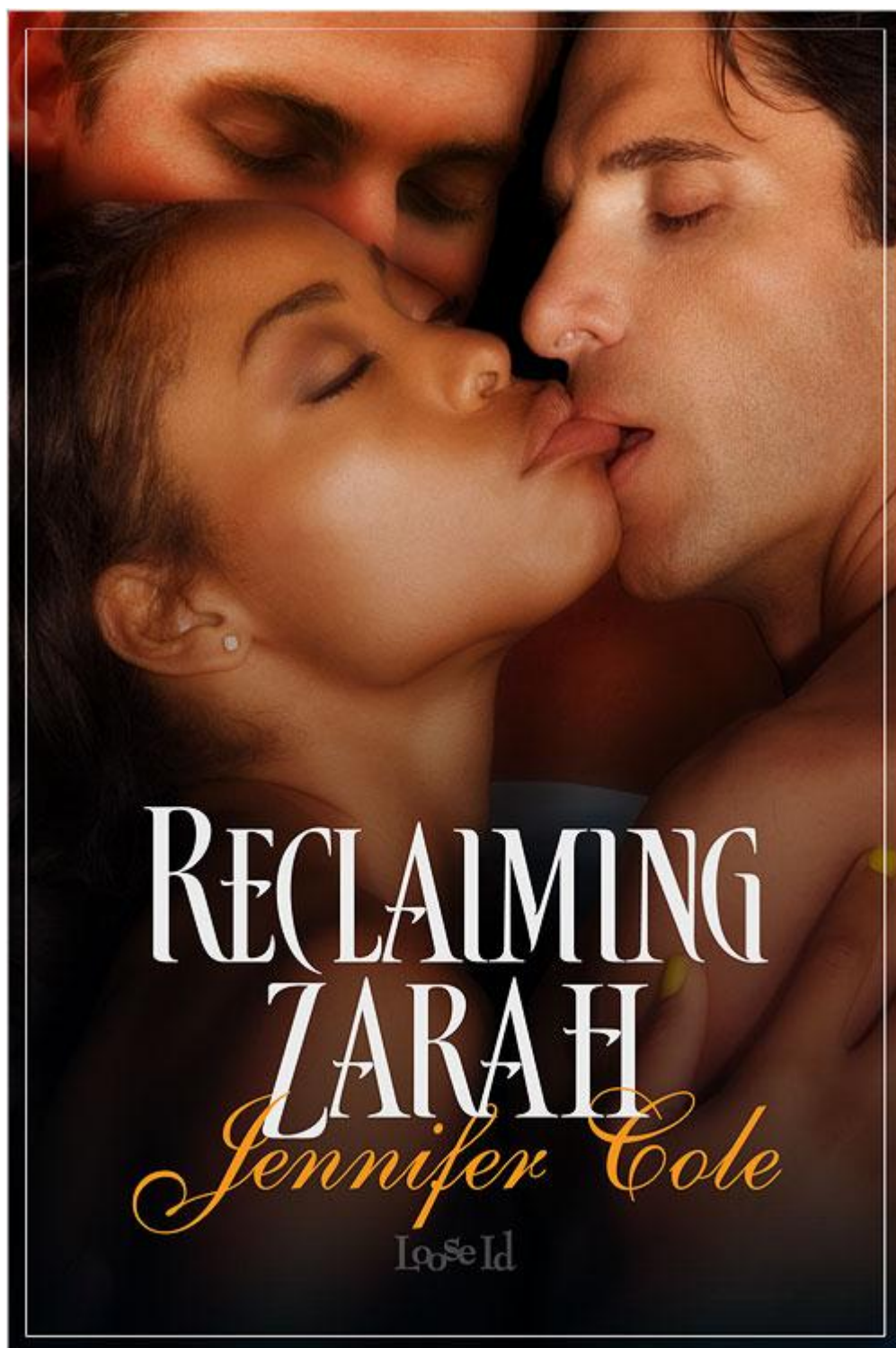




RECLAIMING
ZARAH
Jennifer Cole
Loose Id

Reclaiming Zarah

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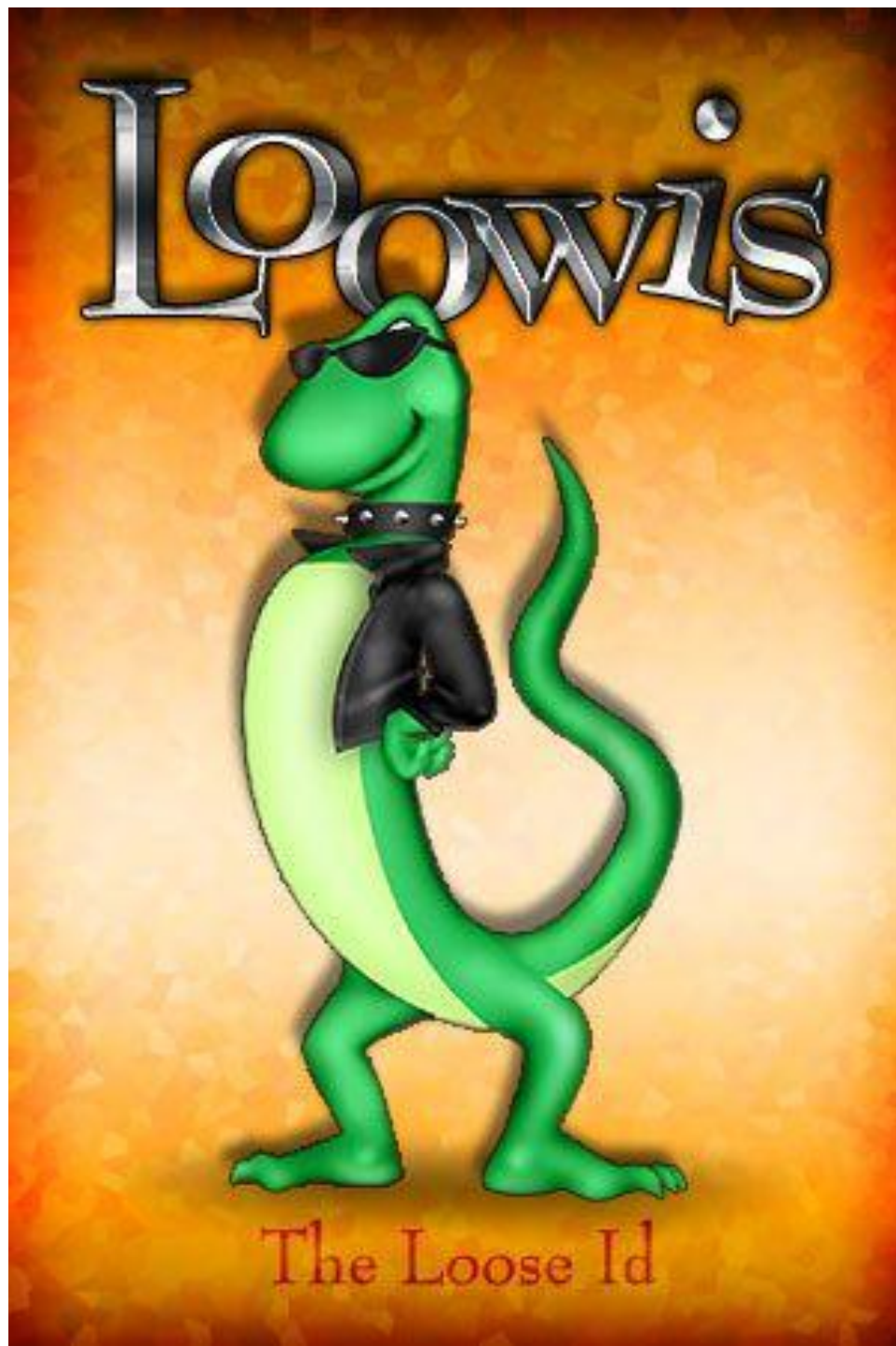
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Chapter One

“Pardon me?” Seated in a chair across from the office’s newest assistant district attorney, Zarah Elliott-Masters frowned, hoping she’d heard him incorrectly.

“We leave Wednesday and could be gone as long as a week,” Radley Raymond repeated, his expression all business. “We’ll stay as long as is necessary to get what we require.”

He might have graduated top of his class from Harvard Law School and come from a long line of old money and brilliant legal minds, but with Zarah having twin babies at home and with only five days until her Valentine’s Day plans with her husbands, his timing sucked.

“I’m sorry, Radley, but less than two days doesn’t allow me enough time to make arrangements for my family. To be gone an indefinite period of time, I’m afraid, is unacceptable. I simply can’t be away that long,” she said.

Nor did she want to be.

“You’re efficient and organized. Two days is sufficient time for you to prepare. So your children’s fathers will have to step up to the plate in your absence.”

Radley was tall with broad shoulders, his build athletic. His dark hair was trimmed in a style that was both professional yet casual. More than once in the lunchroom she’d heard the women she worked with commenting on how dreamy his chocolate brown bedroom eyes were.

Zarah was a woman and not immune to the appeal of a handsome man. She wondered why Radley wasn’t decorating the pages of *GQ* magazine, or perhaps modeling underwear on a billboard, with his chiseled features and strong jawline,

instead of wasting those good looks in the courtroom. Regardless of those good looks, something about him rubbed Zarah the wrong way. But she couldn't quite put her finger on why.

Despite Radley's "hottie" status—at least according to the female masses—his relationship status was single. Therefore he had no family at home to consider.

Zarah scowled in frustration. She'd been working with him for the past month preparing for the office's latest high-profile case, and she had yet to find anything to like about him. He was a demanding hard-ass who failed to give reasonable consideration to anyone's responsibilities outside of work. He pulled the longest hours in the office and expected as much from those on his team.

"Husbands," she corrected. "I *am* legally married to Jack. And my relationship with Lane is just as significant."

Neither Zarah nor the guys ever flaunted their unique union, but they didn't keep it a dirty little secret, either. There were times when meeting new people the trio found themselves on the receiving end of scowls and raised eyebrows. However, after asking those pertinent questions such as "whose bed do you decide to sleep in when?" and "you have sex with both men at the same time?" and once their curiosity was satisfied, most people usually didn't care.

Radley Raymond fell into the former category. His censure of their ménage relationship had been crystal clear when he'd first been introduced to Zarah, Jack, and Lane at the office Christmas party just two months earlier.

"Since the new witnesses are unable to come to us, we will go to them. I need someone to take depositions, et cetera." Radley continued without acknowledging her amendment.

"You have a secretary, Radley," she countered, shifting in the chair. "Surely Alyssa will be a more useful assistant for you than me."

"I think the female witness would be more comfortable speaking with a woman of...color," he added.

Oh no he didn't.

Zarah raised a brow. Last she checked the year was 2011; how was it that in this day and age some people still had issues with color? And in his position as assistant district attorney? That was unforgivable.

“I’m not offended by the term *black*,” she told him in a snippier tone than she intended.

“I didn’t mean it like that. My oldest sister, as well as a cousin of ours, is married to a black man,” he returned.

She didn’t have any use for his ass-kissing. This was her job and, despite the ick vibe she’d gotten from him during their introductory meeting, Radley’s case would receive 100 percent of her efforts. Cozying up to the man himself was another story.

“That you’re a new mother would be a benefit as well.”

She relaxed marginally at that.

Zarah had been back to work a couple of months following the birth of her and Jack’s twins seven months earlier. Though she missed being at home with her babies, she loved the challenges her position with the district attorney’s office provided and was excited to be back at work. She’d been settling into routine, and things were going well.

At least up until a week ago when Radley had promoted—or *demoted*, depending on which side of the fence you sat—Zarah to *his* personal assistant, fetching his morning coffee, ordering in his lunch, and organizing his schedule. She had yet to receive a “pick up my dry cleaning” memo, but supposed it would be forthcoming the longer she worked with him.

Zarah assumed the reason behind *her* latest influx of duties was the numerous closed-door meetings Raymond conducted with his secretary. Alyssa was a petite brunette with wide round eyes, full pouting lips, and a set of implants Chesty Morgan would envy.

“I want you,” he said, then added before she could respond, “Stephen says you’re the best and gave his stamp of approval.”

“Oh,” she replied. Steven Webster had been sworn in as the DA shortly after Zarah went on leave. He was a man Zarah looked up to and greatly admired. Of course he would have recommended her for this assignment; her record was impeccable.

“Just out of curiosity, how long has this excursion been in the works? We’ve been working together on this case for a month, you three weeks before that. Why am I just learning of this now?”

He dropped the pen in his hand onto the desk. “From the beginning. With witnesses popping up all over the place, the trip was inevitable. I figured you’d received the memo.”

Of course, she hadn’t.

Radley stood, walked around his oversized oak desk, and strolled toward the door—a subtle signal that their conversation was over.

“The arrangements have already been made, Ms. Elliott,” he said.

“Elliott-Masters,” she corrected. “Or plain old Zarah is fine.”

“The hotel is booked. There is a schedule of appointments slotted with the witnesses. We’re out of here in two days.”

Zarah stood and ran a hand down the front of her skirt, smoothing away imaginary wrinkles. With her yellow legal pad in hand, she turned and walked across the office. On her way out the door, Radley leaned in, and his arm brushed along hers as she passed. Goose bumps erupted on her skin.

“Stop by Alyssa’s desk for a copy of our itinerary,” he directed.

Zarah pasted on a pleasant smile, when inside she really wanted to jam the heel of her suede pump into the top of Radley’s highly polished loafer.

“Of course, Mr. Raymond.”

Inwardly Zarah bitched as she strolled down the hallway to the large open-concept office where the assistants to the DAs and twelve ADAs were working. Fingers tapped vigorously on keyboards, and muted voices carried on conversations

both on the phone and off. She stopped in front of Alyssa's desk and stood in silence, waiting for the other woman to finish whatever held her enthralled on her computer monitor.

After a few moments of being ignored, Zarah softly cleared her throat.

Alyssa scowled up at her.

"Mr. Raymond said you have our itinerary for our trip leaving Wednesday," Zarah said with a smile.

Without a word and with a glower on her usually pretty but overly made-up face, Alyssa thrust a file folder at Zarah and went back to more pressing matters on her monitor. Obviously the other woman was unhappy about Radley excluding her from this trip.

"I hope your day gets better," Zarah announced before turning away.

In the basement library of the office, she fumed. This business trip couldn't have come at a worse time. Valentine's Day was the coming Monday, and she had been planning something special for Jack and Lane since Christmas. She'd made arrangements for the twins to spend the night with Rita and Mack Davis on Saturday so that she, Lane, and Jack could have the house to themselves. The three of them needed some "grown-up time" together.

Wicked and depraved grown-up time.

Along with the typical exhaustion and upheaval that came from bringing a new baby home, both babies had also suffered colic, but of course not at the same time. They'd each endured mild colds over the holiday season, but of course not at the same time. Diaper changes and feedings seemed endless. And within the last week, their daughter, Magan, had cut her first tooth. Madan, their son, not willing to be shown up by his sister, wouldn't be far behind.

Regardless of the fact that there were three adults in their home tending to the never-ending needs of two infants, following the birth of the twins it was somewhat expected that Zarah, Jack, and Lane's sex life would be a temporary casualty.

With Jack running his own tow truck business, Lane working as a paramedic, and Zarah devoting her time to motherhood—and now returning to work as well—at the end of the day exhaustion always lurked in the shadows.

She and Jack made love, and she and Lane made love, but the three of them hadn't been together since the day the twins were born. And as far as she was concerned, that was so very long ago. While she savored snuggling between the solid, warm bodies of her two lovers in bed at night, she craved being sandwiched between the two of them as they fucked her silly.

Zarah longed for the exquisite sensations of one of them sliding into her pussy, filling her, while the other stretched the snug muscles of her backside. She yearned to be squeezed between their hard frames, to feel their hands on her breasts, caressing her body. Needed them to claim her, own her, possess her, and consume her. She needed them to fill the void their dry spell had left in her.

Just as she was feeling the loss, the connection of their ménage, she knew Jack and Lane were as well. No words needed to be spoken for her to recognize they too were missing the absence of that special part of their union. Neither man would begrudge her the time she devoted to their babies, but before babies, the sex between them had been bountiful, spontaneous, and so incredibly decadent. *Après* babies, there just didn't seem to be enough hours in the day, little spontaneity and, although she cherished making love with each of the guys separately, there was always a slight something missing.

The other man and what he brought to their unique sexual dynamic.

Zarah's intentions were to spend the upcoming weekend dedicated to her lovers, squished deliciously between Jack and Lane, rekindling their love, and spending two entire days screwing each other senseless. They needed to find their way back to that special place that had brought them to each other in the beginning.

It would be heaven.

But now, thanks to the pompous and arrogant ADA Radley Raymond, her plans for their carnal rendezvous would have to be postponed.

Zarah scanned the itinerary in her hands and knit her brow. Hmm, the only thing missing on the schedule was time for an occasional food, bathroom, and sleep break.

She cursed Raymond's hide.

* * *

Lane Dundas pulled his SUV into the driveway of the home he owned with his best friend Jack Masters and Jack's wife—the woman they shared—Zarah Elliott. Strapped into car seats in the backseat, Jack and Zarah's twins—Madan and Magan—babbled to each other in some serious baby lingo. Lane grinned in the rearview mirror, curious as to what the pair was talking about.

Even if it had been his own DNA that had gone into creating the two miracles in the backseat, he couldn't have felt any more like a father. He'd been there the night they'd welcomed their babies into the world. He'd walked the floors of their home for hours on end, soothing them when they'd suffered with colic. He'd gladly taken his turn assisting with midnight feedings, changings, and general upsets. Didn't mind sitting up with the kids when they'd first brought them home and their internal clocks got switched around and they'd slept through the day and were up all night.

Many times over the past year and half since he, Zarah, and Jack had formed their unique relationship, Lane had counted his blessings. Not for one minute had he ever thought that first night in Jack's apartment following a barbeque and a movie would turn out like it had.

That night, the three of their lives had changed.

And then a couple of months later, another change had come about—Jack and Zarah's wedding—and Lane had been prepared to step away from the relationship. He'd never wanted to come between Zarah and Jack; his friendship with them was far more important. It had been crazy for him to even have considered being

anything other than the odd man out, because where in the hell was a single guy supposed to fit in a relationship with a married couple?

But the night they'd wed, Jack and Zarah had presented him with the greatest gift of all.

After dinner on the beach and a reception of sorts in the resort's *discothèque*, Zarah and Jack had invited Lane to walk with them up to the honeymoon suite. He'd placed a gentle yet deep kiss on Zarah's lips, shook Jack's hand, and then, after wishing them congratulations for the umpteenth time, had been prepared to walk away to spend a long, lonely night alone in his room, thinking about the two of them. Longing to be with the two of them.

Jack had opened the door to the suite, and Lane took the cue it was time to leave them to it.

"Where are you going?" Zarah asked and grabbed his hand in hers.

A mixture of emotions flitted across her face. Her eyes glinted with need and desire and a hint of confusion. Her skin was warm under his fingers. Her lips were full and inviting just as they'd been that night weeks earlier in Jack's apartment. The urge to take her mouth was strong. But he refrained. It was a struggle, but he did it.

"Well, this is your wedding night," Lane pointed out. "I'll give the two of you privacy."

"Jack and I don't need or want privacy from you," Zarah said, tugging him forward as she stepped into the suite.

Lane held still. Then he glanced at Jack. What he saw in Jack's eyes moved him. The same need and want in Zarah's eyes was mimicked in Jack's.

"She wears my ring, Lane, but she loves you deeply as well," Jack said. "I won't ever make her choose between us."

Lane's gaze fell on Zarah. He didn't know what to say.

“We’ve been talking,” she said, her eyes shifting to Jack, then back to him. “Today is a new beginning for us. Not just for Jack and me, but for the three of us, Lane.”

“I’m sorry.” Lane’s breath left his lungs in a rush of air, and he felt as though he were falling through a bottomless pit. They couldn’t possibly be suggesting what he’d hoped they were. “I’m not sure I understand.” He was certain that before he heard the response, he would wake up in his room and realize he’d dreamed the entire exchange.

“We don’t know where it will lead, Lane,” Jack said, placing one hand on Lane’s shoulder. With his other hand, he cupped his new wife’s face. Zarah smiled between Jack and Lane, and Lane’s pulse had started to race and his cock had hardened. “But there is something intense and insanely gratifying building between us. I think we owe it to the three of us to explore it and give this an honest try.”

They’d offered him a future. One that to date had been fulfilling, completing, and all-encompassing—something he’d thought he would never be fortunate enough to experience. A future that included a life with them. No, not *with* them, but *alongside* them as an equal to expand their loving partnership into a trio.

He’d never known anyone involved in a ménage relationship for anything other than sexual fulfillment, and he hadn’t a clue if what Zarah and Jack proposed would be sustainable long-term. But here they were, a year and a half later, the parents of twins, and Lane was more content than he thought he could ever be.

Though Lane had not a single regret about the life he was living, since the arrival of their babies, the trio’s sex life had been relegated to collateral damage. Yes, he and Zarah made love, and she made love with Jack, but—unbeknownst to Zarah—he and Jack had decided after the babies were born that enjoying her together should be put on hold for a while. They hadn’t wanted to overwhelm her or her body following the births by forcing themselves on her at the same time.

There was no question, he was blessed.

So why in the hell was he suddenly questioning his place in the relationship, he wondered. But it hadn't been suddenly, he corrected himself. He'd noticed the difference, though subtle, over the past couple of months. Things between him, Zarah, and Jack seemed strained, and he'd latched onto the simplest explanation, chalking it up to the three of them adapting to a new life after bringing the twins home.

What Lane truly missed was the three of them together—the intense connection between him, Zarah, and Jack. And he'd been with the other two long enough to recognize they were missing the dynamic the three of them created as well.

Or was that what he'd wanted to see? Had he been seeking reassurances that just weren't there?

He was being ridiculous. Or was he?

Could it be that Zarah's recent withdrawal, which he'd chalked up to exhaustion, might actually be something more significant? They were all tired; there was no question about that. Even with three adults minding two babies, there were times he, Zarah, and Jack felt outnumbered.

To add to the already confusing thoughts plaguing his mind, an unexpected one made his blood run cold. Perhaps Lane had outlived his usefulness in the ménage relationship. Yes, their relationship was more than sex, but had his beloved Zarah come to the realization there was no longer enough love in her heart for two men?

He gave his head a swift shake and then drew in a deep breath. On a shaky exhale, he worked on convincing himself his thoughts regarding his uncertain place in the relationship were unfounded. After cutting the engine of the vehicle, Lane was about to open the door when an unpleasant odor wafted up to the front seat.

He glanced over his shoulder to study each of the kids' faces. Any insecurity he felt melted away as he took in the sight of the two babies he'd fallen head over heels in love with. Magan had her mommy's eyes, while somehow Madan's were the same

blue as Lane's. Both had Jack's nose and smile and Zarah's caramel skin tone. And in all these months, still neither one had grown any hair.

Then, remembering what had made him glance over in the first place, he raised an eyebrow and searched each of their little faces for a tell as to which one had just turned the air in his truck blue.

Madan's face tensed and reddened.

"Jesus, buddy." Lane raked his fingers through his spiked hair and shook his head. "Couldn't you have waited until we were out of the truck to let that rip?"

The baby's expression relaxed.

"Little man, we need to have a serious talk with your mom about your diet."

Lane pushed the door open and left it that way. To vent the interior more, he pulled the rear door open, and Magan gazed up and flashed him one of her melting baby smiles. The white ridge of her first tooth poked out of her lower gum. Her chubby cheeks were rosy pink, a subtle characteristic of teething.

Jack's pickup truck pulled into the driveway and he parked alongside Lane's. He stepped out and walked around both vehicles over to the passenger side of Lane's SUV.

"Look, guys, Daddy's home," Lane announced. "Hey, Jack."

"Hey, Lane. How was your day?" Jack pulled the passenger-side back door open. "Hello, you two."

Lane had had the day off, and therefore he'd "parented" for the day. He cherished days like this. When Zarah returned to work, Rita had excitedly offered her services to sit for the twins unless Lane had a day off through the week. Each morning Rita would come to their home, but when Lane was off, he still took the kids to Rita and Mack's for a visit.

"Day was good. We went to Grandma and Grandpa's for lunch. And then we had a nap. You know, Dad, Grandpa's not a very exciting guy once his belly's full."

Jack laughed as they worked to unfasten the restraints of the carriers.

"That's nice. Does Mack have that empty unit ready for painting yet?"

"Not yet. He's got to repair a hole in a wall."

"A hole? What the hell was the guy doing in there?"

"One of his buddies helping him move was carrying the rails for the bed out, tripped, and rammed one through the drywall. Mack said give him a few days."

"Huh, all right." Jack turned his attention back to the bundles in the backseat. "Did you guys have a good time with Grandma and Grandpa today?"

"Oh, be warned, Madan dropped a load a few minutes ago," Lane cautioned.

Jack sniffed, and his lip curled. "Right, Lane, blame the baby. Very mature."

Lane shrugged and lifted Magan's carrier out of the base. "We'll just let Daddy figure it out for himself, won't we, sunshine?" From the floor he retrieved the casserole dish of manicotti Rita had prepared and sent home with him for their dinner.

"Don't forget the diaper bag. It needs to be restocked. These two were little poop machines today," Lane said, pushing the door closed.

In the kitchen, both men conversed about their days, set the carriers they brought in on the kitchen table, and proceeded to unfasten the contents within.

Jack sniffed several times, made a face, and then admitted, "Madan needs to be changed."

Lane glanced down at Magan and lifted an eyebrow. "He thought I was kidding."

With Magan in his arms, Lane followed Jack through the living room and down the hall to the nursery.

"So, did you have an opportunity today to give some thought to this weekend?" Lane crossed the room to sit in the rocking chair in the corner, and held Magan so she was standing on his thighs. She started bouncing.

A frown creased Jack's brow as he pulled off his son's jeans. "Yeah. What do you think of that bed-and-breakfast off County Road 2001? It's far enough out of the

city to feel like a getaway, but close enough that Zarah should be all right with being away from the kids for a night.”

“The old Brown place?”

“Yeah, that’s the one. It was featured on a Web site that reviews romantic retreats,” Jack said.

A few weeks earlier, Jack and Lane had discussed doing something special for Zarah for Valentine’s Day. Since their honeymoon, they’d been so focused on setting up their home and awaiting the babies’ arrival that they hadn’t taken a holiday. This time away was something they needed. Lane hoped the time together would help the three of them reconnect. And hopefully put his recent misgivings regarding his place in the relationship to rest.

“I’ve heard about it. The couple that bought the estate is really making a name for themselves. They’ve completely renovated it. It’s quaint and quiet and perfect for romance,” Lane added.

Jack opened Madan’s diaper. “Oh for the love of God!”

Lane smiled at Magan, who glanced over her shoulder at him. “Hmm, everything okay, Dad?”

Jack gagged. “How can something so small and innocent be so toxic? This is vile.”

“Hey, I’ve seen you clear a room a time or two, my friend,” Lane said.

“But he’s barely seven months old,” Jack complained. “Jesus, this is so wrong. What did your Uncle Lane feed you today, sport?”

“Don’t blame me,” Lane said, pulling Magan close and blowing a raspberry against one of her cheeks. She giggled. “Take it up with his mother. She insisted they try peas today.”

“If he keeps this up, we’re going to want to think about building him his own bathroom away from the house.” A scowl wrinkled Jack’s face as he wrapped up the

diaper tightly and tossed it into a garbage can beside the changing table. "It's a good thing you're adorable, son."

Jack proceeded to wipe Madan's backside, applied baby powder and a fresh diaper, and redressed him in his tiny pair of blue jeans. "There. That's better."

"We'll have to call and book the B and B," Lane said. "I hope we didn't wait too late and they're filled up already with Valentine's Day being Monday."

"Nah, I called this afternoon for information," Jack said. "They've got a couple of rooms left. I wanted to make sure you were certain you had the time off. What about sitting arrangements?" Jack scooped Madan up into his arms and was about to leave the room when he lowered his eyes to the plastic pail containing the ripe contents. He grabbed it too. "That can't stay in here. The fumes are bad enough to peel the paint off the walls."

Lane stood and followed Jack out of the room. "Rita and Mack will be here through the day Saturday, and Eric and Scott are going to spend the night. Eric's working Sunday, but Rita's going to come back out to help Scott with the kids until we get home."

"Perfect," Jack replied. "The important stuff is in place. I'll call and book our room. You going to be good while I make the call and jump in the shower?"

"You bet," Lane said, fastening Magan back into her carrier. He then reached over to take Madan from Jack's arms. "Let's get you strapped in, slugger. Then Uncle Lane can make your dinner."

From the doorway leading down the hall, Jack turned. "Any chance you'd be willing to handle getting our dinner ready too? I'm willing to pay."

"Forget it, Jack. Monday is your night." Lane laughed. "Rita already took care of your main course. You're on your own for the rest. And you'd better make it quick in the shower. I, for one, am starving."

"Thanks, Lane. Thanks a lot."

* * *

After his shower, Jack stood at the island in the kitchen, slicing peppers and cucumbers to add to the ready-made bag of lettuce he'd picked up for a salad to go with the manicotti. The pasta was in the oven warming, and the rolls he'd buttered and sprinkled with garlic salt sat awaiting their turn beside the stove.

Jack might have grumbled before his shower about being stuck making dinner, but the truth was, he enjoyed the opportunity to do this for Zarah and Lane. Her appreciation and praise at his efforts made him feel amazing.

After they were married, they'd wasted no time in finding a house. With two babies on the way, there was no room in the bachelor units each of them had lived in at the Davises' apartment building. Once he, Zarah, and Lane left the conveniences Rita and Mack Davis lavished on them—mainly three prepared meals a day if they wanted them—the trio had enrolled in a cooking class, since none of them were any good in the kitchen. And it wouldn't have been right to depend on Rita to feed them now that they were starting their own family.

Of the three, Lane was the most adventurous when it came to cooking. At least Lane could use a toaster without having the fire department called because a neighbor thought his apartment was in flames. To this day, Jack had yet to live that day down.

While each had his or her own nights to cook and hadn't starved to death, Jack was appreciative when Rita sent home care packages for them. Especially on Jack's nights.

The thought of the woman who'd been more of a mother to him than his own brought a smile to his face. Though he was good at following the instructions on simple recipes and boxes of frozen pizzas and such, he still managed to burn water on the odd occasion.

Seated at the table across the room, Lane fed the twins. The three of them were spattered in a colorful array of baby foods.

It was nearly five thirty, and Zarah would be home any minute. Then they could sit down to eat.

Jack was excited about the upcoming weekend, spending quality “adult time” with Zarah and Lane, reconnecting. It had been too long since they’d taken time for themselves.

They hadn’t made love as a threesome since before the twins’ arrival, and as the months went by, the void inside him grew bigger. As much as he loved Zarah and loved being with her by himself, he knew that when Lane joined them, something unexplainable exploded within Zarah. Within all of them. Yes, they all enjoyed their individual encounters of expressing their love, but when the three of them got together, the earth moved.

Jack wanted to feel the earth move. But he still wasn’t convinced the timing was right. He was still concerned that Zarah’s body hadn’t healed enough for him and Lane to make love to her at the same time.

The last time he and Lane had made love to Zarah together had been the afternoon she went into labor—six weeks before the twins’ due date. Jack was certain that was what had triggered it, and he had agonized that because of his and Lane’s demanding needs that afternoon, in their raging lust they might have done something to harm the babies. The doctor had assured him otherwise, saying it wasn’t unusual for twins to arrive earlier than expected. That night they’d welcomed a healthy five-pound baby boy and five-and-a-half-pound little girl into their family.

That was a little over seven months ago. Their family had settled into a routine, and with Zarah’s return to work, their lives were on track.

He didn’t know why he was hesitant about resuming their ménage relationship. He knew the smart thing to do would be to talk to Zarah and Lane and get things out in the open, but Jack wasn’t about to do that, either. Over the past couple of months or so—he was certain it hadn’t been longer than that—Jack had detected a shift in the relationship. Zarah seemed withdrawn at times, and Lane appeared to be distancing himself.

At first Jack had assumed he was imagining those things. Sure, the twins' arrival changed their lives. But lately Jack couldn't help wonder if there was more going on with his wife and best friend. He knew they were all missing being together. Zarah, for one, had voiced her wishes to "do it" more than once. Still, Jack worried her body wasn't ready for that. The thought of possibly hurting her ate at his gut like acid, and he knew Lane felt the same way.

"Come on, Magan-girl, open up," Lane said from the table. "Two more bites of this disgusting-smelling squash, and then we can move on to the bananas. Yum."

"Why don't you try that squash, Uncle Lane? Show her it tastes better than it smells."

"Not on your best day, Dad." Lane grinned over his shoulder. "I'm totally hooked on the fruits, but you couldn't pay me enough to eat the meats and veggies." Lane turned his attention back to their kids and said, "This crap is for growing girls and boys. Isn't that right?"

Jack laughed.

"Open up, pumpkin. Last bite. That's my girl."

It was time to get things back on track. Though Jack had reservations, perhaps it was time for him to consider them engaging in a ménage. Their relationship wasn't all about the sex, but Zarah, Lane, and he needed to refuel the fires that had brought them together in this unique partnership. Or at the very least put the topic on the table for discussion.

The excessive slamming of a car door drew Jack's gaze out the kitchen window. He saw Zarah's SUV—identical to the one Lane drove—parked in the driveway. She kicked the front tire on her way by. From his spot at the island in the center of the kitchen, he watched her delicious full lips moving a mile a minute. Judging by the frown on her beautiful face, his wife hadn't had a good day.

"Heads up," Jack said and nodded toward the door.

Zarah's muttered voice carried through the screen door leading from the yard into the kitchen, and both men glanced over. Her curses carried inside as she neared.

"Sounds like she had a rough one," Lane said.

Zarah's head was down as she pulled the door open and stepped inside.

"The pompous son of a—" She lifted her head, and a wide smile lit up her face. "Hello." Suddenly she beamed.

"Hey, baby," Lane greeted.

At the door, she dropped her purse and keys to the floor, hung up her coat, kicked off her heels, and walked hurriedly toward the table.

"Hello, my babies," she cooed and picked up the damp facecloth Lane had set between the two carriers. She wiped Madan's face, then peppered a smattering of soft kisses against his tiny lips. Magan was treated to the same loving greeting by her mother. "Did you manage to get any food inside them?" She chuckled and turned her attention to Lane.

"Yeah, I think enough." Lane gave Madan's foot a gentle shake, making him laugh. "They don't seem to be starving. Look at the size of this leg."

"They do have healthy appetites, don't they?" she said.

After wiping Lane's face, Zarah pressed her lips to his, and a sultry moan resonated from her chest.

Jack's cock hardened instantly.

"Which reminds me," Lane said when she withdrew from their kiss. "No more peas for this guy."

"Why's that?"

"He dropped an A-bomb in my truck this afternoon. I don't think I'll ever get the smell out of the upholstery."

Zarah laughed. "It couldn't have been the peas from lunchtime today; they wouldn't have gone through him that fast. Might have been the taste of yogurt I

gave him yesterday. Maybe it was too much for his little belly. I'll be more mindful when offering them something new in the future." She turned and crossed the room to Jack. "I'm so glad to be home. How was your day?" she asked, sharing the taste of her mouth with him.

His lips burned from her touch, and his fingers itched to pull her against him so she could feel the evidence of the arousal she had stirred.

"I thought about you every minute of every hour," Jack admitted, his voice husky from the sudden onslaught of desire she invoked.

Zarah grinned. "And just what kind of thoughts were you thinking, Mr. Masters?"

"Disgustingly impure, Mrs. Masters."

"Sounds deliciously decadent," she purred and gave him a wink. "Would you be terribly hurt if I took a quick shower to wash away the day's grime and frustrations before digging into your wonderful-smelling dinner?"

"Kids are fed," Lane said. "I just need to clean them up and set the table for us."

"I've almost got this salad ready. And the rolls will only take a few minutes under the broiler," Jack said, pulling the tea towel off his shoulder to wipe his hands. He dipped his head and brushed another kiss along Zarah's lips. "Take as long as you want, sweetheart."

"I love you. Thanks." As she walked through the kitchen, she began unbuttoning her peach-colored blouse. "I promise not to be long."

"Would you like me to bring you a glass of wine, honey?" Lane asked as he carried the dishes he'd used to feed the babies to the sink.

Zarah paused at the door and spun around. Her golden eyes sparkled, and her smile broadened. Her blouse was open, revealing her belly and the tantalizing swells of her breasts above her bra.

"Mmm, I would make it so worth your while, lover."

It didn't matter her statement was issued to Lane; Jack nearly came from the promise in her voice. Zarah disappeared around the corner, and the bathroom door down the hallway clicked closed. A moment later, the sound of water could be heard.

Lane removed the bibs from around the babies' necks, wiped their cherublike faces, and pressed a kiss to each of their heads.

Jack crossed the kitchen to the fridge and pulled out a handful of mushrooms to slice into the salad. He also helped himself to a bottle of beer. As he went back to his salad preparation, Lane set the table and then poured a glass of red wine.

He flashed Jack a grin.

"Thought you said you were starving," Jack said.

"You heard the lady," Lane replied. "She's going to make this glass of wine worth my while. Not a chance I'm going to pass that up."

Jack chuckled and shook his head.

Chapter Two

Zarah stood under the spray of the shower, the hot water sluicing over her body, rinsing away the shampoo from her hair. The opening of the shower curtain sent a cool breeze wafting over her heated skin.

After wiping the water from her eyes, she opened them to see Lane, naked, holding out a glass of wine.

She smiled. "Thank you." She took the glass and swallowed a healthy mouthful of fruity red liquid. "Mmm, this is lovely."

Zarah took her time visually savoring Lane's gorgeous body from head to toe. When she reached his cock, it was hard, the head dark purple. At the end, a droplet of precum seeped from the slit.

When she handed the glass back to him, Lane took a sip and then reached around the curtain to set the glass on the edge of the tub. With his hands empty, she moved in.

She wrapped her hands around the back of his neck and then pulled his mouth to hers. Her breasts pressed against the firm muscles of his chest. His arms went around her waist, and his hands ventured lower to cup the cheeks of her backside. She slipped her tongue past his lips to mate with his. A shared moan of their mounting desires echoed within the confines of the shower.

Lane's right hand released her butt and moved up to palm her breast. When his fingers began plucking at her distended nipple, she pulled away from his mouth enough to whisper, "I want you."

"The feeling is mutual, baby."

Lane captured her mouth again and turned her until her back was pressed against the wall of the shower.

“Just to let you know,” he said, reaching down and hooking his hand behind her knee and pulling her bent leg up to his hip, “I’m so fucking hard and need you so fucking bad, I think it only fair to warn you this is going to be quick.”

Zarah uttered a throaty chuckle. “Just seeing you and Jack when I walked in the house, Jack working on dinner, you feeding the kids...” She stroked her hand from Lane’s neck over his shoulders and down the tensing muscles of his pecs. When her fingertips feathered over his taut nipples and squeezed them between her fingers, he breathed a hiss through his teeth. “The two of you make me so hot. My engines are already revved, stud. I need you hard and fast.”

“Then I am just the man to accommodate you.” Lane’s tongue drilled into her mouth, dominating their kiss as he angled the head of his cock toward her opening.

Zarah reached between them, wrapped her fingers around his long, thick shaft, and stroked him several times. He growled into her mouth and thrust his hips against her hand. When he pushed forward, she eased him inside her.

Lane’s fingers dug into her thigh, held snug against his thrusting hip. His left hand caressed from her waist, along her side, over her breast, and up the back of her neck to fist in her long curls. He held her head in place while feasting hungrily on her mouth. The possessiveness in his kiss stole the air from her lungs.

Lane filled her pussy. His cock stroked a delightful rhythm along her quivering muscles. When he had climbed into the shower with her, her lust had already been all-consuming. She was thankful he joined her of his own will, because if he hadn’t, she’d had every intention of pulling him in with her.

But she’d known he would join her. The only thing that would have made their shower more perfect would have been if Jack had been there as well.

Climax was within her reach. Just a few more exquisite strokes and her body would explode. With reluctance, she pulled away from Lane’s mouth.

“Yes, baby, right there,” she begged.

She wrapped her arms around his waist, one hand dropping to his ass and encouraging him to fuck her harder, faster, deeper.

“Jesus, woman,” Lane panted. “I’m so close. You’re going to kill me. Death by fucking.”

Zarah groaned out a weak chuckle. “Just a little more, Lane, please...” She dug her fingernails into the firm, tensing cheek of his ass.

With her next breath, she came. Her muscles clamped onto Lane’s cock and squeezed him in violent spasms. Her body shuddered as seductive waves of orgasm swept her under.

Lane buried his face in the crook of her neck and hammered into her several more glorious strokes until his body tensed. Inside her body his cock jerked, and the hot evidence of his completion filled her. He leaned into her, her body absorbing his weight. His muscular frame trembled against her. His breath was labored and harsh.

“I’m sorry,” Lane said a few heartbeats later.

“Mmm, for what?” She stroked her hands up and down the length of his back.

“You deserve more than a quick fuck in the shower.”

Zarah cupped his cheeks in her hands and pushed his face back until she was staring into his eyes. “You gave me exactly what I needed, Lane. You never need to apologize for that.” She pressed a gentle kiss to his lips. “Besides, Jack has dinner waiting for us. We can’t be too long.”

“Oh yeah, I forgot all about dinner,” he teased.

Zarah didn’t want to spoil what was a perfect moment, but she had to clear something up. In the past, more weeks than she cared to admit, something had changed. The mood of the relationship was different. And as much as she tried not to, she couldn’t help but stew and dream up all sorts of conclusions as to why that was.

Sometimes Lane seemed distant, though not at the moment. Right now she held his full, undivided attention. She was certain it was nothing more than their lives at present, with their jobs, their kids. It was encounters like this one where she had to tell herself sometimes she shouldn't listen to her thoughts. But then there were other times when she just couldn't help it.

And that was due to the absence of their ménage experiences. Not that they were the glue holding their relationship together; the three of them shared so much more than sex. Or did they? Did Lane feel as though that was all they had? Was that all she meant to him, and since that part of their relationship had fallen by the wayside, was he losing interest? In her? In their family? Would it be that easy for him to simply walk away, just because the two of them had never exchanged vows the way she and Jack had?

Then there was Jack. She'd voiced her consent and desire to reestablish their threesomes in the bedroom or the living room or the kitchen. It didn't matter to her where they did it, just as long as they reconnected. She wondered why he was holding out. Did he think that was all she wanted from him and Lane? That it had to be both of them or neither? No, that was crazy, since their individual experiences were equally as fulfilling. But there was something, damn it.

"You know I love you, right?" she asked him.

Lane gave her a quizzical look. His cock was still buried inside her. "Yeah. What's up?"

"And you know how much I enjoy making love with you."

"Yes."

"I'm just curious," she said with trepidation. "As fulfilling as what we just shared was"—Lane held her gaze—"was something missing?"

Lane gave her a lopsided grin. "I gave you the whole thing, baby. Every inch. I promise I didn't hold back on you," he said and dipped his head to steal a kiss.

Zarah rolled her eyes.

“Okay, okay, yeah, honey, *sometimes* there’s something missing. But not always. Sometimes it’s really nice just me and you.” He pushed a wet lock of curls behind her ear.

Zarah panicked a mite, not wanting Lane to think she didn’t value the time they spent as just the two of them.

“Oh, Lane, I just meant—”

He pressed a finger against her lips, halting the clarification on her tongue.

“I know what you meant. And I agree with you; sometimes there’s something missing, and that something is Jack. Just like, I imagine, sometimes when you’re with him, I’m missing.”

“So you guys *do* feel it?”

“How could we not? The three of us share something remarkable.”

“So is it Jack holding out on the threesomes?” She recalled the time she’d cracked her car up, she craved the love and comfort of the two men, Jack had insisted she wasn’t ready. She’d proved them wrong by seducing them with a jerky striptease because her muscles were so stiff and then proceeded to tease them by masturbating for them. It hadn’t taken long for them to relent. And what a night it had been.

“Nah, Jack’s not holding out, baby.” Though he smiled, his eyes flickered for a split second, and she knew she’d hit close to the mark. “It seems the two of us have turned you into a greedy wench,” he teased.

She wanted answers, but she refused to spoil the moment between her and Lane any more than she already had. The weekend she had planned would have been the perfect time to rekindle their ménage relationship and strengthen their bond. They’d spent the past months focusing on the twins and forgetting all about themselves. As much as they all loved devoting time to their kids, they needed to remember themselves and each other as well.

If there *was* anything to her deluded thoughts about what Jack and Lane were possibly thinking, this weekend she'd intended to put all their concerns to rest. She had wanted to show them she wasn't a fragile waif following the birth of her babies and that she could and would take everything they offered her. She refused to even consider Lane's attentions might be faltering; at least for now she would. Because she intended to show him her love for him was as strong as ever.

"You two have no one to blame but yourselves," she chided with a smile.

"Let's get a move on. I'm starving," he said.

Lane withdrew his cock from her pussy, and they hurried to finish their shower.

* * *

With dinner and cleanup out of the way, following bath time, and once the babies were tucked into their cribs for the night, Zarah, Jack, and Lane sat in the living room, relaxing.

All evening Zarah had put off announcing her impromptu business trip to the guys. She *knew* they'd be all right for the few days she'd be gone, but she didn't *want* to go. Didn't want to be away from them, especially with their intimacy in a somewhat fragile state. She was pissy that the plans for her romantic and carnal weekend would have to be put off until the following weekend. However, she was thankful the guys hadn't picked up on her disappointment when she'd walked through the door earlier. If they'd said anything at that precise moment, her head might have blown right off her shoulders.

But when she'd walked into the house, oblivious that she even had until she glanced up and saw her husbands and their babies all smiling at her, all thoughts of ADA Raymond and his damn trip had dissolved.

Making love with Lane in the shower was a most welcome diversion of her thoughts, both physically and mentally. Emotionally he'd devoured her, as usual. It didn't matter they'd shared a fast fuck. What mattered was they'd shared each

other. And later, if she played her cards right, she'd have Jack. Perhaps she'd be lucky enough to have both Jack and Lane at the same time.

"So," Jack said, handing her a glass of wine and dropping onto the sofa beside her. "You going to share with us what had you upset when you came home?"

Zarah took a sip from the glass and then leaned over to set it on the end table beside the couch.

"I have to go away for a few days on a case," she said and glanced between them.

"Days? Like overnight?" Lane asked.

This would be the first time she'd been away on an overnight business-related trip. She nodded.

"How many days?" Jack asked.

Zarah shrugged. "That's the thing. Raymond said it could be up to a week." At the matching surprised expressions her lovers wore, she added, "But I can't really see it being that long."

"So you could be gone for the weekend?" they asked simultaneously.

Zarah went to speak, but the look of disappointment on their faces halted her words. She blinked hard several times, then nodded. They looked like she felt about her plans for a carnal escapade being squashed.

"Okay, tell us what's up." Lane's expression returned to neutral. He sat back in the recliner, stretched his legs out, and crossed his ankles. Over his abdomen, he interlaced his fingers.

"New witnesses have come forward on the organized crime case Radley's prosecuting, and since they can't come to him, he needs to go to them."

Jack seemed to stew over that. "How does that include you? Your job is mainly research. Book stuff."

She frowned recalling the conversation in Raymond's office earlier that day. "Seems my being a woman of 'color'"—she drew imaginary quotation marks in the

air with her fingers—“will make one of the witnesses more at ease delivering her statement.”

“He said that? *Just* like that?” Lane leaned forward in his chair, a frown creasing his gorgeous brow.

“More or less.” She shrugged. “The connotation was there.”

“I knew I didn’t like that guy,” Jack said.

“Please, guys, he doesn’t bother me, honest. He also said my being a new mother would be a benefit. Whatever is needed to get the required information, I’ll do. It’s all right.”

“It’s not really, baby,” Lane added.

Zarah chose not to entertain their comments.

It was hard to believe that in this day and age some people were still hung up on race. It boggled the mind. But being interracial, she’d been on the receiving end of her fair share of racism. Over time she’d learned to pick her battles regarding it. It was either that or drive herself crazy fighting everything and everyone. And what kind of life was that to live?

“I don’t want to go, but Stephen recommended my presence, so—”

“You don’t want to let him down,” Jack said. “We understand that, sweetheart.”

Lane nodded his agreement.

“Thanks, guys. I just feel so bad leaving you and the kids.” *Not to mention, I had something wicked planned for us this weekend, and now it’ll have to wait.*

“We’ll be fine, honey,” Lane said. “We’re familiar with the kids’ schedule.”

“And Rita’s here with them through the day,” Jack added. “Everything will be all right.”

Zarah was about to let it slip that Raymond had ruined her plans for the upcoming weekend when the monitor on the table erupted. Madan’s sudden whimpering had the three of them glancing at the handheld unit. She slid her legs

over the edge of the sofa to get up and tend to their son, but Lane's voice stopped her.

"I'll check on our boy, baby," he said, giving her a wink.

"Thank you," she said.

Lane rounded the corner and disappeared up the hallway. A moment later his voice sounded over the monitor.

"Shh, Uncle Lane's got you, buddy," Lane whispered. "Settle down now. We don't want you waking your sister." There was some rustling of the blankets within the crib and the soft creak of the rocking chair in the corner of the room and then the baby settled. "Now what's got my boy so upset, hmm?"

Once the monitor went silent, Zarah smiled at Jack. "Lane is so good with the babies."

Jack nodded. "Yes, he is."

Without waiting for an invitation, Zarah crawled along the sofa toward Jack and leaned across his lap. She slipped her hands under his T-shirt, caressing along his firm abs and defined pecs. She feathered her fingertips over the hardened peaks of his nipples.

A groan rumbled in Jack's throat. His hands stroked up the length of her thighs to her hips, where they settled.

"I want you, handsome," she whispered and moved in to kiss his throat and along his jawline. The stubble of his whiskers added to her arousal. "Right. Now."

Jack raised his eyebrows, and his lips curled in a sexy grin. "Is that so?"

"Mmm-hmm." She pushed his shirt up urging him to take it off.

Jack pulled his T-shirt over his head and tossed it to the floor. Zarah dipped her head to flick her tongue over the tight tips of his nipples. His moan and grip on her hips sent a surge of heat through her pussy. Her own nipples swelled into painfully distended peaks, straining against her bra.

The hand on her hip dropped the fastening of her shorts, and with deft fingers he slid the button through the hole, then eased the zipper down.

“It’ll be my pleasure to give my woman what she wants,” Jack said in a husky voice.

Zarah slid off the sofa and knelt between Jack’s legs. The desire in his eyes stirred her fires. When he ran his tongue along his full lower lip, a surge of moisture dampened her panties. She held Jack’s hungry gaze, slipping her fingers into the waistband of his jeans and unfastening the button and fly. He lifted his ass as she worked the denim, along with his underwear, over his hips and down his legs. He pulled his feet free and she tossed the jeans toward the discarded T-shirt. She eyed him thoroughly from head to toe and smiled.

“It’ll be *my* pleasure to take what my man wants to give me,” she purred and wrapped her fingers around his cock.

Jack was hard and hot in her hand. Up and down his velvety length, she pumped and squeezed. He laid his head against the back of the sofa and closed his eyes. Licking her lips, Zarah lowered her head and took his cock into her mouth. The musky scent of his arousal fed her desire. She stroked her tongue along the thick pulsing vein on the underside of his shaft. When the crown nudged the back of her throat, she swallowed and flicked her tongue out against his balls.

A strangled groan from above drew her gaze to Jack’s face as she pulled back. A pained expression of ecstasy spread across his gorgeous features. She continued to work her hand and mouth on him while working her shorts and panties over her hips and off with her other hand. She grew so hot for Jack by simply watching the pleasure she was bringing him cross his face. Her pussy clenched and throbbed, readying itself for him to stretch and fill her.

Jack’s long fingers threaded through her curls, gripping tight, holding her head while his hips thrust against her mouth and hand. A moment after a gush of salty liquid trickled over her tongue and down her throat, Jack pulled her head away from him while her hand still stroked.

Zarah sent him a pout.

“I want to be inside you, baby.” The low rumble of Jack’s raspy tone sent a tremor of need through her, and she shivered.

Zarah stood and pulled her T-shirt over her head and threw it aside. Her bra joined the shirt on the floor.

“What about what I want?” she asked, cupping her breasts, lifting the heavy globes and pushing them together. Then she swiped her tongue over the tip of her right nipple.

Jack sat forward, slid his hand between her parted thighs, and pushed a finger inside her drenched pussy.

A wolfish grin lifted his lips, and he said, “Feels like you want it too. You’ve got that pussy of mine hot and wet and wanting me to shove my cock inside it.”

He withdrew his finger, gripped her hips, and pulled her forward. Zarah straddled him. Jack wrapped his hand around his shaft and aligned himself with her body, and she slid her hips forward.

“Take me all at once, baby. Don’t be gentle,” Jack said and captured one of her nipples between his teeth.

“Oh yes.” She sighed, lowering herself onto Jack’s cock, losing herself in the feel of him parting her folds. The heat of his mouth on her breast and the sting of his teeth sinking into her flesh sent sparks of need shooting from her nipple throughout her chest and south to where Jack impaled her body so deliciously.

Jack’s strong hands on her hips encouraged her to ride him in an erotic and smooth rhythm.

“Oh fuck yeah.” Jack’s groan vibrated through her breast.

Up and down, swiveling her hips, Zarah rode Jack, hard and determined. Her need soared toward the stars. Perspiration popped from every pore, and her flesh glistened. The scent of their coupling fragranced the air. The wet, seductive sounds of their joining bodies echoed around the room. As her momentum gained in

strength, she gripped the back of the sofa on either side of Jack's head for support. Against Jack's groin, she ground her pelvis, needing him deeper inside her. She slammed harder down onto him.

"Fuck," Jack growled through gritted teeth, his body slick with sweat.

Zarah tossed her head back in the throes of bliss. In her peripheral vision, she spied Lane standing in the doorway, watching them. She glanced over, never breaking stride on Jack's lap.

"Join us," she purred.

Lane pushed himself from the frame of the archway and crossed the living room to sit in the chair he'd vacated earlier. "Mmm, I'm content to enjoy the show," he said, his voice heavy with desire. The front of his jeans bulged, outlining the long, thick evidence of his arousal.

Disappointment that he wouldn't take her up on her request tweaked within her.

"Why don't you turn around, baby, so I can get a better look at you," Lane said.

Zarah dropped her mouth to Jack's, kissing him deeply. As Jack lifted her ass, his cock slipped free, and she stood. Jack grasped her hips again when she turned, and he guided her back down onto his shaft. Zarah straddled Jack's thighs once more. He spread his legs, forcing hers even wider, leaving Zarah's body open to Lane's hungry gaze.

Having Lane watch was like throwing gas on an already roaring fire. Her body burned. Her skin itched. Her insides were turning outside. The familiar tingle of orgasm began building and her movements grew jerky. Her rhythm was lost as she strove for completion.

Jack reached around her and pulled her back against his chest, his hand cupping her breast, tugging and plucking at her nipple. He slid his other hand between her legs, his thick fingers spreading her folds wide, exposing the swollen, wet spot where their bodies were joined.

On the chair, Lane sat forward, his elbows rested on his knees. His eyes were focused on her center, his breath hoarse and labored. Perspiration peppered his upper lip, and his hands were clenched into fists between his knees.

Zarah held Lane's gaze as she rode Jack's cock. Jack massaged her breasts, his fingers tugged roughly at her nipples. His teeth nipped at the sensitive flesh behind her right ear and neck. The delightful friction of his shaft thrusting up inside her, combined with the fingers from his left hand manipulating her swollen clit, bordered on unbearable.

Just then Lane stood and crossed the living room floor, unzipping his jeans. From within he pulled his long, thick length and wrapped his fingers around the hard flesh. He pumped his shaft as he neared her and Jack on the sofa. The crown was a vibrant purple, the veins pulsing. From the end delicious precum oozed teasingly, glistening on the expanse of his length as Lane's hand stroked.

It was too much. Jack's cock buried inside her, his fingers dancing over her clit and her nipples, and his mouth on her neck. The fragrance of their lovemaking heavily scented the air around them. Watching Lane jerking his cock in time to Jack's thrusting hips drove her need through the roof. She was enjoying the gradual and fierce buildup, and when her climax suddenly hit, her body blew apart.

The muscles in her pussy pulsed around Jack's cock, squeezing, clenching, convulsing. She grew dizzy as the jolts of pleasure rippled through her. Her eyes closed as the erotic sensations dragged her to the dark side.

Beneath her Jack continued to pump. When his body stiffened and his cock jerked along the throbbing walls of her pussy, she grabbed his manipulating hands and opened her eyes. Lane's hips thrust forward and his hand pumped his cock hard and fast. Seconds later he shot his cum onto her heaving chest and the backs of her and Jack's hands. Warmth flooded her as Jack filled her with his release.

Several moments passed between them as they savored their climaxes. Hoarse, strangled breaths were the only sound in the living room.

"That was fucking hot," Jack said, his voice husky and still laden with desire.

Lane gave the two of them a smile. "You should have been standing here," he said. After pulling his T-shirt over his head, he reached over to wipe his cum off her breasts.

"No," Zarah said, and he stopped before the fabric touched her skin.

First, she lifted her hand and dragged her tongue along the back of it, licking off Lane's release. Then she brought Jack's fingers to her mouth and cleaned off the droplets that had landed on him. From between her legs she drew Jack's hand up and sucked her own juices from his digits. With Lane focused on her movements and Jack watching over her shoulder, she cupped her breasts and proceeded to tongue off the cum splattered all over her chest.

When she was finished, she ran her tongue along her top lip, then slowly across the lower, and moaned low in her throat. "Mmm," she purred.

It had been perfect.

"Now *that* was hot," Lane and Jack said in unison.

"I fucking love watching you do that," Lane said and then dipped his head and took possession of her mouth.

Chapter Three

According to Radley's itinerary, he was picking her up at her home at five sharp that evening. Despite the scowl of irritation he'd given her, he gruffly consented to her leaving the office around lunch so she could finish getting ready for their trip.

"I suppose if you must," he'd said.

Damn right she must.

While the kids napped, Zarah bustled around the house, collecting toiletries and clothing and tossing the items on the bed for inventory. Deciding she wouldn't be staying away any longer than a few days at the most, she packed accordingly. Into a small suitcase she packed a couple of mix-and-match skirts and blouses, one pair of neutral-colored heels, a pair of pants, one sweater, one dress, and undies. She snatched a book from the nightstand that had been sitting there for weeks and she'd been dying to crack open, but hadn't yet found the time.

She mentally ran through the kids' and guys' schedules and wondered if she'd forgotten to do anything that the guys might require in her absence. She'd ensured there were sufficient diapers and jars of baby food and groceries. All the laundry had been done the night before.

It still made no sense why Radley had insisted on her accompanying him to interview witnesses. For the sake of the case, she'd smile and go. It was important to put the witnesses at ease, and if her presence would make someone more comfortable, it was her duty to the office to see that through.

With her case zipped, she set it on the floor and pulled up the handle to wheel it to the door. On her way past the nursery, she wandered in to watch the twins

sleeping soundly through their afternoon nap. It was nearing three thirty, and the duo would be awake shortly, looking to be entertained before wanting dinner. Unfortunately, she wouldn't be around to feed them their supper. Most nights she came home after they'd already eaten, so tonight really shouldn't have made a difference. But it did, since she'd be away for several days and would miss everything they did in her absence.

Zarah watched the babies a few minutes alone before Rita entered their room.

"They're beautiful," Rita said, gazing lovingly into one crib and then the other.

"Yup. The most beautiful babies in the whole world," Zarah agreed.

"Come along, my pet. I've made us some tea. It'll help you relax. You're very tense."

Zarah nodded and followed Rita from the room. At the kitchen table, Rita poured the tea.

"It's that new ADA. He gets me so fired up," Zarah said.

"He's not worth the fuss, pet," Rita replied simply.

The two women conversed for twenty minutes before the monitor in the middle of the table came to life with the sounds of baby babble.

Rita shifted in her chair, but Zarah stopped her.

"I've got them," she said.

When Zarah came back into the kitchen with a baby in each arm, Lane walked through the back door. Her pulse accelerated at the sight of him. His eyes sparkled with desire and mischief when they settled on her.

"Hi there," she said.

"My two favorite ladies, and my two favorite munchkins. Today is my lucky day."

After kicking his shoes off and removing his coat, he crossed the kitchen. He scooped Madan into his arms, then gave Zarah a kiss.

"All packed and ready to go?" he asked, eyeing the suitcase beside the door.

“Ready as I’ll ever be.”

The sound of Jack’s pickup pulling into the driveway drifted through the open windows. A moment later he entered the house carrying two bags of Chinese takeout.

Mack Davis followed Jack in. He’d come to pick Rita up after she’d been sitting for the day.

“Hello there, love of my life.” Jack set the bags on the counter and dipped his head to place a kiss on Zarah’s lips. “I thought we’d eat together before you left.”

“That’s very thoughtful. Thank you.”

On his way toward his wife, Mack stopped and kissed Zarah’s forehead, then Magan’s. “Elliott, you get more beautiful every time I see you.”

“Oh you sweet-talker, you.” Zarah laughed.

Lane’s expression turned serious, yet his blue eyes gave away his amusement. “Back off, old-timer. That woman’s taken.”

“If I was thirty years younger, I’d give you boys a run for your money.” Mack dropped a kiss to Rita’s cheek.

“Mmm, now that’s an entertaining thought.” Rita grinned. “A man thirty years younger...”

“That’s enough, woman,” Mack teased. Rita gasped in surprised when Mack squeezed her left butt cheek.

“Well you started it.” Rita patted her husband’s forearm.

Zarah smiled and tightened her grip on her daughter. She was blessed to be part of such a wonderful family.

The crunching of gravel outside announced a car in the driveway.

“Shit,” Zarah murmured under her breath. Panic rippled through her as she wondered if Radley was there already.

“What’s the matter?” Jack stood at the sink, washing his hands.

Zarah hurried to the back door and peered out to see Eric and Scott walking toward the house. She let out a sigh of relief. It wouldn't have surprised her if Radley decided to fuck with her a bit more by showing up earlier than scheduled.

"I thought it was Raymond," Zarah said and pushed the screen door open for them. "Hi, guys."

"Hey, gang," Eric said, plucking Magan out of Zarah's arms. He blew a raspberry against her chubby cheek, making her giggle.

When Magan spied Scott over Eric's shoulder, her smile widened. If it were possible for a baby barely seven months old, she was smitten with Scott. She couldn't take her eyes off him, endlessly watching him with adoration in her big golden eyes. It was cute how when he was around, no one else mattered.

"Hmm, that was a new record. Uncle Eric gets shoved aside when Uncle Scott's around." Eric feigned being hurt and handed the baby over. "Lucky for you I'm not an overly sensitive guy, kiddo."

"A little competition will keep you on your toes, babe." Scott took the baby from his lover. "Hello there, my angel," he cooed to Magan. "I have the most gorgeous pictures of you and your brother to hang in your room."

"You got them back?" Lane asked Scott, passing Madan to Eric.

Scott's onetime hobby of photography had turned into an obsession once the twins arrived. Over the months since their birth, he'd taken thousands of pictures of them, and many of those shots were displayed all over the house. Two weekends before, he and Eric had joined Zarah, Jack, Lane, and the kids on a family walk and picnic in the park. The entire time, Scott's camera clicked away.

Scott nodded. "These two are very photogenic."

"They're a couple of hams when they spot that camera of yours." Jack laughed.

"I love taking pictures of them," Scott continued. "And you too, Zarah. There are several shots where I've captured something magical in your expression when you're looking at them."

Zarah's cheeks warmed.

"Did you bring them, pet?" Rita asked.

"No," Scott replied.

"That's my fault," Eric said. "When I picked Scott up, I failed to mention we were coming out here. Sorry."

"No problem," Jack said. "Get them here soon, though. These two are growing like a couple of weeds."

"Yeah, it's quite an awakening to look back on all those shots around the house and see how much they've grown and changed," Lane added.

"It's amazing how fast this time passes, isn't it?" Rita crossed the kitchen toward the cupboards where the dishes were kept.

"They're small for too short a period of time," Zarah agreed.

"Mack, love, start unpacking those bags while I get plates and cutlery," Rita said, pulling the cupboard door open. "Zarah's on a tight timeline tonight."

"Sure thing, honey." Mack dug into the bags and began setting the various containers on the kitchen table.

After washing his hands, Jack strolled over to the fridge, collected several jars of baby food, and proceeded to dish out dinner for the babies. Eric and Scott strapped the kids into their carriers and set the bundles on the island where Jack had set the two dishes after warming them up. Everyone then sat at the table and were busy passing the dishes around. Zarah pulled up one of the stools at the island.

"Why don't you go ahead and eat, sweetheart? I'll feed these guys," Jack offered.

She shook her head. "I'm going to miss this for the next few days. I want to."

"All right." Jack gave her a wink and walked over to the table. He came back a moment later with a plate he'd made up for her.

"You are far too good to me, Jack." Yes, she was blessed.

After dinner everyone worked together tidying the mess. At five minutes to five the sound of a car pulling into the driveway carried into the house. Zarah glanced out the front window to see Radley's silver Mercedes parked beside Jack's pickup truck.

"Well, there's my ride," she grouched and then made her way over to gather up her suitcase and purse.

Her entourage followed her outside. Jack and Lane each carried one of the babies.

"The time will pass quickly, pet," Rita said.

"That's right, you'll be back before you know it," Mack offered in support.

"Scott and I will help Jack and Lane out, Zarah. Please try not to worry," Eric said and gave her shoulder a squeeze.

"I'll try."

Radley was standing on the passenger side of his car and had already opened the trunk when Zarah came outside.

"Radley, you know my husbands, Jack and Lane." The men exchanged nods of acknowledgement. "This is Rita and Mack Davis, our children's grandparents. Their nephew Eric Davis and his partner Scott Reynolds."

"Pleasure," Radley said.

"Likewise," Mack and Rita said together.

Eric and Scott nodded.

Jack passed Magan to Zarah and then reached down and hoisted her luggage into the small trunk space atop Radley's.

"Nice car," Jack said to Radley.

"Thanks."

"You'll be traveling with valuable cargo, so you'd better drive safely. Like your life depends on it."

Radley stiffened.

“Because it does,” Lane added.

Zarah’s cheeks heated.

“I’ve never so much as received a speeding ticket,” Radley said. “You needn’t worry about my driving.”

Straight-laced, by-the-book Radley Raymond; Zarah believed it.

Zarah kissed her daughter before handing her back to her father. “Mommy loves you, baby-girl. You be good for Daddy and Uncle Lane.”

She then gave Jack a deep kiss. Turning to Lane, she took Madan’s tiny hand in hers and pressed her lips to it several times. “You too, little man. Love you.” Lane received the same passionate kiss as Jack had.

Normally Zarah wouldn’t flaunt their relationship so blatantly in front of someone she knew wasn’t comfortable with it, but this was Radley Raymond, someone she was presently pissed at. If he didn’t like it—and she was sure he didn’t—he could go fuck himself.

“Knock ’em dead, honey,” Jack said as she turned to walk to the car.

“See you soon, sweetheart,” Lane said.

“I’ll call when I get into my room,” she told them before Lane closed her door.

As Radley pulled out of the driveway, she waved good-bye to her family.

Zarah’s heart sank to the pit of her stomach. Before they’d even reached the interstate, she missed home.

For a couple of days she’d be fine, but the ADA had left their return date up in the air, and that didn’t sit well with her. Their destination was a three-and-a-half-hour drive upstate; realistically, it was too far to commute each day, especially if they had to be there any longer than a couple.

Inwardly she sighed and glanced out the window at the passing scenery, not actually seeing any of it. In silence she wondered if there was something she’d forgotten to do that would make her absence easier on the guys. She was worrying

for nothing; she knew it. The guys would be fine. The babies would be fine. She'd be fine. And in a few days, she'd be back home.

Lost in her thoughts, she decided to go over the case in her mind. One positive thing she could think about Radley Raymond was he was meticulous when it came to a case. He was thorough and examined every lead and angle to the nth degree. He was a brilliant legal mind.

Twenty minutes into their journey, Radley clearing his throat interrupted her thoughts.

"You have a lovely family," he said.

"Yes I do." Her reply was terse. Since she'd never heard one from him before, it took her a little while to realize Radley had paid her a compliment. She then felt bad for her brusqueness. She turned her head his way. "Thank you."

He nodded.

For a moment, she studied his profile and began to wonder what made the man beside her tick. At the office he was such a hard-ass, a jerk with his holier-than-thou attitude, but at the moment—especially with his mouth shut—she had to admit he was damn attractive. Genes had blessed him with a strong jawline and perfect nose. A subtle cleft adorned his chin. When he smiled a genuine smile—which wasn't often—a dimple formed in his left cheek. She'd lay odds that he could obtain women's phone numbers simply by batting those long eyelashes over his brown bedroom eyes.

Too bad he was a giant jackass.

* * *

Later that night, Jack and Lane sat on their respective sides of the king-sized mattress, both leaning against pillows propped up against the wooden headboard of the sleigh bed. Jack's legs were outstretched, ankles crossed, fingers interlaced behind his head. Lane's legs were also extended and crossed at the ankles, and his

arms were crossed over his chest. Both were dressed in nothing more than a pair of underwear. The sheet and comforter had been shoved to the foot of the bed.

The odd snuffle or whimper from the nursery sounded over the monitor on the nightstand to Jack's left. The hockey game they were watching on the television across the room was coming to an end. The commentator just announced the last minute of play. The Rangers had kicked the shit out of the Flyers with a score of six-nothing.

The only thing missing on an otherwise routine night was Zarah snuggled between them.

A couple of hours earlier, she'd called to let them know she'd arrived and was in her room. After giving them the address and phone number of the hotel she'd be calling home for the next few days and asking about the kids, she'd told them both she loved them and then signed off for the night with the promise to call first thing in the morning.

"That was a massacre," Lane said as the last fifteen seconds ticked down.

"No shit. It was like Philadelphia didn't even show up tonight."

Once Zarah had left and the Davises departed for the night, Jack had cleaned up the kitchen and filled the double sink so they could give the twins a bath. With the kids tucked in bed, the guys settled in for a quiet night.

Lane reached between them for the remote control. "News?" he asked and then started flicking through the channels.

"Sure," Jack replied and shifted to get up. "Unless you're ready to call it a night."

No, Lane wasn't tired yet. There was something on his mind, but he wasn't sure if he should bring it up.

"I'm a bit wired," Lane confessed.

"Yeah, me too. I'm going to grab a glass of milk. Get you something?"

"Sure, milk's fine. I'll check on the twins."

When both men were back in the room and settled in their respective places, Lane glanced over at Jack.

“Are you going to tell me what’s on your mind? Or are you going to keep ogling me with love in your eyes?” Jack asked.

“Well, I’ve always thought you had a nice smile, Jack. And your eyes kind of have a dreamy quality to them,” Lane replied.

“Really? You think my eyes are dreamy?” Jack turned and batted his eyes at Lane. “My best feature, maybe?”

“Oh no, your best feature is your backside,” Lane teased.

“You’re an ass.” Jack grinned and turned back to the TV.

“You were asking for it.”

Jack reached for the remote and turned to a sitcom already in progress. “So?” he asked after several moments of silence.

“The ADA’s a nice-looking guy,” Lane declared.

Lane was secure enough in his masculinity to admit such a thing. He recalled their meeting a couple of months back and remembered how many of Zarah’s female coworkers were practically drooling at the man’s heels.

“Yeah,” Jack said, and his lips drew into a thin line.

“Now I’m sure there’s nothing to it, but I for one was uncomfortable with how he looked at Zarah tonight. She didn’t notice; she never does,” Lane said.

Though she was much more comfortable in her own skin now than when they’d first met her, he and Jack knew she still had trouble seeing herself as a sexy, attractive woman. Lane suspected while her self-esteem had grown tenfold in the time they’d been together, she had years’ worth of issues and past experiences to overcome.

Jack and Lane knew men checked Zarah out—both discreetly and blatantly. She was beautiful, inside and out. Just because she didn’t see it didn’t mean it

wasn't there. Lane and Jack saw it. Other men saw it. And knowing whose bed she was warming at night, the guys had never let it get to them.

But this thing with Raymond Radley, this was different. The way his eyes had taken in the sight of Zarah earlier affected Lane in a way no man looking at her ever had before. His protective and possessive instincts had surged to the forefront. It took great effort to stop himself from launching at Raymond and thumping some sense into him as a reminder that Zarah was a claimed woman and the mother of Jack and Lane's children.

"I was hoping I hadn't seen what I thought I had," Jack said.

"Well, she's gorgeous. And smart."

"Total package. Whether she acknowledges it or not."

"So you were rubbed the wrong way too?"

Jack inhaled a deep breath and held it a moment before letting it out. "Yeah, he got my ire fired up. I know it shouldn't piss me off, because men look at her. Some just quick looks when they think they aren't seen; others take their sweet-ass time even when they know one of us is standing right there with her. But I didn't want to add to her stress by calling Raymond on it."

"Yeah." Lane finished his milk and set the glass on the nightstand beside him.

It wasn't that Raymond had stood there leering lewdly at Zarah, but the appreciation and interest in his gaze had lifted the hair on the back of Lane's neck.

Appreciation he would tolerate.

Interest he would not.

Then Lane started thinking about the distance between the three of them over the past couple of months, and the niggling of panic began to take root. Although Zarah made love with both of them separately, he knew a part of her remained unfulfilled. Hell, he was missing the threesome action too. And Jack had to be as well. Was her interest in the relationship waning? Earlier, when he'd declined her invitation to join her and Jack in their lovemaking, opting instead to jerk himself off

while watching from the sidelines, he'd caught the flash of disappointment in her eyes. Was the absence of what the three of them created when they were together becoming too much for her to bear any longer? Or was her interest in him dying? She and Jack had the bond of marriage holding them together; what did Lane have?

Radley was a good-looking guy. They were going to be away for several days, perhaps as long as a week. Together...

"Hey, you don't think Zarah might be..." Lane couldn't bring himself to finish his sentence. There was no way Zarah would look outside of their union for comfort in the arms of another man. He and Jack provided all the comfort she required.

Jack tensed beside him.

Except she hadn't been receiving everything she wanted—what she needed.

"That's ridiculous," Jack said. Though his voice was calm despite Lane's inference, Lane had been friends with Jack too long not to have picked up on the apprehension in his tone.

Lane ran his fingers through his hair and blew out a sigh. Time to get things on the table.

"I know you're right," he began. "But things have been off around here for a while now."

"Yeah, I know. It was my hope this weekend would be the start of us getting back on track. So we have to postpone things for a while longer. That's all."

"Sure. Yeah."

"Zarah's happy, Lane. She loves us, the babies, her life. She knows we love her and would do anything for her."

"Of course."

Jack seemed to relax and reached for the remote again and started flicking through the channels.

A few minutes later, Lane chuckled.

"What?"

“I know I was off base suggesting she was looking for solace elsewhere. Zarah’s happy, the love of our lives. Of course she isn’t looking outside of our relationship.” On top of everything else he was thinking about, he didn’t need that worry in his mind. But it was there now. Inwardly he sighed. Jesus, when did things get so out of control? “It’s just, with the strain between the three of us, and I know you feel it too, Jack”—Jack nodded—“well, I guess I allowed my mind to run off in all sorts of directions.”

“Yeah, me too, pal.”

“Anyhow, I was chuckling because as good-looking as Raymond is, he has a way of getting under Zarah’s skin. And not in a good way.”

Jack chuckled too. “He’s the last person she would turn to for anything.”

Though he knew that was true and that his thoughts were unfounded regarding Zarah being bored in their relationship, he couldn’t banish the thoughts from his mind. He knew Zarah was loyal to him and Jack, just as they were to her.

But something wasn’t sitting well with Lane.

“Well TV sucks,” Jack announced and dropped the remote back on the bed.

“What do you expect? It’s closing in on eleven thirty.”

An amused frown crossed Jack’s face as he glanced over the empty space between them. “This is the first night Zarah hasn’t been in this bed with us.”

Lane smiled. “Feeling awkward about sharing the bed with just me?”

Jack shook his head. “Nah, I can be a big boy if you can.”

The monitor on the nightstand chirped to life with whimpering cries of unhappiness across the hall. Jack swung his legs over the edge of the bed.

“Poor little guy. He’s having a rough time this week,” Jack said as he crossed the room. “Must be teething.”

“Zarah left a bottle of liquid Tylenol on the dresser beside the change table,” Lane said. “Want some help?”

“No, I’ll be fine. You’re up next time.”

“You got it.” Lane plumped up his pillow, lay down on the mattress, and pulled the sheet up to his waist. “Oh, Jack,” he said before Jack left the room.

Jack hitched his chin in question.

“I know how much you like snuggling, so when you settle Madan and come back to bed, as long as you keep your shorts on, I’ll let you spoon me.”

“That’s generous of you.” Jack’s voice was heavy with amusement. “I appreciate the sacrifice. Once I’m asleep, I just might take you up on your offer. And by the way, you’re an ass.”

Lane chuckled and reached for the remote as Jack walked into the nursery.

Chapter Four

Friday morning Jack stood at the kitchen table sliding one last mouthful of pabulum into each of the twins, preparing to move on to a jar of apricots. It had been a rough couple of nights for Madan as his first tooth had broken through the gum, and he was cranky. He wasn't dealing with his discomfort as well as his sister was hers. And he was no doubt missing his mommy, since he was feeling so crummy. When Lane had informed Zarah of their son's new tooth during her phone call home the night before, he said from the sound of her voice he could picture a tear slipping from the corner of her eye.

Though they missed her, the men were faring well in their wife's absence. Jack and Lane were both man enough to admit the reason they were doing so well was due to Rita. She was a godsend.

Thursday night, the night before, was Zarah's night in the kitchen, but with her being away, Jack and Lane would be on their own. Not willing to assume Rita would take pity on the two of them—though deep down he'd prayed she would—Jack had swung by the sub shop on his way home and picked up a couple of sandwiches for him and Lane. But God bless her, Rita had ensured the guys had come home to a home-cooked meal. When he'd walked into the house and inhaled the scrumptious scent of roasting chicken, he'd tossed the store-bought fare into the fridge and forgotten about it.

Nobody's cooking came close to Rita's.

Ever since the conversation between him and Lane Wednesday night after Zarah had left, Jack couldn't get their discussion out of his mind. Though he knew

his wife was committed to him and Lane and their relationship, Jack couldn't help but give consideration to what Lane had said about ADA Raymond.

Yes, the guy was good-looking—almost too good-looking. And while Zarah had barely acknowledged his presence as he stood in their driveway, that didn't mean she'd never noticed him. It also didn't matter that the man pushed her buttons; did he offer her something that Lane and Jack didn't? A sympathetic ear to bend? A shoulder to lean on?

Sure, things were a tad strained between them right now, but relationships always suffered the odd blip. As far as Jack was concerned, that was all this was—a small blip on the radar screen. Lane and Jack doted on their wife. Fulfilling her needs, wants, and desires were paramount to both men. Emotionally, physically, financially, she could want for nothing. Everything they were was hers. He couldn't fathom her seeking anything outside of their relationship.

But, sexually speaking, she was deeply missing their connection of the ménage. How could he make her see she wasn't ready physically to resume that part of their life yet? That he was only looking out for her.

At the counter, Lane stood packing his and Jack's coolers for the day. Along with the subs he added a couple bottles of water and juice, some leftover chicken, cookies, granola bars, and a snack-sized bag of chips. Both men had no trouble eating their way through their days.

"So what did the B and B say when you called to cancel?" Lane asked.

"They wouldn't refund my deposit, but I didn't expect them to, considering it's the weekend before Valentine's Day, and a busy one for them," Jack replied. "They'll keep the deposit on file and said we can book something at a later date. So that's what we'll do. Maybe next weekend."

"Sounds good."

Lane closed the lids on the two coolers, carried them over to the back door, and set them on the floor. He then crossed the kitchen to the table. "You pick up something special for Zarah for Monday?" he asked. He grabbed the damp

washcloth and wiped Madan's face and then handed the rag to Jack. "Besides the requisite flowers and chocolates."

"I got her a charm bracelet and a few charms for it. One each of all our initials and the kids' birthstone." Jack cleaned off Magan's face and lifted her out of the carrier.

Lane held Madan in his lap. "Okay, slugger, time to wash that stuff down," he said, offering the baby his bottle.

"How about you?" Jack asked, settling Magan in his arm for hers.

Rays of sunshine streamed through the glass lighting the room in a buttery morning glow.

Lane's attention was focused on Madan for several moments before he answered. It seemed as though Lane was contemplating a response, as if unsure Jack would like the one he was thinking of giving.

"I, uh, bought Zarah a ring." The apprehension in his voice matched his expression.

Jack didn't see what the big deal was. Though Zarah didn't wear a lot of jewelry, save for small hoop earrings she rarely removed, her wrist watch, the gold anklet Jack had given her on their wedding night, and, of course, her wedding rings, she did have several pieces she wore on special occasions. She might not have donned all her jewelry all the time, but she did appreciate the time and energy that went into choosing something for her.

"I'm sure she'll love it," Jack said.

Lane nodded, but didn't comment. Jack sensed his friend was holding back.

"Was there something else, pal?" Jack asked.

Then it registered. Zarah wore Jack's ring, but not Lane's. Though Zarah and Lane were as committed as she and Jack, perhaps by presenting Zarah *his* ring, it would cement something more for Lane. Could that be the reason for their conversation two nights earlier?

“No, I don’t think so,” Lane replied.

“You sure?” Jack recognized Lane was torn with coming clean with his reasoning. “You know you can tell me anything. In fact, considering our lifestyle, we should be comfortable with sharing any and everything.”

Lane nodded again. Jack decided not to push.

“It’s not that I’m feeling insecure,” Lane finally offered.

Jack met his gaze. “I didn’t think you were.”

Several moments passed before Lane spoke again. “Okay, I admit, sometimes I’m envious.”

“Of what? We are equals in this relationship.”

“I know, Jack. It’s just, sometimes...” Lane left his sentence unfinished, and Jack let him.

Lane was dealing with some doubt, and who could blame him? Hell, there were times when Jack had doubts. Times when he wondered if Zarah loved Lane more, wanted Lane more, enjoyed Lane’s company more, thought Lane was a better lover. Then he would realize those thoughts were ridiculous. Zarah loved each of them for their own individual qualities. She didn’t treat either of them differently from the other. The ring she wore on her finger, placed there by Jack, was a symbol of his commitment to her, just as the one he wore on his finger was a symbol of her commitment to him. Lane must have wanted that same connection.

“You don’t need to explain it, Lane. I get it.”

Though the three of them shared a unique partnership, and Jack and Lane were equals, Zarah and Lane had never exchanged vows or symbols of their commitment to each other. But that didn’t mean they weren’t dedicated to each other and their family.

“You, uh, don’t think it’s hokey? Or that I’m being silly about the whole thing?”

Jack shook his head. “No, my friend. Not in the least. And I think Zarah will cherish the symbolism and sentiment your ring represents.”

Lane smiled. That grin of contentment made Jack proud. Jack loved the man sitting beside him and was prepared to do everything in his power to help Lane through whatever uncertainties he might be dealing with. He was important to what the three of them were. There was no reason for him to have any misgivings, but Jack wouldn't belittle his friend's feelings and emotions. Jack was completely secure in their arrangement, and Lane needed to be as well.

"Um, Lane." A horrid thought entered Jack's mind. "Uh, you aren't thinking that maybe things between us, the three of us, are..." But Lane had just confessed he'd bought Zarah a ring to show his commitment to her and their family; surely what Jack was thinking was the furthest things from Lane's mind. "You aren't thinking your welcome is worn out, are you?"

A glint of something Jack was afraid to label as indecision flickered in Lane's eyes, but it passed just as quickly. Lane studied Jack for several moments in silence. Jack hoped Lane could read his expression loud and clear, that he was just as much a husband and father as Jack was, and he'd have a fight on his hands if he was considering otherwise.

"No, Jack. I'm not going anywhere." Despite the tone of uncertainty in Lane's voice, Jack exhaled a sigh of relief at Lane's words. "I can't help but sometimes think that maybe, the two of you—"

"Not on your life, Lane."

Lane chuckled. "I know, Jack. Thanks. You just have no idea how much I value the gift you and Zarah have given me."

"What about the gift you've given us?"

"Fair enough," Lane said and pulled the empty bottle away from Madan. He sat him up on his lap and began patting his back to get the gases moving.

"So, a charm bracelet and a ring," Jack said and sat Magan up as well. "We are totally spoiling that woman."

"But it's worth it just to see joy on her face."

“Worth every penny.”

The back door opened and Rita entered the house.

“Good morning, my pets.” A broad smile accompanied her cheery greeting.

“Grandma’s here, and she’s just in time,” Jack said.

“Why’s that, Jackson? Did Magan just fill her diaper?” Rita dropped her purse in the corner on the floor, gathered up the dishes from the table, carried them across the room, and set them on the counter beside the sink.

Jack felt his cheeks heat. Rita had an uncanny ability to see right through him. “I’ve already changed two shitty diapers this morning; it’s someone else’s turn,” he complained with a chuckle.

“I’ve been thinking, Dad, maybe if we stop putting it in one end, it’ll stop coming out the other,” Lane said.

“Give me that baby,” Rita grumbled with a grin, scooping Magan up into her arms.

“Tell Grandma how much you love her, sunshine,” Jack said, relinquishing his hold on his daughter.

A soft burp escaped the baby, and Rita smiled wide once again.

“Grandma loves you too, my precious,” she said as she disappeared around the corner.

When she returned from changing Magan, Jack was lacing up his work boots. Lane had strapped Madan back into his seat and was pulling on his jacket.

“So what time are you boys going to head out tonight?” After fastening the restraints around Magan, Rita picked up the two empty bottles and carried them over to the sink.

Jack exchanged a look with Lane, and Lane shrugged.

“Where are we going?” Jack asked.

A scheming grin curled the older woman’s lips. “Well, I figured since your plans for that weekend of debauchery at the bed-and-breakfast were foiled by

Zarah's impromptu business trip, the two of you would make tracks to go and spend the weekend with her."

The two men exchanged another glance.

"That and I couldn't help but notice how handsome that young ADA is," she added. "If I was a younger woman..."

Lane's eyes narrowed, and Jack suspected his friend's expression mirrored his own.

Jack stood and inhaled a calming breath before speaking. "And what does Raymond have to do with anything?" he asked.

"Oh, look at the two of you," Rita quipped as she looked between him and Lane. "All upsetlike, and for what? Zarah is crazy about the two of you, knuckleheads. What I meant was it's a shame that she's all the way upstate while the two of you are here. She's holed up in some hotel for the weekend with ADA Raymond when there is no reason the two of you couldn't be with her. Surely she won't be working all weekend."

Holed up with Raymond? Had Rita seen the looks Raymond gave Zarah? Had she seen Zarah return those looks when he hadn't? Now that stirred Jack up with very little effort. He clenched his hands into fists at his sides.

"So it's not the B and B." Rita shrugged as she started putting the breakfast dishes in the dishwasher. "Just a change of venue."

Suddenly Lane grinned and nodded.

Jack scowled. This was no time for grinning. Their wife was a couple hundred miles away, staying in a hotel with her "handsome" coworker.

"Why in the hell did neither of us think of that?" Lane asked.

"Because you're men," Rita stated.

Both men frowned. They'd planned the original weekend without any help, and they'd done a damn good job of it. They could be romantic and show their woman just how insightful and passionate they could be.

“Don’t be so sensitive, boys,” Rita continued. “With Zarah away, your thoughts are naturally about your babies.”

That was true. With Zarah away, Jack hadn’t really given any thought to anything else except making sure the twins were taken care of.

“Now I figured you boys would leave around five or so. That gives you time to come home and clean yourselves up before leaving,” Rita said and twisted the tops off the bottles and gave them a rinse. She then placed the glass bottles in the dishwasher and set aside the rubber nipples to be cleaned and disinfected later.

“I’m done at four today,” Lane said.

“It’s Friday, and with Zarah being away, Freddie won’t allow me to stay late,” Jack added. “I should be able to be home around four thirty.”

“Mack will come out to spend the night with me and the kids. As far as I’m concerned, our weekend plans haven’t changed. We’ve just added a second night to our staycation.”

“You are too good to us, Rita,” Lane said, then pressed a kiss to her cheek.

“It’s easy,” she replied. “Now get going, you two. My grandbabies and I have a big day planned, and you’re holding us up.”

* * *

Lane was in the bedroom rummaging through his dresser drawers, gathering a few things to toss into a duffel bag. He was pleased the day had been a slow and uneventful one because he’d spent the better part of it checking his watch. The time had ticked away at a snail’s pace, but when quarter to four hit, he couldn’t get out of the station fast enough. He’d nearly broken the sound barrier to get home. He still couldn’t believe neither he nor Jack had thought of making the trek to be with Zarah for the weekend.

All day his thoughts had been of spending the weekend with Zarah. He couldn’t wait to touch her, to hold her in his arms. Her scent on her pillow had

driven him crazy the past two nights without her in their bed. The craving to taste her was all-consuming. He wanted her on his tongue.

First he wanted her mouth. He loved the flavor of her mouth, innocent and free, with just the right amount of fire to stir his need. Then he'd lick a trail along her neck to her beautiful, ample breasts and suckle the ripe berries at the tips. The taste of her skin was an aphrodisiac Lane couldn't function without.

Her scent, an erotic combination of sultry and sweet, turned his insides out. He wanted to bury his nose in her most private area and inhale, drawing her into his body.

Once he'd sampled every inch of her voluptuous body with his tongue and lips, he'd settle himself between her splayed thighs to feast upon her. She'd be so wet for him. She would have been anticipating their being together, just as much as he had. His hands would roam her sensual curves. He'd be relentless in his teasing as he tongued her pussy, swirling, delving, flicking. And when he knew he'd brought her to that place, to that painfully pleasurable spot right before her body blew apart, he'd close his lips around her clit and take her to the completion she'd so desperately be begging him for.

Then, after Jack had taken a turn at tasting her and pulling a climax from her body, they would take her together.

Between their bodies they would hold her. One would claim her pussy, the other her ass. With both of them filling her, she would be so incredibly tight around them. Hot, wet, and pulsing. Perspiration would glisten on her caramel-colored skin, and the musky scent of her arousal would swirl the air around them. Encouraging them, urging them on. Jack and Lane would ride her, hard, their need taking complete control of them until Zarah cried out their names as wave after wave of orgasm crashed through her.

The scene had played out over and over in Lane's mind as the day wore on. His cock had been at a semistate of arousal as the hours ticked by. Several times he'd

found himself so consumed with his thoughts that he imagined catching the scent of her arousal in the air.

He couldn't wait to see her.

Lane had showered when he got home and was still wearing a towel around his hips when Jack entered the room.

"Hey, pal. How was your day?"

"Long and sexually frustrating," Lane admitted and dropped the towel to the floor. He stepped into his underwear and pulled them up over his hips.

"Sounds just like mine." Jack tossed his work shirt into the hamper in the corner of the room.

"The sooner you get your ass moving and shower, the sooner we'll have our girl between us." Lane wagged his brows at Jack. "I have depravity and licentiousness on my mind, and I need a curvaceous brunette with golden eyes to slake my lust on."

Jack laughed. His pants joined the grease-smeared shirt in the basket. "Zarah won't be able to walk once we get done with her."

"My mouth is watering just thinking about it," Lane said, stepping into his jeans.

"You sure it's not from the tantalizing aroma of strained carrots coming from the kitchen?" Jack teased.

"Carrots, huh?" Lane scrunched up his face. "Those poor kids. Nah, it's watering because I can't wait to put my mouth on her, before sliding my co—"

"A-hem."

A loud, overemphasized throat clearing from the kitchen cut Lane off.

"Um, Rita?" Jack called out.

"I can hear your conversation courtesy of the monitor in the nursery across the hall," she told them.

The men stared at each other for several seconds. Jack's cheeks were as red as Lane's felt.

Lane shrugged. *We're adults*, he mouthed to Jack.

Jack's eyebrows rose in challenge of sharing that with the woman in their kitchen. A woman they both considered their mother.

"Sorry, Mrs. Davis. We'll behave," he offered instead.

While Jack left the bedroom, heading to the bathroom down the hall, Lane finished getting dressed and packing his stuff.

It was nice to see Jack more relaxed. He'd been as tense as Lane had been since Wednesday night after they'd talked. This weekend was the perfect opportunity for the three of them to reconnect and stoke the fires of their needs. Rita was right; the same plan was in effect, just the location had changed.

Forty minutes later, Lane and Jack were ready to head out the door.

"All right, you two," Jack said in a stern tone laced heavily with amusement. The babies looked up at him with big drooling grins on their adorable faces. "Be good for Grandma and Grandpa this weekend."

"Yeah, no wild parties. No drinking. And no smoking," Lane threw in.

"We'll try to keep things tame," Mack said. "But I'm drawing the line at not engaging in intimate relations with your lovely sitter." He leaned over to kiss Rita's cheek.

"We figured that was a given. Just be sure to change the sheets," Jack said. "Bye kids, we'll give Mommy your love. Let's go, pal."

"You boys have a nice time," Rita called after them.

"Hey, you overheard our plans," Lane said over his shoulder. "How can we not?"

Rita shook her head. "Our poor girl doesn't stand a chance."

Chapter Five

After two full days of meeting with witnesses, Zarah was convinced Raymond could have handled the trip just fine on his own. She'd been relegated to sitting at the table, making notes on a legal pad and operating the recording devices while Radley conducted the examinations. Not one witness had appeared uneasy or the least bit nervous about giving their statement to the ADA. Therefore she couldn't help but wonder why in the hell she was there instead of being at home with her family.

She missed Jack and Lane and her babies, and she was more than ready to go home.

Since they'd pulled close to ten hours both Thursday and Friday, Raymond proposed taking Saturday off as a break and then starting fresh with the witnesses again on Sunday.

When Zarah suggested if they were going to take Saturday as a break, they could head home that night and drive back on Sunday morning, Radley's tune changed.

"On second thought, perhaps a break isn't such a good idea," he'd said. "If we don't meet with them tomorrow, we'll get together and review their statements."

The man was infuriating. They'd gotten all they could from the witnesses. It wouldn't matter if they'd spent the next month questioning them; they weren't going to come up with any new information. As far as Zarah was concerned, this trip was over.

"Why don't we go out for dinner? Someplace nice," Radley had said when they'd arrived back at the hotel after that day's questioning. "My treat."

The last thing she wanted to do was go out to eat. She was tired, grumpy, and longed to be with her guys and kids. If she had to be stuck in a damn hotel away from her family, all she wanted to do was hide in her room, order in room service or a pizza, and lose herself in the book she'd brought.

However, she accepted Radley's invitation. Something in his expression made her feel bad for considering turning him down.

In her room after a shower to freshen up before dinner, Zarah pulled out her cell phone and called home. She needed to hear one of the guys' voices. Just hearing the deep timbre of either one of them would bring her some comfort. What she really wanted was to feel them touching her, feel their mouths on her, their hands caressing her curves.

If she wasn't three and a half hours from home, the three of them would be settling in to their carnal weekend first thing the following morning to spend the next couple of days exploring one another, finding their way back to that magical place that had brought them all together.

When the answering machine at home picked up, she frowned and disconnected before leaving a message. She decided to dial Jack's cell first, since for work purposes he always carried it and never shut it off.

"Hello?"

Zarah's body tingled with the sudden surge of arousal the sound of Jack's voice brought on. "Hello there, handsome," she said.

"Hey, honey." She could hear the smile in Jack's voice. "How are you doing?" His voice flowed through her, making her envision herself sandwiched between him and Lane, being deliciously ravaged beyond her wildest expectations.

"I miss you guys." The sultry purr of her reply only added to her sexual frustration.

"We miss you too. How's the interviewing going?"

The tightening of her nipples and the dampening of her pussy made her breath catch. Oh God, how she needed them.

“As far as I’m concerned, we’re done. But not according to Raymond.” She sighed. “Looks like we’re here for a couple more days.”

“It’s all right, honey. You’ll be in our arms before you know it.”

Zarah could tell by the background noise that Jack was in his truck driving somewhere. Considering the time, he should have been home and showered, the kids would be fed, and he and Lane would be sitting down to watch a hockey game. “Where are you?”

“I, uh, had to run out to the store. Needed diapers,” he said.

Zarah frowned. Stacked in the nursery closet were three boxes of diapers and a fourth in the hall closet just in case they ran short. “Diapers?”

“Uh, yeah. And I told Lane I’d pick something up from the deli for dinner.”

“Rita didn’t make dinner for you guys tonight?”

“She offered, but we declined. She takes way too good a care of us sometimes.”

Zarah laughed. “Yes she does. We’re spoiled. Hey, I called home first and the machine answered. If you’re out, where’s Lane? Are he and the kids with you?”

“No, I’m uh, alone. Lane was giving the kids a bath when I left. You know how much fun the three of them have at bath time. He’s probably busy with that.”

“Okay. So, I guess you guys are doing all right without me?” She couldn’t stop disappointment from creeping into her voice.

Jack chuckled. “We’re managing, baby. But it’s damn tough without you.”

Even if he was just saying that because it was what she wanted to hear, she’d take it.

“Thanks, Jack. I needed that.”

A knock sounded at the door. She stood and crossed the room to answer it.

“What was that? You have company?” Jack asked.

After looking through the peephole to confirm it was Radley, she unlocked the door and swung it open. His eyes swept lazily over her from head to toe, and then they met hers. After a moment of hesitation due to a sudden chill moving through her, she welcomed him in with a wave of her hand and raised one finger indicating she'd be a minute or two. He nodded and stepped inside.

"It's Radley at the door," she said. "He's invited me out for dinner tonight."

"Is that so?" Jack asked.

Zarah knit her brow. Was there a tone in Jack's voice? Determining she was overworked and missing home, she decided she'd heard wrong.

"Yes, he's quite a slave driver," she teased, glancing over at Radley. "Seems only fitting for him to treat me to dinner after all our hard work over the past couple of days."

Radley smiled at her.

"That's nice," Jack said in a gruff voice. "Then you should enjoy yourself. You've no doubt earned it."

"Thanks, Jack. So are the kids good? Eating lots and sleeping well?" she asked. "Even if you have to lie, please assure me they haven't changed too much over the past couple of days."

"Well, they're talking about college. Magan's interested in art school, and Madan wants to be a rock star. Oh, and Magan's asked Scott to marry her. Eric's devastated."

"Jack..." She couldn't help but smile at his teasing. She was a lucky woman to have him in her life.

"They're great. They miss their mommy."

Zarah's heart squeezed with love. "Give them extra kisses and remind them how much I love them."

"You can count on it, honey. How about Lane and me?"

"Mmm, I love you guys too."

"I'll pass that along. But there's no way in hell I'm kissing him for you," Jack said.

Zarah laughed. "I love you, Jack. I'll call you guys when I get back from dinner."

"Love you too, baby. We'll see you soon."

Not soon enough.

With that, they disconnected.

"Everything all right at home?" Radley asked, pulling his hands from the front pockets of his dress pants.

Zarah wondered if he owned a pair of jeans and a plain old T-shirt. She'd only ever seen him in suits, dress pants, and sports jackets. Tonight he appeared as casual as she figured Radley Raymond ever looked. He wore black dress pants, with a dark gray button-down shirt and highly polished Oxfords on his feet. And a tie. She'd never seen him without a tie. A black leather jacket completed his ensemble.

"Yes. They seem to be faring just fine without me," she told him.

His expression softened. Maybe he realized how tough it was for her to be away like this.

"This is the first time I've been away on an overnigher," she told him. "One that's turned into several nights. It's hard for me, but I'll be fine."

He nodded. "It was necessary for us to be here. You realize that, don't you?"

It was necessary for someone to be there, yes, but not specifically her. "Yes, Radley, I realize that. My job is important to me, and I'll do what is required to do the best I can for the office."

"I know you will. And you do. That's why I want you. So you ready to go?"

"Yes. Suddenly I'm hungrier than I thought." The sooner they went, the sooner she'd be back in her room. She grabbed her purse off the small round table in front of the window and her coat hanging over a chair beside the table, followed Radley

out the door, and pulled it closed behind her. “Where did you have in mind?” she asked as they walked along the exterior corridor toward the staircase.

When they arrived at Radley’s silver Mercedes SLS AMG, he held the door open for her. Climbing in behind the wheel, he eyed her again.

“By the way, you look nice,” he said with a small smile. “I like it when you wear your hair down and loose. It’s sexy.”

Zarah stiffened and her lungs ceased to work momentarily. Sexy? Did that border on inappropriate? True, they were off the clock now, but they should maintain an air of professionalism between them. Shouldn’t they?

“Um, thank you, Mr. Raymond,” she said.

His tone had been genuine, yet a hint of discomfort came over her. When he turned the engine over and shifted the car into gear, she shook off the odd feeling, chalking it up to her just longing for home.

“Why so formal this evening, Zarah?” he asked and flashed a grin that displayed his dimple. Dimples were cute, and all right, Radley wore his well.

Radley seemed to be attempting to tap into the laid-back part of himself that he didn’t allow to surface very often. At least she’d never seen it at the office or so far on their trip.

Zarah decided it was silly to allow uneasiness to make her wary. This was a man she worked with. And despite the fact he was a pompous prick most of the time, he’d never given her a reason to be uncomfortable in his presence. She relaxed into the leather seat. Though she’d ridden in it on the trip here, she hadn’t taken any time to admire the luxury of the car.

Jack and Lane shared a love of automobiles, and since being with them, she’d developed an appreciation for certain vehicles and their attributes.

“Jack was right; this is a nice car,” she said with admiration. “Fun and sporty.”

“Thank you. And if I may say so, you look great in it.”

The wink he gave her brought back the unease she'd dismissed moments before. She again shook it off, deciding Radley was simply trying to make conversation. Sure, he might be fucking his secretary, but she had yet to hear about him ever having a girlfriend. Maybe relationships weren't his thing. He'd worked hard through law school. Perhaps he was awkward when it came to casually conversing with women. And it was refreshing to see a different side of him. At that moment she decided to squash the niggling of awkwardness and just enjoy the evening out.

"It was a gift from my parents following graduation from Harvard," he replied.

He came from a long line of old money, of course it was, she mused.

"The XC90 you drive is quite sleek," he said, talking about the Volvo she drove. "Its safety rating is second to none."

"With a family of five, I need something a bit more functional than flashy," she said.

"Yeah, I suppose."

"But I wouldn't mind test driving one of these babies sometime. So where are we going?" she asked as he merged onto the highway.

"I was hoping you like Italian."

She nodded. "I do."

"Excellent. There's a cozy authentic place ten minutes up the interstate. Everything is hand prepared, from the sauces right down to the various pastas."

"Sounds wonderful," she said.

"When I'm this way, I always try to get a meal or two in there," he said. "You'll love it."

Zarah was pleasantly surprised throughout dinner with Radley's casual demeanor. Sure, she could have done without the occasional, blatant gazes at her breasts, but otherwise she was enjoying his company. This was a different ADA than she was privy to at the office.

“Tell me about your family,” she said.

He topped up their wineglasses as the waiter arrived at their table with their salads. “Not much to tell,” he answered. Then he shrugged as if coerced into giving up the information. “Law is in my family’s blood. My father is convinced it’s actually a component of our DNA.”

Zarah laughed.

“You have a very infectious laugh, Zarah,” Radley said. “I like hearing it.”

“Thank you.” She gave him a smile. This different man was full of compliments, instead of issuing sighs of irritation as he did at work. “You were saying?”

“Well, of course my father was in the DA’s office, as well as my brother and two sisters. So it seemed only right that I should follow in the Raymond family footsteps.”

“But of course,” she teased. “And what does your mother do?” Zarah took a bite of salad and moaned at the delightful tang of the dressing. “Oh this is good.”

A flash of—oh no, it couldn’t be... Did she see...desire flickering in his eyes? No, that would be ridiculous. Clearly she imagined what she’d seen.

A moment later he continued. “Mother studied and practiced law until she started having children. Then she settled into life as a wife and mother. On the side she offered her services as a legal consultant, but gave it up when my siblings began having their families. She wanted to devote all her free time to her grandbabies.”

“That’s very nice. Have you given any thoughts to having a family? Or do you enjoy the playboy lifestyle too much?” She grinned.

Radley shook his head and took a sip of wine. “Not sure the commitment of a wife and children are for me. I’m not ashamed to admit I’m selfish when it comes to my free time and money.”

Zarah wasn’t surprised, considering the hours he kept at the office. It was a good thing he wasn’t interested in a family, then.

“So how about you? You enjoy being with multiple men,” he stated, straight-faced.

Zarah nearly choked on her salad. “Um, I’m not with *multiple* men,” she clarified. “Just Jack and Lane.”

“I’m sorry, that came out wrong. What I meant was you enjoy variety in your sexual partners. What you don’t get from one, you do from someone else.”

Zarah narrowed her eyes and contemplated his words. She’d thought their conversation so far had been pleasant, and it was nice to see a diverse side of Radley Raymond, but his questions bordered big-time on the side of “none of your fucking business.” While Zarah didn’t mind answering queries regarding her unconventional lifestyle with Jack and Lane, Radley’s choice of description about their relationship was rather crude. But she gave that some thought and remembered their meeting at the Christmas party. Sure, the relationship she and her two lovers shared wasn’t the norm, and sometimes the admission rocked people. Some accepted it, others didn’t; that was their choice.

“There’s far more to my relationship with Jack and Lane than sex,” she pointed out.

After studying him for several heartbeats, she relaxed. It was his nature to ask questions. This was a subject he obviously had no knowledge of, and he was curious, she supposed. She’d never seen him in court, but she had heard he was formidable when it was his turn to cross-examine a witness. He’d ask his questions in whatever manner, tone, and phrasing he had to in order to get the information he sought. It was just part of who he was. Zarah supposed that, despite the fact they were having a casual dinner together, they were still coworkers, and it was apparent Radley didn’t stray too far away from his lawyer personality.

It was part of his genetic makeup, after all.

“But I, uh, suppose that’s one way to look at it.”

Radley nodded. “I think it’s admirable that as a woman you know what you want. You aren’t afraid to surge forward, outside of what society deems is the norm,

and you go out and fulfill your sexual needs. It's commendable. And arousing, if you don't mind me saying so."

"Uh, well actually I..." She'd started to say that yes, in fact she did mind, but then stopped herself. Everyone was entitled to their opinion, and Radley was certainly permitted his. Just as she'd had to learn to deal with the cruelties directed at her because of her disparate ethnicities, her relationship with Jack and Lane really wasn't that different. She'd known it wouldn't be all roses when she and Jack began seeing each other, and she had known it would be tougher on them as a family when they'd invited Lane into their union. But she wouldn't have had it any other way. "No, I suppose not."

Radley grinned.

One waiter approached their table to clean up their appetizer dishes, and a second placed their entrées in front of them.

"May I bring you another carafe of wine?" he asked Radley.

"Certainly," he replied.

"Oh, no more for me," she said and waved a hand in front of her glass. "Thank you. It was delicious though."

"Come now, Zarah," Radley quipped. "We're relaxing, letting loose after a couple of taxing days."

"No, no, really, I've had enough wine," she said to Radley, and then to the waiter, "I'll take a sparkling water, though, on your next trip by, please."

"Certainly, ma'am. Wine for you, sir?"

A look Zarah had difficulty interpreting crossed Radley's face. Then it vanished and he smiled again.

"No, thank you. Two sparkling waters will be fine."

When the waiter walked away, Radley was studying her with intensity.

"Sorry, Radley. I'm not much of a drinker. A couple of glasses is my limit."

“No problem,” he returned, his expression softened once again. “I don’t really need any more, either, since I have to get us back to the hotel safely, with my life being on the line and all.”

Zarah chuckled nervously. “Radley, Jack and Lane were just teasing, honest.”
At least I think they were.

“Sure, I know that.”

In silence they dug into their dinners.

“So,” he said, lifting a forkful of lasagna to his mouth. “Your boyfriends don’t mind you being with other guys, then?”

Zarah stiffened. “They’re my husbands, and they don’t mind me being with the other *man* in our union, no.”

He nodded again. “Right, I’m sorry. I want to understand your situation. I get the whole two-men-doing-one-woman, you know like a dominance thing, and for sex purposes only. You see it enough in porn—”

“I wouldn’t know about that,” she murmured.

“—but I’ve never actually met anyone who lives in a threesome relationship in a real-life arrangement. Without the sex, what have you got, really? I find it a bit hard to grasp the *ménage* concept as a fulfilling experience in reality.”

“It’s not that tough to understand,” she said with as warm a smile as she could muster. “What Jack, Lane, and I share is not any different than a conventional couple union.”

“It’s just out of the norm, that’s all.”

“That depends on what one considers *the norm* to be.”

“I suppose so.”

She hesitated before taking another bite of her dinner. “So you mean to tell me a guy as good-looking as you has never had the opportunity to share a woman with a buddy? Not even once?” She wasn’t sure why she asked.

He swallowed roughly and took a mouthful of wine before responding. "Yeah, I had a friend suggest it once, but I declined. I want to be the only guy in my girl's bed."

Ah, Radley needed to be center stage.

"There was a time in law school, though, where a couple of girls in my forensics class approached me to join the two of them. That I agreed to."

Of course! "And?" She shrugged.

"And what?" He looked surprised.

"What happened? Where did things go from there?"

"You're interested in a play-by-play of the encounter?" His smile turned mischievous.

"Ah no. Though I don't watch them on a regular basis, I've seen the odd porn and have an idea of how things played out physically. I'm more interested in the emotional connection."

"It wasn't anything more than physical. We got together a few times and that was it. We moved on."

Hmm, okay, she gathered there was certainly the physical satisfaction, but she had been hoping he'd sampled the emotional aspect in his experience that she could relate to him in her own lifestyle. But that obviously wasn't going to happen.

Throughout the rest of dinner and the dessert he insisted they share, they made small talk about family, work, and the case they were working. Then Zarah was more than ready to call it a night.

"Well, perhaps we should be getting back to the hotel," Zarah said when they'd finished their coffee.

"I was just thinking the same thing."

She realized she must be tired, because his tone sounded suggestive, and that was nonsensical.

Back at the hotel, Zarah stood outside her room and rummaged through her purse for the key card to unlock the door. She was ready to spend some time alone. After retrieving it, she turned to Radley.

“Thank you for dinner, Radley. You were right, that was a great restaurant. Dinner was lovely, and your company a very pleasant surprise. I have to admit, you are a different guy tonight than you portray at the office. You really should let people see that side of you more often.”

Something flickered in his eyes, and the tip of his tongue slipped over the corner of his lower lip. A niggling of apprehension snaked along the length of her spine.

“Our evening doesn’t have to end just yet, does it?” His gaze dropped to her mouth for a handful of seconds before lifting to meet her eyes again.

She squared her shoulders and crossed her arms in a defensive gesture over her breasts. “You’d probably like to look over your notes from today and figure out what direction to go in tomorrow.”

“There’s plenty of time for that,” he countered and took a step forward. “I was thinking maybe we could continue our evening over another glass of wine. Now that we’re back safe and sound. I have an exceptional vintage of red in my room. Let me go and grab it for us.”

“That sounds nice, but really, I’ve had enough alcohol for one night,” she said.

He reached out and dragged the back of a finger along her bare forearm, making Zarah take a step backward. “It’s still early.”

“I’m ready to call it a night. I’d like to call home before my babies are put to bed,” she continued. “Then I plan on settling in to read a book I’ve been dying to get into. Perhaps another—”

“Listen, Zarah.” Radley’s gaze turned intense as he held hers. “I’m just going to say this. I find you sexy as hell.”

Zarah gasped. “Radley, you need to stop right—”

“Look. I don’t normally romance a woman like I did you tonight,” he began. “I just don’t have time for it.”

He’d thought he’d what?

“I’m interested in physical gratification without the emotional baggage. When I see someone I’d want to be with, I approach her. If she’s interested, we do it, and then I move on. But you’re different. I’m not interested in a one-night fuck with you.”

Zarah’s mouth gaped open and her eyes narrowed. “Mr. Raymond—”

“Yeah, I like it when you call me that. It makes my balls throb,” he announced and moved forward another step.

Zarah took another step backward and smacked into the door behind her.

“I’m not looking for anything serious, Zarah. More of a fuck-buddy association. Since you’re into multiple partners to get off, this will work in both our favors.”

Zarah was instantly outraged.

“I am a *happily* married woman,” she told him.

“Yeah, I know, so it’s a perfect arrangement. When the itch strikes, we’ll get together and scratch it and then go our separate ways until the next time. No strings or anything.”

“What sort of woman do you think I am?” She scowled.

A grin that made her blood run cold curled Radley’s lips. “An open and adventurous one. A guy’s ideal dream in the flesh. And someone I want to be with. Just physically, of course.”

“I am *not* interested in you, Mr. Raymond. In fact, up until dinner tonight, I loathed you.”

He chuckled. “Mmm, I love it when women play coy. It’s sexy. You don’t need to lie to me, baby.”

Zarah stood there, stunned. Infuriated beyond any sense of rationality. “Excuse me? Where do you get off—”

“I’m hoping with you. You are so fucking sexy. You’re soft and feminine in all the right places. What with those wide hips, that round ass. And those huge tits are so fucking hot—”

“Your delivery needs serious work, Raymond,” she growled through gritted teeth.

“—I might not be interested in having a steady girlfriend, but I’ve been with enough women to know what gets them off. Let me show you how loudly I can make you scream, lady.”

Radley moved in so fast, she didn’t see him coming, and due to his size and stealth, she wasn’t sure she could have stopped him if she had.

He leaned his weight into her, pressing her back firmly against the door. His fingers gripped the loose curls at the back of her head, and his mouth crashed against hers. Her lips had parted to tell him to get the fuck off her, and he seized the opportunity to shove his tongue into her mouth. It took her a moment to assimilate exactly what was happening, but when his hand cupped her breast, she snapped back to reality in an instant.

Zarah worked her arms out from between their bodies and raised her hands to propel him away, but Radley was unmovable. Because of his size and strength, she struggled against his frame.

* * *

From the passenger seat, Jack glanced around the business district of the area as they approached the hotel where Zarah was staying. Lane pulled into the lot and parked his SUV beside Raymond’s Mercedes. As Lane killed the engine, Jack spied Zarah and Raymond climbing the stairs to the second floor of the complex. Raymond’s hand pressed against the small of Zarah’s back was a tad too familiar for Jack’s liking.

“He’s touching her,” Jack snarled.

Lane glanced toward the stairs and stiffened. “Okay, relax. I don’t like it either, but let’s put this into perspective. They’re walking up the stairs, and he’s offering support. We do that all the time when Zarah’s in front of us.”

“She’s our wife,” Jack growled.

“While I hear you, bud, keep perspective. Don’t go off halfcocked.”

“No worries there, pal. I’m fully cocked. Move,” Jack said, reaching for the handle and pushing the door open.

As Jack and Lane walked across the parking lot toward the staircase, Zarah and Raymond’s muted voices carried to the floor below. Jack couldn’t make out their conversation.

When Lane and Jack reached the top of the stairs, they stopped dead in their tracks when they saw Raymond pressed up against Zarah, her back against a door. Raymond’s hands were all over her; his mouth was on hers.

Jack saw red.

He tore off down the corridor. When he reached them, he grabbed Raymond by the collar of his jacket and yanked him away from Zarah.

Zarah gasped in surprise.

“What the fuck!” Raymond shouted in astonishment.

Jack pulled back his arm and was ready to let it fly when Lane’s fingers wrapped around his wrist, stopping him.

“Lawyer,” Lane simply said, and Jack dropped his arm.

Before he could assimilate anything more, Zarah’s knee came up—and judging by the grunt she uttered on contact, delivered the blow with all she had—connecting squarely between Raymond’s legs.

Beside him, Lane’s groan of sympathetic suffering matched his own, and Jack was pretty sure his friend’s nuts were looking for a place to hide, just as his own were. His boys had accidentally caught that knee a handful of times while Zarah tossed and turned in her sleep.

At that moment, Jack released his hold, and the other man dropped to the ground in agony. In a supportive gesture—one that really was beyond any man's control—and to ensure their own boys were still intact, Jack and Lane both reached for their groins.

"Oops!" Zarah cried out. The concern in her voice reflected the worry in her eyes. "I was caught up in just getting him away from me."

After several moments, and with his balls feeling somewhat safe since they weren't the target, Jack bent down, grabbing Raymond by the front of his fancy dress shirt, about to haul him to his feet and finish what he'd started.

Zarah was at his side, her hands on the arm that held Raymond. "Jack, baby, let him go. He isn't worth it," she said softly.

It was amazing how just the sound of her voice could calm him down and bring him back around when his anger took control. Jack wasn't normally a violent man, but when someone threatened his wife or his family, he would stop at nothing to protect them.

"Besides, Jack," Lane said, "if you hit him, you're going to want it to hurt like a motherfucker. And by the looks of him, Zarah shoved his stones clear up into his throat—"

"I didn't mean to hurt him so badly. I just didn't know what else to do," Zarah said.

"—so I don't think he'll be feeling much of anything until they drop back down into place."

Jack allowed the man to settle back onto the ground. He grabbed Zarah, pulled her against his chest, and held her tight. "Did he hurt you? Because if he did, I'll kill him."

She sighed into his chest. "I'm fine. And so happy to see you guys." Her grip around his waist tightened, and then she turned toward Lane. "What are the two of you doing here?"

“We came to surprise you, honey,” Lane replied and pressed a kiss to her lips. “And what do Jack and I see when we find you? You’re in the arms of another man. What’s with you telling us you had this so-called business trip, when all you wanted to do was run off and have a torrid affair with your boss?”

Despite the teasing tone of Lane’s voice, Zarah narrowed her eyes, and Jack knew she was about to let Lane have it. When Lane grinned, Jack felt Zarah relax against him.

“Well, the two of you have been holding out on me for months.” The disappointed tone in her reminder tore at Jack’s gut. The sassy smile she then cast at Lane made Jack’s balls tighten with want. “What’s a girl supposed to do?”

Was there an underlying message in her words? Could she be missing the ménage to the point that she would actually consider looking for an external outlet?

“Before your trip, we’d planned a dirty weekend away where Jack and I were going to make all your wickedest dreams come true. Right, Jack?”

She chuckled. “I did that too. For you guys.”

Jack nodded. “Yeah, all for you, sweetheart. Whatever you wanted. And needed.”

“So you came all the way here for me?”

“Yeah. Now come here,” Lane said, leaning into her again. “Let me help get that bad taste out of your mouth, huh?”

Zarah laughed. “Kiss me again.”

And he did.

A groan carried up to them from the floor. The trio glanced down at Raymond, who was now lying in the fetal position, whimpering.

“What room is ADA Lothario in?” Lane asked and knelt beside him.

“Next door.” Zarah pointed to the room beside hers.

“That’s convenient,” Jack snarled.

Zarah shot him a look of mock chastisement and stood on her tiptoes to brush her lips along his. When she turned to look at Raymond on the ground, she cringed. Regardless of the fact the son of a bitch had just manhandled her, Jack knew Zarah felt bad about bagging him. Hell, any man who'd taken a knee to the groin would feel sympathy for him.

But Jack's sympathy hadn't lasted long. The fucker had made a move on Jack's woman. Raymond was lucky he was still breathing.

If Jack had his way, he'd cart Zarah off into her room and leave the sorry SOB lying in the hallway rolling around in agony. However, with Lane being a paramedic and his fucking oath and all and Zarah owning the size of heart she did, Jack knew damn well what was going to happen next, probably even before the other two knew.

"I kneed him pretty hard, Lane. Is he going to be all right?" she asked, holding Jack's hand in hers.

And there it is.

"I suspect so," Lane said. "Go and grab my kit from the truck, honey. Jack and I will help Raymond into his room, and I'll check him out to make sure you didn't actually shove his balls up into his throat. And that nothing was ruptured."

"We will, will we?" Jack pulled Zarah back against his body.

"Could I really have done that?" she asked, concern heavy in her voice.

"Oh God," Raymond croaked. "I-I'm dying."

"Not actually. But if you'd like, I could make that happen for you," Jack growled.

"Here." Lane pulled the keys to his SUV from his back pocket and handed them to Zarah. "I need my kit. Jack, give me a hand."

"Fine. But I don't know why we just don't leave the bastard out here—"

"Jack, please. For me," Zarah said. "The sooner we tend to this situation, the sooner we can get started on that dirty weekend you and Lane have planned."

“Hurry up, then,” Jack said, releasing her and bending to help Lane lift Raymond to his feet. “This fucker doesn’t deserve you being kind to him, Zarah, after what he did—and thought—he could do.”

“I’ll be right back.” Zarah ran along the corridor and disappeared down the stairs.

He and Lane carried Raymond into his room and eased him onto the bed. After Zarah returned to the room and passed Lane his medical bag, Jack ushered her out of Raymond’s room and into her own.

He slid off his coat and tossed it over the back of a chair, then helped Zarah out of hers. “Call Stephen and tell him what happened.”

She nodded and rifled through her purse for her cell phone. When he should have given her some privacy, he stayed put in the room and listened as she relayed the evening to her boss. First and foremost Stephen ensured she was all right before he asked for an update on what they’d uncovered over the past two days. The call ended, and she disconnected.

“Well?” Jack asked, pulling her onto his lap. He’d taken a seat at the table under the window.

“I’m free to head home,” she announced. “Stephen said he’ll review what we have, and if the need to come back arises, he’ll handle it.”

“Raymond?”

“We’ll discuss it further once we’re both back at the office.”

Jack tensed and his blood pressure began to elevate.

“Jack, don’t get worked up, at least not in an angry way.” She grinned.

He couldn’t help but chuckle.

They heard the door to Raymond’s room close, and then Lane walked through Zarah’s door and pushed it shut. He set his medical bag on the table in front of the window.

“Well?” she asked.

“He’ll be okay,” Lane reported, removing his coat and laying it on top of Jack’s.

“They weren’t in his throat then?”

Lane shook his head. “He’s going to be damn tender for a few days, but otherwise he’s fine. What’s happening in here?”

“I called Stephen, and I can go home.”

“Good news,” Lane said.

“Then let’s pack your stuff and get the fuck out of here,” Jack said.

Zarah vacated Jack’s lap, and when he reached for her to pull her back down, she side-stepped away from his grasp. A sexy smile curled her full, teasing lips. She began to unbutton the buttons marching down the front of the peach-colored dress she wore. When she’d worked enough of them open, she pushed the fabric over her shoulders. The material pooled at her feet, and she stepped out.

“It’s kind of late to be driving home tonight,” she said, her voice dropping to a husky, seductive tone. “Besides, right now I want the two of you to eliminate every trace of Raymond’s touch and smell from my body.”

Behind the zipper of his jeans, Jack’s cock hardened. He glanced over at Lane, and a similar bulge had formed in his jeans.

“I’m sure we can help you with that, baby,” Lane said, rubbing the outline of his cock through the denim.

“I want you both,” she continued.

Jack’s pulse began to race. His skin felt like it was on fire. His arousal was gaining a momentum he was going to have trouble controlling.

Desire burned in Zarah’s eyes as she gazed between him and Lane. She reached up and released the front closure of her bra, then opened the material to reveal two of the most perfect breasts Jack had ever had the pleasure of enjoying.

“And you’ll have us both.” Jack prayed she didn’t pick up on the apprehension in his voice.

The straps of her bra slid down her arms, and she tossed the offending scrap of lace to the side.

Watching her sensual striptease, Lane had peeled his T-shirt off and dropped it at his feet. He was already working on the fly and zipper of his jeans.

Jack smiled. This was what they needed. What they were all missing. Their connection. He stood, toed off his running shoes, and yanked his shirt over his head. Then he dropped his hands to his pants.

Next Zarah slipped her fingers under the elastic waistband of her panties and worked them over the flair of her womanly hips, down those shapely thighs that Jack wanted to have wrapped around his neck.

"I want the two of you at the same time. One of you fucking my ass, and the other fucking my pussy," she said, clearing up any misconception he or Lane might have had.

"I told you on the way here, Jack, our baby's greedy, greedy, greedy," Lane teased. "You know what that makes her, don't you?"

"Yeah, ours," Jack replied.

"Definitely ours," Lane said, holding his arms open to her. "Now, come here."

Zarah walked into Lane's arms.

"Show us where Raymond touched you," Lane said.

Along her right forearm, Zarah dragged one of her fingertips.

Jack approached from behind and pressed his chest against her back. Slowly, he ran his hands from her shoulders and down her arms to her hands. He lifted her right arm and brought it to his mouth. Against the spot she'd indicated seconds before, he brushed his lips in an attempt to erase Raymond's touch from her mind. *Mine.*

"Mmm," she purred.

"Where else?" Lane asked.

Jack continued to kiss her right forearm, but released her left hand so she could point to another spot. When she reached for her breast, Jack's blood pressure shot up. The son of a bitch had touched his wife's breast. If the opportunity arose and Jack got his hands on Raymond, the other man would be sorry.

Lane lifted his hand and cupped her breast. He palmed her a few moments before dipping his head to drag his tongue over her erect nipple. Zarah shuddered against Jack.

"Just this one?" Lane whispered before closing his lips around the tight peak.

"Y-yes," Zarah replied in a breathless tone. "But he might have thought about the other one."

"Well, then, we'd better take care of that one too." Lane cupped Zarah's other breast and paid it the same attention he had the first.

"Anywhere else?" Jack asked between the kisses he peppered along her arm to her shoulder.

Zarah raised her left hand and touched a fingertip to her quivering lips. With his finger beneath her chin, he turned her face toward him and covered her mouth with his.

Mine.

Jack tried to keep their kiss gentle but failed miserably. His possessive need was too strong to abate. With a fierceness that caught him off guard, he devoured his wife. The want to reclaim what was his was powerful and all-consuming. Too intense to rein in.

With reluctance, Jack withdrew when Zarah's breathing grew ragged, labored, as she struggled to draw air into her lungs through her nose. The combination of his oral onslaught and Lane's focused attention on her breasts had Zarah trembling between them.

"Did Jack get that bad taste out of your mouth, baby?" Lane asked her, releasing her breasts and stroking his hands down her waist to rest on her hips.

“M-most of it,” Zarah stammered breathlessly.

Jack couldn't help but smile. She was going to do everything in her feminine power to get her way in having both of them take her together.

“Well, then, let me clean up the rest for you.” Lane dipped his head to capture her mouth with his. Jack reached between her and Lane to cup her breasts in the palms of his hands. The contented sigh she expressed sent a jolt surging through Jack.

While Lane feasted upon her mouth, Jack brushed his lips along the smooth skin of her shoulder and up to the sensitive spot below her ear. He nipped at her with his teeth and peppered a smattering of gentle kisses over her warming flesh.

The way her body reacted to his touch was remarkable. She was so responsive, so open, so eager. He loved her with everything he was.

Against his cock she wiggled her ass, and the friction of her soft skin against his hard flesh nearly made him forget his own name.

She pulled away from Lane's oral possession and breathed over her shoulder, “I want you in my ass, Jack.”

Jack cursed. His and Lane's bags were still in the truck. And within those bags was a tube of lubricant. He wouldn't shove his cock into his wife's ass without lube. No matter how often he and Lane had taken her there, he'd never take her ass dry and cause her unnecessary discomfort. He wasn't sure spit would be enough.

“Please.” The need in her voice matched the need in her sparkling golden eyes.

Jack scanned the contents sitting on top of the dresser and the vanity counter along the back of the hotel room outside the bathroom.

Lane must have picked up on Jack's thoughts and scanned the area as well.

“A-ha,” he said and reached over to retrieve a bottle from the dresser. He handed Jack the bottle.

Vitamin E oil. Zarah used it as a moisturizer when her skin was dry. It was slippery and would do the trick.

Jack squeezed some into the palm of his hand and stroked it over the length of his cock. Lane reached around Zarah, grabbed the cheeks of her ass, and opened her for Jack. With another squirt, Jack smeared the oil over the puckered hole of Zarah's ass and worked first one finger inside her, then another.

Her hands gripped Lane's shoulders, and her head rested back against Jack's chest. Her eyes drifted closed, and her lips parted. Soft murmurs slipped over those lips, music to Jack's ears. Her hips began rocking in time to Jack's fingers readying her for his taking.

Lane's gaze was focused on Zarah's face. His hands kneaded the globes of her ass. His harsh breath matched Jack's staccato rhythm.

When Jack worked a third finger into her ass, Zarah's body swayed.

Jack's cock strained painfully toward the hole his fingers were buried in, as if seeking out the place it most wanted to be. His balls threatened to unload with each thrust of his digits combined with the brush of her skin against his.

"Please," she begged softly.

With his climax threatening to consume him before he had the chance to pleasure his wife, Jack withdrew his fingers and aligned the head of his cock with her anus.

"Wider," he growled low, and Lane pulled her cheeks open as far as he could without causing her pain.

Jack pushed forward, the tip of him entering her body with a subtle resistance. He couldn't control the tremor that coursed through him at just entering her. Beneath his shaft his sac pulled up tight to his body. Jack inhaled deeply and then exhaled a shaky breath.

Around his dick he felt Zarah's muscles relax, and she pushed outward, encouraging him to advance his entrance. He did. Couldn't have stopped if his life had depended on it. Wouldn't have even tried.

Jack continued feeding his cock inside her until she'd taken every last inch of him in her hot depths. He shuddered as his balls rubbed against her body.

"Oh God yes," she whispered.

Lane released her backside and slid his hands up her waist, then back down to her generous hips. "You should see how fucking beautiful you look right now," he said. "Your skin is starting to shine with sweat. Your cheeks are flushed a rosy pink. I can smell how hot you are for Jack and me."

Of the two, Lane was more vocal during lovemaking. Not that Jack didn't voice his pleasures and desires. The truth was, Lane's dirty talk was as much a turn-on for Jack as it was for Zarah. He loved to watch her expressions when Lane engaged in crude locker-room talk. Lane always seemed to know exactly when to use what language.

Zarah moaned low in her throat, and a shiver moved through her. "I'm so fucking hot for you. Both of you."

Lane slid one hand down between Zarah's legs and began stroking along her folds. Her muscles clenched when he pushed a finger, or maybe two, inside her. She swayed again, and her knuckles grew white as she dug her fingertips into Lane's shoulders.

"Jesus you're wet," Lane announced.

From his position buried in Zarah's ass, Jack felt Lane's fingers thrusting in and out of her pussy. The wet sounds filled the room.

"Please, Lane," Zarah whimpered. "Please shove your cock in my pussy."

Lane chuckled low, and Zarah trembled in Jack's arms.

Lane bent his knees, angled the head of his cock toward Zarah's pussy, and pushed inside. The muscles engulfing Jack's shaft tightened, and he groaned aloud. "Christ."

"Now move," she ordered on a strangled sigh.

"Didn't I say you were a greedy wench?" Lane's tone teased.

“You made me—oh God yes, *yes*,” she cried out as they began to move inside her. “M-made me th-this way. Please don’t stop.”

Zarah was so snug around Jack. Her muscles squeezed his shaft, and judging by the tense expression on Lane’s face, she was doing the same thing to him.

“Feels s-so g-good,” she stammered.

“Oh yeah, baby,” Lane moaned in agreement against her right shoulder.

Jack nuzzled the crook of her neck on the left. “Yes, sweetheart. This is what we were missing, isn’t it?”

“Yes, Jack, yes,” she murmured. “We’ve waited too long. I-I’m going to explode.”

Her confession threatened to pull Jack’s climax from his balls.

“It’s all right, honey,” Lane said, looking at her, and then Jack. “We’ve got you. Let go. Come for us.”

When her body relented, Jack’s followed in earnest. His cock jerked with an intensity he wasn’t certain he’d ever experienced before. His release shot forth from his cock with such force, he momentarily wondered if Zarah’s insides would be bruised from the impact. She cried out his name, and Jack thrust into her again, unloading every last drop of himself inside her.

Zarah trembled as her orgasm consumed her. She and Jack were reveling in the aftermath of their climaxes while Lane continued to pump in and out of her pussy.

“Mmm, that was beautiful you two,” he praised, and suddenly he lost his coordination. His hips thrust forward, and his body stiffened. An expression of sheer pleasure crossed his face, and within the warmth of Zarah’s ass, Jack felt Lane’s cock dance inside her pussy, and her body heat even more as Lane emptied his balls into her.

Jack was surprised they'd managed to fulfill their desires while standing, but nothing was going to stand in their way once their passions were in motion. To support their trembling bodies, Lane's hip rested against the dresser beside them.

Between them, Zarah's shudders continued, long after her orgasm subsided. She'd laid her forehead against the right side of Lane's chest, and her hands had fallen to the crooks of his arms. Jack realized then that she was crying.

Jack broke out in a cold sweat. He was solely responsible for bringing his worst fear to light. He'd hurt his wife. What kind of husband was he? He'd been caught up in her seduction, wanting her with every fiber of his being. Needing her with desperation he'd no longer been able to control.

"Hey there." He hoped she didn't hear the panic in his voice as he eased himself out of her ass.

A soft sigh tripped over her quivering lips.

Lane raised a hand and, with a finger under her chin, lifted her head up and back, so they could see her face.

"What's with the tears?" Lane asked.

Her lower lip quivered as she smiled. "Happy tears. Promise," she replied.

Jack relaxed marginally.

The wet slide of Lane's cock slipping from Zarah's pussy sounded between them. She sighed again.

"We're so sorry—" Lane started to continue.

"No. No apologizing." She wiped at a tear that trickled down her cheek. "To apologize means there are regrets," she said. "And we don't have any of those."

"Not a one," Lane agreed.

"That's right, sweetheart," Jack concurred.

"All I was going to say was we're sorry that the three of us lost our connection for a while," Lane said.

"We knew it would be expected, though, with the babies and all. Guess we allowed ourselves to get comfortable with buying into the 'too tired' and 'not enough hours in the day' scenarios," Jack added. "But no more."

"Thank God," Zarah said. "Because I can't go that long again not having the two of you." She dropped her head again and shuddered. "I-I know this sounds selfish, but as much as I love being with each of you separately, I-I need this." She pressed a hand to each of their chests. "I need the both of you, together. It's as if your combined energies breathe new life into me. When I don't have it, I'm lost."

"This is what we'd planned this weekend for," Jack said, tucking a damp curl behind her ear. "Lane and I were missing the three of us too. This was supposed to be time for us to reconnect, to find that piece of each of us that's been missing."

Zarah chuckled. "I'd planned the same thing, this weekend away for just the two of us. Until Radley ruined it with this trip."

"No worries, honey. You won't be waiting anymore in the future," Lane assured her.

"That's good." She wiggled between them, and Jack's cock hardened again.

"I saw a hot tub down by the pool. You two want to go for a soak?" Lane asked.

Zarah shook her head and thumbed toward the king-size bed in the middle of the room. "What I want is for the two of you to fuck me all night long, right over there." Then she pointed to the vanity counter. "Then over there." To the dresser beside them. "And here." Over her shoulder to the small table in front of the window. "Then maybe over there."

"See, Jack," Lane said with a smile on his face. "What did I tell you?"

"She's greedy, no question."

Jack bent and scooped his wife up into his arms. Then he turned and tossed her onto the middle of the bed.

"Guess we'd better give our wench what she wants," he said and jumped onto the bed with her.

After a second round of making hot, sweaty threesome monkey love, Jack, Zarah, and Lane lay sprawled across the queen-sized bed, limbs entangled, bodies shiny with perspiration, breath labored. The fragrance of their lovemaking scented the air heavily in the hotel room.

Zarah's fingertips stroked gently over Lane's pecs as she lay curled up against his side, her head resting on his chest. Jack lay on his side, his body stretched out alongside Zarah's, his hand caressing along her warm damn skin, along her side, over her hip and down the outer side of her thigh. She trembled between him and Lane.

"Thank you," she purred.

"For what, baby?" Lane asked.

"For coming to me. I missed and needed you both so desperately, I ached."

Jack pressed a kiss to her shoulder. "It was our pleasure, sweetheart."

"Happy we could accommodate you." Lane's teasing tone brought a sultry chuckle from deep within Zarah's chest.

"Only the two of *you* have the accelerant to fuel my fire," she said.

"And don't you forget it." Jack pressed closer to his wife, a reminder to her that he and Lane would keep her safe, and were ready, willing, and able—and more than capable—to provide her anything and everything her heart desired.

She was theirs.

"Hmm," she hummed after several moments of silence passed between them.

Jack caught the hint of sudden anxiety in the vibration of the sound, and the hair on the back of his neck stood on end. "Hmm, what?" he asked.

"I was just thinking about how awkward Monday morning's going to be," she replied.

"How so?" Lane asked.

“With Radley. I wonder how uncomfortable things will be between us at the office come Monday morning,” she said and snuggled in closer to Lane.

Every possessive instinct within Jack surfaced. His heart rate accelerated. His blood surged through his veins like a Tsunami about to crash ashore.

There was no way in hell Zarah would be subjected to awkwardness in her workplace. A place she’d always loved spending time in. Doing a job she gained reward from.

Radley would not take that away from her.

No way in hell.

Chapter Six

Midmorning Monday, Zarah laid a soft knock on Stephen Webster's office door, announcing her presence before opening it. The DA's secretary had told her that Stephen was expecting her, so she didn't wait for the invitation to enter.

When the door swung open and she glanced inside, she stopped in midstep over the threshold.

"What's this all about?" She'd expected a meeting with Stephen and Radley but was taken aback by Lane and Jack's presence in the office.

"Zarah, please come in and take a seat," Stephen said.

She closed the door behind her, then crossed the room and sat in the empty chair between Jack and Lane. Radley was seated several feet away to the left.

"What are you two doing here?" she asked. "Not that it isn't a pleasant surprise to see you."

"Support," Lane replied.

"Muscle." The tense expression on Jack's face triggered warning bells in Zarah's mind.

Unease settled like a boulder in her stomach. Warily she glanced from Jack to Lane, then to Stephen and then Radley before meeting Jack's gaze again. "And just why do you think I need muscle here?" she uttered in a low voice.

Jack didn't respond.

What the hell was going on?

"Radley has something he'd like to say to you," Stephen said to her.

“All right,” she replied. Leaning forward to see around Jack, she turned her attention to the ADA.

It had been two days since she’d seen last him. And that encounter had been less than pleasant.

Radley met her gaze head-on. His eyes were cautious but sincere. “Zarah, I owe you an apology. My behavior last Friday night was deplorable and my actions inexcusable. I cannot express to you enough just how sorry I am.”

The apology had been expected, but she hadn’t expected it to be so genuine and heartfelt.

“Are your balls still sore?” As she asked, all four men in the room visibly tensed.

“Tender, but deservedly so,” he replied.

“I’m really sorry I did that,” she offered.

He nodded. “Also, I’ve presented Stephen my letter of resignation—”

Zarah shifted to the edge of her seat. “What? You can’t do that, Radley,” she said.

“Let him finish,” Jack growled.

Zarah turned to him and narrowed her eyes. Anger burned in his gaze, and his expression tightened even more.

“My actions last week were unbecoming of a representative of the district attorney’s office, and to the legacy my father left here—”

“You can’t let him do this.” Zarah whipped her gaze around to Stephen.

“It’s his choice, Zarah,” Stephen replied.

“But he’s an exceptional attorney. Have you reviewed his motion on the case we’ve been working on together?”

Stephen nodded. “I have.”

“Then you know he has it wrapped up. Stephen, without a doubt we have incredibly talented people in this office, but, with all due respect, I don’t believe

anyone else here could have solidified the evidence against the accused the way Radley has in such a short period of time. There's no question he'll get a conviction in this case."

"I agree," Stephen said.

"Zarah, what the hell are you thinking, sticking up for him?" Jack griped. "After what he did to you? If Lane and I hadn't shown up when we did, he would have followed through with raping—"

Zarah's mouth gaped open. How dare he infer she couldn't handle her business!

Radley straightened his back at Jack's insult. "I would not have raped her. I respect no means no."

"You were groping our wife like a side of beef," Jack snarled and shifted as if on the verge of launching himself at the other man.

"Hey!" Zarah snapped. Jack turned his attention back to her. "A side of beef?"

Jack frowned. "You know what I mean."

She leaned so she could see Radley again. "Radley, what you did at the hotel was out of line. Everything. All of it. No question. Regarding my relationship with Jack and Lane, you *are* entitled to your opinion, and I will never fault anyone for that. But you're a brilliant attorney. By turning in your resignation, you're throwing away your opportunity to make a difference in the United States judicial system. You can't leave this office."

When Radley refused to defend his professional position, she shot a helpless glance at the DA. Surely he would see reason in this absurdity. "Stephen, do something. This isn't right."

Stephen sighed in resignation. "Zarah, it's his choice."

"Like hell it is," she argued. "Last I checked, you were the head of this office."

"Zarah, calm down. He wants to resign. Let him," Jack said.

“Stephen’s right, honey. It’s Radley’s decision,” Lane added. “It’s the right thing for him to do.”

“Oh this is ridiculous.” This back-and-forth was exasperating. Yes, Radley had acted beyond inappropriate at the hotel, but this was his career. As the victim of the situation, if she was willing to put it behind them, then why couldn’t they just let this go and move forward? “This office needs legal minds like Radley’s. Yes, he made a misjudgment, but you cannot honestly say, DA Webster, that ADA Radley Raymond is not a valuable asset to this office.”

“I agree he is,” Stephen admitted. “His work ethic isn’t in question.”

“Then why are you resigning?” she asked Radley.

“For you,” he replied.

Zarah jerked back, stunned by his response. “Um, pardon?”

“I don’t want you to look at me every day and recall what an asshole I was to you. The other night I told you that you were different, and I meant it. I won’t do that to you,” he continued.

“Well, then, don’t resign, Radley,” she said.

Low rumbles of anger sounded on either side of her. Jack’s hands were balled into tight fists on his thighs. She could feel the heat of Lane’s stare burning a hole in the back of her head. Her men were furious. While she understood their frustration where her forgiving Radley was concerned, she wanted them to understand her position. They weren’t going to now, but once they were alone she’d explain things more clearly.

“Zarah, I just can’t—” Radley began, and she cut him off.

“Listen, Radley. You’re an ass. But you know what would upset me more than you staying?”

He shrugged, a confused expression on his face.

“You leaving,” she told him. “If you ever touch me or speak inappropriately to me again, I will send your balls up into your throat.”

Four groans of male distress echoed around the room.

“But if you resign, you will be denying the residents of this state your talents. You alone could be the difference between obtaining a conviction on behalf of a victim and allowing some slimy piece of shit to get off scot-free.”

“So you’d be all right with seeing me around the office every day?” he asked.

“I’d be fine with it. But I mean what I say about you ever touching me again,” she reiterated.

“You needn’t worry, Zarah,” he said.

“Stephen, tear up that resignation,” Zarah said to her boss.

Stephen picked up Radley’s letter from his desk and tore it in half.

“Thank you,” she said to him.

“No, thank you, Zarah,” Radley said to her. “I know it’s a lot to ask, but will you consider continuing to see this case through with me?”

“No,” Jack and Lane growled in unison.

“Yes.” Zarah’s response was simultaneous with theirs. Zarah sat back in her chair and took one of Jack and Lane’s hands in each of hers. “I love how fiercely protective you two are of me,” she told them. “But it would be a terrible shame to deny the public the brilliant legal mind Radley possesses. He *will* make a difference in this office, guys. Please understand that.”

Jack glanced toward Radley. “If you ever touch my wife again, I’ll kill you,” he managed through gritted teeth.

Radley nodded. “Understood.”

“Jack,” Zarah said softly. “You just threatened an officer of the court in front of another officer of the court.”

“And I meant it.”

She smiled and gave his hand a squeeze of appreciation. She wanted to lean over and kiss his frown away. “Thank you for understanding.”

“Don’t thank me, Zarah, because I don’t understand why you want this. But I love you. If his staying here pleases you, then so be it. I’ll have to learn to live with it.”

She glanced over to Lane. Lane had been quiet throughout the meeting, but she knew his anger was simmering below the surface. Lane might be vocal when it came to their sex life, but with something like this, he would listen to all parties and side with reason. It was his nature.

“I’m right there with Jack on all counts, sweetheart.” Lane’s voice carried the same irritated tone as Jack’s. “If Raymond *ever* disrespects you again, the man will pay.”

She nodded.

“But I do understand your position regarding his value to the office,” Lane added.

“I appreciate that,” she told him. “All right, then, I think we’re done here,” Zarah said and stood still holding the guys’ hands. “Come on, I’ll walk you guys out.”

Once outside the office, Zarah figured the guys—mainly Jack—would relax. The air in Stephen’s office had been thick with tension. Anger had rolled off Jack and Lane in fierce waves. And as she took in their mirrored expressions of annoyance, she realized it apparently had yet to subside.

“That was a joke,” Jack growled when they reached his pickup.

“What was?” She rounded on him.

It was clear the men in her life were not pleased with the outcome of the meeting with Radley. She’d appreciated his apology, but there was no way she was going to let him throw away his career over his indiscretion. People made mistakes; that was what made them human.

“Why in the hell did you jump to his defense?” he continued in a raised voice.

She knew they didn't understand her reasoning, but she wasn't prepared for them to hash things out in the parking lot.

"I told you why I did what I did," she answered.

"You had no business talking him into staying after Stephen accepted his resignation."

Zarah inhaled a calming breath and blew it out slowly.

"All right," she began and tamped down her own irritation. "Care to share the real reason the two of you are here this morning?"

"We already did," Jack grumbled. "Support."

"And muscle," she added.

He shrugged.

"What'd you do, Jack? Strong-arm Radley into turning in that resignation?"

Neither Jack nor Lane confirmed or denied her accusation, but their matching expressions answered the question.

"Oh God, you didn't." The pieces began to fall into place. Mortified that the two men she loved with all her heart would stoop to such tactics, she glared at them.

"You're our wife," Lane returned. "And we will do anything to keep you safe."

She narrowed her eyes. "You think I'm some fragile waif who needs her big strong men to swoop in and protect her? You think I can't handle myself?"

Jack crossed his arms over his chest. "Not around a guy like Raymond."

Her mind began to spin. An abhorrent thought struck, and her stomach turned. "You don't trust me."

"We trust you. We don't trust Raymond," Lane countered. His blue eyes flared with the same anger as Jack's.

What was happening here?

“Yeah. Last Wednesday when he came to the house to pick you up, he was looking at you like you were some tasty treat he couldn’t wait to sample.” Jack’s voice grew louder.

“Oh no you don’t. You came here today and threatened Radley, said God-knows-what to Stephen, all because you didn’t think I was strong enough to stand up for myself in there.”

“That’s not true,” Jack returned even louder.

“I think it is true. And you know what else?”

They both lifted a brow in question.

“You said you came upstate last week to be with me, but I can’t help but wonder if the two of you came just to check up on me.” Her body trembled in fury.

“What!”

“Wait just a minute,” Lane cut in. “You’re way off base there.”

“Am I?”

“Yes,” Jack bellowed. His face was red.

Zarah wasn’t so sure. Something had been building between the three of them for a couple of months. It was a shame it had come to a head at that moment.

Lane and Jack’s expressions suddenly dropped. Lane’s gaze shifted from her face and darted aimlessly all around them. In Jack’s she saw shame mixed with frustration. What was he ashamed about? Besides threatening Radley. She wished she possessed the ability to read their minds, because their tense expressions gave nothing away as to what they were thinking.

Zarah wasn’t about to let this drop so easily. Damn them for keeping whatever they were struggling with from her. “And I’m beginning to suspect you had this morning all mapped out last Friday following the incident. What’d the two of you do, sit up after I fell asleep discussing how you were going to make Radley pay? You figured if you threw a good and thorough fucking into me I’d turn into an insipid docile wimp and cower in the shadows to let you fight my battles for me?”

“Whoa! Back up,” Jack roared.

“How pathetic of me to think what the three of us shared Friday meant as much to the two of you as it did to me,” she shouted. “It’s been so long since we were together like that, and I thought it was the beginning of us getting back on track. Boy, was I wrong.”

Usually one to keep her private life private, Zarah didn’t care that she’d just blurted out for everyone within hearing distance that she’d engaged in a threesome the week before. If somebody didn’t like it, tough shit.

“It did mean something to the two of us,” Lane said.

“Yeah,” Jack said in agreement. “It was just what the three of us needed.”

“Too bad your plan of seduction didn’t have the desired effect of turning me into some hapless waif.”

“If memory serves, you were the one leading the seduction,” Jack said.

The blood in her veins suddenly ran cold. “So that’s it? This arrangement isn’t working for the two of you anymore? The three of us. The hesitation from both of you Friday was evident, though I tried to convince myself it was all in my head. But it wasn’t, was it? The two of you want out, don’t you?”

“No way!” Lane’s hands balled into fists.

“Absolutely not!” Jack added.

Their twin expressions now revealed more than she was ready for. Rage. Hot, searing rage. Was it because she’d hit the mark dead on or because she was wrong?

“I think we need to take a step back and calm down.” Lane’s suddenly calm voice of reason broke the momentary silence threatening to swallow them whole.

“Good idea,” she said.

Hurt, confusion, and disappointment were bombarding her senses to the point of overload. She couldn’t continue right now. Frustrated, she turned on her heel and started walking away.

"Hey, where are you going?" Jack called after her in a gruff voice. "We're not finished here."

"Oh yes we are," she spat out as she spun back around. "I'm going back to work because right now I'm fighting the urge to kick both your asses."

"Come back here." Lane held his hand out to her. "Let's not end things like this."

"You think we can kiss and make up, just like that?" She snapped her fingers. "The two of you don't trust me."

"We do trust you," they said simultaneously.

"Right. That's why you surprised me on my trip, and why you were here this morning bullying my boss." She waved her hand when Jack opened his mouth to argue further. "Listen, you two need to figure out just what kind of family we're going to have if you can't trust me to make choices for myself. I'll see you at home."

Uninterested in hearing anything else either of them might say, she turned away and hurried toward the front door of the office. At her sides, her hands were clenched into fists. Her cheeks were hot, and her body was shaking. What the hell was wrong with Jack and Lane? Why did they truly not trust her? She'd never given them a reason not to. So why didn't they now? There had to be more to this than the situation with Radley, but she wasn't prepared to continue arguing in the parking lot where her coworkers could see them from inside the building and passersby could hear them. No, after they had the day to calm down and think, perhaps they could carry on a civilized conversation in the privacy of their own home.

On her way down the hall, she nearly slammed into Radley as he exited his office. When she stumbled, he grabbed her upper arms to balance her. Once she was steady, he released her as if touching her burned him.

"Sorry about that," he said, casting a glance at her arm. "I thought you were going to fall right over."

"It's fine. Thank you for the support." Her surly tone made her wince.

“Hey, are you okay?” he asked.

“Just ducky,” she returned with a forced smile. “Let’s get to work. What else do you need from me on the case?”

Chapter Seven

Zarah sat in her SUV in the driveway for several minutes after turning the key off. She stared toward the house, wondering what she was going to walk into when she entered. Had Jack and Lane calmed down? Would they be able to talk rationally? She felt bad about the argument she'd had with them, and even worse for walking away from them when things were so heated. She felt doubly awful that she'd refused to take their calls throughout the day or return their many voice messages. But they hadn't been in a frame of mind to listen earlier, and her patience on the subject had worn thin.

From the passenger seat, she grabbed her purse and lunch bag, then opened the car door and climbed out. As she walked toward the side door of the house, her frustration and hurt began to surface once again. It took effort, but she pushed them aside, determined to remain in control. Tonight they would talk things out calmly, reasonably, and get everything out in the open.

At least that was her plan.

Zarah pulled the screen door open and stepped into the kitchen. The tension in the air slammed into her like a truck. Once inside, she glanced around and froze in her tracks.

The kitchen table was set with their good china, silverware, and crystal wine goblets. Pillar candles flickered in the center of the table. Beside the plates lay folded linen napkins they'd received as a wedding gift. At the back of the table were two vases of long-stemmed roses: one of red, the other white. Her table looked like one out of a decorating magazine.

“Hey there,” Lane said. His tone was cautious as he continued to feed the twins, who were in their carriers on the countertop.

Seeing her babies made the day’s stresses melt away.

Jack stood at the counter preparing dinner, which smelled delectable. “Hi, sweetheart. We were wondering how long you were going to sit out there in your truck.”

“Hi. Sorry about that. I was collecting my thoughts.”

Both men smiled at her. Their wary expressions told her they’d spent the day stewing over the morning just as she had.

“What’s all this for?” she asked, pointing to the table. If they thought a nice dinner was going to make up for the debacle of a morning, they were sorely mistaken. But it was a sweet gesture.

“Did you forget it’s Valentine’s Day?” Jack teased.

Actually, she had. Following their disagreement, she hadn’t thought of anything else.

“Yeah, I did,” she admitted.

“Here,” Lane said, vacating his spot on one of the stools. “Why don’t you feed our monsters their dessert, and I’ll pour you a glass of wine.”

“Thank you. I’d like that,” she replied.

She dropped her purse and bag beside the door and kicked off her shoes.

“Hello there, my babies,” she cooed and gave them each a kiss on the forehead. “What are they wearing?”

She pulled their bibs up to see their shirts. They wore matching red T-shirts covered with pink and white hearts. The biggest heart in the center had the words *Be my Valentine* embroidered in the middle of it.

“These are adorable,” she said. “Where’d they come from?”

“I spotted them in the window of that children’s clothing store you like,” Jack said.

“The one beside my favorite florist,” she said, again eyeing the roses on the table.

“That’s the one.”

Lane gathered up the dishes he’d used to feed the babies and passed her a bowl from the counter beside the fridge. It contained a mashed up mess of red and smelled of strawberries and a hint of banana.

“What’s this?”

“We’re having strawberry shortcake for dessert, and I thought the kids might like to try real strawberries. So I mashed up a few with a couple slices of banana. Is the consistency okay for them? You want me to puree it in the blender?”

Zarah smiled. God, how she loved these guys. More so when they weren’t stubborn asses. “No, it’ll be fine. Let’s see what they think.”

She offered a spoonful to Madan, then Magan. The two gummed the mashed berries and puckered their lips.

“Hmm, that bad, is it?” Lane’s brow furrowed in disappointment as he watched them.

“Just different and new, Uncle Lane, that’s all,” she assured him.

Madan swallowed, grinned, and kicked his feet in joy.

“See, Madan loves it. Don’t you, little man?” She gave him another taste. “And now Miss Magan. Open up.”

The air in the kitchen was leveling out to a more favorable degree.

Jack turned toward the stove and pulled the oven door open. From within, he retrieved a baking dish.

“That smells fantastic. What did you make?” she asked.

Jack beamed when he glanced over his shoulder at her. “Rita helped me with Beef Wellington this afternoon.”

“Beef Wellington?” Her tone revealed how impressed she was.

Lane set a glass of wine on the countertop beside Magan's chair. He studied Zarah for a moment, probably gauging her tolerance of him before leaning in to press a soft kiss against her lips.

She welcomed his kiss and pressed more firmly against his mouth. His lips were warm, firm, confident, and just what she needed to feel.

"I love you," he whispered against her lips before pulling away.

Warmth sparked low in her belly and spread throughout her body like a wildfire.

"Yeah, you really enjoy it when we have it at Rita and Mack's, so I asked her to help me make it for you tonight," Jack said.

Love filled her heart, and she thought the muscle might burst from her chest. "That's very thoughtful of you, Jack."

He winked at her. "Seeing my girl happy makes me happy."

"Listen, guys, about this morning," she said. "We need to clear the air."

"Agreed." Lane plucked a couple bottles of beer from the fridge and, after twisting off the caps, handed one to Jack. "We have a special night ahead of us and don't want any unpleasantness looming in the shadows."

The promise in Lane's eyes sent Zarah's pulse racing. Could it be as simple as that? And what exactly did they have planned? After their morning, she'd been thinking about sleeping on the rocker in the nursery.

"Lane and I did some serious thinking today and were talking before you came home." Jack tipped his bottle to his lips and took a long pull from it.

"Oh?" She spooned more fruit into each of the twins.

"First and foremost, we trust you," Lane said. "With everything we are, Zarah. We'll never give you a reason to question that again."

She nodded. But that meant something else was eating at them.

Jack walked around Lane on his way to the fridge. From within, he pulled out fixings for a fresh salad. "I'm not going to lie to you or pretend something I don't

feel. Though I heard it and tried to reason it out in my mind, I don't understand why you did what you did for Raymond this morning."

When she opened her mouth to speak, Jack lifted a finger to his mouth to silence her.

"But I love you. And I trust you, and your judgment. If you feel as strongly as you do about him staying in the DA's office, then I will respect your decision."

"Thank you, Jack." It took a lot for Jack to admit that to her, and she loved him even more for it.

Jack gave her a wink. "Lane, grab that glass bowl from the top shelf, will you?"

"Sure thing." Lane opened the cupboard door above the stove and retrieved the bowl. He placed it on the counter beside where Jack stood slicing bell peppers.

"So, if you both trust me, then what was this morning all about? Things spiraled out of control pretty fast."

"Guess the strain between the three of us finally got the better of the situation." Lane came around the island and took the empty bowl from her hands. "How was that, guys?" Both babies gurgled in response. "Think we should offer them more fresh fruits instead of the jarred stuff?"

"I don't see why not. It won't hurt them," she replied and wiped down the twins' faces.

"Probably try some veggies too," Jack joined in. "Stuff that's easy to mash up."

"I'm sure they'll like that." Zarah smiled at him. "So are you two going to share with me what you're dealing with regarding us?"

Jack poured dressing over the salad he'd prepared and gave it a light toss. "That needs to sit for a few minutes to let the flavors meld," he said and set the bowl aside.

"Does Wolfgang Puck need to watch out for Jack Masters?" Lane teased.

"Not for a while yet," Jack answered. "But you do have to admit, I'm getting the hang of this cooking gig."

“Yeah, we admit your cooking hasn’t made us sick.” Lane continued to dig Jack in fun.

Jack flipped Lane the bird.

Lane blew Jack a kiss.

Zarah laughed at their exchange. The two men were worse than a couple of kids at times. But she loved them all the same.

“Earlier Lane shared with me that you confided in him about missing the ménage of our relationship, honey.” Back at the stove, Jack pulled a tray of sweet potato fries from the oven. He set the baking sheet on a cooling rack on the counter. “For the record, I was missing it too.”

“Was?” she asked.

“Well yeah, we had Friday,” he replied.

“Once in seven months hardly constitutes we’re back on track,” she countered. Her body began a slow simmer as she recalled every delicious detail of that night.

Jack chuckled. The low sensual rumble activated her desires. Lord she was weak when it came to her men.

“We’re on our way back,” he said.

Fair enough. Friday had been a spectacular encounter. And she knew the bullshit she’d spewed at them that morning about the experience not meaning anything to them had been unwarranted. She’d been hurt and frustrated and had lashed out.

“I was hesitant to engage in a ménage because I didn’t think physically you were ready,” Jack admitted.

“I know my own body, Jack. I’ve been ready, willing, and able for several months now,” she told him.

“You’re right, I didn’t think. You mean so much to me and Lane and the babies that I didn’t want to hurt or push you just to satisfy my own sexual desires.” As Jack came around the island toward her, he wiped his hands on a tea towel he’d

picked up from the counter. When he stood before her, he used his finger to lift her head until she was looking up at him. "I'm sorry for not appreciating your strength sooner. That is a mistake I will not make again." He dipped his head and claimed her mouth with his.

Several moments later he pulled back, leaving her breathless. Her heart thumped with force. She could hear it pounding. Her nipples sprang to attention, and the gentle tingle between her legs turned into a fierce agonizing throb.

"I need to finish dinner," he said and turned away. "Lane, you can pick this up."

"Then where were we?" she asked, her voice husky and laden with want. She picked up her wineglass and took a swallow.

Over the rim of the glass, she eyed Lane, who was leaning against the counter with his arms crossed over his chest. The flames of desire flickered in his blue eyes. The evidence of his growing arousal pressed against the zipper of his jeans.

"I've been dealing with my own insecurities," he finally said.

"About?"

"My place in this relationship."

Zarah sucked in a breath and held it. This was her worst fear come to light. Lane was questioning his place in their lives and had been possibly for some time. Was he going to tell them he was leaving? He couldn't. He was happy there; he belonged with them. Their family wouldn't be a family without him. What was he thinking? How could she show him just how important he was to their union?

"Buy why? What have I done to make you question such a thing?" Whereas a moment before her heart was so full of love, she now felt as though it was breaking.

"Ah honey, you didn't do or say anything." He dropped his arms to his sides and walked toward her. "I was having trouble dealing with my own issues. Looking back now, it was silly—"

“Your feelings are never silly, Lane. How could you wonder about your place with us? Without you, there wouldn’t be an us. You see that, right?”

“Oh, baby.” He ran his fingers through her curls and tucked a strand behind one ear. “Not that the ménage is what holds us together, but I guess I’d put too much stock in it and the fact that we hadn’t engaged in it in so long that I let my wayward thoughts get the best of me.”

Zarah uttered an unladylike snort. “Gee, and I thought you’d lost interest in me, in us.”

“No way are you and Jack getting rid of me that easily.”

“I know our relationship isn’t society’s idea of normal, but under this roof we have love and lots of it. That’s what’s important. I don’t want you ever questioning how you fit in this trio again, Lane.”

Uncertainty flickered briefly in his eyes.

She wanted to tell him his doubt was unfounded, but she knew this was a situation where words simply wouldn’t do. He needed action, and she would spend the rest of her days showing Lane there was no other life out there for him to live better than the one he was living with her and Jack. He would never find someone who loved, wanted, and needed him more than she did.

“I can’t promise you that, sweetheart.” He leaned in brushed his lips against hers. She parted hers and encouraged him to explore her mouth with his tongue. And he did.

When he withdrew and stood to look into her eyes, her arousal skyrocketed.

She blew out a sigh of relief but wasn’t completely at ease.

“So we could have avoided the unpleasantness of this morning if we’d had some faith in each other and communicated our feelings?” she asked.

“We’re men. We don’t do feelings real well,” Jack confessed.

“Well, then, that’s got to change. We need to keep the lines of communication open,” she said to them both and then turned to Lane. “I love you. With all my heart and everything I am.”

“I love you too, honey.”

She glanced over to Jack, who was busy plating their dinner. He stopped what he was doing and met her gaze. Hunger gleamed in his gray eyes, and a feral grin lifted his lips.

“And I love you, Jack. With all my heart and everything I am.”

“And I am more in love with you today than the first day I laid eyes on you. Ready to eat?”

“Yes. And then after the kids are bathed and down for the count, I want dessert,” she replied.

“Well, I’ve prepared delicious strawberry shortcake for you, our love,” Lane said and took her hand in his to escort her to the table.

“Oh I intend to enjoy that too, but the dessert I was thinking about was filthy and carnal in flavors. And involved the three of us naked and sweaty.”

“God damn, I love the way you think, lady.” Before she could sit, Lane tugged her against his body and captured her mouth with his.

Chapter Eight

Lane turned out the light in the bathroom and, after checking on the sleeping twins, crossed the hall to the room he shared with Zarah and Jack. With a towel wrapped around his hips, his skin still damp from the shower, he leaned against the frame of the door and watched the scene about to unfold on the bed.

Dozens of candles flickered warm, soft light around the room.

Zarah stood at the foot of the bed, while Jack lay atop it. His back was against a pillow propped along the headboard. He was naked and already aroused at the sight of his wife. Though she stood with her back to Lane, he watched as she unfastened the belt of the short satin robe she wore and opened the front to Jack's hungry gaze. She pushed the silky material off her shoulders, letting it fall down her arms and to the floor to pool around her feet.

Lane's cock joined Jack's in a hard state of arousal.

She was so beautiful.

And so theirs.

She leaned forward and lifted one knee onto the bed, then the other, and began crawling forward between Jack's legs. He parted them farther, granting her better access. Though she touched Jack, Lane could feel the firm pressure of her hands, and she stroked up the length of Jack's legs, over his abdomen and up to his chest. Her delicate fingertips feathered over Jack's nipples, and Lane's rose to attention.

Jack's expression told Lane Zarah had given him that sexy, impish grin she did when she was about to take control.

Lane's balls tightened when she leaned over and drew her tongue across Jack's left nipple. A moan rumbled in the back of Jack's throat, and he closed his eyes. She

moved over to the right, paying it the same attention. Then she moved south. Her hands caressed Jack's body as she slid down between his legs. Once there, she dropped her head to Jack's crotch and stuck her beautiful ass up in the air.

Lane's cock threatened to unload at the sight of her. He wondered if she'd sensed his presence, watching them, and was blatantly offering herself to him. The scent of her building arousal carried across the room to tease under his nostrils, and he inhaled deeply, drawing her into his body. She wiggled her ass.

Oh yeah, she knew damn well he was standing there. The minx.

Well, he wasn't about to give her what she wanted that easily. Mesmerized by the sight, the smell, and the energy sizzling in the room, he continued to observe from the doorway. Jack had reached down and gathered Zarah's long, dark curls in his hand and held them back, giving Lane a slightly less obstructed view of her taking Jack's cock between her lips.

As her head dipped, Lane imagined more of Jack's shaft disappearing into the heat of her mouth, and his own cock jerked beneath the towel around his waist. He moved a hand to his groin and rubbed himself. The rough friction of the towel brushing along his hard, sensitive length had him fighting the urge to simply yank himself to relief. But he wouldn't cheat himself of the greater reward awaiting him on the bed.

Jack's breath grew labored, hoarse. The bobbing of Zarah's head sped up for several strokes, then she slowed down before she released Jack's cock to tease him with her tongue and teeth. Jack groaned in pleasure.

Lane knew just how sensational her mouth felt.

Zarah's musky scent wafted under his nose again. As he drew in her feminine fragrance, a tremor of need coursed through him, and he shuddered. He had to taste that sweet-smelling spot that was making his cock ache.

Dropping the towel to the floor, Lane crossed the room and crawled onto the bed behind Zarah. She moaned around Jack's cock when Lane dug his fingertips

into the cheeks of her ass and began kneading her flesh. She pressed her backside against his massaging hands and wiggled it from side to side.

Lane released Zarah's buttocks and shifted so he was lying on the bed, his head between her parted knees, her pussy hovering right above his face. He reached under her body and up and over her hips until his fingers gripped her bottom again. He spread her wide and pulled her pussy down to his mouth. A strangled sound caught in her throat as his tongue slid along her slick folds. Up inside her, he probed, needing more of her, as if he could absorb her essence into his bloodstream.

A tremor moved through her, and she trembled as he continued to tongue-fuck her. The tang of her flesh on his tongue made him pleasantly dizzy. Her aroused scent grew heavier, and he hung on it.

"Christ." Jack's growl was low, primal. "Jesus, baby, you're killing me."

A seductive chuckle rumbled from Zarah, and she continued her pleasurable assault on Jack's dick.

Lane wanted to shove his cock inside her so bad. But it was too soon. He needed her to come for him first. To take the edge off. Then he would slide into the snugness of her pulsing asshole while Jack claimed her pussy.

Closing his lips around her swollen clit, Lane drew on her flesh, suckling, nibbling, and savoring. Then he fought past the clenching of her muscles, thrusting his tongue inside her again. He alternated his blissful torture until Zarah began riding his face. His grip on her ass tightened, holding her still as he devoured her. He wouldn't allow her to control her climb or her release. He'd make her come in his own time, once his hunger had abated.

To prolong her torment, Lane pushed her hips upward and away from his mouth. A whimper of frustration carried to his ears, and he grinned. She'd been close, he could smell and taste it on her. He studied the slick folds above his face. She was so beautiful. Her breath was as labored as Jack's and his own.

Wetness trickled down the length of his cock as her scent enveloped him. A droplet of clear liquid dangled from Zarah's clit, confirming just how close she'd

been to coming. He wanted that release. Wanted the warmth of her passion washing over him. Knowing it was mere licks away, he roughly drew her back down to his mouth, where he plundered her depths with his tongue. When her muscles tightened around his tongue, he withdrew to capture her clit between his lips and suckled her hard.

Zarah's body trembled and shook as he pulled the orgasm from her. A raspy cry of completion echoed around the room. Down his chin and neck and over his chest, she drenched him with a gush of her juices. As the sweet-tasting fluid touched his tongue, he drank from her, swallowing down as much as he could get into his mouth.

Never before in his wildest dreams would he have imagined the taste of a woman would turn him inside out. Yes, he more than enjoyed going down on a woman, relishing her moans of delight, feeling her grind against his tongue and his fingers, knowing it was him bringing her such pleasure.

However, Zarah took his enjoyment of performing oral to a higher level. She didn't squirt every time she came—although more times than not—and though he and Jack weren't disappointed when she didn't, when she did ejaculate, Lane's primal need grew dangerous. He'd never witnessed anything as hot as watching Zarah come all over him or Jack. Her release was warm and slippery, and the taste addicting. It was the sexiest thing he'd ever experienced.

As her tremors subsided, Lane released his hold on her ass and slid out from beneath her. She dropped to the bed. In the throes of her climax, she'd collapsed against Jack's stomach. Her fingers were still wrapped around his cock. Jack's one hand remained fisted in her dark curls while the other stroked along her back.

"Wow." Jack's voice was low. A wide smile lifted his lips as he eyed Lane's dripping chest.

Lane grinned back and lifted his hand to his chest, rubbing her into his skin.

"I had to pull her mouth off my dick for fear she was going to suck it right off my body," Jack said. "You were certainly working some magic down there."

"I try my best," Lane said.

"I think I'm dead," Zarah murmured against Jack's abs.

He chuckled. "No, you're not dead, baby."

"I saw stars," she added. "Big bright stars. And lots of 'em."

Lane leaned over and pressed a kiss to the small of her back. "That good, huh?"

"Mmm-hmm."

They allowed her several moments for the strength to return to her limbs.

"So, you ready for round two?" Lane asked, grabbing hold of her hips and urging her onto her knees.

"I don't think I can move." She gave a soft chuckle and lifted up.

"Well, for what we have in mind, honey, you won't have to," Jack said, reaching for her.

Once she settled on Jack's lap, Jack reached over, retrieved a tube of lube from the nightstand, and handed it to Lane.

"Ease up, baby," Jack told her. "Let me slide my cock into that hot, wet pussy of yours. I need to be inside you."

Zapped of energy, Zarah lifted enough for Jack to angle himself to her opening, and then she slid down on top of him. A sigh of utter contentment blew past her lips. She leaned forward, lying across Jack's body.

Lane squeezed a glob of lube in the palm of his hand and stroked it over his length. His cock was so hard it hurt. He wondered if he'd have the restraint to actually get it inside Zarah before he popped off. Sometimes there were times, like now, when she'd fired his arousal and his control teetered dangerously. It was as if he was a prepubescent boy again.

Jack's hands smoothed over the cheeks of Zarah's ass and he massaged the globes. With each pass, he pulled her wider.

Lane ran a lubed fingertip over the rosette of Zarah's ass, and the pucker tensed. He smiled as she trembled under his touch and eased the digit past the

resistant muscles. It amazed him that as often as he and Jack had taken her there, she was still so tight. He worked his finger in and out of the snug opening until she relaxed around him, then he added a second finger. Her breath grew labored as he continued to finger-fuck her ass. When she'd accepted the double-digit assault, he added a third, stretching her even farther.

"Please," she pleaded in a whimper.

More than willing to give his woman what she wanted, Lane pulled his fingers free, and with his free hand aligned the head of his cock with her opening. Slowly he pushed forward, entering her with a subtle *pop*. He eased his entire length into her inch by inch. Once his balls touched her body, he pulled back until the crown alone was positioned just inside her opening.

He dug his fingers into the cheeks of her ass and massaged the globes apart. For several moments he simply relished the sight of her body stretched and flared around his cock. She was so beautiful. When he slid back inside her heat, the tremor that shivered through Zarah moved through him as well.

She was so tight and hot around his cock; she fit him like a glove.

Lane pulled back as Jack pushed forward. Back and forth, they moved. Between them, Zarah's sultry moans and desperate groans were music to his ears. Her body shuddered. She seemed to struggle to draw breath. Perspiration glistened on her caramel-colored skin.

"P-p-*please*." She sighed heavily, her need crystal clear in the air rushing past her lips.

"What do you need from us, baby?" Lane whispered against her shoulder.

Her delicate fingertips dug into Jack's biceps; her knuckles were white. She mewled and whimpered as he and Jack continued to counterstroke one another. Within Zarah's body Lane savored the safe haven she provided him. She was his sanctuary, the balance between good and bad. He never wanted to be anywhere else than where he was at that moment.

The scent of Zarah's arousal grew heavier. The fragrance of her fed his hunger, his need. He knew she was close. Along his stroking shaft, the pulsing of her muscles increased. Her insides squeezed and convulsed, pulling on his dick every time he withdrew.

Sweat shone on Jack's skin; from his temples, it flowed in steady thin streams. His hoarse breath echoed Lane's.

Rivulets of feminine perspiration trickled sensually over Zarah's heated flesh. The sobs of her need became desperate as Jack and Lane's thrusts gained momentum.

"Yes, *please*," she gasped.

Lane knew what she waited for. When he'd brought her to climax with his mouth, that had been to take the edge off. This time around, she would permit them to take their time, to tease, torment, and tantalize her. She was near mindless from their attentions. Incoherent mutterings tripped past her full, delicious lips. She wanted their consent and would hold on until they gave it.

"Go ahead, baby," Lane announced.

What began as a carefully orchestrated dance of lovers quickly descended into the clumsy fumbling of two desperate men.

"We've got you, honey. Take what you need." Beneath her, Jack thrust upward, hard and fast.

Zarah cried out as her orgasm claimed her. Her ass gripped his cock so tight, Lane stilled his movements for fear of hurting her. Judging Jack's strained expression beneath Zarah, Lane suspected he was experiencing the same pleasurable encounter.

Only when Zarah's ass ceased to pulse at such a spine-twisting rate did Jack and Lane start moving within her once again. Against Jack's chest she lay limp, yet the seductive octaves of her moans of want and desire were clear and hypnotic.

"Oh God," she whimpered.

Lane met Jack's gaze and recognized that Jack was there, just as he was.

"Once more, baby," Lane urged. "This time Jack and I are right there with you."

With a low, hoarse growl, her body relented and pulled Jack and Lane along with it.

The simultaneous orgasm reduced the three of them to quivering masses of sexual satisfaction.

"Did you see stars that time, honey?" Lane asked, brushing her dark curls from her face.

"Brightly colored lights," she purred. "Pretty lights shooting all around us. Did you guys feel the earth move?"

"Oh yeah, sweetheart," Jack whispered in agreement. "The earth moved."

* * *

Zarah snuggled up against him, and Lane stroked a hand along her damp skin. The sigh of contentment that slid past her lips tickled over the hairs on his chest. The aroma of their lovemaking scented the air heavily around them.

Jack leaned toward the nightstand on his side of the bed, pulled the bottle of chilled champagne from the ice bucket, and proceeded to fill the three flutes beside it. He handed one to Lane, a second to Zarah, and the third he kept for himself.

"To us," he said, lifting his glass in a toast.

"To us," Lane and Zarah repeated.

After taking a sip from her glass, Zarah handed it to Lane, who set it on the nightstand beside him.

"That was incredible." She sighed. Her eyes drifted closed as she cuddled close again. "You guys wore me out. And I loved every minute of it."

"Hmm, is our girl too tired to receive her Valentine's Day gifts?" Jack teased.

Zarah sat up like a shot, and her golden eyes sparkled with excitement and curiosity. "I'm never too tired for presents," she said.

Jack and Lane both laughed. Zarah loved the holidays. Every one of them. Her excitement was infectious.

“All right, then.” Jack leaned over again and from the drawer of the nightstand retrieved a medium-sized rectangular box wrapped in pink paper covered in red hearts and with a big red bow on the top of it. “Happy Valentine’s, honey,” he said and pressed a kiss to her lips.

“Thank you,” Zarah returned, taking the box from Jack’s hand. “Hmm, I wonder what’s inside.”

She wasted no time in tearing the paper off the gift. From inside the box she withdrew a blue velvet rectangle-shaped jewelry box. A smile curled her lips when she met Jack’s gaze. Her face brightened as she lifted the hinged lid,

“Jack, it’s beautiful.” She held up the bracelet and dangling from the chain were several small charms: a J, Z, L, M, and a ruby—the kids’ birthstone. Zarah examined each charm thoroughly.

“There’s a little piece of each of us,” Jack told her.

“I love it. I won’t sleep in it, but put it on me. I want to see what it looks like.”

Jack took the bracelet and fastened it around Zarah’s wrist. She held her arm out to admire it.

“Thank you.” She leaned over and shared a deep, passionate kiss with Jack. When they parted, she turned toward Lane. “Now your turn,” she said in a sassy voice.

Lane laughed. “Greedy, greedy wench.”

The moment of truth was at hand. He wondered if Zarah would understand the meaning behind his gift. Would she recognize the symbolism his ring carried, or would she think his reasoning was ridiculous? He was prepared to hide his hurt and continue as they were, because being a part of her life was more important to him.

What if she felt as though she could wear only one man's ring? Did that minimize what the two of them shared independent of Jack? Would he be strong enough to accept her refusal of his gift and what it meant?

There was only one way to find out.

From the drawer of the nightstand on his side of the bed, Lane pulled out a small ring-sized box wrapped in simple red paper with a red bow tied around it.

The sexy smile she gave him sent frissons of needs coursing through him. He handed the box to her.

"For you, baby," he said.

"Thank you." She made short work of the wrapping and withdrew the blue velvet box from inside the white one it came in.

Lane held his breath.

When she lifted the lid, her eyes widened and her smile disappeared. Her hands began to tremble as she stared at the contents.

Several heartbeats of silence passed before she looked up at him and spoke. "It's stunning," she said in a soft voice. It was a good sign that she seemed to like it.

"Lane, that's gorgeous," Jack said, glancing over Zarah's shoulder.

Lane acknowledged Jack's compliment with a nod.

"Does this mean what I think it means?" she asked. Her voice was low and shaky.

Lane exhaled the breath he'd been holding and swallowed the lump that had formed in his throat. "W-what do you think it means?"

"Well, it's a diamond-encrusted wedding band, Lane. It can mean only one thing."

Did she understand? Truly? Or was she formulating the suitable words in her mind to let him down gently? He couldn't interpret the expression on her beautiful face. He wanted to reach out and touch her, but he couldn't bring his arm to move.

One of them needed to remedy the sudden awkwardness in the room. Since he'd created it, he'd fix it.

"Zarah, I wanted to give you something to show my commitment and devotion to you. A token of my love and loyalty."

"And fidelity." She smiled.

"And fidelity. It might seem silly—"

"It's not silly at all. I love it, Lane. The symbolism, the sentiment—all the reasons you have in gifting it to me."

Lane's heart swelled with love and pride and a shitload of lame-ass machismo. He thought it would burst through his chest.

"Put it on it me," she directed and turned the open box to him.

"You'll wear my ring?"

"With pride, lover. Now, get it on my finger."

Lane plucked the gold band from the slit in the box. Zarah held out her left hand and wiggled her ring finger at him. The one where Jack's ring had been placed a year and a half earlier. Surely she wouldn't wear the two of them together on the same finger? That wouldn't be right.

Uncertain he should place his ring alongside Jack's, Lane glanced at his friend for direction. Jack's emotions were unreadable.

Hmm, so Lane was flying solo.

Finally Jack said, "It's a perfect complement to the ring she already wears. Very nice choice, Lane."

When his eyes met Zarah's, she winked and wiggled her finger again. Lane slid his ring onto her ring finger and exhaled a shaky breath.

He'd done it. She'd accepted his ring. Accepted everything it meant to him in offering it to her.

Zarah held up her hand to admire the newest addition to her finger. The smile on her face triggered a throbbing need in his balls. He loved this woman more than he ever thought was possible.

"I'm a spoiled rotten girl," she announced before turning his way. "I love you." She captured his lips and stole his breath with as passionate and deep a kiss as she'd shared with Jack moments earlier.

"I love you too, sweetheart. More than you'll ever know," he replied.

"All right. Now your guys' turns." She scooted from between them down the bed and rushed over to the closet. From her side, she rummaged through to the back where she retrieved two gift bags of equal size. She knelt back on the bed and handed them each one.

"Jack, you go first. There are two items inside," she said. "You may take the box out and open it first."

"Hmm, sneaky," Jack teased and pulled the mentioned box out. It was larger than a ring box, but Lane couldn't decide what it was.

Jack peeled the red heart paper away to reveal a watch box. He opened it and withdrew a gold dress watch.

"You were so disappointed when you broke the good one Rita and Mack gave you, after the battery died in your cheapy one," she said. "I tried to find something similar to the other one so you could still think of the Davises when you wore it."

"Honey, it's perfect," Jack said. "Thanks." He pressed a kiss to her forehead. When he sat back and reached inside the bag again, she swatted his hand.

"And you guys call me greedy," she admonished. "Wait for Lane to catch up." Her eyes flickered with something Lane couldn't quite put his finger on. She was excited, that much was clear. A mischievous glint dilated her pupils. But the sexy grin on her lips was going to do him in. "Your turn."

Lane plucked a box from the bag she'd handed him. It was the same size as the one he'd given her and was wrapped in purple paper covered with tiny pink and red hearts. A bright pink bow was stuck to the top.

Lane tore off the bow and wrapping and stared at an identical box to the one that had contained the ring he'd placed on her finger. His ring.

Before he opened it, he looked up at her. Her eyes glistened, and her broad smile warmed him throughout. Holding her gaze, he lifted the lid, then glanced down at the open box.

At the sight of the contents, his hands began to tremble.

"It's about time you wore my ring, Lane Dundas," she whispered.

Lane glanced at Jack, then Zarah, and then back to Jack, who was wearing a smug, knowing grin. The sly son of a bitch had known all along what he and Zarah were going to gift one another.

Zarah reached over the top of the small box and withdrew the white-and-yellow-gold ring from within. She took his left hand in hers and waited for him to look at her before she slid the ring onto his ring finger.

"This is my commitment to you, Lane. Never again doubt my dedication and devotion to you," she said.

"I never doubted you, baby," he assured her. "I suspected you might doubt mine."

"Never," she whispered and leaned in to kiss him.

When they parted, Lane felt a tear escape his eye and he lifted his hand to wipe it away. Zarah reached up and brushed her thumb against his cheek, collecting the tear.

"Okay," she said, releasing his hand. He so badly wanted to pull her hand back into his grasp and never let go. "Now you can check out the envelopes."

Again he and Jack dipped into the bags on their laps and pulled out matching envelopes. They were plain white letter envelopes and neither was sealed. They each looked inside.

"Hey, these are season tickets to the Phillies," Jack announced. "Sweet."

"Damn, honey, these are first row right behind home plate," Lane said.

"I know," she teased. "Awesome, huh?"

"Oh yeah, awesome." Jack laughed.

"I got myself tickets too," she told them.

"Cool." Lane slid his tickets back into the envelope, placed the envelope in the bag, and set the bag on his nightstand.

"Yeah." Zarah crawled up the bed, between Lane and Jack, and turned to lie back against the pillows. "I figure the only way the two of you are going to brush up on your sports stats is to get you into the heart of things."

"Are you going to gloat about your sports knowledge being superior to ours forever?" Jack asked and set his gift bag on the stand beside him.

"Probably," she admitted. "Wanna know what else I've planned?"

"What's that, honey?" Lane asked.

"Well, I've already arranged for someone to watch the kids during those dates, and afterward." Zarah slid her hands down her chest and over the ampleness of her breasts. Between her thumb and forefinger, she squeezed her taut nipples.

"Is that so?" Jack stretched out beside her and stroked the back of his fingers along her side.

"Mmm-hmm." She continued to toy with her nipples while trailing her other hand over her belly to the sweet juncture between her legs. They watched, rapt, as a long, slender finger disappeared inside her body. "Yeah. You see, since those are preplanned dates, the three of us will get to spend time together, all by ourselves."

"Sounds great," Jack said.

“So my horny and incredibly sexy husbands, any suggestions as to what disgustingly depraved carnality we can engage in with all that alone time?”

Lane dipped his head and captured her neglected nipple between his teeth and bit down. Zarah arched her back, pressing her breast against his face.

“First thing tomorrow, baby, I’m going to start writing out my list,” he said.

Zarah wrapped her hand around Jack’s neck and drew his mouth toward hers. As their lips met, their combined groans of need filling the bedroom sent Lane’s pulse racing. His body went on full alert. His cock hardened instantly, and his balls began to ache.

When she released Jack and turned her beautiful face to Lane, he ceased to breath. Her golden eyes sparkled with contentment and need. A knowing grin lifted the corners of her mouth. She knew exactly what she did to him. How she affected him. Lane knew for as long as he lived, there would never be another woman for him.

Zarah was his salvation. The reason he drew breath every day.

She wrapped her long, slender fingers around the back of his neck and pulled him to her in a searing hot kiss. The sensual moan that vibrated deep within her chest reverberated through him. He trembled against her with a growing mixture of desire and excitement.

Life was good.

Very good.

And if tonight was a hint as to what the three of them could look forward to in the future...it was only going to get better.

 THE END 

Loose Id Titles by Jennifer Cole

A Delicious Taboo
A Delicious Taboo Plus Two
Abbey's Sexual Adventure
An Invitation: Alayna's Training
Pursuing Zarah
Reclaiming Zarah

Jennifer Cole

After reading a number of erotic romances I got the bright idea it might be fun to write one. Seems I possess a talent to tell a lascivious tale—my English Profs are stunned. Regardless of the steamy sexy stories I create, for me it's all about true love and happily-ever-after, or a reasonable facsimile—the guy must get the girl in the end.

On those rare occasions when I manage to steal some spare time, I read. When not sweating over the laptop tapping to keep up with my over-active imagination, I squeeze in running, cycling, trips to the gym and occasionally shoot pool. Above everything else, I cherish time spent with my family and friends.

Currently I make my home in a small city in South-western Ontario and just enjoy life.

A simple girl with simple indulgences, that's me. I listen to rock music, enjoy expensive cognac and oh, I've never met a cookie I didn't like!

I invite you to grab a naughty story and snuggle up with your knight in shining armor or, your master or mistress of the dungeon and lose yourself in the seduction of erotic romance.

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