

Big

MOUNTAIN
MAN

STRANDED AT CHRISTMAS SERIES NOVELLA

AMANDA KEEN

Big Mountain Man

Stranded at Christmas Series - AB Shared
World

Amanda Keen



BIG Mountain Man

Amanda Keen

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Blurb



BIG Mountain Man

Days before Christmas...

I caught my fiancé and best friend in our bed!

Amelia

Devastated and not paying attention to where I was driving, I found myself lost in the mountains in a snowstorm.

Just what I needed, but when I lost control of my car and crashed into a mailbox in the middle of nowhere...

I had no idea that my life was about to change forever.

Brick

The mountains had always been my escape, my protection.

I wasn't the good guy, far from it, but even I knew when I needed to lay low.

That was until someone crashed into my life, literally.

The moment I laid eyes on her, I felt drawn to her.

It turned out, this beauty was feisty, sassy, and absolutely addictive, but she was keeping something from me...

And I wasn't talking about her a-hole fiancé.

Problem was that I was too damaged for a pure soul like her.

But when my past comes knocking, putting Amelia in danger, I had only one option.

Risk everything I'd worked for to protect her.

AB Shared Worlds



12 authors, 12 stories, one world.

AB Shared Worlds are bringing you the Stranded at Christmas
Series

From the Author about Big Mountain Man



What's a girl to do when she get's stranded with a sexy
mountain man at Christmas?

Climb him like a Christmas tree of course.

Chapter 1

Amelia



I stood in front of my house, hands trembling, heart racing with excitement as I stared at the pregnancy test in my grasp—the two lines that would forever change my life... in the best possible way.

I was pregnant with my fiancé's baby, which sent giddiness through my gut as I was trying to work out the best way to surprise him with the incredible news.

It wasn't planned, but I'd always wanted children. We would make it work, and it'd strengthen our relationship because, lately, things hadn't exactly been smooth between us. Jason had been distant, our arguments had escalated, and it got to the point where his aggression had me questioning our future.

That was about to change. We had to make it work... for our baby. I mean, I was twenty-three, and my work at the local plant nursery store had health insurance. Plus, Jason earned well, so I didn't think we'd have problems with money.

Taking a deep breath, I rushed inside the house, eager to let him know we were about to become parents. Glancing around the living room and kitchen, he wasn't there, but the fragrant smell of the beef casserole I'd asked Jason to put in the oven for dinner filled the air. Stepping into the hallway, I pivoted toward the study when a moan came from the spare room we kept for visitors, which I now intended to turn it into a nursery.

I suspected Jason had fallen asleep as he'd been working late nights at work. Setting my keys in the bowl on the side

table in the hallway, I moved on hurriedly, my hand still shaking with the pregnancy test.

Exhaling and inhaling slowly, I tried to get my nerves under control. Excitement burst in my chest while the worry about how he'd take the news flared in my stomach. Glancing down at the stick for the hundredth time, I squealed on the inside that this was happening, that I was going to become a mom.

It was a miracle since the last time I had sex with Jason was four weeks ago, and before that it had been closet to three months. He'd been too busy, too tired, too aggravated at me for no reason. This was going to change everything. I pictured Jason going with me to the doctor and getting one of those black-and-white ultrasound pictures women posted on social media when they got pregnant.

Though I wasn't going to achieve anything by staying out in the hallway, so I pushed open the door.

Instead of surprising him, I froze in shock.

Jason was naked on the bed with my very naked best friend, Lyric, wrapped over his waist and chest.

"Lyric, what are you doing?" Jason murmured before he turned onto his side, shoving her off him, revealing his back to me—a back marked by the bright red stripes of scratches.

"Jason!" I shrieked, as if from a distance, before my hearing came back. My arms quivered, fire clawing up my neck and over my face, piercing my chest.

He was cheating on me!

"Amelia? What are you doing at home so early?" Jason shouted. He jumped out of bed, his hand raised, before bringing it back down, knowing Lyric was there to see anything he might do. He never became physically abusive when there were witnesses. "What's the meaning of this?" he growled.

"I could ask you the same, but it's pretty clear. You're fucking my friend." I had taken a lot from this man over the

years, abuse both verbal and physical, and utter humiliation, but this was too much.

“You should have called me to say you were on your way home. Why didn’t you call me?” he accused, as though it was somehow my fault he’d slept with my friend.

“Amelia, I’m so sorry you had to find out like this.” Lyric rushed off the bed, getting dressed, tears in her eyes and her cheeks glowing red.

Shaking furiously, I didn’t know where to look or what to think, except that I felt like I was going to be sick.

“I don’t care what either of you does or who with, anymore. This is the last straw, Jason. This is fucking over.”

He growled under his breath. His black, short, spiky hair was messy as his shoulders rolled forward.

“I can’t make Christmas dinner on my own, Amelia. We have company coming, my parents...” Jason sputtered.

“Are you fucking kidding me?” My pulse skyrocketed at what he deemed important. Fucking asshole. I wanted to grab something to throw, but there was nothing nearby. Only the pregnancy test was clutched in my hand, and the reality of me being pregnant left me dizzy. Bile hit the back of my throat, and I was going to faint if I didn’t leave.

My heart was squeezing, my eyes burning with tears. I shook, the full-body twitching kind. When I was eight, my parents divorced, and I went to live with my grandma because it got nasty between my parents. They fought for custody, but at the time, I thought that my life was over, that I’d be stuck living on the farm, abandoned by my parents. There had been a sickening dread that curled in the pit of my gut that they forgot me, that they no longer wanted me, which, of course, wasn’t true.

That same ache rippled over my stomach now, the sensation that I’d be all alone bringing up a child.

It made me shudder with dread.

Three freaking years I'd given him, dedicated to our relationship, and this was what I got?

A sob caught in my throat.

He gave me a deadpan look while my friend stayed in the corner, acting all meek.

"Amelia, let me explain," my now ex-best-friend pleaded.

I tensed up that any lame excuse could explain her sleeping with my fiancé.

"You two deserve each other... you'll fuck each other up. Go for it."

Everything was happening too quickly. Within the span of a few seconds, I made the decision that life was too short, that I couldn't bring up a child with a man like Jason. I'd been kidding myself, wanting a family so desperately, I ignored the clues that he was just a dick.

Adrenaline threaded through me, and with rage, I threw the pregnancy test at Jason, hitting him square in the face before it dropped to the ground. It landed face up, those two lines staring at us like beacons.

He glanced down and saw it, his eyes huge with shock.

"Are you fucking joking?" he blurted, his nose creasing with disgust at the idea of having a baby. "It can't be mine. You just want child support from me while you're spreading your legs for other men. My uncle's an expensive lawyer and you won't stand a chance."

"Asshole." Shuddering, my hands curling into fists with anger, I snapped, "You can fuck off. I'll raise our child without a dickhead like you or any of your money. I don't want a cent."

Abruptly, I turned and ran out of the room, slamming the door behind me.

It felt like I was flying because I no longer felt my body. I fished the house and car keys from the bowl and stuffed them in my pocket. Then grabbing my bag and coat, I marched back

into the kitchen. Sliding on my oven gloves, I collected the barely warm casserole out of the oven.

Fuck them both.

Hurriedly, I left the house as I heard Jason shouting at Lyric in the bedroom.

Nearing his lifted truck, I threw the glass casserole dish at his precious *Babe*, with the big tires and shiny custom paint job. The glass dish shattered and dented the truck, making me smile. A giggle of delight bubbled out of my lips as I bent over to grab at a piece of glass as further inspiration struck. My hands, still padded by oven mitts, were well protected as I picked up two large pieces of the broken dish and ran them along the outside of the truck until I got to the driver's side door. The screeching sounds were satisfying, especially when I scratched the words, *Tiny Dick*, across his hood.

Dumping the oven mitts on the ground, I collected the keys from my pocket, removed my car keys from the lot, and dumped the rest into the storm drain. With a smile, I got into my car, and that was when the tears really hit me.

I'd been driving ever since, with my phone switched off, and feeling like shit.

Against the impossible darkness, I kept going, my car lights carving through the night. Somewhere on my drive, I'd come to the conclusion that Jason had been cheating on me for months. It explained him working weekends away, which had become more frequent, our non-existent sex life, then there was my friend at my place for surprise visits.

I had managed to lose my closest friends in one day. But they weren't really friends, considering they were cheating behind my back.

Taking my foot off the gas pedal, I took a slow, deep breath and turned the wheel into the curve around the steep mountain, squinting when my high beams bounced off the dull metal guard rails.

Snow fell as I made my way along the road, apprehension building as I realized there was a huge turn coming up. The

urge to press down on the brake rapidly was strong as I made my way toward the first twist of the winding road. I didn't know when the landscape changed from straight roads with houses to mountains, pine trees, and no streetlights.

Flicking on the bright lights, it felt as if I was completely alone on the mountain. Time to think about what I was going to do after I moved out of his apartment... a place I'd called home for the last three years.

Focusing on the drive, everything would have been just fine, dandy even, if that deer hadn't been standing in the middle of the road, blinking at me with an expression that screamed, 'uh, what?' I'd have been off this mountain in no time.

With disturbingly calm nonchalance, I wrenched the wheel to avoid hitting the deer, not wanting to kill Rudolph so close to Christmas. I was still calm as the car skidded out of control, although I could hear a scream from somewhere in the car. It was far away, though, far, far away and seemed to fade farther away as the car plowed over a brick wall and went airborne.

I screamed, my life flashing before my eyes when I wasn't ready to die. Not when I'd wasted the last three years with that dickhead Jason.

A huge pine tree loomed ever larger as the car sailed through the air toward it. Cars weren't supposed to fly, but my hands on the steering wheel couldn't seem to make the car change directions, so that sensation had my stomach lurching.

Hitting the ground, the shrubs and smaller trees slowed me somewhat before the car struck the huge pine hard enough for half the hood to crumble inward.

I cried out as my body was flung forward and the airbags burst out of the steering wheel and door, then fizzled out as quickly as they emerged. It buffeted my face from hitting the wheel, but then it threw me backward, and I slammed into the window to my left.

Sharpness snaked across my head just as the passenger's seat airbags burst out of the dashboard and door, flooding the

car with a strange noxious smell. My teeth clacked together so hard I was certain I'd shattered them all—just before the world went black.

Groggily, I opened my eyes, struggling from a consuming darkness around me until I saw a light, then a... *monster*.

I blinked, convinced I was imagining things.

The creature was well over six feet tall, maybe even seven. I screamed and slammed at the lock on my door but couldn't seem to engage it. The back of my neck was hurting, but that didn't stop me from screaming again.

My vision blurred and the silence after the crash was deafening. Yet there stood the creature in the dark. Fur covered the creature's body—a Yeti, it had to be. I'd never believed in them, but as the monster stepped closer and another scream tore out of my abused throat, I was certain I was about to be devoured by a mythical creature that shouldn't exist.

Darkness blinked at the edges of my vision, and my head swam.

Thankfully, the world went black again, and the creature slipped from my mind. I couldn't be afraid if I wasn't conscious.

Chapter 2

Brick



The woman's screams were deafening, nearly piercing my eardrums before they stopped. I had no idea why she was screaming, whether it was fright or pain, but from the look on her face, I gathered it was fear.

She lay unconscious in the small sedan, where the hood was wrapped around the thick trunk of a pine tree, the tail end of the car firmly on the ground, the side wedged up against the front of my mailbox I'd fortified with bricks a few months ago. All the windows were shattered, with only one headlight still beaming into the top of the stand of trees.

I'd heard the crash from the living room, where I'd had my feet up by the fire and had just poured myself a glass of Macallan whiskey. I ran outside to the chaos, my heart in my throat, thinking I was under siege.

I'd been wrong.

When I'd seen it was a small woman in the car, slumped against the back of her seat and bleeding, my first thought had been to call emergency services. A quick glance at the road showed ice already forming. An ambulance wouldn't make it up the mountain at night in this weather, so she'd better hope she wasn't too badly injured, whoever she was.

Moving quickly through the thick snow, I reached the driver's seat and wrenched open the door that had buckled but thankfully swung open of its own accord.

"Miss, can you hear me?" I reached over and placed a hand on her cheek. Her skin was cold. She wasn't bleeding

profusely that I could see in the dark, just a few cuts and bumps. Shock would have made her pass out based on how loud she screamed.

Unresponsive, I did a quick body check to ensure she wasn't badly injured, then I needed to get her indoors before she froze to death. I'd faced and aided my fair share of wounded people to know what to look for to ensure she didn't have life-threatening injuries.

Once I was convinced she was okay, I got the woman out of the car and into my cabin, settling her into one of the extra bedrooms. I was sweating beneath my heavy clothes and fur-lined coat during the whole process.

I'd gone out to the kitchen to grab a couple of ice packs to put on the side of her head and forehead, collecting the first aid kit as well, and came back to her screaming at me again.

Then she collapsed and passed out.

Good to know she wasn't dead, but the poor thing was in shock.

I glanced down at the woman, who, in the light, appeared a lot more beautiful than I'd first noticed. A small, round face with delicate features, full lips, and one of those upturned noses. She also had a wicked-deep scar across her brow that had long healed. Wild, deep-red hair was stuck to the sides of her face. She looked young, maybe in her early twenties.

"Who are you, and what are you doing so deep in the woods, little girl?" I grizzled at the bad timing, considering I'd wanted to be alone for Christmas after the fucked-up few months I'd just had. I needed to lie low, so that meant this little dove would need to heal and leave in the morning. Last thing I needed was the cops or anyone else sticking their noses in my business.

For now, the only thing I could do was slap the ice packs on the knots on her forehead and the side of her head, then pull out alcohol wipes to wipe the bleeding cuts. There was a little blood from the knot on the left side of her head, where the skin must have split, so I wiped that before I examined the rest of

her. She was covered in small pieces of glass, which I removed, then I undressed her, planning to put her in some of my pajamas if nothing else came to hand. I had to check if she was injured anywhere else since I didn't need her in a state of having to call the paramedics.

First, I cranked up the heat with the wood burner, and slowly her cold skin warmed up. The skin around her eyes and cheeks was red from tears but not from the cold. Had she been crying before the accident? Stupid to get behind the wheel of a car if you were that upset but too late to worry about it now.

As she lay on the bed on her back, I pulled up her eyelids, one by one, revealing forest-green eyes that looked clear of blood or other signs of severe injury. I checked her head over once more, digging through her silky red hair to feel her scalp. The only thing I found was the knot on the left side of her head and the one in the middle of her forehead.

Gently, I slid my large hand to the back of her neck and tugged her shirt up and over her head, leaving her in a black bra. I undressed her robotically, not thinking more of it than helping someone in trouble. Things I'd done before when a mission had gone so wrong, I had to drag a friend close to death to safety to patch up the bullet wounds and bandage as best as I could.

Blinking away the past, I focused on the red-haired girl—beauty I shouldn't notice and a curvy body that was impossible to ignore.

I had gone over her limbs briefly in the car, but I examined her abdomen and back as I fought not to pay attention to the lace underwear that stretched enticingly over her hips and a matching filled-out bra. Instead, I rolled her onto her side as gently as I could. There was a bruise on her right front shoulder, but nothing to panic over. I cleaned a few scrapes and cuts on her hands but found her remarkably untouched for what must have happened.

She was a stunning woman, and I enjoyed more than I should how the black lace panties she wore stretched enticingly over her hips.

Swallowing hard, I kept on checking her for signs of injury, trying to pull my fucking head together. Moving on impulse, I slid up her legs. My black sweatpants were far too big for her, but they were all I had. I slipped a sweatshirt over her head and slid her arms through the sleeves. She made a small murmuring sound that could have been a snore, and I grinned. It was too fucking cute.

What was wrong with me?

Dragging the sheet and blanket over her to keep her warm, I tried to think of anything else I should do, but nothing came to mind.

Somehow, I hadn't been surprised to find a female in the driver's seat, though that was unfair. My best friend's teenage daughter, Millie, would say I was being sexist and that plenty of men caused accidents, but she wasn't here to correct me. I smiled softly and went back to cleaning up the mess I'd made from cleaning her wounds, then left the room and turned off the light.

I'd watched the news earlier and knew the current storm was going to get worse and last for a few days, dumping well over two feet of snow and who knew how much ice. I had hoped that in the morning, the storm would blow over, so I could drive her to the local town two hours away.

From the looks of her car, I would have to take her to the local town a couple of hours away because her car was destined for a junkyard from the looks of it.

Toeing off my hiking boots, I hung up the coat I'd dumped on the floor in my hurry to get supplies. I went back to the kitchen to check the lasagna and garlic bread I had in the oven, then returned to my recliner in front of the fire.

Itching to move and my mind fueled with adrenaline, I got up, went to the fridge, grabbed a beer, and went back to the wooden stool on the other side of the island that was shiny from being used the most.

Lately, a few things had gone wrong with the family business, a business I'd inherited far too young but had taken

on when the time came. This place was supposed to be my shelter from the storm, a place where I could hide out from those who sought me out, who wanted me... dead.

A heavy weight settled over my shoulders, and I propped my elbows on the kitchen top of the island so I could rest my head on my fists.

“Brick,” I thought I heard someone say and looked up from my study of the island top.

I sat up straight as seconds ticked by, looking toward the hall to the room I’d settled the woman into. Had she been calling me? I shook my head with a frown. She didn’t know my name. I was alone.

My mother came to mind, as it did when I let my thoughts wander. The voice sounded as if it could have been her. I shook my head, realizing I’d imagined someone calling out for me. I’d been alone the whole time, so there wasn’t possibly anyone else here.

Getting to my feet, I slowly moved to the edge of the island, my beer in hand. I sauntered into the living room, checking out the windows for signs of anyone lurking in the darkness.

A slight pang of unease settled in my chest. Was there more than a distraught woman on my property tonight? Maybe that unease was the intuition I’d developed since I took over the family business, an intuition that told me when there was danger near. Had someone else come to pay me a visit? Maybe with a bullet to put in my head?

I waited, but nothing else disturbed me, and I saw no movements outside. Maybe the woman in the bedroom had moved, her leg sweeping across the sheets, whispering a sound that might have sounded like my name. Or it could have been the wind outside, lashing snow against the logs of the cabin. I went back to the kitchen to check the windows there but saw nothing more than heavy snow blowing down from the sky.

Shaking my head, I tipped my beer to my mouth, took a long drink, and left the kitchen, moving toward the hall. I’d

left the woman's door cracked open and stepped carefully as I made my way down the hall, although the sound of my footsteps was muted by the thick rugs left over from my grandmother's generation. She may have even made the rugs, for all I knew. My father once told me about how his mother had been very creative and loved making things for the house.

Peering through the crack into the spare room, I found the woman illuminated by the light from the hall. Her eyes were closed, her head nestled against the ice pack to the left of her head, her right hand against her cheek. She looked like a Gaelic angel with the covers still tucked around her body. She hadn't spoken; she was dead to the world.

Returning to the kitchen, I took out the lasagna and devoured most of it with some garlic bread. I left a portion for the woman should she wake up during the night.

I wasn't a bad cook, if I said so myself. My mother taught me when I was a kid, and once she passed, I trusted no one else to cook for me. People were too susceptible to money for me to feel comfortable eating food I hadn't cooked myself.

It occurred to me that she might have loved ones who were worried about her, but I wasn't going back out into the howling wind to dig around in a car that had basically been turned upside down. I'd let her find it tomorrow. Besides, a glance at my phone told me the signal was gone, anyway. It was usually strong on top of the mountain, but during a storm, the signal would cut out, especially if the power went down in the town below. The tower would have no signal to send out without power.

I checked on the woman every fifteen minutes throughout the evening until I went to bed at midnight. By that point, over a foot of snow had already fallen. If it kept up at that pace, there would be over three feet of snow by morning, if not more.

That unease returned as a reminder that I might lose my window of opportunity to take the woman into town in the morning and as far from me as possible. Grinding my jaw, I exhaled loudly.

I had to wait until morning to assess the situation.

Changing into thick black pajama pants and a t-shirt, I put on socks to keep my feet warm before I got into bed. I left my door open in case the woman woke up in the night. The wood burner was stocked up and would keep the cabin warm all night, so there wasn't much more I could do.

Socialising wasn't my thing, which was why I enjoyed my time here alone in the cabin.

As I dozed off, I couldn't get the woman off my mind.

Was she really an innocent driver, or was she someone who wanted me dead? The man who wanted me dead wasn't the kind of man who would drive all the way up here in the middle of a blizzard just to finish me off. By her fear and accident, I doubted she'd be someone he'd hire, but I'd keep an eye on her since one could never be too sure. If she was innocent, I'd have to find a way to get her away and out of harm's way as soon as possible.

Chapter 3

Amelia



Consciousness came with pain digging into my right shoulder, more around my hips, and a dull, thudding ache in my forehead. Then there was the stinging pain on the left side of my head. I moved my hand up to my forehead and found a knot. There was another that felt scabby on the left side of my head.

Did I get run over by a truck last night?

My last memory had been the deer in the middle of the road, swerving and running into a tree. After that, my thoughts were kind of blurry.

Flipping open my eyes to a dimly lit room, the blinds had been pulled, but the edges shone with light. I kept searching for the clock I kept on my bedside table, convinced I was home, but my head was still dizzy with confusion. Finding a bedside table and clock that weren't mine made me sit up abruptly, my heart pounding louder.

Panic collided with me as I swept my gaze across the strange room. This wasn't home or a hospital room.

Where the hell am I?

Glancing around the unfamiliar room, I tried to remember what had happened after I crashed. I moved to get out of bed and realized I wore unfamiliar clothes that were three sizes too big and hung off me. I tugged up on the sweatpants that kept trying to slip down my hips.

Had I been carried from my car, then dressed in some huge men's clothes?

A ripple of fear snaked down my spine as I made my way out of the bedroom door into a hallway lined by doors. I hurried down the hall ahead and found a kitchen and living room to the left. There was no one around as I frantically searched left and right, feeling an urgency to run, except I had no idea where to go.

“Hello?”

I was almost afraid to say anything. What if I wasn't supposed to be out of my room?

I'd seen a lot of horror movies in my life, some about kidnappings, and they all seemed to start like this. An unsuspecting woman just walking along, searching for signs of life, confused about where she was, and getting smacked or dragged off to be chained to a bed.

Weapon.

I needed a weapon.

Quickly making my way to the fireplace, I snatched the iron poker, and the handle fit nicely in my hand. I walked around the cabin, which appeared minimalistic, but the furniture it did have was expensive—leather, rugs, and light fixtures that might easily have cost more than my weekly salary at the nursery.

I checked for a bathroom because, despite the panic growing inside of me, my bladder was demanding I pay attention to it. When you gotta go... I found the bathroom and hurriedly did my business before I went back to the kitchen door, propping the iron poker against the wall.

I hadn't seen any of my clothes or shoes, and I was barefoot, so I didn't want to walk outside, but I would if I had to. Leaning on the wall by the window, I pushed the curtain carefully away to take a peek into the yard since it seemed I was alone in the house.

Snow blanketed everything—the ground, the trees, the shrubs, and I was talking about knee-high snow. More of it was coming down fast as the trees around the property swayed from the wind, which whistled in the gaps of the door.

I'd never get far in that snowstorm, and by the looks of the dark clouds, it wasn't going anywhere.

When I shifted to glance at the other end of the yard, I shuddered at the sight of a mountain of a man dressed only in boots, jeans, and a brown hat with ear flaps, no shirt or coat on. He was massive, a monstrously huge man with abdominal muscles I could wash clothes on... or run my hands down. I almost choked on my own ridiculous thoughts.

Standing beneath an extended cover near the house, he was chopping wood, half-facing the house. Despite the fact that snow was blowing everywhere, he was sweating up a storm of his own. Was he the one that... took me? Was he some kind of crazy recluse who decided he needed a bride like I'd seen in some of those exploitative movies about people from the Appalachian Mountains? Movies I hated because they made fun of people like me. Right now, though, it seemed to be a plausible idea.

The mountain man suddenly lifted his head in my direction.

Panic struck, and I threw myself back, the curtain falling back into place.

I waited, my heart pounding in my chest, not recognizing anyone or anything around me, ready for a full-blown panic attack that would have me running out of the house, screaming as I ran barefoot to the nearest road. Which would just be plain stupid in this snow, I reminded myself as I panted with fear.

When the huge man didn't come crashing into the house, I guessed he hadn't seen me, so I went to a different window in the living room to gauge my whereabouts. When I spotted my poor car, I sighed.

The front was crunched against the oversized birch tree. The windows had all shattered, and the back end was scratched up. My hand instinctively went to my forehead. The pain there could have come from hitting that ancient torture device of a steering wheel. I just had an accident, hit a mailbox and tree, and the monster outside saved me. But why hadn't he called 911?

The memory of a scream, an impact, fear, pain, and a... Yeti? The memories flitted through my mind, leaving me more confused. What was the Yeti about? I glanced over at the mountain of a man who had his back to me from his window, and I wondered if he was some kind of mythical creature. I mean, he's huge enough to be a Yeti, but do they have the ability to look like humans one minute and covered in fur with long fangs and sharp, piercing nails the next?

I needed to get out of here, wherever here was, and go home.

Only another memory finally came to life.

Jason in bed with Lyric. His accusations that it was my fault he got caught flared in my mind, and with it came a burning anger at both of them. A mixture of rage, sorrow, and hurt bled through me. I hated how tears pricked my eyes, when that dickhead didn't deserve anything else from me. He'd already taken three years of my life, and sure, hindsight was crystal clear, but I wished I'd seen this earlier and left him before he left me feeling embarrassed and doubting myself.

Sighing, I wiped my eyes, slowing my breaths, feeling like absolute shit that he cheated on me. Like, somehow, I wasn't good enough for an idiot like him. I meant nothing to him; that was clear. Otherwise, he wouldn't have slept with my friend. I hated them both for making me feel worthless.

I let the curtain drop and moved back toward the bedroom, figuring I had to work out where I was and find a motel to bunk in for a few days. My family lived too far. I'd moved across the country for Jason, leaving behind my family and friends. The tears that fell came with a fiery ache in my chest that I'd ended up like in this situation with him.

Doing my best to focus on anything but Jason, I searched for my clothes, which had to be somewhere in the room, but there was no sign of them or my black Uggs.

Searching the room, I didn't find anything in the closet, the dressers, or under the bed. I ran out of the room, the fire poker still in my hand. I'd check the kitchen and see if they were in there. Maybe my head wound bled a lot and had left them

bloody, and he'd put my clothes in the washer. But where were my boots?

I was throwing open sliding doors to what I hoped was a laundry room when the back door of the house opened with a creak.

Freezing, every hair on my body stood on end.

I turned, startled like a thief caught.

He'd appeared large outside, but when he was ten feet away, he was... massive.

OMG. Who the hell was this man?

It seemed as though his broad but muscular body filled the whole house. A black-and-red flannel shirt now covered his humongous chest.

"Hello," he said with careful control, his hands nonchalantly in his pockets. "I'm Brick."

I simply stared at him, not caring what his name was. He was terrifying, and my tongue wouldn't move. I considered fleeing out of the kitchen door and just keep going, but my feet wouldn't move.

"I-I'm Amelia."

He ran a hand through his ink-black hair that was dusted in snow as his deep mocha eyes studied me. Closer, I could easily become mesmerized by his ruggedness—that square jawline, lips that pressed tightly as if he was lost for words, and did I mention he had muscles? His bicep flexed, stretching the fabric of his shirt as he brushed the snow out of his hair. Was it wrong that my stomach fluttered?

"Um, you were in an accident last night. You ran through my mailbox and slammed into that tree out there." He moved toward me, and my feet finally unglued. I recoiled from him, moving to the door, even though he frowned.

I put the island between us. He stepped back into the living room, dwarfing the long white linen couch, the two brown leather side chairs, and a flat-screen TV on the wall. The wood

burner where I'd found the fire poker was also in there, and he even seemed to block the heat with his size.

"Don't come near me," I murmured, holding my hands up to ward him off. That only deepened the grumpy lines on his forehead. My shoulder muscles stiffened in response.

"I promise you, I won't. I mean you no harm," he muttered softly, seeming more frustrated than angry.

I wanted to go home! I trembled as we stood there, still clutching to the too-big-for-me pants as we looked at one another in an awkward standoff.

"The snow, Miss," he said, gesturing behind him to the white linen curtains on the windows in the living room. "It started last night, and the ice was bad. So, I brought you in and tended to the few injuries you had, but you seem okay this morning."

"Thanks, I guess. Where are my clothes?" My mind was still stuck on the whole notion that he stripped me and redressed me.

"In the washer. Your boots are on top of the washing machine. Everything was covered in glass, and your shirt had blood all over it. I went out and found your handbag and phone in your car this morning. It's on top of the washer as well," Brick offered in a casual tone.

Glancing over at the room I'd just abandoned, I opened the door, grabbing my boots, phone, and bag, but paused when I chanced a glimpse at a collection of handguns in the far corner on a shelf. They weren't the kind used to hunt an animal, though the lethal hunting knives might be. Was this guy some freakish collector or a criminal who needed that many weapons? I backed toward the hall that led down to the room I woke up in, trying my best not to appear panicked or to let him know I saw all his guns. Shit.

"Are you hungry? It's after one p.m., and you haven't eaten. I can make you something?"

"I'm okay," I replied instantly, my voice sharper than I'd intended, still not trusting him, even if what he said made

sense, even if I could remember parts of the previous night. “How long before I can leave?”

“As soon as the storm ends. News says it’s going to be a few days, at least. The snow isn’t letting up, and my truck won’t make it down the incline without sliding into a tree or all the way down. And you’ve had intimate relations with one tree already this week.”

He chuckled, and the frown was replaced with a gorgeous smile, revealing perfect white teeth and small lines at the corners of his eyes. The man wasn’t my age, more like in his mid-thirties, perhaps, but he had a vibe that he had his life in order, that he knew what he wanted, and he’d take it.

A vibe that was almost the opposite of dickhead Jason.

Now, if this was any other situation, I might have laughed at the joke, but I struggled to breathe as everything sank in. He’d come across so grumpy before. I preferred when he laughed.

“How come you’re all the way out here alone so close to Christmas? Is someone coming to join you?” I almost slapped my mouth to keep it shut for asking such a dumb question. What would I ask next... did he bury his victims in the backyard?

“I don’t live here all the time, only come out every so often,” he answered me, and I nodded, my bottom lip between my teeth. “I like my peace.”

I eyed him when he turned away from me to fill the coffee machine, setting it to brew. He was just way too calm, and for some reason, that bothered me. Weren’t killers calm before exploding into a rage when the smallest thing triggered them?

Maybe I watched too many movies.

“So, I’m stuck here with you, I guess?” I asked, vacillating between wanting to sit down on the first seat I came to and wanting to run. I dug into my bag, collected my phone, and found I had no reception out here... of course.

“You’ll struggle to get a signal out here. That’s another reason I didn’t call for an ambulance last night. There’s no

signal with all of this snow.”

I raised my head to him as he placed two mugs on the kitchen island.

“Sugar?” he asked.

“I like my coffee black.” Slipping up onto a stool, I remembered my pregnancy, along with an array of things I shouldn’t eat or drink. A list I wasn’t familiar with, but I was pretty sure caffeine was up there. “Sorry, any chance you have some decaf?”

“Sorry, you’re out of luck.” His mouth pulled into a lopsided, disappointed frown. “I have herbal tea if you want something easier?” He was digging through the cupboards and came back with a packet of chamomile and peppermint tea. “Any of these take your fancy?” he said in a light, humored tone, making me think Brick was so much more than this stoic, huge mountain man.

“Let’s go with peppermint,” I answered with a grin, which he didn’t see as he set to boil water for my tea.

It was impossible to resist how gorgeous this man was, even with his brooding personality. If I had to be stuck with someone in a house, it could be worse than this handsome eye candy. What better way to get my mind off Jason?

“Also, I’m really sorry about destroying your mailbox. I’ll pay for all damages. And as soon as the weather lets up, I’ll be out of here.”

He placed three heaping spoonfuls of sugar into his cup before he glanced up with a stoic, nonchalant expression that told me nothing about this man.

“Not needed. I’ll fix it up in no time. I’m sure the snow will stop and melt soon enough. Until then, you can keep warm indoors.”

I nodded, noting his focus on the last word. Was that so I didn’t see all the dead bodies buried around his yard? I might have laughed at my paranoia if a part of me wasn’t worried it might be true.

“How long would it take me to walk to the nearest town?” I asked after I let my phone drop back into my bag.

“A couple of hours, maybe. Unless you slide down, then you have to walk the rest of the way to town. It’s below freezing out there now and will only get colder as the day goes on. That’s the forecast, anyway.”

“Oh.” I couldn’t have sounded more dejected if I’d tried. My gaze darted all over the place, searching for a safe place. “Damn.”

“I’m not holding you here, ma’am. You’re free to leave, but I wouldn’t advise it since you won’t make it far before you freeze to death. You can also try the house phone, but reception up here is sketchy at the best of times and doesn’t work at all during storms.”

He held his hands up again as if to show me I was safe. The frown was back, though, and I wondered if he was mad at me for disturbing his peace and quiet out here in the woods.

He turned to brew

“Okay, cool,” I answered, closing my eyes. I was stuck here with this grumpy giant for the next few days, at least.

He placed my tea in front of me, the peppermint smell swirling over me, soothing me.

“This place you have is something. Everything is immaculate and resembles a cross between a bachelor pad and a mancave out in the woods,” I began, figuring if he was kind enough to let me stay here, I could at least make an effort at a normal conversation. Sure, I’d remain on my guard, but if he wanted to do something, he would have already tied me up and kept me in his basement, right?

That smile returned, igniting a faint flutter of butterflies in my stomach, which left me completely confused. Then I sipped on my hot tea.

“The place has been in the family for a long time, and I’d inherited it. I use it as my escape from life now and then.”

“I’d be lying if I said I wouldn’t love a place like this for myself when life turned to shit.” I stared at him over the rim of my cup as I took in more of the tea, its warmth sliding all the way down to my belly. He hummed his agreement, his gaze seemingly miles away, while my mind lingered on fuckhead Jason. Being out of phone range might be exactly what I needed. I wouldn’t receive his calls and messages or those from my ex-best friend. Yes, maybe being stuck here came with some benefits.

Once I finished the tea, I asked, “Can I take a shower?”

“Of course, do as you like during your stay here. There are fresh towels in the bathroom.” He nodded toward the room and stood up as he collected my empty cup.

“Thanks for taking me in.”

“You’re welcome,” he replied, though he didn’t sound like he meant it. This guy was a man of few words, but if there was one benefit, the guy wasn’t gorgeous to look at.

Hurrying into the bathroom, holding onto the oversized sweatpants, I could sense his eyes on me the whole time. Fire climbed up my neck and cheeks while my heart raced with worry.

A few days meant I’d spend Christmas here. Breathing heavily, I reminded myself that I could do this. I just had to keep it together.

Chapter 4

Brick



I hadn't missed her quick dash from the bathroom to the kitchen and back again during her shower. I'd been in one of the easy chairs in the living room, reading a book, when the patter of her feet across the floor drew my attention. I'd seen her practically naked the night before, but there was something tantalizing about a woman in a towel, unaware she'd been observed.

A long time had passed since I'd last been with a woman, and the memory wasn't all that great. Not a terrible memory, really, just boring because, in my line of work, I couldn't risk getting close to anyone and having them die. I'd seen too many friends perish, and it hurt like a bitch.

But the more I thought of Amelia, the more I bet she was a spitfire in bed. But I'd seen the look of fright that had passed over her face more than once when she looked at all me, though she'd tried to hide it. I'd been a large man for most of my thirty-eight years of life, so it was a look I was used to. Sometimes, I let it intimidate people. Other times, I backed off, depending on the situation. Amelia didn't need to be afraid of me unless she'd been sent here by one of my enemies. I didn't think that was the case, seeing as how she was already trying to think of ways to leave the place.

"Hey, do you want something to eat?" I called out and followed her into the kitchen.

"No, uh, I mean, I can just have some toast or something. I don't want to be any trouble. Thanks for bringing me in last

night.” She didn’t look at me as she spoke, and her words came out as though she was trying to placate me.

“Listen, if you’re hungry, I have plenty of food, and it’s no trouble.” I’d started off a little louder than I meant to. She winced and moved away. I frowned, wondering if it was just the awkward situation we were in or if she was really afraid of me.

“If you’re having something, that’s fine,” she answered, turning her head toward me a notch but still not looking at me. “I’ll just check my phone again, see if there’s a signal.”

She went back into her room and came out with her phone in hand. “Do you mind if I plug this in? I have a universal plug with me. The battery is almost dead.”

“Go for it. There’s a socket on the bottom side of the island.” I pointed, then went to the freezer to get out some marinated chicken I’d prepared and frozen for situations where I wanted something but didn’t want a lot of trouble. They’d grill up nicely on the stovetop for sandwiches. I thawed them out a little in the microwave while the grilling pan heated.

“So, why were you out in that storm last night?”

A sudden intake of breath filled the silence between us, and I twisted around to see a faraway look in her eyes. The shimmer of tears glazed her gaze, and suddenly I felt like an absolute prick.

“I broke up with my fiancé last night. I caught him in our bed with my best friend,” she murmured, her voice croaky. The glistening in her eyes promised tears, and crying women were not on my list of favorite things.

“Fuck, I’m sorry. And in your home? He’s got brass balls.” I didn’t want to know the details, but maybe a little humor would keep those tear drops at bay.

“Yep.” She took a deep breath, and I knew she was controlling herself, if barely. “So, I took out the casserole, threw it against his precious truck, engraved ‘Tiny Dick’ on the hood with a broken piece of glass, then dumped his keys into the storm drain and left.”

I barked a laugh, unable to stop myself because I was the king of revenge if someone crossed me, and Amelia was fiery, which I admired.

“I would have set his whole truck on fire,” I added, then frowned as I understood why she ended up in my front yard with her car a quarter of the way up a tree and in my mailbox.

“Ha, in hindsight, I should have burned the damn thing.” She paused for a moment, then muttered, “Sorry for imposing on you like this, and really, I’m not psycho.”

Her awkward laugh made me smile because it felt good to know it wasn’t just me who said the wrong things. She sat on the corner bar stool, where I’d normally stayed since it gave me a perfect vantage view of the front and back doors. She looked good there, the light from outside glinting against her small smile. Really, she was a beautiful woman who landed an asshole who treated her less than she deserved. It irritated me to no end that these fuckheads get away with it.

“It can’t be helped,” I replied softly, which wasn’t necessarily ‘my pleasure’ or ‘no problem,’ but it was something. Grief sucked in whatever form it came, and I learned a long time ago that sometimes, females didn’t want me to solve their problems but just to listen.

As she swung side to side on the spinning stool, I couldn’t help but admire how innocent and beautiful this woman was. The flat expanse of her stomach when I’d stripped her down to panties and a bra flashed to mind. She was so small, one of my hands would cover her entire lower abdomen. I shouldn’t be thinking about her like this, I reminded myself, but I couldn’t help it.

It had been a long time since I’d had a woman in my bed.

When I caught her stealing looks my way, those mesmerizing eyes did something to me, and my brain was off again, thinking about what she’d look like bent over that island.

I put bread buns on a pan to toast and got out lettuce and tomatoes to add to the sandwiches.

“Do you want mayonnaise on your sandwich?” I asked her, not looking up as I cut up the tomato into thin sections.

“No, thank you. Mustard, please.”

“Sure,” I said and turned to get it out of the fridge.

“How tall are you?” she asked out of the blue.

My eyebrows lifted. It was a common question, but I hadn’t expected to hear it.

“I’m six foot eight,” I answered automatically, not surprised when I heard her gasp out a *wow*.

“You must have a hard time finding clothes.”

“Yeah, that’s why you had to roll up the sweatpants I put you in last night. I have to order them from a website.” Which only made me remember taking her clothes off and touching her skin.

“Thanks for putting me in something clean,” she said faintly as if she wasn’t sure she should thank me at all.

“It was all I could do for you, really. To keep you warm and safe, I mean.” I moved on to assembling the sandwiches, then put one in front of her. I stood on the other side of the island to eat mine, not wanting to spook her any more than she already was.

I knew she was thinking about how she was stuck here with a giant of a man, a man she didn’t know, and it had to make her worry. I could tell her there was zero danger of me hurting her, but it wouldn’t matter.

Once we finished, I moved outside on the porch while she checked her phone. I felt awkward and strange, as though I’d never been around a woman before. Something about Amelia made me want to protect her, to find that douche who cheated on her and shove my fist into his face. That would make me feel better.

The porch creaked as she joined me, standing there wrapped in a blanket while the wind whistled, the snow coming down sideways now. I loved the cold; it didn’t bother me much.

“There’s not a lot to look at today, but when it’s not snowing, there’s a great view of the valley below,” I shared, lifting my chin to the left in the direction of the valley.

“Fingers crossed the snowstorm calms down. It’s funny how things turn out sometimes.”

“You have any friends you can stay with after the storm nearby?”

“No, that was part of life with Jason, my ex. He didn’t want me to have family or friends that might take my attention from him, so stupidly, I moved here with him.” Her laughter was strained as she tugged the blanket tightly around herself.

“He sounds like a real charmer.”

Things were adding up. The way she was nervous she was around me—although that could just be the situation—and how she seemed extra careful to keep things calm. It told me the prick had hurt her. Amelia looked away from me, staring into the snowy distance.

“We’ll find somewhere for you to go,” I had contacts who would help. I also decided that I’d pay her ex a visit to ensure he never left her alone for good.

“Thanks, I hope so.” Amelia wouldn’t look me in the eye, but it gave me time to study the knot on her forehead. It was purple and red now but would heal fine. I wanted to say something else but had no idea what. “I’ll get that wood in.”

“Cool,” she said, just as awkwardly.

I didn’t have a clue where she could go, but I’d have one of my guys set something up for her if that’s what it took.

I went out to gather the wood I’d chopped earlier. If I stayed busy, I wouldn’t think about those worried green eyes, those tempting pink lips, or the curves of her breasts that filled her bra nicely.

Reaching for a piece of split wood, I felt a splinter pierce the meaty part of my hand.

“Motherfucker,” I grunted and pulled my palm up to my face. I’d been so distracted by her beauty, I’d forgotten to put

on my gloves.

She'd be a good fuck, I had no doubts about that, but I didn't need her baggage. Even if she was an addiction I could get used to, she would just be a fuck. And I wasn't sure of her mental state for only that.

Filling my arms with wood, the tapping of footsteps closing in had me lifting my head. Amelia rushed outside, her eyes wide with fear behind them.

What happened?" She gasped the words.

"It's okay." I shook my head. "Just a splinter in my palm."

She closed the distance between us and took my hand into hers, her touch so soft, so tender. "That's so tiny, I can barely see it. Do you have tweezers?"

"Nope, fresh out of those." I grinned down at her, unable to remember the last time anyone paid any kind of caring attention to me.

"Duct tape, you must have some of that, right?" She met my gaze, an eyebrow raised as her expression turned determined.

"Yeah, in the laundry. Let me grab some."

She followed me indoors, her presence close, and I enjoyed her company. When I turned back around, tape in hand, she stood inches from me, and her cheeks blushed red. So, it wasn't just me who suddenly realized we were so close. I saw the golden flecks in her eyes as her breaths sped up, and my cock twitched. The more time I spent with her, the dirtier thoughts were that filled my mind.

I hadn't fucked a woman for a long time, so I blamed my cock for the way my breath sped up and how much I yearned to reach over and trace the back of my fingers along her soft cheek and whisper in her ear all the dirty things I could do to her to pass the time during the storm. I suspected she'd blush at my words, something that excited me so fucking much, I had to get out of the laundry before I had her pinned to the wall.

“We need light.” She practically jumped away from me, flicked on the lights, and returned while she tore a piece of the tape with her teeth. She avoided looking at me, her face turning slightly red.

I grinned, well aware she had felt that moment of heat between us.

Taking my hand, she placed the tape across my splinter, gently pushing it down, then going in the same direction as the wood had jammed into my skin.

“Where’d you learn this trick?” I asked, having never seen anyone do this.

“Google,” she replied, giving me a sassy look as if her answer was obvious.

These small snippets of her fun personality when she wasn’t hiding behind fear were calling to me, and as crazy as it sounded, I wanted to know more about this gorgeous girl who crashed into my mailbox.

“Are you ready? It won’t hurt,” she said, gripping the tape on one end between her fingers.

“Ye—”

She ripped the tape back viciously, and I felt a slight pinch from the splinter.

“There... done,” she claimed, sounding proud of herself. We stared down at the underside of the tape. The splinter was a long fucker.

“I like your style... don’t give the patient time to overthink it.”

She shrugged, rolling up the piece of tape. “It worked.” When she strolled out of the room, my eyes automatically dropped to the curvy ass I swore she swung on purpose.

A couple of hours later, the storm worsened, the howling wind crashing into the house. Snow was coming down heavily, making it hard to see the front yard. No one would be on the road in this weather.

Amelia was making spaghetti sauce to go with dinner, looking comfortable in the kitchen and having already found where everything was. She tried to draw me out as she chopped up the vegetables she put into the sauce, but I grunted out simple replies. I'd watched the interest grow on her face as the day progressed. Reading books to pass the time, I'd look up to find her watching me.

"Hope you like my pasta sauce," she said with a grin.

For those few seconds, I wondered what it would be like to have someone in my life to share everything with and not be alone all the time. The thought warmed me. It wasn't the first time I'd contemplated such things.

But the baggage I carried wouldn't work.

I wasn't going to tell her anything about my life or the fact that I was a very terrible man. I had to live with her until the storm that raged outside passed, then we'd part ways. Until then, I needed her calm, but on the bright side, I had gorgeous company while we were stuck indoors.

"Cat got your tongue?" she asked, turning back to stir the sauce.

"No," I said, with a terse air. "My mind was elsewhere for a moment."

"Fine," she said and let the matter drop.

Dinner was quiet because I couldn't stop eating. The meal was spectacular.

"You cook up mean spaghetti sauce. You'll have to leave me the secret recipe," I said, wiping the last bits of sauce with a slice of bread, certain I could eat two more bowls.

"Really, you liked it? My ex only ever said it wasn't enough, but never what was wrong with it. It's my favorite since it's my grandma's recipe. She taught me to make it when I was ten after moving in to live with her after I lost my parents." Her lips pulled to the corner of her mouth as she glanced down at her plate.

Something squeezed my heart to hear the tragedy this poor woman had been through, and she still kept on smiling.

“You know she had a saying,” Amelia pipped up, lifting her gaze.

“Yeah?”

“Only cook when you’re happy. She’d say that her bolognese sauce had ordinary ingredients like so many out there, but what brought her alive was the love she put into it. So, she insisted if I cooked when I was angry, the food wouldn’t taste good.”

“Maybe she was onto something. I watched how happy you looked making this dish, and it’s the best dish I’ve tasted in a long time.”

She laughed lowly. “Thank you. That really means a lot.”

We cleaned up, then I headed to the shower... and to get away from her. Her sweet floral smell filled the cabin, and every time I met her gaze, something inside me stirred. Something was building, and I felt the sexual tension deep in my balls, well aware it would only intensify.

“Hey, have you got a shirt I can sleep in? Those long sweatpants kept getting tangled in my legs last night.” Her question sliced through my thoughts, the ones where I pictured sliding her pants down and showing her how I could keep her warm.

“Oh, yeah, sure.” I left to get a t-shirt from my bedroom and brought it to her.

I had my shower, a quick rinse and scrub, then walked out of the bathroom. She was coming out of the bedroom, dressed in my burgundy shirt, and I caught sight of her breasts, free of a bra, swinging naturally as she turned away, revealing the back of two very fine legs. My shirt came down nearly to her knees, but that was just fine. When she walked, the hem swung with her movements, revealing gorgeous, curvy thighs.

The bed in her room squeaked when she moved about. I hadn’t even said good night to her, but it didn’t matter. I still couldn’t get her dressed in my shirt out of my head. I rolled

over, remembering our close proximity in the laundry, the look she gave me that I knew wasn't in my imagination. I held onto it, replaying it over and over to stop my other thoughts from taking over, and with her imprinted on my brain, I somehow fell asleep early.

Bang.

I jerked upright in bed, startled, my heart racing a million miles an hour.

What was that?

I threw the blanket aside and bolted out of bed, burst through the bedroom, and tore open the door, adrenaline driving me, like all the other times I'd been away on missions for the army, when I was woken up by explosions or when someone came screaming in my room. There was no time to think, only react. To jump into action because it could cost me my life.

I darted to Amelia's bedroom, shoving open the door, half expecting to find someone in there with her. But she was alone, my thumping entrance not disturbing her.

She whimpered in her sleep, repeating the word *no*, over and over again. Her phone was on the floor near the bed, which explained the sound I'd heard. She must have dropped it in her sleep.

Touching her face seemed to soothe her. Sighing, she turned over. Her bare ass stuck out from the covers, and I felt my body respond. Beneath those covers, all she had on was my t-shirt. I caught myself about to put my hand under those thin pieces of cloth to get to her satiny soft skin. I wanted to crawl into bed with her, make those nightmares go away with my touch, with my body, but I couldn't do that to her.

I told myself I was just watching her breathe for a few more minutes to make sure the nightmare didn't come back, then returned to bed. It didn't surprise me at all to find her in my dreams, waiting for me.

Chapter 5

Amelia



The room was still dark when I opened my eyes the next morning, and the wind was still howling outside. It sounded terrifying.

I got out of bed, my bladder urging me to rush to the bathroom. I'd be stuck here until Christmas if this kept up. That, in turn, reminded me of my pregnancy and how I was going to have this baby on my own. I'd always fought for everything in my life and never had anything easy, but for my baby, I wanted to ensure they had an easier life. My grandma was in a retirement community and was too old to help me, but I'd move back closer to her for sure. Rubbing my stomach, everything still felt semi-surreal that I was actually carrying a baby. But what if the test had given a false positive? I'd visit a doctor as soon as I got home and be certain before I panicked too much about my future.

Thinking way too much so early in the morning, I opened the bathroom door without thinking. I was so used to Jason showering while I was in the bathroom that it took my sleep-dulled brain to catch up.

That wasn't Jason in the shower.

Startled, I stared at Brick through the crack between the gray shower curtain and the wall. He was leaning against the shower wall.

I couldn't move, couldn't breathe.

His moan sang over the rushing water as his hand frantically worked back and forth on his cock. Fire crashed

over me at the realization I'd walked in on him while he was stroking himself. His very massive... self. Holy fuck, he was huge. That thing would split me in two, for sure. Would I be able to get my hands around it? Fuck, I had to get out of here, but if I moved, he'd hear me. And I badly needed to pee.

Afraid to move, I knew I shouldn't watch him as the water splashed over his chest and down his muscular body. He was built like a tree trunk. From the way his hips moved as he stroked his cock faster, I knew he would be very good in bed. At least he moved. Jason only wanted me on top to do all the work for him.

What would it feel like to have those huge hands on my ass, my breasts, or between my thighs? I almost had to stop staring because the thought got me instantly wet.

"Amelia," he gasped my name, and I snapped my head up, my heart slamming into the back of my throat.

Except he wasn't even looking at me. His eyes remained closed. My jaw dropped when my gaze fell to where his huge cock was spurting out the cum of his orgasm. Fuck me. Or don't. Fuck, yeah... No, I couldn't handle that thing. Curious to find out, I remained in the bathroom.

He'd been fantasizing about me and playing with himself.

Was I on my knees in his fantasy? Or in front of him, taking every inch of that thick, fat cock?

Brick cleared his throat, which made me scurry away from the door and out into the hall. Shit, he'd nearly caught me in there with him!

Please don't let him have seen me.

My whole body was burning up, and my face was on fire.

I decided to run back to my room when he opened the bathroom door, catching me in the hallway. Heart thumping, embarrassment colliding with me, I did the first thing that came to mind. I swung on my heels to face him, pretending I'd just emerged from my room.

He wore one of those blankets he called towels around his waist. On him, the towel was like a sheet of paper, not concealing the outline of his anaconda.

“Um, sorry, I really need to pee,” I said, right before I darted around him and closed the door. Fuck, did he suspect I’d seen him? Or that I might have heard him groan my name?

Arousal thumped through me, especially between my legs, as I thought about what he’d done in this room. Was he really interested in me, or was it just the forced proximity that made me a convenient fantasy?

I nearly ran my fingers down to my clit, to ease the intense throb of desire burning there, but stopped myself. He could still be right outside the door.

Finishing up, I left the bathroom, my cheeks still feeling like I’d splashed them with fire. I found Brick in the kitchen preparing coffee. With his chest bare, I struggled to keep my eyes on anything else but those perfect muscles. His biceps were so large, he could press a house.

Was this what a real man looked like? Jason didn’t even come close to comparing.

“Hey, if you want to help me today, you can. The sun is only just coming up, but I want to get some of that wood on the front porch today. If you want to get dressed, we’ll do that, then we can have breakfast.”

“Sure,” I blurted, my voice sounding more like a squeak. I blushed as he looked me up and down. Remembering I didn’t have my bra on, I turned away, biting my bottom lip. Damn, he was going to think I was showing off for him. “I’ll go get changed.”

My fingers were frozen by the time we stopped stacking wood, even with my gloves on, but it felt good to do something. Brick kept glancing my way, and I couldn’t help but think he knew I’d seen him in the bathroom. Every time I had that thought, my face burned up all over again.

Focus on the wood. Right.

I couldn't carry the amount of wood that Brick could, but I did my fair share. We were on the way back to the house when I offered to make breakfast. I wanted biscuits and gravy after that workout and deserved the calories.

"That would be great. There's sausage in the freezer and whatever else you need in the kitchen. I'll put more coffee on," Brick answered, and I smiled a casual smile.

I'd thought about him the entire time I trudged back and forth, aware that he was real, near me, and that he'd just masturbated while thinking about me. I could swear there was electricity crackling between us even more than yesterday's laundry moment.

While I prepared homemade biscuits and put them in the oven, I couldn't stop thinking about what sex with him would be like. Would it be painful to take a cock that big? I was breathing heavily, but I wasn't aware of it until Brick came up to stand beside me. I looked up at him, and he moved those few inches, backing me up against the counter.

I swallowed hard, and our eyes locked as his right hand came up to cup my left cheek. His hand nearly covered my entire face, but I didn't back down. I swallowed hard again and met the warm, dark brown eyes that drilled down into mine. He leaned forward, so close that our lips nearly touched.

"I know you watched me this morning," he whispered.

I gasped, but his lips were grazing mine. He kissed me with a starving passion, and I swore I was flying in the sky among the stars. My toes curled against the kitchen rug as my thighs squeezed together. He pulled back, a grin curling his lips.

Oh, fuck me, but the man could kiss, and if he got me drenched from just a single kiss, I was more than curious about what it would be like to sleep with this big mountain man.

"You look beautiful when you blush, Amelia." He raised that massive hand again and traced his index finger along my lips, his eyes following each movement. Heat flooded my

veins, pooling between my legs as hot liquid arousal. I was going to flood the floor if he kept this up.

“I was surprised to find you in there like that, but... um, it was hot,” I replied, trying my best to maintain a bit of bravery when his steady, calm eyes came up to mine. My cheeks were flushed, not from shame, but from arousal. My nipples grazed against the soft fabric of my top.

“Was it now, Amelia? You liked watching me stroke myself for you?” he asked with a quiet calmness that didn’t match the way my heart was pounding or how fast I was breathing. How could he be so relaxed when I was about to have a heart attack? When I was about to make puddles on the kitchen floor because I was so wet for him?

“It was, yes,” I answered bravely, my voice slightly trembling as I attempted to calm my rapid respiration, but then he pressed his hips deeper against mine with a gentle rock of his pelvis, and I swear to God, I wanted to die of shame. Instead, I closed my eyes and groaned.

“Did you enjoy it when I growled your name, Amelia? Do you want to hear it again?”

His voice teased me to open my eyes once more, and I stared up at him, helpless, wanting to touch him but afraid I’d combust if I did. Or beg him to fuck me right then and there. As much as I wanted it, I wasn’t sure I could take it.

“Yes,” I breathed the response, knowing I’d have to be honest if I wanted this to go anywhere. Lying wouldn’t make him want me more, not this guy. He seemed like someone who told it as it was, but that close to him, I doubted I’d be able to say no to him. I had to be honest with myself—since meeting him, I’d been eyeing him up and down, drawn to him like nobody’s business.

“Good girl.”

A delicious shiver tingled down my spine, and I shuddered with a kind of arousal I hadn’t felt in a long time. Something about the way he called me a good girl turned me on so much, I could barely breathe.

He stepped away and went about pouring his cup of coffee as though I wasn't so wet that my panties weren't soaked and in desperate need of another washing.

Standing there for a long minute, I wondered if he was going to touch me again, but he didn't. He collected his coffee and went to sit on one of the stools, eyeing me the whole time.

When I finally moved, it felt as if I was floating. I had no idea I could be turned on so much.

Focus on anything but the desperate need to have this huge man fuck me.

I finished making breakfast, but eating was a struggle. I'd admitted something I'd never have admitted to anyone else. I wanted him, desperately, without reason.

Every time I'd catch him looking at me, I'd blush and crave to touch him. He made a primal sound as he finished his plate of food, and it made me think of the way he'd groaned in the shower as he came, the way he'd said my name, and I felt as if I was about to just burst.

I got up to rush out of the kitchen. Shame burned through me. I was acting as though I'd never had sex and was a dog in heat and could only imagine what he thought of me. I knew it was only a moment of doubt, but I couldn't help it. If he'd been offended or thought I was awful, he wouldn't have admitted to knowing I was there as he jerked off this morning. He wouldn't have done what he did in the kitchen.

I rinsed a washcloth off with cold water and pressed it to my face, trying to cool down the embarrassment that had overcome me as a red heat on my face.

When I went back out, he was busy cleaning up. Going to my room to cool down and catch my breath, I tried my phone again. If there was a signal, I might be able to get out of there. Although the snow was falling thick and fast, so much so, I couldn't even see the road. I wasn't going far, that was for sure, even if the signal did come back on my phone.

I made lunch and dinner since he'd been kind enough not to kick me out in the snow. We sat at the table for dinner, a

glass of white wine on each side of the table. I sipped mine but gulped down the last two mouthfuls when my plate was empty.

“You should open up a cafe or restaurant. Your dishes are scrumptious.” He placed extra emphasis on that last word, dropping his gaze to my lips. Was he flirting with me?

“I-I don’t have the first clue how to run a business, though I used to hold dinner parties for my friends at my grandma’s place. I loved watching them get so much pleasure out of something I created.”

“I admire that you found your passion. Some people go through life never finding that one thing that makes them glow. I can tell cooking is that for you.”

“Thanks.” He had this way of saying things that made me smile and feel great about myself. “What about you? What’s your thing?”

He shrugged, then collected the empty plates from the table. “I’m still searching for it. Anyway, how about a movie?”

“Sure,” I answered, noting how quickly he dodged my question and how little of himself he revealed.

We’d just chosen a holiday comedy movie when a trilling sound made me look around the room.

“What’s that? Is your phone working?”

“It’s just the two-way radio I sometimes use to keep in touch with some of my... employees,” Brick answered nonchalantly.

My passion cooled a little over the way he’d paused over the word employees. Then I thought about the weapons cache I’d found.

“Can we use it to get a tow truck up here?”

“Yeah, once the roads are cleared, we can,” he murmured, not looking at me as he went to pick up the radio and switch it off.

“Why are there so many weapons in your house?” I asked with a wince. I hadn’t meant to let the words out, but with him

not sharing anything about himself and me so horny, I forgot where I was, and reality came crashing down on me. For all I knew, he was a crime boss on vacation.

“Because I’m not exactly a nice guy, Amelia,” he said in a deep voice. “I have enemies, and I might need the weapons.”

“Oh.” I was too stunned to say anything else, but my thoughts were spinning out of control with scenarios and possibilities of who exactly Brick was and what I’d got myself into.

Was he a drug dealer? Worry knotted in my back muscles at the thought because I had enough crap in my life without getting involved with a criminal.

“Um. What is it exactly that you do?”

He breathed deeply, then twisted to look at me, a stoic expression settling over his features. I guessed he was perfect at holding a poker face and hiding his emotions.

“I can’t really go into it. Maybe another time, okay? Let’s just watch a movie and forget about this stuff.” He tried to brush off my concerns, but that just worried me more.

Jason used to do that, brush off my concerns, and I wasn’t having it from a guy I barely even knew.

“No, I’m going to go read, thank you. Have a good night,” I said as I got up from the couch and headed to the bedroom.

“Amelia,” he called and came after me, grabbing my arm, stopping me, an angry note in his voice.

“Just stop!” I said, holding my hand up. “I barely know you, and you have so many enemies, you keep lots of weapons in the house. I’m supposed to feel safe knowing that? Well, I don’t, so I’m going to bed unless you can talk to me like I’m a grown woman.” I don’t know where this confident, brave girl had come from, but I liked her.

“I’m not treating you like a child,” he sputtered, his eyebrows pulled together in confusion.

Okay, so he couldn’t know my thoughts, or my past for that matter, but he was hedging while I was being

uncomfortably honest. It had to go both ways.

“I can’t trust you, Brick. You won’t tell me what I need to know. I’ve been sharing about me, and you tell me nothing.”

“Look, I’m doing the best I can, okay? I don’t know you any more than you know me. I want you to feel safe, and I’ll protect you. I won’t hurt you. I pulled you out of your car, remember? I’m not going to harm you. Even if you aren’t supposed to be here, I’ll keep you safe.”

“Safe from what, Brick?” I hissed out, remembering I was potentially with child, and that put him or her in danger, too.

“From whatever comes our way, if it does,” he said straightforwardly. “From anything that might want to harm you.” He offered me a soft smile that took me by surprise, but not as much as him pushing me up against the wall to kiss my anger away.

When he had to lift me a little so he wasn’t bending down too much, I instinctually wrapped my legs around his waist and ran my hair through his hair. His full lips pressed into mine. I only had on my long flannel shirt since it was long enough to go down to my knees, and I felt him against my bare skin through his jeans.

The intense arousal I’d felt all day exploded into a fire that would only be quenched by his touch, but my frustration also buzzed. Our hands were everywhere at once. Mine pulled at the buttons of his shirt, then tore it away so I could get my lips on his shoulder. He groaned softly and hitched me up to gently bite the curve of my neck. I pushed my hips against his as he bit a little harder. My nipples were hard points against his chest.

Suddenly, he set back on my feet and slid to his knees in front of me. He glided a hand behind a knee and lifted my knee up and over his shoulder as he pushed his face between my thighs.

There was no pause, just a starved man who took what he wanted. His mouth wrapped over my pussy, his tongue running the length of my core. I cried out, my hands fisting his

hair. He pushed my shirt up, and I took the hint, shuffling the thing off, leaving me completely naked in front of Brick. My hips rocked against him as he put his tongue inside me, tasting me, licking me. He growled, one hand clasping my ass, the other swallowing and kneading my breast.

Nothing made sense anymore, just this huge man devouring my pussy, making the most delicious sounds. Everything inside me needed this man, primal desire, urges I couldn't control, but I needed more.

Wrapping his teeth around my clit, the light pressure he applied drove me crazy. When his fingers found their way to my entrance, pushing into me, I came completely undone.

Moaning, my orgasm rattled me. Stars danced in my vision as I came hard. Still, the man licked me, never letting go. His tongue was back inside me, sucking and taking.

My fingers speared through his hair, and I tried to push him away. Every touch tickled like crazy, but he wouldn't release me. His thumb traced over to the tight puckered hole, rubbing it.

Shaking with arousal and unsure what I needed, I wanted him to both stop and keep going. I was crying out again as he worked me, but just when I was about to explode a second time, he drew back.

I gasped for air. "Why'd you stop?"

He laughed and got to his feet as he undid his jeans and pushed them down his legs, stepping out of them, then he ripped his tee off as he towered over me. He bent back down to his jeans and pulled out a condom from his wallet, which he wasted no time ripping open with his teeth and rolling over his massive cock.

"You're exactly where I want you," he teased, that deep hoarse voice my weakness. His hand slinked down between us, his huge hand cupping my drenched pussy. "Who did this to your beautiful cunt?"

I blinked at him, confused. "What do you mean?"

"Who shaved you?"

“Oh, that was me? It’s that J... dickface preferred me that way, but please don’t make me think of him right now.”

Something hard slipped over his face. “I want to see your pussy with that gorgeous red hair. Grow it for me.” He grabbed something from the wallet in his back pocket.

Hands gripping my hips, he had me off my feet so fast, I didn’t have time to consider his words, especially when I wrapped my legs around him. The thick head of his cock probed at my entrance. I gasped and looked up at him. I wasn’t ready—I’d never be ready for him.

“It’s okay, Amelia,” he cooed. “You can take it, and you’ll scream the mountain down when you do because you’ll love it so much,” he whispered just before he pushed the tip into me.

I gasped for breath, gripping his shoulders, unsure how this was going to work.

“Just relax for me... I need to sink into your pussy. That’s all I’ve been thinking about.”

“Yes... please,” I moaned.

He worked deeper into me, taking it slow, which I appreciated. I felt every inch of him stretching me and filling me until he’d managed to push all the way inside me. Rocking back and forth, he picked up speed as he thrust into me.

I barely caught my breath with his force and size.

“Fuck,” I groaned, too in shock to say anything else. He was so huge, oh God, so big. I couldn’t speak, all of my air was gone, but the harder he went, the more delicious it felt.

“Brick... please more.” I looked up into his deep eyes, and he kissed me, completely sweeping me off my feet.

“That’s it, Amelia. Take me, baby. Take all of me... that’s a good girl,” he whispered against my mouth as my head fell back, my face on fire, like the rest of me, as he began to rock faster. In and out, Brick moved in a tight rhythm that stroked every inch of my core.

“You’re going to make me come with my cock buried inside of you if you keep squeezing me with those tight walls

of yours, Amelia. Fuck, you're so tight, it almost hurts, but it feels so good." Brick urged me on, his fingers clamped on my ass, his middle finger teasing at the hole there. I nearly came unglued when he used some of the moisture from my pussy to slide that finger into my ass.

His fingers were as thick as some men's cocks, and I lost my mind as it slid deeper into me, in a place that had never been invaded. "Brick, fuck, I'm going to explode."

"That's it, Amelia, just let go, baby, let go," he urged, moving faster, harder inside of me until all I was, all that I could be, was a contraction of muscles that sucked him deeper and fired my nerve endings.

My climax crashed over me, and when it broke me, I screamed and bit down hard on his shoulder, my back arching.

Clawing at his back, I came with him again, biting his shoulder as my body came unglued. I slumped against him, completely spent.

"You didn't come," I said softly.

"Not yet," he grinned when he spoke, which told me the night was just beginning.

"But I don't think I'll be able to walk for a week."

"That bad?" he asked gently, sliding out of me and setting me on my feet. His large hands spanned the expanse of my waist, holding me up. "You alright?"

"I think so," I said with a shaky smile.

"I'll take you to bed." He carried me to his bed instead of mine, which was a nice surprise. The room was much larger and dark but lit by a candle that smelled of cranberries and cinnamon.

"Your bed is huge." I rolled out of his arms and onto dark sheets that smelled of his sexiness. It was heaven. "I do feel better now."

Chuckling, he got into bed with me, and I nestled against his chest, his skin on fire. It was crazy, considering the small argument we got into, but I felt safe against him.

“Good. Now that we’ve got the angry fuck out of the way, let me show you how a woman should really be treated, Amelia.” He cupped my face in his hands. “Let me begin with kissing you slowly where I caused you some pain.”

His words took me off guard, as did his moving down the bed and prying open my legs.

He grinned, staring at me completely naked. “You’re so beautiful.” Then he lowered that magical mouth to my pussy and devoured me.

Chapter 6

Brick



I woke up to find her crawling back into bed, her red hair wet and her body damp from the shower. I pulled her into my arms with a happy breath.

“Good morning, Amelia.”

“Hey, you,” she answered, her hands on my chest, her breath a soft feather against my neck.

“How are you feeling this morning?” I asked, and she chuckled shyly. I adored that about her.

“Amazing, even if a tiny bit sore, that’s all,” she murmured.

Rolling away and pulling her over me, her legs naturally encircled my waist as she curled around me. Soft curves fit perfectly against me, warmth dancing off her skin.

She was absolutely beautiful.

“I love how you feel on top of me,” I admitted, not sure why.

“It’s nice,” she replied just before I turned her over to crawl between her sweet thighs.

“Not as nice as this, I’m sure. But I have a confession.” I lowered myself to worship her, admiring how she let her legs widen for me, her pink lips already glistening, ready for me.

“Yeah, and what’s that?” She leaned back on bent elbows, staring down her gorgeous, naked body at me with lust hazing her eyes and her breaths quickening.

“I’m already addicted to your pussy. I can’t get enough of how sweet it tastes, how I want it all for myself, and how I can’t stop thinking about licking you.”

Her next breath hitched, her nipples tightening, and fuck me, her body reacting to just my words was captivating.

Without another word, I pressed my mouth to her swollen lips, licking her, inhaling her intoxicating scent. She tasted like the sweetest candy, and I imprinted her on my mind, knowing I’d never forget her. I licked up every drop of her I could.

She gasped as she wriggled against me, giggling and pushing my head away. I wouldn’t let her, though, and focused on her clit. That calmed her right down into a sigh of absolute pleasure. I teased her with a variety of touches until I found what she needed. My hands buried themselves under her ass, and her feet planted on my shoulders.

I hummed with encouragement when she dug her tiny heels into my shoulders for traction as she moved her hips against my mouth. I glanced up to see her pale cheeks were flushed, and her nipples were tight. I’d give those puffy pink perfect nipples more attention later, but right now, I wanted to make her come for breakfast and get my fill.

Grinning against her slick skin as the thought came, I didn’t stop sucking at the button of her pleasure. My jaw started to ache, so I replaced my tongue with my thumb for a minute until the pain passed. Once it was gone, I gave her what she wanted, the hot, wet pressure of my tongue on her clit.

She was sore from our encounter last night, so I’d soothe her. Maybe we could do more playing tonight. For now, I just wanted to make her feel good and not push her until she got used to my size, even if my dick was hard as a rock.

I’d nearly lost my shit when I got inside her last night. I’ve never felt a woman fit so tightly around me, but Amelia fit me like a snug glove. Stroking the thick length that filled my hand, I’d wondered how a woman so tiny had been able to take all of it.

Amelia's cries of pleasure, those soft little sighs and whimpers, the moans she let out, drove me on, spurring my pleasure. There was something about knowing I was about to make her come that made me rock hard. I hummed against her clit, so close to losing my control and unable to stop the vibration of sound, but she seemed to like it. Her hands fisted the bedsheets, and her hips rocked against me. I could barely keep my lips on her clit, sucking it while my tongue flicked away at her, but I managed it.

"Brick," she gasped my name, her hips telling me all I needed to know. She was lost, off in her own world, screaming as she burst with an orgasm. The sounds she made were euphoric, and I palmed my cock at her moans, at her pussy feeding me.

I sped up the strokes, unable to help myself. Inhaling her scent, I gave one last swipe of her entire pussy to get her taste on my tongue as I felt a pulse rocket up from my balls.

She collapsed onto the bed, sprawled out, her pussy drenched. Fuck me, it was delicious. My hand worked overtime, my eyes rolling back as I was so close.

"Amelia," I called out her name as I came, not caring that I was ruining the quilt. I'd wash it later. Right now, the world was pleasure and Amelia. I'd filled all my senses with her, and it was so fucking good. Even if I wasn't inside of her, it felt amazing to come with her.

Growling, my cock pulsed, pumping onto the blanket. I bunched it up around the end of my cock, my hips jerking into it until every last drop came out.

"I'm going to die of pleasure," Amelia purred, pulling me out of a mindless place where only peace existed. I smiled and rolled over to look up at her.

"Is that a bad thing?" I murmured.

"No, it isn't. I've had a shitty life, and having some pleasure for once is nice." She hitched up a little against the pillows, her hands pulling the covers up over her bare skin.

“How so?” I asked, concerned and wanting to know. A quick wipe of myself, and I crawled up to her.

“I ran away from home when I was seventeen,” she admitted as if she’d repeated the story a dozen times before. “My parents were addicts, and my dad wanted to sell me to his dealer for more drugs. He point-blank told me his plan, so I left before he could do it.”

I went still. I wasn’t so much into drugs anymore, but at one point, my dad did heavy business in cocaine and meth. I was glad I’d taken us away from that direction, or I wouldn’t be able to look her in the eye, knowing it was some of my product that had ruined her relationship with her parents. These days, the family business dealt in more expensive items, like corporate secrets and mercenaries for hire. We still shipped guns around the globe and had interests in jewelry mines, but drugs? Too much heat on that shit for me.

“That sounds fucked up. Do I need to shoot your dad between the eyes?” I offered with pure sincerity, even if I offered a smile to soften the deal.

She frowned at me but didn’t say anything else.

“What about your parents?” she asked, and I took a deep breath.

“They died in Ireland. A car... accident,” I answered simply. Not talking about the bomb that turned their tiny Renault rental car into a billion pieces that would never be put back together again.

“I’m so sorry, Brick.” She crawled into my arms, and surprising myself, I let her. I never did pity, but with Amelia, I craved her warmth and to have her against me when I thought of everything I’d lost. How I was left to run the business, deal with the debts, the deals. I’d done a fucking good job of it in the end, but lately, I’d been contemplating cutting back.

Turning back to Amelia, I kissed her forehead, wanting to keep her safe because she deserved to laugh and enjoy life. I understood what losing your family was like, what being rejected did to you. It fucking destroyed you, but maybe I

wasn't too late to ensure Amelia never hit rock bottom as I had done, where I wanted nothing more to do with life. Dark times I put past me a long time ago, but I'd never forget them.

"It's okay," I whispered in her ear, then kissed her neck. "It sounds like we both had a rough start. What matters now is how we live the rest of our lives, right?"

She lifted her head to face me, those green-meadow eyes glinting, touching something inside me I wasn't expecting. I didn't share my past with anyone, and now look at me, wanting to spill my guts to his little red-haired girl.

"Right. And I think what we need to do is start the day off with French toast. After all, you've finished French kissing my pussy, right?" she teased with a cheeky smile.

"Oh, direct hit, guilty ma'am." I clutched at her, acting as if she'd shot me. I was amazed at just how much I enjoyed the free way she laughed before she left the bed to prepare breakfast.

Lying in bed for a few moments, I knew I was getting in way over my head and in huge trouble because I kept finding things to adore about her—way too many things—which couldn't be good.

Chapter 7

Amelia



“**Y**ou know, it’s Christmas tomorrow, right?” I stated, staring outside the kitchen window at the dark afternoon clouds, the storm still in full force.

He’d made us a lunch of soft tortillas with chili con carne and cheddar cheese, all rolled up into what sounded simple but turned out to be amazingly good. I was on my second one when I checked my phone once again to see if the signal was back yet, but there was nothing.

The storm had somehow worsened, and I was worried we’d wake up tomorrow to the house completely buried in snow.

“Yes, I do, but I’m not really into it,” he answered, his voice trailing off. His features came down in a dark look before he looked up at me with a bright smile. “But maybe I have something to actually celebrate this year.”

“If you mean me crash landing in your yard like Santa dropped me from his sleigh for you, then I guess so,” I replied with a grin, seeing the humor in the situation.

“I hadn’t thought about it like that,” Brick mused, nodding his head as he bit at his bottom lip, lost in thought. The expression was so adorable, I nearly fainted, but I controlled myself. “Yeah, I guess that’s exactly what happened. I hope you tipped Rudolph for his troubles. That old car of yours couldn’t have been easy to pull from the North Pole.”

“I’m so glad you didn’t say my ass.” I laughed out, wiping at my mouth delicately. “I’d have had to pout, and that

wouldn't be any way to spend Christmas Eve.”

“No, it wouldn't,” Brick mused. Coming around the island, he nestled himself between my legs, using the index finger on his right hand to bring my face up to his.

I blinked up at him, desire hot and sudden as he came near me. It wasn't just his presence that turned me on. It was his smell, the way the air felt when he was near me, the way I knew he was there, even without looking.

“I wouldn't let you pout for long. I'd have found a way to make you, ahem, smile again.”

“Smile, huh? That's all?” I wrapped my arms around his waist, loving how natural and easy it felt. Usually, I was a very hands-off person, but not with Brick. I wanted to touch him all the time. What I adored even more was how quickly the walls between us crumbled, as though we'd both been wanting desperately to come together.

“Maybe.” He dipped his head to place a kiss between my eyes and leaned back a little. “I don't have a present for you, other than me, of course, but we can put up a tree if you want. I'll go outside and battle the snow to find something that will be suitable, and I think there are some old decorations up in the attic.”

“Oh, that sounds lovely,” I answered, thinking about my tree back at my former home. I'd spent hours getting it just right, only for Jason to move everything around to where he wanted, messing up the symmetry I'd created. Asshole. So, I loved the idea of actually spending Christmas in this cabin in the middle of the mountains with the hottest man I'd ever met. What better way to get over a breakup?

“You stay in here where it's warm, and I'll be back in a little while.” He kissed my nose this time, then went into his bedroom, emerging soon after all rugged up in a thick coat, gloves and hat..

He strolled outside, bundled up and cutting down a tree with an axe. Even though I now knew why I'd had some vague memory about a Yeti when I saw him fully equipped against

the cold, I couldn't help myself when I saw him swinging that axe. I went to the window to watch him. He was so powerful yet so gentle with me, even when he was a little rough. I blushed thinking about the way he'd made me cum this morning, so determined to lick every inch of my pussy.

Brick glanced up and saw me but frowned. He stopped swinging that axe for a second, his head tilted to the left. I decided to give him something to look at and ran my hand under the long black T-shirt he gave me to wear, and quickly flashed him my breasts.

His eyes bulged out and he stared at me hungry. I hollered with laughter and tugged my shirt back down, then I went to stand in the glass doorway and watched him.

Who had I become?

He grinned at me, then went back to swinging that axe but kept his eyes on me, letting me see how each powerful stroke sent shockwaves up his arms. Those arms that held me close, that held me up against the wall last night.

I was alone in the house, so there wasn't anyone to hear me gasp, but he paused as if he knew, as if he'd heard. With a nod of his head, he gave one last swing..

Brick had the tree free of its trunk and back in the house in no time. He looked at me, a smile dancing at his lips.

"Enjoy watching me out there?" he asked, dragging the tree and a bucket he'd found somewhere in the living room.

"Mm, I could ask you the same question," I told him sarcastically, pouting.

His left eyebrow twitched up a little, but he didn't move.

"Later, princess."

"Mm, promises, promises." I stood up straight.

"I'll get the decorations from the attic," he mumbled, but I saw the bulge in his pants as he turned away from me

He wasn't as oblivious as he pretended, yet he was playing a game but staying away, teasing me. That only made me want

him more.

A few minutes later, he came back in and set the box of decorations on the couch. The tree went in the bucket with some large rocks at the base to hold it in place. I went to fetch water to place in the bottom of the bucket, then admired the tree.

“I think we can cut a few of these branches, shape it up a little, and it’ll be perfect.

“There are scissors in the drawer of my desk over there. They should be strong enough.” He gestured at the desk while pulling out garland and tinsel from the box. “I don’t know if these old bubble lights will work or not, but we can try.”

“Bubble lights?” I asked, distracted by the hunt for scissors. I found them and went over to look at what he was holding up. “Oh, those must be old.” I looked down at the liquid-filled glass with interest. “They look like candles.”

“Yeah, the bubbles make the lights kind of flicker, if I remember correctly.” Brick leaned over to plug the lights on, and all of them came on. “There we go. Those will work.”

“They’re so pretty,” I said, grabbing up the gold garland to examine it. The decoration that ran around the tree must have been expensive when it was new, it was quality stuff, much better than anything my parents ever used. There was still only a thin string running through it, but it would do.

“Hmm, let me see that,” Brick said as he reached for the garland. He let it stream through his hand and then looked up at me speculatively. “Come here.”

I did as he asked because, evidently, I was now at his mercy.

“Turn around,” he said, and I smiled, obeying him. “Take your shirt off.”

“Oh my,” I said, understanding that we were playing for real now. “What’s this?”

“Put your hands behind your back,” Brick said, a little more demanding.

I wasn't afraid since he'd shown me nothing but gentleness up to this moment, so I played along, a tingle dancing at the apex of my thighs.

As he ran the rough texture of the plastic garland around and through my wrists, the back of his hands brushed against my bare ass. I shivered as his fingers moved against my skin but didn't say anything. Standing, he ran the garland around my waist, then up over my shoulders. From there, he turned me so that I was facing him. I studied his serious face as he moved.

I was going to ask him what he planned next, but he tipped me back over one arm and sucked at my right nipple, then my left, until they were hard points, and I was squirming. "What are you doing?"

"You'll see." Letting me go, he tenderly twined the string around my nipples, one then the other.

My blood rushed in my veins, excitement chasing away the laughter as my nipples responded to the tight grip.

"Every inch of your body drives me crazy."

"I can't do anything about it, now can I?" I answered cheekily, pushing my breasts out, my hands still tied behind my back.

"No, I suppose you can't." He looked at me, then at what was left of the garland in one hand. "Stand still."

I glanced up at him as he stepped close to me. The fingers on his left hand traced my lips as his right hand went to my breast, holding the weight in his hands. He'd introduced me to the idea that my whole breast was sensitive, that I liked having all of it touched. I thought it was only my nipples until last night. Now, I knew I didn't know a lot about sex.

"I love how you touch me." I sighed as he traced his other hand down my neck.

"I can't get enough of touching you, Amelia. You have amazingly soft skin," he said, guiding me back to the couch. "Sit."

I smiled as I settled in, waiting for further instructions.

“You’re beautiful,” he said softly, but I heard him. Kneeling in front of me, he spread my closed knees with his hands. “Every inch of you is absolutely captivating.”

He came close, kissing me until I grew breathless. My hips jerked against him, my legs wrapping around his body as his hands came down to tilt my hips toward him. I was wild for him, and all he’d really done was kiss me, but he was close, so he didn’t really have to do anything. I wanted him that much.

I forgot how innocent I was. I was ashamed that I wasn’t a seductress, but he didn’t seem to care. He untied my hands so that I could touch him but left my breasts bound. He took my rough touches, my awkward grasps at his skin, my frantic grabs of his clothes until he was as naked as me, grunting when my nails scratched him and sighing when my tongue licked against his lips, asking for more.

“Calm, Amelia, stay calm,” he urged. Moving down my body, he trailed kisses over the tips of my nipples and down my abdomen. “Put your legs over my shoulders.”

I did as he asked, knowing now what it felt like to have a man’s tongue there. I hadn’t known what it felt like until Brick, but I’d always wondered. As his wide tongue slid along the slit of my pussy, spreading his wet spit all over my already soaking skin, I twisted my hips, wanting more. I wanted to be coated in his spit, in his cum, especially if it meant he fucked me.

His hands held my ass, squeezing in time with the circles of my hips, his tongue staying in place when I cried out his name. He circled my clit, lapping it over and over until the need became a pulse of satisfaction. The pain was pleasure, but Brick wasn’t done. He moved, replacing his mouth with a finger as he pulled at the garland, releasing my nipples.

The burning ache sent me soaring, and my moans escalated.

Brick grunted in satisfaction as my head fell back, and I screamed a silent sound, my voice stolen by pleasure.

My mountain man had come prepared because he was fitting himself with a condom.

In seconds, the tip of that massive dick pushed into me, spreading my swollen, drenched lips open, stretching me as he thrust his hips. I cried out at his sheer size. Another thrust, and I took a few inches of him, my walls claspng him, sucking him deeper, inch by inch, until I had all of him inside of me.

“Amelia,” he sighed my name on a groan as he pulled back, then thrust into me, pushing me into the back of the couch, sinking all the way in with a smooth glide. I was so wet, there was nothing to hold him back. I felt the juices drip out of me as he pushed himself back in. His couch would be soaked, but I didn’t care. I reached for him, and he pulled me up, still on his knees.

Wrapping my legs around him, I gasped as the new position made him press into me in a new way.

“That’s so good, Brick. Your dick, it’s just so fucking good.”

I kissed him as he thrust into me, over and over. Clawing his back, I tried to hang on as he moved inside me.

“I’m going to fuck you until the day I die,” he gasped, his lips coming to my neck, biting me, claiming me, marking me for all to see.

I craved his mark and wanted to have a man like Brick in my corner.

“As long as you want me,” I whispered, grinding myself down on him, the friction teasing my clit.

We came together, clutching at each other, wrapped up in sensation. There was no space between us, nothing that wasn’t touched, stroked, or pressed into.

Reality came back to me when he let me down against the couch and pulled out of me. I missed him terribly, wanting him back inside me. He sank down next to me, and I stroked his hair as he came back to his senses, enjoying the silky feel of it in my fingers.

“I think I just received the best Christmas present,” he teased once he caught his breath.

I liked how he wasn't ashamed to be naked in front of me. It meant I could be equally unashamed.

“I think we both did... but now I really want to decorate that tree.”

“Agreed. Let's do it, but I may keep that garland out. I've discovered it has many uses.”

His wicked grin sent tingles down my spine. How could I have become so enraptured over a man I'd only just met? Was this what they called a rebound?

What I was starting to feel for Brick didn't feel temporary in the slightest.

Chapter 8

Brick



Amelia had a quick shower after our tryst on the couch and came out with a smile on her face. I handed her the box of decorations. There was a mixture of colors and materials in there, from glass to crystal and felt to silk.

“Which do you want to put on first?”

“I think these clear crystal balls should go on last, but the crocheted angels will be pretty, with the stars and glass decorations.” She picked up several and started putting them on the tree. I’d shaped the branches while Amelia took a quick shower.

“Alright, let’s do this.” She bounced on her toes with excitement. “Grandma and I used to set up our tree every year early in November, which I know some people freak out about, but as far as I was concerned, I wanted to have the tree up for as long as possible. It always made me happy. Which then begs the question... why isn’t yours up already?”

I shrugged. “No reason to on my own.”

“Well, we’re going to make it incredible and light up the house to look festive, considering outside is the apocalypse of snowstorms.” She giggled.

Her presence was like a flame that warmed me from the inside out. I couldn’t remember the last time these walls had heard laughter.

She caught me staring at her, her sinfully green eyes narrowing as the corners of her lips tugged upward. My heartbeat thumped, and it was a futile attempt to calm down

when my cock hardened every time I looked at her. I couldn't stop imagining her naked and hearing her sweet cries. To see her in the house, laughing, enjoying herself, cooking up a storm in the kitchen... things that made me wonder what it would be like to have a family of my own.

"Are you going to help or just stare?" she mused, then threw a ball of tinsel at me.

Laughing at her, I joined in on the decorating. Humming to herself and smiling, she searched for the best place to hang a glass bauble with golden swirls.

"Grandma and I used to bake nonstop. Some years, we had so many gingerbread cookies, we'd share them with the neighboring farms." She smiled over at me, happiness gleaming in her emerald eyes.

I enjoyed the moment with her a lot more than I thought I would. She'd opened up to me, which surprised me, considering how terrified she'd been when she first woke up. I couldn't help thinking about how Christmas was a time for miracles, hope, and even second chances. And how, for the first time in so long, it felt like my heart warmed up again, and of course, it all came down to being with Amelia and not spending another Christmas alone.

I'd missed happy times with my family and friends, when I allowed myself to have them. Since when had things turned so sour that loneliness had crept into my heart?

"Do you like Christmas?" Amelia asked.

I frowned as I thought about the question.

"I did when I was young, when my parents were alive, but after they died, everything changed. They were doing some stuff in Ireland that wasn't exactly aboveboard, importing guns." I paused, unsure how much I should say, but how she looked at me told me I needed to be honest if I wanted this to go on. Lying to her would get me nowhere, and for the first time since I took over the family's business, I didn't feel so alone. I felt as though I could trust her. "They pissed off the wrong people, and well, their car exploded."

“That’s terrible,” she murmured, her eyes growing wide, but I knew what she must have been thinking—perhaps they deserved it for getting involved in that kind of shit. I’d thought about it myself once or twice, in my darkest days, along with how it led me to follow the same path, which got me thinking if that would end up being my fate.

“Christmas just became a reminder of how alone I was as the years passed, and well, as I said, I came here to get away from it.” I sighed heavily, knowing I didn’t feel like that now. “You make me want to have that again... and share it with you.” Taking a deep breath, I enjoyed how calm she made me feel with that soft smile she offered me.

“Christmas is great when you’re with someone you... like.” She caught herself.

I couldn’t blame her for changing the word at the end. I think we both had a lot of baggage, but I was starting to wonder if maybe we could be more than a fling over a holiday.

“It is. So, tell me more about this Jason guy I have to punch when the snow melts,” I said, trying to make her laugh to change the subject. Her grin cheered me up even more.

“I’d let you kick him in the balls if you wanted to. I told you about catching him in our bed with my best friend. Well, I should have left him long before that. He was the first real boyfriend I’d ever had, and I didn’t realize he was controlling me until it was way too late. I left my grandma and other friends behind to live with him, then he became the world’s biggest jerk.”

She picked up more decorations and placed them on the tree, not looking at me. I had the impression she couldn’t say this stuff if she was looking at me, so I didn’t force it.

“He was meant to be my protector, my family, my everything I’d been missing. Or that’s what I thought... until the first time he hit me. I didn’t wash the dishes fast enough after his parents came over. He thought I needed correcting.”

I clenched my fists to stop from storming down the mountain to that dead man walking. Amelia made it worse

when her hand came up to cup her right cheek, and I knew she was remembering the pain, the shock that came with that slap.

“He deserves to be castrated for what he did to you, Amelia,” I said softly, wanting to touch her, but she looked too fragile just now. My giant hands might break her, so I picked up another delicate glass Santa and put it on the tree.

“He’ll get his, one way or another, Brick. Don’t you worry about him. Eventually, he’s going to meet a woman who makes him rue the day he was born. I’m done with him, and I don’t care what happens to him from now on. He could fall off the face of the planet, and I wouldn’t care,” she said bravely, and the look she sent me said she meant it.

“Good. It’s best not to dwell on asses like him. He’s in the past.” I wasn’t sure what else to say, so I went with encouragement. She needed time to become used to not being under that guy’s thumb, which I totally planned to break one day, but she’d be alright.

“Christmas was a time of magic, where I could hope for something better to come into my life. It took a while, but yeah, I think I’ve finally got what I hoped for. I’m here now and away from him, away from it all, and no matter what happens when it thaws, I’m going to have this to remember.” Her eyes watered, but she looked away.

“Maybe it doesn’t have to end, Amelia,” I heard myself say and wasn’t surprised. There was something special about her that made me want to mean it when I said I wanted to fuck her until the day I died, but I also wanted to spend every day with her. Funny how I knew that, even though I barely knew her.

I’d never met anyone who awakened something within me and reminded me that the way I was going, I would end up alone and dead like my parents.

“We’ll see what happens when the snow melts. You’re such a solitary guy, you may get tired of loaning me your shirts and invading your space.” She stopped decorating the tree, but the tears were gone, replaced with a gorgeous

lopsided grin. “That’s fine, though. I’ll always cherish this memory of my first Christmas with someone amazing.”

“Even if I’m not exactly a good guy, Amelia?” I asked carefully, wanting her to know I wasn’t a white knight. A black knight, maybe, but never a white one.

“As long as you keep it all away from me and don’t bring danger to me. But I would like to know what you do when you want to tell me.” She shrugged, but I had to hide a wince of concern.

Danger was part of the life I lived, but I’d do my best to keep her out of it.

“I can respect that. Now, enough of the hard stuff. What’s for dinner?” I asked cheerfully.

“What do you want?” she asked, adding the final touches with long streamers of silvery tinsel.

“I think I’ll make pizza. I’ll need to get the dough started, but it’ll be worth it, I promise.” Up on my feet, I went into the kitchen and looked at the tree with the lights on. It was beautiful, reminding me of trees at home as a kid. “Nice job.”

Amelia walked over to the kitchen island, took a stool, and watched me. “I’d like to learn to make bread and dough from you.”

“It’s not hard, just learning the techniques and the language of the dough,” I said with a grin, loving the way she looked at me as if only I existed in the world, how she paid attention and wanted to be involved in things I did. “Come on, I’ll show you.”

Sitting at the island, her elbows on the counter, her chin propped up in her hands, she watched me, this gorgeous woman who’d turned my life upside down in the span of a few days.

I’d turned into a hard man after my military time and my parents died. Those events made me stone-cold... until I saw Amelia’s beautiful emerald eyes. Back then, I’d been a young man with dreams, but the gangsters in Ireland and my enemies had crushed that dream. I was a gangster now, a killer, a man

who didn't have time for the kind of feelings Amelia made me feel.

There was a time when I thought I was normal, that I'd have an ordinary life. I'd been a boy who dreamed of being a righter of wrongs. I'd seen shows about cops and knew that was what I wanted to be when I grew up. I still had that desire to fight for what was right, but I'd become the bad guy the comic book heroes fought against. Maybe I didn't deserve to have Amelia in my life.

Fuck that. Amelia deserved to have a man who would protect her like only I could, even if I didn't deserve her. I might not be much of a good man now, but I could make sure she had a good Christmas. It was the least I could do for her with all the horror she went through and hadn't turned into a menace because of it.

"Dinner will take about an hour or so. Do you want to find something on TV to watch while you wait?" The dough was resting in a bowl near the stove, but not too close.

"Sure. Anything in particular?" She strolled over to the couch where we'd just nearly killed each other. She glanced back at me when I was silent for too long and patted the seat beside her with a wicked grin.

"Let me just wash this dough off my hands," I hurried to say and ran water over my hands to get the flour off. I kept looking over at Amelia on the couch, trying to think of all the reasons I shouldn't have her here, but they all turned to dust. There was only one way I wanted to live the rest of my life, and that was with Amelia by my side.

"Come sit beside me already." She shuffled over so I'd be next to the arm of the couch.

When I sat down, she slid into my side, a soft, warm body against me. I'd never shared this kind of closeness with a woman. Yeah, I'd had sex with lots of females, but I'd never slept beside one or shared moments like this. I wasn't used to this kind of touching, not with anyone, but it was good.

“Are you okay, Brick?” Amelia moved so she could see me better in the light from the TV. “You seem a little stressed.”

“I’m actually really good, Amelia. Just... enjoying this, that’s all.”

“So much for the grumpykins who just wanted his peace and quiet the first day I was here,” she murmured with a quiet laugh.

“Yeah, I had no idea you were going to be like a storm in my life, in the best possible way.” I winked at her, garnering myself a poked tongue.

“Well, I hope you’re ready for crappy Christmas movies and me laughing at them because I’m going to show you what you’ve missed the last few years,” she explained.

I rolled my eyes closed.

“Oh, that sounds like I’ll have a headache later,” I promised her, but she just barked a laugh.

“You might, but I have a plan. I’m going to suck that massive dick of yours. I bet that’ll perk you right up.”

Opening my eyes, I burst out laughing.

“I think you’ve already perked it up with that comment, little lady.” I gently poked her ribs. Now, my head was full of images of her on her knees, looking up at me as she tried to swallow what many women had tried—and failed—to conquer. She might manage it, though, if she kept trying.

I’d give her all the time she wanted.

Chapter 9

Amelia



Cold hands grabbed my ankles and yanked me off of the bed in the middle of the night.

Screaming as I startled awake in a panic, my hands flung outward, and the blanket bunched up around my middle.

In the dark, I had no idea who was in my room.

I struggled against the hand that slapped down over my mouth, biting the skin, not knowing who the hell it was. Terrified it was Jason coming to drag me home, I tensed, ready to fight tooth and nail.

“What the hell do you want?” I blurted.

“Shut the fuck up, bitch,” a male voice I didn’t recognize rasped, and then I felt the sharp sting of a slap across my face. “Or I’ll give you a real reason to scream.”

A flash of light came and went, with an explosive sound drowning the room. The man holding onto me was suddenly ripped away, yelping in the process. Then there was a hand in my hair, and I screamed, my scalp burning from how hard the bastard pulled. This time, the man struck me on the side of my head with something hard and metallic.

Falling, I hit the floor with a thud, face down. I cried out, my whole head rattling, my teeth chattering. Pain zigzagged across my face as tears pooled.

When I felt the tip of a barrel press into my right temple, I worked out what they’d hit me with, and terror slammed into me. I trembled as tears fell down my cheeks.

“Do that again, Anderson, and this bitch ends up with a bullet lodged in her brain. I’m going to let her go, then I’ll turn on the light, and you and I are going to go for a little walk.”

I had no idea what the man was talking about, but I whimpered, trying to get my head to stop spinning and work out how the hell I was going to get away from him.

“Fuck you,” Brick barked, and I might have cried out with joy. “Let her go, and I’ll kill you quickly instead of fucking skinning you alive.”

The light suddenly flicked on, blinding me momentarily. As my vision came back, I strained to look behind me without turning my head to see what was happening.

Brick was sitting up in my bed, a gun held steady in his right hand, aimed at the man behind me, who had his gun pointed at me. Out in the hallway lay another man, blood spilling from his head.

My insides iced over, and a scream lodged in my lungs. I was certain Brick had killed the guy, and maybe I wanted him to do the same with the guy holding a gun to my head.

I bit my tongue to hold back a sob, desperate to keep quiet and stay alive. When Jason used to lose his shit, I had to be quiet and let him get his anger out until he ran out of steam. The difference was Jason had never held a gun to my head.

This asshole holding onto me cursed, then his grip on my hair loosened. I felt him getting up and heard his efforts echoing in the empty room as I remained on the floor, face down and trembling. My heart was pounding in my chest as fear flooded me.

What was going to happen now? Would this man kill us both?

I couldn’t think beyond surviving, beyond the baby in my belly. I desperately wanted to be a mother, even if Jason refused to help me. I’d give my baby everything she or he needed, all the love they deserved. So, I knew what I had to do—stay quiet and hope he’d eventually leave me alone. I was so tense, my nerve endings were about to snap.

“Mason, I should have known it was you when you attacked a defenseless woman,” Brick snarled, his voice dark as it rolled through me.

“Yeah, it’s me, Anderson. The guy you got locked up. Those whores who worked for me would never amount to anything more than mouths to feed and more babies. So, I sold a few of them into slavery, big deal. But you had to go and turn me in, right?” When the man behind me shifted slightly, I turned my head just a smidgen to see him clearly, so I could describe him to the cops later.

He was a big guy, built like a brick shithouse, with muscles that strained against the fabric of his black sweatshirt. He was wearing black jeans and black boots, his hair was shaved close to his head, and he had a scar that ran from his left eyebrow to his chin. In one hand, he held a gun and in the other, a small flashlight.

“Stand up,” he ordered.

Slowly getting to my feet, my head was whirling from the blow he’d dealt me, but I managed to stay upright.

“Now, let’s go into the living room, where I don’t have to worry about your guy jumping me.”

He grabbed my arm roughly and shoved me ahead of him toward the door. I glanced back at Brick, who was still sitting up in bed, gun aimed at the man. Our eyes met, desperation behind mine while his held regret and heartache, along with the fury to do whatever it took to keep us both alive.

“I’m going to let you live, lady, but him? He’s going to die tonight, so prepare yourself. Don’t scream, don’t make a sound, and you’ll live through this,” the guy muttered lowly, but I didn’t believe him.

He was going to kill us both. I could feel it in the way he was gripping me so hard, it stopped the circulation in my arm. We reached the living room, and he shoved me onto the couch.

Just as the guy twisted away from me, Brick came flying at him from the bedroom.

My mountain man moved like the storm outside—fast and terrifying. He slammed into the attacker before he got the chance to lift his gun.

I screamed as they came crashing in my direction and scrambled out of the way. Before I could even blink, Brick had the guy pinned up against the couch, pounding the guy's head with his bare fists.

I cringed, not wanting to watch, but at the same time, unable to look away. When the guy kicked Brick in the gut, sending him sprawling backward, I cried out in pure terror.

Brick's heel caught on the rug, and he tumbled backward, slamming to the floor, the bastard jumping on top of him. The guy was bleeding badly, and I noticed he had his gun on his belt, meaning any second now, he'd pull it out and finish Brick.

Panic sliced through me, the kind that told me I'd finally met a decent guy. Sure, he was involved in some seedy stuff, but was anyone perfect? I could overlook that stuff if he treated me like his princess and protected me.

All the crazy thoughts weren't helping, so I scanned the room and lunged for the lamp on the side table. Grabbing it, I wrenched it out of the socket and darted across the room. Maybe it was bravery or stupidity, but I threw all my weight behind me, smashing the ceramic lamp base across the back of his head. Then I recoiled fast, my hands shaking, even my teeth chattering with shock at what I'd done.

The guy groaned, then flopped down on top of Brick, who shoved him over, then laid into him, making sure he wasn't getting back up. When the guy was finally lying limp, Brick collected his weapon, then tied him up with a rope he kept in the nearby drawers of the coffee table.

Finally, it stopped, and all I heard was the sound of Brick's rapid breath. Nothing else, just Brick's panting.

"Brick?" I gasped, looking up at him in horror. "Is he..."

I couldn't say it.

He took his pulse and shook his head. “He’s still alive, but not for long. Don’t worry, I’ll take care of this.” Standing, Brick grabbed his coat, slid on his snow boots, and pulled his gloves out of his pocket. “Are you okay in here for a bit?”

I blinked at him, feeling like I’d suddenly stepped into a mafia movie.

“I-I’m fine,” I said, completely lying because, on the inside, I was still freaking out and startled. My face was throbbing, and my heart pounded in my chest.

“I couldn’t have done that without your help, babe.” Brick blew me a kiss, and my knees melted, my stomach bursting with butterflies.

Was something wrong with me that a man with blood still on his knuckles from his enemy made me hot and horny?

Unsure of what I was feeling, I knew with certainty that seeing Brick fight had turned me on and made me want him to keep protecting me.

He closed the distance between us, lowering his forehead to touch mine. “Are you hurt at all?” The heartfelt emotions behind his eyes touched me in ways I never expected. It was nice to have someone who actually cared about me.

“Just a headache from where he’d hit me in the head, but I’m okay.”

His breaths were deep and long, his eyes scanning me all over.

“Don’t overthink what happened here, okay? It was him or us, and there was no way I would have let him lay another finger on you. I will always protect you, Amelia. Remember that.” He kissed me quickly, then moved over to grab the guy’s legs and dragged him down the hallway, past his dead friend. Brick made quick work of getting them both out of the house and out of my sight.

I wanted to freak out, I was so on the verge, but Brick was right. We did what we had to do in order to survive.

It made me wonder if Jason would have protected me if we'd had a home invasion, if he would have fought for me in such a way. I somehow doubted it.

I couldn't go back to bed, so I made coffee, my hands still shaky. It wasn't hard to find Brick. He was at the edge of the property, opposite where my car still leaned against the tree, hacking at the frozen ground with a pickaxe for both the bodies.

"I brought you coffee," I called out from the porch.

"You shouldn't be out here in this cold," he chided but took the coffee gratefully. "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine, I swear," I reassured him and leaned against his body. "I might need therapy for life, but I'm fine for now," I joked.

"I never wanted you to experience or see any of that crap." He wrapped his free arm around me, kissing the top of my head, covered with a knit cap he had in the house. "I am so sorry you had to go through that because of me. I will need an eternity to make it up to you."

I loved his words, but then I glanced down at the bodies rolled up in blankets, feeling slightly queasy, Brick was disposing of the two attackers out here. I wasn't sure how I felt about them being on his property and staying at the cabin with them here. "You'll have dead people in your yard," I gasped.

"Hey," he whispered, taking my hand. "Don't look at them. Focus on me, alright? I'm burying them here temporarily. My team will come and collect them after the storm and they'll be taken far away from here."

I nodded, meeting his warming gaze.

"You were savage in there, and it's stupid, but I liked you protecting me and my..." My words faltered as my hand dropped to my stomach.

When I glanced back up, Bricks' eyes were huge orbs, and his face was suddenly pale as the axe slipped from his grip.

"You're pregnant?" he gasped.

I swallowed hard, unsure if it was a smart idea to tell him. Once the storm cleared, I had no idea what I was going to do or where we'd end up, so he didn't need to know. Yet something inside me wanted to tell him, to hold no secrets from him, for him to know me just as I was learning more about him.

“Why didn't you tell me? Fuck, I would have done more, would have carried you into town, anything not to put the baby in danger.” He was suddenly sweating, appearing more worried than when he'd faced the gunman. His hand slid to my stomach, his warmth spreading through me. “Does anything hurt?”

“I'm shaken up, but there's no pain.”

He grimaced, looking pained himself.

I glanced around, feeling jumpy, my emotions and thoughts all over the place. “I'm assuming there's a car somewhere on the road that these two parked we'd have to hide.” Listen to me, already helping to cover two dead bodies.

“I hate that this happened to you, and I'm sorry.” He held onto me, afraid to let me go, I think. “And I feel a million times worse knowing you were pregnant. But you don't need to worry about all of it. And the bodies, the car, I'll take care of it all.”

“How is this your fault? For turning the guy in? Sounds like he was scum to me.”

“It was worse than that. He was catching the kids on the streets, selling them to dealers who would take them overseas to who knows what kind of horrors. I couldn't handle that shit. No matter how bad I might be, I'd never harm a woman or kids. Ever.” He held me tight, then stepped back.

“I have to get him under the ground quickly. Otherwise, he might come back to haunt us when the tow truck comes for your car and the police come to investigate what happened.”

“Why would the cops investigate my car crash?” I looked at him, not sure why the police would investigate my car accident.

“Won’t the insurance want it investigated?” he asked with a shrug.

“Oh, fuck it, I’ll just write it off. That car is old, anyway, and I only had the bare minimum of insurance on it. I won’t get anything for it.” I shrugged, but that wasn’t what my thoughts were on now. I was wondering how many other bodies Brick had buried on his property. My emotions were conflicted.

“It would be easier if you did that. Let me get this other guy underground, and we’ll get back to bed. I don’t know if I’ll sleep tonight, but we have to try,” he said, not reminding me that it was technically Christmas day.

Fuck, this was all wrong. We had such a lovely day yesterday, and things were looking so perfect. Damn fate for coming along and ruining what could have been the best Christmas ever.

Once inside, the minutes passed as I sank back into bed, wondering if the day was really ruined. Okay, I knew Brick wasn’t a saint and definitely not a priest, but was he really that bad of a guy? To some, maybe, but I’d had the ‘perfect husband material, and I’d take a guy who would beat a guy to death for hurting me over one that actually enjoyed beating me. I hadn’t known I wanted a protector until I had one, and I wasn’t about to run away from that.

I just didn’t know if the feeling was mutual.

Brick came in, and I didn’t even know Brick had followed me until he slid into bed beside me, naked. I’d fallen asleep without realizing it.

“Go back to sleep,” he whispered, but I wanted to snuggle up to him.

“No, I think we need to talk,” I groaned sleepily.

“In the morning, Amelia,” he insisted, and I knew he was worried and wanted to put it off.

“Let’s do it now.” I sat up, finding that backbone he inspired in me.

“Brick, I want to stay with you, even after the snow melts and this interlude is over, but I’m torn and scared about how safe your life is, and that’s even before the whole ‘I’m carrying someone else’s baby.’ God, please don’t think I only want to be with you because I’m pregnant. It has nothing to do with that, and if you don’t want to, that’s okay, but I just wanted to let you know.”

I was burning up, blushing, and feeling stupid for just blurting it out. I hated that I sounded desperate, except that wasn’t why I shared. It had everything to do with being afraid of losing something I really liked.

He just listened to me, studying me as he lay next to me, and I liked when he did that.

“So, because I kept you safe?” he asked, not sounding impressed.

I rolled my eyes at him teasingly. “It’s not just that. I kinda like you.”

He drew me closer so we were face to face.

“I’m guessing the baby is your ex’s. Does he want anything to do with the child?”

His directness took me off-guard, and just remembering Jason’s cruelty pricked my eyes with tears. I shook my head, gnawing on the corner of my lower lip.

“He wants nothing to do with my little blessing.”

“Good,” he said abruptly, which left me puzzled.

“Is it?”

“Well, I wouldn’t do well with him coming around and getting in my face, and he’s not going to be happy once I pay him a visit after the storm.”

“Wait, are you saying you want to try this out?”

“You really think I’d let you walk away?” he grinned, his fingers running across my hip.

“Even while knowing I’m pregnant with another guy’s baby?”

“Sweetheart, I’ve always wanted a family. If you’ll have me, I will treat the baby as mine, as ours. I’ve needed a reason to step out of the family business, cutting the danger out of my life.”

My breath hitched, and I couldn’t stop smiling. Tears collected in the corners of my eyes as I threw myself against him, hugging him, our naked bodies pressed together, feeling incredible. My heart thumped so loudly, I was convinced I’d start sobbing out of pure elation.

“Why me? Why would you want someone with so much baggage?”

“Because you were ready to give up your life for me, and nobody has ever done that before. You listen to me, you laugh at my stupid jokes, and you fuck me like an animal. I can’t get enough. Plus, I mean something to you, and that is everything to me.”

Brick chuckled, embracing me closer. Brushing his lips over my forehead, he pressed his hands to my ass, as if he needed to reassure himself that I was real. He was ready to fuck all of tonight out of our systems and get back to what we both wanted the most—each other.

“Kiss me, Amelia.”

“Fuck me, Brick. Make me scream your name until it rings around the mountains,” I purred, then kissed him, our lips crashing as the world danced with stars. “You know, Brick,” I said, breaking our kiss. “We might both be broken in our own ways, but together, I think we could be fucking unbreakable.”

“I couldn’t agree more. Now, about that matter of sucking my dick?” He paused when I laughed, surprised by his sudden change of subject. “I think it’s going to take you some practice, but I’m a great teacher.” His hand glided up my side and cupped my breast, squeezing and making me moan. Ducking his head, he licked my nipple, then sucked it.

Those stars were back, bursting behind my closed eyes. My fingers wrapped around his hair. When he let me go, I cried in protest.

“I love your tits,” he admitted, taking another lick before rolling himself onto his back, then kicking off the blanket.

His cock was upright like a flag pole, and I loved how wet I got just seeing him all ready for me.

I slid down his body, trying to work out how I was going to get all of that into my mouth, but I was never one to walk away from a challenge. So, I started by taking long strokes of his cock with my tongue. My hands pressed to his thighs, pushing them apart. I was so turned on, I wasn't sure how long I would last myself.

“That's my good girl. Now, let's get you deep-throating my cock.”

Chapter 10

Amelia



Christmas day had been steamy as fuck because that was what we ended up doing the entire day. I'd lost count of how many times he'd brought me to climax, but I'd never cum so hard in my life. It was filled with merriment and all the cheer a horny girl like me could ask for, the memory something I'd never forget.

Two days later, the snow was melting away. I checked out of the window to where even the road was clear in the early morning sunlight. Brick came up behind me and looked out at the road.

"I think we can leave today," I said

"If you want to. There's still plenty of food left." He paused, then leaned his head over as if conceding. "Though, I probably need to check on what's happening with the business to start closing shop."

"Probably." I grinned up at him mischievously. "I do like the idea of staying indoors and pretending it's still Christmas." I slid my hand to caress his giant cock and found him already hard. A tingle went down my spine at how good he felt. "We could stay for a little while longer... replay it all."

"Actually, I have another idea. I have somewhere I'd like to take you." He kissed the top of my head and walked away. "Don't try your temptress tricks on me, lady."

I stuck my tongue out at him, then a loud engine sound drew my attention back to the window. A black truck was reversing into Brick's driveway.

Panic came at me in waves, seeing the familiar truck.

“Fuck, no!”

“Who?” Brick asked, alerted by the way I backed away and let the curtain fall.

“Jason is out there. I don’t want to talk to him,” I said frantically and went to the hallway, refusing to budge. “Tell him to go away... please.” How the hell did he find me?

“Oh, I’ll do just that, baby,” I heard him say, then he mumbled something he thought I couldn’t hear. “In my own way.”

A furious knock came at the front door, and Brick turned to grin at me with a wink. I glared at him and gestured toward the door.

“Just get rid of him.”

“I will, I will,” Brick said casually before he reached for the door handle and pulled. “Hello, can I help you?”

“Yes, I was told my fiancée’s car is in your tree. Is she here? I’ve been searching frantically for her for days now.” Jason groaned. A pitiful tale indeed.

Just hearing his voice had my hands curling into fists and my heart beating too quickly.

“You’re Jason?” Brick asked casually, standing in the doorway with his feet planted firmly from what I could see from my vantage spot. Jason hopped around, trying to look past Brick, completely unperturbed by my mountain man. It was how delusional he was when he had no clue what Brick was capable of.

“Yes, yes, I am. Where is she? Is she here? Amelia? Darling, I’m here for you,” he called out as if he hadn’t ever slapped me, punched me, or kicked me. As though he’d never ever fucked my best friend in our bed.

“Hey, buddy,” Brick said, tapping Jason’s shoulder to get his attention. Only Brick’s taps weren’t gentle, and Jason winced and glared up at Brick.

“Stop that, won’t you? It hurts,” Jason complained, then went back to trying to see around Brick.

“Dude, seriously, stand still,” Brick said and gained Jason’s attention again. Only when Jason glanced up, Brick’s fist came down, right into the left side of his face.

I gasped.

Jason dropped like a bag of groceries and sprawled out on the front porch.

“That’s from Amelia. She says she’s done with you and prefers my dick. Oh, and here’s your shitty ring back.”

“You fucker! You’ve been sleeping with my girl?” The terrified and shocked expression was priceless.

I smiled and wished I could take a photo of it to frame it forever. Then I’d post to him every year for Christmas.

“She’s no longer yours. She’s mine. And I’ll fuck her better than you ever dreamed about with your pencil dick. Step foot on my property again, and I’ll rip your throat out. Have a nice life.”

Brick slammed the door shut and turned to face me, a smile tugging the corners of his mouth upward.

“Well?”

“That was spectacular,” I said, launching myself into his arms. I wrapped my legs around his waist and kissed him until we were both breathing heavily and Jason had stopped pounding on the door. “Do you think he’s gone now?”

“Yep. He won’t return,” he promised with a grin. “That felt so fucking good, though.”

“I bet it did.” I gave him a wicked grin and hugged him tightly. “Thank you.”

“My pleasure, babe, my pleasure.” He patted my bottom before he set me down. “Let’s pack up and get out of here. I’m in such a good mood, I feel like driving and listening to some good music.”

“Sounds good to me.” It wasn’t as though I had anywhere to go but with him. A slither of doubt crept into my thoughts because good things rarely happened to me. “Are you sure you want me to go with you?”

He stared at me with a raised eyebrow, as if he might spank me.

“I’m so sure, we’re going to stop at the nearest place that sells clothes and get you everything you need right now, then we’ll go to a department store to fill your wardrobe. After that, I’ll show you something spectacular.”

Was this really happening? “Sounds amazing, but I can buy my own clothes,” I said, not wanting him to think I was such a lost cause.

“As you like, but I’d be happy to get it for you.” He shrugged, and we went back to the bedroom to pack.

True to his word, we stopped about two hours from the cabin and filled his truck up with my purchases. I’d bought everything new with my hidden savings, from jeans to pajama bottoms, bras and panties to sexy little numbers to wear for Brick. Not that he needed me to wear that stuff, but I liked the idea of him taking it off me. By the time we’d bought me new toothbrushes, shampoo, razors, and whatever else I could think of, I was tired.

“How far are we from this spectacular place you want me to see?”

“It’s just up there.” He smiled and pointed at the mountain that stood tall behind the town.

I didn’t see anything.

The snow was gone, so he drove up the mountain with ease, and within fifteen minutes, we were pulling up to a very secure steel gate. Brick hit a button on the visor, and the gate opened.

“Welcome home, Amelia.”

My mouth just dropped open. “What?”

He laughed. “That cabin was just my getaway place. This is where I live and where you’ll live with me.”

Discovering where Brick really lived, my head was swirling, and my pulse was racing, overstimulated by my emotions.

He drove up the long driveway that went around the side of the mountain until we reached the very top, and everything opened up around us. The rock walls and trees disappeared to reveal a mansion, but not just one of those ‘small’ mansions a governor or a senator might live in. This was a fucking palace.

OMFG!

There were stone pillars going up four stories, the marble walls gleamed in the late morning sunlight, and there were windows all over the place. I just couldn’t take it all in.

The drive curved, so we’d come up behind the mansion, which tapered down to a hidden little mountain valley. Between the trees were two square pools with waterfalls flowing into them below. And the mansion itself was a single gigantic glass-and-marble structure with a soaring tower that seemed to go up into the clouds. But that was only because we were up so high.

Brick slowed down, then stopped the car.

I turned to him with an awestruck face, my jaw still hanging open, and I was jittery in my seat. “Are you kidding me? You own a palace? I thought you just lived in the cabin.”

“Nope. This place is hidden away here at the top of the mountain,” Brick explained.

I turned back to the house again, seeing wrought iron pieces at the base of the huge windows that must reach from the floor to the ceiling on the top floors.

“It’s mind-blowing and beautiful, and oh my God, you live here?” I gasped, looking at him as he came to a stop.

Then I froze.

Because in front of the mansion, there was a little courtyard with stone benches and a fountain. And sitting on

one of those benches was an older man with silvery hair dressed in a black suit with something in his arms—a tiny, chocolate colored puppy with a red ribbon around her neck.

“Brick?”

“What, babe?” he asked, getting out of the truck and coming around to take my hand. “Oh, you mean Mike? Yeah, he’s one of my guys, don’t worry.”

“The puppy, Brick?” I dropped his hand and rushed to the small dachshund with the most beautiful brown eyes I’d ever seen. “Oh, can I hold her?” She just looked like a girl dog.

“Sure, I believe she’s yours.” Mike handed the puppy to me. The poor little thing wiggled up into my neck, then my hair, whimpering away.

“Brick? Is she mine?” I asked, my eyes hopeful.

“Of course, she is. I wanted to give you a little friend to share the new mansion with as you both get settled into your new home.”

I could have cried with joy, but instead, I took her little body out of my hair and looked down at her. “You are the cutest thing I’ve ever seen. What’s your name?” She just looked up at me with those eyes, and all I could do was hold her to my chest and make silly little sounds of adoration.

“I don’t think she has a name yet. Sir, if you’ll excuse me, I’ll get your bags and bring them in.”

“Thanks, Mike, for getting the puppy and the bags. Amelia is already in love,” Brick murmured to the retreating man.

“My pleasure, sir,” Mike said.

Brick guided me and the puppy into the house.

“Why does it feel like you’re secretly Batman and that your butler is Alfred Pennyworth?” I laughed at my joke while cuddling my new poochy.

Brick laughed as his hand curled around my back and drew me closer.

“For you, gorgeous, I’ll be anything you want me to be as long as you’re safe and happy.”

“You’ve got a deal.” My heart was still beating frantically as I tried to come to terms with my new home, my new boyfriend, and that I was going to become a mother soon.

“I think we’ll call you Mable.” The puppy wriggled in my arms.

“Mable?” Brick said with a doubtful tone.

“No? Jenny? Josephine? Francis?” I offered, and he shook his head to all of them.

“Maggie?” he offered, and my eyes went wide.

“I like that.” I nodded. “Are you a Maggie?”

The puppy, no bigger than my hands really, barked and squirmed. I put her back next to my neck and followed blissfully behind Brick. We strolled into an elevator, and it started before I even caught onto the fact that he had an elevator in his mansion. “You have a lift in your home!”

“Oh yes, and it stops when I want it to, as well.” He gave me a wicked wink but didn’t press anything to make it stop. “Let’s get you both settled, then we’ll explore.”

“Sure,” I replied, only now feeling the shock at just how rich he must be. It had started to settle in, but then I saw Maggie earlier, and that was it. But now? Damn, he was uber-rich. This was billionaire money. Maybe more.

We walked into a room where I placed the puppy down on a bed that matched the one in his cabin. The room was equally dark, but Brick walked over and threw open the curtains. From four stories up, I felt like I was in the clouds, a princess in a high castle.

Hurrying over to the small veranda outside of the double doors, the view went on for miles—the small valley below and miles and miles of sky.

“Oh, it’s beautiful. I think I’ve died and gone to heaven. All this can’t be real.”

“Wait until you see what I have planned soon,” he promised with a gleam in his eye.

“What? Like what?” I asked, sitting on the bed and petting Maggie. She was all over me right away, licking every inch of me she could reach, then lying on my lap, only to bounce up and start all over again.

“So much, Amelia. I want to share everything with you,” he said with a pleased smile, taking my hand and dropping a tender kiss on my knuckles. “But first, I’ve called the doctor to pay us a visit and check that you and the baby are okay.”

I almost burst out crying at his thoughtfulness, my emotions swinging all over the place, but one thing was certain. I was really happy for the first time in my life.

“So, are you going to be a good girl for me?” he teased.

“I’m always a good girl, Brick, you know that.” I grinned at him, sliding off the bed to stand in front of him. “But I need things, too.”

“Like what?”

“Well... lots of orgasms, exploring all kinds of weird things in sex, and cake every now and then. I love chocolate cake, but otherwise, that’s all I’ll ask for. Oh, and if we can spend all the celebrations at the cabin. That’s where I met you and where my life changed for the better. It’s where I finally knew what a real Christmas was supposed to be like.” I placed my hand over his heart and felt its steady beat.

“I promise, Amelia, we’ll go there every year.” He collected me into his arms. “I don’t know what happened to me or what spell you have over me, but I never want to stop feeling this way. I want to explore the world with you. I want to tell you everything I’ve seen, give you all the foods to try, and see how many times I can bring you to climax in one day.” He chuckled, then kissed my nose. “But first, we need to pick out a room for the nursery and start preparing for our baby. I’m about to become a dad, and I can’t fucking wait.”

I might have started crying at his words.

“You have no idea how good that sounds.”

“We’ll do that, and I’ll take care of you both.”

“And you’ll do an amazing job.” I leaned over to kiss him.

“I will, Amelia, for the rest of my days,” he promised, and I planned to hold him to it. “I’m going to show you what truly being loved looks like.”

My heart sped up because he’d just said the four-letter word, and I might have swooned on the spot. He chuckled, then dragged me against him, his mouth on mine, our bodies clashing.

I never knew I could adore someone as much as I did Brick. When he walked me over to the wall, pinning me against him, I knew exactly what was coming—the beginning of my perfect ever after.

“You are so beautiful,” he whispered in my ear, leaving a trail of kisses along my neck.

Moaning, I held onto him, never wanting to be apart, when the words from my heart slipped out.

“I think I love you, Brick.”

He looked into my eyes.

“I love you, too. You are my everything, my forever.”

That time, I sobbed with excitement, and while he kissed my tears away, I realized, for the first time in my life...

I had finally found my family and my forever home.

About Amanda Keen

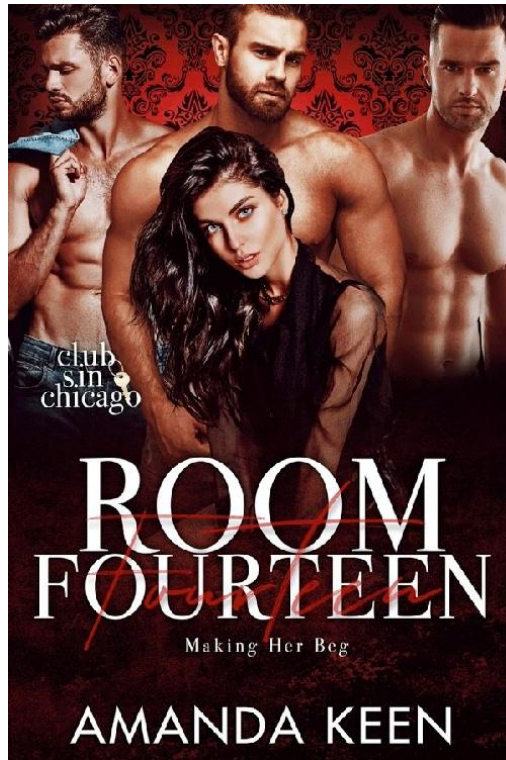
Amanda is obsessed with telling stories. She writes quick, steamy, and dirty romance, with strong men who will do anything for their women. Always with a happily ever after.

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Books by Amanda Keen

[Room Fourteen](#)



It was just supposed to be a fantasy.

Dancing at the club makes my world crazy enough. But now my reality is three dangerously hot men wanting to be with me...And a stalker who's making my life a living hell.

But just when I think this life of mine can't get crazier, it does.

Because I'm falling for all three men. Each tempts me, teases me, and then denies me what I'm craving most. It's enough to drive a girl wild.

Truth is, I want them all. But they've made a bargain, a deal that means none of my prince charmings will get me there...yet. Still, I can't complain. They're all pretty perfect and I'd prefer to keep them all. Because I love how things are between us.

Except I sense they're hiding things from me. And I start to fear the worst...

Could one of my sexy suitors actually be my devil in disguise? And is this new club they're all inviting me to the end of our little arrangement...or just the beginning for us all?

Other Books in the Stranded at Christmas Shared World

[Stranded at Christmas](#)

Shared by the Bikers

Craved at Christmas

Snowed in

Snowbound With My Boss

BIG Mountain Man

Let It Snow

Rescued by an Outlaw

Stranded with the One

Sleigh Ride with Kellan

Faking it for the Holidays

Lost with My Dad's Best Friend

Driving Home for Christmas

If you are interested in joining us in one of our shared worlds,
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[AB Shared World Expression of Interest Form](#)