



Kasey Moone

Her  
**Snowbound**  
Night



# *Her Snowbound Knight*

A short erotic seasonal story by

Kasey Moone



This is an explicit and erotic novel  
intended for the enjoyment  
of adult readers. Please keep  
out of the hands of children.

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Her Snowbound Knight  
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## Chapter One

Anelle Franklin slammed her fists against the hood of her snow covered car.

“Fuck,” she hissed, as a blast of cold wind hit her dead in the face. Though she wore a bulky winter coat, thick mittens, and snow boots, the cold still found a way to crack her armor, rattling her bare bones and frail nerves in one swoop. Her teeth chattered. Her fingers flinched. Her ass felt like a frozen popsicle.

She studied her surroundings. Tall oak trees flanked her on both sides. There wasn’t a house in sight. All was white and cold and bare, and the storm was growing worse.

At the sight of it, Anelle spoke to herself, something she only did when she was seriously pissed, and a little afraid.

“You idiot, idiot, idiot. You just *had* to take a shortcut, didn’t you? And you just *had* to pick today to go shopping at some outlet store *four* hours from home, didn’t you? And you just *had* to have a clunker for a car?”

If she’d listen to her gut earlier in the day, she’d be home in Chicago right now, curled up on her comfy couch, watching Oprah. Not in some backward road in rural Illinois.

She eyed the evil car. She should’ve listened to her parents and invested in a new vehicle a long time ago. They were right. The four door sedan was on its last mile.

Marching through the slush of snow, she yanked open her car door and huddled inside. Then she reached for her cell phone on the dashboard. The signal faded light flashed red.

“No! Don’t do this to me, baby. Not now.”

She hit the buttons, hoping to illicit some type of response, but the red light continued its relentless flash. She threw the gadget down and tried cranking the ignition. Nothing. The engine was as dead as her dreams. It was official. She was stranded. Snowbound. In the middle of nowhere.

The realization rattled her nerves, making her feel unnaturally queasy. Maybe she should brave the storm to search for help. Surely there was a farmhouse somewhere—someplace that was warm, safe, inviting...

At the sound of the howling wind, she quickly changed her mind. Stories of travelers searching for help during snowstorms were common in the news. Some bystander always found their frozen bodies days later propped up on the side of the road. Anelle shook her head, grabbing the steering wheel with all her might. Not her! She was too cute to die from frostbite.

“It ain’t going to happen!”

She took the scarf from around her neck, and positioned it in the cracks of her window, so that it flung in the wind. Someone was bound to see the bright red material. It was her only hope. Feeling more depressed by the moment, she leaned back, closed her eyes, and waited to be rescued.

\*\*\*\*

Jasper Madison drove his snowplow through the white blur, ready to be home. He’d been out all day, clearing snow from the busy roads and dealing with rude people who thought their car could muster the weather. He didn’t understand why people traveled during bad storms. When the news said stay the fuck in, they should stay the fuck in. They made life difficult for him and every other snow truck driver out there.

He clicked his car radio off, banishing the weatherman’s ominous warning. It was going to be a nasty one, this storm. Though he’d plastered the roads throughout the day with more than a foot of salt, they were still as wet and slick as a slip ‘n slide. And the storm was growing darker by the minute. The sooner he got home, the better. Luckily his cabin was off the cuff—located deep in the woods, away from noisy neighbors and reckless drivers. His eyes burned with exhaustion. He needed to sleep. Soon.

Slowly, he rounded a curve and made his way up a steep hill. His truck moaned at the sharp incline, but he pressed on, thoughts of home heavy on his mind. When he finally beat the nasty obstacle course, he breathed a great sigh of relief. Home was less than a mile away. He rubbed his red eyes and was about to turn into the path that led to his cabin, when he saw a flash of red up ahead.

The fact that someone was stranded didn't surprise him, since he'd seen his fair share of stranded folks on the road in his five years of snow wrangling. It was the fact that someone was stranded out here in the woods that shocked his senses. Who'd venture down this lonely patch of road in a storm like this? Probably some fast talking city dude. He drove toward the flashing red fabric then parked his Ford behind the small vehicle and beeped his horn.

A figure tumbled from the car, rose on shaky feet, and then waved him down. Yep, definitely some city prick.

Wrapping himself up with a plethora of hats, scarves, and gloves, Jasper yanked his door open and stepped outside. Cold wind met him head-on. Shit. He could be home right now, wolfing down some burgers and beer. Instead, he was in the middle of a fucking blizzard, playing hero. He trudged through the snow, toward the figure, ready to rip into him for his stupidity. He opened his mouth to speak, but the figure beat him to it.

"Thank God," whispered a silky smooth voice. "I thought I was the only one out here."

## Chapter Two

*A woman?*

Jasper blinked. Sure enough, a woman stood in front of him in a bundle of clothes. She was a short little thing with a moon shaped face and dark chocolate skin. The white snow only enhanced its loveliness. Dark brown eyes, as big as emeralds, stared up at him. Like any red blooded male, his eyes roamed her body, curious about its shape and size. Unfortunately he couldn't see much. Her ugly coat hid her well. Even so, his cock grew impossibly hard at the sight of her plump lips.

*Fuck.*

What was she doing out here? Was she trying to become a fucking statistic?

"Ma'am, are you okay?"

"My car battery is dead."

He steadied himself against the ferocious wind.

"It'll have to wait," he barked. "We have to get out of here."

She hesitated. "You can't just give me a jump?"

"Ma'am, this storm is a nasty one. We have to go now, while the roads are still passable."

He watched her bite down on her lower lip, as she contemplated what to do next, and found the move sexy as hell. Then she turned and stared at her car, as though she was trying to remember it by heart. He didn't know why. From what he could see it was a pile of junk.

When she finally returned his gaze, her eyes flashed with suspicion.

"You're not going to try anything, are you?"

Jasper's eyebrows shot up. "Of course not."

Her chin lifted. "Promise?"

"I promise."

"Pinky swear?"

He bit back his temper. What was she, six?

"Pinky swear," he mumbled.

"Okay, let me get my things."



He watched her retreating backside as she rummaged through her backseat. Then he reached for one of his yellow *do not tow* notes in his pocket, and stuck it in her windshield.

Her head popped out. "What's that for?"

"I'll explain later. Are you ready?"

"Give me a minute."

"Ma'am, we don't have a minute," he said, his control unraveling by the second. "*Hurry.*"

At the word, she reached for another bag in the backseat and reemerged. The wind pummeled the large shopping bags, sending her stumbling against the car. One of the bags went whipping through the sky.

"My jeans!"

She wobbled toward the flying jeans, forcing him to grab her by the waist. For a munchkin, she had strength.

"Those were hundred dollar jeans!"

"They're history."

"But—"

"*They're history.*"

Just then a violent gust of wind encircled them, sending them tumbling to the ground. Though a fluffy bed of snow broke their fall, Jasper cursed viciously, his dreams of burgers and beer long gone. Using the sway of the wind as an anchor, he stood, reached down, and pulled the woman up by the shoulders. Then he gave her a pointed stare, his patience at an all time low.

"Get your things and get in the truck."

"Fine." She thrust the bags in his hands then took off toward his truck.

The woman! Another pocket of wind came from the East.

"Hurry," she shouted back. "We don't have all day!"

With a loud curse he caught up with her. A minute later he jerked the passenger door open and pushed her inside. Then he walked around the vehicle, opened his door, threw her bags in the backseat, and closed the door with a resounding thud. Very slowly he turned and looked at the crazy jean obsessed woman.

## Chapter Three

Anelle met her rescuer's gaze head-on. She knew what he was thinking. That she was a fool for trying to save her J-Lo jeans. But he didn't understand. They were for a dear friend.

She squirmed in her seat at the realization that he was even more gorgeous up close and personal. When she'd first seen him, his beauty had knocked the breath out of her, sending her libido into a wild tailspin. Now, in the warm intimacy of the cabinet, his handsomeness announced itself like a great beam of light.

Brilliant crystal blue eyes, shadowed by thick lashes, stared at her from a hard lean face. A dusting of dark hair fell on a chiseled jaw that rested below a pair of sensual pink lips. His teeth were white and straight. His nose slightly crooked. Absently, she wondered about the color and texture of his hair. Too bad his scruffy hat hid the view.

Her perusal went lower. A hefty jacket accentuated his sculpted shoulders nicely. He was definitely cornfed: tall, lean, and muscled in all the right places. Just like she liked them.

Sure, white guys had never been her thing, but when in Rome...

She suddenly noticed that he was still staring at her. Laughter danced in his eyes. Had he noticed her examination?

"What?"

"You really are something."

Oh God. He *had* noticed. "What're you talking about?"

"You could've died going after those jeans."

She breathed a sigh of relief. Then she blushed, thankful her dark skin masked it. He was right about the jeans, but she wasn't about to throw him a bone.

"You got some balls."

"They cost me a fortune," she said, trying to explain. "*A fortune.*"

"Some balls."

She was just about to say something clever, when he cranked up the engine and pulled out of the emergency lane. He pulled out and drove

down the long stretch of road. Minutes of silence passed between them; the crackle of the engine and car heater the only sounds. She would've let it stay that way if she didn't have the overwhelming urge to speak.

"Do you have a cell phone?"

"Yep, but it doesn't work out here. The signal always fades."

"That's what happened to me," she offered, suddenly wanting him to know that she wasn't a complete nitwit. That it was her cell phone's fault, of course.

He suddenly turned into a narrow path. A family of trees flanked them on both sides.

"Where are we going?"

"I have a cabin up ahead. You can call someone from there."

Annoyed, she shook her head. "No, I want to go to a gas station or store. Not somewhere in the boondocks with a complete stranger. No offense."

He grinned. "None taken."

"Really, though. Isn't there a K-mart or Wal-mart around here?"

"There's nothing but me, you, and my cabin, ma'am. Plus, I'm not going to risk my neck driving you around town in this shitfest. It's dangerous out there."

The temperature in the cab rose at his words. Anelle clenched her thighs.

*Well, it feels a little dangerous in here, too.*

A sexy smile curved his lips. "Don't worry. I won't paw you. I work for the state's snow removal department. I'm a government worker."

"Oh, *that's* reassuring."

"Really," he said, with a wicked smile. "You're safe."

She sighed. What choice did she have? It was either him or the storm. At least with him she had a fighting chance. She clasped her hands in her thighs, a determined expression across her face. Yes. She'd play by his rules—for now at least. Then she'd get the hell out of dodge.

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Jasper hid his smile. The woman must've been certifiable if she thought she could call the shots in a blizzard. Should he tell her now that no one was going to risk the storm to help her, just because she had car

troubles? That she was going to have to wait it out with him? He looked at her uptight face.

He'd wait.

She'd probably bolt from the truck at the news. And if his bad luck held out, he'd have to go stomping through the storm in search of her. He'd already joined the search for two missing snowbound people this month. She didn't need to be the third.

He shot a quick glance in her direction. Unfortunately, her large jacket still covered her from head to toe. His curiosity about her body was growing stronger by the minute. Was it soft and curvy? Big breasts, small waist, wide hips? Or small top, big bottom? The questions were blurring his vision, making him as horny and prickly as a teenage boy. He made a slight turn and pressed on the pedal.

"So what else is in those bags? Kryptonite?"

Her eyes narrowed. "Drop it already."

He shrugged. "Must be kryptonite..."

"For your information, I only have the basics: shoes, shirts, jeans, well I don't have the jeans anymore, let's see, scarves, lingerie, belts, and socks."

"I'm sorry, did you say lingerie?"

"Yes."

His voice grew husky. "Lingerie is not a *basic*, babe. Lingerie is a *treat*."

"Oh, get real," she stuttered. "It's a basic."

"It's a treat."

"Basic."

"Treat."

"Oh, shut up!"

Silence ensued. Jasper grinned. He couldn't seem to stop teasing her. Acute sleep deprivation was fucking up his brain.

"What type?"

"Huh?"

"What type of lingerie?"

"Forget it."

"*Come on.*"

"No."

"Pretty, pretty please?"

"It ain't going to happen," she snapped, shooting daggers in his direction. She stuck a pinky in front of his face.

"You pinky swore."

He stared at her curved finger, perplexed.

"You *promised* you wouldn't try anything," she explained. "Remember?"

He chuckled. "I'm not *trying* anything. Just asking a harmless question is all."

"Sure you are, white boy."

"White boy?"

She glared.

"White boy." He couldn't help himself. "I like it."

They suddenly looked at each other, shocked at the intimacy of their conversation. Jasper was the first to look away. He gripped the steering wheel.

"Er, sorry," he managed. "The storm must've messed me up."

A little "hmmph" was her only reply.

What was wrong with him? They'd just met! And he was doing exactly what he said he wouldn't do: pawing her. He couldn't seem to help himself though. She was cute when she was pissed. The realization annoyed him for some reason.

He decided to remain quiet for the rest of the journey. The last thing he needed was for her to punch him in the gut in retribution and leap from the truck. A short while later they arrived at his two-story cabin. He pulled up next to his black BMW and shut down the engine. The wind seemed to roar to life at his arrival.

"I'm leaving your bags in the snowplow."

"But—"

"We'll get them later."

She sighed and threw up her hands. "Whatever you say, KISA."

"KISA?"

"*Knight in Shining Armor.*"

He laughed. She was kind of sweet and funny when she wasn't being certifiable.

"Stay close to me," he said, reaching to fix a loose button on her coat. At the move he caught his first glimpse and feel of her chest. My God, she was stacked. The sashes and buttons did little to hide her magnificent breasts. Only made them pop up like a platter of goods. Satisfaction

ripped through him. His already swollen cock grew harder. *Fuck*. He hadn't sported a boner like this in ages. Luckily his coat concealed it well. With a loud grunt, he secured the last button. "I don't want you to go flying off in the wind without protection."

She growled. "Jeez--thanks."

"What's your name?"

"Anelle Franklin."

"I'm Jasper Madison. Wish we could've met under different circumstances, Anelle."

"Tell me about it."

He shifted back in his seat, opened the door, and maneuvered his way around the truck to open her door. Then he guided her through the wind and snow, rocking all the way, and up the cabin steps. After much upheaval they finally made it into the warm sanctuary of his cabin. Safe.

## Chapter Four

Anelle let out a steadying breath, her entire body exhausted by the trip. Apparently she was going to have to find a way to thaw her frozen ass. She jogged in place. It was going to be a long night. Half of her wanted to curl up and fall into a deep peaceful sleep, the other half, well the other half wanted to screw the life out of her Knight in Shining Armor. Perfect. What was a girl to do?

She listed the reasons why she shouldn't fuck his brains out:

First, she just met him.

*Hello, one night stand?*

Second, he had the annoying habit of asking her personal questions.

*Did it really bother you, though?*

Third, he was just too fine.

*And?*

Great. Her rational mind was on permanent hiatus. She stretched her back and studied her surroundings. Her eyes bulged at the sight of his beautiful cabin. A dozen portraits of various landscapes hung on the coffee colored walls. One sat above a fireplace surrounded by luxurious furniture.

The kitchen was black and sleek, with stainless steel appliances, and fine dinnerware. Anelle swallowed, half expecting to find a Home and Garden photographer waiting in the wings. His place was fit for a king, not a snowplow man.

Government worker her ass!

She regarded him through narrowed eyes. Though he was busy kicking snow off his boots in the entryway, he must have sensed her inspection, and looked up.

"What?"

"You live here?"

He smiled, revealing pearly white teeth. "Nice digs, huh?"

"You're telling me."

"What?"

"I thought you said you worked for the government."

"I do, but I also paint on the side," he said, yanking off his boots. "It helps pay the bills."

Inside Anelle swooned. A painter? *How romantic.* She had mad love for the arts. At the high school where she taught math, she always made an effort to get involved in the school plays. She even wrote on the side. Maybe she'd been a famous author in a past life.

Her eyes returned to the watercolor portraits of rivers, bridges and buildings. In one of them he'd captured the beauty of the Sears Tower perfectly.

She looked back at him. "You have a good eye."

"Thanks."

"Don't your hands lock up from driving all day?"

"There's no snow during the summers. That's when I paint."

"Nice."

His lips quirked at her reaction. "What do you do for a living?"

She didn't know why, but her breathing hitched and her nipples tightened at the question. What was up with her? It wasn't like he'd ask her about her love life.

"I teach high school math."

He remained silent, his dark blue gaze traveling up and down her body like infrared. Gooseflesh rose on her skin.

"I *said* I teach high school math."

He grinned. "I heard."

"What are you thinking?"

"Just wishing I had a teacher like you when I was making my rounds."

A bright blush erupted on her face. Was he *flirting* with her? She was given no time to contemplate the incredible action for he was determinedly wrestling with the buttons of her coat.

"Let me help you with this."

She held still. A man had never undressed her before. Hers was a boring life, filled with endless grading and PTA meetings. She hadn't been on a date in over a year, much to her friend's dismay. But now, as if her day couldn't get any stranger, a hunk was undressing her. As innocent as it was, she couldn't keep her mind out of the gutter. How horny could she get?

She suppressed the urge to fidget and run. *Jasper Madison.* Not only was he beyond handsome, he was a successful artist to boot. Beauty and



brains? They just didn't make 'em like this no more. Slowly he undid her buttons, then shrugged her out of the big coat.

He moaned loudly. Alarmed, she looked down at herself. Her sweater was wet and tight from the snow. Her jeans weren't any better. They hugged her wide hips and thick ass intimately. She looked a mess.

"Umm, can I use the bathroom?"

When he pointed toward the hall, she made a quick escape.

\*\*\*\*

Jasper leaned against the door frame for support. My God, how long would he last? His dick thickened; his balls swelling to full capacity. He took a steady breath in an effort to regain control of the rigid flesh. But it didn't work. If anything his erection grew larger. Dammit! He couldn't seem to rid his mind of Anelle's perfect hourglass figure. He was fucked up.

He stalked to the kitchen and opened and slammed cabinets until he found the ingredients for hot cocoa. As he prepared his favorite drink, he thought about the woman in his bathroom. She'd been surprised to discover he was an artist. Though most people had similar reactions, her reaction, for some reason, stung. Did she think he was some uneducated country bumpkin? That he couldn't put brush to canvas? Probably. Most city folks did. He slammed the hot cocoa packets against the counter.

Over the years his hobby had allowed him to send funds back home to his mom and pop in North Carolina. Both were retired train operators who needed the cash. He threw a few lumps of sugar in the cocoa. It was a good job with flexible hours. It was something he enjoyed, dammit. He wouldn't allow her reaction to ruin it.

He looked down at the drink. *Anelle*. Her skin was as dark as the cocoa. No doubt she'd taste just as sweet. Shit. He took a long swallow of the rich liquid and waited for her return.

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In the bathroom Anelle studied her reflection in the mirror.

"How far did you fall down the rabbit hole, girl?" she mumbled. At the question the wind wailed a response, rattling the bathroom windows. She grinned. "Pretty far."

She took off her hat and finger combed her short hair. The natural curls just didn't want to cooperate today, like everything else. She glared at her reflection.

"You just *had* to jump into a car with a complete stranger, didn't you? Who *had* to be a fine ass white boy, didn't he?"

She shook her head. At least she was alive. Her friends would tease her to no end once they discovered what happened to her. They'd probably rejoice at her turn of "fortune". The sickos. She could just hear them now: *Girl, you had a fine ass man rescue you and you didn't make a move? What planet are you from?* Anelle snapped her fingers, as if her friends were right there in the room with her.

"Don't start in on me," she hissed, hating the fact that she talked to herself sometimes.

After washing her hands and face and patting herself dry, she returned to the living room, where she noticed the roaring fireplace. She ran toward the flames.

"This is great," she squealed. "Magnificent!"

She knelt close to the crackling fire and closed her eyes. The heat felt good. Running her fingers through her curls, she sighed. Oh, how she wished she could stay in all this delicious heat forever.

Her muscles stretched and relaxed, as though awakening from a deep slumber. She would've lost herself in a daydream if she didn't feel a presence beside her. Her eyes shot up to Jasper. He was a few feet away, staring at her strangely. And he was hatless. Black hair flew past his shoulders in rolling waves. In the glow of the firelight, he looked like a warrior from a different time. A walking fantasy.

Anelle swallowed. "I have to use the phone."

"I'm sorry, but the phone is out."

"What?"

"Sometimes the wind zaps the life out of the nearby telephone poles during these storms. It should be back on soon."

She picked up the cordless phone from the nearby table and dialed a number. Nothing. When she placed it back down and looked up, he was smiling at her.

"It's not that I didn't believe you," she said. "I just had to check for myself."

He shrugged.

Feeling awkward she stretched out her legs, while he sat on the sofa, still staring at her strangely.

“There’s some hot cocoa for you on the table there,” he whispered.

Anelle reached for the liquid and took a long swallow. The warm brew hit the spot. She was finally starting to feel like a regular human being again. Thank God. Placing the cup down, she smiled lazily.

“Thanks.”

She rubbed her palms against her thighs, wondering why he was looking at her so intensely. Hopefully he wasn’t thinking about their earlier lingerie conversation. That was as embarrassing as it got.

“So what’s next? Are you sure the phone will start working soon?”

“I’m confident it will.”

“I mean, there’s no rush,” she heard herself saying. “It’s Saturday and I don’t have to be back at work until Monday.”

Inside she cringed. Did she have no common sense? Didn’t her momma always tell her not to reveal her schedule to strangers lest they abduct her and sequester her somewhere in the woods for days and days on end? Oh shit!

“I mean...”

He smiled. “I also have a free weekend.”

She ducked her head, embarrassed by her ramblings but looked up just in time to catch the knowing twinkle in his eyes and shifted her gaze toward the fire.

“Must get kind of lonely out here in the middle of nowhere,” she mumbled.

“I like my privacy.”

“Me too.”

“I would think that a city slicker like yourself wouldn’t have much use for privacy. Chicago being what it is.”

Anelle shrugged. “I try to protect my privacy as much as I can. It’s not just the city. It’s my job, too. Teaching can be very demanding. There’s always something to plan or grade. Sometimes the work spills into my private life.”

He rubbed his chin. “So quit.”

She grinned. Oh, so he was one of those know-it-alls. “I didn’t say I don’t like it. I just said that it could be demanding.”

“Are you passionate about it?”

“Of course,” she barked. “I went to school for it, didn’t I?”

“School doesn’t mean shit. I have a Master’s in Psychology, babe. Do you see me using that degree?”

She stared at him. It was a long moment before she spoke. “I like to write poetry, okay? That’s my passion, but I can hardly make a living at it.”

“You can do anything you want.”

She laughed. Was he always this bossy when he was dishing out advice? Not using his Masters her ass!

“Hey,” she chuckled. “Dr. Phil wants his day job back.”

Somewhere outside a tree came crashing down. She screamed as the wind and windows battled. How long would the blasted storm last?

Jasper knelt beside her. “It’s okay.”

“Oh my God! I cannot die out here in the woods.”

He chuckled. “You’re not going to die, pet.”

“But the wind!”

“Anelle, we’re safe. I promise.” He crossed two long fingers. “As your personal White Knight in Shining Armor, I give you my word.”

She giggled. The nerve of the man! Here she was petrified at the storm, and he was making some corny joke. A cheesy smile hovered on her lips. “Don’t try to claim that title as a badge of honor, white boy.”

“Why not?”

“Because it’ll go to your head.”

“Who says?”

“*Me.*”

He quirked his eyebrows, causing her to shake with laughter. She was actually starting to really like him. Go figure. Looking around, she noticed that the fireplace was their only source of light. The rest of the cabin was quiet and dark. It was already nighttime.

Noticing her appraisal, he spoke up. “The electricity is out, too.”

Anelle groaned. “You’re kidding me? I was just in the bathroom.”

“It happened a minute ago when I was in the kitchen.”

“Great.”

“It should kick in within the hour though. If not, I have an electric heater and grill, and plenty of water and food. We’ll survive.”

Anelle stared at his handsome face. The man was heaven sent. Sure, he might’ve been a little surly around the edges at first, especially when it came to the entire jeans episode, but he made up for it by being prepared

and calm when disaster struck. If it wasn't for him, she'd still be out there in the storm somewhere.

She stared at his eyes. They were as deep and blue as the sea. "Thank you for everything. I owe you my life."

He shrugged, as though rescuing damsels in distress was a permanent gig.

"You're welcome."

When another blast of wind rocked the windows, she shrieked and leaped into his arms. She hated storms. When she was a child, and a thunderstorm struck, she'd hide under her parent's bed for hours on end. Dragging her out by the ankles had been the only solution.

She buried her trembling body into Jasper's arms.

"I hate storms."

He rubbed her back and made a soothing noise.

"I just hate them!"

## Chapter Five

Jasper didn't know which element was more life threatening—the raging storm outside or the raging erection in his jeans. The feel of Anelle's soft body was making him as hard as a pound of bricks. *Fuck*. He hadn't been with a woman in weeks.

With a calming breath, his cock lengthened, the bulbous head throbbing painfully against the fly of his jeans. *Fuck*, he was hurting here. Her sweet cinnamon scent, large tits, and curvy bottom were pure torture. Unconsciously, he massaged the tender flesh above her ass. His chin brushed the top of her head. Her short curly hair made her look like a pretty babydoll. His gaze flicked down her shirt. She must be a size D, a real handful. A moan ripped from his throat as he continued stroking, lost in his thoughts.

“Jasper?”

“Yeah...”

“Jasper?”

He focused on her. “Yes?”

“What are you doing?”

His fingers flexed above her ass. “Comforting you.”

“Is that what you call it?”

He grinned. “Do you want me to stop?”

Her eyes widened at the question. “What?”

“Do you want me to stop?”

Thick sexual tension hung in the air. Jasper sucked in a nervous breath, his entire body on pins and needles.

A slow smile curved her lips.

“Stop?” She gripped his biceps. “Hell, nah.”

*Fuck*. In all of his thirty years, no woman had ever turned him on so much. All he knew about her was that she taught in the city and enjoyed poetry. He shrugged. No matter. They'd play catch up later.

He spoke not a word as he leaned over and kissed her, claiming every square of her sweet mouth. His tongue relished in the taste and feel of her

soft honeyed lips. The kiss rocked him. It shifted and morphed, juice on juice, flesh on flesh, over and over again. Sweat broke out on his forehead. His breathing stuttered. My God, he was behaving like an untried boy.

When he finally came up for air, his gaze raked over her trembling body, rejoicing in the fact that she was affected by the kiss, too. With little effort, he plucked her sweater over her head, and stared at her magnificent breasts.

She smiled mischievously. "I got more than the average girl."

"I noticed." A realization suddenly came to him. "Are you on anything?"

"Yeah," she said, snuggling closer.

He bent over and sucked a nipple through the white cotton fabric of her bra. She shuddered and guided his face closer to her chest. A low growl resonated in the back of his throat as he realized the bra was blocking him from what he needed. He undid the bra clip and threw it off, then went back in for the nipple. Outside the storm raged on. He moved to the other nipple, growling immediately at the sight of the hard pebble. He sucked it, pushed her down onto the soft carpet, and spread his body over hers.

His cock was rock hard.

He shrugged her out of her jeans. At the body splayed before him, his eyes blurred. She wore nothing but frilly pink panties. Didn't she know better? In weather like this long johns are a must. He stared at the devilish fabric. Well, he'd forgive her just this one time.

She suddenly began to massage the outline of his big cock through his jeans. He groaned at the contact.

"Fuck," he hissed. The woman was dangerous.

She stared up at him, laughing. "Liking that, big boy?"

Like a schoolboy, he nodded obediently.

"I know you do."

She pawed at him again, and he grabbed her wrists.

"Pet, if you keep doing that, I'm not going to last."

He spread her legs wide then placed his palm on the mound of her sex. Unable to resist, he stretched her panties aside, and stuck a finger into her wet pussy. She was as hot and tight as he knew she would be. The sight of his pale finger moving in and out of her dark folds turned him on immensely. Pleasure shot down his spine.

Outside the wind howled and the trees groaned. Slowly, his fingers stroked her swollen pussy lips, over and over again, making her claw at his shoulders and forearms. Her hips arched forward. Her nipples stuck out like black pebbles. He continued his strokes, an arrogant smile across his face.

A moan escaped her.

At the sound, he tugged off his sweater and shrugged out of his underwear and jeans. His cock jutted forward. He couldn't help noticing how her eyes widened at the sight. Male satisfaction rushed through him. He was bigger than most.

He moved on top of her. "How do you like it, pet?" he whispered thickly. "Fast and hard? Or slow and steady?"

She purred. "Surprise me."

With a devilish smile, he impaled her with one long thrust.

"Fuck," he said, against the sweet tightness.

Anelle groaned, the pleasure exquisite. The man moved fast. She'd barely had time to appreciate his sculpted body before he was plunging into her. And what a cock, deliciously thick and long. A real *saucisson*, her friends would say.

She held her breath as he thrust deeper, stretching her muscles to the max. She dragged her nails across his back, torn between telling him to stop and urging him to go full speed ahead. He didn't give her a choice. He rammed his dick into her pussy like he owned it. Their breath rushed together. Sweat glistened on their naked bodies. Whoever said white boys couldn't hang should be fucking shot! No man had ever given her such bliss.

The sound of his plum-sized balls hitting her ass erupted in the air. She tightened her legs around his waist, and held on for the ride. She'd never been fucked this good.

"Damn, you feel good baby."

"Please," she said, pummeling his ass with her fists.

"Please what, baby?"

"Fuck me good."

He moved deeper, faster, roughly screwing every inch of her. Her breathing hitched. Her orgasm was near, just a breath away. She thrust her hips up, yearning for more of what only he could give. He suddenly moved his hands between their bodies, and flicked her nub. Her whole body tensed. A lightening sensation ripped through her. She spasmed



violently in an earth-shattering climax. Screamed. She couldn't catch her breath. She bit his shoulder, her sex tightening around his cock, her eyes dazed. Gooseflesh rose on her skin.

His thrusts became wild. He was a mad man, an animal, a creature she couldn't control. He pumped into her, cursing loudly, plunging his dick inside of her sweet spot, over and over again, ruthless. Then he jerked and hissed.

“Fuck!”

A wad of hot cum shot into her, filling her pussy to the brim. The warm liquid shot down her thighs and legs, as his whole body went limp. He buried his face in the crook of her neck then mumbled something and rolled over, dragging her to his side.

For a long moment, they lay there in tangled body parts as the storm outside raged on. A part of Anelle was dumfounded at the intensity of what just happened. Had she lost her freaking mind? She'd fucked a complete stranger in a cabin in the woods. Talk about a script straight out of a slasher movie.

Never in her life had she done something so wild and reckless, so out of the norm. She closed her eyes and groaned. What would her momma think? When she opened them a minute later, she knew he was watching her, but didn't meet his stare. What must he think of her?

## Chapter Six

She awoke sometime in the middle of the night huddled in a makeshift bed, alone. She must've fallen asleep shortly after Jasper got up to find his old radio. Rising on wobbly feet, she wrapped a nearby quilt around her naked flesh, and took in her surroundings. The room was dim, the fireplace the only light. Anelle sighed. The power must still be out.

Shadows danced on the walls. Somewhere outside an owl hooted. She glanced at an overhead clock. Jesus. It was three in the morning. She'd been out all day. Maybe school would be cancelled on Monday. That would give her extra time with Jasper. Her heart soared then plummeted at the thought. She should be thinking about how she was going to fix her car not how she was going to get her latest fix of hot butt naked sex. Her eyes roamed the room.

"Jasper?"

Where was he? A twinge of fear shot through her. What if he'd gone out into the storm to get her bags, and seriously hurt himself? A fallen tree could've gotten him! She rushed to the window and looked out, but saw nothing but darkness. Perplexed, she moved toward the hallway.

"Jasper?"

A dull light flashed upstairs. Taking the stairs two at a time, she marveled at the beauty of the place. She had to give Jasper credit. The boy did know how to live in style. She stopped outside a wooden door. Light flashed beneath the frame. She knocked.

"Jasper?"

No answer. She placed her ears to the frame. A faint male voice rose and fell. Her suspicions rose. What was he doing in there? Jerking off?

She called for him again and then opened the door. He stood inside a large glass shower stall, vigorously rubbing soap over his naked body, singing. Poorly. She flinched as he tried to hit a high note. Jeez. Her great aunt had better pipes. Her shoulders shook with laughter. Drive a snowplow, he could do. Create beautiful art, okay. Fuck her brains out, certainly. But sing? Well, the boy should keep his day job.

Her eyes fixed on his beautiful body as he sang with his eyes closed. If possible, he was even more gorgeous in his birthday suit. He had a six pack, bulging biceps, and shapely legs. A dusting of dark hair trailed down his chest, tapering off into a V just above his cock. His long dark hair fell in wet waves. It was obvious he took good care of himself, that his athletic body was trained to go the distance.

She should know. Her sore pussy was still singing its praises. Feeling like a bold seductress, she dropped the quilt and took a step closer, grateful that his back was to her now. She loved the element of surprise. Her mind twirled.

What would it feel like to be able to surprise him every morning in the shower, to be able to fuck him whenever she pleased? For years she'd yearned for companionship. For something real and meaningful outside of her career.

Being a single lady in the city sucked. Didn't she deserve a little happiness? Jasper seemed like a good guy. He'd saved her from the storm, despite her crazy attitude. He'd even listened to her rant and rave about her job and love of poetry. And, of course, he'd given her an awesome orgasm. He was a sure thing. A *mighty* good man.

She inched forward. The lyrics of *Life is a Highway* floated up into the air. She stifled her giggles. Poor Jasper. He couldn't even hit the low notes.

Boldly she pulled back the glass shower door and looked her fill. He whirled around so quickly that the bar of soap he'd been using as a microphone went flying from his hands.

"Why don't you serenade *me*," she purred.

"Anelle?"

Water dripped from his shocked face. His expression of surprise was almost comical. Pushing him against the tile she entered the stall. Jets of warm water fell on her backside as she ran her fingers all over his chest.

"Come on mister, hit a high note for me."

He blushed. "I'm not that good."

She grabbed his erection. "Who says?"

Laughter danced in his piercing blue eyes. "Are you always this horny when you wake up?"

Her smile faltered. He was right. She was behaving like a slut in heat. She took a step back, allowing the hot jets to saturate her.

“Hey, I didn’t mean anything by it, pet.” He raised her chin with his thumb. “I mean it.”

Anelle grinned, relieved. “So what’s up with the electricity?”

“It’s only working in this room. Sometimes the generator cuts on and off like this. The rest of the place should be lit up soon though. I would’ve woken you up to tell you, but you were knocked out.”

“Can you blame a girl?”

She kneeled before him, loving the feel of water trickling down her backside. Excitement flashed in his eyes as a knowing grin curved his lips.

“What are you doing, babe?”

His cock lurched in front of her, the jutting flesh beyond intimidating. She licked her lips.

“Sucking you off.”

Jasper groaned as she swallowed him whole in one long swoop. Drawing himself up to his full height, he sucked in a shaky breath and closed his eyes. My God, the woman didn’t let up. His jaw clenched. His fingers curled up into large fists. His buttocks stiffened. She had him. *Damn.*

When she tightened her lips and intensified the pull, he pounded a fist against the tile.

“Good Lord,” he hissed, chin tilted down, eyes searching. “You’re killing me here.”

A light slap of his ass was her only response. He moaned. He hadn’t received head in ages. His ex had often complained about the size of his cock. That it was just too big for the average girl. Anelle was not the average girl though. She was a walking contradiction: a lady in public and a freak in the bed, if the saying was correct. Just when he thought he had her pegged, she’d do something surprising. Like treat him to a blowjob in the shower. His little damsel in distress was full of surprises. He nudged her closer, his dick painfully hard. At the motion, she slapped his ass harder, and gave him a pointed stare. He bit back a smile. *Anelle.* Even when she was on her knees, she liked to call the shots.

He stared at her bouncing tits and remembered their noisy fuck hours ago. Her sweet pussy did him in. Never in his life had he exploded so hard. The sheer intensity of it had been a little frightening. Now in the hot steam of the shower stall, he told himself that he would hold out. That he wouldn’t let her take him over the edge just yet.

But when she wrapped one hand around his balls, and massaged the outline of his shaft with the other, he knew he was done. With a flick of her finger, she touched his sensitive head. The pressure felt too good. His penis leapt. His testes tightened, and suddenly he was jerking away from her and spurting cum on the blue tile.

He came with a loud shout. He came with rigid thrusts. He came until the warm jets cleaned the sweat from his exhausted body, until his breath came out in one huge rush. *Fuck*. She had finished him.

He leaned on the tile, eyeing Anelle carefully as though he'd never seen her before, and in a way that was the case. One day wouldn't be enough for them. They needed more time.

## Chapter Seven

The next hour Jasper gave Anelle a t-shirt and a pair of sweats to wear, and threw her wet clothes in the laundry. Though the baggy clothes reached her knees, she looked adorable in the oversize garments. With the return of electricity, he cooked up some burgers and fries, feeling happier than he had in a long time. They had spent a glorious hour in the shower together, exploring every inch of their bodies, until the water ran cold. In his five years of living in Illinois he'd never met someone so sexually compatible. Someone who fulfilled his every fantasy and more.

Not only was she aggressive in the sack, just the way he liked it, she was also funny and sweet. Her jokes about the size of his cabin and dick belonged on SNL. As they devoured their food by the fire, he'd learned more about her teaching job. How most of her students were rude and disrespectful, but a few made her experience worthwhile. How she didn't understand haiku poems. She'd come to Chicago from a small town in Wisconsin, in her early twenties, yearning for big city life. So far it wasn't what she expected. The crime was bad, the people were rude, and the streets were always filled with trash. He nodded his head sympathetically. He'd seen his fair share of jacked up shit on the road.

He'd told her about his life as a construction worker in North Carolina back in the day. How he'd enjoyed working outside with the other men, despite the danger of the job. As the memories poured from him, he wasn't sure if he should continue. A part of him feared her reaction. Did he measure up to her city pricks? Did she think him boring? Unnerved by his turn of thoughts, he pulled out an expensive bottle of red wine, feeling as antsy as a kid. He was usually so composed around women, but Anelle's effect on him was uncanny. She made him as jumpy as a punk on drugs.

Her eyes widened at the sight of the wine. "I thought all you country boys drank beer."

He suppressed a sharp retort. "We're not all backward hillbillies," he said, purposely keeping his tone light. "We can wine and dine ya."

He poured her a generous amount.

“So why the snowplow job?”

“Don’t know. Something to do I guess. Sometimes if I don’t get out of the house I get a bad case of cabin fever.”

“I can relate.”

Jasper smiled, amused at how comfortable she looked on his couch; one leg propped on a pillow, the other dangling off the side. He switched on his FM radio and listened to the weatherman’s prediction of heavy snow the following day. He sighed, surprised at his overwhelming sense of relief.

“We’ll probably have to stay in tomorrow too,” he said. “With the snow and everything.”

She remained quiet as she curled herself up into a ball. “My poor car.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll jump you when the storm is over.”

She looked at him and wiggled her eyebrows. His little pet was a freak!

“Jump the car that is...”

They laughed.

“Is the phone working now?”

“It should be fine. Give it a try.”

Anelle watched Jasper return their plates to the kitchen, and reached for the phone on the nearby table. She dialed her parents. After reassuring them that she was alright, she started to dial her best friend Sakinah then stopped. She didn’t want to talk to her friend right now. She didn’t want to talk to anyone. All she wanted was for this weekend to stretch on forever. To lose herself in this waking dream. It was beyond belief. This weekend. Why couldn’t all of her weekends be this exciting? Simple, said her rational brain, you’re boring.

“Oh shut up,” she mumbled to herself.

“What was that?” called Jasper from the kitchen.

“Er--nothing.”

What was up with her anyway? She’d gotten hot and heavy with a stranger, but the funny thing was, he didn’t feel like a stranger to her. He felt like a dear friend. She didn’t have to force conversation on him like she had to do with other men. Their conversation and lovemaking flowed easily.

She sipped the rich wine. When Jasper returned, they lost themselves in deep conversation for the rest of the night. The fireplace eventually flickered out. She fell asleep in his arms, wondering what tomorrow would bring. She'd have to leave soon. There was a beginning and ending to everything.

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The next morning Anelle left the cabin, curious about the storm's aftermath. Snow loomed before her like towers. Icicles hung from rooftops and branches, while flurries danced above frozen ponds. It was a winter wonderland. Cold and beautiful and picturesque. Her jaw dropped in awe and disbelief. She twirled around, remembering how much she loved to play in the snow as a child. Around and around she twirled, growing dizzier and dizzier with each sway. One minute she was spiraling like a toy, the next she was falling on top of a great puff of snow, laughing.

What fun!

She suddenly felt as though she was being watched. Looking over her shoulder, she spotted Jasper in the doorway. He wore a black sweater and dark denim with yellow snow boots. His hair was pulled back in a severe ponytail. His eyes flashed with mirth.

She resumed her playtime and began to make snow angels. A part of her got off on the fact that he was watching her intently. If the look on his face was any indication, he wanted her. Well, he'd just have to come and get her. Her legs opened wide as she made another snow angel, swishing back and forth like a windshield wiper.

Before she knew what was happening he was on top of her, kissing her breathless. She burst out laughing. The man wasn't even letting her come up for air! He tickled her sides, sending another spiral of giggles bubbling up her throat.

She kissed him back, as a powerful realization shook her to her core. She was falling in love with him. Her Snowbound Knight. The epiphany made her feel awkward and confused. Though her friends had often spoken of love at first sight, she'd always laughed them off. But now things were different. Now she understood. She stared into his baby blue eyes. Even so, what was she supposed to do? What next?

She wedged her foot between their bodies and sent him tumbling through the snow. Then scrambled on her knees and took off toward the



trees, laughing all the while. She could hear him behind her, closing in. She ducked behind a tree and rolled some snow in her hands. When he rounded the corner, she threw it at his head.

He yelled in shock.

Anelle laughed.

He came after her, a sexy smile on his lips. "You're going to pay for that one."

She sidetracked and ran back toward the cabin. She was almost to the door, when he tackled her to the ground. Her feet went flying in the air. He rained kisses on her face.

"You can't outrun me pet," he said. "I'm too fast."

She grabbed his ass. "You government workers sure know how to run."

He growled. "We have a lot of things up our sleeves."

"Yeah, right."

He repositioned them, so she straddled his muscled frame. Encouraged, she grinded her sex against the rough fabric of his jeans, making him groan loudly.

"Don't mess with me, white boy," she said, grinding again.

A serious expression suddenly clouded his face.

"Anelle," he whispered. "We should talk about us..."

She leaped up. "Bet you can't catch me!"

"Anelle!"

She laughed. She hadn't had this much fun in years and she didn't want to spoil it with serious talk. She ran to his truck, opened the door, and huddled inside the driver's seat. She tore off her jacket and sweater, so she was naked from the waist up. A minute later he joined her, situating her on top of his lap. They were behaving like teenagers! The scent of car air freshener permeated the air. Anelle leaned forward, dragging her nipples across his chest. He met her stare, a mischievous glint in his eyes.

With deft hands, he moved her to the side and yanked her jeans and panties off, then situated her back on top. He unzipped his jeans. Anelle licked her lips in anticipation. His beautiful dick leaped forward, his balls above the elastic waist of his briefs.

"Ride" was all he said before he plunged her down onto the massive flesh. Pleasure and pain assaulted her, making her cry out in shock. It was better than before. It was fascinating. He ruled over her body. He alone

had the final say. She closed her eyes, lost in a haze of pure lust. Her tender pussy stretched to full capacity.

His lips drifted down her neck. "My sweet Anelle."

He kissed her collarbone as she rode him, his cock hot and hard inside of her.

Condensation clouded the truck windows.

"Yes," she whispered, her thighs clenching around him. He shifted slightly, sending her colliding against the steering wheel. The erratic beep of the car horn did little to stop their frantic lovemaking, it only made them fuck harder. Their tongues tangled, mimicking the intensity of their lovemaking, searching for the ultimate release. The intimacy of it frightened her.

He impaled her over and over, again and again. Relentless.

Her eyes flew open. Blood rushed to her face as a ferocious orgasm tore through her body.

She exploded, clawing at his shoulders with a strangled cry, overcome with pleasure.

A hot jet of cum burst from him and into her womb. He cursed loudly, then loosened his hold on her. She collided into his arms. Spent. Half dead. Would she ever be able to walk again?

Eventually she leaned back against the steering wheel, afraid to look him in the eye. It would never be this good with anyone else. In the span of two days they had somehow managed to cross an invisible threshold, as intimate as husband and wife.

She hopped off of him and began to dress.

"Stay," he said, zipping up.

She adjusted her sweater, determined to keep her voice light. "You ready for another round mister?"

He grabbed her hand, forcing her to look him in the eye. "You know what I mean."

Anelle looked away. Of course she knew what he meant. But she could not stay with him forever in a cabin in the woods. The idea was insane. Fear tightened her chest. She crossed her arms. Why couldn't he just wait? Why did he have to move so fast? They had one more day to enjoy themselves. One more day of sweet bliss. And he had to talk about tomorrows and ever afters.

She took in a steady breath. No. She couldn't stay. She couldn't leave the life she'd built for herself in Chicago. It had taken her three

years to save up the necessary funds to move there. Though she'd come across her fair share of disappointments, it was her home now. It was where she belonged. She had good friends and a good career. She *couldn't* move back to a small town that reminded her of her dreary life in Wisconsin. She'd be miserable.

She looked away. "Let's not talk about this now."

"Why not?"

"Because I don't want to!"

She opened the door, stepped out into the snow, and marched toward the cabin.

"Anelle, wait!"

Sucking in a sharp breath, she turned toward him.

"We can make this work."

Anelle lifted her chin. He wasn't going to make this easy for her. She squared her shoulders, determined to make him understand.

"Look, this has been good and everything, but it's only been two days, Jasper. I can't change my entire life because of *two* freaking days." She fought to make her voice detached, blasé. "It can't be done."

"Why not?"

The arrogant man! He was not going to go all Dr. Phil on her again.

"Because it just can't, okay? I have a life in Chicago. I have responsibilities."

He took a step toward her. "A life you hate. You don't even like the city."

"I do too!"

"*Pet.*"

"Don't call me that!"

His lips quirked.

She straightened her sweater. "I don't like it when you call me that."

"You never complained before."

"Well, now I am, dammit."

She spun away from him, seeking the sanctuary of the cabin, hating the fact that she was behaving like a grumpy kid. What did he know about her life? Just because they'd shared a firelight chat the other night didn't mean they were bffs. She had no desire to stay with him. She was perfectly content with her life. Chicago was exciting. *She* was exciting when she wasn't working like a dog at school.

But somehow the affirmations did little to sway her, only made her feel like a terrible liar. Jasper had shown her what real happiness could be like. Had made her feel safe and loved, even if only for one day. But that didn't mean she had to drop everything to be with him. Her pride and stubbornness wouldn't let her. She glared at him, frantically thinking of something to say.

"And you could've let me get my damn jeans the other day," she sputtered, immediately embarrassed. Nicely done, Anelle. You sure know how to dish them out. She breathed in a steady breath. "Let's just forget about this for now."

A minute later he joined her in the entranceway, a dangerous look in his eyes. Once again, she was amazed at his height. At six foot two inches, he was bigger than most men.

"What are you afraid of?"

"Nothing," she said calmly, as if they weren't involved in a heated argument.

She turned and walked up the stairs, feeling foolish and put-out, suddenly wondering why she hadn't gotten the hell out of dodge a lot sooner.

## Chapter Eight

For the rest of the afternoon, Anelle hid in the locked guest room, eating a bag of chips and watching television. According to the weathermen, the roads would be clear enough to drive home in the morning. She sighed, already thinking about the lesson plan she had to prepare for Monday's class, and the stack of laundry that waited for her at home. Life had finally caught up to her.

Every now and then, she'd hear Jasper's footsteps outside her door. A few times she saw his shadow beneath the floorboards. She rolled her eyes at his antics. Was he going to stalk her all night? My God, she wasn't going anywhere--for now at least. Why couldn't he let it rest? In the evening, when he'd announced that dinner was ready, she'd announced she wasn't hungry, which had only made him as surly as a bear. He pounded on the door.

"Anelle, open up. You have to eat!"

"I'm not hungry."

"Come on, babe. I won't paw you."

"Oh, I've heard that before."

Resignedly, she opened the door and let him in. His eyes roamed her body. Though she did her best to ignore him, she couldn't help but notice how handsome he looked carrying her food. He placed a bowl of soup next to her bed and stared at her.

"Are you planning to stay in here all night?"

"Yep."

"Suit yourself."

"Thanks for the food," she offered.

A grunt was his only reply. An hour later he returned to collect her dishes, a frustrated look on his face.

"I could've brought them down."

"Don't worry about it," he snapped.

Inside she ached. It wasn't her intention to hurt him. Jesus, she didn't enjoy hurting anyone, but she had to stay firm.

“Jasper, don’t hate me.”

“I don’t hate you. I just think you’re behaving like a fool.”

Her temper flashed. “Look, just because I don’t want to stay in some backward town with a total stranger, doesn’t mean I’m behaving like a fool.”

He growled and stalked toward the door shutting it with a loud thud. Anelle crawled onto the plush bed and tried not to cry.

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That night Jasper crept into Anelle’s room, silently thanking the gods for reminding him about his spare key. He stared at her peaceful sleeping form. She slept on her stomach, tangled in a confection of pillows and sheets, like a child. He smiled as she murmured something in her sleep. It was clear that she enjoyed talking to herself, even when she was passed out.

“Shining Knight.”

His eyebrows shot up. Was she thinking of him? An arrogant expression smeared across his face. The woman said the most outrageous things. He remembered how cute she’d looked plopping through the snow earlier in the day, throwing snowballs at his head.

Why was she fighting the obvious? They belonged together. Yes, at first he might’ve been taken in by her fabulous ass, but he’d come a long way. They both had. Despite what she might think, he actually enjoyed her presence. He wanted her, exclusively.

He kneeled beside her.

“Shining Knight. My Shining Knight. Knight. Knight.”

She *was* speaking about him; it was obvious. Jasper shook his head, wondering if he should respond. Hadn’t he read somewhere that it was dangerous to talk to a sleepwalker? Or was that sleepwalker? He remained silent.

“Shining Knight. Shining Knight. Get out of my life. Get out of my life.”

He rose suddenly. What the fuck?

“I don’t want you. Stupid. Leave me be. Someone else. Someone else. Not you. Marcus. Marcus.”

He flinched. Her words came more rapidly.

“Dumb fuck. Snow truck. Driver. Dumb fuck. Leave me alone. Leave me alone. Leave me. Someone else.”

Shaken, he walked to the door. Dreams could be a powerful thing. He learned as much in graduate school. Someone else? He hadn't even considered the fact that she might have a boyfriend. That some prick was waiting for her back in the big city. Like liquid fire, rage poured through him. Fuck. He barely knew the woman. Why was he behaving like a love struck fool in front of her? He lived in a cabin in the woods for a purpose: privacy. The last thing he needed was some jean obsessed certifiable woman cramping up his style.

She spoke once more, her body tossing from side to side. “Leave. Leave me be.”

At the words Jasper stiffened. Then like a chivalrous knight, he bowed gallantly.

“As you wish,” he whispered, closing the door behind him, looking at her sleeping face one last time.

## Chapter Nine

The following weeks Anelle lost herself in her work. There were tests to grade and meetings to attend. Mrs. Jacobs, the principal of her school, had the annoying habit of stopping her in the hallways to inquire about the status of a few of her students, known troublemakers. Fortunately, she was able to fumble her way out of the conversation, before the principal started another round of sermons. She could only hear about the perils of standardized tests for so long.

If her days were tough, her nights were miserable. She'd come home to her empty apartment, Jasper on her brain. Though they'd parted weeks ago, she couldn't stop thinking about him. Her mind spun with questions. How was he? Was he with someone new? Was he safe out there in the snow? Was he still singing those God-awful shower songs? Did he miss her?

At the slightest sound of a snowplow, she'd run to her window in search of him, only to make eye contact with a group of chunky government workers. She was beyond pathetic. Staring up at her ceiling late at night, she'd laugh at her turn of thoughts. *Get a grip, Anelle. You ruined any opportunity you had with him. It's over.*

A part of her was still hurt by the way he treated her the day she left. On the drive back to her car, he'd barely said two words. When she'd accidentally held the jumping cords the wrong way, instead of laughing with her, he'd barked at her to pay attention. Who could blame him? She had been pretty rude herself. Still, she wished they could've parted on good terms. She didn't want him to hate her.

One night she called her best friend Sakinah and retold the tale.

"You what? You did the nasty with a snowplow man?"

"Sakinah, please. Don't start."

"Sorry girl. I'm just surprised. I can't believe you got down and dirty with a stranger. A white boy to boot."

Anelle rolled her eyes. She should've skipped over the white boy part. Her friend loved her some white boys.



“Well, now what are you going to do?”

“What do you mean?”

“You just found the love of your life, Nelly. *What are you going to do?*”

Anelle shook her head. “Sakinah, I have responsibilities here. My work. My friends. My home...” She trailed off, already tired of the same old script.

“Look,” started her friend. “You know I love you girl, but times are rough. When you see a good thing you gotta go for it! Don’t use me as an excuse to avoid being with this dude. Don’t cut yourself short, Nelly. I mean, think about it, what are the odds that your car would break down close to his place? In a snowstorm. It was *fate*.”

Anelle sucked in a breath. Her friend did have a point. It was sort of strange. She wasn’t even supposed to be on that blasted road.

“Fate girl,” repeated Sakinah. “Fate.”

Anelle gripped the phone. “I don’t know if he’d...if he’d forgive me. I shut him down completely. I was pretty nasty.”

“He’ll forgive you.”

“How do you know?”

“Believe me. He’ll forgive you.”

Later that night she thought about Sakinah’s words as she rummaged through her mail, wondering what she should do next. Considering the way Jasper had treated her on that last day, maybe it was best for her to keep her distance. To avoid hurting him again.

A glossy cover suddenly caught her attention in the pile of letters. It was a magazine. A Home and Lifestyle magazine. She grimaced. She never ordered magazines in the mail. She was on the verge of throwing it in the junk pile, when something told her to look at the front cover more closely. She stared at the picture.

It was a portrait of a cabin. A familiar cabin in the woods. Its rooftop was covered with snow as white as stars. Icicles hung from the rafters. Trees flanked it on both sides making it look like some winged creature that was about to take flight. Warm light shone from its square windows, cascading off the deck and into the front yard, where a snowman sat, a carrot-toothed smile.

At the very bottom of the page, the artist’s name was announced in bold black letters. Jasper T. Madison. Northern Illinois. Portrait title: *KISA*.

He'd sent it to her! She was positive! But there was no return address. What if it was just one of those promotion deals? She always got stuff like that in the mail. She shook her head.

"No!"

That would've been too coincidental. *It was fate.* She clutched the magazine to her chest as tears poured from her eyes. What had she done? She'd treated the man of her dreams like shit.

She gripped the magazine, staring at the beautiful picture. He was so talented. And she was a class A jerk! She'd gone and messed up a good thing, simply because she was afraid of commitment, of change. Tears rolled down her cheeks. She didn't even like Chicago!

She looked at the magazine date. It was sent over two weeks ago. What if she was too late?

"Jasper," she whispered, sobs tearing from her throat. "Forgive me."

\*\*\*\*

That Friday night despite his friends' warnings, Jasper drunk another round of beer at a local pub. The cold liquid did little to quench his misery. Only heightened it.

"And she's a dirty little talker in her sleep too," he slurred. "A real dirty one."

His loyal friend, Andrew, patted him on the back. "Come on bud. We should get you home."

Jasper grew louder at the pronouncement. "A dirty, dirty, dirty talker."

"I'm sure she is," said his pal Matt. "But you don't want to be accused of being a dirty talker too my man."

Jasper slammed his fists on the counter. "A dirty talker! I sent her magazine covers, and cabin pictures, and she don't even care. I named it for her."

He pointed his fingers accusingly at the pint of beer.

"She's a dirty talker!"

Half of his friends laughed, while the others frowned. Each of them pulled him up by the shoulders and dragged him outside to Andrew's car.

"Damn, I've never seen him this bad."

"What the fuck is up with him these days?"

"Some broad from the city fucked him up."

“Really?”

“Yeah, really jacked his shit up man. I mean look at him.”

Jasper whirled around and flashed them the finger.

“Hey, go to Hell!”

Andrew pushed him in the passenger side.

“Shut up and buckle up,” he snapped.

A few hours later he was sprawled out on his couch, as drunk as a skunk. He groaned, remembering how he’d behaved at the bar. He usually held his liquor better. Fuck, he’d behaved like a total douche bag. It was all her fault. Anelle. She’d turned him into a laughingstock. In front of everyone.

Even though he’d sent her pictures to try to get her to remember the good times they had together, he hadn’t receive a response in two weeks. Two whole weeks. Didn’t the woman have any feelings? For the hundredth time, he wondered what she was doing and who she was with. Marcus. Wasn’t that the prick’s name? He must’ve been some smooth talking city dude. He must’ve worn expensive Armani suits and driven sleek cars. He opened his mouth. Even though he knew he couldn’t sing, he felt like stretching his vocal chords.

“Fuck you, and you, Marcus dude. You can have the little vixen! If you play your cards, she’ll fuck you real hard, and leave you in a...”

Dammit! He couldn’t think of anything that rhymed with “hard.”

A sudden knock came from the door.

“Go away!”

The knock came again.

Cursing beneath his breath he stumbled toward the entranceway, ready to do battle with the person who’d bother him so late in the evening. He yanked open the door. His eyes blurred. Anelle stood in the soft glow of the porch light, staring up at him. Jasper blinked, unsure if she was one of the mirages that had haunted him all week, or the real thing.

She looked beautiful. Her lips were rosy pink. Her curly hair fluttered in the wind. In her dark skirt and a red sweater she looked like an angel.

“What do you want?”

“Can I come in?”

He frowned. “Why?”

“Please Jasper.”

He left the door open and returned to his spot on the sofa. He kicked up his feet on the pillows and glared at her.

"I wanted to speak with you."

"You drove all the way back out here in that junk of a car to speak to me?"

She lifted her chin. "I got it fixed."

"Sure you did."

"Jasper."

"Make this fast."

She stood in front of him, a look of determination across her lovely face.

"I just..." she started. "I just..."

"Get on with it."

"You're not going to make this easy for me, are you?"

"You have one minute."

Sucking in a huge breath, she kneeled before him, her round doe-like eyes searching his face. *Fuck*. He'd miss her.

"I just wanted to say I'm sorry. For everything. For what I said. For how I behaved. It was wrong of me. I regret every minute of it. I panicked a little. You were right. I don't like my life in Chicago. I never have. And when I saw your picture in the magazine, it just brought everything into perspective. I'm tired of living the life I *think* is right. I want to live the life I *know* is right. With you...I love you, Jasper."

He looked up at the ceiling, wondering how long she'd practice the speech. It was a helluva speech. A part of him wanted to tell her to get lost. To leave him alone for good. That he wasn't going to be a fool for her anymore. That he could never be like her smooth talking city dudes. That it was just too damn late. But he couldn't seem to form the words.

"Who's Marcus?"

"Who?"

"The dude I heard you calling out to in your sleep."

Laughter danced in her chestnut eyes. "Marcus was the dog I had in high school. Sometimes I say the most random things when I sleep, especially when I'm stressed. It doesn't really mean anything." She bit down on her lower lip. "Is that what's bugging you?"

"No," he lied, feeling a flush of embarrassment creep up on his skin. "I'm just curious."

She grabbed his hands. "Please Jasper. Let's try to make it work."

A sliver of hope rippled through him. "Didn't you say you'd be miserable out here?"

"I wouldn't be miserable with you. I can teach and write anywhere. My home is wherever you are."

He closed his eyes and dragged in a breath. Why was she doing this to him? Why was she making it so difficult for him to walk away? His pride held him back. "It's too late," he snapped. "Leave."

Tears swelled up in her eyes. "Don't do this."

"Leave."

"It was fate, Jasper. *Fate*."

"Go!"

With a small cry, she leaped up and ran toward the door.

He pressed a hand to his forehead, shaken to the core. Images crashed through him. Images of her. He imagined his life with Anelle in his cabin. He saw her writing in one room, while he painted in another. Her surprising him in the shower every morning. Her running through the woods, while he gave chase, a look of love on her sweet face. No longer could he deny the truth. He was in love with her.

A sudden scream came from outside.

"Anelle!" Jasper jolted from the sofa and ran outside. She lay on her back in the snow, silent. He kneeled beside her. "Anelle? Are you okay?"

She groaned, grabbing at his forearms. "I'm okay. I just tripped over something and lost my footing."

She wiggled her bottom. From beneath her she pulled out a pair of ratty old jeans.

"My jeans!" She hugged the mud soaked jeans to her chest. "The storm must've blown them this way."

Jasper laughed.

"Hey, these are hundred dollar jeans!"

"Babe, they look like they're worth five bucks."

She eyed the jeans. "Yeah, they've been through the ringer. A little loving will bring them back, don't you think?"

He stopped her crazy rant by capturing her lips in a ferocious kiss, relishing in the feel of her soft sweet mouth once more. When he finally came up for air, she eyed him suspiciously.

"So you forgive me?"

"Of course I do," he said with a devilish smile. "I love you, too."

Her eyes widened as she hugged him. He picked her up and moved toward the cabin.

Anelle looked back at the jeans. "But my jeans," she whimpered.

“The jeans can wait. We have some catching up to do.”

She laughed. “Are all government workers this horny at night?”

Jasper kissed the jean obsessed certifiable woman he’d come to love with all of his heart, wondering how in the hell he lucked out.

“Pet, you just don’t know how horny us government workers get.”

He squeezed her ass, while she burst into giggles.

Both stared at each other in awe as they made their way across the porch, through the opened doors, toward the warm loving light.

THE END