

BESTSELLING AUTHOR

Linzi Basset

Snowflakes  
SPANKING

SHE WAS GRATEFUL UNTIL HE INTRODUCED HER TO HIS DUNGEON

SNOWFLAKE'S  
SPANKING

*A Christmas Romance*

A BDSM Romance Novel

By  
**Linzi Basset**



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# SNOWFLAKE'S SPANKING

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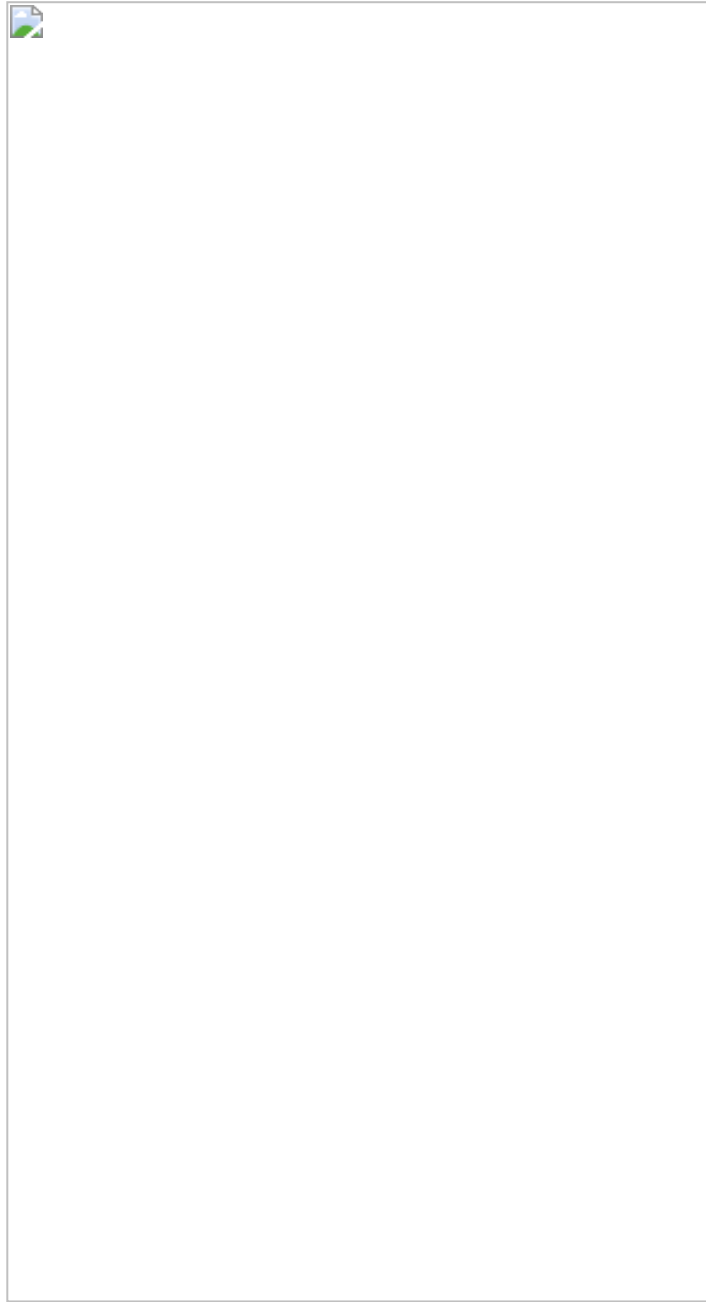
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# Dedication



I needed some assistance deciding on the location for this book and I turned to the members of my Facebook reader-and-fan-group, Linzi's Luscious Lair.

They had some terrific suggestions and after I did some research, Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg in Tennessee were the perfect places for this Christmas story. I mean, where else could the lovers become lost to the rest of the world but somewhere in the Smoky Mountains in a luxury cottage caught in a blizzard ... in front of a roaring fire on a bearskin rug?

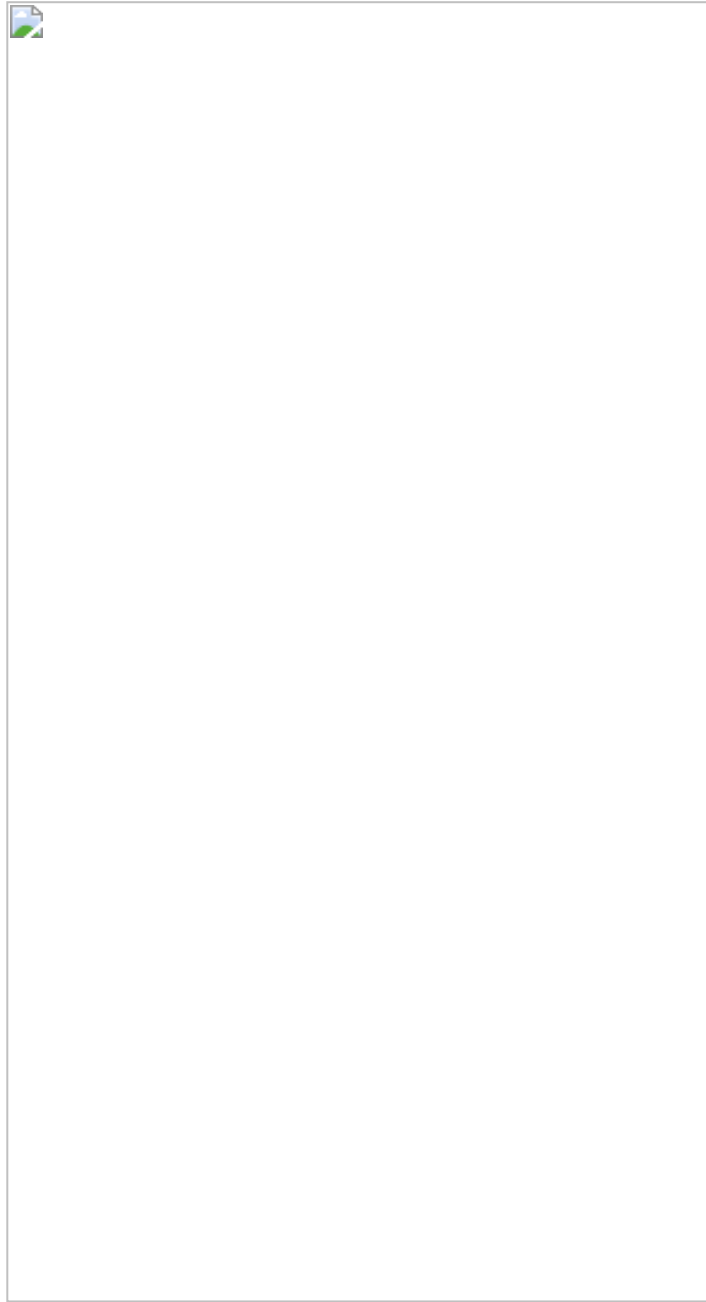
Thank you to Denise Poteetee, Chasity Mahala, Lola Usery, and Rhonda Maricle Spencer who suggested Tennessee. I then asked for suggestions of towns and many voted for Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, but I am going to mention them all!

Thank you, Charlotte Strickland, Kemberlee Snelling, Chasity Mahala, Crystal Shunk, Dana Edmond Thomas, Rhonda Tucker, Deborah Lee, Rhonda Maricle Spencer, and Tammy Long D'Angiolillo.

For the roaring fire and bearskin rug, thank you, Audra Ennis.

This hot and sizzling Christmas romance is dedicated to the lovely members of Linzi's Luscious Lair! You are such terrific supporters.

# Author's Note



Dear Reader,



It's quickly becoming a tradition to bring a hot Christmas Dom story to you and this year is no different. Well, it is a little, as this story isn't set in a club scenario ... rather in the snowy hills of the Smoky Mountains.

The holiday season can bring with it love, joy, and happiness. *Snowflake's Spanking* is the story of two people brought together by a snowstorm and an accident. Two people who, unbeknownst to them, shared a tragic past. This Christmas, in finding each other, could they bury the heartache and find love instead?

*“One spanking? Just one?”*

*“For a start.”*

**The man must be out of his mind if he believed for one second she'd set a foot inside his dungeon ... no matter that she owed him her life.**

The last thing Riley Miller expected after she wrapped her car around a boulder in the Smoky Mountains was to wake up to a humongous mountain man. Much less that she would be stuck with him, in his house, until the storm passed. He discombobulated her at first glance, and his dulcet voice toggled a hidden part of her she never knew existed.

Trent Reeves didn't like people. For that matter, he was known as the Scrooge of Pigeon Forge. It suited him fine, he preferred solitude, especially during Christmas.

That is, until he saved the brunette who appeared so fragile, he named her Snowflake, but who he would soon learn had the potential to awaken the beast inside him and challenge the Dom with her sassiness.

With the beast pacing its cage, wanting a taste of Riley, Trent made no secret of his intentions as he exerted his Domination and introduced her to the pleasures a well delivered erotic spanking offered.

Would the mutual pain of the past keep them from the possibility of happiness or could they break down each other's barriers and finally move forward—perhaps even fall in love—in time for Christmas?

*Editor's Note:*

*Instalove! That is how you will feel about this fast and furious romance among the snow—flakes. A sweet and utterly adorable culmination to the stories of this season, it will make you want to fall in love—and be spanked—for Christmas! Warf!*

It was a wonderful story to write and with it comes the end of an amazing year of achieving my writing goals. I can't thank all my fans enough for your support. You make this journey worthwhile.

Merry Christmas to you and your families.

Warm regards,

Linzi Basset

# Chapter One



“I don’t think you should continue on to Pigeon Forge, Miss. The snow is already coming down and by the looks of those heavy clouds over the mountain, you’re going to be caught in a storm halfway there.”

Riley Miller cuddled the paper cup between her hands as she looked in the direction of the gas attendant’s crooked finger. She’d stopped for some gas and much needed caffeine in Sevierville. She needed a little punch of liquid energy to finish the last thirty minutes of the three-and-a-half-hour drive from Nashville to visit her aunt in Gatlinburg. A long past promise that circumstances urged her to honor and not postpone another year.

“Hm, you’re right, it does appear to be thickening,” she said. Her eyebrows drew together as she pondered her options. At the moment there were only snow flurries. The feathery flakes magically appeared from the sky like small snippets of confetti fluttering aimlessly to the ground.

“There’s a nice bed and breakfast around the corner. I’m sure they might have a room for you.” The graying man scratched his head as he noticed the pretty brunette’s hesitation. “Rather be safe than sorry, missy. The wind is already picking up and you don’t want to be caught in a blizzard on the mountain road between here and Gatlinburg.”

“No, I don’t, but Pigeon Forge is only fifteen minutes from here. Once I get there and the weather worsens, I’ll find a place to wait it out.”

“It’s your decision, missy, but we’ve been receiving blizzard warnings since this morning. They say it’s going to start

overnight but looking at those clouds, I'm thinking it's gonna hit us pretty soon."

"I'll be careful. Don't worry about me, I grew up in these hills and I know how bad the blizzards can get."

Riley handed over the bills for the gas and got into her sporty SUV. She offered the concerned man a broad smile.

"Thanks for your friendliness. It's the one thing I miss in the big city. I better get going."

"You be careful," he cautioned. "And have a merry Christmas in Gatlinburg, missy."

"You too." She smiled and with a wave, pulled out of the gas station. "What a sweet old man," she said as she noticed him staring after her in the rearview mirror.

His obvious concern drew her gaze to the sky. Thin sheets of cirrostratus clouds spread themselves across the sky, creating a pale, white appearance overhead. They were so thin they were translucent with the sun visible through the filmy sheets in the sky.

Riley searched her memory and recalled that these clouds usually came twelve to twenty-four hours before a period of heavy snow.

"It's obviously where the snow flurries come from."

She switched on the windshield wipers and watched as the fluffy snowflakes gave way to its sweeping force.

"Not that I have any idea how long they've been in the sky. I didn't pay attention until it started snowing a while back."

Her eyes drifted to the thickening altostratus clouds over the Smoky Mountains. They appeared gloomy and swirled dangerously. Combined with the very poor visibility of the mountains from here, it was a sure sign of high winds that could very well speed up the arrival of the blizzard.

“Better haul ass then,” she muttered. She sipped the hot latte as she sped up. Blizzards were usually over in two hours in this region. She glanced at the digital clock on the dashboard. Twelve-thirty, which meant if she at least made it to Pigeon Forge before the storm arrived, she could still drive through to Gatlinburg once it dissipated and be cozy in front of the fire enjoying a homecooked meal from her aunt.

“That’s if the roads are at all passable by then.”

She silently prayed that the storm held off until she reached the Bear Cave Lodge in Gatlinburg that her Aunt Sophie owned.

A smile of remembrance curved her lips. Growing up, she’d spent every school holiday there. It was the one place their family always got together to celebrate Christmas.

Riley’s face turned into a painful grimace as she realized she hadn’t been back there since her parents had passed away in a horrific accident on Christmas Eve, six years ago. They had been on their way to a thirtieth birthday party of one of their friend’s sons at the Forge Dream Resort and Spa in Pigeon Forge, when the driver of an oncoming vehicle lost control on a bend and skidded directly into them. The force of the collision caused both cars to spin out of control off the road and to careen over the shallow ravine, crashing into the Little Pigeon River. To this day, no one could find the reason for the explosion that had caused the death of her parents, the woman in the other car,

and her three-year-old daughter. Riley never wished to find out who the woman was because, at the time, she had blamed her for her parents' death.

It was a tragedy that had shaken the communities of Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, as all of the deceased were known and loved by everyone in their respective communities.

Riley had stayed for her parents' funeral after Christmas and went back to Nashville where she'd been living for eight years, trying to make ends meet in an industry at the time that had no sympathy for weakness or heartache. She hadn't been back to Gatlinburg since their deaths six years ago, although she had stopped blaming the woman for the accident. Icy road spinouts happened all the time, no matter how careful the driver was.

"I wouldn't be here now either if I didn't have to get away from that sleazeball," she all but growled.

It had always been her dream to become a journalist, but there had been no opportunities in a small town such as Gatlinburg. Riley had gotten her journalism degree in Nashville and that was where she stayed. Hitting it big hadn't been easy in the investigative journalism fields, which was where her dreams had taken her. She'd floundered from one newspaper and magazine to the next, looking for that one break but no one was prepared to give her a chance to prove herself. She'd gotten tired of covering menial stories and made the decision to turn her focus to the music industry after her parents' death. It had been the wakeup call she'd needed. Life was unpredictable, short, and if she didn't find something that made her happy, she might just as well throw in the towel on a journalism career.



She'd become intrigued by the hustle and bustle of the music industry when she'd covered the first live concert of the then up-and-coming country western singer, Jason Dunn, for the magazine where she worked at the time.

The Rolling Stone Magazine had seen her article and immediately made her a job offer. Riley didn't hesitate. It was the first time her talent had been noticed, and she'd be stupid not to jump at the opportunity they offered. That was how she'd morphed into a writer-journalist for the music scene. It was just as challenging, if not more so, than investigative journalism, to gather the latest news, do in-depth stories on recording artists, and editorialize on musical trends and social relevancy. She had thrown herself into the job with passion and wrote musical masterpieces to such an extent that she'd become known as the maestro of the Rolling Stone Magazine.

It meant staying close to the music scene and rubbing shoulders with musicians, artists, and producers, but Riley had taken it all in stride and thrived on the challenges the industry offered.

"If only I hadn't been stupid enough to fall for Jason Dunn's charm." She could hear the crack in her voice. The vision of walking into his house, where she'd been living with him until five months ago, to find him in bed with one of his young backup singers, flashed through her mind.

"Stop wallowing in pretend grief, Riley. You know very well she actually did you a favor."

Jason had actively pursued her from that first interview. Riley had been flattered but made it clear she wasn't interested.

In retrospect, she realized it was that challenge that had intensified his desire for her.

She withstood his charm for two years and then he caught her in a moment of weakness, on the anniversary of her parents' death. At first, he was charming, loving, and made her laugh. It didn't last. The cracks in their three-year relationship had been there for a long time. She'd struggled to adapt to Jason's oppressive possessiveness, which had burst to the surface three months into their relationship.

He constantly checked up on her. Shouted and argued when she didn't give him a minute by minute rendition of her day. It steadfastly grew worse, especially once she moved in with him. He suffocated her with his constant desire to be the center of her attention. He used sex as a measure to control her and that was the first mistake he made, as to her, it was an insult— that the value he placed on her as a person was reduced to screwing her brains out every single night and not what she needed from him emotionally ... or physically if she was honest with herself. He wanted her to be his personal journalist, reporting on every little nuance of, not only his career but his life. She refused, especially as his life included her and she had no desire to be in the limelight.

Riley had started covering artists away from home, which infuriated Jason, but she refused to budge.

“And of course, him sleeping around was all my fault. I wasn't there, so what was he to do?” Riley imitated his voice in the same way he did when he'd flung those exact words at her. She was still shocked that he expected her to forgive and forget and carry on like nothing had happened.

“Especially after he admitted she was only one of many others over the past three years.” She shook her head and squinted through the windshield. His voice echoed through her mind.

*“Those women don’t matter. It’s just sex, darling. It means nothing. You’re the one I love and will always treasure. It’s different with you. When I’m with you, it’s so much more than sex ... it’s love. We make love, Riley, can’t you understand that?”*

*“I see. So, in other words, you won’t mind if I go around and have sex with every Tom, Dick, and Harry, as long as I come home and make love with you?”*

*“Don’t be ridiculous. It’s not the same.”*

*“It’s not? Explain the difference to me then, Jason, because I honestly would like to know.”*

That had been the conduit to a full-blown fight. He’d eventually stormed out in complete frustration because Riley refused to *‘see things his way.’*

She’d immediately packed her clothes and left before he returned. Luckily, she still had the loft she leased and had somewhere to go. Unfortunately, it also meant Jason knew where to find her and he continued to hound her to return to him. When Aunt Sophie phoned four months later and invited her to visit and spend Christmas in Gatlinburg, she didn’t hesitate. It would be a painful trip down memory lane for Riley, but it was the better of two evils.

“It’s time to let go of them. I’ve held onto the horror of how Mom and Dad died for too long. It’s time to remember the good memories. The love and happiness we shared as a family.” She sighed the words. It was something she should’ve done long ago.

An unexpected gust of wind pushed the usually sturdy SUV closer to the edge of the road. Riley frantically turned the wheel to ease away from the sharp drop she knew was on her left. She slammed on the brakes and yanked the steering wheel to the left as a ridge suddenly broke through the wall of white blowing snow she could barely see through.

“Shit! I can barely see through the snow and where the hell did that mountain come from? The road to Pigeon Forge is straight and— Oh. My. God!” Her gaze caught the small screen of the GPS unit. “I passed right through the town without realizing!” She’d been so caught up in her thoughts, she hadn’t taken in her surroundings. According to the location on the GPS, she must’ve turned off the main road to Gatlinburg at some point. She was now traveling on a road somewhere in the mountains between Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg.

“And I can’t see shit!”

Riley turned the switch to increase the speed of the windshield wipers. Her eyes darted between the road and the GPS screen.

“Nothing! There’s nothing here. I’ll have to turn around,” she muttered but with almost zero visibility, she had no idea how wide the road was. She didn’t fancy ending up in a mangled steel trap if she managed to drive over a cliff or a ridge.

“Damn it! How could I not have noticed the snow getting worse? Now I’m in the center of the blizzard.” She eased her foot off the gas and slowed down, intending to bring the car to a stop. “Let that be a lesson, Riley Miller. You should’ve listened to that old timer. Gatlinburg isn’t going anywhere!”

A sharp scratching noise penetrated her frayed mind. She glanced through the passenger window and went cold at the sight of the rough edges of the mountain.

“Oh no!”

In a panic, Riley yanked on the steering wheel to move away from the boulders the SUV was scraping against.

“Oh, thank god,” she cried as she suddenly broke through the curtain of falling snow into a clear void. “No!” she screamed as she noticed the sharp curve ahead.

Riley slammed on the brakes, whimpering as the SUV swerved across the narrow road, skidding over the icy surface in the direction of the edge of the cliff. The next moment, the falling snow engulfed the vehicle. She heaved in desperation on the wheel. She hadn’t been driving fast but with the wet road, she didn’t dare brake too hard again. Crashing into the mountain was a better option than careening over the cliff though.

The impending crash seemed to take forever. Adrenaline coursed through her veins. There was nothing she could do but cling to the steering wheel as the SUV hydroplaned across the road and skimmed along the surface of the rough boulders, shuddering and then ...

Riley was flung forward as the car crashed head-on into the mountain. She screamed as she felt herself catapult forward; the airbag deployed at the same time, exploding against her face,

flinging her back in the seat. Her face stung and she began to cry as a horrifying scraping sound alerted her to the backend of the car still moving. It wasn't a full-frontal crash at she'd thought; the car was in a tailspin. She couldn't see over the slowly deflating airbag and had no idea how close she was to the cliff. Her screams swelled over the sound of the SUV once again slamming into the side of the mountain. Her forehead connected with a sickening thud against the door panel. With a final shudder, the SUV finally came to a stop.

Riley could hear her sobs and the haggard sound of her breath in the sudden quiet.

*I'm not dead!*

It was the last coherent thought that flashed through her mind. She moved her head and moaned pitifully as pain lanced through her brain. A forlorn sigh escaped her lips as she gave herself over to the cocoon of unconsciousness that wrapped its black cloak around her.

# Chapter Two





“What the devil is someone doing on this fucking road in a snowstorm?”

Trent Reeves squinted through the sheets of snow at the beams of light he could detect higher up on the mountain. He could barely see but the high intensity lights at the top of his truck aided his vision. He was on his way home from saving another distressed motorist who hadn't heeded the blizzard warning and ended up in a ditch just outside of Pigeon Forge. He was one of the reaction volunteers to assist with any accidents in the mountains. He owned a Ford RaptorTRAX with a winch, a mobile snow blade, and Mattracks which he attached to the wheels this time of year.

“Stop the fucking car, goddammit!” His angry growl came in the wake of watching the beams bounce haphazardly all over the side of the mountain. From his vantage point, the only thing he could make out were the two streaks of light, but he knew the mountain like the back of his hand to know the vehicle was teetering on the edge of the cliff. It was evident that the driver was losing control.

“Jesus,” he shouted as he noticed it careening toward the edge. He sighed in relief as the car spun back toward the mountain before the beams became motionless. He pumped the gas, relieved that with the tracks on the truck, he wouldn't skid over the icy road.

“I hope whoever it is, isn't hurt badly,” he muttered as he eased around the curve in the road seconds later. The high intensity snow strobe lights illuminated the mangled red SUV that hugged the side of the mountain. The driver must have managed to put the car in a tailspin as it was facing the opposite direction it was going when he'd first spotted it. “At least the

airbags deployed,” he muttered as he brought the truck to a stop and got out.

Trent rushed toward the SUV, noticing the long brown hair first that was spread out over the white airbag still in the process of deflating. The passenger door was scratched and dented from scraping against the mountain but Trent managed to force it open. He leaned in to press his fingers against the woman’s carotid, relieved to find a strong pulse.

“Miss?” he rasped as he eased her back against the seat and brushed her hair from her face. “Damn.” His deep voice floated darkly in the chilled silence as he noticed the blood dripping on the white parka from a wound on her forehead. She was out cold.

There was no way he could get her out of the SUV from the passenger side, especially as he had no idea how badly she was hurt. He got out, closed the door and examined the position of the car. He’d be able to pull it away from the mountain without too much effort. The wreck will have to be towed away as well. If he left it there, a car coming around the bend, even in clear conditions, wouldn’t be able to avoid it. With a grunt, he walked back to his truck and seconds later, hooked the winch to the bumper slot of the Renegade Trailhawk Jeep.

“Raptor to dispatch,” he said as he settled in the truck. He cranked up the heat as he waited for a response over the Bluetooth system. He kept his gaze on the SUV as he activated the automated winch control.

“Go Raptor.” The hollow voice of a woman responded to his call.

“Accident at the snake bend on Cove Mountain Road. Female in a red Jeep. She lost control and wrapped the car around the mountain.”

“Is she hurt?”

“She’s unconscious and bleeding from a head wound. I don’t know how bad, I couldn’t see. I’m busy winching the vehicle away from the boulder.”

“Damn, Trent, the weather is getting worse by the minute. We can’t send an ambulance into the mountain. The visibility is almost at zero.”

“Don’t worry, Sally, my cabin is around the next bend. It’ll be quicker and safer to take her there. I’ll assess her condition and keep you informed.”

“Thank you, Trent. You’ve been a lifesaver over the past couple of weeks. I don’t understand why people don’t pay attention to the blizzard warnings. That’s the fifth accident on the mountain roads in less than a week.”

“Yeah.” Trent batted the vision that flashed through his mind of another wreck caused by an icy road in a snowstorm. One where he was too late to assist. “Gotta go.”

“Good luck, Raptor.”

It took a lot more muscle power to force the driver’s door open. It was badly scraped and dented from crashing into the boulder at the side of the mountain.

“Come on, shithead!” Trent grunted as he anchored his foot against the backdoor and yanked hard. It gave slowly and with another mighty heave, he finally managed to crack it open. He yanked off one glove to check her vitals.

His hands moved with precision over the injured woman's neck and face. The bleeding had stopped. He decided to leave the wound and attend to it once they got to his house.

"Damn." His voice cracked through the silence as the coldness of her skin against his warm hands penetrated. Without wasting any further time, he carefully picked her out of the car, carried her to his truck where he laid her down on the back seat. He quickly covered her with the blankets that had a permanent spot in the truck this time of year.

Minutes later he pulled away carefully. He kept a sharp eye in the rearview mirror on the wreck he was towing away at the same time.

"What the hell were you doing on this road, woman? The only place it leads to is my cabin and I sure as hell don't know you from a bar of soap."

Trent didn't like visitors. For that matter, he stayed away from people in general. He was more than happy with his two Siberian huskies as companions. He didn't need more than that. He didn't want more than that. Well, except for indulging in the desire of the flesh, which he was very selective about the partners he chose.

Since his wife and three-year-old daughter had died in a horrible accident, he'd become a recluse. Some of the folks in Pigeon Forge even referred to him as the Scrooge. He didn't care. All he wanted was to be left alone in his mountain cabin on Beer Willow Gap in Caney Creek.

To wallow further in the guilt that had been like a boomerang; it kept coming back and wounding him anew. That he should've been the one driving his family from Tennessee to

Pigeon Forge on that fateful day. That he should've said no to scrubbing in for that operation even though there was another surgeon on call. That for once, he should've put his family first before his desire to save every accident victim that arrived at the level one trauma unit of the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville.

No one understood why he had walked away from his career as a brilliant trauma surgeon but Trent couldn't face saving another life when he had failed to keep his own loved ones alive.

*Loved ones? Yeah, the other guilt I can't seem to shake.*

The morbid thought invaded his mind unexpectedly. He'd managed since Adrienne's death, to avoid thinking about that. The main reason he had spent more and more time at the hospital than at home all those years ago. Their marriage had been breaking apart ever since Taylor's birth. Adrienne hadn't planned on having children before she was thirty-five and had been resentful that her career as an actress had taken a back seat to taking care of their daughter. Trent, of course, had been the one she blamed for making her pregnant, notwithstanding the fact that she was on the pill. The way she acted made him wonder if she ever truly loved him or whether she only married him because of his high standing as a well-known and revered trauma surgeon. It had given her career a boost at the time of their marriage and she rode on that wave for four years, receiving one Emmy after the other.

His guilt didn't sprout from the fact that he'd accepted their marriage was over, because on the day of the fatal accident, Adrienne had informed him it would be the last social event she'd attend with him. She had started divorce proceedings the

previous day. In all honesty, he'd been relieved. Living with her had become impossible, especially since he'd learned that she'd been visiting an upmarket BDSM club on her own. He suspected she had an affair with a Dom there. He didn't care enough at that point to investigate the matter, knowing they were heading to divorce court. At the same time, the Dom in him seethed at her deceit.

The guilt that would forever haunt him was that he had neglected his daughter in the process. The pain of losing his beautiful cherub three-year-old little girl never faded; it had stayed with him ever since.

He had learned to cope by losing himself in the imaginary worlds of medical suspense thrillers he created as a writer under the pseudonym of Alex Cross. A series that had catapulted him to the top as one of the bestselling-and-earning authors of all times, especially once Stan Spoon had turned them into blockbuster movies.

He sighed heavily as he parked the truck, resolutely banning the memories to the hidden compartment in his mind. It served no purpose regurgitating over it. It had been six years. He would never forget but maybe the time had come to move on.

By the time Trent had carried the woman into his bedroom, undressed and covered her with the thick duvet, he was highly irritated. As a surgeon, her nakedness didn't affect him, not since he was viewing her as he would any trauma patient. As a man and a Dominant, he couldn't deny she had a beautiful body. He stomped back outside to the truck to fetch his doctor's bag, which he always kept on hand when he responded to a call for assistance.

What stirred his anger was the fact that the storm had now turned into a full-blown blizzard as he struggled against the wind to stomp back to the cabin.

“Idiotic damn female.”

His voice drifted off with the slashing wind. It meant he'd be forced to take care of the woman until the road back to town became passable. He could scrape it himself but depending on how long the blizzard lasted and the amount of snow, it could take as much as a week or more to clear it all the way to Highway 321.

The last thing he needed was a nosy female to usurp the tranquility of his home, especially this time of year. Christmas was the one time he kept to himself and stayed far away from town and people in general.

Armed with a bowl of hot water, a washcloth, and his bag, he walked back into the room. His hands were steady as he quickly cleaned the wound at the side of her forehead and washed the blood from her face.

He grunted as a brief glance offered him an enticing view of her heart-shaped face, high eyebrows, small nose and full cupid lips, which he imagined usually bloomed a rosy color. Now, they appeared as pale as the rest of her face. Her long chestnut tresses were strewn in luxurious disarray over the pillow.

Trent dogmatically dragged his attention back to the wound on her forehead. She might be beautiful with a gorgeous body but he had no interest in anything but treating her injury. The sooner she was better, the quicker he'd have his bed back.

“I should've put her on the sofa,” he grumbled. He cleaned the wound tentatively. It wasn't too deep but it was a rather long

laceration, which he could very effectively treat with butterfly Band-Aids.

A low rumble next to him drew his attention. He frowned at the two pairs of ice blue eyes staring unflinchingly at him. The only ones in his life who weren't scared or hesitated to cut him down to the quick.

“Don't give me that look. This is my bed and she's an uninvited guest.”

Another growling yap indicated the large husky's discontent with his master.

Trent snorted in response, studying the woman as he closed the laceration with three small butterfly Band-Aids. A soft moan escaped her lips, which were becoming rosier by the moment. He was startled as his cock twitched in reaction. It was the kind of involuntary excitement he hadn't felt in years. Living the life he did, he now only allowed himself physical pleasure in the underground dungeon he'd added to his luxurious two-story mountain cabin five years ago.

Adrienne, his wife, had been the perfect submissive until Taylor was born. After that, she *punished* him and took pleasure in only submitting to him when he took her to a club. Maybe that was why it had been easy to move on, but he always carefully selected subs to play with. As a Dom, he had full control over his body and lusts, which was why the reaction he'd just felt, didn't sit well with him.

She was the exact opposite in looks from his wife, or from the kind of woman he usually preferred— tall, skinny and small-breasted blondes. This woman wasn't overweight but her generous curves ... he found himself hesitating as he envisioned



her nakedness in his mind. There was no denying her ample curves made an impact on him. Perhaps it was the entire package she presented. Or the picture that had invaded his mind, of her bent over a spanking bench with his hand heating up her gorgeously rounded ass cheeks while her full breasts jiggled and bounced from the force. He even imagined her husky cries at the pain combined with the weighted clamps dangling from her nipples.

“Snap out of it, Reeves. This woman has a look of innocence about her. If she ever heard of BDSM, I’d eat Storm’s dog kibble.”

“Warf! Warf!” It was evident from the annoyed bark that Storm didn’t take too kindly to that idea.

*So, did Adrienne when you first met her,* his subconscious mocked him. Trent frowned as he gathered his stethoscope and mobile blood pressure unit. He carefully returned it to his medical bag.

*Why the devil does this woman intrigue me so?*

Trent wasn’t someone who ever acted on impulse. He always weighed his options, studied every aspect of a problem before he made a decision and took precautions, always—especially insofar as play partners were concerned. Which was why the desire to test his patient’s submission smacked him in the center of his chest.

“There you have it, Reeves. She’s your patient and the reason why you have to keep your distance from her.”

“Warf! Warf!” This time it was Sheila who offered her sixpence worth.

“Yeah, yeah, I know. I don’t need either of you to offer me any advice.”

Storm growled and scraped his nails on the wood floor. He looked between Trent and the woman on the bed. His head bobbed up and down as he released a soft wail.

Trent chuckled. “Not happening, buddy. Besides, I think Sheila will castrate both of us if I so much as touch this fragile snowflake waif with a ten-foot pole.”

Sheila spun around in a circle in response before she nipped at Storm’s ear. With a haughty sniff at Trent, she ambled closer to the edge of the bed.

“Hey! Get off there,” Trent snapped as she adroitly jumped onto it and settled next to the prone body of the woman. She curled her lips back in a toothy snarl before she laid her head on the woman’s stomach. The message was clear. She wasn’t moving.

Trent shook his head as he dropped his medical bag on the wingback chair in the corner. “It seems the lady has gained a bodyguard, Storm. Best you and I go make something to eat.” He glanced at the woman’s pale face. “She’s going to wake up with a massive headache and most probably a concussion. Before I give her pain medication, she’ll have to eat something. Let’s go warm up some of the soup in the fridge.”

“Warf! Warf!” Storm led the way, releasing the odd yowling yap as they descended the stairs. He had a tendency to talk too much but Trent didn’t mind. At least the two of them understood each other ... most of the time.

# Chapter Three



“Ooww, lord, my head hurts,” Riley moaned with her eyes closed as she finally struggled to the surface through the thick clouds of sleep. She moved her head experimentally once again on the soft pillow.

*Wait! Soft pillow and a nice thick duvet ... where am I? And why does my stomach feel like it's weighed down?*

Panic ensued as Riley's overactive imagination took flight and she envisioned herself an invalid. A soft whimpering penetrated her frazzled mind. Her eyelids fluttered open. She didn't move her head, too aware of the pounding pain lashing through it with every movement. At first glance, she realized she wasn't in a hospital. The room was cozy and obviously a luxurious mountain cabin built with thick round wood logs. One wall consisted of windows that had a breathtaking view of the mountains. Covered in snow as it was, it looked like a picture out of a fairytale.

“It stopped snowing,” she said softly as her gaze moved over the oversized wingback chairs in front of the window. The deep red fabric of the chairs was complemented by the warmth of the same splash of color in the deep gray brocade curtains. Riley assumed their sole purpose was to enhance and served as a frame for the view outside, in the way they were artfully draped and held in place with plated red tussle ropes.

On the dark wood dressing table stood a beautifully carved lamp with a silver shade and a life-like carving of two dogs but it was otherwise empty of paraphernalia. Contrary to hers at home, which was usually packed with perfume, jewelry, brushes, clips and makeup, among other things.

From her position, she could see that she was lying in an oversized intricately carved wood sleigh bed. She shifted her legs and froze as a rumble reached her ears. She looked down.

“Oh, my ... what beautiful eyes you have,” she cooed as her gaze was caught by the ice blue stare of the most gorgeous silver-brown Siberian husky she’d ever seen.

What sounded suspiciously like, *‘hello’* coming from the dog brought a smile to Riley’s lips.

“Are you my nurse?” She reached down and gently stroked the animal’s head. “Hmm ... are you a he or a she nurse?”

A snort was the only response, but the dog lifted its head from where it had been resting on Riley’s lower stomach. A pink tongue lolled from its mouth as a soft bark broke free, like it was cognizant of the headache from which Riley was suffering.

“I’m glad to see you’re awake.”

Riley froze at the deep rasping voice to her left. Cognizant of the pounding in her head, she turned only her eyes to encounter a big man regarding her silently from the doorway. She could feel fear gravitate through her. She wracked her brain for where she was and how the devil she landed in a stranger’s bed but her mind was blank. Pain seared through her as she tried to push upright. He was by her side in a flash and his big but gentle hands pushed her shoulders back against pillows.

“There now, there’s no need to panic or to be afraid. You were in an accident during a snowstorm. Do you remember?”

“I ... no,” she whispered. Try as she might, she couldn’t drag her fearful gaze from the warm depths of his eyes, which

offered her a strange feeling of calm. She lifted a trembling hand to her head. “God, my head hurts. Where am I?”

“In my cabin in the Smoky Mountains. You had a hard bump against your head, so I need you to keep still.”

“I can’t remember the accident,” she said lamely as he walked to a small writing desk next to the doorway.

“Don’t force it. I suspect you have a concussion, which could be why your memory is hazy,” He returned with a tray in his hands. “I made some hearty chicken soup. We need to get something inside your stomach before I give you pain meds.” He placed the tray over her legs and settled on the bed next to her. “No, keep still. I’ll spoon feed you.”

Riley was too weak and confused to argue and meekly opened her mouth when he brought the spoon closer. The fear she’d woken up to, was slowly dissipating, courtesy of his gentle and caring nature. Not to mention the way his deep gravelly voice trembled through her to set her mind at ease. When she pushed the spoon away a while later, he conceded and placed the tray on the floor.

“Your eyes are drooping. Here, take these and then you can sleep.”

Riley was overwhelmed by the conflict of fear at being in a stranger’s house and said man’s gentle assistance as he held a glass against her lips when she swallowed the pain medication.

“There you go, all nicely tucked in. I daresay you’ll sleep through the night.”

She heard the soothing tones of his voice but not the words as she slowly drifted off to sleep.

A similar pattern followed every time she woke up the next three times, which by her jumbled calculation meant she had been drifting in and out of sleep for three nights and two days. During the short times she was lucid, her host was attentive and presented the perfect bedside manners to her as a patient. Which was exactly what she felt like— his patient. He even helped her to the bathroom to relieve herself, which was highly embarrassing to her, but he seemed unperturbed. She became rather irked by this and made no effort to hide it.

“From now on I’ll go to the bathroom myself. I’m not an invalid, you know,” she snipped as he placed her back in bed. His eyes sparked as he straightened. A dark look flashed over his face which was in contradiction to the wolfish smile that curved his lips. “Don’t look at me like that.”

“Like what?”

“Like I’m a naughty little girl,” she mumbled, belatedly realizing how stupid that sounded. He, on the other hand, seemed to be assessing her with an added sharpness to his gaze.

“Well, now, this is interesting,” he said elusively. “Definitely something worth pursuing.”

“What are you mumbling about? I’m not ... oh,” she gasped as he blithely covered her with the sheet. For the first time, she realized she was naked!

*Completely bare assed and he’s been carrying me around.  
Oh, freaking no!*

Riley didn’t know what was more disconcerting. That she’d never realized it or that he didn’t seem at all affected by her nakedness.



*It must be all the meds that are making my head so mushy. Tomorrow I'm getting up. No more wallowing in bed. This headache can be cured on a sofa as well as in this nice, comfortable bed.*

“Why is the headache not easing up?” she asked in undisguised frustration to hide her feelings. The expectant glimmer in his eyes warned her to bring up her nakedness at this very moment might not be a prudent thing to do.

“I'm relatively sure it'll be better within the next day or so, as long as you rest and allow yourself to heal.” He frowned as he regarded her from his mountainous height. “Do you remember the accident yet?”

“I remember I was going to stop in Pigeon Forge if it looked like the blizzard was ...” she yawned, with her fingers over her lips. “I think ...” Her eyes fluttered closed as the meds kicked in and dragged her under while one thought kept ringing through her mind.

*I must remember to ask him his name the next time I'm awake.*



“Finally. I planned to carry you outside and drop you in the snow if you weren't fully coherent this morning.”

“Aww, shit. That hurts.” Riley closed her eyes and moaned as a twinge of pain flashed through her brain when she swung her head to find the source of the deep, guttural voice. The now familiar size of the man loomed in the doorway.

*Hold on! Familiar? I have no freaking clue who this man is!*

“To be expected. It must’ve been quite a blow seeing as the swelling took two days to go down but at least you don’t look groggy and sleepy anymore. No ... stop rubbing your forehead, you’ll loosen the closures over the wound.”

“Closures? Wound?” Riley felt like a record player with a stuck needle but the dulcet voice disconcerted her. So much so that she felt a thrill of sensation ripple through her ... and all from listening to his voice for heaven’s sake. Her eyes fluttered open. She blinked to bring the mountain-sized man into focus. He seemed familiar but her hazy mind couldn’t place him ... and then he came into focus

*Holy, freaking moly!*

Just like that, Riley promptly forgot to breathe.

She gulped at the sheer size of the man whose hands rested low on his hips. He was imposing; that was the word that came to mind as her eyes combed over his body. Actually, scrap that, he was intimidatingly massive, solidly built, and muscle-bound to such an extent, she felt herself drool.

She gasped in a deep breath and curled her hands into fists, lest she did something stupid, like dragging her fingers through his thick hair that kissed the collar of his shirt. A wayward fringe added to the enticing frame of his broad face of bold bone structure. His eyes were mesmerizing, like indigo darts, the color of the sky at midnight, swirling with a flash of silver like the slither of moonlight on a dark stormy night.

At the moment, they watched her from a fathomless depth.

“W-where am I?”

Trent studied her intently. It wasn't uncommon for a concussed patient to forget the first couple of days after an accident.

“In my mountain cabin in Beer Willow Gap a couple of miles outside of Pigeon Forge.”

“Yes, I remember. I realized just before the crash that I must've turned off the main road.” Her lips pursed along with the frown between her brows. “I still don't know how I managed that.”

“What were you doing driving in the middle of a snowstorm?”

“It wasn't my intention but I guess I got sidetracked and drove through Pigeon Forge without realizing it.”

The man grunted and his eyes moved to the dog on the bed that had released a happy yap when he arrived.

“Time for you to take a walk, young lady,” he rumbled in a low demand. He shot a brief glance at Riley. “This is Sheila. She took it upon herself to take care of you for the past three nights.”

“Hi, Sheila and thank you.” Riley rubbed her ears. “It must be why I slept so soundly. Wait!” Her gaze moved to the big man. “Are you saying I was out for three entire nights?”

“You came to briefly now and then. I even managed to force a couple spoonful of soup past your lips before I gave you some pain meds every time. I assume the headache isn't any better?”

Riley's breath wheezed in her throat as he leaned over her and prodded her forehead. The gentleness of his touch sparked a memory and the details of the past couple of days began to play

like the snippets of a movie through her mind. One thing she'd been trying to ignore seared to life once again. He might be a stranger but there was something about him that drew her to him like a magnet. And ... her libido that sparked inside her agreed one hundred percent with that assessment!

*Good lord, woman. You're supposed to be incapacitated, how the devil can your ovaries burst into a burlesque number?*

She couldn't explain the rush of pheromones that resulted in a flush of liquid heat she could feel settling in the wetness between her thighs. And all that from a light and impersonal touch against her brow! But somehow her mind recalled a bartering between them, where she'd been her usually sassy self, even while she was feeling so shitty. The way he'd reacted and the dark glint in his eyes had thrilled her to no end. Excitement rushed through her. She didn't know this man from a bar of soap but instinct told her she could trust him. That maybe he was the man who could give her what she'd secretly been craving all her life.

“Warf!” A clipped bark drew Riley's attention from the hot body of the man standing too close for comfort. She could feel the heat emanating from him where his legs pressed against hers as he leaned over her.

“My, but aren't you a beauty,” she cooed and smiled as a silver and black head of a husky bigger than Sheila wriggled its way between its master and the bed.

“Warf!” he boldly acknowledged her compliment.

“Behave Storm. Go outside with Sheila and no,” he said in a warning voice as the tails of the two dogs excitedly began to

whip back and forth. “You’re not coming back inside if you’re sopping wet from playing in the snow.”

Both dogs awarded him with discontented snorts but happily ran out of the room.

“I’m Riley Miller. I was on my way to my aunt in Gatlinburg,” she said quickly, before she forgot again to find out who this compelling man was.

“Trent Reeves.” He came closer and carefully pushed his arm behind her back. “Come, let’s get you sitting up. You must be hungry for something aside from chicken soup. Easy ... there’s no rush,” His voice dipped low and rumbled gravelly from his chest as she moaned.

Riley was stumped at how his voice cut through her heart and stopped time, if only for a brief moment. It left her shaken, like she’d been transported to an outer universe where normalcy didn’t exist. She was so enraptured by the unexplained sensations that rippled through her from wherever his hands brushed over her body that she temporarily forgot about the headache. It felt much better but the pesky throbbing remained.

*Hold on just a damn minute! His hands on my skin! My naked skin!*

“Why the devil am I naked?” she snapped through thin lips as she clutched the duvet against her chest. Anger flashed in slithers of black, darkening the leafy green of her eyes.

Riley’s memory offered her another flash of the previous night when she’d realized she’d been naked all along.

*Lord, I feel like such an idiot!*

Mountain man didn't seem at all perturbed. In fact, he regarded her with raised eyebrows, taking note of the reddening blush covering her cheeks.

The Dom stirred and the beast inside his soul awakened with a lazy stretch.

“No need to feel offended, little snip. I'm a trauma surgeon and have seen my fair share. I had to carry you from the wreck to my car in the blizzard. You were soaked by the time we got back here. Covering you with the down duvet heated you up much faster against your naked skin.”

“Oh,” she mumbled, doing her best to hide her discomfort. Knowing she was naked under the covers while he stood so close, watching her with an expression she couldn't decipher, placed her on the backfoot. She decided to rather not question him why she was still naked after her body temperature returned to normal. She didn't have the strength for *that* debate. Not yet anyway.

Now that she could remember the past two days, her uncontrolled reaction to her savior completely threw her for a loop.

Suddenly he appeared bigger and exuded power in the confident way he squared his shoulders. It was an unconscious shift; one she was relatively positive came to him naturally. The way his eyes darkened as he stared at her, stirred something deep inside her, a desire to give this man whatever he asked for. A need to please him and be pleased in equal measures.

*What the flying flamingos, Riley!?*

“Here, I brought you breakfast.” He picked up the tray he'd left on the bedside table. He carefully placed it over her legs

before removing the silver cloche covering the plate, releasing the decadent aroma of freshly baked bread, fried onions, and bacon.

“Good lord, I sincerely hope this is for both of us,” Riley exclaimed as she stared agape at the mountain of eggs, sausages, bacon, mushrooms, and onions on the plate. To add insult to the injury, three pieces of toast accompanied the stack of food. She pretended to look under the tray. “I think you forgot the pancakes and muffins,” she said with an amused chuckle.

“Are you sassing me, Miss Miller?”

Riley peeked at him through her lashes, wondering at the dark undertone in his voice. The way he looked at her, reminded her of his reaction to her snappy remark the previous night. His entire demeanor had changed. He absolutely oozed confidence that made his presence that much more commanding.

“Is there a law against that in this area? Or are you one of those men who believe women should be seen and not heard?”

His chuckle sounded decidedly wicked. It caused a spark to zap at her clitoris which caused her legs to jerk in response. His eyes flared with interest as he stood witness to her reaction.

*Freaking fiddles! Behave yourself, Miss Clitoris! Before I make an absolute doofus of myself.*

“Believe me, Snowflake, I love sassy women ...” The hesitation was deliberate. She glanced up and felt her loins clench violently at the heat in his eyes. “As long as they’re prepared to accept the consequences of their brattiness.”

“Snowflake? Consequences?” She cleared her throat at the croak that escaped from her lips. It was incomprehensible how aroused she was.

*Good grief! I don't know this man and all I can think of, is him having his way with me.*

Try as she might, she couldn't drag her eyes from his. He folded his arms over his chest and leveled a sizzling blue flaming look at her.

“Best you remember that, little snip. You've been warned. In this house, there will be consequences for sassing me.” His eyes danced over her naked shoulders. “And yes, you blew in here like a snowflake and you looked as frail as one when I carried you from the wreck.”

Riley clamped her thighs together and cursed her nipples tightening into hard little stones that she could feel poking against the duvet. At least he couldn't see it! Somehow, the smile that crawled over his lips contradicted that thought. She had no idea how, but the expression on Trent Reeves' face warned her that he was very aware of how aroused she was.

*Hot wheels and damnation! Have I landed in hell? Is he the devil incarnate? Am I dead!?*

The thought made her panic. She stabbed at a piece of sausage and popped it in her mouth. She hissed as it burned her tongue but was satisfied that it at least proved she wasn't stuck in purgatory— with him as Hades, ready to ban her to hell where he ruled as the overlord, ready to make her pay for being sassy.

“Don't believe that being a little under the weather will excuse you.” He tapped his temple. “I store every incident up



here and when you're back to health ...”

“Then what? Are you going to spank me?” she said with a cryptic sneer on her lips. Her eyes widened as he smiled indulgently.

“Be careful what you wish for, Snowflake.”

He was already out the door before Riley managed to squeak, “I didn't *wish* for anything! Do you hear me, you ... you bully! I *said* I didn't wish for anything. Least of all a spanking from your big ass hands!”

His deep chuckle was the only response he offered. Riley had a sneaking suspicion his words hadn't been of cautionary nature, rather a confirmation of intent.

“Spank me? In your dreams, you big ass giant.”

Riley attacked her food with gusto. Whether to keep her mind occupied or from hunger, she couldn't say. It was rather disconcerting that the vision of her draped over his legs and his large palm connecting with her naked buttocks, just wouldn't go away. Nor would the pressure that kept building inside her loins allow her to forget how her body reacted to him as a man.

She had never experienced the like. To be instantly attracted to a man had been a foreign concept to Riley and one she'd always scoffed at in the past. Apart from that, he managed to arouse her without even trying. That completely unsettled her.

“Stop! Great balls of fire, if you carry on like this Riley Miller, you'll climax just thinking of the dratted man. Now that would be a complete disaster!”

She listened to the voice echoing back at her. The reality of it sank in. If Trent Reeves knew just how badly he affected her,

he'd walk right over her and twist her like a pretzel with no more than a look from those daunting and seemingly expressionless midnight blue eyes.

“Well, it stops now. I just met the man for heaven's sake! It must be the bump against my head that's affecting me like this. Yes! That's it. As soon as I'm back to normal, so will my wayward ovaries and libido start behaving themselves,” she mumbled around a bite of mushrooms.

It better be all it was. Riley didn't need anyone to tell her that a man like Trent didn't suffer fools easily. Nor that he was the kind of man, who once his mind was set on something, saw it to fruition.

There had been a glimmer in his eyes when he'd issued the warning. A glint she had no other choice but to interpret was because her sassy attitude had placed her on his radar.

She was woman enough to know the arousal she felt wasn't one-sided. She frowned as she pondered over the matter. Trent was one of those men who kept his feelings hidden behind a mask of indifference, stoic and untouched. Maybe she was grasping at straws and he had only indulged her because of the accident.

“Maybe,” she said, dragging the word out. “But there was something else ... hmm.” She took a sip of her coffee. She couldn't put her finger on it but she'd seen the change in him, from a friendly, caring man to one of confidence, power and ...

“Oh. My. God!” she gasped as flashes of books she'd read from various authors played through her mind like a movie reel. She clasped her head between her hands as a searing pain tore

through her brain. She could hear the frightened wail in her mind.

*“Spanking me! He’s a Dominant. A freaking Dom and he ... he ... oh devil’s pimples no! If he thinks I’m going to submit to him, he’s ... he’s ...”*

Her words dwindled. She loved reading about Domination and submission, about the BDSM lifestyle and gobbled every romance book she could find about it. She even fantasized about it, but not once had she admitted to herself it was something she’d like to embark on. Not even experimentally.

“Hell no. And if I ever did, it wouldn’t be with a Dom as visually powerful as Trent Reeves. Definitely not!”

“Definitely not what?”

Riley started as his gruff voice sounded from the door. She didn’t dare look at him but elected to hide her blushing face behind the large mug of coffee.

“Now you eavesdrop on me as well? What kind of host does that?” she muttered irritably.

He laughed. He outright laughed at her. She shot an annoyed glare at him and then she could only stare. Even expressionless, he was drop dead gorgeous, in a rough way, but when he laughed, he transformed into a Greek god. His eyes gleamed with pleasure and his face relaxed completely, giving him a look she could only describe as a mixture between that of a naughty schoolboy and a wicked man.

Her stupid ovaries erupted in a frizz of Chattanooga dance steps that caused a delicious shiver of arousal to trickle all over her skin.

“My apologies, Miss Miller. I’ll be sure to warn you in the future, so that you and your imaginary friend can stop chatting,” he said as he wiped his eyes dry.

“I don’t have an imaginary ... Gmphf!” she ended in an undignified snort.

“I’m glad to see you have a healthy appetite.”

Riley was startled to notice she’d cleaned the plate and only left one piece of toast. She pressed her lips together. She had no intention of explaining to him she usually had a healthy appetite and although thick and delicious, she had enough of soup—especially not since her head had started pounding painfully again.

“Here, this will help.”

He sat down next to her. She took the glass of water as he dropped two tablets in her palm.

“I can see you’re still suffering, so these are strong pain medication. If you need to use the bathroom, I suggest you do so now because they will knock you out in a matter of minutes.”

“Yes, please.” Riley dropped her legs over the side of the bed. She grabbed the duvet as it slipped to her waist. She glanced at him. “Did you perhaps bring my luggage?”

“I did.”

Riley narrowed her eyes at him as he sat watching her, unmoving at her unspoken request for her clothes.

“Well? Could you perhaps fetch it so I can at least get dressed in my pajamas?”

His eyes moved over her naked shoulders, her disheveled hair to salivate over her rosy lips pursed into an enticing pout.

“Sleeping naked is much healthier. Clothes restrict the body to—”

“Thank you, Doctor Reeves. I don’t need a medical lecture. All I want is my clothes.”

An elaborate sigh drifted to the high rafters. “Very well, but first, let me assist you to the bathroom.”

“I’m much better and quite capable of— hey! No, you can’t ... put me down ... give me that duvet!”

“Stop wriggling, Snowflake, unless it’s an invitation to touch, in which case, I accept. Your injury be damned.”

Riley had never swallowed her words as quickly as that. Her body glimmered with a rosy hue all over by the time he lowered her feet to the floor next to the toilet.

She gasped as she took in the huge and breathtaking bathroom. She was enthralled by the gleaming granite countertops, large walnut-framed mirrors, a walk-in shower that was big enough for four people. Large fluffy towels were neatly arranged beneath the counter and the heat under the soles of her feet told her the tile floor had under-floor heating. She drooled over the large oval-shaped jacuzzi tub.

“Two minutes to pee and then I’ll be back. No, you’re not taking a shower. I bathed you last night, so—”

Riley raised horrified eyes at him, her arms and hands covering all her womanly bits as effectively as she could. “You did *what!*?”

“Bathed you. You know, like they do in hospitals. With a cloth, soap and a bowl of water.”

“Out! Get out of here,” she croaked and plunked down on the toilet when her legs gave in. Just the thought of his large hands stroking over every inch of her body sparked every nerve ending in her body to life. It felt like she sizzled all over.

“Are you sure you’re not going to need help with the toilet paper? I’m quite willing to—”

“Trent Reeves, turn those giant boots in the other direction and march them out of this freaking bathroom. I do not need your help wiping ... just get *out!*” she all but sneered as he began to chuckle.

“As you wish, but only because you’re ill. Next time ... I *will* take the pleasure of assisting you.”

Riley waited until the door closed behind him before she snapped, loud enough for him to hear, “Over my dead body, Reeves.” Then in a softer voice. “The day you assist me, is the day I ... I ... oh lord, woman, get your head out of the man’s pants!”

Riley finished and quickly wrapped a towel around her before she gingerly walked toward the door, using the wall as a pillar. She couldn’t believe how weak she felt. He was there when she opened the door, grumbling about an obstinate female as he picked her up and carried her to the bed.

“My clothes! Thank you,” she gushed as she noticed her bright purple suitcases on a luggage rack in one corner of the room.

“Don’t thank me yet,” he said darkly as he rummaged through one until he found her favorite pair of pink flannel pajamas. “Good lord, I haven’t seen the like of this since my grandmother wore something similar,” he said holding them up as he approached the bed.

“Panties. I need some—”

“No, you don’t.”

“But I ... hey! Freaking hell, Reeves, will you stop manhandling me? I can pffdressff myself,” she spluttered as he unceremoniously yanked off the towel and pulled the top over her head. Before she could blink, she had on the pants and he gingerly tucked her back into bed.

“There. Now, snip, go to sleep. I’ll check in again later.”

Riley’s lips wouldn’t stop tingling, long after Trent was gone, courtesy of the hard kiss he’d planted on her lips before he left.

# Chapter Four





“Raptor. Come in. Dispatch calling Raptor.”

“Go for Raptor,” Trent said as he punched the speak button on the top of the range Bluetooth system he used to communicate with the special rescue unit in Pigeon Forge. He’d thrown out the walkie talkie system long ago. Modern technology made distant communication so much easier.

“Checking in on your patient. Do you need us to send a chopper? The mountain roads are completely snowed under and the snow sweepers are clearing the town streets first. I’m afraid you’re not going anywhere for a couple of days.”

“She’s fine, just a headache due to a minor concussion but other than that, I believe she’ll be up and about by tomorrow.”

“I’m afraid I have some more bad news.”

“It’s almost Christmas, Sally. Shouldn’t you be aiming for good news?” Trent teased. She was one of the few people who knew him for the man he was and who he liked. Mainly because she refused to let him raise a barrier between them. Over the years she broke down every barricade he’d tried to erect to keep her at a distance. At sixty-five years of age, she reminded him of his mother, which was why it was easy to open up to let her in. He smiled to himself. She didn’t think twice to rap others over the knuckles if they referred to him as the Scrooge of Pigeon Forge because of his closed demeanor when he was around people.

“Am I supposed to guess?” he prodded when she kept quiet. He already knew what she was going to say. He always kept an eye on the weather conditions.

“Well, if the storm system doesn’t let up, at least you’ll have some company this Christmas— apart from your two furry

ones, that is.”

“Hmm ... let’s hope not.” He shifted in the chair, somewhat surprised that the prospect of having Riley Miller underfoot for two weeks didn’t fill him with the usual disgruntlement of having his privacy invaded.

“You better be prepared, Trent. The warning for the next blizzard says it’s going to be a big one and it should hit us by tonight.”

“Thanks for letting me know, Sally. Don’t worry about us. We’re nice and cozy up here.”

“Stay safe. Dispatch out.”

Trent got up and moved to stand in front of the window. It had been one stipulation he’d made for the architect who had designed the two-story cabin. Large ceiling to floor windows in every room. The view was spectacular and would always be appreciated.

He pondered over his reaction at the thought that Riley might be underfoot for longer than anticipated. She was a beautiful woman but that wasn’t what sparked his interest in her.

The Dom in him was excited by her sassy nature. If she was a novice as far as BDSM was concerned, he’d love to be the one to tap into her natural submissiveness. It would offer him the greatest of pleasure to teach her the fulfillment that giving free rein to that side of her would bring.

Trent hadn’t been ignorant to her reaction to him; indeed, he’d been flattered, which was why he couldn’t resist kissing her earlier. The touch of her soft lips and the way they had unconsciously clung to his had fed the hungry beast inside him.

He clawed at Trent's insides, the prospect of feeding its desire to dominate her, grew stronger just thinking about her.

“Warf! Warf! Yeaoo.”

Trent glanced at Storm who sat next to him, copying his stance as he stared out of the window.

“Yeah, there's another storm brewing. Come, we better get the truck inside. I don't want to have to scrape ice off it once the blizzard is over.”

Storm jumped up and ran in an excited circle around Trent. He loved to frolic in the snow.

“Where's Sheila? Or has she abandoned you again for the patient upstairs?”

“Grurf!” Storm yapped in a disgruntled half-bark. Probably because Sheila wouldn't allow Storm anywhere near Riley. It was as though she had decided the brunette was her human and he had to keep his distance.

“Hm, don't worry, buddy. She'll be gone in a while, then everything will be back to normal.”

Storm followed him outside and jumped on the back of the truck as Trent opened the door. He shook his head.

“You're a weird dog.”

Sheila always sat inside the cab but Storm preferred to feel the wind through his fur. It gave him the freedom to indulge in his antics of catching snowflakes and howling in the breeze as Trent drove.

Once the truck was safely parked inside the large shed doubling as a garage, Trent secured the doors and stomped

through the snow back toward the cottage. He glanced up and his steps slowed. The house at the top of the mountain stood proud and majestic, designed to withstand the forces of nature.

The house that was supposed to be Adrienne's surprise. A last token to try and save their marriage. It had been in the beginning stages of construction at the time she died. Trent immediately had the architect amend the plans to the kind of house he preferred over the ostentatious style his wife did. At the same time, the cabin had been built, where he preferred to live. The big house stood empty, waiting to be filled with love and warmth. Eventually ... maybe children.

"I'd probably be better off selling the damn place," he muttered to himself as he walked inside the cabin with Storm at his heels. He headed to his study where he punched in a code on the communication panel. "Joe, come in, Joe."

"What's up, Boss?"

"There's another blizzard heading this way, worse than the previous one. Please board up the windows, just in case."

"On it."

Joe wasn't a big talker. He was a loner and had grasped the job of caretaker of Trent's properties with eager hands.

"Warf! Yeooo," Storm yapped and shook his body. He sniffed the air and barked again.

"You really act like this is a hotel and I'm your butler, you know that?" Trent mumbled but stroked Storm's ears as he walked to the kitchen to feed him. "Go fetch Sheila. No, don't give me that look. I know you. If she's not here, you'll gobble up her food as well."



“What the devil are you doing?”

“Get out! Damn you, Trent. You can’t just barge in here,” Riley screeched as she scrambled to cover as much of her nakedness from his scorching gaze as she could. She blinked the water from her eyes. She did her best to maintain the appearance of indignance as she stared at him through the falling water of the shower.

“You’re a patient under my care, woman. You don’t just get up and jump in the shower. What if you fell and hit your head while I was outside? Don’t you have any sense? You have a concussion and another bump could be fatal.”

“I’m fine and I’m not a child. Besides, I slept right through the night after the meds you gave me. The headache is gone,” she snipped as she crossed one foot over the other in an attempt to curb the lust that sparked to life under his roving eyes.

“You’re not fine,” he barked. He moved to one side and pointed at the door. “Get out of the shower and march your cute little behind back to bed.”

Riley released a belabored sigh. “Trent, I’m old enough to know my limitations. I promise you the headache is gone. I don’t feel dizzy or have rubbery legs. I can even stand on one foot. Look.” She bravely demonstrated but, in the process, her arms lifted to balance herself. “See ... oh shit,” she moaned as she realized he was looking ... with a wide smile but not at her wobbly one leg stance. Oh, no, his blue gaze seared over her exposed girlie bits.

“Damn you. Get out of here,” she snapped as she once again curled her arms around her body. The widening grin told her the effort to protect her naughty bits from his heated gaze was dismal at best. Why couldn’t she have eight arms like an octopus?

“NOW, Reeves. Get your big ass body out of here.”

“You’ll find that I don’t take well to being ordered around, Snowflake.”

The glare she offered him had the same metamorphosis effect as she’d witnessed before. This time, it was more prominent. He even looked bigger; his eyes darker as he soaked in her defiance. A feeling of excitement thrilled through her frame. She ignored it with difficulty.

“Please do me a huge favor, Mr. Reeves, and kindly leave so that I can finish my shower,” she cooed in a sugary voice.

He rocked back on his heels as he regarded her with a slight smile on his lips.

“My favors aren’t granted freely, snip. If you want me to leave, you’ll have to barter for it.”

“Barter! Oh, good grief. From what archaic era are you? You’re invading my privacy, therefore the polite thing to do would be to turn around and leave. No bartering required!”

“I have to disagree. I can’t invade your privacy seeing as everything around you belongs to me.”

His chin lowered and his gaze sharpened in warning ... or was it possession? Riley wasn’t sure which. All she did know, was that her entire body reacted to the deep gravel of his voice. It reached deep inside her and toggled at something she couldn’t

put a name to ... except she couldn't deny how badly she wanted to belong to him too.

His chuckle shook her and she had a sneaky suspicion he could read her mind. That didn't sit well with Riley. Not one tiny bit.

"Very well, if it means I can finish my shower in peace, I'll barter. What do you want?"

"Hmm ... lemme think," he murmured, watching her with hawk eyes. "A hug."

Riley's jaw went slack. Of all the things he could've asked for, he settled for a hug?

*Well, jeez Louise, what a letdown that is.*

"A hug? Seriously?"

"Yes."

Riley had a suspicion he was suppressing his amusement with difficulty. "One hug and you'll leave?"

"Unless you ask for more," he said in an elaborate drawl.

"Oh, believe me, I won't." She pointed behind him. "Pass me a towel please."

"No. A naked hug."

"You ... this is ..." Riley swallowed her words as he raised his eyebrows expectantly. If not for the fact that she believed sassing him now would land her in trouble, she wouldn't have backed down. As it were, his closeness and her nakedness were a combination that sparked her arousal higher with every touch of his eyes on her skin. The quicker she gave him his hug, the sooner he'd leave and she could start breathing normally again.



“Very well,” she snapped and took the few steps that separated them. She stopped in front of him, toe to toe and looked up. He towered over her in his full six-foot-two glory. By the look on his face, he had no intention of making this easy on her. He waited patiently.

“You’re so freaking tall; I need a stepladder to reach around your neck.” She’d be damned if she asked him to bend over. She wouldn’t put it past him to barter for that too. Trent’s brow raised in acknowledgment of her problem-solving skills when she blatantly stepped onto his boots and went onto her toes to wrap one arm around his neck and the other circled his waist to slide up his back.

“Oh!” she gasped in surprise as his arms wrapped around her and pulled her hard into his body, flattening her softness against his hard, rippling chest. Every nerve in her body sizzled, she could feel the drizzle of lust from between her labia as she breathed in deeply. He smelled like heaven. A fresh, clean smell mixed with pure hot, sexy male that caused an arrow of lust to spear through her loins. She’d never experienced something like that.

His hands moved in a gentle caress over her back, to the small of her waist and curved sensually around the soft curves of her buttocks.

“Hey ... that’s not a hug!” she puffed as he pushed her higher against his body, her feet dangled in the air as he used his hands under her cheeks to move her in a seductive cantation against the hard ridge that pressed against her clit.

“There are hugs, Snowflake, and then there are hugs,” he said against her ear, his warm breath stirred a fresh sensation of

need deep inside her. Her clit throbbed as he blatantly rolled his arousal against the apex between her legs. He moved one hand to settle beneath both cheeks and the other fisted in her wet hair. He pulled, albeit gently and forced her to tilt back her head. His eyes were now the shade of the darkest hour of the night. “Wrap your legs around me, snip.”

Riley still formed the denial in her mind when her legs slinked around his waist. His eyes narrowed on her as her lips opened in a silent “O” as he moved her body up and down the length of his hard cock.

*Crack! Crack!*

“Owww! Snowman’s balls! What was that for?” she squealed in a small, hurt voice.

His eyes remained glued on hers as he slowly rubbed his palm over the stinging slap marks.

“For your defiance in getting out of bed.”

“You ... I ... mmm, stop. I can’t ... think when you do that,” she whimpered, completely overwhelmed as the burning sting was soon forgotten under his brushing palm. It felt like he was rubbing the pain into her skin, forcing it to ripple through her loins that pulsed demandingly, all the way to her throbbing clitoris. Just like that, Riley was on the edge of combusting. She could feel the climax etching closer with every circle of his hand over her stinging buttocks. She couldn’t look away, nor could she keep the silent plea from her eyes.

“Tell me, little one. Tell me what you want from me.”

“Kiss me. Please,” she said in a near whisper.

“I’ll barter you for it.”

“What do you want in return?” she lilted, desperate to feel his lips on hers. To see if they would make her tingle all over like the previous night.

“I’ll kiss your lips, Snowflake, in return for kissing your nipples.”

Ripley couldn’t comprehend what it would feel like to have his hot mouth sucking at her breasts or why she even allowed herself to be in this position. None of that mattered. At the moment, there was just Trent Reeves and the heat that filtered through his skin into hers. The lust that demanded to be satisfied and the desire to fall apart in his arms.

She gave him her answer by dragging his head toward her. Her breath whispered against his lips as she granted him his request. “A kiss for a kiss.”

Their lips met, not soft and tentative. She should’ve expected a kiss like this, like the man he was. Demanding, hot, and seductive. It enveloped her in a cocoon of helplessness, like a sinking yielding against a surging tide of warmth that left her limp like a ragdoll. She moaned as his hand in her hair tightened and forced back her head further. He surprised her by gently nibbling on her lips and then gradually spiked up the intensity that made her cling to him as the world threatened to go into a spin.

“Open for me, Snowflake,” he growled against her lips. She acted on instinct. Her lips bloomed open under the insistence of his. The kiss deepened, drenched in seductive passion that sent wild tremors along her nerves, evoking sensations she had never known she was capable of feeling to tremble through her.

Riley felt her heart race, reacting to the expertise and possession of his kiss. It wasn't thumping or leaping, it was a forceful kick, like a frog kicking wildly in a desperate attempt to escape the chase of a carnivore nibbling on its toes. Her heart became that amphibian, as her emotions moved between two elements: one, excitement; the other, fear.

For what, Riley had no idea but the kiss was like an aphrodisiac, mixed with a Pandora's box effect. Fireworks glowed inside her from the touch of his lips on hers, threatening to explode as he bent her backwards further. His lips trailed over her throat to flutter over her chest, ending with enticing licks all around her areola.

"Oh, my," she keened. Her hands moved of their own volition from around him to circle his neck and hold him in place. "Please," she whimpered brokenly. Every fiber in her body tensed in expectation of that first flick of his tongue over a nipple that stood as hard as stone, begging for attention.

"You beg so beautifully, little one," he rasped against her skin. "Who am I to deny you?"

Riley all but swooned when he wrapped his lips around a nipple and sucked it deep into his mouth. He pulled on her succulent flesh with hard, confident sucks, drawing low moans and cries from her lips. He turned his attention to the other breast and adorned it with the same treatment. His tongue stabbed at the hard nubs, he nipped at them with his teeth, pushing her to teeter precariously on the edge of a climax. She had never experienced such a level of arousal. She locked her ankles behind his back, canting and rolling her clit against his hard cock, riding him inside his pants with a desperation completely foreign to her.

“Holy-holy-holy h-hell!” she screamed as his teeth clamped around a nipple. He bit down— hard. Riley stiffened, a low keening scream rolled from deep inside her as she sped up, rubbing her clit hard against the roughness of his jeans. He suckled softly before moving to the other breast. When he bit into the nub, the coil inside her snapped. Her back arched and she pushed her nipple deeper into his mouth.

Trent didn’t hesitate, he bit harder, shook his head and watched through slitted eyes as she lost herself in the climax that rippled through her. Her face twisted in a grimace of pleasure pain as she struggled to ride the wave that tossed her high one moment, only to yank her under the next. When she finally came back to earth, it was to his lips gently sucking and caressing her abused nubs.

Riley buried her face in his throat when he lifted his head. Her breathing sounded loud and haggard in the silence. She only realized then that the water had been shut off, but when, she had no idea.

“See, Snowflake. Bartering has its advantages.”

She was too embarrassed to lift her head or respond. The way she’d humped his dick was beyond embarrassing but it had given her a climax she was still struggling to comprehend. To date, sex hadn’t been all that exciting for her. She enjoyed it but had always been left unfulfilled. Her climaxes, which were menial at best, had never threatened to tear her apart.

Riley unwrapped her legs from around his waist and lowered them to the floor. She immediately turned away and turned on the water.

“I better finish,” she said in a thick voice.

Trent would have none of it. He turned her with one hand clamped around her shoulder and the other cupping her chin to force her gaze to his.

“Never be ashamed of your sexuality, Riley. Not here and never with me. Is that understood?”

“Yes,” she said breathlessly, biting back the word sir, that annoyingly hovered on her lips.

His broad smile shook her, wondering if he once again read her mind.

“I was right about you, Snowflake,” he said cryptically. He turned and sauntered to the door before she could question him about it. “I can’t wait to introduce you to my dungeon.”

Riley sagged against the shower stall in relief when he disappeared. His presence was just too all consuming, especially after the earth-shattering climax she just had.

“Wait. What did he just say? *Dungeon?*” Her voice rose and ended in a thin wail. She could hear the panic in the echo surrounding her.

“I’m not setting a foot inside your dungeon, Reeves. Not even a small toe, so there!”

# Chapter Five





Riley didn't believe getting dressed and going downstairs after she showered was defiance, rather as being assertive. Trent might be a surgeon, but she knew her body better than him and it told her she was fine. He couldn't take offense to her reasoning, now could he?

Nevertheless, she still tiptoed as quietly as possible as she descended. She felt rather silly peeping carefully around the large archway leading into the grand open room.

“Warf-warf. Yeaaa ... yeaooo.”

“Sheila, fiddlestick, you scared me,” she gasped at the unexpected soft bark and yowl behind her. She pressed her fingers over her lips and whispered urgently. “Shh, Sheila, we don't want Scrooge to hear us.”

“Neaaa,” Sheila responded with a yap that sounded suspiciously like no. She even joined Riley at the entrance and peeked into the room.

“Are the two of you practicing becoming Peeping Toms?”

“Holy smokes, Reeves! Do you always have to scare the living daylights out of me?” Riley spun around with her heart racing.

Trent wasn't perturbed at all. He regarded her regally down the length of his nose. He seemed relaxed with his legs spread wide and his thumbs hooked through the belt loops of his jeans.

“If you were where you're supposed to be, that wouldn't happen, now would it?”

“Warf!” Storm, who sat on his haunches beside Trent reiterated his master's statement, which triggered a low growl from Sheila. She pressed her body against Riley's legs. Riley

placed her hand on top of the dog's head, finding comfort in her protective nature.

“Dr. Reeves, I assure you, I'm fine. I'm not a bed-bound person but believe me, I'm not a martyr either. If I feel the need, I promise I'll go upstairs and lie down.”

His chin tilted toward the living room behind her. “In there. I'll be the judge of whether you should be out of bed.”

“But—”

“It's not debatable, Riley. I'm going to examine you and then we'll decide your fate.”

“My fate? Good grief, you make it sound like I'm about to be sent to the gallows,” she mumbled under her breath as she pivoted and stomped toward the sofa.

“I'm not a fan of mumbling, Snowflake. Either you speak so I can hear, or I'll make my own assumption about what you're saying.”

Riley decided not to give him the satisfaction by defending herself. She sat down on the sofa and folded her hands demurely on her lap. She fluttered her eyelids at him.

“Examine away, Dr. Reeves.”

Reeves chose to park her sassy response along with the others in his mind. The little minx was ratcheting up punishments—whether she realized it or not. He suppressed a smile at her obvious puzzlement when he didn't respond in the manner she expected.

She watched him covertly as he wrapped the mobile blood pressure band around her bicep.

“I don’t have a problem with my blood pressure. You do remember I have a head injury, right?” she said in a derogatory tone. Why she acted like this she had no idea—or wait, she did. His closeness rattled her; completely discombobulated her. It was one way of deflecting the electric sizzle the touch of his fingertips sparked on her skin.

“Keep it up, snip. I’m already salivating over the possibilities your brattiness offers me.”

“What possibilities?” Her tone rang sharp and cutting through the room.

“Shh, I need to listen,” he said as he placed the stethoscope on the pulse of the vein on the inside of her elbow. For moments the quiet offered Riley the opportunity to study him as he slowly released the air from the band around her arm.

Today he was dressed in jeans and a black sweater with matching sneakers. His hair looked messy and she could swear his beard was fuller than the previous day. Maybe he was one of those men who grew his beard in winter. All in all, he looked good enough to eat, or caress ... or lick. Yes, definitely to lick, all along his firm lips, the rippling ridges and valleys of his six pack she detected under the tight sweater and—

*Good lord, Riley. Stop it. The drool is about to drip to the floor!*

“It’s a little high but I expected as much.” His gentle touch moved over her forehead to examine the wound. “You say the headache is gone. Completely, or is there still a tiny throb?”

“All gone.” She clicked her tongue as his one eyebrow raised higher. “I promise. Whatever the meds were that you gave me, it worked.”

“Any pain around the wound?”

“Only if I touch it but other than that I’m not aware of it.”

“Good. You won’t be left with a scar. It was a superficial wound, but it can infect easily if not taken care of. I’ll clean it properly tonight and replace the Band-Aids.”

“Does that mean I have a clean bill of health and I can stay down here?”

“You had a very hard hit on your head, which means you have a slight concussion. I want you to relax and take it easy for another day at the very least.”

“Please don’t send me back to bed. I’ll go crazy if I have to spend the entire day there.”

“Fine, but if I find you doing anything other than relaxing or taking naps on the sofa, I’m cuffing you to my bed.”

Riley’s laughter tinkled through the room. The melody thrilled through Trent’s mind. No matter how hard he tried to shove it away, it crawled all the way into his soul.

“Cuffing me? You’re not a cop that has spare cuffs lying around, so I sincerely doubt that’s a possibility.”

“Hmm,” he mused as he packed his equipment into his medical bag. “I guess you didn’t hear the comment about my dungeon.” His gaze moved with lustful intent over her body. “Believe me, Snowflake, I have a variety of cuffs to choose from.”

Riley could hear herself swallowing as she stared at him wide-eyed.

“Y-you were serious about that?”

“I’m not prone to pranks or telling lies, even white ones. Something you’ll do well to remember.”

There was an unspoken warning in his tone that made her tremble. Not that she had lied to him about anything but who never tells a little white lie?

It wasn’t enough that she found it hard to fathom all the various aspects that made the man, Trent Reeves, she also struggled to wrap her head around him having a dungeon in his home. Her eyes fluttered around the room. She snorted to herself. Wherever the torture chamber was, he’d be sure to keep it hidden from prying eyes. She shifted uncomfortably under his unfathomable stare.

“I ... er need to phone my aunt. She must be sick with worry by now. I can’t find my handbag upstairs.”

“It’s in my study. Through the entrance hall, first door to the right. Phone her from there for privacy.”

He didn’t step back as she stood up, which brought her flush against his body. Riley was afraid her gulp slipped loudly from her lips, especially when a predatory smile flashed over his lips.

“Do I have to barter to pass?”

“You’re a quick learner, Snowflake. I’m impressed and very happy about it.”

She didn’t think to defy him. Just the thought of his lips on her skin made it sizzle with anticipation. It was unsettling to have such a sex crush on a man.

“Well? Am I supposed to guess what you want this time, oh high and mighty sir?” She copied his crawling eyebrow but feared it didn’t have the same effect his had on her.

“I like that word coming from your lips, little one. Now, I just need to teach you to actually mean it.”

“W-what word?” Riley stammered as he brushed his fingers over her bottom lip, pressing hard against it. Her eyes flared as pain flashed through her brain. Her gasp was testimony of the unexpected throbbing in her loins and clitoris that accompanied it.

He, the devil incarnate, seemed delighted by her reaction.

“Hmm ... let’s see.” His eyes darkened as he kept her gaze captive. “A spanking.”

Her eyes popped open as wide as saucers. Visions of the scenes from books she’d read flashed through her mind to tease her with all the possibilities such an act would bring. More than that, her loins clenched in reaction, flooding her pussy with liquid heat. She bit back a groan as she felt the tell-tale wet patch forming on her jeans between her thighs.

“A spanking? Like a ... ehm ... you want to hit me on the ass?”

“That’s generally what spanking entails, yes.”

“Why?” Riley licked her lips, overly aware of the heat penetrating her skin from where his fingers now clasped her chin. “I’m not ... into that.”

“But you want to be.”

“I never said that!” The denial sprang to her lips much too quickly. His knowing smile taunted her.

“But you imagined it. Maybe fantasized about it. Tell me, Riley, if I had to page through your kindle, what kinds of books am I bound to find there?”

“I ... you ... my kindle has nothing to do with this.”

“No? Shall we take a look then?”

He trapped her bottom lip between his fingers and pulled, Hard. Riley whimpered as her lip strained at the pressure. She grasped at his wrist and tugged.

“No.”

One harsh word and her ovaries turned in circles, crowding with what, she had no idea, but her hand fell away without protest.

He leaned in; his eyes not allowing hers to stray. Her whimpers turned to an agonizing groan of arousal as he slowly licked the inside of her lip, the edges of her teeth.

“Open, Snowflake. Come now. As wide as you can.” His warm breath seared her skin as he warned darkly, “You do not participate, my pet. This is for me, to discover the taste of you. Do you understand?”

She dipped her chin in a brief nod. She was sure her eyes were about to pop out of their sockets as she watched his head come closer. Her mouth opened of its own accord, so wide, the dentist would be proud of her. A flash of pride in Trent’s eyes crumbled any resistance she still harbored. She fisted her hands, not sure what to do with them; whether she was allowed to touch him.

*Oh lord, he’s right! I do want this. Unknowingly, I’m submitting to him!*

“Behind your back, my pet, and keep them there, no matter what.”

Riley didn't question how he knew the thoughts that were going through her mind, nor the eagerness with which she clasped her hands behind her back. How could she, when his hot tongue seared inside her mouth to gently explore the warm recesses he found there? He licked, he tickled, he teased; all this while he kept her bottom lip stretched out painfully.

Riley was blindsided by the contrast from the pain and the heat that pulsed through her veins like a volcano on the verge of erupting. She felt herself floundering in her mind, desperate to connect with her brain or her body. *Damn!* Either one would be good, but it was no use. The powerful Dom that hummed with pleasure into her spread open mouth, had full control of her will.

If only that was the solitary thing he owned in that moment. No, he wasn't satisfied with something as menial. He had to encapsulate her every thought, movement and spiked the lust inside her to a breaking point.

The constant sprinkle of honeyed juices from between her labia was proof that she was excited beyond measure at his Domination and the pain he inflicted. She pressed her thighs together and could feel the wetness of her jeans against her skin.

And then, his heat was gone, leaving her feeling bereft and cold, even in the warmth of the room.

He stood in front of her, not moving, just watching, silently waiting. Riley realized this hadn't been a test for him. It had been to prove to her what was floating under the surface. What she'd been suppressing for years, and yes, what she yearned for.

"Ehm ... I need to phone my aunt." Her voice sounded strange, thick and sultry. Her lips tingled and throbbed from the



painful pressure he'd exerted, and still, her loins and clitoris all but crackled like they had been jolted by five-thousand volts of electricity.

"You know what will gain you the freedom to move, Snowflake."

Riley stared at him. It was senseless to deny what was raging inside her—the concupiscent desires he'd awakened.

"One spanking? Just one?"

"For a start."

"You don't play fair, Trent," she lilted in a husky voice.

He smiled gently, completely throwing her off track once again. It brought light and such pleasure to his features; she could only stare in awe.

*Good lord, this man is gorgeous.*

"I know what I want, Riley, and I always get it. If it means I have to allow the beast inside me out to play, I will."

"B-beast?"

*Oh. Freaking. Golliwog! I read about that! Doms who have a dark side and ... and ... holy shit.*

His chin tilted back as he stared at her over his nose, his eyes turning black as the night. A flash of silver held her enchanted.

"Believe me, my pet, you don't want to meet him. Not yet anyway." He squared his shoulders. "One spanking, after dinner ... in my dungeon."

"D-dungeon?" she all but squealed. She cleared her throat.

*Pull up your granny panties, woman. You sound like a scared little girl. How much damage could he do with one little old spanking?*

She straightened to her full height and returned his stare boldly. “Very well. One spanking. Tonight, after dinner ... in your d-dungeon.”

“Brave girl,” he praised.

And wouldn't you know it, Riley basked in it. He took back a step. She didn't wait in case he changed his mind and with a last glare at him, she stomped off. His deep voice reverberated through her as she passed under the archway. Her steps slowed to a stop.

“Be sure to tell her you won't be home for at least a week.”

Riley's eyes drifted to the snow-covered mountains visible through the walls of windows.

“A week?”

“We're high up and deep into the mountain. Apart from the snow that's not melting, the town snowplows are concentrating on the main roads and there's another blizzard brewing.” He watched her nibbling on her lip with an enigmatic expression. “Don't worry, little one, I'll take good care of you.”

Riley walked away without saying another word. Him taking care of her was exactly what bothered her. She was in a state of arousal ... all the time. It was disconcerting. She didn't know the man; how could her libido be so out of sync? How the devil could she have allowed him to do what he just did?!

In response, her loins clenched as a vision of Trent hugging Storm as she walked away, drifted through her mind. Lord, he

was hot and yet sensitive, caring, and loving with his dogs. It made her want to be the recipient of not only his Domination but all that attention. The fact that she felt like this after meeting him only three days ago shook her to the core. How the devil was she going to keep him at a distance for seven days if all she wanted to do was jump him and hump his brains out?

“Now that’s what I call a verity conundrum,” she mumbled as she walked into the study. “Oh my, what a beautiful room.”

It looked more like a drawing room than a study, inviting and warm. One wall consisted of a glass front bookcase, a walnut bureau with three drawers stood in front of the same large windows as the rest of the house. On either side stood plush bucket chairs made with the softest wine-colored leather, their darkness brought to light by the emerald green throw pillows. The desk was made of solid oak and sported intricately carved edges. She wondered if Trent was the carver, seeing as the cabin sported similar concepts all over. She should remember to ask him about that.

Riley could easily envision his huge frame slumped in the oversized chair behind the desk. A desk that was very neat and organized, just like the man himself.

“Ah, there it is.” Riley spotted her handbag on the plush leather bucket chair in a corner of the room. “And it still has some power,” she sighed with relief as she dug her cell out of the large, bright red leather shopper bag. She always color matched her handbag and shoes with her outfit; she was the proud owner of closets of both in a variety of colors.

She sat down in the chair and scrolled to Aunt Sophie’s number. Riley smiled as she answered it almost immediately.

“Riley, darling! Where are you?” her husky voice floated through Riley’s mind, triggering a feeling of nostalgia. She was so close and yet so far. Riley realized only now just how much she missed her.

“I’m at—”

“I’ve been worried sick! I even got the police involved to search for you,” she rushed ahead.

“I’m so sorry, Aunt Sophie. I’m fine but I was in an accident. But don’t worry,” she continued quickly as Sophie exclaimed worriedly. “I only had a little bump on my head. You really have no need to be concerned.”

“Where are you?”

Riley quickly explained what had happened and how she ended up in a mountain cabin of a stranger.

“Trent Reeves happened on the scene directly after it happened. Luckily for me, he’s a trauma surgeon. He’s taken very good care of me.”

The silence that followed was unexpected. Riley checked the connection to see if the call had been lost.

“Aunt Sophie, are you there?”

“Did you say Trent Reeves?”

“Do you know him?” Riley could hear the eagerness in her voice and cursed softly. If her aunt got as much as a whiff of how attracted she was to him, it would be disastrous.

“Yes, I do. He’s a very nice man. Kind of a recluse though, isn’t he?”

“Trent Reeves a recluse?” Riley frowned as she cast her mind back. He was reserved but he had been friendly. “I didn’t get that impression. He’s much too ... too demanding,” she ended in a fluster, hoping her aunt hadn’t caught on how her voice had turned all smoky.

“I see.” Aunt Sophie dragged out the words.

*Ugh! Now, see what you did, Riley Miller!*

She cringed as she realized what thoughts were milling through her aunt’s mind. She was well known in the area as the resident cupid.

“I’m not sure when I’ll arrive. Trent says there’s another blizzard on the way.”

“He’s right and this one is going to be worse than the previous one. I just hope you’ll be able to get down from the mountain in time to spend Christmas with me.” She hesitated. “Are you at least safe there?”

Riley could hear the tremor in her voice and wondered briefly about it but she pushed it aside.

“Very. You really have nothing to be worried about.”

“That sets my mind at rest. You tell that young man to keep you safe and warm.”

“Aunt Sophie, I’m big enough to do that myself. I’m just sorry I’m going to miss the Fantasy of Lights Christmas Parade.”

“With the blizzards not letting up, I’m sure it’s going to be postponed. Many of my friends are waiting for their families to arrive who are stranded in neighboring towns.”

“That’s at least some good news. It’s always so lovely.”

“You should bring Trent along. The least we can do to thank him for taking care of you is to offer him a good, healthy, homemade meal.”

“I know what you’re doing, Aunt Sophie and it’s not going to happen.”

“I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

The phone beeped a warning. “My battery is dying. I’ll phone you again soon.”

“Enjoy the mountains, darling ... and the company.”

Riley shook her head and smiled as they said their goodbyes.

Aunt Sophie would never quit looking for a husband for her only niece. She made it her life’s mission to find love for everyone around her. Because of that, Riley had often wondered why she didn’t like Jason. Aunt Sophie had met him a couple of years ago when she came for a short visit while on a trip with one of her friends.

*I suppose she saw through his facade of charm.*

“Everything good?”

Riley didn’t move. She sat frozen under the raw potency that suffused his voice. It awakened the primordial instinct to submit and unleashed the shackles of her lust.

“At least now my aunt can call off the police hunt.” She forced a smile as she took a moment to bring her wayward body under control. She regarded him with her head tilted to the side. “She seems to know you.”

Trent's expression didn't change as he walked around his desk and sat down. His deep voice showed his disinterest as he responded, "She does?"

"She owns The Bear Cave Lodge in Gatlinburg."

His face became stoic as he returned her stare unflinchingly. A flash of emotion in his eyes startled her but before she could examine it, he blinked and it was gone.

"Everyone in a fifty-mile radius of Gatlinburg knows Sophie Butler."

"I'm a little confused."

Trent didn't respond, but his one eyebrow crawled higher in an unspoken question.

"You said you're a trauma surgeon but she claims that you're a recluse." One hand fluttered in the air. "I don't see you as one but how can you be a surgeon and a recluse? It doesn't add up."

"I don't practice anymore."

"Why not?" His lips compressed into a straight line and his eyes became darkly shuttered. "I'm sorry. I have a natural tendency to be nosy. I'm a journalist, so it's second nature to ask questions."

"Some questions should not be asked." His voice was laced with such darkness, Riley couldn't help but wonder what it was he didn't want to talk about.

He opened the laptop in front of him and powered it up. His gruff voice sounded distant and withdrawn. "There are books to read in the living room or you can watch the tube." He gestured

toward her laptop bag standing next to the chair she was sitting on. “Check your email but no work.”

“Is that your subtle way of chasing me out of your study?” Riley was annoyed by how hurt she felt. It wasn’t like he owed her anything, his time least of all. Just because her ovaries were overeager, didn’t mean he felt the same way, irrespective of what happened in the living room earlier.

“I have work to do and I need peace and quiet.” He scribbled on a piece of paper and pushed it across the desk. “The wi-fi password. Feel free to use it.” He watched her with a guarded expression. “When I work, I don’t wish to be disturbed — ever. This is the one and only warning you’ll receive. Come in here when the door is closed and you *will* carry the consequences.”

Her mouth dry, she braved the question, “What consequences?”

“I will fuck you so hard and so rough that you’ll be walking bowlegged for a week. Your pussy will be raw by the time I’m done.”

Riley’s cheeks turned flaming red as his insolent gaze dropped to her breasts and from there to the pulsing spot between her legs. He licked his lips.

She opened her mouth but snapped it shut as he grunted and then blithely ignored her to start pounding on the laptop keys. She was astounded at the speed with which his fingers raced over the keys.

“Scoot, Riley.”



“I’m going,” she bit out. She got up, snatched the piece of paper from the desk and armed with her laptop bag over her shoulder, she marched to the living room. Her legs were trembling so much, she was surprised she could even walk. The dark promise he’d made, because there was no way she’d ever see that as a threat, kept repeating in her mind.

She was unaware of his eyes darkening as he watched her gently swaying hips.

*What aren’t you telling me, Trent Reeves? What happened to make you turn your back on such a noble career?*

Riley settled on the comfortable wingback chair facing the window and powered up her laptop. A sly smile curved around her lips as she linked to his wi-fi.

“Well, I’ve got the means and am nosy enough to scratch around until I find out ... and I will. I need to know what happened in his life to make him so stoic.”

“Warf! Warf!” Neaoo!”

Riley started at Sheila’s unexpected arrival and what she deemed to be disapproval, if the way the dog glared at Riley was anything to go by.

“Shh ... he’ll be peeved if he knows what I’m doing.” She rolled her eyes as Sheila yapped another negative sounding yowl. Riley scratched behind her ears and leaned closer to whisper conspiratorially, “It’ll be our little secret.”

This time Sheila didn’t make a sound but Riley could swear the look in her eyes was one of reproach. She stared at her unwaveringly, her tail not moving. She was openly showing her disagreement with whatever Riley was doing.

“Okay, okay,” she sighed heavily and closed the web search engine. She cast a sideways glance at the dog as she opened her emails. “Geez, one would swear he robbed a bank or something.”

“Neaooo.”

“No? Okay. Is he—”

“Warf!” Sheila shook her head so hard even her bottom moved sideways.

“Such secrecy! Very well, I get the message. Spying on your master is off limits.”

“Warf.”

If anyone told Riley a week ago that she’d be having a conversation with a dog and understood what it said, or rather tried to say, she would’ve laughed her head off.

Not to mention how enamored she was with its owner ... a complete stranger who forced her to realize she yearned for the kind of things she didn’t even dare dream about. Wild, unspoken acts of debauchery. The kind she only allowed her imagination to indulge in between the pages of romantic BDSM novels.

# Chapter Six



“Come.”

Riley stared with trepidation at Trent’s hand that he held out to her. She’d spent the entire day envisioning what his dungeon looked like and how it would feel to be spanked by his huge hands. In her entire life, she had three spankings. All given to her by her mother when she was still very young. She couldn’t remember them, apart from the fact that she didn’t like it.

Her eyes drifted up the length of his arm, over his broad shoulders to clash with the dark look in his eyes, which to her surprise, swirled with silver sparks.

He came out of his study a different man late afternoon. Dinner had been a silent affair. His mind seemed elsewhere and he answered her questions in short, brusque syllables. She’d eventually given up and they finished dinner in silence. He’d chased her out of the kitchen when she offered to do the dishes. Mumbling to herself over his changed attitude, she’d gone upstairs and taken a long bubble bath. She’d been dying to try out the jacuzzi bath since she’d set foot inside the bathroom.

He had stood in front of the window when she was finished.

Gone was the friendliness, the gentle caring he’d exuded since she’d woken up three days before. In its place was a man who knew what he wanted and how to get it. A man with the power to break her like a twig between his fingers ... literally and figuratively.

This Trent Reeves scared the shit out of her.

“Where are we going?” she hedged, staring at his outstretched hand while trying to settle her scattered nerves.

A tight smile split over his face. “Are you reneging on our barter, Riley?”

“N-now?”

“That’s what I said— one spanking after dinner in my dungeon.” He studied her silently, his hand still extended, portraying phenomenal patience, even though his face was a canvas of dark Domination.

“One spanking. Nothing else?”

His eyes flickered as he watched her shift her weight from one leg to the other. Her hands were clenched together in front of her. One tiny bare foot covered the other. She looked adorable in a bright pink polka dot flannel pajama set.

*Completely spankable ... and fuckable.*

Trent sighed inwardly but he had no intention of bulldozing her into something she wasn’t ready for.

“My kind of spanking, yes.”

Her eyes narrowed as she tried to remember what a Dom’s kind of spanking entailed in the books she’d read.

“Meaning?”

“This isn’t punishment, Snowflake. It’s for our equal pleasure. Therefore, I’ll endeavor to make you enjoy the sensations the pain offers.” His lips twitched in a smile. “Maybe you’ll even climax.”

Her cheeks bloomed with a rosy blush. She was the most sassy and endearing woman he’d ever met. The contrast played havoc with the Dom in him. He couldn’t wait to get his hands on her.

“I’m a little scared,” she admitted but kept her gaze locked on him.

“I’d be concerned if you weren’t.” His hand raised a tad. “Come, Snowflake. Let me introduce you to my dungeon and I’ll explain how submission could bring you pleasure and offer you freedom.”

This time, she placed her hand in his. A spark sizzled from where they touched, all the way to her clit, which had been pulsing from the moment he’d said, “Come.”

She was silent as she followed him down the stairs. There was no sign of the two dogs. At the bottom of the stairs, he turned to walk around it to stop in front of the bookshelves that had been fitted under the stairs. He reached up and a sharp click sounded. Her eyes widened as the bookshelves turned into a door that swung open to reveal stairs leading downward. Light sconces flickered on at a press of his thumb against a control unit fixed to the stone wall.

Trent turned to her. “It’s not the kind of room I’d like a visitor to happen on by mistake. Before we go in, Riley, there are a couple of rules I won’t budge on.”

“Which are?”

“In my dungeon, you’ll always be naked. I want full access to every part of your body at all times.”

“Not even panties?”

“No barriers.” He brushed back her hair as he regarded her with an intense stare. “Were my suspicions correct that you know what Domination and submission is?”

“Yes, I have an understanding of what it entails.”

“And BDSM?”

Her cheeks bloomed red. She nodded.

“Next rule, my pet. When I ask you a question, you answer me. Nodding is not accepted once we step inside the dungeon.” His harsh expression softened. “Tell me what your understanding of BDSM is.”

“Bondage, domination, and submission, sadism and masochism,” she said without hesitation.

“Brilliant. You know what it stands for. Now answer my question.” Trent kept his gaze glued on her. It was important that she knew what to expect and he needed to gauge exactly how far she was willing to submit. Her brow furrowed in thought. He didn’t rush her, just waited patiently.

“It’s the exchange of power in a sexual environment, where a submissive relinquishes herself to the control of a Dominant.”

“Why?”

“Ehm ... I think because contrary to being in control of every aspect of her life, where she might be a strong person of power, submission offers her an escape, a place where she can just let go and feel.” Riley swallowed hard before she continued. It was disconcerting to be put on the spot like this. Why didn’t he just take her into the dungeon and smack her ass? “BDSM combines sex, power, and pain in a healthy, controlled manner, but from what I understand it’s important to communicate at all times and it has to be consensual. Safe, sane, and consensual, I think the phrase is.”

“Very good. I believe you’re a natural submissive, Riley. That you’ve been searching for something without really



knowing what. The fact that you know so much about the theoretical part of BDSM proves that you crave more ... sexually at least.”

“I ...” She bit back the words of denial at the warning flash in his eyes. “I guess you’re right.”

“I have to warn you, little one. Reading about a scene in a romanticized story, is very different from experiencing it. The emotions you’ll feel are much stronger, more elevated than during vanilla sex.”

Her eyes widened. “You said one spanking only.”

He chuckled. “So I did, but don’t discount what a spanking will awaken inside you, my pet. Giving power to a Dom so that you can just feel isn’t limited to physical sensations. Make no mistake about it, Riley. You’ll be flooded with emotions you won’t understand.”

“Are you trying to talk me out of it?”

“Hell no, but it’s important that you understand there’s a difference between the imagination of an author to reality.”

He stepped into her and all thoughts evaporated as his warm lips traced the curve of her neck. Just like that, he obliterated all resistance she might’ve harbored. Her head swam as she battled to conjure up one single thought. All she could think about and feel, were his tantalizing kisses.

“To be honest, little one, I’d love this to be the first visit into the dungeon of many more to come.”

Riley heard his deep voice and it added to the tingling on her skin from the seductive caress that sent ripples of heat rushing through her veins to pool around the nerves inside her

nether regions. Her heart rate accelerated. Not with fear of the intended spanking but with the passion he awakened with every seductive slide of his lips.

“Oh lord,” She clenched her thighs together as the now familiar wetness he so easily evoked from her pussy, caused a wet patch on her pajama pants.

“In a BDSM scene, both parties find pleasure in a scene but it’s the sub that sets the boundaries. Always remember that, Riley, you’ll be the one in control.”

“By communicating throughout and ensure you know what I’m comfortable with. By using a safeword when it becomes too much.”

“Yes. I love to dominate women sexually, my pet. Using an element of pain elevates my partners into a state of euphoric bliss so high that they experience the best climaxes of their lives, at times with no penetration at all.”

He took her hand and led her down the stairs. “For tonight, that’s enough talk.”

Sconces flicked on against the walls as they walked. They passed under a wide stone arch and more lights flickered to illuminate the room.

“This, Snowflake, is my dungeon.” Trent gestured into the room, watching her carefully. She hesitated briefly. His lips twitched when she squared her shoulders, lifted her chin and marched past him.

“Holy snowballs!” She stopped abruptly as she scanned the interior of the dimly lit room. “This looks like a room from a medieval castle’s torture room!” she exclaimed. She always

tried to conjure up what a dungeon looked like from descriptions in stories but standing in the middle of one, completely threw her off center. It wasn't what it looked like more than how it made her feel. The rush of adrenaline pumped through her veins, the blush on her cheeks coated the excitement she felt bubbling inside her ... the lust that wrapped its talons around her insides.

Her eyes darted back and forth, taking note of all the equipment around the room.

“Iron shackles?” she all but squealed as she spied them hanging from one wall.

“Oh, yes, my pet. For the times when punishment is required.”

The room was much bigger than she'd expected. The walls were clad to have the appearance of a stone wall dungeon. Light sconces secured all around the room added to the dimness of the room. The floor was made from rich dark wood, complemented by the closet and numerous drawers built into one side of the wall. It had a warm feeling as much as it was eerie— stylish in a combination of modern and medieval.

“Does this scare you?” Trent rasped in her ear.

“Not yet,” she whispered as she slowly walked around the room.

Riley could feel him watching her as she inspected the content of closets and drawers.

“Good lord! How many subs do you bring here at one time?” she huffed, abashed at the number of dildos, butt plugs

and vibrators of all shapes and sizes she found in the many drawers.

“I host parties sometimes but I personally never entertain more than one sub at a time. Nor do I use the same tool on everyone. Once they leave, they take it with.”

“How noble of you,” she snipped and forced a calming breath into her lungs. She winced and her nipples tingled in response as she traced her fingers over a variety of nipple clamps she found. It was the one thing she’d experimented with on her own. She’d dared to buy small nipple clamps online a couple of years ago and she loved playing with them.

*But these look nothing like my little trinkets. I can only imagine the pinch they’ll have.*

She skirted very quickly past the variety of whips, floggers, and belts, straps, and paddles. She might be curious about BDSM but she was a far way from being ready for impact tools like that.

“This is as scary as much as it’s ...” She searched for the right word, “intriguing.” She settled on the best one that came to mind.

There was a plush leather sofa and chair standing on a thick Persian carpet facing an electric fireplace that Trent switched on as she watched. A golden glow immediately illuminated the room.

She blinked her eyes to verify what she looked at through another wide arch.

“A bedroom?”

“Yes. I never take any of the subs into my own bed. A scene begins and ends in the dungeon, after which they leave. I don’t sleep with any of the subs I scene with.”

Trent’s gruff voice soothed over her concerns as she stared agape at the chains and shackles hanging from the heavy wooden frame over the bed. She dragged her eyes away to find spanking benches, torture chairs, and tables placed strategically around the room. A large wooden St. Andrew’s cross adorned the far corner.

“What is that?” she breathed out in a puff and pointed to a steel contraption in the opposite corner.

“It’s a Trojan fucking machine.” Trent moved to sit on the sofa. “It’s time. Get undressed, please.”

“Trent, I—”

“In here, you will call me Sir or Master. Nothing else. Understood?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Good girl. For tonight, the rules you have to remember are to use your safeword if it becomes too much for you but don’t insult me by using it after the first couple of slaps. You follow any directive I give you without hesitation. Don’t, and you’ll end up being punished. You’ll submit to me for the spanking unconditionally.” He noticed the fear in her eyes. “You don’t have to be scared, my pet. I know it’s your first time and I’m cognizant of that. At the same time, I need you to be honest about what you’re feeling throughout, the sensations it brings and most importantly— how you react to them. My aim tonight is to introduce you to pleasure through the medium of pain, to

teach you to find your inner strength to acknowledge what you truly need.”

His eyes narrowed when she continued to fidget with the buttons on her pajama top. She glanced around, the insecurity she felt blazoned on her face.

“I’ve seen you naked, little one. I’ve bathed and touched you. There’s no need to be shy. You have a beautiful and very sensual body. Now, Riley, get naked or you’ll experience your first punishment.”

“Okay!” she snapped and yanked open the buttons.

Trent let her defiance slide. For now. Tonight, was a practice run, to see if she had the strength to endure, not only the pain, but the devastating aftermath of a scene. More importantly, if she would be willing to set the submissive inside her free. A thrill of excited anticipation raced through him at the thought of being the one to guide her through the maze of scenes he’d love to have with her. His eyes darkened as she finally stood naked in front of him. His lips flattened as he watched her attempt to cover her breasts and vulva from his prying gaze.

“Hands behind your back.” The beast inside him purred as she obeyed without thought. “You never cover any part of your body I told you to bare to me.” His eyes tracked slowly up and down her body. “Beautiful, little one.” He got up and walked toward one of the benches in the opposite corner. “Your safeword is snow. Whether you just want me to stop to talk or end the scene completely, just call snow.” He pointed to the whipping post. “Bend over the bench and hold onto the side bar. Now, Riley. I don’t like repeating an instruction.”

Riley trotted closer. “With what are you going to spank me?” Her voice sounded far off to herself.

He held up his hands, palms facing her. A shiver trailed over her spine. Her soft ass, his hard hands ... it was a combination that spelled disaster for her. Nevertheless, she willingly bartered with him ... well, kind of ... so it was time to pay up.

# Chapter Seven





Riley's legs were rubbery but she managed to step closer. The wooden bench restricted her ability to move as she stretched to wrap her hands around the bars shackled into the wall. She was embarrassingly aware that Trent stood behind her and was free to ogle her nakedness. Bare-assed and presenting him with her pussy that she knew was moist and swollen already.

“Spread your legs.” The abrupt order came from where he knelt behind her.

Riley blushed. *Freaking hell, this is so embarrassing.*

She had acknowledged that this was what she wanted, but somehow, she couldn't move. Her hands tightened around the bars as she glanced at him from under her arms.

He looked up with a raised eyebrow, silently waiting. Her resistance faltered under that unflinching, commanding regard.

She shuffled her feet apart, hearing her breathing rattle from her chest as he folder his fingers around her knee. She was inundated with fresh flush of heat. The full enormity of the position she was in swamped her mind. There she stood, bent over, naked, with the man she wanted the most between her legs, allowing him to ...

*Ooohh, sweet singing monkeys! His fingers inside me feel like heaven.*

Her breathing increased even as a most bewildering pleasure raced through her body. She stiffened at the unexpected, yet tantalizing slide of his fingers on the inside of her thighs.

“Relax, Snowflake.”

The deep, rich chords slithered through her mind to set her at ease.

“Have you ever allowed a man to take charge of you sexually? To control every aspect of the sensations that you feel?”

She glanced at him upside down from between her legs, uncomfortably aware of her nakedness, spread open to his avid gaze. The midnight hue of his eyes was scattered with shards of silver as he watched her intently, almost like he could read her mind, predict what those sensations were going to feel like. She squirmed under his intense scrutiny.

“Riley, I expect an answer when I ask you a question,” he warned, his voice lowering into a deep drawl.

With an effort, she managed to drag her attention back to him. “No.” She tossed back her head.

“I find that strange, especially as the need to be dominated is blazoning from your eyes. Every cell in your body is screaming at me to take control.”

She gasped as his hand covered her breast, reiterating how vulnerable she was in her present position. He toyed lazily with the tip.

“To be honest, I didn’t trust any of the men I’ve been with to give them such power over me.” She sounded breathless.

“And yet you do me. A man you just met.”

“Oohhh!” Riley panted as his fingers tightened and the caress turned to a painful pinch.

“How did that feel, my pet?”

“It felt painful, arousing and ... I liked it.”

“I’m waiting for an answer, Riley. Why me?”

“I don’t know. At first, I didn’t intend to come down here. I had every intention of scoffing at you when you held out your hand but then ...”

“Yes?”

“I looked into your eyes. Instinct. I just know I can trust you. Besides, you ooze confidence in everything you say and do, which tells me you’re an experienced Dom and that sets my mind at ease.”

His fingers brushed over both nipples, smiling as she bit her lip and moaned, which turned to a cry of surprised pain when he pinched both nipples, hard, and pulled them away from her body.

“That’s a good answer, my pet.” His fingers tightened around the already throbbing nubs again.

A burning pain shot to her brain, followed by a rush of heat searing through her veins to settle in her pussy. She stared at him with wide eyes. Bewildered and panting from the painful tugging on her nipples that caused an arousal the likes of which she’d never experienced before.

“I’ve read it so many times but I still don’t understand how pain can cause pleasure.” She exhaled loudly as he rolled her nipples between his fingers, ruthlessly pinching and tugging on them. Her hips shifted against the bench. “I’m ... oh lordy me, I think I’m going to come,” she wailed as she felt the telltale shards of heat in her chest. Completely blindsided by the painful

pleasure that kept pushing her closer to the edge. “How is this ... hmmm! I’m going to come,” she wailed.

“No, sub, you’re not going to come. In here, you don’t climax until I tell you to. Not unless you’re prepared for punishment. Is that understood?”

“But—”

A stinging pain shot to her brain as he slapped her nipple. Once, twice and a third time.

“Yes! I understand.” She shrieked, knowing that one more slap might just push her over the edge. She might feel she trusted him, but punishment the first night in the dungeon was too tall an order. Even though her only pinched and slapped her nipples, they were swollen and throbbled like they’d been caressed and sucked for hours.

*How is this possible? If this is how I react after a couple of minutes, how am I going to survive a spanking?*

Her core burned as wanton thoughts shocked through her brain of other things she’d like him to do to her.

Trent’s cock hardened when her tongue brushed over her lips in a nervous gesture. He had a good idea what was on her mind as he watched her eyes dart sideways, back and forth between the various torture tools, and the bedroom. The emotions that ran havoc inside her were so strong he could almost see them.

“Are you still comfortable with me, Riley? Or would you rather leave?” He watched her with hawk like eyes as her gaze shifted to his. Her breasts jiggled as she heaved in a deep breath.

“No. I am exactly where I want to be.”

“Good girl and such a brave one. I admire that, little one,” he murmured.

“Oh-oh-oh.” The gulp of shocked surprise resounded through the room when he placed nibbling kisses on the inside of her thigh.

“You’re so skittish, Snowflake. You need to relax. You remind me of a kitten who escaped the barn when I was a young boy, running away as brave as a lion, filled with fire to face whatever came across her path.”

“It’s my first time,” she hissed but quickly retracted. “I’m sorry, Sir. I’m trying my best.”

“That’s all I’m after, my pet. That you allow the submissive inside you free and trust your body into my hands so I can give you what you need. I initially planned to tie you to the bench but decided not to. Can you guess why, Snowflake?”

“I don’t know, Sir.” She gasped as he pulled her legs wide apart to the width of the bench.

“Tell me, Riley. Why did you come down here with me?”

“I’m not sure I understand,” she responded breathlessly while her mind screamed the answer, *Fuck me. I want you to fuck me!*

He chuckled and flicked his fingers over her nipples. Riley had a sneaking suspicion he read her thoughts.

“I’m here because of the barter,” she puffed to try and save face.

“No, Riley. I’m here because of the barter. You accepted the barter without too much resistance. I want to know why. What is it that you expect to find in my dungeon?”

“I wish I knew.”

Trent didn't berate her, knowing it was an honest answer. It pleased him that she didn't attempt to play games with him.

“Is it because you're looking for more than just sex?”

“I ... maybe.”

“In here, I'll teach you to tap into your darkest desires. To open yourself to the possibility of pleasure through more than a cock inside your pussy. There's so much more to explore. Riding on a wave of adrenaline that pushes you to a different level to make your climax an astounding explosion of sensations.”

“I'm not sure I follow. What more is there than the pleasure of climaxing?”

“How old are you, Riley?”

“Thirty-three.”

“And to date no one has ever tapped into the depth of your sensuality? Such a shame.”

His curved finger that trailed seductively between the crevice of her buttocks, ended in a feathered caress over her swollen labia.

“Pain is a conduit of many things. Not many people know that it can elevate you into a euphoric cloud of rapture.”

Riley did her best to concentrate on his words but the flutter of his fingers over her clitoris caused her eyelids to flicker closed. She wanted him so much that she ached with it.

*Crack!*

“Aaww!” She cried at the sting on her left cheek then immediately wished she could press her thighs together at the rush of liquid that filled her pussy. Instinct warned her that no matter that she wasn’t tied down, it would be the wrong thing to do. She was astounded at the heat that unfurled inside her loins as a result from the one slap.

“Beautiful, little one. You’re a quick learner. A slap from my hand or the strike of a flogger, paddle, or even a whip will shock the nerve endings with the pleasurable adjuvant effect of vivifying and advancing your arousal. You will feel the corollary all the way into your loins and you’ll be helpless to control the rush of juices that your pussy will emit to reward me.” [\[IN1\]](#)

*Crack! Crack!*

The hardness of the slaps forced her on her toes. A loud hiss escaped her lips at the pain that seared through her mind.

“Of course, the climax you’re coveting could be even more explosive in the end. I want you to hold it back, controlling the need to let go until I tell you to come. Now, Riley, I ask again, what is it that you desire from me, right this minute?”

“A spanking, Sir. Just like we agreed. I wish to experience that rush of adrenaline you spoke of. I want to know if pleasure is possible through the addition of pain.”

“Very well said, Snowflake.” His voice lowered. “Don’t let go of that bar and don’t move.”

Trent was pleased to notice the sizzle of excitement his words sent through her to compete with the tinge of fear her taut body portrayed.



He reached between her legs to cup her breasts which pebbled under that brief touch. He focused to raise the heat in her, so that she would be susceptible to a harder spanking. He exulted in the soft and heavy feel of her breasts in his hands.

Riley moaned as he rubbed her nipples with his thumbs, which caused flaming sensations to singe through her body. She squirmed as her heart began to pound with anxiety. She wanted this and yet she felt a shiver of fear run down her spine. He was so big; his large body blocked the light as she gazed back at him.

“Remember, Riley, if you find this too much or become overwhelmed, it’s in your power to stop me. How do you do that, again?” Even as he spoke, he continued to tease and roll her nipples then squeezed the plumpness of her breasts. She gasped when the next brush over her nipples ended in a sharp pinch.

“Snow. I say snow.”

“Good.” He straightened. He ran his palm over her buttocks. “Such an appealing little ass, so curvy, absolutely perfect for a spanking.”

*Crack! Crack! Crack!*

“Ooww! Jeez, that hurts!” she wailed. The strikes were twice as hard as before and left her panting at the unexpected burst of pain that flashed through her mind. She squeezed her eyes closed.

Trent was secretly delighted by the rosy-pink color flowering beneath his hand. Unable to resist, he ran a palm over the curve of her buttocks again to feel the glowing heat emerge

from his attentions. At the same time, he rubbed the heat deeper to allow it to trigger her arousal

“Try to relax, little one. Don’t tense your muscles, rather allow the heat of each slap to flow into your bloodstream. Lean into each slap.”

“Easy for you to say,” she mumbled, swallowing the spittle that was pooling in her mouth. “How many more?” she asked in a small voice.

*Crack. Crack. Crack.*

“Oohh ... ooweee!”

Riley felt a shudder with every slap that surged and rippled through her loins. The next three that impacted left her gasping as spikes of heat lanced her lower regions and turned into waves of arousal. He rubbed her cheeks with sensual, circular motions. She could swear she felt the heat and sting drive deeper into her muscles that caused a delicious quiver of pleasure she couldn’t control.

“You’re doing very well, Riley. For a first timer, you’re reacting beautifully.

“Thank you, Sir.” She basked in the praise like a peacock admiring his new feathers.

“The next couple are going to be harder, so brace yourself.”

His hands roamed over her cheeks, driving her to the edge of a climax that had been lurking like a thief in the shadows. His hands were gentle but she could feel a roughness graze her sensitive skin from the tips of his fingers. His touch became intimate as he traced the creases between her thighs. She was bombarded by sensations— the sting of her buttocks combined

with his seductive assault overwhelmed her. He slid his fingers between her legs, slipping easily inside the wetness of her pussy. Need poured into her body like hot air over the desert and then just as suddenly, they were gone, leaving her throbbing.

“I need to come, Sir. I don’t know how much more I can stand,” she admitted breathlessly. She was still shocked at the knowledge that the pressure inside her had been an orgasm coiling tight so rapidly it left her floundering like a puppet on a string.

“I’m tremendously pleased by your reaction to pain, Snowflake.” Even his dark praise toggled at the submissive in her, wanting to give him more ... in fact, everything he wanted.

*Crack. Crack. Crack.*

“Please, no more! I can’t hold it ... aahhh!” Her cry shattered as it slammed against the walls when the next four landed with perfect aim in the center of her pussy, followed by an immediate three on her clit. The world around her tilted as she exploded. The burning sting on her pussy intensified the spasms that wreaked havoc through her. She curled around the bench, panting and shuddering as she was inundated with spasms of delight that seemed to have no beginning and no end.

“What just happened, Riley?” His voice cracked sharply over her labored breathing.

“I climaxed. I can’t believe how ... I’ve never—”

“Did I give you permission, Riley?”

“No, but—oh!”

“Yes, oh. I did explain the consequences of disobeying my orders, didn’t I?”

“I’m sorry. Next time I’ll do better.”

“Maybe you will, but for you to understand that my rules will never bend, this won’t be looked over.”

“What do you mean?”

“You didn’t think it would be as easy as apologizing, now did you, Snowflake?”

Trent held out his hand and she grasped it, still struggling to overcome the shattering experience she’d just had. His hand was strong and muscular. He pulled her up with such effortlessness, it was unnerving. She’d be a fool if she didn’t recognize the power this man yielded.

“You mean you’re going to punish me? Now?” She could hear the panic in her voice.

“We’ll attend to that tomorrow, for now, I need to know how you experienced the spanking.” His words were still floating toward her when he picked her up and carried her to the sofa.

The plume of her breath billowed out in a soft puff against his cheek as he gently kissed hers and held her close against his chest. His hands roamed in a gentle caress over her naked back.

Riley leaned into his body, completely relaxed as she soaked up the heat infiltrating her skin. It was a foreign feeling. He hadn’t even had sex with her and she felt more sexually satiated than ever before.

“How do you feel, my pet?”

Riley started, not having expected to explain how she felt. They hadn’t had sex ... per se ... but it had been a very intimate scene and he had made her climax—an earth shattering one at that. Good lord, her pussy was still pulsing in after effect.

Intimacy was something she'd never discussed with any of her lovers. Not even Jason, who was the only man she'd ever lived with.

“Riley, I’m waiting.” His voice flowed into her being. The soft nuances of his caring reached deep into her soul that wavered and dissipated the brief feeling of detachment when he'd carried her to the sofa. She supposed it was a sign of coming down from a sub high that she'd read about.

“I’m not sure how to explain it. Relaxed, enervated even, with a little twinge of pain on my butt when I move.” Her eyelids fluttered as she peeked through her lashes at him. “I never expected any of this. Of how it would feel ... the rush of heat in the backlash of the pain. I still can’t believe how aroused it made me, how desperate for you to ...” She gulped back the words and looked anywhere but at him.

He pinched her chin between his fingers and forced her gaze back to his.

“No, Riley, you don’t hide your eyes from me or the sensations you feel and the emotions they trigger. Least of all will you ever hide your lust for me. In here, all of that belongs to me.”

“I ... that’s a tall order, Sir.”

“At first it might be, but it’s the one thing you need to wrap your mind around. You give me the control ... and I’m a very demanding Dom. If we come back in here again, Riley, it’s best you know that. I want it all. Not only the control and power you give me over your body ... but also your mind and soul.”

# Chapter Eight



“Time to get up, lazybones.”

“Hmhm, I wanna sleep some more,” Riley mumbled and buried her face under the duvet.

“Very well, then I guess it means you’d rather have your punishment now than go with me to start plowing the road.”

Her eyes popped open. Flashes of the previous night flooded her mind. She heard the soft keen in her ears and belatedly realized it came from her. She wiggled her butt experimentally against the soft cotton sheet and was surprised at how disappointed she felt that there wasn’t a sliver of pain left.

“What do you two think? Should I do orgasm control or make her walk up and down the stairs with ball weights added to nipple and clit clamps?”

“Warf! Warf!” Storm immediately consented to the suggestion.

“Neaaooo! Warf!” Sheila napped at his ear and glared at Trent.

“It seems we have a tie. Hm, let’s see. How about we dress her up nice and warm in that special suit I had made. You know the one that allows the nipples to peek through?”

“Warf!” Both dogs barked and wagged their tails.

“Yes, that one. And then ... you know, I think this is it,” he said colloquially. “We take her outside, put clover clamps on her nipples and attach that eagle kite I bought last summer. Then, we see how aptly she can fly it with her breasts. What do you think?”

Silence followed and then two low grunts reached Riley’s ears through the thick duvet where she’d been listening with her



eyes growing wider.

“Okay, that’s it then,” Trent said in a clear voice that sparked the arousal she’d been so desperately trying to ignore. Yes, he’d made her come but it hadn’t fed the lust she had ... for him. To feel his hard cock slide in and out of her ... pounding her, like she’d read in the novels.

She flicked off the duvet and sat upright, all in one movement.

“Traitors,” she snapped at the two dogs watching her with animated expressions. She rubbed the sleep from her eyes as she glowered at them, doing her best to ignore the big man close to her side on the bed. Storm’s tongue lolled sideways out of his mouth as he yapped in her direction. Sheila hung her head.

“Hm ... now isn’t that a sight for sore eyes?”

Riley yanked up the duvet to cover her breasts as she realized Trent leered at her nakedness. He leaned on one elbow and regarded her with an amused twinkle in his eyes.

Dressed in black jeans and a dark blue sweater that molded to his musculature, he looked good enough to eat ... or lick ... or fuck. Yes, definitely to fuck.

*No! Get with the program, Riley. This isn’t a sweet love story. It’s kink! He wants to make you fly a kite with your tits, for heaven’s sake.*

“You’re a pervert, Trent Reeves.”

“I’m a man, Riley Miller.”

“A trauma surgeon! You’re not supposed to drool over a woman’s breasts.”

His laughter rippled from his chest. Riley stared; completely confused at the change in him. The previous night he was tense and morose, stoic and as grim as the Reaper himself.

The laugh came from deep inside his diaphragm with a shaking motion and his face muscles tightened. Riley huffed as she folded her arms, arched her eyebrows, and waited. The rumble that burst from his lips sounded like freedom, an escape from years of incarceration he was giving in to. It filled the room with unrestrained gales and a picture-perfect photo image of glee.

“This isn’t funny,” she clipped out, doing her best to remain straight faced, flip her hair, and storm to the bathroom—he was, after all, laughing at her, not with her. But before she could stop herself, her poker straight mouth twitched upward. She had to dig hard to suppress the giggle that threatened to explode from her lips.

“I might be a surgeon but I’m not in the operating room and you’re not a patient. A man is a man, baby, and there’s nothing as seductively beautiful as a woman’s breasts,” he said through the snickers.

It was a sound that engrained itself so deep into Riley’s heart that she would wait a thousand years to hear it again.

Trent leaned close. Riley’s eyes flickered as she felt their breaths mingling in the minuscule space between their lips. He kissed her. A hard, quick possession of her mouth that broke through her annoyance. It doused her with the passion and desire she swore she could see in his eyes.

It left her breathless, trembling, and shattered.

*Aw, shit, Riley. Now you've dunnit. You're fucked, woman. Short and sweet. You have fallen off the railway.*

She listened to the wail in her mind but her heart settled in a steady rhythm of acceptance. She had fallen in love with Trent Reeves. Head over heels. The one thing she always scoffed at that was possible in real life. How the devil could it have happened to her of all people? Love at first sight, or in her case insta-love. She was truly, truly fucked.

“You have fifteen minutes to shower, dress, and be downstairs for breakfast. If not, I’ll be back with that suit and the clover clamps,” Trent taunted her as he sauntered out of the room with Storm on his heels.

Sheila sat on her haunches, smiling widely at Riley. She looked so happy and sweet, Riley could do no more than laugh and pat the bed invitingly.

“Warf!” She was on the bed in a flash and licked at Riley’s face in an enthusiastic show of affection.

“Eeuw! Stop that!” She laughed as Sheila sat back to watch her. “You do know where that tongue of yours licks, right? No lapping at my face, is that clear, young lady?”

Sheila mewled a shamed reply and lowered onto her stomach, covering her nose.

“Oh, you’re such a manipulator but it’s not gonna work. It’s a no-no.” She rubbed Sheila’s ears and threw off the covers. “I better hustle. That beastly master of yours probably has the suit and clamps at the ready. Gmphf, making me fly a kite with my tits. In your dreams, Doctor Reeves.”

She marched into the bathroom, not surprised to find Sheila following her. She laid down on the thick bathmat, her soulful eyes watching Riley's every move.

“It's only been three days—or is it four already—and I already know I'm going to miss you so much when I leave here.”

*And him. I'm going to miss him even more.*

How it had happened, Riley would never know. She didn't even try to understand the logic of it. As impossible as it might sound, Trent had entrenched himself into the chambers of her heart and filled her soul with his essence—size twelve boots and all. It was the weirdest feeling but also the most intense emotion she'd ever experienced.

She stood in the shower under the hot water cascading over her as she pondered her confused emotions. For the first time, she knew what it felt like to be completely invested in a man.

“So, this is what it feels like to be in love. To love with a passion that equals the desire I feel for him.”

The moment the words echoed back to her, she embraced it to cherish it deep within her, with the hope that maybe one day Trent would come to love her too.



“This doesn't seem like two blizzard's worth of snow,” Riley remarked as they got into Trent's truck.

“It's not. The blizzard predicted for last night moved south and completely missed Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg.” The engine roared to life. “As you can see, I already cleared the road

from the cabin to the mountain road. There are five neighbors in the area who also have snowplows. With all of us working on it, we might get you to your aunt in two to three days.” He looked around as he eased the powerful truck around the curve and onto the slippery tarred road. “That’s if it doesn’t snow again, of course.”

He flipped a switch on the dash. Riley started as the truck shuddered before it started moving forward at a snail’s pace.

“It’s my first time in a snowplow. Just look at all the snow! It’s rising above the truck hood,” she said with her hand over her mouth while she clasped at the seat with the other.

“Relax, Riley. I’ve been doing this for the past six years. Once it reaches a certain height, it topples over to the side, then I reverse and repeat the process until a section of the road is completely clear of snow. My plow isn’t as wide as the ones they use in town but it’s powerful and gets the job done. It just takes a little more time and effort.”

“That’s a relief,” she puffed and pried her eyes away from the snow barring their way to look over the landscape. “It’s so beautiful out here. So different than living in the city. I kind of miss the silence and camaraderie such a small community offers.”

“Where is home?” Trent kept his eyes on the small screen on the dash that supplied him a view from the top of the truck to see where he was going.

“Nashville. I’ve been living there for the past eight years.”

“You said you’re a journalist. Freelance?”

“No. It’s a sad story really. I moved from one big magazine and newspaper to the next, hoping for someone to give me my own column. It never happened until I covered the live performance of an up and coming country western singer. Rolling Stone Magazine noticed the article and approached me for a job. It’s not the kind of reporting I wanted to do when I studied, but it’s more rewarding than the dismal topics I covered up to that point.”

“Rewarding and fulfilling or are you settling for second best?”

Riley contemplated her response. She had asked herself that question many times. She still didn’t know what the answer was.

“I guess it’s a natural assumption to make and, honestly, I’m not sure I can answer that.” She stared over the rolling mountains, covered in all their glory with a white blanket of snow that gave it a fairytale look. “I’m good at what I do, brilliant I’ve been told, and I do enjoy it. I travel a lot. I meet so many wonderful performers ... it’s a different vibe than investigative journalism.” She flashed a brief smile at Trent. “That’s where my passion lies, what I always wanted to pursue.”

“One thing I learned over the years, Riley, is that you should always live life with passion. Never settle for second best, no matter how good others say you are. If that’s what you want to do, that’s what you should fight to achieve.”

“And you? What made you leave your passion as a trauma surgeon to do ... what exactly? Alone up here in the mountains.”

Trent's lips flattened. The truck shuddered to a stop as he shifted the gears into reverse and slowly eased backward. He didn't respond until he lowered the snowplow again and inched forward.

"Who says surgery is my passion?"

"The internet. Don't glare at me like that. I was curious, so I did some investigative journalism about your trauma career," she defended herself with raised hands. "You were one of the best, Trent. You received so many accolades, it's mind blowing. No one achieves such heights in their career if it's not something they do with drive and passion."

He didn't answer immediately but the tight lines around his mouth relaxed. He inhaled deeply, the sound filled the cab of the truck with such desolation, Riley wished she'd never asked.

"My wife and daughter died in an accident. One I'm responsible for."

"I'm so sorry, I didn't realize ..." She placed a consoling hand on his thigh and squeezed gently. "Forget I asked."

"No, maybe it's time I speak about it. God knows it's been milling inside my mind for years."

Riley stared at him perplexed. "Are you saying you never spoke about their death ... for what? Five, six years?"

"I never spoke about the emotional guilt I feel to anyone." Another heavy sigh sounded through the truck. "I worked too hard. I spent too much time at the hospital. Always willing to take on every trauma patient that landed there. Apart from many other reasons that our marriage was falling apart, that took its toll too. I was supposed to be the one driving us to a function

that night. It had been snowing and the roads were icy and slippery but a patient came in with multiple injuries.” He shrugged. “I told her to drive and that I’d meet them there.” His hands gripped the steering wheel so hard, his knuckles turned white. “They never made it. She spun out ...”

“Trent, you can’t blame yourself. It was an accident and it could’ve happened even if you drove the car.”

“Maybe so, but she had told me earlier that day it was the last function we’d attend as a couple; that she’d filed for divorce.” His eyes drifted over the snow-covered mountains. Pain sat shallow in his deep blue eyes. “The thing I can’t forgive myself for, to this day, is that in the process I neglected my daughter. I knew Adrienne was having an affair; that’s why I was never home. I was angry at my wife that night for the blunt way in which she threw away our marriage without putting in any effort to try and save what was left. I *chose* to do that operation. That’s the guilt I live with, Riley. I should’ve been the one driving. The accident could’ve been prevented.” His voice turned thick and cracked as he whispered, “My daughter could still have been alive.”

“Trent, you’ll forever have her in your heart. I’m sure she knew how much you loved her.”

He shook his head as he shifted the truck into reverse and made a U-turn at a wide stretch of the road and drove back to the cabin.

“Does she? Somehow, I don’t believe that. I made her a promise on the day she was born. I fall asleep with those words mocking me every night. I said to her that every summer we would play in the forest and listen to our laughter dancing with



the daisies in the grass. I told her that no matter what, in a time when her life felt like winter, when the ice froze her heart, I would be there for her. I hear my own voice, Riley ... I am your shelter, your guardian, your forever home, my darling daughter. My heart ... always an open door, the key safe in your pocket, and a love that will forever be yours.” He swallowed hard on the lump that formed in his throat. “I failed her. I wasn’t there for her ... not enough. Not nearly enough.”

The truck rocked to a stop in front of the cabin. He glanced at her. She sighed within herself. Gone was the man who showed his emotions, the grief and pain he lived with. In its place was the stoic, impassable mask she wished he would shed forever.

“I have work to do and I don’t want to be disturbed. I’m sure you’ll find something to keep you busy.”

“Trent, I’m—”

“There’s more than enough food in the kitchen. Help yourself to lunch. I’ll make dinner later.”

With that, he pushed open the door and got out.

“Storm, Sheila ... come.”

Storm bounded after him in the snow but Sheila hesitated, looking between him and Riley who hadn’t moved.

“Sheila, come!”

This time she didn’t dare disobey the harsh order and with an apologetic yowl in Riley’s direction, she followed the two males into the cabin.

It was a long while before Riley moved and stumbled through the snow toward the cabin. She felt defeated. She had

an abundance of hope earlier— that maybe she had found her forever after prince. Only to have that dream shattered. He might not have uttered the words, but the underlying message had been clear. There was no space in his life for another woman ... or for love.

The joy she had felt at discovering her feelings that morning, crumbled inside her heart. She felt a stab of pain scorch through her.

Up until that moment, Riley hadn't realized to what extent she had opened her heart to Trent. How fast, hard, and deep he'd wormed his way into the deepest chambers of her heart.

Or was it infatuation? Maybe she was being stupid and naive to believe what she felt for him was love.

“Yeah, maybe that's it. No person falls into such debilitating love this quickly. It's not possible.”

*“Love is what this season is all about. Where miracles happen and love and joy rule the world. Believe, Riley Miller ... believe.”*

“What the flying fiddlesticks!?” Riley spun around and searched for the man with the deep voice, but there was no one. “Holy shitty snowballs, this is too creepy.” She looked around as she ran the rest of the way to the front door. She slammed it closed and locked it behind her.

“See, Riley, there you have it. You're going cuckoos, that's why you think you've fallen for him ... hook, line, and sinker. Ugh! Stop it. It's not love.”

*“Believe, Riley Miller ... believe!”*

“Go away! Jeez Louise! I’m losing it. Talking to myself and a crackhead voice in my mind!”

# Chapter Nine



Balancing the lunch tray against the wall, Riley rapped briefly on the study door, pushed it open and slipped inside. Sheila immediately rushed to her side. Storm, on the other hand, growled at her.

“What are you doing here? I told you I didn’t want to be disturbed.”

Riley froze as Trent’s dark voice timbered through her. She glanced at him and retreated a step. A shudder thrilled down her frame at the glacial look in his eyes.

“Well? Did you lose your tongue?”

“I brought you lunch.” She cursed as she listened to how timid she sounded but she couldn’t help but be taken aback by the man glaring at her from across the desk. This was the man Aunt Sophie had been worried about. The one who shut off his emotions and became a dark and lonely recluse.

“If I wanted lunch, I would’ve asked for it, or better yet, made it myself.”

Riley squared her shoulders and marched toward the desk. She was tempted to slam the tray down to visualize her ire but curbed the childish inclination at its birth. Trent had revisited a very painful time in his life and it clearly affected him in ways he never expected.

“Well, I made it and it’s here now, so you might as well enjoy it.” She patted Sheila between her ears as she headed back to the door. “Just so you know, Trent Reeves, you don’t scare me,” she snipped over her shoulder as she opened the door.

How he got to her so fast, she had no idea but her shriek of surprise seared through the room as he slapped the door closed

in front of her nose. She spun around and slapped him on the chest, trembling from head to foot.

“Was that really necessary? You scared the shit out of me!”

“Really? Wasn’t it you who just claimed the opposite?”

“Tsk, you know what I mean,” she clicked her tongue irritably. She pressed her back surreptitiously against the door in an effort to get away from the threatening man he’d become.

It didn’t help, he followed, crowding her against the hard surface behind her and his equally strong body in the front. His hands were placed against the door next to her face. She was effectively locked in a cage of Trent Reeves.

“You should be scared, Riley. At this point, very scared.”

“Trent, I—”

“Quiet! I warned you yesterday what would happen if you bothered me in here, didn’t I?” His eyes shimmered with flashes of silver that made the ink blue of his eyes glimmer like black diamonds in the sun.

“I thought you’d be hungry. What—”

He pressed harder against her. She stopped breathing as the hard ridge of his ... *holy crap!* ... huge cock dug into the softness of her stomach.

“You don’t pay attention, do you, sub?”

The dark ripple in his tone warned her that she was staring at the powerful Dom. One whose anger seemed to be tenaciously hanging onto a thin thread, ready to snap at any moment.

“Trent, I just ...” Her voice drifted off as his eyes narrowed. His hand curled around her throat and he applied pressure. Not too much but enough for her to panic and rise on her toes. “Sir!” She remembered and sighed softly as the pressure relaxed. “I thought I was doing you a favor. I didn’t mean to—”

“But you did, my pet. I have been waiting for hours for you to walk through this door. I could feel your curiosity eating away at you. How you desired to walk in here to see what I’m doing.”

“No,” she breathed in desperately. “I only brought you lunch.”

“You’ll be happy to know that your curiosity paid off, Snowflake,” he said in a much more controlled voice. The metamorphosis was enlightening to say the least. The anger seemed to slip in waves from his face and in its stead, she stared at the man who had completely rocked her world the night before.

There was a slight measure of amusement in his eyes, but it was overshadowed by a dark warning that the Dom was now in full power.

Riley didn’t stand a chance. Whatever he intended for her; she’d already submitted without hesitation. She could feel the excitement lodge itself in the throbbing of her loins, the pulsing of her clit and the hardening of her nipples that poked against his chest.

“Raise your hands above your head. Good girl.” He smiled as she obeyed instantly. “Keep them there, sub, no matter what. Understood?”



“Yes, Sir.” Her voice hitched high as he unzipped her jeans and yanked them and her panties to her knees. A low grumble from behind Trent caused her body to freeze. “The dogs,” she whimpered as he removed her shoes and every piece of clothing from her body so fast, she became disoriented.

“What about them?”

“They’re watching,” she said in a whisper.

Trent smirked as he pushed her arms back into position. “They’re not strangers to this kind of scene, my pet, so you can relax.”

Riley glared at him. It was the last thing she wanted to hear at this very moment. That he copulated everywhere in the cabin in full view of his dogs!

“I don’t care! I’m not one of your ... *subs* who likes an audience. I want them out.”

“Well, well, the little snowflake has some fire in her after all.” A broad smile split his face in two. “Or do I detect a sliver of jealousy, hmm?”

“Dream on, Mister Dom. You know what? I changed my mind. I’m leaving.”

She lowered her arms and pushed against his shoulders. A laughable attempt at best. Adding a cold glare didn’t assist in her attempt to free herself.

“*You* changed your mind? You don’t have a say in this, sub. You disobeyed an order I gave with a very definite warning as to what would happen if you ignored it.” His hand circled her throat again. This time the pressure made her gasp and she

teetered on the tip of her toes. She clawed at his hands as she struggled to breathe. “Hands!”

She whimpered but released the hold she had on him and raised her arms above her head.

Trent brushed his lips back and forth over hers. He chuckled as a low groan breezed from her lips followed by a painfilled cry as his teeth clamped around her bottom lip. Hard and instantly he bit into the pulpy softness.

He licked away the sting with a sensual swipe of his tongue to growl against her quivering mouth. “There’s only one thing that will stop this, Riley and until you make use of it, the dogs aren’t going anywhere and I’m going to fuck your brains out, right here, against the door and then on my desk, with them watching.”

*Snow! Say it. Shout it at him. Goddammit, Riley, use your safeword.*

But no matter how hard her mind screamed at her, her body was stronger. Her ovaries were doing a foxtrot on the beat of her pulsing clit where he rubbed his jeans against the vulnerable nub. Her loins lubricated her pussy with a flush of her essence in preparedness for his possession.

Riley lost the battle before it even began.

Her gaze settled on his mouth. A little devil inside her prodded her to be bold. Even though she felt herself tremble, she gave in to the desire to act out. With deliberate slowness, her tongue took a slow foray over her bottom lip.

“Does that mean you’re going to kiss me as well?”

Trent had seen the flash of defiance in her eyes but was still surprised at what puffed from her lips. It was undeniable how her sultry voice intoxicated his mind with each melodious syllable. The beast inside released a hungry roar. He supped on the decadent aroma of her arousal that drifted into his nostrils, sparking the heat that flooded his cock as the rush of lust tapped into the Dom in him.

He tested the pulpiness of her bottom lip with a brush of his thumb. Her eyes flared as his hand fluttered on her face, moving down, past her collarbone. The opulent texture of her skin held him completely spellbound.

Riley bit back a moan at the feather light touch that sparked a shiver at the base of her neck. Her lips tingled with the desire to feel his taking possession of them but he ignored her silent plight. Her brain was afire, set alight by his fingertips that had to be electric, because wherever they touched, her skin tingled in a crackling frenzy. She closed her eyes and tried to settle her breathing. The touch of his fingers, as they brushed lightly over the sides of her breasts was like divine fire for her soul. She couldn't prevent another moan as she experienced the tingling sensation of her nipples budding into taut nubs.

Sex wasn't a luxury in Riley's life. She loved it, but Jason had soured the experience for her over the past three years. The way Trent's caresses affected her floored her and she had difficulty focusing on anything but the sensations that flooded her body.

"You want me to kiss you?" His breath whispered in a hot breeze at the nape of her neck, barely touching. Suddenly her body became paralyzed, yearning for those warm, firm lips to touch her skin.

“Yes. I want you to kiss me,” she thrilled, barely a whisper.

“Did I mention kissing when I warned you to stay out of here when I’m working, Riley?”

“No.” Again a soft explosion of sound from her lips as her defenses continued to crumble under his caressing hands that completely bespoke the harshness of his voice.

“Remind me what I said would happen, Riley. Because I don’t want any regrets or accusations afterward,” he demanded impatiently. His body had turned rigid and hard against hers. The huge ridge that dug into her soft stomach stumped her mute.

Riley lost the ability to think logically or even remotely sensibly. The curling and swirling heat inside her loins demanded that he did exactly what he’d promised. The wetness of her pussy wept for it.

“His hand curled around her throat and squeezed. “I don’t like waiting, sub. Tell me,” he demanded.

“Ahh, that ... hmm, that you’re going to fuck me so hard and rough that I’ll be walking bowlegged for a week.” The words rushed from her lips, her breathing fast and erratic as she pressed her breasts into the hand that continued its ruthlessly restrained touches.

“And?” His fingers tightened; she went onto her toes.

“My ... my pussy will be raw by the time you’re done.”

“Good girl,” he praised as he brushed his lips over her collarbone.

Riley was on the edge of swooning. She was unable to compute the pleasure drenching her loins from that sensual kiss

“I hope you are, Riley.” The growl into her ear, his tongue tracing the edge of her lobe.

Lust rocketed through her, exploding from her in a feminine growl—a sound of carnal expectations. It was heady to be ensnared in this powerful man’s massive focus.

Trent was amazed at how affected he was by the lustful need in her voice. He felt it in the hardening of his balls that set his cock throbbing.

She boldly reached up and fisted her hands in his hair, ignoring the warning of his hand that tightened even more around her throat

“Yes. Now, kiss me!”

Riley had no idea where her confidence came from to act like this. She had never been the emboldened one in a sexual relationship. This time, her desires guided her decision not to wait for him to act. She yanked down his head and locked her lips against his.

Trent was amused by her ballsy attitude and therefore allowed her the small victory, but he turned the kiss on her with a passionate lustfulness that left her floundering in her mind. Deep, erotic and drugging strokes of his tongue, that weren’t just seduction; he demanded her full submission as he laid claim to every emotion that he invoked with the kiss.

Riley drowned in a heatwave of desire, helpless against the way he ravaged her mouth. She knew it was more than teaching her a lesson. He was just as affected and invested in the kiss as she was. Neither could get enough; he drank from her like she was the oasis he needed to quench a thirst. He nibbled and bit her lips, only to soothe them with a deep kiss; demanding more

with every swirl of his tongue against hers. She was torn between the elation of having his mouth on hers and the desire to feel his hand touch her skin ... and then, he was there.

*Oooh, sweet snowballs! His hands are so hot.*

The brush of his fingers over her stomach sent a shockwave through her. She realized with a start that her shirt gaped open and her bra had been pulled down allowing her breasts to pop up boldly. His marauding hand skated between her legs as he zeroed in on ... *ooh! That feels so good . . .* his fingers gently teased the wet patch between her legs.

Riley moaned into his mouth, barely cognizant of him tearing off her clothes and throwing them on one of the chairs. At the same time, he plunged two fingers deep inside her.

“Ah, so hot and eager to be fucked.”

His raw voice hardly registered as her pussy clenched at the welcome intrusion—the kind she’d dreamt about for years. She scoffed at those dreams now. Dreams were nothing compared to reality. Not this reality.

Trent brushed her clit, stealing her breath with sensual strokes. She went on tiptoes, trying to escape the almost torturous arousal, only to press down for more. The sensations overwhelmed her; shocked her. Never had she felt so alive. Her body shuddered when his fist closed around her thong at the back and tore it from her body.

Riley gasped jerkily, only to wail a cry of primal greed when he spread her legs wider and pressed his cock against her slit. With slow deliberation, he nudged the blunt head inside her heated channel. Her wet, throbbing pussy clenched around his length as he thrust inside.

Hard and to the hilt.

*Fuck. She's so tight.*

He felt the pulse of his cock all the way into his head; a duet to the beast that demanded to have the hunger fed off her sensual body. He stroked and flexed his shaft against the silky warm sheath that gave way to his demand.

Riley lifted her legs and wrapped them around his waist.

“Oh no, you don't,” he spat and pushed his arms under her knees, dragged them to the side of her and pinned her spread open against the door. She arched and moaned as the position forced him deeper, pressing against her cervix.

“This isn't for your pleasure, sub. You don't get to dictate the pace. You might find pleasure but I'll decide what buttons of yours to push when.”

Her pulsing heat combined with rhythmically clenching soft walls around his shaft, were the final conduit for Trent to let go of the control he'd been holding in check since he'd stared at her for the first time in his bed. He released the pent-up lust she'd unleashed in him.

“Keep your hands above your head, no matter what. If you think you've ever been fucked before ... you're about to receive your first lesson in the difference between being fucked by a vanilla man and a Dom.”

He pulled back slowly and then pounded her against the wall with sharp forward snaps of his hips. Her low cry of surprised pain urged him on and he plundered her body with a raw need that had him undulating his hips against hers with forceful strength.

“Fuck, Riley, I can lose myself in your hot pussy,” he growled with his blazing gaze on where his cock plowed her softness.

Trent froze. He wasn't wearing a condom. He never fucked anyone without one. His chest heaved up and down as he battled to force back the desire to continue. Never had he felt such a desire to plunder a pussy bare.

“Are you on the pill, Riley?” he bit out through gnashed teeth.

“Yes,” she puffed out breathlessly, her pussy spasming around his hard cock. “Please, I'm so close,” she begged in a broken voice. She clenched her pussy around his hard length inside her; feeling the tingle of heat start at the back of her neck and the weakening of her arms. She knew she was about to tumble over the edge.

“I'm not wearing a condom. I never fuck without one.” He dragged in a deep breath. “Which means I'm clean and I have no doubt you are too. I don't want to stop and cover my dick in rubber, not now that I've felt your heat around me.”

“I am on the pill and I made sure I took them every day I've been here. Don't stop, Sir. I want to feel your heat inside me too.”

Riley was in a state of euphoria as she thrashed demandingly against him.

*Crack! Crack!*

“Ooowww!” Riley screamed at the two unexpected and painful slaps against her nipples.



“I told you not to dictate how this goes, sub. Keep still,” he growled in a dark voice that immediately stilled her quivering form.

She tried to curtail her cries but they burst in a soprano choir from her lips as he began hammering into her. It felt like he was permanently attaching her to the door. His lips closed around a nipple. He sucked once and then bit into it, so hard that her cry turned into a wail of desperation when the pain clashed with the pleasure in a culmination of a climax so profound, Riley could do nothing but ride it through.

She grabbed his neck when suddenly she was airborne as he turned with her in his arms and laid her on his desk. He spread her legs wide and up against her sides. His eyes flashed darkly.

“Hands.”

Riley lifted her hands above her head, relieved to find that she could curl them around the edge behind her. It offered her a sense of stability in an increasing spiral of helplessness as he began to pound into her again.

“Have you ever had anal before, Riley?”

“Yes, but ... oh shitting snowman!” she screamed as a climax wreaked through her. Riley had responded without thought. If she actually had the ability to think at that moment, she would’ve said no, because anal with Jason had been anything but pleasant.

His eyes dropped and his mind went numb. The sight of his cock buried so deep inside her body nearly unhinged him. This time, when his body demanded, his mind switched off and he plunged into her, watching as her folds wrapped themselves around his disappearing girth every time. He folded one hand

around her hip to keep her in place as the forceful thrusts pushed her higher on the table.

The beast reveled in her screams and cries as he continued the ruthless possession of her body. He purred with every climax that left her breathless and ended in her pleading for him to stop.

“Please,” she gasped haggardly. “Stop. I ... ooh! No! What ... ahh, Yeezus!” She screamed as he flipped her over. The crinkling of paper barely registered when in one hard shove, he breached her sphincter. He didn’t move, allowing her a breather to catch her breath. His hand drew sensual circles on her back and the other reached around her to toggle her clit. The sudden gentleness made her relax.

“Easy, Snowflake. How many times have you had anal?”

“A couple but I didn’t like it and he ... he wasn’t half as big as you,” she ended in a sharp wail as he slowly worked his cock deeper until he was firmly wedged hilt deep inside her bowels.

“Size doesn’t matter in your ass, sub. It can stretch to accommodate me.” He leaned over her and clamped his teeth into the muscle at her shoulder. She cried out and clawed at the edge of the table where she was still hanging onto for dear life. “Have you ever climaxed from anal?”

“No!” she said indignantly.

*Was the man for real? Who in their right mind would be able to climax from a cock in your ass?*

He laughed at her outrage, accurately reading her response in the tightness of her body. He wrapped his hands under her

waist and picked her up to put her on all fours on the thick carpet.

“Oh, freaking hell,” she wailed as he pushed her shoulders down to the floor.

“That’s better. This way I can fuck your ass properly and I have full access to your girly bits. He slapped her left buttock. “Prepare yourself for the hardest climax you’ll ever have, Snowflake.”

“I sincerely doubt thaaat ... fucck me!” she ended in a desperate cry as he pulled back his cock, ensuring that he awakened every nerve ending along the way and slammed back in, over and over. He toggled her clit and pinched her nipples with a sensual precision she had no way of compartmentalizing.

Her eyes rolled back in their sockets when he pushed two fingers inside her. With deliberate suaveness, he brushed the swollen ganglia on the inside wall of her vagina, knowing it would trip her circuits. Riley realized he had tapped into her one weakness when he pinched her nipple between his fingers and pulled it away from her body. Nipple play pushed her on a cloud of desire without too much effort.

Riley’s mind was a whirlpool of color, flashing brightly in front of her eyes, as a wave of pleasure crashed upon her. She arched her back, clawing at the carpet as she desperately rode the rogue waves of ecstasy that threatened to drown her.

Trent powered into her, driven by his own desire for release as her continued cries spurred him on as much as the clenching of her pussy around his fingers as he slid in and out of her.

Riley heard her cries echo in the room, and try as she might, she couldn’t stop. Trent clamped both hands around her hips

and pounded her so hard and fast, her knees lifted off the carpet. The waves continued to crash, dragging her down deeper and deeper as they kept rolling over her, never ebbing.

“I can’t ... I can’t ...” A band tightened around her chest when she couldn’t draw a proper breath.

“Yes, you can. Give me more, Riley. I want every fucking drop of cum you have inside you. Yes, that’s it,” he praised as her body shuddered through the tsunami that refused to end.

Her face contorted as she felt herself slipping from reality.

Trent stiffened and his fingers dug deeper into her hips. With a loud grunt, he thrust deep, lifting her knees higher than before, which triggered another blissful wave to throw her to the shore of pleasure. She felt the heat of his ejaculation explode deep inside her bowels, fighting off the black void of unconsciousness that threatened to blanket her.

Trent was right. She had never come so hard in her life.

Riley was limp as a ragdoll when he picked her up in his arms and carried her upstairs. She gasped as he followed her down, spreading her legs wide.

“Oh my god, you can’t be serious!”

“I never renege on a threat, Snowflake. You’d do well to remember that. This little pussy is far from raw and there are many hours till morning.”

# Chapter Ten



Trent stopped midway down the stairs the next morning as he found himself whistling a happy tune.

“Fucking hell, when was the last time I whistled?”

“Warf!” Storm responded where he stood waiting for him at the bottom of the stairs, staring at him with his head tilted at a nonplussed angle. Even he was confused at hearing the strange sound coming from his master’s lips.

He continued descending, but try as he might, the smile refused to slip from his mouth. What had started as a punishment had ended in a very sexually satisfying evening. Now, more than ever he was glad he had chosen the sleigh bed with the long bedposts at the four ends. It proved to be a highly entertaining sight to bind Riley with her own lingerie in a spread-eagle position— all for his pleasure and her submission.

A subjugation that still surprised him and left him tingling all over. A weird and foreign feeling, but it was exactly what it felt like, as if he’d been hit by a lightning bolt and every nerve ending sizzled in after effect.

“Raptor come in. Dispatch calling Raptor.” He changed direction at a crackling voice coming from his study.

“Go for Raptor. What’s up, Sally?”

“I just wanted to let you know that with the combined plowing effort of all your neighbors, all the roads to the main road should be cleared by tomorrow evening.”

“That’s good news. Anything I missed since I’ve been snowbound?”

“A couple of silly brave heart tourists but nothing serious.” She hesitated a moment. “How’s your patient doing?”

“Up and about. The wound wasn’t serious and the headaches have stopped. I’m on my way to scrape snow from this side. The dogs need to get out of the house.”

“Perfect. I’ll let the others know. So, are we going to see you at the Fantasy of Lights Christmas Parade in Gatlinburg this year?”

“Wasn’t that supposed to be two nights ago?”

“It was postponed due to the blizzard. It’s going to be in two days’ time.”

In the six years he had lived in Pigeon Forge, he had never attended any of the festivities. It was the one time of the year he locked himself in the cabin. A time where he felt the loss of his cherub little daughter the most and needed to be alone.

Strangely, as he considered her question, it wasn’t that which flashed through his mind. It was the fact that Riley would be gone by then. She’d be in Gatlinburg with her aunt. The decision was made without conscious thought.

“Some Christmas lights might just be the cheer I need after all the snow. Yeah, you might see me there.”

“Well, that’s the best news I’ve ever heard. I can’t wait to introduce you to Jim and my grandkids. Pop in when you’re in town before then. Dispatch out.”

Trent didn’t question his desire to see more of Riley. To get to know every aspect that made her the person she was. She was the kind of sub he had been searching for all these years. The kind of *woman* he could see himself move on with into the future.



*Until she finds out you were indirectly responsible for her parents' death as well.*

Trent chose to ignore the little voice in the back of his mind. It was in the past and something he couldn't change. He had been alone for long enough. He had been sad about Adrienne's death, but it hadn't affected him as much as his daughter's. By the time of her death, their love had died, courtesy of the constant fighting. The final blow came on the day he found confirmation of her cheating on him and committing to another Dom. In retrospect, he should've walked away then but he'd been adamant to at least try for his daughter's sake. Adrienne hadn't been interested in his advances.

“What's done is done. It's time to move on. I want a committed woman in my life—a permanent sub. And Riley is the one I want.”

“Warf! Warf!” Storm chased his tail and jumped up excitedly. He gave Trent a big toothy smile.

“Ah, so you approve, I take it?”

“Warf!” His head bobbed up and down.

“That does it then. Now, we only have to convince her that we're compatible. A perfect fit even.”

“Nyaa,” Storm agreed.

“Let's get breakfast done. I want to put in at least four hours on the road. The sooner Snowflake carries on with her normal life, the quicker I'll be able to convince her, this is where she's meant to be.”

Storm and he chatted up a storm while he prepared a bountiful breakfast, which included blueberry pancakes this

time. After the sex marathon of last night, he was ravenous and his little snowflake needed to build up her energy for what he had in store for her today.



“What is that?” Riley stopped abruptly as she walked out of the bathroom. She’d come up after breakfast to brush her teeth. Trent lounged on the bed, next to a silver, one-piece ski suit.

“It’s cold out. I don’t want you to get sick.”

“I’ve got one of my own. I’m not wearing someone else’s clothes, thank you very much.” Riley bristled at the thought that other subs had worn it before.

“It’s brand new, little snip. You’ll be the first to wear it.”

Her eyes flickered as she walked closer. She lifted narrowed eyes at him.

“Hold on a minute. Is this the suit you mentioned before—with the opening ... for nipple clamps?” Her voice rose toward the end.

“The one and only. Come. Drop that towel. Let’s get you into it.”

“I’m not ... I didn’t do anything wrong to deserve punishment,” she protested vehemently.

“No? You seem to have a very selective memory, my pet. Cast your mind back to the spanking in the dungeon. Care to remind me what happened there?”

Her mouth gaped open. She’d completely forgotten about it and honestly hoped he would’ve too.

“I’m waiting.” His voice darkened as he sat up and lowered his feet to the floor.

“I climaxed without permission.”

“Don’t look so morose, Snowflake. Ah, I see. You thought I’d forget about the punishment.” He chuckled. “You’ll learn quickly enough it’s the one thing I never overlook, my pet. No matter when, if I promised you punishment, it’ll happen.”

He pointed to the spot between his legs.

“Come, Riley. I want to do at least four hours of snow plowing this morning. By tomorrow, you’ll be able to go to your aunt.”

“It sounds like you can’t wait to get rid of me.” She shuffled closer, her heart in her throat at the thought of leaving.

“On the contrary, baby, I’m rather sad to see you go.” He traced her jaw and was happy to identify the swirl of emotion in her eyes that she desperately tried to hide from him by blinking rapidly. He smiled as he reached behind him.

“Let’s get you all dressed up, shall we?”

“What in the freaking snowball’s hell is that!?”

Riley tried to take a step back. She stared in horror at the contraption in his hand. His fingers around her wrist yanked her back.

“It’s a custom-made chastity belt.”

“I’m not wearing that thing. You can forget it,” she shrieked and wriggled her hand to try and free her wrist.

“Stay still.” The warning rang from a gravelly voice that thrilled through her, reaching deep inside to yank to the surface

the submissive inside her. She quieted.

“Drop the towel and step into it, please.”

Riley obeyed but continued to glare at him as he ordered her to spread her legs.

“Hmm, it seems this little pussy is rather excited about the prospect of wearing this rubber cock.” He winked at her as he found her pussy soaked when he pressed a finger deep inside her. “Must be because the size reminds it of me, or what do you think?”

“I think you’re much to ... ohh, shit,” she cried and clawed at his shoulders as he pushed the rubber monster hilt deep inside her. “Vain!” she ended in a moan.

“Vanity has nothing to do with it, Snowflake, not since it’s the truth. Now, bend over and place your hands on the edge of the bed. Let’s reward this little back hole for being so accommodating in the study yesterday. It’ll be unfair if we don’t, right?”

“No need. My little ... rosette, is happy to be left alone. Ohh, freaking snowballs it burns,” she wailed as he pressed the lubricated tip inside her back hole.

“Just relax and push back against it. That’s a good girl.”

She squeezed her eyes shut as the praise flowed over her while he slowly worked the tip of what looked like a fat worm past her sphincter.

*A bright blue worm of all things! Ohh shit, it’s big and ... mmm ... lord that feels good.* She was floored at the myriad of sensations that crashed through her brain as he gently played

with the two dildos inside her until he noticed with satisfaction the juices dripping from her pussy.

“There you go,” he gruffed and assisted her to straighten. “Almost done.”

He was unperturbed at the chilled look she shot at him and within minutes, the horrific torture belt was locked in place.

Locked! With a proper padlock of which the key he dropped with a broad smile in the pocket of his shirt.

“There. Now isn’t that a beautiful sight?”

“I’m so glad you’re enjoying my discomfort.”

“Punishment isn’t meant to be comfortable or pleasurable, my pet but I daresay, you’ll be overwhelmed by the contrast of the two over the next couple of hours.”

“Hours! You’re going to make me wear this damn thing for hours?”

“Yes, until we’re back home. Of course, if you disobey me during that time, I might decide to leave it on longer.”

“Disobey?” she asked in a brittle voice.

Trent reached into the pocket of his jeans. She stared in horror at the small remote he removed and juggled in his hand.

“The two dildos in your pussy and ass vibrate. The cup over your clit ... is a suction cup. I daresay, you’ll be on tenterhooks most of the time.”

“You are so not serious!”

“I never joke about punishment, Snowflake. Now, let’s get the ski suit on.”

Riley grumbled and complained as he helped her to shimmy into the thick, waterproof suit. It immediately encased her body in a cocoon of heat. He zipped it up and snapped the belt in place around her waist.

“Oh, freaking hell, not that too,” she wailed as he pulled on the small material tabs that were situated above each breast.

“Don’t you think this was a brilliant invention of mine?” he taunted her as he reached through the inside opening and pulled on her nipple until the areola popped through the tight hole. He did the same with the other. He patted the area of her breasts visible through the openings.

“Hmm, they need to be tightened.” He lowered the zipper to her waist and fiddled with something on the inside over her left breast. Her breath hissed from her lips as she felt the material tightening around her areola.

“You ... can’t do this,” she moaned as she stared at how puffy the coral tip looked, with the suit compressing around it. Her nipple was as hard as stone and poked against his palm as he brushed it over the tip. “Oh shit.”

Riley never thought her nipple could be this sensitive but the added pressure around her areola caused the blood to rush to the tip. It sparked the nerve endings to life. He repeated the process on the other side and stood back to regard her critically.

“Perfect.” He pulled the flap tight over her nipples and secured it with the Velcro strips attached to the suit.

“Freaking hell! What ... it hurts!”

“Ever heard of a vampire glove?”

Riley stared at him in disbelief. His lips twitched. “I see that you have. The inside of the piece covering your nipples, have the same spikes attached.” He tapped her on the chin. “You’ll feel them with every movement you make. Let’s go. Time’s ticking.”

Riley moaned as he clasped her hand and pulled her along.

“Not so fast. Good god, do you have any idea what it feels like walking with these ... these monster schlongs inside me?”

Trent burst out laughing. His eyes glimmered with mirth as he looked at her. “Now that’s the last word I expected to hear from you. Cock and dick maybe but schlong?” He laughed as he began to descend the stairs. At least he didn’t rush her and she managed with grinding teeth to follow him to the truck.

“Come, I’ll help you in.” He picked her up and sat her down on the seat. Hard and with obvious intent if his smile was anything to go by when she cried out at how deep the act pushed the two dildos inside her.

“I’ll have you know; this isn’t funny.”

“You mistake my pleasure, my pet. Watching your reaction tickles the beast inside me, especially as you’re so defiantly submissive. It’s going to be a very pleasant morning, indeed.”

Riley thought it wise not to respond and turned her gaze forward, staring out of the windshield, effectively ignoring him. He chuckled and closed the door. She was tempted to loosen the flaps over her nipples so that the sting of the little spikes eased off a little but curbed that desire at its birth. She was rapidly learning that open defiance would end her ass in deeper and more painful shit than she already was.

“Safety belt, please.”

Riley snapped the belt in place as he pulled away. Everything was going fine until they reached the road and he started plowing snow. She bit her lip to keep from crying out as she clawed at the edge of the seat below her knees. The spikes dug into her nipples with every move of her torso and she felt every jolt of the truck in the dildos inside her. They were so big; she noticed her stomach moving up and down with every hard bump of the truck.

She never liked having anal sex with Jason but now she was glad it was something she was used to—having a cock inside her rectum. What completely blew her circuits was the double penetration. That to her, was a first. From the moment Trent had shoved the worm-like, long rubber dick inside her, she’d been inundated with conflicting sensations. At first, discomfort, but it didn’t take long for the nerves surrounding the ribbed shafts to awaken. Now, it completely floored her mind. If anyone had told her in the past that the nerves between her pussy, anus, and clit were connected, she’d have laughed at them. Now, she didn’t know what sensation was coming from there. All she knew was it felt ... indescribably erotic.

“Ohhh, freaking shitting snowballs,” Riley wailed as Trent flicked the switch in his pocket and the dildos began to vibrate and pump ... *pump* for heaven’s sake!

“Remember the rule, Snowflake. You don’t have my permission to come. If you do—”

“I’ll be punished. Yeah, I freaking know!”

He granted her a dark look that spoke volumes of how he felt about her snappy retort.



“I didn’t intend to do this yet but seeing as you require an attitude adjustment ...”

“Do what? Nooo!” She cried as the patch with the spikes over her chest began to squeeze and release her already suffering nipples.

“Drop your hands, sub or I increase the pressure.”

“You’re a demon!”

“I’ve been called worse.” He chuckled and turned his attention back to the task at hand.

“Tell me about yourself. Are you involved with someone?”

Riley gnashed her teeth and shot him a sideways look. “Now you wanna know if I’m involved with someone? After you took me into the dungeon and fucked me silly last night?”

“The BDSM lifestyle caters to open relationships, my pet. Many people who participate in it are married with a partner who never indulge in it.”

“If that’s true, why did it upset you so much when your wife ...” she swallowed hard as his jaw turned rigid. “I’m sorry. That was uncalled for.”

“But a question that requires a response. We were not only married as a BDSM couple that lived the lifestyle, Riley. We were also in a committed and exclusive Dom/sub relationship. In other words, we didn’t scene with or fuck others.”

“I see.” She closed her eyes as the truck jerked and the dildos wriggled deeper inside her. “And no, I’m not in a relationship.”

“I didn’t figure you would be.”

“What makes you say that?” She watched him curiously.

He smiled as he looked at her and noticed how tightly she clamped her legs together. Her shoulders sagged in relief when he switched off the nipple torture.

“Thank you, Sir.”

“It pleases me that you remember to address me properly while in punishment, little one. It pleases me very much.”

“You didn’t answer my question,” she said quickly, in an effort to forget how her heart warmed every time he praised her. “How did you know I wasn’t in a relationship?”

“A couple of things. You only phoned your aunt after the accident. You haven’t received any distressed calls from a lover, but most of all ...” he turned toward her as he brought the truck to a halt, “you’re not the kind of woman who would cuckold her man.”

“Oh,” she said with her cheeks heating once again at the lusty look in his eyes.

“Would you like me to release your tits for a bit of a breather?”

“Yes!” she puffed immediately and groaned as he pulled the flaps open slowly. “Awww, shit! I didn’t expect it to hurt so much now.”

“Well, let me ease the sting a little, my pet.”

Before Riley realized his intent, he pulled her onto his lap. His lips wrapped around a nipple and sucked it deep into his mouth while he palmed the other with feathered touches.

“Oh-oh-ohhh! Please, Sir. I can’t stand it,” she moaned as the deep tugging on her sore and sensitive nipples sent an arrow of lust directly to her loins. Her pussy was already in distress, from teetering on the edge of a climax since he’d pushed the blasted dildos inside her. “I need to come, please, let me come.”

“No, Snowflake. That privilege today is mine. The only cock that will feel your pussy clench around it as you climax, is mine. Is that understood?”

“Please, don’t do this to me,” she wailed as his mouth latched onto the other nipple.

“Use the techniques I taught you during the night, my pet. I’m going to be exceedingly disappointed if you give my climax to a rubber dick.”

If he had said anything other than that, used any word but disappointed, Riley would’ve let go as the coil inside her reached snapping point. The thought of failing him filled her with such distress that she clamped her knees tighter together and willed back the orgasm that scratched at her loins.

“I won’t climax, Sir.”

“You fill me with such pleasure, Snowflake,” he rumbled against her breasts as he nipped on the nubs and reluctantly released it with a resounding pop. Riley buried her face in his throat, desperately holding onto the last of her reserves as the vibrations inside her doubled.

“That’s not fair!” she wailed. The pleasure he extracted from her predicament was in the low chuckle next to her ear as he eased her back into her seat.

“Punishment rarely is, Snowflake.”

She was relieved when he carefully removed the pieces of material with the spikes, which she only now realized were attached to Velcro, before he closed the flap. At least she wouldn't have that added torture to increase the lustful pleasure inside her.

# Chapter Eleven



“You met John Bonjovi?”

Riley chuckled at the awe in his voice. He'd asked her so many questions, her voice had become husky.

“I take it you're a fan?”

“Love his music. All rock for that matter. I had been to a couple of his concerts and every one of them was an uplifting experience.”

It helped to keep her mind from her throbbing loins when he continued to rain questions at her about her job, family, and friends.

An hour later, her entire body was wracked with shivers. Trent had switched off the vibrators at intervals but he never allowed enough time for her arousal to relinquish. That in itself ratcheted her need to climax even more. Her teeth clattered as she looked to the backseat, surprised to see the dogs were missing.

“Where are Storm and Sheila?”

Trent looked at her. His sharp eyes didn't miss the shudders that rocked her body or that her knuckles were white from clawing so hard at the edge of the seat. His respect for her increased tenfold. He couldn't remember that he'd ever felt this humbled by a sub's effort to please him.

“You didn't notice when I stopped and let them out?”

She shook her head as she looked around. The road was completely cleared.

“They're playing in the snow. It's their favorite time of year.”

Riley darted a quick glance at him. “P-please, I beg you. I can’t anymore.”

“You did so well, my pet. I’m very proud of you.” He brushed his palm over her cheek. His heart missed a beat when she leaned into his touch. “What exactly are you begging for, Riley?”

She reveled in his tender hands against her skin. He had taught her over a short period of time that there was no shame in admitting to her desires and needs. The previous night had proved to her she was in love with Trent and that he was the one she wanted. No matter how much or little he was prepared to give, she’d grasped it with both hands. She delved into the strength of her beliefs and demanded what she wanted ... right now, right here at this very moment.

“You, Sir. I want you to fuck me. Please fuck me.”

“No man with blood in his veins would be able to say no to such a heartfelt request.”

He leaned closer and kissed her. A simmering meshing of lips that broke through all the barriers she might have erected to keep her heart intact. She didn’t want to shade anything from him anymore. The emotions she felt glinted brightly in her eyes as she looked at him.

His breath wheezed from his throat. “Riley—”

This time she stopped him with trembling fingers against his lips. “No, all I want right now is your cock pounding my pussy. Please, Sir! Fuck me ... any which way you desire.”

“You shouldn’t have said that, my pet, because now I won’t allow you to retract it.”



With the words echoing in her ears, he got out of the truck and walked around the front to open the passenger door. He lifted her out and carried her to the back of the truck.

“What are you ... we can't out here in the open!”

“Why not? There's no one around for miles to hear your screams.”

“It's cold! We'll freeze our asses off,” she said, glancing around and noticed the two dogs bounding around in the snow a short distance away.

“Are you cold in that suit?”

“No, but if you take it off ... oh,” she ended lamely as he reached between her legs and pulled open a hidden flap, exposing her pussy.

“Any which way I please, right?”

“Sir ... maybe I was a little hasty—” She gulped back the protest as he unlocked the padlock just above her mound and gently eased the dildo from her pussy. He rearranged the strap between her legs and straightened. She stared at him with wide eyes as she realized he had no intention of removing the dildo from her ass.

Trent ignored her to fetch a thin piece of foam from behind the back seat. He lowered the tailgate of the cargo bed and draped it over the edge. Riley was still trying to ascertain his intent when he spun her around to face the back of the truck.

“Lie down on the mattress and spread your legs wide apart.” He swatted her behind when she hesitated. It was hard enough for her to scoot forward and lie down. He kicked her legs

further apart at the same time as she heard the sound of his zipper.

“This is something I’ve been wanting to do for a long time ... out here in the mountains, surrounded by the snow and winter’s silence. I guess I’ve been waiting for the right one to experience it with.”

His deep, grating voice unfurled an auxiliary seam of proliferating carnality that cloaked the nerve endings in her loins. She was blindsided by the sparks of heat piercing through her core.

“Let me heat up your pussy, little one. Ahh!” His primal groan married with her keening wail floating into the atmosphere as he thrust his cock inside her slit, waited a second, and then inch by agonizingly slow inch he pushed in until he was firmly wedged hilt deep inside her.

Her back bowed in an arch at the utter fullness and the mind-blowing sensation of his cock pressing against the rubber one still lodged inside her anus. He pumped in and out experimentally, watching her closely.

Riley forgot to breathe—her mind spun around in total shambles. She was unable to dissect the legion of sensations that flooded her. She couldn’t tell what orifice was controlled by which nerve endings. It felt like the sensations duplicated themselves from where the rubber dick vibrated in her ass to where his cock rampaged her pussy. Her sensory input was immersed and overloaded, as she tried desperately to draw a proper breath.

The forceful backwash finally struck in a conflux of emotional and physical streams that yanked her under. It ripped

away her balance and left her feeling afraid and energized at the same time.

“Too much. I’m gonna tear,” she cried, as she clawed at the edge of the foam mattress, completely overwhelmed at the fullness she felt.

His low chuckle sparked a fresh flush of heat through her veins. “You can take it, baby. Believe me, I have no intention of tearing this gorgeous pussy of yours. How does it feel?”

“Full! Too full. I can’t even breathe,” she puffed in desperation, more so from the sensations that she had no way of computing when he slowly dragged back his cock and with a hard snap of his hips, he pounded back inside her.

“Oh, and Riley?”

“Yes, Sir?”

“There’s no limit on how many times you come.”

She gulped at the ominous sounding promise his words held.

“Hands, please.”

She peeked at him over her shoulder, puffing in desperate breaths as she waited for him to fuck her. Her soaking pussy clenched in desperation to pull him even deeper.

“I don’t understand.” What did he want her hands for? She needed them to brace herself for what she had no doubt would be a rough and wild onslaught.

“Give me your hands,” he repeated. His face was drawn as he stared at how deep his cock was buried inside her. A shard of heat stabbed at his loins. It was a sight he wanted to see for the

rest of his life. Not his cock inside any hot and tight pussy; hers ... only hers.

Riley moved her arms behind her back. She whimpered when he took her hands in one of his and pressed them hard into the small of her back.

“Freaking hell,” she moaned as the position forced her to arch backward in a bow while at the same time it pressed her clit hard against the edge of the tailgate. Even though it was covered with the foam mattress, it wasn’t thick enough to completely buffer her. The deep grunt from the demon behind her proved that he was well aware of that fact.

“Now, my recalcitrant little sub, I want you to meet ... the beast.”

The raw growl sent a shudder through her body. She was enthralled by the sudden roughness in his voice and the way his hard body flexed against her buttocks.

“If the beast doesn’t want me to climax without him moving, I have to warn him, it’s about to happen,” Riley facetiously whined in her best baby-doll chirr, taunting him to act.

The trembling increased and her legs shook violently from the throbbing ache that pounded inside her loins, wreaking havoc with her body. She heard her heart hammering in her ears as she waited for his response. The low moan was borne from the visualization of the debauchery he was bound to bring to bear on her as a result.

“I love your defiance, Snowflake. It’s going to offer me years of pleasurable retribution.”

Riley was still trying to wrap her mind around the years of retribution when he grasped the hair on the back of her head and pulled her face around to look into her eyes. She gasped as she identified the sexual rage in his blazing eyes.

Trent closed his fist tighter and jerked her further back to look into the eyes of the sub who had unbeknownst to her, morphed into his tormentor. He was a stranger to her but she had the wiles of a woman and unknowingly used her innocent sexual power by adroitly charting his trigger points. She masterfully identified each spark, pushed the right ones in the exact sequence to tap into the beast inside him.

And it sealed her fate solidly, with no chance of retreat.

“Remember you teased the beast, Riley,” he warned as he pressed a fingertip down on the spongy ganglia that he knew would tilt her circuitry.

Her raw cry seared through his mind as he felt her pussy clench around his cock. She rocked her hips back and forth against him, whimpering as it loosened the hungry licks of heat that lapped at her core. Her clit rubbing against the rough surface of the foam beneath her made her eyes roll back in their sockets. She was so high on a cloud of euphoria she'd drown if he didn't hold onto her. She twisted and jagged.

“Please, just fuck me!”

He drew back and with a mighty thrust he began pounding her. He drove her forward with every plunge, cherishing her throaty cries as her clit scraped against the roughness of the mattress.

“Ahhh!” Her scream splintered the silence as he mercilessly pushed her right into a thundering wave as he banged hard

against her buttocks. The sound of their bodies slapping against each other was a melody of lust and debauchery in his ears.

He felt every flush of her juices, every clench and release of her pussy as he forced one climax after the other from her. He didn't slow down, not once; he kept his hand in her hair, snapping at her to keep her eyes on him when they threatened to drift closed.

“God, no more,” she pleaded as another debilitating climax rippled through her. “Stop, you have to stop.”

He grunted and inhaled deeply as wafts of her aroused bouquet escaped upwards to tease his nostrils.

“You smell like lust, Snowflake, and it's begging me to continue. Who do you think I'm going to listen to? You or your pussy pleading for more?”

“Ahhh ... please, my clit is ...” Another scream split the air as he pumped harder, deliberately humping the nub she was complaining about against the foam-covered edge of the truck bed.

The fear in her eyes told him that the climax that wreaked havoc inside her loins and pussy made the world tilt. Her breathing faltered and she thrashed under him. Raw little cries were the only sound she managed under the rough onslaught that was so much more than she'd expected.

Riley was powerless as paroxysms tossed her about. Long waves of rapture rolled over her as she fought off the dull ache of overindulgence. She gave over willingly, spread open in front of him as she thrashed in subjugation to his Domination.

The climax that splintered through her was the hardest she'd ever experienced.

Trent ground his hips against her buttocks and pumped in and out with long strokes, feeling himself slide against her silky walls. The prick of a thousand needles at the back of his loins, warned him he was approaching his own release. Riley was too weak to move, held in position by his hard hands, she was submerged in waves of eroticism that rocked her into mindless surrender.

He felt the veins in his cock surge with charged pulses of blood that careened into the end of his shaft. His primal roar slammed against the mountains and echoed in a choir back at them. He growled, flayed bare and ragged as he came inside her, pumping and convulsing. He released her hands and hair to wrap his arms around her waist as he finished with a series of quick, hard jabs inside her.

The sudden silence after the sounds of salaciousness pressed against them, making them aware of their surroundings as they struggled to find their breath. Trent couldn't move, even though he knew he was probably crushing her under his weight.

“The beast finally found his match, Snowflake, and he's purring like never before.”

Riley shivered as he whispered against her ear and then the world around her suddenly became the brightest, happiest place she'd ever seen as his next words registered in her shattered mind.

“That means, my lovely Riley Miller, that I'm not letting you go. You've just sealed your fate. You're mine now and I won't let you go.”

# Chapter Twelve





The closer they came to Gatlinburg; the quieter Riley became. The previous day and night will forever be ingrained in her memory. She never thought she'd ever have sex in the open, let alone in such a raw and wild copulation. At the same time, she couldn't discount the fact that she'd never had such amazing climaxes as she did while listening how her hoarse screams of libidinousness echoed over the mountains.

That hadn't been the end of it. Trent had taken her home and directly into the dungeon. They only came out this morning. Her legs were too rubbery to walk and he had to carry her to the room where he had taken care of her with utmost tenderness. After an entire night of debauchery, the likes of which she'd never even read about, she was raw and sore all over, but content, satisfied, and happy.

*"You're mine now and I won't let you go."* The words he'd uttered on the mountain kept milling through her mind. Although he'd been attentive and caring ever since, he hadn't said a word about continuing a relationship with her. Those were the thoughts that haunted her the closer they came to Aunt Sophie's place— twisting and turning, suffocating her with their whispers.

She felt miserable by the time they arrived at the Bear Cave Lodge, located at the entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"The history of how this place came to be, is amazing, isn't it? Is your aunt a descendant of Hattie Ogle McGiffin?"

Riley swallowed back her morose feelings and smiled at him. "Yes, believe it or not, Hattie Ogle was her grandmother. I wish I had the opportunity to meet her. She sounds like an

amazing woman.” She glanced around as they drove past the majestic five-story lodge to the road leading up the mountain. “To this day, this place holds the same values and mission that its matriarch possessed. It’s hard work but my aunt loves it and she goes out of her way to provide the guests with an authentic experience celebrating the southern, rustic charm of Gatlinburg and the Smokies in a warm, welcoming environment with exceptional service. Just like her grandmother did from the day she started the lodge.”

Without asking directions, Trent drove to Aunt Sophie’s home and parked the truck in front of the quaint two-story cabin on the side of the mountain behind the Lodge. She preferred her privacy and had the cabin build fifteen years ago after her husband passed away. Riley was startled to realize it meant he’d been there before.

“It’s no wonder it’s so popular then.” He cut the engine. “It appears your aunt has guests,” he said pointing to the silver Range Rover parked next to them.

“Probably one of her many friends.” She tangled her fingers together. “Trent, I want to thank you for your hospitality and for saving me. I shudder to think what could’ve happened if no one knew I was there.”

His expression was non-committal but she noticed a flash of amusement in his eyes.

“So polite and proper. Hard to believe you’re the same woman I had in my dungeon last night.” He smiled as her cheeks turned beetroot red. He tapped her on the chin. “Believe me, Snowflake, it was no trouble.” He hesitated a moment. “In fact, I’m the one who should be thanking you.”

“Me? For what?”

“For yanking me out of the dark mire I’ve been drowning in for years. Your presence and your unconditional submission gave me the final push I needed to put the past behind me. Now, I can look to the future and treasure the memories I have of my little girl in my heart forever.” He took her hand in his. “Riley, I was wondering—”

“Riley! You’re here. Oh, thank god!”

*NO! Go back inside, Aunt Sophie!* Riley had never felt as frustrated at her aunt as that moment when she burst from the porch and ran toward them. The interruption was more than untimely, it interrupted what Trent was about to say and she desperately needed to hear. He smiled wryly, squeezed her hand and opened the door. With a heavy sigh, she followed his example and got out of the truck.

She watched with interest as Aunt Sophie hugged him before she rushed to Riley, who received an equally enthusiastic embrace.

“Come inside. It’s freezing out here this morning.”

They followed her into the grand open area. A fire roared in the fireplace, offering an inviting glow of heat that spread throughout the cabin.

Riley shocked to a halt as a tall figure standing in front of the window turned when they walked in.

“Jason! What the devil are you doing here?”

“Darling! Finally. If your aunt hadn’t assured me the mountain roads were snowed under, I would’ve come to fetch you two days ago.”

“You’ve been here for two days?” Riley couldn’t wrap her mind around him being there at all, let alone for that long.

“Well, I delivered your niece safely, Sophie. Good day to you.”

Riley spun around at Trent’s curt voice. His eyes shot shards of ice at her as they combed derisively over her body. His lips flattened. She reached out a hand to him. He shunned it by stomping toward the door.

“Trent, it’s not what you think! Trent, please let—”

“No need, Ms. Miller. Be sure to inform the auto shop to contact me prior to collecting your vehicle.”

He didn’t bother to turn as he spat out his response. Riley’s shoulders slumped as she watched him through the window. He got into the truck and within moments, he was gone.

“I can’t tell you how happy I am that you’re here. At least we’ll be able to spend Christmas together,” Jason cooed in her ear. He caressed her shoulders and leaned in to kiss her cheek.

Riley slapped his hand from her shoulder as she spun around to face him. Her eyes flashed dangerously. “What the fuck are you doing here, Jason?”

Aunt Sophie’s eyes widened. Riley never cursed, which was why she thought up all kinds of expressions instead.

“What kind of question is that? I came here to be with you. Where else would I be?”

“With your latest lover, I imagine. Quite frankly, I don’t give a shit.” Riley looked at her aunt. “Don’t tell me he unpacked himself in your home, Aunt Sophie?”

“I could hardly chase him out, now could I? As far as I knew, you and he were in a relationship.”

“We’re not and we haven’t been for almost six months. Not since I caught him in bed with one of his backup singers. One of many over the past three years. That’s what you said, isn’t it?”

“Look, babe, I made a mistake. I admit it. I was a complete asshole and I realized that the moment I returned home to find you gone. Come on, Riley, you never allowed me to explain,” Jason coaxed as he hedged her against the wall.

She agilely skirted around him. “I offered you as much opportunity to explain as I’m prepared to. Let me make this abundantly clear, Jason. It’s over, and it has been officially for six months. In all honesty, it’s been over much longer than that. I just never cared enough to walk away.”

“What are you saying? You said you loved me,” Jason teemed angrily.

Riley frowned as she cast her mind back over the past three years. She had cared for him in the beginning but love? That was one emotion that had never come to mind in all the time she was with him. She sure as hell never told him as much.

“I never said that. I might have said I cared for you but that most definitely didn’t mean I loved you.”

“I refuse to accept that.” He crossed his arms and glared at her.

Riley sighed heavily and dragged in a calming breath. “I suggest you do. I don’t love you. I don’t want you and I have no interest whatsoever to be with you ... ever again.” She pointed to the door. “It’s time for you to leave, Jason.”

“I’m not going anywhere. You and I are meant to be. Come on, babe, just give it—”

“I’ve heard enough. My niece made her feelings abundantly clear. I for one am appalled at how you treated her. You are no longer welcome in my house or anywhere on my property. You have ten minutes to leave through the main gate or I’ll have security remove you.” Aunt Sophie straightened to her full five-foot-two-inches and stared him down.

Riley turned to look out of the window with a heavy heart. It was clear that Trent believed she’d lied to him about not being in a relationship. She was still standing there when Jason came downstairs with his luggage.

“Babe, please, won’t you at least think—”

“No. It’s over between us and has been for a very long time. I want you to leave, Jason. Now.” Riley didn’t bother to face him as she responded. If she did, he’d notice the tears streaming uncontrollably from her eyes and would believe it was because of him.

She kept herself in check until she heard the Range Rover drive off. Her legs gave in and she crumbled to the floor, sobbing angrily at the joke fate had dealt her.

“Riley? Oh, my sweet girl. Why chase him away if you feel like this?” Aunt Sophie went on her knees and hugged her, cooing in her ear and rubbing her back.

“It’s not him. I don’t care about him.”

“If not him, then why ... ohhh!” She gasped and pulled back to stare at her. “Trent? You’re in love with Trent?”

“Yes,” she said wiping at the tears with angry swipes. “And he immediately believed I lied to him.”

“Honey, you hardly know him. Are you sure it’s not just infatuation toward the man who saved your life?”

Riley shook her head. She blinked at her aunt. A smile trembled on her lips. “You fell in love with Uncle Tom the day you met and got married a month later, remember? I’ve never seen a happier couple than the two of you.”

Sophie stared at her intensely. Riley wasn’t an impulsive woman. She had always loved to listen to her and Tom’s fairytale love story, but over the years, she had scoffed at love at first sight.

“Our situation was different. Emotions that develop during such intense scenarios could very easily be misconstrued as love.”

“I’m not an idiot, Aunt Sophie. Don’t you think I’ve thought of that? Believe me, I dissected my feelings since the first moment I looked into his eyes. I’ve never felt like this. He’s ... I know he’s the one for me and now Jason probably completely destroyed any chance I might have at real happiness.”

“If Trent feels the same about you, he’ll listen, Riley. I daresay, the way he reacted earlier, I’m sure he does.”

She shook her head. “No, Aunt Sophie, he won’t. Trent places the utmost value on trust and honesty and he believes I lied to him. I don’t think he’ll listen to me.”

“You won’t know until you try.” Sophie hesitated. “Come, let’s sit on the sofa.” She waited until they were settled before she continued. “What do you know about Trent, darling?”



“That he used to be a well-known trauma surgeon but gave up his career after his wife and little girl died in a car accident that he feels responsible for.”

“He does? Why?” Sophie prodded gently.

Riley explained the story Trent had told her. “I told him he wasn’t to blame. Accidents happen, whether he or she was driving, it wouldn’t have mattered.” She ran a hand through her hair. “I’ve lived for years in anger about my parents’ death but I’ve realized it didn’t serve a purpose. We’re not in control of our destiny and there was no way the woman who caused the accident could have prevented it. I prefer to remember the good memories rather than the bad. We can’t live in the past ... not if we want to move into the future.”

“I’m so happy to hear that.” Sophie rubbed Riley’s hands. “There’s something you should know.” She dragged in a deep breath.

“I’m listening.”

“Trent’s wife and little girl died in the same accident your parents did.”

Riley’s chest closed up and suddenly she couldn’t breathe. “How ... I don’t understand. How do you know that?”

“He came to introduce himself when he moved here. I’m not sure he’ll ever be able to let go of the guilt, Riley. It wasn’t only the loss of his own family he’s been carrying for six years, it’s your parents’ as well.”

“He knew and he didn’t tell me. Why wouldn’t he tell me?”

“For the same reason he kept visiting me every month for the past six years. In my case, it’s his way to make up for the

loss I had ... in yours? I'd say he was afraid if you knew, you'd run from him."

"You seem to know him very well." Riley struggled to work through the news, not so much that it had been Trent's wife in the other car, but that he hadn't told her.

"He's a good man with a caring heart, Riley. It's a pity he stopped practicing medicine but it opened other doors for him. He told me the other day he didn't want to go back to be a surgeon, that he enjoyed and preferred the tranquility and stress-free life he now lives."

"What other doors?"

"You don't know what he does now? You spend five days and six nights with him and you have no idea that you were being taken care of by your favorite thriller author?"

"My favorite ... Alex Cross? Are you saying he's ... that's him?" Riley stared at her in complete shock as the final pieces of the puzzle fell into place. "So, that's why he didn't want to be disturbed when he had work to do. He just never told me what it was and I didn't ask."

"Phone him, darling, and if he doesn't answer, keep trying. You're not a quitter. If your feelings are as strong as you say they are, fight for your happiness."

Riley wiped the final tears from her face and dug her phone from her bag. She glanced at her aunt. "I don't have his number," she said dejectedly.

"Lucky for you, I do." She picked up her cell from the coffee table and scrolled to Trent's number. Riley saved it on her phone before she made the call.

“I’m going to make us some tea. I baked your favorite Christmas sugar cookies.”

Riley smiled at her as she listened to the ring tone in her ear.

“Reeves.” He sounded abrupt and brusque.

“Trent, it’s Riley.”

She would never have thought silence could be loud, but since it was the only thing that followed her greeting, it almost deafened her.

“It’s not what you think. I never lied to you,” she continued in a soft lilt.

“That’s debatable. I’m busy, Ms. Miller. You’ll have to excuse me.”

“Trent ...” Her voice drifted off as she heard the sugary call of his name in the background. She could feel the painful crack form in her heart. “I see. Is that one of your regular subs? You lambast me without giving me a chance to explain while you ... you ... you know what, enjoy her.”

She was too angry to continue and abruptly ended the call.

“Neanderthal! Man-whore!” she sneered furiously.

“Whoa! Where did that come from?” Aunt Sophie’s head turned her way at the insults rippling loudly through the room.

“He already has another woman at the cabin,” she snapped, too angry to be sad.

“No, that’s impossible.”

“I heard her voice in the background, Aunt Sophie, calling his name all sugary and sweet.”

Sophie approached carrying a tray filled with tea and cookies.

“How long did it take you to get here from his cabin this morning, Riley?”

“I don’t know. I didn’t check the time.” She added four teaspoons of sugar to her cup before she realized what she was doing. She slumped back on the sofa.

“It takes almost an hour to get to his cabin, darling. It’s only been thirty minutes since he dropped you here. Wherever he is, it’s not at the cabin. He’s most probably at the rescue center in Pigeon Forge. He volunteers as a rescue medic for them.”

“Oh ... I guess you could be right.”

“Don’t give up, my darling. Give him tonight to calm down and try again in the morning. A night’s sleep apart might be just the thing to make him see things clearly.”

“I hope you’re right.”

“Come, finish your tea. I’d like to take you on a tour of the lodge and show you all the changes I made since last you were here.” She brushed a caring hand over Riley’s cheek. “Six years? I hope it’s not going to be that long before I see you again. I miss you like crazy.”

“I promise. From now on I’ll be back every year.”

“Good. Now, drink up and tell me about your job.”

For the rest of the day Sophie kept Riley so busy she didn’t have the time to think or worry about Trent. Not until she got into bed. Then, she felt lost and alone.

The memory of his hard body pressing warmly against hers as they finally went to sleep was carved into her mind. It had felt so right and the future had winked brightly at her.

*“You’re mine now and I won’t let you go.”*

“Please still feel the same way you did when you said the words.”

Riley couldn’t envision her life without Trent. Even after such a short period of knowing him, he had become her future. He’d entangled his essence so deep into her soul, it had become her guiding light.

“Aunt Sophie is right. I’m not giving up. I love you Trent Reeves and whether you said the words or not, I felt your love in every touch and kiss you gave me last night. I refuse to let a stupid misunderstanding stand in the way of our future ... our happiness.”

# Chapter Thirteen



“Stop growling at me. She’s gone and that’s it,” Trent snapped at the two dogs who had been howling and complaining ever since he returned home alone the previous day. At first, he’d been accommodating but it was now day two of being without her and his patience was wearing thin.

He stacked the last of the beechwood stumps into the fireplace and set it alight. Within minutes the inviting glow of the flickering flames filled the living room. He loved the fireplace as it mimicked the warmth of a summer’s day. He breathed in deeply. Although the air wasn’t smoky, courtesy of the strong extractor chute he installed, he detected a pine aroma as it burned, just a faint fragrance to reassure his senses that there was comfort in the long bitter winter no matter how brittle and chilled his heart was beating.

Sheila laid down on the bearskin rug in front of the fire with her head on her outstretched legs. She released a long, pitiful howl.

“Warf!” Storm sat down next to her and nudged her nose with his. She didn’t respond and he released a pitiful cry.

“Oh, for heaven’s sake! She lied to me.”

“Warf! Warf! Neooo!” Sheila responded as she lifted her head to glower at him.

“What do you know? You weren’t there. She’s got a lover and the expression on her face when she saw him said it all.”

“Neooo,” Sheila yapped and returned to her previous position. Storm just stared at him.

“It’s the truth and there’s nothing any of us can do about it. She used me to teach her—”



“Warf-warf-warf!” Storm scowled at him. His fur glimmered from the glow of the fire as he vehemently shook his head.

“Believe what you will. I know what I saw. I’m going to work. Let’s go.”

Trent stomped off but neither of the dogs moved. He turned to stare at them.

“Gruff,” Storm snorted and settled next to Sheila on the rug. The message was clear. They didn’t desire to be in his presence. Not since he wouldn’t give them what they wanted ... their beloved Riley.

“Stay there then,” he snapped and stormed to the study, slamming the door shut behind him. He started as the sound reverberated through the room. “Get a grip, Reeves. You’re acting like a boy whose favorite toy has been taken from him.”

He sat down behind his laptop and stared at the screen. He’d been trying to write since early that morning. So far, the only thing that showed any progress was the flickering of the cursor, taunting him. Just like her voice kept running through his mind.

*“It’s not what you think. I never lied to you.”*

It sounded so much like the words Adrienne had used when he’d confronted her with his suspicions about an affair that his mind had immediately shut off. He couldn’t forget the love and joy he’d seen on Jason’s face when he’d seen Riley or the guilt on hers when she’d spotted him. The two combined made four and the penny had dropped. She had lied to him. It was the one thing he couldn’t get past, not since Adrienne.

*But you lied to her too, Reeves.*

“I never lied to her,” he rasped in response to the voice in his head.

*Omission is as good as lying. You knew who she was the moment she introduced herself. You knew who her parents were. You knew they were killed in that accident. You knew and you didn't tell her.*

“Fuck, this is such a mess.” He ran his hands over his eyes. He was tired. Sleep had evaded him the previous night. He couldn't get Riley out of his mind. Their last night together had clinched it for him. She was the woman he wanted. Without him knowing, she had crawled into his heart and threaded her sweet submission all the way into his soul. He started as realization struck.

“I love her. I have no idea how it happened so fast but I do.” He slouched lower in the chair and rested his head on the high back. “God, I'm such an idiot. What if I'm wrong and I saw only what I wanted to see? What if she's telling the truth?”

He sat up and opened the web search engine on his laptop. Jason, whoever he was, looked familiar. Maybe if he could find out more about him, Trent might be able to patch together the pieces and get over his cynicism.

Trust. He needed to learn to trust, and until the moment they'd walked into Sophie's house, Riley hadn't given him any reason not to.

Her submission had been honest, open and freely given. In that, he knew she had no agenda. He had to find the credence he needed to—

His fingers stilled over the keyboard. No, he shouldn't need proof. He freely admitted he loved her and he had felt and seen

the love in her eyes. That was what he should believe in. Love ... their love for each other.

He needed to let go of his prejudices and accept that Riley wasn't like Adrienne. She was a passionate woman, in all aspects of her life. It was there in everything she said and did. He didn't believe for one moment that she would have given herself with such abundance to him if she was in a relationship with another man.

“Warf! Warf! Gruff! Warf!”

“What the devil is going on?” Trent grunted and stomped toward the door as Storm thumped loudly against it, uttering little yaps and howls.

“What?” His voice bellowed loudly throughout the cabin as he yanked open the door. Storm jumped up and down, barked and ran toward the living room. When Trent didn't follow him, he returned and growled at him. “You know I don't like to be bothered when I'm working. You better not be wasting my time, mister,” he warned as he followed him.

His footsteps slowed as he entered the room and encountered the most sensually, arousing and beautiful vision of his life.

Riley was sitting on the bearskin rug in front of the fire, her legs to the side ... naked. Her body glowed in a halo of gold from the crackling fire behind her. She looked ethereal, nymph-like and it disintegrated any doubt he had about her.

“Riley?” His throat closed as she moved and her breasts lifted enticingly, nipped by a reflection of golden sheen from the flames in the background.

“I didn’t lie to you. Our relationship was over almost six months ago, longer if I’m honest. He just wouldn’t take no for an answer even though he—”

“Shh.” Trent was there, in front of her on his knees, pressing his fingers against her lips. “I believe you.”

“You do?” She blinked in confusion.

Trent slipped his hands into her hair and watched as the silky tresses slithered through his fingers.

“I became a cynical person over the years. Maybe the community is right, I am a recluse. I don’t trust easily and I learned to guard my heart after Adrienne ... but that’s all in the past. I acknowledge that we don’t know each other very well but one thing I do know is that I fell in love with you.”

He smiled at her surprised gasp.

“Yeah, baby, insta-love. I never thought it was possible, but I’m living proof it is. You’re a passionate woman and once I realized that the way you gave yourself to me ... you couldn’t have been involved with another man. Because you’re mine ... I claimed you the night I saved you from the car wreck.” He brushed his lips in a brief kiss against hers. “I meant what I said on the mountain, Riley. You’re mine and I’ll never let you go.”

“Thank god! Here I thought I’d have to chain you in the dungeon and have sex with you until you were willing to listen to me.”

“Hm, well, that doesn’t sound like a bad deal. Only, little subbie, you’ll be the one in chains and I won’t be having sex with you, I’ll be fucking you ... every day and every night, until

you beg me to remove the chains and cuff you to me with nothing but your love.”

“Not that I’m saying no to all that ... er ... copulation, but it won’t be necessary,” she lilted with a rosy hue tinting her cheeks.

“It won’t?” His hands began to roam over her naked curves. The beast inside him growled as she arched her back to offer him better access.

“No, my love, because I love you too. I think I fell head over heels the first day I opened my eyes and found you staring at me. My heart belongs to you. It doesn’t matter that we only just met; one thing I know without any doubt, is that my love for you will never change, only grow stronger with every passing day.”

“You’ve just made me the luckiest man alive, my lovely Snowflake.” His smile slipped as he sat down next to her and cradled her face in his hands. “There’s something you need to know.”

Riley’s smile was beatific and stole the breath he just took. “I already do. Aunt Sophie told me, but I love that you’re willing to be honest about it.”

“Honesty and trust go hand in hand, my love and it’s the one thing I will always offer you, unconditionally.”

“And I you.” She narrowed her eyes at him, her fingers splayed against his chest to keep him at a distance as he leaned closer for a kiss. “Alex Cross ... does that ring a bell, Mr. Reeves?”

Riley was surprised to see his cheeks redden. She giggled delightfully, realizing that it was the kind of fame he didn't covet.

“You're my favorite author of all time. To be honest ... I've had a couple of fantasies about the very elusive Alex Cross.”

“Is that so?” His voice deepened as Riley turned and gracefully laid down on her back. Her hands moved over her flat stomach to cup her breasts.

“Hmm ... wanna know one of them?”

“I'm not so sure I'm happy that you're having fantasies about my pseudonym, Riley.”

She burst out laughing and then gasped when he settled between her legs, as naked as her. She had never seen anyone shed their clothes as fast as he just did.

“Are you laughing at me, Snowflake?”

“Of course not, Sir.”

His eyes darkened; his dulcet voice timbered over her and cloaked the submissive who had come to yearn for his Dominance in its chords.

“Thank you, Riley Miller.”

“For what?”

“For trusting me with your uncharted submission, for offering it to me with so much trust and honesty. For being the submissive who I have yearned for all my life. Thank you, for being mine.”

“I always craved something in my life but never knew what until you showed me what I yearned for. Thank you for

accepting my submission. For being the Dominant I trust with everything in me and who I will yearn for every day of my life. I am yours, Trent Reeves, body, heart, and soul.”

“Warf! Warf!” Storm barked excitedly, chasing his tail.

“Warf!” Sheila yapped and joined him in his tomfoolery.

Trent laughed gaily, his eyes filled with love and devotion as he looked at Riley.

“It seems we have a consensus, my love.”

“We do?”

“Yes ... and all it needs is for you to say yes to make it unanimous.”

“Yes!”

He chuckled and kissed her lips. “You don’t know the question yet, Snowflake.”

“It doesn’t matter. I trust Storm and Sheila. They would never lead me on the wrong path. So, yes! My answer is yes.”

“That does it then. We’re getting married on Christmas Eve.”

“What? Wait! No, that’s too .... hmmm,” she moaned as Trent rocked his hardness deeper inside her.

“Too late, Snowflake. You already said yes.”

“Warf-warf-warf!” Storm and Sheila chorused their joy.

Riley draped her arms around Trent’s neck and locked her ankles behind his waist. Her eyes shimmered with love. She had never looked more beautiful, coated in the golden hue of the flames.

“So I did, but in case you didn’t hear me the first time. Yes, Trent Reeves, I’ll marry you.”

“And be my permanent sub?”

“Always, my Master,” she murmured against his lips as he kissed her and continued to rock inside her, his beast purring at the title she bestowed on him.

Riley quickly became lost in his raw passion that was in such contrast to the gentle touch of his hands and the promise of unbound pleasure rimming his eyes. The world fell away as they indulged in the unexpurgated passion fed by the instant chemistry and love that had drawn them together from first glance.

Afterward, their breathing haggard and worn, Trent cuddled her against his chest. He held her, breathing in her scent and allowing her essence to flow untethered through him.

“I love you, Riley with a passion I have never felt before. With a possessiveness that scares me, but with reverence and a firm belief that this is a love that will last a lifetime.”

He tilted back her head. The kiss he offered was a slow meshing of warmth, passion, and need; a need that had been born the moment their eyes had met and grew with every passing day.

“This is the beginning of our future, Snowflake.”

Riley nodded with a loving smile. Her fingers trembled as she pressed them against his lips.

“A destiny captured in the beauty of falling snowflakes.”

“Warf! Warf!”



*The End*

# **Excerpt: Master Santa**



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### ***Lascivo Credence.***

*Lascivious Acceptance.* How appropriate, she thought as she stared at the stylish gold crafted sign that glimmered in the gay Christmas light colors of red, green, and gold above the intricately carved dark wood door. Inviting, decadent, and scary at the same time. Megan Torres stared at it, suddenly not as confident as she had been when she'd accepted the anonymous invitation to attend the Christmas Eve party at the upmarket and very exclusive club.

“Miss? Is there a problem?”

The nasal voice of the cab driver yanked her gaze to the front.

“Ehm ... no.” She could hear the hesitance vibrate in her voice.

“Do you want me to wait? Just in case.” The offer came from a man who had seen many things in his forty years as a cab driver. He glanced around. The parking area in front of the impressive mansion that had been converted into an exclusive club—on a private estate edged between Crystal Lake and the coast in Michigan—was packed with luxury cars and limousines. A gathering of the rich and famous. His eyes flitted over the woman in the back seat. She was beautiful but the tight hold she had on the clutch purse in her hand showed that she wasn't one of them. She seemed as out of place as the bright yellow cab.

Megan dragged in a trembling breath. The invitation she'd received flashed in her mind once again.

**You are cordially invited to be  
my personal guest at *Lascivo Credence*,  
a place where your fantasies become  
reality. Dare to be brave.  
Master Santa.**

That in itself hadn't been alarming, but the link she had been directed to, to complete a non-disclosure agreement and a limit list—which until that point she'd only read about in lascivious BDSM books—had shaken her conservative existence to the core. It hadn't stopped her from completing it though. The opportunity to experience all the things she'd only read about had been too tempting. Although, if she was honest with herself, her desire was to see if the rumor was true that it was the place where Cash Evans spent his free time—Cash was the owner and CEO of Evans Sports Wholesale Group in Bay City where she worked as a Senior Legal Advisor. A man who made her ovaries burst into song and dance every time she passed him in the hallways. She couldn't count the times she'd ended up with her panties wet and her clitoris throbbing from no more than brief eye contact and a nod from the gorgeous man.

It was insane. She was a forty-four-year-old woman for goodness sake and she acted like a teenager with a crush on a teacher!

“No ... this is where I'm meant to be.”

She handed over the fee and offered the friendly man a tentative smile as she exited the cab. Her feet—adorned in spiked, green, open-toed stilettos, with jingling silver bells that

were added to further embellish her outfit as a seductive elf—refused to move. She clutched her purse in one hand and the formal access card that had been hand-delivered to her desk soon after she'd completed the applications online, in the other. It had been unnerving that whoever had issued the invitation had known where she worked.

“Well, Megan, you're here now. Might as well bite the bullet and go inside.”

Her thighs trembled as she approached the three-story Southern style mansion. It stood proud and regal, awaiting her entrance. The wood under her hand felt warm as she reached out to push open the door. Doubt assailed her as the cautious Megan rose from the ashes where she'd banned her to while getting dressed earlier.

*What am I doing here? I'm not the adventurous type. And that warning! Oh, shit, I don't think I can—*

“Having second thoughts?”

Megan pivoted around at the deep voice that caused a shiver to run down her spine. He stood a couple of steps away, but his tall, well-proportioned body, dressed in a dark suit, exuded power, so much so that it felt like he was invading her personal space. She sucked in a breath. He was tall and stood with his feet braced apart.

“I ... don't ... maybe I shouldn't have come,” she stammered.

His handsome face was illuminated by the flickering lights. The strong planes of his cheeks and jaw appeared rigid, unsmiling, but his eyes ... *oh man* ... those eyes seemed to burn right through her. Her skin tingled in response to the lazy gaze

that traveled over the black coat that ended mid-calf, to her feet and back. Much like hers had done to him. His dark hair was cut in a neat style and she could see the streaks of gray at his temples. He made her think of Cash Evans. He had the same composure and confidence in the broad lines of his shoulders. She sighed in relief. At least it meant she wasn't too old for a place like this!

“Yet, you came.”

Megan nodded and waved the invitation that had become crumpled in her fist. “I was invited.”

“Let me guess. You're not in the lifestyle.”

*Hell no, I'm not!* Her mind immediately responded but somehow, the expectant glimmer in his eyes told her there was more to the question. A deeper probe ... which was confirmed as his lips twitched in a ghost of a smile.

“Curiosity is good, little one, but once you set foot inside, you better be prepared.” He walked closer ... too close.

Megan suddenly couldn't breathe as she had to tilt back her head to look into his face. His chest pressed her back against the door.

*Oh, hallelujah!* Her ovaries cheered at the contact. Megan was shocked at the immediate flush of heat that slithered past her labia to wet her panties. *Get a grip, Megan! He's a complete stranger.*

“Yes, little one, that's what you can expect in there ... and so much more.” He chuckled and brushed his finger over her flaming cheeks. “You are going to cause a ruckus in there, that's for sure.”

“W-why?” She gasped as his finger traced the fullness of her bottom lip.

“No Dom can resist a blushing sub ... especially a newbie like you.”

Megan’s eyes flashed sideways. “I’m not sure I should ... maybe this wasn’t such a good idea.” Her mind went silent ... for once, although she suspected it was in shock. *Like hell, woman! This is so the best idea you’ve ever had!* Megan suppressed the desire to sigh as her inner voice woke up. How was she supposed to resist it and the man who held her captive with the slight pressure of his chest? She moistened her lips with a sweep of her tongue, exulting in the hardness she felt pressing against her stomach. *Gawd, that feels good!* Her nipples had turned into hard stones and she had no doubt he could feel them poking into his chest.

His low chuckle preceded his deep voice. “I’ll take that as a compliment, little one, but try to curb your desires and reactions in there. Your eyes are very expressive and could be construed as an engraved invitation if you look at everyone like that.” Her eyes widened. “You’ll be naked as a jaybird, tied over a spanking bench for an erotic spanking, not to mention a hard fuck or two before you could blink twice.”

Mortification rushed through her as she realized he had seen right through her. So much for believing she was the epitome of sophistication!

“Now I *know* this was a bad idea.” She skirted around him and took a step. His hand caught her arm in a firm grip.

“You don’t seem like the type to run away, subbie. There’s strength in you. You might be a newbie but deep down, you



know that you're exactly where you want to be.”

“I ... the invitation—”

“Was only an excuse. Why are you here?”

She looked at him. Like she felt with Cash Evans, she felt intimidated by this man's presence. It was more than his massive body, he was calm with a self-possession that made her shiver as she once again felt the thrill of danger that emanated from him.

So, this is what a Dominant in real life was like. Megan stood helpless in the face of the power that radiated from every inch of his body. Excitement thrilled through her. Now more than ever, she wanted to ... what? Give in to her deepest darkest desire to be one of the heroines in the BDSM books she read? To be forced to face the dreary life she'd led since Kent had passed away? She wanted ... *oh god yes!* She wanted a man like this one in her life. A strong, confident man who would bend her to his will ... not by force but because he had the ability to reach deep inside her and tap into the submissive she suspected had been dormant, waiting to be awakened. No, not just a man ... she needed a Dom.

“Let me give you some friendly advice, little one. When a Dom asks you a question, you respond. We don't like waiting.” His voice had lowered into a no-nonsense drawl. The authority of power that was projected on his face, compelled her to answer.

“I'm here because I ... think ... uhm, I have ... I *need*,” she stammered. Her breath wheezed from her lips when he smiled. *Good lord, this man is dangerous!*

“There you go again.” He leaned in. His breath was warm against her lips. “I’m going to come looking for you, subbie. Maybe whoever invited you will be willing to share. I can think of nothing better than ending the celebration tonight than having a threesome with you.”

His chuckle traveled through her body, followed by the red flush coloring her skin from head to toe. The vision his words elicited in her mind was frightening, but it didn’t stop her loins from throbbing in excitement.

“Shall we?” He held open the door expectantly.

Megan hesitated as she looked past him. The entrance hall was magnificent. All marble tiles, flowers, and breathtaking chandeliers that flickered invitingly. A hum of voices in the background was overshadowed by the soothing Grecian music that flowed toward her.

She sucked in a deep breath and stepped inside.

If you love romance with a touch of dark BDSM kink, then this one is for you. Click here to get [Master Santa](#) now.

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## About the Author

“Isn’t it a universal truth that it’s our singular experiences and passion, for whatever thing or things, which molds us all into the individuals we become? Whether it’s hidden in the depths of our soul or exposed for all to see?”

Linzi Basset is a South African born animal rights supporter with a poet’s heart, and she is also a bestselling fiction writer of suspense-filled romance erotica books; who as the latter, refuses to be bound to any one sub-genre. She prefers instead to stretch herself as a storyteller which has resulted in her researching and writing historical and even paranormal themed works.

Her initial offering: Club Alpha Cove, a BDSM club suspense series released back in 2015, reached Amazon’s Bestseller list, and she has been on those lists ever since. Labelling her as prolific is a gross understatement as just a few short years later she has now been published over fifty times; a total which excludes the other published works of her alter ego: Isabel James who co-authors.

“I write from the inside out. My stories are both inside me and a part of me, so it can be either pleasurable to release them or painful to carve them out. I live every moment of every story I write. So, if you’re looking for spicy and suspenseful, I’m your girl ... woman ... writer ... you know what I mean!”

Linzi believes that by telling stories in her own voice, she can better share with her readers the essence of her being: her passionate nature; her motivations; and her wildest fantasies. She feels every touch as she writes, every kiss, every harsh word uttered, and this to her is the key to a never-ending love of writing.



Ultimately, all books by Linzi Basset are about passion. To her, passion is the driving force of all emotion; whether it be lust, desire, hate, trust, or love. This is the underlying message contained in her books. Her advice: “Believe in the passions driving your desires; live them; enjoy them; and allow them to bring you happiness.”

# Stalk Linzi Basset

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Don't be shy, pay me a visit, anytime!

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