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MAYA'S TRIPLE DARE

Divine Creek
Ranch

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Divine Creek Ranch 6

Maya's Triple Dare

Kendall has adored Maya from afar for years, but he is done being her "go-to guy." He's always been her confidant and her husband's best friend. Now widowed, Maya is through with living life in half-measures and regrets never asking both men for what she wanted.

A posthumous letter reveals Maya's husband knew she loved Kendall and challenges her to follow her heart. During a visit to Kendall and his brothers' ranch in Divine, Maya finds that her heart still longs for a ménage. Attraction blooms between Maya and his brothers: intuitive, dominant Boone and quiet, somber Richard.

Maya is determined to not repeat the mistakes of the past, even if it costs her the censure of the Divine Community. Does she dare to build a life with all three handsome cowboys? Can Kendall, Boone and Richard protect her when danger from her hometown knocks on their door?

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DEDICATION

To my husband. Thank you for giving me my wings and encouraging
me to soar.

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Divine Creek Ranch 6

HEATHER RAINIER

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Chapter One

Maya sighed heavily as she dropped her car keys and the stack of envelopes on the marble kitchen countertop and walked into the living room. Using the remote, she turned on the stereo, which was set to play at a low volume on a country and western station.

She glanced at the pile of mail, knowing what was in it. Besides the usual correspondence, there was also a letter from her attorney. That typically meant only one thing, another letter from her late husband. She looked around the spacious living room, lit by the late afternoon sun, and felt small in the big house.

Maya slipped out of her high heels and sat on the couch, tucking her feet beneath her. She was relieved that the meeting with her financial planner was done. The one thing she didn't have to worry about was how she was managing financially. Morgan had left her with a comfortable investment income. She'd been putting off some decisions, unsure of what direction her life should take now.

Up to that point she'd followed Morgan's suggestion to pursue her dreams, which included graduating from The University of Texas with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. She'd also taken and passed the Examination for Registered Nurses.

She had begun the process in a fog after his death, by rote and faith, pursuing the completion of her educational goals as a means to survive the early months of widowhood. She was done with that chapter of her life, and it was time to set off into uncharted waters on her own. She felt like her boat was stalled in the water.

Her phone chirped. Glancing at the screen, she saw the text from Frank Reeves and closed her eyes. What had she been thinking when she'd agreed to that date with her deceased husband's business partner?

When he'd suggested it would be good for her to begin socializing again, she had agreed. She hadn't realized that he would ask her out *every* weekend. Out of sheer boredom she'd gone out with him a few times.

Lately, Frank had been pressing her for affection she didn't feel toward him. That situation was something else she had to make a decision about, especially after his behavior the night before.

She looked at the screen again.

"Will you call me? We need to talk."

"No, *you* want to talk. You want me to listen and be your Barbie doll and nod my head," she said to her phone as though she were talking to him. "Jerk."

She glanced at the thick stack of mail and looked away. She could see the corner of the thick, cream-colored envelope from her attorney's office. She wanted to reach for it, but she also dreaded it.

Instead, she applied her finger to the touch screen on her phone and scrolled through her contacts. She smiled and heaved a shaky sigh when his handsome face popped up on the screen and she touched the "call" icon. Talking to Kendall always helped, and she felt comforted at the thought of hearing his voice.

She could trust this man. She pictured him in her mind and smiled at the thought of broad, muscular shoulders, powerful arms, and a tight butt that was droolworthy. He had eyes that were always lit with

a mischievous twinkle and a flirtatious smile that probably had the girls in Divine hot on his heels.

“Hello, babydoll.”

The same delightful shiver always zipped up her spine at the sweet sound of his affectionate, rugged voice. Sometimes she heard his voice or saw his face in her dreams, and she wondered what Kendall would think if he knew the role he'd taken on in her dreams of late.

“Kendall. How are you?”

“I'm good. We're just sitting at home, cooling off and having a beer.”

Boone and Richard must be there with him, as well. She smiled at her memories of them. Boone, with his body art, tall, muscular physique, and dark brown eyes. And Richard, the gentle, quiet giant with pale eyes that made her heart flutter. The three brothers were all drop-dead gorgeous in very different ways. She might've been a married woman in the years they'd all been friends, but that didn't mean she'd been blind.

Lately, Boone and Richard had even shown up in a few dreams, as well as fantasies. She supposed that might be part of the reason why a man like Frank Reeves, with his slightly superior, aging, preppy-jock mentality had held no appeal for her. She could care less about whether he drove a Jag or owned a boat.

It would've impressed her more if he'd gotten a decent haircut and stopped trying to hide his bald spot. There was something attractive about a man who didn't try to hide things that were a normal part of aging. But then again, Frank also dressed in the same preppy fashions as he probably had when he was in high school, so growing up was obviously an issue.

“How are Boone and Richard doing?”

“They just got home, too. We're fixing to eat. What are you up to?”

“I just got home. I wanted to...” *...tell you I need you.*

Kendall waited for a few seconds and then spoke up, his voice laced with concern. "You okay, babydoll?"

Just tell him. Say the words. I need you.

She couldn't do it. Kendall and his brothers were struggling, trying to get their ranch up and running. They were entrenched in life in Divine, and she was in San Marcos. If she told him that, she knew he'd drop everything and be there inside of three hours. That wasn't fair to him or his brothers, who were still working full-time at that other ranch. *Suck it up, sister. You have decisions to make.*

She wouldn't bother him with her job decisions because she knew it was simply a choice of where to start looking. She'd just tell Kendall about what was going on with Frank. He'd help her see the big picture, and she'd move on. Talking to him could provide a jumpstart of sorts. She'd always been able to rely on him.

* * * *

Kendall Warner sat down with his ice-cold beer and propped his boots up on the coffee table. It had been a long, hot day, but all that was forgotten as he held the cell phone to his ear. He welcomed the sound of Maya Daire's sexy, whispery voice even though it inspired a hardening erection he couldn't expect her to do anything about. He didn't welcome the words he knew were coming.

Don't say it, babydoll.

"You're my 'go-to' guy, Kendall. I know I can trust you to tell me what I should do."

If I did, you'd be living here with us. You'd be lying in our bed right now while I made love to you and my brothers watched, waiting their turn.

He pictured her like that and suppressed a groan. He could see her clearly, her long, golden-blond hair spread across his pillows, her beautiful, curvaceous body naked and resplendent on the sheets. Her

blue eyes glittered with desire as she reached for him. His cock punched at his fly, demanding action.

Kendall glanced at his older brother, Boone, who watched him with a knowing look on his face. It was Kendall's younger brother Richard's turn to cook supper, and he'd been banging around in the kitchen until Kendall's phone rang. The kitchen was now quiet, since he'd told them it was Maya calling. In the last couple of months, both his brothers had developed a greater interest in these calls.

"Is everything all right, Maya?" Kendall prepared to have his heart ripped out.

She was calling him for advice about dating again. Or she was calling to tell him she was dating someone new. He was glad she had returned to the land of the living or at least partly living. It had been a year since her husband Morgan's death, and as a young widow, Maya was trying hard to get back in the swing of things.

"Frank Reeves has been asking for more than just a date. I went out with him last night, and when he brought me home he wanted to stay over."

The thought of her loving someone new made his chest burn.

"How do you feel about that?" Kendall asked through gritted teeth, trying to sound normal as the Neanderthal inside him beat his chest ineffectually.

Frank Reeves was an aging jock with a superiority complex who had been Morgan's business partner. Kendall had never liked him, and it didn't sit well with him that Maya had gone out with the asshole.

Boone propped his boots up on the coffee table and stretched loudly. In answer to Kendall's question to her, he muttered, "Feel like kicking your pussy ass, Kendall, that's how I feel."

Kendall saluted Boone with his middle finger.

It had been Kendall's intent to give Maya time to mourn before sharing how he'd always felt about her. When had he gotten himself into this role as her love-life advisor?

About eight years ago, when I became a fucking pushover where my best friend's wife was concerned.

He thought back to the times she'd called on him as her "go-to" guy. He'd given the blonde-haired, blue-eyed beauty advice on every subject relating to the human male, with Morgan reaping all the benefits.

He'd had a hand in selecting lingerie colors and styles. She'd e-mailed him with a picture of herself shot from the rear. Along with the picture was the question, "Do these jeans make my ass look enormous?" He had no idea why she thought her sweet little derriere was enormous. It was perfection. He'd e-mailed her back an appropriate reply.

His all-time favorite as the "go-to" guy was her asking him if guys *really* cared whether a girl swallowed cum after a blow job or not.

Maya had even talked to him about feeling ready to start a family. He'd imagined her beautiful body ripe with his child. He should've felt guilty for that, or jealous of Morgan, but that hadn't been the case at all. He would've been happy for both of them if she'd gotten pregnant. Jealousy had never entered the picture, and Morgan had never acted threatened by Maya's continued closeness to Kendall since becoming friends in college.

Then Morgan had been killed in a freak auto accident. Kendall's role as "go-to" guy had taken on a different quality as she'd mourned. Over the last couple of months their conversations had concerned her getting involved socially again. It was right about that time that Boone and Richard had begun taking a more focused interest in her.

"I don't want him like that. I think Frank's...*okay*, and he was supportive after Morgan's accident, but I have the impression he's becoming impatient. He didn't leave happy last night." Her silken voice held a note of hesitancy. "If he pulls that again I think I'm done with him. I was actually a little scared when he left so angrily."

Her words and her tone got Kendall's attention. "You're scared of him? If that's the case, you need to stop seeing him now. Don't give

him the opportunity to hurt you. I've never liked the smarmy bastard, but I was glad you were feeling up to dating again. If the guy scares you, cut him loose."

He'd just lied to her. If Kendall had been in the area, Frank Reeves never would've had a chance at dating her. Kendall noticed Boone's demeanor had changed, and the kitchen had grown quiet again.

"I didn't mean to get you all riled up."

"If Reeves is scaring you, I want to do more than get riled up." He wanted to get in the truck and go get her.

"Maybe I'm making too big of a deal out of it. He did stop when I asked him to—"

"Stop what? What did he do?" Kendall saw red and sensed it when Richard came to stand behind the couch to listen and Boone sat up at attention.

"Kendall, calm down. It was no big deal. He was trying to get my top undone. Feeling me up. You *know*."

"Anyone who dates you should treat you like a lady, Maya. Do you need me to come teach the bastard a lesson?" *Please say yes.*

She was silent for a moment, and then said, "That's him on call-waiting right now. I'll let it go to voice mail. No, I don't need you to come teach him a lesson, I need—" He thought he heard a hitch in her breathing.

Say me. Please say you need me.

"Maya?" He could picture her sitting in her living room all alone, looking like she needed his arms wrapped around her.

"Never mind. Listen, don't mind me. I'm not going to see Frank anymore. I'll call him back and tell him we're through. It's just hard, Kendall. It was a year ago yesterday. I—I have...regrets, and it's making me oversensitive. I'll be fine." She sounded anything but fine. Forlorn was more like it.

"Maya, I can be there in three hours."

"No. I'm a big girl."

They spoke of other, safer topics for a few minutes, and then he ended the call, dissatisfied and hungry. But not hungry for supper. The hunger he'd always felt for her burned in his belly. If she knew how her voice on the phone affected him, how her velvety tone caressed his neural pathways, she'd...what? Freak out? Laugh?

Boone sighed heavily and said what was on his mind. "Bro, how long are you going to torture yourself? If she's dating again, you need to act on whatever it was she told you before some other unworthy asshole comes along and steals her away permanently. You got mail." Boone nudged it to him with the heel of his boot on the coffee table.

Richard shifted quietly behind Kendall and said, "Someone's giving our girl a hard time?"

"Yeah. Frank Reeves." God, how Kendall wished she *was* their girl. That had been the topic of recent conversation as well.

"Is he the peckerwood who drives the Jag?" Boone asked, scrubbing a hand over the short beard on his jaw.

"That's the one. He tried to take advantage of her last night. She said he's gotten pushy, wanting more attention than she's willing to give." He lifted a letter written on heavy stationery from the stack to open first. The return address was a law office in Austin. "Shit. What now?"

He sliced open the envelope with his pocketknife as Boone sat forward and Richard hovered nearby with his arms crossed over his massive chest.

Richard asked, "Is it about the claim on the house?"

"No, I heard from them this afternoon," Kendall said as the contents of the heavy envelope fell into his lap. They had been in limbo, waiting to hear from their insurance company regarding the pile of broken lumber that currently sat where the old JWB Ranch house had once stood.

"What did they say?" Boone asked. "The storm was last month, and they sure are taking their sweet-ass time."

“Our policy has a wind exclusion because of the history of storms in our area. It won’t cover the loss at all.”

“Thank God we hadn’t sunk a lot of money and time into renovating it yet,” Richard said.

They’d lived on the Rockin’ C Ranch with the other ranch hands after hiring on with Chance and Clayton Carlisle and had only made the ranch house livable enough to move in to a few months before the storms had hit. Their focus had been the land and saving practically every penny they earned for good breeding stock. The house had been in sad repair, and they’d originally planned to fix it up a little at a time while living in it. Between their jobs and caring for the land and livestock, the last two years had been long and hard.

“And for the fact that we weren’t home when it happened.”

Home for the last month had been the old foreman’s house on the Divine Creek Ranch. Angel, Joaquin, and Teresa Martinez and their two children had vacated it the year before when their new house was finished. The present ranch foreman, Ash Peterson, his wife Juliana, and their baby boy were living in her home while their house on FM 709 was under construction.

Grace Warner had come to the guys when she’d heard about the rickety, old ranch house being destroyed in last month’s straight line windstorm and had insisted they live in the unoccupied foreman’s house while they rebuilt.

Boone added, “At least the outbuildings and livestock were mostly unharmed.”

Boone and Richard still worked full-time at the Rockin’ C Ranch outside of Divine while Kendall worked full-time on their spread, the JWB or Jack Warner’s Boys Ranch. The JWB butted up to the Divine Creek Ranch along the creek for which it was named.

Kendall had begun working full-time on their place the year before. Their plan had been to each come back full-time to the JWB as it began to turn a profit as a cattle ranch. It was slow going, but

they were patient. The JWB was a beautiful piece of land and well worth the effort.

Kendall was content in almost every area of his life, save one. The phone call from Maya had only served to bring his loneliness to mind. He could handle having to rebuild their home. He couldn't handle the thought of rebuilding a house, only to knock around in it alone.

A cover letter and another sealed envelope with familiar handwriting on the outside fell into his lap. He opened the cover letter and quickly scanned the contents. Trepidation grew in his heart as he slit the second envelope open.

"It's a letter from Morgan," he murmured as the old ache surfaced in his heart for his dead friend. Morgan had been killed in a hit-and-run automobile accident a year and one day ago. Boone and Richard withdrew to the kitchen and left him to read in private.

Kendall,

It must feel weird to hold this letter in your hands right now. That means I've been dead for a year. It feels weird to write it, too. Sorry for your loss, dude.

You're my best friend and Maya's as well. That's why I'm reaching out to you. By now, Maya should be moving on with her life, and I needed to make some things right for her sake. Being the nice guy that you are, you have no idea what I'm talking about.

I know you loved her. I know the day I married her had to be the most painful day of your life. But you stood by me the whole time without a word of complaint. It would've killed me if I'd been in your shoes, but you've stuck by us and been the kind of friend we're both grateful for.

If you're able, will you go to her? Will you tell her you love her and do whatever you must to get her to admit she loves you as well? I know she loves you. I knew it when I married her even though I was sure she loved me, too. I think she wanted us both and couldn't ask

for what she truly wanted. Do whatever you have to do to convince her and give her what she needs.

You're going to think I'm a freak for saying this, but I think you're the missing part of our marriage. I wish we lived in a culture where poly relationships were accepted. If I had chosen a different, less public profession and lived in a smaller town it might have been an option for us. I'll never know.

Worst-case scenario, Frank Reeves will try to get involved with Maya. Please don't allow that to happen, Kendall. I think he harbors an attraction for her, and something has been off about him lately. Tell her whatever you have to. Show her this letter if you think it will help. But keep her out of his hands.

Please go after her and take care of her, before some unworthy bastard beats you to her. Love her for both of us. You'll be a lucky man if you do.

*Sincerely,
Morgan Daire*

PS: I hope by now you've made something of that shithole you call a ranch house. Maya deserves a palace.

Kendall felt like he'd been poleaxed. There was a date stamp from the law office on the outside of Morgan's envelope. They'd received it roughly six months before Morgan's death, evidently with instructions for when to mail it to Kendall, if necessary. He found it unsettling that Morgan's words mirrored Boone's of just moments before.

"Damn, you look like you've seen a ghost," Boone commented as he handed Kendall another beer.

"Heard from one is more like it." Kendall handed Boone the letter. Boone sat down and read with Richard looking over his shoulder. Kendall sat on the couch in shock.

If he had the chance for a do-over with Maya, would he let her slip through his fingers again? Hell no. Boone handed him the letter, and Richard sat in the recliner. This involved more than just him. It concerned the two of them as well. Maya Daire's new social status had been the topic of conversation for weeks. Living in Divine and getting to know his cousins had changed the way he thought about relationships, just as it had for his brothers. If she'd loved both Morgan and Kendall was there a chance she could find happiness with the three of them?

Richard gazed at Kendall through piercing, pale eyes and asked, "You going after her?"

"Yes."

Kendall sensed their reactions in their body language. They both looked ready to charge through the front door and climb in the truck.

The three of them wanted—no, *craved* what their cousin Jack had with his wife, Grace, and Jack's distant cousins, Ethan Grant and Adam Davis. They wanted a woman to love and to share. Kendall smiled and looked at them both.

"Do you think lightning can strike twice in the same place?"

"Of course," Boone replied. Richard remained silent on the couch, but nodded.

"Well, let's see if it'll strike three times."

Chapter Two

Maya sat on the couch with the stack of mail in her hand as she laid her phone aside. Something about Kendall's soothing voice always made her feel better, especially since Morgan's death, but before then, also. He'd talked her off more ledges than she could recall, some small and some larger than he probably realized.

She finally reached for the envelope and opened it.

Another one.

After helping his mother deal with the sudden death of his father due to a heart attack, Morgan had decided to write Maya a series of letters to help her in the event she had to deal with his death. His mom had been totally unprepared to handle tying up his father's loose ends and making financial decisions that would affect her livelihood. Maya was grateful for every letter she'd received, both as a tie to him and because she'd been in a fog those first few months and had needed his counsel on many occasions.

Her heart clenched with the pain of Morgan's loss for a moment, and she waited for the buried-under-an-avalanche feeling that always accompanied these letters. Each time one came, her emotional response to it was not as bad as with the previous one.

This time she only felt like skipping supper and going straight to bed. The last time, she'd wanted to stay in bed for a week. Steeling herself, she tore open the envelope. A small key fell into her lap. She lifted the cover letter from Morgan's attorney and close friend and read it.

The key was to a safe-deposit box at Hill Country Bank and Trust in San Marcos. In the letter, the lawyer apologized for the delay in

getting the key to her. Somehow the key had been placed in the wrong envelope, and she should have received it much sooner. It had only recently been discovered in the envelope with the final letter. Laying the key aside, she carefully opened the envelope and slid the enclosed letter out.

Lovely Maya,

This is my last letter. The reason for that is not because I'm tired of writing them. That would be like getting tired of making love to you. If it was the only way I could be there for you, I'd go on for years with letters, but I can't back up what I'd write with action.

I want you to do something for me. Live your life. If you've already begun to move on, I'm proud of you. But will you do one thing for me? Go to Kendall. Tell him you're ready to move on. Be the daring girl I married and ask him for what you've needed for so long. He's loved you since the moment he laid eyes on you, and I know you've loved him just as long.

If I could have one wish granted, it would be that we lived in a world where we could've shared our lives together. No, Kendall and I aren't in love with each other, but we are both in love with you. I was the lucky guy who asked first, and being the stand-up guy he is, he let you go.

I can't fulfill that wish, but this one I can. Go love him and have the life you wanted and didn't dare ask for. If you've followed my suggestions in previous letters, the house should be paid off and you should be through with your degree. Sell the house. Put the money into your investments or the JWB.

*I love you with my whole heart,
Morgan*

Her hand shook as she reread the letter. *Be the daring girl I married...* Could she? She'd never stopped missing Kendall when he'd moved on after they'd gotten married. He'd stayed in touch and they'd visited him, but something had always been missing. No, *someone* was missing. She looked down at Morgan's careful script, and a tear splashed onto the page.

She missed Morgan so much. What she'd wanted, she'd wanted *with* Morgan. To love them both. Whether that made her a deviant, she didn't know or care. She knew what her heart had wanted, and evidently Morgan had understood what she desired, as well. Her heart ached with old grief for him at how he'd loved her despite knowing that about her.

Without bothering to fix supper, she went to her room, undressed, and crawled in under the covers.

As soon as she was comfortable she groaned. "Shit."

She'd forgotten all about calling Frank. After lying there for a few seconds, she decided she was down for the count and he could wait until tomorrow. She closed her eyes and fell sound asleep. It wasn't even dark outside yet.

* * * *

Maya was startled awake by her doorbell ringing. Fuzzy-headed, she crawled from bed, donned her robe and stumbled down the hall. She turned on a light in the dark living room and squinted at the screen on her cell phone as she went to the door. It was half past ten. There were several missed calls and text messages. She must've really been out of it to not hear her phone. She gazed into the peephole and gasped. A wave of heat blasted through her torso.

"Kendall."

She fumbled with the deadbolt and flung the door open. His sandy-blond hair looked mussed, like he'd run his fingers through it a number of times. His hands rested casually on his denim-clad hips as

he stood there. He must've gotten in his truck after their phone call and driven straight to San Marcos from Divine.

The look in his eyes sent another bolt of heat through her, this time straight to her pussy. Funny, none of the men she'd dated in the last few weeks had inspired any sort of sexual reaction in her at all, including Frank Reeves.

In another life she might feel guilty for the warmth that pulsed through her body at the sight of him, but she'd always reacted to him this way. She'd done her best to hide it once Morgan had declared his love for her, but where Kendall was concerned she couldn't help it.

She leaped into his arms as he whispered, "Babydoll."

He smelled of sunshine, hard work, and leather. Breathing his scent in made her mouth water. His muscular arms felt good, holding her securely, and she wondered if he noticed the tremor that rippled through her. She welcomed him into the house, remembering self-consciously when her nipples hardened that she was clad only in her satin robe.

He looked like a sin waiting to be committed, in denim and leather. Where Morgan had been the tall, dark, and handsome Mister *GQ*, Kendall was the blond, sexy, and risqué cowboy, and she'd always enjoyed the contrast between the two of them.

Maya didn't miss the tension in his jaw and the set of his lips as he looked her over. She was about to excuse herself to go change when she saw the letter he held in his hand, written on familiar-looking stationery.

"Is Morgan telling the truth in this?" Kendall asked plainly as he handed it to her. That was Kendall's way, to get right to the crux of the matter from the beginning.

With a trembling hand, she took the wrinkled letter from him, changing clothes all but forgotten. Her cheeks heated as she read Morgan's words. Evidently neither she nor Kendall had been very adept at hiding their feelings from Morgan. The letter went on to say Kendall loved her.

Maya looked into his brown eyes, responding even more strongly to the heat smoldering there. Morgan's voice whispered to her. *Be the daring girl I married...have the life you wanted and didn't dare ask for. Dare.*

Kendall grasped her shoulders through the black satin of her robe, and moisture pooled in her slit in a lightning-quick response. "Is it true, babydoll? Tell me."

Relief that he finally knew, mixed with sorrow for the reason he knew, surged through her, and she bit her lip as she nodded. "Yes."

A breath he must have been holding escaped Kendall in a great gust as he crushed her to him. His body shook and he groaned, kissing the top of her head.

"Will you come back home with me?"

Struck by the suddenness of his request, Maya stammered, "I—I don't know. For how long? For what? Kendall, I—"

He cradled the back of her head as he gazed into her eyes for a few, lingering seconds. His handsome face radiated desire, and she felt completely right and safe in his arms. Gently, he gripped her hair as he closed the distance between them and kissed her. He thrust his tongue into her mouth, stroking lovingly. He tasted minty and clean, and his day-old whiskers rubbed against her cheeks and chin, making her skin tingle and her pussy pulse with need for him.

She'd fantasized about what it would be like to kiss him for years and even more so in the last couple of months. As a matter of fact, her fantasies of late had extended to include Boone and Richard. The three of them surrounding her, kissing her, and even loving her. Should she go home with him?

Kendall released her and looked intently into her eyes. "For how long? Let's start with a week. If you can put up with us then we'll see about forever." His eyes told her he was serious.

"What about Boone and Richard? You're living in a small house right now."

“Not that small. Boone and Richard have to work in the morning. Otherwise they would’ve ridden with me. *They* want you to come, too.”

The emphasis in his statement only gave rise to more questions in her mind, but he chose that moment to lay another bone-melting kiss on her. Maya slid her palms up his solid biceps and wrapped her arms around his neck. The belt of the robe slid loose as she raised her arms, and she felt a draft when the edges parted.

She released his shoulders and pulled the robe back together, feeling conflicted. His kiss turned her on, and she wanted him. That much was certain. But this was so sudden, and she couldn’t afford a misstep. Not with Kendall.

Evidently sensing her hesitation, Kendall released her as she asked, “What Morgan told you in the letter doesn’t bother you? That I wanted you both?”

Maybe she should stay in town and get her head checked. Boone and Richard’s handsome faces floated in her mind, adding to her uncertainty. She pictured herself with Kendall, Boone, and Richard in that scenario.

They were all so different from each other. Boone was dark-eyed and handsome, mysterious, and tattooed. Richard was larger than life, rugged, a quiet, immensely deep person, with beautiful pale blue eyes she swore could see into a person’s soul.

She didn’t know anybody who had the kind of committed relationship she’d always fantasized about. She didn’t even know if it would’ve worked. What if this was a disastrous idea and she lost Kendall’s friendship as well as his love?

“Babydoll, I’ll never regret being there for you, but I don’t want to be your ‘go-to’ guy anymore. I want to be the *man* you go to. I would’ve been there if that’s what you and Morgan had wanted.”

Questions and confusion swirled in her mind, but one fact remained. He knew the truth and still wanted her.

Chapter Three

Kendall watched as Maya debated. Her cheeks were rosy with a blush that made her even more beautiful to him. She was no calculating manipulator, and she'd obviously never voiced her desires to Morgan to get what she wanted. He wanted to give it to her now. He hoped once she arrived at their place, she would feel something for Boone and Richard as well. In order to know, she had to come home with him. He didn't push, wanting it to be her decision.

"Boone and Richard won't mind?"

Kendall pictured the approval in his brothers' eyes as he'd risen from the couch three hours earlier and told them he was going to get her.

"They were very clear about welcoming you. You can call them if you need the reassurance. When I left they were making the second bedroom ready for you to stay in."

"But you're cramped as it is. You told me that house only has two bedrooms."

"And two comfortable couches."

Maya was thoughtful for a few seconds before saying, "I'll pack enough for a week. After that, we'll see."

She looked into his eyes, seeming to need his understanding, and he gave her a big, wide smile. Startling her, he grasped her in a bear hug and lifted her warm, curvaceous body off the floor and twirled around with her. Her gasp of surprise ended in a merry giggle when he set her on her feet.

"You're not going to be disappointed, babydoll." His heart pounded with relief that was echoed in his groin at the thought of

having her so close. A lot could happen in a week. Maybe she could fall for all three of them.

“Make yourself at home. I’ll get ready and pack.” She pecked him on the cheek and went down the hall.

He got comfortable on the couch and took out his phone to text Boone and let him and Richard know she was coming home.

A minute later he heard her shower come on and couldn’t help the fantasies his mind conjured of her under the hot spray. He could picture her head tilted back and soap suds slithering down her gorgeous, full breasts, her nipples peeking out. He imagined the suds sliding over the sexy tattoo he knew adorned her left hip. The only reason he knew about it was because she’d asked for his input on the design. His cock felt hard enough to break concrete as he imagined sliding his hands around her sweetly curved hips and thrusting every inch of his cock into what would probably feel like the closest thing to heaven on earth.

His fantasy was interrupted by a loud knock at the front door, which was rudely repeated a few seconds later. Kendall frowned and wondered who had the nerve to pound on Maya’s door so late at night. He peeked through the peephole and recognized the asshole’s ruddy features and blond hair.

Opening the door, Kendall enjoyed the look of surprise on Frank Reeves’s face. Frank squinted, and recognition registered in his eyes as his lip curled.

“Warner. What are you doing here?”

The self-important asshole moved forward as though he expected Kendall to back away and allow him to enter, but Kendall didn’t budge. Reeves’s days of horning in where he didn’t belong were over.

“I should ask you the same question, Reeves.”

“I need to talk to Maya. Where is she?” Frank demanded, attempting once again to enter Maya’s home, but Kendall wouldn’t allow it.

If Maya had already broken it off with Frank, then his presence in her house would be a trespass on her wishes to see him again. If she'd forgotten to call him, then she had not resolved the issues between them and definitely would not want him in the house while she was showering. Kendall could hear the water still running.

"She's unavailable at the moment."

"I've been trying to reach her all evening. Why hasn't she been answering her phone? How long have you been here?"

"Like I said, she's unavailable." *Permanently, you stupid prick.* "Why I am here is none of your business." Kendall wanted to kick this aging, jock, preppy throwback off of Maya's porch but wondered if it might be better to get this confrontation over with. The decision wasn't his to make. "Wait here."

He shut the door in Frank's face and slid the bolt home because if this guy was taking liberties with Maya he'd think nothing of walking into the house while Kendall checked with her.

He grinned at the muffled expletives he heard through the door as he walked away from it, down the hall. He tapped on her bathroom door and heard her faint response.

He cracked the door open and said, "Frank Reeves is on your front porch. May I kick his ass off of it, or should I let him in?"

She peeked from behind the shower curtain and appeared to debate for a moment. "Shoot. He called and left several text messages while I was asleep. I didn't check the messages. It might be best to let him in and keep him in the living room. I'll finish up and be out in a minute." She held the curtain back for a moment, and her brows knitted together as she added, "Kendall, I'm sorry."

"Why are you sorry?"

"Sorry you have to deal with him." Relief filled him because for a second he was afraid she'd changed her mind about coming with him.

Kendall grinned and winked at her. "You sure I can't kick his ass off your front steps? Because I'm up for that."

A faint chuckle came from behind the shower curtain. “No, you big He-Man. I’ll deal with him.”

Kendall returned to the door and allowed Frank to come in the house. “Maya said to have a seat in the living room and she’ll be out in a few minutes.”

Reeves and Kendall spent the next few minutes in a staring match that Reeves lost. He took out his cell phone and toyed with the screen, probably trying to appear as though he had pressing business at eleven o’clock at night.

Maya emerged from her bedroom with damp hair and a fresh face. She was dressed for the trip home in soft, form-fitting pants and a snug white T-shirt. Kendall rose when she walked in the room as she looked at Frank, who remained seated on the couch. Ill-mannered asshole.

Kendall drew near and murmured, “You okay?”

“Yes. It’s fine. Could you give me a few minutes to talk to him?”

Quietly, so Frank wouldn’t hear him, Kendall said, “I’m not leaving you alone with him, Maya. Not after what you told me.” He had no intention of giving Frank an opportunity to get physical with her again.

“You can wait in the kitchen,” she whispered as she caressed his forearm. Her eyes showed appreciation for his concern.

Kendall cast a black look at Reeves, who returned it. He walked into the kitchen and sat at her table. He kept an ear open for any change in the tone of their faint conversation as he took out his phone and sent a series of text messages to Boone. Richard didn’t like to text, and Kendall knew Boone would relay the messages to him. He grinned as he heard the whiny tone in Reeves’s voice. She must’ve delivered the bad news.

* * * *

Boone did a mental fist pump as he slipped his phone back in his shirt pocket. Richard held the shopping basket as they perused the women's beauty products department of the local drug store. It was the only place open late that sold "girlie" stuff, as Richard had recently called it.

"Tell me again why this is a good idea?" Richard inquired as Boone opened and sniffed at a bottle of bubble bath.

"It will please her that we're trying to make her stay comfortable."

Richard gave him the stink-eye. "Wonder if she'd be *comfortable* about the economy-size box of condoms and tubes of K-Y you're also buying."

"I think we should be prepared, that's all. Kendall would say I'm being positively assumptive."

"Whatever."

Boone slipped a bottle of bubble bath in the shopping basket before picking out other body products that were of the same scent.

Richard rubbed his hand over his bearded chin. "You're not the least bit worried she'll think all this stuff belonged to some other woman?"

Boone knew this line of questioning was leading up to what Richard needed to know, which was if there really was a place for him in the relationship.

Boone shook his head negatively as he took his vibrating phone from his pocket and looked at the new message. "Nuh-uh. We'll tell her we bought it for her, and she'll be even more impressed. Kendall says Maya is dealing with Frank Reeves right now."

"Do you really believe this could work?"

Boone understood the conflict that went on inside his brother. Richard had lost the love of his life and had once said he didn't know if he was capable of loving someone else that much ever again.

"I think it could. We'll give her time to settle in, plant the idea in her mind, and see what happens. I think it's worth a shot, anyway. Remember what Jack and the guys have."

Boone's first cousin Jack Warner and his distant cousins Ethan Grant and Adam Davis were married to a one-of-a-kind woman. Grace Warner made being married to three men look easy. At six months pregnant, Grace radiated happiness, and her men were positively goofy, they were so in love with her.

Boone and his brothers had grown bored with the singles scene and had been talking about the possibility of a life like Jack, Ethan, and Adam's. Maybe this was their chance.

"I don't know, Boone. I'm not that lucky. Not twice."

Sometimes Boone still caught glimpses of the grief that had lingered in Richard's eyes for years after Michelle's death. They'd just gotten engaged the week before she was killed by crossfire in a robbery at the grocery store where she had worked.

"I can't give guarantees, Richard. You know I'm the glass-is-half-empty guy, and I have my worries. Just because she comes doesn't mean she'll stay. And if she falls for Kendall there's no assurance she'll feel the same for us. But you know what gives me hope? I think of Grace and the happiness she obviously brings to the guys. Maybe Maya could feel the same way toward us. We'll never know if we don't try."

Quietly, Richard nodded as he picked up a loofah body scrubber thingy and put it in the basket. "We're all three so different, Boone. You don't think that might be overwhelming for her?"

Boone picked out a multipack of electric toothbrushes, dropped them in the basket, and shrugged, replying, "We give her plenty of space in the beginning and allow her to get used to us. I've never had the impression she was the easily overwhelmed type."

Boone and Richard had met Maya and Morgan when Kendall was in college with them, and Boone had always been impressed with her naughty wit and easygoing, soft-spoken manner.

Certain that Richard's main worry was his sheer size and imposing presence, Boone said, "Maya's not the flighty type. She's

never seemed intimidated by either of us when we've been around her."

"Yeah, but it was under different circumstances. I don't want her to be uncomfortable around me."

Richard was tallest of them at six feet, six inches, topping both Boone and Kendall by three inches. Richard was by no means ugly, but his size was fairly intimidating. The moustache and beard he was currently growing added to that aura, and he had unusual pale blue eyes that Boone knew some people found disconcerting.

"I think you're jumping to conclusions. Let's not borrow trouble, okay? Just give it a chance."

So he wouldn't be overheard, Richard muttered, "I also have to worry about my lack of experience where threesomes are concerned. I know you two made quite a reputation for yourselves when we were on the road. The bunnies trailed after you in every town, fighting for the chance to be the filling in a cowboy sandwich."

Boone chuckled and threw a package of bejeweled hair doo-dads in the basket as he whispered, "Can you handle vaginal and oral sex?" At Richard's eye roll he continued. "Have you had anal sex before?"

"A couple times, yeah." Richard looked a little like he didn't want to contemplate the thought, but they had to get it out in the open.

"Then you can handle a ménage. Just go very slow and watch us for cues if you need to. You had a stellar reputation with the bunnies, too, by the way. That's the reason I know it'll be fine. You were raised right and know how to take good care of a woman."

"But I'm not doing any of that crazy, kinky stuff you like to do."

"What if she likes it, though?" That thought was pure fantasy for him. It had been a while since he'd delivered an erotic spanking. He missed that part of his former life.

"I don't know."

"Do what feels right to you. If the opportunity presents itself, ask her what she likes." Damn, all this sex talk and thinking about Maya was getting him hard.

“Fine, but I’m not getting my hopes up yet,” Richard said, picking up a box of chocolates and placing it in the basket as they made their way to the cashier. “Those are for her, not you, butthead.”

“But you’re not getting your hopes up,” Boone said sarcastically.

Chapter Four

Kendall listened with satisfaction to the sound of Frank Reeves's tires as he peeled out in front of Maya's house.

"That was not fun," Maya muttered as she entered the kitchen and took a glass from the cabinet and filled it from the tap.

Kendall rose from his seat and went to her as she drank her water. He stroked her hips and asked, "You feel up to making the trip tonight?"

Maya gazed up at him, and her blue eyes took on a naughty gleam. "Yes. I'd rather spend what's left of the night in your bed instead of mine."

Kendall barely caught his jaw before it popped open. He'd known her long enough that he was used to her saying whatever sexy thing came to mind, but he'd never been on the receiving end quite like this before. She stood there grinning like a Cheshire cat as she looked him up and down, pausing at his groin and the bulge growing there. He'd missed that sexy, crooked grin and liked being on the receiving end of it very much.

"Now how am I supposed to drive three hours with you sitting next to me saying tempting things like that?" Normally, he was pretty good with a comeback. At the moment he was surprised he could put intelligent words together.

She met his gaze again and said, "Let me pack and we can get on the road. I'll do my best to be a good girl."

"Okay."

As she left the room, he slipped his phone out and quickly typed.

“Forget about fixing the second bedroom for Maya. Put the girlyie stuff in my bathroom. We’ll be on our way in less than an hour.”

Boone’s reply came back quickly. *“Hell yeah! Good going, hotshot!”*

Fifteen minutes later, Maya was ready to leave.

* * * *

Frank Reeves pounded his steering wheel furiously as he drove away from Maya’s house. Everything had been going well until that hick son of a bitch Kendall Warner had shown up. Frank was making amazing progress with Maya and had been ready to move forward with his plan that night. She’d been ignoring his calls and not answering his text messages trying to play hard to get. But he could see right through her act.

Maya wanted to feel like she hadn’t given in to his charm and appeal too early because she was a widow. She’d needed to feign purity a little longer, but Frank had seen the interest burning in her eyes the other night before she’d stopped his advances. Frank was ready to make her his, and Warner had fucked up his plan.

Tonight she’d claimed he was moving too fast and she thought they should stop seeing each other. Fucking prick tease. Warner had obviously influenced her. It had taken all his self-control not to go out to the glove box, get his pistol, and shoot the damned redneck. The only reason he’d left peaceably was because she’d told him Warner was leaving as well. He’d return in the morning, and they’d cut through all the hard-to-get bullshit.

“Son of a bitch!” he shouted in rage, beating the heel of his hand mercilessly on the steering wheel of his Jaguar.

He looked over at the minivan pulled up to the stoplight next to him. The couple in the front seat observed him warily. The light turned green, and he flipped them the bird as he hit the accelerator,

squealing the tires on the damp asphalt before finding traction. He shot across the intersection and headed toward home.

Frank needed to press his advantage while he still had one. She was right where he wanted her, and he needed to keep it that way, at least for a while. He had to get a ring on her finger and the massive zeroes in her bank account transferred into his. He had debts and very menacing debt collectors to pay. He also needed the key to that fucking safe-deposit box Morgan had kept. The contents of that box would make his life one big breeze.

It had been pure luck that he'd encountered Morgan's attorney at an exclusive restaurant in Austin. Knowing he and Morgan were partners and that Frank was dating Maya, the chump had mentioned the by-chance finding of the safe-deposit key to him. The items he'd unsuccessfully searched her house and home safe for must be in that safe-deposit box. Maya didn't know that he had a house key and knew her security password for the alarm.

After promising to pass on his greetings to Maya, Frank had gloated for the rest of the afternoon. Once he had the contents of that safe-deposit box he'd be happy. He could fuck her until he got tired of her then off her when she became a nuisance, just like Morgan.

* * * *

Maya fought drowsiness as the pickup truck ate up miles and miles of Interstate Highway 10. When her head bobbed for the third time, Kendall chuckled and reached into the back seat and pulled out a thick, fluffy flannel jacket and balled it into a pillow.

"Want to lean over and rest your head on the console? There's no point in us both losing sleep."

"You don't want me to help you stay awake?"

"No. I'm doing great. If you're sleepy, don't fight it."

If Kendall only knew what all she was fighting at the moment, what would he think? She'd seen his reaction to her words in the

kitchen and had frankly enjoyed it, but she didn't want him to be uncomfortable on the long drive, and so she'd kept her impure thoughts to herself.

She laid her head down on the voluminous jacket, enjoying the scent of man permeating the thick flannel. It didn't smell like Kendall.

She stroked the flannel, which she could tell was red by the lights of the dashboard. "Whose jacket is this?"

"Richard's. It should be fairly clean. Is it all right?"

Richard, who was so tall and quiet with pale blue eyes that fascinated her.

"Yes. I was just wondering. It doesn't smell like you."

She turned her nose against the fabric and inhaled again. It smelled faintly of laundry detergent, manly musk, and the outdoors. She liked it, and noticed her body liked it, too.

Pondering her reaction to the unfamiliar scent, she wondered at the way she was wired. Though deeply in love with Morgan and happily committed to him, she'd always felt a loving, deep connection to Kendall. Morgan was witty, professional, and dominant, where Kendall was all outdoors, earthy, and playfully sexy. Loving them both would've been incredible. She'd always had a resounding need for the differences which made them unique.

But being one of the top real estate brokers in the Texas hill country area made Morgan much too visible and vulnerable to public opinion. For that reason she'd never asked.

Now, here she was, reacting to *another* man's scent. What did that say about her?

She closed her eyes as Kendall stroked her long hair and caressed her cheekbone. His touch sent tremors through her, and a note of sadness for what could never be echoed in her heart, followed by the refrain of Morgan's words in the letter. *Be the daring girl I married...have the life you wanted and didn't dare ask for.*

Kendall's voice in the quiet of the cab plucked at her heartstrings. "I wish I'd known."

Her heart clenched and a tear leaked from her eye, but for the first time in a long time it didn't feel like grief. It felt more like longing. She'd had days in the last year where she thought she'd never laugh or smile ever again. Somehow that tear marked the beginning of a new chapter between them.

"I wish I could've asked. I imagine you must be wondering what kind of woman I am," she murmured, voicing her real fear.

"I know what kind of woman you are, Maya. You're the kind who has enough love in her heart for more than one man. I happen to like that about you. Do you think it's possible you could feel that way again?"

Except for the fact she'd reacted to Richard's scent on the jacket, she might've been surprised by his question. Maybe it was just the way she was put together, to want more than one man loving her and to be capable of loving more than one man with all her heart.

"I'd have to give it some thought, but yeah, I suppose it's possible. Why?" She looked up at him in the dim light and saw the slight smile on his lips. "Boone and Richard?"

He looked down at her, stroked her temple, and replied, "Maybe. Yeah. But we have plenty of time to mull that over."

* * * *

Maya awoke to the sensation of Kendall's warm hand rubbing her upper arm. She glanced at the clock on the dash and saw it was almost four in the morning.

"We're here," Kendall said as he continued touching her. She glanced out the window into the darkness and couldn't tell much about "here" beyond the light shining on the front porch of the ranch house. "We'll tuck you into bed as soon as we get inside."

Maya was wide-awake now, with images shimmering in her mind of what tucking her into bed entailed. She stretched and Kendall climbed from the truck and came around to open her door and help

her down. She loved his old-fashioned manners, a trait he'd had in common with Morgan.

He lifted her luggage from the bed of the pickup truck and escorted her up the stairs. Stepping quietly, hoping they weren't disturbing his brothers, she followed behind him expecting the house to be dark inside. A dim light was on over the stove in the kitchen, and two big men were sitting with coffee cups at the dining room table.

"Hey. You're awake," Kendall said.

Maya looked around the cozy, low-lit interior of the ranch house's front rooms. The spacious living room did, indeed, have two comfortable-looking couches situated in front of a fireplace. The house was tidy and well cared for, judging by what she could see. She admired a man who was willing to clean up after himself.

"Yeah. We couldn't sleep. Finally gave up a little while ago and put the coffee on," Boone said as he and Richard rose from the table. Both were already dressed for work.

Boone's sensual lips turned up in a smile as he opened his arms. "Hey, Maya. Welcome home." His husky tone had a touch of sexiness to it that made her nerve endings fire up and take notice. She went happily into his arms and they hugged for a few seconds. His chest was a solid, deliciously-scented wall of heat against her cheek, and his well-defined muscles rippled under her hands as he stroked her back. Boone had grown a beard and moustache, and his sandy-brown hair was shorter than it was the last time they saw each other. His dark brown eyes twinkled as he said, "We're glad you decided to come, Maya."

"Thank you, Boone. I'm so happy to see you both."

Boone released her, and she turned to Richard, who had always been a bit of a puzzle to her. The moment felt strangely discombobulated to her. All their circumstances had changed since the last time she'd seen either of them.

She knew both Boone and Richard had come with Kendall to Morgan's funeral, but she'd been in too much of a fog to really recall their presence. The last time she'd seen Richard he'd been in love and planning to propose to the woman he thought he'd spend his life with. They had grief over the death of a loved one in common.

Maya could recall feeling intimidated by Richard's size and absolute masculinity when she'd met him several years before. He had pale blue eyes which seemed to look right through to the depths of her soul. He had a habit of making direct eye contact and keeping it, which she found a little disconcerting, though she knew that wasn't his intention. His handsome, tanned features were rugged with a square jaw and a chiseled nose. His brows were dark brown, like his short hair and well-groomed beard, and were arched over his haunting eyes.

The smile on his face was tentative but genuine, his eyes slightly hooded as if he were trying to put her at ease while at the same time appearing a little unsure of himself. Her heart went out to him, and she reached for him and hugged him hard. A tremor went through his chest muscles, and she heard him catch his breath. The same manly scent from the jacket in the truck enveloped her, and she held on tight, probably longer than she should, knowing something had just shifted between the three of them.

A slow, muted sigh escaped her lips as a sensation akin to relief washed through her. She was surprised by the lethargy that followed quickly on its heels. She released Richard and looked up at the three of them, all standing so close to her. She was struck by the rightness of the moment, and she smiled, feeling content.

"Look at those sleepy blue eyes," Boone commented, reaching out to stroke her shoulder. "We're putting you to bed."

Again with the comments about the three of them putting her to bed. She'd let them put her to bed, all right. Just as long as she wasn't alone. She really did feel sleepy again, so she nodded.

Maya wondered if Kendall was going out to the JWB or if he was going to go to bed for a few hours, too.

Answering her unvoiced question, Boone said, "We got a few hours of sleep, so we'll go by the ranch and check on everything and get the morning chores done before we go out to the Rockin' C. That way you can get a few hours of shut-eye."

Kendall acknowledged Boone's offer with a nod. "Thanks. I think I'll take you up on that."

Maya said, "I could do with a nap. I hope you didn't go to much trouble. I don't want anyone giving up their bed for me, so you can put my things in Kendall's room."

The unspoken communication between the men was not lost on Maya. The look of approval in Boone's and Richard's eyes might've made any other woman nervous. It had the opposite effect on her. She felt safer here with them than she had in a year.

"It was no trouble at all, Maya," Richard said as he lifted her garment bag and overnight case. She followed him back to the rear bedroom and happily discovered this room also had a fireplace. She thought how romantic it would be in the wintertime.

"This is Kendall's room, and we put some things for you in the bathroom, if you need them," Richard said as he hung the garment bag in the closet.

Grinning, Maya turned to Kendall and asked, "You're the middle child. How did you swing claiming the master bedroom?"

Kendall chuckled as he placed her suitcase by the closet. "I whipped their asses in poker, that's how."

Richard grumbled good-naturedly. "I still think he cheated."

They bantered with each other for a few moments, and Maya had the impression they were trying to set her at ease. In the dim light cast by the lamp on the bedside table, Maya looked up at the three of them. She couldn't help but wonder what it would be like to lay in that big king-size bed, surrounded by these handsome men, cozy and

well-loved. A pool of hot moisture seeping through her swelling pussy lips was the answer to that thought.

Boone's hands were reassuring on her shoulders as he kissed her cheek, very near her lips, and said, "Rest, Maya. We'll see you later this afternoon. We left our cell numbers on the kitchen counter. Call us if you need anything."

He retreated to the doorway, and Richard took his place. Her heart surged in her chest as he tilted her chin and looked into her eyes. Richard was hard to read, but she thought she saw hesitancy in the way his brows knit together over his eyes.

The woman he'd adored and lost must have been going through his mind, which could explain his tentativeness. They were comrades in suffering in that moment. She knew what it was like to look forward to a lifetime together only to have the dream stolen away.

Feeling inexplicably guilty, she looked down at his chest and moved closer to him so he could hug her again if he wanted. She hoped he didn't think ill of her for being open about her decision to share a bed with Kendall. There was no point in going through the motions of staying in the other bedroom when this was what they both wanted. She wondered what Richard and Boone thought of her reacting to them the way she was. Life was unbearably short, and there didn't seem to be any point in pussy-footing around with the precious time they had.

Richard hugged her again and kissed the top of her head. His lips lingered in her hair and his hands felt indescribably gentle as he caressed her spine.

"We'll talk more tonight, Maya. Have a good nap," Richard whispered as he pressed his lips to her hair one more time before releasing her. "Later, bro."

A moment later, they were both gone.

Kendall pulled the covers back on the bed. "Come on, let's get you situated, sleepyhead."

Maya grinned and slipped off her shoes. She was struck with a quandary as to whether she should undress or leave her clothes on. Exhaustion trumped all her questions for the moment, so she climbed into the bed as she was while he sat down and removed his boots and socks. She watched him as he undressed to his knit boxers and then climbed under the covers. Smiling like he knew exactly what she was thinking, Kendall leaned toward her, kissed her, and said, “Catch up on your rest for now, babydoll. We’ll have plenty of time to talk *later*.”

Suddenly all she wanted to talk about was how damned fine he looked in those snug, white knit boxers. He hadn’t bothered to hide the semierect cock he was sporting, but Kendall looked exhausted, so she kept her naughty thoughts to herself.

Chapter Five

Richard stared out at the dark expanse of road as he drove down the state highway toward the ranch. A fringe of tall grass billowing in the hayfields was lit by the truck headlights. Boone was rattling on about Maya, but Richard was lost in his own thoughts as he slowed for the turn off the highway onto their ranch. The pipe rail entry, painted red, sported a metal cutout that was fashioned after their brand, the initials JWB surrounded by an oval.

"You're not hearing a word I'm saying, are you?"

"I hear you flapping your jaws like an old woman, but I stopped listening about two miles back."

"Asshole."

Richard's thoughts dwelled on the uncertain look in Maya's eyes right before she'd glanced away from him and had allowed him to hug her. He hoped he hadn't scared her.

"I asked what you thought of Maya's reaction to the two of us."

"I don't know. She's just as beautiful as I remember, and sweet, too."

Richard was afraid he'd made her uncomfortable, and for the tenth time that morning he wondered if she could look beyond his size and appearance. He'd even admit he was unsure if he would ever be ready to love a woman again. Sex was one thing, but to really love a woman...He wasn't sure.

Michelle had been the answer to his prayers when she'd stolen quietly into his life and had made him happier than he'd thought was possible. Even now, the sting of grief pricked his heart when he thought of her loss.

Did he want to love Maya the way he had Michelle? Could he risk loving like that again? The memory of the phone call from the hospital that tragic day wrenched his heart.

“Do you?”

“What?” Richard ground out. Boone kept asking all these fucking questions when he was trying to think.

“Fuck, but you’re pissy this morning considering you just held a beautiful woman in your arms. If I’m pissy it’s because I had to walk away with a hard-on and leave her alone with Kendall.” Unasked was the reason for Richard’s black mood.

“She could hardly look at me.”

There, he’d said it. Every morning when he looked in the mirror, he saw his ugly mug. The beard and moustache helped, but all he saw was the hulk, the unruly curly hair he kept cut short, and the eerie, wolf-blue eyes that had always put people off. He wasn’t coyote-ugly, but he didn’t see much to recommend him as a prime catch. His quiet, solitary nature didn’t help that image either.

He wondered if he was working himself up for nothing. He remembered the hug they’d shared and the way she’d sighed so deeply, like the weight of the world rested on her shoulders, and then she’d melted against him. He knew how she felt, having lost someone she loved very much. He also remembered how good it felt to hold her lush, curvy form in his arms. She’d lost a little weight since the last time he’d seen her, but she was just as gorgeous as ever and her full, plump breasts had felt incredible pressed up against him.

“Damn it! Listen to me! Stop here!”

“Fuck! What?” Richard yelled back, slamming the heel of his hand down on the steering wheel and applying the brakes hard.

“The fence. We’ve got work to do, damned googly-eyed dumbass!”

Richard had to grin good-naturedly at the sound of his brother’s frustration. Boone hated to be ignored, and he’d been in his own world not hearing a word the asshole was saying.

Boone was right, of course. He'd spotted a section of fence that needed repair. He climbed from the truck to help Boone. It was pitch-black outside except for the headlights, and the humidity was especially high though it wasn't very warm yet. After they finished with the fence they continued down the drive and checked on the barns and the animals. When the morning chores were done on the JWB, they drove over to the Rockin' C, where their workday would begin.

Boone had lapsed into silence since Richard was once again lost in thought. As he drove back up the long driveway, Richard wondered what Maya would think of their beautiful spread. Gentle rolling hills, hayfields, wildflowers, and herds of Hereford cattle made for a pretty picture in his mind, with the exception of the wreckage that remained of their old farmhouse. Now that they'd heard from the insurance company, Richard was anxious to begin plans to rebuild. Or maybe it was because Maya was there. Maybe he wanted her more than he thought if he cared what she'd think of the place.

"You think too much."

"You're just pissed because I'm not yimmer-yammering on like you. *You've* got nothing to worry about."

"What are you talking about?" Boone asked, giving him the quirky eyebrow stare.

"You've got good looks on your side, and the tattoos don't hurt, either. Women eat that stuff up."

Boone chuckled and said, "Fine, let's go get your ass tattooed." He held up two hands in front of him. "I can see it now. 'Richard is a pansy-ass mother—'"

"I'm being serious here, damn it."

"And you think you have some sort of disadvantage?"

"We're all so different. How can she be attracted to all three of us? You and Kendall are natural conversationalists and more at ease than I am. I'm just big and...ugly."

“You sound like a teenage girl. You’re tall, decent to look at, and sometimes quiet is good. You have an advantage in that sense. You can draw her out and get *her* talking. You’re not reading her right, Richard. I don’t get the impression she’s put off by you *at all*. She didn’t look unhappy in your arms this morning.”

“No?” Maybe he was missing something. His feelings were all jumbled up. Desire for Maya, and guilt for feeling that desire, was confusing him. He’d been loyal to Michelle’s memory all this time. The only thing was a memory couldn’t talk to him and wrap soft arms around him. He hoped it was just his imagination that he’d made her uncomfortable, because it would just about break his heart if he were to find out Maya was scared of him.

* * * *

Maya woke to the sound of Kendall muttering, “Shit, shit, shit.” Smiling, she opened her eyes and watched drowsily as Kendall jumped on one foot trying to get his foot into the other pant leg. He glanced up at her, and she was blinded by his bright, sexy smile.

“Good morning, er, afternoon.”

“Hi,” she replied as she had a nice, long stretch.

Kendall climbed on the bed and crawled over to her. His hair was wet, and he smelled fresh like soap. He must’ve already taken his shower.

“I slept way longer than I meant to,” he said as he kissed the tip of her nose. “I was planning to enact my plans for seduction this morning after a couple of hours of shut-eye, but we conked out.”

Maya gave him a wide smile, loving the mischievous twinkle in his eyes. “Oh, yeah? Whatcha gonna do now, cowboy?”

“Roust your fetching little ass out of bed,” he murmured as he planted his nose in her hair behind her ear, inhaled deeply, and growled. “I love that spot, right there.” He kissed her there then

yanked the covers completely off of her. She gasped and felt a convulsion in her pussy at the sudden, forceful action.

Oh, baby! Rip my clothes off next!

"I have work to do. How would you like to come with me?"

Her pussy tremored again, and she giggled at her body's slutty response. His words dangling there were more than she could resist, and he chuckled knowingly as the sideways grin spread across her lips.

"Would I like to 'come' with you? Oh, yes. Very much," she murmured in her best sexy voice as she stretched luxuriantly again. She hadn't slept that well in over a year.

Kendall chuckled. "I swear you could take just about any topic and weave an innuendo through it. I've missed you, babydoll."

He'd always called her babydoll. It had always made her feel special to him. She weaved her arms around his neck and pulled him close. He pressed warm, full lips to hers, and his kiss melted her bones as he lingered there. They were interrupted by the sound of his phone chirping. She released him, and he looked at the screen.

"It's a text from Grace," he murmured lying down on the bed beside her. He touched the screen to open the message, holding the phone so she could see, too.

"Who is Grace?" Maya asked, knowing she sounded a whole lot more like, "Who in the *hell* is Grace?"

Kendall glanced at her and chuckled. "A freaking force of nature. That's who Grace is."

Maya looked at the message which read, "*Your truck is still parked at the ranch house. Is everything okay?*"

Maya watched as Kendall typed, "*We're fine. We have company. Remember me telling you about Maya?*"

Maya's eyebrows crinkled together. Who was this woman? Kendall was obviously enjoying keeping her in the dark, and she wasn't going to beg.

The phone chirped again a few seconds later. The message read, *"Oh, hell yeah! Can I meet her! Pretty please? I can be there in thirty seconds."*

Kendall chuckled and texted back. *"Whoa! No running. Jack will kill me if you hurt yourself. We'll stop on the way out. Fixing to leave in a bit."*

Maya figured whoever it was must be nearby and in poor health if she couldn't run.

The phone chirped again. *"Well hurry the hell up! I'm dying to meet her!"*

Kendall turned on his side to twiddle a lock of Maya's long blonde hair between his fingers. "Grace is my cousin Jack's wife. She lives here on the ranch with him, Ethan and Adam, her other husbands." His eyes shone with amusement as her jaws flapped together a couple of times.

"She what? Her *what*?"

"Jack is my cousin. He and our distant cousins, Ethan Grant and Adam Davis, own this ranch. Grace is their wife. She's expecting. That's why I told her not to run."

Expecting? Whoa. She was a wife to *three men*. Maya flopped back onto the pillow and thought about that for four seconds before she jumped up from the bed and ran to the bathroom.

She peered back at Kendall and said, "I can be ready in five minutes." She had to meet this woman.

"Aren't you hungry?"

"Yeah. You better get cracking, hadn't you?" She laughed as she ran the hot water.

Kendall chuckled as he poked his head in the bathroom doorway. "You're a bossy damned thing when you're on a tear, aren't you?"

"Uh-huh!" she replied as she lathered her hands with her facial cleanser. "Scrambled eggs. Please. You can extract payment later."

"I live to serve," Kendall quipped before exiting.

She laughed as she washed her face. Maya joined him at the kitchen table a few minutes later, face fixed, dressed, and ready to go.

"Thank you for being willing to cook, Kendall. I would've been okay with a cereal bar."

Kendall wrinkled his nose. "Not your first breakfast under my roof. Not even your second breakfast or any other, for that matter. We don't even buy those. We men need manlier, more substantial meals than that."

"Oh boy. I'm going to gain weight while I'm here," she murmured as he piled steaming scrambled eggs onto her plate out of the skillet.

"You could do with a few more pounds on you, Maya. You've lost too much weight this year."

Maya shrugged, remembering Kendall had a preference for curvy women. "Cooking for one is not as much fun." Kendall gave her a look that spoke volumes and left her a little dazed. "So Grace is expecting, huh?"

"Yup. The guys are over the moon. You should see what big saps they are around her."

That thought intrigued Maya, and she couldn't wait to meet Grace. What would it be like to have the devotion of three men?

Kendall murmured, "You're awfully quiet. What are you thinking about, if you don't mind me asking?"

Maya felt her cheeks heat a little as she replied, "I was wondering what that kind of arrangement must be like. How do they keep things in balance? Is it hard for her to keep that many men happy? Do they have problems with jealousy? And why didn't I know about this?"

"Well, I can't answer some of those questions, because I don't pry with Grace. Jack tells me their main focus is making Grace happy, not the other way around. Grace is an open person, and I'll bet she'd be happy to answer all of your questions. I can tell you this much, Grace always seems to...glow. I think they make her *very* happy. I never told you...well, there was other stuff for us to talk about." Kendall cleared his throat like he had a frog in it.

“I was self-centered for a while. I’m sorry.”

“Maya, don’t. Morgan died. I didn’t consider it self-centeredness. I’m just happy you’re here with me now. With us.”

Taking the bull by the horns, she asked, “Is their relationship something you, Boone, and Richard would like me to ask her about?”

Kendall looked her in the eye and responded without hesitation in his soothing, husky drawl, “Very much, babydoll.”

Chapter Six

Kendall helped Maya climb into the pickup truck, and she chuckled when he patted her ass before she planted it on the seat. He shrugged innocently when she gasped in mock surprise.

“No man alive could resist something that pretty.”

“You’re just trying to get laid.”

Kendall snorted and said, “I was being sweet, but we can go there, too, if you’re willing.”

“I think time rather than willingness is more of a factor. Don’t you have a ranch to take care of?”

“Yes, but I’m blinded by your beauty,” he said.

Maya scoffed. “Now I know why your eyes are brown.”

“Because I’m full of shit. Gotcha. You can kid all you want. But that is *some* kind of gorgeous ass you’ve got there.” He patted her thigh before closing her door.

When he opened his door and climbed in, she said, “Thanks, Kendall. You’re very kind.”

Kendall dazzled her with his wide, sexy grin and said, “I know. It’s a burden. Will it get me laid?”

“Drive!” Maya said, laughing as she shoved lightly at his shoulder. *Of course, it’ll get you laid!*

She looked around them as he backed the truck out and pulled down the driveway connected to the main drive between two very large, red barns. He drove to the big ranch house a short distance away. It was a beautiful home with white limestone rock facing and a deep, shaded porch running the full length of the back of the house.

Kendall parked his truck next to a white work truck. Once again, Kendall helped her down from the vehicle as a couple came out on the porch, which spanned the front of the house. The man was very tall, almost as tall as Richard in fact. The woman was gorgeous with long, wavy blonde hair. Her cheeks were rosy with a blush as she said a farewell to the man, and he kissed and gently squeezed her.

As they climbed the stairs, he approached the end of the porch and said, "Hey, Kendall."

"Hey, Adam. I want to introduce you to Maya. Maya, this is my cousin, Adam Davis."

"Maya, it's a pleasure to meet you. I'm running *really* late," Adam said with emphasis as he looked back at the lovely blonde. "Otherwise I'd stay to visit. I think Grace is already planning a get together for this weekend. She can give you all the details. See you later."

Kendall nodded as Adam jumped into his work truck.

The beautiful woman, who must be Grace, sidled up slowly with a smile on her face. Her silky top draped softly over the hint of a rounded abdomen. Her cheeks were a little rosy, and Maya recognized the "guess what I've been up to" grin on her face and liked her instantly.

Kendall introduced her and Grace welcomed them inside. After the niceties were over with, Grace joined them at the large marble-topped breakfast bar.

They chatted about mundane things like how long Maya would be in town, where she lived, and about her having recently completed her nursing degree.

"My husband left me with a comfortable investment income, but I needed something for myself. Morgan knew I'd always been interested in pursuing my RN certification, and so he encouraged me to go back to school and obtain it."

"Do you have a position lined up in San Marcos already?"

Maya shook her head. "No, I wanted to take time off and keep my options open."

"I see," Grace replied speculatively.

Kendall rested his chin in his palm and said, "Maya, you might be curious to know Grace is a published author."

Maya turned expectant eyes to her, and Grace nodded. "It's true. I write erotic romance."

Maya and Grace talked nonstop for five solid minutes about that topic, hardly taking a breath. Kendall couldn't get a word in with a wedge and finally held up both hands.

"Ladies, I gotta get to work. Maya, you want to stay and visit?"

Maya glanced at Grace and then looked longingly at Kendall.

Grace chuckled and said, "No, of course not, Kendall. Maya wants to see your ranch and spend her first day here with you. I'll have her over another day, and we can chat to our hearts' content."

Maya's questions for Grace had only multiplied since meeting her, but the stronger desire was to spend time with Kendall and maybe explore some of their ranch.

As they journeyed down the state highway meandering over rolling hills, Maya said, "Grace glows with happiness. I don't know anyone else who has what she does."

"You mean more than one husband? You will before the weekend is out," Kendall said, chuckling as she turned a surprised look his way. "It sounds like you'll meet them all this weekend." Grace had filled them in on her plans for a barbecue Saturday evening.

"What? Like a cult?" Maya giggled. "Are you trying to induct me into a cult, Kendall Warner?"

"Hell, if there's a cult, it's the men who are the devotees. No, Maya. They have a different lifestyle and happen to have all made good friends with each other. In a small town it helps to stick together and watch out for each other. Not everybody in town is nice to Grace. Some people are very opinionated."

"Well, she looks happy. It must not bother her much."

"I'm looking forward to you meeting them. Plus the guys are really good cooks."

"So where is the ranch?"

Kendall pointed to a fence lining the state highway. "Our property starts at that cross fence there." Maya sighed as they passed a huge field of tall, pale, wheat-colored grass. She could make out the roof of a barn in the distance beyond a low hilltop.

"It's wonderful, Kendall," Maya said as he slowed the truck and turned into the entry. The truck rumbled over the cattle guard and down the long, white gravel drive. She looked around her and was struck by how right it felt. Wildflowers in shades of yellow and orange rippled and waved in the wind as they drove past.

Kendall smiled with pleasure and even appeared to blush a little at her heartfelt compliment. "Thank you."

"You've put a lot of work into it, I'll bet."

"Every spare moment. We're going to take a breather for a while before we begin work on the house."

"Why a breather? I would think you'd be anxious to start the process."

Kendall chuckled and said, "We'd like to devote our extra time to our house guest right now. You can even help us with the house design if you'd like."

That statement seemed to hold more meaning for him than just the actual words. Maya decided to cut to the chase.

"Or we could cut all the bullshit and be honest with each other about what we want."

Kendall removed his straw hat and ran his fingers back through his hair. "My suave and debonair charm must be failing me."

Maya's heart fluttered, and she had to take a deep breath. "Trust me, cowboy, your 'suave and debonair charm' is firing on all cylinders. Tell me what you're trying to tell me without actually telling me. Please?"

Kendall replaced his hat on his head and guided the truck slowly down the driveway. He pulled into the cleared area where a ranch house had obviously once stood, judging by the broken foundational piers jutting from the ground. The broken and splintered wood and debris had been bulldozed into a pile.

He parked and then turned to face her, twining his fingers through hers and squeezing gently. Her lips trembled when he brought her hand to his lips and kissed her knuckles.

"I love you, Maya. I don't want you to leave, *ever*. I want your input on the house because we want it to be your house, too."

He sounded awfully self-assured when he used the word *we*. "I love you, too, Kendall. You know that. Do you speak for Boone and Richard on this?"

"We're ready to settle down, Maya. This is what we want, our best-case scenario. For you to love it here, love us, and want to stay."

"Thanks for being open about it."

"Thanks for not expecting me to pussyfoot around the issue all week. I love that about you."

"There's a lot to love about me," Maya said with good humor, feeling relieved to get the elephant in the truck cab out in the open.

"You're open to the possibility?"

"I'd be a liar and a hypocrite if I didn't admit I was also attracted to Boone and Richard. How long have they wanted this?"

"We've been observing Grace with her men and Teresa with hers for a couple of years now, and I think it started rattling around in our heads about that long ago. I'll admit our fascination in the beginning was more along the line of one-night stands and no attachments, but we've grown some and want more than that now."

"Boone and Richard mentioned the possibility to me about the time you started dating again. Richard is still dealing with his issues, but they *both* asked if I would talk with you. Kind of break the ice on the subject. That's not because they're shy, by any means. They don't want to make you uncomfortable if you don't want a relationship with

them as well. Boone said they didn't want to mess up what was happening between the two of us."

"I wanted a ménage so much with you and Morgan. I regret never asking for it. I wanted to tell you last night on the phone, but I didn't see any point in saying so, since we couldn't change the past. Now here I am, presented with that opportunity. Morgan dared me in his letter to go after what I wanted. After missing the first opportunity, I'm going to fully explore it this time. I'm open to the idea, Kendall, but I'm going to need time to get to know them on a deeper level."

Kendall was relieved, judging by his happy sigh. "Take all the time you need."

"Time alone with each of you. One-on-one. Is that going to be a problem?"

"One-on-one, huh?" Kendall said with a smirk. It was so like him to tease her about that. He'd probably pictured her having sex with them when she meant talking and getting to know each other, the horn dog.

Maya giggled and said, "You heard me right."

"I can guarantee we'll be fighting for a chance to spend time alone with you."

"Kendall, we're not talking about a fling. Right? I won't go anywhere near them if that's all they want."

"No, Maya. That's not what they want, and you know it's not what I want. I'd never allow it if they did. You can trust them, babydoll. Judging by the looks in their eyes this morning they're already half in love with you."

Maya doubted that after one rushed, early morning encounter, but trusted Kendall to know his brothers' minds on the subject. He'd always been protective of her. Maya looked out the windshield at the remnants of the old ranch house. "Sorry about your home again."

Kendall chuckled quietly and said, "It was a shit hole. Really rundown and in need of a lot of work. We're actually relieved to be

building new because the farther we got in renovations the more problems we found. It was over one hundred years old.”

Maya shaded her eyes from the harsh afternoon sun and walked around the truck, getting a better look at the place. The remains of the house and the small outbuildings were surrounded by fenced areas. A large nearby field contained more tall grass ready for mowing and baling, and other cross-fenced sections contained grazing white-faced Hereford cattle. Here and there calves cavorted around the hooves of their mamas or lay nestled in the shorter grass. Patches of Indian blanket and small yellow Engelmann’s daisies proliferated in the area near the remains of the house foundation.

“Damn. It’s beautiful, Kendall,” Maya said, not hiding the catch in her throat. She sensed his warm presence behind her, and she turned to him. He smiled as he looked around at his family’s place. Then he gazed down at her, his sweet, brown eyes shaded from the sun by his straw cowboy hat.

“It would be more beautiful with you on it, babydoll.” His eyes burned with desire as he pulled her to him and kissed her deeply. His lips were hot and moist as he pressed them to hers, his tongue dueling passionately with hers as she opened for him. Maya’s body pulsed with need, and she wound her arms around him tightly. Pressed close to him, she could feel his growing erection against her abdomen. Kendall’s squeezed her ass cheeks hard and groaned before he released her. A calf bawled in one of the pastures, and Maya chuckled as he broke their kiss.

Maya said, “Duty calls, I know. Do you mind if I explore?” She wanted to get a better look at what could possibly become her home. She wished Boone and Richard were here. She was anxious to talk with them and find out for herself what it was they wanted with her. She believed Kendall when he said they weren’t after a fling, but she needed to hear that from them, too.

Kendall shook his head and said, “Just be mindful of where you’re walking. Take a bottle of water with you. You can get dehydrated fast out here.” He reached into the cooler in the back of the truck.

She accepted the bottle of water from him. “Are Richard and Boone coming here after work?” It was already midafternoon, but she didn’t know how late they worked.

“They’ll be here in an hour or two. There’s a creek at the rear of the property. It’s the border between Jack’s ranch and ours. Certain times of the year it flows pretty heavily.” Now *that* sounded like a place for all kinds of fun.

“Is it deep?”

“In places, yes. If you’d like, I could hang a rope in one of the oak trees. It’s great for swimming and fishing.”

Maya hummed as she walked in the direction he pointed and said suggestively, “Sounds like fun. Maybe I’ll go skinny-dippin’.”

“Behave,” he said in a growly tone from behind her.

“Where’s the fun in *that*?” she murmured so he’d just barely hear her. She kept walking, placing both hands in a protective gesture over her ass cheeks. Looking over her shoulder, Maya stuck her tongue out at him playfully.

“Woman.”

His sexy, longing tone spoke volumes to her, and she turned as she walked to blow him a kiss. It was unkind of her to tempt him like that when he absolutely had to get his chores done, especially given his late start.

“Hey!” Kendall called out to her.

“What?”

“Watch for snakes!”

Maya grinned broadly and didn’t bother to suppress a sexy chuckle as she eyed the enormous bulge at his groin. “Some snakes I like. I’ll watch out for them, though.”

Kendall laughed and said, “Again with the innuendos, woman. Have fun. I’ll send Boone and Richard after you when they get here.”

“Goody!”

Grateful she'd dressed in jeans and her lace-up ropers, Maya explored the terrain, careful to not lose track of the path she took as she wandered. She found the creek when she headed toward the shade of a long stand of ancient oak trees. Maya hazarded a guess that their ranch must be at least two hundred acres.

She carefully climbed between the strands of barbed wire that kept the cattle from entering the creek and made her way down the creek bank. The shade was solid over water that flowed invitingly. She found a large, flat rock out in the water a few feet from the creek bank that looked solid enough to hold her weight. Jumping onto it from the bank, Maya sat down to untie her boots and take off her socks. The rock was cool underneath her and felt good in the heat. The trees were fairly thick and provided quite a lot of cover.

The idea of swimming here crossed her mind. She'd wear her bikini beneath her clothes next time. The thought of skinny-dipping here floated through her mind next, and she liked that idea even better, especially if she wasn't alone. One, two, or three cowboys might make it a whole lot more fun.

Maya laughed out loud even as her heart lurched in her chest. She still missed Morgan, but she was filled with gratitude toward him as she sat on the rock. If he hadn't had the forethought to put those words down on paper for her on the slim chance she would need them one day, she wouldn't be here. She'd still be muddling through life in San Marcos. She'd still be dealing with Frank Reeves.

He'd had the nerve to tell her the night before that he'd been there for her for the last year and she *owed* him. She'd finally convinced him to leave with the assurance that Kendall would be leaving, too. It was none of Frank's business that she planned to be with Kendall when he left.

After his highhanded treatment last night she hoped he was pissed when he found out she wasn't home. She'd finally silenced her text

message alert alarm after the fifth text message he'd sent while she was exploring. He'd figure out she was unavailable eventually.

She was grateful to Morgan for Kendall's letter also. It confirmed the intuitive feeling she'd had once Frank had pressed the issue of dating her that he was not for her. Morgan had more or less made his wishes known to them both, and she loved him for it.

"I miss you, baby," she whispered through trembling lips as she trailed her fingers through the water, startling minnows that swam around the rock. She cuffed up her jeans and sighed happily as she slipped her calves into the cold water. The emotions came in strange combinations like this sometimes. Maya felt flooded with longing and grief for him while at the same time experiencing gratitude that she'd known a great love with him.

She rested her palms on the rock and leaned forward, looking down into the water. The rock she was sitting on was much larger than she'd thought. It was more like the tip of the iceberg, and there appeared to be a shelf beneath it that the fish darted into. This would be a fun place to play in the water.

Maya lifted one damp leg and braced a foot on the edge as she lay back on the flat surface and closed her eyes. Birds sang all around her, and she detected the faint sound of a small animal scurrying through leaves on the bank. She breathed in deep and let out a long sigh. She lifted her head and shoulders and laid her hair out on the rock and swirled her submerged calf through the water. The tension flowed from her body, and Kendall's brothers came to mind.

She wondered about Boone's tattoos. She loved ink on a man when it was done well and imagined he'd probably added to his body art collection. He'd had on a light jacket that morning when she'd seen him. She wondered if the opportunity to check might present itself. There was something about him that reminded her of Morgan.

A cool breeze blew through the trees, rustling the leaves, and she lifted the hem on her black tank top and gathered it so it was bunched up under her bust. The breeze felt good on her skin.

She was startled when someone landed behind her on the rock. She looked up at a dark, shadowed figure, backlit by the sun glistening through the oak leaves.

In a deep, sexy voice, Boone said, "I think we ought to christen this spot Mermaid Rock. What do you think, Richard?"

Chapter Seven

“Or on second thought, maybe Angel Cove would be better,” Boone said with a chuckle as he held out his hand to help her sit up. His heart rate increased as Maya gazed up at him with twinkling blue eyes and accepted his assistance.

Maya had looked like an angel with her long, blonde hair fanned out and her pale ivory tummy exposed to the breeze. Boone and Richard had paused before revealing their presence, to take in the vision she’d made laid out like that.

She tugged the hem of the tank top she wore back down, hiding the previously bare expanse of her midriff. He wished the T-shirt was coming off instead, revealing her lovely, full breasts clad in satin and lace. He longed to feel the generous weight of her luscious breasts, to grasp them gently and tease her nipples into excitement.

“Did you enjoy exploring?”

“Yes, very much.” She looked straight into Boone’s eyes then shifted her gaze to his brother with a smile on her lips and no trace of hesitancy in her tone or body language and waved. “Hello, Richard.”

“Hello.”

Richard was way off in how she perceived him. “Let me put my boots back on, and I’ll join you. Have you been searching for me?” she asked as she pulled on her socks and began lacing her boots up.

“We knew right where to look,” Boone replied. “Kendall said we’d find you down here.”

Maya held up her hand to Boone, and he helped her to rise and steadied her at her hips so she wouldn’t lose her balance. Maya was delicate and curvy and had an ass that just wouldn’t quit. Boone

couldn't resist slipping his hands down over it and squeezed firmly, gauging her reaction. She caught her breath and caught her lower lip under her teeth. His cock hardened as her cheeks turned a light pink.

Finally, after a few seconds, she asked, "Cowboy? You gonna throw me or let me jump?"

Boone released her as she turned and jumped, yelping when his palm lightly connected with the fullest part of one ass cheek. *Perfect.* If she decided to stay, he wondered if she'd allow him to spank her. She looked back at Boone with challenge in her eyes, and he had his answer. Richard held out his hand to her and helped her as she climbed up the creek bank.

"I love it down here. It's shady and secluded," she murmured as she looked around once more. Boone leaped from the rock and joined them a few seconds later.

Boone's mind swirled with all the uses they could make of that seclusion. "Yeah, lots of nice shaded spots for relaxing."

Maya turned twinkling eyes to him and said, "I could bring a blanket down here and read a book or take a nap."

"I could think of a better use for a blanket than taking a nap. Of course a nap afterward would be good." Boone watched the rosy blush increase over her cheeks and barely suppressed a growl when she smiled up at him.

Maya turned to his brother and asked, "What do you think about that?"

Boone sighed in relief when she reached for Richard. His brother seemed unsure how to answer until Maya put her arms around his waist and hugged him with a contented sigh. It seemed to be what Richard had needed, and Boone smiled at the confused, vulnerable smile that appeared on Richard's face.

He kissed the top of her head and said, "I think the blanket would need to be king-size."

Boone watched in approval as Maya tilted her head up to kiss Richard. Boone's cock stirred to life, and he was willing to bet

Richard was having a similar experience as she stretched up on tiptoes and pressed her body to his. Tightening his arms around her, Richard lifted her off her feet and devoured her lips like a starving man.

Boone was proud of Maya for not pulling away first. She must have sensed that Richard needed to be the one in control of the moment after his doubts had been put to rest.

When Richard released her and carefully set her on her feet, Maya held his hand, looked between them and said to Boone, “Kendall and I had a talk this afternoon on the way over here. If you read the letter Morgan sent to Kendall then you know I love Kendall very much.” Her lips trembled as she continued. “And you also know I wanted a ménage relationship with Kendall and Morgan but never asked for it. Kendall told me that you’re all interested in having an arrangement like Grace does, with equal sharing. He also said that you might like that with me. Is that true?” She looked slightly uncomfortable, and he realized she might be secretly worried they would judge her for wanting something so out of the norm.

Boone wanted to put her fears to rest. “Yes, Maya. It is true. We’ve played the field both on and off the rodeo circuit, and we’ve dabbled in the singles scene in Divine. I’ve been attracted to you since we met when you were in college with Kendall and Morgan but never acknowledged it because you were off limits.”

The relief showed in her eyes, and he felt gratified by her reaction.

Maya turned to Richard and said, “Richard, this has to be hard for you. The last time I recall seeing you, besides at Morgan’s funeral, you were planning a wedding with Michelle. That was three years ago. Do you think you’re ready for something like this? You don’t have to go along with the guys for fear of disappointing me. I don’t want you to feel like you were dragged into this because it’s something Boone and Kendall want. I sound pathetic asking you straight out like this on the day after I arrived, but is there a chance you might have feelings for me that could grow into something that

will last? There seems to be something worth exploring between all of us, but I'm only here for a week, so..."

Boone could see her chest heaving a bit and realized she was rattling on, getting more and more anxious because Richard wasn't showing any kind of response. He wished Richard would say something to reassure her because Boone couldn't. She'd wonder later if Richard was really on board or not. No, Richard had to be the one who responded to her direct question.

Richard frowned and said, "I'm not going to lie and tell you I'm jumping in with both feet. I'm not that kind of guy. But I *can* truthfully tell you I want to give this a try."

"Fair enough, Richard," she responded with a nod. "I don't expect you all to make dramatic declarations of undying love to me this week. Let's just see if what the four of us have together is sustainable. Boone, when I kissed Richard how did it make you feel? Will it make you jealous for me to kiss him like that?"

Boone answered with utter confidence, "No. I like it. But if you kiss any other man besides me or my brothers, I'll throw you over my knee and blister your little ass until it's bright pink."

Maya's face registered surprise and then she laughed out loud. "Oh, is that supposed to *scare* me, cowboy? It's been a while since I've been tied up or had a good spanking."

Boone burst into laughter at her words. "Damn, she's perfect, Richard!" Boone felt himself fall a little harder for her. In just a few words she'd told him a lot.

Most of the women he'd dated had been vanilla, either buckle bunnies on the rodeo circuit or here in Divine. The idea of a paddling would've sent most of them running and had in a couple of cases when he'd mentioned it. One of the few exceptions in his dating career had been a woman who'd wanted to spank *him*, which had been a no-go.

There had also been a couple of girls he'd dated while still living in Seattle who'd been members of a BDSM club. He'd perfected his

technique while dating both of them, and they'd been very disappointed when he'd decided to join Kendall and Richard on the rodeo circuit. He hoped they'd moved on to Doms that were taking good care of them.

When the moment of levity was over she said, "I needed to make sure there's no jealousy, because I'm not going to become the object of some screwed-up chest-beating contest between the three of you. I'll want time alone with you. Would that be a problem?"

Surprisingly, Richard spoke first. "Maya, we'd like you to be comfortable with us, and we don't ever intend to fight over you. Are you going to show preference for Kendall over the two of us, since he's known you longest?"

Maya shook her head negatively. "I don't plan to."

Richard said, "Then you can understand where we're coming from. It sounds like you feel as strongly as we do about sharing. It's mutual or it's not happening."

"I agree," Boone said, adding, "You're the one in control, Maya. We won't rush you. I want you to know that."

"Have you ever shared a woman before?"

Boone glanced at Richard but couldn't gauge what he was thinking. Boone replied, "Kendall and I have."

Maya paused as if weighing her words. Richard spoke up before she could. "We're experienced, Maya. Threesomes were never my thing, but I promise you I'd take good care of you."

She let a breath out and looked at Richard in what seemed like surprise before a bright smile crossed her pretty face. Her features reminded Boone of the angels and cherubs he'd seen in classic paintings.

"What I was about to say is *I've* never done that. I don't want to be compared to the other women you've had before. I have no doubt you would take very good care of me, Richard."

Boone chuckled and stroked a strand of hair away from her cheek. "The threesomes were all casual, with no strings attached. There's no comparing them with what we'd have with you. You're special."

Maya nodded and grinned sexily. "Well, let's get my 'special' ass back to the truck. It must be getting close to suppertime, and Kendall's been working while we've been playing," she said as she tugged on their hands.

"Not quite yet," Boone said as he pulled her back to him.

"What?"

"You know what," he murmured as he pulled her close and tasted her sweet lips. Her herbal fragrance clouded his senses as the kiss intensified, and she flicked at his tongue with the tip of hers, teasing him. Unable to deny the urge, he lifted a hand to cup one of her luscious breasts and rubbed the stiffened nipple through the fabric of her top. She shuddered and gasped, gripping his biceps tightly. He held the back of her head in his other hand and took complete control, tilting her and taking the kiss deeper. He wanted to roar in triumph at the way she gave over to him, allowing him to rule the moment. When he finally released her she had a dazed look in her eyes.

"Now we can walk back to the truck," he said softly. She nodded and turned to Richard, who smiled at her and reached for her hand.

Boone watched Maya as she walked out into the late afternoon sun. He made a mental note to find a king-size blanket to put in the work truck because it paid to be prepared. *Yeah, I'm a frickin' Boy Scout.* He watched admiringly as her lovely ass swayed back and forth. Her snug jeans rode those swells just right, and his cock hardened further at the teasing view. Richard walked beside him, and he glanced at his brother to find his eyes glued to her swinging ass as well.

Their conversation had gone well, and Boone was impressed at the way she took the initiative, instead of playing demure, trying to get declarations of love from them before making a move. He had a

feeling Maya wasn't going to have a hard time at all breaking through Richard's wall of reserve.

* * * *

As Maya walked along, lost in her own thoughts, Boone and Richard walked on either side of her. Watching them in her peripheral vision, she acknowledged to herself that this was really going to happen. She was going to know what it felt like to be with three men, surrounded by them, making love with them. Maybe soon.

She smiled to herself, remembering the looks on their sinfully handsome faces when she'd taken the bull by the horns on the creek bank. She'd dared herself to go for what she wanted, and she'd been rewarded. And those kisses had practically melted her bones.

There was no question in her mind that she wanted these brothers. She wanted to play and laugh with Kendall, she wanted to cuddle with Richard and soothe their shared pain, and she wanted Boone to tie her to the bed and do whatever he wanted to with her. He was dominant, like Morgan had been, and that was what she'd recognized in him earlier.

Looking up at Richard, Maya pondered his quiet nature, wondering at the best way to approach him. She decided she wanted quiet time alone with him first. He seemed most uncertain of the three of them, and she contemplated how to lay both their fears to rest so they could move forward.

He smiled down at her and slid his fingers across her palm and entwined their fingers. His hand was big and rough, making her own seem small in comparison. He gazed at her, his pale blue eyes triggering a pounding reaction in her heart at his sweet gesture. She stumbled, and they both reached instantaneously to steady her. After her whispered "thank you," they continued until they were within sight of Kendall's truck.

Maya offered to help them finish up the chores, but all three men dismissed the idea, and she busied herself picking a bouquet of wildflowers. There was an antique rose bush near the sad remains of the house, and she made a mental note to bring shears, rooting hormone, and potting supplies on her next visit. A flowerbed filled with bushes grown from cuttings from the original rosebush would be lovely after the new house was built. Maybe they'd let her dig up the heirloom bush before construction started.

Maya squatted down in a thick patch of yellow daisies and reached out to gather some for variety in her arrangement. A horrific chill raced over her skin as her ears were filled with the telltale warning of a rattlesnake close by. The sound seemed to come from directly in front of her, and she didn't have time to retreat before the snake struck.

She stared in shock at the wound on her left hand then traced the source of the stinging bite to the agitated rattlesnake coiling in the tall grass, preparing for another strike. Powered by adrenaline, she flung herself backward as far as she could, rolled to her knees and crawled to the bare dirt, screaming and holding her hand to her stomach.

She no longer knew where the snake was and struggled to her feet to put as much distance as she could between herself and it. She tripped and lurched forward, straight into Richard's arms. He hit his knees with her and sat her down after looking around the yard.

Gasping in deep gulps of air, Maya whispered, "Snake."

"I know. We heard it."

She sat, leaning back against his inner thigh and tried to slow her breathing. The pounding rhythm of her heart made her feel like she was suffocating, and so she panted shallowly.

Richard tilted her chin so she'd look at him. Calmly, he said, "Listen to me, Maya." Kendall and Boone both skidded to a stop beside them and crouched down at her side. "Kendall is going to look at the bite. I need you to calm your breathing and your heart rate as

best as you can. The calmer you are, the slower the venom will move through your bloodstream.”

Her hand tingled fiercely as she did her best to settle down. Boone wrapped his bandana around her wrist snugly but not so much the circulation was cut off completely. Kendall checked his watch and looked closely at the bite, careful to not raise her hand as he did so.

“I see venom. It’s not a dry bite.” He placed her hand against her abdomen. “Keep your hand there. We’re going to take you to the hospital.”

“How far?”

“Not far. Divine has a hospital and ER. We’ll be there inside of ten minutes.”

“More like five. I’m driving,” Boone said as he held her hand to her abdomen.

Richard lifted her in his arms and carried her with little outward effort to the truck Boone and Richard had arrived in earlier. It had a backseat, and Richard lifted her in then climbed in behind her and drew her into his lap.

“Doing okay?” he asked in a reassuring tone.

Still trying to breathe calmly, Maya rested her head against his chest and nodded. She could hear his heart beating against her ear. It sounded like it was about to pound out of his chest. She wrapped her right arm around his middle and squeezed. Richard responded by holding her more closely. She felt safe in his arms.

Kendall turned in the seat in front of her and asked, “Did you get a good look at the snake?”

Shuddering, she recalled the threatening rattle of the venomous reptile. “Yes, it was a diamondback. I saw the markings clearly. It was as big around as my wrist. It didn’t rattle until I was practically on top of it.”

She knew they had plenty of time to get to the hospital, which would more than likely have the antivenin for that particular pit viper’s venom.

“Sorry, guys. I should’ve been paying more attention to where I was reaching. I ruined the day.”

Boone looked back at her and quirked an eyebrow before turning his eyes back to the road. “Yeah, Maya, what’s up with that? You sought that big rattler out and pissed him off *just* so he’d bite you.” Preparing to make the turn onto the highway, he added, “Hold on.”

Richard’s arms tightened momentarily around her, and he braced himself as Boone turned, flipped on the hazard lights, and nailed the accelerator.

“Well, I should’ve been more careful. I’m sorry.”

Kendall reached back and stroked her knee and said, “No need to apologize. I’m sorry it happened, but I’m glad you weren’t alone, like earlier.”

Richard shuddered and held her closer. His lips were pressed together in a straight line as he looked into her eyes.

A smile came to her lips as she watched him watching her, and he said, “I’ve never noticed before that your blue eyes have a hint of green to them. They’re beautiful.”

“Thank you,” Maya whispered. “Your eyes are, too.” She spoke quietly because she didn’t want the guys to hear her complimenting his unusual eyes and give him a hard time. She had a feeling he was self-conscious about them.

He shrugged. “Most people are put off by them. I know they’re kind of strange to look at.”

Maya shook her head and said, “I love them.” He closed his eyes, and she reached a fingertip to his lightly bearded jaw. She tilted his face so he would look at her again and kissed the center of his chin. He kissed her lips lightly and asked, “How does your hand feel?”

“The bite is throbbing and my hand is a little tingly and hot, but that might be from binding it. How much farther?”

Kendall turned and said, “Just a couple of minutes.”

* * * *

Richard held the door for Maya several hours later as the four of them emerged from the Divine Hospital Emergency Room. He shuddered again at the memory of her scream of fright and pain, and the way she'd tumbled to the ground after she'd been bit. She'd struggled to her feet to get farther away but had tripped, and he'd done everything in his power to make sure she didn't hit the ground again. The pain and shock in her angelic blue eyes had fired every single one of his protective instincts. He hadn't been able to let her go until it was absolutely necessary at the emergency room so she could be treated. Even then he'd held her hand every chance he'd gotten.

Proving that news traveled fast in a small town, a reporter from the *Divine Courier* had come by to interview her and asked if they'd killed the snake so he might take a picture of it. Kendall had handled the nosy reporter and sent him on his way.

The doctor had determined the envenomation was mild and she'd needed an antivenin injection and a sterile dressing for the bite itself. After blood tests and multiple checks for her respiratory function and blood pressure, the doctor discharged her with instructions on how to care for the wound and what to watch for. Her hand was discolored and the bite looked swollen, but otherwise she'd said she felt fine, if shaken up.

Richard had found himself watching her anxiously all evening for signs of complications or side effects from the antivenin. Every time she'd caught his eye, she'd smiled at him reassuringly, but Maya appeared as though the experience had wiped her out.

As he helped her into the truck, Richard asked, "Maya, are you hungry?"

She'd sent them to eat supper while she was observed in the ER, telling them she was slightly nauseated and didn't want anything. They'd gotten something from the hospital cafeteria and immediately returned.

"Maybe for a piece of toast. I'm so tired," she said, her voice soft as she leaned against him. He tucked her to his side in the truck as Boone drove them home.

Richard caught the smile Kendall and Boone shared as he lifted her from the truck cab and carried her inside. He placed Maya on her feet and set about making her toast. He brought the plate to her, and she smiled in thanks and took it from him. She ate quickly and took a shower.

Boone and Kendall left her in Richard's care and drove out to the ranch to bring back the truck Kendall had left there. Wondering what else he could do to help her feel better, Richard looked in the kitchen cabinets. He spotted tea bags and decided to make her some tea, which might help settle her stomach.

She emerged from the bedroom dressed in a pair of snug knit pants and a T-shirt. Her hair was wet, and she was blotting it with a towel. Richard thought she looked paler and brought her to the dining room table. After boiling the water, he put the cup of tea together and set it before her and joined her at the table.

"I wish this night was different," she said as she dipped the tea bag in the steaming water.

"I know, honey. Me, too. How does your hand feel?"

The doctor had warned her she'd have some pain and swelling in her hand and possibly nausea and fatigue from the antivenin injection.

"It hurts. My stomach still feels wobbly," she murmured as she blew on her tea after stirring honey in it.

Richard knew of something that might make her feel better but waited until she was through with her tea. They sat in comfortable silence while she sipped the hot brew.

He hoped she wouldn't think he was crazy for suggesting it as he said, "Would you like me to rock you?" He gestured with his thumb to the big rocking recliner in the living room.

Maya looked up at him, and her eyebrows knit together. She seemed pale and fragile to him, but his heart leaped in his chest when

she smiled and nodded. He put her empty mug in the sink and walked over to the big recliner and sat down. She followed and didn't hesitate when he opened his arms to her.

He eased her gently into his lap, barely suppressing a groan as she cuddled up to him. He knew she didn't feel good because she was usually playful and talkative. He sometimes didn't know what to say for fear of sounding like a dunce, whereas conversation seemed to come easily for her. She rested her cheek against his chest and melted into him as he began rocking her and stroking her back. She was like a kitten curled in his arms.

"I don't think I've been rocked since I was a little girl."

"Am I going too fast?"

"No, it's perfect." The drawn-out, expressive tone she used in the last word made him smile, and he was glad now that he'd suggested it.

Richard made a vain attempt to distract himself and keep his swelling cock from turning into a full-blown hard-on, which she must've been aware of beneath her hip. Her body was warm and pliant, and the delicate scent of her just-shampooed hair was making him harder by the moment. He was painfully aware of how velvety her fingertips were as she stroked his biceps.

"Do you miss her, Richard?" Her soft-spoken voice was hesitant and had a poignant quality to it.

He shut his eyelids, not sure he wanted to go there yet. "Yeah. Sometimes I miss her very much." In his mind's eye, he could still see Michelle's face, the way her eyes would light up whenever she looked at him.

"I'm sorry she was taken from you." She stroked his arm in a soothing fashion.

"I'm sorry about Morgan, too, honey."

"Richard?"

"Hmm?"

"Do you ever feel lonely?"

"Well, I have Kendall and Boone, so no, not lonely but..." If he said he missed physical affection she would think he meant sex. He did, but not under these circumstances.

She slid her good hand around his back and squeezed lightly. "I've missed the simple, physical connection and intimacy."

Richard nodded. "Yeah. Having someone to touch and hold."

Maya looked up at him, and the vulnerability in her eyes made him feel protective of her. She asked, "Do you think we'll ever get over losing them?"

Rocking slowly, he lifted a damp lock of her golden-blond hair and caressed its silky length between his forefinger and thumb. "I remember when they told me she'd died on the operating table. I wanted to die, too. I felt that way for a long time."

"Me, too," she whispered, and he saw her lip tremble before she pressed her face to his chest.

Hoping the words came out right, Richard said, "I know she and Morgan would want us to live our lives and be happy. I want, I mean, I'm ready—" *Shit.*

"To try and love someone else?" she asked, stroking his pectoral muscle. "Even though it hurts to think of it?"

"Yeah."

She sat there with him, asking no more questions, just stroking him until her movements gradually stilled and she fell sound asleep. Richard would've gladly sat there holding her until morning, but Kendall and Richard arrived a short while later.

"She okay?" Boone asked, fingering a lock of her drying hair.

"Wiped out. I don't think she feels well," Richard whispered.

Kendall pressed the backs of his fingers to her forehead and said, "Her temperature feels normal. You want to put her to bed?"

Richard didn't say it, but in his heart he didn't want to part with her when she was like this. Her sweet, solid weight against him was the most satisfying thing he'd felt in years.

Proving his uncanny ability to read his brothers, Kendall said, “I’m dog-tired, but if you’re worried, you’re both welcome to bed down with us. It might be a little crowded, but the offer stands.”

Boone looked at Richard and smiled, saying, “I think she’s in good hands. Richard, I’ll switch with you during the night, so you can get a little shut-eye.”

Richard nodded and carefully rose from the recliner with her in his arms. She stirred slightly and shifted so that her nose and lips were pressed against his neck. She made a barely perceptible happy-sounding noise. A pleasant shiver raced down his back at the contact. They put her in bed and propped her freshly bandaged hand on a pillow then got themselves ready for bed. Boone said goodnight, and Richard got comfortable on his side facing her while Kendall took the other side.

He looked up from Maya’s peaceful face to find his brother watching him.

Kendall asked, “You okay?”

With his head resting in his palm, Richard nodded as he lifted the blanket higher over her shoulder. He held his breath as she turned on her side in her sleep and cuddled close to his chest. She tucked her hand under her chin and schooched closer until her head was under his jaw and she was touching him from nose to toes.

Richard finally let his breath out slowly and met Kendall’s eyes again. Kendall grinned and said, “Don’t look so shocked, Richard. She feels safe with you, with all of us.”

Damn, she felt good against him. He didn’t know what to say.

Chapter Eight

Maya woke during the night, relieved that the pounding in her head had subsided. She felt very warm, and as she came wider awake, she realized this was because she was caged in by big, male bodies. The wound on her hand still throbbed, but felt better than it had earlier.

She lay there, listening to them breathe, smiling in the dark as she tried to guess who was where. Kendall was in the same spot he'd slept in the night before. She looked up, waiting for her eyes to adjust, and inhaled slowly.

Boone held her tightly against his lean, muscled chest, judging by the sexy, faintly spicy scent that filled her nostrils. His chest was bare, and she had to stop herself from stroking him. His hand rested on her hip. Actually, it did more than rest there. His hand positively gripped her. Even in his sleep Boone's touch had a possessive quality to it. Was this real, or was she dreaming?

She heard someone shift in the room and realized it was Richard, sitting in the rocker in the corner. He must've put her to bed earlier. He came close and placed his hand on her thigh.

"You okay?"

She smiled up at him and whispered, "Yeah. I wondered where you were."

"I'm right here, honey. You go back to sleep."

He patted her then went back to the chair. She drifted off thinking how incredibly kind he was. She wondered if he'd gotten any rest at all.

* * * *

Later that morning, Maya awoke to an indescribably languid sensation. Hands everywhere, touching her, caressing her. Smiling sleepily, she stretched with her eyes still closed. A faint mewling sound escaped from her lips and she heard a male groan.

A pair of callused hands held her ankle and caressed up and down her calf inside of her pant leg. Another hand traveled up and down the length of her spine, from her tailbone to the nape of her neck, stroking into her hair before making its journey south again. Another warm, masculine hand stroked up and down her inner arm and back and forth across her collarbone.

She blinked the sleep from her eyes and smiled at the three men who surrounded her on the bed.

“Good morning, babydoll,” Kendall murmured as he continued stroking her inner arm, his chin resting in his hand as he lay facing her. His eyes twinkled playfully, and there was a sexy smile on his lips.

Her eyelids slid closed in sensual pleasure as full lips pressed against the juncture of her throat and shoulder, and Boone whispered in her ear, “Morning, Maya.”

“Good morning,” she whispered, sighing in pleasure at their touch.

Richard sat at the end of the bed, her foot held gently in his hand. She made eye contact with him and felt his gaze on her as though it were a physical caress. He looked tired.

“Did you sleep at all last night?” she asked as she beckoned him.

He nodded slightly as Kendall and Boone both rose simultaneously from the bed. They were already showered and dressed.

“I dozed a bit. How do you feel?”

She lifted her hand and could tell the swelling had gone down but the discoloration remained. “The bite aches like a deep bruise. The

headache and nausea seem to have passed though.” Richard sat on the edge of the bed and caressed her cheekbone as she said, “You rocked me to sleep.”

Richard smiled faintly. “You had me worried.” He looked as though he might’ve said more but left it at that. “We’ve made breakfast. Are you hungry?”

“A little, I think.” She took a deep breath and smiled at them. “Thank you for waking me so sweetly.”

As he helped her from the bed, Kendall said, “We wanted you to eat with us if you felt up to it. You can always return to bed afterward if you want. We’ve got to get to work, but Grace said she would check on you at lunchtime.”

Maya felt a little let down. She’d been hoping to spend more time with Kendall and do a little more exploring on the JWB during her time there.

The doctor had told her she might have some lingering ill effects from the antivenin and to rest. Forced rest was unwelcome news, but maybe it was for the best.

* * * *

“I know you’re dying to ask, Maya,” Grace said with a snicker. “Go ahead. It’s okay.”

Maya chuckled as she sat with Grace at the dining room table finishing their lunch, which Grace had brought in a picnic basket.

“Do they wear you out? Do you ever get tired of keeping up with them?” That was just the tip of the iceberg on all the questions she had to ask.

“No. They don’t allow it. Jack, Ethan, and Adam take wonderful care of me. Put bluntly, they serve me and not the other way around.” Grace held up her index finger. “Now don’t judge that statement until I’ve explained. I have a housekeeper now, so I don’t do their laundry or clean the house. I devote my day to writing and seeing to the needs

of Discretion and Harper's, in town. Not having all the other stuff to worry about frees my time to pay attention to them, and I feel I am the one being served. They treat me like a queen."

"Do you sleep with all three every night?" *That* was a big question for Maya. She was concerned the need to spend time one-on-one with Kendall and his brothers was going to foment jealousy.

"Actually sleep?" Grace asked with a smirk. "It's my choice to sleep with all of them in my bed at night. But there are plenty of nights where I need time alone with one of them, and I usually mention it over supper or later in the evening. We never keep score, and I make a point of requiring time alone with *all* of them. The only favorite in our house is *me*," Grace added with a giggle.

Good enough. I think I could handle that kind of status.

"Sex with three men in one night?"

"Not every night. Especially not right now," Grace replied, stroking her abdomen. "I'm sure the further along I get the more protective they'll become. I can see it already. If I have sex after the eighth month it will probably be because I *begged* for it. Jack is especially careful about how often. Maya, it's the most amazing feeling."

"What?"

"Being adored by three men. Being worshipped like that. My whole outlook changed when I met them. My life is like a fantasy. Do you mind me asking a question?" Grace asked speculatively over the rim of her tea glass.

"Sure. Go ahead."

"Is it all three you're interested in?"

Maya nodded without hesitation. "Yeah, without a doubt. I'm attracted to all three. I've loved Kendall a long time, and when I arrived the other day, Boone and Richard and I seemed to click together. The three of them are *really* something."

"Tell me about it. What about Richard? How are you two doing?"

Maya mulled Grace's question over for a moment before looking her in the eye. Grace seemed protective of them and rightfully so, since they were family.

"I understand where Richard is right now. We have something in common, and I guess we both need a little time to get comfortable. I think his heart is very tender. I wouldn't hurt him for the world, if that's what you're worried about, Grace."

Grace smiled and nodded. "I've heard the guys talking with Jack and wondered about whether you were right for them, especially Richard. He's so quiet, and his pain sometimes seems like it's still fresh. I feel for him. Boone, on the other hand, is definitely going to give you a run for your money, girlfriend."

Maya burst out in giggles. "He and I are going to do just fine, I think."

Grace laughed with her and said, "In some ways, Boone reminds me of Ethan. Flirty and playful but prone to—"

"Put you over his knee and give you a spanking? Yeah, you've nailed him, all right." Both women cackled loudly and Grace nodded.

"I can't wait for you to meet everybody, Maya. I think you're going to fit in so well," Grace said as she wiped a tear of laughter from her cheek.

"So you don't keep a calendar or have set days of the week where you have all three sleep with you?"

Grace chuckled and shook her head. "No. We have a rhythm of sorts, like a dance, I guess. Most often we're in my bed all together because it's easier for me to sleep with them surrounding me. I'm cold-natured, and I like being tucked in amongst them. You might find that you prefer to alternate beds and nights. It's all about your preferences. I can tell you *that* is how Jack told them it should be. You don't seem selfish to me, so I think you'll work it out with no problem. How does your hand feel?"

"It's feeling better. The nausea came back after breakfast, but it's settled a little since then. I wish I'd been more careful in the grass. This kind of messed up our week together."

"Everything happens for a reason. I think they enjoy coddling you," Grace said, her eyes twinkling. Maya had a feeling Grace knew all about being coddled.

"You think?" Maya chuckled. In the hour Grace had been at the house, Richard and Boone had called to check on her, and Kendall had returned at midmorning to see how she was faring. "Can I ask you one more question?"

"Sure."

"PDA?"

Grace grimaced. "That's a tough one. Public displays of affection may have been one of the biggest hurdles we've faced. I had to decide if I would acknowledge only Jack publicly as my husband or all three," she said, holding her hands out, balanced like a scale.

"What did you do?"

"I adjusted my expectations. I can't look at Ethan or Adam without love in my eyes. It feels like a betrayal when I have to hide it. I acknowledge Jack as my husband and try to behave in a way that doesn't draw unfriendly attention, and we let people draw their own conclusions."

"That must be hard for you to maintain."

"It is, at times. Unless I'm at one of the shops, I'm usually with them. They worry about the unkind things people say to me. I try to take their comments the same way I do my book reviews. It's somebody else's opinion. I appreciate kindness, and I try to not sweat the rest. I want to please Jack, Ethan, and Adam before anyone else."

"I can't wait to meet Jack and Ethan. Adam obviously adores you," Maya said, remembering the tenderness with which Adam had held her the day before on their front porch.

Grace smiled and looked into her glass. "I adore him, too." Maya thought Grace did indeed glow with happiness.

She had to know. "Do you ever argue? Fight? Get pissy with them?"

Grace chuckled and said, "Sure. But they overcome a lot of that because I don't feel overlooked or unappreciated. When someone is consistently that sweet it's awful hard to bite his head off, and I'm not wired that way. Have you thought how you're going to handle issues like public displays of affection?"

Maya bit her lip and said, "I don't plan to hide. I hid my need for Kendall from Morgan, unsuccessfully I might add, for years. I did without what I needed because of public opinion. I don't plan to treat them differently than I would in private. They're equal in my heart."

"They're going to be ferociously protective of you. You should hear how Kendall talks about you. You're his angel."

Maya felt her cheeks tingle with warmth at Grace's words. Deciding to bounce the tiny little worry rattling around in her head off of Grace, Maya said, "He told me he didn't want to be my 'go-to' guy anymore. We've always been close, and I could talk to him about anything. Really *anything*, Grace. We've talked about some crazy stuff over the years, and I always felt like he was someone I could trust. If we get together, I risk losing that."

Grace looked down at her overlapped hands on the tabletop. After a moment she said, "I think you risk more by wanting to keep that part of your relationship intact. Are you seeing it from his perspective? He's loved you a long time and not had access to you except as your confidante. You'd still have a confidante. Someone who knows you better than anyone. This sounds like a trust issue to me."

"How so?"

"Don't you trust him to be there for you?"

"Sure. But before I could rely on his unbiased opinion."

"Do you really think he was unbiased?" Grace asked doubtfully. "Before you answer, ask yourself this. If he's been in love with you

all this time, how do you think he felt every time you called on him for advice?”

“Damn. When it’s put that way, it sounds almost cruel.”

“He probably wouldn’t call you cruel, Maya, but it had to sting. Now, here is this fresh opportunity. Speaking of opportunities, Emma Guthrie told me this morning that she will have an opening available in her practice in September when her RN retires.”

Damn. Maya had known Grace for *a day*, and she was already putting feelers out for potential job openings. Maya perked up at the news. “That is good to know.”

“Which means you might even be here for the birth of this little girl.” Maya thought of just how easily she could slip into a life there in Divine, becoming a part of the community and her men’s family.

* * * *

Despite her protests, Maya was unsuccessful in talking Kendall into bringing her out to the ranch that afternoon when he came by for a late lunch.

“The ER doctor said you’d need the rest today. No, don’t give me ‘the lip,’” Kendall said, obviously having a hard time suppressing his amusement at her pouty lip.

“I wanted to play in the creek.” Skinny-dipping definitely qualified as playing.

Kendall shook a finger and scoffed. “No, you wanted to drive me *insane*. How am I supposed to work knowing you’re ‘playing?’ I’ve known you long enough to know what *that* means, woman.”

“Nobody would see unless they were down in the creek with me. It’s harmless fun! I wanted to explore.” *Yeah, that’s it.*

“The only thing being explored would be *you*. You can’t get in the creek with that wound on your hand anyway.”

Damn it! He was right. In another day she could probably play in the water if she was careful to clean it afterward. She balked at the forced inactivity.

"I'm bored. Couldn't I just come with you and hang out?"

Maya was already planning a trip the following morning with Grace to a little boutique she and a couple of friends were involved with.

"Don't get in such a rush. You got bit by a rattlesnake yesterday. What does your professional training tell you to do?"

"Rest, heal, and watch for side effects."

"Was gallivanting around less than a day later *anywhere* on the list?"

"Ooh."

Kendall mimicked her little exclamation and grimace and tickled her as he hugged her.

"So impatient. There will be plenty of time to play nekkid in the creek on Friday. I may take part of the day off and play with you," he whispered against her throat.

The look in his eyes told her he didn't mean splashing in the water. Her outlook changed instantly as an image came to mind of him making love to her on her flat rock as the creek babbled around them. She knew he would be magnificent, and the thought of the two of them together made her quiver.

It had been a long time since she'd had any sexual attention, and her clit throbbed with need. Her heart pounded as he slid his hands down her back to her ass and gripped her cheeks. He ground his thickening cock against her, and her pussy responded with a burst of tingling, damp heat.

His lips collided passionately with hers, and his tongue plundered her mouth, sweeping her away with his gentle assault. He slid his strong hands up her spine and held her body to his. His arousal was obvious, but he still held her as if she were the finest china, something precious to him. Maya wound her arms around him and moaned

against his moist lips. His tongue stroked hers, mimicking what he no doubt intended to do with his cock once she was fully recovered. She pressed back against his erection and her pussy contracted with longing to know what it would feel like to be filled with it. Unfortunately, along with all the pleasant rush of feelings came a wave of light-headedness and nausea. She groaned and put her hand to her suddenly damp brow.

Damn it!

“Maya?” Kendall took one look at her face and thankfully didn’t lecture her or say “I told you so.” He lifted her in his arms and carried her to the couch. “Want a cold washcloth?”

“Yes.”

He returned with it, and she pressed it to her brow and sat motionless as her stomach wobbled. “Sorry to dampen the mood,” she said weakly as the nausea receded slowly.

“It’s okay. Do you want me to help you get back in bed?” With his point thoroughly pressed home, she nodded, and he carried her back to bed.

“You know, I could probably walk,” she said with a chuckle. She loved being hefted in his big, thick arms like this.

“Where’s the fun in that?”

He laid her down on the bed and sat down beside her.

“I hate being an invalid. We’re supposed to be having fun,” she muttered, trying not to pout.

Kendall tucked a lock of hair behind her ear then patted her thigh. “I know. But at least you’re here with us. We’ll fix you supper tonight and watch a movie. Rest so you can be well for your excursion tomorrow with Grace.”

“I feel better already. Much as I hate it, I know you’re right. This is just going to take some time to get over.”

Kendall kissed her again as if she were delicate porcelain and murmured, “Don’t worry, babydoll. When you feel better we’ll make it up to you.” The heat in his eyes told her it was a promise.

Chapter Nine

Maya discovered one more reason to like her new friend as Grace started the engine of her cute little blue convertible and the stereo blasted loudly.

“Sorry. I like it loud,” Grace said with an apologetic grin, turning down the volume as Maya laughed.

“Five Finger Death Punch?” she asked as a song by that band played in the background.

“I don’t look the type, do I? You should see the baby kick anytime I put their music on. Rose Marie likes ‘Bad Company’ in particular. Every time I play that song she kicks up a storm. I think she responds to the vocalist’s sexy voice.”

“Her name is Rose Marie?”

“Yes, after Jack’s mother. Rose Marie was my friend. She died a couple of years ago. As a matter of fact, it was at her funeral that Jack started to get closer to me. I’d only just met Ethan, and I didn’t meet Adam until that day.”

“That didn’t freak you out a bit?”

Grace beamed and shook her head. “Not really. The chemistry was there from the beginning. They saved me from a bad situation with an ex-boyfriend. It didn’t take them long to have me eating out of their hands, though.”

They zipped down the highway toward Morehead, the breeze blowing in their hair, and talked the whole way. Maya was pleasantly surprised when they pulled up in front of a pristinely kept little boutique housed in a lovely, restored, Victorian-era home.

When Grace had told her they were visiting an adults-only ladies' boutique Maya had not known what to expect. This was lovely. The structure was painted an unusual muted shade of blue and trimmed in pale yellow. Baskets of periwinkles hung in intervals along the deep front porch.

"Wow."

"It's lovely, isn't it? I love it here. Wait till you see inside," Grace said as they climbed from the convertible. "Welcome to Discretion, Maya." Grace opened the front door and stepped inside.

A lively conversation was going on inside the boutique, which was like a wonderland of every sort of kink, passion, and perversion she could imagine.

A lovely, voluptuous blonde with a rosy blush in her cheeks said, "I can't believe I was 'the other woman' in his harem fantasy! I was mortified when his wife called me to let me know she was okay with it."

A tall, gorgeous brunette replied, "Maybe he wanted a ménage and was trying to ease you into it by giving her your number."

The blonde rolled her eyes and said, "Trust me, if I'm ever in a ménage, all parties will be on the same fucking page, not to mention the fact that they'll all *know* each other to begin with."

Grace giggled and whispered, "Oh, crap. What now?"

"So you put all his shit on the front yard and had a rummage sale?" the brunette said from where she sat behind an antique lingerie display cabinet. The imposing display piece served as a sales counter, which housed delicacies of every color, style, and fabric imaginable behind glass.

The blonde who stood folding lingerie at the display cabinet replied, "I *did*. He left for his supposed business trip, and I went on a tear. I sold it all, too. At rock-bottom prices. Hi, Grace!"

"Hi, everyone. This is Maya Daire. Maya, that is Rachel Wolf behind the lingerie counter, and this is Summer Heston. She and her sister, Margot, own Discretion."

Another brunette appeared in the door that led to the rear of the shop, and Grace said, "This is Teresa Martinez."

The brunette approached and held out her hand to Maya. The others greeted her, and she was swept into the conversation as though she'd known them for years. At the moment there were no customers in the boutique.

"What did he say when he came back?" Rachel asked Summer as they went back to their tasks. Rachel had a laptop set up on the counter and appeared to be doing the shop's books.

"I handed him a check for the full amount I made on the yard sale and told him to get the hell off of my property."

"You're not worried he'll sue you for selling his stuff?" Teresa asked.

Summer chuckled. "Are you kidding? He cried and begged me to take him back. He couldn't understand why, if his wife was willing, I wouldn't be interested in him anymore. Mind you, I wouldn't mind being the meat in the middle of a man sandwich, but I'll be damned if I'm going to share a man, especially one with no backbone. I finally called the police. Where do I find these two-timing assholes?"

Rachel spoke up and said, "I'm glad you gave him the boot. He wasn't nearly good enough for you. I hope he doesn't sue you."

"Pish! He can go for it. His stuff wasn't worth that much. I could pay the cost of small claims court and still break even with the fun of selling all his junk and then seeing the look on his face when I handed him the check."

Grace showed Maya around the shop, and Maya asked questions about their involvement.

"Teresa is a born saleswoman. She works in the store with Summer. Rachel does the books and handles online orders and Discretion's website maintenance. I hang out and help with merchandising and the display cases."

Summer added, "Plus, they're all invested in Discretion. Juliana's not here, otherwise you could meet her as well. She helps Margot with buying and is at market in Dallas with her right now."

Maya observed and listened as their discussion about Summer's erstwhile boyfriend continued. Teresa was beautiful and had an almost shy quality to her. Summer was all spunk and fire and sounded like she could handle whatever retribution the jerk dealt to her. Rachel was spirited as well and looked as though she were ready to hunt the asshole down and beat the crap out of him. This was a lively group for certain.

They talked about Maya's experience with the rattler, and Maya told them she was much better. The last bout of nausea had been the previous afternoon, and she'd slept well. She didn't share that she'd slept surrounded by hard, male bodies.

Rachel must've sensed her reluctance to share details about Kendall and his brothers because she said, "I'll bet those three Warner boys are keeping you on your toes, aren't they, Maya? They are drop-your-panties gorgeous."

"Rachel!" Teresa burst out in giggles as she returned from the stockroom with another box of lace lingerie to fold and put away. "Maya, it's quite all right to be blunt in this crazy group of women." Gesturing to Rachel, she added, "Honey Badass here has a delayed filter on her mouth. Don't worry. Grace isn't the only one in this group with an unconventional lifestyle."

Teresa filled her in on her own living arrangement with her husbands, Angel and Joaquin, who were the Divine Creek Ranch's horse breeding experts. Maya also learned she was currently staying in Teresa's former home. Teresa had a five-year-old and an eighteen-month-old, both boys. "Michael and Eleazar are with their fathers right now."

Maya raised a brow in mild surprise, and Teresa explained that her men were raised around horses from infancy and preferred to do the same with their sons.

With a smirk, Rachel said, "Summer, we need to find a *real* man for you. One you can trust. Because, honey, let's face it. Left to your own devices, you're an asshole *magnet*."

The women all laughed, including Summer.

"A freak magnet," Grace said.

"It's a curse! I have the *worst* luck."

Teresa chuckled then said, "When are you going to let Grace set you up with someone?"

"What if it doesn't work out? I'll feel guilty for disappointing Grace."

"Summer, honey, it's about time you put yourself in my capable hands," Grace said quietly as three women stepped in the lace-curtained front door.

Maya visited with the others while Teresa helped the ladies. Rachel bantered back and forth with Grace, proving she'd earned her title as "Honey Badass" and had a truly risqué sense of humor. Her computer dinged with a familiar tone, and she paused in the discussion to check her e-mail. She frowned, and her demeanor changed as she opened the message.

"Grace?"

Grace came closer to look at the computer screen and visibly paled. "*Divine Morality*? What the hell is that? It's not a book review site."

Maya watched with wary interest as Rachel and Grace looked at the screen.

"It's somebody's public blog. *Oh, shit*. Teresa and Rosemary are mentioned as well," Rachel whispered the last so as not to be overheard. "Teresa will pass out when she sees this. *Damn it*."

"What is it?" Maya asked.

"Someone has posted an anonymous, public blog accusing Grace and the others of bigamy, adultery, and immorality. The article mentions that Grace is expecting. This is heinous."

Rachel turned the computer so Maya could clearly see the screen. Her heart fell to her stomach as she read the hateful gossip about her new friends.

The blog was not well written and appeared almost to be slapped together without much editing as if the person were in a hurry. Icy chills tingled up her neck as she realized she could become a target of this individual if she stayed in Divine with Kendall and his brothers.

“Do you have any idea who this could be?” Maya asked.

“There’s no name listed. It could be any of a number of people. Not everyone in Divine is open-minded,” Grace said. “I’ll talk to the guys tonight. I know someone who can help. Rachel, it’s a good thing you set up those Google Alerts for us.”

* * * *

“Where in the fuck is she?” Frank Reeves muttered as he stared at his laptop. He knew she hadn’t left in her car because the GPS he’d installed secretly months ago indicated that it was still at her house. She must’ve taken off with that asshole, Kendall Warner. He should’ve guessed it by the look in the redneck’s eyes. She was probably fucking him at that very moment. On a whim he navigated to a search engine and entered Warner’s name.

* * * *

Late Friday afternoon, Boone watched as Maya relaxed on the flat rock out in the creek. She’d brought a paperback and a bottle of water and had her head resting on a folded towel, reading. She’d stripped her T-shirt off and now lay there in just her lacy pushup bra. The blonde temptress knew one of them would be coming to collect her when the workday was done. The bra was partially transparent, so he could see her rosy nipples through the white lace.

Maya was on his mind a lot lately, and he had to confess, to himself at least, that he'd been grateful for the slow down in this experiment. He didn't want her to feel that this was like every other escapade they'd ever taken part in. She was much more important to him.

All the free pussy he wanted waited for him at The Dancing Pony, but he was becoming bored with that scene. Brenda Sanderson had about done him in with her damned antics and games, playing him, Richard, and their fellow coworker Gil James against each other.

The Carlisle brothers had finally given her the bum's rush off of the Rockin' C Ranch, like Grace had done a couple of years before.

Grace had never said "I told you so," but Boone had wished they'd taken their cues from her more stable example rather than taking advantage of the easy, kinky sex Brenda had offered.

She'd manipulated them and played with them for her own amusement, which had fucked with Richard's head in particular. Boone and Gil had been relieved the year before when she'd taken off in her gaudy dually pickup and hadn't returned or called again.

This woman he watched now was a different breed altogether. He didn't want to approach this thing between the four of them lightly. Kendall adored her, and Boone was certain Richard was falling fast, too. Boone thought she was exactly what Richard needed. Richard had never been the most verbose person, but she'd had the ability to turn him into Chatty Cathy.

He was glad she was feeling better, too. She'd wanted to push things the day before, and it had shown when she'd cuddled up with him on the couch last night to watch a movie. She'd fallen asleep early and allowed them to tuck her into bed without stirring later that night.

This morning she'd seemed like she was bouncing back as she'd prepared to go on her little shopping excursion with Grace. He wondered if she'd bought anything and grinned when he caught a

glimpse of the cover of the book she read. *Hot fucking damn*. She *had* gone shopping.

She was reading an erotic novel if the cover featuring one woman and two men was any indicator. So they were on her mind as well. Good to know. Maybe she'd share a bedtime story with them tonight.

He was horny, but he wanted her to know she was special to them, to him. The memory of the desolate look on her face at Morgan's funeral came to mind, and he felt very protective of her. He wanted her to never experience that sort of devastation again. Even though pain was a part of life, he still wanted to protect her from it.

Though he'd been attracted to her when Kendall introduced him and Richard to her, Boone had always considered her OPP when Morgan had been alive. He'd even acknowledged the place he knew she held in Kendall's heart and had still considered her "other people's property" after Morgan's death. Loving her had never been an option, so he'd ignored the attraction.

He had a feeling that making love with her would be off the charts hot, but it was about more than sex. It was their fantasy coming true, and in a way it scared him.

She was the best-case scenario Jack had talked to them about when they'd asked with curiosity two years before about his relationship with Grace, Ethan, and Adam. Maya was fun-loving, open-minded, and sexy as hell. In short, she was perfect for them.

She didn't seem put off at all by his tendency toward physical possessiveness and dominance. It had been impossible to mistake the sparkle of interest in her eyes when he'd threatened a spanking if she misbehaved. He was willing to bet she loved erotic spanking, and he couldn't wait to find out.

Silently, Boone made his way down the creek bank, jumping silently from rock to tree root, stripping off his sweaty T-shirt and the rest of his clothing. He wondered how she would react and grinned. He gritted his teeth as he slipped quietly into the cold, clear water and submerged beneath its surface.

He rounded the rock and could see her shapely calf swirling in the water. Minnows darted around her foot, appearing to kiss and tickle her toes. He gently wrapped his hand around her ankle and heard her high-pitched squeal even under the water. She didn't jerk away as he surfaced in front of her, and he smiled at the sight of her. She was up on her elbows and her breasts were heaving because he'd startled her, but there was a spark of merriment in her eyes.

She blessed him with a luminescent smile a moment before she planted her other foot on his shoulder and pushed him back into the water. He laughed for a second before he went under, not so much from the force of her push but because he was as much in the mood to play as she was.

She laughed as he surfaced and then became serious as her blue gaze wandered down his torso. Where he stood on a rock, he was only waist-deep. A faint blush came to her cheeks as she looked at his cock, which was only barely submerged in the water. If she kept staring, his cock was going to keep swelling until it made an appearance above water as well.

She laid her book by her towel and sat up. "The cold water doesn't seem to bother you much."

"Not when what I'm looking at makes me this hot, Maya," he replied as he stepped closer to her.

A fish swirled around his ankle as he stood in the cold water. She parted her thighs and watched him as he took advantage of the move and drew closer still. He could see her pulse pounding at the base of her throat, and his dick twitched when she licked her lips as she looked him up and down again. Her hands moved from where they rested on her thighs, and he wondered if she was considering putting them on his cock. He sincerely hoped so. Her breasts filled the transparent lace bra to perfection, and he had every intention of playing with them before he left this rock.

"H-How was your day?"

"Long, hot, and sweaty. How was yours?"

“Positively decadent.” Maya skimmed a fingertip over his tattooed bicep and traced the marking around his shoulder and said, “Turn, I want to see all of it. Oh, Boone.” Her voice was an expressive whisper as he turned so she could see his back.

He’d added to the original red-and-black tribal art on his bicep so that it now encompassed one complete shoulder and crossed the top of his back. Her fingertip descended his spine as she traced the twined red-and-black fiery dragons, done in the same tribal motif, whose tails ended at his lower back. His cock surged as her fingertip traced all the way down.

“Did it take a long time?” she asked as he turned back to her and drew close enough to place a kiss on the upper swell of her breast, right above the lace she wore.

“Yes. Several trips.” He switched to the other side and was gratified by the shakiness of her breathing.

“I wish I could’ve watched.”

“Next time I’ll take you with me.” He traced the tip of his tongue through her cleavage.

“Do you like my new bra?”

A leisurely smile crossed Boone’s lips and he murmured, “I was just admiring it. It looks beautiful on you.”

“It has a matching G-string.”

Hot fucking damn! Dreams do come true. “Any chance I might have the opportunity to peel said G-string off of you?” *Please let her be wearing it beneath these cutoffs.*

Her breath caught in her throat, and she bit her lip before smiling. Her only response was a nod. With dripping hands he pulled her to him, gripping the back of her head in one hand as he slid the other up her thigh to grip her hip. She fit his hands perfectly, everywhere.

He kissed her hungrily and savored her taste, thrusting his tongue between her lips and enjoying the feel of her silken mouth. He groaned when her smooth fingertips slip around his bone-hard dick.

He fumbled with the fly and zipper of her cutoffs, and she leaned back a little to give him greater access. He jerked the faded denims down her hips and legs and laid them aside as he hungrily took in the sight of her. Her quiet moan had his dick bobbing impatiently and seeping pre-cum. He couldn't wait to have his mouth filled with her pussy, to taste her cream.

Her gaze never left his face as he touched the patch of transparent lace over her mound. Her scent rose to him in the balmy air, and he hazarded a guess she was very wet.

"Very pretty, Maya. You look good in lace."

Her only response was a little high-pitched exhalation as his fingers slid over the narrow elastic string that ran over her hips.

"And what's this? A lovely bit of body art." He traced a fingertip over the delicately inked tattoo at her left hip. The duo of roses was deep red and intricately detailed, one fully opened and the other a tightly closed bud. Their stems crossed at her hip so it would appear they were held there by her waistband.

"I want to add to it someday."

"What would you add?"

Her breath stuttered a little when he stroked it with a light tickling touch.

"I think I'd add a colored ribbon and have the artist ink something special on it. Maybe a phrase. I haven't decided yet."

Gently, he hooked his finger beneath the lace and growled at the feel of her silky skin. Maya waxed her pussy. Boone couldn't believe his good fortune. A small, soft thatch of curls grew in a narrow strip above her slit, which was his true destination. Her head fell back as his finger slipped fluidly between her drenched lips.

"Oh, Boone."

Her husky whisper set his blood to boiling as he slid his finger up and down her slit, the sounds of moist flesh parting audible even over the merrily gurgling creek. She lifted a thigh and gave him greater access to her wet pussy, and he took full advantage.

He caught the elastic of the G-string with his fingers and pulled it from her, revealing her blonde curls and the slick, glistening evidence of her arousal to him. She was dripping with her juices and looked like the right touch would make her come on the spot. Lucky for him he was the one doing the honors. He couldn't wait to hear what she sounded like.

Mindful of the rough surface she sat on, Boone reached for her towel. "If I'm going eat this sweet little pussy, I want you comfortable while I'm doing it." He spread the towel on the rock and patted it for her to move onto it.

He helped her get situated, aware of the way she now panted. She leaned back on her elbows and watched him as he slid a hand up her torso and carefully tucked the lace of her bra beneath her breasts so he could reach her turgid little nipples. A strident moan escaped her lips as he pinched them and tugged before rolling each between his fingers.

The whole time his lips were mere inches from her creaming cunt. She surprised him when she slid one hand down her torso and spread her lips for him, revealing the damp, pink delicacy between them. Her fingertip slipped downward and lifted the hood over her clitoris, exposing the small, engorged jewel to him.

"Good girl." His words had a visible effect on her. With her spread like that, he could clearly see her pussy clenching and convulsing with need.

He lightly slid the tip of his tongue straight up the center of her wet flesh from bottom to clit, and her body tensed as if she were a bowstring. He paused and watched as her breathing became erratic, and she moaned in anticipation.

He repeated the motion with relish as her back arched and her vocal response echoed at a higher pitch. He lingered slightly in the stroke over her engorged clit, and her pussy convulsed. The waves of her orgasm rushed over her, and he felt each pulsation on his tongue as he slid it into her cunt then upward to her clit.

Her ecstatic cry was like music to his ears. He went deeper and suctioned the flesh between his lips and flicked her clit mercilessly, enjoying her scream as she came again. Her juices dripped from her pussy, and he licked her thoroughly as he listened to her recover. Every little hitching sob and sigh was gratification itself.

Chapter Ten

Pleasure vibrated through Maya's throbbing pussy as she caught her breath. Her heart pounded, and she quivered as he continued to lick and stroke her.

Raising her head from where it hung back, she looked down at him, poised between her thighs. Where did they go from here? He must've seen the questions in her eyes because he spoke up before she could even form a query in her mind.

"Don't worry, Maya. The guys and I have talked about this. There's no pressure on you to reciprocate right now. We wanted this all to happen naturally, at its own pace." He backed up his statement with a sexy smile and another long, leisurely lick straight up her center.

"O-Oh! I thought maybe you would all expect to be together the first time we did anything like this." He grinned when her breath came in staccato pants of pleasure. Boone had excellent oral skills.

"We were open to however it came about. It just so happens I'm a pushy bastard and got to the head of the line today. Kendall and Richard will not be upset with you for allowing this. They're both waiting for their chance." He stroked her pussy one last time with his fingertips in a caring gesture and helped her to sit back up.

"What about you, Boone? You have to be aching by now."

"Maya, I want you so badly it's painful, but I understand if you need to slow down."

She was grateful he'd backed off a little but wasn't prepared to let him get away just yet. It deepened her feelings for him that he was

trying to think with his big brain right now instead of going for what she'd offered and his cock clearly craved.

"For a rough-and-ready cowboy, you've got a gentle streak about a mile wide."

"Don't let that get out, or I'll never live it down."

"Don't worry, Mister Dominant. Your secret is safe with me." She released the clasp on her bra and laid it aside with the G-string, popped off the rock shelf and into the water beside him.

Her wet flesh slithered against his as he held her to him, and she said, "Why don't you sit on the edge and let me take care of this great, big monster of yours?"

"Why thank you, baby," he replied with a chuckle as he backed to the rock ledge and lifted himself so his ass was perched on the edge. His thighs were rock hard and covered in dark curly hair. She bit her lip in admiration at the way his cock stood up straight and proud from a nest of dark hair as he positioned his hands behind him and leaned back slightly.

He smiled sexily at her, and she loved that he put it all out there for her, giving her easy access to everything. She stroked his thighs and made a yummy noise as she licked along his hard, hot length. His approving growl made her bold, and part of her wanted to climb up on his lap and slide right down onto his gorgeous cock.

"So what have you been reading?" Boone lifted her book from the rock. She'd purchased it that morning at Discretion when she'd bought the bra and G-string. She lightly tongued his balls as he groaned and commented, "*Siren Enslaved: Texas Sirens 3* by Sophie Oak. Look at this cover. My, my. Two men and one woman. Someone has been fantasizing."

She paused in her attention to his balls only long enough to whisper, "Only constantly. The three of you are a fantasy come to life."

"Well, thank you, baby. The feeling is mutual," he said with a groan as he flexed his hips toward her.

She lifted his cock and flicked her tongue around the crown. He was hard as a rock but silky against her tongue and salty as she licked his pre-cum. She hummed happily as she sucked him down, and he groaned like a man in pain.

“Fuck, yes.”

She settled her forearms on either side of his muscular thighs and worked on slowly sending him into orbit.

She loved the taste of his cock and the manly, earthy smell of him. His roughened hands roamed over her shoulders, her back, and into her hair, moving it aside to watch as she took his cock to the back of her throat.

“Do you have any idea how sexy you are, baby? You’re breathtaking with your lips around my cock. You do that very well.”

“Mmm.” All she cared about at the moment was making him feel good and hearing him howl.

She stroked his balls while she made love to his cock and listened as the sounds of his tension building higher and higher. She loved the way his grasp tightened as he drew closer to orgasm.

He jerked in her mouth, and she latched on to his ass and sucked for all she was worth. A roar of ecstasy erupted from him, and his cum streamed into her throat in powerful jets. She swallowed as he thrust against her with a final panting growl. He released her hair and stroked her scalp where his hand had been fisted tightly.

“Damn, baby,” he murmured as he lay back flat on the towel.

“Good?” she asked as she lifted herself onto the rock and knelt beside him.

“My girl’s got some skills.”

Maya snickered and stood, looking down at him brazenly and said, “Honey, you ain’t seen nothin’ yet. Are Kendall and Richard waiting for us?”

“By now, probably so.”

She turned to pick up her lingerie, purposely giving him a peek of her ass and said, "Well, I want more than a quick, hard fuck for our first time, Boone, so we'd better skedaddle."

She squealed when he squeezed her ass cheek while she put her bra back on. Boone helped her back into her cutoffs and her black T-shirt, and then she grabbed her towel and book, took a sip from her water bottle, and leaped to the bank with him hot on her heels.

After dressing and putting on boots, they both looked up as Richard approached the creek bank, and she glanced at Boone. He took her things from her and gave her a hand up the steep bank as Richard reached to steady her. Feeling happier than she had in over a year, Maya jumped into his arms and rained kisses on his face while Richard stood there holding her and chuckling.

"What's gotten into Maya?" he asked as Boone joined them.

"I'm just so happy," she replied as she wrapped her arms around his neck and hugged him. When his hands gripped her ass, she wrapped her legs around his waist as well.

"Were you having some fun?"

"I'll say!" She giggled and gave him a tender kiss on the lips. His grasp was gentle and secure as he held her. She looked into his eyes, searching for a trace of dissatisfaction or jealousy, but she saw no evidence he was anything but pleased to see them both.

"Your cheeks are rosy. You been playing with Boone?"

"Yes. Is that all right with you?"

He started walking back to the homesite, carrying her as he replied, "If it made you happy, of course I'm all right with it. Hope I get my chance soon."

Maya looked into his pale eyes and nodded enthusiastically. "I promise you will." She laid her head against his thick, strong shoulder and sighed happily. Her pussy still tingled and quivered from Boone's attention, and being held like this was getting her warmed up again.

Honestly, she couldn't wait to be intimate with him. Every time she was near him she wanted to wrap herself around him. Richard's

denim work shirt was sweaty, and when she kissed him her lips tasted faintly salty afterward. She glanced at Boone to find him watching her with something akin to approval on his face. He winked at her, and her heart lurched in her chest. Everywhere she looked, she found love and acceptance.

“Jack called Kendall and told him about what happened today at the shop,” Richard murmured, brushing his lips against her shoulder and making her pulse speed up. “I don’t want you to worry about that, okay? We’re going to protect you.”

“What happened?” Boone asked as he strode beside them.

“Someone’s saying ugly things about the ladies, accusing them of immorality and stuff,” Richard replied. “They’ll get to the bottom of it. Jack called a few minutes ago to let us know they were doing something about it. He knew we’d be concerned.”

“Good.”

Boone stroked her forearm as she tightened her hold on Richard’s neck. She’d never doubted they would want to protect her, but it was nice to hear them say it.

* * * *

Maya wanted to cook supper for them that night, so Boone rode with Kendall back to the house and Richard drove her into town. At the grocery store she let him push the cart while she got what she needed. He made a point of being helpful, reaching for things on high shelves for her, but otherwise he maintained a respectful distance.

“Can I ask you a question, Richard?”

“Sure, Maya. Ask away,” he said as he walked beside her. The aisle was fairly deserted, and she felt safe in asking her question as she halted the cart to put some chicken broth in the basket.

“If Kendall and Boone weren’t involved, would you still want me?” She hated putting him on the spot, but she needed to know, separate from the others, if his heart was truly in this.

Richard pondered her question and then said, "I meant to spend my life with Michelle. She's who I'd be with right now if...circumstances hadn't changed. But I can't alter what happened. That doesn't take away from what I feel for you now. You're my present. That was my past."

Pointing to a bottle of salad dressing on the top shelf, she asked, "I'm not asking for a declaration. I just wonder if you can picture yourself loving me that much."

He placed the bottle in the cart and smiled at her. "I know I can." The truth of his statement was in his unwavering gaze.

"Well, all right then," she murmured with a giggle as an elderly woman turned down their aisle with her cart. "*Shoot*. I had all sorts of questions to ask you while we were alone."

He used a fingertip to tilt her chin up so her eyes met his. "I know I'm not the easiest person to read, but I want you to know you can ask me anything. Okay?" He nodded to the elderly lady as she wheeled her cart closer.

Maya smiled at him and said, "Thank you, honey."

She stifled a giggle when he blushed slightly at her endearment.

"Young man, could you help me, please?" The petite senior said in a wavering voice. She looked like she was holding on to the cart for dear life as she lifted a shaking hand and pointed to a jar of pickles out of her reach. "Could you get that jar of bread and butter pickles for me?"

"Yes, ma'am," he said smiling as he retrieved the jar and placed it in her trembling hand. Maya guessed her age to be mid-to-late eighties.

A little, elderly man who had to be closing in on ninety years old tottered up to them and said, "Well here you are, Trudy." He tipped his cowboy hat to Maya and winked at her, and Maya nodded and smiled back. To his little wife he said, "I wondered where you got off to, gingersnap."

Trudy's faded blue eyes twinkled merrily at her husband as she replied, "I got me a handsome cowboy to do my bidding."

He shook his head in mock disapproval and said, "Guess it's time to take you in hand again."

Trudy flapped her hand at him and replied, "Oh, promises, promises."

The chuckling old cowboy reached out to shake Richard's hand and said, "These little fillies are a might headstrong when given their way too much, don't you reckon?"

Richard returned the greeting and nodded. He glanced at Maya with laughter in his eyes. "I know it, sir."

"Well, Trudy. Let's leave these young ones to their shoppin'."

"Thank you, young man. Y'all have a good day," Trudy said as her husband took her hand and placed it securely on the shopping cart handle, and they continued down the aisle, chatting amiably.

"Now, Trudy, I wish you'd taken one of those motorized shopping carts when the manager offered it to you. Are you tired, gingersnap?"

"Oh, I'm fine, Lawton. Nothin' a little nap won't cure."

Maya watched with a feeling that approached awe as the little, aged cowboy smooched his tiny wife on the lips right there in the middle of the store. This was what a lifetime of love looked like. As they moved farther away she heard the old man say, "I love you, gingersnap." Trudy giggled and said something Maya couldn't make out as they rounded the end of the aisle.

She looked up at Richard and saw that he, too, was watching as they moved off.

"Wow," Maya said, her eyes burning just a bit.

"Yeah." His voice was barely a whisper.

"*That's* true love."

He turned his gaze to her and gestured with his thumb in the direction the aged couple had gone. "Think you could handle some of that?"

Willing herself not to cry at his sweet question that was more of a declaration, she nodded and pressed her lips together so her chin would stop quivering. She was thankful when Richard put an arm around her shoulders, drew her to his side, and directed the shopping cart down the aisle.

He insisted on paying for the groceries and loaded them into the back of the truck after starting it for her so the cab could cool off. As they rode down the state highway toward the Divine Creek Ranch he put his hand over hers on the console between them and held it the whole way home, their fingers intertwined. The warm feeling that suffused her heart and the memory of the elderly couple so clearly in love came close to bringing tears to her eyes.

* * * *

Kendall looked on in amusement at the scene before him, along with the rest of the men. The girls were jumping up and down, cheering and weeping at the news Rachel had just shared with all of them. Eli watched Rachel indulgently before receiving handshakes from all the men.

Michael Martinez, formerly Palacios since being adopted by his stepfather Angel, approached the group and patted Rachel's thigh. "Rachel-baby, what does 'specting mean? Why are you crying?" Evidently, five-year-old Michael couldn't stand to see a woman weeping any more than the rest of the men.

Rachel smiled at Michael and sat down on the sofa in Grace's living room and drew him with her. She glanced up at her husband, Eli, and wiped tears from her eyes.

"Michael-baby, sometimes ladies cry when they're very happy, not just when they're sad. 'Expecting' means I'm going to have a baby this winter, at Christmastime."

Michael's eyes lit up. "Oh! *Cool!* High five, Eli!" he hooted as Eli sat down beside Rachel and put out his hand for a smack from

Michael. “Gonna have a little boy? He can hang out with me and Azar.”

Kendall chuckled at Michael’s abbreviation of his brother’s name. Eleazar was a mouthful for a five-year-old.

“I don’t know what I’m having, honey. I just found out this morning. But if it’s a boy he can hang out with you, and you can teach him all kinds of stuff, okay?”

“Kay.”

Kendall and his brothers, Wes and Evan Garner, Ash Peterson, and Angel and Joaquin Martinez adjourned to the kitchen with Jack, Adam, and Ethan while a discussion about baby preparations ensued among the girls. Ethan and Richard sliced the brisket while Kendall and the rest of the men got fresh beers.

“So how are things going with the EMT training, Eli?” Boone asked as he helped Jack cut up the barbecued sausage.

Eli was currently burning the candle at both ends, working security at The Dancing Pony and attending emergency medical technician courses in Morehead. He had hopes for getting on with the Divine Emergency Medical Services Department.

“Hard but good. They keep us on our toes. Rachel is excited because it means fewer late nights. It could also mean that I help with delivering the baby,” Eli replied as he leaned against the counter. The man was seriously tall, towering over the rest of them, even Richard and Adam. When he talked about his wife it was plain to see that he loved her deeply.

“How did she talk you into that?” Kendall asked.

Eli smiled and shook his head. “It was my idea.”

“Really? You don’t mind seeing—”

“The baby I helped put there being born? No, man. Not at all. Rachel is excited about it, too. We’re taking special classes together, and I’m going to be her childbirth coach.”

Kendall shook his head, not sure he could watch Maya go through the pain of labor and then watch their baby actually being born.

Adam said, "Kendall, I know how you feel, thinking about being there for something like that. But when it's yours it'll be different. I remember thinking there was no way I could watch Grace go through that, but I've realized since then that she'll need us. Her needs take priority over my fears."

Eli nodded in agreement. "Rachel's even talking about having the baby at home, maybe using the big tub and having a water birth."

Ethan chuckled. "They both are talking about that. Part of me still hopes Grace gives birth in the hospital with as little pain or risk as possible."

Kendall couldn't help but notice the satisfied smile on Ethan's face when he mentioned his wife. And Eli looked like he could handle whatever he had to in order to be there for Rachel. Kendall understood that kind of devotion. If Maya wanted him there for that event he knew he would be there for her, too.

Boone asked, "Wes, does Rosemary like working with the two of you? I ran into her over at Cheaver's the other day. Is she still splitting her time between your furniture business and the family store?"

Wes and Evan chuckled as they leaned side by side against the kitchen counter. Wes replied, "Rosemary works basically wherever the hell she feels like it on any given day of the week. Randy lost an assistant manager a couple of weeks ago, and so she's been helping out a bit more over there. I'll tell you, that girl can sell ice to Eskimos. We saw a one-hundred-percent rise in sales when she started visiting with clients. We got lucky that she's interested in our business."

"No, bro." Evan chuckled. "We got lucky when she said 'I do' on that beach on Grand Cayman last summer." Wes smiled and nodded as the other men chuckled.

Kendall turned his gaze out to the living room as the ladies' discussion continued. He watched as Teresa's toddler son, Eleazar, walked up to Maya and handed her his little board book.

"My-my, read me?"

Maya nodded and said something to him softly as she lifted him into her lap and opened the thick pages of the durable book. Kendall chuckled at the little boy's version of Maya's name. *My-my*. Yep, he felt the same way.

He looked over and caught Boone and Richard watching her, too. He wondered if he bore the same goofy, in-love expression on his face. Sometimes he wanted to pinch himself because this relationship with her had been a fantasy for so many years.

He'd been in and out of relationships, but she was the only woman he'd ever loved this deeply, even if it was only from afar.

He recalled a time during the year after the three of them had met their first year in college. He'd been dating a girl at the time who had been more flash than substance. It was his first experience living away from home, and the freedom had been heady. Pam was a social butterfly and very concerned with appearances and pleasing her sorority sisters. At a party she dumped him harshly in public, calling him a dumb redneck. When Maya had found out, she'd come to his dorm room and convinced him to go to supper with her and Morgan, who had seized the day and was already dating her.

Later that night after the party was over, the three of them had gone to the sorority house and toilet papered every tree in their pristinely landscaped front yard.

Though he had nothing to do with it, he thought it was hilarious when he saw the large sign proclaiming the name of the university at the entry to the campus. Someone had spray-painted in neat, red letters, "Pamela Vandernoot takes it up the ass. Call her at..." and then listed her phone number.

It wasn't until later when he was telling Morgan and Maya about it that he noticed the red spray-paint residue on her fingers. She'd blushed and hugged him then told him Pamela didn't know her ass from a hole in the ground. To this day, he remembered the feel of her comforting hug when he thanked her. It had felt like slightly more than commiseration when she looked up at him with earnest blue eyes

and told him he deserved someone much better than Pamela Vandernoot. Morgan had agreed with her. That was the day he fell in love with Maya.

He didn't need to have made love to her to know he wanted her forever. Then there was the fantasy he and his brothers had entertained lately, that she would somehow find it in her heart to not only love again, but to love the three of them enough to make a commitment. It was too soon to talk about engagements or things like that, but the three of them hoped for something permanent with her. The thought of making love with her and then watching her leave at the end of her week-long stay with them tore him up. Bit by bit Boone and Richard were losing their hearts to her, and it was no surprise, given the way she'd claimed his heart.

It gave him hope that she'd reacted favorably to the news that Grace had put in a good word for her with Dr. Guthrie, who would soon lose her RN to retirement. He hoped that meant she was seriously considering Divine as her permanent home.

Boone had mentioned to him the night before that he and Maya had been intimate out at the creek earlier that day. He'd expected as much when Boone had told them he would fetch her from the creek. Kendall knew if it had been him, he'd have done the same thing. She'd returned with Boone and Richard looking content and rosy-cheeked. He couldn't wait until he had the opportunity to put that bloom in her cheeks himself.

He'd disciplined himself to one more night of nothing but rest for Maya and hoped tonight could be *the night* for the three of them. He planned to talk with her about it at their first private moment together.

Kendall observed Maya with little Eleazar in her lap as Michael approached and leaned against her. He couldn't hear what Michael was saying, but the look on Maya's face and the twinkle in Michael's dark eyes told him the little cowboy must be flirting with her. Like fathers, like son.

“Hey, Angel, I think your boy is making time with our woman,” Kendall said with a chuckle as he nodded his chin in their direction.

Angel and Joaquin looked over at the exchange. Both of them laughed and Angel replied, “Michael’s skills with women rival even our brothers’, Luka and Matthias. We’re gonna have hell to pay when he’s a teenager.”

Joaquin guffawed as he proudly watched his sons and whispered, “Oh, damn. They’re tag-teaming her, Angel.”

Kendall had to suppress laughter as he watched little Eleazar gaze adoringly at Maya and reach out a pudgy hand to caress her cheek. Maya was obviously enthralled by the two miniature Don Juans as they worked their charms on her. She glanced up at Kendall, a blush on her cheeks, and blew him an air kiss.

Ethan laughed and said, “The phone is going to be ringing nonstop when they’re teenagers.” He held up his pinky and thumb to the side of his face and said in a reedy, high-pitched voice, “*Is Michael there? Um, er, um, can I talk to him pleeeeeease?*”

The men all laughed as they continued to give Angel and Joaquin a hard time over their flirtatious sons.

Boone elbowed Kendall and said, “She fits right in.”

Kendall’s eyes were on Maya as he murmured, “She does. I’ve been wondering...”

“About what?”

Kendall lowered his voice significantly as Richard joined the two of them. “She said earlier that she felt good. I feel like making love to her tonight.”

Maya glanced up at him and smiled when she caught them all watching her. The blush in her cheeks deepened a bit more then she was distracted by a question from one of the girls. She looked at the men again as she answered, probably curious to know what they were talking about.

Boone’s tone was guarded and tight. “You want time alone with her tonight?” Kendall looked over at the two of them and shook his

head. Sure, a part of him would like to have her undivided attention, but he didn't want to start down that road this early. Later they could each have her all to themselves whenever the need or desire struck, but right now it was more important to share her love and lavish her with attention.

"No, Boone. I want to blow her mind with how good it'll be between the four of us."

Richard's voice was so low they could barely hear him. "Do you think she can handle all three of us in one night, right off the bat?"

Boone replied, "If we put her in the driver's seat, she'll let us know if it gets to be too much."

Maya laughed at something one of the girls said, and the melodious sound made Kendall's heart perform a sappy little somersault. His cock was signaling interest and he willed it into submission. It wouldn't do to walk around with a hard-on the whole evening.

"God, I can't wait," Boone said, most likely speaking for all three of them, judging by the bulges they were all sporting.

Kendall was trying to think of something to distract himself when a noxious odor filled the room. Ash groaned as he stood holding his sleeping seven-month-old son, Will, to his chest. "Dude."

Evan and Wes snickered and moved away from him as Will punctuated the odorous aroma he'd created with a prodigious toot.

Wes laughed and waved his hand in the air. "Damn, Ash. What did you feed that boy? Broccoli?"

Ash chuckled and said, "It was just as awful-smelling going in as it is coming out, too."

The men all burst into laughter as Ash grabbed the diaper bag. Juliana was away at market in Dallas with Margot Heston, Summer's sister, so Ash had baby duty.

Grace must've overheard them and came to Ash's rescue, taking the diaper bag from him and then relieving him of the baby. "Don't

worry, Ash. I'll take care of him. You've had your poor hands full with Will for two days."

"You sure, Grace? I change him all the time. It's no bother."

Grace smiled and replied, "It's good practice for me."

She cooed to the auburn-haired baby as she walked away, and Kendall noticed the smiles on her men's faces as they watched her. They were goofy in love with her, and that was the truth.

After ascertaining that the women were caught up in their conversation, Jack finally told the men what Kendall had been waiting to hear about. They'd already done some digging about the offensive blog site that listed Grace, Teresa, and Rosemary by name.

"Ace and Kemp will get to the bottom of this and see what our options are. Kendall, Boone, and Richard, hopefully we can keep Maya's name out of this altogether. Ace said he and Kemp should be back in town next week. How are things with Maya?"

Kendall met Jack's eyes and replied for him and his brothers, "Good. She's feeling better every day. I think she likes Divine. She loves the girls, judging by what I hear."

"Think she might want to make a permanent move?" Adam asked quietly.

Kendall replied, "I think there's a good possibility. We're not rushing her to make a decision. Going at her pace like you suggested. She's taken to Boone and Richard and seems very happy."

"I can tell by the sappy grins on their faces they're not disappointed about that at all," Angel replied, drawing a chuckle from Boone and a downcast smile from Richard. No, Kendall didn't think there was a disappointed bone in any of their bodies.

* * * *

Maya glanced again at the three brothers leaning against the center island in the Warner's kitchen. Every time one of their gazes landed on her, the heat of desire flamed higher inside of her. She

thought she would've felt scared or at least nervous if it were any other men who looked at her that way. The love in their eyes tempered the lust that was kindled there.

She'd fallen asleep with her head resting in Boone's lap the night before and had only vaguely remembered being carried to bed. The one thing she hoped to change tonight was that she'd be wide awake when she went to bed.

Jack called from the kitchen, where all the men were congregated, and said, "The food is ready, y'all."

Maya looked up as Boone and Kendall came to stand beside the chair she was sitting in, both men laden with plates. Richard followed behind with four bottles of beer.

Kendall asked, "Want to sit outside?" There were several picnic benches under the shade of the live oaks in the backyard. Grace's men followed her outside, and the others joined them. Boone led the way to a shady spot, and she took a seat next to him and across from Kendall and Richard. Nobody else joined them at their table.

She smiled at the pastoral scene surrounding them. In the side yard was a grove of tall oak trees, perfect for a party under the stars. To the rear of the property stood the two large red horse barns and the driveway connecting them to the foreman's house where Kendall and his brothers lived. The whole place was situated on gentle rolling hills, much like the JWB was.

Kendall's tone was serious and he watched her intently as he spoke. "We've been thinking, Maya."

Maya stopped chewing as she looked at all three of them. Swallowing her food practically whole, she replied, "What's the matter?"

Boone rubbed her shoulder gently as he said, "Nothing's wrong, baby. Nothing at all."

Kendall smiled and shook his head. "Sorry, that didn't come out the way I intended. We've been thinking about you. Wondering if you're ready to move on with us. Tonight."

Relief swelled through her, followed by a wave of hot desire as her body responded ravenously to the suggestion. Finally. *Finally!* Feeling a little playful, she replied, “Sure. Where do you want to go?”

She froze, all friskiness forgotten when Boone gripped her ass cheek and squeezed. His lips brushed against her ear as he whispered, “You know exactly where we want to go. We want to lay you down on our bed and make you come until you’re hoarse from screaming. We want to make love to you until you can barely move. I personally want another taste of your creamy little pussy. You’re wet and hot right now just thinking about it, aren’t you?”

His dominant tone set off every nerve ending in her body. She wanted to strip naked right there and do whatever he commanded. She thought that part of her life, responding to a dominant male, was finished when Morgan had died so tragically in that hit-and-run accident. She’d told herself those days were over because what was the likelihood of her finding another man who got off on control like Morgan had?

She gazed up into his eyes, trying to express somehow, without words, how much what he was doing meant to her. She was thankful someone else understood this part of her.

He leaned close so only she could hear and whispered, “The look in your eyes right now sets me on fire, Maya. You like to give up control, don’t you? You’d like to put yourself in my hands.”

She nodded mutely, supper all but forgotten.

He smiled at her, looking very pleased and said, “Soon.”

Her cheeks heated up as their private exchange ended, and she looked at Kendall and Richard. They were eating and watching the two of them like the discussion was no big deal. They were all different, and so it made sense that what they each wanted with her might be different as well.

She went back to eating her food but wondered if the three of them could feel the heat her body felt like it was throwing off.

After a few, silent, thoughtful bites, Richard asked, “Maya, are you nervous? I don’t want you to feel worried or...scared.”

His thoughtfulness touched her heart, and she hastened to set his mind at ease. “I’m feeling a lot of things right now, Richard, but worried is not one of them.” She lowered her voice and continued. “I’m mildly nervous, but any girl would be who’d never made love with three men all together. I’m looking forward to it, and you don’t have to worry about me feeling fearful at all.” That seemed to satisfy him, and she realized that must have been his real concern. She loved Richard’s caring nature. Honestly, she couldn’t think of three men she was less frightened of.

Well, Boone had a little edge that scared her, but in a good way. She wondered how long she’d have to wait before the men said their goodnights and departed.

Chapter Eleven

Heart racing with anticipation, Maya stepped from the shower and toweled her body dry. Kendall, Boone, and Richard waited for her in the bedroom. She heard the water shut off in the other bathroom and hurriedly dried her hair and brushed her teeth. She stood before the mirror, staring at herself. She'd seen the same sad face in her mirror at home for over a year. Now a new woman stared back at her. This one had rosy cheeks, a sparkle in her eye, and dared to go after what she wanted.

She would make love with all three of them tonight. The thought caused her heart to race even faster, and her pussy lips throbbed so maddeningly she almost pressed a finger between them to massage the ache. Her clit felt twice its normal size and as she hung her towel her juices seeped out and dampened her thighs. She had to pause and breathe normally at the thought of their big cocks filling her there soon.

She heard male voices in the bedroom as she turned off the bathroom light and opened the door. After her eyes adjusted to the dim light, she could clearly see the three of them relaxing on the bed. Her legs trembled as she walked to the bed and climbed up beside Kendall, who lay in the middle. Richard sat beside him against the headboard, and Boone lay across the foot of the bed.

Desire and lust were evident on their faces as they gazed at her, and she felt small and delicate surrounded by them. As big as they were and as hard and thick as their cocks looked, she should have been trembling with trepidation. But the lust in their eyes was

tempered by something gentle, and she knew she was in good hands with these men.

Kendall reached for her first, and she went to him, turning her head to look at Boone and Richard.

"Come here, Maya. You look a little nervous," Kendall murmured. She curled into his arms at his side and allowed his warmth to steady her as Boone and Richard drew closer.

She gazed at him and smiled, shaking her head negatively. "No, I don't know what you want me to do...how you want me to be. This is new to me."

Boone nodded as he stroked her calf and the back of her thigh as he drew closer to her backside. Richard had moved closer and watched her with luminous eyes, the set of his mouth almost grim. She wondered what thoughts went through his mind.

Kendall distracted her with his gentle touch and seemed capable of reading her mind as he said, "Maya, we want to make sure you understand that this is no fling we're after. You agreed to come for a week, I know, but we want for you to stay. That feeling will only increase after tonight. You know already how much I love you. Hell, I'm practically your love slave already." He grinned when he said it, but there was a deep tenderness in his eyes, and she knew, despite his teasing, that the words came from his heart.

The feel of his callused palm holding her breast drew a moan from her. She turned to Richard and held his gaze. "Richard? Is this moving too fast for you?"

A flash of surprise showed in his eyes, and he shook his head, a faint smile on his lips. "No, honey. It's not moving too fast between us."

She placed her hand on his bare, muscular thigh. "You look uncertain, like something is holding you back."

He swallowed hard and seemed to search for the words as he laid his hand over hers. "I'm worried what will happen if this night doesn't go well. What if you feel differently in the morning about us?"

I'm a little concerned that physically this may be too much for you. In the morning, if you change your mind about us, it will..." His words trailed off as though he was afraid by uttering them they might come true.

Maya pushed carefully, knowing exactly what he meant because she felt it, too. "It will what, Richard?"

"If you leave us—me, it will devastate me. I don't think I can handle that one more time."

He looked away, and she could sense the tension in his body. Her lip trembled with compassion for him, and she wanted to do everything she could to reassure him. Her heart swelled with adoration for this tender, wounded giant.

Looking for approval from Kendall and Boone, she smiled when she saw they understood as she sat up. Kendall moved aside so she could reach Richard.

She had a feeling he would've stayed where he was until she drew him to her, so she went to him instead. He looked at her, seeming a little surprised.

Kendall and Boone stroked her back and her hips as she climbed over this big mountain of a man and straddled his thighs. Her cunt ached in a needful way at the thought of what she was about to do with him. He was almost tentative as he stroked her hips and thighs and looked a little surprised at this turn of events.

That increased her confidence as she placed her palms on either side of his jaw and looked him in the eye. "This relationship is far from conventional, Richard, but I know my own heart and mind. I don't know everything there is to know about you. But I do know I want something beyond this night with you. All three of you. I've worried what the three of you might think of me for jumping so quickly into a foursome relationship with you. You accepted me so easily into your lives the other morning after not seeing me for over a year. I know love takes time, but this *feels* like love to me. If I can't fully satisfy you it would hurt me. Please don't hurt me."

She caught the flash of emotion on his face and in his pale blue eyes as he whispered hoarsely, "I'd never hurt you, honey."

Slowly, he wound his arms around her, and she felt suspended in the moment as he pulled her to him and gave her a kiss so tender and sweet it curled her toes. No, he'd never intentionally hurt her, but she hoped he understood how much power he had over her now that she knew she was in love with him.

He groaned harshly as she wrapped her hand around his cock, her lips still pressed against his. His neatly trimmed beard and moustache tickled her lips and cheek. His kiss quickly turned ravenous, and he released her for a moment to roll on a condom. Her pussy clenched in excitement as Kendall and Boone's hands caressed her spine and her buttocks.

Richard stilled her as she lifted up on her knees. She wanted to be filled with him, but she also wanted to savor this tender moment between them, and she appreciated his control.

"I want you to use lubricant. We're big men and the last thing we want is for you to be sore tomorrow morning."

Maya nodded and shuddered with desire as Richard received lubricant from the tube Kendall held and applied it to her already-drenched pussy.

"Honey," Richard murmured in a tortured-sounding voice. Once he was finished, she rose over his lap and allowed him to position his cock at her seeping entrance. "Nice and slow. Take your time."

She panted when his hot head nudged her lips apart and her pussy tingled warmly as his girth stretched her. She loved it and wanted to plunge down hard but did as he asked and took it slow. Richard bit his lip and growled in his throat as she descended on his cock. She rocked her pelvis and pumped up and down as more and more of him slid in.

"Fuck, that is beautiful," Boone whispered as he and Kendall continued stroking her.

She smiled at Richard and leaned forward to catch his full lower lip between her teeth and suckled on it before kissing him. The

momentum built within her as she changed the angle of her hips and he thrust upward, rubbing her G-spot on every stroke. A deep, pleasurable rush coursed through every nerve ending in her body, and not just in her pussy.

Her voice was a husky-sounding whisper as she leaned against him. "You feel good inside me, Richard."

Richard gazed into her eyes, watching her intently, and replied, "You're so hot and soft, Maya. I've never seen anything more beautiful than you, right now." He gripped her hips in gentle hands and guided her movements then slid his palms up to cup her swaying breasts and play with her nipples. He pressed his lips to her breasts, and the vulnerable look on his face and the reverent way he touched and licked her brought tears to her eyes. He suckled one nipple and her pussy quivered with the stimulation. Her body slipped hotly along the hard length of his cock, gripping him convulsively.

The tension inside her coiled to an impossible strength, and the intense, heartfelt sounds he made were her undoing. Her momentum slipped out of her control and she whispered, "Yes, *oh, yes,*" feeling as though she was no longer the one in control of her movements. He grasped her hips as she ground on his cock, and her pussy convulsed in wave upon wave of ecstasy.

His arms tightened around her, and his resonant growl in her ear told her he'd found his pleasure, too. The muscles in his arms and shoulders bunched and rippled until they were hard as rocks, and he held her to him tightly. His cock pulsated deep inside her, and his breath came in shaky gasps as she collapsed against his chest.

When he was able, he lifted her chin and kissed her, long and deep, before murmuring, "Thank you."

She smiled serenely, sensing his "thank you" went deeper than thanking her for making love to him. She gazed into his pale eyes and pressed her damp forehead against his.

I love you, too, Richard.

* * * *

Kendall watched Maya in awe as she caught her breath against his brother's chest. She'd known intuitively what Richard needed even though she'd been unsure what to do just minutes before. The moment she'd looked in his eyes for his approval, he knew they had the right woman in their arms. She wanted to give them what they needed and had recognized the uncertainty Richard had been feeling all evening.

Richard had said he was worried about this being too much for her physically and had already told Kendall and Boone he was willing to back off for tonight if it looked like she might not be able to handle all three.

Kendall doubted that was going to be a problem. She'd been more than ready for Richard, and the lubricant had only helped. He smiled at the memory of watching his brother's thick cock fill her slick pussy and the beautiful way she'd taken him inside her so eagerly.

There hadn't been any sign of hesitancy in her at all as she'd fucked Richard into oblivion, judging by the satisfied sounds coming from him. Watching his brother's cock slide in and out of her delicate, pink pussy had almost set him off, and he'd had to stop stroking his cock and grit his teeth to get the burning rush of orgasm under control before he lost it.

Maya sat up and kissed Richard one more time and turned to Kendall. He grinned at the playful twinkle in her eyes.

"Kendall, in all the time you've known me, did you ever fantasize about how you'd like to make love to me?"

"Only *every time* I thought of you."

With Richard's help, Maya lifted from his cock and looked up at him. She seemed to sense he needed a moment, and she beamed when Richard smiled at her and nodded. She kissed him one more time and turned into Kendall's arms.

"Do tell," she whispered eagerly.

“Babydoll, every single position you could imagine and some you may never have heard of. It’s not the position that matters to me right now, but that I get inside you just as quickly as you’ll allow it. Feel sore?”

“Not a bit.”

Kendall pulled her down beneath him on the bed and reveled in the feel of her pliant, curvaceous body under his. He’d already sheathed himself as she’d lifted from Richard. His cock twitched as it brushed her satiny thigh and honed in on the slick heat between her legs.

She was drenched, and as her lips parted for his entry, he whispered, “Good, because I want inside right now.”

With an upward thrust of his hips, he pressed his cock to the hilt inside her. She was hot and slippery, and he could feel her trembling under him and around his cock. A hot-and-cold prickling sensation shot up his spine, and he nearly lost it.

“Oh, sweet, baby Jesus.”

Maya’s fingernails dug into his ass cheeks, and she sounded ready to start purring. “Welcome home, Kendall.”

Her whispered words nearly reduced him to a weeping sap, they were so earnest. She gazed up at him and sighed deeply as she moved against him. Her silken cunt received his cock like she’d been made for him, and he delighted in her moan when he suckled her nipples. Her pussy gripped his cock convulsively at the stimulation.

“You like when we play with your nipples, don’t you? Are they sensitive?” The question was asked to titillate her as much as it was an actual inquiry.

“Yes.” She hissed and shuddered as he latched on again. He made love to her slowly, wanting this first time to last. He enjoyed watching her face as each sinuous stroke brought her a little closer to orgasm.

He knew she was close when she whimpered and held on tightly to him, begging, “Please don’t stop, Kendall, please. It feels so good.”

"Are you going to come?" Kendall asked, spurring her on. He withdrew almost completely with each stroke and picked up the pace, the wet sounds of their fucking filling the quiet night. He reached between them and began rubbing her engorged clitoris in time with his strokes.

Her eyes flew open and her pussy convulsed on his cock. She howled as her orgasm came in wave after wave, squeezing him and causing him to follow quickly with his own release. It felt so damned good as he thrust firmly those last few times, then let loose a cry of triumph as his scorching release filled her trembling cunt.

He lifted up to look into her eyes and was awestruck by the blissful smile on her face. To have been responsible for that smile was very gratifying. She looked like a beautiful, blonde angel with her long hair spread out all around her. Kendall kissed her and gently withdrew. She lay where he left her, catching her breath as he removed the condom and returned to her side.

Kendall caressed her abdomen. "Babydoll? Are you okay?"

She opened her eyes, and he saw the sheen of tears in them, and then she sniffled. Boone joined him on her other side, and Richard drew close as well, stroking her hair from her cheeks and damp forehead.

Maya sighed shakily and nodded her head but said nothing.

Boone spoke up and said, "Maya, we care very much about you. Nothing you say will surprise us. Tell us what's wrong."

A small sob escaped her. "I'm missing what I didn't have before, with both Morgan *and* Kendall. Nothing is wrong, I promise. It feels so good with all of you, and I'm scared. I know what it's like to love someone and have him ripped from your life. I'm scared because I'm falling in love again, with you and Richard as well as Kendall. Are you *sure* you want this, Boone? Because it's feeling more permanent by the minute."

Chapter Twelve

Boone could see the emotion in her eyes and feel it in the way she trembled beneath his hands. To reassure her and let her know they were going to be there for her, Boone replied, "Well then, baby, we'll talk in the morning about going home with you and helping you pack. Right now I want you to stop worrying and let me love you." He punctuated the statement with a leisurely kiss.

Evidently satisfied, she sat up and he drew her closer. He'd watched as both his brothers made love to Maya and needed her in the worst possible way.

He didn't intentionally withhold love words from her. He wanted her to himself before he told her. Boone acknowledged that he was possessive by nature and knew the next few days would tell him whether this could work or not. The emotion in her eyes from a few moments before returned to his mind and in a small way he had his answer already. He never wanted to hurt her. This *had* to work.

"Still want me?" she asked with a sniffly chuckle. "I didn't mean to ruin the mood."

Boone smiled and drew her to him where he knelt on the bed, sitting back on his heels. His cock was erect, twitching and aching to be inside her for the first time. "You told us what you needed, Maya. We'll always want you to do that. I want you very much right now." Leaning over her, he tilted her chin up and kissed her deeply. He gazed into her blue eyes and said, "Hands and knees, facing Kendall and Richard."

He heard her slight gasp and saw the glint of lust sparkling in her eyes before she turned her back to him. Boone noticed Kendall's

eyebrows knit together for a second before he looked at Maya's face. Kendall knew all about Boone's kinky side and his order, right off the bat, must've concerned Kendall a bit. Boone knew what Kendall saw in Maya's face as his gaze flicked up, and he smiled at Boone. Maya liked to play. Boone was willing to bet Maya was also a little kinky. He looked forward to finding out.

He sheathed his cock and applied extra lube to it as she got into position. He'd been dreaming of sinking balls-deep in her tight little pussy for days now, and even more so since having a taste of her yesterday.

"Back up to me and spread your feet wider, baby."

She did as he asked and whimpered when he rubbed his cock through her cleft. She was dripping wet and extremely turned-on judging by the sounds she made.

Satisfied with how she was positioned, he slid his hands around her torso and lifted her so she leaned back against his front, her pussy perfectly aligned with his cock. She fit all three of them perfectly. Her head rested in the hollow above his collarbone, and she could easily turn her head to kiss him, which she eagerly demonstrated as she waited for his next directive.

He liked that she allowed him to control the moment. He didn't need to have a tight rein on every aspect of their experience together, but he liked to lead. Slowly, he slid his right hand over her hip and down her pelvis, stroking her with a light, tender touch that almost reached her mound.

"You're beautiful, baby. We'll never get tired of looking at you or telling you. You're precious, and we'll always want you to feel pleasure at our hands, together and individually. Look at Kendall and Richard watching as I touch you." He slid the fingertips of his left hand over her abdomen, tickling her navel before sliding upward.

Her breathing ratcheted up another notch, and he was pleased. It turned her on to think of the others observing. It increased his excitement, too. It took every ounce of control he had to not thrust

like a rutting beast inside her. This was her third experience for the night after a long dry spell and he didn't want her regretting it in the morning.

Willing his rapacious cock into submission, he cupped her full, sumptuous breasts in his hands, delighting in their luscious weight. His hands spanned her torso and slid down to her hips and the juncture of her thighs.

"Your skin is so silky. I'm almost afraid I'll damage it with my rough hands. But you like our rough hands on you, don't you?"

"Oh, yes," she murmured in an unsteady voice as she allowed him to draw her splayed thighs a little farther apart. Judging by her breathing, she was back at the precipice again. Right where he wanted her.

He lifted her hands until they rested at the nape of his neck. This posture raised her breasts up temptingly. Kendall and Richard were raptly attentive as he slid his hands up her inner thighs and stroked her baby-soft outer lips. He grinned at Kendall when his brother licked his lips hungrily. Richard's cock was once again rock-hard and ready for action, as was Kendall's.

Slowly, Boone brushed his excruciatingly hard dick back and forth through her opened slit, teasing her a little. Her body quaked against him, and he smiled when she arched her back and pressed her ass against his hips, offering herself to him.

He spread her inner lips tenderly with his fingers and honed in on her clit, caressing the drenched little jewel. Maya tilted her head back and released a high-pitched breathy sound from her parted lips. She squirmed in his grasp and he growled in her ear. When she settled, he stroked her clit several more times in slow succession. Each caress over those nerve endings increased her tension. Perfect.

"Ready for my cock, baby?"

"Yes, Boone, yes!"

Holding her to him tightly, he maneuvered his cockhead to her slippery entrance and thrust inward, groaning as her silky heat engulfed him an inch at a time.

"Do you want to be ours, Maya?" He pulled out and thrust to the hilt.

"Yes."

"Want us to love you and take care of you? Keep you safe with us?" He pulled out and held her tightly as he gave her every inch again.

Her head tilted farther back against his shoulder and she cried out, "Yes!"

He held her still as she fought to move on his cock, and her body vibrated within his hold. "Will you let me fuck you while my brothers watch, anywhere we want?"

"Anytime, anyplace!" She creamed for him, drenching his fingers as he went back to stroking her pussy. *Damn, she liked that idea.*

"Will you let all three of us fuck you together? A cock in your ass, your pussy, and in your mouth?"

"Yes! Please fuck me, Boone!"

With two fingers stroking her clit firmly he held her to him and whispered, "I plan to fuck your ass soon. Do you think you can handle that?"

"Yes, Boone. I can. Please, baby!"

"Then we plan to make you one happy woman. Want me to fuck you?"

Her hot, drenched body trembled against him as she panted and responded, "Take good care of me, Boone."

"Oh, I aim to, baby."

Her pussy convulsed and clenched mercilessly on his cock as he firmly thrust his cock deep. He noted in the back of his mind that she seemed to enjoy how tightly he held her and wondered how she would respond to being restrained.

Kendall and Richard both fisted their cocks as they watched. He liked this position because it allowed them to observe as his cock slid in and out of her creaming pussy. They'd see the ecstasy on her beautiful face when she came hard for him. He parted her pussy lips and enjoyed the lust the sight inspired in their eyes. She was amazing as she held tightly to his neck and shoulders and allowed him to take her in the manner of his choosing.

He withdrew slightly and began thrusting against her G-spot, having located it based on her responses earlier, and pressed his fingers against her clit so it was against the underside of his cock with each stroke.

Maya sobbed once and let out an eardrum-piercing shriek loud enough to wake the dead. She clutched at his shoulders and jerked in his grasp, grinding against his cock and his fingers. He groaned in satisfaction as her pussy flooded with her cum. He threw off his control, gave three mighty thrusts, and his release exploded from his cock in searing jets. The pleasure was so intense he felt light-headed for a few seconds.

He was vaguely aware of deep groans of pleasure as Richard and Kendall came as well.

His arms shook slightly as he held Maya and tilted his head down to kiss her temple. She leaned her head against his damp chest and smiled up at him blissfully. Her lips were warm and tender as she kissed him, and his heart lurched at the love in her eyes.

In the matter of a few days, Maya had managed to make him fall head over sappy heels in love with her. The thought couldn't have pleased him more.

* * * *

Maya doubted she'd ever felt this sexy in her entire life. Boone had allayed all her worries and systematically stripped her of any sexual inhibition she had left.

Maya loved sex, had always enjoyed it with Morgan, then with Richard and Kendall. What Boone did with her went beyond sex. It fulfilled other needs she had, most obviously the fact that she'd loved the way he'd fucked her while Kendall and Richard watched. The way she'd felt put on display and the sounds they'd made together as they came were incredibly erotic.

The sight of Kendall and Richard stroking their cocks until they came as they watched her and Boone had been a huge turn-on. She looked forward eagerly to the day they'd all make love to her together.

Her pussy tingled and quivered as he withdrew from her, helped her lie down, then continued to hold her.

"You all right, baby?"

"Big understatement, Boone."

"Really?"

"Trust me. I loved it."

She lay there listening to them breathe and sighed with pleasure as Boone kissed her shoulder and slid his warm, work-roughened hand over her torso. His light touch raised goose bumps on her skin and tickled slightly. She smiled and released another happy sigh. She must've drifted in a light sleep for a few minutes but opened her eyes when Boone climbed from the bed and disposed of the condom.

She heard the sound of running water and realized at some point Kendall had gotten up and must be in the bathroom filling the big tub. Kendall returned to the bed and caressed her hip. "Babydoll, would you like a nice, hot soak?"

Maya turned onto her back and stretched luxuriantly. *Have I died and gone to heaven?* With the way these men served her, she'd be spoiled in no time.

"I'd love it." Richard scooped her up and carried her into the redolent bathroom, stealing a gentle kiss along the way. She could hear Kendall chuckling at her surprised squeal from the other room.

Richard lowered her carefully into the bath and she sniffed the air. "Is that lavender? I didn't bring any bath salts or bubble bath with me."

"Boone and I went shopping for you and bought some things we thought you might need while you were here," Richard murmured as he squatted down at her side.

She placed a bubble-covered hand on his cheek and replied, "Thank you for doing that."

"You're welcome. How do you feel?"

"Wonderful. Well-loved and relaxed."

Richard smiled and whispered, "Good. Need me to scrub your back?"

"There's room, if you'd care to join me."

Richard debated for a second before joining her.

Boone poked his head inside and said, "Damn. Beat me to it." But he didn't look upset. She appreciated that they allowed each other access and didn't hoard time with her, whether they were sitting in front of the television or doing things like this. To her, it felt easy. She hoped that was genuinely the case.

Leaning against the doorframe for a moment, Boone said, "I know what Maya would like in the new master suite. A bathtub big enough for four people."

Maya snickered and said, "I like the way you men think, Boone. Spank my fanny and spoil me rotten."

Boone laughed warmly. "Enjoy your bath," he murmured before he returned to the bedroom.

She sighed with pleasure as Richard stroked the muscles in her thighs, and she drew closer to him and climbed in his lap. She lay against him as he poured water from his big hands over her shoulders. His beard tickled against her shoulder as he kissed her there. A sleepy languor stole over her, and she sighed happily.

In the quiet of the bathroom, Richard whispered, "I love you, Maya."

His declaration stole her breath from her, and in a heartbeat her eyes were brimming with tears. She lifted her head to look in his eyes. His heart was there and in his touch as he caressed her shoulder and her back.

He seemed to want to say more, but merely added, "You are precious to me."

She burrowed against him, wrapped her other arm around his neck, and kissed his muscular chest. "I love you, Richard. You make me very happy."

They stayed in the tub, wrapped in each other's arms, until the water cooled. He lifted her out and set her carefully on the bath mat, and they both dried off before returning to the bed.

Kendall reached for her as she climbed in amongst them and said, "Feel good?"

She sighed happily. "Perfect. And a little pruneey, too."

Chapter Thirteen

Maya slept light that night, enthralled by the men who surrounded her with their masculine heat and strength. One of them left the bed, and Maya knew by his silhouette and height that it was Richard. He'd been restless all night, and she wondered if he'd slept much.

He went down the hall to the other bedroom, and then she heard him slip out the back door. She lay there wondering if the men would mind if she joined him in case he wanted someone to talk to. Boone and Kendall seemed surprised that he talked as much as he did with her. She liked that he trusted her and felt he could open up to her.

Careful to not disturb them, she climbed from the bed and pulled on one of Kendall's work shirts. Grinning, she cuffed up the sleeves that hung way past her wrists. The shirt reached to her knees. She buttoned it up and tiptoed to the back door and looked out the window.

He was on the porch glider, and his big frame seemed tense as he sat with elbows on knees and his head down. He'd had time to think and process since they'd settled down to sleep, and she'd wondered if he was coming to grips with letting Michelle go. She felt like a voyeur, getting such a clear glimpse of his struggle.

She opened the back door quietly and approached the glider. He looked up at her and patted the glider beside him. She perched on the edge and faced him.

"Having trouble sleeping?" she asked softly.

"Yeah. I can't get my mind to shut off. Just thinking." The rough, vulnerable timbre of his voice cried out to her heart.

"Thinking about Michelle?"

“Sort of. How about you?” Getting over Michelle’s loss was going to be like peeling an onion. It had to be done one layer at a time.

“Morgan’s challenging words to me, to dare to live, keep me moving forward, but I still feel the grief. Sometimes...I don’t think I’ll ever get over losing Morgan. Not really. He was very good to me.” Her voice broke, and her quivering lips made it hard to continue speaking. She paused, trying to get a grip on her emotions as she looked at her hands twisting in her lap.

She’d never felt this way when she’d dated, before Kendall had come to get her. This felt like she was letting Morgan go and it hurt.

In a deep, husky voice, Richard said, “I missed her so much at times, Maya. I thought it would kill me.”

All Maya could do was nod because she knew the feeling. They reached out to each other at the same moment and were united in their grief. He lifted her into his lap and she pressed her forehead to his bowed neck.

She wrapped her arms around his shoulders and whispered, “I don’t expect you to forget her, Richard. I don’t want you to. I couldn’t forget Morgan. But I love you, too.” Those words, spoken aloud, released the dam she’d been struggling to keep intact, and she broke down in his arms. In that brief moment it felt like Morgan released her.

Richard’s arms tightened around her, and his big body vibrated with tension as he struggled with his own feelings. Maya felt wiped out by the spectrum of emotions she had experienced in the last few days. She cried for Richard, Michelle, Morgan, and herself.

Richard cupped her face in his palms and stared deeply into her eyes. Her pain was reflected in his pale eyes. “It hit me hard. Sometimes it’s like that. I’ll go for weeks and be fine then something will trigger it. I feel...” He pressed his forehead gently against hers and closed his eyelids. The muscles in his arms were tense as he held her. “I feel like I’m letting her go.”

“Yes. It hurts,” she whispered as he held her tightly.

They grieved together in the quiet, interrupted only by the occasional bird call and other night sounds. When the storm of emotion finally receded, Maya realized Richard was rocking them both on the glider. The smooth back and forth fluidity of the motion soothed her as he held her close.

“I’m glad we’re moving on, Maya. I love you.”

* * * *

Sunday morning, Maya and Richard sat looking at the screen on her laptop computer. She’d just pulled up her online e-mail account for the first time in five days and chuckled in surprise when she saw the number of e-mails in her inbox.

“Wow, someone’s been trying to get in touch with you. Do you normally have that many?”

“Not even close.”

She frowned when she saw they were almost all from Frank Reeves.

Richard shifted beside her and growled when he saw the same thing. “Is he usually this high maintenance? Are those business e-mails? He was your husband’s partner, right?”

“Yes, but this is my private address. He’s not even supposed to have it. And he shouldn’t need me for any business dealings. I sold our share to another broker.” She clicked on the first message. Irritation welled up in her at his overly-assumptive tone.

...when you’re ready to come back from this escapade you’re on with that redneck, I might be willing...

Glancing at Richard’s darkening countenance, Maya clicked on the next one, which was written later in the same day. The e-mails started the day she’d left and continued through last night. The tone

was the same in all of them, perhaps more annoying as they wore on, but all with the same high-handed manner.

"Well, that answers your question about flying home alone, doesn't it?" There was no arguing the point, given the serious tone Richard used. If the situation wasn't so troubling she might have found his territorial display endearing. Where did Frank get off harassing her like this when she'd made it clear she was through dating him? The tone of his e-mails sounded like he thought she was playing hard-to-get. Perhaps she hadn't been clear enough when she talked to him.

"He's pushy, but I hardly think—"

"Even if it was okay with me, which it's *not*, Boone and Kendall will never allow it. We'll go with you and help you pack up and make arrangements. One of us will drive your car back, too, so you have your own transportation."

Pick your battles, Maya. "I understand. I just didn't want to take you away from work."

"You don't need to worry about that. Chance and Clayton are both big on family and will understand. There are plenty of guys who can pick up the slack for us. We're going on an overnight cattle haul with them soon."

"I know. Boone mentioned it this morning," Maya said as she selected all of Frank's e-mails and deleted them with a click of the mouse. "I'm not sure what to do about Frank."

"You let us worry about him. Your hand looks much better," he said as he stroked the healing bruise surrounding the bite marks on her hand then kissed her knuckle.

Nice try, big boy. It was a decent effort at changing the subject.

"It's better every day. What are you going to do about Frank?"

"Nothing, unless he shows up while we're in San Marcos. He'll get the picture soon enough."

"I love when you go all protective He-Man on me, Richard. It's sweet."

Richard smiled at her, but she still detected a trace of unease in his posture.

“I don’t have any idea why Frank is so ‘into’ me. I never encouraged him or led him on. I was trying to be ‘just friends’ with him until he got pushy.”

“Sending you all those e-mails and the text messages you told us about seems like stalking behavior to me. You won’t have anything to worry about with the three of us with you. If you’re done here, why don’t you go put on that little bikini I saw you unpacking earlier?”

The heat in Richard’s eyes told her he wanted to see her in it, as well as out of it. She was fine with that.

* * * *

“You want to know what I think?” Boone asked her later that afternoon as they lay with their heads juxtaposed on the big flat rock. She was enjoying the cool breeze as it blew over her damp skin. Boone picked up a damp lock of her long, blonde hair and twiddled it between his fingers before releasing it to play in a similar fashion with her hardened nipple through the damp material of her bikini top.

“What?”

In his other hand he held the erotic romance novel she’d been reading out there a couple of days before. The pages were now slightly damp, much like the space between her legs.

“I think you should read us a bedtime story from Ms. Oak’s novel, here. She clearly knows a thing or two about ménage and I’m willing to bet her words would inspire my brothers as much as she’s inspired me,” he murmured as he laid the book aside and turned to crouch over her. She glanced down at the pronounced bulge at the groin of his cutoffs and hoped she’d soon be the grateful beneficiary of Sophie Oak’s inspiration.

She giggled as water from his wet hair dripped down on her and shrieked when he shook his head so droplets flew in all directions around her.

The four of them had just enjoyed a quick dip in the cold creek. At the moment, Richard and Kendall were retrieving the picnic basket she'd brought with them as well as a large blanket, which they were laying out in a shaded secluded spot under a tree on the bank.

She traced the sexy red tribal tattoo on Boone's right bicep as he gazed down at her. Her cunt pulsed with the memory of his lovemaking the night before. He'd been careful, but forceful and demanding of her as well. She sighed longingly as she recalled the way he'd held her so tightly that she'd felt restrained, powerless, and insanely turned-on.

His dark brown eyes were hard to read, but the smile on his lips was tender and contented-looking. His neatly trimmed moustache and beard prickled as he leaned down and kissed her. She yielded to him as he wrapped his strong arms around her and embraced her tightly.

After releasing her lips he said, "Know what else I think?"

Tingling all over and sure that her bikini bottom must be even damper than it was from her dip in the creek, Maya breathlessly replied, "What?"

"I think lunch would be even better if you ate it naked," he replied in triumph as her side-tying bikini bottom and top were lifted away from her. That smooth devil had held her so enthralled she hadn't even noticed when he'd untied her swimsuit.

She looked up to find Kendall and Richard watching them from the creek bank, approval evident in their eyes.

"What do you think, guys?" Boone asked as he tugged the suit away from her body. It was one thing to be naked with them in the candlelight. Here in broad, unforgiving daylight, she hoped her curves met with their approval. She heard a distinct rumbling sound come from Richard and took that and the smile on Kendall's face as their agreement with Boone.

“If I’m eating lunch naked then you three have to be naked as well.”

They were all on board with that plan, judging by their lightning-quick removal of their clothing. Even Richard didn’t hesitate. She ogled them shamelessly as their gorgeous, bare, *hard* bodies came into view.

Boone helped her to rise and turned her to him for another kiss. Her pussy responded with a pool of heated moisture as his hot cock jumped against her abdomen. It was pressed to her firmly, and she wanted him to penetrate her right where they stood on the rock.

She turned and bent down for her book and bathing suit and he groaned. “Don’t tempt me, baby. It would be so easy.”

He pulled her back by her hips against him, and she had a similar thought. *Oh, don’t tempt me, baby.*

She turned to him, and he steadied her before she leaped to the bank. Kendall and Richard helped her up to the secluded spot they’d created under the tree. The ground was slightly indented, and once they sat on the blanket they were almost invisible from the creek. She hoped this was only the first time they ever spread a blanket here.

“This is a nice little love nest.”

Kendall chuckled and said, “Yes, it is. But first we’re eating. You’ll need your energy if you’re going to keep up with our demands.”

Richard handed her a sandwich and laid a bottle of water beside her, and they all joined her, sitting close by so she could easily touch all three of them.

They ate in anticipatory silence, clearly focused on getting the meal out of the way as quickly as possible. Her pussy clenched and grew hot and wet with desire as she noticed all their cocks became more and more rigid and threatening-looking. They didn’t try to hide the fact they desired her, and lust burned in her heart for them. She swallowed a big gulp of water and laid the bottle aside.

“Now I want my dessert,” she said.

Chapter Fourteen

Maya reached in the picnic basket for the lubricant and the condoms and dropped them on the blanket nearby. She got on her hands and knees and practically dove on Kendall's cock. She groaned at the feel of Richard's fingertips on her breasts, tweaking her sensitive nipples. She must have surprised Kendall as she took him to the back of her throat, because he groaned loudly. His pre-cum made her mouth water as she worked her lips and tongue around his hardened cock.

Boone's hands on her hips were her only warning as he'd already sheathed and lubricated his big cock. The hot, hard tip nudged at her opening, and she wailed on Kendall's cock as Boone pressed into her cunt. Boone was thick, and her pussy tingled as she adjusted to his size before he thrust again and again until he was fully seated inside her. This was the fantasy she'd craved all those years.

He stilled for a few seconds. "Fuck. I'd stay inside your pussy all day if I could. Damn, you're tight, baby," Boone muttered through gritted teeth before he thrust against her. She suckled Kendall's cock and sighed happily as Richard's roughened fingers squeezed her breasts.

She'd closed her eyes to experience all the mix of sensations but opened them to find Richard lying on his side next to her, watching her. With her mouth full of cock, she tried to smile at him. He'd opened a condom and was about to apply it, but she stayed his hand. She reached for his cock and stroked him as Boone fucked her and she continued suckling Kendall. It was important to her they all be connected somehow.

She moaned in bliss when Richard trailed his fingertips down her abdomen to her clit. He stroked her pussy and that bundle of pleasure-producing nerve endings and then held it between two fingertips. She gasped when he did it and cried out around her mouthful as he pressed it firmly against Boone's pistoning cock.

Kendall whispered, "That's it, babydoll. Richard's taking good care of your little clit while Boone fucks you, isn't he?"

Maya groaned in response as Boone fucked her firmly. Careful, yet demanding. By the end of this interlude she would tingle for the rest of the day. The wildfire of lust in her heart increased, and all she could think about was consuming all their cocks and having all three of their cocks in her pussy, one right after the other. Richard released the pressure on her clit and stroked it more firmly. She observed him watching his brother's cock pumping in and out of her and she saw similar lust burning in his eyes. The thought of them filling her one after the other sent her straight over the edge into ecstasy. She froze as her cunt clenched powerfully and wave after wave of pleasure flowed through her.

"That's it, baby," Boone murmured as he picked up the pace of his thrusting. "You love to be fucked outdoors and talked dirty to, don't you? You're creaming like you want more."

Oh! You have no idea how much, Boone! Her pussy reverberated with echoing pulses as she continued sucking Kendall's cock.

Boone's breathing turned to heaving gasps and then he yelled loudly. He stilled as his cock surged inside her and he held her hips in a tight grip. Eventually he loosened his hold and smoothed both callused palms over her lower back and up her spine in a sweet, consoling caress. All their touches served only to stoke her fire. In her mind each individual touch registered but they were part of the whole. She was able to enjoy Boone's hands while loving the feel of Kendall's balls under her fingertips and his rigid cock in her mouth.

Boone pulled out and lay down to rest beside her. Richard shifted behind her and her pussy clenched for more. After quickly sheathing

his cock and lubricating it, he positioned himself behind her and stroked her waist and her hips. That was his way, to be gentle and considerate of her.

Richard paused and said, "Kendall looks like he's enjoying himself. Honey, are you ready for another cock?"

Loudly moaning her assent, Maya waggled her ass at Richard, demanding nonverbally that he give it to her.

He positioned the wide head of his cock at her cunt and chuckled. "I'll take *that* as a yes." She hummed in pleasure as his cock filled her slick opening.

Each of them was built differently and felt different inside of her. Boone was long and thick at the root. Richard's cock had a broader head, but he was thick from root to tip and just as long. Kendall's hefty cock was especially gifted girth-wise and dark purple at the head. All three of them had received a special blessing from the cock fairy, and Maya was grateful.

Richard groaned quietly as he pulled her back onto his cock.

"Spread those long legs, baby," Boone ordered as he rested his head in his hand and lay on his side, watching. She was amazed to see he was already becoming aroused again. "Arch your back for Richard so he can see all of your sweet little pussy as he fucks you."

She tilted her hips up to Richard and he groaned in pleasure as the angle of his thrust changed and he went a little deeper. She panted as the wide head of his cock stimulated her G-spot. She felt his lovemaking in every nerve ending of her body.

"This woman is something else, isn't she?" Kendall asked then groaned. He held his cock at the base for her as she moved against Richard while she continued suckling him. "What a glorious fucking sight."

"Damn, but she is," Richard growled as he snaked a hand down between her legs and stroked her slippery little clit with a touch intended to drive her wild. Up and down his fingers went on either side as if he knew just the way she liked it.

Boone moved closer to her and smiled as he took one of her nipples in his mouth and suckled powerfully. Her pussy convulsed with the bombardment of stimulation, and the orgasm ripped through her with an intensity that was almost painful. She would've collapsed if Richard hadn't been holding on to her hips.

"Maya." Richard groaned and thrust ferociously, his hips slapping rhythmically against her ass, and it felt to her as though his cock grew even harder and bigger inside of her, filling her to bursting. After several more hard thrusts, he froze and his hands shook as he gripped the tops of her thighs. His moan was touching in its heartfelt intensity, letting her know she gave him what he needed.

Kendall groaned as she continued to suckle him, sounding close to orgasm himself. She did truly feel connected to all of them, loving all of them in an undulating concert of motion. Still panting, Richard finally released her and withdrew. She continued loving on Kendall's cock until his hand cupped her jaw. She looked up at him, realizing she'd been completely caught up in the moment.

Kendall smiled down at her, his eyes glowing with love and approval, and he whispered, "I want your pussy, babydoll. Suck Boone's cock for him. I think he's ready for seconds on dessert. But don't be surprised if he gets demanding." Maya released his cock with a pop and chuckled.

"Boone, demanding? I can't imagine."

Boone gave her a sexy smile as she turned so her back was to Kendall and said in a husky voice, "We'll see if you're still amused when my cock is filling your ass in a bit."

Oh, holy fuck! Her pussy convulsed at the thought, and she wondered how he would take it if she laughed and egged him on. He might even spank her first.

"Promises, promises," she whispered playfully, gazing at Boone as all kinds of lascivious visions filled her mind.

Kendall chuckled and delivered a light pop to her ass, and she opened as Boone brought his cock to her lips. She tongued the head,

enjoying him like she would a nice juicy lollipop, suckling and releasing it before wetting her lips and taking him to the root. She enjoyed his intense groan and his hold in her hair as he guided her rhythmic sucking up and down his cock.

Kendall positioned his cock at her cunt as he stroked her back, and Maya appreciated that he took the time to pet her like that. Her pussy clenched, trying to take him inside her, and she moved back toward him, hoping he would press his cock into her and fill her again. He entered her with agonizing slowness as he reached around her hip and stroked her clit. The tingling burn flared inside her again and the upward rise to orgasm began as he stroked every inch of his shaft into her eager pussy.

"God, I love this woman," Kendall whispered as he flexed against her. He filled her perfectly, and she whimpered as he caressed her clit. Another rush of moisture came to his fingertips thanks to his touch, and her heart surged with love for him. He was being very gentle, as the thickest of the three of them, and it meant a lot to her.

Kendall pressed on her clit and murmured, "Feel good?"

Maya replied as best as she could with her mouth filled. "Mmm-hmm." Even to her own ears she sounded blissful.

Kendall fucked her, slowly picking up the tempo. With each hot stroke of his cock, her pussy gripped tighter and tighter until the tension was almost unbearable. This was what she'd fantasized about earlier. Them fucking her with complete abandon. She arched her back and sucked hard on Boone's cock until he finally stopped her and she released him.

Kendall whispered in a gravelly voice, "You feel so good, Maya. I'm gonna come. *Fuck!* Yes!"

He thrust hard two more times and howled loudly as her orgasm exploded around his cock. They came simultaneously, her shriek erupting from her throat as the mother of all orgasms raged through her. Her body convulsed over and over again.

As she collapsed with her face pressed to the blanket, she heard Boone whisper, "Damn, that was fucking intense to watch."

Kendall breathlessly stroked her damp skin. "Maya, you all right?"

"Perfect," she whispered with her lips mashed against the blanket.

Boone said, "Let's rest for a few minutes, then your little ass is mine, Maya."

"Oh, it's hardly little, Boone, but definitely yours," she replied with a chuckle. She had somehow known from the beginning it would be Boone who wanted her ass first. He struck her as an "ass man," literally.

"Lie down, babe," Richard murmured as he drew her with gentle hands into his embrace. He held her as she caught her breath, and her body vibrated from so many orgasms. A cool breeze swept over her sweat-dampened skin, and she listened as the birds called and the creek gurgled. Richard trailed his callused fingertips up and down her spine. His simple touch sent a thrill through her, and she giggled when her back arched involuntarily to follow his touch.

The three of them caressed and kissed different parts of her, even her ass, she noted with a squeal when Boone's moustache brushed the tender underside of her derriere. Their strong hands felt wonderful as they swept up and down her body. Richard leaned forward and kissed her tenderly, plying her lips with his as his fingertips strayed between her legs. Her pussy tingled, and his fingers slid easily through the juices seeping copiously from her.

Maya heard a snap and realized Boone had opened the bottle of lubricant to prepare for what was to come next. She watched Boone from Richard's arms as he deftly applied another condom to his rock-hard shaft.

He observed her as he smoothed lubricant over it, and his eyes shuttered in pleasure as he stroked himself to apply it evenly. Her pussy and ass both clenched in longing to feel him pressing into her with his big cock. It had been more than a year since the last time

she'd had anal sex, and she now had a nerve-tingling craving for that naughty pleasure.

Boone said, "Richard, why don't you help Maya up. We'll—oh, you've got to be fucking *kidding* me." She saw the surprise in his eyes as he was distracted by something beyond the thick stand of oak trees.

He looked down at her and back out at whatever had drawn his attention and stood quickly. "Help her dress. Get your clothes on, baby. This is fucking *unbelievable*." He let loose a juicy curse through gritted teeth as he removed the condom.

Kendall glanced in the direction Boone was looking, and his eyes bugged. "Oh, babydoll. You want to have clothes on, *like right quick*. Here, let us help you."

Feeling a little shocked and a whole lot of annoyance for the badly timed interruption, she allowed them to help her back into her bikini and clothing.

"Yoo-hoo! Oh, boys! I'm ba-ack!" The sing-song female voice made Maya want to grit her teeth. The men were hurriedly pulling on their clothing, cursing softly as they adjusted their flies over very swollen cocks. Her body practically vibrated with frustration. The voice had an easy, familiar quality to it, and the words, "I'm *back*," sent a wave of jealousy through her.

"Who is that?" Maya asked peevishly as she peeked out through the brush and caught a glimpse as the young woman stepped into the tree line. It was a good thing Boone had caught sight of her before they'd proceeded. Her first anal experience with them might've been interrupted, but at least it hadn't been completely ruined.

The petite woman was in her mid- to late-twenties, with fashionably cut blonde hair. Her clothes were stylish, and she walked through the area as though she was familiar with it.

"She must've seen all our trucks and assumed we'd be down here on a Sunday," Richard said.

She turned to look at him and saw that his brows were drawn together and there was a frown on his face. Intuitively, Maya knew

whoever this was had hurt him. She could tell by the look in his eyes. A deeper, more protective emotion replaced the jealousy she felt and she went to him when he reached for her.

Boone nodded at Kendall and said, "Maya, stay put with the guys. I'll handle our visitor."

Visitor? More like interloper.

Richard put his arms around her, and she leaned against him as she watched Boone make his way straight down to the bank before moving along the water's edge, possibly in an attempt to not draw the young woman's eye to them.

"Who is she?" she whispered quietly.

"Her name is Brenda Sanderson. Trouble is *what* she is," Kendall replied to her. "You don't need to worry about her."

She looked Kendall in the eye. "Was she your girlfriend?"

Kendall looked uncomfortable, and she knew she needed to dial it down a bit for their sake. The men had not invited this person to show up in the middle of their secluded little tryst.

"She played around with all of you, didn't she?"

Richard's soft sigh was her confirmation.

The woman's suggestive words carried down the creek bank. "Well, hello, stranger." Those might've been the words that came out of her mouth, but her syrupy tone said, "*Prepare to fuck me.*"

Maya clenched her fists. *I don't think so.*

Boone caught Brenda's wrists as she reached for him the second she was close enough. She smiled up at him and made what she probably thought was a piquant little pout. Boone spoke muted, serious-sounding words to her. She responded with a snigger and quickly stripped her expensive-looking minidress over her head and dropped it on the ground, revealing her generous, perfectly symmetrical breasts and pretty much the rest of her as well.

Kendall muttered, "Looks like somebody found a sugar daddy. I don't recall those looking like that—ouch!" He grimaced and rubbed the stinging nipple Maya had just pinched. "I'm not saying I *like*

them. I just noticed...I'm shutting up, right now." He glanced at Maya and pooched out his lip and she would've laughed given different circumstances.

Kendall's movement drew Brenda's eyes, which showed a moment's surprise as she looked up at them from her position down near the water.

Boone picked up the dress and thrust it at her, and she smiled at him and said, "Well, well. What do we have here? Did I interrupt you in the middle of something? Where did you find that dumpy old thing? Waiting tables at that crappy bar you all hang out at?"

Maya saw her ploy for what it was and rolled her eyes. She caught Brenda's inimical expression and had to stop herself from laughing. If Brenda thought she could run her off with a few tacky comments she had another thing coming.

Maya had dealt with this type from time to time in San Marcos. Being a college town, it was filled part of the year with spoiled little rich girls whose daddies bought them everything, and they expected the same treatment from everyone else.

Brenda glanced at Boone's face then looked at Kendall and Richard. Whatever she saw made her snicker and she said, "She's the new filling in your cowboy sandwich, isn't she? Wow, your standards have dropped some in the last couple of years."

Boone replied sharply enough his voice carried. "Actually, Brenda, our tastes have improved. There's more love in the tip of her pinky-toe than there is in your whole body. Put your dress back on. You wore out your welcome here two years ago."

"I wonder what all the self-righteous citizens of this little community will think when they find out the Warner Boys are sharing a woman." She had a superior smile on her face and a tone to match.

She evidently intended to make a few stops in town and spread a bit of gossip before she moved on. Maya couldn't have cared less but felt bad for the men. They had dealings with the people in the little

town of Divine, and Maya knew any rumors Brenda shared would be greatly embellished.

"It doesn't matter, Brenda. The townspeople don't control who we love or spend time with," Boone replied.

Did he just say "love"?

Surely he was speaking in general terms to this woman. He hadn't said anything to Maya yet, and honestly she hadn't expected him to until he was good and ready. Looking up at Kendall, she caught his smile and slight nod. *Mind reader.*

Maya watched Brenda Sanderson's face turn an unfortunate shade of splotchy red as she struggled back into her dress and yanked it down.

"Well, we'll just see about that, won't we?"

"Go ahead and spin your tales, Brenda. Most anybody you come into contact with will remember you from your escapades the last time you trolled your way through Divine," Boone said as he carefully grasped her upper arm and marched her back up the incline. Maya, Richard, and Kendall gathered their picnic supplies and the plastic tub then followed at a reasonable distance.

Brenda kept up her scalding tirade all the way back to their vehicles, punctuated only by whiny requests that he slow down. When Brenda didn't get anywhere threatening to "out" them to the community, she went back to insulting Maya's looks, her age, her body type, and comparing herself to Maya. How could they want a chubby like Maya when they had her around?

"Why in the world would we want your half-starved, miserable, self-centered presence in our lives, Brenda, when we already have a beautiful, funny, and caring woman to love and take care of?"

Brenda cast another furious glance back in her direction. Maya hoped Boone was being careful with her arm because Brenda looked the type to cry foul when none existed.

Maya grinned as she took in the sight of the brand-new red convertible sitting in the yard by Kendall's truck. Definitely a daddy's girl. Brenda never even asked what had become of their home.

"I have never been to a more inhospitable town," Brenda finally muttered as Boone opened the driver's side door of the car for her.

"It's funny how that happens when you make a habit of hurting the people we care about, Brenda. Remember, you were warned not to return to the Rockin' C by the Carlises. I'd heed that warning, if I were you." Boone nudged her car door closed, and she glared at him as she cranked the ignition mercilessly. "Remember, no shoplifting—I mean *shopping*—at Stigall's or visiting at the Divine Creek Ranch. Grace has a shotgun shell with your name written on it, if you do."

"She wouldn't dare—"

"That's not the point, Brenda. Why would you go where you are not welcome, which includes the JWB, in case you need it spelled out for you."

Brenda frowned deeply at him and yelled, "Why don't the three of you and your hag just go to hell!"

She peeled out, spraying dirt and gravel behind her. Standing farther back than Boone was, Richard and Kendall turned and positioned Maya so none of it hit her, and they watched in silence as Brenda tore down their driveway.

"We can be sure she's going to raise a stink in town," Kendall said as he placed the picnic basket and wadded-up blanket on the backseat of the truck.

Boone looked like he'd been lightly dusted in flour as he turned and walked straight to her. "I don't give a damn. Do any of you?" He crushed her to him and kissed her until her head spun. His hold was secure but gentle, and he groaned before he ended the kiss.

Boone cupped her cheek in his palm and said, "Listen to me, Maya. Not a single, jealous word she said was true. She could see you are much more beautiful than her and was trying to rile you up and get us fighting. Even with her fake tits she's nowhere near the beauty

you are. And *hell yes*, I love you. I would've said it to you under a different setting than this, but I do love you."

His smile was a pleasant change from the dark scowl Brenda and her harangue had put on his face during their walk back to the vehicles.

She swiped her fingertip through the dust coating his chest and said, "Well, she definitely put a damper on our romantic little getaway. I hope we can take a picnic out there again, soon."

Boone bent over and lifted her over his shoulder and said, "As long as we get you for dessert, Maya." She giggled and squealed when his big hand landed with a pop on her ass.

Chapter Fifteen

Driving back to the Divine Creek Ranch foreman's house, Boone wouldn't have been a bit surprised if he looked in the rearview mirror and saw horns sprouting from his head, he was so horny for Maya. The moment he'd been looking forward to had been ruined by that mouthy bitch, Brenda. She'd always had impeccable timing.

He knew his thoughts should be centered more on what Brenda was up to in Divine, but all he could think about was getting Maya home and out of her clothes again. His balls felt heavy and ached with the pressure of denied release. Judging by Kendall's intense stare out of the windshield and the way he shifted in the passenger seat, he was probably feeling the same.

Maya was no shy, inexperienced flower. She enjoyed sex as much as he did. Boone was fairly certain she would've expected more than just anal sex from him that afternoon. She didn't hold back much, and he knew they would've given her a threesome or a foursome if she'd asked for it.

He glanced in the rearview mirror and barely held back a lusty growl. She was sitting beside Richard, who was kissing her neck and feeling her up, but she was staring at Boone as she responded to Richard's touch. She smiled when their eyes met.

Hot damn! The afternoon's not over yet!

Boone had been a little worried Brenda's arrival would fill Maya's mind with questions that demanded answers before they could move forward. He hoped their reaction to Brenda's surprise visit was answer enough in itself.

Kendall glanced back at them and murmured, “Doing okay back there, Maya? Looks like Richard’s not quite through with you yet.”

“Well, it just so happens I’m not quite through with any of you yet, either,” she replied. Her voice was a throaty whisper that sent an animalistic surge through Boone’s body, and he loved the fact she did not shrink from asking for what she wanted. Hell, he wanted to pull over on the side of the road, find a shady, secluded spot, and give it to her.

He listened to the sounds they made in the backseat of the truck as he drove them home. Richard had groaned deeply several times and Maya was panting lightly by the time the truck pulled to a stop in the driveway. Thankfully the truck’s windows were tinted and there was hardly anybody else around the barns, otherwise they might have seen Maya, who was now straddling Richard’s lap, kissing him passionately as he fingered her under her bikini bottom. The scent of her wet pussy in the enclosed truck cab was intoxicating.

Boone noticed Kendall’s hands were shaky as he reached for the door handle. Boone turned to the two of them, so wrapped up in each other they probably didn’t know they were home already.

“Why don’t we take this inside,” Kendall said.

Maya and Richard came up for air and damned if she didn’t look about ready to come right then. Boone’s cock jerked and twinged as he took in the sight of her beautiful, flushed face. He opened the door and took her hand as Richard released her, and helped her climb on wobbly legs from the truck.

Richard got out behind her, looking ready to tear someone limb from limb if he didn’t get inside her again soon. They hurried inside the house, and she stripped her bikini off like a woman on a mission. She held up two fingers to them.

“Get the condoms and the lubricant. Give me two minutes to rinse off in the shower. Boone, come with me, because that bitch covered you in road dust, and I don’t want it all over me.” She didn’t say it in a bossy way. She stated it like it was an emergency.

He followed her beeline to the master bathroom and stopped her when she would've jumped in under the cold spray coming from the shower.

"No cold showers for you, tiger," he murmured as he dropped his jeans on the floor and embraced her from behind as the water warmed up.

"I need you, Boone. I need you all again. I've wanted this, needed this for so long. I almost can't stand to wait. I'd let you fuck me dirty, but she put that there and I need it gone."

Maya was on fire this afternoon. He could see the desire burning in her eyes and he hardened further, ready to give her what she wanted. Needed.

"You've had anal sex before, I hope." Boone planned to be careful with her the first time, but he wasn't sure he could go slow like she would need him to if she hadn't done this before.

"It's been a while, but yes, Boone, I have."

Boone heaved a sigh of relief. If it had been a year it might hurt a bit but at least she knew what to expect.

Boone helped her into the shower, and they rinsed off quickly. They didn't even bother drying off, just blotted with the towels and stumbled back to the bedroom. Kendall and Richard had the bed turned back and the comforter off completely. Richard's cock was already sheathed and lubed, and Boone nodded to him as Maya climbed onto the bed. He wanted the edge off of her tension before he filled her ass with his cock. He also wanted the edge off of Richard because he looked about ready to explode.

Like a starving woman, Maya went after Kendall's cock again, sucking him deep. A thought flashed through Boone's mind that they had found a real jewel in Maya. She didn't play bashful games with them, needing to be led into every encounter. She didn't hide the fact she loved sex, or the fact she obviously loved to suck cock. She was embracing what they offered wholeheartedly.

Boone watched from the edge of the bed as Richard climbed onto the mattress behind her, his massive cock jutting out to her. Maya got comfortable on her elbows and knees in position between Kendall's widespread thighs and established her rhythm before Richard ever made a move. Richard looked practically insane with lust for her and he was *still* careful. Boone knew Maya held Richard's big, solitary heart in the palm of her hand.

Boone and Richard both groaned as she arched her back and showed them her drenched, swollen pussy. It was all Boone could do to stand there and watch, he wanted it so badly. Richard inched forward and groaned as he placed the blunt head of his dick at her delicate lips.

He looked ready to ram it into her, but instead positioned it just barely inside and caressed her ass and hips for a few moments. Boone could see that the self-restraint cost Richard by the tension in his face and the way he bit his lower lip. Maya moaned helplessly on Kendall's cock, and his head fell back against the headboard. Boone could clearly see the way her pussy clenched and convulsed around the head of Richard's cock, and Boone could tell by Richard's rough exhalation that it must feel like heaven.

Richard stroked the juncture of her hips and thighs, and her sounds told Boone she was seconds away from an orgasm. He couldn't believe the control Richard exercised as he flexed his hips and fucked her in short little teasing strokes, going just deep enough to reach her G-spot. Evil genius.

Seconds later she screamed as she came, and Boone almost shot his load as he watched a flood of her creamy translucent cum gush out around Richard's cock as he withdrew and thrust again.

That sight must have set Richard off as well because he thrust to the hilt and pounded into her pussy with long, sure strokes. Her cum covered his brother's cock and dripped and glistened as he filled her sweet little hole over and over again.

Richard had never been involved in a ménage encounter prior to knowing Maya. Boone had, but the others had been events consumed by lust and a simple need to get off. This was much deeper and more meaningful to him. Maya thrust back against Richard, and the wet sounds of their flesh smacking together filled the bedroom.

Kendall gasped and groaned, and his hips thrust up to her. His howl broke the quiet as he came, and Boone watched in awe as she swallowed every drop of Kendall's cum. Kendall's voice was almost a broken sob as she didn't leave off from licking and sucking until he placed his hands in her thick blonde hair to get her attention.

Boone growled with satisfaction to know she was so *into* them she needed to be told when to stop sucking their cocks. Most women would stop at the first chance. Not their angel.

Maya panted as she laid her forehead against Kendall's thigh and he held on to her. As Richard continued fucking her, Kendall slid his hand down her damp torso. Boone knew the moment he touched her clit just right because she sobbed in ecstasy and came again. Richard gripped her hips hard, thrust home, and curled his upper body over hers as he roared in pleasure. He wrapped his shaking arms around her waist and held her tight as he came in shuddering bliss inside her.

Kendall stroked her hair from her flushed face and whispered his thanks to her as she caught her breath. Richard continued to caress her as well, and Boone was pleased by the orgasmic flush blooming on her body as Richard withdrew and left to dispose of the condom.

The smile on Maya's face made Boone's heart lurch a little. It meant more to him than it ever had before to see that kind of peace and pleasure on a woman's face. He liked being a part of putting her smile there and felt a similar feeling inside him. Not exactly peace. That would come later, after he'd experienced the tight grip of her ass on his cock, but the pleasure and happiness were definitely there and real. They weren't fleeting feelings, either. They felt permanent, and this was his moment.

He felt like an insatiable bastard for about two seconds as he rolled the condom on his bone-hard erection and lubed it well. She was still breathless from her last encounter and here he was climbing on the bed behind her, ready to fuck her ass.

When she turned her head to watch him as he got into position behind her, he saw the lust glazing her eyes and wanted to howl in triumph. Maya loved to fuck, and she already wanted more.

He stroked her asshole with his thumb and felt her shudder and press back against it. "It's time my cock filled this pretty ass. Are you ready, Maya?"

"Yes."

Boone lubed her ass well, knowing his self-control wouldn't last long once those tight muscles gave in to him. He didn't want to hurt her. Richard returned to the bedroom and took a spot on the edge of the bed where he could see well.

Kendall moved to Maya's other side and swept his hand up and down her back and whispered to her. "You sure, babydoll?"

Maya was crouched just the way she'd settled after her last orgasm but now her cheek was pressed to the sheet instead of Kendall's thigh. Her legs were folded under her with her ass completely vulnerable to him.

Kendall must've thought she was still overwhelmed and recovering from the last encounter. He didn't recognize Maya's posture for what it was—total submission to Boone.

She'd been responding and cooperating the entire time he'd been applying small amounts of the lubricant around her asshole and inside of it. She might not have been an anal virgin, but her snug little ass was going to be deliciously tight on his surging dick.

Maya had relaxed completely for him, regulating her breathing and not clenching against his invasion at all. She'd been taught well. All sorts of possibilities opened up in Boone's mind. Dormant dreams came to life as he watched her surrender and respond to his touch.

Maya reached a hand to Kendall, which he clasped, and she whispered, "I can't explain to you right now how much I need what Boone is giving me. He knows what I need, and I trust him."

Kendall nodded and kissed her head, continuing to stroke her back. She turned her gaze to Richard and he gave her his undivided attention.

"I want it, Richard. And I want both of you to be a part of this with me. I need you here with me. Don't leave."

He respected her for taking the time to reassure his brothers. He'd had a feeling Richard might want to leave while Boone fucked her ass. She clearly didn't want that. Boone knew Richard would stay because she'd asked him to. She shuddered in pleasure and arched slightly as Boone slid a second well-lubed finger into her ass. It turned out that where Maya was concerned he had a whole lot more self-control than he thought.

"Whatever you want, Maya. I'll give it to you," Richard replied. "If this is what you need, I want you to have it."

Using his other hand, Boone reached between her luscious thighs and rubbed lightly against her clit. Her pussy and her ass quivered in response. Her juices dripped onto his hand, and he knew he had her poised right where he wanted her.

She was relaxed, ready, and waiting. He was impressed at the way she let the tension flow from her as he prepared her, and he was grateful to Morgan for making anal sex an experience she must've looked forward to. Her submission was glorious. She watched him trustingly, and he smiled when he saw the love and anticipation mingled in her eyes.

They hadn't talked about her need to be dominated at all, but they seemed to slip into that dynamic like they'd been lovers, Dom and sub, for years. He couldn't wait to explore with her.

He positioned his thighs on either side of hers and moved close behind her. She held her position with her ass stuck in the air. He massaged her asshole with his lubricated thumb once again.

“It’s time, baby.”

“I’m yours.” She visibly squeezed Richard and Kendall’s hands, letting them know she meant “theirs” as well.

She relaxed the tight muscles at his command, offering her most vulnerable place for his pleasure, trusting him.

Grasping his painfully hard cock in one hand and her lush hip with the other, Boone positioned the head at her lubricated opening. Boone felt himself fall for her even more when, instead of clenching, she took a deep, quiet breath, exhaled slowly and relaxed her resistant muscles as he pressed against her.

A rush of heat sizzled through his body as his cock squeezed into the tight, hot clasp of her ass just a bit. Maya’s lips parted on a rapturous-sounding moan. Kendall and Richard both seemed enthralled when he glanced at them. Richard’s brows were drawn together slightly in concern, and he looked up at Boone.

Grateful he’d caught the look, Boone whispered, “I’d never hurt her, Richard.”

He said the words without any trace of defensiveness or apology, seeking to reassure his brother. Maya tightened her grasp on Richard’s hand and whispered to Boone, “It’s so good, baby. More.”

Focusing on her, Boone caressed her hips and felt her pussy quiver again. Her ass was snug as he allowed her time to adjust to his presence. He thrust carefully and let loose a groan as his cock slid forward into a couple more inches of snug, hot heaven. She arched and rocked against him, and he slid deeper.

“Feel good, Maya?” Boone asked.

She hissed and replied, “Yes. It feels huge.”

“Mmm, good. You feel tiny.”

When he’d pressed almost all the way in, he stopped and withdrew slightly. Her ass clasped him like she didn’t want him to go. Her pleased exhale told him she loved the sensation, and he slid back in.

"Yes, Boone." She drew out his name as though she loved the way it sounded. It made him feel good to hear it. He pulled back and slid in a little harder. By the third thrust he was balls-deep in her ass.

He stopped and leaned forward to whisper in her ear, "Ready, baby?"

"Yes, please, Boone." Her voice had a shaky, almost dreamy quality to it, and he knew she was ready.

Without even having to ask her to, she drew her arms close to her body. He slid his forearms around her and clasped her to him. Kneeling behind her, he drew as close as he could to her until she was a tight little bundle in his arms, unable to move. Her breathing was rapid but even, and he delighted in the happy moan that slipped from her lips as he tightened his hold.

His instincts had been right in guessing at what she liked. He nuzzled against the back of her shoulder, where it met the juncture of her neck, and pressed kisses there. The tight leash on his control slipped and he welcomed it. He had her exactly where they both wanted her and it was okay to let go.

"Thank you, Boone," Maya whispered at his first stroke deep inside her. She was relaxed but not limp beneath him as he fucked her ass in deep, rhythmic strokes.

"Do you like my cock fucking your hot little ass?"

"I do." Her voice was a soft, breathy croon.

"We love you, so much, Maya. We want to love every inch of you." His cock slid in and out of her quivering ass, and the orgasmic tension increased inside her, even as it built inside of him.

"Yes, Boone. Love me. Fuck me," she whimpered. "It's coming, Boone, I can feel it. Please, Boone, please." Her tone was almost imploring.

Shifting slightly, he applied more of his body weight over her and pressed her firmly into the mattress as he thrust faster in her ass. Her tension grew exponentially, and he grinned, knowing he'd just hit the mother lode of all turn-ons for her.

Straightening one leg out behind him for leverage as he shifted, he pressed her fully into the mattress. Her body seized beneath him and shuddered repeatedly as her ass convulsed on his cock.

A sob and then a scream erupted from her throat, and his own orgasm slammed into him with such force he might've screamed as well. He thrust with tremendous force against her and heard her as she cried out beneath him, "Yes! God, yes!"

Boone's cum exploded in searing jets in her ass as she panted beneath him. She didn't move a muscle, just stayed motionless and let him hold her like that.

Never had he experienced a connection this deep with anybody in his life. He heard Kendall and Richard whisper to each other and then the sound of running water in the bathroom.

Chapter Sixteen

Richard returned from the bathroom after the tub had started filling and he'd put the lavender-scented bath salts in it she seemed to favor. He felt like he was floating on a euphoric cloud.

If he'd had any doubts about whether the four of them could share a bed and a life together, they were fading fast. His body felt loose, relaxed, and somehow buoyant. He was happy. Really happy for the first time in what seemed like years.

Kendall was lying alongside Maya, talking to her. It didn't look like Boone had withdrawn yet, judging by his posture and how close he lay with her.

The couple of times Richard had anal sex it had been at the request of the woman he was with. Using plenty of lube, he'd given them what they'd wanted and had gotten off in a big way each time, but he'd worried a little bit on both occasions that he was hurting the woman.

What he'd just witnessed had blown any preconceived notion he'd had about anal sex clear into outer space. He'd never seen a woman come so completely undone in his entire life. And that was saying quite a bit because he'd seen Maya come hard numerous times in the last twenty-four hours and been responsible for a few of those explosive orgasms himself.

Anal sex with Boone in that dominating position had definitely done it for her. Richard had been worried Boone might be too heavy for her, but it had clearly been exactly what she'd wanted. He wasn't quite sure he could do that for her, but if it was what she needed, he'd be willing to try.

He handed Boone the hot washcloth he'd asked for as he climbed up on the big bed with them. Carefully, Boone withdrew and pressed the washcloth to her bottom and wiped all the now-sticky lubricant from the area.

"Feel okay?" Kendall whispered as he kissed her. She smiled and nodded before looking over at Richard.

She smiled blissfully at him and asked, "You okay, Richard?"

Richard felt at times like Maya could look right into his heart. He'd been unable to hide his worry in the seconds before Boone had sunk his cock into her ass. Even then she'd done what she could to let him know she was fine.

"I'm good, honey. I ran you a bath."

Boone rose from the bed to remove and dispose of the condom, and Kendall helped her sit up. She giggled and said, "I feel like a limp noodle."

"Then we'll carry you to the tub," Kendall said as he scooped her up in his arms and carried her to the bathroom. Richard followed them into the room. The tub was nearly full.

"I know it might be tight," Maya said. "But could I talk all three of you into joining me. I can sit in someone's lap so it won't be so crowded."

Richard never even hesitated. He climbed in before Kendall even moved to place her in the tub. There was plenty of room for the four of them once Maya was perched in Richard's lap with her arms looped around his shoulders.

She snuggled her forehead to his neck and giggled when Kendall good-naturedly asked, "How come she's in your lap again for bath time? You got her last night, too."

Richard chuckled contentedly and settled back against the sloped seat of the tub. "Snooze, you lose, bro. Besides, you're going to have her all to yourself Tuesday and Wednesday night. I'm just 'getting, while the getting is good.'"

Richard and Boone were helping the Carlisles haul three cattle trailers full of cattle to Alamosa, Colorado, where they were being met by a couple of friends. The two ranchers were purchasing the breeding stock along with the trailers for their ranch. Richard was willing to bet his next paycheck that the Carlisles also planned to stop in Fort Stockton on both legs of the journey.

Richard had helped Chance haul stock a few weeks before, and Chance had made a stop at the cafe in Fort Stockton, Texas on their way to their destination.

The cafe was poorly managed but their pretty waitress had done her best to take care of them. It had taken several rounds with the menu before they both decided on something the establishment wasn't out of. She'd made sure their food was fresh and hot before she'd brought it to them. As she'd blushed and apologized for the inconvenience, Chance had seemed a little smitten with her.

The manager had yelled at her from the kitchen within their hearing, and when she'd returned to refill their coffee cups there had been tears welling in her eyes.

When Chance had asked if she was all right, she'd reassured him she'd done something worthy of getting fussed at and left it at that. Richard had been able to tell the scene bothered Chance greatly.

Chance had watched her carefully for the hour they were in the cafe. There had been no more incidents with the manager, who had gone into his office and slammed the door.

Richard wasn't sure her circumstances were good. He'd quietly watched her as she'd flitted around taking care of customers, cleaning, serving, and bussing tables with the help of one other waitress. Richard suspected her feet hurt as she'd rushed about, and he noticed her shoes were not of a good quality for standing in all day.

He hadn't been a bit surprised when Chance had tucked a one hundred dollar bill beneath his plate, murmuring to Richard that he knew she was the one who would get it. The other waitress had been just as busy taking care of several tables full of bikers at that point.

Richard was jarred back to the present when Maya's slick little body shifted against his as she reached for her scented body wash. She lathered the bath sponge he'd picked out for her and said, "I'm going to miss you both when you're gone."

Boone chuckled as he took the sponge from her and gently scrubbed her shoulders. "Not likely, baby. Kendall is probably going to keep your hands full the whole time."

Kendall shook his head and said, "No, I fully intend to keep *my* hands full the whole time."

* * * *

Maya chuckled as she read Grace's ecstatic response to her text message Monday afternoon. Maya had thought it was a little preemptive, but she'd done as Grace had suggested and dropped by Dr. Emma Guthrie's office earlier that afternoon.

Kendall was busy at the ranch and had highly approved of her putting out feelers for a permanent position in Divine. He and his brothers went to Dr. Guthrie, and he'd lasciviously pointed out that he'd gladly submit to Nurse Maya's tender loving care anytime he had a boo-boo.

Dr. Guthrie had welcomed her into her office, and they'd chatted informally for a few minutes about Maya's qualifications as a registered nurse specializing in obstetric and pediatric care. At the doctor's request, Maya promised to submit her resume and references. The opportunity for a job there was promising. Outside the doctor's office she'd texted Grace to let her know.

Her phone vibrated in her hand a moment later, and Maya read the reply. "*See? Now you have to stay!*"

Maya walked out to the rental car she'd picked up that morning and drove to the grocery store. When she pulled up, she noticed several people congregated near a newspaper vending machine. Several of them looked up, and one of them did a double-take then

looked away. Maya didn't hesitate as she walked through the door, merely smiled and continued on. Maybe he'd thought she was someone he knew for a second.

Batson's Grocery was quiet except for the occasional sound of grocery carts being stacked together and the elevator music playing through the public address system. The faint scent of bleach filled the air as she walked up and down the aisles of the small, locally owned grocery store pushing a shopping cart. She glanced out the large plateglass windows at the front of the grocery store and noticed the crowd was dispersing. Two women remained, looking into the grocery store, staring straight at her and whispering to each other.

In the checkout line, a little woman with reading glasses perched on her nose stood behind Maya. In a kindly voice she said, "They've put two and two together, young lady. Or three and one as the case may be." The little woman had to be in her seventies and could not have stood much over four and a half feet tall.

"I'm sorry, ma'am? Were you speaking to me?"

"Yes, dear." The woman held out her small hand to shake Maya's. Her grip belied her age. "I'm Evelyn. A friend of Grace, Juliana, and Teresa's." She gestured to the window. "Those busy-bodies out there. They know why you are in town and who you are with."

"You're a friend of Grace's?" Maya asked as she placed everything on the conveyor belt for the cashier.

"Yes. Both Grace and Teresa used to work at Stigall's with me. I was the bookkeeper for many years. Of course, I know about their family situations," she said in a confidential whisper, "and I thought you should be warned." Evelyn pointed at the women, who were still staring in the window. "If those two should try to be friendly with you, be wary. They are very vocal and unkind in their opinions of the way Grace and Teresa live their lives. Rosemary Garner, too, I suppose, but they've learned to steer clear of her. You should avoid them if you can."

“Oh. Well, I’ll bear that in mind, ma’am.” Maya paid the cashier after the total for her groceries was rung up.

The older woman smiled at her and said, “Call me Evelyn. I’m practically family to Grace and her bunch. I wish you well, Miss Daire. Oh! And I’m so glad you’ve suffered no ill effects from the rattlesnake bite.”

Maya smiled at her, remembering the small-town newspaper reporter who had shown up at the hospital the day of the rattlesnake bite. That must be how Evelyn had known her name. Word got around fast in this small town, even over mundane things, it seemed. Could she have been the topic of discussion at that newspaper vending machine? She bid the helpful woman good-bye and took her bags to the car.

After placing them in the trunk, she went around to the door. A piece of notepaper was folded and wedged between the molding and glass of the driver’s side window. She looked about as she slid it free. No one was standing nearby, but she felt a tingle go up her spine. She wondered if someone was watching her. She unfolded the paper and read it.

You would do well to return to the city from which you came, Ms. Daire. We have no need for more women of loose moral character infecting our beautiful town. What you are doing is wrong, immoral, and disgusting. You should be arrested along with all the other women living in bigamous and polygamous marriages in Divine for leading men of integrity onto the path of destruction. This is the only warning you’ll get. If you stay, you’ll regret it.

Maya’s first impulse was to wad the note up and throw it into the air over her shoulder, disregarding the threat. This was America and she and her men weren’t hurting anyone. She knew as long as they conducted themselves with decorum nobody could do anything to

them. That didn't mean the stranger who left the note wouldn't act alone though.

Holding the note by its edges, she went to the trunk and dug through the shopping bags until she found the item she was looking for. She carefully slipped the note into a zip-up sandwich bag then placed it in her purse. It gave her the heebie-jeebies to see that they knew her by name, and alternately pissed the hell out of her that the writer of the note didn't have the balls to sign it.

She climbed in the car and thought about texting one of the guys. It was three o'clock and she knew if she let them know now they would worry about it the rest of their workday. There wasn't anything she could do about the threat except go home and continue on with her day. She was cooking supper tonight and wanted to get an early start.

She backed the blue sedan out of the parking space, taking a moment to look around at the other cars in the parking lot. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary, no stalkers lurking. She gave herself a mental shake.

One of those two women had probably tucked that note into her window, expressing their moral outrage, hoping to intimidate her. They didn't know Maya Daire very well if they thought she was going to slink away like a whipped puppy with her tail tucked between her legs. She didn't value their opinions, and what they thought wasn't going to change her plans. She was staying in Divine, and she was going to socialize with whomever she damn well pleased.

* * * *

"There you are," Frank Reeves muttered as he sat hunched in front of his laptop computer, staring at the online newspaper article featuring Maya. The unlucky girl had tangled with a rattlesnake and made the front page of the small-town newspaper. It hadn't occurred to him until yesterday that if he was going to set up Google Alerts for

her, there was always the possibility her name might be misspelled “Dare” instead of Daire. Such had been the case, as he looked at the caption that went along with the article. It was just his luck the small-town newspaper reporter had gotten it wrong. But that hadn’t stopped him from finding her. Nor would he be impeded in bringing her ass back to San Marcos where she belonged. Right beside Morgan Daire, six feet under.

Chapter Seventeen

Maya was checking the bubbling casserole in the oven when a knock sounded at the door. Boone got up from the couch where he'd been doing paperwork for the ranch and answered it. She closed the oven door and looked behind her as Ethan waved and said hello to her from the doorway and murmured to Boone. He slipped outside with Ethan, and she went back to slicing a tomato for a salad.

She smiled as she rinsed the knife and laid it aside. The casserole needed at least fifteen more minutes. Richard was in the shower and might need assistance with lathering up or rinsing off. Or toweling dry.

One of her favorite new hobbies was sliding her hands over Richard's hard, soapy body. The shower was still running as she walked down the hall, hoping she wasn't too late. In light of the fact they were going out of town the following morning, she looked upon this escapade as "getting while the getting was good," as Richard would say.

Boone had needed to get his paperwork done, and so she'd behaved herself and allowed him to work when she'd really wanted to climb in his lap after he'd gotten home. Kendall was expected home any moment. Her heart raced at the thought of a little alone time with one of her men.

She slipped into the steamy bathroom, removed her clothing, and pinned up her hair. She could hear Richard humming to himself as she watched him lather up through the translucent shower curtain.

"Would you like some company?" she asked as she peeked around the edge of the curtain.

Covered from head to toe in soap suds, Richard turned to the spray to rinse his face and looked back at her. His long dark eyelashes were wet and spiked together. He grinned and nodded as he reached for her bodywash and bath sponge.

Quietly, Maya watched him as he lathered the sponge with his big hands. It made her hot and wet to think of his soapy hands sliding all over her body.

“Supper is in the oven, and I wanted to spend time with you since you have to leave in the morning.”

Richard caressed her shoulder, massaging her tense muscles. He kissed her and murmured, “I’ll miss you.”

He didn’t go on and on, but the warmth and emotion were there in his words and his eyes.

“Me, too.”

Their slick bodies slid together as he kissed her again. He slid a hand down her back to cup one of her ass cheeks and held her close to him as he tilted his head and deepened their kiss. As she parted her lips, his tongue penetrated and slowly stroked hers, making both her heart and her pussy throb. Richard was an excellent kisser, alternating between stroking her with his tongue and smooching her lips gently. He was going to get whatever he wanted with his kisses because she was putty in his hands.

There was nothing quite as overwhelming, in a positive way, as their hands loving and touching her body all at once. She hoped she never grew accustomed to it. But she also loved and craved the time she spent alone with them. What she needed from Richard when they were alone together was different from what she felt for them as a group. In contrast to his formidable size and strength, what turned her on about Richard was his tenderness and the caring way he had with her, which made her feel immeasurably precious. She appreciated their differences more with each passing day.

Thinking of their little group reminded her of the note tucked into her purse. She was determined to not ruin the mood tonight and decided to give them the note in the morning.

Maya slid her hands up his torso and stroked the short strands of dark brown hair at his nape. The timer was set on the oven. Hopefully Boone or Kendall would hear it if she didn't return to the kitchen in time.

"Do you have any condoms in the bathroom, Richard?"

"Medicine cabinet," he murmured against her neck as he brushed his warm lips under her ear.

* * * *

Taking out his bandana to wipe his sweat-soaked brow, Kendall looked around at what he'd accomplished that day. He remembered what the JWB had looked like the day they'd arrived two years before.

The rickety old ranch house had been uninhabitable after sitting unoccupied for thirty-plus years. The fields and pastures that now sported grass ready for baling and herds of Hereford cattle had been left fallow, and mesquite trees had gotten a prolific toehold, even around the house itself. In the last two years they'd done a lot—root-plowing and bulldozing the mesquites, cross-fencing the pastures, purchasing and maintaining breeding stock, and making the house habitable.

It was unfortunate the house had been leveled in the storm, but he didn't miss it all that much. It hadn't been near good enough for Maya to live in. With satisfaction at a job well done, he tipped the water bottle and splashed water on his face then took a long drink. He dried his face and grabbed his cell phone as it rang.

He glanced at the number on the screen and chuckled as he answered the phone, "Mom!"

Josie Warner's familiar, soothing voice responded, "Can someone please tell me why I have to hear that my son is in love from his cousin's wife? I just got off the phone with Grace and she tells me that Maya Daire has got you wrapped around her finger."

"Well..." The statement was mostly accurate.

"It's good to hear that she's moving on with her life, Kendall. I always wondered after Morgan's passing if the two of you wouldn't wind up together."

"But, Mom, it's—"

"That it's the *four* of you is no big shocker as close as you boys have always been. Grace tells me that Maya fits right in down there."

Kendall smiled that his mom made that news seem almost run-of-the-mill. "She does."

"How is the ranch?"

"Hard, hot work but it's looking good. How is Aggie Rose?"

"Your sister is just fine, from what I can tell. She's about as good at keeping in touch as you and your bothers. But you know her. She's an aggie all the way to her maroon blood, still loving Texas A & M. It looks like she's going to finish early."

"Yeah, she keeps telling me she's going to open her veterinary practice in Divine after she gets her degree. I can't wait, because vet bills are expensive. Did she tell you if she's coming for a visit here soon?" He thought Maya would adore his spunky little sister Agatha Rose, affectionately known as Aggie Rose.

"With the schedule and hours she's keeping? I wouldn't expect to see her until Christmas time. I've never seen a more focused student than Aggie."

"That's good because I know you were relieved when the three of us barely managed to squeak by with our diplomas in hand."

"But you're good boys."

"When are you coming for a visit?"

She snorted. "When I hear you have space for visitors. How is the house coming?"

"We'll get started in a few weeks."

She giggled and speculatively said, "Oh! You're too busy romancing the beautiful widow?"

Laughing, he replied, "Something like that."

She turned more serious and asked, "Richard doing okay?"

"He seems to be doing great. Maya has been good for him, I think."

"I'm happy to hear that. How is my eldest doing?"

"Boone is still working at the Rockin' C Ranch with Richard. I imagine they'll both come on fulltime at our ranch sometime next year. He's crazy about Maya."

"I'm glad to hear it. Maybe we can all be together at Christmas. Oh, Kendall, that's another call on the line I've been waiting for. I have to let you go, sweetheart. Tell the boys I love them and to *call their mother*, Okay?"

He responded affirmatively and she made a kissy noise in the phone and ended the call. He drove home and when he pulled up he noticed Ethan standing on his front porch. He greeted Ethan as Boone came out the front door.

"I'm glad you're here, Kendall. We wanted to give you guys a heads-up."

"About what?" Boone asked as he leaned against the doorframe. Kendall joined them on the porch.

"Grace got home a few minutes ago. She was a little shook up because someone ran her off the road between Divine and Morehead." Ethan's eyebrows were drawn together as he said it, and Kendall could see the stress in the set of his jaw.

"Is she okay?" Kendall couldn't begin to imagine how that news must have affected Ethan.

"She's lying down right now. She was having a few contractions here and there, but she's attributing them to dehydration. I came down to let you know about it. With this damned blog that's updating daily

about the girls, we don't want to take chances with them or Maya. Has anybody said anything to her?"

Kendall shook his head as he regarded Boone. "Not that we're aware of. Do you think the incident on the road and the blog are connected?"

Ethan shrugged as he leaned against the porch railing. "I don't like to take chances where Grace or the others are concerned. We think it would be better to warn the girls and try to be with them if they have to go into town."

Boone said, "Richard and I are going out of town with Chance and Clayton for a couple of days tomorrow morning, but Kendall will be here with her."

"Maya told me she was running by the store after she dropped in on Dr. Guthrie this afternoon," Kendall added.

Ethan smiled faintly. "Yeah, Grace mentioned that to us. She found out Maya has obstetric nursing experience, and I think she's bound and determined to have Maya working at Dr. Guthrie's by the time Rose Marie gets here. She really likes Maya."

Kendall chuckled and said, "I think the feeling is mutual. Maya says she feels like she's known them a long time, especially Grace. Do you want us to send Maya down to check on her?"

Ethan looked up at both of them and appeared to waffle for a moment. "Yeah. If you don't mind. The contractions worry me a bit. She insists it's just the little upset plus being too thirsty that's causing them. I'd understand if you want the night to yourselves, with the two of you going out of town. That delicious aroma tells me she's got your supper ready."

Kendall shook his head. "We'll eat real quick and be up to the house. Knowing Maya, we'll have to make her stay to eat before going up there."

"I don't want that," Ethan replied. "Eat supper. I know it would help Adam and Jack to worry less about her if someone with experience looked in on her."

Boone asked, "Was the car damaged?"

"No, not at all. She said it was a black SUV, similar to Jack's, that ran her off the road. She had a bumpy ride but coasted to a stop in the ditch on the side of the road. That little BMW of hers is a solid little piece of machinery, which is one of the reasons we picked it out for her."

Ethan departed a minute later and they went inside. Kendall groaned as the succulent aroma permeating the house filled his nostrils and caused his stomach to rumble hungrily. Maya was nowhere in sight. Kendall peeked in the oven and smiled as he saw the source of the aroma. A homemade chicken casserole from the looks of it.

Boone opened a cabinet and was pulling plates down as Kendall checked the timer, which was ticking down with two minutes to go.

"Wonder where they are?" he asked as he searched for potholders in a drawer.

Kendall blessed Grace and Teresa again for setting them up with all the kitchen basics. Everything they'd owned for use in a kitchen, little though it was, now resided in the pile of rubble that used to be their ranch house.

Boone replied, "Richard was taking a shower when Ethan knocked."

The answer to his other question rang down the hallway as they listened to the melodious sound of Maya crying out in pleasure from the bathroom. Kendall glanced at Boone and couldn't help the smile crossing his face that probably mirrored the big one on Boone's face.

"Damn, I love that sound," Kendall murmured as he opened the oven. His cock swelled as he imagined her in the shower with Richard, trying to catch her breath.

Boone's voice sounded a little deeper than normal, signaling he must be thinking along the same lines. "For being the soft-spoken one, Richard sure is stepping up and claiming what he wants."

"Yeah."

“It’s good. He seems happier.”

“Yeah, happier than I’ve seen him since before... You know.”

The water shut off in the bathroom as the timer went off, and Kendall pulled the baking dish from the oven and put it on the stovetop.

Knowing the other two would be out when they were done, Kendall set the table while Boone finished up his paperwork.

A floral fragrance emanated from the bathroom, along with a languorous sigh. He caught a glimpse of Maya striding naked down the hall to the bedroom. She glanced back and giggled when she caught Richard ogling her from the bathroom doorway and Kendall staring at her from in the kitchen. She blew a kiss and disappeared through the doorway. Richard appeared in the hallway and lifted his chin in relaxed acknowledgement to Kendall before disappearing into the second bedroom where his closet was located.

Kendall looked forward to getting started on house plans sometime soon. He wanted to see Maya in a place of her own that she’d helped them design. They’d been cramped with only two bedrooms. Comically, that was no longer a problem as everyone now willingly slept in the king-size bed with Maya. He’d have to talk to Wes and Evan about a nice big custom bed so they could stretch out a bit and sleep more comfortably.

He was filling glasses with ice a minute later when a scented cloud enveloped him and Maya wrapped her arms around him from behind. Her warm, curvy body felt like home pressed against him as he turned and embraced her from the front. She chuckled and rubbed against the erection that had reappeared at her touch.

“You sounded good earlier,” Kendall murmured before kissing her tenderly on her full lips.

“You’re all spoiling me. I get more attention at every turn than I would’ve thought.”

“Like it?”

"I love it." She emphasized her words, and his cock twitched against her abdomen at the velvety way she spoke. He could listen to her whispering to him for the rest of his life and be content.

Richard joined them at the table dressed in old, faded jeans and a T-shirt, and Kendall couldn't help but feel a little envious of the mellow glow in his eyes when he gazed at Maya. It was plain something powerful was growing between the two of them. In his wildest imaginings, he'd honestly never thought beyond fulfilling this dream, to watch her fall in love with the three of them and them with her. The dream itself had seemed so unattainable his mind must not have allowed him to contemplate moments like this because of the sheer torture it would have been for him.

"Ethan came to talk to us, baby," Boone said as he patted a chair for her to sit in.

She joined them at the table and smiled as Boone served food to her plate. "How was your day? Is everything all right at Grace's?"

"Ethan wondered if you'd come check her after we eat. She had a little scare today on the way home from the boutique. She's been having contractions."

Concern showed in Maya's eyes and she started eating quickly. Kendall hated seeing the remnant of the languorous glow fade from her eyes, but was proud of how down to business she got when someone needed her help. That was his girl.

Boone and Kendall explained what Ethan had told them, and they discussed their concerns as they ate with haste. Fifteen minutes later, they were knocking on the back door of the ranch house.

Chapter Eighteen

Grace sighed when she heard Maya's concerned voice in the hallway outside her upstairs bedroom. She lay propped up on pillows on her gigantic bed, snuggled up with Ethan, who was gently stroking her cheek. While they were talking downstairs earlier, a contraction strong enough to make her wince had convinced him she needed to lie down. She didn't like worrying him, so she had complied. Emma Guthrie had already reassured her that the baby was well-cushioned in her abdomen and it would take more than a little jostling to change that.

Except for the fact that what she'd experienced on the road had been more than a case of reckless driving, she might not have said anything about the incident. The SUV had dogged her tail for several minutes, pulling close then pulling into the oncoming traffic lane beside her and staying in her mirror's blind spot so she had to keep looking back for it. Close to Divine the vehicle had finally passed her and cut her off, narrowly missing her front bumper. She'd been shaking all over and experiencing small contractions by the time she made it to the ranch. The moment she'd walked in the door, Jack, Ethan, and Adam had taken one look and descended on her with concern.

She hadn't had a contraction for thirty minutes and wasn't very worried, but she understood Jack, Ethan, and Adam still needed the reassurance of someone laying hands on her.

Ethan stroked her baby bump, and Rose Marie responded with a tiny kick against his hand. He grinned and tears prickled her eyes at the glowing love in his blue gaze. It was a direct contrast to the

ferocious anger all three of them had to fight to control as she'd told them about her experience. They'd all three looked ready to hunt the person responsible down and beat them to a pulp.

"Thanks for humoring us, Gracie. Maya probably would've come anyway, whether we'd asked or not, once she heard what happened."

"I know. I just didn't want her evening interrupted. It's so soon for Richard and Boone to have to go out of town."

"Kendall didn't seem too worried about it," Ethan said with a chuckle.

Grace giggled and said, "Well of course he didn't. He gets all the 'one-on-one' he wants two nights in a row. He's probably counting the hours till he's got her alone." Grace snorted, thinking how much Kendall reminded her of Jack. That man would be putting her over his shoulder and carrying her up to the bedroom before the other two were even fully out of the door.

She heard Adam's voice and then a tap at the door. Slipping from the bed, Ethan opened the door and Maya Daire entered the room. Grace couldn't help but feel happy she was there.

Ethan joined Adam in the hallway, and they closed the door, leaving her alone with Grace.

Grace raised a hand with a shrug from the comfort of her piled-up pillows and said, "Overprotective daddies-to-be. What are you gonna do?"

Maya sat on the bed and gently palpated Grace's abdomen, smiling when Rose Marie kicked at her hand. She took Grace's pulse as she gazed at her watch and asked a host of questions about other symptoms.

Maya looked around Grace's mistress suite, as her men were fond of calling it, and said, "Grace, this is incredible! They did all this especially for you, didn't they?"

"Yes. They started work shortly after I agreed to marry them, two years ago." Grace looked around the palatial suite with fresh, appreciative eyes as she told Maya about it, pointing out the art they'd

added in those years and the updates they'd recently completed in the bathroom.

When Grace had voiced the random thought that a water birth at home might be nice, the men had ripped out the perfectly lovely, big whirlpool tub in her bathroom and replaced it with an even larger one in an equally lovely shade of rosy pink. She hadn't said that was something she definitely wanted to do, but they'd done it for her, just in case.

"I hope you're working at Emma's office by the time Rose Marie is ready to be born. It would be wonderful for you to be in attendance at her birth."

"It would be my pleasure. I hope it works out. Dr. Guthrie seems like the kind of doctor I'd enjoy working for."

"Not to mention gorgeous. I've tried to set her up on a date or two, but she keeps giving me excuses."

"A doctor's hours can be rough."

"That's one thing about Emma I admire. She manages her practice well and hasn't let it completely take over her life. We even got her over for a barbeque recently. Nope, Juliana is the one in our group who tends to overwork. Miss Perfectionist. You'll love her when you meet her this week."

"I'm looking forward to it. Will is precious. Are Jack, Ethan, and Adam planning on being in attendance at Rose Marie's birth as well?"

Grace grinned happily at the thought. "Yes. I asked them and they agreed. You should see them, Maya. I'll come in and they'll have ESPN on in the living room, drinking a beer and reading books on childbirth and baby care. Adam even picked one up for me on breastfeeding when I told them I wanted to nurse her."

Maya chuckled, got comfortable on the bed, and they talked for a bit. It turned out that Grace's men wanted to do more than just *be* there. They planned to be birth coaches as well.

Grace knew Adam was a little leery of the thought but swallowed his trepidation and was reading up on the subject of husband-coached

childbirth as well. Ethan was focused on helping her with her relaxation exercises, and Jack was ready to play catcher when she was born.

With no other contractions occurring, Maya agreed that she should not curtail her activity, but just be careful in her car, which was thankfully undamaged. She needed to enjoy every moment she had behind the wheel of her little blue baby before her men installed her in the tank-like blue Escalade that had been delivered to the ranch the day before.

Adam had been concerned that as Rose Marie grew inside her she might become uncomfortable behind the wheel of her convertible BMW Z4. She'd tried to convince them otherwise, demonstrating that the seat moved back a reasonable distance and she would be fine, but they were hearing none of it.

They wanted to cocoon her in the solid safety of a Cadillac for the rest of her pregnancy, and she hadn't been able to convince them otherwise. Ethan reminded her that she would need it anyway for transporting the baby. She couldn't argue with his reasoning, because her convertible was a two-seater. Infant car seats and two-seated vehicles did not mix well.

"I agree with Ethan and the others that the Escalade would be safer if that incident on the road was directed at you personally. It's fortunate you were on a straight section of road and could just roll off into the grass. What if it had happened on the bridge or an area that had no shoulder?"

Remembering what had happened to Rachel at the bridge when she and Ace Webster had collided with two chasing deer, Grace knew Maya was right and agreed. She climbed carefully from the bed and gave her a tour of the bathroom, including the ridiculously enormous tub centered before the dual-sided fireplace that faced the bathroom and the bedroom.

Knowing time was ticking down on Maya's night with her men, Grace walked her down the stairs. Grace shook her head in

amusement when her men jumped up and ran up the stairs to help her the moment she appeared on the landing. She was afraid they'd hurt themselves always jumping up to help her.

"I just got off the phone with Hank Stinson," Jack said, handing her a bottle of water.

Grace looked into his eyes for a trace of concern about the Sheriff calling, but only saw amusement. "What was he calling about?"

"He couldn't get through on Kendall's phone and asked if I'd pass a message on. I was just telling the guys about it. It appears that gal Brenda Sanderson came back through town."

Maya groaned as she stood beside Grace and asked, "What did she do? Was she making a big stink?"

Jack chuckled and replied, "Well, the guys told me some of what transpired between the four of you and her down at the creek. She evidently stopped into the Dairy Queen to make good on her 'town crier' threat and was saying a lot of stuff about y'all."

Boone picked up the storyline. "Which is exactly what we expected her to do—head into town, stop a few places, and run her mouth off. If the Divine Morality group had been the ones she encountered it might have worked for her. She met up with a different crowd at the Dairy Queen, though."

Grace chuckled, having a feeling she knew who Brenda had encountered.

"Was Joe there?"

Jack nodded. "Oh yeah. Dad was there and so were Adam's folks and Woody and Charlene Porter. Brenda actually struck up a conversation with the Porters, of all people. You can imagine how well-received her tale was."

Grace knew the Porters did not put up with gossips or any of the petty bullshit aimed at her and the other girls. The local justice of the peace had let it be known on several occasions how he felt about the ugliness and gossip that followed her and the rest of the girls.

Jack continued. "So they let her join them and go on and on. She may be wily, but that girl isn't terribly bright for not picking up on their reactions sooner. She even made mention of how poorly treated she was the last time she trolled through town, mentioning the Carlisles and Grace in particular."

Grace remembered with relish kicking that loud-mouthed tramp off her property two years before. The only way the moment could have been more satisfying was if Ethan and Adam had not stopped her from chucking that clay flowerpot through the back window of her dually pickup.

Jack said, "She probably thought she had an audience who would be sympathetic to her 'mistreatment' at your hands, especially Boone for 'manhandling' her as she put it."

Maya growled softly. "I knew she would blow that out of proportion. He barely had his hand around her bony arm."

"She claimed he bruised her, dragging her to her car. Anyway, after she'd laid it on good and thick, Charlene proceeded to tell her what she thought of her, and then Adam's mom took over. Next thing you know Woody is on the phone with Hank, who shows up and personally escorts the young lady out of town."

"I hope that's the last we see of her," Maya said.

Grace shook her head pessimistically. "No, she's like a bad penny. She'll turn up again."

Maya joined *her* men, and Grace felt her heart thump with happiness for them as she watched how Kendall, Boone, and Richard orbited Maya in much the same way Jack, Ethan, and Adam did her. Those men had a good example in her husbands, and she prayed the same kind of happiness to come to Maya that she enjoyed. They said goodnight, and after they'd all hugged Grace they slipped out the back door.

Tears overflowed her eyes as she watched them walk down the steps with Maya. *Stupid, pregnant hormones*. She turned to Jack and looked up into his aquamarine blue eyes and smiled as he brushed her

tears away. Another wave of emotion made her heart pound in her chest as she recalled the moment she'd realized there was more than friendship between them. It had been the day of Jack's mother's funeral, when he'd stood with Ethan and Adam on his father's front porch waiting to greet her. She'd known by the look in his eyes that their relationship would shift that day. Indeed it had, in ways she could never have imagined.

"You okay, darlin'?"

"I am, Jack."

Adam's large, gentle hands stroked her shoulders in a stupor-inducing, massaging caress. She remembered looking up into Adam's pale green eyes the first time. Her heart could have burst with all the love she'd known since that fateful day. She held back a sob and felt just about done in as Jack slid his arms around her.

"Poor baby. So tired," he whispered in her ear.

Ethan caught her eye and murmured, "Bubble bath and bed for you?"

She nodded and they helped her back up the stairs. She smiled to herself thinking how much her life had changed in the last two years.

Surrounded by the loves of her life, she remembered a time when she'd been unhappy, abused, and unloved. The days of listening to Owen's hurtful insults and suffering his miserable presence were a distant memory. Stroking her abdomen as their active baby girl moved within her, Grace's heart felt like it was overflowing with joy. She hadn't had a contraction in over an hour and someone was making love to her, if she had anything to say about it.

* * * *

Maya read aloud to Kendall, Boone, and Richard from her erotic romance novel, *Siren in the City*, by Sophie Oak. Kendall was currently suckling on her bare toes, and who knew that would feel so freaking erotic? Boone was nibbling the supersensitive flesh beneath

her belly button, and Richard was nuzzling her jawline and beneath her earlobe. Her body was a mass of tingling nerve endings.

“He tugged her close, and his lips sealed over hers. His tongue plunged into her mouth, devastating her with his dominance. He turned her in his arms, and she found herself straddling his lap, her wet pussy on display.”

“‘Who does this belong to?’ Jack’s arm was tightly around her waist, holding her up. The other hand slid in her juices, parting her labia. Everyone was watching, and Abby felt herself just cream. She felt Sam’s eyes on her. They were hot, and she could see the erection tenting his jeans. He smiled slightly at her, letting her know he was there with her always.”

“‘You,’ she breathed. ‘It belongs to you. You and Sam.’”

“‘Damn fucking straight it does.’”

“Baby, I think you’re as inspired by that bedtime story as we are,” Boone said as he dragged a single finger through her drenched pussy. She whimpered as he teased her clenching opening, and Maya tilted her hips, trying to draw his slippery finger inside her. Boone chuckled and persisted in teasing her as she continued to read. With the increased heat of their caresses, she found that she kept losing her place.

“Her head fell back against his shoulder as she gave over to him. This was what she’d missed, knowing that she could give him everything, and he would take care of her.”

“‘You come for me, Abigail Barnes. You come for me now.’”

“His knees spread her legs wide. She was completely on display—”

Richard removed the book from her hand and laid it on the bedside table. “I’ll want more of that bedtime reading when we come home from our trip. Right now I want more of you, Maya.”

“Greedy man,” Maya whispered as she reached for his broad, thickly muscled shoulders. His kiss sent a ball of heat shimmering through her torso, and she shuddered as Boone’s lips and tongue brushed in a torturously slow sweep through her bare slit. She felt the vibration of his deep groan against her clit and allowed her thighs to be pressed open to give him full access.

Kendall released her toes and kissed his way up her arch and over her instep as he pressed her bent leg back against her abdomen. She relaxed under their caresses and sighed happily as he cupped her ass cheek and watched Boone feast on her pussy.

“You’re so good to me,” Maya whispered as Boone stroked her pussy and gently lifted the slight hood on her clit to suckle the delicate nub it covered. She struggled to hold still for his attention and felt a whirlwind of heat surround her as her orgasm burst inside her, centering under his lips. Her cunt clenched and released rhythmically on his teasing fingertip, and her voice was lost somewhere between a pant and a groan as the orgasm ripped through her like a fireball.

Boone kept it going, suckling relentlessly on her clit until she screamed for him with a second fiery eruption. He finally let her come down from it, and her arms fell limp to the bed beside her head.

Lifting her ankles until her heels were resting on his shoulders, Boone thrust his sheathed cock home with one smooth stroke. With her legs up, he was able to go deep inside her and she felt every hard, throbbing inch of him as he thrust repeatedly.

In a gravelly, intense voice he said, “I love watching you take my cock, baby. Love seeing your little pussy pressed open and wet for my fucking pleasure.” Boone emphasized his words by stroking her pussy and her clit. She was almost jealous she couldn’t see what he was gazing down at with such satisfaction. “Fuck. That is beautiful. Wet, pink, and beautiful.”

Boone fucked her into another glorious orgasm as Richard and Kendall watched at her sides, stroking her and whispering naughty things in her ears but never interfering with Boone’s access. By the

time they finished loving her that night she'd come three more times and then they stroked her all over with their callused hands until she practically purred.

* * * *

Boone said his good-byes to Maya, along with Richard, in bed the next morning. They had to be at the Rockin' C Ranch earlier than normal and had not wanted her to get up just for that. They'd slipped quietly from the bed, leaving Maya curled up to Kendall. After showers they'd both come back into the bedroom fully dressed.

Boone was once again grateful Maya preferred sleeping in the nude. She'd pushed the sheets down during the night, so her back side was exposed all the way down to the midpoint of the cleft of her ass. She was partially on her side with one knee raised, her arms curled under her. Her long, wavy blonde hair was strewn all around her shoulders, and he bent to press his nose to its fragrant disarray. As always, her scent stirred his cock to life. He thought he must be a masochist to do that but couldn't resist her. Richard slid a single fingertip down the delicate curve of her spine, and she shivered slightly before drawing her arms up tighter.

Richard smiled faintly at him, and Boone saw satisfaction in his brother's eyes like never before. Maya put her heart, her soul, her everything into the love she showed her men.

Boone pressed a kiss against her shoulder and watched as she turned her face toward him, and her eyelashes flickered a little. Gradually she opened her eyes and smiled at them. Boone thought a momentary sadness registered in them, and she murmured in a sleepy, husky voice, "I'm going to miss you."

She rolled over and stretched with a luxuriant yawn, and Boone's cock went on full alert at the sexy sound. Glancing at Richard, Boone thought he might've felt the same way. She crawled on her knees to the end of the bed and let them envelop her in their arms one at a

time. Her flesh was warm and tender under his rough hands, and he very much wanted to climb back into the bed with her. Boone kissed her and memorized the feel of her soft lips smooching his to replay later when they were on the road.

Yeah, definitely a masochist.

“Did you eat?” Maya asked as Richard released her after she hugged and kissed him, too.

“Yes. We’ve got to go now. You should go back to sleep. It’s at least an hour before Kendall has to be up.”

“Please be careful.”

It was difficult for Boone to release her and walk away. He turned to her at the bedroom door as she knelt on the bed with the sheet twisted around her hips. Her hair was mussed and her lush breasts and curvy ass were in perfect profile. He knew he’d remember that moment for a lifetime.

“I love you, Maya.”

Richard echoed the sentiment.

“I love you, too. Be safe.” Her winsome smile made Boone’s heart feel like it would burst from his chest.

With great impatience for the trip to already be over, Boone smiled at her one last time and turned to walk down the hall. His boots felt like they were full of lead.

Chapter Nineteen

Richard grinned at Boone as they followed Chance and Clayton into the parking lot of the Oasis Café. Richard had noticed as they drove west on Interstate Ten that the closer they got to Fort Stockton the heavier Chance's foot got on the gas pedal in front of them.

Boone chuckled. "Someone's in the mood for a greasy cheeseburger. Is this the place you were telling me about?"

"Yep. Food's not too bad, if you order something they have on hand."

They parked in the trailer parking area, climbed from the big pickup, and followed Chance and Clayton Carlisle, Gil James, and Jonah Kirby to the front door of the café. The café was bustling as they walked through the vestibule into the small building. Richard watched Chance as he looked around the establishment. When Chance smiled and seemed to relax a bit, Richard figured he'd found the one he was looking for.

The pretty brunette waitress, who looked to be in her late twenties, appeared, clad in a drab tan waitress uniform. She gave them all a friendly smile, but her dark brown eyes lit up when she noticed Chance.

"Hello, again. How are you?" she asked as she led them to a table and placed the menus in front of them. She seemed surprised when Clayton took off his cowboy hat and smiled up at her as she handed him his menu.

Clayton glanced at her nametag and said, "We're fine, Lydia. How are you today?"

Lydia grinned and said, "Great! What can I get you gentlemen to drink?"

They placed their orders and Richard stifled his amusement when Chance made no secret of watching the shapely waitress walk away. Clayton rolled his eyes at his brother and made small talk with the other men.

When she returned moments later with a laden tray she said, "You two are as identical as you can be."

Chance spoke up. "Yes, ma'am. This is my twin brother, Clayton. It was me and Richard here that you waited on a few weeks ago. I'm surprised you remembered us. It's been a while."

"Only a few weeks. I always remember a friendly face." She glanced out the front window where the trucks and cattle trailers were all lined up. "Hauling cattle again?"

"Yeah," Chance responded with a nod. "Making a run into Colorado."

She talked with them of mundane things for a minute before she was interrupted.

"Lydia!"

She turned her head and looked back at the window behind the counter. She nodded and waved. Turning back to them, she smiled and blushed in embarrassment. "I think my boss is a little hard of hearing. He doesn't mean to be so loud. What can I get you gentlemen?"

The excuse was made kindly, but Richard wasn't completely convinced her boss's rudeness was so benign. It sounded like the same man who had yelled at her the last time they'd been by.

Today, she didn't seem quite so stressed out, though they were just as busy as last time. Once again, there were only two waitresses working the entire diner. She was wearing better shoes and seemed more comfortable doing her job than last time, as well.

"Lydia!"

Lydia repeated their orders back to them with efficient accuracy, took their menus, and excused herself. She hurried to the window and placed their order.

Richard noticed both Chance and Clayton followed her every move with their eyes. He glanced at Boone and caught his arched eyebrow, but he gave no other hint he noticed the interest *both* their bosses were showing in the waitress.

Their food took a while, but when she served them, it was fresh and hot. Chance tried to draw her into conversation, and she answered his questions and made small talk with them as she tidied the tables nearby. She kept glancing at the kitchen window, and Richard realized her boss was watching her every move from the kitchen. He was an older gray-haired man with a perpetual frown on his face.

"Lydia, are you from around here?" Clayton asked as she stood between him and Chance at the head of the table.

Lydia shook her head with a wry smile. "No, I'm from San Angelo. I came here for a job that fell through—"

"Lydia!"

She sighed, but the smile never left her eyes as she murmured, "Pardon me, boys, while I go see about changing my name."

Chance chuckled but cast a hard glance at the kitchen window. "Now don't go doing that. I like Lydia."

Richard suppressed his chuckle at Chance's flirtatious tone. Chance was always serious, while Clayton was usually the one flirting with the ladies.

Lydia smiled and shrugged, saying, "No? Roberta? Ophelia? Maybe Bernardine?"

She snickered as Chance cringed and said, "All nice names, but a lovely name like Lydia suits you."

Richard nearly spewed his Coke when he caught Boone making a gagging face.

Lydia blushed and gestured a thumb at the window and said, "Duty calls, gentlemen. I'll check on you in a few minutes."

* * * *

Kendall wearily climbed from the pickup after parking in front of the ranch house. His day had been long, hot, and tiring. He wanted nothing more than an ice-cold beer, his boots off, and a full belly. His pity party was interrupted by a muffled, thumping sound. A rhythmic sound, like drums. He looked to the house and realized it came from within its walls.

Careful to make no noise on the porch, Kendall climbed the steps and peeked in the front picture window.

Hot, holy, fucking hell.

Kendall's empty belly, aching feet, and tired body were all forgotten. The throb in the thumb he'd smashed with his hammer that afternoon was a distant memory compared to the throb in his rapidly engorging dick as he watched Maya doing housework. They'd asked her not to bother, but there she was, duster in hand, dressed in her snug little stretchy pants and tank top.

He loved the way those pants clung to her curves as she gyrated her glorious, heart-shaped ass to the beat of the music blaring at eardrum-piercing volume inside the house. He grinned, remembering Maya liked her music really loud. She picked up a knickknack and flicked the duster over it before wiping the shelf and replacing the object.

Perfectly balanced on the balls of her bare, dainty feet, she held on to the shelf and shimmied down low to the beat of "Follow You Home," by Nickelback, then rolled her ass on the way back up like an exotic dancer would. He made a mental note to ask her to perform that maneuver for him again later that night, like right in his face, up close.

She must've made good on her desire to take striptease and pole-dancing lessons at the recreation center in San Marcos. That had been

another one of those “go-to guy” moments. It looked like some of those times were going to be of direct benefit to him now.

Stepping back from the window, he reached for the doorknob and turned it. The music blasted through the house, and she must’ve had her eyes closed because she didn’t acknowledge him. Careful not to startle her, he leaned back against the door after closing it and enjoyed his homecoming.

A heavenly aroma permeated the air with the scent of simmering Mexican spices, and two places were set at the dining table with candles. Maya flicked her long hair back, and it flew around her shoulders in shimmering blonde waves as her arms rose above her head in graceful arcs, the duster still held in her fingertips.

His cock twitched eagerly as she swung her ass and gyrated her hips. The heavy beat of the guitar and drums pounded out the rhythm she danced to, and every drop of blood in him surged at the sight she presented. He groaned softly when she dropped the duster on a shelf and slid her hands down her torso and over her hips to her ass cheeks before running her fingers through her hair.

He loved the view from the back, and as if sensing his wish she turned on the balls of her feet and gifted him with the view from her front as she tilted her head back and cupped those beautiful, round breasts in her hands. Her eyes were closed, her lips were parted, and she was utterly enjoying herself.

He almost dreaded the moment when she realized she was no longer alone, because it was obvious she was lost in the music. The song came to its sudden, resounding end, and her eyes flashed open. Her breath caught in her throat, and she smiled as she launched herself at him in complete, unembarrassed abandon.

He caught her and chuckled as she wrapped her arms and legs around him and rained panting kisses on his face.

“Welcome home, honey,” she said with a breathless giggle.

“I’ll say.”

"I have something for you to eat," she murmured with a lopsided grin.

Kendall looked into her twinkling blue eyes and knew she was *not* referring to supper.

It was amazing how quickly a man could forget bone-weary tiredness when properly motivated.

* * * *

The sun was setting as Boone and Richard climbed back into the truck after their last gas stop of the day in Santa Fe. They were stopping for the night there and planned to arrive in Alamosa midmorning the next day.

Richard would've preferred driving through the night so they could be home that much sooner, but Chance and Clayton wanted to pace the trip and not stress the breeding stock in the trailers too much. They wanted them all to arrive in good condition.

They might also be pacing the trip so it would be convenient to stop at the Oasis Café on the trip back, around a meal time again. Richard chuckled to himself thinking of the goofy grin Chance had worn on his face as he'd told a joke on their way out the café's door and Lydia had laughed and blushing smacked him on the shoulder with a menu.

They were not hauling the trailers or any livestock back to the Rockin' C Ranch on the return trip, so their help was not needed. The Carlisle brothers had told them they could head on home from Alamosa.

As far as Richard knew, Chance and Clayton had been bachelors all their lives. Anyone would have to be an idiot not to see the attraction between Chance and the lovely, if overworked, waitress, Lydia. Clayton had been more reserved, but Richard suspected he might be interested in Lydia as well. Prior to living in Divine he

would've thought that was a recipe for disaster. Now he was just curious to see how things turned out.

Boone started the dually's engine and asked, "Did you want to make a stop in Ruidoso on the way back?"

Richard did a mental lockdown, waiting for the pain in his chest at the reminder.

"Sorry, man. I thought you'd want to stop since we did last time we made this run together."

"It's all right. Yeah, I think I should." Richard looked out the side window at the scenery passing in the fading light. Michelle was buried in Ruidoso.

* * * *

"I think I enjoy being a vanilla kind of guy," Kendall murmured as he watched the spoon pass between Maya's lips when she took a bite of his ice cream.

He scooped up another small bite and pressed the utensil to her bare breast and watched as the ice cream dribbled down her satiny flesh, dividing into rivulets around her nipple before he caught the melted dessert with the tip of his tongue.

"I like the tasty bits they add to ice cream, but in this instance—"

"I'm much happier nibbling on your tasty bits," Kendall finished for her before taking her turgid, pink areola in his mouth. Maya panted and squirmed on his lap, where he held her securely.

After greeting him with breathless kisses at the door, following her wildly erotic display, she'd insisted he sit down and *actually* eat his supper. After the chicken mole enchiladas and salad were a delicious memory, Maya had served a bowl of ice cream, gotten a spoon to eat it with, and crooked a finger at him. Dirty dishes forgotten, Kendall had followed her to the back door. She'd removed something from her pocket and laid it on the table beside the glider on the back porch. The sun was setting behind her as she led him to sit

on the glider and he'd watched with growing lust as she lifted her top over her head.

Kendall's cock had responded the way it did any time he was around Maya, which was with surging attentiveness. She'd glanced at his groin and smiled as she'd slipped her snug stretchy pants down her hips. His hands had itched to reach for her smooth curves and draw her to him, but he'd restrained himself, wondering how far she'd go.

Glancing around at the fence line to make sure they were truly alone, he'd been grateful to whoever had planted the thick, tall shrubs in the yard. He would never have allowed her to disrobe on the back porch like this if there were a chance one of the ranch hands might see her.

Eyes back on her, Kendall had watched with appreciation as Maya had unclasped her sexy lace bra and dropped it in the small pile with the rest of the clothing. All that was left was the transparent, lace G-string that had covered her mound.

Unable to resist, Kendall had slid his fingers under the elastic band at her hips and had drawn it down her thighs himself, revealing her damp, bare pussy to his hungry gaze. He'd planted a kiss on her abdomen and had looked up at her, feeling nothing but adoration for her.

Carefully, she'd climbed into his lap and handed him the bowl of ice cream as if she expected him to eat it.

"Your dessert is ready," she'd murmured with a sexy sigh as she'd squirmed in his lap and had gotten comfortable.

He'd been able to tell by the heat in her blue eyes that she'd found her exposed, spread position very titillating. He'd kissed her collarbone and enjoyed the scent of her wet pussy as he'd taken a bite of ice cream.

Maya reached for one of the items from the table, and Kendall realized it was her MP3 player. She clipped it to his shirtfront and placed an earbud in her ear and the other one in his and turned the

player on. At a low level, "Feelin' Way Too Damn Good," by Nickelback began to play. Kendall grinned lazily and dribbled more ice cream over her other breast. He wondered if she understood how much she got to him as he greedily licked more of his dessert off her flesh.

Maya had a gift for staying in the moment with them, and Kendall planned to make sure she felt his full appreciation.

He fed her another bite, grinning with enjoyment as she shuddered when he slid a hand around to grip one of her ass cheeks. His fingertips teasingly slid lower in a tickling touch until they were down her cleft to her spread pussy. He took the spoon from where it was stuck in a scoop of ice cream and licked it, leaving it clean but very cold. She bit her bottom lip and watched him lower the spoon in front of her between her spread thighs.

Kendall smiled with satisfaction when she arched her back and pressed her pussy against his hand while at the same time watching what he was doing with the spoon. He turned the bowl of the spoon upward and slid it slowly through her opened slit, enjoying the strangled moan that escaped her as the cold spoon pressed against her clit.

He raised the copiously damp spoon to his lips and licked it clean of her tangy juices. "Oh, Kendall!" she gasped in a shaky voice then tilted her hips reflexively against his hand.

"Delicious, baby. Again?"

"Yes."

He scooped up another generous bite so the spoon would get cold again and pressed the softened ice cream directly to her nipple, delighting in her little squeal. The last rays of the sun illuminated her shoulders and her opened thighs and glinted through her thick hair.

He licked the spoon and latched on to her cream-covered nipple then touched the cold surface of the spoon to her clit again. He sucked hard on her nipple then lightly nibbled, and she shuddered and leaned against him. All the while Nickelback played through the earbuds.

The spoon was even more drenched as he paused in his nipple play to lick it clean. His woman's pussy was the sweetest dessert he'd ever had.

"Had enough ice cream?" he whispered in a gravelly voice that sounded unlike him. Maya nodded and he returned the spoon to the bowl. She reached for the condom she'd laid on the table earlier, and he tore the wrapper open with shaky hands. He groaned as he rolled it on, watching Maya stroke her clit with a delicate finger.

A new song began to play as he held his cock in position for her. She acknowledged the song change with a very sexy chuckle. The music sounded vaguely familiar but not something he normally listened to. Maya had varied and eclectic tastes in music, and he liked that she wanted to share that part of this experience with him.

His eyes adjusted to the dimmer light as the sun sank fully beneath the horizon and dusk fell. She rose up on her knees as the intro to the tune played and the seductive beat of "Like This," by MIMS throbbed in a syncopated rhythm. At that moment it was definitely climbing his top ten. He held his painfully thick shaft for her and licked the last of the ice cream from her torso as she settled her creamy, wet cunt over his cock. He growled as she teased the tip, pumping up and down as she gripped his shoulders.

She slid on his cock a few inches, groaning quietly as she ground down. What she did to him for the next few minutes would undoubtedly go down as one of his top ten favorite memories. Using the beat of the music as her guide, Maya fucked him into a state near insanity.

The first chorus came around, the female vocalist whispering, "*Baby, do you want it like this, like this, like this...*" and she pumped on his cock in long, slick glides, squeezing his cock with her pussy muscles on every upstroke. Her movements were graceful and unhurried, timed with the beat. He groaned, sure that she was going to rip the orgasm right from his balls, but then she settled down into

shorter strokes with the next verse. She watched him through half-lidded eyes and gave him a sexy little smile.

She tortured him through three choruses of the female vocalist whispering, "*Baby, do you want it like this, like this, like this.*" He didn't remember the song being quite *that* long and felt his control begin to unravel as she whispered along with the final chorus, taking all of his cock with every slippery, tugging stroke.

"Baby, I gotta come," Kendall groaned, way past caring if he sounded like he was begging. Hell, he was *pleading*. Maya smiled at him, and she began panting as if her own control were slipping, too. He stroked her clit firmly, and she let loose a sobbing wail as her pussy liquefied and clenched on his surging cock.

"Oh, God!" she cried out exultantly and slammed down on his dick as he threw his head back and gritted his teeth as his own orgasm hit him. He held her hips tightly and ground up against her with every climactic thrust, his release shooting from his cock in searing, satisfying streams.

"Oh, fuck, yes!"

Maya collapsed against him, and he held her trembling body as they caught their breath. Her pussy fluttered around his cock with aftershocks. Almost as satisfying as the blistering release was the way she melted against him afterward.

She whispered in his ear, "So I take it you like it 'Like This'?"

Kendall chuckled appreciatively at her humor and brushed her wild hair away from her cheeks and kissed her lips.

"As long as you're my exotic dancer, hell yeah."

Chapter Twenty

Boone pulled up beside the Pinon Pine Cemetery, and Richard climbed silently from the cab of the truck. He knew by repetition that Boone would wait in the truck for him and allow him whatever time he needed.

His work boots made muffled crunching steps as he walked over the fine gravel drive and up into the grass. He'd chosen Pinon Pines for Michelle's final resting place on his own since she'd had no close family left alive to make the decisions. Kendall and Boone had brought him to this place to check it out, and even in a raw haze of pain, Richard had known she would like it. The sprawling lawns were maintained neatly and there were plenty of trees to offer shade to visitors.

He walked down the concrete path leading to her section as a hot breeze ruffled his hair. Her marker was easy to spot, hewn from unusual, bronze-colored polished granite and engraved with her last name at the top in bold letters, "Brock."

The color of the marker had reminded him of the walls of the mesas they'd explored while out hiking or taking a drive, and he'd thought at the time that was what she would've wanted.

He stopped in front of the marker and took a seat on the small bench he'd had installed in her memory, holding the bouquet of fresh daisies in his hand.

"Pretty dumb, huh? Bringing fresh flowers to a cemetery."

He'd lost the inhibition about speaking to her grave marker on his first visit here two and a half years ago. The cemetery was always

quiet and deserted on the days he'd come to visit, and it had felt right to talk to her.

He smiled, imagining the twinkle in her brown eyes as she nodded at his statement. She would think it was stupid and a waste of money. She'd said before she died that she couldn't understand why people paid money for cut flowers when they could plant a tree or a rosebush and have a living monument to love, instead of flowers that were already in a dying state.

The cemetery had rules prohibiting plantings at gravesides, otherwise he would've surrounded her with rosebushes and come to tend them every single day. Maybe that was one reason why they didn't allow such things. The living needed to be allowed to move on.

He couldn't bring himself to put silk flowers there. Silk lasted longer, but he wasn't trying to impress cemetery visitors. The flowers were for her and they should be alive, if only for a short time.

The breath-stealing pain of loss and loneliness he usually felt at visiting her grave had lessened somewhat and was now replaced by the low, dull ache of missing her. Her stone wavered in his vision as tears slicked his eyes, and he leaned his elbows on his knees and dropped his head so it hung between his shoulders.

He knew what she would do if she could see him now. She would plunk down in his lap, put her hands on his cheeks, and lift his face to look at her. Then she'd hash out whatever was bothering him. That was why they had been so perfect together. She'd known how to help him put his feelings into words when he sometimes didn't. She had been easy to be around, and she'd made life feel less complicated.

After she'd died, there had been no reason to stay in Ruidoso. He'd left and joined the rodeo circuit for a few years with his brothers, riding bulls. He'd done what needed doing every day, rode with the best of them, but hadn't really been alive. Boone and Kendall had been great, not pushing him to talk unless he wanted to. He'd gradually gotten to where he could wake up in the morning without wishing he'd died, too. It was no loss or hardship for him when the

guys began talking about taking their winnings and heading down to Texas, to the old ranch his dad had left to them when he'd passed on a few years before. He'd known they would end up there eventually and it was better to go now rather than wait until they were crippled by injury or life on the road.

The move had been well-timed, even though rebuilding the ranch had been hard-ass work. The fruits were now becoming visible. The thought of having someone to share his life with there made it even more appealing to him. But *this* still hurt, too. Would the scales ever swing in the other direction, and he could look back and feel only happiness and gratitude for the time Michelle was in his life?

A breeze kicked up and roiled around him, and for a few seconds Richard felt as though he was wrapped up in her arms. Maybe it was only a memory producing the sensation, but he felt it like a comforting hug.

Letting her go three years ago had felt like razor blades shredding his soul. Today, those wounds felt covered over. There was scar tissue that would last a lifetime, but he'd healed and there was no question in his mind that he could move on now.

Serenity leaked into his chest and filled the place that had been painful for so long as he told Michelle all about Maya. Tears made dusty wet blots on the toes of his boots as he let it all out. He told Michelle he was in love again.

* * * *

Boone watched his brother as he made his way back to the truck, almost an hour later, minus the thick bouquet of white daisies he'd carried into the cemetery.

He sighed in relief at the absence of renewed devastation usually showing on Richard's face after these visits. He seemed at peace, judging by the look on his face and the loose, relaxed way he walked. He'd hoped Richard would eventually get to this place where closure

could occur and knew Maya was a big part of it. For a long time after Michelle's death, Richard had seemed like he was one foot in her grave, wishing he could join her.

Richard stopped and looked out over the sprawling green lawns and seemed to take a long deep breath and let it out. He opened the truck door and climbed inside.

Wordlessly, Boone looked over at his brother and smiled then started the truck and headed for the exit. A thought occurred to him as he put some distance between the vehicle and the cemetery. After they were back on the state highway and pointed toward home he glanced at Richard. His brother sat quietly staring off into the distance, but the grief wasn't etched into his features like the last time they'd made a stop to the cemetery.

"I know what you need right now."

Richard turned to him and lifted his chin in a typical mute inquiry.

* * * *

Wednesday after lunch, Kendall and Maya sat at the kitchen table and talked about moving her to Divine permanently.

"I don't think you should list the house with Frank Reeves, Maya, especially not after all the e-mails he sent you."

Maya shook her head. "I have several friends who can handle selling the house for me. We don't have to involve him at all. Morgan had left me detailed instructions of what to do if something ever happened to him."

"Morgan was always good at seeing the big picture and planning ahead."

Maya was relieved when the memory evoked no pain or melancholy, merely a welling of gratitude to her deceased husband. "There was a key to a safe-deposit box in last week's letter." Had it only been last week that she'd received the letter?

"Any idea what's inside of it?"

“No idea. I didn’t even know he had one. We had a big safe at home.”

They decided to return to her house that Saturday morning and pack her essentials and hire a moving company to handle everything else. Maya wondered if her men would be shocked by what she called necessities.

* * * *

That evening, Maya smiled at Kendall as he pulled open the massive inlaid wood door and escorted her in gentlemanly fashion into the entry of O’Reilley’s Restaurant. The luscious aroma of grilled steaks and other cuisine assaulted her senses and made her mouth water. The interior of the waiting area was decorated in typical Texas Hill Country style, with dark red-tiled floors, and long wooden benches along two walls. Large mirrors hung on the walls, and windows looked out onto a walled terrace festooned with foxtail ferns and other greenery.

Kendall nodded at several others who waited in the entryway after giving his name to the hostess. Maya spotted several lingering looks directed Kendall’s way from women in the room, but he didn’t appear to notice. He smiled down at her and kissed her tenderly before greeting another rancher and his wife who’d just come in the door.

Within minutes the entry was filled with a number of couples and groups waiting for tables, and Maya recognized several of them from the assembly she’d encountered outside of Batson’s a few days before. One of the women who had stood staring into the window of Batson’s Grocery Store was with one of the groups. Maya didn’t have to wonder what she was thinking, because it was obvious in the superior, judgmental gaze she cast coolly in Maya’s direction.

She did a mental cringe as she realized she’d forgotten about the note tucked in her purse. It was still there. Not wanting to ruin their evening out, Maya resolved to give it to him later. She took a lesson

from Kendall and ignored the others in the room and focused her attention on him and the conversation he was having with the older couple that had walked up.

“Warner!” the hostess called out.

Kendall placed his hand at her lower back and turned to say his good-byes to the couple as a woman behind her whispered loud enough for Maya to hear, “Which one?”

Maya turned to her, noting her self-righteous posture, and said simply, “*All of them*, of course.”

The woman gasped and sharply elbowed her companion, who giggled and murmured, “Lucky girl.” Maya winked at her and allowed Kendall to lead her forward from the waiting area into the dining room. He quirked an eyebrow at her in inquiry but she shook her head, determined to not let anything ruin their evening.

She was glad she’d brought a dressier outfit, otherwise she would’ve felt out of place. Sometimes she envied her men the simplicity of their clothing choices. The only difference for them between daytime wear and nighttime wear was a little bit of starch in the shirt, a crease in the blue jeans, and a different pair of boots.

Not that she’d minded dressing up for him. She’d felt sexy as she’d slipped into the ass-hugging black skirt with the slit up the side, and the silky, ultrafeminine top that went over it. High, black wedge heels and diamonds at her wrist, throat, and ears set the outfit off perfectly. Kendall’s eyes had been full of admiration when she’d come from the bedroom.

The hostess seated them at their table in the main dining room, and a waitress immediately appeared to take their drink orders. Kendall stroked her hand on the tabletop as they shared a quiet moment looking at their menus.

Maya glanced up at a noise and looked directly into the eyes of a dark-haired woman two tables away. She was seated with her husband and toddler son. The husband followed the woman’s gaze and seemed embarrassed when he glanced back at his wife.

If this was where the rumor-mongering was going to start, Maya was ready for it. They could bring whatever they wanted her way and she wasn't going to back down.

She maintained a level, unashamed gaze in the woman's direction, which evidently served only to incense the woman. She rose from her chair, throwing her napkin down on her empty plate. Her husband laid a hand on her upper arm and directed her gently, but firmly, back into her seat. He murmured something to her as she took out her cell phone and began typing on the keyboard. The man sighed heavily and looked down at his plate as he continued his meal. The little boy babbled on as his mother silently fumed.

"What are you in the mood for, Maya?"

The words were innocently intended, she was sure, but when she turned her gaze on Kendall, he must've seen the heat in her eyes, because he chuckled and placed a hand on her thigh under the table.

She turned her full gaze on him and whispered, "I'd like my dessert first, please. *À la mode*."

Kendall nearly choked on his beer as he took a sip. Whatever the good citizens of Divine had to say about her relationship with these wonderful men was of no interest to her when compared to the love and merriment in his eyes as he wiped his lips with his napkin.

He murmured, "Check, please. We'll take ours *to go*."

Maya laughed softly and caressed his hand resting on her thigh. They were in the middle of the dining room, and she didn't give a rip who saw his hand there. It wasn't like he had it under her skirt, and the slit didn't go past the knee.

The waitress returned with an appetizer and cheerfully told them about the specials and took their orders. It struck Maya as odd the way people, most of them women, moved around the dining room, conversing with each other during their meals. Didn't they know it was rude to interrupt someone when they were trying to eat?

Kendall noticed it, too. "Wonder what's got them all stirred up?"

"Are they normally like this?"

“Well, it’s not unusual for friends to leave their tables and go greet someone, but they’re milling around like this was a cocktail party. *Shit.*”

Maya turned to Kendall as he caught sight of the same dark-haired woman making a beeline toward Maya. “Who is that woman? She was staring at me earlier like she wants to rip my hair out. What is with all these people?”

Maya felt other eyes upon her as the woman drew close.

“She’s a member of the ‘frozen chosen’ as Adam likes to call them. She’s been rude to the girls on a number of occasions.” Maya glanced at Kendall and he looked ready for anything, too. It was a shame it had to be like this.

Just as the woman closed in on Maya, drilling her with her dark eyes and looking ready to say something righteously indignant, her husband caught up to her and placed a firm hand around her upper arm and diverted her back to his side and whispered in her ear. He nodded at Kendall, and they continued on their way. Maya hadn’t moved in her seat and realized she’d been holding her breath for the first salvo fired directly at her.

“Thank goodness her husband has managed to gain some control of her. For a while there, the girls could count on that woman to have something nasty to say to any of them, even Rachel and Juliana, for being friends with Grace, Teresa, and Rosemary. She looked like she couldn’t wait to get her claws into you. Sorry, baby.”

Maya looked at him and smiled. “Who is she?”

“Her name is Elizabeth Owen. She leads a women’s Bible study here in town. She has quite a following. Her opinions about the girls are very vocal, and she has some friends who follow her example. I’m sorry, babydoll.”

“Why do you keep apologizing? You can’t control what she does.” She cast her eyes around the dining room at all the people staring. “Nor can you control their narrow-minded thoughts. I love you, and none of this,” she said, gesturing around the room, “can

change that. I'm here and I'm staying." She'd turned to the woman who'd made the rude comment in the entryway and emphasized the word "staying" as she held her gaze.

Kendall chuckled and squeezed her hand. "I think the Divine Moral Authority has met its match."

The title of the blog came to her mind, and it gave her the creeps to think whoever had written the judgmental, narrow-minded blog was probably seated in this room right now.

"Maya, do you want to leave?"

"Not on your life, handsome."

A shadow passed over their table, and both Maya and Kendall looked up into the faces of an elderly man and his wife. They were both white-haired and looked to be in their seventies.

"Son, you don't know me, but I knew your father, Jack. We grew up together in these parts and used to run wild on Divine Creek every summer. I just wanted you to know we're glad you're back in the area and we hope the ranch is coming along. I also wanted to tell you that not *everyone* in Divine has a damn burr up their asses like some of these folks do in here tonight."

He said the words with a dark, damning look in his eyes as he cast them around the room. Maya was amused to note many folks who had been milling around gossiping were now returning to their tables like puppies with their tails tucked between their legs.

The venerable man continued as his wife stood proudly by his side, holding his hand. "My name's Sherwood Porter. Your dad knew me as Woody. It's *Justice of the Peace* Porter nowadays. Forgive 'em, son, ma'am. Some people are like cattle. They tend to follow aimlessly without thinking where they might wind up."

Casting another dark gaze around the now quiet room, Porter turned kindly eyes on Maya and quietly said, "Welcome to the neighborhood, ma'am. I reckon old Jack would've doted on you for a daughter-in-law. Y'all have a nice evenin'."

“Thank you, judge,” Kendall said as he offered a handshake, which was returned.

So that was Justice of the Peace Porter.

The dining room returned to a more normal-sounding buzz, and the waitress delivered their food a few minutes later. Maya traded bites of her honey-glazed salmon for a taste of his perfectly seared beef tenderloin. The food was so good it almost made up for the rudeness of the restaurant patrons. Almost, but not quite. That didn't mean she was staying away from there, or that she was going to be run out of town.

Kendall groaned quietly when she ate her dessert, which came with a scoop of ice cream, with obvious relish. The heat in his eyes promised he'd be enjoying *his* dessert just as much, as soon as they were alone.

Chapter Twenty-one

Richard denied the urge to floor the accelerator as the truck ate up the distance between Divine and Morehead. He was already going fast enough to get a ticket.

Boone had generously suggested that Richard drop him off at the Divine Creek Ranch and then head over to Discretion to surprise Maya. After a quick shower and shave that's exactly what he did.

He was tensed and ready to jump out of the truck and run up the steps to the boutique as soon as he got there. He sat behind the wheel, taking several deep breaths. He hadn't felt so anxious about a girl since he was a preteen about to ask his first girlfriend to a school dance.

He lifted the wrapped bouquet of red roses from the passenger seat and sniffed them, hoping she'd like them. She wasn't expecting Boone and Richard home until late that evening, so this was going to be a surprise for her.

Sweet scents filled his nostrils as he quietly entered the boutique. The bell rang, and Teresa looked up from the large wooden counter by the door. A wide, surprised smile lit her face, but she remained silent as he put his index finger to his lips. She pointed to the far wall, at a row of tall book cases and mouthed silently, "Over there."

Rachel stood behind a glass-topped counter rearranging...butt plugs and dildos.

Focus, dude.

Rachel looked up at him and grinned as she slid the door on the display case closed. "Hello, sir. Can I help you find something?"

Richard spotted Maya dusting and arranging a bookshelf. Their avid erotic romance reader was probably keeping her eyes open for more bedtime stories in the process.

"I think I've found just what I need."

Maya turned abruptly at the sound of his voice. "Richard!"

He happily held his arms out and caught her as she flew at him. She enveloped him in a delicately scented hug. He pressed his lips to her silky head and held her close. She practically vibrated with happiness as she burrowed close, pressing her breasts against his upper abdomen. He had heaven in his arms. "Hi, honey."

"I didn't expect you back until tonight." She looked up at him, her blue eyes sparkling joyfully. "I missed you so much."

Not caring who watched, Richard lowered his lips to hers in a sweet, slow reunion kiss. By noticeable degrees she turned to putty in his hands as she melted into the kiss. He wanted more than anything else to get her alone and make love to her. Boone was at the ranch with Kendall and would be all day. If they left now they'd have the house to themselves for several hours.

"Can you get away?"

Maya turned and looked at Grace. She'd ridden into Morehead with her that morning.

Grace waved her hand in a shooing gesture. "I'll be fine. Adam is in Morehead doing a job today. I'll let him know, and he'll probably show up when I leave and follow me home. Rachel and Teresa are carpooling it today, too. We'll all get home just fine."

"If you're sure."

"Positive. Go have fun."

Richard handed her the flowers, relieved that they were using a buddy system to see each other safely home.

She smiled as she sniffed them and said, "Richard, they're so pretty. Thank you."

She grabbed her purse, and they said goodbye and were out the door within a couple of minutes.

"It's a bit early for lunch. What would you like to do?"

She turned a gaze on him that left no doubt as to her preference.

"Let's go home."

* * * *

As she sat beside him in the truck on the way home, Richard's aftershave, the scent of his freshly laundered shirt, and his own manly fragrance made her mouth water. She had to suppress the urge to reach out and caress his thigh or do something otherwise inappropriate. She played with the radio for a few minutes, but his body heat and nearness kept distracting her.

"Did Kendall tell you that we're going to San Marcos this weekend to get some more of my things?"

Richard nodded and gave her a very satisfied-looking smile. "He told me this morning. That's the best news I've had since you agreed to come home with him. We're going to take good care of you, Maya."

"Same here, handsome."

She loved being cuddled up to Richard like this, next to his solid strength. Being with him gave her a feeling of peace and comfort. His lovemaking was a mind-bending combination of gentleness and possessiveness. She'd never doubt how much he wanted her because he made it abundantly clear.

Maya sighed happily and placed her palm on his upper thigh. She rested it there for a minute or two while chatting with him. As he talked she lightly slid her hand down his hard, denim-covered leg then swept it back up to the original resting place. She did that several times and each time she inched slightly higher on the return.

Richard shifted slightly, and glancing down, she noted his swelling erection. She almost giggled as her mouth watered at the sight, and she smiled at the sound of his husky exhalation.

"Maya."

She looked up into his pale blue eyes. "Mmm-hmm?"

"Behave."

Or what, big boy? She kept right on stroking that muscular thigh.

It did not escape Maya's notice that despite what he'd said, he didn't lay a hand on hers to stop her caress. If her progress continued, soon her palm would be cupping his cock through his jeans. She varied her palming up and down his thigh with strokes to his inner thigh, keeping him guessing how far she'd go with each pass.

Richard kept his eyes on the road, and she persisted gently as the truck ate up mile after mile of state highway headed homeward.

Finally ready to move on to the next step, Maya traced her hand over his bone-hard cock, delighting in his soft groan. She was happy that he once again didn't stop her. Richard shifted and pressed back against her hand. She took that as permission to continue.

His regular, relaxed breathing turned more and more to panting with each passing minute.

There was more than a tinge of need in his deep voice. "Maya."

"I'm being bad, I know."

"You are."

She increased the pressure on his cock by a minute degree and whispered, "Pull over at the next exit and find a shady spot to park for a few minutes."

Richard regarded her with lust glittering in his eyes. "You are very naughty."

Happy that he was playing along, Maya replied, "I'm a bad girl." She reached behind his silver belt buckle and unhooked it from the tooled leather belt. "I'm feeling naughtier by the minute."

Richard turned onto a county road. There were several treed ranch entries, and he picked one that was overgrown and pulled a short distance down it and parked under a tree. By the time he put the truck in park she had his zipper down and was reaching inside his jeans to stroke his erect cock.

She pushed on his jeans, and he helped her to work them and his boxers down to his thighs. He moaned in surprise when she closed her lips hungrily around his cock. He adjusted the seat back to a reclining position as she crouched on the seat and suckled him. His hands were everywhere all at once, in her hair, stroking her back, and reaching beneath the hem of her sundress. She crooned in gratitude as his fingertips slid beneath the lace of her panties.

He paused and whispered, "Are you wearing my favorites?"

Suckling happily on his distended shaft, she hummed in assent, never missing a beat. His fingertips strayed over her lace-covered mound to the split down the center seam, which left her completely open and vulnerable to his caress.

"You're drenched, honey," he murmured as he stroked the back of her head with his other hand. "Damn, you do that so well. That's perfect." Even though he'd only been gone a couple of days she'd missed his gentle touch and the careful way he handled her.

Maya alternated playing with his balls with stroking his shaft as he came closer and closer to coming. His callused fingertips felt good caressing her wet pussy. He circled her clit with one finger, teasing her, then slid it in just a little before returning to her clit again.

His fingertips touched her jaw. "Stop, honey. I want your pussy now."

With one last, loving lick, Maya allowed him to pull her on top of him. She settled her knees on the seat on either side of his hips and said, "It's a good thing I had a condom, huh?" She reached in her purse and produced one.

Chuckling, Richard sheathed his cock quickly and replied, "It sure is, because I didn't come prepared."

"Well then just prepare to come," she said with a laugh and then a groan as she slid her wet pussy along his cock. They moaned together as the head slid in, right through the split in her panties. Richard was large and always took his time entering her, so it took her several wet up-and-down strokes before he was completely sheathed inside her.

Pleasurable spasms and the aching in her clit told her it wouldn't take much to put her over. She paused to catch her breath and looked into his luminous eyes and whispered, "I'm all yours, Richard. Every part of me. I trust you with everything."

She leaned forward and kissed him as he wrapped his arms around her torso and held her like she was a precious gift. Desire and lust necessitated movement, and she began to grind on his cock as he thrust upward repeatedly. On every upstroke she arched her back and squeezed with her pussy muscles, and he groaned loudly each time.

He stroked her clit with his thumb and drew her lips to his for another deep kiss. His dick felt even harder and bigger inside her, and she creamed as the waves of her orgasm begin to gather. His touch on her clit sent the tension even higher, and she held tight to his shoulders.

"Richard...Please don't stop."

"Not for anything, honey. I want to hear you come for me. Your pussy feels so good. So hot and tight. Come with me, Maya."

Maya watched his handsome, flushed face. His lips parted in ecstasy, he tilted his head back, and the sight of his pleasure sent her over. She cried out and ground harder against him as the first wave hit her.

He pressed more firmly on her clit and thrust up until she nearly bumped her head against the roof of the truck. He let out a loud groan as he pumped hard and filled her cunt with his cum.

Collapsing against him, Maya lay still and caught her breath as she listened to his pounding heartbeat. He could be forceful when he wanted to be. She wondered, not for the first time, what an erotic spanking from him would feel like. Heavy on the pleasure, light on the pain was her guess. Lifting her head, she gazed up at him and saw the twinkle in his eyes.

"I'm very naughty."

He chuckled and replied, "A very naughty girl, indeed. What am I going to do with you?"

She shook her head slowly and smiled. "I don't know. Bad girls usually get punished, don't they?"

"We'll see about that."

He helped her lift off of him, then they cleaned up and got back on the road. She tucked back up to his side and he put his arm back around her and kissed the top of her head gently.

He murmured, "I missed you so much."

"Me, too." He squeezed her and kept driving.

When they got home, one of the Divine Creek Ranch hands hailed him to pass a message along from one of the guys. Maya covered a giggle at his frustrated groan and went in the house. A couple of minutes later he strode up the porch steps looking like a man on a mission.

Richard bolted the front door, closed the front drapes, and then strode down the hall toward her as he unbuttoned his dark blue, long-sleeved denim shirt, his eyes unreadable. She stood gazing back at him trying to decide what she should do first.

He sat down on the end of the bed and toed his boots off while crooking a finger at her. When she stood before him he said, "Strip."

Her pussy clenched with excitement at his gentle but firm tone. She pulled the dress over her head, removed her bra and panties, and placed them neatly on a chair. She stood before him again, her heart pounding wildly in her chest. Hot moisture seeped from her slit as he gazed at her thoughtfully.

"You give yourself to us, to me, unselfishly. The least I can do is give you what you like, what you want." His words were sincere, and the love and receptiveness in his eyes nearly made her heart burst. "Tell me what you like, Maya. I want to give it to you, however you want it."

"I want you to spank me, Richard."

He nodded without hesitation but she knew this would be a stretch for him. She wanted him to understand what erotic spanking did for her.

Morgan had been dominant and stunningly clever in the means he employed to control her at times, to their mutual pleasure. Boone was the same way, which was why they meshed so well together.

Richard was wired differently, making this a bit of a hurdle for him. When he was in control of a moment, there was never any doubt in her mind he was in charge, but that didn't mean he was dominant. Maybe this was why Richard was special to her, he brought something totally different to her life.

Maya motioned to him to scoot forward to the edge of the bed. When there was enough space for her over his knees, she draped herself across his lap. He placed a stabilizing arm over her back as she settled and braced herself with her fingertips and the balls of her feet barely touching the floor.

"I know the mechanics, Maya. I want you to tell me what you like. I'm sorry I have to ask. I should already know."

Rather than dwell on his statement she chose to move on. "It's all right, Richard. I love the slow buildup. Give me a good, long warm-up, then ten good, hard licks. After that back off and alternate light pops to my ass with spanking my pussy. *Very, very* lightly on my pussy." It felt odd to give instructions to someone she felt so submitted to, regardless of whether he was dominant or not.

He rubbed both globes of her ass, squeezing and massaging them until they felt pleasantly warm. His rough hands felt wonderful, and she looked forward to what came next. His open hand landed with a light pop on the fleshy part of her ass cheek. In quick succession, Richard alternated between both cheeks and her upper thighs, careful to never strike her tailbone, hips, or lower back.

A sensual wave of heat spread through her ass and mound as his strikes became firmer. Finally, he said, "One," and counted out each solid stroke. Tension built higher within her, and the impact of each pop to her ass cheek vibrated in her clit. Her pussy convulsed and her inner thighs became slick. She hissed with the final pop and moaned in rapture as his hand made gentle impact with her pussy.

Now the sweet torture would begin, or so she'd thought, before he suddenly stopped. His hand strayed back to her swollen cunt, and his fingers drifted fluidly through all her abundant moisture. His growl was a deep, almost animalistic sound, and her pussy clenched tightly on his fingers when he slid two inside her easily.

"I'll be damned."

It dawned on her that Richard had just found out what he actually needed to know. Erotic spankings got her hot in a major way. It didn't matter that it was kinky or that mild pain was involved.

She almost shouted in triumph as he withdrew his finger and resumed the erotic spanking. Each stroke to her pussy took her higher and higher. She began arching to meet his hand, eager for each one as a ball of fire consumed her from the inside out.

When she shifted, she noticed his erection was thick and hard against her waist and knew without a doubt he was fully on board with erotic spanking. She parted her legs and the next soft impact landed on her clit and stayed there. Moaning, she writhed as he focused his caresses over and around her clit.

"Yes, Richard. Oh, yes!"

She couldn't wait to feel his cock thrusting inside of her. As if he'd read her mind, Richard thrust two fingers inside her cunt again and continued rubbing her clit as he stroked in and out of her pussy. She grasped his pant leg and bucked against his tight invasion until the tension broke and her orgasm hit her hard.

Her body was a limp noodle when the orgasm receded, but Richard kept stroking her pussy lips gently. The tension soon returned, and she wanted him inside her when she came again.

Carefully, she sat up with his help, feeling euphoric and wobbly.

"You okay?"

She caressed his jaw and kissed him, whispering, "So much better than okay, honey."

She slipped his unbuttoned shirt from his massive shoulders as he stood and removed his jeans and boxers. She retrieved another

condom from the bedside table and drew him into the living room. "Can I sit in your lap?" she whispered, pointing to his large, comfortable-looking chair. The one he'd rocked her in the day she'd been bitten by the rattlesnake.

He sat and drew her to him so she straddled his thighs with her ass perched on his knees. She caressed his balls while he sheathed his cock then he tilted her face so she would look in his eyes.

"Honey, I could see for myself how much the spanking turned you on. Next time you want one, tell me, and I'll be happy to deliver it. You don't have to be naughty in order to get what you need."

Maya giggled and whispered, "But, Richard, provoking you is half the fun."

Richard smiled and groaned as she slid her satiny pussy back and forth over his shaft and replied, "Well, all right then. Although I don't really call what you pulled in the car provocation."

"But it was definitely an invitation."

Glad they were on the same page, Maya lifted up and put her arms around his neck. He positioned his cock at her slick opening and sighed blissfully as she slid down on him.

"I can't describe to you just how good you feel, Maya."

"Do you like my pussy?"

Richard groaned as he thrust. "I love your little pussy."

She reveled in the feel of his strong hands gripping her hips as he guided her up and down on his cock. She kept her eyes focused on Richard's face. He rubbed his thumb gently over her clit, and the orgasm blossomed within her, fluttering and growing. It would overtake her in seconds.

"I feel it coming. I'm so close, Richard," she crooned triumphantly.

"Me, too, honey."

Resting her cheek on his shoulder as they continued moving together, she closed her eyes and imagined how the two of them looked right now with her astride him and his cock sliding in and out

of her drenched pussy. He was so thick and hard. It must be a wonderful sight.

The orgasm slammed into her, and she threw her head back and screamed in joy. His arms tightened around her as he thrust powerfully several times before becoming motionless with a growl. He held her tight, and his body practically vibrated with his orgasm.

When he finally spoke a few minutes later, Richard said, "You let me know if there's anything else you want me to try, okay?"

Maya had to suppress her laughter. "I'm so glad you're good with kinky."

They rested together in the chair, his arms holding her securely. Once again he rocked her gently. The feeling was so peaceful and calming she wanted to stay that way, still intimately connected all afternoon. Eventually he did withdraw, needing to ditch the condom. He helped her up and put her in their bed.

"I'll be right back."

Richard returned a few minutes later balancing a tray and two bottles of water. The tray held sandwiches and fruit he'd hurriedly cut up.

"You made us lunch in bed." She propped up the pillows against the headboard and took the tray from him as he climbed into the bed still gloriously naked.

He cuddled her to him and said, "I figured you had to be hungry and thought you'd like a picnic."

He popped a grape in her mouth and handed her a sandwich, then opened her bottle of water for her.

"Maya, can I ask you something?"

"Anything," she replied before taking a bite of her sandwich.

"Are we wearing you out? Physically, I mean? Are you making love with us this often because you're trying to keep up?"

Maya smiled at him and said a silent prayer of thanks for the way he blessed her heart. After swallowing, she replied, "I don't feel worn out, or put-upon, or any of those things, Richard. I see the love in

your eyes and I...just want you. I experience the way you three sweethearts take care of me, and I want to be with you, all over you, loving you, touching you, and doing my best to devote all of me to you. I can't look in your eyes and not desire the loving care you give me."

"So you're not just doing it to keep us happy."

"Of course, I want you happy. But I do it because it makes me happy, too." She ended her statement with a yawn. The temperature outside was blazing, and that plus their playtime made her want a nap in the cool air-conditioning. Good, hard orgasms did that to a girl.

"Well, right now it looks like you need a rest."

They finished their lunch and he returned the tray to the kitchen. When he climbed back in the bed, Maya noticed he was almost fully hardened again.

"I think you should nap," he said when she reached for him.

"We have all afternoon. I plan to nap, but first I want to play some more. I really, *really* missed you."

He chuckled and pulled her under him. "You're insatiable."

She giggled and replied, "The love of a good man will do that to a woman."

He sheathed his cock quickly and groaned when she wrapped her legs around his waist. His solid weight felt indescribably good above her. She moaned when he flexed his hips and nudged her with the tip of his cock. It was pure bliss the way he entered her, stretching her slowly and filling her to practically bursting.

Richard and Maya made love with slow, leisurely strokes until they were both consumed in a fiery burst of ecstasy. After they'd recovered, Richard left the bed to dispose of the condom. When he returned she was already drifting toward sleep.

He got into the bed and pulled her on top of him, her legs splayed on either side of his thighs and pulled the sheet up to her hips.

"Maya?"

"Hmm?"

“Loving you has healed me. Thank you.”

Maya lifted her head from his chest and gazed into his luminous eyes. “I think we healed each other, Richard.” Her lips trembled as he pulled her closer and kissed her so tenderly tears leaked from her eyes. These tears were happy tears. She nestled to him and he caressed her back in slow, hypnotic strokes.

“I swear your skin is like silk under my fingertips.”

* * * *

Boone returned home with Kendall that afternoon. The drapes on the front windows were drawn and the house was quiet, dark, and cool when they entered.

Kendall silently followed him down the hallway to the master bedroom. The door was open, and he smiled in satisfaction when he looked inside and saw them. Richard was crashed hard, and Maya was asleep, sprawled on top of him, her head on his shoulder. They faced each other as though they’d fallen asleep talking or perhaps looking at each other.

Her hair was spread all around her creamy shoulders and Richard’s chest as though he’d been playing with it. Boone thought of how many times they must’ve made love if they were so deep asleep at this time of the day. He could make out the shape of her lush, heart-shaped ass through the sheet and his cock stirred.

“Beautiful,” Kendall whispered reverently before turning to him. “I don’t want to wake either one of them.”

“Looks like they wore each other out.”

Boone pulled the door closed, and they spent a few minutes together talking and making supper.

After a big pot of spaghetti and garlic bread were ready, Boone returned to the still-reposing sleeping beauties. Maya had kicked off the sheet so nothing about her position was left to the imagination.

Sitting on the edge of the bed, he slid his hand gently down the smooth skin of Maya's back to the upper swell of her exposed buttocks. The sight of her and that simple touch was enough to get him completely hard. It was going to be difficult waiting for bedtime.

She reacted to his touch, arching against his hand, which pleased him very much. He turned his hand and let the tops of his fingers trace back up her spine. She shuddered, sighed, and made a blissful, kittenish little sound designed to torture his libido.

After a few moments of repeated up-and-down caresses, she turned her head and opened her eyes. When she saw him she smiled so happily he thought his heart would burst. She untucked her right hand and slid it across the bed to him and whispered, "Hi."

Twining his fingers with hers he responded, "Hi, baby."

"Welcome *home*."

God, was it ever a good welcome home, there in her eyes and her smile and the languorous, sleepy quality of her voice. That was home.

"We made supper."

"You did? After doing all that driving you had to fix your own supper. Poor baby." She put her lip out in a sleepy little pout and added, "I should've had something ready for when you got home."

"That's okay. I'll claim my payment after supper."

Her eyes got bigger but then she smiled sexily at him. "Guess what I got this afternoon." He could tell by the wicked twinkle in her eyes that she was not referring to the red roses Richard had picked up for her at Merritt's on their way through town earlier.

"What did you get, baby?"

Revealing that he, too, was awake, Richard cleared his voice and said, "She got a spanking for being a naughty girl."

Boone's eyebrows arched up. *Richard?* Richard had given Maya a spanking?

Maya giggled and said, "Yup. I was a badly behaved girl. I had it coming."

Richard chuckled. "That's not all she had coming."

Boone's hand itched to glide over her ass and inspect it, feel the heat if any remained. He knew Richard would be very careful with her and doubted that any redness had lingered.

Richard stretched his big body, with her still sprawled on top of him, then he helped her to sit up. After she kissed Richard one last time, she climbed off and went to Boone.

"I haven't given you a proper welcome yet, have I?"

"I'll take a kiss for now. The 'proper welcome' can wait until later tonight," he said, drawing her to him for a long, deep kiss and a hug. His hands strayed all over her body as he kissed her, finding her silky, hot cunt drenched with her juices. She gasped against his lips and moaned when he slid two fingers into her pussy and stroked very gently then added his thumb against her clit. He meant it to stop at a kiss, but what the hell.

"Oh, Boone. You're going to..."

"I'm going to what?" he asked as she wound her arms around his neck. Her hips flexed against his hand, moving with the same steady rhythm he employed.

"Oh, God. Boone, I'm going to..." Her voice was cut off by her groan. He growled with satisfaction as her pussy tightened like a vise around his fingers. Now *this* was a proper welcome home: the feel of his woman about to come just from the touch of his fingers.

"You're going to what, baby?" The fluttering of her orgasm started around his fingers and Boone wanted to beat his chest in triumph.

"I'm coming! Oh, Boone! Yes!" Her cries were sweet music to his ears as her pussy quaked and convulsed on his fingers, drenching his hand with her cum. She was so beautiful in the way she surrendered to him, her cheeks flushed and her lips rosy from his kiss, parted in ecstasy. When she stilled she looked up at him and smiled, her eyes half closed, looking very satisfied. She bit her lower lip and sighed when he slid his fingers to his mouth and licked her cum from them. She was sweet and tangy like a ripe apricot.

“Luscious, baby.”

Someone’s stomach growled and they both looked up and realized that all four of them were still in the room together. Richard watched with lazy contentment on his face, although his semi-erect cock was telling another story. Kendall looked enthralled and ready to jump in the bed, too.

Maya sighed happily and said, “It’s time to eat, I guess.”

Boone adjusted the bone-hard cock punching at his fly and said, “Don’t tempt me, Maya.”

Chapter Twenty-two

That Friday night, Boone groaned as he watched Maya step onto the dance floor with the girls at The Dancing Pony. Ever since their return to Divine Thursday afternoon, she couldn't walk through a room without inspiring a hard-on for him. Her most innocent touch or look had him thinking evil, lascivious, dominating thoughts. She never held back from him or his brothers.

She was delightfully playful, fun-loving, and sweetly submissive when the time was right. She kept up with them tirelessly and brought more happiness into his life than he'd experienced in a whole lifetime.

She'd hung out at Discretion with Grace during the week, which Boone knew Grace's men appreciated, especially on the drive to and from Morehead. There had been no other incidents, and Boone hoped it stayed that way for all the women's sakes.

His cock hardened to epic proportions as he watched Maya saunter forward with the girls. He'd heard in Technicolor detail from Kendall about her dance in the living room.

She was straight-up the hottest woman he'd ever known, and she was *his*. That was part of her gift. Each of his brothers felt the same way—she was *his*. Somehow she managed to fill different needs they each had for a woman. She gave Kendall the sweet, teasing love he craved, she gave Richard understanding, tenderness, and quiet acceptance, and she gave Boone her submission and undeniably kinky side. She gave them all her love.

Ethan must have been in a mood for oldies tonight as “American Woman” by The Guess Who pumped old-school electric guitar over

the speakers. The energy level in the night club rose as the dance floor flooded and others watched the girls dance.

The girls were all attractive in different ways, but Maya stood out amongst them, like a siren calling his name. Boone grinned as he caught a glimpse of Juliana Peterson on the dance floor. He remembered a time when Ash Peterson had almost pounded his ass for trying to take off with his woman for a dance.

Boone hadn't minded poaching too much back in the day and recalled with only a small amount of embarrassment that he'd had similar prurient thoughts about Teresa Palacios before he'd found out she was engaged to Angel Martinez and his brother, Joaquin.

Now, here they were having finally found the right woman for them. Maya was dressed up for them in a new outfit she'd brought home from Discretion that afternoon.

His cock jumped for joy at the recollection of her showing it off before they'd left for the club. The simple but sexy low-cut red dress ended just above her knees. It clung to her curves like a second skin and made him wish this was the end of the evening instead of the beginning.

Because he'd done an up-close inspection, he knew the seams running up the backs of her stockings were bright red to match her garter belt and made her legs look ten feet long before disappearing into her red stilettos. Generously, Maya had allowed him to assist in picking out her panties, so he knew she was clad in a miniscule cherry-red satin G-string that was mostly elastic and a cute little bow.

Her blonde curls bobbed around her shoulders as her arms arced through the air, her body keeping an undulating counterpoint to the rhythm of the music. He felt another surge of gratitude to Morgan for encouraging her when she'd decided to take striptease and pole dancing lessons. Maya had told Boone that instead of laughing, Morgan had arranged the lessons for her as a birthday gift. She must've been an A-plus student.

Boone tensed when he saw a man reach out a hand from where he sat at a table next to the dance floor. The object of his reach was Maya. Before Boone could make a move, Eli Wolf grasped the guy's wrist and eased him back into his chair. Quick words were shared between the two, and the guy held up his hands in apology.

Boone was grateful to Eli and knew he'd have done the same thing for him since Eli's wife, Rachel, was on the dance floor, too. He liked being part of an extended family that looked out for each other.

"Now that's some karma for your ass, right there, Warner," Ash Peterson said in a gravelly, amused-sounding voice. "Lucky for that guy Eli was nearby, otherwise I have a feeling the poor sap would have his arm stuck up his ass right now."

Boone looked over at Peterson and had to laugh. Yeah, he probably would've been involved in a brawl tonight if not for Wolf's astuteness. "Yup."

"Juliana is enjoying getting to know Maya. She fits right in with them, doesn't she?"

Boone knew he meant in general, but Boone had to agree on the larger scale, too. The group of women who occupied the dance floor were a breed unto themselves. Beautiful, smart, independent, sassy, sweet, and self-confident.

The one other thing they all had in common was that they inspired single-minded devotion in the hearts of their men. Whether it was one, two, or three men didn't seem to matter. He knew this because he saw it in the eyes of their men as they watched them dance.

Maya turned as she danced, shaking her succulent ass to the beat of The Guess Who song until it faded, only to be replaced by another oldies hit. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw Ethan Grant and Evan Garner make a move toward the dance floor as "Some Kind of Wonderful" by Grand Funk Railroad started to play. The girls moved to the new beat for another girls' dance.

Fuck this! Enough torture!

Boone patted Ash on the back and said, "I'm not missing my chance, Ash."

Ash chuckled and strode with him to the dance floor to claim his woman, too. Juliana crooked a finger when she noticed Ash's approach and allowed him to catch her to him on the dance floor.

Maya sinuously molded herself to Boone as he came up behind her and allowed him to turn her and pull her into an intimate dance embrace with his thigh between hers.

"You read my mind, Boone. I could practically feel the heat from here, looking into your eyes. You're very hard," she murmured up close.

"And you're very soft," he said near her ear.

When I hold her in my arms,

You know she sets my soul on fire.

Oooh, when my baby kisses me,

My heart becomes filled with desire.

He slid his hands down her back to her hips and her ass, directing her in a dirty dancing move that had her pressed so close to his cock he could feel the heat between her legs. Her lids shuttered and he heard her low moan as he rubbed his thigh against her apex with each step.

When she wraps her lovin' arms around me,

About drives me out of my mind.

Yeah, when my baby kisses me,

Chills run up and down my spine.

Maya returned the favor and pressed her mound against his erection and flexed her hips as they moved. For a split second he thought he might lose control and begin humping her right there on the dance floor. His friends had their girls in similar clinches all around them as they moved to the beat of the song.

Boone smiled when he noticed Ethan dancing with Grace at a more subdued pace than they normally took. Ethan seemed even more entranced by his lovely wife. Boone was glad for her that she was

able to come to the club, thanks to the city ordinance banning smoking in public places, including The Dancing Pony. He had a feeling she would've been banned from the club by her overprotective husbands if that hadn't been the case.

"Are you happy we're going to get your stuff tomorrow?"

"Yes, there are some things I've been missing." Her tone hinted they were also things *he* would miss if he only knew what they were.

"What kinds of things?"

"All kinds of good things. My lingerie. My books," she said with a small smile. The little tease was building him up to better things.

"Oh, yeah?"

"My...toys."

Fuck, yes!

His voice seemed deeper than normal as he responded, "You have a toy collection?" The Dom in him reared his head, wanting to know what kinds of naughty toys she played with. What he wouldn't give to tie her down on the bed and experiment with them right now.

"Yes, Boone. I have a *wonderful* collection." And didn't his cock just fucking tingle all over at the thought. "Plus, other things."

"Like what, baby. Tell me."

Maya bit her lower lip. Boone gasped her hips firmly and pressed his lips to the satiny flesh beneath her ear. She turned her lips to his ear and said, "A violet wand."

His body locked down suddenly for fear of coming right there on the spot. Control was maintained by the thinnest thread.

"*God, I love this woman,*" he whispered as he squeezed her.

Her lips tilted to his ear again. "I also have a St. Andrew's Cross. And a bondage sling. And..."

"And?"

"Lots and lots of soft, luxurious cotton rope."

Marry me!

"Baby. Do you like rope play?" Chills ran up and down his spine at the thought of the satisfaction he would take in restraining her in a

series of intricate knots. Maya helpless, at his mercy. Tied for his pleasure.

"Morgan had agreed to take classes in it. We'd only taken a couple before...The rope is all still in its packaging."

"You never played with anyone else?"

"No. His instructor called to offer, in a nice way. He said if it was something I *needed*...I could call on him. I wasn't ready and he didn't push it. He was a very kind Dom, but it would've felt wrong. The domination meant nothing to me without the love undergirding it. I want it with you if you're willing."

A low growl welled in his throat at the thought. "I'm way past willing, baby. I'll look into classes." Rope play was not something to take lightly or enter into without knowing what he was doing. He'd never put her in danger with his overconfidence.

"What are you thinking about now? Is it scaring you to know how kinky I am?"

Boone shook his head. "No, I'm thinking about where I can take you tonight that we can have some kinky fun without being overheard."

"The creek?" He could plainly see the eagerness in her eyes.

"I'd have to improvise."

"I'd love to see how you *improvise*."

Boone chuckled and started making a list in his head of what he would need. "It would mean getting back home a little late."

"That's okay. It would be an adventure."

The list grew in his head.

* * * *

"Lord have mercy. What was I thinking when I suggested this?"

"Excuse me?"

Uh-oh. She'd said that out loud?

"Oh, I—uh."

“Tsk, tsk.”

Improvise. He'd said he needed to improvise and I thought that was a great idea. I should've known the Dom would rear his evil head and think of ten different ways to torture me!

“I'm sorry, Boone. I'll be—

Boone gently flicked the clothespins attached to her nipples. The evil genius smiled as the sensation shot a bolt of electricity straight to her clit. She shuddered remembering what it would feel like when he removed them later.

“...and you're still talking. Do you need the gag?”

Maya slammed her lips shut and shook her head vehemently. She hated the gag. Morgan had never minded wiping up her drool afterward, but she despised it. In the dim light of the LED lanterns, Boone grinned at her, and the shadows made his grin appear almost sadistic.

Her body shook with need as she watched the shadows and light flicker off his muscular bare chest. Lucky for them there was a good breeze and the bugs were not bad down by the briskly flowing creek. Lucky for her, especially, because he had her bound by all four limbs to the trees in the little copse they'd trysted in before by the creek.

She lay spread on a thick blanket, soft rope fixing her ankles and wrists to the nearby trees so that she was spread-eagle for his pleasure, or torture as the case may be.

“Remember, no talking unless I ask you a direct question. I'm giving you grace for that utterance, but I'll have to punish you, sweet little sub, if you speak again without permission.”

She nodded and glanced nervously at the gym bag he'd just unzipped. Her lips trembled as he rifled around in it. He glanced up at her and smiled when she made a point of pressing her lips together. She pleaded with him nonverbally but didn't shake her head or make a sound.

"That's my good girl. I guess I'll leave the gag in the duffel for now." He removed several other things from the bag but placed them behind it so she couldn't see what he'd brought with him.

He rose and circled until he stood between her spread, naked thighs. The smile on his face was a heart-pounding combination of lust, dominance, and control. She could tell just how much he was enjoying himself by that smile and the tremendous bulge at the fly of his jeans. He knelt to check the restraints at her ankles, slipping a finger in to make sure they weren't cutting off her circulation.

"I have you right where I want you. Don't I?" He glanced at her, but she caught herself and didn't say a word. He smiled at her. "Do you like being tied up outside? You can answer with a nod or shake of your head."

She nodded slowly with a definite up-and-down motion. *Oh, do I ever!*

"The breeze feels good on your bare skin. You feel even more naked, don't you?"

Another nod.

His callused palm rode up her inner thigh, straight to her pussy, and covered it with his palm for a few seconds. He lightly flicked the clothespins again, and she shuddered at the zing that shot from her nipples to her clit and back again.

"You especially like the breeze blowing on your open pussy. It makes you hotter and wetter even though it's relatively cool down here." His hand felt hot on her tingling flesh as he just barely touched her.

She nodded again.

He looked around into the darkness surrounding them. The music of the creek was the only sound she could hear besides her pulse and his regular breathing. "It's so dark tonight. We'd never know if someone snuck up on us and watched while we play."

She tried hard not to thrust her pussy against his hand at the thought. Her cunt ached for him to increase the pressure against her

clit, to fill her, but she knew she'd have to wait. Maybe quite a while, in fact.

"You're creaming for me at the thought, aren't you? You may answer with a nod."

Her response was not as smooth as before as she answered affirmatively. She trembled all over.

"Good girl," he crooned. "Verbally tell me your safe word. Remember my instructions."

"Rainbow, sir. It's rainbow."

He'd told her she could have her choice of calling him sir, master, or just plain Boone. He explained that he didn't worry about high protocols but wanted to help her stay in the proper mind frame. She'd called Morgan her master and felt uncomfortable calling Boone by the same title, but Boone was too informal for times like this. She thought about calling him liege but was afraid she might earn punishment for her glibness.

"Good, Maya. Use it if you need to."

She remained still, and he smiled with pleasure and stroked her pussy lightly one last time.

He retrieved a clear plastic bottle from his collection beside the bag and began smoothing clear oil up and down her thighs in a thin layer. His hands massaged and rubbed in smooth strokes, and she imagined he could see her pussy dripping and gleaming in the dim lights surrounding them. The thought made her pussy swell even more. He worked his way up, avoiding her pussy altogether, and oiled her abdomen, chest, arms, and saved her aching breasts for last.

He massaged them gently until an orgasm began to coil distantly within her and her pussy clamored to be filled. Without warning he removed one clothespin and soothed the nipple with his warm tongue as she moaned at the sensation. That nipple felt twice its normal size as he released it. She would've covered the other with her hands, knowing what came next but couldn't because of the restraints. She

hissed as the pin was released, and he gently soothed her other nipple with his mouth as well.

“Good girl,” he said as he released it and sat up.

Boone returned to the gym bag and pulled out a white jar candle and lighter, and she wanted to jump up and do a victory dance. Morgan had asked once if she wanted to try wax play, and she'd said yes, but they'd never gotten around to it. She remembered hearing a friend in San Marcos talk about experiencing it at a club in Austin. The dazed, dreamy look in her friend Charlotte's eyes as she'd recounted the experience had convinced Maya that it was something she wanted to try eventually.

Boone rose to stand away from her and lit the candle and dropped the lighter back in the bag. This must've been why he'd placed an old sheet over the blanket before having her lie down on it. For a minute he tested dribbling the wax on his own bare arm, getting an idea of the distance he'd need to hold the candle at in order for the drips to cool enough before striking her skin so she didn't burn. She stretched and relaxed her muscles, contented that he was looking out for her well-being.

He turned to her and said, “This candle burns cooler than a taper would. Use your safe word if you need it. I'm very serious. I don't want you blistered.”

He dribbled a bit of the wax on her instep, starting at a less sensitive area. The heat, in contrast to the cool breeze made her gasp, but it didn't burn.

“Maya. For this exercise you may not speak, but you can make all the noise you want. You may nod or shake your head to any of my questions.”

Maya nodded and mewed softly, anticipating the next drip on her calf as he moved up her leg. The drip was warm and cooled quickly on her skin.

“A little closer, maybe?”

Maya nodded, and he lowered the candle a minute degree. He created a crisscross pattern up and down her thighs adjusting the height of the candle and checking periodically that the drips were not too hot. Her skin beneath the wax pattern felt even more sensitive as the breeze blew over her and cooled each hardening ribbon.

He kept the wax completely away from her pussy, and she wasn't entirely sure if she was happy or sad about that. He had a good control on the temperature of the wax as he dripped it on her, and she was curious what the splash of heat would feel like on her clit, but she held her tongue. Boone watched her expression closely as he continued, a smile on his face.

"Close your eyes, baby. In case there are splatters." She obeyed immediately, and not seeing where he was headed increased her sensitivity and excitement.

He moved upward from her thighs to her arms and created a matching pattern there then proceeded to decorate her abdomen and torso. She gasped in pleasure as he painted her breasts in wax moving in a circular pattern, drawing inward, closer and closer to her nipples. Her breasts felt like they were swelling, and her nipples peaked tightly as the wax landed closer and closer to them. She bit her lip and moaned as he switched to the other without dribbling any on her nipples. The scent of vanilla wafted lightly on the breeze.

"You're being a good girl, Maya. So still while I paint you. I wish I'd brought my camera so I could take your picture once I finish. Next time I'll be better prepared and have candles intended for wax play in different colors. You could be a piece of living art, and I'll take your picture to keep and enjoy forever."

Her pussy pulsed at the thought, and she moaned and nodded. *I'd love that.* With every word of his mouth he made love to her as though he were touching her.

The dribbles circled and drew closer and closer to her nipples, and she panted trying to stay still. She kept her eyes closed and wanted to scream as he took his time.

"Have I told you how much I love your beautiful body?"

Yes, baby, but tell me again.

"Mmmm," she moaned, trying to express that sentiment without words.

"The lovely swell of your ass, right at your hips, begs for my kisses and nibbles. The backs of your knees and your ankles want my caresses. The shape of your breasts is so round and perfect, and just the right size to overflow my hands as I hold them when I take you from behind. And your nipples..." The wax dribbled in little splats directly on her left nipple then stopped as she vocalized.

"Oh..." Her voice trailed off, knowing she was perilously close to speaking. She bit her lip to keep herself from going further. Where they were right now was too precious to her to risk changing the mood with punishment. Not that punishment from him would be all bad.

"Close, baby. Good recovery. This is our first time playing and I'm feeling very magnanimous. Where was I?"

At my nipples. My nipples! Somehow she kept from arching her back in offering to him. A ball of tension grew inside her, centering in her pelvis. He hadn't forbidden her from coming, but he had from speaking, so she remained mute, knowing she was very close to one or the other.

"Ah, yes. Your nipples. I could lick these perky little nipples for an hour."

The wax dripped down in heavy beads directly on the extra sensitive tips, and her lips parted in a wail. He crossed over to the other nipple and gave it the same warm attention.

"Yes, baby. I want to hear you. I love the sounds you make." As he said it, she felt the trail of wax slowly move to the center between her breasts and begin to descend warmly down her midline, headed straight for her slit.

Oh, God! Would he?

Her eyes were closed, but she heard him change position as he stepped on the sheet between her knees. The wax trail slowly continued its course down her center and over her abdomen. Tension redoubled in her body and her orgasm boiled seismically inside her. Inches, only inches remained until the wax landed on her clit. Closer and closer. Her hands fisted and her eyes squeezed shut tightly. Wax pooled just barely above her mound before spreading in rivulets to her hips, and she tilted her hips, poised and ready to explode.

She heard a barely perceptible puff and a scream flew from her throat as Boone's hot mouth descended ravenously on her pussy. His tongue, his lips, and then his fingers were everywhere all at once. The muscles in her thighs seized as she pulled on her restraints, and her orgasm erupted inside of her with such intensity that stars and static filled her brain.

When she opened her eyes, it was to find that her restraints were gone, as well as the dried wax and the old sheet. She now lay wrapped in Boone's arms, breathing normally and covered with a small, fuzzy throw blanket.

"You shivered a bit after I removed all the wax from your skin. How do you feel?"

"Incredible." She snuggled closer to him, and he drew her into a snug little ball against him and held her securely. "Did I faint?"

Boone's smile was so warm and tender she nearly cried as she looked into his dark eyes. "Yeah, you were out for just a couple of minutes. I've never enjoyed a scene more than this one, tonight. You're amazing."

"You were great with the wax. It never got so hot I couldn't handle it."

"You have a couple of red streaks I want to check later."

"Great improvisation, Boone. I enjoyed it very much. How about you? Did you want to continue...sir?" She hesitated for a second. Maybe she should've been calling him sir and responding the way a sub should? She bit her lip.

Boone smiled and smoothed her brow with his fingertips. "No worries, little sub. I like that your thoughts right now are about pleasing me. But like I said, the way you submit means more to me than mere words. Right now I just want to make love with you. I was a bit tense about the wax play."

"Well, I don't have any experience with it prior to tonight but I loved it. You know I love being restrained, too."

She pushed off the blanket, and he sat up to check a spot on her thigh and another on her inner arm. A faint red streak remained, but the areas didn't hurt at all. He lifted her arm and kissed the spot and then kissed the other red mark on her thigh.

"I hope I didn't blister you. I don't want to mar your skin."

"I think it'll be fine. I have another spot you can kiss," she murmured with a chuckle.

Boone responded with a husky growl, dove on top of her and tickled her lightly as he worked his way down her body. She wiggled in his arms until he stopped tickling and instead pressed kisses in a hot, moist path between her breasts down to her abdomen and beyond.

"Oh, yes." She arched her back and sighed with pleasure as his lips and warm tongue licked at her pussy again. She reached down to feather her fingers through his short, sandy-brown hair and shuddered deliciously at the prickle of his short beard against her sensitive, bare pussy.

He licked in leisurely fashion as though he planned to stay there all day and grinned at her from between her thighs when she started to sound particularly needy. Her pussy convulsed and demanded to be filled, not teased.

Maya caressed his cheek and whispered, "Boone, please. I *need* you."

Boone released her hips and sheathed his cock. He prowled over her, kissing here and there, leaving a damp trail of her juices from his lips until he reached her throat. He kissed and suckled on her earlobe before shifting so he could gaze in her eyes. The teasing was over,

and his eyes shone with love and desire. The Dominant from earlier was replaced by a vulnerable, loving man.

"I love you. I need you, too," he whispered as he settled on top of her and pressed his lips to hers in a kiss that she thought might melt her bones, it was so sweet and intense.

Normally, Boone was her intense, almost forceful lover, and she liked that about him. He enthralled her now, stroking her gently with his tongue and his fingers until she thought she might cry from the tenderness of his touch. She knew Boone was vastly capable of this kind of emotional lovemaking, but it still floored her to be on the receiving end of it.

His breathing was deep and regular as he held her down with his solid, muscular body and kissed back down between her breasts and then back up the other side of her throat.

"You're everything to me, baby. Everything. I love you so much it makes my heart ache."

Tears streamed from her closed eyes at his loving words, and she held tightly to him as he positioned his cock and surged between her legs, filling her with his cock.

"God!" Maya whimpered, throwing back her head as she came on his first thrust, so gently like a warm wave lapping easily over her.

"Yes, baby. I love making you come. So perfect for us."

His big body was powerful, majestic as he moved fluidly with her, his muscles rippling in the lantern light. She felt like one big throbbing, fluttering heartbeat as he made love to her with slow, methodical abandon, his pace increasing gradually. She locked her legs around his waist and held on as another orgasmic wave pitched over her.

Her voice shook with emotion as she whispered, "Boone."

He trembled as he held her tightly and growled low in his chest, thrusting so deep and gentle she swore he touched her heart with his last strokes before he came. His cry was deep and vulnerable-sounding. He pressed his lips against her collarbone and shuddered as

he thrust one final time. She clung tightly to him as they caught their breath.

Crickets chirped all around them as they recovered in each other's arms. He lifted his head from her shoulder, and she thought his eyes were a little shiny and red as he brushed the tears from her cheeks.

His lips trembled almost imperceptibly before he said, "I'm lost without you, Maya. You fill my heart."

They snuggled for a long while, bundled tight together under the throw blanket, and listened to the creek and the sound of the night all around them.

Chapter Twenty-three

Maya yawned as she stood in the master bathroom of her house in San Marcos. She and Boone had only gotten four hours of sleep the night before, after arriving back home. Boone had held her in the back seat and let her nap as promised while Richard and Kendall did the driving.

She was placing the rest of her cosmetics and toiletries in a case when she heard Boone call out to Kendall and Richard. There was something about his conspiratorial tone and his location that had her peering around the doorframe and listening to them as they talked quietly. They were in the room she kept all her toys in, packing it up because she didn't want the movers touching such personal items. She heard a slight, telltale crackle that brought a smile to her face. They'd found it.

ZZzzz! "Shit! Fuck! Warn me first!"

She had to put her hand to her lips to stifle her laughter.

Boone murmured, "I put it on the low setting, you big pussy."

"Fuck you. You try it," Kendall retorted, and she promptly heard another short *ZZzap!*

Before they could break her expensive violet wand or kill any desire to play seriously with her precious toy, she strode down the hall and into the room.

Boone had confessed the previous evening at The Dancing Pony that he'd never handled one before, so she figured none of them knew how pleasurable an experience it could be.

Smiling, she held out her hand for the wand. Kendall switched it off looking like he was afraid she was mad at him.

“Unbutton your shirts and untuck them.”

Boone's eyes flared, but he complied immediately and the other two followed, looking like they didn't want to miss out on whatever Boone was going to get to experience. It made her feel good that they trusted her.

She flipped the power switch and adjusted the setting as the glass electrode lit up with a pale violet fluorescent glow. “This is a violet wand. If you like the pain of a mild shock that's how you would use it, merely touching it to body parts you wanted to feel the charge. That's *not* why I have one. It induces very pleasurable sensations when applied using different indirect techniques. Morgan never used this to shock me and I don't want you to either. I'm not going to do that to you because I'm not a sadist. I'm just going to show you what *else* it can do.”

She turned it off and wrapped her left hand around the clear glass tube. Then she flipped the power switch and released the handle, turning to her men.

“If you have metal snaps on your shirt you might want to slip out of it. Don't want you to have any surprises.” Richard slipped his shirt off and stood still for her with the others. His trust was a wonderful thing.

Because Boone was the kinkiest of the three, she approached him first. He watched her hand as she reached with palm out and made gentle, full contact with his chest. He reacted slightly to the small zap he received, but he was completely attentive as she slid her hand in a solid stroke over his thickly muscled pectorals. She maintained constant contact with all fingers and her palm as she stroked him.

“How does it feel?” she asked as she smiled up at him. She could already read the answer in his eyes. She'd be willing to bet he also sported an instant erection from the sensation.

“It feels like your touch is alive, vibrating under my skin. I feel it traveling all over my body, in my hair, in my muscles, even in my cock and my ass.”

Maya nodded, knowing the sensation well. “Lots of nerve endings there.” She stroked her fingers up into the hair at the nape of his neck and felt him shudder with pleasure.

Kendall and Boone looked like they wanted their turn, too, and Maya wondered if they had time for what was probably going to result from this little experiment. It was important to her they were all on the same page regarding the way she liked to play, and now was as good a time as any to find out.

She stroked her hand over Boone’s shoulder and down his arm in a long, slow glide until she lost contact at his fingertips with a light crackle and zing. A delightful shiver shot up her spine at the transition, but also from the look in Boone’s eyes.

Boone said, “Now I understand the attraction for a toy like that. I’d only ever seen one used as a device to torment and tease.”

Maya nodded and smiled. “It has other uses. Morgan would have me strip and lie down on my padded bench and stroke me all over with the different attachments. Sometimes I would hold the electrode and he could stroke me hands free. When he was done I would feel like I’d had a massage, just from a light, full-handed stroke all over.”

“*All over?*” Richard asked, looking a little concerned.

Maya nodded, knowing he’d be the one concerned about that. She pointed at the differently-shaped, pretty glass tubes in the padded case.

“Yes, *all* over, even between my legs. You have to make sure to maintain full contact though. I do not like having my pussy shocked.” She made crackling contact with Richard, who never moved a muscle. After a moment he groaned and his eyelids slid closed as she caressed his chest slowly then worked her hand down over his abdomen. She slid her hand up behind his neck and pulled him down for a wet, tingling kiss.

He sighed deeply and whispered, “Baby.”

“Good?”

“Yeah. I like it. A lot.”

"I thought you might. Who wants to undo their fly for me?"
Belts and denims hit the tile floor with a clanking echo.

* * * *

Two hours later, Kendall was still feeling a satisfied tingle in his cock as they helped Maya pack up the rest of her valuables and necessities.

"Babydoll, where are your car keys? We'll pull the car out of the garage."

Maya brought a set of car keys to him. Boone and Richard followed him as he went through the kitchen to the garage door.

Kendall hit the light and Boone whistled appreciatively. "That is a fine automobile."

Kendall pressed the garage door opener remote, and more light spilled into the neat garage interior which was currently occupied by Maya's silver Cadillac CTS Coupe.

Boone held out his hand and said, "Rock, paper, scissors?"

Richard rolled his eyes. "What? Are we nine years old again?"

Boone replied nonchalantly, "Fine, I'll drive it home."

Kendall laughed when Richard said, "Wait, I didn't say I *didn't* want to drive it."

Maya found them a few minutes later, right as Boone beat Richard in an arm wrestling match, which felt much more manly to be caught participating in than rock, paper, scissors would have been.

Her laughter at their silly antics was cut off by an angry voice echoing through the large garage. "Maya! What the hell is going on here?"

Maya was startled, and the four of them turned to find Frank Reeves standing in the garage door opening. Kendall had a fleeting, yet satisfying image of the door collapsing on him.

"Frank—"

"I said what the hell is going on here?" Reeves's ruddy face was splotchy with anger, and Kendall and his brothers responded as a unit, forming a wall between her and Frank as he walked into the garage uninvited.

Maya patted Kendall's shoulder and said, "Let me talk to him." She didn't sound thrilled that Frank was there, and Kendall was reluctant to give Reeves greater access to her, especially since he had a history of not keeping his hands to himself.

Maya stepped between the men and walked up to Reeves boldly. "What does it look like, Frank? I'm packing and moving. The house is going on the market."

"Where are you going? What the fuck is going on here?"

Boone growled. "Hold on a second! You're not going to talk to her like that!" Kendall was counting down until the ass-whooping started.

Maya held a conciliatory hand to stop them and looked up at Frank as she put her hands on her hips and adopted an "*I'm not taking any shit from you*" posture.

"Frank, I am moving on with my life. I think you should do the same. You have to stop texting me and e-mailing me. I told you we were through."

Frank struck his chest with his thumb and harshly said, "I'm the one who's been here for you for the last year. *I* was the one who helped you pick up the pieces. *I* think you owe me—"

Kendall would've responded to that remark, but Maya beat him to the punch.

"I owe you nada! I put up with your whining about money and your heavy-handed attempts at romance so you could get to my bank accounts. You were Morgan's friend, and I hoped you'd get over it and move on. Don't look so surprised, Frank. I know about your difficulties with your 'bill collectors.'" She even used air quotes around the last two words.

Frank's face turned an ugly shade of red, and Kendall moved closer so he could put some distance between Frank and Maya if need be.

"Maya, you and I belong together, I love you and—"

Maya held up a hand and cut him off. "You love the zeroes in my bank account, Frank. Maybe you cared about me in some way, but you're too pushy and demanding." In a milder tone she said, "I'm moving on and I want you to do the same."

Kendall noted Boone and Richard both let out a muted sigh of relief when Maya stepped back over to them. Reeves didn't look like a man with a broken heart. He looked ready to kill someone.

"Maya, you're making a big mistake." There was no pleading in his tone. It sent a cold chill down Kendall's spine.

"No, Frank. You've made a mistake. Go home and cool off. We're done."

"You're going to regret this."

Clearly unable to let the veiled threat pass, Boone stepped up and said, "Mister, you're going to be the one with regrets if you don't do as the lady asked." Boone looked ready to kick his ungracefully aging, preppy ass.

Kendall noted with satisfaction that Maya stalked back through the door leading into the kitchen, punctuating the end of their conversation with her absence.

Kendall and Richard joined Boone and closed in on Reeves, who cast them an infuriated glance and stalked down the driveway to his Jaguar. He laid a strip of rubber on the white concrete driveway to match the one he'd left the week before on the street out front.

"Asshole," Boone said with disgust.

"He's not the type to just back off," Kendall said. "We haven't seen the last of him. I wonder who he has after him that he needs Maya's money so badly."

"What was he going to do? *Make* her marry him?"

“I don’t know. We need to ask Jack about having Ace and his buddy look into this.”

Without any further interruptions, her valuables and necessities were loaded into the back of Kendall’s pickup in boxes, along with her full suitcases. The furniture from her playroom was all carefully padded and loaded into the U-Haul trailer they’d brought with them. Boone would be following them, driving Maya’s silver Cadillac. They were putting off the trip to the bank where the safe-deposit box was because the bank was closed on the weekend.

Maya got into contact with her real estate agent friend and made arrangements to list the house for sale. After that was taken care of, she called several other friends to let them know she was back in town but only temporarily. Several of them banded together and talked her and the men into having an early supper with them before they headed out.

Maya told her friends she saw no need in hiding her relationship status from them and explained to them her situation. Kendall watched her friends’ faces with enjoyment as they wrapped their minds around her loving three men.

One of the women, Sheryl, kept glancing at him and his brothers and blushing, while Linna asked Maya if that was common in Divine and might they know of other men looking for a similar arrangement.

The third friend, Trina, sighed and said, “Lucky wench. You make me sick.”

It was nine o’clock and they were halfway to Divine when they got a text from Jack. “*Call when you get this.*”

* * * *

Along with the others, Maya watched the grainy video of her and Boone dancing together the previous evening. She glanced at Boone across the marble countertop in the kitchen of the Divine Creek Ranch house. He looked furious. All the men did, but he did in particular.

She turned her gaze back to the laptop monitor. The audio was of poor quality with lots of conversation and background noise over the loud music.

The video had recently been posted to the Divine Morality blog site. There was also a clip of the girls dancing together. It was a violation to be singled out like that, but she couldn't say she was surprised by it. Realizing she'd forgotten about the note again, she reached into her purse and pulled out the plastic bag.

"There's something else you need to know about," she murmured.

Grace and her men, and *her* men looked up at Maya, and she felt a wee bit foolish for forgetting about the note so many times. She laid the bag on the table. The note was open so it could be read without removing it.

After reading it Grace asked, "When did you get this?"

"Monday afternoon." She explained its appearance on her car window and the circumstances surrounding it. "I forgot all about it, until Wednesday night. Kendall, I was going to give it to you Thursday morning because I didn't want to ruin our evening out. The guys got home and I forgot again."

Kendall put his hand over hers in a reassuring gesture which told her she must've looked embarrassed for forgetting such an important piece of information.

Jack said, "It's a good thing Ace and Kemp are back in town. The blog is in serious infringement of libel laws. They're using the girls' names, and now ours as well, and putting a really dark slant on what's in the videos. They make it sound like y'all were inciting a riot or an orgy or something. I'm not happy at all that whoever had the camera was that close to Grace and the others. They even promise to add more videos down the road."

"That's our opportunity, then," Ethan murmured, his arms around Grace's shoulders as she stood with him. "We'll plan an event at the club and advertise it. It'll draw this person, or persons, out and perhaps we can catch them at it."

“But it’s not against the law to shoot videos,” Grace replied. “People do it all the time.”

Ethan replied, “It’ll link them to the blog. Then at least we’ll know who is behind it. We could let Ace and Kemp deal with it from there. That’s their specialty.”

Maya noticed that Ethan’s response seemed to satisfy Grace, and she wondered what this Ace and Kemp were like. Mobster types?

They said goodnight and continued down the driveway to the foreman’s house and decided to wait until morning to unload everything, since it was after midnight.

Even after such a long day, Maya was surprised she was unable to fall asleep. She tossed and turned until Boone wrapped his arm around her and drew her back against his chest. He whispered in her ear, “I’ll bet I know what would help you sleep.”

Chapter Twenty-four

Maya gave a long, quiet moan of delight and pressed her ass against the hot erection developing between them. Boone groaned, and the sound sent a rivulet of desire straight to her pussy. Richard and Kendall stirred with her movement and sounds, and both of them reached out for her.

Richard languorously took a peaked nipple in his mouth, which sent a bolt of sensation straight to her clit as Kendall asked, "Can't sleep, babydoll?"

"No. Too much on my mind."

"I think Maya needs distraction," Boone said before nipping at her earlobe, which sent a flurry of shivers down her spine and made her hips flex against him. The movement pressed her ass against his cock again, and her juices leaked from her slit. His cock slid through them, which he must not have expected because he groaned and thrust against her. "You're wet, aren't you, baby?"

Maya nodded and wiggled against him while at the same time she pressed her breast against Richard's warm, suckling mouth.

The image they made must be hotter than hell, which brought to mind the image she'd seen on the video clip earlier. Why would someone do that? Seek to hurt other people that way, in the name of morality or religion?

"You're thinking again, Maya," Boone whispered in her ear.

"Sorry."

Richard released her nipple and switched to the other one as his hand strayed over her hip. She faced him, and his callused fingertips stroked through her copiously wet cunt. One fingertip unerringly

found her clit and strummed it. His touch was so gentle and such a nice counterpoint to the man demanding attention behind her.

Even though they'd been sound asleep after a strenuous day and long drive, they now gave her their love. Happiness oozed from her pores at the attention and devotion they paid to her. A week and a half was all it had taken for them to come together so beautifully. She hoped that blog didn't ruin everything and wondered again about the two mysterious men, Ace and Kemp, that everyone kept talking about. They were spoken about as though they could handle any situation.

She was startled by a stinging pop on her ass but sighed at the blooming heat that followed. Boone said, "You're still distracted. I'll be right back."

Maya missed his heat behind her and watched as he went into her bathroom and returned with a package that she couldn't identify in the dark.

"Maya needs a little 'something extra' tonight. Since we didn't unload her stuff before coming to bed, we're going to improvise."

Her pussy clenched at the steely edge to his voice and wondered what he was up to as she heard cardboard packaging rip open. Kendall removed condoms from the bedside table drawer and tossed them on the bed with the lubricant.

The whole time, Richard was relentless with his fingers and mouth, content to let the others handle the specifics of whatever this improvisation entailed.

Boone said, "Maya, Kendall's cock looks really hard. I'll bet he'd love to feel your hot little mouth on him right now."

Maya smiled up at Kendall in the light cast by the moon through the window and opened her lips as he held his cock for her to lick and suckle. Her body reacted to his groan of pleasure, sending another rush of moisture to wet Richard's fingers.

She loved the way Kendall tasted, manly but clean from his recent shower, and she sucked him down. Her hips found a rhythm of their

own, moving on Richard's caressing fingers, and she knew if he kept it up she'd come just from his touch.

She was vaguely aware of Boone sheathing his cock in a condom before he tilted her onto her back. Richard shifted and never lost her nipple as his fingers shifted upward and he played with the other one. Her breasts felt engorged at his persistent attention, but she missed his finger at her pussy.

Or at least she did until Boone's hot mouth lapped in lazy, wet strokes, flicking her clit with the tip of his tongue before delving into her opening. She stroked a hand over Kendall's abdomen as he knelt beside her and enjoyed her loving attention. He hardened further and thrust in counterpoint to her rhythm as a groan escaped from his throat. She teased the underside of his head with the tip of her tongue and gradually allowed the suction to build around his cock with each tug of her wet mouth.

"I'm going to come soon, babydoll. Get ready."

Kendall's thrusts became more urgent, and she suckled vigorously until he froze and groaned, his cum pouring in hot streams into her mouth. She swallowed and he cried out, holding her head gently at the nape as each pulse was followed by another. She swallowed every drop before releasing him.

Kendall hummed in bliss and slid his fingers over her cheekbone in a loving caress. "I love you so much, Maya."

She sighed in nonverbal affirmation. She loved him, too.

Maya heard a small pop and a high-pitched whirring sound and squealed a bit when Boone suckled at her clit then flicked it with his tongue several times. She gripped Richard's shoulders in anticipation as he pressed her fully to her back now that Kendall was finished.

She racked her brain trying to think what could be making the sound because she hadn't brought any of her vibrators with her on the first trip and knew for a fact they were all safely packed in a large sports duffel bag in the U-Haul. Her mind was awirl with the

possibilities of what pervertable household item Boone was about to use on her that could be found in the bathroom. Oh holy—

Boone lifted his tongue from her clit and replaced it with something vibrating at a superfast rate. Her pussy immediately clenched in response, feeling like it was swelling at an alarming rate. The tension built in her at such a precipitous pace she felt like she'd lost control. The spasms started, and in a matter of seconds her orgasm crested, causing her to wail like a banshee. Boone's mouth joined whatever was vibrating against her clit, and he pushed her relentlessly to another even harder orgasm. When the last wave washed through her, she heard the toy switch off and sighed in bliss as the blunt head of his cock nudged her pussy and invaded in one hot, wet stroke.

"Oh, fuck yes, Maya. You feel so good," he ground out as he grasped her hips and thrust every inch of his bone-hard cock into her more than willing cunt.

He slowed down after a minute and held up the object of her pleasure earlier, and she realized what it was. An electric toothbrush. The kind with vibrating head and bristles. She giggled as he handed it to Richard, who turned it on and used it to stroke her now very sensitive nipples. Richard alternated between stroking them with the head of the brush and then lightly drawing the vibrating bristles over her nipples as well. The sensation was unbelievably intense. Maya heard another pop and whirl and looked up at Boone, who now held another toothbrush in his hand.

"They're a great value in a multipack."

Maya's laughter turned to cries of ecstasy as Boone resumed making love to her and laid the vibrating head carefully across her clit while Richard continued teasing her nipples. Her pussy clenched at the sensation, and she pulled Boone into orgasm along with her.

Only Richard remained unsatisfied, and she was having none of that. In short order, his cock was sheathed and he had her on her hands and knees. Her pussy tingled and convulsed as he slid his cock

into her swollen entrance. She was even a little surprised by her own stamina as she arched and moved against him, wanting more of him. He held her hips gently and thrust in small increments until his hips were against hers.

“Okay, baby?”

“Oh, yes, yes. So good. Fuck me, please.”

Richard chuckled and wrapped his arms around her torso and murmured, “Oh, I plan to, baby. I plan to.”

A thrill went through her as he pulled her back to his front, staying firmly planted deep within her. One of his hands held a breast and the other cupped her mound as he stroked slowly into her. Boone and Kendall rested against the headboard and watched.

Maya loved this particular position with them because she enjoyed being put on display like this. They would be able to see Richard's thick cock sliding in and out of her pussy. She got wetter and wetter with each stroke at that thought and was soon moving with him in utter abandon.

Richard's fingers splayed her pussy lips open, and Maya knew what came next. Two faint pops and both Boone and Kendall were laying the vibrating toothbrush heads against both nipples *and* her clit. Damned if Kendall didn't have one, too.

Richard chuckled as she writhed. “They seem to enjoy tormenting you, Maya. Poor, poor baby.”

Kendall happily said, “Babydoll, we're going to make you come so hard you fall into a coma afterward.”

Her body lit up with sparks as the earth shattered around her.

* * * *

Maya pulled up in front of the porch steps of the Divine Creek Ranch house. She was driving that morning and was happy to have her Cadillac back. She admired the Escalade that now graced the driveway in front of the house. It was a lovely shade of sparkling blue

that Grace's men must have ordered especially for her. They were going to hang out for a couple of hours that morning at Discretion while Juliana took Will to the pediatrician.

Grace came down the steps, escorted by Jack, who kissed her cheek and waved to Maya before getting in his own black SUV. Grace looked as gorgeous as ever in a gauzy, summer sundress that showed off her lightly tanned shoulders and arms.

Kendall and Boone had returned her rental car the day before, and all three had helped her unpack what could fit in the house, and everything else was stored in a rental unit for the time being. She appreciated how careful they were with her things, especially her playroom furniture.

She knew Boone was anxious to get house plans underway and was willing to bet there was a playroom planned for their new house, with her padded play furniture front and center in it.

Grace broke into her thoughts. "What do you think about a beach theme for Saturday night? I suggested 'Margaritaville Night' and Ethan liked it."

"No exotic dancers? That would outrage the Divine Morality brigade and probably have them picketing and protesting outside the club."

"Ace and Kemp want to catch whoever was video-recording us on the dance floor. If there are male exotic dancers, only women would show up and vice versa. We want to leave it wide open so they feel like they can disappear in the crowd. Ace and Kemp aren't going to let that happen."

Once again, Maya was intrigued by these two mysterious men. "Are they going to rough them up and threaten them with cement boots?"

Grace giggled. "Oh no. Nothing like that. They are good at giving bad people reasons to leave good people alone. It's thanks to the two of them Teresa's little boy Michael has been fully adopted by Angel and Joaquin and now bears their last name. Michael's paternal

grandparents were monsters and would never have allowed it, except that Ace and Kemp gave them and Michael's biological father compelling reasons to relinquish all rights to him. Those men are good at gathering information, too. They have resources the average joe doesn't have access to. Did you get unpacked yesterday?"

They chatted on the way to Discretion as the Cadillac ate up the miles and Kenny Chesney crooned "Somewhere With You" in the background. Grace's phone signaled an incoming call, and she reached into her purse for it.

"Hello. Hi, Nell! I'm fine. How's Henry? You're not out protesting with him?" There was a long pause then Grace chuckled. "All right. I'll get with you as soon as I get to the shop. Rachel, too? Okay. See you in a few minutes." She ended the call and put her phone back in her purse. "I'm glad I brought my laptop with me."

"What's up?"

"That was an author friend of mine. Actually, she and her husband write together, under the same pseudonym."

"A husband and wife team. How cool. What do they write?"

Grace snickered and replied, "Erotic romance. Same as me."

"Can I ask what their pseudonym is?"

"Sure. They keep it under wraps at home, but when they're at conventions they let it *all* hang out. Have you ever heard of Willow Fields?"

"Oh my gosh! I loved the Blessed, Colorado series! Especially *The Waitress and Her Twin Trouble*."

"Me, too! Yep, that's them. She said she and Henry want to video chat with me and Rachel about something."

Maya turned into Discretion's parking lot and parked next to Rachel's jet-black four-door Toyota Tundra.

"Good, Rachel's here."

The herbal scent of lavender hung lightly in the air as they entered the shop, and Maya noted the source at the spa and aromatherapy counter.

Rachel was helping a lean, good-looking man in his mid- to late-forties make a selection. She conversed quietly with the man and had a twinkle in her eyes as she spoke to him, leading Maya to think Rachel must know him.

His dark hair was flecked with silver all over, and lines from smiling and squinting in the sun were etched around his eyes. He was deeply tanned, and Maya wondered if perhaps he looked slightly older because he spent so much time outdoors.

Rachel led him over to the sales counter where she tallied up all his purchases, a rather substantial-looking collection of bath and body products in the relaxing lavender scent.

“Chance, I think she’ll love these. The foot cream will feel so good after she’s been on her feet all day. You’re a sweetheart to get all this for her. How’s Clayton doing?”

Maya smiled at the man’s West Texas twang as he replied with good humor, “He’s holding the fort down. He suggested I come see you ladies and let you make the selections. Cowboys don’t know a thing about girlie stuff.”

Grace gave Chance a hug and said, “You can trust us to steer you right around the girlie stuff. Does this mean you have someone to buy for on a regular basis? We can help you out with whatever you need.”

Chance grinned and seemed to blush a little under his tan as he handed Rachel his debit card. “Well, I’m gonna fire one over her bow and see if we get a response.” He gave an appreciative once-over to the rest of the shop and added, “Although I’ll bet she’d love to shop here.”

“Baby steps, Chance. Right?”

Rachel handed him his purchases in a fancy bag with the Discretion logo on it, and he exchanged pleasantries for a few moments before Grace made the introductions. Chance turned his brilliant blue gaze on Maya.

“So you’re the lovely lady I’ve been hearing about.” He shook her hand congenially as her cheeks went up in flames. “Welcome to

Divine, Ms. Daire. I'll bet you're having loads of fun hanging out with these lovely ladies."

"I sure am, Mr. Carlisle. It's a pleasure to meet you, sir."

"Likewise, ma'am. Well, I'll get out of you ladies' hair. Stay out of trouble."

Chance made his exit as two more customers entered the store. Juliana came from the back room with her sleepy, auburn-haired baby tucked against her chest and a large, rather executive-ish looking diaper bag in tow.

"Hi, Maya," Juliana said in greeting as she sat the bag on the counter and dug through it quickly. "Wallet, phone, tablet, keys. Keys. Where are my keys?"

A jingling sound got her attention, and Rachel chuckled as she dangled a key ring on her index finger. "You left them on the counter when you opened this morning. Do you have everything?"

"Yup." William squirmed against her, yawned, and sneezed.

"Poor baby. Allergies just like his daddy. I'll be back in a bit."

Juliana sailed out the door, and they heard her Tahoe start out front and drive off moments later. Grace and Rachel helped the customers while Maya looked at a lingerie catalog behind the sales counter.

After the customers were finished shopping and their merchandise paid for, Grace said, "Rachel, we need to Skype with Nell and Henry Flanders for a few minutes. They wanted to talk to us about something."

Five minutes later they were set up in the break room. Maya stayed out front to man the store, but nobody came in during their conversation. She was busying herself dusting a book shelf when Grace and Rachel returned to the front giggling.

"Maya, you're not going to believe what we were just talking about," Grace said as she sat down on the comfy tall chair behind the counter. "There was a small riot yesterday in the county lockup in Alamosa, Colorado."

Rachel chuckled and gestured a thumb at Grace and said, “Turns out Prison Riot Caressa’s books were the cause of it.”

Grace laughed and said, “Nuh-uh! Porn Harlot Jane’s books were found in tatters on the floor as well when the dust settled. It turns out someone in the lockup had a small collection of erotic novels he shared with inmates who liked to...um...read. We evidently have developed a following in that jail, and someone took a book another inmate wasn’t done with yet.”

“Oh, no.”

“Oh, yeah. It gets better. The story made the news in the local market and the front page of two newspapers. The sheriff is sympathetic and said all the inmates involved were well behaved until the incident, but the local judge demanded all porn and smut be removed from the jail, including what remains of the book collection. Nell and Henry decided to protest the action and have set up their base of operations outside the courthouse where the judge presides over cases.”

“Poor guys.” *Jail inmates who preferred erotic romance to porn? Well, romance is for everybody, I guess.* “I understand why you call Grace Prison Riot Caressa. It’s understandable. But why Porn Harlot Jane?”

Rachel said, “I got an e-mail once. The opening line was—” In a melodramatic tone, in unison Grace and Rachel said, “*Mizz O’Malley, you are a porn harlot and should be ashamed!*”

Rachel elbowed Grace and snickered, then said, “I clicked delete, but it became a standing joke between us and was soon my nickname. So Prison Riot Caressa and I, and Nell and Henry, also known as Willow Fields, had a videoconference with the sheriff of Alamosa County and he agreed to let us replace the books that were ruined. We’re sending signed copies to Nell, and the sheriff will hold them for the inmate the collection belonged to. In the meantime, Nell and Henry will protest the judge’s decision, and if they’re successful the inmates will get the books back.”

Grace gestured with a thumb to Rachel and rolled her eyes. "Then Porn Harlot Jane has to go and ask if we can talk with some of the inmates."

Maya's eyes popped at that declaration.

Rachel shrugged and said, "Research! *Everything* is research. I wanted to know what they were like. I'm curious about what motivated them to read our books when stereotypically that's not what we'd expect them to read."

"Did the sheriff agree?"

"Oh, yeah. He brought his laptop into one of the visitation rooms and let a couple of the inmates talk to us. They think we are very *bee-yootiful*. I asked them why they were there, and after they filled us in and told us they were big fans, we asked a few questions and that was it."

"That never would've happened if it weren't for videoconferencing," Grace said, taking a long drink from her water bottle as she stroked her abdomen. Maya could well imagine none of Grace's men would allow her within a mile of a jail.

"No, indeed," Rachel agreed.

"They have no idea where you are, do they?"

"No. Nor do they know our real names," Rachel replied. "They know me as Jane O'Malley and Grace as Caressa MacFarland. Of course that could all change if those assholes with that blog ever get wind of our pseudonyms."

"I'll never tell. By the way, have either of you ever met Sophie Oak? I'm her *biggest* fan."

Grace and Rachel laughed and sat Maya down to tell her a story about one of the previous year's Romance Writers' Conventions, which took place in New Orleans. The tale involved Ms. Oak, a riverboat, a bottle of tequila, and a bellhop's cart from one of the area's swankier hotels. Suddenly the nicknames they called each other by didn't seem so unusual.

Chapter Twenty-five

Kendall sent up a prayer of thanks that the Divine Creek was deep enough for cannonballs along the stretch forming the property boundary between the JWB Ranch and the Divine Creek Ranch. It would've been a shame to miss Maya's squeal of delight as she leaped from the bank, swinging on the Tarzan rope and landing in the water with a big splash.

The workday had just ended for the men. Boone and Richard had arrived at the JWB and helped him finish up chores so they could go see what Maya was up to. Now they stood inside the tree line watching her play in the water like a little girl, swinging from the rope Kendall had shimmied up into one of the tall oaks to tie off for their use the week before.

"Too bad we didn't bring swimming trunks," Kendall said as Maya swung into the water again.

Boone snorted as he undid his belt buckle. "You think she cares if we have on swimming trunks?"

"Good point," Richard said as he did the same. One of their belts struck a rock as they dropped their clothes, catching Maya's attention.

She held on to the knotted rope and swung back and forth, dressed in her bikini, and said, "Finally! Someone to skinny-dip with!"

She laughed as Boone shot down the bank and leaped into the water, creating the mother of all cannonballs.

When they were all in the water with her, drenched from head to toe and surrounding her, Maya said, "I went exploring along the bank before I got in the water."

"Oh, yeah?" Kendall said as he kissed the sparkling water droplets on her shoulder. He slid his hands down her waist as she gripped his shoulders to steady herself in the water since the current kept pushing her.

She kissed his cheek and continued. "I found a nice, secluded spot that's not so close to the path leading down here. It's deeper than the one we used last time. You can still see anyone approaching from our side, but the trees and brush are much thicker. No one will find us unless we want to be found. I'm dying to try it out."

Boone cupped her breast and stroked a single, callused finger over her tightly peaked nipple and said, "Right now." He didn't say it like a question but more like a statement, and she nodded, her cheeks turning a pretty pink.

"Yes. I brought all the stuff with me, just in case."

Kendall smiled when he noticed she practically vibrated with excitement. Maya put her palm to his cheek and looked up into his eyes and over at his brothers. "I want it all."

Kendall's body started vibrating enthusiastically as well, especially below the waist. "You mean the three of us at once?"

"You sure, baby?" Richard asked, reaching out to caress her neck, beneath her left ear. "You're not just trying to please us?"

Maya's cheeks bloomed with a deeper blush and she shook her head. "No. I want all three of you to make love to me together."

Boone lifted her hand and kissed it, then smiled at her. "Show us the spot you found, baby."

Kendall lifted her slick, curvy body into his arms and waded for the shore. "We love giving our lady what she wants, don't we, guys."

He set her carefully on the grass and she led them about one hundred yards down, past a bend in the gurgling creek, and climbed a couple of protruding tree roots to get to a higher spot on the bank and beckoned them.

When they joined her, Kendall could understand why she was so excited about it. The vantage point was excellent. It was a large,

shallow, bowl-like indentation in the middle of four large trees, and the ground in the center area was relatively free of rocks, was flat, and scattered with leaves from the oak trees. She stepped down into it and twirled around. As sappy as it might sound, the moment was magical to Kendall. The joy on her face made his heart do swirly, fizzy things in his chest.

Off to the side he noticed a plastic tub with a fitted lid. It looked like there was a blanket and other things located inside of it. Boone and his brothers stood on the edge of the incline, and she looked up at them. Her eyes glowed with desire and love for them as she took note their very engorged conditions. Her gaze on his cock made it tingle in anticipation.

She opened the container and removed the thick blanket they'd used last time and held it to her breasts as they descended into the love nest with her.

* * * *

Maya had made love with Kendall, Boone, and Richard a number of times already and felt completely comfortable with them and the exceptional cocks they'd been blessed with. The thought of taking the three of them together made her heart gallop like a racehorse in her chest. This was new territory for her, and she couldn't imagine a more perfect location than this little hiding place.

Earlier, she'd investigated the trees and discovered one of them was hollow inside. The opening had been large enough for her to climb into, but without adequate light she'd been reluctant to do so.

Kendall took the blanket from her as Boone drew close behind her. The needy ache in her pussy increased as she felt his rough hands at her hips and her back, untying her bikini. She smiled when he thoughtfully hung it over a low tree branch to dry. The men opened the blanket and laid it out across the flat area, and she stepped onto it.

Boone's body felt superheated pressed against her back, and his cock was hot and hard against her ass. He stroked her sides and drew her close, so she rested against him. His fingertips pressed against her pounding carotid artery and softly asked, "Nervous?"

She gazed up at him and replied, "Only excited. Not scared, Boone." Her heart pitter-pattered with extra beats at the love that radiated in his eyes.

"Love you, baby," he said, tilting his head down to kiss her.

As Boone released her lips, Richard drew close and slid his rough hands along her jaw, into her hair, and caught her lips in a slow, deep kiss that turned her knees to jelly.

She caressed his bare chest and whispered, "My heart belongs to you. I know you'll take good care of me."

Kendall traced his fingers down her shoulder as she turned to him and he said, "Babydoll, we promise to go slow and be very careful with you. If you need us to slow down or stop just say so. If it's not good for you, it's not good for us either."

Maya felt awe, love, and respect for these wonderful men. They treated her as though she was the most precious thing in the world to them, and their concern touched her heart. Hoping to reassure him that she wanted this, she wrapped her hand around his hardened cock. His pre-cum leaked from the head, and she smoothed it around with her palm then stroked up and down his length. The three of them closed in a triangular formation around her, and Kendall slid his lips and tongue up the column of her throat.

Her hands strayed from one hot, strong body to the next, stroking and touching as the need grew inside her. Their hands roamed over her breasts, her throat, her hips, and her ass. Her pussy throbbed hotly and pooled with moisture as she stood in their midst and reveled in their combined scents and heat. The chill of the water was long forgotten as her heart pumped wildly in her chest.

Boone wrapped his arms around her from behind and held her steady at the hips. Richard knelt in front of her and gazed up at her

with what she could only describe as adoration. The vulnerability there brought the prickle of tears to her eyes, and she smiled as she stroked his bearded cheek.

Keeping eye contact, he lifted her right thigh and put it over his shoulder and wrapped his arm around her other thigh so he was embracing her lower half. He moved forward until his mouth was against her weeping slit. Only then did his eyes shutter closed on a deep groan as he licked her.

Boone's hands strayed down and parted her pussy lips for Richard, the move also exposing her clit which he suckled on with great finesse. He flicked and teased and suckled until she realized the sounds she heard were her own moans.

Kendall took her lips in a kiss and stroked her tongue with his as he slowly strummed his thumbs back and forth over her nipples.

Richard's mouth became more demanding, and his tongue delved deeper as he lapped at her pussy. Then he changed his technique and suckled her clit until her legs gave out and she came in a long, shuddering wave as Boone held her to him.

They lowered her to the blanket as she caught her breath and closed in around her, loving her, licking her, kissing her all over until her body was one great, pulsing ache.

Gradually they turned Maya to her right side, and Kendall slipped in behind her. He pulled her back until she was semi-reclining with her head resting comfortably on his shoulder.

His lips brushed her ear and sent little tingles down her neck. "Relax against me and let us do the work, babydoll." His cock pressed against her ass cheek as Boone lifted the lid on the tub and brought the lubricant and condoms to the blanket. Kendall and Richard rolled condoms on, and Kendall lifted her left thigh and held it behind the knee.

Richard gently smoothed lubricant on her pussy first then lubricated her asshole and her cheeks. He pressed lubricant into her as

well, to ease the way for Kendall's rigid cock. She breathed deep and didn't fight the slight burning intrusion of his fingers.

"Okay, Maya?" Richard asked as he slid a second finger in with the first on the next thrust. Her cunt pulsed with pleasure.

Boone's cock brushed her lips as she laid her head back down, and she smiled at him before she took him into her mouth. His cock was rock hard as she sucked him, alternating between caressing the base of his shaft in her other hand and playing with his balls.

When Richard was done, he applied lubricant to his sheathed cock and gave some to Kendall to smooth onto his cock after he had the condom on.

Kendall wrapped his arm around her middle, which helped her to feel grounded, and she moaned with anticipation around Boone's cock. Kendall supported her with his shoulder so she didn't have to strain her neck, and Boone groaned blissfully and stroked her throat.

"You're beautiful, Maya," he whispered.

The reverent way he said it made her feel beautiful. She closed her eyes and felt herself slipping into a place in her mind where she shared and was equally shared with the three of them. Maya loved the dark thrill of being taken anally and the deep submissiveness of yielding herself completely to Kendall. Richard held her thigh for Kendall and fingered her clit as Kendall positioned his cock at her tingling asshole.

A warm summer breeze stirred the drying strands of her hair around her, and she looked into Boone's eyes. He watched with approval evident on his face as she slowed her up-and-down oral strokes on his cock and increased the suction a bit.

Kendall's cock pressed against her sphincter, and she breathed slow and deep through her nose, focusing for a moment on relaxing and allowing him entrance. Boone smiled and slid his fingers through her hair. He watched as Kendall's cock made progress against those tight muscles.

The head of his cock slid in with a tight, burning sensation, eased by the lubricant Richard had used. He thrust gently against her as she pushed back, and more of his righteously thick cock slid into her tingling ass. His strokes were small, and she could imagine how beautiful it was by the enthralled look on Boone's face. He glanced down at her, and the heat in his eyes and the thickening of his cock in her mouth told her he was imagining his cock inside her ass right now. She sucked him to the back of her throat as Kendall pulled out and thrust back in. This was the part she loved. The slight, burning pain seemed to sweeten the pleasure as his cock caressed screaming nerve endings with each in-and-out movement. Richard's ministrations ceased as he moved into position in front of her. Bracing on an elbow beside Boone, he stroked his incredibly thick cock and positioned it at her cunt.

Yes!

She hummed in assent when he caught her eye, and nonverbally begged him for it. The ache for him to fill her pussy was deep and voracious. Still holding her left thigh back, Richard groaned as he pressed his rigid shaft forward. Maya's heartbeat pounded in her ears and seemed to pulse over her whole body as his cock slid in by minute amounts as Kendall continued to stroke in and out. Tighter and tighter until she was filled to bursting with them.

Both men stilled momentarily, and she turned her attention to Boone as she picked up the faster rhythm once again. Boone had groaned a couple of times as he watched them work their cocks into her ass and pussy, and she knew by his breathing he was close to coming. He met her gaze, and she stayed focused on him as she drew on every oral skill she had to drive him wild. Boone flexed his hips, moving with her, and growled as his body tensed and his balls drew up beneath her caressing fingertips.

"Damn! Too fucking good at that! Maya, get ready. I'm coming hard for you...Baby!" Boone thrust once more and she swallowed around his cock, taking him deep. He roared as he went over the edge,

his hot cum spurted on her tongue and down her throat as she swallowed again, and he cried out in ecstasy.

Richard and Kendall began thrusting in unison again, filling her so full she knew she'd never be the same again. This was what she'd craved. To be loved, wanted, and made love to by more than one man. By *these* men. Boone caressed her jaw, and she released his cock and crooned out loud as the pace of their fucking increased. Her pussy fluttered with orgasmic spasms, but she held them off. She held on to Richard as he held her thigh. Kendall's hand snaked between them and found the swollen bundle of nerves at her clit and began stroking lightly.

"More!" she cried out.

His touch grew insistent, even as his cock thrust harder in her ass. Richard thrust in time with him, and she knew this scene would've been hotter than hell to an observer. The thought made her pussy cream again.

Kendall suckled the flesh of her throat where it met her shoulder and latched on as his touch at her clit became downright demanding. When he pressed his fingers together over her clit she froze, suspended, waiting for the next sensation. Kendall's muscular arm tightened around her, and it was just enough of a restraint that her orgasm exploded in wildfire all around her. She bucked and screamed as he continued rubbing her clit, and she rode every wave until she melted against Kendall.

"Yes!"

Richard reached orgasm first, and she watched as he flexed and arched his gloriously strong body over hers. The pleasure of his orgasm was etched majestically on his face as he groaned in bliss. Kendall soon followed, holding her firmly to him as he froze and growled in satisfaction. As tightly as she was filled, she could feel every pulse in their cocks as they came, and she loved it.

The breeze returned as they lay motionless, panting. Maya tingled everywhere.

When the power of speech returned to her, she whispered, “Thank you for making my fantasy real.”

Kendall kissed her cheek as he held her, still planted deeply in her ass. “You did the same thing for us, baby. Thank you.”

Kendall withdrew carefully, removed the condom, then used the hand towel she’d packed in the plastic tub to clean her up. Her ass tingled as he wiped the excess lubricant from her, and she smiled at the thought that she’d feel that tingle for the rest of the day. Richard released her thigh and stroked it as he pulled out as well.

She cuddled up with them for a little while and listened to the sounds of their breathing and the bird calls as the zephyrs blew through the towering oak trees.

Chapter Twenty-six

At Discretion the following day, Maya and Rachel stood at the lingerie counter rearranging a display of silk rumba panties when Maya's phone vibrated with an incoming text. She'd decided to turn it on that Monday morning after leaving it off for several days. When she'd powered it up there had been more text messages from Frank Reeves, among others. After their reaction to the number of e-mails waiting for her in her e-mail inbox, she'd decided to delete the messages and just let it go. There was no point in getting the men in any more of an uproar than they already were about the blog and the note that had been left for her.

She opened the text from Grace which read, *"I'm stopping at the store on my way back to the shop. Do you need anything?"*

Maya texted back, *"No. We're fine."*

"Okay. I had a craving for java fudge ice cream and a dildo and wondered if you wanted anything."

Maya burst into laughter as she read the message out loud to Rachel.

Rachel snickered and said, "Auto-correct wins again."

Maya's phone vibrated again. *"Oh my God! That is not what I typed! I wanted a frickin' dill penis!"*

Maya doubled over laughing as she handed the phone to Rachel. Rachel texted back, *"I don't think the guys will take well to you soaking their junk in vinegar."*

Two seconds later the phone vibrated again. *"Pickles! I wanted dill pickles! Oh fucking never mind. I hate this phone! LMAO!"*

"If that's her auto-correct, it makes me wonder what her 'saved words' list must look like."

Rachel smirked and replied, "Well, between 'sexting' with Ethan and using it for work, I would imagine it reads like bad porn."

"Bow-chicka-wow-wow," Maya said and they both burst into giggles again.

"Auto-correct, two points. Grace, zero points."

Their laughter was interrupted by the sound of something hitting the front glass windows.

Maya asked, "What was that?"

Peeking out the lace-curtained window, Rachel groaned. Maya looked, too, and saw the broken egg shells on the porch and the wet smear of egg running down the windows.

"Damn it. They would pull this on the day I wear my new shoes," Rachel said as she slipped out of her brand-new stiletto booties and cuffed up her blue jeans. "I'd better get the hose. As hot as it is today the egg will be cooked to whatever surface it's on. We ought to check the Tundra, too."

They went out the front door, looking around, but whoever it was hadn't hung around for pleasantries.

"Cowards," Rachel muttered as she gave the handle on the faucet a spin and pointed the hose at the wall by the front door and began rinsing egg from the front of the building. "We aren't within the city limits. Discretion is so far out we're practically on the county line. We don't have flashing neon signs or a gigantic parking lot full of eighteen-wheelers. We don't have an enormous sign with 'adult videos' on it, we don't offer peep shows, and the police have never had to respond to a disturbance of any kind out here. Why these assholes feel they should harass us is beyond me."

"This has happened before?"

"Several times. Once it happened on a Sunday, and I came in Monday morning to find Summer and Margot out here with scrub

brushes and buckets because the egg had hardened and wouldn't rinse off."

"Do the men know?"

"Yeah, but we all attributed it to kids pulling pranks. We had a sign posted on the window letting folks know that even though it was prom season and we carry women's formals, we still didn't allow minors in the store. We had a few complaints from moms who liked the store and were willing to come in with their daughters to chaperone them, but Summer and Margot stood firm about that rule, for obvious reasons. Word would get out and it would get blown out of proportion. We figured it was just kids 'protesting' what they saw as an injustice, since the egging started about that time. Prom season is way over now."

Cringing as she approached the vehicle, Maya was relieved to find more egg, but no other property damage. Rachel brought the hose over, and they quickly had the Tundra washed down.

Standing next to Rachel's truck, Maya saw a large figure run from the backyard of the shop and jump over the fence into the wooded area beyond.

"Rachel! Someone was in the back!" Maya hollered as she ran to the back of the building.

"Don't go back—Shit! Wait for me! I'm so not feeling up to this!" Rachel grouched as they ran along the side of the venerable old house. Maya turned the corner and was assailed by the odor of smoke.

"Crap! Call 911, Maya!" Rachel barked as she grabbed the water hose on the back porch to douse the flames creeping along the wall and the old doormat. Someone had tried to set the shop on fire. Smoke filled the air as Rachel sprayed down the walls, praying the whole time for the fire not to spread.

Five minutes later the Tarkett County Volunteer Fire Department's Fire and Rescue equipment filled the parking lot. Rachel and Maya backed off, allowing the firefighters to do their work. Thanks to finding it so soon, the fire hadn't had a chance to get

inside the walls or to do much more than a little cosmetic damage. They treated Rachel and Maya for smoke inhalation, though they'd both insisted it wasn't necessary. The smoke had exacerbated Rachel's ever-present nausea, and the EMTs, many of whom knew Eli, took their jobs seriously as they treated her.

Thirty minutes later, Eli, Rachel, Grace, Jack, Kendall, Maya, Summer, and Margot were all standing in the parking lot, talking with the fire chief and the sheriff.

Maya gave a description of the person she'd seen fleeing over the fence. All she'd been able to remember was that it had been a very tall man with dark hair and dressed in blue jeans and T-shirt.

Summer's sister Margot asked, "So this has been more than just teenaged pranksters all this time?"

"Yes, ma'am. It may have started out a few weeks ago, like you said, with kids. But today's incident with the egg-throwing sounds like a means to distract you so they could set the fire. If Ms. Daire hadn't been as observant, by the time you'd gotten back inside it might have been too late for this old house," the sheriff said, shaking his head sympathetically.

Nodding to Summer and Margot, the fire chief said, "Ladies, does anybody live upstairs?"

Summer replied, "At the moment, no. But there is a large apartment up there. I was considering moving into it, so someone is always here."

The handsome Tarkett County Sheriff, David Northup, said, "I'd definitely see about setting up a security system if you do, ma'am. Call if you need us. Sorry about your back porch."

Summer nodded and smiled at him and thanked the men before they left. The fire department gathered all their equipment and departed soon after.

The men walked the ladies back to the storefront, and Grace gasped as she walked past her Escalade. "Oh! Shoot!" Maya snickered when she even stomped her foot.

"What is it, darlin'?" Jack asked, the picture of husbandly concern.

"My ice cream! It's sitting on the front seat melted!" She pulled open her car door and carefully lifted out the plastic bag containing her pint of ice cream.

Summer held out a hand. "Let me put it in the freezer, Grace. It won't be as good the second time around but it'll still make a nice snack."

Grace lifted the bag containing the half gallon jar of dill pickles that had inspired so much levity earlier and followed them inside. "I had my mouth all set for java fudge ice cream."

Rachel snorted. "How about java fudge milk shake? Hey, can I have some pickles, too?"

* * * *

Saturday night, Maya adjusted the strap on her red lace push-up bra and tied a knot under her breasts with the shirt tails of her costume. With Summer's help she'd found the perfect costume for Margaritaville Night at The Dancing Pony.

She'd decided on a 1940s pin-up girl's costume—red gingham shirt with lots of cleavage showing, red shorts that showed way more than they covered of her upper thighs, and cherry red peep-toe pumps. She'd even managed to get in to Madeleine's to have her hair styled in an updo that would've made Betty Grable proud.

Touching up her cherry-red lipstick, she smiled at herself in the mirror and liked what she saw. The smiling woman looking back at her appeared younger, relaxed, and in love.

After flipping off the light switch, Maya walked down the hall to the living room where her men waited in their flip-flops, shorts, and Hawaiian-print shirts "a la Jimmy Buffet." Satisfaction filled her heart when all three of their jaws popped open. Their eyes bulged as she did a slow turn and cocked a hip at them.

“Dayum, babydoll!” Kendall crowed as he gave her the once-over and closed the distance between them. He traced his fingertips around her waist as he walked around her and then pulled her into his arms. The hardening ridge of his cock pressed against her, and her body responded. Boone and Richard joined them.

“You’re a knockout in that outfit. Out of it, too,” Boone murmured as he pressed his warm lips to the back of her neck above her shirt collar. His words and his touch sent a flurry of tingles to her nipples and beyond.

Richard kissed her and said, “You look gorgeous, Maya. Let’s get out of here before we all wind up back in bed. Not that I would object, mind you.”

* * * *

Grace sat in Ethan’s lap, watching Summer and her date with growing concern. Rachel had pronounced Summer to be an “asshole magnet,” and the appellation was certainly proving true this evening. When Grace and Teresa had first met her, barely two years before, Grace had thought the beautiful, voluptuous woman exuded confidence. In the interim, she’d discovered that while Summer did truly brim with self-assurance, she held hidden from almost everyone a plus-sized woman’s vulnerability and insecurity.

Add to that the fact she’d attracted a string of admirers in the last two years that had each been successively worse than the last. Grace had thought the last had been the worst, but she was being proved wrong tonight.

Grace had offered to set Summer up on a blind date tonight and had even known the perfect guy for her. But when Grace had called her, Summer had assured her she already had a date for that night’s bash. Summer had only come to The Dancing Pony a few times, for reasons Grace still didn’t understand.

Summer sat with her date, Kent Hargrove, and the others making small talk. They hadn't discussed the blog or the reason for the big Margaritaville Night party because there were people present who knew nothing about it. In addition there were people in attendance who were not there for friendly reasons. The goal was to catch them in the act.

Grace wouldn't be a bit surprised if Ethan, Jack, and Adam had a personal hand in dealing out retribution to the person responsible.

"Earth to Grace," Ethan whispered in her ear as her thoughts rambled. His warm hand, which had been caressing her abdomen and their sleeping daughter inside her, strayed up her side. His thumb brushed along the side of her breast in a tender, secretive touch, and her ultra-sensitive nipples hardened into tingling peaks. She was wearing her pink satin-and-lace shelf bra at his request beneath her sexy, but flowing, pink-and-white patterned silk dress. It was maternity wear and looked good on her, but her burgeoning middle had begun to give her doubts.

What would she look like after Rose Marie arrived? Would her waist and abdomen ever return to normal? Would her breasts sag? Charity had assured her they would, a bit. In her typical no-nonsense fashion, Charity had told her that her figure would never be the same, but her men would cherish her regardless of whether her abdomen ever returned to its original muscle tone or her breasts lost a little of their firmness.

She'd told Grace that in some ways, her husband, Justin, seemed to treat her body after the kids had been born in a way that approached worship.

Knowing her men already had adoration down to an art form, Grace tried not to worry too much.

Her body tingled all over now, as she recalled the tenderness with which Ethan had made love to her earlier, bringing her to orgasm with his mouth, and then he had loved her with his cock to a second exquisite climax. The adoration in his sparkling blue gaze the whole

time had added an even deeper emotional element to their lovemaking, and any doubts she'd had about her beauty before or after Rose Marie arrived were laid to rest.

Afterward, Ethan had helped her dress. With her body still tingling from his lovemaking, Grace knew he had picked the lingerie to maximize the effect. The dress rubbed deliciously against her nipples, keeping them constantly hard, though the pattern of the dress made that fact much less noticeable.

The pink lace boyshorts were a luxuriant, stretchy lace that clung to her curves but didn't bind beneath her rounded abdomen. The added benefit of the boy shorts was that the center seam was split and joined together by neat little bows which could be undone.

Ethan had demonstrated that a well-placed finger could also slip easily between the bows for a quick, naughty caress against her clit. The notion of him doing that now as she sat in his lap had her cunt clenching in anticipation.

Ethan gave her a knowing smile as he gazed at her, and Grace was certain he knew exactly what was going through her mind. She glanced up and smiled playfully when she realized Jack and Adam were watching them with interest obvious in their gazes.

"What lascivious thoughts lurk in your mind, Gracie?" Ethan asked as his other hand slid surreptitiously from the back of her bare knee to her upper thigh under the dress.

It was a good thing they sat in the corner with the table before them, otherwise his misbehavior would've been more noticeable as his hand traced higher to the tender juncture between her upper thigh and derriere. Jack and Adam pretended not to notice.

Unfortunately, Kent Hargrove's snide remark filtered through the haze of lust rapidly overtaking good sense.

"Summer, you need to remember your little niche in the retail world, selling *sex toys and bondage gear*, might give you a slightly narrower focus than the rest of us."

Summer chuckled good-naturedly and replied, "I beg to differ, Kent. Sex sells. *Everything*. Take the way they design cars, for instance. Look at the new Camaros and the timeless styling of the Corvette for, oh, the last thirty years or so. Corvette, *please*. They could have more aptly named it the 'Curvette.' That rear end is not just about power and tight suspension. Sorry, big boy. That is a woman's hips and ass. Look at the Ford Shelby Mustang. Add the spoilers, the racing stripes, and pounding stereo and you know what you have, right?"

Kent rolled his eyes, "No, but I'm sure you'll share *your* take on it, won't you?"

With his rudeness, he'd just earned himself a permanent "thumbs-down" from Grace. Summer knew exactly what she was talking about.

Summer giggled and said, "Sorry you're not feeling it, Kent, but every *honest* man here will testify that's an erect cock going down the road at eighty-five miles an hour. Am I wrong?" Summer asked, looking at the other men around the table. She didn't ask it in an obnoxious way, and her argument was compelling as hell, at least to Grace's ears.

"I'm not going to disagree with you, Summer," Jack said, before adding with a chuckle, "But we thought it was a well-guarded *secret*."

Everybody at the table burst into laughter. Kent didn't share in the levity of the moment.

Summer continued, "Which proves the point I was trying to make. Even when we want to deny it or keep it a secret, sex sells *everything*."

Confirming Grace's firm feeling that Kent didn't fit well in their group, Ethan whispered, "I could've done without this asshole's presence tonight. Where did Summer find him?"

"He's a public relations consultant in Morehead."

"Damn. He's *so* not hired. He does PR and he argues with his date like that when she's right?" Ethan murmured as his fingers swirled in

a distracting manner against the edge of her panties. “He should treat her with more respect. Does he have any idea how successful Discretion is?”

“No. And if I’m guessing right by the look in her eyes, he never will.” Summer had glanced up at Grace for a moment, and Grace had seen the disappointment there. Maybe now Summer would finally give Grace a chance to work her matchmaking magic. Sometimes a person had to hit bottom. Grace thought Kent Hargrove represented the bottom of the barrel.

Over the next twenty minutes, this impression was confirmed repeatedly. Summer bantered with her friends, and when she tried to pull him into the general conversation he responded by talking down to her, pointing out where her reasoning or thought process was flawed, or sharing his much wiser perspective. He’d even intimated that because of her size she didn’t have a clear view of the high-fashion industry, being limited to frumpier, women’s-sized clothing. Grace’s heart had done a painful lurch at the hurtful comment.

Summer was dressed in a gold, cleavage-maximizing halter dress that skimmed her lovely curves and contrasted strikingly with her tanned skin and flowing, long blonde hair. The dress ended at the knee, and her gold ankle-strap high-heeled sandals accentuated her shapely calves and slender ankles. She looked gorgeous tonight. Kent couldn’t see past the fact she wore a size eighteen. *Bastard*. Grace’s respect for Summer sky-rocketed as she processed his comment and chose to ignore it instead of replying in kind.

Kent interrupted Summer as she told a hilarious story involving a delivery driver and a box of vibrators that had broken open during transit in his truck. “You think *that’s* something, you should hear about what happened to me—”

Grace made desperate eye contact with Jack, and her husband proved he was both intuitive and compassionate. After a constant barrage of condescension and one-upmanship, Summer was wilting a bit, though trying her best to not show it.

“Summer, I heard from Grace you’re an excellent dancer. Why don’t you let me take you for a turn on the dance floor?”

Jack never gave Kent an opportunity to object, and Kent completely missed the insult Jack dealt him in not asking Kent’s permission to dance with his date first. Summer’s eyes lit up, and she nodded eagerly at him when Grace winked at her in approval.

Kent kept on talking and never spared them a glance or acknowledged her departure. Grace hid her smile when she heard the faint, indignant growl come from Ethan. He would never have treated Grace so casually on their first date much less ignored her as she walked off with another man to dance.

Grace’s phone lit up and she smiled when she saw the caller ID.

Putting her finger to her other ear, Grace answered, “Hello?”

“Who is the insanely beautiful woman Jack is dancing with? And who is the rude motherfucker who’s been standing next to her? I can’t hear what he’s saying to her, but I can read her body language clear as a bell. Tell me he has no permanent ties to her.”

Grace’s intuition was pinging big-time at the husky, territorial tone in his voice. He wasn’t asking please, merely demanding confirmation.

“You know, it’s *funny* you should ask me that question, Ace Webster.”

Chapter Twenty-seven

Boone felt a knot of anger curl tight inside of him. Maya looked into his eyes and seemed to know what he was thinking. He could tolerate a lot, but he could not abide the stupid fucker sitting at their table for even one more minute.

“Baby, let’s dance before you kill someone, okay?” Maya asked as she pressed her fingertips to his straining pectorals. Because Summer was away from the table dancing with Jack, he’d drawn breath to say something to Kent when Maya had distracted him. He led her to the dance floor knowing he needed to cool off.

“What is with that asshole? He talked to her like she was the village idiot or something.”

“I think he does it because he’s insecure and Summer is so sure of herself. She has an air of self-confidence which probably puts off men like him. She told me she’s never met him in person before tonight. They’ve talked on the phone and chatted online, and he asked her out for tonight. She would’ve turned him down, but she decided she’d take a chance and meet him here since we were all going to be here. He’s a putz.”

Boone chuckled as they circled the dance floor and held her close to him. The tension in his shoulders faded as she caressed them, and he let out a sigh.

“Can I ask you a question, Maya?”

She smiled up at him. “Of course. Ask me anything.”

“You don’t have to answer if you don’t want to. I want to ask about the past.”

“Okay.” She looked at him with trusting blue eyes and waited.

“When you and Morgan played together, did you ever go to a club in your area or did you play at home?”

“We played at home. We had some friends in the lifestyle, and we used to go to a public club in Austin with them. They played there, but I never asked Morgan to because I knew he preferred to play in private. We got lots of great ideas from watching, though.”

“Did you enjoy going to the club?”

“I did. Because it was a public club there was a limit to the kinds of things that could be done there.”

“Meaning no sex.”

“Nope. And no nudity either.”

Boone detected a sense of disappointment in her tone and decided to probe that simple comment a little more, later on.

“I know someone who owns a private, exclusive club in Morehead.”

Maya's eyes flared at this news. It could've been the low light, but he thought he also saw her eyes dilate. “R—really? In Morehead?”

The dominant part of his psyche wanted to growl at her reaction.

“Yes. It's an exclusive club, with membership by invitation only. There would be very few limitations there.”

Her hands clutched a little when he said it.

“It sounds wonderful. How did you find it? I imagine they don't advertise in the yellow pages.”

“Ethan told me about it. He knows a lot of people and a lot about the BDSM lifestyle. I asked him about rope play. I hope you don't mind I talked to him.”

“No. I like Ethan. I'm not squeamish about people knowing that about me.”

Boone liked that about her. She didn't play games and act bashful about who she was and what she enjoyed. People could take her or leave her.

“Ethan knows the owner personally. He and Grace have played there a couple of times and so have Eli and Rachel.”

“Really? But not—”

“Not together, no,” he replied with a chuckle. “None of the men share *that* well.”

“I don’t suppose so.”

“We’ve been invited to come for a tour. But there’s one catch. For the tour, you would be allowed to remain in your street clothes. But members of the club who are submissives are held to a different standard of dress.”

“Naked?”

“No, but nearly so, yes.”

“Do you pick what I wear?”

“Yes. Or I can have you go naked.”

Maya blushed prettily and bit her bottom lip. Her telltale reaction answered the question of whether she’d balk at the notion. The thought of him in control of her being clothed or naked in front of strangers turned her on, and her teeth sinking into her luscious bottom lip was a dead giveaway.

A shudder ran through her form as he held her, and his cock responded with eagerness.

“I talked to Kendall and Richard about it.”

“You did?”

Boone knew she was concerned about how Kendall and Richard felt about her kinkiness. It was one thing to be kinky in the bedroom. It was totally different for them to participate in the lifestyle in a club setting with strangers around.

“What did they say?”

“Kendall and Richard felt it would be a waste for them to come to the rope-tying classes but were interested in going to the club to play together. I think Richard is relieved that although you love to be bound and controlled, your enjoyment doesn’t extend to anything beyond mild pain.”

It worked out well that Boone was not interested in putting stripes on her back nearly as much as he was in the mindfuck. In his mind’s

eye, he could already picture her angelic little face and her body's response.

"What about Kendall?"

Boone chuckled, thinking about his brother. "Kendall is about as kinky as they come, but I think he feels the same way Richard did. He needs to get beyond the worry about causing you pain. But he also has a lot in common with *me*. He's an exhibitionist at heart."

"An exhibitionist?"

Her gaze was intense as she kept up with him on the dance floor, and realization hit him. He decided to go ahead and ask while they were surrounded by all these people, rather than waiting until they were alone. The music was loud, so no one would overhear them.

His lips brushed against her ear as he spoke. "Close your eyes. I want you to imagine something for me." She nestled close to him and laid her head against his chest. God, he loved the feel of her melted against him like this, trusting him.

"We're at the club. You've stayed by my side the whole night, a good, obedient little sub. You're still learning club protocols, so you've made some mistakes tonight, because you and I are so comfortable with each other. We are joined in a seating area by several other couples, all Doms and subs, including Master Joseph and his sub." She nodded slightly against his chest, holding on tightly, already going there with him.

"You kneel between my legs. You're naked because that is how I wanted you tonight, but also because I knew it would please you as well. I don't mind if every Dom in the whole place admires your gorgeous, full breasts and your gorgeous ass and pussy. Master Joseph compliments your grace and your submissiveness and suggests that I should feel free to reward both myself and you for your loving obedience."

"Oh, Boone." Her shakily whispered comment was barely audible.

"I command you to rise to your knees and face me. I see the need in your eyes and smile because it matches my own. I instruct you to

open my fly and release my cock. I'm already hard because I've been that way all night, watching you move and the way you blush all over for me. You ask if you may suck my cock for me."

"Oh, honey, I *would*." Her strained tone pleased him. His cock chimed in with tingling approval as well.

"I instruct you to suck my cock, and you do with great enthusiasm. Everyone watches you with admiration. Your eyes are closed, and each soft sound you make brings me closer and closer."

Maya silently trembled in his arms.

"With a hand on your jaw I stop you and ask you to rise. It's torture for me to stop you because your mouth is hot and feels good. You rise and I draw you onto my lap. I am gentle with you because it's what you deserve from me, but there is a Dom amongst the group who believes I am not forceful enough with you. He believes that I should have disciplined your mistakes tonight much more harshly. *You're* about to teach him what submission looks like."

Maya looked up at him, her eyes a little misty and dazed. A thrill went through him at the sight. She was *right there* with him as he described his fantasy further.

"I kiss you, because I love you and want them to know it. This is more than me controlling you. This is you giving control completely, and me thanking you for the gift you're giving to me. I turn you so you face away from me and place your thighs outside of mine.

"You tremble in my arms, knowing already what I want. You brace yourself on the arms of my chair as I lift you slightly. It turns you on to know everyone is watching as I slide into you bit by bit. You're slick and hot as your tight pussy engulfs my cock, and you take all of me into you. I pull you back against my chest and spread my knees, which opens you even wider. All those seated with us can see every inch of your glorious pussy."

Maya's hand fisted in the fabric of his shirt. The other hand gripped his shoulder from behind, and she missed a step in the dance. Boone realized it was possible she might be so aroused by his fantasy

she'd come for him right there, surrounded by others. That thought gave him an idea.

"I thrust into you as I slide my fingers down to your juicy little cunt. You're very wet, and the thought of all those people watching my cock tunneling into your pussy has you on the verge of a screaming orgasm. Because I love you, I know what you crave, and I want to give it to you, my beautiful little submissive. I wrap my other arm around your shoulders and upper arms and hold you to me tightly as I stroke your clit with the other hand. Master Joseph and one of the other Doms comment on how lovely you are. You respond to their words, your pussy growing even wetter for me. Never once have I ordered you to hold back, and as I fuck you it becomes obvious you're about to have an intense orgasm."

Maya's breathing was rapid, erratic panting, and she held on tightly to him, waiting to hear what happened next. She moaned faintly as he paused a moment longer for effect.

"The Dom, who believes I am not firm enough with you, makes a rude, ill-timed comment that you lack control and I am spoiling you. You hear him and are thrown off by what he says. Anger boils inside me that he has stolen the moment from you—the reward you had earned and deserved. The rude Dom is not a member of the club, but a guest. He is invited to leave the area by one of the masters, but I insist he and his sub stay and watch.

"I whisper to you to close your eyes." Boone watched as Maya closed her eyes. Her instinctive obedience brought a smile to his face. "I've slowed my thrusting a bit during the interruption but resume as I whisper to you."

"What do you whisper?"

"I say you are my good girl. I tell you I could not ask for better submission than what you have so generously given me that night and I don't need high protocols to know you are submitted to me. I stroke your pretty little cunt, spreading your juices all around. I stroke more forcefully as I once again wrap my arm tightly around you and spread

your thighs farther apart. I whisper that you are mine, and I love you. I order you to open your eyes and see the admiration of all those who watch you take my cock to the hilt with each stroke. All eyes are on your beautiful face and body as you submit to my command to come.”

“Oh, Boone.”

“Two more stokes and your back arches. Your pussy clamps down on my cock as you scream out your passion. I continue thrusting, because I know you’re not done yet and have earned another. You writhe against me as I increase the pressure on your clit until your body vibrates with tension.”

Speaking of tension, she had to be pretty damn close right now. He maneuvered them to the back of the dance floor farthest from the lights and turned to take advantage of the less crowded space. He held her to him in a snug embrace, and his thigh brushed against her mound as they continued the dance. With her back facing the wall, his hands slid down to grasp her ass cheeks, and he ground her against his erection. He could hear her whimper with pleasure.

“You see the lust in the observers’ eyes, knowing that while they might watch they will never touch you, only admire you as you please me. You focus on the wall behind them and realize it’s a mirror. You finally see what I have seen the whole time—a lovely submissive bringing her Dom great pleasure. The sight of your body trapped in my arms as I fill your pussy with my cock sends you over again, and your wails of pleasure echo through the whole club as *everyone watches*.”

“Oh, Boone,” Maya crooned quietly, and her body went completely tense and still. He smoothly turned her away from the crowd and she pressed her pelvis tight against him as her body shook with passion. “Oh, my God, Boone, I’m—oh!” She pressed her face to his shirt, and he held her securely as she finally went limp.

“I have you, baby.”

“I can’t believe...” Her voice was muffled against his shirt as she panted with pleasure.

"I can. It was beautiful, too."

"I lost control, completely."

"You didn't lose it, Maya. You gave it. I had you safe the whole time. Nobody noticed us with all these others dancing."

Shit! But in the haze of lust he'd forgotten all about the person who might once again be in the club recording videos. He hoped like hell their intimate moment had not been captured. She'd been so controlled right up until the moment of orgasm he doubted anyone could've known what was happening beyond a particularly intimate dance embrace. There were others out there dancing just as closely.

He kept them moving and glanced around as he kept one eye on her.

* * * *

Richard thought Boone had a particularly pleased look on his face when he returned with Maya to their table.

Kendall must've noticed, too, as he said, "Damn, about time you came back. We were about to send a posse out to hunt you down."

Maya gave them both a dazzling smile and said, "Oh, we were talking and got carried away." She giggled when she looked up at Boone, and Richard wondered just how carried away they'd gotten.

"I'm going to go powder my nose and freshen my lipstick. Would you mind ordering me another glass of wine?"

When Maya returned, Grace waved at Ethan in the DJ booth. The next song started as he returned to Grace and kissed her. All the girls made a beeline for the dance floor as Brantley Gilbert's "Kick It in the Sticks" started to play.

Maya turned to her men and said, "Showtime, boys."

Kendall chuckled and said, "Make it good, baby."

Richard kissed her and watched appreciatively as she sashayed away in her little pin-up girl costume and those wicked red high heels.

Combined with her short-shorts those high heels made her gorgeous legs look even longer and sexier.

As the girls proceeded to do their thing to the country rock song, Richard stood with the others watching Maya throw down her best moves. Maya had told them she hoped that if they were over-the-top tonight, the person holding the camera might become so distracted they would forget to be covert and might be easier to spot. Richard asked only that she stay away from the edge of the dance floor so no one could reach out and touch her from one of the tables.

His irritation mounted again as a voice he'd had to listen to all night long spoke up again. It took a lot to get Richard riled up, but he was damn sick and tired of Kent Hargrove. Adam looked at Richard across the table and rolled his eyes.

"Most of those women are spoken for. Or I *assume* they are. Why are they allowed to dance together like that?"

A deep chuckle rumbled from Richard's chest as Ethan stepped up next to Kent and said, "Because we love the girls and like to see them have a good time. It's our job to watch over them and keep them safe."

Kent scoffed and said, "I hardly see where it's worth the disturbance they could cause. Better to avoid trouble and not allow it to begin with."

"Maybe so, Hargrove," Adam said tersely. "But these women are worth it to us, including the woman we've listened to you condescend to all night. It's obvious it's not working out for you two tonight. What's the problem?"

Hargrove sputtered for a few seconds, and Richard couldn't believe the words that came out of his mouth next.

"I suppose some men like their women plus-sized, but I don't and had no idea she was so grossly overweight."

Richard glanced out on the dance floor to make sure Summer was nowhere within earshot. He couldn't believe that was how Hargrove viewed Summer. She was stunning and curvy in all the right places

and had been drawing admiring glances from men all over the club all night. She was vivacious, had a great sense of humor, and describing her as “grossly overweight” was *grossly* inaccurate.

“Hargrove, you must need glasses or something,” Adam said with a disbelieving shake of his head.

Ethan said, “Personally, I think you can’t handle a woman who has thoughts of her own and isn’t afraid to share them or debate them. You’re using her dress size as an excuse when the truth is she’s more woman than you can handle.”

Hargrove rolled his eyes but said no more. As the song ended the men went forward to claim the girls at the edge of the dance floor. When Hargrove didn’t make a move, Richard rose from his seat to escort Summer back to the table while Hargrove fiddled with his cell phone. When he returned with Summer, Hargrove was nowhere in sight.

“I wonder where Kent is,” Summer asked as Adam held her chair for her.

“Hargrove must’ve slipped out of the nightclub without saying good-bye. Maybe he’s in the men’s room.” Richard hoped he’d taken the cue and made his exit.

It didn’t sit well with Richard to stand by and watch a woman be mistreated. If Hargrove had not disappeared when he had, Richard was certain the men would have invited him to find a reason to.

A man approached Summer and asked her to dance. His attitude was polite, and she smiled at him and nodded. Maybe the evening wasn’t a total loss for her.

Richard kissed Maya as she rejoined them and took a little possessive pride when she happily allowed him to pull her into his lap to sit for a spell.

“Did you like my dance?”

Richard chuckled and pressed her against the tingling erection he’d been dealing with while watching her all evening.

“I didn’t get this talking to the guys.” He kissed her throat, and she chortled and wiggled against him.

* * * *

Frank Reeves watched from a darkened corner of the nightclub as Maya cavorted in her skimpy outfit with her redneck boyfriends. If Kendall Warner hadn’t shown up when he did, none of this stealth and sneaking around would have been necessary. His plan would have gone without a hitch without his interference.

It was obvious watching her that she was smitten with all three of the Warner men. That little kink of hers was disturbing to know about, and he was actually glad his plans to marry her had fallen through. He didn’t want her if she was willing to do the kinds of things a foursome did. Disgusting perverts.

His plan was actually simpler as it came together in his mind. Watch her, catch her when she was alone, extract the key by any means available, then hide her body well. The important thing was that he got his hands on the contents of the safe-deposit box. He cursed Morgan for making all this necessary by not storing the papers he needed in their safe at home. They would’ve been ridiculously easy to get at there. He doubted she even knew what was in it yet. If she knew, she wouldn’t be living in such close, cramped quarters with those three cowboys. She’d be living high on the hog, which was what he intended to do after he paid off his damned bill collectors.

Chapter Twenty-eight

Sunday morning, Kendall answered his phone as he stepped from the barn out at the JWB Ranch. Morning chores were finished, thanks to Boone and Richard's help, and he was ready to head back to the Divine Creek Ranch and pick up Maya for lunch.

"Kendall Warner."

"Hey, Kendall. This is Ace Webster. Sorry it took me a few days to get back to you about this guy Reeves. We've been busy with this blog thing. I've got the information if you want to meet somewhere."

"Great. I'm headed over to the Divine Creek Ranch with the guys in a few minutes. Want to meet at the foreman's house?"

"Sure, I need to stop in to see Jack anyway. How long before you head home?"

"Give me thirty minutes."

"Sounds good. See you then."

* * * *

Maya was at her laptop updating her resume for Dr. Guthrie when someone knocked at the door. Rising from the dining room table, she frowned when she looked out the picture window and saw an unfamiliar truck parked out front.

She gazed through the peephole, but the person was wearing a cap and was currently looking away, and she couldn't see his face.

It must be one of the ranch hands or one of the guys' coworkers.

She unlocked the deadbolt and pulled open the door. She gasped when she realized who it was and tried to slam the door in his face.

“Frank! What are you doing here?”

Frank jammed the toe of his boot in the door before she could close it. She threw her weight against the door and looked around for a weapon. Frank was a big guy and had strength and weight on his side. Her cell phone sat on the table by the door, and she grabbed it and slipped it into her back pocket.

“I just want to talk to you, Maya. That’s all. I didn’t come out here to start any trouble.”

Liar! Trouble follows you!

Frank made no attempt to push the door inward. She glanced around the door edge and saw that he held his hands up in a nonthreatening gesture.

Her cell phone vibrated in her pocket.

“Maya, I just wanted to talk to you. I’m sorry I lost it with you last weekend. I didn’t come to make trouble.”

There was a grating edge to his voice that sent red flags flying in her mind. She’d known Frank long enough to recognize he was still angry. He wasn’t there to make peace.

She glanced at the message on her phone and said, “Frank, why are you trying to barge in if you don’t want to make trouble?” Her heart pounded as she waited for him to react.

Frank withdrew his boot, and the door slammed closed. She squinted at the message on her screen. It was from Grace.

“I’m standing in the barn watching your front porch. Who is that and do you need me to send help?”

Stalling Frank while she debated what to say and typed a reply, Maya said, “What do you have to say, Frank? Say it to me through the door.”

She didn’t want to upset Grace in her condition. *“I’m OK. Name is Frank Reeves. Tell Kendall please.”* She pressed send and slipped the phone back in her pocket.

“Maya. Can’t we talk face-to-face like two adults?” Frank’s tone was wheedling. He didn’t answer her question.

"Frank, I'm not opening this door until you tell me why you're here." She quietly slid the deadbolt home as he began talking, and she smiled as his ego served her purpose. No one could monologue like Frank, especially if he was talking about himself.

"I'm sorry about last Saturday. I saw those guys with you and I..."

"You just keep on talking, Frank," Maya whispered as she thanked her lucky stars she had on her sneakers. To make sure he would think she was still there, she yelled, "I told you it wasn't working out between us! Hey! How did you know where I would be?"

"I got the address from one of your friends."

None of her friends liked Frank, if they knew him. Realization hit her, and the fear and adrenaline dumping into her system felt like a cold chill. "You put GPS on my car, didn't you? You *tracked* me here!"

Frank's substantial body weight slammed against the door, and she knew she'd made a mistake. She should've eased him into a nice long speech about his love and devotion.

Oh Lord, please let Grace still be watching this! I should've said I needed help when I had the chance!

Frank growled threateningly through the door. "Let me the fuck in, you little bitch! I'm going to fix you just like I did Morgan. I plan to put a bullet between your eyes." Fear gave her feet wings as she dashed through the house straight to the back door.

Where do I go? Oh, God. Did he just confess to killing Morgan? Don't think! Just run!

She slipped quietly through the back door, closing it behind her as she heard the front door splinter the jamb and burst open. Since he didn't know the layout of the house it would take him a few seconds to ascertain she was not hiding inside and to locate the back door. She leaped from the back porch. She could hear him slamming through the house like an angry bull. She reached the side gate and unlatched

it, figuring the thick shrubs lining the backyard would provide the best cover. She couldn't run to the barn because he'd catch her as she ran by the house, and he said he had a gun. She couldn't chance it. She ran down the fence line, blessing Teresa for caring for the rose bushes, which were thick on the inside of the fence. He wouldn't see her until she was already a distance from the house.

She could hear him still slamming around in the house and took a moment as she snuck down the fence line to check her phone.

"Dammit!" she whispered as she realized the text to Grace had failed. She'd never received the message. She retyped, "*Frank Reeves. Has a gun. Running. Send help.*"

Knowing she was running out of time, Maya hit the phone icon and pressed last number dialed. Richard's number came up, and she pressed it.

"Please answer. Please answer. Please answer," she panted as she began running away from the house, sprinting for the thick tree line in the distance.

Adrenaline dumped into her system, giving her greater speed as the back door of their house burst open. She glanced back and sent up a prayer of thanks she could not see the back of the house for all the shrubs. He couldn't see her and would search for her in the yard first, at least until he found the gate.

She headed for the tree line, figuring the creek was the best option for hiding places.

Richard's deep voice answered the call. "Hello, honey. We're in the truck on our way home right now."

"Richard! Oh, thank God! Richard, Frank Reeves is here and he has a gun! He said he would shoot me!"

"Did he hurt you?"

"He broke the front door! He's chasing me!"

"Where are you, honey?"

"Headed for the creek!"

“Good. We’re almost home. What?” She heard muffled voices and then he spoke clearly again. “Grace is on the phone with Kendall. She’s called 911. Run to the creek, honey. Watch out for the—”

Maya felt a fiery pain shoot through her left arm and yelped.

“Maya! Maya! What happened? Maya!”

Hot liquid ran from her left upper arm, which tingled fiercely and suddenly felt powerless. She looked back, and her heart leaped into her throat as she saw Frank Reeves standing by the open gate, pointing his gun at her.

She knew Frank Reeves was proud of his marksman skills and his gun collection. She hadn’t heard a shot fired and knew if he had brought a gun with him during the day he would have brought a silencer so any shots fired would attract no notice.

“He’s shooting at me, Richard. He hit my arm.”

She ran as fast as she could, weaving as much as possible as he lifted the gun and took aim again.

“Run, Maya! Run! We’re almost there. Get to the creek. Run, honey!”

“I am. Richard, I love you. Tell Kendall and Boone I love them.”

The phone must have changed hands because she suddenly heard Boone’s voice. “Maya! Listen to me, okay, baby?”

“Yeah,” she panted and flinched when another bullet impacted the dirt right by her foot as she raced toward the slope that led to the creek.

“Where did he hit you?”

“My arm. It feels funny.”

“We’ll fix it. Just keep running. Stay ahead of him.”

“Okay.”

“Get across the creek as quickly as you can, and don’t get your phone wet.” A bullet zinged past her ear.

“Oh God! That was close!” She chanced a glance behind her. He was gaining on her.

Maya hit the slope, saw the barbed wire just in time, ass-planted it, and slithered under the barbed strands.

She could hear Frank's heavy footfalls closing the distance. She prayed she'd reach the nearby tree line before he breached the slope. Putting the phone to her ear she sprinted as if ten thousand demons were on her tail.

"I'm under the fence. Almost there."

"Good girl. Keep running, baby."

She heard an ungraceful "Oof!" behind her and managed a happy grimace as Frank commenced to cursing. He'd hit the barbed-wire fence at full sprint. She heard the muffled report of the gun and yelped as pain bloomed in her left shoulder.

"I love you, Boone. I love you so much."

"Don't say good-bye to me, Maya. We're gonna take care of that son of a bitch. *We just got you*. Don't you *dare* tell me good-bye!"

"Boone, he said he killed Morgan. He said he'll kill me, too."

"No he won't. I'll kill him before I allow that to happen."

Somehow she managed a smile at his authoritarian tone. Her eyes were grateful as she left the brightly lit slope behind and entered the heavily shaded area over the creek. In another few seconds he wouldn't be able to see her at least until he freed himself from the fence and got over it, which was not going to be easy for a big guy like him.

She was thankful to whoever had built the fence taller than normal on this side of the creek. She heard another faint pop, and white-hot pain bloomed in her right side, causing her to gasp harshly.

"Baby? Baby, are you still there?" Boone's voice was tinged with desperation. She was barely able to hold the phone to her ear.

"My side, under my ribs. He shot me again."

"Get across the creek, baby. Do it, just get across it."

She gasped as she plunged into the cold water. Her legs felt like they were lead weights, but at least the water only came to her waist

at the deepest point along this part of the creek. It was much deeper and harder to cross farther down where they played.

"Good girl. I hear you in the water. Get across for me." Boone was panting, and she hoped he was getting close. "Once you're on the other side, run outside the tree line and keep going as long as you can. If you keep going you'll eventually hit Rockin' C property. Kendall called Chance and Clayton, and they're coming along your side of the creek on horseback. They were already in the area working."

She pulled herself from the water and gasped when a bullet lodged in the wet clay by her head.

"He's shooting at me again."

"Dammit! Get up that creek bank and outside the tree line, baby! Keep going!"

His steely-voiced orders energized her, and she leaped to her feet and scrambled through the tree line and out of sight. She crouched and ran as best as she could. Her legs were feeling a little rubbery, and she knew blood loss and shock might be catching up to her.

She needed to find a hiding place because she wasn't sure she could make it very far on the bank. She heard a splash in the water and a curse. Peeking through the thick brush she was relieved to see Frank had run down the creek bank, hoping to cut her off before plunging in. All he'd succeeded in doing was entering the creek at a much deeper place than she had. He floundered around, and she hoped like hell his gun got wet. That miscalculation on his part might buy her some extra time.

A rabbit darted out in front of her as she crawled along, giving her an idea. Gauging how far down the creek she was, she peeked through the brush again. Frank was still floundering around and not watching for her. He might have been an excellent marksman, but he couldn't swim for shit.

Noting the terrain of the bank on her side, she went down another hundred feet or so and then, despite her deathly fear of moving closer to him, she carefully slithered through a space between two tightly

spaced oak saplings and rolled into their trysting spot as quietly as she could. Leaves crunched and crackled under her, and she prayed he didn't hear the noise they made as he continued splashing.

Knowing she couldn't stay exposed, even though he wouldn't be able to see her unless he was standing on the upper edge of the hollow, there was only one place to seek shelter. Noise from her phone drew her attention. She put it to her ear as she crawled toward the hollow tree. The splashing noise Frank made sounded no closer, so she whispered, "Shh, Boone. He'll hear me."

"Baby, be careful. Where are you?" Boone's strong voice reassured her as though he was there holding her hand.

"Our spot down the creek. I'm going to crawl into the tree."

"Please, please be careful."

They had not explored the tree more thoroughly the last time they'd come to the creek, and now was no time to regret that fact.

The ancient oak was large in circumference. Maya cocked an ear to locate Frank and scampered into the tree as quickly and quietly as she could when she realized she no longer heard him in the water. She carefully backed from the large opening at the base of the tree until her back was against the other side of the hollowed area.

She pulled her feet as close to her as she could and was satisfied no sunlight shone on any part of her. The wounds in her arm, shoulder, and side set up a painful throb as she tried to calm and quiet her breathing. She listened hard but couldn't hear well over the pounding rush of blood in her ears.

She bit her lip when she heard Frank growl from the edge of the creek bank. He was nearby. All she could do was pray that being a city boy, he wouldn't see the track in the leaves she must have left behind as she'd rolled down the incline and that he wouldn't notice a blood trail.

She jumped spasmodically when she discerned a slight, shifting sound to her right.

Oh no.

Maya held her breath, realizing she was not alone. The hollow tree had at least one other occupant. She heard the shifting again and the rustle of leaves. Frank sounded like he'd moved a few feet away as he muttered to himself. She knew no relief as she debated pointing the lit screen on her phone in the direction of the sounds.

She put the phone to her ear and whispered, "Boone, I'm in the tree. I don't think I'm alone. Frank is nearby. Should I look?"

"It can't be any worse than what is waiting for you outside. Whatever happens, we're going to deal with it. Stay quiet and safe. Be my brave girl, okay? We're on the other side of the creek now. He doesn't even know we're here yet. Fucking city boy doesn't know anything about tracking. I can see the tree you're in. He's about ten feet down from you. Stay where you are. "

"Kay. Hold on." Boone murmured in assent, and Maya slowly turned the lit screen on her phone to illuminate a bit of the interior of the tree at a time, hoping to not startle whatever occupied the tree with her.

A cold chill went through her as she looked into a small pair of reflective eyes. They blinked and the small animal shook its head. Whether it was better to be inside the hollowed tree or not was suddenly up for debate as she saw the sleek black coat and white stripes by the dim light of the phone as she slowly raised it to get a better look.

Papa skunk. I swear by everything holy that if you won't spray me, I will never, ever, ever, ever invade your home again. I promise, I promise, I promise. Nice skunk. Please don't be rabid.

Just as slowly she lowered the phone, making no sudden movements at all. She slowly crouched into a ball, hiding her face and suppressing a whimper as a sharp pain throbbed in her side. She put the phone back to her ear and whispered, "Boone?"

"No, it's Kendall. You doing okay?"

"Yeah, but there's a—"

“Maya? Sit tight. Hank and his deputies are almost here, and Ace Webster is also with us. I can see them coming. We’re keeping Reeves in our sights. He’s moving back toward you. Boone has gone down to the bend in the creek and plans to cross over, see if he can’t overpower Reeves. He couldn’t wait anymore.”

“Skunk,” she whispered.

“What, babydoll?”

“Sku—”

Just then, Maya’s phone made a very audible beeping sound. The noise startled the skunk judging by the sound it made, and the animal sprang through the opening. Maya realized it *was* possible for relief and terror to coexist.

“Oh no. My phone just beeped.” Panic began taking hold as she glanced at it. Low battery indicator.

“Stay put, Maya. He’s moving toward the tree. He must’ve heard it. Don’t move a muscle. We’re coming.”

Frank’s infuriated voice sounded above her on the creek bank. “Maya, I hear you, dammit! When I get my hands on you, after I get that key, I’m gonna—What the—”

Maya was confused by the sounds she heard until the noxious vapors reached her inside the tree. She realized what she heard was the sound of Frank Reeves gagging and vomiting. The skunk had sprayed him, evidently at point-blank range.

“Oh, fuck!” he yelled before vomiting some more.

Her own stomach roiled, and she put her hands over her nose and mouth. Stars shimmered in her vision, but she heaved a sigh of relief as that lily-livered city boy lost his lunch all over the creek bank, incapacitated by a little skunk spray. It might buy her men some time to save her.

There was a tussle, and Maya felt the vibrations as Frank rolled into the indentation outside her hiding place. Her breath caught in her throat as the gun fired again.

The stars that had been wavering in her vision increased, and her head felt like it was filled with static as everything went black.

Chapter Twenty-nine

Boone gritted his teeth against nausea and the stench as he pinned Frank Reeves to the ground, tightening his headlock and pressing down until Reeves quit fighting. He was disgusted by Reeves as he continued gagging and retching.

“Why? Tell me why, motherfucker. One day you’re professing your devotion and acting like a jealous lover and the next you’re trying to kill her.”

“Fuck you, Warner.”

“No thanks. But you let me know how that feels when you’re some seven-foot-tall inmate’s girlfriend, all right?”

Chance and Clayton Carlisle galloped up on horseback as Richard, Kendall, and Ace Webster descended into the bowl-like indentation and scrambled for the opening in the hollow tree.

“Maya? Oh God, Maya.” Richard reached into the tree and pulled out one little sneaker-clad foot. She didn’t move or make a sound.

Kendall sounded like he was barely holding it together. “Careful. She must be unconscious.”

Please, God, let her just be unconscious.

Frank struggled for a moment, and Boone landed a solid punch to his jaw and turned Frank’s face so he couldn’t watch as they extricated her from the hollow tree. Kendall felt for her pulse and nodded at them, relief evident in his eyes.

Chance and Clayton jumped from their horses, and Chance rifled through his saddlebag and pulled out a first-aid kit.

He caught Boone’s eye and grinned. Holding up the kit he said, “Eagle Scout. Always prepared. Holy shit, but it stinks over here.”

Boone grinned and replied, "Yeah, thank God for that skunk, too. Otherwise Reeves might've found Maya before I got to him."

Clayton pulled a length of rope from his saddlebag and threw it to Boone, saying, "Why don't we hog-tie the son of a bitch for Hank." Clayton pointed at the flurry of activity on the other side of the creek where several Divine Creek Ranch ATVs loaded with law enforcement and EMTs were pulling to a stop. Jack had also arrived in his SUV.

Boone hog-tied Reeves and left him for the sheriff's deputies to take charge of. The men busied themselves checking her injuries and tried to stop Maya's blood loss from the wound at her side. When the EMTs made it across the creek, after being directed to the shallowest point by Richard so their equipment wouldn't get wet, they stabilized Maya. Kendall, Boone, and Richard personally carried her stretcher across the creek and rode with her in Jack's SUV back to the waiting ambulance.

Boone helped to hold Maya's stretcher in place and listened to Jack's cell phone conversation with Grace as he tried to keep Maya from being jostled too much.

"That's right, darlin'. Hydrogen peroxide, baking soda, and dish soap. And a bucket. Meet us at the old horse trough out by the barn. One of the ranch hands can fill it for you. No running, okay? I love you, too, darlin'."

Jack slipped his phone in his pocket and grinned at Boone and said, "Grace is bringing skunk remedy. No offense, Boone, but you stink to high heaven."

Boone had become desensitized to it, but when he put his nose to his shirt and sniffed hard, the odor made him gag a little. He was distracted by Maya's moan.

The two EMTs perched in the back of the SUV tended to her, and she looked over to Boone.

He held her hand as she smiled at him and murmured, “You’re okay. I was afraid you were hit when the gun went off. I—I must have passed out. What happened?”

“The skunk sprayed Reeves right before I jumped him. He got it worse than I did.”

“I probably stink, too. It made me want to be sick, it was so strong. I can’t smell it now.”

One of the EMTs spoke up and said, “We’ll probably all need de-skunking. With the humidity this high his spray was thick in the air.”

At the ranch, Grace waited with a bucket and the other ingredients Jack had requested. Jack couldn’t talk her into going back to the house, though. She stayed with Maya until they had her loaded and took off for the hospital.

The EMTs told them that she was in good hands and urged them to take the few minutes to use the de-skunking solution so they would be allowed to stay in the ER waiting room.

As it was, they got lots of surprised looks and a few disgusted ones when they showed up a few minutes later. Fresh clothes evidently hadn’t helped much either. Boone didn’t really care as long as he got to be with Maya. Judging by the looks in Kendall’s and Richard’s eyes they felt the same.

In consideration of the other occupants of the ER waiting room, they stood in the hallway outside the doors to the emergency and trauma department. Kendall and Richard looked about as bad as Boone felt. He hoped he never saw a look on Richard’s face like he’d worn that afternoon while on the phone with Maya. Sheer panic, devastation, and powerlessness.

He’d heard Maya’s pained yelp each time Reeves’s bullets had struck her, and the sound had terrified him.

No one could blame them if they wrapped Maya in cotton, took her home, and never let her go anywhere else alone ever again.

* * * *

Maya returned to consciousness slowly. The first things she was aware of were a deep, rhythmic sound, a warm weight on her thigh, and the fragrance of roses.

Her mouth was dry, and she shivered with cold. Shivering made her tense up, and she felt a weird sort of muffled pain in her right side. Then she remembered being shot. The room was dim as she opened her eyes and took in a sight that brought the sting of tears to her eyes.

Boone sat in the corner by the window in a very uncomfortable-looking chair with wooden arms. His chin rested in his palm, and he was turned sideways in the chair. It looked like the chair had won the battle to find a comfortable position to sleep in.

Kendall sat in an identical chair on one side of the bed next to a lot of monitoring equipment. He didn't look like he was faring much better with his head tilted back, mouth wide open, snoring like a jackhammer.

She grinned and almost wished she had a camera so she could snap a picture of him like that. The others wouldn't think that was so amusing, but Kendall would laugh and ask her why she didn't take a video instead and post it on YouTube so he could be famous.

Maya looked down at the dark form on her right and realized the warm weight on her thigh was Richard's hand. He sat forward in a hospital chair with his upper body resting on the mattress, his head on his forearms.

Even though he was in repose, she could see the stress of the day's events on his face. His eyebrows were drawn slightly together so a line formed between them, and there was tension around his eyes. Even so, he was a handsome man. She loved his full lips and neatly trimmed beard and moustache and the way it tickled when he kissed her.

She longed to thread her fingers through his silky hair but resisted the impulse so he could rest. According to the clock on the wall it was nearly midnight. She reached for the cup on the bedside table and

grimaced at the pain in her side. Taking a drink eased the dryness of her throat.

When she shifted it must have awakened Richard because he looked at her and then quickly sat up.

“Hi,” he whispered, his voice laced with sleepiness. He laced his fingers through hers and glanced at the clock. “How do you feel?”

“Groggy. What happened? I’m having a hard time remembering coming here.”

“You had a through-and-through gunshot wound to your side. They did exploratory surgery to make sure there was no internal damage and made some repairs. They removed the bullet from your shoulder. The wound in your arm was a through-and-through also, but it did some damage to the muscle and your humerus, which is why your arm is in a temporary cast.”

“After he shot me it felt like it didn’t work right. That explains it. What about Frank?”

“Hank locked him up. He’s being charged with attempted murder. They’re going to reinvestigate Morgan’s death, and if they can find enough evidence they’ll charge him with murder as well. Any idea why he would do this?”

Grief and confusion swirled through her grogginess. That hotheaded bastard had murdered her husband, probably for his money. It made her head ache as she tried to piece the puzzle together. “I don’t know. It makes no sense. One day he’s telling me we belong to together and the next he’s trying to—he put a GPS on my car.”

Richard sat back and reached into the bedside table for a notepad and pencil. He jotted down what she’d told him. “We’ll let the police know so they can check it out. Did he say anything else you thought was odd?”

“Nothing comes to mind right now. My head feels like it’s full of cotton,” she said, grimacing when she felt her hair. It was full of grit from the inside of the tree and from crawling through the brush.

"Yuck. I need a shower. Did they say when I can go home?"

Richard smiled at her in commiseration and said, "They want you to stay for two more nights. We'll help you get cleaned up. But that's waiting until the morning."

The night nurse quietly came in to check on her, and Kendall and Boone sat up, wide awake, when she turned on the lights. It was then that Maya noticed the lovely rose arrangements sitting on her windowsill.

Kendall, Boone, and Richard stood at the foot of the bed while the nurse did her job and administered pain meds to Maya.

The nurse, who looked like the no-nonsense type, wrinkled her nose and said, "She's not supposed to still have visitors in her room this late at night. Don't you want her to get well?"

Kendall grinned and turned on the charm for the nurse. "Of course we do, ma'am. She only just woke up a second ago."

The nurse had a twinkle in her eye when she glanced at Boone as he stretched and his spine crackled. "You should go home and get yourselves some rest. Those uncomfortable chairs they put in these rooms are meant to keep people from staying too long, I think."

"Oh, we're just fine, ma'am," Kendall replied, giving Maya's hand a gentle pat. "We had a close call with this beautiful lady and can't seem to pry ourselves from her side."

"All of you stink to high heaven. You could at least go take a shower."

"That is the *eau du skunk* of the varmint that saved Maya's life," Kendall said as he sniffed his shirt and grimaced. "Guys, she may have a point. We are obnoxious."

"The skunk saved her life?" the nurse asked doubtfully.

"He sure did."

"So, is one of you her husband?"

Maya suppressed a giggle and waited to see how Kendall handled that one.

Kendall grinned and said, "Nope, but we will be."

The nurse, who had to have seen some pretty crazy stuff working in a hospital, arched her eyebrows in mild surprise. “We? Who?”

Maya caught Boone rolling his eyes and smiled. Kendall chuckled and replied, “We—us.” He gestured at his brothers with his thumb.

The nurse grinned and doubtfully said, “All three of you?” Maya knew a nurse wouldn’t normally get into such detailed conversations with visitors in a hospital but made allowances since this was a small town and her curiosity was clearly benign. There was no judgment in her posture or voice. Chances were, Maya would probably get to know her well if she worked for Dr. Guthrie.

“Yes, ma’am. All three of us.” Kendall replied, clearly the spokesman for their group.

The nurse turned to Maya to finish her task with one hundred questions in her twinkling eyes. “So all three claimed you? Do they have any single brothers?”

Maya giggled and shook her head.

“Cousins? Distant relations?”

With a laugh Maya replied, “I don’t think so, but I’ll put in a good word for you.” The laughter made her grimace and she put her hand to her side.

“I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have got you laughing. Those pain meds will kick in soon.” Turning to the guys, she said, “She’ll get loopy soon and probably be out like a light for the rest of the night if y’all want to go rest. I might be able to wrangle a cot, but no more than one in a room this size.”

Boone replied, “That’s all right, ma’am. We really don’t mind. We’ll just watch over her tonight and let her sleep. Don’t put yourself to trouble on our account.”

The nurse shook her head and smiled. “My name is Ruth. I’ll be around tonight if she needs anything.”

“Thank you, Ruth,” Maya replied quietly, sighing as a dreamy, peaceful feeling descended upon her.

"Yep. She's feeling better already," Ruth said as she turned out the light over Maya's bed.

They clustered around her as soon as Ruth left.

Gesturing at the windowsill, she said, "The roses are wonderful. Who are they from?"

Boone replied, "Kendall sent the red roses, Richard sent the white and pink roses, and I sent the multicolored orange roses. Like them?"

Maya nodded and murmured, "They're perfect."

Their color choices communicated a lot to Maya. Red roses for desire, white roses for loyalty and sincerity, pink for love, and fiery, multicolored orange roses for passion.

Kendall sat on the left edge of the bed, and Boone occupied the right side. Richard got another blanket from the closet when he noticed her shiver. He spread it over her, smiling as Kendall and Boone each kissed her forehead.

"You should go home and get some sleep. You're going to be worthless tomorrow," she said as she caressed their cheeks.

Boone replied, "Chance gave me and Richard the day off tomorrow and said to tell you he and Clayton hope you feel better soon."

"We're staying here with you tonight. We'll rest some more tomorrow. Right now, I—" Kendall had to clear his throat when his voice cracked. "I don't want to leave. We came so close to losing you today."

Normally so playful and verbose, he looked down and picked at the blanket and said no more. When he looked up at her, Maya saw the sheen of tears in his eyes. Because of the clunky full-arm cast and bandage on her left shoulder and arm she had to reach across her body for him, which pulled at the stitches on her right side, and she grimaced.

"Don't, babydoll. You're going to hurt yourself." He leaned close to her, gingerly slid his arms around her, and sighed when she ran her fingers through the short hair at his nape.

Maya kissed him and said, "I'm right here. I'm not going anywhere."

Ruth tapped on the door and quietly handed Boone three pillows when he opened the door for her.

She released Kendall and put her palm on Boone's thigh when he returned to the bed. "It's over now, and we're going to move on. I hope Frank gets whatever is coming to him. I wish this bed was bigger. Then I could cuddle up with all of you."

"Even though we still smell skunky?" Kendall asked with a chuckle.

Maya laughed and said, "I probably do, too. I want a shower first thing in the morning."

They talked until Maya's pain meds started to take effect. The men kissed her one at a time and grinned when she got her words mixed up trying to tell them how much she loved them. She fell asleep holding their hands.

Early the following morning Ruth came in and shooed them out to check Maya and help her bathe. Maya could tell they were disappointed by that news.

Kendall said, "We'll go get cleaned up and come back after breakfast."

Richard added, "We need to call the deputy who took our statements and tell him about the GPS Reeves may have put on your car."

Boone patted his pockets and said, "Where did I put the keys to the truck?"

"Keys!"

The men returned to the bedside. "Did you remember something else?" Richard asked.

"Yes. He said something about a key. He threatened me, like once he got the key he was going to..." She didn't finish the thought because it obviously troubled them to hear it repeated.

"Key to what?" Boone asked, chewing on his lip.

Kendall's face lit up. "Didn't Morgan put a key to a safe-deposit box in the last letter to you?"

"His law office did. They included it in the larger envelope."

"Where is it?"

"My purse. I stuck it in my pocketbook for safekeeping."

"We need to find out what is in that safe-deposit box," Boone said. "I'm willing to bet whatever is in there will provide a clue for why Reeves tried to kill you."

A shiver went up Maya's spine as she thought of just how close he'd come to succeeding.

After the men kissed her one final time and left, Ruth returned with a sponge bath. Maya was disappointed but knew she'd have to wait at least another day to take a shower and wash her hair. Even though the cast could be wrapped, she was still too wobbly on her feet to be able to shower. Washing her hair would be impossible without help.

"So three men, huh? How's that working for you?" Ruth asked, a friendly twinkle in her eyes. "I probably shouldn't be asking about that."

Maya chuckled and replied, "It's okay. It's not a big secret. I love all three of them very much."

"I noticed on your patient paperwork that you're an RN. Are you new in town?"

"Yes. I just made the move permanent last week."

"Great. I guess I'll see you around here, if you take a nursing job."

"I've got a good lead on a position."

"So they're all brothers, huh?"

Maya giggled at Ruth's avid curiosity and answered a few more of her questions before breakfast arrived.

When Maya told her a little about what had happened the day before and explained her hiding place, Ruth was flabbergasted.

"That's why I was hoping to wash my hair this morning."

“You go ahead and eat, and I’ll see if I can find a hairbrush.”
Maya smiled, grateful that she’d found a friend in the nursing community already.

Chapter Thirty

Two weeks after the incident at the creek, Maya, Kendall, Boone, and Richard journeyed to San Marcos to finally solve the mystery of what the safe-deposit box contained. Upon their arrival, they followed a bank employee to the private room designated for opening safe-deposit boxes and left them after placing it on the large wooden table.

Maya's hands shook as she lifted the lid. An envelope with Morgan's handwriting was the first thing she saw. Lifting it out, she noticed another thick envelope beneath it. She opened the letter and removed the thick sheet of stationery, unfolded it, and read the short letter silently.

Dearest Maya,

If you're reading this letter it means the paperwork in this box is yours to do with as you see fit. I wanted to save it as a surprise for you, for after we retired, which is why I stored it at the bank. Too many people know where our safe is located, and I wanted these papers kept separate under lock and key. Frank was the only one who knew about them besides me, and that's part of the reason for the secrecy. I didn't want him to try to wrangle you out of this piece of land. I hope if you've read my other letters you've distanced yourself from him.

Two separate geologists confirmed the deposits of natural gas on this acreage are enormous. All the information you need, along with the name and address of someone you can trust to help you decide

what the best options are, is in the envelope, too. Give Kendall, Boone, and Richard my best.

*Love,
Morgan*

The tone of Morgan's letter was friendly, and as she reread it, Maya was reminded that Morgan had been a thoughtful, analytical thinker. While writing this letter, it would have occurred to him that she would be moving on with her life by this point. At first, his formal friendliness had struck her as odd, but now she understood it. He didn't want to cause her additional pain. The last letter he'd sent was truly the last love letter she would be receiving from him. With this one he was helping her move on in the only way he could. He'd been so right about Frank. And he'd been fairly intuitive in offering his greetings to Boone and Richard as well.

I'll always love you, Morgan. Thank you.

She handed the letter to Boone, and the men gathered around it to read as she lifted the other envelope from the box. She opened the flap of the thick envelope, and several official-looking documents slipped out.

The first was a deed to a piece of property in Louisiana, made out to Morgan. There were also geologist's reports and a letter estimating the value of the property at two million dollars.

She looked up at the men and handed them the documents.

When she was finally able to speak, Maya said, "Morgan used to say that when we retired we would live like a king and queen. I thought he meant our investments were doing well, which they are. I didn't have a clue he had this."

Shock was evident in their eyes. Kendall asked, "What are you going to do with it?"

They hadn't tendered an official proposal to her yet, but Maya knew exactly what she wanted to do with at least a part of it. Invest it in a promising Texas cattle ranch known as the JWB.

* * * *

Maya cuddled up to Kendall as they drove to San Marcos the second week in June to finalize the sale of her house. Since it was just the two of them for the trip, they were riding in her sporty Cadillac. Kendall put his arm around her so she could scoot even closer to him. It was early morning, and they had a long drive ahead of them.

Kendall, Boone, and Richard had been incredibly patient regarding her incapacitated status, cooking meals, doing all the laundry and housework, and helping her with the physical therapy she'd recently started for her left arm and shoulder. The wounds had healed, and the nightmares that had plagued her for a few weeks were also beginning to diminish. Frank Reeves was in the custody of the State of Texas and likely to remain there a long time. He was now facing prison time not only for Maya's attempted murder, but for Morgan's murder, as well. New evidence incriminating him had been uncovered that linked him to Morgan's death.

During her recuperation, her men had backed off from making love to her as often as she might've liked. She'd practically had to beg the first time, after reminding them her doctor had released her from any restriction regarding intercourse. Her only limitation had been the bulky cast on her arm which had been removed earlier in the week.

The closing on the house went without a hitch, and they had the rest of the hot June afternoon and evening to look forward to. They had made reservations at a quaint little bed-and-breakfast on the outskirts of San Marcos, which was owned by a friend of Maya's.

After Charlotte had them situated in their little cottage, she showed them the room's features. It was a well-known fact among the

local BDSM and kink community that The Lasso Inn catered discreetly to an unconventional clientele.

With a naughty twinkle in his eyes, Kendall pointed to a fern-bedecked plant stand located by itself in the corner of the room. “Is that what I think it is?”

Maya giggled and nodded. “Yes. Charlotte gave Morgan and me one just like it for a Christmas present several years ago. Her husband builds them himself.”

“Yes,” Charlotte said in her genteel, Southern accent. “Zane has made quite a niche for himself online in the kinky, convertible furniture business.”

The innocuous-looking plant stand was in actuality a convertible St. Andrew’s Cross, completely ready to use with eyebolts for securing a naughty sub by their wrists and ankles.

Charlotte also demonstrated a sliding panel on the side of the bedroom armoire that hid an assortment of impact play toys, such as floggers, paddles, whips, and canes. Maya stifled a snicker at the eager gleam in Kendall’s eyes.

“I put something special inside for y’all,” Charlotte said, opening one of the doors indicating a gaily wrapped present inside. “Think of it as an early engagement gift, but *don’t* open it until later tonight. The girls still want to take the two of you to supper. If you open it we may not see you for the rest of your stay.” The merriment in Charlotte’s blue eyes and the pink in her cheeks made Maya wonder what was in the gift.

Closing the cabinet, her lovely, blonde friend led them out the French doors and showed them their private patio. “There’s a wedding reception being held later tonight. Unfortunately,” she added gesturing to the pavilion roof on the other side of the cedar fence, which gave them complete privacy, “the pavilion backs up to your cottage. I hope it won’t be too much of an inconvenience.”

Maya shook her head and started to reassure Charlotte, and then noticed the devilish twinkle in her eyes. “You *kinky* little minx!”

Charlotte shrugged and giggled. "I just thought you'd want to know, that's all. Nobody will be able to *see* onto your patio. And with the band playing they probably couldn't *hear* either."

Maya replied, "That's good to know." Kendall never said a word, but Maya noted the mischievous grin on his face.

When Maya had let the rest of her friends know she was back in town overnight, Sheryl, Trina, Linna, and Charlotte all insisted on taking them to supper once more.

Linna, one of the realtors Morgan had worked with, quizzed Kendall about Divine, asking him what the real estate market was like and if decent housing was easily available. Sheryl was less bashful this time and wanted to know whether the citizens of Divine gave Maya a hard time for being in a polyamorous relationship.

Kendall replied, "Unfortunately, we have to fly under the radar as much as possible. We have some unfriendly folks in town who are making it a little difficult for the girls right now." He told them about the blog and the continued harassment they'd been dealing with.

Maya nodded. The girls grew quiet and gave her their attention. "For some reason the bulk of their gossip and moral outcry seems to be directed at us, the women in the relationships. That's why I think it must be a woman behind the blog being written. The men are painted almost as innocent, beguiled victims."

"Still no idea who is behind the blog?" Sheryl asked as she sipped her soda.

Kendall replied, "The last I heard, the guys who are investigating the blog and the attacks at the shop had some leads they're working on."

Trina, one of her former neighbors and fellow book-lover, hmped in disgust and said, "I should move there just so I can stalk those jerks and kick their asses. Kendall, do you know any single, cowboy hotties who aren't spoken for yet? One? Two? Three, maybe?"

“Trina, it would take one hell of a cowboy to keep you under control. He might have to use a rope,” Sheryl said with a snicker.

“And a paddle!” Charlotte chimed in.

Linna choked on her iced tea and added, “And a gingerroot butt plug!”

“Ouch!” Maya said as she shushed them all. Restaurant patrons were staring. “I don’t think she’s *that* bad.”

Kendall laughed at Trina’s straightforward questions and told her irrepressible friend that he knew several cowboys who hadn’t been claimed yet. The other women laughed uproariously when Trina whooped for joy and declared she was moving to Divine.

Maya wished they all could. She would miss her friends very much. When she told them so, they fought tears and promised they would come for a visit.

When they returned to the cottage, the wedding reception was in full swing under the twinkling lights strung abundantly from the ceiling of the pavilion.

After dead-bolting the front door, Kendall strode toward her with a predatory gleam in his chocolate brown eyes, unbuttoning the cuffs on his button-down shirt. She watched his tanned hands, his fingers moving nimbly on the buttons. Thoughts of him using those sensuous fingers on her had her pussy tingling with longing in a split second.

Chapter Thirty-one

Kendall crooked a finger at her, and she went to him as if drawn on a marionette string. He removed her lightweight summer dress and thong then allowed her to unbutton his shirt front. She slipped the shirt from his broad, thickly muscled shoulders, and he stood and removed his jeans and boxers.

After they were both naked, Kendall removed something from his suitcase and tugged her hand and drew her to the French doors leading onto their private patio. Noiselessly, he opened it, and they stepped out into the moonlight completely naked. Conversations and laughter filtered to them through the privacy fence, but no movement from the other side was visible. A thrilling sizzle of heat rushed through her as the warm, evening breeze rushed over her nude body, culminating in her drenched pussy.

"Come sit in my lap," he murmured, taking a seat in a comfortable-looking, padded patio chair.

He drew her to him so she faced him, straddling his thighs with her ass perched on his knees. The warm, nighttime breeze sent a shudder through her whole body, and her pussy quivered with need. She caressed his cock as she kissed him and whispered, "Aren't you glad I got back on the pill?"

"Babydoll, you have no *idea* how glad I am."

Maya lifted up and wrapped her arms around his neck. He positioned his cock and sighed blissfully as she slid down on him.

On the other side of the fence, a conversation concerning the colors the bride had chosen to decorate her new home in continued.

The band started the next song, and there was a smattering of applause.

“They’re a few feet away from us and have no idea,” Maya whispered. She balanced on her tiptoes and reveled lustily in the feel of his strong hands gripping her hips as she moved fluidly up and down on his cock. She tucked her knees in beside his hips and leaned forward, changing the angle of their connection, and had to stifle a groan at the pleasure coursing through her body.

“Imagine the fence disappearing, Maya. They can see you sitting in my lap, riding my cock.”

She held on to him as she pictured the wedding guests watching in fascination as Kendall and Maya made love under the moonlight. Some would be shocked, but others would watch and be turned-on by the sight of their sweat-sheened bodies joined together and the way Kendall held her so securely in his arms.

She loved knowing they watched her but kept her eyes focused on Kendall’s face. The feel of him inside her without the latex barrier was divine, so hot and slick.

“I’m so close, Kendall.”

“Me, too, babydoll. They’re watching you. You’re so beautiful like this, and they can’t take their eyes off of you.”

Resting her cheek on his thick shoulder as they continued moving together, she closed her eyes and imagined it. The moonlight was shining down on them, their entwined flesh luminous in the lunar glow. She heard a very faint whirring sound and had to stifle a cry when he gently applied one of the battery-operated toothbrushes they’d used as a vibrator to her clit. He began thrusting hard as the telltale spasms started within her.

His whispered voice did her in. “They might enjoy what they’re watching, but they can’t ever touch. You’re *mine*.”

Oh, so completely, totally yours!

They moved together until they reached the silent crescendo. The orgasm slammed into her, and she raised her lips to his to mute her

cry. His arms tightened around her as he thrust powerfully several times before becoming motionless with a shaky groan. He held her tight, and his body practically vibrated with his orgasm. He tilted his head back as his cock pulsed inside her, and she watched his handsome face in fascination as he bit his lower lip.

When he was finally able, Kendall whispered, "Wonder what other household items we can pervert."

Maya had to put her hand over her mouth to suppress her laughter. "Speaking of kinky and perverted, we can open Charlotte and Zane's gift now."

Kendall assisted her as she lifted off of him and led her back into the cottage. After closing the door, she opened the armoire and took out the gift. They unwrapped it together, and Kendall slit the tape on the cardboard box with his pocketknife. Inside, amidst frothy, white packing peanuts were two smaller boxes. She pulled out the one on top.

Kendall studied the picture on the label and said, "Now *that* looks kinky. What does it say?"

Maya read the description. "Genuine leather forced orgasm belt. *Oh! She didn't!*"

Kendall let loose with an evil chuckle as he removed the other box and turned it so she could read the packaging. "The hell you say."

It was a Hitachi Magic Wand. She pulled the fitted leather belt from its wrappings and held it up. The belt had buckles at the waist, and two adjustable straps that extended down between the legs, and more adjustable buckles at both hips. The belt was fitted with an opening at the apex of the thighs so that the head of the magic wand could be secured into the belt. With hands cuffed and restrained there would be no way out of that contraption until Kendall let her out.

"Thank you, Charlotte," Maya said breathlessly, now certain it was going to be a long, wild night.

Maya giggled as Kendall started undoing the buckles and said in a groovy, suggestive voice, “And thank you, Mister Hitachi. *Bow-chicka-wow-wow*.”

* * * *

“Maya, I’m so jealous right now,” Grace said as they walked up to the nondescript but clean-looking storefront in the old downtown district of Morehead. They’d just had lunch at Nikolai’s Café, and Maya was anxious to get started at their next destination, Desired Ink Body Art. Grace had wanted a tattoo since getting a look at the one on her hip.

“Having to wait until after the baby comes will give you time to design the right tattoo. You don’t want something generic that came out of a book, do you?”

Maya chuckled when Grace whined as she said, “No, but...”

“This will also give you a chance to see what it’s like to get a tattoo. You may change your mind.”

“Doubtful, but you’re right. Ethan said he would help with the art, and I do want it to be completely unique.”

They walked into the cool, dry air of the tattoo studio.

After confirming her appointment, Maya handed him her drawing, and they got started. The artist, Jim Durbin, pulled up a chair for Grace to sit in when she told him she was a writer and wanted to observe Maya getting a tattoo as research for a book. Jim took one look at Grace’s rounded abdomen, smiled, and pulled a surgical mask from a box on the counter. She hooked the mask behind her ears and settled quietly.

Maya got comfortable on his table and exposed her left hip.

He tucked drapes into the waistband of her yoga pants and said, “I don’t normally recommend including names on tattoos. I know we talked about this when you visited the shop last week, but are you

sure you want to add names? You can always think it over and I can do them later, if you really want them.”

“Jim, I’m positive. I want you to add the names.”

He nodded. “If you’re sure.”

“One hundred percent sure.”

He sterilized the area and went to work. Jim embellished the existing tattoo, crafting a third rose. He deepened the shade of red on the existing roses then added swirling ribbons where the roses were bunched together. Jim replicated Maya’s design then tattooed the wording along the ribbons.

Maya settled in as he worked with the tools of his trade. She breathed through the rapid, microscopic pinpricks, gradually settling into a place where the pain was exceeded not by her will to ignore it, but by her excitement at the thought of how her men would respond to the new tattoo. By the time Jim was done, she was euphoric and “floaty,” as though she was in subspace.

“It’s perfect, Maya,” Grace said, as Jim cleaned the area and covered it.

* * * *

“Couldn’t you just trust me to keep my eyes closed?” Maya asked later that afternoon as Richard tied the blindfold at the back of her head. They were seated in the backseat of Boone’s truck about to go she knew not where.

Boone chuckled and said, “Maya, the blindfold is sexy on you and you might as well get used to wearing one.”

“That’s right, babydoll,” Kendall said as he climbed into the truck. “We plan to have one on you regularly for playtime.”

She didn’t put it past them either. They were constantly surprising and amusing her. Just that morning, she’d caught them while they were in the bathroom brushing their teeth. They’d grinned at her with devilment in their eyes before going back to their daily hygiene ritual.

Kendall lifted his toothbrush to her, and she laughed so hard she snorted. They were all brushing their teeth with the battery-operated toothbrushes they'd used as vibrators on her.

The month of May and the beginning of June had gone by quickly between her convalescence from her injuries and the guys finalizing the plans for the new house, for which they were breaking ground that weekend.

Ace and Kemp were still working the investigation into the Divine Morality blog with limited success. Maya prayed they would find the culprit soon because she could tell how much it troubled her men. They'd had several leads in the club and were still working to find the connection. They had their hands full with the attacks that kept occurring at Discretion which was disquieting for all the men. Kemp and Ace were devoting part of their time to watching over the ladies, which Maya didn't think they minded very much. Summer seemed pleased about it, too.

They journeyed down the drive and turned onto the state highway. Her excitement rose as she realized they headed in the direction of the JWB.

Finally, the truck slowed, turned, and pulled to a stop. She heard murmurs, and then gentle hands released the blindfold as Kendall spoke. "This is the first surprise."

Maya blinked and opened her eyes, squinting them as they adjusted to the bright afternoon sun. All three men gazed at her, and she smiled then looked around, wondering where the surprise was. Boone pointed out the windshield. She leaned forward slightly and gasped.

"You changed the name!"

They had taken the old ranch emblem down from the pipe arch entry, which had been the JWB brand logo with a circle around it. In its place was the new brand, MWTD, within an oval. Welded to the pipe underneath was the name of the ranch spelled out, "Maya Warner's Triple Dare."

"Oh, my God," she whispered in a rush.

With one voice, they spoke quietly, their hearts in their eyes.
"Marry us, Maya."

Maya's heart was bursting with love for them as she replied,
"Take me down to the creek, and I'll give you my answer."

The men grinned and looked curiously at her when she didn't say more. They parked at the homesite, which had been completely bulldozed and cleared of all debris. All that remained was bare dirt where the footprint of the house had been, in preparation to start the new house that weekend. Boone parked the truck and helped her down while Kendall and Richard gathered the blanket and the picnic basket. They had packed a romantic picnic supper and had even brought along a bottle of wine.

Laughing playfully, she allowed Boone to talk her into taking a piggyback ride for part of the walk to the creek. She waited patiently until after the blanket was spread in their secret little spot and then said, "I want to take advantage of the lovely evening and the privacy down here by eating naked. Anyone interested?"

Maya chuckled as her sexy, handsome lovers doffed their clothing with speed and agility. They were naked and seated in a semicircle around her before she even got started disrobing.

She bit her bottom lip as she gazed at them. Their eyes were on her, waiting, and her heart lurched at the love she saw there. Slowly she removed her shirt and bra and gave Richard a crooked little grin when he groaned appreciatively. He made her feel so beautiful. They all did.

"I want to show you something. Then I'll give you the answer to your proposal."

"Babydoll, if you need more time—" Kendall began, but she brushed a fingertip against his lips and shushed him sweetly.

Carefully, she shimmied out of her soft yoga pants and thong together, careful to keep her hip away from their view as much as possible. She tossed the garments aside and then gingerly peeled back

the plastic wrap taped over her hip. She looked over her shoulder and giggled when she caught them staring at her ass.

“I did something special for the three of you, and I hope you like it.”

When she had their full attention, she turned so they could see her left hip. All three men gasped.

“Maya!”

“What does it say?”

“I’ll be damned!”

On her hip, written on the ribbons festooning the three red roses, were the words “Dare to Live” and then each of her men’s names.

She smiled at the surprise, approval, and awe on their faces and answered their earlier proposal. “Of course I’ll marry you.”

THE END

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Heather Rainier lives and writes in South Central Texas. Her stories offer up the content of her fantasies, with autobiographical humor, triumph and tragedy mixed in. With great pride, Heather writes erotic romances exclusively for Siren Publishing, under their Ménage Everlasting and Everlasting Classic imprints.

Heather's love of romance fiction began as a teenager when her mom gave her copies of Kathleen Woodiwiss's *The Flame and the Flower* and Bertrice Small's *Skye O'Malley*. To this day she's pretty sure that was her mom's version of the "birds and the bees" talk.

Heather writes the type of novel she loves to read: More erotic and edgy than the mainstream, with plenty of sweet romance mixed in and a happily ever after guaranteed. Heather's favorite type of hero is the gentle, lovable giant but readers will discover a wide variety of heroes and alphas on the pages of her novels, from nearly perfect to very flawed. Heather hopes that readers relate to her heroines and the challenges and dilemmas they face head-on.

Heather believes that life doesn't always present love to us in neat little sanitized packages. Sometimes we have to seize the day, live life with no regrets, forget the past, never give up, learn to trust, and dare to live, even in outrageous circumstances. Those themes are woven throughout her *Divine Creek Ranch Collection* which debuted in November of 2010.

When not happily typing at her keyboard, Heather is usually busy corralling her kids, volunteering as a reading tutor, or loving on her smokin' hot husband, who thankfully loves to cook.

Also by Heather Rainier

Ménage Everlasting: Divine Creek Ranch 1: *Divine Grace*

Everlasting Classic: Divine Creek Ranch 2: *Her Gentle Giant, Part 1:*
No Regrets

Everlasting Classic: Divine Creek Ranch 2: *Her Gentle Giant, Part 2:*
Remember to Dance

Ménage Everlasting: Divine Creek Ranch 3: *Heavenly Angel*

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