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CURVY WOMEN WANTED

HER HERO



USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR
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HER HERO

Curvy Women Wanted, 31

Sam Crescent

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Chapter One

Josie Moor whimpered as she looked around at all the snow. What didn't help was the fact that she was also covered in snow. Freezing cold, soaking wet, and wondering why on earth she thought of trying to find whatever it was she was looking for, here in the middle of nowhere. She couldn't even remember the last time she'd seen a sign for anything.

She was starving and angry, and in all truth, terrified. This was not something she planned on. According to the forecast, it was going to be lovely walking weather. Not a cloud in the sky. Yes, it was going to be cold, but that was to be expected in the height of winter.

She was freezing cold, and it wasn't fair. She didn't want to die on this vacation. No, this was to reassess her life, reevaluate what was important, and to just ... find what she wanted to do with the rest of her life. At thirty years old, she found she was no longer happy.

Life was about work. Nothing else. Work. Work. Work. Work.

There were no friends, no boyfriends or husbands, not even any children. Certainly no pets. No dogs or cats.

She woke up thinking about work.

She went to sleep thinking about work.

Work on the weekends.

Work in the evenings.

Work.

Fucking work.

She was an artist at an advertising firm. Having worked her way from the ground up, she had earned her spot as being one of the best in the company. Her only problem — she was dying inside.

Josie didn't even know what happened. One moment, she was happily working away, not caring that she had nothing and no one, only to end up stumbling into a park one day to eat lunch. Her cell phone died, for no good reason, and it took her a moment to realize it was her thirtieth birthday, and she ... had nothing.

Sure, she was a wealthy woman, and lived in a nice apartment, but there was nothing else to her life. When your work colleagues remembered it was your birthday before you did, well, that was just laughable. In fact, it had been a wake-up call.

Her life wasn't meant to be all about work, only it had sunk into that

with every passing day. So, she'd made sure to finish all pressing projects, and then taken some much-needed vacation time. The plan had been to find herself, or to find something.

It had been going so well. She'd been staying in a beautiful cabin with wonderful views of the countryside, the world. Peaceful. No sounds of a honking horn, arguing people, the somewhat static that came with city life. Here, she heard the birds, nature, the simplest majestic sound of the wind through the tress, the sound of rustling leaves. Sounds she had forgotten were so calming and beautiful.

There was nothing beautiful about this snowstorm. It had been a long time since she was terrified, but she was more than making up for that now. Her heart raced and she had a horrible feeling she might have sprained her ankle. Not too bad, but it was making walking uncomfortable.

"*Help!*" she yelled.

Even her voice seemed to get swallowed up in the storm. Panic completely consumed her. She rubbed at her chest. The temperature had plummeted so damn fast. She continued to scream for help and as she did, she couldn't see where she was going. Stumbling in the snow, which had already started to cover her feet, she knew it wouldn't be long before she lost any sense of calm. Squinting through the darkness, she didn't know if it was her imagination or if someone was coming toward her with a torch.

"Hello!"

"Anyone there?" The loud booming voice was a huge relief.

"Help. I'm over here. Help. Please. I need help." She had no idea what to do. She didn't want to risk moving, but the man who'd come to save her looked like he was turning in the opposite direction. "*No, please, stay!*" She started to move and as she did, she stood on her leg with the sprained ankle and a shot of pain rushed through her body. She screamed and fell to her knees. In that moment, she was thankful for the snow cushioning her fall. Her knees were much better with the snow than the hard solid ground.

Another wave of panic rushed over her, but suddenly the light shone in her face. She couldn't quite make out the man.

"Are you okay? Are you injured?"

"I don't know. I think I sprained my ankle."

"What the fuck are you doing wandering around here?" he growled out the words. Considering how loud the storm was, it was a shock to her to hear him complaining.

Why did he care what she was doing out here? She wouldn't say that. He might leave her there.

Josie was about to ask him what they were going to do, when he suddenly wrapped his arms around her legs, then another across her back, and she was lifted up from the snow. No one had been able to lift her in a long time. She wasn't a thin woman, not by any means.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"I'm taking you back to my cabin. You'll fucking die out here."

This man was no knight in shining armor. He sounded foul-mouthed, angry, and ... she couldn't imagine being so aroused by a knight.

Who was this brute of a man? A man who was strong enough to lift her up. She had stopped looking at the scales years ago, so she didn't have a clue how much she weighed, but she fit perfectly into a size twenty.

What the hell was she thinking about at a time like this? This man was not asking her out on a date. He was saving her from death. But, he sounded so ... sexy.

Josie wrapped her arms around him and held on. At least she'd be out of the cold soon enough.

Elijah Snow threw another log onto the fire and turned around to look at the woman he'd just rescued.

He'd noticed her in town the other day when he'd gone to collect his supplies. Years of living off the main grid, he had come to notice the changes in the weather, and knew they were in for a snowstorm. So, before that happened, he'd gone to collect the food he'd need, as well as any other basic essentials.

"How are you?" he asked.

The woman he'd rescued was fucking beautiful. It was as if she had stepped right out of his fantasies. Long, beautiful blonde hair, or at least he figured it was, from the length pulled back in a ponytail. Blue eyes, so beautiful, and those curves. He was having a hard time concentrating on keeping his dick in his pants.

She was stunning. And he'd rescued her.

Whoever she was, he would have to break the news that she'd be staying with him for some time. This snowstorm was ugly and had no chance of clearing up anytime soon. There was no way he was going to risk taking the car to get her back to town. They were suddenly roommates.

“It’s fine. It’s not broken.”

He’d taken her boots off her feet. They’d been weighed down by the snow. Gripping the back of his neck, he watched her wince as she touched her ankle.

“Don’t hurt yourself.” He went toward her, crouched down, and touched her ankle.

“I’m sorry,” she said.

“No reason to be.” He stroked her ankle and offered her a smile. “It’s not broken. What you need to do is get those clothes off before you catch your death with the cold. I’ll go and grab you something fresh.”

Elijah stepped back, giving her space, even though the last thing he wanted to do was leave. He wanted to look at her, watch her. It had been a long time since he had been this aroused by a woman. In fact, he paused on the staircase. He’d never been this aroused in such a short space of time.

Shaking his head, he made his way toward the bedroom, grabbed a pair of sweatpants with a drawstring inside, followed by a t-shirt and a large sweater. He headed downstairs to find her perched on the edge of the sofa.

“Here, put these on,” he said. “Throw your clothes to the doorway, I’ll grab them, and wash them.” He moved away.

“Josie,” she said.

He stopped and turned toward her.

“My name is Josie Moor, thank you for coming out when you did.” She held her hand out and he took it, feeling that spark.

His balls started to tingle.

“Elijah Snow,” he said.

“It’s nice to meet you, Mr. Snow.”

“Elijah, please, and it’s a pleasure.” He pulled his hand away even though all he wanted to do was pull her against him and run his hands all over her body, touch her, strip her completely naked. Instead, he moved to the doorway and waited.

Each time he heard a sharp intake or a grunt, he wanted to turn toward her and ask if she needed help, but he didn’t think that was appropriate, so he stayed perfectly still.

Waiting.

Still fucking waiting.

And then, her clothes landed beside him. He bent down, picked them up, and carried them to his laundry room. Her clothes were still warm. Lifting

them up, he pressed them against his nose and inhaled her soft, female scent. Beautiful.

What the fuck was happening to him? Sniffing a stranger's clothes. He truly had gone mad. There was no other word for it. He'd never done such a thing before in his life.

He threw her clothes into the washing machine, put on the correct cycle, added in some detergent, and then got the wash started. Elijah stayed in the laundry room, glancing around to see if there was any other kind of work he could do. There was nothing. Fuck. Shit.

Heading back to the room, he was tempted to walk in, but that wouldn't be very gentlemanly.

You're not a gentleman.

"Are you ... dressed?"

Now, all he wanted to do was see how good she looked without her clothes on. He imagined she had full breasts, a beautiful ass, and hips made to be held while he fucked her.

"Yes, I'm dressed."

So not fucking fair.

He didn't say a word, and instead entered the room to find that Buster, his gorgeous and loyal Labrador, had decided to go and sniff her.

Josie smiled at his dog. "You're so cute." She leaned down and pressed a kiss to his head.

Of course, Buster just loved the attention and rested his face on her knees.

"He is so gorgeous," she said.

Elijah smiled. "I got him from a pup. Well, I got him and his sister, who is upstairs on my bed. She's a little grumpy when we have company."

"You have two dogs?"

"Yeah, found the two of them wandering around outside a couple of years ago. I was looking to get me some dogs, and it seemed like fate. So, I took them in and they've been mine ever since."

"I never had a dog," Josie said. "I've always wanted one."

He saw the smile on her face drop and he also noticed how tired and worn down she looked. Elijah recognized that all too well.

They heard the sound of padding feet and he found Trixie, his brown Labrador. Buster was a beautiful golden color. She looked toward Josie and gave a sniff.

He laughed. “Go on, girl, you know you want to be petted. She’s a jealous kind.”

Josie kept one hand on Buster, and with the other she stroked Trixie. “So cute. Both of you are.”

And his dogs adored her.

Chapter Two

Josie opened her eyes and the events of the night before came rushing back to her: the walk, the freak snowstorm, the man who'd come to her rescue. Rolling over, she turned toward the window as she thought about Elijah. He was rugged, sexy, and everything she had ever dreamed about in a man.

But that was crazy. There was no way a man like that was single.

He had the most beautiful dogs. Trixie and Buster.

Pushing the blankets off her body, she moved toward the window. With the storm in full possession last night, Elijah had suggested they get some rest. He had a spare bedroom, which he'd helped her to last night. The clothes she wore seemed to smell like him. Did that mean there was no woman in his life?

There was no way she could have feelings like this for a married man. Just the thought made her uncomfortable. So, she nibbled her lip and padded across the soft carpet toward the window. Pulling the curtains back, she glanced outside and gasped. It looked so stunning. Beautiful. The whole of outside was covered in white. Even the trees didn't show much green, covered in snow. It had been a long time since she had experienced such a freak snowstorm. Was there any way for her to leave?

Josie made her way toward the door and rubbed at her chest, hating the sharp sting that struck her hard at the thought of leaving.

She didn't want to leave. How crazy was that? She didn't even know the man, but what she did know was the fact she didn't want to leave. It was so bizarre.

There was a sudden knock at her door and she rushed toward it and opened it up. There was Elijah, his hair looking messed up from sleeping. He wore a pair of jeans, a white shirt, and another thick flannel shirt that reminded her of lumberjacks, maybe, she wasn't sure.

"Morning, I'm heading down to breakfast. I brought you a change of clothes." He handed them to her.

"Er, thank you so much. Can you tell me where the bathroom is?" she asked.

He stepped back and pointed to the door beside her bedroom. "Oh, right, yes, of course."

She smiled, hating that her cheeks heated. Elijah's gaze traveled down

her body and while he was at her feet, she tried to run her fingers through her hair to straighten it, but nothing was containing that mess. Could she have been any more humiliated?

“Do you have any food allergies that I should know of?” he asked.

“No, no, I’m fine. Perfectly fine.”

“I’ll see you downstairs soon.”

She watched him go, wishing there was something else she could say, but she was desperate for the toilet. Rushing into the room beside hers, she closed the door. The toilet made her gasp with relief. She used the toilet, flushed, washed her hands, and then dared to stare at her reflection in the mirror.

Josie looked at her hair, and it was a mess. There wasn’t much time for a wash last night, and with how cold it had gotten, she didn’t dare ask.

Her ankle wasn’t too bad, so long as she didn’t put too much pressure on it.

Could she risk a shower? Glancing toward the tub, she saw that he didn’t actually have a shower, only a bathtub. That settled that, then.

She saw a hairbrush and picked it up, inspecting it to make sure there was no dog hairs, and ran the brush through her hair several times, hoping to bring some order back to the locks. It was a wasted effort. There was no point in even trying to contain the nightmare that was her hair. Giving up, she splashed some water on her face, feeling a lot better.

There was no wrapped toothbrush, but she needed to do something. Using some of the toothpaste on her finger, she shoved it in her mouth and brushed as best she could. Thankfully, before she left, she had a dental appointment and got an all clear, as well as a cleaning. So, nothing to panic about. She could just ask him if she could use a toothbrush.

With her hair down, face washed, as well as her armpits, she used a towel to dry her upper body, and then quickly changed into the clothes he’d given her. They were way too large, but she was able to make them fit. All her clothes were back at the cabin, and she wasn’t going to be ungrateful. Picking up the clothes he’d given her last night, and checking to make sure she’d cleaned up his bathroom, she stepped out. She was greeted by Trixie, who was waiting for her.

“Good morning,” she said.

Crouching down, she petted the dog on the head.

“I wish I had a dog like you.” She couldn’t resist kissing her on the

head.

The scent of bacon and eggs called to her. She breathed in and Trixie gave her a nudge, urging her downstairs. Josie couldn't help but laugh as she made her way downstairs at the dog's insistence. There on the bottom waiting for her was Buster. Both dogs nudged her in the direction of the kitchen.

Elijah stood at the stove. Several pans were on top, and she couldn't quite make out what was in each, but either way, it smelled so good.

"Where is your laundry room?" she asked.

"The second door down the hall," he said. He didn't look at her, but pointed in the general direction.

She couldn't help but smile and then she made sure to go to his laundry room. There was wash already in the machine. She saw the clothes he'd worn last night, and she added hers to the pile. This had to be one of the best ways she had woken up in a very long time.

Serving up a hearty breakfast, Elijah expected Josie to complain, saying how she wouldn't be able to eat all the food he'd prepared. He waited, holding his breath, expecting it, but instead, her eyes seemed to light up as she took the breakfast from him. She was a woman after his own heart. He couldn't help but watch her eat for several minutes before he started on his own food.

Josie moaned as she tried each and every item on the plate. "Do you have any idea how long it's been since I ate a cooked breakfast?" she asked.

"I have no idea."

She tilted her head back and moaned.

The sight of her neck exposed, he imagined feeding her his cock, holding her throat, not too tightly, but enough for her to gag on his dick, and him to feel it inside her.

"This is so good. I'm used to just eating cereal that if you don't eat fast enough, gets soggy." She wrinkled her nose.

"That doesn't sound nice."

"Trust me, it's so not. It's gross, but it was quick and easy food." She shook her head.

"What is it?"

She shrugged. "I'm just thinking about ... my life a few weeks before." She scoffed. "A few weeks, more like a few days before. I was so focused on my work that I wouldn't think about breakfast. Work was what I

thought about when I woke up. In fact, that was my morning routine. I was lucky if I gave myself time to have a bathroom break.”

“Ah, the workaholic.” He smiled thinking about it.

“Were you the same?”

“Oh, yeah. Worked the markets, was so focused on building up clients, making people around me rich. Making myself rich in the process. Loving the high life.” Elijah sighed. “A new woman every single night. Work, work, more work. A few of the guys left the life, and I was suddenly the only single guy in their world. I didn’t get the jokes. They had wives and children, and I was the same.” It had been a long time since Elijah had woken up to that harsh reality.

“What changed?”

“I woke up one Christmas morning. I’d been invited to a coworker’s home for the holidays. It was the first time that had ever happened, and I watched him. He’d reduced his hours at work to spend time with his family, and I saw what he had, and it was like a wake-up call. He had a life, a family, people who loved him. He had it all, and after Christmas, having the best time of my life, I went back to my lonely penthouse apartment, and realized I had no one.” He sighed. “I quit work the next day, found this place, and never looked back.”

He looked over at her and she pressed her lips together, smiling.

“I’m guessing the same thing has happened to you.”

“I was so focused on work, I didn’t even realize it was my thirtieth birthday. My friends are all married, and we — *I* — was focused on work. I stopped returning calls. Stopped turning up for lunches and dinners. Work became my world.”

Elijah nodded. “Comes as a shock, doesn’t it?”

“A little bit, yeah. After that, I knew I had to do something, and that’s why I came out here. I don’t even know what I’m looking for. Answers, I’m guessing.” She sighed.

“You won’t find answers out here. What you’ll get here is a lot of experience.”

“What did you find out here?” she asked.

“I found my freedom. I found my love of life. I found Buster and Trixie.” He’d not found anyone to share it with.

Every now and then, he’d traveled into town to enjoy a beer, and a few women had been interested in him for the night. He wasn’t interested in

screwing around. So, he stopped going into town.

“Don’t get me wrong, living up here is not easy. It has never been easy, but this is my home. This is my life and I love it here.”

“And you’re not lonely?” she asked.

“Sometimes I’m lonely, but I’m not looking for some quick fun, Josie. I want a woman who is willing to live like this. Off the beaten track. Work the land — it’s hard work, but I love it. I’m my own boss. Every now and then, we can travel into town to stock up on essentials. To me, this is the best life.”

“It sounds amazing.”

“What did you used to be?” he asked.

“I’m in advertising. I’m an artist, so I help to sell things.”

“I’m guessing you’re pretty good at it too.” The only way she’d be a workaholic was if she was in constant demand all the time.

“Yeah, you could say that.”

“I bet they would hate to lose you.”

She shrugged. “This wasn’t what I had planned for my life.”

“What did you have planned?” he asked.

“To work, obviously, to have a career, but to turn my art into something else. I used to imagine building a studio of my own, becoming an artist that people want to hire. To have people ask for me personally to do a portrait or a piece especially for them. I don’t know. I wanted a lot of things.”

“Ah, the real world is a destroyer of dreams.”

Josie burst out laughing. “I don’t think this is the best kind of conversation over breakfast.”

“True. But what else is there to talk about?” he asked, winking at her. “I’m forty-five years old, by the way.”

“I’m thirty.” She held her coffee cup up to him, and he clinked her mug with his own.

This had to be the best way he’d spent any kind of breakfast.

Chapter Three

“How’s the ankle?” Elijah asked.

Josie glanced down at her ankle. “A little sore, but other than that, it feels fine.”

He wrinkled his nose. “I’ve made you do too much.”

He’d not made her do anything. He merely offered to give her the grand tour and of course she’d accepted.

His home was stunning. It was a nice large size with a living room, dining room, kitchen, laundry room, and there was another room in the back that seemed to have a chair, a few books, and a couple of beds for the dogs. Upstairs were three bedrooms, one bathroom, and an attic. He’d not shown her the attic. Then, they had ventured outside, not that she could have gone too far.

He was there to help her as he gave her a rough idea of what his garden was like. They stood on his porch, and he pointed to where his vegetable garden was, with a small lawn for the dogs. His front yard was also large, and there was a gate at the bottom, not that it was needed.

He lived so far out in the wilderness, she was surprised he had electricity. Elijah had told her about a generator. The only thing he didn’t have was a live television and Internet access. And she didn’t care. Completely off the grid.

He had a television and several shelves filled with movies. He had admitted that he’d not watched them all, and he often preferred reading over watching a movie. Then of course, there was just sitting in peace.

Stepping back into the house, Josie wanted to ask if there was any way she could get to her cabin back in town. At the same time, she didn’t want to appear rude. She really didn’t want to leave.

This had been the first time in a very long time that she had woken up and felt at peace. Even at the cabin, she had checked her cell phone, with the excuse of it being “just in case.” Just in case what?

“With all the snow, that is quite dangerous, right?” she asked.

“It is.” He closed the door, grabbed a towel, and dried Buster, then Trixie. His dogs had joined them on their walk.

She adored his dogs.

Once they were dry, he took off his coat and she quickly handed him the coat he’d given her. The scent of him had surrounded her, but not

anymore. Nibbling her lip, she couldn't help but watch him. He looked so ... calm.

"Josie, I'm afraid getting you back to your cabin in town will be impossible. It is too dangerous, and I'm not going to risk your life."

She held her hands up. "I ... I don't want to put you out, and I certainly don't want to be a drain on your resources, and I don't want to put you at risk." She wanted to beg him to let her stay.

"Then you're more than welcome to stay. Taking you out there is not going to be ideal," he said.

"Then, can I stay?" She nibbled her lip, curious.

"Of course." He chuckled.

Her stomach chose that moment to growl.

"Time for food."

She put a hand on her stomach. "I'm so sorry."

"Nah, I'm starving. I was wondering when I was going to have to make food. Be a darling, and grab their bowls, will you?"

Josie looked around the floor, and sure enough, she found two clean bowls. Buster and Trixie sat near her feet as she grabbed them.

"Their food is in the cupboard next to the sink. Would you grab them some biscuits and food?"

"Is that why there are four bowls?" she asked.

"Yeah."

Josie nodded. The dogs were following her. She opened up the cupboard by the sink, and sure enough, it was full of canned dog food. Different mixtures. She picked up two of the same, turned toward the dogs, and let them have a look. They went from sitting to down on all four paws. She considered that an agreement, that it was a good thing for them to have.

"Where's your can opener?" she asked.

"Top drawer."

She looked around the kitchen, found the drawer, and opened it up. Sure enough, there was a can opener.

While Elijah got their food going, she scooped out the dog food and worked it into a bowl. Then she did the same with the second, before pouring out some of the dry biscuit dog food. Buster and Trixie followed her to where she put their food down. Elijah advised she start with the dry food, and then join them with the second bowl. Just feeding the dogs made her feel happy.

Returning to the kitchen, she inhaled the soft scent of onions and

garlic. She watched Elijah as he opened up jars that she saw were labeled with dry herbs. “Did you grow these?” she asked.

“Yeah, dried my own oregano, basil, parsley. Did it all,” he said. “Not too bad, huh?”

“Have you always been able to cook?” she asked.

“Nope. In fact, when I bought this place, did it up, I started to cook for myself and gave myself poisoning a few times. Had no choice but to get a couple of books, learn, teach myself.”

“Wow.”

“Do you cook?” he asked.

“Not a lot, and not for a long time.” She didn’t want to repeat that most things that interfered with work ended up being lost to her.

She was more focused on her work. He didn’t need to know the constant repeated story. Yes, she worked a lot. That had never changed.

Watching Elijah, knowing he’d experienced the same, she didn’t feel quite so lonely anymore. Maybe this happened more than she thought.

After feeding Josie, which he was finding a real enjoyment in doing, he felt like the worst fucking knight in the world, as she asked if she could have a shower or a bath. She didn’t realize that his bathtub was both. There was a shower at the top, and a curtain all the way around the tub.

He’d assumed she had taken one that morning since there was no odor coming from her. But it turned out, she hadn’t enjoyed a shower since the morning before. So, he made sure there was fresh towels and more of his clothes. He showed her how to use the shower, before leaving her to it. He waited for her to be done before he took a shower of his own.

His hard cock wouldn’t go down. Wrapping his fingers around the length, he closed his eyes and saw Josie, her long blonde hair, cascading around her body. In his mind, she wasn’t wearing anything. Just stood, waiting for him, wanting him. She licked her lips, looking at him, inviting him. On her lips, she begged him to fuck her, to take her. He was more than happy to do that.

Before he got any further, Elijah gritted his teeth as he came, spilling his seed into the bottom of the bathtub. The orgasm was a waste. He wanted Josie. But, did she want him?

Shaking off the empty feeling threatening to consume him, he washed quickly as the hot water was fast fading. He still didn’t like cold showers, and

often avoided them. Wrapping a towel around his waist, he left the bathroom and walked to his bedroom. Her door was still closed, and he wanted to knock, and ... he didn't know what he wanted, but he refrained from interrupting her.

Fuck.

He used to be good at this, but it had been nearly five years since he was with a woman. Perhaps even longer. He'd taken care of any needs with his hand. He stepped into his bedroom where Trixie and Buster were, and laid on his bed. They lifted their heads up and he was pretty sure they knew what he'd been doing.

"Just so you know, if anything happens, you two are banned from this bed. I don't need my dogs being cockblocks." He shook his head. His dogs were a law unto themselves.

He went to his closet and pulled on a pair of sweatpants and a large shirt. Drying his hair, he ran his fingers through it, before grabbing a pair of socks. Dressed, he made his way downstairs, where he found Josie in the laundry room.

"I hope you don't mind. I know there's no way of me leaving, so I want to be useful to you," she said.

"You don't have to do my laundry." He looked at her folding his pants. There were several neat piles on the counter. His boxer briefs, his shirts, his jeans. He didn't always have time for laundry, so it was rather easy for it to pile up.

"I know, but I wanted to. I hope that's okay?" she asked.

He chuckled.

"More than fine, Josie."

"You could have just left me out there in the cold. I could have died."

"Not possible." He would never let her die.

They finished his laundry and made their way into his sitting room. He put on a little music. Soft, classical music that filled the room.

"Can I offer you a drink?" he asked, holding up a large bottle of whiskey.

"Er, sure, why not. I don't drink, like ever."

"I can get you a coffee? Hot chocolate?"

"Nah, I'll try the whiskey," she said.

"A woman after my own heart." He poured them both a drink, and took one to her. She took the glass, sniffed the contents, and wrinkled her

nose. “Trust me, this is not for everyone.”

“Here goes.” She took a sip and her face seemed to scrunch up in disgust.

“Do you want me to take it?” he asked.

She shook her head. “It’s fine. I’ll drink it.”

He chuckled.

They sat back, and for several minutes, they didn’t speak. He watched her sip her drink. She had pulled her hair over one shoulder, exposing her neck. All he wanted to do was kiss that delicate line of her neck. To pull her against him. The clothes she wore were way too big, but then, they belonged to him. She had shoved the shirt inside the sweatpants, and it was tight across her tits.

“You know, there is so much I haven’t done in a long time. Drinking, listening to music, dancing—”

“Dancing?” he asked, cutting her off.

“You know, going out to a nightclub, dancing with girlfriends, or with a boyfriend?”

“Is there a boyfriend back home?” he asked.

She laughed. “No, remember, just work. Unless work can be deemed a boyfriend. What about you?”

“Sweetheart, if I had a woman, you’d have seen her already.”

He finished off his whiskey and got to his feet. “I can’t give you a nightclub, but I can dance with you.”

“You don’t have to do that,” she said.

“I insist. I won’t hurt or bite.” He wanted to add “unless you want me to,” but he didn’t think she’d appreciate that. So, he kept those words to himself. And waited.

She took a sip of the whiskey, wrinkled her nose, and put the glass down on the table beside her chair. She placed her hand in his, and he helped her up, drawing her closer. He put a hand on her back, then took hold of her other within his own, closing the distance between them. She felt perfect in his arms.

He’d always been addicted to the scent of vanilla and Josie smelled exactly like that. His cock was already starting to harden, and he hoped he wouldn’t fuck this up.

Chapter Four

Elijah had thick muscles. She never usually recognized a man by his size, but he surrounded her. His arms touching her, helped her to feel warm, safe, sexy. She had already caught sight of the ink on his arms, and knew from his confessions that he had a wild life before he settled down.

The soft music filled the air and she tilted her head back to look at him. Why did his lips have to look so inviting? She wanted to know what they felt like, how they would feel brushing against her own lips. They'd feel good, she knew that.

The hand at her back drifted down, going toward the curve of her ass. She stared up at him, waiting. Did he feel this? Her nipples were hard and her pussy wet. She stepped a little closer to him. This wasn't inappropriate, was it? With her hand on his chest, she couldn't help but look at his lips, so inviting.

Kiss me, Elijah.

Please, kiss me.

She waited.

He didn't move.

Or did he?

His face seemed a little closer, and then, against all odds, she grew tired and wanted to kiss him. Sliding her hand up his chest, she gripped the back of his neck, pulled him down, and kissed him hard. Their lips touched and Josie expected him to pull back, to tell her no, but he didn't. Instead, the hand at her back moved up, gripping the back of her head as he deepened the kiss.

She felt on cloud freaking nine. It was so good.

With his other hand, he grabbed her hip, pulling her closer, and she felt the hard edge of his cock as they held one another.

"Fuck, Josie, I only have so much strength. You're going to have to tell me to stop," he said.

"What if I don't want you to stop?" she asked.

She never did anything like this. Elijah was a stranger. But it was like she had known him her whole life, and this felt so right.

Sliding her hands down his chest, she grabbed his shirt and began to tug it out from the confines of the pants. Elijah took over, grabbing the shirt and tugging it over his head.

“Touch me,” he said.

He grabbed her wrists and put her hands on him. He was so warm.

He held her hips stroking the hipline, and then began to work the shirt over her head. She didn't need to take over, because he knew exactly what he was doing. She wasn't wearing a bra. The clothes he brought her didn't come with one, and she had to wash the one she'd been wearing.

“Oh, fuck me,” he said.

His hands went to her tits, and he cupped them, holding them up as if in offering, and then, sliding his thumbs across each peak. “So fucking beautiful,” he said.

That simple touch sent a wave of pleasure straight to her clit. She pressed her legs together, loving the sensations that traveled through her body. She didn't want any of them to stop. Gritting her teeth, she tried to focus, but that was long gone. All she had now was pleasure. Mindless, amazing pleasure. She opened her eyes, staring up at him, and his intense dark browns looked at her. They both stood, their chests naked.

“Do you want this?” he asked. “Do you want me to fuck you, Josie?”

“Yes.” She didn't give herself time to think or even care what his question meant. This was a trip for her to experience and to feel.

From the moment Elijah had stumbled into her world yesterday, she had been on a whirlwind ride. He knew her so well, which seemed impossible, because most of the time she didn't even know herself.

Elijah cupped her cheek, tilted her head back, and then his lips were on her.

She did know something — this was what she wanted. No doubt. His lips were like magic, and when his tongue traced across her lips, she was more than ready to open up to him.

He plundered her mouth, and another moan escaped her. His hands were moving from her tits, going down to her waist, and pushing the sweatpants down — or at least trying to. She'd tied them so freaking tight, that he had no choice but to tug on the drawstring. The moment he did, they fell to the floor and she stepped out of them. She wasn't wearing any panties either.

What she didn't want, was to be the only one naked, so she broke the kiss long enough to sink to her knees in front of Elijah and pull his pants down. The moment she did, his cock sprang out. He was long, thick, and the pre-cum leaked out of the tip. She didn't want to leave him alone. Wrapping

her fingers around his dick, she stroked him, tilting her head back to look up at him.

He reached down, wrapped her hair around his fist, and on instinct, she took his cock into her mouth. Just the tip, and she tasted his pre-cum on her tongue.

This was so freaking daring, but she didn't care. Josie acted on need, on passion, and nothing was going to stop her. This was what she wanted.

"Oh, fuck," he said.

Lifting her gaze to his, she still had his cock in her mouth, and she sunk a little lower, taking him to the back of her throat. She tried to take more of him, but she ended up gagging on the length, and so she pulled away, giving herself breathing room. But she wasn't done with him. She loved the feel of his cock in her mouth, and she wanted to feel him cum, to fill her mouth with his seed, so she could swallow him down.

Josie's mouth was fucking magic.

She sucked on his cock, taking him all the way inside her mouth, until she was almost gagging, but then, she'd pull him till just the tip was inside. Her tongue would trace across his little hole. He closed his eyes, counting to ten, every time it got a little too much. The last thing he wanted to do was explode in her mouth. Not that it would be a bad thing to happen. It wasn't how he wanted their first time together to end.

He gripped her head, pulling her off his cock as he sunk to the floor, taking possession of her mouth. Kissing her hard and deep, he plunged his tongue into her mouth. Running his hand down her body, he pressed between her thighs, touching her pussy. She was soaking wet. This woman was a dream come fucking true. He couldn't believe it. She was his dream.

Sliding his fingers between her slit, he touched her clit, then glided down, to push two of his digits deep inside her cunt. Another moan escaped her lips. He loved the sound coming from her mouth. So perfect.

Elijah kissed those lips again, swallowing the sound. Breaking from the kiss, he trailed down toward her neck, nibbling at her pulse. Another gasp fell from her mouth, and he couldn't resist her tits. They were just as beautiful as he thought they would be. Heavy with nice big nipples, just how he liked his women. Those tits were made to be sucked. Flicking his tongue across each peak, he slid across the valley, going toward her second breast.

Nibbling on the flesh, he let go of her pussy to cup both of her tits,

pressing them together. The scent of her pussy filled the air and his mouth watered. After kissing each nipple in turn, he trailed his lips down toward her pussy. Josie spread her legs for him, and he pressed his face against her core, licking and sucking at her clit. She nearly came off the ground.

He held onto her hips, keeping her still as he licked her cunt. She tasted so fucking sweet. Letting go of her clit, he trailed down toward her entrance, and started to thrust his tongue inside her. Fucking her.

She pressed down on his tongue, and he knew he wanted her to come before he tried to fuck her. With just his tongue and fingers, he knew she was tight. Pushing both fingers back inside her cunt, he slid his tongue back to her clit and began to tease her, drawing out an orgasm, wanting to hear her scream.

“Come on, baby,” he said, mumbling the words close to her pussy. “Come for me.”

She gasped and he felt the change inside her as her pussy started to pulse around his fingers. He couldn't help but smile as with a few flicks of his tongue, she came hard and fast. His name echoed around the room.

And that was how it was supposed to be. She sounded exactly as he imagined she would. Like she belonged to him, and the truth was, she fucking did belong to him. He didn't want her to forget it.

Kissing his way up her body, he gripped his hard prick and pressed the tip to her entrance. Sliding through her slick slit, he waited, staring into her startling blue eyes. He waited in case she had the sense to say no. She spread her legs wide for him. He moved down toward her entrance, lining the tip of his dick with her, and then, inch by inch, he pushed inside.

Her cunt was still pulsing as he pressed forward. She was so fucking tight. He didn't want to hurt her, and took his time as he pushed all the way inside her. When there was more than half of his cock within her, he let go and took hold of her hands, pressing them either side of her head. The last few inches, he slammed inside her all in one thrust. She wrapped her legs around him.

He stared into her eyes, looking for any sign of discomfort, but she had taken all of him. And fuck, it felt so good. For several minutes, Elijah didn't want to move. He didn't want to fucking breathe, to stay within this moment, keeping it frozen for him to enjoy.

His cock had other ideas, as did his balls. Bare, deep inside this precious woman, he couldn't wait. He had to have her, so he began to thrust

slowly at first, or as slowly as he could manage, which was next to impossible. The feel of her tight warmth surrounding him was all too fucking good. He didn't want to stop.

Thrusting hard and deep inside her, he fucked her, taking her to new heights and feeling the start of his orgasm building. He was like a horny teenager unable to control himself. He just couldn't help it, Josie was a dream. The slow thrusts turned fast, hard, and he didn't want to stop, driving harder and deeper inside her, filling her. He was so close to orgasm, and one look, and the feel of her thrusting up to meet him, set him off.

Elijah slammed to the hilt within her and came hard, filling her with his fertile cum. He should have worn a condom, he knew that, but the chance to be with Josie without anything between them was too damn good an opportunity to pass up.

She was everything he ever wanted.

He went a little dizzy from the orgasm. Collapsing against her, he kissed her lips, letting go of her hands, and when she held onto him, he knew he had finally found what he'd been looking for. But, how was he going to convince this woman to stay with him?

Chapter Five

Josie giggled as she rushed through the main house. She had already dropped the piece of laundry she'd been folding. Spinning around the living room, she looked at her chaser.

Elijah Snow stood, naked, proud, with his hard cock pointing forward. She was also naked, and never had she felt so free in her life, than right now. Her heart pounded, but the truth was, she wasn't even making an effort to escape him. There was nowhere else she wanted to be. She wanted Elijah to capture her.

It had been three days since she'd come here, two days since they had sex, and she couldn't recall a time she'd been happier.

"When I get you, Josie, I'm going to fuck you." His voice was deep and rugged.

"You've got to capture me first." She was desperate for him to do so. Licking her lips in anticipation of his next move, she didn't have to wait long. Elijah went over the sofa, chasing after her. She released a squeal, badly attempting to get away, but it was done. Elijah captured her and pressed her over the sofa.

His hands were moving down the curve of her ass, spreading her ass cheeks before cupping her between the thighs. She closed her eyes and gasped at the instant hit of pleasure that rushed over her. He stroked her clit before moving up to plunge deep inside her cunt. He pushed in and out, then added a second finger. Josie pressed back against him, not wanting him to stop.

"I think it's time for you to take my cock, don't you?"

"Yes!"

She needed his cock. She loved his fingers, but his cock was by far bigger, and she needed him.

He pulled his fingers out of her cunt and she didn't have to wait long before he pressed his dick inside her. Inch by inch, he slid his cock within her, both of his hands going to her hips. She gripped the back of the sofa, trying to look for anything to hold onto as he fucked her.

Elijah fucked her hard and deep, then pulled out, making her wait, slamming all the way inside her. "I love the feel of your pussy, Josie. It feels just right wrapped around my dick."

She couldn't agree more.

His hands moved from her hips, gliding up toward her tits, where he held them. He teased the nipples, pinching them until they got tighter, and then cupping them in his palm. All the time he didn't stop, working his dick within her.

She was in Heaven.

Elijah caressed her back, returning one hand to her hip as the other went between her thighs. She closed her eyes as he touched her clit.

"I can feel how close you are. Do you want to come?" he asked.

"Yes, please, yes."

"Then beg me, Josie. Beg me to make you come."

"Please, Elijah, please let me come. I need it. I need you." She couldn't recall begging for this before.

He teased her clit and she felt her orgasm starting to build, driving higher and higher, but he was a master at keeping her from finding her release. She gasped, begging for more, and he gave her more. Fucking her harder than ever. With her bent over the sofa, the angle was so different, and it was like he was hitting a sensitive part of her that had never been touched.

"You have the perfect fucking pussy, Josie. Come for me."

She did so, on his command, her body more than ready to be his willing slave. His name spilled from her lips, and Elijah hadn't even finished. He held himself deep within her, not moving, waiting.

Her orgasm went on and on, until he finally released her clit. Josie didn't think she could take anymore, and as he let her go, he surprised her even more. He gripped the cheeks of her ass and spread her wide.

"Have you ever been fucked in the ass, Josie?" he asked.

His fingers were slick from her arousal as he slid them right across her anus. She had never been touched there before, and as he worked his finger through the crease of her ass, she was a little taken aback.

"N-no," she said. No one had ever touched her there.

He pressed against her ass, and she frowned, totally aroused and a little nervous as she didn't know if this was going to be a good thing or not. She didn't tell him to stop, as she wasn't sure if she wanted him to. It felt so good. Why would she want him to stop? Another moan as he didn't give up, but pressed his finger forward.

He suddenly entered her ass.

She gasped.

"It's okay, baby, tell me if you want me to stop," he said.

“It feels ... weird.”

He chuckled. “Of course it does.” His other hand stroked her ass. “But tell me if you don’t like it.”

She didn’t know how she felt. Her body was on fire. The need pulsed within her. There was no way she wanted to say no, as it felt so freaking good. He pushed more of his finger inside her ass, going in and out, working it hard and deep. When it came to a second finger, she honestly didn’t think it would fit, it was so tight.

Elijah knew what he wanted to do, and once he had worked up a pace of fucking her ass with his fingers, he went back to taking her pussy, and then she felt the pleasure all over her body. In her ass, her cunt, everywhere. He worked her close to another orgasm without even touching her.

Every sensation was heightened, and when she felt him thrust all the way inside her, and the pulse of his dick, she knew she wanted to feel him no matter what.

“They love the snow, don’t they?” Josie asked.

Elijah smiled. He should have totally left winning her over to his dogs. Buster and Trixie this morning had woken up with the desire to go for a walk. They were not taking no for an answer. He had no problem leaving Josie at home, but she had insisted on coming.

With how cold it was, he’d been sure to dress her appropriately. She wore a thermal vest, a long-sleeved shirt, and a short-sleeved shirt over the long one. Also, two sweaters and his coat. He’d also insisted on a pair of sweatpants, along with a pair of his jeans. He finished it off with a scarf, gloves, and a hat. She was bundled up well.

He’d also done the same. But he was able to bend and move while Josie could only seem to use her legs and head. He didn’t want her catching cold.

“Yep, I’m surprised they’ve not whined before now. They love being outside.”

He pulled back their ball and tossed it across the ground. Past a large thicket of trees, there was a large grass field where he took the dogs to go running and chasing a ball. This was where they were now. Not many tourists came up here. He’d made sure the local hiking company hadn’t included part of this trail in their guide. After all, he owned the land surrounding his home. He didn’t mind sharing, but when it came to his dogs, he liked to know he

still had privacy. The last thing he wanted were tourists constantly knocking at his door, wanting attention.

Trixie got to the ball first, dropping it at his feet. He picked the ball up and handed it to Josie. "Want to give it a try?" he asked.

"Er, what do I do?"

"You throw it."

"Right, right, of course. I don't ... I'm not very good at throwing."

He chuckled. "Then it will be good practice." He winked at her.

She rolled her eyes, drew back her arm, and threw.

It wasn't too bad, but the dogs didn't have far to run. Buster got the ball and brought it right back to him.

"Do you want another go?" he asked, seeing the excitement in her eyes.

"Yes, are you sure?"

"Go right ahead." He knew that feeling she was getting. The joy from the few simple pleasures in life.

She drew her arm back and threw the ball. The dogs were already chasing after it. She giggled, covering her mouth. "They are so cute."

He chuckled. "They are."

"You know, I've always wanted a dog or a cat, I guess. It was on my list of things to do, you know, once I'd ... I'm not exactly sure what."

"I get it. Was finding a husband, having kids there as well?" he asked.

She sighed. "Yeah. Did you make a list?"

"Not quite like yours. At first, I didn't think it was necessary to have kids." He shrugged.

"And now?"

"Now, it would be nice to have kids. I love kids. Love dogs as well. But..."

"But what?" Josie asked.

"I don't want to go back to living that life. Get sucked into the shit of it. I like my life up here, and this is not for everyone."

"Do you ever get lonely?"

"Sometimes. Not in the past few days."

Josie smiled and Elijah stared at her, wanting to ask her to stay with him. She had been sleeping in his bed, and he had gotten this crazy idea about her staying with him, loving him, marrying him. He could give her a life that meant a birthday would never be forgotten.

“I get so lonely as well,” Josie said.

Buster chose that moment to bark.

She tried to bend down to stroke him, but he’d put so many layers on, it was impossible to do so.

He couldn’t help but chuckle as he bent down, picked up the ball, and handed it to her.

“So, tell me about this list,” he said.

She sighed. “It’s the usual — find a good guy who doesn’t mind having a career woman, but who also wants to have kids. Then it’s little things, I guess. Finding a dog or two.” She turned to him with a smile. “Going on vacation.”

“You stopped going on vacation?” he asked.

“Yeah, I’ve not been away from work in ... wow, years. There was never a right time.”

“Tell me about it. I had that too. I always thought I’d vacation later, when I had done all the work,” he said.

Josie turned to him and nodded. “Only, there was never a moment when the work stopped. There was always something that needed to be done. Something that had to have my attention.” She sighed. “I should have realized I was falling into bad patterns.”

“Are they bad patterns, or just what you thought was right at the time?”

“I don’t know, what do you think when you look back at your life?” Josie asked. “Before you had all of this?”

Elijah sighed.

“Tell me.”

She wasn’t going to like it.

“I worked to eventually chase off the loneliness. I’d be in the office, working my ass off, and I’d get home, close the door, and it would be silent. No one was around. I’d stand at my door, and I’d feel it sucking me down, and then I’d smile. I had the perfect life, because I’d order some food, as I didn’t have time to make my own, go to my office, and I’d work. Working would beat the loneliness.”

The smile on Josie’s face dropped and he saw tears in her eyes. He went to her side, as did Buster and Trixie, and he pulled her in close.

“That is exactly what it’s like.” She threw her arms around him, holding him close.

“You’re not alone now,” he said.
And if he had his way, she would never be alone again.

Chapter Six

Josie looked out across the gardens. She wasn't sure if the snow was melting or staying the same. Glancing back at Elijah, still asleep in his bed, she licked her dry lips and turned her attention to outside. She didn't want the snow to melt.

How bad was she? She didn't want to go home to her life. Was it possible to fall in love with a man and his world in less than a week?

This was all new to Josie. She hadn't given herself chance to fall in love with anyone. Elijah was different, though. Nibbling her lip, she glanced back at him again as he slept. She had explored every single one of his tattoos last night. He had stopped getting ink years ago.

He was such a lovely man ... a sexy man.

"You're thinking way too much," Elijah said.

She pressed a hand to her chest. "You scared me."

He chuckled and opened his eyes.

"How long have you been awake?" she asked, moving toward the bed.

"Since you left it. The temperature got cold." He wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her into the bed.

His lips were on hers, and she wrapped a leg around his waist. "See, I'm all nice and warm now."

He thrust his cock against her side, and she felt how hard he was.

"Well, we know what's *not* cold," she said.

He chuckled. "Trust me, even cold, he'd be able to fuck you."

Elijah tugged at the shirt she wore. It was another one of his. She had pretty much been wearing his clothes, mixed with the set she'd been wearing when he found her.

"Really?" she asked.

He shoved the blanket off and moved between her thighs. His cock was still rock hard. She loved it when he touched her. His large hands moved all over her body, making her gasp.

"You shouldn't have any doubt about what I can do." He kissed her again, caressing her body, reaching between her legs.

She felt the tip of his cock at her clit. Josie couldn't help but gasp as he touched her nub, sliding back and forth, heightening her arousal. He didn't linger too long, before he slammed to the hilt within her. They both cried out,

and Josie knew he wasn't lying. She didn't think there was anything in this world that would stop him from having sex.

Elijah pulled out of her, until only the tip of him remained, and then he held her tightly slamming all the way in again. He didn't stop this time, fucking her harder and faster, driving in deep.

"Oh, fuck, I'm going to come."

She was more than ready for it, but then he stopped and pulled out of her. Josie wasn't sure what was going on, until he lifted her up, and his mouth feasted on her pussy. He refused to find his release until she had found hers. His tongue lapped at her clit, sliding down, fucking her pussy, before drawing back up. He nibbled on her clit, biting down just a little too tightly, making it almost nearly at the verge of pain, but then soothing it out with his tongue. She knew she was close to coming.

"Elijah!" She couldn't help but scream his name as she came. This time, he didn't wait for her orgasm to stop, no, he pressed her down on the bed, found her entrance, and slammed inside her, driving in hard and deep. He didn't stop, and Josie loved it. She was orgasming at the same time he was fucking her. The sensations were unlike anything she felt before.

When he came, she stared into his eyes, feeling that connection, that feeling that also made her so fucking nervous.

His cock twitched as he spilled his cum within her. Josie knew she should tell him she wasn't on any kind of pill. They were having unprotected sex. They had already had a lot of unprotected sex, but she didn't know how to ask the question, how to find out what he wanted from her? Did she just ask? Did he assume she was already protected? Was he trying to get her pregnant? Did he want her to stay?

There were so many questions, but she didn't dare say a thing, just stared up at him and waited.

"Baby, you are fucking incredible." He kissed her lips, running his hands over her body.

"You're not too bad yourself." She smiled up at him.

He opened his mouth, but before a single word could come out, the dogs started to bark. She couldn't help but laugh.

"I think they know when I'm having a lot of fun."

This made her laugh. "You think your dogs know when you're having sex?"

"Oh, yeah."

“Oh, so you save girls often and win them over with your dogs?” she asked.

Elijah stared down at her. “I’ve never saved another woman. You’re the first woman I’ve saved, Josie, and as for my dogs ... you can’t go blaming me for having such beautiful dogs.” He kissed the tip of her nose. “Am I winning you over?”

She looked at him, heart racing. “Huh?”

“You said I was winning you over, how am I? What am I doing that’s winning you over?”

“Oh, er, I’m...” What did she say? Did she tell him she thought she was falling in love with him? How she was staring at the snow and praying it would never melt? That seemed a little crazy. Men didn’t like crazy women, did they?

She stared at him, waiting. Nibbling her lip, she looked at him, wanting to ask so many questions, but the dogs barked, and they had to come first.

“We’ll talk later.”

He kissed her lips, and she felt him pull away. Would it be so bad to yell the words that she loved him?

Lifting up onto her elbows, she saw that he’d already left.

Elijah had never saved a woman before. Josie was his first, especially here in the mountains. He’d enjoyed his fair share of women before he’d cut himself off from the world. And he knew, deep in his heart, Josie was a keeper. She wasn’t a woman to fuck and leave. She was a woman you cherished, took care of.

Running a hand down his face, this was not going to be a great speech. He wanted to ask Josie to stay with him. The snow was melting. Walking the dogs that morning, he had seen the ground not too far from where he parked his truck. Sure, he imagined there was going to be more snow forecast, but he had to give her the chance to leave, didn’t he?

He was so totally fucked. He didn’t want her to leave. That was another reason he’d not asked her if she was on the pill. Did he even want to know the answer? He liked the idea of fucking her until she was pregnant. Of course, he wouldn’t stop fucking her, but he’d have a reason to convince her to stay.

Buster waited his turn to be dried.

He had to tell her that the path was clear and she could go back to her cabin, back to her ... life. The life she had told him was so lonely, so miserable, that the only thing waiting for her was the coldness of an email. The instructions of a client.

He had no problem with working. It had helped him to get where he was now, but he also knew the value of balance — not living to work, but working to live. He had gotten them mixed up. Now his life was back on track, but he wanted Josie so badly.

“What am I going to do, Buster?” he asked.

His dog had no answers. Not that he could blame him. Who did have the fucking answers right now? He wanted to do the right thing, give her the choice of staying or going.

With Buster and Trixie dry, he made his way inside his home to find Josie already waiting with a cup of coffee. She hadn't combed her hair, and she wore a pair of his pants as well as his shirt.

“Good morning,” she said.

Now that is what he wanted. He took the coffee, had a swig of the hard liquid, but then moved closer to her, lifting her up in his arms. He carried her over to the kitchen counter and put her down.

She giggled. “You're cold.”

“Then it's time for you to warm me up.”

She burst out laughing, gasping as he put his hands all over her body, touching her. She was so fucking beautiful. He tore the clothes from her body, wanting her completely naked.

It didn't take him long to pull out his cock. He found her entrance, and she was slick and ready for him. Slamming inside her, he drove harder and harder within her, taking her.

He didn't want her to leave.

Part of him wanted to take her asshole, so that she knew what it felt like being owned by every part of him, but he didn't want to waste his cum. He didn't know if she was pregnant yet. Driving in harder and deeper, he stared into her eyes, and he saw something, he wasn't sure what, but it drove him over the edge and he filled her up. Wave upon wave of his cum flooded her pussy, until he nearly saw stars.

“Wow,” she said and laughed. “Is that what walking does for you?”

“It has been a ... cold morning.”

“You don't feel cold to me.”

He chuckled. Elijah had to tell her.

“I can take you back to the cabin,” he said. He hated saying those words.

The smile on her lips dropped and he knew he’d spoiled the moment.

“What?”

“The snow has melted,” he said. “I can take you back to your cabin. There’s nothing wrong with your ankle so I don’t think we need to worry about you seeing a doctor.” He hated what he was saying.

What he really wanted to say was this: *“Please don’t leave. I love you, Josie. I want you to stay with me. I want to marry you, have lots of babies, and the truth is, I hope you’re already pregnant with my child, and I want to be a father...”*

Then it all gets muddled up into him ordering her to stay. No, he wanted her to have a choice.

“Oh,” Josie said. “You can take me home.”

“If that’s what you want?”

She looked away from him and he saw her nibble her lip, a frown covering her face. He shouldn’t have said anything.

“I guess I better go and head back, right? Before anything is ... stolen or perhaps reported, maybe?”

“If that’s what you want? I don’t know how long we’ll have before the next snowstorm. There could be a limited time to get you where you need to be.”

Josie smiled. “Then I guess I’m going back to my ... cabin. Back to my life.”

Elijah had gone through a lot in his life. Dealt with every decision, gotten back up, wiped himself down, and moved on. His heart fucking shattered. He hated himself for telling her, hated that she wanted to return to her life.

This woman had stumbled into his world, calling out for help, looking so fucking helpless, and he’d fallen in love with her. His dogs came to him, and he stepped back from her, needing space. Needing something so that he didn’t break down and fucking cry.

“I’ll go get dressed and start the car.”

Chapter Seven

Josie saw her cabin up ahead. Her life was falling apart.

Did Elijah want to get rid of her? She had prayed the snow wouldn't melt, and look what had happened. It had freaking melted.

"It's just around the corner."

At no point during their journey had they been thwarted. Even her own clothes had been washed and dried, and that was what she was wearing now. Complete with the backpack she'd been carrying that she'd forgotten about. Elijah had stored it for her.

Should she tell him they'd been having unprotected sex and she might be pregnant with his child?

"That's it, there." She pointed at the cabin where her car was still parked. "This is ... me."

She reached for the door, and then turned to look at Elijah. "I had an amazing time."

"Josie, you don't have to do this."

"What do you think about kids?" she asked. The words just blurted out of her mouth.

"What?"

"Children. Babies. Are you still wanting a family? Do you want me to leave? I can leave, if you want me to." Her words were all falling together. She held her hands up and took a deep breath. "I ... I've never done anything like this, so I'm just going to let this out. Elijah, the past few days, the week, I don't even know how long it's been, have been the best of my life. I know it seems crazy to say this seeing as we've only known each other like a week, but I ... I love you. I'm falling in love with you, and your dogs, and your life. I don't want to go back. I may still have to work, but I can figure something out. I mean, you don't have Internet access, but you said yourself that you have to come into town. I could do that." She was panicking as he wasn't saying anything. "Also, not that I'm trying to trap you or anything." She couldn't help but wince at this one. "I'm not on anything. I have no pill. We could be making a baby already." She licked her lips.

Staring at him, she waited. He didn't say anything.

"So, I guess I'm going to leave you with that information, and I will go into my cabin. If you would like to explore this ... with me, then I'll be expecting you to come into my cabin, if you want to ... you know."

Her heart raced but she forced herself to move. This was the first time she had done this. Stepping into her cabin, she glanced around at the emptiness of it. Her suitcase was still on the bed from that morning when she'd been ready to go hiking. She'd not checked the weather forecast. She stared down at the case, and wondered what Elijah would do.

Tears sprang to her eyes when she heard the car move. Covering her face, she tried to contain the pain. This was the first time she had been in love, and it would seem the only time she would be. He was leaving her.

“Stay,” Elijah said, startling her.

She spun around and there he was in her doorway.

“I don't want you to fucking leave. I didn't want to tell you about the melting snow. I've been wanting to get you pregnant. Don't leave. Please, don't fucking leave. I want to marry you, Josie. I want to have millions of kids with you. I want to build a life with you. I'll do whatever it takes. Take you into town for you to do work.”

She shook her head. “No, don't do that.” She rushed toward him, and the moment his arms were wrapped around her, she felt complete.

“I love you, Josie. I don't need more time to know how I feel. I know I love you. I know I want to spend the rest of my life with you.”

He pressed kisses to her lips and she broke away.

“I love you too.”

Elijah moved them back, and he closed the cabin door. He took her to the bed. She collapsed over it, and he growled.

“I don't know what I'd have done if you'd not told me that.”

“Why did you move the car?”

“I didn't want the dogs going crazy. So, I parked the other side of you.” He pulled at her jacket, removing it.

She attacked his clothes.

Within minutes they were completely naked and Elijah moved her up the bed, until she was on her knees, but then pressed her to the bed, after putting a pillow beneath her hips.

“Do you have any idea how long I've wanted to do this, but not waste a single drop of my cum?” he asked.

She frowned but then all became clear as he spread the cheeks of her ass. His fingers touched her between her thighs.

“There's a ... there's some lubrication in my suitcase,” she said.

Her cheeks were on fire.

“Your suitcase?”

She nodded. “I brought a ... dildo, in case I got the ... urge.”

Josie looked over her shoulder as he pulled out the dildo as well as the lubrication from her case.

“Fuck me, Josie, I fucking love you so damn much.”

Epilogue

One Year Later

“You can buy any piece of candy you’d like,” Elijah said.

She pushed the shopping trolley and rolled her eyes. “You’re so sweet, but I’m thinking ice cream.”

He chuckled and leaned in close. “The kind that I melt over your body and lick it off?”

She hadn’t been thinking that far ahead, but yes, she didn’t have a problem with that. So totally fine. Licking her lips she nodded. “Anything for you.”

He cupped her hip, then her very swollen stomach, before he grabbed some vanilla and chocolate ice cream. She was a vanilla lover. He loved chocolate.

This was their last trip to the supermarket before the winter took hold. Elijah had woken up that morning and said there was going to be a snowstorm. When it came to the weather, he knew what he was talking about. He’d predicted the snow last year, even after they finally got together — the thawing, the hot summer, and when it would get cold again.

She put a hand on her swollen stomach. She’d not been pregnant last year, and they had in fact gotten married in March. It was now December, and according to the doctor she was five months pregnant, meaning this baby was possibly conceived during July or August. She had an idea when that might have happened. They’d been harvesting from his gardening and doing a whole lot of preserving, when they had made love in their backyard.

Their love hadn’t been fleeting. It had been real.

She had scaled back her work, and because of how good she was, she was able to demand less hours. Elijah had come to work to help her negotiate her hours. He had taught her balance. He wouldn’t let her work before or after certain times. She was only allowed to start work at nine, and she finished at five, regardless. Also, she worked between three and four days a week. That was all. She took vacation time, and soon she’d have maternity leave.

Josie loved her life.

She had found what she’d been looking for.

The right person to spend it with.

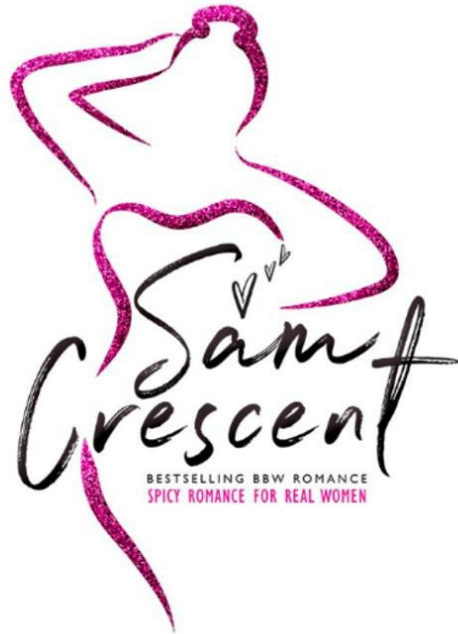
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BONUS SAMPLE CHAPTER

MR. NANNY

The Nannies, 10

Sam Crescent

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Sample Chapter

Caleb Nanny knew he shouldn't take the job. He had plenty of men and women perfectly capable of being a nanny for however long it took to train this woman.

Annie Wells — the woman who had walked into his office building less than twenty minutes ago and asked if he had a nanny who could train her to take care of her baby.

"I know it sounds crazy," Annie said.

He held his hand up. "No, it doesn't sound crazy at all. You must understand we're not the kind of company that trains people to take care of their own children." He'd already noted the lack of a wedding ring, so he didn't know her story.

Annie opened her mouth, closed it, and then glanced down at the child in her arms. "Er, she ... er ... she isn't my child."

Caleb tensed up. Was this woman about to admit to kidnapping? He went to discretely reach for his phone to call the police when she lifted her head. "I'm her ... she has no one. Her parents died and I was down as next of kin, so she is mine now. I've not stolen her or anything. I know how crazy that sounds."

He relaxed. “No, it doesn’t sound crazy.”

Annie laughed. “Trust me. If you heard the whole story, you’d be thinking all of this is a little crazy.” She licked her lips. “I ... I always thought when I had a child, I’d know what to deal with, how to handle this, but I just ... it’s all a little ... it’s just too much. I don’t want to screw this up. I don’t have time to read all the books.”

“Parenting is more than about the books.”

“I know that. I’m willing to pay for whatever help you can provide.”

He wanted to tell her that she seemed to be doing more than okay. She held the baby in her arms, securely if not lovingly, from what he could see.

“It is rare for us to have a baby to nanny,” Caleb said. “Depending on the customers, the position is either live-in or—”

“Live-in,” Annie said. “I saw all the options on your website. I know what you offer, and I would like a live-in nanny for perhaps six weeks to three months, however long it takes to teach me how to take care of a baby.”

He should tell her no. This was wrong. He was attracted to her, and that was very bad for business. But she looked distressed.

There were plenty of nannies in his company. He’d not been a nanny in a very long time. Ever since he started up his company, it had been a huge success, providing an abundance of skilled and qualified nannies.

She looked so helpless and lost.

“I can start today,” Caleb said.

“Oh, thank you. Thank you so much.” Annie got to her feet. She still held the child in her arms as she stepped toward him.

Vanilla. He couldn’t help but detect the subtle hint of her perfume, and it was sweet, making his mouth water. He offered her a smile, when all he wanted to do was press his face against her neck and breathe her in. There would be plenty of time for that.

“Here’s my address,” she said.

“I will bring all the relevant documents over with me, and when you’re in a much more comfortable environment, we can go through them.

“Thank you. Thank you so much.” She looked down at the baby in her arms. “You hear that, Tara? He’s going to make sure I don’t mess this up.”

“Her name’s Tara?”

“Yes.” She offered him a smile. “Thank you.”

“Look, I can’t promise anything. Being a nanny is not easy, nor is

being a parent. I can only offer you the basics in taking care of her.”

“That is more than fine.” She pressed her face against Tara’s and he watched as she gave her a kiss on the cheek. “What happens now?”

“I’ll gather all the relevant documents and meet you back at your place, Miss Wells, and we can go through the finer points of my employment.”

“Awesome. Okay. I will meet you back at my place.” She grabbed the bag she’d put on the floor beside the chair. “I really do appreciate this.”

He nodded. Moving around his desk, he followed her to the door and opened it for her. Escorting her all the way to the elevator, he waited with her.

“You must think so badly of me, asking for help.”

“Not at all.”

Annie turned toward him. “Seriously?”

“You’re asking for help because you want to do the best possible job in raising her. That is not something to think badly of.”

She breathed out a sigh of relief.

“How long have you had her?” Caleb asked.

She cringed. “Two days.”

He chuckled.

She started to talk but the elevator doors opened and she stepped inside.

“Don’t worry, Miss Wells. I’ll help you wherever possible.”

“Annie,” she said.

“Pardon?”

“That’s my name. You can call me Annie.”

The elevator doors closed.

This was bad news.

Stepping away from the elevator, he made his way back to his office and reached for his cell phone. He dialed the only man he trusted, his best friend, Ryan.

“To what do I owe the pleasure?” Ryan asked, on the first ring.

“I think I’ve just fucked up and made a big mistake.”

“I find that hard to believe.”

Caleb snorted and then told him about his encounter with Annie.

“What’s the big deal?” Ryan asked. “So, a woman comes to you for help. I admit it seems kind of crazy that she would ask for help, but it’s a

good thing. She doesn't want to fuck the kid up, like a lot of people do. Shouldn't you be, like, happy about that?"

"It's not that. I'm attracted to this woman."

"So? You've been attracted to women in the past, and not acted on it."

He rubbed at his temples.

"Remember, this is a job and attraction is good. It's fine. Was she attracted to you?"

"I have no idea. She was more concerned with the baby in her arms."

Ryan burst out laughing. "Already this woman is right up your street."

"This is not something to laugh about."

"What? Come on. You can't be pissed off," Ryan said. "You've denied yourself women, time and time again. The first one comes along, and sure, she's about to be a client, but you've not been a nanny in a long time, Caleb. You stopped, remember, and decided to set up The Nanny in the first place, to bring all good respecting nannies under one roof."

"I know why I started my company." Which had started out as *Mr. Nanny*. He'd been determined to cater to the male nannies in the world, but then, he'd expanded to women as well.

So, his company was simply called The Nanny.

"Look, man, I've got to go, but this doesn't sound like a bad thing. You've not dated anyone in a long time. Maybe it's time to put that little black book away and focus on the here and now. Not every person out there is going to break your heart. Some of them will enhance your life for a short time before passing through and moving on. It's time for you to heal. We'll meet up for drinks in a few days, okay?"

"Yeah, sure, no problem."

He doubted he'd be ready for drinks for some time. He didn't say as much, but he placed his cell phone back on his desk once the call had ended. That wasn't the support he wanted. He'd wanted Ryan to tell him to stop being crazy, to get one of his other nannies to handle the job, and to carry on with his day.

Running a hand down his face, he tried to clear the fog from his mind. Glancing down at her address, he saw it was in a nice part of town, not too far from where he lived. It was an apartment. A nice one.

He was tempted to run her name through an Internet search, but decided against it. He wasn't going to learn too much detail about Annie Wells until he absolutely had to.

He stood up and called in his PA, Donald, and got to work giving him the reigns of the place until he returned. He was only ever a phone call away, and Donald was the best PA in the company.

He arranged for all calls to be transferred to his cell, but Donald was only to transfer the important calls he couldn't handle himself. There were not many meetings this week. He asked Donald to reschedule the ones that were important. With everything arranged for his company for the next couple of days, he grabbed the paperwork, his bag, and headed off to Annie.

Annie wanted to write so badly. She was so inspired, but each time she got to the computer, Tara always seemed to need something — a diaper change, some food, some attention. It would end in a couple of hours of stress where Annie didn't know what to do. Okay, so she'd only been doing this for two days, but that was more than enough chaos for her to know she needed help.

Lots of help.

Professional help.

The Nanny had been the first place to come up on her search, and to her, that was like a sign as it also wasn't too far.

She sat on the sofa, while Tara was on the floor, looking up at the mobile she had built.

“What am I going to do with you?” she asked.

None of her grandparents wanted her. She had already called and asked. They wanted nothing to do with their child's baby. Their grandchild.

The truth was, this was hard work.

Tara's parents had broken her heart so long ago. Now she had their baby to look after. Part of her thought she might hate Tara for who she was, but she didn't. The moment the baby had been placed in her arms, she felt this overwhelming need to take care of her. To love her. To make sure she never went without anything, which was another reason why she had gone to The Nanny.

She couldn't wait for Caleb to arrive. She ran her fingers through her hair, and then looked back down at Tara. She had scrunched her hands up, with one pressed against her mouth. Tara was only six months old. Poor girl. Annie didn't have a single photo in the house of her parents. She had found one stashed inside her baby bag, the only thing that had come with her.

“What am I going to do with you?” she asked.

Tara shook her hand and Annie laughed. She was such a sweet baby. A terrible sleeper. A pro diaper filler and an awesome eater.

When her apartment doorbell rang, she breathed out a sigh of relief. She had a feeling people didn't spend their entire days staring at a baby, no matter how cute it was.

There were still daily chores to do, and she needed help to entertain Tara, to help her understand each cry, and also just be a good parent. She checked the peephole to make sure it was Caleb, and when she saw it was, she breathed a sigh of relief.

Opening the door, she smiled. "Thank you for coming."

He stepped through the doors, complete with a briefcase and a suitcase.

"I would have been by sooner, but I had to go and grab a few things."

"I'll show you to your room."

Her apartment had two bedrooms, and Tara was sleeping in a crib in Annie's room. Once Caleb had taught her everything she needed to know, she planned on setting up Tara's room in the second bedroom. She flicked on the light, and he stepped inside.

"You've got a nice place," he said.

"Thank you. There's not an en suite, I'm afraid. We'll have to share a bathroom."

"That's fine."

She went to show him the bathroom, but Tara started to whimper. "Excuse me." She left him in the bedroom and went toward Tara. Moving the mobile out of the way, she picked the baby up, being sure to support her head, as she walked back toward Caleb.

"Let's take Caleb on the tour," Annie said, pressing a kiss to her cheek.

Annie showed him the rest of her apartment and once she had given him the quick tour, they returned to the main sitting room. She eased Tara back onto her play mat, and put the toy back over her.

"Are you okay?" Caleb asked.

"Me, okay? No, not really. I'm just ... this is all new, you know. So very new." She laughed. "I don't know if her parents did this because they thought it was a good joke, they were just being cruel, or if it was because I was the only one they could think of that they trusted with their baby."

"There's a story there," Caleb said.

She snorted. “Oh, yeah, there is a story, but that doesn’t matter. Tara’s my responsibility. I need to know that I can still work and take care of a baby, or do you just recommend I hire you full time?”

She was only partly joking.

“First of all, I think what you need to do is relax. You’re rather tense. Now, there are several ways of approaching the care of a baby. Some of them not quite popular, others are. It depends on how you want to handle them. We’ll go through them all, and see which one suits you. What do you want out of this?” Caleb asked.

Annie blew out a breath. “I want to know how to take care of her. I want to know I’m not going to mess up. Also, I need to keep on working, you know.”

“Sure, where do you work? What’s your schedule?” Caleb asked, pulling out a notebook.

“I work here,” Annie said. “I’m, er, I’m an author, so I work here. I can keep to my own schedule, but in the past two days, I’ve done nothing. Three, if you count today.”

“You’re an author.”

She nodded. She often tried to avoid these kinds of questions as they never seemed to end well with her. Men didn’t like what she wrote, or they did and wanted her to show them how good she was in bed. It hadn’t been the best experience for her on the dating front, which is why she never led with what she did for a living.

“Do you think you can help me?” Annie asked.

“Of course I can help, but I also believe the reason she was crying is that she needs a diaper change.”

“I don’t smell anything,” Annie said.

“You can see how much the diaper has swelled. Not everything needs a number two.”

She couldn’t help but laugh. She was so bad at this. There was no way she was going to tell him that there was a time she wanted to have kids and a family of her own. He’d probably find some way to ban her from ever having kids.

Picking Tara up, she carried her over to the small dining room table that she’d also set up as a diaper-changing station. She no longer ate at the table. Food was eaten while sitting on the sofa, watching television if she got the chance, or listening for Tara to scream.

Again, only two days, but enough.

She eased Tara down, opened up her onesie, and tickled her belly.

Caleb had stood but stayed back at the head of the table as she changed her diaper. Once she was done, she wiped her hands on a sanitized hand wipe, wrapped up the soiled diaper, and disposed of it in her trash bin. This was something she'd been able to do.

Lifting Tara up in her arms, she held her tightly.

“Can I give you my honest opinion?” Caleb asked.

“Of course. I would appreciate it.”

“I don't think you need a nanny or any guidance. A new baby can be tiring and exhausting. Life changes, as expected. You're responsible for a baby.”

“So, all of this is normal? Me not being able to write or do anything but sit and watch her all day?”

“Yes. It's all new and you both need to develop a routine together. It will work out, I promise you.”

“Good, but I still want you to help me,” Annie said. “Please, I will pay double whatever your going rate is.”

She needed to know she was doing this right and the only way to do that was to get advice from the professionals. Also, he'd seen her change the diaper, not anything else. Tara also seemed to be behaving really well. Was she just being a little manic?

Babies didn't come with guidebooks. Technically, now the libraries were full of them, but she remembered her own mother constantly stating that she didn't have a book to help her. How she had to do everything on her own. Her mother had passed away a couple of years ago, which was why Annie was now on her own.

She loved her mother. She was also the only parent she'd ever known. Her father had abandoned them when she was young, because he didn't want to be a dad.

“I'm going to help, Annie, but I honestly think you're more than capable of handling this.”

It was nice to know he thought that, especially as he was a total stranger, but the truth was, she didn't think she could do this.

End of sample chapter

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