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Amateur Night

D.E. LOVE

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First Edition

Amateur Night

Regina didn't plan on taking her top off...

... when she danced on Amateur Night.

But when Mr. Dark Eyes laid out twenty-dollar bills on the stage, she was tempted.

She didn't need the money. As a high-end sex therapist in L.A. she made a very decent living. She just enjoyed dancing. It exhilarated her. She felt free.

And she deserved that feeling now that her relationship with her ex-husband had become less contentious. The men at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club were usually well-behaved. They were just looking for a pretty stripper to slide one-dollar bills inside their g-strings.

When she danced in front of Mr. Dark Eyes, he calmly commanded her to take her top off, and she did. When he asked her for a private lap dance in the Cherry Pit, she was tempted. Again, not for the money, but because he was handsome, dressed well, and his dark eyes made her melt. Plus, when he slipped those twenty-dollar bills inside her panties and kept her bra, she had to give in to his command.

What could possibly go wrong?

When Mr. Dark Eyes and a team of lawyers showed up at her office on Monday morning, she was about to find out.

You'll love this billionaire age gap romantic suspense because of the steamy scenes, developing love triangle, and escalating

suspense.

Get it now.

To A.P.
for being the inspiration for this novel
and to all my fans
who've waited for this book
for over two years.

Contents

1. [Amateur Night](#)
2. [A Proposition](#)
3. [Lap Dance](#)
4. [Non-Disclosure Agreement](#)
5. [Sex Therapy](#)
6. [Evil Plans](#)
7. [A Dreamy Ride](#)
8. [The Penthouse](#)
9. [Sexual Relief](#)
10. [Control](#)
11. [Touch Me](#)
12. [Self Pleasure](#)
13. [Something I Shouldn't](#)
14. [Not All Dick is Good Dick](#)
15. [A Spider has Many Webs](#)
16. [Confessions](#)
17. [A Tempest](#)
18. [Judgement](#)
19. [Self-Defense Lessons](#)
20. [Couples Counseling](#)
21. [Poison in the Soup](#)
22. [Sometimes When We Touch](#)
23. [Watch Your Back](#)
24. [A Big Disappointment](#)
25. [Don't Fuck With a Redhead](#)
26. [Final Warning](#)
27. [Backseat Plans](#)
28. [Distractions](#)
29. [The Scenic Route](#)
30. [Lucid Dreams](#)
31. [Cuffed](#)

32. [Finishing the Job](#)
33. [Confirmation](#)
34. [Death is Coming](#)
35. [Search and Rescue](#)
36. [Contract Fulfilled](#)
37. [Surprise Dinner](#)
38. [Dessert](#)

[Readers and Reviews](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Also by D. E. Love](#)

Chapter 1

Amateur Night

I CHECKED MY MAKEUP IN THE MIRROR BEHIND THE STAGE, adjusted my top, and double-checked my heels. I pulled a strand of my blond hair behind one ear. The blowout I'd gotten at my hair salon had been worth it. My hair still kept its wavy curls, and I looked amazing. I turned my attention to the stage.

"Thunderstruck" blasted through the sound system as I observed Heather rip off her top and shake her breasts in a guy's face, who held a folded twenty-dollar bill between his two thin hands. She moved fluidly on stage, her bare breasts and undulating hips mesmerizing the guests of The Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club.

She gave her full attention to the man in the dark black suit while lesser patrons flashed their fives and ones, hoping to be blessed by her naked presence. The woman had the moves of a dancer—the best so far on Amateur Night—and I couldn't help but be self-conscious.

It wasn't my dancing ability that made me self-conscious. I had been dancing since I could walk and spent some time dancing in Thailand in my early twenties. I wasn't twenty any longer though and my forty-five-year-old body didn't always move the way my mind thought it could.

Even my age wasn't the primary reason I was self-conscious, though. If I saw one of my clients with a stack of ones at the edge of the stage, I'm not sure what I would do. Life as a sex therapist usually requires a very reserved public life, and I had tamed the wildness of my youth ten years ago.

Here I was, though, minutes away from stripping on Amateur Night, watching Heather motorboat men for twenties.

I couldn't help but glance down and reposition my breasts. They were perky enough. Big enough. Enough to satisfy me, that is. Evidently not enough to satisfy my ex-husband.

I'll have to ask Heather what size those are, she thought to herself. I could use an upgrade and now I could afford to pay for them myself.

“Hey, girl. You ready?” Carol said as she moved up behind me.

I glanced down at her. She was fun-size at five foot two and I had eight inches on her easily. In my six-inch heels, I towered above her.

She must have seen the apprehension in my eyes as she gave me a squeeze on the arm. Carol had been my best friend since high school. She had helped with costumes and preparation for every beauty contest I had entered and every school play I had been in.

I had helped her campaign for student government, including president her senior year. She had married her high school sweetheart, now a successful lawyer, while I'd married the college quarterback after graduation. Ten years later, after a horrendous divorce and a cross-country move, I had married the most eligible real estate mogul in the LA area. That relationship had ended terribly as well.

Two years post second divorce, I had finally decided to lead a life outside of work and do something that I loved.

Pole Dancing.

Heather had milked the Suit for as much as she could and was making the rounds to the other patrons. Supporting herself with her hands on the floor behind her, she undulated her hips in front of the men lined up along the edge of the stage.

She still had on a tiny g-string but it had one-dollar bills slipped underneath the thin strip of fabric so she looked like a

hula dancer with her hips decorated with green bills instead of grass. She was definitely the hit of the night so far, and she had the crowd worked up into a frenzy. The woman could probably dance here full-time and make a decent living, I thought to myself.

I didn't have to take my top off like Heather, though. In fact, I hadn't planned on it. It was Amateur Night. The only rules were bottoms had to stay on and we couldn't kick a customer in the head. Evidently it had happened more than once at the Cherry Pie—four times by accident or clumsiness and once on purpose.

The regulars here said that when the girl had kicked a too-handsy patron on purpose, that he deserved it. Harry, the owner, said that didn't matter. I liked Harry. He seemed like a straightforward guy who said what he meant and did what he said.

I had on a burgundy wrap-around with a matching bra and panties from Victoria's Secret. The panties were hip-huggers that still showed off my ass but kept my pussy more private. I completed my stripper outfit with six-inch black platform heels.

The clothes had made me feel super sexy when I tried on the outfit at home before coming to the club. After watching Heather dance, though, I became self-conscious. I pulled the top closed and clutched my hand between my breasts.

"God, she oozes sexuality," Carol shouted in my ear over the beat of "*Here I Go Again*."

I simply nodded.

Heather had slowed down her dancing and moved back to the pole. She grasped the pole with both hands, one above her head, the other near her waist, forming a perfectly sexy triangle. She lifted her body and spun around the pole with her knees bent. Her carousel spin was perfect. Not only was she attractive and fit, she had excellent core strength.

When she finished her spin, she moved, so that she leaned against the pole with her spine aligned with it. She slid slowly and seductively down the pole before bending at the waist and shimmying her bare breasts. Her ass ground against the pole. When her head lowered between her legs, she whipped her head up, her long blond hair flipping up and behind her. No matter which side of the stage the guys were sitting on, they all got a good show.

She moved effortlessly into a backbend, her breasts displayed nicely to one side of the stage and her crotch to the other side. Mr. Suit looked ready to climb onto the stage. He had three twenties lined up on the stage. She was a goddess. A sexually charged goddess.

I had to follow that.

As the song and Heather ramped up to their finale, I turned to face Carol.

“How’s my makeup?” I asked.

“It’s perfect. You look amazing,” she said after actually examining my face. I could always count on Carol to not blow smoke up my ass about anything. I still didn’t totally believe her. The last five years, with its divorce battles, had taken its toll on my spirit and my appearance.

Physically, I was in good shape. Three days at the gym, hundreds of squats a week, and two nights at pole dancing class had turned my forty-five-year-old body into a fit, toned dancing machine. I think I was more proud of my ass now than I had ever been in my dancing days.

My face, though. My spirit. Neither seemed to have that same glow, that same enthusiasm as they had before my second divorce. The custody battle for Trey and Monica had taken a lot out of me. After three years of fighting, I finally had them every other weekend. Being a sex therapist seemed to be a strike against me, even though I helped so many people.

The music stopped and Heather pranced off the stage, money spilling out of her g-string and her hands. She wore a smile that I had no chance of rivaling.

“Did you clean out the suit?” I asked her as she passed.

“Not yet. He paid for a lap dance in the back room, though.” She winked at me, looking over her right shoulder. *God, she IS gorgeous, and she exudes sex.*

That used to be me. I used to exude sex appeal. Charisma. I had men eating out of my hands for table scraps.

“Oh, a lap dance. You should do that,” Carol said, strangely excited at the prospect of me grinding into the crotch of a stranger. That had not been on my checklist of things to do today.

“Everyone give a hand to the heavenly Heather,” the DJ, Tony, announced in his best stripper announcer’s voice. His voice had that low timbre that seemed to vibrate the entire room.

Hoots, hollers, whistles, cat-calls, and applause filled the main room. Then a quiet settled over everyone as the audience awaited the next dancer.

“Break a leg, Reggie,” Carol said. She smacked me on the ass for luck which elicited an unexpected “oh” from my lips.

“That was the halfway point for Amateur Night, gentleman... and ladies.” More hoots and hollers. “*Rock You Like a Hurricane*” by the Scorpions began playing.

“Our next dancer came all the way from Seattle. She plans to make all of you sleepless in LA as she excites you with her dancing.” The song continued, and I hoped the timing would be just right.

“Making her Cherry Pie debut is Muse,” he let the u and then the s of Muse trail off forever as “*Here I Am*” belted out of the sound system.

I’d always wanted to be someone’s muse, and I didn’t want to be a Tiffany or a Jade, so I chose Muse as my stage name

for my one night on stage. I didn't come from Seattle, but something felt wrong giving the name of the small town I grew up in.

The applause and cat-calls began as soon as I set foot on stage.

My feet crossed in front of me with each step as I strode onto the stage with a classical runway walk. I headed straight for the pole. I let the music and applause fill me. It joined with the fear and adrenaline, while waves of raw sexual energy pumped through my veins. Pole dancing had helped me get my sexy back, and I hoped that tonight would ignite it.

The burgundy wrap flew open, and the front trailed behind me as I approached the pole. I grabbed the pole with both hands, one above my head and the other one lower. As I spun around the pole, I lifted my knees and tightened my abdominal muscles. The chair spin wasn't as aggressive as Heather's spin, but I knew I could pull it off and look graceful. At five feet ten, it was sometimes hard to pull off graceful.

After bringing my feet back to the ground, I hooked my right leg around the pole and transitioned into a front hook spin. I reached up as high as I could with my right hand on the pole and brought my left arm across my chest and grasped the pole. Pushing and pulling, I spun around the pole once, then twice.

Bringing my feet back down below me, I almost tripped as my heel caught the pole. Reaching both hands up the pole just above my head, I hugged the pole before tensing my biceps. Lifting both feet off the ground, I wrapped my legs around the pole with them both aimed away from me, parallel to the floor. Feeling my legs lock firmly, I removed one hand and held it out in my version of tada and smiled at the men sitting at the edge of the stage. It wasn't the prettiest pole sit, but it was mine.

The whole routine took less than a minute and the music still blasted. I only did the simplest maneuvers, not because I couldn't do harder ones, but because I didn't have the

confidence to do them here in front of twenty or more strange men.

Doing them in front of other women, sisters of the pole, during dancing class always made me feel brave. Now, I had to just strut and smile for another three minutes. Or until I got bood off the stage.

The whistling and applause heightened, which caused goose bumps to form on my arms.

I faced a man in a blue suit with his tie loose. He had a rugged jaw, dark eyes, and a body that seemed to fit his custom tailored suit perfectly. His hair was a dark black that matched his eyes and, unlike other patrons, was still immaculately styled. No one had run their fingers through his hair tonight. Yet.

He tipped back his drink, draining his glass of everything but the ice. He folded and laid out a twenty on the stage in front of him.

The thrill of seeing that twenty there on the edge of the stage, laid out there for me, thrilled me. The applause and the stares filled me with confidence, and I went off script immediately. In my bra, panties, and heels, I was ready to show these men more of what I could do on a pole.

I transitioned into a carousel spin, like Heather had done, and then climbed the pole and kicked my legs up high. After holding the inverted position for two breaths, I opened my eyes.

Mr. Dark Eyes had laid out another twenty on the stage.

I hadn't planned on making any tips tonight. I just wanted to dance and reclaim some of my old self. Forty dollars didn't mean that much to me. My sexual therapy practice had thrived in the last year.

Something in my pussy though clinched a little at the thought of this dark-eyed stranger slipping a twenty—or two—in my panties.

My feet returned to the ground after I released my thigh grip on the pole. Instinctively, my right arm wrapped around the pole as I reached up with my left hand over my head to the bar. I stuck my left leg straight out and then automatically began spinning backwards around the pole. My right leg wrapped naturally around the pole as I spun.

Coming out of the back hook, I reached up high again with both hands and lifted myself up. Both legs wrapped around the pole, but this time I didn't cross them at the ankles. I gripped the pole tightly with my hands and my thighs. I even bent one leg at the knee and extended it again, flashing a smile at my new pole dancing benefactor.

I was showing off and I knew it.

I don't know if it was the adrenaline or months of practice paying off, but my pole dancing was on point tonight. Mr. Dark Eyes must have liked it, too. A third twenty-dollar-bill had found its way onto the stage.

The applause and whistles from the other men continued. It sounded louder than what Heather had earned, but that may have just been my vanity suddenly sparked by this newfound attention. Or it was simply my proximity to them. Their shouts. Their stares.

A final spin and I ended up with my feet on the stage floor and I was facing away from my new patron. I did a back bend holding onto the pole and let the wrap around top slide off of one arm. I could see him behind me and he leaned in close to the stage, adding another twenty in front of him. He waved the bill at me before I flipped up to an upright position and let the other side of my wrap around fall to the floor.

The cat calls began in earnest.

“Take it off, Darling.”

“Don't be shy.”

“Show us what you got!”

“Be my Muse, Baby!”

In any other setting, I would have been disgusted by the things those men said, all to exhort me to take off my top. Here though, on the dance floor stage of the Cherry Pie, with twenty, no thirty men shouting at me, with the music beating the primal rock beats of this song, I felt my nipples stiffen, and I felt a primal urge to bare myself to them. All of them. *Holy shit Reggie!*

“*Centerfold*” began playing after my first song had finished. I had no obligation to dance further. I could have just walked off, but I felt like a sex goddess and I liked the feeling.

I strutted around the stage, moving away from the man who had laid out four twenty-dollar bills in front of him. Everyone had some cash out and while a majority of them were one-dollar bills, a few men laid out a five or a ten, hoping to lure me into giving them some attention. I don't know why I did what I did. Call it obstinate. Call it rebellion.

I got down on all fours and crawled up to the first man at the edge of the stage opposite Mr. Dark Eyes, who had his one-dollar bills out, and shook my breasts at him. It wasn't the most graceful. I hadn't practiced shimmying my breasts as much as I'd practiced the pole dancing. It seemed to do the trick though as it won a smile from him and he slid a dollar beneath my panties on my hip.

I moved down the line, giving every man a smile and a shake of my head and hair or—if they tipped well—my breasts. Occasionally, I'd turn my ass to them and twerk as best as my forty-five-year-old ass could. That definitely needed some work.

I worked my way around one side of the stage and squatted before the next man in front of me. Then, for the next man, I progressed to Heather's move with my hands on the floor behind me and my hips undulating and thrusting towards those bearing gifts for me.

The primal feeling of dancing before these men flooded me with sensations. My body tingled and I could feel sweat building on my body from the heat and exertion. My nipples

pressed against the fabric of my bra, eager to be free. To be sucked on.

I felt like a harem girl dancing in front of her Sheik and his warriors in a desert tent. I felt like Dulcinea dancing before the men in the tavern in the tale of Don Quixote. Suddenly I was a young maiden dancing around the campfire, trying to catch the eye of the strongest and most handsome warrior.

The sensations turned into pleasure and rippled through me. I felt my a wetness forming between my legs. My arousal seemed to pale compared to the lust and desire in the eyes and pants of those feeding me their green. Their imagined arousal excited me.

The calls to take it all off had heightened. Everyone asked now.

“Oh, come on. Take it off for me.”

“If I give you a fiver, if you take your top off?”

None had swayed me, although the thought of doing so thrilled me..

I came to the dark-eyed stranger and rather than drawing closer; I crawled past him and his five twenty-dollar bills—he'd added another—to the beginning of the stage. Five more men with bills and hard-ons had money to take, and I wanted the handsome man who tried to impress me with his money to simmer and stew. The power of my body and its effect on these men had gone to my head and to other places in my body.

Soon my second song was done and the DJ, rather than calling an end to my set, played another song. He could feel the energy building in the room. Maybe Mr. Dark Eyes had some pull at the club, too. For whatever reason, “*Magic Man*” by Heart played over the stage speakers, giving me another four minutes to entertain the crowd.

Finished with the remaining men, I approached my mysterious benefactor on all fours again. The act of crawling toward him sent sensations shooting through my body. More

tingles. A buzzing in my lower belly. Redness rising in my neck and cheeks.

I should know all about what was going on inside me, because of my profession, but in the heat of the moment, I felt pulled by strings.

He crooked his finger, beckoning me to him. *I suddenly felt a trigger to resist.* The urge to get up and run off stage fought the desire and lust that seemed to pull me like an animal on a leash towards him.

The leash proved stronger and soon I drew so close that when he leaned forward, his mouth was near my ear.

“Take off your top,” he commanded.

I swayed and moved to the music, still on all fours, ignoring his command at first. This close, I could see into his dark orbs. Eyes as black as storm clouds. They brooked no insubordination. His gaze narrowed when I didn't obey.

The invisible leash pulled me up, so that I was standing before him. The music and my desire made me move my hips. I swayed my torso and rolled my shoulders. I couldn't break his gaze. To the other gawking men, it might have been impossible to tell who mesmerized who, but I assure you it was I mesmerized by him.

I reached behind me and undid my bra. Rather than let my breasts be bared suddenly, I cupped one hand over them as I shrugged the straps off my shoulders. Sliding the bra out from underneath my hands, I tossed it to the stage right in front of him. It crashed into the five folded twenty-dollar bills.

I couldn't help but smile at my actions. I felt so brazen. So alluring. So sexual.

I moved closer to him, swaying my hips. Bending over so our faces were only half a foot apart, I removed my hand and let my breasts drop, nipples erect.

He could not hide the glint of pleasure and lust in his eyes, which made my thrill escalate. I shook my breasts in front of

his face like Heather, but stopped short of motor boating. Leaning back, I balanced on my hands and heels and gyrated my hips in front of him. I moved closer until he could reach my panties. My sex.

He placed a hand on my hip as he slipped a bill underneath my panties. He did the same on the other side. Then his hands moved to the top of my thigh as he slid another bill in, this one closer to my pussy than anyone else had dared. He did it again on the other side. Eighty-dollars was just a percentage of my \$500 hourly rate, but the exhilaration I felt was incredible.

It was nothing compared to what he did next though.

The final twenty-dollar bill he saved until I was gyrating my pussy close to his face in the heat of the moment. One finger slid underneath the top of my panties and pulled it away. He could probably make out the small patch of pubic hairs above my pussy as close as he was.

My throat caught though as I felt exposed to him. With his other hand, he slid the twenty inside my panties. He slid it so deep that the back of two fingers rubbed up against my clit. Two thick, strong fingers. *What the hell?*

In any other situation, I would probably have ended things before now. I couldn't believe my reaction to his touch, though. I undulated my hips so that he rubbed my clit with his knuckles at least a half-dozen times. My eyes closed after the first stroke and I just let the pleasure wash through me. I heard no sound. I could not discern a word said by anyone. The music seemed a bare hum of sound to me.

There was just me, my clit, and his knuckles in my entire world. Those things and pleasure.

I stopped and then pulled away so that my pussy escaped his magical fingers. I had no intention of putting on a live sex show for everyone bordering the stage. They didn't have enough money in LA to get me to do that.

Haven't you already done that, Reggie?

My Dark Eyed Magic Man didn't smile. He just gave me this smoldering look that had me melting worse than I had until now. I shot him an embarrassed smile as I braced myself on all fours to stand up. This brought my face near his again.

"Give me a lap dance," he said in my ear, loud enough for only me to hear. At least I hoped so.

I blushed crimson and reached out for my bra, which he had clutched in one hand. He tucked it into an inside suit pocket.

"Give me a lap dance and you can have it back."

"Keep it," I blurted out as I stood. I grabbed my wrap-around and then stumbled from the stage. My senses were scrambled. I didn't know up from down. I focused on Carol at the edge of the stage and moved towards her in a daze.

Who does he think he is? Like hell I will give him a lap dance.

"That was Muse in her debut at The Cherry Pie. You might say you popped her cherry tonight, gentleman. Give her a big round of applause and maybe she'll come back." *The club's anthem, "Cherry Pie" by Warrant*, began playing over the sound system.

When I got to Carol, she gave me a big hug. The applause and cries rang through my ears. Goosebumps stood out on my arms and breasts.

I glanced over my shoulder to look at the audience. To look at the mysterious man who suddenly had me wanting to give him a lap dance and anything else that he asked for.

What the fuck, Reggie?

Chapter 2

A Proposition

I TRIED TO COMPOSE MYSELF AS ADRENALINE AND LUST coursed through my system in equal measures. Music still blared from the other room as the DJ announced the next dancer. My legs felt shaky, and I had to sit down in the chair by a makeup table. My chest heaved as I tried to catch my breath.

“Here’s your rum and coke, Sugar,” Roxi, the cocktail waitress, said. She took care of the dancers. She was an older woman. Well, she looked older than me, that is. She had flaming red hair and a body that had seen better days, but must have been gorgeous when she was younger.

I took it, surprise showing on my face. I looked at Carol, who shrugged her shoulders with that not-me look on her face. She was the only one here that knew I liked rum and coke.

“It’s from the gentleman in the nice suit who you separated from his one-hundred dollars. Nice dancing, by the way, and not a bad set’s work.” She glanced down at the various denominations of bills tucked in my panties.

I glanced down as well, and it looked like someone had started a salad in my panties. Green stuck out everywhere from side to back. I could feel the bills pressed up against my butt and back now.

Carol started pulling them out, straightening and sorting them. My focus rested on the twenty-dollar bill peaking out of the front of my panties. Just looking at it brought back

sensations of his touch. I could feel his fingers, like phantom limbs, still rubbing against my burning flesh. Still brushing my hot flesh.

Here I was, an exotic dancer on amateur night, a sex therapist by day, with a wad of cash decorating my panties and my legs trembling from the thrill and excitement of it all, and my most dominant thought was a dark-eyed stranger's knuckles on my clit. The thought made me tremble again.

Carol noticed and studied my face.

“You okay, Regina?”

I snapped out of it and pulled the twenty out of my panties, straightened it, and handed it to Carol.

“How did I do?”

“I'm up to two-hundred dollars and I still have this stack of ones to count.”

“Is that good?” I took a sip of my drink. The cool soda and rum felt good on my parched throat. The burn of the rum as it went down left me near boiling though.

Carol looked around the back room and then faced me again.

“Based on the reactions of the other girls tonight, it's not bad.”

“Did I do better than Heather?” *Where did that come from? Snap out of it!*

“I can't say. She disappeared halfway through your set. I saw her take her big tipper to the private room in the back.”

“Where they do lap dances, right?”

“Yeah. I think so.” Carol continued to count out the ones. “Forty-eight, forty-nine, fifty. Wow! You can take me to dinner now, Reggie.” Carol joked before handing me the neat stack of cash.

“For some reason, I feel really proud of this,” I said as I flapped the stack at Carol.

“You sound shocked.”

“I am. My intention was to pole dance, maybe strut around on stage, get a few cheers and claps of applause. I had no intention of doing some of... that...” I trailed off, not really wanting to put into words the memories of my thrusting hips in the faces of a bunch of strangers in a strip bar.

I liked to think of myself as an exotic dancer, but I think I crossed some line between exotic dancer and whatever I ended up doing on stage.

“Gyrating your hips and... um, vagina in front of thirty men surrounding the stage?”

“Yeah, that.”

“Well, Babe. You may be in your forties, but you’re gorgeous. You’ve got a killer body and that face of yours can still launch a thousand ships.” I could see the admiration in her eyes. It was that same look that had made her my best friend in our freshman year in high school.

I sighed. The realization that I was sitting there in just my panties hit me like being discovered masturbating in the bedroom. I put my wraparound top on and pulled it over my breasts. My nipples were still so hard, though, that I’m sure everyone in the back room could see them poking through the fabric. The fabric was pretty flimsy, so it wouldn’t take much for nipples to show. Mine, however, seemed to poke out like big radio knobs.

“Yeah, what happened to your bra?” I met Carol’s gaze and the smile that splayed across her face.

“Mr. Dark Eyes said I could have it back if I gave him a lap dance.” I looked in his general direction, even though a wall stood between me and him. That didn’t keep the memories of the way he looked at me from traveling to my pussy.

“Oh, Reggie. You should SO give him a lap dance.”

I blushed and shook my head before pulling my top tighter around me.

“You could take selfies and send them to Ass-Hat.” Ass-Hat was code for my ex-husband. Hat and Hole could easily be interchanged, but Carol preferred Ass-Hat.

“That’s not my style and you know it, Carol.” I took another sip.

“Well, you should still give him a lap dance. Add to your Stripper Haul.” She giggled as she nicknamed my stack of cash.

Roxi appeared again with another drink.

“From your friend. He seems keen on seeing you again.”

“Thanks, Roxi.” I gave her a smile and set the fresh drink on the make-up table. I gave her a twenty from my stack of cash as a tip.

“Thanks, Sugar,” she replied, returning my smile. When she smiled, I could see that beautiful woman who must have turned some heads when she danced here.

“Mr. Dark and Handsome gave me a note for you, too.” She displayed her tray and I could see a drink coaster with some writing on it. I picked it up.

“Mr. Dark-Eyes?”

“Yeah, him.” She chuckled as she observed me like a delivery boy waiting for a reply.

I read the note, and I felt the heat rise in my chest and neck.

I’m serious about the lap dance. I’ll return more than the bra if you do this for me.

After reading it, I gave it to Carol who had been trying to read over the top of it.

“Thanks, Roxi. Tell him that...”

“... she’ll be happy to give him a lap dance. Won’t you, Reggie?” Carol said, interrupting me.

“Carol!” I barked.

Roxi hesitated, as if waiting for an answer.

“Come on. Do it. You need some excitement in your life. And a little man-venture won’t hurt anything.” Carol urged me to make a terrible decision. In high school, it would have been me urging her to do the same.

“How much did he tip you on the stage?” Roxi asked.

“One-hundred dollars,” Carol answered before I could get words out of my mouth.

“Well, if he tipped you a hundred on the stage, he’ll tip much more in the private room. You don’t have to do anything back there you don’t want to. Rub your ass on his crotch. A little motor boat. He’ll be happy.” Roxi dealt out sage stripper advice as if she had experience. I eyed her carefully. Maybe she had been a stripper when she was younger.

“Come on, Reggie. Do it. You can do it,” Carol said, urging me on like a cheerleader.

Thoughts of headlines in the newspaper ran through my head. *Prestigious Sex Therapist now Stripping at My Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club.*

The thought of Ass-Hat getting wind of this adventure and the crap he could put me through made my gut tighten. The thought of my clients finding out and losing their confidence in me and my work with them made my throat dry up. I could feel the tension building in my neck. I usually was firm and never gave into pressure from my peers. Why was I still entertaining this idea?

I could still feel his touch. His hand on my hips. His hand grazing my butt. The twenty-dollar bill sliding into my panties and his knuckles on my clit. I clinched my legs tight as a wave of pleasure shot through me. *That’s why!*

“What do I do?” I asked Roxi, who still waited patiently.

“Just come out whenever you are ready and head over to the Cherry Pit,” Roxi replied.

“The Cherry Pit?” I asked.

“That’s what they call the private room here, Sugar. To the right as you come down off the stage.”

“Let him know I’ll be out shortly.”

“You got this, Sugar,” Roxi smiled and then departed.

“Say, do you think they do more in the back room than just dance?” Carol asked.

“Like what,” I murmured.

“I don’t know. Like, do the girls give a hand job or something?” She laughed nervously.

“Why don’t you go back there and find out?” I asked with a chuckle.

“Oh, shoot no,” she said, her Canadian accent on full display. “I couldn’t do that. I’ve lived vicariously through you for too long.”

“Are you saying you don’t know how to give a hand job anymore?” I teased.

“All my sexual charms are reserved for Monty,” she raised her nose in the air in mock distaste before breaking out into a giggle at the look I gave her.

In college, we had some wild times at frat parties and sorority parties. We had always shared our sexual encounters: all of our firsts, our worsts, and our what-the-fuck moments. We hadn’t shared as much during the last ten years. Her marriage, though, seemed to always work out. Monty adored her and Carol loved him. It wasn’t a bad formula. For them.

“I’m sure they are,” I replied with a grin.

“Well, you’ve been complaining about your lack of sex so much for the last year. Now’s your chance.” Carol said.

“He’s a total stranger.”

“Even more exciting.”

“Carol. Really?”

“Yes. Monty and I role play sometimes. He pretends to be a sheik and I play his new harem...”

“That’s not the same thing,” I said, interrupting Carol. I could see her in a harem outfit.

She wasn’t fit and thin like me. Carol had more of a voluptuous curvy body type. It still turned heads, especially when she chose to put her cleavage on display. It had always turned Monty’s and I had caught Ass-Hat drooling over her at a dinner party many times.

“My point is that a sexual encounter with a stranger is quite exciting. Exhilarating even.”

“I will not get excited over a stranger, Carol.”

She gave me her I-can-smell-bullshit look.

“And you’re lying Reggie. Not just to me, but yourself. You’ve been all moon-eyed and in a daze since you came back here.”

She was right. And I knew it. His touch had electrified me. I was totally aroused over Mr. Dark Eyes.

Dancing on stage, seeing men get hard looking at my body while I danced for them thrilled me. Honestly, it felt like winning a beauty pageant or being named Homecoming Queen, except that the sensation was heightened. Something about dancing naked for a man, for men, seemed to ignite my libido. I wanted to go back there with Mr. Dark Eyes. I just didn’t know what held me back.

I hugged myself tight as I decided. I could feel my hard nipples pressing against the fabric. A tingling sensation rippled through my gut and into my pussy. I not only wanted to give this guy a lap dance, I wanted to do more with him.

That is what scares me.

“Okay, no backing out. I’m just going to go back there. Give him a lap dance. Let him rub his face between my breasts. Rub my ass on his crotch. Get him hard and then leave.”

“You’re such a tease,” Carol replied with a grin.

“And I’ll get my bra back and five-hundred dollars.”

“Yes! You’ve got this.” Carol held up her hand for a high five. I obliged and blushed at the absurdity of the situation.

I’m a fucking sex therapist. I deal with people with sexual hang-ups, sexual dysfunction, couples struggling sexually every day. And now I’m about to take a total stranger into the Cherry Pit for a private lap dance. I stood up and balanced myself on my high heels.

“I expect a full report afterward over drinks and dinner. All the details.” Carol gave me a big hug as she gave me my instructions and offered a huge grin.

“Of course,” I said, my mind already slipping into that haze of overwhelm one experiences when they enter unknown territory.

I’m a sex therapist. I know myself and my limitations. I can control myself in front of an incredibly handsome, commanding stranger.

What could possibly go wrong?

Chapter 3

Lap Dance

I STEPPED DOWN THE STAIRS LEADING FROM THE STAGE TO THE floor with caution. “*Start Me Up*” had just started playing, and the next girl strutted onto the stage. She had a pink glow-in-the-dark panty and bra set on with a bright pink feather boa, which she twirled around with one hand. She stumbled on her heels, which appeared to be seven inch platforms, and smacked into the pole with her forehead. Even though she looked a little dazed, she recovered and continued with her dance.

I winced. *She’s going to have a bruise.*

Mr. Dark Eyes stood waiting for me between the bottom of the stairs and the arched red doorway, which was shaped like a cherry with a stem painted on the wall above it. He had to be six feet two inches tall with broad shoulders to match his square jaw. His suit fit him so perfectly, I could make out the tapered waist and nice ass beneath the clothes he wore. The tailored suit looked to be high end. Those dark eyes of his scanned me from head to toe.

I clutched my top over my chest and walked gracefully towards him. He reached out a hand, which I took before he led me to the Cherry Pit. His hands dwarfed mine and were just another sign of his strength. I didn’t detect callouses, though. Hard labor or carpentry were probably foreign to him. He probably couldn’t afford that suit if he did.

He pulled me closer, and I got a hint of his cologne. I detected hints of leather and wood. The scent was manly to the

core. I couldn't help but breathe in the scent as he pulled me closer. He gave my hand a squeeze.

I had only heard rumors from some girls who worked here and also took pole dancing classes. Most of them were twenty-something, gorgeous women with busty bodies. They had told me that lap dances in the Cherry Pit could go way beyond just a dance.

I remember overhearing one relating her tale of some fun fellatio she had given a very generous patron one Saturday night. The girls at the class met her tale with gasps, giggles, and a few *atta-girls*. *Was Mr. Dark Eyes expecting that from me? What the hell was I thinking?*

I wanted to get out of here giving Mr. Dark Eyes a topless lap dance only. Nothing more! I'd do it with my top on, but he had it in his suit pocket. I also needed to remember to get that back from him.

An imposing man, skin the color of midnight, stood guard at the doorway with his arms crossed over his chest. His chest was so big, his upper arms were almost parallel to the floor.

"You okay going back there with this man, ma'am?" the guard said in a deep, sexy voice. Mr. Dark Eyes had a nice triangular physique, but the guard had muscles on muscles.

"Yeah, I'll be fine. I'm just giving him a simple lap dance."

"If he crosses a line, you just holler. I'll be there in two blinks."

"She'll be safe in my arms, big fella," Mr. Dark Eyes said.

The two men nodded at each other before my new amateur night patron led me into the darkened room. It took a while for my eyes to adjust. Mr. Dark Eyes stopped five feet in and stood there. Evidently, he had to adjust to the lack of light, too. All I could hear at first was "*TNT*" over the loudspeakers in the main room.

At first.

Soon, slurping sounds and the sound of kissing lips seemed to jump out at me from all sides. As my eyes adjusted, I saw one dancer with a man in blue jeans and a torn work shirt kissing. Her bra was pulled down so that her breasts were out, supported by the fabric. Her patron devoured her nipples before coming back for more kisses. His hands roamed from her ass to her breasts.

Two other women were grinding their ass against their men's laps and chests. Their partners were more reserved with their hands and kept them on the armrests of the broad red chairs they sat in. They seemed happy, though. Mr. Dark Eyes better be happy with the same.

He seemed to have found a spot and led us to a big red chair at the far end of the room and in a dark corner. The chair was like a throne and there was enough room for three or four people to sit on it. Hell, Mr. Dark Eyes could lay me out on that chair and fuck my brains out with no contortions or odd positions.

The thought of him on top of me, my legs spread, sent a rush through my body. One I was not expecting.

He squeezed my hand and pulled me with him to the wide red chair. My breathing quickened. My heart beat loudly. Internal butterflies flew about excitedly from my pussy to my chest. I didn't know if I would make it to the chair.

Then I saw Heather in the chair to my left. She was on her knees in front of Mr. Suit. She had his pants down to his knees, his cock out, and she ran her tongue up and down his length before bobbing up and down on it. My eyes widened at the sight and a flutter ran through my belly.

Her lacy bra lay on top of Mr. Suit's head and he held a wad of bills in his hands. He dropped a twenty as I was ushered to our spot by Mr. Dark Eyes, which fell to the ground with a handful of like bills splayed around her kneeling figure. He had his head thrown back and the look of ecstasy on his face had its own orgasmic property.

My pussy clinched at the thought of Mr. Dark Eye's cock in my hand. In my mouth. *No, Reggie. Lap dance only.*

Mr. Dark Eyes whispered in my ear, "Dance for me." Then he sat down, spreading his arms to each side of the chair. He crossed his legs before aiming those dark eyes at me. The darkness of the room cloaked his eyes, which only added to the effect he was having on me.

I swayed my hips from side to side, facing him. I usually closed my eyes when I danced like this, but I needed to see his reaction. The cover up served as a shield as I danced, covering my breasts, but soon I started offering brief glimpses of my breasts. Pulling the fabric away and then covering up served as a little game of peek-a-boo.

The more I danced, the more sensual I felt. It was hard to gauge his expression in the darkness as he sat there, unmoving, cold as stone. The uncertainty, though, only made me want to dance more seductively for him.

The thought of parting his legs and pulling out his cock floated to the top of my attention as I saw Heather take in Mr. Suit's cock into her mouth. His moans floated up to my ears during off beats as the song from the stage died down.

The butterflies seemed to become metal ones, like tiny scissors in that moment, as they bounced around inside of me. "*Welcome to the Jungle*" echoed through the doorway as the doors opened and closed, the light giving me a glimpse of his face.

He looked... smug. Confident. Like he had just ordered steak off the menu and he knew it would be here soon. Only, I was the steak on tonight's menu.

The door closed, throwing his face back into the darkness.

"Come closer," I heard him say over the drumbeats of the song.

I began swaying my hips and let my arms fall loose to my side. My top fell open, and I knew he could see my breasts clearly as I still stood in a somewhat illuminated area. It

almost felt like I was in a spotlight and his eyes took in every inch of me. Every flawed inch. My nipples could have cut glass in that moment as they became so hard. It felt as if my heartbeat and my quickened breathing pumped them up until they pointed straight ahead, plump and hard.

The more I danced, the feeling of being the object of his desire—the feeling I had when everyone near the stage wanted to give me money for a small piece of me—coursed through me, swirling like smoke on the dance floor, swirling around the pole in the center of the stage. The feeling also pulled me towards him, further into the darkness.

He was a magnet. I was his object of desire. I could feel that desire smoldering within him. My top slipped off my shoulders and onto the floor behind me.

I moved closer and did my best shimmy move as I approached him. I got close enough that his cologne and my perfume could intermingle. His hot breath on my neck gave me goose bumps. I started to move in for the motorboat, but his hands on my hips stopped me.

Evidently, he liked the view just fine at this distance. My body seemed to take control in the moment, and I straddled him. With my hands on his shoulders, I danced, moving my shoulders and head into him and away from him.

I still couldn't see his eyes and thus his reaction, but his breathing quickened slightly. His hands moved to my hips and rested there. I brought my breasts closer and closer to him as I moved. He only had to lean forward a fraction and he could kiss my nipples.

I suddenly yearned for him to do so. I felt the first dew drops of arousal between my legs. *Amateur night. Not seduce a stranger night.*

Evidently, he wanted me, too. His body at least did as I felt his growing hardness press into me as I ground my hip on his lap. I hadn't even been aware I was doing it. My body moved naturally in the lap of this man.

I didn't seem to care if he was a stranger. I knew that for men, sex with a stranger wasn't nearly as taboo as it could be for women.

Plenty of my patients had done that. That was why they and their wives were seeing me. I had to do something different. This dance felt too personal. Too sexual. Too hot for my blood.

I stood up before I took this too far. Turning around, I twerked my ass in front of his face before sliding it down his chest and into his lap. His hands rubbed my legs and my ass. He gave a squeeze of both ass cheeks with his big, muscular hands. I almost creamed my panties at that first double squeeze of my ass.

The "Final Countdown" began playing.

I rubbed my ass up and down his lap and I jerked in shock again as I felt his cock against my cheeks. He felt fit there as well. And hard. Very hard.

The thought that I had triggered that response in him sent waves of pleasure through me as well. I clinched my legs tight together, but that only shot tingles of pleasure through my clit.

Just a lap dance. Just a lap dance. Just a lap dance.

Mr. Dark Eyes grabbed me by the shoulders and pulled me into him. This also plopped my ass right on to his hard-on, which now pressed against the fabric of his slacks. The touch of his forceful hands thrilled me. His hot breath on the nape of my neck weakened me.

"I want you," he growled in my ear.

An initial thrill of hearing the desire in his voice rushed through my body. It was all I could do to hold back. My resolve kicked in as the thought of his audacity triggered me.

"What makes you think you can have me?" I asked, looking straight ahead. A lap dance on the other side of the room had another girl grinding into her patron in the same way

I did. Her breasts were bare, and the man gripped and squeezed them with rough hands.

How I longed to feel my patron's hands on my breasts.

As if reading my thoughts, Mr. Dark Eyes slid his hands up my side, across my bare flesh, sending tingles up my spine. He reached around me and grasped both of my bare breasts. The firm squeeze he gave me caused me to moan and lean into him. When he pinched and pulled my nipples, I gasped in delight.

"Because your body is responding to me."

"You think so," I replied between clinched teeth.

"Yes. Not only here..." he said before his hands trailed down my stomach to where my panties covered my mound. He rubbed me with two firm fingers through my panties, causing another gasp.

"... but here too. You're already wet and we've barely begun."

"It's hot... in here. That's. Just. Sweat." I managed as he rubbed my pussy through my panties. I leaned into him and could feel his hard body against my back. My resolve was slipping. What could it hurt to give in and enjoy some pleasure? *Oh my God. Just a... lap dance.*

"Hmm. I think you're a pretty little liar." He slipped his hand inside my panties and those two large fingers slid through my slit.

I was a liar. I could tell I was wet. Soaked. Those two fingers slid up and down my slit twice before finding my clit. If his knuckles had been delightful on the stage, his fingers were magic in the dark Cherry Pit.

He continued to stroke my flesh with his other hand, spending considerable time on my breasts. He kissed my shoulder and neck, and his lips knew exactly where to caress my flesh.

The nape of my neck.

That spot where my neck met my shoulders.

The spot just below my ear.

My gasps had turned into moans.

“You think I’m pretty,” I moaned, my brain in a foggy daze suddenly.

He chuckled, and even the vibration of his chest on my back exhilarated me.

“You know you’re pretty. No one dances like you do. Moves like you do without knowing that she is beautiful.” He nibbled on my neck, pushing me closer and closer to the edge.

“That’s a nice thing to say,” I murmured.

My eyes were half shut and the couple across the way was just a blur, although I was sure they had progressed to a hand job. I could also hear moans and gasps from Heather and Mr. Suit in the next section over from us.

Testosterone, pheromones, and the smell and sounds of lust filled my ears.

Just a lap dance.

My mantra held no weight, though.

His fingers stroked my clit like guitar strings just as “*Nothing but a Good Time*” by Poison kicked into its refrain. My flesh burned as his moist lips caressed my skin. Being this close to his body softened my resolve. His hands on my body melted my resolve.

As soon as I relaxed, an orgasm rolled through my body. Radiating from my clit, down through my pussy and into my thighs, up my belly, into my stomach and chest, racing hard for my nipples. The energy of the orgasm sent tremors racing through me. I clinched my mouth closed and fought the urge to scream my delight so that no one could hear.

He didn’t let up either. He continued to stroke my clit, applying more pressure as I came until I jerked back and forth, up and down on his lap.

“Stop,” I gasped as I grabbed his hands and pulled them away.

He kissed my neck as I caught my breath, and my body recovered. I could feel his hard cock pressed against my ass, especially when he flexed his hips, driving me up and off the couch.

That feeling that many women seem to be genetically engineered to feel as soon as our partner has brought us the joy of an orgasm, soon raced from my body into my brain. The need to reciprocate is like a genetic imperative. At least for me. Unlike men, who fall asleep before we’ve recovered from our own orgasm, women have this driving urge, passed down by generations of subservient and giving women, to please their man.

Or the man they decided to let please them in the Cherry Pit.

Soon, with little thought, and without turning around, I unzipped Mr. Dark Eyes’ slacks, undid his belt and had his hard cock out and in my hand. I’d seen bigger in my life and in my work, but he had nothing to be ashamed of.

I stroked it several times as I thought of what to do next. My normal response would be to give him a blowjob. The thought of being on my knees in that moment on the floor of the Cherry Pit didn’t elicit the right response. So instead, I pulled my panties aside and rubbed his head up and down my slit. He deserved this. I deserved this.

His moans behind me gave me enough permission to continue.

I inched his cock inside of me. My pussy was definitely wet, and it slid in about half way easily. It could have slid in all the way based on how wet I was, but I had to take a second as waves of pain swept through me. Maybe he was bigger than I thought he was.

It had been a long time since I had anything this big inside of me. I purposely used smaller toys and my kegel routine left

me tight for a forty-something woman. The pain soon turned to pleasure though, and after moving up and down on his cock a few times, I began inching it in deeper and deeper inside of me.

Soon we found a smooth motion. I liked a man's hands on my hips in this position, but he wanted my breasts. With his arms around me and his hands squeezing my breasts, I felt so held in that moment, not as a dainty woman protected by a man, but as a woman worthy of a healthy fuck.

I felt like a queen on her throne as I rode him. My body woke up, which was exactly what I expected to happen when I danced earlier. It had when I danced, but this feeling coursing through my body was ten times stronger.

I moved up and down on him and the sound of our flesh slapping together mixed with "*Cum on Feel the Noize*", which played from the main room, rocked our fucking. We moved in this moment of ecstasy for the length of the song. As it neared the end, he reached around with one hand and began strumming my clit with his finger.

I had to lean back against his chest, as the sensations were too much. He began pumping into me harder and faster and continued to pleasure my clit as our breathing quickened. We were definitely getting wild.

I quivered in the throes of another orgasm, and I felt him stiffen and explode inside of me. He bucked, and I tried to hang on for what seemed like much more than eight seconds.

Soon he stopped, and his body seemed to collapse into the couch. I collapsed onto him, laying on my back on his chest, his cock still twitching inside me. His chest and mine heaved with our labored breath, but soon slowed.

"I told you. Your body was responding to me," he whispered.

"Yes, you did. Tell me, that is," I replied.

Then the other feeling that women who have intercourse with a stranger often feel coursed through me. I felt exposed.

Awkward. Vulnerable.

“*Poison*” by Alice Cooper began playing.

I struggled to sit up, his cock sliding out of me as I did so. Turning on his lap to face him, I saw his face in a flicker of light. He had that contented look that a good fuck usually gave men. He looked happy, with no hint of being embarrassed or awkward.

“That was one hell of a lap dance,” he said. He reached into an inside pocket of his suit and pulled out a wad of bills. He handed it to me. “That should be a thousand. It was worth every penny.”

I blushed and panic took over. I acted on instinct.

I reached into his inside coat pocket and extracted my bra. I slipped it on, still sitting in his lap, and positioned my breasts comfortably in them. He leaned in as if to kiss me. I didn’t lean in, but I didn’t move away. Instead, I stared into his eyes, which had come into the light as he leaned forward. He returned my gaze. Challenging me. Commanding me.

“Kiss me,” he commanded.

“Lap dances don’t come with kissing,” I replied.

“I have another thousand for a kiss.”

I gulped. One kiss for a thousand dollars. I didn’t feel worth it. I didn’t need the money, either. The curiosity of wanting to know what his kiss felt like, though, percolated inside me. I’d just fucked him, which is about as intimate as you can get and as sexual as you can get. A kiss seemed trivial at this point. He didn’t think so; he was willing to pay the same price as his lap dance.

I leaned in and kissed him. I had meant for it to be a peck. A grandmother’s kiss, wet and quick.

Instead, I lingered as he returned the kiss with equal passion. His lips were nice. He kissed well. Jolts of electricity shot through my body again. His tongue penetrated my lips. It

felt soft but strong. Penetrating like him. Like his eyes. It took more resolve than I thought I possessed to pull away.

He shoved the wad of cash into my hands and reached for more.

I stood up and bent over to get my wrap-around top, not realizing I was pointing my ass right at his face. I slipped it on and turned to face him.

He offered me another stack of bills.

“The kiss was on the house,” I said before turning around and marching out of the Cherry Pit to find Carol and leave. I didn’t turn around to see his expression, though I would have paid a thousand dollars to see it. Because I had no intentions of ever seeing Mr. Dark Eyes ever again. So seeing the look on his face would have been the icing on the cake.

As soon as Carol and I drove away from the Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club, however, I felt a longing to see him again.

Chapter 4

Non-Disclosure Agreement

I APPROACHED THE ENTRANCE TO MY UPSCALE OFFICE IN A building between Los Angeles and Hollywood. It had taken me seven years to build my practice, my clientele, and my reputation to afford this prime location. I was one of the premier sex therapists in the greater Los Angeles area and hardly anyone knew me. Just the way I liked it.

It was early, seven am, and I arrived before either of my two employees. I glanced at the sign beside the door as I unlocked it.

Regina Davenport

Suite 369

I locked the door behind me and made my way to my office. Silence permeated the office at this time of morning except for the sounds of bubbling water in a tabletop fountain in the corner. The only window faced the west, so only that faint light of dawn reached the room. My table lamp provided just enough illumination to do my work.

I loved working in the office alone in the morning. I could get the first pot of coffee started, drink half of it, and get ready for my clients for the day.

Today's schedule was light, with only three appointments. I seldom saw more than six clients a day, but even with three a

day I could cover office expenses, payroll, including my own, and have some money left over each month. Having high profile clients with deep pockets who wanted to keep their sexual issues private had proved a lucrative business for me.

My preparation for the day went by quickly. None of them were new clients, so I simply had to review notes from our prior sessions and prepare myself to ask the right questions to gauge their progress and to be ready to listen. Each of them was also over six months into their therapy and had already made significant progress. Two of them would see Chastity, my on-staff sex surrogate, but both were simple sensual massages to help them become more in touch with their bodies.

My mind wandered to Saturday night and my wild experience at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club. I didn't feel shame for what had happened, but I felt some guilt over how far I had gone with Mr. Dark Eyes. I hadn't been seeing him in a professional situation—unless stripping and sex in the Cherry Pit counts as professional—but I still felt as if I had crossed a line.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not a prude. In my business, I deal with clients who have sexual dysfunction from a clinical standpoint, even if in reality they just have desires that society doesn't always consider "normal".

I'm not talking pedophilia. Some of my clients have fetishes, enjoy BDSM, open marriages, engage in polyamory, none of which are really abnormal. Even those in heterosexual relationships still have issues from childhood or a previous relationship that lead to erectile dysfunction, misogyny, jealousy, arguments, and even paranoia. Any physical ailments they might have are often simply the result of stress, lack of confidence, and, sometimes, just ignorance.

In my profession, though, there are certain ethical standards I need to stick to and I'm not sure what some of my high-profile clients would think of me if they found out I was

stripping and having sex at a strip club. Or was it just me that was berating and judging myself?

Weaved in with the guilt, though, was reminiscence and flashbacks of that night. Dancing on the stage. Seeing men aroused by watching me dance, even with my bra and panties on. Taking off my top for Mr. Dark Eyes when he commanded me to do so.

It had been a command. He didn't ask *pretty please*. He had said, take it off, and I did.

The sensations that had caused in me seemed to be the most troubling. What had happened in the Cherry Pit had been even more disconcerting. I had acted like a woman with no control over my own actions.

After the divorce and custody battle with Ass-Hat, I had done my best to always be in control. I prided myself on not giving into my own desires. To calling the shots in my relationships. Granted, I hadn't been in a committed relationship since my divorce.

Raoul was a rebound relationship that lasted nine months. He had been a one-night stand which turned into a friend with benefits, but we hadn't seen each other in four years. Jerald, my hunky firefighter friend, didn't count either. They had both been sexual relationships, which I was able to control.

Mr. Dark Eyes, though, had sure flamed my desire. I shook my head, remembering my dance for him in the back room. His touch on my body had stirred many emotions. His hand on my pussy had inflamed my desire. The way he made me moan. The memory of his cock, first in my hand and then sliding into me, aroused me again while I sat in my office.

I checked the clock. 8:13 AM. Penny, my receptionist and office manager, rolled into one, wouldn't be in for another fifteen minutes. I had time.

I was wearing a black pencil skirt this morning and some nice, soft panties. I lifted my skirt up my thighs, spread my legs, and rubbed my pussy through the material of my panties

as the feelings I felt last night returned. It was a silky material, and it felt good on my fingertips and my pussy lips. I could already feel dampness forming on the material.

I pressed my finger between my labia, pushing the fabric into my soft fold, and moved my fingers up and down. Images of Mr. Dark Eyes rubbing me in the same way and the sensations caused my body to dance in pleasure.

I leaned back in my office chair and lifted one leg up to my desk. My three-inch heels and the handle on the desk drawers gave me enough support to spread my legs wider. The image of me with my breasts in his face and the memory of his hot breath on my neck brought my nipples to a deliciously painful hardness which pressed into the soft fabric of my bra. All the memories of how he made my body feel resurfaced and traveled along synaptic pathways and brought me to the same heights of sensation I experienced on Saturday night.

I slipped my hand inside my panties and ran two fingers up and down my slit. *God, I'm wet.* I used the wetness on my fingers to lubricate my clitoris, which I then rubbed up and down before rapidly rubbing back and forth.

All the time I imagined his hands on me. The sensation of them caressing my sides, my breasts, and then tugging on my hips as he slammed me down on his hard cock.

“Yes,” I whispered into the silence of the office before I moaned at my touch and the vivid memories of that night.

Soon I was rubbing myself harder and faster. My breathing and heart rate quickened. My free hand clutched and grabbed my breast through my button-up blouse. I squeezed my nipples through the fabric before loosening some buttons so I could reach the soft skin of my breasts. I slipped my hand underneath the bra to better pleasure my nipple.

He had brought me to ecstasy so simply. So quickly, as far as I could remember. The newness. The taboo nature of what we had done. Perhaps that had heightened the excitement.

Pushed me to orgasm quickly. An orgasm did not come as quickly now.

The pressure of being caught and pleasuring myself quickly affected my ability to climax. I knew that intellectually, but nothing I could do at that moment could hasten my release.

So I rubbed my clit harder. Up and down, then side to side. I dipped two fingers into my pussy and fucked myself. The squishy sound of my pussy being penetrated mixed with my breathing. I pinched my nipple harder and squeezed my breast more. I quickened my breathing on purpose to hasten my climax.

I imagined his cock filling me, spreading me like it did that night, as I pumped my pussy with my fingers. They were a sad substitute for his hard dick thrusting into me, but I had pleased myself for years. Now should be no different. I neared the point of pleasurable release.

The door to my office opened, and Penny strode in, looking at the tablet in her hand. She didn't look up at me until she had advanced into the office almost five feet.

I, of course, didn't see her coming in as my eyes were closed and I was rubbing my clit with total abandon. When she noticed me, my eyes opened to see her suddenly gawking at me with a look of surprise and horror on her face.

She looked up at the ceiling.

I tried to compose myself. I removed my hand from my panties and flipped my skirt down. My blouse though spread wide and I couldn't hide that fact from Penny. I did my best to button up quickly though and in a few seconds was back to my professional self. Minus a super wet pussy, that is.

I took a deep breath.

“Good morning, Penny.”

“Good morning, Mrs. Davenport.” She usually called me Regina, but I believe her discovery of me in a state of near

orgasm must have shocked her into more formality.

“I am surprised to see you so early.”

“My apologies. I wanted to get in early and prepare for the day.”

“Very good. I just didn’t hear you come in.”

“I’ll try to be louder next time,” she offered.

“Good idea,” I added.

“We have a new appointment today. That was the reason I was coming to see you. New client. Will be here at 11:30 AM.” She handed me the tablet that contained the appointments for the day. This appointment hadn’t made my calendar yet.

“Very good. That will keep my mind off of other things,” I said as my cheeks reddened. I handed the tablet back to Penny.

She exited the office, and I breathed a sigh of relief. I would just have to go through the day without the relief of an orgasm.

My day was off to a wonderful start.

* * *

My first two appointments went well. Both comprised an easy hour of checking in, reporting on progress and wins, and then wrapping up with next steps. Paperwork for both was fairly straightforward. Both had made significant progress.

Alicia, a rape survivor who had worked with me for three years, had great news to report. She and her husband had experienced some breakthroughs on the intimacy front and things had been going well for the last three weeks. So well, in fact, that she was pregnant. My work with her wasn’t quite finished, but she felt really confident that we were near the end of a long journey. Her type of case, while not the most

financially rewarding, was the most emotionally rewarding for me.

Jacob, a young man with very wealthy parents, had experienced some erectile dysfunction when he was with girls. As an older man, that's to be expected, but with a twenty-three-year-old, it usually points to other more emotional issues.

He had been masturbating to porn two to three times a day for over a year when he first started seeing me. He could not perform when he met a girl on Tinder. The hookup culture he found himself in put a lot of pressure on him to both talk big to get a girl to meet, but then be able to deliver when they met. He had some family issues going on as well, which contributed to his insecurities.

He had now gone six months without watching porn and had cut down on masturbation. We'd worked through a lot of the family issues and pressures as well and he had been doing much better. He and I decided he was ready to work with a surrogate and we set him up with an appointment with Chastity the next week.

I explained to him that this wasn't like a hookup. It would be structured time with her, and he'd have to focus on being present with her and paying attention to his body. That didn't seem to dissuade him in the least.

People often have misconceptions about sex therapy and surrogacy. Sexual issues are often some of the most deep-seated issues a person can deal with, so the work can be very intense and it really takes a lot of bravery and openness on a patient's part to get the benefit. Some of the wealthy and famous patients of mine don't really get that. At first.

Once they finally realize I can help them, that it's going to take work, and they decide they want my help, then we can get down to business.

My afternoon client is one of those. He'd already had five failed relationships by the time he was thirty-three.

Fortunately, only one of those, the first, was a marriage and there had been no kids involved. He took two years and after the last two failed relationships; he decided to do the work. His progress was erratic though, so I never knew who would show up in my office for our appointment.

I leaned back in my chair as I finished the admin work for Jacob. The only sound in my office came from the water dribbling softly over the rock surface of the fountain. My mind wandered to Mr. Dark Eyes again, and that tingling feeling between my legs bubbled up like the water in the fountain.

I couldn't help but cup myself as I took in a deep breath. I hadn't had sex in about three months before my amateur night performance in the Cherry Pit. Rather than quench any desire that might have been building until that night, I had been abstinent after my last meeting with my firefighter friend.

My time with Mr. Dark Eyes and its memories seemed to have lit a fire in my loins. I so wanted to scratch that itch, but I didn't want to get caught with my feet up in the air again.

The clock showed 11:15 AM. I double-checked my calendar. My next appointment started at 1:00 PM. Thirty minutes used to be enough time for me to reach an orgasm, but I had to admit I didn't always follow my own advice.

My clitoris had become a little desensitized because of the constant use of my vibrator. I used it daily as part of my early morning routine or at night before settling down for bed. I had no desire to be beholden to a man to provide my orgasms.

Besides, Ass-Hat had never been good at pleasing me. He could last a good ten minutes, but it was so mechanical for him. Any time I tried to bring up my needs or my sexual expertise, he just blew it off as mumbo-jumbo.

I knew from experience that a woman's orgasm came with no timetable, but I didn't seem to think that applied to me. Perhaps it was part of the aging process. All I knew for sure was that I could get off in ten minutes in my twenties, and now it always seemed to take longer than thirty minutes. Thirty

minutes was hard to fit in to a professional LA women's schedule.

So, over time, it took me longer and longer to orgasm and required more and more stimulation. I didn't think I'd ever have a quick orgasm again.

Until Mr. Dark Eyes and my lovely amateur night performance at My Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club.

I felt some dampness forming as the memories came flooding back. He had such a manly presence. A manly scent, even. He had commanded me to take off my top while on stage. He had commanded me to dance for him in the Cherry Pit, the back room of the club where private lap dances, and more, occurred. And had I offered him more?

I closed my eyes and pushed my fingers into the fabric of my panties. "*Mmm.*"

There was a call on the phone system.

"Mrs. Davenport? This is Penny. Can you come to the intake room?"

"Yes, Penny. I'll be right there. What's going on?"

"Your next client has some papers for you to sign."

"My next client?"

"Yeah. You're 11:30."

My 11:30 appointment? I double-checked my calendar and there was no appointment. I remembered Penny mentioning my new client, though.

This was odd. Usually, clients had a handful of documents to sign before I would see them.

"I'll be... right there," I replied with a confused expression.

I strode to the intake office. It was a simple room with a table and three chairs. Penny or I would sit with a client in this room, go over all the papers that needed to be signed.

HIPAA policy.

Agreement to pay their bill if their insurance didn't cover the expenses.

Agreement that they would provide us with any additional medical records needed.

Indemnity agreement that they would not hold me or my practice responsible if they refused to follow my advice.

Followed by two or three other agreements that the state, insurance companies, or my lawyer insisted I have signed. Between government regulations and lawsuit issues, it took a lot of signatures before I would accept someone into my practice. Also, since most insurance didn't cover my type of therapy, I had to have assurances my clients could pay.

When I entered the room, I found Penny, an older gentleman dressed in a gray pin-striped suit, sitting across from her, and two people standing on either side of the sitting man. They both held briefcases and seemed to have suits made of the same material as the older gentleman's.

The woman wore a dress suit and had her brunette hair pulled back into a bun and her hazel eyes stared out from behind some fashionable glasses. The young man had dark black hair, slicked back, with thin aquiline features, observing everything going on in the room with darting eyes. Those eyes settle on me for a moment, before his pupils expanded, and then he looked anywhere but at me.

The older gentleman had a beard with gray running through it as well as his well groomed black hair. He was a heavy man, but not overly so. He looked as if he might once have been quite muscular, but had let his body go a bit. His sharp black eyes took me in like he a predator and I was his next prey. *Maybe I am?*

"This is Mr. Warren and his assistants, Banks and Croft," Penny said, motioning to the woman, who must be Banks, and the young man, who must be Croft. They all nodded and I

couldn't help reflecting that Mr. Croft seemed so much like a bird with his mannerisms.

"Mr. Warren has some papers that he says you and I must sign before our next patient will see you," Penny explained. Her tone was very matter-of-fact and contained a hint of sarcasm you recognize after working with a person for seven years.

There was a stack of papers on the intake room table and Mr. Warren extended me a pen. I couldn't help but notice that it looked like a very expensive pen.

A million thoughts seemed to flutter around inside my head like a bunch of birds flushed from bushes by a hunting dog. I tried to compose myself before speaking.

"Mr. Warren, what kind of papers do I need to sign?"

"Well, Mrs. Davenport, my client, Mr. Baxter, and I must insist that you sign this non-disclosure agreement before he will agree to see you." The man had a low voice—the type you'd expect from some English gentleman. It reminded me of Dr. Watson from the old Sherlock Holmes movies. The bird man assistant nodded his head vigorously while the brunette woman just cocked her head slightly and examined me.

"Miss Davenport," I corrected him.

"Yes, Miss Davenport."

"A non-disclosure agreement? I'm confused, Mr. Warren. The very nature of my business depends on non-disclosure."

"Yes, ma'am. I'm quite aware of the nature of your business. However, my client requires a bit more discretion than any of your documents provide."

"Have you read all the documents that your client needs to sign before I'll see him?" I countered.

"He has signed all of our documents," Penny said. She held up the folder with our standard documents in them. When I squinted my eyes at her, she shrugged.

“Did he read all the documents?” I asked, addressing Mr. Warren again.

“I read all of those documents, as did my assistants. We have given them a good going over.” Mr. Warren replied and looked to his two assistants in turn. The brunette nodded once, very businesslike. The Bird-Man nodded his head so many times I thought he was trying to peck at me.

“And what protections do those documents not provide your client?” I asked and without thinking, I crossed my arms in front of me, just under my breasts.

“Well, you see, Mrs. Davenport...”

“Miss.”

“Yes. Miss Davenport, your agreements do not stop you from mentioning that Mr. Baxter is your patient, even in passing with another member of your staff... or in discussing his case with a colleague,” he said.

“I don’t discuss my clients with anyone,” I replied. My tone didn’t hide the anger that was boiling up inside of me. The insinuations were ridiculous.

“Even if you didn’t mention my client by name, just the mention of your conversations and the wrong details to the wrong person could cause damages to my client that would far exceed your annual income. So you see...”

“I don’t SEE anything, Mr. Warren.” I had dealt with all kinds of individuals in my practice, most of them wealthy. Some of them were ridiculously wealthy. Not one of them had ever demanded a non-disclosure agreement before. I was literally flabbergasted. One finger tapped my arm.

“Well, I want to be perfectly clear, Miss Davenport. My client, and I, expect you and all your employees who might come into contact with him or any of his documentation, clinical notes, administrative documents, health records, etc. to sign this NDA.”

“Who is this Mr. Baxter, and why does he think I would agree to this?”

“Miss Davenport, it’s not that he thinks you will agree to this, it is a pre-requisite for him to work with you. Without the NDA, he will leave today and not come back. He will find another individual to work with.”

“He won’t find anyone as good as me to work with, Mr. Warren. I can guarantee that.”

“He agrees. That is why we are here.”

I fumed with my arms crossed, finger tapping, leaning onto one foot, glancing from Mr. Warren to the brunette to Bird Man. They all returned my gaze except for Bird Man.

I turned to Penny and shrugged.

“Are you okay with signing this?” Even if I agreed to this, Penny and maybe Chastity would also have to sign an NDA. It wasn’t even the NDA I was concerned about. It was the consequences of breaking the NDA that suddenly worried me.

“He will pay extra,” Penny replied. She handed me a first check for ten thousand dollars made out to my practice from the Derek Baxter Personal Trust.

“How many sessions is this for, Mr. Warren?” I asked the lawyer.

“That is for today’s session. He will pay the same for each other session. That is twenty times your normal posted hourly fee.” Mr. Warren told me this with such a smug tone.

“My top fee for special clients is two-thousand per hour, Mr. Warren. Ten times that fee is twenty thousand.” I saw Penny’s eyes go wide. I wasn’t lying, and she knew it.

High-profile clients who could afford it paid two thousand per visit. The higher fee gave me the incentive to take them on and compensated me for the eventual paparazzi who would stalk me outside my office early in the morning or late at night.

Mr. Derek Baxter seemed like an even worse pain in the ass, and I intended to be well compensated for my troubles with him. Besides, I had a bad feeling about seeing him and by doubling the stakes, perhaps Mr. Warren and he would fold.

“Are you saying you will sign the agreement and see Mr. Baxter for twenty thousand dollars per session?” Mr. Warren asked.

His facial expression hadn’t changed this whole time. No shock on his face. No anger at my audacity at doubling his client’s fee. *If the man played poker, I would hate to be in a showdown with him.*

The room was silent. I faced Penny, who gave me the fuck-yes-girl look before turning to Mr. Warren.

“What does this NDA require of me or restrict me from doing?”

“You will not speak with your staff about your private visits. Your staff will not speak to each other about his visits. You and your staff will not speak to anyone about your visits or even that Mr. Baxter is a client here. You and your staff will not discuss the details of his visit to anyone. This includes family, friends, lovers, spouses, insurance agencies, newspapers, reporters. Anyone. For that, Mr. Baxter will see you a minimum of ten times for the agreed upon rate of twenty thousand dollars per visit and will agree to your treatments within reason.”

“What if I need to consult with a colleague about Mr. Baxter’s issue... What is his issue, by the way?”

“You will not speak with any consultants. You have a sterling reputation. Mr. Baxter is confident you can help him resolve his problem with no outside aid. As to his condition, neither I nor my colleagues know what he wishes to discuss with you. You will have to ask Mr. Baxter that question.”

“And if I or my staff break the NDA, what are the consequences?”

“One hundred thousand dollars per breach of the agreement, Miss Davenport.”

I couldn't help but gulp at the amount. Discovery and enforcement might be difficult, but it was still a steep amount. I had faith in my staff, though. We'd had several celebrities see me and use my services, even Chastity's, and not one word had ever leaked to the press. I believed sincerely that we would never pay a penny in damages for a breach. It was more a matter of principle.

“Give me the NDA.” I reached out for the paperwork. Bird Man handed it to me. I leafed through each page looking for key spots and the specific verbiage Mr. Warren had mentioned. It seemed to match up with what he had said. I handed it to Mr. Warren.

“There is no clause for the payment amount agreed upon.”

The brunette stepped forward and handed Mr. Warren a document. He looked it over. Crossed something out and wrote on it and then handed it to me.

I looked it over. It promised to pay me twenty thousand dollars per visit for a minimum of ten visits. I ran a successful practice, but it was hard to turn down two hundred thousand dollars. That was what I would normally make in about six months. I set the papers on the table.

“Where do I sign?” I asked.

Mr. Warren handed me the expensive pen, a Montblanc, and pointed to the places I needed to sign. I signed and then initialed in two other places the brunette instructed me to.

“You have just the two assistants on payroll, Miss Davenport?” Warren asked.

“Yes, Penny and Chastity,” I replied. “They will sign as well.” I looked at Penny to ensure that she was okay with this. She reached for a pen.

“And where is my client? It appears it is time for his appointment.”

“He just texted me, Miss Davenport. He’s in your office,” the brunette said.

I blinked and straightened my shoulders. “Very well. Let’s go see what Mr. Baxter needs to work on.” I stopped at the door.

“Oh, and Mr. Warren, please get the check for the additional ten thousand to Penny immediately,” I said.

I strode back from the intake room to my office. When I closed the door behind me, I saw a tall gentleman, broad shoulders, black tailored suit staring out my one window which faced a pond and park beside my building and the Pacific Ocean on the horizon.

“Well, Mr. Baxter, you must have some pretty dark secrets and a very serious problem that you require me and my staff to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Before we get started, why don’t we talk about why you need these circumstances before you will work on whatever is bothering you.” I walked to the middle of my office and took a seat in my comfortable wing-back chair. It was my therapist’s chair, and I always felt more confident sitting in it. I felt in control.

I grabbed a notebook and my pen and prepared to get to work. “You can take a seat on the couch.”

Mr. Baxter turned and walked to the couch. I started writing on my notepad the typical stuff before a session. Patient name, date, time, etc. as he took a seat. When I looked up, he was facing me and his eyes narrowed as he took me in. I couldn’t help but gasp when I saw his face.

Mr. Derek Baxter was Mr. Dark Eyes.

Chapter 5

Sex Therapy

MY PUSSY CLINCHED AND MY HEART RACED AS A FLASHBACK of my lap dance from the Cherry Pit dazed me. The therapy room was silent and illuminated by the sun shining through the window and a long lamp beside my chair. The club had been so much different.

My stomach and legs quivered as if they relived that night viscerally. I focused on the notepad in my lap, trying to catch my breath, as memories of his hands on my body, his breath on my neck, and his cock sliding inside me all wrestled with my need to be professional. *Was that even possible?*

I had danced for him and countless others at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's club. He had commanded me to take off my top, though. No one else. Not that the others didn't want that.

It was something I hadn't planned on doing. It was amateur night, and I was indeed an amateur exotic dancer. Or at least twenty years past the time I did it overseas. I took my bra off anyway and danced for him. Even worse, I let him slide his twenty-dollar bills in my panties. That paltry amount, compared to the check his lawyer handed Penny today, thrilled me so much more.

I experienced his first touch then. It had been like the sun inviting a flower to bloom and did I bloom. I even agreed to a private lap dance in the back room, the Cherry Pit.

I had danced and rubbed my body against his, brazenly shook my breasts in his face, inviting his touch. When he had

offered me a thousand dollars for the lap dance, I was both offended and turned on. I went well beyond a lap dance. Lap dances don't involve intercourse. *Do they?*

When he offered another thousand for the kiss, I turned him down. I kissed him anyway, though.

Back in the present, barely, my cheeks flushed. Hell, I think my pussy blushed. I definitely felt the heat down there. *You have to be professional.*

"Mrs. Davenport?" he said, breaking me from my daze.

I looked up and met those dark eyes of his. He looked amused and awkward, as well as in control, all at the same time. I know that seems impossible, but as my therapist skills and my ability to read people kicked back in, I saw all those emotions flash through his eyes. Taking a deep breath, I did my best to regain my composure. I just wanted to make it through the next hour and not take any of my clothes off.

I looked back down and wrote some notes.

Amused.

Awkward.

In Control.

Does he recognize me?????

"Mr. Baxter. How would you prefer me to address you? Mr. Baxter? Derek?"

"Dirk is fine."

"Dirk?" I eyed him.

"A nickname from my Scottish parents and the boys in school."

"Dirk, then. Tell me Dirk, why are you here to see me today?" *I swear if you offer me a thousand dollars for a lap dance, I'll turn you down. What the fuck, Reg!*

I did my best to shake off those thoughts. He was paying me twenty thousand a visit. I intended to give him his money's

worth of professional help and counseling.

He was sitting on the couch leisurely, one leg crossed over the other. He was wearing a blue suit, white shirt, power red tie. His dark eyes looked at the open window and I got a good look at his profile. Square jaw, Roman nose, and well-groomed, black hair. His hands were large, strong, and his nails manicured. Even his shoes were polished and expensive.

This man was not cheap, just what I would expect from someone willing to pay me what he was paying me. He pondered his response. *Does he like to be intentional with his response or is he preparing to lie? Many patients lie to their therapists and to themselves most of all.*

“I’ve been having difficulties in my marriage,” he began. He turned and faced me, meeting my eyes. He also gave no recognition of our previous encounter. No discomfort. No averted eyes. He seemed more professional than I did.

“Difficulties? What kind of difficulties?” My hand trembled as I made another note on my pad.

Marriage problems!!!!

“Well, my wife is younger than me. And she has a serious sexual appetite.” The tone of his voice raised a bit.

“How old is your wife?” I asked.

“Thirty-three,” he replied. His voice sinking back down into that low baritone.

“And you are, how old?”

“Fifty-five.”

“So, a twenty-two-year difference. That’s more than a bit younger. Tell me about these difficulties.”

He looked back to the window, the sunlight almost reached his face.

I made some notes, letting him process before he spoke.

Wife - 33 - Strong sexual appetite.

Dirk - 55 - Sexual problems?

Feeling vulnerable in this situation. Embarrassed?

He didn't speak for a while. I started to say something, but he turned his face to me again.

"She wants sex every time we're together." His voice was even lower this time.

"And you don't want sex every time?"

"Not every damn time," he growled.

"And how does that make you feel?"

"It makes me feel frustrated."

"Why does it frustrate you?"

"Because I don't want to have sex three times a day." A bit of a Scottish accent slipped into his speech as he said that. It was damn sexy and sent a tingle through my body.

"And why not?"

"I have a business to run. I see her in the morning before I go to work. She wants sex then. I see her when I get home, usually after eight. She wants to have sex. We eat something, relax, and go to bed. She wants to have sex. It was great at first, but now it is just tiring. The lass doesn't quit."

My patients have talked about all kinds of sexual encounters they experienced. Some in graphic detail. I encourage that because by talking about it; they let that energy go. The energy of the memories. The energy of the trauma. Or the energy of the thrill and taboo.

When they do so, it seldom makes me wet. Dirk Baxter, Mr. Dark Eyes, was making me wet. *He's fucking married, though.*

I felt both compassion and jealousy at the same time. Compassion for his predicament. Jealousy that he fucks his wife three times per day.

"Have you talked to her about it?"

“I’ve tried. She doesn’t listen. She keeps going on about how I promised to keep her happy.”

“When was the last time you had sex with her?”

“A month ago.” He looked away when he said that. His eyes focused on the window or something outside.

“How has she reacted to not having sex three times per day?” *But you had sex with me two nights ago. Was that why he was all over me?*

“She hates it.”

I stared straight at him, my right eyebrow raised.

“She screams. She threatens.” He met my gaze.

“And what does she threaten you with? You seem very strong. Very capable.”

“She threatens to tell reporters about our problems.”

Our eyes locked. Mr. Dark Eyes staring into mine. His eyes held a challenging menace in them, a simmering anger. A lump formed in my throat.

“How long have you been married, Mr. Baxter?” I asked, trying to stay professional.

“Three years.”

I looked down at my pad and made more entries.

Wife wants sex three times per day.

No sex for a month.

She makes threats.

Married three years.

“How does that make you feel?”

“Why do you people always want to know that?” he spat.

“Know what, Mr. Baxter?”

“How something makes me feel.”

I could sense his anger and wanted to diffuse it for now. It needed to be addressed, but I needed to know more.

“Fear. Anger. Resentment. All are emotions and different actions trigger them all. Certain events cause us to act in a way that we regret later. Knowing how you feel when triggered is the first step.”

“It makes me angry, obviously,” he replied, sarcasm evident.

I decided on a different angle.

“So, why did you stop having sex with her a month ago?”

“I’d had enough. It made me sick just thinking about it. I needed a break.”

“A break from sex three times a day or a break from her?”

“From all of it. I needed to relax when I got home. Not feel pressured to perform for my trophy wife.”

“Trophy wife?”

“Yes, she’s a model and an actress.”

I made some more notes.

Model and actress.

Probably beautiful.

Doesn’t want to have sex with her.

Why?

“Beautiful?” I asked.

“What?”

“She’s beautiful? Your wife.”

“Of course,” he replied, in a matter-of-fact tone. As if he would be married to anyone not beautiful.

“How much have you communicated with her about this over the last month?”

“Very little. I have a suite in my office complex. I’ve been working late a lot and staying there.”

I raised another eyebrow.

Avoiding her and the situation. I jotted down on the notepad.

“When did you last see her?”

“Yesterday. We had a long conversation about the situation. She was more open to a sane discussion and something had changed in my life. I needed a resolution.”

“Is she difficult to talk to?”

“She is very unreasonable at times, but she never gets super mad to the point of throwing things, though. She just seems to look for a fight. All the time. She can shift moods, though, so quickly. As soon as I concede, she calms immediately. It seems very childlike. I sometimes feel like she’s acting even at home.” His eyes stared at the wall behind me as he said that last sentence. A revelation, perhaps.

“Can I be frank, Mr. Baxter?” I sat my notepad aside and leaned forward in my chair.

“Yes, please do. Can you help me?” He sat up a little taller but didn’t lean in.

“Why come see me? This seems to be a personality issue. A lack of communication. It seems like you two are not on the same page.”

“A friend recommended you.”

“You know I’m a sex therapist, Mr. Baxter? I usually deal with sexual dysfunction and sexual disorders, taboo types of things. Things that cause shame and guilt in my patients. You don’t seem to be feeling any shame or guilt. I would recommend you and your wife should go to couples’ counseling.”

He pondered what I said as the second hand on my wall clock ticked off the seconds and the bubbling of my fountain

sounded behind me. Then he sat up, leaned forward, and clasped his hands in front of him, arms on his knees.

“Well, there is a reason we haven’t had sex in a month, Mrs. Davenport.”

“And what is that, Mr. Baxter?”

“A month ago, on a Saturday night, I came home after a long day at the office. I had a big merger I’m were working on and I had to get a proposal ready by Monday. I had prepared myself to be jumped at the door and was ready to perform. Finishing a tough project always makes me feel more alive and virile.”

I expected and dreaded to hear this story both at the same time. While his case seemed just to need a marriage counselor and not my services, it still intrigued me. His lawyer had insisted on me and my staff signing an NDA before he even saw me. He had a beautiful trophy wife at home who wanted sex with him constantly. He obviously was wealthy. So much so, that he was going to pay me two-hundred thousand dollars to see him ten times.

I hoped there was something I could do to help him. *You fucked him two days ago. I’m not sure that was really helpful knowing what I know now.*

“I get home and she didn’t greet me at the door. I called out her name as I laid my briefcase and keys in the entryway. No answer. I walk through the house looking for her. She wasn’t in the living room or the kitchen. She wasn’t in our bedroom or the master bathroom. Her cars had been in the garage and she hated taking Uber, so I was confident she was home.”

I caught myself holding my breath. I breathed in.

“I went to the south wing where my office, library, entertainment room, and workout room were. As I approached the workout room, I heard some moans and giggling. It seemed more moaning than giggling, though. My heart beat

faster. I imagined the worst and my blood boiled. Was she cheating on me at my own house?”

“How did that make you feel?” I whispered.

He frowned and ignored my question.

“When I pushed the door open, my wife was on a massage table with two masseuses giving her a massage. She was on her stomach. The male was rubbing her shoulders and positioned at the end of the table. A female was massaging her legs and seemed to hit some rather sensitive parts. Thus the moans.”

I felt myself getting a little wet between the legs. It wasn't the story as much as it was his voice. He'd hit that deep baritone vibration that he had uttered his commands in, and it affected my pussy.

“What's going on in here, I said to the three of them. They were enjoying themselves in my house, in my workout room, with my wife. Scarlet turned to me and smiled. She had arranged for a double massage at my house to celebrate the upcoming merger. I went on about how it wasn't a done deal yet and she just smiled and pointed to the other massage table in the room. The female masseuse smiled and gave me instructions for getting ready. I remember taking in a deep breath. I was so relieved that I didn't have to... be with my wife after getting home. Maybe, I thought, I'd make it through the night without having to perform for her.”

I made a mental note. I didn't want to stop him from talking. He thinks of sex as performing for his wife. Not making love. Not having fun. A performance. That's getting into my area of expertise.

“The massage was very enjoyable. The girl, Thea, was very good, and she got very close to my cock. She actually touched my balls and massaged them. Not real professional, but I was on this high from work and relieved that Scarlet hadn't jumped me at the door, so I said nothing and just enjoyed it.”

“Did you want her to do more?” I asked.

“The thought crossed my mind that she might want to do more. That I might like it. I prefer to be in control during sex, though, so it didn’t excite me that much.”

“But you relaxed?”

“Yes, it was very relaxing until it was about time for the massage to end.”

“Because then you might have to perform?”

“No. Near the end of my massage, I woke up or at least became more alert. I had literally dozed off during the massage. I awoke, however, to moans coming from my wife. At first I just thought she was just enjoying the massage, but I took a glance her way and the male masseuse, Victor, had his fingers between her legs and was rubbing her. The moans were from her sexual pleasure.”

“And how did...” I asked before being cut off with an upraised hand.

“Once I was fully awake and raised up off the massage table to see better, the moans stopped, his hands were on her thighs, and Thea eased me back down on the table. I questioned whether I had seen what I had seen. The masseuses finished up and left us in bathrobes.”

He paused and met my gaze. I had listened intently to his story. His eyes were intense and dark. He hesitated. Can he really not recognize me? I wanted him to continue. “What happened next?”

“Scarlet led me by the hand to the kitchen where a candle lit dinner awaited me. She had Renaldo, my private chef, prepared my favorite: New York strip, medium, baked potatoes with butter, sour cream, and bacon, a tossed salad with plenty of tomatoes, and steamed broccoli. The food was still steaming, and I heard the front door close as Renaldo exited. She had gone to a lot of effort to make that night special and in my relaxed state, I enjoyed it very much.”

“Had the anxiety to perform for her disappeared?” I asked. This sounded like a romantic effort on her part. Perhaps, while Dirk said he liked to be in control, maybe his sexual blueprint wasn’t sexual. Perhaps he was more sensual or energetic.

“It hadn’t disappeared. But I was hopeful.” His face relaxed as if he pondered his last statement. “That’s not entirely true. I had warmed up to the idea of taking Scarlet in the bedroom after dinner. Again, that feeling of conquering my day and the upcoming merger had me feeling a bit... aroused.”

“By the time we had finished dinner, I definitely had plans. I took Scarlet by the hand, led her to the bedroom and slid off her bathrobe. When mine fell to the floor, I began kissing her.”

I imagined him kissing her lips, her neck, her shoulders. The thought of him massaging her breasts, kissing and licking her nipples, had my own suddenly hard. The vision of him caressing her from her shoulders to her ass had my body tingling.

I felt the wetness between my thighs. The interrupted masturbation session earlier. Memories of my night with Dirk on Saturday night. The memory of his hands on my body as I imagined his hands on his wife. His hard dick inside of me as we fucked in the Cherry Pit. These thoughts triggered my arousal. *Fuck Reggie. Snap out of it.*

“I laid her on the bed and pleased her. I brought her to orgasm with my tongue. The excitement was building. I felt this lust and desire to take her, to fuck her hard. And then...” he stopped speaking and looked back at the window. The sun had reached the perfect point so that it shone on the couch. It illuminated his face.

To me, he resembled Apollo, the Sun God, in that moment. Handsome. Bright. Majestic. His demeanor had changed, though. He adjusted so that his face was in the shadows before he turned back to me.

“When it came time to have intercourse,” the word came out oddly, as if he wasn’t accustomed to saying it. “I...”

There was a silence again with just the ticking of my wall clock beating out the slow rhythm of time.

“Go on Dirk. It’s okay,” I offered, my voice soft.

“My... penis wasn’t erect. I couldn’t get erect. I had this beautiful, sexy, thirty-three-year-old goddess in my bed, and I couldn’t get a hard-on.”

There it was. That was why he came to see me. Erectile dysfunction. If I had been less excited and more present, I probably wouldn’t have said what I did next.

“But you had no problem two nights ago,” I blurted.

His eyes narrowed as he focused on me. They held surprise. Suspicion.

“What are you talking about?” he said sternly.

“At the Cherry Pit, you had no problem...” I stopped myself even though I’d gone too far. Maybe he didn’t really recognize me. My hair was tied up in a bun. I had more clothes on and much less makeup than I did that night. The Cherry Pit itself isn’t a bright room. Oh, my god. *He has no idea.*

He stood up and strode to the window. He stared into the distance for a while, not focused on any one thing. Turning to face me, those big, dark eyes of his drilled into me.

“Come here. In the light,” he commanded.

My body responded, and I pussyfooted over to him.

He pulled me into the light with his two muscular hands on my upper arms. He examined my face. I saw the recognition enter his eyes. They didn’t express joy in that moment either. It was more like anger.

“You,” he whispered.

I was suddenly embarrassed, and I tried to look apologetic. Meek. Remorseful. Anything other than the lust that stirred within me.

He let me go and stormed to the door of my therapy room. He opened the door and then turned to face me again.

“Do not forget. You signed an NDA.” Then Mr. Dark Eyes, Mr. Dirk Baxter, walked out of my office.

I had this sinking feeling that I would never see him again. The feeling actually hurt, physically. Would he ever trust me again to help him? To work through this problem with him? Had I thrown two-hundred thousand dollars out the window? Worse, would I ever see him again?

You know you want to, Reggie.

Chapter 6

Evil Plans

STU HAD HIS HEAD BETWEEN MY LEGS AND I WAS ENJOYING the attention he gave me. My groans and the lapping of his tongue were the only sounds in my suite at the Ace Hotel. The afternoon sun poked through the curtains and highlighted dust motes in the air.

Stu stood 6'4" tall and his shoulders spanned half that length. He had muscles everywhere but between his ears. My husband, Dirk, hadn't touched me in over a month and I needed relief.

I ran my hand through his crew cut, sandy brown hair and pressed his face into my sex. The ex-marine held the position of Head of Security for Baxter Enterprises and took care of both my husband, Dirk's security, and mine.

Right now his job was to secure me an orgasm. Or three.

He had one superior talent that set him apart, at least in my mind, and that was an extremely long tongue. He penetrated my pussy with that tongue and I felt it spread me open.

I couldn't help but moan and grip the back of his head tighter. My hips ground into him and I reveled in the pleasure shooting through my body. I wrapped my long legs around him, securing his head exactly where I wanted it. I pulled a strand of my red hair away from my face.

He definitely was talented with his tongue.

As he pleased me, though, my mind wandered to my current predicament. That damn pre-nuptial agreement and my

impotent husband, Dirk Baxter.

The man was a billionaire. At least, that is what I told my girlfriends when we would get together for shopping and martinis. I also made it a point to remind my agent of the fact and every casting agent I talked to as well.

He always told me he wasn't a billionaire. *Not yet*, he always said. He had plenty of money though and treated me generously. I had credit cards which were paid off each month. The limits were disappointing—two cards, each with a ten thousand dollar limit. I bumped up against the limits regularly, which was so embarrassing when it happened over martinis with my girlfriends.

Twenty thousand a month though was much more than I brought in from my modeling jobs and the occasional small part I'd get in a sitcom or a random tv show that needed a red-headed beauty to be murdered, arrested, or just look pretty.

Stu's tongue jerked me back from my thoughts as he applied pressure to the little pink nub just above my slit. One of his hands caressed my breast, which lay exposed above my red push-up bra.

I squeezed and pulled on the nipple of the other breast.

His up and down tongue motions, followed by one of his fingers penetrating me, brought me to a quick orgasm.

My cravings for orgasms were only surpassed by my desire for money. So I barely slowed down my breathing and pressed his face into my pussy again.

“More. Harder. Just like that,” I instructed.

I let my worries slip away so I could enjoy the moment. The feeling of his tongue on my flesh fanned the flames of my excitement. My hips bucked up to meet his thrusting finger. I pushed his head into my grinding and continued to pinch my nipple.

Soon another wave of pleasure crashed over me like a twenty footer at Zuma Beach. I wasn't a surfer, but a modeling

friend of mine was. He was always talking about those waves. My best orgasms felt like what I imagined riding one of those waves would feel like.

“Oh, Baby. Fuck me. I want you deep inside me.” My moans, like the waves, subsided before the next swell. I patted him on the shoulder and pulled on him to stand up.

He did, and then grabbed my hips and pulled me to the edge of the king-size bed. A cool breeze blew in from the open patio door that led to the balcony. He positioned his engorged member right at the entrance to my wet cunt.

Sweat clung to my body, and my red hair matted on my forehead.

“You ready for a good fuck, Scarlet,” he grunted.

“Yes, Baby. I need another orgasm or two before I have to head home.”

Stu obliged by sliding his cock inside of me. He had to do it slowly. His girth split me open, and it was painful at first. Once he had fully penetrated me and started pumping in and out of me, the pain turned into pleasure.

I liked pain, but I liked pleasure more. I preferred dishing out pain rather than receiving it. Soon he found that pleasant rhythm and he was doing all the work.

I had to put one hand across my boobs to keep them from bouncing too much. They were pretty immobile for the most part, but the implants could start swaying pretty well when he fucked me vigorously. He removed my hand.

“I like to see your boobs bouncing as I fuck you,” he said.

“Do you, Baby?” I replied.

He leaned forward just enough to make his hard cock push all the right buttons inside of me. He grunted, and I panted as his thrusts became stronger.

I clawed his chest with my nails and drew a tiny bit of blood from a cut at the top of his chest.

He had average length, but he still seemed to penetrate deep inside me and the smacking sound of his legs on my ass had me nearing another orgasm. What he lacked in length, he made up for with girth.

“Yes, Darlin’. I love looking at your body while I pound you. Your tits are perfect.”

I cried out and dug my nails in to his chest as the third orgasm of the afternoon raced through my body. I always felt them before they actually arrived. It was like animals sensing earthquakes before they happen. I felt a tingling in the back of my neck first, which then traveled down to where my legs met at the top of my thighs. From there, a pulsing radiated from my core and exploded into a thousand flaming butterflies flittering about in my body. This orgasm caused my eyes to roll back.

Stu didn’t stop, though. We had done this enough, and I had taught him well enough to know that this was the point where I desired he continue to fuck me. Hard.

I just drifted along on the wave of intense pleasure as he pounded into me. I counted on him being able to fuck me for a good thirty minutes, if not an hour.

It’s like his dick was desensitized and he didn’t feel pleasure as intensely as I did. If a normal man’s penis had four thousand nerve endings in it, his must have only had a thousand. He could last a long time and he had a habit of being rough.

I liked that. I could also sense he wanted to come. He had an insanely intent focus.

“Flip me over,” I commanded.

He obeyed, and soon I crouched on my hands and knees. He slapped my ass before sliding back into me again. Another slap on the other cheek caused me to jump. I didn’t cry out, though.

“Fuck me hard, Dobbs. I want you to come inside of me.”

He grabbed both of my hips and plunged his cock inside of me. His hips moved fast, and he drove his rod inside of me over and over. Harder and faster.

I could see our images in a mirror on the wall.

He thrust his hips forward as he pulled back on my hips and he did it like a machine. A Marine machine.

My breasts hung beneath me, swaying more in this position, even with the implants. Sweat glistened on his chest and the space between my breasts was laced with perspiration. He looked like some scar-faced Roman gladiator and I looked like a Senator's daughter being given to him as a gift for a victory. I am a gift to him.

I took in the sight of us and the pleasure rippling through my body even as schemes and plans popped into my head. I endured the hard sex as he pushed to reach the goal.

“Harder. Faster,” I spurred him on. He couldn't really go any faster I thought.

Somehow he did. We were both panting from the exertion and the pleasure that was coursing through our bodies.

“Come, Baby,” I pleaded.

“You ready, Darling?”

“Yeah, Baby. Come for me. Fill me up. Fuck me harder.”

“I'm coming,” he exclaimed three hard thrusts later.

I could feel his cum shooting into me. The guy also had balls the size of over-sized golf balls. He could fill a large pee cup with sperm on his best days. The feeling of his pleasure inside of me, splashing on the interior walls of my vagina, pushed me to another orgasm.

“Yes, Baby. I'm... coming... too.”

We both cried out and gasped and made those ugly faces that everyone makes during orgasms.

For Stu, fucking was like an Olympic event. He always threw his all into it. I had to give him that. He collapsed on the bed and pulled air into his lungs in deep gasps.

I crawled into his arms and laid my head on his chest. A bit of blood pooled on his chest where my nail had scratched him. I played with it casually, smearing it in a circle.

For me, sex was a power play. Men had used sex to subjugate women for eons. Now, in the days of the #metoo movement, I used sex as a weapon to get what I wanted. Stu had something I wanted. Something I needed. So I fucked him to get it. I fucked him to keep him complacent and willing to do what I needed from him to achieve my ultimate goal.

I intended to divorce Dirk Baxter and get a fifty million dollars out of it. That sum was a drop in the bucket for Dirk. I was sure of it. I could get more, but that involved something a little more drastic than what I had planned.

“Why don’t you just get the divorce and take the one million dollars per the prenup?” Stu asked me after several minutes of heavy breathing and eventual silence. “I make a decent salary from Baxter, and that acting job you’re always talking about could come through any day now.”

There it was. The inevitable proposal. It had never taken me long with a guy to receive a proposal.

Go to Tahiti with me.

Date me exclusively.

Move in with me.

Marry me.

Stu wasn’t exactly asking me to marry him, but fucking him for the last thirty days had turned him into my puppy crush. I had no desire to date, let alone move in or marry Stu Dobbs. I needed him, though.

“I told you, Baby. One million dollars for divorcing a man I’ve spent three years with isn’t fair. He has millions. Baxter Enterprises alone is valued at over a billion dollars and he

owns more than half of it. He'll be a billionaire by the end of the year if not the year after. One million isn't even daily interest on his wealth. I deserve more, and I'm going to get it."

He nuzzled me close and kissed me on my forehead.

"You're sure he saw Regina Davenport on Monday?"

"Yeah, Adams drove him. He took the old lawyer, Warren, and the lawyer's two privates with him."

"Banks and Croft?"

"Yeah, those two. The blond is kind of hot in her pin stripe suits. Croft just creeps me out."

"And they were there for a full hour?"

"Yeah. More like an hour and a half."

"So, that's one session. He can't get to ten," I muttered to myself. "And this Davenport woman, she's a sex therapist, you said?"

"Yeah. Why wouldn't he just go to a marriage counselor?" Stu asked.

"Well, he is fifty-five, Dobbs, if you know what I mean," I replied sarcastically.

"Oh. The boss is having that kind of problem?"

I didn't say a word. His non-disclosure agreement with me was a part of the prenuptial. I couldn't discuss anything private about Dirk to anyone. I didn't really have a problem telling Stu more, but he had a habit of not keeping his trap shut.

"How did you get that in the prenup anyway?" he asked after I didn't answer.

Stu was referring to the divorce clause that I had asked for and which Dirk had agreed to.

In the event he asked for a divorce, I insisted he go to a counselor for ten sessions. I had dated him for six months before he proposed. I had a knack for reading men. He wasn't

the counseling type. He barely opened up to me and even when he did, it came nowhere close to being vulnerable.

Dirk Baxter was like most men in that respect. A closed up can of emotions and memories with no one being allowed close to them with a can opener. If Dirk couldn't finish ten therapy sessions and he went through with the divorce, I got a fifty million dollar settlement and twenty thousand a month in alimony for twenty years. That was a lot more than a straight one million dollars.

I also never thought he would see a sex therapist. My plan to nearly neuter him had backfired.

"It was just a simple, reasonable request." I smiled as I ran my finger over Stu's chest. I had smeared the blood on his chest into a half-dollar size circle and it had dried up.

I had made that simple, reasonable request after a weekend in Aruba, where we hadn't left the suite the entire time. Sex and room service had been the menu for the entire weekend. I had worn his resolve down and the counseling sessions actually seemed reasonable to him.

Warren had objected when we got back to the states. He objected to everything related to me, but Dirk had finally got him to relent. He said he would never have to even consider going to those counseling sessions because he would never ask me for a divorce. He was not the type of man to back out of a commitment.

On Sunday, though, the night after he had slipped away from his security detail, he came to me and asked for a divorce. He tried to be gracious and compliment me for the things I had brought into his life. He tried to package his rejection in a nice little package for me. I didn't appreciate the present.

I threw a couple of wine glasses and then reminded him of the prenup. The counseling clause.

I'd always assumed he would not do it and if he did, that he would see a marriage counselor. Apparently, he had decided

he needed a sex therapist.

Maybe he did. He hadn't touched me in a month. Not since he couldn't get an erection with me naked and ready in front of him. Who couldn't get an erection in front of me? At least that would be my argument in a divorce proceeding. I knew exactly why he couldn't get hard.

“So, you get fifty million if he doesn't see a counselor for ten sessions. What has to happen for you to get two-hundred-fifty million?”

“That will never happen, I promise you. We have to stay married for twenty years. Or he has to die. He's pretty healthy. I don't see him dying while we're still married.”

I didn't expect Dirk to suddenly keel over and die. He worked out five times a week and had a really fit body. Two-hundred-fifty million was half of his estate when we got married. Now it was less, but it was still a substantial sum and I could do nicely with that. I just didn't see him dying soon, and death was the only way I could get that amount.

So, I just had to figure out a way to ensure he didn't make it to ten counseling sessions with this slut Regina Davenport.

Chapter 7

A Dreamy Ride

I EXITED MY OFFICE BUILDING TO MEET THE UBER I HAD arranged. It was a Friday night, 8:00 pm, nineteen days after my first and last appointment with Dirk. It was dark, with only the glow of streetlights providing any illumination. The streets were also quiet in this downtown area. There were no restaurants or bars within ten blocks of my office.

I had worked late, catching up on all my patient notes, jotting down questions to ask or therapies to consider for each of the clients that I had seen that week. My heels were killing my feet. I just wanted to get home and take them off. A hot bath sounded so inviting right now.

I looked up from scrolling through my phone as the vehicle pulled up. The app said my ride was driving a lime green Kia Soul. Not my favorite choice, but I wanted to get home.

The vehicle that pulled up wasn't a Kia Soul. And it wasn't lime green. It was a black Lincoln Navigator with tinted glass and a license plate that read SECURE1. It parked on the curb right in front of me. *That's a dreamy ride.*

The driver got out and walked around the vehicle. He wore a black suit, white shirt, and black tie. His well-polished patent leather shoes reflected the streetlights.

"Evening, Ma'am," he said as he tipped his head to me politely. He opened the backseat door facing the curb for me. "Mr. Baxter requests your presence."

I peeked into the back seat. It was empty.

“Well, if Mr. Baxter wants to see me, he knows how to make an appointment.” I crossed my arms, tapped my index finger on my arm, and smirked at the man.

“Miss Davenport. If you would just get in, I’ll be driving you to see Mr. Baxter.”

“He didn’t have enough desire to come himself?” I leaned to one side, displaying even more attitude.

“Please, Miss Davenport. If you’ll just get in, I’ll have you there in about forty minutes.”

“Look,... whatever your name is, I’m tired. I just want to go home and relax. Mr. Baxter knows my office hours. Have him make an appointment.”

A lime green Kia pulled in behind the Navigator and the driver reached inside his suit jacket as he eyed the vehicle and the driver. *My Uber. Thank God.*

“Trace Adams, Ma’am. I’m Mr. Baxter’s personal driver. You’ll be safe with me. I promise.”

Trace had a square jaw, broad shoulders, and a bald ebony head. His suit couldn’t hide his thin waist and broad chest. It couldn’t hide his muscular body, either. He wasn’t a normal limo driver. It was too dark to make out his facial features, but he looked and sounded like he could keep a woman safe.

Right now, I wasn’t worried about my safety. I just wanted to get home and into a hot bath. *I can use those Morning Zen bath bombs setting on my bathroom counter.*

“Mr. Adams. Thank you so much for coming by and thank you for the offer, but I’ll have to take a rain check.”

“Mr. Baxter really wants to see you?”

“Then maybe he shouldn’t have missed his last two appointments.” I couldn’t really blame the man for that. When I blurted out what I said in my office and he recognized who I

was, it must have been a shock to him. I'm sure he never expected to see me again after our tryst in the Cherry Pit.

The memory of it and his hands on me flashed through my mind at that moment as Trace stood waiting. I felt a tingle between my legs as I remembered him penetrating me during my lap dance.

"He is extremely sorry for that, Miss Davenport. He would like to discuss resuming his appointments..." The Uber driver, who had exited his car, cut Trace off.

"Miss Davenport?" the Uber driver asked. He was an older man, kind looking.

"Yes," I replied. "I'll be right there. I just need to finish with this gentleman."

"Very good, Ma'am. Hopefully not too long. It's Friday night."

I smiled at him and nodded. Then I turned my attention to Trace.

"Where were we?" I asked.

"Mr. Baxter would like to discuss resuming his appointments with you in private."

"No, the part before that."

"He would like you to come with me?" Trace asked, obviously unsure of what I was referring to.

"No. The part where he was sorry for missing his last two appointments. How sorry?"

"Very sorry, Ma'am." Realization dawned on his face and a big smile crossed his face for a few seconds. "If you come with me, you'll see how very sorry he is."

I attempted to pierce Trace's gaze with my own eyes, drilling into him to see if he would flinch. He didn't. I guess if you drive for a rich man, you're not easily intimidated. Or had Trace always been like that?

“Very well, Mr. Adams. Let me take care of the Uber driver and you can take me to see Mr. Baxter.” I started for the Kia.

“That won’t be necessary, Miss Davenport. I’ll take care of the driver. Please, get in the vehicle.” He opened the back door and motioned for me to enter.

I stepped up to the door, examined the interior once again, and then slid in to the back seat. Trace shut the door, disappeared behind me, and then slid into the front seat about a minute later. I saw the Kia pull out and drive past.

“I hope you didn’t just scare him off. I was going to give him some money for his troubles,” I said.

“I compensated him well, Ma’am.”

Trace looked in the rear-view mirror and I could see his dark eyes smiling back at me. He pulled out and wound his way through the streets of LA. The back of the Navigator was luxurious and even had a small bar built in to the back of the front seat console. It had much more legroom than I expected. Much more than the Kia.

“Is this custom-built?” I asked casually as Trace pulled onto 110, heading south.

“Yes, Ma’am. Good eye. Longer body by two feet. Reinforced chassis. Military grade bullet proof glass. This is the boss’s flagship.” He rattled off the information like a proud father. “Help yourself to a drink, if you’d like. There is also some wine in the cooler.”

I opened the built-in cooler behind the driver’s seat. It was big enough for a six-pack and a little taller. Three half-bottles of wine were in there, packed in some ice. A red, a white, and a rose rested in the cool interior. I passed on the wine. I had no intentions of giving any advantage to the man I was being taken to.

We passed the Staples Center and soon after, Trace exited Highway 110 and merged onto Highway 10.

“You’re not taking me to some dark corner of LA to eliminate me, are you, Mr. Adams?”

“No, Ma’am. I think that would be a waste. We’re headed to Santa Monica. We should be there in about thirty minutes.” He cracked a smile as he answered me. In the highway’s light and the general glow of the city, I could tell he had a handsome face.

“So, how long have you been driving for Mr. Baxter?”

“About fifteen years, Ma’am.”

“Mr. Adams, I’d prefer Reggie or Miss Davenport, if you don’t mind.”

“Very well, Miss Davenport.”

“Where did you meet Mr. Baxter?”

“Iraq in 2003 during the war. I drove for him there too.”

“What was he, a consultant or a diplomat?” I asked.

I hadn’t really done a lot of research on Dirk since our first meeting. The first week I was anxious and stressing over revealing who I was to him. When he didn’t show up for his appointment on the following Monday, I thought I had blown it and lost a patient. The next week, after he missed the next scheduled appointment, I tried to put that aside and focus on work.

“He was a first lieutenant. I drove his Humvee.”

“I bet you have some stories.”

“I sure do, Miss Davenport.” He flashed a white smile in the rear-view mirror.

“What’s your best story, Mr. Adams?”

“Mr. Baxter gave me explicit orders not to divulge any of those stories to you, Miss Davenport.”

I relaxed in the back seat and let my mind drift.

Dirk Baxter had awakened a desire in me that night at the Cherry Pit. One which had been like a dull ache since then.

Meeting him as a patient, while I knew I should put that encounter out of my mind as I treated him, had only thrown more gasoline on that fire. I crossed my legs and the feel of my panties on my soft folds and the images that played through my mind stoked those flames.

It was probably best I didn't see him professionally again. At least, it would be more ethical.

I imagined Trace was taking me to a luxurious hotel or condo, where I would ride up an elevator to the penthouse apartment. We would exit and I would find a trail of rose petals leading from the elevator door through a lavish living room down a dark hallway. I would hear running water up ahead from a door. Light from the room would spill out into the hallway and the rose petals would lead right to the door.

In my lovely dream, I would walk to the entrance, stopping there and lean against the frame. Striking a sexy pose, Dirk would be there sitting on the edge of an enormous bathtub, a single rose in hand, and running his hand through the bubble bath that he was preparing. He was only wearing some black silk pajama bottoms. His well-muscled chest and abs shone like an Adonis in the bathroom's steam.

"Is that for me?" I ask.

"Yes, I got you a dozen. All but this one became the trail of roses which brought you to me." I noticed a crystal vase with plucked roses sitting on the bathroom counter.

"I was referring to the bath, Mr. Baxter," I said with a seductive smile. Even in my dream, I just wanted a bath.

"Yes. That is for you, too." He stood and approached me. After giving me the rose, he pulled me into a kiss. Our lips crushed against each other, the passion in me burning brightly. I nearly swooned. His dream kiss seemed just as hot as the one in the Cherry Pit.

Dirk led me to the tub and slowly undressed me. He unzipped my red dress slowly until his hand reached the small of my back. As my dress fell to the floor, he undid my bra and

cupped my breasts in his hands and kissed my neck from behind. The pleasure rippled through me with those tingly sensations one feels when your favorite song plays on the radio. The one that reminds you of the first time you ever made love.

He stepped around me and knelt before me on the floor. He slid my panties down over my hips, down my legs, before helping me step out of them. I only had on a black garter and black hose and red, five-inch-heeled Louboutins. His lips played along the flesh of my stomach, my thighs, as his hands squeezed my ass cheeks. His tongue danced across the flesh at the apex of my thighs. I couldn't help but gasp as his tongue ran up the full length of my slit.

My moans and the running water created a cacophony of sensual sounds. Suddenly, the room was dark except for the soft glow of a dozen candles. Their scent—lavender and hibiscus, mixed with the smell of the roses—had me in a state of sensual bliss.

When his tongue ran along my clit, I gasped again, louder this time. My hands went to the back of his head and I pulled him into me. I pressed him hard against me as his tongue lashed out, penetrating me and pleasuring my pussy.

“I'm so close. Don't stop,” I whispered in my dream.

Suddenly, Dirk was standing in front of me, naked, his cock pressing against my belly. It was hard and ready. He looked eager to take me, almost animalistic. I was ready for him to take me.

The bath, though, was beckoning me. It looked so warm. So inviting. The bubbles looked so soft and magical.

“Why did you stop?” I asked softly.

“We're here,” Dirk said.

“Where?” I asked. My eyes were closed as I reveled in the pleasure. I could feel his fingers running up my slit, pressing against my clit. “Don't stop,” I begged.

“We’re here, Miss Davenport,” Trace said, waking me from my dream.

I felt wet between my legs. I could still smell roses and lavender. *Where was I?* I opened my eyes and realized I was still in the back seat of the Navigator.

Trace had the back door open, but he was looking straight ahead, not at me. I sat up, embarrassed, and slid out of the car. I looked up and saw that we were at the entrance to a hotel.

“Where are we?” I asked.

“At the Huntley Hotel, Miss Davenport. You’ll be headed up to the Penthouse.”

Holy shit! Was that a dream or a premonition? I’d never had a premonition before, not even a *déjà vu* moment. I’d assumed it was a dream.

Trace shut the door and escorted me into the building. We headed into the building, found the elevators, and entered them. I was grateful we were the only two going up.

“You didn’t hear anything from the back seat, did you, Mr. Adams?” I was still disoriented and aroused as hell. I could feel my nipples pressing against my teal bra under my turquoise blouse.

“You did appear to be talking in your sleep, Miss Davenport,” he replied matter-of-factly.

Oh, my God. I wanted to say something. To make an excuse. To ask him what I actually said in my sleep. My chance, though, disappeared quickly as the elevator bell rang to show we’d arrived at the top floor.

He better have a fucking hot bath ready for me.

Chapter 8

The Penthouse

INSTEAD OF A PENTHOUSE SUITE, I STEPPED FROM THE elevator into the restaurant at the top of the Huntley Hotel: The Penthouse. The sounds of conversation, glass and cutlery, and the bright lights of the restaurant assaulted my senses and dazed me. I stepped shakily forward as Trace moved in front of me and I followed him to the maitre d.

No bubble bath here.

“Miss Davenport is joining Mr. Baxter,” Trace said to the man dressed in a black suit with a white shirt.

The maitre d motioned to a server who guided us through a multitude of tables with shiny black tops and white cushioned chairs. The walls of the restaurant were floor to ceiling windows, which now gave a nighttime view of the ocean and city lights below. Many tables were near those windows and everyone chattered away or laughed at someone’s joke or story.

The server guided us to a white-topped table near a window with off-white couch seating and one chair. The window had a view of the bay and the far-off cliffs. A white chandelier with soft-white bulbs centered over the table and a wine ice bucket stand sat ready beside the table with a chilled red wine nestled in it.

Dirk scanned me as I approached—from my high heels to my pencil skirt to my turquoise blouse. He had that same gaze that excited me at the Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club and it

pulled me towards him. He looked famished and ready to devour me.

I could feel my face blush and extend down my neck. My heart rate quickened. That same magnetism that made me dance for him that night, that made me take off my top as I danced on stage for him, and that made me venture into the Cherry Pit to give him a private lap dance—and more—was in full force tonight. I became more aware of the slight wetness that I experienced in the Navigator dreaming about him. I approached the table with slow, deliberate steps.

Trace motioned for me to sit in the wrap-around seating, but I took the chair right across from Dirk. Trace politely pulled it out and pushed it in.

“Will that be all for now, sir?” Trace asked his boss.

“Yes. Stay in the building. We will both need rides home.” Dirk addressed Trace with an even tone, neither dismissive nor overly caring. Professional.

I sat my bag with my laptop and personal items on the seat beside me. Before I could even address Dirk and his disappearing act, a server appeared and asked for my drink order. I scanned the menu quickly and settled on the Watermelon Cucumber Mojito. When the server left, I placed my hands on the table before me, elbows out, and one hand over the other, as if creating a magical barrier between Dirk’s draw on my sexual energy and myself.

“You do know how to get a hold of me at my office?” I asked, my voice dripping with snarkiness.

“I do, but I felt we needed a meeting on neutral ground.” His look went from seducing-the-hell-out-of-me to a poker-faced look bordering on sheepishness, like a wolf who’s sworn off sheep but can’t help but salivate in the presence of one.

“Something tells me you do well in this type of place.”

“I hold my own here.”

“Then it doesn’t appear to be that neutral,” I replied.

“I was hoping we could talk and not make—”

“... a scene,” I cut him off. We weren’t in my office. I had no desire to let him finish. He owed me an explanation. *And a bubble bath.*

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

I couldn’t help but notice the view behind him, even in my suddenly simmering state. City lights curving along the beach, the hills above Malibu, and the shimmering of the moon on the ocean all set such an enchanting picture outside the window beyond Dirk.

When Dirk opened his eyes, his penetrating stare from those dark eyes of his melted me. I had to hold on to my anger, but it felt like holding on to a glass on a hot day with slick condensation on it from the melting ice. I’m supposed to be his therapist, but that seemed impossible after the carnal relations we shared at the Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club.

My drink arrived just as he started to say something. The mojito looked amazing, and I took a sip as Dirk ordered a charcuterie tray with meats, cheeses, and pate. When the server left, he turned that gaze on me again and leaned forward.

“I have no desire to make a scene. That much is true,” he said, his voice low. “And I want to apologize for not arriving for my appointments. I had—”

“... something else more important to do.” I felt like such an impetuous brat, both with my tone and with interrupting him. I took a deep breath and tried to put my therapist’s hat back on.

“No,” he replied defensively, before sighing. “Yes,” he admitted.

“And what was more important than trying to save your marriage?”

“Being sure that I wasn’t walking from a snake’s den into a hornet’s nest.” He laid a file folder on the table from a laptop

case I hadn't noticed in the seat beside him.

"And what is that?" My therapist's hat started to melt.

"Your file, Miss Davenport."

"You have a file on me. I'm the hornet's nest?"

"I thought you might be. My marriage to Scarlet proved to me I have a terrible sense of gauging a woman's integrity."

I stared at the file. It seemed awfully thick for a dossier on me. It was at least a half an inch thick. I figured any file on me might contain a half a dozen sheets—DMV information, credit report, credit score—things a high-tech security guy could get his hands on without my written permission to do so. This contained much more than that.

"So you dug into my past? For what?"

"You see, Miss Davenport, my indiscretion with you at the Gentleman's Club, wasn't supposed to happen. I had ditched my security team, found my way to the nearest place that sold a drink, and found myself sitting at the stage of a strip club. I just wanted a drink or two and a chance to clear my head. Work some stuff out."

"Indiscretion. I was an indiscretion?" I sat back in my chair, crossing my arms over my chest. My anger flared up, and I didn't know what I was thinking or saying. I sounded like a jealous girlfriend who'd been ghosted for two weeks. He just came to me for therapy. I wasn't his girlfriend, but being thought of as an indiscretion was like pouring salt into a wound.

"Poor choice of words, Miss Davenport." He put up his hands as if to shield himself from my simmering fury. "More like a synchronicity."

"So why the file?" I still refused to pick up the file and look through it. I didn't really want to know what he had in there.

"I had to be sure, before I came back to work with you, that you were who you seemed to be in your office and not the

woman who I met at the club.” He seemed to pick his words carefully.

“What if I’m both? What’s wrong with who you met at the club?” More simmering bubbles.

“Nothing was wrong with that woman at the club. She was...”

“Don’t say it. You have one minute to tell me why I’m here and what you want.” I tried to shoot lasers at him with my green eyes, but I didn’t believe I pulled it off. My ex had always said I looked more cute than menacing when I got mad.

“Miss Davenport. I looked into your past, trying to figure out if I could trust you. I still want to work with you, fulfill my contract with you, and get to where I can divorce Scarlet. Everything in your file points to the fact that you keep your word, handle difficult situations well, and are good at your job. Your professional reputation is impeccable, and that’s just what I need. I just can’t have it come to light what happened between us at the club. That could screw a lot of things up in my life.” He sat back and took a deep breath. “I’m at your mercy, Miss Davenport. What do you say?”

He managed to look powerful and act vulnerable at the same time as he gave me his pitch. It felt a little too much like a pitch, though. My intuition told me that this was a bad idea, and that there was something I was missing. I couldn’t fight my curiosity to look at my file. Perhaps it would help me decide.

“May I look at the file?” I turned my gaze to the file folder.

“Certainly. Please do.”

I picked up the file and opened it up. My professional photo from my website and a sheet of basic information was stapled to the left side: birth date, address, phone numbers, height, weight, education, marriages, and residences for the last twenty years. The right side had some sheets detailing business records, my divorce papers, including some

transcripts, pages from my high school yearbook, college records, professional certifications, and some personal interviews. My best and my worst moments summarized better than Saint Peter at the Pearly Gates could put together.

“You didn’t have to waste a tree for this, you know. You’ve heard of this thing called computers, haven’t you?” My comment was acerbic.

“My team is thorough.”

“Team? So you’re not the only one who has been reading up on my life?”

“I entrusted this to my best security analyst.”

“Trace?”

Dirk smirked. “Trace specializes in things more mechanical. Machinery, cars, guns.”

“Oh, so, another jar-head did the dirty work for you? How pleasant.” I continued to ruffle through the information from the personal interviews. The last name on the list made my heart jump.

“Actually, she’s ex-CIA. No military background. Great with things electrical. Computers, firewalls, security, forensic accounting, and she interacts better with humans than Trace does.”

“Forensic accounting? So she uncovered my money laundering scheme?” I joked, although as soon as I said it, I hoped he knew I was joking. I could actually have used a forensic accountant during my divorce, though. My heart was still racing, and I needed to get out of here before I blew up from both anger and anxiety. Dirk had been thorough. *He said she. Interesting.*

“So, let me get this straight. You want to see me for the agreed upon ten times. You only blew me off because you needed to be sure you could trust me and to do that, you had to dig into everything I’ve ever done. In my entire life. And

our... encounter at the club was just an indiscretion that you never intended to happen. Does that about sum it up?"

"Yes, that about sums it up." He looked hopeful suddenly. Not like a hardened military lieutenant who couldn't care less what I said next.

"So, you believe that after reading this file, I'm trustworthy?" The anger had slipped away and the panic that had crept in had been supplanted by my more analytical self.

"Yes. I believe I can trust you to keep to the non-disclosure agreement, and help me in my situation with Scarlet."

"What in this file led you to that conclusion?" I uncrossed my arms and leaned with my forearms on the table again. My green eyes penetrating the darkness behind his deep black eyes.

"Your divorce trial transcripts. The way you answered questions. The way you remained strong against your husband's team of lawyers. Plus, there was nothing else in your background to prove any of your statements in court wrong."

Unlike my lying ex-husband.

My shoulders relaxed as I tried to read him. His thoughts. He had determined he could trust me. Could I trust him? That was the big question. I was eager to leave, though. I had to decide.

"Pay me the original rate for the missed meetings at the same rate as the others. Twenty thousand dollars per appointment. And show up next Friday for your scheduled appointment."

He thought for a moment before replying. "Ten thousand dollars for each of the two missed appointments."

He jumped right into business mode. I wouldn't settle for less. Not because I needed the money, but out of principal. Something was off and I couldn't put my finger on it. It was time to walk away.

“That was my final offer, Mr. Baxter. Good luck in finding a new therapist.” As I stood up, I put the file into my bag. “I’m keeping this, by the way. I’m sure you have electronic copies of everything here.”

I turned to walk away.

“I agree to your terms, Miss Davenport.” I heard the gigantic sigh that followed.

“Good. Call Trace and tell him I need a ride home,” I said, without turning back to face him.

I heard a chuckle behind me that soon got lost in the crowded restaurant noise.

On the elevator down, I sent a text to Jerald.

Hey, I miss you. Can you come to my place? I’ll be there in an hour.

I slipped my phone into my bag, not waiting for an answer. I had so many regrets about Dirk right now, but I had added forty thousand to the bottom line. Nothing but the money felt right about this arrangement.

I had a strong sexual attraction to Dirk. It had been evident at the club, even more so in the Cherry Pit during that private lap dance that turned into much, much more than a dance. It didn’t even seem right to call it Amateur Night anymore after what happened then.

I felt like he had a sexual attraction to me too. But he was married, on the verge of divorce, and too damn handsome for his own good.

As those emotions roiled through me, I also felt this pang in my gut—maybe a little lower—almost an ache that comes from an unfulfilled desire. Dirk was my client now, so I had to put that out of my mind, even if it was the best sex I’d had since my divorce.

Jerald could ease that ache a bit if he wasn’t busy. And he could answer some questions.

When I exited the elevator, I found Trace waiting for me. After I got in the Navigator with all these regrets rushing through me, the one regret that popped into my mind and made me laugh was:

I only got one sip of that mojito.

Chapter 9

Sexual Relief

I ONLY HAD ENOUGH TIME TO UNDRRESS AND SLIP A KIMONO robe on when I got to my condo. I poured a glass of Malbec wine and took a sip. The plum flavor rolled over my tongue and immediately calmed me. A lamp in the living room cast a soft glow into the kitchen in the open area of my home.

The memories of the evening rolled through my brain like the Malbec. I had been both happy and excited to see Dirk and angry at him as well. First, standing me up for two appointments. Then a terrible attempt at making it up to me with dinner at a posh hotel. It wasn't that bad of an attempt. The coconut tuna bowl had looked tasty. He had looked tasty.

My desire for him, though, had surprised me. As his therapist, I shouldn't have those feelings for him. Even if I did, I shouldn't act on them. Perhaps that private lap dance had poisoned my ability to remain detached. I had never really been able to shake the memories of that night, especially the time in the Cherry Pit—the dark, private area in the back of the strip club where I had given him a lap dance on amateur night. A lap dance and so much more!

I felt that desire for him from the other side of the table while I was in the restaurant. I tried to limit those sensations to my bedroom and sessions with my vibrator. The wetness between my legs and my hard nipples betrayed any desire to be ethical.

I knew the body could be a strange master, and I had learned self-control early in life. What I also knew was that

your body often knew better than your brain and I had learned to listen to it. I wanted to listen to it, to give in, but I couldn't. I shouldn't.

The file he had on me lay in my bag on the kitchen counter. My anger really didn't reach a boil until he laid that file on the table.

First, he made me sign an NDA to protect his privacy. Then he dug into my background. The people he interviewed. My ex was on that list. My realtor. An old landlord. Three of my college professors. Two close friends. And Jerald.

Somehow Raoul didn't make the list. The last time I heard from him he was in Spain, though. Perhaps Mr. Baxter's reach didn't extend worldwide.

I had so many questions to ask Jerald, and I expected answers. We had known each other for about four years and two of those had been mutually beneficial to our sexual sanity. When my business took off though, I had cut out our two to three time a month rendezvous.

Even though I hadn't seen him in a year, tonight I wasn't in the mood for that, though. He had some explaining to do.

When I let him in, he pressed me up against the wall and kissed me. I was tall, but his six feet six inches and with me barefoot, he still towered over me. His body, honed from working in the firehouse, responding to emergencies and putting out fires, was chiseled better than any marble statue.

He had my robe opened, my lips parted, and his hands on my waist and hips. I felt his hard body against me in the shadows of the entryway. I swung the door closed and ran my hands through his sandy blond hair, caught up in the moment. Realizing why I had asked him her, I tried to get my hands on his chest to get some distance.

"Jer, we need to talk," I managed in between gasps. I could feel my body responding in its already aroused state.

"Its been. So Long. I've. Missed. You." He planted kisses on my lips and neck in between every one or two words.

“I know, Jer. I’ve missed you too.”

He kissed my chest and then my breasts through the thin, lacy material of my teal bra. My hard nipples pushed into the wet marks he left on it. He sucked one of them through the material and I gasped. I grasped the back of his head and held him there.

“We really. Need to talk,” I managed. Barely.

“We will, Regina,” he said, saying my name so that it rhymed with vagina.

I hated that normally, but Jerald was the only one who amused me when he said it. He sounded like a middle-grade boy teasing a girl in the playground. He was never malicious about it, though, and I’d learned to love it when he said that. Now, I wanted to talk, though.

He stepped back and pulled his Maroon 5 t-shirt off. In the dim light, his muscled chest and ripped abs were accentuated by the shadows. He leaned in and the feel of his warm flesh against my chest and his lips on mine melted the desire to talk. Jer had graced the pages of many a fireman’s calendar, and he was good at putting out fires. Trust me.

“We can talk after. I promise,” he said before picking me up and carrying me to the bedroom. He didn’t throw me over his shoulder in a fireman’s carry. Not this time.

He carried me like I was nothing but a tiny girl safe in his arms. He kissed me as we walked and I wrapped my arms around his neck and returned those kisses. Jer was good at starting fires, too. Although in this case, the kindling had already been lit, he just put a big log on the fire.

He carefully navigated the hallway to my bedroom and somehow didn’t slam my feet or head into a door frame. He dropped me onto the bed and began undoing his belt. Soon, his jeans and all of his clothing were on my bedroom floor. I slid my kimono off of my shoulders and undid my bra. They joined his clothes right before he swooped in for a kiss.

Our lips and bodies melded together with an urgency I hadn't felt between us in a long time. His mouth explored my breasts, my belly, my hips. Soon, his tongue was probing my panties. Kisses and tongue flicks added to the wetness between my legs.

"You're wet and ready." He sounded amazed. And eager.

I lifted my butt up when he removed my panties. Soon, they joined the menagerie of clothes on the floor. I could only gasp as he did what he was good at.

His tongue played across my pussy lips. Teasing them. Coaxing them. Pleasuring them.

I had one hand at the back of his head, pressing him into me. The other played with and squeezed my breasts. I wrapped one leg around him, opening myself up to him more. In that moment, any transgressions, real or imagined, were forgiven.

Four years ago, he'd been a thirty-year-old with a lot of encounters with women, mostly through Tinder. I taught him what I wanted during sex. I had also taught him that every woman was different.

He had been a willing pupil after some initial shock and denial. I didn't have to tell him anymore what I liked. He just knew what to do.

He knew I liked my cunnilingus slow at first with long strokes of the tongue between and along my labia. He knew how I liked my clitoris pleased and that he should work towards it like a dessert. I had taught him to vary the pressure on it, going slow and light at first. I made sure that he was present and listening, not just to my instructions but to my aural feedback: moans, gasps, comments.

"Oh, yes, Jer. That's perfect. Don't stop," I gasped as my breathing quickened.

He had pleased my pussy perfectly and had moved up to my clit. He had barely got past the gentle flicks of the tongue when the orgasm came in waves. I gripped his hair, pulled him into me with one leg wrapped around his back, while I pinched

and pulled on one of my nipples. He sucked and applied more pressure, causing me to writhe on the bed.

“Fuck yes, Jer.” I tried to slow down my breathing, but he moved up my body with kisses.

He spent a while on my breasts. More Kissing. Sucking. Playing.

I could feel his erection grazing my inner thigh. That made me shiver and squirm.

“Still want to talk,” he whispered as he kissed my neck and tugged on my earlobe with his teeth.

“Yes, but it can... wait,” I barely managed as he entered me with his hard cock.

He slid it in slowly. My pussy took him in and I spread my legs wide as his weight pressed down on me. Hard body pressed against mine. Pecs against my breasts. Hard abs against my soft belly. His lips pressed into mine. His tongue penetrating my mouth as much as he penetrated my pussy.

I took deep belly breaths, trying to calm my body’s reaction to his. Not because I didn’t enjoy the feeling, but because now, in my passion, I wanted to enjoy it more deeply. I opened up to him, accepting him, inviting him in to my feminine presence. I closed my eyes and fucked him.

Although, as soon as I relaxed and closed my eyes, my mind immediately wandered to Dirk.

“You’re so wet tonight, Reggie.” He moved with me, a rhythmic movement of his hips as he ground his pelvis against mine, pleasuring my clit with an up and down sliding motion.

For a moment, even though I wanted to remain present—that was always my intention as I believed in conscious lovemaking—I was transported to somewhere else. I suddenly lay in another bed with another man on top of me. It was Dirk sliding his cock in and out of me, and not Jerald.

“Oh, Dirk,” I moaned.

“What?” Jerald asked between a grunt that signified he was close.

I snapped out of my sudden dip into fantasy and realized what I had said.

“Your dick,” I said. “Your dick feels so big today.” Even though I had been jerked from my fantasy, Jerald’s grinding had its usual effect on my body. In fact, it seemed better than usual.

He raised up, so he was kneeling. He grabbed my hips, pulled me into him as he thrust forward. His cock was hitting the right spots inside of me. His breathing quickened. His chest and tight stomach moved with his breathing and his powerful thrusts.

My breathing quickened. I felt our sexual energies mixed, swirling like in a whirlpool, a vortex of passion. Soon I couldn’t hold back the orgasm and it raced through me. Like an explosion with ground zero at my g-spot, it radiated out from there.

My explosion triggered his. He soon filled me with his cum in jets of semen, splashing inside me.

Jerald collapsed onto the bed beside me, and we both tried to catch our breath and come down from our heightened physical state. I traced an infinity symbol on his hip as he lay facing me while I tried to coalesce my thoughts into coherent questions.

Why did I call out to Dirk?

I pushed that thought aside. Feeling the need to get out of the bedroom, I got out of bed, slipped my kimono gown back on, and headed to the kitchen. I took another sip of the Malbec and stared at the file. I turned to the pages where the interviews started and found Jerald’s. As I sipped my wine, I read.

After gaining his confidence, I asked him about the picture on his desk, specifically the woman in the picture.

“Oh, that’s a good friend.” He said.

“Oh, how good a friend?” I asked in response.

“Pretty good. We’re close. I’ve known her about four years. That’s from a charity event she went to with me as my date.”

I was pretty sure he was hedging. After letting him know I wouldn’t be jealous, he finally opened up. They were intimate for about two years. Not a couple, more like a friend with benefits. He referred to her as a milf. They get together once or twice a month. He hasn’t been with her in over a year.

As for her character, he says he trusts her. She’s taught him a lot. She’s kind. There’s been no arguments or manipulation on her part. He talked a lot about sex with her, being both hot and very Zen.

I took a long drink of the Malbec. The plum taste almost seemed bitter at that moment.

Jerald sauntered into the kitchen like a Roman gladiator who had just won and received his reward for victory. He was so cute when he was like that.

I closed the file and observed him over the top of my glass as I sipped more wine.

He opened the refrigerator.

“You got any Redhead, Babe,” he asked. He was referring to a Fireman’s Brew. It seemed like every firefighter in LA wanted a Fireman’s brew now. It was an amber red ale with a caramel taste. I didn’t really like beer, but I did like a Redhead now and then. I usually stocked some for him, but we hadn’t seen each other in over a year.

“No, Jer. Sorry.”

“That’s okay. What are you drinking?” He sidled up behind me, still naked, of course, and hugged me from behind. His muscular arms held me close.

I'd always felt safe with Jerald. Whether it was at dinner or a movie or a concert. Who wouldn't feel safe with a guy who ran into burning houses and saved people?

Now, however, he'd talked with someone about me. With a woman. Nothing he had said was too out of line, but still he'd talked with someone about our personal life. About our sex life. What else had he said that didn't make it into the report?

I turned in his arms so I was facing him. I placed my hands on his and pulled them down to his sides, and met his gaze.

“So, did you get contacted by someone asking a lot of questions about me? Say in the last two weeks?”

He scrunched up his eyes, and his brow furrowed. “No.”

“Are you sure? There wasn't anyone you gave some information to about me.”

“Not in the last two weeks. Never. I swear, Reggie.” He tried to pull me close, but I placed my hands on his chest and held him at bay.

“Think real heard. I'm going to ask one more time. You didn't talk to anyone or answer questions about me to anyone in the last two weeks?”

“No, I'd swear on my life.”

“Would you swear your Eric Dickerson signed football on it?”

He looked at me like I'd just drowned his puppy.

I felt I was an expert judge of character and I felt like he thought he was telling me the truth, but that file said differently. My chest hurt as I reached for the file. I flipped the pages up and over until I got to the page with his interview information. It had his name, Jerald Swain, his address in Torrance, his employer in Inglewood.

Using as even a voice as I could, I motioned him to read the file. “Tell me what this is, then?”

He put two hands on the kitchen counter, palms down, and read the one-page document. I saw his shoulders sink slightly.

“Shit,” he said, followed by a deep intake of breath.

“It’s not what it looks like, Reggie.”

“Why don’t you tell me what it is, then?” I asked, my voice only slightly agitated.

“The only person I talked to about you was Hayley. And it wasn’t an interview.”

“What was it then?”

“I picked her up at Darcy’s on a Saturday night.” He looked embarrassed. We never really talked about any other relationships. We weren’t exclusive.

“And?”

“We hit it off. She came back to my place. And let me tell you, it was a...”

I raised an eyebrow, not wanting to hear about how messy his apartment was.

“... right. TMI. So, anyway we went back to my place. Had some more to drink. Ended up in bed and then talked afterward.”

“And?” Guys are the worst at telling stories. And he’d slept with Dirk’s detective.

“Nothing. That was it.”

I sighed and then flipped to the report again.

“They’ve been intimate for about two years. Not a couple, more like a friend with benefits. He referred to her as a milf. They get together once or twice a month.” I read from the report and then tried to burn through him with my gaze.

“Yeah. Well, she, um, asked about that picture of you and I at the Fireman’s Ball two years ago. We...”

“And you told her about our private life.”

“Well, it seemed like an intimate moment and I thought sharing something about my past would be a good idea.”

“Oh my God, Jer. You had no clue she was an investigator? That she steered the conversation to me?”

“No. Look, I said you were hot.”

“Yeah, I’m your MILF. Thanks a lot.” I fought both the heat of anger and the swirling cold of anxiousness and worry. Jerald didn’t have a malicious bone in his body. Hayley seemed like a manipulative bitch. Perfect skills for an investigator.

“Is there anything you might have said to her that didn’t make it into this report? Anything at all?” I showed him the report again.

“Is this entire file on you, Reggie?”

“Yeah,” I replied.

“That’s a shitload of information. Are you in some kind of trouble?”

“No, Jer, I’m not in any trouble at all. Someone is just being super careful.”

“Who?” he asked, his brow furrowed again.

“Nobody you know, Jer. Hey, do you mind going home?”

“Sure. You sure you’re safe?”

“Yeah, I’m sure.” I offered a reassuring smile.

“Okay. Let me get dressed and I’ll get out of your hair.”

Jerald left me with my thoughts and my worry. I felt violated in a way. Hayley, Dirk’s security expert, had done a lot of thorough digging. She’d talked to many people from my past. People, that unlike Jerald, I couldn’t just invite over or casually call and say, hey, did a young woman come around and start asking questions about me?

Based on the way she had approached Jerald, I wondered how many of them even knew what was going on. Had they

casually dropped a few tidbits from my past?

Even if they had, what would that have meant to Dirk Baxter? Even with this thick dossier on me, he was still willing to work with me. Perhaps he had found nothing about me that made him not trust me.

Wasn't trust the one thing a person needed with a therapist? Especially a sex therapist. He obviously still trusted me even after our encounter at the Cherry Pie and even after his girl Friday, Hayley, dug up everything in my past.

I went to bed and finally fell asleep, but it was well past midnight. Thank god it was Friday. I didn't really come to any definite conclusions, but I was sure of two things. The sexual urges that Dirk aroused in me weren't quelled. And...

Dirk Baxter had some explaining to do next Friday.

Chapter 10

Control

I EXPECTED TO GET SOME STRAIGHT ANSWERS FROM DIRK Baxter about why he insisted on all this cloak-and-dagger activity. It was Friday afternoon, one week since I had met him at the Penthouse restaurant. When I opened the door to my office, Dirk stepped through and walked over to the couch. The overhead lights illuminated the room and sunlight streamed through the west-facing window. I had anticipated this session eagerly since our encounter at the Penthouse restaurant.

He wore a black slim fitting suit which outlined his natural physique nicely. The blue tie and the white shirt gave me a sense of his need to control and dominate. He unbuttoned the jacket and leaned back on the sofa.

“You look very nice today,” he said as a smug smile spread across his face.

I sat down and smoothed out my blue sheath dress and crossed my legs. My blond hair hung in loose curls cascading over my shoulders. I had chosen a bra that pushed up my breasts. I usually took time and care to get ready for work because of the high-profile nature of many of my patients.

Today, though, I had taken more care than usual. I knew my dress highlighted my curves, and I'd spent extra time on my hair this morning. Normally, I would just put it up in a bun, but for Dirk, I wore it like I did that night at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club. I hadn't really realized how I was dressing until I got to the office.

Why was I trying to impress this handsome man? He was my patient. Not a dating prospect. With my notepad in my lap, pencil in hand, I returned his smile.

“Thank you, Mr. Baxter. Are you really ready to get to work now?”

“Call me Dirk. Yes. I’m ready. Where do we begin?”

“Let’s start with why you did such an exhaustive investigation of me, Mr. Baxter?” I asked, as I made some notes.

“SOP Miss Davenport. I have to be careful about who I deal with.”

“SOP?”

“Standard Operating Procedure.” His tone seemed condescending, but barely. Perhaps I felt a little sensitive.

“Did you do an exhaustive investigation of your wife, Mr. Baxter?”

“No.”

“Why not?”

“I’ve learned a lot since then.”

“Like what?”

“I’ve learned that I may not be the best judge of a woman’s character, especially when I’m...” his voice trailed off, searching for the right words.

“Attracted to them?” I fixed him with my stare.

“That is an adequate description.”

“Anything else?”

“I have more to protect now than I did when we married.”

“So, did you protect yourself before you got married?”

“Yes. Scarlet signed a pre-nup.”

“You didn’t trust her?”

“I trusted her.”

“Yet, you still had her sign a prenuptial agreement?”

“Yes, I felt it prudent.”

“Prudent is an interesting choice of words. Why did you have her sign a prenup?”

“My business was just taking off. I knew I was going to be running a business ten times the size of what it was then. If I was wrong in my assessment of Scarlet, I didn’t want it to affect my company.”

“You hedged your bet?”

“Yeah. Something like that.”

“Is safety important to you, Mr. Baxter?”

“I do run a security business, Miss Davenport. Security and safety are kind of my thing.”

“Owning a business, though, involves risk, doesn’t it?”

“I try to minimize the risk for myself in the same way I try to minimize risk for my clients.”

“So, you like to take calculated risks?” I asked. Our exchange came rapid fire, like a tennis match.

“Yes. That is a fair assessment.”

“You like to be in control?”

“Don’t you?” His jaw tightened.

“Some things we can’t control.”

“I will always try to control as much as I can and minimize the risk of things I can’t.”

“Can you control yourself when it comes to sex?” I felt like I was reaching my point. It had taken a while.

“Yes,” he answered without hesitation.

“Really?” I raised an eyebrow. “Your wife tried to set the mood for a romantic evening and you couldn’t get an erection.”

Is that control?”

“Is this your normal therapy technique, Miss Davenport?”
I could see the bulge of his jaw muscles.

“And yet, when you were in a gentleman’s club, in the private room, you had no problem getting an erection with a complete stranger.” My question seemed unorthodox and out of line, even for me, but I intuitively felt like this was the right question to ask. This was the contradiction he faced physically for sure, if not emotionally as well. The question had to be asked. And answered.

“Yes. That is true. In my defense, you’re a very attractive woman,” he said, sounding like faraway thunder.

I could sense a slight drop in his shoulders. I made more notes.

“But your wife is attractive? A trophy wife you said.”

“Yes. She is.”

“So, have you had difficulty getting or maintaining an erection with any other woman besides your wife?”

“No.”

“Are you not physically attracted to your wife anymore?”

“She’s fit. Physically attractive. Active. Beautiful. A nympho. I still feel physically attracted to her.” I could see he actually had thought about the question before and while he was answering he seemed to check off items on a list.

“How about mentally? Are you mentally attracted?”

“At first, I was enchanted with her. She was always the life of a party, fluttering around like a social butterfly. She could talk about anything and to anyone. Eventually, though, I discovered she lacked a lot of depth. Her primary concern was always herself. I invested in her modeling career, her acting career, and her makeup line. After the makeup line failed and her acting career never took off, she changed.”

“How did she change?”

“She started bringing in other people who had business propositions that couldn’t fail. A clothing line. Multiple movie scripts. A movie production starring her, financed by me. Another natural woman’s care beauty line.”

“And how did that make you feel?” The classic therapist line. I didn’t like using it, but I was forming a theory.

“At first I was supportive, but my caution turned into skepticism. Each of the opportunities just seemed off to me. All of them seemed risky and the guys that brought the ideas to me were *friends* from her social circle.”

“Guy friends?”

“Yes. She would spend weekends with them, either in the LA area or Vegas. She loves Vegas. Ah, yes, that was another idea of hers. She wanted me to finance a dancing act on the strip at the MGM.”

“A dancing act?”

“Yeah. Burlesque. Like the Pussy Cat Dolls or the Crazy Girls.”

“So you felt pressured to finance her business endeavors?”

“Not really. I told her eventually I would support her on any idea she brought me with a sound business plan. She never wanted to do the work. She just wanted a blank check.”

“So that affected your sex life?”

“It affected our relationship, for sure, but I remained supportive. The sex was still great.”

“So, what do you think the problem is?” I finally asked. These types of things seldom resulted from one thing, one event, unless something traumatic happened. Their relationship seemed to suffer from a multitude of things over a long period of time.

“I don’t know. That’s why I came to you.” He crossed his legs and arms as he answered. Not a good sign.

“Do you want to save your marriage, Mr. Baxter?”

“Yes,” he answered after a slight hesitation.

“Why only ten sessions?”

“Excuse me?” he asked, looking confused.

“Sexual therapy is a complicated process. It often takes more than a few months to resolve. You probably could have resolved it with a drug. This doesn’t seem like a commitment to resolve your marriage. It feels as if you are looking for a quick fix. Your contract only calls for ten sessions.”

He didn’t answer right away. I felt like he was considering his response.

“You like control. I get it. We all want some semblance of control in our life, but controlling when you’re going to resolve a problem like this isn’t a matter of setting up a workout schedule and reaching a goal. Your insistence on ten sessions seems suspect. That you were willing to pay me twenty thousand for each session makes it doubly suspect. What is your end goal, Mr. Baxter?” I held his gaze when I finished. I couldn’t help him if he didn’t open up and give me honest answers. Plus, the more I talked, the more suspicious I was. There was something he wasn’t telling me, and I didn’t think he wanted to save his marriage.

He still hesitated. By the time I finally had to blink, he uncrossed his arms and his legs and leaned forward.

“Trust takes time too, Miss Davenport. I have my reasons. Now, if you’re through with the interrogation, can we get on with my session?” His voice was level, controlled. I felt the skin on the back of my neck rise. His gaze held a steadiness that a brain surgeon would envy.

“You still haven’t answered why you had to do such a thorough background check and have your own security team interrogate my friends.”

“As I said, trust takes time,” he replied.

“And honesty, Mr. Baxter.”

I made some quick notes.

Likes to be in control.

Only ten sessions. \$20K per session.

Why?

Not being honest with me.

“Very well. I need to determine if your inability to get an erection is limited to your wife. Have you heard of sensate touch?”

“No, I haven’t.”

“It requires you to work with my sex surrogate, Chastity. It allows you to explore the sensation of touch, both yours and hers, in a safe space...”

“A sex surrogate. I don’t intend to have sex with another woman, Miss Davenport,” he interrupted.

“You will not be having sex, Mr. Baxter. You will just be touching each other in a controlled way. I’ll leave that up to Chastity to explain how it will work.” I waited for him to respond.

“Where and when?”

“You can set that up with Penny at the front desk. She maintains our schedules here. As for where, we have a nice room setup just for this purpose. It’s comfortable and safe.”

He sighed. “Very well.”

“I would like you to do this before your next appointment. If I only have eight more sessions to work with you, I need to have this feedback by our next meeting.”

“Very well. I will fit this in by Thursday.” He stood up as our time was up.

“This doesn’t count towards your ten sessions, either. Just so we’re clear. Chastity is an independent contractor, not my employee. I want to make sure she’s well compensated, commensurate with what you’re paying me.”

He turned to face me, his jaw set firmly. “Commensurate with what I’m paying you. Twenty thousand to touch each other? Are you sure there is no sex involved?”

“Five thousand should be sufficient. Payable on the day of your appointment.” I made a mental note to make sure Chastity got everything above what she normally charged for this appointment. We had rich patients, but even the richest paid a thousand for a sensate touch session. I knew Chastity could use an extra four thousand dollars.

Dirk walked to the door and paused before opening it. He turned to face me.

“I would trust you a lot faster, Miss Davenport, if you had dinner with me... and actually stayed throughout dinner.”

“That’s highly unethical, Mr. Baxter.”

“I won’t report it.” He finished that sentence with a slight smirk that looked devilishly handsome.

I made some notes while still seated.

Arrogant. Precocious. Presumptuous.

“Same place as last time?” he asked.

I found it difficult to separate my professional focus from the way I responded to him. From that very first night at the Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club, I had been attracted to him.

“I’m not available this weekend,” I replied. I wanted to say yes, but I needed to have a better feel for him.

“Next weekend? Saturday?” He countered.

I narrowed my eyes. Therapist Davenport shouted no as loud as she could into my left ear. The woman, Regina, kept pushing me forward. Perhaps I could get him to open up more and answer my questions about his need to investigate my entire life and the people I knew.

“While you are my patient, I am off limits to you,” I said.

“I just want to break bread together and truly get to know you.”

“Absolutely not, Mr. Baxter.”

He smiled. “You’ll say yes eventually.” He left my office, closing the door behind him.

After walking through the unanswered questions I still had, my mind immediately wandered to typical girl stuff.

He wants to go to dinner. What else does he want? Is he just trying to screw his wife out of an equal split of his assets? I’d had my own experience with that, so it seemed obvious that my mind would go there.

I made a few more notes before quitting for the day.

Felt like he had to perform.

Wants to be in control.

Has an unrealistic expectation of how long this issue will take to resolve.

What is the actual issue? Can I figure it out in 8 more weeks?

I didn’t add that last thought to the notes on my notepad.

There is no way I can go to dinner with him. No matter how much I want to. He owes me a mojito.

Chapter 11

Touch Me

THURSDAY SEEMED TO TAKE FOREVER TO ARRIVE. I HAD probably looked through Dirk's small file a dozen times since our last appointment on Friday. In between appointments, my mind would wander to him and his case. I would review my notes, add new thoughts to them, and then try to understand what he really hoped to accomplish in his sessions with me.

To say he was frustrating beyond anyone I'd ever dealt with before, would be an understatement. It wasn't only that he was my patient that brought my thoughts to him often, though.

At home, I would find myself using memories from the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club to fuel my masturbation fantasies. I remembered his hands on my body. The memory of his cock in my hand and in my mouth fueled my arousal. The memory of him penetrating me made me moan.

These images would flash through my mind and send sensations through my body as I would pleasure myself with my hands or my dildo. My favorite pleasure toy had taken up permanent residence in my bedroom for the last six nights. I used it nightly. Some mornings I woke early and felt the need to pleasure myself again.

Even at the office, when I had too much time between patients, I would find my hand touching me between my legs through the fabric of my panties or the pant suit I wore for the day. I seldom had time to reach an orgasm at the office, so the attention to my pussy only seemed to heighten my arousal

throughout the day. No wonder I had to rub one out as soon as I got home.

I had considered texting Jerald and asking him to come over for a quickie to get some relief. My friends-with-benefits fireman had a way of turning the act of intercourse into a primal fuck-fest which always left me sated afterward.

For some reason, it felt wrong to call him. The two of us had no attachment. No commitment. Until the other night, I hadn't called him over for over a year. Maybe it was my ego that felt like he wanted more of our relationship, but if I was correct in that assessment, I didn't want to risk deepening any attachment he might have for me. Or me for him.

Besides, I knew that would only add additional confusion to the already complicated mix of emotions that ran through me.

The one thing I had decided for sure was that I intended to watch Dirk's session with Chastity. If I only had eight more sessions to help him, I needed to have both my assessment of visual clues and my sex surrogate's insights about Dirk and his potential problem.

It wasn't normal for me to watch the session. Normally, I would watch the recording. Many other sex therapists thought this practice highly unethical. They were probably right and maybe my feelings for Dirk played a part in this decision. For better or worse, I intended to convince him that this was both beneficial and necessary.

"Regina, your patient is here for his appointment with Chastity," Penny said over the intercom on the office phone.

"Thanks, Penny. I'll be right there."

I exited my office and made it to the receptionist's desk.

Dirk Baxter, all six feet, two inches of him, with those dark eyes that had drawn me in that night at the club, stood waiting. He carried on a conversation with Trace, his driver. With them standing side by side, I could see that Trace stood maybe an inch or two taller and had a broader chest and frame. Trace

had the physique of a tank, while Dirk had the frame of a missile.

I opened the door that separated my small waiting area from the rest of my offices.

“Mr. Baxter, can you join me? We need to talk before your session starts.”

Trace gave me a smile and a nod before punching Dirk on the shoulder. He whispered something that I couldn't make out.

Dirk walked through the open door, and I led him to our surrogate room. I opened the door and then followed him in.

“What the...” Dirk said upon seeing the room.

A king-size bed with an ornate wooden bed frame, which included a headboard and four posters, dominated the center of the room. It had a purple bedspread with geometric shapes of complimentary colors covering it. A couch and chair covered in purple fabric sat against one wall and a large one-way mirror was on the opposite wall. A sturdy coffee table stood in front of the couch.

The surrogate room did not feel like a typical clinical room common in a doctor's or therapist's office. It looked more like a bedroom, and this was purposeful.

Behind the mirror was an observation room with camera equipment. We only recorded a patient's session with their permission, and I never watched during a session. The recording was usually enough for me to make an assessment and then provide helpful advice.

I felt a strong need to watch today, though. I wanted to be ready to review this session with Dirk at our appointment tomorrow. My reasons were purely professional. *Who are you kidding, Reggie?*

The chance to see Dirk Baxter half-naked again may have been my real reason.

“Take a seat, Mr. Baxter,” I said, motioning to the couch.

“This is quite the setup you have here, Miss Davenport. Are you sure you didn’t invite me in here for sex?” He took a seat on the couch and left plenty of room for someone to join him. It tempted me.

“No,” I said immediately. I took a seat in the chair just as quickly.

He shot me a smile that pierced me like a hollow point bullet. I felt it between my thighs, in my belly, and in my heart, which began pounding a bit more. The fragments of that smile coursed through my body, spreading tingles and sensations everywhere.

I rearranged my black pencil skirt, which still revealed plenty of leg. I crossed my legs and rested my arms on the arms of the chair. My white button-up shirt may have fit me a little too tight and my red bra may have shown through the thin fabric of my shirt. I may have dressed to see if it had an effect on Mr. Dark Eyes.

“This room is to allow my patients to experience sensate touch in the privacy of my office and not have to go to a surrogate somewhere in the area. It provides both convenience and privacy. My patients appreciate it.”

“And your girl, Chastity, is going to introduce me to sensate touch? What is that exactly, and why should I do it?”

“Sensate touch is a therapy where you explore the sense of touch with a partner. She touches you and she will ask you to just focus on the touch. Focus on how it makes you feel. Where does it give you pleasure? Where...”

“Where can she touch me?”

“For today’s session, both you and her will stay away from the genitals, and I’ll ask that you stay away from the nipples. Just about everything else is open.”

“You said she touches me.”

“For the first half of the session, she will do the touching.”

“So, I know how to do the touching when it is my turn?”

“Well, yes. Also, so that you can pay attention to how the touching makes you feel. What feels good? What causes discomfort?”

“Do we do this clothed? Or naked?”

“It will help if you strip down to your underwear. Chastity will keep her bra and panties on.”

He nodded and grew silent as he processed. I gave him some quiet and space to grow comfortable with the technique.

“And you must have some recording equipment behind that mirror?”

“Very perceptive, Mr. Baxter.”

“I am an expert in security and...” he stopped mid-sentence.

“I only record with the patient’s permission. The form is on the coffee table.” I motioned to the clipboard and pen.

“How do you secure your video? Does it get uploaded to the cloud?”

My god, he’s paranoid.

“We store all video on local systems with no Internet connectivity. We still have an older 8mm video recorder we could use if that would make you feel better.”

“And why do you need to record?”

“I view the recording so that I can look for verbal cues or body language that might help me diagnose and recommend a treatment.” That sounded so clinical, which it was supposed to be. My thoughts turned to other uses for the recording that would not be ethical, but would be so pleasurable.

“Where do I sign?”

I got up from my chair and showed him where to sign. His hand brushed mine as we did and I felt a jolt of sensation course through me again. After he signed the release, he

handed me the clipboard. I sat down on the coffee table so I could face him.

“I have one more request. Since you insist on only ten sessions, I want to assess your reactions as soon as possible to inform tomorrow’s session. While I will have the tape to review, if I can observe from the other room, I will be able to prepare for our session tomorrow. Will you agree to let me observe?”

“You want to watch another woman touch me and me touch another woman?”

“Yes.”

“Are you a voyeur, Miss Davenport?”

“No, my observation is for a clinical assessment.”

“Not for your own arousal?” His sexy smirk raised the temperature between my legs.

“No, Mr. Baxter, definitely not.” That felt like a lie as soon as the words left my mouth. Our conversation seemed to have slipped into verbal flirting.

“Well, if it is just for a clinical assessment, then I will consent.” He flashed that smile, which again made me melt and tingle in several erogenous zones. While he said one thing, I felt like he meant so much more.

“Could you initial here then?” I asked, trying to ignore the obvious flirting. I held out the clipboard and pointed to the spot, which gave me permission to observe his session. As he leaned in to initial the release form, his cologne filled my nostrils. Wood and leather, with a hint of jasmine, seduced my senses. His hand brushed mine as he returned the pen. As I turned away, he grasped my forearm.

“Although, if you had wanted to watch me to get aroused, I would have signed it as well.”

Oh, my god. I couldn’t tell if he wanted my help or wanted to seduce me. I didn’t think he’d have to do much more to do the latter.

“I will get Chastity and you two can get started.”

I turned and left the surrogate room. My legs felt wobbly as I did so, and I wondered if I could make it through their session without succumbing to the whirlwind of emotions and hormones coursing through my body.

* * *

Chastity entered the surrogate room like the sexual goddess that she was. The best sex surrogate in LA wore a white Turkish cotton robe and matching slippers. I knew she would only wear a matching pair of panties and bra underneath. Even her walk exuded sexuality as she swayed her hips, hips that could hypnotize a man, any man. Or many women.

Not all sex surrogates were beautiful and shapely, like Chastity. She stood a perfect five feet nine inches tall with long, shapely legs and curves to match. She had a nice 38-28-38 figure with breasts that fell between a C and D cup depending on the time of month.

Chastity’s body defied nationality. She had the olive skin and raven black hair of her Native American ancestry. Blue eyes, rounded cheeks, and full lips she inherited from her Swedish mother. She was an exotic beauty and at twenty-nine she could have been walking runways and modeling all over the country.

Surrogacy for her had been a calling. She always told me how much she loved sex and touch. She had a way of working magic with my clients and somehow kept them from falling in love with her. That made her the best surrogate in California.

I had also discovered that her looks provided some major benefits. One, for men who became aroused by the visual, she was perfect. If a man was attracted to the classic body and beauty that Hollywood and modeling agencies across the country were looking for to sell everything from cars to condoms, clothes to hamburgers, then they would immediately

feel some arousal for her as soon as she entered the room and sashayed towards them.

Two, if a man didn't get aroused immediately to her, especially one of Dirk's age, then it could be a sign that they had an issue we needed to work on and, more importantly, could resolve.

She approached Dirk, who stood up and politely shook her hand. He didn't give her the same broad smile he had offered to me, but he didn't frown or smirk. They went through her normal routine of explaining what they would do and to put him at ease. When they finished, Chastity walked to one side of the bed, which allowed her to look right through the one-way mirror.

She gave me that Oh-My-God look, the universal signal among women that a guy is hot as hell. I grinned and felt a momentary relief in her confirmation of Dirk Baxter's looks.

I started the digital recording and the old 8MM camera that we rarely used anymore. The benefit of the 8MM was that I had a player at home and could watch it again tonight. For strictly professional reasons, of course.

Chastity removed her robe and slippers and slid onto the bed. She began arranging pillows and took a position where she leaned against the headboard with plenty of support. Her long legs spread, making room for Dirk to lie between them. She wore a flesh tone bra and matching panties. She almost looked nude. If Chastity didn't work for me, her charms would have tempted me in the outside world.

She arranged her hair and ran her hands up her thighs and then beckoned Dirk to the bed.

Dirk had shed his Allen Edmonds black dress shoes and socks, his black Hugo Boss suit jacket, and his shirt and tie. Every time I had seen him, he wore tailored suits with no apparent loyalty to one brand. And every time I wanted to tear his clothes off.

Mr. Dark Eyes had just the right amount of muscle with a well-defined chest and six distinct bumps for abs. He wasn't deeply cut like a dedicated body builder, but he definitely took care of his body. As he slid his black slacks off, I could see his plaid boxers, which covered too much of his body but couldn't hide his calves and quads, which rippled as he shifted his weight from one leg to the other.

I felt a tingle between my legs and a shiver ran through me. I slid the volume switch on the wall so that I could hear their conversation.

He climbed onto the bed and Chastity guided him to lie down between her legs, his back to her chest. She also guided him to lay his hands at his sides, palms down on the bed. The only contact between them was his back against her front. He couldn't help but feel her breasts pressed against his back. With his boxers on, I couldn't determine his level of arousal.

I made a mental note to have him wear briefs next time.

"Let's start by relaxing. I'm just going to lay my hands on your belly and I want you to take slow deep breaths with me." Chastity wrapped her arms around his torso, placing them on his belly. Her chin lay on his right shoulder. "I want you to breathe deeply into your belly."

Dirk pulled in a long breath, but he pulled most of the air into his lungs, evident by his chest rising and falling.

"It's okay to lay your head on my shoulder," Chastity instructed. "And breath into your belly. I want to see my hands rise and fall."

With those abs of his, if he'd never practiced belly breathing, this might be hard, but it was the key to both relaxing and to creating a good flow of energy and hormones through the vagus nerve. In a few more breaths, his belly rose and fell with each breath.

"Good. Now, I'm going to move my hands across your body. I won't touch your genitals or your nipples during this session, but..."

“Good,” Dirk interrupted.

Chastity smiled.

“While I’m touching you, I want you to just feel the sensations of my touch on your bare skin.”

She began running her hands over his belly and chest, purposely bypassing his nipples. After running her hands up to his shoulders, she gave his traps a nice squeeze before running her hands down his shoulders and arms. She alternated between a light touch and firm pressure on his skin.

Against her darker olive skin, it was apparent that Dirk spent little time in the sun or in tanning booths. His torso was barely tanned and he looked very light compared to Chastity.

As she worked her hands back to his belly and then to the edge of his boxers, Dirk’s deep breathing faltered.

“You might want to wear briefs next time,” Chastity said.

“Oh, why?”

“Briefs allow me better access to more sensitive points on your body.” She pushed down the boxers a bit to expose more of him. She moved them down far enough that his dark pubes showed, but left his cock still covered. He didn’t appear to be aroused at all.

He also seemed to have stopped breathing.

“Don’t hold your breath. Keep breathing,” Chastity whispered.

“You said you wouldn’t touch my genitals.”

“I won’t,” she purred in his ear with a grin on her face. “Is my touch arousing you in any way?”

“No.”

“What are you feeling? Where does your body find the sensation the most arousing? Or energetic?”

As she spoke, she rubbed her hands on his hips and then across his low belly. Her fingers moved through his black

pubes, then up the belly to the solar plexus, before sliding back down to the hips.

“I’m not. Sure,” he replied with uncertainty.

Either he was lying out of embarrassment or for some other *manly* reason. Perhaps Chastity’s touch really didn’t arouse him. I could see no obvious sign of an erection. I also knew that arousal could come in ways that didn’t manifest in the physical reaction of an erection or wetness in the vagina.

“Does this feel good?” Chastity said as she ran her hands lightly through his pubes.

“Yes. And uncomfortable.”

“That’s understandable. And completely okay. Think of this as a mapping exercise.”

“What are we mapping?”

“Your pleasure centers. Places you feel pleasure from touch. How about here?” She ran her fingers with a firmer pressure up the middle of his belly to his sternum.

“It feels good. But it’s not arousing.”

“How about here?” she asked as she ran her hands across his chest, inches from his nipple.

He shook his head.

She asked again as she ran her fingers through his hair, across his face, the back of his neck, down his arms, in the pit of his elbows, and the palms of his hand. He shook his head everywhere.

“Does any of it feel pleasurable?”

“Yes. Your touch is soft, pleasurable. You have soft hands.”

Chastity smiled. “Well, you have a nice body. My fingers enjoy touching your skin. I feel pleasure and arousal just from touching you.”

He seemed to stiffen. I'd have to ask Chastity about that afterward.

“Don't worry. There is nothing wrong with arousal. With becoming sexually excited by the touch of a woman. It's only natural. Breath,” she said as she placed her hands back on his belly.

He relaxed and began breathing steadily and deeply again.

“Let me know how this feels,” she said before running her hands back up his belly to his chest, where she allowed her hands to graze his nipples.

He audibly moaned and I thought I detected the slightest bulge in his boxers.

“You said you wouldn't touch...”

“I know. It's okay. I just needed to find a spot that would arouse you. Did that arouse you?”

“It felt good. It felt sexual.” He seemed to tense up again.

She moved her hands back down the belly and through his pubes again, just above his genitals. Without hesitating, she slid her hands underneath the hem of his boxers and ran her hand down his hip flexors. The movement required her to sit up, which also caused Dirk to lean forward.

The recording booth felt hot suddenly, and I had to undo the top two buttons on my blouse. I rubbed my chest and felt the heat between my breasts. I had never done sensate touch with a client, but I wondered what it would be like to do so. Especially with Dirk Baxter.

He resisted leaning forward, but as she leaned back, she held him up. Her hands then moved softly over his back.

“So your nipples and near your genitals, you feel arousal. Is that right?” Chastity asked.

“Yes.”

“And nowhere else?”

“Yes. Is that a problem?”

“No. Mr. Baxter. Just relax.”

She rubbed his back for a few more minutes, her massage more therapeutic at this point. Then she patted him on the back gently.

“Time to switch.” She slid out from behind him and directed him to take her spot on the bed. When he did, she spread his legs gently and then scooted in between them, her back to his chest.

“Now it’s your turn.”

“So, I just do what you did? Try to arouse you?”

Chastity giggled. “I wasn’t trying to arouse you. I was just touching you.”

“Mapping me?”

“Yeah.”

“So, will I be mapping you?” Dirk asked, a hint of flirting in his voice. *Or is that sarcasm?*

“No. While you do it, I want you to be aware of two things. One, how do your fingers and palms feel as they touch me? How does touching me make you feel in other places, like your genitals, your heart, and your gut?”

“While I’m touching you, you want me to focus on what I feel.”

“Yes. Two, what else do your hands allow you to feel? To notice? Do they sense heat? Energy? Arousal?”

“How do you sense arousal with your hands?”

Chastity smiled. “When I’m done with you, you will know.”

Dirk moved his hands over Chastity’s body, tentatively at first. He started with her belly, just as she had with him. His hands lingered on her breasts and while he never touched the nipples; he caressed them.

“Can I squeeze them?”

“Yes. Please,” Chastity replied with another giggle.

Only with her permission did he squeeze her breasts, touching them beneath the nipples, above them, and to the sides. Following instructions though he never touched the nipples, but I could see the slight bulge of her erect nipples from the booth.

Chastity didn't hold back any moans or gasps that might escape. I swear she had to be the most orgasmic person I had ever known. Not that she would orgasm in this thirty-minute session, but I could easily imagine her orgasming easily when the context was more sexual.

I found that two more buttons of my blouse were now unbuttoned. My hand had slipped inside of my bra and I was squeezing and pinching my nipple. My other hand squeezed my breast as Dirk squeezed Chastity's. It took all my resolve to stop.

Dirk moved his hands over more and more of her body. I swear his lips actually pressed against her shoulder and her neck. A reflex maybe. A natural action when caressing a beautiful woman's body.

As his hands caressed her shoulders, sides, her hips, and moved close to her vagina, I caught myself holding my breath. My legs parted as I slipped a hand down between my legs. My panties were wet with excitement. I smelled the musky scent of my arousal.

Chastity told Dirk when certain movements on the parts of her body pleased her. The nape of the neck. Her inner elbow. Her palm. Any part of her breast. Her belly right above her pussy.

When Dirk leaned forward to reach her thighs and, as his hand moved along her inner thigh, she threw her head back on his shoulder and spread her legs wider. She may have had no intention of having intercourse with Dirk Baxter during this

session. That didn't mean that this wasn't becoming a hot session of foreplay.

Dirk also felt more comfortable. He was moving his hands over her. He was giving, something he seemed more comfortable with. She could only receive, something he seemed to struggle with. He was in control at that moment.

I made a mental note of that. I had no desire to reach for my notepad and pen, which lay beside me.

Pangs of jealousy ripped through me, though. I no longer brought up memories of our time in the Cherry Pit where he did the same and more to my burning body. I had the current visuals of Dirk touching hot female flesh and arousing her. Arousing me.

With one hand inside my bra and another rubbing my pussy through my panties, my arousal had heightened. Watching him touch her excited me for sure. If we had more time, I was sure I could have experienced a rewarding orgasm in the observation room. As it was, I feared I would just spend tonight hot and bothered.

He obviously aroused Chastity with his touch. He aroused me just watching him arouse my sex surrogate. I am sure that if he could have touched her pussy or her nipples, she would have orgasmed right there in the surrogacy room. I am also sure that if I had been there instead of Chastity, he would have me on the edge of an orgasm, too.

The big question, though, was he aroused as he did it? Or was it a performance for him? Did he feel he was obligated to do these things to prove his manhood?

If he was only performing, doing what he thought his partner wanted him to do, then anxiety over performing, over pleasing her, could affect his ability to get an erection. I reminded myself to ask Chastity if she sensed an erection at any point. He wouldn't be the first to not get an erection on his first time with her, but usually those patients were trauma sufferers or ones with a physical impediment of some sort.

In the Cherry Pit, he had no problem getting hard. The memory of his cock, hard as stone, sent rushes of sensation running through me. How could he have been that way with me and unable to get an erection with his beautiful wife? It it was a one time thing, that would be explainable for a man of any age. We had so much more work to do.

Dirk Baxter was a mystery. A mystery I intended to solve.

Chapter 12

Self Pleasure

I ARRIVED HOME WITH A WET PUSSY AND AN 8MM TAPE OF Chastity and Dirk's session in hand. I turned on the kitchen light and sat my Chinese takeout on the kitchen table. After pouring a glass of wine, I sat down to eat my Szechuan chicken, egg rolls, and crabmeat rangoon. My hunger proved to be as voracious as my desire as I gobbled down the food. Well, half of it, at least.

After putting away the leftovers and refilling my wine, I wound my way through my condo to my bedroom. The view of the Los Angeles lights from my living room took my breath away, as it always did. I loved this town and the lights and the glitz.

I considered turning on Entertainment Tonight and languishing in bed before falling asleep. My mind wandered back to Dirk and Chastity and the tape in my purse. I retrieved it and returned to my bedroom.

I laid both the wine and the tape on my nightstand before stepping into my walk-in closet. I stripped my clothes off quickly and headed to my bathroom.

Turning on the shower, I let the water warm up while I gazed at myself in the mirror. I let out my ponytail and shook my blond hair. Soft waves caressed my shoulders. I cupped my breasts and released them. Thanks to my plastic surgeon, they were perkier than they had been in my thirties. The way they looked on my forty-five-year-old body made me smile.

I still had a slim waist and my hips were wider than they were in my twenties, but they seemed to add to my flavor. I turned to look at my butt and the steam forming on the mirror hid any cellulite or dimples. Leaning into the mirror, I picked at a glob of eyeliner, my blue eyes staring back at me. For the first time since my divorce, I loved the person in the mirror.

The mirror fogged up from both my breath and the hot steam from my shower. I traced a heart in the steam and the initials DB. I shook my head at my own adolescent behavior and slipped into the shower.

Images of Dirk moving his hands across Chastity's body flashed through my head as the hot water cascaded down my body. As it rolled over my breasts, my nipples hardened. When it flowed between my legs, my clit sent tingles through my pussy.

I slipped my hand across my belly and down to my mound of trimmed golden pubes. Finding the little nub of my clit, I moved my fingers over it and my mouth involuntarily opened as pleasure rippled through my body.

I imagined Dirk's hands touching Chastity's shoulders, and a shiver ran through me. I envisioned them running across her stomach as I moved my fingers up and down my clit and quivered. The memory of his hands grazing her breasts matched the movement of my hand, squeezing my own. I pinched my nipple lightly as I stroked my clit. When I plunged a finger inside me, my gasp surprised me.

My shower had a ledge I could sit down on and a detachable shower head. I grabbed the shower head and found a comfortable position on the ledge. I returned two fingers to my pussy and moved them in and out. My wetness surprised me. Or did it?

As I pumped my pussy with my fingers, I aimed the hot water from the shower head at my throbbing vagina. As it beat a rhythm of hot pulses on my love-bud, I continued to finger-fuck myself.

All the time, visions of Dirk running his hands over Chastity mingled with visions of me in her place. Those, in turn, merged with my memories of him fucking me in the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club. The feeling of penetration from my fingers became his cock sliding into me. The feeling of my finger on my clit drove me towards a peak.

Before I knew it, I came.

I came with a rush of rapid breaths—my heart beating rapidly—as hot sensations coursed through my body. One leg straightened involuntarily as the waves of pleasure shot through me. I grunted, very unladylike, as the orgasm caused every muscle in my body to tense and strain.

When I finally relaxed, I had to lay my head back against the marble shower wall. I panted as I let the sensations—like electrical current—shoot through my pussy, my stomach, and my legs. The hand with the shower head lay lazily in my lap, the water shooting harmlessly at the floor of the shower.

I lay there a few seconds, but in the haze after my climax, it seemed like forever. The goosebumps forming on my arms and legs and on my breasts broke me from the sweet delirium of imagining Dirk Baxter making love to me.

You got to stop this!

He was my patient. I really needed to quit this behavior. Every moment I wasn't thinking about work or another patient, my mind returned to him, like I was some fish on the hook of his fishing rod. The thought of a rod made me chuckle.

"I'd like to be on his rod right now," I said to no one but myself in my empty condo.

I reattached the shower head and stood up. After I applied some lovely hydrangea scented bath soaps, I lathered up well under the still hot water. The shower took longer than normal. Mostly because I wasn't in a hurry and because my mind liked to wander.

A long, hot shower always seemed to help me work through challenges. It didn't always result in a Eureka moment, but it often laid the stage for a future ah-ha.

Through it all, my mind returned to Dirk Baxter. Not only the time he spent with Chastity in the sensate touch session, but also to his situation. A man in a divorce fight with his wife. One with a multi-million dollar business in security. One who looked like the most virile man you could ever find, but also didn't have an attraction for his wife anymore.

It sounded a lot like my ex-husband. Am I repeating a cycle?

As I turned the shower off and dried off, I remembered the videotape of Dirk's sensate touch session. It was late and time for bed, but I felt I could take the time to watch it again as I drifted off to sleep. Although I wasn't sure watching it would allow me to drift off to sleep.

The heightened sensations of my shower orgasm still pulsed through my body. If Dirk was here and if I knew no one would find out, I knew I would let him take me right now.

Another orgasm wouldn't be a bad thing before I fell asleep. Would it?

I went into my closet again, found a nice black teddy, and slipped it on. A quick glance in the full-length mirror confirmed my legs looked good, peeking out from the bottom of the nightie. I usually wore an extra long t-shirt to bed. I don't know why I slipped on the teddy.

Yes, you do. You want to feel sexy.

I did want to feel sexy. I slipped the 8mm tape into the player, turned on the television, and slipped into bed. Before I hit play, I grabbed my vibrating dildo from the nightstand and laid it beside me. I might get inspired before I fell asleep watching Dirk and his muscular body rubbing his hands all over Chastity.

The tape played, and I took another sip of my wine. As the sexual surrogate rubbed her hands all over Dirk's rock hard

body, I felt a twinge of jealousy again. I stopped the tape occasionally to get a better look. At no time could I detect a bulge in his boxers. When it came time for him to switch, I gulped down the last bit of my wine.

Slipping a hand between my thighs, I found myself still soaked and aroused. I slid a finger up the length of my slit and shuddered. As Dirk touched and caressed Chastity on the video, I grabbed the dildo and slid it up and down my wet pussy, getting the tip wet. As his hands moved toward her pussy, I slid it inside me. I pushed the button to start it vibrating. Three pushes got it to the speed I loved the most—a pulsing, deep, throbbing vibration.

I kept focused on the video with my eyes as my hands moved the dildo in and out of my pussy. My other hand caressed and squeezed my breast. Sensations washed over my body as I watched Dirk caressing and touching Chastity in the video. His hands—as I knew by first-hand knowledge—were strong. At the Gentleman’s Club, his touch had thrilled me.

I had been with other men, most notably my sexy fireman, Jerald, since my divorce, but I hadn’t experienced the excitement and the thrill I felt with Dirk, or Mr. Dark Eyes as I thought of him at the Gentleman’s Club. His touch, his lips, his hands on my body had sent explosions of hormones through my body, which aroused me like no man ever.

Now, though, he was my patient.

I imagined I was in Chastity’s place on that bed in my office and his hands were moving over my body. Just the thought sent tingles through my belly and up into my breasts. I left the pulsing vibrator inside me and began stroking my clit. I had pulled the straps of my teddy down and exposed my breasts. One finger flicked and grazed a nipple, causing me to arch my back as if I was trying to meet Dirk’s thrusts. The dildo pulsed, and each vibration pushed me to the point of ecstasy.

As Dirk squeezed one of the sex surrogates breasts in the video, my fingers pushed me over the edge and I came all over

my vibrating toy.

“Oh, fuck yes. Fuck me, Dirk. Fuck me,” I whispered to the ghostly presence of Dirk Baxter, who had preoccupied my thoughts for weeks now.

The tape ended as my quivering body calmed as if we had timed our orgasms. I pulled the vibrator out of me with the sloppy sound of my wet pussy. The sound and the feeling of being filled and relieved were very satisfying. I collapsed in my bed and barely set the dildo on my nightstand.

It was messy. I was messy. All I wanted to do, though, was pull up the covers and go to sleep.

My mind, though, buzzed from the release of endorphins. I had two problems I needed to solve. ,

My first problem was I needed to figure out why Dirk wasn't aroused by his wife. Or Chastity.

He was healthy. Lab reports showed his testosterone levels were above average. He had no other health conditions which would show a dysfunction: no high blood pressure; he wasn't obese, cholesterol was normal, no diabetes, he didn't smoke, no prostate issues, and no medications which might contribute. Actually, other than health supplements, he didn't take any medications.

I reminded myself to ask him about his health supplements and to ask if he was taking steroids to keep that body of his in such fine shape.

With every physical reason for his condition ruled out, that only left psychological reasons. He had no signs of depression, but I should probably evaluate him for that tomorrow. He had indicated that his work had been stressful. I needed to dig into that more tomorrow, too.

The most obvious root cause, though, seemed to be his deteriorating relationship with his wife. Just because a husband and wife are having difficulties doesn't always lead to ED. More often than not, it leads to a loss of libido in the woman.

Dirk had said his wife was fairly insatiable. Perhaps she had just worn the old man out. That didn't seem likely. At fifty-five, Dirk Baxter wasn't an old man and his physical vitals showed he was the equivalent of a healthy forty-five-year-old.

That wouldn't have explained, though, why Chastity hadn't elicited an erection from him. Maybe he was worried about performing? Maybe she wasn't his type? *Chastity is everyone's type*. No, that made little sense either. I definitely had to ask Chastity about that in the morning.

After my mind spent too much time on my first problem, my second problem demanded some attention. I was extremely attracted to Dirk Baxter and I couldn't do anything about it. His dark eyes, his hair, the way he smelled, the way he carried himself, all left me totally enamored with him. Not to mention he made my pussy wet as soon as he stepped into the office. Or as soon as my thoughts drifted to him. Or as soon as my hand reached to my panty-covered pussy.

Memories of the lap dance that turned into so much more flooded back into my awareness. The feeling of his kiss and the strength of his touch. He caressed my body like a man who knew what he wanted. What he liked. The feeling of his hard cock in my mouth. The feeling of his erection spreading my pussy while I rode him.

Wait a minute.

His cock had been hard as hell at the Gentleman's Club. It had responded to seeing me naked and to our kissing. It had been erect before I took it out of his pants and began giving him my best blowjob ever. When I slid down on his cock, he had spread me and penetrated me deeply with that cock of his. It was like a steel phallus. Granted, the skin felt velvety and sensuous, but he was hard as a rock.

As I drifted off to sleep, I came up with a plan. One more experiment to get to the bottom of his issue. I, Reggie Davenport, was the best sexual therapist in the LA area, sex

therapist to the stars, and I intended to figure this out. Even if it meant doing something I shouldn't.

Chapter 13

Something I Shouldn't

I PACED IN MY OFFICE THE NEXT DAY, NERVOUS ABOUT MY next appointment. The clock on the wall read 4:55 PM. The tick, tick of the clock, the soft flow of water from the fountain, and the muffled sound of my heels on the carpet were the only sounds.

I ran through the facts of the case again and everything still lead me to the same conclusion. In about an hour's time, if things went well, I hoped to know for sure if I was right. Part of me hoped I wasn't. The other part of me, the quiet part of me, hoped that I was.

I came to the office in a plum dress. It came down to just above the knees, so my lower legs were on display. It plunged only enough in the front to reveal a hint of cleavage, but it helped show off my frame in a very feminine way. I tied my hair up in a bun and I felt both professional and sexy at the same time. I didn't normally worry about what I wore to work, but I found myself dressing more provocatively on days I had appointments with Dirk.

I'd asked to reschedule Dirk's 4:00 PM appointment to 5:00 PM. As busy as he always seemed to be, I didn't think he could accommodate my request. However, he answered back almost immediately. Too fast, almost for such a busy man. I didn't really have time to think about the why, but if my conclusion about him was correct, then I maybe already had my answer.

When Penny knocked and opened the door to announce my appointment was here, I nodded.

“Send him in.”

Seconds later, Dirk Baxter, Mr. Dark Eyes, strode into my office. He wore a black Brooks Brothers suit with a light blue shirt and a red tie. Black dress shoes completed his clothing and his handsome head with dark black hair topped it off. I felt a clinch between my legs just at the sight of him. *Hold it together.*

“Should I lock up when I leave, Miss Davenport?” Penny asked.

“Yes, please, Penny. Have a great weekend.”

He took a seat on the couch, and I took a seat in my plush wingback chair.

“Thank you so much for agreeing to meet an hour later.”

“No problem. This time suits me better, anyway.”

“Why so?” I raised a quizzical eyebrow.

“It’s Friday. I had more time to finish up my work so that I could enjoy the weekend.”

“Oh? What do you have planned?”

He paused and stared at me intently. Measuring his words? “I’ve been working really hard on a potential merger and all the legal papers have been drawn up. A meeting on Monday morning should complete the deal. There is nothing to do this weekend but relax and try to enjoy myself.”

“That sounds like a wonderful plan. What do you do to relax?” I couldn’t help but enter therapist mode as we started, even though I had completely different plans for this session.

“You know. A friend asked me to join him on his yacht this weekend. I think I might take him up on it. Some sun and the ocean breeze might do wonders for me.”

“That sounds delightful. You don’t have your own yacht?”

“I live somewhat modestly. I’ve been pouring money back into my business for the last ten years.”

“And how has that worked out for you?”

“Not bad. If this merger goes through, I’ll double my net worth and triple my income potential.”

“Will your wife be joining you?”

“That might ruin the mood, don’t you think?”

I wrote my thoughts on that.

“Tell me, how do you feel when your wife, Scarlet, touches you or you touch her?”

“It feels uncomfortable now. Like an obligation.”

“An obligation?”

“Yeah. I feel like I’m going through the motions to appease her.”

“Interesting. Why did you ask for ten sessions specifically, Mr. Baxter?” That instinctual feeling that there was something Dirk wasn’t telling me triggered and I felt a tightness in my gut.

I uncrossed and crossed my legs.

He shifted in his seat a bit and then sighed.

“It’s a clause in my prenuptial agreement. Since I decided to divorce her, I agreed to go to ten therapy sessions. If I do, then her divorce settlement is reduced. If I don’t, she gets a much larger sum.”

“And you don’t want her to get the larger sum?”

“It might jeopardize this merger. I need a certain amount of capital to complete the deal.”

“So, if you didn’t have this merger going on, you might be okay with giving her the larger amount?”

“Perhaps. Wait. No. That’s not right.” He leaned forward in his seat. “Can I be straightforward with you?”

“Please do.” I jotted down more notes.

“I made a mistake in marrying her. Over the course of our marriage, I’ve already invested over thirty million in her career, her projects, and her monthly spending account. She’s already benefited greatly from our marriage. Even if I didn’t have this merger going on, I would want to minimize the amount of money she gets in a settlement.”

“Out of spite?” I waited with a pen hovering over my notepad.

“Not really. She’s terrible with money. She would just throw it away.”

“What’s it worth to you to get out of this marriage with as few entanglements as possible?” The question held a lot of relevance to me.

I’d finally given in to my ex-husband’s demands just to get out of the marriage. It had cost me full custody rights to my kids and much more limited visitation, but I couldn’t stay in that relationship. I felt the same energy from Dirk, but I also felt like he was still holding on too tight to something. Was he any better or worse than my ex?

“I honestly hadn’t thought of it like that. I don’t know.”

“And what does she get if you don’t complete these ten sessions with me?”

“I want to remind you of our NDA, Miss Davenport.”

“I remember.” When he said my name like that, I felt pressure in my chest, like my heart was going to expand until it exploded.

“If I complete the ten sessions, she only gets a million dollar settlement and \$20,000 per month in alimony for five years.”

“And if you don’t complete the sessions?” That seemed like a handsome sum.

“She gets fifty million dollars and twenty thousand a month for ten years.”

I met his gaze and raised an eyebrow. “That’s a huge difference.”

“Yes, it is.” He was still leaning forward, and he met my gaze with those dark eyes of his. They seemed to burn right now with an intensity I’d seen in my ex-husband’s eyes.

“Do you really care about saving your marriage, Mr. Baxter?”

“Not really. I want to end it and move on with my life. Lick my wounds. Learn from them. And move on.”

I looked through my notes for today’s session before continuing.

“So, when your wife, Scarlet, touches you can you describe what you feel?”

“I feel nervous. Excited. When she touches me, I feel apprehensive. Worried.”

“About what?”

“Not getting an erection.”

“And why does that bother you?”

“I am getting older. You know the old saying. ‘If you don’t use it, you lose it.’ I work out to keep my body in shape. Mental puzzles and working through issues at work keep my mind in shape. I have no desire to let my sexual abilities decline. I intend to find someone to spend my life with after this divorce and I intend to enjoy sex with them.”

“And what do you consider an enjoyable sex life?”

“Two to three times a week. Focused more on the weekend, when I’m not stressed about work.”

“You don’t stress about your company on the weekends?”
An eyebrow shot up in disbelief.

“Well, yes, I worry about work on the weekends. But I’ve always thought of the weekends as a time to fit in some fun. Going out on a Saturday night. Having a few drinks. Enjoying some sex Saturday night. And if things go well, Sunday morning too.”

“Let’s get back to the touching with Scarlet. You feel apprehension when she touches you?”

“Yes.” He nodded as he leaned back into the couch.

“What about when you touch her? Do you get aroused?”

“When I’m touching her and she’s in my arms, I get a bit more aroused. It’s like I’m in control at that point. Plus, she rubs her ass against me and my... I can’t help but get aroused.”

“Do you get hard?”

“Somewhat. Not a full-blown erection. Maybe three quarters.”

“Do you ever get harder than that at any point?” I jotted down notes furiously as he answered my questions.

I gave him a reassuring nod.

“Scarlet seems to have her own playbook. She almost always starts with a blowjob. So, she usually starts with that.”

“Does it feel good?”

He looked at me with a smirk. A very sexy smirk.

“Yes. But it also has felt awkward over the last year. And since I stopped staying at the house, it felt even more uncomfortable. Considering...”

“Considering you want to divorce her?”

“Yes.” He hesitated before answering and his eyes looked up and away. That wasn’t the full truth. What was he not telling me?

“The last time she gave you a blowjob, did the blowjob feel good? Did it feel good to be intimate with her?” My mind

couldn't help but race to thoughts of whether he liked my blowjob better than here.

"Well, she gives a good blowjob. She always has. It didn't feel intimate, though. It felt forced. Out of control. I just wanted it to be over."

"Did it feel good to release?"

"Yes. That part felt good. It had been a while."

"So you haven't been with another woman other than your wife since you decided to divorce her?"

"No. No one."

"Do you masturbate?"

"No. Well. Maybe once a week."

I hesitated to ask my next question, but I decided I had to. Could he have been omitting me from this equation?

"You're sure you haven't slept with anyone else since you decided to divorce your wife. Not even me?"

"I haven't slept with you since I decided to divorce my wife." He didn't hesitate at all and his eyes burned with a fire that dared me to believe anything different.

So when he and I did the dirty deed in the Cherry Pit at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club on amateur night, he hadn't decided to divorce his wife yet. *Holy crap!*

This was new information. I suspected he had feelings for me. Lustful feelings, at least. That was what the next step of my plan was supposed to determine. This cast things in a new light. I had to reconsider. And yet, I didn't want to.

I made notes on my notepad. I shifted my crossed legs and inadvertently exposed a healthy length of my thigh.

The silence continued for a minute as I made notes. I noticed Dirk reposition himself on the couch. His hand went to his crotch at least once, pulling and stretching the fabric of his black slacks.

I decided.

“Mr. Baxter. I’d like you to do something. It’s unorthodox, but I think it will help me help you. Are you willing to try something?” *Who was I kidding? This was completely unorthodox.*

“If you think it will help, I’m game.”

I set my notepad aside and rose from my chair. “Come with me, Mr. Baxter.”

He stood as well, and I led him out of my office and down the hallway. When we got to the surrogate room, I led him in and guided him to the bed.

Chastity had used the bed with one client earlier today, but now it was clean, with a new bedspread and ready for its next session.

Dirk gave me a quizzical look.

“Are you ready for another sensate touch session?”

“Yeah, sure. Is Chastity here?”

“No. She isn’t. Today’s session will be with me.” I turned my back to Dirk and undid the clasp at the top of my dress. “Can you unzip me, please?”

He complied. I moved to the other side of the bed and removed my dress, revealing a plum bra and panties. The panties revealed most of my ass and were definitely party-all-night appropriate. After removing my heels, I lay down on the bed.

Dirk stood there, still clothed, and his eyes bore into me, searching for answers.

“Don’t just stand there. You know the drill.”

I positioned myself on the bed. Back supported by pillows, I leaned back against the headboard. My legs were currently together. My knees were bent, and I caressed my thighs out of nervousness.

Dirk undressed slowly, gazing at me the entire time. While he took off his clothes slowly, I could feel my own arousal awakening. He joined me on the bed. He had taken Chastity's advice and wore boxer briefs that hugged his body nicely. I could see his bulge and my nipples hardened at the sight.

He climbed into bed. I parted my legs. He leaned back against me in the first position. I reached around him and held him across the belly.

"Just relax. Take some deep breaths." I caressed his belly and his chest as he sunk into a position where I could see over his left shoulder. "Breathe deep into your belly. Just pay attention to my touch. How does it feel? What emotions does it bring up? Is it pleasurable?"

I felt his body relax into me as he slowed his breathing. Once he was more relaxed, I started moving my hands over his body. I rubbed his belly, his chest, his traps. I stayed away from certain erogenous zones at first.

"That feels good," he sighed.

When my hands moved towards his crotch, I saw a twitch in his shorts. I felt wetness between my legs, too. *Oh my.*

My fingers traced a path along the upper band of his briefs. The bulge in his pants grew. I rubbed his hip flexors, one hand just a narrow inch away from what looked like the head of his cock. Then my hands retreated up his body, caressing his belly, his chest, his shoulders, and his arms.

"Do you feel awkward?"

"No. This feels safe."

"Do you feel apprehensive?"

"No. Not at all."

"Do you feel a lack of control?"

"Yes, but I trust you."

My hands roamed back down towards his crotch and the bulge, which seemed even bigger.

“Your equipment seems to work, Mr. Baxter.” I whispered in his ear.

“It seems to like you,” he whispered back.

I so wanted to grab him and stroke his cock. As my finger slipped under the waistband of his briefs, I knew I was inches away from the head of his cock. I couldn't run my fingers through his black pubes without touching him. I felt like I was struggling to not start hyperventilating. My breasts pressed against his back and my nipples pressed against the plum fabric.

“My turn?” Dirk asked.

I didn't know if I wanted to stop, but I also knew my body craved his touch. He might have problems getting an erection with his wife, but he seemed to be well on his way to a raging hard-on from my touch. What did this tell me?

“Yes. Let's do that.”

We switched positions, and soon his hand was caressing my skin. Belly, arms, shoulders, and even my neck received the blessing of his touch. I could faintly smell my arousal in that moment and I hoped he didn't sense it too. Or did I hope he did?

When his hands reached my breasts, my nipples felt like they would burst through the fabric. He grazed the sides and the underneath part of my breasts. His hand lifted them and slowly let them down. I hoped he liked the weight of them. Their volume in his hands. When his fingers ran across the exposed flesh above the bra, I thought I might have an orgasm right there in his arms.

I wriggled a little in his arms, and my ass pressed against him. There was no denying what I felt. His cock was pretty damn hard.

In the throes of pleasure, my analytical mind surfaced. So, he can't get hard with his wife, who must be much hotter than me. He didn't have sex with me after telling his wife he wanted a divorce. Which means he told her after our wild

night in the Cherry Pit. He had crazy sex with me at a gentleman's club after I danced naked in front of him on amateur night. And now, practicing sensate touch, he has an enormous hard-on.

While my mind was working through the mental reasoning, my body was giving in to his touch. Everywhere he touched me turned me on. My own hands had begun to casually caress the outside of his thighs, which hemmed me in on both sides.

He arched up, pressing his hard on against my ass. I heard him moan just under his breath.

“How are you... feeling?” I asked as my breathing quickened with excitement.

“Miss Davenport. You'll have to excuse me, but... I am so turned on right now.”

“More aroused than you are with your wife?”

“Yes. Ten times more.”

“More aroused than you were at the Gentleman's Club?”

His hand ran down my belly to the top of my panties. He slipped it beneath the soft fabric. His fingers slid through my pubes.

I gasped. This was close to getting out of hand. I didn't really care, though. Sex surrogates were called that for a reason. Sessions often ended in sex between the client and the surrogate. Maybe not on the first time though.

“Way more aroused than at the club,” he replied. His hand slid down farther into my wet fold. A finger grazed my clit, causing me to throw my head back into his chest. He slid two fingers between my labia, my wet lips spreading to greet him. His free hand squeezed my breast and rubbed my nipples through the fabric of my plum bra.

I was ripe for the taking.

“How does this feel when I touch you here?”

Suddenly, he was in charge.

“It feels amazing,” A moan escaped my lips and my ass wriggled against his hard cock.

Two of his fingers slid inside of me, and his palm cupped my clit. He moved in and out of me as I moved my head from side to side on his chest. He slipped my bra strap off of one shoulder and exposed my breast. His strong fingers squeezed and pulled on my nipple.

This was definitely something that I hadn't planned on, but my body didn't seem to care. His touch was better than my fantasy. By far. At that moment, my mind didn't care either.

He pumped his fingers in and out of me while his palm rubbed my clit on each stroke. His powerful hand squeezed my breasts and nipples. When he kissed me hard on the neck, almost biting me, I came.

I came so hard that I thrashed my head from side to side. My hips bucked. First trying to maintain contact and then trying to break contact as my clit couldn't take any more of the pleasure rippling through me.

When he removed his hand from my panties, he continued to caress my breast. He removed the other bra strap as well, revealing my other breast. His cum-soaked hand caressed and massaged that one so that it didn't feel left out.

“Does that normally happen in a session?”

I felt like I was in a heavenly blissed out state, but I was also so eager to touch him. So, before I completely calmed down, I extricated myself from his loving arms and hands and turned around.

“Yes. Sometimes, especially after the first few sessions. Things progress. Although what I'm about to do is still probably ahead of schedule.” I gazed at his erection bulging against his boxer briefs.

I reached down and pulled down the front of his briefs, revealing his rigid cock. I stroked it a few times and watched

as he threw his head back.

“Does that feel good?”

“Amazing,” he managed.

“What about it feels amazing?” I continued to stroke it.

“The feel of your hand. It’s soft. But it knows what it’s doing,” he said. He gasped when I licked the bottom side of his cock. From the balls to the tip, I traveled his sensitive skin like a pilgrim on a holy journey.

“Your tongue is so warm and wet. It seems to know every spot to touch.”

He was barely holding on. His fingers had pleased me.

I intended to return the favor, but I didn’t want to go further. Not today. I had satisfied my curiosity. He had satisfied my hunger. Now I wanted him to leave at least a little sated.

I slid my lips around the head of his cock and then slid it deeper inside me until it touched the back of my throat. I didn’t want to turn this into an ASMR session, so I stopped there and just sucked hard for a bit. Then I bobbed my mouth up and down on his cock while one hand stroked the lower half of his length.

He was so hard. When I started twisting my hand around his cock while stroking it and I tightened the suction around his head, he gasped out loud before he came. Part of me wanted to see his load, but in an effort to keep the bed less messy, I swallowed it all.

I smiled up at him when I finished, but didn’t say a word.

“God, that was amazing.”

“Did that release feel relieving?”

“Yes, ma’am, it did.”

He hadn’t called me ma’am yet. Had he? It sounded sweet. Considering he was older than me by about eleven years, I’m

not sure what prompted it. Politeness, I guessed.

I slipped out of bed and started putting on my clothes.

He crossed his legs at the ankles and put his hands behind his head in a rather triumphant display.

“Go to dinner with me tonight?” he asked.

“I don’t date patients. I commend you for your persistence, though.” After answering, I slipped on my heels.

He finally moved off the bed and started dressing. I got a good look at his ass, his muscular back, and his strong thighs. I was already wet between my legs, but I felt a lump of desire in my chest as I observed him.

“So, if I wasn’t your patient, you’d go out with me?”

Tricky. Tricky, Mr. Baxter.

“You’ll have to ask me when you aren’t my patient.”

He chuckled and continued to get dressed.

“I do have an assignment for you, Mr. Baxter.”

“Yes?”

“I want you to masturbate every morning until our next appointment. That’s seven days of masturbation in a row.”

“Isn’t that overkill?” he asked.

“Just do it. I have my reasons.”

“Yes, ma’am,” he replied with a nod and a wink.

I had a sense that he was persistent. He probably would ask me out at that point. The thought actually excited me. There was this sense I had about Mr. Dark Eyes. It was an attraction I hadn’t felt before. If I had, it had been so long I had forgotten.

As we left the room, he turned to the one-way window at the side of the room.

“That wasn’t recorded, was it?” he asked.

“No, Mr. Baxter, it wasn’t recorded.” I smiled at what I thought was his concern about being captured getting a blowjob on tape. He was the one that insisted on an NDA.

“That’s too bad,” he said with a smirk on his face.

Perhaps I was wrong.

When I let him out of the office, Trace, his driver, waited. I leaned my back against the closed door.

My assumption had been right. His wife didn’t arouse him. Chastity only partially aroused him. But, and it was a huge butt, I aroused him.

Mr. Dirk Baxter obviously had reached a point in his life where his arousal depended on other factors besides physical attraction. He obviously had feelings for me. Besides the physical arousal, he had asked me to dinner multiple times and didn’t seem phased when I told him no. He had this confidence about him that didn’t seem capable of being dissuaded. He was obviously interested and attracted to me.

As I was to him.

As I gathered my stuff and turned out the lights, I thought about my masturbation session the previous night to the tape of Dirk and Chastity in the surrogate room. I chuckled, remembering Dirk’s question about whether our session had been recorded.

“That is too bad,” I said, wishing I had a new tape to masturbate to tonight.

Chapter 14

Not All Dick is Good Dick

“SHOOT TO THRILL” BLARED OVER THE LOUDSPEAKERS AT THE Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club as I observed from backstage. Light refracted off of silver disco balls and danced across the stage. The warmth of alcohol from my first rum and coke spread through my body, relaxing me.

Wrapped up in a colorful kimono hiding my dark blue bra and g-string, I fought off the goose bumps that were forming on my arms. I had come to the club to dance, enjoy myself, and take the edge off—an edge that had grown sharper over the last three weeks. I just wanted to dance, let loose, and be Muse—my stage name for amateur night.

Some twenty-something girl with either a dancer or gymnastic background flowed smoothly on stage from pole dancing to flips and splits in front of wide-eyed patrons. She had no top on and her perky breasts lured the men surrounding the stage to lean in with their bills. They eagerly awaited their opportunity to slide some currency between the girl’s flesh and her panties. Her youth and athleticism would earn her praise, catcalls, and some cash tonight.

Three weeks had passed since Dirk’s first sensate touch session with Chastity. He had his session with me. Then he had two more sessions with Chastity—each of which had evolved to less clothes and added touches to the genitals—had revealed that Dirk didn’t respond to Chastity physically, like other clients.

He reacted of course. When she grasped his cock, he would harden, but if she didn't touch him directly there, she got less of a response. Even kissing Chastity did not bring about a full erection. Dirk Baxter had one major erogenous zone. His cock.

In the last session, when he got a hard-on from Chastity's touch of either her hands or lips, wetness spotted my panties. I admit, I'd watched the video recordings multiple times, and it had fueled many pleasure sessions before I fell asleep each night. Chastity's hands on his erect cock, stroking it up and down, made my pussy crave his touch. Mostly, it drove my desire to a point beyond boiling.

Carol stepped up to me and touched my shoulder.

"You're up next."

I patted her hand on my shoulder and gave her a half-hearted smile.

"You look like hell. Are you sure you want to do this?"

"Gee. Thanks, Carol. Yes. I need to do this to take my mind off..."

"Mr. Dark Eyes?" Carol finished my sentence with a smirk.

"No," I protested. "Work in general. And Ass-Hat." My ex-husband had been giving me grief. Since my business had made a name for itself and because he literally lived for making my life miserable, he felt I should pay more child-support. That he made twice as much as I did didn't seem to play a part in the equation.

"What hole did Ass-Hat climb out of this time?"

"A deep, dark one. He wants more child-support."

"More?"

I nodded as "*You Shook Me All Night Long*" blared and the young dancer walked off the stage to applause, whistles, and shouts.

“My turn.” I shrugged my kimono off and handed it to Carol. “How do I look?”

She appraised me from head to toe, smiled, and gave me a hug.

“Gorgeous. Break a leg, Reggie.”

“Do we have a treat for you tonight, folks? The last time this dancer graced our stage, we had to pick up jaws and eyeballs off the floor when she finished. Let’s give a warm welcome for Muse!”

“*Enter Sandman*” by Metallica played over the sound system as I strutted on stage. Six-inch blue heels that matched my g-string and panties tapped the floor as I approached the center of the stage and the pole. It started out slow and had a heavy bass beat.

When the song got to the lyrics of *lost in Neverland*, I grabbed as high as I could on the pole with my left hand and strutted around the pole once. I smiled as I did and watched the eyes of those lining the stage. After I circled the pole a second time, I kicked off and reached down as low as possible with my left hand and did a carousel spin. Bending my knees so that my heels almost touched my ass, I spun around on the pole two times before settling my feet back on the stage.

I strolled around the pole again, swaying my hips. Guys who had been at the bar had moved to stage seats and every seat was soon taken. The men had been a blur as I spun on the pole and all my troubles and tension slipped away with the spinning, the music, and the flashing lights.

I climbed the pole about halfway and gripped it tightly before swinging my legs up in an inversion. The force of my movement as I lifted my legs above my head caused me to spin. Once, twice, then three times, I spun as all the gawking men appeared upside down to me. When I swung my legs back down, I wrapped one leg around the pole and continued to spin in a fairy sit.

My arms quivered from the effort as I stepped to the front of the stage and back, eyeing the men who offered their money for me to dance for them. They all had stacks of bills waiting to find a new home. I strutted all around the stage before returning for more stunts. The look in their eyes. The lust and pleasure as they scanned my body sent thrills through me.

I performed on the pole some more until the song wound down. The lights dimmed on cue as "*Hells Bells*" by AC/DC began with a bell tolling mournfully. When the lights came up and the song's tempo quickened, I hung from the pole in an inverted pose and spun around. When the vocals started, I dismounted, and I made my way to the same side of the stage where I'd started dancing close to the edge last time.

A smile.

A wink.

A shake.

A twerk.

My every move found a reward of a one or a five slid into my g-string or bra strap. Some would splurge with a ten and I usually granted them a few more seconds of performing and a shimmy of my breasts. They all seem disappointed when I moved on to the next eager suitor. Sometimes, two men would slip a bill into my panties at the same time.

I had always thought that the touch of men doing this would feel creepy or gross. Thankfully, I gave myself permission to receive, and while every touch didn't thrill me, it didn't repulse me either. They were each showing their appreciation for my dancing. Or for my body.

As I crawled to the next patron, I gulped when I saw a hundred-dollar bill folded down the middle the long way. That was sincere appreciation, and I felt my body respond to the adrenaline rush. My arms quivered more, both from the exertion on the pole, but also from the sudden hormones coursing through me.

A primal feeling of desire flooded through me. I had no intention of doing anything like last time with Mr. Dark Eyes, Dirk Baxter, but I reveled in the thrill in that moment.

I crawled in front of the generous man with the hundred dollar offering and glanced up. I offered a demure but sensual glance, which went from my eyes to my smile to my pussy. My eyes immediately widened and I don't know how my jaw didn't drop to the ground.

It was Ass-Hat!

Yes. My husband, Richard Miller—who when I was mad always referred to as Dick—owner of Miller Real Estate, Realtor to the Stars, sat before me with a horrific grin on his face and a hundred-dollar bill grasped between two fingers.

“Hello, Regina,” he said as his grin grew even wider, seeing my reaction. He even winked. That wink that had driven me wild when we first met and when we progressed through those initial stages of love and lust, pursuit and capture. He dangled the bill in front of my slack-jawed face.

When I finally regained my senses, I moved to the next patron, ignoring Richard.

He smiled one of those smiles a guy uses when he knows he's won something over you. There was no way that I was going to let him touch me. He hadn't touched me in over five years and I didn't plan on letting tonight break that streak.

I moved with less enthusiasm through the next few clients. I didn't take as long. My ex had sucked all the joy out of my evening.

Eye contact was the last thing I wanted to make. My thoughts drifted to only one thing. *Getting off this stage*. I had no intention, though, of fleeing without finishing my act. Then Dick would win. Again.

I reached the opposite side of the stage from Ass-Hat and loosened up a bit as “*Livin' on a Prayer*” began playing. I was over halfway to getting off the stage and I saw smooth sailing ahead. Everyone was still eager and there were less than ten

more patrons to dance in front of. The next one even had five twenties laid out ready for me. I felt another sudden tightness in my chest.

I glanced up to see who wanted to bless me with one-hundred dollars and my night went from worse to worst. My friendly donor was Mr. Dark Eyes himself. Dirk Baxter. *Fuck me.*

Just like last time, I moved past him and gave him the dirtiest look a woman in a g-string and bra could. I hurried through the remaining ten men, dancing for them. Anger coursed through me. I had just wanted some time to do what I loved to do. Something which allowed me to unwind, feel invigorated, and feel the thrill of unattached desire. I wanted my version of lady's night and Ass-Hat had ruined it for me.

I realized by the time I'd reached the last man that it wasn't Dirk that had ruined my night, though. The thought of dancing in front of him, even taking off my top for him, thrilled me. I also realized that I still wanted to do that and, in the safety of The Cherry Pie, I could have done it.

Ass-Hat's presence took that away from me, though. I couldn't do that in front of him and let him use that against me if we had to go to court again.

Or could I?

It wasn't the rum in my system that gave me the courage to do it. It wasn't my anger that fueled me to do it. It wasn't the fact that "*It's My Life*" began playing, although that helped. In that moment, I knew—without the shadow of a doubt—that I wasn't doing anything wrong. I was a divorced, beautiful, capable, forty-something woman who didn't have to be ashamed of her desire or her pleasure.

When the last guy tucked a ten into my g-string, I stood up, took two steps towards back stage before whirling around and strutting back to the center of the stage.

I began a chair spin on the pole and then leaped into a fan kick, letting the spins and the music build up my courage.

Finishing with a back slide on the pole, I leapt up and ripped off my bra as Bon Jovi belted out '*it's my life*' and strutted directly to Dirk with my back to Ass-Hat.

I did a squat with my legs spread and shook my breasts in front of Mr. Dark Eyes. My eyes met his dark-eyed stare, and I took in every ounce of lust and desire that I saw in those eyes.

I could feel the arousal in my body. It exploded from my pussy to all parts of my body. Thighs, stomach, chest, breast. I'm sure my neck flushed with the raw energy of flaunting my body to this man.

As I danced, he smiled and slid twenties inside my g-string. He took his time, savoring the motion and the touch of his hands on my skin. I didn't rush him as I leaned forward, then leaned back, presenting the altar of my vagina to his offering of cash. When he slid a bill into my panties at the front, like last time, his knuckles slid across my clit and across my pussy lips. I could feel the wetness that had started there, and I closed my eyes and moaned at his touch.

When he withdrew his hand, it felt like life being withdrawn from my body. My pussy wanted his touch. I wanted his touch. Thoughts of my ex-husband totally fled my brain. I might have given him a lap dance right there in front of everyone, but the ending of the song and the announcer's voice pulled me out of the moment.

"She burned up the stage tonight. Don't you agree? She may no longer be a Cherry Pie virgin, but she is definitely a slice of sweet Cherry Pie. Let's hear it for Muse." He drew out the name Muse.

I leaned in closer to Dirk and whispered. "Do you want a lap dance tonight?"

He simply nodded, and I thought I saw him swallow.

"Give me five minutes."

I picked up my bra, stood up, and glanced over at Richard. The look on his face should have been satisfying. It wasn't, however. He smiled. He smiled like he'd just unwrapped the

best Christmas present ever. I strutted off the stage to the whistles and clapping.

“Yeah, Muse.”

“Encore.”

“You got to come back.”

My heart pounded in my chest when Carol met me with my kimono. I slipped my bra back on, repositioned my boobs, and then slipped on the kimono.

Carol pulled bills from my g-string and organized them. I felt like a race car driver coming in for a pit stop.

“Reggie. You were great out there. Damn, I wish I could be as sexy as you.”

I helped pull out bills, especially the twenty that had grazed my pussy.

“Oh, Carol. You’re gorgeous. You’d be great out there. You could shake those big boobs of yours and men would throw money at you.”

Carol blushed and continued organizing and counting bills.

“Richard was in the audience.”

“Ass-Hat?”

“Yeah. He had a hundred-dollar bill waiting for me.”

“Did you hide it?”

“No, I moved past him. I wasn’t going to let him touch me.”

“Why not?” a male voice from behind me asked.

I turned to see Richard standing there with that grin on his face again. He always dressed well, and tonight was no exception. He had on a black Tom Ford suit, blue shirt, paisley tie, and black Tom Ford shoes. The suit looked good on his athletic frame. He wore his brown hair slicked back with a liberal amount of hair product, and his brown eyes twinkled.

I couldn't deny that he wasn't attractive. My problem with him happened to be because, among Alpha-males, my ex-husband reigned as an Alpha-hole. He was the model for a narcissist.

I fought back the urge to tell him exactly why. That his touch repulsed me now. The fact that he made my skin crawl. I experienced these powerful feelings and triggers even though I'd done my share of therapy, meditation, and letting go ceremonies.

"I don't want your money," I said.

"I heard you were doing well. I didn't realize you owed your new prosperity to stripping. Tips must be fantastic."

God, I hated him at that moment.

"Three hundred fifty dollars tonight," Carol said, but regretted it when she saw my eye roll.

"Hey Carol," Richard said, giving her a nod. Returning his attention to me. "You must do pretty good in the Cherry Pit?" he asked. Or was it a statement?

"I don't perform in the Cherry Pit." My blood boiled again but not due to desire this time. This was pure, seething anger.

"Is that what they call it now? Performing."

Carol glared. I glared.

"Why are you here?"

"I had a big client to entertain. He loves this place. I bring him here every time he visits from Atlanta."

"What do you want?" I snarled.

He reached inside his suit and pulled out an envelope, which he offered me. Foolishly, I took it.

"I could have had someone else serve you with this, but I told my lawyer I wanted the privilege of doing so. I intended to do it next weekend after I picked up the kids, but since you're here. I'll save myself a trip."

“What is this?”

“Court papers.”

“For what? Why?” My throat tightened as I balled the envelope up in my hand. I heard Carol gasp behind me.

“I’m asking for an adjustment in the child support you’re paying. And after witnessing this tonight,” he said as he motioned to the stage with his arm. “I’m guessing I’ll be asking for more changes in the custody arrangement.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Come on, Regina. You’re stripping. You deal with perverted scumbags in your business. You have no right to raise MY kids. You’re nothing but a slut and a crazy bitch.”

Richard got angrier the more he talked, and I got more intimidated. My anger simmered beneath the surface. I think he would have continued with his rant if a hand on his shoulder hadn’t stopped him.

“I think you should leave,” Dirk said. He squeezed Richard’s shoulder when he tried to pull it away.

Richard jerked away. “Who the hell are you?”

“It’s not important who I am. You’re obviously upsetting the lady. So you should leave.”

“I’ll leave when I’m good and ready. I’m not finished.”

“What else do you have to say, Richard?” I asked. Things were escalating and now the embarrassment of Dirk witnessing this exchange made all the butterflies in my stomach suddenly develop razor sharp wings. They were cutting my insides the more agitated they became.

“I think you should leave now, before you mess up your cheap suit,” Dirk said.

Richard reached out and grabbed Dirk’s suit lapel and bunched it up in his fist. “Look, buddy. I don’t know who you are, but you should stay out of family business.”

The two men were equal in size. Dirk maybe had an inch on Richard, but they both were big and imposing.

“A man should watch his language around a lady.”

“Show me a lady in this joint and I will.” Richard tried to force Dirk away from him with a shove, but Mr. Dark Eyes didn't budge.

What happened next seemed a blur. Dirk did something with Richard's thumb and in no time he had him on his knees squealing in pain.

Carol hyperventilated. Some girls in the back room cried out with either a “What the fuck?” or an “Oh my God.”

I found my hands covering my mouth as I stifled a cry of my own. The Cherry Pit bouncer and another big man were coming up the steps to backstage.

Dirk dug a hand into Richard's shoulder and seemed to lift him from the floor, facing the bouncers. When they arrived, he let him go into their capable hands. They both gave him and me a look, trying to figure out what happened and who to kick out.

“He was harassing Miss Davenport. Please escort him out,” Dirk said. His voice had an authority and crispness of someone used to commanding others.

“You just made a big mistake, buddy. You're going to regret this.” Richard struggled against the bouncers.

The bouncers turned to me, and I nodded. Within seconds, Richard was out of sight.

Dirk stepped towards me, placed a hand on my upper arm, and lifted my chin with his other hand.

“Are you okay?”

I nodded. “I think so.”

“Who was that?”

“Ass-Hat,” Carol answered for me. When Dirk raised an eyebrow, she added. “Reggie’s ex. A real prince among men.”

I looked at the crumpled envelope in my hand. This divorce had gone smoothly after fighting it for years, because I had conceded so much. I’d agreed to pay child support even though the formulas said I didn’t need to. I agreed to let Monica and Trey live with him and only got visitation every other weekend. We’d coexisted rather well for almost three years with no incidents. Suddenly, all that peace I had created exploded like the Death Star.

I hated crying. In that moment, though, the tears came, and I leaned into Dirk and cried on his shoulder.

Carol gathered my things. “I can drive you home, Reggie.”

“I’ll make sure she gets home safely,” Dirk said.

“I promised you a lap dance,” I said numbly. I don’t even know why I said that. The offer originally may have been simply to make Richard jealous. In my emotional state, I latched on to my offer like a stair rail.

“I’ll take a rain check. Let’s get you out of here and get you home.”

Before I knew it, I was in the Lincoln Navigator in the back seat with Dirk and Trace was driving. As I settled down amid the turmoil of emotions, one thing kept surfacing.

I still want to give Dirk that lap dance.

Chapter 15

A Spider has Many Webs

FOR A MARINE, STU EATS PUSSY REALLY WELL. THE FACT THAT I tell him how much I like it helps his performance. We were in the backseat of one of two custom Lincoln Navigators Dirk owned and we had fogged all the windows up. Light from the radio and Metallica added to the ambiance of our tryst. This Saturday night was turning out great.

My panties were off, my tits were out, and he had his head buried deep in my muff. I had a tight grip on the back of his head and, while nearing an orgasm, I ground my crotch into his face.

“Oh, yes, marine. Lick my cunt. I’m gonna come.”

He grunted and licked. He sucked on my clit, which brought me to orgasm seconds later, and it was a doozy. It was also the second for the day.

I squeezed his head between my legs and tried to pull away as my body quivered. A loud cry followed a quick intake of breath. I squirted on Stu’s square-jawed face as another wave of pleasure shot through me.

“Oh God, Scarlet. Fuck you’re wet.”

I fought for breath and could only nod.

“My dick. So hard.” He struggled for air as he spoke.

I seldom turned down a hard dick, even after an amazing climax. “So, fuck me then.”

Stu sat down on the back seat and pulled me on top of him. Stu may never be my first choice in men—mostly because he doesn't have enough money—but he definitely had powerful hands and knew how to fuck. Both things were turn-ons for me. Plus, he was managing both things at full strength.

His muscular hands on my waist shot threads of anticipation through me. It had been a good day, and I wanted to celebrate. My favorite way to celebrate was with wine and orgasms. He lifted me with his brawny arms while I rested my hands on his shoulders.

My breasts dangled in his face and I moved them back and forth, motorboating his face. I grabbed a hold of his length and guided it in as he lowered me onto his cock. A sharp intake of breath followed as he filled me, penetrating me.

I began moving forward and back on his length, rubbing my breasts across his bare chest. The feeling of being stretched by his girth sent waves of sensation through me almost to the point of becoming dizzy. I moaned in pleasure with each measure of his cock. My clit rubbed his flesh on each thrust forward.

He ran his hands along my sides and then grabbed my ass. Squeezing both cheeks, he began pulling me into him as he thrust up to meet my movements.

I leaned back with my hands on his shoulders and let him pound into me like a jackhammer. My breasts bounced up and down and I could only imagine what it was doing to Stu.

“Don't you come yet,” I commanded.

“I don't plan on coming yet. Your pussy feels too good.”

“Oh, yes, baby. You know what Scarlet likes.”

We continued to fuck—cause that is exactly what it was; we weren't making love at all—for another thirty minutes. Like a good porno, we switched positions three times: a little reverse cowboy, some smooth stroking missionary, followed by a hard pounding doggy-style. The intensity when I fucked Stu played a big part in my thrill and arousal.

That it was also part of a power play with Stu also turned me on. He liked to play the alpha, but he had never really been an alpha, not even in the marines. I gave him my pussy because that kept him on a tight leash. It kept my secrets and my schemes safe.

I had already come twice more. It was time to let him release.

“Oh, fuck, Scarlet, I’m gonna come.”

“Oh, you big fucking marine, fill me up. Fuck me, baby. Come for me. Come in my pussy.”

Stu also liked dirty talk. I knew just the right words to trigger his orgasms.

Soon he was gasping, grunting, and filling my pussy with his hot cum. I orgasmed again amid more exclamations, fucks, and pleas for him to not stop. I collapsed onto the back seat and he sat beside me.

“How was that for you, baby?” he asked.

“It was good, baby. You made me come four times. You did good.” If I could have scratched him behind his ears, I would have. All he needed, though, was a gentle stroking of his inner thigh and praise to appease his ego.

We sat in silence until we caught our breath and until he brought up his usual topic.

“I can’t wait until your divorce is final. I hate sneaking around.”

“I know, Baby. Be sure to clean the Navigator before taking it back to the garage.”

“How much longer is it going to take?”

“It depends.”

“On what?”

“On my plan to get that bitch therapist to quit seeing Dirk.”

“I still don’t get how you convinced her ex to sue for custody of the kids.”

“That was easy. My friend Veronica—the porn performer—she fucked the realtor’s brains out and got it all on tape. It will be all over Pornhub if he doesn’t cooperate.”

“Veronica Vixen?”

“Yeah. That’s here.”

“She’s got a smokin’ hot body.”

“Yes, she does. And she got Mr. Richard Miller to say and do some rather taboo things on camera.”

“Wow. I bet she could get a lot of men to do and say a lot of things.”

“Hey. Focus. I still need you to deliver this letter to the sex therapist.”

“Don’t worry. My second appointment is next week. I think she’s going to set me up with that surrogate woman.”

“Don’t start drooling, you big lug. You’re supposed to be doing reconnaissance and delivering this letter so that they don’t know who it came from. Is she buying your reason for seeing her?”

“Yeah. I told her my dick doesn’t feel anything. Talked about some of the shit I saw in Iraq. She took it just like you said she would. She mentioned she thought I might need to see... Chastity. But she wanted one more session.”

“Good. I told you that would work.”

This plan had been risky, but I felt it was worth it. I had coached Stu on what to say. What condition he suffered from. What his symptoms were. The Iraq stuff he didn’t have to fake. He had plenty of gruesome stories. It surprised me he didn’t have PTSD. I also knew the bitch would guess he did and come up with some lame fancy diagnosis and with the added touch of his numb dick, she might get him in to see her surrogate. The numb dick wasn’t a lie though.

“You think she’ll boot Dirk after she gets the letter?”

“If she knows what’s good for her, she will.”

“You are one evil bitch, Scarlet.” He chuckled.

“I definitely want you to see this surrogate of hers. The more of her office you can see, the more ways we have of sabotaging her work with my husband.”

“I’ll control myself. I’ve been faithful to you since we started making love.”

“That’s unnecessary. Have as much fun as you like.”

“You mean that?”

“Yes, Baby. I want you to have fun and get those big rocks of yours off.” I stroked his inner thigh more and gave his thick cock a squeeze. My lips even met his for a tender kiss accompanied by a gentle squeeze of his balls. One thing this ex-marine had was an enormous set of balls. I could barely hold one in the palm of my hand.

“Wow. I can’t believe you know Veronica Vixen.” He mused in the dim light of the vehicle.

“What? You like Veronica?” I grabbed his cock playfully.

“Yeah. She’s not as gorgeous as you, but she is smokin’ hot. I sometimes fantasize about a threesome with me, you, and her.”

I raised up in the seat and glared at him in the dim light. “She’s off limits to you, marine. You’re mine. Got that?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

Kinky bastard. Of course, he would want a threesome with his favorite pornstar. A threesome might be fun, though. Stu could last long enough to satisfy both of us.

I’d have to hold that in my back pocket in case I needed to tighten the screws on Stu to keep him compliant. We only had four more weeks to either get Dirk to quit seeing the bitch

therapist or to make the therapist drop Dirk as her client. Or both.

I was determined to make one of those scenarios happen.

Chapter 16

Confessions

TRACE DROVE US FROM THE CLUB TO MY HOUSE EVEN THOUGH I had asked Dirk to take us to his place. City lights and the noise of traffic filled my senses as we traversed the city.

In my shock of seeing my ex-husband and getting a court summons for a hearing on child custody, I latched on to the desire to give him a lap dance as my driving force for the rest of the night. It wasn't even the lap dance that was important. If he would just stay with me. Cuddle. Maybe make love to me. Then I would make it through the night easier.

I had already leaned into him, and he had a comforting arm around me. He felt strong. Solid. Someone I could count on. At least I thought so. How many times did I have friends tell me what a great guy Richard was, which he was, in public, with other people, while behind the closed doors of our household, he was completely different?

What the hell am I thinking?

I'm a sex therapist, he's my client, and my ex-husband just handed me papers to restrict my custody of my two kids. Adding a new relationship to the mix, no matter how much he arouses me, doesn't seem like the best advice.

I had spent last year alone and the two years prior in a friends-with-benefits relationship with Jerald the fireman because of the no-strings-attached, lack of commitment relationship that offered.

Even though I wanted to, I knew I shouldn't invite him up to my place. I didn't need this added complication in my life. And Dirk was supposed to be working things out with his wife. As soon as I resolved to not invite him up to my condo, he tempted me.

"May I come up for a minute to talk?" he asked just as we arrived.

"I don't know if that is a good idea."

"I just want to make sure you're okay."

"I'm fine. I'll be fine." Sitting up, I reached for the door. Trace opened it before I could and waited for me to get out.

I stepped out of the vehicle, and Dirk followed.

"Really, I'll be okay, Dirk. I'll give you that lap dance some other time."

Why the hell did I say that?

Trace glanced down to hide his smile.

Taking my arm in his, Dirk escorted me into my building. He didn't really ask permission, he just did it. My resistance was minimal and soon we were at the elevator where he pushed the up button.

His touch raised goosebumps on my flesh. I wanted to lean into him and run from him at the same time. My resistance to him coming up to my condo and my desire to go to his place caused my head to spin. Was I resistant to having him in my place? The desire to have him hold me and comfort me had not lessened.

"You don't need to come up with me."

"You don't need to be alone."

The elevator opened, and he entered with me in tow.

"You don't listen well, do you?"

"I listen just fine. Floor?"

"Twelve. You just don't hear then?"

“I listen, then I choose. I choose to come upstairs and make sure your condo is safe...” He pressed the twelve button.

“Safe? My asshat ex just delivered papers to take away my custody rights. He’s not stalking me.”

“I’ll feel better if I check out your place.”

“Just stay out of my underwear drawer.”

“You have underwear?” He turned his head to glance at me and smirked just as the elevator opened.

I ignored the questions as he escorted me out of the elevator to a hallway which extended to the left and the right. I leaned to my right, guiding him. When we reached my door, I searched my purse for my keys. My mind raced and my heart beat faster.

I finally found my keys, and we entered my condo.

The entryway opened into an open design living room, dining room, and kitchen. A hallway to the left led to two bedrooms with one adjoining bathroom between them, while a doorway to the right led to the master bedroom with a master bath and huge walk-in closet, as well as an office. I had insisted on a place with two spare bedrooms for Monica and Trey. Now the chance to have them at my place seemed to be slipping away. Again.

Stainless steel appliances in the kitchen with matching light fixtures contrasted nicely with the white marble countertops and white cabinets. White-tiled floors in the kitchen and dining room met a gray carpet which covered the living room floor. Light blue furniture with pastel green and yellow accents added a sense of coolness to the front room. Light oak end tables and book shelves contrasted the modern look nicely and completed the space.

I had a cleaning girl that cleaned once a week and she had done that this morning, so the space looked immaculate. I sighed on the inside in relief as we moved into the living area.

“Very nice place. I’m impressed.”

“Thank you. I’m proud of it.”

“You have excellent taste.”

“Well, I have Carol to thank for that. She’s an excellent interior decorator.”

“Carol?”

“She’s also my costume coordinator, money counter, and cheerleader at the Gentleman’s Club. You met her backstage.”

“Oh. Yes. Let me check out the rest of the condo.” He moved to the left and examined the bedrooms and bathroom. Then he checked out the opposite side, including my office. He moved quickly and efficiently, and he seemed ready to leap into action if he found an intruder.

I rid myself of my coat and realized I still had on my dancing outfit, which left little to the imagination. When he returned, I stood in the living room in my heels, panties, and bra, with him between me and the hallway to my bedroom.

“Everything looks clear, including your clos...” he stopped mid-word as he saw me standing there exposed. He took me in with a full body scan from my legs up to my breasts. He paused there for a second and we both held our breaths.

It was one thing for him to see me on stage. I danced on the stage and he sit down below, like an invisible barrier existed between us. Plus, I was elevated. Above him. Safe.

Here though, only six feet away, all that stood between him and my naked body were a sequined bra and panties. My pussy clenched at the almost feral look that I saw in his eyes when they finally lifted to meet mine.

“So, you’re saying I’m safe here?”

“Yes. From your ex-husband, anyway.” He moved closer before moving to my left and walking around me. His eyes didn’t leave my body as he appraised me like a John visiting a brothel. I swear, his nostrils flared as I heard him breath out sharply through his nose.

My breath quickened, and I felt my chest tighten. Thoughts of him touching my body and me touching him competed with my worries about what Ass-Hat was up to and how I could fix it.

Ever since that first night I danced for Dirk, my Mr. Dark Eyes, and then pleased him in the Cherry Pit, my life had grown complicated. I had a nice practice helping the wealthiest and most famous people on the West Coast deal with their sexual dysfunctions. My divorce and custody arrangement had been stable for two years. Until this last year, I had a big, strong fireman to help satisfy my sexual urges when needed.

Now, I felt like I was walking a tightrope twelve stories up, with nothing to balance and swirling winds blowing all around me.

“Do you like what you see?” I asked when he finished his circuit around me and stood directly in front of me again. My nipples hardened and were visible through the fabric of my bra. My panties dampened.

“Yes. I do.”

“Does that mean you want that lap dance now?”

He didn't answer. He just leaned in, placed one hand on the nape of my neck, and kissed me.

I closed my eyes and moaned as his kiss took me by surprise.

His hands were on me immediately. First at my sides, then on my hips, before squeezing my ass and spreading my cheeks. Roaming up to my breasts, his hands moved as fast as my heartbeat. I struggled to catch my breath.

I could think of a hundred reasons not to fuck Dirk tonight, but none of them seemed big enough to stop us.

When his lips left mine, I gasped out, “Is that a yes?”

He slipped the straps of my bra off my shoulders and pulled the fabric down, exposing both of my breasts. My

breath came hard and fast before he latched onto one breast and sounds of him sucking on my nipple competed with my moans. He kissed and sucked each breast eagerly. My nipples hardened. My heart pounded.

“You taking my... clothes off... works too. I guess.” I managed between open mouthed gasps. My hands clutched at the back of his head and twined in his short hair. He pulled in as much of my breast as he could manage while pressing down on my nipple with his tongue, as if he wanted to make it inverted. *Am I going to orgasm just from him sucking my tits?*

He slipped a hand inside my panties and I could hear the wet sounds of his fingers pushing into my pussy. With now slick fingers, he rubbed my clit, and he didn't let up on my nipples.

I threw my head back as the first orgasm pulsed through me. “Fuck yes, Dirk!” I held on to him as my knees weakened and my thighs shook. I could barely stand, but I didn't want him to stop.

Dirk bent over, cradled my knees with one arm and lifted me up and in to his arms. As he whisked me away to my bedroom, I let the wave of the last orgasm subside and tried to catch my breath. He sat me down on the bed, turned on a lamp on the nightstand, and then stepped back to take off his clothes.

I had the powerful urge to rip off his clothes, but I slid to the center of the bed and just watched. My breathing and the subtle sounds of cloth sliding over flesh were the only sounds.

“Looks like I get the strip-tease tonight.”

“Yes. Just sit back and observe.”

As his shirt came off, I melted, gazing at the muscles in his chest and abs. He moved his hips and swayed his shoulders in time to some music that only he could hear. When he slid off his slacks, I could see his powerful thigh muscles. I drew my eyes to the bulge in his boxer briefs.

“Where are the boxers?”

“I like the snugness of briefs.”

“I think you should take those off, too.”

He turned around, showing me his ass. Bending over, he slid the briefs down his legs until he could step out of them.

If I was wet before, I was gushing then.

I could make out his balls from behind, and they were a manly set of balls. When he turned his cock, pointed straight forward. At me.

“You have too many clothes on,” he said as he crawled onto the bed.

He slid my panties off, but held my gaze the entire time. Like some wild beast stalking his prey, he crawled closer. My bra came off next and now we were both naked on the bed.

I reached toward him and grabbed his hard-on. A sharp intake of breath made me smile as I pulled his cock and him to the head of the bed. Still on my back, I pulled him close and took his cock in my mouth as he knelt on his knees by my head.

His velvety smooth cock felt nice in my mouth, and it hardened even more. He moved his hips slowly to slide in and out of my mouth. With one hand, he reached down and began rubbing my clit again. *God. That feels good.*

I slipped a hand through his legs and cupped his balls. The weight of them in my hand amazed me. When I slipped a finger beyond the balls to his ass and ran it around the rim of his hole, he breathed out.

“Oh, yes,” he whispered.

When he rubbed my clit more vigorously, I came again. Since I had become a sex therapist, I had learned to relax and let go so that orgasm came more freely for me, but Dirk seemed to have magic fingers, and he made me come faster than any man I'd ever been with.

Jerald could pound away at my pussy for an eternity, it seemed, before I would come.

With Dirk, I had no self-control.

I sucked on his cock harder, wanting to return the favor.

He stopped me, though. "I'm about to come. I want to be inside you, though."

"You want to fuck me, Dirk Baxter?"

"Yes. I do, Miss Davenport."

"Call me Reggie."

I reluctantly let go of his cock, and he moved between my legs. Still on his knees, he positioned it at my entrance and slowly slid in. It was wet from my saliva and my pussy was wet with my own juices. It slid in smoothly but stretched me at the same time. The feeling of being filled up and stretched by him caused me to close my eyes and throw my head back. My back arched, and I wanted to take more of him. All of him.

I swear he stretched me more than any man ever had.

Soon he moved in and out of me in a smooth rhythm. I matched his movements with a movement of my hips, being sure to rub my clit against him on each thrust. The tendrils of an orgasm swirled around inside of me as my ears began buzzing from the pleasure.

The pleasure rendered my entire pre-frontal cortex unable to utter a single witty remark. All I could do was gasp and moan. My cries of pleasure filled the early late night air.

Mr. Dark Eyes never took his dark orbs off of me. The feral expression seemed softened in that moment. A hint of admiration, or maybe it was adoration, mixed with the flickers of the lamplight reflected in his eyes. Whatever the feeling was, it smoldered in his eyes like the hot embers of a wood fire.

Our bodies undulated on the bed in a perfect dance of sex and lust. When he tensed in the shoulders and his face

contorted in the first signs of orgasm. I grabbed his shoulders and pushed against his thrusts harder. Faster.

“Yes, Dirk. Harder. Faster. Fuck me.”

Some men love dirty talk. Certain words can trigger them. While I knew that, that thought wasn't really running through my mind as my orgasm built to the delicious point of no return. My words were as much for me as for him.

Dirk fucked me harder, too. He plunged into me like he needed to drill me deeper than he already had. The sound of his thighs slapping against mine mixed with our moans of pleasure and our cries of impending climax.

Soon we both came. His orgasm triggered mine, and we both cried out, cursed, and grimaced in the throes of our release. He collapsed on top of me in a heap and somehow, his weight comforted me.

I listened to the beating of our two hearts until they seemed to slow and beat in unison. I knew endorphins and other brain chemicals were coursing through our systems, building this bond between us—a bond that I knew we should probably not continue to strengthen even though my body and my desire weakened my attempts at resolve.

“Dirk Baxter. You are going to be my undoing.” I finally said to break the silence.

He rolled off of me and sat on the edge of the bed. “I could say the same.”

“Am I undoing you?”

“Yes.” He turned on the bed and lifted a leg up so he could face me.

“Do you care to elaborate?” I moved to my side and up a bit, supporting my head with my hand.

“I've never cheated on my wife.”

That sank home. I had been caught up in the emotions of our coupling, our adventure, and hadn't even thought about

this in that way. I was breaking ethical standards of therapists, but I'd never been orthodox in my practice.

I fought the urge to be a therapist at that moment.

“We should stop. Shouldn't we?”

“I don't know. There's just this way that you...” He stopped and didn't finish.

Our eyes met as if pulled by magnets, and I could see that he struggled with something.

“Do you really want to save your marriage, Dirk?”

“A month ago, I think I did. Now I'm not so sure.”

“What changed?”

“Meeting you.”

Oh shit.

“Aren't we a pair? Your marriage is on the verge of ending. My ex is making my life miserable.”

“Yeah. What a pair.” He gave me a half-smile.

I had slipped back into therapist mode and tried to tamp down feelings that had emerged towards this man in my bed. While the wheels spun, Dirk's slacks buzzed. Well, the phone in his slacks buzzed.

Dirk checked his phone, scanned a text, and then started putting his clothes on.

I really wanted him to stay with me. The comfort of being in his arms sounded very soothing to me right now. My conscience put my desire in a headlock, as if we were in a Texas Cage match and I didn't ask him to stay.

“Where are you going?”

“I need to get some sleep. I have a meeting with some investors tomorrow.”

“It's Saturday night. Do you ever rest?”

“Usually I rest on Sunday, but I’ve got a big deal that’s moving forward and I need to sell these investors on it. I have to prepare.”

“What kind of deal?”

He had dressed at this point and slipping on his shoes. “One I can’t tell you about.” He offered that half-smile again.

“Don’t worry. You’ll be safe. Trace just texted me and I have a guy monitoring everyone coming in and out of the building. He’s been briefed and has a picture of your ex. You’re going to be safe for the rest of the night.”

Warmth spread through me at the way I felt protected by him. My brain, though, was still processing something.

As he reached the door to my room, I stopped him.

“Dirk. Do me a favor?”

“Yeah. Anything.” He stood framed in the doorway.

“Bring Scarlet to your next appointment. If you really want your marriage over, we should have one or two couples’ sessions.”

That half-smile on his face turned into a look of distaste. “Is that totally necessary?”

“Yes. It is. Be sure she’s there at our next session.”

Chapter 17

A Tempest

THE NEXT MORNING, I PULLED INTO THE DRIVEWAY OF THE house I'd been avoiding off and on for weeks. Revving the engine of the Jaguar F one more time before shutting off the engine, I took in a deep breath. The ride through the hills surrounding LA always settled my nerves and helped me put all the stress of the day behind me. Making the drive in one of my sports cars added an adrenaline rush that seemed to clear any accumulated mind shit as well. I hadn't realized how much I missed that drive.

Spending almost two months in my office complex apartment had distanced me from Scarlet and my home. I had made this trip, though, to do what Reggie had asked me to do, even though I didn't look forward to it. I entered the house filled with a dreaded anticipation.

I couldn't imagine a life with Scarlet anymore. The constant demands for money. Dealing with her sycophantic friends. One failed venture after another. I couldn't go on, not after that one night in which I realized she didn't even arouse me anymore.

I moved through the house that had been my dream house when I started building my business. The sounds of Scarlet speaking to someone drifted down the stairs to the entryway of the three-level home. The entryway was a small split-level foyer.

One set of stairs led to the lower level and a home gym with equipment rivaling the best fitness clubs, two showers,

and a hallway to the garage. There was also an exit to the expansive backyard, which had a pool, a huge grill, and an area perfect for the best Fourth of July picnics.

I took the steps up to the mid-level slowly. My feet didn't make a sound as my military training kicked in. I moved up as if I stalked the streets of an Iraqi village. Scarlet didn't pose the threat that I experienced in Iraq, but it would be foolish to think of her as non-threatening.

She was at the kitchen counter wearing a red V-necked minidress that left very little to the imagination. It showed off her dangerous cleavage, athletic hips, and perfect ass, which had lured many a man, including me, into her arms.

"No. Thank you. I'll take care of it. It was so nice of you to call." She flashed me a smile, but it didn't make it to her eyes. Her eyes flashed with anger. She hung up, and the smile slipped away, replaced by a smirk.

"Hello, Scarlet."

"You've decided to come home?"

"I stopped by to talk." While I had spent some time at the house after starting my sessions with Regina, things had devolved and I have limited myself to staying on the weekends.

"I don't really have time to talk. I'm going out." She moved to where I could see her entire ensemble, including the matching Louboutin heels which she loved so much. She struck a pose which I'm sure she meant to arouse me. I felt nothing.

"This is important. I know I told you I wanted a divorce."

"Yes. You asked for one. Though I don't understand why." She crossed her arms over her chest. That hid nothing. It just perked them up and emphasized her cleavage.

I kept my distance and considered my next words.

"My therapist..."

“Your sex therapist.”

“Yes. My therapist wants to meet with both of us in her office for one of my sessions.” I could see the change in her with each word.

“Oh. I don’t need any sex therapy. My body is working just fine.” She stomped closer and poked me in the chest with one slender finger. “It’s yours that needs fixing.”

The poke didn’t budge me. Her one-hundred-thirty pounds on her five foot ten-inch body didn’t have the strength to budge my two-hundred-five pound solid frame. The words, though, sliced pretty deep, and it puzzled me why. Of course, I didn’t puzzle them at the moment. I reacted instead.

“She still wants to see us. Together.” Anger simmered in my tone.

“Why should I go? You’re just going to spite me. You don’t want to pay me the fifty million you’d owe me for divorcing me. It’s all about your company and your next big deal. It always has been.”

“That’s not true, Scarlet.” Give me a two-hundred pound thug or militant with a gun in his hands, and I could handle them just fine. Or even a group of executives trying to play hardball during a negotiation. Those were easy. Throw a gorgeous model at me, though, and I struggled to get a hold.

“A year ago, you couldn’t keep your hands off me. Now you won’t even live in the same house.”

“Scarlet. It’s more than the sex...”

“No. I think it’s all about the sex. Why would you see a sex therapist instead of a marriage counselor? It doesn’t make any sense.”

“Due to my... lack of desire...”

“You mean your limp dick, don’t you? How can you not get hard for this?” She moved her arms up as if her body were on display for me. I had to admit that she had the perfect body: tall, lean, statuesque. Only her breasts were bigger than the

average skinny model you might see on Vogue, but they hadn't ever kept her from getting work.

I had to admit, that was the first thing that attracted me. Her amazing cleavage.

She moved closer. Her eyes challenged mine with a look of fury and something else. She smelled of jasmine and spices. It had to be the Tom Ford Jasmine Rouge, her favorite. It used to drive me wild with lust. Now...

"How many sessions have you been to?"

"Six. I have four more to go."

"Four more to go before you're *cured*?" The emphasis on cured pierced like a dagger. "Or four more before you can walk away from me and keep your fifty million?"

"That's not it. Money's not the issue. Nor is sex. We have other issues."

"Other issues? Like what, Dirk? Tell me."

"Your friends for one, Scarlet. They all use you."

"Leave my friends out of this. They at least support me in my career."

"Which career is that? Your acting career? The next indie film you want to make? Your next beauty line?"

"That's not fair. Is that why you have been so cold? So distant? So resentful lately?"

"I've wasted plenty of money on your pipe dreams."

"Pipe dreams. Fuck, Dirk. I thought you were as excited as I was about those ideas." She poked me in the chest again. I took it. I'd never raise a hand to a woman. Besides, her words sliced deeper.

"I've spent well over thirty million on those ventures of yours. Not one of them has panned out. It felt like you blamed me for the lack of success. You got more and more resentful. Hateful."

“That’s fucking Hollywood. For such a smart-ass billionaire business executive, you don’t seem to know shit about how things work.”

“I don’t want to know how Hollywood works. I know security. That’s what I and my company are good at. Excellent at.”

“We had been just fine though until that night you couldn’t...”

“Make love to you?” I wasn’t proud of that night.

“I was going to say fuck me, but sure. I don’t feel you’ve loved me for a couple of years. But you know what?” In her heels, she matched my six foot two-inch height and met my steely gaze with her fiery green eyes.

“What, Scarlet?” I asked, my voice low.

“I never thought we’d reached the point that you would want a divorce. You had your limp dick moment, disappeared for a day and come back on Sunday asking for a divorce. That didn’t make any sense to me.”

“I realized something.”

“Oh, really. Did you have a soul-searching moment, Dirk?”

“Yeah. I did. I realized you weren’t the one for me. That our marriage was a sham. That you just wanted me...”

“For your money?” Her eyes flashed a challenge. She was always quick to temper, but she seemed a fiery tempest right now.

“Yeah. For my money.”

“Fuck you, Dirk. Why the fuck should I go with you to your sex therapist if you don’t want me? If you’re just going through the motions, then what’s the point?”

“Reggie wants to meet with us together.”

“Reggie?”

“Miss Davenport.”

“Oh, your sex therapist, who you call by her first name, wants to see me. Oh, well fuck then, let me drop everything and help you cheat me out of fifty million dollars just because you can’t get a hard-on around me and want a divorce.”

“Scarlet. Please. Just come with me.”

She turned around and stomped over to her buzzing phone. After checking it, she dropped it into her red clutch and glared at me.

“My ride is outside. I need to go.”

“At least think about it. Maybe we both need this. She’s good. Discerning. Maybe she can help us...”

“Reconcile,” she said, completing my sentence for me. In our years of marriage, she’d always been able to do that. She always knew what I wanted to say, sometimes before I did. That always worried me.

“Scarlet, please.”

She walked around the kitchen island counter, on the opposite side from me. The room had gotten heated, but now seemed so cold. Stopping at the door, she looked over her shoulder. “When and what time?”

“Friday. 4:00 PM.”

“Don’t get your hopes up. You don’t deserve this.” The last word hung in the air like a heavy fog, giving you a glimpse of what was inside but leaving everything murky. Unclear.

I felt some sympathy for her. Perhaps I’d been too hard on her. I hadn’t thought deeply about how she might be affected by a divorce. I just assumed she would go along with it. She’d always seemed teflon coated while we dated and during the first few years of our marriage.

I gave her a minute so she would be gone by the time I left. I wasn’t ready to face her so soon after our exchange. It would be hard enough on Friday. Assuming she came.

* * *

I stormed to the Navigator, where Stu opened the back door for me. The license plates read Secure2. Dirk was driven around by too-hot to touch Trace in Secure1. I got Stu as my driver in the second Navigator in his fleet of vehicles.

“Where to, Mrs. Baxter?”

“The Ace Hotel. And quickly.”

Stu gave me a look through the rear-view mirror. He knew what I wanted when we got there and he was always eager to please. I needed some sexual relief.

Fighting with Dirk only raised my libido. I literally wanted to jump my husband’s bones at that moment. There was something about him that made me want his dick in my cunt. Maybe it was his money, but I couldn’t deny that he was also handsome. And he had this killer charisma.

I settled in as Stu left the property. Several deep breaths calmed me as I replayed the argument in my head. I hoped I had been convincing enough. My only desire was for Dirk Baxter to not complete his ten sessions with Miss Davenport, or should I say *Reggie*.

That he called her by her first name bothered me. He rarely did that. He usually treated clients and other professionals he dealt with by their last names. He only reserved first names for friends or close employees like Trace and his investigator bitch, Hayley.

“Oh, my fucking God.”

“What’s that Mrs. Baxter?”

“Nothing. Hurry and get to the hotel.”

The only reason Dirk Baxter would call his sex therapist by her first name was if he was attracted to her. Even that wouldn’t be enough usually. There had to be more to it than that. The son of a bitch had to be fucking his therapist.

Which made me want to fuck Stu even more than I had planned. I might be late for dinner with my friends if I followed through with that, but the closer we got, the more I intended to do just that.

The thought of Dirk fucking his therapist made me both furious and horny at the same time. I definitely would attend Dirk's next session with "Reggie". To see my competition up close and personal was a necessity.

I texted him to confirm that I would be there in a conciliatory tone. I even added an "I love you" with a broken heart emoji and several lips emojis. Then I settled in for the rest of the ride, my horniness growing by the minute.

The horny feeling confused me. I had never understood my libido and why I was attracted to certain people. I had slept with multiple movie producers trying to get a role and I had cheated on Dirk multiple times over the years. Sometimes with some of my friends. Sometimes with a random hookup at a club, when I was drunk.

My last therapist had classified me as "hypersexual" and said I had a "compulsive sexual disorder." I preferred to call it what I was...

... a fucking nymphomaniac.

Chapter 18

Judgement

FIVE DAYS AFTER THE BEING SERVED PAPERS BY ASS-HAT, I staggered out of the courthouse, barely able to focus on anything more than putting one foot in front of the other. My stomach roiled and a ringing in my ears pushed me to the point of passing out. The sun shone high overhead, hot and bright. My head pounded from the sound of traffic outside the courthouse. The heat did not cause my distress, however; the hearing had been a nightmare.

Enduring the reading of the filings, the statements, and the accusations sent my brain into a spiral. Attorneys argued, and the judge slammed his gavel and those sounds till echoed. Arguments that my profession made me unfit as a mother rattled around my brain like fruit in a blender. Further accusations followed that my dancing at the Cherry Pie made me even more unworthy. Each *fact*, each argument, each ruling by the judge, pierced me.

My lawyer, one of the best family attorney's in the LA area, did a fine job, but the judge was an older judge, morals firmly entrenched in the 1950s, and so as a sex therapist and amateur stripper, I had no chance of receiving justice. When every argument had been made, every rebuttal argued, and every objection ruled on, the judge ruled in favor of my ex-husband. Effective the moment the judge made his ruling, I could no longer see my children except for once a month supervised visits.

It devastated me.

I reached my car and searched my purse for my keys. Juggling my purse, my cell phone, and my emotions proved too much. I dropped my purse and its contents spilled all over the pavement of the parking garage. Tissues, lipstick, nail clippers, a compact, and other assorted items slid across the ground. Everything but the car keys.

Squatting down, I began retrieving items and slamming them into my purse.

“What else can go wrong today?” I cried.

Someone, who I didn’t hear, approached, bent down, and retrieved the compact which had slid several feet away. He handed it to me and I plopped it into the purse before rising, only to find myself face-to-face with Ass-Hat.

“Oh. It’s you. Come to torture me some more?”

“Look, Regina. I didn’t mean for it to...”

“The hell you didn’t, Richard. You’re the one that made the motion.”

“Well, my lawyer did, actually.”

“The lawyer you paid. Don’t play with semantics.”

“Regina, I didn’t have a choice. I...”

“Didn’t have a choice? Things have been good for the last two years. Of course, you had a choice. Why now did you put your ass hat on and decide to make me miserable again? You’ve always had a choice. Things had been good. Hadn’t they?” My hands moved as if emphasizing my points until I poked him in the chest with my finger at the end of the last sentence.

“They had been good. I thought we were in a good place.”

“This came out of the blue. Why? Why now?”

“You were dancing in a strip club, for God’s sake, Regina.”

“What? A stripper can’t be a wonderful mother? It was amateur night, Richard. I don’t do it for the money.”

“You shouldn’t be doing it at all.”

“You’re going to shouldn’t me? You shouldn’t have slept with your last three secretaries either while we were married, but you did.”

“That’s in the past.”

“What do you want?” I cried out, tired of the same old fight. Rifling through my purse for the keys, unable to look at him right now, I fought back the angry tears that pooled in my eyes.

“I. I just wanted to say I’m sorry it got so brutal in there. There was a lot of pressure. I didn’t want to...”

“I’m tired of you pushing the blame on to me all the time, Richard. You filed the papers to alter custody. Why don’t you go home and take care of our children, since I can’t now? Thanks to you.”

“God, Regina. You’re still the same old bitch you’ve always been. I try to say I’m sorry and you make a scene.”

Finally finding my keys, I unlocked the car and slid in. I started to close the door when Richard stopped me with a hand on the door frame.

“What kind of trouble have you gotten yourself into, Regina?”

“Trouble?”

“Yeah. A new patient? Problems at your practice?”

“The only trouble I have is an ass hat ex-husband who just took away my custody rights.”

“You don’t know why someone would want to cause you trouble?”

“No, Richard. Other than you, my life has been peachy. Now let me shut this door or I’m going to start the car and

leave, even if that means I drag you with me.”

My hand was on the door handle, trying to pull it shut, and I glared at him. My face was flushed and I could feel tears trickling down my cheeks. The one thing I hated the most about dealing with Richard, any man for that matter, was the angry tears that burst forth like an afternoon thunderstorm.

“Well, someone has it in for you. I hope you do a better job of watching your back.”

“Let. Go. Of. The. Door. Richard.” I strained to shut the door, but he kept me from closing it.

“Fine. You deserve everything that’s happening to you.”

He let go of the door and I slammed it shut. After starting up the car, I slammed it into reverse and burned rubber as I backed out of the parking space. The tires squealed again as I sped away from him to the exit.

* * *

Soon I was in Los Angeles traffic, which meant it would be stop-and-go traffic and it would take two hours to get back to my condo. City traffic, honking horns, and a cool wind tried to compete with the words from the hearing and my internal argument that spun around in my head. My stomach hurt and nausea swept through me. I couldn’t decide if I was angry, sad, confused, frustrated, or all of those emotions and more.

I gripped the steering wheel in my hands so tightly my hands ached. My trip to Disneyland with the kids this upcoming weekend had to be canceled. My next visitation wouldn’t be for two weeks and arrangements had to be made to make sure it was supervised.

I flipped through the radio channels, trying to find something to calm me down. Each station irritated me even further. After flipping through twelve stations, I shut off the radio. At the next stoplight, I banged my fists against the steering wheel.

When I stopped, I noticed the passenger in the car beside me staring at me and shaking her head. I flipped her off.

An hour into my drive home, the anger had subsided; the radio was back on and the saddest, most sentimental songs were playing on the radio. The tears that I had fought to hold back before I got into the car flowed freely now. I would hold it together while driving, but as soon as I hit the next light, they would cascade down my face.

I didn't understand why Richard did this? Why would he rock the boat and be so spiteful suddenly? It couldn't be just because I danced at the Cherry Pie. This seemed to be an overreaction, if that was his only reason.

Of course it wasn't. He didn't think my profession as a sex therapist was legitimate, either. He had accused me more than once of having sex with my clients.

Oh, fuck. Does he know about me having sex with Dirk?

He couldn't. Could he?

I finally made it to the 605 and soon was heading north to I-5, which I would catch to Glendale.

I tried to focus on the conversation with Richard and things said in court, but it soon became a tangled mess as I worked my way on the highway. Soon I took the exit to I-5 and continued my journey home.

What if this was all about Dirk? I had been a stupid fool. Those intense dark eyes of his had lured me in, seduced me. What had I been thinking to give him a blow job and fuck him in the Cherry Pit? There was so much testosterone and pheromones in the Pit, no normal human being could function in there, even if they only intended to give a guy a lap dance.

Which had been my only intention. Pent up sexual urges, an alluring sexy man who seemed to command my attention, and the atmosphere of the room had resulted in my lap dance turning into a sexual adventure. And it hadn't been an isolated occurrence. I'd masturbated to his video of his sensate touch session with Chastity. Over and over. Then I had my own

session with Dirk. In my office. I'd sucked his cock in my office. And I'd even slept with Dirk again.

What the fuck had I been thinking?

By the time I'd made it home, I had convinced myself that I was a terrible person, a horrible mother, and the shittiest sex therapist in LA.

When I got inside, I poured a glass of wine, undressed, and settled in the tub for a soak. With some lavender essential oils and some bath salts, I calmed down, but I still couldn't fight the feelings of victim-hood and worthlessness.

When I went to bed, the only thing I knew for sure was that I could not have sex with Dirk Baxter ever again. Since he had come into my life, I had nothing but bad things happen to me. I needed to finish my sessions with him, get him out of my life, and then do what I could to get my kids back.

Chapter 19

Self-Defense Lessons

SIFU LIU LED US THROUGH OUR KATAS AT THE WHITE DRAGON Academy. The sounds of feet shuffling on the mat and the grunts at the end of thrusts and kicks mixed with the scent of sweat and rubbing alcohol. On Monday nights, I attended classes there.

One Saturday, years ago, I had attended a self-defense class and somehow the Sifu Liu, an ancient-looking man who looked older than any dragon, talked me into classes.

After three years, I had only earned my orange belt with three stripes. The way the Sifu explained it, I was the oldest novice he had ever trained. And the prettiest, he always added with a twinkle. I had never been the most dedicated student. The only athletic endeavor I'd ever been good at was swimming and only through my junior year in college. I rarely missed a Monday night class, but even the younger students seemed to learn the skills to advance quickly through the various colored belts.

I enjoyed the workout though and the sweating. It helped to keep my waist trim, my leg and arm muscles toned, and I felt somewhat confident I could fight off a mugger if I ever encountered one in the mean streets of LA. I had to chuckle at the thought. In LA, you had a better chance of being carjacked than being mugged. The mace in my purse would probably be a better deterrent, but I attended classes regularly, anyway.

Sweat rolled down my back as Sifu Liu told us to take seats around the mat. Everyone gravitated to their favorite

spot. Mine was near the wall facing the mirror that occupied one full wall of the dojo. I could see the front and back of the room from there and also see everyone's reflection in the mirror, including mine. I tightened my ponytail as the instructor addressed us.

“Today I have a wonderful treat for you all. My talented student and friend has come to teach some special self-defense moves. These moves are not kung fu, but they are equally effective. I believe you will learn a lot.”

I could see a man step through the door in the back that led to the locker rooms. He wore a white gi with a black belt at his waist. My eyes followed him as he moved to Sensei Liu's right side. I couldn't believe he was here.

“I want to introduce you to Sifu Baxter. Give him your attention and learn.”

He turned and bowed to Dirk and then stepped off the mat. He took a seat at the edge of the mat right beside a student.

“Hello, everyone. I'm Sifu Baxter. I want to thank Shigong Liu for inviting me to teach here tonight. It is a great honor.” He turned and bowed his head to the ancient instructor.

“Besides being a black belt in Kung Fu, and thanks to the tireless efforts of Sifu Liu, I also served in the army of the United States. I served in Iraq most of my tour and picked up various styles of martial arts and self-defense. Today, we will look at moves and techniques to get out of a dangerous situation.”

He scanned the room, measuring each student with those dark eyes of his, and locked eyes with me for what seemed like a minute, even though it was only two breaths. Even though I had sworn to keep my contact with him to a minimum, here he was invading my sacred time at the White Dragon Academy.

After scanning the room, he called for volunteers. One student, in his late teens, volunteered and Dirk ran through different moves, holds, and throws. He demonstrated them in

slow-motion and then did them at full speed with him being an attacker and the volunteer trying the move. He repeated this with several more volunteers.

Whenever someone had difficulty with a move or throw, he called on one of the older students and showed them again, both slowly and at full speed. There were many gasps and winces throughout the demonstration and more than one student sat back down, a little woozy from their lesson. When a couple of students threw Dirk and he hit the mat hard, I winced and my heart jumping with concern.

Fortunately, over the next ninety minutes, Dirk never called on me. There had been enough willing students in the class that night and I was not in the mood for being thrown, choked, or pinned to the mat. I had a feeling that any physical contact would be more than my body could take. The attraction I had for the man seemed to intensify over the length of the class, though, even as my brain was trying to keep him at a distance.

When he finished, Sufi Liu and Baxter bowed to all of us and the academy master dismissed us all. I headed to the locker room to change into some comfortable clothes I always had packed in my duffel.

“Miss Davenport.” Dirk said just as I reached the door.

I stopped and took in a deep breath. Did I dare turn around? He was close behind me and I could sense his dark eyes penetrating the back of my skull with their intense gaze.

“I noticed you didn’t volunteer to come up and learn how to protect yourself.”

“I already know all of those moves.” I turned around to face him and immediately those black eyes of his mesmerized me. He looked extremely powerful too in his gi with his black belt.

“I think I might know some moves you haven’t seen.” He strode towards me with slow, measured steps.

“Is that so?”

“Yes. I’m sure of it.” He stopped a foot in front of me, and I had to look up to meet his eyes.

“Show me.” I remained calm, but my heart rate had already elevated and the heat in my neck and cheeks rose.

He motioned me to the center of the mat, and I eyed him warily. I’m sure I had a smirk on my face even though there was a part of me that wanted him to grab me, throw me to the ground, and take me.

“Turn around. I’m going to teach you how to escape a rear choke hold. If someone grabs you from behind and wraps their arm around your throat, don’t panic. Just remember balls, ribs, feet.”

He came up behind me and wrapped an arm around my front and slid it up under my chin. His other hand went to the back of my head.

I immediately experienced a rush of excitement, not so much out of fear but from his touch. My hands also went instinctively to the forearm at my throat.

“See, you instinctively reach for the arm, but I want you to first go for the balls.” He took the hand on my head, grasped my wrist, and guided my hand to his crotch.

“Do I punch them?”

“No, open your hand and grab them. When you get a hold of them, squeeze as hard as you can.”

I only had to move my hand an inch farther back to grab his nuts under his gi. Being the bad girl that I suddenly felt like, I grasped his sack and gave it a playful squeeze.

He immediately stepped back, forcing me to shuffle my feet to keep from falling. I lost my grip on his private parts.

“Be quick, because when someone grabs you like this, chances are they are going to drag you somewhere. Once they start dragging you, it might be impossible to get a hold of their most sensitive spot.”

“What then?” I managed. Even though he wasn’t grasping my neck tightly, I still felt pressure on my throat.

“Ribs. Don’t be afraid to be forceful. You want to swing at the ribs with all your might.” Grasping my wrist again, he maneuvered it so my arm was bent and then pulled it towards him so that my elbow met his ribs.

“Like this.” I lifted my arm and then swung my elbow back pretty hard. I actually made enough of an impact that I heard an exhalation of air from his lungs.

“Yeah. Like that.”

He moved forward, so that I had my feet solidly underneath me. I could feel his breath on my neck and I craved his lips on the sensitive part of my neck, just underneath the ear. His voice brought my attention back to the mat.

“Finally...”

“Feet?”

“Yes. The top of your assailant’s feet, unless they’re wearing combat boots, is very sensitive. Striking them with your heel can be enough to loosen their grip.”

“Like this.” My tone was smug after landing a good blow in his ribs. I lifted my right foot and kicked downward. My foot met the mat and not him when he moved it away really quickly.

“That would have hurt, but yes. Like that.”

“Why wouldn’t I try to just flip you?” As I asked it, I tried to bend at the waist with a tight hold on his forearm. I wanted to flip him over my hip to the ground. His hold on my neck had my back arched, and I didn’t have enough strength or leverage. All I managed to do was push my ass into his crotch. I swore I rubbed up against his hardening cock.

“Because that won’t work without a little more leverage.”

He pulled me closer into his body and tightened his forearm on my neck.

“There is one other thing that might be more effective. If I have my hand locked into my other arm like this...” He locked his front hand into the opposite hand and put his back hand on my head again, putting me into a very strong choke hold. “... you can’t grab my thumb.”

I tried, but he was right. I couldn’t get a good enough grip on his thumb or fingers.

“But if a blow to the nuts, or ribs, or feet loosens my grip, then you can grab the thumb and try to pull it back with everything you have. You want to pull down to get the most leverage. Worse case scenario, you relieve the choke hold.”

“Best case scenario?”

“You escape completely.”

I got my feet solidly underneath me and relaxed. Leaning into him, I could feel his chest rise and fall with his breathing. I moved one hand behind me and rubbed it along his thigh and hip. When he relaxed a bit, I grabbed his forearm with both hands, bent at the waist, and tried to flip him. Again.

My attempt was just as effective as the first one.

He laughed and then let me go.

Turning, I noticed the smirk on his face. I returned it with a glare.

“You want me to show you the flip too?”

“Sure, Mr. Black Belt Baxter.”

He chuckled as he turned his back to me.

“Okay. Come up behind me and try to put me in a choke hold.”

I came up behind him and reached around him. I had on a pretty supportive sports bra, but it and my gi didn’t seem to be enough fabric to be between me and his back. My breasts pressed up against his back and I immediately felt sensations of pleasure and desire roll through me like a wave on a beach.

He reached for my crotch and I reflexively moved my ass back. It all happened so quickly, though, and I don't know exactly what he did after that. I ended up on the mat and he ended up on top of me. His torso laid across mine and his chest pressed up against the bottom of my breasts. His dark eyes seemed to hold me hypnotized as I lay underneath him.

I had told myself I didn't want to be, couldn't be with Dirk sexually. His body, so close to mine, elicited all kinds of sensations and many images of lust and desire.

He laid on top of me for too long. It may have only been seconds, but it seemed longer. I thought he was going to lean in and kiss me. I almost closed my eyes to let him kiss me as my chest rose up and down from the excitement and adrenalin running through me. My mouth opened, lips ready to be kissed.

"That's how you do the throw if they grab you from behind."

"It happened so fast. Could you do it again?" My cheeks turned red with both embarrassment and desire. I thought about having him throw me down on the mat all night. To be so close. For our bodies to be touching. This desire and craving, unlike any I had ever experienced before, was almost overwhelming. Dizzying.

"I would love to Miss Davenport, but I have someplace to be." While he sounded like he had somewhere to be, his actions seemed to tell me different.

"You mind letting me up then, Mr. Baxter."

"Yes. I mind. But I will."

He got up and reached down to offer me a hand up. He lifted me to my feet easily. I started to the locker rooms without hesitation.

"Miss Davenport?"

"Yes?" I glanced over my shoulder.

“Go to dinner with me on Friday night. 8 PM. I’ll have Trace pick you up.”

I didn’t answer right away. I studied his face, trying to determine his motives for wanting to take me to dinner. His square jaw. His dark eyes. The hair on his head, which was too short to be ruffled from our workout, looking so black and perfect. The black belt on his white gi. I took it all in and fought the temptation. The desire.

He looked as perfect as the best decorated cake. So beautiful looking that you hated to slice it and eat it, but you wanted to eat it.

“I’ve got plans Friday night.” I turned and sashayed to the locker rooms, my hip sway exaggerated.

“Saturday night?”

I didn’t answer as I pushed through the women’s locker room door. My body told me to answer yes, but my mind screamed no. As I changed clothes and before I could leave, I already regretted my decision.

Chapter 20

Couples Counseling

I GLANCED AT MY APPOINTMENT CALENDAR AND STARED AT THE appointment, which I had been dreading all day. My office was silent, but my mind raced with conflicting thoughts. I had feelings for Dirk, feelings that had nothing to do with the great sex.

Meeting him had opened up something in me, something that I didn't think would ever awaken again. I had only had one exceptional year of marriage with Richard. The remaining seven years had been miserable and since the divorce, a magnitude above miserable.

I never thought I would fall in love with a man again.

In fact, my life plan after divorce had been to never love a man again. I even considered a lesbian relationship, just to keep me away from men. Nothing ever came of that, though. I had never given up on sex, but I did give up on love.

Until Mr. Dark Eyes gave me that look, filled with... lust, at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club. His look of desire, as carnal as it seemed, caused my pussy to clench in excitement. His pursuit of me, his taking command when it came to sex, and his damn good looks had me wanting to accept his offers to go out to dinner, but there were multiple reasons not to.

For one, he was still married. While I was supposed to be helping him as his sex therapist, the sex between us left me lost in a dizzy spin of hormones. I hadn't really focused on

trying to help him resolve his marriage issues, which is what I should have been doing.

For two, I couldn't be focusing on a man when I needed to resolve this custody issue with Ass-Hat. I had moved through my divorce by letting go of my need to control the situation and worrying about what he and the courts thought of me. I had reached a delicate equilibrium with my ex, but obviously there were still unresolved issues. Those issues needed to be figured out.

I also probably needed to stop referring to Richard as Ass-Hat.

While there were probably more reasons I shouldn't be sexually involved with Dirk right now, those two were big enough. Fortunately, the phone system buzzed, freeing me from my spiraling thoughts.

"Your four o'clock is here, Miss Davenport." Penny's voice sounded quite formal today.

After catching me self-pleasuring in my office weeks ago, she had caught me once more after an appointment with Dirk just last week when I thought she had left for the day.

I hadn't seen Dirk since Monday and I was both excited and dreaded seeing him. Plus, he had notified me that Scarlet would join us today. I would get my first look at the competition. Fuck, Regina. She's your patient.

"Thank you, Penny. Send them in."

I took a deep breath and let it out before standing up to greet Dirk and his wife, Scarlet. Penny opened the door to let them in. Scarlet, a gorgeous red-head, entered first.

She had a model's height, slim legs, auburn hair, and a thin face with a pointed chin. Bright green eyes that had a hint of the feral in them shocked me. Her demeanor seemed to match her flaming red hair.

"So nice to meet you, Scarlet."

I extended a hand, and she smiled. The smile didn't extend to her eyes, though, and it didn't change the fact that she looked ready for a fight. She didn't take my hand in greeting but walked on by. Her mood was chilly, in direct contrast to her fiery eyes.

Dirk gave me an apologetic look and a nod.

“Mr. Baxter.”

“Reg... Miss Davenport.” Dirk corrected himself and cast a glance towards Scarlet to see if she heard him.

She seemed keen on examining my office. From the furniture, to the paintings on the walls, to the lamps which bathed the room in a dim but comfortable light. Nothing seemed to escape her glance.

I had to admit; she was both beautiful and intimidating. Not only was she tall—five feet eleven inches tall, I guessed—but she moved confidently, like a lioness loping across the savannah. Her orange dress with white polka-dots only came to mid-thigh, which put her long athletic legs on display. She wore mid-calf Jimmy Choo boots and a tangle of gold bracelets. A leather choker and pearl ear rings rounded out her attire.

Scarlet was twelve years younger than me, but she looked younger than thirty-three. *How is Dirk not sexually attracted to her?*

She took a seat on the couch and patted the seat beside her for Dirk. She gave Dirk an alluring smile and frowned when he sat down without looking at her. He also sat as far away from her on the couch as he could.

I settled into my chair and grabbed my notepad. We were ready.

Scarlet spoke up just as I finished jotting down their names and the date at the top of my notepad.

“So, what's wrong with Dirk's dick?” The words cut through the air like a knife.

Direct.

Crude.

I added those notes under Scarlet's name on my notepad.

“Scarlet,” Dirk said under his breath.

“Based on his medical records, our previous sessions, and his surrogacy sessions. Nothing.”

“So why can't he get hard when he's with me?”

“Many factors can affect arousal. Besides the physical, there are emotional, mental, and environmental factors that all can...”

“Yeah. Yeah. But what's *his* problem?”

“Well, Scarlet. Can I call you Scarlet?”

“Sure.”

“That's what we are trying to find out.”

“You've already had, what, six sessions?”

“This is my eighth,” Dirk said.

“Scarlet. Dirk. If I may.” I had to interrupt and gain some semblance of control.

Scarlet adjusted her skirt. Dirk cast a sideways glance at his wife. Neither looked happy to be here. The big question was, did they want to save their marriage? I had to get them to say yes to my next question, and I only had three more sessions to do it.

“Do either of you want to save your marriage?”

“Me. I have no desire to divorce Dirk. I love him.” Scarlet slid closer to Dirk and laid her hand on his knee. She tried to meet his gaze, but Dirk turned his head to face me.

“And you, Mr. Baxter?”

He glared at me as if I had betrayed him. After the night at the Cherry Pit and our sexual encounters in the surrogacy

room and my condo, maybe I had. It was for the best, though. Mine and his.

“And me what?” he replied.

“Do you want to save your marriage, Mr. Baxter?”

I held my breath, waiting for him to answer. Mr. Dark Eyes pierced me with those black eyes of his.

“If there is a chance to save it...”

“Then it’s settled, Doc. What do we do to make Dirk’s... make him attracted to me again?” She scooted even closer to him.

There wasn’t any more room on the couch for him to move away. He didn’t shirk or shrink, though. In fact, he stretched to his full height and put on a stone face. His eyes, though, seemed to question me. I could sense his confusion.

“Let’s start off with a dyad. Scarlet, tell your husband something that you love and admire about him. Mr. Baxter, when she’s finished, you just say ‘thank you’. Understood?”

They both nodded.

Scarlet shifted on the couch so that she faced Dirk and started. “Dirk, I love those dark eyes of yours, especially when they look at me with lust. Lust for me and no one else.” She cast a glance my way, as if accusing me of infidelity.

When Dirk didn’t immediately respond, I prompted him. “Say, ‘thank you’, Mr. Baxter.”

“Thank you,” he said.

“Now, Mr. Baxter, tell your wife something you love and admire about her.”

“Well. I...” he paused, his brow furrowed. “I love how spontaneous you are. You always will do and try almost anything.”

Scarlet actually blushed. “Thank you, Dirk.”

“Scarlet, tell your husband something you love or admire about him.”

“Well. I love how you stay in shape. For a man of your age, you are extremely fit and I just love touching your body.”

Did Dirk just blush? He definitely seemed uncomfortable with that compliment.

I scribbled notes under both Scarlet’s name and Dirk’s before continuing.

“Say ‘thank you’ Mr. Baxter.”

“Thank you, Scarlet.”

“Again, Mr. Baxter, tell your wife something you love or admire about her.”

“Well, I love your intensity for life. It always kept me feeling young.”

“Thank you, Dirk,” Scarlet said as she rubbed his leg again.

This practice wasn’t about physical touch. It was about emotional touch and connection. While I was afraid that the physical touch might distract or confuse Dirk, he didn’t seem too uncomfortable, so I let it be.

We continued the dyad back and forth between them for another ten minutes. I could see them both relaxing their shoulders. I could detect a change in tone when they spoke. This was always a wonderful exercise before we got into the tougher stuff.

“So now, I want you to ask this question of each other, starting with you Dirk. Just ask the question, listen, and then say thank you. You’ll switch back and forth on this question as well.” I waited for them both to nod.

Scarlet had moved, so she sat on the couch facing Dirk. He still had his posture aimed forward from the couch. He wasn’t ready to open up to Scarlet. She seemed sincere in trying to connect. He was still closed off.

“Say to Scarlet, tell me one thing you would like me to know about how you feel about our marriage. Then after she answers, just say ‘thank you’. Then, Scarlet, you will ask the same question. We can go back and forth for quite a while.”

Dirk nodded and Scarlet smiled like a Black Friday sales shopper who got the last Louboutin heels at Sax Fifth Avenue. She shifted her gaze so that she looked straight at her husband.

“Tell me one thing you want me to know about how you feel about our marriage,” Dirk asked, following the script perfectly.

Scarlet gazed into his dark eyes as he had finally turned his head to ask the question. She seemed to think about her answer and then let out a long, drawn-out sigh.

“I don’t feel like you believe in me anymore. You used to be so supportive of my career and now you don’t even ask me whether I am working. You haven’t supported one of my projects in over a year. Work keeps you so busy that I swear you care about it more than me.” She kept her hand on his knee as she spoke and bent just enough to provide him a magnificent view of her cleavage.

The room was silent for several seconds.

“Now you say thank you, Mr. Baxter,” I prompted.

“Thank you, Scarlet.” His tone did not show thanks.

“Now, you ask him, Scarlet,” I coached until they got the hang of this.

“Dirk, my love, tell me one thing you would like me to know about how you feel,” she asked, then added with a cautious smile. “About our marriage.”

“Concerning our marriage?” he asked.

“That or how you feel about sex with me,” Scarlet replied.

I gave Scarlet a look, and she rolled her eyes but remained silent.

“I love you, Scarlet, but my business is important to me. I’m so close to realizing my company’s vision. It’s a huge milestone and the wealth it will generate will last for our lifetime. Sex is one of the last things on my mind.”

“Say thank you, Scarlet.” I could see she was ready to say something.

“Thank you, Dirk.” She said, squeezing his thigh and offering a tentative smile.

Dirk took a deep breath before asking, “Tell me something you want me to know about how you feel about our marriage.”

“I don’t feel like you’ve been fair with me, baby. One night, I have special surprise for you and on Monday you ask for a divorce. It was so sudden. Surprising. I was shocked. And hurt.” She dabbed at her eye with a tissue she had pulled from her purse.

I gave Dirk a look when he didn’t thank her.

“Thank you.” He seemed visibly shaken by her vulnerability and the tears forming in her eyes.

Scarlet asked the question of Dirk.

“I feel like your love for me has faded over the last year. You’ve spent more time with your friends partying. Trying to go to parties where producers will be. I don’t think you even want to know about this huge merger and all the scrutiny that brings about.”

“Thank you darling,” Scarlet said. The words were sweet, but there was a hint of something there that I couldn’t quite discern.

“Tell me something else you would like me to know about how you feel.” I could see Dirk’s jaw tightening after asking.

“I think you care about money more than you do me. You told me you wanted a divorce and you are doing these counseling sessions just so you can keep more of your money. Then you moved out. You haven’t even tried to talk.”

“Tell him how that makes you feel, Scarlet.” I wanted them to talk less about their problems and more about how they felt.

“It makes me feel sad. I feel like I’m not even worthy of your time. It makes me feel worthless. I don’t feel attractive anymore. I can’t eat right.”

“Don’t be dramatic.” Dirk interrupted. I could see his jaw clench.

“Mr. Baxter,” I cautioned. He met my gaze. I don’t think he heard no too often. “Anything else, Scarlet.”

“I feel you gave up on the marriage just because you have ED or something that doesn’t make your penis work right anymore.” She pulled back from Dirk and crossed her arms.

I consider myself an excellent judge of character and she seemed sincere. It may have been because I could empathize with her feelings. I had gone through the same thing with Richard. He had been so focused on his business, working late, on weekends, that I felt abandoned.

This was my first time meeting her, though, and I’d seen plenty of patients who could fool me the first few times we met. I felt a sinking feeling in my gut, though.

I knew I needed to focus on my own issues and having Dirk in my life would be a deadly distraction. Helping him fix his marriage was the right thing to do. The thought of losing him though left me with a heavy feeling. This was going to be hard.

“Mr. Baxter, say thank you, please.”

“Thank you.” He faced me when he said it and not Scarlet.

“Tell me something you want me to know about how you feel about our marriage.” Scarlet asked, her voice low and soft.

“*And*. Please look directly at her when you say it,” I added.

Those dark eyes of his pierced right through me as he glared at me. Eventually, he turned on the couch, giving

himself some room from Scarlet, although now his knee was on the couch pressing against her knee.

“I don’t feel you realize how much I’ve supported you and the money I’ve spent on your schemes. It’s hard to be intimate with you when I have this resentment towards you.”

“You resent me?” Scarlet burst out.

“Scarlet. Say ‘thank you’.”

“Thank you. I guess.” Scarlet huffed and crossed her arms.

I really couldn’t blame her for feeling hurt, angry, and a touch of resentment. Every story has two sides, and I was seeing the other side now.

Dirk Baxter was a workaholic with a wife twenty-two years younger than him. He was focused on a big business deal, which left little time for his wife.

She had obviously spent a lot of his money, had a circle of friends he didn’t particularly care for, and her social life reflected on him. At least he thought so.

We continued the dyad with the same question for another ten minutes, but it seemed to make things worse. The goal was for each partner to understand how the other felt more than what their dislikes of their partner were.

There was, however, a sliver of hope and something to work with. Before the hour ended, I had some recommendations for the couple. I hoped they both would go along with it.

“So, I know that was hard for both of you. Hearing your spouse tell you how they feel, especially when there is a lot of bitterness and anger, is difficult. However, I think there is some common ground you two can stand on. I have some homework for the two of you, if you are still willing to try saving your marriage. You both today have said that is what you want to do.”

I waited for a response or nods of approval. Dirk took a deep breath but didn’t respond.

“I’m willing to try anything, Doc.” Scarlet said.

I practiced my therapist’s penetrating stare on Dirk until he nodded.

“Okay, you have three homework assignments. One, Dirk, you need to sleep at your house and be home at a decent hour each weeknight. Can you do that? Your house has an extra bedroom if you two don’t feel comfortable sleeping together. Right?”

They both nodded.

“Two, on those weeknights, when you get home early, share a meal together. Talk about your day. Catch up and listen to each other. Then, when dinner is over, I want you to do a dyad for thirty minutes to an hour. Here is a list of questions you can ask each other.” I got up and offered my dyad questions handout to them. Scarlet took it and scanned it. I sat back down.

“Pick the ones that seem important but always start out with five to ten minutes of telling each other something you align on or love about each other. Can you both commit to that?”

“Yes. I think these are great. I’ll commit to that, no problem.” Scarlet seemed bubbly and eager.

“If you follow the rules, I’ll do them too.” Dirk gave me a dirty look and exhaled.

“Don’t make it sound like a death sentence, darling.” Scarlet patted him on the shoulder and put on a pout.

“Good. For number three. I want you to practice sensate touch in the bedroom three to four times before next week’s appointment.”

“Oh, what’s that?” Scarlet said with a prolonged oh sound.

“Here’s some literature on why you should do it, how to do it, and some guidelines when doing it.” I got up and handed the literature to Scarlet.

She glanced at it and then noticed that I hadn't given one to Dirk.

"Doesn't Dirk need a copy?"

"I've already done this as part of my treatment."

"This is something a man and a woman do together, right?"

"Yes, depending on your gender preference. You do it with another individual."

"So, who did you do it with, Darling? Did you do it with the Doc here?" Her eyes widened as she contemplated the thought and she shot me a piercing glance.

"No," he replied quickly.

"No, he did it with my sexual surrogate, here at the office." I lied. There was no way I could confess we had done it as well, and that I had sucked his cock before we finished.

"Oh, Dirk. You never told me about that." She looked at him with a coy smile before facing me. "Is she pretty? This Chastity woman?"

"Yes, she's very beautiful," Dirk replied.

Oh my God, Dirk. Are you trying to antagonize her?

"Sex surrogates. They are like substitutes for a wife or girlfriend that a man has sex with. Right?"

"Chastity does mostly sensate touch with my clients and sometimes has sex with them, but that's only in more extreme cases and when it is appropriate. Usually single men and women."

"Did you have sex with her, Dirk?" Her tone was menacing. She rested her hand on his knee.

"No!" he and I answered at the same time.

At what had to be the worst timing in the world, I could see a bulge forming in Dirk's slacks. Scarlet's hand was so

close to it as she started rubbing his leg with soft strokes through the fabric.

Was Scarlet rubbing his thigh, turning him on, or was it a memory of his treatment with Chastity? Or was it... I tried not to blush.

He looked at me with burning dark eyes. Those were the eyes that had skewered me at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club and which, with a simple command to take my top off, had me almost completely naked on the dance floor.

Fuck. He's thinking of our sensate touch session. We had gone well beyond touch then.

"Well, now that you have your homework, it's time to call it a session." I urged them to get up and then walked them to the door. I watched as they walked out of the office.

Dirk's body language was still tentative. He reminded me of a caged lion pacing restlessly in a cage. If he was the lion, Scarlet was the lioness. She touched him tentatively, but she was always close, ready to pounce on him.

As they walked out, I felt this sinking feeling in my gut. Even my neck hurt and my sinuses pounded. That session had been stressful. For me. I felt a wave of nausea attack me, so I closed my door and made it to the couch.

My heart hurt. I had feelings for Dirk. Strong feelings. I felt if circumstances had been different, I could make a life with Dirk Baxter, my Mr. Dark Eyes.

Seeing Dirk get a hard-on brought back memories of the lap dance at the club, me masturbating to the recording of his sensate session with Chastity, and our own sensate session where he got hard as a rock from just my touch.

Even if Scarlet didn't turn him on anymore. Even if Chastity didn't excite him to a full erection. I did. That excited me.

Knowing that and knowing that he brought back feelings of both love and lust into my life would normally be a joyous

thing.

But it left me conflicted. My dancing, which I loved to do, had put me in an unpleasant situation with my ex-husband and the courts. It was also where I met Dirk, so it had that going against it as well. I couldn't afford to have Dirk in my life as anything other than my patient. I had to get custody of my kids back and Mr. Dark Eyes would just confuse that.

The homework I had given Dirk and Scarlet was for the best. It was the right thing for me to do as a therapist and with the dyads, it might also mend the physical wound between the two of them. I repeated those words over and over.

It was the right thing to do.

It was the right thing to do.

Why do I feel like I just lost something special then?

Chapter 21

Poison in the Soup

I SAMPLED THE CHEF'S CHICKEN CACCIATORE IN-BETWEEN pacing the kitchen. Dirk had avoided me over the weekend, but he had promised to come home Monday night for dinner. Being a model in LA, I knew the importance of presentation. So, I had planned tonight meticulously, down to the last detail.

I would greet Dirk in his favorite black dress—an Alaia sleeveless dress with corset features which hugged my features beautifully and came down to just above the knees. Louboutins, hose and garter, a lacy push-up bra and matching thong panties, all in black, completed my fuck-me-please outfit.

I had a bottle of 2017 TOR “Black Magic” cabernet sauvignon for Dirk and a bottle of 2017 Heart Block sauvignon blanc for myself. Wine was the only item where his tastes were more expensive than mine. I just loved a white wine and had never developed a taste for reds. I looked good dressed in red though, but I went with the black dress to match the Black Magic.

Henri had prepared Dirk's favorites: Caesar salad, minestrone soup, olive oil bread rolls, and chicken cacciatore. The table was set with our finest dinner ware. Two silver candlesticks sat on the table with long tapered red candles ready to be lit. The sun was setting on the horizon over the ocean, creating shimmers in the evening air that matched the simmering in between my thighs.

I had abstained over the weekend, much to Stu's chagrin. I went down on him, though, to keep him happy and his mouth shut. Dirk was getting too close to satisfying his pre-nuptial condition that would allow him to divorce me and give me the paltry sum of a million dollars instead of the fifty I would get if he just divorced me without counseling.

It was a silly clause. I had convinced him over wine and intercourse to add to the prenup. The original agreement would have only given me ten million. I had talked him into fifty million only because, in the bliss of our new relationship, he could not foresee wanting to divorce me. None of that compared to the lifestyle I could maintain if we didn't divorce.

My head spun from thinking about the numbers. The only number I cared about right now was 8:45 PM, which was forty-five minutes past the time Dirk had said he would be home for dinner. I had other plans beyond dinner and, thanks to that whore therapist, Regina Davenport, he would have to join me in our bedroom.

I stepped into the security room next to his office and checked the security cameras. Dirk's car pulled up to the six-car garage. He waited for the door to open to pull inside. The thought of him inside me gave me a quick flash of pleasure in my pussy.

Stay on task, Scarlet.

Dashing to the kitchen, I poured Dirk a glass of Black Magic and then fished the small pill bottle out of my purse. Ground up thiazide and fluoxetine, enough for two normal doses of each, along with the contents of one Librium waited inside, ready to be delivered. I poured half of the cocktail mix into his wine and stirred it up. The other half I added to his bowl of minestrone soup.

The blood pressure medication and the depression pills had worked over time to give Dirk a serious case of erectile dysfunction, but it had taken weeks before the symptoms set in. It had taken months before that to figure out which combination worked best.

I had tried every SSRI medication and multiple blood-pressure pills before I found something that worked. The Librium, a tranquilizer, was an emergency ingredient which I hoped would be enough to make him as limp as fully cooked spaghetti.

I was sure he was ready to divorce me a year prior. My plan was far-fetched, but I understood Dirk's psyche. I was sure that destroying his concept of his own manhood would keep me on his arm and married for looks, if nothing else.

He had been at the point of frustration and my plan for gas lighting him—for making him dependent upon me and malleable to my manipulative ways—had been working perfectly until he hadn't come home on a Saturday night and told me the next day he wanted a divorce.

His announcement came out of the blue and I never understood why. All I knew is he ditched his security detail that night and didn't appear again until the next day. Whatever happened, wherever he went, flipped a switch inside him and led him to want a divorce.

I had been working to get him to invest twenty million in a movie that I would star in. I had even gone to the trouble of having a new accountant friend write up a business plan. Instead, he wanted a divorce and any hold I had developed on him slipped away overnight.

I set the bowl of soup and the glass of wine on the table just as he came in from the garage.

He wore a nice blue Tom Ford suit with black Tom Ford shoes. A paisley tie of red and gold silk hung loose on his neck and his white shirt had two buttons undone. His hair, in slight disarray, as if fingers had been run through it, showed it had been a tough day.

No matter what he or anyone else thought, I paid attention to minor details. It was the minor details that needed attention, whether it was when acting and modeling or when plotting to get your husband to support you in a major project.

“Hello, husband. You’re just in time.”

“Hello, Scarlet.” He scanned the dining room and the kitchen before setting down his briefcase.

I sashayed towards him and helped him take off his jacket. I calculated every movement to arouse him, seduce him. My fingers traced his arms as I slowly removed the suit coat and laid it over a living room chair neatly.

As I walked around him to face him, my fingers did not leave his upper arm. Standing in front of him, I met his dark-eyed gaze with my own sultry green. I put on my best runway stare, never breaking eye contact as I undid his tie slowly. Making sure my fingers touched his bare flesh, I watched for signs of excitement and desire.

I saw uncertainty instead.

“You didn’t need to go to all this trouble.”

“It was no trouble. Henri did the cooking. Plus, I know all your favorites.” A smile emphasized my pleasure in making the night special.

As I pulled the tie through his collar, my effort pulled me into him, and he shocked me. A hard-on pressed against my thigh. *Fuck!*

He pulled back slowly. Not quickly.

I hoped my limp-dick cocktail would work.

“Do I smell chicken cacciatore?”

“Yes you do, darling.”

I took his hand and led him to the table where he sat down. “Let me grab your salad. Henri prepared Caesar salad too.” I trailed my hand across the back of his shoulders as I left him to go to the kitchen.

The dining room and kitchen were only separated by the large food prep island where the sink and dishwasher took up one side and a bar like eating area the other. I grabbed two salads from the refrigerator and returned to the table. My hips

swayed as if I walked down the runway in New York and Dirk's eyes swayed with my own movements.

He ate his soup, and I picked at my salad as an uncomfortable silence hovered over us like an early morning fog from the ocean. I observed as he devoured the soup and drank half of his glass of wine. I savored the lemon blossom and Asian pear, along with the slight honey taste of my wine.

“So, how was your day?” I asked, showing interest in his life, which was always defined by his business.

“A challenge. Lawyers and regulators, which are just lawyers for the government, are determined to make me work for every part of this deal. They dig into everything. The European lawyers are the worst. They don't take kindly to an American company buying out a European counterpart.”

“If we only scrutinized politicians to the same depth...” I let that thought trail off. It sounded smart.

He smiled in reply. His eyes had lost that haggard look.

“So, when do you think the merger will go through?” If Dirk wasn't a billionaire yet, this merger with Arsenault Security would make him one for sure.

“It could be ready in a week or it could take six months. Everyone has an opinion on how to answer the many questions and how to fill out all the legal paperwork.” He sighed heavily.

I didn't want to divorce Dirk—my life with him had been any girl's dream. My monthly allowance added up to more than most women ever had to spend in a year's time, and I'd accumulated some money over the five years we'd been married. Of course, that was because some ventures I got him to invest in were simply ways for me to squirrel away money. But if he forced me into a divorce, I intended to get as much from him as I could.

In my sick way, I loved Dirk Baxter with or without his money. Loving him with his money had been so much easier, though. If I couldn't stay married, I intended to get as much as I could from him during the divorce.

“I’m sure you will get it all worked out. You always do.” I imagined my grandmother and her loving smile as I always did to evoke that feeling of supportive love. I tried to paint my face with that same look.

“Yes. I will.” His jaw tightened, a tell that he was determined to win an argument or contest of wills.

“You know I’ve always admired you as well as loving you. I just hope we can get back to the feeling and fire we had in the beginning.”

“We will see, Scarlet.”

“Come on, Dirk. Loosen up a little. Where’s that carefree man who swept me off my feet and adored me?”

“He’s not as sure right now.”

“Not sure of what? His love for me? Or his own masculinity?”

“Of you,” he answered quickly. His eyes darkened. His jaw set even tighter.

“I’m sorry, Dirk. I didn’t mean to upset you. Since the doctor recommended we do this, I have been looking forward to this night.”

He scrutinized me as if trying to read my thoughts. I often felt like his concentrated stare pierced my thoughts, or even my very soul. Now, I just saw suspicion and doubt. I needed to ease any doubt he had tonight. Even though I intended to wound his ego. Again.

We ate in relative silence, although I merely picked at my salad and some of the soup. The olive oil bread rolls were delicious, and I finished one of them. I carefully watched as Dirk finished his soup and his first glass of wine. His eyebrows raised as he finished the last of his wine.

I poured him some more wine. He nodded in appreciation.

I made sure to bend over when I served him his chicken, my cleavage on full display. It didn’t go unnoticed, but I didn’t

see the expected look of desire in his eyes. I hadn't seen that look in some time.

When he had finished his meal, I cleared off the dishes and poured him one more glass of wine.

"I'm going to get into something more comfortable." I let my hand trail up his arm to his shoulder.

"I'm feeling tired. I'm thinking I'll just go to bed."

"Dirk! The doctor gave us one more assignment. We should do that, don't you think?"

"Assignment?"

"Sensory touching, or whatever she called it."

"Sensate touch? You want to do that tonight?"

"Yes, Dirk. Don't you?"

He sighed heavily, and I could see his eyes droop a little. Maybe the tranquilizer was a bit too much.

"I'm so tired. Can I get a raincheck on that?"

"Don't you think we should do it tonight? You trust the doctor, right?"

"She's a therapist, Scarlet. Not a doctor."

"Therapist. Doctor. Whatever. You trust her, right? Don't you think we should do what she suggests?"

He pondered the question before answering, and my mind raced through the possibilities.

My goal was to get Dirk into bed tonight. I needed him to have a major failure and not be able to get hard. Sinking my claws into him deeper so that he questioned his virility was my only goal.

I didn't consider him susceptible to much, and he had always been virile and vigorous in bed. More so than any other man I'd ever fucked. Especially at his age.

He was definitely an alpha male, but he had expressed concerns about our age difference after we got married. Nothing he ever seemed to fixate on, but he had expressed the fear more than once. He was concerned I would lose interest in him and look for someone younger. I needed to play on that fear to keep our marriage together.

Otherwise, other measures would need to be taken.

“Okay, Scarlet. I trust her and if she thinks we should do this, then I will do it.” His jaw tightened again, and he squared his shoulders as he breathed in deeply. It was like he was getting ready for a key at bat on the softball field rather than considering some wonderfully sensuous sex play.

No matter how cold I needed to be, his tone was disheartening. I had always expected him to grow tired of me and want to leave me. All men were the same. They couldn't stay with a woman without straying from her. I thought that maybe Dirk Baxter was different, but I was wrong.

I was sure of one thing, though. Tonight I was determined to humiliate him in bed. Again.

Chapter 22

Sometimes When We Touch

I SWAYED MY HIPS A LITTLE MORE THAN USUAL AS I LED DIRK back to our bedroom, even though Dirk hadn't been in it for over two months. Sensual mood music played over the speaker system. Looking over my shoulder, I gave him an inviting smile when I saw he was following me dutifully, instead of heading to the guest bedroom.

If he would just not act like he was headed to the principal's office for punishment, then I would be happier. I wasn't against providing some punishment, though. In fact, my plan was to punish his ego.

"So, what do we do, Dirk?" I stood by the bed, still in my Alaia dress, looking fucking fantastic.

He walked to the other side and stopped.

"Do?"

"Yes, Dirk. How does this sensual touch thing work?"

"Didn't you read the material, Reg... Miss Davenport sent you?"

What was with him calling her by her first name? I felt my anger boil, but tamped it down. Now was not the time to live up to my red-headed reputation.

"No. I'm sorry, Dirk. It's been a busy weekend. Just walk me through it."

I had read the materials. It seemed an odd practice. Just touching Dirk or being touched by him still made me wet.

Hell, when Stu touched me, I got wet. I didn't know if I would be able to *only* touch Dirk or be touched by him.

The material said that you could take the practice to even more intimacy—the document's words, not mine. I thought saying intimacy rather than fucking or, to be more proper, intercourse, sounded too fancy. Fucking was fucking, plain and simple.

It would be hard to not want to fuck Dirk or suck on his cock.

“Well, we could leave our clothes on and just get into bed. I'll get in first and start with you in between my legs.” He started to slide onto the bed.

“That seems kind of silly. I thought this worked best if we were touching bare skin.” The prick didn't want me touching his bare flesh.

He sighed. “Yes. We could also take off our clothes. All but our underwear.” He removed his clothes slowly and laid them on a chair in the corner. Crawling onto the bed, he positioned himself, leaning against the headboard. In his boxers, he looked quite delicious. Firm abs, defined chest, and chiseled arms and forearms laid out before me like a fine dessert. Even though he was over twenty years older than me, he was still a fine-looking man.

“Can you unzip me?” I sat down on the bed with my back to him.

He moved to unclasp my dress, and he unzipped me slowly. His fingers trailed along my spine, sending shivers of lust through me. I imagined grasping his cock and stroking it.

Focus!

“Thank you, husband.” I used the word husband like a weapon. A reminder that we were still wed and pre-nuptial agreement or not, we had made promises to each other.

I stood up and began a slow, sexy strip tease. It wasn't a dance really, but I used the same willowy sway of my

shoulders and hips as I slipped the dress off my shoulder, down my waist, and past my hips. I let the fabric fall to the floor and stepped out of it.

I crawled onto the bed, ensuring he got a magnificent view of my ample cleavage.

“You won’t need the heels,” he said. “Or the garter and hose.”

Feigning coquettish innocence, I sat on the edge of the bed. I slowly undid the garter clips with each movement calculated, meticulous, and meant to arouse. I stood up and pushed my derriere up and back while I slid the flimsy fabric down my legs and stepped out of them.

The heels came off next, and I cast a glance over my shoulder at Dirk. For all his desire to divorce me, I still saw hunger in his eyes. Turning slightly on the bed to afford Dirk a better view, I slid the hose off, one leg at a time. When I was down to my thong and bra, I bent over, presenting my ass again while I picked up my discarded clothes and laid them on the chair in the nearest corner.

I crawled back onto the bed with even more bare flesh to tempt Dirk. A slight bulge appeared in his boxers. Maybe the limp-dick cocktail wouldn’t work tonight. That would be okay. I hadn’t felt him inside me in such a long time. While my pussy clenched in anticipation, I tried to focus on my plan. *Humiliation not copulation.*

“Where do you want me?”

“Right here. Leaning back against me.” He tapped the bed between his spread legs.

“You sure you want my back to you? I could start some sensate touch on your cock.” I flashed my most seductive smile.

“No. Right here. Back to me. There won’t be any cock stroking tonight.” He spoke like a father speaking to a child, which kind of hurt, but also turned me on a bit.

I moved into position and wiggled my ass up against his crotch. He didn't appear to be aroused now. How could he not be?

Dirk caressed my arms with only his fingertips, and a shiver shot through me almost immediately. From my shoulder to my wrist, two fingers played across the surface of my skin. I could already feel my nipples harden, and he hadn't reached my sensitive spots.

God, how I love his touch.

I laid back purposefully into his chest. The ripples of his chest muscles against my back supported me. His biceps grazed my shoulders as he continued to caress my arms up and down. When he brought his fingers up to the top of my shoulders and traced a path to my neck, I felt the first hint of wetness. The more he touched me, the more I just wanted to ride him until the early hours of the morning. My panties were going to be soaked.

But I couldn't do that. Not if I intended to save my marriage.

I squirmed a bit, enough to feel a growing bulge in his boxers. That wasn't good.

When he reached around and embraced me, his hands played across my stomach, taut from my two-hour daily workouts. I felt tingles from my stomach to my neck where his hot breath whispered across my skin.

I grasped his hand and tried to guide it to my breasts. My desire for him battled with my need for him to remain limp.

His hand didn't budge though and remained on my stomach, although his forearms supported the bottom of my breasts. That alone was enough for me to shiver and let out a moan.

“Patience, Scarlet. You're supposed to surrender to the enjoyment of the experience. I'm in charge, though.”

“Should I tell you what feels good?” The question came out like a whispered moan.

“You don’t have to speak. Your body is telling me what you like.”

He wasn’t wrong. I felt betrayed by my body at that moment. Something I had never really experienced. I was used to being in control. The only man who had ever had the upper hand on me had been Dirk, and he had always read my body well.

When his hands traced the edges of my lace bra along the tender flesh of my breasts, my back arched and my butt pressed against him. My head fell to his shoulder and I could almost kiss him.

I could see his eyes were intent on the task. Those dark, intense eyes focused on caressing my body and bringing me pleasure. The worst thing, though, was that his hard-on had grown.

Was that really a bad thing?

I had been certain to pick a bra with thin, almost see-through fabric, and my nipples showed easily. He ran his fingers along the fabric and around the nipples, making my areolas pebble in excitement. I gasped, as much from his lack of touching my nipples as from his actual caresses.

As my heartbeat quickened and my breath came faster, he moved both hands down the middle of my belly. I thought I could relax until his hands reached my panties.

I wore a black thong with thin strings pulled up over my hip bones and a small triangle of black cloth, which barely covered my smaller triangle of red pubic hair. I had groomed it that way just for tonight. It looked like an arrow pointing down towards my pussy and had been such a turn on for him the night we first made love in Cozumel.

On that memorable trip, as the ocean beat softly against the shore outside his beach front resort, he had devoured my pussy with his mouth and tongue and then fucked me vigorously. I

used my body and my skills at seduction to get him to concede one minor point in my prenup. He had been mine ever since that trip.

Until he wasn't.

I had to win him back or destroy him. I preferred the former, but would settle for the latter.

His hands traced my inner thigh. Being taller than me, he could reach them, but he bent me forward the farther he reached. When his hands came back up, they teased along the outside of my wet pussy lips. I could just make out a wet spot forming on the thin fabric.

“Oh, Dirk.” I gasped before I could catch myself.

“I know all the ways to please you, Scarlet.”

“Then why don't you do it more? You moved out so abruptly.”

“Things have changed.”

“What has changed? Don't I turn you on anymore?”

His hands didn't stop caressing my skin, making a circle around my belly, to my breasts, and back to my soaked panties.

“You are very attractive, Scarlet, but there's more to a relationship than being turned on.”

“That night you didn't come home. The night after, you couldn't get hard. That Sunday, you said you wanted to divorce me. It all seemed so abrupt.”

He grabbed both of my breasts, causing me to gasp, and he angled his hips, pushing his cock against my ass. Even through the fabric of his briefs, I felt like I could feel the ripples and blood vessels against my bare ass. He let out a long sigh, which was so close to a moan.

He was definitely turned on.

“I was confused. I needed time to think.” He slipped his fingers just under my panties and stopped short of my clit.

I bent my back, trying to raise my pussy to meet his fingers.

He held me down easily with one hand.

“But why ask for a divorce? It was just a silly case of ED. You’re fifty-five. That’s not abnormal for a man of your age.”

He squeezed my breasts as if his desire had been aroused to the point of giving in and fucking me. Or he wanted to exert some control.

“You seem to be fine now. And very turned on.” My voice became sultry as I spoke. I ran my hands down his thighs, unable to keep my hands off of him.

“Something happened. Things changed...” He trailed off and smacked me on the hip. “Time to switch. If I keep going, you’re going to want to fuck me.”

“And what’s wrong with that?” I asked, my voice low.

“That’s not happening tonight, Scarlet. No way.”

He moved and fluffed up the pillows for me. I moved into position and he lay against me with his back to my chest. Pressing against my breasts, I felt more thrilling sensations swirling through me. I couldn’t help but notice the bulge in his briefs as he moved into position. If he wasn’t fully erect, he was very close to it.

Evidently, not even the Librium was enough to make him limp. Was that desire for me, or had being away for two months and not receiving my regular dosage of medications that reduce his libido, returned him to normal?

“Remember, Scarlet, no touching the genitals.”

“I can get close, though. Right?”

“Yes, but they are off limits. The point is for me to figure out what excites me when you touch me and you to feel through your fingertips. To feel the sensations.”

He sounded like a doctor, but he had always been savvy about how all kinds of things worked. Even if it was something new, he picked it up quickly.

“Yes, Doctor Baxter.” I teased. “How many times have you done this?”

“A couple of times.”

“Who did you do it with?”

“With Chastity.”

“Chastity?”

“Miss Davenport’s sex surrogate.”

“Is she pretty?”

“She’s gorgeous. Young. Talented.”

“Oh. No one else? Like the Doc?” Hearing the surrogate was young and gorgeous caused my voice to lower in reaction. *What the hell does he mean by talented?*

“No. No one else.”

I ran both of my hands down his thick arms to his forearms. Using my entire palm, I added a light squeeze to his shoulders, his biceps, and his forearms. He tensed up at the mention of his experiences. He just lied to me. Bitch Davenport must have done this with him.

While he didn’t quiver at my touch, he eventually relaxed into my chest. Which didn’t help my nipples or my wet pussy. I ached to have him inside of me.

I couldn’t let Dirk Baxter win, though.

My hands ran over his belly and cords of muscles. When I moved up to his pecs, I paused. “Your nipples aren’t off limits, are they?” I whispered.

“No.” He sounded drowsy. He lay with his head even with my own and he laid it on my shoulder, giving me a view of his body. And his cock. It was still hard. There was no way I did not turn him on. And make him uncomfortable.

I ran my hands up his chest and spent some time rubbing his nipples. If Dirk was sensitive there, I didn't know. I'd never spent any time there. He had enough between his legs to keep me occupied. Maybe there was something to this sensitive touch stuff.

Dirk relaxed into me even more and the weight of his body pressed against mine. As I rubbed his nipples, he gave out light moans, bare sighs.

“That feels good, Reg...” He trailed off as I continued to rub his chest and abs. Was he about to say Reggie? *What the fuck?*

“Regina? The Doc? You said you only did this with Chastity.”

No answer. He had fallen asleep. I could feel the Irish blood in me boiling. I couldn't lose him and if I did, there was no way he would finish ten visits with Doctor Sex Bitch.

Whenever I got pissed like I felt now, there was only one cure. I needed a fuck.

The Librium hadn't softened his cock, but it and the wine had put him to sleep. This might work.

I could comment in the morning about his limp dick. Try to humiliate him in the morning. He wouldn't know it was a lie. He might not even believe me, but for some men, any doubt was like a poisoned pill.

His cock stared back at me like a primal serpent begging me to do something. It could satisfy my need to fuck this anger out of me.

I wiggled out from underneath him and let him slide off me into the pillows behind me. I propped some pillows underneath his head in the middle of the bed. On his back, his cock pointed up like a tent pole in his briefs.

I removed his briefs and took his erect cock into my mouth. The sensations that shot through me with just his cock in my mouth made my pussy ache for him to be inside me. It

became slick with my saliva as I slid my mouth up and down on his length.

It was even harder in no time. I could just suck him off. That would be very satisfying. No, I needed to feel him inside me.

I straddled him, pulled my thong to the side and with my other hand guided his fucking missile of a cock into my silo. Even I appreciated a good military analogy.

In no time, I was moving forward and back. With my hands on his chest, I slid my clit against his pelvis as I ground slowly atop him. I pulled my breasts out, not for him, but for me. Pinching my nipples with one hand and steadying myself on his chest with the other, I rode my sleeping billionaire.

While I liked it rougher, the thought that I was in control and the sensations that came with it washed over me at the same time as my clit signaled my body to orgasm. So as I fucked him slowly with long, slow sliding motions along his cock, the orgasm built and built. When I finally came, it was a euphoric state I could only equate to walking down a fashion runway and seeing hundreds of eyes admiring me.

My head still spun as if I had been fucked hard and rough by Stu and I collapsed on Dirk's chest, breathing in sharp gasps. My heart pounded in my chest and I felt a dizziness in my head.

Fuck, that was hot.

As I fought to catch my breath laying on his chest, brief thoughts of guilt entered my head. I knew men were supposed to have consent, but we were husband and wife. Consent was implied. Right?

In the end, I didn't really care. It wasn't the first time I'd fucked a sleeping partner. My needs were important too.

Somewhere in my heart, love for Dirk still existed, but it seemed a distant memory. I could almost understand why Dirk would want a divorce. The more distant I had become with him, the more he reciprocated. Perhaps I could save the

marriage, but I wasn't sure I would ever see the love we experienced when we first met.

Plus, I didn't think I had it in me to do the things needed to close the distance between us. I was too much of a bitch. I knew that about myself.

Right now, I needed to convince Dirk Baxter that he needed to stay with me because no other woman would want to fuck him. If he believed he couldn't perform in bed because of his age, then he might just settle for staying with me and supporting my lifestyle. If that didn't work, then I had to keep him from seeing the Doctor Sex Bitch for his remaining visits.

I was going to have all of his fortune as his wife or settle for nothing less than the fifty million that I deserved.

Chapter 23

Watch Your Back

THE WEEKLY VISITATION WITH TREY AND MONICA WENT WELL, considering they held it in Richard's quest house and a social services counselor observed for the entire hour. Wednesday's had been determined to be the best day to do the visitation. Not because of my schedule, but because of Richard's and social service's schedule. I had to reschedule all of my Wednesday afternoon appointments to make it here by four.

I was careful not to make promises and to enjoy the time I had with them. Their hugs I cherished, as well as wiping away their tears. I assured them they would be okay with their father. I tried to stay present and focus on them, but a part of my mind fumed over being in this situation and not really knowing why.

Sure, I had danced at a strip club twice, but it was amateur night both times. I wasn't a professional. I did not derive my income from it and even if I did, why is that a reason to take my kids away? Many of the real dancers had kids and from what I could tell, they were great moms. Hell, I was a great mom.

Certain tiers of society, though, had different standards for what was acceptable. I was no celebrity, but my husband was the most powerful real estate agent in the LA metropolitan area. He could afford the best lawyers and his justice insisted on different standards than the average worker in LA.

I only danced to reassert my agency. To do something I loved and something that made me feel good without worrying

about repercussions from my husband, let alone the courts. Unfortunately, it hadn't worked out that way.

Richard met me in the driveway as I was leaving. My anger was near the boiling point. I knew it wouldn't be a good idea to talk to him, so I hurried to my car.

He reached the car first and stood between me and the door.

I glared at him.

"Regina. I'm so sorry."

"For what?"

"For making you go through this."

"If you're so fucking sorry, why did you do it?"

"I had no choice."

"You always have a fucking choice, Richard. You made a choice to cheat on me with your fucking bimbo starlet. When you divorced me, you made a choice. You made the choice to fight for custody of the kids when you're usually never the fuck around."

The words spewed from my mouth like hornets from a nest. If only the sting of those words would have any effect on Richard, then it might have been worth it. Since they didn't usually, I had no expectation of him being remorseful.

"Regina, I'm sorry. I really..."

"You've never been sorry about anything you've ever done. Ever."

"I didn't want this."

"Get out of the way, Richard. I need to go before I do something I'll regret."

"Fuck, Regina. Would you just listen?"

"To what? More excuses. More lies." I took a deep breath. Years of training, which had flown out the window when I

blew up, finally took hold and I tried to compose myself. The yelling had helped.

When I took a moment to pay attention to his face and his body language, it surprised me. His eyes were downcast. His shoulders slumped. He did not display his normal sense of superiority. His ability to always look like he had the upper hand had disappeared to reveal a man I had never met before.

“Richard, will you let me get into my car?” I asked calmly.

He nodded and stepped aside.

I strode to the door and opened it. After sliding in, I started to pull the door closed, before Richard stopped me by grabbing the top of the door frame.

“Richard, let me...”

“Regina, I don’t know who you pissed off, but she wants you to suffer.”

I felt a chill penetrate my bones as he spoke. The anger I had aimed at him disappeared as I met his gaze. His eyes held something I had never seen in them.

Fear.

“What do you mean, Richard?”

“I’ve said enough already.”

“Come on. You can’t drop a bomb like that and not tell me more.”

“Regina, if I could say something, I would. I just want you to watch your back.”

“Why? You’re the only one who has stabbed me in the back lately.”

He met my gaze with a look I had seen only a few times before. The look that was his tell. The indicator that what he said was true even when he didn’t want it to be. I had first seen that look when he gave me the bad news that my father had died.

“Tell me what’s going on?”

“I can’t say anymore. But I will say that it’s better that Trey and Monica are here with me now. I’ve doubled up on security. They’ll be safer with me.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?”

“I fucked up again, Regina. And…” he trailed off, not able to finish the sentence.

That was the closest he had ever come to admitting he had made a mistake. Now I was curious. And terrified.

“I’ve got to get home.” I pulled hard on the door and he let go of it. The door slammed shut.

He knocked on the window.

Reluctantly, I pushed the button to lower the window.

“What, Richard?” I barely kept my voice from quivering.

“I’ve already said too much, but I’m also scared for you. Watch your back, okay? I know you have security systems at your condo and office, but make sure you use them. Maybe consider upgrading it. I’ll pay for it.”

“That’s unnecessary.”

“Yes, it is.”

“It’s not necessary that you pay for it.”

“Oh.” His shoulders dropped again.

“Make sure the kids are safe. And if you can’t say anything now, then you will have some serious explaining to do when this is all over. Whatever this is.”

I started the car and pushed the button to roll the window back up. Before it rolled up completely, Richard said one more thing.

“Remember rule number five.”

When the window was completely up, I started the long drive home.

I had plenty of time for the fear to overwhelm me. I didn't even know what I was supposed to be afraid of. Richard had been so vague.

He had also been sincere in his apology and his warning. The only thing that was clear was that he had somehow fucked up. Traffic only added to my frustration and gave me more time for my mind to spiral out of control.

Watch your back, Regina.

I caught myself glancing at my rearview and side mirrors more. Even when I was at a standstill, either in traffic or at a light, I was looking for something. Only cars and other frustrated motorists glared back at me.

Security at the condo. I had a decent security system. In fact, it had been from a company recommended by Richard. Why the fuck did I trust him enough to listen to his recommendation? My mind immediately flew to Dirk.

Stuck at a light, I turned down the radio and dialed Dirk. I got his voice mail. *Fuck*. When the beep finally came, I left a quick message.

“Hey Dirk, this is Regina. Fuck, you probably know that. I need your help. I need an upgrade to my security system at both my house and the office. Actually, I guess since it isn't your system, I need a brand new system. Look, somethings come up and I'm nervous. Can you call me back asap? Bye. Thank you.”

My ramblings were barely coherent. I knew he would call me back. He would fix my security systems and everything would be good in the world. I would be safe. My kids would be safe. Dirk would fix everything. I just knew it.

Once traffic cleared up and I was moving a little faster towards home, I breathed easier. The act of moving forward, along with knowing Dirk would fix my security system, allowed temporary relief to wash over me. Even though I didn't know what the danger was that I needed to protect myself from.

Calmer now, I ran through the conversation with Richard. He had done something. He had fucked up. I had pissed someone off, too. Who the hell had I pissed off? My clients all loved me and the help I provided them.

Whoever I had pissed off had something on my ex-husband. And they wanted him to fight for custody of our kids and put me in an unpleasant situation. They also seemed intent on doing something to me. No one had contacted me, though. No one had threatened me.

This was so bizarre.

Maybe I was overreacting.

Richard had spent his fair share of time trying to gaslight me during our marriage. I don't think he was even aware of it, so I don't think it was ever intentional. I knew when he did something intentionally.

Even when he cheated on me with an actress, he was only giving into his own urges and desire to be loved in a certain way. A way that I didn't provide for him. Of course, he never talked about his desires with me openly, so I never had the chance to provide him with whatever he wanted.

I had run through the conversation a dozen times by the time I pulled up in front of my condo. My paranoia was high though, and I checked out the well lit parking area before I opened the garage door. I scanned the area, making sure no one crept into my garage as I parked. Remaining in my car, I pressed the garage door opener again to close it.

Only after the loud clunk of the garage door meeting concrete reached my ears, did I get out of the car. As I pushed open the garage door and turned on the interior light, something Richard had said popped into my brain.

“Remember rule number 5.”

I had discounted those words. I hated his rules. Ever since watching Gibbs in the original N.C.I.S., he had devised his own rules. I wracked my brains to remember rule number 5.

Only after checking the entire condo to make sure I was safe. After checking the alarm system to make sure it was armed and all the sensors were working. Only after getting to the safety of my bedroom did I remember what rule number 5 was.

“Never fuck with a redhead.”

Chapter 24

A Big Disappointment

DIRK AND SCARLET SAT ACROSS FROM ME, CONTEMPLATING MY last question. The bubbling from the fountain was the only noise in the room. The afternoon sun bathed the room in warm light, aided by a lamp on one side of the couch that my two patients occupied. It was a Friday, and I was definitely looking forward to the weekend.

Dirk sighed but straightened up on the couch at one end. Scarlet stared at her husband from the middle of the couch, giving him the opportunity to answer first.

Dirk wore a fitted black suit, white shirt, a patterned tie with square shapes of different colors. He smelled of his usual wood and leather. He looked as handsome as ever, although he seemed haggard.

Scarlet arrived in a dark blue dress which showed off her great legs and contrasted with her red hair strikingly. When she had walked into my office, she exuded confidence, attention, and sex appeal. I caught a whiff of patchouli and vanilla. It was easy to see why Dirk was attracted to her.

It also made me wonder about his attraction to me. Was it real or was I just a new infatuation? Was I just some woman to lust after?

“Can you repeat the question?” Dirk asked.

“How have the last two weeks seeing each other every night and on the weekends been going?”

“Good. No problems,” he replied.

“Really?” Scarlet crossed her arms. With her legs already crossed, she sat closed off and unreceptive.

“Do you disagree, Scarlet?” I asked.

“Yes. I disagree. I do all these silly things with him, but he still sleeps in his own bed. He’s practicing intimacy, but he’s not being intimate.”

“Silly things?” Dirk grunted.

“Are the dyads helping?”

“Yes.” Dirk replied.

“No!” Scarlet said simultaneously, raising her voice.

They glared at each other. Dirk’s response was more positive than Scarlet’s. The question, though, was who had been the most honest.

“Scarlet. Tell me how they’re not being helpful.”

“Every time he tells me something he wants me to know, it’s about his business, or his stress levels, or this upcoming deal that has consumed him for a year. It’s never about our relationship and how to salvage it.”

“And how does that make you feel?”

“It makes me feel like I don’t matter. That this relationship doesn’t matter. I feel like now that he’s on the verge of being a billionaire that he doesn’t care about me anymore.”

Dirk’s back straightened even more.

“Mr. Baxter. You thought the dyads were going well. Why?”

“The question was, what did I want her to know? I want her to know all those things. The business is important. But she forgot the times I told her how much I am still attracted to her, how much she turns me on, and... how my erection isn’t the only gauge of how excited I am to be with her.”

Unlike many men I see who come to me with younger wives, he seemed ready to assert himself as he was being

attacked. Many others would get defiant but shrink into themselves. Slumped shoulders and downcast eyes were common. He believed what he was saying.

He had no way of knowing how what he said hurt me, though.

My feelings, however, were not the focus. The dyads were supposed to start them off in a safe space to be more open and vulnerable with each other. They had loved each other once. That spark just needed to be rekindled.

“When you can’t get it up when you’re touching me, it doesn’t shout attraction.”

“You do arouse me, Scarlet. Didn’t you feel that? You saw that. Right?”

“Until you fall asleep and it goes limp.”

“Since you’ve started doing sensate touch, let’s talk more about how that practice is going.” I tried to divert the conversation.

“Good.”

“Terrible.”

Again, opposite responses from the two. I made some notes before asking the next question.

“Scarlet, why do you say they’ve been terrible?”

“Whenever I’m behind him, caressing him, he falls asleep...” She turned her head to face Dirk, “... and then he goes soft as a wet spaghetti noodle. It’s hard to be intimate with someone who’s asleep just as you’re trying to turn them on.”

“When he’s behind you, he’s alert. Awake?”

“Yes. For the most part.”

“Does he seem aroused at all?”

“He gets a little hard. I can feel him pressing against me.”

“And are you aroused?” I asked Scarlet.

She glanced at him before turning to focus on me. “Of course I’m aroused. He’s still a very sexy man, even if he no longer finds me attractive and can’t bring himself to get an erection when I’m touching him. If I could just suck... well, touch him in the right place, I’m sure he would.”

“Scarlet.” Dirk’s tone was admonishing.

I thought I saw the hint of a tear forming in one eye as she looked down and away from me. This was my third appointment with both of them and I’d never seen Scarlet near the point of crying. She had expressed anger, disappointment, and some compassion, but never close to a tear.

“Do you practice this nightly?”

“Five nights a week. Sunday’s and Monday’s I insist on sleeping in my bed.”

“Meaning you sleep together on the other nights?” My heart took a bit of a hit with this new information. I had decided that I couldn’t be involved with Dirk now, without trying to help him and Scarlet as much as I could. There was still a secret part of me that hoped it wouldn’t work out, though. Them sleeping together caused a tightness in my chest. That didn’t mean I wouldn’t do my best to help them. Even if I got hurt in the process.

“Yes. He falls asleep in my bed when I’m trying my best to arouse him. It’s discouraging.” Scarlet looked up and wiped a tear from her cheek. I could sense that anger in her voice.

“Dirk. Do you have anything to say to Scarlet about why you fall asleep when she’s touching you and trying to arouse you?”

“I don’t mean to fall asleep. Usually, I have problems falling to sleep but since I started staying at the house again, I am exhausted and I get drowsy after our meal. I think it’s from the long days and stress of this merger.”

“Maybe it’s because you feel comfortable being back home and in our bed?” Scarlet’s tone was hopeful.

“Is there anything to that, Mr. Baxter? Could it be that you are comfortable being back in bed with your wife?” I tensed, waiting for the answer.

“Maybe.” He didn’t sound convinced.

“And why do you feel you aren’t able to get an erection when your wife is touching you?”

“I do. When I’m caressing her, as her breathing quickens, and while our skin is touching, I get hard.”

“But when I’m touching you? You can’t get it up?” Scarlet’s tone was angry.

Dirk glared at Scarlet. That definitely triggered something.

“I get hard when you’re touching me. I’m sure of it. As I relax though...”

I filled in the silence as he paused. “When you relax, you fall asleep?”

“He falls asleep with his head on my shoulder. It’s kind of cute, actually. Except for the flaccid co... um, penis.” I heard the faintest hint of the word cock held on the tip of her tongue before she said penis.

For the first time, I felt Dirk shrink. He leaned back and dropped his head on to the back of the couch. After breathing in deeply, he let out an audible sigh.

“Do you know how demeaning it is for a man to not be able to get an erection with this ready to... have intercourse with them?” She ran her hands from her hips to her face as if showing off an item on the Price is Right. She also had been on the verge of saying fuck.

She was watching her words with me. Why?

“Scarlet. Stop.”

“Stop. Just because you don’t want to fuck me doesn’t mean I’m going to take it lying down. I love you, Dirk Baxter. I’m not giving up on you. Is it wrong for me to want you to

want me?” She glanced at her husband again and noticed his slumped and weary posture.

I thought I saw the trace of a smile cross her lips until she turned back to me and the teary pout immediately returned.

Never fuck with a redhead.

A chill ran down my spine, and my mind raced with thoughts and possibilities.

“Scarlet. Let’s let Mr. Baxter have a say. Mr. Baxter, you actually get hard while you are touching your wife?” I was as curious as a practitioner as I was as a woman.

“Yes. When I’m caressing her body and feel and hear her reaction, I get hard. She can feel it against her back. I’m sure of it.”

“And when she’s touching you?”

“When she’s touching me, I feel aroused. I’m sure it has aroused me, but the next thing I know, I’m waking up and it’s morning.”

“He falls asleep like a little baby and sleeps so soundly. The last few days there hasn’t been even the hint of an erection.” Scarlet’s tone was sarcastic.

“And you remember having an erection before falling asleep?”

“I’m not sure. According to her, no. When I wake up, I have to deal with Scarlet’s disappointment and disapproval.”

“No, as soon as he falls asleep, his little half-erections disappear.”

“I know, Scarlet. You are constantly reminding me of it.” The muscles in his jaw set.

“It’s very disappointing. It makes me feel like all the nice things he says in the dyads are just lies. Like he’s saying what he thinks I want to hear.”

I made notes rapidly and eyed Dirk questioningly.

“I mean those things, Scarlet. You have to believe me.”
The first hint of uncertainty entered his voice.

Was Dirk really trying to resolve things with Scarlet? Or was he simply going through the motions to satisfy his own sense of fairness?

“I’ve just been so tired lately. I sleep so deeply and can’t remember much of the night before, but I wake up so tired.”

His face looked tired. Dark circles had formed under his eyes. I even could see the hint of gray hair at his temples. It didn’t detract from his appearance. In fact, I found it quite attractive.

This isn’t about you, Reggie.

“Well, it’s not uncommon for someone to sleep deeply and not remember what happened the night before, especially if…”

“Is our time up, Doc?” Scarlet cut em off.

I checked the clock. I was about to mention that certain medications might make him drowsy, but our time was up.

“Yes, it is up, unfortunately. I feel like we are getting into the issues we need to explore to work through this.”

“So how many appointments has this been for Dirk so far?”

I checked the top of my notepad. “This was his ninth.”

“So, one more and you’re free of me. Uh, Dirk?”

“Well, we don’t have to stop at the tenth. I feel that if I continued seeing you both that we have a chance of making more progress. Couples seldom resolve deep issues of intimacy in just ten sessions.”

“One more session and you only have to give me a million in the divorce. Is that what this is all about? Just doing enough to cheat me out of what I deserve as your wife of three years?”

This was degrading fast. She asked good questions, though. One’s that I wanted to know the answers to as well.

When he had been with me, he had no problem with an erection. He was hard as a twenty-year-old. Thick and virile. Someone with that type of reaction seldom wasn't able to get erect with another woman. Unless there were deep-seated problems in a relationship, which I sensed there were. Scarlet was a very attractive female, though, and I couldn't imagine Dirk not reacting physically to her.

The image of Scarlet riding Dirk flashed in my brain. It made me both hot and jealous, all in the same breath. I pulled myself back into the moment.

"I would encourage you both to consider seeing me beyond next week's appointment. There seem to be some issues below the surface that are affecting your relationship. I think with time we can work through them. You can find both your love and your desire for each other again."

Even as I said those words, I hoped that one of them wouldn't want that. I hoped beyond all hope that Dirk was the one that didn't want to recapture that spark.

There is a special hell for you, Reggie.

They both nodded, and I escorted them out of my office. Scarlet exited my room and the waiting room like she was late for a date. Dirk hesitated and hung back.

"Mr. Baxter, could you hold on a minute? I have something I need to talk to you about."

"Sure. Is it about me and Scarlet? Or your alarm system?"

I hesitated before answering. Pieces of a massive puzzle seemed to fall into place, though.

"It may have to do with both."

Chapter 25

Don't Fuck With a Redhead

I WALKED BACK INTO MY OFFICE AND DIRK STRODE BEHIND ME. I took a seat on the couch and he sat down beside me. The sun had sunk in the western sky and it cast long shadows into the office.

“Is the alarm system okay?”

“Yeah. Your team did an excellent job at both the office and my home. I feel safer already.”

Richard's team of technicians had been at my house before I left for work the next day and installed everything while I was at work. Hayley, Dirk's head investigator, supervised the installation. Trace had been there to drive me to work. I felt both silly for being so paranoid and safe with Dirk and his team taking care of me.

Trace was easy to talk to, although he sidestepped questions about Dirk.

Hayley's team then came to the office right as we closed for the day on Thursday. After she gave directions to her team, she accompanied me while Trace drove us home. She walked me through the operation and features of the alarm system at my condo. With sensors and cameras in almost every room, I had felt much safer.

Now on Friday, after my session with Dirk and Scarlet, I needed some answers from Dirk. The sun shone in Dirk's eyes where we were sitting, so I stood and strolled over to lower the blinds.

“You want to tell me what’s going on?”

I resumed my seat beside Dirk. I had debated all day what I would tell him. That I suspected his wife, Scarlet, might have blackmailed my ex-husband and that whatever she had on him scared him to death. That seemed super paranoid to me. Just as I thought I was being silly about it, I remembered the look on his face. Richard had never shown that kind of fear before. I just couldn’t figure out what she had on him.

Scarlet was also the only red-head I knew that might have a reason to want to do me harm. Although I only had a guess what her motive was. I needed Dirk to confirm my suspicions, and after the last two days of worry and stress, I couldn’t go through the weekend without answers.

“This may sound paranoid, but someone is blackmailing my husband.”

“How much money are they asking for?”

“They aren’t asking for money.”

“Then what do they want and what does it have to do with you?”

“They blackmailed him to sue for the change in our custody arrangement.”

“He didn’t want to do that anyway?”

“No. I don’t think so. Everything had been good between us for almost two years. No arguments. No demands.”

“So, what do they have on him?”

“I don’t know. All I know is that whomever is doing this is after me.”

“That makes sense. What is it they want from you, though?”

“I don’t know.”

“Want me to do some digging? Hayley is pretty good at finding dirt. We found nothing on your husband in our first

investigation. Other than being an ass during your divorce and some questionable rulings various city councils made on zoning changes to his benefit, he was pretty clean.”

I had forgotten that Dirk had done such an extensive background check on me and everyone involved in my life back to college. I would normally be upset at someone prying into my life, but right now, I was grateful.

“Tell me more about your pre-nuptial agreement with Scarlet.”

Dirk eyed me with curiosity. I returned his curious gaze with a serious look.

“Well, the financial part is pretty simple. If either of us wants a divorce, she gets a set sum of money. Fifty million dollars and twenty thousand a month for ten years. If she stays with me until I die, she gets 250 million.

“But why did you agree to see me for ten sessions at an exorbitant fee?”

“Well, Scarlet insisted on fifty million. I only intended to give her a million. She convinced me to put the clause that she only got the one million if I asked for the divorce and did ten counseling sessions. If I asked for the divorce and didn’t attend ten counseling sessions, she would get the fifty million dollars and twenty thousand a month for ten years.”

“Why would she ask for that? It makes no sense.”

“I told her I hated therapists and psychiatrists. They never helped me when I was a kid and didn’t really help much after my tours of duty.”

“So you would rather pay me two-hundred thousand dollars so you would only have to pay Scarlet a million? Saving yourself forty-nine million dollars. Why not just pay her the fifty million and be done?”

“I can’t right now. All my cash is tied up in escrow for this merger. I had hoped everything would be done by now, but

we've had delays. Pencil pushers and bureaucrats keep asking for more information."

"Is that why you moved back in and tried to salvage your marriage?" I really didn't want to know the answer to this question. My desire to be with Dirk had been overriding my common sense to stay out of their relationship and do my job as a therapist.

"You made it clear that you weren't interested in me, Reggie. I came back for sessions with you even after I figured out who you were because that first night at the Cherry Pie made me feel like..."

"You liked strippers?" I interrupted.

"No. That night was incredible. You were the most beautiful woman at the club and I had no problem..." he trailed off and averted his gaze. *Was he embarrassed?*

Fuck!

"You had no problem getting a hard-on?"

He looked up but didn't answer. He didn't have to. I could read it in his eyes.

"And since you could get a hard-on with me, that it must be love. Is that what you thought? Is that why you asked me out relentlessly for weeks?"

"Yeah. Every time I see you, I'm aroused. And beyond that, you intrigue me with your intelligence, your strength of will, your straightforward attitude. I think about you all the time. I love you Reggie."

There it was. The three words that caused so much confusion for so many people. *I love you.*

"Let's table that for now, Dirk."

"That's not so easy. Once that cat is out of the bag, I'm not apt to put it back in."

"Well, you're going to have to for now. I've got one more question."

“Anything, Reggie. You just have to ask.”

“What is Scarlet capable of? How far would she go to stay married to you or keep you from finishing ten therapy sessions?”

“Scarlet? She’s a wannabe starlet who won’t take acting lessons. Her modeling career is well deserved, but she doesn’t like to work jobs where they don’t treat her like a diva, so those have been drying up. I can only grease so many wheels in this town to keep her in work...”

“Is she capable of blackmail, and what kind of dirt could she get on one of the best real estate agents in the LA area?”

“No way. All of her plans for me to fund movie projects led to about a thirty million dollars of wasted money. She can plan a spa day or a vacation or an expensive night out with her friends, but not a scheme to blackmail someone who has money and power.”

I didn’t respond. I was sure that Scarlet was Richard’s blackmailer. If she couldn’t plan anything more elaborate than a spa day, though, then I suddenly doubted my conclusions. Even if it was Scarlet, I wasn’t sure what to do about it.

I decided there was only one thing to do.

“Do you have a picture of Scarlet on your phone?”

“Yeah, probably. If not, there is always her Instagram account.”

“Send me a picture of her. Text it to my phone.”

Dirk scrolled through his phone, pushed some buttons, and soon I had a text with two pictures of Scarlet. One was a face shot, and the other was a selfie of her in a bathing suit. Her nipples were erect and poking through the fabric.

“Does she often send you such revealing photos?”

“Those are tame, Reggie. She likes to inspire me during the day. So I have a lot of not suitable for work pictures on my phone. Fortunately, it has strong encryption.”

I quickly texted Richard with the two pictures, followed by a text.

Reggie: Is this the red head I shouldn't fuck with?

"What are you doing, Reggie?"

"I texted Richard. If he confirms this is the red-head who has it out for me, then I think you'll have to believe that Scarlet is more cunning than you thought."

"And then what?"

"Then you need to help me figure out a way to stop her."

Dirk didn't seem to like that idea. I stood up and paced.

"So, if she is the mastermind behind some grand scheme, what do you think we should do?" Dirk asked.

"Well, you own a well-regarded security company and your girl..." I looked at him, trying to remember the name.

"Hayley?" He replied, filling in the blank for me.

"Yeah. Hayley is a talented investigator. She could find out what's going on, right?"

"Maybe. But what is Scarlet's motive for scaring you?"

"Doesn't it seem obvious?"

"No."

"Do you really think you can trust Scarlet? Can you trust her enough to salvage your marriage with her?"

He sighed heavily.

"I've tried to see if there's a chance between us. She's been the model wife, but she keeps playing on my emotions and my inability to fuck her as a major problem. She keeps saying I'll never find a woman who would want to be with me if I can't please her with my..."

"Your cock?" I finished his sentence when he paused.

"Yeah." He whispered with an exasperated puff of breath.

“So, you don’t think you can salvage it?”

“No.”

“Do you want to?”

“Reggie. I told you. All I can think of is you and the way you both intrigue me and arouse me. If I’m totally honest with you and myself, I want you. I found myself just going through the motions and her manipulative ways were so much more obvious to me these last few weeks.”

I felt my heart relax. My conflicted morals, that didn’t want to break up their marriage and wanted to be as distant as I could while trying to be their therapist, seemed to slide away.

I thought of him constantly, too. I’d masturbated to the tape of his first sensate touch session with Chastity too many times. Fantasies about repeating the night I had used sensate touch to see if he could get an erection with me and the blowjob I gave him seemed to be on constant repeat. Visions of the first night at the Cherry Pie in the private room ran through my mind at random times during the day and too often at night.

Without a doubt, I wanted to be with my Mr. Dark Eyes, Dirk Baxter, too. *I surely was going to hell.*

“So, you love me, Dirk?”

“Yes, Reggie, I love you. I want to be with you, but I respect your need to not interfere in my marriage. I promise, though, that this is more than me falling for my therapist.”

I had to smile at his comment. He seemed determined to prove his love even by denying the common trap many patients fall into—developing feelings for their therapist.

I met his gaze and let the desire and determination I saw in those dark eyes of his soak into me. His love and desire were so palpable I could feel it on my skin. I wanted to return it. Soon.

My phone beeped. I had a text. It was from Richard.

Ass-Hat: You definitely don't want to fuck with this one.

Reggie: Is this the one, Richard?

Ass-Hat: I can neither confirm nor deny your question. I can say, she has friends who seem willing to do things for her. Some gorgeous friends.

His 'confirm nor deny' statement was his subtle way of saying yes. The rest of that text meant that she took advantage of Richard's biggest weakness. Women.

Reggie: What does she expect me to do?

Ass-Hat: She said you would find out soon enough.

Reggie: Thanks, Richard.

Ass-Hat: Stay safe, Regina.

I really needed to change his name in my contacts. Ass-Hat didn't seem appropriate right now.

"What did he say?"

"He said that Scarlet is the red-head I shouldn't mess with."

He let out a deep sigh.

"Your last appointment is next week."

"I know. We need to keep you safe until then."

"Agreed. For now, can you get Hayley on Scarlet?"

"Consider it done." His voice took on that commanding tone again. The type of tone that made me feel safe.

"Do you think she is just trying to scare me to stop my sessions with you?" I asked. That seemed the obvious conclusion, but I had to say it out loud. If that was true, my next session was worth forty-nine million dollars to Dirk if he kept it, or the same amount to Scarlet if I didn't.

"That seems the only logical conclusion. I just didn't think she was capable of something like this." Dirk shook his head in disbelief.

“How far would she go to stop me from seeing you next Friday?”

“I think this is as far as she can go. I’m sure of it.” Dirk didn’t seem so certain. “Regardless, Hayley will do some digging and I will make sure nothing happens to you in the next seven days.”

I walked towards the door, and Dirk followed me. He stopped me at the front door.

“Go to dinner with me.”

“Not until this is over, Dirk.”

“I need to see you outside of this office. Besides, you’ll be safer with me and Trace than on your own.”

“Speaking of Trace. He can’t drive me around everywhere.”

“Yes, he can. Especially if I tell him to.”

“No, Dirk. The security system should be sufficient. I don’t need a babysitter.”

“Trace is no babysitter. He’s more of a bodyguard.”

“No means no, Dirk.”

“Okay. Go to dinner with me and I’ll let it go.”

“Fine. When?”

“Tomorrow night.”

“No. It’s too soon. Plus, Carol has this event I promised to help her with.”

“Wednesday night.”

“I have a visitation with the kids at four.”

“I’ll take you to that and then we go to dinner afterward.”

He didn’t phrase it like a question, and my hackles went up slightly. I took in a deep breath as our eyes met, though, and I relaxed into the moment.

“Okay. I will go to dinner with you. But nothing else. Until you end your marriage with Scarlet, my body is off limits.” I felt my pussy protest when I said that. My nipples even got hard as I undressed him in my imagination. I considered doing it right now in my office. There was the bed in the surrogate room. *Fuck, Reggie. Stop that.*

“Excellent. You won’t regret it, Reggie. I’ll pick you up at two on Wednesday afternoon.”

“That will be perfect.”

He leaned in and pressed his lips to mine. Hard. It took me by surprise and my body betrayed me. I returned the kiss with as much passion as he gave. Two, three, four more kisses followed before I placed both hands on his chest and separating us.

“You need to work on your body’s security system, Reggie. That didn’t feel like off limits.” He teased with a smirk that could easily remove my panties.

“That will be handled by Wednesday. Now get out of here. I need to close up and get to my newly secured home.”

I watched Dirk’s ass as he walked away, and I felt some dampness in my panties. It would be so damn hard to not give in to Dirk after dinner. I suddenly wanted the next week to go by as quickly as possible.

I also didn’t want to experience whatever Scarlet had in store for me.

Chapter 26

Final Warning

I DROVE HOME, STILL ON EDGE, BUT SLIGHTLY RELIEVED. Traffic raced by, mixed with car horns, which kept me focused on my driving and pulled me away from my thoughts. That didn't keep me from thinking about how Scarlet might threaten me.

Knowing she was behind my recent problems was one thing. Knowing her next step was another. Each stop light or slowdown in traffic gave my mind time to focus on the potential drama with Scarlet.

I understood why she wanted to save her marriage. Dirk was rich, handsome, and, from what I could tell, a caring man. From first hand experience, I knew he was good in bed. Images of his eyes staring at me when I stripped before him at the Cherry Pie club danced through my head. My skin, bare during the warm LA spring weather, formed goose bumps as I remembered his hands roaming my body in the Cherry Pit, the private dance room at the club.

A car horn blared behind me, pulling me out of my sensual memories. A red Porsche behind me laid on the horn again. I glanced up and realized the stop light was green and pressed the accelerator. My tires on my gold Lexus squealed as I peeled out and sped through the intersection, only to have to stop as traffic waited to move through the next intersection.

I focused on the road and especially my rear-view mirror as I slowly advanced through traffic to my home. The red Porsche disappeared from my mirror and sped past me when

we finally hit an open stretch. The rev of its engine, as it did so, made me flinch.

Jumpy much?

Still paranoid, I kept watching vehicles behind me, paid attention at lights, and tried to get home without freaking myself out. I even turned off the radio, tired of hearing the afternoon traffic reports.

“Black SUV. Blue Lincoln. Green Corvette.” I named off the vehicles I saw behind me just to ease my mind.

As I entered the residential streets of my neighborhood, I breathed a sigh of relief. Checking my mirror again, I noticed the black SUV turned as well.

“He’s not following you, Reggie. Relax. There’s at least five black SUVs in your neighborhood.” I tried to reassure myself. It didn’t work.

At the next turn, the vehicle turned as well. Then, at the second. *He? Why not she? The driver could easily be a female. It could be Scarlet.*

When my next turn approached, I pressed down on the accelerator and sped past it. The black vehicle sped up. I made the first left turn that came up and my pursuer—he or she was definitely pursuing me now—turned right behind me. I sped up again before braking for another quick turn to the right. Speeding down curving lanes before two more right turns put me back on the road, which would lead me home. The black SUV persistently stayed right behind me.

I sped past the turn to my condo, only feet ahead of the vehicle pursuing me. Glances in my rear-view mirror could not make out anyone in the vehicle.

In a panic, I pulled to the curb and slammed on the brakes, sliding twenty or thirty feet with screeching tires before I stopped just a foot from slamming into a large Ford pickup. The black SUV screeched as well, but stopped several feet ahead of me, still in the middle of the street.

I couldn't see anything through the tinted windows, but I was sure the driver and who knows how many passengers stared at me. Images of car windows rolling down and semi-automatic gun barrels sticking out the window aimed at me flashed through my brain. I closed my eyes and leaned into the steering wheel, on the verge of tears.

Squealing tires and a revving engine startled my eyes open as the vehicle sped away. My heart beat loudly in my chest like the bass beat of a song at a dance club. The only sound after the SUV disappeared was my panting breath as I tried to calm down. My body shook, and I had to grip the steering wheel to keep my hands from shaking.

I couldn't tell where the SUV went because of the huge pickup in front of me. SUPERDUTY, in large letters on the tailgate of the pickup, stared back at me as my chest heaved from hyperventilating.

I was still alive.

I thought of calling Dirk, but I wanted to settle down first.

When my breathing finally slowed down, a loud rap on my passenger side window caused me to shriek and jump. An elderly gentleman in a white shirt and blue sweater rapped again on my window.

"You okay?" he said, his words muffled by the window of the Lexus.

I nodded.

"You need me to call anyone?"

I realized he was shouting. I rolled down the window and smiled.

"No. I'm good. Just a bit rattled."

"You almost ran into my neighbor's pickup. Sounded like you were driving way too fast."

"I was being chased." I answered, a bit peeved.

"Chased? Hm. By who?"

“A big black SUV. Didn’t you see it?”

“Nope. Just heard squealing tires. Looked out the window and you were inches away from a new front end and your head in the steering wheel. Didn’t see no black SUV.”

How could he not? I didn’t care if he didn’t believe me. I needed to get home.

“I’m good. Thank you for your concern.” I rolled up the window and backed up so I could turn around and get home.

The drive home was uneventful except for my trembling nerves. I experienced more than one full body shudder before I pulled into my drive.

I clicked the button to open my garage door and then pulled in. I took a deep breath before shutting off the engine. When I reached to open the door, a loud bang and broken glass peppered my face and the interior of my Lexus. My ears rang as I screamed at the top of my lungs.

A burly man dressed in black with a balaclava covering his head reached through the broken window and covered my mouth with a forceful grip.

“Don’t scream again or you’ll get a bullet to the head.”

I noticed his gun when he placed the barrel against my temple to emphasize his point. I sobbed with his gloved hand over my mouth. A familiar smell invaded my nose, leather and wood mingled with a musky scent, but I soon forgot it as I felt the hard steel of the barrel pressing into my head.

“Now, I want you to listen very carefully. Can you do that?” His voice was low and husky. Menacing.

I nodded.

“You’re going to cancel all of your appointments for the next month. Nod if you’re going to play nice.”

I sat motionless. The desire to run, the most primal of defense mechanisms, had overcome me. Since I couldn’t run, all I could do was freeze.

“Did you hear me?”

The barrel of the gun pressed into my flesh.

I nodded.

“Are you gonna cancel your appointments for the next month?”

I hesitated. My practice was my life. I’d spent the last few years building it. It had survived my divorce. My assailant might have well asked me to stop breathing.

Cold, hard steel pressed against my temple until my head tilted to the right.

Nothing I say here means anything. I have to agree to anything he demands.

“Yes,” I said, although the answer was muffled by his grip on my mouth.

He released my mouth from his tight grip.

“You’re going to cancel your appointments for a month AND you’re going to leave town. Go to Europe or something. You hear me?”

I braved enough to turn my head to glance at him. He rewarded me with firm pressure on my temple, which pushed my head until I was facing the steering wheel again.

“Look straight ahead. Don’t look at me. You hear?” His sudden anger was apparent.

“What if I don’t do as you say?” His anger triggered my own. Scarlet blackmailing my husband to fight for custody of my kids. The way she seemed to treat Dirk. The SUV chasing me through my neighborhood. Now a gun at my head. Would this guy really kill me, or was he just trying to scare me?

He reached into a pocket in his black gear and revealed his cell phone. He tapped the screen with his thumb and held the screen in front of me. A picture of Monica at Richard’s pool displayed. He advanced through more pictures, showing each one, to my horror.

Trey at baseball practice. Monica being picked up at school. Trey with friends at a park in Burbank. The two of them getting into a vehicle at Richard's house.

With each picture, my anger went from simmering to boiling.

“You leave my children out of this, asshole.”

His hand went to my throat like a rattlesnake striking its prey. He slammed my head against the headrest.

“You do as you're told and your children will be safe. Got it?”

“You fucking asshole. Leave them out of this...”

His hand gripped my throat tighter. “Cancel your appointments. Leave town. And you won't have anything to worry about.” His voice was low and gravely. His tone was even more menacing, and he emphasized the last sentence by pressing the gun to my jaw.

“You tell Scarlet to go fuck herself.”

My assailant froze at the mention of her name. He only stopped his assault for a second before he slammed my head back against the headrest.

He cut off my next protest by striking the side of my head with the butt of his gun. I reeled. I could hear what he said after that, but my vision blurred and I felt like I was underwater hearing his words.

“Do as you're fucking told, bitch, or I'll kill them both right in front of you. Do as you're told or watch them...”

Everything went dark.

When I finally came to, I was leaning to the right with the seatbelt keeping me from falling over the console. I wasn't sure how much time had passed, but I was in the dark.

As I gained focus, I realized I was still in my car. I was in the dark. Had the sun gone down? Was I out that long? My

head pounded as I glanced in the rear-view mirror. I could just make out the garage door behind me.

I struggled to get out of the car, and the ground spun around me as I stood up. The pulsing in my temples and the nausea that assaulted me forced me to lean on the Lexus. I reached back into the car to get my purse and cell phone and nearly fell over as the pressure on my skull increased.

Glass was everywhere. Inside my car. On the ground beside the driver's side door. My heels crunched on the broken shards as I walked through it towards my condo.

I made it into the house, unlocked my phone, and sat down in a dining room chair. It was near dusk and the last rays of sunlight lit the dining room, which had a splendid view of the mountains to the east. My hands still shook and could barely scroll through and tap my phone to call someone.

I considered calling the police. Should I call Richard and the kids? I wanted to call Dirk. With my contacts finally displayed, I couldn't type enough to get to Richard or Dirk's number. I scrolled instead, but had to fight nausea the entire time.

The man-in-black's last words echoed in my brain along with images of my two children being tortured by him. *Do as you're told or watch them...*

I hadn't heard that last word, but it was easier than the New York Time's crossword puzzle to fill in the blank. *Die!*

I understood why Richard had been so scared. Had they threatened him in the same way? I didn't have any evidence that Scarlet sent the asshole who attacked me, but with everything else that had happened and everything else that I knew, it had to be her. More importantly, my intuition, which seldom failed me, screamed. *It's fucking Scarlet.*

There was no way that bitch would get that close to my kids. No way she or her asshole minion were taking or hurting my kids.

There was also no way I was canceling my appointments. I just had to figure out a way to do so safely.

Scenarios of putting Penny and Chastity in danger though played through my head. My anger said to fuck them all and do exactly the opposite of what they wanted me to do. My desire to keep my children and my friends safe though battled with my anger. *Calm down, Reggie.*

I closed my eyes and took many deep breaths. It calmed my nerves, but it seemed to increase the spinning of my vision. When my body stopped quivering, I opened my eyes. Richard's number was displayed on my phone.

I hit the button to call him. After two rings, he answered.

"Hello. Regina?"

"Hey, Richard."

"Are you okay? You sound a little shaky."

"Yeah. I'm fine, Richard." Fine wasn't even close to how I felt. I tried to compose myself as even my voice shook from the aftermath of the attack. Breathing in deeply, I closed my eyes. I knew what I had to do, and that steeled my nerves.

"Are you okay? Do you need anything?"

"I'm okay, Richard. I wanted to check on the kids. Are they okay?"

"Yeah. They're doing fine."

"Who's driving them to and from school? I want to make sure they are safe and have some protection."

"I've got some people from a security company providing protection here at the house and driving Trey and Monica to and from school."

"Which security company?"

"Baxter Security. They come highly recommended."

I felt an immediate sense of relief. Knowing that Dirk's team was handling security for my kids made me feel much

better about their safety.

“Are they there with you now?”

“Yeah. Trey just got back from baseball practice. Monica is here with three of her friends.”

“Great. Can you make sure they are extra careful and make sure they cooperate and stay home more until this blows over?”

“Stop worrying, Regina. I’ve got this under control. Nothing is going to happen to them.”

“Okay. They’re my life, Richard. No matter what the courts say, they are my world. I couldn’t live with myself if something happened to them.”

“Did you figure out why you pissed off the redhead?”

“I think so.”

“Be careful, Regina.”

“I’ve got this, Richard. You just worry about Trey and Monica.”

We finished with curt goodbyes and I watched the sunset while I debated scenarios in my head.

I could guarantee their safety if I left town. I’d only have to have Penny cancel all of my appointments. Chastity could still see the patients that needed her. If needed, I could schedule some online appointments with my most critical and demanding clients. I hated to work that way, but if I had to, I could. I still would have to process notes from Chastity’s sessions and it would kill me to drop some of my patients.

As I weighed this option, it felt like the right choice, but it also made me nauseous. Or was that from my pounding head? It seemed the safe option, but I had never gotten anything in life by playing it safe.

I had been willing to give up on being with Dirk. That had been the safe option, but now I wanted him more than ever. I wanted him because he made me feel safe, sexy, and his touch

made me feel sensual emotions that I had given up on ever feeling again.

Being forty in LA only seemed to work for the Housewives of Beverly Hills. Not for a sex therapist to the stars who stayed out of the limelight and helped everyone else experience fulfilling, hot, sensual sex.

There was no way Scarlet was forcing me to give up on my practice and on Dirk. Not even if she sent her thug after me again.

I got up and made sure the security system was armed and all sensors were working. I went to my home office where the video system they had set up let me cycle through the outside cameras and make sure no one lurked outside. A glance outside at the street verified that no Black SUVs were parked on my street with more men with black masks waiting to attack me.

Satisfied that I was safe, I poured a glass of wine, took three ibuprofen, and undressed for bed. When I stepped into my bathroom, I saw the trail of dried blood on my face and neck.

“Fuck you, Scarlet.” I said to myself in the mirror. I tentatively pressed the large bump on my skull. After cleaning up and checking the wound on my scalp, I gazed at myself in the mirror. The symptoms of a concussion were obvious, and I knew I should probably go to the hospital. I couldn’t bring myself to leave the house, though.

I wished Dirk was with me right now. He could hold me as I fell asleep. I couldn’t bring myself to ask him for that, though. There was one thing that I could ask for, though.

I found Dirk’s number and tapped the button to call him.

He was right about one thing.

I needed someone to drive me around and keep me safe.

Chapter 27

Backseat Plans

STU SUCKED MY NIPPLE AND AS MUCH OF MY BREAST AS HE could fit into his mouth. I could hear his kisses and licks on my breast over the radio in the Navigator. I was supposed to be shopping, but I had other needs, the least of which was Stu pleasuring me in the back seat of a luxury SUV. My most urgent need required me to think.

Some people have great ideas come to them in the shower. Others find inspiration in meditation. Some fitness nuts figured out things on a hike or run. I had my best ideas during sex.

“Miss Sex Doctor didn’t go to work yesterday, right?”

“Yeah. But Trace drove her to work today.” Stu released my nipple long enough to answer.

I took advantage of that and pushed down on his shoulders, guiding him to where my thighs met.

Stu took the hint and immediately start licking my clit vigorously.

I squirmed and let out a quiet moan. After biting my lip, I continued.

“You obviously didn’t scare her enough.”

“I broke her window,” Stu murmured before returning his tongue to my pussy.

“Mm,” I bucked my hips into his face. “You could have done more.”

He shoved two fingers inside me roughly so that he could look up at me. “I choked her. I stuck the barrel of my Glock into her temple. The only thing I didn’t do was make her suck on the barrel.” His defiance and thuggish nature turned me on.

He had always been forward, crude, and forceful. That’s why I chose him to be my lover. Plus, he was the head of security at Baxter Security. Him driving me around made for a perfect cover and allowed him to satisfy my sexual urges, a duty he was more than eager to perform.

He pumped my pussy vigorously with two fingers, and I could feel my juices flowing. I was angry, but I couldn’t hold on to it easily with the pleasure his fingers were giving me.

“You said you struck her with it.” I asked between panted breaths.

“Yeah. She was out cold when I left. You should have seen her bleed.”

“Oh, fuck, Stu. You know how to turn me on.” I only half meant it. While I needed to figure out how to stop Dirk’s tenth session with Sex Doctor Bitch, Stu’s fingers were pushing me towards a nice orgasm.

“You like this, Scarlet? Me finger-fucking you?”

He’s so cute when he tries to act like the Alpha.

“Slow down, Baby. You threatened her kids, too?” I guided his head back down to my pussy. His tongue caressing my clit would feel nice, and he couldn’t bring me to orgasm as easily if he was a little more gentle. Gentle never made me come.

“Yes. And still she showed up at work today. I don’t believe the bitch.” He dug his tongue into my clit and rubbed it with a rapid movement of his head from side to side. He hummed on my clit, which sent sensations shooting through my belly and thighs, but I fought the urge to let release.

I pressed my hands to the back of his head, holding him in place while I thought.

“What did you say about Dirk’s schedule tomorrow?” I allowed him to pull away enough to speak.

He arched his neck to face me with my pussy juices on his lips and chin. I quivered at the sight.

“He’s picking up Miss Davenport at 2:00 and taking her to visit her kids at 4:00 in Burbank. Then he has reservations at The Penthouse at 8:00.”

“Who’s driving him? Trace?”

“Yeah. It’s always Trace.”

I pushed his face back between my legs, where his tongue pushed between my folds. He dug it as deep inside me as a tongue could go and a fresh wave of pleasure washed over me. A bit more and I would hit creative mode.

Throwing my head back, I let my mind float with the feelings of pleasure in my body. Stu’s tongue digging into my pussy, then stroking my clit. His hands reaching up to squeeze my breasts and pinch my nipples. Rough hands roaming my velvety skin. The stubble from two day’s growth brushing against my thighs when I squeezed them together added to the sensations.

“Oh, yes, baby. That feels so good.”

I floated in a state of near bliss, close to orgasm, but holding on as if my life depended on not climaxing. Thoughts and feelings rushed through me rapidly.

“Don’t stop.”

I loved Dirk. I loved his money more.

He had been so supportive with both his words and his money early in our marriage. Plenty of his money had gone into deals that fell through. Some of it found its way into accounts of my own in Miami and Belize. I had hid just over twenty million from deals that never developed. No matter what happened with the sex doctor and my divorce, that twenty million was mine.

“Oh, yes, baby. Right there.” I floated on a cloud of sexual bliss even though my mind worked.

Now that the financial support had dried up, I felt less love for him. Maybe it was always love for his money. Perhaps I just fooled myself into thinking that I loved him. He was a calming influence. My tantrums didn't phase him like they did guys my age. He was the calming earth to my fiery spirit. There had been plenty of reasons to love him.

Until there weren't.

I pressed Stu's head into my pussy as I clinched. I was near release. A big one. I wasn't ready yet. “Oh, yeah! Fuck, Stu. That feels so good.”

He had three fingers inside me now, stretching my pussy. While he moved them in and out of me, his tongue pressured my clit with up and down licks.

Two weeks of coming home to a nice dinner laced with SSRI's and a light dose of tranquilizer hadn't done the trick. I insisted on doing the stupid sensitive touch thing with him every night. After four months of that chemical cocktail in his food and drinks, he had a tough time maintaining an erection. I had him near defeat.

When he stayed away for a month or more, without the pills, he reverted back to the raging bull he'd been when we first met. His stamina was amazing.

“Fuck, yes, baby. Right there.”

Stu's tongue flicked my clit. Tingles ran through my body, from my knees to my neck. I could sense the flush skin on my neck.

While I had fucked Dirk after he fell unconscious several more times over the last two weeks, he had been semi-conscious one time. His hands roamed my body, caressed my breasts, and grabbed my hips. It had given me my best orgasm in months. He had even said I love you, but in a sad, regretful way.

When he drifted off to sleep, he murmured her name. Reggie. He'd done it several other times, too. Every time he mentioned her in his drugged state, I fucked him harder, then told him the next morning he had gone limp as a noodle when things had got more intimate. I did my best to humiliate him, but I didn't see any evidence of it working.

Dirk lusted after someone else. Not me.

Stu lusted after me right now. His tongue and fingers felt fabulous. I needed more.

Dirk had been cold since our last appointment with the Doc. He had already eaten whenever he got home. He started getting home later and later. When I tried to get him to our bed for our touch session, he declined, went to his bedroom, and locked the door.

The more my body drifted on this cloud of pleasure, the more my anger over Dirk falling in love with his therapist churned and rose. I needed a solution to my situation.

“I need you to fuck me, Stu. Fuck me hard.”

“You don't have to ask me twice.”

He maneuvered into a position in the back seat and slid his cock inside me. With three fingers he had stretched me and now his thick cock stretched me more. This wasn't a time for a gentle fuck. I needed to be pounded.

Stu sensed that and began thrusting his thick cock into me. The Navigator, even with its high-end suspension system, rocked.

Fortunately, we were outside one of Dirk's new warehouses, which wasn't in use yet. Money from his big deal would fund turning it into a manufacturing facility for high-end home security systems.

“Fuck yes, Stu. Fuck me with your big horse cock.” Praising his cock always got him going. He fucked me harder, and I swore he almost whinnied.

Dirk's last appointment was on Friday. Three short days away. The doc hadn't heeded Stu's warnings. His threats hadn't dissuaded her. She must love Dirk. Enough to risk her kids.

That thought made me angrier.

Three days wasn't long enough to convince her by using the same tactic. A flicker of a plan started to come together, just as I sensed the radiating energy of an orgasm between my legs.

"Oh, fuck yes, Stu. Right there. Harder."

"Fuck, Scarlet. Your pussy is gripping my cock like a vise today. You're so tight."

"I'm going to cum, baby."

"Come for me, baby," he urged me as he drove his cock into me forcefully with each thrust.

As the orgasm built and built, I saw a way. A plan formulated. As the orgasm exploded, along with the anger I felt for Dirk and his fucking therapist, Reggie, the plan solidified. I saw it all now. Perfectly.

I released completely. The images of the pain I would cause Dirk and the Sex Doctor Bitch mixed with the pleasure of my climax, resulting in an even more euphoric state than normal.

Stu could cause a great orgasm. This one, aided by my visions, was beyond anything Stu could provide. Granted, if you wanted your pussy pounded by a thick dick, he was your man. This orgasm, though, was explosive and satisfying beyond anything Stu had ever provided in the past.

He exploded inside me as I quivered from my orgasm. It still rippled through me, causing my legs to shake and my hips to buck against him. His thrusts became slow and hard as I milked his cum from him.

Panting, he fell to the seat beside me, spent and sweaty. Stu gazed at me with big, lustful, puppy dog eyes.

I lay with my legs spread, sweaty and messy, my body weak and rubbery.

My body may have been spent, but my mind was tying all the loose ends of a plan together.

“Stu, you are going to drive for Dirk tomorrow.”

“But Trace is his driver.”

“I know. But tomorrow, you are going to be his driver.”

“I’m Head of Security, but I don’t make that decision. Dirk does.”

“I don’t care how you do it, but make sure Trace is not available tomorrow and make sure you are driving Dirk and Sex Doctor Bitch.”

We glared at each other for a few breaths.

“Can you make that happen, Stu?”

“I don’t know.”

“If you can’t make it happen, this is the last look that you’re going to have of this body and the last time you taste this pussy.” I acted like Vanna White, motioning to my body and pussy like they were consonants and vowels on a word puzzle.

“Damn, Scarlet. Don’t be such a bitch.”

“Fuck you, Stu. You’re going to make this happen or by Friday you won’t be working for Baxter Enterprises. Am I making myself clear?” I pulled my button up dress together, covering myself to emphasize what he stood to lose.

“Loud and clear, boss,” he spat out.

“Good. And when you’re driving Dirk and the Doc around tomorrow, here’s what else you are going to do.”

I laid out the plan for Stu in simple words even he could understand. Get Trace out of the way. Drive Dirk and his therapist to Richard the Realtor’s house. Come up with a reason to stick around. Drain the brake fluid from the

Navigator. Watch Dirk drive away. Follow him. If things worked perfectly, his brakes would give out on the way back from Burbank to the restaurant and my problems would be solved.

I wouldn't just get the twenty million I deserved, but I would get 250 million. I wouldn't just have the money I had squirreled away in the offshore accounts. The world would clamor to give Scarlet Baxter her due.

Stu got dressed, as did I. When he got back in the driver's seat and asked where to, I could feel the excitement of a new life on the horizon. By tomorrow night, I would be the sole owner of Dirk's small empire. Love was one thing. Money was another thing completely.

“Rodeo Drive. I have some shopping to do.”

Chapter 28

Distractions

ON A RARE NIGHT OFF, I DRANK SOME BEERS WITH FOUR OTHER guys from work at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club. "She's my Cherry Pie" played loud and proud as a dancer gyrated on the stage, top already off. Working for Dirk as his driver and bodyguard rarely gave me a night off, and I was looking for something more than beers at a bar with no chance of any action at all.

Wendy, our server, stopped by our table with the next round—Bud lights and tequila shots for everyone. Whoops and hollers from guys sitting by the stage competed with the music. She was new to the club, and it surprised me she wasn't a dancer. In red go-go shorts and a tight red halter top that fit her perky tits perfectly, she looked good enough to eat. When she reached to place my drink beside me, I got an excellent view of her cleavage.

"Why aren't you dancing?" I asked with a shout loud enough to be heard over the thundering music.

She smiled and shrugged. When she placed a hand on my forearm and leaned in so she could speak in my ear, the scent of jasmine and hyacinth tickled my nose.

"I'm just a college girl trying to pay tuition. I can't do what the girls do in the Cherry Pit, so I'm stuck as a cocktail waitress." She couldn't whisper or I wouldn't hear her. Even though she almost shouted, others at the table could not hear.

Her short brown hair brushed my cheek. She placed a hand on my shoulder to steady herself. Her flowery scent was more intoxicating than the beers she brought us. I had only drank three beers so far, but her presence made me tipsy.

“That’s too bad. I would have liked to see you on stage.”

She straightened up and I could sense her blushing. Her thin waist coupled with the curvy shape of her tits and ass gave her a slim figure with the natural curves of an athlete. It was hard to tell in the dim light of the club, but occasionally the light shined on her bright eyes, which appeared to be blue.

Time went by quickly and soon it was midnight. The place was crowded and the music and dancing went non-stop. We had talked about Iraq, work, sports, and girlfriends, or the lack thereof. We had all been in the lieutenant’s platoon in Iraq. Many of us had lost a friend there, a squad mate, and the bravery of LT or Sarge had saved each of us more than once.

Wendy stayed busy, keeping us well stocked with beers. She made eye contact or leaned in to ask me if I needed anything every time she came to our table. I appreciated the attention and felt my dick get hard more than once during the night from her touch. Most of the other guys had spent some time near the stage giving away one-dollar bills to get a closer look and graze some skin. I stayed put and the only thing I got was my beer and Wendy’s name.

With my job and the responsibilities I had as Dirk’s driver, I seldom had time for a relationship. My job required 24/7 attention. Tonight was a rare exception and Dirk had told me he had everything under control and there wouldn’t be an issue. That didn’t mean I could follow through on the thoughts that swept through my mind about Wendy, though.

I took it easy with the beer, just in case I got a text, and stopped after my sixth beer. The tequila shots were probably a bad idea, however. When midnight rolled around, I called it a night. I paid my tab and left a generous fifty dollar tip for Wendy. Dirk paid me well, and I didn’t get out much to spend my hard earned money.

Besides, Wendy looked like a hard-working girl. I figured she could use the extra money.

I headed to my Jeep Cherokee. A light rain was falling, and a thunderstorm rolled in from the ocean. I heard the car parked beside me trying to start. The ignition kicked in, but the engine never turned over.

When I looked through the passenger window, I noticed it was Wendy. She threw her head back, and I heard her muffled cry from inside her Kia Sportage. “Shit.”

I wrapped my knuckles on the passenger window and bent over so that she could see my face. The rain sounded like a metallic drum as it hit the roof of the cars in the parking lot. Rain dripped down my back after hitting the nape of my neck.

The passenger window went down halfway. “My piece-of-shit car won’t start.”

“You need a ride?”

“I can probably get an Uber. Just didn’t want to pay fifty dollars to get home.” She smiled weakly and then lay her forehead against the steering wheel.

“Where do you call home?”

“Brentwood. The Luxe Villas.”

“I can give you a ride. No sense wasting money on an Uber.”

“Are you sure? I don’t want to impose.”

“It’s not a problem.”

“At least tell me you’re not going out of your way.”

“I’m not going out of my way.” I lied, but she didn’t need to know that. If I couldn’t help a damsel in distress, what kind of man was I?

We both climbed in my Jeep and I began the drive to her apartment. She complained about the Kia and how it needed serviced. I avoided the 405 and took Olympic Road and

Barrington Ave. I knew the city well enough, having driven these streets for many years, and it was only a ten-minute drive at worst. Living in Cudahy meant I had a good hour's drive after dropping her off.

"You seem so much nicer than your buddies. What's up with that?" Street lights provided plenty of light for me to see the friendly smile on her face.

"I wouldn't say I'm nicer than any of them."

"You didn't go up and tip the strippers. You shy, soldier boy?" She leaned a little closer over the console in the jeep.

I chuckled. "How do you know I'm a soldier?"

"You guys talked about Iraq a lot. Plus, you look like a military man. A marine maybe."

"I was a marine."

"So why didn't you go up and tip the dancers? A big, handsome black man like you."

"I saved my tip for you." I smiled. It had been a while since I'd shared a bed with a woman and I was buzzed just enough that I desired to correct that. Wendy had a nice body, killer smile, and she leaned in close.

"Ah. You're so sweet. I hope that bitch Carrie doesn't take it. I think I left before you did."

"Is this it?"

I pulled up to the apartment complex, a place so much nicer than my place, I took it all in. A slow rock song played on the radio. My arm was on the center console and she placed both hands on my forearm.

"Yeah. It's nice. I share a small apartment with Brett and Dahlia. I'm new to LA and I knew them from back home. You want to come up for a nightcap?"

"I'm good. Thanks, though." Everyone that came to LA seemed to know someone in LA who they ended up staying with until they could afford their own place. Often, they never

could. For every person who came to LA and “made it”, a hundred more came and struggled to make ends meet.

“You sure. A big, powerful man like you won’t walk a little thing like me up to my apartment.” Her finger traced a line up and down my forearm.

I hadn’t been seeing anyone for some time and I rarely picked up cocktail waitresses and took them home. The bulge that was making itself known in my jeans, though, seemed to signal that he wanted to take charge. As I met Wendy’s baby blue gaze, I got the powerful impression that she was game.

“What about Brett and Dahlia? I prefer privacy.”

“Well, this is your lucky night, then. They’re at a party in Huntington Beach. They probably won’t be back until tomorrow morning.” She leaned in and grazed her lips against mine.

They felt soft, full, and this close to me, I could smell her perfume again. Her flowery scent made me dizzy with desire.

“Well, if you need an escort, that’s something I’m good at.”

We exited the car and she led me into the apartment complex. We made our way to apartment 323 with my hand on her lower back. She pressed her lips against mine again and I pulled her into me. She tasted better than she smelled, and that was saying a lot.

After fumbling for her keys, she opened the door and led me into the dark apartment. Flicking on a switch, I took in the immaculately furnished apartment. She wasn’t making ends meet here on a cocktail waitress’s wages and tips.

“Nice place.” I admired the modern white furniture on the white carpets. Stainless steel appliances, metallic legs on the dining room table and end tables. It wasn’t a big place, but it was furnished nicely.

“Yeah. I’m lucky. Brett is some up-and-coming executive at Universal.”

She was in my arms. One hand wrapped around my back, holding me close. Her lips press against mine with more urgency.

I return the kiss and my hand slipped down to squeeze her ass, still clad in only the red go-go shorts. The sensation of caressing her skin was intoxicating, too.

“Want a drink? Beer? Wine?” She pulled free and laid her purse on a coffee table in the small living room and headed to the kitchen.

The sudden absence of her lips left me breathless. I definitely wanted her tonight. “A beer is good.”

“Bud light or Heineken?”

“Bud light is fine.”

I walk to the patio door and looked out. The apartment patio was on the east side and you couldn't see the ocean, but the view of Santa Monica and all of its lights was still breathtaking.

Wendy walked up behind me and handed me my beer. I take a long pull on it while she wrapped her arm around me and ran it up and down my belly. My belly was tight, even though I didn't have a bodybuilder's six pack, and her hand felt good.

“Which is your room?” I ask as I turned around. My body was revved up now. The ache in my jeans was becoming unbearable.

“Are you eager to get into my bedroom, soldier boy?”

“You seem eager to get me there.” I took another long drink of my beer. I didn't need any liquid courage, but my mouth had dried up like the desert in Iraq.

“You're nice. Handsome. Quiet. And you fill those jeans out nicely.”

“I guess Sarge was wrong.”

“Why do you say that?”

“He always said that most girls were a sucker for the uniform, but you seem turned on without me being in uniform.”

“Well, this Sarge doesn’t sound too smart. Most girls just want a guy who will treat them right. With or without a uniform.”

We kissed again, and our hands roamed each other’s body. She led me to her bedroom and clothes began coming off before we got there.

“Finish up that... beer, Soldier Boy, and... let’s get in... this bed.” She said in between kisses.

I chugged the last of the beer and set the bottle on the nightstand. I felt less parched and more eager to get laid.

I had her go-go shorts and top off and pulled her bra off over her head. Her breasts became a playground as I kissed and sucked on her perky tits. She had a handful and not much more, just the way I liked them. My mouth made sure that both of her nipples were hard.

My jacket lay in the living room and she pulled my t-shirt off over my head at the bedroom door. She unzipped my jeans and pushed them off my hips and down my thighs, just before I pushed her on to the bed and slipped her panties off.

Like a wrestler, she rolled to the side, got to her knees and soon had my boxers off my hips and my cock in her mouth. She grasped it in one hand and stroked it while her lips played with its head. Soon her head bobbed up and down while her hand twisted and stroked my base. I fought dizziness as my moans and her slurping mouth filled the room with their sensual melody.

“Your mouth is going to make me come.” I pulled her head off my cock and bent down to kiss her. Dizziness from her perfume or the beer made my vision blur slightly. When I raised back up after the kiss, the dizziness abated.

She stroked my cock as she gazed into my eyes. Her face blurred a bit before coming back into focus. I felt intoxicated

again. I'm not light-weight though, so I couldn't be that drunk.

"Maybe I should get on the bed with you," I growled as I crawled onto the bed. We kissed as we both collapsed onto the soft sheets and pillows of the bed.

"Okay. Soldier Boy, why don't you get on your back? I want to ride you for a while."

"That sounds like fun."

I wiggled to the middle of the bed on my back. She propped a pillow behind my head and got comfortable. She slid my boxers off completely and tossed them on the floor.

She straddled me, and with one hand guided me into her. As her pussy slid down my hard cock, the sensations were mind blowing. She didn't have me completely inside of her and I already was in heaven. I could feel it from my cock to my head and down to my toes. The sensations were overwhelming. She bent down and kissed me hard. I grabbed her firm ass and squeezed.

Soon she moved with a nice steady motion, as we seemed to meld together. With her ass in my hands, I pulled her down on me as I thrust up into her. Her breasts hung deliciously above me and she leaned forward and I took a nipple into my mouth.

Her moans mixed with my gasps and grunts. The longer we fucked, the more I couldn't feel her pussy wrapped around my hard dick. The more she moved on top of me, the more dizzy I began.

"What the heck is going on?" I mumbled.

"You just had too much to drink, Soldier Boy." Her smile twisted and blurred, while her words seemed to come out slowly and slurred.

I looked at the beer on the nightstand and back up to her. There was a sensation of me coming inside of her, but as the orgasm washed over me, my vision became more blurry. Even

as she moved faster on top of me, it seemed like the world slowed down around me.

I heard her cry out in pleasure as blackness overcame me.

* * *

When I awoke, sunshine filled the room I had fallen asleep in. I was naked and sprawled out on the bed. I checked my watch. It was 11:40 AM. When I stood up, my head pounded, and I had to steady myself with a hand on the nightstand.

The beer bottle that I had laid on the nightstand was gone. There was no sign of Wendy either. I picked up my scattered clothes and got dressed. When I opened the bedroom door to enter the living room, a short man with black hair and glasses stood at the kitchen counter eating a bowl of cereal.

“Who the fuck are you?” he asked. The incredulous look on his face held traces of fear.

I could hear a shower being shut off in the bathroom. *That must be Wendy.*

“Um. Is Wendy in the bathroom?”

The bathroom door opened, and a woman exited with a towel wrapped around her which barely contained her ample bosom. It also barely covered her hips. When she saw me, she froze, fear splayed across her face as well.

“Who the fuck is Wendy?”

I thought the same thing and except for the fact that I was way late for work, I would have stuck around to ask some questions. The surprised looks on both their faces, though, led me to leave without answering either of the man’s questions.

Chapter 29

The Scenic Route

“YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD BE REALLY NICE?” I ASKED DIRK AS we walked towards the Navigator.

“What’s that?” Dirk had a light hand on my lower back. We weren’t walking arm in arm, but we were as close as we could get to it.

“Could you maybe drive us to the restaurant?” I wanted to tell him how today’s driver, Stu, gave me the creeps. I felt a knot in my stomach that was so visceral I had become nauseated on the drive to Richard’s mansion.

I had pushed that aside as I focused on my weekly visit with Trey and Monica. It had gone well. The kids seemed happy and safe, and the social worker was kind and supportive.

I had seen a couple of men in black cargo pants and black t-shirts with kevlar vests wandering the grounds and at least one was near the guest house where my visitation took place. It took all my strength not to cry as I said goodbye, and the thought of getting back into that car with Stu triggered more tears.

Trace had somehow come down with the flu and had called in sick. Dirk introduced me to Stu as his Head of Security. All the other drivers for the company had assignments, so he had picked up the driving detail for Dirk. He said little and when I caught him staring at me in the rear-view mirror; it freaked me out even more.

It's as if we had met before, but I couldn't remember meeting him ever. All I knew was that his presence filled me with anxiety.

Stu stepped forward as we got closer to the vehicle.

"Sir, I need a word. Privately." He cast a glance my way, making it clear I shouldn't hear his conversation.

"I'll just get in the car and you two can talk," I offered.

Stu opened the door to the back seat, and I got a whiff of his cologne as I slipped past him. The scent of leather and wood invaded my nostrils. I trembled as I sat down and glanced at the driver suspiciously.

He shut the door, and he and Dirk exchange some words. Dirk seemed concerned, even agitated. Stu seemed apologetic.

When they finished, Stu walked off and Dirk opened the door to the back seat and stood aside so I could get out.

"You get your wish, Reggie."

"What's going on?" I asked after standing up, our bodies so close we were all but touching. I felt my thighs react to being this close to him. God, I wanted him. All of him.

As I breathed in his scent, he guided me away from the door. His comforting smell made me want to roam his body with my hands and other parts of my body. He closed it and opened the front door and motioned me in.

"Something came up. Stu has to go to Huntington Beach to take care of an issue with another client. It looks like I'm driving you to dinner."

"My knight in shining armor." I smiled, relieved that Stu wouldn't be driving us and that I would be alone with Dirk.

I slipped into the front seat, and soon we were driving through Burbank towards Glendale. Eventually we would wind through the hills around LA into downtown LA and The Penthouse.

When Trace had taken me there earlier, I had walked out on Dirk and missed out on what I had heard was a great place to eat and the chance to take in the ocean and hills to the north. I was looking forward to this dinner even though I'd turned Dirk down multiple times.

My suspicions of Scarlet, my attraction to Dirk, and the desire to feel safe all combined to make this a perfect moment. I always felt safe around Dirk and now I had him all to myself.

In two more days, Dirk would have his tenth appointment with me. He would divorce Scarlet and then we could see where our relationship might take us.

Soon traffic piled up and Dirk turned south before we made it to Glendale.

“This route is much more scenic.”

“I like scenic.” I regretted the console in between us. The thought of sliding over to sit close to him and running my hand up his thigh ran through my head.

As if reading my mind, his hand went to my knee. My pencil skirt just reached my knee, but soon he slid it up my thigh and caressed my bare skin. I felt the heat from my pussy growing as his hand stoked my desire.

We met each other's gaze. I tried to smile, but I felt like I melted at his touch and gave him some crazed, lusty look. He smiled back, however, which just melted me more. If I wasn't careful, I might be drenched by the time we made it to the restaurant.

I grasped his hand, lifted it, and held it, while I slipped my skirt back down with my other hand.

“Well, I kind of like the scenery I'm seeing right now.”

“Keep your eyes on the road, Mr. Dark Eyes.”

“Mr. Dark Eyes?” He smiled mischievously.

“Yeah. That's what I called you until I learned your actual name.” I felt the rush of blood from my neck into my chest. I

didn't blush often, but sharing this small tidbit of information with Dirk made me brighten.

"From the club? Who all did you tell about Mr. Dark Eyes?"

"Just my friend, Carol." I focused on my knee and his hand, but managed a side-eye glance at his face.

"Did you tell her everything about that night?"

I gulped and considered lying.

"I told her everything. Down to the last detail."

I noticed a bulge growing in his slacks.

"Does that excite you? Me telling others about our sexual encounter?"

"You excite me. Every damn time." He squeezed my knee and his hand roamed up my thigh, but with my skirt between his fingers and my soft skin.

"Both hands on the wheel." I didn't want his hands off of me, but I needed to maintain my composure until we talked at the restaurant.

I needed to know if his feelings for me seemed as genuine as I hoped they were. I'd gotten involved with a lover with less than hope before, but it had never worked out. If he was serious and we could solve the Scarlet problem, then I would allow his hands to roam up my thigh, right to my aching flesh at the apex of my thighs.

The path Dirk had chosen seemed to go faster, and soon we were on a winding road in Hollywood Hills that snaked down the hills into the valley below us. As the road snaked and roamed with the terrain, I imagined Dirk's hands roaming my curves in the same way.

He put both hands on the wheel as we encountered more and more switchbacks.

My body ached from the departure of his hands just as much as I reveled in the view of the city below us and the

ocean in the distance.

I leaned across the console and laid my head on his shoulder. Breathing in his cologne, I basked in the scents of leather and jasmine, and the faint smell of finished wood.

His cologne always made me tremble in anticipation of his touch. Even when there was no chance of him touching me, like when he and Scarlet were together for an appointment, my body still responded as if his touch were mere seconds away.

I breathed in deeply and I felt as if someone had slapped me across the face. Pulling back, I sit upright and as far away from Dirk as I could get.

Scenes of my assault flashed through my mind. Rough hands. A gun barrel to my head. A scent. Leather. Jasmine. The scent of worked wood. All mixed and assaulted my nose at the same time.

“Are you alright?”

I shook my head and pulled one leg up into my chest, forming a protective shield.

“What’s wrong? You look frightened.”

“Your cologne. It triggered a memory. You told me once about it. What is it again?”

“Um. Tom Ford I think. Tuscan Leather.”

“Where did you get it?”

“Scarlet bought it for me. She said it’s her favorite.”

I clutched my knee to my chest as Dirk slowed down to turn the corner of another switch back turn. He hugged the inside corner before we entered another straightaway.

“What memory?”

“What?” Deep in thought, I barely heard his question.

“You said my cologne triggered a memory. What memory?”

I glanced up and focused on Dirk's face, fighting through the fog of memory. *Am I suffering from a concussion?*

The events from last night were still fuzzy. Dirk came over and spent the night. I told him as much as I remembered through the brain fog of my pounding skull. He wanted to take me to the hospital. To file a police report.

For whatever reason, I refused, and he didn't force it.

In fact, Dirk had sat with me until I drifted off to sleep. I woke up in my bed—carried there by Dirk—with Dirk asleep beside me.

With day came a sense of distance from the events of the trauma from the previous day and a lingering sense of fear and danger.

Now, though, in this moment, the fear and danger had been triggered and had me in full-blown panic mode. Dirk's cologne usually triggered lust, but now it triggered fear. I had smelled that scent, though, from someone else.

Dirk navigated a couple more switchbacks as we descended into the valley below us.

“Tuscan Leather. Scarlet gave it to you?”

“Yes. She said it turns her on. She said she likes her lover to wear it. I really should stop using it, though. Especially if it triggers...”

“Is it expensive?”

“Yeah. I think so. Scarlet has expensive tastes.”

“Would she give it to members of your security team as a gift?”

My mind raced now, trying to figure out this puzzle, and why his cologne had triggered me.

“Knowing Scarlet, I would say no. She said this is a private label custom blend. It goes for about three-hundred-fifty dollars.”

So, why would I have smelled it on Stu?

“Plus, she said she reserves it for her lovers. She can barely resist it.”

The memory of Stu’s cologne. There were hints of wood and leather, but there was something else. Something fruity. A hint of jasmine.

I had smelled something like that before, too. It was a perfume though, and not a cologne. Everything made sense now. I knew who wore that perfume. It had been worn by...

Descending a steep section of road, Dirk started tapping the brakes, which brought me out of my thoughts. He pressed his foot down firmly. No matter what he did, he could not slow the vehicle down.

“Dirk, you’re going too fast.”

“The brakes aren’t working. Hold on.” He reached a hand out to protect me but jerked the wheel sharply, trying to make the turn.

When he entered the next switchback, he was going way too fast.

I could see a steep drop off to my right as we swerved, the wheels coming extremely close to the edge. Just when I thought we might make it, the rear wheels slipped from the road and we flipped over the edge.

The car rolled and careened, hitting rocks and trees. I lost track of the times it rolled over and how many times my head slammed against the glass of my car door, but I remembered it shattering and the tinkle of glass mixing with the sound of metal bending as it hit stone and trees.

The car spun and crashed before it finally stopped. Images played through my mind like a scattered film clip of fire and smoke and Dirk lay silent and still against the steering wheel. Blood flowed down his face. My face felt wet. I smelled sage and smoke before everything turned black.

Chapter 30

Lucid Dreams

A BLACK FOG SURROUNDED ME. MY NOSTRILS BURNED FROM the fog, which seemed to crawl inside me. Mouth, nostrils, ears all surrendered to its penetrations.

I cried as I hugged Monica.

“Why do you have to leave, Mommy?”

Trey stood by the pool watching us, a scowl upon his face. I blinked, and he was in the pool, swimming. Away from me. He never reached the end. He just kept swimming but never moving.

Monica tugged on my skirt. “Don’t go, Mommy. Don’t go.”

I felt myself pulled away from her at an unrealistic rate over the Hollywood Hills. Over Beverly Hills. Black clouds and city traffic whizzed by until I stood in my office.

Dirk was on the bed in the surrogate room, wearing nothing. He was hard already, and I hadn’t even touched him. The lust in his eyes was palpable. He motioned me towards the bed.

I could see my reflection in the one-way mirror. The recording equipment was recording everything. It recorded me in my naked state. My breasts were bare with my taut nipples on display.

“Join me, Reggie. Come to bed. I’m cold.”

I turned to face him and those lusty dark eyes of his burned with a need for me. It was so strong, I could feel it between my legs. I moved towards him, but my legs felt heavy. Something held my wrist tight. It pulled me back.

I glanced down, and a handcuff secured my wrist. Pulling on it did nothing. I tugged and pulled and the more I strained, the more I was pulled through black smoke back to my car.

Parked in my garage, I sighed and turned off the engine. Just as the engine silenced, a large whack and shattered glass rang out around me. I sparkled with bright shiny lights as I felt the presence to my left.

A shadow spoke to me.

“Leave town or else.”

The shadow pressed a gun to my head.

“Or else.”

My heart beat so loudly it drowned out the sound of tinkling glass.

“Or else.”

“Or else what?” I screamed.

My scream echoed as if I was in a cave. My garage became a cave, and the shadow took on a physical form.

Burly arms. Broad shoulders. A balaclava was over his head, hiding everything but his eyes and his mouth. Like a ninja dressed in black, he stood over me. He smelled of leather and wood mixed with jasmine. His scent invaded my nostrils. Burning.

Burning like the black smoke that surrounded us in this cave.

“Or else something bad happens to Monica.”

“No,” I cried.

“Or else something bad happens to Trey.”

“No. Leave them the fuck alone,” I screamed with the walls of the smoke filled cave echoing my cry back to me.

“Or else something bad happens to you!”

I sobbed until the dark figure reached out and grabbed my throat. His vice like grip choked off my ability to breathe. I beat at his hands, and his arms, and his big burly chest.

I felt the slam of the gun against the side of my head. Pain ripped through my skull like hail on a tin roof.

The black figure walked away. I could see him in my side mirror. He pulled off his mask and looked back at me. Stu stared at me, his lips turning up into an evil smirk.

I knew it. It was Stu that attacked me in the garage.

I had to tell Dirk. I looked for him but couldn't find him. Flying across the city, I zoomed to his office, my office, and the places I had been with him. The Penthouse. The Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club.

He sat there in his usual chair. Twenty-dollar bills laid out in front of him. Heather danced for him and he rewarded her for her talents. Her assets. She was gorgeous.

I stormed over to him, but I felt that too familiar tug on my wrist. I glanced back, and the handcuff held me fast. Again. Turning my head, I focused on Dirk again.

Carol now danced for Mr. Dark Eyes. With her brunette hair and the big jugs her husband loved, she jiggled them in his face. He was sliding twenties into the red thong that hugged her waist and curvaceous hips.

“Dirk. Dirk. I need to tell you something. It's important.”

Twenty after twenty slid into place until she looked like she was wearing a hula dress. A hula dress of cash.

“Dirk. It was Stu. Stu assaulted me in my garage.”

I felt jealous and angry as Dirk couldn't pull his attention from Carol. Suddenly, Heather danced with her and a few of

the regulars. Even the cocktail waitresses danced for Dirk. Their hands were on him.

His hands were on them.

“Dirk! Please!”

I turned my attention to my shackles and tugged on the cuffs. Throwing everything I had into pulling on them, trying to break the chain. It was no use. I pulled on the chain, moving hand over hand, following the chain into the black smoke.

I had to find what secured me to this chain. What kept me from reaching Dirk? Soon, he, the club, and his horde of admirers disappeared until I couldn't hear the music or their voices anymore.

Following the chain into the darkness, I felt tired. I needed to rest. A filthy bed appeared as I continued to pull on the chain. It led me to the bed and the other cuff fastened to the bed.

The bed, a futon, was gross. Disgusting, in fact, and I couldn't bring myself to lie down on it.

When my eyes drooped and my shoulders sagged, I couldn't fight it any longer. I lay down on the bed and everything turned dark again. Relief washed over me like the dark waters of a lake.

* * *

“Wake up, Reggie.”

I stirred on the bed. The smell of mold and dust filled my nostrils. My head throbbed and when I tried to rise, I cried out in pain and fell back onto the bed.

Blackness followed.

* * *

“Where are you, Reggie?”

Dirk’s call echoed through the darkness.

“Where are you, Mommy?”

Light penetrated the darkness. The smell of fire and smoke assaulted my nostrils.

“Reggie. Help me.” Dirk’s voice again. He sounded concerned. Really concerned.

I stood up. My head wasn’t throbbing, and my ears weren’t ringing. I heard whispered voices not very far away.

Tiptoeing through the black smoke, the voices got closer. I could just make out shadows ahead of me.

“What the fuck. Why did you bring her here?”

“You said she wouldn’t survive the crash.”

“And why did that compel you to bring her here?”

“If we hold her here past Friday, then you get your money.”

The big, hulking figure had to be Stu, even though he looked like a swirling black shadow.

The other figure, dressed in red with flaming red hair, had to be Scarlet. Her voice sounded shrill. Anxious.

“You idiot. Was Dirk alive?”

“He was bleeding pretty bad.”

Something pulled me away from them like a bullet. Darkness washed over me as I was pulled into the dark smoke again.

I was in the Navigator with Dirk. He drove, and I sat in the front seat. We were on the road that wound down the Hollywood Hills.

I admired his profile. He was a very handsome man. I hadn’t seen pictures of him from earlier years, but I had this sense that he had aged well. Very well.

His hand reached for my knee and rubbed it. As he felt along my inner thigh, his hand moving my skirt with each caress, I felt that tingle between my legs that made me crave him.

I remembered stopping him. Telling him to stop and pay attention to the road. Regret washed through me. I might never feel his touch again.

I let his hand move higher until he cupped my pussy in his palm. Rubbing my soft mound through the lacy panties I wore made me gasp. My nipples hardened and pressed against my lacy bra. They pressed so hard that they ripped through the fabric, exposed now to his lustful gaze.

His hungry eyes took them in, and soon his mouth was around them. He kissed them. Sucked them. Suddenly, he was on top of me. Pulling my panties aside, he penetrated me with his hard cock. The hard cock that always got hard for me, but didn't get hard for Scarlet.

“You didn't go back to make sure?” Scarlet's voice sounded like a whisper inside my head.

The black SUV still moved down the road as if it drove itself while Dirk fucked me. His hips moving forward and back like pistons. My pussy was wet and flowing with my excitement.

I felt a panic, though.

“Dirk. Pay attention to the road.”

He kissed my neck and my shoulders as he continued to thrust into me harder and faster.

My anxiety rose at the same pace as his fucking continued. The car maneuvered every turn while he penetrated me deeply, deeper than anyone had ever penetrated me.

I tried to look over his shoulder to see the road and make sure we wouldn't crash over an embankment. Again.

“A team arrived looking for him. We left before they spotted us.” The husky voice swirled around my head like the

black smoke. It felt slimy and creepy and clung to my skin like soot on a chimney. That had to be Stu.

My mind couldn't take all the images and sounds. This had to be a dream. A very lucid, chaotic dream.

Again, I was in the Navigator with Dirk. His fucking had become more passionate. He was nearing a climax.

The vehicle sped faster and faster down the road. The turns became more treacherous, and we almost spun out of control. We made it through each turn, even though Dirk pounded into me relentlessly with a throbbing dick that seemed so much bigger than I remembered. It was comically large, and I felt like he spread me to limits I had never experienced.

Endorphins and euphoria rushed through me as I climaxed. My pussy squeezed his cock and almost sucked him inside me, in my desire to keep him close and safe within me.

When he finally climaxed, spurting cum inside me, the SUV hit the embankment on a curve and flipped over it. The vehicle crashed and spun, but I hovered above the scene now. Everything played out before my very eyes in a horrific fashion. The rolls. The flips. Crashing into rocks and trees. Shattering glass. Bending steel. The full force of the crash.

A scream.

That was my scream.

When the vehicle stopped plummeting down the hill, white smoke and steam spilled from the engine. Vibrations from the bent frame of the Navigator swept over me. They pulled me down. Into the front seat. Back inside.

Inside my body.

“Dirk. Are you okay?”

His body lay lifeless, head pressed into the steering wheel. A stream of blood flowed down his cheek and dripped onto his shirt. His beautiful black suit spotted with red, like blood tears.

“Dirk. Are you okay?”

He didn't move. He didn't respond.

My head throbbed. I touched the wetness on the side of my head. When I brought my hand in front of my vision, I could see the red blood on my fingers. That liquid rolling down my cheek and neck wasn't water. It was my blood.

I looked around the cab. I tried to unbuckle my seatbelt. My arms wouldn't move, though. The pulse in my temples forced my eyes closed. Blackness laid its veil over my eyes again.

* * *

I didn't know if I was dead or alive. The images that flashed before my eyes seemed dream like and prophetic. I didn't know if what I saw was real or just my active imagination. The whispers through the swirling black smoke seemed authentic enough. Dirk's calling for me seemed unreal.

The crash replayed multiple times, each time the same, but different. Sometimes the entire scene was tinged in red, as if looking through a filtered camera lens. I experienced the crash from inside the Navigator and from without. Sometimes Dirk answered me. Most of the time, he didn't. He was always bathed in blood and black smoke swirled around us.

I had sex with Dirk multiple times. In the car careening down the hill. In the surrogate room. In my bedroom. In a booth at The Penthouse overlooking the ocean and the hills. Each time he stretched me and I could feel his cock and his love penetrate me.

They were the craziest and most fulfilling sex dreams I had ever had.

I didn't know how long I lay in this state.

I just know that eventually I woke up and knew I wasn't dreaming any longer.

First, it was the smell. The pungent odors of mildew and mold overwhelmed me so much I had to sit up.

I blinked my eyes until the sleep and dream drifted away and scanned the surrounding room. I was in an office. A long-abandoned room.

A dusty desk occupied the back end of the room to my right and the light from a desk lamp provided a dim light that didn't quite reach every corner. Neglected steel filing cabinets stood silently against the opposite wall. A door with glass on its top half with a name painted on it was to my left. Frosted glass filled the top half of the walls to each side of the door and one side had dilapidated blinds while the other side only had the strings hanging down.

I sat on a beat-up, black futon, the mattress ripped and torn with white stuffing showing in multiple places. The smell of mold and mildew made me wrinkle my nose. I had to sit up to get away from the smell.

I tried to swing my legs to the side, but a sharp pain brought me to a stop. A handcuff around my right wrist with the other end around the steel arm of the futon held me firmly in place. I fell back against the futon and pulled closer to the end so I could rest my arm on the bar.

Pain shot through my head, my shoulders, and my lower back as I moved around. My stomach roiled with nausea, but also growled with hunger.

How long have I been here? How did I get here?

I heard heavy footsteps and the click of heels on a hard surface approaching. The silhouette of three figures appeared on the other side of the frosty glass before the door opened. A big man opened the door and I could just make out Stu's face.

My heart leapt, and I shrank back further into the futon.

A woman entered with the click of her heels on the wood floor. Dressed in a formfitting black dress, she had on a big black sun hat with a red ribbon tied around its base. Big, dark sunglasses hid her eyes and some of her face.

The third figure stayed outside, his silhouette faint through the glass.

“Look who’s finally awake. How do you feel, Dr. Bitch?”

The woman removed her sunglasses and revealed the face I had expected, but had hoped I wouldn’t see. She glared at me, definitely not glad to see me.

“Scarlet. What the fuck have you done?”

Chapter 31

Cuffed

SCARLET STROLLED TO THE DESK AND LAID DOWN HER sunglasses, then her hat. After dusting off the edge of the desk, she leaned against it. Positioning herself at the edge of the desk, blocking the light, I could only see her silhouette. Her face appeared dim, hid in shadow. She wore a black dress and black stiletto heels with a pearl necklace.

Stu closed the door and took up a position like a bouncer at a nightclub. He stood three or more inches taller than Dirk. The light from the desk lamp illuminated his face clearly and cast a dark shadow on the wall behind him. I shivered at the memory of how he had assaulted me.

I focused on Scarlet's face even though her eyes were shadowed in darkness. If I could only see her eyes, I could read her better. I'd have to rely on other cues.

She crossed her arms and tapped one finger on her forearm.

“So, Doc. What should I do with you?”

“You could start by letting me go before you get in more trouble than you already are.” I moved my bound hand until the cuffs were taut. Being bound like this, chained to a moldy piece of furniture, left me even more hopeless and distraught.

“No chance, Doc. You've only delayed the inevitable by surviving the crash.”

“Where is Dirk? Do you have him too?”

“Oh. Now he’s Dirk? He’s not Mr. Baxter today?”

“Is he okay?” My chest tightened at the prospect that he was hurt. I felt a panic creep up within me. In my dreams, he had been covered in blood. Was that a memory of him in the wreckage that my mind recalled, or my worst nightmare?

Other than a dull ache in my shoulders, the throbbing in my head, and my cuffed wrist, I seemed fine.

“Oh, Doc. Stu didn’t tell you?” She glanced at Stu standing like a stone statue at the door, a smile spreading across her face.

“This is the first time she’s been conscious.” Stu said.

“So, the jarhead here hasn’t told you that Dirk died in the crash, like a good husband?” Scarlet turned back to glare at me.

“Died? That’s impossible. He was breathing...” My temples pounded like drums. A wave of nausea swept through me, knotting my stomach and making me dizzy.

I glanced at Stu. He looked down and changed his stance.

“Why?”

“Why what, Dr. Bitch?”

“Why did you have to kill Dirk?”

Scarlet laughed. “Oh, Princess. For fucking money, of course.”

I felt anger boiling up in me. Anger that this woman, who now laughed at me, had me shackled to a bed and had killed Dirk.

I felt his absence already, like an empty stomach craving food. All because of this bitch, Scarlet.

Any regrets I may have had for coming between Dirk and her vanished.

“You would kill your husband for fifty million dollars.”

“Obviously. For such a talented therapist, you’re pretty naïve.”

I jerked my arm, trying to shed my cuff, but all I did was hurt my wrist. My wince amused Scarlet. My scowl amused her more.

“With Dirk dead, I inherit 250 million dollars. I’d kill my mother for a quarter of a billion dollars. While it would have been nice to inherit everything, I don’t want the headache of running a security company. It sounds super boring.”

Fuck! What a bitch.

Dirk had wanted to save forty-nine million dollars, and it had cost him his life.

“Now I just need to tie up some loose ends.”

“Like me?”

“Yes, Princess. You’re the biggest loose end of all, but there are others. Fortunately, I know the Head of Security well. Biblically, in fact. So, I can have a lot of data erased before anyone knows to even look.” She swept a lock of red hair behind her ear as she smiled seductively towards Stu.

I slumped against the back of the futon cushion. My palms were cold and clammy. My breath came in quick gasps. The pounding of my heart in my chest was deafening.

I’m going to die.

“Who hurt you?”

“What was that, Doc?”

“Who hurt you so badly when you were growing up?”

“No one. You can quit playing therapist, Doc. I don’t need you fucking with my head.”

“Was it your mother? Did she expect you to live her dream of being a famous movie star? Did she push...”

“Leave my mother out of this. She was a saint.”

“Touchy much?”

“No amount of counseling is going to change the outcome, Doc.”

“What outcome, Scarlet?”

“Your outcome.” She pushed away from the desk and walked around the desk, placing it between us.

“So if it wasn’t your mother, then it must have been your father. Did he travel too much? Never spend time with you? Bought you gifts to make up for being gone all the time?”

Scarlet stood behind the light now, her face illuminated. The look of joy on her face was sickening.

“Wrong again, Doc. Daddy died when I was three. Never knew him, but he was a war hero in Desert Storm. He didn’t fuck me up either.”

I felt an edge in her voice. It probably wasn’t a good idea to push her, but I couldn’t seem to control myself. What would she do? Kill me? That was her intention, anyway.

“So, it must have been your step-daddy?”

“Step daddies!”

“And all of them loved your saint of a mother more than you?”

“You’re so fucking stupid, Doc?” Scarlet spat.

Stu shuffled uncomfortably.

I had hit a nerve.

“Help me out, Scarlet. That’s the least you could do since you’re going to kill me.”

“Hear that, Stu? She already knows she’s going to die.” She turned to face Stu before walking around the desk and back into the light. When she stopped, she was a foot from the bed.

“You don’t have to kill me. You could just let me go.” I didn’t have it in me to beg for my life, but I had it in me to at least ask.

“Give me one good reason I shouldn’t have Stu kill you?” She crossed her arms again and leaned on one foot, the other leg splayed out to the side.

Stu looked down and shuffled from foot to foot before looking up and meeting my gaze. His eyes betrayed he hadn’t contemplated killing me himself. They hoped we would both die in the car crash.

But I didn’t. And I was the loose end, threatening Scarlet’s becoming a multi-millionaire.

“Because you don’t want that on your conscious.”

“I just killed my husband. Well, Stu did. I will sleep well tonight.”

“I don’t think Stu wants it on his conscious.”

“Stu will be fine. He’s killed his fair share of Iraqi soldiers. One more bitch of a woman isn’t an issue.” She glanced his way, and he struggled to meet her gaze but finally did with a firm jaw and veins showing on his temple.

Her use of the word bitch was pissing me off. If either of us in this room was a bitch, it was her. If she thinks I’m a bitch, though, maybe I should start acting like one.

“So you had plenty of step daddies. How many raped and molested you?”

“Fuck you, Doc. Stay out of my head.”

“All of them? While your mother watched?”

“Stop it before I slap the shit out of you.” She moved closer, towering over me, and shook her finger.

“That was it. You mother let all of her new step daddies fuck you and so you use the shit out of the men in your life.”

She slapped me. Hard.

My head had already been throbbing and now I felt like church bells were ringing in my head. The light from the lamp seemed blurred and shot sharp points of light toward me.

I tasted blood on the corner of my lip.

“I’ll take that as a yes.”

“You are so fucking wrong. You aren’t so smart after all. I can’t believe Dirk fell for you. You have to be too old to be any good in bed. I have no idea what he saw in you.”

“You’re awfully defensive, Scarlet. Someone that will kill their husband for money has to have something wrong with them.”

“Only two of them molested me. The third one raped me. My mother reported all of them. She was a saint who deserved better.” She struck me again with her open palm.

Blood trickled down my chin, which I wiped at with my free hand.

“Just fucking shut up,” she whispered.

“So, why did you turn out so twisted, Scarlet?”

“Twisted? Tell the asshole who molested me when I was eight that he was twisted. The next one at eleven. The third one who raped me at fourteen. They were twisted.” Her eyes blazed with anger.

My stomach tightened as I imagined the horror she must have lived through.

“At least your mom reported them.” I said. My tone was less confrontational. Her confession hit me just as hard as her slaps. Compassion welled up unbidden.

“A lot of good it did. Social services got us out of the house and we lived in shelters until the next predator asshole found my mom. The thought that the only home I could ever have was owned by an asshole who wanted me more than my mom. Those men were twisted.”

I struggled to disagree.

“But when you had a man who didn’t use you, you killed him?”

“Didn’t use me? I was just arm candy to him and when the promises of movie roles and stardom fell through, he didn’t want me anymore.”

“He didn’t abuse you, though.”

“He threw me away, though. Apparently, he wanted you more than me.” She wiped her face and sniffed. With her face in shadows, I couldn’t see any tears, but I was sure some had trickled out.

“Scarlet...”

“Shut up, Doc. This conversation is over.” She grabbed her items from the desk and stormed out.

Stu opened the door for her like a matador pulling the cape away from a charging bull. He glanced my way and his eyes and face were set with a certain determination. Any reluctance I thought he might have had in killing a woman faded immediately.

* * *

I stormed down the hallway, passing Wagner, a thin man who looked like he had just recovered from a weekend heroine binge. Stu had vouched for him and he had helped with dragging the Doc’s body from the wreckage.

Stu followed behind me.

When we got to the end of the short hallway with offices to each side and the empty, open warehouse behind us, I stopped and whirled on Stu.

“What the fuck, Stu?”

The big man could charge into gunfire in a war zone, but my anger stopped him in his tracks. His shoulders slumped, and he looked anywhere but at me.

“What the fuck what?”

“Why isn’t she dead? Rolling a car off those cliffs should kill anybody, right?”

“The Navigators are pretty solid. It just didn’t happen like we planned. When Wagner and I got to the vehicle to make sure they were dead, the woman was crawling out...”

“Yeah, and the other guy looked bad.” Wagner piped in, eager to join the conversation.

I glared at him.

“And Dirk? Is he dead?”

“There was a trail of blood behind the woman and the passenger window somehow hadn’t shattered. She was barely coherent and passed out as soon as I...”

“And Dirk?”

“He looked bad.” Wagner repeated.

“She passed out when I picked her up and her phone dropped out of her hand. It was dialing 911.”

“What about Dirk, you fucking jarhead?”

“She saw me, Scarlet. She saw both of us.”

“I don’t fucking care about the bitch, Stu.”

Stu sighed and straightened his shoulders. “I don’t know. Before we could stuff her back in the vehicle, we heard someone...”

“Your only job was to make sure Dirk died. Why fuck with the bitch?”

“We thought we could get her back in the vehicle and make sure the vehicle went up in flames.”

“Couldn’t you have just hit them in the head or something?”

“I told Stu that’s what we should have done.” Wagner piped in again.

“Shut up, Wagner,” they both said simultaneously.

I glared at Stu.

“The woman saw us, Scarlet. She recognized me. Dirk looked dead. A security team of his was approaching. I couldn’t be seen there. We ran down the hill.”

“Where did they take Dirk?”

“According to emails, he was taken to Hollywood Presbyterian.”

“You need to find out if he’s still alive.”

“And if he is?”

“Figure out someway to finish him.”

“Kill him in the middle of a hospital?”

“Don’t you military types know a way to kill anyone? Anywhere?”

“We could just give him too much morphine,” Wagner offered.

For once, the drug user’s knowledge might come in handy.

“Yeah. Do that, Stu. Or have Wagner do it.”

“What’s it worth to you, Red?” Wagner asked.

The shit is going to bargain for more money. And he called me Red. I wanted to rip his cock off his scrawny body.

“Just make it happen and you’ll get what you deserve and then some.”

I could always have Stu kill him after he takes care of Dirk. He’s as deep into this as I am. He is also becoming another loose end. *And he’s annoying.*

Stu glared at Wagner. Then at me.

“All right, Scarlet. I’ll go to Presbyterian and see what I can do.”

“Take care of it, Stu. Or we are both in a lot of trouble.”

“I’ll take care of it.” The look on his face was that determined look he got when he intended to handle something for me. When he thought about protecting me.

I had a soft spot for men that protected me. The Doc had been right, my step-fuckers had fucked me up. They were fucking, twisted monsters and never got what they fully deserved. So when a man offered to protect me—and would fuck the shit out of me—then I was his and did everything to make him mine.

I’d felt that way about Dirk at first until the fucking turned soft and romantic. I didn’t do romantic. I definitely didn’t do soft.

Dirk was soft.

Stu was hard and rough.

I liked hard and rough. I just didn’t love Stu. He was becoming a loose end, too.

Chapter 32

Finishing the Job

I WALKED INTO HOLLYWOOD PRESBYTERIAN LIKE I OWNED THE place, with Wagner by my side. The bright lights were a contrast to the dimness of dusk outside. The smell of blood and alcohol made my stomach churn. I'd spent plenty of time in a VA hospital recovering from an Iraqi bullet that crashed through my ribs and pierced my lung.

I had been close to dying. If Dirk hadn't drug me out of that shit hole house to the Humvee and gotten me to the Air Evac, I would have bled out in the scorching desert of Iraq.

I owed the man my life.

Now I had to kill him.

"Where did you get that morphine, Wagner?"

"I don't reveal my sources."

"Fair enough."

Wagner had the thin, emaciated frame of a drug addict. Made sense since he was one.

He had been in our unit in Iraq, too. I probably owed my life to him as well, since he was the medic that kept me alive until they could airlift me to the emergency unit.

He had shaved, though, and put on a suit so he would pass for an employee of Baxter Enterprises. His face was sunken, though, and his cheekbones and chin poked out of his face like a Halloween mask. He basically looked like shit.

Before he let the drugs take over his life, he had worked for me. When he started showing up late, missing shifts, and being out of it on assignments, I had covered for him.

Drugs and the haunting memories of war had led to his end. In Iraq, too many men didn't make it to the choppers and to the emergency units. Many died while he did his best to save them. Those memories were hard to forget.

Wagner had been too soft to shrug that off and live with himself. Every dying face haunted him.

Dirk had even paid for treatment, which worked for three months after he finished. When a client was hurt after Wagner crashed a vehicle into a tree and was obviously stoned out of his mind, even Dirk had to face reality and cut him loose.

Dirk was probably the most loyal guy I knew. He was a capable officer, too. As my lieutenant in Iraq, not only did he survive, he had earned the respect of his men. Including me. I had been his master sergeant there, and he'd hired me for a security detail when he took over Baxter Security.

I still respected him, but my love for Scarlet outweighed any loyalty I had for him.

We entered the elevator and pushed the button to Dirk's floor. He was still in the ICU but had a private room. One guard from his security team would be outside his door, but being the Head of Security meant I would have no problem getting in.

As we walked down the hallway passing nurses, orderlies, and the occasional doctor, I tried to slow my heartbeat and calm my breathing. I felt like I was walking into a firefight.

Heightened heart rate. Adrenaline rush. Chest tightening. That knot in my stomach. I was sure my eyes were dilating, ready to take in as much of my surroundings as possible.

The plan was simple. We would walk into Dirk's room, make sure we were alone, and then Wagner would give Dirk enough morphine to kill him.

The hospital would have a lot of explaining to do. Dirk would be dead. We would kill the doctor. Then Scarlet would inherit a shitload of money and marry me.

Simple Plan. Certain Results. Focus on the Target.

Dirk's mantra before every detail, every assignment, every mission, had always been the same. It had worked well for our unit most of the time. When it didn't, he always seemed to get us out of dangerous situations. He was a hell of an LT.

The knot in my stomach tightened even more as we neared the door. Roberts was on duty, and he gave me a nod as we approached.

"Hey, boss."

"Hey, Roberts. How's he doing?"

"Still unconscious. Has been since they brought him in."

"How bad is he?"

"Not bad, really. I think Taylor had it worse when that mortar shell almost landed on his ass."

"Did he take a bad hit to the head?" Wagner spoke, even though I had told him to keep his mouth shut. That had always been his problem. He talked when he got nervous. In the field, that meant he talked constantly during every fire fight.

"Wagner? I thought they cut you loose."

"Yeah. He cleaned up though, and he's back on payroll." I shot a glaring glance at Wagner and he cut off whatever he was about to say. Roberts and no one here would know that Wagner wasn't back on the payroll except for Dirk. Maybe Trace. And HR, of course.

"Yeah. Well, I heard he only had a broken arm and collarbone. Plus a nasty hit to the head. He'll come through, though. He always does."

"Anyone in there with him?" I asked.

"Trace is in there. Has been since he got here."

“Why don’t you go get a coffee? Three of us should be able to keep the boss safe.”

“Thanks, boss.” He headed down the hallway in search of coffee.

I nodded, gave another stern look to Wagner, and opened the door to his room.

It was dim in the room. The shades on the window were closed tight. A light above the bed cast a dim light on its occupant. Dirk lay in the bed, quiet, almost peaceful. He had a cast on his arm and an IV tube ran into his opposite arm.

A figure rose from a seat between the bed and the window.

“Stu. What the fuck happened?” Trace’s tone was accusatory. I had been Dirk’s driver today. He expected me to keep him safe like every driver and security personnel at the company.

Trace was an imposing man. Dark skin. Bald black head. Broad shoulders and bulging biceps. If there was anyone I didn’t want to get into a fight with, it was Trace. He was a hell of a soldier.

Right now, he was a pain in my ass and stood in the way of my mission.

It actually surprised me he was here. I had hoped Wendy would keep him happy and occupied for most of the day.

“There’s no time for that. How is he?”

“He’s got a broken arm, broken collarbone, and they’re not sure when he will wake up. They’re going to do a brain scan soon to make sure he’s okay. He’s going to survive, but this is totally fucked up. Why weren’t you driving him?”

“Why the fuck did you call in sick?”

Trace’s face shifted. If the mother fucker could turn red, I’m sure he would have. It wasn’t from anger. I’d seen that look before and I knew he would let up on any accusations he wanted to hurl at me.

Wendy had done her job well enough, although I wished she would have done it better.

Now, I just needed to get him out of here.

“Why is he here? Stay the fuck away from that equipment.” Trace’s head turned to the hospital bed and Wagner checking out the monitors and tubes running into Dirk’s body.

Wagner jumped.

“I’m a medic, remember? Just checking his vitals.”

“I remember him patching up that leg of yours when you took shrapnel from that explosion in Kabul.”

“Yeah. I remember. I thought Dirk canned him weeks ago.”

“Months ago actually, but he’s clean now and Dirk gave me the okay to rehire him.” The lie couldn’t be verified if the LT never woke up.

Wagner’s cheeks and frame were thin and gaunt, and I could make out sweat on his brow. He was anything but clean, but hopefully Trace wouldn’t notice in the dim light.

“Okay. Cool.”

“Settle down, soldier. Why don’t you get a coffee or something?” Trace reported directly to Dirk now, but I had been Trace’s master sergeant. I was hoping that might help me get him out of here.

“I can’t leave. Not until he wakes up.”

“You a doctor or something now, Trace?” Wagner opened his mouth, and I cringed.

“No. Neither are you. Get the fuck away from that equipment, Wagner.”

I motioned to Wagner, who stepped away from the bed. He stood as far back in the dim shadows as possible, away from the bed and the window.

“Calm down, Trace.”

“I can’t calm down, Sarge.” Trace had always called me Sarge, even in civilian life.

“Buck up, soldier.”

“I don’t take orders from you any more, Sarge.”

I took in a deep breath. “I know you don’t, Trace. But you can’t help him heal or wake up. You need to take a walk. Get some fresh air. Something.”

“A watched pot never boils.” Wagner piped in again. He must be really nervous.

I turned my head to face him, and he literally sank into the darkness like a phantom.

Trace took in a deep breath and let it out slowly.

“Maybe you’re right, Sarge.”

“I’m always right, corporal.”

Trace returned a weak smile. “I think I’ll go outside. A walk around the hospital might clear my head.”

I put a hand on Trace’s shoulder until he looked up to meet my eyes. Pain was clear in those eyes. Guilt.

He felt guilty that he wasn’t driving Dirk. Signature Trace. It’s what made him so responsible and so detailed in his work. He did everything he could not to feel guilty. That made him a good soldier and why Dirk trusted him with his most important tasks.

I suppose I should have felt some guilt for setting him up with Wendy. My chest felt the slightest twinge of tightness, but it quickly passed.

Focus on the Target.

Trace moved past me to the door and exited. I counted to ten before breaking the silence.

“Do what you need to do.”

Wagner moved out of the shadows and stepped to the bed. The sweat on his brow seemed excessive. He looked like shit before. Now he looked like steaming shit.

“You okay, Wagner.”

“Yeah. Just nervous.”

“Nervous?”

“Yeah. I’ve never killed anyone before.”

“Just think of the hundred thousand dollars you’re getting to do this.”

“Yeah. But this is the LT.”

“Hurry and do it, Wagner. Roberts may be back any minute.”

Wagner pulled out a syringe and pulled the cap off of the needle. The syringe was already filled with a dosage of morphine. He checked the IV line going into Dirk’s arm at the crook of his elbow. Pulling the cap on the needle of the syringe, he inserted the needle into the injection spot on the IV line.

He turned his head to me. “You must really love her?”

“What?”

“You must really love the red head to kill the LT? Is she worth this?”

I scowled. “Is that enough to do the trick?”

“Seventy-five milligrams of morphine should kill him.”

“I thought you said you needed at least two-hundred milligrams.”

“Right. Well, two-hundred milligrams is almost sure to kill him. But they have already given him some morphine, so I don’t want to give him that much. One-hundred milligrams might still be too much. My mind’s a little fuzzy.” He rubbed his temple before returning his hand to the syringe.

“What the fuck, Wagner. You said you procured two-hundred milligrams. Did you shoot up already?”

“No, Sarge. No way. I’m clean. I swear. They’ve already got him on a small dose of morphine. Giving him too much might look suspicious, so I’m just going to give him 75 milligrams. That should be enough.”

“Just inject the shit already.”

“Fuck, Sarge.” Wagner looked at me. Then at the syringe. He held it delicately in his hand, the needle inserted into the IV feed. His hand shook.

I couldn’t take it any longer. Stepping to the bed quickly, I grasped the syringe and pressed the handle with my thumb, injecting morphine directly into his veins. I had just killed my leader, my boss, and my friend.

“Fuck, Sarge. That was a hundred milligrams.”

“She’s worth it, Wagner.” I said, resolute in my desire to finish this mission.

I glanced down at Baxter as if I expected his soul to leave his body in the next second. My gut tightened. My heart rate increased. Maybe I would feel guilt for this for the rest of my life. I didn’t know.

Focus on the Target.

Baxter’s eyes suddenly shot open. He stared directly at me, then at Wagner. His heart rate monitor started beeping.

“His heart rate shot up, Sarge.” Wagner pulled the syringe out of the IV feed.

“Why is Wagner...” Dirk’s eyes rolled up into his head. His body started shaking. He was convulsing.

A nurse came running in and pushed her way between Wagner and I. She began checking monitors.

“What happened in here?” the nurse asked.

“His vitals were good. He opened his eyes. Heart rate elevated. Then he started convulsing.” Wagner spoke up, his medical training kicking in.

“Get out of here, you two.”

Dirk’s convulsions stopped, and he collapsed like a dead fish on the bed. His heart rate went flat.

The nurse reached for the intercom button and cried out. “Code Blue, Room 430. I need a crash cart.”

Neither Wagner nor I had moved. By the time more nurses and a doctor came rushing in, images of the chaos in medical tents flooded me. I grabbed Wagner by the arm and pulled him out of the room.

Roberts ran up the hallway, coffee spilling out of his cup despite the lid.

“What happened, Boss?”

“The LT went into arrest,” Wagner said, panic in his voice.

“Shit. I thought he was going to be okay.”

“Me too.” I said.

Roberts looked from Wagner to me, then back to Wagner. “You look like shit, Wagner.”

“Yeah, that shook me up seeing the LT that way.”

“Roberts. Stay here. When Trace gets back, fill him in. Tell him I had another issue to take care of.”

“Sure will, Boss.”

“Oh, and text me on Baxter’s condition. I want to be kept up-to-date.”

“Roger that.”

Wagner looked like he was about to lose it. I grabbed his arm and escorted him down the hallway. We entered an elevator to take us down to the lobby.

“What the fuck, Wagner. You said it would take a while before the drugs showed any effect.”

“I know, but morphine’s a tricky drug. Results vary by individual. Luckily, he was already on some.”

“Why is that important?”

“The hospital will at first suspect that they made a mistake. No one can connect us to the morphine.”

“The fuck, Wagner. We were in the room when he started shaking like an epileptic.”

Wagner was even more sweaty and clammy than before. His arms and legs were shaking. Probably the adrenaline rush after killing someone. Someone he once knew and respected.

Although, he didn’t kill the LT. I did.

I had little sympathy for Wagner. Drug addicts were soft. Wagner was super soft. I may have made a mistake pulling him into all of this. If Scarlet thought he was a loose end, which she probably would, I might have some more dirty work to do for her.

Yeah, Wagner. She is worth it.

Chapter 33

Confirmation

I ARRIVED AT THE HOSPITAL IN THE EVENING. I HAD ALREADY delayed too long coming to check on my injured husband. Dealing with the incompetence of Stu and Wagner was more than I could take. What does a girl have to do to get her husband killed properly?

Stu had texted me a few hours after dropping me off at the house. He assured me that Dirk had been taken care of. I took my time getting prepared.

They had bungled so much already. I wanted to make sure. Besides, as his loving, beautiful wife, I had to spend a night by his bedside. Hopefully, I wouldn't have to spend the night in the hospital.

It would mean sending Trace home, which would be a challenge. He wouldn't begrudge a wife her private time with her sick husband, though. I knew that much about him.

When I arrived at his room, dressed in a black velvet dress, black heels, and a black hat, only Trace and a woman were in the room. They were conversing, and he was signing some documents.

The woman wore a black skirt and a white blouse. She peered at papers through red cat-eye framed glasses. Her dark brunette hair was tied up in a bun and her face looked all scrunched up. She directed Trace to sign another document.

The bed was empty, however. There was no sign of Dirk in the room and his bed had been stripped of all the bed

coverings.

“Where’s Dirk?”

I tried to sound shocked. My heart pounded against my rib cage.

“Was he discharged from the hospital?” I acted hopeful.

When Trace turned to me, it was all I could do to keep the smile from spreading across my face. His face was crestfallen. Sad.

“He didn’t make it, Mrs. Baxter.”

“What happened? I thought he was... stable?” I have been able to cry on demand since I was nine. The tears came easily, and I only hung my head low enough to not meet Trace’s gaze. He had a perfect view of the tears running down my cheeks.

Trace didn’t move to embrace me, like most men would. He’d always kept a more than respectable distance from me. *Unlike Stu.*

The woman seemed even more uncomfortable than Trace. She purposely looked down at her paperwork.

Trace signed the last piece of paperwork, and the woman headed toward the door.

“My condolences for your loss, Mrs. Baxter.” She said, while pausing at my side. A gentle touch to my shoulder was meant to console me. I didn’t need any consoling. I was elated.

I sobbed for a few more seconds while Trace patiently watched on. When I thought I’d milked that as much as possible, I lifted my chin to face Trace.

“What happened? I thought he was stable.”

“I’m not sure, Mrs. Baxter. His heart rate elevated, and he had a seizure. Nurses and a doctor rushed in. He went into cardiac arrest and they couldn’t save him.”

“Did the hospital screw something up? Give him the wrong medication?”

“That is a possibility. But right now it is believed that the damage to his brain was more extensive than anyone expected.”

“Will they do an autopsy to determine the exact cause of death? Because if the hospital screwed up, they should pay for taking away my husband.” The righteous indignation roiled up inside me perfectly. I really didn’t want an autopsy done, though, so I had to be careful.

“They are not planning on it. All the checks of the medical equipment and records showed he didn’t get a drug he wasn’t supposed to or a dose greater than he should have gotten.”

“So, no autopsy is needed?” I whimpered.

“No ma’am. Unless you request one.”

“That won’t be necessary. Do I need to identify the body? I’d like to get that done and over with.”

“There’s no need, Mrs. Baxter.”

I searched his eyes. He was actually in pain right now. I wondered how well he was holding it together.

“I would like to see him one more time.” I sobbed some more and lowered my head, but kept my eyes focused on him just under the brim of my hat.

“You really don’t want to see him.”

“Trace. I do. I should do my wifely duties.”

“The crash really messed his face up. You’ll barely recognize him.”

I gasped and covered my mouth in dismay. No one had mentioned damage to his face, but that made sense with smashing into the steering wheel and flying glass in the Navigator.

“Oh, my. Will we have to have a closed casket funeral?”

“That might be best, Mrs. Baxter. I can take care of all that, though.”

“Trace. I don’t care what he looks like. I need to see him. Give him one last kiss.” A knot in my stomach formed and my chest felt heavy. I wanted to see his dead body. I wanted confirmation.

“I don’t want to upset you more. Maybe later.”

“Now. Trace.” I literally stomped one foot, and the thin heel let out a thin tap.

“Let me see if I can take you down to the morgue.”

Trace pulled his phone from the inside pocket of his black suit jacket. He tapped out a text to someone.

A few seconds later, he got a response.

“Mrs. Baxter. If you really want to see him, at least give the coroner a chance to clean up the body a bit more first. I can take you down there in an hour.”

“Is he really dead, Trace?” I poured on the grief and another trail of tears fell down my cheek.

“Yes. Mrs. Baxter. He is. You should go home. I can have someone take you.”

“I should be here.” The tremble in my voice was perfect. *Don’t tell me those acting lessons didn’t help Dirk Baxter.*

While I wanted to see Dirk’s dead body to have confirmation that he truly was dead, Trace’s actions and his tone showed he really was dead. He couldn’t be that good of an actor. He only knew one facial expression—the stoic face of a military man taking orders. The hospital lady had also seemed filled with compassion.

I was naturally paranoid, but I felt it was finally over. I couldn’t stick around to see the body.

“I’ll leave everything in your capable hands, Trace.” I moved closer and hugged him. His hands tapped my shoulder blades, but he didn’t soften.

By the end of the week, a month at the latest, I would be a multi-millionaire.

* * *

I had dozed off. Probably not the best idea with a head wound. I was sure I had a concussion. Sleeping, though, was a challenge. With no pillow, a hard and lumpy futon, and my wrist cuffed to the bed, every time I tried to move, I woke up.

The lamp on the desk still lit the room, but I could tell it was nighttime. I couldn't see anything at all on the other side of the glass and it was dark everywhere the light of the lamp didn't reach.

The only good thing was my sleep wasn't haunted with those dreams.

I had cried. Sobbed really. The thought of Dirk being dead hurt more than I thought it might. Not that I had imagined that. Our relationship was still new. Still confusing. Still so unprofessional.

He had made me feel something I hadn't felt in a long time, though. I'd had my friends-with-benefits flings since my divorce, but no man had made me feel what Dirk did.

From the moment I laid eyes on him, my pussy clinched. I wanted to please him and be pleased by him. It was primal and seductive, the lust I felt dancing on that stage in front of him.

Now he was dead, and Stu and Scarlet had cuffed me to a futon that smelled like moldy sex.

I heard voices outside and detected a light from down the hallway. I laid back down and tried to look like I was asleep.

* * *

"So, he's dead?" Stu asked Scarlett. "Did you see the body?"

"No. But I could tell by the way Trace acted, he was dead." I replied.

“I told you I gave him enough morphine.” Wagner piped in.

Stu eyed Wagner with a furrowed brow, and the emaciated man shrank back.

“So what about the woman?” Stu hated to even mention her name. He didn’t really react to the news of Dirk’s death, but his jaw muscle flexed when he clenched his jaw at the news. I knew this was affecting him.

“I need you to hold it together, Stu. We’re almost to the end. The finish line is right in front of us.”

“Don’t worry about me. You know we have to kill her. There is no going back now.”

“I know. I will not lose any sleep over it, though. However, you do it, I don’t want to be here when it happens.”

“Me neither.” Stu looked at Wagner. “Since I ended up injecting that morphine into Dirk, you owe me one. You’re not too attached to the woman, are you?”

“No. Not really, Sarge.”

“You can do this and not fuck it up?”

“I’m not a killer, Sarge.”

“I’ll double what I’m paying you now.” I needed him to do this.

“Two-hundred-thousand? That’s a lot of money.”

“Will you do it, Wagner?” I asked.

“Yeah. Consider it done. I’ll go do it now while you’re still...”

“No,” I interrupted. “Stu and I need an alibi. Give us two hours to get somewhere public. Then take care of her. Are you clear?”

“Yeah. Wait two hours. Kill the pretty woman.”

I realized we had been talking outside the office where Doc was chained to the bed. I guess it didn’t matter at this

point. In a couple of hours, she'd be dead. Stu would know how to make the body disappear.

Stu handed Wagner the keys to the cuffs. "When it's done. Put her in one of the barrels in the warehouse. I'll return with a van in about six hours to take care of the rest."

"Sounds good, Sarge."

"Don't fuck this up, Wagner."

Wagner nodded, but looked down. He was such a pathetic loser. A junkie.

Stu would have to make Wagner disappear, too. I wasn't resting until I tied up all the loose ends nice and neat. The junkie had to be eliminated when he had finished his part.

Stu and I headed toward the exit. I would give him his next orders after a good fuck.

Chapter 34

Death is Coming

SOMEBODY NAMED WAGNER WAS GOING TO KILL ME. MY heart pounded in my chest, which caused my head to throb in pain. Nothing happened, though, for a while. I heard someone outside the office, Wagner probably, but he didn't come in.

When he did come in, he had orders to kill me. I had to escape, and I only had maybe an hour to do it. I reached for my phone to see what time it was, but of course I hadn't seen my phone in days.

Okay, Reggie. You have like the equivalent of one appointment to figure this out. Normally, I had a terrible sense of time. However, when working with a client, I usually had a unique ability to know the appointment was over about a minute before my alarm on my phone went off.

I tried to sink into appointment mode so I could know how much time had passed.

I examined the handcuffs again. One end secured my wrist. The other end circled the large round frame of the futon I had spent the who knows how long on. I jerked and pulled, but all that did was to worsen the raw, red marks on my wrists.

I moved the cuffs forward and back along the pole frame, but it would not slide off. I stood up and lifted the mattress.

A thick bolt attached the frame to the legs and arms. One very thick bolt. I tried turning the bolt but soon realized that without a screwdriver, that might be impossible. It was loose, but I couldn't turn it with my fingers. If I could remove that

bolt, then the handcuffs would slide right off the bottom of the steel frame.

I scanned the room for tools. The desk, a small trash can, an old office chair, and the lamp on the desk. Maybe there would be something in the drawers.

I stood up and started dragging the futon across the floor. It moved easily, but it also sounded like a flock of banshees screeching as I dragged it. I stopped and listened.

If my killer, Wagner, heard that, surely he would come in. After ten breaths, I heard nothing other than my pounding heart.

I dragged the futon close enough to the desk that I could open drawers. I opened each one, looking for a screwdriver or any tool that might help me unscrew this bolt. Maybe a wrench would help with the nut on the end of the screw.

Old papers, ten dried-up pens, and some paper clips were all I could find. Except for a letter opener. It had a point on it which might fit into the crosshead of the screw.

I tried it, and with great effort I got the screw to turn. After what seemed like an hour, though, I had made little progress. The bolt didn't seem to extend from the tube at all.

“Fuck.”

I turned the bolt again and observed what happened to the washer and nut. When I could get the bolt to turn, the washer and nut were moving too. I tried holding the nut and turning the bolt, but all I got for my attempt was a rapidly deteriorating letter opener and a sore thumb.

Giving up wasn't an option, though. I worked on that bolt without letting up. At one point, I stomped on the front of the futon frame as best I could, trying to break any part of it. All that got me was more wrist rash.

An hour passed. Two hours passed. I was sure that three hours had passed. I was running out of time.

Why hadn't Wagner come in to kill me yet?

I collapsed on the futon in frustration. The tears welled up. This couldn't be how my life ended.

My life was just turning around. The custody issues with Richard had finally been resolved. My practice was going great. I had some high paying clients who were helping my office thrive.

This all started when I stripped on amateur night at the Cherry Pie Gentleman's Club. The one time I did something that was just for me, ended up with me handcuffed to a futon with a stinky mattress in an abandoned warehouse, soon to be put to death by a drug addict. *Fuck my life.*

I looked at my raw wrist and a small trail of blood running down the back of my hand. One thin piece of metal wrapped around my wrist and the other end around a much larger bar of metal. So thin, but so strong. I'd been trying to dismantle the bed frame with no success. If I only knew how to pick the lock on the handcuffs, I could escape.

I didn't have a bobby pin. After examining the cuffs, I saw the lock was just a small hole at the base of the cuff. If I had something small, like a bobby pin, I could try. I opened the front drawer of the desk again. Pens, paper clips, post-it notes, a notepad. Wait.

I eyed the clips in the drawer like they might leap out and run away. While I had seen people pick the locks in movies, I had no idea what they did. They seemed to do it so easily. This might be my only hope.

I grabbed one of them from the drawer and straightened out one end so that I had a long piece of metal. I inserted it into the tiny lock hole and wiggled it around. Nothing.

Time slipped away. I could sense it. He would come for me at any time. Maybe my sense of time was off. I might have more time. What if he returned early?

I could feel panic creeping up on me like a cat hunting a mouse. The danger was palpable. I knew it was there, just like

I knew Wagner was somewhere close. I couldn't see it or him, though. The not knowing induced more panic.

I sat down and wiggled the clip inside the lock more. Frantically, I tried moving it in different ways. I slid it in and turned it. Nothing. I wiggled it around in a circle. Nothing. I pushed. I pulled. Nothing.

The sound of footfalls from a distance sent my heart rate soaring. I pushed the futon back to the wall, still grasping the paper clip. It made noise, but at this point, I had little choice.

I sat down and wiggled the paper clip some more. I frantically tried everything I had already tried.

I could see the outline of a man against the smoked glass of the office, walking toward the door. Time was running out.

With a final desperate twist and push of the clip, the cuff slipped off.

Fuck. I did it.

Adrenaline rushed through me as I weighed my options. With little time to act, I curled up in a seated position on the futon, hiding my freed wrist and the cuff beside my leg. I lifted my leg to conceal that I was no longer cuffed. I'd have to figure out the next step when my killer entered the room.

* * *

The door opened, and a thin, scraggly man entered. He walked to the desk and leaned against it, just like Scarlet had.

We stared at each other and I tried to calm down. The thought of being murdered by this stranger had my body buzzing. My fight-or-flight reflex wanted to kick in. The cuff and my freed wrist were hidden, but I still had to deal with my killer. I didn't know if I could fight him off and escape.

He looked thin, but there was a hardness to him.

“You know why you’re here, don’t you?” the thin man asked.

“You’re going to kill me?” My heart pounded.

“Nah. I’m not going to kill you. You’re too pretty to kill.”

He couldn’t meet my eyes. He lied to me.

“You killed my husband, though?” A knot formed in my stomach. Nausea rose rapidly.

“If I tell you, then I’ll have to kill you.” He chuckled as if amused by his own words.

“You don’t look like a killer.” Dizziness threatened to black out everything. *You’re losing it. Pull yourself together.*

“See, that’s what I always thought. I was a medic in the Iraq. I had a gun, but I seldom fired it. Hated the idea of killing someone. Even a haji.”

“So, you’re not going to kill me?”

“Nope. I need to figure out what to do with you, though.”

“But you told Scarlett you would kill me.”

“You heard that.” He rubbed his hand on the back of his neck through his scraggly hair. The man was definitely fighting some moral dilemma. At least, I hoped he was. That might be my only hope of escaping certain death.

“Yes. I heard that.” I scooted back on the futon as far as I could, as if cringing. “You could just let me go.”

He turned his back on me and stepped to the desk. After removing a small case from his inner suit pocket, he laid it down on the desk. He pulled a syringe and a vial from the case and began filling the syringe.

“I did tell the pretty red head I would kill you. And she’s going to pay me a lot of money.” He flicked the syringe with his finger, forcing air bubbles to the top, which he ejected with a push of the plunger. A tiny amount of liquid dripped out of the end of the needle.

“What’s that?”

“Just some morphine. It will help you sleep so I can move you.”

“Move me where?” Fear surged through me.

“Someplace where I can...”

“Look, you don’t want to do this. You’re not a killer. You said so.” The words rushed out of me like water spilled from a glass.

“I spent four years in Iraq. I spent more time patching up soldiers, many of them bleeding out faster than I could plug holes. My job was to keep them alive. Half the time I didn’t. The last two years were with Lieutenant Baxter. He saved my nuts more times than I can count.”

“And yet, you killed him. Today. You injected him with... that.” I gestured to the syringe in his hands.

“Morphine? Yeah. A wonder drug, really. The right dosage can relieve pain, put you to sleep, make you feel wonderful.” He glanced from me to the syringe and back to me.

“And the wrong dosage kills you?”

“You’re pretty smart.”

He strode towards me, syringe in hand.

“Which is that?” I tried to push myself through the back of the futon—through the wall behind it, but I couldn’t get any farther away from him.

“This is just a dose that will put you to sleep. It feels fantastic. Amazing, really. You’re going to love it.” He approached me with syringe in hand like some villain in a Bond film.

When he stood directly over me, I kicked him in the groin with the leg that had been hiding the unlocked cuff. It hit solidly in his lower belly, forcing him to exhale with a loud grunt. He bent over at the waist but didn’t drop. I kicked again and connected with his crotch.

He dropped like a stone and dropped his syringe. It slid under the futon.

I jumped off the couch and searched for the syringe. It had slid so far under that I had to drop to the floor to reach it. I probably should have run, but I didn't want him chasing me with the morphine.

I reached and just couldn't grab it. Scooting forward under the futon, I grasped it and crawled backwards.

Suddenly, a hand grasped my hair and pulled my head back. I hid the hand holding the syringe behind my back.

"Fucking bitch!" He stood and pulled me up with him. We faced each other and his anger caused his face to turn various shades of red.

"I was going to give you just enough to put you to sleep, but now..."

I positioned the syringe in my hand and then slammed it into his neck. I plunged the morphine into his neck as he staggered back and away from me. The syringe pulled loose from his neck, and the rest of the morphine squirted out as I continued to press on the plunger.

When he fell and glared back at me, his look of anger turned to horror as he realized what I had done. He touched his neck and a dab of blood dotted his finger. When he looked at the blood and then glanced back at me, I recognized that look. I had seen fear in the face of men enough to know that he was afraid.

"You fucking killed me."

"I thought it was just a dose to make me sleep."

"I fucking lied, you bitch."

He staggered to his feet and started towards me.

Fuck. It's time to run.

I dashed to the door as he staggered behind me like a decayed zombie. Once out in the hallway, I ran in the direction

he had come from. I did not know what I faced there. The hallway led to some stairs which led down into an enormous warehouse. Empty shelves with a scattering of pallets loaded with who knew what made the warehouse below me a maze.

I had no idea where the exit was, so I continued to run away from the offices. Glancing side to side down gaps in the shelving, I ran barefoot through the warehouse. A red exit sign glowed to my left. Running toward it, I heard someone approaching from behind.

“I’m going to get you. You fucking bitch.” Wagner shouted.

I didn’t slow down when I reached the door. Pushing through it, I broke into the bright afternoon daylight. I glanced behind me to see how close my thin captor was.

And slammed right into a barrel-chested man, which knocked me to the floor. I glanced up quickly as I scrambled away from him. He strode toward me with a menacing snarl.

It was Stu.

Chapter 35

Search and Rescue

“I KNEW HE WOULD FUCK THIS UP,” STU GROWLED AS HE towered over me.

I pushed myself away from him, scrambling on the hot pavement. He was a powerful looking brute, and I wasn't sure he didn't have balls of steel. As he neared me, I tried anyway, kicking up towards his crotch.

The big man turned just enough that my kick slammed into his muscled thigh. Worse yet, he grabbed my leg when I tried to kick him again. He lifted me nearly off the ground and flipped me over onto my belly. He knelt down with his knee on my back and put his full weight on me, forcing every ounce of air out of my lungs.

“Stay down, Doc. I can make this painless and quick or I can make this very painful.”

“You don't want to do this.” I managed, though it came out weak and wheezing.

“Are you going to stop struggling? Or do I need to knock you out before I drag your pretty ass back into the warehouse?”

Someone burst through the door that I had just exited.

“Wagner. You fucking idiot.”

“I'm sorry, Sarge. She kicked me.” He paused and neither of them said anything for several breaths. “In the balls!”

I heard Wagner stagger, and then his body bang against the door.

“What the fuck’s wrong with you?”

“She also... stuck me with the fucking needle...”

“What? Oh, you are a resourceful little bitch. Aren’t you, Doc?”

“Help me get her back inside so you can stick her with the morphine.”

Wagner shuffled over to us and Stu stood, lifting me easily by the arm as he did. They both took an arm and started towards the door. The thin man’s steps came haltingly and his grip was weak. The burly man’s grasp nearly cut off blood flow.

“There’s no more... morphine.”

Adrenaline had to be what was keeping Wagner on his feet. The syringe had been pretty full when I jabbed him and even though much of it didn’t make it into him, there had to have been enough to knock him out for a long while.

“What the fuck, Wagner?”

Stu opened the door and strode through with his iron grip on my arm. Wagner fell to the floor behind us just inside the door. I stumbled forward and Stu kept me from falling. My heart rate pounded in my chest and my legs were trembling. After getting thirty feet inside, the door burst open behind us.

Glancing over my shoulder, I saw two men charge in. They wore black gear, vests, and wielded assault rifles. More were behind them, including Trace, who held a pistol in his hands.

I had never been so glad to see anyone in my life. As soon as the elation hit, Stu jerked my arm hard and pulled me to the right. He pulled a gun from inside his suit and without aiming, fired two shots towards the door. Wagner drew a gun as well and aimed it with a shaky hand at the men at the door.

Stu pulled me between two sets of warehouse shelves, which had pallets of water on them, providing some cover. He fired off three shots behind us. He immediately dashed to the left down another aisle leading back towards the offices.

“Drop the gun, Wagner,” shouted Trace.

“I didn’t...”

Shots rang out. A lot of them, as my brute of a captor, drug me through the warehouse. My legs faltered, and I fell. He hauled me back to my feet, and we ran again. Two more quick shots sounded before he turned to the right at another intersection of shelves. He immediately turned left again, heading towards the back of the warehouse.

Instinct kept my legs pumping, but the more we ran, the more my brain kept telling me not to run. I fell. Again. On purpose this time. I struggled to pull my arm from Stu’s firm hold.

When he tried to pull me up, I struggled by pulling away from him. It only helped for a second and soon he had me on my feet and he pulled me behind him as he ran for his escape.

I could hear footsteps behind us. Beside us. When I glanced to my left, two men had caught up, and I easily saw them through the empty shelves. Soon they raced ahead down their aisle.

“Stop, Stu. There’s no use running.” Trace yelled.

When the two soldiers appeared in front of us now at the next intersection of shelves, rifles aimed at Stu, he stopped. He pulled me into his body and put his gun to my head. The hot metal against my neck frightened me more, and I froze. My head pounded and my stomach churned. Stu had to be holding me up because I didn’t think my legs could do it.

Turning to put me between those following us and him, he growled at them.

“Put the guns down, Trace. All of you. Or I put a bullet through her neck.”

He shuffled his feet, pulling me with him so that I was now between him and the two armed men in the path to the offices. Then he turned back again, facing Trace. Three other men stood in the aisle spread out around Dirk's driver. I noticed another man in the aisle to our right. They had Stu surrounded.

My ears buzzed from the shots fired. Memories of a gun, probably this gun, pressed to my temple returned, making me nauseous and dizzy. The pressure of Stu's forearm on my chest pushed the oxygen from my lungs. Everything was moving too fast.

"Drop the gun and maybe you make it out of here alive."

"Fuck that, Trace. You drop your guns. It would be a shame to lose your boss and his woman on the same day."

He brandished the gun at those that surrounded him, then put it back at my neck. While I seemed to tremble everywhere, he seemed to be in full control. His hand did not shake. He planted the barrel of his gun firmly on my neck. The hot barrel burned my flesh.

"Shoot him, Trace. Dirk's dead. I don't care what you have to do to take this son of a bitch out."

Stu jerked the arm wrapped around my body and squeezed me into his chest. The barrel of his gun pressed even harder into my neck.

"Shut up, Doc. I don't need you agitating the situation." His voice was steady.

"Stu. The odds of you getting away are slim to none." Trace stood about fifteen feet away, handgun raised and pointed at us. At Stu. "Everyone else. Hold your fire. Only fire if I do, and only if you have a clean shot. I don't want a bullet ripping through him and hitting Miss Davenport."

Each of the other men—wearing kevlar vests with Baxter Securities printed on them—stood fifteen to thirty feet away with assault rifles pointed at us. There was no way they could all open fire and not hit me. It was their best chance of taking Stu out and stopping him, though.

“You can’t kill him, Trace. He is probably the only one who knows what Scarlet...”

Stu covered my mouth and pulled my head against his chest, trying to keep me from talking. He was strong. I felt like he was crushing my neck. The pain from the hot barrel made it hard to think.

I had to think clearly. A new memory came to me. Dirk’s self-defense instructions slipped into my mind at that moment, and with nothing to lose, I unleashed myself on my captor.

I swung an elbow to his ribs. My foot came up and slammed down on the top of his foot.

He grunted, but his grip on me didn’t lessen. Jerking my head to the right and then back sent a pounding pain through my skull.

Dirk’s instructions maybe didn’t work on a man built like a tank. I struggled to get my mouth open.

“Stay back, Trace. I can use a bullet or just break her neck.”

“Stu, you’re not getting away. Just let her go. You haven’t murdered anyone.”

“Have you forgotten about Dirk?” He growled and stepped back two steps.

My feet slipped out from under me and my full weight almost caused him to lose his grip. I got my mouth open and bit down on his hand as hard as I could.

To his credit, he didn’t drop me immediately. My teeth sunk in as I heard him grunt. I could feel drops of warm liquid in my mouth. Getting my feet under me, I raised one foot again and tried to stomp on his foot and missed. The hard concrete sent shock waves through my foot.

He jerked me back again while Trace moved closer, gun aimed.

Stu aimed his gun at Trace. “I’ll put a bullet between your eyes, Trace. Not one more step further.”

I grabbed Stu’s thumb—the one held across my mouth—with both hands and pulled as hard as I could. My teeth were still sunk into the meaty part below the thumb and the suddenness of my move surprised him. With his thumb pulled back, his grip loosened, and I bent my knees, lifting my feet off the floor like I was about to do a spin on the stripper pole.

He didn’t drop me, but I slid until he held my head against his belly.

Trace didn’t hesitate and fired. Stu returned one shot at the same time Trace fired again. I heard the thump of bullets hitting my captor.

His grip loosened completely, and I fell to the ground. I rolled quickly to the side away from Stu as Trace and others rushed to restrain him and kick his gun away.

When I got to my knees, I saw two red spots expanding on his upper chest.

“Call an ambulance and police. Now.” Trace shouted out instructions as another man knelt over Stu and applied gauze and pressure to both wounds.

I could do nothing but sit there, butt on my heels, as my body started trembling. Somehow, I had survived and my body knew it. All that adrenaline had to go somewhere.

Trace stepped toward me and knelt at my side. “You’re going to be okay.”

I put my head on his shoulder and just felt my entire body relax. Soon, someone wrapped a blanket around my shoulders and someone else handed me a bottle of water.

Two men worked on Stu, doing everything to keep him alive. They talked, but it all seemed like radio chatter, useless noise that I couldn’t understand.

After taking a long chug of water, I glanced up at Trace. “What about Scarlet? Where is she?”

* * *

The door of the leased jet, which would fly me to Belize, closed, and I relaxed. A little bit. Until the plane took off and landed at its destination, I couldn't completely relax.

Plan B was in full swing. Plan A involved sticking around for weeks or a month, maybe even a year, until the estate was settled, and I had everything I deserved. My phone call to Stu had changed all that. Plan B was now my best option. Maybe my only option.

I had been at a posh LA restaurant with friends, securing my alibi. Slipping away to the restroom where I could talk in private, I called Stu. When Trace answered the phone, my body froze.

“Scarlet. Calling to check up on your man?”

I said nothing. I couldn't. I wouldn't.

“I regret to inform you that Stu Morgan cannot talk to you at the moment. He took two bullets to the chest.”

“Is he dead?” Weakness and some ill-placed sentiment for the man I'd been fucking behind my husband's back for almost a year now pulled the words out of me.

“He might live. And if he does, I'm sure he's going to have quite a story for us. One that involves an unfaithful wife...”

“Shut up, Trace. You've always been too self-righteous for my taste.”

“And you've always been too much of a slut for my taste.”

“Now that he's dead, I guess I'll have to fire you.”

“I regret to inform you...”

“Shut up, Trace. Really.”

“I must inform you that Dirk Baxter is not dead.”

I sat down on the toilet seat of the stall I was in. My knees just collapsed and my throat tightened. The hand holding the phone shook.

“Did you hear me Scarlet? Dirk is alive. You and your goons failed.”

“How?”

“Wouldn’t you like to know?” he scoffed.

I immediately hung up. When my body finally cooperated, I left the restroom, gave an excuse to my girlfriends, and rushed home. On the way, I called a limo company that I had on retainer with orders to pick me up at my apartment.

I already had bags partially packed just in case of an emergency. Three, in fact. One had some clothes that I couldn’t part with. The second had shoes I couldn’t leave behind. I added more until they were full. Then I grabbed the third bag from my closet and emptied the contents of my safe hidden in the back of the closet. It contained cash, passports and ids with a new name, legal papers for the properties I now owned in Belize, and three burner phones.

The limo arrived and as it pulled away and turned a corner, two Baxter Security vehicles pulled up to my apartment and a half-dozen men spilled out and entered the house.

I had gotten out of there just in time. They wouldn’t find anything that would lead them to my new identity and within an hour, the limo dropped me off at the Long Beach Airport right outside my leased jet.

A half-hour later we were taking off, and I gazed down at the LA buildings and roads as we headed southeast, away from a life that had been pretty good to me. Granted, I didn’t have my 250 million dollars. I didn’t even have the one million I was due for divorcing Dirk.

I had, however, siphoned off twenty million dollars, which, except for the hundred thousand in my bag, all sat safely in an offshore account in Belize. So many of the ventures that Dirk had invested in for me ended up with me squirreling away

money. I had purchased the resort home in Belize as a “set location” for a movie that never happened.

The steward, a handsome young man with large hands and a beautiful jaw, served me my second drink. I eyed him up and down, from his well-groomed hair to his tight-fitting pants. With Stu gone, he might make for a fun little romp to win me admittance into the mile-high club.

This chapter of my life was over. I looked forward to the next chapter with no regrets and plenty of enthusiasm. The steward’s dick in my mouth or pussy sounded like an excellent way to pass the time between here and my new home. My new identity.

“What’s your name?” I asked the steward with a lusty look on my face.

Chapter 36

Contract Fulfilled

I SAT IN MY OFFICE, REVIEWING NOTES FROM PREVIOUS appointments with my next client. It was late afternoon, and the sun shone through the thin window. The sun and a desk lamp illuminated my workspace. Two weeks had passed and my physical wounds were all but healed except for a red mark that still marred my wrist. The emotional ones might take a while. Besides my notes, I had plenty of experiences with my client to add to the thoughts swirling through my head.

The intercom on my phone beeped.

“Yeah?”

“Your client is here.”

“Send him in.”

The door opened, and Penny let Dirk in. We were meeting on a Monday rather than our usual Friday time. He had always asked me to dinner after every session. Perhaps, since we weren't meeting on Friday, he wouldn't do that this time. Maybe after all that had happened, the feelings he had for me had dissipated, or worse yet, disappeared.

My heart beat a little faster. My belly tightened. At one point during this crazy mess, I thought he was dead. To see him walking through the door alive made my entire body react as if it was Christmas morning. Dirk Baxter—Mr. Dark Eyes, soon to be a billionaire—was alive.

Dirk took his usual seat on the couch. When I met his intense stare, I felt like his eyes would burn right through me.

He focused intently on me, and his look seemed to carry either menace or passion. I couldn't really tell which one at times. Today I was sure it was passion. My mind raced through the events that happened after Trace and his team rescued me.

After the shootout at the warehouse, an ambulance had taken me to the nearest hospital where they treated my dehydration, my bleeding wrist, and assessed my mental health. Grief was my number one emotional stress during my stay. I didn't realize how much I had cared for Dirk until I found out he was dead. While I tried to put on a strong face talking to the nurses and the psychiatrist, tears were a constant symptom.

It wasn't until Trace came to see me I learned the good news. Dirk was alive. Trace seeing Stu and Wagner on video administering the drug after Dirk developed seizures led them to administer the right drug to counter the morphine overdose. He also had the idea of moving Dirk and pretending he was dead whenever anyone came to visit. Especially Scarlet.

I didn't have many questions then, I still suffered from shock. So I mostly listened. Cried. Mumbled some questions. Cried some more. All the while, Trace filled me in and asked me about what happened at the warehouse.

An examination of the vehicle that we crashed in also uncovered the cut brake line. Stu had survived and confessed to cutting the brake line, but he had been silent as to why he did it. Trace was sure that Scarlett was behind this, but without a confession from Stu and with no physical evidence tracing her to anything, the authorities wouldn't press any charges.

I had told Trace about what Scarlett had done at the warehouse and what she had said to me. Surely what I knew would help, but he told me Dirk did not want me to say anything to the police. Per his instructions, when two detectives came by to talk to me, I played dumb. I remembered the crash and waking up in a hospital. Nothing else came out of my mouth, although I felt awkward and nervous lying to the police.

When the hospital dismissed me, I went to Dirk's hospital to see him, but they said he had been dismissed. Trace told me they had moved him to a private facility and didn't want any visitors while he recovered. He did set an appointment, our tenth and final one, for today. Monday. At 1:00 PM rather than our normal time of four.

In the two weeks that passed, I thought of many questions I wanted to ask him. Only some of them could be asked in this professional setting, though.

I got up slowly and strode to my chair, notebook in hand. After setting down and gathering myself, I met his intense gaze, took a deep breath, and began our last session.

"So. How are you feeling physically?"

"I'm recovering. I should be good as new in a week or so."

"That's good. I'm so glad." A sigh followed. I could barely keep my voice from shaking. This in no way resembled being professional. I just wanted to straddle him on the couch and kiss him all over his face.

He remained stoic, but his eyes still burned like black fire.

We talked more about his health. His thoughts about Scarlet. His marriage. Then I moved into more intimate topics. His feelings.

"And how are you feeling emotionally?"

"I'm doing fine."

"Fine?"

"Yes. Better than fine."

"How is that? Your wife tried to kill you?"

"She didn't succeed, though. I'm fine."

"You're not angry? You're not sad? Curious why she tried to kill you?"

"No. None of those."

“How can you be so calm? I’ve been freaked out almost every day since the car crash.”

“I meditate every morning.” He smiled. The first break in his granite face came after he informed me of his secret. Was he serious or just cracking a joke?

I couldn’t help but smile back. It was important that he process his feelings, though. I knew that. But did he? Maybe, as a war veteran, what he went through with the car wreck was minor compared to what he experienced in Iraq.

“Maybe I need to meditate?” I smirked.

“It can help put everything into a clearer perspective.”

“Good. Let’s get back to the reason you came to me in the first place. How is your libido?”

“My libido?”

“Yes. Your sex drive. Trauma can decrease your desire to have sex. It might inhibit your ability to get an erection.” I sounded so clinical, but the entire time I was talking, I was remembering his length and his hardness when we had been together. I felt my girly parts tighten at the memory.

“I’m not having any problems with that, either.” He smirked back at me.

“Tell me more.”

“Really. You want to know how often I get hard now after my wife tried to kill me? How often I masturbate?”

“I am a sex therapist and you came to me because you were having difficulties in that department.” I smiled reassuringly while visions of bobbing my head up and down his length flashed through my mind. *Was that a wet spot forming on my panties?*

“I can assure you those difficulties vanished as quickly as Scarlet vanished from the US.”

“She left the country?”

“That’s not important. You won’t need to worry about Scarlet.”

“How can you be so sure? She seriously wanted me dead. I sensed some pretty extreme jealousy when she spoke to me at the warehouse.”

“She won’t be an issue. I promise you.” His stare—so penetrating, so hard, so punishing—convinced me this wasn’t a topic he wanted to discuss.

“So, if she will not be a problem, why do you need to see me again?”

“This is the tenth visit per my obligation. I finish what I start.”

“Because it is financially to your benefit?”

“Yes.”

“Is that the only reason?”

Maybe I wouldn’t see Dirk after this meeting. My heart sank and my stomach knotted at the thought. When Scarlet was in the picture and I thought there was a chance they might work it out, I didn’t want to interfere. Even with some of our wonderfully sex-filled meetings, I had to step aside and let them work it out. With her gone, all I wanted was to see him as often as possible.

He thought about my question and only answered after a long pause. “No.”

“No?”

“No.” He was being as tight-lipped as a killer, unwilling to confess to murder.

“Dirk. Why did you meet with me today? Besides it being the tenth session and fulfilling your pre-nuptial agreement.”

“Perhaps I wanted to see you again. Maybe I enjoyed our time together.”

“In our therapy sessions?”

“Well, there was one very memorable session.”

“That wasn’t an official session.” Memories of practicing sensate touch in the office’s bedroom, normally only used by my sex surrogate, Chastity, played like a movie reel in my head.

“But it was memorable.”

“Yes. It was.” I actually blushed, as thoughts of him touching me like he did that night caused my skin to tingle.

The questions we were delving into were on that list of questions that probably shouldn’t be asked in the office. I tried to regain control, not only of the session, but of my own unraveling emotions.

“So you say your libido is fine now. Correct?”

“Yes. It is better than it has been in some time.”

“What do you attribute that to?”

“My security team has some theories.”

“Your security team? They know about your sex life?”

“Not exactly. We found some drugs at our home, hidden in Scarlet’s dresser.”

“What kind of drugs?”

“Some anti-depressants, anxiety medication, muscle relaxers, and more.”

“Was Scarlet suffering from depression or anxiety? Was she injured?”

“No. She coerced a doctor into giving her the medications.”

My puzzled expression caused him to smile.

“What did this have to do with your libido?” I realized the answer as soon as I asked the question.

“You know what SSRI’s are right?”

I nodded. “Yes. Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors. They affect libido. Can cause erectile dysfunction. And you think...”

“I am pretty sure she was giving me a little drug cocktail in my coffee or in my energy smoothies she made for me religiously.”

“You believe this? Why?”

“Because after I saw you for the first time at...” He glanced down before lifting his head to meet my gaze again.

“The Cherry Pie Gentleman’s Club?”

“Yes. I moved out of our shared condo that day. And over the next few weeks, I felt my stamina and ability return.”

“So, you felt better when you were living alone. Away from Scarlett?”

“Yes.”

“But you had no symptoms of ED that night.” Remembering that night at the Cherry Pie sent my pussy fluttering. It felt like my nether lips wanted to part for him right now.

“I can’t explain that. But within two weeks, I felt like I was getting back to normal.”

The evidence seemed pretty clear. While our encounter at the Cherry Pie didn’t fit the evidence, our other encounters did. He was slow to respond to his touch therapy session with Chastity, but was fine with me a week later.

I had assumed it was because of an attraction to me, a craving, a strong desire. I had hoped so anyway. Perhaps it was just a matter of chemicals no longer in his body.

“And now?”

“Let’s just say you could run something up the flagpole every morning if you wished.” His smile was wicked and sexy and left me wetter in the panties. I suddenly felt hot and flushed. *Fuck, I needed some relief.*

“So you attribute this return to form to not taking Scarlett’s ED cocktail for the last several weeks? Anything else contributing?” I was still fishing, but I was using a net now and not just a fishing pole with one hook on it. Without a doubt, I wanted Dirk to ask me out now. I would not hesitate to say yes and I would make sure his dessert that night was worth it.

“Nothing that I can think of,” he replied.

I shifted uncomfortably in my seat. When I checked the clock, our session was over.

“I guess your time is up, Mr. Baxter. Let me walk you to the door.”

We both rose and headed to the door. I opened it for him and we paused.

“I already left a check with Penny.”

“So, you’re all paid up. Good.”

“Thank you very much. For everything.” He reached out to shake my hand.

“No hug?”

The hand remained extended, and I finally took it and shook his hand. I felt a tingling sensation from my hand to my chest. Just from his touch, my nipples got hard. My pussy begged for his touch. I wanted to hug him and press my breasts against his hard chest. I wanted to feel his hard dick pressed against my belly.

No hug came, though, and he kept me at arm’s length with my hand stuck in his.

“Okay. No hug. Thank you for everything, too.”

“Goodbye, Miss Davenport.” He released my hand and headed to the door.

His tight ass in his expensive slacks sent my emotions, my desire, and my body into hurricane mode. I thought we had developed some chemistry. I thought we could explore that

chemistry with his wife gone. My mind raced, thinking of all the things I might have done wrong.

I suddenly felt more devastated than I had ever felt in my life. Mr. Dark Eyes had just walked out of both my office and my life for the last time. There would not be any fairy-tale ending to our erotic romance.

And I so wanted the fairy-tale ending.

Chapter 37

Surprise Dinner

I SAT AT MY DESK ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON, STILL TRYING TO figure out how things had gone so wrong. A dull pain in my chest, which had grown stronger since Monday, weighed me down. My last appointment had ended three hours ago, but the sheer misery of my situation had me staring at my notes, idly shuffling papers, and reviewing my appointments for next week. My focus was scattered at best.

There was a knock at my door.

“Come in.”

Penny pushed the door open and peeked in. “I’m heading out.”

“Okay.”

“You want me to lock up?”

“No. I’ll be leaving shortly.”

She nodded and gave me a half-hearted smile filled with concern. I had seen that smile from her and Chastity all week. I sighed, tired of the pity.

“You okay?” she asked, concern laced in the two simple words.

“Yeah.”

“You sure?”

“Yes. I’ll be okay. I just need time.” The smile I tried to put on my face only seemed to open the faucet of tears.

Penny nodded and closed the door.

This mood, which I had struggled with all week, puzzled me even as it brought tears to my eyes. I hadn't fallen for a man this hard since I was twenty-one and Ricardo, a foreign student from Spain, had swept me off my feet with his charming good looks, charismatic smile, and promises of flying me around the world.

Once I found out his family were simple, poor farmers in Spain and he had only been on the one plane that flew him to the United States—coach and not first class—his love charm over me faded. Not that I was a gold digger, like Scarlet. I simply discovered then that I disliked people who weren't authentic and honest.

The thought of Scarlet brought back images of being locked up in the warehouse, of Wagner approaching me with a drug-filled syringe, the shooting in the warehouse, and of Scarlet mocking me. Nightmares haunted me almost every night.

The worst nightmares, though, involved Dirk embracing me, kissing me, making love to me, only to push me aside and walk out of a suddenly dark room. Those dreams usually ended with Scarlet threatening to come back and make sure I was dead. Even thinking about the dreams caused me to shudder.

I wiped a tear away with a tissue and pushed myself away from my desk. After debating whether to take my laptop with me, I grabbed my purse and phone. I had no desire to work this weekend. I locked up the office and then took the elevator down to the first floor.

When I got to the parking garage, I hurried to my car, focused diligently on my surroundings. The sound of another vehicle approaching from behind made my stomach knot up. That had been another symptom of my ordeal—anxiety and hyper-vigilance. I reached my car and a black SUV pulled up beside me. The vehicle stopped right behind my car. I

hurriedly pushed the button to unlock my car and opened the door without turning to face the vehicle.

A car door opened and closed. I slid into my car and locked myself in. Images of the man breaking my window glass and threatening me flashed through my mind. I immediately tensed up.

“Miss Davenport.”

I recognized that voice. Turning my head, the figure of Trace approached me. His bald black head, glistening from the lights of the parking garage and his broad frame brought with it a wave of calm. Dirk’s black Navigator was behind him, blocking me in my parking spot.

“Oh. Trace. You scared me.”

“Sorry, Miss Davenport.” He stood in a black suit, one hand grasping the wrist of the other arm in front of him. His stoic expression was impossible to read.

“What do I owe the pleasure?”

“Mr. Baxter would like you to accompany me. I am to take you to a dinner engagement with him.”

Shock, surprise, amusement, and anger all roiled through me like ingredients in a morning smoothie in the blender. “Oh, he would?”

“Yes. If you would accompany me, I’ll drive you to the location.”

“What makes Mr. Baxter think I want to have dinner with him?”

“I’m not privy to Mr. Baxter’s thoughts, Miss Davenport.”

I wanted to decline. My instinct told me that no good would come of this and it would hurt me even more. A part of me, though—that part that wanted him to ask me out on Monday—wanted to not hesitate for a second and jump into the black Navigator and be whisked off to dinner with Mr. Dark Eyes.

You only live once, Reggie. Let's see where this goes.

“Very well.” I exited my Lexus, shut my car door, and pressed the key fob twice to lock my vehicle. The chirp of the lock being engaged echoed through the garage.

* * *

Within an hour I was at the Penthouse restaurant again on the top floor of the Huntley Hotel in Santa Monica. Dirk had a very private table with a magnificent view of the ocean and the hills to the north. He had wine and calamari already at the table. I slid into the booth seat and took in the view of the hills to the north. The view was breathtaking.

When I finally turned my head to face Dirk, he stared at me intently. It was the same penetrating glare he had on his face at our last appointment. In the restaurant's light, it gave off a different vibe. This gaze seemed to undress me. There was a heat level to it, not present at our session.

“I'm glad you could make it. I hope you stay this time for the entire meal.”

“The food is probably worth staying for, but is the company?” That came out a little sharper than I intended.

“The food is better, but the company is definitely worth it.” He didn't seem phased by my tone.

“Why am I here?”

“Because you're hungry.”

The server appeared on my left side. “Wine?”

I nodded, and he filled half of my wineglass with a dark wine.

“Merlot?” I asked.

“Yes. Ma'am. Our finest bottle.”

I swirled the lovely mixture of dark grapes and sniffed. Its aroma was heady, rich, and I could detect a hint of plums.

After taking a sip, I nodded to the server, letting him know I was happy with the wine.

Gazing out the window and watching the waves roll up onto the beach, I contemplated whether I would stay or walk out. The first time Dirk had Trace bring me here, I had walked out before I had even finished the one drink I ordered. It seemed a shame to do it again. Besides, he might answer my questions this time, even the ones inappropriate to ask in my office.

And why was I being so fickle? I would have said yes on Monday if he had asked me out. Maybe it had to do with him sending Trace to bring me to him, rather than calling me and asking me out. Maybe I didn't like being summoned.

In the end, though, I was here. With him. Ready for dinner at a very nice restaurant in Santa Monica.

“Penny for your thoughts.” He broke the silence just as I decided to stay.

“I was just debating whether I would stay or leave again.”

“And what did you decide?”

“I'm staying for now. On one condition.”

His dark eyes darkened, and his intense gaze turned into a burning glare. “That is?”

“You be honest with me. Answer my questions.”

“So you want to get intimate with me?”

My mind immediately went to sex, even though as a sex therapist I knew intimacy had many layers. As soon as I thought of sex, though, my pussy clenched and my neck and face grew hot. Perhaps it was because men usually equated intimacy with sex.

“Yes.”

“How intimate?”

“Very. But that won't happen unless you open up to me.”

“What do you want to know?”

“Why did you really keep your last appointment? From what Trace told me, Scarlet is out of the picture, but he won’t tell me where she is. Last I checked, you are still married to her.” My voice remained calm, which amazed me. On the inside, I felt like I was a quivering mass of jello. Cherry red jello, but still jello.

“Did you want some calamari? The breading they use on it here is outstanding.” He motioned to the plate piled high with golden calamari on the table between us.

“No. I want you to answer the question.”

He breathed in deeply. It wasn’t a sigh. It was deeper. Longer.

“I believe in honoring all my obligations. The pre-nuptial agreement was one of those obligations. The other was...” He paused as he measured my reaction.

“Was?”

“My obligation to you. I said I would meet with you ten times and pay you a specific sum of money. I honored that as well.”

“So, I’m a financial transaction to you.”

“I love it when you get your hackles up.” He leaned forward, placing both of his forearms on the table. His wicked smile elicited images of kissing the lips on his handsome face.

“So now you’re comparing me to a dog?”

“I see you more like a cat. Sleek. Graceful. Aloof.”

“You consider me aloof? You? Mr. Dark Eyes, who is all glare and no share?”

He laughed, a deep baritone chuckle that immediately made me lower my guard.

I pulled the plate of calamari closer, placed some on my appetizer plate, then dipped one in some marinara sauce before

placing it delicately into my mouth. Leaning back in my seat, I chewed on it slowly and examined him.

He leaned back with his glass of merlot and took a sip. His eyes looked over the top of the glass, never breaking contact with my own. The intensity in them ratcheted up as he focused on me as if he was perusing a menu.

Was I on the menu? Hell, yes, I was. He was too. Dirk was a fine steak, best served rare. I was dessert. A cheese cake with cherries and sauce dripping from me.

“When you left on Monday, I didn’t think I’d ever see you again. I thought you had gotten what you needed from me and would never come back.”

“How did that make you feel?” He asked, flipping roles on me.

“I felt used. I felt bereft. When you left, I didn’t know if I would ever see you again.”

“You have so little faith in me, Reggie.”

“Faith?”

“You had to know I had feelings for you?”

“I’m a therapist. Not a mind reader.”

“Fair enough.”

“So, what do you feel for me?”

“I find you intriguing. Intelligent. Gorgeous. Sexy. I’m fascinated by you.”

“I asked what you feel for me.” Even though all those adjectives were flattering, he still avoided the question, while at the same time making my heart warm to him.

“I feel like I want to get to know you more. See you more.”

“Let me help. Do you feel love? Like? Affection? Lust? Desire?”

“Ah, yes. Feelings. They are so ambiguous. I read once that the feelings of anxiety and excitement produce the same chemical reaction in the body. It is just our frame of mind that defines whether that chemical reaction is wanted or unwanted.”

“Do you ever just answer a question?”

“Yes.”

I laughed at his response, not because of the word, but because of his expression. He looked insulted. When I finished laughing, I glared at him, holding his gaze. I intended to get an answer out of him or leave.

“Fine. I find myself feeling a great deal of affection for you and unquenchable...” He stopped mid-sentence.

“Unquenchable what?”

“Unquenchable desire.”

The intensity in his eyes now became clear. Desire. He desired me. My heart rate quickened. My face felt flushed and I could feel that tightening in my pussy. I expected to be wet real soon. Wait, maybe I already am.

“When did you first feel this desire?”

“That first night I saw you at the Cherry Pie. I knew then I wanted you.”

“You were married.”

“I know. I hadn’t felt such an immediate reaction to someone in a long time, though. That level of desire had not been seen in my relationship with Scarlet in a long time. Even when I did... well, let’s just say the equipment wasn’t as operational as it was that night.”

“That was because of her little cocktail, though.” My voice hopefully conveyed the caring I felt for him.

“Yes. I know. She and I weren’t attracted to each other anymore, and I had never felt this desire I feel for you with her.”

“Desire is never the basis for a long-lasting relationship.”

“It is a start, though. I don’t know if I have the words to explain it, but I believe a life with you could be different.”

“Are you proposing, Mr. Baxter?”

“Not yet. But I want to see you more. Daily if possible. Not as a therapist, but as my...”

“Girlfriend?”

“That doesn’t seem to really encompass what I expect to experience with you, but yes. My girlfriend.”

The thought of being with Dirk daily both excited me and terrified me. When I was with him, all I wanted was his tongue or cock inside me. I didn’t know if I could stand to be in this state of arousal every day. It would be fun to find out, though.

He hadn’t told me he loved me, which were words so many women wanted to hear. In my experience, some men used the term too often and didn’t really know what it meant to a woman to hear it from someone they really loved. So, his words were enough to stay for dinner.

“All right, Mr. Dark Eyes, I’ll stay for dinner. We can talk more over our meals.”

“Mr. Dark Eyes?” He chuckled again.

I blushed. “It’s my pet name for you.”

“Well, Miss Davenport. I have a better idea. Why don’t we both skip dinner and head to the suite I have for the evening?”

“You mean skip dinner and go directly to dessert?”

“Something like that. I reserved the Presidential Suite.”

“That’s mighty presumptuous of you to assume I’d go to a room with you tonight.”

“I prefer to consider it a well-thought out gamble.”

“The suite is a sweet touch, though.”

“I thought so.”

He stood up and offered me his hand. This was what I wanted, and yet I hesitated. He was handsome. Rich. Intelligent. An excellent lover. And regardless of how many times I had turned him down, he stayed relentless. I liked tenacity in a man, but only now realized it.

I took his hand and let him guide me to the elevator. Trace, who had been sitting at another table out of sight, joined us.

“Does the Presidential suite have a tub?”

“It does. A very nice one. Deep.” Dirk offered me a smile and a squeeze of my hand.

“Room for two?”

“Definitely.”

“I feel like a bubble bath tonight.”

“I can arrange that.”

We glided into the elevator, and I barely even noticed which button he pushed. All I knew. All I cared about was that I was going to be alone with Dirk Baxter.

Chapter 38

Dessert

I SANK INTO THE HOT WATER IN THE DEEP TUB WITH A LAYER of bubbles on its surface. Soft music played on a speaker system within the suite and enhanced the sound of water moving with my body. The water felt comforting on my skin. I waited for Dirk to join me as I laid my head on a soft towel at the edge of the tub.

Dirk entered the bathroom a minute later with two wine glasses in hand, each half-filled with more of the fruity merlot. He still wore his blue suit pants and a white shirt, although he had removed the tie. His hair was tousled from the kissing we had done when we entered the suite and he had at least one smudge of red lipstick on his neck.

I took the glass from him and sipped some before setting it down on the ledge at the back of the tub. He had arranged six red candles around the tub and each of them was lit. Rose petals also were mixed in with the bath water. For a first date, he had gone all out.

“Take your shirt off.” My request came out more command than request.

He turned his attention to me and his expression showed he would challenge me. Deny me a quick strip tease. He took a sip of his wine and placed it on the ledge opposite me.

He started unbuttoning his shirt.

“Slower. I want a show. I want to see you strip.”

A song with a nice dance beat began playing. He undid his buttons much slower and moved his hips to the music. The way he swayed made me want to pull him into the tub. He would be fun to dance with.

When he finished with the buttons, he parted his shirt and gave me a quick show of his abs and pecs. His muscles rippled and made me want to run my hands over every inch of him.

He turned his back to me and continued to move with the music. He slid the shirt off his shoulders and down his back with the hem of each side still in his hand. His back muscles were just as defined. I couldn't help but drool at the prospect of him joining me in the tub.

He let the shirt drop to the ground and, with his back still turned, I heard him unbutton his slacks. When the zipper slid down, the sound made me sigh. He bent over as he pushed his slacks down his legs. Stepping out of them, he turned to face me with only a pair of blue boxer briefs on. His sizable bulge could not hide from my discerning gaze.

“You have one piece of clothing left, it seems.”

“I'm not sure you're ready for me to take these off yet.” His wicked grin told me he was teasing.

I was definitely ready for him. “Take them off. Now.”

“Even you didn't take your bottoms off for me at the Cherry Pie that night.”

“They'll just get wet in the tub.”

He slipped his fingers inside the waistband and slid them down to below his knees. They fell from there to the ground. His gorgeous cock stood at just above half-mast, long, thick, and hard. Standing there like Superman with his hands on his hips, I fought the giggle that wanted to erupt amid the pure lust.

He stepped into the bathtub and I motioned him to sit against me.

“Turn around. Back to me. Just like during your sensate touch session.”

He slid into the hot water, and I wrapped my arms around his chiseled body. When he settled in, he leaned into me and relaxed. His back pressed against my breasts and felt amazing. My hard nipples pressed against him and the slightest movement shot ripples of pleasure through me.

I ran my hands over his abs and then over his chest. When I found his nipples, my fingers caressed around them, never quite touching them. Until they did.

He ran his hands along my thighs. His touch sent tingles up my legs to my pussy.

I splayed kisses along his back as my hands moved lower. When they found their target between his legs and I grasped his shaft, he gave me a low, sexy moan. I played with his thick head while my other hand moved along his inner thigh. Everywhere I touched him, his body was hard and sculpted.

When I began stroking his cock, he moaned, and his head lay back on my shoulder. I kissed his neck and my tongue teased his ear lobe.

“I love it when my body presses against yours.” He whispered in the dim light of the glowing candles.

“Mmm. Me too.”

“Although I would prefer to be behind you.”

“Really. You like to be in control?” I stroked his cock faster while my other hand ran over his chest. I made sure to rub his nipples again.

He always said during our sessions he wanted to be in control. I was determined to show him the pleasures of giving up control.

“I like to give pleasure,” he whispered in the dim light.

“So, you are more of a giver than a receiver?” I nibbled on his earlobe as my hands continued to pleasure him.

“Yes,” he breathed.

I continued to move my hand up and down his wet shaft while my other hand explored his body. He rubbed my thighs as far up as he could, but I kept holding him close to me.

“It’s your turn,” he growled as he turned around in the direction that would keep my hand on his erection. On his knees in the bathtub, with his hands on the edge supporting him, he pressed his lips against mine. He forced his tongue between my lips, but once he did, I accepted it gladly.

“Tired of receiving?” I murmured between kisses.

“Tired of not being in control.”

He grabbed me and pulled me up while he slid underneath me. Water splashed and bubbles roiled with our movement in the tub. I giggled as he repositioned us so that he was now behind me and my back pressed against him.

I twisted enough to kiss him. “What do you intend to do to me, Mr. Dark Eyes.” I’d never really called him that to his face until tonight, but I was enjoying calling him by the nickname.

“I’m going to fuck that pretty pussy of yours until you scream my name.”

One hand reached between my legs and rubbed my pussy. The other reached around me and massaged my breasts. He twirled my nipples between his thumb and forefinger before pinching them. Two fingers splayed my pussy lips as he rubbed up them, reaching my clit. When he began rubbing it back and forth, I gasped and then whimpered.

My back arched as the pleasure ran through me. I felt tingles from my sex to my tits. My nipples were so hard. My clit grew harder and harder. I dug my nails into Dirk’s thighs as the first orgasm neared.

When his second hand grabbed my throat and squeezed, the sensations roared higher like a bonfire. He rubbed me faster and harder, and I felt close to exploding. When he bit me on the shoulder, I completely lost it. When he lifted me with

one hand and mounted me on his raging cock, the climax hit me like the roar of a runaway train.

I grasped the edge of the tub with one hand and dug my nails in deeper into his thigh. My head flung back. My ass pushed against him. I could feel his cock buried to the hilt inside me. I cried out as my body experienced a euphoric orgasm.

“Oh, fuck yes, Dirk.”

I positioned my feet so I could move up and down while impaled on his hard dick. He put both hands on my waist and assisted me with a lift and then down on his shaft. Each thrust inside me hit a core of me I hadn't experienced before. This wasn't just sex.

“Fuck yes,” I cried out.

The water churned as we fucked. My thighs burned from the squats I was doing on his hard cock. The orgasm that I experienced when he penetrated me never really subsided. The sensations continued to rise and fall like the waves that hit the coastline of Santa Monica.

“Right there. Yes.”

When I couldn't go on anymore because of the burning in my thighs, he lifted me until I was standing.

“Step out of the bath,” he commanded, as if giving orders to his men.

I did as he said, because it turned me on and because I didn't want the sex to stop. My pussy already missed his thick presence inside of me.

He exited the tub as well and grabbed me around the waist when I started for the bedroom. He turned me around and pulled me close. I was soon bent over the edge of the bath. I used my hands to support myself on the edge as water dripped from both of us.

When he slid back inside me, I gasped.

“Oh. Yes. Yes.” I cried out.

He still had his arm around my waist, but now his cock was moving in and out of me. The wetness between my legs had nothing to do with the bathwater we had just stepped out of. My breasts swayed with our fucking motion, adding to the sensations I was enjoying. *He is giving all right.*

I suddenly noticed the mirrors on the two walls next to the bathtub. I could see him behind me, fucking me with his arm reaching around my waist. My breasts swayed with the rhythm of his thrusts. My hair was wet and water dripped from both of us.

His expression was intense. He seemed determined to fuck me hard and fast.

When he moved his hands and grabbed my hips, he fucked me harder. The sound of his hips slamming into my ass echoed in the bathroom. He spread me out and drove deeper with each thrust.

“I want to hear you say it.”

“What?” I panted in response.

“Scream my name.”

He pounded my pussy. His thrusts became harder still, and he rubbed all the best parts of me.

My heart pounded, and I could feel another orgasm rising within me.

“Oh, God. Fuck me, Dirk.”

He grabbed a fistful of my hair and pulled on it as he continued to pummel me. “Not that name. The other one.”

I tried to figure out what he meant while he continued to fuck me. My brain was barely there, as my body had taken control of all of my functions. When I finally realized what he meant, I was nearing another orgasm.

“Oh. God. Fuck me. Fuck me harder, Mr. Dark Eyes.”

My words hit the right pleasure centers in his brain as his thrusts became more frantic and jagged. He breathed hard as he continued to pound into me.

I arched my back as he pulled my hair and penetrated my pussy with his fucking motion. My breasts were exposed and lifted, on full display in the mirror in front of us. The nerves in my pussy were overstimulated and both of us were panting and grunting as he ground against me. My mouth was open wide in the moment's ecstasy.

"Fuck yes. I'm coming." I cried out.

He answered with grunts and thrusts.

When he came inside me, I immediately followed. Between the shots of cum he pumped into me and my own juices, I was a hot, sexy mess in seconds.

When he finally stopped, he held on to my hair and steadied himself on the counter beside him. He kept it inside me and my pussy contracted on it for what seemed like minutes. When he finally deflated, my tightening wasn't enough to hold him in. The feeling of his half-hard cock slipping out of me only fed my cravings for him.

He stepped back while I continued to catch my breath and calm my breathing. Wrapping a towel around me, he helped me straighten up. He embraced me from behind before he began toweling me off. Compared to how he had just fucked me, he was tender in his care of me afterward.

I still felt small waves of arousal course through various parts of my body.

When I was steady, he grabbed his own towel and dried off.

"That was amazing." It had been the most amazing sex I'd experienced in a long time. Maybe ever. I couldn't lie.

"That was just the appetizer. Wait until you see the main course."

"Does this meal come with dessert?"

“Oh, yes. The dessert will be exquisite. You will come more than you’ve ever come before.”

“And scream your name?”

“You will scream my name.”

He kissed me before leading me to the bedroom. More rose petals and more candles greeted me. The music system started a song perfect for slow dancing. Or lovemaking.

This night with Mr. Dark Eyes was going to be magnificent. I just knew it and I couldn’t wait for dessert.

THE END

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About the Author

Dallas Love is an emerging author of erotic romance, erotica, and paranormal romance. He loves creating characters, settings, and conflicts that excite, arouse, and delight.

In addition to writing lusty and steamy stories, Dallas loves fantasy, sci-fi, erotic romance, erotica, and paranormal romance books, as well as hiking, cross-country, traveling, binge watching Netflix, and a good slice of pizza.

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