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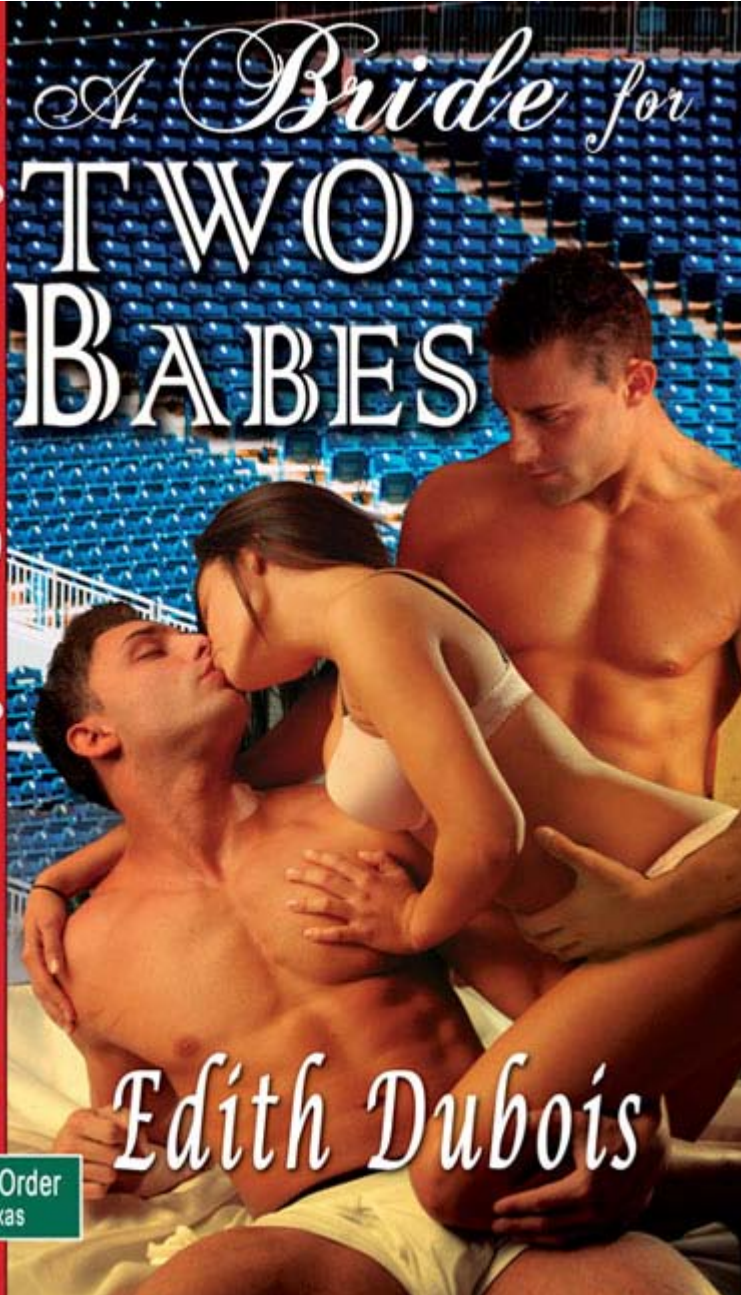
Ménage Everlasting



Male Order
Texas

A Bride for **TWO BABIES**

Edith Dubois



Male Order, Texas 5

A Bride for Two Babes

New York businesswoman Emilie Benson feels like she's been banished into exile upon arriving in Male Order, Texas to sell her father's baseball team, the Dallas Outlaws. The last thing on her mind is falling in love, but when she meets the sexy twins interested in buying her father's team, she realizes she may be getting more than she bargained for.

Grayson and Gavin Stephens have grown up loving baseball, so deciding to become the owners of a Major League Baseball team feels like the perfect plan. Especially when the mysteriously seductive Emilie Benson comes waltzing into their life! When Emilie becomes their lover, it doesn't take long for the twins to realize she is the woman of their dreams.

As sole heir to her father's company, however, there's another man who desires Emilie. And he will stop at nothing to keep the twins away from her.

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MENAGE EVERLASTING



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DEDICATION

For Scorpio. The bitch lives.

A BRIDE FOR TWO BABES

Male Order, Texas 5

EDITH DUBOIS

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Chapter 1

A billow of gray smoke plumed around Emilie Benson's face as she stared out the glass walls of her father's high-rise executive suite. Hundreds of feet below, New York sprawled out and away from her. As she watched the bustle and the hurry of the city's occupants, she took another deep drag on the *Gitane Blonde* cigarette perched between her two fingers. She'd developed quite an affinity for the brand when she attended boarding school in France as a young girl.

Taking a deep drag in an attempt to dissipate the frustration tangled inside her, she thought over the board meeting that had finished a little over an hour ago. Her father, Ralph Benson—CEO, chairman, and principle shareholder for his company, Haymitch-Benson—had announced to the board members that Emilie and Principle Advisor, Julian Steele, would be leaving on Monday for Dallas, Texas to discuss selling his baseball team, the Dallas Outlaws.

It was the first Emilie had heard of these plans.

She had smiled tightly at the board members, shot her father a glance that said "We *will* be discussing this," and then nodded stiffly at Julian. His returning smile held a wry sympathy. They'd both been surprised by her father's boardroom announcements too many times to count. She doubted if Julian had heard of the plans, either.

Hearing the office door open behind her and then her father's footsteps as he moved to his desk, Emilie straightened her back. Not wanting to turn around and face him until she felt completely composed inside, she waited until she heard the trickle of scotch pouring into his glass.

"How long do you plan on fuming by the window, Em?" he said, his gravelly tone possessing a tinge of humor.

She took one last lengthy drag on the *Gitane* then turned to face her father with a small half-smile playing on her lips. "Not long, *Papa*."

Having spent most of her childhood in France, she had never completely lost her accent, and it lent a small lilt to her speech. She still referred to her parents in French as *Papa* and *Maman*, and to her, it was an endearment.

Her father's eyes followed her as she moved to his desk, smashing the burning tip of her cigarette into the ashtray there. Leaning a hip against her father's desk, she looked into his face for a long moment, trying to fathom a reasonable explanation as to why he would send her to God-knows-where Texas with instructions to sell his beloved baseball team.

"Tell me the truth, *Papa*," she said. "Are you dying?"

Ralph Benson's eyes crinkled at the corners as he laughed. "You and your mother are so morbidly romantic. Everything is tragedy, tragedy, tragedy with you two."

"Yes, but you didn't answer the question."

Her father shrugged. "I'm getting old, Em, yes, but I am not dying. Rest assured. I bought the Outlaws almost thirty-five years ago, just after I married your mother. Originally, I had planned on making it a gift, an inheritance, to my son."

Emilie lifted an eyebrow. She didn't have any brothers.

Her father, Ralph Benson, was a self-made man. After leaving his working-class family in Boise, Idaho to attend an East Coast school for business and finance, he'd quickly ascended the ranks. With a

reputation for making swift, unpredictable decisions that often left his competitors scratching their heads, Ralph Benson had built Haymitch-Benson from nothing and turned it into one of the most lucrative investment firms, not only in the United States, but in the world.

And Emilie Benson was his sole heir.

"I find it hard to believe that you are just now realizing that you don't have a son, *Papa*." Emilie said, lighting another *Gitane*.

"All right, Miss Emilie. Your displeasure has been noted."

She sucked in some more smoke through her teeth, chafing at his condescension, but she quickly composed herself. Her lips curled up in a little answering half-smile as she let the smoke fall out of her mouth in thick, curling waves.

"Unless you want the team?" her father asked.

Emilie let out a bark of laughter.

"That's what I thought. So I've decided that now is the time to sell."

"It seems you've also decided that it's absolutely imperative that I travel out to the middle of nowhere—"

"Dallas isn't the middle of nowhere."

"—to meet with some spoiled little rich kids who want to buy up their favorite baseball team because they have nothing better to do with their time? Why would you want me to do this? I know nothing about baseball, nothing about Texas, and especially nothing about spoiled little rich kids. You, of all people, are aware of this."

"Your mother and I have our anniversary this week. She'll have my head on a platter if I miss it."

Emilie narrowed her eyes at her father. "So?"

"So...this team is special to me, Em," he said, peering at her through his hawkish amber eyes. "Before I can consider selling it to anyone, I need to know that whoever buys it will care about it as much as I have. These brothers are born and bred Texans, and they are ready to buy. In this, I trust your judgment, and your judgment

alone. You know people, and I wouldn't allow anyone else, apart from myself, to handle this."

Emilie considered his words for a long moment. Walking around the desk to her father, she bent and placed a soft kiss on his forehead. "I will go, *Papa*. I will not enjoy my time there, and I will not derive much pleasure from my task. But I will go, and I will do this for you."

Her father smiled up at Emilie and said, with much warmth in his voice, "Thank you."

Emilie nodded once and then left his office. She had some packing to do.

Chapter 2

Gavin Stephens stared openly at the woman shaking his hand. There was no other word for her. She was absolutely, completely and totally a woman. Surrounding her pale, lightly freckled face was the silkiest, blackest hair he'd ever seen. She had it loosely coiled at the nape of her neck, but it pillowed her face in a wavy pattern. Bright blue eyes rimmed with coal black eyelashes stared back at him from beneath hooded eyes. A small smile played on her plump red lips. She had that little dip at the crest of her top lip. Gavin loved that little dip.

And her breasts, her perfect breasts, could not be hidden. Even in a suit, he could tell they would be like two little morsels of heaven to hold and suck and bite and devour. She wore no blouse beneath the jacket of her suit, and it fell open at the top, revealing tantalizing white flesh that he wanted to run his tongue over. And then he wanted his tongue to go down and down and down until he could taste the sweet, forbidden cream that he would draw out of her.

"A pleasure to meet you, Mr. Stephens," she said in a soft, husky voice, yanking him from his reverie. She tried to pull her hand out of his grip, but he held fast, not willing to surrender that small point of contact with her.

"Likewise, Miss Benson," he said, running his thumb over the smooth skin at the base of her thumb in a suggestive pattern.

Emilie said nothing, only met his gaze fully, the small smile still curling her beautiful lips ever so slightly. Gavin thrilled at the hot spark of desire lurking in the depths of her eyes. His cock suddenly made its uncomfortable presence known.

He released her hand as her escort, Julian Steele—a middle-aged man with sharp blue eyes and silver-streaked black hair—tugged at her elbow, urging her through the throng of people who were all waiting to meet the New York billionaire socialite. Turning to his twin brother, Grayson, as Emilie moved away from their part of the Club Room, he caught his brother's eye. They didn't have to say it. He knew his brother's expression mirrored his own and that they were both smitten. Smiling, Gavin raised the Shiner in his hand to his lips, taking a hearty swig, trying to cool his insides.

When Grayson had first approached Gavin about buying the Texas Outlaws, Gavin had been skeptical. Lately, Grayson had been coming up with all sorts of schemes, some new business venture that he thought would help to begin making a name for the brothers.

Not that Gavin didn't want to make a name for himself, but he was twenty-four years old, for Christ's sake. He figured he had a few more years to enjoy the rebel-without-a-cause phase of his life. Grayson, however, kept coming at him with various propositions. A couple months ago, it had been Ellis Enterprises and clean energy. The company had experienced some trouble with the Ellis Eco-Energy Department in the past and was still recovering from pretty heavy losses. After that, it had been something about creating and marketing the "Male Order brand." Grayson got pretty crazy about that idea, going so far as to suggest running for some sort of civil office. Gavin fell off his chair laughing at that one.

Gavin's lack of enthusiasm for each of Grayson's subsequent schemes had managed to dampen Grayson's verve until each of his ideas eventually fizzled out. Last week, though, when Grayson mentioned his idea to buy the Texas Outlaws, Gavin had to admit to an inkling of curiosity.

All their life, the twins had been sports lovers. From the moment their toddler hands learned how to grip, there had been some type of sports apparatus in them. They'd participated in almost every sport throughout their school years—football, track and field, even curling

for a little while. It was baseball, though, that claimed Gavin's heart and soul. He loved baseball. He loved everything about baseball.

He loved watching baseball, waiting each tense moment between pitches, knowing that a few seconds could alter completely the course of the game. He loved playing baseball, making split-second decisions that could either save or doom his team. He loved coaching baseball, sharing such heights of joy when his little leaguers hit their first ball or struck someone out for the first time. The thought of owning a Major League Baseball team had Gavin's interest well-piqued.

And now that he'd met Emilie Benson, he was starting to think that maybe this time Grayson's idea could turn into something real.

With his brother standing next to him doing the same, Gavin watched Emilie across the room. She stood next to one of the large windows at the front of the room. The Club Room was positioned behind home plate, and its occupants could observe the goings on of the entire stadium. Gavin and his brother had season tickets, but they usually preferred a seat closer to the field just to the left of home plate. This afforded them prime positioning to watch any excitement that went on at the home plate and first base. Up in the Club Room, with only ten minutes until the national anthem and then the first pitch, Gavin could see that the stadium was practically full.

Emilie stood staring out the window, taking a moment for herself away from the others, it looked like to Gavin. She pulled a little silver case and a packet of matches out of her suit pocket. He liked that she didn't lug a purse around with her, just carried what she needed on her person. She took a cigarette out of the case, and holding it delicately between two slender fingers, lit the match and then the end of the cigarette in one deft motion.

She closed her eyes as she took the first deep breath, and while Gavin didn't particularly care for smoking himself, he couldn't help feeling a stir of pleasure as he watched her features relax, bringing that intriguing little smile back to her lips.

Before she could make it to the second drag, though, one of the Club Room attendants scampered over to her. Gavin could hear his nasally, high-pitched voice all the way across the room. "I'm sorry, ma'am, but this is a non-smoking room. If you wish to smoke, you'll need to exit to the Lexus Balcony located down the hallway on the right."

The smile disappeared from Emilie's lips, and Gavin felt like marching over to the obnoxious pissant and smacking his impertinent jaw. But then Emilie put the cigarette to her lips again, took a long, lingering draw and drilled her eyes into the attendant until Gavin could see the little man literally squirming beneath her gaze. After what had to be more than half a minute, she finally let the smoke curl out of her mouth. She stood close enough to the attendant that, since she stood a good four inches taller than him, the smoke fell right onto his face.

She then stalked past his red, mottled, sputtering face and out the door that would take her to the balcony. Gavin found himself chuckling. The woman was fire inside bones of iron. He supposed with a father like Ralph Benson, it was almost inevitable. Just as she reached the door, her eyes flicked over to where Gavin stood watching her. It wasn't much, but it was enough to cause a primal jolt deep in Gavin's gut. Then she slipped out of the room.

Without hesitating, he began moving toward the door that Emilie had just slipped through when his brother's hand on his arm halted his progress.

"Where do you think you're going, little brother."

"You know damn well," Gavin answered in an even voice, shaking off Grayson's grip and meeting his brother's somber gaze.

"I don't think so," Grayson said.

"That's fantastic. I do, though, so I guess I'll see you later."

"Gavin," his brother ground out under his breath. "She is the daughter of the man with whom we may be conducting business. *No*."

Gavin turned fully to his brother so as to let the full impact of his next words sink in. "She gave me a look."

Grayson snorted. "She looks at a lot of people."

"No, brother, when a woman like *that* gives you a look, no matter who she is, no matter who you are, you'd damn well better find out why she is looking at you."

"I'll keep that in mind," Grayson said, tipping his bottle at Gavin in mock appreciation. "But my answer is still no."

"I don't believe I asked you a question." Just as he turned toward the door, though, Julian Steele slipped through it, ostensibly to find Emilie. "Dammit, Grayson."

Grayson raised one thick eyebrow. "Divine intervention." He smirked at his brother over the edge of his Shiner, taking a triumphant swig. A few moments later, Emilie returned with Julian. If possible, Emilie looked more tense than before she left, while Gavin noticed a small smug smile playing across Julian Steele's features. Immediately, he took a strong disliking to the man.

Emilie turned her face toward Gavin, her blue eyes hitting him like a train. When her eyes found his, the tension in her brow eased. Then she looked at Grayson, and her seductive little smile came back, as if to say *I was waiting for you. You didn't come. Your loss.*

Gavin watched his brother's grip tighten around the neck of his beer bottle until the knuckles on his hands were white like little snow-capped mountains. Gavin laughed heartily and clapped his older brother on the shoulder. "I believe, big brother, that Emilie Benson just gave you the look."

* * * *

It had only been one inning, and Emilie was already bored out of her mind. She had never been a big sports fan, but baseball was the worst. A bunch of over-sized, over-paid boys stood around in pants

that were too tight, throwing a little ball around and occasionally, *very* occasionally, hitting it with a stick.

The only thing that made this evening a tiny bit interesting was the twins, Grayson and Gavin Stephens, who had been shooting her heated glances since they'd first laid eyes on her. Her father had only told her that a pair of twenty-four-year-old, billionaire twins from a tiny town outside of Dallas were interested in buying the Outlaws. She'd imagined that they were either pimply-faced and power-hungry or big, dumb jocks spoiled by indulgent parents. She hadn't even taken the time to Google them.

In reality, they were two of the handsomest men she'd ever encountered. After living in Europe for years, attending hundreds of galas, film festivals, and fashion events and meeting many men thought to be the world's finest, she considered herself a decent judge of male beauty, and the twins were far from lacking.

At first, the twins appeared to be identical. Both possessed dark curly hair, a proud, flat brow, and a wide-set mouth. But when she'd been introduced to them and, thus, afforded a closer look, she'd detected slight differences. Grayson, the older one, wore an impeccably tailored Tom Ford suit and had slicked his curls slightly back away from his face, making his already dramatic cheekbones more forceful. He seemed to have a small, ever-present crease between his brows, as if he was determined to observe everything and everyone around him. His face was just a bit leaner than his brother's, but the biggest difference between the brothers was their eyes. Emilie had immediately noticed that Grayson's gleamed sage green while Gavin's burned topaz blue. Despite their different hues, though, both pairs of eyes had met hers with an identical fire.

While Grayson had been more discreet with his looks, Gavin was eyeing her like a wolf. Emilie had been somewhat surprised by the power of her response. When he'd run his thumb over her hand in subtle invitation, she'd involuntarily squeezed her thighs closer together to ease her suddenly pulsing pussy.

Rolling her eyes as another eventless pitch was thrown, she headed over to the open bar, the only thing keeping her from screaming with boredom at the moment. In the Club Room, no one really sat down to watch the game. Apart from the few guest-listed visitors like Emilie, men and women of the Dallas elite meandered through the private Club Room. Mostly they would stand in front of the windows for a few minutes, watching the game, and then inevitably they would make their way over to the bar, schmoozing in a leisurely manner with whoever passed by on their way back and forth.

As she ordered a gin and tonic with lime from a woman working at the bar, Gavin slid up next to her and ordered a beer. She felt the heat from his body pushing against the side of hers, and she turned to face him more fully, wanting it to wash all along the front of her. Her breasts tingled in response. Studying him for a moment over the rim of her glass, she took a healthy sip of the crisp beverage. Its coolness as it slid down her throat lent her some reprieve from Gavin's heat.

He watched her with a big grin on his face. She liked how it tipped up a little crookedly on one side. "So you and your brother want to buy the Outlaws," she said, never letting her steady gaze fall away from his face.

The bartender handed Gavin his Shiner. "Well, let's just say that we're interested."

"Only interested? Nothing more?" Emilie felt her lips curling upwards, letting a touch of innuendo into the lilt of her question.

He cocked a brow at her. "We usually don't like to jump right into things if that's what you mean."

"Oh? Is that so? I must have judged wrong then." She gave a slight shrug, turning slightly away from him.

"How so?"

"You just struck me as the kind of man who enjoyed all sorts of games."

Emilie nearly choked on her drink when Gavin grabbed her by the shoulders and turned her back to face him. “What sort of game did you have in mind, Miss Benson?”

Warmth spread from Gavin’s hands on the sides of her shoulders and trickled down her arms. She kept her face passive except for her little smile. She liked to think of that little smile as her secret weapon. It affected people, and she knew it. Right now, she could tell from the rising bulge in Gavin’s pants that it was having a very profound effect on him.

She leaned in close to him, letting her breasts brush against his chest, and his hands tightened on her shoulders. “Bring me the baseball signed by Babe Ruth by the seventh inning stretch,” she said into his ear, her breath tickling against the side of his face.

Pulling away from Gavin, she leaned against the bar, bringing the glass up to her lips, tossed her head back, and downed the rest of its contents.

“And what exactly will happen if I do, Miss Benson?”

Placing her empty glass onto the bar, she met Gavin’s burning gaze. “Then you get your prize, Mr. Stephens.”

Chapter 3

Grayson tried not to show his irritation, and so far, the only sign that hinted at his inner frustration was the vise grip he had on his Shiner. He smiled and nodded as one of his father's friends prattled on about a fishing trip he'd taken in Australia ten years ago.

It was that damn woman!

He couldn't concentrate with her around. He'd tried to direct his attention to the game, but his eyes possessed a mind of their own and kept sneaking quick little glances in her direction. He was already working on his fifth Shiner, and it was only the end of the third inning.

And speaking of distractions, he'd wanted to throttle his brother when he'd left Gavin alone for five minutes only to find him moments later engaged in a *tête-a-tête* with Emilie at the bar. As he watched his brother, Grayson drained the contents of his beer. Not wanting to look too deeply into the reasons why, he'd nearly stalked over there to yank Gavin away. Then, putting a halt to his plans, Emilie leaned in and whispered something in Gavin's ear.

Grayson watched Gavin's eyes widen, and as Emilie sauntered away moments later, desire was written across his face for the whole room to see. Only half a minute later, Gavin slipped out of the Club Room. Grayson thought that perhaps Emilie would follow him, and then Grayson definitely would have stalked after them, but Emilie remained in the room.

After she'd been introduced to them, Grayson hadn't spoken to her again. He'd watched as people went to speak to her, as if inexorably drawn to her presence. Not once did she seek anyone out.

She let them come to her. He watched as she spoke a few spare words and then sent them away. It was never anything rude, but just a small tilt of her head and a little half-smile that seemed to say *We are done now. You may go.*

Grayson wanted to go to her, to hear that sweet, husky voice again, to let his eyes devour her exquisitely refined features, to brush back that one lock of black hair that kept falling across her forehead and tuck it behind her ear. He refused, however, to be dismissed by a nod and a half-smile, so he kept his distance.

The third inning ended. The Outlaws were up by one, and Grayson thought it was just about time to start on his sixth beer when Emilie came to stand next to him. He stood at the farthest window, wanting to sequester himself from the rest of the party, and he now found that they were practically cut off from everyone else.

“Enjoying the game, Mr. Stephens?” She was not a petite woman. He guessed that without heels, she was probably around five foot six, but with the extra three inches, she only stood a little below eye level with him.

“I haven’t missed an Outlaws home game since I was twelve years old,” he said.

“Impressive.”

“And you? Are you enjoying the game?”

“Me?” She smiled up at him. “Oh, I love games.”

Emilie stared directly into his eyes, and Grayson felt a pull in his cock. Most of the women he’d met would either giggle and look away or stutter, intimidated by his hard gaze. It seemed Miss Benson, however, thrilled at his directness.

“I’m beginning to gather as much,” he said with a wry twist in his voice. “You wouldn’t happen to know the whereabouts of my brother, would you?”

Emilie turned slightly away, watching as the Outlaws warmed up between innings, preparing for their opponent’s “at bat.” “I would imagine he’s on his way to the other side of the stadium.”

“Where exactly?”

“The museum.”

“The Outlaw Museum?” Grayson didn’t let his confusion seep through to his features, but he knew that Emilie was toying with him, begging him to bite at her bait. “And why would he choose now of all times to visit the museum?”

“He’s looking for something.”

“Looking for what?” Grayson said, breathing through his nose but forcing himself to remain patient.

She turned her big blue eyes back to him, and beneath those jet black eyelashes, he saw the fire burning deep in their azure depths. “He’s looking for something that I *really* want, *Monsieur Stephens*.”

Grayson’s voice came out deep and coarse. “And what do you want?”

She stepped closer to him, and he detected the smallest hints of vanilla and musk coming from the wavy folds of her black hair. “I want you to bring me the baseball signed by Babe Ruth.”

Grayson frowned, taken aback by her sudden change in direction.

“If you can bring me that before the seventh inning stretch, I’ll give you what you want.” Emilie’s back was to the room, so when she slid her hand up his inner thigh to cup his balls, he knew that no one could see her. His cock immediately hardened in her firm grasp, and she shot her little half-smile up at him while the challenge in her words shimmered brightly in her eyes.

“Damn you,” Grayson said, grasping her wrist and removing her hand.

“Are you afraid that your brother will win?” She laughed up at him, trying to pull her wrist out of his grip. “I know the head start wasn’t fair, but I thought you could handle it.”

“Unlike my brother—” Grayson increased the pressure on her wrist. She stopped squirming and looked up at his menacing tone. “—I don’t play frivolous games. If I want something, I take it.” He leaned over, letting his lips hover over hers. Pleased by the way her

hooded eyes widened in surprise, he took a step back and released her wrist. “Now, we invited you here to conduct business. I request that you act accordingly, Miss Benson.”

She raised a long black eyebrow at him. “Your cock doesn’t seem to agree with that request.”

He glared at her. “My cock isn’t the one deciding whether or not we will buy this baseball team, dammit. Besides, I wouldn’t feel right taking the baseball. It may not be worth much, but it’s a treasure that belongs to this stadium and to this team.”

Emilie’s lips curled at the corners. “And who owns the team?”

Grayson frowned and studied her face for a moment. “Why?”

“Why what, Mr. Stephens?”

“Why this little game? You could have any man in this room, hell...probably in this city.”

“But that’s not who I *want*.”

“Do you want to know what I think, Miss Benson?” He took a step toward her, but much to Grayson’s surprise, she didn’t retreat one inch. She stood her ground until their noses were almost touching.

“I would be delighted to hear your thoughts on the matter,” she said, smirking.

Grayson could feel his body responding to their proximity. The blood rushed to his cock, making it strain toward her, while the skin of his chest tightened as if it knew her breasts were only inches away. “Excellent. Let me lay this out on the line for you. You can’t set me against my brother or my brother against me. Not with sex. Not with money. Not with anything. You see, I did my homework. I know you are Daddy’s sole heir to the Haymitch-Benson fortune. I also know that you are used to getting your way. I can see the power you have over people.”

He leaned down to whisper in her ear. “Try to pit me against my brother again, and you will be punished. And trust me, Miss Benson, that’s one game you do not want to play.” He smiled to himself as Emilie’s body stiffened in response to his words.

Pulling slightly away from her and looking over her shoulder, Grayson said, "I believe your associate requires your attention." He tilted his head in the direction of Julian Steele's approaching form.

When he looked back into Emilie's face, a less observant man would have thought it impassive. But Grayson had been watching her all night. Her plump lips were pressed together into a thin line and lacked their usual curl at the corners. Her eyelids were pulled even farther down across her blue eyes, hiding the anger he knew he had ignited.

"Just remember," Emilie said, her voice even, not betraying the fire he knew blazed inside her. "The thing that I love even more than playing games is winning them."

With that, she turned on her heel and strode away from a chuckling Grayson.

* * * *

"Well, shit." Gavin said to himself.

The museum was closed. He should have known that it would be at this hour, but the promise in Emilie's words had distracted him from all rational thought, which included remembering that the Outlaw Museum closed during game time.

He shook the locked doors in frustration.

"Can I help you, sir?"

Gavin whipped around at the familiar voice.

Carl, the security guard who'd been working at the park since Gavin and Grayson's first ball game, approached Gavin with a wary look. When he realized it was Gavin, though, a smile immediately broke out across his features.

"What are you doing down here, boy? There's a game going on out there."

Gavin chuckled under his breath. "Don't I know it."

"What was that?"

“Oh, nothing, Carl. It’s just...” An idea presented itself to Gavin, and he had to stop himself from grinning like an idiot. He didn’t want Carl to catch on to his excitement. “You remember when I was in here a few days ago talking to Gary?” Gary, the museum shop owner, had sold the twins many firsts. Their first set of Outlaw baseball cards. Their first Owen Bryan jersey, the best pitcher to ever play for the Outlaws. And, most importantly, their first ticket into the Outlaw Museum, though they’d bought many after that. The Outlaw Museum was Gavin’s third favorite place in the world, coming only behind his own bed and sitting atop his lime green GQ Quad four-wheeler.

“Sure, sure,” Carl said.

“Well, I think I left my pager in there. I was hoping to pick it up tonight, so I wouldn’t have to drive into town again.”

“Your pager?” Carl looked suspicious. “Do they even make those anymore?”

Dammit, what made him say pager? Cell phone would have been plausible. Cell phone would have gotten him right in. Why the hell couldn’t he have said *cell phone*? Cursing his stupidity, Gavin just nodded his head and decided to roll with it. “My cell phone has been acting a little weird lately, so I blew the dust off the ol’ pager.” He clapped Carl on the back. “Do you think you could open her up for me?”

“All right, but make it quick. You know Gary would have my hide if he knew I was lettin’ people in here willy-nilly.”

Gavin’s face split into a wide grin. “Thanks, Carl. I owe you one.”

Carl pulled out his set of keys and unlocked the door. Gavin didn’t want Carl sneaking up on him, so he said, “Would you mind looking in the gift shop for me? I can’t remember if I left it there or in the actual museum.”

“No prob.” Carl headed off in the opposite direction, and Gavin waited for him to disappear through the gift shop door before heading straight for the display case with the Babe Ruth baseball. When Gavin

tried to pull the case off, he realized that it was locked to keep sticky fingers like his away.

In that moment, Gavin had never felt more joy at being born a boy because, as a twelve-year-old boy, naturally he'd developed an intense infatuation with espionage films. He'd watched every single James Bond film that had ever been made, re-watching all the Sean Connery ones about five times each. From this infatuation, just like an addict, he'd needed something more than just the movies to satiate his lust for all things espionage. He soon began thinking of himself as a spy and set about learning all the tricks of the trade. First he'd mastered pick-pocketing. He remembered his mother being very annoyed when, every time she went for a piece of butterscotch, she was met with nothing but the material at the bottom of her pocket.

After that, Gavin had moved on to picking locks. He'd worked his way up through various levels of difficulty. He'd started with picking the locks on all the bikes of the neighborhood kids. Papa Craig had gotten many irate phone calls from parents those few weeks. After bike locks, he moved up to the combination locks kept on the lockers at school. He never stole anything, but he thought it funny to leave little mementos, things like a paper clip sculpture or little note saying hello. Once, when he managed to break into the locker of an older kid who didn't go a week without picking a fight with Gavin, he taped a picture of a dog taking a shit at the back of the locker and then put an unwrapped Hershey's kiss under the picture right where the imaginary pile of crap would have fallen. That had been a proud moment.

His specialty, however, was key locks. It had taken him the longest to master this kind of lock. Now, though, he could open any door or safe that required a key in less than twenty seconds. The case surrounding the Babe Ruth baseball took him exactly twelve seconds to open.

He grabbed the baseball and then cursed himself for not thinking to wear his suit jacket. He couldn't put the ball in his pants pocket without arousing Carl's suspicions.

“Hey, Gavin! I’m not seeing anything in here,” Carl called out to him from the gift shop. Gavin could hear Carl’s footsteps in the hallway.

“Shit,” Gavin muttered, and in an act of desperation, he unzipped his pants and pulled back the elastic of his boxer briefs. “All for love of the game,” he said to himself as he nestled the baseball in with his own pair of balls and then zipped his pants back up.

He waddled back to the door that Carl had unlocked for him. “I didn’t find it, Carl,” he said. “I guess I left it somewhere else.”

“Sorry about that.”

“It’s all right. Thanks for your help.” He tried to walk as normally as possible, but he noticed Carl’s eyes dart down to his groin area. Gavin gave Carl a devil-may-care look, straightened his back, and then strode out of the museum. “Later, Carl,” he said, shaking Carl’s hand and giving him a solid thump on the back. As he walked back toward the Club Room, he looked at the small key he had just nicked from Carl, tossed it into the air and then put it in his pants pocket, grinning triumphantly the whole way back.

* * * *

“What do you think so far?” Julian asked Emilie.

She shrugged, noncommittal. “We have a week to decide. I’ll know what I think then.”

Emilie could barely keep her concentration focused on Julian’s inane questions. After he’d found her out on the balcony and insisted she rejoin the company, she’d been doing her best to get rid of him.

He’d been acting strangely all night. He kept putting his hand on the small of her back or making strange little comments to people. It almost seemed to Emilie that he wanted to send out the vibe that they were together. Stifling a laugh at that thought, she stuffed Julian Steele’s odd behavior into the back of her mind.

Instead, she replayed Grayson's words in her head. She'd never been more infuriated in her life. She'd also never been more aroused. When he'd leaned over to whisper his threat into her ears, his hot breath had washed over the side of her face and neck, waking the nerves and the synapses just under the surface of her skin. Her pussy had clenched and pulsed at the sound of his voice rumbling so intimately in her ear.

But then the meaning of his words had started to sink in, and she'd had a different kind of heat burning in the pit of her belly. No one ever spoke to her like that, like she was a child who needed a good spanking. An image of Grayson doing just that flashed through her mind, and Emilie took another deep breath through her nose, grasping for her usual aplomb as her pussy thrummed in response to the image. Who the hell did he think he was anyway? *Used to getting her way*, he'd said. *Done his homework*. He didn't know shit about her.

She took a deep breath, wanting a cigarette but knowing that if she stepped out to the balcony to smoke, Julian would just follow her there. At least in the Club Room, she could dart between people to create a temporary barrier and catch a few free moments for herself.

Not that she wanted to admit it to herself, but it annoyed her that ever since their conversation in the corner of the Club Room, Grayson had stopped sneaking glances in her direction. He'd been chatting with people, mixing and mingling, and completely ignoring her. No one ever ignored her. *Ever*.

Emilie went to take a sip out of her glass only to realize it was empty again.

"Need another?" Julian asked.

"Yes, thank you," she said with a grim tone, handing over her glass.

They were only in the fifth inning. Emilie prayed that the next innings would pass quickly and painlessly. What she wanted most was to go back to her hotel room to take a long, luxurious bubble bath

with a glass of wine perched on the lip of the tub while listening to Edith Piaf croon tempestuously.

Just as the thought of that bubble bath had her lips curling up in anticipation, Gavin strode through the Club Room door. He had a wide triumphant grin, and Emilie couldn't help but notice his abnormally large bulge. Surprising herself, she giggled out loud, knowing exactly why he appeared so well-endowed. She quickly stifled the noise, though, not having giggled since she was fourteen attending Madame Broussard's Academy for Young Ladies when she and a friend had pilfered one of Madame's Swedish porno mags and a pack of cigarettes.

Gavin strode over to where Emilie stood.

"I got it," he said, unable to keep the smugness out of his voice. "And with two innings to spare. Does that get me bonus points?" The roguish smile and devilish twinkle in his eye made Emilie want to giggle again, but instead, she held it back, letting none of her humor show. Perhaps she should slow down on the gin and tonics, she thought to herself. She felt much too giddy.

Deciding silence was her best option, she merely stared at him with her little half-smile. Just then, Julian returned with a drink for Emilie and for himself.

"Mr. Stephens," he said, nodding at Gavin.

"Mr. Steele," Gavin answered, just as stiffly.

Then Grayson approached their group. "Everyone enjoying the game?" he asked with just a bit too much innocence. Emilie flicked her eyes at him, but he continued to ignore her as the group chatted for a bit.

"So," Julian said. "Do you two have any experience owning a Major League Baseball team? Or playing on a professional level? Or anything really, that would prepare you for such a huge financial responsibility?"

There was a long moment where Grayson and Julian locked eyes. Then Gavin released a robust peal of laughter and, clapping Julian on

the back, said, "Lighten up, old chap. We've got a week to work out details like that. Tonight we're here to enjoy a little Outlaw action."

Julian, Grayson, and Emilie stared at Gavin in open-mouthed shock for a moment as he took a casual sip of his Shiner and then continued. "Besides, Mr. Steele, you already know that my brother and I have no experience owning a professional baseball team. You did your homework, didn't you? You strike me as a man who would. But, if I can be so bold as to suggest it, Ralph Benson has a reputation for making wild, spur-of-the-moment decisions which generally have a funny way of turning a profit for the company. He doesn't seem like a man who concerns himself much with whether someone has experience or not. If he thinks a man *or woman*"—he winked at Emilie—"can get the job done, I believe he would hire that man or woman. In our case, sell us his baseball team."

Julian's voice took on an iron tone. "Ralph Benson is at the head of one of the most powerful and influential companies in the world, and as I have had the privilege of working with him for over twenty years, I can tell you that he did not get there by indulging in 'wild, spur-of-the-moment decisions,' especially concerning the people with whom he conducts business. His discretion is impeccable. Never doubt that, Mr. Stephens."

"Oh, I don't doubt it. Isn't that why he sent his lovely daughter?" Gavin shot Emilie a broad smile, heat burning in the clear blue depths of his twinkling eyes. "Who else could he trust to oversee the selling of his pride and joy?"

"Undoubtedly, you are right."

Ignoring Julian's derogatory tone, Emilie looked at Gavin with renewed interest. She was shocked at Gavin's intuitive perception as his words so closely echoed those of her father from only a few days previous. She felt a small, begrudging respect in the pit of her stomach. Automatically assuming that Grayson was the business-minded brother, she now realized that Gavin seemed quite capable of handling himself as well in the business realm.

“I’m sure both of you know, but just in case you don’t,” Julian said, “Emilie, in her younger years, spent some time acting in French films.”

Although Emilie smiled and tilted her head in Julian’s direction in a small acknowledging gesture as the brothers offered small expressions of surprise, she felt just about ready to give Julian a swift punch to the nose. She knew why he brought up her acting career at such a moment, and she felt her blood begin to heat up and run through her veins like a wild, angry fire.

Gavin had just paid her a compliment, putting her on a level with the men in this business interaction. However, by bringing up her past and everything that had happened then, Julian had offered a stark reminder that she didn’t quite belong with the men, that her past would never quite go away, and that it would always shadow everything she did. She honestly didn’t know if Julian had done it intentionally or if it had sprung from some deep, subconscious level of jealousy. Either way, it had her on edge.

“I read that Mr. Benson’s wife and your mother,” Grayson said, barely glancing at Emilie, “is a well-renowned French actress.”

“Yes, Élodie Rienne-Benson, or just Élodie to the French public,” Emilie said, smiling warmly at the thought of her mother. It helped to soothe her irritated nerves. “Eight César nominations and two wins.” Emilie couldn’t keep a small note of pride from seeping through her voice.

“Don’t be modest, Emilie,” Julian said. Then he turned to Gavin and Grayson. “Emilie herself was nominated for a César.”

“Oh wow.” Gavin nodded, looking impressed, but the effect was ruined when he said, “Sorry, but what’s a César exactly?”

Emilie chuckled softly. “There’s no need to apologize. It’s a French film award, the most prestigious. Equivalent to the Oscars here. It was quite an honor.”

“Yes, and she was only nineteen.”

“What were you nominated for?” It was the first time Grayson had asked her a direct question, and Emilie felt the fire in her blood return, only this time she welcomed it.

“A film adaptation of a play by Molière entitled *L’Avare*, otherwise known as *The Miser*.”

“Impressive.” Gavin smiled at her.

The conversation steered away from her short-lived acting career, much to Emilie’s relief, as the four of them chatted for a few moments about their plans for the week, about sights to see in Dallas and about where Emilie and Julian were staying.

“You know, you should just stay in Male Order,” Gavin said.

Emilie noticed Grayson giving his younger brother an infinitesimal shake of his head, and the ever-present half-smile on her lips widened just a tiny bit.

“I would love that,” she said warmly. “That would be perfect. Don’t you think, Julian? A whole week in Male Order. We could really get to know Messrs. Stephens. See if they are a perfect fit for the Outlaws. *Papa* would love the idea.”

With a swelling of triumph, Emilie watched as Grayson finally gave her his full attention. He narrowed his eyes at her in obvious annoyance, but she maintained a steady gaze.

“I suppose that would be all right,” Julian conceded, but Emilie could tell the idea annoyed him. She couldn’t say that she blamed him. As much as she’d wanted to annoy Grayson, the thought of spending a whole week in the remote Texas countryside had her feeling a little queasy. Not that she didn’t enjoy a nice, relaxing, rural retreat every once in a while, but she in no way considered this business trip a retreat.

“You have a decent hotel there?” Julian asked.

“We do have a *pretty* decent hotel,” Gavin said with an odd note in his voice that Emilie couldn’t place. She thought something passed between the brothers, a joke maybe, but couldn’t decipher its

meaning. “But we wouldn’t dream of letting you stay there. We have plenty of room at our place, and you are both more than welcome.”

“I think a hotel would be more appropriate,” Julian said. “Emilie is still an unmarried woman even if she is one of the most successful ones in the world.”

Grayson nearly choked into his beer. “Oh, I see.” He met Emilie’s eyes for a moment, his derision apparent. “If it’s her womanly virtue you’re worried about tarnishing, she is more than welcome to stay at our friend Sherri’s house. She’s lives just across the river from our property, and I know that she wouldn’t mind.”

“And you’re lucky, Miss Benson,” Gavin said, his blue eyes sparkling. “At week’s end is our annual cotillion. If we decide to go ahead with the sale, that would be the perfect venue for announcing our intention to buy the Outlaws. If not, you will simply have the chance to be a part of a beloved Male Order tradition. And we, of course, would be greatly honored by your presence.”

“Sounds perfect to me,” Emilie said, not waiting for Julian to give his consent.

“Great!” Gavin said. “That’s settled then. A week in Male Order it is.”

* * * *

Although he was thrilled to be playing this little game with Emilie, and even more thrilled to claim his prize, the baseball between Gavin’s balls was starting to get just a bit uncomfortable. He’d already been to the restroom three times to give himself a couple minute’s reprieve, but even that wasn’t enough anymore. He needed to get that ball out of there for good.

Luckily, the top of the seventh inning was coming to a close. One more out and it would be time for the seventh inning stretch. Gavin had been watching Emilie for the past two half-innings, aware of her whereabouts, aware that she circled him like a shark waiting for its

prey. Gavin didn't care. He would gladly be her prey as long as he could take the damn baseball out of his pants.

Then with a classic ground hit to short and a quick toss to first, the top half of the seventh inning ended. Over the loud speaker, the Outlaw announcer said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, please stand, stretch, and relax to enjoy our Outlaw seventh inning stretch. And join us as we sing 'Take Me Out to the Ballgame'."

As if on cue, everyone in the Club Room began moving and circling and swirling around him. Then he felt Emilie press herself against his back, wrap her hands around his front and cup all the balls currently in his possession. She whispered into his ear, "Time to collect your winnings."

The announcer began singing the traditional baseball song, and a chorus of voices rose around them. Making sure to steer clear of both Grayson and Julian, Emilie grabbed Gavin by the hand and led him through the singing, oblivious crowd toward the exit.

As soon as they were out of the Club Room, Gavin leaned in to plant a kiss on her tempting red lips.

"Ah ah," she said, putting a finger to his mouth and smiling her Mona Lisa smile. "Take me to the museum first. We've got some goods to return."

"Dammit, woman, it's all the way across the stadium."

"This is my game. We go by my rules." With a grunt of frustration, Gavin took Emilie's hand and headed in the direction of the museum.

When they finally made it, it felt like his cock would explode out of his pants. With the baseball rubbing against it and Emilie walking just ahead of him, lending him a maddening view of her perfectly shaped ass swaying from side to side as she walked, he knew that if he didn't plunge his cock deep within her cunt and do it soon, he might have a very embarrassing situation on hand. The whole walk there, he'd imagined plunging into her cream-laden cunt deep and hard until he had her squirming and screaming beneath him.

Pushing those thoughts momentarily away, Gavin pulled Carl's key out of his pocket to unlock the museum door for the second time that night.

"Where'd you get the key?"

"Darlin'," he said, shooting her a lascivious grin, "I have many hidden talents." Maintaining his grin, he pushed the door wide open for her to walk in before him. Closing the door and making sure to lock it so they wouldn't be interrupted, Gavin immediately began unzipping his pants.

"Well, somebody certainly is eager to claim his prize." Although her words were teasing, Gavin could hear the desire coursing through her voice. She wanted him just as much as he wanted her.

"Yes, I am. I can't deny that, but I also can't take another minute of this fucking baseball against my dick. I'm so hard right now. It's not the most comfortable thing to have down there. In fact, I can think of something I'd much rather have down there." He pulled out the offending object and handed it over to Emilie like a crusading knight handing over the most precious of treasures to his beloved queen.

Her eyes burned into him as she ripped the ball out of his hands and tossed it to the ground. Closing the distance between them in one step, their lips collided against each other. Gavin put his palms against each of her soft ass cheeks and pulled her closer to his aching cock. She rolled her hips up against him, the friction of fabric rubbing across his skin. The pressure of their bodies as they held themselves together made his cock grow even bigger. He felt stretched to his limit and wanted the comfort of her hot, wet pussy to ease the aching in his balls.

As if her mind was on the same track as his, both of their hands went to the button and zipper of the other one's pants. Ripping and pulling at each other's clothes until they both stood completely naked, they collided again, this time the flesh of their bodies catching fire as skin slid against skin and lips pressed against lips.

"I don't know how you're feeling about foreplay right now..." Gavin said.

"We've had enough, I think," she said, her breath short.

"My thoughts exactly."

Emilie put her lips against his again and then grabbed his bottom lip between her teeth. She exuded just enough pressure to make his lip sting, but he knew she was teasing him, goading him into reciprocation.

Gavin grabbed the knot of hair at the base of her neck and yanked her head back, exposing the white skin of her long, graceful throat. Moving his lips away from hers, Gavin kissed and bit at her neck, letting his lips and his teeth travel farther down until he began to taste the soft plumpness of one of her breasts. Although he could barely hear it with his ears, he knew she moaned in pleasure. He could feel it rumbling lightly through her chest.

Moving to her nipple, he rolled his tongue around its edge, tender and soft. Then he grabbed its point between his teeth and pulled on it. Emilie sucked in a deep breath between her teeth, putting her hand to her other nipple in attempt to give it equal attention.

Gavin quickly snatched her hand away. "That's my nipple."

"You bastard," Emily said in a breathless whisper.

He only grinned, moving to the neglected nipple. His ministrations were greeted with a tremor that spread through Emilie's body. As she rippled against him, Gavin realized he could wait no longer. He grasped her hips and lifted her up, reveling in the feel of her powerful legs as they wrapped themselves around his waist and the way her breasts were pillowed just below his chin. Without hesitating, because he knew she was ready, he slid her onto his stiff cock, all the way down his length until the weight of her body pushed against his body. He muttered a curse under his breath at the feel of her soft walls clenching and closing around his dick.

He slowly knelt down until he sat on his calves. Emilie's feet fell to the floor behind him to give her some leverage as they began their

motion, but her thighs tightened around him. Gavin grasped her hips, pushing them away as he slid out of her, taking himself to the tip.

Waiting just a moment before moving, he looked up into Emilie's beautiful face.

"Do it," she said with her half-smile. "Fuck me hard, Gavin."

It was the first time she'd said his name all night, and it triggered a wild, primal response deep in his gut. Using every ounce of power he possessed, he slammed his cock deep into the recesses of her pussy.

Emilie groaned even as she smiled, and Gavin pulled back again, taking himself to the very edge of her cunt and then slamming himself back into her, his balls squishing against her ass. He kept it up, slamming into her again and again and again. She threw her head back, each slam of his cock eliciting a raspy moan from her slender white throat.

Her breasts jiggled against his chest and neck each time he drove into her, the reverberations coursing through her whole body, and Gavin buried his nose in the flesh of her bosom. Soon her moans grew into full-throated screams. Gavin could feel her fingernails digging into the flesh of his arms as she struggled to hold on. He kept pushing, each thrust bringing him closer and closer, higher and higher, driving him toward a peak he'd never dreamed existed.

His balls began to tighten, and he knew he was close to exploding, but he refused to let go until Emilie had reached vertigo. He couldn't go on much longer, he knew, but Emilie kept climbing higher and higher. When he felt the muscles of her pussy begin to quiver and clench around his cock, he knew that one more thrust would send them both spiraling.

Pulling his cock out until only the tip remained ensconced, he hovered at her opening for a moment, mustering every ounce of strength he had left. Emilie let out a low moan of frustration, expecting his thrust. He held her hips still.

“Gavin, you motherfucker,” she growled, glaring at him with her wild blue eyes.

Gavin grinned up at her and then, with one final explosive thrust, pushed himself deep into her cunt. He felt the muscles of her pussy clenching wildly. Instead of screaming, Emilie’s arms fell away from his arms, forcing him to catch her, even as his own world imploded. He held her close as she whimpered, the waves of pleasure he felt rolling through her body and her cunt splashing onto him. Wrapping his arms around her, he held their trembling bodies together, his own body echoing her pleasure. She trembled in his hands, so he placed a gentle kiss on her temple.

After a little bit, Emilie pulled her hips up and off Gavin. Rolling all the way off him, they both fell onto their backs, onto the cold tile floor of the museum. Gavin needed its abrupt coolness against his heated flesh to restore reason, or at least some semblance of coherent thought. He inched his hand over, groping until he found Emilie’s fingers. They both lay there for a moment, hands entwined while allowing their breathing to return to normal.

* * * *

Emilie stared up through the darkness, at the ceiling that her mind told her must exist. At the moment, however, she could not be totally sure that a ceiling did exist. For all she knew, her body was floating in outer space.

The innermost muscles of her pussy were still pulsing, and waves of pleasure continued to wash through her body. No one had ever driven her to the edge like that. Every time his cock pushed so incredibly deep inside her, Gavin had dug deeper and deeper into something she kept buried far within herself. He kept pushing and slamming and driving until she couldn’t keep him out.

Then when she could fight it no longer, she collapsed. Everything in the world that had been holding her up just seemed to crumble, and

Gavin had to catch her. As he held her, and their bodies trembled together, he had placed a gentle kiss on her temple.

Now, though, as she lay on the hard, cold tile, reason began creeping back into her brain. And with reason came a great and terrible fear. No one had ever made her feel as powerless as the man lying next to her.

Emilie thrived on power. It made up the very core of her being. That power had been stripped from her, and Emilie felt as if she had been thrown into a sea of unknown proportions. She flailed, and she grasped for anything that could lend her some support.

A warm hand wrapped its fingers around hers. Emilie's breath caught in her throat, the fear making it hard for her to breathe. For a long moment, she couldn't move. Squeezing her eyes tightly closed, she forced herself to take long, deep breaths. Counting *in-two-three-four, out-two-three-four* in her mind.

When she thought she had managed a small amount of control, she ripped her hand out of Gavin's and sat up.

"Whoa. Everything all right, Emilie?"

Emilie grimaced at his use of her first name. It suddenly felt extremely intimate, and it chafed against her insides.

"Yes, everything is all right," she said, keeping her voice even, not wanting to betray the tangle of emotions running rampant within her. She rummaged through the clothes that had been strewn about the room.

"Whatchya looking for?"

"A fucking cigarette," she said, finally finding her suit jacket and pulling out a *Gitane*. She lit it up and then began putting her clothes back on.

"Are you sure everything's all right?"

"I already said that everything is all right."

"Because it doesn't exactly seem like everything is all right."

“Stop fucking saying that,” Emilie burst out. Then gritting her teeth together in frustration, she took a deep breath through her nose. “Look, your brother was probably right.”

“Oh, he was, was he? About what, may I ask?”

“He said that we should keep this professional.”

Gavin had propped himself up on one elbow and watched her with a smirk. “Unfortunately, I think it’s a little late for that, and I don’t see how feeling bad about it will get us anywhere.”

Emilie had most of her suit back on and was buttoning up her jacket. “I don’t feel bad about it,” she said, flicking her eyes over at him in annoyance. She took a long drag on her cigarette. With her clothes on and a few minutes of separation from their fevered sexual encounter, her sense of control and power began to return.

“So why the sudden desire to go? I’m sure we’ve got at least an inning left. Plenty of time for more kinky museum sex.”

Emilie narrowed her eyes at him. “I’m all for kinky museum sex, but only if everyone out there”—she motioned toward the door—“doesn’t know about said kinky museum sex.”

“All right,” Gavin said immediately.

“And,” she added. “No emotions. Just sex. Plain and simple.”

“Done,” Gavin answered, still grinning up at her.

Emilie peered down at him skeptically. “You’re fine with that?”

“Yep. Totally fine.”

“So out there, I’m still Miss Benson, right?”

“You got it.”

Emilie felt her lips curl up into their familiar half-smile. She suddenly felt assured, a sense of anticipation curling deep in her belly. “Well then,” she said. “It looks like I’ve got an interesting week ahead of me.”

Chapter 4

Studying her image in the mirror, Emilie fiddled with the silk embroidery at the top of her cream-colored Dior blouse. The top curved into a low V, the embroidered design a perfect setting for her exposed collarbones. The short-sleeved top revealed a healthy portion of her cleavage while the simplicity of the shirt kept her looking classy. Not big on overly frilly clothing, Emilie liked just a hint of lace or a splash of ruffle to exude her femininity but not make her appear too flippant or whimsical.

Her high-waisted black trousers squeezed the curves around her waist and then loosened up around her hips and thighs only to tighten again around her ankles, lending her whole body a clean and tapered look. A pair of black, three-inch Louboutins completed the outfit with two thick straps across the top of her slender feet and red toenails peeping out. Black was her favorite color to wear, especially when attending business meetings and even more especially when attending business meetings with men. They took her more seriously when she wore black.

Applying a coat of matte red lipstick to her lips, Emilie appraised the finished product. With her hair parted to the side and slicked back into a tight bun at her neck, her high French cheekbones stood out above her bright lips. The woman looking back at her was strong, and she was beautiful. Emilie felt ready.

“Wow, you look amazing,” came a bell-like voice from the doorway of her bedroom.

Emilie turned around to find Sherri, the twins’ friend since second grade, leaning against the doorframe. “I feel a little under-dressed

now,” Sherri said, motioning to her bright yellow and white Diane Von Furstenberg sundress. Sherri had a crop of light purple hair, which Emilie thought a little absurd at first, but now with the yellow dress and her bright pink lips, Emilie realized Sherri looked adorable in a quirky sort of way.

“No, your dress is perfect. I, however, didn’t think about bringing anything picnic-appropriate. This is much too formal, but it’s all I have.”

Emilie and Julian had arrived in Male Order only a few hours ago, but the twins had already invited her over for a late afternoon lunch and homemade lemon sorbet.

After turning off the main highway out of Dallas, Julian drove about ten minutes down a county road with no center stripe to separate the lanes. When they turned off the county road into Sherri’s driveway, they still had about five minutes to go. Emilie didn’t think of the driveway as an actual driveway. It was more like a path covered with rocks. When they pulled up to the large cabin nestled amongst the trees, Sherri ran out of the house to greet her.

“Emilie,” she trilled. “It’s so nice to meet you!” She squeezed Emilie in a brief, friendly hug.

“It is?” Emilie said, stiffening at the hug. “I mean, it is nice to meet you, too.”

“Hi.” Sherri smiled, offering her hand to Julian. “I’m Sherri. Nice to meet you.”

Julian put Emilie’s *Louis Vuitton* luggage on the ground to shake Sherri’s hand, and Emilie fought back a grimace of annoyance. “Julian Steele,” he said, giving Sherri’s proffered hand a firm shake.

“You’re staying with Grayson and Gav, aren’t you?” she asked.

“I am.”

“Their place is about one mile that way.” She pointed to some trees at the edge of her property. There’s a path through the woods right over there. I’m sure you’ll want to drive over, though. Obviously,” she added, laughing out loud.

Julian smiled back at her, and after they had unloaded all of Emilie's belongings, he got in the car and headed back up the driveway.

Sherri had been chatting non-stop since that first introduction, only giving Emilie a few minutes to change for the lunch date at the twins' place. Emilie knew several facts about Sherri now, the most important—or the one that Sherri talked about the most, at least—being that Sherri attended grad school at SMU in Dallas, studying to be a psychiatrist. Emilie also discovered that Sherri ran a small side business in Male Order called Wicked Whimsy, although after mentioning it, she became noticeably close-lipped about it, only telling Emilie that she would have to come on Wednesday to a place Sherri called the Boom Boom Room to find out more about it. Not that Emilie would have a choice in the matter, she thought.

"I don't think we'd better walk over there. Not with those precious things on," Sherri said, indicating Emilie's shoes.

Emilie glanced at her reflection in the mirror. The shoes completed the outfit. She knew that, but at the same time, she was Sherri's guest. If Sherri wanted to walk to the twins' house, Emilie would oblige. "We can walk. I'll put on some flats."

"Are you kidding? It would completely ruin your outfit. Keep the heels. We'll ride over."

"You're sure?"

"Absolutely." The two shared a smile in the mirror at their mutual respect for fashion. "I guess I'd better go check the oil, though. We've got to get going pretty soon."

The oil? Emilie thought to herself. If the twins' house was only a mile away through the woods, it couldn't possibly be far enough away by road to require an oil check. Emilie didn't know much about cars, but she did know that people usually checked the oil before long trips, not a quick jaunt to a friend's house.

Following Sherri out of the rustic cabin, Emilie watched as Sherri bypassed her little cherry red Prius and headed for a shed tucked just

behind the edge of the trees. Unlocking the deadbolt, Sherri swung the large wooden door open. Dust blew out, splashing old, moldering air into their faces.

Emilie's nose cringed of its own accord, while Sherri took a deep breath of the stagnant air. "Ah, I love that smell."

Emilie could see over Sherri's shoulder into the shed, and she had a sinking feeling as her eyes fell upon the largest object inside. And just as she suspected, Sherri grabbed an old greasy rag off a shelf and began checking the oil of a bright red four-wheeler.

"That's what we're riding?"

"Absolutely," Sherri said, studying the oil on the dipstick. "Looks good." She put the metal stick back into the four-wheeler and grabbed two helmets off the shelf. "These are my best helmets. They won't mess up your hair too much."

Emilie took the helmet from Sherri and held it delicately between her fingers, rolling it over in her hands the way a man would handle a dirty diaper.

"Don't worry," Sherri said. "It's totally safe, and I'm a great driver. The helmet's just a precaution. I make everyone wear one when they ride with me." Sherri smashed the helmet onto her head, making little tufts of lilac-colored hair stick out at the bottom.

Shrugging, Emilie did the same with hers. Sherri hopped onto the machine and revved it up. Swinging a long leg over the seat, Emilie positioned herself behind Sherri.

"Ready?" Sherri asked over her shoulder.

"Ready," Emilie said.

"All right, here we go!"

The four-wheeler lurched forward with a roar, and they sped toward the woods. After a few minutes of riding, Emilie got used to its loud growl and actually began to enjoy watching the trees and woodland pass by. Before long, they broke free from the trees, approaching the twins' house from the rear, and Emilie gasped as the twins' *house* came into view. She laughed inwardly at the term.

That was no house. That was a veritable *château*.

Glancing at the few neighborhood abodes that she could see from behind the twins' house, Emilie realized that they lived in one of the smaller homes of the area. Usually such ostentatious displays of splendor had no effect on Emilie. Growing up as her father's daughter and then living in the world of *haute couture*, she'd become accustomed and desensitized to such exhibitions. However, there was something magical about Male Order. Everything that she had seen thus far seemed so separate, so secluded from the rest of the world. She felt like she had stepped into a place that couldn't possibly exist in the real world, yet her eyes told her that it did.

Thinking back to when she and Julian drove into town earlier that morning, Emilie had been surprised by some of the shop names she'd passed—Givenchi, Swarovski, and her personal favorite, Dior—mostly because she wondered how a town as small and as remote as Male Order could economically support those shops. Seeing the cluster of mansions around her, though, Emilie began to comprehend that Male Order was no ordinary small town.

As soon as Sherri shut the engine off, and the two women climbed off the machine, they both had a glass of blackberry lemonade thrust into their hands and found themselves swept over to the white mesh awning that had been erected and sprawled luxuriously in the back lawn. Sherri's purple head of hair bobbed away as she greeted, hugged, and kissed longtime friends.

Emilie spotted Julian talking to a petite woman with a long auburn braid slung over her shoulder underneath a large pecan tree. As the woman laughed and nodded at something Julian said, a little boy with a mop of brown hair tugged at her arm.

Then the crowd momentarily parted, and Emilie saw the twins a little bit away from the party with two other men. In a small field, they were working on setting up a net of some sort, hammering stakes into the ground and tying rope around the stakes to keep the net taut.

At this distance, she couldn't tell them apart, but that didn't matter. She could see muscles rippling beneath skin as one of them hammered and a fine-looking ass as the other one leaned over to tie the rope. One of the other men said something, making a lewd gesture, and all four men broke into laughter. The twin tying the rope popped up, playfully shoving the man who'd made the joke.

Emilie didn't even realize she was grinning like an idiot until an undeniably debonair man holding a lime-rimmed glass in his hand approached her. "You must be the billionaire's daughter from New York who's got us Male Order natives all in a dither. You're all I've heard about since I arrived," he said, a slight mocking tone in his words as he sloshed down a healthy portion of the clear liquid in his glass. He certainly wasn't drinking the blackberry lemonade.

Emilie studied him for a moment. Impeccably dressed in a pair of brown Burberry dress pants and complementary light blue button-up shirt, his narrow hazel eyes scanning the crowd with a condescending air, Emilie immediately recognized a kindred spirit. She pulled out her little silver case of *Gitanes* and offered one to the man. "You smoke?"

His eyes widened when she held the case open to him. "*Les Gitanes Blondes?*" His French accent was impeccable and like a balm to Emilie's rapacious ears.

"*Oui*," she said, delighted. "*Savez-vous cette marque? Et parlez-vous Français?*" She lit a match as he sucked in a deep, smokey breath.

"*Oui et merci*," he said, indicating his thanks for the burning cigarette. "Allow me to introduce myself," he continued in French. "My name is Alexander Dimitri Abrams the Third, sole descendant of the most illustrious House of Abrams, one of the five founding families of Male Order, Texas. At your service, *mademoiselle*." He gave her a slight bow.

"Quite an introduction," Emilie said with a wry lift of her brow. "*Et je m'appelle Emilie Benson*." After offering her hand and

receiving a warm shake from Alexander, they spoke animatedly over *la belle France*. Emilie learned that he was only in Male Order because both his fathers had passed. He'd abandoned an estate in Monaco a couple years before to come back and take care of all the tending legal matters that came with inheriting a monstrous fortune. When he discovered that her mother was the renowned French actress Élodie Rienne-Benson, he let loose a tirade of praise in rapid French, exclaiming that he had watched every film of hers at least two times each.

"I never knew she had a daughter," he said. "And you were involved with French cinema as well?"

"*Un peu.*" She smashed the butt of her cigarette against the bark of a large tree that they stood under. Its breezy shade had been preferable to that of the crowded tent. "You must remember, though, it was a long time ago."

"You know," Alexander said, an insolent grin curving his lips slightly upward, "I find myself strangely *unattracted* to you. In a good way, if you know what I mean."

Emilie felt her own lips curling up, her usual half-smile echoing his. "I *do* know what you mean."

Just then, the woman with the long auburn braid and the little boy came to stand next to her, thrusting out a tiny hand toward Emilie. "Hello. I don't believe we've met yet. I'm Taylor Stephens-Bartlett."

Emilie shook the proffered hand while Alexander's eyes lowered into a rueful smirk.

"Mr. Abrams," Taylor Stephens-Bartlett greeted Alexander through tight lips.

"Always a pleasure," Alexander said, rattling his glass. "But it looks like time for a refill. I hope to see you again, *Mademoiselle Benson*." He scooped one of her hands into his and placed a seemingly gallant kiss on the top of her hand, but the twinkle in his eye told her it was all to irritate the tiny woman standing next to her.

Then Alexander swept away.

“You’ll want to stay away from him,” Taylor warned. “He’s got a reputation in this town.”

Emilie watched him disappear into the crowd, the small smile still playing across her lips, pleasantly surprised at the knowledge that she’d just made a most interesting friend. And in Male Order, no less.

“Beautiful, aren’t they?” the woman said, noticeably changing the subject and looking in the opposite direction.

Emilie took a delicate sip of her lemonade, burying her grin in her cup, not exactly sure to what or to whom the woman referred.

Taylor looked up at Emilie, smiling. “My husbands, I mean. Those two miscreants out there are my husbands.” She pointed in the direction of the twins and the two other men who were still working on getting the badminton net set up.

Emilie felt her eyebrows shoot up in surprise. “Husbands? As in, you have more than one?” Emilie could tell the woman gauged her reaction to that statement, so she kept her features as blank as possible.

“Oh yeah. Practically every woman here has more than one husband.”

Emilie quickly glanced around the party, and sure enough, she noticed that most of the women were surrounded by more than one man. They looked like a bunch of recumbent queens, Emilie thought.

“And since I know everyone else here, you must be the mysterious Emilie Benson.”

“I am, and it’s a pleasure to meet you, Taylor. Please excuse my rudeness for not introducing myself earlier.”

“Oh, no worries, sweetheart.” The woman shot a big smile up at Emilie.

“Mommy,” the little boy from earlier said, appearing at his mother’s side and tugging at her hand again. “Is it time for ice cweam yet?”

“No, Dorian. Not yet. Where’s your sister?”

Dorian shrugged. “Dunno. When is it time for ice cweam, Mommy? In two minutes?”

“No, sweetie.”

“In one minutes?”

“Dorian!” said a little girl with soft strawberry blonde curls who, Emilie assumed, must be the wayward sister. “There you are.” The girl went to grab Dorian’s wrist but then noticed that a stranger stood next to her mother. With wide eyes, she looked up at Emilie. Whatever she’d been about to say to Dorian, she abandoned it, snapping her mouth shut.

Taylor put her hands on her hips. “Weren’t you two supposed to be helping Grandma in the kitchen?”

“Dorian snuck out,” the girl said in a much softer voice than she’d used earlier, obviously shy in front of Emilie.

“Little man,” Taylor said, a core of steel suddenly present in her voice, “if you don’t mind Grandma, there isn’t going to be any ice cream time.”

Dorian’s eyes widened, and his bottom lip trembled. “No ice cweam time?”

“You have to be a good little man to get ice cream. Got it?”

“Got it, Mommy. I can do that!” he said, sticking out his little chest.

“Good. Now go with Vivien and mind your grandma.”

The two little bodies ran away toward the house, and Emilie noticed how Taylor watched them with a warm smile of contentment on her lips.

“Excuse me if this is rude,” Emilie said. “But do you know which husband is their father?”

Taylor didn’t seem offended. She just laughed. “We’ve never done an official DNA test or anything. They belong to both of my husbands just as much as they belong to me. But as they get older, it gets more and more apparent which father each child favors.”

Emilie didn't have much time to dwell on the inner workings of the Stephens-Bartlett family because a familiar voice spoke from behind her. "Ah, Miss Benson. We meet again." She turned around to find Gavin approaching, his blue eyes gleaming. Grayson followed only a few feet behind his brother.

A curl of warmth began swirling between her legs as Gavin leaned in and placed a warm kiss on her cheek. Over his shoulder, Emilie could see Grayson watching her hotly with his green eyes. He tipped his head in her direction, but otherwise, offered her no greeting.

"Is lunch ready yet, cuz?"

Taylor smacked Gavin on the back of his head. "Manners in front of the lady. And no, lunch is not ready."

"You're such a brute," Gavin said, rubbing the back of his head.

"Come on," Taylor said, rolling her eyes and smiling at Emilie. "Let's start bringing the food out."

Later when everyone was seated around five wooden picnic tables that had been lined up lengthwise next to each other to create one grand table, Emilie found herself laughing when Sherri told the table an anecdote about one of her fellow students at SMU confusing a bottle of phentermine for Tylenol. Emilie sat across from Gavin and Grayson. Grayson had been avoiding eye contact throughout most of the meal, but Gavin had his long legs tangled with hers under the table.

Most everyone at the table had finished eating and were now engaged in individual conversations. The skin of Emilie's legs felt very sensitive, and each touch of Gavin's legs sent little chills of pleasure throughout her limbs. Without looking in Gavin's direction, Emilie slipped off one of her heels and moved her foot up to the bench between his legs, using her toe to nudge and play with his hardened cock.

His hand darted under the table and quickly grasped her by the ankle. Cutting her eyes over to his face, he glared at her with a clear hint of warning in his bright blue eyes. She wiggled her foot again in

defiance, tickling the space between his balls and inner thigh. Stifling a laugh as Gavin lurched backward on the bench at her touch, Emilie tilted her head slightly toward the house in suggestion.

Before Emilie knew if Gavin had even understood her message, his hand darted out as if to grab a piece of bread but knocked Emilie's glass of blackberry lemonade straight into her lap. Emilie gasped as the icy liquid immediately soaked through her pants to her hot pussy inside.

"Miss Benson!" Gavin said, sounding shocked at his clumsiness. "I'm so sorry! What a klutz!"

Emilie stood, letting liquid fall off her pants. She grabbed a cloth napkin from the table, trying to soak up as much liquid as she could. All the while her mind seethed. The pants she wore cost over a thousand dollars, but more than that, they were one of her favorite pairs.

Taylor and Sherri were immediately at her side. They fussed and flapped around her, looking for anything they could use to clean up the mess.

"Your beautiful pants," Sherri said, hopping up from her seat. "Gavin, you idiot!" She turned a furious gaze on her friend. "You take Emilie up to that house, and you find her something to wear."

For the first time that afternoon, Grayson looked at her, and Emilie felt a blush creeping up her neck. She realized that Gavin had been planning to take her up to the house even if Sherri hadn't suggested it, and Grayson seemed to know that, too.

Surrounded by all the *mènage* couples, it suddenly hit Emilie that perhaps the twins were used to sharing their women. With a flash of desire, she realized that she wanted, more than anything, to be pressed between both brothers, their cocks filling and grinding her pussy and her ass until she could no longer remember her own name.

The strength of her desire in response to these thoughts surprised Emilie. She'd never thought about having sex with more than one man at a time, not that it repulsed her, but she'd just never

encountered two men comfortable enough with it to suggest it. With Gavin and Grayson before her now, Emilie realized that this possibility could very well become reality.

She *would* find a way to get past Grayson's standoffish behavior, and she would get what she wanted.

She always did.

* * * *

A few minutes after knocking over Emilie's lemonade in what Gavin could only describe as a stroke of unparalleled genius, Emilie stood across the room from him. He dug through a dresser drawer in the guest room where Sherri had stashed some clothes, both feminine and masculine, for emergency situations, looking for something suitable.

"Move over," Emilie said next to him, bumping him with her hip to get him out of the way.

She selected a pair of light khaki pants.

"Those are men's pants."

Emilie gave him a long, hard look, letting him know that she was well aware of this fact. "Can you find me a woman's belt?"

"Sure thing." He began digging through some dresser drawers, but soon forgot his task as Emilie began to unbutton her pants. He watched in the mirror attached to the top of the dressers as she slid the black fabric over the curve of her perfect ass, over her long, white legs, and then let it fall in a heap on the floor. She was turned in profile, and Gavin couldn't tear his gaze from the one perfectly smooth ass cheek edged in the black lace of her thong.

At that glorious sight, his already hard cock bucked against the inside of his pants. He was so engrossed by her ass, Gavin didn't notice until a moment later that Emilie watched his face in the mirror, that teasing smile playing at the corner of her lips as if she knew exactly how tantalizing she looked.

Gavin whipped around, facing her. He liked how her eyes drank in the sight of his bulging cock.

With a slow, seductively measured step, Emilie walked across the room until she stopped just centimeters away from the point where their bodies would meet. Lowering herself to her knees, she unbuttoned the pants that felt so restricting against Gavin's dick. With a swift zip, her delicate fingers had released his straining cock and were now stroking along the ridged length of his shaft. One hand rolled his balls against each other while the other gripped his cock and rolled a thumb around the edge of its tip.

"Put my cock in your mouth, Emilie."

She smiled up at him as she obliged. One hand continued to stroke his balls, every once in a while flicking to the tender spot between the back of his sack and his anus, while her other hand gripped his hips to help her commence a steady, driving rhythm with her hot, sucking mouth. She purred against him, sending little vibrations of pleasure through his dick.

"Fucking hell, woman," Gavin groaned, leaning against the dresser and letting his head fall back. It felt like she was sucking out his essence, everything in his body drawn to his cock as he pushed himself to the back of her throat. The tension built up, and he knew he was only moments away from exploding into her hot, sweet mouth when suddenly a rush of cold air washed over his cock.

His head snapped upright. Emilie was already on the other side of the room with his father's pants and the belt in her hand. "Emilie," he said, an ominous warning tone in his voice. "Get that mouth over here and finish what you started."

Pulling the pants up to her waist and latching the belt with a mischievous grin, she said, "You have to find me first." With that, she slipped out the door into his family's huge mansion. Letting out a loud, frustrated groan full of misery, Gavin reached down for his pants. God, there was something about a woman in men's clothing.

As much as he needed release in that moment, he didn't dare finish himself off. Emilie's taunt as she slipped through the door promised richer rewards if he could just wait a few more minutes to find her.

There was no question. He would find her. And then he would make her pay for her insolence.

Chapter 5

“Grayson,” Taylor called from down the table. “Could you do me a favor?”

“Sure,” he said, snapping out of his daydream. Emilie had been wearing a delicate little top, and the pale flesh of her breasts had been reflecting sunlight up at him from across the table all throughout lunch. He’d been picturing the way they would bounce perfectly as she straddled herself across his lap while he fucked her senseless. He would bury his face in their soft perfection as her pussy squeezed around his aching cock.

During lunch, she’d been playing footsie with his brother, and it had taken a supreme amount of self-control not to reach over and run his hand up the contoured length of her calf muscle.

“Whatchya need, Tay?” he said, shaking his head, trying to dislodge his conjured images.

“Vivien and Dorian want to eat their sorbet in the meadow. Could you go grab a blanket out of the closet?”

“Sure thing, cuz.”

He headed up to the house, trying not to think about the fact that Gavin and Emilie had been gone for over fifteen minutes. His mind had already created dozens of scenarios for the reason why they’d been gone so long, and in none of them did they have their clothes on.

What frustrated Grayson the most was that he felt no jealousy of his brother’s time with Emilie. No, what he was jealous of was Gavin’s ability to throw caution to the winds and be spontaneous, to be completely irresponsible.

If Grayson could do so, he would, and he would do it in less than a heartbeat.

Ever since their birth mother—the woman who had abandoned them when they were only seven to marry some boozier in Las Vegas—had been hospitalized for alcoholism a little over a year ago, Grayson began to realize just how much they owed Papa Craig, Papa Clark, and Mama. They'd been offered a second chance when Papa Craig took them in as his own sons. It had begun when Grayson and Gavin decided to begin coaching a little league baseball team in Male Order. Grayson was amazed at how much the kids had to spend on gear.

Apart from his mother's hospital bill, he began looking into all the expenses Papa Craig had lavished on him and his brother. An overwhelming gratitude had swept over Grayson, and he knew it was time for him and his brother to begin making a life and a name for themselves. He had begun by running ideas by Gavin. At first, Gavin seemed annoyed with Grayson's plans, but Grayson thought his brother was finally coming around to the idea of owning a baseball team. Papa Craig had agreed to help them buy the team, and once the twins had established themselves as responsible yet aggressive team owners and had begun earning revenue, they would pay Papa Craig back. Grayson had no doubt in his mind that after a few years of hard work he and his brother would carve out one hell of a team.

Grayson headed for the back hallway where he knew Mama had a stash of blankets, quilts, and afghans. When he opened the closet door and before he could switch on the light, a pair of hands grabbed his shirtfront and yanked him into the closet.

"I knew you'd find me," a soft, husky voice whispered in his ear, and then he felt Emilie's warm lips as she nibbled at his ear and neck.

His cock was already harder than a fucking stone, but his mind seemed determined to fight what he so clearly wanted. "What do you mean, Miss Benson?"

She chuckled deep in the back of her throat. “Oh, playing coy, are we? You mean you don’t want me to finish what I started?” With her words, her long slender fingers curved around his straining cock, and they began massaging him in a slow, dizzying pattern.

“Oh God,” he heard himself mutter through clenched lips.

“That’s more like it,” she purred.

Her fingers began undoing the button of his pants, but his hand on hers halted her progress.

“What is it, Gavin?” Her already husky voice came out in a frustrated growl.

Grayson ran his hands up her arms and then let himself have one good feel of her perfect breasts. He closed his eyes, enjoying their fullness, the weight of them as they rested in his broad palm. He ran his thumb across the front of each one, feeling her hard nipples through the thin fabrics she wore.

He wanted to slide a hand beneath the silky fabric, to feel the warm flesh beneath, and he wanted to taste that soft flesh between his teeth as he suckled first one and then the other of her nipples.

Instead, he removed his hands, flicked on the light, and looked at her, letting her see the color of his eyes. Her own blue eyes widened in shock.

“You’re not Gavin,” she said.

“Nope.” He reached behind her to grab a blanket and then turned on his heel and left the closet, slamming the door closed behind him.

Only a few steps away from the closet, Gavin rounded the corner in front of Grayson.

“Grayson, what are you...” Gavin’s eyes traveled to the closet door behind Grayson, widening in understanding. “Is she in there?”

“Yes.”

“Did you—”

“No.” Grayson didn’t let his brother finish that thought as he stalked away.

Gavin's laughter coming from behind certainly didn't help matters.

* * * *

Emilie's mouth was still parted in shock. Grayson had been so close. He'd run his hands over her breasts. They still tingled from the heat and the friction he'd caused. And then he'd just left. Emilie didn't like the emptiness she'd felt when his big hands had pulled away from her breasts. She pushed it down deep inside herself, not allowing herself too much time to dwell on it.

Only a few moments after Grayson stalked out, Gavin slipped through the door, a wide grin set across his full lips, giving them a crooked tilt.

"Took you long enough," she said.

Gavin pulled her against him and bent down to kiss her eager lips. His mouth moved in a hot dance on hers, drawing the need and the desire she kept buried up to the surface of her body. As he yanked her pants off, Emilie pulled off first his and then her shirt, and then his hand slipped between her slippery thighs. Grayson's hands on her breasts had already drawn the cream from her pussy, but Gavin's hand down there now, smearing and playing with her moisture, had it coming out even faster.

"You are so fucking tight and moist, Emilie."

Emilie sucked his bottom lip, pulling him toward the back of the closet. There was a steel coat rod about a foot above Emilie's head. Gripping the rod, she pulled herself up and wrapped her thighs tight around Gavin's midsection.

"You are such a bad girl, Miss Benson."

"Shut up and put your cock inside me." Despite her demanding words, she grinned down at him.

"Yes, ma'am."

His big palms grasped her hips roughly as he guided himself into her warm depths. Hanging from the rod, Emilie held on tightly as Gavin began moving his dick inside her.

“God, you are so fucking big.” His cock stretched her almost to the point of pain, but it was just enough that it soon morphed into an almost unbearable pleasure. Their flesh slapped together, and Emilie could feel it ricocheting all the way up her body to her very fingertips as they gripped the metal. With each stroke, he pushed himself so far inside her she could feel it in her gut, and she tightened her legs around him, wanting her pussy to devour every inch of his pounding cock.

Gavin put his face between her breasts. Even though they were shrouded with the thin silk of her bra, he nibbled her flesh, sending chills across her heated flesh. His teeth grabbed a nipple, and Emilie had to bite back a scream as pleasure rippled through her. His movement beneath her quickened as they both reached for their climax. Every stroke that Gavin drove into her elicited a small, wanton moan unbidden from her lips.

Her hands tightened around the pole as somehow Gavin managed to drive himself even farther inside her cunt. She thought a few more strokes would send her over when she felt Gavin slip his fingers between her ass cheeks. Her body reacted, flinching and shying away from the touch, pushing her pussy tighter around Gavin’s dick.

“You’ll be begging for more than this soon enough,” Gavin whispered harshly, his voice just as strained as Emilie’s insides felt. Both his hands gripped her ass now, and he spread her cheeks apart. His fingertips pushed against the edge of her back hole, sending ripples of hot pleasure up through her spine with each thrust of his cock.

“Holy fuck, Gavin. I’m going to come, goddammit.” As she said the words, Gavin pushed himself into her with one last slam, and she felt his hot seed spurting up inside her, a fountain of warmth that made her pussy clench wildly. Her orgasm made it feel as if her pussy

were grasping at the warm liquid shooting upwards through her body. Her mind, addled by the pleasure that still roiled through her, imagined his hot cum bubbling up her throat and spreading out through her veins until he permeated every pore of her body.

Her arms began to tremble as waves of pleasure came in a more languorous fashion.

“Let go, Emilie. I’ve got you.” Her eyes were still closed, but she trusted him. Gavin eased himself out of her, and she loosened her grip on the rod. Feeling like molten lava, she let her body slide along his until her feet finally touched solid ground. She leaned into him, despite her better judgment telling her not to do so. As he wrapped his strong arms around her trembling form, she realized that she didn’t want to move away from the warmth of his body just yet. With a final tremor, she sighed against his chest.

She’d never, not once in her life, felt so utterly and completely content.

Chapter 6

“Get up! Get up! Get up!” Sherri squealed as she jumped onto Emilie’s bed. Emilie cracked one bleary eyelid and could only make out a lavender blob moving up and down in the air a few feet away from her.

Sherri flopped down to her knees and gave Emilie a little shake. “Come on, sleepy head. It’s monkey bread time.”

“Go away.” Rolling over, Emilie pulled one silk-covered pillow over her head in a futile attempt to block out Sherri’s early morning perkiness. Her insides still felt jumbled from Gavin’s merciless fuck the day before, and her pussy had some soreness. Emilie had never been sore after having sex, not even the first time.

Now, all she wanted to do was sleep, to let her body revel in its aching memory of her pleasure, but Sherri was bouncing up and down on her knees, jolting Emilie’s body almost completely off the bed.

“Come on,” Sherri insisted. “Everyone’s going to get there before us, and all the monkey bread will be gone.”

“Sherri,” Emilie said through the pillow.

“Yes?” Sherri momentarily stopped her bouncing.

“What the hell is monkey bread?”

In answer, Sherri ripped the covers away from Emilie’s body, and Emilie reflexively curled up into a whimpering ball. “Sherri!” Emilie screeched.

“Monkey bread is only the best damn thing your mouth will ever taste. It’s all cinnamony and gooey and delicious.”

Emilie grinned wickedly under the pillow, thinking that perhaps Sherri was not quite right about that first statement, imagining the

flavor of Gavin's cock from yesterday. The thought sent a wave of warmth to her pussy.

Tentatively stretching out her legs, Emilie took the pillow off her face, braving the bright morning light. "Okay, okay," she said. "I'm getting up. What time is it anyway?"

"It's almost nine. I wanted to come in at seven because Mama Julie said that the bread would be ready at eight, but I decided since you were my guest, I could give you a couple extra hours. But Gavin just texted me and said there's only one tray left."

Emilie held back a laugh at the desperation in Sherri's voice. "You can head over if you want."

"That would just be rude."

"I don't mind. I like a solitary, early morning walk through the woods."

A glimmer of hope leapt into Sherri's eyes. "Are you sure? Are you absolutely sure?"

"Yes," Emilie laughed. "It's going to take me a while anyway, and I wouldn't want you to miss out."

"Thank you," Sherri squealed, attacking Emilie with one of her ambush hugs. Then she darted off the bed and out the doorway, and Emilie was alone.

About an hour later, after Emilie had freshened up and enjoyed her morning cigarette, she began her hike to the Stephens'. When she walked across their back lawn, she was amazed to find the back doors wide open. They were so trusting here. At her apartment in New York, she had three locks on her door, locks on all of her windows and an incredibly expensive alarm system. Plus, a safe where she kept her most valuable possessions.

She heard a warble of voices just inside the door and down the hallway and was on her way toward them when a man's laughter sounded from the opposite direction. It had a familiar ring to it, but it also had a strange quality that she couldn't place. As she walked down the hall, the man laughed again. She realized it came from

behind a set of huge oak doors. One of them was partly open, giving her enough space to slip in undetected.

Once inside, she realized she stood inside a family library. Hundreds of books climbed up the walls, surrounding her in a cocoon of literature. A large globe, almost as tall as herself, was in the center of the room. Free-standing shelves were positioned throughout the room to create little alcoves where someone could come in and curl up for a few hours without being disturbed. Emilie took a deep breath, comforted by the smell of aging paper.

Ever since she'd become serious about taking over her father's company, she'd found little time for pleasure reading. As an actress, reading was a part of her daily routine. It inspired her, and it kept her characters fresh. Now that most of her days were spent in meetings in executive offices all across New York City, if she did any reading, it was always a report or a proposition or an account summary. What she wouldn't give for an afternoon spent curled up on a cushion in this huge library. One day, she thought to herself, she would build herself a library like this one.

Hearing the laughter again, she was pulled out of her visions for the future. It almost sounded like Gavin's laughter, but it had a slightly different cadence. She followed the sound around a large free-standing shelf in the middle of the room.

One of the twins sat on one side of a dark green plush velvet armchair, his back to her and his legs sprawled out before him. The chair was slightly angled toward her, so she could see his cheek propped against his fingertips, and a small smile curling the edges of his lips, lingering from his laughter. He read something funny again and threw his head back in laughter. When he did, Emilie could see more of his face. It was Grayson. Her heart clenched.

She had to cover her mouth to keep her own laughter in check at the sight of his amusement. He looked so tender and harmless, so different from his normal aloof and distant self, she couldn't help but tiptoe over to see what he was reading. Peering over his shoulder, at

first she could only see that he read a play. Then as she ventured even nearer, she saw the title. It was Molière's *The Miser*, the play that had gotten Emilie a César nomination in France.

A welling of emotion rose within her, unbidden and all-encompassing. The urge to reach out and run her fingers through his dark curly hair, to hold his rough cheek in the palm of her hand, had her whole body trembling.

She knew she was not meant to have seen him in here, reading this play. She knew this was private, that if she had not stumbled upon him, she would have never known that he thought about her at all. Watching him read and laugh, knowing that he did so because of her, with no agenda or angle, had Emilie's heart in her throat. Normally, Emilie would have reveled in the power she held over him, but in that moment, all she wanted to do was curl up in his lap and share this moment.

A small sigh slipped through her lips, and Grayson whipped his head around to her. Emilie froze, angry at herself for ruining such a beautiful moment.

Grayson slammed the script closed and tried to tuck it out of Emilie's sight.

Without thinking, she rushed over to his chair and lowered herself to her knees in front of him so that she was eye-level with him and put her hand over his, the one that held the play.

"No, don't put it away. I know...I know what it is. Please, don't be ashamed."

Grayson's green eyes bore into hers, searching. She wasn't playing games. She wanted him. She simply *wanted* him.

His brow furrowed. She could see dozens of emotions and thoughts flickering across his face, but desire eventually won out. His hand reached for her neck, pulling her lips slowly to his. His kiss was gentle, warm, and soothing upon her lips. As he deepened the kiss, she scooted closer, her arms snaking up his body. Running her thumbs over each of his sharp cheekbones, she let her fingers slip to the back

of his head, running them through his soft curls. She smiled against his lips, delighted by the tickling sensation of his hair against her palms, and gasped when he took advantage of her parted lips to dart his tongue inside her mouth.

He leaned over her, forcing her to arch her back as his tongue dove into the depths of her mouth, stroking and swirling in a dizzying pattern. Grabbing under her arms, he lifted her up into his lap, almost as if he'd heard her thoughts from a moment before, as if he wanted to hold her as close to himself as possible.

Emilie curled up against him, tucking her legs against the inside of the chair, as his arms wrapped all the way around her. She rested her head against his shoulder, sucking in a deep breath. The power of her attraction to him went deeper than anything she'd ever felt, and it frightened her. For now, she told herself to simply enjoy his strong, implacable arms around her.

He placed his hand under her chin, tilting her face up until she was forced to look into his eyes. "Let me see you, Emilie. No more hiding."

She nodded, somehow understanding what he meant. He wanted to hear something from her, something genuine, something that no one else knew. Noticing the paper edge of the play sticking out between the cushion and the armrest, she felt a confession rising to her lips, something she'd never admitted, not even really to herself. "Sometimes I miss acting. I don't want to go back, but I do miss it."

He considered her statement for a long moment, keeping his face expressionless. "Why did you stop?"

"A lot of reasons, but mostly because of my father. I'm his only child. He's made such a mark on the world. I don't want that to just...to, you know..."

"To just vanish?"

"Yeah, to disappear once he's gone." Emilie was silent for a moment, and she could feel Grayson's eyes on her face.

“There’s something else.” It wasn’t a question. She shuddered, chills rippling across her skin at how far he could see into her.

She nodded.

“What is it, Emilie?”

She swallowed, her mind shying away from the long-buried memories, but she wanted Grayson’s trust. She took a deep breath. “I was a young woman, very young and inexperienced, when I started acting. Then suddenly, in the blink of an eye, I was this international sex symbol. I’d always received attention because of my parents, but this was different. This was because of me. Myself. I had this power.”

“Uh-oh,” he said, grinning.

Emilie gave him her half-smile. “I was eighteen, I was French, and I was desirable. Of course, there were many men and even women who fell in love with me, but when *I* fell in love, it was overwhelming. I was naïve. The man I loved, Guillaume Cassell, was an actor turned director. He was so very beautiful, so artistic and passionate. We were together for almost three years. Not forever, but long enough to form something solid and, to me, sacred.

“Then, whatever had been holding us together broke one day. I looked at him, sitting across the couch from me, reading a review of a film he’d directed, smoking a cigarette, and I didn’t love him. It stopped. It just stopped.

“I didn’t say anything to him at first, just went to our room and started packing up my things. When he realized what I was doing, there was an explosion. Hours of screaming and crying and pleading and so much misery. You know the whole thing.” Emilie tossed a wry smile at Grayson then continued. “I broke his heart. I know that. I wish it didn’t have to happen, but my mind has fucked me over so many times. I feel horrible for what I did, and still do sometimes, but it was no excuse for what he did to me.”

Against her will, the muscles of her lithe body clenched, surprising her with how fresh her anger still felt.

Grayson ran a hand through her long, silky black hair, pulling all of it over one shoulder, and she smiled, glad she had decided that morning to let it hang in its naturally loose waves. “Tell me what he did to you.” Grayson buried his face in her smooth, fragrant locks, taking a deep breath and placing a kiss against her temple, just as Gavin had the night before in the Outlaw Museum.

Taking a steadying breath, Emilie said, “He humiliated me. He told the world our secrets. He shared pictures of our lovemaking. He told the magazines, the newspapers, sharing secrets of the bedroom with them. For weeks I couldn’t go online without seeing a link to my shame.”

Grayson’s arms tightened protectively around her. “That fucking bastard,” she heard him say under his breath. Then, more gently, “What did you do?”

“The only thing I knew how to do. I just smiled and carried on. When reporters asked me about it, I smiled and stared at them until they gave up and moved on to the next question.”

“Ahh,” Grayson chuckled into her locks. “I know that smile.” His lips ruffled the hair at the side of her face, his warm breath tickling through the strands to her ear. “It’s your very own Mona Lisa smile. It’s like you are saying to the world, ‘You don’t know me, and you will never know me’.” Tucking a finger under her chin, he tilted her face up to his. “But I know you.”

Emilie’s heart thumped uncomfortably in her chest.

“And, Emilie, you are safe with me,” he said. “Gavin and I, we would never do anything like that to you.”

“Grayson,” she said, staring hard into his eyes. “You don’t want me. I will break your heart.”

His lips tilted up in a crooked smile. “How do you know I won’t break *your* heart?”

Without matching his smile, she said, “Nobody breaks my heart.”

Grayson’s eyebrows shot up his broad forehead in momentary surprise. In a flurry of motion, she swung her legs off his lap and

began moving away from him, aware that she had let the conversation go too far. Casual, mindless sex with Gavin was okay. It was fun, and it kept her entertained, but Grayson wanted things from her that she would not give. *Could* not give, even if she wanted.

His strong fingers formed a vise around her upper arm and stopped her progress.

Yanking her into his lap, he said, "I can see why you played Frosine so well." She felt his stiff cock against the soft, yielding flesh of her bottom. She froze in his grasp, not giving in and not struggling. He pushed her black hair behind one ear and then leaned close. "The other characters revolve around her. She manipulates and manages them without ever letting herself get too involved. Her sex appeal is her power, and she is always in control."

Emilie jerked in his grip, desperately wanting to flee from his words. They struck her deep down in that place she kept buried, and the words chafed her, made her feel so raw and vulnerable.

Grayson chuckled. "The more you struggle, the more I know my words are true."

Emilie immediately froze. "You ass," she hissed. "I'm not a character in a play. That is make-believe. It's drivel. It's nothing."

"That's my point, Emilie. You're not Frosine. You're Emilie, and whether you want to believe it or not, you are my Emilie."

She twitched in his arms, her breathing heavy.

"Just my touch has you all confused." To illustrate, he wrapped an arm around her torso, pulling her back against his chest and holding her still. Forcing his legs between hers, he made her long limbs spill over each side of his lap. Then he trailed his fingers from her neck to the sides of her bosom and then down her rib cage over her hips and across the tops of her thighs to reach between her legs and press against her pussy, his fingers pushing firmly against the fabric of her high-waisted shorts. As much as she wanted to resist, her rebellious cunt was already clenching, greedy for more than a passing caress.

She could feel the warm cream gathering between her legs and soaking through the flimsy material of her panties.

“Your nipples are hard for me.” He rolled his palm over her straining nipples. “Your pussy is wet.” He cupped the space between her legs, and Emilie knew he could feel the moisture down there. “Now give in to me.”

As his hands moved up to her breasts, pressing and squeezing and pinching, Emilie tightly closed her eyes. Ignoring his words, she undid the buttons of her shorts, needing some release for her pussy. She grabbed one of Grayson’s hands and guided it to slide between the fabric and then into the hot, throbbing flesh of her pussy.

“Mmm,” Grayson sounded from behind, the vibrations of his voice rumbling through her back and her ribs.

Spreading his thighs wider so as to make Emilie’s own legs split farther as well, his fingers began teasing the tautly stretched skin of her lips, spreading her warm liquid. Emilie squirmed against his fingers, trying to force them inside her, so Grayson tightened his free arm around her torso, holding her in place.

“I will show you, Emilie. I am going to take your power away from you. You will surrender every ounce of your control, and you will scream out your pleasure, and my name will fill your mouth until you cannot hold it any longer. Do you understand me?”

His words woke something angry inside her. “You fucking wish,” she said. “Now put your goddamn fingers inside my cunt.”

He nipped the tender flesh of her earlobe. “Not good enough.”

“I don’t give a fuck.” She wriggled against him, trying to get those fingers in her pussy. She felt his dick pressing against her backside and decided to change tactics. Instead of going for the fingers, she began rolling her hips backwards against his hard cock.

“Ah, ah, ah,” he said, pulling his fingers completely out of her panties. He slapped her vulnerable pussy. Even through the shorts, she could feel the sting of it.

“Hold still, or you’ll get more of that.”

“Fuck you.”

“Madam,” he whispered, slapping her again but with more force. She grimaced, trying to squeeze her thighs together in response, but Grayson’s thick legs kept hers spread wide apart. She tried not to like the way his slaps sent a jolt of hot pain and then pleasure straight up her body. Her muscles trembled in wanton need, even though her mind was ready for a fight. “This is a library,” Grayson said. “Please be so kind as to lower your voice.”

“You are going to pay for this, damn you.”

Grayson slammed his hand into her pussy again, only this time instead of a quick slap, his hand stayed pressed against her, the bottom of his palm grinding on her clit. She pushed back against his body, looking for any escape from the burning fire he caused to spread in her groin.

“Maybe that’s true. But right now, your body belongs to me, and I will do with it any damn thing I please.” Emilie gasped as he brushed the strap of her Dior tank top off her shoulder and sank his teeth into her soft flesh. It didn’t break her skin, but she knew she would have marks the next day.

“Please,” she whispered.

“That’s a little better.” He kissed the place he had just bitten and then slipped his hand inside her shorts again. Leaning back against his chest so that her body was even more exposed, and she could rest her head on the back of the chair, Grayson began moving his fingers inside her. His other hand splayed across her belly, warming her skin and making her muscles quiver with each stroke of the fingers inside her pussy. His thumb wriggled against her swollen clit while the two fingers buried deep inside pushed and moved in an undulating pattern against the throbbing walls of her pussy. She flexed the muscles deep inside her body, trying to draw his fingers even farther inside. The movement sent a hot wave of pleasure through her whole body, and she continued to flex and unflex her inner muscles.

Her climax was only a few strokes away, and she felt her whole body begin to tremble. But then Grayson abruptly stopped his motion.

“What the fuck,” she whispered without thinking. She kneaded her fingers into the thick muscles of Grayson’s thighs, her body trembling and her breathing strained. All she wanted was release, but the fiery tingle in her nerves had already begun to recede.

“Not until you scream my name. That’s the deal.”

“That’s going to take more than a finger-fuck,” she said, panting from the need still coursing through her aroused body.

Before another thought could pass through her brain, Grayson pulled his fingers out of her cunt. She cried out at the sudden emptiness inside her. Grayson grabbed her hips and lifted her off his lap. He placed her on her feet facing him, making her shorts pool at her ankles.

“Take your panties off,” he ordered.

She glared at him, not moving her hands or making any move to obey him.

He leapt off the chair and stalked toward her, his large body driving her backwards, forcing her to step out of her shorts, leaving her more vulnerable. “Take your panties off,” he ground out when her back finally hit a wall of books. When she still refused to obey, his hands shot up under her top, his palms pressing against her full, pliant breasts, pinning her against the shelves.

He pushed his knee up between her thighs, shoving it roughly up against her pussy. It ground against the bones beneath her skin, and Emilie felt warm cream gushing between her legs as he pulverized her flesh. Closing her eyes, she pushed her head back against the books behind her, her hands clutching his elbows.

Then, like she knew he eventually would, he let his knee fall away from her aching cunt.

“I can finish. I can make you come harder than you ever have before.”

The promise in his words sent a new wave of pleasure through her tormented body.

“All you have to do is take those panties off. I want to see your pink pussy. I want to see how much you want me inside of you.”

As if in answer to his words, Emilie’s pussy throbbed hard, wanting her to obey his command. Her mind could resist no longer. Without taking her eyes away from his, she slipped her fingers through the fabric that wrapped around her hips and slid the tiny garment down her thighs then lifted her legs through the holes. Cocking her eyebrow, she tossed the panties aside.

Grayson used his knee to spread her legs in a wide stance. Then he stepped back for a moment just to look at her pussy, which liked the attention apparently. Despite Emilie’s efforts to deny her body’s reaction to his demands, her pussy’s throbbing increased its frequency with each second that he stared at her. His crooked smile grew wider.

“You are so beautiful, Emilie.” In that moment, he looked so young and tender and impressionable, not at all like the man who demanded everything from her, stripped away her control, and left her naked. His unabashed admiration made her feel powerful, but in such a different way. This power made her feel wholesome, made her feel clean in a way she hadn’t in a very long time.

The angry fire inside her subsided, and she suddenly craved his sweet tenderness. “Grayson,” she said, liking the way his eyes darted hopefully to her face. “Come here to me.” He took a step closer. “Let us both surrender.” She leaned forward, placing a gentle kiss against his full, wide mouth.

He moved his lips against hers in answer to her request, and his hand slipped between her thighs to push slowly inside her. First he moved with a slow, easy stroke, rekindling the fire that he had so cruelly extinguished. Emilie sighed against his lips, squeezing her muscles around his roving fingers.

“That’s lovely,” she whispered.

Grayson moved his thumb over her clit, pressing it hard while his fingers scraped slowly against the hot flesh inside her pussy. He curled his fingers inside her, his knuckles rippling against her tender walls. Then he kneaded his knuckles up and down inside of her, creating tiny knots of pressure until she thought she would just about explode.

“Grayson,” she whispered against his neck. “Please, go faster. I want to come. I want to come so bad.”

Leaving the tips of his fingers curled slightly up, he began moving his fingers in and out of her cunt, scratching all along the inner flesh of her pussy, sending tracks of pleasure out in wide rays through her body. Her pussy began throbbing and pulsing deeper than ever.

“Yes, Grayson,” she said, pushing her hips back and forth on his fingers. The rough edges of the books pressed sharply into the tender skin of her back and her ass. “Yes, please, just don’t stop.”

She only needed a few more thrusts, and she knew her climax would ripple throughout her body. Seeming to sense her nearness, Grayson spread his fingers wide apart inside of her while continuing his last strokes with more power and force.

The pleasure exploded through her, and Grayson smashed his lips over hers to swallow the deep moan that spilled out of her lips. Emilie’s legs shook from the energy it took to hold herself up, so she threw her arms around Grayson, letting him support her. His hot breath spilled down her back, and then he kissed the hollow of her neck.

* * * *

Her muscles were trembling, and Grayson smiled into her raven locks. Taking a deep breath, he liked how her hair smelled like flowers but with something sharp layered beneath the sweetness. He wished he could hold her that way forever.

Her body stiffened in his arms just as he heard the soft patter of footsteps in the hallway outside the library. He realized the door must have been open the whole time. He hoped none of the children had meandered past in the last few minutes.

“Grayson?” He heard Sherri’s voice calling from just outside the door. “Grayson, are you in here? The monkey bread’s almost gone.”

He didn’t answer while he and Emilie locked eyes, both hoping that she would walk past without stopping.

They sighed in relief when they heard her footsteps move away.

The momentary distraction broke the spell that had been holding them together. Emilie moved out from within his arms to retrieve her clothes. He watched her glorious ass as she bent over to pick her garments off the floor. His cock was so fucking hard. He’d have to spend some time in the bathroom before the little league game that afternoon.

“I’m going to the kitchen,” Emilie announced after buttoning the last button on her shorts. “I need some food.”

“What are you doing this afternoon?”

“Julian and I had planned on exploring Male Order, visiting the shops, getting the scoop on the Stephens twins. You know, that sort of thing.” Her lips curled up at the corner, sending a jolt straight to his cock.

“I have a better idea. Ditch the creep and come to the Barnstormer Braves game this afternoon.”

Emilie frowned at his nickname for Julian but didn’t comment. “Another baseball game?”

He chuckled at the note of aversion in her voice. “Well, T-ball actually, but yes, another game.”

“T-ball?”

“My brother and I coach a local T-ball team. It will only be about forty-five minutes long.”

“I don’t know.”

“I thought you liked games.”

“Ha. Ha.”

“Come on, Em. I’ll even throw a snow cone into the bargain.”

She giggled, the sound trickling out of her perfect mouth like water in a brook, so pure and so delicate. “Okay,” she said. “I’m sold. T-ball and snow cones it is.” Her blue eyes sparkled up at him, and he couldn’t resist pulling her in for one more kiss.

She gave his ass a playful squeeze before pulling away. “Okay, I need food now before I pass out.”

“Fine,” he said, letting his arms fall away from her. “Just make sure you find me in about an hour. We’ll all ride together to the fields.”

He watched her hips swing from side to side as she sauntered out of the library, throwing him one last teasing glance before disappearing through the large oak doors.

Realizing he stood staring after her like an idiot with a big goofy grin on his face, he shook his head.

“Shit,” he said to himself. Damned if he she wasn’t exactly the kind of woman he could fall in love with.

Chapter 7

Julian Steele smiled and interacted with the inhabitants of the kitchen as if nothing were amiss. Emilie had waltzed in a few minutes before with tangles in her hair and a hot flush across the skin of her chest and cheeks. He'd known her almost her whole life, since she was nine years old, and he also knew the look of a woman who had just been pleased.

Taking a deep gulp of his orange juice, he forced the anger back down his throat. He'd accepted a long time ago that Emilie was Ralph's sole heir, and nothing would change Ralph's mind about that. He doted on his daughter, but Julian also knew that Ralph wouldn't hand anything down to her if it wasn't deserved.

She'd proven herself time and again in the ring, hard-nosing it with the businessmen Julian and her father dealt with on a regular basis. Perhaps that was why Julian had always imagined himself to one day take her as his wife. Who else belonged at the top of Haymitch-Benson with her if not him? He'd been a loyal advisor to her father for so long, and once Ralph was gone, Julian planned on joining Emilie at the head of the company.

Julian knew that the only way to secure that position was to marry her.

He did not love her, at least not in the way that usually led to marriage. He respected her and could see himself spending many lucrative years with her as husband and business partner. Julian also knew that, as her husband, he would be at the helm of Haymitch-Benson.

Julian sighed. Despite Emilie's discretion and impeccable instincts in the business arena, Julian understood that women were fickle. Sure, she would want him with her at the beginning, but what would happen were she to marry another powerful businessman? Julian would be pushed aside in deference to her husband. Thus, Julian had to fill that place in her life.

She'd never seemed too interested in dating or becoming serious with anyone after her public debacle with Guillaume Cassell, and Julian assumed that he had plenty of time to make his move. But in the course of just three days, he could see that she was dangerously close to getting too involved with these twins.

The twins were young, just puppies compared to Julian, but he hadn't gained his position as Chief Advisor at Haymitch-Benson by underestimating his opponents.

As he sat at the kitchen table watching Emilie laugh and joke around at the breakfast bar with that purple-headed twit, Sherri, and one of the twins, a plan began to form in his mind. He took stock of his advantages. He knew Emilie. He knew what bothered her and what would break through her tough exterior if presented at just the right time and in just the right way.

He had his age and experience to contend with the twins. He'd have to keep his eyes and ears open. An opportunity would present itself. It always did if Julian waited long enough, and he was a very patient man.

Blinking his eyes a few times, he realized Emilie had just asked him a question.

"Sorry. What was that?" he asked.

"I said you don't mind if I go to a little league game today instead, do you? I know we had planned on heading downtown, but Gavin and Grayson have invited me to watch their T-ball team. I figured you could handle the downtown perusal by yourself."

Julian forced a smile to his lips. "Of course. I can do that if you think it best."

“Perfect. I’ll meet you for a late lunch to go over everything. We’ll probably need to call *Papa*, let him know how everything is going. I know he’ll be anxious.” Without another word, she turned back to the twin sitting next to her. Gavin, Julian thought. He seemed like the more laid back of the two, especially when he tossed a hunk of bread up into the air and caught it in his mouth like a circus seal.

Begrudgingly, Julian had to admire the way Emilie maneuvered people. She’d left no room for him to work his way into her alone time with the twins, making it seem of the utmost importance that he scope out the town of Male Order even though they’d only made those plans because there was nothing else to do.

As Julian contemplated his long afternoon alone, the other twin, Grayson, walked through the kitchen doors. He immediately went to Emilie’s other side, taking a place at the breakfast bar next to her. Julian’s hand tightened around his orange juice glass when Emilie scooted closer to the new twin. It was almost as if she couldn’t help herself, as if she’d done it involuntarily.

Gavin, the bread-tossing twin, watched his brother interacting with Emilie, and Julian noticed a warm smile spread across his lips. Julian wasn’t surprised that he showed no jealousy. This town was all about sharing.

Julian had learned about Male Order’s particular tastes almost from the very first moment he’d arrived. When he’d walked into the Stephens’ mansion after dropping Emilie off at Sherri’s, he’d been greeted by an older man named Craig and his wife, Julie—the twins’ adoptive parents. While showing him around the mansion, they’d pointed out pictures of their family, and Julian had been shocked to see that twins’ adoptive mother had another son *and* two husbands, one of whom had passed away a few years previous.

The family was obviously close-knit, and watching the twins now, he realized that they probably planned on sharing a wife just as their fathers had. Julian wasn’t sure, but he thought Emilie’s father might have a few qualms with that little scenario. Despite Male Order’s

tolerance for alternative marriages, Emilie's life and career existed outside of Male Order, and Julian didn't think the world would look kindly on that type of thing in the business realm.

Emilie had said that her father would be anxious to hear about their time so far in Male Order.

Julian smiled to himself. Ralph Benson would, indeed, be receiving an interesting call this afternoon. The only thing was his daughter would not be a part of it.

Chapter 8

Sherri pumped her fist in the air. “Whoooooooo! Whoo! Whoo! Whoo! Whoo! Go, Vivien! Whoooooooo! Yay, Barnstormers! Go Barnstormers! Whoo! Whoo! Whoo!”

Emilie was impressed. She was beginning to think that Sherri had superhuman lungs, but the petite woman finally took a breath just to start up another string of chants as Vivien ran the bases. Emilie clapped and laughed as Gavin stood at third base, swinging his arm in a wide circle, jumping up and down, urging little Vivien to run as fast as she could to home plate.

The little girl’s helmet was a tad too big and kept falling in front of her eyes. She finally just decided to hold it with her hands, which made her look slightly drunk as she ran the final steps. With a flourish, she leapt to home plate, pouncing with both feet and landing squarely in the middle.

Taylor and her two husbands sat in the row in front of Sherri and Emilie. The red-headed woman turned toward them, her face glowing, “That’s my daughter,” she said with a huge, proud smile on her face.

Her husband, Brody, held up his hand for a high five. “Yeah, baby!” The family all gave each other high fives, including Dorian, who had been sitting in the lap of his other father, Jay. Vivien ran up to the fence in front of her parents and put her palm up to the chain links, grinning from ear to ear. Both of her dads, her mom, and her brother each gave her a high five.

After Vivien ran over to her identical uncles, as the children affectionately referred to them, in the dugout to give them high fives as well, the Stephens-Bartlett family began doling out high fives to

anyone standing within a ten-foot radius, which included Emilie. She couldn't remember ever having given anyone a high five, not even to any of her friends at boarding school, and the first one felt awkward. By the time she got to Dorian, though, she felt like a pro.

She felt so relaxed in the bleachers among the twins' family. They were all so welcoming. Papa Craig and Mama Julie, as they had been introduced to Emilie, sat behind her. They had been chatting with everyone in the stands from the moment of their arrival.

Bryant Clare, an old friend of Jay and Brody's, walked up with snacks for Taylor and Dorian. "Aw, damn," he said. "What did I miss?"

"Vivien got a homer!" Dorian said as Bryant handed him a candy bar.

"All right!" Bryant gave Dorian a high five.

So it wasn't just a Stephens-Bartlett family thing, Emilie thought to herself. The whole town appeared to like high fives.

Bryant wore a straw-colored cowboy hat, tight-fitting jeans, and a pearl-snap plaid shirt even though the sun shone intensely on their backs. Emilie wasn't used to so much heat this early in the year and started to sweat just looking at his long-sleeved shirt. She wiped her hand across her forehead, trying to keep the sweat from dripping into her eyes. Her thick black hair stuck in a cloying mess against her neck. She was suddenly envious of Sherri's short, light-colored bob.

About a half-hour later, the game ended. Since it was T-ball, there was no scoring or winning or losing. Gavin jogged over to his family.

"How about Perry's steak house tonight? In honor of Vivien's magnificent home run and, of course, our lovely guest." Emilie had started to climb down the bleachers, but Gavin grabbed her around the waist and lifted her up, swirling her onto the ground.

She squealed in surprise, not only because he had taken her by surprise but also because of his very blatant, very public display of affection. She tried to discreetly swat his hands away from her hips when they lingered just a moment too long.

Just then, Grayson called from the dugout, “Gavin, leave Emilie alone. Get over here and help me take all this gear to the truck.”

Gavin shot her a quick wink and then trotted back through the fence to the dugout.

Sherri bumped her hip against Emilie’s and chanted below her breath so only Emilie could hear, “Gavin and Emilie sitting in a tree...”

“Shh,” Emilie hissed, glancing around to make sure no one paid them too much attention. She looked down and noticed Dorian watching her with a huge grin. She put her finger to her lips in a hushing motion. The little boy giggled and buried his face in his mother’s leg.

A few minutes later, after the twins had loaded everything up and each little boy and girl had been dispersed to their parents, Grayson strode up to Emilie and offered the crook of his elbow. “I believe I owe you a snow cone, madam.”

Emilie ignored Sherri’s knowing snicker next to her. Elbows usually weren’t frightening or formidable or extraordinary, really, in any way, but now that Grayson had presented his to her, elbows suddenly seemed extremely momentous and important. She could feel everyone’s eyes watching her. To refuse would be an embarrassment and an affront to Grayson and his family. To accept, however, would start their tongues a-wagging. And she would *never* hear the end of it from Sherri.

Emilie put her half-smile in place, but drilled a glare into Grayson’s eyes and then slipped her arm through his. Before she had her arm all the way through, Gavin slipped up next to her and tucked her other arm into his elbow. Emilie rolled her eyes.

“A girl doesn’t stand a chance sandwiched between you two bullies.”

Gavin leaned in to whisper in her ear. “Too true.”

Emilie dug her elbow playfully into his ribs. It seemed the rest of the family wanted snow cones, too, because they were all in tow

behind Emilie and the twins. She could hear them chatting and joking. At least they weren't whispering behind their hands.

After ordering a red raspberry snow cone with cream on top, Emilie watched the twins and then Sherri order a cone. Sherri pranced over to the picnic table where Emilie sat with her cone. "Don't forget. Tonight is the Wicked Whimsy party at the Boom Boom Room."

"Sherri, I'm staying at your house. How could I possibly forget?"

"I just don't want you sneaking off without me noticing."

"I promise to be there."

"Hey, Sherri," Bryant Clare said with his slight Texas drawl, sitting down with a big blue snow cone. "Do you think you could squeeze one more into the party tonight?"

"Ooh, I always have room for another victim. Who is she?"

"What do you mean *victim*, Sherri?" Gavin asked as he made it to the table with a rainbow snow cone. "You're not going to be doing any weird experiments on Emilie, are you?"

"Don't worry, Gavin. Any experiments conducted on Emilie tonight will be far from painful." Sherri waggled her dark brows with an impish grin on her face.

Gavin wrapped an arm around Sherri's neck and gave her a knuckle head. Sherri, laughing, elbowed him in the stomach and broke free, her lavender mop ruffled.

Returning her attention to Bryant, she said, "Sorry, Bryant. Excuse this ill-mannered ruffian." She shot Gavin a disapproving look while she straightened her Barnstormer Braves T-shirt.

"That's all right, Sherri," Bryant said, adjusting his hat with a charming grin.

Emilie knew that the twins thought of Sherri as a sister, but something potent welled up inside Emilie as she watched their light-hearted horseplay, something curling and snaking and green. It made her want to grab Sherri's short mop of purple hair and yank her away from the twins. The violence threatened to erupt from her fingertips,

so Emilie took a big bite of snow cone. The ensuing brain freeze took her mind momentarily off the jealousy.

“Now, who is our mystery guest?” Sherri asked.

“Her name is Robin Lawrence. She’s in town archiving family documents for the Abrams family. That’s one of Male Order’s founding families,” Bryant added for Emilie’s benefit. “Robin’s an art history major. She’s a little shy, but you can handle that, right?”

“Pshh,” Sherri said, waving her hand at Bryant in a dismissive gesture. “If I can get this one on a four-wheeler”—she poked a thumb at Emilie—“Robin should be a piece of cake.”

Emilie raised her brows at Sherri. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

“I saw your face when I opened the shed doors. You did not want to get on that four-wheeler.”

Just then, the lady working the snow cone stand handed Grayson a grape snow cone, and he joined the group. “Emilie rode a four-wheeler? When? How did I miss this?”

“To lunch the other day.”

“I bet that was sexy,” Grayson whispered in her ear so that none of the others could hear. Bryant and Sherri were discussing the best tactics to get Robin to the party, and Gavin stood across from her, watching as his brother whispered inappropriate commentary into her ear.

Her breasts tingled, and her pussy suddenly became very sensitive to the fabric of her panties and shorts. Every little movement of her legs sent a jolt through her. The sun felt so stifling against her skin, and she just wanted to be pressed between their two bodies. It worried Emilie that just having their eyes on her sent so many sensations through her eager body. She pushed the worry away for the moment, not wanting to ruin the easy-going friendship flowing through the group.

Her phone buzzed in her pocket, and she was grateful for the distraction to pull her away from the twins’ burning eyes. She held

her phone up to Grayson and Gavin, letting them know she would just be a moment and then walked over to stand beneath a large pecan tree. The cool, shaded air under the tree's generous foliage felt sublime against Emilie's heated skin.

Looking at the screen, she hit the accept button. "*Bonjour, Papa.* I was just going to call you this afternoon."

"Emilie, I think you'd better find Julian right now."

Emilie frowned. His voice sounded odd, holding a strained and worried timbre. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing is wrong necessarily, but you need to leave the baseball fields and go to Julian."

"*Papa,*" Emilie said, an ominous feeling creeping cold fingers through her blood. "How did you know where I was?"

"Julian has something you need to see. I'd rather you see it than try to explain it to you myself," he said in a gentle voice. "Julian said to find him at the bakery downtown."

"Okay, I'll call you later."

"Good, good. *Je t'aime,* Emilie."

"*Je t'aime, Papa.*"

* * * *

An hour later, Emilie stared at the computer screen, her fingertips white as she gripped the edge of the café table. When she'd found Julian at a little soup and sandwich bistro downtown, they hadn't said much. He'd handed her a pair of earphones, typed in an address at the top of the Internet browser, and then sat back while she listened and read.

A young, effervescent male voice greeted her ears first as the screen began to sparkle and move. The voice said. "Hola y howdy. My name is Emilio Estefan. Welcome to *Allegedly*, your go-to spot for all things trashy, nasty, Dallas, and fabulous. Aye ya yi!"

Just as the voice finished introducing the website, a big picture of Emilie popped up on the screen. It could only have been taken a few hours before, Emilie thought in panic, because it was a picture of her smiling broadly with a twin on each arm at the little league fields. It also looked like she was leaning in to whisper something in Gavin's ear, even though Emilie knew she'd only been turning around to wink at Dorian who had accidentally stepped on the back of her heel as they walked to the snow cone stand.

Her eyes flew to the write-up beneath the picture.

“Ding Dong! ~~Yes, please!~~ Who's there? It looks like Dallas's best kept secret, Male Order, is harboring a sexy newcomer. And not just any ruby-slipper-wearing stranger. No, no, no, mijitos, this pretty little miss hails from that faraway, magical land known as New York City, sources reveal, and her daddy just happens to be the great and powerful ~~Θζ~~-Ralph Benson. For you cretins who are scratching your head and picking your nose, Ralph Benson is only like the richest man since God. And we here at Allegedly are left to wonder what his darling girl could possibly be doing poised as the meat between two slices of identically delicious man-bread in Male Order, Texas.

Well, honey, you ain't in Kansas anymore, but whoever you are and whenever you are here, we're digging the ~~DP-lifestyle~~ look! I think I saw that top on the Dior catwalk. We've got our eyes on you, mamacita. xoxo, Emilio.”

No wonder her father had seemed so concerned on the phone. She'd thought those emotions were gone, banished, but she felt fear creeping into her spine, paralyzing her thoughts and her reason. Guillaume's treachery suddenly felt very fresh and very real. It had

been so long since she'd seen her name splashed across some gossip rag or online site, but it still sent cold chills through her body. Swallowing down a large gulp of the sweet iced tea, Emilie took a deep, steadying breath.

It hadn't said anything at all, she tried to assure herself. Only mentioned her name...in conjunction with her father's...and a naughty sexual reference...below a picture of her...with not one, but *two* men! Emilie closed her eyes and rubbed her temples. She'd left her damn cigarettes at home, thinking she wouldn't need them at the little league game. With a groan, she noticed that the article had already received over a thousand views, and it had only been up for about forty-five minutes.

Experimentally, she typed her name into a search engine. The *Allegedly* article was only behind two other links. "Who the hell posted this?" she asked more to herself, but Julian answered.

"Someone probably saw you at the game, and either recognized you or noticed you with the twins. They probably texted the picture, just wanting to know who you were. You're not exactly inconspicuous, especially in such a small town."

"Shit. You're right."

"Do you want to go back to Dallas?"

Even though Emilie had already been toying with the thought, as soon as Julian said it, she immediately rejected the idea. He made it sound like she would somehow be giving up, and she was not a quitter. She knew that about herself, at least.

"No, no. We'll stay. I just need to be a little more aware of my surroundings, I guess. I didn't realize Dallas had such an active gossip scene." Emilie felt the barriers in her mind closing in again. She'd have to be more careful with the twins. Whatever happened, she couldn't screw this up. Her father had trusted her to make sure this business deal went over smoothly, and she refused to be ruffled by a few wayward words on a gossip site.

With a small sigh of regret, Emilie realized that she would have to sever all physical ties with the twins. Well, so be it. From now on, Emilie promised herself, everything was strictly business.

Chapter 9

Gavin checked his phone for the ninth time in half an hour. Emilie had taken a phone call and then left the fields with barely more than five words to either himself or his brother. She'd agreed to meet them for dinner at Perry's that evening before Sherri's party, and he'd already called her twice. With no answer and no text in over four hours, Gavin felt a small nagging worry in the back of his mind.

He and Grayson had gone back to their house, and Papa Craig had been helping them cut some limbs around the house that were starting to look a little too heavy. Of course, they could hire someone to do the work, but Papa Craig and his boys enjoyed sweating in the hot Texas sun. He'd passed that love of labor on to all three of his sons. While Gavin was out in the blistering sun with his chainsaw, cutting and lifting the heavy limbs, it was easy to throw himself into the work. He worked to purge from his mind the image of Emilie's finely curved ass as she'd bent over for his cock. He worked to forget the image of her breasts as they slapped against her body while he fucked her.

Now that he'd showered and dressed for the evening, though, the images were back, and his cock had been standing at attention since stepping out of the cold water. Flicking his fingers over the dial pad of his phone, he rang Sherri up.

"What do you want, turd face?"

"Shut up, butt head. Is Emilie there?"

"Oh no," Sherri said, and Gavin could easily detect the teasing tone in her voice. "Has the big, bad knight lost his lady prize?"

"Where do you get this crap?"

“From the crapper, of course.”

“Okay, well, look in that crapper of a head and see if you can answer my question.” Silence greeted his ears, and for a second, Gavin thought he had lost the connection. Then he heard a muffled giggle. “Hello! Sherri! I’m still here.”

“I know. Emilie was just teaching me a few choice words *en Français*.”

“What the hell, Sherri. Can I talk to her?”

“*Elle dit, non.*”

“I’m guessing that means no.”

“*Oui.*”

“Sherri, if you weren’t practically my sister—”

“*Au revoir!*” Sherri chimed, cutting him off, and then the phone went dead.

“Dammit!” Gavin shouted at his phone.

“Who was that?” Grayson asked, striding into the room while running a towel over his wet, curly hair.

“I was trying to get Emilie on the phone, but Sherri, being Sherri, wouldn’t give the phone to her.”

Grayson muttered some unintelligible reply. Then his phone rang. It was sitting on the bed between the two of them. Exactly between them. Both their eyes noticed the name flashing across the top of the screen at exactly the same time, and then they both dove at the phone. Grayson got his hand around it first, but Gavin’s head rammed into Grayson’s forearm, making Grayson howl in pain. Gavin wrapped his fingers tight around Grayson’s that still gripped the phone.

“It’s my phone,” Grayson panted as he struggled to maintain his grip on the small device. He dug his shoulder into Gavin’s side, trying to force his younger brother’s body far enough away to weaken Gavin’s grip.

“Don’t hang it up!” Gavin shouted.

“Then let go, asshole,” Grayson said, elbowing Gavin and eliciting a deep grunt.

“You let go.”

“She called my phone. She wants to talk to me.” With a final wrench, Grayson got the phone free from Gavin. He quickly pressed the accept button, and without a hint of the struggle that had just ensued, he said, “Hello. This is Grayson speaking.” He covered the mouthpiece part of the phone while he took a few deep breaths.

“Mmm hmm...yep...everything’s good. Oh...really?”

A frown creased Grayson’s brow, and Gavin sat on the bed, waiting for his brother to let him know what was going on.

“Okay. And you’re sure?” Grayson turned away from Gavin and spoke in a low voice. Gavin smirked. He found it comical that Grayson thought he could keep anything from him. He clearly heard his brother say, “We were looking forward to dinner tonight. It’s a shame that you can’t make it.”

Gavin’s ears perked up. That didn’t sound good. A few moments later, Grayson hung up and turned back to his brother.

“So she’s not coming?” Gavin asked.

“Nope.” Grayson looked at the shirt he had in his hand and walked toward the bedroom door. Then he changed his mind and headed back toward the closet. Then he changed his mind again and headed for the bedroom door.

“Everything all right, bro?”

“Huh?” Grayson looked up at him with big owl eyes.

Gavin threw a pillow at him, hitting Grayson square in the face. When he barely flinched, Gavin sat up straight on the bed. “You fucking love her, don’t you?”

“No!” Grayson said, snapping out of his momentary daze. When Gavin only stared at Grayson incredulously, Grayson said, “What, asshole?”

“What happened to the whole ‘We’re doing business with her father’ speech?”

Grayson sighed but continued to glare at his brother. “Don’t act like you are not partly responsible. When have we ever not been

attracted to the same woman? I told you to stay away. You didn't. So now, here we are."

"All right, all right. What are we going to do about it?"

"Seeing as she is the furthest thing from a Male Order wife that I've ever seen, and she'll be going back to New York in less than a week, I suppose that after she's gone, we won't be doing a damn thing about it."

The way Grayson said it, so matter-of-factly, hit Gavin right in the gut. He hadn't let himself dwell on the fact that Emilie would be leaving in only a matter of days. He'd just wanted a little bit of fun, but now the thought of losing her was really making him squirm.

"Or..." Gavin said, realizing suddenly what his older brother wanted him to say, what he had been waiting for him to realize. "We could try and convince her to stay here. With us. Permanently."

Their eyes met, and they knew, with absolutely no doubt, that Emilie Benson was their woman. And now that they were united in this view, it was only a matter of time before she realized it, too.

* * * *

Throwing back the last swig of her second gin and tonic, the lime tumbling against her lips, Emilie closed her eyes, opening up the back of her throat to let the liquid fall freely into the very core of her body. She wasn't sure, but she thought that Sherri's party was making her hyper-aware of her body and of its deep arousal. Every time Sherri brought a new toy out for them all to ogle, Emilie imagined how much fun it would be to use with the twins.

At the moment, Sherri had out a nipple stimulator. It had two little clamps with wires attached to a battery-operated remote that would send varying levels of vibrations into the lucky nipple that found itself pinched between one of the clamps. Emilie had to cross her legs at the thought of that on her nipples while one of the twins took care of her pussy and the other...

She couldn't let her mind go there. She was supposed to be done with them. If only she had a scalpel for her mind. She needed some sort of invasive surgery to rip them free from her brain.

"Okay, ladies, time to woman up," Sherri had called from the stage about an hour before. As each woman arrived at the party, they were directed to a rack in the back with some of the most risqué, exotic-looking lingerie Emilie had ever seen. Each woman was required to pick something out and wear it throughout the duration of the party.

Up on the stage, Sherri had on black stilettos, fishnet thigh-highs attached to garters, and a black one-piece leotard-looking piece with little cap sleeves and geometric chunks missing from the body.

"Ladies! Ladies!" Sherri said, her clear voice ringing over the excited chatter of the twenty or so ladies in the Boom Boom Room. "Welcome to the fifth meeting of our monthly Wicked Whimsy!" All the ladies in the room cheered. The seasoned veterans were at the front, obviously the most comfortable in their garb. Emilie and a few other newbies, including Bryant Clare's friend, Robin Lawrence, hid in the back. Emilie wasn't uncomfortable in her get-up, but she also wasn't a natural exhibitionist.

"We should have enough poles for everyone," Sherri said. "We'll start with a little warm-up." Sherri led them through the basics of pole-dancing aerobics, and Emilie reveled in the soft fabric of her lingerie as she learned an interesting pattern of leg twists.

Upon perusing through the lingerie, Emilie had chosen a lilac bra and panty set decorated with the most exquisite Alençon lacework she'd ever seen. The set came with a sheer lilac over-robe embroidered with silk flowers. The robe buttoned snugly across her torso but hung luxuriantly open at the top, exposing her full, creamy bosom encased in the elegant lilac lace. When she walked, her long slender legs swished through the opening that started at her waist and reached all the way to the floor. Emilie had never worn something so wonderful. She felt like such a woman, so soft and graceful and

delicately beautiful. Sherri was very clever to have them prancing around in the decadent garments. Emilie never wanted to take hers off, and she knew she would be making at least one purchase tonight.

Later, after the pole dancing session, Emilie's attention was ripped away from her lingerie when Sherri pulled the next toy out of her little treasure chest onstage.

"All right, ladies, some of you may be a little shy about our next toy at first, but this *is* Male Order after all." Sherri reached into the chest with an impish grin and pulled out a set of anal plugs. Emilie heard some of the ladies gasp, and she noticed Robin Lawrence's eyes widen at the sight of the naughty toys Sherri brandished with such a lack of decorum.

"Now, ladies, these aren't your ordinary anal plugs." One of the veterans gave a hearty cheer when Sherri said "anal plug," and Sherri giggled. "These babies vibrate!" Sherri illustrated by pushing a button. The plug made a small buzzing noise and began to glow in her hand. "Oh yeah!" she yelled, accentuating each word with a lascivious thrust of her hips. "Pass this little number around, and just close your eyes. Let your imagination soar." She handed the buzzing object down to someone near the stage.

Sherri worked her way through the rest of the objects in her treasure trove, moving from toys to products and then finally to a Q&A. By the time they reached the end of Sherri's presentation, none of the ladies were shy about asking questions. They'd all had at least three drinks if not more, and the lingerie seemed to be making them, as a whole, quite uninhibited.

"All right, ladies, you know the drill. I'll meet each of you one on one behind the curtain where we can discuss your Wicked Whimsies and get you well on your way down pleasure's pathway. Make sure you look over the complete list of all our goodies, and if you have any questions, I'll be ready to answer. Let the wickedness begin!" She leapt off the stage and pranced over to slip behind a thick, velvet curtain.

After purchasing another drink for herself to the sounds of some sleazy, trumpety jazz music, Emilie spotted Robin Lawrence sipping on a whiskey and Coke by herself in the corner. Knowing Sherri would chastise her later if she didn't make any sort of friendly overture, Emilie waded through the sea of scantily clad women.

"Robin Lawrence?"

The woman's brown eyes darted to Emilie. "Yes. You're Emilie Benson?"

"Correct. I'm staying with Sherri, who seems to know your friend Bryant."

The woman had her arms crossed and a hard look on her face as she sucked steadily on the straw of her drink, but at the mention of Bryant, her features softened just a bit. "Yeah, I know Bryant. Bryant is great. Bryant is wonderful." Then she muttered something under her breath, and her face hardened once again.

"I don't mean to be pesky," Emilie said, an unusually friendly tone in her voice. Perhaps it was the gin speaking, but she suddenly found herself feeling very magnanimous. "Is everything okay? I know I just met you, but you seem a little tense." It *was* the gin. She could hear the words coming loosely out of her lips, like her tongue couldn't quite hold on to all the sounds. Emilie leaned her tall, slender form against the wall for support.

"It's not Bryant that I have to worry about," Robin said. Emilie thought she sounded a little loose and relaxed, too, and she watched as Robin took a long gulp of her whiskey and Coke. "It's his damn friend, Alexander."

"Oh! Do you mean Alexander Dimitri Abrams the Third?" Emilie asked in delighted surprise.

Robin frowned up at Emilie. "You know Alexander?"

"Oh yeah," Emilie said, patting Robin's shoulder, feeling inexplicably chummy with the woman. "We're practically bosom buddies."

“Then perhaps you can explain to me why he’s such an ignorant, arrogant, and comprehensive ass.”

Emilie frowned, feeling nothing but empathy for her new friend. Men could be so pig-headed sometimes. Emilie stayed with Robin, mulling over and discussing Alexander’s infuriating misdeeds. Besides, Emilie wanted to help Alexander out. Robin obviously cared for him, otherwise he wouldn’t have the power to upset her so much, and Emilie felt it her duty to help her newfound friends.

Soon, though, Sherri’s head popped out of the curtain, and she crooked a finger at Emilie, indicating it was her turn behind the curtain.

“I’m being summoned,” Emilie said to Robin, “but for what it’s worth, I think Alexander is marvelous,” and leaning over a bit unsteadily, she placed a kiss on each of Robin’s cheeks. “*Au revoir.*”

Oddly comforted by the genuine warmth behind her own words, Emilie left Robin and slipped through the thick velvet folds to discover a rather sizable alcove. Sherri sat on the opposite side of a round table, all her goodies either spread out across its surface or on display in her Wicked Whimsy chest beside her.

“So what do you think?” Sherri asked in her high-pitched, ringing voice, sinking back into the plush cushions behind her.

“This is amazing, Sherri. I’m so glad you made me come.”

“Did you see anything you liked? Anything strike your fancy?”

Emilie suddenly felt very self-conscious. “Umm, Sherri...”

“Yes?” Sherri drug out the word, making it as suggestive as possible, and Emilie had to stifle a giggle.

“Well, it’s just that...well, I know that you and the twins...I mean, I wasn’t sure...”

“Ew! Hold it!” Sherri said, throwing her hand up. “Grayson and Gavin are like brothers to me. We, like, picked each other’s boogers when we were little.”

“That’s what I thought, but I wanted to make sure before I...you know.” Emilie motioned at the heaps of products positioned around

Sherri. Then, like two little girls, they rummaged through the naughty offerings until Emilie had about three large bags full.

“Okay, okay,” Emilie laughed. “I think I have everything I could possibly want or need for, like, ever.”

They dissolved into another fit of giggles.

“And what about the lingerie?” Sherri asked.

“Definitely keeping the lingerie.”

“Okay, good. Because you look friggin’ awesome.”

“I know.”

“Oh my gawd!” Sherri squealed. “I’ve always wanted a sister.”

Clenching her fingers around the edge of the marble tabletop, Emilie felt the blood draining from her head to settle heavily in the pit of her stomach like the inevitability of sand running through an hourglass. “Sherri, it’s not like that. We’re just having fun. I thought you knew. I mean...I’m going back to New York at the end of the week.”

Her grin not losing a bit of its power, Sherri leaned her elbows on the table. “You’re funny, Emilie.”

“I’m serious, Sherri. Marriage...long-term...that sort of thing...it’s not for me. Understand?”

“So let me get this straight,” Sherri said, a small frown distorting her delicate features. “What you’re telling me is that you have not one, but *two* men who are head-over-heels mad about you, and not just any men, but Grayson and Gavin, who *I know* will devote their whole lives and hearts and souls to you, and you are able to just walk away from that? Without a backward glance? Without a hint of regret? Or wondering what if? You can do that?”

Emilie swallowed, trying to alleviate her suddenly dry mouth.

“You’re a stronger woman than I,” Sherri concluded. As she leaned back into her cushions again, Emilie detected the smallest trace of irritation in the petite woman’s voice and posture. It was the first time Sherri had been anything but beaming around Emilie, and shame licked at her in the pit of her stomach.

But then, beneath the guilt at having to hurt the twins and Sherri, Emilie felt something else growing. Something very close to desire, but an altogether new and strange kind of desire.

Sherri's words had painted a bright picture in Emilie's mind, and she saw herself in Male Order, nestled between her two beautiful men, holding their hands as their little girl ran around in the yard on a lazy Sunday afternoon, giggling. What surprised Emilie the most was not the vision itself but the warm feeling of happiness that swept through her at the vision. She'd never wanted that sort of life, never dreamed it could exist, not for her at least. Now that the opportunity for it had been presented to her, however, she realized that something deep inside yearned for that security, that sense of coming home.

"Well," Sherri said, inspecting her fingernails in a casual manner. "It seems you've already wasted a good portion of your night here." Her bright blue eyes darted to Emilie's face, and they had lost their teasing glint. "And, if what you say is true, and you are dead set on leaving them at the end of the week, you'd better waste as little time as possible."

The coldness in Sherri's voice shocked Emilie, and an incredulous laugh rose to her lips. "Are you sending me away?"

Sherri didn't say anything, just met Emilie's eyes squarely without flinching or glancing away.

"Okay." Emilie gathered her belongings, and she could feel the muscles of her face settle into an emotionless state, the mask hiding just how much Sherri's words hurt. "It was a pleasure doing business with you." Emilie nodded once at Sherri, who watched her with obvious disappointment, and then strode out through the curtain.

The bluesy, electric guitar-filled music pulsing through the speakers pounded against her skull, and Emilie wanted nothing more than to get out of the Boom Boom Room and away from the party. With a small growl of frustration, she realized that Sherri had given her a ride to the party and was supposed to be giving her one home as well.

Well, she thought to herself, she'd just have to walk, dammit.

Chapter 10

The cell phone buzzing in his pocket brought Grayson out of his light slumber. He'd been reading in the library and had fallen asleep on one of its soft couches. Upon glancing at his screen, he quickly answered his phone.

"Emilie?"

"Hello, Grayson."

Her voice was quiet on the other end, eerily quiet. "Aren't you supposed to be at the Boom Boom Room? At Sherri's party?"

"I was." She sniffed.

"Is everything okay?"

"Umm...can you come let me in?"

"You're here?" He shot up off the couch, his legs already heading out of the library before his mind processed what she'd said. "What's wrong? Are you hurt?"

"No, I'm fine. Everything's okay. I just...well, I wanted to see you."

Her voice sounded tiny in his phone's earpiece, not holding its usual sense of command.

When he opened the front door, she gasped, dropped the bags in her hands, and then launched herself into his arms, her tall frame colliding into his. Her hot lips found his within moments, and she plunged her tongue deep inside his mouth, pushing past his teeth to thrust at the back of his throat.

The force of her attack sent him back a few steps, and the back of his knees hit the edge of a decorative wooden sculpture. The wood

groaned loudly and awkwardly against the marble floor of the entryway.

“Take me to your bed,” she purred in his ear as soon as he had regained his balance. Without waiting for his compliance, she turned toward the stairway and began heading up. That was when he noticed her attire. Her whole body, every inch of her lithe, luscious form was draped in a sheer, light-purple fabric. Beneath the see-through outer layer, she wore a skimpy little pair of lace panties that left half of each of her ass cheeks on pert display above her long, bare legs.

As she walked slowly up the steps, her hips swaying at eye level, Grayson couldn’t resist grabbing at the material. The soft fabric bunched as he slipped his hand up between her legs from behind.

Emilie gasped, lurching forward as the tips of his fingers pressed against the sensitive outer flesh of her swollen pussy. She caught herself with her hands on one of the stairs above, and Grayson was rewarded by a low moan as he massaged his fingers against her hot cunt. Darting beneath the flimsy lace of her panties, he sank two of his fingers into her wet, clenching hole. She crawled upward, and Grayson moved closer, urging her as he pressed his bulging cock against her backside. Reaching around with his free hand, he clutched one of her breasts, pulling her body to his and holding her close.

With his fingers lodged deep inside her, they moved up the stairs in a swaying, dizzying motion, every step she took causing the soft flesh of her thighs and her silky inner walls to clench around his hand. He was so engrossed by the silky folds wrapped around his fingers and the heat growing between their bodies that Grayson didn’t notice Gavin waiting for them at the top of the stairs until he heard his brother’s deep voice.

“Goddamn, Emilie. You look so fucking sexy.”

Grayson felt Emilie’s muscles stiffen at Gavin’s voice. She looked up.

Grayson leaned down to whisper in her ear, “Tell us you want us both inside you.”

“I do,” she moaned. “I want you both. I want to fuck you both.” As if her words had unlocked something inside her, she began straining against Grayson’s restrictive hold on her body, reaching for Gavin. Taking his fingers out from between her legs, he gave her a little leeway.

Then Gavin took two steps down the stairs toward them and came within Emilie’s grasp. She wrapped her arms around Gavin and pressed her body against his, smashing her lips against his in desperate need. Grayson slid his hands down her back, stopping when he held an ass cheek in each hand. Moving his hand through one of the high slits in her sheer robe, he spread her ass apart and slipped his thumbs beneath her panties, letting them tickle the sensitive flesh between her cheeks.

Emilie jerked at his unexpected exploration, breaking off her kiss with Gavin, and Grayson placed a soothing kiss on the soft slope of her shoulder.

“Let’s go to the bedroom,” Grayson said, taking Emilie’s hand. “We’re going to do this right.”

Her warm fingers curled around his, and she took Gavin’s hand. Their sides bumping intimately against each other, they made their way down the hall and into the master bedroom where the brothers had a four-poster California king-sized bed waiting.

Emilie paused in the doorway, releasing their hands. “I want you both to go to the bed. I want to do something for you. For both of you.”

Grayson looked over at his brother, who shrugged and then headed toward the bed, obviously curious about what their sexy woman had planned for them. As they sat propped against the headboard, Emilie stood with her legs slightly apart. She ran her delicate hand up her thighs, brushing over her pussy and then sliding lingeringly over her rib cage to stop under her breasts. She cupped herself, rubbing her nipples through the thin fabric of her lingerie.

Grayson could see the contour of her hard nipples poking through the material.

Emilie closed her eyes as she pinched herself and then let her hands slide back down her body to her pussy. She massaged herself, and a slight flush washed over her skin. Grayson's cock, already hard, bucked against his pants, reacting to her arousal.

Her eyes snapped open, and she stalked over to one of the wooden posts at the foot of the bed. Grasping the smooth wood, she lifted one leg to the bed, pressing her pussy to the wood, and then pulled herself all the way up, arching her back. When she was in a standing position with both legs on each side of the pole on the bed, she hung away from the post and then rolled her body first away and then toward the pole. She arched her hips and undulated against the wooden post again and again, letting them watch the rough wood press against her tender, swollen flesh. Then she twirled around it so that she stood at the corner of the bed with her ass toward them.

"Oh, fuck me," Grayson heard Gavin whisper beside him.

With her back to them, she began unbuttoning her robe and let it slide slowly over the pale, smooth skin of her back and over the curve of her ass to the floor.

"Come here now, Emilie," Grayson commanded, unable to take her sweet torture any longer.

She turned to face him with a small, temptress smile playing at the corners of her lips. Dropping down to her knees, she began to crawl slowly toward him, her breasts dangling. Grayson sat up, moving to his knees, and when she reached him, he yanked her to his body. Her soft flesh molded to his hard muscles, and her hands snaked around to his ass, pulling him closer to her.

Grayson broke the kiss. He needed to be inside of her. Grabbing her hips, he moved their bodies so that her back was to him and she faced Gavin.

Gavin understood what he wanted and said, "Put your head down, Emilie. I want your hot mouth on my cock."

Without hesitating, Emilie leaned over to suck Gavin, leaving her ass and her pussy vulnerable and begging for Grayson's cock. Grabbing her firmly, he guided his aching cock to her hot pussy.

As soon as she felt the nudging tip of his dick, she dipped her back, making her legs and her pussy widen slightly, urging him to bury himself deep within her creamy depths. As he pushed himself inside her, he could feel her intentionally clenching around him, pulling him deeper and deeper. Without waiting, he began moving, pulling out and then pushing solidly back in, his cock pushing firmly against her inner walls.

Every stroke sent a tremor through the muscles of her already pulsing cunt, which rippled across the taut, sensitive skin of his dick. He wanted to keep it steady, to build the pressure slowly up inside of her, but she pulled at him.

He felt himself driving deeper and deeper inside her, and a small whimper fell out of her lips, muffled but still audible. He saw her fingers clench and dig into the bed covers, each of his strokes bringing her closer and closer to release, even as she increased her own rhythm on Gavin. Grayson's balls began to tighten painfully, and he fought against it, wanting to hear her scream first.

He tightened his grip around her waist and then moved his hips in a small circular pattern with each thrust, trying to reach every surface of her inner walls.

Emilie groaned loudly, and his brother arched his back, causing Emilie to rise up. Even as his brother came in Emilie's mouth, Grayson maintained his winding thrusts.

Then Emilie pressed her cheek against Gavin's abdomen and screamed as Grayson felt her pussy clenching and pulsing wildly around his cock. Her whole body shuddered with her release, squeezing and releasing and then squeezing and releasing around him until with one final thrust his cock burst, shooting white-hot cum into her core.

* * * *

After a long moment, Emilie opened her eyes. Every nerve in her body was on fire, and she could hardly stand it. Grayson pulled away from her, his cock sliding out of her, to roll away. She followed suit, rolling to land between the two brothers.

Every muscle trembled, even as she lay flat on her back.

Well, shit, she thought to herself. This was not exactly what she had in mind when she'd told herself to cut off all physical ties, to make everything strictly business between herself and the twins. Dammit, she'd come over here to tell them that she couldn't see them anymore and that they needed to back off, but when Grayson opened the door, his dark curls tousled and his cheeks all rosy like he'd just woken up, she couldn't stop herself.

Usually her willpower was rock solid, and she had gotten used to being the one in charge when it came to casual sex. The twins, however, took everything from her and warped it and twisted it until she no longer recognized herself, what she wanted, or what she needed.

Damn them for making her so confused. She wanted her self-assurance back.

At the exact same moment, the twins each took one of her hands. Emilie rolled her eyes in the darkness, annoyed but also deeply pleased by their affection.

For every second that she let them connect themselves to her, she knew she only made it harder to let them go, on both herself and on them.

Trying to push those thoughts away, Emilie felt Gavin roll towards her and pull her hand up between them. He placed a gentle kiss on her knuckles and said, "This may be a strange time to mention this, but..." He grinned sheepishly at her.

"What, Gavin?"

Grayson spoke from her other side, squeezing her hand. “Will you be our date to the cotillion?”

Emilie scooted up on the bed, dragging the twins up with her when they refused to let go of her hands. “Okay, so what’s the big deal about this cotillion? Everyone at the party was all in a tizzy about it.” Emilie fought back a mental cringe when she remembered how she had left the party. She’d deal with that later, she told herself.

“It’s a Male Order tradition,” Gavin answered. “We were hoping to make a big announcement at this one.”

He brought her hand to his lips, but before he could kiss it again, she snatched it out of his grip. “Excuse me. Don’t you think it’s a little early to be discussing big announcements?”

Grayson frowned. “No. I don’t think it’s early at all. We’ll have to come to a decision pretty quickly, don’t you think?”

Chills rippled across Emilie’s skin as Sherri’s words reverberated in her head. *I’ve always wanted a sister!* Surely the twins weren’t thinking along the same lines. She knew this town valued marriage, but damn, she’d only known them a couple of days. “Okay, let’s get this straight,” Emilie said, using her “businesswoman voice.” “No one here is making any big announcements, so you two can just get that particular idea out of your heads.”

This time Gavin frowned, but Grayson spoke. “What do you mean, no big announcement? I thought that’s why you were here. I mean, what’s the point of all this? Surely we’ve proven to you that we are the right choice.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?” Emilie tried ripping her other hand free from Grayson’s grip, but he held tight.

“Emilie,” Gavin said, “what’s the matter. Why are you so upset?”

“I’ve known you for exactly three days, and you want to discuss big announcements? How the hell else am I supposed to react?” Emilie struggled against Grayson’s grip on her hand, trying to wrench it free.

“Wait, wait, wait,” Gavin said. “What big announcement are you...?” A knowing smile crept across his face.

Emilie paused, not meeting either of their eyes. “Umm...what announcement were you two thinking of?”

“The Outlaws,” Grayson said, still looking at her nonplussed.

Emilie felt the bed shaking, and then the sound of Gavin’s deep laughter greeted her ears. Her ears suddenly felt extremely hot, and she slapped her palm against Gavin’s bare, muscular chest. “Shut up,” she said in a low, embarrassed voice.

“Did you think we meant the big M?”

“It’s just that Sherri mentioned something about sisters and how she’s always wanted one, and it got me all paranoid, okay?”

In one quick motion, Emilie crawled under the covers until they were over her head and then wriggled away from their laughter, as Grayson had now joined in his brother’s amusement.

“Emilie, come on,” Grayson urged, his hand groping around in an attempt to pull her back to the surface. She slipped out of his reach, and since the bed was so large, she was able to wriggle her way to the edge and out from under the covers onto the floor near the foot of the bed.

“What the hell are you doing?” Gavin asked, crossing his arms. “Get your ass back in this bed.”

Emilie stuck her tongue out at their matching scowls and then scampered out the door, not caring that she was completely naked. It felt good for her hair to fly free behind her as she raced back down the stairs.

It wasn’t a random escape. She had wanted to grab some of her new goodies to give them a try with the twins, but since they were being so annoyingly smug, now they’d have to earn the treats she had in store for them.

“Oh, Gavin!” she called. “Oh, Grayson!” She grinned mischievously up at them when they appeared in the doorway. “You see these?” She held up a bottle of lotion and a tiny little egg vibrator.

“This one”—she waved the lotion at them—“heightens sensitivity. It makes everything *better*.” She opened the lotion and poured some into the palm of her hand. She rubbed it over her breasts and then down her stomach and then all over her pussy and her ass cheeks and down between her legs. Immediately, she felt tingles all over. Her pussy became very warm and bright, almost unbearably so. “Oh shit, that feels good,” she said more to herself, but when the twins took a step toward the head of the stairs, both pairs of eyes burning with desire, she knew they’d heard her.

She smiled lecherously up at them and held up the vibrator. “And I’m sure you know what this one does.” She turned it on, the small buzzing noise filling up the still night air. “Now come catch me if you can.” With that, she disappeared around the corner, turning the vibrator off as she raced stealthily through the house in desperate search for a hiding spot. She heard their heavy footsteps racing down the stairs. Then she heard a sort of scuffle as if they were pushing and shoving each other even as they ran after her.

Turning down whichever hallway and into whichever door presented itself to her, Emilie eventually dove into the laundry room. Her pussy was burning with need. The lotion had every nerve on fire, and each step that she ran sent reverberations of pleasure deep into her body. She sat on top of the washing machine, the cold metal momentarily soothing her hot cunt.

After a few minutes, she heard one of the twins outside of the door. With a wicked grin, she turned the vibrator back on. Immediately, the footsteps got closer and closer to the door, and each step had her pussy clenching in anticipation. The door opened, and Gavin stood there, stark naked, his hard cock pointing up with eager need, and a look of pure lust written across his features. Emilie had been holding up the little oval vibrator so that he would see it as soon as he opened the door, but now that he was before her, she quickly slid it into her aching pussy.

She inhaled sharply, not prepared for the intense barrage of sensations that blossomed within her cunt as soon as the vibrator touched her swollen flesh. Falling back and barely catching herself with the palm of her hands, she squeezed her thighs together, taking the waves of pleasure deep inside her body. There was a window behind the washing machine, and as her head fell back, her eyes swam in the stars.

She heard Gavin's footsteps, but when she felt his mouth close around her overly sensitive clit, his tongue darting over and over and around, she screamed aloud. Wave after wave of pleasure rolled through her with each flick of his tongue until the muscles of her stomach clenched and unclenched in the most exquisitely beautiful torture she'd ever experienced.

Emilie was unable to restrain her deep, guttural moans, and Grayson soon found them. "I found something else in those bags of yours," he said from the doorway. Emilie barely managed to open her eyes through the pleasure, but when she did, she saw Grayson holding up the butt plug that she'd purchased.

"Oh, God, I can't," she panted, struggling to pull the words from her pleasure-addled brain.

Gavin stopped his fiery kisses, looking around at his brother. When he saw the butt plug, he yanked Emilie off the machine and onto the floor, setting her on her feet.

"Now, you wicked girl, you will see what happens when you run away from us." He whipped her around to face the machine. "Keep that ass up."

Emilie whimpered, part of her frightened at what she knew was coming but also completely turned on. She gripped the edge of the machine with her long fingers as one of the twins split her cheeks and began massaging lube into her flesh. As he stuck a finger into her tight hole, spreading and rubbing in the thick liquid, she almost crumpled, the sensation shocking her already overloaded nerve-endings.

A broad hand smacked one of her ass cheeks with a loud report. “None of that, Emilie,” Grayson warned. “You will stand up and take everything we give you. Do you understand?”

Emilie panted, trying to force the words from her lips but simply unable to do so.

Another smack landed on her opposite cheek, and in an even voice, Grayson said, “Do you understand, Emilie?”

“Yes, Grayson. Yes, I understand. Please, just please...”

One of the brothers pressed a hot kiss on the back of her neck. “We will take care of you. Do you trust us?”

Emilie nodded, and then she felt the plug pushing against her tight hole. At first, it seemed as if her body would refuse the marauding toy, but Gavin whispered and stroked her spine. “Focus on the pleasure, Emilie. You feel that vibrator in your pussy. Concentrate on that. Feel my fingers on your clit.” As he said the words, his hand moved to her front and pinched her clit between two big, warm fingers. He pinched and then released, pinched and then released until the uncomfortable pressure on her back hole receded and then blossomed into pleasure.

She felt her muscles relax and accept the intrusion. Gavin took advantage of her relaxed state and pushed the plug all the way through her tight ring. Continuing his ministrations on her clit, Gavin said, “How are you doing?”

Emilie could only release a deep, pleasure-filled moan in answer.

“Good,” he said with a wicked timbre to his voice.

Taking his hand off her throbbing mound, he grasped her hips and pulled her back until she leaned far over. “Now you see what happens when you run away from us. I’m going to spank this naughty ass.”

Emilie immediately straightened at his words and turned around so that her ass pressed against the washing machine, the vibrator and butt plug shifting inside her and sending waves of pleasure through her. She glared at the twins and their identical smirks. “You will do no such thing.” To illustrate, she pushed her ass even harder against

the machine, biting her lip when it sent another round of heated pleasure through her body.

“As if you could stop us,” Grayson said, yanking her away from the machine and whipping her around, his strong hands holding her ass in place. “You hold her, Gav. I want to be the one to do it.”

“No problem, bro.”

Emilie only had time for one little scared whimper before she felt Grayson slap her exposed ass. She screamed, her mind in complete shock at the instant sting of flesh and the tremor of the butt plug as Grayson’s hand met her ass. Before she could even process what she felt, Grayson slapped her other cheek. Hot white tingles spread across her flesh. Then he spanked her again. And again and again. With each slap, it was as if the butt plug absorbed the shock and then sent it echoing through her body, creating wave after wave of painful pleasure.

Just as she reached the point where one more slap would send her tumbling madly over the edge, Grayson stilled his hand. Then he scooped her trembling body up in his arms. Without saying a word, Gavin opened the door leading to their back lawn. Grayson carried her down the porch steps and then laid her down on the ground. Gavin had snatched a blanket from the laundry room and already had it spread across the grass.

Grayson slipped his fingers inside her pussy, grasping the still vibrating egg and pulled it out from her wet folds. Then he rolled her onto her side so that Gavin could do the same with the butt plug.

“Emilie, we both want to be inside you,” Gavin said.

“And I want both of you.” She reached up and put her hand along Grayson’s strong jaw, and he looked down at her with a beautiful tenderness. Rolling onto his back, Grayson pulled Emilie with him until she straddled him, the entrance of her pussy aligned with his huge, quivering cock. She let herself sink slowly down his length, her cream-covered folds taking him deeper and deeper. Finally, she felt

his balls beneath her, so she leaned forward, resting her full weight upon him and leaving her ass vulnerable for Gavin's dick.

As Gavin lathered her back entrance with more lube, she rested her arms on Grayson's chest, her hair falling around them like a curtain. She bent down for a kiss, keeping her eyes open, loving the way his forehead creased between his brows and his eyes squeezed tightly closed. When she pulled away with a small, contented smile, he looked up at her with eyes so pure and wholesome the sight made her insides clench.

The next moment Gavin's bulbous head was nudging its way between her cheeks and pressing insistently against her puckered hole. Gavin ran a hand down her spine. "Are you ready for this, Em?"

She didn't take her eyes off Grayson, only nodded.

Then as Gavin pushed the tip of his cock into her tight, muscled entrance, Grayson began moving beneath her, urging her to take his brother deeper and deeper. With each stroke of Grayson's, Gavin pushed himself deeper into her ass. Emilie clutched the tight muscles on the top of Grayson's shoulders, every thrust making her feel fuller than she had ever imagined possible.

Emilie didn't know if she could take anymore and was just about to tell Gavin to stop when he said, "I'm in. Are you still okay?"

Taking three deep breaths, Emilie nodded. "I'm ready. Come on," she said, wiggling her body between the two cocks pushed deep within her body.

Without speaking, without needing to, the twins began their movement, one taking while the other gave and then reversing. Their rhythm and their movement were so fluid that soon Emilie began to lose track of who was who and what was moving where. They moved as one inside her body, filling her and pushing her to a point of such extreme, indelible pleasure that her mind and body seemed to reach for a new and undiscovered realm of existence.

Throwing her head back, she howled up to the night, her scream piercing the cool night air. Every muscle in her body began to quake,

tremble, and then disintegrate into white-hot pleasure. The orgasm tore through her, forcing wild cries from her lips, but even as pleasure filled every atom of her being, the brothers still drove in and out of her, pushing her well beyond the point of sanity.

* * * *

Emilie's screams rent the air and pushed against Grayson until he felt his balls tighten painfully. He wanted to continue, to make Emilie dissolve against his skin, but with one giant thrust, his hot seed burst from his cock up into Emilie's clenching insides. Her pussy drank his cum, sucked his cock.

He heard Gavin groan and Emilie's answering moan as Gavin came, and then Gavin pulled out of Emilie, rolling away. As if she simply could not support herself another second, Emilie collapsed against Grayson's chest. His cock slipped out of her as she did so, and he wrapped his arms around her, stroking her hair away from her cheek.

"You are beautiful. Did you know that?" he asked her quietly.

She sighed against his chest, nestling her head beneath his chin, their sweaty flesh beginning to cool as a gentle breeze washed over them. Grayson felt Emilie reach behind her and take Gavin's hand. Gavin smiled at her back, and they all three drifted into a light sleep.

Just before Grayson fell completely asleep, he heard Emilie's voice. In the tiniest whisper, she spoke against his chest.

"I think I do love you."

* * * *

Sometime in the early dawn, when the sun was just beginning to stretch its rosy fingers across the horizon, Gavin stirred, thoughts of their night swirling lethargically through his mind. They'd awoken sometime in the night and skipped naked down to the river, playing

and frolicking and washing and then making love in the fresh, rushing waters.

Now, Emilie lay on her side, nestled between himself and his brother, her small smile present in profile even as she slept. Only it held none of its usual secrecy. It somehow seemed purer, as if it came from some place deep inside her. He leaned over and placed a warm kiss on her high cheekbone. The smile grew wider for a moment and then went back to being just a tiny curve of her lips.

“Interesting,” he whispered and then kissed her again, this time on the corner of her mouth. As he expected, the smile grew even wider, showing a hint of teeth, and then fell back. He placed a kiss on the tip of her bare shoulder and then on her shoulder blade and then her neck, testing each spot to see how much of a smile he could get in return. He was so absorbed in his tiny kisses that at first he didn’t notice when Emilie’s breathing changed from deep and steady to suddenly very short and uneven. He had placed a kiss on the spot just behind her earlobe when her hand darted around to grasp his cock firmly.

His morning erection already pressed against her back, but at the feel of her fingers wrapped around his length, he grew even harder. She rolled over to face him, her cheeks rosy from sleep. Soft morning light lit her features, and her blue eyes gleamed. Scooting his pelvis toward her, she wrapped one leg around him and then took his cock deep into her sleep-warmed pussy.

Everything was soft and delicate and yielding, as if she would absorb every bit of him. He moved in a lazy pattern, letting the heat build slowly between them. Just as the sun rose fully on the horizon, casting a deep golden light over Emilie’s pale flesh, lighting up the tiny hairs on her body until it looked like she was on fire, she squeezed his cock tight within her pussy. She grasped his face between her hands as the orgasm swept through her, making her body undulate with its quiet power.

Soon Gavin followed, the pleasure rolling through him, steady and strong.

After a moment or two, Grayson spoke from the other side of Emilie. "Good morning." He pressed a kiss on Emilie's neck as Gavin had done when he'd first awoken.

"*Bonjour*," Emilie answered, smiling.

She rolled over to face Grayson, and while they made love slowly and sweetly as she and Gavin had just done, Gavin massaged the muscles of her back, gently but firmly. She felt so soft, so delicate beneath his large, strong hands. He felt as if she'd been molded just for him and his brother.

Emilie arched her back as Grayson took her over the cusp, and they remained wrapped around each other for a few moments. Gavin scooted closer, pressing the length of his body against her, burying his face in her earth-scented locks.

Eventually, Grayson spoke, breaking the spell. "We should head inside. People in the neighborhood will be waking up soon."

With a sort of quiet melancholy that the morning's enchantment had to end, they gathered themselves up and headed inside. About an hour later, after all three had showered and dressed, they re-congregated at the breakfast table for coffee and some cream cheese-filled pastries.

"So I've decided," Emilie stated without preamble.

"About what?" Grayson asked, taking a bite of pastry.

"First, I will be your date to the cotillion."

Gavin let out a whoop, lifted Emilie up in the air, twirled her around, and then set her back onto her stool. She squealed, still not accustomed to his outbursts, but then laughed.

"Okay, next," Emilie said, her tone becoming serious. "I'll have to get the final okay from my father, but I believe that you two are a match for the Dallas Outlaws."

At her announcement, Gavin smiled widely, but Grayson spoke first, "That is good to hear, Emilie."

Gavin, overwhelmed with happiness and excitement, wrapped her up in his arms and planted a big kiss on her lips, making a loud

“mwah” sound as he did. “Stop it, you *grand bouffon*.” She swatted half-heartedly at him, her French insult stirring his arousal. “We can make the announcement at the cotillion. What do you think?”

“Sounds good to me,” Grayson said, placing a gentler kiss on her lips.

They sat at the table for a while, discussing the team and the cotillion and what she would say to her father. Finally, Emilie glanced at the clock and stretched. “I better get back to Sherri’s. It seems I have some shopping to do.” Placing a warm kiss on each of their mouths, she walked out their back door with a sigh and a lingering, backward look.

Unable to resist the longing in her eyes, Gavin ran out the door and slammed into her, picking her up and holding her tight against him. She welcomed his collision, wrapping her legs around him and meeting his lips in a hot, needy kiss.

Grayson moved up behind her and pulled her hair until her head fell back and her lips met his in an upside-down kiss. Gavin leaned down, his head pressing between her full breasts, kissing the soft flesh of each orb through the fabric of her shirt.

“I have to go,” she said, even as she moved her hips against Gavin’s hard cock. Then she let her legs fall away from Gavin, and he set her back down. “Don’t leave me alone tonight. I will need you. Both of you.” She gave them long and heady kisses and then turned, moving away from them with a stiff, hesitant gait toward the path through the woods.

Chapter 11

Despite the long hike through the woods, Emilie still didn't know if she was ready to face Sherri. Emilie had really begun to like Sherri, to consider her a friend, and it had been so long since Emilie remembered having any real female friends. Not since boarding school, and those friends were long gone.

When she entered the *petit chalet*, she found Sherri in the kitchen pouring a generous amount of champagne into a carafe of orange juice.

"Mimosas," Sherri said over her shoulder. "I saw you walking up. Thought you might need a little morning pick-me-up."

Emilie couldn't figure out Sherri's vibe, so she just accepted the refreshing, bubbly beverage and waited. As Sherri finished pouring herself a flute and turned around, Emilie was relieved to see a huge grin across Sherri's lips. Sherri took a delicate sip and then lifted one of her dark brows.

"So..."

"Yes?" Emilie asked.

"You were gone all night."

"I was."

"And I think I know where you were." Her voice had that familiar sing-song note that Emilie recognized as teasing.

"I think you know, too. Where did you think I would take all those new toys?" Emilie took a long drink of her mimosa, hiding her face as she drained the rest of her flute's contents.

"Eeeh, I knew it!" Sherri squealed. "Oh my gawd, you hussy."

"And I'm going to be their date to the cotillion."

Sherri gasped, put down her flute, and then bounded across the room to wrap Emilie up in a big hug. “I’m so happy! But oh my gosh,” she said, pulling away with a stricken face.

“What?” Emilie asked, slightly worried by Sherri’s look.

“We have so much to do. You need a dress, shoes, jewelry...well, accessories in general...an appointment with Ricki...He’s my go-to hair and makeup guru.” Sherri continued listing off all the errands they would have to accomplish before the big event on Sunday, and Emilie just poured herself another mimosa.

“Emilie,” Sherri said in a more subdued tone.

“Yes?”

“I am terribly sorry about my behavior last night. I hope you’ll write it off as my inner-weirdo coming up for some air.”

“Of course, Sherri,” Emilie said, smiling widely and feeling a warm rush of sisterly affection rising up inside her. “Especially because...” Suddenly the words didn’t want to come out of her mouth even though they’d been swirling around her insides since the night before.

“What?” Sherri prompted, her eyes wide.

“Because I think I...oh God, this is hard to say.”

“Do you want me to help? Is it because you—”

“Wait! I need to do it. Because...I...” Emilie took a deep breath. “I love them.” She squeezed her eyes tight, but when Sherri didn’t squeal or attack Emilie with a hug, she cracked one eye open again.

Sherri was leaning against the counter, a smug smile playing across her lips as she sloshed around the contents of her flute in lazy circles. “I knew it. I knew it all along.”

“Oh, hush up,” Emilie said, rolling her eyes.

Sherri stuck out her tongue, but then said, “Oh shit! I haven’t even checked *Allegedly* this morning.” With those words, she ran out of the kitchen, careful to avoid spilling any of her drink, and into her cozy little office.

Emilie groaned. “You read that site?”

“Oh yeah.” Sherri laughed. “I saw your spectacular debut yesterday. You should feel honored. I would love to have something half as juicy on *Allegedly*. I only had, like, half my face in there once when Emilio posted a picture of Gavin with this big-boobed—”

“Please don’t stop on my account. What were you about to say?”

“I mean, it was like, two years ago or something.”

“It’s okay. I accept that Grayson and Gavin have big-boobed skeletons in their closets. I’ve got skeletons, too.”

“I’m sure it wasn’t their boobs that were big, though.”

“Sherri! You are so ribald.”

Sherri peeked her head around the corner and shot Emilie a huge, toothy, unabashed grin.

“Oh hey!” Sherri called after ducking back into the office. “Something came for you in the mail. It’s on the counter next to the fridge. That big envelope thingy.”

As Emilie began to open the package, wondering who would send her anything here, she heard Sherri gasp from the office. It didn’t sound like a good gasp, and chills ran up Emilie’s spine.

“What?” When Sherri didn’t answer, Emilie headed toward the office. “Sherri, what is it?” she said as she rounded the corner. Sherri’s eyes were glued to the screen, and her mouth hung open in shock as she darted her eyes back and forth, reading.

Emilie went to stand behind her and gasped as soon as she saw the picture that took up half the screen. It was her. Again. And again with the twins. Only this time, she was sandwiched between them outside their back door, her lips pressing against Gavin’s as Grayson stood behind her, his lips on her shoulder and all three of them bathed in the morning light from only half an hour before.

Emilie pressed her hand to her mouth to hold back a distressed cry of outrage. *Who the hell is taking these fucking pictures?* Panic swept through her. For a moment, everything felt completely out of her control. She felt helpless. Powerless. Alone. Sinking. Small.

“Emilie, are you all right?” Sherri’s voice sounded from far away, distorted and echoing somewhere in the distance. Emilie slowly sank to the floor, putting her head between her knees, forcing herself to breathe through the panic that had wrapped so quickly around her chest. Finally, the oxygen began to reach her brain, and she could sort through the thousands of thoughts and emotions rushing through her.

“Read it to me, Sherri. I know it says something.”

“Umm, are you sure? You look a little unstable, not to be rude.”

“Read the damn article.” Then in a gentler tone, she added, “Please.”

Big Business in Male Order...

Well, well, well, mijitos. Looks like this sexy señorita knows how to get exactly what she wants. In the boardroom and the bedroom.

After our first sighting of the lovely Miss Emilie Benson, yours truly got curious. Turns out, she’s more than just a Dior-sportin’ mamacita. Emilie Benson is not only the social butterfly daughter of Mr. Benson. Oh, no, no, no. She is the sole heiress to Big Daddy’s Fortune 500 company, Haymitch-Benson (read “This is one rich bitch.”) Her New York Times profile says that “anyone in the boardroom choosing not to look past the couture suits and expensive champagne habits would be making a disastrous mistake. Known for her hard-nosed negotiating tactics and extreme sangfroid, Emilie Benson is poised not only to follow in her father’s footsteps but to make some pretty substantial ones of her own.”

So what is she doing gallivanting around Male Order? And what on earth is she doing smoochin’ these two Male Order ~~gods~~ natives, Grayson and Gavin Stephens, so early in the morning?

Oh la la - les liaisons dangereux for sure!

“Well, that’s not *so* bad, is it? It’s mostly just speculation, and I mean...Emilio loves Male Order. He’d never write anything malicious about any of us. In fact, you should check out some of his other stuff. It might make you feel better.”

“You don’t understand, Sherri. It’s not just my reputation that’s affected by this kind of stuff. Anything that implicates me implicates my father and, in turn, the company. And I’ve been there. I know how much damage these fucking tabloids can do.” Emilie’s hands were shaking. “I’ve been through this before, and I can’t do it again. I just can’t.” She hated the way her voice sounded so small and childlike. She hated the way she was unwinding so quickly. And she hated that what she wanted most in the world at that moment was the twins’ arms around her, protecting her against all of this misery. “I’ve got to call the twins. We have to stop. At least until after this whole thing has blown over.”

“Wait. Just wait,” Sherri said, sitting down on the floor next to Emilie. “Tell me what happened. Maybe if I know what happened, I can help us figure something out.”

Emilie took a deep breath, said, “Okay,” and then told Sherri about Guillaume Cassell.

After Emilie had completed her tale, Sherri let out a long breath. “What a shitface.”

Emilie laughed. “My mother would love that. Guillaume, *un visage du merde*.”

“Well, we are going to figure something out.”

“I’ve already decided to sell the Outlaws to Grayson and Gavin, and I fully intend on following through with that plan.”

Sherri glared at Emilie. “And the cotillion?”

“Oh, please, Sherri. If there are questionable pictures of me now, going to the cotillion, especially with the twins, would be like inviting the vultures to feast as I throw myself in front of the bus.”

“Okay, well, that was unnecessarily graphic, but just hold your horses. Let’s think about this.”

Emilie rolled her eyes and stood up. “Okay. You think. I need a cigarette.”

A few moments later, Emilie stood at the open kitchen window, sucking gratefully on her *Gitane* when she remembered the envelope. After retrieving it from the counter, she pulled out its contents.

“Goddamn motherfucking *tête de pissette*!” Emilie roared.

Sherri came running in. “What? What’s the matter?”

Emilie threw the pictures in her hands onto the counter, shoved her cigarette between her lips, closed her eyes, and then ran her shaking fingers through her hair. After she had taken some restorative puffs of smoke, she opened her eyes again. Sherri was already combing through the pictures. They were of Emilie and both of the twins, all three naked and all three entwined on the blanket in the grass, obviously having sex.

“This is too far,” Sherri whispered. “Who would do such a thing? This goes beyond a gossip site. You gotta call them.” Sherri had already reached for her phone when Emilie stopped her.

“No. Please don’t tell them.”

“What the hell, Emilie? You have to tell them. They have a right to know about these.”

Emilie pulled out her lighter, reaching for the pictures, wanting to destroy the disgusting things. When she shifted the photographs around, though, a white piece of paper fell out.

“What is this?” Sherri said, picking it up off the counter. When she read it, her face visibly paled. “Oh, shit, Emilie.”

“Let me see.”

Sherri handed it over.

It had been typed up and was very brief.

Leave the twins alone BITCH. And get the fuck out of this town.

“Okay, you definitely have to tell the twins. I will if you won’t.”

Emilie was shaking again, and she numbly nodded her agreement. Julian would need to know as well. This had gone well beyond harmless gossip. These pictures could do some major damage to her father and his company, and Julian was a part of that company. She needed help. She needed her mother.

* * * *

“*Maman*, these pictures, they were horrible,” Emilie heard the childish waver in her voice, but at the moment, she could not have cared less. “I don’t know what to do.”

“Okay, okay, I will tell you what to do.” Just the sound of her mother’s thick French accent and her low, soothing voice was enough to begin calming Emilie’s nerves. “First, you take a long, hot bath, okay? Then you go downtown. You walk into the Dior boutique you told me about. And then you buy yourself the most expensive gown you can find. And finally, you go to this cotillion with those twins. Okay?”

“But what about *Papa*? And the company? You don’t think I should just come home?”

“Emilie Renée,” her mother said in a firm voice that left no room for argument. “You love these twins, yes?”

“*Oui, Maman.*”

“And you are not a coward?”

“*Non, Maman.*”

“Then you hold your head high, and you stand next to the ones you love. *Tu comprends, ma belle fille?*”

“*Oui, Maman.* I understand.”

“Okay. I will see you next week.”

“*Je t’aime, Maman.*”

Just as Emilie hung up the phone, she heard a ruckus at the front of the house. It sounded like two very large, very angry twins had

entered the cabin. Her bedroom door flew open, and Grayson stalked across the room to yank her off the bed, pulling her into a rough embrace.

“We are going to find this motherfucking cunt.”

“Okay,” she said into his chest, taking in a deep, uneven breath.

“Emilie, you are safe,” he said, looking down at her and pushing her hair away from her face. “I know how scary this is for you, but I promise, we won’t let what happened to you before happen again. Got it?”

She nodded.

“Good.” He placed a kiss on her forehead and then released her, letting Gavin hold her for a moment.

“Julian is headed over. He was downtown,” Emilie said. “Once he gets here, we can figure this all out. You know, what it means for the rest of this week and for Haymitch-Benson.”

Gavin grimaced.

“What?” Emilie asked.

“I don’t like that guy.”

“Yeah, how long have you known him, exactly?” Grayson asked.

Emilie frowned. “He’s been my father’s most trusted advisor for almost twenty years and a family friend for longer. He wouldn’t be with me here if it were otherwise. Please, do not disrespect him with suspicion. It is beyond unfathomable, understand?”

Grayson kissed her. “Sorry, Em. We don’t want to upset you.”

“We won’t bring it up again,” Gavin said, kissing her as well.

* * * *

Damn it, Julian thought to himself. He had counted on the *Allegedly* pictures being enough to scare Emilie away, but just to be sure, he’d slipped another envelope filled with the illicit photos he’d taken that morning. He still couldn’t decide if he was lucky or if the twins and Emilie were just stupid, but he’d been looking and waiting

for an opportunity that would allow him to bring all of Emilie's insecurities to the surface. They could not have made it easier for him to capture the photos.

Now that they were all congregated at Sherri's, though, Julian was finding it necessary to exert an inordinate amount of willpower to restrain his rapidly growing irritation. Not only did Emilie want to remain in Male Order for the rest of the week, but she still wanted to go to that damn cotillion.

"Here's what we can do," Sherri said. "Emilie, you'll go with Grayson, and I'll go with Gavin. At least it will look less suspicious."

"I should accompany you as well," Julian said, tinging his words with something akin to fatherly concern.

"Yes, that makes sense." Emilie covered his hand with hers, giving him a warm pat and a grateful smile. "I think *Papa* would like that."

"You should know, Em," Sherri said. "Emilio Estefan, the guy who runs *Allegedly*, will be at the cotillion. So you'll have to be on your best behavior."

"We all will," Grayson said.

Julian strained not to let his face break into a wide grin. Oh, if they only knew what he had in mind, it wouldn't matter how they behaved. A plan was already curling through Julian's mind, and as the details became clearer, Julian knew that this plan would work where his others had failed. The setting was too perfect. Emilie was too vulnerable. She would be mortified, an unfortunate but necessary byproduct. But best of all, just thinking about the twins would disgust her. She would hate them by the time Julian was through. He leaned back in his chair, feeling confident and composed once again.

If Emilie wanted a cotillion, Julian would give her a fucking cotillion.

Chapter 12

The next few days leading up to the cotillion flew by in a daze. Grayson's hours had been tied up in conference calls with Gavin, Emilie, Julian, and Ralph Benson. Grayson was glad for the distraction because every time he came within ten feet of Emilie, he wanted to whisk her away to some dark corner and bury himself balls deep in her sweet cunt. However, the looming threat of their mysterious paparazzi had all three of them on edge, and they'd only managed a few brief and, unfortunately, inadequate encounters.

With only a few hours remaining until Grayson, Gavin, and Julian went to pick up the ladies, Grayson couldn't shake the feeling that something ominous hung in the air. Emilie had been more jittery than ever and had been snapping at him for the smallest things.

He'd noticed that she'd been smoking an American brand of cigarettes rather than her French ones and figured she must have run out. He'd spent almost four hours calling tobacco specialty shops across the US and had finally found one in New York that sold her brand. He'd placed an order for rush delivery, but when he saw Emilie after all his hunting, she cursed and yelled at him for a good half hour, accusing him of negligence when they had so much work to do.

Grayson took her abuse, and when he got the *Gitane Blondes* the next morning, he'd hand-delivered them to her. He'd begun by teasing her for the previous day's tirade, but when she nearly burst into tears as he handed the box over, he lost the urge to make fun. Her full bottom lip trembled, and she looked up at him with so much emotion shining from her blue eyes.

“This is perfect, Grayson.”

“All the way from New York.”

Emilie smiled sweetly and stood up on her toes for a loving kiss.

“Only a few more days and this will all be over.”

A cold fear gripped his stomach. “Emilie, we should talk about—”

She put her finger to his lips. “Shh. Grayson, you know I was only referring to the cotillion.”

Grayson closed his mouth, assuaged for the moment.

“I’m sorry if I seem extra snippy, but everything is just like *déjà vu*. It’s really starting to fuck with my mind.”

Grayson pulled her into his arms and felt a guilty pleasure in the way she curled herself up against his chest. “Hey, what’s going on?” Gavin had said when he walked in the room at that moment.

She pulled back from Grayson a little but not completely out of his arms, and he felt her stiffen slightly.

“Hey,” Grayson said. “Shh. It’s okay.”

She nodded. “It’s just...the last time this happened...with Guillaume, you know...everything was so similar.”

“What do you mean?” Gavin asked, running his fingers from her scalp down through the ebony waves that spilled across her back.

She spoke into Grayson’s chest, her words muffled but still audible. “Well, at first all these pictures started showing up on the sleaziest French gossip sites, and I didn’t really think much of it. But then it was the night I was to be the guest of honor at a big film party as a sort of congratulations for my César nomination. Guillaume had come over a few hours before and begged me to give him another chance, saying that I was the only girl for him, that he couldn’t let me go.” She let out a bark of laughter that, to Grayson, sounded like it contained more self-loathing than mirth. “Do you know what he said to me? The actual words he used?”

Grayson slowly shook his head.

“I have not forgotten. I remember when he first said it, I thought it was the sweetest thing he’d ever said to me. Probably the sweetest

thing any man had ever said to any woman. I felt so stupid afterwards, but when he first said it to me, I just remember filling up with this warm, happy innocence.” Her fingers tightened and bunched up the fabric of Grayson’s shirt. “He said, ‘Emilie, you are perfect. And I don’t mean that in some idealistic way. I mean, you and me, you are not anything I could have ever dreamed up. You are much better than anything my imagination could have invented. Emilie, if God could make a perfect woman for me, it would be you.’

“And, like a fool, I fell for that bullshit.”

“You’re not a fool, Emilie,” Gavin said.

“Oh, but I’m not done. That night I agreed to ride with him to the party, and that night while I was surrounded by the most important people in French cinema, my dearest friends, and my family—my father was there, for God’s sake—that bastard completely humiliated me.

“They were supposed to be showing a five minute clip of my performance in *The Miser*. Instead, when the room went dark and the screen flickered up, it was...” She took a strained breath. “Oh God, it was me and...” She buried her face in Grayson’s chest again, and he could barely make out the words. “It was me, and I was tied up in Guillaume’s bed, naked and spread out.”

“Shh, shh,” Grayson soothed, meeting his brother’s eyes over her head. Gavin looked ready to commit murder, and Grayson knew his face reflected that same desire. Instead, he whispered, “Em, we don’t have to go to the cotillion. This deal can happen without all the fanfare. We just want you to be happy. We want you to feel safe. That’s the only thing important to us, okay?” When she didn’t respond, he said, “Do you understand me?”

She nodded, her head moving against his chest, and he felt an answering pull in his cock. “God, I want both of you so bad,” she whispered.

“I promise, after the cotillion, we will take you somewhere far away where we can be alone and spend as much time as we want, just

fucking and not worrying about all this shit.” Gavin spoke in her ear as Grayson massaged her breasts and rubbed his thumbs over her hard nipples, all three of their bodies straining, frustrated.

Now, standing in front of the mirror, adjusting his sea-green, silk-striped bowtie that Emilie had insisted he wear, he realized he was already impatient for the night’s events to be over. Usually he enjoyed the annual cotillion, but this year he was too worried about Emilie. After making their announcement, Gavin and he planned on grabbing her and making a mad dash to the DFW airport. They’d already booked three first class seats on a flight to Paris that night and reserved the *Louis XV* suite at the *Hotel de Crillon* for a week.

Gavin strode through Grayson’s open bedroom door, wearing an identical *Dior Homme* tuxedo, only the color of his bowtie was different, a bright coral to match Sherri’s gown. They’d been wearing identical tuxes to the cotillion ever since their first one when they were sixteen and had decided to take the same date. It had been their mom’s idea to dress them identically, and they had merely continued with the tradition.

This was the first year they weren’t completely matching. It irked Grayson that this was also the first year they finally had a woman they wanted to take to more than one cotillion, and they couldn’t take her together. His blood boiled.

“Whoa, bro. You might want to wipe that frown off your face. Emilie might decide to ditch you and take me instead.” Gavin put Grayson’s Clive Christian cologne that he had borrowed a few minutes earlier back on the counter.

“Shut up, dickwad.” Grayson shoved his brother.

“Hey! Hey! Don’t wrinkle the suit. Shit, man. Those girls will have our asses if anything is out of line.”

A quiet knock sounded on the doorframe behind them. Grayson looked in the mirror to see who it was as he buttoned his shirtsleeve. Julian Steele stood at the door, already dressed in a charcoal gray Joseph Abboud tuxedo. Grayson fought down an inner cringe. From

the man's slicked-back, gray-streaked black hair to his overly tan skin, Grayson couldn't stand the man, and the thought of him accompanying them tonight was altogether repugnant.

"Are you two almost ready? The limo is here, and we were supposed to leave five minutes ago. I've been waiting downstairs."

Grayson stiffened, but Gavin answered with a laugh to lighten the sudden tension permeating the room. "Hell, you know the females won't be ready for fifteen more minutes."

Julian met Grayson's eyes in the mirror. "I know you haven't known Emilie for long, but she abhors tardiness. I'll be downstairs." With that, he turned on his heel and stalked out of their sight.

Just then Grayson's phone buzzed. When he looked, it was a text from Emilie. "Are you coming? We've been ready for five minutes."

"Asshole," Gavin said when Grayson showed him the text, referring to Julian.

A few minutes later, they were knocking on Sherri's front door.

"Finally," Sherri said as she opened the door. "They're here, Em," she called over her shoulder. Then she looked them both up and down. "Y'all look okay, I guess."

"Thanks. You're too kind, as usual," Grayson said as she gave each of them a peck on the cheek.

"You, on the other hand," Gavin said, sweeping her hand up to kiss, "are completely hideous. Just a blight upon my vision."

Sherri swatted him with her tiny, diamond-encrusted purse and then tucked her arm into his elbow. As she moved away from the door, Emilie swept into view. Grayson sucked in a stilted breath.

Emilie wore a gray-green gown of silk with gold and green lace appliqués sewn around her hips and bosom to make her curves seem even more feminine and luscious. From mid thigh to the floor, the bottom was split into alternating sections of silk and then sheer, pleated fabric that swirled around her long legs like sea foam and fog when she walked. Her long black hair had been styled back away from her face so that her delicate bone structure stood out more

sharply, and her bright pink lips looked perfect as she greeted them with her usual half-smile.

Grayson strode up to her, fully intending to kiss her to the point of insanity, but she put her hand against his lips. "My lipstick," she warned.

Although she said it with a smile, Grayson could hear the nervous tremble in her voice. Grayson put his hand around her neck and pressed his forehead against hers in frustration. "Emilie, I know you are worried about *Allegedly*. But let's not allow this cunt to ruin our night. Deal?" She looked deep into his eyes for a long moment.

"Okay." She finally nodded and then put her arm in the crook of his elbow.

As the four entered the limo, Julian kissed Emilie's cheek, murmuring, "You look absolutely stunning, my dear."

"Thank you, Julian," Emilie said with a warm smile.

Grayson almost punched the man before he realized Emilie would probably cut his balls off if he did anything to harm him, but goddammit. Every second he spent with the man, the more his dislike grew. He didn't know why exactly. He just knew that he couldn't wait to sneak Emilie away after their announcement. Away from Male Order and away from Julian Steele.

* * * *

They'd been at the cotillion for almost an hour, and Gavin couldn't hold back a proud smile as he watched Emilie continue to impress everyone in the room. As soon as they'd walked into the high-ceilinged ballroom, with golden light spilling from the four ornate chandeliers, they were announced, and Taylor descended upon them.

"Emilie, your dress is absolutely stunning. Of course, I knew it would be. And your hair. Oh my God. Everything is stunning." Taylor detached Emilie from Gavin's arm and whisked her away to introduce

her to all the influential families of Male Order. Gavin kept a close eye on her the entire time, but she was accustomed to these events, probably more so than he and his brother. Each time someone new was presented, only a few minutes passed before Gavin watched them laugh heartily at something she'd said or shake her hand with a broad, adoring smile.

When Gavin watched a petite Hispanic man wearing a ruby-colored velvet tuxedo and a three-inch bouffant protruding from his forehead, he stiffened. Both he and Grayson instinctively began moving across the room to stand by Emilie.

Just as they reached her, Gavin heard Taylor say, "Emilie, I want you to meet one of my dearest and most trusted friends, Emilio Estefan."

When Emilie turned around at Taylor's words, Emilio grasped her hand in his, pulling it to his shiny lips. "You are even more *bonita* in person, *Señorita* Benson." Emilie stared at the man for a long moment, her face expressionless.

Then her lips spread into a wide grin. "And you are even more fabulous than I imagined."

Emilio threw back his head in laughter. "Oh, and these are your twins? Live and in the flesh?"

Emilie only flicked her eyebrows quickly up in answer while she took a sip of her Kir Royale, the crème de cassis coated sugar cube dancing in the bottom of her flute.

"Wait, do you two already know each other?" Taylor asked, a perplexed look crossing her features.

"Taylor Stephens-Bartlett, are you telling me you haven't been keeping up with all the *Allegedly* gossip? I am shocked. Shocked and appalled. And you call yourself my friend? *Chica*, please." He tossed up a palm and shot Taylor a saucy look.

"Okay, you birth two rambunctious hellions. Then we'll talk," she said, flipping back her loosely curled auburn locks.

Emilio pinched Taylor's round cheeks. "You are so freaking adorable. I can't stay mad at you."

While they had their little interchange, Gavin grabbed Emilie's hand and gave it a small, tight squeeze. She squeezed back, and he noticed the corner of her mouth turn up ever so slightly although she didn't look over at him.

A few moments later, their group grew in size as Sherri rejoined, bringing along Robin Lawrence and her two dates, Bryant Clare and Alexander Abrams. Robin, Emilie, Sherri, and Emilio cooed over each other's regalia as the men shook hands. Then, much to Gavin's annoyance, Julian Steele squeezed in. They chatted for a few minutes, conversations flying and stumbling across and between the numerous bodies.

Emilie had moved over to speak with Alexander and Robin, but after a few minutes, she broke off her conversation with them to look over at the twins. Her eyes said, *It's time*. Gavin nodded and, from the corner of his eyes, saw his brother do the same. They each took one of Emilie's hands and headed for the stage.

Gavin was the more naturally out-going of the two twins, and all three had decided that he would do most of the talking. Taking the microphone, he flicked up its "on" switch.

"Ladies and gentlemen and honored guests of Male Order, may I have your attention, please?" he began. "As most of you know, but some of you do not, I am Gavin Stephens, and this is my brother Grayson. The lovely lady standing between us is Emilie Benson, daughter of Ralph Benson, owner and CEO of the Haymitch-Benson investment firm. First, we would like to wish you all a good evening and a warm welcome to the annual Male Order Cotillion."

The crowd gave him a warm round of applause. "Again, as some of you may know, Ralph Benson is the owner of our very own Dallas Outlaws." The crowd applauded again with a few whoops interspersed.

Gavin opened his mouth to continue when a disturbance in the middle of the ballroom caught his attention. After a moment, a woman burst through the crowd. It didn't take long to realize that she did not belong at the cotillion. She wore a tattered sundress and had scabs on her scrawny legs. Her bleach blonde hair was matted and wrapped in a knob at the top of her head with straggling tendrils falling around her gaunt face.

She stopped in front of the stage, breathing heavily and glaring up at Gavin. She had a mean scowl on her face, and her arms were crossed awkwardly over her gut.

Gavin stole a quick glance at his brother. Grayson met Gavin's eyes and shrugged.

"Yes, ma'am. May I help you?" Gavin spoke without the microphone although the acoustics in the large, open ballroom made it easy enough for most of the crowd to hear him.

"Yes, you fucking can, Gavin Stephens," she spat out, her voice raw and scratchy.

"Whoa." Gavin handed the microphone to Emilie.

"Do you know this woman?" Emilie asked.

"No. I've never seen her in my life. Let me take care of this. I'll be right back." He discreetly squeezed her hand, but the woman must have seen because she let out a wild bark of laughter.

"Is that your new whore? Quite a step up, I see."

Gavin locked eyes with Grayson. "Stay with Emilie." Grayson nodded, grabbing Emilie's hand and moving her to stand slightly behind him.

When Gavin leapt off the stage and approached the woman, she scooted backwards like a wild animal, never letting her eyes stray from Gavin's face as her hands remained clutched around her middle. The crowd instinctively moved away, giving her a wide berth. He could smell her repugnant body odor, and as he moved closer, he could see that her teeth were stained almost brown. She also had sores around her mouth.

“Ma’am, I’m sorry, but I’m going to have to ask you to leave.” He lowered his voice, trying to sound as soothing as possible, as if he were approaching a snarling dog instead of a human being. “Now, I have never met you before in my life, so I’m not sure how you know me or why, but I will have to escort you out of the building.”

She spat at him, the saliva nearly splashing across his shoes. “Bullshit, Gavin Stephens, you lying sonuvabitch. Are you telling me you don’t remember this pussy?” She grabbed herself through the dress.

Gavin immediately stopped his progress, his brain numb.

“You better remember real fucking fast, asshole, because you never paid me.”

“Ma’am,” Gavin said in a deep, steely voice. “That is an entirely false accusation. I have never met you in my life, and I suggest you cease your accusations immediately.”

She threw back her head in wild laughter, and her deep, scratchy voice filled the now completely hushed ballroom. When her laughter died, she met Gavin’s eyes with no smile. “That’s real fuckin’ nice. You talk real pretty in here, don’t you? When you got your nice fancy suit on and your little rich lady standin’ right next to you. But I’ve heard you moan, Gavin Stephens. I made you howl. And what did I get for my troubles? Not a goddamn penny! All I got was this!”

The woman took her hands away from her body and pulled her dress tight against her belly, revealing a bulge.

Gavin spoke in a low voice, fighting to maintain control, but he could feel this situation slipping violently through his fingers. “Ma’am. I repeat. I have never seen nor met you in my life. You will leave now.” He reached for her arm, intending to physically escort her out of the ballroom, but as soon as he touched her, she lashed out.

With a wild snarl, she slapped at his face, her fingernails scraping off skin from his cheek.

Next thing Gavin knew, Emilie had put herself between him and the crazed woman.

“Leave now,” Emile said, standing at her full height, glaring at the woman.

Grayson moved toward her. “Ma’am, I have no wish to harm a pregnant woman, but you are clearly not welcome here and have made some very serious yet very false accusations. You need to leave.”

When the woman made no move to leave, and only glared at them with her chest heaving, Robin Lawrence, Bryant, and Alexander came to stand next to Emilie and Grayson, forming a solid line of bodies as a barrier between Gavin and the woman. Finally, she turned on her heel and stalked through the crowd, putting her arms back over her belly.

As soon as she left, the ballroom erupted into a loud chorus of exclamations and excited chattering. Emilie, however, turned and, without looking at either Gavin or Grayson, headed for an exit that led out to a veranda overlooking the river.

Gavin quickly thanked Robin, Bryant, and Alexander for their assistance and headed after Emilie. The last thing he saw as he left the ballroom was Emilio Estefan standing on the edge of the crowd with wide eyes and his glossy lips hanging open in a wide “O” of surprise, watching Gavin and Grayson as they headed after Emilie.

And just behind Emilio stood Julian Steele, a smile and a smug lift of his brows visible even from across the room.

* * * *

Emilie leaned heavily against the stone baluster, resisting the urge to hurl all the contents in her stomach down into the dark swirling waters of the river that moved slowly past. She heard the twins’ steps behind her as she knew she would.

Grayson approached first, resting his hands gently on her shoulders. “Are you all right?”

She straightened, shrugging off his touch, and turned to face Gavin. "Who was that, Gavin?"

He frowned. "I wasn't lying. I have no idea who she was. I have no idea why she was here tonight. I don't know how she knew me. I don't know."

"Yet she knew you. She knew exactly who you were." Emilie took in a breath, forcing the oxygen to travel down to the bottom of her lungs before she trusted herself to speak again. "You are twins. Yet she looked straight at you and said your name, Gavin. How do you explain that?"

The waters below whispered softly beneath them. The cacophony of insects, river critters, night birds, and the gently drifting music from inside the ballroom filled the air between them.

Gavin stared at her, long and hard. "I don't have an explanation."

Emilie closed her eyes, unable to look at them as the next words fell out of her mouth. "I'm going back to New York."

"Okay..." Grayson said. "I thought that was already the plan."

"I'm going tonight. Right now. I'm leaving right now. And...I don't think I will be returning." Despite her words, she didn't have the power to walk away. She remained staring at the twins. "You understand?"

After a long moment, Grayson spoke. "You are not leaving. There is too much here for you. What about the Outlaws? What about..." He made a small gesture at himself and his brother, his face hard and, at the same time, seemingly on the brink of fracturing into a million pieces. "What about everything?"

"It's just...it's too much. I have responsibilities. To my father and to myself. To our company. That is my life. And I'm sorry. I am truly sorry that I let this fantasy—this dream, this place, this life—distract me so completely."

"Dammit, Emilie, stop it. You don't mean that," Gavin said. "Don't do that. You know I am telling you the truth. I have never seen that woman, goddammit."

"I believe you, Gavin. I do. But it's more than that. I can't stay here." Emilie looked back and forth between the twins, looking for some sign of understanding. "I don't know. Maybe you really don't see it."

"See what?" Grayson asked in a low voice.

"I don't belong here. Male Order is a wonderful place. Everyone is kind and welcoming and...well, they are interesting, to say the least. But I exist outside of Male Order. My reputation, my family, my life...They are so much bigger than this tiny, wonderful secret life." Both Gavin and Grayson opened their mouths to protest, but Emilie cut them off. "And I know what you want from me. But commitment is not something that I can give to you. Not to you. Not to anyone."

"This is not your past," Grayson said. "We are not him. You are safe with us. Your heart is safe with us."

"What about your hearts? Maybe I'll want you for a day, for a month, for years. Who knows? All I know is that, one day, I will resent everything that I gave up, and I will hate both of you for taking me away from New York. Because if I stay with you here, I am done in New York. The world would not accept us, and I could not do that to my father's company. So you see, it is better for me to just go now. This is what I needed. This was good."

"Dammit, Emilie," Grayson roared, grabbing her arms. "You stop with this nonsense." He shook her. He shook her until her teeth rattled in her head.

She let him shake her. She didn't fight.

But she didn't break, either.

Finally, he stopped and looked deep into her eyes. He released her with a sound of disgust. "Go then."

"What?" Gavin said. "No! You're not leaving us, Emilie. Not like this."

Emilie continued to stare at Grayson. She knew he finally understood.

“We can’t keep her here, Gavin. She wants to leave. Let her fucking go.”

Emilie stepped away from both of them. Gavin watched her with confusion and a deep hurt written all over his features, but Grayson had turned away from her. He stood ramrod straight, looking out toward the dark river.

Ignoring every part of her screaming for her to stay, she walked away. She walked back into the bright golden light of the ballroom, past the swishing bright-colored swirls of extravagant gowns and then out to the night again. The cold, empty, lonely night.

It wasn’t until she made it back to her dark, empty apartment in New York and had locked the door behind her that she finally fell to the floor and cried.

Chapter 13

Six Weeks Later

Emilie couldn't focus. She'd been scratching her pen over the same bit of paper for the past fifteen minutes, and her father's voice was a distant drone in the back of her head. The air in the boardroom felt sticky and heavy in her lungs, and she struggled to pull in one breath after the other. She regretted the decision to wear her deep plum Alexander McQueen suit. It was gorgeous, but she had already sweat through the silk lining. The long-sleeved jacket fit snugly with a thick black leather belt around her waist, and the jacket fanned out behind her in a small pleated bustle. It was a little too extravagant for work, but that morning, fed up with her misery, Emilie had clutched at anything she thought might make her feel better.

She'd even worn her favorite pair of black Dior pumps.

None of it had worked. Not even her *Gitanes* gave her release from the tension thrumming through her body. Every thought that passed through her brain took her in a circle, always bringing her unfailingly back to the twins.

What do I want for dinner tonight? Dinner...dinner...Why did I miss that dinner at Perry's Steakhouse with them? Why did I waste one second of my time with them?

Her breath came shortly. She tried to focus on the black splotch she'd made in her notepad.

I'm almost out of coffee. I need to do some grocery shopping. Maman used to take me grocery shopping before I was sent to boarding school. I used to pick up the peaches and rub their fuzzy

skin against my cheek. I wonder if I'll ever have a daughter to take to the grocery store to rub peaches on her cheek. I could have. With them, I could have.

Emilie's stomach quivered. She felt ill, and a cold sweat broke out on the back of her neck. She shoved her chair out from the desk and, without looking at her father, left the boardroom.

Focus, Emilie, focus. Think of something else, dammit. Think of everything except them. New York. Taxis. Traffic. The city. Lots of people. Central Park. Haymitch-Benson. My father. My mother. Cigarettes. Oh God, Grayson bought me those cigarettes.

She barely made it to the toilet before the vomit spilled out of her. When she finished, a sob followed. It came from deep in her gut and stole all the oxygen from her lungs, and for a long moment, she couldn't find any air.

Clutching the sides of the toilet, she let herself cry. It was the third time that week. She felt weak and vulnerable and confused and so, so lost.

It wasn't just her own thoughts making her ill. Everything around her seemed to point out what she'd left behind. The first time she'd turned on her television, a Babe Ruth special came blaring out at her. She'd forgotten that she'd been watching ESPN before she left. In a moment of wild panic, she flicked the set off and hadn't turned it back on since then.

But it was the height of baseball season, and every day on her trip to and from work, she passed at least fifty people wearing some sort of baseball paraphernalia. The Yankees. The Mets. The Red Sox. The Orioles. She'd even seen a family wearing Dallas Outlaws jerseys in Central Park last week.

Finally, that morning she'd given in and decided to take a taxi, so she could ignore the passersby. But, of course, the cab driver's name was Gavin.

“How much longer?” she whispered, clenching her eyes tightly closed. And then, so quiet she almost couldn’t hear herself, she said, “How much longer can I take this?”

* * * *

Later that night she found herself at yet another charity gala. She hadn’t even bothered to buy another gown, just recycled one from a few seasons ago. She hadn’t wanted to go. She’d already been to four that week, but when she’d tried to beg off, her father and mother had both insisted she attend.

“*Papa*, I can’t sit through another one. Please allow me stay home tonight. I need some rest.”

“No, Emilie, what you need to is to pick yourself up. You’ve been moping around for more than a month. It’s time for you to get your mind back into the business. Your behavior is bordering on negligent, and it is inappropriate.”

She frowned at her father for a long minute. “That was not kind,” she finally said in a low voice. “And very unfair.”

“What your father means, Emilie,” her mother said, standing next to her husband and placing a stilling hand on his arm, “is that we have a deep concern for you. You have been at home for the past few weeks, but there comes a time when you just have to leap back out there, you know? And, though you may not like it, this is your time. *Comprends?*”

Emilie had nodded briskly, turned on her heel, and fled out the door. Now she found herself staring across the dinner table at a spot above the head of whoever sat across from her. She still had four long hours until the event ended, and she couldn’t even recall which organization would benefit from the proceeds raised.

Some time later, a string quartet began playing, and Emilie let out a small sigh of relief. If the music was starting, that meant that she’d

made it halfway through the event and only had a few more hours left to endure.

A fingertip tapped her shoulder, and she stiffened. She'd purposefully requested a seat in a far back corner so that she could ignore everyone and avoid dancing. The music had only been playing for fifteen minutes, and someone had already sniffed out her hiding spot. Inwardly cursing, she turned around to face the interloper to her privacy.

When she turned, however, Grayson stood before her, his palm up in that classic gesture that asks, "May I have this dance?"

Her heart leapt up into her throat, making speech impossible. Without hesitating, she placed her palm in his and rose. Their eyes remained locked as he led her to the dance floor. So many questions and doubts and hopes passed between them. When he pulled her close to his body to begin dancing, a warmth that she'd been missing the past six weeks flooded through her body. With a deep sigh, she put her cheek on his chest and just let herself be held by him while they gently swayed to the music.

Finally, she looked up at him, and with a million questions burning her mind, she said, "Where's Gavin?"

Grayson maneuvered them around until Emilie spotted Gavin at the edge of the dance floor. When their eyes met, he smiled.

"How? I mean, why? No...how did you know I was here?"

"Your father," Grayson answered. Although his arms were warm and solid around her, holding her safely and securely, there was a strange and cold quality to his voice.

"You spoke with my father? When?"

"This afternoon. We arrived around noon and immediately met with your father."

"And...and what did you discuss?"

"First, I told him that Julian Steele betrayed you and betrayed him."

"What?" Emilie jolted, but his arms held her fast.

“Julian Steele sent those pictures to *Allegedly*. And Julian Steele hired that woman to accuse Gavin.”

“No,” Emilie said, wondering how her father had reacted to that statement. “You are positive? You have proof?”

“It took us a while to track down the woman, but we did. And we offered her five times what Julian paid her. Plus, we agreed to pay for any and all hospital fees related to her pregnancy if she would admit why she had done what she had.

“After that, it was easy to find all the trails Julian left behind. Once we told Taylor what was going on, she convinced Emilio to divulge the sender to us. He didn’t even use a different e-mail to send the pictures to Emilio’s site.

“We presented all of this to your father this afternoon. I believe, if you ask him, you will find that Mr. Julian Steele is no longer employed by the Haymitch-Benson investment firm.”

“Oh, *Papa*,” Emilie whispered under her breath. Julian had been his closest friend for so long. “Why did he do it? It makes absolutely no sense.”

“Your father wondered the same thing.” Emilie frowned, not realizing that she had asked the question aloud, but Grayson continued. “When he asked Julian, that bastard turned around and asked for your hand in marriage.” It was the first time in his speech thus far that Emilie detected any sort of emotion. He had been speaking so mechanically, so clinically.

It surprised Emilie enough that she didn’t at first understand what Grayson said. “Wait, what? He asked my father for my hand in marriage? *Mon Dieu*, what century are we living in?”

Grayson peered down at her and then broke into a chuckle. He smoothed a thumb over her forehead. “Of all the reactions, of course you are affronted most by his disregard for your independence.” He kissed the spot between her brows, and she involuntarily wrapped her arms tighter around his body.

“Grayson...” she said against his chest, trying to pack every emotion skipping through her heart into that one name.

Some of it must have filtered through because his arms tightened around her as well. “Let’s go outside for a moment.”

Emilie could only nod, and as they made their way to an exit, Gavin joined them, taking her hand in his. Surprisingly, Emilie discovered that she didn’t care if half of New York’s high society saw it, either.

When the cool night air splashed against her warm face, Emilie sucked in a deep breath. It felt like the first she’d had in six weeks.

Then Gavin scooped her into his arms. “Emilie,” he said into her hair, kissing her neck, her cheek, her jawline, and finally her lips. His kisses swept away all the darkness of those past six weeks, swept it away until the only thing left was love, pure and simple.

Emilie pulled her lips away, breathless. “I’m sorry,” she said. “I am so sorry I left you. I don’t know why you came here, or if you even feel the same way. But I love you. Okay? I love you. Both of you. Gavin, Grayson, I love you.” She had placed a hand on each of their cheeks, and at the exact same time, they both placed one of their hands over hers.

“We love you, too,” they said in perfect unison.

Emilie smiled so wide she thought her cheeks would split.

“Marry us, Emilie,” Grayson said, and at his words, Gavin seemed to remember something. He dug around his pockets and pulled out a tiny black case. When he opened it up for her, inside was a simple diamond set in a simple platinum band.

She looked up at her twins—her Grayson and her Gavin—and with a big smile she said, “Yes. With all my heart, yes. I will marry you.”

Epilogue

Waking up for the first time in her new bed in Male Order, Texas, Emilie let herself enjoy her first stretch in her new home, flexing and extending her muscles until she finally shuddered and then collapsed back into utter relaxation. Two warm bodies slept on either side of her. Gavin snored softly, and Grayson lazily scratched a buttock.

Emilie stifled a giggle and stealthily wriggled her way out of the covers. Scampering across the cold tiles in their new house, she slipped on her house slippers and then darted into the office. After grabbing the laptop, she went into the kitchen to start some coffee.

They'd only returned from their honeymoon about four hours ago, but Emilie was so happy she couldn't sleep. As the coffee began to drip and fill the kitchen with its glorious scent, Emilie stood looking out the window she had opened above the kitchen sink. The sun was just rising, and its rosy fingertips stretched across their land to tickle the air around her. She smiled, something she'd been doing a lot more of lately.

A few minutes later, she opened up her laptop and immediately typed in *Allegedly's* web address. The usual greeting met her ears, and just as she thought, a picture of her popped up on the screen. Instead of the usual terror that swept through her upon discovering a new picture of herself on the web, this time she only felt joy soaring through her.

Beneath two pictures, one of her with the twins in her Christian Dior wedding gown and the other of her looking groggy at the airport the night before, was a short article which Emilie quickly devoured.

“What are you giggling about?” Gavin asked, coming around the corner. “And omigod, you are naked. Holy shit, Emilie.”

Emilie straightened up from leaning over the table. Gavin’s intense study of her exposed bosom, however, sent ripples of heat straight to her cunt, making her nipples instantly harden.

“Emilio,” she said, indicating the computer.

Just then Grayson rounded the corner, and just as his twin brother had done, he came to a complete stop when presented with Emilie’s naked form.

She casually sipped on her coffee. “Something the matter, *mes amants*?”

“You’re...the window...in the kitchen...naked...boobies.”

“May I offer you a cup of coffee, Grayson? You are not quite making sense this morning.”

“I think I want something a little stronger to wake me up,” Gavin said, approaching Emilie, his large, hard cock peeping through the slit in his boxers.

“Hmm, I can see as much.” Emilie backed away from him with a taunting leer. When her bare ass met the tiled countertop, she lifted herself up and perched on the edge. Placing the palms of both of her hands on the space between her spread legs, she leaned forward, pushing up her plump breasts just as Gavin reached her.

He fell forward, burying his face in her flesh and nuzzling. He snaked his hands between her legs and grasped her wrists, taking them and pinning them on the counter behind her. Then he trailed his lips over her skin, blazing a trail down to her creaming pussy. She scooted forward on the counter and spread her legs until her cunt was fully exposed. Gavin responded by taking her throbbing clit between his teeth and sending harsh little vibrations through her body.

Then his tongue darted up and between her folds, swirling delightfully, lapping and licking until she let out a deep moan. Grayson had been watching her from across the kitchen, stroking his hard length, but at her moan, Emilie saw him leave the kitchen.

“Wait. Come back.”

At Emilie’s distressed whimper, Gavin ceased his ministrations, only to pull Emilie off the counter with a wicked grin. Cradling her in his arms, he took her to their never-used, custom-made, oak table and laid her on its finished surface.

Emilie felt her eyes widening, realizing where Grayson had gone. Just as she suspected, when he returned, he had a few extra items in his hands, items she had purchased weeks earlier at another Wicked Whimsy party.

Without a word, Grayson tossed Gavin two long pieces of velvet rope. Each brother immediately went to work, one at her head and one at her feet, securing both her wrists and ankles on each leg of the table. They worked at exactly the same pace, and when Grayson secured an ankle, he kissed the delicate curve of her calf just as Gavin secured one of her wrists and placed an echoing kiss in the crook of her elbow. Their wordless, precise movements turned her on even more, sending deep and penetrating waves of pleasure through her already aroused body.

Once all of her limbs were secured, Gavin lifted her shoulders from the table, and Grayson tied a blindfold around her head. Everything went dark, and suddenly, without her sight to distract her, Emilie became aware of every sensation. She caught the rich scent of coffee permeating the room interwoven with the scent of her big, sexy men. As they moved around her, their scent came to her in the displaced air as it swirled around her. She could feel tiny ridges and bumps of the wood beneath her bare back, ass, and legs. Through the open window, she could hear chattering birds and the tiny buzz of bees as they began their day’s work on the flowers beneath the window sill. The twins, however, were completely silent.

After a moment, all ministrations stopped, and the twins removed their hands from her body. Emilie waited a long moment, thinking they would return shortly. But when a minute and then two minutes

and then three minutes passed without so much as a whisper or a touch, Emilie got impatient.

“Grayson,” she said sharply. A breeze rustled a strand of hair across her face, but no one answered. “Gavin.” This time she put a warning tone in her voice. For a long moment, no one responded.

But then a hand moved across her face, brushing back the strand. One of the twins placed a kiss first on one nipple and then the other while a thumb pressed against her lips. She tasted something sweet, and making her lips wider, she sucked the thumb all the way into her mouth. As she did so, the mouth on her breasts fully took a nipple and began sucking and nibbling. The sweet rich flavor of honey washed across her taste buds, and she locked her mouth around the thumb, rolling her tongue all the way around it to get every drop.

The mouth on her nipple echoed her mouth on the thumb, and Emilie smiled. Each flick of her tongue was answered by a flick of tongue on her nipple. Each little bite of her teeth meant an answering bite on her nipple. Her hips rolled up, her cunt desperate for some attention. Immediately, a mouth closed over her clit.

“Yes,” she murmured. She resumed her sucking on the thumb in her mouth. Again, the mouth on her breast echoed her attentions, but then Emilie realized that the mouth on her clit also mimicked her movements.

“How?” she whispered, but then shut her mouth, realizing that when she spoke, the ministrations on her body ceased. She began sucking and flicking and nibbling with an increased urgency, building up her own crescendo. Finally she could hold on no longer as hot ripples of pleasure lashed through her body, making her stomach clench and quiver in response.

But then again, she found herself alone in silence and in darkness, her breathing heavy in the stillness. Soon, however, something nudged against her mouth, and the head of a cock gently parted her lips. She took it eagerly, pressing her tongue against its tip and then swirling her tongue around its length until the tip reached the back of

her throat. Relaxing, she began to suck, luring the cock deep and then pushing it back out again. Her efforts were met with a guttural groan from one of the twins. She knew it was Gavin. She smiled around the cock in her mouth, feeling powerful.

Emilie could sense Gavin's motions becoming more urgent and less smooth as he approached his climax, so she was a little disappointed when he pulled his cock out of her mouth before she could take him there.

Then without any warning, the blindfold was ripped from her eyes. Emilie gasped as the now fully risen sun and its bright white light scalded her eyes. Before her eyesight could adjust, her limbs were freed from her binding, and the twins had flipped her over on the table.

Grayson lifted her hips up from behind and slipped something soft and cylindrical beneath her hips, making it even easier for her to undulate her hips back and forth without causing any discomfort to her hip bones. Gavin crawled up on the table in front of her. It was large enough that he could rest his hands palm down on the table behind him while Grayson stretched out over Emilie's ass.

Her men didn't waste any time. As soon as they all three were positioned, Grayson sank his cock deep inside her eager pussy. His arms were on the table on either side of her, and if she peeked down, she could see his large muscles flexing as he plunged into her again and again.

She didn't have much time for that, however, because Gavin wrapped his hand around the back of her neck and pulled her lips down to his dick. He let her rest her head against him as he thrust his cock in and out of her mouth.

As they all moved as one, the object beneath Emilie pressed against her bones and her clit. Each stroke from Grayson caused a moan to spill from her lips and onto Gavin's cock. They were all close, she could tell, and Grayson began thrusting even harder, driving them all three to the brink. Emilie's pussy clenched so quickly

it almost seemed to be vibrating. She let her head's weight fall completely against Gavin, pushing his cock the farthest yet down the back of her throat.

He reared up, and Emilie was rewarded by the feeling of his hot seed spurting and sliding down the back of her throat. She swallowed it all up. Only seconds later, Grayson's hot semen exploded inside her cunt, filling her insides with liquid warmth.

After a moment, Grayson moved away, and Emilie rolled off Gavin. All three of them scooted and maneuvered until Emilie was nestled between her two beautiful men, their legs and bodies a tangled, contented mess.

Gavin smiled at her while Grayson combed his fingers leisurely through her mussed locks.

"Love you, Em," Gavin said.

She kissed him. "And I love you."

Wriggling her bottom against Grayson behind her, she said, "You too."

"Love you," Grayson said, placing a kiss on the curve of her neck.

With a contented half-smile, she thought back to Emilio's article and believed he couldn't have written anything more perfect.

For the New Mrs. Benson-Stephens, There's No Place like Home...

Well, mijitos, we've all been wondering which city she would choose, but sources have confirmed—Male Order it is! After months of flights back and forth between New York and the Big D, it seems our darling ~~Dorothy~~ Emilie has finally clicked those ruby slippers for the last time. At around midnight, returning from their month-long honeymoon à Paris, the most recent Stephens triad was spotted on their way out of DFW. When asked if they were

staying for good, the newly anointed Mrs. Benson-Stephens replied, "All I can say is that we're home."

And all we can say is...we welcome you to ~~ménage~~ munchkin land!

THE END

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Although she grew up in small-town, Texas, Edith has lived and traveled in both France and the UK. She currently resides in Austin, Texas but wouldn't mind a gallivant or two across the Australian Outback, the highlands of Scotland, or any other foreign land that happens to interest her.

She's been writing since she was eight or nine, but she never thought about writing as a career until she handed in her first short story to her high school English teacher. She had so much fun writing it and spending time with her characters and actually finishing it that she started another, and she hasn't stopped since. Edith enjoys writing in all sorts of genres, including song-writing and script-writing, but no matter what, love is always at the center of her stories.

Edith's idea of a passing a perfect hour would be to cuddle up with her blind miniature Schnauzer, Gretchen, next to the window with one of her favorite books, a big ol' mug of hot chocolate with whipped cream and cinnamon in her hand, and Patsy Cline softly crooning from her record player in the background. A big, hunky man feeding her orange slices would be nice, too.



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