

~ Blizzard ~

by Kim Baldwin

© 2004

This is dedicated to the Queen of the Double Standard. Thanks for everything.

Her body ached from driving hunched over the steering wheel. Her anxiety over the worsening conditions had settled into a knot between her shoulder blades. Beth leaned forward in the rental car as if that would help her see through the curtain of blowing snow. Visibility was only a few feet. *Damn. I should have splurged on that SUV*, she berated herself. *Or at least stuck to the main road.*

She had turned off the state highway a couple of miles back to take a secondary road through a national forest. It was a much shorter route on the map, but there were almost no homes along the way, and snowplow crews hadn't yet touched the isolated road. She was traveling faster than she'd have liked, for the road was hilly and curved. But she feared the lightweight car would be instantly mired in the deep snow if she slowed down. The detour had been a horrible mistake. At the rate she was going, it would still be another hour or more before she reached the hospital in Marquette.

She'd had several close calls already, where the car fishtailed or began to bog down in a heavy drift. The bursts of adrenalin that each episode released kept her on edge.

There was only one other set of tire tracks and they were quickly fading as the snowfall increased in intensity. She liked following them; they seemed a comfort somehow-as if proof there was something of civilization out here in this vast landscape of trees. So she was disappointed when they turned off into a driveway, and she was left to plow ahead on her own. The driveway led off to a light in the woods, the first she'd seen in miles. *Somebody's home. I sure envy them right now.*

The blizzard made her claustrophobic. The whirlwind of snow around the car pressed in on her until all at once she could no longer see the road directly in front of the car. *Oh Shit Oh Shit Oh Shit.* Her heart sped up. She could feel it pounding in her ears. She kept her foot on the gas, praying as the seconds ticked by for the cloud of white to lift enough for the road to rematerialize.

She never saw the curve.

The car went off the road and tucked itself between two oak trees, burying its front end into a massive snowdrift. The airbag deployed, and Beth was wearing her seat belt, so when the car stopped moving she was surprised to find that aside from having been scared out of her wits, she was uninjured.

She tried the engine. Nothing. But the interior dome light still worked. She looked at her map. She was more than twenty miles from Marquette, with nothing between her and her destination but forest.

She pulled her cell phone from her pocket and turned it on, doubting whether she could get a tow truck to come get her. She didn't have to wonder long. *No signal. No surprise.*

Beth knew she didn't have a lot of options. She could stay with the car and hope that road crews discovered her, but she might have a very long wait. It was snowing so heavily the plows would be kept plenty busy just trying to keep the main roads cleared.

The obvious choice would be to walk back the way she'd come. The light she'd seen was only a mile or two back, she was certain.

Temperatures were only in the teens but Beth had a suitcase full of clothes in the back seat. She put on her warmest things, dressing in layers. It was her feet she was most worried about. They were already cold. She put on two pairs of socks and loosened the laces of her tennis shoes so she could still get them on. Her gloves were also inadequate, so as she set off down the road she pulled her arms inside her coat and kept her hands against her body.

She tried not to be afraid. Tried not to think about her childhood fears of the dark. She sang to herself as she trudged along, heading straight into the wind. Her eyes stung and her nose watered.

Her feet had begun to go numb by the time she admitted to herself that she must have gone too far. Either the snow had obscured the light, or it had been turned off and she had passed by the house. She turned around and slowly retraced her steps along the edge of the road, trying to pick out the driveway.

She was miserable. She had never been so cold. The adrenalin had burned off and left her exhausted. She knew she would be in serious trouble unless she got some shelter in a hurry. But she plodded along at a slower and slower pace, her pants wet up to her knees, her legs protesting the constant struggle against the snow. She longed to rest.

Beth stumbled and fell headfirst into a drift, sending a cascade of snow down her neck. The shock of it startled her back into action. She brushed herself off and continued on, and was rewarded soon after by the narrow break in the trees she'd been looking for.

She followed the driveway for a few hundred feet and spotted a small log cabin, a pickup truck parked outside. The exterior light was off, but Beth could see a faint glow of light from within as she came up the walk. *Thank God. Just please don't let this be some weirdo, all right? It's been a long night.*

She took a deep breath as she rapped firmly on the storm door. Several seconds passed. She knocked again.

"Hello?" Beth called out, wondering whether the owner had gone to bed. She couldn't see her watch, but she didn't think it was after 9 or 10. "Is anyone home? My car is stuck. Hello?"

The interior door opened and a young woman appeared, holding a kerosene lamp aloft so she could see Beth's face. "Jesus, you scared the shit out of me!" the woman said by way of greeting, just before she opened the storm door. "Car trouble, you said?"

"Yes, I'm sorry to bother you," Beth apologized. "But my car is stuck in a drift down the road and my cell phone can't get a signal."

"Come in," the woman said, beckoning her visitor inside. "You can at least get warm. But I'm afraid I don't have a phone either at the moment. My power just went out."

"Oh great!" Beth commiserated, stepping into the warmth and stomping her feet on the mat. "Well I'm glad it didn't go out sooner. I saw your light when I drove by. It was the only one I'd seen in a long while." She glanced around. The cabin was one large room with a kitchen in one corner, and a massive fireplace dominating one wall. Two doors led to what she guessed were a bathroom and bedroom. It was hard to see anything much in the dim light of the kerosene lamp, but it looked like a cozy little place, with pine paneling on the walls and log beams. "

"You're lucky you spotted me," the woman said. "All the other places around here are seasonal. I'm the only year-rounder for miles." She took Beth's hat and coat and motioned toward the fireplace. "I was just laying a fire, why don't you take a seat and we'll get you warmed up."

"I'm afraid my clothes are wet," Beth said. "I was out there a while."

The woman turned up the lamp and looked closer at her guest. "You're soaked! And in tennis shoes? You must be freezing!"

"I'm most worried about my feet," Beth admitted. "They feel like numb little stumps." She blew on her hands to warm them up enough so she could untie her laces.

"Here, let me help," the woman said, setting down the lamp and stooping to remove Beth's shoes. Beth put her hand on the stranger's shoulder to keep her balance. She felt a little unsteady on her frozen appendages.

When the shoes were off, the woman took Beth's elbow with one hand and the lamp with the other. "Into the bathroom to get those wet things off," she ordered, leading her guest. She set the lamp on the counter and pulled a towel from a cabinet beneath the sink. "You can hang your things in the shower," the woman said. "I'll get you something warm to put on."

Beth shivered violently as she stripped off her sweatshirt and began unbuttoning her blouse.

There was a knock on the door. "Here are some sweats and a pair of down booties," the woman said from the other side. "They might be a little big."

Beth cracked the door and took the clothes. They weren't just a little big. Beth was 5'3", and her host was several inches taller. She was dwarfed by the sweats, but they were soft and warm. She rubbed her frozen feet with the towel and slipped the booties on. They were also too large, and she had to shuffle along in order to keep them on. By the time she was changed, her host had a cheery fire burning in the fireplace.

"I can't tell you how much I appreciate this," Beth said, heading toward a rocking chair by the hearth. A fleece throw was folded on the seat; she wrapped it around herself. "I hate to put you out. I'm Beth Williams, by the way."

"Morgan MacGregor," the tall brunette said, as she lit a few candles she had set about the room. "And you're welcome. It's no trouble."

"Nice to meet you, Morgan," Beth said. "Sorry I gave you such a fright."

Morgan blanched. "Not a very polite welcome, was it? I had a little case of the willies after the lights went out and when you knocked, I about jumped out of my skin. I have to admit I've always been a little afraid of the dark."

"Don't apologize, I know just what you mean," Beth said. "I was wishing I'd brought a flashlight along when I ran off the road."

"Well, I've got some water heating," Morgan said, nodding toward a teakettle she'd set at the edge of the fire. "We can have some tea."

"That sounds wonderful." Beth leaned toward the fire and stretched out her hands to warm them. "So when do you think I can get a tow truck out here?"

"Hard to say," Morgan replied. "The forecast is for four to six inches tonight, and another six to eight tomorrow. And it's supposed to be really windy too, so the drifts could be pretty bad. The crews won't touch this road until it stops, so I think we're here for a while."

"What about the power?"

"No idea," Morgan said. "I'm the only one on this line, so I'm a very low priority for them. And they won't send anyone until the road is plowed."

"You sound like this has happened before," Beth said.

"Four times so far this winter. It's one of the only downsides to living up here." Morgan handed Beth a mug of tea. "The good news is we'll be pretty comfortable with the fireplace. And I've got lots of food."

"I wish I could get word out somehow, though," Beth said. "I'm expected in Marquette tonight."

"Is that where you live?" Morgan asked.

"No, I live in Florida. Tequesta-it's near Palm Beach. I'm up here to visit a friend." Beth explained.

"And I bet this looked like a really good shortcut on the map, right?" Morgan asked.

Beth nodded. "Exactly right. I had no idea it had so many hills and curves. And once I got on it and really saw how bad the snow was, I didn't see a way to turn around and go back."

"You can't really, it's too narrow. And you have to keep moving when the snow is this deep. I barely made it home." Morgan said. "I keep telling myself I need to get something with four-wheel drive."

"I was doomed in that little thing I was driving, it fishtailed all over the place." Beth said, sipping the tea. She was finally warm, and had resigned herself to the delay in getting anywhere. She could have it a whole lot worse, she thought, studying her host as the tall brunette fed the fire with large splits of seasoned oak.

Morgan MacGregor seemed perfectly suited for her remote woodland environment. She wore no makeup, and her shoulder-length brown hair had been blunt cut in layers to require a minimum of fuss. The collar of a plaid flannel shirt peeked out of a sweatshirt that read 'Club sandwiches, not seals'. Her faded blue jeans were loose fit and comfortable, but they could not disguise legs that were firm and toned, evidence of her active lifestyle.

She wasn't model beautiful but she was cute in a natural, clean-cut way, with a ready smile and a sparkle in her hazel eyes, and a healthy glow about her.

Beth found herself looking forward to having some time to get to know her host. Morgan was sweet and kind, and certainly easy on the eyes. *Probably not gay*, Beth told herself. *But awful compelling by candlelight. Nope, this isn't bad at all.*

"So how long have you lived here?" Beth asked, as Morgan pulled an easy chair close to the hearth and joined her.

"Three years. I got tired of the big city traffic and pollution."

"The big city?" Beth asked.

"Atlanta. I worked for a public relations firm there for a couple of years before I moved. The money was great, but I grew up just a few miles south of here and really missed the outdoors--the changing of the seasons and the wildlife."

"I would think it would get awful lonely though," Beth remarked. "Especially this time of year."

"Oh, I don't mind the solitude," Morgan said. "I work in a little library back on the state highway,

so I know a lot of people in the area and get out now and then to socialize."

"So what do you do for fun up here in the boonies?" Beth asked.

"Well in the summer I have a garden and I kayak a lot. The Takewa River is just off my back porch-you'll see it in the morning." Morgan nodded toward a large set of glass doors opposite the fireplace. "This time of year I do a lot of cross-country skiing. I enter a couple of biathalons every year."

"Biathlon?" Beth asked. "I've seen that on the Olympics, right? Isn't that where you ski and shoot?" Beth asked.

Morgan nodded. "I started competing in college," she said. "I even tried out for the Nagano Olympics in '98, but didn't make the team."

That explains the nice body, Beth thought.

"It's a fun sport," Morgan concluded. "How are you doing by the way? Are you warm now?"

"Toasty, thanks," Beth smiled at her host.

"Great," Morgan said, getting to her feet. "Well in that case, I'm going to leave you for a few minutes. I need to get some more wood for overnight, and I'll bring in a bucket of water from the river so we can still use the bathroom.

"Can I help?" Beth offered.

"No, you stay put," Morgan replied. She put on a heavy parka and pulled the hood up, and shoved her feet into a pair of tall boots that were set by the door. "I'll be right back," she said, pulling a flashlight out of her pocket and stepping outside.

While she waited for her host's return, Beth studied the cabin and its furnishings as well as she could in the dim light. Books were a dominant feature-no surprise considering Morgan was a librarian, she thought. There were three bookcases jammed with books in the little room, and a neat row of books adorned the thick oak mantel above the fireplace. She rose from the chair for a closer look. They were field guides-to birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, insects and spiders, trees and wildflowers.

In addition to the two chairs they were sitting on, there was an oversized couch in front of the picture window, a colorful Hudson's Bay blanket draped across the back. The kitchen had a small table and two chairs. And in the corner opposite the kitchen was a desk, with a computer, phone, and piles of papers and office supplies.

Her visual exploration was interrupted by a burst of cold air as Morgan came in carrying a load of wood in one arm and a large bucket of water in the other. Beth hurried over to her as fast as her oversized booties would allow. "Let me help," she offered.

"Can you set this in the bathroom?" Morgan asked, holding out the bucket.

Beth took it from her, shocked by how heavy it was. She struggled with two hands to get it to the other room, trying not to splash on herself. *She's certainly stronger than she looks*, Beth thought. She didn't act like this was anything at all.

Morgan was stacking the wood by the hearth when Beth regained her seat in the rocker.

"That wind is really brutal," Morgan said. "I couldn't see two feet out there-almost walked right into the river!" She crossed to the kitchen with her flashlight and began rummaging through one of the lower cabinets. "Aha!" she cried, holding up a bottle of Remy Martin and two snifters "What'ya say? This will warm us up even better than tea."

Beth nodded. "That would be lovely."

Morgan poured two cognacs and handed one to Beth before settling back into her easy chair.

The two women swapped stories for the next hour.

They discovered they had much in common-they both had two older brothers, no sisters. Both women were avid cooks, and they had the same taste in movies and T.V. shows.

Beth gestured toward a cabinet under Morgan's stereo that displayed an extensive collection of CDs. "You look like you're quite a music fan. What do you like to listen to?"

Morgan laughed. "Well, I have a rather eclectic collection, I must admit. Lots of classical, jazz, showtunes, music from other countries. Not much contemporary stuff. I rarely listen to the radio."

"Me either," Beth agreed. "I'm into classical music, mostly. I play French horn with the Palm Beach Symphony."

"Oh really? That's wonderful," Morgan said. "I always loved the French horn." She paused a moment to sip her cognac. "I play an instrument too, but I bet you'll laugh when I tell you what it is."

"Oh?" Beth asked. "And why is that?"

"Because not a lot of people play bagpipes." Morgan grinned. "Yet another good reason for living all by myself in the woods-I can practice without bothering the neighbors!"

"I just LOVE bagpipes!" Beth enthused. "I go to all the parades around where I live just to hear them-there's a really good pipe and drum corps that plays a lot around the area."

"Well, I'm not very good, I'm afraid," Morgan said. "But my Dad played, and left me his pipes,

so I kind of feel close to him when I get them out."

"Well, good or not, I'd love to hear you," Beth said, stifling a yawn. The warm fire, the cognac and her earlier exertions had combined to make her comfortably drowsy. She fought to keep her eyes open.

"You're tired, we should turn in," Morgan said, getting to her feet and stretching. "I'd be the perfect hostess and offer you my bed, but I think it's going to get awfully cold in the bedroom tonight. Let's pull the couch over closer to the fire-it folds out into a bed. I think you'll be more comfortable here."

Morgan made up the sleeper and topped it with a thick down comforter and pillow.

As Beth settled in, Morgan added a couple of large logs to the fire.

"Night, Beth."

"Night, Morgan," Beth answered, stifling another yawn. "Thanks again for your hospitality."

"My pleasure," Morgan said. "It's actually been very pleasant having the company. See you in the morning."

Something brought Beth half awake during the night. A noise. She had cocooned herself in the down coverlet. When she woke she was momentarily disoriented; aware only she was not in her own bed. She sleepily poked her head out and spotted Morgan, crouched on the hearth in men's flannel pajamas, blowing on the embers of the fire to bring it back to life.

"Is it morning?" Beth groaned.

"Nope," Morgan said, smiling. "You're dreaming. You're really on a nice warm beach in the south of France. Go back to sleep."

"All right," Beth mumbled. *You're awfully nice, Morgan MacGregor*, she thought as she drifted off. *So why do you live alone?*

Beth was once again submerged in the comforter, with only her face exposed, when the tantalizing aroma of coffee roused her. She opened her eyes to find Morgan already dressed, ensconced in the easy chair with a mug of coffee and a book.

Even cuter by the light of day, Beth observed. "Got another one of those?" she asked, gesturing toward Morgan's coffee as she sat up and ran her hands through her strawberry blonde hair.

"Coming right up," Morgan said, pouring another cup from a carafe she'd set on the hearth. "How do you take it?"

"Black is fine, thanks." Beth took a sip. "Wow, this is great. How did you manage without

power?"

"French press," Morgan answered. "Got it right after the power went out the first time. Instant just didn't cut it for me,"

"A woman after my own heart," Beth said. "Bless you, I'd be lost without my morning caffeine."

"How'd you sleep?" Morgan asked. "Were you warm enough?"

"I slept like a rock," Beth said. "You?"

"Well, it got dang chilly in there," Morgan admitted. "The fireplace just can't heat the whole house, so I shut off the bedroom." She motioned toward the closed door. "I'll stay out here tonight-I've got a sleeping bag and backpack pad."

"We could share the couch," Beth suggested. She could feel herself blushing as she said it, and hoped Morgan didn't notice.

"Oh, that's not necessary," Morgan said.

Drat.

"How do eggs and corned beef hash sound for breakfast?" Morgan asked.

"Heavenly," Beth answered. "I haven't had anything since lunch yesterday."

"Coming right up."

While Morgan set about cooking their breakfast in a large cast iron skillet, Beth walked to the big glass doors and got her first look at Morgan's view.

Her host's porch overlooked a stunningly beautiful panorama-a bend in the river lined by birch trees and tall white pines. The snow was still falling, but the wind had died and visibility was excellent. All around the cabin hung bird feeders-one at every window, and each was alive with birds: chickadees and titmice, woodpeckers and goldfinches.

"The view is amazing," Beth breathed.

"I find it hard to leave," Morgan admitted.

After breakfast, Morgan suited up again in her outdoor gear. "I've got a few chores to do," she said, pulling on her boots. "I need to fill feeders and get some more wood and water. I won't be long."

Beth emptied the last of the carafe of coffee into her mug. "Anything I can do?" she asked.

"No, got it handled, thank you. You're welcome to pick out a book if you like-help yourself. And there's another bookcase in my bedroom if you don't see anything in here."

Beth walked around the cabin, scanning the bookshelves. Morgan had an extensive collection of true-life adventure books; sea survival stories and mountain climbing tales, wilderness escapes. She also had a fondness for mysteries and biographies, it seemed. Small framed photographs adorned the bookshelves-Morgan skiing, kayaking. Posing in front of a mountain, or natural landmark. Sometimes alone, but often pictured with a handsome man about Morgan's age. *Cozy*, Beth thought, studying one where the man had his arm draped over Morgan's shoulder. *Guess that answers that. What a shame.*

None of the books grabbed her. *You're curious, not nosy*, she told herself as she cracked open the door to Morgan's bedroom. *Besides, she invited you.* The bed had a thick quilt and several blankets piled in disarray. The bedside table was crowded with books and other objects. There was a TV on a tall dresser, and a floor-to-ceiling barrister bookcase.

She skimmed the bookshelves. More mysteries. A small section of Civil War books.

And then-a shelf of Lesbian fiction.

Beth knew many of the authors and titles. *Hunter's Pursuit*, by Kim Baldwin. Margaret A. Helms' *The Fifth Stage*. Several titles by Melissa Good and Mavis Applewater. And an entire set of books by her favorite author, Samantha Clark.

"*Well this is certainly an interesting development,*" Beth said as she opened the glass and selected Clark's first book, a romantic thriller entitled *The Chase*. She'd read it already, but not for a long while. And she couldn't resist seeing what effect her selection would have on her host.

When Morgan returned from outside, Beth waited on pins and needles for the right opportunity to present itself. She looked at Morgan a little differently now, her heart beating faster with the knowledge that there might just be a possibility after all for her to explore her growing attraction to her host. She tried not to stare, but she couldn't help stealing glances at Morgan's amazing physique as the tall brunette stripped off her coat and boots and carried another load of wood to the hearth.

"Ah, that's better," Morgan commented after stoking up the fire with a couple of new logs. "No sign of it letting up out there. I bet we got a half a foot last night." She settled back into her easy chair and opened the paperback she had set on the seat. She glanced over at Beth, who was smiling at her.

"What?" she asked.

"Oh, nothing," Beth lied. *Maybe this isn't such a good idea after all*, she thought. *She won't be interested in me. I'm leaving in a day or two.*

But it was too late.

"Find something to read?" Morgan asked.

Now or never.

"Mmm hmm," Beth answered. "You have several books by my favorite author." She held up the book for Morgan to see.

Morgan's face registered her shock. Her eyes widened. Her jaw dropped. She blushed crimson, but recovered enough after a moment or two to answer with only the slightest tremor in her voice. "Seems we have an awful lot in common, don't we?" she remarked with a shy smile.

Beth grinned back, relieved and encouraged. "Seems we do," she agreed.

The ice was broken. From that moment on, they couldn't keep their eyes off each other.

"You know, I'm suddenly really glad I got stuck," Beth offered.

"Me too," Morgan replied. She set down her paperback and faced Beth. "Can I ask you something?"

"Sure."

"This... friend...that you're going to see in Manistee..." Morgan stammered.

"My old college roommate," Beth volunteered. "She and her husband just had a baby. Well, she was in labor when she called me yesterday morning. I'm going to be the baby's godmother."

"Congratulations," Morgan said, breathing a deep sigh of relief.

Beth chuckled. "Now can I ask you something?"

"Fair's fair," Morgan replied with a grin.

"Who's the guy in all the pictures with you?"

"My brother," Morgan answered, slowly rising from the chair and extending a hand to Beth. "My turn."

"O.K. Shoot," Beth said. Her voice was unsteady as she took Morgan's hand, the electricity in their touch sending waves of desire coursing through her body. They stood facing each other, a foot apart.

"Seeing anyone?" Morgan whispered as she put one arm around Beth and pulled her closer.

"Nope," Beth supplied, wrapping her own arms around Morgan's waist. Her palms were

beginning to sweat, and she was feeling a little light-headed. "You?"

Morgan shook her head. She had the silliest grin on her face.

"Interested in seeing someone?" Beth continued playfully, as she began to caress Morgan's back.

Now Morgan nodded. Slowly, deliberately. Her eyes bored into Beth's, the pupils dark and huge in her arousal.

Beth moistened her lips and tried to calm her racing heart, as Morgan closed the distance and kissed her.

Soft. Her lips are so soft, Beth's mind crooned, as Morgan's mouth covered hers.

Tentative for only the first moment, the kiss heated up quickly as their bodies pressed closer together and their tongues found each other, tasting, stroking, exploring.

Beth's hands found Morgan's firm ass and she squeezed the brunette closer, insinuating one of her thighs between Morgan's.

Morgan moaned. It was a languid, drawn out sound that drove Beth wild.

"You have an incredible body," Beth breathed, nibbling lightly on Morgan's earlobe before moving to taste the soft flesh of her neck.

"Oh God that feels so good," Morgan groaned. "It has been so hard to keep my hands off you."

"You should have told me," Beth admonished. Her tongue danced over Morgan's skin. "Since when?"

"Sitting by the fire last night," Morgan said, threading one of her hands through Beth's shoulder-length hair. "The firelight caught the coppery highlights in your hair, and your cheeks were all flushed from the cold. I ached to kiss you."

The admission drew Beth's mouth back to Morgan's. Beth nipped gently on Morgan's lips. Her own felt swollen. Heated. Her tongue teased Morgan's.

"I love the way you kiss me," Morgan whispered.

Beth slipped one hand under Morgan's sweatshirt, and tugged her flannel shirt from her jeans. She continued kissing Morgan, teasing. Deep, then gentle. Passionate, then playful.

Morgan moaned again. "You're driving me crazy."

Beth smiled as her hands found the warm skin of Morgan's back. Her fingertips trailed lightly up the brunette's spine, touching off goose bumps all along the way.

"I must touch you," Morgan demanded as she claimed Beth's lips in another fiery kiss.

"Take me to bed," Beth urged, pulling Morgan toward the couch, still open as a sleeper

They collapsed onto the bed and shed their clothes in a frenzied rush of desire and impatience.

The cold air hit their naked flesh and they scrambled beneath the down comforter, clinging together for warmth.

"I should put some more wood on the fire," Morgan said as Beth resumed her nuzzling exploration of the brunette's neck and face.

"Later," Beth said, shifting her weight to lay atop Morgan,

"You're so tiny," Morgan whispered, running her hands along Beth's back and sides, down along her thighs, along her backside. "I like the way we fit together."

"Mmmm, me too," Beth agreed, sliding her body down Morgan's so her lips and tongue could trail along her lover's collarbone, down into the valley between her breasts.

"Please, Beth," Morgan groaned. One of her hands cupped the back of the redhead's neck.

Beth's mouth found Morgan's nipple, and suckled hard. Morgan trembled. Her hips thrust upwards to meet Beth's.

Beth slipped her leg between Morgan's as her lips and teeth claimed the other nipple.

They rocked together, hands everywhere, caressing, stroking. Morgan was breathing hard. Everywhere Beth touched her, her skin came alive, as though Beth had scorched her with her fingers.

Beth was overwhelmed with the sensations that flooded her own body, whenever and wherever she touched Morgan. The heady scent of their arousal filled her nostrils and drew her hand to Morgan's heated center.

Morgan cried out as Beth's fingers found and stroked the wet, silky folds. Beth's lips reclaimed the nipple of Morgan's left breast as her thumb teased the swollen bud.

"Oh God, Beth," Morgan panted.

Beth drew Morgan along in a crescendo of feeling, stroking her harder and faster as her mouth teased and tasted her breasts, her neck, her mouth.

The sounds--moans, mewls, whimpers-- that escaped Morgan as she neared her peak drove Beth close to climax herself.

"Inside," Morgan gasped as she thrust hard against Beth's hand. Beth complied, slipping three fingers into Morgan and driving her over the edge.

Morgan cried out, her body rigid. She clung to Beth as the aftershocks ripped through her body.

"Wow," Morgan rasped. "That was amazing." She fought to get her breathing under control.

"I can't stop touching you," Beth said, her fingers lightly playing over Morgan's breasts and stomach.

"Fine with me," Morgan sighed. "You have amazing hands, Beth," she said, taking one of the redhead's petite hands in hers. "They're so delicate. Soft. The way you cupped the snifter in your hand last night..." She smiled, reddening slightly. "I just think they're beautiful. Little did I know then how talented they are, too!"

Beth blushed too under the compliment. "Glad you like them. They have lots of exploring yet to do," she promised.

"Later," Morgan growled, abruptly reversing their positions so that she was lying atop Beth, supporting her weight on her elbows. She kissed Beth hard, then put her lips near Beth's ear.

"Your turn," she purred. Her hand slid between their bodies. "Are you as wet as you make me?"

"Oh Morgan!" Beth cried out as her lover's hand cupped her swollen sex.

Morgan skillfully stroked and petted Beth's aching bud, prolonging the redhead's climax in an exquisite building of sensation.

"Oh God Oh God," Beth screamed, clinging to Morgan. Morgan peaked again along with her, their mouths meeting hungrily.

They fell back against the pillows, struggling to breathe. It was a long moment before either spoke.

"You're incredible," Morgan exclaimed.

"We're a good fit," Beth sighed, cuddling up to Morgan, her head tucked into the crook of the other woman's shoulder. She yawned.

"I hope it snows and snows and snows," Morgan whispered, kissing the top of Beth's head as the redhead drifted off to sleep. Morgan was not far behind.

When they awoke an hour later, Morgan stoked up the fire and they made love twice more, languishing in the opportunity to explore each other's bodies.

In the afternoon, Morgan donned her PJs to make them tuna sandwiches and tea, while Beth leafed through the novel she had chosen.

"So you like Samantha Clark?" Morgan asked as she brought their lunch back to the bed on a tray and set it down before Beth.

"Oh yeah, I've read every thing she's written." Beth replied.

"She's very big on that 'fate brings soul mates together' idea," Morgan said as she sat cross-legged on the bed opposite Beth.

"Do you believe that?" Beth asked.

"Well, our meeting was certainly serendipitous, wouldn't you say?" Morgan asked.

"Most definitely," Beth nodded, She leaned forward to kiss Morgan. "I absolutely believe we were destined to meet."

"Well, that's a relief," Morgan grinned. She set the tray aside and reached into the top drawer of her nightstand.

She took out a book and handed it to Beth.

"What's this?" Beth asked. She studied the cover as Morgan stripped off her PJs and rejoined her under the covers.

"Samantha's latest novel," Morgan answered.

"I haven't seen this," Beth said. "This must have just come out."

Morgan didn't answer. She cuddled up next to Beth and reached over with one hand to open the book.

Under the title, carefully written in black felt tip, was the inscription,

"Fate brought us together, Beth. I will always be your port in a storm,"

Love, Morgan/Samantha

"Oh My GOD!" Beth did a double-take. "You're Samantha Clark?"

Morgan's cheeks were crimson. "My mom was Samantha, my father Clark."

"Wow, I can't believe this!" Beth stared dumbfounded at the book, and then at Morgan.

"I'm also John Thomas," Morgan offered. "My brother's names. Mysteries?"

Beth's eyes got wider. "I thought you worked in a library," she squeaked.

"I volunteer two days a week. Have to get out of the house now and then," Morgan grinned.

"Anyway, the point is, I'm not really tied to a place or a schedule, and I've got a good budget for flying to Florida to see what happens next."

Beth pounced on Morgan and pinned her to the bed, covering her face and neck with kisses.

"I want to be your port in the storm, too, Morgan," She whispered.

"You are love, you are."

THE END

Kim Baldwin @ 2004. All rights reserved.

Please visit my website at www.geocities.com/woodsbard .

Feedback welcome. E-mail me at woodsbard@yahoo.com
