

Beautiful Trade Publishing

STUNT 101

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Dedicated to the whole entire staff at BTP and the whole entire author crew. You make a woman feel like family, feel like she is always fierce, and like she has super powers.

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PROLOGUE

Graduation 1998

“Everyone, take one last look to the people on your left and your right. This will be the last time you will be a senior in high school. This will be the last time you see this person just as they are now. Remember it, and get ready to live life. Take your tassels, turn them to the left, and give yourselves a round of applause, the Marching Tigers class of ’98!”

The auditorium exploded in thunderous applause as the royal blue-colored caps danced and twirled in the air. Ambrosia Davies looked around her as her classmates chucked their caps toward the sky. She wasn’t going to throw her cap. It had taken most of her paycheck to pay for the darn cap and gown; she sure as hell wasn’t about to send the cap flying in the air.

Ambrosia pulled the cap off her head and smoothed down her mocha and burgundy locks. She’d had her shoulder-length hair cut and styled at a salon as a graduation present to herself and didn’t want to mess it up. Her uncle and his military buddies were going to take her out to dinner to celebrate.

Did she have friends her age? In a word, no. She was a military brat, and three years was the longest she'd ever stayed in the same spot. Her uncle was her only family and her best friend.

Ambrosia looked around for her six-foot-two uncle. Not seeing him anywhere, she figured he must've already headed over to the VFW. Sighing, she stood up from the metal folding chair, walked around the hugging people, and got ready to get on with the rest of her life.

"Ambrosia!"

Ambrosia stopped in her tracks and looked around. She wasn't aware that anyone here would know her name, let alone yell it. Since Ambrosia couldn't figure out who of the two hundred kids in her graduating class called her name, she turned to peck her way out of the crowded auditorium. As she headed toward the doors, she felt a large hand on her shoulder. Everything in her wanted to kick someone's ass first then ask the victim's name later. If there was one thing her uncle taught her, it was that she was no one's toy. Her balled fist was ready to connect with the nose of whoever was grabbing her.

Her clinched fist fell to her side as she looked into the mysterious gray eyes of Wyatt Archard, the school's, well, everything. Wyatt was the jock all jocks wanted to be, yet quiet and reserved. He played

multiple sports—football, hockey, and he ran track. His athleticism showed through the simple navy suit he wore. The material hugged his arms, and the plain white dress shirt seemed to be holding his defined pectorals hostage. Ambrosia eyed him up and down as he stared down at her. He even made her uncle look like a shrimp. Wyatt was six foot six, and his forearms looked like they belonged to the Incredible Hulk, not a human being.

Ambrosia couldn't help but stare at the closest thing to perfection since Michelangelo's David. She'd seen him around the school and always thought he was a great-looking guy, just not in her league, or even her atmosphere. He was just too much of the all-American boy she read about in Sassy magazine. So why would he be talking to her now?

As much she wanted to give Wyatt her typical "f-the-world" look and stance, Ambrosia wasn't even going to bother standing tall with him around. She was six feet, and she felt like a mouse standing next to an elephant.

"Ambrosia." Wyatt's voice, deep and husky, easily drowned out the noise in auditorium in her ears.

“Um, Wyatt, right?” Ambrosia’s voice cracked, and she cleared her throat. She still wondered why he would seek her out.

The corner of his mouth hitched up just slightly. “Yeah, Wyatt Archard. Hi.”

“Okay, um, hi.” Why would he want to introduce himself now, the last day that she would see any of the graduating class?

“Um, I was wondering if you were going to the all-night party at Lake Calhoun?”

Ambrosia couldn’t help but ball her hand into a fist. Maybe she watched too many movies, but she wasn’t about to be the punch-line of some fool-ass prank. Right now, she was feeling like Carrie, and there’d better not be any pig’s blood around.

“No.” She turned on her heel and already had a foot planted to march right out of the auditorium.

“Wait!” The hand came again, but this time he grabbed her wrist. Ambrosia cut her eyes at his hand and looked back to his face. He loosened his hold on her wrist, but he didn’t let go. “Hear me out. I was asking because I was hoping you would be my partner in the jet-ski race.”

“Look, Wyatt, I don’t know what you and the rest of the jock-strap club are up to, but I’m not interested in being the butt of anyone’s joke or the last prank of high school. I’m not going, and that’s that.”

“Prank? Why would I want to prank you?” Wyatt’s eyes got big, and his rich brown eyebrows knit together in confusion.

Ambrosia let out a sigh of frustration. Damn, he was good at playing that innocent role.

“Why, let’s see, I can give you at least five without having to bust a brain cell: I know I’m a nerd; I’m one of the five black people in this whole school; I’m the tall girl who towers over everybody; I wear glasses; and I’m an orphan. There, does that sum it up for you, or do I have to humiliate myself further? Now leave me alone,” Ambrosia spat. The last of her words sounded like a hissing snake. Ambrosia closed her eyes and willed the tears that stung her to stay in her head.

As she was counting to ten, she didn’t realize Wyatt had let go of her and then wrapped his strong arms around her, hugging her.

“If I’d known you were going to be this defensive, I would’ve asked you before now. You’re the only person I know who makes me feel like a chicken.” Wyatt chuckled.

“What?” Ambrosia’s eyes jerked open, and she stared up at him. It was hard for her to imagine Wyatt being scared of anything.

“I wanted to ask you last week in chemistry, but I chickened out. I didn’t think you’d like me. It isn’t

for any one of those things that you said—as a matter of fact, the fact that you are taller makes you the perfect tandem jet-ski partner.”

“Did you say tandem jet-ski?” Ambrosia’s eyes got big with excitement. She’d always loved the water.

Wyatt’s face broke into a smile.

“Pick you up at seven?” Wyatt asked, with hope and expectation in his eyes. Ambrosia couldn’t deny the sincerity in his smoky eyes. Seven would be long enough to leave her uncle at the VFW after dinner.

“Deal. You need my address, or should I meet you somewhere?”

Wyatt’s head cocked to the side, and a sly smile spread across his face.

“What makes you think I don’t know where you live, Miss Davies, especially as I only live three houses down from you on the same block.” With that remark, Wyatt turned and went back to his buddies.

CHAPTER ONE

Present Day

“Five, four, three, two, one! All clear!”

The stand-by crew ran to the scene and began to spray down the blazing motorcycle with high-powered fire extinguishers.

“Did we get the shot?” the stunt woman asked as she rolled several times to make sure her blue fatigues weren’t smoldering. She pulled the helmet off her head and stared around the movie set. The director smiled as he stared into his lens and nodded emphatically at the playback of the stunt.

“Apparently so, Ambs. We got to get you into the wetsuit under your fatigues to shoot the jet-ski chase. Let’s hike it to the trailer.” The dowdy assistant to the stunt coordinator was brushing Ambrosia’s pants with a lint brush and making sure there were no tears in her costume.

Ambrosia shook her jet-black spirals loose and sighed. Another day, another dollar, she thought as she made her way to the trailers. At least she got the adrenaline rush she craved by doing stunt work. After she’d taken the bar exam, she’d realized she didn’t want to be an attorney, no matter how lucrative

it could've been. The thought of being strapped behind a desk reading motions and briefs all day didn't give her the rush she was searching for. Ambrosia knew she was a restless soul and needed excitement. Jumping out of burning buildings and crashing motorcycles for a living was the only way she was going to get that "free-bird" feeling, as her uncle described it.

She took off the fatigues and slipped into the wetsuit. This movie was the first time she was not an extra, and that meant she got her own trailer. The lead role was being played by the newest Hollywood "it" girl—she wanted to be in an action movie, but didn't want to do any of the work it required. Luckily for Ambrosia, she'd happened to overhear the conversation about the stunt auditions at a nearby coffee shop. Ambrosia had known she could land the job with her background in martial arts and the need for speed on her own motorcycle.

After dressing in the wetsuit and arranging her fatigues, Ambrosia picked up the script to prepare for the jet-ski chase. Flipping the pages of her script, Ambrosia smiled at the thought of getting back on a jet ski. The last time she was on one, she was a senior in high school and with Wyatt. As much as she wanted to bury that memory as one night of pure fun, she knew she was always looking for a rush to replace the

excitement and abandon she'd felt speeding around Lake Calhoun, clutching Wyatt's large frame.

"Well, this is as good as I'm going to get, so live it up. Wyatt is a long-ago memory," Ambrosia said to no one. She put the fatigues on and slipped on her large sunglasses. It was just another sunny day in California.

"Dude, you gotta be fucking kidding me. She won't come out because her astrologer told her that she'd sprain her ankle?" Wyatt roared. He was getting so sick and tired of babysitting these damn debutantes. What made him think that being a bodyguard made sense?

The meek assistant just shook his head and pushed his glasses back up his nose.

"Then tell me how I'm supposed to get her to the set? She's due there right after they finish the jet-ski scene."

The blond-haired assistant swallowed hard. He looked up at Wyatt, which didn't make it any easier to speak. He could tell the bear of a man was pissed off.

"Um, she would like for you to carry her there, just to make sure she doesn't stumble."

Wyatt punched his fist into his other hand. He was going to strangle the diva with his bare hands. Yesterday he had to help her out of the pool because her astrologer told her it was bad luck to use a ladder. The day before that she needed a foot rub. There were some things Wyatt would do out of the goodness of his heart, but this woman was taking it too far.

“I’ll get her a wheelchair, and push her there, but I refuse to carry her.” Wyatt wasn’t a punk, even if the girl’s father was giving him a huge paycheck. The paycheck from this job would put him right where he needed to be financially to start his own gym.

“Um, well, see, if the stalker-razzi snaps a picture of her in a wheelchair, her career...” Wyatt held up his hand to stop the man from saying the words he knew were coming.

“I know, her career would be over before it started. That’s getting real old real quick, Ethan. Tell Miss Price I’ll be here whenever she’s ready.” Wyatt was going to get through today and then somehow find a way to get out of this particular job. He’d worked with some snobs, but none were as bad as Veronica Price.

“I’m ready now!” As if on cue, Veronica threw open the trailer doors and posed seductively in the blue fatigues he’d grown accustomed to seeing her wear for the movie. Wyatt suppressed the urge to

growl out loud and wondered for the millionth time why he put up with the woman's attitude. It was a job, and his loyalty was to her father, the man who'd helped him get his foot in the door being a bodyguard, and the man who was the stunt coordinator on set.

The diva held her arms up and waited on the steps. Wyatt growled so loud, the deep sound made Ethan drop his pad. The girl had the audacity to smile at him. Wyatt pursed his lips and turned his back to her to give her a piggyback. That was as good as it was going to get for her. He knew what she was up to, and there was no way he was going to cross that line. She was a job, and plus, she just wasn't his type.

Wyatt always admired women who were smart, but weren't pushovers. He needed someone who would be an equal but let him be the man. His father had pounded into his head to never let a woman take advantage of him, but also never to treat a woman like dirt. Wyatt remembered asking his dad how he'd know if he ever found the right woman. His father simply answered, "When the world stops, you will know."

Wyatt dropped his package off at the director's chair and went to stand behind the scenes, watching as the stunt crew finished filming the jet-ski scene. The right corner of his mouth hitched slightly, making his dimple appear like a magic trick. He had fond

memories of being on a jet ski and laughing well into the night with Ambrosia.

It'd been a while since he'd had fun like that. Wyatt wondered if she ever went home to visit her uncle. As much as he missed his rambunctious family, Wyatt hadn't visited home in a long time. Time had gotten away from him, and before he knew it, eight years had passed. Sure, he went back on holidays, but he still didn't visit as much as he should. Yet when he did visit, Wyatt's attention was divided between listening to his family yak about the newest pick-up trucks and looking out the window, hoping for a glimpse of Ambrosia walking down the street.

He could still recall the wide-eyed look in her chocolate eyes when he'd told her that the school's golden boy lived in the hood, three houses from hers. Wyatt had laughed when she'd admitted she'd assumed he had a silver spoon shoved so far in his mouth that he could crap out silver dollars. Now, years later, the dimple on his right cheek became deeper as he bit down on his tongue to keep from laughing out loud.

The finale of the chase was winding down, and the stunt woman on the jet ski rounded the water one last time. After revving the engine, she propelled the machine up the steep ramp and into the prop yacht while jumping off into the lake. The yacht blew with a

blaze of flames leaping into the air, and Wyatt covered his ears against the air-horn.

As Wyatt watched the stunt crew scramble to subdue the burning yacht, he lost sight of the stunt woman. The crew hustled around, setting up for the next scene, and in the midst of the moving bodies, Wyatt looked over to the director's chair to see that Veronica the diva had disappeared.

"Dammit," Wyatt mumbled under his breath. He took off to look in the usual places for the wayward and immature star.

Wyatt rounded the trailers and saw Veronica's back. How in the hell had she gotten all wet? He didn't remember her ass looking so good in those fatigues earlier. The longer he stared at the full figure, the more he began to rethink the whole "she's not my type" thing. Rather than contemplate the dilemma any further, Wyatt decided to put her back where he'd left her.

Without making a sound, Wyatt snuck up behind the movie star and threw her over his shoulder.

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHH! What the fuck are you doing, you ass? Put me down!"

"Now I'm an ass? I piggybacked you all the way here, missy, because of that fool nonsense about your damn ankle. I'm doing my job."

“You didn’t piggyback anything, you asshole. Put me down before I seriously hurt you.”

“You can’t hurt anything, so no, I won’t put you down.” Wyatt dared to walk a few more steps, and then he felt a sharp, excruciating pain in his left shoulder. He stumbled when he realized the crazy-ass woman was clawing a circle in his back like a human glass cutter.

“Owww, son of a...” Wyatt swung her off his shoulder and set her down hard. Muttering, he didn’t even look up as he felt his back underneath his thick polo shirt. How in the hell had she managed to get her nails through the material? Wyatt looked down to make sure he hadn’t hurt her.

What Wyatt saw wasn’t the face of the newest diva in town; it was the face of the woman who’d haunted his dreams for the past eight years. His world stopped.

“Have you lost your mind? You don’t go picking up women and slinging them over your back like some neo-Neanderthal, especially when this woman knows several ways of kicking your ass without breaking a nail.” She was dusting off her arm and not looking him in the eyes, but he knew beyond all doubt that he’d been granted a second chance with the one person who made his blood boil and run cold at the same time.

Ambrosia was going to let it slide that the fool picked her up without making a sound. She would've let it slide if he would've put her down immediately. But the thick-headed talking Sequoia tree kept walking with her in tow. She had to stick her nails in his back and twist. If he was working on the movie, she didn't want to hurt him too bad, but she didn't want to be carried off like a sack of potatoes either.

Just as she was going to launch into a tirade in one of the six languages she knew, she caught a glimpse of his eyes. She'd only seen eyes like that one time in her life, and they belonged to Wyatt Archard. As she looked at his height and his taut muscles in the jeans he wore, she thought, *it couldn't be*. But when she met his eyes and saw the single dimple on his tanned face, she knew it was Wyatt.

"Ambrosia?" The full pink lips moved and said her name, but Ambrosia barely heard it. She couldn't believe it was Wyatt.

"Ambrosia, please tell me that's you." The voice came again.

She shook her head and rubbed her eyes. This couldn't be real. As if reading her thoughts, Wyatt snatched her hands from her eyes and pulled her in

close. His arms circled around her, and Ambrosia felt like she was transported in time back to that summer when Wyatt held her at the campfire.

“It’s me in the flesh, Wyatt,” Ambrosia said as she finally gave in to the hug and circled her arms around his back. Damn, the boy had become all man—she could barely get her hands to touch around his broad back. Taking a step back and trying to get rid of the warm, fuzzy feeling spreading through her, Ambrosia eyed the man before her.

“Damn, Wyatt, what have you been doing—eating barns?” Ambrosia joked as she looked him over from head to toe.

“Nope, did a stint in the Army. Look at you, Miss Thang. You’re looking good. Why are you here?” Wyatt looked confused as he eyed her up and down.

“You know that jet ski that went barreling into the yacht? Um, I was driving it,” Ambrosia said, looking down at the ground. Normally she would be proud to scream, *I’m a stunt woman!* Yet with Wyatt, she didn’t want him to see her as just another tomboy.

“Are you fucking serious! Why are you doing that? You could’ve hurt yourself!” Wyatt’s voice became steel as he shot her a thunderous look.

Ambrosia, shocked at his tone, took a step back. Her eyes narrowed as she glared at him.

“It’s my job, Wyatt, that’s why. That’s what stunt woman means.”

“I know what it means, Ambrosia. What I don’t know is why you’re doing it. Like I said, you could’ve been hurt.”

“And again, I’m telling you, that’s a part of my job. Stunt 101, lesson one: you can and most likely will get hurt,” Ambrosia said, her voice just as steely as Wyatt’s. Who in the hell did he think he was?

“Okay, that might have been a stupid question, but you were so smart—you were going to be an attorney.”

“So because I’m jumping jet skis means I got dumber?” As much as she would love to drop the conversation, she just couldn’t. “I’ll have you know, I passed the bar, graduated at the top of my class, was going to be an entertainment attorney, and guess what? I realized I didn’t want to do that.”

“So how did you end up doing this?” Wyatt asked, sweeping his arm at the set.

“I wanted an adrenaline rush. I was sitting in a coffee shop and heard that Price Pyros and Stunts were looking for a particular type of stunt woman. It sounded fun, so I went to a few classes, learned a few things, and here I am.” Ambrosia smiled and looked at Wyatt. “Why are you here?”

“I’m...”

“WYATT!!! Oh WYATT!!!” The high-pitched tone of the tornado known as Veronica Price came from behind Ambrosia. Ambrosia turned to see the woman whom she was supposed to make look good as an action star. As she sized Veronica up, she realized it was going to take a lot of movie magic to make the skin-and-bones star look as though she did the stunts. Ambrosia was well toned, but definitely thicker than the svelte actress. Ambrosia shook her head and turned back to Wyatt. She noticed his lips had gone from succulent and plump to a thin line that looked as though he was biting the inside of his cheek. Ambrosia had seen that look only once during the summer they’d spent together, and it was directed at an ex-girlfriend.

“Wyatt,” Veronica said, and she slid next to him and looked Ambrosia up and down. “Are you finished talking with the minions? I need to go back to the trailer.”

Wyatt shoved his hand at his pockets and shot Veronica a look that could’ve murdered most of Los Angeles.

Minion? Ambrosia wasn’t about to let that slide, especially since she was the one making her look good.

“Minion? I believe I’m your stunt double, and considering the fact that this is an action flick, I’m doing about eighty percent of the work. Wouldn’t that

make *you* the minion?” Ambrosia said with her fist on her hip.

“I don’t know what you mean. It is my name on the movie, not yours, whoever you are.”

“Ambrosia Davies. Wish I could say it is ‘nice’ to meet you, but I’m still waiting on you to be nice.”

“What kind of name is that? I wouldn’t be caught dead with a name like that.”

“Keep talking and you’ll just be dead, regardless of your name.” Ambrosia stepped to the woman and glared down at her.

Wyatt knew that look, and if he hadn’t stepped in between them when he did, Veronica would’ve been missing a chunk of hair and a lot of dignity.

“Ambs, Ronnie, Wyatt, fancy ya’ll are in one spot. Saves me the drama of having to find you.” Duncan Price’s thick Texas accent made them all stand at attention as if they were bad little children caught setting mailboxes on fire. Wyatt and Ambrosia both stood eerily still while Veronica went rushing into the arms of her father.

“Daddy! I’m so glad you’re here! This woman was...”

“Fan-fuckin-tastic! Did you see that jump? That explosion went off perfect. Ambs, darlin’, you aimed that sucker spot on!” Duncan wrapped his arms around his baby girl, but he was staring at Ambrosia.

“She’s making you look good, Ronnie—I wouldn’t piss her off.”

“But Daddy!” Veronica stomped her foot on the ground.

“Ronnie, the director’s lookin’ for ya. Now git goin’—I need to speak with my crew.”

Veronica glared back at Wyatt and Ambrosia and stomped off.

“Now, tell me what comfy, cozy little scene I just broke up. Wyatt, I thought I told you to keep Ronnie away from the stunt crew?”

“Sir, I thought Ambrosia was Veronica,” Wyatt uttered. He was looking at his feet and for a brief moment, Ambrosia got a glimpse of the boy she’d known that summer, the shy one who was obedient to a fault.

“Duncan, I know Wyatt from way back. We graduated together, so when he realized it was me, we started chitchatting. Veronica was joining us—that’s all.” Ambrosia hoped she wasn’t about to lose the job because she’d almost knocked her boss’s daughter’s lights out.

“Yeah, right. If I know Ronnie, she was under your skin quicker than a mosquito bite, Ambs. Which is why I hired Wyatt here to be her bodyguard. To keep her away from the rest of the working world. I think I just doggone spoiled the girl too much.”

Duncan shrugged his shoulders and walked up to Wyatt and smacked him on his back. Duncan, being the same height as Wyatt, looked him square in the eye. "And what did I tell you about calling me 'sir'? I haven't been your CO in quite some time, Wyatt. We're civilians, eh?"

"Sorry, sir...I mean, Duncan."

"That's more like it. Anyway, I came over here to give the crew the rest of the night off. They're done filming the action scenes, and I'll watch Ronnie for the rest of the night. Since ya'll are old buds, take the night off, get something to eat. Do something."

Ambrosia watched as Duncan Price ambled off, his silvering hair shining in the setting sun. His limp reminded her of her uncle back home. She'd have to call him tonight. Ambrosia turned back to Wyatt and started a little at the way he was staring down at her.

"What?" she said, tilting her head back to stare up into his intoxicating eyes.

Wyatt shook his head, and before Ambrosia could utter a word, she was in his arms with his lips pressing against hers.

CHAPTER TWO

It only took eight years, but finally Wyatt was doing the one thing he'd wanted to do more than breathe—kiss Ambrosia. He'd dreamed about it after the senior all-night party. He'd thought about it every day while they were sipping iced tea on his porch or cliff-jumping at Taylor's Falls. It was the one goal he'd had that he'd never reached, and he wasn't going to fail again.

Wyatt instinctively reached up and sunk his thick fingers into Ambrosia's silky coils of hair, pulling her in closer. She still had the same scent that he remembered—vanilla and honey. His other arm snaked around her back, and he felt her leg wrap around his. Knowing his erection was pressing into her belly, Wyatt still held her tight. He'd waited too long to kiss her to give too much of a damn.

Moaning as he pulled her closer to his body, Wyatt bathed in her body heat. Her skin was as soft as he remembered and her body fit perfectly into his. When he finally let her go, they were both out of breath and his skin felt hot.

“Why Wyatt? Why now?” Her words came out soft and husky, laced with the passion he could see in her eyes.

He grabbed her hand and touched her fingers to his lips. Slowly, he kissed each one of the five digits and curled her hand up to his chest and held it over his heart.

“Do you remember when we would sit and talk and we had the big scheme that I was going to become a famous football player, and you were going to be my agent?”

Ambrosia smiled and nodded her head in agreement.

“Well, my heart wasn’t in football, and I enlisted in the reserves after my second year. I was devastated that I couldn’t live up to playing pro ball, but I was more devastated that I didn’t keep up my end of our bargain. I didn’t know how I was going to break it to you.”

“Wait—all this time, Wyatt, you were scared how I was going to take the news that you didn’t become some big-name football star?”

“It was more than that, Ambrosia. It was what tied me and you together. It was the *only* way I could tie me and you together.”

Ambrosia looked startled and began to back up slowly. Wyatt would not let her run, not this time. It had taken him all this time to get the courage to make her his, and she wasn’t going to walk away from him, ever.

“Ambrosia, don’t run, not this time. You said you didn’t want to get involved that summer because you didn’t want to be a fling. Baby, I’m telling you, this is eight years in the making—this isn’t a fling.”

Wyatt reached out and pulled her close and kissed her full lips again. The taste of her simple vanilla lip balm drove him wild. He couldn’t taste her enough; he couldn’t hold her close enough; there just wasn’t enough. He had to get them out of here before he had them both naked in the middle of the set.

Reluctantly, he pulled his lips from hers and stared into her eyes. The beautiful cocoa hue of her eyes always entranced him, and he could always read her. She wanted him, but he could tell she was skeptical. Biting back a moan, he pulled her arm in his and pulled her in the direction of the trailers.

“Which one is yours, sweetheart?” Wyatt’s voice almost broke at the question. The emotion he was feeling after laying eyes on her again was more than one man could bear. He’d wanted her for far too long; keeping it bundled on the inside wasn’t even an option.

“That one in the far corner.” Ambrosia pointed, and for the first time, Wyatt noticed the length of her arms. His eyes followed her finger up her forearm, up her bicep and settled onto her neck. His vision was impaired as he imagined her long arms wrapped

around his neck, holding on for dear life as he rode them both to completion.

The vision in his head broke all of Wyatt's restraint. For the second time that day, Wyatt picked Ambrosia up and slung her body over his shoulder, and in a few strides he was in front of her trailer, with his mind made up that Ambrosia Davies wouldn't leave his sight ever again.

CHAPTER THREE

Ambrosia had no idea what came over Wyatt at that moment, but she could get used to him picking her up. His strong, toned arms held her tight, and she knew he wouldn't let her go. She contemplated spraining her ankle every once in a while just to have the man carry her around from place to place.

That was when Ambrosia realized the track her mind was following. It was thinking permanency, attaching herself to him for the long haul. When Wyatt finally put her down, her body protested at the loss of his body heat. Ambrosia almost fell into her trailer instead of using the graceful walk she thought she possessed. Being around Wyatt made her forget a lot of things, like her name.

"Wyatt..." Ambrosia wanted to maybe just talk. She'd found herself back in Wyatt's arms after all this time, and she wasn't trying to be a rebound or some sort of cheap trick for him.

"Wait, Ambs. Before you say anything, just hear me out on one thing." Wyatt transfixed her to the middle of the trailer floor with his gaze. His fascinating silver eyes transformed from their normal smoke color to an inky black.

She didn't move when Wyatt reached out and held her chin still with a mere two of his fingers. She didn't move when he stepped closer to her, but his intense stare was beginning to make her freak out.

"Ambrosia Davies, do you remember when you told me all those summers ago that I should find something to love and follow my heart?"

Ambrosia nodded, her stomach beginning to tighten at the forceful tone of his voice. It was strong, severe and yet so gentle.

"I have found it." Wyatt's lips pressed against hers so softly, she thought she imagined the kiss. That was the last time it was that gentle. The next time his lips came down on hers, they were unrelenting. He pulled her body into his, and his mouth devoured hers. She could taste the peppermint candies he was so fond of on his tongue as it swirled around her mouth.

Ambrosia could feel the heat from his palms as he slid his fingers under the flimsy shirt. She thanked her stars that she'd decided to get out of the wetsuit beforehand. Her eyes rolled in the back of her head when she felt Wyatt's hands on her stomach.

Everything in her wanted to sink to the carpet; her mind spun from the sensations Wyatt produced with just his touch. His hands made their way over her ass, and he cupped her to him. She had no choice but to follow his lead and wrap her hands around his

neck and throw her legs around his waist. She threaded her fingers into his silky brown hair. His steps were sure as he made his way from the living room of the trailer to the single bedroom at the back.

She sighed when he laid her down on the full-sized bed. He pulled her shirt over her head and proceeded to rain nibbles and kisses down her neck and between the mounds of her breasts. His fingers touched and teased as he worked her out of the camouflage pants. She thought for sure she would expire before they even got to the good part, but his caresses were enough to make her seriously wanton and proud of it.

When Wyatt's mouth found her nether lips and began to kiss them gently, there was no going back. Her fingers sunk into his hair, and she held on for dear life.

Wyatt had her exactly where he wanted her. Her panting and her sighs were driving him wild. Her nails digging into his scalp set his loins on fire. He could only press his throbbing rod into the mattress to alleviate some of the building pressure.

When his lips tasted the sweet nectar in between her thighs, Wyatt was a goner. There was nothing as

sweet or as satisfying to his appetite as the moment his tongue curled around Ambrosia's swelling nub.

Using the very little control he had left, Wyatt dipped his finger into her tunnel and hissed at the tightness. He tried to be gentle, but the more her tight canal squeezed at his finger, the more his restraint slipped.

"Wyatt," Ambrosia crooned in her sexy, husky voice. At that moment, he felt her juices flood over his finger, and he was proud of himself for holding out until she at least had one orgasm. He'd waited far too long to hear his name on her lips to have much patience left.

"Are you ready for me, Ambrosia?" Wyatt asked as he peeled his shirt off his body and pulled his pants down his thighs. He watched intently as he saw her stare down at his member, standing at full attention and pointing directly at her.

He slowly climbed up her body and caressed her face. He leaned his forehead down to hers and whispered the words that he'd kept at bay since realizing who she was.

"I will never hurt you. I love you too much to ever hurt you." Wyatt waited for the words to sink in and for Ambrosia to try to run again.

"You love me?" Ambrosia stammered, and for once, all the surety that made up the woman he was in

love with was gone and he heard the vulnerability in her voice.

Wyatt gathered her into his arms and slowly slid into her slick path. He heard her gasp when he finally seated himself fully within her. Looking down into her eyes, he kept his gaze on hers.

“Yes, I love you, more than words can express.” Wyatt rocked back once and pushed forward again. “I loved you since that summer, and have not stopped thinking about you.” He rocked back again, and pushed himself into Ambrosia’s wet folds. “And I don’t plan on stopping my love for you, so get used to it.”

With those words, Wyatt’s last restraint on his passion gave. What started as a slow-tempo waltz between Wyatt and Ambrosia quickly turned into the seductive tango of bodies. Ambrosia clawed into his back, hanging on to Wyatt as he poured himself into her like it was the last thing on earth he would ever get to do. If this was his last act on earth, Wyatt would’ve been in bliss.

He was so close to the brink of his own completion when he felt Ambrosia’s womb quiver around his cock. Not wanting to end without her inside him, Wyatt reached in between their bodies and began to rub her pearl. He heard her gasp and knew

she was on the brink. He pressed and rubbed harder, daring her to let loose.

When Wyatt saw her open her mouth and realized she was going to holler the roof in, his mouth quickly clamped down on hers, feasting on her lips and swallowing her cries. His body stiffened as he emptied his love into her, filling her womb.

Wyatt held her close and settled her on his lap as he took a more comfortable position on the couch. There was no way he was going to let her go, not even for a moment. Just as Wyatt was going to ask if she was okay, he heard her soft snores and her breath vibrating on his chest.

“That’s okay. Sleep now, Ambs—you’re going to need it.”

Ambrosia awoke with a strange feeling under her. It was warm, bulky, and a little bit of hair was on her cheek. She licked her mouth and looked up. Wyatt’s chocolate eyelashes rested on his cheek as he dozed, giving him a peaceful aura.

Ambrosia didn’t know what to do about the last few hours . She’d just been thinking about Wyatt today. If he hadn’t picked her up, maybe she would’ve never known he was here. They would’ve missed each

other. What would make the Fates smile on her today? The stunts she'd run had been damn near flawless, and Wyatt, the one man she'd always pined for, had waltzed back into her life.

Still in a daze, and partially wanting to make sure this wasn't a dream, Ambrosia reached up to caress his cheek. His five o'clock shadow felt good in her hands, so she kept rubbing.

"Are you trying to make a wish, Ambs?" Wyatt smiled without opening his eyes. His dimple peeked out, and it was at that moment, with that statement, that Ambrosia fell deeply irrevocably in love with the man holding her.

"I think I got my wish. I love you too, Wyatt. I think I always have in some way. You seemed to be always in the back of my head, even when we were apart." Ambrosia looked at Wyatt as he hugged her close.

"Good, because I wasn't going let you out of this trailer until you said you loved me." Wyatt chuckled, but Ambrosia wasn't laughing.

"I'm serious. I don't take love lightly. I have never said those words to anyone but my uncle."

"I don't take love lightly either. I play hard and I love hard. I hope you are ready for that." Wyatt's tone dipped to a baritone that made Ambrosia quiver.

“I’m ready, for anything, all the time.” Ambrosia laughed.

Wyatt quirked his eyebrow at her.

“Stunt 101—always be ready,” Ambrosia supplied and kissed his dimple.

“I’ll teach you a stunt or two.” Wyatt growled and kissed her hard.

“Mmmm, I think we might be ready for an advanced lesson plan, Mr. Archard.”

“After,” Wyatt said as he nibbled her bottom lip.

“After what?” Ambrosia whispered into his mouth.

“After I get you back home so I can ask your uncle for your hand in marriage properly. You will never ever walk out of my life again. How soon can you leave the set?” Wyatt looked down at Ambrosia with a wicked but determined gleam in his eye.

“Now,” Ambrosia said, leaping out of his arms.

“Always be ready?” Wyatt said as he stretched his arms over his head.

“Stunt 101, baby!”

****NL****

NEVEA LANE

Nevea Lane currently resides in the Midwest, where she lives the life of a hermit. Her life has taken her on many travels and adventures, including: the tops of the Swiss Alps, *le Metro* of Paris, the busy street of Adams Morgan in Washington, D.C., and the quiet mystery of the Silver Lake mountain ranges of the Treasure State (Montana). She has called herself a geographic mutt, and believes that your home is where your heart takes you for the moment. Right now, her heart has led her to the rolling plains of Minnesota, where she'll remain until her characters have decided to stop chatting, or the muse leaves to pester someone else. She has received many marriage proposals, but has not yet decided to make that leap. She is looking for more than just a spark, she is looking for a forest fire...until she finds it, let her entertain you.

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