

MAIL ORDER MOUNTAIN MAN



USA TODAY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
KHLOE SUMMERS

Mail Order Mountain Man

Waylon Family Ranch

Khloe Summers

Summer to Winter Publishing



Copyright © 2023 Summer to Winter Publishing

All rights reserved

The characters and events portrayed in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

No part of this book may be reproduced, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without express written permission of the publisher.

Cover design by: RebecaCvrs

Editor: Link Phoenix

www.authorkhloesummers.com

Chapter One

Junie

“*What?*”

“What do you mean, what?” My friend Maggie is a spitfire of honest energy that I don’t need today. Today, I need an agreeable bestie. One that goes along with everything I say and makes me feel like a genius for thinking of it.

She tosses her long blonde hair back over her shoulder and looks toward me with a downturned gaze that just might set me on fire. “Be honest! The last three guys were all duds, because you—”

“Because they were jerks! The first one stole money from his parents to travel up the mountain, the second lived in the city, and the third guy was younger than me. None of that is my fault!”

She glares down at my application, then back up at me. “*Really?*”

“What?”

She yanks my laptop from my lap and stares at me while holding down the delete button. “You’re not a veterinarian. You’re a ranch hand. You haven’t traveled the world. You’ve literally not left the mountain. And you’re clearly only twenty-four, not thirty-six.” She shrugs. “Who lies about being older?”

I suck in a deep breath and count slowly as I release it. I’ve been working on that in therapy. I’m not sure if it’s making much of a difference.

“I’m studying to be a veterinarian, and if I *were* thirty-six, I’d already be there... with a few vacations under my belt. So, I figure why not talk like I’ve made it? I want to attract older men, anyway. I don’t want some young guy who can’t handle a woman.”

“Okay.” She scrolls down the page to the boxes where I appoint my desired age range in men. “Then check one of

these.”

I tilt my head to the side, unamused by her *honesty*, and do-gooder attitude. “Trust me, I’ve checked it, and still, I only get young guys pretending to be mature. If I’m a young girl pretending to be old, maybe I’ll get guys that are older.”

I expect her to laugh, but instead, she shakes her head back and forth, checks the box, and presses send on my revised application before getting my approval.

“So pushy! What about you? You’re judging me, but you haven’t been on a date in months.”

Her eyes roll. “I don’t need a date. What I need is a dog. Do you think you could help me fill out an animal shelter application next?”

I grin. “Sure, but I’m not going to let you lie about your yard size.”

Finally, we laugh *together*, about the same thing. It’s good timing, too. I was starting to wonder if I was going to have to excuse her from her best friend duties.

“Anyway,” she says, standing from the couch, “I’ll see you at Waylon’s? I’ve got sheep duty all week. I’m not a fancy trainer like you.”

“I’ll be in around one. I promised him I’d grab lunch for the office on my way.”

She takes off, and I busy myself with a bit of the homework I need to get done before work. I could call myself a veterinarian. I only have a year left of school. That’s nothing compared to the years I’ve been working toward the degree. I was earning college credits in high school, for God’s sakes.

As I’m finishing up the last paragraph on my personal statement essay, I get an alert on my phone from the matching agency.

The first time I was matched, I’d got really excited. After all, the man of my dreams was about to ride up the mountain on his white horse, marry me, and give me all his babies. Turns out, even a mail order mountain man isn’t a sure-fire

thing. Maggie's probably right. The other guys lasted less than twenty-four hours and none of them even made it to my cabin. This one will be a nightmare, too. Maybe more so.

I click the link, which leads me to a message. *Cole will meet you at the bakery in eight hours.*

Eight hours!

That's one thing I don't care for about this app. There're no photos and you get no real information. You get a first name and a time to meet. The agency says it keeps folks from being superficial and matching based on soul mate status rather than their body, but still, it's a little annoying when you're on 'soul mate' number three.

Just tell me he chews with his mouth open and has four ex-wives so I can give him a pass and move on. I guess if I wanted that, I could go to the array of other matching agencies online.

I suck in a deep breath and let it out slowly, practicing my box breathing as I read the email. I'm not sure if seven o'clock tonight works. I have an exam tomorrow online and I haven't studied at all for it. Besides, I have to work all day and by the time I get home and get changed, it will be late and—

The sound of Maggie's voice hits me hard, like she's in the room. "*You're going to this date!*" I guess we've been friends long enough that the ghost of her comments are here whenever she isn't. Truth is, even her ghost is right.

Who knows? Cole could be the mail order mountain man I've been dreaming of. Or at the very least, he could be another hilarious story to tell the real man of my dreams someday... if I ever find him.

Chapter Two

Cole

I know who she is before she even says hello. She's dressed in a short yellow sundress with a pink cardigan wrapped over her shoulders. Her hair is auburn with highlights of pink to frame her face and she's currently wearing the best accessory of all time, a full cup of coffee dripping down the front of her.

She looks like a punk rock beauty queen that just fell into a puddle of mud but kept the smile for the sake of the crowd.

Why is that so amusing for me?

The little bake shop quiets as the owner towels the woman off, paying no mind to how hard her nipples have gotten under the thin cotton dress she's wearing. I try to be classy as well, but turns out, I'm not classy at all.

"Can I help with anything? You're Junie, right?"

The cute, angry looking woman glances toward me, then hides her face against her palms. "You must be Cole."

I grin, steady my gaze with hers, which is an effort considering her sopping wet nipples standing at attention.

"Sorry about this." She rolls her gaze to the side. "I guess I figured I looked better wet."

I grin, thinking of all the ways I could turn that into a joke, or at the very least an innuendo about how much I agree. Instead, I settle on, "We should get out of here." In hindsight, I could've come up with something better, even with my self-inflicted restrictions.

"And go where?" She laughs. "I'm soaked?"

Again, the innuendos are eating at my brain.

I look at the woman behind the counter. "One large coffee, to go."

The older barista nods and pours me a large cup of hot brew. I hand her a few dollars and nod toward Junie before

stepping outside the bakeshop window.

Junie looks at me with a wrinkled forehead as though she's been dumped, but I have no intention of leaving. I pour the steaming cup of coffee down over my shirt and try with all my might to contort my face into a smile while doing it. Through the window I yell, "Now we're both soaked. Where should we go?"

I expect the gesture to go over well, like some romantic comedy where the hero makes an elaborate gesture of solidarity, and the heroine jumps into his arms. Instead, Junie's face turns down and she storms from the shop like she's just come face to face with Charles Manson.

"What?" I chase after her, which could be my second mistake. "Where are you going?"

"Home."

"Why home? We have a date."

"And we're soaked!" She turns back toward me. "Why would you pour coffee all over yourself?"

The cool wind bites against my chest as we stand staring at one another in the street. "I didn't want you to be alone."

Her head cocks to the side. "Let's be honest with ourselves here. *Okay?*"

She has fire... and I'm intrigued.

"Okay..."

"For one, you're clearly older than me."

"I'm not that much older than thirty-six." I slide her a half smile. We both know she's nowhere near thirty-six like her profile said. If I had to guess, she's in her mid-twenties at most. "Plus, I'm in the age range you requested."

"Well, I assumed when I was setting that age range, I was also looking for mentally stable. Did I get that?"

"*Wow!* Who's *truly* mentally stable, anyway? Are you mentally stable?"

She rolls her eyes up into her head, then crosses her arms over her chest, blocking my top tier view of her nipples. “I mean... are you a psycho, serial killer, or just an asshole? The way you’re acting, I’m just not sure.”

Why is it the feistier she gets, the more I’m interested?

“Okay... give me five minutes. I can guarantee that in five minutes I can prove I’m not a weirdo.”

She hitches her hip and rolls her eyes again. It’s now that I see what a pretty shade of blue they are. “Four minutes. Go.”

“Okay, I’m a carpenter. I build cabins all over the mountain. My last build was up at Waylon’s ranch. I also used to ride in his rodeo. Though, it’s been a few years now at this point. I love my mother and my grandma used to call me her favorite boy, so... I’m pretty sure I’m a good guy.”

She holds back a smile. “How have you been building up at Waylon’s ranch and I haven’t seen you? I’m there every day.”

“What do you do there?”

“Horse trainer. You’d know that if that app would let you view my information.”

“Then maybe we would have never been matched.”

“Who’s your boss up there? Don’t tell me Bob Nichols?”

“How’d you know? That’s wild. We’ve been working so closely for how long now, and we never noticed each other.”

She turns back. “I never noticed you because you work for my *father*, and I stay far away from where my father works.”

My chest tightens. She may have just sunk my battleship. “Your father is Bob?”

She nods. “And he’s very protective. He would literally *kill* you if he knew you were dating me.”

I’m offended, young lady. “What’s wrong with me?”

She scans me up and down. “Aside from your propensity for insanity? Nothing. Well, except your age. I dated an older

man once and my father drove him out of town.”

“Then why did you put older men on your profile?”

“I like older men. I figured I could see someone on the side. We could fall in love and be married before my father even had a say in it. But... you work for him. That’s not really the recipe for dating in the shadows.”

“How so? Have you never heard of hiding in plain sight? We—”

“Look,” her gaze turns down and I feel the rejection coming, “you seem like a crazy, nice, weird, and kind guy, but I can already tell you aren’t going to be able to look at him daily and not crack. He’d know when you started acting differently. Trust me, it’s not worth it.”

“How do you know I’m not worth it?”

She laughs. “I don’t, but I’m saving you from yourself. You’re welcome.”

I stand in front of her truck door and stare at her. At this angle, she’s about as close as she’s gotten all night. Sweet blue eyes, long auburn hair, soaking wet dress, and an attitude to match. I’m smitten, and I’m not sure I can walk away. “Let me talk to him.”

She laughs harder. “If you value your job, your town, or the people you love, you won’t. Trust me, he’s old fashioned when it comes to his daughters. The kind of old fashioned man that keeps a gun by his bed at night and shoots into the woods if he thinks he hears an unusual rustling. He wouldn’t think twice about firing you and shooting your ass on the way out the door.”

Losing my job right now would be a slight inconvenience. I’m halfway through rebuilding on my own cabin and I need the revenue stream to finish things off. Not to mention the fact that there aren’t a ton of construction jobs in Rugged Mountain. Bob Nichols is the only game in town.

That said, I can’t imagine not seeing this firecracker again. “Let me at least take you to dinner tonight. No one has to know about a simple dinner. It can be just us.”

“This is a small town.” She smiles. “Everyone knows everything, and everyone knows my father. Trust me, it won’t work.”

“Then let me cook for you.” As soon as the words come out, I’m hesitant to hear her answer. I want to see her above all else, and cooking for her sounds perfect, but my cabin is a mess. I have half-built furniture everywhere and part of the place is blocked off for the expansion I’m working on.

She turns her head to consider the idea. “And how do I know you’re not going to murder me and feed me to your chickens?”

I grin. “That’s the fun of it, right? It’s an adventure.”

She glares toward me like she still isn’t sure.

I reach for her hand. It’s cold. *She’s cold.* Cole, you fucking moron. She’s freezing. Of course, she’s freezing. I’ve been keeping her out here to talk while she stands in a dripping wet dress. “I won’t hurt you. I promise. Text a friend and let them know where you’re going.” I hand her my card. “That’s my home address. I’ll warm you up and cook you a good meal. If nothing comes of tonight, we’ll both walk the other way and pretend this never happened.”

She stares at me a moment longer, then down at the wood carving on the business card, before glancing up at me again. “Okay. I’ll give you dinner tonight, but that’s it.”

I smirk, finally understanding what it means when people say, *‘when you know, you know.’* Because right now, without any other data points, I know this woman is in my future, even if she doesn’t believe it yet.

Chapter Three

Junie

“I’m almost there!” I shout the words out to Maggie, who’s screaming on the other end of the line.

“Oh my God. This is so hot! He’s your forbidden romance and you’re his soaking wet love slave.”

“Gross. Stop.”

“No way! I love it. Daddy won’t let you touch him, so now you have to fuck him even harder. I’m jealous.”

“Don’t be. Besides, you read too much. It’s not like that.” I roll my eyes as I flick on my blinker, following the black pickup truck up a steep incline. “He’s actually kind of sweet. I spilled my coffee all over myself and so he spilled his, too.”

She laughs. “On you?”

“No! On himself,” I laugh.

“So, you’re both insane? Nice. What’s he look like? Construction worker sexy, with bulging muscles tearing out from behind a tight white t-shirt?”

I’m hesitant to tell her how gorgeous he is. She always makes too much out of everything. “It doesn’t matter what he looks like. It matters that we connect.”

“Right, right, right, but what does he look like?”

I sigh, thinking over how to describe how much of a goliath he is. “To start, he’s tall.”

“How tall?”

“Probably six and a half feet.”

“Okay,” she says sarcastically. “What else?”

“He’s dark featured, a great smile, and he’s got big biceps and strong shoulders. Oh, and tattoos. Loads of tattoos.”

Her voice contorts as she says, “Then why is he still single?”

“My thoughts exactly. All I can figure is he’s weird and kind of abrasive.”

“All men are abrasive. It can’t be just that.”

“Well,” I say, turning onto his stone driveway, “I’m about to find out. If I don’t call you by midnight, send help.”

She laughs. “You better do something juicy tonight. I’m living vicariously through you, remember?”

“Love you!” I put my phone back in my bag and stare out at the property Cole has taken me to. I’m not sure what I was expecting, but the night keeps getting more and more interesting.

His cabin sits on acreage that stretches for what seems like an eternity. Wide open land dotted with towering pines and glacial boulders that’ve made their way down ages ago. Pink and purple skies light up the landscape and highlight the majesty of a cabin that’s being expanded on.

“It’s not as bad as it looks.” Cole stretches down from his truck and unlocks the front door of the cabin, which looks to be custom carved with two trout and a splashing stream. It’s gorgeous. The detail of the fins and the sanding of the door brings the scene to life.

“Bad? Is this one of those times when people say something is bad because they’re fishing for compliments?”

He shakes his head, and that warm smile comes back. “Nope. I was worried all the way here that you’d turn and run once you saw the mess.”

“What are you going to do with all the extra space?”

He shrugs and makes his way to the back of the cabin. “I figure someday I’ll have a family here. If not, then the resale will be better with three bedrooms and two baths. Right now, it’s just a one bedroom, one bath situation. It’s fine for me, but it wouldn’t suit most people.” His voice gets louder, and I hear him rummaging through something. He’s probably looking for the ropes to tie me up. I’m such an idiot for following a stranger back to his cabin.

“That’s very... proactive of you,” I say, stiffly studying the lines of the walls. I know construction pretty well since I’ve grown up around it. My dad was the first to call someone out on lazy lines or poor craftsmanship. He says up here on the mountain, people hire folks that aren’t afraid to build details into their work. I see now why he hired Cole.

“You built everything yourself?” I turn toward him. He’s changed into a fresh flannel, and he’s brought me one as well.

“Figured you’d like to dry off. And yes, all of this was built by me... at an incredibly slow pace.” He lets out a small chuckle under his breath. “I just finished that bookshelf this year with wood from Whiskey Falls. They have great balsam up there.”

“And the books? You read all these?” I drag my finger across the shelves, noting the treasure trove of names. Hemingway, Stephen King, Cormac McCarthy, James Joyce, Jack London.

Impressive.

“That’s my collection. Do you read often?” As he talks, he pulls two steaks from the fridge.

I tuck behind the plastic drape and peel the wet dress off me, replacing it with Cole’s oversized flannel. It smells like pine, and it swallows me up.

“Oh.” I clear my throat, and step back into the main living space. “I think I’ve read all my life. My friends make fun of me because I get sucked into these romance novels for days on end. It’s a mess.” I meet him at the butcher block counter. Even the kitchen is done with detail in mind. “Is this local wood, too?” I swipe my hand across the surface.

He nods, staring toward me in his shirt before redirecting back to the dinner he’s preparing. “Right here on this property. I got that pine down by the river. Bears like congregating down there this time of night or I’d take you for a stroll.”

“This is a dream spot! The mountains, the water, privacy. Ugh. I’m jealous. I’ve been renting a cabin up on the east corner of the mountain. It’s off grid, so that part is nice, but

there's a family of raccoons that live in the attic, and I'm pretty sure they're chewing their way down to the kitchen. I hear them scrambling up there all the time. That and my woodstove is all messed up. Last night I had smoke in the cabin and spent over an hour clearing it out."

He laughs, seasoning the steak with pepper. "Yeah, I was off grid for a while too, but I upgraded to a few newer power sources last summer. It's been much easier living. I'd be happy to come help you with the raccoons and the woodstove."

"Thanks, but I think maybe the raccoons are keeping me company. I'll let you know if they chew through the walls."

He laughs and pulls two potatoes from the bottom cabinet of the pantry. "Are baked potatoes okay?"

"Perfect. What can I do to help?"

"Just keep me company. You're welcome to look around and find all the faults you can about the place. It's been a while since I've had anyone in here critiquing me. I could use the opinions."

That's a new one. A contractor that *wants* opinions on his work. I laugh to myself at the thought, then go back to wandering the cabin. On the wall hangs fish trophies and a few antlers. He's a hunter and a fisherman. I imagine him up in some blind, holding a copy of *Pride and Prejudice* while he waits for his dinner to cross the field.

Why does that turn me on? I'm not a fan of killing animals for a trophy, but there's something about a big, strong, capable man who can find his own dinner that turns my clit into a sopping mess.

In the newest section of the house, there's a large piece of drop plastic separating the rooms. I peek behind to see more custom shelves and a few carved wood pieces that look to be misplaced sculptures.

"Please tell me you don't do these too?"

He laughs, steaks sizzling on the indoor grill. "Sure do. That's what I do for clients. It's my side job. If you want a bear carved out of wood, I'm your man."

“The detail is incredible. How do you do it?”

“Chainsaw, but there’s some finer detail work I do with knives that really brings out the features.”

I sigh. “You make me sound lame for just doing my one job.”

“Not true.” He says it with enough sarcasm that I’m a little taken aback. This man knows nothing about me, other than I like spilling coffee all over myself. Why is he acting like he does?

“Why do you say it like that?”

“Your profile online had some pretty interesting things tagged.”

“You can’t see my profile, so...”

“I can’t... except for your kinks. I guess those could be deal breakers for some. You got mine too, right?”

My chest tightens. Maggie was the last one to touch my profile. What did she write? “I did,” I cough. “Yours were blank. Mine should’ve been, too.” Is this why he brought me here? Is he only interested in me because he thinks I’m into some weird sex stuff? I’m going to kill Maggie.

Cole flips the steaks on the grill and glances toward me. “The profile said you were into domination play.”

I laugh and my face burns. “Well, I’m a virgin so... I’m not sure I even know what that means.” Why did I tell him I’m a virgin? And why did I say I don’t know what domination means? Of course I know what it means. I think about a big, strong man dominating my body every single day. Still, I can’t believe Maggie checked that box. I slap my hand over my face and walk toward the tree by the door before grabbing my coat and purse. “I think we’re good here. I’m going to head out.”

“No. Don’t go. I’m sorry if I scared you. I thought it was intriguing.”

I roll my eyes. “I bet you did.”

He laughs. “Not like that. I didn’t bring you here because of your kinks. I brought you here because when we were talking outside of the diner, you seemed sassy, and it made me smile. The whole domination kink is just some extra seasoning on your personality. I can’t say I’ve ever met someone bold enough to put that on a dating profile.”

I’m going to murder Maggie.

“Look, I don’t know if you’re some kind of fetish guy or what, but I’m not interested in anything weird. Like I so *embarrassingly* said... I’m a sad, pathetic twenty-four-year-old virgin.”

He makes his way around the counter, his big muscles flexing. I know I’m trying to fight his advances, but I bet he’d be good at dominating someone. I can see him bending me over, smacking my ass, and giving me orders to suck his cock.

My clit swells at the thought before I shake my head back into reality.

“I’m so sorry I brought it up. It was one of the few things you had on there that I could see, so I thought it was something that was cool to talk about. Looking back, though, it was dumb of me to bring it up when I did. I promise I’m not a weirdo.”

“Honestly, my *ex-best friend*, Maggie, overstepped.” I shake my head with a smile. “She wants me to put everything out there and I’m definitely not ready to be having this conversation any time soon.”

He nods and makes his way back to the kitchen. “We don’t have to talk about it again.” He pulls the steaks off the grill and lays them onto a tray next to the foil wrapped potatoes. “We can eat and talk about town gossip. Have you seen what they’re doing down near the train station? I think someone is opening up a flower shop.”

I sit at the small oak table next to the fireplace and take a bite of the steak. “Haven’t heard of the flower shop, but I’m impressed with the steak. Is there anything you’re not good at?”

He laughs. “There’s a newer farm to table restaurant put together by Waylon’s daughter, Kate, that would put this steak to shame. Besides, if I ever do leave the construction thing, I’m probably going to pursue building my sculpture and woodworking dreams.”

“Don’t you get lonely up here, though? I mean, going to work must get you out with people. If you worked solely on your sculptures, you’d never see anyone.”

He smiles. “I think I’d be okay with that. I’m not a huge people person, anyway. Though I do wish I had someone to share all this with.”

I’m reminded of Maggie’s question earlier. “Why don’t you have someone? You seem like a nice guy, and you’ve got this nice house, this great property, a good job...”

He shrugs. “Women tell me I’m stubborn.”

“A very upfront answer,” I laugh. “How so?”

A warm grin brightens his face. “I guess I like things a certain way and I get ornery about it. I think it’s becoming worse the older I get. Besides, women my age are all on their second or third marriages. They have kids and they don’t want more. That said, you’re the first woman I’ve been matched with that didn’t have all of that. But the way tonight’s going, I’m not sure you’ll be back for seconds.”

I’m not sure why I feel the need to console him, but I do. “I’m sorry. I think it’s partly my fault you’re feeling this way. I signed up for this service hoping to find my soul mate and instead I’ve gone through a string of losers. That’s why I’ve been hesitant to even give you a shot.”

He holds his hand over the table as though he wants to hold mine. It’s big and calloused, a working man’s hand. I let my palm melt into his, warmth radiating through me.

“I’m Cole,” he says. “I’m forty-five. I’m a contractor that happens to work for your dad, and I carve random shit out of wood. I learned from my father, who spent his life whittling trinkets. My parents live in Wyoming near the Utah border. I’ve got one sibling, a brother, who’s moving down here next

month. I've dated here and there, but nothing serious in years. What about you?"

I bite my bottom lip and try to ignore the way his forearms flex as his thumb brushes my wrist. It's a small subtle movement, but the way he does it is so manly, so... tough. What is it about older men that does it for me? He's so rough and brooding. He's got his life figured out, he's hot as hell, and I'd bet if I gave him permission, he'd spank me for being his naughty little girl.

I shake my head back to reality. "I'm Junie. I work at Waylon's ranch. I'm a horse trainer, which really helps because I'm going to vet school. Umm... my mom passed when I was young of cancer. And my dad, as you know, is a nutcase. I love the country and I'm never leaving." I shrug. "Oh, and I'm also into the dom-sub thing." I laugh.

He nearly chokes on his beer. "Well... you said it yourself that time."

"Yeah. I figure if it's out there, I might as well own it. What about you? You left the kink box blank."

He pulls another sip of beer in what seems to be a distraction. "I've never had anyone ask me that question."

"Until a second ago, when I did."

His brows raise. "I suppose you're right. Well," he sighs, setting his silverware on his plate, "I guess if I'm being honest, I've always liked being rough and dominate, but I've lived a very conservative life. It's not the sort of thing I would go around and talk about regularly."

"Like ever? What about in relationships? You've never communicated what revs your engines sexually?"

He laughs. "This is the strangest first date I've ever been on."

"Well, it's not really a date. We either marry in twenty-four hours or agree to never speak again. That's kind of the rules of the app."

He nods. "Right. I don't want to scare you away, is all."

“By what, all the kinky shit you’re into? I may be a virgin, but I’ve educated myself.”

He raises his brows and I see a shift in his gaze. It’s subtle and I’m not sure everyone would notice, but it’s there. “Okay... in past relationships, aggression was talked about like it was a downfall.”

“Like how?”

“Like I said, I grew up very conservatively. So, my views and those of the people I tend to date are very conservative.”

“You’re saying words, but I don’t know what you’re trying to tell me.” I smile and sip my tea. I get the feeling he wants to break from his mold, go wild, and be the man that’s buried inside. The primal, archaic, sexual creature that he is, but he’s been told it’s wrong.

“I’ve been with a lot of women who want to make all the decisions and be the boss, and I grew up differently.”

I circle my finger around the rim of my mug. “And what about sexually?”

His gaze widens. I realize asking is out of his comfort zone, but Maggie wasn’t wrong in what she wrote on that profile about me.

Out of line... yes.

Wrong... no.

I need a dominate man in every sense of the word. An old fashioned kind of guy who will run the house and be solid and strong.

He clears his throat and his gaze locks with mine. “If you’re asking me if I’d enjoy telling you to bend over for me, I most definitely would.” His voice is deep when he speaks sending a shot of energy rushing to my clit.

I swallow hard. “I guess that’s what I’m asking.”

He nods. “How much do you want to know?”

My breath catches. His energy has shifted. He's letting his mind dip into that dark, archaic place I like. I can see it in his eyes. "Then you'd also like it if I told you to get on your knees and suck my cock?"

My heart runs in circles after itself and I'm nearly breathless. *God, why does he sound so good when he talks like this?*

"Am I scaring you yet?" He laughs, lifting his beer to his lips.

The fire crackling and the rough bristle of his beard is all I can hear. Well, that and the sound of my heart thumping in my ears.

I shake my head, my skin burning hot. I can't imagine how red I must be.

He stands from the table and makes his way around to me, his large hand on my chin as he guides me up from the chair and backs me against the wall. He's big, and though he's letting himself go, there's a waver in his voice that tells me he's not used to acting like this. With his hand on my neck, he leans into my ear and growls, dragging his teeth down the arch and onto my shoulder.

Maybe I should thank Maggie.

"You like this?" he groans, wet, hot heat against my ear.

My body turns to jelly, melting for him like a ball of snow brought in and set in front of the fire.

If I didn't think my father would murder him right here and now, I'd beg him to fuck me, because *this...* is exactly what I've been holding out for. A big, strong, hardworking man with a great smile, a good heart, and a tongue that doesn't mind talking dirty. I feel more alive than I've ever felt.

He pulls away from me smiling as though the whole thing was only a tease. "Good to know."

I clear my throat and sit back at the table, squeezing my thighs together as I push away thoughts of getting on my knees

for him... because none of this is allowed. He's off limits, and tonight can't happen.

Chapter Four

Cole

She looks good wearing my flannel like a dress. It's been driving me crazy for hours. Her hips, her tits, her creamy thighs, the way she moaned just slightly when I had her up against the wall. We were playing pretend, but I can't imagine we both didn't know there was more behind it. If there's not, I'm way off base, and it's probably for the best. She's young. On paper, it looks like a number. In person, I feel like a pervert.

She's talking about vet school, telling me about the online courses, and how they let her work from Waylon's ranch to earn credit hours. She tells me that she loves being a farm vet but she'll always have a soft spot for cats. That cats are God's perfect animal and every time she sees one, she can't help but be drawn to it.

I hang onto her every word, desperate to memorize the way her lips move. It's cliché and I almost hate myself for falling this hard so fast, but Junie isn't like other women. She's a paradox... even to herself. On one breath, she's telling me how much she loves small town life. On the other, she's telling me how she wishes she could disappear in a crowd of people.

I lean in closer and take in the scent of flowers in her hair, remembering the way her skin tasted just an hour ago. I don't know how I'll go back to normal after this. How do you stare at everything you've ever wanted, then let her walk away like you never met at all?

Filthy thoughts surround me, and for a second, I'm lost, wondering what she would look like bent over, begging for me with those beautiful lips open just enough to let out a whine.

Fuck my life.

Why does she care about holding back? What would Bob really do? Yell? Be pissed for a while? He couldn't really fire me. Hell, maybe it would be worth it. I've been wanting to put more into the carving business, anyway.

What the hell am I thinking?

It doesn't matter what I want. Maybe Junie doesn't want this because she respects her relationship with her father and being with someone so close to him would fuck their relationship worse than I can imagine.

All I know is that the time is ticking. Twenty-four hours to figure this out isn't ideal. In a perfect world, I'd love to finish this cabin, show her the life we could live here, and work things out with her father. Unfortunately, if she holds to this clock, I need to get her to start seeing things the way that I do.

“What do you think?” She looks toward me with wide blue eyes, sliding a spoon full of vanilla ice-cream between her pink lips.

“About what, sorry.”

She laughs. “Am I that boring?”

I shake my head and blow out a breath of hot air. “The opposite, actually. I'm still lost in what happened an hour ago. I don't think I've ever felt energy like that.”

She looks down at her bowl and smiles the sweetest grin. “Me either. That doesn't change anything, though. My dad is still—”

“If this is about my job, I can find work elsewhere.”

She laughs. “Wow, that's not scary. You're giving up your job for me after one date.”

“Sorry. It's the time constraint of that stupid app. I don't want to lose you. I mean, what's the worst thing that can happen, anyway? We don't get to use the soul mate service again?”

She bites her bottom lip. “When you were daydreaming, I asked how many kids you wanted.”

I suck in a heavy sigh. “Shit. As many as possible. A houseful if we can. If we can't do it naturally, I'd pursue adoption. You?”

“I’ve always wanted the biggest family I could have. I want to be surrounded by a world we create, you know? A nice farm, a bunch of kids, and the kind of love story they want to retell over and over.”

The fire pops and crackles beside us, illuminating her face.

“And what would I have to do to give that you, Junie?”

She shrugs. “I don’t know. I’m not sure it matters.”

I stand from the couch and reach for her hand. When she accepts my touch, my hormones take over, and every sense of reason I’d been holding onto leaves my body and burns up in the fire.

Her eyes narrow and focus. Her lips part, and she leans against me.

My hand lands on her throat as a single breath releases. “I’m not sure I have the willpower to walk away from you, my little kitty cat.”

Her knees buckle a little as though she likes the name. “Then what if we get lost tonight? What if we let our bodies do what our bodies want to and we let tomorrow be tomorrow?”

“What about the issues with your dad and your virginity? I would hate for you to regret making a split decision in the morning.”

She rocks her hips toward me. “The way this night’s feeling, I’d regret not exploring what was going to happen tonight for the rest of my life.”

“What about protection? I never expected this, so I would need to go get some.”

She stares at me, panting as though she’s as desperate as I am. “Can you pull out?”

I think about the request of pulling out, spilling my come all over her skin, and watching her rub it in.

Fuck. The more my cock throbs, the more my brain surrenders. All thoughts are gone. I’m running on nothing

more than instinct.

This isn't me. I don't meet women and have sex three hours later. I don't fall in love easily. Hell, I don't fall in *like* easily. I don't lose control of myself, *ever*... but here I am.

"Yeah," I finally say, breathing hard against her plump lips.

Her nails scratch through my beard and she moans into my mouth, unbuckling my jeans with one hand.

"Good girl," I groan, biting her bottom lip as I pull away. "Do you want me to take control?" I ask out of respect for her, but every part of me wants to dominate her immediately and without permission.

She nods, her big, innocent eyes staring up at me like a sweet fucking angel.

"Okay. Get on your knees."

She does as I've asked and lowers herself slowly, staring up at me with her plump round ass cheeks spilling out from beneath her panties.

Fuck, fuck, fuck. I'm going to make a fucking fool of myself. I'm going to come in three minutes and her first time will be ruined.

"Have you ever done this?"

She shakes her head and an odd sensation of warmth rattles over me. The thought of being the first man in her mouth. The first man in her tight slit. *Why the hell does it get me off so much?* I'm fucking sick, that's why.

I push the darkness away and feed the urges taking over my body. I won't take this for granted. I'll remember every second of the way her body feels against me.

With my jeans tugged onto the floor, she slides her lips onto my cock, sucking and stroking like one would if they'd never given a blow job. It's haphazard and wild, unpredictable, and off rhythm, but I love it. She's wet and sloppy, and tiny little moans escape as she works.

“Good fucking girl,” I growl, as she gags and strokes my cock. I let her go a few moments longer before I start to feel like I can’t take any more. “Stand up and show me your body. I want to see all of you.”

I’m a man I’ve never met. Junie wakes up parts of me I haven’t felt in... fuck... maybe ever.

She looks up at me, unbuttoning the flannel top, dragging it slowly off her shoulders. “I’ve never been completely naked in front of anyone.”

“Do you want to be?” I won’t push her too far. She needs to want this, too.

She nods slowly and my shoulders relax as she lets the shirt fall.

Orange flames flicker onto her skin as she stands in the glow of the fire. Her breasts are round and pert, her nipples hard, and the curve of her hips is wide. Her pulse beats against the arch of her neck as she bends slightly to pull her panties to the ground.

Small hands wrap onto her breasts as she attempts to cover bits of herself from me. I’d never admit it, but I love the shy act. The innocent lamb too afraid to show herself to me.

Fuck. My cock aches.

“You’re gorgeous,” I say, leaning into each breast to suck the exposed nipples.

Her fingers weave through my hair as she moans with each suckle. “I need you, Cole, like I’ve never needed anything.”

My teeth scrape over her hard nipples as my hand wanders between her thighs and brushes her soft pink mound. My breath hitches as I part her with my thumb and rub her wet, glistening pussy. Soft and perfect, she’s never been touched.

Her voice shakes as I press inside. One finger, then two. She melts into me, thrusting her frame against my touch as though she’s unable to fight the urge as well.

Her small hand grips my cock and pumps in rhythm with mine.

“Tell me you like my fingers in your tight little body, kitty.”

“I do. I like it,” she pants.

“I like it what...”

She grins. “I like it, sir.”

I groan and thrust harder. “Good girl.” She’s tight, tighter than I expected, and she winces as I push inside. I can’t imagine she’d handle my girth very well right now. Maybe we should take things slow and work up to sex. Then again, I have twenty-four hours to get her addicted to me the way I am to her.

I suck in her scent and bite her shoulder as she bucks into my hand. Her tits scrape against my chest as she cries out, “Please, I need to come. Make me come. I—”

A horn honks from the driveway and bright lights shine through the cabin windows. It’s a pickup truck. A big one.

My throat goes dry. I’ve seen that truck before. The headlights aren’t the regular ones with the dull lamps that everyone else has. They’re the LED lights that should be illegal.

Junie looks up toward me, confirming my fear. “Why would my dad be here?”

“He stops by some nights on his way home and leaves me wood and supplies that he can’t use. Usually, he tells me he’s coming. I’m sure he’ll drop them off and leave.”

Except he doesn’t.

Tonight, he knocks.

Chapter Five

Junie

My dad and I have never been super close. If I had a dance recital, he missed it. If I had a horse race, he missed it. If I had a father-daughter dance at school, he had work. Apparently, though, the first time I'm about to have sex, he's at the door, blocking me. That said, when it comes to family, he's the only dad I have and I love him.

I hold my ear to the door, listening to Cole talk construction to my dad. I can tell he's trying to blow him off, but Dad is clueless and goes on and on about some project they're working on.

How did he not see my truck out there?

The worst part is, I'm still achy and throbbing, desperate to come. I've never felt the way Cole makes me feel. Sex has always seemed like this big, intimidating thing, but the way he takes control gives me a level of comfort that's both sexy and relieving.

"You have any beer?" Dad's voice moves through the house and toward the kitchen. I haven't been in the cabin long, but from where I'm sitting against the bedroom door, it's easy to tell where the voices are.

Cole tries to convince him he's going to turn in early, but Dad goes for the beer anyway. "Yeah, I'm pretty tired myself. I'll probably head home soon. I wanted to drop you some of those balsam logs we cut last week. I'm sure you could use 'em. The work you're doing here is impressive."

I can't hear Cole's response, but I imagine it's rushed.

"You'll find someone to share all this with." Dad is back in the living room now. I hear the rustling of the plastic near the addition. "A good guy like you... it's hard to believe you haven't settled down already."

Okay, so that's something. Points for Cole. Dad likes you. I wonder if he'll feel the same when I tell him we're getting married soon. I chuckle to myself at the thought.

For a second, I imagine that scenario. Cole and I exchanging vows down by the river with wildflowers and the mountains in the background. A simple life here on the ranch with a few horses and as many kids as we can handle. I imagine us flirting all day while we do chores and disappearing somewhere in the barn where he chains me up and spanks me with the horse whip.

My thighs tingle and my breath picks up.

God, I want him. This is the worst.

I stand up straight and swallow hard, collecting myself yet again.

The conversation in the living room has turned to Cole's potential ladies in town. Apparently, Dad has some prospects for him including a few women from the diner and another from the library. He only has to say their names and I'm jealous.

God, I need help. Twenty-four hours in and I'm both jealous and horny over a guy I barely know. Maybe this is what desperation looks like. I've spent so many years trying to find the perfect man that I neglected the urges I'd inevitably have. Now, I'm getting all possessive and weird.

Cole dismisses Dad's offers. "Nah. I'm seeing someone, actually."

Shit! No! My eyes squint closed. *Don't say it. Don't say it. Don't say it.*

Dad's tone brightens as he says, "Shit. Didn't know that, son. Who is it?"

Son? I read into the simple name and wait for Cole's response with strained ears and a clenched stomach.

"A younger woman. She works down at Waylon's."

"*Younger?*" Dad laughs it off. "Well look at you, robbing the cradle."

Cole doesn't laugh. "Not really. We get along and that's what matters."

“It is.” Dad clears his throat. I’m guessing his ego is bruised because his joke didn’t land. That’s another thing about Dad. He’s a bit of an egomaniac who needs to be praised. “Who’s the lucky girl?”

My throat tightens, and as I’m leaning forward to listen harder, I trip on a cord, fall back into the nightstand, and send a bowl of marbles flying to the floor.

Damn it!

“Is she here now? Fuck. I’m sorry. When I got here, I went around back to dump the wood like always. I didn’t even see anyone else parked out there. You need to put a sock on the door or something.” My dad let’s go a belly laugh at his own joke.

Either Cole doesn’t respond, or I don’t hear him. Either way, I’m crawling around the cabin floor searching for marbles like I’m a lost boy in *Peter Pan*.

Seconds later, Cole bursts through the door. “Are you okay?”

I turn back. “Yeah. That scared the hell out of me, though. What are you thinking telling him you’re dating someone?”

“I want him to know. We were matched for a reason. And ten minutes ago, we both knew why. Are you saying you don’t feel it now?”

I sigh. “I’m saying it’s more complicated than feelings.”

“Okay, how so? I’m a problem solver.”

“It’s not that easy. I can’t put it into words. If I could, I’d have found a solution already. This is that strange place in the ether, you know... where things make sense to us, but they’d fuck everything else up.”

He narrows his brows and grips my hands in his. “How does that work? If it makes sense to us, it works. We’ve just got to get through the bullshit. Your dad didn’t sound bothered by an age gap romance. I’m sure he’d be fine with it given time.”

“He wasn’t bothered when it was *someone else’s* daughter. He’s going to flip when he finds out it’s me. Trust me. Dad showing up tonight was a sign. A sign from the universe telling us to stop before things go further.”

He rolls his shoulders back then tightens them up.

A lump grows in my throat. “This isn’t what I want. Believe me.”

His gaze draws toward the corner of the room, and he stays silent.

Maybe he’s right. Maybe I should stand up to my dad, tell him what I want, and if he’s not okay with it, then so be it. I don’t owe him anything. I’m an adult. I can make my own decisions. It’s time I make a family for myself, anyway. I don’t need his approval for it.

I suck in a deep breath and let it out slowly. “Even if I wanted this, you still have your job to think about. You don’t have to sacrifice everything for this.”

He laughs wrapping me in his arms. “I think you’re being dramatic. Your dad will be upset for a little while, then he’ll move on.”

“I should go.”

“Please stay.” His voice is rough with need, and I feel it all over. In my heart, in my bones, between my legs... *everywhere*.

I tip up onto my toes and kiss his lips one last time. “I have to, Cole. Thank you for tonight. I won’t forget it.”

And with that, I gather my things and step out into the cold, where life reminds me how alone I really am.

I haven’t studied for my test, but the answers come easily. Thank God! Between masturbating all night to the thought of Cole calling me a good girl and rethinking my decision to leave him, I got zero sleep.

“What do you mean you left?” Maggie’s voice grates on my nerves. I love the girl, but her honesty is exhausting. “He sounds perfect. If you can’t have him, can I?”

The thought of him with anyone else sends another pang of envy through me.

“What would you do? You know my father. When Isabelle got involved with that guy from that motorcycle gang, dad shot him in the shin. Then, when the guy didn’t go away, he threw his motorcycle over a cliff, and shot him in the thigh. He promised the next shot would be to his dick.”

“Of course, I remember that,” Maggie groans. “Okay, maybe you have a point. What happened to the motorcycle guy? Did he give up after the dick thing?”

“Yup! My sister’s still alone and furious with Dad, but I don’t think he cares. He’d rather know that she was ‘*safe*.’ Mick was a great guy, too. Dad just needed to get to know him.”

“So don’t tell your dad. Run off with Mr. Perfect and live in Whiskey Falls. Or move to Utah or something.”

“Cole’s life is here. He thinks he wants me right now, but in five years when all the hormones have settled, he’ll realize I’m not that special, and he’ll regret having given up his job and livelihood.”

“Sounds like he wanted to start his own business. Let him.”

I appreciate her concern, but I’ve spent all night going over how we could make this work.

We can’t.

“My dad would still be harassing us.” My voice is strained. “I’m done talking about this. I have to get to work. Are you going to be in today?”

“Yeah, later. I’m going on a run with Emery first.”

“Ooh... la... la... Look who’s causing trouble herself.”

“Whatever. We’re just friends. And Dodge and Emery have been best friends forever. It’s no big deal. He’s used to me and I’m used to him.”

“Right... Catch you later?”

She blows a kiss into the phone and hangs up, leaving me with my thoughts. It’s a place I don’t want to be. So instead of thinking, I crank up the volume, pop in a pair of ear buds, and lose myself in some late 90s country. It’s not nearly the distraction I need. In fact, it might be making things worse. My mind shuffles between thoughts of Cole last night, and the future we could have together.

I imagine myself finding Cole on the ranch today and him grabbing me uncontrollably. I picture his hands all over me as he bends me over to take what he wants. He was so big in my mouth, so hard. I can’t imagine what he’d feel like inside of me.

My pussy swells at the thought. I lean back in the chair and tuck my hand into my panties, rubbing at my thumping clit as I think about Cole’s rough hands all over me.

Less than two minutes later I’m convulsing in the office chair with a wet sticky mess between my legs.

I’d love to say I’ve got this, but I’m not sure letting go of Cole is going to be as easy as I thought.

Chapter Six

Cole

The day is damn near torture. How can I live knowing that the woman I'm meant to be with is right there? A few steps, a few words, and one tough conversation away.

I stare up at the blue sky and let out a breath. I tried not to think of her last night, but I couldn't help myself. My cock was so hard for her. I jerked off twice in a row, just thinking of the way her innocent lips parted for my dick. She took me so hard and sloppy after she got on her knees so willingly. She took off her clothes for me so freely. She was open and honest with me. She smiled, laughed, and had a smart-ass comment to everything I said.

I need that woman.

"You coming down from there?" Bob yells up. He's holding a plan for the new barn Waylon wants to build on the east end. I swear to fucking God I'll quit if he put me on lead for that job. It's too close to Junie.

"Coming down now, boss." I take my time making my way over, trying to rationalize something in my head that makes no sense. I never move on anything this quickly. It took me years to start the build on the house and years to convince myself that the money spent made sense. Hell, it took me six weeks to decide which business cards I wanted for the carving business. With Junie, everything is different. There's no question in my mind. *She's the one.* Period. End of sentence. Next chapter. That woman is my future, I know it.

"What's up?" I take off my hard hat and stare toward Bob as he rubs his hand over his bald head. The man is short, but he's built like a pit bull and covered in tattoos.

"I'd like you to lead the job on the east side barn."

I let the offer sit in the air. I'm sure he's expecting I'll take it and be thrilled for the opportunity. Yesterday, I might have been. Now, that can't happen.

“I appreciate that, sir, but I think I’m going to have to decline the offer. I have enough work to do on this job until spring and I’ve got quite a few orders to get caught up on at home.”

His heavy brows crinkle. “All that’s left here is grunt work. You’re better than that. You should be at the new build. I need you guiding the guys, keeping everyone in line.”

The job site has emptied for the day and the sound of hammers and drills are replaced with the rustle of the wind and the sound of horses in the distance.

Junie. I’d bet she’s over there training them now. Her silky hair braided to the side. Her curves stuffed into a tight pair of jeans. Her sweet lips parted and sarcastic. My heart warms and my cock thumps thinking of her. I have to take this chance. I have to leave this job, show her how serious I am, and hope that I don’t scare her away.

“I think this is a good time for me to resign.” I stand with my arms crossed over my chest, waiting for his inevitable meltdown. I’m the top man on his team. Truthfully, I don’t know what he’ll do without me. “I’ll give you two weeks to replace me, then I’m going to work on selling my statues.”

“You’re making nearly six figures for me. You can’t possibly make that much on carved logs.”

“Not at all, but it’s enough to finish the house and live comfortably. Plus, I’ll have more time, so I can take more orders.” I hold out my hand and shake his. “I appreciate all you’ve done for me. I hope you understand.”

“I don’t,” he sighs. “You’re making a really stupid decision.” He runs his hand over his head again. “But... you’re a grown man and I know what it’s like to need autonomy.” His hand lands on my back. “Doesn’t mean you won’t be missed. If you ever change your mind, I will always have a place for you.” His words are so kind that I contemplate throwing in the part about being in love with his daughter, but I fear that might change the tide. Besides that, it’s not my place. Junie needs to tell him how she feels when she’s ready... *if she’s ever ready.*

My heart thumps against my chest. Two quick decisions in one day and I don't regret either of them. My eye is on the prize and I won't take no for an answer.

Her gaze goes wide and her lips part as she sees me.

Fucking hell. I hope I can turn this around.

“What are you doing here, Cole?”

It's nearly dark, though it's only six o'clock. We're the last few people on the farm still working. Most folks are in by five at the latest, though I think Waylon has a guy that does evening rounds.

There are a million things I want to say to Junie, but they're a jumbled mess in my head, so I don't speak at all.

Stalking toward her, I grip my hand on the back of her neck and guide her into the barn, kicking the door closed behind us.

“Did you miss me today?” My tone is rough, my gaze on hers.

She whimpers, “Yes.”

My cock throbs. “Good. I quit my job.”

Her eyes widen. “What? Cole you—”

“If you can't be with me because you're afraid of your father, then that's okay, but I couldn't live with myself thinking I was doing anything that could keep us apart.”

She stares at me for a long while. She looks exactly like she did in my vision. A long auburn braid with a pink strand. A pink and white flannel fit tight, with jeans that hug every curve of her plump frame.

I beg my dick to disappear, but he's desperate to be the star of the show.

“You need the money,” she finally says, panting.

“I'll be fine.”

“You're crazy.”

“Guess I am.”

“What other things do crazy men do?” she pants, backing into the corner of the barn where I want her.

I grip the rope and flog off the ground and spank her ass lightly before tying her wrists to the post nearby. “I think they tell pretty little cowgirls to get naked.”

Her face flushes. “They do?”

I nod. “Would you like that?”

“I would.” Her breath is barely there as she speaks. “I want you, Cole. I want all of you. Now and always... but that scares the hell out of me. How do I know it so fast? It doesn’t make sense.”

I land my hand on the side of her face and lean into her lips softly. “You just know the same way I do, and I’ve never been more sure of anything.”

She swallows hard. “Fuck me. Please. I need you. I thought about you all last night. I... I touched myself to the thought of you, Cole. Your cock was so big in my mouth, I... I wondered all night what you’d feel like inside of me, stretching me wide.”

God. Her little hand rubbing over her clit as she thinks of me sends an egotistical bolt to my dick.

“And I thought about coming in that tight little pussy, then watching you walk around this ranch, knowing you have me dripping down your legs.”

She sighs and crumbles in my arms.

“Undress for me,” I growl.

Frantically, she pulls off her shirt and pushes down her jeans, taking little lacy panties with them. My clothes aren’t far behind.

Horses whiney behind us and the breeze bellows in from the cracks in the old wood. She’s precious. This moment is precious. Maybe I should hold out.

“Do you want to go back to my place? I don’t want to—”

“Fuck me!” she begs louder. “Tell me what to do. Take control of me, Cole.”

I groan in pleasure at her request, then step around the bale to push it beneath her. I rest my shirt on the dried grass to soften the scratches she’ll endure if she’s thumping against it raw. I slowly tie her hands together, never breaking eye contact.

“On your knees for me, kitty. Bend forward.”

She does as she’s told, whimpering. Not in pain, but out of need... out of desperation.

Her round ass lifts and her swollen, pink, pussy drips with excitement.

How do I not fuck her hard right here and now? How can I make this last?

Bending forward, I lick the sweet juices she’s made for me.

She bounces back and forth, struggling against the restraint of the rope as I devour her.

“Hold still.” I grip her hips tighter. “You want to come, right?”

“Yes, sir.” she pants, trying to hold herself in one spot. She thrashes all over the place, moving her clit as fast as she can against my beard. She needs to release.

“Please fuck me,” she begs. “I can’t wait any longer!”

“Whine for me,” I order, spreading her ass to lick the bundle of nerves presented to me. I circle slow and careful, eating her like this is my first meal after being lost at sea. I’ve never done this before, but her ass is too tempting.

She responds by squeezing her thighs and releasing a guttural moan that leaves me desperate to fuck.

“Now. Please! Fuck me!” Her tone is ragged and out of control.

I suck in a deep breath, trying to control my urges. I want this to last. I want to take my time with her. “You haven’t

gotten your spankings yet, kitty.”

“I love it when you call me that! Call me your kitty! Say it again!” Her tone has changed. It’s wild, fevered, desperate, needier than ever.

I love it. I love when she calls out to me.

With the flog in my hand, I look down at my girl, tied and helpless, her virgin body begging for my cock to stretch her.

“What did I do, sir? Why would I get spankings?” She’s breathless, going along with the scene.

“Well, you denied me yesterday, for one. I wanted to keep you, play with you, fuck you, give you my babies, and you ran off.” I smack her round ass, leaving a small red bruise.

She winces, falling forward and her tits sweep against the cotton on my shirt.

“Again,” she cries, “with your hand. I want your marks!”

Oh fuck. I’ve never spanked anyone before and using my hand makes me uneasy. I’m not sure I know my own strength, and this sweet woman is the last person on Earth I’d ever think to hurt, but the sound of her needing my bruises on her skin gives me a fucking chill like I can’t describe.

I land my hand on her ass, leaving behind prints.

She moans, “Again!”

Fuck me.

I growl out and land my hand on her ass again.

She bounces forward and whines, “Fuck me! Please fuck me!”

With my cock desperate for release, I slide into her plump, tight pussy, and thrust. She’s warm and tight, and when I break through to the deepest parts of her, she squirms and cries for relief as though it hurts.

“Don’t stop,” she begs. “The pain will go away. I can take it. I want it.”

I contemplate whether I should listen, but I figure she knows her body, and I'm not sure I could slow down if I wanted to. We've built this up for days. I need to come on her.

Thrusting harder, I reach forward and rub her clit as she pulls against the rope.

“Come in me, Cole. I want you inside me.”

Hormones devour all sense of control and reason. I'm not sure what the right decision is anymore, but I'm not sure it matters. My cock is seven inches deep, and she's screaming like she's about to alert the whole ranch.

Harder and harder, faster and faster, I thump against her round ass until she clenches me tighter and explodes.

She thrashes against me, convulsing without control. Her tight slit spilling its juice over my aching cock is like magic. She's like nothing I've ever felt.

Within seconds of her thrashing, I'm coming, spreading my seed inside her tight, young pussy.

As I thrust the last bits of me free, I loosen the rope on her hands, and she collapses against the bale of hay.

My teeth scrape against her shoulders and a growl leaves my throat in a hurry as I grip her round tits in my hand and twist her toward me.

“That was insane, and I think I need it for the rest of my life,” she says with a smile.

I nod, kissing her neck and the lobe of her ear. “Let's get home and get cleaned up. I can make us dinner and we can figure everything out. I'm never letting you out of my sight again. Got it?”

She grins. “Yes, sir.”

“I like it.” I smile, staring down at the beautiful woman in front of me. I can't imagine the *'yes sir'* thing lasts outside the bedroom, but that's okay. I need the feisty kitty too.

When our clothes are firmly in place and the bits of hay are picked from our hair, we flick off the barn light, and slide

open the door. Standing opposite the scene, only twenty feet away, is Junie's father.

He's holding his shotgun.

Chapter Seven

Junie

“Put it down, Dad.”

Dad doesn't listen. He stalks toward Cole and holds his aim. “You piece of fucking shit.”

I wonder how long he was standing by the door. I wonder what he heard.

God, my face is hot. The last thing I need is for my dad to have heard all the weird sex things I said.

“Dad!” I step between my father and Cole. “Put. It. Down.”

Dad lowers his gun but looks past me toward Cole. “This is the girl you're dating? This is the reason you quit. You're a stupid man.”

I suck in a deep breath. “I love him. We're getting married. You don't get a say in it.”

“He's forty-five years old!” My father hollers Cole's age as though that will change my mind.

“I know. So?”

“So, he's a fucking pervert! You're a girl!”

“I'm not a girl! I'm twenty-four! I'm old enough to make my own decisions, and whether you like it or not, it's happening.”

My father grumbles something under his breath and paces away.

“I'm sorry it came out like this, Bob, but I'm in love with your daughter, and I'd do anything to keep her safe.” Cole grips me close to him and my heart warms.

How did this happen? How did I finally meet the mail order mountain man I've been looking for?

“You don't want our relationship to end up like you and Isabelle's, do you? You barely talk to each other now. She's

never going to forgive you for what you did to Mick! You know that, right?"

He doesn't answer. He stays still, staring out into the dark lit mountains like they have all the answers.

I grip Cole's hand in mine before staring at my father. "You can pout all you want, but this is who I love. This is what I'm doing. I'm doing it here with your blessing, or I'm doing it here without it. You won't hurt him. I'm not as nice as Mick or Isabelle. I'll have you arrested."

Dad won't turn his gaze back toward me. He's a stubborn man, but I'm done worrying about what he thinks. I love Cole. I need him. I won't let my father dictate my life.

Cole turns toward me. "I should let you guys talk. I don't want to—"

"We'll leave together. I'm not explaining myself to him."

Cole's face turns down as he stares toward me. I know what he's saying without saying it. He wants me to hash it out with my father, but he doesn't realize the reality of who my father is. He knows a work version of my dad. That guy is a people pleaser. He wants to be liked. The dad I know behind closed doors is a tyrant.

With Cole's hand in mine, I tug him toward the lot where we're parked. It's late, I just lost my virginity, and I want to go home and enjoy lying safe in his arms.

"Wait," my father yells. "You're right." He sighs, walking toward us, his gun tucked behind his shoulder. "I hate it, but you're right. What you do is none of my business. What Isabelle does is none of my business. I should apologize to her."

My chest tightens and my mouth goes dry. I'm not sure I've ever heard my father agree with anything I say. I mean, I spent most of fourth grade convincing him that kids need hugs. He, in fact, did not agree and countered with, '*Hugs make you weak.*' I'm tempted to check his temperature.

“Are you okay?” I ask warily, wondering if this is all a trick. He could be trying to get close enough to be sure the bullet hits right between Cole’s eyes.

Instead, he laughs, which scares me more.

“Cole is a good guy, Junie. You’re lucky to have each other. I don’t agree with his age. But... if you love him, I can see past it.”

I stand with my jaw slacked for more time than I’d like to admit. It’s so long that I miss the words exchanged between Cole and my father. I’m only brought out of my daze when Cole’s big hand lands on my back in comfort.

“You ready to get home?”

I narrow my gaze, suspicious of the whole encounter.

Dad laughs again. “I’ll call your sister right now. She deserves an—”

“Wait, wait, wait!” I bark, holding my hands in the air. “What the hell? Are you dying or something?”

He shakes his head and places his hand on my shoulder. “We’re all dying, Junie. Enjoy your life. You found a good man. I was wrong and I’m apologizing. Is that so hard to believe?”

I nod. “Yes... actually. Very much so.”

He laughs again before he turns away. “I’ll drop that extra wood off for you next week.” He’s talking to Cole and in the back of my head, I’m still wondering if he has something sinister planned.

“Let it go, sweetheart,” Cole laughs. “This is good. Maybe he trusts me because he’s known me for years.”

My stomach is still turning and I’m beyond suspicious of my father’s sudden desire to be kind and understanding, but when Cole looks at me with big, dark eyes, I can’t help but forget everything else. He’s the man of my dreams. The love of my life.

“You mentioned that you were going to marry me back there,” he smiles. “I’m not sure I’ve asked you yet.”

My lips tighten with embarrassment. “I know. Sorry. I got caught up in the moment.”

He kisses my forehead, then drops to his knee. A breeze blows in from the west and the clouds move to highlight the dark mountains lit by the dusky light. “Junie, I thought feelings like this were just in fairytales, but they’re not. With you, they’re real, and I want to experience them by your side for the rest of my life.” He pulls his key ring from his pocket and pulls off the keys before sliding the ring onto my finger. “Will you marry me?”

For years I waited for love to find me. *A real love*. An old fashioned love. The kind of love that makes you feel adored and cared for. The kind of love that smacks you on the ass and calls you a kitty cat. The kind of love that gives up everything for a chance at that same love.

Now, I’ve found it.

I kneel down on the ground with Cole and lean into his arms, my lips brushing his as the word ‘yes’ slips out.

Epilogue

Cole

Six Months Later

I press submit on my final essay for vet school. I've been working on it all semester. It's a personal statement that explains the skills I've learned and how to best use them for the betterment of all animals. When I tell people what it is, they laugh it off like it's an easy task and not at all the final project they had to complete their senior year, but the professors require more than a simple note about loving animals. They're looking for a deep and profound journey that demonstrates the growth of the person helping them.

"How'd it go?" Cole rubs my shoulders. "You've been in here all afternoon."

Here, is the office he built me seemingly overnight now that he has more time. It's across from the baby's nursery. Raine Elizabeth should be here in three months. Who would have thought our romp in the hay was going to be all it took. We found out six weeks in... and two days before the wedding.

We only had a few people in attendance, but it was everyone who needed to be there. My dad, who surprisingly never retaliated. My sister and her boyfriend, Mick. Ella and Boone, with Mabel in tow. Maggie. Cole's parents and brother. It was a bright summer day and everyone was happy to be sat down by the river bank with the wildflowers as we said our vows. Afterward, we had the reception in the field and Cole gave tours of the house he'd just finished, including a banner in the nursery announcing Raine's arrival. I'm not sure the day could've been any better.

"I have to deliver some carvings to town in an hour. Why don't you come lay on the bed? I want to—"

"Hello! I'm here with all the good things!" Maggie knocks on the back door, but lets herself in. She's carrying a basket filled with baby toys, blankets, and diapers.

I glance toward Cole who's plans have been momentarily derailed. "I'm sorry." I kiss his lips gently and smile toward Maggie. We really need to talk about this barging in thing.

"Thank you! Does this mean you're officially going to miss the baby shower?"

She puckers her lips. "I'm sorry! I haven't seen my brother in months. He's renting that cabin by the lake and—"

"Emery will be there..." I raise my brows and call her out on her tricks before she gets a chance to skirt around the truth.

She grins. "Something like that. It's the first time we've seen each other in a while. Plus, he's my brother's best friend. It can never happen. And... he's like twenty years older than me, so it's just weird." She sighs. "Then again... look at you two, defying all the odds. Who'd have thought?" Laughter bubbles up her throat. "Oh yeah, me!"

"Maybe that means it'll happen for you, too. If you like Emery, take your shot. What do you have to lose?"

Her lips purse to the side. "My dignity, respect for myself, and the chance to ever be in a room with him again."

"You literally wrote my sexual preferences in the only visible box of my soul mate application. Do you really want to talk to me about dignity?" I'm playful in the way I speak, but there's an undertone of seriousness to what I'm saying.

She rolls her eyes. "Okay, okay. I'm going to leave before you say anything else smart that I have to listen to."

"Good luck, Maggie," Cole says, holding the door open for her.

Maggie gives him a side eyed expression, then grins. "Oh... I interrupted something, didn't I?"

I smile and hug her close. She's a giant pain in the ass, but I'm thankful for her none the less. "Text me every detail. Have fun!"

With a smile still on her face, she slides out the back door, and back to her truck.

“That was the fastest visit ever,” Cole says, thumbing through the big basket she’s dropped off. “It’s nice of her to bring over all these things for the baby, though.”

I nod. “I hope she talks to Emery. She’s pushed away every other guy she’s met, and she won’t admit it, but I know it’s because she’s in love with him.”

“That’s awkward, though. Her brother’s best friend? That might be worse than boss’s daughter.”

“How so?”

“Well, her brother has a lifelong friendship with this guy. How do you look past that and see your best buddy with your sister?” He shivers. “I don’t know. I couldn’t do it.”

I laugh and slap him on the stomach playfully. “You’re a hypocrite.”

“Probably so, but still a hypocrite that’s about to order you to bed.”

I raise my brows and glare at him. “Is that right? You’re going to order me to bed for what?”

“Ah, you’ll see.” He grips my hand in his and drags me down the hallway, pushing open the bedroom door with his left foot. He’s done something special because there’s a content smile on his face that’s accomplished and desperate, like he can’t wait to show me what he’s done.

Inside the room are half a dozen lit candles and hundreds of single stem wildflowers. Beside each candle, a folded note.

“What is this?” I hold back tears as I walk toward the notes.

“I know we’re going to be busy soon, and I wanted you to have something to look at. Something to remind you that when things get crazy, I still love you.”

As I stare at my husband, my soul mate, my best friend, tears spill over my cheeks. “You didn’t have to do that. You’re

busy enough with the carvings, the baby's room, and—”

He kisses the words straight from my mouth, holding me against his chest as though I'm *all* that matters. “Open the first note.”

I reach for the folded cardstock and open it slowly, reading the handwritten words in the light of the candles. *‘There's no better feeling than holding you in my arms.’*

I sigh and stare up at the gargantuan man that rescued me from myself. He's strong, kind, brave, and when I least expect it, he's emotional.

“Turn it over,” he says, still holding me close.

I do as he's asked and find another note in smaller print. Holding it close to my face, I squint and read out the sentence. “Lay on the bed and spread your legs. Keep your knees apart.”

My stomach clenches and my gaze draws to Cole's. “Oh, this is a game...”

He nods. “Do as I've asked.”

I'm not sure what I expected pregnancy to be, but I wasn't expecting to be as horny as I am. Day and night, night and day, my hormones are wild and nearly insatiable. Most days I'm begging Cole before he gets out of bed, and by lunch I'm ready again. So then, I have no problem doing as he's asked.

I hop up onto the bed and spread my legs, keeping my knees apart. I live for these moments. This simple archaic game where he's in charge and I'm submissive to him. When he's growling under his breath and calling me his good girl.

My clit throbs just thinking about it.

“Good girl,” he groans, kneeling at the end of the bed. He scoots me closer to the edge and rubs the top of my cotton panties with this thumb.

“I've been thinking about you, kitty.” His voice is low.

“What about me?” I pant.

“It's been a while since you've been patient enough to let me eat. I get hungry you know.”

“Yeah?” I whine, grinding my pussy against his touch. “You want to eat me?”

He grumbles again. “Very much so. I want to eat my little kitty right up.” His finger slides beneath my soaking panties and into my slit. He’s careful, but his big, tough hand is like sandpaper against my skin.

I close my eyes and lean back, taking in the rough touch. I love it. I love him.

“Tell me what you like,” he groans and his breath warms my folds as he slides another finger inside.

My belly blocks my view, but I’m not sure I could hold my eyes open, anyway. He feels too good.

“That,” I pant. “Do that!”

He circles my clit and laps against the swollen nub with strength as he growls. Vibrations shoot through me, and I shudder against his tongue.

I reach for his hair, desperate to tug, but I can’t reach him from where I lay.

“Do you know how much I loved fucking this baby into you?” He groans out the words as he licks, and finger fucks me. He rubs at my inner walls, groaning and growling against me as I arch away from the mattress. I’m on fire, hot and burning, desperate to release.

“You’re tight, kitty. It’s time for you to give me what I want. Give me your come.” His demand for my come winds me tighter and tighter.

My heart skips and stalls, then starts again with a galloping speed. My body is tense. I’m on the edge.

“Now,” he roars into me, his beard soaking wet as he thrashes against my silky wetness.

It’s what I needed. I yell out a shattering sigh that I swear could break windows. Loud and crazed, my body convulses against his face, scratching against his beard, slapping his cheeks against my thighs.

Cole groans through it all, still lapping me up as though he's genuinely been desperate for the taste of me.

When I've had all I can take, he lifts from between my legs, and settles next to me.

"I could eat you all fucking day." His voice is raspy and honest, desperate and needy. "Read the next note."

I sigh, and struggle to the edge of the bed, where a candle sits on the nightstand. "You're the best thing that ever happened to me."

"It's true. The very best thing." He grins and kisses my forehead. His cock is as hard as it gets. "Turn it over."

I do as he's asked. On the bottom right hand is another note. "On your knees. Bend forward."

It's simple enough, and it's an order I'm used to, except the look in his eye tells me more is coming. I know what it is, and I'm ready for it.

I nod toward him. "I want you to."

"It could hurt. I don't want you to be in pain."

"It could also feel good, and I love it when things feel good." I kiss his lips, tasting my own pleasure.

He nods and I do as he's asked, bending forward on the mattress, ass up. He leans in and scrubs his beard against the swell of my cheeks, gripping my hips as he slowly sinks into my core.

"You're always so ready for me," he groans, thrusting into me with need. "Are you my good girl?"

I pant a haphazard 'yes' as my nipples scratch against the soft sheets. He's priming me for something more. Something neither of us have done, but we've both been curious about.

"I'm ready," I sigh. "I want you in my ass. Take me everywhere, Cole." These aren't words I ever thought I'd hear myself say, but since I've been pregnant, I've been insatiably horny. Turns out, one of the best pregnancy positions is doggy style, and one of the best spots to orgasm in, is in your ass.

Thank you, internet. The A-Spot is my new exploration site. Supposedly, I can feel it vaginally as well, but it's easier to get to with anal sex. Well, at least I hope it is. I also read this could hurt like hell.

Cole's dick slams into me harder as he growls and pulls out of my pussy slowly. "You have to tell me when this hurts. I don't want you in pain, got it?"

I agree as he rubs the bundle of nerves at my back side. His finger is wet and slick with my juices and the sensation is indescribable.

He reaches in the nightstand and hands me my vibrator. Flicking on the switch, he runs the head between my legs and lands it on my clit.

I take over holding the tool as he inches into my ass. He's slow, insanely so, letting the muscles surrounding the hole relax before he presses in. When he finally gets his head inside, he grips my hips, and pushes harder.

"You good?"

There's a stretching pain, but it's not unbearable. Actually, it's the opposite. It feels *good*. Not great, but good. This is an exploratory mission. I'm not expecting magic.

"Keep going," I pant, desperate for him to find this spot everyone is writing about.

"Good girl, taking me in your ass. I'm getting deep, kitty. You like it?" He's no more than finished the sentence and I'm shaking.

"Don't stop! Go deeper!"

He growls out, and I know he's going to burst. "Your ass is so fucking tight!"

With one gentle move to the left, he's hit an unholy spot that forces a shudder down my spine and into my groin. The vibration on my clit only makes the pressure stronger.

Cole groans and growls as he grips me tighter, thrusting forward in short motions, reapplying pressure on the spot I've been aching to bring to life.

“Come for me, kitty. Do it. Come for me!” His command is everything.

My eyes squeeze shut, and my hair falls forward as I scream out in pleasure. Wave after wave of billowing hormonal bliss dances over my skin as I come. Cole isn't far behind. Within seconds, he has me gripped so tight that I hear his teeth clench.

He pumps my ass and lets out a growl, coming inside.

His breathing slows and eventually, he collapses next to my limp frame.

I'm still reeling from the orgasm.

“Was it different from the others?”

I lean into his chest and nod. “A lot different. Was it for you?”

“So different.” Our words are scant and a bit incoherent as we get our faculties back. “You feel so fucking good, sweetheart.”

I thread my fingers through his chest hair and lay against his shoulder, tracing the lines of his tattoos as he holds his giant hand against my expanded stomach.

This is the life I've always wanted. A cabin by the river, a baby growing inside of me, and the man of my dreams holding me in his big, strong arms.

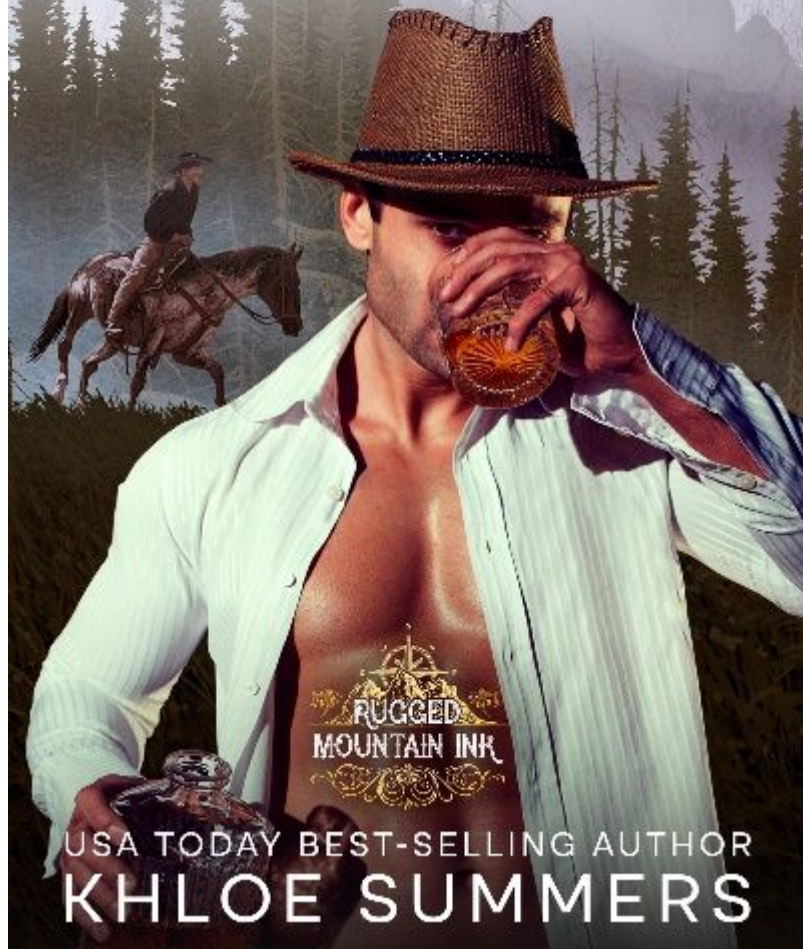
“Should we lay here the rest of the night,” Cole's voice is deep and gritty, “or should we finish reading the notes and keep going?”

I bite my bottom lip and lean up, staring toward him. “I think we should hydrate and keep going.”

He smiles and kisses my lips gently. “That's my good girl.”

[Read Maggie's Story Next](#)

BROTHERS BEST FRIEND COWBOY



USA TODAY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR
KHLOE SUMMERS



Khloe Summers is the author of over one hundred short and steamy romance titles. Her books are written in many different tropes, but always contain growly older alphas, curvy women, and lots of steam.

Khloe lives with her husband, (who she affectionately calls Daddy) in sunny Florida. They spend most of their free time sinking their toes in the sand, eating too many pizzas, and hollering obscenities at the TV on football Sunday. (At least he does. She sits on the sidelines and quietly orders nonsense off Amazon.)

Before this life is over, Khloe would like to check everything off her sexy bucket list and visit South Africa to wrestle evil poachers into submission. (And maybe see some baby elephants.)

HEA Guaranteed.

Read Bonus Scenes

at

www.authorkhloesummers.com

Did you know Khloe writes Dark Romance as Ava Quinn?

[Check out her library here:](#)

