



Black Light
ENTRANCED

ROSE C. CAROLE

BLACK LIGHT: ENTRANCED

BLACK LIGHT SERIES



ROSE C. CAROLE



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Black Light: Entranced

by Rose C. Carole

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CHAPTER ONE



As Teigen parked in front of the elegant Tudor-style home, the sound of power tools clued her in that she was at the right address. Grabbing her reporter's pad and camera, she walked around to the back of the mansion where the addition was being built. The main structure had already been erected, impressing her even at first look. The half-timber decorative treatment of the exterior mimicked the front of the house, and there were openings for windows all around, which would make it bright and spacious.

It was just as she expected. She'd been researching the firm of Markham Architects for her article for *Architecture D.C.* Their reputation for renovating old houses, modernizing them while keeping their historic elements was legendary in Washington, D.C. One had to get on a waitlist for their services, and it was a coup for the fledgling reporter to have scored an interview with Ellison Markham, the head of the operation. Looking at the house in progress, she understood why he wanted her to meet him here.

While she waited for him, she took some pictures of the house's exterior.

"Hey, Sweet Stuff! You're not allowed out here. In case you haven't noticed, this is a construction site."

Teigen turned to regard the burly guy approaching her. The broad, almost-sneer he displayed didn't bode well. *Fuck!* She'd been up against these guys at construction sites before. They used their bulk to intimidate women like her.

Determined not to let that happen, Teigen pulled herself up to her full height and confronted him. “I’m meeting the architect here. It’s okay.”

“Well in that case, welcome, Sweet Stuff. I could show you around if you’d like.”

As he spoke, he walked forward, forcing her to retreat to keep from allowing him into her personal space. In no time, she was backed up against the house, with him menacingly close, his arms boxing her in. Summoning up all her courage, Teigen prepared to kick him in the balls if she needed to. She’d learned self-defense in the women’s shelter she’d spent three years in.

“We could explore *all* the intricate details.” He snickered as his eyes roamed over her body, causing a chill to run down her spine. *Ugh! Why did these guys always feel so entitled?*

Before she had a chance to respond, the man was wrenched away from her and punched in the face, causing him to tumble to the ground. Ellison Markham stood over him in a boxer’s stance ready to strike again if he moved. With dark hair falling across his forehead, Ellison’s fierce deep-blue eyes pinned the miscreant into place. Ellison waited, but the creep didn’t get up.

Without moving from his intimidating position, Ellison turned to her, his penetrating stare regarding her carefully. Relief mixed with embarrassment caused her to tremble, and she remained against the wall, afraid her knees would buckle if she moved.

“Are you all right?”

Still shook up by the whole encounter, Teigen could only nod.

Satisfied she hadn’t been harmed, Ellison turned his attention back to her would-be attacker.

“Get up and get out! You’re fired, and if I ever see you on one of my jobs again, you’ll be very sorry.”

The guy jumped up and out of Ellison’s way. Outraged, he shouted, “I didn’t do anything to her! I was just offering to

show her around!”

“That’s not what it looked like to me,” Ellison replied. “Anyone who backs a woman up against a wall doesn’t have good intentions. I want you off this property now! I mean it.”

As he turned to go, the guy yelled, “Fucking asshole!” Ellison stepped toward him, and the idiot took off down the driveway.

Ellison relaxed his stance, his lean but muscular body straightening to its over six-foot height, concern etched on his chiseled features. “I apologize. No one should be treated like that on my sites.”

Recovering from her momentary shock, Teigen assured him: “It wasn’t your fault. You weren’t even here.”

“It doesn’t matter. I don’t tolerate that kind of behavior. I take it you’re Teigen Finley?”

“Yes.”

Ellison extended his hand. “I’m sorry we had to meet under these circumstances.”

Teigen took his hand to shake. His clasp was firm, and he placed his other hand over hers. “Nice to meet you, Teigen. I promise from now on, you will be safe.”

Warmth suffused her. She realized she trusted his word, even though they’d just met. He exuded confidence with a power to back it up. Unable to contain the blush that stole up her cheeks, she mumbled, “Nice to meet you too.”

To her dismay, he released her. She wanted to hold his hand a while longer, to feel the comfort of his touch, but of course, that wouldn’t be appropriate. Yet she wouldn’t have minded if he did.

“Would you like to look around? We’ve made a lot of progress in a short amount of time.”

“Yes, thank you.”

He led the way to the center of the backyard, looking toward the house. Pointing to each detail, he described why

he'd chosen the materials and the design. Teigen took copious notes, impressed with the attention to detail and the beauty of the design.

The beauty of the man beside her affected her as well. Mid-length curly black hair he made no attempt to tame framed his tanned face. His full lips, aquiline nose, and dark sea-blue eyes reminded her of statues of Greek gods she'd seen in museums. His impeccably tailored suit accentuated his slim frame. Her mother used to call men like him "a tall drink of water." He could quench her thirst anytime.

To distract herself, she moved away and resumed taking pictures.

"I'm going in. Take your time with your photos and when you're done you can join me. Just be careful since the steps haven't been built yet and the entrance is makeshift for now. As soon as you get inside, make sure someone gives you a hard hat."

She admired his tight ass as he walked away.

Jeez, get a grip, Teigen. He's the subject of your article, not a date!

Recovering herself, she turned her attention back to her work, recording all the wonderful details he'd talked about.

Once she got inside, Ellison met her and handed her a hard hat. Not a great look, but she knew it was required.

"So what do you think?" he asked, his eyes riveted on her as though he really cared about her opinion. She'd studied some architecture in school, but her status as a newbie reporter would be elevated if she got this interview right. *No guts, no glory!*

She told him what she thought. "I love what I've seen so far. I'm sure it's going to look like it was built at the same time as the main house, yet all those black-iron windows give it a modern feel."

Ellison nodded approvingly. "That's what we've been going for in all our ventures. To be honest, sometimes we're

not as successful melding the two time periods, but I think this is one of our better attempts.”

A young man came over to speak with Ellison. “I want you to take a look at the kitchen, sir.”

“Sure, Randy. This is Teigen Finley. She’s from *Architect D.C.* magazine.”

Randy nodded at her then moved toward the kitchen. Ellison motioned for her to follow. “You can finish taking your pictures when we’re done, but I think you might want to be in on this conversation. It will give you a good insight into how we operate.”

“Thank you.” Teigen followed him through the addition. It was open to the rest of the house and she could see they were in the middle of redoing the adjoining kitchen.

Pointing to the few planks laid on the kitchen floor, Ellison asked, “So, Teigen, what do you think of these?”

Teigen hesitated. Not wanting to seem stupid, she didn’t want to tell him the truth of how she felt.

Ellison pinned her with his stare. “C’mon, Teigen, let’s see how much you know about restoration architecture.”

She summoned up her courage and said, “They’re the right width, but none of them are the right color. These two are too dark and the other one is too light. I think you need more of a caramel color.”

“Excellent! That’s my feeling as well.”

Thank God! Not that she’d ever see him again after the interview, but she cared what he thought of her. The combination of his talent and good looks stirred something inside her that had been dormant forever. How she would love to explore those feelings further. If only this wasn’t business...

Ellison continued to discuss the floor and other options with Randy, and by the time they were done, Teigen knew the project would be perfect, almost as perfect as he was.

“Teigen, I have to go to my next site. You’re welcome to stay longer and take more pictures. Call my assistant

tomorrow and set up an appointment for the final interview.”

“Okay.”

He turned and left, leaving her feeling as though all the energy had been sucked from the room. His intelligence, his spirit, and his enthusiasm created an irresistible life force she craved more of.

She walked around the site, taking more photos but barely paying attention to what she was doing. All she could think about was her next meeting with Ellison Markham. She couldn't wait.

CHAPTER TWO



TEIGEN

The next night, Teigen followed her friend Maria through the doors of the little psychic shop. An older gypsy woman sat quietly and nodded to them. Too eery to be a club, Teigen was puzzled. She grabbed Maria's arm and pulled her close.

"What are we doing here? I thought we were going to a club? I don't need a fortune teller," she whispered, not wanting to be overheard.

Maria smiled like the Cheshire Cat. "Just follow me."

In the back of the shop, a hulking, scary figure of a man stood in front of a door. This just kept getting creepier and creepier. She was shocked when the guy greeted Maria with a smile. "Hello, Maria. It's nice to see you again. And who do you have with you tonight?"

"Luis, this is my friend Teigen. She's my guest for the evening. If Miles comes through this way, could you let him know we'll save him a seat by the stage?"

Miraculously, the man stepped aside and allowed them to go down the spooky passageway. Teigen wasn't sure she wanted to find out what was on the other side of the door they approached at the end of the corridor, but before she could say anything, Maria had entered and she had no choice but to follow.

Maria signed Teigen in with Danny, the guy manning the desk, who was also friendlier than she would have anticipated. The difference between the atmosphere so far and the attitude

of the staff was jarring. And Maria was enjoying the fact that she was uncomfortable. If things continued in this vein, she might leave.

After giving Danny her license, he handed her paperwork, and they moved to the side of the entrance desk to fill it out. Teigen had been to a BDSM club before, so she wasn't unfamiliar with the nondisclosure agreements. She quickly read it through and signed.

Once she handed in her paperwork, they were directed to the lockers where they had to leave their phones and other electronic devices. It was hard to give up her link to the outside world. She'd known Maria for quite some time, but this was a new place and so far, it was scary. However, if she wanted to find out more about this lifestyle that she was drawn to, she'd have to take a chance. Reluctantly she put her phone and coat into the locker and followed Maria through the doorway into the club.

It was way more luxurious than she had expected. It didn't feel like a dingy dungeon like the other place she'd been to with concrete walls and floors. Rather it was as upscale as the neighborhood it was in, even with the lack of clothes on many of the people socializing at the bar and at tables. Music floated above the conversations without being too intrusive.

"We have to go to the main stage. The erotic hypnosis demo is going on there," Maria said as she led Teigen through the room. All around her, people were engaged in various scenes, and she would have liked to watch some of them. Others not so much. How some people could take the kind of pain she witnessed she wasn't sure, but she didn't think that stuff was for her. Maria kept telling her she wouldn't know what she could handle until she was in the scene for a while. She'd wait and see. For now, she needed to go slow.

"Can't we have a drink first? I'd like to get my bearings before we go any further."

"Teig, we talked about this." Maria kept walking as she spoke, forcing Teigen to follow; she certainly wasn't going to get stuck being on her own. "If we want a good seat, we have

to get there early. Plus, it's probably not a good idea to have a drink if you want to be hypnotized."

Teigen waited till they got to the other end of the club to answer Maria. The smorgasbord of BDSM scenes were too distracting for her to have a cogent thought.

They sat down on one of the available couches in front of the stage. With her mind less preoccupied, Teigen informed Maria: "I don't want to get hypnotized today. I just want to see what it's all about. If you want to go up there, that's fine with me, but I'm staying put the whole demo."

"Fine, but you could be passing up an opportunity you might not get again for a while."

Teigen folded her arms and sat back further into the couch. "First of all, if I ever allow myself to be hypnotized, it will be in private. Second, I'd want to know the person I engage with a lot more than I'll be able to watching a demo. Anyway, you don't know if anyone will be called to the stage."

"I guess we'll see. Ooh, there's Miles!"

Maria stood and waved him over. After a brief introduction, Teigen let the two chat while she watched people file in and take their seats. Folding chairs had been lined up behind the couches to accommodate the eager crowd. Longing filled her as she watched the subs who followed their Doms then sat beside them, or on the floor, or even on their laps. She hadn't had anyone care about her for years, if she ever really had it at all. Her parents and her ex-husband had been strict and controlling, but she knew now it wasn't because they'd loved her. She'd give anything for a man to treat her with the care these Doms displayed.

She pulled on the bodice of her top, hiking it up a bit so it didn't show as much skin. Her ample cleavage had spilled over, showing the edges of her areolae. Why she'd allowed Maria to talk her into the skimpy thing she wasn't sure, but it would torture her all night. She certainly wasn't ready to get naked in a club. A headache began to insinuate itself, and she rubbed her forehead to try to stave it off.

“Hey, relax.” Maria stroked her arm gently. “You’ll be okay. You don’t have to do anything you don’t want to. Consent is king in a place like this. If you don’t want to be hypnotized, you won’t be. Although if that’s the guy doing the hypnotizing, pick me!”

Maria pointed to the stage, where a tall, lanky guy dressed in leathers was checking out the equipment.

Holy crap! It was Ellison Markham! He’d been handsome and sophisticated in his suit, but now he exuded a primal masculinity that prompted more than admiration from her. She could barely sit still, every nerve in her body was on high alert.

Ellison’s well-defined muscles flexed as he pulled a chain down from the ceiling to attach a hook. What that had to do with hypnosis, Teigen wasn’t sure, but it was mesmerizing to watch his lithe body in action. Maybe she’d have to rethink her desire to be hypnotized.

As though he heard her thoughts, Ellison turned toward the audience, his penetrating blue eyes perusing the crowd, homing in on her. She squirmed in her seat, unable to tear her gaze from his, cursing the damnable blush she knew was blooming on her cheeks. A smile curled his lips and his eyes sparkled as he nodded to her.

If I could disappear now, that would be great. His seeing her here would be so awkward when they met for the follow-up interview. *How humiliating!*

Thankfully, another excruciatingly handsome man appeared onstage, and Ellison turned his attention to him. They talked quietly for a while, until a cute petite blonde in a brocade corset and a thong joined them. Ellison embraced her, and a twinge of jealousy shuddered through Teigen. She’d never be petite, and blonde was not a good color for her. If this was the type of woman Ellison was attracted to, he’d never give her a second look.

Be professional, stupid! You should never get involved with the subject of an article anyway.

There was that too. She had to ignore the quivers zinging through her body and watch the demo. That's what she was here for.

“Good evening, everyone. If you could settle down, we're going to start. I'm Chase Cartwright-Davidson, one of the owners of Black Light, and I welcome you to our demo tonight with Master Ellison, a practitioner of erotic hypnosis. Joining him tonight as his subject is the lovely submissive Yvette. I hope you enjoy the presentation. Master Ellison would like you to save your questions for the end because he has to concentrate on Yvette while she is being hypnotized. The stage is yours, Master Ellison.”

Chase left the stage, and Master Ellison stepped forward.

“Erotic hypnosis can be used for many things—enhancing kinky play, helping someone push past barriers to sexual fulfillment, fulfilling fantasies. Tonight we are going to fulfill a fantasy for Yvette. She has seen pictures of women suspended by their breasts, and though it frightens her to contemplate it, this avid rope bunny would like to try it herself. I'm not sure it's the safest thing to do, but we're following risk aware consensual kink tonight.”

Master Ellison beckoned Yvette forward, pointing to a spot in front of him. When she approached, he turned her to loosen her corset, then turned her back and removed it. Despite her small stature, her breasts were substantial, allowing Master Ellison to wrap them in rope and secure the resulting rope corset with a carabiner to the dangling chain in front of them. As the ropes coiled around Yvette's body, Teigen felt a tightening around her own chest. Each loop made her breathing quicker until she had to force herself to concentrate and take a deep breath.

Wrapping his arms around Yvette's body, Master Ellison spoke softly to her, all the while massaging her scalp. Yvette's eyes closed and her body sank into his. The intimacy of the moment drew Teigen in. She had no desire to be hypnotized or hung by her breasts, but she wouldn't mind being held that close by Master Ellison, with all his attention fixed on her.

Ellison turned to the audience. “Yvette is now in trance. We’re going to begin the scene.”

He continued to hold Yvette as he spoke to her. “Okay, Yvette, I’m going to begin to raise you up. Are you ready?”

She began to whimper. “I don’t think so. Can we wait a bit?”

“Remember, Yvette, this is what you wanted to do. Now, here we go.”

Master Ellison stroked Yvette’s cheek and she visibly relaxed. He pulled on the rope to raise her breasts up slightly.

“Up you go, Yvette. Can you feel yourself rise?”

“Yes!”

He tugged a bit more. “Your feet are almost off the ground. Isn’t it wonderful?”

“It’s scary! I’m not sure I can go higher,” she whined.

“Sure you can. Let’s get your toes off the ground.”

He pulled the rope again, causing her breasts to raise only slightly more and for her to raise up on her toes. Ellison removed his hands. “Can you feel it? You’re almost off the ground!”

Pushing on the rope, he forced her to sway. “Okay, up you go!”

Yvette swayed, but her feet never left the ground. Teigen held her breath, waiting for the final lift. Instead, Yvette began to squeal.

“Oh my God, I can’t believe it. I did it!” Her whole face radiated with joy.

“Do you want to go higher?”

“Just a little.” Yvette reached up to grab the rope.

“Uh-uh-uh. Hands clasped behind your back, or you won’t go any higher.”

Yvette followed his order while she complained, “You’re mean! It’s more difficult this way.”

Master Ellison spanked her hard, causing her to rock forward. “Respect, little girl, or we’ll stop right now, and you won’t get to do what you want.”

“Yes, sir. I’ll behave. Can we go up just a bit higher?”

“As long as you do as you’re told without complaining.” He tugged on the rope, and she fell forward. He prevented her from putting too much strain on her breasts by holding the rope above her head, allowing her to swing on her toes in a tight circle.

Yvette moaned loudly. “This is so good! I love it!”

“You’re doing so well. Just a little while longer, and then I have to take you down. I don’t want you to strain yourself.”

“Pooh. I could do this foreeeevvveer!”

Yvette’s joy was palpable. Teigen held her breath along with the rest of the audience, in awe of the fact that Yvette clearly felt she was suspended in air. What would it be like to feel that free and untethered even though she was clearly earthbound.

”Now that you’re finally up in the air, let’s add to your fun. Just like we’ve practiced before, when I snap my fingers, you’re going to have an orgasm. Are you ready?”

“Oh yes, sir!”

Placing a steady grip on Yvette’s arm, Master Ellison snapped his fingers. To Teigen’s amazement, Yvette began to tremble, the ripple of the orgasm traveling through her till her whole body clenched tightly, accompanied by a moan that rose in volume until she was shouting, “Yes!Yes!Yes!” as though it were one word. Master Ellison hugged her tightly throughout her climax, assuring that she didn’t put too much strain on her body.

Yvette wasn’t the only one who had an orgasm at the command. The whimpers around Teigen clued her in to Ellison’s power. Teigen wasn’t impervious to it either. The sound had reverberated through her as well, causing her own body to quake in sympathy, except she couldn’t reach the same

pinnacle as the others. Envy consumed her as she teetered on the edge without being able to go over.

Master Ellison's voice finally infiltrated her daze as he spoke to Yvette.

"That was so good, Yvette. It's time to take you down now."

"Noooo. I don't want to come down yet." Her whine grated on Teigen. It obviously grated on Master Ellison as he warned her: "If you don't cooperate, we won't do this again. Now, here we go."

He released some of the tension on the rope, and her breasts lowered slightly.

"You're coming down, Yvette. Get ready."

A little more release of the rope.

"Now your toes are down."

More tension released, and her breasts dropped to their original spot. "Back completely on the ground."

Yvette sighed as Master Ellison embraced her again. "I'm going to take you out of your trance on the count of three. One, two—open your eyes—three."

Yvette wrapped her arms around Master Ellison's neck. "Thank you, sir. That was wonderful."

"You're welcome. Now let's get you untied."

Yvette began to pout, but an arched brow from Master Ellison stopped her cold. Once she was released from her bonds, he nodded to a man standing near the edge of the stage who came forward with a blanket, wrapping it around her and leading her offstage. On her departure, the crowd erupted into applause.

Master Ellison turned to the audience. "Thank you. Do you have any questions?"

He pointed to a man in the back, who asked, "How did you get her under so fast?"

“There are many methods of induction into a trance that will work. I was able to talk her into a state of relaxation with words of suggestion, while I massaged her scalp to calm her even further. Most importantly, she wanted to be hypnotized, so she was open to my words. We’ve also worked together before so there is a bit of a shorthand I can use with her.”

He picked a woman the next time. “How is it possible that she believed she was suspended?”

“Hypnotic suggestion is pretty powerful. She was in a receptive state and I gave her cues to reinforce her perception of reality.

“As I said at the beginning of the demo, despite the videos we’ve seen, I don’t think it’s safe to hang a woman from her breasts. But with hypnosis, Yvette was able to believe she had the experience, and she had all the feelings that go with it. Now I would ask you to keep my secret and not discuss what actually happened with her so that she can keep the fantasy going. Of course, you can complement her on how well she did.”

“Isn’t that a mind fuck?” someone called out.

“I prefer to call it a mind massage. I think of a mind fuck as causing stress, discomfort, or anxiety. Personally, when I put someone under hypnosis, I’m aiming to give them pleasure, relief, or comfort and sometimes just plain fun. Hypnosis is a powerful thing, and using it for a mind fuck could cause adverse reactions. You have to be very careful.

“Thank you all for coming. I hope you enjoyed our scene, and if you want to learn more about hypnosis, I’d be glad to talk with you.”

Master Ellison walked off the stage to more applause. Teigen felt as though she’d been hypnotized by his charm, his confidence, and his intensity even though she’d never stepped on the stage. What was her interview with him going to be like? If she wasn’t careful, he’d put her under his spell and she’d be lost.

CHAPTER THREE



Ellison circled around to the side of the stage looking for the beauty with the flaming red hair who sat in the front row. He'd been enchanted by her smarts, not to mention her curvy sexy figure, when he'd met her on his work site, but he would never have acted on his attraction during a professional interview. Now that she was here, he wouldn't have to hold back.

Lucky me.

After walking around the floor a few minutes, he spied her across the room looking a little lost. He approached her in what he hoped was a nonthreatening manner. She didn't look like she was used to this environment. He didn't usually play with newbies, but for some reason his attraction to her overrode his reticence.

"Hello, Teigen. Are you alone tonight?"

"No, but my friends went off to play. I'm trying to figure out what to do now."

"Would you like to come with me to the bar so we can talk?"

A look of panic crossed her face, and despite not having her permission to touch her, he reached out and stroked her arm. "I won't harm you, Teigen. We're in a club where all you have to do is yell 'Red' and someone will come to help you."

"Sorry. It's not that. But it's humiliating for you to catch me in a BDSM club."

Wait. What?

“Why? Obviously if I’m here, I don’t think there’s anything wrong with it. We’re not in a professional setting at the moment.”

Blushing once again, she giggled engagingly, her hand over her mouth. “I guess I’m not thinking clearly. I was so surprised to see you here, it threw me.”

“I was surprised to see you here as well, but it made me happy. Please, have a drink with me.”

She said, “okay,” but she didn’t move. He reached out his hand and waited patiently for her to take it. She stared at it for a moment then placed her hand in his. Claspng her tightly to prevent her escape, he led her to a table in the bar. Pulling out a chair, he instructed her to sit. She plopped into the chair and he finally let her go.

She was more work than he liked. He usually played with women who were experienced, came to the club to play with no future expectations, and even if he went home with them, they didn’t assume he would play with them the next time. But looking at Teigen’s flushed cheeks and her expressive green eyes, he felt compelled to dive in.

“Did you enjoy the demo?”

She squirmed in her seat then looked down to avoid his gaze.

Uh-uh. Not happening. “Teigen, please look at me. I asked you a question.”

She obeyed, wringing her hands, and mumbled, “It was interesting.” Then she lowered her eyes again.

Where had the smart confident woman he’d met onsite gone? Something wasn’t right.

Once they’d ordered, he tried his question again.

“What did you find interesting about the demo?”

She leaned back into her chair, a strand of hair falling over her cheek. He was tempted to reach forward to tuck it behind

her ear then brush his fingers down to her neck, encircling her throat to keep her attention focused. *Slow down. Not yet.*

Instead he waited her out.

“I couldn’t believe she thought she was really suspended in the air.”

“Why not?”

“I don’t know. I mean...isn’t it true you can’t make someone do something under hypnosis they wouldn’t do fully conscious?”

He nodded. “That depends. Why they wouldn’t do it is important. Sometimes a misplaced belief is holding them back, and hypnosis lets them get beyond it. But in this case, Yvette wanted to fulfill this fantasy, and after putting her under, I was able to suggest to her it was really happening.”

The service sub set their drinks on the table. Teigen sipped on hers, mulling over his answer. She seemed ready to ask a question more than once but didn’t. He wanted to be able to soothe her concerns, because at some point he’d love to put her under to fulfill her fantasies, whatever they were. He needed to delve deeper to find them out.

“Let’s try this another way. Why did you come to the demo?”

Once again, the deer-in-the-headlights look appeared. “To be honest...I have a few issues I’d like to work on, and I heard hypnosis could help.” She quickly held up her hand in a stop motion, “I’m not going to tell you what they are, so please don’t ask.”

He suppressed a chuckle, sure it would anger her. Little did she know his powers of persuasion were legendary, even without hypnosis. He could bide his time, though. There was no doubt in his mind he’d have more chances to get to know her secrets.

She intrigued him. Her work persona was so different from how she acted in the club. And there was no denying his attraction to her. Stunning, with her red curls, peaches-and-cream complexion, expressive green eyes, and curves for days,

she was made for him, and he couldn't wait to get his hands on her.

Not yet! But it's hard to wait when someone that appetizing is sitting across from you in a sex club.

"I have a different question then. What kind of BDSM scenes do you like?"

Teigen closed her eyes and took a deep breath. Again he waited her out. Even if she wasn't a complete newbie to the lifestyle, he was sure she hadn't been around long.

"I've never played in a club. I was introduced to BDSM by my friend who brought me here. She gave me some romances that had BDSM in them and I was intrigued by it. A guy I dated tied me up and I liked it. I've only been to a club a few times, but all I did was watch."

"That's what I suspected. Do you want to try a scene?" His demo with Yvette had been fun, but since she belonged to another Dom, it restricted what he could do with her. He was definitely up for a scene with someone totally under his control, and the lovely Teigen would be a perfect choice.

"I'm not sure that would be a great idea since we still have to do the interview. Wouldn't it be weird?"

"Not if you don't want it to be. I have been able to separate my work life from the lifestyle for many years. I know you're new to all this, but I think you could do it as well."

"I guess so, but I definitely don't want to be hypnotized!" Her vehemence surprised him. Keeping her secrets safe was clearly a major concern.

"I respect that, Teigen, and I would never overstep your boundaries. I thought we could try some light bondage, which you say you like, with some sensation play. Nothing too intense for our first time playing together."

"I guess that would be okay. But I won't get naked in public. If you can accept that, I could try it."

Not his preference but he could definitely deal with it. "Give me your hand."

He reached his palm across the table, and thankfully she put her hand in his. Massaging her with his thumb, he regarded her in all seriousness. “You have all the control in any scene. Nothing, and I do mean nothing, happens without your consent. If anyone ever tries to push you into something you don’t want to do, get away from them as quickly as possible. If you don’t want to be naked, we will leave on that pretty top you’re wearing that exposes your breasts in such an enticing manner. What do you have on under your skirt?”

Teigen squirmed and her beautiful blush reappeared. “Lace panties.”

“Are you comfortable in just your panties or does the skirt stay.”

Biting her plump sensuous lip, something Ellison would love to do himself, she thought about it. “Panties are okay.”

“Good. Anything else I should be careful of—concerns, fears, health issues, or triggers? Anywhere you don’t want me to touch you?”

“No-o-o-o.”

The drawn-out word set off his radar. He stopped massaging her and gripped her more firmly. “I have to have the truth, Teigen. I won’t play with someone I don’t feel safe with, and if you don’t tell me everything I need to know before we play, we can skip it.”

She tried to pull away from him, but he wouldn’t let her. She had to learn this lesson now, before she went any further in her exploration of the lifestyle. *This* was nonnegotiable.

“I’m waiting.”

Her eyes dropped, and he let her get away with it as long as she told him what she needed to.

“I can’t have orgasms, so when nothing happens during play, it’s not your fault.” A harsh breath whooshed from her lips.

My God! Who the hell had she been with? In his experience, women who didn’t orgasm usually hadn’t had sex

or scened with someone sensitive to their needs. “Hey, it’s okay. We don’t have to worry about that today. We’re just going to have a little fun. Come with me.”

He stood and she followed. Keeping hold of her hand, he led her back to the stage. “I need to get my toy bag from backstage. Stay right here.”

He pointed to a spot in front of him and she nodded as she stepped forward.

“Good girl.”

The way her face lit up when he praised her clued him into the fact that she probably hadn’t been given much approval in her life. He had to make sure she knew she was appreciated when she was with him. She was such a delicious morsel, she had to be made aware of it at every opportunity. As a Dom, it was his job to make sure that happened. It was his responsibility.

He ran up the steps and grabbed his bag. He didn’t want to leave her alone for too long in case her nervousness got the better of her. Thankfully she was still where he’d left her when he returned.

The St. Andrew’s cross he wanted to put her on wasn’t too far from the stage. Ellison put down his bag and took hold of Teigen’s arms. When she wouldn’t look at him, he lifted her chin. “One more thing, and it’s important. If at any time you want to stop, use the club safe word ‘*Red.*’ If you need a breather, if it gets too intense, say ‘*Yellow.*’ If I ask and you’re okay with what’s happening, you’re ‘*Green.*’ Do you understand?”

“Yes.”

He stroked her arms, and she trembled under his touch. When was the last time he’d been with someone who reacted to him that way. His dick began to take notice.

“Good girl. Do you want to take off your skirt, or would you like me to do it?”

“I’ll do it.”

He squeezed her arms and gently kissed her forehead before he released her. Her sweet sigh at his touch was an aphrodisiac, sending him soaring into Top space. She made him feel powerful again, not just a vehicle to help a sub get off, but someone who could affect her deeply.

He turned his attention to his toy bag, carefully selecting items he knew would bring her on a progressive journey of sensation. Challenged by her statement during negotiation, he needed the proper arsenal.

Once she had placed her skirt on a nearby table, he took her hands in his.

“I’m going wrap you in handcuffs. They are soft, so they shouldn’t hurt at all. If they do, or you feel numbness, let me know right away.”

As he secured the cuffs on her wrists, she began to bounce on her toes, whether from nervousness or excitement he wasn’t sure. He could work with either, as long as she continued to be engaged with him. He had to make sure that happened.

“Come stand facing the cross. I’m going to secure your hands above you, and then cuff your ankles so I can attach them below.”

She did as he instructed, turning her ass toward him. To his delight, the panties were cut high in the back so that most of her cheeks were exposed. And what a lovely ass it was—firm, round with dimples at her lower back and luscious cheeks he would love to bite. *Time to take over, to let her know what letting go and giving over control could feel like.* Now the choices would be his.

Secured to the cross, she began to shift her hips back and forth. Pressing himself up against her, he allowed his hands to explore. Soft flesh succumbed to his touch, his fingers imprinting themselves on her skin, letting her know he was in charge. A soft moan escaped her lips.

“That’s it, Teigen. Feel me enjoying you, loving your soft skin under my fingers.”

She leaned back into him, resting her head on his shoulder. Taking that as a sign she wanted more, he caressed her neck then followed her silky smoothness down to the edge of her top. She stiffened when he invaded it with his fingers, swiping across her nipple.

“Relax, Teigen. Enjoy the feeling. Just let yourself go,” he whispered into her ear. He didn’t stop stroking her, and soon she settled her weight back against him. A shudder passed through her body, and once again his dick took notice.

“That’s it. Does it feel good when I touch your nipples?”

She sighed in exasperation, breaking the mood. “Do we have to talk about it? Can’t we just be quiet?”

Not acceptable. She would have to learn that giving him feedback and expressing her feelings were crucial to a successful scene. He pinched a nipple between his fingers, hard enough to get her attention.

“Ooww!”

“That’s what you get when you don’t answer my questions.”

“I’m not sure I like when you do that,” she protested.

Maybe, but she didn’t pull away. He’d wait a bit longer before he checked to see if she was lying.

“Now tell me. Did you like me stroking your nipple? Does it feel good?”

This time she answered him. “Yes, I do.”

“I like it too. I love the way your nipple hardens to a firm peak under my fingers. You’re so responsive to my touch. The tiny shudders that pass through your body turn me on. Do you know that?”

She shook her head.

He held her tightly with one arm while he alternated between her nipples. “Watching you come apart from my touch delights me to no end. How beautiful you are when you get excited.”

“I’m not beautiful.” She slumped against him.

He tweaked a nipple, eliciting a gasp. “Just the response I was looking for. When I tell you you’re beautiful, I mean it. I won’t have you saying anything negative about yourself.” He pinched her nipple again. “Am I clear?”

If the music wasn’t so loud in the play area, her screamed “Yes,” would have been heard across the room. Her back arched against him.

“Now that I’ve made that clear, we’re going to try something new.” He stepped back and she whimpered at the loss of contact.

“I’m right here, Teigen. I won’t leave you when you’re tied up. I promise.” After grabbing what he wanted, he came up behind her. “Let’s see how you like this. Close your eyes.”

Placing his arm around her waist, he held her close while he stroked her with a paddle covered in rabbit fur on one side. The other side was leather, but she wouldn’t feel that today. As the fur brushed her skin, a slight shiver passed through her. *Good*. She was giving in to the sensations.

“How does that feel?”

“Nice. It tingles slightly, but in a good way. You can keep doing that.”

Chuckling, he informed her, “That’s not quite how this works. I’ll decide what you need, but I’m glad you like it. I’ll keep doing it a little more.” He rubbed up and down her body, reveling in her little sighs and mews. When she relaxed so much her knees buckled, he determined she’d had enough. Time to wake up her nerve endings.

He whispered into her ear. “I’m glad you enjoyed that, but we’re going to try something a bit different.”

He leaned over to place the paddle on the table and grab one of his favorite sensation devices. Pulling her close again, he rolled it along her shoulders, eliciting a small shriek.

“What is that?!”

“A Wartenberg wheel. Do you like it?” He rolled it down her arm.

“It’s prickly. I’m not sure.”

“Yes, it is prickly. It has tiny spikes on a roller. Let’s explore some more and help you make up your mind.” He rolled it across her chest. By squeezing her a bit tighter, he forced her nipples to show above the top, and he passed the wheel over a nipple. Her whole body tensed, and he was sure she was going to at least call “*Yellow*,” but a moment later, to his delight, she relaxed. She was leaning into the slight pain, encouraging him to go further.

“I’m going to take that as a yes on the wheel.”

With a sigh, she nodded.

“See. You have to give each new thing a chance before you make a decision on whether you like it or not. Let’s keep going.” He gave her other nipple the same attention, and she began to writhe against him, causing his own body to shiver. Her smell was intoxicating, her low moans setting his blood to boiling. He bent his knees and brought the wheel down one leg then up the other, passing it over her luscious ass cheeks. Another shudder passed through her, tempting him once again to take a bite. *Not. Yet!*

He placed the wheel back on the table, then leaned up against her and squeezed her ass cheeks. She pushed back into his hands, so he reached in front and cupped her mound. Her panties were wet. *Bingo!* He pushed down his feeling of triumph, needing to concentrate on her feelings.

“I’d like to turn you around. Relax and I’ll undo your cuffs.” Once they were off, he had her turn, and he secured her again.

At her look of panic, he placed his hand over her face and had her close her eyes. He pressed up against her, planting kisses from her neck down to her breasts, pulling a nipple into his mouth and stroking it with his tongue. It should be pretty tender by now, yet she pushed herself forward as much as she could, inviting him to do more. And he wanted to. Squeezing

her breasts together, he alternated between them, sucking on her nipples till he elicited a satisfying moan, reassuring him that she was enjoying what he was doing. His dick was certainly enjoying her responses, hard as a rock as it was. It was dying to get inside her, but he wasn't sure that was in the cards for the evening. It didn't matter. He hadn't enjoyed play like this in a long time.

He egged her on. "That's a good girl. Enjoy the sensations."

"Yes, yes, yes!"

Pleased with her response, he trailed a hand down her torso while continuing to lavish attention on her nipples. Her hips jutted out, and he accepted the implied invitation to insert his hand into her panties and stroke her pussy. Her head shook from side to side and she pushed herself against him. Encouraged, he slid his hand through her wetness and circled her clit. Her vocal response got louder, urging him to continue.

He massaged her clit till it was swollen then inserted a finger inside her. She tensed for a moment, then pushed against his fingers. He added another digit, finger-fucking her in a steady rhythm while still stroking her clit. He was sure she was on the edge of coming when she sagged against him and began crying.

"See. I told you. I can't!" Her voice rose an octave in her anguish.

Fuck! He immediately removed his hand and held her while she sobbed. The desperation in her cries tore at him. How could he have missed the signs of her distress? It wasn't like him to not be attuned to what was going on in a scene. All the signs had pointed to her enjoyment. What made her stop?

"I'm going to take you down, Teigen." He quickly undid her leg cuffs, then had her place her hands around his neck after he unclasped her wrists. He lifted her up and carried her to the nearby chair, where he rocked her on his lap like he would a child. Spencer, the club manager, walked over to them and handed him a blanket.

“Don’t worry about cleaning the station. I’ll send someone over to do it. Just take care of your girl.”

His girl. Teigen was very much the type of woman he’d be attracted to. But tonight had revealed a whole new side of her, one he wasn’t sure he was ready to take on. His work was too demanding to have time to take care of someone with such deep-seated issues.

He wrapped the blanket around her and pulled her closer. “Hey, it’s okay. I had no expectations for you. I just wanted you to have a nice experience. Everything doesn’t have to end with an orgasm. That’s not the end all and be all. It’s the connection with a partner in a scene that’s most important. And I felt that with you.”

He kissed the top of her head and stroked her as he rocked. Finally, she caught her breath and stopped crying. He leaned back slightly, wiping the tears from her cheeks with his thumbs. Her eyes remained downcast.

“Hey. Look at me.” He kept his voice low as he spoke to her.

He waited while she pulled herself together, pushing her hair behind her ears. A few deep sighs later, she met his gaze.

“Did you hear what I said?”

She nodded. Usually, he wouldn’t accept that as an answer, but she was in such a fragile state, he allowed it this time. It was more important that she was communicating with him, that she hadn’t shut down completely.

“Do you understand what I’m telling you?”

Again she nodded. This time it wasn’t enough.

“Tell me exactly what it means to you.”

She dropped her head on his chest. “Uuuugggghhhh! I hate talking about this! It’s hard to put my feelings into words.”

He was unyielding. If he couldn’t get her to talk about her feelings, they’d never be able to move past what was holding her back. “Try.”

“Everything was going fine while you were touching me with the different things. It felt good and after a while it turned me on. My whole body became so sensitive. But once you began to touch me...you know...I got nervous and all tangled up in my own thoughts.”

He figured she had a long way to go before she would ever feel comfortable having her pussy touched. She couldn't even say the word.

Before he could think it through, he said, “I think I might be able to help you with that. But you would have to consent to being hypnotized.”

She began to protest, but he put his finger over her lips. “I promise you that I would never go beyond preset boundaries. We would discuss it first, and you would approve of anything I would have you do.”

“I'll have to think about it.”

“That's fine. I don't expect you to make a decision right away. Take as much time as you like.” She tried to rise, but he held her back. “I would like to take you home and make sure you're all right.”

“I came with my friend. I think I should go home with her.”

Not what he would have preferred, but he allowed her to get up then handed her her skirt. He packed up his own bag while she put it on, tamping down his own frustration. “Let's go find your friend. I want to be sure you're in good hands before I say goodbye.”

He followed her through the busy crowd while she looked for her friend, eventually stopping at the medical play station. Her friend was tied to the exam table, flushed and frantic while her Top was torturing her with a scalpel. Teigen's shoulders wilted.

“That's Maria. I guess I'll wait for her in the bar.”

She turned and took off. Ellison knew the scene was way beyond her comfort level and was a bit annoyed that her friend

had left such a newbie alone. She should have known better. No way was *he* leaving Teigen alone.

He caught up to her as she was about to sit at the bar, totally unaware of the two Doms who eyed her with the look of predators. If they were here at Black Light, they would have been vetted by the club, but he still didn't like it. A feeling of possessiveness he wasn't familiar with overcame him.

“Teigen!”

She turned, and he beckoned her to come to him.

Rolling her eyes, she shuffled toward him. “I can look out for myself. I've finally learned how to do it, and I don't need a chaperone while I wait.”

The statement was packed with a lot of information he wanted to know more about, but his priority was getting her to let him take care of her. He was a stickler for making sure any sub he played with was in good shape before he let them go. Teigen was definitely not in good shape. She needed looking after, and if her friend wasn't in a position to do it, he would.

“I'm sure you're perfectly capable under normal circumstances, but you've just had a troubling scene and as a responsible Dom, I can't leave you alone. If your friend had been available, I would have allowed you to stay with her, but she's preoccupied. So, you have two choices: you can let me buy you a drink and sit with you till she's ready or you can let me take you home.”

“Fine. I'll let you take me home. I'd really like to get out of here.”

Not the kind of response he'd normally tolerate, but she clearly needed some leeway, and since she was allowing him to escort her home, he decided to be content with that.

After they collected their coats and electronics, Ellison asked Danny to let Maria know he'd taken Teigen home, then led her down the block to where his car was parked. She was silent on the drive to her house except to tell him where to go, and he didn't intrude on her thoughts. It had been a long night,

and she'd need some time to decompress and make sense out of it.

Reluctantly he stopped at her door. He would have liked to go inside and get her tucked into bed, but he knew she wouldn't allow it and he didn't want to push her.

“Thank you for seeing me home. I appreciate it...and the scene too, even though I ruined it.”

He cupped her face between his hands, forcing her to look at him. “Granted I like to make subs cry, but for different reasons. You have nothing to be ashamed of. We all come up against triggers during scenes. If you'd let me, I'd like to help you overcome yours.”

She shook her head no. “I don't think anyone can help me with this” Her breath caught in a half sob, and it was all he could do to stop himself from carrying her inside and comforting her on his lap. Instead, he told her, “We'll talk about it another time. I want you to go inside and relax. Take a hot bath if you can. Try not to dwell on tonight's issues. Instead remember how good you felt when I caressed you with the rabbit fur.”

He kissed her gently on the lips then let go. She turned and went into the house. The door closed with a click of finality.

He wasn't going to allow it to be final. This woman was a challenge, a study in contrasts. On the job, she appeared smart, confident, and capable. Here, even allowing for the fact she was a newbie, she displayed traits of repression, wariness, and uncertainty. It would take some time to unravel her, and he had to confess to himself he wanted to do it. He was grateful he'd have an excuse to see her again. She did have to finish the interview.

CHAPTER FOUR



She didn't want to go. How could she ever face him again? Everything she'd been afraid of had happened. And the most mortifying part was it'd happened with Ellison Markham, a man she'd admired and, if she admitted it to herself, crushed on ever since she'd started working at *Architecture D.C.*

How did she get to the age of twenty-nine being such a naïve fool? Of course, she knew the answer to that question, but she hated to face the fact that she'd let other people control her life for so long. At least she'd finally come to her senses, but it still left her so damn ignorant.

She glanced at the clock and realized if she didn't get going, she'd be late for her follow-up interview. How she was going to look Ellison Markham in the eye she wasn't sure, but if she wanted to keep her job, she had no choice. And she wanted—no, needed—to keep her job. It kept her independent from her meddling parents and her ex-husband. She could never allow them to have any influence over her life again. She was done spending time on her knees asking for forgiveness. She couldn't suppress a chuckle when a brief vision of herself on her knees for an entirely new reason entered her brain.

Grabbing her coat, she ran out of the house. If she drove a little above the speed limit, she could make it there on time.

Ellison waited for her in a corner booth at the café he had chosen. It was secluded enough that no one but the waitress would be able to eavesdrop. He rose when she arrived,

greeting her warmly. His attitude helped take away some of the embarrassment she felt at seeing him. Once seated they looked over the menu and ordered.

She didn't hesitate to get into the interview, not wanting to engage in small talk that would bring up the events at Black Light. "What made you get into architecture?"

He went along with her, answering her questions in a professional manner, further allaying her discomfort in his presence. "I've lived in D.C. all my life. My parents were lawyers who worked for the government. I'm proud of our capital and always loved the way the city is laid out with the stately buildings in the city center as well as the neighborhoods. As I traveled with my parents, I saw the historic districts of cities being destroyed by a careless quest for modernization, which often left them with no character. I wanted to be a part of preserving the uniqueness of D.C."

She took voluminous notes as he continued to describe the way he went about researching the history of buildings he worked on, and how he came up with his designs. They discussed specifics of many of the projects he had completed while they ate their lunch. Over coffee, to her dismay, he got personal.

"You are pretty knowledgeable yourself about architecture, Teigen. Why are you working on an architecture magazine. Why aren't you an architect yourself?"

Caught off-guard by his question, a feeling of being trapped overcame her. How could she tell him about her career choice without revealing her unpleasant past?

Stammering, she blurted out, "I-I didn't really have the talent to be an architect. I can appreciate good architecture... like one would a good painting. But I could no more design a building or a reno than I could paint a picture. And it was... too complicated for me to learn CAD and BIM and all that."

He looked unconvinced. "I'm not sure that's true, but being a good writer is a talent as well, and I've read some of your pieces. I wouldn't have let you interview me if I didn't like how you write."

Well, that's comforting. At least he respected something about her.

She'd finished with all her questions and searched for something intelligent to ask him when visions of their infamous scene intruded on her. Did he really mean it when he said he wanted to work with her. After thinking about it for a few days, she thought it might not be a bad idea. The burden of being so uptight about anything sexual was weighing on her, and she didn't want to have to deal with it anymore. She didn't know how to broach the subject, though. They were here on business and it wouldn't be professional to let her insecurities interrupt the interview.

"Hey, what's going on in that beautiful mind of yours?"

Startled out of her rambling conversation with herself, she looked up to see Ellison smiling at her expectantly.

Okay, the hell with it! Time to dive into the deep end. "Nothing much. I was thinking about how much I have to learn about the lifestyle." *And life in general*, but she kept that to herself.

"Learning about it should be enjoyable. Nothing to worry about. However, you have to take it slowly or it can be overwhelming, and that could ruin the experience. I would be happy to continue to guide you, be your mentor, if you'd like."

Relief flooded through her. She wouldn't have to remind him of his offer.

"I think I would. I've decided that being hypnotized may be the only way to get past my insecurities. You understand how difficult this could be, right?"

He smiled indulgently. "I was at your last scene if you recall. I'm pretty sure I understand what you're dealing with. The thing I need to know is why. Do you think you could tell me more about yourself so we could get to the root of the problem?"

"It's not such a difficult thing to figure out...I just can't find a way to get their voices out of my head."

"Whose voices are you talking about?"

Here it was, her horrible, mortifying life story. She wanted to keep it secret, but she knew if she did, she'd never get better. She had to trust Ellison to keep her confidence and to treat her without censure, but she was afraid he'd never look at her the same way again. Her past tainted every aspect of her life, a stain she didn't think she'd ever get rid of. In desperation she confessed to him.

“My parents were members of a religious cult. We lived on a huge farm in Vermont. Most people around us thought we were hippies, since a lot of them created communes in that state. But our group preached severity in life and abstinence except to have children. Boys and girls were kept separated, and it was a terrible sin to even touch yourself in a sexual way.

“My husband was chosen for me, and I married at 17. We were expected to have children right away. The first time either of us had sex was on our wedding night. We didn't know what we were doing and we fumbled through it. I didn't enjoy it then and I didn't enjoy it afterward. I also didn't get pregnant. Bobby blamed me. He said because I didn't respond well to his lovemaking, it was preventing us from having a baby. Obviously, now I know how ridiculous that was, but at the time I believed it was all my fault.”

She leaned back in the booth, the awful memories of the fights they had playing back in her head. The pain of it all was like a dagger in her belly, twisting her insides. She looked over at Ellison to see if he was disgusted by her tale, but only empathy shone on his face.

He reached over and took her hand, massaging it with his fingers. “How did you get out?”

This was the worst part of the story, the part she hated to reveal. “I had a breakdown. The pressure of not being a good wife, not knowing how to make it better, and my parents and the community's not-so-quiet condemnation got the better of me. I ended up catatonic on the floor of my bathroom. Bobby took me to a nearby hospital, I think as much to get rid of me as to help me. We didn't go to doctors much.

“There I got lucky. A social worker took an interest in me and arranged for me to get treatment for depression, which included a lot of hours working with some great therapists. I was able to pull myself together enough to get my GED, while I lived in a battered women’s shelter. I suspected Bobby wouldn’t come looking for me, but it was a safe place to stay and they helped me get into college. That’s how I ended up in this area. I got a scholarship to Goucher College, and they had a program in culture and historical preservation. I think I was attracted to it because what I was taught had been to reject everything outside the compound. I wanted to feel connected, and since I didn’t have family, I chose a connection with history.”

He squeezed her hand and smiled. “That’s an impressive accomplishment given your circumstances. You should be very proud of yourself.”

“I guess, but I still have all that negative bullshit running around in my head. I can’t make it stop!” She could barely contain her frustration, her voice raising in her distress.

“What you have to do is look at how far you’ve come, pat yourself on the back, and then get ready to move forward. I’m here to help you with that. First, I need to know how you came to be interested in BDSM. It seems a far reach from where you came from.”

Teigen hesitated to answer as the waitress came to refill their coffee cups. This was definitely not a conversation she wanted overheard.

“I met Maria in college. She gave me some romance novels that had BDSM in them. She didn’t reveal to me at the time that she was into it. We didn’t talk about it, but when I would return a book to her, she’d offer me another one or she’d recommend a book on Kindle. When we graduated and moved together to D.C. for work, she confessed that her interest wasn’t all theoretical. I was afraid at first to go anywhere with her, but finally I decided to try it. She took me to a few parties with her friends. It was there I met the guy who tied me up and spanked me. He also took me to a club a

few times, but I was too uptight to play. Last Saturday was my first time at Black Light.”

“I’m glad you came, Teigen.” He sipped on his coffee a few times before he went on. “Here’s what I think we should do if you’re comfortable with coming to my home. If not we can use one of the semi-private rooms at Black Light, but it may be a bit more difficult for you to block out noise from the dungeon so you can be put under.”

Put under. The phrase was so scary, but for some reason, going to Ellison’s home wasn’t. She’d seen him in action at the reno site, and she didn’t think the Black Light people would allow him to do a demo if he wasn’t fully vetted. The way he treated her during their last scene also reassured her.

“I’ll go to your house.”

“Terrific. I’m busy with a project for the rest of the week. How does Sunday afternoon sound?”

That allowed her a few days to convince herself to really be open to the hypnosis. “Good.”

“Give me your phone and I’ll put in my address and number. I’ll expect you at one.”

Once he’d accomplished the task, she rose to leave. Now that they’d decided she’d let him hypnotize her, she needed some space to come to terms with what she’d agreed to.

He got up with her. “Wait while I pay the bill, and I’ll walk you to your car.”

“That’s okay. I’m just down the block.”

She turned to go when she heard the voice of authority. “Teigen. Wait.”

He wasn’t going to let her go easily. Maybe this wasn’t such a good idea. He was going to push her even on the simple things, and she wasn’t sure she could deal with that. One more person telling her what to do.

This is what you need. Calm down and listen to him. Looking back at him, she asked, “What?”

He approached her, his expression stern, his voice low. “Wait for me as I told you to. If you can’t follow the simplest commands, we won’t be able to work together.”

“Sorry.” Flushed with embarrassment, she dutifully remained in the café while he paid the bill then followed him outside.

At her car, he took her by the shoulders, forcing her to look directly at him. “This will be a Dom/sub relationship. I will take care of you and help you as best I can. You have to trust me—and more importantly—you have to obey me. It’s the only way this is going to work. I want you to think about whether that is something you not only want but something you can do. If you can’t, text me to tell me you’re not coming. I won’t be offended. If you decide you can, I’ll see you at one on Sunday.”

He kissed her on the forehead and helped her into her car. He was still standing there when she drove away.

Five days to decide. It wasn’t going to be easy. Even on the ride home, every time she thought yes, her heart started racing and she contradicted herself. *Uuuuuggggghhhh!*



ELLISON’S HOUSE was exactly as she expected it to be: old, regal, and huge. The updates, even from the outside, were subtle but effective. Oversized windows with black wrought-iron frames, a squared-off entryway, and a fixed casement window over the door blended seamlessly with the red brick Georgian mansion. Teigen parked in the driveway. Before she could knock, Ellison opened the front door.

“Welcome. You’re right on time. Good girl.”

Warmth infused her at his praise. She was hungry for approval, something that caused her embarrassment because it had usually been given with a hidden agenda, but in this context it worked for her. Maybe a Dom/sub relationship was just what she needed.

The house was as lovely inside as it was out. High ceilings and a modified open floor plan with an eclectic mix of furniture paid homage to the history of the house while keeping it modern and updated.

Her admiration only increased as she followed him through the rooms. “It’s perfect, Ellison.”

“Thank you. Can I get you anything to drink before we start?” he asked as he stopped by the massive kitchen island. “Nothing alcoholic, of course.”

“I could use some water, thanks.” Now that this was a reality, her mouth had gone dry. She hoped he hadn’t noticed the wet rings under her arms when he’d taken her coat.

Ellison grabbed a few waters from the fridge and placed them on the counter. He sat down on one of the barstools and beckoned for her to come closer.

“Right here.” His legs were spread and he pointed to the spot between them.

He hugged her to him when she approached, and she melted into his arms. His strength beckoned to her, allaying some of her fears. She yearned to let go, to release all the pent-up anxiety roiling inside her. Maybe Ellison could be the one to help her.

“It’s going to be okay, Teigen. We’re going to go slow, and I promise not to push you beyond your limits. You should also understand that even when you’re under hypnosis, you will be able to tell me to stop if it’s too much. You’ll probably come out of trance if you are overwhelmed, so I don’t want you to worry about going beyond what you can bear when you’re in trance. We already discussed your background so I’ll try to avoid anything that might trigger a bad reaction. Are you ready?”

“As I’ll ever be. I think I need to just get going and get past my fear.”

“Don’t negate your fear. It’s always working to protect you. I will work to alleviate it in a positive way, so you’ll be willing to give it up. If you’re ready, follow me.”

He took her by the hand and led her down a long hallway to a luxurious bedroom. A massive four-poster with sleek lines commanded the center of the room. Gray linens with touches of navy topped the bed and abstract artwork graced the walls, a stark contrast to the rest of the house, yet it had Ellison stamped all over it.

“Teigen, did you hear me?”

Oops! Pay attention or he'll kick you out.

“Sorry. What did you say?”

An arched eyebrow put her on notice. “I want you to get undressed. Fold your clothes and place them on that chair.”

She obeyed reluctantly but quickly while he stripped the bed of everything but a few pillows and the bottom sheet. Then he sat and watched her while she finished undressing. Why did she have to get naked, to show off the body she was so ashamed of, the body she'd been taught was evil to display? It was one of the things about BDSM she had a lot of trouble with. She could ask him if she could keep some clothes on like last time, but she didn't have the courage. *Ugh!*

“You look beautiful, Teigen. I love your curves. You should be proud of them.” he told her when she'd finally divested herself of her clothes. She wasn't sure if he was serious or if he told that to all the women he scened with, but it made her less self-conscious nonetheless. She was pathetically eager for any praise whatsoever.

He lay sideways and beckoned her over, patting the spot beside him. “Come here next to me.”

Now or never. Despite her heart racing, she crawled onto the bed, and he positioned her next to him, her head on the pillow, her arms by her sides. His nearness comforted her, his warmth forming a cocoon in which she could feel safe.

“Are you okay with me hypnotizing you?”

“Yes.”

He stroked her arms softly. “We are going to do a scene to help you orgasm, all right?”

Even though it was obvious, it was reassuring to her that he was confirming their purpose. “Yes.”

He instructed her to close her eyes. “I want you to concentrate on your breathing. Take a deep breath in...and out. In...and out

Despite his calm, soothing voice, Teigen had difficulty listening. All she could hear was “You’re not good enough.” She struggled, her breath jagged.

“Listen to my voice, Teigen. It’s the only one that matters right now.”

Her exasperation with herself exploded. “I’m trying!”

“Teigen, look at me!”

She obeyed his command and looked into eyes filled with compassion.

“It’s just us two here. Only you and me. No one else has any place here, not your parents, your ex, or anyone else. You are in a safe place. Do you understand?”

“Yes, I guess so.”

“So my voice is the one you will listen to, no matter what.”

She nodded, unable to speak past the lump in her throat. He was being so patient, she didn’t want to screw it up.

“Okay, so let’s start again. Concentrate on what I’m telling you. Listen to my words and try to follow them.”

“Okay.”

“Close your eyes, Teigen. Keep your breathing slow—that’s right—and relax your shoulders...your arms...your chest...your hips...your legs.”

His voice came through loud and clear, blocking out all others. “Your arms are starting to feel heavy. You can’t lift them, can you?”

She could curl her fingers inward, but her arms were like dead weights. She didn’t want to even try to lift them. “No, I can’t.”

“That’s good, Teigen. Now your body is sinking into the bed, your legs heavy as well.”

The bed enveloped her, surrounding her in softness, compelling her to yield to its hold.

“I want you to listen to me carefully, Teigen. If you feel like it’s too much, you are to say ‘*Red.*’ You can do that even when you are in trance. Do you understand me?”

“Yes.”

He stroked her lightly, making every cell on her skin feel alive. “You are mine now, Teigen. You are safe here. I will take care of you. Do you understand?”

Safe. Yes, she wanted to feel safe. Safe from her parents. Safe from Bobby. Safe from her bad dreams.

“Do you know you are a good girl, that you deserve to be happy?”

That familiar feeling of dread sent tentacles of doubt through her. “I’m not sure,” she whimpered.

“Do you trust me, Teigen?”

Did she? Everything about Ellison reassured her. His intelligence, his dominance, his caring for her when they played. If she let him, he could help her. And she so wanted him to help her. “Yes. I trust you.”

“Well, I’m telling you the truth. You deserve to be happy, to feel good about yourself, to experience pleasure.”

He sounded so convincing, she almost believed him. Could it be true? Could she finally find peace within herself?

A filmy soft fabric blanketed her torso. “I want you to take this silk scarf and smooth it over your skin.”

The soft fabric tickled her as she skimmed it over her body, causing her to squirm. She wanted to wrap herself in its smoothness.

“How does that feel, Teigen?”

“It’s so soft.” She rubbed it over her face, breathing in the scent he had sprayed over it. “It smells lovely too. Like lilacs. I love lilacs.”

“You’re doing so well, Teigen. The scarf is your pathway to pleasure. Everywhere you touch yourself with it, you will feel pleasure. As you move it over your body, your arousal will increase. Brush it down your chest, see how it feels.

Holding it on one end, she allowed it to drape over her skin. Swish. Swish. She became lost in an ethereal daze of bliss. Compelled to keep the feeling going, she wadded up one end so it would be firmer to the touch. Her nipple pebbled as the scarf grazed over it, her arousal heightening as she moved from one breast to the other. Shivers went down her spine, and a tingly feeling settled in her pussy.

“That feels wonderful, doesn’t it?”

“Oooh, yes.” She didn’t stop as he spoke, overcome with the strangeness of being so in tune with her body, nothing else mattered.

“You can make yourself feel good any time you want.”

Her senses were on high alert, her muscles tensing under the barrage of stimulation .

“Your body reacts to touch when you relax and let it happen.”

A thought penetrated her haze: Was pleasure really in her power?

“Where else can you use the scarf to make yourself feel good?”

“I-I...don’t know.” She knew exactly where else; she was just afraid to do it. If she pushed herself too far, it could all go away like it always did. She couldn’t bear that. It felt sooo good.

“Teigen, I know you do.” That voice of authority again, compelling her to obey. “I want you trail the scarf down your body, then open your legs and rub the scarf over your pussy.”

Her mouth was so dry she could barely swallow. Fighting against the resurgent voices telling her no, she brushed the silken fabric down her torso. If her body weren't so heavy and sunk into the bed, she would have tried to rise up to alleviate the adrenaline ricocheting through her. Reluctantly she forced her legs open, then reached down between them, crumpling the scarf into a ball. She didn't want it to tickle. If she were going to do this, she wanted to obey Ellison, to feel it fully. Another shiver coursed through her as she fondled herself with the delicate silk.

“Don't stop. Rub it back and forth, back and forth. Revel in the sensation as your pussy swells, your clit hardens.”

The pressure in her clit intensified the longer she stroked it, Ellison's strong voice egging her on. Her core coiled so tight she thought she'd burst. She was on a roller coaster, whizzing along, every nerve in her body alive. The exhilaration was almost too much until all of a sudden, the car veered, about to go off the rails, plunging her into nothingness. *You must not!* Panic enveloped her.

“Stop!” The command crashed through her consciousness, abruptly saving her from disaster. The precipice of catastrophe disappeared. Everything calmed down and her breathing slowed. The silk scarf evaporated into thin air.

“You're safe, Teigen. You are under my protection. I won't let anything bad happen to you.”

Yes. Ellison was still here, watching out for her. She sank back into the mattress, his calm voice comforting her, his gentle stroking soothing her.

“I'm going to wake you up now, Teigen. You're going to wake in three, two—open your eyes—one.”

She stared over at him next to her on the bed. Despite the imminent danger he'd rescued her from, she still felt more rested than she had in a long time.

CHAPTER FIVE



Okay, so they'd made some progress. She was starting to trust him. He'd hoped she'd have been able to go under longer, to ride the experience of feeling turned on a bit more. But the voices in her head were stronger than he originally thought, and it was going to be a challenge to get her to block them out in favor of his.

He wasn't sure how many more sessions they'd have to have before she was able to truly let go. Despite her progress in therapy getting her life on-track, the sexual aspects of her repression hadn't been addressed. He wasn't sure he was up to the task, or even if he wanted to. This was going to require a long-term commitment, something he didn't do.

And yet, he hadn't been attracted to anyone like this in a long time. Too focused on building his business, showing his father that being an architect was as good as being a Supreme Court Justice, he'd left no time for anything—or anyone—else. He'd pursued a path of his own making, dedicated to preventing the suffocation he knew he'd experience if he'd followed his parents into the legal profession and fulfilled his father's lifelong dream for him.

I guess I've had my own voices in my head pushing me. Working with Teigen was eye-opening in more than one respect. He'd been held back from pursuing a relationship for almost the same reason Teigen was being prevented from achieving an orgasm. Playing with subs in the club was fine, but he'd rarely allowed himself to spend more time with women than that. It seemed both of them were going to have

to learn new patterns of behavior. Did that include committing to helping Teigen over time?

“Are *you* okay, Ellison?”

Fuck! He was neglecting his charge, which was unforgivable given what she’d just been through. “Yes, Teigen. I was thinking how very proud I am of you that you went so far today, that you let go to the level that you did.”

All right, not quite the truth, but close enough.

Her shy, trusting smile took his breath away. How could he turn his back on her? He should do everything in his power not to let her down.

“I enjoyed it till the end. Then it got very scary.” Furrowed brows marred her beatific smile.

“What happened that was scary?” Dissecting each session was critical to figuring out what he could do to help her next time and also help her understand what happened so she could move forward.

“I lost control; then I panicked.”

He needed to connect with her on a visceral level, skin to skin. Pulling her against him, he caressed her face as he directed her to look him in the eyes. She wasn’t under anymore, but he could still focus her attention on the message he wanted her to absorb.

“Before you lost control, did you enjoy what was happening?”

She didn’t hesitate. “Absolutely! All my senses were alive. I don’t know when I’ve ever felt as good.”

“You realize that no one else was touching you, that you were directing your own pleasure.”

A vivid blush stole across her cheeks. “I guess I was thinking that you were doing it since you were directing me.”

“I was, but the hands that were caressing your body were your own. You were in control. Up until the last moment, you relished every minute of it. The more you learn to stay in tune

with your emotions, the more you'll be able to block out the negative voices. You can learn to make that happen."

With his hand still holding her face, he prevented her from shaking her head no. He wouldn't let even a minor negative reaction like that to invade her thoughts.

"You can," he reiterated. "And you will. Please trust me, and most of all, please trust yourself."

"I'll try."

He smiled down at her. "As Yoda said, 'Do or do not. There is no try.' You must get it in your head that you are master of your own body. The more you work on it, the more you will believe in yourself."

She leaned into him, pressing her body against his. "I'll trust *you*. That's all I can promise for now."

"I'll take it. How about you get dressed, then we'll go downstairs and I'll make you something to eat. I have a feeling you were too nervous to eat much before you came."

"Psychic as well as hypnotic. You're right. I could eat."

He helped her off the bed. "I'll let you get dressed, and I'll meet you downstairs in the kitchen."

He kissed her forehead and left the room. Relaxing over a meal would help cement their dynamic without being threatening. She had made some encouraging progress today, which they could build on as they went along. Deciding she was a challenge he was willing to take on, he was sure that eventually they would conquer those fucking negative voices, and when they were done, she would fly.



TEIGEN

Dinner with Ellison had been better than she imagined. He could cook, and he made her feel like a queen, waiting on her all evening. The potato and leek frittata had been delicious, as was the crisp white wine he'd chosen to go with it. Ellison

didn't pry any further into her private life, although why would he? He'd already gotten her life story. Like a good host, he steered the conversation to non-intimidating topics like where in Washington they liked to go. Ellison got so excited about some new buildings that had gone up recently, he invited her to visit them with him. She wasn't sure if it was a date or just an extension of her interview, but any excuse for spending time with him was fine with her. He told her he'd make arrangements and let her know when they'd go. By the time she'd gotten home, she was already looking forward to the next time she'd see him.

The next day Teigen met Maria for brunch in a small café near her house.

"I can't wait to hear all about your time with Master Ellison!" Maria said as she sat down and pulled off her scarf. Mesmerized by the fabric sliding from Maria's body, Teigen's memory of her own scarf experience flashed before her. She could sense the flush of excitement flare up.

"Oooh. Does that blush mean it was good?" Maria's eyes twinkled as she regarded Teigen with anticipation.

"It was incredible. I never thought I'd be the type of person who could be hypnotized, but it was surprising how fast he had me under."

Maria leaned forward and whispered, "Did he make you do kinky stuff?"

"I'm not sure if you'd call it kinky. He had me touch myself with a scarf."

"That's all?"

Maria's disappointment surprised her—and put her on the defensive.

"You know, not all of us have the kind of experience you do. And when, I might add, was the last time you were hypnotized and engaged in sensation play? Do you know what it feels like to let your body go and experience something soft and sensuous all over your skin while someone else is telling you exactly what to do and is expecting you to obey? I know it

doesn't sound like much, but it really turned me on!" Teigen put her hand over her mouth when she realized her voice had risen. Thank God the café was crowded and the noise level was pretty loud or she'd really have embarrassed herself.

"Hey, I didn't mean to upset you." Maria reached across the table and took Teigen's hand. "I know you're new to the lifestyle. It sounds like Master Ellison made the scene incredible."

"Not as incredible as we both would have liked," she confessed. "I kind of panicked, and he had to pull me out of the trance. I think he was as upset with me as I was."

Maria squeezed her hand as a look of fury crossed her face. "He had no right to be upset with you. He knows everyone responds to scenes differently. It probably triggered something that made you react the way you did. He should have been supportive of you, not upset!"

"Sorry, I don't want to give you the wrong impression. Ellison was comforting and tried to make me feel better. It's just that I had the feeling he expected more from me, and I was sorry I disappointed him."

The waitress approached and took their order. The minute she left the table, Maria attempted to reassure her.

"You can't project your own feelings on someone else, particularly in this situation. If Master Ellison didn't tell you he was disappointed in the scene, you have to take him at his word. When you start a relationship in BDSM, particularly when you're new and don't know what your boundaries are, you have to go slowly. Sometimes it takes a few scenes before the two of you are comfortable enough to let go with one another. Did you enjoy the scene at all?"

"I did. And Ellison said it will get better each time we play."

Maria took a sip of her coffee. "You should believe him. He obviously has a goal in mind with his scenes, and you have to trust him to take you where you need to go."

"Yeah...Trust. He told me that. It's just hard."

“Of course, it’s hard. But it’s worth it in the end. It’s why scenes can be so intense. If you open yourself up to someone and be vulnerable, the payoff in the end is incredible. That’s why you have to be honest with how you’re doing, so he knows how to proceed. It sounds like Master Ellison is doing exactly what he should. I can’t wait to see where he takes you.”

“You and me both. It’s scary and exciting at the same time.”

“It sure is. By the way, why don’t you call him Master Ellison like the rest of us do?”

“I think because I met him outside the lifestyle. He hasn’t told me to do that yet.”

Maria nodded. “If he wants you to, I’m sure he’ll say something.”

The waitress brought their food and the women ate quietly for a moment before Teigen said, “Maria, thank you for listening. At times I’m overwhelmed by all my feelings about what I’m going through. Your feedback helps me make sense of it all. Otherwise, I think I’d spend my time brooding about how I messed up.”

“Believe me, I get it. I’ve had friends help guide me through my own experiences. I’m just passing it on. Are you going to see him again soon?”

“We’re supposed to go on a tour of buildings that have interesting architecture he thought I might be interested in.”

“Do you know when?”

“First of all, he’s a busy guy. Second of all, I’m sure I’m not the only woman he’s interested in.”

Maria frowned. “You’re right. I’ve never seen him with the same woman for very long. I don’t think you should wait around for him. If you’d like, we could go to Black Light next weekend, and maybe he’ll be there. He doesn’t have to know you went there looking for him.”

“I thought you said I had to be honest with him for it to work.”

A sly smile crept across Maria’s face. “Most of the time, omission of the facts is considered lying, but there’s a fine line. I think you could get away with it.”



IT WAS why the next Saturday night she was dressed in a form-fitting red leather dress that just skimmed over her butt that once again Maria had insisted she borrow. Now that she was standing near the bar feeling as though she had on a neon sign beckoning to any Dom in the vicinity, she was rethinking her decision.

After turning down the opportunity to play with the third Dom who’d approached her, Teigen turned to Maria. “I don’t think this was such a good idea. I don’t see Ellison, and I feel awkward with all these Doms coming up to me. You stay and wait for Miles. I think I’m going to call an Uber and go home.”

The beautiful blonde bartender approached her. “Hi, my name is Klara. If you’d like to sit here without anyone bothering you, I can make that happen.”

“I appreciate the offer, but my plans for the evening aren’t working out.”

Klara winked. “I think your plans for the evening is approaching the bar at this very minute.”

Teigen was nonplussed. “How could you know?”

“Because I know everything that goes on around here. It’s my job.”

Maria piped up. “She’s right. He’s here. I just saw him talking to Spencer. He’ll probably make his way to the bar soon. Everyone usually stops here before they play.”

Relief flooded through Teigen, followed by the alarming thought that since he hadn’t called her, he could be meeting

someone else. That would be devastating. Why hadn't she thought of that before? She had to get out of here.

"Would you like a drink so you can look nonchalant when he comes over?" Klara asked.

"Thanks, but I've changed my mind about tonight. I've got to go."

Before anyone could talk her out of it, she started for the lockers, causing her to be in a direct path to Ellison, who was coming toward her. She stopped, unable to figure out how to avoid him.

Ellison's face lit up as he approached her. "Hello, Teigen, what a nice surprise!"

"Hi." Caught off guard, she couldn't look him in the face.

"I didn't expect to see you here tonight. Did you come with Maria?"

"Yes."

"Teigen, look at me." At her pitiful responses, he quirked an eyebrow. "What's going on? You don't look happy to see me."



Ellison

She curled in on herself right before his eyes. He couldn't let her get away with backsliding on their progress in connecting with one another. "I need you to answer me, Teigen. Did you not want to see me here tonight? Did you put on that lovely red dress for someone else?"

"No! I picked it out for you. Well, actually, Maria picked it out, but I wore it for you...to make you interested in wanting to play with me...Oh God, I didn't mean to tell you that!"

She looked mortified, but he couldn't stop himself from laughing.

"Please, don't laugh at me!"

“I assure you, Teigen, I am not laughing at you. I’m delighted that you wanted to please me by wearing that alluring dress. You were successful. I definitely want to play with you tonight.”

He held out his arms and waited for her to come to him. She hesitated, the war between her distress and her desire playing out on her face. He nudged her in his direction. “Come to me, Teigen.”

He embraced her the minute she took the requisite step forward, holding her close in the middle of the chaos of the room, creating a circle in which there was no one but the two of them. He stroked her back and instructed her, “Close your eyes and breathe with me. I want you to relax. Ignore everything. Let your stress go.”

He felt her shoulders release their tension, and her breathing began to match his own. He stood there holding her until he felt her lean into him, letting him bear her weight.

“That’s a good girl. I would like to take you over to a table and sit and have a drink. Are you ready for that?”

She nodded into his chest.

“Good.” He released her, took her hand and led her to a secluded table in the corner of the bar. Once they’d ordered a drink, he leaned back in his chair in a casual pose, hoping she would mirror his attitude. He wanted her to relax, to enjoy her surroundings, to get in tune with herself. BDSM could be dangerous if not done with proper precautions, and one had to be careful when they played, but it didn’t mean you couldn’t have fun. It was apparent to him that even after leaving the hospital, Teigen hadn’t had a lot of fun. Perhaps tonight was the night.

She settled into her chair but brought her arms across her chest.

He had to fix her attitude, open her up to him. Reorienting her physical stance would help. “I’d like you relax your shoulders and put your hands comfortably in your lap. Then tell me if you masturbated this week.”

Her eyes rounded and her mouth dropped. She leaned forward to speak but apparently thought better of it, because she leaned back in her chair and dropped her hands to her lap. She clasped and unclasped them a few times before she composed herself and looked up at him. “I can’t believe you asked me that question.”

“It’s an important question. We worked on your achieving pleasure by your own hand. It’s only natural for me to see if you did any homework. So, did you?”

Her response was a curt “No.” It wasn’t enough. Despite her resistance, he needed her to cooperate with him.

“Did you try and then stop, or did you not try at all?” He didn’t move from his laid-back position, conveying the impression that there was nothing probing about the questions he was asking. Just a pleasant conversation between friends.

The crimson flush he enjoyed so much crept up her cheeks. “I didn’t try at all. After the last time we were together, I wasn’t going to risk it.”

“It shouldn’t be a risk, Teigen. I know you’re concerned, but if you think about it, the worst thing that could happen is you don’t come. You shouldn’t be ashamed or embarrassed by that.”

She rolled her eyes at him, something he’d have to train her not to do if she was going to be his.

His.

He realized that at least for now, he wanted that. His desire to protect her overwhelmed him, a new feeling for him. He’d have to get a collar for her to wear in the club to keep away the Doms he’d noticed hovering around her earlier.

“I mean it, Teigen. I know you’ve grown up with negative views about your sexuality, but it’s something I’m determined to erase. I want you to learn how to appreciate your beautiful body and the joy it can give you.”

Their drinks arrived, and he could see she was relieved to have a distraction from the conversation. He wasn’t going to allow it to last. The minute the serving sub left, he continued.

“I have an idea for a scene tonight that I think you will enjoy. Are you okay with getting wet?”

“I’m not sure. Getting wet how?”

“I want to take you to the water play area. You will need to get naked and not worry about getting any part of your body wet. I’m sure you spent time doing your hair, but I’m probably going to mess it up. Can you deal with that?”

She thought for a moment. “Are you going to get naked as well?”

He nodded, surprised and pleased by the question. “I spent a lot on these leathers. I have no intention of ruining them with water.”

A cunning smile crossed her lips. “I guess I’m willing to get wet if you are.”

“Wonderful!” He jumped to his feet. “Leave the drink. I’ll get you another one after we play. Come with me!”

He held out his hand, and when she took it, he led her over to the communal shower area. Grateful no one else was there, he quickly claimed a spot that was equipped with a handheld showerhead, perfect for what he had planned.

“Strip for me, Teigen. Reveal that curvaceous, sensuous body to me. I don’t want you to think about anyone else in the cub. We are here together, and we’re the only ones who matter.”

She pulled the rocking red dress over her head, shyly looking over to him for approval. “Good girl, Teigen. Keep going. I want to see every inch of your glorious body.”

She quickly divested herself of the thong she was wearing, and hesitated again. “I’d love you to keep on those stilettos, you look so hot in them, but I’m sure you don’t want to ruin them, so leave them on the chair with the rest of your clothes. Then I want you to stand by the shower head right there and wait for my next instructions.”

She obediently did as he asked, watching him intently as he divested himself of his leathers. He hoped he assuaged any

doubts she had about whether he appreciated how she looked once she saw the evidence of his own excitement. A shy smile crossed her face as he removed his pants. *Yes.*

He placed his boots under the chair he used for his own clothes, and stalked forward, causing her to straighten from her slouched position. *Good.* He wanted her fully attentive.

He grabbed the shower head and doused her hair in water. Then he took some nearby shampoo, and began to massage it into her hair. She moaned softly in response, and he had to focus on her to keep from being caught up in his own need. Using the kneading of her scalp as an induction into a trance, he spoke to her softly as he worked.

“You’re going to relax, Teigen...You’re going to go deep into a trance while standing here with me...You’ll still be able to stand, but your attention will be on me. You are giving yourself over to me...Deeper and deeper...”

He continued to massage the soap into her scalp while directing her. Her breathing began to slow, the tension in her shoulders visibly relaxed and she sighed.

“The water is your safe place, Teigen. As it cascades down your body, it will bring you pleasure.”

He brought his hands down to her neck. She leaned her head forward, allowing him access. “That’s a good girl, Teigen...Relax...Deeper and deeper...”

CHAPTER SIX



Ellison's voice got farther and farther away. She rolled her head, releasing the tension. His powerful hands massaged away her doubts and fears, comforting her, making her feel secure and cared-for. Her mother had never washed her hair, even when she was young.

"I want you to put your hands on the wall. They will become stuck there. You will not be able to move them no matter what I do."

She placed her hands where he instructed.

"Now, spread your legs for me as wide as you can. They will not be able to move as well."

Opening her legs, she became overcome with a sense of vulnerability. A whimper escaped her lips. Immediately Ellison's arms encircled her, his deep voice giving her words of comfort.

"You're safe with me, Teigen. I will not hurt you. This is all about your pleasure. You will put all your bad thoughts aside for now and just feel what I'm doing to you. Enjoy the sensations."

"Okay..." Instinctively, she knew it would be all right.

The spray of the shower head massaged her scalp while rinsing the shampoo from her hair. She closed her eyes and gave in to the warm water pulsing against her. The liquid sluiced down her body, awakening the nerve endings of her skin, just as Ellison told her it would, causing her nipples to

peak and her clit to pulse. How did he get her so aroused so fast? She wanted more.

“Please, help me.”

Ellison’s disembodied voice filtered through her consciousness.

“What do you need, Teigen? All you have to do is ask me and I’ll give it to you.”

Her body tingled under the force of the cascading water, but it was too light. She needed more force, more pressure. “More...all over...harder...”

“Good girl. I’ll give you what you need.”

The shower spray moved down her back, the pulsations firmer. It kneaded the muscles, releasing all the tension in her upper body, making her all too aware of the coiling sensation down below. She tried to move her legs together to assuage the persistent desire centered on her clit, but for some reason she couldn’t.

To make matters more intense, the unrelenting pulsations had moved to circle her breasts, causing her peaked nipples to throb. She attempted to move to put them directly into the spray, but she was rooted to the spot and had to endure the teasing water.

“Uuuuggggghhhh. Please!”

A hard pinch to her nipple reverberated through her, causing her to tremble. “Is that what you need, Teigen?”

“Yessss!!!”

The other nipple received an equivalent pinch, and she rocked back and forth to absorb the pain. Her poor clit pulsed, straining for direct attention, and the wetness dripping down her legs wasn’t only from the shower.

The spray continued its march down her torso, the anticipation of its final destination driving her mad. Ellison’s voice egged her on. “It’s coming, Teigen. Give in to it. Feel the pleasure. It’s okay.”

When the spray finally hit its target, the shock catapulted her into an unexpected orgasm, her whole body vibrating under the force of her release. Every muscle inside and out contracted in concert, draining her of strength as she came down from the high.

“Release your hands, Teigen, and lean back into me!”

She fell against the solid wall of muscle that cradled her as she was guided to the floor. Enveloped in his arms, she continued to shake even as he held her tight against him.

“You did it, Teigen! I’m so proud of you.”

Tears of joy flowed down her face. Her sense of accomplishment knew no bounds. So *this* was what all the fuss was about!

“I’m going to take you out of the trance, Teigen. You will come back to me in three...two...one.”

He leaned back. Feeling incredibly vulnerable now that she was fully conscious, she didn’t like the space between them. She nestled further into his chest.

“I want you to look at me, Teigen.”

When she finally collected herself enough to turn her gaze upward to meet his, she was bowled over by the look of happiness mixed with pride on his face.

“Do you realize what happened?” he asked, holding her face in his hands so she couldn’t look away. “You finally let go, erasing everything in your mind except the pleasure you were experiencing, and you were rewarded with a powerful orgasm.”

Despite the fact it was what she’d wanted, embarrassment pushed aside her initial joy. Anyone who’d walked by could have seen her display of carnal pleasure. Ellison had seen it up close and personal. Now that she was no longer in trance, the conflict of getting what she’d strived for warred with the voices of condemnation that now reared up in her head. *Fuck!*

“Hey, what’s going on? You should be happy.” Concern replaced the delight Ellison had shown her. She couldn’t get

anything right.

“I guess I am.”

“You guess? I’d hoped this breakthrough would make you ecstatic. What’s wrong?”

She shrugged.

“Teigen, I know you are more in touch with your feelings than that. What is going on?”

She knew, but she couldn’t believe it herself. She’d put herself in the safe hands of Master Ellison, and he’d delivered what he’d promised. The orgasm was spectacular. Of course she had nothing to compare it to, but it *was* pretty special. Why couldn’t she ride the wave of accomplishment for at least a few minutes before the world came crashing back in on her?

“Being hypnotized allows me to truly let go. Now that I’m fully aware, all my insecurities came back in a wave. At least the orgasm happened. That’s something.”

“It certainly is. And it’s just one of many more to come. The more it happens, the more you’re going to come to accept it.” He leaned forward and kissed her gently on the forehead.

“I hope you’re right.” Suddenly, despite the fact that she was still in close body contact with Ellison, a chill overtook her and she shuddered.

“Teigen, you did so well. Please try to enjoy it. Now let’s get you dried off, and you can get dressed.” He helped her up off the floor and wrapped her in a towel he grabbed off a nearby rack. “Warm enough?”

“Yes. I’ll go into the locker room and dry my hair. I must look a mess.” She ran her fingers through her tangled locks. “It’ll take me a while to look presentable.”

“You look sensational, Teigen. You have the glow of a woman who’s just had a satisfying scene. If you would smile, you’d knock everyone’s socks off.”

She rolled her eyes at him and he swatted her ass, though with the towel around her, it didn’t have much of an impact. But it got her attention.

“Hey, why’d you do that?”

“You may not be mine yet, but you will not roll your eyes at me or treat me with disrespect. I don’t do it to you and I expect the same courtesy.”

She absorbed what he was saying, but the word “yet” stood out. Did he really mean it...or was he just saying it for effect? She couldn’t believe he’d be interested in someone with so many issues. Maybe he saw her as a challenge to his hypnotism skills, and once he’d conquered her, he’d move on. He was in for a rude awakening. She may have had her first orgasm, but she was far from being fixed.



Ellison

Teigen was certainly an enigma it was going to take Ellison a while to figure out. Her having an orgasm was the tip of the iceberg. Her self-esteem was so buried under a pile of judgment and disdain, it was going to take him some time to sift through it all and help her believe in herself, in her right to experience arousal and an orgasm, in her right to be happy.

He had his work cut out for him, but she was worth whatever time and effort it took. When she let go, it was miraculous, her joy in discovering herself compelling to be around. She was smart, interesting to have discussions with, and not the least of all, she was so beautiful. Her soft curly red hair was made for him to run his fingers through while he lost himself in her expressive green eyes, and her smooth peaches-and-cream skin that encased her voluptuous curves demanded his caresses. He wasn’t giving up on her even though she seemed to give up on herself.

Once she left for the locker room, he towed himself off and dressed. After running a comb through his hair, he went to wait for her at the lockers. She came bounding out and turned toward the exit.

“Weren’t you going to say goodbye?” He tried not to sound accusing, but he was a bit offended that she would leave

without seeing him.

She looked somewhat sheepish when she turned in his direction. “Sorry. I’m gonna call an Uber. Thanks for the scene. I’ll talk to you soon.”

Fuck no! “Not so fast. You don’t need an Uber. I’ll take you home. I don’t want to argue about this every time we play, Teigen. I’m not letting you go home alone after an emotional scene. You don’t get to run from me...or your feelings.”

“I’m not—”

“Don’t even go there! I’m waiting.”

He stared her down till she agreed.

When she picked up her phone and coat from her locker, he instructed her, “Now text your friend and tell her I’m taking you home.” She did as he demanded but not without a pout on her face. “Okay, now I’ll just grab my jacket and we’ll go.”

He unlocked his locker, put on his jacket, then picked up his toy bag and took her hand. “Let’s go.”

He was gratified when she gave him a “yes, sir.” At least they’d made some progress.

He needed to see her again, and not in a BDSM context. On the way out he reminded her of their date. Surprisingly she remained open to the idea. That was a relief. He was taking one step forward and two steps back each time he spent time with her in a scene. He had to use their time together outside the lifestyle to get her to trust him and to have fun together. It would help them bond, and he needed that if he was going to get anywhere with her. He didn’t want to admit to himself that she might need more than he could give her, that a therapist would be more effective than he was.

Yet when he thought about it, she’d had a lot of therapy while she was recovering from her panic attacks. It had taken her a long way, allowing her to get away from her family and go to school, but it hadn’t been able to get the negative voices totally out of her head, particularly when it came to sex. He had a few things going for him a therapist didn’t; he was totally invested in her progress, and his techniques allowed

him to bypass the voices, at least temporarily. That was significant.

She was pretty quiet on the drive home. He allowed her to stay in her own thoughts, but when they arrived at her house, he turned off the car and turned to look at her.

“What’s been going on in the restless brain of yours on the way home?”

She remained silent. *Not acceptable.*

“Teigen, I need you to look at me and tell me what you’re thinking. We just had an intense scene, and you didn’t even allow me the opportunity to give you aftercare. I will not leave until you talk to me.”

She turned sideways in her seat, curling her foot underneath her. “I think I told you everything you need to know. I don’t know what else to say.”

He took her hand in his, circling it with his thumb. “Do you feel you made any progress tonight?”

“I guess. I mean, of course. I never had an orgasm before, so that’s a big thing. I’m just worried that the voices in my head will never go away. And that...eventually...you will.”

“I’m not going anywhere.” He caressed her cheek, then leaned forward and kissed her gently on the lips. She audibly sighed.

“I hope that’s a sigh of pleasure and not of resignation.”

She cupped his face and gazed into his eyes. “I’m afraid it’s a combination of both. I appreciate that you feel committed to be with me while I take this journey. I’m not sure you’ll be able to stick it out till the end.”

“Can I ask you not to worry about the future and try to live in the moment? You’ll be more successful with everything you’re trying to accomplish if you can focus on what’s happening now. We had a great scene tonight. The only problem with it was that you second-guessed yourself after it was over. You have to dwell on your progress not your difficulties. It’s the only way you’ll move forward.”

He kissed her again. “Tell me I’m right.”

Her mouth tilted into a half smile. “You’re right.”

“Okay. Now you can go in.” He got out of the car, and took her hand as she emerged from the vehicle. He would have preferred she wait for him to open the door for her, but that was for further down the line.

At her door, he waited while she unlocked it, once again kissing her gently on the lips.

“I want you to go inside, have a warm cup of tea or hot chocolate, and relax before you go to bed. Think about how good that orgasm felt. Think about how much better it will be next time. Because it will be, Teigen. I promise.”

“Okay.”

She turned to go inside, but he held her back. “That’s ‘Yes, sir.’”

This time he got a full smile. “Yes, sir.”

“Good night, Teigen.”

“Good night, sir.” She closed the door behind her.

He waited till he heard her turn the lock. As he drove away from her house, he determined that he wasn’t going to give her too much time to brood. This campaign would have to be persistent if he was going to make any lasting headway.

CHAPTER SEVEN



TEIGEN

Sunday morning, Teigen rushed around her bedroom like an idiot, trying on clothes and discarding them in her search for the perfect outfit to wear on her first official date with Ellison. Even though he'd called with last-minute plans, she didn't stand on ceremony. She wanted to see him. Finally settling on a soft green v-neck sweater that played up the color of her hair and complexion paired with dark indigo jeans, she tied a colorful scarf around her neck and finished the outfit with dark-caramel suede booties. Hearing the doorbell, she pulled a brush through her curls and ran to the door just as Ellison began to knock impatiently.

"I'm coming!" she shouted as she sped up across the hallway. She opened the door to an unexpected grin given the impatience of his knocking.

"That's for later. Now we're going to look at architecture."

A blush bloomed across her cheek. "I can't believe you said that!"

"I'm not always serious. I enjoy a good double entendre as well as the next guy." He winked. "May I come in?"

"Of course. Sorry. You threw me off-guard. I'll have to be careful around you."

She gestured for him to enter.

"Not too careful, I hope. I was nurturing the idea that you were coming to trust me."

She immediately regretted her remark. “Of course, I trust you. I can make a joke as well.”

He pulled her into his embrace and kissed her gently on the lips. “I think we both need to loosen up and enjoy the day. I won’t be defensive if you won’t. Deal?”

“Deal.” She kissed him back, seeking his warmth and reassurance. “I’ll just get my purse and we can leave.”

He let her go, and once she had her purse, took her by the hand and led her out to his car. She’d never been with anyone so gentlemanly before, opening up car doors, taking her by the hand as they walked, making sure she was comfortable. She could get used to this kind of treatment very easily, and she warned herself that it could all end at the drop of the hat. Two sides warred in her head: *Trust him. Be careful.*

“Are you with me, Teigen?” She realized Ellison was staring at her.

“Yes, sorry. Where are we going?” She hoped her smile conveyed her eagerness for the day.

“Our first stop will be the John and Jill Ker Conway residence. I’ve spoken with the agent onsite, and he’ll give us a tour. It’s a remarkable place because it’s apartments for former homeless vets located in the up-and-coming NOMA neighborhood, and it’s incredible what they’ve done with very little money.”

He wasn’t kidding. Juxtaposed next to an old church, the building’s façade, created with sets of windows angled against one another, projected a modern high-end look.

As they walked through the front entrance into the bright, high-ceilinged lobby, she remarked, “Wow. I can’t believe this is low-income housing.”

“I know. All of the concepts used to generate dynamic living spaces have been used here. The key was using inexpensive materials—such as corrugated metal and polished concrete—in a way you’re normally not accustomed to seeing. It’s quite brilliant.”

They were met by the building agent and given the tour through the welcoming public areas including an outdoor patio, TV room, and clubhouse with exercise equipment, and the well-appointed apartments with tall windows and light wood flooring. It had all of the elements usually associated with high-income housing: bright, clean, and charming. The only concession was in the size of the studio apartments, but the design made them feel much larger than they really were. She wouldn't mind living there.

Back in the car, Teigen couldn't get over what she'd just seen. "It's amazing what you can construct even when you're on a tight budget."

"You just have to think outside the box. I'm hoping to collaborate on a project like this one soon. I'm currently in negotiations."

"This is the first you've mentioned it to me. It would certainly be an interesting aspect of my article."

Ellison turned to her as he stopped at a light. "I didn't tell you because it hasn't been confirmed yet. I'd appreciate it if you would keep it off the record."

Teigen nodded. "I promise. I'm just sorry it has to be kept quiet. After spending so much of your career building top-of-the-line projects, it's noteworthy that you want to help people on the lower end of the economic ladder as well. People should know that."

"I appreciate your intention, but I'm not looking for approval from others on this. I spent too much of my life seeking approval from my father, trying to live up to his expectations that I forgot to figure out my own. I've loved doing historical projects, but I'm at a point in my career where I think I'm ready to do something new. I don't want to ruin the historic aspects of D.C., but I think buildings like the Conway can meld into the historic landscape."

Teigen understood completely, as she'd spent so much of her life trying to follow someone else's rules. She also knew how freeing it was to finally allow yourself to realize how you wanted to live your life. Up till now, she'd thought they were

so different, but in reality they were fighting for independence in similar ways.

She reached out and placed her hand on his thigh, hoping to convey the fact that she understood what he was saying. He grasped her hand in his and squeezed. They rode in companionable silence for a while, cocooned in the warmth of their shared purpose, the sounds of the street totally ignored.

Not too far away but in a totally different world, they came to the Apartments at CityCenterDC.

“So now we go from modest to extravagant. Here we have no expense spared to create a total city enclave, almost self-sustaining. There are restaurants, office buildings, condos and rental apartments, and a hotel. You could work and live in this complex and barely have to leave.”

“But exploring the city is my favorite thing to do. It seems a waste.”

“It does have its perks.” Ellison led her to the private pedestrian street that traversed the property. “See how the buildings are lower here? It’s to give the people walking more of an open feel. Windows are again a major source of light and views, though of course the apartments are much bigger.”

“I get all the features that they put into the space, but I still wouldn’t want to live here. It seems a bit sterile to me.”

“It’s interesting that the \$1,325-a-month apartment building is way more captivating than this one. It shows that money isn’t the only consideration when creating a space.”

Teigen looked around for a moment. “There aren’t even a lot of people here. I guess I’m not the only one who’s unimpressed.”

“I wouldn’t go that far. The use of light and materials is well-thought out. Residents get a lot of space and luxury for their money.”

“I guess. But I’ll still take my little Cape Cod house in the burbs over this. It has more character.”

“That’s because you put the character into it.” Ellison put his arm around her and walked her back to the car.

“You don’t know what kind of character I’ve put into my place. You haven’t seen more than the doorway.”

Ellison backed her up against his car. “I hope I get to see more of it after I take you to dinner.” He pressed against her and kissed her with a promise of more to come.

She was willing to accept that promise. Hopefully, she wouldn’t disappoint him this time. “I’d be glad to give you a tour.”

“Good. Let’s get something to eat. What are you in the mood for?”

She thought about it for a moment, then remembered a trattoria she’d eaten in not too long ago. “How about Italian. There’s a great place not too far from me that I think you’ll like.”

“Sure, let’s go.”



Ellison

The restaurant Teigen recommended was excellent. They had a wonderful meal, but Ellison only allowed them one glass of wine. After the wonderful time they’d had together, he’d decided that if she was up to it, he wanted to be able to play when they got to her house, and too much wine would mess up his plans.

Their discussion of the afternoon continued over dinner. Ellison elaborated on his upcoming project. Providing housing and a resource center, which would include medical, educational and recreational facilities to disadvantaged single mothers, would engage Ellison in a way he hadn’t been challenged at work in a long time. Doing projects with adequate resources made problem-solving easy. All you had to do was throw money at an obstacle and it was overcome. But making do with a limited budget meant he’d have to get

creative, much like they'd done at the Conway Residence. He couldn't wait to get started.

"I wonder if I could follow you through the project and write an article about it. I think highlighting these kinds of designs opens up the possibility for more of them. We obviously need to get people out of traditionally monolithic low-income housing and present them with alternatives that enhance quality of life rather than destroy it," Teigen said.

"I think that's a great idea. Once the contracts have been signed, I'll let you know."

Teigen grinned. "It will also give me an excuse to see you more often."

Ellison dipped his biscotti into his espresso and took a bite. He contemplated how he wanted to answer her comment. He wanted her to know that he would see her a lot more if she were willing, that putting a collar on her was something he'd been mulling over. But he didn't want to scare her off by moving too quickly.

"You don't need excuses, Teigen. All you have to do is text me, and I'll make arrangements with you. However, I won't wait for you to make the next move. I promise I will be planning to spend time with you again soon... and often."

"I'm glad to hear that."

"Good. Now how about we finish our coffees and you can give me that tour you promised."

Teigen polished off both the biscotti and the coffee quickly and he followed suit. In no time they were on the road to her house.

The cottage boasted an array of colorful petunias, which found their way inside in multiple vases. They reflected Teigen's design aesthetic, which displayed elements of boho style. Vibrant colors graced pillows, curtains, and throws covering furniture that had obviously seen better days. Large abstract art pieces adorned the walls painted a pale blue.

Teigen regarded him warily as she showed him around. "I know it's not the most polished look. It's taken me a while to

put the house together, and admittedly, a lot of the furniture came from flea markets or were hand-me-downs.”

“You have nothing to be ashamed of, Teigen. Your place is warm, inviting, and cheerful, much like you.”

“Thank you.” She paused. “Your opinion means a lot to me.”

“I take that very seriously. I want you to know you’ve impressed me in so many ways, not the least of which is in the ingenuity of your home. You have a lot to offer the world. I can’t wait to see what you do next. But I’m ready to see your creativity in your bedroom.”

He would never tire of watching her blush. “Is that another double entendre?”

“Could be. Lead the way.”

He followed her down the hall to the cozy bedroom, which continued the theme of the rest of the house. Her bed was piled haphazardly with a kaleidoscope of pillows on top of a red comforter. The curtains sported a small paisley print, and the rattan loveseat pillow was covered in bright cobalt blue. How she got any rest in here, he wasn’t sure, but since rest wasn’t on his agenda, it worked for him.

“Are there any toys in that nightstand?”

She froze in place, her blush turning crimson.

“Teigen, I asked you a question. I expect an answer.”

She raised her foot as though she were going to stomp it in frustration, but clearly thought better of it. Her foot settled back on the ground, and she nodded.

“Take them out and lay them on the bed for me.”

He didn’t think she could walk any slower, but she made it to the nightstand and took out a small bullet vibrator and a pair of tweezer nipple clamps.

“Is that all? It doesn’t pay to lie because I can walk over there and check for myself.”

“Well, there’s a Hitachi, but it’s too much. It hurts!”

“A bit of pain can be quite erotic. Why don’t you take it out and we’ll see.”

She rolled her eyes at him but did as she was told.

“Have you tried any of these since you had your first orgasm?”

She shook her head. That wasn’t a good sign.

“Why not? You’d probably be successful now that you’ve broken through some of your mental blocks.”

“But I really haven’t.” She turned away from him, pressing her fingers against her eyes in a gesture of frustration.

“Come here, Teigen.” He pointed to a spot on the floor directly in front of him. It was time to put her back under, to once again silence the voices so she could enjoy herself.

She came to the spot he designated, but she didn’t look him in the eye. His finger under her chin, he forced her to look up at him. She was near tears.

Fuck! That would not do. “Teigen, do you consent to being hypnotized again? I want to help you relax.”

“Okay.” Her voice was barely a whisper, but she nodded her head to confirm her consent.

“Good girl. Please take off your clothes, lie on the bed, and we’ll begin.”

As she obeyed, he picked up the toys and placed them on the nightstand then piled some of the pillows against the headboard so she would be supported in a halfway seated position. He helped her settle herself, then he sat down next to her.

He needed to be careful. The minefield of her mind could trip him up at any moment. He had to have a clear vision of how he was going to guide her through this.

“Close your eyes, Teigen.” She obeyed and he led her through an induction that had her under very quickly.



TEIGEN

Ellison's voice sifted through her consciousness. "I'm going to touch you with your bullet, and you're going to let yourself go and allow it to arouse you."

He turned on and passed it over her collarbone, over her upper chest then circled her nipples. A shiver of delight flitted through her, erasing all other thoughts.

"This feels nice, doesn't it?"

Teigen squirmed a little but couldn't answer him. She was concentrated on following his instruction to enjoy. He leaned down and nipped at her nipple.

"Yes!" *Damn!* Didn't he realize she was having trouble finding words?

"Good. You will answer all my questions. Is that clear?"

"Yes." *As best as I can.* As long as he kept touching her with that thing, it was going to be hard to think.

He trailed the bullet around a breast in a spiral, slowly making his way to her now hardened peak. A whimper of anticipation escaped her lips as he got closer, becoming a full-blown moan once he reached his target. Her knees rose in tandem, pressing together, trying to contain the burgeoning arousal concentrating between her thighs. He pulled the bullet away, and she cried out in protest. She needed more!

"Legs down and spread as far as you can. They will become bound to the bed once you obey me."

Her legs moved of their own accord, exposing her pussy to the mounting pressure without being able to provide it with relief.

"Help!" she gasped.

The bullet traversed the same trail on her other breast, but this time her legs were rooted in place, the anticipation

mounting with no relief in sight. Without being able to press her legs together, she cried out, “Please, I need more...”

Ellison’s voice promised, “I will give it to you.”

Yes! He had to do something to help her. She wasn’t sure she could stand the excruciating tension much more.

A thin wire circled her nipple, creating more and more pressure until...

“Too much!”

“You can take it, but I’ll loosen it a little bit.”

The force of the viselike object diminished slightly, but the throbbing in her clit increased to an almost unbearable level.

He repeated the procedure with her other breast, priming the nipple with the bullet then clamping it. She hissed at the onslaught of pain, which morphed into a delicious rush to her nerve center below.

“What color are you, Teigen?”

Color? He wanted to know what color she was? She was many colors, the colors of fire; red with orange and yellow and violet...

The tweezer around her breast pinched. *Fuck!*

“What?” she shouted, unsure if her vision of her colors were what he was asking.

He smoothed his hand down her arm. “Remember at Black Light I told you about the safe word colors?”

Oh that. She was glad she hadn’t told him about the fire colors or he might have stopped, and that would have been a disaster. Nodding, she replied, “I’m pretty green.”

“I’m glad to hear it. Are you ready to go on?”

“God, yes!”

She heard him chuckle and then felt the bullet traveling down her torso.

Yes! Come to where I need it, please. Her hips rose in anticipation, but he gently pushed her back down. “We’ll have

none of that. You'll just have to wait until I get there."

She whimpered in response. *God, he knew how to torture a person!*

He huffed a laugh. "Patience, Teigen. We will do this at my pace."

She rolled her head back and uttered her mantra, "Uuuuuggggghhhh! I'm going to explode before you get there."

"That's my intention. Now open yourself up to the sensations." He moved the vibrator and stroked her skin with his other hand.

If she opened up any more, she'd fall apart.

Spreading her labia, he gently touched her clit with the bullet, making her jump.

"Enjoy, Teigen. Let the pleasure wash over you."

He swept it over her clit again.

Oh my fucking god! She couldn't keep still, her muscles vibrated along with the bullet. But for some reason she couldn't close her legs and catch it to make it stay in place.

"Good girl. You feel like you're going to come, don't you?"

Understatement of the year. She could only manage a breathless "yes" in response.

"Good. The next time I touch you with the bullet, you will come...hard."

The insidious machine was pressed firmly against her clit, accelerating her into a storm of ecstasy, the waves short-circuiting her system and recharging it over and over again. She wasn't even aware the bullet was still pressed against her until she began to come down, when it became more than she could bear. Through the convulsions wracking her body, she screamed, "Turn it off! I can't!"

It disappeared immediately, and she was enveloped in Ellison's arms. His warmth soothed her as she sank into

oblivion.



Ellison

Surprised and delighted by the force of Teigen's orgasm, Ellison stroked her back as he rocked her back and forth, back and forth, in what he hoped was a soothing motion. It was a while before her breathing slowed and she sighed.

"Hey, are you back with me?"

She snuggled up against him. "I don't know."

Kissing her on the top of her head, he commanded, "Look at me, Teigen."

She leaned back and raised her head, her eyes seeking his.

"How do you feel?"

"Like I've just run a marathon."

He smiled down at her and stroked her arms. "You did. You let go like I haven't seen you do before. I'm so proud of you."

"I think I'm proud of me too." She started to get up.

"Where are you going?"

"I need water. I'm parched."

"I'll go get it. I want you to lie down and rest. I'll be right back."

Dragging himself away from the warm satisfied bundle of woman, he found a package of spring water in the kitchen. Grabbing a bottle, he went back to the bedroom only to find Teigen sprawled across the bed fast asleep.

He was tempted to let her rest, but if she were dehydrated, she'd wake up with a headache, not a reaction he hoped for the next morning. He wanted her to wake up feeling blissed out on the after effects of the blinding orgasm she'd experienced.

He sat next to her on the bed and pulled her into his arms. “Wake up, Teigen. You need to drink some water.”

“No. I don’t wanna.”

Accessing his most forceful Dom voice, he demanded, “Wake up and drink. Now.”

He pressed the opened bottle to her lips and tilted it slightly. Thankfully, she began to drink. She sipped on the water till the bottle was half empty then pushed it away.

“No more.”

“Okay. I guess you’ve had enough. You can go back to sleep.”

She rolled gracefully out of his arms and back onto the pillows, asleep in an instant.

Ellison covered her up and kissed her on the forehead. “Get a good night’s rest and I’ll call you in the morning.”

His words probably didn’t even invade her sleep, but he’d call her early so she wouldn’t feel abandoned when she woke up. Sleeping in bed with her wasn’t an option. Pressed up against her warm soft curves would be more challenging than he could take.

On the ride home he reflected on Teigen’s progress. She’d probably be able to respond now to him as a Dom without his having to put her under. He wasn’t sure how many times he’d be able to watch her explode in a mind-shattering orgasm without getting off as well. He derived immense satisfaction in her accomplishment, and it turned him the hell on. But his dick was getting impatient—it wanted in on the action—but once again, he’d have to take care of it once he got home.

CHAPTER EIGHT



TEIGEN

*T*eigen crawled out of bed the next morning aching and parched. She finished the half bottle of water on her nightstand but needed more. Grabbing a robe, she made her way to the kitchen just as her phone rang, forcing her to run back to the bedroom to answer it. Her head was spinning by the time she picked up the phone.

“What?” she barked in her discomfort.

“That’s not a very nice greeting.”

Ellison? Why wasn’t he here? Her brain finally connected that it was morning and she was alone.

“Leaving me without a word wasn’t a very nice goodbye,” she huffed.

“But I did say goodbye. You were too tired to hear it.”

She lay back down on her bed, her feet dangling. “I didn’t want you to leave.”

“I didn’t want to leave either, but I didn’t feel you were ready for anything more. And I had to be onsite early this morning, so I didn’t want to disturb you when I left.”

Disappointment at his absence overtook her, but she didn’t want to let him know. Forcing herself to be cheerful, she said, “I understand. I’m sorry I fell asleep on you and didn’t get to thank you for a pretty perfect evening.”

“It was my pleasure. I just wanted to call and make sure you’re okay. It was an intense scene last night. If you feel like

you want to talk later, you can call me, or even better you can stop by my office.”

“Thanks. I’m not sure what my schedule will be today, but if I can I will.”

“Okay, Teigen. Have a good day, and if I’m lucky, I’ll get to see you later.”

“Bye.”

As the phone went dead, she felt her heart sink. A powerful feeling of loneliness descended on her. She wasn’t sure if it was delayed subdrop, but she didn’t like it. She had a really good scene last night. Why couldn’t she feel high after it rather than like she lost her best friend.

She shook her head as though it would snap her out of it. “Time to get your act together, Teigen. Let’s get ready to go to work.”

Her emphatic pep talk propelled her to her feet. She made her way to the kitchen, downed another bottle of water, then made breakfast. After scrambled eggs and coffee, she began to feel more human. She needed to get out of the house and into the office, eager to hear her editor’s feedback on her preliminary draft of Ellison’s article. She wanted to get it right for both herself and him.

Her editor called her into his office as soon as she arrived.

“Please sit, Teigen.”

Once she was settled comfortably, he told her, “The article is good, but there are a few holes I need you to fill in. We don’t have much background on how he started his firm, and we need to know what’s on his horizons.”

“I’m sure I can get that. Ellison has been pretty forthcoming with information.” Of course, she wouldn’t be able to talk about the most interesting project he had in the future, but the firm would definitely have some other projects she could talk about.

“Good. I’ll expect the finished article by the end of the week to make deadline for this month’s issue. Given what

you've already written, I think it will be good enough for a second cover line."

"I'll be sure to make that happen, sir."

Teigen could barely contain herself when she left her editor's office. It was all she could do not to skip down the hallway to her office. She'd never had a cover line before. It was the biggest accomplishment of her career yet, and she couldn't wait to tell Ellison. She'd definitely make it her business to see him that afternoon.

Ellison greeted her with a quick kiss when she arrived at his office, making her a bit uncomfortable. She wasn't sure she wanted anyone outside of the BDSM community to know they were dating. It made it look like she got the interview because she was sleeping with him.

"Hey, you okay?" Ellison asked when she didn't kiss him back.

Not wanting to make a big deal out of it, Teigen avoided the issue. "I spoke with my editor today and he liked the article. He just needs a little more follow-up information. Do you think you'll have time to talk with me about it?"

Ellison steered her to his office and shut the door. "I'd be glad to answer any more questions you have. But you haven't answered my question. What's going on, Teigen?"

As he spoke, he backed her up against the door, his hands on either side of her, caging her in.

"It's nothing, really."

He shook his head slowly, his eyes boring into hers. "No, Teigen. That's not how this works. You tell me what's bothering you when I ask. You don't evade and most importantly you don't lie. Do you understand?"

Uuuuuggggghhhh! She hated confrontation, but clearly Ellison wasn't going to let her get away not talking to him.

"I'm not sure it's a good idea to kiss me in front of other people?" She couldn't help the doubt from affecting her answer.

His eyebrows rose almost to his hairline. “Really? I seem to recall you getting naked and us having a pretty intense scene in public, but you don’t want me to kiss you?”

She tried to keep the impatience out of her voice. “I’m not talking about in a club. I’m talking about in your office, where I’m supposed to be a professional writer not your girlfriend!” *Crap!* Did she just say girlfriend? She wanted to sink into the earth.

Ellison seemed to take it in stride. He stroked her cheek softly and moved back a bit to give her more breathing room. “I understand your point, and it won’t happen again. We’re a small firm and things are a bit informal around here, so I didn’t think twice about it. I apologize.”

“It’s fine.” She hoped the smile she gave him was reassuring. At least he didn’t say anything about the girlfriend comment.

“Let’s sit and talk about the article if you’d like.” He motioned to the sofa and she preceded him to the luxurious seating area. “Now what do you need to know that we haven’t discussed already. I feel like I’ve given you pretty much my life’s story.”

She took out her iPad and pulled up her notes. “My editor wants to know how you started your own business. He also wants to know what you’re planning for the future.” Before he could protest, she added, “I know you don’t want to talk about the women’s home we discussed, but I need something else you’re going to work on.”

Ellison nodded. “Before my senior year in college, I landed a coveted summer internship with McConnell Douglas. They were one of the biggest companies working in Washington. I got to assist on a project at the Capitol. At the time, my focus was still on historic public buildings. I worked for them for three summers and after I got my Master’s I got a job at the firm. It was a great accomplishment, but they were a big company and I was low man on the totem pole. I learned a lot from my five years there, but it became evident that it

would take me forever to get my hands on a juicy project I could direct on my own.”

Ellison got up from the sofa and started to pace. He seemed agitated. As his story continued Teigen understood why.

“I left and started my own firm on a shoestring. Having McConnell Douglas on my resume allowed me to knock on doors for smaller-scale private jobs. I was also familiar with a lot of craftsmen who specialized in historic craftsmanship and would take a smaller job when they had time. But I was only able to secure a business loan because my father cosigned for me. He’d been unhappy with my decision to go into architecture, but he was determined that whatever I did, I should become the best, so he took a risk to make that happen.”

Ellison finally stopped pacing and leaned against his desk. He ran his hand through his hair in a gesture of frustration. “After each successful job, I got a bigger one, and I paid off the loan in record time. But—off the record, please—my father never lets me forget he got me started and keeps pushing for me to take on more high-profile jobs. But my focus has changed, and I’d like to get more into the project we spoke about. I’ve kept it quiet for two reasons. One, it isn’t a fait accompli yet, and two, I don’t want to deal with my father when word gets out.” He came back to the sofa and plopped himself down. “Pretty pathetic, huh?”

Seeing this side of Ellison shocked her. He always seemed so self-possessed. She could definitely relate to the feeling of disappointing his father, yet not really wanting to do what he needed to do to change it. Forging her own path in life was crucial to Teigen, and she could understand the feeling of being between a rock and a hard place the way Ellison was.

“Boy, parents don’t know when to quit, do they?” Teigen mused. “I certainly don’t think you’re pathetic. I know so many people who are still trying to prove something to their parents rather than following their own path. But at least your father cares. My parents threw me away.”

“I’m not sure cares is the right word. He needs his son to be successful because it reflects on him.”

Teigen stopped taking notes. “Can I write about this if I leave your side comments about your father out of the article?”

“Sure.” Ellison came back to the sofa and sat down. “As far as future projects, we have a few more buildings we’re contracted to do over the next year. I’ll send you information about them and you can write whatever you want about them. The contracts have already been signed.”

He slid closer to Teigen. “Now, I hope I’ve given you enough for your article. What I’d like to do now is take you to dinner, and if you feel like it after, we can go back to my place. I’d like to see if any of my hypnosis stuck.” He winked at her, and a shiver went up her spine. She’d like to see that too.



Ellison

They left her car at his office, and Ellison took Teigen to one of his favorite restaurants. It wasn’t fancy but the food was terrific, and the ambience was warm and cozy. He wanted to set up an environment that would help her relax. It wasn’t that he was opposed to hypnotizing her again, but he would prefer if she were open to sex with him without it. They could save the hypnosis for more fun things.

Teigen beamed with delight as she relayed the information about her story on him. “I forgot to tell you in your office that my editor is going to make the article a cover story. Not the primary cover, but it will be on there. I’ve never had a story featured on the cover before. This is a big deal for me.”

He was thrilled he could make that happen for her. “Congratulations. That’s quite an accomplishment. The magazine is well regarded in the D.C. area. You’re making a name for yourself.”

“Well, I have you to thank. You’re a pretty good storyteller yourself. I didn’t have to do much to make it interesting.” She casually laid her hand over his on the table. He was sure she wasn’t even aware of what she was doing. But he’d take it. He curled his fingers around her hand gently, enough that she wouldn’t take too much notice but ready to hold on if she pulled away. He enjoyed having the connection.

“Don’t sell yourself short. You wrote a good article and your editor appreciated it. Take the win. No one will give it to you if you don’t. If you want to get ahead, you have to take charge of your career and play up your successes.” He squeezed the hand he was holding. Nothing was more important than making sure her confidence grew in all aspects of her life.

“I’ll try. It’s hard to talk about myself like that.”

“One step at a time, but always go forward. It doesn’t mean you won’t have slipups, but keep moving. Do you have another story coming up?”

She nodded and began to sit back, but she couldn’t because he wouldn’t let go of her hand. Blushing beautifully, she said, “It’s going to be hard for me to eat if you don’t let go.”

“When the food comes, I’ll give it back. Until then, I’ll keep possession unless you call *red*.”

A shy smile accompanied her, “I’m pretty green right now. I like when you take possession of me.”

“Good. Now I asked a question.” His eyebrow quirked to emphasize the fact that she’d been distracted. Not that he blamed her. He might have had something to do with that.

“Oh, right. Yes, I haven’t had approval on it yet, but I submitted a story idea on women’s roles in the preservation of historical sites, how they run historical societies all over the country and keep our history alive to the public.”

“Without them a lot of buildings would have been demolished. It’s a great idea. I’ll be interested in reading it.”

“I’ll definitely show it to you for feedback.”

By the time they'd finished dinner, she'd laid out a lot of the specifics of her article. She'd clearly done a lot of research on the topic and he knew she'd once again write a well-crafted story. He'd told her a little more about his secret project, and by the time they walked out the door to his car, he felt they'd grown closer to understanding the passions that drove one another. Passions he wanted to explore further in his bed.

Once inside the front door of his home, Ellison hung up Teigen's jacket. Then he asked her, "Are you ready to hand over control to me without hypnosis?"

Her eyes grew wide, and he detected a small shiver of what he hoped was anticipation pass through her. The blush he loved so much returned as she answered. "Yes, sir."

Yes! Despite his own excitement, he tried to maintain the proper gravitas as he gave her his instructions. "I want you to go to my bedroom and strip. Wait for me sitting on the edge of the bed hands in your lap. I won't be long."

While she did as she was told, he collected water from the fridge and a few items from his toy bag. When he entered the room, she was where she should be, her crimson hair cascading over her fair skin, her emerald-green eyes glistening with expectation, her delicate hands folded dutifully in her lap. Tempting as it was to simply walk over and ravish her, he collected himself and strolled to where she sat. He placed his goodies on the end table, then took her hands in his.

"Are you ready, Teigen?"

"I'm not sure. What are we doing?"

Good girl. She was looking out for herself and taking it seriously. He was proud of her and relieved as well. He could rely on her to communicate with him about anything that wasn't going right for her.

"I'm hoping that after I make you come, you'll want me to take you fully."

A sigh of relief escaped her lips. "God yes. I was hoping for that too."

Thank fuck. “Then let’s get started. Remember your safe words?”

“Yes. *Red* for stop, *yellow* slow down, *green* for I’m good.”

“That’s it. Now lie back on the bed arms up, legs spread as far as you can.”

She scrambled to get in place, reassuring him in her eagerness that she desired this as much as he did. Nothing could have pleased him more.

He secured her to the bedposts with leather cuffs. As each cuff was locked on, her breathing accelerated. It was almost as though he could hear her heart thumping in her chest. Slowly, he stroked her body, starting from her neck and moving down her smooth skin until he reached her feet, where he gave her double the attention. Touching her thrilled him, each caress eliciting a sigh or a squirm, causing his own body to heat in response.

“That feels soooo good.” She closed her eyes and took a deep breath.

He wanted her relaxed, but not so much that she’d fall asleep. Trailing his hands along the inside of her thighs, he applied more pressure. Her pelvis rose, and he pressed her back into the mattress, skimming over her mound and moving up toward her breasts. Her eyes flew open when he squeezed a nipple.

“Now I’ve got your attention.”

Eyes riveted to his, she answered, “My whole body is at attention. I love having your hands on me.”

“I’m glad. Now let’s see how you like having my mouth on you.”

Turning to the hardened peaks just calling for his attention, he drew one into his mouth and teased it with his tongue. She began to moan, which raised to a crescendo as he licked and lightly bit her. His dick strained against his zipper, eager to get its turn.

Forcing himself to concentrate on her rather than his own raging need, he trailed his tongue down her body, exploring her hills and valleys until he arrived at the fragrant plump pussy straining for his touch. Positioning himself between her legs, he licked up her slit, opening her pussy with his tongue. He circled her clit then sucked it in his mouth, holding it in place gently with his teeth. The more he licked, the higher the octave her moans rose. Her trembling body struggled against her bonds, every muscle tensed, until he finally bit down harder and pressed his tongue firmly against her clit.

She exploded, her whole body vibrating inside and out. He held her hips firmly in place as she rode out her orgasm, allowing her to feel his dominance as he continued to lick her, savoring the sweet nectar pouring from her. When her body finally calmed, he grinned at her. "That's one."



TEIGEN

He had to be kidding. There was no way she was going to be able to have another orgasm like that today. It was an accomplishment for her to have one, much less two. But Ellison seemed so confident, it was hard to doubt him.

Her eyes threatened to close as she relaxed, but she couldn't resist watching him as he divested himself of his clothes. Slim as he was, his muscles visibly flexed as he moved, and her craving for him intensified as more and more of his body was revealed. A rush of desire invaded, her clit throbbing despite the fact she'd just come.

How was that possible? Never before had she had such sustained lust sweep through her.

He removed his pants and underwear in one swift move, revealing a cock that was long and by no means slim. She licked her lips, hoping he'd let her taste him.

The look he gave her as he stalked toward the bed felt as though it could singe her skin. He grabbed a condom off the

table and she was riveted as she watched him slide it over his turgid length.

“Is this what you want?” he asked, stroking himself and capturing her gaze.

“Please, sir, yes.” So wrapped up in the moment, she forgot she was bound as she reached for him. Being stopped by the bonds emphasized his control over her, ramping up her own desire.

He positioned himself over her, notching his cock against her entrance. To her dismay, he didn't thrust forward immediately, tracing his cock around her clit a few times, driving her crazy.

“Please, sir, please!”

Ellison grinned as he pressed forward, piercing her open as he drove into her. The walls of her pussy clenched around him as he grazed a spot inside her that shockingly propelled her into another orgasm. As she rode out the intense contractions that wracked her core, he rocked back and forth slowly, sustaining her ecstasy.

The minute she relaxed, he pumped forcefully inside her, causing another ripple of trembling.

“I can't take anymore,” she whimpered.

“That's not a safe word, Teigen. Do you want me to stop?”

The thought of losing contact with him made her realize what she was saying. The last thing she wanted was for him to stop. “No!”

“Thank god.” At that, he accelerated his pace, pounding into her relentlessly, driving her over the edge into a place she'd never been before. Her whole world exploded, her mind splintered into a thousand shards, her body caught up in a whirlwind of exhilaration. She lost track of everything but the sensations enveloping her.

“Teigen, are you still with me?”

Ellison's voice punctured the haze, bringing her back into awareness. Despite the fact that he'd released the cuffs around

her wrists, she couldn't move her arms. Her body was a blob on the bed, melted into the sheets. Ellison stared down at her in triumph.

Ellison. The man responsible for all this. She smiled up at him, hoping she didn't look too goofy in her current state.

"I'm not sure. I think I left parts of my brain on the ceiling."

His chuckle was full of happiness. "Then I did my job well."

He slid to the side of her and reached down to undo her legs. Then he curled up next to her, pulling her into him. She basked in the afterglow as he stroked her softly.

"That was the most incredible thing I've ever experienced," she said. And she meant it.

"Good. It's just the beginning. Once you can let go like this, there's no end to the things we can do to make it happen over and over again."

"I'm not sure I'll survive anything more than this."

He pinched her nipple, causing a forceful aftershock to rip through her. She almost doubled over in response. "Yes, you will. And you'll thrive on it."

"Well, if you don't mind, I'd like to rest before we do anything like that again."

He kissed her shoulder as he hugged her closer to him. "I don't mind at all. Go to sleep, Teigen. We can try again tomorrow."

CHAPTER NINE



The next morning they did try again, and though her orgasm wasn't quite what it had been the night before, Teigen got into her car after Ellison dropped her off feeling relaxed and quite satisfied. She drove home and after a brief shower, sat down at her desk and wrote the final revision of the article, incorporating the information her editor wanted. It gave her a great sense of accomplishment when she sent it off to his email.

She met Maria for lunch. Things had been progressing so quickly with Ellison, she needed to talk to a trusted friend.

As soon as they sat down at the table, Maria said, "So give me the deets, girl."

"God, so much has happened since then I can barely remember. I'd describe it as a tsunami. Ellison used a shower spray to stimulate me all over, driving me insane till I had a mind-blowing orgasm."

Maria sat back in her seat and clapped softly. "I'm so happy for you. I know it's been something you've had issues with."

Teigen waited till they placed their order with the waitress. "It was good and bad. I got so embarrassed afterward, I tried to leave without saying goodbye to Ellison...or you for that matter. He wasn't happy with me."

"I can see why. You do understand that when you have a scene, aftercare is part of it, right? It provides comfort for you but also for your Top or Dom. Subdrop is a real thing, but so is

Topdrop. They need to know that what they did didn't affect you negatively, and that you're okay."

"Yeah. Ellison said he was angry I didn't allow him to give me aftercare."

"We follow certain protocols in BDSM for a reason. We're doing risky things and we need to put in safeguards to mitigate that risk."

The waitress placed their sandwiches and drinks on the table. Teigen took a bite before she spoke.

"I get what you're saying. But the thing that's troubling me more is that I think I'm falling for one of the biggest players at Black Light. I know he doesn't scene with a sub more than a few times, and I'm afraid that no matter how good this all feels, it could vanish in a moment."

Maria nodded. "I know. I've never seen Ellison with anyone long-term, so I'd try to take it easy."

"How do you tell your heart not to get involved? I'm not very experienced with relationships myself. The last one I had was a disaster."

Maria smiled in sympathy. "I can't say I'm an expert myself. I've been playing with Miles for weeks, but he's never asked me to do anything outside the club. Our scenes are hot as hell, and he's attentive with aftercare, but he lets me go home alone at the end of the night. I'm getting a bit frustrated."

"I'm so sorry. Have you talked to him about it?"

Maria shook her head. "I don't want to scare him off. What we have is better than nothing."

"Miles is very lucky to have you to play with. I think you have to discuss where you're going or start playing with other people as well. He'll have to make a decision, and if he doesn't want to make more of a commitment, you'll move on."

"Well listen to you, my wise friend. I thought you wanted to have lunch to talk about Ellison."

Teigen reached across the table and squeezed Maria's hand. "I wanted to have lunch with one of my best friends. If it's only about me, it's not much of a friendship."

Maria squeezed her hand back. "We've come a long way from college, haven't we?"

"Yes. But you're avoiding my suggestion. Are you going to talk with Miles? You know, negotiation, that important protocol in BDSM?"

"Wow, throwing my words back at me. I guess you're right. He may just want a play partner, which is fine, but I think I want more. I have to find out."

"I'm glad to hear it." Teigen took another bite of her sandwich. "Now that we've got you sorted out, how should I deal with Ellison?"

"Did he ever call you about the date you were going to go on?"

"We went Sunday. He gave me a tour of some of D.C.'s impressive architecture, with dinner and you know. And I may have spent last night with him as well."

Maria gave her an accusing stare. "Holding out on me!"

"Not really. I'm telling you now. It's all been such a rush. That's why I'm getting worried. I'm afraid he'll get tired of me and move on like he always does."

"Just like you told me, Teigen. He's lucky to have you in his life. You're smart, loyal, and beautiful. If he moves on, so will you."

"I don't know if I can. Ellison has opened me up in a way I never dreamed. He's the only man I've ever been comfortable enough to have an orgasm with."

Maria leaned forward, a determined look on her face. "If you could do it for him, you can do it for someone else."

"I'm not sure."

"I am." Maria punctuated her statement with a smack on the table. Then her gaze softened. "Look, I'm not saying it

won't work out with Ellison. Just be careful and know you'll be okay no matter what. If it falls apart, you'll come back to Black Light with me and we'll find someone new for you. Maybe you'll be able to get a membership."

"Thanks, but I couldn't afford one with my salary. I think I'm going to hope for the best with Ellison and not think about the worst."

"Aw, honey, it definitely could work out. You never know. You could end up being the woman who gets him to stick."

She sure hoped so. No matter how confident each of them were to the other, she was pretty sure Maria was as worried about how long her relationship would last as she was. It was never easy.



TO HER SURPRISE, Ellison called her a few afternoons later while she was at work. "I'll be honest with you. This is a booty call. I haven't been able to get you off my mind for the past two days. I need a Teigen fix. Are you interested?"

"Does that mean you only want me for my body and not my mind?"

"Actually, I don't think you can separate the two, but for this situation, I'll say yes. I'm craving your luscious body. I'll even feed you before."

"Really? What are you going to make me this time?"

"I was thinking of ordering in Chinese food. I won't have time to cook before you get to my house, but the place I order from is terrific, so you'll get a good meal."

"In that case, I accept."

"So here's what I propose. Go home after work and pack clothes for the next day. I'll pick you up by six, and I'll take you to work in the morning. "Sounds good. See you then."

Hanging up the phone, Teigen was giddy with excitement. She could barely keep her attention on her research for her

next article. When it was time to leave the office, she had to keep her eye on the speedometer to not go too far over the speed limit.

She took a quick shower and freshened up her makeup, then packed up some toiletries and an outfit for tomorrow. She danced to the door when Ellison arrived right on time.

He pulled her into a firm embrace the minute she opened the door. "It's so nice to have you in my arms again. You smell soooo good." He took a nip out of her neck, eliciting a little squeal.

"I'm glad you called. I missed you."

There. She put it out there. She held her breath waiting for him to reciprocate.

"I missed you too."

She almost went limp from relief.

"Hey," he said. "What's wrong. I can feel it from your body."

"Nothing. I'm just happy you came."

"Teigen, we talked about this. No. Lying. And if you think I can't tell, you're deluding yourself." This time he nipped her ear.

"Can we not entertain the neighbors on the front porch? Please come in."

He followed her into the foyer, where her overnight bag sat on the floor. He ignored it, pinning her in place with an unyielding stare. "Teigen, I asked you a question."

"Okay. I'm relieved you missed me. I needed to hear you say it."

He pulled her back into his embrace so tight she almost couldn't breathe. "You pop up into my thoughts in the morning when I get up, during the day while I'm working, and at night before I go to sleep. You've even invaded my dreams."

Wow...just wow. Not quite what she was expecting, but she'd gladly take it.



Ellison

Ellison really didn't want to let Teigen go, but if they stood there like this for much longer, he wouldn't get her home. He kissed her on the forehead and reluctantly released her from his embrace.

“Okay, let's get going. I'm hungry in more ways than one and I can't wait much longer.”

He pointed to the bag on the floor. “Is this going with us?”

“Yeah. Let me get my coat.”

He helped her into her coat, compelled to give her a squeeze as her sweet fragrance enveloped him. He grabbed her bag, waited while she locked the door, and helped her into the car.

The drive was longer than he remembered, or maybe he was just eager to get home. He'd ordered the food to arrive shortly after they did, so they wouldn't have to wait too long for dinner.

The food showed up just as they did. Ellison put her bag in his room as Teigen got the table set. They put the containers on the bar and served themselves. It felt so domestic, and for the first time in his life, it didn't scare him. Was he ready for something long-term? Could he carve out a life for himself that didn't look anything like his parents' relationship —cold, unemotional, distant? He couldn't imagine that his desire for Teigen would ever wane, though he knew it did for many couples. But would he still want to spend so much time with her, to share his life with her as partners, to keep the lines of communication open at all times? With the way he felt about her, it could definitely happen.

“Have you made much progress on the article you told me about?” he asked once they sat at the table.

She became extremely animated as she told him about what she'd been doing. “I've had an opportunity to have a

zoom call with Elizabeth Schecter, who is the head of the historical society in Fredericksburg. It has a vibrant downtown featuring homes and shops from the Revolutionary War and a Civil War battlefield. Her team has been extremely successful in keeping the history alive in the city. She was so gracious, answering all my questions patiently, giving me all the time I needed. I guess she figured I was giving her publicity as well, so any opportunity to get the word out, she'll take."

"And you're a good interviewer, asking insightful questions that keep the interview interesting for the subject as well. I should know."

He'd never get tired of the pretty blush that bloomed on her cheeks at his praise. He'd have to do his best to keep it there as much as possible.

"Enough about me. Have you made any more progress on your secret project?"

"Are you asking as a reporter or as my girlfriend?"

Teigen's pretty pink blush turned apple red. "What do you mean?" she sputtered.

"Weeelll. I do remember you saying something about being my girlfriend when we were in my office.."

"But you didn't say anything about it then! I thought you were ignoring it because you didn't want it to be true."

"We've been seeing each other long enough that I think we can now say it's true, don't you think?"

Teigen slowly nodded her head. "I guess so. I'd like that."

"Then it's settled. Let's finish up dinner so we can celebrate." He raised his eyebrows up and down with a lascivious grin. Her spontaneous laugh was music to his ears.

"Not that I'm unhappy about the way we got sidetracked, but you never answered my question about your secret project. And to make it clear, I'm asking as your girlfriend. The reporter can wait till you're ready to share with the world...or at least D.C....or your father."

“Hmmm. You’ve got a little brat in you I haven’t seen before. I think you’ll have to pay for that later.”

She looked at him coyly through her lashes. “Maybe just a little.”

“So you’ll be ready to pay for it later?”

“Maybe just a little. A little bratting only deserves a little punishment, right?”

“Certainly for your first time. You don’t have to worry. However, just remember the more you push, the worse it will get.”

She saluted him. “Message received, sir.”

What a fun turn of events. Now that Teigen felt more comfortable with her sexuality, she might be interested in going past sensation play. It also opened more doors with erotic hypnosis in its more playful aspects. A fascinating future to look forward to. Starting tonight.

“I can’t believe you avoided my question for the second time. If you don’t want to tell me about it, just say so.”

“Sorry. I’m not avoiding you. We’ve gone off on a few delightful tangents, that’s all. I’m waiting for approval from the zoning board, which could be dicey because we’re going into a partly residential neighborhood. But I think once they see our plans, it could be one of the nicest buildings on the block, and the women wouldn’t pose a threat to the community.”

“I hope you’re right. Some of these boards get off on power trips. I’ve seen it happen.”

“I know. We’ve got all our ammunition prepared for anything they want to throw at us. Then once we’ve got the okay, the contracts will be finalized and we’ll be a go.”

Teigen’s apparent happiness for his success was welcome. After dealing with his father’s disapproval and his mother’s apathy, it was nice to have someone close to him in his corner.

CHAPTER TEN



They finished up dinner, and once the dishes were in the dishwasher and the leftovers in the fridge, Ellison brought Teigen into the living room. She went to sit next to him on the couch, but to her dismay, he had her sit by herself on the club chair beside him.

Ellison took her hand in his. His next statement threw her a little off. “I think it’s time for a little adventure in sex. We’ve broken through your inhibitions about orgasms. Now we should take it to the next level.”

“What does that mean? I’m not sure I’m ready.”

Ellison kissed her on the cheek with a smack. “I’m sure you are. We are going to work on orgasm control. This is where erotic hypnosis can really be fun.”

“Are you kidding me? I just got the ability to do it. How can you make me do it on command?”

“It? Don’t you mean orgasm. Let me hear you say it.”

Uuuuuuggggghhhhh! “Orgasm, all right? I said it. See?”

“Yes, I do. And the more you get at ease with it, the better you’ll be. Now, I want you to get comfortable.”

She settled into the overstuffed chair. “I don’t even have to get naked?”

He bent over her, resting his hands on the arms of the chair. “I’m going to make you come without touching you.”

He sat down on the coffee table in front of her. “I want you to relax into the chair, your eyes are getting heavy, you’re going deeper and deeper into trance...deeper and deeper... relax...”

She squirmed, unable to center herself. “I can’t.”

“Just listen to my voice, Teigen. That’s all you have to do.”

Listen to him. Trust him. “Okay. Could you try again?”

She closed her eyes and focused on his voice. The singsong, soothing tone finally permeated her brain. She felt boneless, her arms leaden, his voice almost a whisper. She leaned her head back, using the chair for support.

“You’re feeling warm, Teigen. Your nipples are beginning to ache with arousal.”

He was right. Her nipples peaked and pushed against her bra, itching to be touched. She arched forward, pressing her breasts harder against the fabric covering it.

“Enjoy the ache, which will only turn you on more.”

Was it possible for nipples to throb...or was it just her imagination?

“Savor the heat traveling through you...awakening the nerves in your clit. Feel it become firm, reaching out from its hiding place...pulsing with need.”

“Please, touch me,” she whimpered.

“I don’t need to. Feel the flick of my tongue on your nipples over and over, then my mouth sucking on your clit... back and forth...over and over. The stimulation is getting almost too much. Do you feel it?”

“Yes! I can’t stand it!” She began to writhe, unable to contain the fury of her arousal.

“The pressure is intensifying...harder...more...harder... more...When I snap my fingers, you’re going to come.”
SNAP!

She exploded, her core contracting violently to the point of breathlessness. Ellison pulled her onto his lap and held her as

her body shook and her mind went blank.

Ellison was holding her tight as faint shudders still wracked her body. “Hey, you coming back to me?”

“I don’t know if I’ll ever come back.” She gave him a faint smile. “How did you do that?”

“I didn’t do anything. All I did was guide you. You are always the driver in an erotic hypnosis scene. I’m just the navigator.”

“May I have my water? I’m parched.”

Ellison reached over and brought the water glass to her lips. She drank hungrily like a child, trying to replenish her resources.

“I didn’t think you could pull it off. I didn’t believe I was capable.” Even without touching her, Ellison had brought her into a full state of orgasm. He made her feel totally connected to him, his voice acting like hands over her body.

“One thing you have to know. A hypnotist can’t make you do something you’re unwilling to do. He can only reach into your brain and help you destroy the obstacles to doing what you really want to do.”

Incredible. She’d wanted to be in touch with her sexuality the minute she’d married Bobby, to please him so they could have a child. So torn between the Farm teachings and the desire to satisfy her husband, she didn’t know how to accomplish it. Fortunately, she wasn’t able to make it happen or she’d be stuck on the Farm, never having known freedom. But it had taken far longer to figure things out than she’d have liked. She was so lucky to have met Ellison.

“How are you doing? Are you ready for another go at it?”

“Are you serious? I barely survived the last one.”

Ellison regarded her with arched brow. “I don’t believe you. You had a good one, but it was just an orgasm. You’ve had more than one in an evening as I recall.”

Her blush crept up her neck to her cheeks. Why did she still get embarrassed with Ellison? They’d shared so much in

such a short amount of time.

“So we’re going to go for number two. I think you’re well-hydrated again. Sit back in the chair and we’ll begin.”

Once again, she made herself comfortable in the chair. Ellison sat next to her on the couch.

“Okay, Teigen. I want you to relax...remember the feeling you had a moment ago...let go of all tension...relax...”

He began to massage her head, and she went deep into a sleep state. He brushed his forefinger along her cheek.

“That’s good, Teigen. Now every time I brush your cheek, you will go into a trance.”

Her head dropped to her chest, all her thoughts concentrated on Ellison’s voice.

“You’re going to have another orgasm, Teigen. You won’t even need a full re-creation of last time. Think about how it felt, your nipples tingling, your clit throbbing, your body coiled like a spring ready to explode.”

Her body came alive instantly, all her nerve centers on high alert.

“Now, whenever I snap my fingers, you’re going to come, even when you’re fully awake. Without thinking, your nipples will peak, and your clit will firm. The orgasm will travel through your body and your core will contract in pleasure.”
SNAP!

Just as he predicted, a wave of arousal traversed her body. Her toes curled, the tension ramped up in her body, then detonated, contracting more fiercely than before. She collapsed into the chair in a sweat. “Enough! Please!”

Ellison chuckled. “I’ll let you rest for a little while, and then we’ll go again.”

“Are you trying to torture me?”

An evil grin crossed his face. “Is it possible to torture with pleasure?”

“I’d say so. I’m exhausted.”

“Aah, exhausted but satisfied? I wouldn’t classify that as torture.”

He did have a point. She settled back into the chair, savoring the wrung-out feeling of two orgasms back-to-back when a frightening thought occurred to her. If he could make her orgasm with the snap of a finger, would he use it like a weapon against her any time he liked?

“I need to ask you something,” she said, as the idea took hold. “What’s to prevent you from making me orgasm any time you like, whether I want to or not?”

Ellison leaned forward, his arms on his thighs, and smiled at her in a way that made her uneasy. “We’re in a Dom/sub relationship, right?”

She wasn’t sure she liked the way this was going. His arched brow made her answer, “Yeeeesss.”

“And you are aware that in a D/s relationship, I, as the Dom, am in control and your orgasms belong to me?”

Dammit! He had her there. “Did I agree to that?”

“I’m pretty sure you did, although if it wasn’t clear before, I’m making it clear now.”

“So let me get this straight. If you want to make me orgasm whenever you want just by snapping your fingers, it’s your prerogative.”

“Unless it’s a hard limit. In which case you can call “*red*” right now, and I won’t do it ever again.”

Was that what she wanted? She had to admit she liked when Ellison took control of their sexual relationship. With all the crap going on her head, it was such a relief to let him lead her to sexual fulfillment without having to worry about whether she was good or bad, if she was doing it right, or if she was pleasing him.

“Can we negotiate this a bit?”

“Teigen, we can always negotiate our relationship. You are not a slave. You are my submissive and we are in a partnership. I would never want you to feel like you have no

control over your life in any way. My control is always within the parameters of our negotiated relationship. Now, what do you want to negotiate about hypnotic orgasms.”

Surprisingly, for the first time in her life she wanted to talk about her feelings, to discuss what she wanted instead of just hoping things would work out the way she wanted them to. That was another new development she could thank Ellison for.

“Okay. I don’t want you to do this in a situation where other people are present. The embarrassment would kill me.”

“I don’t believe in involving non-kinky people who haven’t consented to view our play. I’m not going to snap my fingers in a restaurant and have you come for all to see. But do you also mean with kinky people, like when we’re at Black Light? You’ve done scenes there when you were naked and orgasmed in front of others. Isn’t this almost the same thing? People orgasm there in public all the time. It certainly wouldn’t be something they haven’t seen before.”

She didn’t like the idea. She hoped he’d respect her feelings on this. With trepidation she laid her feelings bare. “So here’s the thing. It’s one thing when we’re in a scene and all I’m focusing on is you. I can block everyone else out and just be in the moment. But if we’re sitting at a table at the bar, and you snap your fingers and I come, I’m pretty sure it will be so embarrassing, I’ll want to sink into the ground.”

“You’re not into humiliation play. I guess you’ve had all the humiliation you could stand already in your life. I mean to be respectful of that at all times. I will admit orgasm on demand has been something I’ve played with with other subs in front of other people. With them it was all in good fun. However, I won’t do that with you. I have no desire to push you in a direction that makes you ill-at-ease. We’ve worked so hard to get you to be able to get the negative voices out of your head. I’m not going to do anything that would destroy your confidence.”

She breathed a sigh of relief. She loved being with Ellison at home, out on the town, and at the club. Knowing he

wouldn't embarrass her allowed her to be comfortable with him wherever they went.

“You have no idea how happy that makes me.”

“I'm glad. Now do you have any other concerns you'd like to discuss?”

She shook her head.

“Then get over here and sit on my lap so I can hold you. I need to feel your soft curves against me.”

She jumped up to obey him. She needed to feel his strong arms around her as she pressed up against his hard body. The thought crossed her mind that she might not need him to snap his fingers for her to orgasm. Just being wrapped in his embrace turned her on. One day it might even make her orgasm. You never know.



Ellison

Having Teigen curled up in his lap after their last scene was a bit challenging. It only exacerbated the hard-on he'd developed watching her come apart for him. He was curious to see how long it would take her to acknowledge his condition.

Fortunately, not very.

Her voice barely a whisper, she said, “Excuse me, sir.”

“Yes, Teigen?”

“Um...is there anything I can do to help you out?”

Not bad, but it needed work. “Help me out how?”

“Weeelll, I seem to be sitting on a very large log. I think you might have something to do with that.”

Humor. He was impressed. “Yes, Teigen. If you'd like to slide down to your knees, you could both make up for your earlier brattiness and help me out.”

“That’s not much of a punishment, sir. I’d definitely enjoy doing that.”

“I’m not a big fan of real punishment for small transgressions. And I suspect you’ve never done this before, so it could be more of a challenge than you’re anticipating.”

Her eyes opened wide, her lips pressed firmly together. A little fear. He didn’t mind that. He’d guide her through it, and if it became too much, they’d find another way to deal with his problem. He suppressed a chuckle. He didn’t want her to think he was laughing at her.

“On your knees, Teigen. I’m going to teach you to worship your Dom’s cock.”

“Are you sure I shouldn’t be hypnotized for this?”

His laugh erupted when he saw her cockeyed grin. “You little vixen. Down on your knees. Now.”

She slid down in one smooth movement, looking up at him expectantly.

“Undo my button, slide down the zipper and take out my cock.”

She followed his instructions then leaned forward to take him in her mouth.

“Uh-uh-uh. Did I say to do that?”

She put her hands down at her sides. “Sorry, sir.”

“Do only what I tell you to do. Now, hold my cock around the base and lick all around the head and down the underside of the shaft.”

Her tongue was tentative as it made its way around his cockhead, but it was enough to elicit a moan from deep in his throat. “Yes, Teigen, that’s it, but you could use a little more pressure.”

Be careful what you wish for. She took a firm swipe at the underside of his cock, past his most sensitive spot, and he had to dig down deep to keep from coming. A drop of precum collected on his tip.

“May I taste you, sir?”

“Absolutely, then you can take my cock in your mouth as far as you can go.”

She licked the precum off like she was licking a lollipop then smacked her lips. He couldn't believe it when she winked at him.

He growled. Actually growled. This was not the time for teasing. “You don't seem to be taking this very seriously,” he admonished.

“Sorry, sir. It just tasted sooo good.”

Minx. She'd come a long way since they began, and he'd come like a teenager if she continued to tease. But he couldn't help smiling at her.

“Okay, brat, pay attention to what you're doing or there'll be a real punishment you may not like.”

Without hesitation, she sucked him into her mouth down to the base. *Holy Crap!* He'd had experienced submissives who didn't give head like that.

“That's it. Now keep sucking as you move up and down my shaft. Yes, Teigen. Yes!”

His hips thrust forward, forcing his cock down her throat, yet she didn't flinch. Remarkable! His balls began to contract, and he knew he had a few more thrusts before he came.

“I'm going to come. If you don't think you can swallow, you can use your hands to finish me off.”

She kept going, her tongue lashing his cock as she moved. In no time, he was spilling jets of cum down her throat. She took it all. *Fuck!*

“Was that okay?”

He pulled her up to straddle his lap, mindless of his deflating cock. “You couldn't have done better. That was incredible. Thank you.”

She beamed at him with a look of pride. “I had a good teacher.”

She embraced him and planted a smacking kiss on his lips.

“You’re incredible, Teigen. I’ve never met anyone like you.”

She looked askance. “I’ve been a lot of trouble. I know that. You could find a lot of women who would be easier to be with.”

“Easy isn’t all it’s cracked up to be. I’ve been with easy for years. Good women too. But none of them has been worth the effort like you’ve been.”

He returned the smacking kiss and grinned at her. “Let’s go to bed. I think we’re both worn out. We can pick up where we left off in the morning.”

CHAPTER ELEVEN



Sex was short, but by no means sweet before Ellison left her off at work the next morning. She only needed to stay half a day in the office, giving her editor the time to read her final version of Ellison's interview. Off to a research library, she Ubered home to pick up her car and change into jeans and a long-sleeved T.

Just as she was about to leave, her doorbell rang. Her shock was palpable when she opened the door to Bobby.

"What in the world are you doing here? You know we're divorced, right?"

Bobby pushed his way past her. Shaken by his presence once he'd invaded her home, she forced herself to regain her composure and follow him into the living room.

"I asked you what you're doing here."

"That's not a very nice greeting for a man you were married to for three years." He sat down on the couch and placed one foot over the other in a relaxed pose. Teigen wasn't buying it.

Hands on her hips, she rounded on him. "I wouldn't remind me of that. It was a terrible time in my life, one I'm trying to forget. I'm having a hard time getting your voice out of my head."

A smile like the Cheshire Cat crossed his lips, but his eyes remained dead-looking. Teigen shivered at the malice she felt coming from him.

“I knew you couldn’t forget me, Teigen. That’s why I’ve come to take you back.”

Dumbstruck, you could have knocked her over with a feather, but it didn’t take long for anger to seep into her pores. “You’ve got some hell of a nerve coming here after all this time. You dumped me in that hospital and never came back to see if I was all right!”

“I knew you needed more help than I could give you. That doesn’t mean I didn’t miss you.” He abandoned his relaxed position for one of supplication, his hands out in entreaty. “I need you to come back with me.”

“Not going to happen.” She pointed to the door. “You take yourself out of my house now or I’ll call the police.”

Bobby jumped up and marched toward her, forcing her to walk backward to keep her distance. He finally backed her up against the wall, where he caged her in with his arms. “If you won’t do it for me, do it for your mom. She’s dying and she wants to say goodbye to you.”

A torrent of mixed emotions descended on her. She’d never wanted to go back to Vermont, but the prospect of her mother dying and never seeing her again caused a well of grief to rise up, threatening to choke her. A familiar feeling of panic gripped her heart, and she had trouble catching her breath.

“I need water, Bobby. Please.”

He didn’t move. “I’ll get it for you when you promise me you’ll come to see your mom.”

A tinge of anger managed to claw its way to her brain. “Dammit, Bobby. Don’t be such an asshole.”

“Promise me,” he insisted.

When she forced out a breathless “I promise,” he went to the kitchen and found the water. By the time he returned, she was sitting on the couch with her head between her knees.

“Here, drink.”

She attempted to take the water but he held it out of reach. “I’ll help you.”

Deciding it wasn't worth wrestling the bottle from him, she nodded. He brought the bottle to her lips and helped her drink, bringing to mind the vision of Ellison helping her the night before. How she wished he were here now instead of the monster who stood before her.

After she'd drunk her fill, she pushed the bottle away. "Why is she dying?"

Bobby knelt in front of her. "She's got ovarian cancer. She doesn't have much longer to live. She's been asking for you. You gotta go, Teigen. She's your mom."

Her mom. The woman who made her feel so terrible about herself, the woman who berated her on a daily basis, the woman who forced her to marry Bobby when she wasn't ready. But even with all that, could she turn her back on her when she was dying? If she didn't go see her, would she regret it later when she wouldn't be able to change it?

"Okay. I'll go up next week when I have some time. I need to finish a few things first." And see Ellison, but she didn't tell Bobby that.

"No. You have to come with me now. She could die any day now."

Her fury returned, pushing out her other emotions. "Why did you wait so long to tell me?"

Bobby returned her anger, his face contorted in rage. "You left us! We never heard from you! Your mom begged me to come see you when she knew it was soon. But we didn't know where you were. It took us forever to track you down. It wasn't my fault!"

He got up and started to pace the room. "We have to leave now. I'll wait while you throw a few things in a bag, but I'm leaving in 15 minutes. If you want to see her before she dies, you'll be ready!"

It took a moment for Teigen's brain to engage, but she ran into her bedroom and grabbed whatever she could think of for a short stay. When Bobby shouted, "Five more minutes," she

gathered her last few things, combed her hair, and brought her suitcase out to the living room.

“I’m ready.”

Without another word, Bobby took her bag and walked out to the car. She snatched up her keys threw her cell phone charger into her purse, locked the door and followed him outside. Her bag was in the back seat and the car was running. As soon as she closed the door, he took off.

Neither of them spoke until they hit the Baltimore-Washington Expressway. Thoughts of her mother dying had tortured her, and she couldn’t keep quiet any longer even though having a conversation with Bobby was not something she wanted to do.

“When did they find out she was sick?”

“It was a while ago. She all of a sudden lost a lot of weight and she was walking around with a lot of back pain. When she got so weak she didn’t want to do anything, your father finally panicked and took her to the hospital. It was too late for them to do anything.”

An emptiness pervaded Teigen’s body. She couldn’t cry, or rage, or even form a cogent thought. She was just numb. Staring out the window for hours, she watched the car eat up the road to her former home with no emotion.

Bobby didn’t try to invade her thoughts till he stopped for gas. “Do you need to go? I’m not stopping again. We have about three more hours to get home.”

Home. She wasn’t going home. She was leaving home, going to a place in her past filled with unhappiness and pain. What was she doing?

“I’ll be right back.” She got out of the car, not even conscious of where they were. She made her way to the bathroom in the nondescript rest stop, took care of business, and traipsed back to the car.

Bobby was waiting impatiently. “Took you long enough.” He motioned to a bag between the seats. “I bought some water and snacks if you want some.”

She wanted nothing. She felt nothing, not even hunger. She wasn't sure how long since she had her last meal, but she knew they'd been on the road for a while.

As Bobby pulled out of the rest stop, he turned to her. "At least drink some water. You can't not have anything the whole trip."

A niggle of irritation passed through her, quickly enough that she didn't even bother to respond to him before she settled back into her lethargy.

"Fine. You wanna ignore me, I don't give a fuck. You'll change your tune when we get home."

Whatever. She leaned back and closed her eyes as a pervasive weariness engulfed her. She'd deal with it all once she got there.



Ellison

Ellison was in such a good mood the whole morning, he didn't even realize how fast time had flown till his assistant Lena came into his office. "Would you like me to order lunch or are you going out?"

"I'll have a meatball sub from Gino's. For some reason I'm ravenous."

"Sure, boss."

As Lena left to make the call, he realized he could pinpoint exactly the reason. His appetite for Teigen was raging, his desire to be with her powerful. He had to at least hear her voice.

He could barely contain his disappointment when the call went to voicemail. He felt like a teenage boy calling a girl for the first time, agitated that she didn't answer, wondering if she didn't answer on purpose when she saw who it was. It was all he could do to keep himself from redialing her number over and over again till she answered.

He forced himself to turn his attention back to the plans he was constructing for his new project. He plowed into the sandwich when it arrived, barely aware of eating it when it was finished.

By the time the day was over, a feeling of unease descended upon him. Why hadn't she called back? He knew she had to finish her article to make her deadline. Maybe she didn't want to interrupt her train of thought as she wrote...or maybe she was having regrets over their evening together. They'd gone so far beyond anything she'd done before, were her doubts coming back to prevent her from wanting to see him again?

Yesterday had been intense. They'd played in so many new ways, but he would have sworn she'd been pleased with the way she'd responded. She seemed to thoroughly enjoy everything. Her silence was mystifying.

The only thing to do was to find her and make sure she was all right. He called her office and was told she'd left early. She hadn't said anything to him about going home early.

Then he tried her cell phone. No answer. *Fuck!*

Leaving the office a little earlier than he normally did, he made his way to her house. Her car was still in the driveway so she had to be home. She *was* avoiding him! He marched over and banged on the door. "Teigen, please, I need to speak with you!"

Nothing. He didn't even hear her walking around inside. What the hell was she doing, hiding from him?

Dismissing the fact that he was being stalkerish—she could be in trouble emotionally if not physically—he made his way around the perimeter of the building till he could look into her bedroom window.

What he saw was confounding. Clothes strewn across her bed, drawers half-open with garments falling over the edge, and a backpack on the floor. Clearly, she was gone, and she'd been in a hurry when she left. Where the hell was she, and who did she leave with?

Thoughts swirled in Ellison's mind. It didn't make sense. Yes, she was having difficulty dealing with her sexuality, but she'd seemed to be coping with it. He'd thought she was thriving. And she had a good job that she loved. Even if last night had been difficult for her to reconcile, why would she abandon her work just when she was ready to make a big splash with her article?

Now he was really starting to worry. He got back in his car and made his way to Black Light. It was the Tuesday night that had the educational classes, so he would probably be able to talk to Spencer there. He knew it was against policy, but if he could convince Spencer to give him Maria's number, she might know where Teigen was.

It was pretty quiet when he went through the psychic shop to the entrance. On Tuesdays when there was no play, they only got the people interested in the class of the evening. Luis assured him Spencer was there, so he went down. Danny greeted him with a broad smile when he arrived at Security.

"Hey, Master Ellison, I didn't know you were into needle play."

So that was the class tonight. Not his kink. "I'm looking for Spencer. Do you know where he is?"

Danny's smile diminished as he took a good look at Ellison. "You okay? You don't look good."

Keeping his annoyance at the delay at bay, he shook his head. "I just need to speak to Spencer."

"Sure," Danny replied. "Put your stuff in locker 27. He's probably in his office."

Quickly divesting himself of his phone, he made his way inside, where to his relief, Spencer was sitting at the empty bar. Ellison sat down next to him.

Without even a hello, he implored Spencer, "I need your help. I think Teigen is in trouble."

Spencer gave him his full attention. "What happened?"

Without betraying too much of Teigen's confidence, Ellison told Spencer about what he'd found at her house. "I haven't collared her, but we've made a commitment to a Dom/sub relationship, and I feel responsible for her. I think she may have freaked out over a scene we had last night."

"What the fuck did you do?" Spencer eyed him with disdain.

Ellison raised his hands in a defensive gesture. "Nothing! She's been dealing with an issue, and I've been helping her. As a matter of fact, last night I thought we had an enormous breakthrough. But I'm afraid she had second thoughts once she got home. I'm wondering if she went to stay with her friend Maria, who's a member here. Is it possible for you to give me her number so I can see if that's where Teigen is? I'm worried about her."

"I can't do that. But I can call her myself and ask if she wants you to contact her or if Teigen is even there. I'll be right back."

Unable to sit still while he waited for Spencer to come back from his office, Ellison got up and began to pace. If there had been a carpet on the floor, he'd have worn a hole in it by the time Spencer returned.

"Sorry, man. Maria says she hasn't talked to Teigen for a few days. She did allow me to give you her number, though."

He handed Ellison a Post-it with the number. "Thanks, I owe you one."

Without even saying goodbye, Ellison turned and left. As soon as he got back into his car, he called Maria.

She answered immediately. "I'm sorry, but I have no idea where Teigen could be. She never said anything to me about going away. I'm worried. We're pretty close and I think she would have let me know if she had plans. Something had to have happened."

"That's what I'm afraid of. Do you have any idea where she may have gone?"

Maria paused for a moment. “The only thing I can think of is that she went back home, but it’s a real longshot. I know she hated it there.”

“Yes, she told me that too. I can’t imagine what would make her go back there.”

“Beats me, but I can’t think of anywhere else she might be. She doesn’t have a lot of friends in Washington. Maybe she’s with someone from work.”

“Maybe. I’ll check it out, and if I find out anything, I’ll let you know.”

He’d have to wait till the next day to contact her work, but he had something he could take care of today just in case she wasn’t with anyone from the office. He was reluctant to do it, but for Teigen he would.

Ellison approached the law offices of Markham, James, Callahan and Associates with trepidation. *Fuck!* Why should seeing his father be such a big deal? Yet it was. Embarrassingly so.

He steeled himself against the duress this meeting was going to put him through. He just hoped it would be successful.

“Ellison, what a pleasant surprise,” his father said as he walked into his office. As Ellison suspected, the office was still busy past dinner. His father and his partners demanded almost the whole lives of their staff. Hours were long, but the ability to work in this firm seemed worth it for a lot of people. He rarely saw his father growing up, but his late hours were working in his favor now.

“Hello, Dad. I’m sorry to bother you, but I need your help.”

His father leaned forward over his desk. Without inviting Ellison to sit down, he said, “I’m listening.”

Ellison ignored the lack of invitation and sat in the chair facing him. “I need a private investigator, and I know you’ve got a few good ones on retainer. I wanted to know if I could borrow one. I’d pay for the hours.”

“I hope you’re not in trouble.” His father’s tone was more of consternation than concern but Ellison didn’t respond the way he would have liked if Teigen weren’t involved.

“No. I need to find someone.” He didn’t want to go into more detail because he knew his father would be angry if he knew the whole truth about his situation with Teigen. He’d never even told him about his interest in hypnotism, sure it would drive his father crazy.

“Who did you lose?”

“A friend of mine. She seems to have disappeared, and I’m worried about her.”

“Do you mean to tell me you’re chasing after some woman who may have dumped you?” His father got up and rounded his desk, fury etched on his harsh features. “What kind of man does that? Let her go and the hell with her.” He banged on his desk for emphasis.

Of course, that’s how he’d feel. He’d only stayed with Ellison’s mother for her social standing. Ellison wasn’t going to let that happen. He wasn’t giving up on Teigen until she told him that she never wanted to see him again and could give him a good reason why.

“Look, Dad, I’m only asking that you let me hire one of your detectives. You don’t have to agree with what I’m doing. Give me a name and number and I’ll be out of your hair.”

“How long do you think you’ll need him for?”

“I’m not sure. I need him to find a commune in Vermont.”

Ellison didn’t think his father could get any angrier, but he did. “A commune in Vermont? How the fuck did you get involved with this nut anyway?” he bellowed.

Forcing himself not to let his father get to him, he replied in a somewhat calm voice. “She’s a reporter for *Architecture D.C.*, and a good one at that. It’s her parents that live there.”

His father stood over him for what seemed like an eternity, opening and clasping his hands. Finally he turned and pressed the intercom on his phone.

“Margy, give my son the number for Frank Evans, please.” Looking Ellison dead in the eyes he said, “Make sure this doesn’t reflect back on me or my firm. I don’t want to hear about it again.”

“Thanks, Dad.” Ellison got up and left as his father waved him away as a goodbye, hoping he wouldn’t change his mind before Ellison left the building. He realized he didn’t give a fuck—finally—what his father said to him as long as he helped him out.

CHAPTER TWELVE



Dread crawled up Teigen's spine as they approached Trinity Farm. She thought she'd never be here again, but the looming wrought-iron gate mocked her as they passed through. *We'll never let you go*, it whispered.

She shook her head to get the voice out of her mind. She didn't get out when Bobby pulled up in front of her parent's cabin.

"You planning on sitting here all night? You'll freeze your ass off. C'mon. They're waiting for you." Bobby exited the car and came around to open her door. "C'mon!"

Without a word, she got out and preceded him up the steps to the house.

"Don't you want your bag?" Bobby called after her.

She shrugged then knocked on the door. She barely recognized her father when he opened it. Gaunt, his eyes hollow in their sockets, he'd obviously taken her mother's illness hard.

"Teigen. I didn't think you'd come."

"I'm not sure why I'm here."

He stood aside to let her pass. "Because it's your mama. You had to see her before she died."

Everything was just as she'd seen it the last time she was here, except for one thing. A bed had been placed in the middle of the small living room, making it difficult to move from one end to the other. Her mother's skeletal body was

curled up under a ratty sheet. The lingering smell of urine, alcohol, and death hovered in the room.

“Is that you, Teigen?” Her mother’s voice was barely a whisper.

“Yes, Mama.”

She didn’t know whether to scream or cry. The residual anger she still had toward her parents clashed against the despair of seeing her mother reduced to such a horrible state. She couldn’t yell at her anymore. The woman who’d punished her, berated her, and pawned her off to Bobby was gone. In her place was a pathetic shell of her formerly self-possessed, merciless mother.

The despair won out. She sank to her knees beside the bed and took her mother’s hand in hers. She wanted to ask her why she’d waited so long to see a doctor, why she hadn’t sent Bobby sooner, why the God they worshipped hadn’t helped her. But she knew the stubborn, the-world-is-out-to-get-us attitude kept them isolated in their own world. She was surprised her father had taken her mother to the hospital in the first place.

Her biggest question to herself was why she cared. All the hurt and anguish of her childhood seeped away in the face of death. The love of the little girl who thought her parents were gods before they began to crush her soul emerged from its hiding place.

“I knew you’d come back to us, Teigen. That you would see the way.” Her mother patted her hand.

“I’m only here to see you, Mama. Then I’m going back home.” Teigen couldn’t let any of them believe that she had returned for good, not even her dying mother.

Her father came up behind her. “We’ve been waiting for you, Teigen. Now that you’re here, we can’t let you leave. Your mama needs you.”

Nononononono...but now wasn’t the time to fight. She didn’t have the energy. “Okay, we’ll talk about it later.”

Her mother closed her eyes. It became apparent that she was falling asleep, so Teigen took the opportunity to stand and collect herself.

Bobby still stood in the doorway with her bag. She walked over and took it from him. “I’m going upstairs to my room. I’m exhausted myself and I need a good rest. If you need me, you know where to find me.”

Without waiting for a response, Teigen climbed the stairs to her old room. Shocked to find it just as she’d left it when she got married, she dropped the bag at her feet and lay down on the bed staring at the ceiling.

Then a thunderbolt thought hit her. *Ellison*. She hadn’t told him where she was going. She hadn’t told anyone.

She grabbed her purse and pulled out her phone. She’d put it on mute while she’d been working in the office and forgotten to take it off, something she did far too often. She had to kick that habit and fast. Ellison had called her and she hadn’t heard the vibration in her purse on the floor. What’s worse was that there was no cell service here. Of course not. There wasn’t a cell tower for miles. Only the higher-ups in the commune had access to a few landlines.

Fuuuuuuk! The shock of hearing about her mother had fried her brains. She should have called Ellison before she left. *Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!* When she didn’t call him after a day or two, Ellison would get worried, and now she had no way to contact him.

Her mind kept spinning. What if her editor had a question about her article? If she didn’t respond could it keep him from putting it in the issue?

She sat up abruptly. *Think, think, think*. The odds of being allowed to use the landlines were slim to none.

In a panic, she ran down the stairs. Her father was sitting next to her mother while she slept, his head resting on the bed.

“Dad. Did Bobby leave already?”

Her father raised his head, his eyes swollen from crying. “He went to return the car to the mayor.”

Ignoring her father's distress, she went back up to her room. There was nothing she could do until morning. Then she'd figure out how to contact the outside world.



Ellison

It took most of the next day before Frank Evans decided Teigen had to have gone home. He'd found a few possible locations for the commune, most of which were located in the northern part of Vermont, at least a seven-hour drive away. With Frank onboard, Ellison decided not to wait till the next morning, hoping to get most of the way there before they stopped for the night.

He couldn't figure out why Teigen would go back to visit her parents given what she'd told him. But family had a way of keeping hold no matter what you wanted. He'd never had this happen before in a session, but if Teigen really had a bad delayed reaction after their scene, it could have driven her back to the perceived safety of the commune.

He banged on the steering wheel in frustration as he drove down the road, attempting to keep vigilant about his speed because he continually accelerated well past the speed limit as his desperation propelled him forward. The fact he couldn't call her only exacerbated his anguish.

Why didn't you turn to me for help, Teigen? I'm your Dom. I'm supposed to help you. The words formed a loop in his brain, winding around and around as he sped on.

“Hey, man, get it together or you'll be no help to your girl, and if you keep driving like a crazy person, I'm going to take over. I'm not getting killed tonight.”

Frank's words pulled him back from the brink. Nevertheless, he drove on till he pulled into a motel close to where Frank thought was the most likely community where she could be. It was too late to barge into a place he knew he wouldn't be welcomed. The last thing he wanted was to be

shot by some self-righteous guy who thought he was invading their compound.

He barely got any sleep. By the time the sun crept through the curtains, he and Frank were showered and ready to go.

Pulling up to the gate to Trinity Farm, they found it locked. Pressing the intercom, he had to wait several minutes before someone answered.

“What do you want?” asked the disembodied voice.

“I’m here to see Teigen Finley.”

“She isn’t here. She left the commune years ago. Go away.”

“She may have just come back and you didn’t know it. Could you please check?”

He was met by dead air. He pressed the button a number of times, but no one answered.

“Look. Let’s regroup. We’ll go get some breakfast and see what we can find out in town. It’s a small community. Maybe someone knows something.”

Frank was right. He backed up his car and drove back toward town. At least he knew he was in the right place. Either she hadn’t returned here and he was at a dead end, or the person answering the intercom was lying. He suspected the latter was true. They’d never let a stranger on the grounds, particularly if Teigen told them she was home for good.

They had to figure out a strategy to find out if she was there and to get in touch with her. They walked into the local diner and sat down. A waitress came over, and after they gave her their order, Frank asked, “Do you get people from the Trinity Farm coming in here?”

“Nah. They keep totally to themselves. The only place you ever see them is at the local market. I’m pretty sure they come in a van once a week. Which is fine by me. They’re pretty weird.”

“Thank you,” Frank replied. Once she left the table, they agreed they should check out the market as soon as they finished breakfast.

At the market they found out that residents of the commune came in every Thursday to shop, and they hadn’t come in yet.

Ellison couldn’t believe their luck. They sat parked in front of the building until a vintage VW bus parked next to him and a straggly group of women got out. There was no doubt in his mind that they were from the Farm.

Waiting till they got into the market, Frank had him go down one aisle while he went down another. Ellison ran into them first. He approached one of the women when she detached herself from the group to go up an aisle alone. He followed Frank’s directions on how to talk to them.

“Excuse me,” he said, “I wonder if you know where I can find the detergent?”

She eyed him warily but answered, “It’s two aisles over that way.”

“Thanks.” He walked away but then stopped and turned back to her. “Aren’t you from Trinity Farm?”

She began to back away.

“It’s just that my friend’s parents live there. I thought if you knew them, I could ask how they were doing.”

The woman hesitated, so Ellison pressed on. “Her name is Teigen Finley.”

The woman put her hands on her hips and her chin jutted out. “If she’s your friend, why didn’t you know she came to visit her dying mother?”

She *was* here! And not because she was running from him. “If you see her, could you tell her Ellison was asking after her?”

“I don’t think so.” The woman stalked off without a backward glance.

Maybe Frank would have gotten more information, but at least he knew where she was and why. A dying mother is a hard thing to resist no matter how you felt about her. He was curious about how Teigen found out about it and how she got to the Farm. She couldn't be planning on staying too long no matter how sick her mom was.

He met Frank down the next aisle and signaled to him that he had made contact. They left the store and got back into his car.

"She's there," Ellison informed Frank. "Her mother's dying."

"That means we're going to have to find a way in without being detected. With the security around the perimeter, it's not going to be easy, but I suspect they don't have a lot of cameras inside. After nightfall, I can look around the property and see if I can find a way in."

"I want to go with you. Teigen doesn't know who you are and she has no reason to trust you."

Frank shook his head. "I get it, but it will be easier for me to maneuver if I don't have you with me. You'll give me some things I can tell her that will convince her that you sent me, and I'm sure she'll trust me after that. It's too much of a risk, and I don't want to get shot on that property. No one will ever know we were there if we get caught. This group has a law unto themselves."

"I know you're right, but I'll be going out of my mind till you come back."

"All right. I'll take you with me. But you better fucking listen to every word I say till we get out of there. I'm in charge and I don't want any backtalk from you!"

"Of course."

They went back into the market to pick up food to eat in their room then went back to the hotel to wait until sundown.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Teigen came down to breakfast early. She wanted to find a place she could get phone service as soon as possible. After she finished eating and visiting with her mother, she told her father she was going to find a way to get to town.

Her father's answer shocked her. "You're not allowed to leave the property, Teigen. Now that we have you home, we're not letting you go back to the heathens you've been with for so long. Bobby is ready to take you back in his home. For now you will stay here and be with your mother till..." He left the obvious conclusion to the sentence hanging.

Despite the fact that her dying mother was in the next room, she was unable to keep her anger from boiling over. "I am not staying here! I just came to see Mama for a visit! I have a life, and it's not here!"

She stormed out of the room, but stopped short when she spied her mother in tears. In all her years living in this house no one had ever cried but her. Last night it was her father, today her mother. Her father's statement confirmed that they hadn't really changed, but she couldn't ignore the despair her mother was showing. Teigen sat down on her bed and took her mother's hands.

"Why are you crying, Mama?"

"Because I need you, Teigen. Your father does too. I can't bear the thought of you leaving again."

Teigen gently squeezed her mother's hands. "You must understand that I can't come back. I'm not married to Bobby anymore, and I have a job and a home in Washington now. I'll stay for a while to help care for you but then I have to go home."

Her mother's hands shifted to grip hers more firmly than she would have expected. The steely tone she remembered from her childhood issued forth from her mother's thinned lips. "This is your home, Teigen. It's enough. It's time for you to face your responsibilities to your family and your community."

Teigen attempted to remove herself from her mother's grasp, but she held on tight. *Fine*. It didn't mean she couldn't make her point. "Listen to me, Mama. I'm not staying here. I don't owe you or anyone else on the Farm anything. And if you don't stop pushing me, I'll get my bag and leave right now."

"You're not leaving now or ever," her father chimed in from the doorway. "You better just settle down and accept it, otherwise you'll be locked up here till Bobby takes you home and I suspect you'll be locked up there too."

Fear crept up Teigen's spine as she realized that her mother's illness had been the excuse to get her to return home. She wouldn't be the first woman confined to the house when she didn't agree to the demands of the community. She could be kept here forever and no one would know where she was.

She had to settle down like her father said, not because she accepted his dictates, but because she had to lull them into not watching her every move. If she fought them outright, she'd never get away. Being cagey was the only way to win.

Without conceding defeat, which she didn't think they'd believe right off the bat, she sat quietly next to her mother. Her father sat on the other side of the bed, and no one said a word for a while.

Finally, she asked her mother if she wanted anything to eat or drink.

“I’d like some hot tea and some toast. It’s hard for me to eat anything else.”

“I’ll get it for you.” Teigen rose and went into the kitchen.

Her father followed her. “Just so you know, the doors to the house are locked and your old keys won’t work on them.”

“I get it, Dad. I’m not trying to go anywhere. I’m making Mama what she asked for.” She kept her voice low and respectful, hoping her diversionary tactic would work.

“All right.” He turned and went back into the living room.

Teigen prepared the small meal, trying to keep it together as she worked. She’d have to portray the dutiful daughter until she could figure a way out. After all these years of being able to be herself, it was going to be torture to kowtow to her parents and Bobby again.

As though summoned from her brain, Bobby appeared in the kitchen, putting his arms around her, startling her so that she almost spilled the tea she was pouring. It was all she could do to keep from slapping him for taking such liberties.

“What are you doing here?” she asked, trying to keep her tone deferential.

“I came to see my mother-in-law...and my wife, of course.”

Don’t argue. Don’t. Argue. Those words would become a mantra she’d have to live by.

“I’m making my mom breakfast.” She extricated herself on the pretext of taking the toast out of the oven. “It’s good to see you.”

A broad smile lit up Bobby’s whole face. “I knew when you had some time to think that you’d realize you made a mistake.”

Mistake? By seeking out therapy and finally getting a degree and a job? How was that a mistake? But she couldn’t tell him that. She merely smiled and continued to butter the toast.

Bobby moved toward her again, but when she involuntarily moved back a step, he stopped.

“Let me help you take this out to Mama,” he told her, picking up the teacup.

Mama. She wasn't his mama anymore. They were all walking around in the delusion that nothing had changed. But actually it was she who was delusional. In this community, in this house, nothing had changed. *Uuuuuuggggghhhh!*

“That's nice of you,” was all she could say, bringing in the toast after him.

Her mother beamed at Bobby. “It's so good to have the family whole again. You wait, Bobby. It will be no time before Teigen will be carrying your child. All I ask is that you name it after me.”

“Of course, Mama.” Bobby responded. “We'd love to name the baby after you, right, Teigen?”

There was no way there was going to be a baby. She'd do anything she had to before she'd let Bobby touch her again. Fortunately, it looked like no one expected her to be with Bobby while her mother needed care. How the hell she'd let herself get talked into seeing her mother again, she couldn't explain., except that the shock of her mother's illness clouded her judgment. She'd find a way out before her mother died. She'd said her goodbyes long before now and she'd have no guilt leaving when she could.



Ellison

As night fell, Ellison and Frank dressed for darkness and gathered the equipment they'd need, including a night vision scope, a jammer to disrupt the security system's WiFi, and a microphone array designed for long-range video surveillance. Frank suspected security wasn't monitored 24/7 so it was likely no one would notice if they stopped the cameras from recording.

“Do you know how to shoot a 10mm?” Frank asked.

“Regretfully, I’ve never handled a weapon before.”

“Then I won’t give you one. It’s probably better that I’m the only one armed. I have enough experience to know when not to use it as much as when to shoot. That’s critical.”

“I’m sure you’re right. God, I hope it doesn’t come to that.”

Frank somber expression spoke volumes. “Me neither.”

They left their car down the road from the gate and circled the property to the back, where there was a fence topped with only one layer of barbed wire.

“I’ll jam the system then help you over the fence. I’ll have no problem getting over on my own.” Frank took the deauther out of his backpack and pointed it at the camera above them. Once he was sure the camera had been disabled, he came out of the bushes and approached the fence.

“Let’s get going. The longer it takes us to find her the more of a chance we have of getting caught.”

Ellison got a small tear in his jacket going over the fence, but otherwise he was unharmed. Frank didn’t even get that, clearing the barbed wire with no problem. Once they were both on the ground, they proceeded toward the cluster of buildings ahead.

How the hell they were going to find Teigen without alerting anyone else was beyond him, but Frank seemed to know what he was doing, so Ellison followed blindly. Thank God he’d brought Frank along. Not only was he knowledgeable about how to get around security, the amount of equipment he was packing was impressive. Another thing to be grateful to his father for.

He’d figure out how to thank him later. For now he had to find his girl, as Frank called her. And, he realized, she *was* his; she just didn’t know it yet. He had to find her to tell her.

They stopped behind the nearest building. Frank motioned for him to stay while he crept around the perimeter and

withdrew his listening device. It took him about 15 minutes before he came back to Ellison.

“I found her. We have to circle past three houses before we get to hers, but we don’t have to go out into the open to get there. Follow me.”

They crept along the buildings till they could position themselves behind Teigen’s house. “We’ll wait till they go to bed before we try to enter the house. I’m going to go in alone. It’ll be a lot more dangerous if you come with me.”

Reluctantly, Ellison agreed. He had no idea how to make his way silently through a house. He hoped Teigen would accept that Frank was there to help her. He felt helpless not knowing her frame of mind after seeing her mother. Could she be convinced to stay? Would he ever have an opportunity to tell her how he felt about her? The questions were eating him up the longer they waited.

They sat behind the house, checking periodically to see if the lights were out. When the whole complex went dark, they waited a while longer to ensure that people were asleep. Frank picked the lock to the back door and disappeared.

Ellison waited for what felt like hours, praying that no one woke up and caught Frank, that Teigen accepted Frank’s word that he was there to help her, and if she wanted to leave, they got out safely.

Someone walked across the compound. Ellison held his breath in fear of being discovered. The sound of a door closing allowed him to exhale, but he was concerned that someone would hear his heart racing and discover him there.

Finally, the door to Teigen’s house opened and Frank and Teigen emerged. Ellison couldn’t keep from crying as he rose and embraced her.

Frank’s voice invaded his relief at having Teigen in his arms. “We’ve got to get out of here now!”

Holding Teigen’s hand, he followed Frank back to the fence. Frank hoisted him over, then he was able to help Teigen down after Frank gave her a boost.

They took off toward the car as soon as Frank hit the ground. Ellison let Frank drive so he could sit with Teigen in the back seat. They sped off to the motel in silence.

“I’ll run in and collect the bags,” Frank advised.

That was fine with Ellison. He couldn’t let go of Teigen even for a moment. Although they hadn’t said one word since the rescue, they were glued to each other in an embrace of solace.

Frank startled them when he jumped back into the car. “We’re not going to check out. I left the keys on the desk. We’ll call the desk when we get farther away.”

As they drove off, Teigen finally spoke, her voice barely a whisper. “I thought I’d never get out of there.”

He squeezed her tighter, hoping his arms would provide her the comfort she needed. “I’d never have left you there. You can count on me. Always.”

She turned to him, her eyes shimmering with unshed tears. She’d held it together more than he did. Her fortitude under duress astounded him.

“I didn’t think anyone would know where I was. How did you find me?”

“I have to thank my father for that. He gave me Frank, a master investigator, who took barely a day to figure out where you were.”

Teigen put her hand on Frank’s shoulder. “I owe you, Frank. Thank you so much.”

Frank patted her hand. “You don’t owe me anything. Your boyfriend here is paying.”

“I would never have found her this fast without you, Frank. We both owe you.”

Frank didn’t protest further. He kept his eyes on the road and kept them speeding back to safety. Ellison didn’t care if Frank admitted it. He’d forever be in his debt for returning Teigen to him.

Now that he had her back, he had to make sure he didn't lose her again. He needed a collar as soon as they got back to Washington.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



TEIGEN

It had been three days and Teigen still couldn't sleep well. The threat of being held captive at Trinity Farm plagued her dreams, waking her up in a sweat in the middle of the night. If it weren't for Ellison holding her until she calmed down, she wouldn't have gotten the little sleep she had.

Although she hadn't been able to get herself to go to work yet, she'd been able to check in with her editor and her article was being published. He also gave her a few weeks to recover before he would give her another deadline. Thank God her family hadn't ruined that. She'd known her parents and the cult she'd grown up in was extreme, but she hadn't thought after all that had happened, they'd be so delusional they would have thought she'd cave to their demands that she stay with them. Nothing would make her go back there again.

Ellison had insisted that she stay with him for a while, and although a little part of her resented once again being told what to do, she accepted that in the long run, they'd both feel better with him watching over her. He worked from home as much as he could, only leaving for short periods of time to check on the progress of his projects. Each time he left, she experienced such anxiety, despite the fact there was a housekeeper around, that she couldn't sit still till he got back. Maria tried to get her to go to lunch, but she couldn't bear to go out.

At the end of the week, Ellison walked into the house with a huge smile and a garment bag. "It's time to have some fun.

We're going out to a nice dinner and I want you to wear this new dress I bought you."

He handed her the garment bag from Alice + Olivia, a boutique she went into now and again to drool.

"First of all, I can't take that dress from you. It's too expensive. Second, I don't feel like going out." She sat down on the couch with a pout.

Ellison strode purposefully toward her. He knelt down and took her by the chin to get her attention.

"First of all, I can buy you anything I want and you will accept it because I want you to. Second, it's time for you to stop moping around the house. I appreciate that you've been through a difficult time, and I don't want to be insensitive to your trauma, but thankfully, we got you out of there without incident. So get your beautiful ass off this couch and go into the bedroom and get dressed. We'll leave in an hour."

He stared her down until she reluctantly did as she was told. After showering and putting on makeup she opened the garment bag. Inside was a stunningly simple, black vegan-leather dress trimmed in white pearls around the neckline. It skimmed her body perfectly when she put it on, the pearls lighting up her face. She hadn't felt this pretty in ages. Leave it to Ellison to find a way to lift her spirits.

She finished the look off with a pair of bright red heels. Ellison actually whistled when she met him back in the living room, causing her to blush profusely.

"I knew you would be breathtaking in that dress. I can't wait to take you out to show you off. Turn around for me so I can get a good look."

As she pivoted around, he began to clap. "Perfection," was all he said.

Perfection was right. How she'd landed the quintessential kinky gentleman she didn't know, but she considered herself the luckiest woman on the planet. What a turnaround from last week! She owed him everything, and if he wanted to take her

out, she'd better go and make it a wonderful night for him. He deserved it.

She walked up to him, putting her hands around his neck. "Thank you so much for the dress, but most of all, for coming to my rescue."

She stood on tiptoe and brushed his lips with her own in invitation. He pulled her so close, their bodies connected at every point, then he devoured her mouth in a kiss laced with such desire, she was left breathless, clinging to him for support. He didn't let her fall, holding her tight while he claimed her body and soul, which she relinquished without a fight.

"No matter what happens, I will be there for you, Teigen. You are mine now." He looked down at her for affirmation.

She hesitated only for a moment. For the first time in her life, she was ready to commit with her whole heart. Ellison didn't want to control her life, he wanted to love her. And she was ready to accept that and love him back.

"Yes, Ellison. I'm yours."

She settled into his embrace and savored the closeness until finally Ellison said, "We'll miss our reservation if we don't leave now. I also won't be able to keep myself from ripping off this beautiful dress if we stand here much longer."

Happiness suffused every molecule of her body as he pulled away from her and took her hand to lead her out. She practically skipped to the car in her excitement. Now that she'd accepted the fact that they were going out, she was looking forward to being out with Ellison again. He wanted to show her off: she wanted to be seen with him as well.

"Where are we going?"

"To a restaurant I've been dying to try for a while. It's called Jont and it has a fourteen-course tasting menu."

"Fourteen courses!" Teigen couldn't control her laughter. "How are we going to ever eat fourteen courses!"

Ellison helped her into the car and got into the driver's seat. "Haven't you ever done a tasting menu before?"

"Yes, but not fourteen courses. Maybe five or six."

"It's a lot of small bites in-between bigger ones so you don't have to worry. I have faith in you." He patted her thigh as he drove off, causing another shudder of pleasure to course through her. She wasn't sure how she was going to make it through all those courses before spontaneously combusting at his touch.

Luckily Ellison found a parking spot near the restaurant so she only had to walk a little way on the too-high heels she'd worn. They went up to the second floor where they were seated around a counter that had fourteen seats and faced the kitchen. Hard at work were the chefs with no barrier between them and the guests, affording the diners a ringside seat to watch how their food was being prepared.

"What do you think?" Ellison asked once they'd confirmed that they would have the wine pairings with the meal.

"It's fascinating. I feel like I'm spying on the chefs."

"You are...with their permission of course."

The food began to arrive at their places, as amazing to look at as it was to taste. A beet tart that looked like a flower; a sea urchin doughnut; a tomato salad bathed in tomato water; fish, meat, and duck surrounded by the most delicate sauces; and impressive desserts entertained them for more than two hours.

By the time dinner was done, Teigen realized she hadn't thought of her family once. Never before had she eaten such delectable food that touched all the senses. By the time they left the restaurant she was floating on a sea of contentment, which she realized was probably Ellison's goal in bringing her there.

As they walked to the car, Teigen stopped, forcing Ellison to stop as well. Not caring who saw them, she wrapped her arms around him and kissed him hard, forcing her tongue into his mouth. He accepted her invitation, taking over the kiss, tangling with her tongue. His own desire was evident when he

pulled her against him. She couldn't wait to get back to his place.

When they finally separated, Teigen told him, "That was the best time I've ever had. Thank you."

"The night's not over. I think I can make it even better."

"You do that." She winked at him and he grabbed her hand, pulling her quickly toward the car. Despite the heels, she followed his lead, flushed with the excitement of the things to come.

As they sped off into the night, Teigen had never been so happy.



Ellison

The night couldn't have gone better. Ellison had wanted to create a magical evening for Teigen to get her to forget about what she went through, and he'd succeeded. She'd enjoyed every morsel of the fabulous food and every sip of the perfect wines that went with the meal. Now she was smiling and mellow, and he couldn't wait to get his hands on her. He'd been worried that her stay at the Farm would set her back in her progress.

When they arrived at his house, she cuddled up against him as they went inside, kissing his neck and whispering sexy words. He made a beeline to the bedroom, not wanting to miss the amorous mood she was in.

She plopped herself on the bed and arranged herself in a provocative pose.

Oh yeah!

He crawled over her, propping himself up on his hands and knees. Her honeyed yet spicy scent wafted over him, driving him a little mad.

"I missed you, Teigen. I'm so grateful you're back in my bed. I could devour you from head to toe."

She regarded him coyly through her lashes. “What’s stopping you?”

“Absolutely nothing. You just lie here and I’m going to do all the work.”

He got up and removed her shoes, kissing her feet then trailing his lips up one thigh, taking a quick bite, which elicited a squeak of surprise, and repeating the action up the other. She tried to sit up but he pressed her back down. “You stay where I put you, and take what I give you.”

Her sigh of exasperation went straight to his cock, the sound bringing it to life. His little sadistic heart loved to torture.

He turned her over and unzipped the dress, pulling it down her body and hooking his fingers in her panties as he went down. The sigh turned into a moan, egging him on.

Her skin was so soft he couldn’t keep his hands off her, the impulse to touch, to kiss, to bite overtaking him. Unhooking her bra, he almost ripped it off, gripped by a primal urge to claim her, to impress upon her in all ways that she was his.

Grabbing a breast in his hand, he squeezed and lashed the nipple with his tongue then sucked it into his mouth, biting softly even though he felt compelled to clamp down hard on the peaked bud. She bucked up against him, clasping her hands around his neck, pressing her breast against his mouth.

He accepted her invitation, biting hard while caressing the bud with his tongue.

“Oh my God, Ellison. Yes!”

He had to have more. After treating her other breast in the same brutal fashion, he trailed his mouth down her torso, nipping and sucking at her flesh till he reached her mound. He could no longer be gentle, going straight for her clit, trapping it between his teeth. She screamed out her orgasm as he tortured her tender nub with his tongue and pumped two fingers inside her wet passage.

As soon as she settled back down, he grunted, “I want another,” and revved up his ministrations once again.

“I can’t. I’m lucky I had the first one!”

“You can and you will.”

He sucked and nipped and caressed until he felt her tense up again, then he bit down on her clit. She exploded, her muscles clenching fiercely as her breath seemed to leave her body.

As she came down this time, he rose and bent over her, whispering, “I’m not done with you yet.”

He tore off his clothes, dropping them to the floor in a heap, then covered her body with his. She was coated in a sheen of sweat, her body still trembling from aftershocks.

“Are you ready for me to take you, Teigen? To make you mine?”

“God, yes!”

Thank fuck!

“I’m warning you. It won’t be gentle.”

Teigen rose and bit his lip. “Good. So do it already!”

“That’s my girl!”

He laughed as he rammed into her sweet warm pussy, her muscles clamping around his cock as though they would never let him go. As promised, he didn’t hold back, impaling her over and over again in a relentless rhythm. Her moans accelerated until she screamed her orgasm, her muscles gripping him so tightly it only took a few more thrusts before he followed her over.

It took him a few moments to recover enough to roll off her and pull her into his arms. She crumpled against him like a rag doll, as spent as he was.

He’d shocked himself. He’d never lost control like that, always being so careful to be attentive to his subs needs in a rehearsed dance of seduction. Teigen brought out his most carnal instincts, consuming him in a haze of desire so strong, he couldn’t hold back.

Her rhythmic breathing clued him in to the fact that she was asleep. He basked in the bliss of the evening and followed her into slumber.



TEIGEN

Teigen woke the next morning in a cocoon of warmth, both physical and mental. She couldn't remember the last time she'd felt so peaceful. As she began to move, her aching body reminded her of the night's activities, bringing a smile to her face. She stretched out and took a deep Yoga breath.

Ellison stirred beside her, wrapped his arm around her, and tweaked her nipple, eliciting a contented moan.

"How are you feeling this morning?" he asked.

"Absolutely wonderful. And I owe it all to you." Unable to reach his lips because of his intense grip, she turned and planted a noisy kiss on his chest.

Chuckling, he squeezed her nipple a lot harder. She wrestled herself free and climbed on top of him, grabbing his hands and pushing them into the mattress.

"Now I'm in charge." She bent down and nipped his nipple.

In a flash, she was on her back with him on top, her hands now pressed into the mattress above her head. He stared down at her with an evil grin. "Nope. Not going to happen, I'm the Dom in this relationship, and if you're ever on top, it's because I put you there."

Even though she knew it was futile, she attempted to buck him off her and turn them over again. Without exerting much effort, he held her in place, eyebrows raised in disbelief. Finally, she gave up.

"Okay, you win. You're in control, and for the first time in my life, I actually like it."

He let go of one hand and caressed her cheek, followed by a tender kiss. The gentleness of the action brought unexpected tears to her eyes. *How did I get so lucky?*

“Actually, Teigen, you’re the one in control because nothing happens without your consent. But I am honored that you would let me be your Dom. And I want to solidify this moment with something special. Don’t move.”

He got up, went to the dresser and pulled out a long box tied with a bow. He sat down next to her and motioned for her to sit against the headboard.

“I want you to know I’ve never done this before. I’ve always been so consumed with my work; I didn’t let myself become emotionally involved with anyone. But you crashed through all the barriers I set up to prevent a relationship and captured my heart and soul.”

He handed her the box and waited while she opened it. Inside was the most beautiful necklace she’d ever seen: a heart surrounded by diamonds and the initial E etched in the center above a small opening for a lock. It took her a moment to understand that this was a collar, and the E meant she belonged to him. She looked up at him in wonder.

“Teigen, you have become the center of my universe. If you accept this collar—a symbol of my ownership—I promise to love you, care for you, guide you, protect you, and make you the number one priority in my life. I will strive to never let you down, but if I do it will be because I made a mistake, not because I didn’t care. I promise to cherish your submission and never take it for granted. I want you to feel supported, nurtured and loved. Will you accept it?”

Blown away by his words, Teigen could barely speak. Her mind was spinning, her pulse pounded in excitement, and her heart almost hurt from happiness. When she realized Ellison was getting concerned she wouldn’t accept his offering, Teigen whooshed out a “Yes!”

Ellison’s relief was palpable. He grabbed her in a bear hug, crushing the box between them.

“Aren’t you supposed to put this on me?” she whispered in his ear.

“Oh yes I am and you’re never going to take it off.”

He took the box, pulled out the collar and clasped it around her neck. She heard a click as he put the two ends together.

“Now you can’t take it off without my permission. You’re mine now. All mine.”

She touched it, but she needed more. “Can I go look at it in the mirror?”

“Of course.”

She jumped up and went to the mirror over the dresser. The reflection was so shiny she almost couldn’t see it. Stunning, the diamonds just big enough to sparkle like crazy, but it was the elegant script E—Ellison’s symbol of his claim over her—that affected her the most.

“It’s the most beautiful collar I’ve ever seen. Thank you, sir.”

The word “sir” suddenly felt so right in her mouth. After rejecting the control of Bobby and her parents, she finally had the right man to walk with in life, to help her find her way, and most importantly, to genuinely love her.

“Get over here. We have to cement this relationship.” Ellison patted the bed beside him.

She ran over to lie down and press herself against him, squeezing him in her excitement.

He caressed her cheek and smiled. “The two halves of you have finally come together. You are now the same self-confident woman in the bedroom you are as a reporter.”

She pressed her face against his hand then turned and kissed it. Her heart swelled with gratitude and love for this man who had helped her escape from the prison of her parents’ home and more importantly, their teachings.

“I owe it all to you. Thank you thank you thank you.”

“I have to admit to ulterior motives. Once I knew I had to have you, I did everything in my power to make it happen.”

“It’s the best thing anyone has ever done for me.”

He rolled on top of her and settled, allowing some of his weight to hold her down. She reveled in his power to restrain her physically, while he nurtured her emotionally, encouraging her in her work. She submitted to his control, her body electrified by his touch.

He trailed his fingers down her neck then circled her throat, squeezing just enough for her to feel her pulse pounding against his skin. She relaxed, accepting his display of power, confident he would never hurt her.

His lips crashed down on hers and she opened to let him in. Completely at his mercy, restrained by his body, her arousal rocketed. She could feel the wetness seeping from her pussy, her nipples stimulated to peaks by his body contact, and his hardness pressing against her belly.

The kiss lasted forever, stealing her breath to the point of seeing stars. Emotions and sensations swirled through, bringing her to the brink of an orgasm faster than ever before. She wanted him inside her when it happened.

“Please! Fuck me!”

Ellison didn’t hesitate, burying himself inside her, sending her right over. His short thrusts prolonged the storm raging inside her, as her body clenched around him over and over and over again.

As the tremors began to subside, he nipped her ear and said, “Next time we go over together.”

He revved up his speed, pounding into her with the force of a tornado. She lost track of time, of where she was, of everything except the connection of the two of them driving her toward the breaking point.

“Come with me, Teigen,” he shouted as he surged into her, his cock pulsing with his release. She followed him in an explosion of ecstasy, her moans rising in a crescendo, every muscle in her body vibrating.

It seemed to last forever until finally they lay there, totally spent, his body weight caging her in. It was perfect, right where she wanted to be. When he began to get up, she cried, “Don’t!”

He kissed her neck, her chin, her cheeks, her nose, her lips. “You’re going to start to have trouble breathing if I stay on top of you for much longer. Hang on tight, we’re going to switch.”

He rolled over and brought her on top of him.

She smiled down at him coyly. “I thought you said I couldn’t be on top.”

“I said you’d only be on top if I put you there.”

She lay her head on his chest. “I could stay like this for hours.”

He stroked her back, his fingers trailing gently along her spine. “We’ve got nowhere to go. Enjoy.”

She closed her eyes, basking in their connection. She couldn’t move if she wanted to. She’d been totally wrung out by their lovemaking. That’s what it was in all its intensity and passion. She was finally home.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



ELLISON

Sunday morning brought a phone call from his father asking Ellison to meet him at his house. Ellison knew there would have to be payback for the enormous life-saving favor his father had done for him, but he dreaded what it would be. Having extricated himself from his father's sphere of influence, he hated being told what to do by him. It was oddly reminiscent of Teigen's experience with her family, except he had brought this on himself. Not that he wouldn't have done it again if he'd needed to.

He had to tell Teigen about the summons, but he didn't want to subject her to his father's moods and his scrutiny. He looked at the wondrous beauty stretched out on his bed and his protective instinct overcame him. His father was not safe, and he had promised Teigen he'd keep her safe.

"I have to go see my father today. I'm going to give you a choice, because I don't want you to think I don't want you to meet my parents. Actually, I don't, but it's not because of you. I don't trust him and I don't want you to be on the receiving end of his nastiness. At some point, it's going to be unpleasant, but if you want to come, I won't stop you."

"Of course, I want to go. I have to thank your father for giving you Frank. He saved my life."

"Just realize that things could go sour at any moment when you're in his presence."

Teigen got out of bed and walked over to him. She wrapped her arms around his neck and looked him in the eye.

“I have you to protect me, so I feel confident everything will be all right.”

Ellison shook his head. “He’s like a snake. He may look calm, but at any moment he can strike, and he can be deadly. I may not be fast enough to do anything about it.”

She rose up on tiptoe and kissed him softly on the lips. “I trust you.”

God, he wished he trusted himself as much as she did.

“Okay, then. Get dressed and we’ll go now. The sooner we get this over with the better.”

As she turned toward the bathroom, he swatted her delicious ass.

“Hey, what was that for?”

“Nothing. I couldn’t resist. It was too good to pass up.”

She rolled her eyes at him, and he gave her another swat. “*That* was for rolling your eyes at me.”

As she hurried away from his reach, she yelped, “You’re too much!”

“And you like it that way!” he retorted.

“Damn straight!” she said as she turned on the shower.

He laughed as he rifled through his closet looking for appropriate attire to wear to meet his father. The less Ellison gave him to complain about the better. He laid out a sport jacket, button-down shirt and khakis on his bed and was looking at underwear and socks when Teigen came out of the bathroom.

She took one look at his outfit and asked, “Should I get dressed up? I was going to wear jeans and a nice sweater.”

“I don’t want to tell you what to wear unless we’re going out for fun, but in this case I would say that you’ll be more comfortable around my father if you wear a dress. He’s very formal at all times, and I’m sure my mother will be wearing one as well.”

“Okay. I’ll pick out some clothes while you shower. Then I’ll dry my hair and finish getting ready.”

He stepped into the shower already regretting that he suggested she could come. Being with his father was like walking through a minefield, and it would be worse for Teigen. She represented everything her father looked down his nose at. What had he been thinking when he gave her a choice? He should have told her he was going alone and would be back later, except, of course, that’s how his father would have handled it and he didn’t ever want to be his father.

By the time they left the house, his anxiety had ramped up to an almost untenable state. As they drove, Teigen reached over and laid her hand on his thigh, massaging it gently.

“Hey, don’t worry. I think I can hold my own. I’ve been up against some rough characters in my life.”

How she’d tuned into his distress was remarkable, always looking out for him instead of the other way around. What an asshole. He had to pull himself together.

“You’re right. I have complete faith in you. We’ll face him together.”

He squeezed her hand and smiled over at her. No matter what, he had to suppress his own feelings and look out for her.

As they drove up to the three-story brick Georgian and parked the car, Teigen let out a breathless “Wow!”

He was so used to the house that it didn’t affect him. Seeing it through her eyes reminded him that it was one of the most impressive houses in Washington. The huge leaded-glass entry door opened into a large foyer with marble-tiled floors and a large pedestal table adorned with a massive flower arrangement.

They were led through the elaborately trimmed hallways to his father’s library. He didn’t know this new butler, so it was a quiet walk. Teigen had a stranglehold on his hand, but he didn’t care. Numbness was a small price to pay for her tranquility.

His father and mother were sitting by the fireplace reading when they arrived. She stood to embrace him, but his father stayed seated.

“It’s been too long, Ellison,” his mother chided. “You’ve missed the last few parties we invited you to.”

“Sorry, Mom, but you know how it is when you own your own business. There aren’t a whole lot of other people who can take over for you.”

“That’s why being in a large firm is important,” his father interjected, a grim look on his face.

Ellison decided to let that remark slide. *Pick your battles carefully.*

Instead he turned to Teigen. “Mom, Dad, this is Teigen Finley. She just finished interviewing me for an article in *Architecture, D.C.*”

His father’s eyebrows shot up in surprise. “So you’re a writer?”

Fuck! No “Nice to meet you” from either of them. The grilling was starting already.

Teigen seemed unaffected by his father’s forthrightness. “Yes, sir. Ellison was a great subject for an article. He’s had such an interesting life.”

His father’s eyes fixed on Teigen, his stare boring into her. “Did he tell you how he rejected the family business to become an architect or did he leave that out?”

Teigen squared her shoulders and returned his stare. “He might have mentioned it, but it wasn’t the most important part of the story. You and Mrs. Markham obviously showed him a lot of the world as he was growing up, helping to mold his character. He’s had an enormous impact on the architecture of Washington.”

To Ellison’s astonishment, she barreled on. “I wanted to thank you so much for letting Ellison use Frank to find me. I will forever be in your debt.”

Then the bomb dropped. “The only way you can repay that debt is to get out of my son’s life.” He turned to Ellison, a look of distaste on his face. “I asked you to come here to tell you this, but I didn’t expect you to bring *her*. That’s on you.”

Teigen looked shellshocked. Unfortunately, *he* wasn’t surprised. His father’s heartless selfishness affected every aspect of his father’s life. This time, however, Ellison wasn’t going to let it slide. He pulled Teigen safely into his chest with his arm tightly around her.

“That’s it. I refuse to listen to your rudeness and self-righteousness anymore.” He forced himself to keep his voice low and calm, emotionless, despite the fact he was seething inside. “I won’t let you insult Teigen under any circumstances. She doesn’t deserve it. I don’t deserve it. I’ve tried to get along with you, but you always want to have it your way no matter who you hurt. We are never, ever, setting foot in this house again. We. Are. Done.”

Without waiting for a response, he turned them toward the door. His father finally rose from his chair and shouted after their retreating forms. “You’ll need me again, and when you do, I will not let you into my house or my office!”

Ellison didn’t even respond. He’d said all he was going to say to his father. He kept them walking till they were out of the house and in the car. He slammed the car into gear and sped away.

It took him a while to calm down enough to be able to speak to Teigen. She hadn’t said a word since they’d left his father’s office, and he understood. His father had the innate ability to kick the rug out from under you. He was lucky Teigen was still standing.

“Wow...just wow,” Teigen whispered.

He squeezed the hand he’d been holding and massaging since they got in the car.

“I don’t want you to think about what he said. It’s meaningless. He has no control over you or me.”

Teigen turned to him. “But he does. He’s your father. He’s been driving you all your life. You can’t just turn him off. Believe me, I know.”

“I don’t mean to minimize the influence he’s had over me. Ironically, the more I’ve worked with your issues, the more I’ve seen how mine parallel yours in only a slightly different way.”

“But you don’t have *you* to help you deal with it. I’m certainly not equipped to do it.”

Ellison pulled into the garage and sat quietly for a moment. Teigen was right in one respect. Even though he wanted to exorcise his father from his life, there were going to be land mines embedded in his mind that could detonate at the most inopportune moments. It’s possible he could use some professional help.

However, Teigen was wrong about not being able to help him. Having her in his life had opened him up in a way he’d never experienced. He wanted to take care of her, spend time with her, play with her, cherish her, and, most of all, love her. She’d brought love into his life, and he’d be forever grateful to her for it.

“Let’s go inside. I could use a drink.”

She followed him into the living room where he rounded the bar. “What would you like?”

“Nothing, thanks. Or maybe just some sparkling water.”

He poured her water and then poured some Scotch into a glass for himself. “Come sit with me on the couch.”

He placed the drinks on the coffee table then had her sit on his lap. He needed her as close as he could get without being inside her. She grounded him, kept him from exploding with the rage that was roiling inside.

Teigen wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him. His whole body turned in to her, completely sensitized by her nearness. Her soft body, her sweet scent, her lyrical voice all called to him. He wanted to drown himself in her, but he had

to make sure she was okay first. As bad as it had been for him, it had to have been worse for Teigen.

“I hope you won’t take my father’s words too hard. He’s a selfish bastard. He wants the world to conform to his thinking and he hates anyone who goes contrary to him, particularly me.”



TEIGEN

Teigen leaned against his chest, snuggling as close as she could to comfort him as well as herself. She was concerned that Ellison would be guilty about what his father did to her. That kind of guilt could be toxic to their newfound relationship, pushing him away from her more than his father’s words. She couldn’t let that happen.

“I’m well aware of what it’s like to have a parent hate you for who you are. Your father’s just been more civilized about it up till now. I’ve worked my whole life to exorcize the hate my parents heaped on me. I promise you, I will not let him hurt me. I’m worried more about you. You haven’t had the practice I’ve had to get him out of your head.”

His strong arms almost crushed her with the fierceness of his hug. “You have no idea how much of a lifesaver you’ve been for me. You’ve helped me emerge from the cloud of his negative influence that’s been driving me my whole life.”

He paused and Teigen could almost hear the wheels turning in his head. “Well, Miss Cub Reporter, I’m going to give you the scoop of your life. Ellison Markham and Associates, which is basically me and those who work *for* me, is changing its focus from high-end homes to homes and buildings for people in trouble, either because of poverty, mental health, or abuse. I want to create housing like the Conway building.”

A feeling of triumph erupted in Teigen’s heart. She didn’t care if Ellison was reacting to his father’s words, the end result

was that he would be guided by his own passions rather than his father's influence.

"I can't tell you how thrilled I am for you. You're already planning something like that. This would be an expansion of your work in that area."

Ellison's excitement was palpable as he began to outline his new ideas. "Yes. You know about the project I've been developing for single mothers, including housing, medical care, education, and job placement. I'm going to be doing more projects like that, and after I finish up the contracts I've already signed, I'll turn my total attention to more like those."

"Won't your employees be a little upset at the change of focus?"

"I get that some people in my firm want to work for me so they can go out and get the high-paying jobs themselves, and I will give anyone who wants to leave my firm a good recommendation. But it's my company and I don't have to answer to anyone else. Except you." He lifted her chin and captured her lips in a passionate kiss.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that my business will be directed by me, and now that you've accepted my collar, my personal life will be a partnership between you and me. I think I have the best of both worlds."

"So do I." Who would have thought her life would turn out this way? For years, she'd fought her demons. Even though she wasn't physically under her parent's influence, she'd had to fend off their teachings, their insults, their disappointment in her. It affected every aspect of her being until step by step, she came into her own. This was the final leg of her journey, opening herself up to a man who loved her, exposing her wants, needs, desires without shame. Even if things didn't work out with Ellison, she would always be grateful for what he gave her.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



Ellison had a lilt in his step as he entered his office the next day. His life was finally on track. His expectations had been turned on their head, but it was a good thing. The final piece in the puzzle was letting his employees know about his change in direction. He had a feeling he knew exactly who was going to stay and who would want to find another prestigious firm to work for. He had no resentments. Eight years ago, he'd have done the same thing.

Before the meeting, he called Spencer at Black Light, who answered on the first ring. "Hey, I heard everything's okay with Teigen. I'm glad to hear it."

"It was one of the worst things I could have imagined, but fortunately, we got her out of there and she doesn't seem too traumatized by the situation. The reason I'm calling is twofold. I want to change my membership to a couple's with Teigen, and I'd also like to arrange an erotic hypnosis demo with Teigen as my bottom. If my application gets approved I'm going to present her the membership at the end of the demo."

"I don't see it being a problem. I'll draw up the papers and have them ready when you get here. As far as the demo is concerned, you'll actually be doing me a big favor. Our wax-play demo was postponed for Saturday night, so you would be a great replacement. I got terrific feedback on your last demo."

"That'll be perfect. Thanks."

With the wheels in motion for his plans for Teigen, he went into his meeting feeling on top of the world.



TEIGEN

Ellison came home with a big white box tied with a red satin bow. He wouldn't let her have it until after dinner.

Her curiosity ate her up all during the meal, the box taunting her from the living room. The minute the last dish was in the dishwasher, she turned to him with rounded eyes and a small pout.

“Please, Ellison. May I open it now?”

“Okay. Let's bring it into the bedroom.”

She didn't even wait for him. She snatched it from its perch on the coffee table, and rushed down the hall. Sliding off the ribbon, she opened the box. A shiny red sticker held the tissue paper in place, and she peeled it back, revealing a stunning, red-brocade corset. She'd never owned anything that beautiful. She reverently removed it from the box and walked over to the mirror by the closet. Holding it up against her body, she imagined it sucking in her curves, giving her an hourglass figure. The ruby red color accented her red hair and brought color to her cheeks. She'd always looked good in red, even though some people thought redheads shouldn't wear it.

Ellison sat on the bed watching her.

“It's so beautiful!” she whispered, almost reverently. “I love it!”

Ellison's delighted laugh rang through the room. “I can't wait to see you in it. But there was more in the box, wasn't there?”

She'd been so caught up with the corset she hadn't noticed. Rushing back, she placed the corset on the bed and looked in the box again. She pulled out a red lace garter belt, thong, stockings, and a very short, full, red satin skirt.

“Oh my God, Ellison. What did you do? This is incredible.”

“I want to be able to show off my sub when I take her out on Saturday. And she has to look extra special, because we’re going to do a demo at Black Light. You’ve been so receptive to my erotic hypnosis, I figured that my next time onstage I should have my own sub as the demo bottom.”

Uh-oh! She wasn’t sure the outfit was worth the price. “I’m going to be way too embarrassed to get up onstage in front of all those people I don’t know.”

Ellison took her hand and pulled her in front of him, stroking her cheek with his forefinger.

“I’m sure Maria will be there if you ask her. And it’s really not much different from doing a scene in the main part of the dungeon, just a little higher up than usual. You’re going to be with me, so it will be just like the times we played there before. If you concentrate on me, as you should, once the demo starts, you won’t even notice anyone else.”

Yeah...but... She could barely get the words out. “The worst thing is the getting naked part with all those people looking at me. I hate it.”

He pointed to the clothes on the bed. “That’s one of the reasons I bought you the outfit, Teigen. I want you to feel like the stunning creature I see every time I look at you. You can wear it the whole time.”

Well, that made things a lot better. “Really. You won’t make me take it off at the last minute?”

“I would never, ever tell you I’d do something and then renege. Why would you trust me after that?”

She cast her eyes down, unable to face him after she realized she’d just insulted him. “I’m sorry.”

Ellison lifted her chin, forcing her to look at him. “Hey, it’s okay. We’re still new, and you will learn to trust me. It won’t happen overnight. In time you’ll know I’ll never put you in a situation where your limits are not being respected, or that I’ll violate what we’ve negotiated.”

She leaned into him, her heart full of love for this man who was everything she needed him to be. “I do trust you...”

completely. It's just sometimes my own insecurities take over."

"I understand. There will be time I will make you undress at Black Light, but Saturday you'll be onstage in your beautiful outfit, looking gorgeous...and, I hope, confident."

Her joy at receiving the new clothes finally won over. Bouncing on her toes, she told him. "I do love it, and I can't wait to try it on. Can I do it now?"

"Of course. You can model it for me. Wear your red stilettos to complete the picture."

Without thinking, Teigen shed her clothes, totally comfortable being naked in front of Ellison. His attention, caring and love had given her the confidence to at least be herself with him.

She donned the thong, garter belt, stockings, and skirt and put on the stilettos. "I don't think I can put the corset on myself."

"It's not easy. I'll help you."

He loosened the laces on the back, opened the hooks along the front, then held the open corset out for her to step into. Once the hooks were closed, she turned around. Ellison grabbed hold of the laces and pulled, cinching her in tight.

"Hey, I can't breathe!"

Ellison laughed. "Breathing is overrated. When you wear a corset, you have to be sucked in."

"How did women long ago wear this all the time? It looks incredible, but..."

She didn't finish the sentence. Catching sight of herself in the full-length mirror, she was taken aback. Her full breasts appeared on the verge of spilling out of the garment, her waist never looked so tiny, and the swingy skirt accentuated her now hourglass figure. She couldn't help herself from twirling, revealing the sexy garters holding up the lace-topped stockings.

"Wow...just wow."

“You got that right, my beautiful girl. I hope this will give you the confidence to be with me onstage. Look at you.”

She preened a bit before she turned for him to take it off. “I love it, but I’m not sure I’ll make it through the night with it on.” As Ellison undid the laces a whoosh of relief escaped her lips. “It almost feels as good taking it off as wearing it.”

“If it gets too much, you can change after the demo.”

“But this is the only thing I have to wear to the club. I always borrowed something from Maria when we went.”

“You’ll have time to go shopping with Maria to pick out something more comfortable to change into. You can go to Passion’s Promise. They’ll bill me.”

She bent down and kissed him on the nose. “Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. Now take off the rest of the outfit and put it away for Saturday. We don’t want to mess it up before your grand entrance.” He winked at her. She gave him what she hoped was an enthusiastic smile back.

She still had trepidations about the demo, but she hoped her bright red corset and Ellison’s faith in her would carry her through. The last thing she wanted to do was disappoint him.



SHE MET Maria at Passion’s Promise the next evening after work. As soon as she walked in the door, Maria squealed.

“Is that what I think it is?”

“What?”

Maria pointed to her neckline. “That! What else would I be talking about?”

Oh, right. Belonging to Ellison seemed second nature to her now, even though it had been such a short time. She gave Maria a coy smile. “Yeah.”

Maria jumped up and down clapping before she reached for the collar to get a better look. “That man knows his way

around jewelry, I'll give him that. It's spectacular."

"Thanks. I love it. Every time I get a glance of it in a mirror, it steals my breath away. I know a lot of women say this, but I'm the luckiest woman alive."

"Alive is right. I can't believe your parents tried to kidnap you. You're lucky Ellison went crazy after you disappeared and went to find you. That's really why you're lucky."

Teigen needed to set Maria straight. "Don't get me wrong. I'm so grateful that Ellison came to find me and helped me get away. But if he hadn't come, I would have found a way myself. There isn't a chance in hell I would have let them abuse me again. I've found my strength over the past few years, and they weren't going to steal it from me again."

Maria hugged Teigen hard. "I was so worried when you went missing. I get what you're saying but I'm still glad Ellison went to find you."

"I am too. I got out of there a lot faster, and it showed me how important I was to him. I'll always be thankful to him for that."

Maria hugged her again. "You deserve someone good in your life. Now, let's go find something spectacular for you to wear for this demo."

"Oh, I already have an outfit for that. It's the most incredible corset, but it's so tight I'll need something to wear after it's over."

Maria started to laugh. "Oh, you mean like a reception dress."

"Exactly."

The two women went arm-in-arm through the racks of lingerie and fetwear, finally settling on a black jersey short dress with lacing up the front, revealing a lot of cleavage. Ellison would like the exposure, and she could still feel covered up, as it skimmed a lot of the bumps she felt self-conscious about.

After shopping they got a cup of coffee. Teigen told Maria about their confrontation with Ellison's father.

"Boy, you guys have had family conflicts all over the place. I'll hand it to Ellison that he stood up to his father for you. A lot of men in his position wouldn't do that."

Teigen swirled the coffee in her cup, thinking about how the encounter could have gone a lot differently.

"He didn't even hesitate. I was so proud of him for himself as well as for me. It just worries me. His father has been such a driving force in his life, I hope he doesn't regret it."

Maria looked Teigen squarely in the eye. "Do you?"

"Do I what?"

"Regret standing up to your parents. Letting them know that under no circumstances were you ever coming back to them."

"Of course not."

"Then why don't you give Ellison credit for being able to do the same?"

Damn. Maria had a point. Teigen's insecurities had bled over into her viewpoint of how Ellison would eventually react to his father. She'd assumed at some point he'd need to go back to his family rather than stand by her. If she looked at the evidence without bringing her self-doubt into the equation, Ellison was clearly happier now than when she first met him.

"You're right."

"Damn right I'm right. Now treat that man the way he deserves to be treated. He's put himself way out there for you."

"I know. He's been very patient with me. I'm not easy to put up with. If I want to have a full relationship with him, I'm going to have to allow myself to be pushed past my comfort zone."

Maria nodded. "It'll be worth it. Master Ellison has been in the lifestyle a long time. I look forward to seeing you open up

to new experiences, to letting him guide you through types of play you'd never thought you'd try. Be open to him...and to yourself. I promise you won't regret it."

"I will. Saturday night will be a whole new world for me, standing up on that stage allowing myself to be vulnerable to him. Doing a scene centerstage rather than off in a corner somewhere. It's so scary, but I'm determined to go through with it."

"Don't think of it that way. Then it's something you have to endure, not something new you get to try. He hasn't steered you wrong, yet, has he?"

Teigen shook her head.

"Then anticipate the scene with excitement. A little trepidation isn't a bad thing, either. It adds to the fun."

"God, Maria, I don't know what I'd do without you. You always know how to get my head on straight."

"It's just experience. The more you get, the less you'll question. And knowing Master Ellison will never push you too far will allow you to relax and enjoy. It doesn't mean you can never say no, you'll just say it a lot less often."

Teigen finished up her coffee. "Thanks for the help picking out the dress, but more importantly, thanks for the advice. I have to get home now. Ellison is waiting for me for dinner. Next time we concentrate on you and Miles."

Maria groaned. "That will take more than one evening."

"Whatever it takes. I'll be here for you too."

They embraced and went their separate ways, leaving Teigen feeling less apprehensive about the demo. All she had to do was concentrate on being up there with Ellison. The rest didn't matter.



Ellison

Ellison couldn't wait for Saturday night. After his meeting at his firm, when to his shock, no one asked to leave, he was walking on air. The demo was the final key to his strategy for completing his path to independence, ironically by committing himself to Teigen in front of his friends at Black Light. His collaring of her had been spur of the moment, compelled by having her back with him after her kidnapping. He wanted to declare his love for her formally.

Teigen threw herself into work on her next article. He wasn't sure if she was avoiding him or just working hard and he didn't want to assume. Even though she spent an inordinate time in the office working, he knew that by Saturday night, she wouldn't be able to hide from him anymore.

He concentrated on his own work for the rest of the week, and by the time Saturday rolled around, he felt like a schoolboy getting ready for prom.

Teigen, on the other hand, was skittish all day. She jumped out of bed in the morning to make breakfast instead of lying around to cuddle, something she enjoyed doing on other weekend mornings.

He needed to calm her down. He walked into the kitchen to find a hurricane of measuring cups, flour, butter, and a skillet. "What are you making?"

"Pancakes. We haven't had them, and they're my favorite."

He walked over to her, brushing flour off her nose. "We would have had them before if I'd known. I want to do everything in my power to make you happy, and if you like pancakes, we'll have them. But after breakfast, I want you to take a long, hot bubble bath, and relax. I suspect your yen for pancakes has something to do with what's happening tonight."

She couldn't look him in the eye. He circled her into his arms and stood there, having her lean against him, letting their breathing mesh. "Teigen, I want you to enjoy this evening, I want us to share our erotic hypnosis practices with our friends, to show them how in sync we are. Doesn't that appeal to you?"

She nuzzled in closer, allowing him to pull her in tighter in hopes of giving her a sense of security. He wanted to be her rock, her center, the place she could be safe. He covered her face with tiny kisses, murmuring “I love you” after each kiss.

Her body shook and he realized she was crying. “God, Teigen, what is it?”

“I’m afraid...of disappointing you ...”

“You could never ever disappoint me unless you leave me. What I have planned should be playful. And as you requested you will not be required to get naked.”

“What about an orgasm onstage. I’m not sure I’d like that.”

“You did say it was okay in a scene, and this will be a scene. You will be concentrating on me. You probably won’t even notice the audience once we get started. But remember, even under trance you have the ability to say stop. If you are not comfortable with what is going on, you always, always, always have your safe word. I would never violate your trust by not responding to it.”

“But I wouldn’t want to humiliate you by doing that.”

He stepped back so he could look her in the eye. “Teigen, you will never humiliate me by calling a safe word. If you remember nothing else about BDSM, remember that. We will be among like-minded people. They will understand.”

He hoped he’d put her mind to rest. The last thing he wanted was to cause her anguish. “Hey, I’m looking forward to these homemade pancakes. Get going!” He smacked her lightly on the ass. Her giggle assured him that for now she was okay. He hoped she’d be fine this evening.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



ELLISON

After Teigen went into the locker room to get dressed for the demo, Jaxson walked over to Ellison. “I’m glad to hear about your new membership status. You’ve made a great contribution to this club, not just with your teaching but by participating in the kind of community we’ve built here. Teigen will be a welcome addition.”

“Thanks. I know she will.”

At that moment, Teigen came out of the locker room, followed by Emma, Jaxson’s wife.

Glowing with a combination of excitement and a bit of nervousness, Teigen looked better in her new outfit tonight than she did when she’d originally tried it on. She twirled for him, obviously proud of the way she looked. It had been the right move to dress her up.

“Emma helped me tie the corset. I couldn’t have gotten it on without her.”

“Thank you, Emma. I was going to sneak into the ladies’ room to help Teigen, but you saved me the trouble.”

“It was no trouble at all. I was happy to do it. I’m so glad we were able to make it to D.C. this week. I’m looking forward to watching you two tonight.”

The brunette with the dark hair and violet eyes was a stark contrast to Teigen but no less beautiful. Jaxson and Chase had to thank their lucky stars every day to have her as their own.

“It will be an honor to have you in the audience.”

Jaxson took Emma's hand. "Chase is waiting for you by the stage for your introduction. Have a good time." He winked at Teigen as he led Emma through the club.

Ellison turned to Teigen. "Come, my exquisite goddess, let me show you off to the world." Extending his hand, he admired every inch of her loveliness as she sauntered up to him.

"I wouldn't call Black Light the world." Hand on hip, she posed provocatively in front of him, ignoring his extended arm.

Teetering on her high heels, she almost lost her balance as he pulled her into his embrace. He gripped her ass and pinched. "For us, for now, Black Light is our world. And when I call you to me, you come."

With a sly grin she sassied back, "I thought you had to snap your fingers for me to come."

Despite his desire to keep his cool, he couldn't help laughing. A little sass showed she was feeling self-confident, and he didn't want to discourage that.

"You know very well what I mean. Now take my hand and let's go to the stage. Chase is waiting for us."

On their way across the dungeon, they met Maria and Miles.

"Wow, you look fantastic! I wouldn't take that outfit off ever!" Maria hugged Teigen and she blushed under the praise.

"You really like it?" Teigen self-consciously smoothed the skirt.

Miles looked like he could eat her up, making it hard for Ellison to keep from pulling her away. "Yeah," Miles said. "You look smokin' hot!"

Maria grabbed Miles' arm in what looked like a possessive gesture even as she agreed with him. "See, I'm not the only one."

Well, he wanted to show her off. He'd have to deal with the admiration and attraction others would give her. Even

though he knew she wouldn't engage with a Dom she didn't know and she was wearing his collar, he wasn't going to leave her alone for long for both their sakes. *Be careful what you wish for.*

"Thanks, guys. Your approval means a lot to me," Teigen replied. "I'm so nervous about tonight."

"Don't be. We'll all be supporting you."

Though grateful for her friends showing up, Ellison had to get them to the stage. "C'mon, Teigen. It's time."

Wide-eyed, she followed him to the stage. A crowd had gathered, and Teigen squeezed his hand tightly as they went up the stairs.

Chase was waiting for them when they arrived. "All set? We have the chair you asked for, the pillow, and some water. Did you need anything else?"

"No, that's good."

"Okay, as soon as you're ready, I'll introduce you, although I'm sure most of our members have seen you before."

Ellison pulled Teigen into his arms. "Give us a minute and we'll be ready."

Chase walked to the back of the stage to wait. Ellison pressed his forehead to Teigen's and spoke to her in a soft voice. "Remember to use your safe word if you feel uncomfortable. This is supposed to be fun for both of us. I love you, and I'm so proud of you. Are you ready for this?"

She nodded.

"Do you consent for me to hypnotize you in front of these people?"

Another nod.

"I need your words, Teigen."

"Yes, sir."

He kissed her gently on her forehead, eyes, nose then mouth. “Okay, we’ll start now.”

He waved to Chase, who came back to the front of the stage.

“Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. I’m Chase Cartwright-Davidson, one of your hosts at Black Light. We have a wonderful treat for you tonight. Master Ellison and his lovely sub Teigen are going to do a short erotic hypnosis demo.” He put his hand up over his mouth and in a stage-whisper announced, “We might even have a surprise ending.”

Teigen looked at him in panic.

“Trust me,” he told as her as he led her to the stand in front of the pillow.

“Good evening. I am thrilled to have you join us this evening. We’re going to do what is called sensation transfer, a delightful sleight of touch, then move on to the vanishing seven, which will become apparent during the demo. Please welcome my lovely sub Teigen, looking fabulous in her new corset.”

Whoops and hollers erupted from the crowd, and to his amazement, Teigen curtsied.

“Good girl.”

She beamed up at him, all of her nervousness seemingly at bay. He was so proud of her he could burst.

After making a quick check of the time, he stood facing her. “On your knees.”



TEIGEN

Teigen sank onto the pillow, totally concentrated on Ellison. The crowd had gone silent, making it easier for her to block them out. He stroked her cheek and she drifted away as he directed her to go deep into trance.

The singsong tone of Ellison's voice calmed her, directing her to reach out to him. She raised her hands.

"Teigen, do you feel the ropes coming up out of the floor and grabbing your legs. They're locked tight, so now you can't move."

She tested him, trying to move her feet, but they were bound as he said. But his ropes were safe, keeping her secure while they scened. She settled onto her heels, accepting her position.

"Good girl, Teigen."

Every time he called her a good girl, warmth suffused her like a hug. She'd craved it all her life, "I'm warning you. It won't be gentle."

Teigen rose and bit his lip. "Good. So do it already!"

"That's my girl!" but he was the only one who ever called her that.

"Listen carefully. I'm going to move all your sensation points to your right hand. When I make little circles in the palm of your hand, you will feel as though I'm touching your nipples. They will get hard and you will get excited."

The minute he touched her, her nipples became extremely sensitive, and she twisted to provide them with friction. She could barely hear his words as he relentlessly stroked her palm.

"For the next fifteen minutes, there is no number seven. It will cease to exist until ten o'clock tonight. Then it will miraculously reappear. Do you understand?"

Why he was fixated on the number seven, she couldn't figure out but okay. She wanted more of the sensation. "Yes, sir."

"Good girl."

His constant massaging of her palm made her dismiss what he'd just told her. She hoped it wasn't important. She needed to concentrate on other things.

“Your arousal is getting more intense and it is traveling down your torso to your clit. It’s swelling, throbbing, you’re getting wet.”

Vibrations coursed through her as the pressure in her pussy intensified. Little beads of sweat appeared on her forehead. She was on fire.

The relentless circling of his fingers ramped her up as much as his words. “Every inch of your being is tingling with arousal...you feel electric, all your senses are alive, you feel about to ignite.

She couldn’t control the tremors that coursed through her. “Please...” escaped on a whimper.

“Yes, Teigen, come for me. Now!”

She convulsed, her inner muscles clenching violently, and she struggled to catch her breath. On it went, until she sank forward, Ellison catching her, stroking her arms and back.

“Good girl, Teigen. The ropes are going to release you and I’m going to take you out of the trance. Rest back on your heels and relax...relax... On the count of three you’ll be awake, refreshed, and you’ll remember the command I gave you. One...two...three. Awake.”

Teigen woke to the sound of clapping. A little mystified, she looked to Ellison.

“Come, stand up, and give me your hand. Bow to the crowd. you did very well.”

She curtsied, basking in Ellison’s praise, spreading her satin skirt wide, loving the way it swished around her.

“Would you like a little water?” He handed her the water next to the chair. “Have a little sip.”

She wasn’t sure why she felt so parched, but she drank half the bottle. When she handed it back to Ellison, she was dismayed by the sly grin on his face.

“Do you remember when you sassed me, and I promised you’d have to pay for that.”

“Now?”

“I think we should do it now. Unless you think you should get away with it.”

She backed away from him slowly. “What are you going to do?”

“Since you’re new to punishment, I’m going to give you a spanking with my hand.”

A spanking. She’d tried spanking once and she’d enjoyed it. But it wasn’t a punishment spanking. She did trust that Ellison wouldn’t harm her, and the little pain she’d experienced with him so far had turned her on, but...

She stopped in her tracks. Ellison crooked his finger for her to come closer to him. In a low voice that no one else could hear, he asked, “Are you calling your safe word? We’ll stop right now if you want to. No pressure.”

She met his gaze with determination. She wanted this from him and oddly the crowd didn’t matter. “I consent to the punishment.”

“Do you trust me?” Ellison remained still until she responded.

“Yes.”

“Then let’s have some fun,” he said and gave her a wink.

Ellison turned back to the audience. “How many swats do you think my lovely sub here deserves for brattiness?”

“One hundred,” was the first response.

Trust him. Trust him. Trust. Him, she repeated to herself as the high numbers flew around the room.

“Now, now people. Give her a break. This is her first real punishment, and I think a count of ten is plenty.”

There were a couple of no’s from the crowd, but to her relief, Ellison stood firm. How bad could ten be?

Ellison pulled up the chair and placed her over his lap, holding her tight to his body, reassuring her with his closeness.

As he flipped up her skirt, she panicked until she realized he'd positioned her sideways so she wouldn't be exposed to the audience.

As Ellison stroked her bottom, he told her, "Now I want you to count the swats. If you miss the count, if you make a mistake, we start again. Do you understand?"

Teigen smirked, grateful Ellison couldn't see her expression or he'd probably add more. It wasn't hard to count to ten. This would be over quickly. Not much of a punishment.

"Teigen, I asked you a question."

Ugh! "Sorry, sir. I understand."

Without further warning, he smacked her bottom. Harder than she anticipated, it still wasn't anything she couldn't take.

"Teigen?"

"What?"

"I didn't hear a count. We start over."

This was more difficult than she thought. Positioned over his lap, her head upside down was strenuous and confusing. Her body was conflicted between the sensation of the spanks and the concentration needed to pay attention to the count.

SMACK!

This one had more power than the last. Was he making a point?

"Teigen?"

"Fuck." *Pay. Attention!*

SMACK!

"That's for the cursing. Now we start over."

Fuck! At least she kept that one to herself.

SMACK!

"One!"

"Good girl!"

SMACK!

‘Two!’

SMACK!

“Three!”

SMACK!

“Four!”

Her ass was warming up, and she was grateful she only had a short count.

SMACK!

“Five!”

Halfway. She was going to make it easily.

SMACK!

“Six!”

SMACK!

“Eight!”

“Uh-uh-uh, Teigen. That’s wrong. We start over.”

A ripple of laughter went through the crowd.

What? How the hell did I mess up? If she had to start over, this could get to be more than her now hot ass could handle.

SMACK!

“One!”

The smacks continued and she dutifully counted, getting more and more uncomfortable with the pain, until Ellison stopped at eight and admonished her again.

Her confusion was monumental. She was counting like he told her to. What was wrong?

“Before we start again, does anyone have the time? I’d like to get home at a reasonable hour.”

A voice from the crowd. “It’s ten o’clock, old man. Still pretty early.”

“Oh, I didn’t realize it was only ten o’clock.”

Teigen couldn’t help herself. “Who cares what time it is. Can we just get this over with?”

A ripple of laughter went through the crowd.

Ellison stroked her ass. “As you wish.”

SMACK!

“One!”

As the count continued, Teigen noticed that, though the smacks still hurt, her pussy contracted with each swat, revving up her arousal. So this was the whole pain morphing into pleasure thing.

SMACK!

“Six!”

SMACK!

“Seven!”

A cheer went up through the crowd. *What the hell?*

SMACK!

“Eight!”

SMACK!

“Nine!”

SMACK!

“Ten!”

An unexpected orgasm shot through her. Ellison pulled her into his arms, holding her tight while her body trembled. If this was what a punishment spanking felt like, she could definitely try it again.

Once she calmed down, Ellison told her, “You took your punishment very well, Teigen.”

The audience applause rang in her ears, reminding her she wasn’t alone with him. He leaned into her. “You were

wonderful. You have nothing to be ashamed about. Everyone was in your corner.”

Someone in the audience called out, “What’s the surprise?”

“I’m getting to it now.”

In a soft voice he again addressed Teigen. “Can you stand?”

“I think so.”

She got up on wobbly feet. Ellison rose and offered her the chair, where she sat gratefully. He caressed her while he spoke.

“This has been the happiest week of my life. As you may have noticed, Teigen has accepted my collar.”

More clapping, whoops, and whistles came from the crowd.

Teigen felt the telltale flush traveling up her body and over her face.

“To top it off, Black Light has accepted my application to change my membership to a couple’s membership.”

“Yeah!” one observer yelled.

Teigen was overwhelmed. He’d done that for her? She knew it cost a fortune to be a member, and as pretty as the collar was, this was way more of an investment in their relationship.

Ellison turned to her. “Both of us have had to turn our backs on the family that raised us. But I’m not sad, because I’ve chosen my own family, people I can turn to when I’m in trouble, and people who will celebrate my joy. You, Teigen, are my joy. In front of all these people I want to repeat the vow I made to you when I gave you my collar. I promise to honor you, treasure you, guide you and, most of all, love you. Welcome to the Black Light family...and I hope, in the near future, we can make a family of our own as well.”

As the audience once again erupted, Teigen couldn’t contain her tears. By the time Ellison had folded her into his arms, she was sobbing.

“Wow...just wow!” was all she could muster.

Speaking to her in a voice no one else could hear, he said, “I can’t live another day without you. Please move in with me, and this weekend we can go ring shopping. A collar is not enough. Next time we come to Black Light, I want you to show off your new engagement ring. Will you marry me?”

This time she had no problem answering. “God yes!”



WE HOPE you enjoyed Ellison and Teigen’s story along with your latest visit to Black Light East. We have a full season of Black Light stories coming your way including the long awaited ***Black Light: Gamble*** (Elijah’s story) by Livia Grant along with ***Black Light: Secret (M/m)*** by Samantha A. Cole. We will also have stories by Eden Bradley, Golden Angel, and Eris Adderly! Make sure you receive the Black Collar Press [newsletter](#) so you don’t miss a release.

Check out this sneak peek at ***Black Light: Gamble*** by Livia Grant:



ELIJAH WAS NEARING the front of the line when his phone vibrated. He glanced down to a message from Kent letting him know the guys were leaving L.A. later than they’d hoped, but they’d be getting in before midnight.

Great. He’d end up with a night in Vegas alone. Technically, he could have worked that night after all and driven over after the club closed, but then he wouldn’t have gotten to enjoy the sunny drive in his new convertible and anyway, then he’d be exhausted all day tomorrow if he got no sleep.

A front desk agent with an opening caught his eye, waving him over. He was ready with his ID and credit card out. While

the tall guy behind the desk checked him in, he couldn't help but overhear the raised voices coming from near by.

“My reservation has to be in there. If not under my name, try Tristan Goodrich.”

He glanced over as nonchalantly as he could—surprised to see one of the two women who'd been with the jerk driver. Her long dark auburn hair had looked more red out in the sun, but it had been her long tan legs he'd been admiring while standing behind her in the line that he recognized now.

“As I've said, I do find Mr. Goodrich's reservation, but he did not add your name to the registry. What time will he be arriving? You can check in then with him.”

“He's been delayed!” Her voice quavered. “He won't be here until tomorrow now, but obviously, I still need our room.”

Elijah wasn't sure, but it sounded like the beauty was about to cry.

The hotel employee didn't seem phased. “Is there some way you can contact Mr. Goodrich and have him add your name to the reservation?”

“I've tried reaching him several times, but he's traveling on business,” she pointed out.

“Well, like I explained already. I cannot check you into his room without his permission. If you have him add your name, you could come back.”

“What? And wait in line again?” she complained, clearly frustrated. “Fine, then just make a whole new reservation for me and put it on my card. When I reach him, I'll just have him cancel his reservation.”

“I'd love to help you, but unfortunately, we're completely sold out for the next three nights. We have a huge technology convention in town. Not to mention, it's already after three and so I'm afraid Mr. Goodrich will be charged for tonight regardless since it's past our cancellation deadline.”

Thankfully, Elijah wasn't having the same kind of problems checking in and he had his key in hand, ready to

head up to his room just as her two other friends arrived next to her.

“What the hell is taking you so long?” asshole asked. His tone of voice grated on Elijah’s nerves just as much as his shitty driving had earlier.

He was ready to pass by and get as far away from them as he could when the red-headed beauty burst out crying.

“They don’t have a reservation for me and won’t check me into Tristan’s room. This whole weekend was a mistake. I’m going back to L.A.”

Elijah expected her friends to cheer her up and come up with a solution, but instead just before he was out of earshot range, he heard the asshole berating her for crying and embarrassing him.

Something made Elijah stop and turn around to watch the drama play out. His sixth sense was telling him that something was wrong... more than just a mixed up hotel reservation.

As he got his first good look at the unhappy woman’s face, his breath hitched. He’d been right. She was beautiful, but not in a fake, glamour kinda way like her friend, but more in a girl-next-door authentic beauty way that had his dick stirring in his jeans.

“You’ll just have to hang out in our room, I guess, until he gets here,” the other woman offered.

But the asshole only made things worse by adding, “How are we supposed to have any fun with her in our room all night?”

The beautiful red-head flinched as if he’s physically hurt her instead of just using his shitty words to do his damage.

Elijah had absolutely no idea why the trio had caught his attention, but they had. He had no idea who these people were to each other or who the hell Tristan was, but Elijah’s Dom radar was currently set to HIGH, and alarm bells were telling him the red-head needed help—help she clearly wasn’t going to get from the rude pair with her.

It was none of his business. He should just go upstairs and forget about them, and he would have if she hadn't glanced his way. His gaze locked with her sad eyes as she swiped at her tears, and even though he knew nothing about her or her situation, he knew without a doubt that she was lost—emotionally, if not physically.

Letting his gut make his decision, Elijah took long strides back towards the desk. As he approached, the beauty's light blue eyes widened, realizing he was headed into her personal space.

Ignoring her and the couple with her, Elijah instead spoke to the front desk agent who had been trying to help her.

“Hi,” he paused, glancing down at the employee's name tag before looking back up and adding, “Ryan. I couldn't help but overhear the dilemma surrounding this young woman's reservation. I understand that you might not be able to assist her, but would you mind calling your manager over. I'm sure we'll be able to get this all sorted out.”

“Uh... my manager is super busy. I don't think—“

“Okay, then perhaps you will be able to help after all if your manager is not available,” Elijah said with the dominant tone of voice that made the dungeon monitors who worked for him quiver.

“Um... I don't know what...” Ryan stuttered, clearly uncomfortable with Elijah's take-charge attitude.

“Oh, I'm sure we can put our heads together and come up with a solution, don't you?” Elijah offered, putting a knowing smile on his face. “Now, my friend here has a reservation, but it was a mistake that her name was not put on the reservation along with Mr. Goodrich. I'm certain that leaving her off the reservation was just an oversight on his part and he wouldn't want to have her inconvenienced.” Grabbing his wallet from the back pocket of his jeans, Elijah whipped out his American Express Platinum Card and plunked it down.

It was a gamble on his part. He had no intention of paying for the beauty's hotel room, let alone some asshole who hadn't

even had the decency to show up, but considering he'd overheard that the room was non-refundable, he suspected it was already paid for anyway.

“Payment isn't the problem. I can't just give his room away without his permission.”

“Of course not,” Elijah said just as he felt soft hands on his bicep. He didn't dare look in her direction. He knew she was probably confused about why he was getting involved, and honestly, he was beginning to wonder the same thing.

“I'll tell you what. Let's have you take my card as a backup form of payment for the room. That way if Mr. Goodrich shows up and gets upset that you've checked my friend here into his room, you'll have another form of payment to reimburse him with.”

“We don't normally do it that way...”

“Probably true, but I also know that it's an option available to you. Let's just make it happen, shall we?” It may have been formed as a question, but there was no doubt Elijah had given him marching orders.

The agent typed into the computer for another full minute. As the seconds ticked by, Elijah found himself thinking that the guy could take as long as he wanted since he was enjoying the red-head's hand resting on his arm, gently pulling trying to get his attention.

When she leaned in closer, he caught a whiff of her vanilla shampoo as she whispered, “Why are you doing this?”

Not wanting to let the front desk agent realize that they'd never met before, Elijah put his left hand over her hand resting on his arm, patting gently as he returned, “Just let me handle this.”

But it wasn't the beauty that threatened to ruin things... it was the asshole. “I don't know who you are old man, but you need to butt out.”

Elijah had just about enough of the jerk, even before he felt the hand on his arm squeezing. He suspected it was a subconscious move on her part, but it told him he'd been right

when he picked up on her uneasiness with the aggressive jerk standing on the other side of her.

Luckily, Ryan chose that moment to hold out a key packet with a room number scribbled on it. Elijah reached to grab it and his Amex card. “Thanks so much for your help, Ryan. I’ll be sure to fill out a survey card to let the management team know how helpful you’ve been for my friend and me.”

That got a smile out of the employee who immediately turned his attention to the next person in line.

When Elijah turned to hand the key to the young woman, he was confronted with the jerk instead.

“Who the hell do you think you are, gramps?” he accused.

Giving the guy his best dismissive smile, he stepped to the side and reach around him to hand the key to the red-head, ignoring the asshole completely.

“Here you go. I hope you have a great weekend,” Elijah offered as she reached to take the key packet.

The other woman with them was already pulling at the red-head’s arm. “Come on, Reagan. Let’s go upstairs.”

Reagan. Nice name.

Their eyes met and for the briefest of moments, his breath hitched. Elijah shook his head, unsure what the feeling was that had his heart rate going up. Was she in trouble?

It’s none of your business, Keaton.

“Thank you,” she offered quietly, a soft smile coming to her lips which chased away any fear of her needing more help.

“You’re most welcome,” he offered just as her friend started pulling her away.



WATCH FOR **BLACK LIGHT: Gamble** coming soon! You can come along to Vegas to help Elijah celebrate his big 5-0

birthday. Thankfully, what happens in Vegas is going to follow him back to Black Light West.

ABOUT ROSE C. CAROLE

Rose has been an avid reader all her life and pursued that obsession into the publishing business, where she worked in both production and editorial for books and magazines. When her son went off to college, she decided to fulfill another dream and went to culinary school, thinking she would write a cookbook but loving the cooking so much she became a caterer. But her love for books is ever present, and she finally decided it was time to reconnect with her own creative muse and write the kinds of books she enjoys reading. She hopes her readers enjoy them as well.

Rose is now an award-winning author. She had the Best Book of the Year 2015 from the BDSM Writers Con; was a finalist in the Passionate Plume Contest Best BDSM Book 2018 from Passionate Ink, a division of Romance Writers of America; and was a finalist in the Beverley Awards for Best Erotic Romance from Colorado Romance Writers.

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ALSO BY ROSE C. CAROLE

Catering to His Needs

Catering to His Desires

Catering to His Demands

Trust Betrayed

The Auction

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