



**FIVE
DAYS OF
CHRISTMAS**
Spice

A SINFUL DELIGHTS ROMANCE

MERCY DENTON

Five Days of Christmas Spice

Mercy Denton

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First published via Amazon.com

ASIN: B0CMPH5QKS November 2023

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the Sinful Delights Series! I hope you enjoy Noel and Holly's story in Five Days of Christmas Spice. Some things I want to share before we begin:

This book takes place in Canada and is written in Canadian English and some words may look different to you. If you find what you think is an error aside from the Canadianism, you're welcome to drop me a screenshot here: mercydenton@gmail.com. Five Days of Christmas Spice is about exploring kinks in a safe space with a partner who respects consent and boundaries and does include: light bondage, pup play, orgasm control and public play. I hope you enjoy the read! And if you do, . Reviews help indie authors get noticed.

Merry Kinkmas,

Mercy

1 HOLLY

DECEMBER 23RD

“**Y**ou’re not even curious about the kinky resort next to your grandmother’s farmhouse?” Patricia Smythe, my best work friend, grabs my phone out of my hand.

My cheeks grew warm.

Patricia levels that same look at me that I’ve seen her use on a reporter when she wasn’t getting her way for a client. I stare past her at the bedazzled Christmas tree under her window, trying not to blink.

“This is what happens when you ply me with drink.” I take back my phone, wishing I had kept my mouth shut.

But the day before Christmas Eve, and in Patricia’s cozy living room instead of in one of our executive offices, leaves us more open with each other. I’ve known Patricia for five years, ever since she came to Edmonton and took a job as a PR Executive working for one of the best outfits in the city.

I work as a talent manager at one of the top firms in the country. Patricia and I share some of the same clients.

Patricia and her capable team handle many of my actor clients who found themselves on the wrong side of the press.

“Good drink, too.” Patricia holds the bottle of Blanton’s Single Barrel Bourbon to the light. “Beats the orchid I sent her.”

I laugh. We can blame it on the drink. “Are you going to tell me who that’s from?”

“You know better,” Patricia smiles, wagging a finger at me.

“Don’t try to change the subject. Why won’t you go scope the place out?”

I don’t want to talk about this, but Patricia’s expression is open and judgement-free, her short black curly hair untamed, falling in ringlets to her chin, her brown eyes curious behind her red-framed glasses.

“The guy from the consortium that owns Vixen’s Paradise keeps bugging my cousin to sell. We’ve told them no. What’s there to go look at?” The truth is, I don’t want to go look at Gran Deb’s place. It hurts too much.

“The fact that this place is a kept secret in a small town outside of Toronto makes me curious. Maybe I can hire their PR person.”

“Patricia!” I giggle. “We have no interest in selling the land. I don’t need to go see some chintzy resort.”

“How do you know it’s chintzy?”

I bring up photos on my phone. The outside picture shows a manicured lawn and a huge old farmhouse that obviously had an addition or two, and the interior shot is of a dungeon. Turning off the screen, I toss my phone in my bag to stop looking at it.

“I assume the place is falling apart and cold and drafty with bad towels,” I curl my feet under me on her corduroy couch.

“You don’t know until you go look. Why won’t you guys sell?”

“It’s been in the family for generations. We don’t want to sell it.” A defensive tone creeps into my voice, and I wince.

“But your cousin and your parents don’t want to live there?”

“No. My mom and stepdad are happy in their St. Augustine condo. My cousin, with her five kids and two budgies, has no interest in living in the middle of nowhere. Neither do I.”

“Farming is hard. If nobody wants to live there, why don’t you look into renting the place to this consortium?” I shrug. I don’t want to deal with the Brennon Consortium, but truthfully, I’ve left my cousin, Stella to deal with it for too long, which is unfair.

I have to look at the place if I want to sell it.

“Yeah, maybe I should take a look at it. It’s been years since I’ve been there.”

“You could bring Phil,” Patricia waggles her eyebrows.

“He’s way too vanilla for that. Going to Cozumel is enough excitement.” Phil, my boyfriend of three years, and I had been going to Cozumel every year for Christmas since we first got together.

“It is exciting! I’d love to go!”

“Then why don’t you book a resort and take Jared?”

Patricia lets out a bark of laughter and gets up from her chair, still chuckling. From the fridge, she pulls out a cheese board.

“He hates sand. We’re going to visit friends for New Year’s Eve. Speaking of adult-only places, we’re going to a kink party.”

“No way!” We have never talked about this kind of thing before now. Our interactions are mostly confined to lunches and meetings with our respective clients. Guess the bourbon made Patricia’s lips loose tonight, too.

“Yep. Christmas with my parents, then we’re leaving for Vancouver the next day. When are you leaving for Cozumel?”

“Tomorrow.”

“On Christmas Eve?” Patricia looks at me as if I told her the most famous pop star on her roster joined a convent.

I mistakenly left the booking to Phil, thinking he could handle it. But who books a flight on Christmas Eve?

“Yep. It’s when Phil booked it.”

I know I should be happy that's off my plate, but honestly, I would have booked us two days earlier.

“Okay! Present time.” Patricia dives under her tree and picks up a gold-wrapped package with a green bow. “Open.”

I balance the gift in my hands, admiring the perfectly tied bow. Smiling at my friend, I tear away the shiny paper and reveal a clothing box. Carefully, I deal with the tape and get it open.

My breath catches. Nestled in soft pink tissue paper is a gold cardigan. I pick it up, the fabric soft and luxurious in my hands. “Patricia! It's gorgeous!”

The gold material shimmers in the soft lighting of Patricia and Jared's contemporary house.

“It's handmade. The artist is local. One of my clients finds the most unique things, and I jumped on them for the intel.”

“If I could get one of my actors to wear this, this artist would have so much work.” I carefully settle the sweater in the box and put it aside. “Thanks so much.”

“My pleasure. I thought it was light enough to pack, and you could wear it on the flight to Cozumel.”

I reach for the bottle on the table and pour us a half measure. I raise my glass to my friend's. “You're always so thoughtful. It's perfect.”

“Good,” Patricia's lips quirk.

“I had to come up with something that wasn’t wine. How many bottles did you get this year?”

“We’re not competing!” I laugh. One of three reasons Patricia and I are fast friends is because there is so much we relate to, being women who are executives in competitive fields.

Patricia grins. “Come on, I beat last year’s record.”

I spread brie on a cracker, hiding a grin. “The last count? Ninety-six bottles of red and fourteen bottles of white. Two bottles of ice wine.”

Much of this wine comes from other companies we work with or want us to work with.

“Impressive haul!”

“Yeah, we keep it in the closet in the office and give it out to clients when they sign the deal. I took one bottle home with me and left the others. Speaking of, I was hoping we could get Mr. Durand some friendly press while he’s taking his adorable toddler skating?”

I slyly throw the pitch. Turning off my work brain is a huge problem, but I’ve learned to live with it.

Patricia shakes her head and laughs. “Holly, this isn’t business. We can discuss it on the fifth of January when you’re sun-tanned back from Cozumel, and I’m back in the office.”

“Okay, I’m just saying the toddler is adorable, and I know they’re going to be skating at the Victoria Park Iceway around three o’clock on Boxing Day.”

“Naughty, Holly.” Ivy reaches for her cell and quickly taps out a text. “No promises.”

“Hey, I didn’t expect any.” I lift my hands, trying to convey innocence. “Only putting a bug in your ear. I know the press loves him and wants to get as much from him before he heads back to L.A. to start filming the second season.”

“Consider the bug placed,” Patricia drains her glass. “You know I adore your gift. Thank you.”

My gift to Patricia had been a pair of tickets, centre row orchestra to a symphony performance of Bach.

“You’re welcome.” I check my watch.

“Guess I have to get ready for Christmas at the beach.”

“Did you want to do something different for Christmas this year?”

I swallow past an unexpected lump in my throat. Christmas is kind of hard for me.

“I don’t know. Phil’s family doesn’t really get together, and mine gets together for Thanksgiving. When I was a kid, it was so perfect, you know?”

Maybe that’s all it comes down to. I long for my childhood Christmases, and because I can’t get that, I pick going away. But who wouldn’t choose to escape the snow and cold and go to Mexico? I know I’m being ridiculous.

A memory of my Gran’s farmhouse, covered in snow and the Christmas tree in the window, floats through my mind, and I

think of the Brennon Consortium, who want to buy it. They'll probably demolish it, eventually. This resort of theirs must be a pop-up thing because how can a kinky winter wonderland be sustainable?

"I think Christmas is like that when you're a kid, and if it is, you're lucky." Patricia squeezes my arm.

"Yeah, I think you're right." My throat is tight with tears, and even though we have shared intimacies tonight, I won't let her see how upset I am. "My Uber should be here any moment. Thanks for sharing your liquor, the dinner and the gorgeous sweater."

"You're welcome for the sweater. We have to do this again." Patricia gives me a hug. "Tell me how Cozumel is and if you change your mind about going to Vixen's Paradise!"

A security alarm elicits a double beep that indicates a door is open, and Patricia's face lights up. "Jared's home!"

I gather my things and follow Patricia downstairs to the entranceway.

"Hello, ladies," Jared Smythe, all six-foot-something and built like a defenceman, stomps the snow off his boots and flashes a pearly white grin at his wife.

"I'm so happy to be home!" He flings an arm out and catches Patricia around the waist, lifting her. They lock lips, like a Hallmark movie on the doorstep.

Those tears threaten to spill, and I push them away.

"Hey, Jared! Merry Christmas."

“Merry Christmas. Can I give you a lift?”

“No, I have Uber coming, but thanks.” I throw on my jacket and hug Patricia. “Thanks again. See you in the new year.”

“Merry Christmas, Holly!” Patricia waves as I rush down their snowy steps to my waiting Uber.

“Hi, hope I didn’t keep you waiting.”

“Not even a minute,” the driver flashes a grin. “You’re going to Saskatchewan Drive?”

“Yes, that’s me.” I lean forward to check their GPS, and it’s correct. Settling against the seat, I take out my phone.

As the driver pulls out, I see Jared kiss Patricia through their still-open door.

My heart twists with a twinge of envy. Phil isn’t that affectionate, but he’s stable and kind, and that’s what I want after one lousy relationship led to a series of them.

I don’t want to repeat my parents’ mistakes. Solid is a good foundation. So what if it’s boring and vanilla? The kink stuff is behind me. Been there, not going back again.

I think of Patricia and Jared going to a kink party. Maybe solid and fun is a lot to ask for?

But Phil is fine. He gets along with my cousin and my parents, remembers to take out the garbage and gives me space. It’s fine.

I keep telling myself that, even as the lump in my throat grows bigger, I end up sniffing through the rest of the drive.

2 NOEL

I brush past a mother bouncing a crying baby on her hip and through the crowd of people who clearly have no idea where they are going. Grandparents and aunts standing still, locked in an embrace. Couples kiss each other goodbye, and I push down the lump in my throat, irritation heating my skin.

Lots of people don't have anyone special to spend this Christmas with, and it's fine. I dodge a cluster of women cooing over a baby and shake my head. At least I don't have kids. Claire didn't want any. That thought just adds to my mood, and I side-step the cooing and ahing and dash down the corridor to my gate. Every single chair is occupied. On Christmas Eve, what did I expect?

My phone vibrates against my pocket, and I answer, leaning against the window. "Yeah?"

Glancing outside, I see thick snowflakes covering the tarmac, and I hope the weather doesn't cause any delays.

"Why are you so hard to get a hold of?"

“Why do you have to call me so often?” It’s my brother, Evan, and he’s a grump.

Someone runs into me, and I turn. A man with a toddler smiles at me in apology.

“We are trying to make sure you’re okay, Noel. Give us some slack.”

I probably should not ride them so hard, but what kind of older brother would I be if I didn’t?

“No snow out your way?”

“Nope, it’s a balmy ten Celsius. The sun is shining.”

I think it was October since we experienced anything above a zero. The weather is a safe topic. That’s why all small talk starts with it, and while I’m using it now. I’m tired of telling them how I am and reassuring them that I’m fine.

I didn’t drink too much the night before.

I didn’t buy a new car, or like that one time, I bought six properties for sale in the middle of nowhere in Ontario.

And I didn’t do something completely rash, like return to working for a firm.

“Evan, it’s the third year without her. I’m not great, but I won’t abandon ship.”

I reflectively clench my fist as if I could stop the pain that’s still an open wound deep in my solar plexus.

“Good to hear, Noel,” Evan’s tone lost its usual snark. I know my brothers had a hard time watching me deal with my

grief.

“You know I am going to see good friends at the end of this flight, and I like checking on my pet project. I’ll see you on New Year’s Eve.”

Vixen’s Paradise may have come to life on a whim, but I left the day-to-day operations with the two people I trusted most in the world, outside of my brothers. It was Evan who convinced me to bring my half-formed idea to life.

“Okay, I’ll see your ugly mug soon. Are you going to join the party?”

I turn from the window.

In the crowded room, a woman on her knees frantically shuffles clothes out of shopping bags from the airport shops and crams them into her small carry-on suitcase. Her long auburn hair falls past her arm as she tosses out a pair of flip-flops.

“Noel?” Evan barks my name, impatience clear in his tone.

“Sorry. No, I’m not going to join in.”

“It’s okay if you do.”

I close my eyes against the icy grip of grief because it’s a weird mix of guilt, this kindling of need I have and knowing I can’t bring it to my wife.

But other than one lousy one-night stand eight months after her death, I haven’t slept with anyone since Claire left me three Christmases ago.

“I’ll see you in a few days.” I end the call before Evan can say another word, and I lose my cool.

A woman hands the suitcase packer the flip flop, and she looks up and flashes a smile. The smile transforms her face to a glow.

But as soon as she returns to her packing, her expression becomes a mask again.

My bag is digging into my shoulder, and I adjust the strap. Claire didn’t like to fly, but she wouldn’t have repacked a suitcase in the middle of an airport. Her anxiety wouldn’t have allowed her to. But she would have made friends with the people sitting next to her and would have made sure I had a cup of coffee. Damn, I miss her.

There is something so self-assured about the woman kneeling on the floor.

It’s the set of her shoulders, the confident way her fingers are flying across the items, the force field of “I don’t care, I’m packing this bag in the middle of the airport” around her that holds my attention like it’s the Stanley Cup Final.

And maybe it’s because I’ve lost some swagger, some of that self-confidence, that my gaze is glued to her. It’s a reminder of the hotshot corporate lawyer I once was.

I used to strut into the room, leading the way, untouchable and unaffordable to all but a select few.

I worked my ass off, knowing I had a gorgeous woman waiting for me at home.

Until she was snatched away from me by something as ordinary as the flu.

I give myself a shake, determined to enjoy this festive season.

My good friends, Rosa and Axel, will make sure I don't wallow, and I'm eager to check on the place. I have old friends coming to stay at the resort, and I am looking forward to seeing them, too.

But I miss having a woman beside me as much as I miss having one in my bed. Commitment, though, isn't for me. My heart is too wounded from grief to let that possibility through.

The announcement is made for us to board, and I hang back, waiting to see the line. The gate must have had flyers from a previous flight because it doesn't look like this plane is packed by the line-up.

I shake off my maudlin thoughts. I want to talk to the woman with the auburn hair. My stomach twists. It feels weird to admit the attraction I already feel to her. But I shake it off and tell myself a conversation is not putting a ring on her finger.

3 HOLLY

“Excuse me? Can I have another coffee?” I call to the stewardess. I furiously grab napkins from my purse and wipe the spilled java off the tray. I’m not even supposed to be on this plane, but at least it’s half-empty, and I managed to tune everything out by listening to a playlist.

“I don’t think she heard you.” The rich, smooth voice is from a man seated on the aisle seat in the next aisle over.

He’s in an empty row. I’m also in the aisle seat, and a teenager is dozing silently against the window seat.

The man extends a handful of napkins, and I take them.

“Thanks. I guess someone’s not happy working on Christmas Eve.”

“You can’t blame her,” the man smiles and my pulse races. His smile is a gold star to his attractive face, making his chocolate eyes shine.

Yeah, I could relate to being somewhere you didn’t want to be because I am not landing in Cozumel with Phil beside me.

Instead, I'm on my way to the middle of nowhere.

I was packed this morning, waiting for Phil to pull up in his Volvo. A text buzzed in my phone, saying, *Sorry, Holly, It's time for us to end things- Merry Christmas, Phil.*

I stopped myself from hurling the phone into the bushes beside my condo entrance but didn't feel upset. No, I felt fury. The kind of fury that heated my blood and made me see stars. Quickly, I ran through my options. After I booked a flight to Toronto, I hopped in an Uber, and here I am.

I know things between Phil and I were getting stale.

Anger heats my skin, and I gulp back a mouthful of water. Phil works for an accounting firm. I have a roster of world-class directors, producers and actors. I don't want to be a snob, but honestly? I'm out of Phil's league.

Stella tried to tell me, but I wouldn't listen, wanting to create something good. Something solid. Something I thought would last.

"I don't think she's bringing you another coffee. Maybe she needs a beach vacay," the man across the aisle says.

"That's where I was supposed to be," I mumble before I can hold the words back. I want off this plane. Checking my watch, I'm relieved we should land in twenty minutes. Then I have to find a way to Vixen's Paradise, to the tiny town outside of Toronto where the resort is located, next to my Gran's.

I swallow the lump in my throat.

“How come you aren’t?” His tone is friendly and curious, but my emotional state takes it as an assault, and my skin crawls with irritation at the question.

“I decided to do something more adventurous.”

“Oh? Like what?” He leans forward, his hand stretching across the aisle as if to brush my arm, but he pulls it back to the armrest as he catches me noticing.

I choke back a giggle, wondering how this clean-cut man in an expensive suit will react if I tell him I’m going to be spending Christmas at a kinky adults-only hotel. Yeah, they call themselves a resort, but I’ve been to resorts, and some were nothing more than dressed-up hotels. I don’t have high hopes.

But the man still looks at me as if he’s genuinely curious. He has a slight smirk as if he’s daring me to answer him.

“I’m spending Christmas in the town of Creekside. You’ve probably driven through it.”

“Oh, I’ve done more than drive through it. There’s a world-famous chef in that town, it’s a picturesque village. Would you believe I’m also headed there?”

I laugh. “No. This isn’t some corny movie.”

“Why does it have to be corny? You don’t believe in coincidences?” He smiles, amusement clearly on his face.

I notice the dimple in his chin and glance away. “No.”

“Do you believe in Fate?”

I shake my head. I believe in hard work and well-laid plans.

He flashes me a smile that I could lose myself in and shrugs. “It’s true. My brothers and I own a hotel about thirty minutes from the village.”

“Why are you going there for Christmas?” I can’t help but be curious.

“There is never time off when you own a hotel, but it’s a good chance for me to look over the property. What do you do?” The corners of his eyes crinkle slightly.

He’s attractive. Okay, he’s super-hot, and my libido is taking notice.

I bite my lip. Most of the time, telling men I work as an entertainment agent usually leads to them asking if I could make them a star. “I work in sales,” I spit out.

“You must be very good at it.” He crosses his leg over his knee, taking up all the space he can.

“Why do you say that?”

“A beautiful woman like you who sounds confident? Whatever you sell, I’d buy it.”

“Screen covers,” I think if I had said “vacuum cleaners” it would be more credible, but sometimes thinking fast on your feet leads to screen covers.

The man smiles. Does he believe me? I don’t care.

The seatbelt light chimes on, and a muffled captian’s announcement follows. I presume it’s announcing that we’re

starting our descent, but I can't make out the words.

“Would you have dinner with me at the hotel?” This time, he does touch my arm. It's a firm, warm touch, just enough to give little shivers.

“At the chintzy hotel? I don't know. I kind of booked it to get away.”

“Why did you come if you think it's going to be... ‘chintzy’?”

He air-quotes my word, and I blush.

“You know what they say about curiosity.” I shrug.

I need time to get my head together and decide what I want to do next.

“If you don't want to eat with me, I'll respect your privacy, but I have a car picking me up, and you're welcome to ride along.”

He looks so earnest and hopeful that I can't say no, and besides, it's just dinner, right?

“I'll take you up on it. I'd love to have dinner,” I say. “What's your name?”

“Noel Brennon. Who do I have the pleasure of meeting?”

Is he part of the Brennon Consortium? My stomach lurches, and my mind spins momentarily, wondering if this is a setup. Stella would tell me that I've watched too many murder-mystery movies. Hey, when you represent one of the most in-demand villain actors, it's hard not to.

“Holly Burkholder.”

The plane landed with a bump. “Do you have a bag beside your carry-on?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll walk you to baggage claim to get it,” Noel says.

I blush and gently touch the teen’s shoulder next to me, giving myself an excuse not to answer Noel.

“We’ve landed.”

Her eyes blink open. “Thanks.”

Dinner with the person who wants to take Gran’s farm. I should have said no, but I don’t want to back out.

I want to go to dinner with a man who might appreciate me, and by how Noel’s gaze drank me in, I think dinner with him would fit that brief.

The plane taxi stops with a bump.

I dutifully grab my carry-on and wait for the rows before ours to empty. Noel steps beside me, and I blush again, following the line of people through the crowded airport.

I don’t know what good the contents of my bag will do me in Ontario’s snowy cold. I had packed for the sun, but I did what I could with the airport gift shops, and I’ll leave the bikinis and shorts packed.

“This way,” Noel points me in the opposite direction from where I was going.

The airport buzzes with excitement, and carols join the background music from somewhere further ahead.

At the baggage carousel, I wait impatiently.

Noel is beside me, not saying anything. I take a moment to stare at his strong jaw. He's a full head or two taller than my five feet-ten.

My lavender suitcase spits out on the carousel, and I grab it. "Where to?"

"This way," Noel reaches for my bag.

"That's okay, I got it."

"I insist." Noel covers his hand over mine, and my pulse races.

I stare at his perfectly formed cupid's bow, take in his muscled arms and my tummy flip-flops, strung tight with nerves. Maybe this isn't a great idea. I had my run with controlling men before, and I don't want to go back there.

That's why Phil was good for me. He never controlled anything and let me lead.

"I'm only being a gentleman, Holly. If you're uncomfortable with me touching your bag, it's all yours," Noel says.

He takes his hand away, and all I want to do is grab it back.

"No, it's okay. It's nice of you to get my bag, thank-you."

"You're welcome."

Walking through the crowded airport with Noel's hand on my back, attraction makes my blood sizzle. When was the last

time someone I didn't pay carried my bag? Phil would pick up something if I asked, but he wouldn't carry my bag because he knew I could do it.

We'd spent increasingly less time together in the last six months, which I know didn't feed the relationship.

"Out this way. The dark blue Range Rover at the end is our ride," Noel's smooth voice breaks into my thoughts. He holds the door for me, and I allow myself to be guided to the vehicle on the snowy sidewalk.

A driver steps out of the vehicle. "Good evening, Mr. Brennon."

"Hi Martin, thanks for coming. Did you have a good Hanukkah?"

"It was great. My brother and his family came down. How was your flight?"

Noel places his hand on my back, and I allow myself to be guided into the cushy leather seats.

"Good, thanks. Straight to the property, please," Noel settles in beside me.

"You got it." Martin picks up my bag and puts it in the trunk.

Noel closes his door and stretches his long legs out.

"How long are you staying at Vixen's Paradise for?"

Cloying nerves take my voice away. For a second, I'm frozen. This was a stupid idea, getting in a car with a man I don't know. Didn't my mother warn me about this? And this

whole trip. I should have turned back on the doorstep and gone home to my empty condo. I could have worked through the holidays or caught a flight to St. Augustine.

But the Brennon group called my cousin Stella for nine months about selling our grandmother's land. I kept telling her I'd look into it, and honestly, it went to the bottom of the list because I didn't want to think about it. It was hard to think about a place that held so many good memories against the backdrop of my parents' marriage falling apart.

"Holly?" Noel places a hand on my arm. "Are you okay?"

"Sorry, I got lost in my thoughts. I'm heading back home to Edmonton on the thirtieth."

"And mere curiosity made you book into our fine resort?"

A snort escapes before I can stop myself.

Noel raises that cool eyebrow again. His mouth twitches, revealing a dimple. "You don't think our resort is fine?"

"I don't know what to expect. After my beach plan didn't work out, I wanted to do something just for me on my Christmas holiday."

"And you thought exploring your kinky fantasy was just the thing?"

His gaze is making me squirm. I look out the window, shaking off his intensity. Until I told Noel, I hadn't realized that I wanted something just for me.

“Vixen’s Paradise had availability when I made the reservation. On Christmas Eve, a lot of places don’t.”

“Most people who come are interested and eager. You sound as if you expect it to be awful.”

My nerves flutter under this man’s perception. “I’ve learned to keep my expectations low.”

“Afraid of being disappointed?”

“Used to being disappointed.”

Noel places a hand on my knee, a tiny little thrill shoots through me at being touched by a stranger. “I challenge you to walk in with an open mind. Vixen’s Paradise is designed to be a safe place for people to be themselves and engage in activities they might not do in their regular lives. What’s on your kinky try list?” His tone was light, almost teasing.

“Maybe,” I admit, taken back by this conversation. At one time, I wanted to engage in all the kinky things. But I got burned. Climbing back from that wound took me years.

My eyes start to feel heavy, and I sniffle a yawn.

“We’ll talk more about it at dinner. Do you want a blanket? We’re about forty-five minutes away if you want to nap?”

I shake my head. “I won’t nap, but I have an email I have to return,” I dig my phone out of my bag.

“Of course. I won’t interrupt you,” Noel says. He takes an iPad from his briefcase and throws on a pair of headphones.

I smile in thanks. I need the escape that work brings me because in this enclosed space, with this man making my belly flutter and pulse race? It's a distraction I don't want. It's making me feel things I haven't in a long time, way before Phil.

It scares me what this attractive man offers beside me because I don't know if I can be vulnerable again with someone.

My mind wanders, I can't focus on my inbox and I sneak a glance at Noel. Casual sex and maybe some kinky play with no strings attached might be precisely what I need.

4 HOLLY

The Range Rover turns down the familiar road that's etched in my memory, and now I'm swimming in a pool of sentimentality.

Whenever we visited Gran Deb, I knew that my mom would be okay for that weekend. For that space of time, when I crossed my Gran's threshold, I knew there wasn't going to be yelling or threats uttered by my father. My mom would smile, the dark circles etched under her eyes would lessen, and I'd have her undivided attention. My Gran's house was a place of solace and warmth; when Aunt Rachel visited with my cousin Stella, it was the highlight of my year.

Growing-up, I didn't register the property next door. Like all the houses on this stretch of road, I presumed it was a farm. The treeline hid it from view from my Gran's, but when I rode the back trails on my favourite mare, I could see the neighbouring property and sensed that it was vast and larger than Gran's gently sloped land.

The vehicle bumped down the long driveway lined with evergreens, their boughs heavy with fresh snow.

I check my watch, set to local time. It's two o'clock in the afternoon, but I yawn, that sleep-drunkenness from travel settling over me.

"My favourite part of Vixen's Paradise is arriving at it," Noel says.

As I glance out the window, a part of me wishes I didn't agree with him. But the large house is lit with soft lighting, a Christmas tree in the large window visible from the drive. The house sits on land that stretches forever. With a sleigh parked on the lawn, the place looks like a Christmas card.

"It's beautiful," I can't help but say it.

"I hope you are surprised and delighted by your stay, Holly," Noel says.

"I'm curious to see the inside."

"Let's go."

Noel opens my door before I can, waving off his driver.

A man wearing a black coat trimmed in red piping waves at us while pushing a luggage cart.

"Mr. Brennon, I will bring your bags to your room."

"Thanks, Shawn. Holly is a guest and has a room of her own booked," Noel sets my bag on the cart next to Noel's carry-on and laptop bag.

"Your bags will be waiting for you, Holly."

“Thanks,” I say.

Shawn waves while whistling, and Noel offers me his arm.

The snow crunches underfoot, and the airport price I paid for these boots was worth it.

“Welcome to Vixen’s Paradise, Holly,” Noel opens the door.

I step through, and immediately, the vibe of the place hits me.

Twinkling lights and gorgeous glass decorations hang from garlands above the doorways and walls.

“Welcome!” A woman calls from behind a reception desk.

“Hi,” I say distractedly, realizing the beautiful glass ornaments are...I giggle and cover my mouth, wondering if Patricia would like a clitoris-shaped glass ornament or maybe the giant penis that I thought was a spiral at first glance.

The way the lights shine through the ornaments is so pretty.

Noel brushes by me to the reception desk and hugs the dark-haired woman who greeted me. “Hi Rosa, lovely to see you. That Dom of yours must be taking good care of you. You’re looking well.”

Rosa blushes, touching the collar at her throat and suddenly, the reality that this place is an adults-only resort where people come to engage their kinks is there.

Even if it looks like it could be off the set of Anne of Green Gables.

I force myself to move, passing the doorway to the dining room.

Beyond the reception desk is a winding staircase.

“This is Holly Burkholder. Holly, this is my good friend Rosa. She runs the place.”

“Nice to meet you,” I say.

“That’s my phone,” Noel mumbles. He takes the buzzing phone out of his pocket and frowns at the screen.

His frown is kind of adorable.

“Can you give Holly a tour? Holly, I’ll see you at seven in the dining room.”

“Sure. Thanks for the ride.”

Noel nods, brushes my arm and disappears behind the reception desk.

“Follow me to the Parlour. This is where I like to remind guests clothing is optional throughout the space, but you signed that acknowledgement when you booked. Our Parlour is a space where guests may come to socialize and read. There is no loud talking or electronics permitted.”

I stop at the doorway of the Parlour.

A man with a bushy beard casually lounges on a sofa, his hand resting on the shoulder of a man sitting on the floor, with his back to the sofa.

The simple gesture is so intimate that tears well in my eyes. I didn’t have that with Phil, and I’m not sure I’ve ever had that

kind of casual intimacy.

Near the window, two women are lying on a chaise, their feet intertwined. Behind them, a man and woman are working on a jigsaw puzzle at a small table. Red candles on the mantle glow, and a piano is at the other end of the room.

“It feels soothing.”

“That is the point,” Rosa smiles and leads me to the dining room.

“In here is our dining room. The menu is posted daily. Of course, we’re also happy to provide room service.”

The dining room, with its soft cream walls and the fireplace at the centre, has tables with seating for two and four. A table on a raised platform in the room’s far corner makes me curious.

“Beautiful,” I run my hand along the wooden doorframe. It’s a place you want to eat in, and a swarm of nerves burst in my stomach, thinking of dinner with Noel.

“We think so,” Rosa straightens out a table setting and brushes by me.

“Down this hall is a games room, a library and if you watch your step—”

I look down to see a low step as the hallway veers off in a curve.

“This leads to our full-service spa. You remember, one treatment is covered with your stay?”

“Yes, a nice touch.” A stay at Vixen’s Paradise was almost a thousand dollars a night.

“And you know all guests are free to take in as little or as much of the open dungeon times as they like. This way,” Rosa turns sharply to a dimly lit hallway.

“It’s quiet today, and no guests have requested the dungeon.”

Rosa opens the pair of gold framed doors, revealing a vast space with sunlight pouring in from the oval-shaped windows that line one side of the room.

“This couldn’t have been original to the house?” I throw out the small talk as I take in the dungeon.

“No, this was part of the extension built when Vixen’s Paradise opened.”

I didn’t want to like it, but I did. Oh, I did.

The navy walls with the high windows gave it the feel of being in a place of worship without it being ornate. My breath catches as I take in the well-made equipment. Spanking benches, a St. Andrew’s cross, a cage in the corner, all of it tugs at my heart, and I feel an ache, knowing what I missed, burying myself in a vanilla relationship for the last three years.

I needed kink.

I want to be placed over that spanking bench or cuffed to that bondage table because being a submissive is part of who I am.

I miss giving and yielding.

All day, I chase contracts, negotiating deals that change people's lives. My throat grows dry with the longing to submit. Submit so I can turn my work brain off, and simply rest in my own self.

Every piece of equipment gleams.

"We have everything you can imagine for purchase," Rosa says. She is standing back by the door, and I shake myself out of my wishful thinking and follow her. She makes a left and shows me the spa treatment rooms.

This place isn't chintzy; it's a luxury five-star hotel in the middle of nowhere, and that in itself has its own star power.

"The only thing left to see on this level is the whiskey-tasting room. To get to it, we need to go outside from these doors." Rosa points to an exit.

"Maybe later. I want to go to my room."

"Of course."

I follow Rosa, retracing our steps, passing guests, bundled for the weather, on their way outside, and I follow my host up the staircase to another long hallway, the plush carpet clean, the low afternoon sunlight lighting our way.

"You are in room five, at the end of the hall." Rosa passes me a keycard.

"Thanks for showing me around. I can tell how much you love this place." I slip the room key into the reader.

“Yes, I do. “Everything you need is here. Please call down if I can assist you in any way.”

“Thanks.”

Rosa smiles, and I step into the room.

The room is gorgeous. The walls are the softest tone of mauve, and the king-size bed has big fluffy duvets and mauve pillows, urging me to take that nap Noel had mentioned in the car.

I open the door to the left and see a bathroom done in chrome and marble, with a simple shower. There is no need for a tub when there is a clawfoot tub under the windows. A little seating area is on the other side of the TV. The room is spacious and elegant.

I glance out the window but can't see Gran's property from here. My room faces the other direction.

My bags are by the closet, and I kneel on the soft carpet to open the rugged zipper. From here, I can see there are hooks above the bed and hard points on the headboards, perfect for bondage play.

I swallow past the lump in my throat as I unzip the bag to see bikinis, short skirts, beach hats, and flowy dresses.

The reality that I am not in Cozumel hits me.

I had packed a couple of evening dresses for the upscale beachside restaurant, and these, along with the stuff I bought at the airport, are going to have to do.

Hoping that distraction will keep my emotions from tumbling over, I unpack my bags.

The room is so perfect it's hard to explain why I feel cheated by my expectation of the place being lacklustre.

I want a cup of tea, and after searching the closet and the cabinet by the television and not finding even a coffee maker, I grab the little phone by the bed, punching the button that says "desk."

"How can I help you, Miss Burkholder?"

"You said my room has everything I need."

"That's correct. If you need something special, I can find it for you."

My face is hot, a mix of anger and sadness bubbles through me, my emotions as unchecked as the sea.

"I want a cup of tea, and there isn't a kettle."

"If you look to the left, the door—"

"I did, and it's not there!" Tears fall on my cheeks, and I know I am being unreasonable. I set the phone down. I've acted badly enough and don't want to slap it down. I set the phone down.

It's my own fault. I was stupid to spend that much time with Phil, but I kept hoping solid and steady were enough for me.

It wasn't.

Grabbing a fluffy white pillow, I hug it to my chest.

A knock sounds on my door, and I toss the pillow away.

“What?” I yank the door open.

“You’re giving me plenty of reasons to spank you, but I haven’t even had dinner with you yet.” Noel brushes past me into the room.

“Why are you here?” I cross my arms in front of my chest as he levels a stare at me with a cocked eyebrow.

“I heard you yell through the phone at Rosa.”

“Do you check in with all your guests?”

“Only the most perplexing ones,” Noel’s mouth quirks to one side.

Great, now the super hot guy is going to think I’m an emotional wreck. Isn’t that what I fight against every day? I can’t show emotion in the office, or they’ll think I can’t do my job.

“I’m sorry, I—”

Noel takes two steps, and he’s swallowed up all my space.

He presses a finger against my mouth, his touch firm. It sends a tremble through my body, like a pin releasing the pressure in a balloon, and I stare at his shiny black shoes.

“Everyone can have one bad moment, and it’s Christmas. You’re forgiven. You’re not the first guest to yell at Rosa. She can handle it.”

His warm palm slides against my cheek, caressing me softly.

“I’m usually better behaved.”

“I don’t doubt it,” Noel takes his hand away, and I stop myself from keeping it pressed against my cheek.

He brushes by me, pausing beside the bathroom.

“Here.”

From the wall, Noel pulled open a pair of doors that were set-in so cleverly they blended with the wall.

“I didn’t see it.” My voice wobbles, to my horror, and I inhale a steadying breath.

The door opens, revealing a shelf with a pod coffee maker and a tea kettle.

“This is a little fridge.” Noel opens the door of the tiny fridge.

“I missed it.”

Noel takes the tea kettle into the bathroom, fills it, and plugs it in.

“What type of tea do you like?”

“Anything decaf right now.”

“May I suggest hibiscus?”

“Thank you.” I cross my arms in front of my chest, leaning against the wall.

Noel takes a saucer and a china cup from the shelf and, from a canister, measures out loose tea into a tea ball.

“May I make another suggestion?”

“You seem to do that a lot.”

Noel shrugs. "I can't help it."

"What do you suggest?"

"You take a bath and a nap before I knock on your door again. I'm happy to start the tub for you."

His deep brown eyes stare at me, and I suck in a breath of air. This is like I fell into a rabbit hole of some kind of fairy tale, but I'm going to take it.

"Yes, please."

"Good. Now take this." Noel presses the warm mug into my hands, and I follow him to the tub, sitting on the bench seat under the window.

Noel turns the taps on, and the steam from the hot water rises.

"There's all kinds of different oils and salts. What do you like?"

"Whatever," I shrug.

"Let's go with 'mulled wine oil.' It's going to turn the water a pretty shade of red." He cocks an eyebrow, sending flutters to my core.

He opens the jar, and red liquid flows into the water.

"Thank you."

"Enjoy your bath, Holly. I'll see you at seven."

"I'll be a calmer woman," I promise.

He gazes at me across the tub, a look so full of heat and want
I blush.

“I like a storm every now and then.”

I bring the tea cup to my lips to hide my smile. “Good.”

Noel winks and strides out of the room, closing the door
behind him.

I set my tea on the tray by the tub, slip my clothes off and get
in.

The warm water eases my tired muscles. This is the kind of
Christmas I can get used to.

5 NOEL

DECEMBER 25TH, FIRST DAY OF
KINKMAS

Excitement hums through my body as I take the stairs two at a time from my private loft space, exiting behind the reception desk, to the main floor.

I had tried to concentrate on reports and my meeting with Axel, but the image of Holly cupping her tea cup, her eyes glassy with a desire that matched mine, kept flashing through my mind.

I didn't want to leave her.

I wanted to take off her clothes, watch as she lowered herself into the tub and drink in every inch of her body, but I pride myself on being a gentleman.

Ripping off a woman's clothes without any prior negotiation isn't a great way to earn her trust.

I stop in the hallway between the stairs and the Parlour and breathe in the scented candles of cinnamon and vanilla. Every door frame is decorated with boughs of evergreen, and the

laughter coming from our guests makes me grin. Homey, cozy, luxurious and kinky; that's the vision of Vixen's Paradise.

If I walk down the hallway, instead of turning to the stairs, I'll go into our spa area and the dungeon.

But tonight, I am taking a beautiful woman to dinner.

My pulse races with anticipation. It's been years since...I've been on a date.

My heart gives a familiar twinge of sadness, but my eagerness to see Holly outweighs it, and I turn the corner as Holly descends the grand staircase. A red silky gown that stops above her knee shows off her gorgeous long legs compliments her green eyes. Her hair is loose in soft waves.

"Good evening, Noel," her voice is honeyed, her eyes wide.

I lean in to kiss her cheek and take her arm. "That dress clings to your curves in the most delicious way."

"Thank you."

"Are you hungry?"

The way her face tilts to mine, her pulse racing at the hollow of her neck, heats my blood.

"Yes, I am."

The sultry look she gives me makes my dick twitch.

My throat is dry, but I lead her to the dining room. It's half full of guests enjoying their meal, the mood light with soft classical music playing in the background.

I smile at other guests, some I know from past visits and some are new. I take her to a table in the far corner.

I pull out her chair, her eyebrows raise in surprise, a small smile on her glossy lips.

“How was your bath?” I ask as I take my seat.

“Delightful,” Holly murmurs, fidgeting with the table setting.

“I’m pleased.” I take her hand in mine, rubbing the soft, delicate skin with my thumb.

“Are you so easily pleased?” Holly asks, her eyes light with mirth.

I lean forward, eager to participate in this conversation. “It doesn’t take much to please me. I like a woman who is open about her needs.”

Adorable spots of red splash on her cheeks.

“In my experience, that makes you a rare man.” Her tone is detached and cool.

I have the racing urge to plunge through her defences until I have this woman figured out. I can’t say no to a challenge.

“Would you like to elaborate?” I’m curious if she’ll tell me more.

“Good evening, Mr. Brennon. What can I get you to drink?” Lori, one of our servers, interrupts us.

“I’d like a whiskey neat. Holly?”

“Same, please.”

“Thanks, Lori.”

Holly takes a sip of water and regards me coolly.

“You were saying?”

“No. You asked me if I wanted to elaborate. I was considering it.”

Laughter breaks from my chest, and I can't help but grin. I like this woman a lot.

“My brothers and I have built this place for consenting adults to indulge in anything their minds can come up with. I enjoy playing with a woman who knows what she wants.”

“And not how much she can take?” Holly spits out the words with such vitriol I want to wrap her in my arms and hold her.

“I'm not into dishing out pain, Holly,” I reach for her hand, and she lets me hold it. “I am more into how much pleasure I can wring out of a woman until she's screaming for mercy.”

Lori is back at our table and sets down the glasses of whiskey, and another server places a plate in front of each of us.

The food is gorgeous and mouth-watering, exactly as it should be. Vixen's Paradise isn't some afterthought; everything from the food to the accommodations is excellent, and I'm so pleased it runs with our high standards in mind.

“Potato waffle with smoked salmon, fig with goat cheese, and a cucumber prawn cocktail cup,” Lori explains.

“Gerald has outdone himself as usual. Thanks, Lori,” I say.
“What would you like to try first?”

“The salmon.”

“Allow me,” I lift the delicate bite from the plate, holding it to her mouth. “Open.”

The pulse at the hollow of her throat jumps. I wait to see if she’ll give into this little test of surrender.

Her glossy lips open, and my cock throbs.

I gently feed her the canape, leaving my finger on the centre of her soft lips as she chews, only removing it when she is done swallowing it.

“That is a perfect bite.”

I pop the other potato thing into my mouth. “We pride ourselves on service, Holly.”

“Do you often have dinner with your guests? Is that part of the service?” Her little smirk is delightful, the cool tone scathing, and I want to know what this woman does because if she spends her days selling screen protectors, I’m Mr. Claus.

“This is the first time I have had dinner with a guest. It must be Christmas in the air.”

“What do you usually do for Christmas?”

I bristle, the question momentarily catching me off guard because I have done my best to ignore Christmas for the past three years.

“The holidays are always busy for the hotel industry.”

“Now, who isn’t answering the question,” Holly reaches out for the cucumber cup and drinks, tilting her head, exposing the hollow of her throat that I desperately want to trace with my tongue.

“My brothers and I attend a New Year’s Eve Party at our restaurant, Sinful Bites, and then we all try to take the next three days off and hang out.”

“Are you close with your brothers?”

“Yes. Except for Hunter, but he’s kind of the lone wolf of the family, always has been.” I shrug, not wanting to go into details. “What about you, any siblings?”

“No siblings,” Holly glances away. “My boyfriend of three years broke up with me. Right before I was supposed to get on the flight with him to Cozumel.”

A wave of fury simmers through me at the cruelty of this act. How could this guy dump this gorgeous woman right before Christmas?

“He’s an ass,” I say.

Holly laughs a high-pitched peal that floats around the room. “Thank you. I should have broken up with him long before now.”

“Why didn’t you?” I gently walk my fingers along her arm.

She takes a sip of her whiskey. “I thought what he offered me was enough.”

“And what was that?” I touch her again, feeling the slight tremble run through her, and all I want to do is reassure this woman that she’s worth more than the douche who broke up with her.

“Predictably and safely,” she paused, her eyes fluttering to meet mine. “Vanilla life.”

Lori approaches us, and I raise my hand, stalling her. “We need more time, please.”

“Of course, Mr. Brennon.” Lori leaves us.

Holly stares at me, frozen momentarily, then sips her whiskey.

“And that’s what you wanted?”

“What I thought I wanted.” Her shoulders rise, and I feel the tension rolling off her like an icy breeze.

“When I was in University, I thought I would be married by now.”

“Where did you go to school?” I can’t help but interrupt her, my curiosity too fierce to ignore.

A red flush smatters her cheeks. “U of T for my medieval studies degree. Waterloo for law.”

“You’re a lawyer?” I knew this woman was a professional from the moment I saw her.

“No. I have a law degree, but I chose another field.”

“Screen protector sales.” I can’t help but smile.

She returns my smile and shrugs. “Men are often intimidated by me. That’s why I broke up with my first serious boyfriend. He stopped me from writing the LSAT, saying he wanted to be a lawyer, not married to one. The break-up caused me to miss a year.”

I force myself to relax because I want Holly to keep talking, but that kind of trumped-up macho bullshit bothers me.

Before I gave it up, I was a successful corporate lawyer, and I know the type of Holly’s ex.

“He was also controlling and a Dominant. We attended kink events together, and I thought after he broke my heart I didn’t want that anymore. And I didn’t want to chance it—he messed up my head.” She brushes her hair behind her ears and sits up straighter.

“That sounds awful. You’re incredible for getting through that and going on to law school.” She glances up at me under a curtain of long lashes.

“A full year later, I wrote the LSAT and got accepted to Waterloo.”

I could soak in this woman’s confidence all night. The LSAT, the entrance exam to law school, is challenging for many. I know guys who failed it several times. The fact that Holly picked herself up and went for it, is super impressive.

“Yeah. But I thought Phil...I don’t know. I thought I could be vanilla.”

“Then you realized you couldn’t?” I keep my voice soft. I know how this goes because I thought going to work and providing for Claire was enough, and I was a lucky bastard that she was open to indulging in my kink.

“Yes.” Her voice is a whisper, but she stares at me as if challenging me to leave.

“I came here to escape and to reconnect with my old life. I lost my wife three years ago.”

I hate saying those words. I hate the cold shiver of grief that worms its way into my body.

“That must make your Christmas suck.”

I love her honesty, and it makes me smile. “Yeah, it does, but this place and our kinky restaurant is a haven from life, and I wanted to take a few days to indulge. You asked me if I eat dinner with all of our guests. You’re not an ordinary guest, Holly. I find you attractive, and I want to indulge with you.”

There, I put it on the table, and it’s up to her to pick it up.

“What do you have in mind?” Her chin juts out, challenging me.

I study her like I do when I make a deal with anyone, wondering if she is sincere or if she’s playing me.

“How about this? For the next five days, we play, indulge our kinks with each other and enjoy each other’s company.”

Her eyes widened in surprise, her mouth forming a little “O.”

“I am not into impact play, nothing that marks. I like it light and fluffy with a touch of pain—only a touch, and I will not apologize for that.”

This gorgeous woman shouldn't have to apologize for a single thing, though I wonder what her asshole ex-Dom did to her. But I don't need to know the details to respect her boundaries.

“Light and fluffy is exactly what I need. What about a hand spanking?” I take my fork and feed her another bite, watching her brow furrow slightly as she works out her thoughts.

She accepts my bite of food, slowly chewing and swallowing, and I like that she's patient and takes her time.

Everyone has a different range of what they consider to be a touch of pain, and I want to know all about her limits.

She shifts in her seat in the most appealing way, giving me my answer. “To be toppled over your knee? I don't hate the idea. Well, maybe a little.”

“I can work with that.”

“Good.” She nods as if the deal was sealed. “What do you like?”

“To give pleasure and praise. To have my way with a woman who tells me what she wants. That's what I like.”

She fidgets with her table settings. “You asked me if there was anything on my try list.”

“Yes?” I brush my hand along her arm.

“I thought...please don't think it's ridiculous.”

Her confidence, when it's on full, is dazzling. Her vulnerability reels me right into my protector side, and I want to hold her.

“Holly, I've been in the lifestyle for fifteen years. I was a Dom to my wife, and we tried a lot of things. I've seen things at my brother's restaurant that made me blush. The dungeon here is designed to cater to a lot of different tastes. I won't judge you.” I lean back, trying to make myself as non-threatening as possible.

“Puppy play,” she spits out, her eyes downcast.

The whispered admission causes my pulse to race.

I am so proud of her. “Good girl.”

“I've never told anyone that before.” Her eyes are wide.

“I'm so thrilled you trust me. I can make that happen for you. Can you agree to give me these five days? Five days of Kinkmas?”

Her laugh is the perfect thing to break the tension.

“Kinkmas?” Her eyebrows shoot up to her hairline.

“Yes, Kinkmas.” I reach out and lightly run my fingertips along her arm.

“What happens at the end of five days?”

Looking into her glowing eyes, I know I want her past these five days, but I'm not sure if my grieving heart can do an

entire future. But...I could give her the best kinky five days I know how to.

“I’m not looking for a long-term commitment, but I’m open to remaining friends, maybe more.”

It’s the only thing I can give her right now.

She nods. “You need to know that I don’t like honorifics. I like being called a good girl. I like praise and pup or puppy or pet when we’re playing, but I don’t...I don’t want to call you sir or master or be called sub...or anything like that.”

A sour taste coats my mouth, and I hope Holly’s first boyfriend is alone with a shrivelled dick somewhere.

“I can’t wait to hear my name from your lips tonight.”

“Tonight?”

Yes, because I want to show her that she can trust me, and I want to start erasing her past experiences and replacing them with good ones.

“Why wait?”

“Isn’t that six days of Kinkmas?”

“No, it’s one night and five days, and they’re going to be as dazzling as your smile, Holly. Is it okay if I order?” I want to switch gears for a moment to give her time to absorb everything we’ve discussed.

“Yes.” She reaches for her water.

I wave Lori over and notice the dining room is empty.

“Can we have the roasted Portobello with the farro salad?”

“Yes, Mr. Brennon,” Lori says. She collects our empty appetizer plates and leaves us.

Holly nods, and the glass of water trembles slightly as she sets it down. “Was it hard to get people to work here?”

Ah, business is a safe topic and a break from the vulnerability she shared.

“We offer a full salary, great benefits and an above-industry package. Obviously, it helps if our staff is familiar with the lifestyle but if they can be discreet and have comfortability with it that helps. Are you going to tell me what you do?”

Holly smiles. “What would be the fun in that?”

“Maybe I’ll unwrap that secret like a bow with my tongue.”

Her green eyes sparkle as she leans forward, showing me a bit of her cleavage. “You could try, Noel.”

I reach under the table, placing a hand on her knee. “If I didn’t want you to have stamina, I’d insist on skipping dinner.”

“Are you impatient?”

“To taste you? Yes, Holly, I am.”

She rewards me with another dazzling smile, and my heart lurches.

What am I doing? Having fun. Indulging. Everything I set out to do when I decided to spend Christmas at Vixen’s Paradise.

“I’m on birth control and was tested for STIs last month. I... wondered if Phil was cheating on me.”

“I’m sorry your relationship was unfulfilling.”

She throws her shoulders back, piercing me with that glowing green gaze. “I’m starting to get mad at myself for staying that long, but a new year is in sight, right?”

Servers set fresh plates down in front of us.

I break off a piece of the mushroom with my fork and hold it to her mouth. She closes her eyes, opens her mouth, closes it and makes a sound of pleasure that I want to hear her hum around my cock.

Damn, it has been a long time since I fed a woman.

Pleasure ripples through me as I continue to feed her small bites, enjoying how her lips close around my fork, how she takes her time chewing and swallowing.

“Can we be done with dinner, Noel?”

With how my cock is throbbing in my pants, it’s a great idea.

“Yes, Holly.” I throw my napkin on the table, stand and offer her my arm.

I lead us out of the empty dining room. At the bottom of the stairs, I stop, placing my hands on her shoulders. “I need to grab a few things from my room. I’d like you waiting for me.”

“Undressed?”

“Exactly.” I run the back of my knuckles over her jaw, ignoring the ache of guilt pulling at my heart.

“Don’t leave me waiting too long, Noel.”

“I wouldn’t dream of it.” I give her cheek a peck and watch as she climbs the stairs.

6 HOLLY

My heart races as I climb each step. Forcing myself to not look back, I keep my shoulders straight and hold my head high.

Inside, I'm a mess of self-doubt coupled with buzzing anticipation.

Dinner with Noel wasn't what I expected, but it left me wanting more. It feels good to have a man look at me like he does—with want in his eyes.

It feels freeing—like the tension I carried in my body and my pent-up emotions from this last year all melted away—because I spat out my innermost desire.

He didn't laugh in my face.

After my last relationship with a Dom, I didn't think I'd ever give it a chance again. But five days of kinky play, with no attachments, is a safe way to dip my toes in the water again.

I'm not the twenty-something-year-old who got lost under a big personality and pretty promises.

I'm almost thirty, successful in my male-dominated field. My ability to read people is far better than it was back then.

Maybe I need to tell myself these things, cloak myself in reassurances that this is okay, that I am allowed to go and play and have my sexual needs met as I step out of my dress and hang it in the closet.

Catching sight of myself in the mirror, I pause. I'm not shy, and I like the curve of my hips. The muscles I've worked hard to put on at the gym give my body strength. My C-cup breasts have always been okay, not too big and not too small, and I walk across the room as if I am trying on my nakedness for size to get comfortable before Noel arrives.

I know he'll expect me to be waiting on the bed.

I'm not a brat by nature. But I don't want to do what is expected, and I want to see how he'll react when he opens the door and finds me not on the bed.

Sitting on the window bench, I cross my legs, willing myself to project the calm I want to broadcast.

This is okay, even if I'm nervous.

Idly, I try to recall the last time Phil and I had sex, but it doesn't matter. Am I okay if tonight ends in sex?

Honestly, I'm not sure. That might be too much of a jump for my need to be cautious. But I want to run my hands down Noel's chest, touch his muscles, get close enough to breathe in his scent of cedar and musk, something I caught sitting next to him on the drive here that I can't get out of my memory banks.

Noel makes me feel good, and it's not a pretense. He genuinely seems like he's what he told me so far: a man looking to indulge and offering me the way to do the same if I chose.

The window against my back is cool.

A sharp knock on the door comes before I decide I've had enough of sitting in place. My mouth grows dry with the canopy of nerves, but I want to do this and am ready.

"It's open," I call.

I sit still, with my hands on my knee, my right leg over my left. Just casually sitting here on Christmas Eve like it's my tradition.

The door opens with a slight click. Noel enters the room, pushing a cart. He closes the door, turning towards the bed.

I smirk as his eyebrows rise, and he strides past the bed.

"Good evening, Holly. I'm ready for dessert, are you?"

"Depends on what you brought."

He smiles as he catches sight of me, his austere features softening, and he runs a hand through his black wavy hair. "I did expect you on the bed."

"I like being a surprise."

He strides slowly, crossing the room to me. It's his turn to pretend to be casual, and he shoves his hands in his pockets, walks around the tub and stops when he's right in front of me.

He rakes his eyes over me, pausing at my breasts, drinking in my nakedness.

I stay still under his roaming gaze that heats me from head to toe.

“You’re beautiful, Holly, much prettier than any ornament I’ve ever seen.”

My face heats at his words, and my pulse picks up speed.

“What have you brought?” I ask. I want him to touch me, and for a moment, his hand reaches for my shoulder, but he lets it drop by his side.

I bite my lip, wondering if he’s nervous or is having doubts or if we’re taking our time. I’m patient because suddenly, here, naked with this stranger, I want the offer he put on the table.

He ever so slightly brushes my shoulder before going to his cart.

“Whipped cream.” He holds out a steel bowl piled high. “I thought I could make you desert.” He sets the bowl on the table by the tub.

“I’m not opposed to the idea.” My voice comes out thickly.

Noel takes off his cufflinks, dropping them on the table by the bowl of whipped cream and rolls up his shirt sleeves.

“I don’t know if we covered everything at dinner. I admit that I’m out of practice negotiating a scene.”

Something warm flutters from my core. The admission he utters kind of turns me on because it’s sexy to find a man who

admits not knowing every damn thing, a man who even admits to seconding-guessing himself.

It makes what we are doing more human and normal, somehow.

“Sometimes things can be over-negotiated, don’t you think?” I’m really in the mood to be surprised, and I have no doubt that this man will honour my words, whether it’s a no or a safeword.

“That’s true. I propose this: I will do nothing to you without your enthusiastic consent. I want you to say ‘yes.’ As in, ‘yes, you can lick the whipped cream off my naked body.’”

I try to swallow, cough, and force the words past the roar of my beating heart.

“That could be one of Vixen’s Paradise’s theme weeks.”

The resort seems to have plenty of them. I lean forward, aware that my nipples have pebbled. Negotiating is a heady high; the thrill floods my system with adrenaline, and it’s addictive.

That’s why I’ve made a name for myself in my chosen career. I put in the hours necessary to keep reaching for that thrill that a new contract brings.

“You read about our theme weeks?”

“It has to be a great draw. I did find it amusing that the week after Valentine’s Day is ‘Bring the spark back’ week.”

“That one is my brother Evan’s idea. Many couples have found it a great way to reset their marriage.” A shadow crosses his face, and I shift on the bench, wanting to change the tone back to play and fun.

“What else have you noticed about our fair establishment?” He takes a step back, and I wonder if he’s nervous, but I realize I’m happy for a longer pause.

“You treat your staff exceptionally well.”

“It’s a cornerstone of our business. Every property we own is held to the same high standards.”

“It is warm, evoking an old-timey feel, but everything is clean and perfectly set. It doesn’t feel cluttered.”

“Not chintzy?” Noel raises an eyebrow.

“Not at all.”

“Spread your legs as wide as you can.” The command is as cool as the window against my back. The stare he gives me is sizzling.

“Yes, Noel.” I don’t hesitate because the confident way he shifted from casual acquaintance to Dom doesn’t feel forced, but the next step in the game we’ve agreed to play.

“What’s your safeword, Holly?”

My mouth goes bone dry at his rich timbre.

“Bells,” I spit out. It’s the first thing that pops into my head.

“It fits the theme,” Noel says. “Tell me what you want me to do with this whipped cream.”

He holds the bowl up as if he's holding a holy relic.

"Lick the whipped cream off my body, Noel."

"You're a beautiful woman, Holly, and you know it." He takes the spoon from the bowl and kneels right in front of me.

"I don't shy away from it." I shrug, trying for nonchalance, but I'm quivering in anticipation. He slowly presses the cold metal spoon against the top of my breast, and the whipped cream flows in one long line, a dollop sliding down my breast to my nipple.

"Good." Noel drips whipped cream against my other breast. He sets the bowl aside, then grabs hold of my hips, his hands firmly pressing into me.

His dark eyes smoulder. He leans forward, his mouth hotly presses to my breasts, his tongue flicks over my nipple, and I grasp, my hips rocking forward on the bench.

My belly tightens, and I'm instantly wet as my nerve endings wake up from their long neglect. Noel sucks my nipple between his teeth.

I hiss but want more of his mouth on me. I thread my fingers through his silky hair. It's odd to touch a man who isn't Phil, but also thrilling. My head swoons.

He lifts his mouth from my nipple and licks my sensitive flesh, his tongue following the path of whipped cream.

I'm lost in the hot, prickly sensations of his lips sealing against my flesh. He switches sides, sucking in my nipple harshly, as if he can't get enough.

“Oh!” I cry out, needy with want.

He swirls his tongue around my beaded nipple, pulling it to the roof of his mouth. Between my legs is a river.

His breath is hot as he lifts from my nipple, licking and lapping the whipped cream.

“So tasty.” He smiles, leaning forward, but doesn’t kiss me.

He spreads my thighs even further apart. I gasp at the sudden coolness of air.

“I can smell your arousal, and I want to taste you.”

“Yes, please! I want your mouth on my pussy.”

My keening tone surprises me, but Noel’s smile eases my nerves.

“Perfect.”

He gently touches my pussy lips and spreads them open.

“No coming, Holly. I want you to give control of your orgasms to me for Kinkmas. Can you do that?”

The request sends a shiver of fear up my spine, but his touch on my lips is gentle and teasing. He’s waiting for my reply.

If I give him this, is it too close to the territory I want to avoid, or is this a new path with a new man? It’s also only a game for five days.

“Do you think you’ve earned such a present?” My voice is thick with desire.

“I’m going to make sure I do.”

His thumb presses on my clit, ripping a laugh from my throat.

“What do you say?”

“You can have my orgasms, but it may mean I keep my secrets.”

He throws his head back and laughs. “Maybe if I am very good at enjoying my present, you’ll tell me what you keep so tightly wrapped.”

The intensity in his dark eyes shoots my heart into a steady drumbeat against my chest.

“Stay still, Holly, while I explore this beautiful pussy. Be a good girl, and let me eat my present.”

“Yes, Noel.” The words come out in a whisper.

He presses his face to my pussy, and my hips lift off the bench with the first swirl of his tongue along my tightly wound nub of nerves.

“Noel, I have to come! I have to!” I screech the words as he licks my clit. His tongue darts out of his mouth in fast, quick-fire strokes. The heat from my core envelops my entire body, setting it aflame.

In reply, he licks the side of my clit, little flicks of his tongue at a rapid-fire speed, and it makes me pant.

“I need to come, please!” The sensations solidify, a wave about to break open, and I know I can’t hold back this orgasm.

His mouth seals around my clit, and he sucks as if extracting all the juice from an orange.

“Noel!” The wave breaks, and I scream his name, blazing shudders rolling through me as I float away from myself on a crest of pleasure that brings tears to my eyes.

Lifting his head, Noel smiles, caressing my face with his palm. “Delicious. I need another taste.”

“You can’t!” I reach for him, and my hand closes around his shoulder as the aftershocks ribbon through me.

“You agreed to give me your orgasms. Do you want to stop?”

My body hums in satisfaction, but my head feels floaty. He’s staring at me intently, steadying my reply.

“No, I’m good to continue.”

“I’m so pleased that you gave me your trust, Holly. That you’re playing this game with me,” he palms my breast and gently squeezes it.

“I am, too,” I exhale, shuddering, and gently drag my hand across his jaw.

Noel grabs my hand and sets it on my thigh. “I want that second taste. Ready?”

“Yes, Noel. Give me what you got.”

“Gorgeous, Holly.” He presses a finger to my lip, slowly tracing the outline. Without lifting his finger, he traces a line

down my collarbone, over my breast, and down my tummy to my mound. He bends his head. I spread my legs.

He licks my inner thighs; his warm tongue in this sensitive area sets off a new wave of sparks, and I grab at his shoulders.

“I like that!”

He takes his time licking every inch of my inner thigh, then swiftly moves to my clit. I grab his head, and for a moment, I wish he'd throw me down on the bed, but that's a little too fast for both of us.

I settle back against the window, my body warm now, and get lost in his licks and laps, enjoying the picture of this strong man kneeling between my legs, giving me pleasure.

He increases his rhythm faster and harder. His tongue strikes at my clit, his nose presses right to my seam.

“Noel!”

I'm gone, lost in a burst of pleasure. I squirm on the seat, closing my eyes tightly. Hot tears fall down my face, and I gasp for breath.

“Come here, Holly.” Noel moves beside me on the bench and wraps an arm around me. “Making you fall apart in pleasure is the best Christmas I've had in a long time.” His voice is thick with emotion.

I cup his face, and this time he doesn't stop me. “I needed that. Thanks.” It's an odd thing to say, but I want to say something to express that he's brought me relief for the first

time in so long, connecting me to my body's wants that I've ignored.

I reach for the bowl of whipped cream. Scooping a dollop on my finger, I dabble some on his lips.

He stares at me, his eyes wide, and before I lose my nerve, I kiss him.

He tastes of mint and sweetness from the whipped cream, and I twine his tongue with mine. A growl emanates from his lips, and he grabs my head and takes control of the kiss, his tongue dominating mine.

He groans, and I bask in the high of making this man utter that sound and yield to his exploring tongue, his soft lips against mine.

“Merry Christmas Eve, Holly.” He drapes an arm around me, pulling me tight against him.

“Merry Christmas Eve, Noel.”

His expression draws tight. “Would you like to go further or leave it for tonight?”

My body feels languid and heavy, my head floating with the after-effects of our intimacy, but my thoughts are a knotted mess.

“I want to leave it here. But I feel you didn't get a turn.”

“Sweet Holly.” He kisses my cheek gently. “Giving you pleasure is enough for me.”

Noel stands and takes my hand in his. “I’ll see you tomorrow for the first day of Kinkmas.”

“I’m not sending you out into the cold on Christmas Eve, am I?” Half of me wants to ask him to stay, but I need the space to process what we just did.

“No, Holly.”

Past boyfriends claimed that I needed too much alone time. But with my job, being alone sometimes is the only way I can decompress, and I guess it’s become a habit.

“Good night, Noel. Thanks for...” Words fail me for a moment, and then I decide just to say it. “The orgasms.”

He chuckles. “Goodnight, Holly. I’ll see you tomorrow. Sweet dreams, gorgeous girl.” He presses a soft kiss to my lips before leaving me to my thoughts.

7 NOEL

DECEMBER 25TH, FIRST DAY OF
KINKMAS

“**Y**ou got laid last night. That’s what you’re telling us?”
I can tell by the high-top tables behind him that Evan is in Sinful Bites. He waggles his eyebrows as he sips his coffee, and his brown eyes, so much like mine, have that mischievous glint I know so well.

“Knock it off, Evan.” Theo, my middle brother, levels a stare at Evan.

Theo resembles our mother: brown sandy hair and light grey eyes. He’s at our parents’ house, hanging out in the garage. I see our Dad’s hockey sticks behind him.

“What?” Evan leans back in his desk chair.

“You’re being obnoxious,” Hunter says.

Hunter, the youngest Brennon brother, sits with arms crossed over his muscled chest. I have no idea where he is. It’s a white wall behind him. His beard is full, and he looks like he needs coffee.

Hunter comes and goes as he pleases, and I'm touched he showed up to this meeting.

Even though I want to mute them and leave this Zoom meeting, Evan insisted we have one this Christmas morning.

I'm totally blaming the lack of sleep I got last night and the lack of coffee I got this morning on Holly.

Theo and Hunter are younger than me. Theo by two years, Hunter by three, but Theo is so serious you'd think he was the older brother, not Evan.

"Noel, if you found a way to make your Christmas happy by meeting this woman, I think that's a good thing. You don't have to sleep with her," Theo says. Theo's tone is his usual seriousness.

"Thanks, Theo," I say.

"Yeah, but the man's not dead," Evan says.

His quick mouth and quick temper often get him in trouble. Theo sits back in his chair, Hunter leans forward, and Evan goes off-screen for a moment.

"I have things to do. Check in with you guys later," I say.

"Hey, I'm an ass. Sorry." Evan comes back in the frame, holding up a potted lavender tree. "Look, I put this in the entranceway. I know Claire loved them."

She loved our garden and, for Christmas, would give everyone a plant of some kind. The first year Sinful Bites was open, Claire decorated with lavender trees. Evan freaked out,

saying that their smell would compete with the food. Claire shrugged and moved her trees to the entranceway.

“The man does have a heart,” Theo mumbles.

“It’s fine. I know I’ve been a widow for three years now.” A lump rises in my throat because it’s three years to the day.

“Isn’t this the usual bowl of cheer? If Noel is shacking up with one of his guests or plans on it, I’m for it. Merry Christmas, boys. See you in the New Year.” Hunter waves before he logs off.

“I have things to do. Merry Christmas,” I say.

“Merry Christmas,” my brothers echo back.

I stride across the room and glance out the window. From my private loft slash office space, it’s a white blanket of fresh snow covering the fields across.

I wanted to come to Vixen’s Paradise not only to see Rosa and Axel and to check on the place but also because this is a place that my wife hadn’t been. Grief made me buy up all the properties and follow in Evan’s footsteps, opening a luxury hotel serving kinky tastes. The properties were mostly abandoned or on the way to being left destitute. Some the banks owned, and some people were looking to sell, so it was good timing on my part.

All except for Winterhaven Farms, the property next to us. Half the time, the owner hasn’t returned my calls. When I first bought this property, Evan dealt with a lot of the administration stuff because I was still in my cloud of grief.

Vowing to call the owners myself after the holidays, I change from my sweats into a pair of pressed grey slacks and a light blue dress shirt, missing that I once had someone who laid out my clothes every morning.

Shaking away the sadness, I take the stairs two at a time, follow the narrow hallway and make my way to Rosa's office.

"Merry Christmas." I peek my head around the door.

Axel and Rosa break away at my knock as if I caught them in the act...which I did. Rosa blushes, reaching for her blouse.

"Merry Christmas, boss," Axel says, leaning on the desk.

"Rosa, are you okay?" I grin at her.

"We were just taking a moment."

I half shrug. "I know it's unusual to have me here. I'm not concerned. It's early, and your capable staff is looking after the guests."

If anything, my words cause Rosa to blush more, and I remember her and Claire making dinner together in our kitchen in our Edmonton home.

"I got what you asked for, Noel. I made it to the shop in the nick of time."

"Thank you."

"We're happy to help. You deserve happiness, Noel."

I shrug. "It is a little Christmas fun," I take the gold-wrapped box from Rosa. "See you two out there."

Axel nods, and Rosa rushes to close the door behind me.

Whistling, I stride down the call, opening the door to the main resort.

I laugh as a man runs past the desk, chased by a woman brandishing a crop.

“Come back here, you brat!”

“Got to catch me first!” the man yells, almost crashing into Lori, her hands filled with a coffee tray.

The scent of cooked sugar and cinnamon is heavy in the air.

My stomach rumbles, wanting breakfast.

“Noel! Good to see you!” Rick Meaford slaps me on the shoulder.

I shake his hand and grin. “I didn’t know you guys were here already.”

“Wouldn’t miss the Fire and Ice party! Axel’s parties are the bomb. Isn’t that right, Cat?” Rick squeezes his submissive’s shoulder.

She laughs and flicks her short hair. “Vixen’s Paradise’s play parties are awesome. We had to come to the last one of the year.” Cat reaches up and gives me a kiss. “Merry Christmas, Noel.”

“Merry Christmas. It’s been too long.” I genuinely mean it. Rick and Cat were two of my friends from my old life. When I opened Vixen’s Paradise, they were my first phone call.

“We’ve got to work off that breakfast. See you later!” Rick swings Cat up in his arms, and she laughs as he leads her away

down the hall.

My pulse gallops as I see Holly at the top of the stairs. I start over to her when Pauline steps in front of me. The old Domme takes my hand in hers.

“Noel! Merry Christmas.”

“Merry Christmas, Pauline. It’s good to see you. Thanks for coming.”

“We wouldn’t miss it for the world! Kai is around here somewhere.” She puts two fingers in her mouth, emitting the shrillest whistle I’ve ever heard.

I startle and cover my ears.

“Practice, darling,” Pauline grins knowingly at me.

From across the room, Kai darts over and kneels at her feet.

“Here he is. Kai! Look!” Pauline grabs a fistful of his hair, forcing Kai to meet my eyes. He gives me a huge smile.

“Hi, Noel. Great place you have here.”

Pauline rests a hand on Kai’s head. I catch sight of Holly halfway down the stairs now, and I want to rush to her, but I don’t want to be rude.

“I just saw Rick and Cat. Did you come with them?”

“We did! You know this place is fab, Noel.” Pauline launches into a story about their drive down, but my eyes have found Holly.

She’s chatting with a woman on the stairs; her hair is tied back, falling down one shoulder, and her short skirt floats

around her legs. She's wearing a lacy red top, showing her beautiful breasts, and I remember how her nipple taste.

"You'll come for dinner soon?" Pauline says.

I blink, knowing I had tuned out the conversation. "Yes, I'd love that, thanks."

"Run along, Kai. We must not keep our friends waiting any longer," Pauline demands. She flips her long blonde hair as Kai scrambles along the hall on all fours.

I meet Holly on the stairs before anyone else can grab my attention. She turns to me and smiles, her eyes glowing.

My heart tugs weirdly, and I know I have the biggest grin splashed on my face, and I don't care. I'll smile every time I see this woman walk into a room.

"I'll talk to you later. Nice meeting you," the woman says and goes upstairs.

"Good morning, Miss Burkholder."

"Merry Christmas, Mr. Brennon," Holly says.

I move closer, close enough to see the glitter in her dark pink lip gloss. She tilts her head to me and smiles.

Leaving her last night was so hard. Part of the reason I gave her the choice to continue or to pick up our game today was because I thought maybe I needed a push...a push to spend a night in a woman's bed who isn't my wife.

Another part of me is relieved that she sent me away, even if all I wanted to do was bury my cock in her pussy.

I take her arm, guiding her down the last four steps.

“This is for later.” I hold up the gold-wrapped gift, it’s heavy and boxy and set it behind the reception desk. “How did you sleep?”

“Great,” but a shadow crosses her face, and I want to know why.

“Are you sure?”

“My family hasn’t celebrated Christmas together for a long time. Being here, with all the holiday decorations...”

She touches a piece of evergreen on the doorframe of the dining room. “Made me miss some stuff. I called my cousin last night. She and her kids read *The Night before Christmas*.”

“Christmas does bring out the sentimentality,” I say.

I take her arm and guide her to the dining room.

“Or new traditions,” Holly laughs, pointing to the table on the raised platform where we had dinner last night.

A man has his head buried in a woman’s pussy, and her legs are over his shoulders.

“I know it’s optional, but in the dining room?” Holly’s expression is half amusement, and her tone is one of fascination, not judgemental.

I grin. “It is Christmas.”

I catch Axel’s eye across the room as he’s helping one of the wait staff bring in a new carafe, and we exchange amused glances.

“If you tell me what you like, I’ll bring you a plate.”

Her eyebrows shoot up. “Really?”

“You can enjoy your coffee, and I’ll bring the food. There’s a table free by the window.”

“Lots of bacon, those waffles smell amazing and something with fruit to balance it out.”

“You got it.”

“Thank you, Noel,” her voice is soft and wistful.

I smile, grab another plate from the line and wait my turn, watching as she makes her way to the table, exchanging polite chitchat with guests.

I go through the line, taking waffles with whipped cream because I can’t help myself, a fruit bowl, lots of bacon, eggs and toast for me. At the end of the line, I balance our plates across my arm, remembering my days as a waiter while in University and praying that I don’t spill any of this food. Holly helps me unload the plates, and then I slide into the seat across from her.

“I don’t think anyone’s gotten me a plate before,” she mumbles into her coffee.

Her cheeks are bright pink as if my gentlemanly act has embarrassed her, but I can’t believe this gorgeous woman didn’t have men falling at her feet, offering to carry all her things or to get her a plate of food.

“It’s no big deal, Miss Burkholder. Merry Christmas.”

We dig into our food.

“You’re a popular guy this morning. I saw you talk to a woman as I was coming down.”

“Merry Christmas, Mr. Brennon.” Madison, one of our waiters, interrupts us. “Coffee?” She holds up a carafe, and I pick up the coffee cup from the table.

“Thank you.”

“I noticed your hands were full.” Madison winks at me and goes to the next table.

“See? Totally popular.” Holly smiles.

“I’m lucky to have good friends.”

“Well, if I had a friend who owned a private hotel with a dungeon...” Holly winks at me.

I sip my coffee, my hands sweating. “I’ve known Pauline and her husband, Kai, for years. Same with Rick and Cat. I met them at a Club I used to attend with my wife. I wasn’t a great friend after she passed. But when I called them to tell them what I was doing here, they were my first guests and have come back to all the play parties since.”

“I’m sure they understand, Noel.”

The concern in her voice melts a frozen section of my heart. I know grief is a living, breathing, and often controlling force, but I was awful to the people in my life. Buying the properties on this road gave me purpose when I realized I wasn’t returning to work for the firm.

“They are kind, and I’m lucky.” I smile.

Holly takes a forkful of whipped cream and holds it to my lips. “My turn to feed you?”

I laugh, giving in to her request to open my mouth.

“There, now I feel like I’ve given you something.”

She smiles, her eyes glow. The background noise floats away. I suppress the wild need to laugh.

I’m eating breakfast with a beautiful woman. All I want to do is taste her skin again. I want to give her another earth-shattering orgasm that severs the ties to the self-control she tightly holds on to.

“You are the present, and I have plans for the first day of Kinkmas.”

“Any hints?”

“Nope. But I want you to open your present.”

She sets her fork on her plate. “Noel, you don’t have to give me anything.”

Not this again. One way or another, I’m going to make this woman accept good things. “I like to.”

“Is that part of bringing you pleasure?”

“Oh yes,” I take her arm, guiding her out of the dining room. Behind the reception desk, I grab the gold-wrapped present and hand it to her.

“Noel, this is too much.”

“You haven’t opened it yet.”

“Kiss her!” Rick strides past me and points to the ceiling. Above our heads, the mistletoe hangs.

“It’s tradition.” Holly smiles, sets the gift on Rosa’s desk, and lays her palm on my chest.

Her hand is warm through my shirt.

I clasp it and lean forward, slanting my lips over hers. I kiss her with all the passion and gratitude I have for this woman I met on a plane.

Holly might not believe in coincidences, but surely this was meant to be?

She lets out a soft whimper as I twine her tongue with mine. My hand snakes up her back, pressing her close to me.

“Sorry to interrupt, Mr. Brennon.”

I reluctantly break off the kiss, glaring at Rosa.

“Important phone call from Theo.”

“Theo?” The surprise in my voice is almost comical. “I’m sorry, I’ve got to take this.” I brush Holly’s soft cheek with the back of my knuckles.

“I understand.” she smiles.

“Open the gift once you’re inside your room, and if you can’t follow the instructions, text me.”

I had planned to keep her busy until this afternoon and joke about having to be done at three, but this works out, too.

“Okay. See you later.” Holly grabs the gift, touches my arm, and strides past me, going upstairs to her room.

“This better be really important,” I growl at Rosa.

But Theo never calls for anything small.

“He tried to get you but couldn’t.”

I take my cell out of my pocket, and sure enough, three missed calls from my little brother.

Hoping whatever it is is quick, I disappear into my office.

8 HOLLY

DECEMBER 25TH FIRST DAY OF
KINKMAS

The gift is heavy in my hands, and I want to rip it open right in the hallway, but I force myself to not run down the hall and get to my room as fast as I can.

Inside, I tear off the paper, and a card falls to the floor.

I pick it up.

Holly, I would be delighted if you joined me for a sleigh ride this Christmas. Please meet me at the front at 3:00 p.m. Yours, Noel.

The note makes me smile. There is something so gentlemanly about it, so considerate, and it reflects the man I've started to get to know.

Gently lifting the lid of the black cardboard box, I take off a layer of tissue paper.

“Oh, wow.”

Reaching into the box, I pull out a fabric bundle laying it on the bed. My heart races. This is so unreal. It's like I'm on the

set of a Hallmark movie.

Delicately, I touch the soft faux fur. I hold it up against me, and it glimmers in the light. The dark green fabric makes my eyes pop. I undo the clasp and slide my arms inside the soft cloak. Inside, the cloak is lined with fleece.

It has pockets! I shove my hands in the deep pockets.

Strolling to the window, I look at the fields toward my Gran's house. Those child Christmases brought the peace I hadn't had at home, and I realize I am carrying a little bit of that threat with me into my day-to-day life, where I always feel like I am fighting to keep the peace I've found.

When I am dealing with my egocentric clients, I fight with them to get them to listen to me; when dealing with studios and production companies, I fight to be taken seriously.

But with Noel...I don't have to fight.

Coming here to Vixen's Paradise was the remedy I didn't know I needed. My fingers snag on something in the pocket, something metal and cool. Taking the object out of my pocket, I laugh. It's a gold bullet vibrator; the remote control that goes to this device curiously missing.

My cell chimes, and I answer the call. "Merry Christmas, Mom."

"Holly! Merry Christmas! It's raining here like a sheet, can you believe that? I bet you and Phil are having a great time on the beach!"

A lump forms in my throat, hearing my Mom's voice. I understand why we stopped getting together at Christmas after Gran passed, but I think we can create a new tradition. When I talked to Stella last night, she said the same thing.

"I'm not on the beach. Phil and I broke up."

"Oh, Holly! I'm so sorry! Do you want to come for some Florida sun?"

"I'm actually—" How do I even tell Mom about this? I blush, wondering what she'd think of this adults-only place.

"It's okay, I'm meeting friends."

"Okay, honey. Did you tell Stella?"

I smile. "Yeah."

"And what did she say?"

My cousin is always quick with the one-liners. "Good, because, and I quote, 'Phil is as interesting as a toaster.'"

My mom howls, and I laugh because it's true.

"I miss you both."

"I miss you too. I'm going to come and visit soon." I mean it and vow to look up my calendar and flights when I'm off the phone.

"Here's Max."

"Hey, kiddo, how's your Christmas?"

"It's snowy," I tell my stepdad. "Not the beach I was expecting."

“I overheard. You holding up okay?”

“Yeah,” I pace across the room. “Getting ready for your golf game?”

“Yep, I’m all set. Did you know I almost had a hole-in-one the other night?”

Tears gather at the corners of my eyes as I listen to Max tell the story. I couldn’t ever bring myself to call him “Dad.” The dad I knew drank too much and screamed at my mother. I was twelve when my mom finally decided she had enough. I was fifteen when Max came along and swept Mom off her feet.

He’s stable and steady, and he’s always been there for me. When I broke up with my former Dom and was going to quit being a lawyer, he flew out to Toronto, took me to dinner and told me to only give up if it was on my terms.

With a start, I realize I had spent so much time trying to avoid a relationship that was like my mom and father’s that I didn’t clue into the one who I was trying to model my own after. Max brings my mom flowers out of the blue. He gets her favourite concert tickets and surprises her with trips. They dance in the kitchen as if it’s Carnegie Hall, and he looks at my mother as if the sun rises and sets on her.

I don’t need someone steady, stable and boring. I need someone who can love me.

I frown.

I don’t want a man who wants me to be weak, even if I am submissive in the bedroom. Noel said he’d been in the lifestyle

for fifteen years and a Dom to his wife. If I continue with him, will I lose myself? But so far, Noel has shown me he is a good man.

“Holly? I got to get to my game.”

“Okay. Love you, Max.”

“Love you, kiddo.”

The phone is silent, and I end the call. We agreed to five days, only five days, I remind myself.

* * *

“I knew that colour would suit you,” Noel leans by the front door. “Are you wearing everything I gave you?”

“Yes.” I feel the weight of the vibrator as I move. “Thank you very much for the cloak. I’m at the mercy of what I found in the airport gift shop.”

His dark eyes light with mirth. “I saw you stuff shoes into your bag.”

“You did not!”

“Yes, and it was adorable.” Noel throws on a wool coat and a plaid scarf. He passes me a red-knitted toque and a fuzzy pair of gloves.

“Thanks.”

“Right this way.” He opens the door.

The cold air catches my breath, and my feet crunch on the packed snow. The red bows and the hanging star ornaments on

the garlands are dusted with snow, making the property look like a Christmas card.

From here, I can almost see Gran's treeline.

"Holly, this way." Noel gently takes my arm.

"Oh, horses!" I rush forward, eager to give the two great speckled grey Percherons pats. One snorts at my touch. The horses are harnessed to a red sleigh.

A driver in the front of the sleigh tips his hat to me.

"How many horses does Vixen's Paradise have?"

"These two workhorses and four more. We have a maintenance ground crew and stable staff who live on the property full-time."

"You must rent this out for photo shoots." The sleigh is gleaming, the horses gorgeous, and I'm in the middle of a Christmas fairy tale.

"We don't, actually. Come on."

Noel gives me a hand, and I step up on the back of the sleigh.

"Merry Christmas, Aaron." Noel claps the hand of the driver before stepping up beside me.

"Good day for a ride, Noel. Where are we going today?"

"A tour of the property."

"You got it. I'm happy to let these guys stretch their legs. Here, let me pass you that blanket." Aaron unfurls a thick blanket and settles it across my lap.

Noel climbs up beside me, tucking his hand into mine.

“Ready?” he asks.

My heart skips a beat.

Stop being silly, I scold myself, but I’m literally in a Christmas special with kinky flair, so I can be okay with silly.

“Ready.”

Noel’s eyes are warm against the red in his scarf, and he rewards me with that dimpled smile.

The horses start at a trot, and I take in the expansive property.

“Why no photo ops?”

“Because that would be risking too much exposure. We don’t want to hide what we do at Vixen’s Paradise, but we do want to be careful with how we market it.”

“Have you ever had someone make an arrangement and not know what it was?”

Noel grins. “Once, we had someone drive by and knock on the door. In that case, our staff asks them what kind of experience they are looking for or if they want to book one of our theme weeks and depending on how they answer, they’re told we don’t have room.”

My mind starts to wander, thinking of how you’d market Vixen’s Paradise.

“That’s a clever way to handle it.”

Noel squeezes my thigh under the blanket. “How did you sleep last night?”

“Honestly, I slept the best I had in months.”

“Then I guess I didn’t leave you frustrated enough.”

His smirk tells me I’m in for more, and as the sleigh turns to go up the hill, vibrations buzz against my sensitive flesh.

“Noel!” I clutch his arm, even as I’m tightening my muscles against the low hum in my pussy.

“Yes, Holly?”

“I don’t know if I should thank you or jump out of this sleigh!”

Noel laughs. “Both?”

Just as I think the orgasm is going to burst open, taking me under right on this sleigh, the vibrations stop.

I slump against him, slightly wrung out.

“How is your first day at Vixen’s Paradise?”

“Aside from the Kinkmas, this feels good. Like I am in my own Christmas card.”

The ride is smooth, and the horses are familiar with this path.

“Good,” Noel says. “I needed this, too. I’m glad I bumped into you in that airport.”

Snow starts to fall. I stick my tongue out, catching the flakes. It strikes me that I should be on the beach right now.

“I’m happy that I’m not in Mexico right now.”

“Even with the snow?” Noel brushes a few flurries off my shoulder.

“This is a pretty place to see the snow.”

“If we still like each other at the end of Kinkmas, maybe I’ll take you somewhere warm next year.”

“Does the Brennon Consortium have properties in Cozumel?”

Noel tilts his head, steadying me. “How do you know it’s a consortium?”

My mind races. I blush, wondering if somehow he’s going to find out that I’m one of the people he wants to buy land from, and I don’t want that because I don’t want to ruin this moment.

“I think I saw it on the website.”

“Maybe Theo updated it.” Noel frowns. “Though we only use that name for legal purposes.”

“Do all your brothers have properties?”

“No, only Evan with Sinful Bites. Hunter and Theo help out. What does your family do?”

“Not own kink-friendly establishments.” I smile and squeeze his thigh, wanting him to relax. “My mom is an X-ray technician and has done that for years, though I keep telling her to retire. My stepfather is a music producer, and my cousin is a stay-at-home mom.”

“You are close to them?”

“Yeah. My cousin and I are like sisters.”

The sleigh turns, and I can't help but gasp. I wasn't expecting to come upon Gran's property so suddenly, but here is the start of the long driveway and the old house with boarded-up windows. It looks sad and forlorn.

I almost say something, but the vibrations rock me, pulsing hard against my clit. I let out a little shriek and grip Noel's arm.

He grins wolfishly, holding the remote. "Give it to me, Holly."

The pulsating pressure increases. Noel places a hand on my thigh, holding my legs apart. And even as I'm horrified, my toes curl. The pressure builds to a force I can't hold back, and as the orgasm rolls through me, I scream, right there in the back of the sleigh, with the driver up front, who can clearly hear me.

"Noel! Oh God." I pant.

"That's the first of many, lovely Holly. I'm going to have fun on this Christmas day."

"And what's my fun, Noel?"

"This is fun for you."

Damn, he's a handsome man, grinning like he got a prize.

Handsome and confident and sexy as hell. The driver laughs, telling the horses to crack on, and they break into a trot over the gentle slope of the hill. Just as they were on the other side of the hill, vibrations ping through me, so hard and fast, I gasp, squeezing my eyes shut against the pressure.

“Noel!” I grab his arm, rightly.

“Be a good girl and give me your orgasm, Holly.”

“I...can’t,” I grit out.

Noel cups the back of my head. His dark chocolate eyes meet mine. “Yes, you can. Now, Holly.”

This is too much, but the vibrations roll through me, even though the aftershocks haven’t finished from the last orgasm.

“Noel!” I shriek into his jacket.

The pleasure rips through me so fast it feels like it’s separating me from my body.

“Noel! This feels so...good...God!” I can’t catch my breath. My head is floaty and my body is completely boneless.

He kisses my brow. “That’s a good girl. Now, I’ll let you enjoy the ride.”

A second later, I feel a low hum roll through my body. The man hadn’t put away the remote control. He just switched it to the lowest setting to torture me this way.

“Evil!” I protest.

“I have to keep playing with my present.”

I lean against him, jostling at the low murmur of sensations rolling through my centre. They are more annoying than anything, leaving me wanting more and not wanting it at all. Like an insect buzzing around my face, it’s a constant buzz of annoyance.

I lean against Noel, trying to ignore it.

By the time we are back at the driveway of Vixen's Paradise, the snow is thick, and I'm ready to be out of the cold.

"Are you hungry, or would you like wine in my room?"

"Not hungry. As long as your room has a fireplace, I'm good with it."

"I have a fireplace."

"Deal."

Noel laughs. "You're an easy woman to please."

Aaron stops the sleigh, gives me and Noel a wave, and the horses disappear around the building.

"It's pretty."

"You're pretty," Noel says.

I shake my head at him but grin, and he holds the door open for me.

We stomp the snow off our boots and leave them by the door. I notice a rack holding slippers and help myself to a fuzzy green pair.

"Nice touch."

"We try." Noel grins.

Laughter floats from the Parlour, where a man with a white beard plays carols on the piano.

A large man runs down the hall, chasing a woman who has tinsel in her hair.

"It's festive here," I say.

Noel laughs. “As it should be. Right this way.”

He guides me to a door behind the reception desk. It opens to a narrow staircase.

“It’s claustrophobic but worth it.”

“Is this a bad time to tell you I’m afraid of dark spaces and caves?”

“I’m always afraid of the dark. I’ll hold your hand if you hold mine.” Noel reaches for my hand, and I return his firm squeeze.

“Deal.”

Following behind him, I hold his hand and the banister with the other, step after step. Three more steps, and there is a column of light from the window.

Wow, it’s absolutely spectacular.

The attic has been converted, so it spreads the entire floor. There is a massive bed under the eaves, windows that let in the light all around the perimeter, and the calm grey tone of the walls, perfect to let the features shine, like the fireplace across from the bed, with a stone surround.

A pair of French doors is across the bed, and I wonder what’s behind them.

“Welcome to my private getaway. You’re my very first guest.” Noel spreads his arms wide.

“Really?”

“Yes, this was completed in the spring.” Noel takes my hand again and guides me to a small sitting area.

“Take off your cloak. I’ll get us wine.”

I remove the borrowed hat and cloak as he disappears behind the French doors, returning a second later with a bar cart.

“Here we are.” He takes out a bottle of red, sets it on the cart and grabs two glasses.

He opens the wine and pours us generous amounts.

“Noel?”

“Yes, Holly?”

“Are you going to take off your jacket?”

“Of course. I wanted to get you warmed first.” He strides over to the fireplace and turns it on.

That’s it. I’m a puddle of need and lust. He hands me the glass of wine and raises his glass. “To Kinkmas.”

“Merry Kinkmas.” I laugh.

The wine is cherry and woodsy on my tongue.

Noel takes a sip, sets down the glass and removes his jacket, hanging it on a coat tree near the door.

He strides towards me, a look of pure determination on his face. “I’m going to kiss you now.”

“Yes, please.”

My heart beats so fast I can’t hear anything. Electricity snaps through the air between us. Noel’s hands are on my shoulders.

He tips my face to his and slants his lips over mine.

“Noel,” I say into his mouth.

My body is turning into liquid with every stroke of his tongue.

I break off the kiss, my belly a tight knot of nerves.

And maybe because I want to take control, I slide off the chair onto the floor.

Noel’s hands rest on my shoulders. I hook my hands around his muscular calves.

“Holly...” He runs his hand through my hair.

“Let me give you a gift now,” I say the words lightly, but I’m worried he’s going to reject me.

“I think I would like your gift very much.” The heat in his eyes sizzles through me.

“Let me help.” I reach to unzip his fly.

With a groan, he rolls his pants down, revealing a pair of black silk boxers.

Noel rips them down his legs, clutching my face. “Do you like it hard and deep or should I keep it civil?”

My pulse races. His cock is standing up. It’s thick, and I can’t help but touch it. It’s smooth under my palm.

“Damn, Holly,” Noel hisses through his teeth.

“Hard and deep, please.”

I'm learning his length, from tip to root. I cup his balls, squeezing gently.

"Holly, your touch is going to make me come apart." He tangles his fingers through my hair, massaging my scalp, bringing me closer.

I grip his cock lightly and take it into my mouth, just the tip. I roll my tongue along its underside. Above me, Noel hisses, his grip tightening on my shoulder.

"That's very nice, Holly. Good girl."

And then I am lost in his state, in the sensations of his warm cock in my mouth. I suck, taking in more length and lick it like a snow cone.

It's a tasty treat of male musk and hard steel.

"Damn, Holly, what a gift." Noel rocks on his heels as I massage his balls, lapping his length. I swirl my tongue along his underside, loving how it makes him twitch.

"Holly! You're going to make me explode."

I nod, with his cock in my mouth, because that's exactly what I want. I want him to fuck my mouth, and I want to get lost in this man who has made my Christmas bright.

I suck, hollowing my cheeks and wrapping my hands around his thighs.

"Fuck, Holly!" That's all the warning I get before he takes control, holding my head in place. He thrusts hard into me, and I swallow on his length, keeping my jaw slack.

“Good girl,” he grits out, and I will myself to stay still as he plunges his cock in and out of my mouth.

“Those tears are so pretty,” he coos.

I feel them wet on my cheeks, but I’m only concentrating on how his thick cock feels in my throat, following his thrusts.

He thrusts once, slowing down the pace, and I take the clue and swallow. He tips forward into my waiting mouth, and I sputter, trying to hold my lips around his cock.

“Now, Holly!” But he slides in and out of my mouth, and I do my best to keep contact with his cock.

He pulls my hair, bringing me closer, and I close my eyes as he releases his hot seed down my throat.

I swallow, tasting his saltiness on my lips.

I wipe tears away from my eyes. Noel slowly withdraws his cock from my mouth.

“Good girl,” Noel exhales, cupping my nape. “You’re extraordinary.”

I’m liquid at his praise and sit back to look at him. His hair is dishevelled, but his expression is one of awe, making me proud.

“I’ll be right back.” Noel disappears behind a door I didn’t notice before, near the bed by the window. I hear water running, and then he’s back, holding a face cloth out to me.

He leans down and wipes my mouth with the warm cloth. I take it from his fingers and shyly use it to clean up his cock.

“I haven’t had a chance to do that in a long time,” I say.

Noel hands me my wine glass, and staying on my knees, I drink it. I’m relishing in how...submissive I feel, and I like it.

“Your ex didn’t like you giving him head?” The exclamation in his tone is comical, but yeah, it’s true. Phil’s idea of sex was two minutes of missionary with the lights off.

“No...my sex life has faltered between non-existent and vanilla for the past two years.”

“What an idiot,” Noel murmurs.

I laugh. “This is fun. It feels good to laugh.”

“You haven’t done much of that either?”

I take another sip of wine, my mind wandering to work. At the beginning of the month, a client got trashed on his ex-girlfriend’s wedding night, showing up to set the next day smelling like a bar and nearly got fired. It took a lot of massaging of that producer’s ego to keep him.

Another client had a crisis and wanted to quit before the series wrapped up, violating the terms of their contract.

I went with them to set every day for a week and acted as their personal cheerleader.

“Work’s been chaotic.”

“Is the screen protector business that stressful?” Noel’s lips twitch.

“You could say that.”

“I needed this Christmas break, too. Thanks for spending it with me.”

I take his outstretched hand, and he helps me to my feet.

He hugs me, and I lean against his wall of muscles, breathing in his delicious scent. A part of me could stay in his arms forever. A part of me wants to.

Noel leads me to the bed, and my breath catches in my throat. From here, I can see my Gran’s property.

“Everything okay?”

“Yes, fine.”

“Holly, I think you are a beautiful, capable woman. If there is anything you want to share, I promise to treat it with the utmost respect.” The confidence mixed with gentleness in his tone wraps around my heart.

All of the times that men who were interested in me gave me a similar promise flash through my mind, and I glance at him. He’s standing off the side, his gaze somewhere above my ear. Would he think I’m a liar if I told him who I was? Or that I was trying to influence him somehow when it came to selling Gran’s farm?

But more than that, I want the rest of Kinkmas, and I don’t want to risk that.

“I know you would,” I say. I smile and sit on the end of the bed. “I’m starving. What are our dinner options?”

Noel grins. "I'm so glad you asked." His hand slips into his pocket.

Vibrations shoot through my core, awakening the vibe once more.

"Noel! I forgot you had that!"

And amazingly, I had forgotten it was still in me.

"I thought you might." he grins wickedly, approaching me.

His lips crash into mine, and he kisses me as the vibrations increase. I clutch his arms as the orgasm winds from my centre and crashes over me in a burst of pleasure. It hits me so vigorously that I grab him, resting my head against his shoulder.

"Now dinner." Noel kisses me again, and my head is floaty with all the aftershocks of pleasure.

He kisses me passionately and insistently, and I know this man is going to undo me.

9 NOEL

DECEMBER 26TH, SECOND DAY
OF KINKMAS

The morning light slants across Holly's face, and her hair spills on the pillow. I carefully set the tray of coffee on a side table.

Last night, we had dinner with Cat and Rick. Holly had charmed them both, and my friends were delighted to hear that she went to school at U of T. Then, we moved into the dungeon, where we watched Rick's scene where he ate dessert from Cat's naked body.

Holly had watched, fascinated, and I noted her dilated eyes and gaspy breathing, filing it away for later.

My present likes sensation play with a little bite, and I'm going to keep delivering. Her eyes open, and she smiles.

"Good morning, Noel."

"Morning, Holly." She glances at the unwrinkled bed sheets on the other side of the bed. "Do I snore?"

"I don't think you do." I had slept in my office, still near her but not beside her because as much as I enjoy spending time

with this woman, I couldn't bring myself to sleep beside her.

“Coffee?”

“Noel, you are spoiling me.”

“Good. I like spoiling you.”

She sits up, the sheets revealing her gorgeous creamy breasts, and she's totally unconcerned with being naked.

“What's your plan for the second day of Kinkmas?”

I join her on the bed, balancing my coffee cup. “You are booked for a full spa treatment, including a massage.”

“Oh?”

“Yes, I need you relaxed in time for the Fire and Ice party.” I grin.

She shakes her head, twisting a strand of hair behind her ear.

“We talked about puppy play but didn't talk about anal. How comfortable are you with a butt plug?”

She shrugs, the pulse of her throat racing. “It's been a while, but I enjoy anal play.”

A good portion of my blood rushes to my cock. “Good.”

I take her coffee cup because I want to kiss her and set it on the nightstand next to mine.

“Merry Kinkmas, day two.” My mouth finds her lips, and she yields with a gaspy little breath. I kiss her, my tongue sliding around hers and my cock throbs.

I break off the kiss, getting up and taking a fruit bowl off the tray. “Open.”

I feed her a strawberry. “I love watching your mouth.”

She blushes most deliciously.

“Noel.” She places her hand on my arm. “I can buy my own food, and you can bill me for the spa treatments.”

It’s cute that she is concerned with the cost of things.

I press another strawberry to her lips, and she opens at the invitation.

“Good girl.”

This is so simple, this peaceful pleasure, and I want to heap her with orgasms and goodness because she’s brought so much joy to my Christmas.

“We’ll figure it out later.” I keep my tone light, even though I’m grinding my molars.

“But I can—” I kiss her lips insistently, cutting her off. She sighs but kisses me back, her lips slightly swollen and sweet.

“I know you are a capable woman who can pay her way. But this is my Christmas present, don’t forget.”

“Noel...” Her hands cup my face, and I gently kiss her lip, taking it between my teeth.

She moans and arches towards me, and I grin, liking her expression of need.

I roll on top of her, careful to keep my weight off her slender frame and kiss the hollow of her throat, my lips brushing her

skin from her collarbone down to the valley between her breasts.

Her little breathy sounds are pure music and encourage me onto the plane of her stomach, the dip in her hips. I skirt my lips over every inch of her skin, and when I reach her legs, I spread them, kneeling between her.

“Show me your breasts, Holly.”

She cups them and arches forward, offering me her lovely globes.

Her expression of anticipation rings through me. From my pocket, I take out a pair of alligator clamps.

“How do you feel about nipple clamps?” I press them against her breast.

“Good. Yes, please,” she reaches for me again, and I skim my lips against hers, burying myself against her smooth skin.

With my free hand, I massage her breast.

“Oh, Noel!”

Smiling, I take her nipple into my mouth, sucking the hardened tip. She mewls under me, her legs clasp around my waist. I lick every inch of her luscious nipple, her moans of pleasure urging me on.

“Gorgeous, Holly,” I say as I come off and find her lips again, kissing her with all the angst I feel.

Taking her bottom lip gently into my mouth, I tug on it, then kiss my way back down to the other breast and suck on that

nipple while caressing the other one between my fingers.

“Noel! You’re making me all hot.”

I laugh with her nipple in my mouth, give it a long pull and break off. Taking the clamps, I settle one nipple between the teeth, and she squeezes her eyes shut.

“Do you like this?” I plump up the other and settle the clamp around the beaded nipple.

“Yes!”

“Good girl. Your nipples look so sexy like that.”

And my cock is so damn hard.

“Are you wet for me?”

“Yes.”

“Show me.”

She spreads her legs open, her hand sliding down and stopping just before her mound.

The tangy smell of her arousal is thick in the air.

“Your pussy is glistening. Is that for me, Holly?”

“Yes, Noel.”

I thumb her engorged clit.

She lets out the sexiest mewl, her whole body bows back, her hips rising off the bed.

It’s been so long since I let myself enjoy a female’s body, so long since I indulged.

Leaning down, I drop a trail of light kisses on her inner thigh while keeping my thumb on her clit.

“Noel! That’s so good,” Holly grits out between closed lips. Her head is tossed back, and she’s so beautiful. I can’t believe this woman is with me right now.

I press my lips against her sensitive skin. Holly jerks, and I laugh, loving how she responds to every brush of my lips and every touch of my fingertips.

Her arousal is a tangy perfume that coats the back of my throat, and I want to taste her. Leaning down, I press my lips to her sensitive skin, sucking a breath away from her pussy.

“Noel!” She screams my name, and her cry shoots all the blood to my cock.

I suck her inner thigh so hard I know I am going to leave a mark.

My cock is rock-hard, but I am a patient man with a plan in mind.

Removing my thumb, I press it against her mouth.

Immediately, her tongue comes out, and she laps up my digit, cleaning it and letting out a soft hum of pleasure.

“Remember, your orgasms are mine for all of Kinkmas, and it’s only the morning of the second day.” I grin as her eyes widen.

“Anyone tell you that you’re a mean Grinch?”

I laugh and drop a kiss on her mouth. “Who me? Never.”

She grabs my arm. “I’m so wet. I want to come so bad.”

“Perfect, that’s exactly how I want you. Enjoy your spa treatments. I have work to do.”

She closes her eyes with a huge grin, then scoots up against the pillows. “Like what?”

“Ever since we’ve opened, we’ve tried to acquire the neighbouring property. They’re impossible to get on the phone, but I’m determined to reach the owner today.”

“That’s commitment,” Holly pulls a sheet over her body and reaches for her coffee.

“We want to make this whole stretch a retreat. We bought the farm across from us and the next two to the left of us, but this neighbour is the holdout.”

“What are your plans for the property?”

Her sharp tone takes me back, and I wonder if this makes her uncomfortable.

“I want to move the stable over there. There are more trails on that property, and my brother, Theo, suggested it could be an intimate bed and breakfast.”

“What do you want to do with it?” She tilted her head, her eyes bright.

“I would love to bring it back to a farm, and then Vixen’s Paradise and the adjoining properties could be self-sustained. We could use the space to run classes to give our guests more experiences.”

“That’s very idyllic to turn this whole stretch into a resort.”

“Yes, it is, but we’ve done big projects like this before. We have our restaurant experience in one of the most luxurious hotels in the country. Anything is possible.”

“If you have money,” Holly mumbles.

“Yes, I’m not going to insult your intelligence by denying that is a factor.”

Holly puts her coffee down and leans so close to me that her hair bruises my lips.

“Good, I don’t like being insulted.” Her mouth meets mine, and she kisses me, grabbing my shirt. Her touch ignites a smouldering fire that rolls through me.

Grabbing her hands lightly, I rock my hips against hers, kissing her mouth hard.

“Noel!” Her fingers thread through my hair.

“Just making sure you’re still wet.” I smile and roll off her.

“I am so very wet.” She flutters her eyelashes in an exaggerated come hither move, and it’s adorable.

“Good girl, I want to keep you that way.”

“Yes, Noel.”

“But these should come off,” I flick the nipple clamps.

“Please,” Holly says.

Reaching down, I remove the clamp and immediately soothe the nipple with my mouth.

“I can almost come!” Holly’s hands are roaming along my back.

“Not yet,” I squeeze her nipple between my fingers gently and remove the other clip, soothing and sucking this nipple with my mouth.

“Oh, Noel! I think I’m going to…”

“No, you’re not,” I rip my mouth off her nipple so fast I feel dizzy. “I’ll reward you later. No coming, remember.”

“What if I do?” She smirks at me.

“Then I’ll topple you over my lap for that hand spanking.”

My mouth grows dry as a shudder racks through her body. I have things to do, like tracking the owner and checking on Theo. My mild-mannered brother wants to buy a bakery/art shop, and he was so distressed yesterday that I didn’t get the full story out of him.

“I think I’m going to enjoy that.” She grins, and my heart thumps hard against my chest.

“I’ll see you soon, Holly.” I brush her lips with my finger.

“Don’t leave me waiting too long, Noel.”

“Never,” I promise before heading downstairs.

10 HOLLY

Spending all day in a spa? I definitely need to do this more often. In the women's changing room, I grab my phone, and with my refreshing lime water drink in my other hand, I call Stella.

“What’s up, cuz?” She sounds like she’s in a rush, as usual.

“I’ve just finished a facial and thought I’d call you.”

“Lucky you! We’re on our way to the in-laws.”

“So I’m wondering if you got a call today from the guys who want to buy gran’s farm?”

“Holly, I asked you to deal with this—I don’t have time to take their latest offer to a lawyer, and you are a lawyer. Right?”

I’m thankful that my Mom never cared about titles because even though I went to school for law and took a course on Entertainment Law, I was lucky to land an internship with the talent agency I’m at now. So, I never completed the licensing necessary to practice as a lawyer. But I read contracts all day

long, and I feel guilty that I haven't wanted to deal with this and left Stella—to deal with it.

“No, but I can read a contract. Email it, and I'll go over it, okay? Stella, what do you guys want to do?”

A child screams in the background, and there is the thump of a door. I move to a small sitting room and sit in a plush chair, grabbing something wrapped in puff pastry off the tray.

“Holly, I need a new roof. I want my mortgage paid off and to start saving for all these kids. I want to sell.”

I know that's how she's felt, but until now, Stella has tiptoed around the issue.

“Okay. I think I'm ready to sell.”

“Really?” Stella squeals.

I'm hit with another wave of guilt because though Stella and her husband do okay, they are nowhere near my yearly salary. I bought my condo on a deal, and Max and Mom helped me with the down payment.

“Amazing that you don't hate me,” I tell her.

“Holly, how could I hate you? I get that your emotions are tied up in it, but I'm in the weeds here trying to keep tiny humans alive. I loved Gran's farm, but it's time to let it go. She's gone, and it's not the same.”

“I know. I'll let you know what I think of the offer.”

“Thanks, Holly. Love you.”

“Love you too.” I snap the phone off.

A woman with a long braid comes into the room, smiles at me and takes down a book from the shelf. Following her is a tall, muscled man.

“Holly? It’s time for your massage. My name is Vince.”

I follow Vince through to a gorgeous room. It has a soft waterfall feature wall in the back, and orange and white candles are on every available shelf and surface. The scent of bergamot and vanilla is thick in the air.

The stone floor is cool under the slippers they gave me, and I pause at the table. “I’ll give you a moment to get set on the table.”

I smile my thanks, and as Vince leaves me, I drop my robe and get under the soft sheet on the table. This is the comfiest massage table I’ve ever laid on.

“All ready?” Vince asks.

“Yes.”

“Good.”

Vince takes me to heaven as his strong, firm hands work out the knots in my neck. I gained them all from the endless days of talking to clients at my desk. When dealing with a difficult phone conversation, I flip through photos on my desktop of faraway places. It gives me a visual point of focus while I listen and problem-solve. It’s a trick I picked up in my second year that I was an agent, and seven years later, I still do it, including titling my head as I scroll through the photos and cause these knots.

Vince's hands run down my back, and I can't help but let out an oomph. My face feels so relaxed and smooth from the facial treatment, and my eyelids start close, lulled by the soothing touch. If I close my eyes, I could be in a spa in the Great Alps or in the resort in Bali I went to the year before I met Phil. A girl could get used to this kind of treatment.

This man is good, and the tension ebbs out of my body under his firm hands as he works over my glutes in the wholly detached way of professionals.

Who needs Cozumel when you have this kind of luxury. I never thought it would be in the middle of nowhere, Ontario. That's what makes this place. If you strip away all the kink, it could stand on its own.

My eyes close as I let out another sigh. Something warm and soft is draped over my body, and then firm, quick pressure is applied from head to toe. I'm sure I'm alone, with the soft classical music playing. The room is warm, and my body is languid.

A layer is lifted off of me, and then a new set of hands sweeps across my back to my bottom.

"I hope you don't mind another kind of treatment." Noel's voice, sultry and rich, floats into my ear. My pussy clenches at his touch. His hands roam over my back, squeezing each buttock expertly. I could melt under this man, and I do as he rubs circles on my ass, down along my calves, and back up to my lower back. He leans close to me, his aftershave as tantalizing as the scented candles.

“Did you enjoy your spa day?”

“Yes, it’s been lovely.”

“Good,” he lifts the blanket covering my back.

The cool air makes me shudder, not unpleasantly. Noel nibbles my ear, kisses my neck down to my collarbone and his sure press of lips eases a part of me that longs to be dominated.

He kisses the base of my spine, his hands circling my hips.

“You’re gorgeous, do you know that?” he says against my neck.

My heart leaps, and as his hands gently trail along my sides, I wonder if Noel is the kind of man I’ve been afraid to have.

The kind of man I’ve told myself doesn’t exist, afraid they’d be too put off by my success or that I would lose myself like I did with my ex.

Noel’s firm touch against my hip brings me back to the moment, pushing my swirling thoughts to the side.

“I could have you right on this table.”

My skin pebbles with goosebumps at his words; a thrill of excitement causes my pulse to roar loudly in my ears. “No objections.”

I turn to kiss his mouth, and his lips met mine. He kisses me deeply, asking me to open with the swirl of his tongue. He kisses me with a possession that heats my blood.

I grab for him, wanting him closer to me, and he breaks off the kiss and firmly nudges me back onto the table.

“I can’t wait to feel your pussy around my cock, Holly. I want to see how this looks on you.”

Something cool and smooth is laid against my chin. I lift my head and smile. I did tell the man I wanted to try puppy play.

A long silicone butt plug is in Noel’s hand. It’s curved, just like a tail.

“Rainbow coloured?”

Noel smiles. “I thought it was fun.”

“Yeah, it is.”

“Relax for me, Holly.” Noel picks up a bottle of lube from the side cart, and my tummy tightens with nerves.

His hands are warm on my ass, and I exhale a shuddering breath.

He sweeps his thumbs in my crack to my sensitive spot, brushing upwards in quick, firm strokes.

So good. I want more of his touch, so I arch my lips, lifting off the table to encourage him.

He chuckles, but his palm smacks me lightly on the ass. “Patience, Holly.”

I sigh dramatically but get back into position.

Picking up the bottle of lube, he holds it over my cleft, and the warm liquid drips into me.

“Can you spread for me, Holly?”

He can ask me to do anything in that voice that flows like warm whiskey, and it'd be hard for me to say no.

But I stall as I reach behind me.

“Holly, I didn't hear you.”

“I...yes.”

“Yes, what?” Noel says against my neck.

My whole body is blushing. “Yes...I can spread for you.”

Pure hot desire rolls through my body, arrowing right to my clit, as I reach back and spread my ass cheeks.

“Good girl.”

His praise makes my belly drop to the floor. The effect of the humiliation deliciously heats my blood,

Noel slowly massages the underside of my ass and lays the butt plug against my ass cheeks. He holds it there for a moment, so the plug takes on my body's warmth. It grows from cool to warm. “Arch towards me, Holly. Yes, exactly like that. Good girl.”

My body tenses as the silicone is worked into my ass.

“Breathe Holly. You can take this for me.”

I will myself to relax, bearing down.

“There, a little bit more,” Noel encourages.

The stretch of my most private flesh is almost painful. “I can't.”

“Yes, you can. Be a good girl for me and take this plug.”

I exhale, feel Noel work the rest of the plug in, and my body adjusts to the snug fit.

“So pretty,” Noel gives the plug a gentle pull.

“Are you wagging my tail?”

“Yes, I am.”

I laugh.

“You please me, Holly.” Noel wiggles the plug back and forth, and my inner muscles stretch with it.

I moan low in my throat. The sensations from the plug send a tingle through me.

He swallows my moan and kisses me slowly with determination.

I could spend all day kissing this man. His lips fit against mine perfectly. I kiss him back, striving to match his intensity. I want him to know that I want this a hundred percent. I’m on board with whatever he wants to do with a plug in my ass.

He breaks off the kiss. My lips are swollen and kind of numb.

“Beautiful, Holly. You taste so sweet. Every time I kiss you, it feels like I’m falling into a vat of goodness.” He strokes my hair, and I mewl.

He comes around the table so he’s in front of me, and I see him slide his hand into his pocket, pulling out the little gold bullet vibe.

“You didn’t think I had forgotten this, did you?” He smirks.

“I thought I left that on your dresser.”

“Oh, you did.”

“Is this what happens when the owner of the place seduces you?”

“Yep, he helps himself to things left on dressers.”

Whatever we are doing for this Kinkmas, it’s easy and sweet, and I want to stay here.

“Turn over, please, Holly.”

He steadies me with a firm touch on my elbow, and I get myself over so I face the ceiling and a painted cloudy sky that I didn’t notice before. The plug presses against my spot, but not uncomfortably. I like the feeling of fullness.

“Gorgeous.” Noel tugs the sheet that covers my breasts off of me, and then his mouth is on my nipple, covering it completely. He sucks it like a tasty treat, his hand massaging the other breast. My hips buck off the table as need starting in my centre, spreads outwards, right to my throbbing clit. He takes my nipple in his mouth, his tongue swirling around the hardened point. He sucks and nuzzles, and mewling sounds escape my lips as wetness leaks from my pussy.

He switched breasts, nuzzling his cheek against my left one. I threaded my fingers through his silky hair. He laughs softly before his mouth closes around my nipple, and he sucks. With his lips on my nipple, the throbbing need between my legs becomes louder, and I arch my hips off the table. He squeezes

my inner thigh, pressing me back down, and I let out a frustrated sigh.

His sucking and lapping become frustrating as hot pins of desire make my body aflame with need.

Finally, Noel lifts his head from my breast and kisses me, pulling at my bottom lip. So deftly, I didn't see him. The little vibe was pressed against my clit, nuzzled in place. Slanting his mouth over mine, he kisses me, long and slow, as if he were taking his time, covering every inch of my swollen lips with his.

"Noel!" I cry as vibrations zip through me, my pussy so wet it didn't need a lot of coaxing. "I'm going to come." I got the words out as the orgasm crashes through me so vigorously the pleasure ripped me apart, swallowing me up in ripples.

"Good girl for coming, Holly," Noel said into my mouth.

"Please."

"Please, what, Holly? I will give you whatever is in my power."

"I want you."

His eyebrows raised to his hairline. "Right here? I had thought to make you wait." His mouth quirks up in a smile, but I shake my head, the aftershocks rolling through me.

"Now."

"I like a woman who knows what she wants." He unbuckles his pants and lets them fall. His long thick cock springs free.

My pulse gallops as he slowly unbuttons his shirt. The look in his eyes is confident. The man is fully aware of his sex appeal. He knows the effect he has on me. With one hand, he strokes his cock, and the other finally finishes the last button on his shirt.

He whips away the remaining sheets, and then his body covers me on the massage table.

“Noel—” Only his name, that’s all I can get out.

It seemed to be the right thing because he eats my lips, slowly kissing me as if he wants to savour me.

But I don’t want to be savoured. I wanted to be ravished. I kiss him hard against his perfectly symmetrical lips.

“Don’t let it be said I don’t give my present what she wants,” Noel murmurs against my lips.

He leaves a trail of kisses down my neck to my shoulder, hands sliding down my hips, his cock pressing against my pussy, hard as steel.

“I can’t wait to sink into you, Holly.”

I cry out as he nimbly takes the vibe from my pussy, then stays silent as his mouth crashes against mine.

He kisses me, and my head spins on a crest of pleasure.

“I love feeling your body against mine,” I say into his neck. The words feel daring, but I need to tell him how much I love the feel of his skin against mine, the hardness of his muscles. I like how he’s taking control right here.

“Good.”

And then it's an exchange of moans and sounds of need.

My hands are on his back, down to his trim waist, pressing against him as close as possible.

“I'm going to enter you now, Holly. Is that pussy still wet for me?” Noel shifts me slightly as he braces on the table, his dark eyes staring down at me. “Tell me.”

“My pussy is still wet for you.”

“Perfect.” He slams his lips against mine as his cock glides into my pussy. I moan in one long exhale as he rocks right into my core, his strokes slow and smooth.

He thrusts into me, his hands hold me on the table, and the sensations that break out of my skin are hot and thick, needing the release this man can give me.

“Holly,” he whispers against my neck. “Your pussy feels like a smooth whiskey, warm and bright.”

I cry out as he moves his body against mine. I rise from the table, meeting him thrust for thrust.

He kisses me, and I suck his lips, nuzzling my face against the crook of his neck as his thick cock pushes against my folds.

“Holly!” He says my name, and it echoes around the room, crashing over me in a sea of pleasure. I've never felt as wanted as I do now as he looks at me with sizzling heat. He rocks one, long thrust.

“Now, gorgeous girl, come with me!”

Out of my control, the orgasm bursts from my centre, taking me down in a crashing wall of bliss as I feel Noel’s release of hot seed in my core.

“That feels....felt amazing,” I say, catching my breath.

He lays a trail of kisses against me, then roughly kisses my mouth. “You’re amazing.”

My hair is sweaty, and a sheen of sweat is on Noel’s brow.

“Come here,” he lifts me off the table as if I were a fine piece of China, cuddling me close to his firm chest.

The floor is cool underneath my bare feet. I don’t know where my slippers are.

I laugh. “Have you seen my slippers?”

“No, but I’m sure I can return a pair to you by midnight.”

“Would you like your present to be a pumpkin?” I smirk.

“No. I want my present to be a Holly,” Noel grins at me as if he’s scored a point, and because he totally has, I laugh.

And we’re giggling together in a fit of hilarity that’s making tears cascade down my cheeks. “You’re a little goofy.”

“I know. Want to see my shower?” He exaggeratedly waggles his eyebrows.

And, to my horror, I snort. I cover my face with my hand, and Noel lifts it away from my face.

“You’re adorable and gorgeous and all mine. Time to shower.” He guides me to the bathroom.

“You’re kind of adorable, too,” I say, kissing his cheek quickly. “And kind of gorgeous.”

The bathroom’s decor matches the craven stone theme of the spa area. There is a walk-in shower big enough for two.

“Sit down, Holly.”

I sit on the bench, the tile cool under my skin, but something about the warm, glowy lights above the shower makes it feel surreal.

Suddenly, the water rushes down, and Noel walks through the pouring water. I’m content to sit on this bench and watch the water pour from his muscled back. He turns, and rivulets of water flow down his chest.

“Seriously, kind of gorgeous.”

“Are you just going to watch? Come here.”

I grin and move to join him under the spray.

“You’re perfect.”

The look he sends me makes me feel as if I am precious, and I can stand in his appreciative gaze for ever, never moving.

“Turn.”

I place a hand on his chest, feeling enveloped by the heat of his skin.

Noel grabs a sponge from a rack, loads it with a sweet-smelling soap and lathers me.

When was the last time someone had taken care of me? Unexpectedly, I feel a rush of tears start to leak out.

“Shush, it’s okay, my present, I got you.” He kisses away my tears, gently washing my neck and my pussy, giving the butt plug a pat. “I’m going to take this out now.”

“No!” I turn from him, backing up a step.

“Yes, Holly. Put your hands on the shower bench.”

I swallow. This feels like the most challenging thing he’s asked me to do. The water changes pressure to a gentler flow.

I take a deep breath, telling myself this is fine. I can do this. With my palms on the shower bench, I stretch, giving Noel what he asked for.

“Good girl. You look so pretty like this. We’ll have to come here again.”

And I feel the plug come out with a tug.

“Holly, come back to me,” Noel says.

Slowly, I bend up from the shower bench and turn to face him again.

“Now I get to wash you.” He adds more soap to the puff.

Standing under the spray, his molten gaze locked on me, I tell myself I deserve this, the attention of a caring partner, something that had been absent in my life for too long.

Noel makes a circle of each breast.

“That feels nice.”

“Good.”

I close my eyes as he soaps my belly, get lost further in the sensation of being cared for as he moves the puff down my stomach and on every inch of my leg.

“There. You’re all washed.” He tilts my chin up and kisses me long and slowly.

There is nothing better than the feel of his tongue against mine, with the heat of his body pressed to me.

I take the puff from his hand. “My turn.”

“Oh really?” Noel smirks.

“Yes.”

I squirt more soap on the puff, starting at his trim waist, and wash his back up to his shoulders.

“Hmm, I could get used to this,” Noel says.

I circle his front and wash his steel chest, running the puff along each of his legs, taking my time like it did to me.

“Thank you,” his hands press on my shoulders, and he kisses me softly and sweetly.

“I want to do this again.”

“Me too.”

Noel turns the shower off, takes me by the elbow, and we step out of the shower.

He wraps a fluffy towel around me, then grabs another one and slowly dries my hair, taking care to wring it out.

“Thank you”

“For what?”

“For giving me another day of Kinkmas.”

His gaze held me as if I was a wanted Christmas present, and my heart bursts out of my chest.

Three more days. There might be a small growing part of myself that wants this man beyond the agreed-upon time frame.

“You’re welcome.” I squeeze his hand, my throat tight with emotion I was too afraid to express.

“Dinner. I worked up an appetite.”

I laugh, standing on my tiptoes to kiss him.

“And I’m going to have you for dessert.”

“What do I get again?” I tease.

“To knock off the item on your try list.” The blazing stare he levels at me immediately makes me eager and wanting.

“I can’t wait.”

“Come on, I’m very hungry.”

I blush as he takes my hand, and we leave the spa behind. He may be hungry, but this experience showed me how starved I was for the things I didn’t let myself have.

11 NOEL

DECEMBER 27TH, THIRD DAY OF
KINKMAS

“I have set up for our pup play.”

We're sitting shoulder to shoulder, finishing up breakfast. I smile, seeing the blush spread across Holly's face.

“Today?” Holly sets her coffee cup down.

“On the third day of Kinkmas, yes.” I place my hand on the top of her thigh and squeeze.

“This seems to be a jump from asking me if I slept well and giving me orgasms.”

“Did you sleep well, Holly?” I take her hand in mine, twinning my fingers through hers.

“I might have to take that bathtub home.”

I laugh though my heart twists, knowing I left her after dinner again to wake up alone because I still couldn't cross that threshold.

“That could be arranged. So, pup play. Are you up for it today?”

“Oh yes.” She leans against my shoulder,

“Good. I want to go over some pet play specifics. I know you said calling you pet is okay. Is there any other name you want to use?”

Holly places her hand on my thigh. And then lower, only a tease.

My dick twitches. Negotiation is such a damn turn-on.

“Pet is fine, Noel.”

“Good,” I brush my fingers through her hair, work my hand behind her head and hold her there for a moment.

“Do you have a certain pup age in mind that you want to mimic?”

“Not ancient, but I don’t want to run around on my knees all day.”

“Okay. I have knee pads if you are comfortable taking on crawling and walking as a pup?”

Holly licks her lips. She glances away, and my heart sinks, wondering if this is too much.

But she grabs my arm. “Yes, knee pads are perfect.”

“Do you want to play knowing basic commands or being taught?”

“Like what?”

I shift beside her, my cock hard against my fly. “Sit. Stay. Shake. Speak. Roll over.”

“Ohhh...those are good questions.” Holly rolls her shoulders. Her eyes become glassy, and her lips form the cutest pout. “I want to spend the time in pup play... not being me. I don’t want to be forced into being a pup. I want the room to take on the headspace. Does that make sense?”

I cup her face in my hand. “Perfect sense. So my pet knows basic commands.”

“But I don’t mind being taught a trick or two,” Holly raises her eyebrows. “And maybe a slight correction here and there.”

“We’ll have fun, my pet,” I say purposefully to gauge how she reacts, and I’m rewarded with one of her dazzling smiles.

“I have some treats for you. I have set up a spot in the dungeon for some of our play. Are you comfortable being on a leash in public?”

“Yes, I’m excited about this, Noel. Thank you for making it happen.”

“It’s my pleasure.”

The way her whole body relaxes in a bubble of ease gives me pleasure. It sets my head buzzing with need, and I am so happy to make this woman’s fantasy come true.

“What about speech? Do you want to be fully restricted with a muzzle?”

She closes her eyes and puts her head down on the table. Her shoulders start to heave, and I signal the waiter, gesturing for some water.

“Holly, we don’t have to do this now.”

She raises her index finger. “Need a moment.”

I sit back, giving her space. Lori refreshes the water, I nod my thanks and keep watching Holly, waiting.

I want to rub her back, but I’m taking my cues from her.

“No gags or muzzles. I’m not...ready for that.”

“Can I rub your back?”

She nods her head. I wait until she peers up at me. “Please.”

Slowly, I rub between her shoulder blades, wondering if I’ve taken her here too quickly.

“I’m good, Noel. I just forgot that gags are often a part of pet play. I can’t do that yet.”

“No problem.”

“But speech restrictions, yes. Like maybe I can only answer with whimpers and barks?”

“I like that, Holly. What about bondage?”

She raises her head and crosses her arms in front of her chest.

“I like my hands being restricted and being on a leash, but I can’t go further than that.”

“Good. We need a stop signal. What would make you comfortable?”

She reaches for the water glass, her fingers trembling a little.
“Can I say ‘red?’”

“It works. Did you find the butt plug tail to be comfortable?”

“Yes...I like it.” She blushes, tucking a piece of hair behind her ear.

I reach up to pet her on the head. “Good girl.”

She closes her eyes and nuzzles my hand. All the blood rushes to my cock. I can't wait to get into this scene.

“You said a leash is fine, so a collar?”

“Yes, Noel.” She touches her throat.

“I have one all set, ready to go.”

“How do you manage to be prepared for every scene?”

“I own an adults-only resort with a private dungeon.”

Holly laughs, her eyes crinkling at the corners.

While that's true, I also had some help, and I'm thankful for my friends and staff who aided me in all the preparations for this scene.

“Clothes or no clothes?”

“Some clothes? I have a lot of lingerie.”

I move my hand to her thigh and give it a slight squeeze.

“Perfect. If you could forget wearing panties, I'd enjoy that.”

“I can definitely do that.” Her head drops to my shoulder.

“Corrections will be given with a spanking. Anything else you're okay with?”

“I don't think so.”

“Okay, we’ll keep the corporal corrections to a minimum. I have some pup toys to play with, but I’m okay with you rejecting them if we get that far into the scene. Do you want to see them or be surprised?”

“Ah, we’re at the point of maybe over-negotiation. Surprise.”

“I knew you’d say that.” I kiss her, grinning. “I may have a pup bed set up. Is that okay?”

“Yeah,” her voice is thick with arousal.

“What about eating and drinking? Break scene, or would you like to try out puppy bowls?”

She shifts in her seat, and I swear I can smell her arousal. “Bowls.”

My pulse picks up because I can’t wait to see her eat out of the bowls I’ve lovingly prepared for her.

“One more question we need to address before going into the scene. How are we going to meet your human bathroom needs? Break scene to pee or use a pee pad?”

She swallows and squeezes her hands. She looks at me and away. This is an intense moment where she is considering all the options. I will go whatever way she wants, whatever makes her feel safe, so I wait.

“This time, the first time we play like this? I want to break the scene to use the bathroom.” She bites her lip.

“Holly, you feeling safe is what is most important. I am so happy for your trust, but we don’t have to take it any further than you or I are comfortable with. We did say we’d remain friends on the fifth day if we still like each other and see what happens?”

She nods. “It just feels so easy.”

“What does?”

“Being with you,” she whispers.

The fact that she said out loud what I’ve been feeling for the past couple of days stuns me for a moment. I reach for her arm, tug her gently over to my lap and hold her.

“I feel the same way, Holly,” I breathe in her fresh scent, brush my lips against her neck and hold her.

Holding a woman on my lap feels very good. I don’t feel guilt or regret. Instead, I feel protective and eager to give Holly what she needs today.

“Can we get started, Noel?”

“Yes, my pet.” I shift her off my lap. “In twenty minutes, I will go up to your room. I expect the door to be open and you to be waiting for me like the good puppy you are. You’ll find mitts, knee pads, a collar, and a leash on your bed. Please place the collar and mitts on, along with the knee pads. Wait for me, kneeling. Any questions?”

“No, Noel.”

“Good girl. I’ll see you soon, my pet.” I make a shooing gesture with my hands but smile to keep it playful.

She laughs, stands and leans down so I can spot a peak of her cleavage through her thin T-shirt.

“Can’t wait, Noel.”

She scampers out of the dining room, stops by the door and wiggles her bum.

Damn, I’m going to make sure this scene is good for her because I know I’m going to enjoy every moment of it.

12 HOLLY

My palms are sweating as I use the banister to climb the stairs to my room. I can't believe this is happening, and I said yes.

But pet play has been a secret wish of mine for a long time, something on the kinky bucket list, and I haven't had a chance to try it out.

Until now.

Two women brush by me in the hall, laughing with each other, and I blush as if they know my secret. My tummy hits the floor as I realize I'm going to be doing all of this in public. But if I called "red," I know Noel would heed my safeword. All play would stop, and I would have the choice to end the session.

Right now, I could choose to walk out of here. If I wanted to, I could run myself a bath in the gorgeous deep tub and lock my door, leaving Noel to wonder what had happened or to assume I changed my mind.

Playing out these scenes gives me a sense of control.

I open the door to my room, and there on the bed, exactly as Noel said, is a collar, a leash, and a pair of leather padded mittens.

Going to the closet, I reach for a top and stop.

I've come this far...could I go further? I contemplate what it'd be like to be naked on Noel's leash, and shivers rack my spine. Goosebumps prickle my arms.

I want to be played with and fondled. I want his hands on my body.

Naked is the way to go.

The collar is a wide leather band, and I snap it on my neck. Again, this gives me a measure of control. I am choosing to do this. It's not being done to me. I fasten the knee pads, adjusting them so they're tight enough.

Next, the mitts.

I manage to get my hand in one, but getting the second mitt on is impossible. They are too padded for any flexibility.

I set that mitt on the bed.

With a shuddering breath, I kneel to wait for Noel and see right across from me is a stand holding two metal puppy bowls.

One is filled with water, and the other has something in it.

Deciding now or never, I crawl over to the bowl.

It's dried cereal.

Seeing it there reassures me and makes me feel giddy.

Leaving it, I crawl back to the end of the bed, the plush carpet soft on my shins. The padded mitt is clunky, but I like how restrictive it feels.

While waiting, I shift my thinking and find a different headspace. Today, I only have to follow commands.

I welcome the break from my always on-brain, from planning for and anticipating what comes next.

Waiting like this, I get myself into an almost meditative state when I hear the soft click of the door and see Noel's shiny black shoes as he enters.

"Hello, my Pet." He strides over to me.

I keep my eyes straight ahead, focusing on following his lead.

He pats my head.

"You're a gorgeous pet, do you know that?"

In reply, I nuzzle his hand.

"Stand up, Holly. I need to break the scene for a moment."

I take his warm palm with my un-mitted one.

He leans against the bed. His eyes are glowing.

"Does that work too? If I say your name instead of 'pet,' does it break the scene for you?"

My heart leaps into my throat. I've never played with a Dom who is so considerate and aware of boundaries as Noel

continues to be.

“Yes, that’s perfect. I can’t get the other mitt on.”

Noel picks up the mitt off the floor and slips it onto my hand. “How does that feel?”

“Good.” I flex my fingers. It’s tight but soft inside and feels good restrictive, not scary restrictive.

“That collar looks good on you. You decided to go without clothes?” The warm note of approval in his tone sends shivers up my spine. I want to please him.

I go to touch the band at my neck but can’t feel it through the mitt.

“I like how it feels. I want to be your pet...completely.”

“Good, that makes me very pleased, Holly. I want to ask you something, and I want you to answer honestly. I don’t care either way. This is about how comfortable you are.”

My pulse picks up at his serious tone. “What is it, Noel?”

“How do you feel about being touched by someone else? Like, if someone asks to pet my puppy?” He caresses my cheek, and I close my eyes.

My mouth is dry at the suggestion.

But I’m also wet because the idea of others interacting with me, treating me like a pet turns me on.

“Yes.”

“Yes?” By his tone, he is surprised, but he smiles. “Okay. Any limits?”

“Touching is fine...anywhere,” because honestly, I’m in this far, why not go for it?

“You’re stunning, Holly, do you know that?” His mouth crashes over mine, and he kisses me, sliding his hand to my nape.

He tastes of mint, and his lips are soft over mine.

“Good girl. Let me put your tail on. And when I give you the first command, the scene starts. Any questions?”

The room sways for a moment because I want this so much I almost vibrate.

“No, I’m good to go.”

“Excellent. Turn around and spread those cheeks for me, Pet.” His sharp command makes my nipples bead.

I do exactly as he says, face down on the bed. Grabbing my ass cheeks, I spread them.

Swallowing past a knot of nerves, I force myself to exhale. I hear him squirt lube into his hands, and his warm fingers massage my anal opening.

He holds the butt plug to my skin, waiting for it to warm.

Then I feel it against my opening.

“Bear down for me, Pet.”

Gasping, I do as I’m told, and the plug is in, its weight familiar.

“Good girl,” he pats my head. “I want to take you through commands now before we go on our walk. On all fours, Pet.”

I drop to my knees. The mitts on my hands feel odd. I can't feel the ground through the padding, but the knee pads support my weight.

“You're magnificent, Pet. I'm proud to own such an obedient, good girl.”

My brain leaves me at his honeyed praise. Suddenly, I am hyper-aware of his musky scent, of his footsteps on the carpet in front of me.

“Walk to the window and back, Pet.”

Channelling a pup the best I can, I move one hand at a time, followed by my knee, deliberately moving each limb. I keep my head straight on where I am going. It feels like it takes forever, and wetness pours between my legs, trailing down my inner thighs.

I reach the window and turn back with the slow, exaggerated pup walk.

“Good girl, Pet.” Noel steps towards me, reaches into his pocket and takes out a bag.

He pulls something from the bag and cups his palm before my lips.

The whimper escapes my mouth, the sound unfamiliar to me, something primal and keening.

I lick the gummy candy off his palm, shuddering with a wave of bliss as my tongue licks the warm skin of his palm.

“Perfect, Pet.”

Noel ruffles my hair and chucks me under the chin. I close my eyes, swimming in his touch, highly aware of my arousal.

“Speak.”

I blink at him, swallowing hard. Nerves and shame commingle through my system, freezing me.

He grabs a fistful of my hair and pulls it so hard I yip. “I said, speak, Pet.”

“Arr-rrf!” I choke out.

“Louder.”

His grip is firm, but his other hand is on my shoulder, half reassuring and half admonishing. “Arf!” My pup bark is louder this time, and the smile that spreads across Noel’s face is reward enough.

“Good girl. That one’s hard for you, eh?” He rubs behind my ear, his touch calming my nerves, letting me rest in this pup headspace.

He takes three steps in front of me. “Stay.”

I laser-focus on him as he picks up the leash and walks to the door. Once he’s at the door, he nods. “Roll over, pup.”

I drop to my belly, the carpet soft against my breasts and rollover.

“Spread.”

I do, and this makes me aware of those pup mitts.

“Pretty pup. Come here, Pet.”

Crawling in that pup-walk, I do, and when his shoes come into my vision, I keep my head down.

“Good girl.” He pets me. The pride in his voice makes me want to shake my tail, and I realize that’s exactly what I should do.

I turn so that my bum is in front of him, and I move my hips, shaking my bum.

Noel laughs appreciatively. “Very good girl. Time to go for a walk.” Patting my bare ass, he tugs my tail and clips the leash to my collar. “You be a good girl and walk right beside me.”

I whimper. He ruffles my hair and opens the door. We’re out in the hallway, where anyone can see us, and I’m so wet and hot with the high of being in this headspace.

We start down the hall, and I keep pace with Noel, crawling beside him.

“Sit, Pet.”

I sat back on my knees, holding my breath.

“Relax, Pet. You seem to be waiting for someone to leave their room and see us. Remember, the only thing you have to do right now is follow directions.”

As Noel stands with his back to the hallway, a short man with his arms wrapped around a blonde woman come out of their room, laughing.

They glance at us and continue on their way.

I close my eyes, in relief or wistfulness, I’m not sure.

Noel pats my head. “Okay?”

“Arf!”

“Good girl. Let’s continue.”

The air between us is tense with lust, and I’m hyper-aware of Noel’s every move as I crawl beside him. His gentle tug pulls me through the leash, connecting me to his wants, down the stairs.

And then stops at the reception desk. “Noel, can you take a quick look at this for me?” She shows him her iPad.

I’m ignored as Noel leans against the desk, reading whatever is on the screen. Guests pass me by on their way out for the evening.

Piano music floats from the Parlour, and my head grows thick with a stillness I haven’t experienced before.

I’m invisible, or at least blended in or accepted as being nothing more than Noel’s pet, and I like it so much. Desire heats my blood with want.

He reaches down and twirls his fingers through my hair.

Another long moment, then he gives a tug on the leash.

“Come, Pet, to the dungeon.”

The hardwood floor is tough on my shins, and I’m super grateful for the knee pads and mitts giving me protection.

The doors to the dungeon are open, and people are playing. I glance up to see a man tied to the cross, a woman with long purple braids working him over with a flogger.

In the next play area, a woman sits on a queening chair being serviced by a man, and the roll of voices surrounds me. It's all very lively and upbeat.

My tummy tightens in nerves and eagerness.

Noel walks me through the space, and I keep my head straight so I'm not catching all of it from this viewpoint, but the space hums with an electric energy.

Leading us to the back, Noel stops. Reaching down, he unclips my leash from my collar and pats my head.

“Good girl, Pet. Hop up here,” he points to the step.

I do, and it's an ample empty space—maybe they use it as a stage—on a raised platform.

“Ready to play?”

“Arf! Arf” I let out a high pitch bark and shake my ass, deciding to go for it because I want to play.

Noel grins. His smile makes me melt.

“Stay.”

He walks across the stage to the back, rummaging in a fabric box. He holds up a bone-shaped squeaker toy and throws it in the air.

“Fetch, pet.”

As fast as I can crawl, I chase after the toy, grabbing it with my paw mitts. My lips touch the silicone, setting off a new blaze of desire. I'm absolutely soaked. I return the toy to Noel, rubbing his legs with my body.

“Good girl. Drop the toy, Pet.”

I drop it right at his feet. He throws it again. “Fetch.”

This heady glow of pure pleasure and adoration suffuses my limbs as I get lost in this game. Nothing matters other than Noel’s cool command of “Fetch,” of me crawling across the springy floor, finding the toy and dropping it back to him.

I feel the gaze of the people watching us, and it heightens the pleasure.

On my next turn, Noel pats my head. “Stay.”

He walks back to the fabric box and drops the toy in. I whimper.

“You liked that game, didn’t you, Pet?”

“Arf!”

Taking a collapsible bowl from the box, he sets it down and then grabs a water bottle on the railing. He pours water into the bowl.

“Drink, Pet.”

I do, lapping water up with my tongue, not realizing how parched I am until the cool liquid soothes my throat.

“May I pet your pup?” A woman with short blonde hair and crystal blue eyes asks.

Noel’s gaze lingers on me, a smile hovering at the corner of his mouth. “You may, Pauline.”

My nipples tighten to a painful point. Pauline gives me a wide smile and pats my head.

I nuzzle into her touch, wanting more. She pets my shoulders, trailing her fingers along my spine and down my ass.

When she grabs my tail and pulls, I whimper.

Pauline laughs, “What a good Pet.”

“Arf!” It comes out more as a whispered moan. Her warm palm moves to my breast. She squeezes one, then the other. I press into this touch, and it is taking me further into that floaty headspace.

Her touch sweeps down between my thighs, her fingers slip into my wet pussy, and I rock on her fingers, moaning.

Ah! The mix of humiliation and pleasure is so sweet and thick I can taste it on my tongue and in the pores of my skin. I’m floating in pure bliss.

“Bad Pet,” Noel yanks me back from Pauline’s touch by grabbing my collar. It takes me a moment to realize the connection with Pauline’s glorious touch has been interrupted.

I whimper, staring up at him. I put a paw up and sit on my heels in a complete begging pose.

His lips twitch. “Did you forget who your orgasms belong to?”

“Arf! Arf!” Oh, so not fair.

Noel’s eyes have darkened with desire. Grabbing me by my collar, he stops at the step, sits down, and pulls me over his lap.

I'm just a pile of cells, trying to take in this rapid fire pleasure.

I'm so wet, so gone in this cocoon of pup-space and throbbing with need. I hump him, wanting him to put pressure on my clit, wanting him to give me relief from the needy ache.

His palm comes down on my ass, hard.

I shriek, the pleasure almost streaming to break into an orgasm. The next spank lands right above my thigh, and I let out a soft whimper.

"I think my Pet likes this."

And his fingers are on my clit. He touches it so softly it barely registers.

"But Pet must not orgasm for strangers!" He smacks my ass twice more.

I am breathing hard, the sensations reducing me only to need and lust.

Noel brings me on his lap and wraps his arms around me.

My head falls back on his shoulder, my eyes closed.

"Pet, it's time for some lunch."

I nod, opening my eyes. The adoration I see in his gaze makes my pulse race.

He clips my leash to my collar.

"Walk, Pet."

I follow his footsteps, everything else fading away, except for the river between my legs, the incessant want.

13 NOEL

Changing my plan from eating in the dining room to having food sent to Holly's room, I stop by the reception desk and ask Rosa to take care of it.

“Excuse me, may I pet your pup?” A tall man with a beard asks.

I haven't met this man before, but he's standing back respectfully. Thinking of how Holly responded to Pauline's treatment in the dungeon, I grin.

“You may.”

He gently leans down and pats Holly on the shoulder.

Her eyes are glassy, her skin is all goosebumps, and little shudders rake through her. I knew she wanted this. I'm surprised at the intensity of the scene.

We spent longer in the dungeon than I expected, and my cock is ready to drill concrete.

I'm pretty certain Holly is in subspace.

“Have a good night.” The man gives a wave and continues on his way.

“Come, Pet.” I turn and take us upstairs to her room. At her door, I take off her leash. “Go in, Pet.”

She crawls in front of me, shaking her ass so her tail wags.

“Sit. Good girl,” I leave her sitting at the end of the bed. I take my shoes off and sit at the small table.

Her eyes are laser-focused on me, and my cock twitches.

Having someone follow my commands, to give themselves over to me is a healing balm to my wounds that I didn’t know I needed until now.

Reaching for my belt buckle, I undo it, drawing the leather out slowly. I unzip my fly and roll down my slacks.

I went commando today. I slide my palm up and down my cock, tracking how Holly’s gaze is on my hand. She’s licking her lips, and soft mewling sounds escape her glossy lips. Her eyes are so wide, they’re beautiful pools of desire.

“Come and lick me, Pet.”

She scrambles over to me and reaches for my cock before realizing the paw mitts are going to make touch a little tricky.

I laugh and cup her face. “Lick me, and if you make me cum like a good Pet, I’ll reward you.”

“Arf! Arf”

Her yippy barks are adorable. She takes the head of my cock into her mouth, and I stop myself from clutching her head and

helping her out.

Her pink tongue darts out, starts to lick the tip of my cock, oh so slowly. She licks the underside, up and down from root to tip.

I groan. My balls are so heavy, but I force myself to stay still.

She rises up on her knees, and her lips close around my cock. She sucks it deep in her mouth.

Fuck.

Because as much as I want that, it's not what I asked for. I'm a soft Dom, even a kind Dom but I need her to know who is in charge.

I grab a fistful of her hair and jerk her off my hard cock.

“Naughty Pet. I said, ‘Lick me and make me come.’ Did you hear me?”

She leans back on her heels, her breasts bouncing.

I reach out and flick her nipple. “Pet, did you hear me?” I twist her nipple, needing her attention.

“Arf!” Looking up at me, she licks her lip. I keep tugging on her nipple, not harshly, but with a little bit of pain to steady her.

I'm satisfied that I got her focus back. I hold my cock to her lips, and she licks. Her tongue is like a hot streak of lava wherever it makes contact, and I'm holding myself back

because I want her to succeed in the task I laid out, but I'm battling for self-control.

As if she feels my frustration, Holly picks up her speed, licking me by the root, her tongue darting out. Her nose touches my balls.

"Good girl," I hiss through clenched teeth.

She licks each heavy sac.

My hand cups her nape, and I keep her there.

She laps and licks her tongue, working so hard to cover every inch of me.

Gripping her hair in one hand, I pull so her head comes up. She takes the hint and licks the head of my cock.

I breathe deeply.

"Come on, Pet, give me this orgasm, and I'll put you out of your heat."

A tremor rocks through her whole body. Reaching between her legs, I swipe my finger along her slit.

She's fucking drenched.

"You want me to make you come, don't you Pet?"

Her tongue wraps around the tip of my cock, enveloping it in luscious heat, and I grit my teeth.

This is sublime, and I don't know who is being more tortured, me or her, but I'm soaking up every second.

“Your breasts are so beautiful, swaying like that as you lick my cock. You’re such a good Pet.”

Her cheeks grow red at the praise, and I brush my hand through her hair.

“I’m so close, Pet. Your tongue is heaven.”

She cries out and licks the underside of my dick with fervour, her determination renewed to do as I asked.

I groan. I’m almost there, and I’m going to explode.

Her tongue darts out, stabbing my cock right at the root, and that does it. My vision blurs, white-hot fire licking up my spine.

My release comes out thick and hot.

“Lick it all up for me, Pet.”

My seed spills onto her tongue, and she furiously works to catch every drop, mewling in a high-pitched yip.

The look of adoration she gives me sears right into my soul, and I need to touch her. I pat my lap. “Up Pet.”

She scrambles up in my lap, and I hold her, nuzzling her neck.

“Good girl, very good girl.”

I trace her lips with my finger, and then I kiss her, tilting her head so she opens more and gives me more access.

Her sweet taste soaks into my synapses, and I know I haven’t had enough of her. She squirms on my lap, and I laugh.

“Yes, you’ll get your reward, Pet. Stand up.”

She does, and I turn her so her back is to me. Sliding a palm to her ass, I give the tail one good wag. She bucks against me.

I give it another little twist, delighted by how she shivers, and then I take it out.

“Arf!” she yelps.

I set the anal plug in an empty ice bucket that’s by the nightstand and lift her on my lap again.

“Now I get to play.”

My hands sweep down to her breasts, and finding her nipples, I tug them at the same time.

“Ow!”

But she arches into my touch, seeking more. I pinch both her nipples in my fingers, applying a good amount of pressure.

She licks my neck and turns into me, showing me she wants more.

I let go of her right nipple, my fingers trail down her taught belly to between her legs and dip in her heat.

She’s still drenched.

“Nice and wet for me, Pet.”

“Arf!”

I circle her clit. She’s so soaked that my finger is completely coated in her juices.

My cock is starting to harden because this woman makes me feel as horny as a teenager, and I plunge two fingers into her depths.

She closes her eyes and rocks on my lap, and I want her orgasm; I want to rip it from her, drown her in pleasure.

My fingers slide into her channel and curl to find that spot.

“Please!” she whispers against me.

“Naughty Pet, speaking like a human,” I whisper into her ear.

She whimpers as my thumb presses on her clit.

I feel her tense, and I know she’s so close.

“Come for me, Pet.”

“Noel!” she screams my name.

I keep my thumb on her clit, until she’s grabbing at my arm, closing her legs, overwhelmed by the sensations.

She turns her face to find my lips and kisses me hotly, her fingers threading through my hair.

“Good, Pet.”

I want more of her, and a part of my brain wonders if I’m pushing her too much, but she smiles at me, and her body glows.

“Get on the floor. I want to fuck your ass.”

“Arf! Arf!” She scrambles down off the chair and gets on all fours.

I laugh. I stand, taking my cock in my hand, I palm it. Her eagerness is all the reassurance I need.

“Lie on your back for me, Pet.”

Grabbing the lube from the nightstand table, I squirt some in my palms and cover every inch of my length.

Taking it with me, I walk around her slowly. “You’ve been the best Pet today. Grab your ankles.”

Her toned stomach muscles ripple as I help by pushing her ankles until they are right by her ears, her shoulders stay on the floor, perfect.

“Comfortable?”

“Woof!”

I squat above her, slowly balancing until I am straddling her. I slowly dribble lube between her ass cheeks and swirl it around her anal whorl with a finger.

“If you are uncomfortable, say ‘red.’ Good?”

“Arf!” She lifts her butt even more off the floor, resting it on her hands.

I slide a finger into her anus, and her muscles close around my digit.

“Noel!”

I work another finger in, working them back and forth, watching as she twists to the side, her eyes closing.

I spank her hard, once, twice on each ass cheek.

“What did you say?”

“Arf, arf!” she cries out.

“Better, girl. I’m going to slide into your ass and fuck you like the Pet you are.”

Her high-pitched mewl is the green light.

Slowly, I press my cock’s head against her opening. My palm is on her ass cheek, rocking her slightly. Her skin is warm to my touch.

Taking my time, I work my cock in, hissing as it’s enveloped in her tight lava centre.

“Fuck, you’re so snug, Pet.”

I close my eyes, sinking into the sensations.

She lifts up even more, and I can’t do anything other than pound into her.

Thrusting, long and deep, holding back my pace, I ride her so hard sweat breaks out on my brow.

Holly cries out.

She’s so tight, fitted to me in all the right ways.

I drill into her as she bears down on me even more, crying out in a screeching, “Yes!”

I am so gone.

Enveloped in her molten heat, she’s gorgeous under me, her flush a pretty pink, her nipples harden. I feel her skin pressing into me, and it drives my pleasure.

Until I burst, my release coming hard.

“Gorgeous Pet!”

The orgasm rips from my body, and I tremble and withdraw from her tightness.

She crawls over to me and wraps her arms around my waist. I close my eyes against her softness, her submission so damn pure I could swim in it forever.

“Good Pet.”

For a long moment, there is only the sound of our heavy breathing. I sit on the floor and wrap her in my arms. Finding her mouth, I kiss her tenderly.

“What an awesome present.”

She laughs.

I cup her face in my hands and kiss her forehead.

“Holly, how are you feeling?”

Hot tears flow down her cheeks. “Too much! It’s too much.”

“I got you. I love those tears. Good girl, Holly,” I soothe. With her in my arms, still sitting on the floor, I grab the robe at the end of her bed and throw it over her shoulders.

“Come with me.” I stand, offer my hand, and lead her into the bathroom. “Let’s get you cleaned up.”

“I’m cold.”

Her skin is all goosebumps, and her teeth are clattering. Quickly, I turn on the shower and ease her into it.

Though I want to take my time and relish in her body, grabbing a washcloth, I squirt some body wash on it and clean between her legs.

“Turn, please.”

She does, and gently, I swipe the washcloth between her legs, then taking the shower head down, I wash her bum.

“You’re hosing me down.” Holly giggles as I direct the stream right between her gorgeous ass cheeks.

“I got to take care of my Pet,” I murmur.

“Thank you, Noel.” Her eyes are shiny with tears.

I turn off the tap, guide her out of the shower and take a fluffy towel off the back of the door. I dry her off.

She reaches for her robe that’s on the back of the door.

“You should probably wash off, too.”

“Yeah. I’ll be quick.”

“Can I watch?” Holly smiles, leaning against the sink.

“Be my guest.”

I step into the shower and give myself the quickest wash ever. I want to get back to holding her. To the aftercare she so deserves.

“I’m done.”

Holly hands me a towel.

“How are you feeling?” I drape my arm around her shoulders as we walk back into the room.

“A little emotional. A little shaky.”

“Perfectly normal reactions,” I reassure her. I grab a bottle of water and an energy bar from the fridge.

A knock sounds on the door.

Grabbing my pants, I throw them on and, bare-chested, open the door.

A server is there with a cart, dome-covered plates, a bottle of whiskey, and cutlery.

“Thank you,”

“Of course, Mr. Brennon.” The server nods.

I wheel the cart in the room.

“Sit at the table, Holly.”

She does, and I lift the domes off the plates, placing them on the table. The food smells delicious, and I suddenly realize how ravenous I am. I tuck into the grilled salmon and vegetables.

“Eat,” I order her.

She’s hugging herself with a dazed look on her face. “Did you like it?”

Her voice is so small, so far from her confident way of speaking.

“What?” I’m not sure I’ve heard her correctly.

“Did you like it? Was it okay?”

In two steps, I'm kneeling beside her chair, cupping her face in my hands. I kiss her soft lips gently.

“Did I like it? Holly, that scene was amazing. I loved every second of it, and you were glorious.”

“Thanks,” she glances at the floor.

“I was giving you a few moments before I started to run the scene down, but we can do it now if you need to. Did you like it?”

“Yes.”

She says it even before the words are out of my mouth.

“But?”

She shakes her head and squeezes her eyes up tight.

“Holly, tell me,” I stroke her shiny hair, bringing her close to me.

“Noel, I could have stayed like that for longer. If you hadn't called my name, I would have, and that scares me.”

But she flashes me that confident, sexy grin. “But I knew I had safewords, and you checked in with me, so I wouldn't have lost myself, right?”

“No, Holly. The scene had a beginning, middle and end.” I stroke her hair until she relaxes.

“Okay,” she says to herself as if confirming something in her head.

“Thank you for your trust. For your submission.” I trace her jaw.

She shudders under my touch.

“Thank you for giving me space to let me indulge in my submission,” her green eyes stare into mine and the realization hits me. Whatever this woman asks me for, I’ll do everything in my power to give it to her, no matter what it takes.

14 HOLLY

DECEMBER 28TH, FOURTH DAY
OF KINKMAS

“Give me that hot toddy!” Cat calls, laughing as we file back into the warmth of Vixen’s Paradise.

“Me too!” Rick says he places his hand on his wife’s shoulders, and I step in after him. Pauline and Kai.

Noel is behind me. He wraps his arms around my waist. “I can think of other ways to warm up,” he whispers in my ear.

I blush through my frost-nipped cheeks.

“I want that hot toddy first.” I kiss him, his facial hair prickly under my lips.

“You may have anything you want first.”

I giggle. He takes my cloak. I slip off my boots and slide my feet into slippers.

“Can we have the hot toddy upstairs?”

“That’s a magnificent idea.” His dark eyes glow with desire.

My heart skips a beat as his lips brush mine.

When I woke up alone this morning, I had a moment of feeling bereft. But that's what I wanted, right? Not to get too close to Noel. These five days of Kinkmas were supposed to be fun. A way to let down my hair and tip-toe back into kink. I can't ask him for the closeness that I said I didn't want.

And if he's not comfortable spending the night in my bed, I can't force that on him.

But after the puppy play yesterday...that scene got right into my soul. It was everything I had dreamt about and told myself I couldn't have.

Noel took good care of me after the scene, running a bath, checking me for any injuries, and making sure I ate. Then we cuddled on the bed and watched an old Christmas movie. He even left dark chocolate on my bedside.

But when he kissed me goodnight, I wanted to throw myself at his feet and beg him not to leave.

This morning, I slept late, definitely experiencing sub drop. A call from my cousin is what woke me.

"The guy called me again, Holly. Did you look over the offer?"

"I'm taking my time with it," I said carefully. The truth was I had gotten distracted on my first read-through.

"I just don't want to deal with it. I want them to stop calling me."

"I hear you, Stella. I'll take care of it."

I ordered breakfast in my room, and taking my time, I read over the latest offer from Brennon Consortium.

Their price is fair, but I thought they could go higher.

Noel texted me around three in the afternoon, asking if I wanted to go ice skating with him and his friends before we got to Kinkmas Day Four activities.

It was exactly what I needed, being out in the cold air, moving my body. I hadn't skated since I was a kid. But Noel was steady on his feet, looking like a pro out there.

Laughter comes from the dining room, and I poke my head in, waving to the group.

"We're taking our drinks upstairs. Thanks for letting me tag along. I had a great time!"

Cat rushes towards me, her arms out for a hug. "Our pleasure, Holly. Thanks for not laughing at me as I stumbled across the ice."

"You make this guy look good," Pauline says, grabbing Noel's arm playfully. "Will we see you at the Fire and Ice play party tomorrow?"

I swallow past a lump in my throat. Tomorrow is the last day of Kinkmas.

"She'll be there. I have plans for this one." Noel grins wickedly, his hands warm and firm on my shoulders.

"Night, friends." He waves.

“Night, Holly!” All of them chorus. I return their waves, and Noel takes my arm.

“Now you, my present, are all mine.”

He waggles his eyebrows, and I laugh, reaching up to trace the dimple in his cleft chin.

“What were you thinking tonight?”

“That I need to taste you and make you come so many times you are begging me to stop.”

A shudder rolls through me as heat creeps up my neck, but I keep climbing the stairs.

“Yeah?” I tilt my head, enjoying how his muscles ripple under his T-shirt.

“Yeah, that’s my plan.” With two steps, he cages me against the door. His mouth is on my neck. His hot lips are tracing a line across my jaw. I want him so much.

It feels so damn good to be wanted.

Giggling, I open the door, and we tumble in, barely making it to the bed.

Noel pushes me back, and I fall on the soft mattress, clutching his arms.

“All day, I’ve wanted to taste you.” His hands go to the hem of my sweater, but I’m super impatient, so I throw it off, along with my T-shirt underneath.

Noel’s lips drag across the hollow of my throat to my collarbone.

I let out a soft moan, his mouth slanting over mine. For a moment, I pretend that this man is mine. My fingers trail through his silky hair, and I arch my hips in invitation.

Noel unbuttons the lace clasp of my bra, tossing it to the floor. He thumbs my nipple back and forth as if it's a guitar string.

I cry out at the heated touch, wanting more and less pressure. He leans his head close to my breasts, and he takes my nipple into his mouth.

Oh God. I'm lost in the sensations he's awakening with every hard, long pull of my nipple. He's tasting me as if I am a dessert to savour.

Heat spreads through my body, hot, prickly sensations swirl through at every lap of his tongue. I reach for him because I want to touch him. I want to be as close to him as I can now. I want him to stop because the heat and the sensations are making me wild.

"Noel!" I feel like I'm going to shatter.

He switches sides. His mouth is fused over my nipple, flares of desire coursing through my veins.

He switches sides, and I tug on my pants, trying to get them off.

Noel laughs, and with his nipple in my mouth, the sound vibrates through my body. "Impatient are we?"

"Yes!"

“But I want to take my time with you, Holly.” Noel stands and smiles at me. I clutch the sheets in my palms.

He opens the nightstand drawer and pulls out two long lengths of silky rope and a new vibrator in a package.

“You really do have elves that help you.”

Noel laughs. “I pay those elves very well. Tell me that you want me to tie you up.”

My mouth grows dry in anticipation. “I want you to tie me up, Noel. Please.”

“Good girl.”

He takes my arm, stretching it out across the bed, then makes a loop in the rope, forming a bracelet. He slips this over my hand and ties it off to one of the hooks on the side of the headboard.

The rope is soft against my skin.

I flex my fingers, testing it out. If I had to, I could get out of the bracelet.

“How does that feel?”

“Good. You could make it tighter.”

“Excellent.” Noel adjusts the slack on the rope. It’s tight as I pull on it, and I won’t get out of it easily.

He ties my foot to the hard point at the bottom of the bed and repeats the tying on the other side.

“Very pretty.” He stands between my spread and bound legs, staring right between my thighs.

My belly tightens, and my body tenses, craving his touch.

And he gives it to me, his firm fingers press on my inner thighs. Flashing me a grin, his mouth is on my pussy, his tongue stabbing my clit.

Oh.

The wall of need breaks open so fast that I am gasping for breath. Intense bliss heats every single one of my nerve endings to a blazing orgasm point.

“Noel!” I scream his name.

“That’s one.”

But his fingers don’t let up, right through the aftershocks. My head is swimming. I feel flung from my body in a whirlwind of pleasure.

His thumb presses down roughly on my clit.

“Give me more, Holly.”

As if his voice was a leash to my pussy, it contracts almost to the point of pain. I shriek out gibberish, sweat breaking on my neck.

“Good girl. And another.” He swipes his fingers on my leg, crawling up the bed. He trails his lips over my waist, across my stomach.

With the barest of pressure, he skims my breasts, dragging that kiss caress up to my neck until his lips meet mine.

I kiss him, wanting even more.

Even through the slight thud of my post-orgasmic high, I want even more.

And maybe it's because I trust that he'll stop me from going too far, that I know I'm going to beg.

“Please, Noel. Please make me come again. Please.”

He kisses my brow. “Of course, Holly. I love how your eyes get dark, and your toes curl before your body bows to the orgasm. I want three more.”

It sounds like too much and not enough.

I'm making those mewling sounds as he shows me the vibrator.

He turns it on and sets it against my breast.

The vibrations are soft and fluttery and I'm arching against my cotton bonds.

“Please.”

“Please, what?” He turns off the vibe, skims it along the underside of my breast and grasps my nipple between his fingers.

Ah! The tug of pain is refreshing and narrows my desire to a point.

“Please use the vibe on my pussy.”

“Good girl, Holly, for asking so sweetly.”

I close my eyes, basking in his praise.

And then the vibrator is in me, the weight sure and comforting as he turns it on.

My clit is so sensitive from the previous orgasms that it doesn't take much. Noel grins at me. As I stretch my neck, the vibrations shoot through my core.

Exploding in a mess of heat and need and ache, I scream.

“Too much! Oh too much!”

“Good girl for coming, Holly. You can give me two more.”

I don't know if I can.

“I can't!” I reach for him.

“Yes, you can, Holly. Be a good girl, and give me your orgasm.”

Noel's fingers plunge into my core. The pain-pleasure rolls through me. I'm panting with need and the ache of the intensity.

I close my eyes against the tide that is pulling me back into the pleasure, and I open them. Noel has moved the vibrator, so it's right against my clit.

His hand presses against my thigh. “Look at me, Holly.”

I meet his stare, and my heart leaps out of my chest. Because in this moment, I want to be wholly his.

I can't deny or ignore that commanding tone, the way he looks at me with the expectation that I am going to do exactly what he says.

“Yes, Noel?” I squeak the words out as the vibe drums against my clit.

“Come, now.” He touches my shoulder, but the heat in his eyes scalds me, cementing me to him.

My entire body tightens and then launches like a rocket into hot surrender. The orgasm crashes through me, and I scream, wanting it to stop because the intensity is so damn much I think it’s going to swallow me whole.

I want to curl in a ball, but the rope bondage doesn’t make that possible.

“See? That wasn’t so hard.”

“Yeah, it was.” I pant, stretching my arms, the rope smooth against my wrists but tight.

“You’re a good girl for giving me what I want, Holly.” He kisses me tenderly.

I exhale as the vibe stops.

And then I scream as his mouth is on my pussy again.

“Noel!” I reach to touch him and can’t, but with the slightest bit of nip, his teeth are on my clit.

Shivers roll through me, and I’m lost in not quite pain, not quite pleasure, as he sucks my clit.

I want to run away from the intense sensation, but I scream as a sizzling rolling fire starts at my core, blooms upwards and blurs my vision.

I am ripped from my body, thrown against a wall of stabbing pleasure so intense that tears leak down my face.

“Noel, Noel,” I sob, reaching for him.

He keeps going, his tongue swirling over my clit, then his mouth is on my inner thigh.

I close my eyes, lost in the overdose of pleasure, my body aching. I feel Noel shift, so he’s over me, kissing my jaw.

My tears are hot, and I want to move, to wipe my nose. I want to hug this man and lay beside him and never move.

I want him.

His dark brown eyes meet mine, and a slow, sultry smile spreads across his face.

Oh, it can’t be true.

It wasn’t supposed to be anything more than a fling.

A sob catches in my throat because I want to push down these feelings of desire and attraction, of how much I want this man beyond tomorrow.

The thought terrifies me.

“Good girl, Holly.” Noel is working my wrist free. The right one, then the left.

He rubs my leg until he gently removes the ties that bound my ankle. “You did very well.” Lifting my leg, he kisses my knee so tenderly it makes me sob more.

“It’s okay to let it out.” He moves to my left leg, quickly setting me free.

“I hate crying,” I whisper.

I’m overwhelmed by the sensations, the forced orgasms taking me under, this scene more intense in ways I didn’t expect.

How my body responds to this man is different than any other man I have been with, and that scares me because it has to mean something.

But what if it doesn’t mean anything? What if I never see him again?

“Come here.” Noel slides up to me and wraps his arms around me. He pulls the sheet over my body and nuzzles my neck.

He holds me like that for long moments, where my heart beat finally returns to normal, and I stop crying.

He brushes his fingers across my brow. “What can I get you?”

“We never got to the hot toddy.”

“I will remedy that now.” He brushes my hair off my face.

“I’m going to take a quick shower.”

“Okay.”

In the bathroom, I turn on the taps as hot as I can stand, letting the hot water add to the languidness I feel.

I needed this so much.

This release, the kinky fun time, yes, but more than all that, I needed to be looked at like how Noel looks at me.

I needed to be appreciated and understood. I take time washing my hair before I step out of the shower and throw on the silky robe.

Noel is sitting at the table, arranging cutlery.

“I got cake, too.”

“I never say no to cake.” I brush my hand along his shoulder as I take my seat and pick up the glass.

The amber liquid is warm and lemony on my tongue, soothing.

“How are you feeling, Holly?” Noel reaches for my hand.

“That scene was more intense than I thought. Not as intense as the pet play, intense in a different way.”

“You gave me everything I asked.”

I blush at his glare, the praise in his tone.

He cuts into the chocolate cake with his fork.

I close my eyes against the thought, but before I lose my nerve, I open them to meet his curious stare.

“Will you feed me the cake?” My voice is barely more than I whisper, and I tense, afraid of a moment of rejection.

But he lifts the fork to my mouth. “It’s my pleasure.”

The cake is delicious, dark chocolate and smooth. It dances on my tongue as he feeds me bite after bite in silence. I remember the first time he did this. The pleasure he takes from this is a burst of electricity. I can feel how much pride he is taking in it as he feeds me the cake.

“Is there anything else I can give you?” Noels asks.

I take another sip of the hot toddy.

His head is turned slightly, a small smile on his face.

I shift on my chair, and nerves form a tight ball in my stomach.

“Will you spend the night with me?”

15 NOEL

I pause with my fork halfway to her lips. The stare she levels at me is blazing with tension. The robe dips, showing her creamy breasts. Her hair, still wet from her shower, curls at the ends. Holly looks like a figure out of a painting.

This moment feels like we are on the cusp of something, and she's waiting, poised to hear my answer.

Her confidence is like a welcome cold snap. Over the past few days, as I've spent time with her, I've appreciated her ability to tell me what she wants.

It's a quiet confidence that gives her presence an aura that lights up the entire room. And I want more of her light. I want to breathe in her scent and have her tangy taste on my tongue—even though I spent hours exploring and tasting her, it's not enough. My hunger for her burns with an intense desire I've never experienced.

What I had with my wife was solid and special, but what I am finding with Holly is a renewed fire.

“Holly...I...” I don’t want her to see me as weak, but the words stick in my throat. I sip the hot toddy, the sourness of the lemon and brandy focusing me. “Yes.” The word doesn’t get stuck in my throat. I say it as if it’s an exclamation mark because I mean it.

Her perfectly arched eyebrows rise to her hairline.

“Yes?”

“Yes, I will spend the night with you.” I lift the fork to her mouth, and her lips close around it. She swallows. I reach for her hand. Her hand looks small in mine, delicate and soft, but I take care of it, holding it gently.

“I would love to spend the night with you. I wonder how many times I can make you come.”

She closes her eyes as a delicious shudder rocks through her body. “Wasn’t it five?”

“Oh, you’re right. Maybe it’s time to see how long you last without coming.”

“Haven’t we done that before?”

“We have.” I nod. “But I like repeating good things. Don’t you?”

The small smile she gives me makes me hum in appreciation. “Yes, I do. And what happens if I do come?”

My mind whirs with possibilities. I stretch my legs out, rubbing my foot over hers.

“How would you feel about a spanking tomorrow night at the Fire and Ice party?”

In my mind, I see her perfectly shaped ass covered in trails of wax, disrupted by my palm.

“Deal, Noel. If I come, you get to spank me at the party.”

The blood rushes right to my cock, it throbs, insistent, and I need to be inside this woman more than anything in the entire world.

“Good.”

“Why are we waiting?” She pushes her chair back.

I stumble out of my chair, like an oversized ogre to her cool ice Princess. I own the damn building, and yet this woman’s offer is so heady, so enthralling, I am knocked off balance.

She grabs my arm, tugging me to the bed.

“You’re always impatient.” I laugh.

“Yes, when it’s something I want.” She keeps tugging my hand, and I go with her, allowing her to push me down. Her robe falls open, revealing her gorgeous breasts.

I weigh them in my hands and brush those sweet nipples that are already beaded and pointed.

She gasps as I keep the pressure up, and I want more of her sounds. I press her nipples inwards against her breasts until she squeals.

One night? A huge part of me wants to give this woman more than one night. Because I want to hear every noise she makes, to take in how the pleasure softens her features. I want more of her sweet surrender, of how her whole body bows under my tongue and hands.

Holly reaches for the hem of my shirt. I grab it and press a kiss to the pulse point on her wrist. I get my shirt off.

“You’re beautiful.” She brushes my chest, and her trailing touch sets off an ache of hot need.

I hiss as she drags her tongue across my nipple.

I want to cement this moment to my memory bank, and I want to give her every ounce of pleasure she’ll accept.

Our lips meet in hot, devouring kisses. A second later, my pants come off.

She kisses my lips teasingly, her lips not staying on mine but darting to my chin and cheek.

Having enough of that, I growl. I tease her bottom lip, tilting her head to get more access to her mouth. I drive the kisses with all the hunger I feel.

Her body softens against mine, and those delicious exhales drive me on.

But then she pushes at my chest.

I laugh. “It’s like that, is it?”

“Maybe.” Holly smirks.

My cock is so damn hard, I want to pull her under me, but the torture of her kisses, to my collarbone, over my abs, makes me so hot for her.

“Holly,” I hiss as she palms my rigid length.

“Yes, Noel?” she says as if it’s a question, as if she doesn’t know that her long pulls on my cock are driving me wild.

“Suck me, Holly.”

“Yes, Noel.”

My cock is in the heaven that is her mouth. Last time she was restricted to only using her tongue, and as if she’s intent on reminding me of that, she is sucking my dick with so much force I’m sure I’m going to explode before I can come in her pussy.

Her robe slips, exposing her back, her gorgeous ass, and I’ve had enough. I want her under me.

Tugging her hair, I guide her off my cock, then my hands are on her small waist, and I’m on top of her, staring into those gorgeous emerald eyes.

She tries to push me off, but I take her hands in mine and stretch them above her head. As my lips merge with hers, fire explodes between us, a white-hot pulse that consumes us as we meld together.

Never have I had an experience like this. This woman reminds me there is more to life than the next project. I want to stand on the edge of a mountain cliff and look down with

her by my side. I want to travel to far-off places and see the ancient artifacts.

My heart rate increases as I close my mouth around her moans.

Sliding down her body, I flick my tongue at her nipples. She grabs me, pressing my head to her breasts, and I can't deny the offered treat.

But I'm quick about it because I want to make her shatter, so I take my mouth off her nipple and move down between her thighs.

Her legs naturally fall to my shoulders.

"Your clit is gorgeous, Holly." Her clit is engorged, glistens invitingly.

I swipe my tongue through it, her spicy taste so familiar that I know I need this woman. I'm not going to let her go.

Somehow, I must show her that she belongs with me after tomorrow.

"Noel!" she cries out above me. I feel her legs tremble against me.

With my pulse hammering, I come away from her pussy and move her in line with my cock.

"I need you right now," I growl.

I dive into her wet pussy.

We both groan as my cock is gloved by her welcoming heat.

Leaning down, I kiss her.

She drags her nails across my shoulders, her hips lifting off the bed as I pick up the pace.

I thrust so hard that the bed shakes under us.

My balls are heavy, and I'm going to come undone.

But I want her to come undone first because I want to spank her tomorrow.

Leaning forward, I find her lips. I dive into her mouth as I rock into her core and kiss her. My tongue dominates hers with a fierce passion I can't hold back.

Her nails are scratching me, her legs like a vice around my torso, and we are driving toward the apex together.

She glides with me, hard and fast, but I want more. I shift so I hold her leg for even more purchase, to dive even further into her core.

She closes her eyes, the pulse at her throat visible and lovely. Her little mewls of pleasure are exactly what I want to hear as I rock.

"You're making me burn." She tightens her grip on me.

I'm infused with her, not sure where I begin, and she ends.

"Holly!" I yell out her name, only to hear the syllables.

I plunge even deeper.

She holds on, and I pound into her with all the greedy want that's propelling me into her. I'm so far into her body that I don't think I could ever untangle.

And I don't want to.

“Hang on, baby,” I say near her ear.

We are both panting, and moans of pleasure dance around us.

She mewls, I groan.

I groan, she yips.

It’s a back-and-forth dance, but what it isn’t is how I’m grinding my hips against her, taking her even further because I want that orgasm.

“Noel! I can’t!”

Thrusting even deeper, my lips fuse to hers. I grab her ass, pressing her even closer to me.

“Give it to me, Holly. Come for me.”

Her eyes open. They are glossy with pleasure, sparkling emeralds behind a glass.

“Noel!”

She clenches around my cock, and I feel the second her body tenses, the second she gives over to the fire that’s licking at our backs.

“Gorgeous, Holly,” I whisper against her neck.

The bed vibrates below me. I know I’m screaming as my vision blurs, as that white-hot fire encases me.

I release deep in her core and lay for a moment, bracing above her, panting.

“I owe you a spanking,” I grit out.

“Yeah.” Holly smiles, swiping her hand through my hair.
“But it was worth it.”

I withdraw from her, kissing her belly. I swing my legs to the floor. I need to clean up, but her hand on my arm stops me.

“Stay here with me for a moment.”

“Okay,” I spoon around her, holding her against my chest as my heart settles but pulses with a different beat, the one of wanting her.

* * *

It’s ten after two in the morning, and I’ve just stepped out of the shower. I don’t know if I have slept a whole night since my wife died. And even though I have this gorgeous woman in my bed now, old habits will take a bit to break.

“Hey.” Holly is sitting up in bed, scrolling through her phone.

“Did I wake you?” I slide into bed beside her.

“No. I’m kind of doped up on pleasure.”

“Good.” I trace her lips with my finger.

“Can I ask you something?”

“Anything. Ask me lots of things.” I find her hand and lace my fingers through hers.

“Where do you live?”

That shouldn’t be complicated, but since Claire left, I haven’t really lived anywhere. I have a condo in Vancouver

that's seldom used and a crash pad in Toronto, but in March, I moved back into the house Claire and I shared in Edmonton.

“In Edmonton. My wife's family is from there.”

“Is your family?”

I laugh. “No, I grew up in Vancouver.”

“How did you make your money?”

I love how she asks the question without any bluster. “My dad invented a special cover for a solar panel, so they absorb more power.”

“Your dad is an inventor?” She props herself up on her elbow, smiling at me.

“Yeah. It took him years to get any success. My mom worked as a paralegal.”

“Is that why you became a lawyer?”

I grin. “Kind of. I thought I'd be good at arguing, and I am. My house was chaotic with four boys, my dad's bits and stuff everywhere, but it was good.”

She stiffens beside me. “Holly?”

“Mine wasn't. My bio father abused my mother. Not me, for whatever reason.”

“I'm sorry.” The words are so pointless, but I mean them anyway.

“My Gran's house was a safe place. That's where we spent Christmases,” she glances away from me.

I gently grab her chin with my fingers. “Hey, I’m here. And your mom left your father?”

Her gaze swings back to me.

“Yeah. That was a happy day.”

“What did you want to be when you grew up?”

Holly shakes her head. “I wanted peace and quiet. But I just wanted something...more...something brighter than I was living.”

“Did you find it?”

“Yeah.” She kisses me, quick and sharp. “I’m great at screen protector sales.”

I laugh and kiss her brow, burying my face in her hair. “I’m happy you found it.”

“Thanks. I’m happy this is how I spent Christmas.”

“Think we should do Kinkmas every year?” The question leaps out of my mouth, and I hold my breath.

I didn’t ask about after tomorrow but next year because the far future is easier to plan for than the near future.

“Definitely.” Holly yawns.

I snuggle against her, feeling her breathing deepen. How right this feels fills me with a certainty I’ve never felt before.

16 HOLLY

DECEMBER 29TH, FIFTH DAY OF
KINKMAS

“Happy Kinkmas, day five.” Noel comes up behind me, his hands on my waist.

I’ve just come out of a shower. I’m trying to find something to wear.

“Merry Kinkmas.” I cup his face, staring into his dark eyes. I don’t want this to end. He stayed with me last night, all night.

Being wrapped in his arms was the best gift Noel gave me. And he’s been giving me presents all week.

But I know the scales aren’t even here. He’s shared with me and given me everything I have asked for, and I haven’t reciprocated. My stomach rolls with guilt.

“Noel, I need to tell...” his phone buzzes, interrupting me.

“Sorry.” He grabs it, reads a text and curses. “I have to take this, and then I have a meeting with Axel about final arrangements for tonight’s party. Can we talk later?”

I swallow my disappointment. Of course we can talk later but I had worked up the courage in this moment. I don't want to be the kind of woman that wallows while waiting and I don't want to demand more of him, but I'm not sure if am going to get another dose of courage.

It should be simple, to tell people that you are attractive to what you do for a living, but I've had so many dates where guys hear that and they either ask me to make them a star or they scoff at me as if they couldn't imagine I'd shake hands with movie producers and actors.

"I feel selfish for asking, but can you take your call and meet me in the dining room? Or can we have coffee in your apartment?"

His expression goes from all detached, focus on his business, to soft. He places a hand on my thigh and exhales.

"There isn't a fire anywhere. All I want to do is spend time with you." His lips crush against mine, and he threads his fingers through my hair, deepening the kiss. It makes me feel like I am precious and cared for.

"I understand if you do have something urgent. I'm not one of those women to call you a million times or whine about you working late. I work late."

That's an understatement. My email says I'm available until five unless it's an emergency, but I usually eat dinner at my desk, and my car is the last in the parking lot most of the time.

“I know that about you,” Noel says. “It’s only...” He stands, paces in front of the bed and spins. “Do you want to go for a walk? I’ll grab to-go cups of coffee.”

“Okay.”

“Good.”

We finish getting dressed and are out the door a moment later. The resort is quiet, kind of like nobody is here.

“There was a special breakfast in town today, a fundraiser for the art gallery. Several guests have gone to that. The place is going to be packed tonight for the party.”

A quiver of excitement rolls through me. I can’t wait for this play party.

Downstairs, Rosa smiles warmly at us. “Good morning, Mr. Brennon, Miss Burkholder.”

“Good morning, Rosa. Is everything well?”

“Yes, we are right on schedule. Can I help you with anything?”

“I was going to grab coffee from the kitchen.”

“Let me.” Rosa smiles.

I don’t know if I can get used to Noel having helpers do whatever he wants, but that’s the perk of having money. There’s nothing wrong with that. I work with the grossly overpaid every day. So why am I feeling...weird...about it now?

I frowned, trying to puzzle it out. Noel takes my green cloak from the hook and holds it open for me.

I put my arms through the velvety sleeves. “Thanks.”

“You’re welcome.”

He puts his coat on and plops a hat on my head. I’m sliding my feet into boots when Rosa appears.

“Here. Two coffees to go, and I packed a breakfast sandwich. It’s warmer out there today.”

“Thank you, Rosa. You’re amazing.” Noel smiles.

“Have a good time.” Rosa waves.

“Ready?”

“I think I am.” It’s the only honest answer I can give him.

He takes my gloved hand in his, leading me outside, where the snow is still on the ground, but it’s definitely a few degrees warmer.

Noel takes my arm and we follow the path. I’m waiting to let him speak because he seems lost in thought. I sip my coffee and nibble my breakfast sandwich. Noel guides me around the back of the building, through a winding path that would take me right to my Gran’s back door if I veered off.

“Last March, I started to take a cooking class.”

“Okay.” I bite back the laughter that wants to escape because Noel looks serious; his tone is grave, but it’s not what I expected.

He leans on the snow-dusted fence that leads to a small garden. “My wife did all the cooking. My grandma lived with us growing up and did all the cooking. But when Claire left, I had no idea what to do with my kitchen.”

“I eat takeout more often than I cook,” I admit.

“And that’s fine, but what I realized when I started taking these cooking classes is how much time I missed while my wife was in the kitchen cooking for me or our family and friends, and I was intent on ironing out the next big acquisition for a firm that didn’t care about me, despite how many hours I gave them.”

That’s the nature of big corporations. I know this, and you kind of have to accept it and be in it for the love or money. In my case, it’s a little of both, but the thrill I find in my work is what keeps me there.

“Did your wife mind?” It was a dumb question, but I feel like I have to fill the silence somehow, and not asking something about his wife feels like I’d ignore what he’s shared with me.

“That I didn’t cook? No. But she did mind the missed anniversary dinners and how often I’d get interrupted at home. I wasn’t always a good husband.”

He takes my arm and leads me around the garden, circling back to the resort.

“When you asked if we could talk now, I realized I had a choice. I could be the former me, the one who thought

everything was a crisis, or I could be the new me, who knows very few things are actually a crisis. I chose to be the me who spends hours in the kitchen cooking.”

“Do you really?”

“Yeah, I do. What did you want to say to me, Holly?”

I know this is the perfect moment to tell him about what I do and maybe even who I am, but he is so serious, and what he shared was so personal it seems so trivial to bring up what I do for a living.

“After my Gran passed, my family made this pact not to spend Christmas together. At least, I thought it was an agreement, but being here, taking this time away, has made me realize I’m the one who said no to spending Christmas with them. Like, if I couldn’t have it how it was, I didn’t want it.”

This is more vulnerable than telling him how I spend my nine-to-five or nine-to-nine.

“What about being here made you realize that?” Noel brushes my arm.

“It’s the slowing down. It’s finding peace because you’re relaxing in the Parlour or walking into the dining room and smelling cinnamon or turkey. It reminded me of the good parts of Christmas, which I want to repeat with those I love.”

“Happy to be of service.” Noel flashes me a grin.

I take one last bite of my breakfast sandwich and crumple the bag.

“I think this has been my favourite breakfast.”

“Now, who is the easy one to please?” Noel loops his arm through mine.

I laugh. “I don’t consider myself difficult.”

“At tonight’s party, how do you feel about ice and wax play?”

“I don’t have experience with either. I’m open to trying it.” The thought of hot wax covering my body is appealing. I’m not sure about the ice part of the equation, but there must be some kind of appeal to it, and it’s Kinkmas.

“Good. I can’t wait to play with you tonight, Holly.”

My cell rings from my pocket, and I fish it out. Stella’s number flashes on the screen.

“Why don’t I leave you to it, and I’ll go see what needs my attention? I’ll text you if I’m free for lunch.”

“That’s fine, Noel.”

He holds the door of Vixen’s Paradise for me, and I step into cozy warmth, the score of a Broadway musical being played on the piano.

“Good. See you soon.” He cups my nape, his lips brush mine, then he’s deepening the kiss, and I’m twining my tongue with his. He breaks the kiss, leaving me bereft.

“Be good.”

“Yes, Noel.” I grin and watch him go behind the reception desk to his private oasis. I hang up my cloak, take off my

boots and walk into the Parlour. The room is filled with people lounging and talking.

“Hey, Holly!” Rick calls me over to their small group.

“Hello.”

“Are you ready for tonight?” Cat asks.

“Yeah, can’t wait.”

“I can,” Kai grumbles from where he is kneeling beside Pauline’s chair.

“Oh, you’ll like it,” Pauline says, ruffling his hair.

“Sit and hang out with us.” Rick pulls out a chair.

I sit, my cousins’ phone call forgotten, as I lose myself in good company and anticipate my last night at Vixen’s Paradise.

17 NOEL

It's like being in a kinky winter wonderland, the dungeon glows with winter vibes.

One half of the dungeon is lit from above with soft blue lights.

White and blue fabric hanging from one side of the room glows with hanging lights like stars.

On the ice side of the room, there are buckets waiting to be filled with ice.

The other half of the room is draped with oranges and reds, canisters at each station are filled with different coloured candles, made especially for wax play.

The place looks stunning. On the stage, a DJ is set up, and by the door there are UV body paints with backlights available for our guests to decorate their bodies or their partners.

I go to move the medical play table because it's slightly in the main area.

“Sure, it can move half an inch.” Axel shakes his head and then lifts the locks for the brakes.

I put my hands up in apology. “Sorry. The place looks fantastic, Axel, honest.”

He flashes me a grin that transforms his usual scowl. “Just doing my job, Noel. But I’m looking forward to tonight.”

“Good.”

When we have play parties here, all guests must be checked in by noon and the staff gets time off to enjoy the night.

The caterers are setting a table with snacks and drinks to the left of the door and I take it all in, one more time.

It’s everything I had hoped for when Evan encouraged me to make Vixen’s Paradise a reality. A place people could come without any judgement and indulge in their kink.

I knew having a good monthly play party would be part of the attraction and slowly, word has grown.

I take a few pictures and send them to Evan.

Staff flutter by me and I know I’m in the way. I’m nervous because I want to give Holly an experience to remember tonight.

I don’t want it to be our last. I know she’s catching her flight tomorrow but there’s no reason why we can’t continue this relationship past tonight.

I hope she sees it that way.

Despite the attraction between us, she's still guarded and I wonder if I should have pushed her? But I didn't want to take that route. I'm trying to be a more patient, compassionate man and the little she told me about her previous Dom relationship told me to back off.

My phone buzzes and I take it outside the room.

"Winterhaven Farm is asking for half a million more." Evan greets me.

That's the last property we need to make this a fully private area.

"We can afford it." There are times to press back hard but there's no reason to hold out. We have the money and we want the farm next door.

"Okay. I'm having Brent draw up a new offer. Do you want to look at it before it gets to the owner?"

"No, that's fine, I trust Brent."

Of course I did, I picked him to be the legal guy for the Brennon Consortium.

"Feel free to crack a smile, Noel. This is great news."

"I'm smiling," I tell him.

"I'm going to go celebrate. Are you going to celebrate with that girl you met?"

"Woman, and yes, I am." I take a seat in the empty dining room.

"Good. See you soon," Evan hangs up.

A project I set out to create has come to fruition and it's fine. I've long since known that I am more energized by the pursuit of something than the actual having of it. Spinning the candle holder on the table, I wonder for a moment how Claire would have reacted. She probably would have shrugged and smiled.

Though she liked socializing, she preferred to live our kink behind closed doors. Claire didn't see the attraction of Sinful Bites, was kind of shy about being public with the lifestyle.

My heart tugs, with a pang. I will always miss my wife but the thought of telling Holly about the sale of the neighbouring farm heats my blood.

I know she'll get the relief and excitement that comes when you finally get that person to sign on the dotted line to give you what you want.

Laughter breaks my solitude from the hall, guests have started to make their way to the dungeon. Pauline's tall frame is clad in a latex suit, she grins at me and waves.

Are you ready? I text Holly.

Coming down now.

My palms are sweaty. I'm feeling as nervous as the first time I asked a girl to prom but I wait at the bottom of the stairs.

My mouth goes dry. She's wearing a lacy red corset that lifts and shapes her breasts in a most pleasing way and a short black skirt made out of see-through material. I can see her matching red panties.

Her long hair is in a loose braid, flowing down her back and her pair of black stilettos completes the look and makes me want to throw her over my shoulder caveman style.

“Good evening, Mr. Brennon.”

“Good evening, Holly.” I lean down to brush my lips over hers. She tilts her head, giving me more access and I devour her with a deep kiss for a long, lustful moment.

“I can’t wait.”

“Me too.” I smile at her and we walk to the dungeon together.

Inside she grabs my hand, leading me towards the dance floor. “Dance?”

“Yes.” Though I can’t remember the last time I’ve danced. Probably back in those prom days. But Holly moves effortlessly to the music, her hips sashaying in time with the beat.

Holly’s face is bright with excitement and she presses next to me. “So what’s the plan?”

I grin. “I give you such a good night you agree to go to dinner with me on the second of January.”

Her smile wavers, she touches her neck as if to feel for the collar that isn’t there.

“Noel, I...”

“I know,” I whisper into her ear. “You don’t want long term commitment, but we did agree we’d see where it goes and

that's all I'm asking for."

That kind of makes me a liar because I want more than that with her.

She dances away for me for a beat, then spins back, grabs my waist and grinds against me in step to the music.

I laugh and match her step for step.

I'm committing to memory how free she looks right here, with her head tilted to the lights, her palms cupping my ass cheeks, the feel of her breasts against my chest.

The song shifts and I take her hand. "That was a great warm up. And I hope you're warmed because it's time to cool you down."

"Is it?" She bites her lip, her eyes are bright.

"Yes." I lead her over to the ice side of the room where a bench is free.

"Do you remember you're owed a spanking?"

"I might." The corners of her mouth lift up in the most adorable way and I can't help but lean in and kiss her.

My mouth slams into hers. I kiss her long and hard, a kiss that takes all my breath and makes me want more.

The taste of her is so rich and I can't wait to give her what she's owed.

I break off the kiss and hold her at arm's length.

"Oh yes, you came last night and you weren't supposed to. Remove your skirt and hop up on the bench."

Holly grins, wiggles out of her skirt, and sets it on a cart. Her red panties barely cover her ass.

She hops up on the bench. “Now what?”

“Now I get to spank you and you’re going to hold ice cubes while I do.” I scoop out a handful of ice from the bucket, press two cubes into each of her palms.

Her eyes close for a moment, a shudder rolls through her body and she grins. “Okay.”

“If you drop those while I am spanking you, you don’t get to orgasm all night.”

“No!” But she’s smiling at me, her hands closing around the ice.

“Yes, Holly. Do you accept this punishment?” I cup her nape, pulling her against my chest.

“Yes, Noel.”

“Good girl. Lie down on your stomach, please.”

She does, and I wish for a moment I could pick up a flogger but we only agreed to hand-spanking.

Her ass is lifted and ready for me on the bench and I pick up another ice cube from the bucket. I run my fingers along her flesh, holding the ice cube between my fingers, rubbing it along her skin.

“Noel!” she shrieks.

“Do you like this?”

“It’s...yes, keep going.”

I run the ice cube over her panty-clad ass, between her ass cheeks. I nudge her legs open, so I can see the red strip of fabric covering pussy.

“Noel!” Her cry is fuel, as I run the half melted ice cube in my hand under the waistband of her panties. She kicks at me.

I clamp a hand on her upper thigh. “Stay still. Or I can cuff you?”

“I’ll stay still,” Holly grits out.

I laugh, kiss her forehead. “Good girl.”

Letting go of her thigh, I draw a circle with the half melted ice cube over her ass, covering every inch of her gorgeous globes.

“Five swats on each cheek. Count for me, Holly.”

I get close to the bench, throw my hand back and set it across her ass with a pleasant thud.

“One, Noel.”

Her breathy voice sets my pulse racing, I bring my hand down harder across the other cheek.

“Two, Noel.”

I rub the spot I swatted in a tight little circle, until the tension in her shoulders has gone. Then without warning, I lay the next three spanks down, alternating cheeks.

“Five! Noel!”

“Good girl.” I’m so touched by her trust in me that I swallow over a sudden lump in my throat.

She wiggles on the bench, her hips rising up, offering me her ass.

“Very good girl.”

My palm comes down hard on her right cheek, twice.

“Six. Seven,” Holly says.

Her voice is whispery and a little breathless.

Wondering if this is turning her on, I place a hand on her left ass cheek, flip down her waistband with my other hand and reach around to find her pussy. I drag a finger through her folds, wiping the moisture on her ass.

“You’re very, very wet. Is this spanking turning you on?”

“Yes.”

“How are those ice cubes?”

“Still holding them,” Holly says. Her voice is husky and syrupy with arousal.

I rub small circles between her shoulder blades. She sighs and puts her head down on her arms.

My hand trails back down to her ass.

With a lift of her hips and a long mewl, her ass rises to meet my hand.

My hand covers her ass in a quick three beats rhythm.

“Eight!”

I grin, pausing. “I think you missed some. But I’ll give you more.”

“Yes, Noel!” Her voice is like honey. I can’t wait to ravish her completely.

I spank her twice more, hard spansks that make my palm sting.

“Nine! Ten.” She pants for a moment.

I stroke her hair, lifting her up from the table. “Good girl, Holly. You took that very well for me. How’s the ice?”

“Cold. And gone?” She wipes her palms on my shirt.

I laugh and kiss her because I have to feel her lips under mine right this hot second.

She kisses me back with fervour like she doesn’t want this moment to end either, and I’m encouraged.

I hold her close to me and take control of the kiss, slowing down the pace.

My lips press against hers, and I slowly take in her bottom lip, nibbling it gently.

I could look into her big emerald lake pools forever. “Come.”

When she steps down, she grabs a wipe and cleans off the table. I pick up her skirt, and she takes it, throwing it on.

“Good girl,” I tell her because I can, because it makes her blush a little under the lights.

I guide her out of the station. My gaze wanders over the scenes that are happening in the room, but I don’t linger on them because all I care about is the woman next to me.

“What now?” Holly asks.

“Now it’s time to warm you up,” I throw my arm around her shoulders and lead her to the hot side of the room.

“You’re going to play with fire?”

“We’re going to play with fire, baby.”

She laughs and reaches up to kiss me. I know with every particle of my soul I can’t let this woman go.

18 HOLLY

My skin is ablaze with heat from the spanking. The echo of Noel's palm, the impact, spread out through my whole body.

Between my thighs, my panties are soaked.

Noel's firm palm on the small of my back increases the blaze. My cheeks are scalding...with embarrassment? No, with the thrill of being with this man.

He grabs a bucket of ice from one of the stations, taking it over to the fire part of the room. The whole dungeon is gorgeous tonight, I feel like I've stepped into the pages of a fantasy because this place is perfect for wintry kink exploration.

From the floors, to the equipment, everything glows and the buzz in the room is threaded with laughter. Cries and whimpers rent the air as the scenes are taking place. I glance across the room to see Pauline use a short flogger on Kai.

This is so far out of my comfort zone, it's made me feel free in a way I haven't experienced before.

"Our turn now." Noel guides me to a wide medical table that's been draped with a sheet.

"Undress, for me Holly."

My tongue forms the words, "Yes, Sir," and I jump back as if I've been burned. It's been so many years since I uttered that honorific and I swore I wouldn't do that again. But Noel has shown me I can trust him.

That he is as much of a gentleman as he is a Dom.

My fingers tremble as I work the fastener off of the corset. I bought this for the trip to Mexico and I'm thrilled it's getting a new purpose.

Noel takes the corset from me, setting it aside on a cart as I step out of my skirt.

"Want me to lose the shoes?"

"Yes. Your toes curl before you come and I want to see them."

I swallow a lump in my throat. The heat in his gaze sears me. I step out of the stilettos and leave them beside my clothing.

Noel takes my hand and helps me onto the table. The sheet is cool against my back.

"Ready?"

"Yes, Noel."

"I would like to restrain your hands." He raises an eyebrow.

“Yes, please.” My belly tightens in a knot of anticipation.

Noel takes my right hand, cuffs it to the table, walks around, and does the same to my left. “Comfortable?”

I stretch a little, testing the restraint. The cuff is velvet-lined and soft against my skin. “Yes.”

“You tell me if it’s too tight.”

“I will.”

He turns to the table, picks up a bottle of oil, and squirts some between his hands.

As he starts to massage my shoulders, his hands coming down to cup each breast, I’m taken back to that day in the spa. Coming here has been a trip for my senses and it’s been a trip that has showed me how much I want this...how much I want a Dom.

Noel works quickly, his hands brushing across my stomach, down my legs, right to my feet.

“There, all set.”

I force myself to exhale through a sudden onset of nerves.

Noel reaches for a purple candle, lights it and it’s being held over me.

“Let’s test out how hot you find it.”

I swallow my mouth dry. I’m usually sensitive to warm temperature things, and didn’t realize that’d be a factor tonight. “This is a bad time to tell you I’m sensitive to heat.”

Noel's lips purse, and his eyes darken. "Exactly the reason for a test. But thank you for telling me. Are you okay for me to proceed?"

"Yes."

Noel holds the candle high above my leg.

I startle as the first droplets of wax fall.

Oh.

It's not unpleasant.

It's kind of soothing.

He does it again, his gaze glued to my face. This time, he holds the candle closer to my skin.

I jump at the sudden heat but relax as it quickly becomes a soothing warmth.

"I like it."

"Good." Noel rubs the wax spots on my left, rubbing it into my skin, and it feels so soothing a hum starts to vibrate low in my core.

Moving to my feet, he grabs a blue candle. He lights it, and I follow the flame as he holds it above me and lets the wax drip.

Noel moves the candle above my legs, painting me with trails of blue wax.

Noel massages the wax into me. "You like this, don't you?"

"Yes," I purr at the warmth-infused touch.

Noel moves to my stomach with the purple candle. The wax pours onto my belly in a wide circle. It doesn't quite reach my breast or pussy.

But I jerk in the bonds, my belly more sensitive to the heat than my leg.

“Shh. You got this, Holly.”

I watch the strings of wax decorating me like icing on a cake and exhale. I feel slightly chilled as the wax coats my torso, goosebumps rise across my skin.

Noel looks so gorgeous in the red glow of the lights around us. Every move he makes is so sure and confident.

He turns from me and then comes back with a red candle.

Holding it above my breasts, Noel lets the wax drip close to my skin. I shiver as a flow of wax crosses my nipple.

“Gorgeous. You like this, Holly?”

“Yes, yes! Yes.” The droplets of wax are warm and soothing. My head feels floaty.

The wax builds up so slowly around my breasts, droplet by droplet, my breasts are covered.

Noel massages the wax into my breasts, and I am so hot with want and need I feel like I'm going to combust and break out through this shell of wax.

He keeps building up a multi-coloured cone shape around my breast, and I can't predict where the droplets are going to hit.

The sensation ebbs a little as he continues, one long wax strand after another.

I feel like a painting in progress, and he's almost detached, as if he has to apply the next brushstroke.

My boobs are covered in blue, purple and red. The strands are beautiful, and a part of me wants to stay in this wax cocoon forever.

Noel leans down and kisses me, his familiar taste flaring my want even more.

“May I blindfold you?”

A tiny bit of fear ratchets up from my spine. But this is Noel, and I trust him.

“Yes.”

The silky blindfold settles over my face. I can't see through, but I can make out the light.

I jump as rivets of wax hit, unable to see where the wax will land on my body, heightening the sensation of dulled fire touching my skin.

Quicker than I can follow, ribbons of heat drape across my flesh.

It's so good.

Soothing and unexpected, the wax touches my skin seconds later with more burn than the last droplet.

My mind floats in a cloud of pleasure, arrowed to the need between my legs.

I moan because I am aching with want.

The wax drips down my breast to my torso but doesn't reach my mound.

I whimper as his hands continue to massage and work in the warmth.

“Now this.” Noel presses something cool against my cheek.

“Is that the vibe?” I grin.

“Yes, Holly. I want you to come as I coat every inch of your body in wax.”

He slips the vibrator into my body that welcomes it without resistance.

A moment later, it hums to life, sensations buzz through me.

Droplets of wax fall like a warm rain, competing with the hum.

The intense and pleasurable sensations pull my head in different ways.

I feel the wax brush my skin in wider arcs, and the vibe increases its rhythm.

A bead of wax lands on an uncovered spot on my nipple. At the same time, the vibrator roars to life at the strongest setting.

I am so lost.

Floating above the table, above this exquisite dungeon, the orgasm rips through my body as my muscles contort in pleasure.

Tears are falling down my cheeks. The loud panting belongs to me.

The vibrator is pulled away from my body, and I feel empty.

But not for long because Noel's fingers are on my clit.

"Give me another one, Holly."

I try to turn on the table in protest, but the wax feels like its own bondage, holding me in place.

"Yes, you can." The gentle command in his voice creates space in my body. His thumb presses down on my clit.

It's too much.

The press of his thumb, the rock of his fingers, I can't help but give away to what he wants my body to do.

I shriek because the explosive pressure is almost painful.

"Good girl, Holly. That's exactly what I want."

The orgasm sails me further over the crest, parting me from my own control.

"Please, oh please, Noel." I don't know what I'm saying, but I keep saying things lost in this scene Noel created.

He swipes away my tears so gently his touch makes me want to cry in a different way. It brushes by the wound I've worked so hard to ignore, that wound of not being wanted. Not by my father or my ex-Dom, who took it too far and didn't listen to my safeword, to freaking Phil dumping me right before Christmas, when he knew that was a vulnerable time for me.

“Holly, I’m here.” The blindfold comes off me. I blink, adjusting to the light. Noel’s face is close to mine, his dark gaze steadying me.

“Are you okay?” Noel traces a finger along my eyebrow.

I swallow. Exhale. Feel like I’m coming back to myself. “I am because you are here.”

“I’m not leaving.” Noel kisses me so tenderly I want to cry again. “Are you okay to continue?”

“Yes!” I want to see this through and push my jumbled emotions aside.

“Now it’s time to clean you up.” Noel grins, holding a credit card.

“I’ll try to be still.”

“Do that.”

The first scrape of the plastic card in the wax mound on my nipple brings me off the table. Noel laughs, setting me back in position.

“Not easy, is it?”

“I already got my orgasms.”

“Yes, you did. Be a good girl and stay still; you might get more.”

His smile is so endearing I try to tighten my muscles to keep myself still. Noel slowly scrapes the card along my breasts through the buildup of wax.

With every flick of the card, the area starts to clear.

But the sensations are too overwhelming.

“Holly, what is it?” Noel stops.

“I don’t like the scraping sensation.”

“We can try a comb?”

I let out a shuddering breath. I don’t know what I expected Noel to do. Maybe insist that I have to go through the scraping thing that I don’t like? But of course, he offers me another alternative.

My jumbled emotions are still too close to the surface.

“Okay.”

He picks up a comb, sets it against my skin and scrapes. But this is less intense, making me feel kind of shivery.

“This is better.”

“Good,” Noel says.

As he continues to work, I’m aware of a crowd. I don’t know if they’ve watched our whole scene, and I don’t care. I try to relax as Noel combs away the wax. It lifts up easily.

He sets it against my still-covered left nipple and drags it across my skin.

“That tickles!” I giggle.

“Want me to keep going?”

“Yes!”

He does, and I can’t help but go into a complete giggling fit. It’s egged on by how Noel glances at me, his smile huge and

his dark eyes lit with merriment.

Working the comb in quickly, all of the wax is off in no time.

I have spots, but I'm sure they'll come off in the shower.

“Stay right there, Holly,” Noel says as I start to sit up.

“Why?”

“Because I promised you more,” he drops a kiss below my ear, his dark eyes staring into mine.

“And you think I can take it?” I lay back down against the table, but I'm smiling.

This man shows me his dominance in gentle, confident ways. Another dominant might say, “The scene isn't over until I say it is,” but Noel has led me to where he wants me. I follow his lead because he's shown me I can.

This man has shown me all week that I can indulge and give my submission to him. He's not going to hold it over me.

He's going to treasure it and care for it and damn, how I want more of this.

I want to see him beyond tonight.

Even if the idea of a new relationship is scary, I still want to try it.

He's spread my legs, and before I can utter a playful protest, his hot mouth is covering my pussy.

“Noel!”

He flicks his tongue over my clit, then he's sucking it, his teeth grazing it.

A coil of pleasure spirals itself tightly from my core.

My body pulsates every time he touches my clit with his tongue. My pleasure ramps up. Until I can't hold it back anymore.

"Noel!" This orgasm rocks through my body, taking all my breath.

"Good girl." Noel strokes my hair, his lips brush mine.

"Thanks," I sigh.

He grins, then uncuffs my right hand, then my left. He takes my wrist in his palms and rubs them, making sure there is circulation. "You were wonderful in that scene."

"You were kind of awesome, too." I lean towards him, wanting his touch.

He helps me off the table, and as he cleans up the space, I realize I don't want to get into my clothes.

"Here, Holly." Noel holds open a robe. I gratefully slip my arms into the soft, silky material. "Let's get you some food."

My legs are wobbly, but he guides me across the room to where there is food and a little seating area.

"Sit." He holds a chair for me, hands me a bottle of water.

"Thank you."

"I'll be right back."

I drink the water. Across from me, a woman is feeding her submissive ice cubes. In another play station, a sub is tied up, with an ice cube sitting on her red ass.

At the table next to me, a man is feeding his submissive on his lap.

“Here we are.” Noel puts down a plate of finger foods.

I pop one into my mouth as he studies me.

“How are you feeling?”

I chew, and to buy time, I take another pastry-wrapped morsel.

“That scene brought up emotions I didn’t expect.”

Right away, Noel pulls me into his lap. “Want to talk about it?”

I lean back against his solidness. “For a long time, I have felt unwanted.”

My voice catches on the admission, and I realize it’s true. I could joke about Phil breaking up with me and what an unsuited match we are, but he didn’t even try to give me what I wanted.

“Oh, Holly.” His grip tightens on me. He nuzzles my neck, and I blink back tears because I feel safe in his arms.

I stay there with him for a long moment while he cuddles me.

“You are a good girl. You were so very good for me tonight.”

His praise eases the ache of those raw emotions.

“Thank you for giving me this...”

“You’re welcome.”

“Will you stay with me tonight?”

He gently sets me on my feet. “Yes, let’s go.”

I laugh but take his hand.

He leads me out of the dungeon, up the beautiful staircase and to my room.

I don’t want this to be the last night. I tell him.

But he takes off my robe. His lips fuse against mine.

He kisses me, tasting each part of my lip, his tongue stroking mine. I melt against him.

“Let’s go to bed.”

I follow him to the bed with the luxurious sheets, and I’m so happy I came here that I can barely speak.

Noel is taking off his dark blue dress shirt. I scoot up to my knees to help him. I trail my hands down his hard pecs.

“So handsome.”

He grins and unzips his fly.

Not needing another invitation, I lean down and take his long cock all at once into my mouth. His taste is familiar. My tongue rolls under it as if I know exactly what’s going to drive him wild.

And as I press my tongue to his balls, I realize I do.

It makes me giddy, and I put more of myself into it, sucking and rocking on my knees.

“That feels amazing, Holly.” Noel holds my head, and he thrusts hard and fast into my mouth.

I open my jaw as wide as I can, and he increases his rhythm, his eyes close.

I massage his balls as he tilts into my mouth so hard it’s an effort to keep my mouth on his cock.

“Holly!”

His cum shoots into my mouth, hot and fast and using my tongue, I lap it all up, even as I’m swallowing. His cum is salty and musky, and I could lick him every single night.

“Good girl.” Noel runs his fingers through my hair.

He sits on the end of the bed, and because I want to, because I absolutely need to show him...to give him my submission, I put my head on his thigh.

“Oh, Holly.” He cups my face with so much tenderness my heart explodes. He strokes my hair, and I want to purr.

I want him, but I don’t know if I can trust myself not to be lost in him because I want to stay in this moment forever.

It’s going to kill me, but I know it’s better to leave Noel in Vixen’s Paradise.

* * *

The work ringtone of my phone breaks into my cocoon of sleep, and I throw the blankets off me, reaching over Noel to

the nightstand to grab it.

“Hello?”

“Holly, have you seen the news?” My assistant’s voice is rung with worry, and I curse myself for being off-grid.

“No, Meg, what is it?”

“Xander Durand’s kid broke his leg skating, and he’s refusing to go back on set until the kid is healed.”

“What?” My mind kicks into work mode.

“Yeah. He made a social media post about it.”

“I’m flying home tomorrow morning. I will call him.”

“I tried and couldn’t, but the producer said Durand better be there on Monday.”

“Got it. Thanks, Meg.”

Reality crashes back into me as my mind whirls, wondering how I am going to get Xander Durand to listen to me. He’s snobbish and egocentric but also one of the first clients I signed that is making the agency gobs of money.

His show is number one in the rankings.

Somehow, the man has to be in L.A. to resume shooting.

I Google, “How long does it take to heal a broken leg?” and curse.

“Holly, can I help?” Noel snaps me back to the present.

“I have to...I have work to do. I’m going to leave in the morning.”

I say this as much to myself as to him because I'm pretty sure I can't get a flight out tonight.

"I know. Can we spend this night together?"

My heart breaks because I want to, but I don't know what it will cost me if I say yes.

I have to look after my client and get back to the real world.

"I don't know...I have calls to make."

"Okay. You know how to reach me if you're done with your calls and want company."

"Yes, okay," I say.

"Holly."

I turn to look at him. He has his shirt back on.

"I used to be a workaholic, and there's nothing wrong with that. But I think having a balance of work and other things..."

He raises an eyebrow. "Is a better way to do it?"

"Maybe," I whisper.

"Good luck with your phone calls."

"Thanks."

There is nothing more to say. I watch as he leaves, gently closing the door, and I stop myself from chasing after him.

Pressing Xander's number, I go to the tea service and put the kettle on, smiling as I remember Noel showing it to me on that first day, correcting me.

"Hello?"

“Xander, it’s Holly. I’m sorry about your toddler, but you must show up on set.”

“Fuck, Holly, I can’t leave him,” Xander says.

“Yeah, I know what that’s like.” I launch into my spiel, even as my heart is breaking.

19 NOEL

DECEMBER 30TH

“**W**hat?” I growl into the phone.
“Who pissed in your cereal?” Evan says.

I throw off the tangled sheets. I didn’t sleep well after leaving Holly. I tried not to take it personally, to shake off her rejection, but it still felt like cold water being thrown in my face.

She’ll be on that flight home and away from me in only a few hours.

Fuck, I hope she hasn’t left yet.

I scramble into my clothes, trying to understand what Evan is saying.

“Evan, if there is a problem with the contract from Winterhaven Farm, get Brent on it.”

“You’re not listening.” My grumpy younger brother growls into my ear. “Brent has left for vacation for two weeks. The name is incorrect on the contract.”

“Stella...something, right?” I drudge the name from memory. The woman always sounded harried when I called her and rushed with a lot of clamouring in the background. Maybe she misspelt it or something.

“Right, that’s who I thought owned the property. But that’s not the name on Brent’s offer sheet.”

“So he made a mistake?”

“Yeah, or something weird is going on. Can you please fix it?”

I open the door to my private suite and take the stairs two at a time. “Okay, what’s the name on the offer sheet?”

Maybe it’s a simple fix, like missing an l or something, and I can fix it within an hour.

“Holly Burkholder.”

“Say that again?” I stop mid-step.

“Holly Burkholder. She has an Edmonton address.”

Even though I tell myself not to leap to conclusions, my mind is whirring. Could she have taken advantage of Stella? I mean, that woman seems ripe to fall victim to scams that could talk her out of a lot of money, or is it another Holly Burkholder and not the woman I’ve been fucking all week?

“An address in Edmonton?”

“Yeah, I think it’s a condo. Anyways, if I can email this to you, can you try to contact her? If we get it done today, we can celebrate at the party.”

“I’ll take care of it.” I run back to the resort, to Rosa’s desk.

“Hey, where’s Holly?”

“Outside, she’s leaving now,” Rosa says. “Noel? What’s going on?”

“I said I’d take care of this, okay?” I hang up on Evan.

A sharp anger surges through my veins. She didn’t even say goodbye? The cold air hits me. She’s wearing the cloak I gave her. Martin is helping her load her bags into the trunk.

“Holly.”

She turns to me. “Hey.”

“What’s going on?” I shove my hands in my pockets.

“I’m leaving.” Her eyes dart everywhere except my face.

“You weren’t going to say goodbye?” I’m having a hard time swallowing past the lump in my throat.

“We did that last night. Look, Noel, this has been nice, but...”

“But what?” The words are hard to get out.

“I was honest from the beginning. I told you I didn’t know if I could have another relationship. What you’ve given me...we agreed to five days.” Holly crosses her arms over her chest.

“Yes, we did, and they were the five best days I have had in a long time. But are you sure you’ve been honest from the beginning?”

Her eyes widen. She shakes her head and grabs the door.
“I’ve got to go.”

Despite spending all that time with her and knowing I want her, I don’t know the little things about her. I don’t know her favourite colour, what music she likes or how she handles conflict.

“Are you a journalist?”

“What?” Her brows furrow. “No!”

“Not out for a story to expose all this?” I gesture at Vixen’s Paradise behind me.

“Noel, I wasn’t pretending with you.” She juts out her chin.

It’s cute that she’s angry.

“I didn’t say you were. Only that you weren’t honest with me.”

“I told you, I don’t like telling people what I do for a living.”

“How do you know Stella Kent?”

She leans against the car door.

I take a step, taking up all her space. “Or are you trying to pull off some kind of scam?”

“No scam. Stella is my cousin, okay? I gotta go. I can’t talk about this.”

“Holly, I don’t want to part like this.” My voice is hoarse.

Her expression is pinched, like she’s fighting back tears. “I have stuff I have to deal with, and I can’t...”

“Can’t what?” I place a hand on her arm.

“Talk to you any more about this or anything. I got to go, Noel.” Her voice breaks.

The emotion in her voice twists my heart, and my anger fizzles away.

“Fine. Holly, call me later, okay?”

“Okay.” But I see by the set of her chin that she’s made up her mind and isn’t going to call.

She slams the door shut. I stand there, watching her drive away from me.

Even though I’m freezing, I walk along the trail that takes me to the farm next door.

If Stella is her cousin, then the old lady who owned it is probably their grandmother, or a great aunt or some relative. The safe place Holly had to escape her abusive father.

But why did she come to Vixen’s Paradise?

I shove my hands in my pockets, hunching my shoulders against the wind, whipping at my back.

How did she know that Vixen’s Paradise was next to her grandmother’s place? Holly is bright. She must have researched what was happening with properties in the area. If she had done a holdings search on Brennon Consortium, the list of properties we own, Vixen’s Paradise, and Sinful Bites would have shown up, and she would have seen the address.

Speaking of which, I call Theo once I'm in the warmth of Vixen's Paradise, sitting at a dining table with a cup of coffee and a shot of whiskey.

"Hi, Noel."

"Hey, Theo. So tell me again about this café you found."

"You sound awful. What's wrong?"

I could never fool Theo. He is keenly observant.

So much for trying to distract myself from Holly's leaving.

"The woman I played with this week just left. I really like her, Theo."

"Did you tell her that?"

I grin at his practicality. "Yes, but I think she's scared. Her ex-boyfriend just dumped her, and her previous serious relationship ended badly."

"Tell her again, then. Maybe she needs to see that you mean what you say."

"Yeah."

I contemplate showing up at Holly's door, but I don't know if that would be a dramatic gesture or a scary stalker move.

"And you are a widower. You must be scared, too."

The words hit me right in the gut. I throw back what's left in the shot glass.

"I'm scared, but she's worth being scared for. I want to see her again."

“Then go for it. That’s what you’re always telling me.”

I laugh gruffly. Theo is cautious and takes forever to make a decision, but once he does, his mind is made up and unchanging.

“True. The café, run it down for me.”

“Okay, but it’s not a lifestyle café, all right? Just a normal everyday place where clothing isn’t optional, it’s required.”

I wouldn’t say Theo is against Vixen’s Paradise or Sinful Bites, but he’s ... super private about what happens in his bedroom.

I might be the only brother who knows what his tastes are.

“Where is this normal café located?”

“It’s in a little town called Rising Harbour. I was visiting a friend’s winery. My car broke down. I went into this café and met this woman.”

“Oh?” I grin.

“It’s not like that, Noel.” Theo brushes me off.

“And she told me the café is for sale.”

“And you want to buy it?”

“Yes.”

“You want to buy a café in the middle of nowhere, about four hours from where you live, and it has nothing to do with the very attractive barista?”

“How do you know she’s attractive?”

I laugh. “What do you need me for?”

“Can you handle the sale for me? I don’t know how much they are asking, but I want the building it’s in, too.”

I smile as I drain the last bit of my coffee. “Let me guess, she lives there.”

“Noel, look. I have the money, and I can do this good deed.”

“What’s her name?”

Theo sighs. “If I tell you her name, will you help me buy the place?”

“Yes.”

“Callie.”

“Are you bringing this Callie to the New Year’s Eve party?”

“No! I mean, I can’t. It’s not like that, Noel.”

I laugh. “Okay, send me everything you have on the café, and I’ll get to work.”

“Thanks. You should go get this girl of yours.”

“She’s not mine.”

“But you want her to be.”

In a choir of laughter and conversation, guests enter the dining room, and I stand, moving out of the space.

“Yeah, I do.”

“See you in a few days.”

“Bye.”

Axel is leaning over Rosa's desk, locking lips with his submissive.

"Hey," I lean against the wall.

Rosa jumps back, her chair scraping against the floor.
"Sorry."

I wave off her apology.

Axel grins. "Great party last night. Everything's been cleaned up, and the dungeon is back to normal."

"I know. Thanks for all of your effort in making it work."

"Anything for you, Noel." Axel slaps me on the back.

"Rosa, can I have Holly Burkholder's address?"

Rosa smiles and taps on her keyboard. "Sure. Want me to text it to you?"

"Yes."

At the door to my private suite, I pause. "And Rosa? Can you book me the next flight out for Edmonton?"

"I can do that," Rosa says.

"Good for you, Noel," Axel reaches over and squeezes my shoulder.

I nod and go through the door, taking the stairs two at a time. I have to pack.

Theo is right. I have to go tell Holly that she is mine.

20 HOLLY

DECEMBER 31ST

“**H**olly, go home. It’s New Year’s Eve,” My boss says, leaning against my door.

“I won’t be much longer,” I tell him.

“Good job with Xander Durand. I thought I was going to have a heart attack.”

“You and me both.” I meet my boss’s stare.

“That was a great save.” Mr. Preston raps his knuckles against my door. “See you next week.”

I gather the files on my desk and lock them in my filing cabinet.

Getting Xander on the plane to L.A. with his leg-in-a-cast-toddler had been a feat. It took hours of me on the phone, cajoling and promising. Yesterday I had to meet him at the airport to make sure his butt was in that first-class seat while Meg and my other assistant, Charlie, worked to find a nanny in L.A. and a doctor that would follow the toddler’s recovery.

I told my assistants to go home at noon and celebrate that it's another year. I turn the blinds on my windows, glancing around my cool contemporary office.

I'm proud of the work I do here. I know it doesn't seem like much to be a hand holder, but this is the career I wanted to pursue; helping to make people's dreams come true is something that drives me. It fulfils me, meeting that quest for bigger.

And yes, sometimes I'd like a break from the pressure and the stress of the job, but nothing is worth losing everything I've worked so hard for.

I pick up my briefcase. Throw on my favourite pair of boots. Since returning from Vixen's Paradise, I have been going nonstop.

And it's been to keep my mind off how I left it with Noel. I didn't even explain; I made no apology and told him we were done.

If it was the right thing to do, why do I feel so lousy?

I lean my head against the elevator, tears welling in my eyes.

Maybe there was another way I could have handled it.

Yeah, with honesty.

But if I had told Noel that he was trying to buy my Gran's farm right from the start, would he see me as anything other than his opponent?

I scoff to myself at the irony.

Every day in this office, I want to be seen as fierce and independent, cool and smart, someone you can't push around and someone who doesn't give in easily. You could say that I spend my working days in the role of opponent.

Noel didn't know who I was, and he flirted with me on the plane. He treated me as if I was a sexy woman, someone like-minded who played in the lifestyle. That made me feel good, sexy and wanted.

His attention made me feel attractive in a way I never had before. And how he touched me set my skin on fire.

With him, I was able to be vulnerable enough to allow him to help me explore a fantasy I had never voiced to anyone.

And it's because I took off the armour I wear every day.

So no, if he knew the real me, none of that would have happened.

We would have been two lawyers duking it out over a negotiation that dragged on and on. Maybe we would have found our way to a glass of wine, but it wouldn't have been five days of sizzling play.

I push through the glass doors to the freezing cold air. And maybe it's because he didn't know who I was that when I asked for more, the Brennon Consortium simply accepted the counteroffer.

Like I told Noel, sometimes things can be over-negotiated.

It's a short drive to my condo. In this blustery weather, I'm thankful for the underground parking. Taking the elevator up

to my floor, I crave a bath and a fireplace.

My apartment's tub is nowhere near as luscious as the one at Vixen's Paradise, and I really should have taken that tub home.

But it's not the tub I should have taken home, it's the owner.

The elevator doors open, and I swipe at my watering eyes. It must be the air freshener in the hallway.

At my door, I unlock it, kick off my shoes and hang up my coat. My condo is cozy and my sanctuary, but it feels like I'm standing somewhere cold...and lonely.

On my counter is one of those bottles of wine that I was given at Christmas.

I took this one home because it's from a winery near Niagara Falls, and the picture on the bottle is stylized in gold.

I thought maybe my Mom would like it. Finding a glass in the cupboard, I pour myself a generous helping.

Taking my favourite take-out menu off the fridge, I'm hoping the place that makes the best spring rolls is still open.

I'm confirming my order when there's a knock on my door. It must be a neighbour because all guests are buzzed up.

The wineglass kind of bumps the doorknob as I check the peephole. My hand shakes, spilling wine onto my fingers.

My stomach drops to the floor.

There, standing on my doorstep, hair all dishevelled, is Noel.

I open the door.

“Hi.”

“Okay.” That was a dumb thing to say, but my mind is scrambling to figure out why he is standing on my doorstep.

He grins, and the smile lights up his chocolate eyes. I notice the dark circles under his eyes, the bag he’s holding in his hand and my throat goes dry.

“Can I come in?” Noel goes to touch me, and stops, dropping his back to his side.

“Why are you here?”

“I wanted to come yesterday but couldn’t get on a flight. Do you know that the New Year’s Eve flight was empty?”

“You’re supposed to be at the restaurant.”

Noel shrugs. “It’s not the first New Year’s Eve party I’ve missed. Can I come in, Holly?”

He asks this again, and my brain kicks into the fact that he is actually here.

“Sure.”

He strides past me into the middle of my living room.

The last owner of the condo had a fondness for blue. There is blue trim on the dusky blue walls in the living room, and I haven’t had time to repaint it yet. The cupboards in the kitchen are blue.

My bedroom walls are a deep navy.

Noel runs his hand along my 1960s low couches. I had them recovered in a deep burgundy as a gift to myself after my first

year of being a talent agent.

“It’s nice.”

“Yeah, it’s okay.”

Noel leans against the bookshelf that my Mom gave me, and suddenly, I see things that make me cringe everywhere, like the Hello Kitty vase Stella gave me, a pair of Mickey Mouse ears from a trip to Disney, my favourite stuffy bunny from when I was a kid.

“It’s good to see you.”

“You only saw me yesterday.” I cross my arms over my chest, but his words make me glow. I know I’m blushing.

“Yes, but I didn’t get to have coffee with you this morning. I didn’t get to feel your mouth on my cock.”

Now, I’m definitely blushing. Suddenly, he’s in front of me.

“Noel, I don’t...I can’t.”

“Holly, if you tell me to go, I will leave. The ball is firmly in your court. You can decide to contact me in a week or never. But I need to tell you, I want to be with you. I came here because I want to go into this New Year with you by my side.”

I shake my head. “You don’t even know me.”

“I know you are a strong woman who has been hurt in the past, and you’re afraid of giving me your heart. I know your submission is like a fine whiskey, something to slowly savour and keep in the right conditions. I know I don’t want you to tell me to leave.”

“Noel, I...”

How can I tell him that I want him to wake up beside me tomorrow?

“I’m so scared you’ll resent how many hours I work. My clients are very needy, and I might have to drop everything because someone didn’t get them the right dinner, and now they’re walking off.”

“Off of what?” Noel asks.

“Off set,” I mumble. Last year, one of my clients had walked off the set because someone gave her a meat sub instead of the vegan wrap she ordered.

“I told you, I understand being glued to work. That’s why I left it. I’m happy working with my brothers. I have enough in my life to keep me busy, Holly. I don’t need you to wait on me.”

“You say that now.”

Hot tears fall down my cheeks. I want this so much. I want to believe that he is going to be there for me and not get frustrated because I keep cancelling dinner on him.

“I don’t say things I don’t mean. I’m scared, too.” Noel runs his hand through his hair.

“Then why are you here?”

“Because I didn’t get to kiss you this morning.”

He leans down, and I don’t pull away. I stand there and let him kiss me, let those ridiculously symmetrical lips touch

mine.

He kisses me as if he means it, with so much passion, shivers run up my spine.

My hands come around his back because I need to touch him. He's really here, in my apartment.

He showed up for me.

That makes my heart dance in a pitter-patter, and I am lost in his kiss, my thoughts growing silent.

"There, that's better." Noel breaks off the kiss, holding me close.

"Is it?"

"Yes." He smiles so huge I can see his molars. Tilting my chin, he slants his mouth across mine.

I've missed his taste, his sure, firm touch.

There's a knock on my door, the take-out.

"Dinner," I explain. I practically run to the door.

I pay with my credit card, take the bag of food, and place it on the counter.

"Want to stay?" I take out two plates from the cupboard.

"Yes, I do."

"Noel..."

"You invited me to stay, Holly. You could have easily told me to go."

I'm swimming in a mixture of pleasure and nerves, but I want him near me. I don't want him to go.

I want to wake up to this man every morning, even if I can't give him all of my nights.

"I want you to stay," I whisper the words.

Noel takes the plates from my hands and gently sets them on the counter.

"I'm not going anywhere, Holly, unless you tell me to. Not tonight, not tomorrow, not next year. I'm yours for as long as you want me."

21 NOEL

Her eyes scan my face as if she is seeking reassurance? I don't know. But then her lips part, and that's all I need. I crush my lips against hers, and she moans into my mouth.

Desire surges through my veins, hot and demanding. I need to be in this woman right now.

I lift her, to her squeal of delight, cupping her gorgeous ass.

Guessing the hallway leads to the bedroom, I march down it and nudge open a blue door with my foot.

“Noel,” she says against my lips. It's a plea and one of acceptance as she holds onto my neck as I place her down on the bed.

She's pressing hot kisses on my neck, and her hands are flying right to my waistband.

“I want you inside me.”

“That's good, sweetheart because that's the only place I want to be.”

She pulls my shirt off, my lips are glued to hers, and I'm pressing my erection against her clothed skin.

I pull her dress off her shoulders but fumble, the fabric not cooperating. Somehow, Holly gets it off her.

"Gorgeous." I break off the kiss.

Leaning my forehead against hers, I take in her bright eyes her parted lips.

"I need you, Holly," I work the clasp on her bra and free her breasts.

"Me too. I need you."

"So damn gorgeous."

And I take her nipple into my mouth, sucking on it. It's the fine wine taste I remember, and I can't get enough.

Holly meets my eyes, and the heat in hers reflects the burning rolling through my body. I can't get enough of her, all of her. I swallow hard on her nipple before switching to the other one. She's pulling off my belt, unzipping my fly, and I let her, all the while I am licking her breast.

The heat rolling off me is enough to consume me, but I will not combust before I make sure she does.

"Spread those legs for me."

She spreads her legs wide with a small smile, and they come around me, grasping my waist. I shift her slightly so I have a better angle, and with a groan, I plunge into her.

She's so wet.

I close my eyes, luxuriating in the feel of her molten pussy on my cock. She gasps as I tilt my hips to go deeper. And deeper again.

Holy takes every inch, and I exhale in a hiss, loud enough that it bounces off the walls.

“I want to fuck you hard and deep,” I say into her neck.

She grabs my shoulders. “Yes. Do that.”

Damn.

Sweat breaks out on her cupid’s bow. She pants as my cock is sleeved by her heat, even hotter, deeper than ever before.

My vision blurs as I pound inside her.

“You’re perfect,” My lips are on her soft skin. I need to keep tasting her, to keep drinking in this moment.

She gyrates against me, arching her hips, giving me even more room. I sink even deeper into her tight pussy.

“That’s so good.”

Her words are the signal I need to devour her completely. My mouth is on her again. I’m swallowing up her mewls.

She moans under me, matching the cries that pour out of my lips.

I am lost in her body sensations, how soft and welcoming she is to me, and how she fits perfectly against me.

I piston into her with long, quick strokes that she matches by lifting her hips every single time.

Her face contorts, and I want to make her come undone because I remember how beautiful she looks as the orgasm hits her, and I can't wait to get her there.

The whip of roaring blood fills the space between my ears. The only thing I can hear is my heartbeat and her moans of pleasure.

“Please, Noel.”

Never have I been so sure of anything in my entire life, as I am sure that I don't want to live a second without this woman beside me.

Holly's scent of arousal permeates the air and drives me to quicken my pace. The bed is slamming against the wall, and I don't care.

Holly lets out a low, piercing mewl, and it's the best sound I've ever heard. It shoots through my veins in a primal way. That's my woman.

She pulls my bottom lip in her mouth, and my balls are so damn heavy.

I am going to explode, but not without her.

“Holly, come for me now, sweetheart. Give me your orgasm.”

She mewls, presses herself even more against me so we are skin to skin. Nothing is getting between us.

A flush starts to climb up Holly's neck, her body tensing.

Shifting without breaking my thrust, I reach in between us and find her clit. At the touch of my thumb, it hardens to a swollen bud.

“I love you,” I say into her neck.

I close my eyes on the words. The spark of desire is sizzling to a full flame, and I am going to blaze in it right with Holly.

I grit out a groan pound into her so hard I see stars.

“Now!”

“I love you, Noel!” The words rip from her throat. Her orgasm rolls through her body, her pussy spasming on my cock.

I can't hold off another second. My seed releases into her in one hot spurt. We are both gasping for air, my heart beating in overtime.

Holly kisses my nose, my mouth, my ear. “I love you,” she repeats with confidence.

I suck in a lungful of oxygen, needing more air. Without detangling from her, I wrap her in my arms.

“I love you too, Holly. So much.”

She lays her head against my shoulder.

“This is the best present ever,” I tell her.

She laughs, lacing her fingers through my hand. “I can't think of a better way to spend New Year's Eve.”

“Me neither.”

I know whatever this year brings, it's going to be phenomenal with her by my side.

22 HOLLY

JANUARY 1ST

The change of light woke me up. Noel's arm drapes me, and I thread my fingers through his hand.

He's sleeping, his chest rising and falling against my back. I can't believe this is how I am starting the New Year, and I can't wait to see what happens with this man beside me.

"Good morning, my present," Noel says against the nape of my neck.

"I thought you were sleeping."

"Nope, not sleeping." He kisses my nape below my ear.

I giggle. "I like having you in my bed."

"Good. Though it is slightly on the small side."

"It's a queen."

"Like I said, on the small side. Want to move into my big house? Or we can find something new."

I turn to see his face. His dark eyes are serious, and his lips are curled up in a little smile.

It's not that I didn't believe his words of wanting me and loving me because I mean them too. I love this man with everything I have and can't wait to get to know him more. I want to know how he spends his days. I can't wait to try the recipes he's perfected, but I feel frozen for a second.

I worked so hard to buy this condo, and I don't know if I am ready to part with it yet.

"Holly, you don't have to sell your condo."

"How do you read my mind?"

Noel chuckles. "Your eyes started to flutter, taking in everything in this room. We can find a place together, or I could move in here."

"I love you." I kiss him, loving how his lips feel under mine, how he growls in the back of his throat and takes control of the kiss.

He pulls my bottom lip with his teeth, gently grazing it.

"About your Gran's farm..."

The words make me tense beside him. He drags the back of his hand along my cheeks. "Why didn't you tell me who you were? I get why you didn't tell me what you do but why didn't you tell me you own the farm next to Vixen's Paradise?"

I shift, so I can see his face better. His expression is calm, he's waiting for me. "I don't know. At first I wasn't sure how to. Your dinner invitation took me by surprise."

"A good surprise." he kissed my cheek.

“Yes, a very good surprise,” I threw an arm around him, liking how it settled against his trim waist. “And then I thought if I brought it up...that it would destroy or change what we had. That you would have thought I was there under some kind of pretense or I was trying to influence the offer or something.”

“I get that. But nothing can change what we have, Holly. What I have with you is the magic of Christmas morning. What I have with you, is another chance to love. You have no idea what a gift that is.”

I close my eyes against his soft caress. “I should have told you.”

“Don’t keep things from me, Holly. Not the non-work things you can share.”

That’s going to be different from how I usually operate but looking into his deep pools of chocolate, I answer the only way I can. “I’ll try, Noel. I’ll do my best to share everything.”

“We can work on it,” he kisses me, long and slow. I pull away from him, needing to see his face as I ask him another question.

“Are you serious about not selling my condo?”

“I’m going to be wherever you are, Holly. I don’t need space. I just need you.”

Waves of lovey-dovey syrup crash over me, and I kiss him frantically as if my next breath depends on it.

Noel is richer than I am, and I'm sure he'd rather stay in his big house than in this condo, but the fact that he offered to move in here because he knew how much it means to me? That has my heart racing.

He nudges me to my back. "I'm also fine with being a kept husband."

He kisses my neck, the hollow at the base of my throat, working his way down to my breasts. He laps and sucks, and I give him all the noises he seems intent on wrangling from my body.

I love watching his muscles flex and move, and he's on top of me, his eyes glaze into mine, that smile still on his lips.

He throws the blankets off me and nudges my legs apart.

I reach down, the tips of my fingers finding his silky hair.

"Oh, Noel!" I cry out as he swipes his tongue over my clit.

I'm already wet.

I push my hips towards him.

His laugh vibrates through me, tickling my sensitive skin.

"Did you say, husband?"

My mind somehow clues in as he sucks on my clit. My legs tremble with the force of the orgasm building. It already wants to explode.

"Kept husband?" I repeat.

The breath is taken away from me because I never imagined a husband. Partners, yes, long-term boyfriend, yes, but I don't

know if I ever saw myself married.

Noel pushes my legs further apart, and all the thoughts fly out of my head as he slips a thumb on my clit, his mouth on my inner thigh.

“Mmmm-hmm. It has a nice ring to it, don’t you think?”

“Noel!” Quick and fast, the blissful wave of pleasure crashes over me.

I move my legs to curl them up, but Noel is beside me and curls his body around mine.

“You’re so gorgeous when you come,” he murmurs against my ear. His hot breath sends tingles down my spine.

“Once you see the kind of slob I am, will you still think I’m gorgeous?”

“You could be a hoarder, and I’d still love you.”

I hear the smile in his voice and turn to look at him. His hair is tousled, and he’s smiling at me.

“Wait till you see how little I have in the fridge.”

“Okay, I’m out then.” Noel gets up, grinning.

“Wait! I have wine and gift baskets!”

“In that case, I think you’re worth keeping.” Noel laughs, kissing me hot and fast.

“I need a shower,” I tell him.

“You smell like me. I like it.”

I know I'm blushing furiously, and my pulse is racing. If this is how we start each morning, I'll never make it to the office.

So before I can change my mind, I leap off the bed, throw on a T-shirt and wander into the kitchen.

"What? Did I say something wrong?" Noel is behind me, naked.

"No, but if you're going to insist on kissing me every three seconds, I'm going to need food."

Two gift baskets are on my counter. One is jams, brie and crackers, and the other is an arrangement of chocolates and a dessert wine.

I open the cheese and jam basket. It comes with a cheese knife and a cutting board, and I put it on the counter.

"Think this brie is any good?" I hold up the wheel.

Noel takes it from my hands. "It's from Denmark. It looks fancy."

"Is this the kind of thing you eat?"

Noel cocks an eyebrow at me. "Because I'm a rich snob?"

I shrug. "I have a client who eats smoked salmon for breakfast every day and another who won't work unless there is a box of Kraft Dinner in their dressing room. So you never know."

Noel opens the wheel of brie. "I do not eat this every day. You'll laugh, but I like pop tarts for breakfast."

"Strawberry or raspberry?" I try to hide my smile and can't.

Noel reaches for one of the jars of jam. “I like the variety pack. It also comes with blueberry.”

“I don’t have pop tarts. Coffee?”

“Yes, please.”

I spoon coffee into the filter, humming as I do, and I can’t help but smile. Noel sets the crackers on the board, opening more jars of jam. This feels so domestic I stop with my finger on the start button of the coffee maker.

“Holly?” Noel’s tone is that sugary one that makes me look at him instantly.

“Yeah?”

“What’s wrong?”

“I’m just thinking how amazingly normal and lovely this feels.”

“And it scares you.” Noel takes my finger and presses the button, making my old coffee machine whirl to life.

“And it scares me,” I echo.

Noel wraps his arms around me. “I love you, Holly. We don’t have to get married tomorrow. We can have a long engagement.”

“How long?” My heart is fluttering widely.

“Spring?” Noel raises his eyebrows. His expression is so hopeful and kind of boyish that I laugh.

“Okay, spring.”

Did I just agree to marry the stranger I met on the plane? I think I did.

Noel smiles huge, picks me up in his arms and spins me around.

“My mother is going to be thrilled,” I say against his neck.

“Good. I can’t wait to meet her and Stella, too. When can you take time off work next?”

“I don’t know,” I mutter.

“We’ll figure it out. We can do weekend trips. You have to meet my brothers.” He takes my hand and kisses the top of it.

“Am I going to like them?”

Noel shrugs. “I like them. Evan’s birthday is next month. They’re probably pissed at me for missing our New Year’s Eve bash.”

“I don’t want to start off like that,” I say. I pour the coffee into the mugs. Noel passes me the cream from the fridge, and I take down the sugar.

“They’ll be happy for me. You take the coffee. I’ll grab the cheese board.”

“I follow him into my living room, and we settle on the couch.

“You know,” Noel says, spreading brie on a cracker with a little pear jam. “There’s an old wives tale that says however you spend New Year’s Day is what you’ll be doing the rest of the year.”

“I could get used to it.” I open my mouth, and he feeds me the cracker. I chew. It’s slightly tangy from the cheese and sweet from the jam.

“Good.” Noel slants his mouth across mine. His hand reaches for my thigh, and before I know it, I’m under him, and he’s above me on my couch, and it’s perfect.

“I love you,” I tell him.

“I love you, Holly,” he says. He kisses my neck and works his way down to my breasts.

My nipples are already hard, he mouths them through my shirt. There’s something about the sensation of his warm mouth over my clothed nipple that makes me wet.

“Noel, I want you.”

“I want you too.” He gives the other nipple the same treatment.

My hips arch off the couch, inviting him because I am aching for this man. I want him in me right now.

His mouth comes off my T-shirt, then he lifts it off. I’m a tiny bit cool, but then he covers his chest with mine, and I’m not the least bit cold.

“Mine.”

“Yours.” My voice sounds far away, but Noel kisses me, his tongue swirling around mine. His body pressed to mine, melting on my smallish couch.

Grabbing my leg, he throws it over the couch so I am spread open for him.

“Beautiful pussy. And it’s mine.” Noel swipes a finger through my wetness. His touch makes me shiver. I reach for him, needing to touch him.

I brush my hands over his abs, across his pecs and stare at this gorgeous man.

“You’re mine,” I say.

His smile is like dawn breaking, and he fingers me.

The need in me is scorching hot. I grab at his arm, touching his elbow. “Please.”

“I like hearing you say please.” Noel shifts so he’s lined up with me. He enters me so slowly that I feel every ridge of his thick cock.

I gasp as he fits his cock in me, loving how it adjusts to his size. The amount of burn that comes with my body stretching is perfect.

“You feel good.”

“You feel like lava around my cock.” He brushes his lips against mine and moves in me, taking his sweet time.

And I’m burning with so much ache, I feel like screaming.

His hips move so slowly I am sure I am going to combust.

“Faster, please.”

“Anything for you.”

He drives even deeper into me, taking my breath with him on his hard thrusts.

“Yes!”

“I know you like that,” Noel says.

His dark eyes are glassy, and I swallow a gulp in my throat because he’s looking at me like he loves me.

He thrusts again, even deeper and all my nerve endings are on fire. I need him so much. I am going to shatter with how much I need him.

How much I want this man.

I’m going to be in pieces by how much I love this man, but I am not thinking as he’s driving into me so fast that the couch moves, and I laugh, wondering if we’re going to topple to the floor.

But then, I’m not laughing as he seals his mouth over mine.

Noel tilts his hips, and the pleasure breaks open from my core, spiraling.

“Holly! I love you!” His eyes close.

I know he’s close, and I want to watch him lose control. I meet him thrust for thrust, grabbing for his fingers.

We’re both panting, our bodies are against each other, hot and warm and messy, and I can’t love this man anymore.

“Now, Holly. Be a good girl, and come for me.”

My body obeys his command, and as soon as the words are out of his mouth, my pussy tightens around his cock.

The orgasm unfurls from my toes and climbs up through my centre. I shatter in pleasure as Noel's face contorts, and he follows with his own orgasm, releasing deep in me.

"We're going to have a hell of a year," Noel says.

He gently detangles from me and lifts me, draping an arm across my shoulders, he holds me against him.

"Cheese and orgasms. I like that."

"Good." He kisses me so hard my lips throb.

"I love you."

I like how his face lights up whenever I say it, and I hope it always does.

"Love you too, Holly."

I can't think of a better way to start the New Year.

EPILOGUE HOLLY

FEBRUARY 5TH

If I had any doubt that Noel is rich, that his family is wealthy, being in this hotel smashed those doubts to pieces.

We're on the seventh floor of Hotel Hugo.

An outdoor terrace overlooks Coal Harbour and the North Shore Mountains. But as nice as the luxurious high thread count is on the bed, the room's dark tones make me feel a little claustrophobic.

Polished cherry furniture gives the room a decidedly heavy feel, and I miss the unexpected charm of Vixen's Paradise.

"Are you ready?" Noel steps out of the shower with a towel wrapped around his waist.

"I guess." But I'm not. I'm literally sitting on the bed, scrolling through my phone. My stomach is fluttering with nerves.

"Holly, they're going to love you." Noel brushes his lips against my neck. "And if they don't, it doesn't matter. I love

you.”

But I want them to like me.

Family is essential to Noel, and I want his brothers to think that he’s making a good choice in marrying me.

“I love you, too.”

He pushes me back against the bed, and I laugh, threading my fingers through his hair. “Noel, if you have your way with me now, we’ll be late, and then I’ll make a horrible impression on them.”

“I’ll tell them it was my fault. That I had to have you before I subjected you to them.”

I kiss his perfectly symmetrical lips, loving how soft they are, and the heat in his gaze tells me exactly how much he wants me.

But I duck out under his arms.

“You can’t get away from me!”

“I just did.” I laugh from the end of the bed.

Noel growls and lunges for me. I try to twist out of his reach, but he’s faster and pulls me to his front.

“Noel! I need to put on my make-up.”

“Okay, I’ll let you go. But I have something I want you to wear tonight.”

“Your ring on my finger isn’t enough?” I hold my hand to the light. An enhanced blue diamond is nestled in a white-gold braided band.

“Nope.” Noel drops kisses behind my ear, making me flushed and wet.

“Noel, I don’t want this dress to get wrecked,” I say as his hands wander down the lace-up back.

“You look stunning in this dress, and I will ruin it later.”

I close my eyes at his promise as his hands sweep over my breasts through the silky fabric of my dark blue dress.

With one more kiss, he turns from me and reaches into the closet for his suit and shirt. The deep purple brings out his eyes, and the charcoal suit is a perfect match.

“I love that colour on you.”

“I like this colour in you.” Noel grins, holding up the golden bullet vibrator he first gave me at Vixen’s Paradise.

My cheeks flush as I lick my lips.

“What do you say, Holly? Want to be mine to control throughout this evening?”

In answer, I grab it out of his hand and run into the bathroom. “If you make me orgasm in front of your brothers, I’ll never live it down.”

Noel chuckles. “Wait till we get to the restaurant. You’ll fit right in.”

After I slide the vibrator in place, I step out of the bathroom and take his hand.

“Give me five minutes to do my make-up.”

“You got it,” Noel leans in the bathroom doorway.

“You don’t have to watch me.” I quickly lay powder fountain on my face, followed by a touch of concealer.

“I love watching you.”

My make-up brush falls out of my hand as vibrations pulsate through me, and I gasp. “Noel! Let me put on my make-up before you wreck it.”

“Fine.” He sighs in an exasperated way and slips the controller into his pocket. “I’ll wreck it later.”

I smile at him, loving how easy it is to be with him. He can be playful one moment but still give me what I crave.

He makes me feel so treasured. Being with him still feels like a dream.

With a swipe of lip gloss and one quick fluff of my hair, I turn to him.

“Ready.”

“Damn, I’m a lucky bastard.” Noel steps into the bathroom, wrapping me in his arms. “Why do you love me?”

I laugh but stop at the seriousness in his tone. “Because you’re you.”

He grins and takes my hand. “I love you because you are you. And you’re so hot you’ll raise the restaurant’s temperature.”

I shake my head at him.

Slyly, Noel reaches into his pocket, and I feel the low hum ripple through me.

I slip my feet into low-slung back heels and walk through the door Noel holds for me. The hallway carpet is so plush it feels like walking on a cushion.

Noel presses the elevator button, and the car opens to a dark panel wall. My heart is in my throat as it rises two more floors.

“Holly, no matter what happens tonight, you’re mine.” Noel fuses his lips to mine, and I clutch his arms as the vibrations increase.

“Be a good girl and give me that orgasm right now.”

I can’t believe how ready my body is that it bows to his command, but as he leans in to kiss me again, deepening the kiss, the vibrations rise to a crescendo. My orgasm falls so quick and fast, only my body shuddering in the aftermath is the sign that it happened.

“Good girl.”

The bell chimes to tell us we have arrived on our chosen floor, and we step out. Two men dressed in tuxedos are in the hall. By the earpieces they’re sporting, I guess they are security.

“Good evening, Mr. Brennon. Your brothers are already waiting for you in the back of the dining room.”

“Thank you.”

Great, we’re late. My stomach turns with a little bit of anxiety.

But Noel drapes an arm around my waist and leads me into the gorgeous restaurant. I stop because I've never seen anything as glamorous as this place.

Crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling. Every table in the place is glass; some are oblong shaped, some are high-top squares, and some are banquets with seating for eight guests.

The chairs are leather, not quite black, a deep blood hue. On one side of the room, there is a throne. There are cages and spanking benches along the wall as if they are art exhibits.

“Wow.”

“Oh yes, it gets better,” Noel says.

He leads me past the guests, and I avert my eyes from a woman dressed as a kitty, her gorgeous breasts on display. She's kneeling on a cushion at one of the shorter tables, and her breasts are literally on the table.

Her companion, a woman with a French braid, is picking a canape from her naked breasts.

The wait staff is dressed in black and flutters by us. The guests are dressed in varying degrees, and scenes are going on around me, but the setting is intimate; me walking by them feels intrusive.

“Noel, we didn't think you'd ever make it!” A well-built man with hair that is slightly darker than Noel strides towards us. He's not as tall as Noel, but his muscles are evident under his white dress shirt. This guy doesn't skip arm day.

“I’ve been busy.” Noel leans in to hug the guy. “Evan, meet Holly. Holly, this is my younger brother Evan and the brains behind Sinful Bites.”

“Nice to meet you.”

Evan takes my hand and stares into my eyes. His eyes are so like Noel’s, but his features are sharper.

“I hear you are what’s keeping Noel busy. Nice ring. The others are in here, come.”

Evan leads us through a set of double wooden doors that open to a private dining room.

One man is sitting, facing the doorway. He has a stuffy beard, and his arms are crossed over his chest.

“Finally, big brother.” The guy gets up, and he moves a lot more gracefully than he looks like he can.

“Hunter, good to see you.” Noel gives him a quick one-armed hug. “Meet Holly.”

“Why does he get to meet her first?” A man comes between us, slinging his arm over Noel’s shoulders.

“I’m Theo.” He extends his hand to me.

“Hi, I’m Holly.”

“There, you met her before Hunter. Are you happy?” Noel asks.

Theo flashes a grin. “Thrilled.”

“Congrats, Noel. Holly, I’m thrilled you managed to make this guy smile,” Hunter says.

“I have the first course coming out in two minutes. Sit down.” Evan gestures at the table.

“So Noel, do you notice anything missing?” Theo sits across from us, with Hunter on his right. Evan sits at the head of the table, and Noel guides me to a seat on his right.

“It’s a good crowd for a Thursday. Can’t say I noticed anything. Holly?”

“I don’t know, but this is my first time in a restaurant like this.”

“It’s the only restaurant like it in North America,” Evan says.

“That can’t be true.” Theo shakes his head, his sandy hair falling into his eyes.

“It is true.” Evan glares at his younger brother.

“What does it matter?” Hunter says.

“Are you going to tell us?” Noel glides his hand to my thigh.

Being in the room with the Brennon brothers is a little overwhelming, and I’m trying to take in all their facial gestures, trying to figure out if they are happy I’m here or if I am a fifth wheel when the strongest pressure rolls through my centre.

I gasp and grab Noel’s arm.

Noel passes me the filled water glass in front of me, his smile so mischievous I want to lick him.

“There’s not a single flower in the place because Evan fired the florist.”

“They did horrible work!” Evan protests.

Just then, the doors open, and a whole team rushes in, sitting down plates before us. The most delicious aroma fills my nostrils, and I don’t know what’s on my plate, but I’m going to eat it all.

“First bite is Hoisin meatballs. Please enjoy.” The waiter bows her head, and the team leaves the room.

“But now he has a photo shoot and needs flowers.”

“There must be a million florists in this city. Choose one,” Noel says.

He picks up his skewer and pulls off his meatball, smiling at me.

I reach for mine and pull back as my body is on fire with the pulsating rockets of vibration.

“Holly, are you okay?” Theo, a sly smile on his face.

My cheeks are burning.

“Fine. So what florist do you want, and why hasn’t she agreed to take the job?” I say it through gritted teeth.

Thankfully, Noel lays off the remote control.

Evan pauses with his skewer to his mouth. He lifts his wine glass to me. “You got all that in five minutes?”

“Holly’s a great reader of situations. It comes in handy with her job,” Noel is smiling so huge. I want to climb into his lap.

“I guessed from Theo’s reaction. He looks like he has a secret. Noel’s right. There are lots of florists in the city, so

there must be a reason why you cancelled your floral order.”

“Yes, the previous company fired her, and now she’s started on her own and won’t take my calls.”

“Sounds like my kind of woman,” Hunter says.

Theo and Noel laugh, but Evan glares at his youngest brother. Hunter shrugs and pops the skewer in his mouth.

“Why won’t she?” Noel asks.

“She doesn’t like this place.” Evan shrugs.

“It’s not everyone’s taste.” Theo says.

“No, but she hasn’t even tried. She can’t judge without giving it a fair chance,” Evan says.

“Then why don’t you invite her to experience it as a guest?” Noel says. “That’s how I got this one.”

I giggle as he holds up my hand, my cheeks flaming.

“Maybe. I don’t like people telling me no.”

“A woman dared to tell you no? I like her too.” Noel grins. “What’s her name?”

“Mara.” Evan stares at us coolly.

“Ooh, Mara,” Theo says.

“And Theo, how’s it going with Callie?” Noel asks.

I grin as his brothers laugh, and Theo wags a finger at Noel. “I told you, it’s not like that.”

“That’s why he’s going to the middle of nowhere again next week.” Hunter grins.

“I wish you guys all the luck in your pursuits or non-pursuits,” Noel adds, glancing at Theo.

The next course comes in with more wine, and I settle back, holding Noel’s hand under the table, listening to the brothers talk.

It’s clear they love each other, and I can’t wait to meet their parents.

“Mom is going to freak. She’s going to want to hold the wedding in the backyard,” Evan says.

“This time, I’ll let her. If that’s okay with you, Holly,” Noel raises an eyebrow at me, and I sense the collective held breath around the room.

Noel’s wife will always be a part of him and a part of his past. Just like my past, it sometimes comes out into the present moment.

But it doesn’t matter.

I love Noel, and I know the next moment we create is more important than anything that’s ever come before.

“That sounds amazing,” I say and squeeze his hand.

Finally, the desert comes, and Noel stands.

“We’ll join you guys tomorrow for breakfast. I need to take my wife-to-be back to our room.”

“Noel, she’s cute when she blushes,” Hunter says.

I am grabbing his hand so hard I’m sure I’m bruising it.

“She’s cute all the time,” Noel says. The look he sends me leaves my throat dry. My pulse races, and I don’t care that his brothers know he’s going to have sex with me. I’m a moment away from telling him to ravish me right here.

“Nice meeting you all,” I say.

“Good night,” Theo says.

Evan gives us a salute, and Noel waves.

The restaurant is quiet. A grey-haired man is dangling a cherry to a petite woman he has on his lap.

She giggles as she tries to catch the cherry in her mouth.

“What a place,” I say.

“Yeah, Evan is proud of it.”

And why shouldn’t he be? It takes the parts of a dungeon and puts them on display over appetizers.

I get the appeal, but I’m not sure I want to be a guest there.

But the memory of Noel feeding me at Vixen’s Paradise rushes through my mind, and I shrug.

Maybe I get the appeal after all.

In the elevator, Noel pins me to the corner of the car, slants his mouth over mine and kisses me.

He tastes like the red wine we had with dinner. His hand slips under the skirt of my dress.

“How wet are you for me?”

“I’m so soaked.” I close my eyes, arching my body as he pushes my panties to one side.

His touch ignites that storm of desire he’d built all evening long. I shriek as the elevator tumbles to a stop, the doors flying open to a couple.

“Evening,” Noel says to them.

He takes my hand and both of us are running down the hall, like we’re teenagers who just escaped being caught.

Noel swipes the keycard at the reader and we’re in the room.

“Now I get to have what I want.”

“Yeah? What’s that?” I kick off my heels and reach behind me to unsnap my dress.

Noel undoes the clasp and I get the dress off.

“You. You’re all I want, Holly.” He takes off my bra. I shudder as his hands slide down to the waistband of my panties.

He reaches between my legs, gently pulling the vibe out.

“It’s soaked with your juice. I love your smell,” Noel holds the vibrator under his nose as if he’s smelling a flower. He gives me a wink and then goes into the bathroom.

My whole body is red with heat and a little embarrassment, but the kind that is making me wet.

When he comes out of the bathroom, he’s naked except for his pants.

My heart is in my throat as I turn to kiss him. He's serious but playful, content, and eager to try new things.

He's steady and fun, and I can't believe I am wearing his ring on my finger.

"You're all I've ever wanted, Noel. I love you."

"I love you, too." He lifts me up, and I laugh. My legs are around his waist as he carries me to the bed and sets me down.

I'm aching so much for his touch. I reach for him, my hands run along his muscular back. He laughs as I fumble at his waistband.

"Impatient?"

"You know this about me."

"Yes, I do, and tonight, I'm not going to make you wait another second." He shucks off his pants, and the cock I love to taste so much springs free.

Grabbing him with my hand, I take it to my mouth.

He hisses, a growling, guttural sound emits from his lips.

I smile around his cock, taking in as much as I can. I twirl my tongue under his shaft. And I lick, feeling the shudders rake through him.

His cock is steel, and his reactions are soft; he's letting me see him vulnerable, and I love it. Slowly, I suck on his cock, playing with his balls as I sweep my tongue along his sensitive underside.

“Holly, I love you.” He rocks back on his knees so his cock comes out of my mouth, and the next thing I know, I’m under his hard body.

He kisses me. Then kisses me again. He eats at my lips as if he can’t stop tasting them, and I swoon with want, with need. Noel breaks off the kiss and skims his mouth along the hollow of my neck, down to my breast.

“Why is everything so different with you?” I mumble as he sucks in my hardened tip to the root of his mouth.

Pleasure rockets through me as he works his mouth over my nipple, sucking and tasting.

He grins at me as he comes off my breast, switching sides.

“Because we’re meant to be. You’re mine, Holly.”

Ripples of pleasure break across my skin at the touch of his tongue on my nipple. I press his head against my flesh, wanting to be closer to him.

My body is all soft and needy, ready for him to manipulate it how he will.

No man has ever made me feel so loved, adored and treasured.

Noel grazes my nipple with his teeth before coming off of it and fusing his lips to mine.

His lips are slightly swollen and feel like electricity as they touch mine.

“I love you.”

“I love you too.”

He shifts himself so he’s lined up with my pussy, and gently grabbing my legs, he places them around his waist.

“You’re so soft and ready for me. I love looking at you like this.”

“I need you inside of me.”

He laughs. “Yes, my present, anything for you.”

His cock slides into me, deep and as he rocks his hips, even deeper.

He stays like that for a moment, poised above me, his eyes meeting mine as if he’s remembering every detail about this moment.

“Please.”

“I love hearing you say that.” He kisses me as he rocks his hips, drilling into me.

He is all I need. He’s filling every single inch of me, consuming me with need and desire, and I moan.

He groans in reply and moves his hips like a slow dance, intent on driving my pleasure. It starts to spiral upwards as he sinks deeper and deeper, pulling me to him with each thrust.

My head explodes with fierce want. We’re skin to skin, and I breathe in his familiar, rich scent.

“I need you.”

“Not as much as I need you. Come, Holly, come with me. Now.”

He thrust long and deep, once twice, before he drills right into my core, his gaze locked with mine, as if he's taking me into his soul.

"Noel!" I cry his name as the crest of pleasure rises even higher, feeling him tense above me.

"You're my heaven, Holly."

It's the naked love in his voice that breaks open the orgasm, sending me diving off the crest, falling into the abyss.

"Oh...oh!" I pant all my words, my breath gone.

One more thrust, and he's released right in me.

We both catch our breath and then he slowly dislodges, wrapping me in his arms.

"I want to stay here forever."

"For five days?" He says against my ear.

"You're mine forever, no matter where we stay."

"You got that right, my present. Never forget it," He nibbles my ear and chuckles as I squirm against him.

My heart is so full, and I know he'll love me forever, and there's not a second that he'll let me forget it.

* * *

Join my newsletter to stay in the know about the Sinful Delights series, including when Five Days to be Mine - Evan and Mara's story is released!
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If you enjoyed Five Days of Christmas Spice, please leave a review!