

MERCENARY
MASTERS

ICE

DOOR

USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

DELTA JAMES

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ICE DOG

MERCENARY MASTERS NOVELLA



DELTA JAMES

*For Chris, Renee, and the Girls:
Who make my life so much easier and better.
Special Thanks to Kessily Lewel
for the use of her characters Tobias and Margo*

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CHAPTER 1



*K*unlar Province Afghanistan

Ten Years Ago

Chelsea Mason stood on the side of the barren mountain in the Kunar Province, holding back tears. But were they of sorrow or rage? Could be both. The decimated forest which had been cleared of its trees was hard to even look at. Chelsea had grown up the daughter of a rancher in the panhandle of Texas. Her family had homesteaded and owned their ranch from the time Texas joined the United States. Their roots ran deep. So, what the hell was a rancher's daughter turned UN translator doing in Afghanistan?

The original reason she'd been given was that her background, combined with her command of Shumashti, made her uniquely qualified to perform the study on the illegal lumber trade in the war-torn country. She had pointed out that ranching and logging had little in common, but her concerns had been brushed aside.

The sound of a small band of men moving down the mountain behind her was alarming. She'd passed a band of rebels about an hour ago but thought she had managed to slip by them without notice. She feared that thought might have been incorrect. Chelsea began to make her way down the mountainside, hoping her increase in speed would go undetected by those behind her.

They broke from the cover that remained on the landscape and charged after her. She was certain her modern dress and uncovered blonde hair had marked her as a foreigner, as had the UN symbol on her backpack. The band would be looking to trade her for a ransom, but this particular band of rebels was notorious for how they treated their prisoners—male and female alike.

Giving up all pretense that she didn't know she was being chased, as well as hoping they might take it as bait, she slipped out of her backpack and let it fall behind her. Her passport, some of her money, and other travel and identification documents were concealed in the pack secured around her waist under her jacket. Losing the pack also meant she had jettisoned some weight and given herself less restrictive movement.

Chelsea heard the men pursuing her hesitate for a moment at the pack—some staying behind but two more continuing on. She reached the bottom of the mountain and put on a burst of speed. She had no idea where she was heading. Right now, she needed some place she could hide or seek sanctuary. Her plan when she'd started out this morning was to do her survey and move on to the next town. Problem was, she didn't know where that town was.

She wasn't supposed to be out on her own, but the guide that had been assigned to her had failed to show up. Chelsea was told another one wouldn't be available for at least a week; she'd wanted to be home by then. She hadn't thought the job was particularly dangerous—after all, her boss wouldn't send a civilian translator on a dangerous assignment, right?

Damn the men at the UN that had talked her into this. If she died, she would find a way to get her spirit back to New York and haunt them forever. Chelsea ran, even though her lungs felt like they were bursting, and her legs felt heavy and slow. She made it across the open field and thought she was gaining a lead on them. Scrambling up the side of the raised bed of a roadside, she scraped her hands and had to dig her toes in to get any kind of traction, but she made it to the road.

Her joy at having made it that far was deflated like a balloon someone hadn't tied off and had released. Sitting there was a band of decidedly unfriendly-looking men in a rundown jeep that had seen better days.

"Halt! You are our prisoner," shouted the rebel leaning against a machine gun mounted on the jeep in Shumashti.

Knowing it would take nothing to cut her down with that gun on open ground, Chelsea stopped and put her hands behind her head, locking her fingers together as she sank to her knees. Thankfully, years of submissive's training had given her the ability to do that without injuring herself.

Two men jumped out of the jeep while the third remained attached to the machine gun. The two men who'd been chasing her crawled up onto the road, shouting in triumph. What were they so fucking happy about? If it hadn't been for their buddies, she might have gotten away.

The men from the jeep dragged her to her feet, one of them using regular zip ties to bind her hands. It was funny how your mind worked. The first thought that occurred to Chelsea as the binding tightened was *under different circumstances, I might find this kind of kinky and sexy*. Probably not something she would share with her captors. She only hoped that the UN identification would save her from rape. But she made her mind up that whatever happened, she'd survive and make it back to her small loft in Tribeca.

Two months later, Chelsea's situation had grown more dire. They had yet to rape her, but that didn't mean she hadn't spent a lot of the time chained to a wall being groped... or kicked. One of the rebels liked to kick her before spitting on her. The food they ate, or at least served her, was appalling, and the water brackish. She had yet to get dysentery from either, although she rarely ate and only drank the water to keep from becoming dehydrated.

Chelsea knew the state of negotiations between the United States and the rebels had broken down; she feared irretrievably. The UN had a long-held and strict position of not negotiating with anyone who fell under the broad term of

terrorist. So did her country of origin and citizenship, the good ole U.S. of A. Both groups were sometimes willing to fudge a little on that policy provided the person involved was *somebody*, but Chelsea knew she didn't qualify. Even though they hadn't raped her, that possibility had been discussed if the Americans refused to pony up the money.

She knew the rebels weren't going to be able to keep her much longer. Several members of the group were already getting nervous about having been in one place for so long. There had also been talk about making an example of her and delivering her body to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. The rebels had yet to figure out Chelsea spoke their language fluently, which allowed her to keep tabs on what was going on and just how desperate her situation was becoming.

The worst part was that she'd given up her annual trip with Olivia Miles to London. Both worked in the UN's translation group, and both were practicing submissives and longtime members of both the "scene" and Baker Street. Both had long ago agreed that the UN didn't need to know anything about their lifestyle choices and had ended up becoming good friends and taking an annual holiday together to London.

Shit. The rebels seemed to be forgetting that their religion forbade strong spirits. Drunk, horny and angry. That was not a good combination, especially when she was the only female available. Chelsea knew she needed to start looking for a way to save herself, because it didn't look like anyone else was coming anytime soon. She closed her eyes for a moment and promised herself that whatever happened, she would survive.

The rebels continued to drink, coming in to make lewd and obscene gestures to her, telling her what they wanted to do to her. She resisted the impulse to tell them that some of what they suggested was anatomically impossible. As the day progressed into evening, and evening into night, they quieted down. Chelsea supposed it was because they'd passed out from too much booze. If she was going to make an escape attempt, the time was now.

Chelsea had been working on a way to get out of the zip ties with which they'd bound her hands and then secured to the

wall. She had been able by gestures to convince them it was better if her hands were in front of her. When they'd complied, she'd curled her hands into fists with her palms facing downward. Now, she unclenched her fists, turned her palms into each other, and wriggled her right thumb until she was able to slip her hand free.

Quietly she got to her feet and stood, letting her limbs come back online. Chelsea had tried to avoid becoming stiff or sitting in one position for too long. She was past the point of exhaustion but if she was going to live through this, she needed to get away. She didn't bother to check on the men; she could hear them all snoring and there was a way out of the hut from the back. She moved carefully and with great stealth toward the door, ensuring she made as little noise as possible. Just as she reached for the door, she watched in horror as the lever that latched and unlatched moved and the door began to open. No fucking way was she not getting out of here. She looked around for a weapon and found nothing but an old piece of rebar.

Raising it above her head, she was shocked when a delicate white hanky emerged through the small opening.

"I'm here to help," came a distinctive British voice that Chelsea recognized immediately.

Jordan James, proprietor of Baker Street and the best person to have in your corner if something bad happened to you in some godforsaken part of the world. JJ was here. Relief flooded Chelsea's being and she bit her fist to keep from crying.

JJ stuck her head inside. "Well, you might look like shit, but you look a damn sight better than I thought you would. And look at you—freed from your restraints. Good girl."

"It was something Nigel taught in his self-defense course. I was one of his best students. We need to move. They've had too much to drink and passed out, but..."

"We need to disable one Jeep and get the keys to the other."

“JJ, I know this is kind of your area of expertise, but I really think...” Chelsea said, following behind as JJ strolled boldly toward the room where the men were.

“They didn’t just pass out, Chelsea. That booze was laced with a powerful tranquilizer. They’ll be out for hours. Do you know how to use a gun?”

Chelsea was beginning to believe they were going to get out. Grinning, she said, “I wasn’t raised in the Texas panhandle for nothing.”

JJ returned her smile and handed her a SIG, taking a Glock, a knife, and keys for herself.

JJ motioned for Chelsea to follow. She picked her way over the bodies of her captors, snatching up the discarded camera and exited through the door where two more of the rebels laid passed out, dead to the world. With a brutal efficiency that surprised Chelsea, JJ slashed all four tires of the Jeep that had the mounted machine gun, and then went to the other Jeep. She reached inside her jacket and slapped UN Medical Team stickers on the hood, on the tire mounted on the back and both doors.

Chelsea hopped in as JJ started up the Jeep, checked their fuel gauge, and drove off into the night.

“JJ, I’m not one to quibble and I am eternally grateful that you got me out of there, but I don’t recognize those stickers you put on the Jeep.”

“That’s because I had them made in London. There’s water and protein bars in the back. Help yourself but eat and drink slowly. I don’t suppose you’ve had much of either since you were taken. As for the decals, I suppose the UN would be pissed, but considering their cavalier treatment of their personnel who are abducted, I figure they can kiss my ass. What’s in the camera?”

“Pictures of the devastation of the illegal lumber trade. Their standing timber is at about fifty percent of where it was, and they didn’t have much to begin with. They’re going to turn that country into a bigger dust bowl than it already is.”

She held up the camera before slipping it inside her bra. “I didn’t want to have gone through this not to get my bosses what they wanted. Hopefully these pictures will help stop the smuggling of lumber, which should also deprive the rebels of money they need for arms and other supplies.”

JJ shook her head. “I don’t know what they feed you translators, but I’m not sure I wouldn’t rather have the lot of you on my side than their peace-keeping forces. Sometimes it’s difficult to tell the difference between those in power and those trying to overthrow them, and a lot of the so-called peacekeepers aren’t much better.”

She turned the Jeep onto an unmarked opening in the vegetation—something that passed for a road. They traveled up a sharp incline and onto a flattened clearing. Sitting dead-center in the middle was the most beautiful thing she’d ever seen: an AgustaWestland Apache attack helicopter and a pilot. The chopper was a modified version of the Apache Longbow made for the British Army Air Corps.

“Jimmy?” JJ said, bringing the Jeep to a halt and stepping out. “What do you say we get this bird in the air?”

CHAPTER 2



The pilot in the glow of the helicopter's interior bore an uncanny resemblance to Jan Michael Vincent, who'd played a rogue chopper pilot in a television series called *Airwolf*. It was one of Chelsea's guilty pleasures and she'd purchased the DVDs and watched them whenever she was home alone and wanted to feel good.

JJ nudged her. "I know," she whispered. "He looks just like him, doesn't he?"

Chelsea nodded.

"Ladies, let's get this show on the road," said the pilot. "I take it the pretty lady is the package everybody's been looking for?"

"She is," JJ said with a grin.

The pilot helped both of them on board and into the troop portion of the helicopter. Once he was sure they were belted in, he got them airborne, turned on the stealth mode, and flew low over the terrain. Chelsea felt like if she leaned out of the chopper, she could trail her hand along the tops of the bushes. Once they made the short hop to China, where a private jet was waiting for them, Jimmy radioed back to London. "Dark Angel and package are safe, getting off the chopper and heading to the plane." He turned back to them. "Safe journey, JJ."

"Thanks, Jimmy. I appreciate the help."

Chelsea ran with JJ to the plane and boarded. Once they reached international air space, Chelsea took a long, cleansing

breath. “I had no idea you had this kind of equipment at your disposal.”

JJ laughed. “Well, they’re not mine. Both Jimmy and the plane’s owner support my efforts at getting women out of bad situations. They sent the cutest male flight attendant. He’ll have something hot, nourishing, and easy on the stomach.”

“I don’t know how to thank you, JJ. I don’t think I would have made it out alive without your assistance.”

“Oh, I don’t know about that, you looked like you were well on the way to rescuing yourself. I’m just glad I got there when I did and could help out.”

“If you ever need anything, just ask. And I’ll start sending regular contributions to your slush fund that goes towards these kinds of projects.”

“Thanks, Chelsea, but not to worry. I have some rather wealthy clients who keep me well funded. Some of them are happier about that than others, but the money all spends the same.”

They lapsed into silence as they ate, and sometime later Chelsea realized she must have fallen asleep. She woke to sunlight pouring in through the plane’s window with a pillow under her head and one of Baker Street’s cashmere blankets wrapped around her.

“You’re awake. Good. How are you feeling?” JJ asked solicitously.

“I’m alive, and I’m headed for London. I couldn’t ask for more.”

“Look, I know Baker Street isn’t the Savoy...”

“There’s no place I’d rather be, or where I would feel safer.”

JJ grinned. “We’ll sneak you in tonight, but tomorrow evening a lot of people want to see you. You don’t need to play. Just hang out in the lounge.”

“I think I’ll probably sleep for a long time, but then I don’t know that I don’t want to play or at least have some kind of

session. I need to fly, JJ. I need to really feel alive.”

“I won’t have any trouble getting one of the Doms who has your best interest at heart to take care of whatever you need. Now, let me get our subby little flight attendant to make us lunch.”

As JJ rose gracefully from the seat, she walked toward the rear where the galley was kept. Chelsea settled back in her seat and began to think of all the things she would do in the future to honor what she had been put through.

When they landed in London, a black town car whisked them from a private airstrip just north of the city to the side entrance of Baker Street. When the vehicle came to a halt, the door was opened and a man who blocked out the sun in the limited frame of the door, helped both her and JJ out and ushered them inside.

“Jesus JJ, the Afghans and the Chinese are up in arms. The Home Office is up in arms, the UN is having a conniption fit, and Nigel is here.”

JJ grinned. “Of course, Nigel is here. Such a sweet man. I suppose if I let him spank my ass, he’ll be in a much better mood and feel like he’s in charge, and will save me from this terrible mess I’m in.”

“Really JJ,” drawled the voice of Nigel Pederson, one of the Resident Doms and the only one who topped JJ, “you’ve been a most naughty girl. Lucky for you, I persuaded the Home Office to let me deal with you.”

“Really Nigel?” quipped JJ. “What is it exactly they think they can do to me? Anything they try to do will require a trial or at the very least a press conference. How do you think it will look when I point out that what the UN, the United States and the rest of the bastards said couldn’t be done with all of their fire power was done by one lone woman? How do you think they’ll look when they hear that a civilian translator was abandoned by her employer and her country? The rebels and the Afghans sure as hell aren’t going to admit that they took Chelsea or that I snatched her back... with zero bloodshed, I might add.”

“You wouldn’t...” said Nigel, clearly alarmed.

“I would,” said JJ, leaning into him. “Let’s be honest, Nigel, I’m better at extraction than any of their so-called super soldiers. If they fuck with me, I’ll eat them alive.”

The gorgeous hunk who helped her out of the car, and who Chelsea had seen decked out in leathers, was magnificent, and so muscular that he made a professional bodybuilder look downright wimpy. Adam Wheldon was well over six feet, with dark hair, dark eyes, and a lethal air about him. As she recalled talk in the submissives’ salon, she knew he was also single, had earned the designation of Master, and was reputed to be well-hung with the skill to use it. Things were definitely looking up.

“Chelsea? Why don’t we get you upstairs? You can tell me what you’d like to drink and eat, and I’ll see that it’s brought up to you. Or you’re welcome to go in the submissives’ salon, change into the appropriate clothing and join us in the lounge, which should be fun as I doubt JJ is through giving Nigel hell.”

“Do you really think ‘appropriate’ is the right term for a corset and thong?” Chelsea teased.

“It depends entirely on where you’re going. Lunch with the Queen? I doubt it. But here in the club, unless you’re in one of the private rooms, it’s mandatory.”

Chelsea laughed. “Thank you for that. I haven’t laughed in a while. I think I’ll just hang out upstairs and anything that’s easy is fine with me.”

“JJ put you in Mulholland Falls. It’s not the biggest, but it has an enormous soaker tub and is the most conservative of the rooms.”

“What if I want a session?”

Adam shook his head. “No can do. One of the doctors that plays here will be by in the morning to check you out. Until he’s cleared you for play, you’re to stay in your room or in the lounge. If you want to leave the club, someone in security will

go with you. The rebels and their backers are making lots of noise and we want to make sure you're safe."

"You don't actually believe they'd try to abduct me in broad daylight in the middle of London, do you?"

"Not necessarily, but I don't know that they wouldn't. In any event, once the press gets notice that you're alive and well, they'll be all over you for a story."

"I hadn't thought of that. Does the UN know that I'm safe?"

"Yes, we let them know when your plane entered international airspace. They wanted you brought to New York or at least the US Embassy here in London." He chuckled. "JJ told them to kiss her ass and wants you to know you're welcome to stay at Baker Street for as long as you like."

"Thanks, Adam."

He growled as they went up the stairs. "What did you call me, sub?"

There were certain protocols in place at Baker Street. One of them was that Doms were referred to as Sir or Master in all public areas.

"I'm sorry, Master Adam. Thank you for your help and kindness. I really do appreciate it."

"Good girl," he purred, and Chelsea felt his voice and words flow over her as if she were slipping down into a hot bath.

Adam opened the door to the Mulholland Falls room. "And Chelsea? The no playing until a doctor clears you includes self-play."

Chelsea felt her skin flush and knew her cheeks were stained with a blush from his words. How the hell had he known what she was thinking? A quick shower and then a long soak in the tub, followed by a meal and then a nice long session in bed with a vibrator. She had a lot of built-up tension and a couple of good orgasms would have set her up for a great night's sleep.

As she watched the door close behind him, she wondered if there was any way he'd know if she masturbated. Deciding that was a consideration for after she'd gotten cleaned, relaxed in the tub and eaten, she sat down on the edge of the enormous bed and began to peel her filthy clothes from her body. She found a spare garbage bag and sealed her clothes inside, attached a sticky note that said "toss," and set it outside her door. Chelsea knew that all of the rooms had luxurious robes, and sweats in all sizes. She also kept a change of clothes here at the club. She never wanted to see the things in that bag again. Ever.



Adam closed the door quietly behind him. For once he was glad he'd worn jeans and a sweater to work. The sweater was long enough that hopefully it had hidden the rapid swelling of his cock at the sight of the beautiful, curvy, and blonde submissive. Chelsea Mason had played at the club plenty of times. He'd seen her in beautiful fet wear with her hair and make-up done to perfection, but something about how exhausted and abused she seemed had called to a deep place inside him he'd thought was long dead. It wasn't that she looked helpless or even overly submissive, but there was a vulnerability there with an overlay of strength that tugged at him.

Adam kept his sessions with subs on a more professional and less intimate level. He was the head of security for the club and didn't want any lines blurred. He had Master level membership and was adept at fire, wax, impact and sensation play, as well as the violet wand. He was currently studying shibari with Nigel. He loved the submissives and was happy to help them when they needed something from him, but he only offered oral in terms of sex. More than one submissive had tried to manipulate him into getting what they wanted from him, earning them a disciplinary session.

But damn. He didn't just want to blur the lines with Chelsea; he wanted to erase them completely. She was beautiful, but he saw beauty in all of the subs at Baker Street, and generally in most women. He doubted she had yet realized

how fully the rebels had messed with her head. JJ had rescued her, and she was safe, but that didn't mean her kidnapping and rough treatment from the rebels could be dismissed so quickly.

It was true that JJ wanted Chelsea checked over by a physician who specialized in trauma victims and who was also a member of the club. JJ had asked staff to keep a close watch on Chelsea, as she had never once shed a tear since her escape. Both the physician and JJ had felt it was better if Chelsea didn't play in public or with another member until she was cleared. There had been no prohibition against masturbating. Adam had included that. He was bound and determined that if anyone was going to take care of Chelsea's submissive and intimate needs, it was going to be him.

As he walked down the stairs, he began to plan just how he was going to convince Chelsea to let him take care of her.

CHAPTER 3



Chelsea turned on the water and stepped into the steamy shower. After almost two months without one, it felt like heaven. The shower was enormous, it could easily accommodate both her and Adam.

Now where the hell had that thought come from? She had to laugh. It wasn't really all that hard to figure out. The guy was gorgeous, reputedly hung and was a Master Dom at Baker Street. That meant something. They didn't just give titles out around here. She had more than one fantasy involving the ex-special ops warrior.

She turned her back to the body sprays and allowed them to melt the caked-on dirt and grime away. She understood why there had been a prohibition against public play or with a partner, but surely she knew herself well enough to know what she needed. And if she didn't use any toys and did it here in the shower? Who was to know?

Turning back to face the pounding hot water, she closed her eyes and moaned. She used the scrubby and all-natural body wash until she was clean and her skin glowed. She washed and conditioned her hair and loved the way the heated water intensified the citrus smell of the shampoo. This alone was almost heaven, but why settle for almost heaven when true nirvana was so close at hand?

Reminding herself there was no way for anyone to know, her hands seemed to trail down of their own accord, cupping her breasts before she strummed her nipples with her thumbs. God that felt good. She adjusted the water and moved to the

back of the stall to sit on the bench where the water could still reach her.

Chelsea imagined it was Adam's hands that returned to her breasts and began to play with them. He'd lower his head, sucking one into his mouth, while his hands explored her body. With one hand still pinching and tugging her nipples, his other hand would drift down her body until it reached her clit, where he would taunt and tease it before easing into her pussy.

The glass door to the shower was jerked open and she was summarily hauled out of the shower. "I believe I was pretty clear that you weren't to play with yourself. What part of that didn't you understand?"

The subject of her masturbatory fantasy was standing right in front of her, only he wasn't all about offering her comfort and pleasure. No, this jerk was growling at her.

"I asked you a question, Chelsea."

She wanted to stand up to him; wanted to tell him off; wanted to throw herself in his arms and cry, but she did none of that, instead she lowered herself to her knees, trying to push away the memory of the last time she'd done that—the day the rebels had abducted her. Chelsea reminded herself that this was Baker Street and Adam. She couldn't be safer if they had her in the Tower of London.

When she dropped her head and lowered her eyes, all of her wet, freshly shampooed hair fell forward, affording her the perfect curtain from which she could stare at him, unobserved. His jeans were Levi's. She knew because of the button front, which was holding back what looked to be a massive erection. It was all she could do not to reach for him, but if she was going to get out of this without any kind of discipline, she'd best follow high protocol, including keeping her mouth and hands to herself until told to do otherwise.

"Answer me."

Could his Dom voice be any better? Deep, dark, sexy. It was as if he was the most perfect salted caramel being drizzled

all over her butter pecan ice cream body. Butter pecan because it was a bit lumpy and didn't have French Vanilla's perfection.

"You told me I wasn't to play with myself," she answered without lifting her head.

"And what were you doing?"

"I was handling my own needs. It's been a while. I had a vacation planned here in London and was planning to visit Baker Street a couple of times. I kind of wanted to be on edge so I could really enjoy it. And then the rebels decided to abduct me, and JJ rescued me. All in all, my life's been pretty shitty for the past few months."

"And you think a good orgasm would help alleviate some of that tension?"

The Dom voice was still there, only now it was laced with arousal as his cock throbbed and strained against his fly. When she'd arrived, she'd simply thought he was being kind. Was it possible he was attracted to her?

That couldn't be. She'd just arrived looking like hell and smelling to high heaven. On her best days, he was way out of her class. She'd seen the man in his leather breeches, polished tall boots and open vest. He was a god and sex on a stick. As she recalled, he had the most gorgeous set of abs. She wondered idly if he'd think she was out of line if she traced every definition with her tongue.

She raised her head, looking him right in the eye and letting him see what she needed. "Yes, Master Adam. I thought having an orgasm would make me feel better than I have in months."

"But you were told not to. You've been in a hostage situation for months. I would think you would listen to the concerns of the people who got you out and are keeping you safe until we can be sure the bastards don't try to retaliate and take you again."

"Yes, Master Adam. I didn't think of it that way. See, I was the one who actually got kidnapped and lived in appalling conditions—never knowing if I was going to be raped or killed

while my employers who sent me there...” She could feel the tears starting to fall and her tone beginning to border on hysteria. “...just fucked around and fondled themselves. I didn’t go running off to Afghanistan on a whim or to see the sights. I was told my vacation was cancelled and I was sent into a fucking war zone with nobody to watch my back...”

Adam reached down, hauling her to her feet so he could sweep her up in his arms and carry her to the bed. Romantic and sexy as hell, and she was quickly becoming a blithering idiot. Tears began to roll down her cheeks, both unbidden and unstoppable. But instead of laying her out on the bed, stripping down and covering her with his naked body, he sat down and settled her in his lap, tucking her head under his chin and wrapping his arms around her.

“They never should have done that to you. None of it,” he rumbled soothingly, rocking her back and forth.

“I kept thinking they’d kill me or at least rape me. I’ve never been so scared.”

“I know, sweetheart, but it’s over and you’re safe now. You know Baker Street; you know you’re safe here. Just let it out.”

“I kept telling myself that no matter what, I’d survive...”

“Because you’re brave and strong.”

“Do you think so?” she said, stifling her sobs and looking up at him.

“I know so. What you went through was horrific and would have terrified anybody. But you kept your wits about you. JJ said you were well on your way to rescuing yourself. I don’t know many people who could keep it together enough to do that. You need a release, but I don’t think an orgasm is the way to go, do you?”

She shook her head and let the tears fall without restriction as Adam held her in his arms, rocking and comforting her. She felt a peaceful feeling beginning to creep over her—solace replacing fear, understanding replacing anger. She continued to cry and be held by a man who seemed solely focused on taking care of her.

“It’s okay, Chelsea. Everything will be okay.”

“Promise?” she sniffled.

“I do. Ask anyone here at Baker Street and they’ll tell you I’m a man who never breaks his word. Let me take care of you, Chelsea.”

She could feel Adam’s hard cock beneath her and for the first time in years felt that she was standing at a crossroads: she could either go back to her old half-life, or she could embrace the second chance she’d been given and go after what she wanted. The choice was clear. She wanted Adam Wheldon, and if that meant leaving the UN, so be it. After all, they seemed to have functioned perfectly fine when they’d sent her unprepared to Afghanistan and then left her there when the whole thing had gone tits up.

“I don’t want to go back,” she whispered. “I want to stay here... with you.”

Chelsea couldn’t believe she’d said that. Here he was just trying to be nice—hard cock notwithstanding—and she was making proclamations of some kind. It wasn’t like her at all. But, she reminded herself, being who she had been before had led her to caving to her boss, who could have done the job himself. It had led to being kidnapped, abused, and now sitting naked in Adam’s lap getting snot all over his shirt.

She could feel the moment his breathing changed, and she realized many years later that was the point in time where everything changed, the whole trajectory of her life. Tucking her head back under his chin, she listened to the sound of his lungs expanding and contracting.

“I have a confession, Chelsea. The doctor didn’t say you shouldn’t masturbate. I made up that rule because I didn’t like the idea of you up here all alone taking care of yourself when I was the one who wanted to do it.”

“You did?”

Adam chuckled. “Chelsea, that should be fairly obvious, given you’re sitting on top of my cock.”

“You never seemed to notice me before...”

“Oh, I noticed. I think I knew instinctively that if I acted on it, there would be a deep connection that I wasn’t ready for.”

“And now? Because I don’t want your pity.”

The quiet laughter came again. “Sweetheart, the last thing I’m feeling is pity. I told you I admire what you did. Very few people would have come through what you went through and come out on the other side unchanged.”

“But I have changed. Before Afghanistan, I would never have thought about telling you I wanted to be here with you. I realized I’d been given a second chance and that I had a choice to make about how I wanted the rest of my life to go. I didn’t want to go back to New York to my dull little life where only a couple of times a year I got to fly and embrace everything life had to offer. I could decide what I wanted and go for it.” She hesitated, then plunged ahead. “Does it help if you know when I was touching myself, I was imagining it to be you and wishing it was?”

“That depends entirely on how you define ‘help,’” Adam groaned. “I like the idea that I was the one you were thinking about, because if we go forward, I’m the only man you get to think about, much less play with. You’ve always seemed to just play at the lifestyle. That’s not necessarily a bad thing, a lot of people do. But I want to live it, twenty-four/seven. I want a wife and a submissive. I want a woman who loves and trusts me to take care of her, to see to all her needs. I want her to know she answers to my authority.”

“Do you want her to be a stay-at-home wife and mother?”

“If she wants to. JJ pays me very well. I can support my woman. If she doesn’t, we’ll figure it out like every other couple.”

Chelsea settled against him. “I think I’d like that very much. If you’re opening up that position to candidates, I’d like to apply.”

“I don’t want anyone else to apply. I have the woman I want sitting here in my lap.”

“But if there’s no doctor’s order against masturbation...”

“I got news for you. *I* have a rule and order against it. From now on, your pleasure only comes from me, got it?”

“Yes, Master Adam.”

“When we’re alone, Chelsea, Sir will suffice.”

“Yes, Sir.”

Adam tightened his arms around her, allowing his hand to drift down to rest on her thigh. “Do you want to continue?”

“Yes, Sir. I think I told you, I had a physical before they sent me to Afghanistan. I was perfectly clean, and I haven’t been with anyone since then.”

He nodded. “I can say the same. Are you on birth control?”

“Yes. I have an implant that is still in effect for the next couple of years. You mentioned kids. I take it you want some?”

“At least one, but I wouldn’t mind having a whole household.”

Chelsea giggled. “Is it just me or does it seem kind of weird and kind of right to be having this conversation?”

“I think more right than weird. I think we both know what we want. I think we both skirted around each other for ages and then what happened to you just ripped away all the pretenses and indecisions. So, we’re agreed that we’re going to move forward into an exclusive relationship?”

“Yes, Sir.”

Chelsea felt safer and more sure of herself than she ever had before. She was convinced that Adam was going to be her own secret hoard of happiness. She would guard it and revel in it for as long as it lasted. And if it lasted forever with a whole bunch of kids running around? So be it.

He slid her off his lap and onto her back, covering her body with his own, moving between her legs. They parted easily as if they’d been lovers for years.

“That’s my girl,” he purred. “Just relax and let me take care of you.”

Chelsea wondered if there’d ever been a time someone had taken care of her. Oh, plenty of guys had been willing to take care of her sexual needs, but not once had anyone wanted to care for her. In all honesty, she’d never really wanted to take care of anyone else, either, but now she wanted a life where she took translating contracts and took care of Adam and their kids.

She’d always taken care of herself. Never relied on anyone. *And look where it got you.* whispered the voice inside her head. *Abandoned and left to die.*

Adam gently twisted her clit and she squeaked. “I don’t know where you went just then, but I want you to be here with me and when you drift off, I’m going to bring you back.” It was said seductively, but she knew a command when she heard one.

Well, he’d certainly done that. “Yes, Sir.”

She allowed herself to breathe, to really just let go. Chelsea realized he wanted to take responsibility and be the one to lead, and for the first time she knew she’d found a man worthy of following. She snuggled closer, ensuring that her legs did nothing to bar his further exploration. She seemed to fit naturally into the curves of his body. He was so much bigger than she was, and Chelsea was not a little girl. The rebels had called her a freak. Yet Adam made her feel strong and delicate, voluptuous and petite. She was beginning to crave what he offered in abundance.

He went back to tracing lazy circles around her clit and down the inside of her thighs. Every time she thought he would move to the promised land of her pussy; he went back to teasing her clit.

“You take what I give you,” he whispered as he tugged at her clit before pressing down and circling it once again.

Adam trailed his fingers along her sex until he reached the opening to her core, allowing his thumb to use her swollen nub

as a kind of anchor. Pressing down again, he curled his fingers up inside her. The swell of her orgasm surprised and overwhelmed her as it swept her along in its wake. He held her as she shuddered and then sagged against him.

“That’s my very good girl,” he purred. “Now let’s get you into bed.”

“I think that’s an excellent idea,” she said dreamily.

Chelsea could never be sure, and Adam swore it wasn’t true, but she was fairly certain she heard him chuckle as he laid her on the bed, pulling the covers over and kissing her forehead. She reached for him as he drew away.

“It’s all right, baby. I’m right here. I’m not going any place. I just want to let the team know where I am.”

CHAPTER 4



Baker Street *London, England*

Present Day

Chelsea stood in front of the mirror at Baker Street, doing a critical examination of her body. She wasn't the same lean and muscled sub she'd once been. While she found Adam's scars sexy—they were like a roadmap to his life—she often wished that Emily had been born vaginally rather than via C-Section. Although the sight of Adam fainting when the doctor made him cut the cord was a memory she would always remember. Her body still looked all right in a corset, but she'd given up the thong for a micro mini skirt. Adam didn't like anything between him and her pussy.

She smiled. Her husband still made her feel like the sexiest woman on the face of the earth, and his libido had never lessened or waned. The most difficult, and yet most fun part of her only pregnancy was watching Adam keep his hands off her. She'd offered the use of her mouth or hands, but he'd been adamant—if she had to do without, so did he. Although they had fucked like bunnies during her second trimester until the doctor who was in the lifestyle himself had warned them off Chelsea having orgasms.

They'd struggled to get pregnant, not for lack of trying, and had suffered two miscarriages before conceiving Emily and carrying her to term. The pregnancy itself had been difficult and had taken a toll on Chelsea emotionally and

physically. But through it all, Adam had been her rock, standing beside her to support her through whatever was needed. He'd been able to walk that fine line between stern and loving.

JJ walked up behind her and smiled. Like with Chelsea, when JJ had met Robert Fitzwallace, Adam's old special ops commander, she'd been swept away. And the woman who'd once sworn she'd never kneel to any man or be collared now wore a stunning collar and was usually found either in his lap or resting between the Scotsman's legs.

"I don't think he'd like to know what you're thinking," said JJ, speculatively.

"Probably not, but let's face it, gravity takes its toll. And you can't tell him, because what's said in the submissives' salon stays in the submissives' salon."

"My club; my rules. Chelsea, I'm not sure what you're seeing, but you are gorgeous. You do know Adam is quick to remind any man who so much as glances in your direction that you are his and he knows more ways to kill them than they know how to die."

"I know, but..."

"It'll be your butt if he finds out you're doing a number on yourself again. How can you doubt him? He never so much as looks at another woman. I've seen women get naked, literally, in front of him and it doesn't register. It's like he's a eunuch. But the second you walk into the room, the man lights up like Christmas."

Chelsea smiled. "I don't doubt him or his love for me. Did you see that notice about the contest from the Red Hills Resort?"

"The one in Colorado? I did. I tried to convince Fitz to take me, but he prefers either to be here, at our house on the Isle of Skye, or in Switzerland. Why? Are you going to try to convince Adam to take you?"

"The contest prize is for a kind of soft opening December 26th through December 30th. Our ten-year anniversary is on

the 31st. I thought maybe I'd enter and surprise him.”

“As I recall, the last time you ‘surprised’ him, you had trouble sitting down for a few days.”

“That was different. This would be sexy and fun. You know I love Baker Street...”

“I’m all in favor of you going. Tobias is a member here. Nice guy. Not at all like a lot of men who have generational wealth and have expanded on it. I don’t know much about the woman he married, but I understand they came together a lot like you and Adam.”

“She was captured by Afghan rebels, abused and tortured, a totally fucked up mess and he saved her?”

Chelsea had long ago come to terms with what happened to her. It had taken JJ insisting she needed therapy and Adam putting his foot down that she would have it, but it had done her a world of good. Not just around the issue of her kidnapping but left-over abandonment issues from her childhood. She knew that she was a much better partner to her husband because of it.

JJ smiled. “Hardly. I just meant they went from zero to married at the speed of light. I’m curious about the place. Tobias invited Fitz and I, but we had other plans with Nigel and Olivia. Fitz and I have talked to Nigel and Olivia about doing something similar—a kinky resort—and plan to look at some places next year. If you really want to go, I could ask Tobias if there’s a spot available. It certainly wouldn’t hurt his business for you and Adam to be recommending the place to our members.”

Chelsea whirled around and threw her arms around JJ, who had become like an older sister to her. “Oh, could you? I’d love to give Adam something really special.”

“I’ll make you a deal. I’ll call Tobias, but you have to stop frowning when you look at your body. The deal is, the next time I see you do it, I get to tell Adam.”

“You’re mean,” accused Chelsea with a laugh.

“You’re just now figuring that out? Good lord, Chels, I thought you were smarter than that. You go join the gang in the lounge. I’ll give Tobias a ring. It’s the middle of the day there. I should be able to catch him.”

Forty-three minutes later, JJ joined a grumpy Fitzwallace, who’d been counting. When Chelsea slipped her a questioning glance, JJ had given her the very briefest nods. They were in. Chelsea was going to get to give Adam the most wonderful present.



“You did what?” Adam roared at his wife of almost a decade as she stood on the opposite side of the desk from him in his office.

“I was going to enter us in that contest for the vacation at the new kink resort in Colorado. JJ said she knew the guy and they’d had to turn down an invitation. So, she called to see if we could take their place.”

“Did it ever occur to you to check with me before doing something like that?”

“It won’t cost us anything. Rhiannon offered to give us a lift to and from the airport. And the guy that owns it is paying for everyone’s expenses. It’s all inclusive. Besides, JJ really wanted to see it.”

“Yes, and Fitzwallace didn’t want to go because he has some security concerns, especially where JJ is concerned.”

“But I’m not JJ.”

“No, you’re my wife and collared sub, or did you forget that?”

Chelsea was taken aback. “Why are you so upset?”

“Because you didn’t check with me. We’re a couple, Chelsea. We’re supposed to decide things together.”

That was a crock of shit, and they both knew it. Adam made the decisions and normally Chelsea was fine with that. But for once she’d taken the initiative and he was being a jerk.

“I did it so we could go and enjoy a special tenth wedding anniversary together, or did you forget our anniversary is coming up?” she said, her voice starting to rise in anger.

“Watch your tone with me, sub.” Okay, now she could tell he was really pissed. “Have I ever forgotten our anniversary? Your birthday? Emily’s?”

“Well, no...”

“Then what makes you think I’d forget this one? Or is it because you’re afraid you will... because you have before.”

That hurt. Twice their wedding anniversary had slipped up on her, which was stupid because it was New Year’s Eve. And he was right. He had never, not even once, forgotten any day that was special to them.

“That’s mean, Adam,” she said, stomping her foot. “How can you say that to me?”

“Because I see the way you look at some of the other guys,” he growled.

He was jealous? That was ludicrous. Deciding to go on the offensive, she accused, “You can’t possibly be jealous.”

This was escalating quickly, and Chelsea knew she needed to get things calmed down and back on track. Chelsea walked around the end of the desk and came to stand between his legs, leaning against the desk behind her.

“You’re being a jerk,” she said, prodding his chest with her finger.

Chelsea could feel arousal flash into existence and surge through her body. A decade later and he could still make her hotter than the Fourth of July in Texas. Her blood was like molten fire racing through her system, jangling every nerve and waking up every synapse. It was impossible for her to want him this much. He’d been late for work just this morning because he’d been too busy pleasuring her to be on time.

Adam rose up out of the chair and looked down at her. He said nothing but reached behind her and swept everything off his desk and onto the floor. Luckily, the staff had heard that

sound before and knew they didn't need to check on anything. He leaned in, trying to intimidate her with his sheer size, but she wasn't afraid of him. She had no need to be.

He lowered his head, capturing her mouth in a fiery kiss. God, she loved the taste of him. Their lips fused and their tongues danced together in perfect harmony. Adam was not just tall, he was broad and muscular. He moved between her thighs, forcing them apart as his hand ran up under her skirt. Chelsea moaned as his fingers parted her labia. He was the sexiest thing she'd ever seen and yet somehow, he seemed to doubt that. Everything about Adam called to every part of her.

Adam's fingers dipped into her wet heat, and he pulled them back, bringing them up to his mouth. "So sweet," he purred, unbuckling his belt before unbuttoning his fly. "I ought to take my belt to you. You know better than to do something like this without talking to me."

"I guess I was more in a mood to fuck than talk," she taunted. She'd never known what a brat she could be until she met Adam.

"My sub, the mother of my daughter, does not use foul language."

"Not true. I get to use it when I'm talking about the actual act, and believe me, I was."

His fly now open, his cock jutted out as he pushed his jeans down past his muscular butt. The large, plum-shaped head of his cock parted her labia as he took her hips in his hands and pressed in, groaning in relief and carnal pleasure.

"God, you feel good. You're still so tight you damn near strangle me."

"Baby, that's more about how big your cock is than how little my pussy is."

Fisting her hair, he pulled her head back, the sensation lighting up her scalp. "Brat."

He drew back, only to thrust back in with a single, hard stroke that put him balls deep. His mouth descended on hers again and he began kissing her, using his tongue in her mouth

like his cock in her pussy. Chelsea arched her body into his, giving him deeper, better access as she clung to him, her nails digging into his biceps. She moaned and writhed as he began to pound into her. Over and over again, he surged in and out, driving her to the precipice of ecstasy and then pushing her over the edge as he gave a ferocious thrust and she felt him flooding her pussy with his cum.

“What did you say to me, sub?” his tone indicating anger had turned to lust and now satisfaction. Chelsea had learned a long time ago a lustful or satisfied Adam was a lot better than an angry one.

She smiled slyly. “I said you were being a jerk.” She grabbed the front of his shirt, pulling herself up to kiss him. “But you’re my jerk and I love you. Want to tell me now why you got angry?”

“Sometimes I see you looking at the other Doms, and I wonder if I’m enough. Sometimes I don’t feel like I give you what you need.”

Chelsea shook her head, locking her legs behind his butt to keep him from uncoupling from her. “For a really smart guy, sometimes you can be incredibly dumb. Did it ever occur to you that I’m not looking at the guys, but at the beautiful women with them? Did you ever think sometimes I wonder, a decade and a child later, if I measure up?”

She watched as doubt fled from his eyes, and a simmering anger returned. “I thought we dealt with that right after Emily was born. You told me that we had. Did you lie to me, sub?”

Normally he only called her sub when he was angry, but this time there was more taunt than threat.

“Not at the time. But there are so many beautiful women in the club...”

He tangled his fingers in her hair and tugged. “None as beautiful as the one who completes my life. Fair warning. The next time you look at some Dom and his sub, it’s ten over my knee. Got it?”

“Yes, Master,” she purred.

The phone rang and Chelsea tried to extricate herself from beneath her husband.

“I’m not done with you yet, sub. You stay right where you are.” Adam picked up the phone. “Adam Wheldon.”

She rolled her eyes and relaxed on the desk. Apparently, this was going to take a while.

CHAPTER 5



As he answered the phone, Adam drove a bit deeper into his wife's wet heat. If she was doubting his devotion and need for her, he needed to step up his game, starting now. The idea of talking to whoever it was on the phone while his wife was impaled on his cock made the damn thing start to stiffen again. That was fine with Adam. When the phone call was over, he'd pull her off his cock, flip her onto her belly, and have her again. He'd give her little doubt about how sexy and desirable he found her.

"Adam Wheldon."

"Adam? It's Tobias Waite in Colorado. I understand you and Chelsea are coming to our soft opening."

"Yes, I just found that out myself." Chelsea squirmed underneath him to try and get some leverage to move off his cock. His hand snapped against her exposed backside, making her yelp. "Did I tell you that you could move, sub?"

"No, Sir."

The look she gave let him know she knew exactly what he was doing.

"Did I catch you at a bad time?" asked Tobias.

"No, not at all. Chelsea wanted to surprise me for our tenth anniversary."

"Something tells me it was truly a surprise."

"Yes, but I have to say, a nice one."

“The prize is December 26th through December 30th. I was wondering if I might be able to persuade you to either come early or stay late.”

“Any particular reason why?”

“We had some building supplies and copper piping stolen during the early phases of construction.”

Adam nodded. “Copper piping can net a thief good money and it’s easy to fence.”

“The place had been closed for a while. We bought it in a foreclosure sale and began renovating it. After the theft we had a rudimentary security system installed, mainly to keep thieves away from our building materials and to keep people from trying to move in and assert squatter’s rights. That can be a nightmare to resolve.”

“Do you think your staff could be involved?” Adam asked.

“No way. Margo and I were very careful about who we hired. You know what it’s like. I had Cerberus do a deep dive on all of them. They’re solid.”

Adam chuckled. “As long as Cerberus says they’re clean, that’s good enough for me, but I do know there are a lot of people who raid construction sites.”

“Exactly. I know I need an upgraded and more secure computer system, and I’ve already contracted with Cerberus for that. I know you don’t work for them, but I also know you set up the actual physical security system at Baker Street. I was hoping I could hire you as a consultant and you could set up ours. We want our staff and guests to feel that we take their safety and confidentiality seriously. Baker Street is world renowned in the community. I’d like to be able to boast that the same people that keep it secure have set up our systems here at Red Hills. I’d make it worth your while.”

“Chelsea hadn’t gotten to the specifics of the trip, but I’d rather stay late than come early. That way we can have Christmas with our daughter. But I’m sure JJ would be okay if we stayed past the 30th. After all, our actual anniversary is the 31st.”

“I’ll tell you what, if you agree to take the job, I’ll have the chef make an intimate dinner for two on your anniversary and we can all have brunch on New Years’ Day.”

“That’s very generous, Tobias. I’ll have some time while everyone else is there and then a couple of days afterward should do the trick. Do you need me to supervise the installation?”

“Not necessarily. If you could come up with the recommendations and plan, I can get my contractor to do the actual installation.”

“Sounds good.”

“Then we have a deal?”

“We do. We’ll see you on the 26th. We’ll send our flight information as soon as we have it.”

“Sounds good, Adam. I’m looking forward to seeing you both. Take care, and if I don’t talk to you before you get here, Merry Christmas.”

“Thanks, Tobias. You, too.”

He ended the call and looked at Chelsea speared on his cock, her hair a mess, her clothes in a state of disarray and counted himself the luckiest of men. “Have I told you today how truly beautiful you are?”

“Have I told you what a jerk you are? He heard that.”

“What? The swat I gave you? I’m sure he did. I’m also sure he knew exactly what it meant. Tobias is an experienced Dom. Now, the question becomes, do I pull out and flip you on your belly and have at you again? Or do I have at you like you are, then spank that gorgeous ass of yours to a blushing shade of pink and then mount you from behind?”

“Adam?”

“Sub?”

“Sir, please, I’ll behave. I’ll be your dutiful and obedient submissive...”

Adam laughed. “You couldn’t pull that off for more than a day. I think one of the reasons we had this spat is because as great as our sex life is, I haven’t been holding you as accountable as I should. That stops now.” Adam pulled her body up close to his. “I love you, Chelsea. You and Emily are everything and so much more than I ever dreamed I’d have.”

“I love you, too. Emily is with the babysitter. I arranged for her to stay until we got back home tonight.”

Adam shook his head. “Topping from the bottom, again? Maybe you need a trip over one of the spanking horses.”

He chuckled at the look of panic in her eyes. He knew Chelsea hated to be disciplined over any of the equipment. She needed the feel of her connection with him, either over his knee or over something that he had her pinned to. Sometimes, depriving her of that could be very effective, but usually the threat of true discipline could get her back in line.

Taking her hands and pinning her to his desk, he grinned as he began to move his hips. “And then again, maybe just fucking you until you can’t move would do the trick.”

Her body softened and her pussy oozed with arousal. “Yes, Master,” she purred.

At the end of the day, Adam was glad he had a cracker jack team and if anything had come up, they’d handle it. He was also grateful he had a boss in the lifestyle and one that understood sometimes a couple just needed a day to reconnect. Between bouts of driving Chelsea out of her mind and making her scream his name, he’d actually managed to get some work done, usually with her either at his feet or in his lap.

By the time he’d checked in with the staff working that night, Chelsea was in a very subby and dreamy place. Normally, Adam was the guy that told Doms they were not allowed to leave the club with a sub in subspace. The only exception was long-term, exclusive, and married couples, and only then when the Dungeon Monitor approved. It was this kind of attention to the needs of their clientele that Adam hoped Tobias would be exercising.

Adam left Chelsea curled up on the sofa in his office with a cashmere blanket draped over her. He stepped into the doorway so he could talk to those he needed to speak with and keep an eye on Chelsea. When he was through, he checked with the Dungeon Monitor before lifting a very blissed out Chelsea into his arms and heading out to the valet parking.

She snuggled into his arms and sighed contentedly as he started out of Baker Street. “Shouldn’t I go change?” she asked, nuzzling his neck.

“No, sweetheart. We’re going to go home, pay the babysitter, and I’m going to run us a nice long tub bath. I’ll take care of you,” he said lovingly.

“You always do,” she sighed.

Once they were home and the babysitter had left, Adam scooped Chelsea back up in his arms, checked that Emily was sound asleep and then took his wife into their room with the attached bath. Setting her down, he kept his arm around her as he started the tub and then turned back to get her out of the corset.

“Adam?”

“Yes, sweetheart.”

“You’re not still mad at me, are you?”

“I get what you were trying to do, but that’s the kind of thing you talk to me about first. Okay?”

The smile she turned on him outshone the sun at high noon. “In that case, can I tell you what I want for my anniversary present?”

“Not to have me pack my strap?”

She shook her head, her blonde mane falling down around her shoulders. “That’s a given, and that thing is evil. No. What I want is at least one, if not two, new corsets from the Dark Garden.”

“How about we see what they have in the semi-customs and buy five of those and then buy a fully custom one for our anniversary?”

Chelsea's eyes widened. "Really? That's a lot of money."

"It is, but I'm getting a big bonus from JJ and Tobias Waite is paying me a lot of money." Leaning down he turned off the water in the free-standing Victorian slipper tub. "Now let's get you out of what's left of your clothing."

"Yes, Sir."



Gatwick Airport

London, England

Six Weeks Later

Fitzwallace and JJ had upgraded their airline tickets to first-class when the Cerberus jet had to be repaired and the other one was in use. They'd made it through security and were now having a drink and snack in the VIP lounge.

"Did you remember to thank Fitz and JJ?" she asked, sipping her peach margarita, on the rocks, no salt. Living proof you could take the girl out of Texas, but you'd never get her to give up her tequila.

"Yes, and I called Wyatt. He and Mak are taking Emily to some puppet show in some park. Did you notice she couldn't wait to get rid of us?"

"Well, Uncle Wyatt never denies her anything. But I worry about Mak. She wants to teach her to blow things up."

"Only glitter bombs."

Adam raised his eyebrow. "I'm telling you right now if there is ever another glitter bomb, Wyatt will make sure Mak can't sit for a month. Jesus. He was telling me that they were picking glitter out of their hair, their beards, their clothing, their boots... everything for weeks."

"Did she really once blow up the interior of a building in such a way that the exterior walls were still standing?"

"She did. In all honesty there is nobody, nobody, better with explosives than Mak."

“And not a better sniper in the group than Rhiannon,” said Chelsea proudly.

“Yeah, but right about now, I’m pretty sure her belly would get in the way and Sawyer told her she was not to pick up a rifle until after the baby stops breastfeeding.”

Chelsea laughed. “Rhiannon said the other day he was kissing her belly and talking to the baby. He told the baby not to get too used to using his mother’s boobs because they belonged to him and were only on lease to the baby. Honestly. You never felt that way.”

“Didn’t I?” he said with a sexy grin. “If you recall on more than one occasion, after you fed Emily, I got a turn.”

“Adam, stop,” she said blushing and swatting at his hand. “And the doctor kept wondering why my milk supply was so good.”

“See? I was doing it for Emily.”

“No, you were doing it because you’re a pervert and I loved every minute of it. I hope you’ve been coaching Sawyer on how to properly care for his wife, so she feels sexy through her whole pregnancy and never doubts he still lusts after her.”

“I was good at that, wasn’t I?” he leered at her.

A member of the wait staff approached them. “Mr. and Mrs. Wheldon? Your plane is getting ready to board. If you’ll come with me, we’ll get you to the plane.”

As they followed her through the door into the terminal, a little golf cart like vehicle was waiting. They were helped aboard and whisked off to their gate, where they were shown to their seats.

Chelsea settled back in her seat, hugging his arm. “I think I’m going to enjoy this. Happy anniversary, babe.”

Once the passengers and bags were all loaded, the plane pulled away from the gate and made its way out to queue in line for takeoff. The pilot taxied down the runway and before they knew it, had lifted off and they were headed towards the United States. Adam chuckled as Chelsea was sound asleep

before they ever leveled off. He stretched his long legs, pulled the armrest up between them, and adjusted her position so she'd be more comfortable.

Ready or not, they were headed towards the newest, most luxurious kink resort in America... maybe even the world.

CHAPTER 6



Their flight was smooth and uneventful. Tobias had a beautiful luxury SUV waiting for them, and it ferried them to the resort. He had booked them into the largest suite, which had a main bedroom, a small office, and a sitting room with a balcony that overlooked the winter wonderland outside. The room was decorated expensively and with great attention to detail. It truly was the only place he'd ever seen that could rival Baker Street. It didn't, in Adam's mind, have the same panache and old-world charm, but then the building hadn't been around since the time of Queen Victoria, either.

At first glance, the room seemed like any other hotel suite in a five-star resort. Closer examination, however, revealed the true nature of the club. There were hard points installed in several places in the room. There was an elaborate, fully padded spanking horse on wheels tucked into the corner. Pulling back the extra wide curtains on either side of the French doors leading out to the balcony revealed a St. Andrew's cross on one side and a large cabinet on the other which when opened, revealed a plethora of BDSM implements—floggers, canes, single-tails, violet wands, dildoes—a veritable toy chest to satisfy any kinkster's fantasy.

“Wow. Aren't Fitz and JJ thinking about doing something like this?” asked Chelsea.

“They've talked about it a couple of times and Gavan Drummond said there's a gorgeous place on the Isle of Skye. It would take a lot to get it ready, but I think they're planning to go up and take a look at it.”

“There’s just so much space,” she said, marveling.

He trailed his hand down the wall of instruments. “So many toys, so little time.”

“Am I even going to be able to walk when we leave?”

“Not if I have anything to say about it,” he teased, only half joking. “I’m going to have them send up dinner. I’d like to get you naked and keep you that way.”

Chelsea sidled up to him. “I thought I got new corsets so you could show me off.”

“When did I say that? You said you wanted them for the trip, so I got them for you, but baby, those outfits were designed specifically for me.”

“You and Louis are rotten to the core. Keeping me blindfolded the whole time.”

“Hey, at least I’m not keeping you naked until our anniversary and then giving you one. That one is going to blow your mind. Olivia and JJ helped me pick it out. Do you want to check on Emily?”

“Do you think we need to?”

“Nope. Wyatt and Mak are great with her, and if anything goes wrong, we can’t do a lot from here and she has her ‘aunties’ and ‘uncles,’ all of whom she has wrapped around her little finger.”

She walked over to him, wrapping her arms around his neck and pressing her body into his. “Do you know what I want while we’re here?”

“No, but it had better involve my dick getting inside you three or four times a day.”

“How is that different from when we’re at home?” she teased.

“Oh, trust me, baby, you’re going to be begging by the time I get through with you.”

“In any event, I want us not to be parents. I love Emily more than my life, but I just want to be Chelsea and Adam

while we're in Colorado.”

“We're always Chelsea and Adam. Always. But most of the time, we also have Em. But I agree, these next few days are about us. I need to do some work for Tobias, but I see he left me a full set of blueprints with schematics.”

“And what am I supposed to do while you're doing that?” she asked, archly.

“You're supposed to rest before I come at you the next time. I mean it, Chels, I plan to fuck you harder and longer than I did on our honeymoon, and I have all these wonderful toys to use. But if you like we can go cross-country skiing to check out the things I need to see in person.”

Chelsea took a deep breath and exhaled it in a sigh.

“What do you say we get rid of all that tension?” he asked. “I want you stripped naked. I'm going to get the spanking horse, bend you over it and tie you down.”

“Really?” she squeaked.

“Really, sub. The Dom is in the house. You've needed a good session for the last several weeks. I mean to start our vacation the right way—one that gets you in the proper frame of mind.” He wheeled the spanking horse into the center of the room and locked it into place. “You need to come over here and find your position draped over the horse.”

As he opened his kit that he'd tossed onto the bed, he said, “Now, Chelsea.”

Her eyes grew wide as he unfolded the braided leather ties he'd had made for her. Being bound could still be difficult for her because of Afghanistan, but she trusted Adam to know what she needed. She had been keyed up and had wanted to hold off on more serious playing as she knew they were coming to the lodge. Most times he let her simply hang on to whatever he was using, unless moving might be dangerous.

Chelsea removed her clothing and settled herself over the comfortable bench. He knelt down and locked her ankles into a spreader bar, which he knew always made her wet. It was more the idea of being tied down than the actual binding. Once

she was tied down and Adam was working on her, she subbed out in no time at all and allowed her husband to make everything right in her world.

Once she was secure, he came around to the other side, the hard bulge behind his jeans a clear indication of what was going to come later. He reached down, tweaking her nipple until she gasped. Grinning he bent down and began to bind her hands to the legs of the spanking horse. All the safety and quick release protocols were in place.

He pinched the other nipple, smiling as her body shuddered. “That’s my good little sub. Look how pretty those stiff nipples are. I brought some jewelry for them for later.”

Adam stood immediately in front of her, the bulge behind his fly pressed against her head as he leaned over her, placing his hands on her ass and drawing his hands all the way along her spine to her shoulders.

“You really are tense, baby.”

“I won’t be when you’re done. I’ll be lucky if I can stand.”

He grinned. “If you can, I didn’t do it right.”

He walked around the end of the spanking horse, trailing his fingers along her body so that she could feel her connection to him. When he got to the back, Chelsea knew it was coming, but still the instant his hand connected with her left butt cheek, she cried out.

“Good, that got your attention,” he said as he smacked the other one. “God, I love how your skin absorbs the blow and then turns the prettiest shade of pink. One of your corsets is this exact shade.”

“I don’t think I want to know how you found material that color...” Chelsea quit talking and gasped as his hand struck again.

“I don’t need you to talk, sub, unless you need to use your safe word.”

She nodded. Adam began to rhythmically strike her backside, usually the fleshiest part, but occasionally

underneath where her leg met her ass. As he warmed her up and she began to squirm—partly from pain, partly from pleasure—he smacked the back of her thighs. He wasn't kidding around, he meant to make her fly.

It had been a long time since she'd cried out or let any kind of tears fall. Adam knew that for her, it meant that she was holding things in too closely. As he continued his own form of therapy with her, he broke through all her walls, and she began to weep. There was heat and pain, but in the end, there would be intense pleasure and peace.

Over and over, he smacked her ass and she writhed beneath his touch. She knew it didn't make a lot of sense to most people, but those in the lifestyle understood the connection between pleasure and pain. The tension began to leave her body as her arousal kicked in and her body began to soften.

Adam stopped for a moment and slid his hand between her legs, parting her labia and stroking her slit. He thrust his fingers in and out and then pressed down on her bottomhole. Chelsea went off like the proverbial rocket, calling his name. He let her have her orgasm and supported her by gently stroking from clit to slit as she floated back down to reality.

He smacked her ass, her thighs and her pussy, making her cry out and tremble on the razor's edge, making her squirm and gasp. Time and space ceased to exist. All that mattered was Adam and her and the way he made her feel. He made her whole body come alive and she reveled in being so connected to him that she knew his every feeling before he even spoke it.

When he finally finished, he knelt down, stroking her cheek. "You did so well, baby. I'm so proud of you. Do you feel better?"

"Much. I didn't realize how much I needed that... this... you. Well, that's not true, I always need you."

"Not half as much as I need you. Can you take a little more being bound? Can you do that for me?"

"Always. With you I can do anything. I love you."

“I love you more.”

Adam moved from in front of her until he was standing directly behind her. She could feel him unbuttoning his jeans as each time he ripped a button open, the back of his hand struck her swollen and wet labia. She was more than ready for him. Chelsea could feel subspace rolling back over her like a comforting fog of warmth. He freed his cock and guided it between her legs, parting the petals of her sex as he pushed himself into her, invading, claiming, and possessing what was his, what had been his for more than the past decade.

There were times she wondered if she didn't owe the rebels a debt she could never repay. Had they not abducted her, who knew if she and Adam would ever have gotten together. Olivia maintained they were inevitable, but Adam had taught Chelsea to embrace her past—all of it. Because all of it, dark and light, sweet and sour, pleasure and pain, had brought her to this place. And whatever price she had paid to get here was worth it.

He pressed in as deeply as he could, his legs and hips snugging up to her heated flesh, and she cried out as she came again and was rewarded with a kiss to the nape of her neck. “Such a good girl,” he crooned.

Adam dragged his cock back and then surged forward again. He repeated the motion, each time picking up speed and rhythm as he fucked her, his thrusts harder, stronger, and deeper. He pounded into her as he let himself seek his own pleasure. Even after ten years she was still a snug fit and he filled her completely. She could feel his cock beginning to swell and twitch.

“Who's my little fuck toy?” he growled, hammering her pussy.

Adam was fucking her because she had given herself to him a long time ago. He fucked her because he wanted to. He fucked her because she needed him to. He fucked her because his cock had been made to thrust in and out of her cunt.

Growling, he shoved himself deep and flooded her pussy as her body reached climax again and he released thick ropes

of his cum into her, holding himself against her while he rested on her back, catching his breath.

After a moment, he uncoupled from her and released her bindings. Lifting her in his arms, he carried her into the bath and turned on the shower. Once they had luxuriated in washing and drying one another, he swept her up and carried her back to the bed. He laid her carefully on her side before crawling in on the other side of the bed, spooning his body against hers.

Wrapping his arm around her waist, he cupped her mons, squeezing gently before they both drifted into a deep and dreamless sleep.

CHAPTER 7



For the next few days, Adam divided his time between studying the blueprints and system schematics and designing the physical security for the Red Hills Resort. Several times, he wanted to see the actual area that was giving him concern as well as be able to take a long view of everything. Chelsea was always at his side—either skiing with him outside or just relaxing and drifting in a peaceful, quasi subspace at his feet. She never sat on furniture. She was always either between his legs or in his lap if he was feeding her.

“Chelsea, what would you think about relocating to the States?”

“What?” she asked, surprised. “I know we’re going to visit Chicago...”

“Yes, and that got me to thinking. I know you were born and raised in Texas, but I think a lifestyle club in Chicago would do better.” He laid his finger against her lips to silence her. “I know there’s a part of you that still misses Texas. Just because I’ve chosen to ignore it doesn’t mean I didn’t know. I would point out, that’s not something you should have kept from me. But in any event, being here has made me think about a lot of things. Maybe it’s time for us to come home. I called Fitz last night and talked to him. He’s been talking to Ethan McDaniel of the Wild Mustang group. There’s a natural synergy between Cerberus and Wild Mustang that the two of them think can be exploited and Fitz wants me involved.”

“I don’t like the idea of you going back into black ops...”

“Not black ops, babe, but maybe some K&R stuff like I’ve done a couple of times for Cerberus. In any event, Fitz said they don’t want to lose us so if we’re keen on Chicago, we can use the time we’re there to look for a place they can base a club and what will be the U.S. Headquarters of Cerberus.”

Realization finally made Chelsea sit forward so she could look him in the face. “You mean we’re actually going to do this? And yes, I’ve never really thought of any place but the U.S. as home. Maybe I could run the club, like JJ does. Emily is going to be in school, so I’d have the time.”

Adam chuckled. “I guess it’s settled. I’ll call Fitz later and let him know, and I think JJ would kill to have you take on her role in the new club.”



New Year's Day

Red Hills Resort, Colorado

Several times Tobias had tried to lure them out, but Adam had taken the position that they weren’t really guests as he was working, but if they were guests, he was on his anniversary trip and he wanted nothing more than to be with the woman that belonged to him. When a staff person told them about the blizzard that had trapped everyone, he and Chelsea went out to take a look. He reported back to Tobias that everything seemed to be secure but some of the wires and conduits were going to need some work in order to keep them functional.

It was the New Year. Tobias’ wife, Margo, had talked Chelsea into coming down to a special New Year’s brunch. All of the other guests were there. There were the twins, Nathan and Natalie; Peyton and Declan; another Adam and Jasmine. They were, to say the least, an interesting bunch. He shook his head. Nathan and Natalie’s parents owned a BDSM club. While he believed in the lifestyle, it was difficult to imagine ever being okay with seeing his daughter in a corset or strapped to a St. Andrew’s Cross. Did that make him a hypocrite? Perhaps, but it still boggled the mind.

The brunch that was laid out was truly a feast, and he grinned when he saw they had strawberry-cheese blintzes—a particular favorite of Chelsea’s. Having seated Chelsea with Margo and Tobias, he filled a large plate with food and joined them, drawing Chelsea onto his lap.

“Any chance I can talk you into leaving Baker Street?” asked Tobias.

Adam grinned. “No, but it’s kind of you to ask. I should have all the plans drawn up for you by the end of next week. I’m leaving you with some things you need to get your construction guy on ASAP, as they’re true safety issues in terms of egress and access.”

Taking the plans, Tobias looked them over. “These are amazing. If you ever want to leave Baker Street to form a security company...”

Adam’s laugh cut him off. “If I was going to leave Baker Street, I’d join Cerberus officially. As it is, I do some things for them. I’m probably going to have my hands full. My beautiful wife has decided it’s time to come home. She wants to leave England and move back here to the States. We talked to JJ and Fitz. We’d planned to visit the Windy City before returning, but now we’re doing it with an eye to finding some kind of historic building and turning it into a Roaring Twenties/gangster themed club. Fitz wants me to take on a different role here and liaise with the Wild Mustang group out of Arizona. And knowing JJ, I suspect there’s going to be another kink-friendly resort in the world—up on the Isle of Skye. Only our dungeon will be a real one. She’s found a deserted and supposedly haunted castle she wants to buy.”

Tobias laughed, knowing he had no chance of recruiting Adam. “That is so unfair. Nobody built dungeons in this country. I had thought you might join us last night...”

“No; it was our tenth wedding anniversary, but we did raise a glass to you all and wish you a prosperous new year. I think you’ve done an outstanding job with this place. My guess is that it will make you a fortune.”

“Perhaps once you firm up your plans, Margo and I can fly over to England and see what kind of reciprocity Red Hills might have with Baker Street and the new resort.”

“You know you’re always welcome. Let us know when you’re coming, and we’ll get you set up at the Savoy.”

“Will do. Thanks, Adam, for all your hard work. I really do appreciate it. I’ll see that the balance of your funds is transferred on the second. I’m not sure you’ll make it home before then.”

Adam looked at the sky. “Nah, the storm’s blowing over. I suspect it’ll be a kind of pretty snow tonight instead of that white-out shit we saw for the past two days, but we’ll try to make it down for breakfast in the morning.”

“Good enough,” said Tobias, shaking Adam’s hand.

Adam headed up the stairs. Opening the door, he’d expected her to either be kneeling facing the doorway or up on the bed resting. He chuckled to himself; he fucked her more in the past six days than he had in the last three months. He was like a young man first discovering sex—he couldn’t get enough of her. She was in neither place, though.

“Here, Master. I’m out here.”

And she was—out on the patio, the two heating lamps not negating, but at least lessening the freezing temperatures. She was completely naked, save one of the Baker Street blankets they’d brought with them.

He joined her, wrapping his arms around her and looking out at the beautiful valley that stretched below them. “Aren’t you cold?” he murmured, nuzzling her neck.

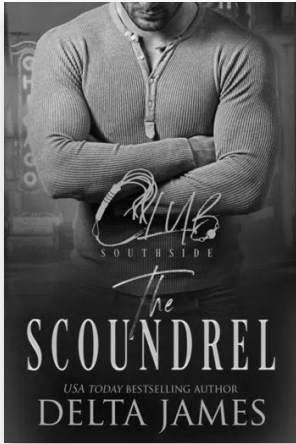
“With you in my life? Never.”

“I love you, Chelsea.”

She leaned back into him. “I love you more.”



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Other books by Delta James: <https://www.deltajames.com/>

As a USA Today bestselling romance author, Delta James aims to captivate readers with stories about complex heroines and the dominant alpha males who adore them. For Delta, romance is more than just a love story; it's a journey with challenges and thrills along the way.

After creating a second chapter for herself that was dramatically different than the first, Delta now resides in Florida where she relaxes on warm summer evenings with her loveable pack of basset hounds as they watch the birds, squirrels and lizards. When not crafting fast-paced tales, she enjoys horseback riding, walks on the beach, and white-water rafting.

Delta loves connecting with her readers and tries to respond personally to as many messages as she can! You can find her on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/DeltaJamesAuthor> and in her reader group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/348982795738444>.

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