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LITTLE CAKES, BOOK FIFTEEN

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This is a series of books that can be read in any order. You may, however, choose to read them sequentially to enjoy the characters best. Subsequent books will feature characters that appear in previous novels as well as new faces.

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About the Book

Welcome to Little Cakes, the bakery that plays Daddy matchmaker! Little Cakes is a sweet and satisfying series, but dare to taste only if you like delicious Daddies, luscious Littles, and guaranteed happily-ever-afters.

Could her frustrating next-door neighbor be the one man who discovers her Little side?

No-nonsense detective Nicoya Stevens doesn't tolerate any shenanigans at the police station or in her personal life. After a disastrous work day, the last thing she needs is to find the landscaper planting a neighbor's cherry tree on her property.

Axel Jennings never grew out of two things: his love of playing in the dirt and his incredibly laidback attitude. That's why he can't understand the fire flashing in the eyes of the woman confronting him over a simple, and fixable, mistake. But when he catches a glimpse of something he recognizes in Nicoya's steely glare, he's sure there's a Little beneath her tough exterior just waiting to be nurtured by a patient and loving Daddy.

Chapter One



It was just awful. Everything about today was awful. Nicoya grumbled to herself as she slammed the front door and stormed through her house toward her bedroom.

She needed to shed her day job as fast as possible. As a police detective, she often had stressful days, but not usually as bad as this one. Not only had someone spit on her face, but she'd had to hold a bloody paper towel to an older gentleman's head wound while waiting for an ambulance, and a sick child had thrown up all over her.

Nicoya was a cop, not a medic, but she encountered all sorts of things out in the community, and she was often the first to arrive on the scene, so her job was sometimes messy. But today was the worst.

Taking a deep breath, Nicoya locked her weapon in her safe, kicked off her shoes, and started stripping on the way to the bathroom. She eyed the bathtub with longing. Baths always made her feel better. Bubbles and bath bombs and her rubber duckies could erase any crappy day's events.

But she didn't have time for a bath right now. Nor did she want to let herself slide into a deep Little space. She was going to Blaze tonight. She'd save her Littlest feelings for after she arrived in that safe environment.

She was going to have to take a shower, not only because of the amount of time she usually wanted to spend in the bathtub, but also due to the amount of yuckiness she needed to wash off her body instead of sitting in the water with it.

The day's gross events started running down the drain as soon as she stepped under the spray. She sighed and closed her eyes, enjoying the waterfall as the grime rinsed out of her hair. Blindly, from memory, she

reached for her shampoo and pushed a squirt into her palm.

By the time Nicoya was shampooed, conditioned, washed, shaved, and squeaky clean, she almost felt like a human again. Almost Little.

Like most evenings, she was slowly skirting the edge of her Little. Normally she would put on her favorite PJs, fix something for dinner, and curl up on the couch with Ruffles, her stuffed German Shepherd.

Maybe she was silly, but it seemed like a lot of cops owned a large-breed dog like a German Shepherd. Nicoya lived alone, and she didn't think it would be fair to any dog to leave it for such long hours, so she'd gotten herself a stuffed one. Ruffles. He was a great guard dog. In her imagination.

Since she was going out tonight, however, she wouldn't put on her PJs. Instead she headed to her closet and perused the left side. Right side—adult. Left side—Little. It was so hard to choose. She wished she had a Daddy who could choose for her and take away the options and responsibilities.

Nicoya sighed. Like she was ever going to find a Daddy. *Right. Sure.* For one thing, it wasn't like there were dozens of good Daddies lined up in town looking for a Little. Plus, even though there were an inordinate number of people living in town who practiced some form of age play, they were surely all taken.

The hardest hurdle was Nicoya's job. She was a cop, for heaven's sake. That was intimidating for most men. What sort of Daddy wanted to take on a Little girl who worked in law enforcement?

"Avery has a Daddy," she reminded herself, thinking about another female officer who worked for the same precinct. Granted, she was in a relationship with the one man in town who was more powerful than her—the police chief, Trace Barnes. Nicoya sighed.

Shaking herself out of her meandering depressing thoughts, she chose a pair of purple leggings and a matching shirt that said "Girls Rule" on the front in sparkly gold letters. She giggled as she headed for her dresser to grab a matching bra and panty set.

Five minutes later, she was dressed, including her sparkly gold tennis shoes. She headed back to the bathroom to tackle her hair. It was unruly to say the least. Too curly and a boring brown. She'd never managed to tame it in her life, mostly because she didn't have the patience for it and probably didn't use the right hair products.

If she weren't a cop, she'd probably cut it at her chin and let it go wild, but she preferred to wear it in a tight bun at the back of her head when she

was working. With her baby face, freckles, and lack of interest in makeup, she looked about twelve instead of thirty-five when her hair was loose. The only way to ensure people took her seriously was to put it in a severe bun, and to do that, it had to be long enough.

So, the hair hung past her shoulders, though when she pulled one corkscrew down, it extended far longer. Hurrying to comb through it before it could start to dry, she finished it off with a squirt of mousse. Presumably the mousse would keep it from flying all over the place. *Ha.*

Nicoya grabbed a pair of gold hairclips next. She picked up a lock off her forehead, twisted it around and around, and clipped it back before doing the same on the other side.

There. She felt better. Sort of. She was dressed for the evening, and even though she hadn't fully slid into her Little space, she would as soon as she arrived at the club.

Nicoya had only joined Blaze recently. She'd hedged for a long time even though she'd known Avery was a member. She'd been worried about what people would say or think. After all, there was no way to avoid people who lived in this town, and putting herself out there like she did by openly practicing her kink at the club was risky.

Taking a chance one day, she'd confronted Avery about her kink. The woman had graciously encouraged Nicoya to visit the club, and the moment Nicoya had met all the Littles who went there, she'd felt welcome and... home.

Nicoya had been shocked to realize how many members of the community were Little. Not just Avery by a longshot. Everyone who worked at Little Cakes was a member. The florist. The owner of the tattoo parlor. The owner of the coffee shop. The owner of Nibbles & Bites. The list was long. Hell, even the woman who'd recently remodeled Nicoya's deck, Jordi, frequented Blaze with her Daddy.

Nicoya really needed to get a move on so she could arrive there early. She liked to maximize every minute she was able to play in her most comfortable headspace.

Dinner was the next item on her mental list. She considered her options even before she reached the kitchen, deciding on a healthy frozen dinner. When she opened the freezer, she took stock of her options. On the left was the pile of foods she reserved for her Little. On the right was the stack for her adult—the responsible food that had vegetables, whole grains, and proteins.

Nicoya held a hand up to her face to block her view of the left side of the freezer, forcing herself to make a healthy selection. She'd eaten crap from a drive-thru for lunch. She needed something better for her body tonight.

While the frozen dinner heated in the microwave, she stood at the kitchen sink, staring out at her neglected backyard. She hadn't had time to mow it in over a week. Normally she paid a neighborhood kid, but he was out of town this month with his family.

Something caught her eye, and she turned her attention to the side of her yard. Someone was there. A man. In *her* yard. Was he digging a hole? What the hell?

Granted, there wasn't a fence between the two properties, but she knew good and well where the property line was.

Nicoya yanked open the back door and rushed outside, not wasting a single second as she speed-walked off her brand-new deck and across the too-tall grass. "Excuse me," she nearly shouted.

The man had his back to her, but she noticed he had on a navy T-shirt with the logo for the local landscaper on the back. She glanced around quickly, spotting a tree lying on its side near where the man was digging. What the hell was he doing?

When he didn't turn around, she tried again, louder this time. She was only a few yards behind him now. "Excuse me!"

Nothing. No response. Was he rude or deaf?

Nicoya closed the distance and tapped the man on the shoulder just as he stuck the huge shovel into the ground yet again.

He spun around so fast, she yelped and jumped backward, nearly falling on her ass. She'd scared him too though. He set a hand over his heart, dropped the shovel, and tugged an earbud out of his ear.

Ah. That's why he hadn't heard her.

For a moment, they stared at each other, both breathing heavily. Nicoya didn't know the man. Obviously he worked for Bark and Branches Landscaping, the largest of the town's landscaping companies.

Of course, Nicoya didn't know the owner of the house either. Her neighbor had moved in only a few weeks ago, and he'd had so many people helping him move that she hadn't known which of the men she'd seen coming and going had been the new owner. She hadn't seen a woman at any point, and she had no idea where the man worked or what his hours were, but they didn't match hers because she came and went without bumping into him

in the driveway.

Suddenly, the man smiled and held out a hand. “You must be my neighbor. Nice to meet you. Axel Jennings.”

She stared at his hand, dumbfounded. She’d thought he was here doing a job.

Axel pulled his hand back after a second and looked at it. “Sorry. I’m all sweaty and gross. You probably don’t want to shake my hand.”

That hadn’t been it. She’d just been startled and slow to react, but she reminded herself she was here to complain, not make pleasantries. However, now that she knew the man was actually her neighbor, she needed to rein in her frustration. It wouldn’t do to piss him off. *Be polite, but firm*, she told herself.

“What are you doing?” she blurted.

He smiled again. He was ruggedly handsome, darn it. And tall. So tall. Maybe six-four. And built. Big, but fit. Nicoya’s nether regions took notice. His smile was heart-stopping. And he had a sexy beard that was well groomed. He was tan, and she found herself wondering if his chest was tan too. Maybe he had one of those farmer’s tans—if he worked outside a lot.

His voice jolted her back to the issue at hand as he pointed at the tree. “Planting that cherry blossom tree. It’s partially mature. It will still take several years for it to fully mature, but it will smell so lovely when it blooms.”

She blinked several times. His voice was mesmerizing, and he was incredibly passionate about his tree. She put her hands on her hips and stood to her full height of five-ten. Ordinarily that was intimidating to people, but this man was much taller than her and looked a bit too laidback to be intimidated.

“Something wrong?” he asked. “You don’t like cherry blossoms?” Was he smirking?

“I like cherry blossoms just fine.” In fact, it sounded lovely. “But you’re on my property.”

He jerked his head down to the ground and glanced around. “I thought I was on my property. I have the survey. Did I misread it?”

“Yes. Apparently.” She pointed at an electrical post at the edge of their properties. “You’re about two feet onto my property.”

His shoulders dropped in defeat as he took a step back and reached into his back pocket. “Darn. I hope you’re wrong. The cherry blossom needs a lot

of direct sunlight. If I move much closer to my house, it will get too much shade from the roof.”

Axel pulled a folded paper out of his pocket and slowly unfolded it. It was covered in dirt, but he smoothed it open and held it up. Good grief, was that the land survey? Who carried a land survey around in their pocket?

“Shoot. You’re right. I miscalculated.” He lifted his face and grinned at her, his eyes twinkling before he winked. “You won’t tell anyone my mistake, will you? No one in town will hire me to landscape their properties if they think I can’t do simple math.”

She swallowed hard over the lump in her throat. She was supposed to be mad at this man. Darn him. He made that impossible. Why did he have to be so easygoing and kind?

“You work for Bark and Branches?” she asked, fully realizing he was both the homeowner and the landscaper. *Duh.*

“I’m the new manager of the local store. Transferred here to take this promotion. This looks like an amazing town. I’m in love with it already. The people are so nice. The downtown area is like stepping back in time the way the shops are so popular and people congregate there.”

She nodded slowly. He was right. And he was ruining her mad.

While he spoke, he’d already started pushing the dirt back into the hole. “I’m so sorry about this. I’ll replace the grass I messed up.” He glanced over his shoulder. “I bet if I go back a few yards and over a few, I’ll still get plenty of sun.”

Her mouth was dry. Her panties were not. “Thanks for moving it into your lawn.”

He shifted his attention back to her. “The wind will blow some blossoms your way during the spring. I hope you don’t hate pink flowers. Do you?”

She slowly shook her head.

“Now that I think about it, it would have been polite to ask if it would annoy you beforehand. I’m not used to living with neighbors.” He palmed his forehead, getting dirt on his face. Dirt she wanted to wipe off. She might even have to rise onto her tiptoes to reach his forehead, and wouldn’t that be heavenly. For once, she would feel small. Few people made her feel small.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t get your name,” he stated.

“Oh, uh, Nicoya. Nicoya Stevens.”

“Are you one of those women who hate pink?” He looked more serious now.

“No.” She cleared her throat. “No. I’m sure the tree will be lovely.”

“Oh, good. Again, I’m sorry for the mistake. And for not checking with you in general before I planted a cherry blossom tree. That was insensitive. I’ll get your lawn set straight and then get this planted in mine.”

“It’s okay.” She took a step back. She really needed to get away from him before she said something stupid. “Well, nice to meet you. I guess I’ll see you around.”

His smile was lopsided and sinful as he nodded at her. “Yes. We’re neighbors after all. Bound to run into each other.” He pointed at her lawn. “Would you like me to mow your lawn for you? I was going to do mine in the morning.”

“Oh, you don’t have to do that. I can do it.”

He lifted a brow. “I’m sure you can, but I’d like to this time as an apology for my error.” He glanced around at the expanse. “Do you normally do it yourself?”

She stiffened and had to work hard not to growl. He might have been easy on the eyes with a dazzling smile and friendly demeanor, but if he insinuated she couldn’t mow her own lawn because she was a woman or implied that she didn’t take care of her grass... Yeah, flames would come out of her head.

Never mind that she hated yardwork and didn’t normally mow it. That wasn’t the point. She narrowed her gaze, hands on her hips. “What are you implying?”

He lifted both hands, palms out. “Nothing, Nicoya. I’m simply asking a question. It’s a huge lawn. I noticed you work long hours. I haven’t seen anyone besides you coming and going. If you’re looking for a regular landscaper, I have a reliable staff and people I could recommend.”

She stared at him, assessing his implication. She had no idea why she was scrutinizing the man so hard. He’d done nothing wrong except make an honest mistake, which he’d apologized for in spades. He was kind and friendly and warm. His smile was infectious. She wanted to burrow herself in his lap and...

What the hell am I thinking?

She blew out a breath and tried to loosen her stance. “I usually have a neighborhood kid mow for me, but he’s out of town. That’s why it’s gotten so long. I haven’t had a chance to do it myself. I would be grateful if you would recommend someone to help me out for the month. I wouldn’t want to permanently replace the boy who does it. I’m sure it’s good pocket money for

him.”

“Of course not.” Axel smiled again. She was pretty sure he had dimples under his beard.

“How about if I do yours tomorrow when I do mine. That takes care of this week, then we can talk about next week another day.”

Be grateful. Be nice. Stop being suspicious. “That’s very kind of you. Thank you.” There. She did it. She said nice things. It was so hard to not wonder what was wrong with this man. He seemed larger than life and too good to be true.

She pointed over her shoulder and started walking backward. “Well, I should get back inside. I left my dinner in the microwave.”

He winced. “Leftovers or a frozen meal?”

She pursed her lips and continued walking backward. Why did he care?

He shook his head in dismay as if he knew what her answer would be and didn’t like it. As if he thought he was in charge of her eating habits. As if he were her Daddy.

Nonsense. He’s not even a Daddy, let alone yours.

She was several yards away, still walking backward, when he called out, “Hey, Nicoya. Just so you know, I’m aware you’re a police detective. I’ve seen your badge attached to your belt. I’ve also seen you jogging early in the morning. I know you’re perfectly capable of damn near anything you set your mind to, but you don’t have to be badass all the time. It’s okay to relax and let someone else help out.”

Nicoya turned around and nearly ran back inside. Her heart was racing. Her Little was so close to the surface it was a wonder she hadn’t started crying. Her new neighbor was Dominant and tempting and he made her nipples hard.

She was panting by the time she got inside, and it wasn’t from exertion.

Damn. He knew so much about her. He was obviously observant. She hadn’t even known who her neighbor was, and he knew her profession. How embarrassing. She felt like a fool.

And she’d gone out there all fired up, hands fisted, ready for battle.

Her sexy neighbor had knocked all the wind out of her sails and made her feel things she hadn’t felt in forever.

He’d made her feel Little. Special.

Hell, he’d made her *feel*.

Chapter Two



“If she’s not Little, I’ll eat my shirt,” Axel said out loud as soon as his adorable neighbor slipped back into her house.

He hadn’t moved an inch yet, mostly because he’d watched her retreat, not wanting to miss a single moment. She had stunned him in every way.

When he’d first spun around, he’d had no idea in the world who he’d been looking at. Nicoya the police officer was severe and intimidating. Half the reason he hadn’t gone over to her house to introduce himself was because he hadn’t been certain what to expect from the tall female cop next door.

At no point had he considered that she might be Little, but now he was certain. Her hair had been down, blowing in the breeze. Adorable. He’d never seen it down before. She always wore it in a tight bun. Her outfit could have been worn by a vanilla adult, but the combination of the sparkly “Girls Rule” logo, the gold tennis shoes, and the pretty hairclips had made him suspicious.

Her mannerisms had done the rest. Maybe the average vanilla guy wouldn’t have noticed, but Axel wasn’t the average vanilla guy by a longshot. He was a Daddy through and through. He recognized the signs. The way she fidgeted and chewed on her bottom lip. The way she looked down submissively.

He suspected she’d been sliding into Little space when she’d spotted him in the yard and had taken off to reprimand him without taking stock of her outfit or her headspace.

Damn, she was cute. Her Little was precious. He knew it. Her adult was feisty and not to be reckoned with. Not surprising considering her line of work.

Realizing he was still standing in the same spot, staring at her back deck,

he shook himself back to the present and turned around. He needed to hurry if he was going to get a new hole dug and get this tree in the ground before the sun went down.

After another glance at the survey he was still holding, he sighed. It wasn't like him to make such a mistake. He must have been looking at the survey upside down or something ridiculous when he'd judged the property line.

Making quick work, Axel got the tree in the ground and watered before the sun disappeared from the sky. He hurried to put his equipment away in the garage, wanting to get inside as soon as possible.

He had plans to visit Blaze, the local kink club, tonight. It would be his first visit since he'd moved here, and he was looking forward to getting a lay of the land. He sure hoped some of the members were age-play participants. But that wouldn't necessarily be the case. Not all kink clubs were the same.

As Axel pushed the button to lower his garage door, he glanced at his neighbor's house. He wondered if by chance she too was a member of Blaze. Wouldn't that beat all? It was possible. After all, she'd obviously come home from work, shed her professional side, and switched gears in a hurry.

"Wishful thinking," he muttered to himself as he headed inside, beelining for the shower. Besides, even if Nicoya was a member of Blaze and he happened to see her there tonight, that didn't mean she wouldn't freak the fuck out with embarrassment.

Most Littles were pretty protective of their Little side, especially around strangers. There was a good chance Nicoya would not want her neighbor knowing about her kink.

"Dude, you aren't even certain she's Little at all," he verbalized as he shed his clothes and dropped them in the hamper. He chuckled to himself as he stepped under the water, repeating what he'd said earlier. "If she's not Little, I'll eat my shirt."



By the time Axel arrived at Blaze, filled out the paperwork, and made his way into the play space, it was growing late. He didn't know a single member. Par for the course. It wasn't as if he could have asked any of the new people he'd met through work or at the grocery store if they were a

member of a kink club.

He didn't mind coming by himself. He would meet people soon enough and make friends. Hell, he'd probably make better friends from the people he met at Blaze than out in the vanilla world.

As Axel wandered around the main playroom, he continued to scan the entire area. He had only one person on his mind. Nicoya. He'd spent the last few hours convincing himself she would be here. His imagination was out of control, of course, but he didn't think it was too farfetched. After all, she'd intentionally gotten dressed in Little attire after work.

Plus, Axel reasoned, though he hadn't seen her leave her house, when he'd pulled out of his garage a bit ago, he hadn't thought she was home. Her porch light had been on, a light in the living room, and nothing else. Typical illumination for someone out for the evening.

Suddenly two women rushed past him. They were giggling and holding hands. They were wearing cute dresses and pigtails and had ribbons in their hair. They were definitely Little, and Axel followed them to see where they were going.

Bingo. As soon as he turned down a hallway, he found what he'd been looking for. A daycare. A massive daycare. His heart was so pleased to realize this club indeed had a large age-play community.

There was a low half wall to "keep Littles from escaping the daycare." It made him smile. In addition, there were several men Axel assumed were Daddies hovering near the wall, glancing into the daycare space frequently.

A few of them looked at Axel skeptically. Understandable. Daddies were inherently protective of Littles—not just their own. They wouldn't be very good Daddies if they didn't scrutinize a newcomer.

"Axel?"

Axel shifted his gaze to the side at the sound of someone calling his name. He let out a relieved breath when he recognized the man as Callen James. He owned the hardware store in town, and Axel had made so many trips there in the last few weeks to stock his garage and make minor repairs around the house that he knew the owner's name by now. They were on a friendly basis.

Axel held out a hand to shake Callen's. "Good to see a friendly face. This is my first visit to Blaze. I don't know a soul."

Callen smiled warmly and nodded toward the men he'd been talking to. "Let me introduce you to a few people. You'll fit right in in no time."

Everyone, this is Axel Jennings. He's the new manager of Bark and Branches Landscaping."

The first man to lift his hand said, "Tarson Kirkwood. I'm the baker at Little Cakes. If you haven't been there yet, you're missing out." He chuckled.

"I've seen it, but I haven't had a chance to go inside yet."

"Come in this week. Ellie, the owner, is working on a new flavor." He rolled his eyes. "What am I talking about? Ellie is *always* working on a new flavor."

Axel laughed.

"Garrett Erickson," said the next man. "I own several of the buildings on the strip in town. I spend a lot of time at Little Cakes. Ellie is my Little girl."

"Oh, I guess I'll see both of you if I hone my sweet tooth."

The next man to introduce himself said, "Trace Barnes. Nice to meet you. Don't let my job intimidate you. When I'm here, I'm just Daddy to my Little girl. Nothing else. Out there, I'm the police chief."

Axel tried not to react as he shook the man's hand. If he was the police chief, he knew Nicoya. In fact, he was probably her Daddy.

How foolish had Axel been thinking so hard about his neighbor without considering the fact that she probably already had a Daddy. *Shit.*

"Daddy!" shouted a woman who came bounding toward the group, pigtails flying. She ran straight toward Trace and threw her arms around his waist before tipping her head back. "Can we please, please, *please* go to Little Cakes this weekend? Everyone is going."

Axel let out a long relieved breath, hoping no one noticed as Trace smoothed his hand over his Little girl's head and smiled at her indulgently. "We'll talk about it later, Mae Bug."

"Is that a yes?"

Trace chuckled. "Avery, that's a 'we'll talk about it later' unless you want it to be a spanking in front of your friends."

She sighed dramatically. "If you decide we can go, can we pick up Nicoya so she can come too? She doesn't like to go by herself."

Axel's breath caught in his lungs. She was here. *My God.*

"We'll see," Trace warned.

Avery released him and looked over her shoulder, a huge fake pout plastered on her face. "Daddy says *maybe.*"

The moment those words left her mouth, Nicoya stepped into view.

Axel couldn't breathe or blink as he watched her approach. She was

wearing the same purple outfit he'd seen her in earlier. Somehow, she appeared younger now though, and he suspected it was due to her headspace being more firmly planted in her preferred age range.

She looked rather young in general, and he suddenly wondered if she would think he was way too old for her. He was forty-five. She didn't look a day over thirty.

When she reached the group and lifted her face, she froze. Her eyes were wide, mouth hanging open, skin turning pale.

"Hello, Nicoya," Axel managed to say.

She looked like she wanted to fall through a crack in the floor. He couldn't blame her.

"You two know each other?" Avery asked.

"We're neighbors," Axel informed everyone. "We actually just met this evening. I was planting a cherry blossom tree, and I started digging on her side of the property line. She came out to reprimand me." He smiled, hoping she would recognize the teasing tone of his voice.

Nicoya continued to stare at him, shell-shocked. He hated this awkward standoff, but there was nothing he could do about it. The fact that he was a Daddy had to come out at some point. Eventually, no matter what, Nicoya would have had to deal with this revelation.

Axel just hoped she would get over her shock soon and give him a chance. Because he'd never been more certain of anything in his life as he was right now. This feisty woman who could no doubt put any grown man in his place in a heartbeat was also a Little. Even her adult had a tender side. After all, she employed a local kid to mow her lawn because she wanted to support the community.

Axel had no doubt she was a gem among precious stones.

He also had no doubt she was his.

Chapter Three



A crowd of Littles sprang up around Nicoya and herded her to the far side of the daycare. She sank down out of view, and Axel knew she was hiding from him and that her friends were covering for her.

“I’m not here to cause any problems,” he said to the Daddies who responded instantly to the protective wall their Littles had formed. “I need to talk to Nicoya. I promise I don’t mean her any harm. Is there a place we could speak privately?”

“There’s no way you’re going to get her to go somewhere with you alone. Let’s see if we can shoo the other Littles away for a short time so you can talk to her in a safe place,” Callen suggested.

One by one, the Daddies collected their Littles to go get an ice cream cone from the kitchen. No one wanted to leave but listened to their Daddies when they spoke quietly to them.

Finally, only Ellie and Avery remained on each side of Nicoya. They held her hands tightly and refused to move.

“Nicoya’s my friend. She stood up for me when all the crappy stuff happened. I’m not leaving,” Avery said with an expression that brooked no arguments.

“Me, neither,” Ellie swore. “Daddy, don’t make me.”

The two Daddies looked at Axel and he immediately sat on the floor in front of Nicoya to get on her level. “Are you okay if your friends hear what I say?” he asked.

“Yes,” Nicoya said. “Or you could just leave me alone. That would be even better.”

“Little girl, I can’t leave things with you this upset at me. Give me five

minutes, and I'll walk away if you still want me to."

He watched Nicoya check the purple watch on her wrist and knew she wouldn't give him thirty seconds more. "Thank you, Nicoya."

After taking a second to gather himself, Axel spoke. "I've known I was a Daddy for as long as I've known they existed. It's just the way I'm wired. I'll be glad to give you the names of other clubs I belonged to and you can check with them to see that I was active there. I'll invite you to check my lack of a police record—well, other than a scattering of parking tickets from when I was young and dumb."

"You shouldn't park where you're not supposed to," Ellie said primly.

"Ellie, you're not in this conversation," Garrett warned, and she sighed loudly.

"Ellie's right. I learned at eighteen that you have to pay for those with penalties if you ignore them. Hopefully, I got all my stupid out long ago," Axel agreed. "I've been looking for my Little girl for a long time. I thought maybe I'd found her once when I was twenty-five, but she decided she wasn't Little, and I had to let her go. When you tapped me on the shoulder, I was startled for two reasons. One, I obviously hadn't heard you coming. And two, I felt like a ton of bricks had landed on me."

"Why?" Nicoya spoke for the first time.

"Something happened inside me when I met you." Axel patted his chest. "Instantly, I wanted to know everything about you and spend time with you. I came to Blaze because I'm new in town and I wanted to meet like-minded people. I thought you might be Little, and I admit I had hoped to see you."

"How did you know I was Little?" Nicoya asked.

"Daddies have a type of radar. It immediately went off even though you were completely Big when we met. There was something in your eyes I recognized despite the expert way you hid your secret," Axel assured her.

"Are you going to make trouble for me?" Nicoya asked.

"Never. For a couple of reasons; one, I'm a good guy. I try to make people's lives happier by sprucing up their environments. I go above and beyond to create a place where they can escape from the world. Two, I'm a Daddy. I want to take care of my Little girl. I don't want to make life difficult for her. I'm wired to support and treasure Littles, not hurt them."

Nicoya leaned over to whisper in Ellie's and Avery's ears. The two Littles slowly moved to the sides and got up to join their Daddies who quickly led them away. "I have a lot to lose every time I become Little. It

scares me when new people find out I'm Little, especially when they know private information about me."

"That would scare me, too," he admitted. "The club should be a safe place. Have you ever had a problem here?"

"No. Everyone is great here. Even the captain. Of course, he loves his Little girl, so he's automatically going to protect my privacy," Nicoya pointed out.

"I hope he'd support you no matter if you were a sadist, an exhibitionist, or a pony," Axel stated firmly.

"I think he would," Nicoya commented.

"Would you like to go get an ice cream cone with me? I bet your friends are worried about you."

"I'd like that. You could stay and color with me later. You know... If you want to," she added hesitantly.

"I'd love to color with you. I'll warn you, I color even worse than I plant cherry trees."

Her giggles went straight to his heart. "It's easier if you take your time."

Nicoya hung back as Axel escorted her into the kitchen. It was obvious she didn't know how her Little friends would react to her appearing with him after she'd panicked.

"It's okay, Nicoya. Everyone understands." As Axel waited for her to decide to join the group, he asked, "Do you want chocolate or strawberry ice cream?"

"Chocolate," she declared as she stepped into the group. They were scattered around the kitchen—some standing, some seated.

"There's bubblegum ice cream, Nicoya." Ellie pointed to the container in Garrett's hands.

"I want that," Nicoya said, changing her mind immediately.

"Bubblegum ice cream? Does it just taste like bubblegum or does it have gum in it?" Axel asked.

"Both," Daisy answered, blowing a bubble with her gum.

"Heck. I want bubblegum now, too," Axel said, making everyone laugh.

"My Daddy's having it, too. He likes it," Avery said, pointing to her Daddy, Trace.

"What do you think, Nicoya? Should we give Axel an ice cream cone and let him join the group?" Garrett asked, watching the Little's face.

Axel said nothing but waited silently to see how the Little girl would

answer.

“I’d like him to have ice cream with us so we can get to know him better,” Nicoya suggested.

“I think that is a very good idea,” Trace Barnes endorsed.

With a flourish, Garrett created two bubblegum cones and handed them to Axel and Nicoya. They settled at the table in the last two chairs. Nicoya licked her ice cream and let out an “Mmm!” of delight.

“It is good, isn’t it?” Axel said, leaning closer to talk to her privately.

“Do you like it?” Nicoya asked.

“I do. It’s sweet and delicious. The chunks of bubblegum are interesting. I don’t know whether to chew them or tuck them against my cheek and let them warm up,” Axel confessed.

“I can’t ever wait to try everything. I’m chewing and licking,” Nicoya shared.

“I’ll try that, too.”

Looking up at the crowd watching them, Axel asked, “Could someone tell me who goes with whom?”

Trace laughed and said, “Avery’s mine like she said earlier.” A dark-haired beauty waved at him as she nibbled on her cone.

“Garrett’s my Daddy. He found me making Rainbow Sprinkles cupcakes,” Ellie said, pointing to the large man who’d scooped the ice cream.

“I’m Tarson. I’m one of the dungeon monitors at Blaze. I’m very lucky to have a sweet Little who always smells like flowers. Daisy’s mine,” the large man announced before burying his face in Daisy’s long blonde hair. Her answering giggles made everyone smile.

“I guess we’re the last ones. I’m Callen as you know. Jordi is my Little girl.”

“Hi!” Jordi said with a smile and a wave, drawing Axel’s attention to her hand and bandaged finger.

“Did you hurt yourself?” he asked.

“A board didn’t want to fit into place. When I whacked it, I got a splinter in my finger. Daddy’s a big believer in bandages,” Jordi explained.

“Do you smack wood around normally?” Axel asked.

“All the time.”

When the other Littles burst into laughter, Jordi shook her bandaged finger at them. “You all have dirty minds. Not that kind of wood! Wood like from a tree. I’m a remodeler,” she explained to Axel.

“She built my deck,” Nicoya shared.

“It’s beautiful, Jordi,” Axel praised as Jordi beamed with happiness.

“Thank you,” Jordi answered politely.

“If you’ll excuse us, Ellie wanted to see the rope demonstration Riley and her Daddy, Milo, are doing in five minutes. Anyone want to come with us?” Garrett invited.

“Me, me, me!” filled the room and the Daddies herded their Littles to the sink to wash their hands before heading into a different area of Blaze to watch the demo.

Axel and Nicoya sat at the table finishing their ice cream cones. They discovered that neither of them liked the cone itself but enjoyed the ice cream inside. When others from different areas of the club visited the kitchen, Axel suggested, “Shall we go color now?”

“My fingers are all sticky,” she complained as she flexed her hands.

“Let’s go clean them up.”

Axel stood and led Nicoya to the sink. He dispensed soap onto their hands and turned on the water. Rubbing their hands together under the flow, he cleaned all the stickiness away. After drying her hands and his own, Axel extended his hand to the Little girl and smiled his approval when she linked her fingers with his.

“Let’s go color,” he suggested. “You lead me back to the daycare. I might get lost.”

“It’s just through here.” She pointed in the correct direction and took the lead to draw him back into the special area.

“What do you want to color with?” she asked. “Colored pencils or crayons?”

“I’m a crayon guy all the way through.”

“Me, too. Colored pencils leave too many lines and markers leave the page wet so it’s easy to smear,” she explained. “We can share a box.”

“Then we won’t have as many to pick up. Smart!” he complimented.

“Now, here’s the tough part. Choosing a picture. Let me get some coloring books.”

Axel kept his eyes from studying her fine bottom when she stood and walked quickly to the rack on the wall that held all sorts of books. She picked out two. One had a princess on it and another had cute animals.

“How about one of these?” she asked. She clearly favored the animal coloring book by tucking the princess one under it.

“I’ll take the one with puppies.”

“Or I can get another one,” Nicoya said quickly.

“No. This is perfect. I’d love to have a dog. What about you?”

Nicoya shrugged. “I’m not home enough to have a *real* dog, but I like to color them.” She set the princess book aside.

“I’ve always known that my Little wasn’t going to be a perfect princess. I want someone real and honest about who she is. Not someone who thinks she needs to play a role,” Axel said honestly.

“I can’t be a princess,” she said sadly. “I’m too tall and muscular. You need to be dainty to be a princess. I’ve always been too much of a tomboy.”

“Anyone who wants to be could be a princess. It’s more a state of mind than a physical form. Didn’t you know there are lots of different types of princesses?”

“Types of princesses?” she echoed.

He flipped through the pages to find a cute puppy with a ribbon tied around its collar. “I think I’ll do this one if it’s okay with you?”

“That’s cute. Go ahead. Would you pick one out for me?” she whispered.

“Of course,” Axel flipped through the pictures to find a cute kitty. “Do you like kittens?”

“I do, but they make me sneeze.”

“Let’s avoid a cat then,” he said in a serious tone. “How about this one?” Axel showed her a picture of a furry giant of a dog.

“He’s so cute! I bet he’d stand taller than me.”

“Or maybe me,” Axel suggested.

“You are pretty tall,” she commented as she considered his height as he sat next to her.

“My mother always complained about my long legs that were obviously empty when I was a teenager and devoured everything in the fridge and cabinets,” Axel said with a laugh as he carefully pulled both pages out of the coloring book.

“Did you grow up around here?”

“Not too far. My mom and dad are both gone now. A horrific traffic accident stole them away from me.”

“I’m sorry.” Nicoya shivered.

“I didn’t mean to stir up old memories.” Axel winced. Police officers saw the worst things on a shift.

Immediately, he changed the subject as he opened the massive crayon

box to offer her one. “Did you have a dog growing up?”

“Ruffles. He was the best dog ever,” Nicoya commented, selecting brown and black crayons.

“What kind of a dog was Ruffles?”

“Stuffed,” she admitted, peeking up at him.

“Do you still have Ruffles?”

“Yes. He’s my bestest friend.”

“Maybe someday you’ll introduce me to him.”

“Maybe.”

Chapter Four



They colored for a few minutes quietly. Axel could tell she was thinking hard about something. Finally he asked, “What’s on your mind, Little girl?”

After a long hesitation, she whispered, “Do you think less of me because I’m Little?”

Axel pushed back his chair before tugging her chair from the table. He scooped her into his arms and sat her on his lap. When she dipped her head to keep from looking at him, he simply held her and rocked their bodies gently.

Finally, she relaxed against him.

“Littles are the bravest people I know. They are willing to listen to what their heart wants most. Many people go through their whole lives not paying attention to what would make them happiest because it’s scary to be that vulnerable—to feel what you’re feeling right now because you’re worried I will judge you. I would never do that. I’m actually in awe of your strength.”

“I’m just being me,” she murmured.

“Exactly. Some people are too frightened to be themselves.”

He felt Nicoya melt against him. The last of her reserve ebbed away.

“It was scary to walk in here that first time. I thought my heart would burst from my chest. And when I saw who was in the daycare, all I wanted to do was run away,” Nicoya admitted.

“But you didn’t. That sounds brave to me.”

She nodded against his shoulder before slowly pushing herself up so she could look at him directly. “Do I get a reward for being brave?”

“I think that would be a very good thing.” Axel cupped the back of her head to draw her forward. Pressing his mouth against hers, he teased her by tasting her inner lips with his tongue. To his delight, she opened her mouth

and darted her tongue out to copy his action.

Moving slowly, Axel deepened the kiss, tasting her sweetness. Her fingers tightened on his shoulders, and she wiggled to get closer as she responded to his explorations. He loved how responsive she was.

Unable to resist, he lifted his mouth just long enough to praise her, “What a good girl,” before capturing her lips once again.

“Ahem!” a deep voice interrupted in an exaggerated throat-clearing noise.

Axel looked up to see a line of Littles and their Daddies watching over the half wall. Unable to resist, he pressed one last soft kiss on her lips.

“Would you like to come color with us, Little girls?” he asked.

“Is that what they call it now?” Ellie asked, wagging her eyebrows.

Smack! Ellie jolted slightly forward from an obvious swat on her bottom.

“We can call *this* coloring if you’d rather,” Garrett admonished her.

“No, Sir. I like the other coloring better. I’ll just go sit down now,” Ellie decided.

“That’s my good girl,” Garrett praised.

It took a few minutes for everyone to settle and choose a picture to color. Nicoya didn’t attempt to move from Axel’s lap but sat there happily as she colored. The conversation between the Littles rekindled, and Axel enjoyed spending time with everyone. They all had their own personalities. He celebrated his decision to come to Blaze. Other than buying the house next to Nicoya, it was the best move of his life.

She didn’t move from his lap except to run to the bathroom. He noted that she stopped to pick up her small purse from a hook on the wall and replaced it when she got back. Axel suspected he knew why.

An hour later, the Daddies gathered their Littles to take them home. Leaning close to Nicoya, Axel asked, “Did you drive here, Little girl?”

“Yes.” She nodded.

“Next time, we’ll come together. I’ll follow you home.”

“I’m almost finished with my picture,” she said in an obvious delaying tactic as Nicoya gestured at the half-finished puppy.

“Let’s take that home and you can finish it tomorrow.”

“It won’t take too long. You can go ahead and leave if you’re ready.”

“Nicoya, I’m not going to pressure you for anything when we get back to our houses. If you want to take things slowly, that’s okay.”

“I can’t play around now,” she whispered.

“You know Daddies don’t mind if their Little girls are messy.”

When she shook her head frantically, he added, “I understand. How about if we spend the next few days getting to know each other?”

“I’d like that.” Nicoya relaxed against him.

“Discovering everything about you is the most important thing on my list. Ready to go home now?” Axel asked.

Her yawn answered his question.

“Time to head out, Little girl.”

Axel boosted her up from his lap and stood as she retrieved her bag. He guided her to the door with a hand on the small of her back, deliberately claiming her to anyone watching as he cared for her. He loved how she walked close to him. Nicoya was definitely not giving off mixed messages. She was as into him as he was her.

At her car, he gave her a hug and a light kiss. “Drive home safely, Little girl. Stay off your phone and pay attention. When you get home, wave at me from your front window, so I’ll know you’re safe.”

“Yes, Sir,” she answered.

“Do you work tomorrow?”

“Unfortunately, I do.”

“I have a full schedule, too, Little girl. We’ll have dinner together. I’ll cook.”

“Okay.” To his delight, she pressed a light smack on his lips before darting into the car.

As he closed her door, Axel said, “Wait for me, Little girl. I’m in a blue pickup truck.”

After jogging to his truck, Axel drove to where she sat patiently waiting. He watched her put down her phone before backing out of her parking spot. As he expected, Nicoya drove adeptly through the lightly trafficked roads. Axel learned a shortcut home as he followed her.

He watched her drive into her garage, and the door lowered, sealing her safely inside. In a few seconds, she waved from her front window. They both stared at each other. Neither wanted to be the first one to break their connection. Axel knew she needed her sleep. Sighing deeply, he put the truck back in gear and headed for his driveway.

Chapter Five



Getting home from a vicious day of policing the city, half of Nicoya just wanted to lie down and take a nap, while the other half wanted to spend time with the man she hoped would be her Daddy. As she pulled into her driveway, she noticed her lawn looked amazing. Perfectly symmetrical rows and trimmed edges along the drive and sidewalks were a vast difference from the neighborhood boy's best efforts. Nicoya pulled her thoughts away from that observation as she realized she was considering replacing the young entrepreneur with a professional. *Remember, you want to support the community, not have a pristine lawn.*

She forced herself to stop staring at the beautiful green space and drive into the garage. Needing to refresh herself, Nicoya headed directly into the shower, and it invigorated her slightly. Walking out onto her new deck, she peeked toward Axel's yard and didn't see any movement.

"He must not be home yet," she said out loud to the tote bag she'd bravely flung over her shoulder.

She decided to try out her new deck. After sitting down on her chaise lounge, Nicoya twisted to put her feet up and set the tote bag next to her. A sigh of enjoyment escaped from her lips as she watched butterflies dart around the flowers she'd planted outside. Nicoya's eyes drifted closed.

A deep voice invaded her dreams. "Little girl, dinner's ready. Can you wake up to eat?"

Nicoya's stomach growled in response as she opened her eyes to look into deep brown eyes. Her heart rate jumped as she realized she'd let someone get so close. Automatically, she put her hands up defensively, and her fingers got tangled in the bag she held to her chest.

“Whoa! Little girl. You’re fine. It’s just Daddy,” Axel reassured her.

“Daddy?” she repeated, struggling to push away the sleep fog in her brain.

“Yes, Nicoya. It’s just me.”

She shook her head. “Sorry. Automatic response.”

“I should have stomped on the decking to let you know I was coming. I’ll remember that next time.”

“It was stupid to fall asleep out here,” she grumbled, condemning herself.

“Never call yourself stupid. You’re as safe here as you could be. It’s okay to let down your guard when you’re at home. This is a quiet neighborhood, isn’t it?” he asked.

“Yes. Nothing bad happens here. We all look out for one another.”

Her hands still fumbled with the straps of the tote bag. He carefully untangled her and peeked inside. “Could this possibly be Ruffles?” he asked.

“Yes. I brought him so I could introduce the two of you.”

“I would have recognized him immediately.” He turned to the stuffie. “Hi, Ruffles. I’ve heard a lot about you. Thank you for protecting Nicoya for so many years. She’s very lucky to have you in her life.”

“It’s silly to talk to stuffies,” Nicoya said quietly.

“Balderdash!” he responded in mock affront. “Whoever told you that isn’t the recipient of a stuffie’s love and affection.”

Nicoya quickly sided with this opinion. Her parents and grandparents had worked together to discourage her from carrying Ruffles everywhere. She doubted they’d ever loved a stuffed animal as much as she adored Ruffles.

“Would you two like to come over for dinner? I’ve made hamburgers, potato salad, and strawberries with cupcakes as dessert,” Axel said to tempt her.

“That sounds amazing.”

“Let’s go.”

Taking her hand, Axel helped her up and led her into his backyard to an area protected by netting. With each step she took, Nicoya could smell the delicious scents wafting from the table. She sat down eagerly.

“This looks incredible,” she complimented.

“Have a hamburger,” he offered, holding out a plate for her to help herself. “Pile everything you like on it.”

Nicoya dolled up her hamburger as he put a heaping spoonful of the potato salad on her plate along with three plump strawberries. Finally, she

lifted the sandwich to her lips, took a big bite, and groaned. “This is the best hamburger I’ve ever eaten.”

“I’m so glad you like it. I’ll remember that. Tell me what foods you don’t like so I won’t cook them for you.” He took such a huge bite out of his burger after he spoke that Nicoya’s eyes went wide, making him chuckle as he swallowed.

“I’ll never understand how men are able to eat a sandwich in so few bites,” she commented as she took another bite from hers. After she chewed and swallowed, she answered him. “I’m not a very picky eater. I just don’t like raw onions.” She curled up her nose.

“Noted. That explains why you didn’t put any on your burger.”

“Icky,” she confirmed. “And squash. Why do people think they can replace spaghetti with that stringy stuff? Uh uh.” She shook her head.

He laughed. “No squash then.”

She sat up straighter and narrowed her gaze to make sure he understood how important her next comment would be. “There are important food groups, you know.”

His smile lit up his face. “What would those be?”

“Well, the most important one is cupcakes, of course. You haven’t been in town long enough to see the food pyramid Ellie created. She put it up in the window and on the wall in Little Cakes and then everyone wanted one, so now it’s all over town. I’ve heard some Littles even have one in their homes.”

“I can’t wait to see it. I assume the largest tier is cupcakes.”

“Yes!”

“Which flavors are the best?” he asked. His burger was already gone.

“That depends. Before tomorrow, I would say it was probably one of the chocolate ones because chocolate is an important staple that should also get its own level on the food pyramid, *but...*” She shook a finger at him. “Tomorrow, Ellie is *finally* going to introduce the best, best, best cupcake ever. I already know it will be the best one ever because Ellie’s cupcakes are always amazing and delicious. She doesn’t have any bad ones. This new one though...” She sighed dramatically. “I haven’t even tried it yet because Tarson is a meanie and wouldn’t let me come into the kitchen at Little Cakes to taste it or even *see* it. Can you believe that?”

He was a very attentive Daddy. She could tell that already. He’d turned his chair to more fully face her, leaned forward, and set his elbows on his knees. “I cannot believe it,” he teased. “Are you going to tell me what flavor

is being unveiled tomorrow?”

She giggled and clapped her hands together. “Maraschino Cherry!”

“Ahhh. A cherry fan, are you?”

She narrowed her gaze at him again and shook her head. “Not just any cherries. Not Bing cherries or cherry pie filling. *Bleh.*” She made a face. “We’re talking *maraschino* cherries. The ones that have been processed to the point they have no value other than in the sugar food group. *Those* are soooo good. I could eat them by the jar. I don’t even buy jars of cherries because that is what would happen. I would eat the entire jar.”

“And Ellie is unveiling a Maraschino Cherry cupcake tomorrow?”

Nicoya nodded vigorously. “Avery was hoping her Daddy would take her to get one and they usually pick me up when they go, but...” Nicoya stared at the handsome man smiling at her.

She’d never been in a situation like this before. She’d never had dinner at a man’s house who was a Daddy. She’d never felt comfortable enough to let her guard down and be Little with a Daddy. She was somewhat stunned at how relaxed she felt around him. After all, she’d only met him yesterday, and that had been with her stomping out with her dukes up to reprimand him.

What a difference twenty-four hours made.

Nevertheless, she hesitated now, wondering if she was being presumptuous and too forward. After all, just because he’d colored with her last night and invited her to his home for dinner tonight didn’t mean he wanted to date her or take her out in a vanilla public space. Maybe he was just being a friendly neighbor. Or maybe he was trying to make up for his attempt to plant his cherry blossom tree on her side of the property line.

Suddenly, she felt ridiculous for assuming too much. She flushed and looked down. “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have assumed... I’m sure Trace will be happy to pick me up. You probably—”

He stopped her with a hand on top of hers over the table. “Nicoya, look at me.”

She lifted her gaze, but her cheeks were hot with embarrassment.

“You assumed correctly, Little girl. I would be honored to take you to Little Cakes tomorrow. And I happen to be a fan of maraschino cherries myself.” He grinned.

She let out a breath. “Okay. If you want.” She gave a nonchalant shrug as if it didn’t matter one way or the other if he wanted to take her.

Axel gave her hand a tug. “Come here, Little girl.”

She slid off her chair at his encouragement and was surprised when he pushed his chair back a bit farther and lifted her onto his lap. He tipped her chin back with one finger, putting them eye to eye. "I couldn't have been certain you were Little when we first met yesterday, but I'd hoped. I was praying you would be at Blaze last night, and I was elated when you were. In my heart, I already knew you were mine before that moment."

She gasped, her eyes going wide. "You did?"

"Yes, Little girl. I couldn't even concentrate at work today because all I wanted was for the day to be over so I could get home and see you again. Every moment I spend with you solidifies my certainty that you are mine."

She held his gaze, trying to make sure he wasn't just saying that. Could he really mean it? Could he be her Daddy?

"So," he continued. "Trace does not need to pick you up tomorrow or any other day for that matter. I will take you myself from now on. I have to work in the morning, but you let me know what time the other Littles are going to get cupcakes, and I'll be here to pick you up. Got it?"

"You won't be too embarrassed?" She needed to be certain he understood the implications of taking her out in this town filled with more Littles than the average town.

It was his turn for his eyes to go wide. "Why on earth would I be embarrassed to take the prettiest Little girl in town to get cupcakes?"

She shrugged and drew in a breath. "When I'm at work, I'm badass and fully adult. I've been known to make grown men cower with just a look, and I'm proud of my job. I'm a good cop. I love working in the community and keeping everyone safe." She licked her lips. "But when I'm not there, I'm usually in my Little headspace, and when I go to Little Cakes, there are so many Littles I let that side of me take over sometimes. It's a safe place."

He stroked her cheek and tucked a lock of hair behind her ear. "I've seen you coming and going from work. I've even seen the expression on your face. I'm so proud of you for being able to be true to both sides of yourself. That shows incredible strength. I will always support your adult and her important role in the community. But when you're with me, I'll encourage you to let your hair down and be as Little as you want."

She giggled. "I do literally let my hair down." She lifted a corkscrew and held it out. "It's a hot mess when it's down so I wear it in a bun at work. Also, I look so young when it's blowing around that no one takes me seriously."

He leaned in slowly and kissed her gently. "I will always take you seriously, Little girl. Both sides of you. I'm so glad I finally found you. I can't wait to take you to Little Cakes where everyone will see that you are mine." He smiled.

She returned the smile. "Okay."

"Now, how about if Daddy cleans up from dinner, and then I'll escort you back home and tuck you into bed?"

She stiffened and glanced at her house. Did she want to bring him into her home yet? She knew the answer was yes, but the problem was that she was so enamored with him she feared they might start making out and she would get carried away and...yeah, she was still on her period.

"Am I taking things too fast, Little girl?"

She shook her head and squirmed on his lap. "No. I just..."

"Are you worried about being intimate with me because it's too soon or because you're on your period?"

She blew out a breath. "The second."

"I told you I don't care about that. It's part of being a woman. It happens every month."

"I know, and maybe it won't bother me next month or the next, but I don't want our first intimate contact to be during my period. Is that okay?"

"Of course, Little girl. I would never rush you to be intimate with me anyway. I hope you don't feel like I'm pressuring you. In the future, I intend to be so intimately acquainted with your body that nothing about you will be private or off limits, but we just met, and I'll respect your discomfort."

Goosebumps rose up on her arms at his pronouncement. The thought of having a Daddy intimately involved in every aspect of her bodily functions made her skin tingle and her nipples stiffen. She wondered just how intimate he intended to be.

"Do you feel like I'm pressuring you, Nicoya?" he prompted.

She shook her head. "No. *I'm* pressuring me," she admitted. "I really want to uh...well, do stuff with you, and I'm afraid I will lose my head if you come over to tuck me in and embarrass myself."

He smiled warmly. "I promise not to let that happen. I'm not ready for this night to be over. Please let me come tuck you in. I swear I have the willpower to keep my hands out of your panties."

The tingles grew as she held his gaze. Could this be real? It felt so good.

Axel stood, holding her in his arms, and turned to sit her on the chair he'd

vacated. “You sit right here and look pretty while I clean up, and then we’ll head to your place.”

Chapter Six



Axel was so elated with how well things were going that he almost dropped the plates as he carried them into the kitchen. Nicoya was the sweetest Little girl he'd ever met. The two sides of her personality were precious, and he would cherish both of them.

When he finally had everything put away, he stepped back onto the deck and reached a hand out for Nicoya to take.

She gave him one of her bright smiles as she set her smaller hand in his.

“Ready?”

She nodded as she stood, grabbing Ruffles from his spot across the table.

Axel led her to her back deck and opened the door for her. He was immediately struck by how tidy her kitchen was. He narrowed his gaze at her as he shut the sliding door and locked it. “You said you were having a TV dinner last night. Do you ever cook, Little girl?”

She shrugged. “Sometimes I make mac and cheese.”

He lifted his brows. “From a box?”

“Uh, yes?”

He chuckled. She was just too cute. “That’s not cooking.”

“I mean I *can* cook, but I don’t feel like it most nights. They make really good frozen dinners, you know.” She rushed to open her freezer. “See?” There were two stacks of dinners. She pointed at the right. “Healthy.” Then she pointed at the left. “Little.”

He tipped his head back and laughed. “From now on, Daddy is cooking for you.”

“You don’t have to do that,” she murmured. “You work long hours too.”

“It will be my pleasure, Little girl. Taking care of you is now my top

priority. It fills my soul with happiness.”

“Oh.”

He loved the way she looked at him all wide eyed in her Littlest space.

“Show me your bedroom, Little girl.”

“Okay.” She turned and headed through her living room toward the hallway. Her living room was as tidy as her kitchen. She was a minimalist. That he acknowledged immediately.

When they entered her bedroom, he grinned wide. “Ah, there’s my Little girl. I was wondering what style your Little preferred.”

She flattened herself to the wall just inside the door. “It’s kind of silly, I guess. I mean I’m a grown adult. What grown adult has a bedspread covered with cherries?”

“One who embraces life and is true to herself. Cherries make you happy. I’m glad you surround yourself with things that make you happy.” He wandered to her bed and picked up one of the red cherry-shaped pillows. “I love these.”

“I even have cherry PJs,” she admitted. “Want to see them?”

“I do. I want to see them on you.” He nodded toward the bathroom. “Why don’t you go brush your teeth, use the potty, and put your pajamas on. I’ll wait out here.” He returned to her and took Ruffles from her arm. “Ruffles and I will get better acquainted while you get ready for bed.”

She released her beloved stuffie to his care almost reluctantly, turned toward her dresser, and snagged her jammies.

He barely caught a glimpse of the white material covered with cherries before she scurried into the bathroom and shut the door.

He couldn’t stop grinning. He’d hit the jackpot when he’d moved into the house next door. Fate must have guided him to this location. *Or the realtor*, he thought with a chuckle. Now that he realized that an inordinately large percentage of the population of this town practiced age play, he wondered if Lark Adams might also be Little. He hadn’t seen her at Blaze, but that didn’t mean she wasn’t a member.

Axel didn’t touch anything, but he did wander around Nicoya’s room, looking at the trinkets she kept on her dresser and nightstand. He admired the artwork on her wall too. When he stepped closer, he noticed it wasn’t just a framed picture of cherries as he’d thought. It was a puzzle. He suspected she’d assembled that puzzle herself and used puzzle glue to seal it together before having it framed. It would have been a difficult puzzle with the white

background and random cherries.

When the bathroom door opened, he turned around to find Nicoya shuffling into the room. She looked embarrassed again. He couldn't wait until she trusted him enough to know she never needed to be embarrassed around him.

"I love this puzzle," he told her, pointing at it. "Did you do it?"

"Yes."

Already he had dozens of ideas running through his head about the finishing touches he would make to her nursery.

Axel had chosen the house next door specifically because he loved the room it had off the master bedroom. Perhaps it had been wishful thinking on his part, but that room had sold him. It was the perfect size for a Little girl to keep all her favorite Little things in without worrying about any visitor finding out about her kink if she didn't want them to know.

"And your jammies. Those are adorable." He stepped to her bed and pulled the fluffy comforter back, wondering how long he would need to wait before he told her about the nursery and the plans already forming in his head to move her into his house. What if she didn't want to move?

Who was he kidding? He was so smitten with her he'd be willing to move into a tent in the woods if that was what she wanted. His house was larger though, and the kitchen and bathrooms had been recently remodeled.

She did have a better deck, and he now knew she'd recently added it. But the deck was a small thing. He would give her any deck she wanted.

"Daddy?"

At the sound of her sweet voice calling him Daddy for the first time, he spun toward her and grinned from ear to ear.

"Where were you?"

He furrowed his brow.

"You were deep in thought."

"Ah." How long had he been standing next to her bed pondering the future? Apparently longer than he'd thought. "I'm sorry. I was getting ahead of myself. Come. Climb into bed."

"Getting ahead of yourself?" she asked as she slid beneath the covers and let him lift them up under her arms.

He settled Ruffles in next to her and sat on the edge of the bed. "I was picturing us in the future," he admitted, pleased when she smiled.

"You were?"

“Yep.”

“Was I the most sweet, angelic, well-behaved Little girl ever who never needed to be spanked or disciplined?” She cocked her head close to one shoulder and batted her eyes adorably.

He laughed. “Is that how you see yourself?”

“Maybe?”

“While we’re on the subject, how about you tell me some of the things you need in a Daddy so I’ll know how to take care of you the way you prefer.”

“Okay, but don’t you also have things you need in a Little girl? What if I’m not the right Little girl for you?”

He shook his head. “Not possible. My main need is already met. To meet someone who enjoys age play as much as me nearly fulltime when she’s not at work. Someone who will let me take care of her in every way. The rest is negotiable.”

She licked her lips and parted them but didn’t speak yet.

“Go on. Tell Daddy what you’re thinking.”

She swallowed. “I was wondering... You said earlier and again just now that you’d like to take care of a Little girl in *every* way. Does that mean you want your Little to be uh...really young sometimes?”

“Yep. If that’s something you’re interested in, of course. It’s up to you, but I’d be privileged if you entrusted me with all of your care sometimes.”

“Like everything?” she asked, eyes wider.

God, he hoped he was reading her right. “Yes, Little girl.” He tapped her nose before he shared further. “You wouldn’t have to worry about your periods if Daddy diapered you on those days, for example.” He watched her closely to gauge her reaction.

Thankfully, she visibly shuddered and blushed. Those weren’t the telltale signs she liked his suggestion though. It was the way she squeezed her legs together and drew her arms closer to her chest.

“Does that idea appeal to you, Little girl?”

“Maybe? I’ve never let myself think about it too much. I’ve never let myself think about having a Daddy at all. It seemed like a longshot. There are only so many Daddies in the world. Maybe I would never get one. And most of them probably wouldn’t want to change diapers.” She added that last part in a whisper.

“I don’t know. It looked like several of the Littles at Blaze had on a

diaper last night.” He had noticed that right off.

She hesitated and then nodded. “I guess most of the Littles at Blaze who have Daddies do turn over more of their care to him sometimes.”

“And you’ve thought about it,” he pointed out to clarify.

“Sometimes,” she whispered.

“Do you have anything in the house you like to take out when you’re feeling really Little, Nicoya?”

Her cheeks turned a deep red as she slowly nodded and glanced at her nightstand.

He shifted his attention to the small bedside table. “May I look inside?”

“If you want,” she murmured.

He reached over and slid the top drawer open. Inside he found three adult pacifiers, an assortment of colorful vibrators, and a few pairs of soft mittens like the kind babies would wear to keep from scratching themselves.

Axel’s chest tightened. He badly wanted to skip forward to a day when his precious Little girl would trust him to care for her so intimately. He reached for a pair of mittens and held them up. “Do you like to sleep in these, Little girl?”

“Sometimes,” she admitted softly.

He set them down and picked up a hot pink bullet vibrator. “Tell me how these incongruent things come together for you, my sweet Little Niki.” The nickname slid off his tongue, and he looked at her to see how she would react.

“No one has ever called me Niki,” she admitted.

“Do you think Daddy could be the first then?”

She nodded eagerly. “I like it.”

“Good. Now don’t avoid my question. I’m thinking the mittens keep you from touching yourself, which would indicate some level of orgasm denial. But then there’s this bullet...” He let his voice trail off as he thought about the possibilities and came up empty.

She was so red now she had to be overheated, but at the same time, he was pretty sure she was going to share her secrets, and the idea of his precious Little girl opening herself up to such vulnerability for him nearly brought him to his knees.

She stared at him for a long time before reaching for the bullet and flipping it around in her hand. “This little vibrator is small but powerful. When I put it up inside me...” She stopped and looked away.

“Go on, Niki. Tell Daddy. I want to know everything. I promise I would never judge you for your preferences. But if you share them with me, I’ll know better how to please you.” He really didn’t know where this explanation was going, and he was curious as fuck. Also his dick was about to force itself out of his jeans.

She inhaled deeply again and looked back at the vibrator in her hand. “Sometimes I like to use one of the larger vibrators with clitoral stimulation. It’s the only way I can come. But sometimes...”

He was starting to understand. “Sometimes you put the little bullet inside your pussy and put the mittens on so your body hums with unrequited need.” It wasn’t a question. He knew he’d nailed it.

She nodded and looked away. “I’m kind of weird.”

He cupped her face and guided it back to center so he could see her eyes. “You are not weird. Ingenious. Do you deny yourself like that because you like how it feels to stay aroused for a while, or do you do it to punish yourself?” This was super important.

She threw her forearm over her eyes and groaned. “I can’t believe I’m telling you all this. What’s wrong with me? I’ve never told *anyone* any of this. No one alive even knows I have pacifiers and diapers and bottles in my home. I just met you yesterday, and—” She cut herself off as though just realizing how much more she’d revealed.

He lifted her arm from her face and leaned in to kiss her lips before moving back only a few inches and holding her gaze. “I’ve never been more humbled in my life to have earned someone’s trust like this. I will never, ever take advantage of it. Do you have diapers in this bottom drawer, Niki?”

She nodded.

“How often do you wear them?”

She shrugged and said nothing. That spoke volumes.

“Answer Daddy’s other question. Is the orgasm denial pleasurable or for punishment?”

“Both,” she whispered almost too quietly for him to hear.

“At the same time or on different nights?” he asked to clarify.

“Could be any combination,” she admitted before looking away again.

“Thank you, Niki. I’m so happy right now I’m doing a dance inside my head.”

She looked back at him. “Really?”

“Yes.” He kissed her again. “Also my cock is so hard I’m going to come

in my jeans,” he informed her, hoping the admission would help her feel less self-conscious about the things she’d revealed.

He didn’t stop there either. She deserved to hear his dreams too. “I’ve longed to find the perfect Little girl who would trust me to diaper her and change her and feed her. Someone I could rock to sleep when she needs to be younger. Someone who would let me bathe her and tuck her into a crib for naps and nights when she’s feeling really Little. I love the way you’ve found such creative ways to be the Little you need to be without a caregiver. I’m going to enjoy taking over those responsibilities myself, starting right now.”

She gasped. “You said—”

He shook his head. “I don’t mean tonight precisely. When your period is done.”

“Okay.” She squirmed again. “Daddy?”

“Yes, Niki?”

“Would it be okay for me to admit my pussy is very wet and needy right now?”

He smiled. “I’m so glad, Little girl. All this talk of fulfilling each other’s needs has me pretty damn hot and bothered too.” He reached to adjust his cock.

She glanced at the front of his jeans. “I could—”

He slapped a hand over her mouth. “Don’t you dare even suggest such a thing, naughty girl. You will never be taking care of Daddy’s needs until yours are fully met. Not tonight or any other night.”

She bit her lip and released it, wiggling around under the covers restlessly. “Now I’m really horny though. Maybe I could touch myself under the covers and lick your cock at the same time.”

My God. She was so bold. It nearly stunned him. He shook his head though. “Not a chance, you naughty, naughty girl. No way am I going to watch you orgasm for the first time completely covered with blankets. Forget it.”

An idea formed though. He put the bullet back into the drawer and reached for a pair of white mittens. “Give me your hands.”

She lifted them cautiously.

He pulled first one and then the other glove over her fingers and down to her wrists. Next, he grabbed a pacifier. After he shut the drawer, he opened the lower one to confirm she did indeed have a tall stack of diapers in there. She also had wipes and a changing pad.

When he shut that drawer and looked back at her, she had her lips pursed.

“I’m going to go home now before I get so carried away that I break my vow to you. I expect you to go to sleep like a good girl and keep your hands away from your pussy. I don’t think you’ll need the bullet to feel the hum of arousal tonight.” He lifted a brow.

She shook her head. “No, Daddy. I’ve never been this aroused.”

“No touching yourself, got it?”

She nodded. “Yes, Daddy.”

He leaned over and kissed her again. This time he lingered, deepening the kiss until she opened for him and moaned into his mouth. He loved that sound, her taste, and the way she was squirming so deliciously under the covers.

When he pulled back, he immediately plugged her mouth with the pacifier. There was no way he could endure even one more sentence from her lips. Not a naughty sentence or an innocent one. The sound of her voice would be his undoing.

He rose and kissed her forehead. Already he hated leaving her to go next door. He wanted her under his roof at night. He wanted her in his bed. In his life. In her nursery. Everywhere.

Axel Jennings wanted Nicoya Stevens more than he’d ever wanted anything in his entire life. And she was so totally his.

“Do you have to work tomorrow?” he asked.

She shook her head, suckling the pacifier.

“Text me and let me know what time you want to go to Little Cakes and I’ll pick you up.”

She nodded.

“I’ll turn off the lights on my way out and lock your front door. But Niki...”

Her eyes widened in question.

He wanted to leave her with parting words that would have her squirming for a good long time before she could fall asleep. “As soon as your period is done, plan on sleeping in my home. I’m going to start putting your nursery together immediately. Little girls need a special place to play. Not just a drawer. Your nursery will be equipped with a changing table and a crib. Most nights I’ll want you in my arms in my bed, but you can expect to nap in your crib and sleep there on nights when you’re feeling super Little and need the comfort of the slats around you.”

Her eyes were still wide, and he thought she was holding her breath.

He leaned over and set his hands on either side of her, holding her gaze. “From now on I’ll be the one to diaper you and change you when you need it. You’ll take bottles sometimes too. Are you with me, Little girl?”

She nodded eagerly.

He smiled wide enough to split his face once again. “Good.” Another final kiss, this one on her nose, and he turned and left the room.

Axel was nearly hyperventilating as he turned off her lights and let himself out, making sure to lock the front door.

He couldn’t believe how perfect Nicoya was for him in every way. She really had surprised him. He was so pleased. As badly as he needed to come, he decided he wouldn’t masturbate tonight. After all, he’d forced her to wait. He could wait too.

In a few days the waiting would be over, and their first time together would be the sweetest thing in the world.

Chapter Seven



Nicoya looked at her phone for what seemed like the millionth time. She wanted to text him that everyone was meeting at Little Cakes at two, but she debated how much of a fool she'd made of herself. When the doorbell rang, she scrambled to open it. A delivery lady from a local grocery store stood at her door with a ginormous jar of maraschino cherries.

"I've got to be honest. Of all my deliveries, I want to be you," the woman said with a grin as she handed over the treasure.

"This is mine?" Nicoya's mind did a happy dance as she looked at the hundreds of candied cherries in the jar.

"From your neighbor, the message says."

"He's so sweet," Nicoya murmured.

"I'd keep him. Enjoy!" The driver waved and headed back for her vehicle parked at the curb.

Immediately, Nicoya ran inside and grabbed her phone. Dialing the number he'd left on her kitchen table before leaving, she turned the jar in circles on the counter as she waited for him to answer.

"Is the lid off yet?" he asked.

She could hear the smile in his voice. "It's not yet. They're better cold. I'm trying to make myself wait. You got a huge jar."

"I'll buy you more when you run out," he promised.

"Sounds like you plan to stick around for a while," she whispered.

"A very long time, Little girl. What time are we going to Little Cakes?"

"Could you be available at two?" she asked hesitantly.

"I'll be glad to take a break. It's hot out here. I'll have to be back here to supervise at four. Will that be long enough?"

“Oh, yes. If not, someone will give me a ride home. I could just take a ride share,” she suggested.

“And leave me without a cupcake after you’ve told me how amazing they are? That’s just cruel, Niki.”

She giggled at his ridiculous tone. He was so much fun. “Can you pick me up at a quarter to two so we can be there when everyone arrives?”

“You got it. Put those in the fridge, Little girl. Don’t give yourself a tummy ache. You don’t want to ruin your appetite for those special cupcakes.”

“I’m looking forward to spending time with you, Axel,” she confessed.

“I am too, Little girl. I am, too,” he said quietly into the phone.

Knowing that she was keeping him from work, she said her goodbyes quickly. As she set her phone on the table, she contemplated the large jar of cherries. He’d have to stay around for a long time if he wanted to outlast that jar of maraschino cherries. Nicoya picked up the jar and set it in the refrigerator to chill.



She saw his truck pass her house at twenty minutes to two. Wishing to save him some time, she gathered her stuff and stepped outside. When her door was locked, she headed over to his house and knocked on the door.

“Oh my!” burst from her lips when the door opened suddenly and a towel-wrapped naked and wet Axel answered.

“Come in, Niki,” he urged. “Let me get some clothes on and we’ll head out. I wasn’t fit to drive with you or step foot into Little Cakes.”

“Little Cakes?” she repeated, staring at his body that was chiseled from hard work. “Hmm, snack.”

“Are you calling me a snack, Little girl?” he asked, his eyes practically dancing with amusement.

“Oh! I’m so sorry!” she said, feeling her face flame with heat. She knew she was blushing more than the deep red of the maraschino cherries.

“And here I was thinking *you’re* a snack in your cute cherry T-shirt,” he said, drawing her into the house to close the door behind her. He stepped close, making her move backward until she was pressed against the wooden barrier.

The kiss he gave her brought Nicoya to her tiptoes as she wrapped her arms around his damp neck. One touch of his hard body and she couldn't prevent herself from finding out if he felt as good as he looked. Just as she was really getting into it, Axel set her firmly away from him.

"Cupcakes, Niki. Keep thinking about cupcakes," he instructed firmly as he tightened the towel at his waist and turned around to head for his bedroom. "You can come talk to me as I put on some clean clothes."

Not willing to miss this, she trailed after him, trying not to look too eager. To her disappointment, he was already in the walk-in closet. She could hear the rustle of clothing and knew he was dressing.

"What did you do today, Little girl?"

"I went to the grocery store, paid some bills, and read a book."

"Sounds like you've earned a cupcake," he called.

"What did you do?" she asked, looking over the things arranged on his dresser—his wallet, keys, phone, and a few pictures of people she assumed were family.

"I wrangled a bunch of bushes that had taken over the front of someone's house. You could have lost a small child in there for days," he joked.

"I don't like bushes around a porch. I know it gives some privacy but it also allows bad guys to attack you, take your stuff, or worse."

Axel appeared in the doorway, dressed and holding flip-flops. "Think it will be this casual? My feet don't want to wear shoes."

"It's a cupcake shop. You don't need to dress up."

"Perfect," he said, dropping the sandals to the floor and stepping into them. "Time to go."

Nicoya looked down at her watch and noted, "Only a minute late. That's good timing."

"One less kiss and I would have been completely on time. It was totally worth it. I'd lose another minute," he stated firmly, as he walked forward.

"Cupcakes!" she squeaked, extending her arms to keep him at bay.

"These better be good," he said, relenting. With a wink, he guided her to his truck and helped her inside.

Axel talked easily about the activities of his day. There weren't any awkward moments as they crossed town. She felt like he wanted to hear about her day as much as he enjoyed sharing the fun things that had happened to him. Her mind flashed to the older couples she ran into when she went out to eat. They usually just sat there eating their food, neither saying a word to

the other. She knew Axel would never become one of them. He'd always have something interesting to share.

When they pulled into the parking lot of Little Cakes, Nicoya almost bounced with excitement. She could see there were several people inside. As soon as Axel put the truck in park, she reached for the door handle and froze as his hand clamped over her thigh.

"Wait for me," he directed firmly.

"I can open my own door, Axel."

"You can, but when you're with me, you won't. That's Daddy's job," he clarified for her.

"That's silly," she dismissed, ignoring his statement and popping the door open. His hand tightened on her leg, tethering her in place.

"What? It's already open now. Let's go have a cupcake."

"Close the door, Niki."

"This is freaking ridiculous," she argued and met his gaze directly. He didn't back down but continued to look at her directly as he held her in place with one hand. She knew she could scramble out easily despite his hold. The look in his eyes kept her from doing so.

"You need to make a decision, Little girl. It's up to you. Do you want a Daddy? If so, you need to let me take care of you," Axel said carefully.

"It's just a door," she protested.

"It's more to me."

She stared at him, hoping he would back down, but he didn't. He met her gaze squarely as he gave her time to decide. Fractions of seconds dragged by as he waited to see if she would follow his directions.

"Fine," she said finally, slamming the door closed and flouncing back against the seat.

"Thank you, Little girl." Axel slid out of his seat without lecturing her or saying anything else.

She watched him circle the hood and open her door before stepping close to help her out. After closing the door, Axel took her hand and escorted her through the parking lot, always walking on the outside to protect her from the cars. When they reached the door, he opened it for her and allowed Nicoya to precede him.

Her friends immediately swarmed her. In the flurry of hugs and hellos, Nicoya forgot her annoyance. She remained aware of where Axel was as he greeted the other Daddies who had brought their Littles.

“Whew! I’m glad you got here now! We’re almost out of cupcakes. They’ve been flying off the shelf today,” Ellie said, emerging from the kitchen in a Little Cakes apron.

With squeals of happiness, the Littles lined up at the counter. Nicoya noticed that everyone who had a Daddy there returned to his side to take his hand and walk together. She swallowed hard. It looked like she had a lot to learn about how to be Little with a Daddy.

As she watched the others, Axel approached and guided her with a hand against the small of her back. She met his gaze and whispered, “Sorry. I guess I’m failing at being Little.”

Immediately, he leaned close to kiss her lips softly. “Silly. You can’t fail at being Little. Everyone is different. We just need to figure out what’s important to us. I’ll always be glad to hold your hand.”

When he squeezed her fingers lightly, she smiled. It did feel really good to be connected to him. Is that why the other Littles always held their Daddies’ hands? Curious, she observed the other couples’ interactions. They looked happy together.

“I want to be that happy,” she told him.

“I’d like that, too. I have a feeling you’ve watched out for yourself for so long you forgot how good it is to have someone else take over for a while.”

She stared at him in amazement. How could he know so much about her?

Ellie interrupted her thoughts. “I know you’re having a Maraschino Cherry cupcake, Nicoya. What would you like, Axel?”

“I’ll try one as well if you have enough for everyone,” Axel answered.

“I just put a new batch in the oven. There’s plenty,” the friendly baker assured him.

“Then, we’ll take two Maraschino Cherry cupcakes, Ellie, and a couple glasses of milk,” Axel ordered.

It had been years since Nicoya had drunk milk. She started to correct Axel and order coffee instead but deliberately kept her mouth closed. He seemed to know what he was doing. Maybe she should wait and see if he was right about this as well.

In a few minutes, they took the last couple of chairs at the group of tables that had been pushed together at the back of the café area. Nicoya unwrapped her cupcake eagerly and lifted it to her mouth to take a big bite. Sweet cherry goodness burst over her tastebuds. She hummed with delight.

“That good, huh?” Axel asked with a big grin before taking a bite

himself. Immediately his eyes lit up, and he nodded as he chewed. She understood instantly that he agreed with her one hundred percent.

Moans of appreciation rang out from around the table as Ellie hovered nearby to see their reactions. She clapped her hands and did a small victory dance that made everyone laugh.

“There is so much cherry flavor, Ellie. This is the best cupcake I’ve ever had,” Nicoya cheered.

“I still like the Rainbow Sprinkles ones but this is definitely on my favorites list,” Ellie confessed.

Nicoya plucked the decorative maraschino cherry from the top and popped it in her mouth. The combination of the sweet candied fruit and the creamy frosting that clung to it was so good. She wanted a bunch more.

Blinking at the cherry dangling in front of her mouth, Nicoya looked at Axel. “I can’t eat yours. It’s too good. You taste it.”

“It’s for you, Niki. You can have it,” he told her.

Without a second protest, she plucked the cherry from its stem and chewed happily. “Yum!” she mumbled, enjoying the super-sweet flavor before reaching for her milk. Her eyes widened as she drank. The milk tasted like cherry!

“You are a genius!” she complimented, setting the glass back on the table.

“Is it good?” Daisy asked, lifting her own glass. When she set it back down on the table, she wondered aloud, “How do Daddies know these things?”

Axel winked. “We make good guesses.”

Chapter Eight



Nicoya had missed Axel when he'd dropped her back at her house. She loved how he'd watched until she was safely inside and waved at him to indicate that everything was good before he'd returned to his job site to finish the day.

On a sugar high from the cupcakes, she'd cleaned her house. It didn't take much. Nicoya wasn't home a lot to mess anything up. With the dust wrangled and her laundry folded, she'd settled on the back deck to relax.

She debated how to tell him that her period was over. Would that sound like she was asking for him to make love to her? She didn't want to sound like she was pushing herself on him.

About six o'clock her phone rang. She groaned at the sight of Trace's name. There was only one reason the captain would call her.

"Detective Stevens. What's up, Captain?"

"Sorry to bother you on your day off, Nicoya. We have a hostage situation on Monroe and Fifth Avenues. Shots were fired. A neighbor called it in. The perpetrator will only talk to you."

"To me?" Nicoya asked in surprise.

"I don't like it, but we need to talk him out of there peacefully. We aren't sure who's inside with him."

"I'll change and be on my way," she promised, already moving to her bedroom to grab clothes out of the closet.

"Wear your tactical gear, Nicoya. Something about this feels wrong. We'll keep you protected but I want you to be ready if this goes south."

"Got it, Captain. I'll be there in a few."

Nicoya swapped out what she had previously chosen to wear for a shirt sized to fit over her bulletproof vest. It took her a few minutes to dress, and

she headed out to her car. As she drove, Nicoya kicked herself for not asking the name of the assailant who had requested her.

After parking at the perimeter of the taped-off area, Nicoya bailed out of her car, grabbing her helmet. She showed her badge over and over until she reached the captain's side. "Any updates? Who is this guy?"

"He says his name is Ricky Stiles. He hasn't responded to our last two calls. It's totally quiet in there," Captain Trace Barnes reported.

"That's not good," she commented. *Ricky Stiles...* She couldn't place the name.

"We were getting ready to go in. Since you're here, try calling him. Maybe he'll respond to you."

The captain picked up the megaphone and spoke. "Detective Stevens is here. She will call your phone."

Nicoya picked up the cellphone they'd been using to communicate and redialed the number that appeared in the contacts. She waited and heard three rings before a male voice answered.

"Nicoya Stevens?"

"Yes. Is this Ricky Stiles? I understand that you requested me to be here."

"You don't remember me, do you?" he asked, and she could hear the anger in his voice.

"I'm sorry. Help me remember. Where did we meet?"

"Jefferson Junior High School."

Nicoya tried to think fast. "Did we go to school together?"

"Yes. You sat in front of me in almost every single class. Stevens. Stiles." His negative tone continued to deteriorate.

Still clueless, she tried to fill in the pause. "Oh, during the first days of class when the teacher put people in alphabetical order."

A picture began to form in her head of a quiet student with glasses who was frequently absent. "You were the only one who understood what our geometry teacher taught us."

"Yeah. That was a class I got to attend. I could follow along there."

"Ricky? What's going on in there? Why were there gunshots inside your house?"

"I had to stop my sister."

"Did you hurt your sister?" Nicoya asked.

"Only to stop her from hurting me."

The police officers listening to their conversation shifted restlessly. She

needed to get in there.

“Are you going to hurt me if I come inside, Ricky?”

“No. You’re the only police officer I know. You weren’t ever afraid of anything.”

“I’m going to come inside now, Ricky. I want you to put the gun down and push it away,” Nicoya requested.

“Okay. I wouldn’t shoot you, Nicoya,” he promised.

Nicoya left the call open with the phone on the roof of the squad car as she headed toward the old house not too far from where she’d grown up. A battered sedan was in the driveway. Walking slowly up the ramp to the front door, she called out, “Ricky, I’m at the door. I’m coming in.”

Pushing open the door, she scanned the area and felt sick. A woman lay on the floor, not moving. There was a knife lying next to her hand. A filthy skeleton of a man sat next to a tipped-over motorized scooter. A gun lay not far from his hand. Judging by the twisted way his legs were angled, Nicoya knew the chair was his.

“She was hurting me, Nicoya. I couldn’t let her keep hurting me,” Ricky told her.

Nicoya walked over to kick the gun out of his reach before checking on the woman. There was no pulse. Turning to look at Ricky, she noticed a red mark on his skin. After walking back to him, she pushed up Ricky’s sleeve. “Did she do this?”

“Yes.”

“Why didn’t you call someone?”

“There was no one to call.”

“Is anyone else in the house, Ricky?”

He shook his head.

Good. At least no one else was being held or had been harmed. The person the captain had assumed was a hostage was dead. The entire scene brought bile to Nicoya’s throat though. Not just from the blood and loss of life, but it was obvious Ricky had been abused and neglected for quite some time.

Struggling to maintain her composure, Nicoya radioed in to the captain that the threat was controlled. She reported there was one fatality and another who would need medical care before she squatted down next to the man she barely remembered from school and took his hand.



Hours later, she pulled into her driveway. Turning off the engine, she sat there staring blankly at the dashboard. There were days she loved and hated her job, and then there were shifts like today. Ones that showed her the worst of humanity.

A knock on her window made her look up as she reached instinctively for her gun. Her shoulders sagged at the sight of Axel's concerned face. Immediately, she unlocked the door, pushed it open, and slid across the trash bag she'd used to protect the upholstery from the filth that was ground into her uniform.

He took one look at her and wrapped his arms around her in a massive bear hug. "Oh, Niki. Let's get you inside and cleaned up."

She nodded and allowed him to guide her into her house. He stopped at the laundry room just inside the garage. Nicoya took off her duty belt and set it carefully on the dryer before allowing him to strip off her clothes and shoes. When she stood naked before him, Axel pulled his T-shirt over her head and helped her thread her arms through the holes. Nicoya waited, wrapped in his scent and the warmth that lingered in the soft fabric as he dumped everything washable into the machine, added soap, and started an extended cycle. She picked up her duty belt and tactical vest as he guided her to the door.

"Let me carry this for you, Niki," Axel offered, taking the heavy tactical vest from her hands. "Where do you store your gun?"

"In my bedroom."

In a few minutes, she had everything put away with his help and could relax fully. Turning to him, Nicoya wrapped her arms around him, relying on his strength to support her as she sagged against him. "It was bad."

"I'm so sorry, Little girl. Let Daddy help you clean up. You'll feel better after a shower."

Holding her against him, Axel released the pins and elastic band holding her tight bun in place. Nicoya sighed with relief as the pressure of the tight hairdo eased. Axel massaged her scalp, making her groan in pleasure.

"Come on, baby."

After guiding her into the bathroom, Axel turned on the shower to warm before stripping off his clothes. She watched him blankly. Noticing his

incredible body mechanically as her mind struggled with all she had seen, she felt numb.

“Into the water, Niki,” Axel ordered guiding her into the spray and following her inside. He washed her body without lingering on her curves, simply making sure that every inch of her skin was clean. He even had her dip her head into the water so he could shampoo her hair carefully.

“How do you feel, Little girl?”

“Clean. Thank you.”

Turning off the water, he toweled her dry and wrapped another towel around her wet hair before wiping the moisture from his own skin.

“Are you hungry?”

She shuddered at the thought of eating. “No.”

“Then let me hold you.”

Within minutes, he helped her into bed and tucked Ruffles into her arms before climbing in behind her to wrap his arms around her. With her snug against his body, Axel pressed a kiss to her temple. “You’re safe, Niki. Push everything out of your mind. Just be my Little girl for a while.”

She nodded and felt the last of the tension flood from her body. Taking all the memories of that horrific scene and locking it into a box in her mind, Nicoya focused on being with him now. His loving care surrounded her. She closed her eyes, feeling suddenly exhausted.

Chapter Nine



The room was dark when she woke up. Nicoya lifted her head from Axel's chest to look into the sleeping man's face. Her heart swelled with emotion. He hadn't asked any questions but had simply taken care of her. She remembered his words in the truck when she'd resisted allowing him to do something as easy as open her door for her. Why in the world had she bristled against his attempts to do simple things for her?

"I can hear you thinking, Little girl," he whispered sleepily.

"I'm so sorry," she responded in an equally hushed tone.

"You have nothing to be sorry for, Niki girl," he said as he reached out to encircle her with his arms and pull her tight against him. Pressing his mouth to hers, Axel kissed her deeply, making her wiggle even closer to him as she snuck her arms around his neck to hold on.

She was panting from the erotic kiss when she bravely said, "I'm not on my period anymore."

When he lifted his head a few long moments later, Axel asked, "Are you ready for me to make you mine, Little girl? Be sure. I don't plan to let you get away after this."

"Please."

"Let me get my pants. I want to protect you."

"There are condoms in the drawer. I bought a pack yesterday."

He wiggled his eyebrows at her comically. "You had plans to attack me, huh?"

Giggles bubbled out of her throat as she felt her face heating with embarrassment. The tragedy of yesterday was far from her mind as she concentrated on this amazing man. "Maybe?" she admitted.

“I love it!” he announced loudly into the quiet of the room before he rolled her over so he was above her, tethering her to the mattress. He eyed the clock. “I have two hours before I need to be at work. Prepare to be orgasmed,” he announced, dropping his head to nibble at her sensitive neck.

“Ummm, I don’t really do that,” she whispered, trying to take the pressure off both of them.

“Do what?” he asked, lifting his head to stare down at her.

“Orgasm from uh...penetration,” she answered, blushing.

“Then there’s no pressure on you. If I’m totally incompetent, it will be the same. If I’m Super Daddy, then you give me a million kisses and look forward to the next time we make love,” he stated easily.

“Super Daddy?” she asked with a smile, feeling the tension in her body ease with his reaction to her confession.

“Da, da, da, duh!” he sang as he pressed a light kiss on her lips that flamed into so much more.

Axel stroked his hands over her, coaxing her to feel more than she ever had. He searched for small sensitive spots that zinged through her, building the heat in her body as he tasted her skin. When his hand cupped her breast, Nicoya prepared herself for disappointment. Her limited number of previous lovers had concentrated solely on her nipples, not exciting her at all. Axel paid attention to the sensitive underside of her breasts, pressing kisses and allowing the stubble of his beard to push her arousal higher. She was wiggling underneath him by the time he reached her taut buds, and she loved his delicate nibbles to the tips.

He stroked a hand over her toned stomach, leaving a path of shimmering feelings as he touched her skin. Axel didn’t rush. He savored. And she loved it. When she tried to stimulate him, he moved her hands to his chest.

“This time is all for you, Niki. Hold on to Daddy.”

When he parted her lower lips to explore her pink folds, Nicoya was shocked by how much she felt. It was almost as if he’d ignited her nerve endings, making her so sensitive to his touch. He stroked her slowly as he located the places that responded eagerly. The heat built inside her until she struggled to contain it.

“Ahhh!” she cried out, shocking herself as pleasure cascaded over her.

She felt Axel smile against the crook of her neck where he nibbled and kissed before he said, “I thought you didn’t do that. You know there are consequences when you lie to Daddy. Let’s try another one.”

This time she didn't even attempt to deny that she could orgasm from his touch. He was already leading her up that mountain of sensations. His fingers traced her sensitive opening and dipped inside. She loved the feeling of being filled by his touch as he explored for those trigger points inside just as craftily as he had located them scattered on her body. When two fingers scissored inside her, the faint burn of him stretching her was the final piece she needed to explode again.

This time, he whispered, "Which side, Little girl?"

"Which side?" she echoed.

"Where did you hide the protection?"

Nicoya pointed to the nightstand closest to her and blushed when he opened the drawer, remembering all the things she kept in there. He'd already seen and commented on all of it, but she still felt self-conscious about her private stash of both sexy toys and Little things. "We're so experimenting with some of these vibrators next time," he promised as he opened the box and removed one wrapped condom.

She loved that he was already planning to make love to her again. Nicoya watched him kneel between her legs. His cock was thick and long, making her mouth water at the thought of that filling her completely. She loved the view of him stroking the condom over his shaft. His hands, rough and urgent, showed her how much he wanted her. At the feel of the broad head of his cock pressing against her, Nicoya forced herself to relax.

"Good girl," he praised as he slowly pressed inside, stopping each time her hands tightened on his shoulders when the pressure built. He didn't hurry her or force past her tight muscles, but allowed her to ease around him before pushing deeper. By the time he was buried inside her, she was on the edge again.

"Do you know some kind of magic sex moves?" she asked, trying to explain away her responsiveness.

"We're making the magic together, Little girl. It's not me. It's us. Let's see if we can fly together," he suggested and moved.

Her eyes rolled back at the feel of his thickness sliding inside her. Her body, wet and slick with arousal, allowed him to brush past all those sensitive spots he'd discovered. She tightened her muscles around him tentatively and felt the deep groan that vibrated his body.

"Do that again, Niki," he ordered, and she loved the feeling of power that filled her.

It wasn't just him making love to her. They were urging each other on. Her hands slid over his skin as it became damp with the heat that built between them. She loved the feel of his hard form moving over and into her, his muscles bulging as he supported himself over her.

Those sparking sensations built and rekindled the lust inside her. Nicoya urged him on, meeting each of his thrusts with eager moves. Wrapping her legs around him, she clung to him as he moved deep inside her.

With a scream, she spasmed around him as her climax hit hard. Her contractions launched his as he moved even faster before pouring himself into the protection inside her. Finally dropping to his elbows to support his weight over her, Axel captured her mouth in a searing kiss that made her pleasure flare just at the end as he pressed his pelvis softly against hers.

"Way to make a liar out of me," Nicoya complimented.

"I'll spank you later," he promised.

"Really?" she teased, half serious.

"Oh, you'll need your bottom smacked regularly," he commented, sounding serious.

She gave him a second look. "Like really?"

"Dinner tonight at my house. Wear a sundress and no panties. I'll spank you before feeding you."

"Axel..."

"Daddy," he corrected her. "We're way past you calling me by my first name when we're alone."

"I don't know how I feel about being spanked."

"That's why I'll paddle your bottom tonight. Then you won't need to worry any longer about what it will feel like. Tonight will be a good-girl spanking. You'll enjoy it."

"That's different than a bad-girl spanking?" she asked, fascinated.

"Oh, yes. That you won't enjoy," Axel promised.

"I think I'll avoid that kind."

"That is a very good plan," he said, rolling to the edge of the bed and onto his feet and holding out his hand. "Come on, pretty baby. Shower with me before I need to leave."

She didn't even consider refusing him.

Chapter Ten



Nicoya got busy cleaning her house after he left. Nothing was dirty. She'd cleaned it yesterday too. But she needed to keep her brain occupied so she didn't think of the encounter with Ricky yesterday afternoon. It was just so depressing. The ambulance had taken him to the hospital yesterday to be checked out. No charges would be pressed in the case. It was obvious to everyone that his sister would have killed him soon by sheer neglect if he hadn't acted.

In the back of her mind, she considered what community resources could help him when he got out of the hospital. She had started making a list of people to call when her phone rang. Nicoya smiled when she saw Ellie's name on the display.

"Hi, Ellie. Those are addictive cupcakes. I think you need a new entrance in the alley behind the store."

"Maraschino Cherry is doing so well. Someone thought no one would like them, but Bear was completely wrong," Ellie shared, throwing her assistant completely under the bus.

Nicoya laughed at the outrage she heard him expressing in the background as he threatened to leave. "Don't let him go, Ellie. He frosts a mean cupcake."

"Bear won't leave me. He's used to my teasing and knows I love him."

"Of course he does. What can I do for you, Ellie?"

"I've been thinking for a while that everyone in town has supported me so much, I'd like to give back. Do you know any worthwhile community groups looking for help with special projects?"

Nicoya rocked back on her heels. She'd already been thinking of asking

the captain and Avery if they would help her clean up Ricky's house a bit before he returned home. If they had a bunch of people, they could really make a difference.

"How do you feel about helping clean someone's house that's been neglected? It's in rough shape. We'd have to wear protective gear."

"Is it dangerous? Like used needles and stuff?" Ellie asked hesitantly.

"Not at all. Just dirty."

"For someone who really needs the help?" Ellie probed.

"Definitely. A former classmate of mine. I hadn't talked to him for years. He's in the hospital now. I should warn you, there's some blood splatter. I hired a biohazard team to go in and clean that up first. Plus we have to wait for the all-clear from the police investigation."

"You tell me a time and place. I'll gather everyone I can and we'll meet you there."

"Thanks, Ellie. I appreciate you wanting to make someone's life better."

"Of course. I'll bring cupcakes!"

"That will make everything more fun," Nicoya agreed.

When she got off the phone with Ellie, she called her boss. It was always a good idea to run an idea past him. Just as she thought, he was immediately in and would post a sign for volunteers from the detective pool to help. He'd bring protective gear for everyone and Nicoya would locate some donations of cleaning supplies. Taking action felt good.

It didn't, however, erase Axel's promise of a spanking from her mind. Nicoya kept herself busy and finally forced herself to go sit out on her shady deck with a glass of lemonade. She wasn't there for too long before she saw his blue pickup roll into his driveway. Axel tapped a friendly toot of his horn before climbing out. He was covered in dust and grime.

Rushing toward him, Nicoya asked, "What have you been doing?"

"We laid a bunch of rock into flowerbeds today. It's dusty work." He plucked the glass of lemonade from her hand and drained it.

"Hey!" she protested.

"That was really good. Want to bring over two more glasses for dinner? Stop and take those panties off before you walk over." He lifted a brow to remind her of his edict that morning.

"You can tell I'm wearing panties?" she whispered.

"I couldn't before, but now I know for sure. Come in the back door. I'll leave it open for you." He winked before heading toward his house.

Nicoya hurried back into her house and filled another glass with ice before pouring lemonade into both. Pausing, she considered her options before reaching under her dress to skim her panties down her legs. She didn't want to tick off the man who supposedly was going to give her a reward spanking. That definitely didn't seem to be wise.

She walked as quickly as she could between the two houses, trying not to slosh lemonade over her hands. *Why didn't you just bring the pitcher?*

Ducking in the back door, she heard the shower going. Instantly a picture of Axel's honed body standing under the spray of water bounced into her mind. Her body reacted immediately, and she squeezed her thighs together as she felt the heat gathering. She flapped her dress, trying to cool herself down but stopped immediately when she heard the shower turn off.

Distracting herself by looking around, Nicoya noted that Axel had a lot of unpacked boxes still decorating the rooms of his house. She wanted to open one and start putting things away, but some people were hypersensitive about their stuff. Finally, she perched on the edge of a kitchen chair and tried to look at ease as she sipped her lemonade.

"Come on, Axel. I need a spanking," she whispered sarcastically to herself.

"I'm here, Little girl. Let's get this spanking started," he answered with a sparkle in his eye as he buttoned his shorts. A T-shirt stretched over his shoulder for him to put on next.

She flinched. *Darn. He heard me.* How embarrassing.

He chuckled. "It's okay to be curious and excited to try something new, Niki. Plus, some things can be scary. Once you've experienced them, they aren't nearly as scary the next time."

"That might be true for bungee jumping or roller coasters, but I'm not sure about spankings?" she hedged.

Axel pulled his shirt over his head and reached out a hand for her to take. "Trust me. It will be true for spankings too."

She dragged her feet as he tugged her into the living room. Nerves ate at her, making her fidget in front of him after he sat in the middle of the couch.

He rubbed her arms. "This sundress is very pretty, Niki. The red looks nice on you."

She narrowed her gaze at him. "You're just saying anything to take my mind off the spanking."

He laughed. "Caught me. Did it work?"

She shook her head as he drew her in between his legs.

“Tell me what you’re worried about?”

“That it will hurt,” she blurted.

“That’s a legitimate concern, and some Little girls don’t like pain, so they aren’t fond of spankings. Most, however, do enjoy the heated skin and the slight burn that reminds them every time they sit down that their Daddy cares about them enough to discipline them when they need it.”

She squeezed her legs together, uncertain why her pussy got wet every time they discussed spankings. “I know a lot of the Littles at the club like to get spanked. They’re always inventing naughty things to do in order to end up over their Daddies’ laps.”

“I bet you’ve watched a lot of spankings, haven’t you, Niki?”

She nodded. “Yes.”

“That’s why you’re curious.”

“Yes, Sir,” she whispered, her cheeks heating.

He lifted her chin with one finger. “There’s nothing to be embarrassed about.”

She shrugged. “It’s confusing because they always seem to enjoy it, and I just want to know why. Will you show me now?”

“Absolutely. But first I want to talk about it.”

She sighed and shifted her weight back and forth. “Why?”

“Because I want you to know what to expect.” He lifted both brows as if waiting to make sure he had her attention.

“Okay, Daddy.”

“That’s my girl. Now, like I said earlier, you are not in trouble. I’m going to give you a good-girl spanking tonight. It’s meant to relieve stress and help you relax.”

“I certainly have a lot of stress. All day long I couldn’t get Ricky out of my head.” She shuddered at the memory. “I kept picturing him in that house being abused and no one ever came to help him.”

“That’s very stressful, Niki.”

“I have a stressful job. Some days are worse than others.”

“You sure do. All of your days are more stressful than me choosing a location for a bush or laying some mulch. That’s why it’s nice for you to be able to come home at the end of a long day and turn your care over to Daddy.”

She nodded. He understood perfectly.

“I suspect you’re going to enjoy the release you’ll feel from a maintenance spanking, and I bet you’ll be able to come to me after a particularly stressful day from now on and ask me to spank you.”

She curled up her nose. “Ask you? That seems weird.”

“Not if it’s what you need. Of course, you could throw a tantrum instead and earn a naughty-girl spanking, but it probably wouldn’t have the same effect. We’ll try both and you’ll see the difference.”

She widened her eyes. “Tonight?”

He grinned. “No. Tonight Daddy is only going to demonstrate a good-girl spanking. I’m going to take you over my lap, push your dress up, and swat your bottom until it’s pink and hot. I’ll start slowly and build up the intensity when I think you’re ready. I’ll also check in with you often to make sure you’re okay.”

She nodded. That sounded pretty reasonable. A lot better than the place her mind had wandered every time she thought about getting spanked. She’d never envisioned being with a Daddy who cared so much about her that he would take the time to explain himself and offer her an out.

“Are you ready, Little girl?”

“I guess.”

He guided her to one side and helped her lie over his thighs. “Are you comfortable?”

She stretched her arms out and folded them under her head against the couch cushion. “Yes, Sir.”

“Good girl.” He pushed her dress up to her shoulder blades and set his palm on the small of her back. His other hand settled on her butt cheeks. “I’m already very proud of you for asking for what you want and trying something new. If you want Daddy to stop at any time, just say so. This spanking is meant to make you feel better, not worse. If it’s having the wrong effect, Daddy will stop.”

“Thank you, Daddy.” She relaxed further. His promise to stop if she hated it was enough to calm her immensely.

Keeping his fingers splayed on the small of her back, he lifted his other hand and gave one of the cheeks a firm swat.

Nicoya flinched, but she realized her reaction was caused from the anticipation of pain rather than the actual slap of his palm against her skin. It hadn’t hurt at all really.

She flinched the second time too, but it made her giggle.

Daddy chuckled. "That's not the reaction I was expecting. I guess Daddy isn't striking you hard enough."

She shook her head. "No, Daddy. You're doing just fine. I was just laughing at the way I flinched the second time even though I knew what was coming."

"Well, you won't always know what's coming. Daddies have a way of switching things up so you can't anticipate exactly where to expect the next swat or how hard."

She drew in a breath and released it slowly.

Daddy spanked her several more times, not hesitating for more than a second in between. He also made good on his promise to switch things up. Sometimes he struck the same cheek two or three times. Sometimes he aimed lower and swatted the backs of her thighs.

When he paused to rub her heated skin, he asked, "How are you feeling, Niki?"

"Good."

"Your skin is barely warm. Are you ready for Daddy to increase the pressure?"

"Yes, Sir." She could feel the heat, but she knew it could get a lot hotter.

"Relax your thighs and part them a few inches, Little girl." He patted the backs of her legs.

She whimpered as she did as he requested, aware that her pussy was wet. Would he find out?

The next round of spanks was more intense, or perhaps they just felt that way because her thighs were parted. Everything felt more intense with her pussy exposed.

By the time he stopped again, she was panting.

"I think my Little girl is starting to understand how nice a good-girl spanking can be," Daddy commented.

She didn't respond. She had her lips pursed to keep from moaning. Her legs were no longer loose and pliant. They were trembling with need.

"No need to be embarrassed by your arousal either, Niki," he pointed out.

She was even more embarrassed to know he was aware of her trembling horny body.

"Why do you think the other Little girls misbehave?"

She held her breath. Was he right? Did Ellie and Daisy and Jordi and all the others act up because they got aroused when their Daddies spanked them?

“One more round, and then I’ll give you what you need, Little girl.”

His words swam in her head as he started swatting her again. Her skin was so hot and tingly, and she thought it would grow worse. But that’s not what happened because her Daddy started spanking her in a new spot, the juncture of her thighs with her bottom.

The first slap took her by surprise, and she was still trying to pull in a breath when he did it on the other side.

Nicoya gasped. Her pussy pulsed, begging for attention.

Daddy rained several more swats to that special place that drove her crazy. By the time he stopped to rub her hot skin, she was panting and desperate.

“Daddy…” she whimpered.

“I think my Little girl understands now.” He slid his hand between her legs, found her pussy, and stroked through her dripping folds.

She moaned. “Oh…”

“That’s my girl. Such a good girl, taking a spanking from Daddy. I think you deserve a reward, don’t you?”

It took her a moment to realize he’d asked her a question. What had it been?

Daddy didn’t wait for an answer anyway. He thrust two fingers into her pussy and rubbed her clit at the same time.

Nicoya shot off like a rocket. She’d been stunned when he’d been able to make her come so easily early this morning, but this was even more shocking. He’d just spanked her bottom like a recalcitrant schoolgirl. How had that made her so horny he was able to make her orgasm in seconds?

“That’s my good girl. Let it feel good, Niki. Let Daddy take care of you.”

When the pulses began to subside, he eased his fingers out. A moment later, she heard him sucking.

Her face heated to rival the pink of her bottom at the thought of him sucking her arousal from his fingers. She kept her eyes closed and her face buried in her forearms to avoid watching such an erotic sight.

Suddenly, his hand returned to her pussy, and he stroked his fingers languidly through her folds before trailing them back toward her tight rosebud.

Nicoya clenched her butt cheeks together and whimpered. Surely he didn’t want to touch her *there*.

“Relax, Little girl. No part of you will be off limits to Daddy. I’ll take my

time, but eventually this tight little hole will accept Daddy's cock."

She shuddered. Her bottom? Was he serious?

He gently rolled her over and cradled her in his lap, lifting her chin to meet her gaze at the same time. "Was Daddy right about good-girl spankings, Niki?"

She nodded. He'd been more than right. The spanking had been amazing. The orgasm afterward had made the earth stop spinning.

"Do you think you might be able to give Daddy the benefit of the doubt about trying other things too?"

She snuggled against his chest. "You mean like fucking my butt?" she murmured.

He chuckled. "Yes. Exactly like that." He slid his hand between her legs, past her pussy, and tapped her tight hole.

She was relieved when he removed his hand and gently rocked her for a few minutes.

"Do you feel better, Little girl?"

"Yes, Sir." She did. It was strange, but she felt lighter. Tomorrow she knew it would be easier to face the challenge of organizing the clean-up of Ricky's house. It was going to be a huge task, but she knew Ellie and the other Littles would be there to help.

"Next time you have a rough day, maybe you could come to Daddy and ask for a maintenance spanking to chase away the icky feelings, yeah?"

"Maybe..." She still wasn't sure she could muster up the courage to actually ask for a spanking. That seemed over the top. Today she'd practically begged him to do it, but that had been an experiment. Would she really be able to come to him when a true crisis had her in knots?

"I think it's time for Daddy to get some dinner in you. What do you say?" He stood her on her feet, letting her dress fall down around her thighs.

"Can I go get some panties first, Daddy?"

"Nope. You can leave your bottom exposed. Daddy is going to want to check it several times this evening to make sure the pink subsides. I never want to spank you so hard that you can't sit on it the next day."

"Oh." She looked down as she clasped her arms behind her back and rocked forward and backward. The thought of Daddy checking the pinkness of her bottom several times made her horny all over again.

Daddy rose, cupped her face, and bent to kiss her lips. "You're the cutest Little girl I've ever seen, Niki."

Chapter Eleven



“How’s the clean-up project coming along?” Axel asked Nicoya when he called her during his lunch break the following day. He was glad she’d been able to answer. He understood sometimes when she was at work, she wouldn’t be able to take his calls.

When Niki had told him the specifics about what had happened during dinner, he’d winced inside several times. No wonder she’d needed a spanking.

She sighed on the other end of the line. “Okay, I guess. It’s going to take several days for the police to finish with the scene. Plus, I want the blood definitely cleaned up first. My friends don’t want to deal with that.”

“Makes sense. You sound stressed, Little girl. You sure you’re okay?” Of course she would be stressed, but he also realized this particular case was weighing on her heavier than usual, probably because she knew the man who’d asked for her personally.

“Yeah. It’s just so sad,” she whispered. “I went to visit Ricky in the hospital today. I stayed for almost two hours. He really needed someone to talk to.”

He figured she’d stopped somewhere to talk to him without other people hearing. “I’m glad you could be there for him. Did you find out any more about why he’s in a wheelchair?”

“Yeah...” Her voice about killed him. “He was in a skiing accident a few years ago. Broke his back. He has a really good job too. He always was a math whiz. He works from home for a tech company. He was living alone and didn’t need any outside help, but apparently his sister moved in about a year ago. She’d lost her job and her apartment and blamed him for messing

up her life.”

Axel gasped. “How was he responsible for her life?”

“He wasn’t, but she’d always been a bully and insisted that after his accident he got all the attention and made her life hell.”

“So she moved in with him and started abusing him in order to get payback?”

“Basically, yes.” Her audible sigh came through loud and clear again before she took a deep breath. “I should get back to work. I need to let Ellie and the rest of the girls know we can go in and clean in a few days.”

“I can also help, Niki. Anything you need. How is the outside of the house?”

“Neglected,” she informed him.

“Then that’s my domain. How about if I get some of the Daddies to help me fix up the outside while you and the other Littles work on the inside?”

She gasped. “You’d do that for a stranger?”

“First of all, yes, Niki. I would do that for someone in need. But more importantly, I would do it for you, Little girl. You’ve asked your friends to help. What about your Daddy?”

“You’re right. I should have asked you too. Thank you so much for offering. I’ll appreciate the help, and I know Ricky will too.”

“Good. That’s settled. Now, I bet you need to get back to work. I’ll see you tonight when you get home. How about if I make comfort food for dinner and then you sleep over at Daddy’s house?”

“Meatloaf and mashed potatoes?” she asked in a hopeful voice.

He chuckled. “Is that your go-to comfort food?”

“Yes. Can you make it?”

“I certainly can. I’ll have it ready when you get home. What vegetable would you like with it?”

She sighed loudly. “If we must have a vegetable and ruin the word comfort in comfort food, then green beans, but the kind from a can. I like to dip them in the mashed potatoes.”

He couldn’t help but grin. “Canned green beans have no nutritional value whatsoever, Little girl, but I’ll make them for you tonight since you asked.”

“Cupcakes have nutritional value,” she pointed out eagerly. “I know because they’re on the food pyramid, and it must be so because practically everyone in town has one of those revised food pyramids.”

He laughed. His Little girl definitely had a silly side. “I will pick up

cupcakes for dessert. Maraschino Cherry?”

“Daddy!” She kept her voice down, but the inflection was there all the same. “That’s the only flavor that matters. Such a silly question.”

His laughter grew. He hadn’t laughed so hard in years. “Okay. Got it. Maraschino Cherry cupcakes, canned green beans, meatloaf, and mashed potatoes. The boxed flakey kind?” He said that last part just to get a rise out of her.

It worked. “Daddy,” she hissed. “Please tell me you’re kidding.”

“I was joking, Little girl. Get back to work. I’ll see you tonight.”

“Okay.”

He ended the call before he said, “I love you, Nicoya Stevens.” He felt it all the way to his soul, but he didn’t think she was ready to hear it yet.

Deciding he needed to get off work early in order to hit the grocery store, he hurried back out to the front of Bark and Branches. He wanted to get as much done as he could before he left the store in the capable hands of his employees.

By three o’clock, he was in his truck and headed to the store. He wanted to have plenty of time to work on the nursery before she got home too. He’d gotten a good start on it the night she’d been called in to work, but he hadn’t shown it to her yet because the timing had been off.

Tonight, he would introduce her to not only the nursery, but a deeper level of age play. Considering the stress she’d been under for the last few days, he thought she would benefit from a baby-girl evening.

The spanking had helped. The orgasm he’d given her after swatting her bottom had too. But sometimes Little girls needed to spend some time with zero responsibilities. His job was to make that happen for Nicoya.

After a quick trip to the grocery store, he headed for Little Cakes.

As soon as he stepped inside, he was bombarded by Ellie and her employees. Ellie quickly introduced him to Sue and Tori, whom he surmised were also Little.

“Are you here to get Maraschino Cherry cupcakes for Nicoya?” Ellie asked, beaming.

“How’d you guess?” he teased. “You better give me four. I suspect she might want a second one tomorrow.”

“Coming right up. Did she tell you about her plans to clean up a house?” Ellie asked as she boxed the cupcakes.

“She did. It’s very kind of you to offer to help.”

“We all will,” Sue stated.

“Definitely,” Tori added. “We saw Daisy earlier. She’s in. I’m sure Lark will come. She’s Ellie’s best friend.”

“Lark Adams?” he asked. It was a small world.

“Yes. Do you know her?” Tori asked as she opened a bag so Ellie could set the cupcake box gently inside.

“She was my realtor. Best realtor I’ve ever had,” he informed them.

Ellie giggled. “She is the best.”

He glanced around at all three women, marveling at how many people in town were Little. It was uncanny. Or maybe it wasn’t. Maybe it was simply a matter of living somewhere where people were openly true to themselves and their preferences.

Axel had often wondered what percentage of people enjoyed some form of age play. Now he suspected the number was probably much higher than the average person would expect. They simply weren’t willing to out themselves. If more people lived in an accepting community like this one, the world would be a happier place.

Axel handed Ellie his credit card just as Tarson came through from the back room. “Hey. I thought I heard your voice out here.” He extended a hand toward Axel.

“Good to see you again. I was actually going to hunt you down at some point. I have a proposition.”

“If it involves showing up with the Littles for the clean-up job Nicoya is arranging, several of us have already planned to be there.”

Axel smiled. “You read my mind. I was hoping to gather some men to do the outside. Bark and Branches will donate supplies, shrubs, and whatever else we need to get the house looking its best.”

“That’s very generous of you,” Tarson responded. “I’ve spoken to Garrett, Wyatt, Milo, Evan, and Davis already this morning.”

“Wow, you’ve been busy. It doesn’t sound like I even need to make calls,” Axel joked.

Tarson chuckled. “Evan and Davis were easy to catch. They both dropped off their Littles here for work this morning. Garrett has been in to see Ellie a few times today. Wyatt picked up cupcakes for the police station earlier. Milo came in on his break. He’s an EMT.”

“Thank you so much. I only formulated the plan this afternoon. You already had it executed. I’m grateful. Who else do I need to talk to?” Axel

asked.

“I can handle gathering people,” Tarson replied. “Your contribution is huge. I’m sure Trace and Avery already know since they work with Nicoya.”

Sue rocked forward excitedly. “I’ll pop over to Maniac’s Tats and invite Maniac and Tatiana.”

Tori nodded. “Good idea. I have to make a cupcake delivery to CC’s Purrfect Coffee this afternoon. I’ll let her and Hunter know. He’s a doctor. I’ll call my brother Terry too. I’m sure he and Kiki will want to join us.”

Axel thought of one person he at least knew in town he could add to the list. “I’ll call Callen at the hardware store.”

“Good idea,” Tarson agreed. “Jordi will come with him.”

Axel was elated by the time his transaction was over. Sounded like damn near half the town would be willing to help. “Thank you all so much.”

Tarson shrugged. “Always looking for a good cause to support. From what little I’ve heard, this is an excellent cause.”

“It is. It really is,” Axel assured him. “If you think of anyone else, invite them too. I’m sure as soon as Nicoya has the exact day nailed down, she’ll be in touch.”

Ellie waved as Axel headed for the door. “Thanks for coming in. And thanks for being such a great addition to our town.”

Axel blushed as he headed for his truck. He didn’t think he was doing anything special. Surely anyone would step up to help a man in need.

He jogged the last bit of the way to his truck. He had a dinner to cook and a nursery to finish up before his Little girl got home.

Chapter Twelve



Nicoya was drained when she finally got home from work. She went straight into her house, shuffled through to her bedroom, locked up her weapon, and stripped out of her clothes on the way to the shower.

She had just turned the water on when a voice startled her.

“Niki?”

She nearly jumped out of her skin before she realized the voice belonged to Axel. She also noted she probably had barely shut the front door. She certainly hadn’t locked it. He must have seen her pull in and come right over.

“In here,” she called out before snagging a towel to wrap around her naked body. It was a ridiculous thing to do because he’d seen her naked, but instinct caused her to cover herself.

“Hey there, Little girl,” he said as he leaned in the doorway. “I saw you pull in. You certainly got undressed fast.”

She nodded. “I always feel gross after work. I like to get in the shower before I do anything else, no matter how tired I am.”

“Makes sense.” He stepped the rest of the way into the room, gently took her towel from her, and settled it back on the hook. “How about if you get in the shower while I find something for you to wear. I’ll come back in to dry you off and help you dress.”

“You don’t have to do that,” she argued. It seemed so excessive to ask her Daddy to do so much for her. He’d worked hard all day too.

Axel lifted her chin. His expression was serious and kind of stern. “I know I don’t have to do those things, Little girl. I *want* to. It’s what Daddies do. You’ve had a very stressful week, Niki. I want you to let me baby you for the evening.”

She licked her lips. “Baby?” Her voice squeaked. Was he suggesting what she thought he was suggesting?

“Yes. Sometimes Little girls need some time in a younger space to help them rejuvenate. I know the concept isn’t foreign to you. You’ve got all the things a Baby girl would need in your home. That tells me sometimes you’ve let yourself play younger without a caregiver.”

She swallowed. Of course he knew all of that. There weren’t any other options considering the fact that he’d seen her stash of diapers and wipes. She’d inadvertently told him about the bottles. And he’d given her one of her own pacifiers when he’d tucked her in the other night.

“Tonight, you’re going to have a new experience. I want you to spend the time in the shower letting yourself slide into a younger age-play space so when you get out, you’ll be ready to submit to Daddy.”

“Okay,” she murmured hesitantly. Was this a good idea?

He released her chin and pointed toward the shower. “Go ahead. Get in.”

As he was about to turn around, she grabbed his forearm. She held his gaze to make sure he understood how serious her next words would be. “I’ve never let myself be that vulnerable in front of a single other human. You’re the first person to even know that side of me exists on any level. Please promise me you’ll never use this information to hurt me. I’d be devastated.”

She shuddered. She wasn’t kidding around. It would ruin her trust in humanity and destroy her career if Axel, or anyone else for that matter, used her most private thoughts to hurt her.

Axel cupped her face. He wasn’t angry. That was good. “I promise and solemnly swear I will never intentionally hurt you for any reason. I’ve told you already you’re it for me. My Little girl. My Baby girl too. But if for some reason you decide you don’t want to be in a relationship with me at any point, I would never break your trust. Your secrets are safe with me. Cherished even. Okay, Baby girl?”

“Yes, Daddy.” Already she was feeling Littler. He’d convinced her of his loyalty and worn down her arguments.

Axel Jennings was her Daddy. And she was about to have the most vulnerable evening of her life, complete with meatloaf and mashed potatoes.

She was trembling as she stepped into the shower, and she had to close her eyes and take deep breaths as she imagined what he would choose for her from her room.

By the time she turned off the water, she was in Little space, but she was

also a ball of nerves. So far the plan to de-stress her was not working.

Axel was back in the bathroom before she could even reach for the towel. He patted her dry before scooping her into his arms to cradle her as he carried her to her bedroom.

He gently lowered her to the mattress. “Spread your legs for Daddy.”

She released a long breath as she did as she was told.

Daddy lifted her ankles and slid a diaper under her before opening a tube of diaper cream and squeezing some onto his fingers. She could hardly argue or complain. After all, these were all items he’d found in her own bedroom.

She held her breath as Daddy rubbed the cream carefully around her pussy, finishing up by sliding his fingers lower and coating her rear entrance. When he slid one finger inside her bottom, she shivered.

She still didn’t deny him though. She couldn’t. As deeply submissive as he was asking her to be, she wanted this. She wanted to turn her care over to him and take this risk.

“Stay right there,” he directed before stepping into the bathroom to clean his hands.

When he returned, Axel fastened her diaper just like she liked it—tight but not too binding. He turned her onto her side so she could see the closet door, saying, “What would you like to wear tonight? This blue or the pink T-shirt?”

“Pink,” she whispered. “I like the cherries on that one.”

“I should have guessed!”

“Let’s put something on this cute bottom, too,” he suggested, patting the padding wrapped around her.

“My black shorts!”

He helped her sit up and threaded the shirt into place before standing her on the carpet to step into her shorts. When she was completely dressed, he picked her up and rocked her gently on his lap. Brushing her hair back from her face, Axel studied her. “Do you feel any better, Little girl?”

“Yes,” she whispered.

“Ready to go to my house for dinner now?”

She looked at him in shock. “I can’t go out there like this! Someone will see me.” There was no way that someone wouldn’t notice her bottom was two sizes bigger wrapped in the diaper.

“I’m sorry, sweetheart. I should have thought of that. How about if you wear a jacket over your outfit?””

“It’s hot out there. I’ll look ridiculous in a jacket.” Nicoya scrambled to slide off his lap. What was he thinking? He’d put everything in jeopardy. Well, not for him but for her.

Glaring at him, she added, “I don’t think this is going to work, Axel. I’d like you to leave.” She rushed into the bathroom and closed the door. Ripping the diaper off, Nicoya tried to wipe off the cream he had spread over her skin.

Panic filled her. She’d always been so careful to hide her Little side from the general public. How could he not see that she couldn’t just walk to his house wearing a diaper?

She should have known things with Axel were too good to be true. Fairytales didn’t exist in real life. Pretending to be really Little in the privacy of her home was one thing; sharing that lifestyle with another was more than she could handle.

“Nicoya, I’m sorry, Baby. I didn’t think. Being your Daddy is new to me as well. It was thoughtless and I apologize. I’ll do better. How about if we drape this loose sundress over your T-shirt? No one will notice anything.”

“I’m not going anywhere with you. I’ve asked you to leave once. Please go away.” She was trembling with frustration. Maybe she was overreacting, but she couldn’t let herself get swept away with visions of the perfect life with the perfect Daddy. She would eventually get hurt.

“Nicoya, I don’t want to leave with you this upset. I have dinner prepared. How about if I bring everything over here? We can spend some time together and talk.”

“I don’t want to talk to you... Axel.” She deliberately forced herself to use his name. “For the third time, go away.”

“I know you’re upset, Nicoya. I’ll leave if you promise to talk to me later tonight or tomorrow at the latest.”

“Fine. Just leave!”

“I don’t like this, Little girl.”

When she didn’t answer, she heard his footsteps and knew he had left her bedroom. Tears cascaded down her cheeks. Nicoya stood there feeling miserable for a few seconds before taking a deep breath and heading back into the shower. She couldn’t feel this cream on her body now.

A half hour later, she forced herself out of the shower. She couldn’t hide there any longer. Nicoya wadded up the diaper and threw it away before sending that pink T-shirt into the laundry basket. She’d have thrown it away but it had cherries on it. Dressing in pajamas, she got ready to curl up in bed.

Throwing back the covers, she crawled into bed and hid under the comforter. Her stomach growled angrily. She'd dreamed of meatloaf and mashed potatoes all day. Pressing her hand to her abdomen, she whispered, "Shut up. I'm already upset. I don't need you making me more miserable."

Her doorbell sounded and Nicoya peeked out as she listened intently. An urgent knocking sounded at her door. She slid from bed and crept to the door to peek out the peephole. Something on the ground caught her eye.

After looking to see if anyone was around, she cautiously opened the door to find a covered tray sitting on her welcome mat. It smelled amazing. Nicoya hesitated. She couldn't leave it out there. Animals would ravage her doorstep to get a taste of that.

She stepped outside in her PJs and looked around. No one was there. After lifting the tray, she carried it inside and set it on the kitchen island before returning to the door to close and lock it. Pulling the towel from the top, she discovered he had brought her a plate filled with the items she had requested with one addition. She lifted the plastic tumbler to find a perfect maraschino cherry cupcake. He'd protected the icing from being smashed by the towel. The tray smelled even better without the material absorbing some of the aroma. Her stomach roared in response.

Nicoya leaned in to sniff and spotted a piece of paper tucked under the plate. Pulling it out carefully, she felt her heart rate increase. What had he written? She unfolded it and took a deep breath to calm down before reading.

Niki,

I am so sorry I scared you. I understand your need to keep your Little side a secret. In my eagerness to take care of you, I violated every Daddy code there is by not thinking of how to protect you. All I can say is I've learned to stop and think about things, considering the need to guard your public persona. I'm heartsick and so sorry. I hope you'll give me another chance.

Daddy

P.S. Eat, Little girl. I need to know that you're fed.

She set the paper aside after reading his message over and over. It wouldn't do any good to throw everything out. Nicoya elbowed a stool at the island to the side so she could scoot around it to sit down. Rereading the note, she took a bite of the meatloaf and moaned.

Damn, that's good.

Nicoya devoured every bit on the plate. It was the most delicious meal she remembered eating in a long time. She always stocked frozen meatloaf meals in her freezer but this was very definitely not a microwaved concoction.

She shook her head slowly. Axel was everything she'd ever wanted in a Daddy. Maybe this was just the universe telling her she shouldn't be Little. It was too risky. Perhaps she needed to let go of this dream of allowing her Little side out to play.

"I can always be Little when I retire from my detective job," she announced to the empty kitchen. Her words seemed very loud in the open space. Retirement seemed like a lifetime away.

Chapter Thirteen



The next day, Nicoya left early to go run at the park instead of her normal path around the neighborhood. She could shower at the station before work. Running in circles wasn't what she liked to do, but it would burn off some energy and help her make it through the day. The visual of the large tub of Little stuff she'd thrown together and put in the garage last night kept popping up in her head.

"It will get easier," she reminded herself. Hearing the words out loud didn't help. Nicoya didn't believe that statement. She'd fallen hard for Axel. She'd had on rose-colored glasses. She hadn't stopped to think about the ramifications of living a more open age-play lifestyle. It wasn't safe. He would never understand.

The morning rush of driving to the station and lugging in her clothes to clean up and change scattered her thoughts. By the time she sat down at her desk, the stack of cases there demanded all her attention and she very deliberately pushed all the anguish floating around in her brain into a small box in her mind where she could ignore it.

When she got home to a freshly mowed lawn, she almost lost it as she pulled into her driveway. He was still taking care of her. He had to stop. There was no truck in his driveway so she took a chance that he wasn't home.

Grabbing the carefully washed dishes and the tray, Nicoya wrote a quick note and dashed them over to his front porch. It seemed like her feet had a mind of their own as she returned to her house. They didn't want to go. Forcing herself to hurry, she caught the toe of her shoe on the grass and stumbled before catching herself. Finally, she made it into her house.

When her doorbell rang an hour later, Nicoya didn't answer. She knew

exactly who it was.

“Nicoya! We need to talk. Don’t do this,” Axel’s deep voice penetrated the wooden barrier easily.

Wrapping her arms around herself, Nicoya forced herself to stay on the couch. She listened intently, trying to hear anything else, but only silence reached her ears. After several minutes, she slumped back against the cushions. It was done. She pushed to standing. Being idle wasn’t going to help. She should go for an evening jog.



Axel returned to his house with the note in his hands. Picking up the tray and dishes, he carried them inside and dropped them with a clatter on the kitchen counter. Propping himself against cabinets, he read her note.

Axel,

I’m sorry for wasting your time. I’ve decided it’s too risky to be Little. Thank you for the meal and mowing my grass. My regular young man will return next week.

Your neighbor,

Nicoya

What in the hell is this? It sounds like she’s rejecting her Little side and me simultaneously. And she won’t answer the door for me to talk to her. What was he going to do?

Standing at his front window, Axel read and reread that note. Finally, he saw her jog past his house. Running outside in his work shoes, Axel fell into step with her. “Hi. I’ve missed you.”

“Yeah. Sorry. Work was crazy today,” she said, looking steadily in front of her. She quickened the pace as if hoping he’d drop out.

“We need to talk, Little girl.”

“I’m not that anymore. It’s too dangerous. You got my note, right?”

“I did. I also know that’s not the way it works. You can’t just decide to ignore part of yourself, Niki.”

“Oh, that part’s gone.” She brushed her hands together as if cleaning her hands of a mess.

“I’ll always be here when you change your mind, Little girl.” Axel forced himself to slow down and stop. It took everything he had to turn around and walk back to his house.



Nicoya stared at Axel’s retreating form before she dragged herself into the house. She didn’t remember ever being this tired. It took everything she had to survive this last shift after tossing and turning all night last night. She had to get some sleep tonight. Every time she almost drifted into sleep, Nicoya pictured Ruffles stuffed in a tub in the garage. Tears rolled down her face as she leaned against the wall.

“Fuck this!”

Nicoya headed for the garage, grabbed the storage bin, and popped off the top. Ruffles looked at her with big sad eyes. “I’m so sorry.” She picked up the dog gingerly and searched for any injuries before holding him tight to her chest. “Never again, Ruffles. I promise. You can bite me if it will make you feel better.”

He simply looked at her with the same sad eyes.

“I know. You’d never do that.”

Hugging him, she looked down at all the special things she’d tucked into the tub. How had she ever thought she could pack everything away and a part of her would disappear? Nicoya rolled her eyes at herself. She’d definitely overreacted when Axel hadn’t thought about her walking outside as a Little. He wasn’t used to having a Little with such a public position.

Leaving the tub open on the floor, Nicoya walked inside to think. What should she do now? She had to figure out how to undo this.



The next day was even worse. After two nights of fretting and another long day at work, she knew she needed to tuck her tail between her legs and face her Daddy. Because that’s exactly who he was to her. Her Daddy.

Peeking out the front window, she saw Axel’s truck in the driveway. A noise from the backyard drew her through the house to look at the door onto the deck. Her handsome neighbor stood on the side of her deck, loading

beautiful, flowering potted plants from a battered wheelbarrow along the edge of the elevated platform.

She smiled. That was Axel. His love language was plants. He was showing her how much he cared about her.

Creating and dismissing a wild assortment of plans to fix this mess she'd caused, Nicoya dropped her forehead down to Ruffles. She felt so guilty. An idea blossomed in her head. *Could it work?* Her gaze immediately went to the deck. Axel had finished and left.

Before she could talk herself out of it, she walked outside and over to her neighbor's house. Nicoya took a deep breath when her feet wanted to escape. Lifting a hand, she knocked on the door.

Axel opened it, holding his T-shirt in his hands. She knew immediately he was getting ready to take a shower. "Little girl?" he said, with a spark lighting his eyes.

"I need a spanking."

"Maybe you should come inside," he invited and stepped back. As soon as the door closed, he pulled her shaking body close and rubbed his hands over her back before pressing a kiss to her temple.

"I'm sorry I'm sweaty, Little girl. If you'll promise not to run away, I'll go take a quick shower."

"You smell like plants and flowers. Don't go away. I'll get cold feet."

"I'm not going anywhere, Niki. Talk to me."

"I can't be anything other than what I am," she whispered. "I was so scared."

"I'm so sorry I caused you to get upset, Niki. We could have talked through it."

"I know. I ran away from who I am—who you are. Can you ever forgive me? I don't know if I can even forgive myself," she confessed.

"You have the solution for that," he reminded her.

"A spanking?" Nicoya whispered, gluing her hands to her sides to keep them from sliding behind her.

"I think you'll feel better."

After swallowing hard, Nicoya forced herself to nod. She would continue to beat herself up until she felt like something had washed away the anguish of her panic. "I need a spanking," she repeated.

"Let's wipe those bad feelings away," he said, unfastening her slacks and pushing them over her hips to let them drop to the floor. Her panties soon

followed and Axel squatted at her feet. He stroked a hand over her smooth skin.

“Put your hand on my shoulder to balance. Lift your left foot. Your other left,” he instructed with a chuckle when she got confused.

“Sorry.”

“You’re thinking about way too many things, Niki. Just let me take care of you,” he suggested, looking up from untangling her feet from the clothes.

“Yes, Daddy.” She swallowed hard and knew she needed to listen to him.

Axel had her shoes and pants off smoothly. He stood up to wrap an arm around her waist and guide her to the ottoman. “Let’s get all those negative emotions and feelings washed away.”

“Please, Daddy.” She knew immediately what he meant by wash away the feelings. A tear leaked from her eye and he wiped it away tenderly.

“Come here, Little girl.”

Within seconds, Axel had her draped over his lap with her bottom pointed to the ceiling. Nicoya shivered as his warm hand rubbed over her skin. She tried to relax, but she was so wound up with self-blame for running away.

“Trust Daddy, Niki,” he said quietly.

“Yes, Sir,” she whispered, and then she gasped as his heavy hand landed on her bare bottom.

Axel didn’t hesitate. He peppered her bottom with spanks ranging from sharp to heavy to light. She couldn’t anticipate what would come next because he kept switching it up. He was in control—not her.

Tears tumbled from her eyes to land in the thick carpeting. Nicoya didn’t try to hide her sobs. She wouldn’t hide anything again from him. Her body relaxed slightly over his lap. She needed this spanking so much to learn that she could trust him to take care of her.

Her Daddy eventually paused to check in with her. “Niki, I want you to learn two things from this spanking. One, if something bothers you, you need to tell me. We’ll come up with a solution together. Two, you are a Little girl. Forever and ever, this is how you are wired. You can’t hide from it or conceal it from yourself. Accept who you are.”

“Yes, Daddy. I promise.” The heat built on her skin. She knew her bottom had to be red now.

“Do you feel better now, Niki?” he checked with her.

“Yes, but…”

“Not enough. It’s okay, sweetheart. You’ll know when everything is

better.”

Axel continued to spank her, giving her exactly what she needed. Finally, all her miscellaneous thoughts and worries evaporated from her mind and she could only concentrate on him. The last of the tension drained from her body, and she felt like a rag doll over his lap.

“That’s my Little girl.” He smoothed his hot hand over her bottom, reassuring and comforting her. “Such a naughty bottom. Come let Daddy hold you.”

Axel lifted her and rotated her body to sit on his lap. Nicoya hissed as her weight settled on her punished skin. She would feel this spanking for a while. Collapsing against him, she wrapped her arms around his neck and pressed kisses on his salty skin.

“Such a good Little girl,” he praised her.

Surprised, Nicoya looked up to meet his gaze.

“I know. You feel better now. Can I let you in on a secret? Daddy’s always known you were a good Little girl. You just needed a reminder.”

“You didn’t think I was bad?”

“I knew you panicked because it got too... real.”

She nodded, amazed that he understood her so completely. “But you let me run away.”

“Your adult side had to admit to herself that this was what she needed to be happy. As much as it ripped out my heart and made me miserable without you, I could only do small things to help you work through your fears in hopes you would decide you needed to be true to yourself.”

“Things like mowing my yard, feeding me, and flowers?” she whispered.

“Exactly. I look forward to reminding you every day how much I love you and want to take care of you.”

“I love you, too, Daddy.”

Axel’s mouth took hers gently. He reassured her with sweet kisses that made a path straight to her heart as his hands caressed her body. As the heat grew between them, the exchanges became more urgent. Stripping the rest of her clothes off, Axel threw the garments to the side as he showed her how much he enjoyed her body.

Before the passion between them reached the boiling point, he announced, “Shower, Little girl. I need to take this dust and grime off me before I remind you for the second time how much you belong to me.”

“My bottom can’t take much more,” she teased, amazed how relaxed she

felt.

“Your bottom will take me, but not tonight,” he said, completely serious.

Nicoya tried to relax. She wasn't surprised that Axel would stake his claim on her in all ways possible. He'd warned her he would eventually take her bottom.

“We'll start prepping you tonight,” he promised.

Sealing her mouth, Nicoya didn't want to reveal how much that thought excited her. She took his hand when he held it out and let him tug her into the bathroom. Resting her hot buns against the cool wood of the vanity, she watched Axel unbutton his jeans and push them and his boxer briefs down to his ankles. He already had taken off his work boots in the garage as normal. With a few steps and a yank on his socks, Axel stood naked in front of her.

His body, chiseled by the intensive labor he did every day, drew her forward. The allure of pressing herself against his strength was too much to resist. Axel allowed her one kiss before guiding her into the shower. She observed from the corner as he rinsed off his day. When he poured shampoo into his hand to suds up his short hair, she moved forward and brushed his hands away. Scratching her fingers over his scalp, she loved his groans of enjoyment. Taking care of him felt so good.

When he was clean, Axel grabbed the floral soap he had stocked for her and stroked it over her skin. The slick concoction made his caresses glide over her. Nicoya froze as he cleaned her bottom and pussy. Her nerve endings tingled as he touched her.

“My Little girl is so responsive. Do you need Daddy to make you come?”

“Please!” she whispered urgently.

Axel smoothly lowered himself to the shower floor and pressed a kiss to her mound as he crowded her backwards to lean against the tile. She gasped at the cool ceramic touch on her heated bottom. The contrast drove her arousal higher.

“Spread your thighs, Niki,” he requested before praising her when she immediately complied. “Good girl.”

Tasting her, Axel focused on all the spots that made Nicoya inhale or gasp. He drove the sensations higher and higher with such speed that she had to relinquish control. With a cry, she felt everything crash inside her and explode into a thousand zings of pleasure.

“Good girl, Niki.” His mouth and hands gentled against her as he extended the orgasm but allowed it to gradually fade away.

When she could think again, she loosened her grip on his shoulders and tried to smooth away the nail marks. “Sorry, Daddy.”

He smiled at her sweet apology and rose to his feet to kiss her. She could taste her juices on his lips. It was so forbidden and erotic that the arousal inside her rekindled. Nicoya pressed herself against his body as she stroked her hands over his chest and arms.

When she dared to move her caresses near his thick erection, Axel controlled her hand with a shake of his head. “Little girls need permission to touch their Daddies. Turn around, Niki. I want to see your red bottom.”

Inching her way to face the tile, Nicoya kept looking over her shoulder to make sure she was doing the right thing. Each time, Axel whirled a finger in a circle to coax her on.

“Hands against the wall, Niki.” His deep voice made her shiver with desire as she followed his order.

His hand smoothed over her inflamed bottom. The water pelted onto her hypersensitive skin, restoring part of the sting she’d felt earlier. It also reminded her that her Daddy had made everything better. He’d wiped away her self-blame for panicking and trying to deny her true self.

“I’m a good Little girl,” she whispered partly to herself and partly to him.

“You are my precious Little, Niki. I wouldn’t have ever stopped trying to reconnect with you. The flowers were only step two in my plan to Get Niki Back.”

She could hear those words in capitalized letters as he said each one crisply and purposefully. “What’s the next step on your list?”

He stepped up and slid his knee between her thighs. Automatically, Nicoya shifted her legs apart to make room for him. Axel pressed his steel-like erection against her punished buns, rubbing his shaft up and down.

With a moan, she widened her stance a bit more and pushed her bottom out, offering herself to him. “Please,” she begged.

“Fuck.”

She peeked over her shoulder when she heard the whisk of the shower curtain open and saw his back as Axel darted from the shower. A giggle slipped from her lips as she realized immediately what errand he had gone on. She stayed in position, waiting for him. In a flash, he returned, tearing a small packet open with his teeth.

“I’m going to stock every room in this damn house with condoms,” he muttered as he rolled the rubber onto his thick shaft.

Nicoya turned back to the tiled wall to hide her amusement and felt a stinging swat on her bottom. “Sorry?” she asked, giggling.

“Come here, you. Let’s see if I can help you focus.”

Fitting himself to her entrance, he pressed inward, filling her completely in one stroke. Gasping, Nicoya clung to the wall for stability. He wrapped himself around her and moved. Axel caressed one hand down her stomach and into her pink folds to drive her arousal higher quickly. Her focus immediately shifted from amusement. Her moan drew a deep chuckle from him.

“That’s my good Little girl.”

Chapter Fourteen



Axel held her on his lap at the kitchen table. He'd tucked her into one of his T-shirts after their shower, knowing that he was marking her as his. He needed to stake his claim on her after their time apart. Feeding her another bite of the stir-fry that he had whipped together, Axel enjoyed the feel of her in his arms.

"My bottom hurts."

"That's what happens when you don't talk to your Daddy. Can you think of a better solution for next time?"

"Yes, Sir. There won't be a next time," she promised.

"Not like this. I think you learned about who you are."

Nicoya nodded as she chewed. He dropped a kiss on her shoulder. There were so many lessons for a Little girl to learn. The most important was to be true to yourself. He'd do everything to keep her safe from the world that might judge her, but there was always a risk for someone who lived a different lifestyle. Thank goodness, she had the support of her captain.

Pushing his concern away, Axel asked, "When's the big clean-up day?"

"Tomorrow. Ricky's getting out of the hospital this week and will go to rehab for a few days. The therapists will work with him there to assess how well he can handle living on his own. I actually stopped and talked to him at lunch today to pick up the keys for the house."

"How was he?"

"Good. I'd wondered how he would feel about going back to that house. There's so many bad memories there."

"Did you ask him?" Axel asked, feeding her another bite.

She chewed and nodded. He handed her the glass of water they were

sharing after she swallowed.

“I did. He’s amazingly positive. He wants new memories to wipe out the last year. His life growing up there was happy because of his parents. I think he feels close to them there. He has some tough decisions to make about whether that’s the best place for him to live.”

“Getting the space put back in order will help whether he stays or sells the house,” Axel suggested.

“Definitely. Are you still available to help?”

“I’ve got plants set aside for the yard. I’ll bring a crew over in the late morning. Between the other Daddies and a few of my guys, we’ll get it handled.”

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, Little girl.”

They ate quietly for a while, both enjoying simply being together. When she’d eaten all she could, Axel finished off the last of the food on the dish. He hadn’t felt like eating while they’d been apart. Now his appetite roared back to life.

“I hope you’re planning on staying with me tonight,” he said as they finished dinner.

“I don’t want to be any place else.”

“Good.” Axel didn’t push her for anything else. He’d take her for one night at a time until she was ready for more.

Hugging her close, Axel closed his eyes to memorize this moment. He thought he’d lost her.

“I won’t run away again,” Nicoya whispered.

“I’m going to hold you to that promise, Little girl,” he said before lightening the conversation. “How about if you help Daddy by coloring a new picture for my refrigerator while I clean up the kitchen?”

“I can help.”

“Daddy’s job. Do you feel like coloring?”

“Sure. I enjoy that any time.”

“Perfect. I made a drawer for you.” He pointed to the cabinet closest to the table. “Go peek in there.”

He boosted her from his lap and watched Nicoya scamper over to open the place he’d indicated. Her squeals of delight made him smile.

“You’ve got the big set of crayons. And this is a sticker book!” She returned to the table with her prizes hugged to her chest. “Can I sit over here

so I won't get them dirty?"

"Give Daddy a kiss first, and then I think that's a good idea."

She bounded over to him and puckered her lips to bestow an enthusiastic kiss on him. Soon, she settled in a chair and started the tough process of choosing a picture.

Axel gathered the dishes and cleaned up the remains of dinner. He found himself moving slowly and knew he didn't want this precious time to end. His Little girl was here. She was happy.

That night, cuddled in bed together, Axel held Nicoya as she crashed into sleep. He could tell she hadn't slept well since they'd been apart and had insisted on an early bedtime despite her protests that she wasn't tired. A cute snore made him smile. *Damn, he loved this woman.*



By the time Axel reached the house everyone had descended on, the cleaning process was in full swing. He got his crew pulling out an out-of-control line of hedging that blocked entrance to the house and mowing the overgrown lawn. They'd replace those things they removed with easy care plants.

"Hey!"

He turned and smiled at Nicoya. "Hey, yourself. I was just coming inside to see you."

She walked forward, looking adorable in the hazmat jumpsuit they'd all decided would be best to wear. "Thanks for bringing some guys to do the heavy stuff. The other... men are glad to help whenever you're ready for them. They're doing some heavy lifting inside for us to get underneath stuff."

"Is it bad in there?"

"It's getting better," she said cheerfully.

"Good. Do you need me inside or should I stay out here where I know what I'm doing?" Axel asked with a laugh.

"Oh, stay out here. You'll make a big impact out here."

"Will do. Be careful in there, Niki."

"We are. I'm so sorry no one knew."

"Hi. I'm from across the street. Is there anything I can do to help?" a friendly, but frail voice called.

"Hi. I'm Detective Stevens. Call me Nicoya."

“We’re the Thompsons. Bill and Mary,” the elderly woman provided. “We can’t do much physical labor anymore but we can provide some drinks and snacks for the crew. We were friends of Ricky’s parents. We didn’t realize what it was like over here. Is he okay?”

“It’s easy to miss the signs. Ricky’s getting better all the time. He’s going to rehab for a while to get stronger. Would you mind keeping an eye on the house and letting me know if anything seems weird?”

“We can do that,” Bill Thompson agreed. “Do come over for a cookie. Mary just made my favorites even though they’re really for Christmas.”

“Did I hear Christmas cookies?” Ellie appeared behind them, looking hot. “I have to get out of these coveralls for a minute. They’re hotter than the kitchen with a hundred cupcakes baking.”

“You’re the lady at Little Cakes,” Mary said with a smile as Ellie took off the disposable clothing. “I love all your flavors. Where do you get all your ideas?”

“Sometimes from cookies. I don’t suppose you’d share your specialty with me? Maybe I’ll steal some ideas from you,” Ellie plotted happily.

“Oh. Wouldn’t that be fun. Does anyone else want to come? I have lots of milk and cookies.”

“Me!” echoed behind them and Nicoya turned to see Garrett shooing the Little girls out of the house.

“All you ladies go get cookies and milk. I’m going to ply these guys with a beer,” Garrett declared with a laugh and watched them peel out of their coveralls eagerly before addressing the man who stood on the driveway. “Sir, you can stay with us if you’d like.”

“Call me Bill, and as good as that beer sounds, I’m going for my favorite cookies.”

“Smart man. Watch out for all the ladies for us,” Axel requested. He watched the older man stand a bit straighter as he walked the women across the street.

When they disappeared from sight, he turned to Garrett. “Something bad inside?”

“Even the professional cleaners couldn’t get the stains from the large area rug. There’s hardwood underneath in fairly good condition. I thought we could move around the furniture and haul out the carpet,” Garrett suggested.

“Good idea.”

By the time the Littles returned with a cookie for each of the guys, the

men had finished that job inside and were working with the landscapers. At the sight of her Daddy's dirty hands, Nicoya held a treat to his mouth for him to take a big bite.

"Mmm!"

Ellie beamed at them and clapped her hands in celebration. "I know, right? Now I know the next cupcake for Christmas. It will be chocolate with..."

"Ellie! It's going to be a surprise, remember!" Lark said after slapping a hand over her friend's mouth. "Oh, it looks so much better out here already without those bushes. It will help the resale value."

"I hope he doesn't have to sell," Nicoya commented before adding, "but it does look better, and I'm glad to know that a realtor thinks so too. Want to give the guys any more advice about the outside?"

"Nope. Axel obviously knows what he's doing. I'd leave it up to him. I'm ready to get in there and tackle the entryway. I want it to sparkle when Ricky comes back," Lark said with a determined air.

"Go for it. Let's work a couple more hours and stop for lunch. Keep up the great work. I can't tell you how much I appreciate all of you," Nicoya thanked them.

As five more cars pulled up to the curb, fit guys and girls piled out. Nicoya looked at them with her mouth gaping open. She walked forward with Avery and Trace behind her to greet the off-duty police officers who had shown up to help.

"Thanks for calling in reinforcements, Captain," Nicoya said when everyone had introduced themselves.

Axel loved seeing her smile at the sight of Riley and Kiki writing everyone's name with a marker on their coveralls like a name tag so they'd all learn each other's names. The Littles were making the best of this tough job by having fun and making friends.

"I don't know if I've got enough food," Nicoya confessed, worrying her bottom lip with her teeth.

"Isn't there a Little who runs a restaurant?" Axel struggled to remember the names of all the Littles he'd met at Blaze.

"Good idea. I'll call Elizabeth at Nibbles & Bites. She'll be glad to whip up some food for us. Heaven knows Ellie brought enough cupcakes for the entire police force," Tarson commented with a playful roll of his eyes.

"The proper ratio of cupcake to sandwich is important," Ellie observed,

not bothered at all by Tarson's teasing.

"Thanks, Tarson." Nicoya smiled at everyone as they got organized for the next round of improvements.

She snuck her hand in Axel's to squeeze his before whispering, "These are such good people."

"I'm glad to know all of them. It makes this feel like home now," Axel observed.

"This is your home," Nicoya stressed with a silent message that she needed him to stay there.

"I know, Niki. I'm not going anywhere."

Chapter Fifteen



With aching muscles, Nicoya stepped into the shower. “Thank goodness we had those coveralls. I had no idea what we’d find in there.”

“You should be very proud of yourself, Little girl. That house looks at least four hundred percent better,” Axel congratulated as he flicked the shower curtain closed behind them.

“It does. Ricky’s going to be knocked over when he sees it. I’m so glad we got it all done in one day. So many people came to help.” Nicoya dipped her head back into the water to wash her hair. She needed to wash every inch of her body even though she’d worn the coveralls for protection.

“I think you all used products containing a million lemons today. The whole atmosphere changed inside, and it smelled amazing.”

“Yeah. It’s a ton better. There still could be some improvements, but it’s perfectly livable now. I took a bunch of pictures. I’ll go visit Ricky at the rehab facility this week and give him a sneak peek so he doesn’t have a heart attack when he rolls inside,” Nicoya shared.

“That would be nice. I’m sure he’s thought of it today and wondered what was going on.” Axel turned her around to pour shampoo on her wet hair.

“I know. That feels good, Daddy.”

“I’m glad. Are you okay with pizza tonight?”

“Yum. I think I could eat a whole one myself. I think I burned through a million calories today.”

“You worked very hard. I’ll order two when we get out.”

They stood quietly together as the warm water eased their muscles and washed away the yuck from the day. Axel’s fingers felt amazing massaging her scalp.

“You can do that for a few hours,” she mumbled, closing her eyes.

“We’re both going to be wrinkly when we get out,” Axel warned.

“I’ll risk it.”

When he patted her bottom, she turned around to rinse the suds from her hair. His hands washed her body as she made sure all the lather was gone from her curly hair. It liked to hide bubbles in different places.

After grabbing his liquid soap, Nicoya squeezed some out into her hand and soaped up his chest, leaving curlicues in the lather for decoration. “Turn. Let me get your back.” She kneaded the hard muscles of his shoulders and neck. Nicoya had watched how physically demanding his job was as they’d pulled and dug up the bushes from the front yard.

“I thought cleaning inside would make the biggest impression but getting rid of all those bushes and letting the light in the front of the house made it look so much better,” Nicoya complimented.

“The improvements will impress Ricky as he approaches for the first time, but the interior is where he’ll spend the most time.”

“But now he can come onto the front porch again. I love my deck so much. I know how much fresh air can do for your soul,” Nicoya confessed as her hands moved lower to cup his toned butt.

“Ask permission, Little girl.”

“Daddy, can I touch you?”

“Yes, Little girl. You have permission to play tonight.”

Excited, Nicoya urged him to turn around. She stroked sudsy hands over his lower abdomen and loved his rapid inhale of breath when her knuckles brushed the underside of his cock. That was very definitely her next target. After wrapping her fingers around the thick shaft, she pulled from root to tip in the guise of spreading the lather. At his groan, Nicoya repeated the action before cupping his sac and tugging gently on it.

“Playtime is going to be over fast, Little girl,” Axel warned with a mock severe look that made her giggle.

“But I just got started.” She rolled his balls in her hand and loved seeing his eyes roll upward in their sockets. Releasing his sac, she washed down his muscular legs and over his feet before urging him around to rinse his front.

She enjoyed washing the backs of his legs and slid her fingers between his taut buttocks to wash him thoroughly. Who knew when she’d be given permission again to caress him?

“Turn toward me, Daddy,” Nicoya requested and sank to her knees in

front of him when he followed her request. The heat in his eyes felt like it would burn her as he watched her every move with anticipation.

“I think I need a special treat, Daddy.” Her hands wrapped around his shaft to draw the broad tip to her lips. With a moan of delight, Nicoya flicked out her tongue, tasted the head, and gathered up a few drops of his essence that had escaped.

When he tangled his fingers in her wet hair, she opened her mouth fully and let him guide himself inside. He watched her carefully and didn't push past where she felt comfortable before withdrawing and gliding in again. She loved the feel of his cock filling her mouth. Trying to relax her throat to take him a bit deeper, Nicoya started to panic. Immediately, he pulled back.

“You're okay, Niki,” he reassured her.

“But I want to please you,” she whispered.

“I don't need to be buried inside you to feel good, sweetheart.”

“Can we try it again?” she asked.

“I'd love that.”

This time he kept her from trying to swallow too much. She swirled her tongue around him, experimenting with how to please him most, and enjoyed his deep moan of delight. Nicoya loved his response to her caresses. She shifted restlessly on her knees as she felt the heat growing inside her body.

“Touch yourself, Little girl.”

Her eyes met his as she debated whether or not he was asking her to do what she thought. There was no mistaking the heat in his eyes.

“Help yourself come, Niki.”

She shifted a hand from gripping his powerful thigh to stroke over her breast and down to where the heat gathered between her legs. Nicoya loved how Axel's fingers tangled in her hair, preventing her from testing her boundaries again. The sting of the pull on her hair when she got too ambitious sent zings pushing her arousal higher.

His hips moved faster. “Get there, Niki,” he ordered and she flicked her fingers over her clit rapidly.

It was the last bit of stimulation she needed, and Nicoya came with a moan around his cock. Seconds later, he urged, “Release me now.”

She moved slightly back and he ejaculated over the tile as she pushed the last of the sensation from her orgasm. Axel leaned down to loop his arms under her shoulders and lift her to her feet. He pulled her to his body as he slumped against the shower wall.

“Thank you, Little girl.”

“I could have...”

“Thank you, Niki. I didn’t know if I could keep myself from pushing too far forward. We can try that the next time Daddy lets you play if you wish. You were perfect just as you tasted me.”

“Okay, Daddy. I don’t want you to worry.”

“Thanks, sweetheart.”

He rubbed her back and she knew he just wanted to hold her. Laying her head on his broad shoulder, she marveled at how much her life had changed again in forty-eight hours.

“Thank you for not giving up on me.”

“Never. You’re mine, Little girl.”



Curled up together on his comfy couch, they devoured almost all of the two pizzas he’d ordered. Watching a G-rated action adventure set in a jungle, Nicoya didn’t know when she’d felt so relaxed. When he woke her up at the end, she clung to his warmth and security as he walked her upstairs to his bed.

“Tell me what happened, Daddy.”

“There was a lot of running in the jungle.”

“That sounds exhausting,” she mumbled.

“Then they caught the bad guys.”

“Yay!” she said, rallying her enthusiasm.

“And the guy got the girl.”

“Mmm. Love should always win.”

“Exactly, Little girl,” he said, tucking her into bed in the cute cherry nightie he’d produced for her to wear.

“I love this,” she told him again, brushing her hand over the soft fabric as her eyes drifted shut again.

“I love you, Niki.”

“Wake me up early? I have to go jogging before work.”

“I’ll set my alarm.”

“Thanks, Daddy.”

“Night, Little girl.”

Chapter Sixteen



“How are things going?” Ellie whispered as she slid a Maraschino Cherry cupcake and a glass of milk in front of Nicoya.

The weary detective had taken a seat at a table when Ellie had waved her out of line with a cheery, “I’ll bring your order out.”

This had been a very long day, and it was only one in the afternoon. Who knew what would happen next. Nicoya had jumped at the chance to swing into the Little Cakes parking lot on her way back to the police station.

“Thanks, Ellie. I missed lunch and knew one of these would cure all that ails me.”

“Do you have a lot on your ail list?” Ellie asked in concern.

“This job gets tough some days. My own life is going well. The time I spend with Axel helps keep all this crazy in check,” Nicoya shared.

“Good! That’s the way it’s supposed to be. You seem a little tired.”

Nicoya sighed. “I almost screwed things up beyond repair with Axel. Okay, so I did mess things up. And I couldn’t sleep for two nights afterward.”

“Need to talk?”

“I got scared and tried to convince myself I didn’t need to be...” Nicoya leaned in to whisper, “Little.”

“Oh! That didn’t go so well?” Ellie guessed.

“No. I don’t know what I was thinking.” Nicoya plucked the cherry off the top of her cupcake and popped it in her mouth.

“The same thing every one of us tries to convince ourselves,” Ellie shared.

“You tried to be... unLittle?” Nicoya asked, swallowing quickly. She choked and gulped down a drink of the milk as Ellie patted her firmly on her

back. Nicoya knew that didn't work but she appreciated the baker's attempts to save her.

"I don't think any of us has never struggled or tried to convince ourselves otherwise. But in the end we all realize that's just the way we're wired and it's okay. Most of us decide it's better than okay."

"Thanks, Ellie. I needed to hear that."

"Besides, with all those rippling muscles your Daddy has, I'd decide I was Little even if I wasn't," Ellie teased.

"And right there I have the blackmail I need for you to have to frost and sprinkle that last batch of cupcakes." A deep voice behind Ellie made them both turn around to look.

"Tarson, you shouldn't eavesdrop. It's not nice," Ellie retorted with a smile. "Besides, we both know it's safer if you sprinkle. I get wild with that shaker."

Both Tarson and Nicoya laughed as Ellie pantomimed her sprinkling technique. Tarson pulled a chair out and sat down with a sigh. "Can I join you, ladies?"

"We'd love it," Nicoya said. "If you won't share anything you heard."

"Not a word. That's a rule," he answered, shaking his head.

"A Daddy rule?" Ellie asked, leaning in to speak quietly.

"A human-being rule. You're allowed to talk to each other about stuff—as long as you're not hiding things from you-know-who," Tarson assured them.

"He knows," Nicoya said, taking a bite of her cupcake and groaning in delight. "These are so good."

"They've been really popular. We may have to put them on the regular menu," Ellie shared.

"Yes, please." Nicoya wholeheartedly approved of this idea.

The line at the cash register got longer than Ellie liked it to be. With a smile, she excused herself and rushed over to help. Left alone with Tarson, Nicoya took another bite of the cupcake as she eyed the large man. She didn't know him well but could tell everyone else trusted him completely. Gathering her courage, she leaned forward.

"Ask, Nicoya. I'll tell you the truth," Tarson promised when she hesitated.

"Do Daddies ever have questions?"

"Like if they're really Daddies?" he asked, surprising her.

“Yes.”

“Of course they do, in the beginning. Like when you get a new pair of jeans and you’re wondering if they’re going to fit right and are they going to stretch out in the right places. Being a Daddy feels as right as that pair of jeans you hope will never wear out. It feels...”

“Like you’re supposed to?” Nicoya guessed.

“Exactly.”

“Thanks, Tarson.”

“I’m going to see you soon at Blaze, right?” he asked.

“Yes. We’ll be there this week.”

“You chose a good one, you know.”

“I know.”

“I’ve got to go rescue the sprinkles. Enjoy the rest of your cupcake, Nicoya.”

With that, he disappeared, moving quickly for a large man. She smiled at the kitchen door after he’d gone through it.

A few minutes later, she finished her cupcake and got up to leave. Nicoya had just waved at Ellie when her phone buzzed. Looking at the screen, she headed immediately for her car. Dispatch alerted everyone in the area to report to the scene of a large accident about three miles down the road. She could be there quickly.

The rest of her afternoon flew past. When she pulled into her driveway, Axel sat on her front step sipping from a Styrofoam fast food cup. Another sat by his side. She jumped out, feeling the corners of her lips turn up in a giant grin.

“Did you bring me a cherry limeade? I may go into a sugar shock from all the cherries I’ve eaten today.” Nicoya sat next to him and leaned over for a kiss.

“I did, and I bet you’ll be okay. I passed that accident today and saw you working hard in the heat. I decided you needed a treat. I know this isn’t as good as the maraschino cherries in your jar, but I figured you could add more if you wanted.”

Axel handed her the drink and watched her take the first sip. “Maraschino enough?”

“Barely. But I had a cupcake today so it all balances out,” she teased, leaning against his strong frame.

“I missed you today.”

“I missed you, too. Whose house are we staying at tonight?” she asked, taking another deep sip.

“We’re going to have to talk about this someday and make some decisions.”

“I know. But we don’t have to rush, do we?”

“As long as we’re together, Little girl, I don’t care,” Axel assured her.

“That accident was bad. I’m glad you weren’t early and in the middle of it.”

“Me, too. I’m glad you’re safe as well. I worry about you out there.”

“Every job is dangerous. You could get attacked by…” Nicoya struggled to come up with something scary that a landscaper would run into.

“A mole? A police detective with a hole in her yard?” Axel teased.

“I was so mad. It’s funny looking back. I might not have even met you for weeks if you’d read those plans correctly.”

“I would have maneuvered my way into meeting the hot cop next door, somehow. Shower at your house and dinner at mine?” he suggested after a few minutes.

“Hot cop is right. Let’s go take a shower,” she invited. She took his hand as he stood to boost Nicoya to her feet.

After they were both clean, Axel opened the cabinet where she kept her Little supplies. She’d moved them all back into the house from the tub in the garage. “Are you willing to try being super Little for me again?” He lifted a questioning brow.

Nicoya hesitated before nodding. “Yes, please, Daddy.”

He led her to her bed and laid her down on a towel. Nicoya tried to control her wiggles as he spread diaper cream over her bottom and pussy but gave up when Axel kept finding new more sizzling spots to make sure he’d covered her completely. When she’d come twice, he wrapped her securely in a diaper before helping her off the bed and dressing her in the sundress he’d suggested the last time.

“I’ll waddle across the lawn,” Nicoya whispered at the door when she got scared.

“I’ve got a plan for that, too, Little girl. Kick off your flip-flops. I’ll carry you to my house,” Axel directed, lifting her off her feet. He waited until she’d followed his instructions before maneuvering his way through the door. Within seconds, he crossed the lawn safely to his house and set her down on the ground.

“It worked. A couple people waved but no one looked at me weird,” she said in disbelief.

“Most people are too busy with the things going on in their own lives, Little girl, to worry about others, but it’s never a bad idea to be careful. And now, you get to be Little at my house.”

“What if I need to have my diaper changed?”

“Daddy can take care of that upstairs in your nursery.”

“Is it ready now?” she asked, remembering how long ago they’d talked about it.

“It is. Want to go see it now?”

“Yes.” She nodded her head eagerly and took his hand. “Where is it?”

“It’s off my bedroom,” he explained, leading her that way.

“Like in the closet?” she asked as she glanced around his front room. All the boxes were gone. He must have finished unpacking.

“I bet you thought that door led to a closet but it’s actually your super-secret nursery.”

“Really?” She bounced with excitement as she walked.

“Truly.”

Axel walked into the largest bedroom and over to a door she’d noticed in passing. “Open it, Little girl.”

Slowly, Nicoya turned the doorknob and peeked into the darkness beyond. She couldn’t see anything until her Daddy reached around her to flip the lamps on. Hurrying inside, Nicoya tried to look everywhere at once. “It’s so pretty. Look, there’s Ruffles!” she said, pointing to a painted picture next to the large crib. “It looks just like him.”

She walked forward to run her hand over the smooth wood of the cherrywood crib. “I didn’t know they really made these for adults.”

“They do.” Axel slid the side down and asked, “Would you like to stretch out and rest in your nursery while I make dinner?”

“Oh, I’ll just get up here to see what it’s like. I don’t need to take a nap or anything,” she assured him.

When she got tangled in her dress as she climbed inside, Axel stopped her for a minute to strip the dress off and help her under the covers. “It’s so soft.”

“You close your eyes and rest for Daddy. I’ll come get you soon,” Axel instructed, leaning in to kiss her before slowly raising the crib railing to keep her safe inside.

“I won’t sleep,” she insisted before yawning widely.

“Then just rest.”

He left one lamp on in the corner and turned the rest off to leave the room in soothing shadows. Axel stood by the bed to help her settle in for a few minutes. Reassured, she closed her eyes and snuggled into the pillow.



Waking, Nicoya pushed herself up to sitting and groaned. That large cherry limeade was now pushing on her bladder. She needed to go now. Rattling the railing, she tried to figure out how to lower it.

Axel’s voice came from a stuffed puppy under the glowing lamp. “I’ll be there in a minute, Niki.”

“I have to use the bathroom, Daddy. Come quick.”

“It’s going to be a minute or so. If you have an accident, Daddy will change your diaper.”

“But...” Nicoya squeezed her thighs together. She could hear the rattle of the pans and knew her Daddy was cooking. He might not be able to come help her for a bit.

She tried to think of anything else to distract herself. Nothing was working. Not even reciting all the cupcakes on the Little Cakes menu. Nicoya heard him coming and scooted to the front of the crib. A groan escaped from her lips as that motion turned out to be too much and she wet her diaper. Once she started, Nicoya couldn’t stop.

“Daddy, I couldn’t wait,” she confessed, feeling her bottom lip quiver as he walked in.

“That’s okay, Little girl. A quick diaper change and you’ll be ready for dinner.”

He lifted her effortlessly into his arms and placed her on the changing table. “We don’t want your hands in the way,” he said as he tethered her hands together securely above her head. “That’s my good girl.”

Blowing a raspberry on her tummy, Axel made her giggle. He didn’t seem bothered at all that she’d used her diaper. In a flash, he had the heavy, wet item stripped off and used a cloth to wipe her skin clean. “It’s a good thing I got that cream applied so well,” he said, reminding her of the orgasm she’d experienced at his thorough touch.

“Let’s check one thing,” he suggested and reached in the drawer below

her.

The thick thermometer he withdrew made her stiffen her legs straight. She knew that wasn't one that went in her mouth. "I'm too big for a bottom thermometer."

"All Littles get their temperatures taken in their bottoms," he told her as he looped a restraining strap over her ribcage before he lifted her stiff legs and pushed them back over her head to spread her buttocks.

She leaned sideways to watch him pull out a small bottle with an ejector tip on the end. He snapped off the protective tip and squeezed it slightly to dispense some of the goo before pressing it to the small opening between her cheeks. With a whoosh, she felt the thick mixture flow inside.

He dropped that into the trashcan and inserted the thermometer deeply. In this position, she could hardly squirm. The lubricant kept her from being able to push the intruder out of her bottom. He twisted it from side to side, settling it as deep as her body would allow.

"Good girl. Just a few minutes and we'll pop that out. Then I'm going to insert a plug to start widening your bottom."

She watched him reach forward to a set of items hanging handily on the wall above the changing table. Plugs nestled in holders each larger than the next ending with a size that was too big for her to think about fitting inside her. They were so conveniently located. Did that mean he would use them often?

Nicoya held her breath while she waited and stared at those plugs on the wall. She was embarrassed, not because he was taking her temperature or because he intended to put one of those giant things in her bottom. Nope. She was embarrassed because she was wet and struggling not to squirm. Also, her nipples were hard, and since she wasn't wearing a shirt, he could see them. There was no way for her to hide her arousal. And it surprised her that her body's reaction was a result of anal play.

"Did you take your vitamin this morning?" he asked, seemingly out of the blue.

"No." She shook her head. She always forgot those in the rush to get to work.

"That's what I suspected. Daddy will give you one now."

It seemed like forever before he removed the thermometer and set it on a tissue. "It's perfect. Just like you, Niki."

She smiled at him, enjoying his praise, and almost missed him screwing

the lid off a large cannister of what looked like really large pills. Nicoya squinted and could read *SUPPOSITORIES*, written in large block letters. She tried to squeeze her bottom closed, but whatever that lubricant was, it worked too well. His finger pushed easily inside her with the vitamin and then a small plug settled into her tight channel.

“Daddy!” she wailed, flexing her tight hole around the intrusion.

“All done. You were so good and you’re going to feel so much better.” He stepped away to wash his hands before returning quickly to wrap her in a fresh diaper and free her from all the restraints.

“Spaghetti and meatballs,” he announced as he lifted her down to the carpet. “Let’s get you a shirt, and we’ll protect it with a bib downstairs.”

Wiggling on her filled bottom a few minutes later, Nicoya was pleased she was wearing a bib as noodles cascaded down her front. There were too many things distracting her to be careful.

“How about if Daddy feeds you, Baby?”

She nodded, acknowledging she needed help, and he smiled broadly at her. “That makes Daddy happy, Niki. I love helping you. Have a bite of meatball,” he offered, holding a piece at her lips.

The flavor filled her mouth, and she chewed happily. Her Daddy was absolutely the best cook ever. She wiggled again and the plug inside her bottom made her freeze in place. Maybe she needed to come up with a different way to celebrate when something was yummy.

Axel chuckled. “I think my Baby girl likes her plug a lot.”

She flushed and forced herself to sit very still, but it was hard. Everything about this Baby girl trial was making her hot and bothered. Embarrassed, she ate the rest of her meal in silence, like a little bird, opening her mouth for another bite every time.

Her Daddy never stopped beaming his approval.

When they were done, he cleaned the kitchen and wiped her hands and face before releasing her from the booster seat and setting her on her feet on the floor. Every step felt funny, the thick diaper reminding her she was playing at a younger age. Even though she’d worn diapers before alone in her house, she felt far more self-conscious doing so in someone else’s home.

Daddy followed her into the living room. “Would you like to watch a movie before bedtime, Baby girl?”

She nodded, and her breath hitched when he lifted her up and twirled her in a circle before setting her in the corner of the couch. He tucked a pillow

between her and the armrest and guided her to lean into it.

The thick diaper made her feel very young, especially combined with the T-shirt and no bra. He hadn't put one of his shirts on her this time. He'd put a new shirt he'd obviously purchased for her. It didn't cover her bottom. It barely touched the top of her diaper.

"How about this one?" Daddy asked as he returned to her, holding up a movie so she could see the jacket.

She nodded her approval. She'd seen that one several times and liked it.

She watched as her Daddy popped the movie in. As it started he left the room, only to return a few minutes later shaking a bottle.

Nicoya swallowed. Could she also drink a bottle in front of him? He was pulling out all the stops tonight, giving her a fully Baby girl experience. "What is it, Daddy?"

"Almond milk. I noticed you keep some in your fridge, so I assumed you like it."

She smiled as he sat next to her. So close.

When he held out the bottle, she decided to take a risk, wiggling herself in the opposite direction so she could lie curled up with her head in his lap. "Will you hold it for me, Daddy?"

"I'd love to, Baby girl."

She opened her mouth and let the nipple in. As soon as she started sucking, she felt a sense of calm wash over her. She'd never felt so peaceful before.

Suddenly everything in her world was perfect. She couldn't think of a better scenario than an evening watching a movie with her Daddy while she lay against his lap and he fed her a bottle.

But it only got better because when the bottle was empty, she crawled all the way up onto his lap and let him cradle her. When he popped a pacifier into her mouth, she nearly purred like a content cat and closed her eyes.

Was it possible her world was as perfect as it seemed? She still had concerns. This was so new. She'd been the cause of their first bump in the road. She knew there would be more bumps, but she really wanted this to work. It was a dream come true.

Chapter Seventeen



The next evening had a similar vibe. Nicoya came home, shed her adult in her own house, showered, let her Daddy dress her, and went to his home for the night. It felt so good to let him take care of everything.

At one point during dinner, she asked him, “Are you sure you don’t mind babying me like this? I’m a lot of work.”

“Not at all, Niki. I love it.” Tonight he’d gone a step further, strapping her hands to her sides in the booster seat and fixing a tray over her waist.

The effect was shocking. She couldn’t stop squirming. The plug in her bottom was one size larger than the previous night, and she was pretty sure after he’d put diaper cream on her, he’d added a different sort of cream directly to her clit. It tingled and made her fidget constantly.

But the restraints on her wrists... They shifted her mindset even younger. She was breathing heavily all through the meal, nearly panting every time he offered her another bite of homemade mac and cheese.

She kept swinging her legs and squirming, every movement making her nipples rub against the thin T-shirt.

Another bottle and another movie followed, but she didn’t fall asleep this time. She was too aroused to doze off. Her Daddy hadn’t had sex with her last night or this morning. He hadn’t even given her an orgasm. She’d begun to think he was tormenting her on purpose.

When her bladder grew too full to hold back any longer, she wet herself, no longer worried about how he would react. She’d learned that he liked taking care of her so intimately.

She couldn’t take it any longer. As the credits ran across the screen, she turned toward her Daddy and cupped his face. “Can we have sex now,

Daddy?”

Her Daddy chuckled. “Is my Baby girl aroused?”

She nodded. “Please?”

He turned off the television and rose, keeping her cradled in his arms. “Hmm. I have another idea.”

Another idea? What other idea could he have that didn’t involve sex? She tried hard not to pout, disappointed when he walked straight through his bedroom and into the nursery.

Daddy lowered her onto the changing table before pulling her shirt over her head.

She shivered as the air hit her sensitive nipples. The shiver turned to a full-body shudder when he lifted her hands above her head to restrain them like he had last night.

She started panting when he added a second strap across her hips. “Daddy...” She was desperate.

“Shh. Let Daddy take care of you.” He removed her diaper, spread her legs wide, and wiped her skin clean with several wet cloths. So many that she decided he was continuing on purpose in order to drive her arousal even higher.

It was working. She kept clenching the plug in her bottom, secretly enjoying the way it felt. It was naughty and its presence drove her higher.

“Can you keep your legs open for me, Baby girl? Or would you like me to restrain them?”

She licked her lips, panting. Could she really ask him to restrain her legs?

He smiled at her. “Never mind. I realize my Baby girl likes a bit of forced pleasure. I wasn’t sure until I restrained you during dinner. And now that I have you secured to the changing table, you’re practically moaning.”

She pursed her lips to make sure she didn’t actually moan, but it was difficult to hide her pleasure from him. Impossible. And she gasped when he pushed one leg out much wider. He bent her knee so that her heel was almost touching her butt, wrapped some sort of strap around her leg several times, and then tethered it to the far side of the changing table.

As soon as he started on the other leg, she whimpered. She’d never been this exposed before. This vulnerable. She was submitting to him on a level she’d never expected. And her pussy was soaked and needy.

“Daddy...” she whimpered as she tugged on all her restraints to test them, finding them secure. That realization drove her even higher, sending her

climbing up to a peak she'd never visited before.

Daddy stepped between her legs, leaned over her, and cupped her breasts. She arched and moaned. "Daddy!" she cried out.

"That's my good Baby girl. Let it feel good. Don't fight it." He teased her nipples for several minutes, circling and tapping them until she thought she might hyperventilate.

"Please, Daddy. I need you to touch my pussy."

He shook his head. "Daddy is not going to touch your pussy tonight, Baby girl."

She gasped. Was he serious? She might start crying if he didn't let her come. "But..." The word came out on a breath. More of a gasp.

"Don't worry. You're going to get a powerful orgasm. It's just not going to come from the kind of penetration you're craving right now."

She blinked several times, not understanding. Too afraid to ask.

He opened a drawer and pulled out a small tube. As he squeezed a tiny amount onto his finger, she realized it was the same thing he'd put on her clit earlier. He didn't put it on her clit this time, though. He spread it onto his two pointers and rubbed it into her nipples.

She arched and writhed and fought him to no avail. Every time she tried to avoid his touch, her arousal shot higher. The restraints did that. Testing them made her nearly self-combust.

"It tingles, Daddy," she cried out.

"I know, Baby girl. It's supposed to." He parted her folds, held her steady, and applied more to her clit next.

"I don't understand," she mumbled. All three spots were warm and tingly. She needed contact badly. If he left her like this, she wouldn't be happy with him. But he'd said he was going to give her a powerful orgasm. How?

With one hand flat on her pelvis, holding her in place, he used the other hand to twist the little plug around and around in her bottom.

Nicoya's arousal grew. Suddenly her bottom was a very erogenous zone. It had nerve endings she hadn't thought about.

Daddy eased the plug almost out and then pushed it back in, the wide section driving her mad. When he popped it free and set it aside, he met her gaze. "Shall I use a larger one, Baby girl?"

She nodded before she could stop herself. Any modesty she'd had was gone. She didn't care how he made her come as long as he did.

She was pretty sure he skipped at least one size because the next plug

stretched her significantly farther. She held her breath as he teased her with it.

“Breathe, Baby girl. Don’t clench.”

She tried to obey him, but it was hard. So many nerve endings. So sensitive. Suddenly, he was circling her clit with the middle finger of his other hand. It was too much. She came with no warning, screaming her release into the room.

“That’s my good girl,” Daddy murmured over and over as she rode the waves.

She was only marginally aware of him removing the toy and undoing all her restraints. And then she was in his arms. He was rocking her back and forth, kissing her all over her face.

She started crying from the intensity of the emotions and how hard she’d come. She was trembling at the same time with tears and snot and everything as though he’d spanked her instead of giving her an orgasm.

“It’s okay, Baby girl. Daddy’s got you. Let it all out. So many feelings. My girl needed a good cry and a huge release. Such a good girl.” He kept whispering sweet things to her while she cried and clung to him.

When she was finally able to stop sniffing, she realized they were no longer in the nursery. They were in the master bathroom, and her Daddy held up a warm wet cloth and wiped her face.

Afterward, he carried her to the bed. Part of her thought she should have been too sated to even move, but instead she felt alive and wired. When he went to pull the covers over her naked body, she shook her head, kicked the covers away, and rolled onto her tummy.

“Niki?”

She pulled her knees up under her and spread them wide, exposing her most private hole fully to her Daddy. “Please, Daddy. I want you inside me.” The orgasm had been powerful, but it had left her wanting more, wanting him. If he was going to dismantle her so totally, she wanted to return the favor and bring him to his knees too.

He set a finger on her spine and slid it down to her tight puckered hole. Tapping it, he said, “Here, Baby girl?”

“Yes, Daddy. Please.” She shook her tush at him.

He grabbed her hips, dragged her to the edge of the bed, and leaned over to kiss first one butt cheek and then the other. “You think you’re ready to take Daddy in your bottom, Baby girl? I’m bigger than that plug.”

“I’m ready, Daddy.” This was huge. She knew it was a big deal. She was

giving him the last part of her, her most private part. Something she'd never given to anyone or even considered. But this was her Daddy. She trusted him to take care of her, to love her carefully.

She twisted her head to watch as he grabbed a condom from the drawer and rolled it down his length. He snagged a bottle of lube next and popped the top. The sound made her flinch and then giggle.

He smiled at her as he poured a generous amount on his fingers. He was still holding her gaze as he spread the lube around her tight hole before slathering up his erection.

Finally, he was at her entrance, holding her hips, his cock nestled at her tight hole.

She wiggled her bottom at him and whimpered. He was taking his time when what she wanted was fast and hard.

“Don’t rush Daddy, Baby girl. You’re going to be so tight. I’m going to come in seconds.”

She didn’t care. She wanted to watch. She was glad she’d just had such a powerful orgasm. It would help her focus, allow her to see him without her eyes rolling back in her head.

At least that’s what she thought until he grabbed his length with one hand and dragged it through her folds. It was unexpected, and she moaned.

With one hand around her hips to steady her, he thrust into her pussy all the way to the hilt.

She arched her back and cried out. That wasn’t where he was supposed to be taking her, but she was speechless and unable to protest, especially when he stroked her clit again while inching in and out of her.

Another orgasm built, threatening to drag her under, and she didn’t want to fight it, so she closed her eyes, set her forehead against the mattress, and moaned loudly the moment her orgasm consumed her entire body.

The second her tight channel gripped his shaft, he pulled out, slid his cock to her tighter hole, and thrust into her. The stretch was tremendous, but not painful. It was tight, but not something she couldn’t handle.

And then he started moving, in and out, deeper it seemed with each pass, driving her to a new height.

She was only marginally aware of her surroundings or the fact that she was moaning loudly. As she accepted him into her body, she felt a wave of closeness wash over her. She was his, and he was hers.

Together they were one. Unstoppable.

In no time at all, Axel gripped her hips and cried out his release deep inside her bottom.

Nicoya rocked with his movements, smiling like the cat that ate the canary. She'd given her Daddy the last private part of her, and she had no regrets.

Chapter Eighteen



When Nicoya got home the following night, her Daddy wasn't there. She was kind of disappointed. After she locked up her weapon, she headed for the bathroom, stripping out of her clothes.

Her phone texted just before she stepped into the shower, and she smiled as she picked it up and saw it was Daddy.

Hey, Baby girl. There was a problem with a delivery at work today. I'm running late. Can you be a good girl and follow Daddy's instructions until I can get home?

She immediately responded.

Yes, Daddy. What do you want me to do?

Take your shower, change into something comfortable, and go over to my house. The key is on your keyring. Let yourself in. I left a bottle on the drying rack. There's almond milk in the fridge. Fix a bottle, take it to the nursery, and play for a while until Daddy can get there. Can you do all that?

Yes, Daddy. I'll do it right now.

Nicoya was grinning as she set the phone down and got in the shower. She would be a super good girl and do all the things her Daddy asked,

making him proud.

After a quick shower, Nicoya put on one of her simple summer dresses, a pair of flip-flops, and nothing else. She giggled as she found his key on her keyring. How had she not noticed it before? How long had it been there?

She nearly skipped over to his house, let herself in, locked the door, and headed for the kitchen. In no time at all, she had her bottle and was in the nursery.

She hadn't had a lot of time to explore in here yet, so she spent time moving around the room, looking at everything he'd filled the room with. So many toys and books. Crayons and coloring books. Puzzles and games. Dolls and stuffies.

As she picked up all the stuffies one by one to admire them, she glanced at the crib and found Ruffles watching her. She giggled as she put the last stuffie back on the shelf. "Don't worry, Ruffles. You're still my number one." She headed for the closet next. When she opened it, she gasped. It was filled with clothes for all different ages of her Little.

They seemed to be lined up from oldest to youngest, and she lifted the last hanger from the pole and held up the frilliest, most babyish pink dress she'd ever seen. The kind a newborn would wear if they had a rich aunt to buy it for them. It would be too expensive and outrageous for parents to buy.

She giggled as she twirled it around in a circle before deciding she wanted to try it on. When she pulled it off the hanger, she found a fancy diaper cover under it. It was also pink and covered with ruffles.

Would her Daddy be mad if she tried it on? She dismissed the thought immediately. If he hadn't wanted her to go through the things in the nursery, he wouldn't have invited her to come over and explore on her own.

After a glance at the changing table, she hesitated before deciding to go all in. If she was going to put on the fancy dress, she would want to try the bloomers too, and that meant she would need a diaper for the total desired effect.

Nicoya quickly pulled her dress over her head and kicked off her flip-flops. She lifted a diaper from the pile, opened it up, and laid it on the floor before lying down on it so she could pull the front between her legs and fasten it.

She'd done this before. Lots of times. She knew how to diaper herself. Easy peasy. In no time at all, she had the pretty dress and diaper cover on and spun in a circle to make the ruffy tulle flow around her.

Her hair was still damp, the curls hitting her in the face. With another idea, she rushed to the master bathroom to pull open drawers in there. “Bingo,” she muttered when she found the stash of ribbons, bows, and bands. She parted her hair down the middle and put two high pigtails in before adding fat pink ribbons.

Grinning from ear to ear, pleased with herself, she headed back for the nursery, picked up the bottle and a pacifier, and crawled into the crib. She wouldn’t lift the side because she was afraid she might really get stuck. If her Daddy took too long, she wouldn’t want to be climbing over the top.

Humming her favorite princess songs, she downed the bottle before swapping it for the pacifier. She let herself slide deeper and deeper into her youngest headspace. She’d been slipping for the last hour, but it was hard to fully embrace her Littlest Little when she was playing the roll of caregiver and Baby girl at the same time.

She was done being the caregiver now though. All she had to do was relax, hum her songs, suck her pacifier, squeeze Ruffles to her chest, and lie in her crib.

Her mind went to another place, visualizing a future where her Daddy would come home, lift her into his arms, and rock her while he read her a story. Or maybe he would decide she needed to eat first. He would take her into the kitchen, restrain her waist and wrists in the booster seat, and feed her soft foods that a Baby girl wouldn’t choke on. Afterward, he would give her a bath, letting her play with bath toys while he washed her.

She was rocking back and forth, grinning and daydreaming and humming when she heard her Daddy’s voice. “Niki?”

A moment later, he came into the nursery. “There’s my sweet Baby girl.” He smiled as he came to her side and set a hand on her thigh. “Don’t you look pretty?”

She nodded, not giving up the pacifier.

When he patted between her legs, she smiled broader. “My good girl even put a diaper on. I’m proud of you.”

She flushed at the compliment.

He scooped her up and carried her to the rocking chair where he sat, lifting her higher to arrange her straddling him. His hands came to the small of her back as if she needed support to sit up. Bracing her with one hand, he pulled the pacifier from her mouth.

She whimpered and watched as it disappeared, the ring around his pinky

finger to hold on to it.

“I spoke to some of the other Daddies today. They said a bunch of them are taking their Littles to Blaze tonight. How does that sound? Would you like to join them and play with your friends?”

She froze, blinking several times as she processed his question. Blaze? Tonight? “Uhhh…”

“I know you like to spend a few nights a week at Blaze, and I haven’t taken you since we met. I feel bad about that.”

“Okay, Daddy,” she whispered, her gaze lowering to his shirt. She played with the front of it.

“Daddy needs to take a shower before I touch you any more than I already have. Can you be a good girl and stay in your nursery while I shower?”

“Yes, Daddy.”

He lifted her chin. “Are you okay, Niki? You seem a bit off.”

“I’m fine.”

He was frowning when she met his gaze. “You’re sure?”

“Yes, Daddy.” She nodded and squirmed off his lap, grabbing her pacifier from his finger before turning toward the dolls.

While she pretended to look at them, he gave one of her pigtails a tug, kissed her cheek, and left the room.

Blaze? Tonight? She looked around, feeling panicked. It seemed like he really wanted to go, and she couldn’t blame him. He’d only been the one time. He was probably looking forward to getting to know everyone better, and Blaze was the best place to meet up with all the Daddies.

Nicoya wandered around the room, touching things haphazardly, not really paying attention to anything but the panic growing inside her. She couldn’t describe it and didn’t fully understand why her heart rate had picked up and she was trembling. She loved Blaze. She should want to go.

Needing to think about her weird reaction and feelings, she dropped onto all fours and crawled into the corner behind the rocking chair. She pulled her knees up to her chest, sucked her pacifier ferociously, and set her chin on her knees.

“Niki?”

She glanced up at the sound of her Daddy’s voice. She hadn’t seen him come back in the room, nor had she noticed him drop down low to squat close to her.

“Baby girl, what’s going on?”

She shrugged.

“Can you take your paci out and talk to Daddy? You’ve been out of sorts since I arrived.”

She reluctantly plucked the pacifier from her mouth. She didn’t feel like talking. She only felt like being snuggled and having no responsibilities. “I guess I had another rough day at work,” she conceded, and it was the truth.

“Okay, but you’ve had some pretty difficult days this week, and I’ve never seen you quite like this before. Did something particularly bad happen?”

She shook her head and looked down at her knees. “No.” The truth was she was still processing her feelings herself. That made it hard to explain herself to her Daddy.

“Okay... Do you not want to go to Blaze?”

She shrugged again. “We can go if you want,” she murmured.

He pushed the rocking chair out of the way and crawled closer to her so he could sit facing her. His hands came to her knees. “That’s not convincing. We don’t have to go to Blaze, Baby girl. We can stay home.”

She swallowed and met his gaze. “But if you want to...”

He frowned. “What I want is for my Little girl to be the happiest Little girl on earth. I want my Little girl to know that when she’s not at work, she’s mine to spoil and pamper and baby. What makes me the most happy is making you happy. Going to Blaze is obviously not going to fit that bill tonight, and that’s okay, Niki. It’s more than okay. I’m just wondering why because I’m confused.”

She looked down at her frilly dress and squeezed her thighs tighter around her diaper. Finally, she realized what her problem was and jerked her head back up. “I let myself get too Little tonight for that, Daddy.”

His brow furrowed for a moment and then he relaxed his face and reached out to stroke one of her pigtails. “Ahhh. Now I get it. You like to be a bit older than this at Blaze, and it would be really hard to backtrack to an older age now that you’ve settled in this one for the evening.”

She nodded, sitting up taller. That was it exactly. He understood. And more importantly, she also finally fully grasped why she was feeling so out of herself.

Daddy pulled her into his arms and hugged her tight. “I love you, Baby girl. We don’t ever have to do anything you’re not feeling. We’ll stay in

tonight. Daddy will Baby you all evening. How's that?"

She grinned wide. "Thank you, Daddy."

"Did you say you're off work tomorrow?"

She nodded.

"Good because I took the day off too. I heard Tarson say Ellie is secretly working on a new cupcake for the upcoming holidays. Maybe we should plan a trip to Little Cakes?"

She clapped her hands together. "That would be great. I bet other Daddies will be there. You can talk to them and we can hang out a while. Maybe if we're there very long, we'll get hungry and need to have a second cupcake."

He laughed. "Nice try, Baby girl, but no matter what age you wake up feeling tomorrow, Daddy is not going to consent to letting you eat two cupcakes."

She gave him a huge fake pout. "But we *have* to get a Maraschino Cherry one, and if there's a new flavor, we'll need to try that one too to be polite."

He laughed harder. "Your reasoning is adorable, but it's not going to happen."

She sighed. "Fine," she grumbled, but inside, she was so grateful to have such an amazing Daddy. She loved him so much. She was the luckiest Little girl in the world.

Chapter Nineteen



“Wait!” Nicoya declared as Axel led her down the strip of storefronts, aiming for Little Cakes.

“What is it?” Axel asked as he came to a stop when she tugged his hand.

She was looking through the display window of a shop, and he lifted his gaze to see the name of the store was Design Magic. He’d heard of it from some of the locals and knew it was a favorite clothing shop for women.

“Can we stop here first?” she asked, looking up at him.

“Of course. What are we shopping for?” He pulled the door open and held it for her.

“I need a few new shirts for work. Gemma knows what I like. She always makes it quick and easy.”

“Who’s Gemma?”

“The owner,” Nicoya responded, tugging him into the shop.

Axel glanced around as they entered, but moments later, a curvy woman appeared. “Nicoya! How are you?”

Nicoya tugged free of Axel’s hand and rushed forward to hug the woman. When she released her, she turned toward Axel. “Gemma, this is my... boyfriend, Axel Jennings.”

Axel smiled and extended a hand, hoping Gemma didn’t notice or mind Nicoya’s hesitation about what to call him. “Nice to meet you. Your shop is amazing.”

“Nice to meet you too.” Gemma gave Nicoya a hip check. “I didn’t know you were dating someone.”

“Well, Axel is new in town, and he’s kind of my next-door neighbor, and we just sort of hit it off.” She shrugged as though it were no big deal.

He tried not to chuckle. They'd done far more than hit it off. He was already thinking about rings and "I do's" and how to get her to move in with him permanently. He wouldn't voice any of that out loud yet and risk scaring her, but in his mind, those things were coming soon.

"I was hoping you might have some new shirts for me to wear to work," Nicoya inquired.

"I sure do. I thought you might be coming in soon. I set a few aside for you." She grabbed Nicoya's hand and led her toward the back. "Give me just a second. I'll be right back. I put them on a rack in the back room."

When Gemma disappeared into the back, Nicoya looked at Axel and winced. "Yikes, I almost called you Daddy," she whispered loudly.

Axel nodded toward the cash register. "Are you sure that would matter to Gemma?"

Nicoya followed his line of sight to see a very well-loved stuffie tucked next to the cash register. Most customers wouldn't be standing this close to the entrance to the back room with a view of the stuffie.

Nicoya grinned wide. "Maybe you're right." She shrugged.

Just then the bell sounded over the door, indicating another customer was coming into the shop.

Gemma emerged from the back and hurriedly handed several hangers of shirts to Nicoya. "Give me a few minutes to help this customer. You can try those on if you want."

Gemma rushed around them, but the new customer was already approaching. Axel watched the gentleman out of the corner of his eye.

Gemma smiled broadly. "Hi. Welcome to Design Magic. I'm the owner, Gemma. Is there anything I can help you with today?"

The man gave her a slow smile and extended a hand. "Anton Gates. Maybe you can. I need a gift for my sister. I was going to get her a gift card, but then I remembered how much she loves your store, so I thought I'd stop by and see if you could help me choose something for her."

"Of course. I'd be happy to help. Give me just one second." She turned toward Axel and Nicoya. "Did you want to try those on?"

Axel took them out of Nicoya's hand. "I'm sure they're fine. We'll just get them all and get out of your way."

Nicoya made a small sound behind him, but when Axel turned to look at her with wide eyes, she seemed to catch on. "Oh, right." She hurried toward the cash register. "We don't have much time anyway. We're supposed to be

meeting some people at Little Cakes. We'll just get these really quick and be on our way."

Axel gave Nicoya's shoulder a squeeze as he pulled out his wallet. It was sweet of her to notice the possible chemistry between this customer and Gemma. Maybe the two of them might hit it off if Axel and Nicoya got out of the store.

"Did you say Little Cakes?" Anton asked.

Axel looked toward him. "Yes. Have you heard of it?"

"Love that place. Thanks for reminding me. I should head there next. My sister would be doubly impressed if I showed up at her birthday party with cupcakes. I wonder if they have any holiday ones yet. My sister is all about the holidays. Even though her birthday is December second, she considers it a Christmas birthday and thinks everyone else should too." Anton rolled his eyes, but he was grinning.

"That's so sweet," Gemma responded as she rang up Nicoya's shirts with trembling hands.

Axel didn't miss the way she gasped and pushed her well-loved stuffie farther back behind the cash register. When he glanced at Anton again, he found the man's eyes twinkling and a smirk on his face. He hadn't missed it either.

A minute later, Axel and Nicoya were out of the shop. Almost before the door closed, Nicoya was talking a mile a minute. "Did you see how he was looking at her?" She giggled. "Did you see that stuffie? Did you see how she tried to hide it? Did you see how she was shaking while she rang us up and how flustered she was?"

Axel shifted their purchases to one hand and took his Little girl's hand with the other. "Yes, Little girl. I saw all of that. Now, we need to go get some cupcakes and leave Gemma and Anton to find their way."

"I bet she's Little."

"Me too, Nicoya, but our meddling ended when we hurried to check out." He glanced at her. "Do you really think these shirts will fit? Did you even look at them?"

She giggled. "Nope, but Gemma knows my size and my taste. I'm sure they're fine." Nicoya skipped alongside Axel as they continued down the strip mall.

He had a smile on his face that wouldn't wipe off. He didn't even want it to. His Little girl was happy. He was happy. They were about to have

cupcakes. What more could anyone want in life?

Author's Note

We hope you're enjoying Little Cakes! We are so excited to be working together to create this new series! More stories will be coming soon!

Little Cakes:

(by Pepper North and Paige Michaels)

[Rainbow Sprinkles](#)

[Lemon Chiffon](#)

[Blue Raspberry](#)

[Red Velvet](#)

[Pink Lemonade](#)

[Black Forest](#)

[Witch's Brew](#)

[Pumpkin Spice](#)

[Santa's Kiss](#)

[Fudge Crunch](#)

[Sweet Tooth](#)

[Flirty Kumquat](#)

[Birthday Cake](#)

[Caramel Drizzle](#)

[Maraschino Cherry](#)

[Reindeer Tracks](#)

[Little Cakes, Box Set One](#)

[Little Cakes, Box Set Two](#)

[Little Cakes, Box Set Three](#)

[Little Cakes, Box Set Four](#)

About Pepper North



Ever just gone for it? That's what *USA Today* Bestselling Author Pepper North did in 2017 when she posted a book for sale on Amazon without telling anyone. Thanks to her amazing fans, the support of the writing community, Mr. North, and a killer schedule, she has now written more than 80 books!

Enjoy contemporary, paranormal, dark, and erotic romances that are both sweet and steamy? Pepper will convert you into one of her loyal readers. What's coming in the future? A Daddypalooza!

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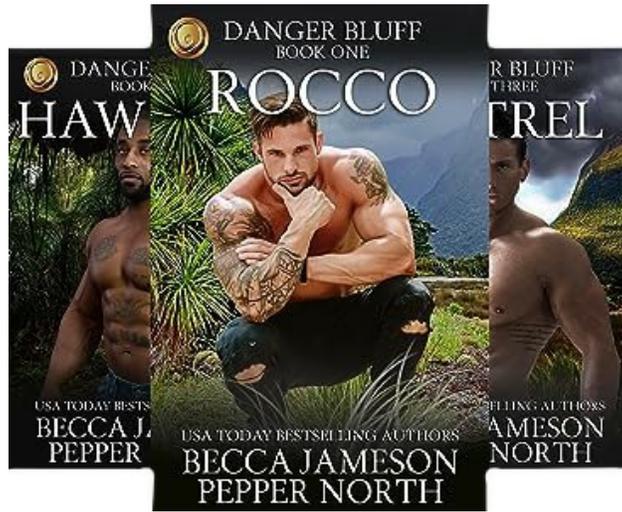


[Shadowridge Guardians](#)

Combining the sizzling talents of bestselling authors Pepper North, Kate Oliver, and Becca Jameson, the Shadowridge Guardians are guaranteed to give you a thrill and leave you dreaming of your own throbbing motorcycle joyride.

Are you daring enough to ride with a club of rough, growly, commanding men? The protective Daddies of the Shadowridge Guardians Motorcycle Club will stop at nothing to ensure the safety and protection of everything that belongs to them: their Littles, their club, and their town. Throw in some sassy, naughty, mischievous women who won't hesitate to serve their fair share of attitude even in the face of looming danger, and this brand new MC Romance series is ready to ignite!

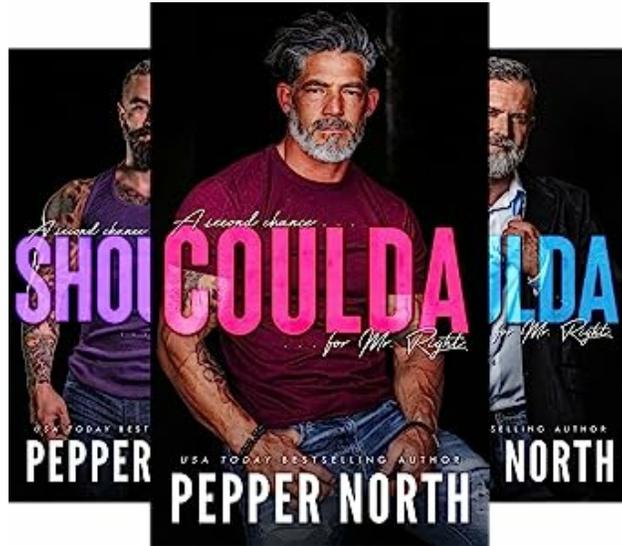
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[Danger Bluff](#)

Welcome to Danger Bluff where a mysterious billionaire brings together a hand-selected team of men at an abandoned resort in New Zealand. They each owe him a marker. And they all have something in common—a dominant shared code to nurture and protect. They will repay their debts one by one, finding love along the way.

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[A Second Chance For Mr. Right](#)

For some, there is a second chance at having Mr. Right. *Coulda, Shoulda, Woulda* explores a world of connections that can't exist... until they do. Forbidden love abounds when these Daddy Doms refuse to live with regret and claim the women who own their hearts.

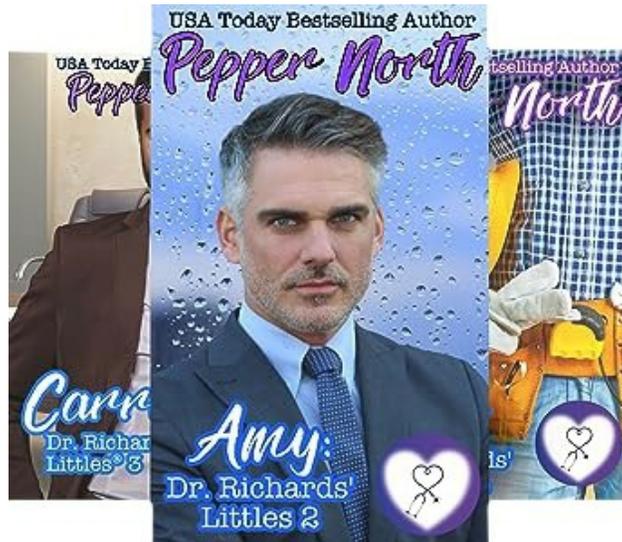
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Little Cakes

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Dr. Richards' Littles®

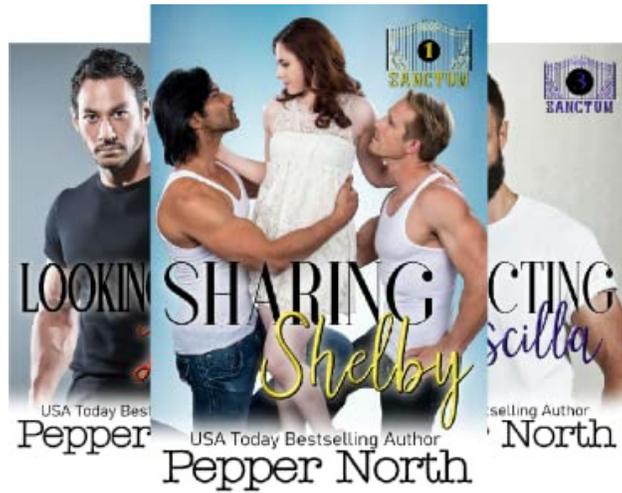
A beloved age play series that features Littles who find their forever Daddies and Mommies. Dr. Richards guides and supports their efforts to keep their Littles happy and healthy.

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4PepperNorth.club

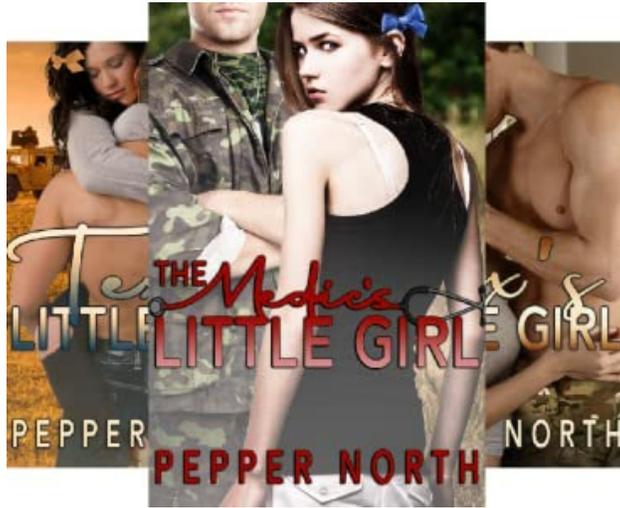
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SANCTUM

Pepper North introduces you to an age play community that is isolated from the surrounding world. Here Littles can be Little, and Daddies can care for their Littles and keep them protected from the outside world.

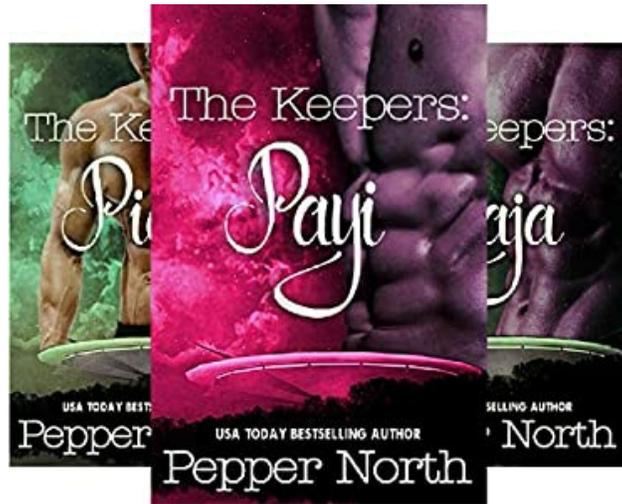
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[Soldier Daddies](#)

What private mission are these elite soldiers undertaking? They're all searching for their perfect Little girl.

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[The Keepers](#)

This series from Pepper North is a twist on contemporary age play romances. Here are the stories of humans cared for by specially selected Keepers of an alien race. These are science fiction novels that age play readers will love!

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The Magic of Twelve

The Magic of Twelve features the stories of twelve women transported on their 22nd birthday to a new life as the droblin (cherished Little one) of a Sorcerer of Bairn. These magic wielders have waited a long time to take complete care of their droblin's needs. They will protect their precious one to their last drop of magic from a growing menace. Each novel is a complete story.

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About Paige Michaels

Paige Michaels is a USA Today bestselling author of naughty romance books that are meant to make you squirm. She loves a happily ever after and spends the bulk of every day either reading erotic romance or writing it.

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Holidays at Rawhide Ranch:

[Felicity's Little Father's Day](#)
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Would you like to see a map of the island where Littleworld is located?! This link will take you there!

[Map of Regression Island and Littleworld](#)



Afterword

If you've enjoyed this story, it will make our day if you could leave an honest review on Amazon. Reviews help other people find our books and help us continue creating more Little adventures. Our thanks in advance. We always love to hear from our readers what they enjoy and dislike when reading an alternate love story featuring age-play.

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