

# ~ Kicking and Screaming ~

by Larisa

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Disclaimer; Yada yada yada, not mine, sex, bad language, old wrinkly women in leotards, violence and morons, there ya go, have fun kiddies.

This is for Lesia and Renee' for listening to my aimless rants for years, thanks guys.

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## Chapter one

The day would have been a peaceful one if not for the slamming of a wooden door so hard that it sounded like a rifle shot and then the loud scream coming from behind it. As of lately, it had become a timed occurrence. Aeryn Davidson was building up reputation as a complete lunatic in the small law office of Davidson, Gerard and Smithe. She worked as an investigator for the small firm and was kicking herself everyday for taking a job where she would have to look at her father and brother in-law all day. Granted she kind of liked her father and barely tolerated her brother in-law but she felt more like the office lackey than its top investigator.

So in the morning, she would no sooner sit down at her desk than the intercom would buzz and he would ask where his coffee was. What she would love to say to him is it's still in Columbia waiting for his lazy ass to pick it. Instead, she would grind her teeth until her jaw ached and fetch his coffee. She was tempted to add some ex-lax to it and pass it off as mocha but knew that moms wraith would be painful. What really burned her ass was that the other attorney's thought that she was supposed to fill their cups as well, she told them that she was in no way, shape or form their girl Friday and to kiss her ass.

That got her a spot in front of her dad's desk and a stern dressing down and had her grinding her teeth until she cracked a molar and had to put out 1500.00 for a porcelain crown. One of the secretaries told her that she needed to see someone about her anger management problem before she ended up getting false teeth. What she really needed was an island in the south pacific where she could be alone and maybe hold onto what little bit of sanity she had left. That's what she was dreaming about when the thorn in her side shoved the papers from the corner of her desk and plopped his lazy ass on it.

"What do you want?" She asked through narrowed brown eyes.

"Same thing I always want," Jack Sorenson purred as he trailed a finger down from her shoulder until she moved and smacked the shit out of his grubby hand. "Why can't you see it my way," he winked at her. "Us naked and sweaty and you worshipping my glorious body for long hours."

Aeryn got up slowly from her chair to tower over him with her six foot frame. "I'd rather worship a pit of venomous snakes; now get the fuck away from me before I end up in jail for murder."

He gave her a cocky grin and tried to get a free feel of her right breast. "You are so frigid; you

really need to get laid." He said and then jumped away from her desk when she pulled her 9mm from her desk drawer. "You're not supposed to have a gun...you could shoot someone with that!"

"Wanna be the first of many victims," she growled and stepped closer. "I feel a rampage coming on?"

No sooner had she sat down than the next moron came over to her and tried his lame ass lines on her. She got up from her desk, growled at him and marched to the small bathroom in the far corner of the room. With one glance over all the other idiots that thought that the sun rose and sat at their command, she slammed the door and started screaming obscenities about everyone of the male gender; some included male dogs and cats as well. Fifteen minutes later, she came from the bathroom and slapped her hands over her eyes; there at her desk was the primo of the moron gene pool.

Rick was one of the junior attorneys and junior in all departments according to some of the female employees whom had been stupid enough to date him. His dark sparse hair was oiled back from his face, a straggly mustache and goatee tried to cover a too thin upper lip and weak chin and worst of all was the Olive oil thin arms exposed from beneath his rolled up shirt sleeves. His looks were not the reason the women had dated him, it was his huge bank account. Aeryn knew that the reason he had so much money was because he couldn't even buy a date because he sucked in all aspects of life.

He was the by product of two parents telling him he was the greatest thing in the world since the Edsel. He thought he was a great attorney because he had such a heavy case load when in fact it was because the prosecuting attorney gave out his business cards to all the scumbags in jail. It made his job easier because Rick sucked at his job so it was always a slam dunk prosecution.

Cussing under her breath, she walked over to him and pointed at his sunken chest. "Get your bony ass away from my desk."

"Come on Aeryn why do you have to be so mean to me?"

"Ohhh because you're a sleazy little bastard." She shoved him away from her desk and was reaching for her desk drawer when her dad stepped up behind her. "Now go away and leave me the hell alone."

"Actually Aeryn I asked Rick to meet me here," she groaned and dropped down into her chair, this was going to be bad; she just knew it in her gut. "We have a problem with one of the cases that Rick is working on and we need you to do some investigating."

"Why me..." was all she got out before her father gave her the 'I'll fire you your ass' look he reserved for his employees. "What is it?"

"There's an apartment building that we think is housing the less than desirables."

And the problem with that is?" She got the distinct feeling that this was one of those jobs that

makes you feel dirty.

"The owners are collecting money from the government for HUD housing; it states that they have to abide by certain standards and laws when renting out to people. One of which is there is to be a background check on the applicants, they're not doing it and second, there's a convicted drug dealer living in the building. We need proof to get them into court and have their HUD status revoked for lack of better word.

She rolled her dark brown eyes and then shook her head. "How do we get all these shitty cases, last one I got stuck with was who was putting dog shit in some guys car at night."

Her father wagged a finger at her. "And because of you we won that harassment case, this one is gonna be big, we win this and we can get a full page ad in the phone book!" He grinned and wiggled his gray eyebrows.

"Christ and you wonder why mom left us...ooohhh wait she didn't leave, she made you move out to the in-law house also known as the storage area over the garage." She ran her fingers through her dark below the shoulder length hair and sighed, she wondered if they were still hiring at the Sheetz in town. "Riddle me this bat breath," she looked at Rick. "Why can't your investigator do this?"

"Uhhmm because his brother lives in the place and if he finds out then he'll get his ass kicked."

"Wonderful just wonderful, I get screwed again."

## Chapter two

Aeryn had spent an uneventful night watching the apartment building; two cars left the entire time and had come back around eight the next morning. She figured that the people worked the midnight shift somewhere and they were not part of the illegal dealings with the owners. Other than that there was nothing, she had no idea how she was supposed to investigate these people and was seriously thinking of working at Sheetz or McDonalds.

Giving up for the day, she started her car and drove the fifteen miles to her efficiency apartment. As she pulled into the drive and made her way around to where she parked at her front door, she caught movement out of the corner of her eye. "Why me, why can't I be rich and be able to afford to live anywhere but here?" She yanked the emergency brake on and grabbed her backpack from the passenger seat. Getting out of her 22 year old Chevy Cavalier, she gently closed the door. She had slammed it one day on accident and the bumper fell off and landed in the parking lot, now it was held on by a wire coat hanger and duct tape.

Before she could make it to her front door, she heard her name called and knew she was in deep shit from the tone alone not to mention that her full name had been used clued her in as well.

"I didn't do it; it wasn't my idea and it's dad's fault." She dropped her head and felt exhaustion flow through her body under the stare of emerald green eyes.

"What has that idiot got you doing now that you've been gone for almost a complete day, but knowing his law practice it's got to be seedy?" She waited for her daughter to open the door and then climbed the two steps into her Coleman camper trailer. Dropping the clothes basket onto the small square table Aeryn used as a desk, she waited for her to spill her guts.

"Crooked HUD housing people, is 7-11 hiring?" She dropped her backpack on the table and smacked her head on the over the head storage cabinet for the millionth time.

"I must have been wasted when I married that idiot, I should have married his brother; at least his used car lot is more respectable." She pulled a brown paper bag from the laundry basket and dropped it on the table. "There's your lunch and if you're not up later I'll save you some supper." She placed a kiss on her daughter's forehead and left the trailer.

Not even bothering to change out of her clothes, Aeryn dropped into her bed and fell asleep. Stake outs sucked and it was worse when you were up for a full day before the stakeout started. A few hours later, what seemed to be a slight movement to her camper caused by wind became a bucking bronco that threw her to the floor. She lay on her back, arms outstretched trying to keep from rolling across the floor and then it stopped. She looked around her and flinched at the nasal sounding voice screaming her name.

"She's dead go away!"

"Let me in...it's important!" Her brother-in-law yelled and pounded on the door. "Come on Aeryn I really need your help!"

Getting to her feet, she looked for any thing heavy before she opened the door, she would have smacked him in the head if she had found anything; the only thing heavy was her coffee mug and it was her favorite. "What is your problem this time?"

He pushed past her and dropped down at the small table, holding out a brown bag from Wal-mart he shook it at her. "Snugums sent me to the store for...you know...those female things and I couldn't remember which ones she said so I bought one of each...I."

She rolled her eyes and took the bag from him. "You are such a twit you know that?" She looked into the bag and then back at him with a raised eyebrow. "This is a new one for me," she looked back into the bag and held back a snort. "She sent you to get rubbers but 'you' don't know which ones to get, isn't that your department, you know what I'm saying?"

"I have no say in the matter, either I use what she likes or." He held his arms out to the side and shrugged his shoulders. "Please help me, it's been months and I'm desperate enough to pay you..." He flinched at her sudden movement and backed into the corner of the seat. "That didn't come out right; I'd pay you to find out what ones she likes."

She gave him a narrowed gaze, dumped the contents of the bag onto the table and sorted through the different types of rubbers. A few of them she had never heard of and had to laugh at what they were supposed to be able to do for the sexual partner. "Magnum Twister," she looked at his red face and grinned. "Designed with a special "TWIST" to help stimulate both partners in their most sensitive areas.' sure it does." She picked up another box and snorted. "Extra roomy, yeah like you need that." She grabbed one of the boxes and tossed it to him. "Take that one home and take the rest of these back."

He grinned and would have hugged her if he wanted to live long enough to get laid that night. "You can have them or give them to your boyfriend." He ran all the way back to his car and peeled out of the driveway.

"Yeah like we're gonna use this many Trojans before they disintegrate from age, she looked at the price on the boxes and whistled. She checked the bag and found the receipt. "I'll take them back and pocket his money, numb nuts idiot." She put them all back into the bag and then searched through them before pulling out a box of extended pleasure climax control Trojans. "Maybe this will help prolong it past 2.5 minutes." She left them on the table and left her trailer with bag in hand, there was no way that she wasn't gonna tell her mom about this one, it was just too good.

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"He brought you these?" Her mom Selma said and then busted up laughing. "What ones did you give him back?"

"The Magnums with warm sensations lubricant."

Her mom howled with laughter, she wiped at the tears coursing down her face and then laughed some more. "You realize Bill's a dead man right?"

"Well I was hoping that if he showed up with the ones her and Ralph use then maybe she'll think that he knows she's a cheating slut and she'll stop it." She shrugged her shoulders and sipped at her coffee. "Can't hurt none, he's an idiot and he'll just blame me for giving him the wrong ones, which will be even funnier."

"The worst part about all of this is that we know what rubbers they use." Her mom said and then shivered from the disgusting scenes going through her head.

After a hot shower, supper and a thermos of hot chocolate, she was back at the apartment building for her stake out. She had to park on the opposite side of the building and couldn't get a good view of the front doors but she really didn't care, it wasn't as if she was going to see anything anyways. In the morning she was going to have to talk to either her dad or Rick and tell them that a stake out was not the answer to this investigation. What they needed to do was set the

people up by sending in a convicted felon or recent parole to make out an application; if they passed that test then they had them. As she sat staring off into space, she saw a light come on in the building across from her, as she watched, she saw a persons shape walk past the lit window. She sat watching and felt her mouth drop open when the person started to do pull ups from a bar in the doorway. She didn't know the size of the person but they had a perfect V shape. The back was wide and shoulders were thick and strong, completely memorized, she sat starrng. When they had dropped to the floor, she realized that she had counted how many pull-ups they had done.

"And my lazy ass boyfriend can do zero pull-ups but he can curl six-16 oz beers and maybe a 32 oz on a good day." She looked back up to the window and felt her mouth drop open again when the person started doing wide spread behind the head pull-ups. "Sweet Jesus I'm in love." Not one to be on the lower rung of the body meter, she often had to ignore comments made by the idiots in her office, but she never thought that she would be drooling over someone's body like she was now and it was down right creepy. "To hell with watching that apartment, I got something way better right here." She continued to watch as the person did a massive workout, what she figured out was that the whole upstairs area was a gym, complete with machines.

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A week went by with her being a voyeur, the building that she was supposed to watch could be burning to the ground and she would never know. She also didn't know that the occupants of said building knew that she had been there for quite a while and were trying to come up with a way of doing away with her. Their problem was that they were all chicken shits and none of them would leave the building.

Aeryn shook the potato chip bag, quickly glanced inside and sighed at the emptiness before her. Looking to the passenger seat, she saw that all her junk food was gone with the exception of a *Snickers* bar. She looked back up to the windows she had been watching and saw the lights go out. "Damn, the shows over, guess it's time for me to go home." She wiped her greasy hands on her pant legs, her mouth on the sleeve of her flannel shirt and then started her car. "I'm exhausted from that work out, how in the hell does he do it every single night?" She pulled away from the buildings and headed on home to her trailer. "I keep eating all this shit on stake out and I'm gonna need to work out more or turn into a lead ass," she pictured herself looking like the overweight men in her office and tossed the candy bar out the window. "Enough of that, I'll do an extra mile on the treadmill in the morning...ok afternoon."

She groaned and cursed when she saw her boyfriends car in her parking spot, all she wanted was to drop into bed and sleep for a full eight hours. With him there that was not going to happen, she'd be lucky if she would get three hours of sleep. "This sucks so much, why the hell couldn't he stay home and leave me alone." She trudged up to her door and before she could open it, John flung it open and almost took her out for the count. "What the fuck you asshole?" She got up from the ground and raised a fist at him. "I should knock the fuck outta you," she pushed past him and looked around her small trailer. "How long have you been here, the place is trashed?"

"Too long, where the hell have you been?" He grabbed another beer and drained half before dropping down on to one of the bench seats. "It's Tuesday and you know what we do on Tuesdays." He gave her a wink and nodded to the box of Trojans on the table. "I see you're prepared, did we use all the other ones?"

"I work unlike you and no, I forgot it was Tuesday." She grabbed the box and tossed them into the kitchen junk drawer. "It will take us years to use all the rubbers in a box, especially since we will not be using any tonight."

He rubbed his razor stubbled cheeks with both hands and tilted his head to the side. "Come on Aeryn, it's been a week and I've been thinking about this all day." He got up and rubbed at his crotch. "Little John is all ready, come on it won't take long."

"Don't I know it," she moved towards the back of her trailer and turned to jab a finger at him. "I'm taking a shower alone, you come in the bathroom and I will rip you into pieces."

He raised his hands up and sat back down. "Geez is it that time of the month?"

"Like that would mean anything or stop you." She mumbled under her breath and slammed the bathroom door, not two seconds later it started. "You rotten good for nothing nasty son of a bitch!" She screamed through the door and then flung it open. "If you can't piss in the toilet without pissing all over everything else, then go piss on a tree!" She slammed the door again and took a deep breath to try to calm down. "I should have stayed on the stake out; at least I would have had another chance to watch a hot body." She sighed and started to strip out of her dirty clothes. "Now I'm stuck with...why am I stuck with him, I don't even like him?" She stared at her reflection, closed her eyes and dropped her head. "I gotta stop this stupid shit, he's got to go...after a record 2.5 seconds. It's pity sex...I pity my sorry ass for wanting crappy sex but it's just to get rid of him."

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Aeryn lay on her back wishing she could be anywhere but where she was, John was reminding her more of a grunting pig than anything and she was close to throwing up on him. If he wasn't belching in her ear, he was breaking wind and making the air so noxious that her eyes would water. With one last grunt and belch, he rolled off of her and scratched at his nuts. "That's got to be a new record for us." He said and grinned at her.

"You're telling me," she got up, grabbed her robe and moved out of his reach. "That lasted a whole two minutes," she picked up his discarded clothes and threw them at him. "I want you and all your shit gone by the time I get back." She went to the door and stopped at the call of her name.

"What the fuck is that supposed to mean?"

"Did I not speak English; it's over, done with, kaput. Now get the fuck out and don't ever come near me ever again...and leave my key on the table." She slammed the door and walked across the back yard to her mom's house, once inside, she made her way to the kitchen.

"I see the asshole is at your place." Her mom said and handed her a cup of coffee. "I thought the trailer was gonna blow up a few times, that freak needs to see a proctologist or something." She shivered and shook her head. "How in Gods name can you stand that, it's...disgusting!"

"And that is exactly why I just told him to get the fuck outta my trailer and to never come back." She dropped down at the table and rubbed at her aching head. "What was I thinking when I started dating that freak, I mean he's not good at anything and basically he's a leech. How did I stoop so low as to get involved with someone like him and why didn't you punch me or something?"

"I tried to remember, but you said that he just needed a little work and he would pass as normal. The only thing that would ever make him even get close to passing as normal is Gene therapy treatments and I don't think even that would help inbred short comings."

"Christ I think I'm just cursed in the dating department and not to mention that I have to put up with all those creepy assholes at work hitting on me every single day. Don't they get it that dad's law practice sucks where pay is concerned and marrying his daughter gets you indebt not rich?"

"What do you expect when you have a bunch of ambulance chasers that got their law degrees from online schools? Not a one of them can tie their own shoelaces let alone actually win a big court case." She refilled their coffee and brushed back her daughter's hair from her face. "If I was you I'd run as far away from here as possible, maybe the one for you isn't in this area?"

"I think I just give off some kind of vibe that attracts only losers, some of the women at work have really nice husbands that take care of them and do all kinds of nice stuff for them and then there's me." She dropped her head onto her arms and stared across the kitchen. "I think I'll swear off men and get a puppy, a female puppy."

### Chapter three

Aeryn walked into the office and went right to her desk, she figured if no one saw her, the better off she would be. That proved to be false, Jack saw her instantly and she swore that he just materialized at the side of her desk and never actually walked there. Before she could even take a breath to tell him to drop dead, he was hitting on her.

"Come on Aeryn, one date with me and it'll change your life."



"Yeah I'll be behind bars and serving a life sentence for murder, now get lost." She reached for her desk drawer and yanked out a taser. "Move or we'll see what getting hit in the groin with a taser is like." She jabbed it at him and grinned when he screamed like a girl and ran away. "Pussy." She mumbled and sat down behind her desk. She had a total of five minutes of peace and quiet before round two began.

"There you are Aeryn," Moron number three of the office, or better known as Scott dropped down onto the edge of her desk. He crossed his arms over his chest and tried to give her his best macho look. "So do you need any company on the stake-out, I know they get boring being all by yourself out there."

She looked at him with narrowed eyes and leaned back into her chair. "And that is exactly how I like it, all by myself, just me and the peace and quiet of the night."

"Wouldn't it be nice to have someone to talk to or keep you warm when it gets chilly at night?" He tried to run his hand up her arm and grunted from the kick to his shin. "Ohh I get it you like it rough, I can do rough like no other."

"So can I." She gave him a sexy grin, stood up from her chair and let him have it. When he hit the floor, she stood with her foot on his chest. "Was that rough enough for you?" She was about to give him a kick to his nuts when she heard John call out her name. "Ohh for fucks sakes, what else is gonna go wrong today?"

"I've been looking for you all day," he came towards her and stopped when he noticed Rick passed out on the floor. "What happened to him?"

"He pissed me off and it's amazing but you're doing the same thing, who knew that it could happen so quickly." She stepped over Rick and moved into John's personal space and jabbed him in his chest. "I told you last night to stay the fuck away from me?"

"I thought you were just mad and that you'd be fine in the morning," he rubbed at his razor stubble, belched and adjusted his nuts. "So can we have make up sex?"

"You just didn't say that...you know I have had just about enough from all of you asshole men!" She shoved him hard enough that he flipped backward over a desk and was on her way out the door when her eyes met one of the other women in the office. She stopped, turned to the onlookers and stepped up on one of the empty desks. "You know, every single god damn day I come to work and I have to put up with you sleaze bag men asking me out, hitting on me and all kinds of other bullshit." She balled up her fists and yelled at the tops of her lungs. "Leave me the fuck alone...you all suck and I'm...GAY!" She jumped down and walked out the door, before she could get to the street, the woman she had glanced at in the office came up to her.

"You have no idea how long I've been waiting for you to come out of the closet," She held out a business card. "There's a group of us that get together and hang out, go to ball games, hold BBQ's that kind of stuff." She looked up at her with twinkling eyes. "My wife thinks you're the sexiest thing next to Salma Hayek, she's gonna flip when I tell her what you did." She slapped

her in the shoulder and went back inside.

"What have I done this time?" She covered her eyes and groaned.

"Aeryn, what I just heard in there was...is...please tell me you're not one of those...dykes?" Her dad asked and gave her a pleading look.

"Ohhhh I am such a dyke...one of the biggest dykes around, I'm gayer than *Ellen Degeneres*," she showed him the business card. "I even belong to a dyke club, we meet every Wednesday night, wanna come, I'm sure that Karen and her wife wouldn't mind?"

He looked into her eyes carefully but had a hard time reading them. He gave her a raised eyebrow when their stare wavered on her end and then he smiled. "Ok, I can deal with this; it's not the end of the world by far." He reached into his wallet and pulled out two gold tickets. "I was going to give these to Bill and your sister but they bore me, bring your girlfriend." He watched her look at the tickets and then look away. "You do have a girlfriend don't you, you're a beautiful woman so of course you do, bring her so that your mom and I can meet her." He gave her a bright smile, tucked his hands behind his back and whistled gleefully as he went back into the building.

"I am so fucked," she looked at the tickets and saw that they were for Saturday night. "Ohhh my Gods, I have to find a woman, convince her to pretend to be my girlfriend in...four days. And then beg her to go to this huge and expensive charity dinner." She slapped her forehead and tried to think of what to do, she could feign illness and get out of it that way but she knew that her father would still insist on meeting her nonexistent girlfriend. "Wonder if there's a 1-800- SOS-DYKE line I could call?" She walked down the sidewalk and stopped in front of a new age coffee shop, going inside, she looked at all the other patrons. "Yeah like lesbians have a sticker on their foreheads." She mumbled and then ordered a regular coffee to go. With no idea where she was going, she wandered down the sidewalks thinking and before she knew it, she was about ten miles from the office. She jumped from the blare of a truck horn and finally looked around at her surroundings. She was smack dab in the middle of a construction site for a building renovation. If the truck hadn't blown the horn at her, she would have stepped into wet cement. She waved a hand, mouthed 'Thank you' to the driver and blushed from the whistles she was getting.

## Chapter Four

"That's some kind of lost in space," the truck driver said and looked to the passenger. "She would have just kept on going until she was bogged down in cement."

"I'm surprised you blew the horn at her." Green eyes swung back to the retreating figure. "You usually wait until their halfway out there in the shit before you do anything."

"Well ma kicked my ass for letting her get that far before I yelled at her, so that was my good deed for the year." He looked at his sister and grinned. "Not to mention I wanted to get a better look at her, she's hot, did you see her ass?"

"I was more interested in the front," she cocked an eyebrow at him and grinned. "I was watching her in the side view mirror and you ruined my save the damsel routine by blowing the damn horn." She crossed her arms over her chest and sighed. "Now we gotta sit here longer so I can win that damn bet I made with Ted."

"Oooohh I love bets how much is on you if you lose and what's the details?"

"Thanks buddy, see if I take you to lunch on the winnings and now I ain't tellin." She waited for him to start begging before she held out a hand. "Two bucks and I'll tell."

"That's not fair, I pay you two bucks for the info and I can get it from Ted for free?"

"Two more bucks in the kitty for me to win, means more money for a big lunch." She took his two bucks and grinned. "The bet is that I can save a damsel in distress and get her to go out with me on one date, Ted said I can't do it but I say differently and that's why we're parked here."

"And why you threw all the wet cement signs in the ditch?"

She gave him a beaming smile. "Exactly! Now keep watching and pray for a damsel, old lady or anything female."

"Maybe you'll get lucky and that brunette will come back this way."

"Will you be a good brother and go out and toss her in the middle of the cement so I can save her?"

"Depends, can we go to the Outback steakhouse for lunch if I do?"

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Aeryn looked down at her watch and tried to figure out how long it would take for her to walk back to the office and her car, and then she realized that it didn't matter because she wasn't doing one damn thing for the rest of the day. The people there had pissed her off beyond normal standards and she had gotten herself in deeper shit with her raging idiot rant. She still hadn't come up with an idea on how to find a woman who would play her girlfriend for one night and didn't know if she could handle it if she could. She wasn't a touchy feely type as it was and acting romantically involved with a man was difficult as it was for her. She hated cuddling after sex and just wanted them gone far away from her as soon as the act was over. She wondered why she

even bothered with the sex partner; she could do better with an electrical device and toss it on the floor when she was done. What really made her happy about the device was that it never left the toilet seat up or pissed on everything in the general vicinity of the toilet.

"I really need to rethink my life; maybe I could change my name, move to another country and start over." She stopped and looked around her; she noticed the same cement truck parked in the same spot as before. "I need a job like theirs, bet it pays more as well." She noticed the passenger this time and was surprised that it was a woman about her age. "See that I could work there, can't be too hard to dump cement." She gave the woman a wave and a small smile before she headed back down the sidewalk."

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"Did ya see that Buddy, she smiled at me; bet I could get her to go out with me." She turned in her seat and looked out through the window. "What do ya think?"

"That you're delusional," he gave her a disinterested glance and went back to reading his comic book. "She screams straight chick which means that I stand a better chance than you do, that is if I was into women who are three foot taller than me." He flipped the page and looked out of the corner of his eye at her. "Which I'm not."

"Sorry about your luck Buddy the Christmas Elf but I happen to just love tall women." She almost fell out of the window trying to get one last look of the tall brunette. "Turn the truck around and let's go chase her down, I wanna ask her if she'll let me save her and what-not."

"You're outta your mind," he looked at his watch and started the truck up. "The cement is dry and our shift is done which means that we are outta here!" He ignored her pleas, punches and bodily threats all the way back to the cement factory and then all the way to their apartment. "Taylor, that woman was way out of your league, we can go pick up some dumb bimbo and you can win the bet that way."

"I wanted to have some fun," she crawled down from the cab of her brother's jacked up 4x4 Chevy truck, made her way around to his side and watched him slip to the ground by way of hanging onto the seat belt. "Ya know like have an intellectual conversation over dinner and drinks."

"You can have that with a bimbo; just don't use words with more than four letters in 'em." He ginned and ran all the way to the front doors of their building.

"That's kind of like the conversations I have with you!" She walked to the doors and wondered what she had done wrong to end up with a smartass brother.

## Chapter Five

Aeryn yawned, wiped at her watering eyes and then shook her head to try and wake up. She had been watching for hours for any movement from the apartment she had staked out and was ready to call it a night. Even the building across from her where the body builders were didn't have anything going on, which made it a very boring night. She was just about to start her car up when she saw dark figures running towards her, before she could do anything, they attacked her car with baseball bats, crow bars and she had no idea what else they had. "Ohhhh this is not good...NOT GOOD!" She yelled and tried to get her car to start, after three times of turning the key, it rumbled to life. She tried to pull away and found out that her tires were all flat, her car wobbled forward and then stopped from all the bodies rocking it from side to side. She swore that she saw her life flashing before her, in an instant the windshield shattered into little pieces and hands were dragging her out and onto the hood of her car. Her head snapped to the side and then she felt a sharp pain in her ribs.

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"Taylor grabbed her brother's arm in a tight hand and pointed out through the driver's side window of his truck." Go over there something's going on."

"Looks like the whole damn neighborhood is tearing that car apart, sure we wanna get close?"

"Yes damn it," She reached behind the seat and pulled out an axe handle. "It looks like they're beating on someone!" She jumped from the truck and took off at a sprint towards where there were men beating on a limp form. "Mother fuckers want some of this?" She yelled and cracked the first guy across the back with the axe handle, Hank Aaron would be proud of how she swung that piece of wood; in minutes all the men were gone with the exception of the ones needing an ambulance. Buddy looked to the still form lying on the hood of the car and grabbed his cell phone from his pocket.

"Taylor we have to get outta here," he looked around him and hoped that reinforcements weren't coming. "Before they come back and we're not so lucky!" He called 911 and reported what had happened and said that they were taking the victim to the hospital; he told the operator that they were not staying in the area for fear of more people coming to finish the job. The operator advised against leaving the scene but Buddy didn't give a damn. "Come on sis we have to get the hell outta here, we gotta take her to the hospital."

Taylor leaned over the body lying on the hood and felt immense pain in her chest; she wasn't expecting to see a woman. "Buddy, back your truck up here." She reached down and placed her arms under the body and lifted as gently as she could, she moved over to the tail gate and waited

for Buddy to drop it for her. "Take the fastest route there," she looked up and saw people coming towards them. "Ooohhh shit we gotta go!" With her brother's help, she and her injured passenger were safely in the back of the truck.

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Aeryn groaned and gasped from the pain in her side. "Where am I?" She asked and then flinched from a jarring stop and bright lights flooding the area.

"At the hospital," Taylor said. "Buddy would you get a nurse or someone!" She yelled and saw Buddy wave a hand at her. "You're lucky we came along when we did, I think they would have killed you." She looked down and studied the woman in her arms for the first time. "Don't I know you?" She didn't get to say anything else because a doctor and a handful of nurses came running to the back of the truck.

Taylor and Buddy sat in the waiting area with the police, they both felt like they had been the ones committing the crime and not the other people that they had scared off. By the time the police had left them alone to get the statement from the victim, they were exhausted and ready to head home.

"Ya know you would have thought that we did something wrong, no wonder why there's so few good Samaritans in the world." Taylor mumbled.

"You're telling me," Buddy said and held the door for his sister. "That's the last time I help someone."

"Me to," she stopped and looked at him with raised brows. "Does this count for that dumb bet I made?" She searched through her pockets and pulled out her copy of the police report. "Here's my proof that I'm a hero, now I just need a date and I win...I feel like a smuck." She put the paper back in her pocket and walked behind her brother.

"Yeah me to, I thought that being a hero was supposed to make you feel...I don't know...different?"

"I thought so to, I just feel tired and hungry."

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Aeryn pushed the doctor's hands away from her face and slapped at the nurse who was trying to unfasten her Levis. "Come on people leave me alone," she slid from the bed and moved into a corner. "Just gimme some drugs and I'll be on my way home."

"You need a head CT, you could have a concussion," the doctor tried to get closer to her and failed. "At least let me stitch up that laceration on your cheek bone, it's a bad one and needs attention."

She ran her fingers over the area and came away with bloody fingers. "That's all you're doing, I've been beaten worse than this and I've survived just fine." She gripped her ribs and tried not to show pain. "Ok, maybe tape up my ribs but that's it ya got me?"

After the doctor had taken care of the laceration and bound her ribs, she signed the papers and hobbled from the ER room. After checking her pockets for her cell phone, she remembered that she had left it sitting on the seat of her car. "So much for that, I wonder if my car is completely smashed?" She looked around the waiting area hoping to see either her parents or the people who had saved her. "So glad that the police called my mom like they said they would, assholes were useless as always." She walked towards the door and looked out into the brightening sky. "This just sucks, how in the Hell am I gonna get home?" She walked outside and looked around the barren parking lot. She was about to go back into the hospital when a huge truck pulled past her and then backed up, she was ready to take off when she recognized the driver. "Hey don't you drive a cement truck?"

"Yeah and you used to drive a car," he shrugged his shoulders and grinned. "Now I'm not sure what you would call it."

Taylor leaned forward and looked down into the bruised face and grinned. "You look a little better now; you had me worried there for a while."

Aeryn nodded her head and stepped closer to the truck. "Thank you so much for saving my ass, I know I wouldn't be standing here now if you two hadn't stopped. Can I take you guys out for supper or anything; I feel that I owe you guys?"

Buddy looked to his sister and raised his eyebrows before turning back to her. "Geez I feel like such an idiot," he opened the door and slid to the ground by way of seat belt. "I'm Buddy Garrett and this is my sister Taylor."

Aeryn thought she would get a crick in her neck from looking down a good two feet or more; Buddy had to be under five feet tall. "I'm Aeryn Davidson; it's nice to meet you."

"This just really sucks, sis get out here so I can feel... I don't know,"

"Like one of Santa's elves," Taylor held out a hand to Aeryn and grinned. "He really got the short end of the stick in the family." She looked into the warmest eyes she had ever seen and felt like she was going to fall into them.

"Yeah well I might just be the only normal one here; you two are just freakishly tall. Damn six foot giants and shit, can't be normal."

"Ignore him he's just jealous and over compensates his smallness by having this huge ass truck." She still hadn't broke eye contact or released Aeryn's hand. "Do you need a ride home, we can drop you off?" She reluctantly let her hand go and took a step back.

Aeryn looked around and saw that no one had yet to come and get her and figured that unless she called, she would be stranded here. "Yeah I could use a ride, seems the police didn't call my mom."

"Believe me, they were a bunch of idiots." She placed her hand on Aeryn's lower back and led her around to the passenger side. "Do you wanna check on your car, you know see if there's anything left?"

"They probably hauled it off already; I can't believe that those assholes attacked me like that." She winced with pain trying to get into the huge truck. "This is gonna be fun to explain to my insurance company."

Taylor got in beside her and couldn't ignore the tingling in her thigh where it touched Aeryn's. "What were you doing there so late; the neighborhood isn't safe during the day let alone late at night?"

She looked to both siblings. "You guys don't live there do you?"

"Ha nope, wish that building would burn down one night;" Buddy said. "It's full of drug dealers, addicts, rapists you name it and it's in there."

"And that's why I was there, I'm an investigator for a law firm, I was checking the place out."

Taylor leaned sideways against the truck door and examined Aeryn closer. "And here I thought we had a stalker, you've been out there for over a week now." She gave Buddy a huge grin. "See that, you strutting around half naked in front of the window was for nothing."

Aeryn moaned and covered her face with a hand, if it was at all possible; she wished she could evaporate into thin air. "Ohhhh looky here, we did have a stalker." Taylor busted out laughing and squeezed Aeryn's thigh. "So were you checking out my short shit brother over there?"

"I'm not real sure who it was I saw," she looked between the two of them and wondered if they were twins, they both had short blonde hair, green eyes, looked about the same age and had similar builds. "I could really only see the pull-up bar so who ever was doing all the pull-ups is who I watched." She knew her face had to be red and hoped that all the bruises covered it a little bit.

"Well that doesn't help because we both use it, but if you saw some freak strutting in front of the window and doing all kinds of weird shit, then it was Buddy."

Buddy coughed and looked out his window, he knew he was busted. "I was just looking out the window, simple as that." He pulled off the side of the road and looked to Aeryn. "I've been



driving but I have no idea where I'm going, where do you live?"

Aeryn rolled her eyes. "I guess maybe the doctor was right and I have a concussion." She gave him her address and was thankful that her father's car was gone when they got there; she sure as hell didn't want to explain anything until she had some sleep. "Thank you so much for everything, I don't know how I'm gonna repay you guys." She reached into her wallet and pulled out one of her business cards. "Here's my card, if you guys aren't busy on Friday, I'll take you out for supper."

Taylor took the card, looked at the information and smiled. "Don't know about the elf there but I'm free." She helped Aeryn down from the truck and watched her as she hobbled up to the front door of the ranch style house. "Damn but she's hot, too bad she's too straight for me and too tall for you little brother."

"Maybe she likes short guys; remember I'm the right height for some stuff." He winked and chuckled at her disgusted expression.

## Chapter Six

Selma heard the front door open and knew it had to be Aeryn; she had looked out earlier and not seen her car. "Aeryn if that's you, I have breakfast back here."

"How about some vicodin to chase down my coffee," she stepped into the kitchen and took a deep unsteady breath. "I wanna kick the shit outta dad and Rick."

"Ohhhh Christ, what the hell happened to you and why didn't you call me?" She went to her side and helped her ease down into a chair. "You look awful; did you go to the hospital?"

She explained how she had ended up all beaten to hell and the reason why and thought that her mom was gonna call in a hit man to take care of her dad and Rick. "What the hell is wrong with those two assholes, I swear he needs his ass kicked for stupidity alone." She handed her a dish rag filled with ice and winced when she put it to her black eye. "So the people who saved you not only took you to the hospital but brought you home as well?"

"Yep and I owe them more than I can pay, I'm taking them out to supper on Friday." She swore under her breath and looked to the tabletop; she knew she had better say something now about her asinine stunt. "Before you hear this from someone from the office, I sort of blew up yesterday in the office and told all of them that I'm gay."

Selma busted out laughing and had to wipe tears from her eyes. "I bet that sent your dad off on a tangent, so what happened?"

"Actually he handled it quite calmly but it did get worse, dad gave me some damn tickets to that

charity thing and said I'm to bring my girlfriend...thing is I'm not gay and I don't have a girlfriend, what am I gonna do?"

"That's easy, don't go." She shrugged her shoulders and got up to get them more coffee and to heat up Aeryn's breakfast. "I'm sure once he gets a few drinks in him he'll never remember that he gave you tickets." She had no sooner sat back down than the front door banged closed and her husband came running back to the kitchen.

"I just found out from the police what happened, are you ok?" He flinched when he saw his daughters' battered face. "I sent some people over to that apartment building, if we don't get the names of who did this, then I'm gonna have the whole building arrested." He looked to his wife and saw that he was in deep shit. "This isn't my fault; I couldn't have known that this was gonna happen." He moved closer to Aeryn and placed a hand on her shoulder. "Don't worry about anything, I'll take care of this; you need to get some rest and let your girlfriend know you're alright." He left the kitchen by way of the back door and never saw Aeryn shake her head.

"See I'm screwed, he thinks I have a girlfriend. Where am I gonna find one in less than two days?"

Her mom sat and shook her head, she had no idea where they would find a woman in such a short time, and she had to admit that it was funny. "Only you could get into something like this, don't you have any friends that could do you a favor, you know someone that your dad has never met before?"

"Nada, I don't have any girlfriends that I can ask," she saw the grin on her moms face. "Hell you know what I mean, I don't have any friend's period, John took care of that for me." She pressed her fingers to her eye and cheek and flinched. "How bad do I look, I haven't had the nerve to look in a mirror?"

"It's not that bad, you've had worse done to your face." She took the rag from her hands, filled it with more ice and dropped her plate before her. "Eat your breakfast and I'll see if I have any good drugs you can take."

"How about something to knock me out until Monday."

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Taylor bent over at the waist and took depth breathes, glancing to the side, she watched her brother do the last of his reps. "Are you coming with me tonight?"

"Nope, I got a date." He wiped his face on his towel and dropped to the floor in front of her. "I'm lying to ya; I'll be here watching the WWF smack down pay preview thing."

"Why, I mean Aeryn invited both of us."

"I know that but I'd feel like a third wheel." He studied his sister and wondered if she knew how striking she was and that she even turned the heads on straight women. "This gives you a chance to maybe get her to go out with you; you know win that bet and shut Ted up for good. One question though, what constitutes as a date?" He watched her face darken and knew this was gonna be hilarious and almost impossible to pull off. "You're screwed huh?"

She gave him a smirk and nodded her head. "To say the least, I may have to bow down on this one, now that's gonna suck even worse. But the deal is that I have to save a damsel, take her to an expensive and romantic dinner and then slow dancing afterwards" She dropped to sit on the wooden floor and rested her chin in her hand. "If I lose, I have to dress fem, go to a straight bar and dance with all the guys from work. The big ugly part of this is that I have to let Stan, our 'neutral witness' know ahead of time and he has to witness our date, if it doesn't pass the 'couple' test then I lose."

"Eewwww!" He shivered and rubbed at the goose flesh on his arms. "Get me a wig and I'll be your date!"

"How about a leather mini dress to go with?" She chuckled. "I'll deal with it if that happens, but I tell ya the first one to grab my ass is going to pay dearly." She got to her feet and stretched her arms over her head. "This is gonna be awkward, ya know like a blind date."

"How can it be awkward if you're having supper with another woman, now if it was me it would be awkward? Even though I'm way more charming than you are and women just love me, it would be hard because I don't have any common interests."

"Believe me, you can feel awkward no matter what the person's sex is it's just harder for me when it's a straight woman. I mean I can't say, hey don't you think Cathy Debuono is hot and expect her to know who the Hell I'm talking about let alone if she's hot?"

"I think she's hot, I'd get a sex change for her!" He got this dreamy expression on his face and yelped from her kick to his knee. "Come on Sis, ya gotta have something in common with her, then again you are such a guy."

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Aeryn pawed through her dresser drawer looking for socks that at least matched a little bit, she had forgotten all about laundry with all that had happened in the last couple of days. She also forgot that she had no car and that her mom had a poker game that night. "This is good, I have to walk to the restaurant or ride my nephews' big wheel." Dropping back onto her bed, she stared at the ceiling. She had been trying to think of a way of asking Taylor if she would go with her on Saturday to the charity thing. "I know that we've just met but I need a girlfriend for tomorrow

night... Could you do me a favor, I really need a date to go with me to a... I'll pay you if you hang all over me and feel me up at this charity party." She slapped her hands over her eyes and groaned. "I can't do this, I'm just gonna have to come clean and tell dad... and then he'll tell all the other assholes and I'm back to square one." She jumped when her phone rang and prayed that it wasn't asshole John again; he had filled up her answering machine twice so far with stupid ass begging. "Water treatment plant can I help you?"

"Hi this is Taylor so helping me depends on whether or not Aeryn is there."

"Sorry I thought it was a crank call, I've been getting them for the last couple of days. I'm glad you called because I forgot to get your number, so are we still on for tonight, you know supper?"

"If you're up to it so am I, the real reason I was calling though is to offer you a ride and to tell you that Buddy has a prior engagement tonight so it's just the two of us."

"Sorry to hear that, I'll make it up to him another time. And if you don't mind that would be great, I sure didn't wanna ride my nephew's big wheel into town."

"That would be something to see; at least you wouldn't have a parking problem you could just carry it inside with you."

"That's true; maybe I've been over looking a more efficient way of travel." She fell back on her bed and smiled to herself. "Can you imagine seeing adult sized big wheels going down Rt. 340?"

"Sounds like a good thing to me, less pollution, car accidents and lower insurance premiums. Poor Buddy couldn't get an adult sized one though; he wouldn't be able to reach the pedals."

"You sound like a green person, ya know save the environment and recyclable energy?"

"I do my best to help, I'm all for sharing a hot shower with a... anyways, what time do I pick you up and what kind of place are we going to?" She slapped herself in the head for being an idiot.

"That's all up to you, where ever you want to go is fine with me." She looked to the door of her trailer when it opened and waved at her mom. "Doesn't matter what kind of food either, I eat whatever's put in front of me."

The last part sent shivers down Taylor's back; she was finding it hard to keep her mind out of the gutter. The entire time that they had been on the phone, all she could think of were Aeryn's warm brown eyes and her tall athletic body. "Ok, I'll be there at seven sharp and dress is very casual, holy Levis, faded t-shirt that kind of dress is always good."

"Ok, see ya then." She hung up and raised a brow at her mom's expression. "What?"

"Do you need my car for tonight; I can get one of the girls to pick me up?"

"Nope, Taylor is gonna pick me up." She sat up on her bed and leaned against the corner of the

wall. "I forgot to get their number the other day, how dumb was that?"

"After what you went through please," she sat down and studied her daughter. "This is the first time in a long time that I've seen you so relaxed and actually smiling, so what's the deal?"

"I guess it's that I'm going out to supper with someone that I don't have to impress and doesn't expect sex afterwards. It's kind of refreshing, ya know when there's no pressure or anything."

"I have that with your dad, ohh that's right I have that because I leave him at home and I make him live above the garage." She got up and gave Aeryn a kiss on her forehead. "I'll see you in the morning."

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Aeryn sat across from Taylor in Ruby Tuesday's and couldn't help but notice how tight her t-shirt fit and how it showed off her thick muscles. It had her wondering about who she had been watching through the window at night. "So tell me about that upper floor where I saw you and Buddy."

"The front part where you saw us is our gym and the back part is our living areas. We bought the place years ago and we've gradually remodeled it over the years, we share a kitchen but have our own living rooms, bathrooms and of course bedrooms. It gives us all the privacy we need but keeps us close as well."

"Sounds nice, my place sucks." She looked down at her long fingers and twisted them together. "Do you remember seeing that camper trailer in the yard at my house, that's where I live?"

"In the trailer, so who lives in the house?"

"My mom, I've lived in that trailer since I was like fifteen or so; it got rough in my house so I moved out there."

"Boy I wish we'd had a trailer in our yard; I would have been out there when I was like five! You have no idea what it's like having a twin who's older by a minute and let's you know about it all the time."

"I was wondering about that but I would have never guessed that Buddy was older."

"I always tell him that I passed up being born first for the Amazon gene." She leaned back in the booth when their food arrived; she looked from her heaping plate to Aeryn's and grinned. "Ya know I love a woman who's not afraid to eat." She smirked at the deer in the headlights expression on Aeryn's face. "Easy there, I'm not hitting on you; just making an observation." She took a huge bit of her hamburger and moaned. "This is so good, how's yours?"

Aeryn took a bite and closed her eyes as she chewed; she nodded her head in agreement. "It's been a while since I've eaten here; I forgot how good the food is." She wiped her mouth and watched as Taylor took another bite of her hamburger. "Can I ask you a personal question?"

"Sure as long as it's not about Buddy?"

"Nope, not about your brother;" she took a deep breath and looked into twinkling green eyes. "Are you gay?" She waited for Taylor to go ballistic and tell her it was none of her business. "I'm sorry that was..."

"No it's ok," she wiped at her mouth and waved a long fingered hand at her. "I get asked all the time, actually no I don't; most people take one look and know."

I was going by that and some of the stuff you've said and not said." Aeryn blew out a relieving breath. "I know that we've just met and treating you to supper is nowhere near a repayment for what you and Buddy did for me but I'm in trouble and I need a favor."

Taylor leaned forward and raised an eyebrow at her. "Go ahead I'm listening?"

"I got myself so deep in trouble at work and." She went on to tell her what she had done and couldn't help but raise an eyebrow at her hysterical laughter.

"I'm sorry for laughing but I wish I had been there to see that, it's not everyday that a woman comes literally screaming out of the closet; not that you're gay or anything and I'll stop while I'm ahead." She wiped at her eyes and took a drink of her Coke before continuing. "So let me get this right, you need a girlfriend for tomorrow night."

"Yep and it has to be believable," she took a deep breath and continued. "My dad has to believe that we're a couple along with all the assholes that work with me."

Taylor steeped her fingers together and looked into Aeryn's eyes. "How long have we been together?"

"Huh, what do ya mean?" She was confused.

"Well, people who've only been together for a week or so act differently than people who've been together for months, which are we?"

She thought for a few seconds and knew she was going to regret this some how. "Let's say for example a few months, how would we be?"

"We're affectionate and show an intimacy with just a look or touch," she reached out and caressed Aeryn's hand and watched the color of her eyes flicker to a lighter brown. "It's almost the same as a heterosexual relationship except the sex is better." She gave her a seductive smile and a wink. "Can you do this, I mean act like we're together?"

"I'm gonna try, my very sanity counts on this." She drank from her Coke and sighed. "What I'm afraid of is the freaks in my office; you know how men are when it comes to." She raised her hands in the air.

"Don't worry about that, I'll make sure that they don't even get that thought formed." She dropped her napkin on the table and rubbed her hands together. "Do you drink?"

"If you mean like beer, yeah I drink; with the asshole I was involved with it was mandatory to even stomach him." She shivered at the thought of John and saw Taylor grin. "It was a horrifying experience when not drunk; just thinking of him makes me want to get drunk."

"That sounds like the relationship from Hell, good thing you're gay now or you might have needed a liver transplant." They finished their hamburgers and French fries in comfortable silence. Taylor got up from the table and held out her hand. "Let's go have a beer." She took her hand and pulled her close to her side. "Do you know anyone in here?" She saw a few interested stares as they made their way to the cash register.

"One or two," she whispered close to her ear. "Is it always like this, the stares?"

She handed the bill and enough money for it and the tip to the cashier and led Aeryn towards the door. "Nope, usually my girlfriend isn't hot so no one pays any attention."

"Wait a minute here, you just paid for our supper, I was supposed to pay and I am not hot."

"Sorry its habit," she leaned in close to her and whispered. "You can pay next time and you sure as Hell are." The hardest part for the two of them was who was going to open the door for whom; they compromised by opening both doors and then sprinting to Taylor's Toyota Forerunner. Aeryn won by a good 25 feet but lost by not having any keys to open the trucks door. "I can see this is going to be a constant battle, who knew a straight woman could be so butch."

"Is that even possible, a straight butch seems impossible."

"Seems to me that it's possible, I've never had to fight to open a door for a woman before unless she was butch." She crossed her arms over her wide chest and eyed Aeryn. "Either get in the truck or we arm wrestle to see who gets in first, your choice."

Aeryn narrowed her eyes and puffed out her chest. "Looks can be deceiving ya know I work out so I'm not a wimp." She knew that a lot of people had no clue as to what she hid under her leather jacket or her hooded sweatshirts.

"We'll test that out after a few beers," She lifted her up and put her into the truck. "Your place or mine," she leaned in close to her. "I've got a refrigerator full of beer or we can stop, pick some up and go to your trailer, your choice."

She thought for a few seconds and shrugged her shoulders. "We could go to my place, but I'm warning ya it's a shit hole and we might get company."

"Your place, Buddy will be all over us if we go back to my place; he's a nosy elf especially when it comes to anyone who happens to be in my apartment." She ran around to her side of the truck and chuckled when the door popped open for her. "Some how I knew that was gonna happen, are ya sure you're not gay?"

Aeryn shrugged her shoulders. "Pretty sure that I have no idea right now." They pulled into the Food Lion parking lot and looked to each other before getting out of the truck. "I'm paying for the beer, ya got me?" She waved bills at Taylor and then shoved her through the door and into the store. She grinned and realized that she had never felt so relaxed and comfortable with anyone before. Even with people she had known for years, she didn't feel this way, she wondered if it was because Taylor was so open. "If you tell me you drink that cheap shit, I'm gonna smack the shit outta you."

"Nope, I like real beer like Sam Adams lager." She waited for Aeryn to grab a case of Sam Adams and then took it from her hands. "I'll carry it; it'll keep my hands from going for my wallet." She followed her through the store and watched as she grabbed bags of chips and pretzels.

"Can't have beer without the chips, want anything else?" She looked to the side and saw one of the other investigators from the office. Moving up close to Taylor, she grabbed her hand and leaned into her side. "I swear I've seen more people from work today than anything and this guy is a real dog, he's one of the creeps that keeps on harassing me."

"Which one and what do you want me to do?"

"The guy with the scruffy beard and greasy hair, how about kick him in the nuts?"

"I could do that but I think being overly affectionate towards you would work better, ya know kind of mark my territory." She thought of what she said and cringed. "That didn't sound too good."

"Don't worry I know what you meant, is he following us?"

"Lemme check," she glanced back slowly. "He's right behind us and checking out your ass."

"How do you know it's not your ass he's checking out?" She stepped in front of her and put the junk food down on the conveyor belt.

"Well now he is thanks to you." She placed the beer on the conveyor, wrapped her arms around Aeryn's waist and rested her chin on her shoulder. "You do realize that he's gonna run his jaws the second he gets outta here?"

"Yep and I don't much care as long as he stays far away from me." She smiled at the teenage boy at the register, tried to hand him her two twenties but his eyes were trained else where. "Forget it she's mine and entirely too much woman for you."



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Taylor looked around Aeryn's trailer and gave her a raised eyebrow. "How long have you lived in this trailer?" She took in the worn table and benches, the faded linoleum and then to her strange looking bed. "I couldn't do it." She shook her head.

"Way too many years that's for damn sure but with the crappy economy and my shitty paycheck, this is it. I looked into houses, apartments and condos and almost died when they started crunching numbers. How do single people do it without having roommates?"

"I have no idea; I've always lived with Buddy." She leaned back on the bench seat, watched as Aeryn kicked off her worn cowboy boots and then fell back onto her bed. What she found amusing were her socks, one was white and the other had a gray toe and heel. "And here I thought I was the only one who wore mismatched socks."

"Yeah well I forgot all about laundry with all that's happened this week," she ran her fingers over her black eye. "I'm gonna look like Hell at that thing tomorrow night."

"Nah, you'll look just fine and I'm sure that by now everyone knows what happened to you. I'm still trying to process the chances of having you sitting right outside our building, walking past our construction site and then me knocking the shit outta your attackers. It's gotta be an astronomical number for us to meet."

Aeryn grinned and nodded her head; she had to agree that it was some kind of weird chance. "I guess we're destined to be friends," she raised her beer out and winked at her. "Now tell me all your darkest secrets."

They talked for hours about everything under the sun, Aeryn was still surprised that they had so much in common and was a little scared about that fact. She had never really had anyone that she shared so many interests with and that included family members. She locked the door to her trailer and then went about getting ready for her shower. After her shower, she dropped down onto the bench where Taylor had sat and noticed her flannel shirt lying across the table. She ran her hand across the soft material and then lifted it to her nose; the scent was warm and reminded her of the outdoors. "What are you doing Aeryn, I swear you've gone and lost your mind."

## Chapter Nine

Taylor walked into her kitchen and found Buddy sitting at the table eating cereal, he would eat

cereal every meal if he could and the empty box on the table proved he had done it that day. "Christ I'm gone for a few hours and you managed to eat a whole box of corn flakes."

"Two boxes, the other one bit the dust about three hours ago." He waved his spoon towards the trash and then zeroed in on her. "So how was your date, do anything physical?" He wiggled his eyebrows and then ducked the box heading towards his head.

"You're a pig, I'm so glad we didn't come back here after supper." She stuck her tongue at him and dropped down into a chair. "She's straight, straighter than mom, got me?"

"That's too bad for you, good for me because now I can ask her out."

She got a wicked glare in her green eyes that had him shrinking away from her. "Nope elf boy, good for me because I'm taking her out tomorrow night. We're going to some charity dinner where I get to play her lover, beat that elf boy."

"Ohh now that's just not right, my big diesel dyke sister is taking a straight woman out and gets to play touchy feely with her?" He leaned towards her, looked into her eyes and cursed under his breath. "You ain't lying either, so how in the Hell did this happen?"

"I'm charming and she just couldn't resist my animal magnetism, I'm the luckiest damn woman in the world. She's hot as Hell, has a nice firm body and the most expressive eyes I've ever seen and then there's her voice, it's like a deep purr."

"Geez you sound like you're in love with her," he watched her turn away and sighed. "Don't go there sis, it'll end in your heart being broken again."

"Don't worry lil brother; I learned my lesson, no straight woman for me." She headed towards her part of the building and thought about Aeryn, she had never met anyone like her and knew that she was strongly attracted to her. "Can't go there Taylor, just be her friend and that's it." She shed her clothes on her way to her bedroom and dropped into her bed.

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Aeryn tried to block out the pounding with her pillow, when her trailer started rocking she swore under her breath and got up. Before she opened the door, she peeked out the side window. "Hold on I'm coming!" She unlocked the door and waited for her mom to come in.

"Now that's a first, I've never known you to lock your door before, what's up?" She handed her a mug of coffee and then took a seat at the table.

"I was afraid that asshole John would show up and harass me, so I locked the door." She shrugged her shoulders and dropped down at the table across from her mom.

"I saw that your friend was here last night, have a good time?" She looked at her daughters bloodshot eyes and then to the strange shirt she had on. "Did she leave here half naked?" She pointed to the shirt and smiled at her daughters red face.

"No, she had a t-shirt on, she forgot this on the table and I found it after..." she knew she was screwed by the ever widening grin on her moms face. "I like it, it's soft." She ran her fingers down the sleeve.

Selma looked at how the shirt fit her daughter and raised an eyebrow at her. "How big is this Taylor, that shirt fits you like it's yours?"

"She's as tall as me but has way more muscle, you should see her and her brother together, they look like linebackers." She cupped both hands around her coffee cup, blew across the top and looked to her mom. "What are you thinking?"

"Ohh it's just that my daughter is looking really comfortable in some woman's flannel shirt, did you ever wear anything of John's?"

"Eeeewww hell know," she shook her head and looked down at her coffee. "I feel comfortable with her, like we've known each other for years. And ya know I wasn't grossed out when she hugged me in Food Lion."

"She was hugging you in Food Lion?"

"It was to keep one of the asshole investigators away, it was either that or kick him in the nuts, I was for the former."

"I figured that, does she know that you get happy with a taser?"

"Nope, I didn't wanna scare her off; I figure that meeting dad and all the assholes at the charity thing will do that."

"Which reminds me, what are you wearing tonight?"

Aeryn closed her eyes and swore under her breath, she hadn't even thought of what she was going to wear. Not like she had any fancy expensive clothes to begin with and hadn't even thought of asking Taylor if she had anything to wear to it. "What do they wear at these things?"

"It's \$500.00 a plate so just think of what those rich ass snobs will be wearing. Your dad is wearing a black tux and I'm wearing something disgustingly expensive because your dad's paying for it. You can't go wrong with black, you've got black dress pants and I don't know what else in your closet in the house."

"I guess I better call Taylor and let her know what I'm wearing; ya know how couples are supposed to compliment each other or match or what ever the hell it is."

"I'm sure whatever you two wear will be fine but make sure you both wear heels, it drives the short people nuts."

## Chapter Ten

Aeryn paced in her mom's living room, the click of her heels on the hardwood floor driving her mother nuts. She had sat down for a whole five minutes and got back up and started pacing again, she kept looking at her watch and then out the front window. "For Christ sakes will you calm down before you have a heart attack," her mother pushed her down on the couch and would have sat on her if she thought it would have done any good. "Why are you so nervous?"

"Wouldn't you be if you were going to a big shot charity event with a woman?" She twisted her hands together and looked at her watch again.

"I'll swap ya, I'll go with Taylor and you can go with your dad, how's that sound?"

"Not a chance," she jumped when she heard a vehicle pull into the driveway. "Oohhh my gods, she's nuts." She pointed out the front window at the black limo parked in the driveway. "I'm gonna kill her."

"She sure knows how to turn up in style; you guys will be the envy of the place." She tried to see what Taylor looked like but was blocked by her daughter's body. "I wanna see what my daughter's girlfriend looks like and ask her intentions towards you."

"You can be surprised with dad, that way it looks like I've been hiding my gayness from everyone." She ran for the door and was out to the limo before Taylor could even get the door all the way open.

"My kid is a nutcase, hiding her gayness, she sounds so convincing." She rubbed her chin and shook her head.

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Taylor lay on the leather seat and chuckled, she wasn't expecting to be tackled as soon as she opened the limo's door. She looked up into chocolate brown eyes and smiled. "I can honestly say that this has never happened to me before." Aeryn didn't seem to be in any hurry to move and just hovered over her.

"What's never happened before?" She looked down into emerald green eyes outlined in black eyeliner and felt her world tilt.

"Getting tackled in a limo by a hot woman, it's always been one of my fantasies though." She laughed when Aeryn blushed and sat up when she was free.

"Glad that I could make that come true then," she straightened her black suit jacket and copper colored silk shirt. "My mom was ready to give you the third degree and I had to...save you from that."

"Ohh let me guess, she wants to know my intentions?" She laughed when Aeryn looked out the side window. "Completely honorable I assure you." She looked at how they were both dressed and smiled even wider. "I am gonna make some boys very jealous tonight and I'm gonna love every single second of it."

"Not if we don't get there you won't, we haven't left the driveway yet." She gave their driver the address and relaxed back into the leather seat. "I can't believe that you got us a limo, we might be the only ones showing up in one ya know that right?"

"And that's what I'm counting on; I want those smucks to see that I spare no expense when it comes to you." She tapped on the window dividing them from the driver and waited for it to go down. "How long before we get there?"

"About five minutes, traffic is very light tonight."

"Just enough time to go over our plan." She turned sideways, sat back and took in Aeryn. "So are we going to be deeply and madly in love tonight or we sorta like each other but we're looking for other avenues?"

Aeryn narrowed her gaze and raised her left eyebrow. "You led and I'll follow how's that sound?" She gave Taylor a look that made the pulse point in her throat throb.

"Uuhhmm...ok," she wiped at the sweat that had formed on her upper lip. "No wonder the men fall all over them selves in the office, you're dangerous." She noticed that the car had stopped and looked out through the windshield. "Looks like we're here," she opened her door, held her hand out and pulled Aeryn from inside. Holding onto her hand, she stepped up to the driver's side window and looked in. "Thanks Uncle Joey."

"No problem Taylor, here don't forget this." He handed her a single red rose before closing the window.

"I almost forgot," she handed her the rose and saw tears form in her brown eyes. "What's the matter?"

"Nothing, it's just that the first time I've ever gotten a rose and it's from my fake girlfriend." She blinked her eyes a few times and took a deep breath. "Men suck; let's get in there before I lose my nerve." They walked holding hands into the community center; Aeryn handed the tickets over and pulled Taylor behind her. "Ok that was the hard part." She moved in close to her side and whispered. "Now what?"

"You're asking the wrong person, I've never been to one of these things." She looked around to all the tables and saw an older man coming their way. "Looks like the bouncer."

"Wouldn't that be nice, we get tossed out by some old geezer." She held her breath and waited for him to point to the door.

"Ms. Davidson your table is this way." He held out a hand in the direction of their table and waited for them to walk before him. "Your dad is already here, he's in the bar area with your brother-in-law." He pointed to their table with the name cards behind the plates and then made his way back to the doorway to greet more guests.

"I have no idea who that man was but he obviously knows who we are," they pulled out their own chairs after a share of narrowed stares. "My dad probably handed out a mug shot of me to everyone working this thing."

"Like seeing two women together would not have been enough?" Taylor said and then looked around them. "What is this thing for anyway?"

"No idea, with these people it could be a charity to buy grass seed for some baseball field. They put this shit on their resumes thinking it makes them look important." She looked around and saw the bar area off to their right. "I need a strong drink, like a water glass of Jack Daniels." She got up and held her hand out to Taylor. "Are you ready to face my dad?"

"The question is, is he ready to face us?" She wrapped her arm around her waist and pulled her into her side. "Take a deep breath," she took a deep breathe and grinned. "I'm talking to myself here."

With their drinks in hand, they weaved their way back to their table and sat back down. The place was starting to fill up with people and they could hear band instruments tuning up in another part of the building. They were both wondering how long they would have to endure before escaping.

"There you are I've been looking all over for you two." Selma leaned down, placed a kiss on her daughter's temple and then held her hand out to Taylor. "I'm Selma, Aeryn's mom and you are obviously Taylor." She took in her dark blonde hair, green eyes and her strong presence. "So what do ya think of all this bullshit?" She waved her hands around. "Is it ridiculous or what?"

"Well, I can honestly say that I have never been to one of these things and I'm not quite sure what to expect."

Selma sat down across from them, took the name card that was in front of the plate, tossed it on the table behind her and put her own in its place. "Dumb asses, why would I want to sit with that idiot I'm married to." She grabbed Aeryn's glass took a drink and coughed until her eyes watered. "Geez some Coke in that glass would be nice!"

"I needed a strong drink and where's dad, I haven't seen him yet?"

"Last I saw he was running out the back door with Rick and Bill, I think your sister is on one of her PMS rampages...again." She took another drink of Aeryn's whiskey and shivered.

"I'm going up to the bar, can I bring you a drink Selma?" Taylor asked as she lifted her half full glass from the table.

"A Disaronno on ice and that cute bartender would be perfect." She flashed a bright smile and then looked to her daughter once she was out of earshot. "She is...hot as you would say; you sure can pick a girlfriend. I say you should stick with her because you really suck in the man department; you get that from me, your father and John are proof." She reached for Aeryn's glass again and grinned when it was moved from her reach.

"I think you're wasted, I can't believe you just said that." She said in a whisper and jumped when a hand caressed her back.

"Said what?" Taylor asked, placed a glass in front of Selma and then sat down and rested her hand on Aeryn's upper thigh.

"I told her she should stick with you," she waved a hand at her. "I know the deal here and you two are perfect for each other." She closed her eyes, downed the drink and sat wobbling in her chair. "Fuck me here comes your dumb ass father." She rolled her eyes at his sprayed on tan and dyed hair. "I swear I'm gonna move to Budapest or Transylvania anywhere to get away from him."

"There you are," he went to lean down for a phony air kiss and jumped when she moved her foot to kick him in his groin. "And Aeryn, I didn't know that you were here already." He eyed Taylor and held out a hand. "I'm Tom Davidson and you are?"

"Sorry dad, this is my girlfriend Taylor Garrett." Taylor stood up and extended her hand.

"Pleased to meet you sir." She squeezed his hand and held back her grin when his eyes grew wide from pain.

"My, you are tall aren't you," he looked up into her eyes and then down to take in her wide shoulders and very muscular body. "I guess I don't have to worry about anyone messing with Aeryn anymore." He turned to Selma and held out his hand. "Would you dance with me, I'm tired of running from the PMSing Aerial and maybe she'll leave me alone if she sees you?"

Selma searched through her purse, found a small bottle of Midol and tossed it to Aeryn. "Spike your sister's drink; force them down her throat or something before she kills someone." She got up and followed her husband to the dance floor.

"Your parents are...different."

"You can say it, we're dysfunctional, I'm the only one who's not entirely whacked outta my mind." She held her hand out and pulled Taylor from her chair. "Let's go look for my sister, just listen for a big mouth yelling and men crying."

"Men crying?"

"Ohh you'll see soon enough." She groaned at the thought of her sister meeting Taylor, nothing good could happen from it. "If she gets too close threaten her with garlic cloves." She pulled her through the crowd and stopped when she heard her sister's laughter. "This is not good."

Taylor looked over the heads of cringing men and saw a small dark haired woman pinning a man against the wall. "What is she doing?"

"Taking measurements in a way, I have to stop her before she's injured every man in the place." They moved through the men and just as Aeryn yelled her sister's name, she turned in the opposite direction and grabbed Taylor.

"Ohh Hell..." Taylor gasped out and fell over into the wall next to the whimpering man. "Aeryn...help." She was having trouble breathing after Aerial's other hand grabbed her right breast and squeezed.

"Ohh that is it!" Aeryn yelled as she went after her sister. "Get your god damn hands off my girlfriend," she shoved her away and pulled Taylor behind her. "You need to go sit your ass down before I plant you!" She towered over her and bared her teeth when Aerial reached towards Taylor again. "I'll knock your ass out, I swear I will." She grabbed her sister by her shoulder, spun her around and marched her towards the bar. "You ok baby?" She pulled Taylor's head down to her shoulder and rubbed her back.

"She's strong as shit, I think my tit is gonna fall off." She pressed her hand to said area and whimpered. She stepped back pulling Aeryn with her. "She's looking at me funny."

"Give me a minute and we won't have to worry about her." She emptied the pills from the bottle into her hand, ordered two fingers of scotch and dropped them into the glass. "Aerial either you drink this or I dump it down your throat, your choice?"

"What is it?" She looked at the glass then to Taylor and licked her lips. "I'll drink it if I can play with her." She winked, did grotesque things with her tongue and then downed the scotch.

"You're not doing anything with her, now sit your ass down before I smack the shit outta you."

"Geez Aery you're so mean to me, I just wanna have fun." She stuck her tongue inside the glass and eyed Taylor. "I can have a lot of fun with her."

"Touch her again and you will wake up in intensive care." She leaned back into Taylor's body and felt her arms wrap around her chest, she covered her hands with her own and sunk deeper into her warmth. "What is she doing?" She watched her sister swipe at things only she could see



and then lick at the air. "Taylor, Midol what color are they?"

"White caplets with Midol written on them in blue I think, why?"

"Uhhmm because Aerial is acting too weird to have been given them, the pills were white caplets with numbers on them and..."

"Aeryn do you still have those pills..." Selma asked and shook another Midol bottle at her. "I gave you...the wrong bottle and I'm too late." She tilted her head to the side and snickered. "Aerial's wasted on my vicodin; at least she's harmless now." She looked to her daughter and how she was wrapped in Taylor's arms. "Just leave her there and come out to the dance floor with me, you two need to make an appearance if ya know what I mean." She took one last glance at her other daughter and rolled her eyes. "Only my kid would lick the air like a damn lizard."

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Aeryn and Taylor looked to all the couples standing on the outside of the dance floor and then to each other. "Can you dance to this crap?" Taylor asked and chuckled when Aeryn gave her a horrified expression.

"The only thing worse than this music is Polka...ooohhh wait this is Polka music!" She looked for the idiot in charge and saw him hiding in a corner. "We have to fix this, there's no way I'm getting up there and dancing to that shit." She poked her dad in his chest and then pointed to the DJ who was sitting on a table falling asleep. "Give your Polka buddies a break so we can have some real music." She looked closely at him and pointed to the side of his face. "Your hair dye is running down your face."

"What, I don't dye my hair?" He panicked and took off in the direction of the men's room.

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"Here take my jacket back to the table and I'll take care of the Polka music." Taylor handed off her black jacket and went up to the lederhosen outfitted band leader on the small stage. She handed him a fifty, waved goodbye and then went over to the DJ, after a few minutes, he was playing music from this century. She returned to the side of the dance floor and watched as people actually started dancing.

"So good looking can I have this dance, I have moves that will make you wonder where I've been all your life?" A sleazy looking man asked and then wiped his nose on the sleeve of his jacket.

"No thanks, I've limited myself to one sleaze ball a century and I killed him years ago, now get lost."

"You must be a dyke, all women love me."

"As a matter of fact she is and she's my dyke so get lost Larry before I use my taser on you again." Aeryn reached for her pocket and smiled. "I have a bigger one now, guaranteed to shrink nuts in one hit; wanna have a go at it?" She grabbed Taylor's hand and pulled her out on the dance floor. "I really hate men, too bad my taser doesn't work like lightening in a field of cows." She turned to face Taylor and tilted her head to the side. "Who leads?"

Taylor busted out laughing and pulled her into her arms. "We'll take turns how's that sound?"

"Fine with me." She wrapped her arms around her neck and pressed into her body, she had danced with lots of men but none of them made her feel the way that Taylor did. She tangled her fingers in the hair at her nape, placed her cheek on her shoulder and took in the spicy scent of her cologne. When she began to think of all that had happened so far, she pulled back, looked into her eyes and felt calmness come over her. "I'm having a slight problem here, I've on more than one occasion tonight staked my claim to you, does that seem strange to you?"

"Well, I've never had a girlfriend quite like you before so I don't know." She moved them across the dance floor and noticed that Aeryn had shed her jacket and how the copper color of her silk shirt brought out flecks of gold in her brown eyes. "I do know that I'm the luckiest person here and the envy of every swinging dick, they would fight each other to dance with you." She nodded her head and turned them so that she could see all the men watching them. She ran her hands down her back to stop right at her waist and slipped one thigh between her legs, she moved seductively against her and grinned when the men dropped their hands down in front their groins.

Aeryn looked at all the idiots and buried her face in Taylor's neck. "I have never seen so many horn dogs in one place and all because of us slow dancing." She bit back a moan when Taylor's thigh rubbed against a sensitive spot and felt her body shake with a chuckle. "You did that on purpose."

"Of course I did, I just wanted to see if I could do it. Let's get out of here before they start stampeding, I'm wearing insane heels and I can't run in these things." Her body was humming from the closeness they had shared, it had been a great while since she had dated or even danced with a woman.

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Taylor kicked off her shoes in the doorway of her living room, she hated wearing heels but sometimes the extra two inches did wonders for intimidation. Nothing like a six foot two muscle

bound woman to keep things in order. "Make yourself comfortable, I'm gonna get out of these clothes." She made her way through the living room and down a hallway where her bedroom was. Aeryn watched as she pulled off her shirt and felt her mouth drop open at the sight before her.

"I know who I was watching all those nights, there's no mistaking it now, it was her." She dropped down onto her overstuffed couch and leaned back into the soft cushions. Kicking off her heels brought a sigh of relief past her lips. "Hate those damn things," she curled her toes and felt some circulation flow back into them. "This is nice." She closed her eyes and relaxed into the warmth of the couch.

Taylor came back out into the living room dressed in an old tank top and sweat pants; she looked down at Aeryn and smiled. She was sound asleep and snoring lightly. She moved her so that she was lying down, took a blanket from the back of the couch, and covered her up. "You're an unbelievable woman, any man would be lucky to be with you." She ran her fingers through her hair and then left the room. "I need to go do some pull-ups, maybe run a few miles to get rid of this sexual tension." She ran her fingers through her hair to the point that it was standing on end. "I'm getting in too deep here." She went into the gym, flipped the lights on and headed over to the mats lying on the floor. She stretched for a bit before going over to the Total Gym and starting her workout.

"Hey sis what's up, I thought you were at that charity thing?" Buddy asked on his way over to her. "It's only eight o'clock; I figured you'd be there later than this."

"Yeah well there's only so much a big old dyke and a straight woman can take when it comes to swinging dicks." She finished doing the Iron Cross exercise and went over to the incline sit up bench. "When we left, there were so many idiots with erections you would have thought we were at a smiling Bob convention."

"You know that happens sis and what do you think is gonna happen if you lose that stupid bet with Ted." He leaned against the wall and eyed her. "You're gonna have to dance with those freaks and I can guarantee that everyone one of them is gonna get hard and grab your ass."

"I know I get sick every time I think about it." She went over to the pull-up bar and was in the middle of her set when Aeryn came in and stood behind her.

"It was most definitely you I was watching every night," she moved closer and took in the rippling muscles and how the sweat ran down her arms and back. "How many of those do you do a night?"

"About 200 on a good day," she dropped to the floor and turned to look at Aeryn. "So was it a success tonight?"

"Ya know I really don't care, this was the first time that I went somewhere and felt at ease. I wasn't dreading the end of the night because of what was expected of me." She moved closer to Taylor and looked into her dark green eyes. "My sister didn't leave any marks on you did she?"

Taylor laughed and shook her head. "No and it's not the first time that I've been grabbed but hopefully the last time I'm mistaken for a guy."

Buddy gave them an interested stare and waved his hands at them. "Ohh come on now, you can't just stop there, I wanna know all the details!"

Aeryn told Buddy what happened and apologized to Taylor again, she really felt bad and didn't know what else to say to make up for her dysfunctional family. "I'm going to call it a night and call a cab, thank you again for saving my dumb ass." She turned and stopped at the sound of Taylor calling her name.

"I'll give you a ride home, just lemme get my shoes on."

"Really you don't have to, I can call a cab." She headed towards the door and felt arms wrap around her and lift her off her feet. Taylor carried her all the way to the living room and put her down beside the couch. "I'll be right back just lemme get my shoes." She ran to her bedroom and came back hopping on one foot while she pulled a work boot on.

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They pulled up outside of Aeryn's trailer and stopped right by the door. "Thank you again for tonight; I don't know what I would've done with out you."

"I'm sure you would have come through alright, maybe with less drama then you'll face tomorrow but." She shrugged her shoulders and smiled.

"I always dread going into work, I hate the place but I have other stuff I have to take care of in the morning, namely taking care of getting another car."

"Yeah did you see your car is still sitting by my building, I'm surprised it's not stripped?"

"It just goes to show that my boss/father is an idiot, he was supposed to take care of all that days ago and he did nothing as usual." She sighed and ran her hands across her face. "I need a tank for my job, with maybe 50.cal machine guns and grenade launchers." She turned and moved closer to Taylor. "Thank you again." She pulled her into a tight hug and held on longer than you normally would, she took in the soft scent of shampoo and the strong warm arms wrapped around her. "If I was gay, I would definitely chase after you." She released her and moved to get out of the truck. "If you need anything or just wanna hang out, give me a call, I don't have anybody you know?" She shrugged her shoulders, got out of the truck and walked up to her trailer.

"Aeryn, I'll call I promise." She yelled to her and then waited for her to get inside before she backed from the parking area. "I will call you and hang out with you even though it will hurt like

hell." She wiped at her eyes and took a deep shuddering breath. "You're an idiot Taylor; you've fallen for her already when you said you wouldn't."

## Chapter eleven

A week had gone by since the charity event and all had returned to normal in the office, the assholes had gone back to harassing her just like before. But she had a break from the insanity for the moment, everyone was out for lunch. So she sat at her desk and flipped through page after page of reports, she had to find the right information to put together for one of the court cases she had been doing an investigation on. This was the part she hated, she thought that the lawyers were the ones who would know best what was needed but they proved themselves to be incompetent morons time after time. "I need to start my own business and then I'll be able to set how much money I get paid for all the long hours I put in." She dropped the report on her desk, rubbed her eyes and dropped her head down on crossed arms. "Two hours of sleep ain't cutting it, I need to..."

"Spend a night with me; I always could wear you out if ya know what I mean."

She lifted her head and cussed under her breath. "Actually that was boredom that did me in all you wore out was your welcome."

"Huh, that don't make no sense."

"That's because you're brain dead, now leave me the fuck alone before I shoot you in the head." She shifted her eyes down to where her 9mm was pointed at his groin.

"You won't shoot me, you do and you won't get your world rocked on Tuesdays."

"I'd rather be stoned to death than have you ever come near me again." She pulled back the hammer and looked right into his eyes. "You have two seconds to run before I pull the trigger."

"Come on baby, my back still hurts from disposing of that last body, at least gimme a full week before you shoot another creep." Taylor shoved John out of her way, leaned down, lifted Aeryn's chin and kissed her lips gently. "Sorry I'm late for our lunch date, I got tied up at the office." She took her hand and pulled her from the chair. "Hey stupid fuck, she's told you how many times to get lost and now I'm telling you. Bother her any more and I'll make sure no one ever finds your body, got it?"

"You can't threaten me like that, I'll tell Mr. Davidson!" He stepped in front of her and realized that she was twice his size.

"Go right ahead John, tell my dad." She wrapped her arm around Taylor and they walked past all the returning employees, she caught glances with the lesbian of the office and winked at her.

"Here you are saving me again, guess I owe you lunch." She felt her tighten her arm around her waist and felt safe in her embrace.

"And here I was going to treat you to lunch, I'm sorry I haven't called I've been busier than usual. We got a new contract and I had to do all the concrete forms at the work site but I finished early so here I am." She led her out to her truck and smiled when she went right to the driver's side, opened the door and crawled across to the passenger side. "Solves that problem but we still have the other door problem."

"I'll make it easy on ya, you open on the way inside and I'll get it when we leave." She took in her worn Levis, dirty work boots and tight t-shirt. "Tell me something, do all the guys envy you because you're built like a brick shithouse?"

Taylor busted out laughing and had to wipe the tears from her eyes. "Some of the guys have a problem with it and others are glad I'm like this, I can lift the forms by myself and some of them are lucky if they can lift their feet." She pulled into the Food Lion parking lot and into a parking space. "I thought we'd go to Mezzaluna's for Italian, they've got great food there."

"Sounds good to me and thank you again for scaring John, he's so damn dense that even me pointing a gun at him doesn't faze him."

"I saw that, so do you always carry or is this something new?"

"I carry when I'm out on the job, with the exception of that one night. I forgot my gun in my desk drawer and after the first uneventful night I figured that I didn't need it, how dumb was that?"

"Who would think that an entire apartment building would go after one woman, it seems weird."

"Exactly, too weird if you ask me, I think someone tipped them off, I just don't know who yet?" They waited to be seated in a booth and accepted the menus. "So what's good here?"

"Everything, but my all time favorite is the stuffed manicotti." She patted her stomach. "After eating here I have to do an extra work out."

"Ohh boy another day at the gym fending off freaks, thanks Taylor."

"You're welcome," she grinned and then pointed out what she was ordering. "Eat all of that and you'll be there for two extra workouts."

"No thanks, I'm lucky to handle the time I do spend there; Gold's gym is like a meat market. I seem to get more attention because I have meat on my bones where the other women there look like starving Ethiopians."

They placed their orders and sipped at the house wine their server had brought to the table. Aeryn rolled the wine in her mouth and moaned from the sweet flavor, she normally didn't drink at lunch but with Taylor's recommendation she wasn't about to pass it up and now she was glad

she hadn't.

"Wait until we have the cappuccino, the stuff is so good." She smiled when she saw their food coming. "I am so hungry."

"Now that you mention it, I'm starving; I haven't eaten since last night...I think." She saw unbelieving green eyes looking at her. "Really, now you've been to my place there's not a whole lot of kitchen to cook in and I'm not that good to begin with."

"Then I'm glad I brought you here because this will make up for it."

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After eating enough for three people at the restaurant, Aeryn made a trip to the gym the next day. She swore the night before that she was dying; her stomach was so full that she couldn't lie down without feeling like a beached whale. It was ten times worse than any Thanksgiving meal she had ever eaten in her life. Now she lie on the floor in the locker room and prayed that she would just die right where she was. Her muscles burned and she felt weak and nauseous all at the same time. She knew that she had over done her normal workout a little bit but this was insane.

"Are you ok, you're looking a little green around the gills?" The aerobics instructor questioned and grimaced when Aeryn groaned and waved a hand. "That bad huh, why did you do two of my classes in a row on top of your normal workout?"

"Mezzaluna's." She mumbled and closed her eyes in agony.

"Say no more, why do you think I'm so busy here." She dropped a towel on her face and laughed all the way out of the locker room.

Aeryn was ready to scream, she figured that at least in here she could die in peace, instead it was a steady barrage of questions and suggestions.

"Not trying to out due the bottomless pit of Jefferson County is wiser than all their bullshit together."

"Now you tell me after I've suffered for two days," she pulled the towel from her face and smacked Taylor with it. "I would never think that you would come here, ya know with all that impressive equipment you have at home."

"I'm waiting for a client, she's late as usual." She dropped to the floor and sat across from her. "You really don't look good; can I do anything to help?"

"Kill me?"

"And who would I have to hang out with if I did that?" She ran her hand across Aeryn's bent knee and jumped when hands landed on her shoulders.

"Sorry Tay, I ran into a little problem with the asshole." A tall lanky bleach blonde woman purred as she continued to run her hands across Taylor's shoulders and upper arms. "I'm ready to start my workout and I really want to work on my derriere, it needs to be higher like when I was in my 20's." She looked down at Aeryn and gave her a disinterested glance before leaving the locker room.

"You have to have a body first," jealousy was never something that Aeryn fathomed feeling, but it sure was waving a big stick at the blonde as she pranced away. "What does she weigh, fifteen pounds soaking wet?"

Taylor laughed and got to her feet. "I think she tops out at sixteen," she pulled Aeryn to her feet and led her from the locker room. "You gotta see what she considers a workout."

Aeryn rolled her eyes and was ready to run screaming from the gym; there was no way in Hell that the blonde bitch from bimbo land was working anything but flirting muscles. She did more touching and leaning on Taylor than anything else. And the barbells she was using looked like they belonged to a GI Joe doll. She picked one up and looked to Taylor with a raised brow. "What the Hell does a 1lb. barbell do?"

"For your information they do a lot," Bimbo bitch strutted forward and waved a boney finger at Aeryn. "I am in pristine condition," she looked Aeryn up and down and gave her a disgusted look. "You need to do a little more and maybe one day you'll look as good as me."

Aeryn looked to Taylor and saw that she was doing her hardest to not bust up laughing. "When I get to look like you, it means I'm dead from malnutrition." She waved a finger at her bony body and shook her head. "You need to stop looking in that mirror and eat something more than rice cakes and tofu." She turned and started to walk away and stopped when something hit her in her back, turning slowly she narrowed her eyes and saw the 1lb barbell on the floor. "Listen bitch, I'll break you in half with one punch."

The bimbo looked at a smirking Taylor. "Taylor are you going to let that fat bitch talk to me like that?" She moved to stand behind her and then kept trying to find a place to hide when Aeryn advanced on her. "Are you insane...leave me alone!" She ran to the other side of the gym and stood behind an incline sit-up bench. "Taylor help me!"

"Nope, don't care who you're married to, I'm outta this one." She sat down on a bench and watched in total amazement as Aeryn pulled her heavy sweatshirt over her head, dropped it to the floor and walked around in just her sports bra. Her mouth dropped open when she jumped up on a bench, whistled through her fingers and got everyone's attention.

"Ok people listen up; see that scrawny ass anorexic bitch there." She pointed to the bimbo and waited for those listening to nod their heads. "She thinks that I'm fat and I need to work out so



that I can look like her, a walking cadaver," she held out her arms at shoulder height, turned in a circle and flexed her arms to show the muscle and then planted her hands on her hips. "Ok, so we have that 65-70 yr-old bag of bones dressed in a leotard left over from the 80's, complete with matching headband. And then there's me, now tell me, who looks better?" Fingers pointed unanimously to Aeryn. "I rest my case," she jumped down and walked towards the bimbo. "You lose you scrawny ass bitch." She picked up her sweatshirt, waved at Taylor and walked out the door.

"Taylor what is wrong with you, you let that...that fat bitch embarrass me in front of all these people?"

"I happen to agree with her and I was only helping you as a favor for your husband my boss, and now I'm done." She walked from the gym and ran out into the parking lot looking for Aeryn. "You are my hero." She whispered to herself and then sighed when she couldn't find her friend.

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Taylor sat in the passenger seat of the cement truck and did paper work while Buddy loaded the cement for the next job. She hadn't seen Aeryn since they were at Gold's gym, not for trying though; Aeryn wasn't answering her phone and hadn't been at the office in over a week. She had wanted to go up to her mom's door and ask her where she was but she didn't want to bother her. At least that was the reason she was trying to convince her self of, she knew she was being a chicken shit.

"Ok sis we're outta here, this is the last load that they need there and then we're done for the day." Buddy buckled the seat belt and then looked to his pensive sister. "Still thinking about her huh, I'm pregnant and you're gonna be an uncle, ma is really a transvestite."

"What?" She looked to him and then blinked her eyes.

"I was beginning to get worried, you were so far out there I thought I was gonna have to signal the mother ship to haul you back."

"Sorry, I was just thinking."

"Lemme guess...tall dark and extremely sexy?"

She shrugged her shoulders and grinned. "I just find it weird that she's been gone so long and she didn't even say she was leaving." She held up a hand to stop him. "I know what you're thinking and that's not it, I know that she's not my girlfriend but she's my friend and if I were going for a week or so I would let her know."

"Maybe she didn't get a chance to call or whatever, did ya call her mom?"

"No...I was." She shrugged her shoulders and looked out through the windshield.

"Chicken shit." He pulled the truck out of the cement company's lot and turned left onto Rt. 340. They had been working at both the new Chick-a-fila restaurant and Rite-aid store that the area really didn't need but they had no say in the matter. "I think you should call her cell phone or go see her mom; she might be sick or something."

She sighed and blew out a breath, she knew he was right. If she was any kind of friend she wouldn't have waited this long to find out what was going on. "Ok, I'll go see her mom but that's only if there's no answer at her trailer."

"Trailer, she lives in a double wide?" His eyes were wide with disbelief; he remembered dropping her off at a ranch style house. "Then where did we drop her off that night?"

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you."

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Aeryn sat in the airport terminal and cursed at the ETD screen, if she had started walking when they posted the first delay, she would be halfway home by now. Her father had screwed her over again and had sent her on a wild goose chase, now she was stuck in a tiny little airport in some backwater hellhole in Southern Ohio. As she looked around at some of the people, she knew damn sure that they were all blood related. Some of them downright scared the hell out of her and made her feel that she was in part two of the movie *Wrong Turn*. With one more look to the screen, she left the small terminal and walked over to a rental car place. It was the last place she would have imagined to see an Enterprise car rental, but there it was and she was happy as hell. She knew that it would take her longer to drive but with the limited flights out of the mid-Ohio regional airport, she would take her chances. She sure as hell wasn't looking forward to flying into Pittsburgh and then waiting on another flight to get her to Dulles or Baltimore.

She would have to rent a car to get home anyways so this was much better and safer in her eyes, she hated flying and on a plane just a smidge bigger than her deceased car was even worse in her eyes. Stepping up to the counter, she waited for the young guy to notice her.

"I need to rent a car."

"That might be a problem ma'am," he rubbed his bald head and looked up at her with a wandering eye. "We only have one car left and it's been in a slight accident."

She looked back and forth between his eyes as she tried to talk to him and felt dizzy. "What's a slight accident?"

"I was moving it around to the back and kinda hit the edge of the building." He shrugged his shoulders and gave her a sheepish expression. "The front fender is history not to mention the

corner of the building, my boss is gonna kill me."

Aeryn leaned forward and raised a dark brow at him. "Is it drivable?"

"Yes ma'am, it just looks real bad, I can't really rent it in its condition though."

She leaned on the counter and moved so that she could look into the eye that didn't wander as much. "Maybe you can't rent it but you can sell it right?" She wiggled her eyebrow and gave him a heart stopping smile.

"Yes ma'am we do sell our older cars but that one isn't one of them." His eyes widened at what she was getting at, he quickly punched the keys on the pc's keyboard and ran a hand across his face. "I can't believe I'm gonna do this," he looked up at her and raised an eyebrow. "You are one lucky lady; the car just came up on the list to be sold." He punched a few more keys and went over to the printer. He came back and handed her the paper and waited to see her reaction. "It's a good car with the exception of the damage to it."

She looked at the price, pulled her wallet out and slapped her gold American Express down on the counter. "I'll take it."

"You will...I'll clean it up real good and make sure that all the fluids are topped off before you leave." He ran the card and did all the paperwork for the sale of the car. His boss would be surprised that he was able to sell the car the first day that it was put on the sell list; he didn't have to know that it had appeared almost six months early. There was no way that he would ever admit to hacking the pc program and changing the dates.

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Behind the wheel of her 2007 infernal red crystal pearl PT Cruiser, Aeryn tore up the highway on her way back home. One thing she couldn't wait to do was tell her mom that she had put the car on her dad's company credit card. After all it was his fault that her car was destroyed so he should replace it. She ran her hands across the steering wheel and couldn't help but grin like a complete lunatic; this was the first car that she had that wasn't over 20 years old when she got it.

"I can't wait to show it to Taylor," she slapped her forehead and swore. "I forgot to tell her I was going outta town; she probably thinks I'm blowing off our friendship or that I'm mad about that anorexic bitch from the gym." She searched her pockets, her belt and then remembered that she didn't have a cell phone. That was another thing that she was gonna charge to her dad's card, if she could get away with it, she would buy a house. "Just wait until he gets this bill, he may drop over from a heart attack." Looking at the clock on the dash, she estimated that she could make it home in about four hours if she did the speed limit. "Maybe less than that if I hit the pedal a little harder." She thought of how much gas she would use speeding down the highway and decided that the extra cash for gas and a possible speeding ticket wasn't worth thirty minutes or so.

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Taylor ran her fingers through her hair, looked in the rearview mirror and then decided that there was nothing she could do to hide the worry in her eyes. As soon as she and Buddy had gotten home, she had taken a shower, grabbed a sandwich and high-tailed it out the door. She wanted to get to Aeryn's before she lost her nerve and just sat at home and worried. As she pulled past Aeryn's trailer, she saw that there was no car in the parking area, as she neared her mom's house; she saw a car in the garage out back. "Can't chicken out now, you're in the driveway." She parked and saw movement in the front windows, as she climbed from her truck; Selma opened the front door and waved at her.

"Come on in, I just started a pot of coffee." She waited for Taylor and took her hand as she stepped into the house. "I thought it was my kid coming in the drive."

"That's actually why I'm here," she took a seat at the kitchen table. "I haven't heard from her and I'm worried."

"That dipshit forgot to call you," she shook her head in exasperation. "I specifically told her to call you before she took off outta here." She placed a cup of coffee in front of her and then got the creamer and sugar. "She had to go up to Ohio and check out some leads on some case, I expected her back hours ago but I figured she got delayed at the airport. She has to fly from Marietta to Pittsburgh and then to Dulles, no telling when she'll get here."

Taylor felt a bit of relief; at least she knew where she was. "I was just worried, you know with what happened to her the last time. Is it normal for an investigator to stake out a place all alone?"

"Nope, normally there's two of them but with my kid, she refuses to let anyone do stake outs with her." She played with the spoon beside her cup and then looked up at Taylor. "She has a real problem with some of the men in her dad's office; he seems to be able to find and hire all the low life scumbags in the area. He paired her up one night with this guy and within three hours I had to go pick her up at the ER. The freak she was on stakeout with jumped her and she ended up breaking her hand on his face." She grinned and gave Taylor a wink. "He had to stay in the hospital for a week, who knew that having you nose set and jaw wired would have ya laid up in the ICU?"

"I can honestly say that I have never in my entire life had to deal with such asinine behavior from men, see that being a heterosexual is worse."

"I think it may have something to do with being an Amazon, you probably scare the shit outta most men. Now my kid is built and has more muscle than most men, but her mistake is that she's dated losers and they pass the word around and then she has the loser colony following her everywhere." She held up a six fingers. "Six of them in as many years, the latest ass wipe is this disgusting excuse for a life form John. If I could get away with it, I'd kill him."

"Ohhhh I've met him, briefly and I can tell you I was not impressed in the least. I threatened to kill him and make sure that no one found his body, has he come around anymore?"

"He's too damn stupid to realize a real threat, he was here a couple days ago and thank god that Aeryn wasn't here, she would have shot him this time." She groaned and slapped a hand to her forehead. "He was in her trailer when I chased him off and I forgot to check to make sure he didn't do anything creepy."

"Is it unlocked?" Taylor got up from her chair.

"No, I locked it up after he left," she pointed to a ring of keys hanging by the kitchen door. "There's the keys, you go open it up while I grab her laundry, some day that kid will wash her own clothes."

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Taylor spun the keys on her index finger as she walked towards Aeryn's trailer; she looked up and saw the back end of a car sitting in front of the trailer. Cussing low under her breathe, she took off running towards it. When she made the corner, she felt a solid impact and the next thing she knew, she was looking up at the sky.

"See I was right, you two are made for each other." Selma said from where she stood over both women. "That's gonna leave a mark." She pointed to the red mark on Taylor's forehead and snickered at the matching mark on her daughter's forehead. "If you two aren't dead, let's go have some cheese cake and coffee." She dropped the clothes basket off and stepped over both women on her way back to her house.

"Ya know Aeryn," she rolled to her side and groaned. "You need to wrap caution tape around you or something."

"I'd settle for foam rubber maybe a catchers mask," she sat up and fell back in the grass. "As if a black eye isn't enough to deal with." She lay there until Taylor held a hand out to her. "I know why I was running but why were you?"

"I saw that car in the yard and thought that John was here," She pulled her to her feet and stared into her reddish brown eyes. "I was gonna kick his ass if he was in your trailer."

"Not if I got him first, that's my car you see, I just got here no more than two minutes ago." She looked into emerald green eyes and felt her heartbeat pick up speed. "This is gonna sound crazy but I missed you." She threw her arms around Taylor and hugged her. "I'm sorry that I forgot to tell you I was leaving, I'll make it up to ya."

Taylor buried her face against Aeryn's neck and sighed, she didn't give a damn if Aeryn was

straight or not, this was a guilty pleasure and she was going to enjoy for as long as she could.

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Both women sat at the kitchen table with bags of ice on their foreheads, neither one couldn't help but laugh at each other. "You two are something else, I'm gonna take out insurance on both of ya cuz y'all might end up accidentally killing each other." Selma placed cheesecake in front of them and then grabbed the coffee pot. "So my kid the biggest klutz in the county, did you find anything on your goose chase?"

Aeryn had her fork half-way to her mouth and stopped; she blinked her eyes and then shook her head in amusement. "You knew he was gonna send me on a goose chase and you didn't stop me?"

"Of course not, I figured you'd have sort of a mini vacation from the office assholes but you should have taken your girlfriend with you," she winked at Taylor. "So did you find anything?"

"Nope," she grinned and then wiggled her brows. "With the exception of a new car, dads gonna have a heart attack, I put it on the company credit card."

Selma busted out laughing and held her hand up for a high five with her daughter. "How much did you charge?"

"Around eleven or twelve grand, it's a 2007 Cruiser and a hell of a lot better than the cars that dad's gotten to replace all the ones in the past. Some of them I swear he found inside the crusher at the junk yard."

"So your car being totaled the other night is not the first?" Taylor asked in total amazement.

"Nope, I've had quite a few stripped, stolen, plowed into but this is the first one to be demolished by baseball bats while I was in it."

"You need a tank with a great big pit bull inside it."

"I told her to take her dad's car on stake out one night and let him cry when something happened to it, then he would get her something that would withstand a riot."

"That's what I'd do, so are you going to use this new car on stake outs?"

Aeryn shook her head and finished chewing her food. "Hell no, I'm gonna use Rick's car." She grinned. "Just kidding, he'd have me arrested for car theft. But I stole his keys the other day and had copies made, one day I'll just up and move it somewhere just for the hell of it."

## Chapter Twelve

Taylor stood leaning against the kitchen counter with a cup of coffee in her hands when Buddy came stumbling in, he took one look at her and grinned. "Thought I looked bad in the morning but you got me beat." He got closer to her and noticed the reason why her eyes lids were a little bruised and eyes bloodshot. "Who the Hell hit you in the head," he tried to touch the dark bruise between her eyebrows but couldn't reach. "Does it hurt?"

"I literally ran into Aeryn yesterday and Hell yea it hurts. I imagine that she looks worse than I do, with the black eye now a greenish color, sutures in her cheek and now a big old bruised brow line."

He cringed at the picture forming in his head. "Christ maybe you two should invest in accident insurance or something."

She chuckled. "That's what her mom said she's gonna do," she sat down at the table and watched as he crawled on the counter to get his cereal bowl down. "For some reason her mom thinks we're gonna become more than friends, at least that's what I'm picking up."

"Is there a chance of that?"

She shrugged her shoulders and took a drink of her coffee to keep from voicing her wishes. She kept getting signals from Aeryn but she didn't know quite how to read them, the woman was like no one she had ever met before. Her straight female friends hugged her, touched her and had even kissed her on the cheek but none of them made her feel the way that Aeryn did. She knew it wasn't because she was attracted to her; she was attracted to plenty of straight women and they didn't give her the vibes she was getting from Aeryn, it was something else that she just couldn't put her finger on. "You know that I don't go after straight women, drooling over them from a distance is different but no entanglements means no broken heart."

"But you can get a broken heart from any kind of relationship sis, what if she pursues you, will that change your mind?"

"What like all of a sudden she jumps over the fence because she's curious?" She shook her head; she would rather not be a baby dyke trainer.

"How many people have hid in the closet for years and then one day they just got tired of playing the game and said the Hell with it I'm coming out?"

"Quite a few but I don't think Aeryn is one of those, she just has really bad taste in men."

Buddy laughed and slapped his hand down on the table. "That's probably because she's gay!"

"And just what is your excuse; you've dated some real winners?"

"The Lollipop gang is too old for me?" He shrugged his shoulders. "Seriously, if her taste is that bad do ya think she could be picking the losers unconsciously? That way she doesn't have to really form a commitment with a man, stay hidden in her closet and this all seems so clear in my mind but it sure sounds wonky when I try and say it."

"Nah, I think I know what you're trying to say." She scratched her head and shrugged her shoulders. "Lemme think on it." She headed to her side of the house and fell on her couch; she didn't feel like doing much of anything but was glad that they had the day off. It was unusual that they had the day off but with the torrential rains and heavy winds, they couldn't pour any cement. She was hoping that it would last a few days, she was tired and her body ached from all the raking and floating of the thousands of yards of cement they had done in the last week. What she really needed to do was a light workout to loosen up her aching muscles and joints but even that was taking a back burner to her just lying on her couch and watching TV.

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Aeryn had spent two hours at the doctors' office and just up and left when the nurse told her that the doctor was running another hour behind schedule. She didn't have all day to be sitting around waiting for some idiot to look at her face and then take out the sutures. She could do that on her own and not have to pay the exorbitant office call and then the price to take out the sutures. She was going to just go into work but changed her mind at the last minute; she flipped a U-turn and headed back towards where Taylor and Buddy lived. She decided that she was taking the day off and didn't give a damn what anyone thought and that included her dad. She didn't want to sit at home in her crappy trailer and her mom was off on one of her traveling poker games somewhere so that gave her a good excuse to spend time with Taylor. She just hoped that she was home, she had no idea what days she worked or even the shift. If no one was there she would leave a note for her to call her when she got home.

"Supper would be good; I need to take her out to supper maybe a movie afterwards." She shook her head at her thoughts. "That sounds so much like a date...it would be a date." Taking a deep breath she thought about what she had just said and smiled. "Ok so I wanna date her, what's wrong with that...ohh for the fact that you're not gay would be one good reason. Ok, how about that I don't think I'm completely straight, how about that?" She pulled down the street to Taylor's and slowed as she moved towards her building. "How's this one, you're a complete lunatic because you've been having a two way conversation with your self!" As she got in front of the building, she saw both trucks beside each other in parking spaces. "Take a deep breathe and get your ass in gear, you can do this Aeryn." Before she could change her mind and chicken out, she sprinted up to the building and went through the large glass door. Seeing just one mailbox in the alcove area, she wondered where the other occupants for the building got their mail. She looked



down the short hallway and saw just one door on each side.

"Ok so they don't need numbers because they know where they live and they get their mail at the post office?" She saw the stairs ahead and climbed to the second floor, what she found strange was that there was just a small alcove with a single door. It reminded her of a penthouse and then realized that it sort of was a penthouse. "I don't remember any of this from when I was here." She rung the door bell and stood back, before she could take her next breathe, the door opened to show Buddy.

"Hey Aeryn, good to see you, come on in." He held the door for her and gave her a warm smile. "I heard ya got a new car, so how do ya like it?" He led her down the hallway past the open door to the gym and then to where the door to the kitchen was.

"I love it, this is the first new car that I've ever owned, well it's not brand new but newer than any I've had."

"I've had quite a few of those myself, they nickel and dime ya to death with repairs. I bought my truck new and then did all the modifications when I had the money." He took her to Taylor's living room and pointed to where his sister was asleep on the couch. "Go smack the shit outta her, I can't believe she's spending her day off sleeping."

"So you guys have the day off...of course you do, it's raining outside." She went to smack her forehead and thought better of it.

"Nice bruise ya have there looks just like Taylor's." He squeezed her shoulder and left her alone in his sisters living room.

Aeryn moved closer to the couch and sat down on the edge, taking in her friends sleeping features made her smile. She took in how her dark eyebrows were naturally arched and how flawless her complexion was. It was then that she noticed the white hairs peppering her blonde hair and the laugh lines at the corners of her eyes. Gently, she ran her fingers through her hair and felt tingles in her digits.

"If you tell me I have grey hair I'll smack you." She opened one eye and watched a grin form on Aeryn's lips.

"Actually they're not grey, they're white." She yelped when Taylor grabbed her and rolled her to the back of the couch.

"They're highlights," she got up and grabbed the TV remote. "It takes a long time to do one hair at a time." She dropped back down on the couch after turning the sound down. "So what brings you here to torture me?"

"Ohhhh nothing, I got pissed off and left the doctors office before he could see me and then I decided that I was taking the day off." She raised her hands out to the sides. "So I came over to see if you're doing anything for supper tonight?"

Taylor looked up at the ceiling, rubbed her chin and then turned twinkling green eyes back to her. "Eating some really good free food hopefully."

"Your choice of restaurant and I'll even drive, that is if you'll feel safe in a vehicle with the Klutz of Jefferson county?"

"I feel lucky today so it's fine with me if you drive. Do you have any other plans for today?" she cast a quick glance towards her living room door and then back to Aeryn.

"Nope, not a single thing to do." She looked towards the door and then back to Taylor, she raised her left brow and waved a hand at the door. "Expecting someone, should I come back later?"

Taylor grinned and shook her head. "There's an elf hiding near the door, eavesdropping on us." She whispered and then held a finger to her lips. "Watch this." She pulled a Nerf baseball bat from under the couch, snuck up to the door and swung the bat at knee level around the door jam. Buddy let out a yell and then there was the sound of him running down the hallway. "He's so dense sometimes, anyways since you don't have any plans, how about lunch?"

"Ok, where are we going?"

"To the kitchen," she held out her hand to her and pulled her up from the couch. "I've got a craving for a huge chicken sandwich, French fries and a beer."

Aeryn had no idea that Taylor's idea of a chicken sandwich was a deep fried breaded chicken breast on a Kaiser roll with all the trimmings. What had her even more surprised was that they were able to put away two each and eat a whole bag of curly seasoned French fries. They had finished eating when Buddy snuck in and smacked Taylor in the back of the head with his Nerf baseball bat.

"Now we're sorta even," he looked down at her plate and growled. "Where's mine?"

"Still running around a chicken coop somewhere I imagine." She pointed to the fryer basket. "You're lucky we weren't that hungry or you wouldn't have gotten anything." She got up and took the dirty plates with her to the sink. "There's tator tots in the freezer or more curly fries if you want 'em." She rinsed the dishes off put them into the dishwasher and was about to grab the other stuff when Aeryn placed them on the counter. "See that Buddy, she cleans up the table and she doesn't even live here, I think I'll keep her and toss your ass on the sidewalk."

"I'll tell ma on you." He stuck his tongue out behind her back

"And I'll tell the guys at work that you still suck your thumb when you sleep." She stuck her tongue out at him and then pulled Aeryn from the kitchen. "You better clean up your own mess Orville!" She yelled back to him and laughed when he called her a rotten no good bitch. "His given name is Orville Lee Garrett, atrocious isn't it?"

"I take it he was named after a relative?"

"Nope, it was dad's doing; he loves Orville Redenbacher popcorn and Robert E Lee." She dropped down on to her couch and flipped the TV channel to TBS. "After that, mom fought him tooth and nail and won, if she had lost, you'd be calling me Stonewall Garrett."

"That's a hell of a lot better than Orville Lee, no wonder you call him Buddy." She sat down next to her and rubbed her aching stomach. "I ate too much and thank you for lunch; I've never had a sandwich like that before." She leaned back in the softness of the couch cushions and closed her eyes. "Do you guys eat that much all the time?"

"Yep, it takes a lot of energy to do the work we do, eight to ten hours a day moving cement burns up the calories quick. Plus the workouts we do burns off a lot to." She pulled a handle on the side of the couch and eased the whole back into a reclining position; she stretched out and felt her eyes growing heavy. "I love this couch, so glad I made it." She got comfortable, pulled a blanket off the back and covered them both up. "What stuff do you watch on TV, we've got *DirectTV* here so we've got lots of channels to choose from?"

"It's up to you, I get two whole channels at home so this like going to Disneyland." She moved closer to Taylor and looked at the TV remote in her hand. "My remote is me using my toes to hit the channel button on the TV."

Taylor glanced at her from the corner of her eye and raised an eyebrow. "Your toes huh, that's some kind of talent."

"You didn't see my tiny TV sitting on a shelf at the end of my bed huh, not much talent to stretch out your leg and hit the thing?"

"Ya never know, you could be the only person in the world that can do it." She put on USA and dropped the remote on the couch beside her. "This is a good channel and today is the *NCIS* marathon, I just love Cote, she plays Mossad Officer Ziva David."

"So I get to watch you drool over some woman huh?" She leaned back and gave her a narrowed look. "Is she hot?"

"I don't drool and I think so, you'll see." She grinned.

"Probably some blonde bimbo with huge tits and zero talent like Pamela Sue Anderson." All Taylor did was give her a wiggle of eyebrows.

"Not even close on all accounts but you'll see soon enough." Were her last words as she drifted off to sleep beside Aeryn.

Buddy came into the living room, looked over the back of the couch and rolled his eyes. "Light weights, eat lunch and take a nap, next I'll be warming up baby bottles for ya." He reached over the couch with a black magic marker, did some art work and then skipped from the room.

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Aeryn was still asleep when Taylor woke, what woke her was her arm throbbing in pain. She tried to move it but the pain and the weight of it had her gasping. She looked down and saw one of the reasons it was so hard to move and that was that Aeryn was laying on it. She tugged on her arm to no avail and was ready to wake Aeryn when she saw reddish brown eyes blink open. "My arm is dead...can you..." She pointed to where her arm was trapped and gritted her teeth when she moved and blood flow rushed back into it. "Damn but that hurts!" She fell back on the couch and continued to grit her teeth together.

"Why didn't you just shove me over or something," she studied Taylor's face with concern. "You know that you grew half a mustache during our nap." She chuckled.

"Is that all, I don't have a sideburn or anything else?"

"Nope, just half a mustache, so this happens often?"

"Ever since I shaved off half of Buddy's mustache while he was sleeping, I seem to grow the other half while I'm sleeping."

"So it's paybacks of a sort."

"Yep, last week I shaved the hair off one of his forearms." She groaned and tried to flex her fingers.

Aeryn ran her fingers up Taylor's arm and then started to gently message the muscles. She grinned when she tried to pull away but her dead arm wouldn't let her. "Just give me a minute here and it'll feel better I promise." She kept messaging the thick muscles of her forearm and worked all the way up to her shoulder. She stopped and looked into darkened green eyes and felt her whole world tip in a different direction. She moved closer to her and ran her hand across her chest to stop at the side of her neck. With the tip of her thumb, she caressed her jaw line and trailed her fingers up into the hair at her temple.

Throwing all her fears to the wayside, she leaned into her body and brought their lips together in a soft kiss. She pulled back enough to be able to look into her eyes and saw a gamut of emotions. "Don't think about anything, just feel." She whispered in a hoarse voice before bringing their lips together again. She moved so that she was pressed tightly against Taylor's wide chest and tangled her fingers in her hair. She deepened the kiss and felt her head spin. What she felt while kissing her was right and true and what she had been looking for all her life.

Taylor gave up all control and let Aeryn take the led, what she was feeling was unlike anything she had ever experienced before. What scared her most was that these emotions were just from

being kissed and then her brain kicked into gear and ruined everything by screaming 'straight woman'. She pulled back from Aeryn, took a deep breathe and shook her head.

"We can't do this...it's not right." She rolled off the couch and moved across the room to stand at a pair of French doors. "Aeryn, I can't,"

"What, what can't you do. I don't understand or is this about us?"

"Us, there can't be an 'us'. You're straight and I can't even think that way. I'm not playing the Ann Heche game with you, I've done it in the past and I got burnt." She dropped her head and jammed her hands into her pockets. "I can't risk my heart again."

Aeryn moved into her personal space, held her face between her hands and looked deeply into her troubled green eyes. "The last thing in the world I would ever do is hurt you, you must believe that. And I'm not exactly as straight as even I would like to believe, and I admit that to you and myself. I sucked at relationships because that's what I wanted. I don't want that anymore, I want to be with someone, I want that someone to be you. That is if you are at all interested in me in that way, if not I understand."

"I'm more than interested and I have been since our fake date."

Aeryn wrapped her arms around her neck and pulled her into a tight hug, when strong arms wrapped around her, she sunk into the warmth. "You are the only person I've ever hugged outside of my family, that's got to say something." She leaned back and looked at her. "I even find you extremely attractive with half a mustache, that's just got to be wrong right?"

Taylor tried to hold back her laugh but lost. "Ok, that counts for something but I wanna take this slow, friends first."

"Ok, friends first." She pulled her down for a soft lingering kiss before releasing her. "And I'll have you know that I have never until today made the first move on anyone."

"I've seen your taste in men so I can see why that would be." She threw her shoulder up to block the punch coming her way. "Hey it's true!"

"I know but you don't have to remind me." She took her hand and pulled her back over to the couch. "So since we can't make out or anything, what's on TV?" She dropped onto the couch and waved a hand at the remote. "I'm remote challenged so you do it."

"Hope you don't mind being tortured," she pressed a few buttons and then dropped the remote. "My favorite movie is on and it just so happens that the only channel that plays it is the *Logo* channel." She wiggled her brows and grinned. "It's a channel for us gays, lesbians etc...they show documentaries, TV series, short films and just about anything else that you can think of that would interest gays."

"Believe it or not I've heard of it, I saw an advertisement for *RuPauls*

Drag show, I just don't get to see stuff like this because I'm a cheap bitch and don't have a little dish."

"Those drag queens scare me, especially when it looks kinda female up top but has this huge package below." She shivered.

She got up from the couch, and waved a hand at Taylor. "Does this thing go completely flat?"

An evil grin formed on Taylor's face, she nodded her head and then pointed to the side of the couch. "Pull that handle and it drops flat, now tell me why we need to have it flat?"

"It's not often that I have a chance to lay on a couch and unless you don't mind me laying on top of you..."

As soon as Taylor dropped the couch flat, Aeryn grabbed a throw pillow and crawled behind her. "Ok, now what are we watching?" She dropped her arm over Taylor's waist and squeezed her.

"Uuhmm...D.E.B.S." She looked over her shoulder, into reddish brown eyes and gave up the fight. "You're gonna make this extremely hard aren't you?"

Aeryn snuggled into her back and smiled to herself. "And I'm sure I have no idea what you mean, now be quiet I'm trying to watch the movie."

They lay together on the couch watching the movie; Aeryn tapped Taylor on her temple and pointed to the TV. "See that, the 'perfect score' Amy meets the bad girl Lucy and falls out of the closet. We're just the opposite."

"And how are we the opposite?" She rolled back and looked at Aeryn.

"Well I'm bad at everything so that makes me the bad girl who came literally screaming out of the closet; besides, I'm the dark one here."

"I think you're both nuts and this ain't fair!" Buddy leaned over them and beat them both with his Nerf bat. "You turned another woman; pretty soon there won't be any left for me to date!"

"I'll leave ya all the ugly ones, how's that?" She covered her head and slid from the couch; seconds later she had her own bat and was smacking him. Aeryn joined in with her pillow and pretty soon it was an all out war.

"Ok I give!" Buddy said from where he was hiding behind a chair. "I was gonna make supper, what do ya'll wanna eat?"

"I'm treating," Aeryn said. "You guys wanna go out or order in?"

Taylor gave Buddy a huge grin. "In and I want pizza."

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Aeryn stood by the door to the parking lot and wished that she didn't have to leave. She wanted nothing more than to spend more time with Taylor but had agreed to take things slow. She was about to go out the door when she heard someone running down the steps, she turned and saw Taylor jumping down the last six or so steps to land in front of her. "I know what I said but I can't let you leave without doing this." She put her hand behind her neck, leaned in and captured her mouth for a deep consuming kiss, she backed her into the wall and continued to kiss her until they were both dizzy from lack of air. They hung onto each other and slid down to the floor where they sat leaning into each other.

"Tell me again why we're going slow?" Aeryn asked in a husky voice.

"Because I'm an idiot," she got to her feet and pulled Aeryn up. "Come on I'll walk you out to your car, never know when some idiot will attack you." She took her hand, walked her all the way to her car and then opened the door for her. "You better get out of here before I change my mind about taking this slow." She leaned through the window and kissed her one last time before jogging back up to her building. She stood in the doorway and waved as Aeryn backed out and left. Sighing, she ran back up the stairs and met Buddy in the doorway. "I am in so much trouble Buddy." She walked past him and went into the kitchen for a beer.

"You've fallen for her haven't you?" He watched as she turned and saw it clearly in her eyes. "Whatcha gonna do now?"

"Cry." She dropped down into a chair and rubbed at her forehead.

"So is she really gay or just dazed and confused because my Amazonian sister kissed her into a semi-coma?"

"From the way she kissed me back, I was in a semi-coma. I'm just really confused about everything that happened today, one minute I'm telling her that we need to take it slow and the next I wanna..." She waved a hand at him.

"So the feeling is mutual?"

"Yeah, now what am I gonna do?"

"Don't ask me, I have no idea about you women. One minute you all are straight then gay then who the Hell knows. But if I was you, I'd be wining and dinning her and praying for a toaster." He pointed to the one on the counter. "We need a new one that one sucks; it burns one side of the bread."

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Aeryn gazed into Taylor's light green eyes; she caressed her face and pulled her in for a lingering kiss. She had prayed that she would come to her after she had left that night and she didn't disappoint. She moaned as her hands traveled across her bare skin leaving it tingling and warmed. Moist lips traveled from her neck, down across her breasts to her stomach and then between her legs. Taylor's hot wet tongue had her gasping for air. She clenched her hands and dug her heels into the mattress; her body was humming from the attention. She gasped and threw her head back into her pillow, her back arched, toes curled and she shuddered with release. She lay with her hands above her head and her hips still twitching with after shocks from her release. Loud pounding come from her trailer door, the bubble burst and she realized that everything that had happened had been a dream.

"For fuck sakes," she ran a hand down between her legs and felt how wet she was. "First time I've had mind blowing sex and it's from a dream." She got up and stumbled on weak legs, peeking out the window she saw her dad and ignored the pounding. "I'm in the shower go away!" She yelled and turned the water on.

"I want you at the house when you're done!" He yelled back.

She grinned to herself; she just knew it had to be about the charges to the company account. He sure as Hell didn't want to go there with her; she could and would make life very unpleasant for him if he did. "I'll let Taylor knock the shit outta him if he tries to take my car." With the thought of her friend, she felt her insides quiver and her center twitch. "I feel like a kid, wet dreams at my age?" She stepped beneath the hot water and thought about her dream, twenty minutes later she was sitting on the floor of her small shower recovering from self induced orgasms. She got to her feet and slowly made her way the short distance to where her clothes sat in the basket. After dressing, she made her way to her mom's and took a deep breath before going inside. The first thing she heard was her mom yelling at the tops of her lungs and then her dad yelping.

"Don't you pull that shit with me; I know damn well you've spent more than that on stupid ass shit. Those illegal Cuban cigars for one and would you like me to make a list of all the other illegal shit and turn it over to the district attorney, I'm sure he would just love to toss your sorry ass in jail?"

"But she put that on the company card."

"I don't give a shit if she put it on your personal card; you've ripped your own daughter off for years. You pay her practically nothing; abuse her by not putting an end to all the shit she has to put up with at work and putting her in dangerous situations." She grabbed a frying pan and waved it over head. "Now get the fuck outta my house before I hit you again you good for nothing bastard!" She turned when she heard footsteps and smiled at Aeryn. "How much did you hear?"

"A lot and I have news for him, I'm quitting." She sat down at the table and rubbed at her tired



eyes. "I can make more money at Subway making sandwiches than investigating all the stupid shit for him."

"You look tired, what time did you get home?"

"About ten o'clock, I just didn't sleep good and then asshole pounding on my door at the crack of dawn." She looked up at her mom and tried to avoid her dissecting stare.

She recognized the glow her daughter had about her and grinned. "What did you do last night, anything interesting happen?"

"I ordered pizza for the three of us, we ate and I came home." She felt her face heating up from her mother's gaze and covered her face with her hands. "We didn't do anything...I had this dream this morning and..."

"Ohhhh I see, it was one of those dreams, so she's that good huh?"

"Ma...this is just wrong, ya know us talking about it and I'm not saying one word about how good she was...fuck me sideways I have a big mouth and no brain."

"See that, you need to forget about swinging dicks and go after Taylor, if she's that good in a dream then just think what she would be like in real life."

"That is just terrifying; I don't think I could live through the real thing." Her thoughts ran rampant and in seconds her center was twitching. "I can't believe I'm gonna say this to my mom," she cleared her throat. "I want more than a friendship with her, she calms and excites me all at the same time, she's all I can think about and when I look into her eyes," she looked down at her hands and back up to her mom. "I think I'm in love with her."

"Then what in the Hell are you waiting for, get your ass over there and tell her."

"There's just one problem...I put the moves on her yesterday, she freaked and we came to an agreement to take it slow."

"Ohh I see, she's afraid that this is just a curiosity for you and that's it." She leaned back in her chair and thought for a few seconds. "The two of you need to get away for a weekend, go somewhere nice and quiet." She snapped her fingers and got up from the table. "I know just the place for you two, Mildred told me about it." She searched the top of the dry sink and found a pamphlet. "Here it is this place looks absolutely beautiful."

Aeryn took the pamphlet, looked at it and then to her mother. "And why does Mildred have this, this place says it's gay and lesbian friendly?"

"Are ya kidding me, her and Sally have been together for going on 40 years. They go down there at least once a month, there's some lake or something around there where they go fishing when it's nice."

Aeryn narrowed her eyes and cocked her left eyebrow. "Fishing huh, more like skinny dipping knowing Mildred, she's a 65yr-old pervert." She began to wonder about all her moms other friends and their poker nights. "So tell me ma, what do you guys do on these traveling poker games?"

"Poker hell, we go to strip bars, you have no idea how many free drinks we get from dumbass men. Now go make some damn reservations before they get booked for the weekend, Hell go for a week!" She looked at her daughter from under drawn brows. "A week in the sac with Taylor wouldn't kill ya none." She left the kitchen and Aeryn sitting there with her mouth hanging open.

"I'm getting romantic getaway pamphlets from my mom and sex advice, just great." She went back to her trailer and read through all the stuff that the *Lost River Guesthouse* had to offer, she had to admit that the place was beautiful. She grabbed her phone and made the call, she might end up there all by herself but she didn't mind, she could use the break.

## Chapter Thirteen

Taylor had stayed away from Aeryn physically for almost a week, she wanted to test herself and she now knew that she was a serious loser. She couldn't concentrate at work; she had ended up dumping a good portion of a cement truck on herself that morning and had to put up with Buddy's ribbing. Her gym workouts lasted mere minutes because she would drift off into another world and forget what she was doing, she found out how dangerous it was to stop while running on a tread mill. She now found herself walking in town in a complete daze and came damn near getting run over by a truck. "You gotta snap out of this before you end up getting killed." She said to herself and then looked around to see where she was. Seeing one of the coffee shops that she frequented, she headed towards it and went inside. As soon as she sat down, she recognized a few of the local women. She raised her coffee cup to them and smiled. She knew Karen and her wife Dana from the bar scene and their dyke club, she had gone to a few of their BBQ's and other things when she was dating, but had stopped when she broke up with her girlfriend.

"Hey Taylor, I haven't seen you in a while, how are you and Aeryn getting along?" Karen asked.

"Aeryn...I forgot you work at the same office," she sipped her coffee trying to figure out just what Karen knew about her and Aeryn. "We're doing good, so how's it going with you and Dana?"

"Good, and let me tell you that she was bouncing off the walls when I told her about Aeryn finally coming out of the closet and I almost had to sedate her when I told her that you two were dating. We've been waiting years for her to finally realize that she was on the wrong damn side of the fence."

Taylor raised an eyebrow at this, she wondered if she had been missing something all along.

"Years huh, so when did you know about her?"

Karen gave her a strange look and shook her head. "The minute I saw her, no straight woman threatens to cut guys nuts off or constantly beats the shit outta them for just looking at her. At least none of the straight women I know, Aeryn is like...she's hard to describe but my Gaydar shorted out the second I saw her."

"Yes she is," she grinned knowingly. "Is she at work today?"

"Yep, she doesn't leave the office at lunch time, it's the only time she has any peace from the morons. You know that we're gonna miss her after she leaves, she always keeps the place jumping, ya know with zapping the idiots with her taser or knocking them over desks."

"Excuse me, what do you mean when she leaves?"

"You know her quitting, I heard she has a new job starting soon or did I hear wrong?"

"Nope, you heard right but I didn't." She tossed her empty cup in the trash and waved. "I gotta run, maybe I can catch her before she takes off." She left the shop and smacked her hands together. "Shit I don't have my truck!" She took off running down the sidewalk and kept on running until she came to the building that housed the law firm where Aeryn worked. She fell into the doors and hung onto one as she bent over at the waist and tried to catch her breath. She looked through the glass doors into the office area but couldn't see Aeryn's desk from where she was. Stumbling on weak legs, she went through the doors and looked around. One person was still in the office and the elderly woman gazed up at her and smiled. "Is Aeryn here?"

"No, she left about ten minutes ago, can I help you?"

"Any idea where she was headed?"

"I know you, you're her girlfriend." She got up and walked towards her. "She said something about going to the gym."

Taylor groaned and nodded her head; it was just her luck that she had missed her by minutes. "Thank you, I hope I can catch her before she leaves." She walked from the office and turned in the direction of the gym, she glanced at her watch and figured out how long it would take her to run the four miles there. "I hope I can catch her before she leaves or I'm gonna drop over." She started running and took as many short cuts as she could to cut down on time and distance.

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Aeryn had just lain down on the weight bench, placed her hands on the barbell and closed her eyes in concentration. She jumped when something wet fell across her chest and was ready to

start swinging when she realized that it was Taylor. "What's wrong," she ran her hands across her back and felt how wet her t-shirt was. "You're soaking wet."

"Dying..." she panted out and clutched at Aeryn's shirt. "Heart attack." She slipped to the floor and pulled Aeryn with her.

"What!" she looked down into her pale and sweaty face and then around the gym. "Ohh Christ don't do this to me," she looked to the back corner, saw one of her friends and yelled out his name. "Jack I need your help here!" She wiped at her face and then dropped her head to her chest; she heard her pounding heartbeat and became even more terrified.

"What's up Aeryn?" A short and stocky man asked from where he was bent over the two of them.

"She's having a heart attack," she glanced up with panicky eyes. "Help her please, she's my girlfriend."

"Ohh shit," he dropped to his knees, grabbed Taylor's wrist and then looked to Aeryn. "Go out to my car and get my bag and on the front seat is a bottle of aspirin bring that to." He waited until Aeryn was gone before he started checking Taylor out. "Ok tell me when did it start?"

She gasped for breath and clutched her chest. "About...ten minutes ago." She closed her eyes and tried to take deep breaths. "Hurts so bad, can't breathe."

Jack took her pulse and then checked her eyes and waved to one of the trainers. "You still have that oxygen in the office; I need it if you do?" He watched as Aeryn came sprinting back into the gym with his bag. "Ok Aeryn, I need you to calm her down for me." He searched through his bag for his stethoscope and blood pressure cuff, when the trainer brought the oxygen; he placed the face mask over Taylor's face and started taking her stats. He looked down at her when he was done and smiled. "Good news, you're not having a heart attack." He turned the oxygen down and tapped her on the chest. "So how far did you run before you got here?"

"Eight...ten miles," she leaned back into Aeryn's body and took a deep breath. "Had to get here." She brought Aeryn's hand up to her lips and placed a kiss in the palm of her hand.

"There are better ways than running a mini marathon to impress your girlfriend, try flowers or a romantic night out. Because scaring her half to death with a possible heart attack is a sure fire way of getting your ass kicked." He handed Aeryn the bottle of aspirins and packed up his bag. "Get some fluid in her and no more running today, maybe a full body massage to help with the stiffness and I don't mean running her over with your car either." He gave them a grin and headed to the doors.

"What were you thinking?" Aeryn asked and hugged her tightly to her chest.

"I was thinking of you," she turned in her arms and looked up into her warm eyes. "I've had a bad week and all I wanted, was to see you; I've really missed you." She rested her head against her chest and listened to the sound of her steady heartbeat.

"Let's get out of here; the animals have had enough of a show." She helped Taylor to her feet and grinned when her legs buckled. "Jack is right, you're gonna need a full body massage, maybe a wheelchair."

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With both women exhausted, they lay on Taylor's bed in a tangle of arms and legs, Aeryn lifted her head from where it rested on Taylor's chest. "You really need to have an elevator in this place," she got up and moved to where the light switch was and flipped it on. "Where's Buddy?"

"I haven't seen him since I got off work," she lay on her bed watching as Aeryn wandered around her bedroom. "I had kind of an incident and had to leave early and it just went down hill from there." She tried to lift her legs and let out a loud groan. "Did you notice my boots in the hall downstairs?"

"The ones covered in cement, I wondered about those?" She pulled open a dresser drawer and inspected the contents before pulling out what she wanted. "So what happened did you walk through wet cement on accident and get stuck there?" She came over to the bed with clean clothes draped over her arm.

"I dumped half a truck of cement on me; the boots were the only things that survived, kinda." She pointed to the clothes. "You gonna steal my clothes?"

"Nope they're for after your shower, you really reek and the shower will help with your stiff muscles." She pulled her to her feet and helped her to the bathroom. "You get in there and I'll be right back." She headed to the kitchen and started pulling open cabinet doors until she found a bottle of Bourbon; she then searched around for a glass and filled it with ice. "This should do it, if not I can always use my manly muscles and knock her ass out." She made her way back towards the bedroom and when entering, she almost dropped everything from her hands. There stood Taylor with just a towel around her hips and one around her neck.

"I feel better but I know I'm gonna pay for it in the morning." She saw the look in Aeryn's eyes and gave her a cocky grin. "Am I everything you thought I was and more?"

Aeryn shook her head and walked towards her with darkened eyes, she took in her wide muscled chest and firm breasts before lifting an eyebrow. "Who knew that you could channel John?" She pushed her towards her bed and handed her the glass and bottle. "That's for you and do you have any muscle rub?"

"You're kidding right, there's two muscle heads in this place, we have a case of the stuff." She pointed to a tube sitting on her nightstand. "So seeing me half naked does nothing for you?"

Aeryn moved towards her with panther like movements, she pushed her back on the bed and straddled her hips. "Ohh it does a lot for me," she placed a soft kiss between her breasts and then hovered over her. "If you weren't in such sad shape I would be all over you," she kissed her softly before moving off of her. "And believe me I'm suffering here, now roll over and I'll get the backs of your legs." If having her lying in front of her half naked wasn't bad enough, running her hands across her warm flesh was killing her slowly. She was fighting with herself to not give in and take advantage of the situation and she almost screamed when Taylor rolled over and her thigh brushed across her center.

"Have a drink with me." Taylor requested and pointed to the bottle. "You look like you could use it." She waited until Aeryn was pouring the drink before she pulled a shirt on and then grabbed her shorts. "We really need to talk," she took the glass from her, took a long drink, coughed and wiped at the tears running down her cheeks. "I'm miserable, I can't sleep, I can't function and it needs to change." She looked at her hands and everywhere but at Aeryn.

"What are you trying to say?" Fear clutched at her heart, she had a feeling that this was going to be one of those conversations.

"I can't do this," she waved a hand at her and blew out a breath. "I've tried but I just can't stay away from you or take it slow." She saw relief wash across Aeryn's face.

"And that means what?"

"I'm...too far gone, I'm in love with you." She whispered and thought that Aeryn was going to pass out. "Gay, straight, undecided I don't care anymore, I want more than a friendship with you."

Aeryn put the glass down and pushed Taylor back on the bed. "What are you doing this weekend?" She laid on top her and looked deeply into her eyes. "I made reservations for us to go away this weekend, I was going to come over today and ask but you got to me first."

"I'm going with you," she hugged her tightly and breathed deeply. "So you're not scared with what I said?"

"Nope, not at all." She pulled back to look into her eyes. "I had a long talk with my mom the other day and this little get away was her idea, I told her that I'm in love with you. I was gonna tell you once we got down there but, ya beat me again." She leaned down and brought their lips together in a passionate kiss, they moved against each other until Taylor let out a deep groan. "We don't need to rush this, you're in no condition to do anything," she held up a finger. "Don't argue with me, you can't even move without pain." She got up, handed her some aspirins and went to get her some water. When she came back, she gave her the water and then searched through her dresser for more clothes. "Close your eyes and rest, I'm gonna take a shower and when I'm done I'm gonna get us something to eat."

Taylor grinned and rolled over onto her side, if Aeryn was taking a shower and gonna wear her clothes then there was a good chance that she was staying the night. She didn't care that they

wouldn't be intimate, it was enough that she would be there and hopefully in the same bed with her.

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Buddy came into the kitchen and stopped dead in his tracks, there stood Aeryn in a pair of his sister's shorts and a cut off sweat shirt that showed off her six pack abs. He watched as she made sandwiches and wished that she was there making them for him. His sister was one lucky woman and he'd like to kick her ass. "Hey Aeryn how's it going," He stepped into the kitchen and looked down at all the food she had on the table. "Feeding the army of one I see?"

"Hey Buddy want a sandwich?" She offered him a thick sandwich and grinned when he looked at her. "It has everything you can think of on it, so how was work?"

"Fine for me, not so good for Taylor." He grinned and leaned forward towards her. "She's so messed up that she gave herself a complete cement suit, she had to strip down to her underwear before the stuff hardened."

"I bet that went over good with her, so what else has she done in the last week?"

"Let's see...she locked her truck with the keys in the ignition and it was still running, dropped her IPOD in the cement, Hell she's done so many dumb things I can't list them all. So where's she at?" He was admiring Aeryn's body and wishing she had worn a tighter shirt.

"Right behind you." She towered over her brother and gave him an intense stare down. "Stop looking at my girlfriends tits." She smacked him in the back of his head and then shoved him out of her way. "Rotten perverted elf, go find your own woman."

"I tried but you turned them all, you're like a big ole' lesbian vampire." He bit into his sandwich and moaned. "Her sandwiches are better than yours sis."

"That's because I can't cook so I've gotten good at sandwiches." Aeryn said and handed Taylor the chips and two bottles of *Mountain Dew*. "Ok, I think we have everything and what are you doing outta bed?" She thought Buddy was gonna choke to death, his face turned red and he started pounding himself on his chest.

"Take it easy elf; I'm going against doctors and worst of all, her orders." She shuffled from the kitchen and gritted her teeth with each movement.

Aeryn shook her head at him. "You don't wanna know but she'll be better in the morning." He watched her carry the plates towards his sister's bedroom and just grinned, for once maybe his sister had met her match.

"I'm sure she will be because she's perfectly safe with you walking around half naked." He chuckled and then smacked his forehead for thinking about his sister and mind blowing sex at the same time. "Ewwww...I wish I could wash my mind out with soap."

## Chapter Fourteen

Taylor jumped awake when the Cruiser came to a stop; she blinked and looked around her. "Are we there?" She asked and tried to stretch her stiff and aching legs.

"Yep, let's go check in." She gave her an amused look. "That is if you can walk."

"You're never gonna let it go huh," she opened the door and gritted her teeth. "You should be thinking how lucky you are that you have a girlfriend who would literally run to the ends of the earth for you."

"Ohh I've been thinking alright but more along the lines of a good mental health doctor." She pulled her into her side and hugged her tight. "You have just got to be insane to run on foot when you could have called the gym from my office. I would have left and come to pick you up; it's a lot easier than running."

"So my mind was a little clouded at the time," she took in Aeryn's chocolate colored eyes, straight nose and pink lips. She brushed her hair back from her squared jaw and saw the way the sun brought out red highlights in her hair. "But everything is bright as day now." She leaned in and captured her lips for a lingering kiss. On their way to their room, they stopped on the deck and took in the scenic view before them. The place was beautiful, trees as far as the eye could see and the air fresh and cool. "It's absolutely beautiful here, I'm glad you made the reservations." Their room had cream color walls with dark green stained wood panels below, the furniture matched the bed frames and made the place seem warm and homey. What had their attention was the bed, it was huge with a hand made crocheted blanket covering a thick comforter. "This is so much better than my bed," Taylor fell onto the bed and held her hands out to Aeryn. "I need one this big." She pulled Aeryn down onto her chest and hugged her tight. "So what are we gonna do?"

"I'm perfectly happy with just laying right here," she pressed her face into Taylor's breasts and sighed. "For the entire weekend." She could smell a soft scent of vanilla and lavender from her shirt and then her spicy cologne closer to her collar. She lay in complete contentment and thought of everything that had happened in the last few months. She would never have dreamed of coming to a place like this or with another person. She lifted her head and took in Taylor's calm features; she traced the laugh lines at the corners of her pink lips and caressed her tanned cheek. She loved how her short hair feathered back over her ears and then curled where it was longer at the back; she played with the long curls at her shoulders and wondered. "Has your hair always been short?"



"Nope, used to be long but I got tired of it, it really needs trimmed though." She rolled them over and hovered over Aeryn. "I'm hungry, can we go get something to eat and maybe walk around?"

"Anything you want and it's yours." She looked into her eyes and tried to convey all that she was feeling at that moment. She watched as a dark brow rose over an emerald green eye and then her pink lips lifted in a small smile. "Yes that's an invitation." She said in a husky voice.

Taylor pressed her back into the soft bed and took her lips in a kiss that had her head swimming and her breathing heavy when it ended. "Don't move I'll be right back." She ran from the room and left the door open in her haste, Aeryn snorted and then waved to the two old women that walked by. She had just come from the bathroom when Taylor came back into the room carrying a wicker basket in her hands. "You would not believe what I got here," she placed the basket at the foot of the bed and started pulling out items. "All I asked for was some whipped cr me and nipple clamps and they gave me this stuff." She saw Aeryn's mouth drop open and she grinned. "Just kidding," she handed her two fluted glasses and pulled out a bottle of chilled Champagne. "Kinda classy huh?"

"They've thought of everything, strawberries, champagne, and chocolate for other things." She waited for Taylor to catch on to what she was thinking and wasn't disappointed.

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Clothes were strewn across the floor, the basket sat on its side with what little bit of food that remained spilling out. Bed clothes hang precariously from the foot of the bed and a pillow lay on the floor. Soft moans and whispers wafted in the darkening room. The sound of soft squeaking and thumping came from the bed and seized with the sound of gasping and a low rumbling moan. Aeryn lay beneath Taylor, her arms wrapped around her wide back and one leg up over the back of her thigh. She clutched at her and moaned from the spasms still wracking her center; she had never experienced anything like what she had in the last four hours. None of her previous sexual partners had performed oral sex on her and she now knew what she had been missing for a lot of years. At one point, she thought that she was going to pass out or burst into flames. She chuckled when her lover bucked against her and groaned, before lifting her head.

"And I thought I was sore before," she groaned when another spasm went through her. "Baby I gotta wash this stuff off before I die." She lifted herself all the way off of Aeryn and looked down at her lower stomach and thighs. "I think I have friction burns from that stuff."

Aeryn rolled from the bed and stumbled after her on her way to the bathroom. "Where did you get that stuff anyways?" She kicked the empty bottle of KY warming liquid.

"Would you believe the old queen at the front desk gave it to me?" She turned the water on, turned and pulled Aeryn into her arms. "Have I told you how much I love you?"

"Not in the last 20 minutes or so... Ohh wait that may have been God that time." She brought their lips together and groaned when the KY started to warm up again. "This stuff is... did we maybe use too much?" She felt her juices start to flow again and wondered how long it would be before she was dehydrated.

"Maybe, I didn't really read all of the directions." She grinned and pulled her into the bathtub with her. "We'll wash it off and it'll be ok." She stood so that the water poured down between them and couldn't help but laugh when the stuff reactivated. Aeryn grabbed a bottle of body wash, poured some into her hand and started to wash the KY from Taylor's body, a wide grin came across her face when Taylor groaned and pushed into her hand. She could feel how aroused she was and knew that it wouldn't take much to push her over the edge. She ran her fingers across her engorged clit and then dipped her fingers inside of her; she slowly pulled her fingers out and pushed them back in. As she pulled them back out, she felt her center filled with long fingers. She looked into hooded green eyes and brought their lips together in a searching kiss. They moved in unison and were soon crying out their releases and slipping to the floor of the bathtub. "The water is getting cold." Taylor said and started to get up. "We may freeze to death if we don't hurry."

"Or die from exhaustion and starvation," Aeryn mumbled and used Taylor's forearm to pull herself up to her feet. "I'm hungry; I want a huge steak and all the works."

"That sounds good, wonder if they have ice cream." She wiggled her brows and yelped when Aeryn pinched her ass. "To eat... nothing kinky, I promise." They hurried and got through with their shower right before the water turned ice cold.

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They sat in the dinning room across from each other and gazed at each other with the sappiest expressions known to man. The proprietor approached them with a menu and chuckled; he had seen their expressions thousands of times and still found it funny. "You must be the newly weds from Room three, was the champagne to your liking?"

"Ohh very much so, thank you." Aeryn replied and then handed him the menu. Her mind wandered off to a place better left for the bedroom and didn't hear Taylor talking to her; she jumped from the kick to her foot and blinked. "Huh?"

"What do you want for supper?" She asked and grinned at her light blush. "I'm having the T-Bone, potato etc..."

"Make that two and I want a Mountain Dew if you have it."

"OK, coming right up." He rolled his eyes at them and went towards the kitchen. "It's gonna be a noisy weekend."

Taylor snorted and shook her head; she grabbed Aeryn's hands and brought them up to her lips. "I forgot to tell you that they gave us the newly wed basket, do we really look that way?"

"If not then we do now, we did walk in here a little stiff and you do have bites on your neck." She gave her a seductive smile and raised a dark brow. "And I know of some other places that have marks to."

"It could have been all the noise coming from the room, we're not exactly quiet."

"Yeah that would be a dead giveaway huh," she leaned back in her chair and smiled when an older woman placed a platter before her. "Thank you, this looks great." She watched as a younger woman brought out their drinks and placed them on the table, she didn't miss the look she gave Taylor and was ready to throw something at her.

"Easy baby, I'm not going anywhere." She caressed the top of her hand with long fingers and waited until their eyes met. "She's a kid and I have what I want right in front of me."

"That was really weird, I've never been jealous before." She shook her head and picked up her knife and fork. "It must be because I'm tired; I had a lot of exercise today." She smiled and cut into her steak.

After supper, they returned to their room, undressed and fell into bed and into a deep sleep. Neither of them moved until the sun was halfway up the sky and the sound of voices came from the deck area. Taylor woke first to find Aeryn wrapped around her body like a second skin. With all her past girlfriends, none of them had slept with her, they had sex and then one of them would leave and go home. Being with Aeryn was something that she would never have guessed would have happened and she was thanking every spiritual being she could think for it. One thing that she would never grow tired of was waking up with her wrapped around her or vice versa.

"Whatcha thinking?" Aeryn asked and stretched out her long legs.

"How I never wanna wake up alone again." She hugged her tight and kissed her forehead.

"This is a first for me, I've never slept with anyone but you, I've always had booty calls."

Taylor laughed and nodded her head. "That's what I've had, booty calls; geez I'm too old for those things."

"How old are you anyways?" She went up on an elbow and waited.

"I'm old enough to know that I'm too damn old to run ten miles and have marathon sex hours later, from now on; its just marathon sex." She rolled to her side and snuggled her face against Aeryn's breasts. "Never too old for this though."

"You didn't answer my question, I wanna know if I'm robbing the cradle or not?"

"I highly doubt that, the only person older than me is the Pope, he's like 300 or something." She yelped from the pinch to her ass and gave up. "I'm 44 gonna be 45 in two months."

"Well neither one of us is a cradle robber, we're the same age." She ran her fingers through tousled hair and heard her stomach growl. "Come on I'm starving and I really need to move around, I've never been sore like this before." She knew the reason was that she had never had anyone make love to her before or for hours on end. Or give her multiple orgasms, the only one who ever gave her orgasms period was herself.

"Makes two of us, one certain area is really sore, I think that KY did it." She looked down and pointed to a spot right below her belly button. "Looks like a bad sunburn and feels like it to."

"We'll get something for it after we eat..." she looked at the small clock on the table and snorted. "Lunch, you know its 12:30?"

"No wonder we're hungry."

## Chapter Fifteen

Aeryn walked into her mom's house and went right to the kitchen, no matter when she entered the house, that's where she always found her.

"MA!" She yelled just because she could and that it drove her mom nuts.

"Christ its not like I'm deaf, why do you always do that?" She turned from where she was making a cup of coffee, took one look at her daughter and grinned like an idiot. "Ohhhh I see, Taylor is sooo much better than the dream," she pulled her in for a tight hug and pressed a kiss to her forehead. "You look so happy."

"You've no idea, I'm so glad you gave me that pamphlet; the place is beautiful."

"How much of the place did you actually see?"

Aeryn blushed deeply and shrugged her shoulders. "We seen some stuff, Taylor's legs were still sore so we went easy on the walking."

"Geez what did you do to her to make her that sore, I can't see you being a wild woman or anything in the sack."

"I'll have you know that I'm very...that ain't right, you're not supposed to think of me..." she rolled her eyes when she saw the evil grin come over her mom's face. "You are truly evil; you should have been a cop or a lawyer. Anyways, she over did her workout on Friday; she ran like

ten miles and couldn't walk to good before we left."

"Ohhhh so now she's worse off than before, now I'm really taking out insurance on you guys." She took her coffee and sat down at the table. "So tell me, is this a U-Haul relationship?"

Aeryn was beyond confused, she had no idea what her mom was talking about. "Huh?"

"You really need to learn the gay lingo and stuff. It's a joke, after lesbians have one date; one of them packs up and moves in with the other one on the second date. In your case, all you have to do is drag your trailer over there, see that you're the perfect lesbian."

"Thanks ma, now all I have to do is get Taylor's truck and I'm all set." She sat down and tried not to wince. "Anyways I have the keys to the law firm and I'm gonna leave them with you." She dropped them into her mom's hand and felt a weight lift from her shoulders. "Dad won't pick a fight with you, me on the other hand."

"He's a dumbass," she put the keys on the table and leaned back in her chair. "So what are you going to do now that you're unemployed, let Taylor take care of you?"

"Start my own business; I have enough connections from working at the law firm that I can get lots of work. I have a job lined up for next week and all I have to do is some back ground checks for the Board of Education." She winked at her ma. "And she does very well in that department, over fours hours of pure heaven." With that she stood up and left the house, she grinned all the way back to her trailer, it wasn't often that she got the last word in on her mom.

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Taylor was sprawled out on the couch when Buddy came in from errands, he hadn't seen her since she and Aeryn had left on Saturday and he was curious. He wanted to know every single little detail of what they did. Dropping the bags on the floor, he jumped over the back of the couch and landed on top of her. "I wanna know what you did?" He shook her by her shoulders and laughed when she flung him onto the floor. He got to his knees and busted out laughing when he saw her neck. "Holy shit, she marked you good!" He slapped her leg and grinned even wider when she hissed and grabbed her thigh.

"My legs still hurt, I can barely walk and it's been days since I ran."

"Maybe you need to run some more, stretch out the muscles?" He shrugged his shoulders and then leaned forward. "Come on sis, you always tell me about your dates."

"It wasn't a date and I'm not saying one word about what we did or didn't do, so there." She stuck

her tongue out at him and went back to watching TV.

"You are so gone over her; it's about damn time, so when's the wedding, how many kids are ya guys having and who's gonna be the donor daddy?"

"Don't even think about being a sperm donor elf boy," Aeryn said from the doorway. "That nasty stuff scares the living shit outta me, I made all the idiots I slept with triple glove." She came around the couch and sat on the edge at her lover's hip. "That should have been a giant ass clue right there for me huh, or the fact that I was nauseous every single time."

"I know I get nauseous thinking about banging some guy," Buddy said and then looked at both women. "What, it's true and it gives me shrinkage, kinda like when I jumped in that really cold river and my...nevermind." He got up from the floor and left then grinning like idiots.

"That was too much information, and now I have this gross picture in my head." Aeryn said before she leaned down for a searing kiss.

"You, I've had it ever since we were kids and ma bathed us together, and I don't know how he could tell he had shrinkage, he's small in all departments." She slapped her hands over her eyes. "I just made it worse huh?"

Aeryn busted up laughing and forgot all about shrinkage when she noticed that Taylor was bra less. She pushed her hands up under her tank-top and stopped when her fingers found hardened nipples. Rolling them between her fingers had Taylor closing her eyes and arching her back. She leaned forward and nipped one with her teeth, which brought a moan from her lover and excited her. "Would it be rude to drag you off to your bedroom and take total advantage of you?"

"Uhhmm lemme think...nope." She rolled from the couch, took Aeryn's hand and pulled her behind her. "I just put a new lock on the door, perfect time to try it out." She closed the door and sent the dead bolt home. She turned and pulled her tank top off as she walked towards her bed and lover. "Have I ever told you about all the sound proofing I did to my bedroom?"

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Taylor lay sprawled across her bed, her deep snores sounding more like a grizzly than anything human. It made Aeryn wonder if the earlier comment about sound proofing was a warning about her snoring. She rolled from where she had been lying on top of her and winced. She looked down and tried to find the buckle for the leather harness that she was wearing. She felt embarrassed and a little turned on by the fact that she had a five inch dick. A wide grin came across her face when she thought of what her lover had said about her use of said item. "Now I have ammunition against the swinging dicks." She jumped when Taylor made some strange noise and then rolled off the bed to land on the floor. She glanced over the side and saw green eyes blinking open. "Please tell me that I wasn't supposed to strap you in or something?"

"This is why I need a bigger bed," she got to her knees and realized that she was at eye level with the strap on. "Uhhmm...this is really kinky," she raised an eyebrow. "Want a blow job?" She grinned at the strange expression on her lover's face. "Believe me it can be done, it's all in the visualization." She got up and pulled her to the bathroom, after washing the dildo off and grabbing a small bottle from the bedside stand, she dropped to her knees before Aeryn. "Just watch me and let go." She rubbed strawberry flavored body lotion on the dildo and across Aeryn's nether lips; she then ran her hands up the backs of her thighs and pulled her closer to her. Looking deeply into her dark eyes, she flicked the end of the dildo with her tongue; she was not disappointed when Aeryn's hips jerked. She licked up the bottom and dragged her tongue back down to the tip before taking it into her mouth. She kept eye contact with her lover the entire time and shuddered when she moaned deep in her throat. She didn't know how long she would be able to hold on before she went over the edge.

Aeryn watched as Taylor lavished the strap-on with her tongue, in seconds it became part of her own body and she swore that she could feel every touch of her wet tongue. Her hips twitched and then started to move gently, she reached out and gripped strong shoulders to keep from falling and moaned when she felt a warm wet tongue circle the outside of the strap-on and touch her flesh. When Taylor flicked the end with her tongue, she closed her eyes and thrust forward. She gave out a deep moan when she heard her lover's deep voice say. "Come for me." She looked down to see that Taylor was running her hand up and down the dildo, she bucked against her hand and in seconds she felt her release flow from between her lips. Her knees gave out and dropped her into Taylor's arms; she lay against her twitching and moaning as she rode out her orgasm.

"I would have never thought that we could do that." She mumbled and then felt her body being lifted to the bed.

"There are lot's of things we can do," she hovered over her and grabbed the small bottle she had laid on the bed. Covering the dildo with more lotion, she then straddled it and slid down onto it. She moaned deeply and rocked her hips forward before rising up and sliding back down. "I'll show you later." She was about to move upward when Aeryn stopped her.

"Lemme do this," She pulled out slowly, moved so that she was behind her lover and pulled her closer to the edge of the bed. She slowly pushed into her and groaned from the pure thought of what she was doing. "Stop me if I hurt you." With in a few minutes, they were shuddering from their shared releases and then collapsing onto the bed. Taylor helped her with the harness and dropped it to the floor.

"We won't be able to walk in the morning." She mumbled against Aeryn's chest. "I'm calling in crippled, can't go to work all bowlegged and hurtin."

Aeryn pulled the covers over them and wrapped herself around her lover; she was exhausted and knew that neither one of them was gonna last long before sleep claimed them. "I love you Taylor." She mumbled and felt her eyes close.

"Love you..." And then a god awful noise filled the room as Taylor fell asleep.

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The next morning Buddy pounded on the bedroom door until he couldn't lift his arms, he then called their own phone number until he heard a groggy voice. "Get your ass UP!" He yelled and then laughed when he heard the phone hit the floor and then cussing.

"What time is it?" Aeryn asked and cleared her throat.

"Time for the sex fiend to get her ass up before we're late for work," he heard mumbled voices and then heard Taylor's raspy voice. "Put the toys away and get your ass up."

"I'm not going in, I'm...sick." She groaned as she tried to get out of bed. "My entire body hurts; I think I got the flu or something."

"I think you have a case of nymphomania, get some sleep and I'll talk to ya later." He hung up the phone and grinned from ear to ear, he would call their mom when he got to work and fill her in on everything.

"He is gonna terrorize me until one of us is dead." She mumbled and rolled over to bury her face in Aeryn's neck.

"Nymphomania is it, that's one I wouldn't use when calling into work."

"He'll tell them that to, the little prick." She went back to sleep and lulled Aeryn with her with her rumbling snore.

## Chapter Sixteen

Aeryn sat at the table in her trailer; she had paper and folders across every surface and her laptop sitting on the small windowsill. What she missed was the copy and fax machine at the office; she would be spending a lot of time at *Staples* making copies. She rubbed at her eyes and leaned back into the cushion, she was bone tired and the eye stress of looking at her laptop was giving her a headache. "I need to find somewhere else to work," she closed her eyes and rubbed her temples. "A small office somewhere."

"What about the basement," Selma asked as she pulled the door open and stepped into the paper hell. "There's your dad's old office down there, it still has all the filing cabinets, his big desk and there's other stuff in it?" She moved a stack of folders to the side and sat down. "There's a phone down there and an old fax machine, might as well use the stuff."



Aeryn looked at her and then out through the screen door, she really couldn't afford an office quite yet so this would be good. "Ok, but this is only until I can afford an office in town; I'd feel better having clients far away from where we live."

"Why, your dad brought all kinds of low-life scumbags here, a shotgun aimed at a certain area always kept me safe." She tapped the table to get her kids attention. "You only have to look at someone and they're intimidated or get Taylor over here to stand at the door, that should make a few of them piss them selves." She chuckled at the image of Taylor standing at the door with her arms crossed over her chest. I'd go with Taylor; at least you'd have something to look at."

"Yeah I can see me getting a lot of work done with having her so close."

"At least you wouldn't get bored during the down time." She laughed all the way back up to the house.

"I wouldn't get any work either; we'd scare them all away." She thought of all the nights she and Taylor had spent together and felt her pulse pick up, her sexual appetite sure had changed. There wasn't a time when she didn't think of getting her lover into bed or taking her on the living room floor, couch, hallway and even one time in the front seat of the truck. She grinned when she thought of how close they had come to being caught by Buddy one night; they were up against the wall in the gym when he came up the stairs. He now yelled from the foyer before coming up the steps and then he covered his eyes until her knew it was clear. That had added some extra excitement to their night and Taylor had grindingly given up her title as a top, after she had passed out when Aeryn hit her G-spot.

Giving up doing paperwork for the day, she left her trailer and headed to the back door to her mom's basement, she would look around and see what she had to work with. At least she hoped doing this would take her mind off thinking about her lover.

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John, Rick and his brother Gary sat huddled in a booth at Bob Evans restaurant. They had been talking over the problems each of them had and had come to a conclusion, they needed to work together to take care of their mutual problem. "I'm telling ya that blowing it up would take about two seconds," John said and drew a picture on the back of his menu. "Shoot it right here and BOOM!" He clapped his hands together and saw the attention he had drawn. "I can take care of it tonight and we'll be done with it."

Rick looked at the picture and then at both of the men. "The cops won't investigate this will they?"

"They didn't do shit with the other thing we did, why bother with this, accidents happen all the

time." Gary said and grinned. "That was a priceless night; I'll never forget that one, too bad it failed."

Rick looked between both men and nodded his head. "Ok, we take out the problem your way but it had better damn sure work or we might as well jump off a bridge because I'm not going to jail." He knew that if he did, the inmates would kill him within minutes. "You two take care of that end and I'll pull some strings on my get you two alibis." He knew that with everything going on, that they could be connected.

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Taylor looked around the office and nodded her head; she liked it and gave her lover a smile. "It just needs some work and it'll be great, ya know like some shelves and maybe a new fax machine and copier?"

"Not so fast there baby, that stuff is expensive and I haven't gotten paid yet." She dropped down onto an old wooden box and looked around at all the dusty furniture. "I need to get the shop-vac down here, which would make it easier to clean up all this dust."

"How about a bucket of soapy water and some rags, I can wipe stuff down after you vacuum?"

Aeryn pointed to an area across from them. "There should be some stuff in the laundry room." She stepped over the boxes she had loaded up earlier. "I'll be right back; I think ma has the shop-vac up stairs." She ran up the stairs and almost into her mom. "Where's the shop-vac?"

"In the garage, what are you doing down there?" She handed her a cookie and sat down at the table.

"Cleaning, I cleaned out all the filing cabinets and the desk. Taylor's gonna help me clean some of the other stuff but I thought that using the shop-vac on the dust would be easier."

"What ever you found down there just toss out to the trash, it's been down there for twenty years or more." She looked to her daughter and saw that she was happier than she ever had been. "And no fooling around down there, I'm still shaking from the other night when you two were out in your trailer."

Aeryn gave her a wink and then headed out to the garage, once she found the shop-vac; she searched for an extension cord. "Figures I find everything that I don't need," she looked around her at all the shelves and saw some wall brackets and other shelving materials. "Perfect, saves me from having to buy it." She grabbed what she could and headed back to the basement. "Baby, I need a hand or two here." She struggled with the shop-vac and decided to leave it at the top of the steps. "I found some shelving stuff."

"I found some dead mice, I'll trade ya." She held up a flattened mouse. "Poor things must have died after seeing the huge snakeskin under the desk." She held that up as well and grinned. "Do ya think?"

"I think that probably belongs to my dad, he's the biggest snake I've ever seen." She dropped the stuff in her hands and was on her way back up the steps. "Ma said that I can put all the boxes out to the trash, will ya help me?"

"Anything ya want or need, I'm here." She picked up two of the boxes and grunted. "Did you have to make them so damn heavy?"

"Ohhhh please, you dead lift over 250lb, what's a little box of paper?"

She grabbed a box and headed up the steps after her. "Shit," she mumbled. "I know where the extension cord is, it's in my trailer." She dropped the box outside of the house and headed towards her trailer. "I'll be right back; I need to grab this before I forget."

Taylor lugged her boxes to the curb and went back for the one that Aeryn had dropped. She went past the trailer and heard her cussing and then all kinds of commotion from inside. "Ya ok in there baby?" She snickered at all the growling and cussing she heard and kept on going.

Aeryn lay on her belly and searched through the storage compartment under her bed; she couldn't see a damn thing in the dark and had no idea where her flashlight was. She reached through and dropped the outside door to the storage area and squinted from the brilliant sun. "Great, I go from one kind of blindness to another."

Taylor saw the large door dropped down at the back of the trailer as she came through the basement door, she could just make out her lover as she neared. She was about to call out to he when a loud explosion rocked the earth and she was thrown backwards and into the side of the house. She lay crumpled to the ground with burning debris falling all around her. Pain brought her back around and she shoved at the piece of burning wood on her leg. Blinking back tears, she looked towards the trailer and saw it engulfed in flames. A terrible howl came from deep in her chest, she stumbled to her feet and tried to get to the trailer. The heat so intense that she felt the hair and flesh on her body burn. "AERYN!" She screamed and then choked as the thick smoke over came her. She kept on screaming until Selma pulled her back from the fire and tried to hold on to her. "She's in there!" she screamed and fell to the ground.

"We can't help her," Selma cried and hugged Taylor. "She's gone, there's nothing we can do." She looked towards the street and saw the back end of a blue truck and then flashing lights as police showed up.

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Intense pressure and then a strong gust was all that Aeryn remembered as she came awake where

she lay in the back yard. She shook her head to clear the ringing in her ears and then looked down at her hands. They were covered in blood and her back was starting to sting like hell, she looked closer at herself and saw that her clothes were in shreds and that there were numerous cuts and gashes all over her. "Great...more stitches." She stumbled to her feet and looked towards where the flames were licking at the shell of her trailer. "Ohh my god...Taylor." She said and then took off at a wobbling jog towards the house, the last time she had seen her lover was as she was coming towards the back of her trailer. "TAYLOR!" She yelled and threw an arm up when another explosion shook the ground. The sound of sirens and yelling came from the driveway and then sobbing. "MA...TAYLOR!" She yelled again and then saw them sitting on the ground by a police car.

Taylor heard her name and turned in that direction, what she saw coming through the smoke brought a choking sob from her chest. She sprung to her feet and went running towards where Aeryn was stumbling. She caught her before she hit the ground and sunk to her knees, tears fell freely down her cheeks to drip from her jaw. She buried her face against the side of her lover's neck and sobbed. "I thought I lost you." She mumbled between sobs and shrugged off the hands pulling on her. "Don't touch her!" She yelled and then stopped when a calming voice spoke in her ear.

"Taylor, let them look at her, she'll be ok." Selma whispered in her ear and then brushed her sweat soaked hair back from her face. "It's ok, let them help her." She pulled her into her body and wrapped her arms around her shaking shoulders. "You two are so damn lucky it's unbelievable." She sniffled and started laughing, she knew it had to be the stress that caused it but she just couldn't stop. "Let's get away from all this heat, I feel like a marshmallow." She watched as they loaded Aeryn onto a stretcher, she took in her shredded clothes and busted up laughing again. "She looks like she was shot from a canon!"

Taylor looked down at her lover and couldn't help but agree, if not for all the blood, she would have found it funny. "We have to go with them, I can't leave her." She got to her feet and pulled Selma with her, she looked to where her truck used to be and saw only a burned out shell. "Now I know what that other explosion was." She looked to the drive and saw Aeryn's cruiser; she pulled her keys from her pocket and went towards it. "Come on ma, we have an ambulance to chase." She tore up the road in Aeryn's red cruiser and ignored Selma's screams of terror, she was used to it, Buddy screamed like a little girl every time she drove them anywhere.

She slid to a stop behind the ambulance, got out and waited for Selma at the side of the cruiser. She knew that the only way she would get anywhere in the hospital was with Aeryn's mom. "I have to call Buddy," she searched through her pocket and pulled out what used to be her cell phone. "Shit, I have to find a phone but after we get to see Aeryn."

"Gimme a minute and I'll get us in there, I have to find Mildred." She pulled Taylor through the emergency doors, down a side hallway and to the nurses break room. She went over to a phone on the table and hit an extension number. "I'm here at the hospital in your break room, I need a favor." She hung up the phone and looked at her daughters stressed lover. "You need to get that arm and leg looked at, there kind of singed." She looked to see the nasty burn on her arm and then where her skin was peeking through the tear in her pant leg.

"After I see Aeryn." She looked around her and watched as a woman Selma's age came through the door.

"What took ya so long you old dyke?" Selma asked and then pulled Mildred in for a tight hug. "Can you go into the ER and find out about my kid?"

"What did she do this time?" She asked and then looked to Taylor. "Or should I say 'they' did?" She took in her crispy appearance and then looked to a similar Selma. "What the hell were you people doing a fire dance?"

"Some asshole, who I will name later, blew up Aeryn's trailer..."

"With her in it." Taylor finished. "Please, can you find something out?"

"I'll do better than that, come with me." She was like a bulldozer as she went down the hallway with the other two in tow. She looked into each exam room until she came to the last one; there was no way that she could have missed who was in there. Aeryn was doing her damndest to keep nurses and doctors from examining her, she had the nurse in a headlock and the doctor held against the wall with a booted foot. "Christ what happened to her clothes?" She looked back at Selma. "She looks like she went through a shredder." She waved to the doctor and ushered both women into the room. "Let them help you guys, otherwise you're not gonna get anything done in here."

"Aeryn will you stop acting like a total ass and let them check you out?" Selma stepped closer and pointed a finger at her. "The sooner they get done, the sooner you can leave."

"They wouldn't tell me anything about you guys," she released her captives and sat still on the gurney. "That's all I wanted was to know if you were here." she started to cry and wiped at her soot covered face. "What the hell happened to us?" She asked from where she was huddled in Taylor's arms.

"Your trailer blew up and it took my truck with it." She eyed the doctor with a syringe and winked at him. "Do ya still have your dad's credit card because he's buying me a new truck?" She heard Aeryn chuckle, flinch and then go limp in her arms. "Don't hurt her." She gave everyone a steely eyed stare. "And I want a specialist in here; she's having short term memory loss."

"As soon as we check her out I'll see what needs to be done and who to call..." The doctor said and backed up against the wall when Taylor growled at him. "I'll call in someone for that problem." He squeezed past all of them and went down the hallway to never be seen again.

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Hours later, a doctor came out to the waiting room and looked around; it wasn't hard to find the ones waiting for news on his patient. He took in their soot covered bodies and haggard expressions and knew that they had waited too long for news. "Mrs. Davidson?" He approached Selma and held out a hand to her. "Aeryn can go home as soon as she's dressed, besides all the cuts and such on her, she has a slight concussion."

"What about her memory loss, is that from the concussion?" Taylor asked and held out her hand. "I'm her girlfriend Taylor Garrett."

"She seems fine now, I did some tests and she passed; it may have been shock that had her altered. After all she did get literally blown out the back of a trailer." He smiled at them. "My nephew is with the fire department, he said it was the damndest thing he has ever seen. Everything that had been in the back storage compartment was blown free and littering the back yard."

"That's where she came from," Taylor said in a low voice. "When I saw her, she was coming from the back yard." She wiped her face and shook her head. "She has to be short on lives by now. Can I go back, she may need help?"

Through the doors and to the left, last room on the left." He waited until she was gone before looking at Selma.

"What aren't you saying?" She asked and prayed that it wasn't bad news.

"She's lucky to be alive, she's got some real bad cuts and there's a possibility that she may not recover all her hearing in her right ear. There's some blood around the eardrum but we won't know anything until it heals. She has an appointment with a specialist in a week, he'll check it then."

"Believe me that's the least of her worries, her trailer blowing up was deliberate." She saw her daughter and Taylor coming her way and excused herself. "Let's get outta here, we going to your place Taylor?"

"Yep, I haven't been able to get a hold of Buddy; he's probably got the National Guard looking for me."

## Chapter Seventeen

With Aeryn sound asleep in Taylor's bed and Selma on the foldout couch, Taylor was sitting in the kitchen with Buddy. She rubbed her eyes and looked to his unbelieving expression. "I swear on ma's life that she was blown right out the back of the trailer, I didn't see it because I was too busy being stuck to the side of the house." She shook her head and grinned. "It was the strangest feeling, one minute I'm walking and the next I'm sliding down the side of the house with flaming

shit falling all around me."

"You guys are damn lucky that's for sure and what about your truck, did you call the insurance company?"

"Nope, with all that was going on that was the last thing I was thinking about, I'll do it in the morning. What really bothers me is that her dad never showed up at the hospital or anything, the son of a bitch lives there, there's no way he couldn't see what happened."

"Do ya think he had something to do with it, kinda funny that he would be missing?"

"I'm gonna look into it that's for sure and Selma knows who blew up the trailer so that's gonna be a huge help with the arrests."

"It all seems connected to me," Buddy said and held up a finger. "One, she gets harassed at work all the time, gets suck ass investigations. Two, she almost gets killed on stake-out and the cops don't call her mom for her. And three, she gets literally blown up. Now did any cops show up to ask questions?"

"Son of a bitch!" She clenched her jaw and balled up her fists. "Someone's on the take, she's been blown off with everything that's happened and if ya think about it, no one ever questioned us after that first time."

"Now who do you go to that you can trust to not be on the take, the cops are out that's for sure. The lawyers she worked with are scum bags and crooked as hell and dad's an asshole?"

"The district attorney is our best bet," Selma said from the doorway. "I trust him; he's never lied to me in all the years I've known him."

"Ok, I think the sooner the better, for Aeryn's sake." Taylor said as she rose from her chair. "I'm exhausted, I'm gonna check on Aeryn and then turn in."

Buddy looked to Selma and then to his sisters back, as soon as she was gone from sight he sighed. "Do ya think they'll be ok, I mean they've been through a lot in such a short time?"

"You mean their relationship?" She snorted and waved a hand at him when he nodded. "Don't worry about them, nothing is gonna separate them, with all that's happened already dontcha think one of them would have run away screaming if they weren't committed?"

"I've never thought of my sister in a committed relationship before, no one has ever stuck around long enough for that to ever happened." He grinned and leaned forward. "Aeryn has her whipped."

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Rick was sitting at the back sipping his fourth or fifth Gin and tonic; he had lost count after the second one. He kept eyeing the door behind him and cussing when it remained closed. It had been two hours since he left his partners and he was getting worried, he hoped that they weren't sitting in lock-up spilling their guts. Plus it was getting harder to keep up the act that he was not alone and that his buddies were wandering in and out and around the bar. He kept ordering drinks for them and tossing them out the back door to make it look like they were drinking them. He hoped that they weren't in lock-up spilling their guts because if they were, they were dead men. He was about to get up and leave when the door opened a crack and then all the way as they snuck in and took seats at the table.

"Where in the fuck have you two been?" He hissed and raised a fist. "You know how hard it is to make a believable alibi for three when two are missing?"

"It was either be late or drag the cops here with us." Gary hissed back and kicked him under the table. "And for your information, the job is done."

"Better than done, we took out her girlfriend to," John said and smiled. "She got thrown all the way across the yard and into the side of the house, it was classic!" He laughed and grabbed one of the beers on the table. "She hit the ground and that's all she wrote."

"The flames had to shoot 50 feet high and the noise made our ears ring." Gary added.

"That's all nice but are you sure she's dead?"

Both men nodded their heads and grinned. "There's no way she survived that, we watched her go in and then that's all she wrote after it blew." John said, held up his hand for a high five and then drained his beer. He signaled the waitress and ordered two more beers and another gin and tonic for Rick. "Now what do we do?"

"We hang in here for another hour or two and then we go about our normal business, no bragging to anyone about this or we're all doing time."

"Who we gonna brag to?" Gary asked and looked to him. "No one would be impressed that we killed Davidson's kid, besides he finds out and we might as well kill ourselves."

The three men sat at the table for another hour before leaving, each went their separate ways into the night and hoped like Hell that each one of them was clear of suspicion.

"I am so glad that asshole is gone," the waitress said to the bartender. "He's a cheap son of a bitch when it comes to tips."

"He's a real prize, maybe someone will shoot him one day, damn scumbag lawyer."



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Davidson stood looking at the two burned out husks in the yard and wondered where everyone was and what had happened. Then again he wasn't really concerned because it wasn't his living area; his was still secure and untouched by the fire. He looked down at the muddy water seeping over the soles of his Italian loafers and cursed. "I'm gonna sue the fire department for making the yard muddy and for ruining my expensive shoes." He headed towards the house, stepping over debris as he went and stopped only to pick up the newspaper lying on the front porch. Ignoring the fact that his feet were covered in mud, he walked right through the front door, across pale blue carpeting and into the kitchen where he left muddy footprints. Ransacking the refrigerator, he grabbed containers of leftovers, a six pack of Budweiser and went out through the kitchen door and into the garage. He tossed his suit jacket on the back of the couch and headed into his small kitchenette to heat up the food, before it was hot, the power went off. "What the fuck is going on?" He stumbled in the dark and stood completely still in the center of the room.

"Rotten no good son of a bitch, I hope he falls down the steps and breaks his damn neck!" Selma closed the fuse box door, slapped a Master lock on it and headed for the door to the kitchen. "Come into my house and leave mud and shit everywhere." She grabbed her camera and started taking pictures of the damage. "I got his ass now; he's as good as homeless!"

"How is that ma?" Aeryn asked from where she was getting the mop bucket ready.

"He's trespassing, breaking and entering, destruction of private property and he stole my beer!" She looked in the refrigerator and cursed again. "And he stole my left over Chinese food; I hope he gets food poisoning!"

Aeryn looked to Taylor and shrugged her shoulders. "This has been going on for years, its part of every day life for the Davidson family."

"Not no more," Selma handed her an official looking paper and grinned. "I got his ass now!"

Both women looked at the paper and then to a smiling Selma. "Ma, this is a mortgage application in dad's name for this house."

"It sure as hell is and a second mortgage at that, the kicker about this is that he doesn't own this house, I do and it's paid off."

"Which means that he can't apply for a second anything on it." Taylor said and gave her a knowing smile. "He's toast and so is the idiot that would even talk to him about it."

"That's three assholes down, your dad the banker and John," she smacked the table with her palm. "That's right I forgot to tell you two, when I came out yesterday after the explosion, I saw John with a rifle pointing out of the window of his truck. He had someone with him but I couldn't see who it was, we find out who and that was and its four assholes gone."

"John tried to kill me?" Her temper was rising by the second, she clenched her jaw, balled up her fists and let go a sting of cuss words that would rival any sailor on shore leave. "I want his balls swinging from Taylor's bumper hitch!"

"I'd let ya do that in a heart beat if I had a bumper hitch, it's sitting in the yard all crispy." She looked to her lover and knew she had to calm her before she exploded into a million pieces. "We need to get a cop out here, one that isn't in your dad's pocket or on the take, any ideas?"

"I call Bill the district attorney, he'll have someone come over for the statements, I have to call him anyway, he's handling my lawsuit against your stupid ass father."

"Let's go outside and see what we can salvage from the backyard." Taylor grabbed her lover's hand and pulled her towards the back door. "Ya know you look like shit?"

"Gee you are so smooth with the complements and for your information; you don't look so hot either." She bumped shoulders with her and squeezed her hand. "I bet my dad looks worse than both of us, he's afraid of the dark." They walked around the yard picking up burnt debris and assorted items that escape the trailer. After about two hours, they had garbage bags piled up at the curb and were watching a wrecking service haul Taylor's truck away.

"I loved that truck," she wrapped an arm around Aeryn and leaned her head against hers. "Did I tell you about your ma and her screaming all the way to the hospital?"

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Selma had called her friend Bill and he agreed to come out to the house with a police officer so that complaints and reports could be made. He was ready to take down the entire police department when he found out that no one had even come out after the explosion was reported. He would get that in writing from nearby neighbors, he had a list of names of the people who had called in and that included one city councilman that had been driving by at the time of the explosion. He had a huge dent in the hood of his car where a bench seat had landed and was pissed that no cop would talk to him. Satisfied with the events, Selma sat down at the table and drank her coffee, she would tell the kids when they came in from playing out in the yard. She thought of Taylor and how protective she was of her daughter and knew that she would never have to worry about her getting emotionally hurt again. She couldn't make guarantee about the physical part for Taylor, she was dating the Klutz of Jefferson County. "At least they'll have an interesting life."

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Taylor and Aeryn walked past the ruins and were on their way back into the house when a police

car pulled into the drive. As they neared, they saw a man in a dark suit in the passenger side and recognized him as the district attorney. What caught their attention next was Davidson screaming from where he was crawling through a window onto the garage roof.

"Ohhhh I am so glad to see you," he struggled and fell out onto the roof. "That bitch turned off the lights and left me stuck in the dark, I want her arrested..." He saw who had come to his rescue and shut his mouth.

"Go slap some cuffs on that asshole and call for another car to pick him up; I don't want his filth in our cruiser." The cop nodded and then called for another cruiser. "I would have done worse you son of a bitch, I would have shut *your* lights off." He waved at Aeryn and headed to the front door where Selma was standing. "He'll be gone as soon as the other cruiser gets here and I've arranged for him to spend sometime in the same cell with a real gift to the jail system." He stepped inside, gave her a hug and followed her to the kitchen. "I've told everyone that he's a pedophile and into kiddy porn, that should give him a sleepless night."

"Good, that rat bastard deserves everything he gets; want some coffee before we start?"

He sat at the table with the women and was astounded at all that had happened to them and checked and saw that no police reports had been filed. He started taking down everything on his laptop and sent it to his assistant back at the office. His next mission was to talk to all the neighbors and get statements from them. He had started their own investigators on any leads or information on John and his partner in crime. He knew of John and his notorious family of degenerates and often wondered if Aeryn had lost her mind when she started dating him. He was happy to see that she had changed her dating habits and was with someone from a solid family. "Ok, I have what I need here, now I'm gonna go visit your neighbors and get their statements. If there's anything else you think of just give my office a call and I'll come back out." He shook hands with each woman before taking his leave.

"So now that we've done that, I feel a little bit more optimistic about this coming to an end." Aeryn said. "And now I know why my car sat for so long outside your building, the cops could have cared less what happened." She looked to her mom. "Do ya think dad was behind all of this bullshit, I mean it seems kinda funny that I'm the only investigator to ever get into so many problems?"

"If he isn't I'd be surprised," Selma replied. "Either way he's history, his show has come to a close."

## Chapter Eighteen

An investigator for the district attorney office pushed open the door to the Billy Bob bar and grill, he looked around and let his eyes adjust to the darkness. He hated this place but not as

much as the man he was investigating. He had gone to school with John; at least until John dropped out of the ninth grade to become what he still is today, useless. He had gotten the report from the office and this was listed as John's alibi, and John being a genius, he gave the other people that he was with. Those men were now being brought in to be questioned; everyone knew that they had to be involved; John was too stupid to pull anything off on his own. He looked around him and saw a waitress and the bartender. He sat down and waited for her to approach him. "I would like a Jack Daniels on ice and some information, please." She looked at him completely shocked because he used the word please and almost fell over when he placed a twenty dollar bill on the table across from him. "Please ma'am it'll only take a minute of your time."

"Ok, but I don't know how much help I'll be." She sat down and took the twenty. "What can I help you with?"

He pulled pictures of the three idiots from his pocket and placed them before her. "I'm an investigator with the district attorney's office and I'm trying to find out if these men were in here two days ago?"

She looked at the pictures and nodded her head, he was about to sigh in defeat when she spoke. "This cheap bastard was here for over two hours and gave me a whole buck in tips; he kept buying three drinks at a time but only drank the gin and tonic." She shook her head and cursed. "The stupid bastard kept throwing the beers out the back door over there." She pointed to where the door was. "About the time I was gonna toss him out the back door, these two showed up." She pointed to John and Gary. "They snuck in through the back door and acted like they had been here for hours. Now ya can see that this place isn't that big, we don't get a big crowd in here on a weekday so there's no way in Hell they could hide without us seeing them all that time."

"So you're saying that only Rick was here the entire time and the other two got here later." He wrote this down in his notebook. "What time would you say that they got here?"

"I can do better than that, we have the security tapes." She got up and went over to the bar, got the tapes from the bartender and brought them back along with his drink. "Here ya go, the cameras scan the whole room every thirty seconds or so and it's as clear as day."

"Thank you so much ma'am, this will defiantly help with my case." He downed his drink in one gulp, shook her hand and then left the bar. So far it was looking very good that he could prove that John was lying about the amount of time he and Gary had been in the bar. He also had to check with the DOH and see if he had gone past any of their cameras, which would give them an even better time frame. "I'll get your asses and make sure ya can't wiggle out of this." He got into his car and headed to his next destination.

\*\*\*\*\*

With Davidson in jail, Aeryn moved into his small apartment over the garage. What she found had her madder than Hell, was that he had boxes of ledgers detailing all kinds of illegal activities. Other boxes were full of porn of every shape and size, on both VHS and DVD. That led her to his computer; she did a search and was disgusted with what she had found. She immediately called Bill and let him know what she had found. She knew that other charges would be filed on her asshole father and knew that if convicted, he would never see the light of day. What really surprised her was all the information Bill's investigator had been able to uncover. John and his buddies would never see the light of day either and that made her happy as hell.

"Hey baby whatcha doing?" Taylor asked and then gave her a funny look when she looked into one of the boxes of porno. "I didn't take you as a porno person," she picked one of the DVD's up and grimaced. "This is disgusting, women with farm animals?"

"Those disgusting things belong to my asshole father, Bill's on his way over to get them and all this other shit I've found." She dropped what she was doing and went over to hug her lover. "So how did the truck shopping go?"

"Nothing yet, I've still got some other places to look but nothing is jumping out at me." She nuzzled Aeryn's neck and breathed in her soft scent. "I don't know if I want the same sized truck or go with something smaller, ya know easier on gas." She pulled back and looked around the dingy apartment. "Are ya sure ya wanna live here, it's kinda dark and depressing?"

"Is that an offer?" She pulled back and looked into green eyes.

"Yeah, I mean that's if you wanna live there with me and the elf." She gave her a soft kiss and rocked her from side to side in her arms. "We practically live together anyway, when's the last time we slept alone?"

"Uhhmm...ok, I see what you're saying, I don't even have anything to move to your place, what clothes I have are already there."

"See how easy that is, now all ya have to do is tell ma?"

Aeryn groaned deeply she knew that her ma would have a field day with this news. "I think she already has an idea that I'd be moving in with you, she asked me if this was a U-Haul relationship at the very beginning." Taylor busted out laughing and hugged her tighter.

"Let's get outta here, this place smells funny and gives off bad vibes."

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Aeryn, Taylor and Selma sat in the court room listening to the court case against John, Gary and

Rick. At times they found it hard not to laugh, Rick was defending all of them and he was so bad that it was comical. Even the jury sat shaking their heads or rolling their eyes at what he said at times. What really got them was all the info on the HUD apartment building Aeryn had been watching for the law firm. They found out during the trial that Rick was part owner with his brother Gary, his brother ran the place and his investigator's brother was the maintenance man. That tied them all together in a nice little package, except for where John came in. He got tangled in the web only because he was pissed at all the rumors going around about him, seems that someone was passing around that he turned Aeryn gay. It cut down on his dating and he wasn't too happy about it. He wouldn't accept the fact that he just plain sucked and be done with it, so he grouped up with the others to kill her. Now they were all looking at a very long time in prison because of their ignorance, Aeryn hoped that they tossed her dad in with them after his trial; they'd all make great cellmates for each other.

"That was really entertaining," Selma said. "I had no idea that court could be that much fun."

"Believe me; it was always hysterical when Rick went into the court room." Aeryn said and took Taylor's hand. "What's even funnier is that he thinks he's a good lawyer."

"Good for nothing," Selma mumbled and looked to where Mildred and her life partner were waiting for her. "Well kids it's time for my poker game, be nice to Buddy and don't scare him too much with all those funny noises ya'll make."

They looked to each other and then to Selma's back as she walked towards her friends. "Is there anyone who hasn't heard us when we're you know?"

"I don't think so, maybe someone in another state." Taylor shrugged her shoulders. "Before I forget, I have to go a meeting with Ted and a couple of the supervisors tonight; we have a problem with one of the work sites."

"Ok, what time will you be home?" Aeryn asked.

"I shouldn't be too late, I hate these damn meetings, this will be the last of them." She hated lying to her but knew that there was no way that she would pull her into her stupid bet.

\*\*\*\*\*

Taylor took a deep breath and walked into the bar; she let her eyes adjust to the darkness and groaned at her welcoming committee. There were all the guys she worked with sitting in chairs around the small dance area and Ted right in the center of them. She shook her head at her stupidity and swore that she would never again make any bets. She glanced down at her blue silk shirt and black trousers, this was as close to being feminine as she would get. "You can do this but first a good strong drink." She made her way to the bar and ordered her drink, before she could take a sip, Ted was at her side.

"This has just got to be a first; I have never beaten you in a bet before."

"Well ya just got lucky and I'm telling ya now that I'm done with the bets, it's gotten old so go pick on someone else."

"That's not fair; you're the only one who really challenges me."

"Sorry about that but I'm retiring," she downed her drink and waved to the dance floor. "Let's get t his over with."

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Aeryn stood in the kitchen looking at the newspaper when Buddy came in; he took one look at her and sat down at the table. "Where's Taylor?"

"She had a meeting with Ted and some other guys, how come you're not there?"

"Meeting..." he looked to the calendar and felt his mouth drop open, he had completely forgotten about the bet. "Ohhhh we have to go," he got up and ran around the kitchen looking for the keys to his truck. "She's not at a meeting, she's making good on a bet she made."

"A bet, but she said she was," She narrowed her eyes and pointed at him. "You're gonna explain all of this on the way to where ever she is or else."

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Taylor smacked Sam on the top of his bald head, moved his hands off her ass and stomped on his foot hard enough to make him yell out. "Get your god damn face out of my cleavage or I'll kill you!" She had just about killed the last guy for trying to grind on her and she was getting really close to going off and committing mass murder. Not a single one of them had any sense or manners and they shouldn't have been allowed to reproduce. She was never so thankful when the song ended and she was able to escape for a couple of minutes. She got another drink and was just finishing it when her next dance partner showed up. "Ya know you could all be gentleman and say 'Ok you lost, we'll give ya a break' but nooo." She walked out to the dance floor and waited for the groping to start.

"Excuse me but you're done little man." Aeryn said as she grabbed him by the back of his shirt and yanked him away from her lover. "You are in so much trouble Taylor." She whispered and stepped into her arms. "Why didn't you tell me about this stupid bet?"

"Because it's a stupid bet?"

"No more so than what I got myself into with my dad." She pulled back and held her with a raised brow. "I would have helped you, all you had to do was ask."

"At the beginning I was going to, but as I got to know you, I didn't want to cheapen our relationship by having you help me win this childish bet."

"Hey what's going on here?" Ted asked as he approached the women.

"I'm dancing with my girlfriend do you have a problem with that?" Aeryn asked as she glared down at him. "Where's that low-life Stan?" She looked around the room and saw Buddy pointing to a man; she looked him over and grinned. "Wait until I get a hold of him, I'm gonna make sure Marjorie knows what an idiot she's married to." She went over to him, whispered in his ear and grinned at the shocked expression on his face. He took exactly two seconds to go over to Ted and tell him that he had witnessed the date between Aeryn and Taylor. Ted then came over to them shaking his head.

"That dumb bastard just told me that he was blackmailing you or something and that you did go out on a date and went by the rules." He reached in his pocket and pulled out a wad of bills.

"Here are all your winnings and you're right, this has gotten old." He waved at them and headed towards the door.

"Ok so what was he talking about?" Taylor asked as she pulled them towards the bar.

"Well it seems that my ma's poker games have nothing to do with playing cards, they go to strip bars for free drinks." She explained to her about her mom's traveling poker games. "And one of the idiots that spends the most on drinks for them is Stan. She has all these pictures in an album and he's in most of the pictures."

He really thinks that he'll get lucky buying women drinks in a strip bar...what an idiot." She chuckled and then gave her lover a confused look. "So how was he blackmailing me?"

"Well he saw you in a compromising position and was using that to make you fold on this bet."

"A compromising position was it, did I enjoy it?" She found herself pushed all the way back to the bar and pushed down onto it, her mouth taken in a hungry kiss and long minutes later she was led dumbfounded from the bar.

"Now tell me did you enjoy it?" Aeryn asked.

"Yep, I sure did and I'm so glad you came to my rescue, I never wanna dance with another man as long as I live." She shivered and pulled Aeryn into her side.

"You, I get sick thinking about being near a man ever again. I know one thing, they'll have to



drag me kicking and screaming back into the closet." They got into Buddy's truck and practiced some more compromising positions before he came out and yelled at them.

The End.

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