



PLAYS WELL
WITH

Others

DALY WAY

BRYNN PAULIN

Plays Well With Others

A Daly Way Story

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Resplendence Publishing, LLC

<http://www.resplendencepublishing.com>

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Daytona Beach, FL 32176

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Copyright © 2010, Brynn Paulin
Edited by Christine Allen-Riley
Cover art by Les Byerley www.les3photo8.com

Electronic format ISBN: 978-1-60735-181-8

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Electronic release: August 2010

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To everyone who loves the men of Daly Way! Thank you!

Chapter One

Paisley Szuzman glanced at the tall, rugged man before her and blinked into his piercing blue gaze. Toward the end of her interview, which she personally felt as if she'd bombed, he'd come around the desk and leaned against it. One long, muscular leg crossed the other, and as he studied her, his arms crossed as well.

Ace Graham was about as enticing as a man could get, but he also owned the Laurel Ridge Ranch. He'd be her boss if she were hired to oversee his books and such. But as of about two minutes into the meeting, she'd decided she probably didn't have a prayer. In an office, she was great and came with glowing recommendations. As someone who knew jack about ranching... Meh...

"Miss Szuzman?" Ace asked.

She shook herself. "I think I should be honest and tell you up front... Well, I'm sure you've figured it out. I don't know much about, um, ranching. I mean, I've always lived in the city. I looked to see if there was a *Ranching for Dummies* or something, not that I thought it would make me into a rancher or anything." She laughed uncomfortably. "Anyway, there's no such thing."

"You don't say," he said, and she suspected he was biting back a grin.

That did it. He probably thought she was a vapid, vagabond twit rather than a competent office assistant. She was sorta a vagabond but not vapid by any measure. Generally, she excelled at whatever she did. In fact, she'd often been accused of being a workaholic which was one of the reasons she thought a job here in Wyoming might be the ticket for her. She was looking for a slower, small-town way of life and a job that wouldn't keep her behind a desk until late at night. She wanted to see sunsets and breathe fresh, unpolluted air.

“Well, city girl,” he said. “Why don’t we show you some of the place, and I’ll introduce you to my partner, Brant Cauldwell.”

“Sounds good to me.”

She stood and smoothed her skirt. The pencil cut of it along with her heels probably wasn’t the best idea for tromping through a barn, but she didn’t particularly want to tell him she could easily change clothes. Her entire life was packed in her small, yellow Volkswagen parked out front. Besides battling her rampant workaholic tendencies, she’d left my last job to move west to care for her grandmother who, it turned out, was absolutely fine once she’d had a medication change. Gram was great, and Paisley was at loose ends with a trunk full of her only possessions.

“So you don’t know anything about ranches. Have you ever ridden a horse?” His denim-clad legs unfolded as he rose. He was so tall her head came to the middle of his chest where his light blue work shirt stretched over his wide pecs. His dark hair brushed his collar, and she had to fight back the desire to reach out and see if it was as soft as it appeared.

“No. The closest I’ve come to a farm animal is an Old McDonald Golden Book.”

“So...why is it you wanted a job on a ranch?” he asked with some confusion.

“I wanted a life outside the city and I *can* do the job. The office part. I’m good at it. Really good. And I’m a fast learner. It’s one of my best skills—that and getting along with people.”

His blue eyes assessed her, and she wondered what he was thinking with the intense gaze. He gave a slight smile.

“So you play well with others?” he said, skirting her and reaching for his Stetson.

“I guess that’s one way to put it, though usually I’m not much for playing.”

“That’ll need to change if you stick around here. We work hard, real hard, but we play hard, too. And with it bein’ fall, the days are getting a little shorter.” The rhythmic clunk of boots stopped as he turned to look at her. “That means more play time pretty soon, but not yet.”

“Okay.” She didn’t know what else to say. She didn’t get what he was saying, but she knew work didn’t stop when the snow flew. Cows didn’t just hibernate for the winter.

They headed through the outer office then into the massive living room of the main ranch house. It had to be large, she supposed. He’d mentioned that the sprawling home had six bedrooms so the person hired for admin would use one of them and have the run of the house. Any place with a half dozen bedrooms had to have adequate living space for the occupants. Of course, there was plenty of space outside. The ranch encompassed 28,000 acres.

“How many cows do you have?” she asked as they entered the front hall.

“At the moment, we have twelve hundred *head*.”

Head, right. Not cows.

“That’s how we count them anyway. I’d have to look in the books for the exact number because most of the adult bulls count as one and a half animals and the mothers and their calves count as one.”

“Like a complicated algebra problem,” she commented.

“Yeah. Kinda like.”

Then they were outside and Paisley took a deep breath. The scent of pine and sage and tall, fresh grass hung heavy on the air. Horses were penned nearby and with that came a slight odor of dung, but it wasn’t enough to disturb her enjoyment of the crisp late-September day, with its hushed breezes and clear blue skies.

“Do you have boots?” Ace asked.

“Uh, no.”

“You’ll have to get some then.” He looked down at her nearly four-inch black pumps—her Christian Louboutin power shoes from New York. “Those pretty little things just won’t do, city girl.”

Without waiting, he headed across the space that separated the barn from the house. She hurried after, doing her best to stay forward on her soles and keep her shoes from sinking into the dirt. All without twisting an ankle and breaking her neck. Boots. Check! She’d get some ASAP. Even if she didn’t get this job, she’d need them if she stayed in this area.

“Brant,” Ace called as his long, mouthwatering legs took him into the barn. She heard a muffled *oof*, just as she entered, then her eyes adjusted to the change in light and went wide at the sight before her. A man... She swallowed. A dark-haired man as tall and as wide as Ace had him pinned to the wall, his hand fisted in Ace’s shirt as he kissed him. Hard.

She blinked. Staring. Then trying not to stare. Then looking back again because, sweet heaven, they were a beautiful sight together.

“Brant,” Ace growled when his lips were free but still against the other man’s. “We’re not alone.”

“It’s no big secret,” Brant laughed. “Seth and Tai—”

“It’s not them,” Ace interrupted.

The new man glanced over his shoulder. "Oh. Hey, miss. Sorry, I, uh..." His hand went up to scratch the back of his neck just above the collar. He left the sentence at that, apparently uncomfortable with his display in front of someone new.

"No big deal," she replied. She held out her hand. "I'm Paisley."

"Brant," he said as his big hand enclosed hers, the rough skin sliding against her palm. She swallowed, pushing back the sudden desire to feel those calluses on more tender skin.

"She's the new admin," Ace said. "If she takes the job."

"You're hiring me?" she blurted. "Why?"

Ace bit back another grin. "Because you're honest," he said at the same time she thought she heard Brant say, "Because you're a woman."

"You mean about not knowing ranch stuff?" She focused on Ace's statement because she couldn't have heard Brant correctly.

"Yeah. You'll catch up on stuff. Besides, it's not like mucking stalls is in your job description."

Speaking of stalls... She looked around and wondered if the smell was just one of those things one got used to. Hell, she didn't like walking past the carriages waiting for fares in front of Central Park. The barn smelled so...barnlike. That aside, she was surprised by how clean it looked. While dimmer than outside, it wasn't really dark. She saw lights overhead that weren't turned on. Equipment hung on one of the walls, every piece seeming to have its place.

Neat and clean and, well, kind of smelly. Not at all the romantic place often depicted in books.

"I spend a lot of my time out here," Ace told her. "And a lot of my time out on the spread, overseeing things and tending the cattle."

"You don't have someone to do that?"

The look the men gave her wasn't quite mocking but spoke of her lack of knowledge. "Yes, but a ranch this size doesn't allow any man to sit on his ass, 'scuse the language, and let someone else do everything. We have someone to do the bookwork so we can be out here doing this work."

She nodded, pretty sure she didn't understand the magnitude of what was needed to run a ranch this size.

"I'm going over to the calving shed," Brant told Ace. "Miss Paisley, it's nice to meet you. I'll see you at dinner." His eyes swept over her, assessing her in a way that no gay man should ever

assess a woman, not if he wasn't batting for both teams. Then he nodded, gave her a friendly grin and headed outside.

"There's probably no *Ranching for Dummies* book because no one's had time to write one," Ace commented, leading her back out of the barn. "Twenty-eight thousand acres probably sounds huge to you, but in the scheme of things four of us run it."

"How?" she gasped before she stopped herself.

"Start early, end late, drink coffee and just keep doing what needs to get done." He grinned. "And hope none of the heifers calve in the middle of the night. They always seem to around here."

Paisley shuddered to think of how early "early" was in order for them to care for so many cows—*head*—and everything else a ranch this size would need done.

He sighed regretfully. "I've got to get back to things, or it will be after midnight before I'm finished tonight. You said you could start right away? The first order of business is getting you settled. You should go into Gillette and get those boots. On your way back through Daly, stop at the diner and let Leena know you'll be over here so they know where to direct your mail—and she can avert rumors of a strange, possibly available, woman wandering town. When you get back, you can move your stuff into your room. I'll leave a sticky note on that door so you'll know which one. You'll probably want to acquaint yourself with the office after that. Dinner's at seven. I'll see you then."

Paisley stared after his firm backside as he left, jumped into a four-wheel drive truck then headed down a two-track across one of the fields.

She was exhausted already, just from his list, and it was only ten a.m.

Chapter Two

Finding boots was a bigger deal than Paisley would have guessed, but by mid-afternoon, she'd finished shopping, stopped at the diner, met Leena and had at least five men try to pick her up.

"You're the new best thing," Leena said, handing her a cup of coffee with a bright smile. "Welcome to the land of no women, honey. You'll be the star of these cowboys' dreams until you're taken."

Paisley laughed. "Surely not."

Leena studied her. "You don't know about our population issue? We have only a few women here but nearly one hundred sixty men. Trust me. You'll be popular in these parts."

"No, I didn't know that... Why is it so unbalanced?"

"Daly has always been a ranching town. Young men come in to work the dozens of spreads nearby. Women, not so much. At the risk of sounding sexist, ranch jobs just aren't for women unless they can lift a hundred and fifty pounds or more, repeatedly, without blinking much."

"Ace hired me for my office skills. I've never even been on a horse."

"That'll change." Leena peered at her as if looking inside her head. "But you must be pretty special..."

"Yeah, a complete ranching imbecile. He had to send me into the city to get boots." The more she thought about how much she didn't know, the more it bothered her. She didn't want to look stupid to Ace or Brant. Not that she thought she'd change them. If they liked guys, they liked guys. But...well, there was something about them that made her care what they thought, and it wasn't her desperate need for professional satisfaction.

Leena shook her head. "No...do you know how many people he interviewed for that job? I guess you wouldn't. At least, twenty. I saw 'em all come trooping through town, heading over to

the Laurel Ridge. Real pretty girls, too. And they all went on their way right on outta town and back to wherever they'd come from. I'm not saying you're not pretty. Hell, you are, but—"

"It takes more than looks to do a job," Paisley put in.

"Oh, hell. I know. That's not what I mean." She shook her head again. "I'm talking about dynamics you don't understand yet, but you will. And either you'll say yes, or you'll tear out of here."

A bolt of ice shot down Paisley's spine. "That sounds...ominous."

"No, honey. It's a gift. It's just not for everyone. Now...dinner over there at the ranch. The men usually take turns whipping stuff up, but why don't you make a nice meal for them? You know how to cook? They all like lasagna. I'll send some of my bread..."

Leena took off into the grocery attached to the diner, and all Paisley could do was stare. When the hell had a cyclone dropped her in the Land of Oz?

* * * *

Paisley's room was on the second floor of the ranch house. She juggled a box and a suitcase as she climbed the stairs, hoping all the way that Ace had gotten a chance to mark the room for her. To her relief, he had. A large yellow Post-it was stuck to the middle of a white-painted door at the end of the hallway.

She shifted the box higher on her hip and headed for it. Off-hand, she wondered which room was Ace's and which was Brant's. Or did they share one?

Her door opened into a spacious, oddly-shaped room that appeared more of a suite than a bedroom. It stretched to both her right and left, leading her to believe it ran the length of this side of the house. A large bathroom was to her immediate left. A canopy bed had been set into the open space between it and the rear wall with an oak dresser nearby—all without the area looking crowded. In the other direction, a trio of club chairs faced a window seat in a rounded out-cropping. A desk with a visible internet line was directly to her right. Near it were a dorm-sized refrigerator and a microwave on a stand. A huge braided rug took up the center of the room with a small table and a chair on the side nearest the refrigerator. Three of the four main walls had windows, as did the turret-like space.

There had to be some mistake. This couldn't be hers.

Well, what now? Maybe she should leave her stuff in a neat stack in the hallway until she talked to Ace. She needed to bring in her other things, but she didn't want to put stuff in the room, only to be embarrassed and have to move from there later.

The box was heavy so, for now, she put on the floor near the door and dropped the suitcase beside it.

It was such a lovely room. She bit her lip gazing at the lace canopy and the matching sheers on the windows. Someone had opened the windows and a breeze fluttered the curtains. So relaxing and pretty...

Thick, white towels hung in the bathroom which had a garden tube and a shower. A red gingham tablecloth was on the dinette table.

She'd just decided this had to be the master bedroom when she saw a folded sheet of yellow paper on the desk with her name scrawled on it. The note contained a brief welcome and further instructions from Ace about government paperwork for her to fill out which he'd left on her workstation downstairs.

Relieved to know she'd found the right room, and still shocked that it was hers, she brought in the rest of her things. She left them inside her doorway, planning to put them away later, then headed for the kitchen by way of the front hall where she'd left the few groceries Leena had sent. In a way, it seemed presumptuous to just cook for these men, but in another way, it made perfect sense. They worked the ranch from early morning to well past dusk. Why not save them making a meal since her hours ran only to five? Besides, she actually *liked* to cook—and she'd peeked into the kitchen earlier. *Martha Stewart eat your heart out. I've got a better kitchen!*

With little effort, she had things going, and the smell of Italian sauce filled the kitchen. She popped an enormous pan into oven then made a salad and left it in the fridge. Satisfied that dinner was well on its way, she headed for the office area to get acquainted with things and fill out her forms.

Her desk was piled high with bills, files and ledgers. It was piled so high in fact, that she could barely see the flat-screened monitor behind one stack of tomes. First things first...everything went into piles on the floor. She had to be able to at least *see* her desk then she could sort through everything.

She was crouching down with one pile, when two cowboys tromped into her office.

"Where's the culinary angel who's come to save my life?" one of them exclaimed.

Smiling, she rested her arms on the edge of her desk and looked up at the exuberant man. "Angel, huh?"

“Definitely.” He circled the desk and without giving her a moment to protest, pulled her into his arms. His lips were on hers before she could gasp. From reflex, her hand came up. She encountered damp hair as his mouth coaxed hers open and he dipped his tongue inside to meet hers. He smelled of barn and hay and hot man—and to her surprise, she didn’t mind at all.

An electrified pulse of both shock and horror surged through her, and she jumped away from him. Her hand went to her lips, her eyes wide.

“I can’t kiss you,” she exclaimed. For Pete’s sake! She’d been here mere hours, and already, she’d behaved inappropriately with a co-worker. She hadn’t been out of an office setting so long that she’d forgotten professional conduct. It had been only six months since she’d left her job in New York to care for her grandmother.

“But you can. You just proved you can. And honey, you so should,” the man said.

The cowboy with him caught his arm as he stepped forward, and she backed up, stumbling over a pile of files. “Down, Seth. Obviously, you’re scaring her to death.” He held out his hand. “Ma’am. I’m Tai Cauldwell, Brant’s cousin. This yahoo is my friend, Seth Danielson. We’re helping out on the ranch while Ace and Brant’s hands, Brian and Steve, are on honeymoon with their wife.”

“Come again?” she asked before she could stop the words. Had Tai meant to say wives?

Seth nodded. “Yeah, we’re just here until spring. Helping out until they get back. When the snow flies, Ace always has extra help, too. Shorter hours, but more work to do with dropping hay. So we’re stayin’ on. Come spring, we’re taking over Tai’s dad’s spread when he retires. He’s moving south near where Ace’s dad lives.”

Paisley nodded, still stuck on the plural hands and singular wife. “And when will Brian and Steve and their wives be back?” she asked.

“Wife, ma’am,” Tai corrected. “Sheila’s her name. Right nice girl, too, those lucky saps.” He glanced at Seth. “Hopefully, we’ll be that lucky some day, too.” He turned back to her. “Anyhow, we just wanted to introduce ourselves and thank you for making dinner before we went and cleaned up—though...” He punched Seth’s arm. “From this one’s actions, we probably shoulda washed first. You stink, man.”

“Yeah? So do you.”

Paisley stared after them as they bickered good-naturedly all the way out her door and across the living room to the stairs. With a shake of her head, she drew her fingers lightly across

her lips and turned to the files she'd tripped over. Before long, she had them righted and had the rest of the piles off her desk. The forms Ace mentioned had been in the only clear spot.

They covered basic tax information, the same as she'd filled out for every job she'd held since she was sixteen. Once she'd placed them in Ace's in basket on his desk, she set about sorting the files. The only problem—she had no freaking clue what she was looking at. Armed with sticky notes, she made comments on papers and files and marked questions for later. Hopefully, Ace would be able to free up a few minutes for her tomorrow morning then she'd go from there.

"You look 'bout ready to yank your hair out, city girl."

Paisley jumped a mile. She'd been engrossed in a report on the mating of two of the stock, surprised at how it was done and wondering if she'd ever comprehend everything in this paperwork. She might not be out on the land, but there was so much to learn in the office. It was like a foreign language.

She looked up at Ace and tried to dredge up her professional persona and hide the proverbial deer in the headlights look that she'd probably had for the last half hour. He leaned against the doorjamb, arms and ankles crossed as he observed her.

"I'm okay," she replied. "There's just so—"

"Damned much? 'Scuse the language," he interrupted. "Yeah, that's one of the reasons I needed someone in here."

"I hope I don't just make more work for you," she admitted. He'd praised her honesty. She might as well continue that route.

"You won't. I'll start you on part of it then we'll move on to the next part. Before you know it, you'll have everything organized and this hellish, 'scuse the language, backlog will be gone. You'll be wonderin' how things got so behind."

"I doubt that. You're doing two jobs." And his body showed it. Lord, the man was hard and built. She looked down and shut the file before he realized she was staring. Again. Good grief. Between ogling him and kissing Seth... They were going to send her out of here on a pike for sexual harassment. And what the hell was with her sudden lust for anything with a third leg? Sure, she hadn't been with anyone in a while, but she wasn't one to play the field, and definitely not the whole team at once. So far, she'd met four cowboys here at the Laurel Ridge, and so far, she thought sleeping with any one of them would be a great idea—except that it was an awful idea. They were her boss and co-workers.

"I've been doing one job," he replied. "The other has been stacked on your desk."

“You must have been getting some things done—”

“Some. But I’ve been working this land since I was a boy. I keep a lot in my head, and I know what absolutely must be put in the permanent records. My ma made sure I learned that. She kept the records until she and my dad retired. They moved south to be near her sister. Bought a small spread down there, ‘cause in my family no one really retires. My ma missed other women, too.”

“Leena mentioned the town’s off-balance gender-wise.”

“Could say so,” he replied. “‘Off-balance’ is a generous way of puttin’ it though. It’s so skewed we’ve all come up with a different way of—”

He stopped and shook his head, obviously thinking better of the information he’d been about to impart.

She raised her eyebrows.

“Probably not something to talk about on your first day in Daly. Suffice to say, we all live by the Daly Way. That’s all.”

Paisley had told him she caught on quickly, and she hadn’t been lying. One and one added up quickly—or should she say, one and one and one. “Seth and Tai mentioned your regular help being away with their *wife*. And Leena was hinting at something earlier, but I didn’t get it at all. Does this Daly Way... Well, is it polygamy of some sort?”

“Well, hell, ‘scuse the language. You are a quick one. Yes. That’s the practice here.”

She nodded and stood. “And you’ve been screening for the perfect woman to fill some sort of position here that might not be as administrative as I thought.”

He was silent, his piercing eyes silently studying her. Her middle clenched in fluttery response, but she ignored it. Anger raged through her. This had all been a farce, and she suddenly felt like some sort of commodity, like a Bedouin woman traded for several camels.

She glared at him, but he stood his ground as she approached.

“Get the fuck out of my way,” she said her best New Yorker don’t-mess-with-me voice. She’d go through him if she had to. It didn’t matter how big he was; she knew self defense. “And don’t excuse *my* language.”

Now, he raised his eyebrows but stepped to the side with a flourish of his hand. She brushed past him and tried not to be taken in by the intoxicating cologne he must have put on when he’d washed up. Pine and fresh mountain air. It was the only description that came to mind.

Irritated with the lingering arousal and pissed at him, she stomped up the stairs.

"Oh man, what did ya go an' do, Ace?" Seth called from the main floor.

"Go find something to do," Ace rasped, and a tremble coursed through her. She hadn't realized he was on her heels.

She spun around, grabbing the railing for balance. "Back off, cowboy," she demanded, poking him in the chest.

He grabbed her hand and stared into her eyes, his callused thumb rubbing the tender skin between her own thumb and forefinger. "No," he replied.

"I can't think of anything I'd rather do," Tai called, and she realized he and Seth were settling in to watch the show.

There wouldn't be one. She yanked her hand from Ace and ran the rest of the way up the stairs. To her surprise, he didn't follow her into the bedroom. He stopped in the doorway, a better barrier than a locked door.

"What are you doin', city girl?"

"What do you think? I happen to think you're pretty bright. You can figure it out."

"It's getting dark. You don't want to drive in this."

"The hell I don't," she shot out. She was *not* staying here. "I'm staying somewhere else. I'll come back for my things tomorrow."

Ace sighed, and she saw Brant come up behind him. "Honey, don't be upset."

Right...the boyfriend—*partner*—was coming to his defense. That brought her up short. She pointed back and forth between the two of them.

Brant grinned apparently knowing what she was thinking.

"Aren't you gay?" she demanded. "Why would you want a...a...concubine?"

Brant snorted while Ace raised that damn eyebrow again. Downstairs the others hooted. She took a deep breath. Evidently, she was yelling.

"Honey—" Brant started again, but Ace cut him off.

"We're bi-sexual. Happens a lot 'round here. And we don't do concubines in these parts. Actually, you'd be the one with the harem."

"A harem of two," she laughed. The sound cut off as her eyes went wide. Wait. They didn't intend to include Tai and Seth... "Oh hell no."

She grabbed her purse and dug out her keys. She sighed inwardly at leaving behind such a lovely room. It suddenly made so much more sense. The quarters of the kept woman.

“You’d better back off,” she warned as she headed toward Ace and Brant. She waved her keychain. “Pepper spray and I know how to use it.”

Both men backed in opposite directions with hands held up, and Paisley swept past them, down the steps and out the front door like the queen they’d claimed she’d be.

Chapter Three

That couldn't have gone more piss poor. Ace ran a hand through his hair while Brant rubbed his shoulder and kissed Ace's temple.

"What a cluster fuck," Ace grated.

"She'll come 'round. And if she doesn't, then she wasn't the right one," Brant assured him. "But...I just think she'll bend."

Ace wasn't so sure. "She's not a wild horse."

"Women. Wild horse. Often alike, love. Just takes the right coaxing and sometimes the right treats."

Despite her obviously expensive shoes, Paisley didn't really strike Ace as materialistic. She drove a little, hippie-mobile with a ding in the door and peace sign decals peppered across the bright yellow paint job. A peek in her bedroom door showed a few boxes and two suitcases. Not really a lot for a woman who liked things. No, Paisley wasn't one to be lured by "treats".

And he was worried about her driving angrily through the waning dusk. The road to town wasn't as twisting as most, but it was still gravel, and after a long summer, it was in need of grading. Like her shoes, her car was completely inappropriate for these parts. He'd figured to eventually lure her into driving a truck and ditching the car before she actually ditched it during the first snow.

"Where do you suppose she's off to?" he asked Brant.

"Maybe town. Maybe Gillette. Maybe all the way back to New York. She was pretty pissed."

"Yeah," Ace replied. He sighed. After all the applications—picture and bio required—he'd thought she was definitely the one. He'd written some bullshit about needing the bio to judge a person's ability to live and adapt in these parts, but it was only marginally true. Mostly, he'd been

looking for adventurous traits in a woman who might be inclined to enjoy a ménage relationship. Someone who wasn't overly conservative but also someone who wasn't just looking for a fling. Someone who could adapt to an old-fashioned western way of life while being a forward thinker. And yes, someone with office skills, because the woman of the Graham family generally did the office work—and some of the ranch chores, but Ace hadn't been expecting that of Paisley.

"Get dinner out of the oven," he yelled down to Seth and Tai. "I saw salad in the fridge."

"What are you going to do?" Brant asked.

"I didn't finish mucking stalls earlier."

"You need to eat, love."

"I need to think." He made a face and put his hand on Brant's cheek then slid his fingers back into his hair. "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have told her."

Brant gave a half laugh. "Somehow, I don't think her reaction would have been different later."

"She's willful. It was something I read loud and clear on her ap. She'd need to be to deal with us."

"Well, we still have tomorrow. When she comes to get her stuff."

Ace headed downstairs and outside, hoping that by then he'd figure out the words to say.

* * * *

Paisley was terrified. After a white knuckle drive into Daly, she'd made the mistake of stopping at Leena's to eat before she drove over to Gillette for the night. Before Leena could get to her, a crowd of men had converged. No one had been out of line, but they'd surrounded her. The questions seemed constant as they asked her name, where she was from, how long she'd be staying, if she had a boyfriend, and so much more. Her head throbbed from the press of people and the constant inquires volleyed her way.

"Please...I'm just eating dinner then leaving," she said, overwhelmed by the attention. It was crazy. Though she was used to the crowded streets of New York, everyone there ignored her, consumed in their own business. Here, everyone seemed consumed with *her*.

What an insane night. First, Ace and the ménage revelation then this. In truth, once she'd settled down a little on the way into town, the idea of being with all four of those men titillated her senses. What would *that* be like? Four sets of hands. Four mouths. Four cocks. Four men intent on her pleasure. The last had stopped her. Maybe they'd all be intent on her pleasuring

them, like some girl in a brothel who'd give each man his time every night. Her ire had risen again at that.

After another mile, she'd wondered if maybe she should have questioned exactly what the men of the Laurel Ridge had in mind before she'd flown off the handle. If they truly wanted a group sex scene, she wasn't completely opposed. She'd never participated in such a thing, but it intrigued her.

Still thinking, she'd gone to Leena's to ask her a few pointed questions. She'd taken a stool at the counter of the restaurant which had only a few tables and booths along with these counter seats. Unfortunately, with the cowboys hanging on her every word, there had been no way to ask Leena a thing.

Leena gave her a sympathetic look as she refilled Paisley's coffee. "My husbands are on their way," she said. "They'll keep these guys away until you're ready to go."

Paisley nodded. She'd seen Leena on the phone earlier, and she hoped those reinforcements would get here soon. Her heart raced as an odd case of something like claustrophobia attacked her. These guys were too close. It wasn't like when Ace, Brant, Seth or Tai stood near her. And when Ace had held her hand on the stairs...

She trembled from the remembered arousal. It had taken everything in her not to lean into him at that moment.

"I'm sorry," Leena continued. "They're a wild group tonight. Usually, they've got more manners," she grated as a young, blond cowboy leaned against the counter, facing Paisley and crowding into her.

"Hi," he said.

"Trent, back off," Leena demanded.

"Yeah, Trent. Back the hell away from my woman. 'Scuse the language, darlin'."

Paisley looked up to see Ace elbowing his way through the crowd with Brant, Seth and Tai on his heels.

"Ace!" she exclaimed, practically launching herself off the stool and into his arms. They closed around her, pressing her protectively to his chest as silence ensued around the restaurant. Brant came up beside them then Seth and Tai squared off the box, keeping everyone else out. As closed in as she'd felt before, she didn't feel that way with these four. Though she'd stormed out on them, she knew they'd keep her safe.

"They don't mean you harm, city girl," Ace said quietly. Though the name could have been mocking, she heard only tenderness in his voice when he called her that.

"It's okay, honey," Brant added, stroking her hair. "We've got you."

And she suspected they did. She reached out an arm to wrap around him as she pressed a cheek to Ace's hard chest. "I'm still not sleeping with any you," she murmured.

Seth kissed her neck. "We'll see. You seemed awfully into my kiss for that second when you let yourself be."

Ace pulled back enough to look down at her. "You kissed him?"

"She did," Tai confirmed.

"I want a kiss," Ace told her, his voice a low rumble as his blue eyes sparkled with desire. Her body went soft at the thought of kissing him. She was already heating up with the men's proximity.

"Me, too," Brant growled, and she trembled. She looked into his deep brown eyes then over at Ace.

"Not here," she replied. She bit her lip. Was she really considering starting something with them? A freaking hour and a half ago she'd stormed from the Laurel Ridge Ranch steaming angry at all of them and feeling like the butt of some joke. Though she'd begun to wonder, halfway down the treacherous, pitch black road, if she hadn't overreacted, this was still so...odd. And they had plans for her—sorta nefarious ones in her opinion—but hadn't she been fighting her reaction all day anyway? She'd had her own wicked thoughts about all of them.

"Let's get you out of here," Brant suggested. Ace reached around his lover and handed Leena some money. Turning, Paisley saw Tai grab her purse from the counter.

"Okay," she agreed.

"We're taking you in the truck," Ace told her. "That matchbox on wheels really isn't meant for roads like ours. We'll come back and get it in daylight. Don't wanna lose you in a pothole."

She just nodded. Arguing wouldn't do any good. Besides, she didn't want to drive that road again. Not at night.

In minutes, she was sandwich between Ace and Brant's large bodies while Seth and Tai squeezed into the smaller backseat. She noticed Tai's arm around Seth and wondered if it was proximity or if they were partners, too.

"We need to talk," she announced as they drove.

Silence.

"I came here for a job," she continued, filling the blackness with her words. "I mean this is...so not what I expected. I mean...what if it doesn't work out? I'll be screwed both ways." She coughed and smiled. "Excuse my language."

"It will work out," Ace assured her.

"I don't want to feel like...well, you know, like sex is part of my job requirements."

Ace pulled to the side of the road, and she heard a sharp inhalation from the back. Brant muttered something like *Oh shoot* under his breath.

Her eyes went wide as Ace killed the engine. All the running lights went off, leaving the passengers holding their breaths in the pitch.

"Exactly what do you think of us, ma'am?" Ace rasped. "You seem to be suggesting I've lured you into some sort of prostitution."

"No...well...you do have to admit this is...unusual," she said, hating how hesitantly her words came out. "I mean...well, dam—darn it, you hired me—"

"Paisley," Brant cut in calmly. "Yes, we hope you'll like us enough to be interested in us, but you're getting paid only for your work in the office."

"I could just fire you," Ace suggested harshly. "Would that be better?"

"Don't be insane," Brant replied for her. "You need someone to deal with that fire hazard cum avalanche problem in that office. We've already got a fine because we missed the notice from the environmental guys last month." He patted Paisley's arm. "Whether or not you decide to be with us, the job is yours. And even though Ace has a healthy attraction to sex on desks, he'll refrain. Won't you, Ace?"

Silence.

"Ace?" Brant prodded.

"With her," Ace answered. "No promises for your ass."

"Nice, Ace," Brant sighed. "I'm trying to smooth things over."

Despite the tension in the truck, or maybe because of it, Paisley chortled.

"Paisley, you okay?" Ace asked, suddenly sounding alarmed as she tried to strangle her laughter.

"Mm-hmm," she got out. Barely. The picture in her head of her trying to take a phone call while Brant and Ace fucked amused her so much she couldn't quite stifle her glee.

With sudden clarity, she realized that the guys just wanted her. And she'd gone way overboard with her response and put machinations in place that didn't exist. Yet her job and this thing with the guys weren't as independent of each other as portrayed—they couldn't be. No doubt the men had pored over bios and pictures before scheduling interviews. And according to Leena, she was the only one who'd met the requirements. They needed someone for the job, yes, but in truth, it had just been a way to get her to the ranch. They wanted her first, and the job was something for her to do while she was here.

If she thought about it, the salary was exactly what should be paid for what she'd been hired to do. Actually, it was a little low. They certainly weren't paying for extra favors.

In a crazy way, that was freeing.

The scene in the diner, with all those cowboys, made it abundantly clear how desperate things could be around Daly and just how far men might go to get the female they wanted. Not just any girl. One that met their requirements, like an oddball dating service.

And she could leave whenever she wanted...

The overhead interior light snapped on, and Ace loomed over her, looking into her face, concern all over his. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing. Not a thing. Kiss me, Ace," she pleaded. All her tension drained to her pussy at her words. She might be making the biggest mistake of her life, but she wanted a taste of him—of *all* of them. She glanced at Brant. "And touch me. Kiss me and touch me."

"All of us?" Seth asked hesitantly from the back.

She slid down so that her head rested on the seat back. She closed her eyes and reached up to turn off the harsh overhead light. Maybe she shouldn't and maybe it would turn out to be a mistake, but she could experience this decadent pleasure at least one time in her life. How many women had four men, totally into them, as her lovers for the night?

If she hated it, she could still leave tomorrow. She'd essentially quit when she'd stormed from the house earlier.

But maybe she wouldn't hate it. Maybe it would be the start of something really good...

"Yes," she breathed, stepping over the cliff of no return. "Yes. All of you."

With a groan, Ace leaned in and covered her mouth. As his lips parted hers, his tongue delving inside, her body melted into liquid desire, and she knew she'd made the right decision. It might kill her career prospects at the Laurel Ridge, but this experience with these cowboys would be worth embarking on a new job search.

And... Maybe everything would be okay. The slide of Ace's tongue over hers caused a flood to her pussy. Fingers skated up to her breast, cupping the mound and gently pinching at the peak. Lips pressed to her temple and her hand came up to bury in the hair of the man from the backseat—Seth. Seth was on that side. A moment later, Tai was kissing her on the other side.

Brant opened the first few buttons of her blouse. He pressed his mouth to the slope of her breast before gently pulling down the cup of her bra on that side. She cried into Ace as Brant's mouth closed around her nipple, drawing hard. She arched, frantically kissing Ace as he consumed her. Ace cupped her jaw. Another hand was at her clothed breast, but whose, she had no idea. She almost came at the heady eroticism of being touched by all these men, of not knowing exactly who did what.

It's a gift. It's just not for everyone, Leena had said earlier. Paisley suddenly understood what she'd meant. Lord, this was a gift. And apparently it was for her. She could barely breathe for the excitement pulsing through her.

"We should go home," Brant suggested. "It's a bit limiting here, and the back of the truck is too hard and dirty."

"Paisley?" Ace asked, letting up on her mouth.

"I don't care. I just..." She bit her lip. She didn't quite have the guts to say she just wanted them. All of them. As soon as possible so she didn't lose her nerve. "Yes, let's go back to the ranch."

Chapter Four

Brant took over kissing Paisley as Ace drove to the ranch. Seth's kiss had been eager, Ace's had been demanding, consuming, but Brant's was as low-key as the man himself. Slowly, he explored her mouth. He pulled her onto his lap as Ace rolled cautiously down the dark road from their gate to the house. Brant cupped her head, angling her for his mouth as his tongue licked over hers. His free arm supported her back as he discovered her.

His cock was hard against her thigh, telling her he enjoyed women as much as he must enjoy Ace. She slid her palms over his chest. It was so hard. Work-hewn. That's what it would be called. His muscles were from the demanding labor he did everyday, not from using some machine. All of the men in this truck would be built like this. Anticipation laced through her. She couldn't wait to be the softness between all those unyielding bodies. To feel them on her. Under her. In her.

She groaned, pressing into Brant's chest.

His mouth traveled to her ear. "I can't wait to be in you," he rasped.

"Yes," she sighed. Her hand clamped on the back of the seat as he kissed his way to her breast, pushing aside the fabric she hadn't adjusted and taking her nipple once more. A hand clasped hers. Through slitted eyes, she saw it was Seth. His pants were open as Tai bent over him. She moaned as she watched Seth's long shaft disappearing into Tai's mouth. *So hot*. Her panties were wet with her desire to feel that cock between her lips. To feel their cocks in her. To come from the ecstasy they'd give her.

Brant's lips were at her ear again. "Will you ride me?" he asked. "Now?"

"Yes," she whimpered. At the moment, she might not make it across the porch. Their kisses and touches made her too weak.

He opened her jeans in a flash. She helped shove them down, but the pants caught on her new boots. It was enough. As she straddled him, he shoved open his own jeans then rummaged in the glove box. In moments, he had a condom. He ripped it open with his teeth then rolled it on, his huge fist running down the length of his thick erection. They fumbled, adjusting. Then...

Oh God, his cock was sliding into her. She gasped choking breaths as his width pushed her open while it shoved deep. Her fingers locked with Seth's as Brant took her hips. She rocked with him. Her wetness coated him, turning her on even more.

"Yes," she cried loudly as Ace reached over. He yanked down her bra to access the breast closest to him.

"Yeah, fuck yeah," Seth echoed. His grasp on her fingers tightened as he drew close to his release.

Mindlessly, she rode Brant while he bucked beneath her. The friction of the angle brought her closer and closer to orgasm with each surge.

"Come," Ace whispered in her ear. He took her nipple roughly into his mouth. Lightning shot through her, and she exploded around Brant's cock while Seth called out in the backseat. Brant pushed into her vise-like cunt two more times before his heat poured from him on his deep groan.

Her head dropped to his shoulder. "Sweet heaven," she moaned.

"By the way, we're here," Ace announced, his smile bright in his voice. He cuddled close to her and Brant, but otherwise, no one moved.

"It's going to get cold in here," Brant said.

There was lethargic agreement from everyone, but still little movement.

"Baby, did you eat anything?" Ace asked her.

"No, it was too...crowded," she finished diplomatically.

"I'm sorry you had to deal with that," he replied. "Mostly, they're all great guys. It's just—"

She brushed her fingers over his cheek. "I get it," she interrupted. "I understand. Really. I'm...uh, sorry about earlier. Hey, I can make quite a scene, huh?"

She smiled ruefully then moaned when he turned his lips into hers.

"It was a shock to you," he murmured. "We have some awesome lasagna. Maybe you'd like some."

"Lasagna, you say? Yum. Later." She scooted to fix her pants.

"Later?" Brant asked.

"I don't think we're done," she said, feeling far more in control than she had earlier. "Now that we've begun..." She sighed. "I need more. You don't know what you've started."

Ace laughed. "I quote your bio, 'I'm an all or nothing person. When I start something, I go into it full throttle. Partway is never enough.' That sold you to us. Brant and I read that and knew we wanted you."

"Let's not bring up my résumé, okay?" She didn't want to remember her path here. Right now, it sufficed that she was with the four men who wanted her for female companionship, plain and simple.

"Consider our lips sealed," Brant promised. He leaned around her and kissed Ace. "Right, Ace?"

"You might need to seal them some more," Ace groaned.

"Not a problem. Always," Brant replied. He kissed his lover again then turned to his newer lover. "See how pliable and easy he is?"

"Right. As pliable as the Mississippi," she replied. "He just happens to be getting what he wants, but I'm on to him. He appears calm and harmless until the storm swells his fury."

"Then watch out," Ace laughed good-naturedly. He nipped her shoulder where it was exposed at her neck.

"Don't worry," she told him. "I'm good enough at sandbagging to get through it. You don't make it in New York without being tough."

"I like your soft parts," Seth said, leaning over the seat to steal a kiss from her. "Let's go inside. The backseat is really cramped."

Tai gave a fake snuffle. "And we're feeling left out."

"Well, we can't have that." She knelt on the seat and leaned over it. Grabbing his shirt front, she drew him up and brushed her mouth over his. "Let's go."

* * * *

Brant thought maybe he'd died and gone to heaven. What had started as an awful evening was turning into a great night. Having the damp, fiery vise of Paisley on his cock while all her soft curves had rocked against him had been pure bliss. Eager anticipation gripped him. He wanted to feel her again.

This is what he and Ace had talked about for years—a woman like Paisley. Smart, strong-willed, hot and enthusiastic. Someone to warm their beds and their hearts while being their helpmeet as they worked the ranch. A mate of their own.

As the five of them climbed the stairs, he had a small stab of worry as he thought of her with Seth and Tai. The two of them would leave in a few months. If Paisley bonded with them rather than with him and Ace, Brant and Ace might be alone again. He loved Ace, but both of them wanted a woman to complete their circle.

He couldn't think that way. This wasn't a contest, and at the moment, they all had Paisley squarely in all their corners. He watched her jeans move with her firm behind as she climbed the stairs at Ace's side. His palms itched to reach out and cup those tight mounds. Biting his lip, he imagined taking her ass while Ace was buried in her pussy. Hell, he'd come again just thinking about it.

His steps slowed at the landing as he watched her, his mouth watering at the thought of not only fucking her but tasting her, too. Her scent had filled the cab of the truck, earlier, and probably driven everyone to harder proportions.

Tai came up beside him and leaned in with a chuckle as Seth passed. "I know what you're thinking, cousin."

"Yeah?"

"How did she feel? Damn, I haven't been with a woman since college." A long time since he'd gotten back from university five years ago.

"Like a fist of fire..."

"Poetic," Tai laughed, pushing him along toward Paisley's bedroom as Seth entered. "You still writing?"

Brant shook his head. "No time."

"Too bad. You used to write some good shit. Used a couple of your lines in college."

"You did, huh?"

"Yeah—"

All conversation stopped as they stepped inside the room. Paisley was on the edge of the bed, pants off, shirt hanging open as she laid back with Ace, naked, between her thighs. As he parted her and swiped his tongue along her slit, she moaned and grasped the blanket beneath her.

Seth had shucked off his clothes then climbed onto the bed beside her. His hand splayed on her midriff as he leaned over her for a kiss. Paisley drove her fingers into his hair, lifting into his mouth.

"Go on," Brant urged Tai. "I had a head start..." And the sight of Ace pleasuring her turned him on. Also ditching his shirt and pants, Tai climbed onto the bed. His mouth went to

Paisley's breast, his tongue lashing over a pouting pink nipple. She jerked and cried out, her pretty reactions upping Brant's arousal. She was so perfect for them. So responsive and keen for more.

One of her legs went up on Ace's shoulder and curled around his back.

"So good," she gasped, her breathing ragged.

Seth kissed his way over her shoulder. Idly, his fingers circled her navel as his mouth headed for her breast.

It was so beautiful, the four of them moving together in perfect union. After a moment, Ace lifted his head to gaze at Brant with a raised brow. Brant nodded and smiled to indicate everything was okay. Ace always worried about him—when they'd been neighbors then lovers growing up. When they'd been schoolmates at Western Michigan University, each studying in different agricultural programs, he'd always been concerned for Brant. Ace was his lover, protector, partner and friend, and soon God willing, he'd be the third in a triad marriage with Paisley. His husband. Paisley's husband.

Moving forward, Brant yanked off his clothes then knelt behind Ace and lifted Paisley's leg to rest over his shoulder as well. He stroked her calf, the back of her knee, her thigh, while he leaned into Ace's shoulder. His teeth sank lightly into the muscle, branding his man just as he liked, while reaching around to grasp Ace's cock. Slowly, he jacked his hand along the shaft, firmly tracing the ridges and claiming the rigid length. His thumb swept over the head and around the edge of the glans before pressing into the frenulum. Ace moaned as Brant touched that hotspot then moved away to repeat the process with the practiced hand of a familiar lover.

Releasing Ace's shoulder, he lifted his mouth to Ace's ear. "Kiss me. Give me a taste. Then fuck her. And I'll fuck you."

With a groan, Ace turned and kissed him violently. Brant's lips were momentarily pressed to his teeth before they adjusted, and Ace's tongue thrust inside giving the tangy taste of their woman.

Unwilling to leave Paisley's pussy unattended, Brant drew his fingers over her, pushing two deep into the clutching passage that had squeezed him so recently. Oh, how he wanted to feel that fiery warmth around him soon...while he pumped into her, while Ace thrust into him, while they all maneuvered to kiss and caress and shoot into mind-numbing release.

His thumb rasped over her clit, and she cried out, lifting her pelvis into his touch. Pulling his mouth from Ace's, he whispered, "Now. Do it now."

Ace grabbed with a condom from his discarded pants and rolled it on quickly. "Move her higher on the mattress," he told Seth and Tai. With Paisley's help, everyone shifted toward the head of the bed. Ace slid between her parted thighs. Brant avidly watched as Ace's cock, the cock that had brought him so much pleasure over the years, slowly sank into the woman who would bring them years' more pleasure. And it was as if something clicked. Brant had claimed her. Ace had claimed her. Even though Seth and Tai would likely feel the clasp of Paisley's tight cunt, she was taken and only shared with the two other men.

Brant rolled on his own condom then grabbed an individual lube packet he carried in his pocket for "emergencies". With practiced precision, he lubed his cock. His fingers pressed to Ace's anus as Ace flexed forward into Paisley. Working with his lover's movements, he opened him then Brant aligned his glans and pushed his way inside, moving in unison to the pair beneath him.

Paisley thought she might die from pleasure. Her lids parted slightly as she felt Ace's penis push into her, moving easily through the cream brought by her intense arousal. Her womb was so tight with need, she feared she might fly apart when she came. Seth and Tai had their hands all over her, over-sensitizing her skin, making her writhe as they suckled at her breasts.

Cool air licked her nipple as Tai released it. He shifted to his knees while she watched Brant move behind Ace. Brant's face contorted to such a look of sheer ecstasy, she had no doubt he'd just entered Ace. Oh, how she loved watching those two men together. Knowing Ace was getting fucked while he fucked her nearly sent her over the edge into that huge orgasm that waited to steal her senses.

Suddenly, Tai's cock was near her mouth. She turned her upper body as well as she could, Seth moving with her, and partially rose on her elbow. She opened her mouth, looking up at Tai. His hand cupped the back of her head then he pushed between her lips. His scent filled her as she tasted his wide, slightly salty length. The smooth, steely shaft slid along her tongue, and she pressed up, closing him between it and the roof of her mouth.

She sucked hard on the tip while she tried to absorb the sensation of her mouth being filled, Seth licking her breasts, and Ace driving into her with the force of two men, his pubis rubbing her clit with each thrust. Brant's hands were clasped around her knees while Ace gripped her hips.

Seth moved over her. Her breasts were pushed together, and his cock shoved between the mounds, slippery with his saliva. How they did it, she didn't know, but as one, they each pushed forward in unison, their rhythms matching as they all fucked at once. Her eyes closed as she lost herself in the swells of their movements, lightning driving through her, tiny sparks igniting nerves throughout her body.

She moaned around Tai's cock as she distantly wondered how she'd thought this might be a bad thing.

Seth managed to pinch her nipples while he pressed the mounds together and suddenly, she screamed, her body spasming in great rolling climaxes that burst then ebbed then crashed again. Frantically, she laved Tai until his cry joined the loud rush of the blood past her ears. His cum splashed into her throat, and she swallowed quickly to get it all.

Gasping she pulled free, still shaking from the release slashing over her. Tai pressed her wrists to the bed as she writhed. Seth leaned in and kissed him while he continued to thrust.

"So fucking tight," Ace groaned.

"So good," Brant enjoined.

Ace stiffened while Brant caught a choked breath behind them. In a daze, she watched their faces contort in unparalleled pleasure, their fingers digging into her. Warmth seeped onto her chest, and she saw Seth holding his breath. He sighed.

And they all collapsed.

Chapter Five

Distantly, Paisley heard the running of water, but her muzzy brain wasn't making connections. After the first round, she'd discovered Seth and Tai were quick on recovery. Tai had licked away Seth's release while Seth had fucked her right into another screaming climax. Then Tai had taken his place and put his own brand on her, pushing hard and deep and fast until she wasn't sure where she ended and he began. All the while, Brant and Ace had stroked her, touching her sensitive places, drawing her nerves to the end of their endurance. They'd both whispered in her ears about how fucking beautiful she was, how good she felt, how much they loved watching her...

After Tai had come, after she'd climaxed again, too, her mind had gone blank, her whole world shifting into a fuzzy mode of balmy comfort where she floated around on a sea of razor-edge sensation, her body randomly trembling with the aftermath of tiny orgasms.

"Darlin', can you hear us?"

"Mmm," she murmured, snuggling toward the source of the voice. His hard, warm chest made a perfect pillow for her sensual drifting. She curled her fingers into him, floating deeper into the haze.

"Honey, you gotta wake up," she heard from the other direction. Brant. Brant called her honey. "You're gonna be mighty unhappy in the morning if you wake up all sticky."

At the moment, she didn't care. She groaned, rolling to her back. "I don't wanna move."

Brant smiled down at her. "We'll take care of you. Just relax. Ace is gonna carry you in to the tub. You can rest, and we'll keep you safe."

"M'kay," she yawned. Sliding her arms around Ace as he lifted her, she pressed her face to his neck. "Where are Seth and Tai?" she asked.

"They went home to their trailer," Brant said.

“Okay,” she replied, a little more awake now.

“But we’re going to stay with you,” Ace told her, in that deep rumbling voice that made her tummy flutter. “All right, darlin’?”

Paisley’s arms tightened, and her eyes squeezed shut as she cuddled into him. He sank into the water, and it seemed completely normal for him to be in the big garden tub with her, for Brant to be there, too. She shifted to rest between Ace’s legs, his chest against her back, his semi-hard cock a sensuous press to her buttocks.

“Okay,” she murmured. “Tired anyway.”

Beside them, Brant sighed, the sound content, and she wasn’t sure why. She opened an eye as the water seeped into her and, though warm, woke her fully. She looked at Brant. “But you were worried I wouldn’t feel that way.”

He nodded. “They’re younger, closer to your age. Only a year younger. Ace and I are five years older than you. Maybe you’d want them to stay and...play...and for us to go.”

Should she tell him it was lust at first sight with Ace? How hot she thought it was when they handled each other? How she’d wanted him to touch her when she’d seen him kissing Ace?

“I like you here,” she said finally.

“I like you right here, too,” Ace replied, re-slanting the conversation, but she didn’t call him on it. His arms tightened around her middle for a moment then he reached for the soap and the folded washcloth on the edge of the tub. Brant took another cloth and lathered it as well. Together, they washed her, rubbing away all traces of the night’s sex while encouraging her to stay still.

Paisley’s toes curled as Brant drew the fabric over her sole then along the ball of her foot. His hand cupped her heel, his thumb stroking her instep. She moaned quietly as he kissed the inside of her ankle then moved to the other foot.

Meanwhile, Ace washed her shoulders and neck then her chest where Seth and Tai had licked so fervently then where Seth had come. Not an inch was missed as Ace circled around each mound then swept upward to the tips. He pinched each nipple through the cloth as he lifted away.

“You two are gonna get me all hot again,” she accused. “I thought the plan was to get me clean.”

Ace chuckled. “Don’t worry, city girl, you’ll be nice and clean when we’re done.”

Paisley moaned and sank into the pleasures they offered—and the best bath she'd ever had.

* * * *

The alarm clock went off in the middle of the night. Paisley startled awake in the pitch black room, disoriented and wondering at the heat to either side of her.

"God's sake, Ace," a disgruntled voice rasped. "Turn off the damn alarm."

Another voice groaned, and she heard the banging of a hand as it tried to find the alarm clock to no avail.

"Brant, it's on your side," she said then rolled over and buried her head in a pillow. She yanked Brant's from under his head and pulled it over the other side of her head to block out the noise. "Why's it going off so early?" she complained as Brant managed to shut off the thing.

"We've gotta get moving so we can start by seven, city girl. But you can sleep a few more hours, sweetness." Ace told her. "You don't need to be down to the office until eight-thirty or nine."

Despite the extra pillow, her eyes squinched tighter as a bedside lamp turned on. "Who cooks you breakfast?" she asked.

"We fend for ourselves," Brant said.

That just struck her as wrong. From what she understood, yesterday's hours were and anomaly. The guys normally worked fourteen and fifteen hour days, with short breaks for lunch and dinner. She didn't think they should have to cook, too.

"Not anymore," she said.

Ignoring her nakedness and aches from the strenuous evening, she crawled from between them and headed for her luggage. The larger of the two bags held a thick, dark-blue silk robe. She slipped it on, loving the feel of it against her bare skin. When she turned, both men were still in bed, the sheet at their waists, their arms bent behind their heads and silly smiles on their faces.

"What?" she asked.

"Just enjoying the sight," Brant replied.

She rolled her eyes. "I'll see you both downstairs. Do Seth and Tai come to the main house for breakfast?"

"Yes, ma'am," Ace told her. "Really, Paisley, you don't have to—"

"It's fair, Ace," she interrupted.

"It's not what I hired you to do."

“Neither was sex. We established that’s not connected to my job. Neither is this. I want to do it. Just let me, okay? I’m used to taking care of people. You know I originally came west to take care of my grandmother. I have three younger sisters, too. My dad died when I was five, and mom worked two jobs to support us. So I took care of my siblings—and actually, my mom, too. It’s what I’m used to doing.”

“You shouldn’t have to—”

She gave both men a dark look. “We’ve already gone over that. And I’ve already told you how it will be. Now, go do whatever you do in the morning then come downstairs for breakfast.”

Ace looked at Brant with a raised brow and Brant lifted a shoulder. They both shook their heads.

“Paisley, come here,” Ace said. “Now,” he added when she hesitated. As soon as she moved close, he pulled her into the bed. “You can do this,” he said. “But you need to understand something, darlin’. You’re not in charge. And you don’t get to tell me what to do.”

“Or me,” Brant added.

“It’s kinda against our cowboy nature.”

Right. Cowboys. The epitome of alpha male and she was in bed with two. Ace was the top dog, but Brant was a close second.

“If you think I’m going to be weak and wilting and kowtowing to your every desire, you’ve got the wrong girl.”

Brant snorted then kissed her nose. “We wouldn’t dare think that of you, honey. But you need to watch the tellin’ us what to do. It don’t go over well.”

“Right. Got it,” she said, with a roll of her eyes as she disengaged herself then climbed from bed. “I’m sleeping with Attila the Hun and Genghis Khan. I’ll just await your orders in the kitchen where I will have humbly prepared your breakfast.”

“Willful,” Brant commented as they watched the door swing shut behind Paisley.

Ace shook his head, laughing. “Wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Scooting closer to Brant, he pressed his body to the man who’d filled his life since he was a kid and filled his bed since they were both seventeen. His hand splayed over Brant’s belly as he kissed his shoulder.

“How are you feeling with everything?” he asked.

Brant shrugged. "Last night, I was thinking about her being our wife and you being my husband. But still wondering if it'll happen. Seth and Tai won't be here forever. And... well, she could decide to go with them, you know?"

"Yeah, I know. I don't want her to have to choose, but at the same time, I want her to stay."

Brant chuckled. "Catch-twenty-two. I don't want her to get hurt either. I don't think Seth and Tai are ready to be serious about a woman anyway."

"I don't know." Ace hated to be the devil's advocate, particularly since he wanted to believe Paisley would choose them. "They've matured a lot since they've started negotiations for your uncle's land. I think the prospect of the responsibility has put weights on their shoulders that weren't there before." He sighed. "It's only been a day..."

"Yeah. Let's not count calves before they're standin'."

Ace chuckled at Brant's twisted truism. The man had always had a way with turning phrases.

"We better get to showering if we want some breakfast before we start. Seth and Tai are still on the far west pasture doing fencing. Can you pick up the dams we put out in the pastures in May and check the head gate over at the north ridge? I need to get Paisley going on the paperwork—last night it didn't look like she could make heads or tails outta it—then I need to go check the jack fence in along the northeast edge. It'll take me a few hours, but I think some of the wires are down."

"Are you just inventorying or fixing? You probably need to replace timbers. Some of them weren't looking great when I was out there last."

"Best get moving," Ace replied. He gave Brant a quick kiss then slid from beneath the blankets. Taking care of nearly forty-five square miles of land didn't leave time for lolling around in bed, even if he wanted to. After finding his clothes in the pile on the floor, he padded into the hall, naked, and headed for his room.

Though they were lovers, he and Brant maintained separate bedrooms so they each had their own space. That would probably change if Paisley stayed on as theirs. They'd all share the big suite at the end of the hallway, leaving the other five rooms empty since his ranch hands, Steve and Brian, had their own small home to the south of the main house.

He grinned. Maybe someday, there would be some kids to fill a few of the empties.

Seth and Tai's voice carried up from the kitchen as Ace headed in toward his shower. He'd better hurry, or there might not be any coffee left with those two.

* * * *

When he entered the kitchen fifteen minutes later, Tai and Seth were finishing their breakfast and talking quietly as they drank their coffee. Paisley was nowhere to be seen.

"There's plenty on the stove," Tai said, jerking his head toward a few covered pans there.

"Where's Paisley?"

Seth shrugged. "She ran out to the truck to get her purse and when she came in she was on her cell phone. Went into the office."

At six-thirty in the morning? Ace supposed it was later out east where she was from, still he was surprised. He poured himself a cup of coffee in a travel mug then headed toward his own office. He hoped everything was okay with her, and if so, he could organize what needed to be done today.

"No Riv, I don't think you should come here."

Ace stopped halfway across the living room as Paisley's voice drifted to him. Riv? Who was Riv? Were Ace and Brant looking to stake a claim on someone else's territory?

"Of course, I miss you," Paisley said. "But you can't—" She made a frustrated sound as she was interrupted. "No. It's not safe—" A sigh. "Of course, I'm fine. The guys on the Laurel Ridge are great... Yes, Riv. Guys. Four of them. Now back off it." Another strangled, frustrated sound. "I don't have time to talk about this. I've gotta go, and I better not be seeing your cute ass anywhere near Daly. I mean it. No surprises."

His eyes narrowing, Ace headed back to the kitchen. *Cute ass*, his ass. What the hell was she doing with them if this Riv person was in the picture? He slammed his cup on the counter then topped it off and filled a plate with food. At the moment, he didn't feel like eating, but he had to if he was going to make it through to lunch at mid-afternoon.

"Problem?" Brant asked when he came into the room. He stood in the doorway, looking Ace up and down. Apparently, Ace's mood was written all over him—especially when viewed by his lover.

"Later," he replied shortly, not wanting to discuss the matter in front of Seth and Tai. Not yet. Not before he'd thought things through.

Opening the cupboard, he pulled out the roll of tin foil and slapped a piece over his plate to take with him.

"I'm gonna get some supplies and head over to the northeast. It'll take a while so I better get going on it." He ignored Brant's confused look as he picked up his things. Brant followed him into the entry where Ace yanked his shortwave radio from the charger. He shoved into the holder on his belt then grabbed his Stetson. He jammed the hat on his head.

"Ace, what's going on?"

"Not. Now. Brant." Ace sighed as his lover flinched. He set down the cup and plate he'd been holding in one hand and pulled his man to his chest. "It's not you, love," he said. "I promise after I think a little, we'll talk about it. Can you let Seth and Tai know what I need them to do today? And can you show Paisley the databases online? Grab the basket off my desk of the paperwork that needs to be entered and mail that needs to be looked at. She can make notes on it and talk to me about it after lunch. And point her in the direction of the filing cabinets. She'll need to check the paperwork in the folders that were on her desk against the databases then everything that was there just needs to be filed. And Brant... Do yourself a favor. Don't tarry."

He headed out before Brant could ask him anything else and before he went into Paisley's office and demanded what the hell.

Paisley paused in her office door, having come through just in time to hear Ace's tirade. Brant ran a hand through his hair as the door slammed with a resounding thud.

"What happened?" she asked.

"Beats me."

She was going to find out. Part of her told her to mind her own business, but the part of her that had always taken care of people needed to know what was bothering Ace. She couldn't have him going off mad. Her father had been angry when he'd gone off to the fire that day he'd died... Ticked at her for leaving her toys out. Irritated that the twins were whiney and sick. Still steaming from the ensuing argument with her mom.

It had destroyed all of them.

Paisley had never been the same. It was a rare case—like last night—when she ever allowed separating from someone while she and that person were angry. Especially the other person. She'd grown adept at tamping down her feelings. But other people...

She'd worry herself sick about Ace's mood distracting him during his work. About him making a mistake and getting hurt.

She headed for the door, skirting Brant on the way and ignoring the fact she still only wore her robe.

"Ace," she called as she ran outside, the cold dew clinging to her bare feet as she headed for her.

He pretended that he didn't hear her, though she knew he did, and got into the truck.

"Damn it, Ace!" she swore, running toward him. She whipped open the passenger door as he started to go. He slammed on the brake with a curse and not so much as an excuse in sight.

"God's sake, Paisley, are you trying to get yourself killed?"

"Would you care?" she asked, pretty sure now that he was pissed at her but having no clue why. She knew he'd care if she got hurt, but putting him on the spot was her main objective—that and getting him to talk. She might have only been here for a day, but his sleeping with her as well as his plans for her pretty much overrode normal time considerations. The relationship was in fast forward, and she was feeling weeks further along with things than she normally would have.

He glared at her, but she climbed in the truck anyway.

"Get out," he said.

"No."

"You really wanna wear that robe for the next seven hours until I come back for lunch."

Not really, but she would...

"Tell me what's wrong, let's talk about it then I'll get out of the truck."

His hands tapped on the steering wheel, and he stared into the distance, his jaw set in a rigid line. His eyes closed, and he licked his bottom lip then blew out an irritated breath.

"Then I wear the robe," she told him. She sat back and crossed her arms over her chest.

"Why did you come here if you weren't...unattached?" he asked suddenly. "And why didn't you say something last night?"

She almost looked around to see who the heck he was talking to, because he couldn't be talking to her. "What?"

"Your man, your boyfriend, your whatever," he prompted.

"Ace, I haven't dated anyone for almost a year."

"I told you how much I value honesty—"

"I'm not lying," she exclaimed. "Wait...wait! But...wait! You're...*jealous* of some person who doesn't exist yet you share me with three other men?"

"I'm not jealous!" He turned those piercing blue eyes on her, and once more, she got the impression he was staring inside her soul. "I'm not jealous," he repeated more calmly. "I'm frustrated. You saw all those cowboys in the restaurant last night. I would be one of them if I didn't have Brant and if I didn't know that somewhere out there is a woman for us. A woman who doesn't already have a man and who'd appreciate being in a ménage with two men who wanted to take care of her."

She looked out the window. He had no idea that he was talking to her. About her. That she wanted to be the center of someone's universe instead of the person who took responsibility for everything. She'd been trying to take care of people's physical and emotional well-beings since she was five.

"I'm not attached to anyone else," she said quietly, thinking she was becoming pretty attached to Ace and Brant after they'd rescued her last night then fucked her six ways this side of Tuesday. If her calculation was right, they'd only gone to sleep a couple hours before the alarm blasted this morning.

"Who's Riv of the cute ass?"

Her head whipped around, and she stared at him, finding he'd turned completely to face her, his leg bent up to partly rest on the seat, his back against the door and his arm draped over the steering wheel.

"I heard you talking this morning when I was coming to see if everything was okay," he confessed.

"Riv is a pain in my ass. Always has been, always will be. *She's* my younger sister. My mom, poor thing, was unfortunate enough to get pregnant—*with twins*—right after I was born. River and Moonbeam are only ten and a half months younger than me."

"Your mother was high on pregnancy hormones when she named them?" He shook his head, pushing that thought away. "I'm...Hell, I'm sorry, Paisley," he said. "Scuse the language. I just heard you arguing, and I thought this Riv was a man and...well, I guess I was some sort of jealous. I guess of the unknown entity." He tipped his head slightly, hiding his eyes in the shadow from his hat. "It's too soon to feel possessive or want to stake a claim, but I at least want to know that the possibility is out there. Someday."

"What if I were to choose Seth and Tai?" she asked, knowing he had to have some thought on the possibility. She wanted to know how far his possessive feelings stretched. He'd said it was too soon, but she knew they were there.

He glanced away for a moment then looked back, his eyes still hidden. "It's a possibility I have to consider. Don't like it, but I can accept it more. But in my head, I brought you here—"

"Like an arranged marriage thing..."

"Well, yeah. That's actually how it was with my parents. She met him right before they married. As foreign as it sounds, it was something they'd arranged. My mom and dad were always very happy. I know it can work—people meeting, uniting *then* falling in love."

She'd heard of such a thing and indeed been intrigued by it. She couldn't lie and say she'd never indulged in any stranger fantasies. Truthfully, it was part of why the night before had been so hot for her—aside from multiple men which could have turned her on by itself.

"And how do Tai and Seth work into that scenario?" she asked.

"It's just sharing."

"And Brant?" she asked, wondering how deep this possessive streak went.

"Everything I have is Brant's, too. I wouldn't dream of it any other way."

"So when you marry?" she prodded.

"I'll never have a traditional marriage. Legally, what I own will be shared with the woman with whom I join, as well as with Brant. The three of us would have a legal bond, rights through waivers and contracts, but not civilly through state recognized marriage. We have a lawyer in town who specializes in such things."

Despite everything she'd learned over the past twenty-four hours, Paisley suddenly felt as if she'd fallen into the proverbial rabbit hole and ended up in an alternate universe.

"And you want me to be with you. And Brant. And only sometimes them?" she murmured.

"Pretty much."

"It's a lot to absorb." And that was an understatement. She felt as if she'd only understood half the equation until now. As if she'd been in a dim room and now the lights were turned on high.

"I know."

"And you weren't exactly honest with me," she accused.

"I know. Shoot, darlin', I'm sorry for that, too."

She frowned as she scanned the brightening horizon. "I need to go clean up the kitchen and get ready for the day then try to figure out the office. You should know though that I'll be fantasizing that we're having make-up sex, not doing paperwork and whatever you're doing."

There wasn't an appropriate place to mention my high sex drive in that bio I sent you. Just so you know." She grinned and opened the truck door, but she only made it halfway from the vehicle because Ace grabbed the back of her robe.

"Don't you even think about leaving this cab without giving me a kiss goodbye, city girl." He hauled her to him, pulling on the back of the garment. She grabbed the belt to hold it closed, though the entire front managed to gape.

Ace turned her in his arms, cradling her between his long legs as she half-lay across his chest. One hand grasped the back of her head, angling her into his kiss. The other snaked up to unapologetically grasp her breast. As his tongue pushed inside her mouth, his callused fingers rolled her nipple.

Paisley moaned into him. Her pussy flooded with need once more. Surely there was enough time for one quickie...

Ace pulled his mouth free with a groan. "Gotta go," he muttered. "Make sure lunch is portable. That sex will keep us busy when we should be eatin'."

"Tyrant," she teased, wondering how she'd make it until then. Even with an office full of work to do, her mind would be on an afternoon encounter with him and Brant.

"That's Mr. Hun to you, ma'am." He swatted her rear. "Now, get going. I don't want to be late for my afternoon appointment."

Chapter Six

Make up sex with Ace had been mind-blowing. Of course, Brant had been there as well. Between the two of them, she'd barely been able to go back to work that afternoon because of the sexual lethargy from the strenuous activities. And every night for a week, she'd had either two or four of the men in her bed before they all settled in for the evening. It still niggled at her that she was sleeping with four men at once, with nary a commitment to any of them. Did that make her a loose woman? Some sort of deviant? She enjoyed every moment of the time with them, whether on the kitchen table with Seth and Tai taking turned licking her to orgasm, or in the shower sandwiched between Brant and Ace as they made her squeaky clean and steaming hot, or on hands and knees taking them all in the bedroom.

Today, she was thinking of asking for something new. For some reason, she was so overwrought with arousal she just wanted to fuck. No slow foreplay. She wanted down and dirty, "take me, take me hard, take me now" sex.

Paisley sighed and rested her chin on her palm as she stared at the computer screen in front of her, her thoughts more on the five-some last night than on her professional tasks. It had taken her nearly a week, but she'd finally organized the mess in both her office and Ace's—even with mounds and mound of sex. There was still plenty of time for her job. All the cowboys worked hard. They might play on the lunch break they took every day, but there was too much to do to let lust consume all things.

For her, there were literally piles of documentation to enter into the various databases. This morning had been another thrilling round of recording blood tests, semen counts and pregnancy results for the stock. She'd had to order vitamins that would be mixed with the herd's hay come November. It had been surprising to learn she'd need to order syringes and medications to administer over the winter months.

Brant had explained to her that Ace did the main share of “doctoring” for the cattle. A great deal of the time, it wasn’t possible or financially sensible to have a veterinarian come out for every little thing. As soon as calving season hit in February, Ace would be overseeing births and praying that the heifers and cows went during the day rather than in the middle of the night. Brant had veered into bull birth weights, the theory of evening feedings and body condition scores—and Paisley had wondered if she’d ever *get* ranching. In the context of work to be done in the office, she was starting to understand things, but as far as out there on the forty-five miles of land...not a prayer.

But at least she could help with this.

By one, her brain was full of staggering numbers, from the amount of feed, water and medicine needed to keep a herd of twelve hundred head, plus the taxes paid on the land, the market value of the stock and the price the ranch hoped to bring in at market later this month.

Looking for something less technical, to give her cognitive skills a break, she turned to sorting through a mass of environmental correspondence. Sorting by date, she concluded that responses were past due and the ranch was looking at a fine for allegedly releasing sediment into one of the waterways that passed through the Laurel Ridge. Yet, there were official reports mixed in with the environmental quality letters that showed this wasn’t true. These would have to be discussed with either Ace or Brant ASAP when they came in from their chores.

Which was soon! She needed to get moving.

Quickly, she headed into the kitchen to make sandwiches and bag up four lunches—massive amounts of food for four men who expended *massive* amounts of energy.

“Hey,” Ace called, walking through to his office. He’d been true to his promise and had remained all business during office hours unless he was making a hasty off-handed remark regarding that evening or plans for the lunch hour.

“Hey, yourself,” she replied, following then leaning against his doorjamb. He looked tired, but damn sexy as he looked at the pile of environmental stuff she’d left on his desk for review. “When did you get in?”

“Few minutes ago. I told Seth and Tai to grab their lunches from the fridge. Brant is upstairs.”

“Just us three?”

His eyes burned into her as he looked up, that possessiveness a heady sensation as he nearly grabbed and held her with that gaze.

“Just the three of us,” he replied. Then he blinked, breaking the tension. “Okay?”

Paisley nodded, her whole insides winding tight at what was to come. Offhand, she wondered if Seth and Tai had any idea what they were missing. They were fun, and she’d saw them as men who could be good friends, but after the conversations she’d had with them, she didn’t see herself developing a romantic bond with them. Still, she didn’t want them to be hurt. “Do, um, do they know?”

“Yeah. They’re fine. No worries, darlin’.” He flipped through the sheaf of papers, pulled one out then held it toward her. “Can you go online and download the form listed on this letter? We need to get someone out here to deal with this. I’m not paying eighty-two thousand for an error that’s not even mine.”

“Sure. Don’t blame you,” she told him. Taking it, she headed back into her office and sat down. Ace was all business now, which was how it should be—even if she wanted to break that sex on the desk rule.

With a quiet sigh, she clicked the icon for the internet. There was a satellite delay way out here in the country, and she absently stared at the laminated map of the ranch that was tacked to the wall. Dry-erase pen marked where the cattle were grazing and where each cowboy was working at any given time.

Each man had a shortwave radio. She had one too. Brant had showed her how to use it and to notate on the board where people were. It was a security precaution, he’d told her. 28,000 acres was a big territory to search for a missing person. Today, everyone was working on inspecting and repairing fencing—a major project that had to be done before the snow flew.

“What are you doing?” Ace asked, just as the website she wanted came up.

“Looking up that form.”

He shook his head. “Later. You have a two o’clock lunch appointment.”

She swiveled in her chair. “Oh really, Mr. Graham?”

“Really. You better move it, I promised no sex in this office, and I intend to keep that promise. At least for a while.”

* * * *

Brant smiled as he heard Ace and Paisley racing up the stairs. He loved the sound of his two lovers having fun. Paisley was still getting her feet under her here at the Laurel Ridge, but he sensed she was getting more and more comfortable. He also sensed she didn’t quite trust herself yet. Everything was new. While she was getting more relaxed in the office and in the bedroom,

she rarely ventured past what would be considered the yard of the ranch house—unless she drove into town for supplies or to see Leena.

“Brant!” Paisley exclaimed as she burst into her bedroom. She rushed to him, bowling him backward onto the bed. She straddled his hips. “Ace just promised to fuck me until I scream. He uses such bad language when he’s horny.”

“Damn straight,” Ace growled. “Why are you both still dressed?”

“Busy, love.” Brant kissed her, rolling her beneath him on the mattress. “I’ve been thinking about you all day.”

“Same here,” she answered against his mouth. “I’m so wet with wanting that big cock in me again.”

“It can be arranged. Maybe then I won’t be so distracted while I’m working.”

She pulled back, worry in her eyes. “You’re being careful, aren’t you?”

“Always, honey. Don’t worry. We’re all very careful while we’re out there,” he told her as Ace climbed on the bed beside them and started kissing his ear. Ace’s hand splayed on Brant’s back, sliding down to his rear, his fingertips going into Brant’s waistband.

“Good. I couldn’t bear it if one of you got hurt because you were distracted on my account,” Paisley said.

Brant smoothed the hair away from her face and looked into her eyes. She and Ace had formed a connection on day one, but the bond between her and Brant was growing by the day. He wasn’t jealous of Ace. It just surprised him how different it was between them all. She and Ace had a tense, nearly instant lust. With Brant, it was easier and more laid back. Their relationship wasn’t any less than the one she had with Ace. Just different. He supposed it made sense, given different personalities.

“So tell me what you want me to do with this big, *safe* cock,” he rasped. He was so hard for her, he didn’t know if he’d make it through foreplay without going off. One touch of her mouth, and it might be over this afternoon.

“I don’t think it’s particularly safe,” she quipped. “But what I want—”

“We heard there was a party up here,” Seth called from the door.

Brant felt a slant of irritation go through him, and Ace groaned quietly, but Paisley grinned and held out a hand to the two cowboys who’d just arrived.

“Just in time,” she laughed. “I was about to tell Brant and Ace exactly what I want this afternoon.”

Brant kissed the soft skin of her chin, the corner of her mouth, her temple, just in front of her ear. "What's that, honey?" he asked.

"I want..." Her lips pressed together, and she suddenly blushed. "Um...I kinda want to be tied up—my hands—and be blindfolded. Then I just want all of you to fuck me. Just, um, fast and hard. One after the other, but one at a time. No playing around today. I'm too...needy."

"Hot," Tai murmured.

"I think it can be arranged," Brant replied. He and Ace stood. All four of the men started stripping off their clothes as Paisley shimmied out of hers. She curled her legs beneath her, shyness and excitement in her eyes as she watched them, the tips of her slightly upturned breasts beaded into tight knots. Her lips parted a little, her breathing shallow, as she watched him and Ace pull their belts from their jeans. Seth and Tai tossed the pillows from the bed then yanked the top sheet and comforter from beneath her to leave her on the plain white bottom sheet.

"Lay in the middle of the bed with your arms stretched toward the posts," Ace ordered. Brant wrapped his belt around his hands as he went to Paisley's right side. He pushed the leather through the buckle then slipped her wrist through the loop. After pulling it firmly, he drew the free end around the bedpost and firmly knotted it. Ace did the same.

Brant's cocked jerked at the sight of Paisley bound there for their entertainment—and he sensed from her words that was exactly what she had in mind. A raunchy coupling, her body at their mercy, her cunt their plaything. Going to his pants, he pulled out the blue bandanna he'd grabbed this morning in case it got warm. He hadn't needed it, but now, it would be handy.

He took a moment to look down into her excited green eyes. "You're sure," he asked.

Her fingers clenched on the leather straps that held her. "Yes. Please, yes. I can't believe how turned on it makes me."

Brant grinned. Him either.

A ripple slammed through Paisley as darkness closed over her. The men were silent as they stood there. Someone roughly opened her legs and planted her feet on the mattress. Then more silence. She couldn't feel the cowboys, didn't know where they were or what they were doing, couldn't *hear* them as hard as she strained.

Her fingers clenched even tighter on her bonds as her thighs quivered. Her pussy wept for the men, and she wondered if they could see it glistening in the afternoon light that streamed through the bedroom windows. Her breasts tingled with the imagined sensation of being ogled, of

the fantasy of the men staring at her body, their eyes caressing her nakedness, while they stroked their thick cocks.

Were they deciding who'd go first? Who'd fill her and make her scream?

Her breath drew in sharply as the first man surged between her thighs. He didn't pause as he grasped her hips and roughly drew her up to his cock. He held her up, helpless, as he pumped deep inside her sodden folds.

The metal from the belt tightened against her wrists as she used the leather straps as leverage to work against the faceless man who fucked her hard, his guttural groans doing nothing to give away his identity.

She cried out as she spasmed, growing wetter and wetter. Suddenly, he was gone—before he'd come!—and another took his place. He grunted as her folds closed around him. Her orgasm was already fisting her cunt as he pushed inside her tight passage. Whimpering gasps were yanked from her as he drove deep, the friction shoving her deeper into release. She felt it dampening her curls and leaking to her inner thighs.

And he was gone. Another dove in. She screamed as he reached up and pinched her nipple as he thrust inside her. Her legs quaked, but she was held up, at his mercy, at all their mercies...just as she'd begged for. And none of them had come yet. This cowboy pinched her nipple again, twisting it just as she liked.

He left her as she was about to come. She lay panting for a moment. Three. Hard and fast. It wasn't until the last man moved between her legs and slowly stroked his fingers over her slit that she realized there was more to come. He spread her folds while her hips remained on the mattress. Leaning over her, his breath hot on her neck, he speared his wide cock into her.

His strokes were slow, but hard and deep, as he took her, maintaining the silence they'd each practiced. He kissed the slope of her breast, working his way to her nipple. Once there, he gently bit the tip, the same one that had been warmed with pinching and twisting.

She jerked against his hips, overwhelmed by how this scene sent her over the edge. How acting out her fantasy of being bound and having them rutting over her, made her come and come. The muscles in her arms strained, burning with the force of the way she mindlessly fought the bindings to reach for each man, somehow needing even more than they were giving her.

The last man left her, just as he struck her hot spot and her juices burst from her. Her head swung back and forth on the bed as they all fucked her again, each withholding their own release as they made her climax over and over. Perspiration coated her as her muscles clenched

and spasmed, her cries nearly continuous as they kept her at the razor's edge, pushing her right back whenever she started to come down.

She couldn't keep track of how many times they'd taken her, how many times she'd orgasmed. When she heard the first grunt of release from the man driving into her channel and grasping her thighs in a bruising grip, she cried out in relief.

Her pleasure was perfect, but she wanted theirs as well.

He fell to her side, the bed shaking from his breathing, but she soon was focused only on the guy who'd taken his place. Their bodies slapped together. His fingers dug into her. He was close. So close. She could hear it in his gasps and feel it in the way he jerked. She fell over the edge again a moment before he came. He was gone before she recovered, the next man keeping her orgasm going. Her whole body shuddered out of control, flying into a near-terrifying chasm of oblivion. The bliss was so deep she barely heard him as he cried out raggedly.

But, oh, she felt it when the last man pistoned into her. Fingers, hands and mouths were all over her then. Someone pinched her clit. Somewhere, she heard a muffled curse. Then finally, the heat of the final release, that last cowboy's cum spurting into his condom.

They stroked her down from her climaxes, gentling her back into the land of reality like a spooked horse. She shook just as hard.

The belts were released, but the men left the blindfold in place and didn't move her from where she lay boneless in the center of the bed. She barely heard the bedroom door quietly close behind them.

* * * *

When Paisley finally roused enough energy to clean up then go downstairs, everyone but Ace had left. He gave her a half grin coupled with a pleased, sensual look that would have gotten her going again if she weren't sexually exhausted.

"I was thinking maybe you'd like to come out with me this afternoon. Get a glimpse of things."

"But..." She let a gesture toward her office be the completion of her sentence.

"It waited until you got here; it'll wait an afternoon," he said. "You have things wrangled right into control anyway. I don't think it'll all go to hell if you take off a few hours. 'Sides, I don't have anything much planned. Just more fences until dinner."

"I think I might like that," she decided.

He eyed her work clothes. She dressed down for the ranch but she still wore dress pants, a blouse and Louis Vuitton flats. "You'll need to wear something more appropriate, city girl. Jeans. A shirt you can get dirty. Those fancy-schmancy boots you ain't broke in yet."

She grinned. The boots she'd gotten, while fancy and kind of pretty, were a cross between a traditional cowboy boot in the upper section and a work boot in the sole. She'd be just fine.

"I'll be right back, cowboy." In nothing flat, she'd raced upstairs, put on a pair of old jeans, a pink and black flannel shirt with a white T-shirt underneath and her new boots.

Ace bit back a snort when she came down the stairs, but she heard it.

"Your boots have pink stones on them."

"Yeah," she challenged, with a grin and her hands on her hips. "Gonna make something of it?"

"No, ma'am," he laughed. "But you can betcha, you're so sexy in that get-up, I want to take you right back up to bed."

"It's the boots," she told him. "You just wanna have sex while I have on my sexy boots."

He raised a brow. "Well, I'm not gonna lie. The thought of them crossed behind my back while I ride you is a right big turn-on."

"Something to consider for my next fantasy," she replied. "Maybe I can think up something with a saddle. Hmm... Well, in the meanwhile, we better go, huh? Or the other guys are going to think you're shirking your duties."

"I'm the boss. It's my prerogative."

"Hmm... Well, I want to see some cows."

He shook his head and headed for the door. "You're gonna keep me and Brant on our toes, aren't you?"

"Oh no," she teased him. "I like Brant."

Chapter Seven

Ace turned serious once they were in the truck. "I need to talk to you about something," he said as he headed down a two track to the acreage at the back of his land. "It's something really important to Brant and me, and something Seth and Tai think I should talk to you about, too."

Her brow furrowed as she looked at him, concern etched across her face. His insides knotted a bit as he considered what he had to say. What if she objected? Or if she wanted things to go a different way?

"What is it?" she asked.

"Thing is..." he started. "Life in Daly might be more laid back than in the city—"

"Not that I've noticed," she interrupted. "There are less people, but you guys are on the go practically twenty-four-seven."

He grinned. "You stop moving an' you die," he said. "So...life is *different* here. But, well, thing is relationships move a lot faster than they might in other places."

She nodded. "Being together all the time, not to mention the abundance of sex, will do that to people, I'd think."

"Yeah...it does. Courting time in Daly is short, to say the least. And well, Seth and Tai are—"

He stopped at her gasp. When he glanced over, her eyes had gone wide. Surprise and something that bordered on hurt filled her features. She shook her head, as if denying his words, and his heart lurched in his chest.

He parked the truck, wanting to give her his full attention.

"Darlin', what's wrong? I thought... Well, I thought you were getting to really like Brant and me."

"Yeah, I am," she told them. "Why are you...I...I thought they were only temporary at the ranch. That when they went, I'd be staying and it would be...us."

Ace stared at her, trying to decipher what she was saying and where this conversation had taken a wrong turn. His heart started thumping in regular rhythm once more as he realized she'd misread what he'd started to say.

"Paisley, sweetness," he started, "I think you didn't understand where I was going. Brant and I, well, we want you to stay with us. We want you to be ours, and to understand that we don't want you to go with Seth and Tai when they leave. The time together has been short, but we've been able to get to know each other. If you can live with designer boots more often than designer shoes, we want you with us always. If that's what you want."

Tears filled her eyes as she stared at him, and his heart lurched again. Then she launched herself across the seat and wrapped her arms around his neck, kissing his face wherever her lips landed. He captured her mouth and kissed her deeply, sealing the deal in the best way possible.

"I know you like Brant, but I hope you like me just a little," he said as she rested against his chest, her head on his shoulder a few moments later.

He felt her face shift and suspected she was smiling. "Not at all," she answered.

"Maybe I'll start calling you city brat," he grated, giving her rear a swat.

"Oh sure, Mr. Hun. Get the girl then start abusing her." She picked up his radio and hit the buttons for Brant.

"Yeah," he answered, likely thinking it was Ace.

"Yes," she said. "Definitely, yes."

Brant's "yahoo" filled the truck, and Ace couldn't help but grin at what a great day it had turned out to be.

* * * *

She was staying with Ace and Brant. Laurel Ridge would be her home—and more than just because of her job. Paisley could barely stop grinning. When Ace pulled up to the back line, she jumped out of the truck, ready to learn what he did on a day to day basis. This would be barely a scrape in the top of the bucket, but it was a start—she didn't want to know *everything* any way. Birthing a calf just sounded, well, gross.

Brant handed her a pair of work gloves as he came around the vehicle. "You better wear these or your hands will get ripped to hell, 'scuse the language." He walked toward the thing he was calling a fence—a structure quite different from the post and beam barrier she'd been

picturing. There were crossed posts every couple yards. Three beams formed the side closest to them and a single beam ran along the back. Barbed wire stretched along the length.

"This here is a jack fence," he told her. "We use this because the ground is so rocky and uneven here. Mostly, I'm checking for rotted wood and downed wire."

"What do you want me to do?" she asked, eying the structure and thinking this was way out of her skill set.

"To start, look for loose or down wire. It should be taut. Push against the wood in each section with your boot or your hands to see if it's solid. I have to stretch new wire for this first section. Oh and come here. There's something else."

"What's that?" she asked, going back to him and expecting him to give her some sort of tool or something.

He cupped her chin and kissed her, sending a thrill to her well-protected toes as the cool afternoon air swept around them, the wide open space making her feel one with the land and truly as if she belonged here in Daly, Wyoming.

"Okay, now we're set," he said against her lips.

They worked for two hours, her testing and him fixing. He had more work than she did, and he showed her how to stretch wire, though he didn't let her do it. She did get to drive the galvanized staples into the wood and was thankful for her work gloves that kept her hands from getting eaten up by the barbs, especially when she saw one piece gash Ace's arm as he was pulling the line across. Beads of blood formed on that bit of skin, but he ignored it as he forged ahead.

As the autumn sun started to dip low in the sky, Ace called a halt. It would take an hour and a half to drive back to the house and he wanted to go past and check on a few of the heifers on the way. They would be moved closer to the house in the next month or so, but right now, they were grazing in the pasture beside the one where they'd been working.

No sooner had they entered the area than Ace swore, slamming the truck into park. One of the animals had gotten stuck in the fence and was struggling to get loose.

"She must have seen something she wanted on the other side," Ace said ruefully, shaking his head. "I've got to get her free and get Brant to come out here and help me get her closer to the house. Those cuts will need to be tended."

He grabbed tools and headed for the heifer. Paisley followed, not knowing how she'd help but wanting to be there if he needed her.

"Stay back," he ordered her as he got closer.

“Okay,” she replied. She didn’t want to get that close to the big beast anyhow.

“It’s okay, sweetheart,” he said to the animal. She saw him pull out a pair of cutters. He dropped the rest of his tools.

The sound startled the already skittish animal. She bellowed, thrashing against the fencing to get free. Her hooves came up as she writhed and belted Ace in the center of his chest. Before he could roll free, they came down again, hitting his side and his right arm.

In horror, Paisley watched the cow seem to tromp over him as he struggled to get clear. His agonized cry cut through her, and she hurried to help him.

“Stay back,” he rasped, as the cow hit him again. Paisley’s nails dug into her hands as she tried to stop herself and tried to figure out how to get to him.

After what seemed hours, but was only moments, he’d half-crawled-half-rolled far enough from the beast to be safe. She dashed to his side and dropped to her knees.

His face was ashen, and she was afraid to touch him, knowing he was hurt badly. God, he had to be okay.

“Get me to the truck,” he whispered, the sound barely audible. Blood was beginning to stain his shirt on his arm and belly. Tears streamed down her face as she tried to help him up. He couldn’t get to his feet. He half-crawled, and she half-dragged him to the truck. Each groan punched through her, and she knew for every one he couldn’t keep in, ten more were trapped inside. All she could think was if she didn’t get help—or get him to help—he’d die. She knew he was hurt badly, but she couldn’t even guess how badly.

He collapsed onto the backseat with another groan. His breathing was ragged and harsh as he obviously tried to collect himself and will away the pain.

Paisley grabbed the radio from the front seat. “Brant,” she screamed.

“Paisley, what—” came his shocked reply.

“A cow. It kicked Ace. Trampled on him. He’s hurt. Bad. I’m not even sure how to get back.”

“We’ve got to get the heifer free,” Ace said weakly from the backseat.

“The heifer’s still stuck,” she told Brant. She got out of the truck and headed for the wire cutters that had flown several feet from where Ace had fallen. “I don’t know how to get back.”

“Take the road that runs along the pasture. Head away from the sun. My uncle has a helicopter. We’ll find you then transport Ace to Campbell County Memorial.”

“Okay,” she sniffled.

"We've got to get the heifer free," Ace repeated, his voice coming through the open door as he tried to sit up.

"Stay there!" she ordered. She knew he wouldn't settle as long as he knew the animal was in danger. He'd fret as long as that freaking beast was stuck. "I'll get the damn cow free," she said. "A smarter way. Stay still!"

"No!" Ace rasped in disapproval. "Paisley, don't—"

Shoving the wire cutters in her pocket she headed for the fence, ignoring Ace's protests. It wasn't as if he could stop her right now. He couldn't even get off the seat.

The barbed wire ripped her jeans as she climbed the rails. Thankfully, she still wore the gloves Ace had given her. Quickly, she jumped to the other side of the fence.

"It's okay, you damned ferocious beast," she said in a low, calm voice as she approached the cow head on. Its eyes were wide, and it mooed balefully at her. Paisley wondered if these animals bit, but figured as tangled as it was it wasn't likely to be able to get to her. Coming at it from the front and side, she pulled the cutters from her pocket. Carefully, she slipped the nose of the tool between the wire and the animal then cut. Moving to another spot, she snipped again. Slowly—too slowly for her taste—she lopped away the length that had twisted around the beast's neck. As soon as Paisley pulled back the last bit of metal, the heifer struggled free and took off toward the herd where it grazed in the other half of the pasture.

Awkwardly, Paisley climbed back over the fence, further scraping her arms and legs. She stumble-ran to the truck.

Ace was deathly still, and her breath strangled in her throat. *Please just let him be passed out*, she begged. She was practically sobbing by the time he suddenly let out a shuddery exhalation. Hesitant relief worked through her.

"Don't you die on me," she ground out, getting behind the wheel, her voice far tougher than the rest of her. Her body shook almost out of control.

"Been...hurt..." He took a shaky inhalation. "Worse. Way worse."

Worse? Holy Pete! Could she handle that? Life with ranchers. Dangerous life with ranchers, where doing something as innocent as helping an animal could result in debilitating injury?

"Brant's bringing a helicopter," she chattered, tearing down the road in the direction Brant had told her to go. "They're taking you to the hospital."

When Ace didn't answer, she slowed the truck and glanced back at him. His eyes were squeezed shut, his teeth gritted as they bounced along the path. He was obviously fighting not to make a sound. Men.

She turned back to the two-track, grimacing at every bump and dip on the way. After what seemed forever, she heard the *whup-whup* of the copter's blades. The grass flattened as the transport landed in the field a bit ahead of her. Brant and another man jumped out and ran toward her.

Relieved that help was here, Paisley brought the truck to a halt several yards away and climbed out. Her panic started to settle in, gripping her in a vise as she tried to stay calm. Ace required help, and no one needed a wailing woman on their hands. She grabbed the door as her whole body shuddered.

Brant and the man she didn't recognize carefully lifted Ace from the backseat.

"Man, what did you do?" Brant asked. She heard the tremor in his voice and knew he wasn't as calm as he was trying to come off.

"Danced with a heifer," Ace replied. "Damn bitch tried to lead." His glassy eyes shifted toward Paisley. "Scuse the language."

She shook her head. "You can say whatever you want, as long as you're talking," she told him.

"Okay," he replied. A groan burst from him as the men had to shift him in their grip. "Then..." He took a few raspy breaths. "Marry me."

"Ace..." she said. He was delirious. In awful pain.

The men lifted him into the helicopter, saving her from answering. A moment later, Brant came back to her. "Take the truck back to the house, honey," he told her. "Just go that way," he told her, pointing. "It should take you about a half hour. If you feel like you're lost, call Tai on the radio. He'll come find you. I'll be back as soon as can."

And then he was gone, and the craft was lifting into the air, leaving her alone with her panic and the fear that a man she loved was going to die from doing his job—just like her father had.

* * * *

Dark had fallen before Paisley fought past her panic and drove back to the ranch house. Seth ran out to meet her. He opened the truck door as she stopped and pulled her out, hugging her tight.

"I was about to come after you," he said.

"I'm okay," she told him. She wasn't. She was just functioning. Her entire being seemed wrapped in gauze. Muzzy. Almost as if she were outside herself.

Tai came up on her other side as she walked toward the house. She hadn't stopped shaking since Ace had been kicked. She lurched as Tai touched her arm.

"Baby?" he said. "Ace is gonna be okay. They've probably already gotten him to the hospital."

She nodded, but it was more of a shudder than anything.

"Oh, God, I think she's in shock," Seth murmured.

"I'm fine," she insisted. "Fine. I'm fine."

She needed to clean the blood off herself. Get into some other clothes. Go to Gillette.

"What's going on?" a voice said from the shadows of the porch.

"River?" Paisley exclaimed.

Her sister stepped into the light cast by one of the posts near the driveway.

"What are you doing here?" Paisley demanded.

"I wanted to see where you're staying." She looked at Tai. "Is that your boyfriend?"

Paisley looked at him. How would she—could she—describe what he was to her.

"No," Tai answered before she said anything.

"Is he then?" River asked.

"No," Seth said. "Who's this?" he asked Paisley.

"My younger sister."

"Barely younger," River snapped.

"Riv, I don't need a pain in the ass right now," Paisley told her. "I have to get cleaned up and get to the hospital."

"To see your...boyfriend?"

"Fiancé," Paisley corrected. "But yeah."

At least, he would be—and Brant would be—when she got to them. As long as Ace had really meant it. After the talk this afternoon, she was pretty sure he had.

She went into the house, with River on her heels. Seth and Tai followed, carrying River's suitcases. Paisley gave them a disparaging look. So much for her instruction not to come here. River always did her own thing—and generally near Paisley. Paisley only hoped her sister was up

for the attentions she was sure to get when the male citizens of Daly learned she was in town and unattached.

"I'm going upstairs to shower and change." She looked at the guys. "Take care of her. And not the way you take care of me."

Seth chuckled, and River asked, "Why not?"

No one answered her as she looked around the circle. Shaking her head, Paisley headed for the stairs. She stopped short then turned back and hugged her sister.

"I love you, Riv. Even though I told you not to come, I'm glad to see you. I'll explain everything later."

With that, she headed upstairs. Tai followed her.

"Ace talked to you?" he asked.

"About me being with them and not you guys? Yeah. Are you and Seth all cool with that?"

He nodded, his hands in his pockets and his head slightly down as they walked. "We knew from the start it would be this way. It's why they slept with you and we went home to our trailer. And...Seth and me? As much as we want to have a woman in our life someday, we're not ready. Taking over my dad's ranch, setting up our own household, that'll take a bit. We don't want to bring in a woman until we're settled." His fingers slipped over her cheek at her bedroom door. "We like you a lot, and we love spending time with you."

"But?"

"The boundary's set now," he said. "It's always been there, but now it's visible, you know?"

She nodded. All along something had kept her from being too emotionally close to the younger two cowboys. Apparently, they'd all sensed it.

"Now that it's there, Seth and I can't be with you—at least not without Brant and Ace's permission." He grinned. "I'll like having you as a cousin. And hey, don't worry about your sister. We've been sleeping with you. We're not really into the familial thing."

Paisley laughed. "Thanks. She's in for a real surprise from Daly. If you can keep her on the ranch while I'm away, I'd appreciate it. I don't want her getting the Daly Way culture shock until I'm back."

He leaned in and kissed her on the cheek. "Consider it done. And Paisley..." he said as she turned to go inside her room.

She looked back at him.

"Don't worry about Ace. He'll be fine. He's too cussed stubborn not to be."

She gave him a wan grin. She hoped he was right.

* * * *

Brant was sitting in the emergency waiting room when Paisley finally got to the hospital. His elbows rested on his knees, and his head was propped in his hands.

"Brant," Paisley said quietly as she took the seat beside his. He turned silently and pulled her into his arms, pressing his face into her neck. She rubbed his back, feeling the same worry in him that she'd experienced earlier. Everyone had tried to talk her out of her concern, but this was proof of what she'd known. Ace was in bad shape.

"I don't really know anything about him," Brant said. It wasn't that the hospital wouldn't tell him, Paisley suspected. She knew he had paperwork that showed him as Ace's legal advocate in a situation such as this. It gave him the right to make decisions and to have access to Ace. "They were taking him to surgery," he told her. "His arm's broken, so are a couple of his ribs. They punctured a lung. The worst is he's got internal abdominal bleeding."

She pressed her lips together and squeezed her eyes shut as she sought to control her emotions. "He'll be okay," she said quietly against the side of his head.

Brant pulled back and looked at her. "He's gonna live, honey. I know you're scared 'cause of what happened with your dad, but this is a different thing. They'll patch him up and send him home to make all our lives difficult for a few weeks. By the time the snow flies, he'll be right as rain."

"I...Brant, I don't know if I can take it. Knowing you guys can get hurt out there—"

"Honey, you stop right there. If we were men who lived and worked in the city, we'd have just as much risk of getting hurt. We're trained to do this job. Ace...well, he was stupid to go at that heifer the way he did. He told me he thought she was too stuck to have that range of motion. And you're tough. You got that animal free—he told us on the way here—and you got Ace into the truck and you managed to get halfway back to the ranch before we spotted you. You proved you have the steel to be our woman, honey. Not that we ever had a doubt."

"Mr. Brant Cauldwell?" a nurse called.

Brant squeezed Paisley's hand. "Let's go see to our man."

* * * *

Ace looked like hell, but at least, he was breathing better. Pain meds, Paisley decided. She rested her head on the edge of the bed and held his hand while she waited for him to wake. He'd

roused on and off through the night, but the anesthesia from the surgery had kept him pretty out of things. She wasn't even sure he knew she was there.

Brant had held her for a long time last night, but he'd had to leave in the wee hours of the morning to get back to the ranch. They were down one man and they couldn't afford for him not to work the next day. His main objective was to find the heifer that had injured Ace and to get her patched up. Paisley hadn't realized it, but the animal was pregnant which had made her extra skittish—and extra valuable to the ranch.

"Hey, darlin'," Ace said weakly. He patted her hair, his voice and the acknowledgement of her presence heaven to her ears.

She turned her head and kissed his palm. "How're you feeling? Do you want me to go get the nurse?"

"I kinda feel like I got run over by a heifer," he said. "And no, no nurse. I'm okay right now. I'm glad you're here, city girl."

"I'm glad you're going to be okay," she replied.

"I'd be more okay if you answered my question," he told her.

"You didn't—"

"From yesterday."

Oh, the marriage question. "I don't understand," she confessed. "Yesterday, I thought you were delirious or something. But, even if you weren't, what about Brant? I thought this was a you, me and him thing. I love you both. I can't choose one over the other."

Ace smiled. "I love you, too." He touched her cheek, his fingers light and dry against her skin. "I'm not asking you to choose. I'm asking you for the both of us. A threesome marriage. The three of us, happily ever after."

Relief and joy seeped through her. The three of them. Happily ever after.

She stood so she could lean over the bed. Her fingers slipped into his hair as she brushed her lips over his. "But I don't like you."

"Mmm...perfect," he replied. "I love you, city brat."

"I love you, too, Mr. Hun."

Epilogue

The alarm went off in what seemed the middle of the night, and Paisley stole the pillows on either side of her to pull over her head.

“Hey!” Brant and Ace both exclaimed, as their heads plopped onto the mattress.

“The honeymoon’s over,” she groaned. “You’ve gotta get up.”

Ace’s hand slid over her hip. “But Mrs. Graham, I am up.”

“So am I,” Brant growled. His erection bumped her side, prodding her to awareness as her body began to heat.

Ace leaned over her and kissed Brant. “And good morning to you, Mr. Graham.”

Paisley grinned, loving that the three of them had the same last name. She and Brant had both had their surnames legally changes right before the joining ceremony in front of their families and the people from town.

Her family, after some shock, had accepted Paisley’s union with two men. In fact, River and Moonbeam had both announced they were moving to Daly. Permanently. River already had a job working at the new bed and breakfast, while Moonbeam would be working with the newly formed Daly Tourist Association. Paisley had no doubt that, soon, they’d both have more male attention than they could handle.

Like she had...

She slid her hands over her men’s torsos, loving them and loving that she could touch them whenever she wanted. Ace loved it, too. As soon as she’d agreed to be their wife, and as soon as he’d been physically able, that no sex in the office rule had gone right out the window. At least once a week, she found herself bent over the desk and taking his...dictation. Brant didn’t mind Ace’s special time with her. He liked to take her on drives once a week, find a place to park and repeat their first time together with her riding him in the front seat of the truck.

Paisley was pretty sure she was getting more sex than any other married woman in the world. And today, it was her six-month anniversary of coming to them. She had something special planned.

"Seth and Tai came over this morning," she told her guys. "They're helping Steve and Brian feed the stock so you two can stay here with me. All morning. In bed."

Ace looked concerned. "Are you okay?"

She sighed. "I arrange a morning off work for you, and you think something's wrong. Everything's fine. I wanted to celebrate being with you six months. And the fact that come December there will be four Grahams, not three."

Both men stared at her. Brant jumped out of bed. "Yes!" he exclaimed. "Yes, yes, yes!"

Ace kissed her. "I love you, baby."

"I love you, too. Brant." She grabbed his arm and yanked him down. "I love you."

It pleased her that both of them were thrilled by her revelation, and neither seemed to care which of them had fathered the child. It could be either of them since they'd both stopped wearing condoms three months ago. They all wanted children, and they didn't want to wait.

Brant's mouth covered hers. She hummed as arousal had her shifting beneath him and beneath Ace's hands. His fingers traveled down to her pussy where he slid his fingers over her folds, finding her wet for them.

"We really have all morning?" Ace asked.

"Until noon."

"Fantastic," Brant decided. He smiled and trailed a finger between her breasts. It swirled around one mound, circling to her nipple where he lightly pinched the tip. "I saw you got a new pair of shoes in the mail yesterday."

"Jimmy Choo's."

"Chews what?" Ace teased. "Gum?"

"Laugh all you want," she told him with a poke. "They're black, four and a half inch patent leather."

He snorted. "And where are you going to wear those?"

"On Brant, when I ride him. He likes my shoes."

"Oh God," Brant groaned. "This morning. Please."

"I don't know if you should wear something that tall with the baby and all..." Ace protested.

“Baby’s not scared of heights, Ace. Don’t worry. Brant will keep me safe.” She grinned and got out of bed, knowing Ace would insist on the shoes, too. He seemed rather taken with them poking his ass while she had her legs crossed behind his back.

Disappearing into the closet, she pulled out the sheer black nylons she’d saved for this morning and put them on with a new black silk garter belt. She slipped on the new shoes, feeling ultra feminine in the sky-high heels. Finally, she pulled on a black demi bra that left her breasts mostly bare—which was as it should be since she wasn’t bothering to cover her pussy.

“Sweet heaven,” Ace whispered as she came out.

“Aren’t you glad we gave her that shoe budget?” Brant asked.

“Damn straight...” Ace hurried from the bed and drew her to the end where he guided her into a bent position, her hands braced on the end. As Brant circled behind her, Ace knelt. She closed her eyes as he parted her folds and dipped his tongue along her crease, gathering her cream and teasing her clit. Brant’s cock pressed against her ass as he drew his hands along her thighs. Goose bumps rose in the wake of his fingers. She shivered in delight. Every day with them was a new adventure. A new pleasure. A new glimpse of perfection.

Holding her hips, Brant pushed into her pussy, stretching her wide with his girth. She moaned and her head dropped forward as he filled her. Ace sucked at her clit. His tongue occasionally flicked out, and she knew he was tasting her juice on Brant’s cock as his male partner fucked her. The notion turned her on even more. This partnership wasn’t just about loving her in tandem. It was about loving all of them. Man to man; woman to man.

Ace slipped upward so he sat between her braced arms. “Suck me,” he told her, his fingers going into her hair to push her down. He knew she loved him being forceful. Loved his commands—in the right context. During sex, it was always right.

She sometimes wondered how things had progressed so quickly between them, but mostly, she didn’t care. Her men loved her, and she loved them. And really, that was all that mattered.

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.

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***Not All Who Wander* by Dakota Rebel**

Sara has always been a wanderer, traveling the world in search of her next big adventure. When she ends up on a tropical island, she's afraid of being trapped forever. Even more, she meets two men who both want her in their bed—the same bed—and she couldn't be more confused. While her body screams yes, she's just not sure she wants to tie herself to any relationship, let alone a ménage.

Gabe and Toby know as soon as they find Sara washed up on the shore of Wyspa that she's the answer to their dreams, the woman they both want as the third in their relationship. They know she's their one. They must overcome her doubts and convince her that not all who wander are lost. Sometimes, finding a home is the biggest adventure of all.

***Belonging to Them* by Brynn Paulin**

On the run from her past, Rayna Halliday is devastated when her old car breaks down in the middle of nowhere. She soon finds that her ex has managed to block her credit cards, her accounts and even her cell phones in an attempt to exert his control over her. Giving in to him is something she refuses to do.

When the owners of O'Keefe's Gas and Repair come to her rescue, they make her an offer that tantalizes the forbidden desires within her—she can find a way to pay for the car repairs, or she can belong to them for two weeks and they'll see to her repairs for free. At the sexual mercy of four gorgeous men for two weeks... Why not? She can have fun and get things straightened out, all at once. But there are two problems heading her way: an ex on a rampage and her heart that's in for more than just fun.

***FU* by Mia Watts**

When a screw-up by the Fullerton University Housing Office leaves Parker Galloway shackled up with four sexy men, Parker thinks four just might be her lucky number...as long as she can get Kei Yamamoto to join in the fun.

But will taking advantage of FU's mistake end up getting all five roomies kicked off campus, or will it be the closest thing to heaven Parker has ever experienced?

***Key West* by Demi Alex**

What a time for a revelation!

The moment Prince Charming proposes, Addison London realizes that she is about to say “yes” to a lifetime of love and stability—and *constancy*—having never really lived her life to the fullest, and runs.

As a straight-laced good girl grown into a responsible, respectable woman, Addison is always prim and proper, and...well, boring. She always does the right thing, plays it safe, makes the right decisions, and suppresses her own longings to meet the expectations of others.

But she will have no regrets.

Before committing to a life wrapped in a white picket fence, she will have a little excitement and adventure, she will throw caution to the wind, and she will live out her most secret sexual fantasies—if only for a weekend.

Desperate to break free, she travels to Key West and surrounds herself with willing, gorgeous men. All she has to do is pick *one*. But with only one weekend in the tropical paradise, and one chance for a hedonistic experience meant to last a lifetime, she discovers that “one” is not enough.

After all, what happens in Key West stays in Key West, right?

***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 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?

***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.

***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 and 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.

***Chance Encounters* by Mia Jae**

Seven short erotic stories to whet your appetite, packaged in one collection. Whether the couples meet on a glance, make a split second decision or take a chance to be together, the encounters change their lives, for a minute, or for a lifetime.

You'll find a plumber who gets into more than a little hot water, a housewife tangled up in a cyber relationship, a cowboy trio attempting to brand a bartender for their very own, and a woman experimenting with a same-sex relationship. Then, there is naughty Rose, who dances naked in front of her bedroom window, a chance sexual encounter in a taxi that turns the tables, and a woman who finds herself doing exactly what she thinks she shouldn't...and liking it.

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