

Back Cover Copy

Two volatile people, two different lives—too hot to handle?

Dax Winslow never believed in love at first sight...that was before he met Kendall Zurich. While en route to the most important meeting of his legal career, Dax's car breaks down in the small town of Milton Ville and he finds himself face to face with the owner of Kenny's Service Station. The stunning mechanic knocks his otherwise structured psyche off balance.

Kendall Zurich is content with her laidback life. Too bad Dax's arrival disrupts her quiet existence and turns it completely upside down. She can only hope the dashing counselor doesn't uncover her secret...and if he does, the deception isn't too big for forgiveness.

Emotions of the past can provoke a burning struggle. Will very separate lives, misunderstandings, and outright lies be enough to keep them apart? Or has each finally found the spark that could ignite a lifetime?

Highlight

As Dax gave his head a shake to clear the vision in his mind, he found himself standing in the doorway to the kitchen watching Kendall dishing out their dinner from a slow cooker on the counter. The sight of her took his breath away. Freshly showered, her blond curls were still slightly damp. Clad in a pair of denim shorts that teasingly hugged her round rear and a pastel pink tank top. He saw she wore a black bra by the strap peeking out, and wondered if matching panties caressed the flesh under her shorts. The fresh clean scent she exuded drove his senses crazy.

As he stood in silence watching her, he noticed her stiffen suddenly, raising her head as if distracted from her task.

* * * *

Kenny sensed her guest behind her, felt the weight of his stare. Catching a whiff of Dax's mild cologne, her nipples hardened painfully and the clean pair of panties she wore grew damp.

She tensed. "I hope you're hungry," she said, surprised at the breathlessness of her voice. Turning to meet his gaze, her breath caught.

"Starved," he answered, his voice low, deep.

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Dedication

For lovers of romance...

Chapter 1

Daxton M. Winslow III drove his rental car along the deserted county road. He hadn't passed another vehicle in close to an hour and had seen only a handful of old farmhouses. The fields lining either side of the dirt road contained acres upon acres of thriving crops or pastures of livestock.

He was thankful to have arrived a day early to familiarize himself with the area before his meeting with the law firm's newest potential client. He tapped the GPS unit mounted atop the dash and cursed under his breath. Since leaving the airport he'd been driving four hours, and had yet to come upon his destination. The firm was more than holding their own in corporate law, but the reputation attached to the Waterston Corporation would put MacIntyre, McQuaid and Winslow at the top of the legal food chain.

To say Dax was royally pissed the senior partners assigned this specific trip to him would be an understatement. Law wasn't his passion, it was his father's. Three years earlier and fresh out of law school he'd been appointed junior partner in his father's firm. He figured he would have made junior partner on his own impeccable record—three years of practice without a single loss in court—but law wasn't what he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

Architectural design had always been his first love, a passion he'd kept hidden from his father. Over the past two-and-a-half years, he had successfully sold his designs for several small office buildings throughout the state.

As pissed as he was about the assignment, during this trip Dax planned to kill two birds with one stone. The day after his father informed him he would be leaving by the week's end Dax received a call from a conglomerate of doctors planning on building a new medical facility. Having a design in mind sure to be just what they were looking for—according to the specifications they had emailed him—he arranged an appointment, following his meeting with Clayton Waterston.

Catching himself smiling in satisfaction, Dax couldn't have been happier because during this trip he was also getting a reprieve from the egotistical, self-centered Molly McQuaid. A couple of months earlier his father suggested—to be more accurate, demanded—Dax see his partner's daughter socially. Not wanting to disappoint his father, and in an effort to keep the peace in his parents' home, he agreed to a couple of dates with her.

Immediately Molly latched on to Dax, proclaiming them engaged. The only things Molly had going for her were her heart-stopping beauty and her father's money. A whiny, needy, selfish pain-in-the-ass, the only relationship Molly enjoyed being in was the one with her mirror. For weeks he gave her the brush-off, but the spoiled brat refused to take 'no' for an answer. Twice he changed his cellphone number, fed up with her calling all hours of the day and night. As of late, she'd taken to showing up at the office to see him.

Glancing at the GPS monitor for the hundredth time, Dax cursed under his breath. He should have been at the hotel long ago. It was clear he'd taken a wrong turn somewhere, but where? He had been following the fucking GPS to the letter.

Sort of.

On the shoulder of the dirt road, a sign came into view:

Milton Ville 5 Miles

Population 250

"Finally," he muttered, reaching over to crank up the volume of the stereo.

Sharp pinging sounds came from the engine. A glance at the dashboard identified the engine light glowing at him. When the car suddenly lurched he glanced in the rearview mirror in time to see a cloud of thick black smoke. Another lurch, followed by chugging and choking noises, made him clutch the steering wheel. The CD player then spit his AC/DC CD toward the back window, shattering the thin plastic disc into pieces.

"Oh, this is just fucking great," Dax said through gritted teeth, pounding the steering wheel with the palms of his hands.

A mile outside of town the car started to lose speed. Black smoke continued to spew from the rear, and the loud pinging had turned into a harsh constant knocking. As he pleaded with the car to fix itself, Dax took a moment to survey his surroundings. Bungalows and cottage style homes lined either side of the main street.

Various shades of faded pastel paint colored the houses; one was robin's egg blue, another buttercup yellow, several were mint green, a couple were soft lavender; and just about every property was surrounded by a waist-high white picket fence. In one yard he watched three children playing ball with a puppy. Branches from tall trees hung over the street, the leaves offering cool shade from the hot sun above.

Dax spied the Milton Ville General Store on the far corner of what appeared to be the only intersection in town, and in his opinion, the structure was in dire need of renovation. He speculated the merchandise in the store had to be the only thing preventing the building from collapsing to the ground. A man sat on a bench out front, his legs outstretched and ankles crossed, his fingers interlaced atop his big belly, a straw hat pulled over his face. Dax wondered if the man was asleep.

"Oh, just beautiful," he growled as the engine finally died, the car rolling to a stop some twenty feet from the entrance to a service station.

When a man and a little boy appeared around the corner on the opposite side of the street from the store, each with a fishing rod resting on their shoulder, Dax dropped his forehead against the steering wheel.

"I've arrived in fucking Mayberry," he groaned.

Opening his left eye a crack, he watched as smoke now poured out from under the hood as well as underneath of the vehicle. Once the smoke and stench of burning crept into the interior, Dax opened the door and got out. Slamming the door with unnecessary force, he again cursed under his breath, kicking the front tire. When his foot made contact, the tire popped and went flat. Seconds later a god-awful clunk followed from under the car.

He stared openmouthed at the newer model Mazda sedan he'd driven from the airport. After several moments, he looked over at Kenny's Service Station and began walking. As he approached, he found himself grinning as he noticed the four old-fashioned gas pumps in the middle of the lot. Large overhead doors in the front of the building stood open, where he could see that two hoists each had a car raised high in the air. Inside one bay, he noticed the lower halves of two mechanics as they worked on one of the cars. Outside the small wooden door leading into the rundown building, a big old German Shepherd and a Bloodhound lay sound asleep.

"Jesus, this place is right out of a fifties horror flick." He chuckled, shaking his head with amusement as he reached for the doorknob.

A tiny bell above the door tinkled as it opened and then closed behind him. An older gentleman, who could have passed for Santa Claus, sat behind a beat-up old desk reading a newspaper. The man didn't even lift his head to acknowledge Dax's presence.

"What can we do fer ya, son?" the old man drawled in a crackled voice that hinted of a three-pack-a-day habit.

"Yes, sir, my car broke down, conveniently on the street right out front there." Dax pointed at the road.

"Yer not blocking traffic, is ya?" he asked, still concentrating on the newspaper.

"No, sir. I've pulled it off to the shoulder. I'm kind of in a hurry, would your mechanic be able to have a look at it for me?"

"Well now, son, we got a few ahead of ya. If ya wanna leave it, we'll git to her soon as we can."

You've got to be fucking kidding. His jaw started to tick. "Actually, sir, I can't just leave it. I'm supposed to be in Abbotsford for an important business meeting. I took a wrong turn somewhere and now my car has died. I'm really in a hurry here."

Without lifting his head, the old man turned the page of his paper. "Yup, sounds like yer in a real jam."

Dax stared at Santa's twin in disbelief. *Oh, there is no way this country hick attitude is going to fly with me right now.* He clenched his fists at his sides. "Excuse me, sir." Dax leaned across the desk, yanking the paper out of the old man's hands, finally gaining his attention.

"Hey now." He reached for his stolen paper. "I's readin' that."

Calmly folding the paper, Dax tucked it under one arm, holding the older man's gaze. "I need your mechanic to take a look at my car, and I need him to look at it now," he stated evenly. "I need to be in Abbotsford for an appointment."

"Abbotsford, huh? Real pretty place this time of year." He stopped, staring off into space, deep in thought. "Whatcha goin' there fer?" the old man asked with mild interest.

Was he serious? Dax was in dire straits here and this clown wanted to make small talk? *I'm being punished.* That was it. He didn't know what he had done, but it must have been something big. With a shake of his head, a slight grin curled his lips before he answered. "I have a business meeting with the Waterston Corporation."

The old man acknowledged with a nod of his head. "Well, ya ain't gonna git there anytime soon, son. Yer more 'an a six hour drive from Abbotsford." He stood and again reached for his paper.

"What!" Dax shouted. "Un-fucking-believable. How in the hell..." The tick in his jaw worked even faster.

Inhaling a deep calming breath, he watched the old man lean back on his heels and tuck his hands into the pockets of his railroad-style overalls. With speculative, narrow eyes the old man looked Dax over thoroughly. The sight of his scruffy white beard hanging down to his big round belly brought to Dax's mind the character of 'Uncle Jesse' from the old *Dukes of Hazzard* series that ended in the mid-eighties.

Following a second deep breath, Dax exhaled slowly. "Sir, may I please speak with your mechanic?" he asked politely. "I've really got to get back on the road."

"Ain't here," the old man replied with a smirk and a shrug.

The tick in Dax's jaw was joined by the one beside his right eye.

"There are two guys out there in the garage right now working on a car. I saw them when I walked up, now would you please go and get one of them so I may speak to them? I'm in a hurry." Dax tapped his watch, trying to maintain his calm, although feeling himself losing it. Fast. "I have a schedule to keep."

The old man was about to drive Dax over the edge and seemed well aware of that fact. Silently he continued to stare at Dax, who felt as if his ears were on fire and were turning bright red from his growing annoyance.

"Listen, old man, I don't have time for these games." Taking a deep breath, he pulled himself together and cleared his throat. "Are you the owner here, sir?" he asked, using his courtroom voice.

Santa shook his head, grinning.

"Well, do you expect the owner to come by anytime today, sir?" Dax maintained eye contact with him.

The man remained silent and shrugged.

Dax inhaled another breath. "Sir, I have to say, this is a poor manner with which to treat a customer."

At that moment, Dax decided he'd been working too hard. The stress of the firm was getting to him, and he determined he was long overdue for a holiday. When he went home, he intended to clear his calendar and use up some of his banked vacation time.

This test of wills was not one in which he saw himself coming out the victor. Dax found it interesting that he didn't particularly have the energy or the care to argue with the man over semantics. Catching himself chuckling, he eyed the older man. "This isn't getting us anywhere."

"Nope," the man said, still grinning.

"Listen..." Dax reached for his wallet, trying to gain some control over the situation. "I'll pay twice your usual shop rate..."

Inside his pants pocket, his cellphone rang. Pulling it out, Dax looked at the display and cursed under his breath.

"I'm sorry. Excuse me a moment," Dax said to the man studying him. Deciding to put some distance between himself and the old man for a few minutes, he answered Molly's call. "What," he bit out into the phone.

"Is that anyway to greet your future wife?" she snipped back.

"You aren't my future anything, Molly," he growled into the mouthpiece. "What do you want? I'm in the middle of something important."

"Humph," she huffed back. "Daddy hasn't heard from you yet, so I told him I'd call to check up on you. How come you changed your cell number again?"

Dax rolled his eyes and tamped his anger down.

"I've had a little car trouble," he informed her, turning to look at the smoking heap of blue metal on the side of the road. "Tell your father not to worry, I'll make the meeting tomorrow morning as scheduled. Now, I've got to go, and don't call me again." Before Molly could utter another word, Dax snapped his cell closed, ending the call.

When he turned back to the Santa clone, the old man wore a broad smirk on his face as he continued to watch Dax closely. "Trouble with yer missus?"

"I don't have a missus," Dax mumbled irritably, pinching the bridge of his nose. "That was a business associate." *Christ, is this fucking day ever going to end?*

The old man came around from behind the desk to stand in front of Dax. "To answer yer question, this here's Kenny's shop."

Great, now we're getting somewhere. "Excellent. Any chance Kenny is around? I'd like to speak with him." Dax was disgusted with the desperation he heard in his voice.

Christ, he had to get the car fixed and get back on his way. It would be well after midnight by the time he made it to his hotel, since he was six fucking hours away from his destination.

"In the back." The old man jerked a thumb toward the garage. "Kenny!" his croaky voice called out. "Come in here, would ya? Customer wants to yak at ya."

Finally. Dax sighed with relief, glancing back at the smoldering heap he'd arrived in.

Hopefully it wasn't as bad as it looked and he would be on the road in no time. Mentally he kicked himself for not paying closer attention during auto shop class in high school. Cars had never been of interest to him, unless they got him from point A to point B, and got him there fast. Other than that, he didn't give a rat's ass what made them run. As long as he kept his car fuelled, his mechanic would take care of the rest.

As Dax turned back to face the old man, his breath lodged in his throat.

Chapter 2

“What can I do for you, sir?”

An adorable vision wearing a grimy pair of coveralls stood before Dax, wiping her grease-covered hands on an orange shop rag. Her hair was tucked up under a baseball cap, an escaped lock revealing a blond curl. Vibrant green eyes sparkled as she met his gaze, and the smile she flashed him brought his body to immediate attention. Pulling the newspaper from under his arm, he held it in front of his rapidly stiffening cock. The woman stood a foot shorter than his six-foot-three inches and a smudge of motor oil colored her left cheek.

Despite standing in the middle of a garage, a fresh clean floral scent swirled around him, taunting his nose.

“Kenny?” Dax felt dizzy.

“Kendall, actually.” Extending her hand to him, her warm smile broadened. “Kendall Zurich.”

“Kendall.” As he repeated her name, the woman before him shivered, sending a jolt straight to his balls.

“What can I do for you?” she asked again.

Without hesitation, he placed his hand in hers. Filth or no filth, he needed to touch her. *My answer is, what can I do to you?* He mentally began undressing her. “My car...” he mumbled, flipping his thumb haphazardly toward the road, forgetting the rest of his sentence.

“Broke down,” the old man, who Dax had forgotten was still in the room, chimed in with an amused chuckle. “And he’s kinda’ in a hurry.”

Glancing around him in the direction to which he pointed, her dancing eyes grew wide when they spotted the smoldering heap on the side of the road. “Uh, well, let’s go out and have a look, shall we,” she said in an almost apologetic tone, preceding Dax through the doorway, tucking the rag into the back pocket of her coveralls.

Dutifully Dax followed, his eyes fixated on the sensual sway of her backside as she walked. The grimy, oversized coveralls did little to disguise the curves hidden beneath.

He imagined the softness of her creamy skin under his fingers as he gripped those wide, teasing hips, thrusting himself inside her from behind as she cried out his name.

The sound of shuffling from behind announced that the old man was coming along too.

Opening the driver’s side door, Kendall’s eyes narrowed as she sniffed the interior. She pulled the latch releasing the hood and walked around to the front of the car. Once the smoke had dissipated, somewhat, she surveyed the engine and then knelt down to look underneath the foreign-made automobile.

With admiration, he watched her. Luscious full lips drawn into a frown, brows furrowed, her perfect petite nose scrunched up. She looked adorable as she studied the disabled car.

From out of nowhere, he found himself curious as to what sensual expressions would cross her face when she checked out his naked body while he lay before her.

Most important, how incredibly sexy she would look in the throes of passion. Envisioning her beneath him, breasts heaving with labored breathing, her nipples would be dark, puckered peaks from his lavish oral attention. A light sheen of perspiration would cover her heated, trembling flesh as he worked her body to orgasmic ecstasy, over and over again. The thought of licking the salty liquid from between her swollen breasts, off her skin, then sampling the sweet cream from between her thighs made Dax’s eager cock strain painfully against the zipper of his dress pants.

Before he blew his load in his cotton boxers, he took a deep breath and gave his head a shake. Jesus, he whimpered in silent agony, as she stood, dusting her hands off on the front of her coveralls.

“Well, Mr...” Kendall hesitated and Dax realized he hadn’t offered his name.

“Dax.” He hoped his voice didn’t sound too strained as he attempted to control his arousal.

“Mr. Dax—”

“No, Dax is my first name. My last is Winslow.” He knew he was babbling like an idiot, and cringed inwardly. The warm sexy grin the woman before him wore had Dax wondering if she was aware of his discomfort.

“Oh, okay, Mr. Winslow—”

“Call me Dax,” he was quick to offer.

“Well, Dax.”

He noticed the difficulty she seemed to have swallowing, and the huskiness of her voice as she spoke his name made his nipples hard. Did he have an effect on her?

“I have to tell you, so far this doesn’t look good, but I’ll need it up on the hoist for a better look.” Shifting her eyes, Kendall glanced at the man standing to the left of him. “Uncle Mel, will you pull the Chevy out of bay one and ask Haydn to come out here to give me hand, please?”

He heard the old man walk away. Dax had been holding his breath, and the air left his lungs in a rush as her eyes came back to settle on him.

“So where are you headed?” The sultry tone of her voice sent a jolt to the pulsing flesh between his legs.

“Uh, Abbotsford,” he managed to say while images of her naked and sweaty still danced in the forefront of his mind. “I have a meeting there first thing in the morning.”

“You’re a very long way from Abbotsford.” Though still inviting, her smile had turned sympathetic.

“So I’ve heard,” Dax replied and reached up to loosen his tie a little more. *Man, did the temperature just shoot up twenty degrees?*

“How in the world did you end up way out here?” She grinned.

“I don’t have any idea,” he answered honestly.

After getting off the plane, his mind had been everywhere else but his meeting. As he thought about it, he couldn’t even remember the conversation that took place with the kid at the car rental counter, hours earlier.

“I plugged the address to the hotel into the GPS unit and well...” Dax shrugged, feeling like a complete moron sharing his momentary absentmindedness with the beauty before him. If there had been the slightest chance of her agreeing to maybe have dinner with him, he’d pissed it away now. *Whoa! Where in the hell did that come from?* “...here I am,” he finished.

“I’ve never trusted those things. There is nothing wrong with an old fashioned paper map to find your way around.” She winked playfully at him.

His cock grew harder. So hard he needed to adjust the discomfort in his pants. At the sound of approaching footsteps, Dax reminded his shaft now was not the time. Glancing over his shoulder he spied a tall lanky man strolling leisurely toward them. Meeting his gaze, the man eyed Dax with disdain. The evidence of a hard life was etched into the man’s features, but Dax estimated the other man wasn’t much older than himself.

“Hey, how ya doing?” Dax asked as the man brushed past him. A terse grunt was his only reply.

“All right, Dax, you get in and steer the car while Haydn and I push it up into the bay.” She walked to join her co-worker at the rear of the vehicle.

“You can’t push this car all the way up there.” The protectiveness in his voice stopped him short. *Jesus, is she crazy?* Despite the angry glare the other man cast his way, Dax found himself greatly concerned for this woman’s well-being. “You steer and I’ll help...” This time when he met Haydn’s evil stare, Dax felt territorial. The need to stake his claim on the blond woman was difficult to curb, so he allowed the possession in his voice to flow freely from his mouth. “...Haydn, is it?”

Haydn scoffed and snickered, but didn’t break eye contact.

“I assure you, Mr. Winslow, we’ve pushed much bigger.” A playful sassiness accompanied her grin, and damn it, if the vixen didn’t throw a wink in, just for good measure! Gesturing him into the vehicle, she and Haydn took positions at the rear of the car.

Within minutes, they had rolled it up into the garage bay and it was being lifted into the air above them.

“Can you fix it?” he asked before the hoist even stopped elevating the car.

The raised brow she gave him sparked a tingling in his balls again.

“You don’t know much about cars do you, Mr. Winslow?”

“Please call me Dax,” he reiterated again. Feeling a little insulted, he squared his shoulders adding, “And no, I don’t.”

What the hell does that have to do with anything? Reading her expression wasn’t easy. What? Did the fact that he didn’t care to know about cars make him less a man, his mind and his cock demanded. Damn it, just who did this woman think she was, judging him based on his knowledge of cars?

Casting a glance at Kendall’s co-worker, Dax’s hackles rose. The smug smirk on the man’s face had Dax’s blood boiling. A challenge glinted in Haydn’s eye. The urge to go all primal and mark Kendall as his grew almost impossible for Dax to control. He pictured taking hold of her, throwing her up over his shoulder and racing off into the sunset. Nice, he thought wryly, the buried ‘caveman gene’ has come up to bat. *Yeah, that’s romantic, you ass.*

The small area of the garage filled with testosterone. If the man smirking at him was looking for a fight as to who was the better man where Kendall Zurich was concerned, Dax was more than ready to oblige.

Whoa! Taking a mental step back, he wondered what prompted the possessive thoughts threatening to blow apart his control. Hell, once the car was fixed he’d be on his way and this little town would be long forgotten.

Like hell it will! The man's deepest deep in Dax's subconscious leapt forward. There was no way he was going anywhere until he knew more about the woman he'd just met.

Nodding her head, the warm, inviting smile on her full lips brought Dax back down to a sensible state. Man, she was good, he mused, feeling himself relax.

"So what do you do for a living?" She cocked her head inquisitively.

Reading genuine interest in her question, he found himself strangely excited with her query on a personal level. Suddenly, he felt as if it were just the two of them standing in the garage. In a way that thrilled yet frightened him, Kendall's natural sensuousness had him mesmerized. Usually quite good at maintaining his self-control, standing so close to her as he was now, his control was walking straight toward the drainage hole in the middle of the garage floor.

"I'm a lawyer," he answered.

Haydn scoffed again and the old man snickered, reminding Dax they were still there.

Kendall, however, just nodded and grinned at him.

"Well," she said, pointing to her co-worker, "Haydn is holding the drive shaft. The car isn't going to move without that. Also," she continued, walking under the car to point out some grease-soaked part, "there is a crack in the oil pan here. It appears this car has been leaking oil quite steadily, hence the ping and eventual knocking, which I'm sure you heard before she started smoking like an old locomotive. I'm really sorry, Dax, but you aren't going anywhere in this car. The engine is fried."

He looked from the underbelly of the car to Kendall. *No, no, no! This can't be happening!* "How do you know that?" he snapped, sharper than he'd intended. "You've barely even looked at it."

Shit! The look on her face told him he crossed a line. Offending her wasn't something he'd intended to do.

"I don't have to look," she replied, lifting her chin and crossing her arms over her breasts. "I can smell it."

Fuming in silence, Dax straightened his posture, assuming his stare-down pose which worked so well in a courtroom, but had no effect on the woman before him. The rising of her left brow had him taking a step back.

Christ, she was so pretty, and his fingers itched to touch her again. As they held each other's gaze, he felt himself relax as he studied her. Once calm he inhaled a deep breath and could indeed smell the stench of dead car.

"Okay, well, do you have a loaner I can borrow?" he asked hopefully. "I'll return it in a couple of days, after my meetings. Or just direct me to the nearest car rental place."

"Look 'round ya, son. Yer in the middle of butt-fuck nowhere." The old man chuckled. "We got no car rentals 'round here."

"Uncle Mel, please." Kendall poked the man in the belly. "I'm sorry, Dax. We're just a small repair shop, and I don't have anything here to loan you."

"You got your—" Haydn was cut off with a sharp glance from Kendall.

"As I was saying," she said with a warm smile, turning her attention back to Dax. "I don't have anything to loan you. Unfortunately, your car needs a new engine. Now I can rebuild it, but it'll take me a couple of weeks because I just don't have all the parts here to do it."

Great, Dax groaned inwardly.

As much as he didn't want to be at that meeting in the morning, he wasn't interested in letting the firm down, or worse, disappointing his father. The three senior partners were counting on him to make his own name in the firm by landing this client.

He suddenly found himself with a far more important reason for wanting to ditch tomorrow's meeting. She was standing in front of him, looking at him with the loveliest green eyes he had ever seen. As he stared back at her, he considered making a deal with the Devil himself, offering his very soul to see her out of those grimy blue coveralls.

"Actually, it's not mine," he informed her. "It's a rental I picked up at the airport."

"Oh, well in that case," she stated brightly, "give them a call and they'll make arrangements for a replacement."

The tightening in his groin had him shifting his weight in an attempt to relieve his discomfort.

"Good idea," Haydn snarled, shooting a nasty look at Dax before spitting a mouthful of tobacco at his feet, just missing the toe of his polished loafer. "Then 'pretty boy' can be on his merry way."

As if slapped in the face, Dax didn't miss the irritation in Haydn's voice, detecting the attraction toward his cute employer. Ignoring the other man's snide tone, Dax flipped open his cell and dialed the rental depot at the airport. After several minutes, he snapped it shut, abruptly ending his call and knew the look on his face reflected his angry thoughts.

"This just isn't my day, is it? They don't have another car available." With a low growl Dax kicked a lonely tire leaning against the shop wall. "Shit!"

Kenny felt bad for the handsome stranger. The poor guy was so out of his element in the middle of Milton Ville. A tiny little town, not really even big enough to warrant the classification of *town*, it was a small village in the middle of butt-fuck nowhere, as her uncle so eloquently worded it.

"Listen, Dax." She glanced at the clock on the wall of the shop. "We're closing up now, so you will stay with me tonight and we'll figure something out tomorrow." She grinned at him. "How does that sound?"

"It's not like I have many options. I didn't notice a hotel as I rolled along the main street." Although he shrugged, the intense look he held her frozen in place with had her soaking her panties again.

"He can stay with me at my mama's house," Haydn snapped angrily.

"Yer mama's house ain't big enough fer one more," Uncle Mel said. "'sides he'd be more comfortable out at Kenny's."

Kenny walked toward the control panel on the wall. "Why don't you get your belongings out of the vehicle?" She turned to Dax as she pressed the button for the hydraulic hoist, lowering the car from the air. "Give me a few minutes to clean up, and then we'll head out. All right?"

Welcoming a break from the arousing heated scrutiny of the handsome stranger gracing her garage, she closed the door to the bathroom.

As she unfastened the buttons marching down the front of her coveralls, the memory of his spicy clean scent tickled her nose. Inhaling deeply only added to the sexual frustration he'd induced. Not that she had a ton of experience, but no lover in her past had ever stirred her libido into a frenzy like Dax Winslow did in a matter of minutes.

From the moment she laid eyes on the man, her nipples refused to recede. As aroused as she was, the amount of moisture in her panties was becoming a tad uncomfortable.

Slipping the blue fabric off her shoulders, she continued to think of the handsome stranger standing just beyond the closed door. The storm gray pinstripe suit—which fit him so beautifully it was criminal—she suspected bore the Armani label. A red and black tie with tiny checks was loosened from around his neck. The first three buttons of the black silk dress shirt caressing his body were undone, revealing tanned flesh, and a nervously bobbing Adam's apple.

As she continued her leisurely mental recollection of the hunk, the gush of fluid soaking her panties almost had her gasping in surprise. The lace of her bra as it scraped her hardened nipples made her weak in the knees. Oh Lord, she groaned to herself as her coveralls pooled around her feet.

Short, dark, wavy hair was styled to perfection. Intense dark blue eyes had met her gaze and unless she was mistaken, they'd been laden with interest. Full lips curled upward, looking deliciously kissable. Temporarily, she became lost in the intense look he had held on her when their eyes first met.

After relieving herself, Kenny stood at the sink brushing her teeth and scrubbed at the grease smear coloring her cheek. Pulling a brush through her hair, she wrapped the mass in a scrunchie before reaching for her clothes, which she'd hung on a hook on the back of the door that morning.

The spicy fragrance of Dax's cologne was hypnotic and when he'd placed his hand in hers, electricity jolted through her body. In the silence of the bathroom, Kenny wondered how those strong hands would feel roaming her curves and exploring her most intimate body parts.

Unable to control it any longer, she allowed a shiver to set a pleasurable course through her body.

If she were to have wagered a guess based on attire, the stranger in her garage was a professional. A lawyer would have been her first guess, an executive her second. She wasn't at all surprised it was the first. There was an air about him she'd seen before, but he seemed far from being an egotistical know-it-all.

Noting his spotlessly clean hands and neatly clipped fingernails, it was clear tinkering with cars wasn't something he did in his spare time. There was evidence, however, that he did something with his hands. When he'd taken her hand in his, the telltale signs of calluses could be felt. And she'd be lying if she didn't admit her excitement at not finding a wedding band on his finger. Sure, that didn't mean anything, but it was something.

There was more than just a physical attraction toward the stranger. Despite the anger she'd sensed he was feeling over his situation, she felt a seductive pull and did not fight being drawn to him.

The soothing tone of her voice had wrapped around him and in an instant, his situation didn't seem so incredibly shitty. After he'd nodded in agreement, Kendall excused herself and disappeared behind a closed door at the back of the garage. Without warning, Dax felt as if he were free falling, helpless to stop himself.

The weight of an angry stare slammed into Dax as if he'd been hit in the solar plexus. From the corner of his eye, he watched as Haydn followed his movements while he gathered his briefcase and suitcase from the back seat of his rental car.

"If you so much as..." The contempt in Haydn's voice had the hair standing up on the back of Dax's neck.

In an instant, the need to mark Kendall as his resurfaced. Taking a deep breath, Dax squared his shoulders, pulling himself to his full height. Meeting Haydn's approach, the two men stood almost chest-to-chest, posturing for dominance.

"Go on home, Haydn," Uncle Mel said evenly. "We'll see ya in the mornin'."

"But Mel, I don't like it that Kenny's gonna let him come home wit her," Haydn said bitterly.

"The lady just offered me a place to stay for the night, buddy." Dax stood his ground. "I promise she'll be safe."

"Ya gay?" Haydn asked, hocking another mouthful of tobacco juice, this time into a spit cup.

Lifting his chin in challenge, Dax raised his brow in warning.

"Go home, Haydn," the old man said again, in a firmer tone, leaving no room for an argument.

The younger man hesitated a few moments before snarling an obscenity and stomping out of the building to head down the road.

"Never mind him, the boy means no harm. He looks out fer our Kenny like she's his little sister," the older man said on his way out the door. "You take care, son," he added with a wink. "Come on boys, let's git on home," he called to the two dogs as he closed the door behind him.

Haydn would like to treat Kendall as more than a sister, Dax thought, as twinges of jealousy raced through his body. Clenching his fists at his sides, he tried not to think about her with another man. The possessive thoughts regarding the cute mechanic once again stopped him cold. Where in the hell were those feelings coming from? Hell, he didn't even know this woman and yet here he was, jealous at the thought of her being with someone else.

The door Kendall disappeared through moments earlier opened, drawing his eyes to her. His breath hitched as he took her in. The ball cap had been discarded and her blond hair was pulled down into a ponytail at the base of her neck. Damn, it was curly...his biggest weakness. Blood rushed to his cock as he thought of her on her knees before him, his hands fisted in those soft curls as she stroked his thick shaft with her mouth. The grease mark had been scrubbed from her gorgeous face, and she was now dressed in a pair of faded blue jeans and a navy blue t-shirt that hugged the swells of her upper body seductively. Her womanly curves called out, taunting him. Dax's mouth went dry, his tongue sticking to his pallet. His loins ached to have her straddling them. Beautiful full breasts teased when she slid her hands into the back pockets of her jeans, causing them to jut toward him.

"Are you all right, Dax?" She smiled brightly, cocking her head to one side.

Dax was afraid to speak; unsure sound would even come out. He wondered if she possessed any inclination of the effect she had on him. At the moment his raging hormones were threatening to back her up to the workbench and rip the jeans from her body before plunking her ass atop the bench so he could slide himself into her warm, wet heat.

"Uh, yeah," he muttered hoarsely.

"Great. Let's go."

After Kendall pulled the door closed behind them, Dax followed her across the small lot toward a green tarp. She removed the tarp, revealing a Harley Davidson Road King, and handed him a helmet. As she swung her leg over the seat of the bike, his mouth began to water. He knew the wide-eyed stunned look on his face was what prompted the soft giggle to escape her lips when she glanced over her shoulder at him.

"Are you coming?" she asked.

Almost, baby, just give me another minute. The sight of her straddling the motorcycle nearly finished him off. Now that was all he needed, to blow his load in his Armani suit, walking around with a big wet come stain on the front of his pants for the world to see. For Kendall Zurich to see. *Come on, you ass, get it fucking together.*

Reaching for his briefcase, she settled it across the gas tank in front of her and directed him to climb on behind her. Not realizing how difficult the task would be with a fucking boner, he did as instructed, positioning himself on the back of the bike, praying like hell she couldn't feel his rock-hard cock pressing against her backside.

"We're not going far," she said over the rev of the engine. "Just rest your suitcase on one thigh and hold on."

The erotic vibrations of the machine beneath him, was almost unbearable. This was going to be the most painful ride he had ever taken. With one hand settled on the luscious curve of her hip, he gritted his teeth as she hammered the throttle.

Chapter 3

The ride to Kendall's took them to the outskirts of the town. They drove up the lane and parked in front of single story cottage-style log home, nestled in and protected by dense woods. A tire swing hung from a big old oak tree in the middle of the front yard. A colorful rose garden adorned the front of the house. A wrap-around porch held two rocking chairs and a porch swing.

On the seat of one of the rockers lay a big old orange cat.

They climbed off the bike and removed their helmets.

"Welcome to my little piece of paradise." Kendall beamed proudly.

"Honey, it's beautiful," Dax replied honestly.

"Thanks," she said with an accompanying shiver. "Come on, you'd probably like a shower. I know I would, and I'm famished." She giggled, rubbing her belly.

The aroma of pot roast greeted them as he followed her through the front door. His own stomach rumbled angrily, reminding him he hadn't eaten since breakfast.

At the end of a tour of her home, Kendall left him alone in a spare bedroom. After taking a shower in the en suite and putting on fresh clothes, he felt like a new man.

Wandering around again, Dax admired the simple, yet functional design and layout of her home. The furnishings were modern, accented with a light country flare and a gentle feminine touch. It wasn't frilly and girly, but rather comfortably unisex and felt like home. He found his mind wandering and liked where it headed. *This was their home, with a couple of kids running around, himself sitting on the couch bottle-feeding a baby while Kendall worked in the kitchen preparing their evening meal.*

As Dax gave his head a shake to clear the vision in his mind, he found himself standing in the doorway to the kitchen watching Kendall dishing out their dinner from a slow cooker on the counter. The sight of her took his breath away. Freshly showered, her blond curls were still slightly damp. Clad in a pair of denim shorts that teasingly hugged her round ass and a pastel pink tank top. He saw she wore a black bra by the strap peeking out, and wondered if matching panties caressed the flesh under her shorts. The fresh clean scent she exuded drove his senses crazy.

As he stood in silence watching her, he noticed her stiffen suddenly, raising her head as if distracted from her task.

* * * *

Kenny sensed her guest behind her, felt the weight of his stare. Catching a whiff of Dax's mild cologne, her nipples hardened painfully and the clean pair of panties she wore grew damp.

She tensed. "I hope you're hungry," she said, surprised at the breathlessness of her voice. Turning to meet his gaze, her breath caught.

His hair was damp and tousled as if he had just towel-dried it. A pair of khaki shorts hung low on his slender hips, and a button-down striped shirt adorned his upper body with just a single button fastened around his belly button. The sleeves were rolled to his elbows and she noticed the head and partial body of a cobra tattooed on the inside of his left forearm. A dusting of dark chest hair teased her, but not nearly as much as the dark trail leading to the treasure below the waist of his shorts. He stood in the doorway, barefoot—a big turn on for her. Kenny didn't think there was anything sexier than a guy in bare feet. And the man standing in the doorway of her kitchen was the sexiest thing she had ever laid eyes on.

"Starved," he answered, his voice low, deep.

The two stood staring at one another for several heartbeats before the loud squawk of a bird outside an open window caught their attention.

"Uh, would you like beer or red wine with dinner?" she asked, sinking her teeth into her lower lip to keep from begging Dax to touch her.

"Which would you prefer?" he countered.

Kenny chuckled as she picked up their plates off the counter. "Actually, I'd really love a cold beer."

"Then allow me, my lady." He winked. Opening the fridge, he grabbed two bottles and popped the caps as he carried them to the table.

Engaging in small talk while eating, they enjoyed their meal, combined with the sounds filtering through the open kitchen window of night descending upon them. When they finished, Dax rose and cleared their plates, carrying them to the sink and started running the water to wash the dishes.

Kenny smiled from the table, content to watch him work in her kitchen. Very quickly she found herself enjoying the confident graceful movements of his body.

"You don't have to do that, Dax," she told him as she approached the counter, picking up a dish towel to dry.

"Nonsense. You prepared us a fabulous dinner, I don't mind showing my appreciation by cleaning up."

"Well, if you keep this up, I might just keep you around," she teased. *Wouldn't that be nice?*

With the kitchen tidied and everything put away, Kenny found herself unsure of what to do with her houseguest. No, that wasn't true, she knew exactly what she wanted to do with him. They were adults, and consenting adults could do whatever they pleased. But would he be consenting, she wondered, trying to tamp the excitement building between her legs.

Positive she was sending the right signals, Kenny decided she would wait for Dax to make the first move. For a moment her thoughts froze. A wedding ring didn't mean this handsome stranger didn't have someone warming his bed at night.

"Would you like to sit outside for a bit, before calling it a night, Kendall?" he asked when he noticed her staring at him.

"Yes, I'd love to," she answered, hoping he picked up on the huskiness in her voice. "I spend a lot of time out on that porch."

"You head on out, honey, and I'll grab us another beer."

Kenny shivered in response.

* * * *

As he stepped out onto the porch, Kendall was seated in a corner on the swing. When she patted the cushion next to her, his heart raced. Sitting down beside her, Dax handed her an uncapped bottle of beer.

The voices of the crickets and bullfrogs in the air sounded like a symphony. The hoot of a nearby owl joined the growing chorus of night sounds. The air was cool, the smell of heavy dew carried in a gentle breeze.

Ah, this is the life, he found himself thinking. He gave his head a shake. *The calm night air, my woman by my side. My woman?*

"Are you married?" Kendall looked at him wide-eyed, appearing surprised as the question slipped past her lips. Her nervous giggle had Dax grinning. "Shit, I'm so sorry, Dax. I'm just making conversation."

"I don't mind at all." He grinned, trying to put her at ease. "I'm not married. No girlfriend either. And before you ask, I'm not into guys."

Kendall laughed aloud. "Oh, I knew you weren't gay. You exude a raw animal masculinity that is totally hetero."

A jolt of desire headed straight to his semi-erect cock.

"How about you?" Dax mentally crossed his fingers, willing a negative reply. "Where's your significant other tonight?" If he had a woman as fine as Kendall Zurich, there was no way in hell she'd ever be left alone. "Haydn wasn't very pleased about me staying here with you. Are, uh...you...and he..."

She shook her head.

Yes! Dax mentally 'high-fived' himself. *Get a grip, dumb-ass.*

"That stray is the only man in my life." She nodded toward the fat orange cat, which didn't appear to have moved from his perch on the rocker. "Well, he and my Uncle Mel."

"The old fellow is really your uncle, huh?" Dax mused, thinking she had to be adopted, because there was no way they were biologically related.

"Yup, he really is. Uncle Mel and my father were brothers, five years apart. Uncle Mel was the oldest, he never married nor had children of his own. He has always been like a second father to me," she said. "When my parents were killed, he stepped in to make sure I stayed on the straight and narrow. He's very protective of me."

Dax raised his brow and looked at her in question. "He let you invite a complete stranger home with you. How is that protective? I'd kill any guy who even thought about going home with my niece."

"Believe it or not," she began, and then laughed, "Uncle Mel is a very good judge of character. Kind of has a sixth-sense when it comes to people. If he suspected for one minute you were an asshole, he wouldn't have even called me in to speak with you at the garage. And he most definitely would not have allowed me to offer my spare room to you." Pausing, Kendall took a swallow of beer. "So tell me, what kind of law do you practice?"

"I specialize in family law and dabble a little in corporate."

"Wow. Those are totally opposite ends of the spectrum," she said with a laugh.

"My father's firm likes to have a hand in everything. My meeting tomorrow is with the Waterston Corporation and if I can land the deal, it will be a huge asset to the firm. I'll have to call them first thing in the morning to reschedule, I suppose, since I'm not going to make it."

"There is no doubt in my mind, Dax Winslow, you'll win them over."

Her confidence warmed him. And there was something in her voice he had never heard before.

They sat quietly, listening to the night.

Carried on the gentle breeze, Kendall's natural fragrance tickled Dax's nostrils. A scent unique to her alone, it aroused him, making his body ache with intense need. He would have loved nothing more than to lay her back on the porch swing and make slow, exquisite love with her until they both collapsed from exhaustion. His mouth salivated to taste her, devour her. He needed to feel her flesh under his fingertips as his hands caressed her into a state of erotic bliss. To feel her womanly body wriggling beneath him as he plunged himself into her. The thoughts nearly drove him over the edge.

Unaware of how this sweet country maiden would feel about the big bad city wolf preying on her innocence, he decided he'd leave the ball in her court. If she gave him the right signals, he would be all over her like 'white on rice'.

"You were right, Kendall," he said quietly, glancing over at her. "This is paradise."

She gave him a bright smile. "I like that you call me Kendall." Her look then turned wistful. "My mother was the only person to ever use my given name. I haven't heard it in four and half years. The entire free world calls me Kenny."

"That's a shame, because your name is beautiful."

They shared a look, a few moments of silence.

"So, I'm guessing your father wanted a boy?"

"Yes. Well no, not really. I think all fathers want a son, but my parents were thrilled and very fortunate just to have me. My mother suffered a horrible miscarriage five years before I came along and the doctors told her she would never conceive again. They were devastated and gave up trying. Over time, her body healed, and five years later she found out she was pregnant, and lo and behold, here I am today. She became very ill shortly after my birth and underwent a hysterectomy, so I was left an only child. Now, to answer your question about my father wanting a boy, he gave me my first baby doll. And I still have her." She chuckled. "But, I also had every Tonka truck ever made, played PeeWee hockey, Little League baseball and football in high school. And as you know, I love working on cars."

Dax laughed. "And I've no doubt that you were spoiled rotten, honey."

* * * *

Kenny shivered at the endearing term he called her. It was the third time he'd called her honey that night. Suspecting he probably didn't even realize he'd said it, she dismissed it as a slip.

"Tell me about you," she said. Her interest in this man was growing at an alarming rate. She wanted to know everything about him; his likes and dislikes, what his family was like, his turn ons...

"Well, I'm the youngest of five boys, and a third generation lawyer."

"Very impressive," she stated.

Though his shrug was casual, Kenny felt his discontent.

"Two of my brothers are junior partners with the firm. The eldest is a doctor, and the second eldest a politician. I can tell you, it's a ton of fun during holidays." He rolled his eyes.

Kenny found herself thinking about how great it would be to belong to a big family.

It had been just her and Uncle Mel for so long she'd forgotten what it was like to have lots of loved ones around. She had several friends who came from large families and secretly envied them as they bitched and complained about this sibling and that sibling. Deep down she knew that to feel the love of so many people would far outweigh the tribulations of meaningless arguments.

After an hour or so chatting with Dax on the porch, Kenny's eyelids began to grow heavy.

"Well," she said and stretched. "I think I'm going to call it a night."

Chancing a glance to her right, Dax met her gaze with warm inviting eyes. Could she be so bold as to invite him into her bed? "You are welcome to stay out here...if...you wish."

"Thanks. I'll head in shortly, Kendall. I'm enjoying the night air. I've got to tell you, I'm developing a whole new appreciation for the outdoors being here," he replied, holding her gaze. "I'll lock up before I turn in."

Disappointed that she hadn't given him the right signals, or perhaps he just wasn't interested, Kenny nodded in reluctant acceptance and stood.

"Do you want me to bring the old tom in when I come?"

She shook her head. "I've tried to domesticate him, but he's not interested. He'll find shelter in the barn out back. Besides, with my allergies, it's probably best he stay outside. Well, good night, Dax."

"Good night, my Kendall," Dax said, his voice low, hoarse. "Sleep well."

Kenny hesitated for a moment, having great difficulty walking away from this man. His scent was like a drug, hypnotic, mesmerizing, sexy. She ached to feel his hands on her body, to have his cock inside her, his mouth feasting upon hers.

Lowering her head, she walked toward the door. Once there, she turned to meet his gaze once more.

The electrical energy that surged between them was undeniable. He had to feel it as well. It hurt that he had denied her subtle advances. But then maybe she hadn't made her intentions clear enough.

"Good night," she whispered again as she closed the screen door behind her.

* * * *

When Kendall had looked over at him, Dax's entire body reacted with the torment his cock was feeling. Would she have welcomed his kiss? Would she have allowed him the pleasure of sharing her body?

Adjusting the stiff flesh between his legs, he tipped his beer bottle up draining the contents. "Damn it," he groaned as he thought of Kendall's naked body curled up, all alone in her bed. It took every ounce of his self-control, to fight his growing need to follow her into her home, into her bedroom. And into her bed.

Chapter 4

When he awoke, his meeting was the furthest thing from Dax's mind. He'd barely slept a wink during the night and felt like shit, even after a shower.

The entire night he tossed and turned, thinking about Kendall lying in her bed, just down the hall, all alone. Naked. Twice he had stroked himself to some semblance of relief but was far from satisfied. Only one thing would appease his growing hunger and that would be to bury his cock inside her warm wet depths. Until that moment arrived, he knew he would never be content. And that thought scared the hell out of him. He wasn't a playboy, far from it. In fact, he rarely dated. Never before had he met someone who stirred the carnal fires he felt now that he'd met Kendall Zurich. Sure he'd taken a few lovers to his bed, but his thirst had never been quenched. His body, mind and soul now knew why.

Dax fastened his watch around his wrist and glanced at the face. He had two hours until his meeting, which he wasn't going to make. Unable to put off the inevitable any longer, he needed to call the client and was not looking forward to breaking the news to his father. Although an adult, facing the wrath of disappointment from his father was not something he wanted to endure.

As if it were just yesterday, he recalled the day when his two eldest brothers, Darryl, a pediatrician, and Devin, a congressman, chose to follow their ambitions. Daxton Winslow II refused to even speak to his two sons for close to a year.

Once the men established themselves and proved to their father there was life outside the legal world, the old man relented. Somewhat. However, the relationship between father and sons had never been quite the same. The three youngest boys quickly learned not to piss off their old man. Following in his footsteps, they all became lawyers, whether they'd wanted to or not.

The clanking of dishes, combined with appetizing aromas from the kitchen, brought a famished Dax down the hallway. Leaning against the doorframe, he savored a few silent moments watching his beautiful hostess.

As he stood there, he wondered just how long he'd be able to keep up the façade of 'gentleman', because his raging libido wanted nothing more than to rip off Kendall's clothes and sink himself into her body. Her scent teased him relentlessly. The fragrance of jasmine had taunted him when he'd laid his head on the pillow the night before. It was infused in the blankets he'd covered himself with, and the towels he'd used to dry off after showering. Watching her made his body hard. He wanted her like he had never wanted anything before in his life.

* * * *

When Kenny sensed his presence, a shiver teased its way up the length of her spine, stilling her movements. With her back to him, she relished the weight of his stare as it raked over every inch of her body. His quiet confidence engulfed her, consuming her very being. The self-induced orgasm she'd brought herself to the night before only added to her sexual frustration, instead of relieving it. Her body ached to be his, for Dax to take her to carnal heights she suspected only he could.

"Good morning," she said, before turning around. When she did turn, the mischievous smile tugging at his luscious full lips took her breath away. A soft gasp escaped her. "I, uh, know you have an important meeting this morning, so I wasn't sure how long I should let you sleep." The heat in his eyes as he held her gaze had her nipples growing painfully erect. Willing them to recede, Kenny hoped Dax didn't see the evidence of the effect he had on her. "Coffee?" she asked, groaning in silence at the huskiness of her voice.

"Please," Dax's tone echoed hers as he answered, pushing away from the doorframe.

Their fingers touched as he accepted the mug she offered him, and her panties dampened. A knowing grin crossed his face as he took a seat at the table.

"You didn't sleep well," Kenny said, observing his bedraggled appearance. She hadn't slept worth a shit either.

All night she'd flipped and flopped, thinking about sexy Dax Winslow sprawled across her spare bed—she'd imagined naked—just a few feet down the hall.

"No, I didn't," he admitted, before lifting his mug to his lips. As he swallowed, the appreciative, deep, throaty moan he gave made her nipples pucker tight once again. "I'm not going to make my meeting and that won't be good for my father's firm. I need to call Waterston, and my father." The forced smile on his face was unconvincing.

Dax's sudden uneasiness had the hair on the back of her neck standing on end.

For a brief moment he sat stiffly and looked terribly uncomfortable. Setting a plate of scrambled eggs and bacon in front of him, Kenny could no longer fight temptation.

Reaching up, she ran her fingers through the dark waves above Dax's right ear to the back of his head. Moaning low, his eyes closed and he tilted his head into her touch. The strands felt like silk sliding through her fingers, the spicy scent of his shampoo filled her nostrils. Touching him only taunted the painful pulsing of her body.

"Thank you," he said, opening his eyes to look up at her.

"Don't sweat your meeting, Dax."

The need to taste him overwhelmed her. It would be so easy to lean over, to press her lips against his, to slip her tongue into his mouth. He smelled delicious, and his flavor would be

...

Shaking her head, she willed her body to stop its trip to climax land.

It was a battle she was losing. As Kenny dropped her hand between Dax's shoulder blades, the subtle fragrance of her growing arousal tickled her senses. Oh, for the love of God, she whimpered in silence.

* * * *

When her slender fingers threaded through his hair, it took all of Dax's control not to pull Kendall onto his lap. The feel of her hand on him was like a brand. Then his control nearly shattered when the light musky scent of feminine arousal flooded his nostrils, driving his cock to the brink of release. *Christ, no, not now!* He silently begged. *Down cock, down!*

"I have a web-cam, internet and fax machine," Kendall suggested with a casual shrug. "Why don't you conduct your meeting via the world wide web?"

While she sat down at the table across from him and began eating, Dax sat in thought for a few minutes. "Damn, that's a great idea." Jesus, she just kept astounding him. "You are a brilliant woman, Kendall Zurich." She wasn't just brilliant, she was an incredible woman; sexy, desirable, and Christ, he had to have her. "You may have saved my hide."

She shrugged again, nodding toward the plate of food in front of him. "Eat your breakfast before it gets cold." The sassy smirk she flashed threatened to burst him apart at the seams.

After he helped her tidy up their breakfast dishes, she led him to a smaller bedroom which she used as a home office. A computer sat atop an old oak desk along the far wall, with two filing cabinets on the opposite side.

"Well, I'll leave you to it, Mr. Winslow. I need to go to the shop, but I'll see you around lunch."

The sexy smile on her lips made his testicles pull up tight against his body.

"Knock 'em dead, counselor." The huskiness in her voice was just about his undoing.

* * * *

As Kenny dismounted her motorcycle, she felt the unmistakable weight of Haydn's stare of annoyance. Over the years she'd been on the receiving end of that look numerous times. Without him even saying a word, Kenny knew he was furious she'd invited Dax back to her home.

A couple of months earlier, Haydn voiced his intentions that he was interested in a personal relationship with her. However, she was not. Ever since she was a little girl, she'd looked up to Haydn as the big brother she'd always wanted, but never had. And she loved him as such.

Their families had been very close and the two had basically been raised together. With Haydn being a few years older, Kenny had followed him around like a lost puppy when they were little. Anything Haydn did, Kenny had to do too. As kids, Haydn made no bones about her annoying the hell out of him. It wasn't until the day she followed him up a tree only to fall out of it, breaking her arm in two places, that Haydn realized how much she idolized him.

Although his family didn't have the means for Haydn to further his education, and he'd dubbed himself nothing more than a 'grease monkey in a small town garage,' Kenny still looked up to him. He was a very good man, and she knew her happiness was of the utmost importance to Haydn. And for several years Kenny also knew he'd silently worshipped the very ground she walked upon.

"Morning, princess," Haydn said as she approached him. He placed a gentle kiss on her forehead, a gesture he'd performed every morning since the day she'd taken over the garage. Kenny accepted it for what it was, a simple platonic exchange between two very close friends.

"We need to talk about pretty boy," Haydn told her.

"I've told you, I'm not interested in a relationship with you, Haydn."

He nodded. "I'm only concerned about you takin' him home wit you, princess."

The low rumble of a tow truck pulling into the lot to pick up Dax's rental car silenced the lecture when Haydn excused himself to tend to the driver.

Alone in the office, Kenny found her mind wandering to the handsome stranger she had left in her home. While one part of her ached to be near him, to touch him again, to inhale his masculine teasing scent, another part was thankful for the small reprieve.

It had been torture sleeping under the same roof with him knowing those strong hands and well-defined muscles were lying beneath the sheets in her spare room. As silly as the thought seemed, she'd been envious of the lucky cotton fibers caressing Dax's naked flesh and the feather pillow cradling his head.

"Jesus," she groaned, aroused again. *I need to change my underwear.*

At the breakfast table as Kenny had run her fingers through the silky softness of his hair, she'd felt herself edging very close to climbing onto his lap. She was growing desperate to feel his thick flesh stretching her open as he claimed her body. The need to have his hands touching, caressing, exploring her was becoming a fight she was losing.

If she hadn't left her home when she did, Kenny was positive she would have thrown herself at Dax's feet and begged him to ravish her. The fact she was losing her self-control made her feel weak. It was a feeling she didn't like. She was proud of her ability to remain focused, to stand strong when faced with adverse situations. However, since crossing paths with the distinguished, incredibly alpha Dax Winslow, her maintained self-control was quickly becoming a thing of the past.

The gentle tinkling of the bell above the door made Kenny blink back to reality.

"Morning, sunshine," Uncle Mel's booming voice greeted her as he entered.

"Good morning, Uncle Mel." She returned his greeting with a kiss on his furry cheek. "Good morning, Max, Webster," she continued, ruffling each of the dogs' coats who followed behind him.

An hour and a half later Haydn left the garage to drive into the city to pick up some parts for a 1969 Cougar, when Uncle Mel wandered from the office into the shop.

"Where's pretty boy?" he asked, after watching Kenny quietly for several minutes.

"He's at home," she replied, focusing on her task. Knowing her uncle as she did, Kenny was expecting this conversation.

Expected it, yes, prepared for it, not particularly.

"Did yer houseguest reschedule his meetin'?" He tucked his hands in his pockets.

Shaking her head, Kenny smiled up at him. "No, he's conducting it via web-cam over the internet," she said, dropping the transmission from an old Chevy pickup.

"I don't understand all that 'lectronic shit," her uncle grumbled.

"I know, Uncle Mel," she sympathized with a grin. "This meeting is very important to his law firm."

"He's a good boy, ya know," he continued, and began rocking on his heels.

"I know," she agreed whole-heartedly. *He's easy on the eyes, smells divine, and I'm sure he tastes exquisite.*

"Comes from good stock," he stated matter-of-factly. "I can tell."

"I know you can, Uncle Mel."

"He's good husband material, Kenny," he said, watching her lift the radiator from the under the hood.

She raised one brow at him in warning. "Uncle Mel."

With his hands raised in defense, he muttered, "I'm just sayin'."

"I know." She expelled an exasperated sigh.

The garage fell silent as she proceeded to work the motor mounts loose, before hooking up the hoist to lift the engine out of the truck.

"You two didn't...ya know?"

"Uncle Mel!" The wrench in Kenny's hand slipped from her grasp. The sound of metal slamming against the concrete floor bounced off the cinder walls, echoing in the small garage. She cast a 'you did not just ask that' glare at him.

"I'm just sayin', ya haven't dated anyone since that clown at the university and well, I ain't gonna be 'round forever, sunshine. I wantcha ta be happy. I wantcha ta have what ya mamma an' daddy had."

"Uncle Mel..." She hoped the tone in her voice advised him to choose his next words carefully.

"I know, I know, ya thinks I'm a babblin' old fool, but I knows about these things, Kenny. And I haves a feelin' about that young man."

She walked up to her uncle and wrapped her arms around his waist. "I know, Uncle Mel. And you're not a babbling old fool. I don't even know Dax, but what I do know is that we come from two totally different worlds."

"Yous ain't that diff rent."

"Well, I'm not about to give up my life here. This is where I belong. This is my home, and you are my family. And Dax has his own life." She pulled back to look up at her uncle. "And someone like Dax Winslow wouldn't be happy here in 'butt-fuck nowhere.'"

* * * *

Mel smiled down at his niece. Oh, she was so young and naïve. She'd been the apple of his brother's eye, and now his own. Trusting his sixth sense, Mel's instincts told him Kenny's world was about to be thrown for a big-ass loop, at the hands of the dashing lawyer, Dax Winslow.

"Don't count yer chickens, my sunshine." He chuckled, giving her a tight squeeze. After placing a kiss in the top of her head, he released her and headed back into the office to read his paper. "Don't count yer chickens."

"Oh, that old fart," he heard her quip.

"I heard that," he called over his shoulder.

The sound of the wrench smacking against the cement floor filled the garage bay a second time. "I was counting on it, old man," Kenny hollered back.

Chapter 5

Entering her home, Kenny was quiet, not knowing if Dax's meeting was finished.

Wandering by her office, she found it empty. She heard singing coming from the kitchen and ventured in that direction.

In the doorway, she stood smiling while watching Dax. He had his back to her, and she knew he didn't realize she was there. As he spun around, hitting the high-pitched chorus of Elton John's *Bennie and the Jets*, he froze.

The man couldn't carry a tune in a bucket.

Staring back at him, she knew amusement sparked in her eyes because her body began to tremble as she attempted to stifle her laughter.

"Not...one...word." He pointed a finger at her in warning, and grinned.

Kenny shook her head, her eyes wide and teary as she bit back a giggle. Turning away from him, she opened the fridge, grabbed a couple bottles of juice and carried them to the table. As he sat down across from her, she couldn't hold it any longer and burst into laughter. He looked at her through squinted eyes for a few minutes before joining her.

"I would have never suspected you to be so musically challenged, counselor," she managed to croak out, wiping at the tears streaming down her face.

"Hey, when I sing alone, no one complains." He feigned offence. "Eat your lunch." He chuckled, pointing to the clubhouse sandwich he set in front of her.

After regaining her composure, Kenny decided to pry a little into Dax's morning.

"So, how was your meeting?" she asked, taking a bite of her sandwich.

"Well, Clayton Waterston was understanding with regard to my car situation, and very impressed with the firm's proposal. The Waterston Corporation is the newest and biggest client of the law firm of MacIntyre, McQuaid and Winslow," he said with a wink.

"Yay! That's fantastic. I'm really happy for you! I knew you would kick ass, even if you weren't physically there."

Dax seemed so much more relaxed than when she'd left him earlier. While they finished their lunch they continued to make small talk.

Since Kenny had decided she wasn't going back to the garage for the afternoon, she wanted to share a part of her life with the handsome city slicker. Dax hadn't yet mentioned needing to go home, and she felt desperate to keep him around as long as she could.

"Have you ever been horseback riding?" she asked, collecting his plate when they were finished.

He shook his head. "No, actually I never have."

"Well, then you are in for a treat." She grinned and gave him a wink. "Let's go for a ride, huh?"

* * * *

"Okay, sure." Hell, she could have asked him to hurl himself off a bridge with a bungee cord strapped around his ankles, which he would have never done, but would have readily agreed if Kendall had asked him. It didn't matter what they did, Dax needed to be near her, needed to be with her.

"Come with me," she said, excitedly grabbing his hand.

Following her out the back door, they walked toward a barn where Dax was surprised to see two horses standing in a corral watching their approach.

"I looked out the window earlier," he told her. "I didn't see them."

Kendall snorted. "These two are not early risers. The only time I see them before noon is if I come out here and kick them out of the barn. Hi, boys." She stroked the noses of each beast. "This is Sir Edgar of Prague," she introduced a beautiful chocolate colored stallion to Dax. "And this is Her Secret Delight," she said of an incredibly handsome ebony steed. "To be honest their pedigree means nothing to me, I call them Eddie and Sam." She turned to him. "They're both retired from the racing circuit, having won many honors and awards." She shrugged causally. "But I fell in love with them at first sight and wanted them as pets. Don't be nervous, they're very gentle."

"Well then, lead on, my lady," he purred close to her ear as he stood behind her, stroking Eddie's snout. Dax delighted in the gentle tremble of Kendall's body as he pressed his body against hers.

As she leaned into him, Dax felt his cock about ready to explode. He wondered if Kendall felt the chemistry between them. She had to, he told himself. There was no way the attraction was one-sided, the pull was just too strong.

The nervous clearing of her throat brought Dax back to reality. Taking his hand in hers again, she led him into the barn, where the tack for the horses was kept.

Taking their time, Kendall talked him through saddling the beasts and fitting them with bridles before the two of them set off.

The sun was warm as it shone through the trees. A gentle breeze blew, carrying the fragrances of summer in the air. For a couple of hours they rode along the trails throughout the woods behind Kendall's home.

Dax found himself feeling something he'd never experienced before...a sense of peace, tranquility.

The beauty surrounding him was indescribable. Riding through the woods was relaxing, comforting, soothing, and riding behind her just added to his content. The way she commanded the stallion beneath her reminded him of the power she held over him. She didn't know it, but with just a smile and a tilt of her head she had the ability to command him to do just about anything she wanted.

As they returned to the barn and dismounted from the magnificent beasts, he discovered he was drawn into the world of Kendall Zurich. She stimulated parts of his anatomy in ways he'd never felt before. And he ached for more.

Once they removed the saddles from the stallions, she handed him a brush and they groomed the two beasts before putting them away for the night. Dax delighted in the incredible pleasure he gained from performing such a simple task. Never before had he experienced something so fulfilling as grooming a horse. The beast relished in his gentle strokes, he could feel Sam's strong muscles ripple under his stroking hands.

After they tucked the horses in their stalls for the night, Dax grabbed Kendall by her shoulders, spinning her around, and pulled her against him. "Thank you," he whispered before placing a light kiss on her lips.

* * * *

Kenny's tummy flipped and her heart raced. Gripping his forearms, she held on for dear life. Dax's lips were soft, his kiss confident. The feel of his hands resting on her shoulders, though gentle, carried a touch of possession. At that moment, she wanted to be nowhere else than in this man's arms.

"For what?" she asked breathlessly, as he pulled away. The heated look of desire in his eyes, told her he was fighting his arousal, just as she was.

"For allowing me to share a part of your life." His voice was rough, husky.

Feeling the unmistakable firmness of his erection pressing against her body, Kenny trembled in his embrace. Unwilling to fight it another minute, she was about to pull his mouth to hers once again and wrestle him to the ground when his deep voice interrupted her dirty thoughts.

"I took a couple of steaks out of the freezer earlier," he said softly. "I thought we would barbeque them for dinner. I hope that's okay."

Kenny blinked several times to clear the fog of desire clouding her brain.

"Uh, sure, that would be nice," she finally answered.

As they walked back toward the house, Dax wrapped his arm around her waist, his hand resting comfortably on the swell of her hip. Kenny was in a state of near delirium from the friction his body brushing hers created. Although a casual touch, it ignited a fire inside her she knew she wouldn't be able to extinguish by her own hand.

The humming in her body had her heart rate accelerated. Developing a mind of their own, her nipples grew into erect, painful tight peaks and her sex flooded with liquid heat. Back at the house, needing to put a little space between her and her handsome houseguest before she did something she might regret, Kenny excused herself.

Once inside the privacy of her bathroom, she gave in to the sexual frustration she was consumed with by being in Dax's presence. Shedding her clothes, she leaned into the tub and turned on the cold water. Climbing inside the enclosure, she pulled the curtain closed and stood under the spray streaming from the showerhead above. The cold water cascading over her made her nipples rock hard and her skin goose-fleshed but the fire burning between her legs only grew hotter.

Needing relief from her sexual torment, Kenny's fingers were drawn to the tiny nubbin pulsing at the juncture of her thighs. So far beyond needing warming up, she pushed a finger up inside her wet heat and with two fingers from her other hand, sought out the swollen bud of nerves driving her crazy. With firm pressure she pressed tight circles against the nub, matching the tempo of the finger moving inside her pussy. Her breath grew heavy as her lower belly tightened. Faster her fingers worked, pushing her beyond the point of no return. Release was within reach, so close. She sank her teeth into her lower lip to stop herself from crying out, and a torrent of cream coated her hands as her pussy spasmed.

Leaning against the wall of the shower for support, she allowed the waves of her much-needed release to wash over her. When the throbbing of her body ebbed, and she'd regained some strength, Kenny continued with her shower.

Her mind wandered to Dax, showering down the hall, au natural, soapy and wet, his hands washing his naked body, slipping lower to stroke the length of his... With a groan of frustration, Kenny reached around to make sure the cold water tap was on full blast.

Only when she began shivering did she shut the water off and climb out of the tub.

* * * *

Side by side, Kenny and Dax prepared their dinner. Despite masturbating in a frigid cold shower, she felt tortured by the warm throbbing in her clit yet again.

After they'd eaten, they sat in the family room enjoying the remainder of a bottle of wine they'd opened with their meal. With her feet tucked beneath her, Kenny snuggled into the corner of the overstuffed sofa. Across the cozy room, Dax sat on an ottoman in front of the picture window, his elbows resting comfortably on his bent knees, his fingers laced together between.

"I noticed your diploma on the wall in your office. Impressive. Why didn't you say anything?"

Kenny shrugged, feeling a little uncomfortable that he'd seen it. "Because it's not really that big a deal."

"You hold an honors degree from Harvard Law School, Kendall, that's a pretty big deal. Why don't you practice?" As his eyes held her attention, she read his genuine interest in them, and his words.

"It was never my thing," she said with a shake of her head.

"I don't understand, honey." Dax's brows furrowed.

He had called her honey so often since his arrival that it didn't surprise her anymore as it slipped past his lips. The 'pet' name he used with her seemed natural, comfortable. Although she felt as if his endearing term just might lead her into a false sense of hope and security, Kenny couldn't bring herself to ask him to stop.

"Why would you go through law school to never practice?"

After taking a sip from her wine glass, she sighed. "My father wanted me to be the best that I could be. He insisted on a top-notch education and a prestigious career, because he didn't want me working in the garage for the rest of my life. My mother, on the other hand, taught me to always follow my heart, to do whatever makes me happy." She smiled, allowing her thoughts to wander. "During my second year of law school, their car was hit by a drunk driver. They were both killed, along with the man driving the other vehicle.

"I finished my law degree to honor my father's wishes. After passing the bar, I went back to working in the garage, to honor my mother and to please myself. It's where I'm most happy and content. I don't want to work the rest of my life at a job that I don't love, that I don't thoroughly enjoy."

Despite the heat in the air, Kenny shivered. "Now, that's enough about me. How about you, Dax? Why do you practice law? I have a sense you're very good at it, but I can see in your eyes that you don't enjoy it."

"How do you do that? How do you see what is in here?" He pointed a finger at the center of his chest.

She shrugged and flashed him a shy smile.

"You have me off-kilter, Kendall. In the past twenty-four hours, I don't know if I'm coming or going. And for a guy who has never been allowed to be free and easy, always living a life of absolute structure... I love it. I'm off balance for the first time in my life, and I love it."

She winked, and a playful grin curled her lips. "You can't take life too seriously, Mr. Winslow the Third. It's far too short to go through it unhappy. Now, stop avoiding my question. Tell me why you practice in your father's law firm, when you would much rather jab sharp pencils in your eyes."

* * * *

Dax chuckled. The beauty across the room didn't know how accurate her analogy was.

"Law is my father's life." He waved his hand in the air for effect. Kendall giggled. "It was drilled into me from the day I was born that I would be a lawyer. I was a doodler growing up, but my father never took an interest in my art. I always wanted to be an architectural designer. Then, when I started building structures out of Legos, he didn't hold back at voicing his disgust."

Dax stopped his verbal biography and took a swallow of his wine. "After witnessing the hell my eldest brothers went through living their dreams, I followed the path my father led and went to law school. I majored in law and minored in architectural design. The year before I passed the bar, I changed my major and focused on design. My father still has no idea I hold two degrees, or that I've sold several designs. If he only knew I agreed to meet with Waterston just to sell another design, he'd shit." He smiled smugly.

Kendall laughed. "Oh, you are a sneaky one, Dax Winslow the Third."

As he studied her, he felt his control slip. "I really hate my name."

"Oh, I'm sorry." She looked apologetic. "I didn't mean to offend you, I was just teasing."

"No, you didn't let me finish. I hate my name, but I love the way you say it." Yup, there was his self-control walking down the hall and through the front door. He mentally waved bye-bye. "You have no idea how aroused it makes me to hear my name spoken from your lips." He stood and closed the short distance between them. "Say it again."

From her cushion on the sofa, she grinned up at him mischievously. "Dax Winslow...the Third."

Taking the wine goblet from her hand, he set it on the table beside her. Grabbing her hands in his, Dax roughly pulled Kendall to her feet and tugged her against him.

"Again," he growled low.

"Dax...Winslow...the...Third." She barely had the words out when his lips crushed against hers.

* * * *

Dax's lips were firm, possessive and his taste was like nothing she'd ever sampled before. He tasted of power, confidence and desire. Wrapping her hands around his neck, she explored his mouth with an urgency that alarmed her. Thrusting her tongue between Dax's full, delicious lips, she grew heady savoring his taste.

"I want to make love to you, Kendall," he murmured against her lips.

Along his warm, solid frame, she shuddered excitedly. "Mmm, I want that, too."

She slipped her tongue past his lips to explore the depths of his mouth.

Gripping his shirt in her fists, she pulled sharply, sending the buttons flying in various directions around the room. Stroking her hands along the firm swells of the muscles sculpting his chest, she savored the feel of his flesh beneath her fingertips. As her hands ventured lower and unfastened the button and zipper of his shorts, Dax pulled away slightly, his heated gaze fixed on her.

Holding his attention, Kenny reached inside, wrapped her fingers around his thick cock and withdrew it from his pants. Using firm pressure, she began to stroke him with purpose. His throaty moan filled the room as she used her other hand to cup his testes, squeezing them. His skin was soft, silky smooth, his flesh heavy in her palm. The weeping slit at the tip of the dark purple head made her mouth water. Standing up on her toes, she leaned into him and ran her tongue along the seam of his mouth.

With a sharp nip at his lower lip, she pulled back and looked into his eyes. "Get these off," she ordered, pushing his jeans with one hand while the other continued to stroke his shaft.

Releasing his hold on her waist, Dax shoved his shorts down his hips, kicking them aside. Her hand never released his hardened flesh. Once he stood straight again, Kenny dropped to her knees and winked up at him as she flicked her tongue across the crown of his cock. The taste of his flesh on her tongue made her head spin. More, her mind screamed. Squeezing the base of his shaft drew his wide-eyed expression to her once more. Enjoying the gentle quiver of his lower lip, she licked her lips and slowly slid them around the head of his cock. His deep growl vibrated through her, and as she watched his eyes squeeze shut and his head fall back, she was consumed with a feeling of sexual control.

The feel of his fingers gripping fistfuls of her hair, combined with the jerky movements of his hips thrusting against her face, told her Dax was losing the battle with his own control. She looked up at him through heavy lidded eyes and took his thick shaft completely down her throat.

"Oh, Christ," Dax groaned loudly, and she felt his legs waver.

Kenny hummed with satisfaction around the cock in her mouth. Hungrily she sucked, trying to take him even deeper. He tasted of virile man, exciting, delicious. Gently she palmed his testicles and reached her other hand up to pinch his nipples roughly.

* * * *

Nearly ready to explode, Dax shuddered and pulled his cock from her hungry mouth.

Lowering himself to the floor, he tugged Kendall's shirt over her head. Wasting no time, he rid her body of her bra and leaned her back until she lay on the plush carpeted floor. With one swift motion, he pulled her shorts and panties from her body and pushed her legs wide.

A savage growl from deep within his chest filled the room, as he took in the sight of her bare pussy. The plump lips glistened with her cream, and the musky aroma of her arousal made his balls tighten. Christ, he was going to come all over the fucking floor if he didn't exercise a little more patience. The seductive little minx was testing the last fiber of his control as she lay spread out before him.

Using his fingers, he spread her smooth lips open, revealing the swollen pink bud hidden within to his hungry gaze. "Mmm, very nice, baby," he moaned as his eyes met hers. The blush that traveled from the tight tips of her rosy nipples all the way up to her cheeks was nearly his undoing.

Dipping his head between her splayed thighs, he stroked his tongue the length of her wet sex. When he flicked his tongue across her swollen clit and she cried out, Dax closed his mouth around her flesh and suckled her gently. Finally tasting her, he took his time, his tongue probed, exploring her depths, savoring her flavor.

As his feasting mouth brought her to an explosive orgasm, she called out his name and tangled her fingers in his hair as he lapped up her creamy offering. Not about to allow Kendall

to cool off, he crawled up the length of her body to suckle her breasts thoroughly before capturing her mouth again.

Their fierce oral exploration of each other seemed to steal her breath away. As she lay beneath him, spread eagle, gasping for breath, he thrust his hips forward, impaling Kendall with his rock-hard shaft. Crying out, she wriggled against him as he slowly withdrew. When he slid back inside her heat, her hips bucked to meet his commanding thrusts. She met him stroke for stroke as he pounded himself into her body.

"Jesus," he groaned with a forceful thrust. "You feel so fucking good, baby." He felt himself soaring ever so close to the edge of release, but he felt selfish, desperate to prolong their pleasure. "Your pussy is gripping my cock so tight." Slowing his claiming strokes, he nuzzled her neck, squeezing the fullness of her right breast in his hand.

She was turning him into a desperate man.

The pungent aroma of their lovemaking filled the room.

"Oh, Dax," she groaned hoarsely. Bucking her hips against him, her fingertips dug into his biceps.

"Yes, my Kendall," he whispered his encouragement against her neck. "Come again for me."

"Harder," she begged in a whimper. "Please. Fuck me harder."

More than eager to comply, Dax began pounding himself into her heat.

"Jesus, I can't hold it. I'm going to come," he growled, and fucked Kendall like she'd begged for; harder, faster, until he thought he would pass out. "Ugh, come with me, my baby."

Wrapping her legs around his thrusting hips and clutching his arms, she screamed out his name as her channel began fisting his cock, milking him to release. Inside her, his cock jerked seconds before he drenched her cunt with jetting streams of his seed.

Collapsing against her heaving breasts, both their bodies were slick with perspiration. The erratic thumping of her heart against his chest mirrored his. The smell of their sex scented the air around them. Her hands gently stroked down the length of his back.

With reluctance, Dax pulled himself up after a few moments to stare down at the woman beneath him. The sated look on her face stole his breath. Exquisite content sparkled in her eyes as Kendall looked back at him and smiled.

"Mmm, you are incredible, Dax Winslow the Third," she jested. A throaty moan carried to his ears when his cock jerked again inside her.

"I think you are the perfect woman for me, Kendall," he growled, dipping his head to take the puckered nipple of her left breast into his mouth. He laved the tight, delicious tip and thrust his still-hard cock in and out of her soaked channel, again.

Within minutes, he brought the two of them to another explosive climax.

* * * *

After making love once in the shower, they continued to spend the next several hours bringing each other to mind-numbing orgasms. Near exhaustion, they lay nestled in each other's arms beneath the cozy blankets of Kenny's king sized bed.

"Earlier you mentioned meeting with those doctors." She stroked a fingertip across one of Dax's taut nipples. "When is that?"

"Mmm, day after tomorrow," he answered, tightening his arms around her. "Why?"

"Just wondering how much longer I get to enjoy your company, Mr. Winslow," she replied in a husky tone, ecstatic he would be in her home and her bed for another couple of days.

"I'll be here for as long as you want me to be, honey," he muttered against the top of her head.

As hopeful as she might be, Kenny wasn't delusional. She knew once his meeting concluded Dax would be on the first flight back home, and his time in Milton Ville would be but a distant memory.

Feeling herself drifting into the darkness of slumber, Kenny promised herself she would enjoy the time she had left with him, and expect nothing more.

Chapter 6

The following morning Dax woke feeling better than he ever had in his life. Sexually, he was sated beyond his wildest imagination. Emotionally, he felt utterly complete. He was having some difficulty wrapping his mind around the fact that this woman he didn't even know fulfilled him. Until he'd laid eyes on the lovely Kendall, he had never been a believer in love at first sight. Since being in her company, he found himself looking to the future. A future with her.

After making love again, Dax finally allowed Kendall to get out of bed. The thought that he would never be able to get his fill of her had his cock springing to life again.

Together they prepared breakfast.

Determining his butt and thighs didn't feel half bad after their ride the day before, when they'd finished eating he and Kendall decided to take the horses out again. She packed a picnic and a blanket for them to eat on, and off they went.

By noon they found themselves deep in the woods and had come upon a bubbling hot spring. Dax helped Kendall down from her mount and pulled her against him, kissing her deeply, with need. Unashamed of his uncontrollable desire for Kendall, Dax allowed his desperation to pour into her.

With slow, sensual movement, he tugged her shirt over her head and released her breasts from their lacy restraint. Dipping his head, he captured the peaked tip of her left breast between his lips. With gentle pressure, he drew on her flesh, pulling a deep moan from Kendall. Cupping her right breast in his hand, he brushed the pad of his thumb across the erect bud, making her back arch upward. The combination of her taste and scent had his cock close to bursting in his jeans.

Moving to sample Kendall's right nipple, he bit the tip between his teeth before swirling his tongue around to sooth the sting. The grip of her fingers in his hair tightened as she held him to her breast. Dax growled against the flesh he enjoyed in his mouth, the tip growing harder under his attention. Her body trembled as his left hand caressed down her spine to settle in the small of her back, holding her close. Switching sides again, his right hand released her breast to stroke along her belly to the waist of her jeans.

Unfastening the button of her pants, he pushed them over the flare of her hips, easing them down her thighs. The aroma of her musk had taunted him long enough.

Needing to feel the juice of her body, his fingers ventured inside her panties in search of her moist heat. As he stood, she released her grip on his hair and wrapped her fingers around his biceps. Taking a selfish moment, Dax studied the woman in his arms. She looked up at him through half closed lids, perspiration dampened her upper lip, and her lower lip quivered. Dipping his head, he swallowed her whimpered labored breaths. Kendall sighed into his mouth as he sunk two thick fingers inside her.

In an instant his digits were soaked, and the enticing scent of her feminine fragrance wafted up between them. Her hips swiveled against his hands, gently at first, as she began to ride his probing fingers. With her hands tight around his biceps for balance, she met his mouth in a hungry oral exploration.

The palm of his hand pressed against her lower back aided Dax in controlling the gyrating of her hips. His fingers continued to explore the wet, tight heat of her pussy, and with his other hand wrapped around her waist, he held her snug to his hip. As he continued to feast on Kendall's mouth, she tried moving against his hand. Without effort, he restricted her movements with the length of his body as he pushed her arousal higher.

"Feel good, baby?" he asked against her lips.

A throaty groan was her response.

When Kendall's fingertips dug into his arms, Dax knew she was close. The pad of his thumb pressed her clit, rubbing tight, firm circles against the swollen nub as his fingers probed deeper. The tightening of her cunt around his fingers made him pull back to watch as she met her release. Tossing her head back, her eyes squeezed shut. The low rumble of a growl began in her chest before a cry of completion filled his ears. The warmth of her come trickling over his hand brought a grin to his face and a throbbing to his cock.

"You are so fucking beautiful," he said hoarsely.

The racing of her heart beat against his chest, while her breath grew ragged.

Trembling against his aroused body, Kendall gasped a sob as the waves of her orgasm washed over her. The flush rising from her breasts to spread across her face threatened to shove him over the edge.

Once her breath grew less harsh, Dax withdrew his fingers from the slickness of her body, pulling away from her long enough to lay the blanket Kendall had brought along the bank of the spring. He finished removing her clothing before lowering her to the ground, kissing her passionately, thoroughly. Their hands roamed each other with desperation. He offered no resistance as she tugged his t-shirt over his head and tossed it aside.

The tips of her fingers burned a trail along his already heated skin as she reached to unfasten his jeans. Slipping her hand inside, she pulled his rock-hard length free. The possessive strokes she used on his shaft built his desire and need to a fiery, dangerous level. As she lay beneath him, Dax dipped his head to pluck her nipple between his lips. Growling against her breast, he grinned again as Kendall's body shuddered.

"Please," she whimpered.

In the palm of her hand she held his stiff length. After a moment of stroking him, she guided his tip to her wet opening. Nestled between her thighs, he slowly pushed himself inside her. Kendall's fingers clutched the cheeks of his ass, pulling him roughly against her, impaling herself fully on his thick, hard shaft. Dax felt desperation.

Unable to control his need as she massaged his cheeks, his hips thrust against her, sliding his cock as deep as he could inside her.

"Kendall," he moaned when he felt her cunt fist his cock as she again reached culmination. Wrapping her legs around his hips, she met his commanding strokes as he pushed her over the edge. "Ah yes, baby, yes," he continued to encourage her.

The final thread of his control broke as her body milked him to his pinnacle. Stroking inside her wet heat thrice more, he emptied himself deeply within her. Calling out her name as spurt after spurt of his release coated her channel, he collapsed atop her heaving bosom.

The two lay struggling for breath for many moments.

A puff of air blew over the left cheek of his ass before something warm and smooth pressed against his flesh. "What the..." Lifting his head, Dax glanced over his shoulder to see Eddie preparing to poke him a second time with his snout. "Hey, pal, back off." He chuckled, and Kendall giggled.

After bathing in the hot spring and making love a second time, they lay in each other's arms under the warmth of the afternoon sun, in complete and utter satisfaction.

* * * *

Waking around dusk, Kendall and Dax dressed and rode back to her home. After tending to the horses, they made dinner together and ate outside on the porch swing.

As darkness descended around them, Dax held Kendall close, his arm around her, her head resting against his shoulder. Holding his woman in his arms, her scent encompassing him soothingly, he was content. Her confident carefree attitude was refreshing, invigorating and exhilarated him. The relaxed, non-complex life Kendall lived, Dax found exciting.

In two short days he'd encountered incredible empowering pleasures in such simple experiences. Like the feeling of freedom riding a horse through the woods, and then grooming the beast afterward to cool him down, both of which were more than relaxing.

A simple task of preparing a meal together gave him a sense of belonging he had never felt. Never had he made love with a beautiful woman outside, under the warmth of the sun, with a gentle breeze caressing their heated skin, perspiration glistening on their flesh.

The woman in his arms was a passionate lover. Giving, confident and unafraid to take what she wanted as she shared herself with him. He'd never met a woman like Kendall before and he knew his family would adore her. A zest for life surrounded her and the magnetic personality she possessed seeped in to those around her. He knew damn well others could not help but be affected by her; Christ, Dax himself felt like a new man just being in her presence. He'd become a better man simply by meeting her. Kendall's enthusiasm was infectious; and he couldn't believe that in such a short period of time, he was losing himself completely to this woman. Since arriving at her garage two days earlier, he hadn't particularly given his life back home a second thought.

Enjoying the incredibly tranquil surroundings of Kendall's home, Kendall's company, was exactly how Dax envisioned spending the rest of his life. He'd had enough of big city living, was tired of the fucking stress-filled days, nights and weekends that were his life. He no longer felt like an individual. Actually, as he thought about it, he realized he'd never truly known individuality. Loyal to his father, eager to please his parents at the very cost of losing himself, dedicated to a law firm he'd never wanted to be a part of. Dax no longer wanted to keep up with the rat race. He just didn't have it in him anymore.

He wondered if he ever really did.

Sure, he found great peace in designing, and it angered him that he had to keep his dream a secret or risk losing the love and affection of his father.

Enjoying the cool night air, Dax made an important life-altering decision at that moment as they sat on the front porch swing of his adorable mechanic's home. However, his excitement was short-lived as he found himself wondering about the woman at his side. He had no idea what her future plans were. Was she even interested in seeing where a relationship with him may lead? Or was she content just to live her quiet, uncomplicated life in peace?

Knowing all too well, a future involving the Winslow family would be anything but quiet and uncomplicated, Dax wasn't sure he could do that to his Kendall.

Chapter 7

“Come on,” Kenny called out from the front door of her home. “Let’s go.”

She smiled as Dax appeared around the corner looking incredibly handsome. However, at the moment, he also appeared nervous, just a hair short of panic. Cardboard tubes containing his designs were tucked under one arm as he fought with a duffel bag.

Feeling his nervousness as if it were her own, Kenny’s heart ached, knowing this meeting meant more to him than the one for his father’s law firm, two days earlier.

This meeting defined him as an individual. She knew that. Dax confessed that although he’d successfully sold several designs in the past, this project would be the largest. The conglomerate of physicians was prepared to pay him an obscene amount of money for his design and wanted him to personally oversee the construction of the building.

Stuffing his tubes into the pack, he glanced over at her with a lopsided grin. “I think I’m ready, and nervous as hell.”

“What?” Resting her hands on her hips, Kenny looked at him with surprise. “Why are you nervous?”

“Because I told you, you’ve got me off balance, baby.” Closing the distance between them, Dax wrapped his arms around her and kissed her with hunger. “You’ve got my head spinning. I can’t even think about my proposal.” He finished by sliding his hand down her back and over her left butt cheek. After a gentle squeeze, he gave it a sound slap.

Startled by his rough play, she jumped. It didn’t scare her, quite the opposite in fact.

“Get it together, Winslow. You’re a big scary attorney and an even more talented architectural designer. I’ve seen those designs.” She pointed to the duffel bag he held in his hand. “They’re fantastic, and you’re going to knock those doctors’ socks off with your creativity. You, sir, are worth your weight in gold.” She chuckled and kissed his full lips. “Now, get that fine ass moving, Winslow. You are not going to be late for your meeting on my watch.” With a smack on Dax’s derriere, Kenny pushed him outside.

The meeting was two counties over from Milton Ville and fortunately she had a good idea where he needed to be. They mounted her Harley and were on the road. Within forty-five minutes, they pulled up to a vacant field, where a half dozen other vehicles were parked.

After dismounting and removing his helmet, Dax took a deep breath. Raking his fingers through his hair, he then pulled his tubes from the duffel bag. Kenny stood silently watching Dax prepare himself. He exuded confidence. When he noticed her watching him intently, he grinned.

“What?” His deep, sexy chuckle made her shiver.

“Good luck, Dax. Although I don’t think you’re going to need it.”

“You’re not coming over?”

“Well no, I wasn’t going to. I don’t want to interfere.” As Kenny patted the seat of her bike, she added, “Go ahead. I’ll wait right here for you.”

“Oh, no you don’t.” He grabbed her hand, pulling her to her feet. “In every other area of my world, you’ve got me off balance, honey, but when it comes to business, you have this natural ability to keep me in line. Let’s go, your presence will keep me level.”

Not wanting to throw him off, she followed behind as they made their way toward the crowd of men conversing on the other side of the cars.

* * * *

“Gentlemen, good morning,” Dax said as they approached the group. “Dax Winslow, and allow me to introduce my assistant, Ms. Kendall Zurich.”

“Good morning, Ms. Zurich, it’s a pleasure. Mr. Winslow, it’s nice to finally meet you,” one of the men said, offering his hand. “This isn’t the most conventional place to hold a meeting, but we thought you’d like to see the site for yourself.”

Dax chuckled to himself. *No, it sure wasn’t.*

The law firm spared no expense when it came to making a client comfortable during their appointment. But in the middle of the vacant field, there were no hollering jilted lovers, no one threatening ‘you’ll never see your children again’. They weren’t seated in a conference room, hashing out assets and squabbling over debt. There wasn’t a crystal pitcher in the middle of a boardroom table, no hundred dollar Montblanc pens atop the highly polished surface. Most importantly, no judge, no witness stand and no bailiff. Around him now, there was no arguing, no pussy-footing, just the serenity and peacefulness of the glorious outdoors.

Dax found himself thinking how easily he could adjust to the laidback lifestyle here. He saw himself conducting all future business meetings just like this one. Out in the wide open spaces. In fact, he’d insist on it.

The man before him introduced himself as Dr. Roland Wagner and took a few minutes to introduce the other men. In total there were six doctors, two lawyers, an engineer, and four separate contractors in the group.

The physicians had purchased a three-acre lot on the outskirts of a developing county. Their vision included a large pharmacy, full service laboratory, and a state of the art x-ray and ultrasound department. Each doctor was well established in the medical field, each specializing in a different aspect of medicine. By combining their resources, it was their hope that their patients would have all of their medical needs met under one roof.

The three-acre lot was a more than adequate space for Dax to implement the doctors’ requests and needs. The reception area would be open concept, a warm and welcoming environment with several thermal panel skylights. The examination rooms themselves were larger than the norm, to accommodate families when necessary. Once the facility was erected and the parking lot paved, a large enclosed playground would be assembled behind the building.

Lush woodlands lined the perimeter of the vacant lot on three sides, and Dax had every intention of leaving the natural landscape intact. The sound of birds filled the warm air around the group. To the right of where they stood, the Appalachians provided an incredible backdrop for the facility. In the fall, the view from here would be spectacular as the leaves of the trees changed colors, decorating the mountainsides. He couldn’t wait to see the scenery the changing of the seasons would display.

Taking in the spectacular landscape around him, Dax grinned. Yup, he thought, I could definitely get used to this.

“Well then, gentlemen,” Dax said as he shook the last man’s hand, “let’s get down to business.”

* * * *

Kenny watched in silent awe as Dax commanded the meeting. His confidence and enthusiasm while he discussed the landscape and best positioning of the building had her beaming with pride. Pulling the blueprints from one of the tubes, he spread them across the hood of a car and while everyone gathered around, he described his vision for their medical facility.

All six physicians expressed their pleasure that Dax had incorporated their ideas along with his own, to give them each what they sought in their new space. From what limited experience Kenny had with this sort of thing, she felt as though the meeting seemed to be moving along nicely. The men conversed about drainage, bricks, roofing materials, water, electrical and a shitload of other things she hadn’t a clue about.

Although she had not said a word, all fourteen men were sure to include her in their discussion.

As she enjoyed this glimpse into the design world of Dax Winslow, Kenny’s head was spinning. He was confident and powerful and he made her body yearn. This part of his world was fast-paced and exciting, and she wondered just how in the hell he kept up with everything. Practicing law was a full time job and her heart ached to think he probably didn’t have a whole lot of spare time to indulge in his true passion. There was no doubt in her mind Dax was an exceptional lawyer, but watching him command this meeting to sell his very own idea, himself, she knew architectural design was his true calling.

Kenny had been so busy enjoying herself watching her lover work, she hadn’t realized they’d been standing in the field for an hour and a half.

“Gentlemen, that concludes my proposal, and it has been my absolute pleasure,” Dax said as he extended his hand to each of the men in the group. “I look forward to hearing from you.”

Dr. Wagner then spoke up. “We want your design, Mr. Winslow. Your vision is exactly what we are looking for. Gentlemen?” he asked his five colleagues, who all nodded in agreement. “Davis, may I have the contract and the check, please?” he asked one of the men who Kenny recalled was a lawyer.

The doctor handed Dax a large manila envelope. “Take this with you and read it over. I think you’ll find it to your satisfaction, but I want you to be sure. As we discussed on the phone, we want you to oversee the entire project personally. From the first shovel in the dirt to the ribbon-cutting on opening day.” He chuckled, handing a smaller envelope to Dax. “To show you we are serious, this is an advance, payment for the design as you and I discussed, and for your time thus far. Now, once we review the proposals from the attending contractors and select one, we’ll be ready to break ground. Again, it’s been a pleasure. Ms. Zurich. Mr. Winslow, we look forward to working with you.”

At the beginning of the meeting Dax had introduced Kenny as his assistant. She supposed ‘lover’ would not have been appropriate. At the thought, her cheeks heated with mild embarrassment.

“Gentlemen, I’ll walk you to your car.” Dax smiled, shaking Dr. Wagner’s hand.

Kenny’s heart was racing; she was delirious with excitement. Not wanting to embarrass Dax by making a fool out of herself hooting and hollering, she bit her lower lip to stop from shouting out. Kenny was so close to exploding from the adrenaline rush, her body quivered. She was so happy for Dax and thrilled to have been a part of his important morning.

From her spot in the field, she watched Dax conversing quietly with the doctor before he slid into his car. Although she couldn’t hear their discussion, she realized they were relaxed and engaged in a casual conversation. The doctor chuckled and slapped Dax on the back, casting Kenny a glance and a knowing smile. A warm blush crept its way up from her chest to

heat her cheeks; they were talking about her. After he finished conversing with the doctor and the car had driven off, Dax joined her once more.

Once they were alone, Kenny threw her arms around Dax neck and jumped up, wrapping her legs around his waist.

"You were incredible! That was so exciting! Thank you for allowing me to be a part of it! They loved it! I knew you could do it, I just knew it!"

His lips found hers and he kissed her deeply. Slowly he lowered her down his body until her feet touched the ground.

"I couldn't have done it without you," he mumbled against her lips.

Kenny laughed. "Oh, yes you could have, but thanks just the same."

Holding hands, they walked over to the motorcycle.

"We should celebrate," she said excitedly. "What do you think?"

"I've already got it covered," he said huskily. "We're going to go home and you are going to put on something incredibly fucking sexy, because I'm taking you to The Terrace Room in Bainbridge."

Her face warmed with excitement. Briefly. Then she felt the color drain from her face. "We don't have to go there. It's far too expensive."

"It's perfect. And it comes highly recommended."

"Is that what you and the good doctor were discussing?"

"Hmm-mmm." Nuzzling the crook of her neck, Dax kissed his way up to her ear and then whispered, "I told him I wanted a special place to take an incredible woman out to dinner and he put two and two together. Guess he suspected you aren't really my assistant. Well, not in business anyway."

"Oh, Dax." She laughed.

"Come on, baby, let's go home."

As he said "home", her body trembled in his arms. She tried not to get her hopes up, though. Despite her liking the idea of him staying, she knew it wasn't a possibility. He had a life to get back to, as did she. It would hurt like hell when the time came for him to leave, but she wasn't going to worry about it now. For now he was hers, and she his, and that was all that mattered.

Chapter 8

Cursing under her breath, clad only in panties and bra, Kenny stared at the contents of her closet with mild embarrassment. Dax had told her to wear something incredibly fucking sexy, and she was coming up empty handed. She hadn't had the need or the desire to dress fit to kill in...she couldn't remember how long.

Now, more than anything in the world she wanted to look and feel incredibly fucking sexy. She wanted to take Dax Winslow's breath away.

"Ah," she said in triumph, pulling a slinky number from the darkest depth of her closet. "I almost forgot you were here."

* * * *

Dax heard the clicking of high heels approaching in the hallway and turned to await Kendall's arrival. As she stepped into the room, his breath hitched. His body was suddenly on fire, and the burning in his loins made his balls ache.

His knees threatened to buckle.

"Is this okay?" Her voice was heavy with nervousness. Looking over at him sheepishly, her eyes barely made contact with his.

Her curly blond hair was down, loose, but pulled up in a clip on the right side, revealing a tiny diamond teardrop earring. A matching necklace adorned her slender neck, the diamond resting in the tasty hollow of her throat. A silky spaghetti-strapped royal blue dress caressed her womanly curves, dipping low in the front to display a delicious amount of cleavage.

The minx wasn't wearing a bra.

Dax's mouth went dry, his cock rock-hard. He knew he wore a stupid grin on his face, yet he didn't care. Without words, he motioned for her to spin around for him with the flick of his finger.

She complied.

The back of the dress rested teasingly just above her backside.

Dax could see the cute twin dimples on her lower back and knew she wasn't wearing panties either.

As she faced him again, the slit running the length of her right thigh gaped open, where he caught a glimpse of the lacy band of the thigh high stockings she wore.

His heart raced, pounding so hard he thought it would burst from his chest.

On her feet, Kendall wore black, sling-back sandals with a four-inch heel.

Feeling his balls tighten, Dax was sure he was about to come on the spot.

"I'm speechless," he admitted.

* * * *

Pleased with the effect she had on him, Kenny flashed him a sexy grin, sliding her right foot forward, spreading the split wider. Running her tongue along her lower lip, she relished in the heated desire Dax looked her over with. He reminded her of a predator stalking his prey. She shivered at the erotic intensity growing between them. He looked as if he were going to pounce and devour her whole.

"I guess I meet your approval, Mr. Winslow?" she teased.

"You are absolutely beautiful, Kendall. And sexy as hell." He smiled mischievously.

Kenny gave him the once-over—twice—and licked her lips seductively at him. "You clean up pretty good yourself, handsome."

Dax gathered her in his arms kissed her with heated thoroughness. "And you taste as good as you look, baby," he whispered against her ear and stroked his thumb over the tip of her engorged left nipple. "I can't wait to sample the rest of you."

Kenny quivered in anticipation.

"Come, our chariot awaits." Dax placed his hand low on her bare back, urging her toward the front door.

Up until that moment, she hadn't given any thought as to how they were going to travel to The Terrace Room. There was no way in hell she was riding her motorcycle in four-inch heels and a three-hundred dollar dress.

Dax opened the front door, and they were greeted with a black stretch limousine parked in her driveway. A tuxedo-clad gentleman stood patiently by the back door.

"Dax," she gasped in surprise and tipped her head, looking up at him.

"Honey, as much as I love riding behind you on your Hog, I thought we'd travel by car tonight. I want to be able to look my fill of your beautiful face and touch your soft skin and smell you and kiss you until my heart and my body are content."

Dax helped her down the stairs and into the limo. Inside, chilled champagne and a dozen long stemmed red roses awaited them. He picked up the bouquet and placed it in Kenny's lap.

"Thank you," she whispered, inhaling the aromatic fragrance of the flowers. "They're beautiful."

"They pale compared to you, my love." He kissed her lips softly before pouring them each a flute of champagne.

* * * *

Kendall and Dax were escorted to a cozy table in a dimly lit corner of the restaurant. Sitting side by side, he still could not get close enough to her. His thigh rested against hers, his arm wrapped around her shoulder holding her to him as he nuzzled her neck. He delighted in the effect his intimate crowding created. Beside him, Kendall's body trembled under his touch. The scent of her arousal teased his nose, and his tongue was begging to lick the moist flesh between her thighs.

They dined on caviar and oyster appetizers with pink champagne to tickle their pallets. He watched her with amusement as he tipped a shell to feed her an oyster. Her expression was priceless, as she swallowed the delicacy. Her nose squished up, her eyes squeezed tight and her hand rested on her chest as the slimy little nugget slid down her throat.

"Well?" He chuckled, watching her.

She licked her lips and opened her eyes. "You know, that wasn't half bad," she admitted. "Now I get to feed you one."

As she fed Dax an oyster, he held her hand as she tipped the shell for the meat to slide into his waiting mouth.

Their entrées arrived, consisting of seafood linguini and filet mignon. Dessert was crème brûlée and more champagne.

"Are you trying to get me drunk to seduce and take advantage of me, Mr. Winslow?" Kendall tipped her flute, swallowing the bubbly pink liquid, eyeing him with feigned suspicion.

Dax placed his hand over his heart, a feigned innocence on his face. "*Moi*?" The thought never crossed my mind, Madame. But now that you've mentioned it, let's finish up, I've got plans for you in the back of that limo." He intended to enjoy. He wagged his brows and Kendall laughed.

There was a chill in the air as they left the restaurant. Dax removed his jacket, draping it over Kendall's shoulders. He held her close as they walked to the limo.

Once inside, he raised the dividing window while his fingers stroked up the length of her leg. He turned in the seat to face her, pulling her against his chest as his lips met hers. His tongue slipped past her lips, sweeping along the inside of her moist cavern, exploring, tasting, savoring.

Kendall groaned loudly, her hands gripping his arms.

Dax's lips nibbled down her throat and across to her shoulder. On his journey, he slid the offending thin strap of her dress keeping him from her down her arm. With the fluid motion of a predator, he moved and knelt on the floor in front of her. His hands explored her body with sensual purpose. Both straps of her dress now rested loosely around her forearms, her breasts completely free, and his lips caressed hers, hungrily.

Slowly he slid Kendall to the edge of the plush seat, pushing the skirt of her dress high on her thighs, exposing her damp sex for his enjoyment.

She pulled away from his mouth. "We can't do this in here. The driver."

"It's all right, baby, I'm just going to sample what I intend to devour when we get home."

Dax growled and dipped his head to suckle her puckered nipple into his mouth. His tongue laved the tight rosy tip, his teeth gently nipped her flesh. His fingers went on the hunt for entertainment of their own. Stroking her inner thighs, climbing higher and higher, until they found the moist heat of her pussy. He pushed a finger inside her body.

Kendall shivered, moaning loudly.

His finger stroked deeply for several minutes before adding a second. Kendall ran her fingers through Dax's dark hair, clutching fistfuls as his fingers explored inside her and his mouth feasted on her breasts.

"Dax. Ahh Dax, I'm going to..." Kendall whimpered on the seat, thrusting her hips against the fingers thrusting inside her.

Dax played her body as if she were made only for him. He stilled his fingers and lowered his head between her splayed thighs.

"Well, then I want to taste you while you come," he whispered and flicked his tongue across her throbbing clit.

His mouth closed around her, suckling the swollen nub hungrily, his fingers still inside her. Her body shuddered violently as her climax coursed through her. Kendall's fingers fisted in

his hair, her breath was erratic, harsh as she gasped for air.

He gazed up at her from between her thighs, savoring her expression as exquisite pleasure racked her body. His tongue continued to lave her pussy, suckling, tugging gently, slipping inside her, driving her to another release.

"You are so fucking beautiful when you come, Kendall."

"Dax." She shivered, her hands still gripping him.

He rose up on his knees and unfastened his pants. Fumbling briefly, he pushed them over his hips, to his knees and leaned forward pressing the head of his cock against the slick opening of her pussy.

She grabbed the top of his shirt and yanked. The buttons scattered around the limo as they were ripped away from the material.

"Damn woman," he growled with a smirk of aroused amusement and thrust his hips forward. "We're going to have buy stock in dress shirts."

Kendall gasped in a sharp breath, her eyes rolled back in her head. In one swift, fluid motion, Dax was buried to the hilt inside her body. They shuddered against each other.

"Dax. Oh God." She cupped Dax's ass cheeks in her hands and held him to her as he invoked a sensual rhythm that she met stroke for stroke.

"Yes, that's it, baby," he groaned.

They both looked down between them, shivering at the sight of their bodies joined together.

Dax thrust in and out, faster, slower, driving the two of them crazy. She slid her hand down and rubbed her clit in time to his strokes.

They were so close.

"God, you are so sexy, Kendall," he managed to gasp between thrusts. "Your fingers touching your sweet pussy. Christ," he groaned. "I can't hold it, honey, come with me."

"Yes, Dax, yes!"

He felt her body tighten around him as Kendall found her release. He thrust into her harder, pushing her orgasm higher. Endlessly she spasmed around him, her body trembled, her skin glowing with perspiration. Her gorgeous blond curls were damp and tousled.

Satisfied that she was sated, Dax allowed himself his own release. His cock jerked, spewing hot come deeply within, coating her insides.

Dax placed a fierce kiss upon Kendall's quivering lips before collapsing against her heaving chest. This was exactly where he wanted to spend the rest of his life. Nestled deep inside this woman—his woman—tasting her flesh, inhaling her feminine scent. Enjoying her. Savoring her. Cherishing her.

* * * *

Kenny could not believe she was fucking a man in the back of a limo that she'd just met a couple of days earlier. She had never had sex in a car. She'd never had sex outside. The things this man made her want to do excited her beyond conscious thought. She would do anything he asked.

Anything.

She wanted to be his. At this very moment and until he went home, she would be his.

Kenny never wanted to let Dax go. As he lay in her arms, she felt safe, comforted, loved. Cherished. With Dax was exactly where she wanted to be. Except that he would be going back to his life and probably very soon.

They felt the car turn left into Kenny's driveway and roll to a stop in front of the house.

"Mmm, we are so far from finished, honey," Dax whispered. He helped her to straighten her dress and wrapped his jacket around her. "Let's get you inside."

Kenny refused to make eye contact with the driver as he held the door open for them.

She kept her eyes glued to her feet as she raced up the stairs and into the house.

"Thank you," she heard Dax say to the driver and the rear door of the car slam shut.

"Good evening, Mr. Winslow."

Kenny heard the limousine drive away and her front door close. The lock clicked into place. She turned to see Dax stalk toward her with intent purpose, unquenched lust and desire filling his eyes.

Chapter 9

Their evening of celebration had continued into the morning. After making love before getting out of bed, again in the shower, and finally on the kitchen counter, with reluctance Kenny left the house to make an appearance at the garage for a few hours. She felt bad that over the last few days, the day-to-day operations of her garage had fallen on the shoulders of Uncle Mei and Haydn. Neither one would ever complain. They loved the garage as much as Kenny and were as much a part of its success as she was.

Deep down she knew Dax would be going back home to his life soon and she would have to go back to hers as well. She tried not to dwell on the eventuality of their parting but it was hard not to. Kenny knew she had lost her heart to him. She enjoyed their conversations and loved his wry sense of humor. She loved his natural, masculine scent. The feel of his hands on her body, drove her close to madness.

His skin tasted exquisite and was soft under the touch of her exploring fingertips. She would miss his passion when he was gone. He was a sensational lover, confident and demanding, as well as gentle and giving. He would take and give with equal fervor.

Not knowing if tonight would be their last night together, Kenny wanted to do something special for Dax. She wasn't quite sure exactly what that would be yet, but she had all afternoon to plan something fabulous for him.

She did not want him forgetting her any time soon. If ever.

* * * *

Once Kendall left the house, Dax retreated to the kitchen to make a few business calls. He reviewed the contract drawn up for the new medical development, signed it, and couriered a copy of it back to Dr. Wagner. He was taking a big step agreeing to oversee the project and was eager to begin this new adventure. Life is very good, he thought, leaning back in his chair, his fingers interlaced behind his head.

Glancing around the kitchen, he caught himself focusing on the countertop where he had taken her a short time earlier. A smile of contentment crossed his lips as he inhaled the trace of their lovemaking still scenting the air.

After making one final call, to the airport, he decided to head outside to enjoy his last afternoon of good clean, country air. As he stepped onto the back porch, he inhaled deeply the smells of peace and contentment. The scent of comfort, no rush living.

Kendall's place was a perfect paradise.

Home.

Kendall was his paradise. His salvation.

"Stranded in paradise," he mused to himself.

While Kendall was gone for the afternoon, Dax decided to tackle a couple of chores she needed done, but hadn't gotten around to. First, he was going to fix the gate in the small corral and the door on Sam's stall. Then he'd cut the grass.

Dax picked a couple of apples from a tree in the yard and wandered over to the garage to scope out some tools. Finding what he needed, he strolled across the lawn to the corral. In the palm of his hands he offered the two steeds an apple, enjoying their quiet company. He marveled at the soothing peacefulness their presence brought him. It astounded Dax that in the short time he'd been with Kendall he felt like a new man.

After finishing with the gate and stall door, Dax went back to the garage and eyed the riding lawnmower. He had never operated one before and realized just how many simple things he'd been missing out on.

For as long as he could remember, a landscaping company had taken care of his parent's estate. When he had left home, he moved into a penthouse suite in a high-rise. The only vegetation he had to care for was a fake Ficus which sat in a corner of his balcony.

He'd never operated one of these machines, but he was an educated man, after all, and figured it couldn't be too difficult. He sat down on it and fired her up, grinning dumbly in satisfaction at achieving such a major feat. It took Dax a few minutes to figure out the controls, but within no time he had driven the mechanical beast out of the garage and was cutting the grass.

About twenty minutes into his groove, the lawn tractor sputtered and died.

"Ah shit," he growled. This was not his week for operating motorized vehicles. He tried the key. The engine turned over, but refused to catch. He tried again. Nothing.

"Maybe it's out of gas," he said hopefully, hopping off and heading back the garage.

He went in search of a gas can, but came up empty-handed. Everything in the garage was pretty much visible and there was nothing resembling a gas can. Standing with his hands on his hips, Dax continued to survey the garage.

"Hmm, what's back there?" He walked toward a set of doors at the back of the garage that he hadn't noticed earlier. Unlatching the lever resting in the old-fashioned slot, he pulled the two doors toward himself.

"What the fuck?"

The room was dark. However, the daylight shining in the opening from where he stood was enough to reveal headlights and the sparkling grill of a car.

He slid his hands along the wall in search of a switch. Flicking one he found, bright light illuminated the room from above. In the middle of a double-car bay sat a 1969 cherry red Corvette convertible. Dax stood stunned for several minutes processing his find. He was having difficulty wrapping his mind around it.

Kendall had lied to him. But why?

Dax caught himself clenching his fists at his sides.

"Hell, maybe the fucking thing doesn't even run." He relaxed and walked to the driver's door.

Spying the key in the ignition, he opened the door and sat behind the wheel.

Dax turned the key.

The engine caught.

Blankly, he sat staring ahead.

"Of course it would fucking run, she's a goddamned mechanic!" he hollered to the empty garage.

Unable to control the boiling of his blood, he shut the vehicle off and got out. Scanning the contents of the garage, he found a lonely gas can sitting in the far corner. Picking it up and realizing it was full, he took it out to the lawn tractor to finish cutting the grass.

By the time he had finished mowing the lawn and returned the tractor to the garage, he'd calmed down and was amused at his earlier irrationality. In truth, no harm had been done. He'd attended his meetings and landed both deals without difficulty. More importantly, he'd learned something about himself, and he intended to embrace it.

* * * *

Kenny burst through her front door on the hunt for Dax. She was excited to be home and anxious to wrap her arms around him. She found him in the kitchen stirring something on the stovetop.

"Hi," she said, smiling. "I'm sorry I'm so late, I lost track of time. Hey, I thought we would go out to dinner tonight. Maybe not somewhere as extravagant as we went last night but I want to treat you." Kenny came up behind him, wrapped her arms around him and stroked her hands across his broad chest. "Thank you for cutting the grass. It was getting unruly." She chuckled. "Maybe I should get a goat. Or I guess I could always tie Sam and Eddie out front sometimes."

Kenny walked over to the fridge and grabbed two bottles of beer.

"No problem. Oh, and I found some tools in the garage and fixed the gate in the corral and Sam's door." Dax turned to her.

"Thanks, you really didn't have to do that." She handed him an uncapped beer. "But I do appreciate it."

"I didn't mind at all. I like to use my hands." He winked at her playfully.

"Mmm, I know you do," she purred against his neck.

* * * *

Although he was long over his earlier pissiness, Dax needed to hear Kendall's explanation regarding the Corvette in the garage. "The tractor ran out of gas before I finished," he informed her casually. "But I found a gas can in the back part of the garage."

Dax watched her body stiffen.

"I emptied it," he announced. "So, it'll need to be refilled."

From the other side of the room he could almost taste her nervousness.

"Nice 'vette."

She stood quietly.

"The other day you said you didn't have a car to loan me. Imagine my surprise to find one sitting right out there in your garage," he said gruffly, more irritated by her silence than anything else. "You knew how important those meetings were to me."

With furrowed brows Kendall eyed him. "Your meetings went ahead as scheduled. You landed Waterston for your firm and you sold a design, taking your side business to a new level," she said defensively. "That's what's important."

"That's not the point, Kendall," he stated simply. "You lied to me."

As he saw tears well in her eyes, his heart just about broke.

Almost.

"I wouldn't have wrecked it, and I would have returned it to you," he said, raising his voice slightly. "Why in the hell did you lie to me?"

* * * *

Kenny couldn't control her emotions any longer, and she let the tears flow. Dax had found her out and now she had to come clean. She would lose him for sure. No matter what he felt before, she could see the look of disgust in his eyes. He was angry. The best thing to ever come into her life was about to walk away and never look back. She was embarrassed, completely humiliated.

"If you had a means to leave, I would have never seen you again. You would have left me forever. And I couldn't let you leave, Dax, I wanted you so fucking bad it hurt," she cried out.

"You didn't even give me a choice," he stated.

"You're right, I didn't. I was selfish. I couldn't just let you go. From the first moment I laid eyes on you, I felt something that frightened me, something I don't even think I can explain. You draw me to you. You've got some magnetic pull on me I have no control over. It scares the hell out of me and excites me and—"

"I would have come back, Kendall," he said, reaching for her.

She flinched. "No, Dax. No, you wouldn't have. You would have gone back to your life and never given me a second thought." The crying had stopped, and was now replaced by anger. "Damn it, listen to me. I'm fucking pathetic. I sound desperate, needy and fucking pathetic!" She gasped for breath. Panting heavily, her voice was barely above a whisper when she finally spoke after a few silent minutes. "Christ, look what I've been reduced to. I'm an intelligent and successful woman who just wants happiness and love. Something I never thought I'd ever find, I found in you. And here I am, groveling and begging for something I'll never have and don't deserve. You."

* * * *

Dax's heart broke, and he felt her pain as if it were his own. Jesus, he didn't want to fight with her.

He stood speechless. Kendall had just said, virtually verbatim, everything he himself had been feeling. She had ignited a fierce desperate need in him that scared the hell out of him, and he hungered for her. He wanted to share the rest of his life with her.

He needed to share the rest of his life with her.

As he reached a second time to comfort her, she again flinched and pulled away roughly.

Dax fumed.

How dare she open herself up to him, and then turn around and slam the door in his face? Her words touched him, giving him insight to a future he thought he would never experience. But her refusal to accept his touch infuriated him beyond his self-control. Cursing under his breath, Dax turned and left the room.

Standing at the front door, he hesitated several minutes before walking through, then slammed the door on his way out.

Chapter 10

A couple of hours later, Dax lay on the bed in the spare room, his heart still racing from their earlier argument. The turn his simple question invoked had taken him by surprise. Oh yes, he'd been pissed when he'd found the car in the garage, realizing Kendall lied to him. But logical thought prevailed and he calmed down, knowing his anger was ridiculous. He'd just wanted to hear her side of the story. His only intention was to find out why she had kept the fact she had a car hidden from him. He was upset she hadn't even allowed him to make the choice himself.

What he was not expecting was the heart wrenching confession she laid on him. He knew he would have come back to Kendall, because the moment his eyes met hers, he'd fallen in love.

He was in love.

The whole of his heart and soul belonged to her, completely. There was no doubt in his mind this was exactly where he was meant to be, with Kendall. With her, he would be free to live his life as he chose. With her encouragement and understanding he could take his dreams as a designer to the level he wanted. Oh, his designs would still continue to take a backseat, but only to her.

Dax desperately wanted to go to Kendall, to comfort her; he needed to touch her, to feel the warmth of her body against his.

The ringing of his cell abruptly interrupted his thoughts.

* * * *

Alone in her room, Kenny felt miserable, knowing full well she had been completely unfair to Dax when she exploded earlier. He'd asked a simple question, without malice, and deserved an honest answer. She'd deceived him and was totally in the wrong.

Kenny understood she never should have kept the fact she had a car hidden from Dax. His meetings had been important to him, she knew that, and she now felt as though she'd let him down. How in the hell could she ever expect him to be interested in a relationship with her now, when he would probably never be able to trust her again?

She needed to apologize to him. He deserved so much more, but it was the least she could do, for right now. She needed to make things right with him. She wanted his strong arms wrapped around her, to feel the beat of his heart against her chest, his heat seeping into her very being.

As she sat on the bench in front of her bedroom window, she could smell him in the air. She smiled, thinking of how she'd learned so much about herself over the past few days. Dax unleashed a passion within her that was exciting, even though he'd exposed her vulnerability.

Biting her bottom lip, Kenny stood to leave her room. She would apologize to Dax and they could see where the future would take them, if anywhere. Calmly, she would tell him exactly how she felt about him and that she wanted a life with him, whatever that may hold for them.

She made her way down the hall and smiled when she noticed the door to the spare room was ajar. *He's been waiting for me.* As she neared the opening, Dax's soft voice carried into the hall.

"Yes, I know." She heard him say as she stood in the doorway.

He stood with his back to the door, looking out the window into the darkness of the night.

"Uh-huh," he continued. Kenny was about to make her presence known when his next sentence stopped her short. "Oh, it will never work. We're just too different. She'll have no choice but to accept it. Please, it's not like it would really matter to her anyway. She'll never even miss me. I'm quite confident she'll bounce right back, without missing a beat. Women like her don't have any trouble moving on. Listen, we can pick this up later, my flight will be in around two tomorrow afternoon..."

Kenny had heard enough. Spinning on her heel, she ran back to her room, tears streaming down her cheeks, her heart broken.

* * * *

A sound in the hall grabbed Dax's attention, and he turned to glance out the open door. Disappointment needled him when he didn't see Kendall. He'd hope she had come to him. Their earlier disagreement was forgotten as far as was concerned. Now he was anxious to start making up. He needed to go to her and make things right.

Tossing his cellphone atop the bed after finishing his call, he left the room and made his way down the hall toward her bedroom. Stopping outside her door, he placed his ear against it. No sounds came from within, he knocked softly and then tried to turn the doorknob. The door was locked. Resting his forehead against the frame, he sighed heavily.

For several moments Dax contemplated knocking loudly and encouraging Kendall to talk with him. A tightening in his chest had him holding his breath. His heart ached at causing his Kendall such grief over something so ridiculous as the car parked in the garage. He knew she was as miserable as he was, he could feel her anguish even through the wooden door separating them.

There was so much he needed to say. So many things he needed her to know. With another sigh, Dax figured that perhaps for tonight, it would be best if he gave her some space.

Reluctantly, he turned and returned to his room.

* * * *

After returning to her room, Kenny locked herself in her bathroom and sobbed into a pillow she'd snatched off her bed.

Love and a life with Dax were not to be hers. It just didn't pay for her to put herself out there; because she had opened her soul to him, and he stomped all over her heart as if it meant nothing to him, as if what they'd shared meant nothing.

Kenny felt used, dirty, as though she were just another notch on his bedpost.

She'd made a fool out of herself.

Over the last few days, she had fallen in love with Dax. Head over heels. She had completely lost her heart and soul to him. Up until now, she had lived the life she wanted. She had her garage and her friends and her Uncle Mel. And before Dax, she'd been content with the life she led. However, now that she'd experienced the Dax Winslow no one else knew, she didn't know how she could possibly go back to living her mundane existence.

In just a few days, he'd turned her world upside down.

She didn't know how she would go on without him.

Kenny spent the night alone in her room, crying herself to exhaustion.

Chapter 11

Dax was already sitting at the kitchen table when Kendall entered around seven-thirty. He knew she rose bright and early, and he was anxious to clear the air between them before leaving.

“Good morning,” Dax said when she appeared.

Redness rimmed her usually bright green eyes, telling him she’d had as rough a night as he did. It broke his heart that his woman had been crying, and he was to blame. The puffiness of her eyes and the pale pallor of her skin didn’t deter from her beauty, however. He wasn’t about to allow another minute to pass with his Kendall unaware of his feelings, and more importantly, his intentions.

Kendall refused to make eye contact with him as she padded barefoot across the floor. “Good morning,” she replied quietly.

From the cupboard, she pulled out two travel mugs and filled them with the hot coffee he had already made. “Well,” she began in a solemn tone, “we should get going, we’ve got a long drive to the airport, and I don’t want to be responsible for you missing your flight.”

Dax raised his brow. He hadn’t yet told her he had scheduled a flight today.

“Kendall…”

As she spun on her heel, he saw sorrow in her eyes, and then a mixture of emotions crossed her face as he held her gaze. The unevenness of her breathing told him she was struggling for strength to maintain her composure. Her knuckles were white as she gripped the edge of the counter as if it were holding her upright. Dax sensed Kendall felt herself slipping, and she did not want him to be a party to her falling apart.

“Listen, Dax, I know what I did was wrong, and I’m sorry I deceived you. If I had it to do over again, believe me, I would do things differently. I’m not usually one to play mind games.” She stopped to take a deep breath. “So let’s not draw this out, please, your leaving hurts enough already.” As she exhaled a heavy sigh, her body shuddered. “Look, I heard you on your cell last night and you’re right, we’re just too different.”

Dax couldn’t stop the grin curling his lips. “You were eavesdropping on my conversation?”

“No, not eavesdropping exactly. I’d come to your room to apologize for my part in our argument and, well, I just overheard you. I’m sorry, really.”

“Was that all you heard?”

The way her eyes narrowed at his question told him all he needed to know.

Rising from his chair, he closed the distance between them. Gathering Kendall in his arms, he pulled her against his body, kissing her fiercely. When he released her mouth, he reveled in the difficulty she had regaining her composure following his oral attack. A shiver coursed through her as she struggled to draw breath. The tips of her fingers dug into his biceps, and he was sure he’d bear bruises. Holding her tight to his chest, their lips were barely a hairsbreadth apart.

“When you heard me say ‘we’re too different,’ I was referring to the daughter of one of the senior partner’s at the firm. At my father’s insistence, she and I went out once or twice, but that was it. Anything more than that was a figment of Molly’s imagination. And judging by the surprised expression on your beautiful face, you walked away too soon, and missed the most important part of the conversation.”

It was her turn to raise her brow. “What are you talking about?” she whispered.

He smiled against her lips.

Yes, she was exactly the woman to complete him.

Pulling back to look into her eyes, Dax continued, “I informed my parents that I have found the woman who has stolen my heart.”

Her lips parted, but no words emerged. With the pad of his thumb, he wiped away a single tear trickling from her right eye.

“I reminded them my life is mine to live as I choose. And I finished by telling both of them, as of that very moment, I am out of the law practice.”

“Dax!” Kendal gasped.

“Honey, I’m ready for us to start a whole new chapter of our lives.” He hugged her tighter. “I’m going to focus on you first and my designs second. Until I learn the lay of the land around here, I’m going to share your office space to run my architectural design business. If that’s all right.”

Kendall pulled away from him. The look of confusion marring her beautiful features made him chuckle.

“I don’t understand, Dax. What are you saying?”

“Come on, sweetheart, you’re a smart woman,” he teased.

Placing his hands on either side of her head, he kissed her with possession. Once he was sure he held her undivided attention, he told her exactly what was on his mind. “Let me spell it out for you. Ready? I love you. And here with you, is exactly where I want to be for the rest of my life.”

“Here?” she asked, her voice cracking. “In butt-fuck nowhere?”

Dax shook his head. “No, baby, here in paradise.”

“Oh, Dax—”

He cut her words off with another kiss.

“There are two tickets waiting for you and me at the airport. I am taking you home to meet my parents, my family, and I’m going to pack up my shit because I’m moving here, right here, with you.”

The conversation he had the night before with his parents had actually gone better than he thought it would. He’d felt a tremendous weight lift off him as he stood his ground and laid his plans out for his parents.

“I’m not coming home,” he told them.

“Well, what exactly does that mean, son?” his father asked in an authoritative tone. “And what about your career? I paid a lot of money to send you to law school.”

“I’m not interested in practicing law, Dad,” Dax said matter-of-factly. “I’ve never enjoyed law, and I’m not going to do it anymore. This is my life to live, and I’m going to live it how I want to live it.”

“Dax.” His mother sighed.

“I am going to officially open my own architectural design firm,” he declared proudly. “Right here in Milton Ville. I’ve met someone,” he added, smiling as he thought of Kendall down the hall. He was a wreck that they had argued, but it would all be rectified soon. “And I’m in love.”

“Tell me about her.”

The pleasure Dax heard in his mother’s voice had him beaming.

“Kendall is incredible, Mom. You’re going to love her. And she is absolutely gorgeous.”

“Kendall,” his mother repeated. “What a pretty name.”

“Daxton.” Hearing his father use his full name made Dax’s hackles raise. “I can’t tell you how disappointed I am—”

Dax cut his father off at the quick. Pulling up every ounce of his confidence, he was not about to back down. This was his life, and he intended to live it, with Kendall. There was nothing his father could have said or done to change his mind. He would not allow his father to bully him into continuing to live a life he didn’t enjoy.

Life is too fucking short, Dax had reminded himself.

Kendall was his life now, and if it meant losing his relationship with his father to be with her, well then, as much as it pained Dax to be forced into such an unreasonable position, so be it.

“I’m sorry you feel that way, Dad,” he said assertively. “But I am an adult, and I’ve been kowtowing for far too long. I may have only been here a few days, but I have changed.”

“Daxton,” his father began again.

“No, Dad,” Dax again interrupted him. “You have no idea how upset it makes me to hear that I’ve disappointed you, but I’m happy here, and will gain great satisfaction running my own firm. I didn’t tell you this earlier, because I knew how pissed you’d be, but I agreed to the Waterston assignment just to meet with a conglomerate of doctors who have hired me to oversee the development of the building design I sold them.”

When he stopped to take a breath, his father’s words froze him in place.

“Do you honestly think you’d pulled one over on me?”

“Dax, that’s wonderful news. Congratulations, we’re so happy for you.” His mother’s cheery voice had him replaying the last minute of the conversation back in his mind.

"You knew?" he asked his father in disbelief.

"Jesus, son, of course I knew" his father replied. A heavy sigh came from the other end of the phone, before his father continued. "Listen, when your brothers followed their own paths, I'll admit I was upset. But during that year while I was being a giant asshole, I realized something—that I am very proud of you boys, no matter what path you choose in life."

"Uh, I, uh..." Dax was speechless.

"Now, what I was going to say was, I am very disappointed that my firm is losing such a talented attorney. And I wish you all the best in your endeavor, son."

"Uh, thank you," he muttered, in a mild state of shock.

"How soon are you considering the move, my sweet?" his mother asked.

"Immediately," Dax replied.

"And your Kendall," his dad said. "What are her thoughts?"

"Actually, I haven't told her yet," Dax confessed.

"You love her?" his father asked.

"More than I ever thought possible."

"Well then, you must follow your heart, my sweet," his mother told him.

"I have my parent's blessing to follow my heart and my passions," he told Kendall. "My second passion is the desire to run my own design firm. And my first passion, my heart, is you."

As her lips began to tremble, he dipped his head, placing a gentle kiss upon them. He felt her body and mouth respond as she returned his kiss.

He had her!

"Marry me, baby, and I will spend the rest of our lives making you the happiest woman in the world. Sorry I don't have a ring to offer you, making my intention official. I'd planned on taking you out for an incredible dinner, before going back to my apartment and making love to you until neither one of us could stand. And then I was going to propose, when I was sure you were so thoroughly sated you wouldn't turn me down," Dax finished with a chuckle.

Kendall laughed through her tears. "Dax," she whispered, welcoming another kiss from him.

"Well? What do you say?"

The tears flowed from Kendall's gorgeous green eyes at a rate he couldn't keep up with. Knowing they were tears of happiness he gave up wiping them away and just allowed his beautiful woman to weep her joy. After a moment, he felt warm moisture trickling from his own eyes as he awaited her answer.

"I guess I better go and pack a bag." She grinned at him. "I love you."

About [Jennifer Cole](#)

http://www.lyricalpress.com/jennifer_cole

By day, Jennifer Cole is a mild mannered administrative assistant in a bustling office. By night, she shuts out the world of reality and enters...the realm of erotic romance and fantasy.

Living for exhilarating plots and wickedly delicious sex scenes, there is nothing too outrageous or off limits for this slave to eroticism; in fact, the naughtier the encounter, the better.

* * * *

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. 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.

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