

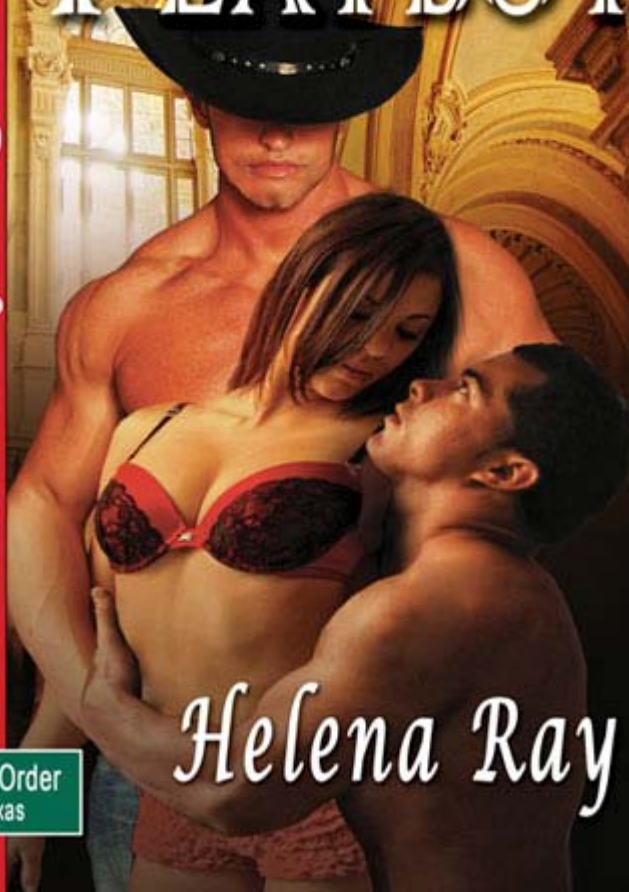
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Male Order
Texas

A Bride *for* TWO PLAYBOYS



Helena Ray

Male Order, Texas 4

A Bride for Two Playboys

Just when she thought her life was stalled out, Robin Lawrence receives a request to travel to Male Order, Texas to study the Abrams family mansion. She didn't bargain on her assignment including the current Abrams heir, the arrogant and debonair Alexander. Fresh from his five-year-long stint partying in Europe, Alexander has no room for a woman in his life and no patience for Robin's fiery personality. Luckily, Alexander's best friend, the hunky cowboy Bryant, is there to keep Robin very entertained during her stay in Male Order.

But her life isn't all fun and games. She discovers a series of crimes committed against the Abrams family, and her rocky relationship with Alexander prevents her from performing her professional duties. When Bryant demands Robin make amends with Alexander, it seems all is lost. Can Robin manage a cowboy, a billionaire, and a professional disaster? In Male Order, anything is possible.

Genre: Contemporary, Ménage a Trois/Quatre, Western/Cowboys

Length: 55,198 words

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DEDICATION

To Justin, for being just crazy enough to love me.

A BRIDE FOR TWO PLAYBOYS

Male Order, Texas 4

HELENA RAY
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Chapter 1

This isn't real.

Robin Lawrence steered her Honda Civic down the long drive leading to the Abrams estate. When it came into view, it took her breath away.

There it stood, a century-old stone mansion with sloping roofs, turrets, and balconies projecting over the grand entrance. The Abrams mansion was the closest thing to the fairy-tale castles every little girl dreams about that Robin thought she would ever see. As she drew nearer, more details came into view, and her heart pounded with her excitement at just being there.

When she pulled in front of the main entrance, a man attired in a tuxedo ran to her door. A tuxedo! In Texas's sweltering July heat! He opened her car door, and Robin stepped out, confused as to what exactly she was supposed to do in this situation. She grabbed her hefty messenger bag off the passenger's seat, and a second attendant nearly toppled her over. This one was dressed in a more sensible uniform of a polo shirt and khakis. He handed her a small slip of paper as he hopped into her car, closed the door, and sped off.

“Ah, Ms. Lawrence, I presume,” the man in the penguin suit offered. The disappearance of Robin’s car around the corner distracted her, and she hoped that wouldn’t be her last glimpse of it. Her confusion must have painted itself across her expression, as Mr. Tuxedo-in-July laughed and said, “Don’t worry, it’s just the valet service. Complimentary for all of our most esteemed guests.” He gave her a small bow, revealing the ample bald spot atop his head.

Robin gathered herself and remembered her professional manners, extending a hand. “Yes, I’m Robin Lawrence. So nice to meet you.”

He took her hand in his and patted it once. “Rupert. I’m sure we’ll meet several times, Ms. Lawrence.” He then turned and marched toward the house. Robin stood in front of the house awaiting his instructions and clutching the strap of her messenger bag. It was times like this she cursed her social awkwardness. Although she warmed up to people relatively quickly, her initial shyness often got in the way of her professional obligations.

“Ms. Lawrence, are you coming?” Rupert’s voice interrupted her thoughts, and Robin scurried after him, worrying she had already made a bad impression.

Any worries she had, though, immediately dissipated at the sight of the Abrams mansion’s entry hall. It was large, bright, and clean, with neoclassical details adorning the walls. The focal point of the entryway was the grand staircase. It led up the double-height space, splitting into two smaller staircases halfway through its ascent. Robin’s breath caught in her throat as she stood in the space she had dreamed of for months.

Robin’s arrival at the mansion on the outskirts of the peculiarly named Male Order, Texas had come in a very roundabout way. Since Robin had graduated *summa cum laude* from Southern Methodist University in Dallas with a degree in art history, she had labored tirelessly to attempt to get ahead in her profession. She worked menial jobs in almost all of the major art museums in Texas, including her most recent assignment in the archives of the Meadows Museum at

her alma mater SMU. She had assumed that job, like all the others, would lead to nothing, but about six months ago, she received a strange offer from her supervisor. Apparently, the will of the most recently deceased Abrams descendants stipulated that the mansion be fully documented for archiving in the Meadows collection. And the family had specifically requested Robin.

She was flabbergasted. Of course, she knew and loved the work of the art deco architect Max Abrams, who had also built a modernist masterpiece on the grounds. However, Robin had no idea that Max Abrams's family also owned this idyllic, romantic castle of a house. No, the word house was nowhere near sufficient to describe its grandeur. It was a mansion, a chateau, a villa, anything but a mere "house." The short-term rental the museum had secured for her in downtown Male Order that Robin had deemed luxurious earlier that day now paled in comparison.

These thoughts raced through her mind as she ascended the staircase, struggling to soak up every decadent detail of the space. Was that an original Monet she spied through an open doorway? Rupert, who she now assumed to be the butler, turned to ascend the smaller staircase that led to the left. She walked behind him, so engrossed in every facet of her surroundings that she fell several paces back.

They turned down a smaller hallway with several intricately carved, tall wooden doors lining both sides. Neo-Gothic wall sconces hung on the stone walls of the corridor, illuminating the way as the long tunnel of a hallway darkened the farther they walked. After what seemed to be about half an hour of trudging through narrow passageways, they stopped at a particularly tall set of wooden doors with elaborate sconces holding gas lamps. *Quite a nice touch for the atmosphere. Whoever lives here certainly has a flair for the dramatic.*

She didn't know the exact purpose of their expedition since Rupert's quick pace left Robin constantly hurrying to keep up in the maze of corridors.

Turning with a dramatic flourish, Rupert addressed Robin. “Ms. Lawrence, if you would be so kind as to grant us one moment before you meet with our archivist, Dr. Blackmon.” Robin nodded, uncertain what would come next. “I understand that you need the living heir’s consent to access certain materials. He’s often, ah...” Rupert paused, appearing to decide on the correct words. “He is frequently occupied,” he said finally.

“Oh, that’s fine.” Robin hadn’t expected to start off so quickly and had to dig through her bag to find the consent forms. After a brief search, she located the papers and handed them to Rupert. He looked down at the papers as if they were poison ivy and left her holding them.

“Ms. Lawrence, I believe you should ask Mr. Abrams for permission yourself,” Rupert said uneasily. “Alexander generally responds better to anyone but me.”

Alexander? Alexander Abrams was *here*? She knew he was Max Abrams’s descendant but had assumed he would be anywhere but Male Order. Gossip magazines frequently featured his exploits on their covers, and Allegedly.com, the infamous Dallas-area gossip blog, followed his adventures closely. Although he had been raised in Male Order, he had departed as soon as possible for Europe, where, according to the media, he caused a sensation among the upper crust. All reports of Alexander included booze, gambling, and the most glamorous models in the world. What had always caught Robin’s attention, though, was Alexander himself. He was far more handsome than most matinee idols, and his quotes were always articulate with a dry, cynical humor that Robin appreciated. Yes, Alexander Abrams looked on track to surpass James Bond as the archetypal handsome European playboy.

“Okay,” Robin squeaked, unable to believe her luck. She had figured she might meet Alexander at some point during her stay in Male Order, but her first day! She had not expected that. After his fathers’ deaths, Alexander had assumed the position of the head of the

Abrams estate, but Robin assumed he would have sent a representative while he stayed on his notoriously over-the-top estate in France. Apparently, she thought wrong.

“Allow me to announce your arrival,” Rupert said as he placed a gloved hand on the polished gold doorknob. “One moment, Ms. Lawrence.”

The butler disappeared through the door, and the sudden silence unnerved Robin. Despite the Texas heat and the gas lamps burning above her head, the air conditioning against the stone walls of the sequestered hallway in which she stood sent a chill through her. She hopped from foot to foot, trying to keep warm and numb her nervousness about meeting *the* Alexander Abrams.

The door creaked open, and Rupert emerged, exasperated. He sighed and held the door open to Robin. “Mr. Abrams will see you now, Ms. Lawrence.”

Robin walked through the door, a strange mixture of dread and excitement gnawing at her stomach.

* * * *

Alexander breathed a sigh of exhaustion as he spun around in his high-backed leather chair, propping his feet up on the edge of his large mahogany desk. He sank further into his chair and framed Rupert’s face with the tips of his bespoke Oxfords. “What fresh hell do you have for me today?”

Every day since his return to Male Order from his estate in France, his house manager conjured up some new situation that required Alexander’s attention. Alexander was not suited to such duties. No, his talents were far better suited to long nights at the tables in Monte Carlo, to polo matches with the rulers of small European principalities, to afternoon trysts with their wives...

“Sir, it’s the historian from the Meadows Museum. I told you of this engagement last night, *sir*, between your various Scotch tastings.”

Rupert shot him a chagrined look. Alexander did feel for the poor man. His fathers had been devoted to maintaining the dignity of the Abrams family name. Alexander, on the other hand, worked to escape that dignity, instead preferring to indulge in the fruits of his ancestors' labor differently, for instance, across the ocean in a casino. Poor Rupert was cursed with the task of acclimating Alexander to the new duties thrust upon him after his fathers' deaths in a car crash.

"Right, right. That." Alexander hoped his tone conveyed his reluctance to cope with the situation. "Do I really need to meet this old bat?"

"Yes, sir, you do." Rupert's eyes narrowed as his patience for Alexander's petulant behavior ostensibly came to an end. Alexander sighed and lowered his feet from the desk. Yet another loose end left by his fathers. Doubtless he would have a new stack of papers and would demand Alexander scribble his signature across countless times. Day after day of this, he thought. What a shell of a life.

Rupert left the room, and Alexander adjusted his Dolce and Gabbana smoking jacket emblazoned with the Abrams family coat of arms as he sat up in preparation for his unwelcome guest.

The door opened, and in walked a waif of a woman, probably a foot shorter than Alexander. Her face conveyed an unmistakable innocence with large, brown doe eyes that widened as she took in Alexander's office with its dark wood paneling, gold fixtures, and original old master paintings and drawings scattered across the walls. Despite that naive look on her face, Alexander saw something delectably naughty in her. Her flimsy V-necked grey T-shirt revealed a set of pert breasts, and Alexander inwardly thanked the unbearable summer heat in Texas for necessitating her to wear very short shorts that hugged her ass perfectly. *Quite unprofessional*, he thought. As he watched her mouth drop into an "O" at the sight of the Rubens drawing framed on his wall, he felt his cock stirring, wanting to feel that mouth tighten around it.

Maybe this wouldn't be too miserable after all.

The woman collected herself and extended her hand across the desk. “Mr. Abrams? I’m Robin Lawrence, from the Meadows Museum.”

Alexander stood, took her hand, and rubbed the inside of her palm with his thumb. “Call me Alexander, Robin.” He used his most sensual voice, the one that had women running to him in Monaco.

Robin quickly withdrew her hand and cleared her throat. “Um, Alexander. I will need you to sign some authorization papers so the museum can access the unarchived material housed here.”

Alexander stared at her, perplexed, as she rifled through the papers sticking out of the messenger bag slung over her shoulder. The thumb maneuver was usually his way in. Women could never resist a sensual touch. But there was something different about her. While she was beautiful, she didn’t look like the models who followed his every move in Paris, and she certainly didn’t look like the usual old fogey academics that begged him for permission to rifle through his great-grandfather’s things.

“But of course. First, tell me about yourself. How come a beautiful girl like you wants to spend time with a bunch of dusty old plans?” Alexander crossed to the front of his desk and sat lightly on the edge. From this angle, he could inhale the light perfume she was wearing. It had been, what? A few weeks since he got laid? This girl would be a suitable conquest.

His sudden proximity caused her to take a few steps backward.

“Mr. Abrams, I—”

“Alexander.”

“Mr. Abrams.” Her look told him she meant business. “I’m here because I was sent on assignment from the Meadows Museum and because I admire your great-grandfather greatly. Now if you’d please...” She indicated the papers she was still holding.

Alexander ignored the documents and circled behind Robin, getting a better view of her round, tight ass. “I’ll get to those, but really. A woman like you shouldn’t be wasting her time on dead

architects. Wouldn't your boyfriend rather you be at home with him?" Killing two birds with one stone. Not that the answer would make any difference in his advances.

"Excuse me? *At home?*" Robin's smooth, milky skin turned a deep shade of red. "This is what I love, and as a woman of the twenty-first century, I can do whatever I please." She paused, looking a bit flustered. "Also, I don't have a boyfriend. I don't need one." She jutted her chin upward as if proud of her perceived independence.

"Don't get angry with me, Robin." He winked at the use of her first name. "I just think it's a waste to hide a girl like you behind a stack of books. No one cares about that stuff, anyway."

"No one cares? *No one cares?*" Clearly, Alexander had struck a nerve. "The story of architecture in the first half of the twentieth century is a poignant example of..." Alexander stopped listening to the angry pixie woman storming about his office shouting about architecture and gesticulating violently. He didn't need this.

Alexander grabbed the papers from Robin's hand as she flung them upward in a dramatic gesture to accompany her lecture. "I'll have my attorney look over these. Meanwhile, talk to Mr. Blackmon about provisional access to the archives." He consciously switched from aroused predator to apathetic businessman.

Robin opened her mouth as if to continue her lecture then closed it and took a deep breath. She rearranged her bag and smiled coolly. "I look forward to working with you on this project." The look on her face and the tone of her voice implied she didn't mean that.

"I look forward to working with you, as well," Alexander replied in an identical tone as he returned to his seat behind the mahogany desk. "Now, if you will, I'm quite busy today." He motioned to the door.

"My pleasure." Robin shot him one more angry look before turning and exiting the room quickly.

Goddamn it, a nosy bitch. Exactly what Alexander didn't need. Apparently, he would have to meet his sexual needs in another way.

He kicked his feet back on to his desk and closed his eyes. Oh, having her around was going to be fun.

Loads of fun.

Chapter 2

What a bastard! Robin attempted to slam the ten-foot high door to the mansion behind her as she exited, but it was too heavy, and her anger was forced to stay pent up. She stood just outside the entrance, out of the cool stone walls of the mansion and once more in the July heat. She supposed she should find the outbuilding that housed the Abrams family records, but her ire impaired any sort of academic thought at the moment. She shook her head to clear the memory of Alexander Abrams. What a pig! How could such an awful, unpleasant man be the descendant of Max Abrams, one of the most brilliant designers in American history?

One thing Alexander did have in common with his great-grandfather was his looks. Max Abrams was notorious for being arrestingly handsome, and his heir certainly shared that quality. Even though Alexander made Robin seethe with his antiquated attitudes toward women and his disdain for her work, she could not deny his effect on her body.

Alexander was extremely tall and trim, and his designer wardrobe showed off his long muscles. His hair was a tuft of messy brown curls. He had piercing hazel eyes that dripped with mischief and full, extremely kissable lips.

Wait, what am I doing? The last thing she should be doing is thinking about kissing Alexander Abrams. For one thing, she had a job to do. She had not been sent to the Abrams mansion to flounce about like a princess. For another thing, even if she were to be involved with someone on her trip, it would not be an unbelievably spoiled and rude brat like Alexander Abrams.

She continued stewing over her encounter with Alexander as she wandered the grounds. The longer she walked, though, the less agitated she became. The unbelievable beauty of the grounds, landscaped to showcase the natural beauty of the Texas countryside, overwhelmed her, and the interaction faded in her memory.

The sound of hooves hitting the ground behind her interrupted her reverie.

“Beautiful, ain’t it?”

Robin turned around to see a man perched on a dapple grey horse. He wore a red pearl-snap shirt with the sleeves rolled up and the kind of jeans cowboys wear that leave very little to the imagination. His muscular frame lifted out of the saddle, and he dropped himself to the ground. He grabbed the reins and walked the horse over to where Robin stood.

He smiled down at her, and she could see more clearly his open, friendly smile and sparkling blue eyes. Set against his short, dark hair and tan skin, the beauty of his eyes struck Robin as she turned her face up to his.

“I’m Bryant Clare, stable manager and horse trainer extraordinaire,” he said as he ran his hand down the muzzle of the horse standing next to him, “and this here’s Sylvia.”

“Robin Lawrence.” She followed Bryant’s lead and stroked Sylvia’s neck. The horse breathed softly against her neck in approval.

“She likes you, Robin Lawrence.” Bryant’s grin was infectious, and Robin found herself giggling like a schoolgirl as the horse nuzzled her hair. He snapped and pointed at her.

“I like her.” Robin tangled her fingers in Sylvia’s mane. She looked up at Bryant, slightly confused. “Horse trainer?”

“Ah, Al and I are partners in a little business training show horses.” He waved his hand dismissively. “But that’s not why you’re here, is it? You’re the one from the Meadows Museum, right? Al told me you got here today.”

“Al? You mean Alexander?” Robin’s good mood faded as she spit out his name.

“Ah, I see that you’ve met him.” Bryant chuckled as Robin scrunched her face at the memory of meeting him. “He’s a real prick, isn’t he?”

“I mean, I don’t want to say anything bad about your employer but—”

“He’s a prick. It’s a fact.”

“Well, yeah, I guess that’s one way of putting it.” Robin breathed a sigh of relief that she was not alone in her assessment of the Abrams heir.

“Don’t worry, he’s a decent guy. Let’s just say he never lifted a finger in his life until about a year and a half ago.” Bryant shrugged. “He’s getting used to doing anything for himself.”

“I don’t care what his excuse is. He shouldn’t go around insulting people’s—”

“Honey, we could go on for days talking ’bout everything that’s wrong with Al, but I’d rather show you the grounds.” Bryant looked down at Robin with a smile she knew could become addicting. “If it’s not too forward, wanna jump on Sylvia and I’ll show you around?”

Robin took one more look at his muscular back as he turned around to mount Sylvia and made up her mind. “Not too forward at all.”

She let out a small shriek as Bryant reached down from his perch, wrapped his arm around her midsection, and pulled her up on the horse.

“You okay there?” Bryant turned slightly to make sure Robin had landed safely on top of Sylvia. Robin nodded, her breath still knocked out of her from the sudden mount. Bryant took one of her hands, wrapped it around his waist, and flattened her palm against his stomach. “Keep your hands like that,” he instructed. Robin happily mimicked the action with her other hand.

The two of them rode like that throughout the grounds. Bryant pointed out various features in the landscape planted by Max Abrams himself as Robin listened, nodding enthusiastically the whole time. She loved the way his voice sounded. When he explained the intricacies of the estate and his horse-training enterprise, his Texas accent held an undercurrent of something exotic and sophisticated.

However, she couldn't help but divert her attention to the feel of the rippling muscles underneath her hands. His thin shirt did little to disguise his well-toned stomach and the large muscles in his forearms. With her chest fully pressed against his back, she felt the movement of the perfectly defined muscles at every turn and smelled his intoxicating musk of leather and horses. Her body was not immune to this perfect specimen of Texan man, and she could feel the wetness of her own arousal pooling between her legs. She involuntarily rocked her hips in the saddle as they rode, desperate for some sort of pressure to alleviate her building desire.

They returned to the front of the main house, and Bryant dismounted. Not a very experienced horsewoman, Robin attempted to follow suit, but hesitated.

"Don't worry, darlin', I got you." Bryant smiled as he easily wrapped both hands around Robin's waist. "Throw your other leg over." He slid her off the horse, tightening his grip as she lowered to the ground. When she completed her descent, he maintained his grip around her waist. Robin's arousal flamed to life again when she felt a denim-clad bulge pushing against her stomach.

She cleared her throat and tried to back away from Bryant. "Thanks for the ride." Robin's voice was shaky at best. "You're right, best way to see the grounds."

Bryant stopped her retreat by entwining his arms tighter around her waist. Robin could not stop the heat building inside of her now. She had never been one for lusty encounters with near-strangers, but since meeting Bryant and, she admitted begrudgingly, Alexander, her libido had been out of control. Her hold on her inner passions snapped

in that moment, and she reached up in an attempt to wrap her arms around Bryant's neck.

"It's the best when I feel you"—he pressed her against him—"right behind me." He lowered his face closer to Robin's, and she could feel his breath on her face. As she closed her eyes, ready to kiss this handsome stranger, Bryant released his grip on her. Robin's body cried out at the absence of the warm presence that had been wreaking havoc on her libido for the past hour.

"So, you're gonna be around for the next couple of weeks?" His tone suddenly turned chatty. "I think this place could use a little more feminine presence." He winked at Robin before turning to Sylvia and pulling himself back on top of the horse. While Bryant's departure saddened Robin, she was very appreciative of the view of his ass afforded by his mounting the horse. Her eyes lingered on his biceps flexing when he pulled on the reins. She already wanted to feel his body underneath her hands again.

"Robin?" Bryant's voice broke into her thoughts.

"Sorry." She blushed, realizing he had caught her in admiration. "Yeah, I'll be around. Probably pestering everyone with my questions."

"With those doe eyes, you won't bug anyone, darlin'." With that and one last grin at Robin, Bryant slapped one of Sylvia's haunches and galloped in the direction of the stables.

Robin let her mind wander as she walked in the direction of the small outbuilding that housed the Abrams archives. Funny, the memory of Alexander's loathsome behavior had faded into the far recesses of her mind. Bryant expelled any unpleasantness she had encountered since her arrival.

She felt a wide grin crawl across her face. Yes, her stay in Male Order looked very promising, indeed.

* * * *

Alexander practiced his aim by wrinkling copies of documents Rupert left for him into tight balls and tossing them into the antique mahogany and gold waste paper basket on the opposite side of his desk. His target practice was interrupted by a matching paper ball landing squarely against his head.

“Real mature, Bry.” He didn’t tear his eyes away from his very important task as Bryant dropped himself into one of the Italian leather armchairs in front of Alexander’s desk. He perched his brown ostrich skin cowboy boots on the edge of Alexander’s desk and sank deeper into his chair.

“Anytime.” Bryant threw another wadded up document, this time in a smooth arc that ended in the waste paper basket.

Alexander narrowed his eyes at the intruder. “Show off.” Bryant chuckled and picked up the precious gem-encrusted, eighteen-karat-gold Rubik’s Cube from the edge of his desk.

“So according to our newest guest Robin, you two had quite a confrontation.”

Oh, fuck. They were talking about this. Alexander grunted in lieu of a verbal response.

“Al, that girl may bug the living shit outta you, but she is damn sexy.” Bryant chatted as he tried to solve the puzzle.

“No. I know where you’re going, and no.” Alexander gave Bryant his most commanding son-of-a-billionaire stare. He and Bryant had been best friends for fifteen years. He knew Bryant wouldn’t fall for his act, but he at least had to try. “It was one thing to bang my dead ancestor’s groupies when we would never see them again and they spoke about six words of English.” Alexander couldn’t help but smile a little when he remembered the countless nights he and Bryant spent driving women mad at his estate in the south of France. God, they were good. “But I will not have that little bitch hanging around like all the others, begging to be fucked again when we’re done with her.”

“We don’t have to be done with her anytime soon, Al. We could keep her around and—”

“No.” Alexander turned deadly serious. He couldn’t bear the thought of being in any sort of relationship, even an exclusively sexual one. Ever since his mother died of breast cancer while he was attending college in Europe, he had lost the ability to be close to anyone except Bryant. Alexander had been raised in a ménage family, as had all the sons of the five founding families of Male Order. His mother’s death broke his fathers’ spirits and resulted in Alexander staying away from Male Order for five more years in order to spend his family’s fortune on booze, cards, and women in Europe.

Immediately after graduating from college in Scotland, he purchased a mansion in Paris’s wealthy sixteenth arrondissement to avoid returning to Texas and the oppressive reminders of his mother in Male Order. After living in Paris for a year, he found himself traveling frequently to Monte Carlo for the wild nights of poker, booze, and sex with the most gorgeous models working in Milan. He purchased an estate in the south of France and invited Bryant to join him, ostensibly to work for him as his stable manager—Bryant refused to accept a job beyond his own capabilities—but really to have his partner in crime by his side. His fathers’ deaths in a car accident brought Alexander back to Male Order, Texas to oversee the family estate. All he wanted was his life of gambling and rough sex back. Memories of his mother haunted him constantly in this house, and his sadness sickened him.

“Look, Robin’s a young, gorgeous—”

“Obnoxious,” Alexander interjected.

Bryant ignored him and continued. “—lively woman. She won’t be going anywhere anytime soon. Why don’t we keep her around, train her just right so she’ll know how to please us?”

“Bryant. I don’t keep women. Especially not snobbish, headstrong ones.”

Bryant let out an exasperated sigh. “Fine. That doesn’t mean I can’t have her.”

Alexander was speechless, a rare occurrence. Ever since Bryant joined him in Europe, they had shared all the women in their lives. He knew Bryant wanted a wife and a family one day, and Alexander had assumed, if he could ever commit to a woman again, that wife would be his as well. He could not even comprehend the idea of Bryant having a woman that didn't also belong to him.

"Fine." Alexander could feel the indignation heating his skin.

"You won't mind me inviting her, on your behalf, to our little shindig tomorrow night, then."

Determined not to let his anger show, Alexander gave a curt nod. "Go ahead." Robin's presence would annoy him, but he would allow it at his "shindig," although that term was entirely inappropriate for the decadent soiree reminiscent of his wildest nights in Monte Carlo he would be hosting the next evening.

Bryant opened his mouth as if to comment on Alexander's unusual terseness, but the low buzz of his phone vibrating in his pocket interrupted him. He glanced at it. "Stables," he muttered as he jumped out of the armchair and headed toward the door. He gave one last glance to Alexander.

"Think about it."

Alexander watched the door as it slowly closed. He sat in the silence and let Bryant's words echo in his head. He rose from his chair and pushed all the books off the shelf behind his desk to the floor as he let out a roar of anger and frustration. Once again in total silence, he looked at the pile of Hemingway first editions that lay scattered on his antique Persian rug.

Fuck. Bryant wanted her, and as much as he wanted to, Alexander couldn't deny his attraction to her.

This girl would be his undoing.

* * * *

Following Bryant's expert directions, Robin approached a rickety portable building set up against the side of one of the estate's rolling hills. The structure looked conspicuous against the decadence and sophistication displayed everywhere else on the estate. A funny feeling turned in her gut, advising her to hesitate before continuing onward. However, the temperature hovered somewhere above one hundred degrees, and the sight and sound of an ancient air conditioning window unit protruding from one of the portable building's windows promised some sort of relief.

Shouldering her bag, Robin put aside her uneasiness and cautiously climbed the decaying wooden steps to the entrance to the building. She pressed slightly against the door and entered into a small room filled with boxes stacked from floor to ceiling. The window unit A/C whirred loudly and blew a few stray papers across the floor. Stepping fully into the room, Robin wondered if she had found the right building. This room looked to house the family paper recycling facility, not the archival holdings of one of the most prestigious families in the country.

A browned paper fluttered against Robin's leg, and with an academic curiosity, she leaned down to investigate. She unfolded the paper. It appeared to be a letter dated from 1925 and addressed to someone named Audrey from...Max Abrams himself! Robin fell to her knees to study the document further, but an avalanche of papers ceased her efforts. A whole tower of boxes had toppled over around Robin, startling her into fear. Suddenly, a man's head poked out from behind another leaning tower of boxes.

"Ms. Lawrence!" the man exclaimed, hopping out from his hiding place. He was a short man, no more than an inch or so taller than Robin's petite stature, with black hair covering every inch of clammy, pale skin. He waded toward her through the sea of boxes and clasped one of her hands in both of his. Robin immediately felt the impulse to recoil from his sweaty grip.

"I'm Dr. Melvin Blackmon. You've probably heard about my efforts here." He moved closer to Robin, compounding her uneasiness, and shook her hand vigorously. "Robin, yes?"

"Y–yes," she said shakily. This man made her quite uneasy. "And yes, the Meadows Museum sent me. I've been compiling a dossier from your online holdings..."

"The online holdings are hardly adequate." Dr. Blackmon snorted in disdain as he turned away from Robin back toward the unorganized mound of paper from which he had emerged. He collected an armful of wrinkled papers and shoved them toward her. "Here, these should get you started."

"Thank you, Dr. Blackmon. Is there anywhere I can—"

"I've worked quite hard to keep this one of the finest familial archives in the country, you know." He paced back and forth in front of Robin, keeping her from anything but the papers she struggled to balance in her arms. She watched in horror as sweat beads rolled from behind his neck, past his already soaked shirt collar, and onto the papers scattered across the floor, damaging irreplaceable documents. "I don't let *anybody* snoop around in here."

"The Meadows Museum really appreciates your cooperation with the Abrams family in—"

"Call me Melvin, Robin." He stopped in front of her and studied her face. Robin twitched under the intensity of his scrutiny. "You can set up at the table over there." He pointed to a small school desk covered with even more boxes of documents.

"Um, thank you," Robin stuttered, not sure exactly how to behave in this situation.

"I must take my leave now," he said with a dramatic flourish. "Mother will be needing me to cook her dinner." He leaned in toward Robin again, and she instinctively backed up. "I *can* trust you with the archives, can't I?"

"Of course," she said as she backed into the wall.

“Have you yet met that despicable excuse for a stable manager, Bryant Clare?”

Even in the presence of the stout, narcissistic archivist, Robin couldn't help but grin a small bit. “Yes, I've met Bryant.”

“Dreadful human.” Melvin snorted in derision. “The fortunate, ungrateful bastard lives on the grounds. He'll be by to lock up around five.” As he waddled to the door, the man whose figure resembled a fireplug called out to Robin, “You're the only one with access to the archives with the knowledge to do any damage.” He paused and narrowed his eyes at Robin. “If I find anything a hair out of place, I'll know who the perpetrator is.”

He slammed the door behind him, and Robin breathed a sigh of relief as she heard him stumble down the portable building's steps.

The roar of the window unit grew louder as she stood alone in the office. How could she not move anything a hair out of place? The building was an utter disaster, and Robin knew this would take much longer than the two or three weeks she had allotted for the assignment. The thought brought a smile to her face, though.

Bryant would be here later to lock up. Bryant, who promised to make her stay in Male Order much, much more enjoyable. She closed her eyes and conjured up images of the afternoon. Riding through the grounds with her hands firmly pressed against his stomach, the feel of those muscles rippling beneath her hands...

She had to shake her head and close her eyes to calm her arousal and attempt to focus on the daunting task at hand. But when she closed her eyes, all she saw was Bryant's face in the afternoon sunlight. The brightness brought out a smattering of freckles on his cheeks, and his wide smile glowed. Even in her mind's eye, she could not tear her focus from his bright blue gaze.

Chapter 3

Robin pushed her chin-length brown hair behind her ears again. She felt painfully awkward as she stumbled toward the Abrams mansion in the green silk stilettos she wasn't used to wearing. What was she doing here? This kind of party had driven her away from Dallas, but she couldn't resist the look in Bryant's eyes when he invited her. That sexy smirk could cause any girl to take leave of her senses.

She threw one last look back at the valet hopping into her Honda Civic and adjusted her short, green, strapless cocktail dress. Among the extravagant sports cars and straight-off-the-runway dresses, Robin felt even more out of place. A man in what could only be described as a penguin suit held the door open as Robin strode toward it.

"Right this way, mademoiselle." He gestured into the grand foyer, which was decorated with tiny white lights and filled with waiters carrying trays of champagne flutes. Bryant had purported this to be a "small gathering," but clearly their definitions of the term differed. Robin lifted a glass of champagne from a passing tray and graciously thanked the waiter. She could sympathize with those working in service to this abundantly wealthy family.

As she sipped on her champagne, the idea of fleeing this scene started to hold more appeal. The entire younger generation of Male Order appeared to be in attendance, and their presence intimidated her to no end. Although no one looked that much older than Robin, everyone dripped with a sophistication she could only dream of possessing. Suddenly, a voice in the crowd served to ease her awkwardness.

“Robin! Darlin’!” Robin turned around to see Bryant weaving his way through a gaggle of young girls. Their eyes all followed him, lingering on the muscular bulk of his chest. He wore a white, fitted shirt open at the top and flawlessly tailored black slacks. Even though he eschewed the pearl-snaps-and-denim attire, an air of casual openness still clung to Bryant. Robin felt a stir of jealousy in her chest at the other women’s open admiration of Bryant’s impressive physique.

He approached Robin and wrapped an arm around her shoulders as he landed a kiss on her cheek. “I’m so glad you could make it out to our little soiree.”

“I am, too.” Robin felt the eyes of the other women as she returned Bryant’s greeting. “Alexander can’t be too thrilled about my being here.” Bryant let out a chuckle at her comment.

“Alexander’s never thrilled about doing anything,” he said casually. “Smart little thing like you must have noticed that by now.”

Robin glanced around at their decadent surroundings and failed to locate Alexander. His impressive height made him difficult to miss in a crowd.

“Is he not even thrilled about attending his own party?” she asked.

“Oh, this isn’t the party.” A mischievous grin tugged at the corner of Bryant’s mouth. “This is only the smoke screen.”

“The *what?*” The habits of the privileged never failed to confuse Robin.

“Gossip travels fast in Male Order,” Bryant explained, “and if it got out that Alexander Abrams was holding one of his legendary European-style parties, there would be riots trying to get an invite.” He gestured to the gaggle of girls who still stood eying their interactions. “No matter what you think of him, there are more than a few young ladies vying for Al’s attention.”

“But I don’t get it,” Robin said. “Didn’t everyone get an invite? I don’t see how many more Male Order residents there could be.”

“As I said, gorgeous—” Bryant’s eyes glowed as he complimented Robin. “—this ain’t the real thing.” He leaned over her and whispered, his breath blowing against her ear. “I’ll show you the real thing.”

His voice, combined with his arm wrapping around her waist, hinted at something more sensual. But Robin had no time to contemplate Bryant’s meaning as he guided her toward a door underneath the grand staircase in the foyer. Bryant gave a nod to a man standing next to the door. Robin had failed to notice the doorman, as he was dressed in plain clothes, not the penguin suit of the man outside. The doorman glanced around to make sure his actions wouldn’t arise any suspicions in the party guests and held the door open just enough for Bryant and Robin to squeeze through it.

Robin couldn’t breathe at the sight that greeted them. They had stepped into a miniature replica of what Robin immediately recognized as Charles Garnier’s iconic card room at the Monte Carlo Casino in Monaco, well known to any architectural historian. She gaped at the walls drenched in gold paint and intricately executed murals. Although smaller in scale, the room shone with all of the decadence associated with the original. Fantasies of being clad as a Bond girl and seducing men in this room danced through Robin’s head. She quickly rid her mind of these thoughts. Just standing so close to Bryant Clare was driving her mad with sexual energy already.

“Welcome to Alexander’s masterpiece,” Bryant said as he indicated the room with a sweep of his hand. “When we got back from Europe, Al couldn’t get this place out of his head. He kept claiming he missed the room as much as the poker tables. His first order of business as head of the Abrams estate was constructing this room.”

Something Bryant said troubled Robin.

“We?”

“Yeah,” he said easily. “We. He invited me over there when he finished college.”

“Oh, so you worked for him there?” Robin assumed financial reasons were the only rationale anyone could have for voluntarily spending time around Alexander Abrams.

“Well, yeah,” Bryant explained as if it were obvious. “And we just hung out. He’s my best friend.”

What? How could such a nice, normal guy like Bryant ever be friends, let alone *best* friends, with an ogre such as Alexander? Robin seriously needed to reconsider her opinion of Bryant.

“Best friends? How?”

“I dunno.” Bryant shrugged. “We met at school when we were fourteen. I got a scholarship to St. Mark’s School in Dallas where all the rich kids went. I thought Alexander was an arrogant prick then, still do, but he’s a decent guy.”

Robin humphed at his statement. No one who treated her like he had could be described as a “decent guy.”

“Look, he’s not that bad.” Bryant squeezed his arm around her waist. “He takes some getting used to, but so does all of Male Order.”

Robin continued her pouting.

“How about I introduce you around?” Bryant asked. When Robin hesitated, he added, “No Alexander. Just some other people I want you to meet.”

She made the mistake of looking up into his sparkling blue eyes. She couldn’t deny any man who looked like that. What the hell? She was here for the next three or four weeks, anyway. Might as well get to know the locals, no matter how bizarre they were.

Bryant led Robin forward into the room. This room was nowhere near as crowded as the foyer. Most of the partygoers stood gathered around the bar, although a group of men sat around one of the many card tables set up in the room. The men seated at the table were all engaged in some sort of lively debate. Robin’s quick survey of the room failed to turn up any evidence of Alexander. Maybe he really was so stuck up he wouldn’t even attend his own gathering. *Typical rich kid.*

Bryant released Robin from his grip and moved in the direction of the bar. “Stay right here, darlin’.”

Robin continued to sip her champagne, feeling even more awkward now that she was in a more intimate setting. Bryant returned quickly, however, with a gaggle of guests to introduce.

Two gorgeous men flanked Bryant as he approached. They were nearly identical, with high, chiseled cheekbones and dark messes of curly hair. The only difference between them was their eye color—one sage, the other turquoise, both equally piercing.

“Robin Lawrence, meet two of Male Order’s most eligible bachelors, Grayson Stephens—” Bryant gestured toward the green-eyed twin. “—and Gavin Stephens,” he said with a nod toward the blue-eyed counterpart. What was it with this town and ridiculously good-looking men? Robin could get used to this.

Gavin started to leer in Robin’s direction, and out of the corner of her eye, she saw Bryant give him a stern look. This deterred Gavin only a little.

“Ms. Lawrence, welcome to Male Order.” He took her hand and leaned in conspiratorially with a nod toward Bryant. “If this guy gives you too much trouble, just let me know,” he whispered.

“Forgive my brother,” Grayson said dryly as Gavin reluctantly let go of Robin’s hand. “Grayson Stephens, so nice to meet you.” He gave her hand a healthy shake, and Robin nearly missed the questioning look Grayson shot to Bryant. He gave a curt nod in response, and Grayson dropped Robin’s hand.

“So you’re the historian from the Meadows Museum at SMU?”

Ah, discussing work. Robin was in her comfort zone for the first time since she had arrived at the party. “Yes, I’m the one digging through the archives all day. It’s a little bit lonely, but I wouldn’t trade it for anything.”

“If you ever get too lonely,” Gavin volunteered, “our buddy Sherri is also at SMU, and I bet she’d love to get you to the—”

“To the Boom Boom Room. For drinks.” Bryant leveled a heavy-handed stare at the twins. Robin didn’t understand what was going on, but she had come to expect the few interactions she’d had with the Male Order crowd.

“Sure, drinks.” The more serious Grayson let out a bemused snort.

Bryant leaned over and whispered in Robin’s ear. “They’re talking about something called a ‘Wicked Whimsy’ party. It’s quite the sensation amongst Male Order ladies these—”

Suddenly, the crystal chandelier hovering above the room dimmed, and the guests’ chatter softened to whispers.

“Okay, guys, the real stuff is about to start,” Bryant said, giving Gavin a friendly shove.

“It’s nice to meet you,” Robin whispered, mimicking the behavior of the other guests. “I’m sure I’ll see you around.”

“Looking forward to it,” Gavin said as Grayson tugged him in the opposite direction.

“They’re a handful.” Bryant laughed as he hooked her arm into the crook of his and led her in the direction of the card tables. “Forgive Al,” he said. “He has to make a dramatic entrance. It’s in his nature.”

Robin started to ask Bryant what he meant, but the sound of the heavy doors at the opposite end of the room creaking open stopped her. A smaller chandelier over the door illuminated, and Alexander stepped into the pool of light.

He made an impressive figure illuminated against the dull golden glow of the card room. The tall oak double doors through which he made his entrance framed his formidable height. A closely tailored charcoal gray suit flattered his lithe figure, emphasizing the athleticism in the way he walked. The light played over his sharp features, making his high cheekbones and strong jaw more pronounced. Standing there, he dripped with the elegance and sophistication one would expect from a legendary European playboy.

“*Mesdames et messieurs*,” he announced in a perfect French accent. “*Bienvenue à ma petite soirée. Joueurs de carte, bonne chance!*” Wait a minute, Robin thought. *Joueurs de carte*? Her French was far from perfect, but she began to think it was more than a coincidence that this evening was held in this room devoted to the art of gambling.

“For those of you who neglected to pick up French, first, shame on you,” Alexander said with a smug look to his guests. “And second, welcome to my humble *soirée*, and good luck at the poker table. You’ll need it.”

Robin’s suspicions were confirmed. All of this secrecy wasn’t about keeping out Male Order’s riff raff. It was about covering up an elaborate poker game! All Robin could hope for was that it was for some charitable cause and not to further the wealth of the billionaires surrounding her.

Alexander clapped his hands, and the room suddenly glowed brighter than it had before, but the din of chatter didn’t escalate this time. Instead, the guests spoke in hushed tones as five men bravely strode toward the largest table in the center of the room.

“Sorry for not telling you first, beautiful,” Bryant said, wrapping an arm around Robin’s shoulders. “But after your reaction to Al, I figured you never would have come if you knew this was his swanky poker game.” The guy had a point there.

“Still! Poker in Male Order seems a little excessive, doesn’t it? Doesn’t everyone have enough money? Why would they want to risk it in an effort to get more?”

“Honey, when you’re rich like Alexander, gambling isn’t about money.” Bryant’s tone became serious. “Al started playing in high school, and when he moved to France, only a hop, skip, and jump away from Monaco, it got worse. It’s all about the adrenaline rush for him.” Bryant spoke casually again. “That, and he’s damn good at it. He loves taking other people’s money.”

For a moment, Robin felt a creeping sympathy for Alexander. His parents were all gone, and from what she had seen in the family archives, his fathers and grandfathers had pushed him hard toward a career in business. It couldn't be easy to live up to the Abrams name.

Her sympathy faded, though, as Bryant pulled her closer toward the table.

"One hundred buy-in," she heard Alexander announce at his table. Well, at least the game was relatively low-stakes. Maybe it was just about the thrill.

"My accountant gave yours the numbers earlier today," said one man settling in a seat across from Alexander. "You should already have the hundred thousand."

Wait just a minute, Robin thought. One hundred *thousand*? Just to buy in? She suddenly feared what she would see tonight. That was more than she had earned in her entire life! Just for one night of poker!

Bryant must have sensed her outrage as he ran a hand over her tensed shoulder blades. "I know, it doesn't make sense to us." He shrugged. "After a few years of this, hearing people toss around a couple of hundred grand doesn't even ruffle your feathers." Robin arched a single eyebrow at his claim. "I swear!" They shared a laugh at the absurdity of the statement.

"Bryant!" Alexander commanded in an imperious tone, interrupting their moment. "Get your ass to the table. I'd like to take your money tonight."

Bryant surprised Robin by pulling her along with him as he crossed toward the table.

"Not tonight, man," he said as they approached Alexander. "I'm introducing our guest around to your little crowd." He gestured toward Robin as he spoke.

Alexander's gaze came to rest on where Robin stood partially hidden by Bryant. "Oh. You came." He didn't sound very excited about her presence there. Even though Robin had already determined

her utter distaste for the man, she tried to extend some professional courtesy.

“Thanks for inviting me, Alexander.” He said nothing in return, and Robin nervously continued. “You know, I really love this room. I mean, Charles Garnier and the Belle Epoque style have always been—”

Alexander cut her off with a raised hand. “Really, Ms. Lawrence?” He sounded beyond exasperated. “I don’t have the patience for your academic bullshit tonight.” He pushed around Bryant to stand closer to Robin. “And I certainly don’t have any desire to chitchat about my decorating decisions.” He gave her a superior grin. “Unless, of course, you want to buy in.”

Robin cowered underneath his height. God, why did he have to be so handsome? Even when anger and annoyance tainted his features, he was more gorgeous than any of the men that modeled the designer suits he wore. She cursed her body’s reaction as he extended himself to his full height and looked down his nose at her.

“I didn’t think so.”

He started to return to his seat, but Bryant grabbed him by the shoulder.

“Al, really. Is that how you treat a lady?” A hard look flashed through his eyes.

Alexander looked again in Robin’s direction and sneered. “I guess so, *Bry*.” He directed his angry glare back at Bryant. “This is my fucking party, and I’ll treat my guests as I see fit.”

“Why do you have to be like—”

“Enough!” Alexander exclaimed as he lowered himself to the table.

The outburst pushed Robin over the edge. She could no longer stand to be in this room with all of these people. Did they all share Alexander’s opinion of her? And if so, what was she doing hanging around here? Not bothering to glance back at Bryant or Alexander,

she made a beeline for the nearest exit, the doors through which Alexander had first emerged.

She just needed out. And she needed out *now*.

Chapter 4

“Robin!” Bryant hurried out the double doors, not caring about the scene his disappearance made back in the card room. Shit. He had really hoped getting Alexander to invite Robin to his game would show Robin that Male Order wasn’t such a bad place. Instead, Al had decided to play the role of the pretentious, entitled ass tonight, and Robin had spooked at his behavior.

Bryant understood where Robin was coming from. When he and Alexander became best friends when they were fourteen, trips to Male Order scared the living shit out of him. He had adjusted quickly, though, and befriended many of the town’s other wealthy residents. Yes, a good chunk of the population was wealthy beyond anyone’s wildest dreams, but they were the friendliest bunch of billionaires this side of the Mississippi. Even his big sister Gillian had come to think of Male Order and the Abrams household as home.

But Robin, poor Robin, was all alone out here. He couldn’t imagine Melvin Blackmon being very good company, and living alone in downtown Male Order didn’t seem too great, either. He wanted to change how Robin saw Male Order, and him.

From the moment he saw her digging through her bag outside the grand entrance to the Abrams mansion, something about her enraptured him. Of course, her tight body and petite frame that was half legs didn’t hurt, but another quality captured his interest and his arousal. She had no poker face. Delight and anguish both revealed themselves completely in her features. That sincerity meant that she couldn’t be faking the smile she beamed when she saw him. Her entire face lit up when she saw him. It was the most endearing thing

he had ever seen a woman do. And seeing a smile tugging at the corner of her lips always made him think of her lips tugging at something else, too.

He turned down the hallway off the card room and ran down the corridor, shouting Robin's name as he went. He felt a breeze against his face, and he rushed to the open French doors at the end of the adjoining corridor. He went out the doors, crossed the terrace, and quickly descended the steps out onto the grounds of the estate. He crossed the small lawn between the mansion and the stables.

Panting slightly when he reached the stable entrance, he peered through the door, and the glow of the barn's security light illuminated the most enchanting scene unfolding before him. Robin stood in front of Sylvia's stable with the horse's silver muzzle pressed against her cheek. She was quite a sight, standing in her tight, green cocktail dress, matching stilettos dangling from one hand. Her height meant that she had to reach to pet Sylvia's mane, and that reaching movement pulled her dress up just enough for Bryant to begin to see the bottom curve of her round ass. Even after running, that sight started to harden his cock.

He stood observing Robin for a moment more. She turned her head toward him, and he could see tears glistening at the corners of her eyes. That motivated him to action, and he entered the stables and wrapped his arms around Robin. She tensed at first but relaxed when she looked up into Bryant's gaze. Her hands went to her eyes and began wiping away the accumulating tears.

"Sorry, I'm fine, I swear." She sniffled and turned her face away.

Bryant tightened one arm around her waist and put one hand under her chin to lift it to his face. "There's nothing to be sorry about."

"I'm supposed to be this sophisticated professional, and look at me." She chuckled at her self-deprecation. "I'm running away from parties when some boy is mean to me. It's not supposed to be like this."

Robin leaned her face against Bryant's shoulder, and he cradled the back of her head. Her warm tears wet the front of his shirt, but he didn't care. The fact that this woman could turn to him for comfort wiped any worry about his appearance from his mind. She leaned back from him a bit, and Bryant seized the opportunity.

He kept his hand wrapped around her neck and entwined his fingers in her hair. "It's supposed to be exactly like this, honey." He lowered his face to hers and captured her lips in a kiss. He started slowly, gently caressing her lips with his, then heightened the passion in the kiss. He licked along her bottom lip, and she opened her mouth to give him access to the wet, hot abyss. God, kissing her was unlike anything he had ever experienced. White-hot passion coursed between them but with a tenderness Bryant had never known. He wanted both to protect this delicate creature and to fuck her brains out.

He broke the kiss, and Robin stood within his embrace, her lips slightly parted and her eyes still partially closed. She opened them, and the dark pools of warmth sucked Bryant in. "Okay," she said breathily. "Maybe it is supposed to be like this."

Bryant wound his fingers through her hair tighter and once more brought her face to his. He kissed her with earnest passion this time, not masking his desire at all. He swept her hair away from her neck and planted several soft, wet kisses down her neck, paying special attention to the spot where her neck met her shoulder. She shivered against him when he kissed her there, sending waves of desire straight to the bulge in his tightening jeans. Damn it, if he didn't stop this now, he'd take her right there in the barn.

Sylvia whinnied from behind Robin, and Bryant reluctantly pulled himself away from Robin's mouth. "Sylvia has a point there," he said, his lips still brushing against hers. "If we're gone too long, people will start to wonder." He released Robin and took a few deep breaths to cool his arousal.

He started toward the exit and held out a hand to Robin. She took it and pressed her body against his. "I don't wanna go back," she said

then landed a kiss on his shoulder. "But you're right." A wicked grin spread across her face. "I can't afford to get a reputation this soon after getting into town."

"Oh, honey, you've already got a reputation." Bryant laughed as they crossed the lawn back toward the mansion.

"And just what is that supposed to mean?" She was even adorable when she pouted.

"Have you seen the way every man in this town looks at you? Grayson and Gavin begged me to introduce them. They were practically salivating over you at the bar."

A blush spread across Robin's face and down to her neck. "You can't mean that."

"Did you really expect to come here wearing that tight little dress and not get noticed?"

The blush intensified.

"Well, you know, there are so many other women drooling all over the other men in this town." She looked up at Bryant with heavy-lidded eyes. "I figured no one would pay any attention to me."

"I doubt anyone could *not* pay attention to you." They had ascended the stairs and now stood on the terrace. Bryant pulled Robin in front of him and placed one more kiss on her soft, pink lips. "Now let's get inside, gorgeous. I wanna show you off." He took her hand again and walked back into the mansion in a much better mood than when he left it.

* * * *

Robin knew she must have glowed as she reentered the room on Bryant's arm. Nothing could ruin this moment. She had come to this town a total outsider, and now the sweetest, most ruggedly handsome cowboy she had ever laid eyes on was proud to escort her. She had done all right since her arrival in Male Order.

Bryant steered her to a corner of the room where he draped an arm around her waist, his hand occasionally grazing across her ass. He introduced her quietly to other members of the founding families of Male Order. She greeted each of them warmly and found them more than willing to let her rummage through some of their old family papers. Her acquaintance with Bryant seemed to convince them to take her seriously and to treat her with respect. She wondered why they were all so trusting of Bryant, then her stomach clenched as she remembered Bryant's revelation from earlier in the evening. He wasn't just Alexander's business partner. He was Alexander's *best friend*. Their scene in the stables had erased that unhappy memory from her mind. Now it came back in full force, and she looked questioningly up at Bryant. He was so normal. How could he ever learn to stand Alexander, let alone live with him?

As if sensing her unease, Bryant's arm squeezed around her waist, and he leaned down to place a kiss on her neck. Perhaps Robin could learn to forgive Bryant that one fault. It's not like she was planning to marry this man. Heck, if he was bosom buddies with Alexander, there was a chance he shared his attitude toward women. This would just be an affair, nothing else. Her heart sank at that thought, but she reminded herself that she was a professional. She didn't have time for romance, anyway.

She snuggled into his protective embrace, determined to enjoy this moment no matter if it led to more or not. She turned her head and rested her face against the smooth, hard muscles of his shoulder. Bryant moved to kiss, and she turned up her face in anticipation of the warmth of his lips.

"Son of a *bitch*!" Alexander exclaimed. Along with the other guests, Robin and Bryant's attention turned to the brightly illuminated card table. Alexander leaned over the card table, his height allowing him to put his face directly in front of his opponent's. The guests' hush made Alexander's venomous whisper echo in the silence. "Go back to Dallas where you came from. You ungrateful prick." With

that, he stormed away from the card tables and back through the double doors.

The room's occupants were silent for a moment then erupted in fervent gossip over the scene they had just witnessed. Robin turned to Bryant, hoping for some sort of explanation for his best friend's outburst. In her opinion, very few things could explain away a temper tantrum such as that. Just as she opened her mouth to inquire about Alexander's abhorrent and immature behavior, Bryant gave her a quick kiss on the cheek and released her from his grip.

"Just a second, I gotta see what's up." Bryant gave her a quick look over his shoulder as he ran after Alexander.

Robin stood dumbfounded, watching as the other guests milled about. Some still talked of Alexander's fit, but most of the guests had moved on to other topics. Their conversations included European sports cars, private jets, private fashion shows, importing exotic animals as pets, and the rates for keeping various celebrity chefs on retainer. Robin's head began to spin in an attempt to process everything she was hearing.

The lifestyle in Male Order definitely required an adjustment period. Robin thought to her own upbringing in Waxahachie, Texas, a small town just south of Dallas. Her parents were the picture of the happy middle-class family. Her father worked hard and had high expectations for his daughter, but he had supported her in any effort. Her mother, on the other hand, was a slightly wacky creative type. She worked, though, to create a loving, warm household for Robin. But nothing her parents could have done could have prepared her for this. This was madness.

Besides the staggeringly high incomes of its residents, Male Order boasted another odd quality. There was a distinct surplus of men in the town. Robin knew of the town's origins through her research. It had started with ten men, five sets of brothers—the Abramses, Bartletts, Caldwells, Ellises, and Kingstons—accidentally furnished with only five mail-order brides. As a result, the five founding sets of

brothers each took one wife and lived in ménage relationships. When Robin had discovered this fact, it had excited her. The idea of living with *two* men there to fill her every need had made Robin's panties wet, even in the highly inappropriate setting of the SMU library.

Was that still going on today? With all these men and so few women, Robin had to wonder. As she waited for Bryant to return, she leaned against the wall and carefully observed the party's guests. Many were clearly singles, flirting ostensibly with any human of the opposite sex. Robin finally singled out a cluster of men and women not engaged in the early stages of the human mating ritual, and her suspicions were confirmed. The group nearest her comprised of two men and one woman, with each man dangling an arm around her. As they talked with their friends, the woman would alternately lean her head on each man's shoulder, and both men's hands would occasionally graze across the round curve of her ass.

So it was true. Male Order was home to at least a few ménage relationships. That certainly made sense, given the town's open attitude toward sex and public displays of affection. Despite being some of the wealthiest and most influential members of society, these people were a little bit weird, too.

A tall, balding man approached Robin. He didn't have the odious presence of Melvin Blackmon, but he didn't appear to fit in with the debonair billionaire crowd, either. She spotted his white gloves, and his presence there clicked. Of course. He was another butler. The Abrams family *would* have two butlers. Hell, they probably needed a dozen. She assumed he was there to offer her a drink or extend some other nicety to her and the other guests.

"Ms. Lawrence?" He knew her name. Impressive.

"Yes?"

"Mr. Clare has requested your presence in the private chambers upstairs," he said, turning and indicating Robin to follow.

She proceeded in his wake, confused as to what exactly was happening. They exited through a small door that led to a private

staircase. As they climbed, the two of them chatted amicably about the history of the house. Nicholas, as Robin discovered this butler was called, had a multitude of anecdotes about the family's relationship with the mansion, and Robin was eager to speak with him more.

They reached a long, narrow sitting room with deep green carpeting and panels and oak detailing. The room was decorated with full-length portraits of people Robin could only assume were the Abrams forefathers. Nicholas unfortunately took his leave and left Robin to wander the room alone. She paced along the length of the room, admiring the portraits of Alexander's handsome Russian and French ancestors. He certainly came by his good looks naturally.

Alexander. There he was in her head again. No matter how she felt about him, he never left her thoughts. Even when she was with Bryant, Alexander was always in the back of her mind, and it infuriated her.

Just then, a wooden door at one end of the narrow room creaked open. Bryant emerged through it and shut the door carefully behind him. He quickly crossed to Robin and grabbed her by her upper arms. He then leaned over and claimed her lips in a kiss, romantic yet highly sensual. Despite the suddenness of the action, Robin felt her body responding, liquid heat beginning to pool between her legs. The champagne she'd imbibed downstairs lowered her inhibitions, and Robin spread her legs in an invitation for Bryant. He nudged a thigh between her legs, and she wrapped one leg around his thigh. She ground against him, her body thankful for the warmth and friction, but he lifted his head and broke their embrace. He took a step back from her, but kept his grip on one of her upper arms.

"I just had to do that again before the party ended," he said, his face flushed with the sudden sexual contact.

Robin blushed in response and diverted her eyes from his intense blue stare.

"What's going on? Why did Alexander do that?"

“Shh,” he said, placing a hand over her mouth and moving her toward the other end of the room. “Al is really upset, honey, and he’ll blow up at any noise right now.” He breathed an exasperated sigh.

“What right does he have to push you around like this? He should be upset after what he did to all of his guests,” Robin said.

Bryant sat down on a wooden bench in front of a particularly striking portrait of Alexander Dimitri Abrams I and gestured for Robin to join him. When she did, he leaned forward and cradled his head between his hands.

“It’s two years today,” he muttered.

“Two years from what?” Robin asked, genuinely concerned now that she saw how this affected Bryant.

“His fathers’ deaths,” he said, leaning back and putting an arm around Robin. “They were killed by a drunk driver on Interstate 35.”

“Oh, god. I didn’t realize that was today. I’m sorry.” Guilt washed over Robin at her earlier outrage.

“It’s hard for Alexander,” Bryant said. “He wasn’t close to either of his fathers. They wanted him to go into the aviation business like they did. But he was never cut out for that. His talents were always in interacting with other people.” Robin let out a snort at that comment. “Really, when he puts his mind to it, he’s as charming as they come.”

“He certainly hasn’t charmed me,” she pointed out.

“It’s been a rough couple of days for him,” Bryant replied. “You haven’t seen him at his best. I swear, he’s a thoroughly decent guy. He’s just a little spoiled. But wouldn’t you be if you grew up here?” He gestured around the room.

Robin followed Bryant’s lead, taking in the rich carpet and impeccable furnishings. When she wasn’t looking, Bryant wrapped his other arm around her and pushed her down so that she landed on a hard, wooden bench. The arousal she had felt at their earlier kiss returned with full force. He claimed her mouth in a passionate kiss, teeth and tongue immediately pressing against her lips. She allowed him to explore the depths of her mouth, and one leg involuntarily

lifted to hook around Bryant and pull him closer. The action caused the bottom of her cocktail dress to ride up and reveal her matching lime green lace thong. The sensation of the wood against her ass nearly convinced Robin to end their encounter, but Bryant's hand squeezed her breast, banishing all other thoughts from her mind.

He moved his mouth to her neck, using his tongue and teeth to send Robin's body into convulsions. He moved his mouth around the base of her throat and licked there as his hand left her breast in an expedition downward on her body.

"Bryant," she gasped, and the forcefulness of his erotic attack pushed Robin's head to dangle off the edge of the bench.

A growl escaped from the mouth currently sending Robin over the edge, and she felt Bryant pushing the fabric over her dress over her hips. Even here, where any member of the Abrams household could spy them at any second, Robin couldn't help but emit a small moan of pleasure when Bryant hooked his finger underneath the fabric of her thong and pulled it to the side. He slid one finger forward to part Robin's now completely soaked outer lips. Bryant added another finger and lifted his head to look at Robin. The heat in her stare must have convinced him of her complete arousal.

Bryant plunged both fingers into Robin's tight opening and used his thumb to massage against Robin's clit. The suddenness and eroticism of the action, combined with the heat of the whole evening, had Robin thrusting against Bryant's hand. He matched her thrusts, and the feel of his substantial erection against her thigh escalated Robin's pleasure. Damn, this cowboy knew how to use his hands.

He thrust his fingers harder into Robin and increased the pressure on her clit. She was so close to the edge and was certain her hot juices were already covering the wooden bench below her. She didn't care, though. She wanted the release she knew only Bryant could give her now. A frustrated whimper escaped from her throat as she looked into Bryant's determined, heated stare. He leaned forward and bit her ear.

“Are you gonna come for me?” he whispered against her neck, and Robin was only able to moan in response. Bryant moved his mouth to cover hers and angled his hand upward, pushing directly against her G-spot.

That action was all it took. Robin went sailing, feeling her tight pussy muscles contracting against Bryant’s fingers as she shook through her release. It seemed to last forever, and she kept pushing against Bryant, wanting more and more from him. God, what was this? Robin had never felt this way before.

Finally, the heavenly orgasm released her, and she lay sated on the bench. Bryant took her in his muscular arms and pulled her up to sit on his lap. Robin leaned her head against his shoulder as she scooted her thong and dress back to their proper position.

“That was... That was... yeah,” she whispered, still unable to find coherent language. Bryant stood, still holding Robin against him. He kissed her forehead and lowered her to the ground, allowing her time to balance on her very high heels before he released her.

“Okay, honey, I have to go check on Al. But I’ll see you again soon, all right?”

She nodded as she leaned against his chest, still reeling from the dizzying heights of pleasure she had just reached. “Soon?”

“Yes, soon,” he promised. He took out a phone from his pocket and tapped on the screen. “Nicholas’ll get you back to your car, honey.”

Robin suddenly felt awkward, the heavy scent of her arousal still hanging in the air of this staid corridor. She stood and tried to smooth her disheveled dress.

“Robin?”

She turned to see Bryant standing with his hand against the doorknob leading to where Alexander was apparently fuming. “Yes?”

“This is the best damn card game Al ever hosted.” Bryant smiled and slipped back through the door.

Chapter 5

Robin leaned against the doorframe of the apartment attached to the stables. She peered through the open door at Bryant's apartment. He had furnished it sparsely but with clean, modern furniture. It held an air of manly sophistication. Robin's eyes settled on the low oak bed with slate gray sheets. She wondered what it would feel like to lie there, Bryant on top of her, making her writhe like she did under his lips.

An arm wrapped slowly around her waist, diverting Robin's thoughts. A hand brushed the hair on the back of her neck to the side, and she shuddered at the touch. Lips followed the hand, and Robin couldn't help but lean backward into the warm, muscular body waiting for her.

"Hey, good lookin'." Bryant reached to turn Robin around, and she stood on tiptoes to kiss Bryant's waiting lips. His lips were soft as he slowly and methodically kissed Robin. He swiped his tongue across her bottom lip, and she opened her mouth. Bryant continued the maddeningly languid pace as he reached up and cradled Robin's face between his hands to deepen the kiss. She wrapped her hands around his neck and pressed her body against him. Robin felt so comfortable with Bryant and free to let her romantic, and sexual, desires run wild.

Bryant lifted his head just enough to break the kiss.

"I will never get tired of kissing you."

Robin's heart fluttered at his words. She couldn't help but giggle like a schoolgirl caught in the rapture of her first crush.

"Kissing you's not too bad, either."

She proved her enjoyment by hooking an arm around his neck and pulling his face back against hers and nearly knocking the black Stetson off his head.

“Whoa, now, girl.” Bryant’s smile was nearly as wide as hers. “Save some of it for the picnic.”

Robin leaned her head against Bryant’s chest, inhaling his scent of leather and musk. Standing cocooned within the arms of this handsome, kind man thrilled every fiber of her being. She didn’t want to let go, but she knew they would have to leave eventually. Suddenly Robin didn’t care about seeing the art deco gardens Max Abrams had designed for his family. She would rather stay cradled against Bryant, perhaps in that bed she had admired earlier.

With a kiss on her forehead, he left Robin to lock his apartment, and her body cried out at the absence of his warmth. When he returned, he carried a large, old-style picnic basket in one hand and a classic red and white checkered blanket cradled underneath his elbow. He reached his free arm around Robin, held her close to him, and walked her toward the stables’ exit.

“We’re not taking Sylvia?” Robin was slightly disappointed.

“Nah, then you have to sit behind me the whole time.” He pulled her closer against him and placed a light kiss on her lips. “And I can’t look at your gorgeous face.”

Robin blushed at the remark.

“Okay, I can live with that.”

* * * *

“Here okay, darlin’?” Bryant chuckled as Robin’s eyes widened at the sight of the flat, art deco bridge over the serpentine stream. She turned her head side to side with her mouth dangling open as she took in the mature live oaks and lush green moss along the banks of the stream. She was especially beautiful when she was enraptured under the spell of some piece of art or some building. Her passion was

plastered all over her face. Now that she had looked at him like that, Bryant was addicted. Alexander or not, he would not let this one get away.

He watched her wander in awe as he set down the picnic basket and unfolded the blanket, sat down, and placed his hat to the side. He couldn't wait to see the look on Robin's face when she saw the bounty of food he had picked out for her. He bet she had never seen a picnic quite like those prepared in the Abrams kitchen. He remembered his first meal at the Abrams estate. He had been hesitant about coming to the Abrams mansion. He was fourteen, and he and Alexander had just settled their schoolboy differences, and Bryant still had doubts about whether or not the invitation was a ploy to poison him. When he sat down with Alexander and his parents, what looked like an entire cow and a full harvest of vegetables greeted him. Used to the fast food and casseroles served most often in the Clare household, he had eaten greedily and decided Alexander couldn't be too bad.

He shook his head to get away from the memory. If Alexander had no intention of letting down his guard for any woman, so be it. Maybe he would be better off in a relationship without Al, for once.

As he thought, he watched Robin wander about the garden. She wore a white cotton gauze dress that cinched right underneath her breasts, squeezing them together and giving Bryant a better view of her cleavage. The dress stopped about halfway down Robin's thigh. As she walked, the hot Texas breeze caused her dress to billow temptingly near the V at the top of her legs. Bryant wanted to bury his face there and send Robin to heights of pleasure she had never imagined.

Now, though, he mostly wanted to hold her and feed her the sweetest strawberries and the smoothest champagne money could buy.

"There's a man waiting here with food for you," he called in her direction. "That has to be more interesting than a bridge."

Robin turned just her head to look back on him. She looked perfect just then, a vision in white, with a flawless ass and a flawless mouth just waiting for him. He winked at her, indicating the jab to her passion for architecture was just a tease, and she came bounding in his direction.

She sat beside him and leaned her head against his shoulder.

“What delicious things have you conjured up for me?” God, that smile would light up any man’s world.

Bryant reached one hand underneath her ass and easily placed her on his lap. He placed a hand on her shoulder and ran it down the length of her arm to cover her hand with his. He moved her hand to the basket and nibbled at her ear.

“Why don’t you find out for yourself?” He had meant to sound playful, but the sensation of Robin perched on his lap had his arousal growing.

She wiggled in his lap, accidentally providing stimulation to Bryant’s ever-hardening cock, and opened up the picnic basket in delight. She let out a series of squeals as she examined the basket’s contents. Bryant had packed a wedge of the French brie Alexander kept around the house since his return from Europe, a loaf of fresh-baked sourdough still warm from the oven, a bottle of Krug Grand Cuvee champagne, and the *pièce de résistance*, fresh strawberries the size of Granny Smith apples, imported from Australia by Male Order’s own Ellis brothers as a complement to the fruit from their own strawberry farm. While Bryant may not have acquired the same refined palate as Alexander, he could certainly use the items in his kitchen to impress the sensual nymph in his lap.

After opening and pouring the champagne with a bravado that elicited a giggle from Robin, he offered a glass to Robin and proposed a toast. “To the most magical woman I’ve ever met.” Robin glanced at Bryant through lowered eyelashes.

“I’ll drink to that.”

They clinked their glasses and sipped at the expensive champagne. Even though Bryant had prepared a feast for himself and the woman he was courting, he could hardly concentrate on food. Every time Robin's tight ass brushed against his cock, Bryant's ability to control himself lessened. He was rock hard by now and wanted nothing more than to push into the liquefied heat he could feel emanating from between Robin's soft thighs.

He kept a tight rein on his urges, though, and found himself distracted by the bottomless pit of cheeriness that was his companion. As they ate, she leaned back against his chest, and they shared things about their lives. Robin came from a loving middle-class family and was raised in Waxahachie, a small town on the outskirts of Dallas. She talked frankly about her love of animals, accounting for her disappointment at Sylvia's absence at their picnic, and the foster dogs and cats her mother took in on a regular basis to help out overcrowded shelters. Her voice took on such a warmth when she discussed her family and her background. Bryant felt himself falling for her, not just as a beautiful woman, but as an intelligent and kind companion.

After they finished the brie and bread, Robin pulled out one of the enormous strawberries. "I've never seen anything like this!" Her eyes widened as she compared the size of the strawberry to the size of her delicate fist. "How on earth do these happen?"

She rolled off Bryant's lap and onto her back. She held the strawberry above her face, appearing to study its massive size, before lowering it to her lips. Watching her small pink mouth open and her lips suckle the fruit caused Bryant's cock to stir to life. He wanted nothing more than to have those lips around him. Or he could suckle another part of her just like that.

When Robin had finished the strawberry, she began to sit up, and Bryant put one hand on her shoulder to pin her to the ground. He moved on top of her, his cock relieved at the gentle flesh it now ground against. She gasped when he nipped at the place where her neck met her shoulder.

“Watching you wrap that perfect mouth around the strawberry,” he whispered against her neck, then placed a gentle kiss on her mouth, “well, that was damn beautiful, darlin’.” He placed a hand on her waist and, when she didn’t object, moved it down to her hips. “You’re turnin’ me on.”

Bryant pressed his hips against Robin, and she gasped. The flush that consumed her chest when she got excited only heightened Bryant’s arousal. He lowered his head to her mouth to taste the sweet recesses that he longed to explore fully. Whereas their earlier kisses had started gentle and sweet, this kiss smoldered from the start. Bryant pressed his tongue insistently against Robin’s mouth, and with a bite at his bottom lip, she gave him access. The heat of her mouth made him long to touch another heat, to taste it. He couldn’t get himself off rubbing against her hips. She deserved so much more than that. Without warning Robin, he sat up and hovered over the picnic basket.

He heard her whimper when he left and smiled to himself. She had no idea how much pleasure he was about to give her.

* * * *

Bryant held a large, deep red Australian strawberry to Robin’s lips, outlining them with the tip of the strawberry. She leaned forward to bite the strawberry, but Bryant pulled it away. “Not yet, honey.”

He continued his agonizingly slow outline of her lips, then moved the strawberry downward along her neck. He traced along her collarbone, then returned to the base of her neck. He moved his body to hover over her completely and dragged the strawberry down to her cleavage and placed it there, his hands lingering for a long moment. He placed his hands on either side of Robin’s shoulders and lowered his mouth to hers. She parted her lips, desperate for some sort of heat to offset the tension building between her legs. Bryant brushed his lips gently against hers, pulling back and laughing softly when she

moved her head up to deepen the kiss. After what seemed like an eternity to Robin, he placed his mouth fully upon hers and opened her mouth wider with his tongue. The wet heat of the kiss consumed her entirely. She tangled one hand in Bryant's hair as she pulled herself up against him. He took her bottom lip between his teeth and pulled at it at the same time he thrust his hips against Robin's. The feeling of his erection pressing against her through her white gauze dress drove her even closer to the edge.

She had been so consumed with the kiss she failed to notice that Bryant had removed the strawberry from her cleavage. He withdrew his mouth from hers and placed the strawberry against her lips. "Bite down on this, but don't eat it," he whispered against her ear. "Just keep it in your mouth, just in between your teeth, and don't bite down. There will be plenty of time for feasting later."

Robin did as Bryant commanded. She moaned against the strawberry as his tongue followed where he had traced the strawberry, first outlining her lips, then her collarbone, and finally sweeping down to fuck her cleavage with his tongue a couple of times. One hand reached to the hem of her dress and began lifting it toward her stomach. She whimpered against the strawberry and lifted her hand to remove it, but Bryant wrapped his fingers around her wrist.

"Don't worry, no one will find us here. With that strawberry gagging you, your screams can't give us away." Robin's pussy clenched at Bryant's words, and her hips bucked involuntarily. He smirked at her reaction and leaned down to kiss her chest before moving slowly downward. He entwined his fingers in the light gauze of her hemline, and the back of his hand brushed against Robin's inner thighs, causing her excitement to mount. He moved his hand in between her thighs and slowly dragged his fingers upward. When his index and middle fingers finally pushed against her panties, Robin gasped and begged with her hips for him to push harder.

Bryant slowly pulled his gaze upward to meet Robin's. She watched the movement of his long eyelashes as his eyes raked over

her body until his warm blue gaze finally locked with hers. “You’re so fucking wet.” He pushed her panties aside with one finger and used the other to slowly stroke her velvety folds. “I could smell you that day when we met, after we rode Sylvia, how wet you were for me.” He leaned down and positioned his face right behind his fingers. “You smell even better up close.”

Robin writhed in pleasure at the feeling of Bryant’s warm breath against her swollen clit. God, Bryant was actually going to drive her mad. Robin gave herself over to the sensations quickly enveloping her, all capacity for rational thought flying out the window.

Bryant responded to her body’s pleas by increasing the pressure of his strokes against the outer folds of her cunt. He pressed his index finger deeper into her and flicked her clit, eliciting a gasp that nearly had Robin swallowing the strawberry whole. Her hands took on a life of their own as they reached down to grasp Bryant’s hair and pulled his face closer to the source of the unbearable heat growing inside of her. Before she had any luck, Bryant withdrew his hand from her now-dripping pussy and used it to grab both her wrists. He lifted his head, and Robin saw something dark flash in his normally warm and kind eyes.

Bryant pulled himself up so that his face once more hovered above hers. He placed one knee in between her still-open legs and pushed it against the source of her heat and wetness. He started pressing his knee into her pussy and withdrawing it rhythmically, the pressure and the rough denim giving her the friction she so critically needed. As her moans increased, he quickened the pace of his knee rubbing against her clit and reached a hand down to cup one cheek of her ass.

Robin gasped at his sudden movement down her body. His face pushed between her thighs, and she felt his mouth against where her panties covered her mound. Bryant took the soaking fabric between his teeth and forcefully jerked her panties to her knees. The sensation

of the hot summer air against her pussy heightened her arousal and pushed her dangerously close to the edge.

Bryant licked up and down the entire seam of her cunt, and Robin opened her legs as wide as the panties around her knees would allow. She was soon rewarded for this action. Bryant held her nether lips back with two fingers and lapped eagerly at her hole, swallowing her juices. His tongue darted in and out of her hole, promising a more thorough fucking later. She pushed her hips up, wanting something, anything, inside of her. Bryant's tongue vanished from her pussy, and his other hand took its place. He placed one finger inside of her, and her pussy tightened, begging for more. He fucked her rhythmically with one finger, then added another. At the same time he pushed a second finger into her dripping cunt, he used his tongue to lave at her clit. He tilted his fingers upward and brushed against her G-spot, this time eliciting a scream around the compromised strawberry.

He continued his ministrations in that way, pushing Robin ever closer to her fulfillment. She continued bucking against him until, finally, he propelled his fingers directly against her G-spot and sucked at her clit. The suction against her nub and the pressure on that magical spot inside her pushed Robin completely over the edge, and she moaned as she rode the wave of orgasm.

When she at last arrived back on earth, Bryant was lying on the blanket beside her. He reached his hand, still wet with her juices, to the stem of the strawberry still sitting lightly in her mouth and withdrew what was left of the fruit. He bit down on it then sucked his finger into his mouth. "You taste better than wild strawberries, baby." He placed a gentle kiss on Robin's lips and pulled her spent body against his.

When she finally recovered from the waves of pleasure that had just crashed over her, she gazed up into Bryant's sparkling eyes. Warmth and friendliness usually gave his eyes their glint, but this time, arousal brewed in his ocean-colored stare. He rested a hand on the small of Robin's back and pulled her against his considerable

erection. Robin could feel her pussy start to wet again as she longed to free that bulge and feel his cock inside her.

“I need you.” The guttural sound of Bryant’s voice told Robin he felt the same way. She started to sit up and remove her panties that were still wrapped around her ankles, but Bryant wrapped both arms around her midsection and pulled her on top of him. Robin shuddered at the heat in his sudden action. He ground his hips upwards against her rapidly dampening slit. “I want to bury myself in you.” He pulled one of her hands to his mouth and wrapped his mouth around the index finger. He locked his gaze with Robin’s and withdrew her finger from his mouth slowly, running his tongue along its length and reminding Robin of the ecstasy she could feel at the mercy of that tongue.

His hands slid down her body, stopping in apparent appreciation at her breasts and again at her hips, until he grasped her panties in both hands. The anticipation caused her clit to swell at the thought of his ripping off her panties and taking her. Once more, Bryant shattered Robin’s expectations when he pulled her panties back to cover her pulsating mound. He rested his hand against her wetness for a moment and let out a sigh. “Wait,” he said, his chest rising and falling with deep breaths. “Let’s take this somewhere more private.”

Robin wrapped her hands around Bryant’s neck and her legs around his waist as he grabbed his hat and replaced it atop his head then swiftly rose to his feet. He placed her gently on the ground, and they quickly strode in the direction of Bryant’s residence at the stables, choosing to leave the picnic basket and its decadent contents behind. Apparently her pace was unsatisfactory, since Bryant gathered her into his arms again and shifted her so that she lay across his arms and cradled her to his chest. He moved faster than Robin thought anyone could with a woman clinging to them. Then again, she guessed anything was possible when their destination held such impossibly thrilling promise. As they approached the back entrance to the stables, Bryant placed Robin back on the ground, but before she

could regain her balance, he slammed her back against the stable wall and claimed her mouth in an aggressive kiss. His hands roved over her body, eliciting gasps when he massaged her breasts and slipped a hand between her thighs.

He grabbed her hand and pulled her toward the stable entrance. As they approached, it appeared Sylvia had escaped from her stall and was grazing at the hay left on the ground outside the entrance to Bryant's apartment. Robin saw an unfamiliar rage flash across Bryant's face, but it was quickly replaced by the heated stare of arousal.

"Fuck it," he murmured as he leaped from where he stood to the adjacent ladder. "I need you *now*." His tone was deadly serious as he ascended the ladder. Robin scrambled behind him, finding it difficult to hurry in her excited state. When she pulled herself into the next level, she saw that it was the hay loft and that Bryant had already busied himself spreading a Native American blanket across a few hay bales.

When she stood, Bryant crossed immediately to her and grabbed the hem of her dress. In one smooth motion, he pulled the dress from her and tossed it behind him, reducing it to a white gauzy pile. Once she was freed, Robin busied herself with ripping open the pearl snaps of his light, navy blue cotton shirt. She pushed it off him, and Bryant's hands immediately went to the clasps on the back of her lacy, quite revealing bra.

"You're not even stopping to admire the scenery," Robin protested teasingly against Bryant's neck. He pulled the bra off her and turned her toward the hay bales. He laid her down on the blanket and lowered his head to one breast, taking a nipple between his teeth. Gasping at the sudden, sharp sensation, Robin arched her back, forcing more of her breast into Bryant's waiting mouth.

"Not when the scenery is hiding something much more delicious." While his tongue laved at her breast, Bryant pushed one hand into her lacy underwear and ran his finger along the length of her dripping slit.

“Feels like you want something more delicious, too.” One finger pushed into Robin and pressed directly against her G-spot. She screamed as her nerve endings ignited at the welcome intrusion. Bryant forced her panties down her legs and tossed them to the rapidly growing pile of discarded clothing. He lifted his face from her breast, and Robin reached her hand to the back of Bryant’s neck and pulled him into a desperate, scorching kiss.

Bryant busied himself with undoing his jeans as he moved his mouth down Robin’s neck, laving at her skin and sending little shocks straight to her throbbing cunt. He pulled himself out of his jeans, and Robin glimpsed his long, thick cock for the first time. The head was a deep shade of purple and pulsating with his need. A droplet of pre-cum rolled down from the slit, pooling at his swollen ridge, and Robin’s inner muscles contracted at the flurry of desperation she felt. She reached out to wrap her hand around his cock, but Bryant pushed her backward onto the hay.

“Don’t you dare, little lady.” A smile curled on his lips. “I might just explode before I get a chance to fuck that sweet little cunt of yours.” Robin lifted her hips underneath him, desperate for something to push into her wet, swollen folds.

Bryant positioned himself at her entrance and pushed forward, allowing only the tip of his cock to penetrate Robin’s soaking entrance. With obvious effort, he stopped himself and looked down at Robin, blazing heat mixing with something sweeter in his stare. “Meeting you is the best thing that ever happened to me.” Robin’s heart pounded faster at his words, and she lifted her legs to wrap around him.

He took her movement as an invitation and pushed himself slowly, inch by thick inch, inside of her. Robin felt her pussy muscles clench around him. It had been so long since she had done this and never with such an impressive cock invading her. Once he was all the way in, Robin moaned her pleasure. Every part of her felt the heavenly fullness of Bryant’s cock fucking her. He pulled out and

pushed into her again, this time lifting his hips at the end of the stroke, causing his cock to graze against her G-spot and his pelvic bone to press against her engorged clit.

Robin shocked herself as she moaned louder than she thought possible. Other people and horses be damned, this cowboy was riding her so hard she had to scream.

“Fuck, Robin, you feel so goddamn good,” Bryant said, his words slurred with his arousal. He continued his rhythmic stroking, his cock touching her G-spot each time. Robin wrapped her hands around his neck, willing to do anything for more pressure, more filling.

Bryant fulfilled her silent wishes by leaning back and pulling Robin’s legs over his shoulders. With every stroke, he pushed his full length inside of her, driving her to heights of pleasure she had never felt with any man. Bryant’s cock was a gift from God. She was sure of it. Each stroke sent her higher and higher, the summit of her arousal now within reach. Bryant’s strokes became harder, more insistent, signaling that he was nearing the peak of his own excitement. Suddenly, Robin felt Bryant’s hand against the seam of her ass. He pushed her cheeks open and placed a finger against her puckered hole. Holy shit! No one had ever done this to her before.

The erotic pressure against that forbidden spot propelled Robin into the most intense orgasm she had ever felt. Cascades of pleasure washed over her as she arched her back and pushed harder against Bryant’s cock. She felt her muscles convulsing around his shaft, and the sensation sent even more electric shocks flying throughout her body.

Robin’s tight inner muscles squeezing must have sent Bryant over the edge, as well. His hot seed splashed inside of her as he groaned his completion, fucking her with hard strokes as her cunt milked him. He collapsed on top of her, his breathing heavy and his heartbeat racing.

They both lay there, Robin’s breaths and heartbeat matching Bryant’s. Other than the sound of their sated panting, the hayloft was

quiet. Robin ran a hand through Bryant's hair, noting with reverence the way the late afternoon sun shining through the slats in the roof played across his skin and hair. She took a deep breath, smelling the grain and the horses and, of course, Bryant's distinctive musk. She wanted to commit everything about this moment to memory—the sight of Bryant lying on her chest, the smell, his heavy weight, the faint taste of her own juices mixed with Bryant's delicious mouth. She placed a kiss on his hair and smiled. This was happiness.

* * * *

“Bryant Clare, you motherfucker. I know you're here!”

“Shit!” Bryant leaped to his feet and began gathering his scattered clothing. As he hopped on one foot then another putting on his jeans, he leaned over and kissed Robin where she lay prone on top of a stack of hay bales. “I gotta get down and see Al, darlin’.”

Robin pursed her lips into a pout at the rude interruption of their post-coital cuddling. Alexander Abrams, once more ruining all her fun. “Be quick.” She sighed and watched him button his shirt at the same time he moved to descend the ladder out of the hayloft.

“I will, baby, I promise.” He whispered those last words right before his head disappeared, and she heard his boots plop onto the dirt floor of the barn.

“Why you so uptight, Al?” Bryant sounded totally smooth, no hint of the husky voice he had just used with her. The voice that would haunt her fantasies tonight...

Robin heard a bit of a scuffle with muted profanities escaping in between soft thuds. Slightly worried, she pulled the blanket over her still heaving breasts and crawled to peer over the edge of the hayloft. She giggled at the sight her view afforded her. Bryant was standing with one hand leaning on the barn wall and the other extended outward. Alexander's head was pressed against Bryant's extended hand, and his feet ran in place as if trying to attack Bryant.

“What, huh? Oh, are you upset?” Bryant laughed as Alexander pulled his head back and halfheartedly landed a punch on Bryant’s stomach. Bryant gave Alexander’s shoulder a shove, and the two of them ended their jocular physical dispute. Robin always found male friendships confusing, but how anyone could play fight with Alexander and not try to kill him was beyond her.

“Fuck you, man.” Alexander joined Bryant in leaning against the barn wall. “Hey, will Constant Comment be ready for the show jumping World Cup qualifier at the end of the month? Her owners are breathing down my neck and playing the ‘we knew your fathers’ card.” Alexander crossed the aisle running down the center of the barn and approached a stall occupied by a tall, dark bay horse. He reached his hand up and ran it smoothly down her neck, his fingers tangling in her mane on the way down. “But we don’t mind you staying here, girl.” His voice was soft and sweet when he addressed the horse.

“I’m having trouble getting her over a few jumps cleanly, but someone who shows more than I do probably shouldn’t have a problem.” Bryant’s voice was matter of fact, the sophistication taking precedence over the Texan drawl. “I can find some training surcharges for them if they’re really bugging you.”

Alexander continued stroking the horse, his admiration for the animal plain on his face. “Nah, not unless they’re really necessary.” He leaned his face against the horse’s muzzle, letting her breath muss his soft curls.

Robin was shocked. Alexander seemed positively human. He was so tender in his handling of the horse and so easygoing in his interaction with Bryant. He even declined an offer to screw over someone! Why on earth couldn’t he use that same open, laid-back attitude with her? And why couldn’t he lean his face against hers and run his fingers softly through her hair like that? She shook her head to dispel that last thought. She had Bryant, more man than she could

have ever dreamt up on her own. She hardly needed to be fantasizing about his spoiled brat of a best friend.

“Whatever you say, man.” Bryant joined Alexander in his admiration of the horse, and the horse’s height dwarfed both of the tall men. “We can get her out of here before the Cotillion, that’s for sure.”

Bryant’s words stilled Alexander’s hand against the horse’s neck. “Are you thinking about...” Alexander closed his eyes and gulped in a breath of air. When he reopened them, the steely look he used with Robin had returned. “Are you taking Robin?”

Robin held her breath in anticipation of Bryant’s response.

“Al, you know how I feel about that.”

Fuck! Was Bryant expressing some sort of doubt about taking Robin to the Cotillion? Normally, Robin wouldn’t care about attending such an event, but the idea of Bryant in a tuxedo showing her off to all of Male Order as his woman excited her so much. She didn’t want her fantasy ruined so quickly.

“And you know how I feel.” Alexander’s voice held the same edge of distaste that it did in his disputes with Robin. “I can’t do it. Sure, she’s got that sexy, tight little body, but I can’t.”

Questions filled Robin’s brain. Why did it matter how Alexander felt? He wasn’t her keeper. And what can’t he do? And was he saying that she was sexy? The thought of him admiring her body should have disgusted her, but she felt her pussy heat at the thought.

“Why not, Al?” Bryant shot a quick glance toward the hayloft and lowered his voice. “We fucked our way through Europe together. Each ménage a trois was supposed to be the one that finally got you over your intimacy issues. It’s time for you to let someone in again.”

Alexander humphed in response.

Bryant lowered his voice to a whisper, and Robin strained to hear. “She’s the one.” He took a deep breath. “For both of us.”

Alexander’s voice and face betrayed a vulnerability that shocked her. “I don’t want you to do this without me, Bry. It kills me.” He

focused all of his attention on the horse. “But I don’t know if I’ll ever be ready, and I sincerely doubt that Robin is the one for *me*.” He steadied himself against the horse’s neck, and when he turned back to Bryant, the mischievous look he had when they were scuffling had returned to his face. “But you go ahead and hit that, man. I’m not stopping you.”

Bryant turned in the direction of the hayloft, and Robin scampered away from the edge. She heard him walking in the direction of the ladder.

“Just think about it.” His whisper was barely audible.

Robin spread the blanket over the hay bales and quickly tried to recreate the position she had been in when Bryant left. Soon the top half of his head peaked over the edge of the loft, and he pulled his massive body into the small space. He lowered his body on top of Robin’s and placed a soft, tender kiss on her lips, licking her bottom lip gently as he withdrew his mouth.

“Al needs me to take care of a horse that’s showing later this month. I gotta take her out again today.” He ran a hand over her nipples, and they pebbled at his touch. “I don’t wanna leave you, baby.” He moved down her body, took a nipple between his teeth, and tugged. Robin melted under the ministrations of his mouth and was unable to stifle a soft moan. “I’d rather make you do that all day long.”

“It’s okay.” Robin absentmindedly ran a hand through his hair. She inwardly thanked Bryant for leaving. She needed time to process what she had just heard. “I need to get back to the archive, too.”

He reluctantly lifted his head from her breast, placed a gentle kiss on her lips, and grabbed his Stetson from where it lay discarded on the loft floor. As he began his descent down the ladder, he glanced up at Robin. “You’re okay to get back to work?” She nodded her response. “Al’s a really good guy. Please tell me you’ll think about getting along with him.”

“I’ll try.” Robin could never deny Bryant anything.

Chapter 6

Sweat poured down the back of Robin's neck as she hefted another banker's box full of crumbling letters and sketches to her small desk. She opened the lid and sighed at the contents. She had seen all of these before and had precisely and systematically archived each of the seemingly endless pieces of papers. Once more she began the tedious task of cross-checking the contents of yet another box with her notes. Letters? Check. Garden sketch? Check.

The garden. Oh, the garden. Robin couldn't help but smile at the recent memory of lying in the lush undergrowth, inhaling the sweet mixture of flowers and Bryant.

A determined shake of her head cleared the memory and refocused her attention on the task at hand. Funny, her mood fluctuated constantly these days between frustration and satisfaction. Work was such a dead end, but her private life had taken an unexpected and slightly confusing turn for what she thought was the best.

Back to work, she reminded herself. One by one, each and every document in the box matched with the list Robin had compiled. And with that, Robin had searched through each box twice, not including her initial sweep of all the documents.

She dug through her bag and produced the 1950s book on the Abrams mansion that served as the primary guide for her research. She flipped to the bibliography yet again and shook her head in defeat. The book relied heavily on a series of letters written in the latter half of the 1920s that illuminated the design processes Max Abrams used in all his work. Those letters were half the reason Robin

was in Male Order. But even after another sweep of the Abrams archives, Robin came up empty.

She got up to stretch her legs then leaned against the wall of the rickety portable building. Her efforts were futile. The online archive showed the letters as a carefully archived part of the collection, but they were nowhere to be found in the messy piles of papers Robin had encountered here.

Exhausted, Robin let herself collapse on the floor, bumping her head against the wall. With about half an hour until Melvin returned to the archive, maybe she could take a power nap to help things straighten out. Power naps were an essential tool in any scholar's arsenal. She turned to lie on her side, and a bundle of papers held together by a rubber band came to her attention. They were stuffed behind a banker's box. She had just gone through that box the previous day. How did she overlook that? Were they the missing papers?

Renewed by academic curiosity, Robin stretched to grab the papers. They weren't in a box, but hadn't Melvin said she had access to the entire archive? That access had to include the several papers strewn about the small room's dusty floor, right? Robin sat cross-legged and placed the pile gently on her lap and painstakingly removed the rubber band.

They weren't the letters. Disappointment welled in her chest but was quickly replaced by a keen inquisitiveness. She paged through the papers, confused about what information they held. They appeared to be forms documenting some sort of sale. Understanding dawned in Robin's mind. Receipts.

Each was from a different prominent auction house. One from Christie's, another from Sotheby's, another from Bonham's. Her heart plummeted to her stomach when she perused a receipt. It was in the form of an e-mail from the Christie's main office in London and confirmed a deposit in a Swiss bank account belonging to one M. Blockmin. As she read further, she saw the cause of the deposit—the

sale of a 1927 letter from Max Abrams for one thousand five hundred British pounds. Robin did a quick conversion in her head. That was nearly two thousand five hundred dollars! For one letter!

Pages flew as Robin examined the receipts. One from Bonham's for one thousand dollars. Another from Sotheby's for nineteen hundred. All addressed to one "M. Blockmin." The name was suspiciously close to the only person who could siphon from the archive without anyone noticing. Robin's head spun from the implications of her discovery. Melvin was selling the vital Abrams letters for his own profit.

She quickly replaced the rubber band around the documents and shoved them back into the corner where she found them. Her heart raced as she flattened her back against the wall. She had to tell Alexander about this. There was no other choice. He was the only one who could do anything about the letters, and he had the wealth to coax them out of the hands of their new owners. She buried her head in her hands, fearing the upcoming confrontation.

The door to the portable building squeaked open, and the unmistakable shuffle of Melvin's heavy feet sounded through the building.

"Robin!" His squawk rattled her nerves even more. "Robin, you simply must read these letters before you organize them. You're getting the boxes *all* messed up."

She sighed at his baseless whining and pulled herself to her feet. "Yes, Melvin?" She hoped her hesitant tone didn't betray her knowledge of his clandestine dealings.

"*Robin*," he said, sounding hugely exasperated. "You put the 1924 letters in the box with the 1923 sketches. What *were* you thinking?" He hoisted his significant weight closer.

"I—I—I just kept them where—"

"Are you accusing me of not keeping the archive in order?"

Robin paused before answering. She could accuse him of quite a bit right now. "I'm just saying that—"

“You know, Robin—” He scooted uncomfortably close to her, and she scrambled for her bag and found herself cornered against her desk. “—there are ways I could forgive your insubordination and not report you to the Meadows curators.”

He leered closer, and his acrid odor filled her nostrils. Her attention was drawn to the sweat caught in his thick black arm hair, and the contents of her stomach began to rise. He leaned a hand on the desk and created a small opening between himself and a neighboring stack of boxes. Robin clutched her bag and shot through the newly opened passageway. With speed she hadn’t known she was capable of, she darted to the door.

“I need to go find Mr. Abrams,” she managed to squeak before racing out of the door and back toward the main house.

* * * *

Robin paused before entering Alexander’s private card room and admired the ornate solid gold doorknob beneath her fingers. Everything about Alexander screamed wealth and refinement, and frankly, it scared her. Alexander had been on good behavior for the past week, but Robin still got nervous before seeing him. He needed to know about the letters and criminal activity of his employee, Melvin Blackmon, and she knew he would not like this visit.

Robin took a deep breath and remembered her promise to Bryant to attempt to get along with Alexander. Truthfully, keeping that promise hadn’t been too hard this week. Ever since learning that Bryant shared his sexual conquests with Alexander, fantasies of nights between the two strong, handsome men filled her dreams. On the nights she lay alone in her bed, she couldn’t help but touch herself thinking of both of them pleasuring her at the same time or taking one in her mouth while the other fucked her.

Robin finally turned the doorknob and leaned on the heavy oak door. It opened slowly to reveal yet another pocket of extreme luxury

in the Abrams mansion. She took in the towering wooden fireplace carved to look like a small Greek temple and the furniture that looked as if it had been plucked from every young girl's fantasy of becoming a princess. Finally, she saw the mansion's Prince Charming sprawled across a tall armchair. His legs were kicked over one arm of the chair, and he cradled some sort of magazine against his knees. Funny, the magazine seemed out of place in this lap of luxury. As she edged her way into the room, Robin strained to see what so occupied Alexander's attention. Her breath stopped in her chest when she saw the name emblazoned across the front. Pearls and Chains. Male Order's BDSM shop. He was reading a BDSM catalog!

Alexander pulled his attention away from the catalog and turned toward Robin. The look on his face indicated that her intrusion was very unwelcome.

"What?" Venom saturated his voice.

"Hi, Alexander." Robin flashed a smile, hoping it would remind him of their friendly interactions as of late.

"What, Lawrence?"

"I just needed to tell you something regarding the archives. If this isn't a good time..."

"Of course it's not a good time!" Alexander's voice rose in volume. "I'm in my fucking card room, my private card room, not my goddamn office. I want to be left alone!"

Robin knew she shouldn't respond to the petulant heir's shouting, but the anger in his voice broke her grip on her control.

"It's one question! One question, Alexander."

"Who told you that you could call me by my first name?" His voice was at a full shout now. "Our relationship is a professional necessity. I'm not your friend, Ms. Lawrence."

"I'm sleeping with your best friend! I think a little familiarity should be expected."

"Exactly! You're sleeping with my best friend. That's more than enough reason for you to leave me the fuck alone."

“Oh, I had guessed that you would be man enough to handle that.” Robin’s tone was cool but furious.

“*Not man enough?*” Alexander rose to his feet and strode swiftly to where Robin stood. He extended himself to his full height, nearly a foot taller than her, and Robin cowered at his massive figure. Maybe she had gotten herself in over her head. “I assure you, if I so pleased, I would show you that I am more than man enough for your needs.”

Robin edged backward until she was flat against the wall. Alexander followed her and pressed his body against her. Until then, Robin had failed to notice the erection covered by Alexander’s smoking jacket. He leaned his hips into her stomach. His cock felt impossibly hard and long as he rocked his hips against her, and she sensed her pussy getting wet at the sensation. She willed her arousal to go away, but her body refused to listen when Alexander’s strokes against her stomach became harder and faster.

“Is that man enough for you?”

Chapter 7

What on earth was he doing? He hardly went around rubbing himself against nosy, prying bitches' stomachs on a regular basis. Robin was different. Even though he found her despicable, he couldn't help his attraction to her. Despite her constant nagging at him and her flaunting of her relationship with Bryant, she was irresistible with her tight little body and perfectly formed pink mouth. He wanted her. Badly.

"Huh, Ms. Lawrence?"

God, he shouldn't have been reading the Pearls and Chains catalog. All he could think as he looked at the toys was wrapping those leather ankle cuffs around Robin's delicate little legs and hooking her against a wall. That way he could get a full view of that pussy, and Robin's hands would still be free so she could stroke Bryant while Alexander fucked her. Except that fantasy would never happen.

When Robin interrupted his session with the catalog, his arousal intensified at seeing the object of his fantasies, and his anger mounted knowing that she would never bring those fantasies to fruition. All he wanted was to dominate her, to make her realize what pleasure could be had by submitting to his every desire. Right now the smell of her juices had him desiring to rip off those short shorts and plunge his tongue into her dripping cunt.

Just as he neared the brink of arousal from pressing against Robin, she slipped away from the wall.

“What on earth do you think you are doing, Alexander Abrams?” Her lips had turned a shade of deep red. He didn’t know if that was due to arousal or anger.

“Whatever the hell I want!” The absence of her soft body under his rock-hard cock infuriated him. “This is my house, and my word overrules everything else.”

“That doesn’t allow you to rub yourself up against anything that will stay still, you pig!”

“Sure smells like you didn’t mind.”

God, she looked damn sexy when her skin got all red with fury.

“Fuck you!” She tried to run to the door, but Alexander reached out and caught her wrist and easily pulled her in front of him. He watched several different emotions play across her face, anger, anxiety, worry. Excitement. She settled on a stressed and confused expression as she looked up at him.

Still holding her wrist in one hand, he placed the other on her shoulder and dragged it slowly down her arm, switching to her waist at her elbow, then across her hip, and finally resting lightly on the side of her ass. Robin shuddered at his light, slow touch.

He leaned over, closing the substantial gap between their heights, and lowered his face to hover above hers. He watched her tongue dart out to wet her full, red lips, and she tilted her face upward to his.

“Robin,” he whispered, his lips barely brushing hers, “get the fuck out of my room before I call the guards.” He released her body and returned to his perch on the armchair.

Robin stood, still shuddering, with her mouth agape.

“Out!” Alexander bellowed, raising his voice to intimidate her.

Robin turned to the door and, as she opened it, shot a dumbfounded glance at Alexander. He cocked an eyebrow at her, and she hurried out the door.

He sank deeper into his armchair. Well, now he’d done it. That little showing may have given him some much needed friction on his cock, but he had destroyed any hope of sharing in Bryant’s bounty.

He untied the belt on his red silk smoking jacket and unbuttoned his silk wool pants. He reached down, wrapped his hand around his shaft, and started stroking. At least he could get rid of this tension and forget about the whole mess with Robin and Bryant for a while. He conjured up a memory of a New Year's Eve party at his private suite at the Monte Carlo Casino Hotel and the naked models in the hot tub on the terrace. One of them had the same chocolate brown hair and milky skin as... Damn it! He couldn't get Robin out of his thoughts.

As if to add to his frustration, he heard yet another knock on his door.

"Does no one understand the meaning of *private* card room? Just a goddamn minute!"

* * * *

"Whoa there, girl." Bryant tugged on Constant Comment's lead as he pulled her back toward the entrance to the stables. She had been a rough one, for sure. Her owners had used their clout with the Abrams family to push past the others on their training waiting list. Al hadn't been particularly pleased with the transaction, but Bryant needed the extra cash they had been willing to front.

While Bryant was far from impoverished, moving back to America had diminished his income significantly. He'd had to build a new client base for his training operation, and the prize money to be had in European competition eclipsed anything offered at a Texas rodeo. He handed Constant Comment off to one of the stable hands and headed in the direction of his apartment.

True, it wasn't much in comparison to the magnificent Abrams mansion, but Bryant was quite content with his humble abode. He had turned down Alexander's offers to move into the main house, preferring to have something of his own closer to the horses. He had furnished it sparsely, but with high-quality pieces. All those years

hanging around Al and the billionaire crowd *had* rubbed off on him a bit, he thought as he flopped onto his bed.

He tucked his hands behind his head and enjoyed the moment. He hadn't been this happy with his life in a while. Business was booming, he was about to get that damned horse out of his hair, and Robin and Alexander seemed to be on good terms. Robin. His dick hardened at the thought of that little spitfire.

From the instant he'd met her, she had lighted up his world. The way her eyes glowed with excitement then ignited with passion drove him crazy. When they made love, he had felt a release unlike anything he had ever experienced. That's when he knew. Over the years, many women had walked in and out of his life. While they were each special in their own way, he could never bring himself to do anything out of the ordinary. He had never wanted to court someone. Then he met Robin and had spent each waking moment since figuring out how to keep her in his life forever.

The only issue was Alexander. Al had always been dead set on this whole ménage business, citing his parents as an example and claiming that a woman as special as his own mother needed not one, but two men. Bryant had played along, never really committing to the concept until he joined Alexander in Europe. There, Al had found women who refused to have any fewer than two men, and Bryant learned the true pleasure of a ménage. No longer did he think he could find true completion without watching Al pleasure a woman at the same time Bryant fucked her.

That was what he thought about when he delved into the sweet, honeyed depths of Robin's pussy. She was more than enough woman for at least two men, but he wanted to give her more, send her further over the edge. He had heard the screams women made when he and Alexander drove their ample cocks into them at the same time and knew the feeling of their tight asses spasming around his cock as they came. The idea of being buried to the hilt in Robin's sweet, round ass while Alexander sent her into oblivion with his mouth, well, that was

the idea Bryant got off to on his nights alone. And if he was entirely honest with himself, that's what he got off to on nights with Robin, as well.

Robin deserved the whole package, though. He wanted Al to love her like he did. He couldn't just use Alexander's companionship to satisfy his and Robin's sexual needs. The three of them needed to be in a relationship like that of Alexander's parents and the whole Abrams line. Robin and Al both deserved that level of support and love, and Bryant wanted that more than anything. But surviving in a relationship that depended on Alexander Abrams not losing his temper? That was the only thing that worried Bryant. However, that thought had to wait. He needed to see if Robin and Al could survive each other.

His hand had wandered to the front of his pants as he thought, but he didn't realize this until he heard a knock on his door. He grumbled as he attempted to will away his erection. Probably one of the damned stable hands. He sighed, knowing how much he needed to get back to work.

A very pleasant and sexy surprise greeted him at the door. "Well, hello, darling," he said as he leaned down to kiss Robin.

She returned his kiss with less than stunning enthusiasm. She stormed into the middle of the room. "How on earth do you do it?" She crossed her arms and glared in Bryant's direction.

"Do what?" He closed the door, genuinely befuddled by Robin's sudden fury.

"Stand Alexander!"

"I thought you two were getting along, honey. You know there's nothing I'd rather see than the two of you—"

"He's an oversexed pig! He thinks that just because he looks like a fucking matinee idol, he can go around doing whatever he wants to innocent young girls. Well, not this one!" She fell on Bryant's bed with an overdramatic sigh.

Shit. Bryant knew exactly what had happened. Al always did this when he couldn't contain himself or his feelings. On the one hand, it was a good sign. Al only pulled the overbearing sex fiend act on women he couldn't get out of either of his heads. On the other hand, it had scared off more than a few women Bryant would have liked to have gotten to know better. He had really, sincerely hoped that Al could let that go just this once. He wanted Al to feel that way about Robin, and he knew that deep down, Al did.

Bryant moved to comfort Robin. "Look, whatever he did, he didn't mean it. That's just the way he acts when he can't get a woman off his mind."

Robin moved out of Bryant's reach. "Can't get how much he hates a woman off his mind, maybe." She crossed her arms, and her face set into a pout.

"Believe me, he's really coming around to you. And that's all I want, baby."

"All you want? I thought you wanted *me*." Robin gasped and covered her mouth as if she hadn't meant to admit her feelings so fully to Bryant.

"I do want you, honey, but I can't give you everything." Bryant had known this conversation was coming. He had dreaded it, but the time had come to deliver his ultimatum. He sat on the edge of his bed and stared at his feet, unable to look Robin in the eye.

He felt the bed dip behind him as Robin sat up and put a hand around his shoulder. Even in her fury, she was an angel of comfort and solace. Goddamn it, why did she have to make this harder?

"Yes you can," she purred in his ear. "You've already given me more than I have the right to ask for."

Bryant gulped in a breath of air, steadying himself for the coming blow he would land on the minx curled behind him.

"No, I can't, honey." He turned to face her. She leaned her face toward his, but he placed a hand on her shoulder to hold her back. The

warmth of her brown eyes gazing questioningly into his just made this harder. “But Alexander can.”

Robin’s face dropped. “No, no, he *cannot*. I want him nowhere near my love life.”

“Then you want me nowhere near your love life.”

Silence hung in the air between them as Bryant watched Robin comprehend his words. The look of pain that finally etched across her delicate features tugged at his heart. He hated doing this to her, but he knew it was the only way he could ever get the two of them to settle their differences.

“Bry.” Robin lifted a hand to his cheek. “What exactly are you saying?”

“Al and I are a package deal.” He made certain to articulate his next words very carefully. “If you want to be with me, you have to be with him, too.”

He felt sick to his stomach at the look she gave him and had to restrain himself physically from gathering her small body into his arms. Damn it, why couldn’t Robin and Al just set aside their differences? And why was he the only one that could see how brilliant a relationship between the three of them could be?

All trace of emotion fell away from Robin’s face, and she took on a very businesslike countenance.

“Then I have work to do, Bryant.” He could see a sheen of tears at the edges of her wide eyes.

“Robin, it doesn’t have to—”

“I have work to do,” she reiterated as she turned to the door. “I trust that you’ll leave me alone to do it.” With that, she strode out of Bryant’s apartment, slamming the door behind her.

Bryant’s face fell to his hands. This hurt, no doubt, but it was what he had to do. Even through the pain, he knew it would be worth it the first time he and Alexander claimed Robin together. He just hoped that time came soon. Very soon.

Chapter 8

That afternoon, Robin had escaped into downtown Male Order to avoid dealing with the pain of walking out on Bryant like that. Luckily, she happened to stumble into Luscious, Male Order's local beauty salon. While waiting for her mani-pedi, the locals took an interest in her. When she introduced herself as Robin Lawrence, the women all started chatting away with the gossip that had already spread through town. Apparently, her and Bryant's behavior at Alexander's little get-together had hardly gone unnoticed.

Most of her prodding came from Aurora Compton-Blanc, the owner of Luscious and an aging beauty who had retained her looks. She chatted away about her own marriage to two men, but that did nothing to ease the knot growing in Robin's stomach.

Greta McCall, owner of the Wet Lotus yoga studio, also relished the dish session with Robin. She was married to three men fifteen years her junior and was the textbook definition of a cougar. Her seductive and wild ways endeared her to Robin instantly.

However, she most connected with Veronica Ewing, the wild and unmarried owner of the Boom Boom Room, Male Order's finest speakeasy, and Beverly Cullen, the introverted single mother with a no-bullshit attitude Robin appreciated.

After a little coaxing on their part, Robin had agreed to accompany them later that evening to a country dance hall in a small town just outside Male Order. Some time away from the mansion sounded like a good idea to Robin, and she figured chatting with some of Male Order's most prominent and influential residents could only be beneficial to her work.

That, and she needed a drink.

* * * *

“Here we are, ladies! Prepare for the delicious feast of cowboy meat!” Greta pulled her BMW into a dirt parking lot next to a rickety old building. A vintage bus sat rusting next to the entrance, and a flickering neon sign advertised that they had arrived at *The Twirling Lasso, Home of the Finest Country Dancing in the World*. Robin exited the car dubiously. A hokey cowboy-themed tourist trap would probably not pull her out of her terrible mood. Greta, Aurora, and Beverly tittered excitedly as they hurried toward the entrance, apparently oblivious to Robin’s still-sullen state.

Robin felt a warm arm wrap around her shoulders. “Don’t worry, honey.” Veronica’s face was warm and supportive. “Male Order is a rough place to be, especially if your pretty little wagon’s hitched to that spoiled prick Alexander’s.” Robin cracked a smile at the insult. “See, honey? At least you’ve got sympathy.”

“I’m just tired. I need a night off from the lifestyle.” She laughed at her own words. “Please, no more champagne!”

Both women dissolved into giggles, and Veronica gave Robin a quick hug.

“Now let’s go drink some beer and dance with some cowboys!” That was an idea Robin could get behind.

When they entered the dance hall, Robin realized this was no tourist trap. A wide dance floor occupied most of the space, and rickety card tables covered with red-checkered tablecloths were jammed in the corners. Even more impressive were the dancers themselves. That sign wasn’t kidding. Robin watched in awe as people from all walks of life danced the Texas two-step in a circle around the dance floor. Some were just learning the iconic Texan dance, but some were masters of the art, twirling around the floor in intricate patterns as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

The most impressive, though, was the way that everyone under that low ceiling interacted. Strangers asked each other to dance, and groups sat laughing in the corners, drunk but as friendly as can be. Even though she had never seen such a place, Robin felt immediately at home.

The girls hadn't been kidding about the delicious cowboys, either. Everywhere she looked, she saw tall, muscular men that looked like they'd just come from a long day of herding cattle on the range. Each one of them sported tight jeans that cupped their work-tightened asses and the black Stetsons that always drove women wild. Robin's attention was drawn to a table in the corner. Two of those perfectly formed cowboys sat with two older men sporting trucker hats and beer bellies. One of the cowboys said something, and the entire table erupted in laughter, knocking two beers over in the process and increasing the hysterical convulsing of the men at the table.

This was what rural Texas was supposed to be, Robin thought. People not giving a shit about wealth and status and just drinking beer while they dance. Nothing like the pretension she had to endure day after day in Male Order, especially from her least favorite wealthy heir. Why did Bryant have to make their relationship contingent on her feelings toward Alexander?

Aurora interrupted Robin's admiration of the men at the corner table by wrapping her arm through Robin's. She turned Robin toward the bar across the room and pulled her in that direction. "Come on, dear. All of us have agreed that you need a couple of drinks tonight."

The women had chosen a table right on the dance floor, filling their sight with nothing but the men and women gliding gracefully past them in their denim and cowboy boots. As Greta delivered a pitcher of Lone Star Beer and a stack of plastic cups to the table, the women all exchanged nervous glances. Why their enthusiasm had turned into unease was beyond Robin. Instead, she concentrated on having a drink and enjoying the ambiance of the evening.

After the live band played a few covers of classic country songs, an older man approached the table and extended his hand to Robin. “Care to dance, gorgeous?” Robin glanced at her table companions, and they nodded their wholehearted approval. She took the man’s hand, and he led her to the center of the dance floor. Although she hadn’t two-stepped since her elementary school gym class, her dance partner coached her through the dance and relaxed her with his easy conversation and copious compliments.

While she was dancing, she noticed the two sexy cowboys that had been entertaining the locals earlier. One of them was executing an intricate maneuver with a perky young blonde. The other was trotting around the floor with an elderly woman half his height. Each time he turned her out, she visibly swooned, giggling like a schoolgirl at the cowboy’s attention.

The dance ended, and Robin’s partner bowed to her. She curtsied in response and began ambling back to her companions. She noticed the older man kissing Veronica’s hand and escorting her onto the floor. The crowd shifted, and the sexy cowboy and his elderly partner now blocked Robin’s path back to her table. She stopped to watch as he bowed deeply in front of his partner and landed a kiss on her cheek on his way up. His attitude exemplified everything good and friendly about a place like this, and Robin couldn’t help but stand watching him as he escorted his partner off the floor. He straightened and removed his Stetson, revealing a mess of brown curls. He extended to his full height and glanced around. Robin’s heart stopped beating.

Alexander Abrams.

Here! Here in middle-of-nowhere Texas, Alexander Abrams was dancing with little old ladies! It had to be an act. Robin wondered what sort of charity he was performing by associating with his inferiors. This probably fulfilled some other part of his fathers’ will. Of course. The Alexander Abrams she had come to loathe would never deign to visit this dance hall without being legally bound to do so.

After standing in disgusted awe, marveling at the sight of Alexander in such an establishment, Robin ducked quickly through the crowd and weaved a convoluted path back to her table. She didn't think Alexander had spotted her. Doubtless he would have some objection to her presence if he found her here.

Her consternation must have been obvious on her face. All of her companions rushed to console her.

"Don't you think a thing about him, sugar."

"Just pretend he's not here."

"There's plenty of juicy, hunky cowboy fish in this sea."

Each one patted Robin's face or arms as they delivered their assurances, but Robin was not as distraught as she was confused. Why was Alexander here? Even if it were in his fathers' will, did he have to dance with that little old lady while his friend pawed at the petite blonde? Did he have to entertain the old men in trucker hats at his table?

As the women each took their turn around the dance floor, Robin quietly watched Alexander. Everyone in the dance hall seemed to know him. When he was at his table, men and women alike came to greet him, and he gave each a tight hug and a beaming smile. That gentleness Robin had seen in Alexander when she spied on him from the hayloft was on full display here. He made his way through all the tables, asking nearly every woman in the bar to dance, regardless of age or appearance. And the strange thing was he appeared to be having the time of his life. His face glowed with happiness as he took each woman around the floor, not a shred of his trademark pretension in sight.

He lifted a small girl in the air and spun her in a circle. This elicited a delighted giggle, and the girl threw her chubby arms around Alexander's neck. After placing her back on the floor and bowing to her, Alexander made his way across the dance floor to the area where the women from Male Order were seated.

He spied them and made his way in their direction. Oh god. Robin felt her heart sink to her stomach. She didn't know if she could handle another confrontation with Alexander. One traumatic, sexually charged incident was enough for one day.

He stopped in front of Aurora and bowed, removing his black Stetson. "Why, I do declare, Mrs. Blanc, if you get any more beautiful, I'm gonna have to steal you from those husbands of yours." Aurora blushed and waved a hand in his direction.

"Oh, you stop it," she said.

"You don't have to stop it with me! You can come right on into my ménage." Greta's laugh was high-pitched, and it drew Alexander's startlingly warm gaze to where she was seated. Next to Robin.

His eyes fell on Robin, and neither of them spoke for a long moment. His face froze, no longer relaxed and open like before, but not hostile and domineering like it had been earlier. Robin silently prayed that she would never be subjected to his earlier ire again.

Alexander took a deep breath, and his beaming smile once more illuminated his face. The glow it brought to his hazel eyes made Robin's heart do a backflip.

"Well, well, well," Alexander said as a mischievous grin spread across his face. "You ladies have been holding out on me, hogging Male Order's newest bachelorette to yourselves." He looked at Robin questioningly. "Enjoying our humble dance hall, Ms. Lawrence?"

God, he was handsome when he wasn't playing the role of the spoiled-rotten former heir. She had never noticed that his lips were so deliciously full. His flush from a night of dancing turned them to a deep shade of red that made Robin wonder what they would be like to kiss. What the hell. She was too exhausted from a day of conflict, misery, and fear to worry about hating Alexander Abrams right now.

Deciding she would play along, Robin batted her eyelashes and ratcheted up her light Texas accent. "Why, Mr. Abrams, this

establishment is just peachy.” She followed her comment with a smirk and was shocked when Alexander failed to take the bait.

“Well then,” he said, bowing down and beginning to extend a hand. He looked at Robin questioningly for a moment. She gave what she hoped was a conciliatory smile, and Alexander fully reached out his hand. “How about you do me the honor of dancing with me?”

Robin tore her gaze from the ruggedly handsome man in front of her and looked to her table companions. She caught all of them raptly watching her interaction then glancing away and feigning innocence. Robin took a deep breath and looked back at Alexander waiting expectantly. What did she have to lose?

“Why, sir, of course,” she said in her thickest Southern accent as she took Alexander’s hand. She turned back to her friends. “I’m gonna take a turn around the dance floor. I’ll be right back.”

“Bon voyage!” Greta waved her hand excitedly. The rest continued their play of indifference, but as she stood and walked hand in hand to the dance floor with Alexander, she heard them tittering away behind her.

Alexander led her to a spot in the center of the dance floor. “They’re quite a bunch, aren’t they?” he said once they reached their destination.

“They are, indeed. I didn’t even want to come here, after what happened today and—” The sensation of Alexander’s hand on the small of her back silenced her.

“Shh.” He took her right hand in his left. “Let’s not talk about that tonight.” He pulled her into an enthusiastic dance to the fast country waltz the band played. Robin felt herself let go a little. No matter what she thought of this man, her job necessitated getting along with him. Maybe their dance here in the hall plopped in the middle of a cow pasture would finally smooth out their relationship. The number drew to a close, and Alexander spun Robin out, then back against him.

“Thank you.” Her smile was completely genuine. “That was great.”

The band began playing a cover of Patsy Cline’s “Crazy,” and Robin moved to return to her table. Alexander thwarted her plans when he tightened his grip around her waist. “One more, Ms. Lawrence?” She made the mistake of looking into his hazel eyes that, shockingly, dripped with sincerity. She had expected that same charming, seductive act he pulled on her when they first met, but his eyes didn’t have the same steely glint they did then. Now, she only saw genuine interest in those eyes, and she couldn’t help but melt into his grip.

“One more, Mr. Abrams.” He pulled her against him as they began to dance. The difference in their heights meant that her head rested against his chest. She inhaled Alexander’s scent. While Bryant smelled sweetly of leather and horses, Alexander smelled clean and crisp with a hint of spicy musk. They were certainly different, but Robin found that contrast exhilarating. She tilted her head upward and found him staring down at her.

“I’m sorry about today,” Alexander said softly, leaning down so she could hear him. “I shouldn’t have acted that way. You were just trying to do your job. I got in the way.” He closed his eyes and shook his head. “I’m such an asshole.”

Robin felt a twisting in her chest at his heartfelt apology. And though she would never have believed it this afternoon, she rushed to assuage his guilt.

“Hey.” Robin sought out his eyes and held his gaze. “You are a little bit of an asshole, but that doesn’t matter right now. I interrupted you today and forgot to call ahead.” Alexander shook his head again, and she noticed the stubble on his chin. She had never seen him anything but cleanly shaved, and this new shadow on his face made him look so much more human.

“I shouldn’t have tried to intimidate you, though. It’s just...” He looked away, and Robin thought she could see vulnerability play across his features.

She brought her hand to rest against his chest. It felt firm and warm against her fingers, and she struggled to pay attention to anything else. “Don’t worry. It’s in the past. Let’s just dance, okay?” Robin’s fingers played with the pocket on his shirt. Alexander took her hand in his again and spun her out slowly. Once Robin landed against him again, his face showed only vulnerability and openness.

“It’s just that you’re with Bryant.” She opened her mouth to reply that Bryant had made that impossible, but the gravity in his expression silenced her. He made eye contact with Robin and stated his next words very clearly. “And I want you to be with me, too.”

Her jaw dropped. The band scored the moment perfectly.

“And I’m crazy for loving you.”

* * * *

After Bryant told him of the ultimatum he gave Robin, Alexander couldn’t stand to hang around the estate any longer. He could have gone down to the Boom Boom Room and downed that bottle of Chateau Mouton Rothschild 1982 he knew they had stashed away somewhere. He could have raced his Ferrari Enzo as fast as he could into Dallas and crashed one of the many illicit poker games he knew were going on in the basements of Highland Park mansions. And god knows, that’s the sort of thing he would have done in France or in his first year back in Male Order.

Everything changed the moment Robin walked into his life. He and Bryant both fell for her instantly, although Bryant was much more eager to admit that fact. It only became clear to him in that moment. As he held Robin like a porcelain doll on the dance floor, he finally allowed himself to realize the depth of his feelings. She was everything he ever wanted in a woman. She was beautiful, no one

could deny that, but so much more was there. She cared about things, and her passion was obvious in everything she did. Their many fights told Alexander that he didn't scare her in the least. And when he saw her relaxed and bantering with the women who had surrounded him his entire life, he knew that he wanted her forever.

Alexander didn't know that infamous pack of Male Order women had chosen the rural dance hall as their destination for the evening. His parents had taken him dancing here since he was old enough to know the difference between a two-step and a polka. His happiest memories all happened here. Sitting with the locals while his mother took turns dancing with his fathers, taking Bryant here when he came home for his twenty-first birthday—everything good in Alexander's life seemed to be connected to this dingy, low-roofed barn in the middle of nowhere. He had danced in the finest dance halls money could buy, but this one would always be his favorite.

When he realized that neither booze, nor cars, nor cards could cure his sullen mood, he retreated to his rural haven. There, he was never forced into the role of Alexander Abrams, spoiled heir. He was just Al, a kid who had grown up sitting at those rickety card tables drinking soured Lone Star.

As Alexander expected, he was greeted enthusiastically by all of the regulars. His mood was cured after hearing tales of life on the ranch. He exchanged goodhearted insults with the men and women who had played a fairly large role in raising him. After the death of his parents, this was the closest to home he could get.

Then he had spotted a slight girl with soft chocolate brown hair swishing behind her as she danced with one of the town's elderly residents. She clearly didn't know too much about dancing, but she appeared to be in high spirits anyway. He forgot about her as he palled around with the dance hall's proprietor and made sure to dance with every woman in the bar, but he realized who it was when he approached the table of women from Male Order. His mother used to run with that crowd, and they had been invaluable during her illness

and the chemotherapy. He could never play the role of the petulant brat with them.

His heart thrilled at the opportunity to show Robin that his persona was just an act, a wall around his real self he erected after his mother's death and his reaction to it. He still felt so guilty for abandoning his fathers in favor of gambling away his fortune and his responsibility. When she hesitated to follow him onto the floor, his whole world floated in suspension. He knew that once he brought himself to be real with Robin, she would see her feelings clearly, too. They were two atoms in a molecule, and it had always been that way.

Her body felt so precious in his arms. When he spun her out and she clung to him upon her return, he knew he was in. Now he only had to admit how he felt.

"And I want you to be with me, too."

The song came to a close, and the rest of the dance hall faded from Alexander's awareness. He saw only Robin and her round, pink mouth hanging open. She closed her eyes and breathed. Alexander's heart pounded harder in his chest. He knew that, no matter what her response, this was a turning point in his life.

Her eyes opened, and Alexander gazed deeply into the pools of melted chocolate. He saw nothing but affection there, no trace of the defensive, overbearing looks he had provoked from her earlier. Every nerve ending in his body zinged to life. She was going to say yes. He knew it. He felt her hand move and watched her place it just where her head had rested against his chest. Her finger traced around one of the round pearl snaps as she returned her stare to his face.

"I have to be insane for doing this," she said quietly.

Unable to contain himself, he wrapped one hand around the back of her neck, leaned down, and pulled her face against his. The band started back up, but the two of them stood in the middle of the floor, locked in passionate embrace. His tongue delved into her mouth, exploring the hidden depths that occupied his fantasies. She returned his passion, standing on her toes and suckling his bottom lip. They

stayed that way underneath the flickering glow of the neon beer signs and the dance hall's dim lighting, everyone else on the dance floor whirling to life around them. Alexander felt Robin smile against his mouth as the band hit the chorus of their tune.

"Starry eyes forever shall be mine."

He reluctantly lifted his face from hers and cupped her face in his hands. He could feel the blood coursing through her veins, nearly as quickly as his own. Her lips were flushed to a deep pink and betrayed her arousal. Alexander was so thrilled to have this woman in his life, to have her to talk to and argue with, but that color in her lips made him want to do only one thing. Fuck her. His cock stirred in agreement.

After their earlier interaction, he was slightly embarrassed at the evidence of his excitement growing against her, but she seemed not to mind, leaning into his erection.

"Robin," he whispered, "let's get out of here."

She nodded her agreement, and Alexander wrapped an arm around her and guided her toward the exit.

"Hold on." She broke away from him for a moment and headed in the direction of the Male Order ladies. She weaved her way to their table and grabbed her bag. As she retreated, they all simultaneously waved their hands at her in shooing motions and shouted their supports.

"You go get it, honey!"

"Don't worry about us!"

"Mmm, that's quite a cowboy you got there." That one was from Greta.

When Robin returned to his waiting arms, her blush had intensified.

"Don't worry about them, beautiful." Alexander raised a hand to brush against the warm flesh of her cheek, the sensation sending a lightning bolt of arousal to his cock. "This is just par for the course in their world."

He led her toward the exit, both of them hurrying to find release from the sudden realization. As they waited for a group of dancers to clear the door, Robin stood on tiptoes and said against Alexander's neck, "I'm so happy." Her breath ruffled the curls at the base of his neck, and he smiled down at her.

"For the first time in a long time, I'm happy, too. So happy, Robin."

The group finally moved, clearing their path to the exit, and the two of them rushed out, eager to be away from the prying eyes of the bar's patrons.

Chapter 9

A slight pain zinged through Robin's back as Alexander slammed her against the aluminum siding on the back of the dance hall. The smell of rust coupled with Alexander's expensive cologne filled her senses and drove her mad. Alexander continued the assault on her mouth he had begun inside and pushed Robin harder against the dance hall. A fleeting thought about whether rubbing up against such rusty siding was really a good idea entered Robin's mind, but Alexander landed a bite on her jawline, and the thought dissipated.

His hand snaked between them and tugged at the buttons of Robin's plaid shirt. Once he had gotten a wide enough opening through which to push his hand, he cupped one of her breasts in his hand. Even through her black lace bra, the touch kindled something animalistic inside of her. She wrapped her right leg around Alexander's muscular ass, hoping he would get the hint. He did and wrapped both of her legs around his waist so she was suspended between Alexander's body and the wall behind her.

From this angle, Robin could feel exactly how much the situation aroused Alexander. He humped against her, brushing his considerable bulge against her quickly dampening mound in tempo with his ministrations on her mouth. Suddenly, the tight western jeans she had so admired on Alexander seemed entirely unnecessary.

Robin boldly reached her hand downward. Alexander and her new friends from Male Order had broken her shyness that evening, and she was shocked to see her confidence extend into her sexual endeavors. Her hand reached his large oval belt buckle, intricately carved and cast in what Robin assumed was solid gold. Well, damn. The

expensive accessory was damn effective. She let out a frustrated noise against Alexander's mouth, and his hand joined hers in the mission to free his ever-hardening cock.

Just as the two were about to accomplish their salacious task, they heard two voices laughing and shouting around the corner of the barn. "Shit." Alexander took Robin in his arms and hurried her behind an abandoned truck rusting at the back of the barn.

"Well, I'll be," one drunken voice bellowed into the darkness. "Little Al done found himself a woman who doesn't even look like a hooker."

Even in the faint glow of the neon sign, Robin could see Alexander's cheeks redden.

"What you wanna bet he's been a-courtin' her for weeks? He don't just take to any old girl like he did that little lady. She was a downright looker, too," the second voice added. This time it was Robin's turn to blush.

Their voices faded, and Robin heard a car door slam closed. She glanced down at her half-unbuttoned blouse and her nipple poking out from under the intricate floral trim. She and Alexander exchanged a knowing look and quickly began righting their disheveled clothing.

Once they had finished their adjustments, Alexander straightened himself and extended a hand to Robin. She took his hand, closed the distance between them, and leaned her head against his chest. She felt warm when wrapped inside Bryant's muscular mass, but being held against Alexander's tall, lean form gave her an entirely different sensation. Excitement pulsed through Robin's veins as she ran a hand up the sinewy muscles in Alexander's arm.

The intimate touch set something off in Alexander, and he scooped Robin into his arms. Although she hardly objected to literally being swept off her feet, the action did confuse her. He sped up his pace, nearly breaking to a run. She was about to ask him what the rush was when she saw where he was headed. Bryant's truck. She would recognize the rugged blue Tacoma anywhere.

They reached their destination, and Alexander hauled open the door to the cab. All semblance of the elegant, standoffish man Robin knew vanished as he laid her across the bench, climbed in after her, and closed the door. Before Robin could adjust to her new surroundings, Alexander was on top of her, his hand entwining in her hair as he pressed kisses against her collarbone.

“Robin, I’ve wanted you since the moment I met you,” he said, his husky voice betraying a deep desire. “When Bryant fucked you...” Alexander cleared his throat then lifted his head and looked into Robin’s eyes. “I couldn’t take it. I needed you.” With that, he brushed his erection against her crotch. “And not just sexually.” He steadied himself on one hand and brought his free hand up to trace the outline of Robin’s lips. “You’re a pistol, Ms. Lawrence.” A rare hint of a Texas accent slipped into his voice. “And I don’t want you going anywhere.” Alexander’s trademark mischievous smirk crawled across his face. “Even if you bug the living shit out of me sometimes.”

Robin placed her hand on the side of his face, and he turned his head and kissed her palm. “Alexander,” she whispered, followed by a light, lingering kiss. “You infuriate me, but I can’t get enough of you.”

Alexander leaned down to kiss Robin fully, and their kiss escalated in a matter of seconds. Soon, he was humping her in earnest, and all Robin wanted was for him to sink that massive cock into her. She tried to iterate such through an ardent thrust of her hips, but the sound of the car next to them starting up interrupted her bodily request.

The noise startled Alexander, and he bolted upright. He leaned over to kiss Robin again, then turned his attention to the dashboard and started the truck. “I know a place.”

Those were the only words spoken as the truck wound its way out of the parking lot and back onto the dusty farm-to-market road that led to civilization. Occasionally, Robin and Alexander reached out to touch each other with heat and affection, and Robin even landed a

kiss against Alexander's neck, but they were silent as he drove. Alexander missed the exit to Male Order, and before Robin could say anything, he took a sharp turn into a wide field with a few cattle sprinkled around. Robin was stunned. Of all the things she thought could happen tonight, sitting in a cow pasture with Alexander Abrams was absolutely last on her list.

The car jolted to a halt, Alexander switched off the ignition, and their gazes met. Before Robin could register what was happening, the two locked in passionate embrace. Their mouths plundered each other, tongues probing into wet heat, urgent with the desperation for closer, more intimate connection. Alexander pulled Robin onto his lap. She wrapped her arms around his midsection and rubbed her drenched pussy against the rough fabric of his jeans. Suddenly, a warm breeze blew through Robin's hair, and she felt herself being removed from the truck's cab. Her body refused to let go of Alexander, heedless of where he was carrying her.

A crash sounded, and cold metal replaced the warm breeze against Robin's back. Alexander's weight pressed her against the metal, and she opened her eyes to find herself lying prone on the truck bed. Alexander sat up, undoing the pearl snaps on his shirt, revealing a sleek, muscular chest. The long, sinewy muscles rippled as he shoved the shirt from his shoulders and sent it flying over the edge of the truck. Robin reached out to touch the washboard abs he had just revealed. She shuddered at the combination of the hard masculinity of his muscles and the smoothness of his olive skin.

Alexander returned to his position hovering above Robin and took her earlobe between his teeth. A shriek escaped her lips at the sudden erotic pain. She nearly silenced herself then remembered they were actually in the middle of nowhere. There was no one around to hear them. Her moans increased in volume as Alexander continued to explore her upper body with his mouth.

He laved at the valley between her breasts, and he began unbuttoning Robin's shirt. He trailed hot kisses along her skin as he

slowly, painfully slowly, undid all the buttons on Robin's shirt. Her breath had quickened to only short pants by the time he finished and pushed her shirt from her shoulders. His mouth hovered just below her belly button, and he nipped at the skin just above the button to her scandalously short and tight denim cut-off shorts. Alexander looked up into Robin's eyes as he placed both of his hands against the clasp.

"You are so beautiful," he whispered against her skin. "I want to see just how beautiful you are everywhere."

His words sent electric bolts of pure heat straight to Robin's pussy, and she was certain she must have soaked through the denim crotch of her shorts by now. More liquefied passion dripped between her thighs when she remembered that she had eschewed any sort of panties this evening. Her tight shorts showed all sorts of panty lines, and a girl's night out always necessitated some sort of walk on the wild side. Now, the arousal of that decision pulsed in her nipples and pussy as she realized that Alexander would soon uncover the core of her pleasure.

He undid the button on her shorts and slid down the zipper in reverence. His hands cupped underneath her ass, kneading and squeezing before he removed her shorts in one swift motion. They joined what Robin realized must be a substantial pile of shucked clothing surrounding the truck. She shivered as she felt the hot breeze of Alexander's gasp tickle against her dampness.

"Bloody hell." He cursed as he splayed a long-fingered hand over the top of Robin's thigh and dug his fingers into her tightening muscles. "You came prepared for this, didn't you?" The look in his eyes darkened, and he slunk forward up Robin's body like a lion hunting a juicy gazelle. He held his weight on one arm as another slid underneath Robin and expertly unhooked her bra. He discarded that garment as well and pinched one nipple between his fingers. Hard. Robin's chest heaved at the sharp sensation tugging at both her nipple and her clit.

“Did you come prepared for me, Robin?” He twisted her nipple, and the pleasurable pain forced her hip upward in a frenzied search for his thigh. “Or did you come prepared for Bryant?” His teeth replaced his fingers on her nipple, and Robin emitted a noise halfway between a scream and a moan. He lifted his face, and his pinching fingers found Robin’s other nipple and pulled.

“You like it when he fucks you, don’t you?” The pain and his words expelled any coherent thought from Robin’s mind. Every fiber of her being was reduced to a shivering mass of want. Alexander’s teeth found Robin’s neck, and the force with which he bit left Robin certain there would be a mark tomorrow. “You’re gonna like it when he fucks you up the ass, too.” Oh, God. Robin’s fantasies of being caught between the two of them danced through her mind, more potent than ever.

The erotic vision spurred her to action, and she somehow found the effort to race her hands to the waistband of Alexander’s jeans. His belt still hung open from their earlier groping, making it easier for Robin to access what her body so desperately demanded. She unbuttoned and unzipped Alexander’s jeans with an ease that she hadn’t expected. His hands moved hers from their mission, and he shoved his jeans off, freeing his cock in the process.

Robin’s eyes widened, and she gasped at the sight before her as Alexander leaned back to throw his jeans over the side of the truck. Against his abdomen bobbed the most impressive cock Robin had ever laid eyes on. It was long, just like his massive height, and thicker than anything Robin had encountered in her, albeit limited, experience. It twitched under her gaze, and she watched as a tiny droplet of pre-cum formed at the tip of his wide mushroomed head. Her eyes followed its trail down the length of the thick, throbbing vein on the underside of his cock. She licked her lips, eager to feel jets of his hot, salty liquid against the back of her throat.

She moved forward and lowered her head to Alexander’s cock, her tongue flicking out in an attempt to sample the taste of his pre-

cum. Before her tongue could make contact with the engorged purple head of his cock, Alexander wrapped his hands into Robin's hair and yanked her down to lie on her back.

"I say when you can suck my cock, got it?" Robin's body reacted to his words, visibly shuddering at their heat. His same cockiness and entitlement that had driven her mad with irritation this afternoon now drove her mad with something much darker and much hotter.

With one hand still knotted in her hair, he brushed the other against the sopping fold of her pussy. He pushed two fingers against her wetness and grinned when her whole body jerked at the very welcome invasion. His long index finger brushed against her entrance and then her clit. Robin audibly whimpered at the sensation, completely consumed with her desire. Without warning, Alexander plunged his finger into her pussy and directly against her G-spot. He pumped his finger in and out several times, each time sending increasingly intense surges of pleasure pulsing outward through Robin's limbs. He added a second finger, and Robin flew over the edge.

She screamed as the orgasm consumed her, one cresting tidal wave of ecstasy after another. Alexander kept pumping into her, brushing her G-spot and her clit each time, fueling the intensity of her release and the gushing cream that poured out of her. Finally, she began her return to the Earth's atmosphere. Alexander twisted his finger inside of her, eliciting a small shriek, and then withdrew it. He brought his finger to his face and smelled it as if inspecting a fine wine. He then brought his lips around his finger and sucked as he captured Robin's stare with his.

"You taste heavenly," he said and kissed Robin lightly on the lips. She could taste a faint hint of her arousal on his lips. He smiled and gave a small, bemused laugh. His cock pushed against the still-sensitive flesh between Robin's legs, fanning the flames of her excitement again. The head pushed against Robin's clit, and she felt a

fresh wave of her juices rush from her opening. “Now if you’ll excuse me, I’m going to fuck this sweet cunt.”

Alexander used the same tone he would use to excuse himself from a card table, and the casualness in his voice only served to heighten Robin’s passion. He continued to press his cock against her, and Robin moved her hips in an attempt to maneuver the entirety of that long shaft inside her.

Finally, Alexander moved his body downward, and just the wide head of his substantial cock breached Robin’s entrance. She trembled, amazed at how full she felt with only Alexander’s cockhead penetrating her. He pumped only his head into her with small strokes that hit her clit each time. Soon, his cock’s ministrations reduced her to the puddle of need she had been before he pushed her into the abyss of carnal satisfaction.

Alexander stilled and looked into Robin’s eyes. She returned his gaze, feeling entirely consumed by the heat and, strangely, the affection she saw there. He must have seen what he needed in her heated stare. With one push, he sank his entire length into her. “Robin,” he breathed before he began pumping into her with a slow and steady rhythm.

The feel of Alexander’s cock was too much for Robin. She couldn’t continue at such a slow, measured pace. Her fingernails scratched along his back, and her teeth found his shoulder, biting to urge him to a faster pace. “Please, Alexander.”

He responded to her request and began an assault on her wet, quivering pussy. His strokes were hard and fast, each one pushing Robin’s small body farther up the truck bed until her head hit against the back of the cab. The pain did nothing to faze her, and she matched the intensity of each one of his strokes. Soon, she felt an orgasm beginning to overtake her. “God, more, I’m so close,” she moaned as she reached the edge of euphoria.

Alexander halted his strokes and locked a hand over Robin’s mouth. His features took on a dark, erotic quality. “Not until I say so,

Ms. Lawrence.” She whimpered under his hand and attempted to nod. Alexander restarted his impassioned pummeling, and Robin struggled to hold off the blissful release she knew was so close. Alexander’s eyes closed, and his head rolled back in pleasure. A strange sort of satisfaction consumed Robin knowing she could reduce this notoriously handsome womanizer to the bestial creature of want fucking her at that very moment.

Alexander snaked a hand down between them and pressed against Robin’s clit. She yelped and knew that fending off an orgasm was damn near impossible in that moment. “Fuck, Robin,” Alexander moaned as he drove his cock into her and fingered her clit. “Now, come *now*!”

They both exploded, clinging to each other with the force of their mutual sensual ecstasy. Robin felt the steaming jets of hot liquid pouring into her with each thrust, and her pussy clenched and milked the shaft of his cock. With one final thrust, Alexander collapsed on top of Robin, and they lay that way for a few minutes, their panting the only sound audible beneath the starry sky of the summer night.

Alexander sat up, looked down at Robin, and gave her a conspiratorial look. “You know what we have to do now, right?”

“I can think of a few things...” Robin’s eyes darted to Alexander’s cock, which twitched to life under her stare.

“We can definitely do *that*.” Alexander laughed and tangled a hand in Robin’s hair. “But right now we need to find Bryant.” He leaned forward and bit Robin’s lip. “I believe he will be quite eager to hear about our evening.”

Chapter 10

Bryant stared at the ceiling fan rotating above him. He shoved his comforter off yet again. He had spent the whole night like that, attempting to get comfortable, attempting to quiet his brain. That confrontation with Robin earlier today kept replaying in his head. He knew he had done the right thing. He'd tried to do this without Alexander, but it just hadn't felt right. Maybe with a lesser woman, but not Robin. She deserved everything any woman ever wanted.

Oddly, Bryant wasn't bothered by the financial limits he had, at least compared to Alexander. Instead, he only wanted Robin to have the perfect man. He knew he was imperfect, but with Alexander, those imperfections took on less significance. The two of them complemented each other in every way. That was why they had made such good friends over the past decade and a half. When both of them were with a woman, she could have everything a man could provide. Bryant was strong in all the areas that Alexander struggled with—kind, fair, levelheaded—and vice versa.

He had seen the way Alexander looked at her and knew that he was nearly as in love with the little minx as Bryant. And Robin and Alexander had everything in common. They were both intelligent, headstrong, and full of passion. If they would just stop fighting long enough to have a real conversation, they would realize that.

His eyes followed the fan's rotations, making him slightly dizzy. He wished he wasn't stuck in his apartment tonight. Al had gone to the Twirling Lasso to meet up with some buddies there he'd only seen a couple of times since his return to Male Order, and Bryant needed to catch up with some paperwork before they released Constant

Comment. But he hadn't gotten anything done that night. The remembered sight of Robin turning away from him and leaving kept him preoccupied. He wanted her, that was for damn sure, but he wanted her in a way he had never wanted anyone before. Al needed to cooperate on this one, deep-seated intimacy issues be damned.

His phone lit up beside him, and he scrambled to respond, delighted for an excuse to stop this futile attempt at sleep. Speak of the devil himself. It was Al. He read the text message, and every nerve ending in his body ignited.

Ran into Robin at the Twirling Lasso. You were right, Bry. She's the one. Be back in half an hour. ;-)

Bryant wanted to shout his elation at the top of his lungs. The two most stubborn, determined people he had ever loved finally realized they could care for each other. He swung his legs over the edge of the bed then raced hurriedly about his room, dressing himself to meet Robin and Alexander at the moment of their return. He interpreted the winking emoticon Al used to end his text as an indication of his intentions for the evening. Bryant knew Al's stubbornness was the only thing standing in the way of their blissful union with Robin, but did Alexander intend for that to happen tonight?

Uncertainty pulled at Bryant's insides, but he tamped it down. Whether or not Alexander intended to share Robin tonight ceased to matter. Bryant smiled in the darkness of his apartment. It *didn't* matter. Robin had helped Bryant finally find the courage to declare what he truly wanted and assert his own needs, a prerequisite for being in a long-term ménage relationship. This was it, Bryant decided. This was the destiny that awaited him, Alexander, and Robin.

Bryant set out on a run toward the main house, intending to meet the two as soon as they arrived at the mansion. He ran a hand through his mussed hair, uncharacteristically not missing the feel of his Stetson on his head. The rumbling of an engine sounded in the

distance, and Bryant directed his course to the front of the house. The dim headlights of his truck cast a dim glow on the pavement as Alexander sped the truck to the main entrance where the overnight valet was already waiting. After what seemed to Bryant an agonizingly languid drive toward the house, even at high speeds, the truck pulled to a stop, and Alexander leaped out of the cab. Bryant beat the valet to the passenger side door and cradled Robin in his arms as he lifted her from the cab.

Robin was a vision of debauchery as she rolled her head against his shoulder. Her lips were flushed from her arousal, and her normally smooth hair hung in messy clumps, obviously recently mussed. Her shirt was only partially buttoned, revealing the lacy black bra that did very little to obscure her pert nipples. Bryant turned toward Alexander, and Alexander smiled the Cheshire-cat smile of a man recently thoroughly satisfied. He then gave Bryant a nod and headed inside.

“You have a good time tonight, baby?” Bryant pulled Robin closer to him to inhale her sweet scent.

“Mmm, a very good time,” she sighed against his chest.

A household employee unobtrusively held the door open for them, and Bryant carried Robin across the threshold. “Darlin’, I want you to belong to *us*, not just me.” He placed a kiss on Robin’s hair. “I couldn’t be happier right now, Robin.”

He continued carrying her up the grand staircase and through the endless maze of corridors that led to the family sleeping quarters. He smiled to himself, knowing Robin had never been this way and anticipating her wide-eyed, delighted reaction. They came to a stop in front of the tall set of double doors that led to the master suite. Bryant finally lowered Robin to her feet, and she stumbled a bit before steadying herself by wrapping her arms around Bryant’s waist.

Bryant turned in her arms and reached down to lift her chin. He pressed a firm, deliberate kiss on her lips. “Baby, this is all I’ve ever wanted.”

She clung to him tighter and whispered, “Me, too.” She laughed a little, and Bryant felt the wetness of her tears against the flimsy cotton of his T-shirt. “I never even knew this existed, never knew I could find two such wonderful men, but—”

Alexander opened the doors, and Robin was struck speechless. Alexander and Bryant exchanged a knowing look and smiled as they watched Robin’s reaction. She staggered forward into the cavernous room with an expression of open-mouthed awe. Bryant followed her gaze, seeing the room with a fresh perspective now that he knew what heights of pleasure it held for him.

Elaborately carved stone arches met in the center of the room to form a vaulted ceiling. Flickering gas lamps hung from wall sconces on either side of the enormous four-poster bed enclosed by crimson curtains. While Bryant had watched Robin’s admiration of the space, Alexander had climbed into the middle of the oversized king bed. Now Alexander reached out toward Robin, and she placed both of her hands in his. With some effort, she climbed onto the bed, and Bryant followed, thankful that his hardening prick would soon be released from his ever-tightening jeans.

* * * *

Robin gasped as Alexander’s hands wound tightly around her wrists and pulled her onto the largest bed Robin had ever climbed. He rolled her onto her back and straddled her. Bryant mounted the bed after her and pulled himself to lie next to Robin. He leaned over and ran his tongue along her lips, forcing them open. He kissed her passionately, and she felt his hard cock pressing against the soft flesh of her leg.

As Bryant plundered the depths of her mouth, Alexander’s long, deft fingers undid the buttons of her shirt and splayed across her stomach. Robin’s nerve endings fired at even the slightest of Alexander’s touches, and skin Robin had never thought sensitive

tingled with the force of her lust. Alexander pushed her shirt from her shoulders, and Bryant's hand snaked underneath her blouse to undo the clasp of her bra. As he did this, Alexander pushed a hand underneath the loosened fabric and took her nipple between his middle and index fingers. He pulled it toward him, and Robin squealed into Bryant's mouth, nearly biting his tongue.

"Now it won't do to have you tryin' to hurt me, gorgeous." Bryant gently sank his teeth into the side of her neck. Robin knew his actions would leave a mark, and her pussy spilled a fresh wave of cream at the thought. Caught up in the pleased pain of Bryant's bite, Robin failed to notice the removal of her bra. She felt the light, erotic touch of Alexander's fingers against her abdomen as he once again freed her from her denim shorts. He pulled them off in a smooth motion and grazed a fingernail against the sensitive outer folds of her pussy. She rolled her head back as she gasped at the sudden sensation. A scream caught in her throat as the finger pressed through her outer folds and moved to pinch against her clit. The sharp sensation had her hips bucking, needing only the tiniest bit more stimulation to achieve her release.

"What do you say, Bry?" Alexander's breath landed against Robin's pussy, sending shudders throughout her body. "Do we let this precious specimen come yet?" He tickled her clit, and Robin let out the moan that had been lodged inside her throat.

"I don't know," Bryant drawled as he moved to join Alexander between Robin's legs. "Maybe she should give something to us first." Bryant's finger joined Alexander's against her pussy and teased at her entrance. She bucked her hips in an attempt to suck that finger inside of her, desperate to be fucked by anything.

Bryant's laugh was husky and dark. "She's certainly ready for it." The feeling of warm breaths against the most delicate part of her being intensified as Alexander leaned forward.

“We can get that pretty mouth around us later.” The sensation of Alexander’s whisper had Robin in the midst of pre-orgasmic spasm. “We need to teach her to come all night long, anyway.”

A tongue licked across Robin’s pussy, and she was soaring. The orgasm came over her in hot waves, each one more delectable than the one before. Alexander kept licking against the epicenter of her arousal, the feeling of his wet tongue against her oversensitive flesh perpetuating her suspension at the peak of sexual desire. Finally, the contractions inside her stopped, and she began to float back to earth.

Her chest heaved as she struggled to regain her breath. Bryant and Alexander pulled themselves up to lay next to her, fully enveloping her in manly warmth. Alexander hooked a finger underneath her chin and drew her face to his. Tenderness pervaded his soft kiss, and the aroma of her own arousal filled Robin’s senses. Bryant reached across Robin’s midsection and rolled her so that their bodies were pressed against each other. He, too, captured her lips in a kiss, but his was passionate, desperate, and white-hot. He ground his erection against the warmth between her legs, and the familiar tingling sensations of arousal built there again.

Bryant shucked his T-shirt and set to work removing his jeans. Alexander drew himself against Robin’s backside, and he laved at the sensual flesh on the back of her neck. His hands roved freely up and down her body, caressing each breast and electrifying her flesh with light, teasing touches.

As soon as Bryant finished removing every shred of clothing, he pulled Robin away from Alexander’s embrace and lowered himself on top of her.

“Al’s gotten to fuck you already today.” His voice was gravelly with the potency of his desire. “I’ve just been thinking about you.” He ran the tip of his cock along the wet seam of her pussy. “My hand doesn’t feel anything like your velvety folds, darlin’.” Robin half-screamed as Bryant pushed just the head of his dick into her now sopping wet opening. “This is what I’ve been thinking about doing.”

Robin bucked her hips forward and drew Bryant's cock into her. She was amazed. Never before had she been so on fire after an orgasm. These two seemed to give her endless stamina. The idea of ever stopping their sexual play repulsed her. No, this was all she wanted in life. Right here.

Desperation colored Bryant's fucking, eschewing any semblance of gentleness. His strokes were hard and fast as he pummeled into Robin over and over again. The force of his carnal attack shocked her at first, but she soon found herself more aroused than ever at the animalistic fucking. He pushed into her hard, and her head pounded against the headboard. She didn't feel the pain, though. She could only pay attention to the fire Bryant had ignited in her pussy.

Without warning, Bryant rolled onto his back without withdrawing from Robin and grabbed her hips. He held her still, preventing her from fucking herself on his hard prick, and pounded upward into her. Robin was so surprised and consumed by their change of position, she failed to feel Alexander straddle Bryant's legs behind her until she felt his hand reach around to play with her overstimulated nub. She screamed as he pinched it between his fingers at the same time Bryant lifted his hips from the bed and pushed his long, wide cock completely into her. She was close, so close. She panted and dug her fingernails into Bryant's chest. His blue eyes were closed, but he opened them just enough for Robin to see the intoxicating mixture of affection and pure eroticism in his stare.

"Lean over," Alexander whispered from behind her as he pushed at the folds of her ass with his leaking cock. Oh god, Robin thought, when did he take off his clothes? The idea of all three of them naked and in bed was so close to the fantasies that had haunted her every night since she came to Male Order that her thighs quivered at just the thought. It was really happening.

She obeyed Alexander's command and leaned until her nipples dangled against the hard ridges of Bryant's chest. A gasp escaped

from her throat as she felt a cold, liquid sensation against the seam of her ass.

“Bryant told me you liked this,” Alexander said, a dark steaminess in his tone as his fingers pushed between Robin’s ass cheeks. Oh god, this was it. She couldn’t take the pounding in her pussy and the sensations at her puckered hole.

“I-I’m gonna—” She panted, trying to warn the two men torturing her with pleasure.

“Gonna what, huh?” she heard Alexander say in a heavy voice just as he wiggled a finger into the tight muscles of her asshole.

That was it. Another orgasm overtook her as Bryant filled her with his enormous cock and Alexander sent electric sparks flying to her pussy with his talented fingers at her back entrance. A tsunami of sensations swept through her, the feeling of Bryant’s hot seed spraying into her heightening her sensitivity. She screamed her pleasure as loudly as she could, not giving one fuck about who would hear her.

Finally, her orgasm faded, and she fell limply onto Bryant’s chest. Their heartbeats matched as they bathed in the warm afterglow. Even while Bryant’s cock softened inside of her, the nerve endings of Robin’s pussy once more fired to life. She moaned, exhausted but undeniably turned on, as Alexander began pumping his finger in and out of her asshole again. The tight sensation caused her to clamp down and draw his finger deeper into her. The idea of anal sex turned her on, and she’d experimented with pressing her vibrator into that forbidden spot, but she never thought it would turn her into such a creature of pure want.

Alexander wrapped his free arm around her waist, pulled her languid form off Bryant’s cock, and laid her face down on the bed. A second finger joined the first in her ass, and Robin gasped and pressed into the erotic pain.

“You like that, don’t you, Robin?” Alexander said as he pressed his cock against her wet entrance. “You like the feeling of my lubed-up fingers in your ass, don’t you?”

“Mmm hmm.” Robin was too spent and aroused for any sort of coherent English.

Alexander pushed himself inch by inch into Robin, slowing the pace of his fingers in her ass as he fucked her. She whimpered in protest, but Alexander only chuckled at her body’s pleading. After what seemed to Robin like a month of teasing, Alexander pushed into her to the hilt. Bryant then used his hands to lift Robin into a position where she knelt on the bed, offering up her weeping pussy and tight asshole to Alexander. He pushed harder and faster into her, finally giving her the pace she so profoundly needed.

“Now that we have you,” Alexander said, his voice only a groan, “we’ll be making you come like that on an extremely regular basis, Robin.” Her name escaped as a moan. “Bryant will put that wide cock in your ass while I fuck you. You want that?”

Robin felt a fresh wave of cream rush from her pussy at the suggestion, and she pushed back against Alexander’s cock. She rolled her head to the side to look at where she felt Bryant leaning on the bed. Her moans increased in volume when she saw his hand wrapped around his cock, expertly pumping up and down. Already, a drop of pre-cum accumulated on the tip, and Robin longed to taste it.

Bryant must have read her mind because the next thing she knew, Bryant had pressed the head of his cock against her lips. They locked eyes, and Robin opened her mouth, wrapped her lips around just the head of his cock, and sucked as hard as his girth would allow. A sharp gasp escaped from Bryant’s throat as he fucked his way deeper into Robin’s mouth. At the same time, Alexander increased the speed of his thrusts, obviously nearing his release. Robin moaned at the unbelievably overwhelming pleasure of being so full. With Alexander’s and Bryant’s cocks in her pussy and mouth and

Alexander's long, talented fingers in her asshole, the force of the sensation threatened to send her over the edge again.

Alexander's fingers left Robin's ass, and he flipped her over onto her back. The motion caused Robin to let go of Bryant's cock and scream in astonishment and sexual delight. Alexander hooked one arm underneath one of her legs and thrust himself completely inside of her. He pumped hard into her, brushing that electric spot inside her pussy, and Robin was once more caught in the maelstrom of her erotic release. A few pumps later, Alexander joined her in that vaulting ecstasy. As the two of them ground against each other at the apex of human pleasure, Robin felt hot liquid spill onto her breasts and turned her head to see Bryant's hand milking his seed from his cock.

Finally, they all fell back to earth and lay in a sticky jumble on the bed. Bryant clung to Robin's left side, and Alexander's head rested on Robin's right shoulder. The wall sconces cast a flickering orange glow onto the bed. Robin ran her fingers through both of her lovers' hair and relished the shade their skin took on in that soft post-coital light. This was what she wanted. She had come to Male Order expecting nothing, but the old platitude proved true. It happens when you least expect it. She smiled as she stared at the bed's canopy and snuggled closer against her men.

"Do you have plans for tomorrow?" Bryant's voice cut through the pregnant silence.

"Nothing besides work," Robin responded.

"Good."

"We plan on keeping you up very, very late." Alexander's tone suggested he had something in mind.

Bryant reached across Robin and punched Alexander in the shoulder.

"And I wanna take you downtown. There's...some people I want you to meet."

Robin would have agreed to anything in that moment. She pressed her face against Bryant's muscular shoulder and sighed an "mmm

hmm” in assent. The intoxicating scent of Bryant, Alexander, and sex filled her awareness, and she drifted to sleep settled in between them.

* * * *

The pillow on which Robin’s head laid rose up and down in a steady motion. Drowsily, one eye flicked open to examine the situation. The offending pillow was not, in fact, a pillow at all, but Bryant’s chest heaving with the deep breaths of sleep. A crimson sheet outlined Bryant’s form and momentarily confused Robin. Then the memory of the evening flooded her senses, heightened by the feeling of Alexander’s long arm wrapped tightly around her waist.

Robin lifted her head and took in the scene. She had fallen asleep between the two men. What a day, she thought to herself. Although it had started wretchedly, her trip to the country dance hall had changed everything. And now, she lay prone on Alexander’s gigantic bed, the hard bodies of the two most gorgeous men she’d ever known pressing their heat against her. She sighed in contentment.

Although staying in bed with these men forever sounded like a fantastic idea, reality beckoned from beyond the confines of the mansion, and the idea of a shower before starting her next day of work suddenly sounded quite alluring.

She wiggled her hips in a reluctant attempt to escape from Alexander’s tight grip. His embrace loosened, and Robin pulled herself to a sitting position. She crawled to the edge of the bed and pulled open a curtain.

“Hey.” Alexander’s sleepy whisper caused her to drop the fabric and turn back to him. “Don’t leave me yet,” he whispered, rolling onto his side and patting the bed next to him.

With a sigh, Robin returned to his side, and he pulled her against his chest and buried his face in her hair. Robin leaned against his collarbone and whispered into the silence. “Alexander.”

Their few words of speech heightened the silence, and Robin focused her attention on the sounds of her men's breathing. *Her men*. There was no doubt in her mind that last night was the beginning of something big. She had not yet discussed Bryant's ultimatum with Alexander, but the fire between them was undeniable. But what if Alexander's loss still stung too much for intimacy? Her breath caught in her chest, and she snuggled closer to Alexander, desperate to enjoy this intimacy now that she realized it could be ephemeral.

"I'm a prick." Alexander's voice cut through the dark. "Robin." He readjusted himself so that he faced her. "I haven't treated you with the respect you deserve."

"No, really, it's—"

"No." Even though she couldn't make out the look in his eyes, the sound of his voice made her suspect it was the hard glint he wore when he was deadly serious about something. "I fell for you the first day I met you." His fingers stroked along the sensitive flesh of her side, leaving her skin tingling in its wake. "You challenged me and didn't let me control you. I don't want to sound like the poor little rich boy, but it's tough." He cleared his throat before continuing. "All my life, I've had everything handed to me. I know how fortunate I am, and I am so grateful that my family could give me these privileges."

"Since moving back to Male Order, I've done a lot of soul-searching." He stilled his hand on Robin as if to emphasize the gravity of his words. "A lot, Robin. What's happened, I've found, is that I never had the chance to grow up. The normal struggles that young people go through were taken away from me. I never had to work for anything. It was all given to me freely. Like when my mom died..." Alexander's voice quavered with emotion, and he stopped to take a deep breath.

"When she died, I never gave myself a chance to grieve. Any normal man would have had to deal with how he felt. I just used money to drink and gamble and fuck away my misery." He dug his

fingers into Robin's side. "Robin, I wasn't a very good person then, and I'm not certain I've completely recovered from that."

"You have, Alexander. You—"

"No. I can't forgive myself for what I've done. Not yet, at least. But I'm not asking for your forgiveness or your sympathy. If we're going to be together, you need to know all this."

Robin's heart pounded in her chest. He wanted to be with her! She didn't care about his past, didn't care about any other women. Somewhere deep inside her heart, there was a certainty that Alexander would never go back to that lifestyle. She knew that he was a better man than that. Caught in the flurry of emotions, Robin could only nod in response to Alexander.

"I hurt a lot of people, not the least of whom were my fathers. I cut off all communication while I was in Europe, taking only their money. They knew I needed time to process what had happened to Mom. We all did. But I abused their love for me, and for that, I can never forgive myself. Especially since I never got a chance to thank them before the accident." His breathing became shallow, and a single tear shone in the scant light entering through the curtains. "They needed me here to help them get over the pain. We needed to become a family again without her. I knew that, and I still abandoned them. I was self-centered. Hell, I still am."

"When I came back, I hated being here, and I thought that was because I missed Europe. Then I realized what I hated. It wasn't Texas or Male Order or any of that. It was what being here represented. This was the first place I was spoiled. A whole staff of people in this house made sure I was always happy. And after I finally admitted to myself how much I hurt my fathers, I came to realize where my anger and pain came from. I was given so much, but I destroyed it. The only way this guilt will go away is through some serious self-exploration. I need to figure out why I grew up resenting everyone. I always had everything I wanted, and I hated my family, my friends, everyone for giving it to me."

“But that’s what drew me to you, Robin. You never game me what I wanted. You challenged me from the first day, and that intrigued me.” One of Alexander’s hands pressed against the small of Robin’s back, and he pulled them so their noses were touching. “I’m sorry about the way I’ve treated you. I’ve had a hard time expressing anything but hatred or resentment recently. You make me want to be better, Robin. I want to learn to express myself and to communicate for you. I want to give you the life you deserve.”

His lips brushed lightly against Robin’s, but when she tried to kiss them, he pulled back. “Is this what you want?” he asked, his voice gravely serious.

“Yes, Alexander. I want you, and I want Bryant. I want this.”

Chapter 11

“Is this her?” A woman with brown hair and warm blue eyes identical to Bryant’s bounced down the steps of Jacqueline’s department store in Male Order’s elegant downtown district. She wore a form-fitting black dress with bright floral accents and a purple crushed-velvet scarf, but her hair hung messily around her shoulders, pinned back only around her face.

Robin leaned her face against Bryant’s shoulder, and he entwined his fingers with hers. “Don’t worry,” he said against her hair, “she doesn’t bite.” He exchanged a bemused glance with Alexander. “Most of the time.” Bryant kissed Robin’s hair before releasing her and running to embrace his sister.

“Gillian Clare-Sumner, I would like to introduce the most beautiful woman in the world, Robin Lawrence. Robin, this is Gillian. I hope you can abide her.”

“Oh, shut it, you.” Gillian enthusiastically wrapped her arms around Robin in an embrace, then held her by the shoulders. “Look at you! There is no way you could be any cuter. I can’t believe Bryant’s been holding out on me for weeks!”

Robin was shocked by the sudden onslaught of affection, but she recognized the same warmth and friendliness that made her fall for Bryant. She giggled at Gillian’s remarks.

“Well, these two have been holding out on me! I am in dire need of female companionship.”

Gillian hugged Robin again and smiled at her brother and his best friend. “Oh my god, I love her already. Now, shoo! It’s girly shopping time.” She gestured dismissively in their direction.

Bryant and Alexander both kissed Robin on the cheek. Alexander ran a hand through her hair.

“If she scares you too much, just call 911.”

“Away!” Gillian shouted at the men. She hooked her arm around Robin’s elbow and led her to the entrance of the department store. “Now call me Gilly, cutie pie, all my friends do.”

Robin’s jaw dropped when they stepped through the glass doors and into the atrium of Jacqueline’s. Black marble covered nearly every surface, and unbelievably fashionable women stood behind what seemed like thousands of makeup counters. Every luxury makeup brand on earth had a counter at Jacqueline’s. Robin couldn’t help but stare.

“If you think this is impressive, just wait until we reach our final destination.” She took Robin’s hand and led her in the direction of a saleswoman. Robin kept looking around her, amazed at her surroundings. She was actually the luckiest woman alive.

“Come on!” A jerk on Robin’s hand drew her out of her thoughts. Gillian had found a saleswoman to escort them around the store, and Robin scurried excitedly to catch up with her. They ascended an impressive marble staircase, but the second floor truly awed Robin. The high ceilings, bright windows overlooking downtown Male Order, and sparse, tastefully done displays reminded Robin of a cathedral. Although, this was a cathedral of fashion.

The highest-end brands covered every surface. Her eyes darted in all directions as she spied the latest runway pieces from Dolce and Gabbana, Christian Dior, Givenchy, Valentino. Robin’s head spun as she mingled among pieces she had only seen in her wildest dreams.

Reality came crashing into her dreamland as she overheard Gillian consulting with the saleswoman. “Do you have the new McQueen gowns in yet? One of those would look so cute on her figure.”

Robin trudged slowly to where they stood, gesticulating wildly while they discussed the season’s formal wear. Reluctantly, Robin tapped Gillian on the shoulder. “Gilly? This is great inspiration, but

where's the ready-to-wear department?" Robin had done a quick calculation and figured that she could afford a small number of designer pieces.

Gillian looked at Robin as if she had just propositioned they make a human sacrifice. "Why on earth would you want to hide behind—" She lowered her voice to barely above a whisper, as if loathe to utter the term in the Church of Coco Chanel. "*—ready-to-wear?*"

"I can't afford designer gowns! But I could manage a sensible sundress, maybe."

"Honey, you have moved way beyond the world of sensible sundresses."

"What do you mean?" Robin was slightly offended by Gillian's accusation that there was something wrong with Robin's fashion sense.

"I am correct in assuming that you're fucking my brother and Al, right?"

Robin turned a shade of beet red as Gillian's question echoed in the expanse of the department store. "Not so loud!"

"Oh, honey. This is Male Order. The word fuck is hardly going to offend anyone." Gillian turned to the only other customers in sight, a woman and her tween daughter. She smiled sweetly in their direction and, in her thick Texas accent, hollered, "Fuck, these are beautiful!"

The mother gave Gillian a dirty look and hurried her daughter to the other end of the section. Robin was fairly sure that had to do with Gillian's audacious personality and not the remark hurled in their direction.

"Okay, but do we have to bring up my sex life?"

"Honey." Gillian gave Robin an indulgent smile. "You have dried cum on your neck."

Robin's hand shot up to her neck. Damn it! She knew she shouldn't have let Alexander and Bryant hurry her out of the house like that. They had thrown off her entire morning beauty ritual.

“Nothing to be embarrassed about, cutie.” Gillian took on a suddenly businesslike stance. “Now the real stuff. You’re *affiliating with*—” Gillian looked at Robin for approval and received it. “—one of the richest men under the age of thirty-five on the face of the planet.” She rested her hand on Robin’s shoulder. “There’s no way on the Lord’s green earth he’s going to let you be seen in anything but the finest money can buy. People will think he’s not taking care of his woman.”

What! Such attitudes incensed Robin. First, what made him think she was his woman? When she looked in her heart, she knew she belonged with Alexander and Bryant, but she hadn’t told them that! And second, she did not need a man taking care of her. She was an independent woman of the twenty-first century. Just then, the glimmer of a sequin on a stunning Dolce gown caught her attention. Maybe she should hear Gillian out.

“And that means what?”

“You know the Abrams family started Jacqueline’s, don’t you?”

Was there nothing the Abrams family couldn’t do? “No, I didn’t,” Robin said hesitantly.

“Al’s arranged for you to have anything in the store. He’s taking care of all of it.”

Robin thought her jaw must be only an inch from the floor.

“Shut your mouth, pretty little Miss Robin, this is just how things are done in Male Order.” Gillian captured Robin in another hug. “And you’re one of the chosen ones! Oh, I can’t wait until we’re sisters!”

Robin’s heart nearly pounded out of her chest at those words. Sisters? As in sisters-in-law after she married Bryant? Of course the thought had crossed her mind in daydreams, but hearing it said out loud made it seem so real. Chills danced up her spine. Married! Her mind took a quick turn, though. Could someone get married to two people?

Gillian must have picked up on Robin’s confusion. “Al and Bry’ll duke it out over who gets to legally marry you. Trust me, it’s so much

fun to watch that fight,” Gillian said conspiratorially. “But make no mistake, if they’re taking you shopping, they mean to make you their wife.”

Robin’s swoon nearly knocked over a mannequin in a form-fitting Armani cocktail dress.

Gillian reached out to steady Robin. “Now, let’s go shopping!”

She started toward the dressing rooms at one end of the enormous hall of fashion. As she approached the room, another employee greeted them clad in a tight black blazer and black pencil skirt with hair tucked in a neat bun. A secret service-style wire curled from one of her ears, and she clutched a clipboard to her chest, appearing to be holding on to it for dear life.

“Mrs. Clare-Sumner! Always a pleasure. Are you here for that Gaultier you asked us to pull?” She was friendly, but her attitude smacked of the trademark aloofness associated with haute couture.

“Ooh, I had clear forgotten about that!” Gillian hopped from foot to foot like an eager child at the mention of the designer garment. “But I’m not worried about little old me today.” Gillian gestured to where Robin stood nervously beside her. “This is Robin Lawrence.”

Robin extended a hand to the woman, but she just stared at it and turned back to Gillian.

Gillian let out an exasperated sigh. “*Robin Lawrence*,” she said, stressing each syllable. “You know, the one who’s working at the *Abrams* mansion.”

“Oh!” The woman straightened, and her eyes widened in realization. Her hand shot to her earpiece, and she turned away from Robin and Gillian. “We have a code six *Abrams* in women’s formalwear. I repeat, a *code six Abrams* in women’s formalwear.”

She whipped around, a bright customer service smile plastered across her face.

“Ms. Lawrence, it’s so lovely to meet you. Would you like anything to drink? Champagne, perhaps?” Robin wondered what exactly it was about a “code six *Abrams*” that made their assistant’s

attitude change. And how did they know who she was? She didn't have time to be upset, though, as a flute of champagne was shoved in her hand by a nearly identical assistant before Robin could respond to their question.

"Right this way, Ms. Lawrence, Mrs. Clare-Sumner." The assistant threw open a curtain and marched through, and Gillian gestured for them to follow. They arrived at a large room that looked more like something that would belong at New York Fashion Week than something in a department store. A long runway bisected the room with a full set of mirrors at one end and a curtain at the other. Velvet curtains demarcated a changing area in one corner. Gillian sat down on one of the modern, white leather chairs, and Robin followed suit.

The runway curtain fluttered open with a flourish, and Robin was struck dumb by the sight that awaited her. Three assistants pushed a rack of at least twenty of the most beautiful and elaborate dresses Robin had ever seen. They were followed by a short man with fashionably shaggy hair and a moustache. He was dressed in a tight-fitting striped waistcoat and matching pants, and he wore the same sort of richly made Oxfords Alexander always wore. She smiled at the thought of Alexander and dancing with him, making love with him, waking up between him and Bryant.

"Someone just got laid," the man proclaimed with scandal in his voice. He stepped off the runway and exchanged cheek kisses with Gillian. "Is this her?" he asked Gillian as he turned toward Robin.

"Yes, indeed. Luc Saint-Croix, meet Robin Lawrence, the girl who's managed to bag my brother *and* Al."

Luc gasped and took Robin's hand in both of his. "Girl, teach me all your ways. I wanna know how to bag two such juicy pieces of man meat!"

Gillian cringed at that description of her brother, and Robin shrugged in response.

“I don’t know,” Robin said shyly. “It just feels right. They’re both so different and—”

“Oh, girl, ain’t that the truth?” Luc said as he took a seat next to Robin. “I can’t wait to hear about how you handle that sex bomb Alexander. He’s a pistol and a half!”

Robin giggled at Luc’s description of Alexander and relaxed into the leather chair.

“Luc is Jacqueline’s resident stylist and designer of their in-house line,” Gillian clarified. “When Bry called me this morning and told me you needed a Cotillion dress, I just knew you had to meet with Luc.” Gillian reached across Robin and took Luc’s hand. “Plus, we’re besties, and I miss him so much when I’m in New York!”

“Oh, sweetie, I miss you, too. Thank the Lord you’re here in the summer!” Luc rose to his feet and stepped back onto the runway. “But enough chitchat. Let’s get the beautiful Miss Robin in the gown she deserves.” Luc snapped his fingers, and one of his fashion automatons pulled a rack forward. Robin shivered in anticipation of the feel of the lush fabric on her skin. While she kept up with fashion, she had never donned a garment anywhere near as luxurious as those that Luc thumbed through.

Luc stopped his perusal of the dresses, squinted at Robin, and snapped his fingers again. “None of these are good enough for this cutie pie,” he scolded his assistant. “Next!” Another black-clad assistant brought another rack of garments for Luc to inspect. A long, deep red gown caught his eye, and he grabbed it from where it hung.

Crossing to the edge of the runway, Luc dangled the dress in front of Robin and Gillian.

Gillian grabbed Robin’s arm in excitement. “Oh, honey, you have to try that one.” She hopped from her seat and reached out to feel the silky fabric, but Luc swatted her away.

“Don’t you dare! This is only one of three Valentino made. I won’t have your grubby palms on something that our guest might

wear.” Luc snapped his fingers again, and the assistant he earlier shunned grabbed the dress from his hand and spirited it away. “Next!”

The third rack met with more approval from Luc, and he pulled a purple Badgley Mischka, a one-shouldered Carolina Herrera, and a sleeveless black Chanel gown with gold accents that had Robin salivating. She couldn’t wait to try these gowns on, but had a guilty feeling gnawing in her stomach. Even though she knew Alexander could afford anything she wanted, she still felt uneasy accepting any one of these dresses that she knew, from her window-shopping trips to designer boutiques in Dallas, cost several thousand dollars each.

After Luc and Gillian had inspected the selections, one of the assistants led Robin to a large, mirrored room with a different dress hanging on each wall. She was instructed to try on each dress and, no matter her opinion, model it on the runway. Parading herself in front of others was never Robin’s favorite endeavor, and the idea made her a bit uncomfortable.

Her discomfort vanished as soon as she donned the red Valentino. The feel of the smooth fabric against her skin reminded her of the sweet caresses she had received just hours ago. She turned, and the sensation of the dress against her ass forced her to remember Bryant’s hand there and the reverence with which he brushed against her forbidden hole.

When Robin inspected herself in the mirror, her smiling lips were the same deep red of the dress, reflecting her admiration for the flush all this arousal gave her. She pulled up the hem of the too-long dress and proceeded to the runway. She strutted down the catwalk, newly confident from the adoration she had just received from Gillian and Luc.

They, however, were not impressed. They both tilted their heads back and forth as they examined Robin. Finally, Luc sighed and stepped onto the runway, placing a hand on Robin’s shoulder.

“It’s beautiful, and god knows you’re just as pretty as they come, but girl, this just isn’t it.”

"I agree," Gillian said as she attempted to mount the runway but was once more halted by Luc. "You need something with even more wow to it."

Slightly defeated, Robin walked back to the dressing room and moved on to the Badgley Mischka. That dress met with the same tepid reaction from her shopping companions, as did the Carolina Herrera and, much to Robin's chagrin, the Chanel.

Returning to the runway in her denim skirt and plain T-shirt, Robin sat on the edge of the catwalk as Gillian and Luc conspired on how best to find the appropriate gown. Their expressions did nothing to bolster Robin's spirits. Suddenly, Luc hopped to his feet and clapped his hands quickly.

"The Dior!" he exclaimed, and Robin's heart did a backflip. It had always been her dream to wear a real couture gown from Dior, even if just for a few moments. "Well, well," Luc said as he eyed Robin's reaction. "It looks like little Miss Sex Bomb here likes Dior." He leaned over and embraced her. "It's a one-of-a-kind vintage gown, honey. You're gonna just *die*, positively *die*."

"Don't do that! My brother'll have my neck." Gillian smirked as Luc groaned at her attempt at humor.

Luc ducked back through the entrance, and Robin and Gillian waited in nervous anticipation. They could not have imagined, though, the spectacle of a gown that Luc himself wheeled out. It was a champagne-colored, strapless, princess cut dress with a molded bodice and a skirt composed of blue-edged petals that made it look like the dress was emerging from mystical depths. Crystals covered the entire garment, glistening and accentuating every ripple of the fabric.

Whereas Robin had to be ushered into the dressing room for the first few dresses, she raced there this time, beating the assistants with the dress. When she wiggled herself into the gown and took the catwalk, she felt like Cinderella. Gillian and Luc audibly gasped as Robin slowly, deliberately made her way down the runway.

“Oh my god,” Luc whispered. “That thing was made for you.”

Tears welled up in Gillian’s eyes, and Robin’s eyes responded in kind. Gillian successfully sidestepped Luc and leapt onto the runway. Robin instinctively hugged Gillian, for the first time certain this person would be in her life for the long term. “Oh, Robin, baby, I’m so glad you’re gonna be in our family.”

Relief filled Robin’s chest. For the first time since she left her family home in Waxahachie eight years ago, Robin would have a family of her own choosing. She hugged Gillian tighter until Luc cleared his throat emphatically.

“Okay, you two. Time to get that dress off. Don’t want it getting *too* mussed before the workout I’m sure Bryant and Alexander are gonna give it at the Cotillion.”

Robin reluctantly returned to the dressing room and removed her gown. Against her better judgment, she stopped one of the assistants and asked how much the gown cost. Maybe she could pay for half of it and ease her uncertainty.

The assistant put her hand to her earpiece, turned away, and muttered in some sort of vogue language. She turned back to Robin and said without expression, “Twenty-six.” A high-pitched choking sound escaped from Robin’s chest. “Will there be anything else, Ms. Lawrence?” Robin shook her head, still speechless.

She changed back into her normal clothes, her body crying out for the feel of the decadent garment she had just worn. She loved the dress, but taking that much money from Alexander didn’t seem right.

She didn’t have much time to ponder her dilemma, though, as the sounds of a scuffle out by the runway filled the dressing room.

“No, you don’t!” Luc exclaimed just as a loud crash sounded.

“This is *girl* territory!” Gillian’s high-pitched whine traveled to Robin’s ears. “Well, and Luc territory! But not your ass!”

Then the curtain to the dressing area whipped open, revealing Bryant standing with his arms open. Robin rushed forward, and Bryant picked her up off the floor and spun her around a few times

before setting her back on the ground. Apparently heedless of their audience, Bryant hugged Robin against his body and captured her mouth in a passionate kiss. Robin's body fired to life at the sudden action.

Bryant scooped Robin into his arms, and although public displays of affection usually unnerved her, Robin had no problem clinging to his chest and planting kisses on his muscular neck. He carried her out onto the runway, and the shrieking protests Robin had overheard grew louder.

"Bry, what in the Lord's name do you think you're doing here?" Gillian stood with her hands on her hips, glowering at her younger brother. "You know seeing your woman's Cotillion dress is second only in bad juju to seeing her in her wedding dress! Now, out!"

Bryant only smiled at his sister and pulled Robin tighter against him.

"Now, Gilly, you know I don't care one bit about your *bad juju*. I just care about getting the most beautiful girl in the world ready for tonight." He leaned his face down to Robin's and kissed her. She returned his kiss eagerly, the heat coursing through her veins overriding any concerns she might have about propriety.

"Ahem." Luc cleared his throat, causing Bryant and Robin to separate their lips, and Bryant placed Robin back on solid ground. Bryant wore a sheepish look, and Robin was certain her expression matched. Luc crossed to Robin and placed a light kiss on her cheek. "You ready for a little break from shopping, honey?"

Bryant reached an arm around her waist, convincing Robin that a break was most definitely in order.

"Yeah, I apparently have something to get ready for." She felt a grin spread across her face as she thought about how pleasant surprises were in this town.

"Okay, gorgeous. Well, you found your dress, and we'll send it on over to you as soon as the alterations are done." Luc's eyes darted to

where Bryant's hand kneaded Robin's hip. "Or should we send that on over to the Abrams compound?"

"No, no, my apartment is fine." Heat crept up Robin's neck and face. She turned her face up to Bryant. "I don't want to be too much of an inconvenience."

Bryant leaned down and brushed his nose against her ear. "You keep doing what you did last night, and you'll never be an inconvenience, darlin'." Robin felt her blush intensify, as she was sure everyone could hear Bryant's whisper.

Luc grabbed Robin's upper arm in an affectionate gesture. "We'll figure it all out, honey. You go with that decadent piece of—"

"Don't you dare," Gillian said with a look of admonition.

"Fine." Luc sighed and released Robin. "I'll see you again soon, cutie."

Robin turned to say her good-byes as Bryant pulled her toward the exit. "It was really nice meeting you, Luc, and of course, you, Gillian!" She barely had time to finish her sentence before Bryant pulled her out onto the main floor of Jacqueline's and placed another kiss on her lips.

"Let's get you out of here," he said breathlessly, and his expression turned wicked. "This place has entirely too many clothes, and those are the last thing you need now you're with us."

Chapter 12

Robin's breath caught in her throat. After Bryant literally swept her off her feet that afternoon at Jacqueline's, gifts and surprises had filled her day. First, Bryant took her to Stephanie's, Male Order's premiere broker of jewelry, and instructed her to pick out a necklace for herself while he returned to the stables to work. Robin spent an hour marveling over the selection of sparkling treats. Her shy outer shell cracked a little as she chatted with the salespeople, swapping stories about life as a commoner amongst the wealthy residents of Male Order. Chatting with Gillian and Luc earlier had really helped to ease Robin's anxiety, and she felt herself relaxing with someone besides her men for the first time since she arrived in Male Order.

After choosing a white gold necklace with a three-row circular diamond pendant, a Rolls-Royce awaited her at the entrance to Stephanie's. The sight of the car warmed her heart. She had confided her admiration for the vintage cars to Bryant at their picnic. She luxuriated in the feel of the leather on the ride home, fingering the new necklace and marveling at the brilliance of its stones.

When she arrived back at the mansion, the real surprise awaited her. Rupert led her to what Robin believed was an empty bedroom. When he threw the door open with great flourish, Robin found that she had been mistaken. Hanging racks of clothing, like she had seen at Jacqueline's, lined the perimeter of the room. Underneath them were shoe boxes emblazoned with the biggest names in fashion. "All for you, Ms. Lawrence," Rupert had informed her. "Mrs. Clare-Sumner picked out the garments, and Mr. Abrams and Mr. Clare picked out some of the shoes and the garments in the closet." The

usually staid butler blushed a bit at the statement, and Robin suddenly wanted to forego the rest of her new wardrobe and throw open the closet.

Rupert left her to gawk at the clothing in peace. She walked up to each of the racks, staring in wonder then rapidly rifling through the hangers, delighted at what was now hers. She also fell to the floor and ripped open the shoe boxes with all the zeal of a small child at Christmas. Pair after pair of strappy stiletto heels captured her interest, and she studied each with almost academic curiosity. All the while, she couldn't forget Rupert's sudden bashfulness when he mentioned the closet.

And the contents of the closet was certainly cause for Rupert's reaction. Robin shuddered, and her pussy clenched with excitement when she opened the closet. Some of the most elaborate and well-made lingerie she had ever seen hung in the closet. She reached out to finger the silky material of the several sets of matching corsets and thongs. Touching the fabric made her long to know how it would feel against her dampening slit, how it would brush against her clit when Bryant and Alexander pulled it aside to push her over the edge.

After checking to be certain she was alone, Robin sank to the closet floor and unbuttoned the top button of her denim shorts. One hand wiggled underneath the waistband. Good thing she had all these new clothes at her disposal, she thought. She needed them as the crotch of shorts now appeared to be soaked. Just as she prepared to wiggle a finger inside of her waiting pussy, a knock at the door shocked her back to the present.

"Yes?" she asked, attempting to banish any shaky hint of her arousal.

"Ms. Lawrence." Oh thank god, just Rupert. She couldn't handle hearing Alexander or Bryant's voice just then. "Mr. Abrams asked me to inform you that you will be dining with him and Mr. Clare tonight at seven. Please dress for the occasion."

"Okay," she managed, her voice still husky. "I can do that."

She heard his steps retreating and pulled her hand out from the shorts and fastened them. She had a mission now. She hopped to her feet and excitedly studied the lingerie. She couldn't wait to model the lingerie tonight. And with her newfound confidence and comfort, Alexander and Bryant were in for a treat.

* * * *

Alexander paced in the foyer, anxious for his dinner date to descend the grand staircase.

"Settle on down, Al," Bryant drawled from an armchair, one leg tossed over the side. "You've been like this all day, and you've had nothing to worry about."

Bryant was right. Nerves had plagued Alexander since he released Robin into Gillian's hands this morning. He had spent so many nights fantasizing about her, so many days trying to convince himself that hatred caused the intensity of his feelings, not...

Alexander's breath caught in his chest at that thought. *Love*. He loved Robin. Even though he only then allowed himself to acknowledge it, he knew the feeling had long since developed. From the day she first argued with him in his office, shy but always passionate, he knew that she had the power to reduce him to pieces. With his track record of a raging asshole, he figured the burning in his chest was due to an escalating ire.

He never imagined he would fall in love.

"Al, seriously." Bryant's voice returned him to the conversation.

"I know, I know." The speed of his pacing escalated. "She loved shopping, Gillian didn't scare her off, and Rupert said she literally squealed at the clothes." Alexander sighed and raised his hands to his temples. "I understand that means she'll be down soon for dinner, but, Bry, you can't blame me for my apprehension. I've been a right douche to her for weeks now."

“But Robin’s not like the pieces of ass we chased in Europe. I think she knows a good deal when she sees one.”

“Me? She thinks anything involving me is a good deal? If that is indeed the case, she is nowhere near as clever as I believed.”

“Al. You said you told her everything, and based on the feel of her mouth on my cock this morning, she’s still more than willing to do this.”

Alexander’s cock tightened at the memory of Robin’s mouth around Bryant’s cock as Alexander tasted the sweet depths of her pussy. Suddenly, he wasn’t so certain he could make it through an entire meal before burying himself in her cunt again.

Something caught Bryant’s attention, and he sprang to his feet. Alexander turned to see what had caught Bryant’s attention, and he had to reach out to steady himself on Bryant’s shoulder.

Robin appeared at the top of the staircase wearing a short, tight, one-shouldered white dress and white stiletto heels. With each step down the staircase, her dress rode up to reveal garters supporting her sheer white tights. Just the sight of her made Alexander’s breathing turn ragged and his pants excruciatingly tight. He knew his erection would be visible in his expertly fitted suit pants, but he was not at all ashamed of his unrelenting attraction to Robin.

Alexander turned to see Bryant just as entranced by her lusty beauty. God, how could he be so lucky? He and his best friend had fallen for this woman, and all signs pointed to her falling for them, as well.

A flush heated her milky skin as Robin took in their stares. She continued her descent and finally reached the ground level and crossed toward them.

“Hi,” she whispered shyly.

“Hello, darlin’.” Bryant took Robin in his arms and planted a passionate, lingering kiss on her mouth.

“Well, hello to you, too,” Robin said, giggling, as the blush spread to her chest.

“Robin.” Alexander could only breathe her name as he walked toward her and cupped her face in his hands. He stroked his thumb over her cheekbone, and she leaned into his touch. He lowered his mouth to hers, tasting what he had missed all day. His cock begged for more, and he had to stop. “I’m not terribly certain we can make it through an entire meal with you in that dress.”

“I’m definitely hungry for something else.” Bryant approached and wrapped an arm around her shoulders.

Robin smiled as she leaned backward against Bryant while keeping her arms around Alexander’s waist, and her lips pulled into a wicked grin. “That was the point.”

Alexander leaned down and lightly brushed his lips over Robin’s. “We have reservations, Ms. Lawrence,” he teased her. “Hester’s might take away our private room if we don’t keep it.” He mustered all his strength and pulled away from Robin. Bryant followed suit and placed a hand on the small of her back to lead her to where the Maserati awaited them.

The car delivered them to Hester’s Steak House, and after advising the valet of the pain he would experience if any harm came to the car, Alexander joined Bryant in helping Robin out of the car. As she stood up, he caught another glimpse of the white garter against her milky skin. As much as that dress made him want to fuck her right there and then, he couldn’t wait to inspect exactly what she wore underneath it.

They entered the restaurant, and Alexander watched as Robin’s eyes widened to the size of platters as she took in the decadent sight for the first time. Alexander joined in her appreciation, thinking this sight was a modern American equivalent to France’s Rococo dining rooms. The room was wide, with undulating partition walls creating intimate alcoves on the edges of the wide dining area. Modern light fixtures of clouded glass and iron cast a warm glow on the oak tables and chairs scattered across the floor. The space was clean and

modern, but the colors and materials lent the space an air of delightful excess.

“Mr. Abrams, so good to see you.” A host scurried toward their group, and while his greeting sounded sincere, the host’s exasperated expression suggested it wasn’t. He and Alexander had clashed a few too many times for excessive niceties. “The Abrams family’s private dining room awaits you, sir. Right this way.” The three of them followed him into a room to the left of the entrance. The round room was deep red with a light fixture comprised of a swirling metal sculpture tangled over the large table designed for far more than three. Alexander shared a look of amusement as Robin’s jaw dropped once more in awe of the space.

The host took his leave, and Robin turned to her companions. “You guys, this is incredible. All of this is incredible.” She took a seat at the table, and despite the nine other chairs available, Alexander and Bryant took the seats flanking her. She looked between them then looked down, shyness casting over her features. “I really don’t deserve this.”

“Hey,” Bryant said, capturing her chin with his hand and turning it toward him. “Yes you do. Al and I would go to the ends of the earth and back for you.”

Alexander massaged the place between her shoulder blades. “I promise you, I will spare no expense for as long as I am with you. You’re the kindest, most beautiful, and sexiest woman we’ve ever met.” She turned her head toward him and fixed her deep brown eyes upon him. “You deserve everything.”

He watched as Robin smiled at his words then parted her small pink lips, a gasp escaping from her throat. Bryant’s hand had slipped underneath the hem of her dress. Robin writhed into the movement, and Bryant looked up to exchange a knowing look with Alexander. Bryant pressed his hand farther up Robin’s thigh, nearing the source of the sweet odor of female arousal that now surrounded the three of them.

Following Bryant's lead, Alexander dragged his hand from her back up to the sensitive spot on the back of her neck. She shuddered at his touch, and Alexander took that as permission to push ahead. He ran his hand across her collarbone and brushed his finger downward. Finally, he grasped the globe of her soft breast straining against the fabric of her dress and held it in his hand. Alexander leaned over and brushed kisses along her ear, dragging his tongue along the sensitive flesh just behind it. At the same time, his hand ventured further, pushing underneath the neckline of her dress, his cock begging for mercy against the zipper of his pants as he felt the soft skin.

Robin let out a sharp noise when Alexander's fingers tweaked one of her nipples at the same time that Bryant's hand appeared to start a rhythmic motion between her legs. "U-um..." Words seemed difficult for Robin, Alexander thought to himself smugly as he increased his pressure on her nipple and twisted. That elicited a scream.

"Please, you guys," she panted. "Someone's gonna hear." Even as she expressed her apprehension, she bucked her hips toward Bryant's hand.

"You think they didn't think of that already?" Bryant asked. "Honey, this is Male Order. *Everything* here is soundproof." Alexander laughed at Bryant's statement.

Robin's moans increased in volume, and Alexander could no longer take the tight skin around his impossibly hard cock. Without consulting Bryant, he withdrew his hand from her breast and grabbed her ass. He lifted her from the seat, and she yelped at the sudden movement. He threw Robin's small body over his shoulder with one arm while he used the other to send the table's settings crashing to the ground. His cock allowed him to show no mercy, so he tossed Robin down onto the newly cleared table.

"Alexan—"

He clamped a hand over her mouth as he climbed over the table and pushed his erection against her thigh. "Did you really expect me not to fuck you when you decided to wear that dress?"

* * * *

The forceful landing on the table knocked the wind out of Robin. Her arousal, however, didn't need air, and the cream from her pussy was beginning to escape from her crotchless panties and drip down her thigh. Every inch of her burned for the two men poised to take her. While Alexander clamped his hand over her mouth, Bryant continued his explorations beneath her dress. One strong finger brushed her slick entrance and stroked against the dripping, oversensitive flesh, and Robin screamed against Alexander's hand, purposely letting her teeth graze across his palm.

"Al, I think our woman is wearing a bit too much clothing." He used a second finger to push open her labia and brushed against her clit, causing her hips to shoot upward of their own volition. Bryant forced a finger inside her, hooking it upward to brush against her sweet spot and send electric shocks out to her limbs. As she gasped and clenched her inner muscles., he added a second finger and began finger-fucking her in earnest, massaging little circles over her clit with his thumb.

Bryant pushed the hem of her dress upward to reveal her crotchless, silken white thong and matching white garter belt. Robin audibly whimpered when she felt the heat of his breath brush across her thigh as he moved between her legs. She spread them wide for them, bucking her hips forward, begging for the sweet ecstasy of his mouth on her cunt.

Bryant obliged, licking along the dripping seam of her pussy before opening her with his fingers and laving his tongue against her engorged clit. The first rhythmic spasms of an oncoming climax pulled at her inner muscles, and she pushed her hips toward Bryant, knowing how close she was to sweet release.

Suddenly, Bryant's mouth departed from her swollen pussy, and Robin felt soft cloth encircling her wrists and pinning them above her

head. Consumed as she was by Bryant's ministrations, at first, Alexander's capture of her wrists escaped her notice. She looked up to see Alexander securing her wrists together with the discarded tablecloth. The restraint only heightened her arousal, and the absence of a mouth against her sopping cunt infuriated her more.

Only Alexander and Bryant didn't give her any time to focus on her anger. Bryant's hands slipped underneath her hips and flipped her so that she lay face down on the table. Before she could protest, she felt Bryant's hands massage the globes of her ass. His fingers left trails of electric sparks, and Robin thought she could probably come just from this sort of attention as well.

Before she could lift her hips to plead for Bryant's hands where she wanted them most, a cold sensation ran down the crease of her ass. A second pair of hands joined Bryant's massaging her ass. This time the hands ventured further toward her forbidden hole, and she felt Bryant's fingers press against the puckered opening.

Alexander's long fingers dragged up Robin's back and found her chin. He directed her face to the side so she could look at him despite her restrained arms.

"You liked it last night when I had my fingers up that tight little hole, didn't you?" Heat emanated from his gaze, and she felt his bulge brush against her side. "How would you feel about Bryant fucking you there?"

Bryant's naked cock pressed against the seam of her ass, and Robin turned to see that Bryant had quickly removed all his clothes. He held her ass open, and his lubed cockhead pressed against the tight ring of muscles guarding her virgin hole. The pressure sent shockwaves to her pussy. Bryant must have sensed that, and he lowered a hand to her pussy. Three fingers pushed into her and began fucking, hard. Finally finding the sensation she wanted, she wriggled herself against his fingers, pressing alternately into them and against Bryant's cock at her asshole. Alexander rubbed her clit, and Robin

went flying, the euphoric sensations of orgasm propelling her to heights she had only lately discovered.

Alexander gave her no time to recover. He wrapped his long arms around her torso and pulled her to a sitting position. Alexander leaned forward and gave her a passionate kiss, exploring the depths of her mouth with his tongue, taking time to drink in her taste. Bryant laved his tongue at the base of her neck, and Robin felt their hands working to pull her dress fully off her.

“Oh, honey,” Bryant said in a reverent whisper once they had fully disrobed her. She looked between the two of them, reveling in their reverent gazes. Clearly her choice of the silky white bra with matching crotchless thong, garter belt, and thigh-high stockings met with their approval. She shuddered as Alexander ran a hand over her breasts, stopping to pinch her nipples through the fabric.

“It looks like you did indeed intend to be fucked this evening.” Alexander smirked as he enveloped her breast in his hand and pumped. “I believe Bryant and I would both be happy to oblige.”

“I sure would,” Bryant cooed against her ear. “I can’t wait to bury my cock in your ass while Alexander fucks you.”

What? Robin’s heart started racing, and she felt her blistering juices burst from her pussy at the thought of fulfilling her deepest, darkest fantasy with the two men. Just the suggestion made her moan and writhe.

“Fuck her, Bry,” Alexander said, lowering his hand and pushing apart her nether lips. “She’s wet as can be.”

Alexander dismounted the table and began stripping out of his suit while Bryant lowered Robin onto her stomach and raised her hips so that she rested on her knees, offering her ass to him. Bryant leaned over her back, and she felt his full lips brush against her ear.

“You sure about this?”

“Completely,” she whispered.

“I never want to hurt you, baby.”

As Alexander climbed back onto the table, Bryant began to push into Robin's tight hole. She squeezed her eyes shut, a burning sensation overtaking her entire body. Fingers had been one thing, but Bryant's wide cock was quite another.

"Breathe, Robin," Alexander said, rubbing a hand against the small of her back. "The pain doesn't last long, I promise."

She gritted her teeth against the pain and felt sweat dripping down her neck. Bryant finally pushed through the tight ring of muscles, and instantly, the pain melted into pure pleasure.

"You okay?" Robin heard Bryant ask. Okay? That didn't even begin to describe it. She felt so decadent, so naughty, and all she wanted was for him to fuck her into oblivion.

"Yes, damn it," she managed to choke out between pants. "Now what did you say about fucking me?"

Bryant must have taken that as permission and withdrew his cock and pushed it back in, eliciting a moan from Robin. He repeated the action a few times, and then he wrapped an arm around her breasts and pulled her to lie side by side next to him.

Alexander grabbed each of her ankles and spread her wide open, displaying her dripping cunt. She looked down at his perfect cock, impossibly long and hard against the flat planes of his stomach. A droplet of pre-cum shimmered on his head, and she longed to have that large instrument of ecstasy buried completely inside of her. Bryant pushed up into her, causing a fresh flood of juices to flow from her as Alexander watched.

He moved across the table toward her, positioning himself between her legs and rubbing just the head of his cock against her awaiting pussy. He looked over her shoulder to Bryant. "How does she feel, Bry?"

"So fucking tight," Bryant managed from behind gritted teeth. "Now get your cock in her so I can move and fucking come."

Alexander's characteristic haughty laugh escaped from his lips, but the look of pure adoration he gave Robin came from that sensitive spot inside him that she had fallen for.

He pushed forward, groaning as she clenched her muscles around him. He stopped for just a moment, and Robin was grateful for the opportunity to adjust to the sensation of being filled by two large cocks. They both pressed forward a little more, and she moaned at the feeling. Never would she be happy with just one cock again, she thought to herself. This was pure sexual heaven.

They both began moving, slow at first, but Robin's violent bucking must have pushed both closer to the edge, since they both moved with abandon. The feeling of a cock in her ass made the cock in her pussy feel tighter and hotter.

As they both pushed in and out of her in an alternating rhythm, she felt the beginnings of an oncoming orgasm. Her spasms must have affected Bryant as well. His pace escalated, and his breathing became ragged.

With an "oh, fuck" escaping from his lips, she felt Bryant's hot seed fill the chasm of her ass. Feeling him pump through his orgasm, Robin's pussy clenched, and her orgasm hit her like a ton of bricks. It floored her, overwhelming her with more pleasure than she'd ever dared to imagine. Just as she rode the last waves of her pleasure, Alexander pumped his cock into her harder, jabbing against her G-spot with each thrust. Between that and the feeling of Bryant's cock still in her ass, another orgasm overtook Robin, and she screamed her pleasure.

At the same time, Alexander found his release and pumped hot jets of semen into her awaiting pussy. Once the thrusts and gasps of Alexander's release had subsided, the three of them relaxed into the cool wood of the table. Bryant kissed the back of Robin's neck, and she pressed back against him. Alexander ran a hand up and down her side, and he stopped to admire her carefully chosen lingerie.

“So I take it you’d be amenable to attending the Cotillion with us.”

Robin’s heart did a back flip, and she kissed the tip of Alexander’s nose then turned to kiss Bryant on what she could reach of his cheek. “Of course I will. I even have a dress.”

Robin longed to pull both men into her own embrace, but a quick wiggle reminded her that still wasn’t possible. “Um, guys?” She desperately didn’t want to interrupt their afterglow, but as the last embers of her flaming passion finally died down, reality reared its ugly head.

“Yeah, honey?” Bryant slurred against her ear.

She wiggled her wrists, accidentally causing him to withdraw from her with a slight pop. Her body felt suddenly empty. After feeling Bryant and Alexander filling her completely, she knew she could never go back to anything else. Pure ecstasy awaited her here.

A dark chuckle came from Alexander as he pulled out from Robin. He looked over her shoulder at Bryant. “I think our lady friend wants free use of all her appendages.”

All three burst into laughter at Alexander’s statement, and Bryant freed Robin from the tablecloth knotted around her wrists.

“And, um...” Robin knew she must be quite a deep shade of red at the moment. “Our food?” She sat up and looked back and forth between the two gorgeous men on either side of her just waiting to fulfill her every need and desire. “The two of you have given me quite an appetite.”

Alexander also sat up. “From what I’ve seen, Robin, your appetite is relatively insatiable.”

“Told you she needs two of us,” Bryant said from where he lay on the table, hands folded behind his head. “Enough is never enough for this one.”

Robin began to lean in toward Alexander, prepared to indulge in another round of lovemaking, when her stomach grumbled to remind her of the real purpose of this excursion.

Alexander heard her stomach's protestations. "Bry, I think her appetite might really be sated for the moment." He placed a hand on Robin's stomach. "If she doesn't receive her regular feedings, we won't ever get off." He cast a wicked smile at her as she frowned in mocking disapproval of his sarcasm. "Don't worry, gorgeous. I told them to prepare something for about an hour after we arrived."

"Oh, so the food should be—" Realization dawned on Robin. "Wait a minute. You two planned this?" She shot a look at Bryant.

"Told you we had another surprise for you, darlin'."

Robin wiggled her ass and launched herself off the edge of the table. She attempted to stand, but her limbs were still jelly from their romp. She tripped, ruining the effect of her indignation.

Her two men laughed at her misstep, and Bryant joined her in crawling from the table. "Honey, you really can't be too mad at us for making you come like that."

"Yes, I can!" Their presumptuousness infuriated her, and her hands balled at her sides.

"Robin, really," Alexander purred as he moved toward the edge of the table. "Are you angry with us for making you happy? You seemed pretty damn effusive just a few seconds ago."

He leaned his head toward Robin's for a kiss. At first, she backed away from his advances, but Bryant placed a hand on the small of her back and pressed her forward. She met Alexander's kiss as Bryant embraced her from behind. The kiss was slow and romantic, with only nibbles of teeth and flicks of the tongue. Bryant worked on her neck, laving at her collarbone from behind and sending shivers of mounting desire down Robin's spine.

Alexander lifted his face and smiled. "So this dispute is settled now, right?"

Robin leaned back against Bryant, her voice becoming a moan as he continued his ministrations. "You guys win this time." Bryant bit down, and a gasp escaped from Robin's lips. "But not always, okay?"

Alexander smiled at her as Bryant released her, and she let out a sigh of disapproval. “Okay, beautiful. Now.” He clapped his hand and jumped off the table to grab his clothing. “You’ve never sampled the fine cuisine here at Hester’s. I took the liberty of ordering you the filet mignon smothered in Hester’s famously divine sauce. Is that okay?”

Just hearing Alexander’s description of her meal made her mouth start to water. “Anything you say.” She poked him, interrupting his dressing and earning her a warning look. “After all, you are the personification of European sophistication, are you not?”

Bryant let out a snort as he buttoned up his shirt. “God, that’s great whenever people say that. You read the stuff people spout about Al?”

Alexander picked Robin’s dress up from where it had been discarded and handed it to her. “Can we not talk about the perception people have of my various exploits?”

“Oh my god, like on Emilio Estefan’s blog, Allegedly.com?” Robin slapped a hand over her mouth, embarrassed to have revealed her guilty pleasure to the men.

Bryant howled in laughter, throwing his head back. “Oh, Robin, darlin’, you have no idea how much Al hates that Emilio Estefan.”

Alexander rubbed his temples and turned his darkest stare on Bryant and Robin. “Please, for the love of all that is good, drop it.”

Robin stifled a giggle at Alexander’s reaction and noticed Bryant doing the same.

A knock interrupted their tormenting of Alexander, and Bryant hollered for the waiter to come in. He entered, carrying a tray of the most delectable-looking food Robin had ever seen. Her eyes focused on the filet mignon waiting for her, and her stomach grumbled its approval. The waiter cast a knowing glance around the room, his eyes lingering on the scattered place settings, most of which were shattered, in the corner where Alexander had pushed them. “Shall I reset the table for you, Mr. Abrams?”

Alexander threw an arm around Robin and shook his head. “Just leave it on the table. We can figure something out.”

The waiter gave an exasperated sigh that indicated he was as disconcerted with Alexander as most of the residents of Male Order, placed their food on the table, turned, and left the room.

Alexander grabbed the plates off the tray and carried them around the room toward where Bryant and Robin were still standing, confused. He indicated for them to follow suit.

“Picnic at Hester’s?” he asked, lowering himself to the floor.

Robin smiled and dropped to join him, pleasantly surprised by this outburst of youthful rebellion. The three of them sat on the floor in the corner, shaded by the table, as they ate their food, laughing and smiling throughout their dinner conversation. Robin alternated leaning against Bryant and Alexander, and occasionally, one of their hands would venture toward her breast or ass. They stayed like that after the meal, and only left when the waiter came in and announced the restaurant’s closure for the night.

Chapter 13

Robin crawled out of bed, careful not to wake either of her sleeping men. Her limbs were still heavy with sleep and satiation, but she knew she needed to attend to her true reason for being in Male Order. She scrawled a note informing Bryant and Alexander of her whereabouts for the day and scurried out the door.

Robin had finally figured out a way to complete her assignment without using the letters and was nearing the end of her task. She had alerted the Meadows Museum to the missing letters, noting that they might check European auction house listings to see if any had recently surfaced. Although she had been careful not to directly implicate Melvin Blackmon, she had intimated that their disappearance may have had something to do with the poor organization of the Abrams archive. Once the assignment was complete and she no longer needed to access the archive, she would run to Alexander and then the police. She only needed a few more days.

Tiptoeing down the long stone corridor, she finally approached the room that held the enormous wardrobe Gillian had picked out for her. She chose a pair of denim cut-offs that showed the bottom of the round globes of her ass and a tight-fitting tank top. Hopefully Dr. Blackmon wouldn't be there to comment on her unprofessional appearance. Texas summers demanded the least clothing possible. Outside of the cool walls of the mansion, Robin knew she had to fight the oppressive Texas heat that had risen to well over one hundred degrees. She sighed, remembering how much worse it was inside the stuffy, carpeted archive.

She made her way to the mansion's exit, nodding at Rupert as she slipped out. Just as she predicted, the heat washed over her like a wave of steaming lava. Great, a particularly bad day in which to work in that awful little building. She considered turning back for a second, but ultimately thought the better of it. No use prolonging her work in the archive, although, she thought, she could always find a way to insist the museum keep her in Male Order a little longer.

These thoughts danced through her head as she trudged across the Abrams grounds toward the rickety building. She was suddenly quite appreciative of Gillian's skimpy taste. One more day, she told herself as she wiped the already accumulating sweat from her forehead. One more day.

* * * *

He watched her walking toward the portable building, his face smashed against the decaying blinds, yellowed from years of hard use and neglect. *That's it, girl*, he thought to himself. *Lean over and show me those pretty little tits*. As if responding to his unspoken request, her bag slipped off her shoulder, and she leaned down to pick it up. With lightning speed, gained from years of practice, he snatched up the binoculars from the little desk next to his lotion and tissues.

God almighty, he could see her bra. What was that, black lace? The little whore was wearing that for someone. Rumors flew through the estate staff that she was involved with that motherfucker Alexander Abrams. And if Alexander was as ménageamous as his forefathers, she was probably involved with that Bryant Clare, as well. He *had* spied her at the stables a few too many times for his liking.

Robin stood back up, and Melvin noticed he was hard again, a common occurrence around her. He stroked his erection, hoping to spill his seed before she made it to the archive. He had to have full

control of all his senses for what he was preparing to do. He looked at the white vinyl rope coiled on the desk.

Apparently, Melvin's attempts to woo Robin had been thus far unsuccessful. He could never figure out why. He gave her full access to the archive, and a dedicated architectural historian, such as Robin, should see that as the greatest gift a suitor could give. He's the one who had gotten her out here, out of that awful museum where no one appreciated true academic scholarship.

As he continued pumping, his mind drifted to the first time he saw her. Yes, at that conference in Austin where she presented a paper. He couldn't take his eyes off her and knew then she was the one. He then asked for her specifically to come to the archive, warning the Meadows Museum administration not to tell of her special selection. He focused on her bouncing tits as she came nearer to the building and found his completion. spurts of semen flew into his waiting tissue, and he quickly rearranged himself. *Don't worry*, he told himself, *real completion will come soon*.

Very soon.

* * * *

A bit languid from the heat and the previous night's extracurricular activities, Robin slowly trudged up the wooden steps to the portable building. She saw the blinds were drawn, the usual indication that Melvin was away. Thank God. This would all go significantly quicker and easier without his constant, narcissistic interruptions.

She leaned on the door, and it creaked open. Everything was still in the boxes she had organized, and for that she was thankful. She let the door slam closed behind her as she made her way to her tiny elementary-school desk.

"I've been waiting for you."

Melvin's voice behind her made her jump and turn with a small squeak.

"Hello, my sweet."

Robin's heart started racing, and her whole body went into defense mode. She looked for a place to hide or for any sort of escape, but the swarthy, rotund man stood between her and the exit. Something on the table next to him caught her attention. Her heart stopped. Rope.

"Don't look so nervous," he said, his substantial bulk staggering toward her, rope in hand. "Sweet, you've been so nervous. Let me rub the tension out of your shoulders."

"No!" She jumped backward, and a stack of boxes went tumbling to the floor, sending papers flying everywhere and scattering the contents of Robin's bag.

Melvin's knuckles turned white from his grip on the rope, but his demeanor did not change.

"Poor baby, not getting enough tension relief from Alexander Abrams? Hmm?"

Oh shit. How did he know about Alexander? Why was this leaking into her professional life? Her eyes darted back and forth around the room, desperately searching for some way out.

"Or is it his buddy Bryant that's the impotent one? Hmm, Robin?" She ducked in an attempt to escape him. Her attempt backfired, though, and she fell to the floor, allowing Melvin to straddle her. A drip of sweat rolled from his black arm hair and landed on Robin's cheek. She flinched at the slimy sensation.

"My love, you will be so much happier with me." He leaned over her and pinned her to the ground. She squeezed her eyes shut, hoping this was all a really terrible dream.

Melvin placed his sweaty hand on her back and pushed her onto her stomach. Tears began rolling out of her eyes at her helplessness. He lowered his significant weight onto her back and began tying her wrists and ankles together, leaving her completely bound. He reached

his chubby hand around to her face and pried her jaw open, stuffing a wad of tissue inside.

She suddenly feared what he would do with her in that position. Horrible images from TV crime shows ran through her mind, and the tears fell faster.

“You’ll stay here until you realize what’s best for you, my sweet little angel,” Melvin said as he lifted his weight from her. “All alone so you can think about how you’ve hurt me and what you’re losing.” She heard his footsteps retreating, and relief began welling up in her chest.

“Mother needs me at the house now.” His voice sounded like it was coming from the door. “I’ll be gone for three days. When I come back, you can tell me how you feel about me then.” A dark noise rumbled from him. Robin assumed it was an attempt at a laugh. “Don’t try going to Alexander or that horrid, uneducated Bryant. I’ve changed the lock, sweetheart, and I’ve informed Alexander I’ll be at a conference for the next week. You’re going nowhere.”

The door slammed, and any semblance of relief left Robin. Three days. He was planning on leaving her there. For three days. Three days! No food or water, nothing at all. Just silence and heat. She doubted she’d live, and if she did live, the trauma would certainly transform her life into a mere shadow of its former self. The tears began anew, and her convulsive sobbing sent her rolling to the side.

Wait, she thought to herself. That’s it. Rolling. She began a tentative roll toward the center of the room. It hurt, sending shooting pain to her wrists and ankles and accidentally stuffing the wad of tissue farther down her throat, but it worked. She remembered the contents of her bag flying across the room. If only she could find her phone, then she could have some way of alerting someone of what had happened. She began her journey of inching around the room in an attempt to find a line out.

Suddenly, a banging sounded on the door of the portable building.

“Robin!”

Chapter 14

Alexander woke that morning with no one in bed with him but a snoring, drooling Bryant, and while he loved Bryant like a brother, he had no place in Alexander's bed without Robin. He had given him a playful shove that sent him flying through the crimson canopy and muttering some quite colorful curses.

Never a morning person, Alexander stumbled out of his bed, telling Bryant with a deathly stare that he was to vacate his room that instant. He couldn't return to the dark mood that had consumed him for years, though, as he spied a note on his bed stand. He knew who must have composed the note. Robin. He hurriedly scanned the note. It said she would be back by noon for a famous Abrams kitchen lunch. The clock indicated that he and Bryant had slept in well past noon.

"Bry, you clod." He laughed as he yelled the joking insult into the hallway. "Lunch with Robin, okay?"

Yawning, Bryant reentered the room. "Thought you wanted me outta here." He stretched and took the note from Alexander's hand. "So you're telling me our lady wants lunch with us?"

"Just make yourself presentable and come downstairs when you look like less of a slob."

"How kind of you, good sir." Bryant's voice was a mocking impersonation of the stereotypical Southern belle.

Alexander left Bryant to his task, dressed, and went downstairs, only to find Robin missing. When he realized that none of the house staff had seen her since she left early that morning, he knew something was amiss. He tried to call her cell, but she didn't pick up

or answer his text message. That just wasn't like her at all. Since their involvement had turned romantic, Alexander had been particularly protective of her and her whereabouts. He ran up the grand staircase, his smoking jacket billowing behind him.

"Bry! *Bry!* This is serious!" He ran toward his room hollering, but Bryant met him halfway down the hallway.

"It's Robin."

With that, both Alexander and Bryant took off at a dead run toward the portable building that housed the archives.

Bryant arrived first then hopped off his mount and banged on the door. Alexander took stock of the situation. The archive appeared completely closed up, unusual for midday. He remembered that Melvin had informed him that he would be out of town, but Robin would still be working. It wasn't like her to abdicate professional obligations.

Melvin. Of course! It made so much sense that Alexander was shocked he hadn't figured it out sooner. He leaped off his horse and joined Bryant in banging. As owner of the estate, Alexander had no qualms about lifting one of his muscular legs and kicking the door in.

"She's in here," Bryant said, gesturing to the corner of the small archive. Alexander joined Bryant, and the sight he saw hurt him in a way he hadn't felt since his mother's passing.

Robin was in the middle of the floor, gagged with a wad of tissues, and cheap rope tied around her wrists and ankles. Dried tears stained her cheeks, but all Alexander could see on her face now was anger.

Bryant knelt down beside her and proceeded to remove the tissues from her mouth. After coughing and sputtering for a few seconds, Robin grew indignant at their intrusion.

"Fuck you guys," she shouted. "I could have gotten out of this on my own. Look." She gestured pathetically with her head toward a phone about four feet away from her. "I was gonna get it and call for help. I had it handled." Her tone had decreased in volume, but the

venom there was unmistakable. She sighed in apparent exasperation and tilted her head backward. "Just untie me and let's get out of here."

Alexander watched numbly as Bryant obeyed her command. His heart squeezed in his chest, but he chose to ignore it. Robin's reaction seemed completely out of proportion to him. He had watched his mother suffer and how it affected his fathers, and doubt suddenly settled over him. Was this worth it?

Without saying a word to either Bryant or Robin, he turned and exited the portable building. He looked up to see that black clouds had darkened the humid day, signaling the impending arrival of a Texas-sized thunderstorm. He mounted his horse with ease and turned her back to the stables.

A peel of thunder sounded, and the horse reared. Alexander hung on easily. With that, the horse took off toward the stable carrying Alexander away from the pain and away from Robin.

* * * *

A mixture of emotions broiled in Bryant's chest. First, relief. He and Alexander had rescued their Robin, and she was fine. Shaken up, certainly, but the only physical evidence of the attack were the bruises encircling her wrists and ankles, and those might have been there anyway, Bryant thought wickedly.

However, anger eclipsed his relief. Anger at Melvin, anger at Robin, anger at Alexander. Why the fuck did Melvin want to hurt the sweet, delicate woman? Because she rejected his advances? With the way he looked and acted, that couldn't have come as a shock to Melvin. But why the fuck did Robin allow herself to be in a position to be kidnapped? Robin's stubborn and headstrong ways made Bryant fall in love with her, but he hadn't bargained on them threatening her life.

He huffed as he paced angrily back and forth down the aisle of the stables. Robin was in quite a state of anger, claiming that she had the

situation handled. Anger grew in his chest and strangled his heart. Seeing her bound on the ground like that activated every protective instinct he had. She shouted the story at them, frustration and fury obvious in her voice, and it only heightened his need to protect her, to shield her from all the horrible things in the world. Her dismissal of their help set his usually mild temper on fire.

He could only imagine how Alexander felt.

Everything was perfect yesterday. He and Al finally had Robin the way they wanted her, and Robin was obviously falling hard for both of them. But today? That damn excuse for a librarian, or archivist, or whatever the fuck he wanted to call himself, made everything Bryant had worked for go to shit.

Another emotion tugged at the edges of Bryant's consciousness, and he couldn't well ignore it for too much longer. Relief, but of a different sort.

He observed Robin and Alexander's stand off as they ran after him into the stables, wet from the soft rain falling outside. Both had their arms crossed tightly across their chests and their eyes firmly averted. Bryant sighed and rubbed his temples as he shook his head. A relationship with these two stubborn people could not end up well. In order for this to work, Bryant needed Alexander to open up completely to Robin again and let her see that side of his personality he so often kept hidden. And he needed Robin to emerge out of her shell like she did when she and Alexander met at the Lasso.

Maybe this was for the best. Even though it put Bryant in physical pain to admit it to himself, he had to acknowledge that something wasn't working. At least not yet.

Bryant stopped his pacing in front of the door to his apartment and turned to address his two obstinate companions. "Look, the two of you can keep huffing and puffing, but if we're not gonna talk about this, I'm gonna do some paperwork." He placed his hand on the doorknob and looked between the two of them. "Let me know if you decide anything." His hand began turning the doorknob.

“Wait.” Robin’s interjection stilled his hand, but he didn’t turn to her. “Bryant, please,” she continued. “Please listen to me.” Her voice quavered, and Bryant instinctively turned and crossed to her, sensing her oncoming tears. “I can’t do this...this...*thing* anymore.”

Although they echoed his own thoughts, Robin’s words cut like a dagger through his chest. He wrapped his arms around her, relishing the sensation of her delicate, shaking body against his. He felt a wet spot form where her face was pressed against his chest.

“Bry.” He looked up at Alexander’s voice. Alexander had crossed to Robin and ran his hand through her chocolate locks. “She’s right. This isn’t working.” He recognized the hard look in Alexander’s face. It was the same look he’d worn so many times after scaring girls away from the estate in France.

Robin hiccupped in Bryant’s arms and backed out of his embrace. He reluctantly released her. “I have to go,” she whispered. “With the archive mostly completed, I won’t have to be here much longer.” Her eyes searched Bryant’s, obviously anxious for a reaction to her declaration.

“Your car,” was all Bryant could manage.

“Shit!” Alexander exclaimed and kicked at the door to one of the empty stables, and it flew open. The noise heightened the silence that followed. The soft rain then increased into a downpour, pummeling the metal roof of the building.

“Look, I can drive you back downtown, or—”

“No.” Robin wore the same determined, hard look as Alexander. “Please don’t try to help me.” The quaver returned to her voice, making it difficult to understand over the din. “I can figure out what to do now on my own.”

Bryant longed to reach out and hold Robin, but her earlier withdrawal told him she wouldn’t appreciate his advances. Tears streamed down Robin’s cheeks, and she nodded in the direction of Bryant’s room. “I’m okay. You can leave me alone now.”

Bryant stepped toward her, but she only turned from him. With great effort, he disappeared into his apartment. Before he could sit down, shouts outside drew him back to the main aisle of the stables.

"I told you. I can take care of myself!" Bryant peered out his door at Robin's exclamation.

"Fine. Don't take my charity, then." Alexander loomed over her, and Bryant knew his physically threatening Robin couldn't help the situation.

"I. Don't. Need. Charity." Robin's brown eyes had turned black.

Alexander set his eyes in a glare and opened his mouth, as if to utter one of those trademark haughty insults. Bryant inwardly prayed he wouldn't pull that shit. Not now.

With strength he hadn't imagined Robin possessed, she pushed Alexander away from her and stormed to where Bryant stood. "I told you. I'm fine. Let me go." The anger and stress had reduced Robin's voice to a choked whisper. "Now."

About to walk out into the rain, she turned back to them. Alexander started toward her, his arms open to her. "Robin, please. Let us explain."

She pointed her hardened stare at both of them, and her pale skin starkly contrasted with the cloud-darkened landscape behind her.

"Please," she begged. "Just leave me alone."

With that, Robin turned into the grey abyss outside and set off at a run toward the main house.

"Fuck you, Clare." Alexander's voice snapped Bryant's attention back to the stables.

"What, man?" Bryant wasn't in the mood to fight with Al, but he couldn't contain his outrage. "What? Robin and I had something, you know that. You saw us at the poker game, I know that. Why did you have to ruin everything?"

"Me? I ruined everything?" Alexander approached Bryant and pressed a finger against his chest. "Oh, no, I believe you were the one who ruined everything. Robin came here to study *my* house. With or

without you, we would have been fucking. But with you, it had to be more, didn't it?" A rare vulnerability flashed across Alexander's face, but he quickly schooled his features back into the hard glare he had perfected. "You knew how much pain I was in, but you pressed the issue, Clare. Make no mistake. This is *all* your doing."

Alexander stepped back, and for a long moment, they said nothing. The rain had reduced to a gentle sprinkling.

"I'll e-mail you the files about the new clients," Alexander said. His switch to business was clearly a self-preserving move. He turned and followed Robin's path, although Bryant was certain he would not go looking for her.

With an exhausted sigh, Bryant reentered the open door of his apartment and slammed it shut behind him. He always tried to be optimistic, but he could see no clear way out of this predicament. There was no way for him to be with Robin.

Chapter 15

Robin's fingernails dug into the skin on her upper arms as the rain started pounding again on the glass and iron awning above her. She hopped from foot to foot as she stared down the winding drive to the Abrams mansion, willing her rescue to come faster. She saw the reflection of red and blue flashing lights on the pavement. The police had taken her statement about the entire incident, but they couldn't offer her any real solace. Robin had to fend for herself.

Finally, a black Bentley Mulsanne came into sight, and Robin clutched her bag to her soaked chest, anxious to run into the car's interior. Despite the temperatures still hovering above one hundred degrees, Robin shivered. Running through the rain had drenched every part of her being, and all she wanted was somewhere warm and dry to return to normal.

The car finally came to a stop in front of Robin, and she scurried to the door. She flung it open and dove in, feeling a twinge of guilt upon dripping onto the rich leather and wood interior. However, the car's driver didn't seem to mind.

Heedless of Robin's aqueous state, Gillian threw her arms around Robin and held her head to her chest. "Oh, cutie, thank you so much for calling me. Bry texted me about what that louse Melvin did, and I was so worried."

The tears Robin held back flooded her eyes, and she sobbed against Gillian's chest. "I-I-I'm so sorry." Her heart throbbed in her chest, overwhelmed by everything that happened that day. "I-I can't go back to my apartment alone, and I don't think I can go back to Bry and Alexan—"

“Shh,” Gillian said, leaning down over Robin, her long, wavy locks spilling against the back of Robin’s neck. “I don’t give two shits about those silly boys. Really, I don’t.”

Robin withdrew from Gillian’s embrace, reassured by her words, but Gillian kept a grip on both of Robin’s hands.

“You know I want you to be my sister,” Gillian continued. “But more than that, I want you to be safe and happy, and I want you to be my friend. You can always stay with me when we’re in Male Order, Miss Robin. You know that.”

Robin smiled through the fresh wave of tears that poured down her cheeks at Gillian’s kindness. “Thanks, because I was gonna ask—”

“You don’t even have to. I’ll get the guest suite all ready for you, dear.”

The darkened world outside flashed past Robin’s eyes as Gillian pulled away from the mansion and consulted with one of her husbands on the phone. The events of the day weighed on Robin’s mind. Work had sounded like such a nice reprieve that morning from the welcome turmoil Alexander and Bryant brought into her life. And then what Melvin did... She shook her head. She couldn’t dwell on it. Not yet. She couldn’t dwell on the implications of the event, either. Her head felt heavy at the thought that she would never be with Bryant or Alexander again. Bryant, she could see. But after Alexander nearly assaulted her... No. It couldn’t be.

By the time they reached the Sumners’ townhouse in downtown Male Order, Robin had cried as much as she could for the day. Numbness overtook her as Gillian helped her out of the car. While the building’s neoclassical design would normally have fascinated her, Robin kept her head down and leaned against Gillian’s shoulder as they ascended the steps into the thankfully warm glow of the entranceway.

Two identical handsome men with barely graying strawberry blond hair ran to meet them. They each wrapped an arm around Gillian and kissed her in turn. The normally forceful Gillian seemed

demure and coy around these two men who very clearly worshipped her. The swelling lump in Robin's throat forced her to turn away. Memories of two men giving her such affection clawed at her heart.

Gillian's arm around her shoulders brought her back to reality, and for the first time, Robin looked around. Although the home was nowhere near the scale or decadence of the Abrams mansion, it was still impressive. A gold and crystal chandelier cast a pale orange light on the white marble floors and gold accents that decorated the foyer. A staircase spiraled out of sight to Robin's right, and she assumed it led to similarly luxurious rooms.

"Boys," Gillian said, "this is my new friend, Robin. She'll be staying with us for a spell." She cast a warning look at her husbands. "Y'all aren't going to object, are you?"

They shook their heads and laughed at their wife. One man took a step forward and grasped one of Robin's hands in both of his. "Eric Sumner, it's so nice to meet you. Gilly won't stop tittering away about her new girlfriend." His smile was warm, and Robin could instantly see how Gillian would fall for these men.

The second man pulled Robin into an embrace. "I'm Matthew," he said when he released her. "I've heard so much about you from our Gilly and Br—" He halted, and Robin glanced at where Gillian was standing. She glared at him, daggers in her eyes. Matthew cleared his throat. "Well, it's great to put a face to the name," he said, squeezing Robin's arm.

"Okay, enough with the formalities, let's get Miss Robin warm and dry."

* * * *

The soft feel of Egyptian cotton against her cheek woke Robin up. She didn't dare open her eyes to the harsh glare of the sun. Instead, she luxuriated in the soft sheets, down pillows, and cloud-like mattress that surrounded her. Just as sleep was about to reclaim her,

memories of the previous day flashed through Robin's mind. Waking up in a different bed, being tied up in the worst way possible, the police and flashing lights, fighting with Alexander and Bryant in the barn, the venom in Alexander's voice and body, Gillian's rescue.

After settling into her room and throwing on some of Gillian's pajamas, Robin had spent the night with her new dear friend, talking over everything that had happened, crying and confiding in each other.

Gillian regaled Robin with the tale of her own romance with her two husbands. The two twin brothers had been raised in a ménage family in New York. Throughout their lives, they had vacationed in and around Male Order. Three years ago, in Male Order visiting Bryant on one of his rare return trips from Europe, she met Eric and Matthew at the Boom Boom Room. She had fallen in love immediately, and when they asked her to return to New York with them, she agreed without hesitation. Soon after, they were married, and Gillian now enjoyed a luxurious life with her banker husbands. It seemed that she had no problem adjusting to the life of high society and decadent Manhattan parties.

Hearing about Gillian's romance at first only worsened the tight pain in Robin's chest, but Gillian rushed to provide her comfort.

"Sweetie, this is just the way falling for two men works," Gillian said as they sat chatting on Robin's bed. "There's always one you can love without even trying. I'm guessing that's Bry in your situation. And there's always one that gives you too much trouble. They're both worth loving, and they're both at their best together." She grasped Robin's hands and gave her a meaningful look.

"This might sound a little strange to you, not coming from these parts and all, but my brother loves Alexander." Robin was certain her eyes were about to pop out at that moment. "Not like that, sweetie," Gillian said with an endearing chuckle. "Al is the brother Bry never had, even though Daddy and I tried our hardest. He might have the biggest heart of any man you'll ever meet, but I don't think he has

enough room in his heart to love a woman and also keep his friendship with Al. Any woman he loves needs to understand that.

“If you can be a part of Bryant *and* a part of his friendship with Alexander, he’ll have everything he needs. He can still love that annoying best friend of his while he loves you.” Gillian’s voice took on a gravely serious tone Robin hadn’t expected from the bubbly woman. “Bryant is my only brother, and after our dad goes, my only blood family. Even though I just adore you, Robin, he’s my number one priority. All I want is to see him happy.”

Robin felt hot tears stinging her eyes and couldn’t stop them from rolling down her cheeks. “I just wanna see him happy, too,” Robin squeaked between sobs. “But I don’t know if I can do that right now, Gilly. If you want me to go—”

“Don’t you dare,” Gillian said, her hand rubbing Robin’s back in a gesture of comfort. “I didn’t mean to scare you off, sweetie. You can stay here as long as you need. I just wanted to be entirely honest with you. Bry’s my little brother. As his big sister, I have to be big, mean protector woman.” Gillian’s eyes scrunched into an imitation of a threatening glare, and the two women chuckled lightly. Robin fell to the bed at that point, emotionally and physically drained.

The memory of her conversation with Gillian made it easier for Robin to open her eyes to the day. The brightness of the sun stung her puffy eyes, and she groaned as she pulled herself from the bed. A glance to the large, gold-encased clock told Robin it was well past noon.

A white box tied with a black bow sat on the chaise lounge in the corner of the room. Robin didn’t think it had been there the night before. As she lifted the box, she recognized it as coming from Jacqueline’s. A note was attached to the front.

Hey, hon! The husbands and I have to go into Dallas today for a political fundraiser thing, so I can’t stick around right now. I took the liberty of having Jacqueline’s send something over so you don’t have

to wear my cast-offs. And call Antonio and ask him to make you whatever you want for dinner. Oh, and I attached the invite for a little thing at the Boom Boom tonight. We won't be back till late, so you should go! Get your mind off things. Hearts and kisses! Gillian

Robin picked up a second card tucked under the black bow. It was an invite to the “Wicked Whimsy” party Bryant had mentioned. She sighed at the thought of Bryant, but the idea of going to a no-boys-allowed event cheered her immeasurably. After vacillating for a few seconds, she decided on attending the party.

After tossing aside the notes and ribbons, Robin opened the box. Gillian had matched Robin's taste exactly, purchasing her a pair of very short designer cut-off shorts and a stylish pale blue top with antique lace accents. Robin held the soft fabric of the top to her face and discovered she had missed something else in the box. *Oh, Gillian*, she thought to herself, bemused, as she extracted a red and black lace bra and lace boyshort-cut panties. She checked the sizes, amazed that Gillian had accurately gauged Robin to be a 34C.

Robin shucked Gillian's pajamas and dressed slowly, making a list in her head of the activities she would indulge in on her work- and men-free day. First, of course, Robin planned to avail herself of the personal chef services Gillian had mentioned.

Chapter 16

A discomfort identical to the one she experienced before that fateful poker game weeks ago lodged itself in Robin's stomach. Gossiping women filled the Boom Boom Room, all flitting from group to group, clutching their cocktails and rearing their heads in laughter. A small pixie-like woman hollered at the crowd from the stage. From her choppy haircut and outgoing attitude, Robin figured she must be Sherri Winston, the host of the Wicked Whimsy party and friend Bryant had mentioned. The thought of Bryant made the monstrous feeling in her gut dig deeper, and she tried to push it away.

Apparently, a "Wicked Whimsy" party was an event where women gathered to examine and later purchase the latest sex toys and fine lingerie on the market. Robin had heard of the parties before and knew of Wicked Whimsy's reputation as the purveyor of only the finest toys for the bedroom. It seemed a bit silly to be there after just breaking off things with Alexander and Bryant, but she figured it would be the perfect place to pick up a battery-operated boyfriend.

Sherri directed the women to a rack at the back of the bar featuring some very dangerous, very risqué lingerie, and instructed each guest to choose an outfit to model for the rest of the party. Robin gulped in fear but squared her shoulders. She could do this. Maybe strutting around in something obscenely skimpy would distract her from her woes.

After the first wave of experienced partygoers left the rack clutching their exotic boon, Robin wedged her way in to examine the leftovers. Automatically, she eschewed anything crotchless or titless. Her attention was drawn to one ensemble in particular. All in black

French Leavers lace, it featured a demi-cup balcony bra, high-cut briefs, and a classic-cut garter belt meant to cinch around the thinnest part of any woman. Robin swiped the get-up and chose a pair of scallop-topped sheer black Wolford thigh-high stockings with a seam down the back and five-inch black stiletto pumps to complete her outfit.

When Robin turned to the mirror after donning her racy guise, she didn't recognize the decadent creature staring back at her. She turned to fully inspect her new appearance and further acquaint herself with this new person. No longer the shy, innocent creature, Robin appeared to be a vision of sex and naughtiness. Instead of the repulsion she would have expected, Robin felt acceptance and love for this new vision of herself. *It's because of Alexander and Bryant*, a small voice in the corner of her mind whispered. *They've shown you how beautiful you can be*. She squeezed her eyes shut in an attempt to silence the voice, but she knew it was right. That was something to consider later, she decided. Now was the time for booze and toys.

Despite her newly discovered confidence, Robin crept out of the dressing area and felt a bit bashful amongst the scantily clad women. She sidled up to the bar prepared to order another Cosmo, but changed her mind at the last moment. "Whiskey and Coke," she said to the bartender with more swagger than she thought she possessed. "And make it a double."

She stood in the back while waiting for the presentation to start, nursing her drink and happily accepting refills while she watched the bolder ladies in attendance try their hand at pole dancing. The thought of twirling herself around a pole in front of a bunch of strangers made Robin sick with nervousness, but her pussy creamed at the thought of dancing for Bryant and Alexander. Robin quickly pushed away the thought. Thank god the activity was optional this evening.

"All right, ladies, time for the good stuff!" Sherri squealed from stage, and Robin was thankful for the distraction. Many toys excited and amazed Robin. All manner of vibrators and massage oils came

flying from Sherri's treasure chest of toys, as well as some more exotic toys, such as a vibrating anal plug that drew Robin's memory back to two nights before. She shuddered at the sensual memory, but Sherri's next toys returned her to the moment.

Sherri extracted a collection of iconic sex toy designs, all rendered in an understated, very tasteful white latex that appeared very soft to the touch. When Sherri pulled out the Rabbit, Robin blushed as she felt her clit engorge. Simultaneous G-spot and clitoral stimulation sounded like exactly what she needed. Her arousal heightened when Sherri pulled out a variety of anal toys, including the beads that had always fascinated Robin, even before Bry and Alexander helped her discover her passion for anal play.

When the presentation was over, Robin quickly ordered another drink to dampen her arousal and relax her for her upcoming meeting with Sherri where Robin would order several sex toys she had featured tonight. Even after the past few days, talking about sex always made Robin a touch uncomfortable.

"Robin Lawrence?"

She jumped at the sound of her name being called from behind her in a slight French accent, and turned to find a pretty girl with long, silky black hair and arresting blue eyes. "Yes?" As she looked at the girl longer, realization dawned on her. "You're Emilie Benson!"

Emilie was a French actress Robin had admired in college, and Bryant had mentioned that she was in Male Order and involved with the Stephens twins, Grayson and Gavin.

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

Bryant. Just the mention of her lover's—*No*, Robin chastised herself inwardly—her *former* lover's name made her slump against the wall, slightly defeated.

"Yeah, I know Bryant." Despite her disappointment, she couldn't hide the love in her voice. "Bryant is great. Bryant is wonderful," she said, effusive. Her heart caught in her chest, and she felt her

expression harden again. "If only he didn't need that damn asshole by his side," she muttered under her breath and hoped the gorgeous, refined French woman wouldn't hear.

"I don't mean to be pesky." Emilie leaned in a bit closer, and due to Robin's slight intoxication, she couldn't help but respond to the stranger's warm friendliness. "Is everything okay? I know I just met you, but you seem a little tense."

Robin let out a sigh as Emilie leaned against the wall next to her. "It's not Bryant I have to worry about," she confessed and took a long drink of her whiskey. "It's his damn friend, Alexander."

"Oh! Do you mean Alexander Dimitri Abrams the Third?"

Emilie's expression was far too bright to be thinking of the same Alexander, but she seemed to know exactly who he was. Just the thought of him drew the corners of Robin's mouth downward to a frown.

"You know Alexander?"

"Oh yeah, we're practically bosom buddies." Emilie placed a hand on Robin's shoulder in a friendly gesture. Maybe it was the alcohol, but Robin felt her shy demeanor dropping as she opened up to Emilie.

"Then perhaps you can explain to me why he's such an ignorant, arrogant, and comprehensive ass."

"What do you mean?" Emilie asked sincerely.

"He thinks he can bend anyone to his will just by saying his name. He takes what he wants without regard to anyone's feelings and..." Robin gulped as tears stung at the corners of her eyes.

"What's wrong, *ma chérie*?"

"Oh, Emilie," she said, letting the tears spill down her cheeks. "I can't stand him, and I'm in love with him."

"How did you ever fall in love with him, then?"

"That person he pretends to be, the asshole, that's not who he is," Robin managed to get out between gulps of air. "He's funny and sweet and caring and vulnerable." She smiled at the memories of

being in his arms and him confessing his love for her. “But he’s also strong and impulsive. And while that makes him who he is—”

“It makes him impossible to be with?” Emilie volunteered, rubbing Robin’s back to comfort her.

“Exactly. Bryant is none of those things, but he won’t be with me without Alexander, and I love him, too.”

“Sometimes we have to do things our heart doesn’t want. Being in love can hurt, and it hardly solves everything.”

Robin looked up at Emilie, amazed by the sudden burst of wisdom. “Being in love fucking sucks.”

Both women burst out in laughter.

“*Oui*,” Emilie said in between laughs. “But I can see how much you care about Alexander. You wouldn’t be crying at a party if you didn’t want him, and you clearly love Bryant if you even tried with Alexander.”

Something snapped Emilie’s attention away, and Robin followed her gaze. Sherri was peeking out from behind the curtained area and crooked a finger at Emilie. She nodded at Sherri then planted kisses on both of Robin’s cheeks.

“For what it’s worth,” she said, “I think Alexander is marvelous.” She smiled and took her leave with a quick “*Au revoir!*”

Robin stared at her drink. Emilie was right. Alexander *was* marvelous. But could she take being in a relationship with him? Could she take being with Bryant?

She stood in the corner for a while, swirling her straw in her drink while remembering both the high points and the low points of her life since her arrival in Male Order. Just as a flush was rising up her neck at the thought of her tryst in the garden with Bryant, Emilie scurried out from behind the curtain, and Sherri beckoned Robin to her lair.

Emboldened from the memories and alcohol, Robin ordered the luxurious replica of the iconic Rabbit vibrator. She bounced out from behind the curtain with as much energy as the bouncy Sherri.

The Wicked Whimsy party had done just what Robin needed it to do. She felt empowered and ready to take on the world, two men at her side or not. Although, if Robin looked deep inside herself, she knew exactly how much brighter and happier a life she would lead flanked by Bryant and Alexander. That is, if they wanted her back.

Robin retrieved her clothing, changed in the curtained-off dressing alcove, and left the party. She exited to the cool breeze blowing through downtown Male Order. She lifted her face toward the breeze, and a sensation of happiness and freedom overtook her. The Cotillion was only a few days away, and that gave her plenty of time to make up her mind about attending. In the meanwhile, she would take advantage of Gillian's hospitality and hole up and finish her assignment. Then she would be in the state of mind to decide.

* * * *

"Rise and shine, Robin bird! I have a surprise for you."

Robin groaned and rolled onto her side, pulling a pillow over her head to block out Gillian's singsong voice. She was in no mood for cheeriness this morning, not with the jackhammer drilling into her brain.

Gillian's next knock roused her out of bed, and nausea hit her as soon as she stood up. Normally, Robin didn't drink too much. The strong cocktails that eased her into her good mood the previous evening now took their toll on her small body. Robin steadied herself against the doorknob and opened it, giving her best hung-over smile to Gillian.

"Oh, honey, you look like death warmed over." She smiled and stepped into the room. Robin held the door open and gave a smile, although several curses ran through her brain. "Guess you had a good time at the Wicked Whimsy party then, huh?"

Gillian deposited herself on Robin's bed, and Robin followed her lead, flopping backward into the mess of down and Egyptian cotton.

“A good time. I guess that’s one way to put it.” Robin groaned to herself and covered her eyes with her hand. The light hurt too much.

“Something go wrong?” Gillian sounded genuinely concerned.

“Nothing went *wrong*, per say. The whole night just made me realize several things about myself.” Robin rolled on her side and looked up at Gillian. “I have no idea what to do about your brother and Alexander.”

Gillian smiled down at Robin, and she thought she detected a hint of pity for her hungover state. “Honey, I am hardly neutral on this subject. You know how I feel about it.”

Robin sighed and rolled back onto her back. “I just need a little time to make sense of it all.”

“Well, by all means, you stay here as long as you need.” Gillian hopped off the bed with far too much energy. “When you’re ready, I do have that surprise for you downstairs.” As Gillian exited, her eyes fell upon the box piled on the chair beside the door. She raised one eyebrow at Robin and smiled knowingly. “Have fun with that,” she said, giggling, as she closed the door behind her.

Robin stayed on the bed, willing the room to stop spinning. What sort of mess had she gotten herself into? She just needed time to think. And she needed to not be quite so sexually frustrated. Between her relationship with Bryant and the addition of Alexander as the third member of their ménage, regular mind-blowing orgasms had become a vital part of her life.

She twisted on the bed, and her eyes fell on the box next to the door. Gillian or one of the staff must have brought it in this morning. Its contents could solve all of her problems. She eased herself off the bed and decided to take her brand new vibrator for a test drive. Settling herself onto the bed, she let thoughts of her last few orgasms drift through her mind. Alexander holding himself up above her. Bryant’s cock in the mouth and the taste of his explosion. Alexander’s teeth on her nipples. Bryant’s cock pushing at the entrance to her

mouth. She slowly worked the vibrator into her pussy and around her clit, letting it hit all the right spots to elicit her soft moans.

The vibrations were driving her wild, but something wasn't right. She couldn't find the sweet release she knew that she needed. The solution suddenly dawned on her. As she tilted the vibrator upward to push against her overstimulated G-spot, she slipped one hand behind her ass and penetrated herself with her index finger. That sent her flying, the release she had so desperately craved igniting a small fire between her legs.

She quickly fell back to earth and to the reality that she was alone in her bed. Her orgasm had relieved her tension, but hadn't solved anything. Sleepiness muddled her thoughts, and she slipped into an unconscious state, her vibrator still in her hand.

When she awoke, the sun was beginning its daily descent. Her stomach grumbled, no longer upset but hungry. She made her way downstairs, still in her wrinkled clothes from the previous evening. While her search for Gillian was fruitless, Robin did discover her surprise. Hanging in the entranceway was a large black and white garment bag from Jacqueline's. Robin slowly reached up to the zipper and lowered it, revealing the Cotillion gown she had selected. It gleamed brighter in the dim light of the hallway, its crystals magnifying the meager light into shining magnificence. The silky fabric underneath still felt just as soft as the first time she donned the garment.

Fingering the dress delicately, Robin came to a conclusion. She had two days until the Cotillion. She wouldn't send the dress back, but she wouldn't make a firm decision about whether or not to stay, either. She would work, finish her project, and decide on the day of the Cotillion.

The only variable was whether Alexander and Bryant would want her back.

Chapter 17

Manly or not, Bryant loved the Cotillion. From the first year Al had scored him an invite while they were still in high school, Bryant had counted down the days to the event. It was a chance for all of Male Order to get together, and these days, it was the only event that united the entire Clare family. Although he studiously avoided the dance floor, he loved the opportunity for gregarious conversation with the town's male contingent and the opportunity for conquest of the female contingent.

Bryant and Alexander had shared many a woman they met at the Cotillion, but those memories did nothing to cheer Bryant now. Several young women had approached him and commented on his choice of a cowboy hat as apparel for the event. They leaned toward him, rubbing their bodies against him, but it had no effect. Quite the opposite, in fact.

Just the idea of being with a woman besides Robin sickened him. He still hadn't heard from her since she walked out, though Alexander had several times commented that she hadn't returned her Cotillion gown.

He and Al had resolved their differences the day after Robin left, making a pact never to let a woman interfere in their friendship. But both knew and acknowledged that they needed Robin to make their promise work. She had made it clear that she wanted some space, and they had agreed to give her as much as she wanted. She was the only one who could, at some point, care for both of them and accept both of them as lovers.

And Bryant loved her. He had discussed the matter with Alexander, and he felt the same way. They were both completely and utterly head over heels for the girl, and, of course, they had screwed it up. After much debate, they had decided not to chase after her and to let her make her own decision. Alexander insisted it was the only way she'd come back. The trauma of her assault and detainment would only drive her away from any advances they attempted.

Bryant looked down at the ice cube swirling in his bourbon and took another swig of the drink. He didn't care about the ball, didn't care about the women. He only cared about Robin, and every fiber of his being was praying for her to walk through that door.

He pushed the empty tumbler away from him and nodded to the bartender, requesting another drink. He laid his head down on the bar in utter defeat.

Where was Robin?

* * * *

Red or black. Odd or even. The clicking of the roulette wheel scored Alexander's somber relapse into his gambling habit. Since returning from Europe, he had restricted his gambling only to the occasional game of poker. But now he needed a distraction to make him feel anything besides his pain.

"Sixteen!" The little ball clicked into the slot, and Alexander slumped over against the table, watching his chips disappear, all of his bets wrong. He carelessly tossed a few purple and orange chips on the table and looked away.

The charity casino tables were a new addition to the Cotillion this year and were very welcome by Alexander. When he had first entered the Cotillion, attired in his finest custom-made suit from Savile Row in London, a flock of women had surrounded him. Word had apparently traveled fast about his little falling out with Robin.

Robin. Just her name caused a physical reaction in him, his pain and sorrow welling up in his chest. For the first time, he had put his heart on the line, and it was left crushed and broken. But he had driven Robin away himself. By turning into an angry, entitled prick, he had lost the one thing he had really cared about in years.

“Eleven!” The welcome call of a number distracted him, joy at winning something momentarily diverting his attention from the emotional wound that pulsed within him. Every time he closed his eyes, he saw her convulsing in tears from the pain he had caused her, and it broke his heart. He didn’t know how much longer he could live with that level of hurt inside him.

His only hope lay in the fact that she hadn’t returned the Cotillion dress. Perhaps she had taken it and returned to Dallas. That wouldn’t upset him at all. He wanted to give her anything that she desired, no matter the cost. But taking the dress and running wasn’t like Robin. She could never let accepting that kind of gift weigh on her conscience.

He glanced down at the white gold, diamond-encrusted Cartier watch that weighed on his wrist. The Cotillion had been in full swing for two hours. While he certainly understood the concept of arriving fashionably late, he didn’t think this counted as such an instance. No, he thought, slumping against the roulette table and tossing all his chips on black, second twelve, odd. It didn’t matter now.

“Ahem.” The sound of a familiar throat-clearing echoed over the PA and pulled Alexander’s attention away from his vice. He looked past the canopy hanging over the casino tables and saw Rupert standing at the top of the stairs. Funny, Alexander thought to himself. Normally the Cotillion had their own staff to—

Oh god. It hit him what could be coming next. He could only hope and pray for what he wanted in that moment.

“I present to you, Ms. Robin Lawrence of Waxahachie, Texas.”

* * * *

Careful not to harm the vintage Dior, Robin stepped lightly down the grand staircase toward the floor of the Cotillion. The room thrilled Robin with its neoclassical arches tapering into a coved ceiling, its marble floors and detailing, and the ionic columns framing every entrance. Her usual shyness uncharacteristically dissipated as she enjoyed being in the spotlight. Due to preparations for the Cotillion taking much, much longer than she expected, her arrival was delayed by over an hour. All the other guests appeared to have gathered, and Robin's entrance became the focal point of the party.

She looked around, happy that so many familiar faces beamed at her from the floor. Greta McCall sent a wink in her direction, and Emilie Benson, glamorous as always in her haute couture gown—no doubt straight from Paris—spared Robin a friendly smile. As she neared the dance floor, the crowd returned to its milling about.

Trying not to get her hopes up, Robin stood on her tiptoes and searched the room for Bryant and Alexander. Although she couldn't quite see every corner of the ballroom, her survey of the guests failed to turn up either one of them. Disappointment caused a lump in her throat, but she shook it away. After what she did, she knew it might take quite a bit of convincing to wiggle her way back into their hearts. Her attendance at the Cotillion was only her first step.

A tuxedo-clad guest pushed through the crowd surrounding her and took her hand in his. It took her a moment to realize this was Gavin Stephens, the charming, handsome twin who Bryant warned off her at the card game. His normally outgoing affect appeared subdued, and Robin wondered if that had anything to do with the rumors surrounding the Stephens twins' relationship with Emilie.

"M'lady," he said to her, kissing her hand and bowing lightly. Robin responded with her best attempt at a curtsy.

"Hello, sir. How are you this evening?"

Gavin hesitated. "Let's skip the chitchat tonight." He squeezed her hand tighter. "I'd rather finally get my chance at dancing with this ravishing creature."

Robin blushed at his compliment and enjoyed the attention, but she could feel her heart cracking a little more with each moment that passed without Alexander or Bryant. Robin and Gavin danced a quick waltz, poking fun at guests and catching up on their most recent adventures. He seemed as in need of some sort of distraction as she was.

The waltz ended, and a strong hand landed on Robin's shoulder. She thought she recognized the touch, but couldn't be sure, as her mind saw Bryant and Alexander in everything. Slowly, she turned toward the hand and raised her head. If what she saw was a hallucination, she didn't care. It was a damned good one.

Bryant stood in front of Robin clad in a custom-fitted suit that accentuated the bulges of his muscular frame. And, in typical Bryant fashion, a black Stetson sat atop his head. He reached up to the brim of the hat and tipped it toward Robin before removing it. The sight of his messy hat hair in the middle of the Cotillion warmed her whole body, and without meaning to, she threw her arms around his waist and rested her head on his chest.

He leaned his head down and whispered, "I've missed you, darlin'."

A single tear rolled down Robin's cheek. "You have no idea," she said, tightening her grip on him.

He pulled away from her, and her body cried out at the sudden loss of his warmth and strength. "Come with me." She snuggled back into his arm before he had a chance to get away, and he tightened it around her.

He hurried her through the crowd toward the exit opposite the grand staircase. They emerged into a long corridor of vaulted ceilings and low-hanging chandeliers. He ushered her toward a set of tall,

arched French doors then leaned over and kissed her lightly on the lips.

Before Robin was able to protest at the absence of his kiss, he opened the door, and Alexander stepped out of the shadows. Bryant took her hand and guided her to the edge of the terrace overlooking the lights of Male Order. The Dallas skyline glimmered dimly in the distance. Two hands came to rest on Robin, one on each shoulder, as she studied the skyline. She turned around and looked between the men. To her astonishment, neither looked upset or angry.

"Robin," Alexander started, "I'm sorry doesn't begin to cover my contrition. I hurt you, and that will haunt me for a long time." Robin started to look down, but Alexander captured her chin with his hand and tilted it up to his face. "But that doesn't mean that I don't want to be with you. You make me a better person. You challenge me and annoy me sometimes, but that's what draws me to you."

Bryant put his hand on the small of her back, and she turned to look up into his eyes. "You are like no other woman in the world. We want a chance to show you how much we want you and value you. You're beautiful, you're funny, and you make me happier than I have any right to be."

"But after what happened, aren't you..." Robin trailed off, delighted but thoroughly confused by the amorous confrontation.

"We just don't want to lose you," Bryant said, releasing his hold on her back.

"I can't stand the idea of living without you." Alexander took a step forward and placed a hand on her cheek. "I love you."

Bryant touched her arm, turning her attention to him. "And I love you."

Robin's heart pounded at their admission. Her legs wobbled, and she didn't know if she could draw enough air into her lungs to respond.

"I love you, too," she squeaked. "Both of you."

The two men exchanged a look and both lowered themselves to one knee.

“Oh my god,” Robin breathed as Alexander reached into the pocket of his suit jacket. She held her hands to her mouth to silence the squealing already beginning.

“Robin,” Bryant said, “will you marry us?” Alexander at that moment pulled a small jewelry box out of his pocket to reveal a thin white gold band with small diamonds all the way around.

She looked back and forth between the two men then snatched the box out of Alexander’s hand. As soon as he began to stand, she wrapped her arms around his neck. He obliged and sent her spinning in a circle, her legs whirling in the air behind her. Bryant captured her legs and hauled her into his arms, cradling her while kissing her passionately.

“So I take it you’ll consent to the agreement.” Alexander’s tone was dry as always.

“If you’re willing to stop acting like such an ass—”

“I promise. I never want to hurt you again, Robin. I will do what it takes.”

“Then yes,” Robin said after Bryant lowered her back onto her feet. “A million times yes.”

Alexander stepped forward and took her face in his hands. He kissed her, backing her toward the balustrade of the terrace as he did so. Robin opened her mouth to her future husband, sucking in his tongue, trying to meld herself as completely as possible to one of the men with whom she’d spend the rest of her life.

Alexander broke the kiss, looked to Bryant, and nodded his head. Bryant quickly disappeared inside, and Robin saw the light from inside fading as Bryant closed a curtain. He returned and took Robin in his arms. His kiss was rougher, an attempt to claim her, to mark her as his betrothed from the moment it began. Robin felt Alexander’s hands on her hips, guiding her backward and lowering her to a concrete bench on the terrace.

Heat waves began emanating out from Robin's pussy, especially now that they were shielded from the prying eyes of the Cotillion guests. Wet cream rolled down the inside of her thigh, today unhindered by underwear. The scent of her arousal must have drifted out from under her dress, as Alexander began snaking a long arm underneath it from behind, pulling the substantial skirt up around her waist.

"Look, Bry," Alexander said, reverence in his voice. "Our fiancée neglected to wear any underwear today." He wedged a long finger between her pussy lips and teased at her clit. Robin gasped at the sudden stimulation where she wanted it most.

Bryant lifted his head from where he feasted on Robin's mouth and moved downward, placing his hands on her calves and spreading her legs as he went. Alexander swirled his finger, causing Robin to moan her arousal, and withdrew it. Her head rolled back at the absence of the sensation. She looked over at Alexander. He studied his digit dripping with the honeyed nectar. He sucked his finger into his mouth and closed his eyes, appearing to savor the taste.

"Bry, can you take care of her?" Alexander asked, that mischievous edge creeping back into his voice. "She's got me too turned on right now."

Bryant responded by moving his hands up to Robin's thighs, spreading her fully open, and pushing the heavy skirt of her gown up above her hips. The cool evening breeze blew against her exposed clit, and the sensation caused a fresh wave of cream to spill from her cunt. She felt Bryant's tongue there to lick it up, and with just that sensation, she knew she was close to coming. He licked her clit and teased it, causing her to buck her hips toward his face.

Bryant murmured his appreciation of her taste and pressed two fingers into her entrance, and Robin's insides became embroiled in the apex of a roller coaster of pleasure. When the fingers found that sweet spot just inside her pussy and pressed, the roller coaster inside

her dipped over the edge, sending her into the total oblivion of heat and rapture.

She had no time to revel in the afterglow of her orgasm, though. She started to lie back, and Alexander's cock pressed against the side of her cheek. She turned her head to wrap her lips around it and looked up and saw his head roll back in pleasure as he fucked his cock deeper into her mouth. He eased backward into a kneeling position on the bench, and Bryant adjusted Robin's dress so she could lie completely against the bench. What she couldn't fit in her mouth she held and pumped with the same rhythm as her sucking. Her lips glided over the ridge of his cockhead with each pump, causing Alexander to shudder with every stroke.

As Alexander pumped himself more forcefully into Robin's awaiting mouth, she heard Bryant unzip his pants. Bryant lifted her skirt higher and settled his cock against the slick entrance to her pussy. Just having him so close caused her to whimper around Alexander's cock.

"Fuck, Robin." Alexander pushed his cock farther down her throat. "I won't last horribly long if you keep doing that." She giggled, and he growled in warning.

Alexander withdrew from her mouth, and Bryant wrapped his arms around her torso and pulled her to sit up straight. Alexander placed a hand on her cheek and turned her to face him as he took the seat next to her on the bench. The look in his eyes was gravely serious. "Are you sure you want this?"

Robin looked between him and Bryant several times and felt nothing but love and acceptance. This was what she wanted. Forever.

"I'm sure," she said.

She heard Bryant laugh next to her. "You heard what the lady wants." He turned Robin so that he sat behind her and spat in his hand. Robin felt his saliva-slickened dick press against her puckered hole. Bryant pushed into her, leaving her gasping for air. This time, the pain vanished almost instantly and transformed into a whirlpool of

pleasure. Once Bryant had started a rhythm, Alexander spread her legs and moved his substantial cock to sit against her entrance. He pressed against her drenched folds, forcing her to fuck the tip of his cock with each of Bryant's strokes.

"I love you." Alexander whispered the words while looking deep into Robin's eyes, and then Alexander thrust the full length of his cock into her in one stroke. She moaned at the invasion and the sudden feeling of complete fullness. Vaguely, a voice at the back of her mind told her that someone might overhear, but she didn't care. All she cared about was the perfect back and forth motion of the two men that held her in between them.

Bryant's strokes became harder and faster, and he reached around to Robin's chest. He wiggled his fingers underneath her dress and pulled at a nipple, eliciting another scream. When Alexander reached down and rubbed circles over her clit while he fucked her, Robin could no longer contain herself. Her inner muscles clenched, milking the two cocks fucking her. Both stroked into her at once and propelled her into the heaven of bodily indulgence that she'd only dared to dream over the past month. As she bucked her hips, Bryant exploded into her ass, panting as he spilled his seed deep inside her. The force of Bryant's and Robin's orgasms pushed Alexander into their shared transcendental bliss.

After they all came down off their high, Bryant stroked the sweaty strands of hair off Robin's forehead.

"You've done to me what I do for a living."

"Huh?"

"You've tamed me. I'm all yours, Robin."

Robin felt a blush rising to her cheeks at his statement.

"Me, too," Alexander added. "You're all I want now. You're everything."

She looked between her two admirers and laughed.

"You two are a handful, but you know me." She gave them a smug smile. "I'm always up for a challenge."

Epilogue

Robin Abrams-Clare poked her head around the corner into what had formerly been Alexander's private card room. In the past year, she, Alexander, and Bryant had transformed it into a living area for all of them. It was a symbolic gesture on Alexander's part, and he had delighted in turning his den of inequity into somewhere they could all relax in front of the fire. Or, you know, do other things in front of the fire.

Alexander sat deeply engrossed in the bound manuscript of the book she'd written about his great-grandfather, Max Abrams. "Is it okay?" she asked nervously, crossing into the room.

His eyes darted back and forth over the words, finishing a paragraph before lightly setting the book down with his place marked. "It's brilliant, darling." He pulled Robin closer to his chair, and she fell into his lap with a small scream of surprise.

"Hey, quit having too much fun without me." Bryant followed Robin into their living room, his open, friendly expression contradicting his words.

"It's always about *you*, isn't it, Bryant?" All three burst into laughter at the absurdity of Alexander's words.

Life was like this now. Soon after the Cotillion, Robin had resigned from her job at the Meadows Museum and moved permanently to Male Order. She and Alexander were formally married in the Male Order courthouse. Bryant had insisted on Robin marrying Alexander due to the strict clauses in the Abrams family legal documents. After all, there needed to be another headstrong, handsome Abrams heir. Later, Gillian and her husbands performed a

commitment ceremony to wed Robin to Bryant, even if only informally.

As a wedding present, Alexander had a state-of-the-art archival facility constructed on the estate, and dubbed it the Lawrence Archival Library. Robin had worked tirelessly to track down all the missing letters, and her task was reaching completion. Also, she worked to compile all of her notes from her summer work in the archive and published a new, enlightening text on the life of Max Abrams.

So much has happened, she thought. But she was about to deliver the biggest news of all.

“Bry, Alexander,” she said quietly, feeling the shyness that still returned in moments of anxiety. “I have news.” She reached down and pressed her hand to her stomach.

“Is that...” Bryant started.

“Are you...” Alexander chimed in.

She turned her head side to side and kissed each of her husbands on the cheek.

“Hope you two are well rested because there’s going to be a new member of the Abrams-Clare family. And judging by the parents, the little rugrat is going to be a handful.”

THE END

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helena Ray has always maintained that the world inside her head is much more exciting than the real world. Growing up as an only child, she spent many happy afternoons dreaming up companions. These included her evil twin in Mexico, puppets that would pop up out of the ground, and many a talking dog. Born the daughter of a newspaperman and a lawyer, words have always been a vital part of her life. Over the years, her love affair with the written word turned torrid, and she couldn't stop herself from following in her parents' footsteps.

She loves to travel, and her most recent adventures have included several trips to Paris, leisurely weekends on Lake Constance in Germany, and raucous nights in Dublin. She has traveled all over the United Kingdom and has lived in London and northern England. Currently, Helena lives in Texas with her very handsome boyfriend, his two cats, and her also quite handsome dog. She hopes that readers have as much fun occupying her imaginary worlds as she has creating them.



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