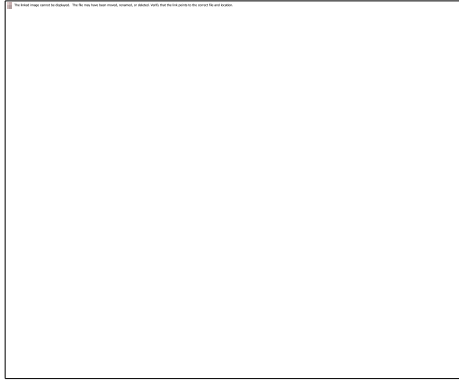


# ~ Rat's Bitch ~

by Larisa

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**Disclaimer:** Yep, they will remind you of our favorite women, but these two are all mine. This story contains everything that a Xena ep would have in it and then some. If your jailbait or live where this life style is against the law, sorry about your luck. Loving scenes between two women, violence, bad language and what ever else I've forgotten. No infringement on songs by famous artists is meant.

Thanks to Lesia and Ri for being my sounding boards. I've set up appointments with the local nut-wards for ya.

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## **Rat's Bitch**

By Larisa

[Hecate3366@frontiernet.net](mailto:Hecate3366@frontiernet.net)

The bright fluorescent lights made green eyes ache, after weeks out in the field, Stephanie Carlton was once again back in the office. She typed with a flourish of one who was no stranger to a keyboard, closing her eyes and mouthing the words that her small fingers ticked out, she was coming to the closing paragraph of her report. Raising her right hand high above the keyboard of her PC, she jabbed the enter key and sighed with relief. Even though while she was on her last assignment and sent in reports every other day, she needed to do the closing report and now that it was finished she sighed with relief as the heavy burden lifted from her small muscular shoulders. She had just spent one year undercover to bust a drug ring in Richmond Virginia. It encompassed being able to get herself into a network at the boat docks, take photos of cabin cruisers and other boats coming into and leaving at the late night hours preferred by the drug runners. Making numerous friends of known drug runners, suppliers and users to get the evidence needed by the District attorney, to have a strong case against the parties so that they would be spending a very long time behind bars. When the bust had come down, she was arrested right along with the entire lot of them. No matter what, it had to look like she was as guilty as the offenders were.

Her life depended on it, even when they were all safely behind bars there were still connections that could be made from the inside to make sure that she would end up dead. To make it look real, during the arrest she put up one hell of a fight and had the numerous cuts and bruises to attest to the struggle she gave the arresting officers. She knew for a fact that they didn't fair much better than her, it was one way to work off the frustration of a year in hell as she had told her boss Jacob Freeman. She printed out her report; paper clipped it and shoved it into a manila

folder. Getting up from the desk, she walked stiffly to her boss' office, waltzed right in, and tossed the report on his desk.

"I'm done and I'm going to that place where I think I still live and take a nice long hot bath until my entire body looks like a raisin."

A set of brown eyes looked up at her as she ran her fingers through her short sweaty blonde hair. Jacob could see the tiredness in the way his young officer held her shoulders; her eyes shot through with red spider webs and worry lines etched across her forehead.

"You do that, but make sure that you're back in here on Monday." Picking up the envelope, he placed it in his in box and offered her a small smile. "You did great out there, no one else could have pulled it off. I'll take you out to dinner next week after you recuperate."

Green eyes rolled at the line he always used on her, if it was not for the fact that he was in his late 50's and happily married with kids her age, she would think he was hitting on her.

"Ohh please, I was just doing my job."

"Steve, you know that you just have something that makes people trust you. That really helps when we're trying to get the creeps off the streets." Coming from behind his desk, he placed an arm around her shoulders and gave her a hug. "Could you see one of those cocky bastards out there flirting with a drug dealer to get into their confidences?"

She thought about some of the other undercover Police Officers and had to laugh. Some of the guys looked like they should be breaking rocks with a ball peen hammer in the nearest quarry. She had to admit that being a woman; certain jobs were easier because she could flirt her way in.

"Thanks a lot for that visual, now I'll have nightmares all night."

His face broke out in a huge grin, the lines near his eyes becoming deeper along with the laugh lines at the sides of his mouth.

"Glad I could help. Now remember Monica wants you over before the weekend."

"I know, or she'll come to my apartment and kick my ass. I'll be there on Friday." She gave him a quick kiss on his cheek and left the office thinking of his wife. Since she had joined the Police Force eight years ago, they had taken her in and were more like surrogate parents than her boss and his wife. When not in the field, she was over a couple of times a week to go shopping or what ever with his wife of 35 years. With being an only child, her mother's passing when she was five and being a survivor as she like to refer to the Step-Mommy Dearest syndrome, it was a welcome feeling to have the older woman look at her like she was their own offspring. With both being barely five foot five, green eyes and short blonde hair, with just a glance people thought that they were mother and daughter. Since her assignment, she had kept in touch by sending e-mails to Monica under the disguise of her health food store. It was not unusual for Steve to get boxes at her office on the docks full of all the latest health food along with a hidden floppy disc

in a box of wheat crackers. She was thankful for the food; with the hours she worked, she never had time to shop for proper meals. Most often, it was something she picked up on her way into the phony front the drug lord used to hide his real operation. Now that she would have time to get her life back in order, the first place she was going was a steak house on the outskirts of town. She was dying for a sixteen-ounce medium rare steak, baked potato with the works and a hot fudge sundae with whipped cream and nuts. Her mouth watered with just the thought of real food for a change.

Grabbing her windbreaker, she headed out the door of the Police Station and to her dark blue Toyota Celica GT, she would miss the sporty car when she turned it back in and retrieved her own car. One of the perks for working as an Undercover Narcotics Officer was that she often got to use the seized cars that were taken from drug dealers for her own use while working. Her car was a late model Ford Tempo that was on its last leg. Jacob had warned her about buying a Ford; he was a die-hard Chevy man. Driving the hour to her apartment, she parked the Celica, searched the glove compartment for her keys, and then walked the ten feet to the front door of the three-car garage. She had found the ad in the paper years ago about the loft apartment for three hundred dollars a month including utilities. At the time, she was not making a whole lot of money and this place was something that she could afford easily and still pay for her tuition to college. At first college was no problem for her money wise, but after her first two years, she changed her major from medicine to law enforcement and pre-law. With one-year left, her father found out what she had done, with the nagging of his wife, he stopped paying for the stuff that wasn't covered. The scholarship she had won only paid for Medical school and with that gone and her fathers help, she ended up working two minimum wage jobs to pay for everything. Now after eight years on the Police force, she could afford to live else where but being here was where she wanted to stay. The owner was an old lady with a heart of gold; Beatrice was in her late 60's that had lived alone her entire life on the small farm. After her parents died, she never married nor moved away. From time to time, the ladies from the nearby church would stop over to visit her. But most of the time it was just her and Steve to keep each other company. For the last year with Steve living in the city area as part of her cover, they had only seen each other when she could sneak away on weekends or when her boss was out of the country. Now she hoped she would be home for a while and catch up on the gossip from around town. Climbing the stairs to her loft, she came to a lightly stained wooden door. The sound of the creaking hinges reminded her that she needed to oil them as well as do some serious cleaning and laundry. That could wait until later; right now, the tub was screaming her name.

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The sound of heavy wheels crunching the gravel came to alert ears; pale eyes scanned the area for the large truck that was scheduled to be at the appointed spot at exactly midnight. It was one minute to midnight now, counting, if it was late the deal was off, and the driver knew this. As the large hand hit twelve, a set of parking lights flashed once and all was dark except the faint glow of a cigarette tip moving towards her. She knew who it was before he came with in sight.

"You're lucky that it's just me here." A deep voice came from the dark. "If I had sent out one of

the guys, they would have shot you already."

"Damn I screwed up again, I so wanted to get shot so I could have some time off."

The soft glow of a lantern filled the mans features in, his long black beard streaked with silver matched his long hair. Green eyes twinkled as he held out his hand to his long time friend.

"How you been Big D? I hear you have a big load for me to take to the boss?" He looked up a good two foot into pale blue eyes.

"How's 40 Uzi's, 15 Police issued Sniper Rifles, two case of CIA Glock's and 3 LAWS sound to you?" The tall figure flipped a tarp off the items and stepped to the side. "Plus the usual assortment of drugs and shit. I have a new connection with those, so I should be able to get more than usual."

"Damn D, you did good this haul. I'll tell the old man about the new connection." He pulled a thick envelope from inside his leather vest and handed it over. "Should be a hundred grand in there, minus a dollar. I needed a coffee before I fell asleep at the wheel." His white teeth flashed up at his tall friend.

"That cheap bastard didn't even give you enough money for gas did he?" Pulling a fifty from the envelope, D passed it over to the shorter man. "I won't tell if you don't, lets get this shit loaded so I can get home to my bitch."

Two hours later D was pulling her old truck up to the log cabin and jumping out before it stopped bouncing on its worn out shocks. Wiping dirty hands on worn out Levi's, a large long fingered hand reached out and opened the door. The inside of the cabin was dark except for the flickering of the TV and a light on over the kitchen sink. Shedding the dirty denim shirt, it was tossed near the front door, D walked into the living room to see the skinny blonde that had been won at a fight, sprawled out on the couch. Drugs, a burnt spoon and lighter lay on the coffee table and floor, a needle was still sticking out of the vein in her forearm from when she had shot up on her heroin.

"Fucking disgusting whore." D kicked the passed out woman in her leg and watched as she rolled from the couch to land on her face onto the hard wood floor. "Told you about bringing that shit into my house, first chance I get your sorry ass is gone." Heading towards the master bedroom, D flipped on the light and looked at the damage done to the room. Clothes were thrown all over the furniture and floor, the bed was flipped over as well as the nightstand. The phone was beeping from being off the hook, and from the looks of the thing, it was lucky to still be working. Heading for the master bath, D flipped the light on and saw pretty much the same. Kicking the stuff out of the way of the bathtub, a large hand ripped down what was left of the shower curtain and sent it flying out of the room. Seconds later, clothes hit the floor and a tall muscular tattooed body stepped beneath scalding water. A low rumbling growl echoed in the bathroom as water loosened tight muscles and washed away sandy grit. 45 minutes later pale blue eyes looked into the mirror, long fingers pushed back dark hair from around a bronze face to reveal high cheekbones. Pinching the bridge of the straight nose to push away the aching pain

that invaded the area right behind the tired blue eyes did nothing.

"Fuck it, I'm tired and I'm not cleaning this mess up."

After flipping the bed over and tossing the mattress back on, six foot of bronzed body dropped face first into the bed and searched for the lone pillow that had been found. Within minutes a deep snore came from parted lips.

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Steve moaned as she turned the key again and heard the clicking noise come from her starter. Slapping the steering wheel with her hand, she cursed at her Ford Tempo. Turning the key, it clicked once and then turned over to cough a few times until it caught and revved throwing up clouds of black smoke.

"Piece of shit car, need a new one and soon." Pulling from her drive, she headed to the station; she couldn't believe how fast the week had gone by. After spending all day Friday with Monica and then dinner with her and Jacob, it seemed like the weekend was gone and she was headed back to her office. Nodding hellos to people she hadn't seen in a year or more, she went right to the desk that she used when she wasn't out in the field. Pulling out the small desk chair, she knew why she never had to worry about someone taking it. Looking around the room, she saw new computer chairs with thick padded seats, backrests and adjustable arm rests. Shrugging her shoulders, she took her seat and booted up the PC that took up most of her desk. Before it had come up all the way, she heard her name bellowed through out the office.

"Now what did I do?" Pushing back from her desk, she looked to the half-opened door of Jacob's office. "I've been here a whole two minutes and already he's yelling." Taking a deep breath, Steve straightened her shoulders and went forward to face whatever it was.

Jacob rubbed his face with both hands, looking over the top of peaked fingers, he grumbled to himself as he saw Steve coming through his door.

"Steve, glad to see you're on time today."

Green eyes narrowed at his statement, crossing her arms across her chest, she tapped her foot on the tiles.

"Hey now, I've gotten better at getting up and to work on time."

Brown eyes tracked from her tapping boot up to her raised left eyebrow. "Sorry Stevie." Taking a deep breathe, he leaned back in his chair. "Take a seat, we have a problem." Sliding a folder across his desk to her, he went on to explain. "One of our undercover officers working the drug and weapons trafficking has been found in pieces outside of Fredericksburg. He was undercover in the motorcycle gangs for the last three years trying to get to the big supplier."

"What has this got to do with me?" She flipped through the folder to see pictures of grungy bearded men on all types of motorcycles and choppers.

"I want you to slip into the picture and see if you can work another miracle."

"Do I look like the fairy fucking Godmother?" She tossed the folder onto his desk; a deep rumbling growl came from her chest as green eyes flamed with disbelief. "I just spent a whole year undercover with scumbags trying to feel me up, shot me up and other disgusting things and now you want me to slip into this!" She pointed to a picture showing hundreds of motorcycles grouped together. "I'd be raped before I could open my mouth to scream."

"Stevie, I don't want you to slip into the male part of the gangs, I want you to get into the female side."

"Ohh great!" She stood up and paced in front of his desk, her hands slapping at the air with each word she mumbled. "You want me to play cycle slut instead. Do I look like a slut?" Her temper was at its boiling point, a vein throbbled in her temper.

"No Stevie, I want you to mingle with the females and see if you can find out who the hell is in charge. It's got to be someone that we've not been able to flush out of the tangled little organization they have set up."

Taking a seat, she drilled him with smoldering green eyes. "And how am I supposed to do this, stand out in the middle of a field and pray that they show up?"

Jacolb chuckled at the way she was trying to intimidate him, waving a finger at her, he grinned.

"No, I don't expect you to stand out in a field and wait for the mother ship to zap you into her fold." Pointing to a map, he showed her where they had a small caravan type set up and a small town nearby that they traveled to for supplies. "Get a job in town and make yourself seen, it's a well known fact with this group that they steal woman to add to their group."

"Ohhh great! Now you want me to be kidnapped on top of everything else! Are you nuts? What makes you believe that I'll get into this hell of a mess that no one else has ever been able to do with out ending up in pieces all over the place?" She was back to pacing, with each word she pointed at Jacolb with her index finger. When she finished, she stood with her hands planted on her hips and leaning close to him.

"Because you're beautiful when you're angry?" He just couldn't help but knock her anger down with a cheap line. He chuckled at her wide-eyed expression. "Stevie, you're the best we have in the field. Just use your charms and see what happens."

"If you find more bodies, it's because I used my charms and a chainsaw. When do I leave for another stay in hell?"

"Tomorrow morning, here's the address of a place you can stay and the keys to your ride."

Her face brightened at the thought of driving the same car as before.

"You're going to kill me, but your ride is an older model Jeep. Not much better than your car, it'll be needed for the areas that you're going to be traveling to."

"I hope it's a swamp." She mumbled as she flipped the keys in her hand. "Any other instructions?"

"Yeah, dress slutty." He ducked when she came over the desk at him and tried to grab him by his tie. He looked up from the floor into twinkling green eyes.

"Does Monica know you like to see me looking slutty?"

"Well...I'm in deep shit ain't I?"

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Hundreds of motorcycles were parked in the open field North of Fredericksburg, the whine of dirt bikes as they tore across the paths and jumps as men raced against each other and the stopwatch. Once a year the gangs got together for a huge BBQ, racing, beer drinking and if anyone happened to have the urge at the time, then a wedding. Though it was not performed by the clergy or a Justice of the Peace, it was considered by the other members to be just as binding. A huge pit had been dug close to the beer kegs, men turned spits with hogs and a sides of beef suspended over the flames. The smell of roasting meat reached for miles as it cooked slowly, a pick-up truck with the word Rat painted on the side, had huge speakers sitting in the back of blaring music. Standing in front of the thumping speakers was a skinny, grungy blonde with wild un-kept hair, dark circles under her crazed brown eyes. Her short shorts barely covered her private areas and left all to view the track marks and open sores on her legs that matched the ones on her arms and upper chest. D looked with narrowed eyes at the woman before her, disgusted with what the woman was doing to herself with drugs and alcohol; she made a promise to her self to make sure she got rid of her before she could cause trouble for the organization. She had kept her self-clear of the police and other departments looking into the motorcycle gangs for drug trafficking and gun running, but for some reason deep in her gut, she knew that the crazy blonde could be her down fall. Picking up the full faced helmet, D pushed the dirt bike off the trailer and started to where the races were to start up again. In the past ten years, she had been the sole winner of the all the races held at the get togethers. Being the undefeated Queen of the dirt track, she was always at risk while riding. It was even more dangerous since it was a no rules type of race. The only rule being that no weapons of any kind were to be used, if one went against the rule, they suffered a very slow death at the hands of the one who was endangered.

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Stevie had just pulled into a small Mom and Pops store when 30 or more motorcycles blew past her, the noise was deafening. Clapping her hands over her ears, she watched as they blew past at high speeds. Never before had she seen anything like it and hoped that she would be able to with

stand being around so many rough looking characters if she was to get in and do her job. Popping the door on the Jeep, she began to fill up the tank. Turning to the side she watched as another group of motorcycles pulled into the small parking lot, every range of body type was displayed before her blinking green eyes. She felt shivers run up her spine as numerous eyes looked over to her.

*"Oohh shit, I don't like this one bit."*

A fear that she had never before felt in her 32 years ran through her body. She knew that she would have to go inside the small store and pay for her gas, which would lead her right past a large majority of the men. Feeling self-conscious about the very short cut-offs and half shirt she wore, didn't help her any. Screwing the cap on and closing the door, she went to pay for her gas. With out looking at any of the men, she pushed the door open and ran right into a thick belly. Looking up into a jagged toothed smile, she gulped and whispered a small sorry to the biker.

"It's all right little lady." He bowed his head a little then stepped sideways from her. Giving him a small smile she walked up to the counter and held out her money to the older gentleman.

"I hope you're just passing through, this is not the place to be right now." He whispered to her. "Haul ass out of here in the opposite direction of those bikers."

Steve looked at him with confusion until she felt a large presence behind her.

"Thank you, I'll be sure and do that." She offered him a small smile and made her way to the door. Once out the door, she noticed that only four motorcycles were left and five bikers including the one that was still inside. Walking gingerly to her jeep, she felt a large hand grab her from behind.

"Just the thing I was looking for." A deep voice said close to her ear. "You just became my prom date." Spinning her around, he dragged her towards the other bikers and shoved her up to a mean looking chopper. "Get on or else."

"Are you insane? I'm not going anywhere with you, now let me go!" Steve pushed his hand away from her arm and tried to get around him only to find his hand wrapped around her neck and squeezing.

"Don't fuck with me bitch or I'll rip your head off!" He picked her up by her throat, put her on the seat of his chopper, and climbed on behind her.

"Come on Spartan, leave the lady alone." The giant of a man she had met earlier said to the man shoving her. "We're late as it is and I'm not gonna explain that to the boss, now let her go."

With pleading green eyes, Steve looked to her possible savior.

A shiny 38 Special appeared from nowhere and pointed at him. "Fuck you Stump, she's mine now."



Stump rubbed his beard and sighed, he knew if he pushed Spartan, he would be trying to plug a hole in his chest after he was shot. "Damn it, Rat ain't gonna like this." He mumbled under his breath and watched as one of Spartan's buddies pulled away in the lady's Jeep. Climbing on his Shovelhead, he kicked it over and followed the others out of the parking lot. Steve felt her heart slamming in her chest with fear of the unknown; she had no idea what's so ever what was going to happen to her now. Hoping that this was where she was supposed to be as far as her boss was concerned. If not, she was in deep shit. Holding on to the gas tank, she prayed that the biker Stump would help her when they got to their destination.

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On the last jump of the dirt track, a steel covered foot kicked out at D's knee while both bikers were in mid air. Avoiding the foot, D struck out with a gloved hand and smacked the other biker in the side of his unprotected head. Only two wheels hit the dirt and headed for the finish line, the other dirt bike rolled end over end with the biker tangled in it's frame. Screams and yells went up around the winner, while others ran to help the fallen man. D pulled a wheelie and rode it all the way to where Stump was running up to her.

"Rat we got trouble, Spartan grabbed some lady and..." Was all he could say before six foot of pissed off biker rode to where Spartan and his group of friends were circled around his chopper and Steve's Jeep.

"Come on bitch take them off!" Spartan waved a wicked looking butterfly knife in front of Steve's face, she had leaned back as far as she could to keep the blade at bay but found her self with no more room. She could take the blade from him in a heartbeat and ram it up his ass if she wanted, except that would blow the cover she was trying to present and most likely get her killed in the process. Looking over his broad shoulder, she saw Stump coming her way along with someone riding a dirt bike at break neck speed. A cloud of dust billowed up around them and then what seemed like a figure from a dream walked from the cloud to slam a hand down onto Spartan's shoulder. He turned his head and felt all the color fade from his face. Flipping the knife a few times, it closed and disappeared into the pocket of his leather vest.

From behind a dark tinted shield, a deep voice vibrated. "You know the law Spartan, she's mine."

"Fuck you Rat, I found her she's mine."

A glove-covered hand grabbed him by his throat, with the ease of lifting nothing; Rat picked him up from the ground and held him overhead. His face turned purple, eyes bulged as his fingers tried to peel the strong fingers from around his throat.

"I take what I want. She's mine!" Steve watched as this Rat person, relaxed the grip on Spartan's neck and watched as he dropped to the dirt gasping for air. Her wide eyes traveled the worn black leather covered person from heavy black boots to Snell helmeted head. The danger poured from the tall figure before her, she was more afraid now than before. Easing up over the top of her Jeeps hood, she tried to get to the drivers seat with out being noticed. In a flash the tall figure

was standing in front of her and a large hand had a hold of her upper arm. She felt her heart drop down to her feet, looking into the dark shield; she tried to see the face that was hidden.

"Please...don't hurt me. I'll do what ever you want." She was pulled forward and slammed up against a hard leather covered body. Fingers cupped her chin and turn her head from side to side. Then both arms were held out and examined.

"Stump, get that heroin addict and get rid of her, take care of this Jeep and my truck. I'll ride my scooter home."

"You got it boss; I'll have everything taken to your cabin." He paused for a moment before he asked what could very well get his ass kicked. "About the addict...you want her...?"

"Give her to one of the other gangs; I don't ever want to see that disgusting piece of shit again."

Steve wondered what the hell was going on and why all of a sudden, she felt like a worthless piece of flesh that was just sold at a horse auction. Her notorious temper rose and screamed out for action.

"Hey wait a minute; don't you want to see if I have all my teeth?" She asked and was yanked forward and then dragged behind the long striding Rat. "If you don't stop yanking on me I'm going to put a foot right up your ass!" She dropped back and let her foot sail upward and right into the leather-clad ass. Looking behind her, she saw Stump cover his mouth and turn his back on her; other snickering noises came to her ears from all directions. She had the feeling that she just stepped on a land mine. A low roar rumbled before her and before she could run, she was thrown over a wide shoulder and paraded upside down across the wide field. Grabbing onto the bottom of the leather jacket, she held on for dear life.

Thoughts flew through Rat's mind, not knowing where to go but only that they had to get away from the prying eyes of the others. *I can't believe she kicked me, no one has ever kicked me no less in my ass! Just my luck, I get rid of one problem and get another one in its place.* Looking through the dark shield at the large body of water ahead, Rat had just found the space needed to confront the small blonde for what was going to be one hell of a fight.

Steve looked at a funny angle under the Rat's arm, all she saw was sparkling blue, then it hit her, she was going to become quite wet in about two seconds. She gripped the leather jacket with all her strength.

"You wouldn't drown me would you?" She asked with a whimper. "I'll be good and I won't kick you again." She felt her body being moved to a different position, wrapping an arm around the neck of Rat and the other holding onto the back of the leather jacket. "Please don't drown me!" She yelled as she felt her body being lifted and then a ice-cold water hitting her back. She forced herself up through the water, sputtered, coughed and wiped the water from her face. Looking around her, she found herself alone.

"Where the hell did he go?" Spinning in a circle, she looked for the Rat. "He couldn't have just

disappeared in two seconds...could he?" She froze when she felt one hand go up under her arm and the other grab her by her upper thigh. She was lifted up over a black helmet and tossed out into the middle of the lake. Coming back up to the surface, she looked at the intimidating soaking wet leather clad Rat standing near the bank with a whole crowd of bikers right behind him. Trudging up to the Rat, Steve grabbed the front of the leather jacket and came nose to shield.

"Do you have a serious problem or what?"

A dripping gloved hand raised and flipped the dark shield up to reveal pale blue eyes. Steve gasped and stepped back, she had never seen eyes that color before and didn't expect them to be able to steal her breath. Watching the eyes travel down her body. She let her own eyes look down to see that her short shirt had climbed up and was now showing the bottom of her breasts, her nipples hard and showing quite clearly through the thin material. Quickly crossing her arms over her chest, she glared into blue eyes.

"I suppose you want the same thing that Spartan wanted, well forget it! I'll drown first!" Stalking past the tall figure she felt her arm grabbed and her body hauled up against the wet leather.

"That's where you're wrong." Rat pulled the wet jacket off and covered Steve with it, then pulled the helmet off and tossed it to Stump. "Is my bag still in my truck or did that sleazebag steal it?"

"Nope it's still there, you want me to..."

"I'll get it; make sure that they leave us some food."

"Got it Boss, I'll go right now." The large man took off at a slow jog to the BBQ pits leaving Rat and Steve in the company of snickering bikers.

"You have a problem guys?" The deep voice asked while pale blue eyes tracked to each one. Then looked to the small blonde still shivering from the cold water.

Steve's mouth was hanging open, her eyes bulging from their sockets as she looked at the Rat. Standing next to her was the most beautiful woman she had ever laid eyes on, the classic Greek Goddess looks and leather made her heart pound in her chest and confuse the hell out of her. She was not a sexual person, she had never dated while in school or college but had always found men attractive, and none of them had made her heart slam in her chest like the Rat did. Taking a deep breath, she just chalked it up to the situation she was now in.

"Uhhmm...what are you going to do with me...I mean?"

"Don't worry about it, come on I need to get out of this leather before it shrinks."

Pulling the wet jacket around her body, Steve felt a large hand grip her elbow and lead her to an old truck not far from where the lake was.

"I have clothes in my Jeep, I could get...them?" She looked to where her Jeep used to be and then turned flaming green eyes to Rat. "Where's my Jeep, you can't take that it's mine!" Rat grabbed her by the front of the jacket and pulled her forward so that they were nose to nose.

"I can give you back to Spartan, so take your pick. Me or him and his gang bangers?"

"Uuhmm...big choice you gave me." Defiant eyes locked with steel blue. "Can you answer a question for me?" With out waiting for an answer she pushed on. "Why can't you just let me go? I mean I won't say anything, I don't even know who you people are." She stopped talking when Rat pulled her wet T-shirt off and tossed it in the back of the truck, turned and faced her bare-chested. Gulping, she looked down at her wet cross trainers.

"For the simple fact that if I let you go, Spartan will find you and him and his friends will make you wish you had never been born."

"Not if I go back to where I came from he won't."

Rat handed her a clean shirt, then pulled one over her head. "Do you have any idea how many bikers are out on the roads right now? Thousands and they're all headed here, for the next week this will be the largest rally Virginia has ever seen in years." She stepped closer and leaned down to look in to green eyes. "Do you think you'd be safe out there? Spartan has already put out the word to keep an eye out for you. Now get out of those wet clothes before you freeze to death."

Steve looked around at all the milling bikers and then back to Rat.

"You expect me to strip right here in the open with all these men wandering around?" Her mouth fell open when Rat pulled her leather pants off, stood before her half-naked and shrugged her shoulders.

"Suit yourself, freeze to death see if I care."

Clapping her hands over her eyes, she let out a groan. "Why me?" Peeking from between her fingers she saw that Rat was now dressed, taking a deep breath, she looked to the truck and got an idea. Grabbing Rat by her hand, she dragged her over to the trucks door and opened it.

She moved Rat so that her large body was standing in front of her. "Stand there for a minute." Green eyes looked up into pale blue. "Will you turn around?" She used her finger and made a spinning motion.

"You don't have anything that I haven't seen before."

"For Gods sake, why couldn't I have been kidnapped by the Krishna's." Turning her back she lifted her shirt over her head then saw all the men watching her through the window of the truck. Spinning back around to face a grinning Rat, she gave up and handed her the wet shirt. Her face a bright red and her teeth ground together she grumbled under her breath. "Pervert." *I can't*

*believe that I go through this kind of humiliation for Jacob, I just hope that I'm with the right people. It would be a real bitch to hook up with the wrong ones, he did say to mingle with the woman.* Looking up into the now darkened blue eyes of Rat, she took her wet clothes from her hand and rolled them together. Pulling on the sleeves of the huge flannel shirt, she cocked her head at the tall woman. "You wouldn't happen to have a pair of shorts or something would you? I mean I'm naked under this."

"Nope sorry, come on I'm starving."

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With a paper plate piled with beef, pork, baked beans, baked potato and a fresh roll. Steve sat on a tree stump in front of a blazing fire, she was now warm and comfortable but still ill at ease with what had happened to her that day. She had planned on getting in with the gang by means of a job in town, not being kidnapped and held basically against her will with in 3 hours of her leaving the comfort of her apartment. She wondered how she was going to let Jacob know what was going on if by chance her laptop had been stolen from her Jeep. Worse her high tech camera's and other equipment that she used in her disguise as an unemployed photojournalist. The hair on the back of her neck stood on end and then a warmth caressed her back as Rat leaned down and handed her a cup of steaming coffee. Glancing up at the tall woman, she nodded her head and whispered a thank you. She sighed after the first sip, feeling it warm her further. She jumped a little when she felt the softness of material slid against her bare thighs when Rat sat down behind her. Looking over her shoulder at the woman, she saw that she was leaning back against a log and eating from her paper plate. Blue eyes looked up and caught green, a small grin came across pink lips while a blue eye winked at her.

A dark figure came to stand in front of the Steve. His bulking size and flaming red hair gave the impression of a Viking. "Hey Rat, how much for the blonde?"

Green eyes grew large at the thought of being sold, with pleading eyes, she looked back over her shoulder at Rat.

"She ain't for sale, besides you know I'm not into that."

He crossed his huge muscular arms across his barrel chest and laughed. "Come on Rat, she's a scrawny thing and I haven't heard anyone say they seen you claim her yet."

"Claim me?" Steve squeaked out. "What's he talking about?"

"What I'm talking about little one is, any new meat is either branded, tattooed or marked in some way. If not, then we fight for the prize namely you." He pointed a thick finger down at her.

"Rat...are you..." She felt a warm hand come down onto her shoulder.

"Red, do you really want to fight me?" Her blue eyes turned a silver color and danced with the flames from the fire. "Remember what happened with the last guy."

"Not really, just want to see you claim her so that I can pass it along to the others. I want this gathering to be a peaceful one." He shrugged his shoulders at her. "Well?"

"Shit Red, always gotta cause me problems." Tossing her long dark hair over her shoulders, she placed an arm across a trembling Steve and pulled her back against her chest. "Don't worry, I won't hurt you." She whispered close to a small ear. "Now watch carefully Red." She leaned forward and gently kissed the area right below Steve's ear, a grin came to her lips when Steve's breath hitched in her throat. Taking the soft flesh between her even white teeth, she sucked hard enough to feel Steve tense up against her chest. After a few minutes, she pulled back and ran a fingertip across the dark purple bruise on the soft skin. Bringing her eyes up to lock with Red's, she cocked an eyebrow. "Well?"

"I'm satisfied, how about you?" He gave her a great bellowing laugh and walked away.

If not for the strong body behind her, Steve knew she would be laid out on her back. She had thousands of sensations all shooting through her body at one time. Her breathing was ragged and a heat was burning at her center, she had no idea why that had happened.

Rat whispered into her ear. "Hey you OK, I only did that to keep the assholes from bothering you." Running her finger across the deep purple bruise, she heard a small whimper come from Steve. "Ya know, I just put a huge hickey on a strange women's neck. What's your name?"

"Huh?" Steve whispered from what felt like thousands of miles away.

"Your name, what do I call you?"

"Steve."

"Well Steve, I'm exhausted, lets get out of here."

She led the dazed blonde to her customized 1450cc Harley, placing her helmet over tousled blonde hair and taking her now dried leather jacket and holding it out for Steve to slip on, she then straddled the Harley. Holding out her hand, she took the smaller one and helped Steve onto the back. Hitting the start button, the engine turned over and rumbled beneath her.

"Hold on tight, or you'll fall off." She took the small hands and placed them on her stomach, then pulled the bare thighs right up behind her own. Steve was dazed, confused and a bit in awe at the speed that they were traveling. In such a short time, her mind and body had done back flips. She had no idea what she was doing with this tall woman.

Rat took a deep breath and felt her body relax, the small but muscular arms hugged her tightly around her stomach. She had no idea why she had marked the small blond, she had never marked any other female before and didn't know why she had done it this time. Deep inside, she felt something odd and un-nameable, almost like a small flame had been ignited within her. The one problem she knew she now faced, was keeping her activities a secret for the next week until she

would let Steve go her own way. By then all the bikers would be gone and the area and roads would be safe for the small blond. Taking a tight right hand turn, she eased her Harley up to her log cabin and parked it in front of Steve's Jeep.

"You awake back there?" Unclasping the small hands, she held on to one as she turned to look over her shoulder. Sliding the shield up, she saw closed eyes and heard a soft snore come from between parted lips. *My Gods, she's asleep.* Easing her helmet off, she placed it on the mirror, slipped her leg over the tank while still holding onto Steve. Picking her up in her arms, she walked to her front door, opened it and then made her way to the master bedroom. By the light of the moon, she could make out her unmade queen-sized bed. Laying Steve down, she pulled off her shoes and pulled the blankets up over her. *You could probably sleep through a tornado.*

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Steve felt a warmth against her back and a tightness around her stomach. Cracking one blurry green eye open, she looked around the strange room. She had no idea where she was but knew that she was not alone, from the warm breath that tickled her ear and neck. Easing forward, she looked over her shoulder at the calm features of Rat. *Ohh Gods I'm in bed with a woman!* Her inner voice screamed, trying to move away from the larger woman lasted for all of two seconds when Rat's hand moved up to cup her right breast. *Ohh Gods, I hope we didn't do anything last night. I would know wouldn't I? Knew I should have paid more attention during sex education.* She heard Rat take a deep breath and bury her face closer against her neck. Closing her eyes, she concentrated on the feeling of the warm body spooned against her. Running her hand across the thick forearm and up to the cover the large hand. *I really need to talk to Monica about this.*

A blue eye looked to the red numbers on the alarm clock, Rat moaned at the time, she was usually up by 6am. Now at 8am she still felt exhausted from the night before. Rolling her head to the side brought the sight of tousled blonde hair into her vision. At first, panic filled her until she realized that it was Steve and not the heroin addict. Even though she had never allowed the sleazebag addict in her bed or had any kind of relationship with her, she wouldn't put it past the horrid woman to try and sneak into her bed. What amazed Rat was that she had slept so soundly, normally; she slept with one eye open and never allowed any one to stay in her bed. For some reason having Steve there didn't bother her. Easing out from under the small woman, she looked when she heard a mumble and a small hand reached out for her.

"Go back to sleep Steve." A green eye opened part way, then both shoot opened as Steve woke completely. "It's OK, go back to sleep."

"Rat where am I?" She asked as she watched the broad back stop in the doorway.

"You're at my cabin, you're safe here."

A light blush colored her face when she realized that Rat was naked, she couldn't pull her eyes away from the broad back with the Chinese dragon tattooed across it.

"And my name is Dirke, Rat is what the gang calls me."

Steve sounded the name out in her head a few times, a small smile came to her face. Dirke fit the tall woman better than Rat.

"OK Dirke, it's Greek isn't it?"

Dirke looked over her shoulder, a slight grin covered her face and traveled to her pale blue eyes.

"Yeah, look in my dresser, I should have something in there that will fit you until I can get the stuff out of your Jeep."

Falling back onto the soft pillow, Steve took in a deep breath and stretched her body out with a low moan. A smile came to her face, she had never slept so peacefully in a strange place before.

"I slept in the same bed with a woman. I see a problem here since I know damn well that I was using her as a human pillow and reached out for her when she got up."

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Dirke ran a hand through her dark hair, leaning on the kitchen counter with one hand, she tilted her head back and let the breath go that she had been holding. She had no idea what the hell she was doing, she wanted to go back to bed and cuddle up against the warm body that was still in there. *Come on Dirke, she's a total stranger that you just happened to rescue from Spartan. Shit! Now you're rescuing damsels in distress, what a thing for a drug trafficking gun smuggling motorcycle gang president to be doing. If she knew what you were, she'd run as fast as she could to get away from you.* Opening the refrigerator door open, she got out bacon, eggs, cheese, an onion, peppers and a carton of orange juice.

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Steve sniffed the air, she could smell food cooking but didn't know from where since she had not gotten out of bed yet. Letting her strangle hold of the pillow go, she swung her legs over the side and followed the smell of food. She came to a large country kitchen and stopped dead in her tracks at the sight of the tall naked Greek Goddess standing in front of the stove.

"Do you have something against clothes?"

Dirke tossed over her shoulder. "Yeah they ruin my all over tan. You hungry, I made omelets."

"From what I can see and from your Greek name, I don't think you have to ever worry about tan lines."

Dirke placed two plates on the table and motioned to the chair across from her. "OK, so I'm lazy and I never wear clothes in my own house." She sat down and poured orange juice for both of them. "If it will make you more comfortable, take yours off and we'll both be naked."



Green eyes widened at the thought of being naked in front of the tall woman, a slight blush came to her face as she sat down across from Dirke. She couldn't help but look at the ample breasts that were right across from her. *I'm a damn pervert.* "Nah that's OK, I'll keep my clothes on." She never seen the toothy grin come across Dirke's face, because she was afraid to raise her eyes from her plate.

"I want you to know that you're not a prisoner here, but it would be safer for you to stay here until the rally was over."

"Why do you say that, I mean aren't you with the motorcycle gangs?"

"I'm the president of the Rats, but not all those guys you saw yesterday are like my guys. Some are only out there to be predators, and then you have your Lawyers, doctors, steel workers and every day men and women that just like to hang out at the rallies."

"What makes your guys different, I mean..."

Blue eyes connected with green, Steve could see the color lighten to a silvery color and felt tingles go up her spine.

"My guys know that if I catch them doing wrong, I'll make sure they pay for every little injustice they've every done or dreamed of. Want coffee?"

Steve let out the breath that she had been holding, with a simple nod of her tousled head she answered.

With the breakfast dishes washed and put away, Dirke left Steve to her own amusement while she went out to her garage to get a motorcycle ready to take out to the rally. She had minor adjustments on the carburetor to do and she would be set to head back out. She couldn't help herself while they ate breakfast to not tease the small blonde by strutting around naked. It amused her to see green eyes peeking at her and the dark blush covering the small women's features. She didn't know if Steve was on the same side of the fence that she was on and there was no way in hell that she was going to ask. Wiping her hands on a rag, she shoved it into her back pocket and then pushed the motorcycle out of the garage. Turning the key, she grinned when it fired up and rumbled. Using a screwdriver, she made one more adjustment to the fuel mixture and was happy with the results. Gunning the engine a few times to make sure, she shut it down and returned to the house.

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Steve had wandered around the log cabin looking at all the trophies and pictures of Dirke on all kinds of motorcycles and standing with numerous bikers. In all the pictures, Dirke had a stoic expression on her face, it was very intimidating to see and yet, Steve knew there was more to the tall biker. She had seen a small side of Dirke that morning at breakfast, a mischievous side that piqued her interest. She wondered if she would be able to capture that on film. Even though part

of her job was to collect photos of the subjects, she loved to just take pictures of people for her own interest. So much could be seen from a simple photo, things that the naked eye never saw but showed clear as day when it was printed. Dirke would be perfect for a black and white shot, her high cheekbones caught in a light to show their perfection and the paleness of her eyes. Grabbing her camera bag, she took out her digital camera and made sure that she had cleared the memory from the last time she used it.

"I wonder?" Steve said to her self as she pulled her other camera from the bag.

"Wonder if I'll pose naked for you?"

"Huh...No, I mean..." She became flustered at the thought of photographing Dirke naked. "You would make a wonderful subject but I know that I would never get the pictures back from the developer and you my friend would be posted all over the internet."

"Hey, I'm game if it sells more of my custom made motorcycles." Dirke held out her hands and shrugged. "What's wrong with me, bare ass naked stretched across one of my custom made Rat Scooters?"

Steve gulped; she could see it very clearly. The flame that went through her body settled in the southern region of her anatomy and made her knees feel weak. "Not a thing." *Did I say that out loud, I really need to talk to Monica. Maybe I'm suffering early menopause.* She looked up into a dazzling toothy grin and twinkling blue eyes. "You're kidding right?"

"Maybe, maybe not." She squeezed Steve's shoulder as she went past her and down the hall towards the master bedroom. "You'd have a heart attack taking a picture like that." She mumbled under her breath and then snorted at the image of Steve laid out on the ground and steam shooting from her ears. Pulling a leather jacket from her closet, she turned it to see the colors of her gang displayed across the back. The background was purple with a silver circle in the center and then a black rat centered inside the circle. On the front was Rat embroidered across the left breast. The leather old and worn but it still held the soft scent of leather. Pulling another jacket from the closet, she headed back out to the living room where Steve was repacking her camera bag.

Steve knew that Dirke was standing behind her; she could feel the warmth of the tall body even though she was still standing near the doorway. Looking back over her shoulder into the blue eyes of the biker made her heart beat a staccato in her chest. Then calmness washed over her when the corner of pink lips twitched upward into a wicked grin.

"Do you think anyone will mind if I take pictures of the motorcycles and bikers?"

"Nah, those guys love when people drool over their scooters." Handing her the jacket, she lifted her chin up so that they were eye to eye. "Just be careful, some of them will be doing things that are illegal. If you take pictures of them setting up something or trading off it will mean trouble."

*OK Stevie act stupid and naïve, you do it so well.* "How will I know? I mean ..."

"Ohh you'll know, believe me."

Steve took the jacket and looked it over closely; confusion came to her face as she looked at the large patch on the back and Rat's name on the front. "This is yours."

"Was, it's too small for me and if you wear it then you won't have to worry about anyone bothering you." She held it out for Steve to slip on, smoothing the shoulders down, she felt a slight tremble course through Steve's body. "Ready, I have a scooter to sell today."

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With Steve holding on tight to Dirke's waist, they tore down the road to the open field where the rally was in full force. The sound of firecrackers and the scent of smoke came to them as they pulled up close to a tarp stretched over tall poles. Steve looked over Dirke's shoulder to see Stump stretched out in a lawn chair in a pair of cutoff shorts, T-shirt and his engineer boots. He grimaced when he turned his head to watch them get off the scooter.

"Hey Boss, did you bring a gun with you?"

"Why would I need a gun Stump?" She asked, as she got closer to the mountain of a man. "You know I prefer hand to hand."

"Cuz stupid me, got sunburned and death would feel a hell of a lot better than suffering."

"OK, I could sit here and stare at you until you died from boredom."

"That's OK Boss; I think I'll just suffer alone."

"Where's everyone else at?" She looked around all the bikers looking for her gang.

"Down at the lake, something about trying something out." Before he could finish, the sound of rapid gunfire filled the air. Dirke cursed under her breath and headed off at a jog towards the lake with Steve right on her heels. As they drew closer, a huge boom rang out and water shot up in the air.

"What the fuck are they doing?" Dirke yelled as she pushed through the group of bikers to where two of her guy's were standing. "Are you two crazy?" She grabbed a tall thin man by his arm and took the stick of dynamite from his grubby hand. "You want the police down here?"

"What, I was just trying it out and if they show up I'll just blow them to pieces like I did that undercover guy."

Blue eyes narrowed and turned a stormy grey in color; fists clenched right before she grabbed the man by his throat and picked him up off the ground.

"You killed him? You son of a bitch!" She held out the stick of dynamite to one of the others and ordered him to light it. "You just wrote your death sentence!" Shoving the now lit dynamite down the front of the biker's pants, watching as the fuse grew shorter and he struggled against her grip. At the last second, she shoved him away, jumped up, kicked him in his chest and watched him fly backwards into the lake. Waiting until he surfaced, she pointed to him and told him to meet her in the center of the grounds. Shedding her jacket, she handed it to Steve and strode off with heels pounding into the hard earth. No one in her group killed except her; if they did, then they faced her wrath.

"Dirke wait! What are you going to do?" Steve felt her heart pound; she couldn't let Dirke do something stupid. Being a cop; meant that she had to uphold the law no matter what. Even if it meant having her new friend arrested for murder. "Dirke!" She yelled at the retreating biker. "Damn it!" Watching as Dirke pulled her black T-shirt over her head and dropped it to the ground. She now stood in the center area clothed in a short Tank top, her leather pants and heavy engineer boots. Pulling her waist length dark hair back, she tied it off with a piece of leather. Within minutes, the man still dripping wet stumbled into the center to face his president and soon to be demise.

He held out his hands with palms up, brown eyes looked into steel blue as he pleaded his case. "Come on Rat, he was only a cop!"

"You stupid mother fucker! He was undercover, he had nothing on us and now with him dead, they'll send another to replace him!" She struck out with her foot and kicked him in the stomach. "Now they have something on us!" She spun and hit him in the face with a roundhouse kick. Steve stood back, Rat's leather jacket clasped tightly to her chest as she watched the tall woman beat the shit out of one of her own people.

*I can't let you do this; you can't kill him no matter what he did.* Dirke had him in a headlock and was slowly strangling the life from him. Her face showed no emotions what's so ever as his face turned a deep purple. Steve handed her stuff to someone standing next to her and ran to where Dirke was standing. Wrapping her hands around Dirke's thick forearms, she squeezed to get the taller woman's attention.

"Let him go Dirke, he's not worth it." Her green eyes locked with steel grey and held. "Killing him won't help." Letting go of Dirke's forearms, she cupped her sweaty face in her hands. "Let him go." She whispered to her.

Dirke felt the anger and hate take over her being; she had worked hard getting what she now had. The thought of losing everything because of an asshole killing a cop was enough to put her into a killing rage. She could feel the man's struggles diminishing as she squeezed tighter with her arm. Then a soft voice came and pushed the red haze away, soft warm hands touched her face and broke the trance that she had fallen in to.

"Please Dirke, let him go." Steve flinched when Dirke dropped the man and let out a loud roar. She turned her back and stomped off into the crowd of on-lookers. Steve retrieved their

belongings and ran after her friend. She was thankful that Dirke was so tall and easily seen above the other people's heads. She finally caught up with her outside of the Rally; she was standing in front of a large tree and punching it so hard that the limbs were shaking.

"For the love of...damn it Dirke." She mumbled before she went up, grabbed Dirke's arm and kept her from hitting the tree again. "Stop Dirke, you're hurting the tree." She held onto the strong arm and was lifted up and off the ground. "What good will it do you if you break your hands?" She took a deep breath when she was lowered back to her feet. "I don't know you, but I do know that without the use of your hands, you can't build motorcycles." She held the bloody hands in hers and looked up into furious blue eyes. "I don't like the fact that a cop was killed, but you taking another life will not help. Turn him over to the police, let them handle it."

Dirke's voice was low; she leaned close to Steve and growled. "I can't turn him over, if I do that, every other biker will see me as a trader and I'll be dead with in minutes of him being arrested."

Dropping her eyes to their feet, Steve thought for a few moments for an alternative punishment. Finding nothing that would fit, she looked to blue eyes.

"What else can be done besides you killing him?"

Dirke closed her eyes and tilted her head back; she didn't know what to do. No one had ever stopped her from doing what needed to be done to protect her organization.

"Can you kick him out?"

"Yeah, take his colors and banish him." Shaking the blood from her knuckles, she then ran her hands across her sweaty face. "Stupid god damn fucker!" Striding off towards where Stump was, she cussed the entire way with a grinning Steve right behind her.

"What was going on out there?" Stump asked the pissed off biker.

"Mother fucking asshole was using dynamite; he killed that cop that they found."

Stump jumped to his feet and began pacing in the opposite direction that Dirke was. "Did you...you know kill him?"

"No she didn't, I stopped her." Steve said from where she stood to the side of them with her arms crossed over her chest.

"Boss, what are you going to do now?"

Dirke stopped, turned and faced him. "Get the others together, we're taking his colors and banishing him."

"What? But we've never..."

"This will be the first." She turned to look at Steve.

"Thank you." Steve said, as she got closer to the now calmed down biker. "Let me take care of your hands." She reached out and grabbed them even though Dirke tried to keep them above her head.

"I'm OK, they don't hurt." She tried to remove her hands from Steve's grip.

"Bullshit! Look at them; they look like ground meat and their turning purple." She cocked an eyebrow as she looked into amused blue eyes. "You gave your mother grey hair right after birth didn't you?"

"Why aren't you running for the nearest phone to report all that you now know?"

Steve stared into Dirke's eyes for long moments trying to see if she was serious.

"For the simple fact that if I was to even be that stupid, I know that I would be joining that officer in the other world. I may look young and act it at times but believe me I'm not stupid." Pulling on the bikers arm, she led her over to the lawn chair that Stump had vacated. "Where's your first aid kit?"

"How do you know I have one?"

"How do you know I won't kick your ass again if you don't tell me?"

A slight grin came to Dirke's face; she nodded her head towards a metal footlocker next to Stumps truck. "You're a tough bitch, you know that?"

*If you only knew what I was, you'd have me taken care of in a heartbeat.* "When I have to be, now don't you move one inch." She pointed a finger at the biker and then retrieved the large first aide box. Pulling out numerous things that she felt she would need to clean and bandage Dirke's hands, she had just poured peroxide over the left hand when she caught movement out of the corner of her eye. A petite bleach blonde strutted over to them, dropped into Dirke's lap and put a lip lock on her that had the tall biker squirming in her seat. A rage flew through Steve as she witness the two women before her. She felt her jaw aching from the pressure she had placed on it while she gritted her teeth. She had no idea why it bothered her so much that some strange woman was kissing Dirke. All she knew was that she didn't like it one bit and the fact that the woman acted as if she wasn't even sitting there. She had enough when the blonde's hands went up under Dirke's tank top and grabbed her breasts. Tapping the blonde on her bony shoulder with enough force to leave a dark red spot where her spaghetti strap left exposed skin, she waited and when she got no response, she grabbed the woman by her arm and pulled her away from Dirke.

"Who the fuck are you?" Her green eyes filled with flames as she glared at the blonde. "Can't you see that I'm doing something? Now get the hell out of here before I knock the shit out of you!" She gave force to her words by jabbing the boney chest of the woman. Turning on her

heel, she pointed a finger at Dirke. "And you had better not move or I'll kick your ass!"

Dirke couldn't keep the grin off her face; she had never seen a she viper before until now. She wondered why it bothered Steve so much that another woman had jumped her. Was it disgust? Or, something more that she hadn't been able to pick-up on yet.

"I ain't moving your aim is too good when it comes to kicking my ass." She waved at the other blonde and told her to take a hike, then turned back to Steve. "What was all that about? I mean if looks could kill, she would have been dust at my feet."

"One of my pet peeves is being ignored and over looked like I don't exist. And the way she just blatantly waltzed over her and jumped in your lap...well it got me..."

"Jealous?" Dirke asked then threw up her hands to defend her self from the small one that came towards the top of her head.

"Jealous? Of you...you've got to be kidding." She snorted as she went back to taking care of Dirke's hands. "She's my type at all."

"Who said I was saying she was your type. Anyway, what is your type? Tall, blonde, muscles, facial hair, hairy asshole and chest male type...what?"

"Hardly, I don't go for the outside package; it's what's inside that attracts me."

"So you're saying that it could be a short dumpy guy with hair growing out of his ears and nose and if he had a good heart you'd jump him?"

"EWWW that just scared ten years of my life. I'll have nightmares for a month. Thank you very much." Sighing deeply, she looked for a second into twinkling blue eyes and then tended Dirke's other hand. "OK, so good looks does have a standing."

"So you could go for someone like me?" That got Dirke the view of Steve's tonsils when her mouth fell open.

"Excuse me, but if you haven't noticed we happen to be the same sex."

"And here I thought you were the adventurous type."

"My idea of adventure is ordering something off a menu that I've never had before. Not sleeping with another female."

"I'm on the menu and you've never had me and if I remember correctly, we already slept together." She leaned closer and let the words purr in her throat. "And we'll do it again tonight." That brought the desired results she wanted, Steve was now ten shades of red.

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Steve was still flustered from their little talk, she didn't know if Dirke was kidding or not with her. Every time she thought about sharing a bed with the tall biker, she felt her pulse race. Then her stomach fluttered when she thought of what might happen once they were in bed. What she wanted for her first time was love not animal lust like she saw in Dirke's eyes. But with one look and a single touch from her, had Steve tossing all her beliefs out the window including being strictly heterosexual. Now that she had some space from the biker, she was able to sit back and watch her without worrying that she would see the emotions raging through her eyes. Watching Stump and some of the other Rats drag the man that Dirke had nearly killed earlier towards his doom. He was tossed to the ground at her feet and made to stay that way when she put a booted foot in the center of his back. Steel blue eyes glanced around at the other members, Steve could here her tell them of his wrongful deed that would ultimately bring the Police to their fold. The only way that this could be stopped was to take his colors and banish him. She then heard another member ask why she just didn't kill him, her reply was that what he had done was wrong and she was not going to follow in his footsteps. Blue eyes locked with green for a moment then traveled back to the members of her gang. Nor would she allow any one else to either. And if they felt she was wrong in her decision, then they could surrender their colors and go with him. Grumbles were heard all around but no one stepped forward to surrender. Reaching down, she jerked the man to his feet and striped him of his jacket and anything else that showed what gang he belonged to. Shoving him towards Stump, she told Stump to take him to his scooter and make sure that he left the area. Waiting until the other members left, her head dropped until Steve came up to her and lifted her chin with two fingers.

"What you did was the right thing to do."

"I know, but I'm afraid that he may retaliate someday. And because he was banished from the Rats does not mean that some other gang won't sponsor him. He could be a lot of trouble to me now."

"Then we'll handle that if it happens."

Dirke looked at Steve with confusion. "You said we'll handle it, I told you that you don't have to stay here after the Rally."

"I know you did, but I came to this area to find a job in a nice quiet place and that's what I'm going to do. Maybe get a job at a store or something, I consider us to be friends and friends don't run when things get rough."

Dirke gave her a small smile and draped her arm across her shoulders.

"OK, I think it's time I bought you a drink. The Gods know I could use one."

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The sun was lowering in the sky, a slight breeze was blowing in off the lake giving the air a slight chill. Steve wrapped her arms across her chest and rubbed her arms to warm them. She



stood off to the side and watched as Dirke did business with a man from another gang. They battered back and forth over the price of the Panzer motorcycle that she had rode to the rally that day.

"Come on buddy, I put 24 grand into that bike."

"25 grand is a little steep Rat, all I've got is 20."

Dirke tilted her head back, shaking her head, she opened her eyes and sighed.

"How about you give me the 20 and your scooter and we'll call it even. I know that bike you have isn't worth more than three thousand, so that means I'm cutting you a break."

The man scratched his bearded jaw and shook his head.

"I don't know Rat, I've had that bike for fifteen years."

"Then I think it's time to move to something built by the Rat." Steve said from beside her friend. "I know for a fact that the scooter she brought today is one of a kind, I watched her build it from the floor up. And the chrome on that thing!" She rolled her eyes at the man. "You know she had all that stuff dipped three times more than the factory stuff and the engine purrs like a kitten." She cast a sideways glance at Dirke and winked. "You'll have one of a kind and be the envy of every other biker that sees you on it." She held up her hands with fingers extended and thumb tips touching. "Picture your self riding on that two tone midnight black and royal blue two toned scooter. Both Big Bobs filled to the brim and you roaring across country to some scooter show and walking away with the trophy." When she brought her eyes back to the man. She saw a huge grin covering his bearded face. Pulling the keys from his pocket, he handed them to Steve along with a huge roll of bills.

"You got it little lady." He looked to Dirke, held out his meaty hand and shook hers. "I'll pass your name on to my gang. Thanks Ladies." Catching the keys from Dirke, he trotted off to get his new Panzer.

Steve handed the keys and the money to Dirke, her eyebrow rose over her left eye and her mouth formed into a smirk.

"Did I do good?"

Her answer was to be pulled into a tight hug. "You did more than good, that was great!" She kissed the top of a blonde head and gave her one more squeeze before releasing her. "I didn't know you knew anything about scooters."

A light blush came to Steve's face, shrugging her shoulders she mumbled. "I don't, I'm an avid reader."

"Huh? What's reading got to do with getting me a big chunk more than what the Panzers worth and his Harley on top of it."

"While you were out in your garage, I was reading one of your motorcycle catalogs, you know the one where you buy all your parts from?"

"You got all that information from reading a parts catalog?"

"I have a photographic memory and I know how to get what I want."

A dark brow arched at the last part, the corners of her lips curled up in to a smile. "Want a job, I'll pay you good?"

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Hand in hand they walked to where the band was just starting to warm up for their gig that night. Dirke had pulled out all the stops for this Rally, with having so many connections and the most amount of property that could be used, she thought it a good idea to have a live band for a couple nights. Leading Steve over to where the drinks were being made and the kegs were sunk down into ice, she offered Steve a bottle of Honey Brown beer and took a Guinness for herself. The lead singer for the band looked very similar to Hank Williams Junior but his voice sounded a lot like Vince Gill. Dirke didn't know if the other bikers would like the music but she really didn't care, she liked country music and as far as she was concerned, if they didn't they could all go to Hell.

Not being a real big drinker, Steve felt a little drowsy after two beers. She found herself holding up a pole that was part of the canopy that was shading the band. Watching couples dance in the area in front of the makeshift stage, she felt a little lonely. It had been a very long time since she danced with any one, in fact the last time was years ago at a party thrown for her graduation from college. The lead singer started to sing a song by *Alan Jackson* called *You can't give up on love*. She watched as the couples pressed closer together and swayed to the slow song. Tears came to her eyes with the thought of not ever having a loving relationship with anyone. Just once she would like to be held close and pretend that someone loved her. Wiping the tears from her cheeks, she turned and was walking away when she felt a warm hand touch her upper arm. Looking at the hand, she trailed her tear filled eyes upward until she came to piercing blue eyes looking down at her. Dirke gave her a small nod towards the dance area and then lead her out to join the other dancers. Pulling the smaller body close to her own, Dirke pressed her face against a tear dampened cheek.

"What's wrong Stevie?" She whispered into her ear.

"It's stupid." Was all she said as she snuggled into a strong shoulder and wrapped her arms around a trim waist. They danced slowly together until the song ended and started into another slow one also by *Alan Jackson* called *If I had you*. Dirke felt the soft sobs rack her small friend, she had never been one to comfort but Stevie brought out a gentleness in her. She hugged her

tighter to her body and placed a kiss on her cheek before she ran her fingers through short blonde hair. Steve felt embarrassed with her lack of control, trying to pull away from Dirke was impossible. The taller woman pulled her tighter to her and sang in a low voice into her ear. A calmness came over Steve, she turned her head to bury her face against a warm neck.

Crazed brown eyes watched the couple dance close to each other, her drug induced mind raged at the betrayal. She was the one who should be up there with Rat, not some scrawny little blonde bitch. She sunk back in the shadows to wait for an opportunity to strike. She would take care of the blonde and be back in Rat's life before the night was out.

After the band stopped for a break, Dirke pulled back from Steve just far enough to place a kiss on her forehead and wipe the tears from her face. Hugging her once more, she whispered to her to head over to the Harley and she would join her in a few minutes.

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Dirke searched out Stump, after finding him, she pulled him to the side where they could not be seen by anyone.

"Can you meet our guy at midnight? I don't want Steve to know what I'm doing."

"Sure boss, is the stuff in the usual spot?"

"Yeah, he should be giving you twenty five grand tonight. Bring it by my place tomorrow sometime."

Stump shook his head and then gave her a toothy grin. "Do I see the boss with a soft spot for a little blonde?"

"Me with a soft spot?" She snorted. "The only soft spot I have is you know where and she's not into that."

"Could have fooled me, she kept an eye on you all night." He squeezed her shoulder. "Better get your gaydar fixed Boss, I think it maybe out of alignment."

Dirke stood for a few minutes after Stump had left, pondering what he had told her. "Nope old boy, I think you're wrong about her." She shrugged her shoulders and headed to find her friend.

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Steve stood with her back to the other bikers, she was looking over the Harley that Dirke had gotten from the other man that night. The Harley was nothing like the motorcycles that Dirke built. Hers seemed so flashy and had a personal feeling to them, where this one seemed plain in comparison. As she bent over to look at the air cleaner cover, she felt the hair raise on the back of her neck. Before she could straighten up a sharp pain hit her in her left shoulder. Stumbling to the side, she turned and faced a crazed looking blonde.

"So you're the bitch that replaced me!" She screamed with spittle flying from her lips. "That will change right now!" She lunged at Steve with a black tactical baton in her hand. Swinging it over head, she aimed for Steve's temple and missed when she dodged to the side and brought up her foot to kick her in the stomach. A roar of rage tore from the crazed woman's throat, she took another swing at Steve and connected with her left forearm. Steve gasped as she felt the bones crack under the force. Cradling her arm, she took a step back to draw the woman away from the motorcycle. She waited for her to come at her, as soon as she raised the baton over her head, Steve dodged to the side, grabbed her wrist and brought her arm down over her raised knee. She felt the woman's elbow snap and a loud animal like scream came from her.

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Dirke heard the awful scream and knew immediately who it was. She took off at a sprint towards where the sound had come from. Seeing Steve and the addict fighting, she was about to intervene when Steve broke the woman's elbow and took the baton from her weak fingers.

Steve retracted the baton by hitting it on the ground, wrapping her fingers around it, she stepped forward and punched the woman in the jaw and watched as she dropped to the ground in a heap.

"Fucking crazy ass bitch!" Slipping the baton into her back pocket, she turned when she felt somebody come up behind her. As soon as she saw that it was Dirke, she fell into her arms.

"Are you all right?" She pulled Steve closer and jumped when a painful gasp came from the small woman. She pulled her closer to the Harley and flipped the headlight on to see better. She ran her hands down Steve's arms and flinched when she felt the swelling forearm and heard the cry of pain. "I'll kill her!" She swept Steve up into her arms and placed her in front of her on the Harley. After starting it, she took off towards where the crowd of bikers were and looked for one of her members. Finding the small sandy haired woman, she pulled up beside her and yelled over the rumble of the engine.

"I need your help, her arms broke can you set it?"

The woman came over to them and looked down at Steve's rapidly swelling forearm. Running her fingers across the area and then checked for a pulse in her wrist, a small frown came across her face. Hazel eyes looked into green and saw the pain that Steve was in.

"Take her home and I'll meet you there, I have to get some things from home. I should be there in about twenty minutes. Put some ice on it and keep it elevated."

"OK, anything else?" Worried blue eyes looked in to the doctors.

"Yeah, don't worry." The doctor squeezed Dirke's upper arm and then took off in the opposite direction.

Placing her arm around Steve's waist, she pulled her tighter against her chest and told her to lean

back.

"We'll be home in about ten minutes OK?"

All Steve could do through the haze of pain was nod her head.

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Steve lay on the bed with her arm elevated with pillows, tears flowed down her cheeks from the sharp pain in her arm and shoulder. She watched as Dirke cursed under her breath and paced the floor like a mad woman.

"Dirke..."

Dirke stopped her pacing and came over to the side of the bed, sitting carefully on the edge, she wiped the tears from Steve's face.

"I'm sorry Stevie, I should have known that crazy bitch would have tried something."

"You couldn't have known." Taking a deep breath, she asked something that she never thought she would. "Will you hold me?"

Dirke tried to swallow the lump in her throat, moving as slowly and gently as she could, she slipped behind Steve and took her in her arms.

"Doc should be here soon." She whispered next to Steve's ear.

After Steve's arm was set and put in a special splint, she was given a pain reliever and slipped into a deep sleep. Dirke and the doctor went into the kitchen so that they wouldn't disturb her.

"How bad is her arm and shoulder?"

"Her shoulder's just badly bruised, she's got a lot of muscle there so and that's what saved her. But the forearm took a beating, I set the bones as best I could from feel alone. She has a strong pulse now, but I want you to bring her to my office tomorrow for x-rays."

Dirke ran her hands through her hair and sighed with relief, connecting with the doctors hazel eyes, she nodded her head.

"Thanks Doc, I owe you one."

The small woman chuckled at her. "Bullshit Dirke, you don't owe me anything. Just take care of your girlfriend."

"Danielle, she's not my girlfriend. I've only known her for a few days."

"Could have fooled me, when I walked into the room you two looked awful cozy." Danielle leaned closer to the tall biker. "Does she know about you? I mean the real Dirke Rathson?"

"Nope, and until the time is right I want her to stay in the dark. It's safer for her there."

"Well my friend, I think the time is close by." She stood up from the table and hugged her friend. "Take care of your girlfriend and those nasty looking knuckles of yours and I'll see you two bright and early in my office."

"She's not..."

"I see a big bad biker falling fast." She chuckled at the shocked expression on Dirke's face and left her sitting there with her mouth hanging open.

"I am not falling anywhere...shit." She rubbed her tired eyes and moaned when she realized that Danielle was right. "Son of a bitch." She got up and went to her bedroom still mumbling under her breath. After taking Steve's shoes, socks and pants off. She undressed and slipped into the bed beside her, placing her hand across Steve's stomach she joined her moments later in sleep.

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A throbbing pain woke Steve from her sleep; she moved her arm and let out a strangled groan when pain shot up to her aching shoulder. Opening one eye, she looked down at the offending limb and closed her eyes to the radiating pain that shot through her neck. She could swear that she had been hit by a truck and left to lie in a ditch. That was if she didn't feel the warm body snuggled up to her side and sharing her pillow. Easing out from under the heavy arm, she slipped from the bed to go to the bathroom. With one look in the mirror, she knew that the truck would have left less damage. A dark purple bruise ran from her collarbone to the middle of her neck and across her upper chest. Her arm was a different story all together, she could feel the swollen appendage throb with each heartbeat and it only got worse if she lowered it. Not knowing what to do with it, she rested it on top of her head and struggled as she tried to relieve herself. She thanked the Gods that she was right handed because something's just wouldn't work to well using the wrong hand. She got tired of trying to pull her panties up and decided to forgo them, her Shirt was just long enough to hide the essentials and at this point she could care less if it wasn't.

Going into the kitchen, she readied the coffee pot and then searched the refrigerator for something to make for breakfast. Sighing when she found nothing but a few slices of Bologna and cheese, she decided that they would go out to eat. Going into the living room, she found her laptop and decided to download the pictures that she had taken the day before. Afterwards, she would download the pictures via the web to a photo list and send a quick encrypted e-mail to Monica for Jacob letting him know they were there. This had always worked in the past and she knew it would again, things were so much easier with certain features the web had. Most of her last case reports were sent by encrypted e-mails and by using Monica's health food excuse. Steve knew she would have to ask Dirke if she could receive packages there until she got her own place. The idea of living in town didn't really appeal to her but she saw no other way. Hearing

the last sputter from the coffee pot, she fixed two cups and took one of them to a still sleeping Dirke. Setting it down on the bedside table, she sat on the edge of the bed and brushed the dark hair away from Dirke's face. Letting her fingers linger on her cheek, she ran her thumb across a dark brow and grinned when it went up an unlined forehead. Continuing to play with Dirke's eyebrow, she watched as a pale blue eye opened to a slit and rolled to look at her.

Her voice rough, Dirke mumbled to her. "What are you doing?"

"Playing. I brought you a cup of coffee."

Dirke rolled onto her back and stretched, the blankets sliding off her naked body to show rippled abs and flexing pectoral muscles. A dark blush washed across Steve's face at the sight, she couldn't hold back the moan that escaped from her lips.

"How's your arm this morning?"

"Hurts like a bitch. How are your knuckles?"

"Swollen and stiff. How about if we just lay around the house today? I really don't feel like going to the Rally and with selling that Panzer yesterday I can afford a few days off."

Steve leaned back against the headboard and looked into sleepy blue eyes. "That sounds good except there's no food in the refrigerator; can we go out for breakfast?"

"Lets get showered and dressed and then I'll take you to the best little dinner in the area."

Steve looked down at her arm and mumbled something under her breath. She was shocked when Dirke answered her, she didn't think she heard what she had said.

"I'll help you get dressed and then after breakfast, we have a date with Danielle at her office. She wants to take x-rays to make sure that she set your arm right and that there's no problem with your shoulder."

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Dirke was still amazed at the amount of food Steve could put away, now after they had fought over the check and Dirke lost because it hurt for her to get her hand into her pocket, they were on their way to the doctor's office. That was one fight that she did win, it was either Steve go along with it or she would be tossed over Dirke's shoulder and paraded through town in that fashion. Steve walked through the door that Dirke was holding open for her, it was the first time that a woman had held a door for her. She had been blushing all morning with all the little things that Dirke did. Every time they were getting in or out of the truck, Dirke would point a finger at her, tell her not to move and then run around and open the door and help her out. At the restaurant, even though they were going to sit in a booth, Dirke held out her hand and helped her to sit down. Steve didn't know any men who did the things that Dirke was doing, not even her father acted that way. She felt Dirke place her hand against her lower back and lead her to a desk that

looked like a tornado had landed on it. Grumbling came from behind the desk but Steve couldn't see the person.

"Hey you stupid bitch, you have a patient here." Dirke said in a growling voice, shocking Steve with her manner of addressing the invisible person.

"You don't count because you're an asshole." A dark head appeared above the desk and then a pair of the oddest colored eyes Steve had ever seen, they were a spooky gold color with dark brown flecks. If Dirke hadn't been bracing her back, she would have jump backwards and out the door.

"Spooky ass freak!"

"Mother fucker!"

"Only yours oh royal Sageness."

"Uuhmm excuse me." Steve interrupted the insults.

Dirke smacked her forehead and groaned. "Sorry Stevie, this is Sage, Danielle's evil half. Evilness this is Stevie..." She blushed and looked into twinkling green eyes.

"Carlton, nice to meet you."

"Who did you piss off to be stuck with big bad biker dyke there?"

"You'll have to excuse Evilness, she's suffering from menopause."

A dark brow rose over a green eye, she looked between the two women and just shook her head. Loud bursts of laughs came from Dirke and Sage as they high fived each other and carried on like kids.

"What happened to your desk?"

"You would know if you checked your answering machine. I was with Grandma for a couple days. Her arthritis is acting up and she needed her car fixed. So in those couple of days Danni took care of the paperwork." She held her hands out to show the mess. "This is what she left me."

"You know I hate paperwork." Danielle said as she gave her wife a gentle kiss. "Why do you think I married you?"

"Because I can suck the chrome of a bumper hitch and give you multiples."

Steve felt her face turn beat red, she was wondering if her face would remain that way. Danielle looked at Steve and offered her a bright smile.



"How do you feel today, any problems? Besides these two idiots."

"Just a little throbbing, nothing I can't handle."

"Come on in the back and let me x-ray that arm." She pointed to Sage and Dirke and narrowed her hazel eyes at them. "Don't make me come out here and give you two lower GI's." She lead Steve into the back where her x-ray machine was located. "So tell me how do you know my sister-in-law?"

"Sister-in-law?" She sputtered.

"Yeah. Dirke's, Sage's rotten sister."

Steve dropped her head and looked up from under her bangs. "She rescued me from some bikers."

"So she was doing the damsel in distress thing." Danielle chuckled. "She's good for something other than causing trouble."

After chatting while the x-rays developed and then checking them, the two smirking women rejoined the other two in the waiting room. They didn't expect to find Sage hog tied with her own boot strings and Dirke shooting paper wads at her.

"I swear I can't leave you two alone for a minute!" She gave each of them a glare and motioned to her wife. "What did you do this time?"

"Me? Why is it always me that has to have done something?"

"Easy, you're the instigator, what did you do?" Danielle asked again.

"I asked badness there if she's," Sage stuck her tongue out and wiggled. "Yet?"

"That explains it you pervert." Danielle turned to see a blushing Steve. "Brats, plain and simple." Turning hazel eyes to pale blue, Danielle raised an eyebrow at Dirke. "Damsel in distress?"

Dirke shrugged her shoulders and grinned. "What can I say, I'm a sucker for a beautiful blonde."

Steve knew for sure that her face would stay permanently red, never had anyone called her beautiful not even cute. She always considered herself plain and no one ever argued with her. She found herself giving Dirke a shy smile, it was then that she realized that Dirke seen her as more than a friend. It was so boldly shone in her blue eyes. *Shit now what do I do? Is it just plain old animal lust on her part? Most likely, after all she's a biker.*

"So what are you two doing tonight, going to the Rally?" Danielle asked as she untied her wife and slapped her on her ass for the hell of it.

Dirke shook her head at them. "Nope, staying home tonight. We both need some rest and recuperation time."

"Good, from the looks of you two you both need it. Steve keep that arm elevated and use the sling I gave you. It's actually used for people that have had shoulder surgery but since your left shoulder is all bruised." She held her hands out to the side and shrugged her shoulders.

"Ohh I will on all counts and thanks for all your help. You're actually the first doctor that I've liked." She moved close to Danielle and gave her a quick hug. "Don't worry about badness there, I'll hog tie her when we get home. Give her hands a chance to heal." It was after they left the office that she realized that she had referred to Dirke's place as her home. How she wished that it was true, in the next day or so it would be safe for her to venture out on her own and be able to find a small apartment somewhere. Price really didn't bother her since the department would be paying the bill. A lump formed in her chest and made it hard to breath, she didn't want to leave Dirke, she cared about her a lot and wanted to be close to her. In the tall bikers company, she felt safe and protected, maybe even a little bit of love. Dirke noticed the strained look on Steve's face, wrapping an arm around her shoulders she pulled her close to her side.

"Are you OK, you look a little pale?"

"It's nothing really." With a quick glance to worried pale blue eyes, she then glanced back to the small store fronts that they were walking past. "Can we stop so I can get a newspaper?"

"The local newspaper is about ten pages and most of it is the local farm reports."

"What I was looking for is the listings for apartments." She choked out with a rush.

"Stevie." Dirke stopped their walk and turned her friend to stand in front of her. Cupping her face with her large hands, she tilted her face upward so that she could look into her green eyes that were quickly filling with tears. "I would like you to stay with me, I know my place isn't really big or anything but I like having you there." Using her thumbs, she wiped the trailing tears from soft cheeks. "Will you stay? I can fix up the loft and you can use that as your room." She watched as a small smile came to Steve's face, before she knew what happened, she found the small woman wrapped around her body.

"Thank you, I would really like that."

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"Jacolb!" Monica yelled to her husband who was out at the grill making hamburgers. "Pictures from Stevie, and some interesting ones to." She finished the last part in a softer voice. "What are you up to little one?" Brown eyes looked longer at the pictures of a tall stoic looking woman standing alone in the middle of an open field. The stance that of a proud warrior after a battle. She looked at another one and gasped at the paleness of blue eyes that she swore looked right to her very soul and burned it crispy. "Ohh Stevie, if you get tangled up with this one, you're going to be in deep trouble." Looking to the sliding glass doors, Monica watched her husband flip the

burgers. "Hey you old buzzard, get in here and look at these. I think you're going to have a big problem."

Jacob thrust his head into the open door and growled. "If my hamburger burns..." He didn't finish when he saw the look on his wife's face. He knew it all too well after 35 years. "Ohhh all right, will you watch the food?"

"Don't worry about the food." She pointed to the picture that had her so riled up. "Worry about her."

"Ohh my God, I hope Stevie's being careful." He looked up into strained brown eyes. "This one here is scary, her picture alone gave me gray hair." He scanned through the other pictures and saw quite a few of the tall dark woman. "What is she doing a modeling shoot? There's more of this woman than anything?" He then came to one that Steve had taken of Dirke giving her a lopsided grin with the raised eyebrow. "One thing for sure, she's a beautiful woman who ever she is." That got him a smack on top of his head. "But not as beautiful as you Mama." He looked at the pictures again and thought for a few minutes about all the other pictures Steve had sent to him while working past cases. "Mama do you think that maybe Stevie is you know... gay?"

Monica yelled from where she was pulling the burgers from the grill. "What makes you think that?"

"It's just that she has never dated or showed interest in anyone and now all of a sudden, she sends 35 pictures and half of them are of the same woman."

Monica looked over his shoulder at the pictures again. "Maybe she sees that the stoic one there is very photogenic, could be all innocent. You know Stevie, she sees things that the rest of us don't see."

Jacob nodded his head and made a small sighing noise. "I hope you're right Mama, because that woman scares me. Did she send anything else?"

"Yep, her usual health food order." She gave him a wicked grin because she knew he had never figured out her and Steve's little code words. Becoming impatient, he threw his hands in the air and grumbled.

"Come on Mama, what did she say?"

"Ohh I didn't know that you wanted me to tell you." She couldn't help but laugh at the look on his face. "She's OK, was kidnapped but saved. staying with a biker."

"That's all she said?" He was hoping for more, this was a very important case since one of his officers was killed trying to bring the bikers to justice.

"Give her a chance Jacob, it's only been what five days?" Just as he was about to sign off line, the PC voice told him he had mail. Pulling up the small window, he saw the screen name as

Chatterbox and knew it was from Steve. "OK little one what have you got for me?" Double clicking on the name, he watched as one of Monica's ordering forms came up. "Mama it's for you." He looked over his shoulder at his grinning wife. "Now will you put this into terms that I can understand?"

"Right, how many times have I explained this to you?"

He shrugged his shoulders and leaned his head back against her chest. "Maybe if it made any sense what's so ever."

"Before I start on this one, all her orders mean something to her state of mind. For example, if she orders bean sprouts and lots of different spices. She bored stiff and there's no action. If she orders lots of vitamins like Valerian root or Chamomile teas, then it's hectic and she needs something to calm her down."

He cocked an eyebrow at her. "Then what's all the damn crackers you send her mean?"

"Nothing, she just likes them." She grinned at him then went on to the new e-mail. Monica looked at the items that Steve had ordered and grinned. "Ohh Stevie, what are you doing?" She looked down at her confused husband. "It's not her usual order, that means that this is not a typical case for her. Look here." She pointed to the list of health foods and supplies. "She wants that herbal hand cleaner that will take barnacles off a ship hull, Ginseng, Aloe Vera, passion fruit shampoo and conditioner, sandalwood oil, and two orders of... strawberry body lotion. What in the hell is she going to do with all that, those are industrial size bottles?"

Jacolb was just about jumping in his chair with impatience. "What's it mean Mama?"

"Our little one is trying to get someone's attention and I don't think it has anything to do with the case."

"Ohh shit! Maybe I should pull her out of there?"

"Just wait, she may have other ideas roaming around in her wicked little mind besides capturing someone's heart. This may all be part of it."

Jacolb rubbed his eyes and nodded, he sure hoped that Steve was losing her marbles. She was the best damn cop he had and he didn't want anything to happen to her. "Send her one of those encrypted things, I want to know who tall dark and scary is and if she's dangerous to Stevie."

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Steve had just sent off her e-mail to Monica when Dirke came into the kitchen. She looked up with a small smile. "I thought you were going to be lazy today?"

"I thought the same as you." She looked over her shoulder at her laptop and saw that she was playing on-line. "Looking at Porno sites?"

"Huh? Ohh Gods no! I ended up on one of those sites and I kept getting all these e-mails for Viagra, penis enlargers, stay stiff products and everything else that you can imagine."

"Happy to say that I don't need a penis enlarger. So what web sites do go to? Anything interesting?"

"Only if you like health food, I just placed my order."

Dirke snorted at learning that Steve was a health food case, with all the food she ate including deserts that could put a normal person into a diabetic coma, she found it hard to believe. "What did you order?"

"Ohh some really good hand cleaner, and other stuff like shampoo, body lotion, ya know stuff like that." She picked Dirke's grease covered hand up by a finger and groaned. "Maybe I should get a sandblaster to clean your hands?"

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Dirke pulled open a trap door she had under her workbench, flipping on the light that lit up the small area and the steps leading down to it. She ventured forth and closed the door behind her. Rounding a sharp corner in the large area that had been dug out after the garage was built; she flipped on more lights over other workbenches. Scanning each area, she found what she was looking for and took a seat at her computer terminal. Signing on to a special link, she typed out a series of coded numbers and hit send. Going into the area where she received her mail, she pulled up a list of the stuff that Stump had delivered to the contact for her. Checking it against her memory, she finalized it and sent it back to the author. Signing off, she shut down her PC and went to the wall directly across from her and pulled down a well-worn double shoulder harness and two 357 magnums. She didn't know if she would need them but better safe than sorry. To complete her arsenal, she grabbed extra clips, throwing knives, a tactical baton and her 38 special police issue revolver and its clip on holster. She would have to make the pick-up tonight because Stump was out of town on another mission for her, the biggest problem would be Steve. She didn't know how she was going to get around her with out having her become suspicious.

"I need an excuse." She sat down in her office chair and spun in circles. "I have to check on grandma? Nope, she'll want to go along." Running her hands down her face, she sighed with frustration. "Shit! Don't even think about it Dirke, you can't take her along with you and you can't tell her that you're going to pick up 50 kilos of cocaine to sell to your contact." Her chair stopped in mid spin as the alarm system she had set up for the garage door went off. Dropping her stuff in the chair, she sprinted to the stairs and took them two at a time. "I really need to put a camera link up there." She said as she eased the trapdoor up.

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Steve had just finished placing supper on the table, she had yelled out the door for Dirke to come

and eat and after five minutes of no tall dark and greasy one, she decided to go out to the garage and drag her in by her ears if she had to. Walking into the garage, she saw that the area was empty. Seeing a smaller area at the back, she jogged the short distance and let out a yelp of surprise when Dirke's head came up through the trapdoor.

"Holy..."

"Fuck!" Dirke finished the sentence and let out a deep groan. She had never been caught coming out of the trapdoor before and if not for having one hand on the floor, she would have tumbled down the steps and landed on her ass.

"What are you doing down there?"

"I uuhmm...shit!" She ran one hand across her face and looked up at a foot tapping Steve.

"You took ten years off my life I'll have you know. It looked like you were decapitated and your head was just lying there!"

"I could not be that lucky as to have that happen." She made her decision right then and there. "Go close and lock the garage doors and come down here for a minute." She didn't know if this was a good idea but she had no choice now. She had to tell Steve something, thinking quickly she came up with an idea. She just hoped that Steve would believe her; she just hoped that it wouldn't send the small woman running.

Steve closed all the doors then made her way to the trap door, looking down she saw that there were steps going down and that the area was well lit. Taking a deep breath, she went down the steps and found Dirke sitting in an office chair with her head in her hands.

"Dirke?" She said softly as she approached the tall woman. Her eyes were drawn immediately to the wall with all the weapons hanging on it. Walking over, she pulled down an M-16 and then looked to Dirke. "What is all this?"

"Stevie...you know when the cops get all riled up about illegal guns getting into the hands of dangerous people?"

"Go on." Steve said as she stepped closer to Dirke; her eyes narrowed with curiosity.

"I buy the guns along with drugs on the black market and other connections, then I sell them back to the people they were stolen from." She knew it was a lame story but she couldn't come up with anything better on such a short notice.

"And why do you do this, I mean aren't the people that had the stuff stolen from them just as bad as the ones you buy them from?" She hit the button on the M-16's grip, dropped the full clip into her hand, pulled the charge handle back and checked the barrel all under the impressed eyes of Dirke. Releasing the charge handle, she slapped the clip back in and tossed the rifle to Dirke. "Nice piece of weaponry, it's been modified to be more accurate than what the Government has."

She watched as Dirke's jaw dropped to her chest, giving her an evil grin, she walked over and pulled down a stainless steel 357 magnum, spun it in her hand, flipped the chamber open, closed it and then took a shooters stance. Once she was satisfied with the revolver, she put it back where she had gotten it. "Tools of the trade Dirke, or just a hobby?"

"Not all the time and Both." She stood up and walked over to replace the M-16. "Only a couple people know about this, Stump is one, the guy we deliver to and our boss." She looked down into dark green eyes. "And now you."

Crossing her arms over her chest, she starred defiantly into blue eyes. "So are you going to kill me so that your little secret doesn't get out?"

"Kill you?" She asked as her eyebrows buried themselves in to her hairline. "Why would I kill you?"

"Isn't that what you people do when your secret gets out?" Steve was both scared to death and pissed off at the same time, her heart was breaking into pieces as she took in everything that was around her and what she had just learned. She would have to turn in the woman that had claimed her heart. Or maybe not, maybe she could tell Jacolb that the ring was dead and gone, moved to a different state or something.

Dirke moved closer to her and cupped her face between her calloused hands. Shaking her head no, she backed it up with the spoken words that rang true to Steve's ears. "I would never hurt you; I only kill when it's absolutely necessary or my life is being threatened." Bringing their foreheads together, she spoke softly. "I try and get all this stuff off the streets to protect the innocent. Most of the stuff I buy is from street gangs, if I can get one weapon off the street or an ounce of narcotic, it may save a life."

"There's something else you're not telling me."

Dirke shook her head and then lead Steve over to the office chair. Sitting down, she pulled Steve onto her lap and tried to explain her reasons.

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The sun was shinning brightly through the side windows of the late model Plymouth. Dirk Rathson and his small family of his beloved wife and two daughters were out celebrating his promotion to Sergeant in the Narcotics division of the Dade county police force. After working endless hours for the past year and a half, the narcotics officers had finally had enough evidence to bring down one of the largest suppliers of Cocaine the area had. After the court hearings and sentencing', Dirk found himself standing before his superiors and being informed that he had been promoted. His dark eyes shone with pride as he rubbed his finger across his new shield. He couldn't wait to get home and tell his wife and kids, this was something he had worked years for but was always just out of reach. Now they could have the things that they could never afford before, maybe even buy a nice house somewhere. Pulling his old car up to the stop light, he glanced into the rearview mirror and smiled as he saw his eldest and name-sake running her

fingers across his old badge. He knew that Dirke would follow in his foot steps one day and that was why he gave her his old badge. His youngest daughter was a complete mystery, Sage showed no interest in anything except trying her damndest to get Dirke pissed off enough that it became a wrestling match. Sometimes he and his wife thought that they were raising two boys. As he waited for the light to change, he took a quick glance over the back seat at his fighting daughters and then rolled his eyes at his wife. He couldn't help but laugh at the merriment that Deidre's pale blue eyes held.

"Are you sure they're ours?" He hitched a thumb to the backseat.

"Positive, unless someone snuck into our apartment after they were born and switched them. Now one I could see, but not switching both of them." Pale blue eyes looked over the seat and connected with their doubles. "We could always sell them..." The smile left her face in an instant. Deidre let out a blood curdling scream and pointed to the back window. A group of men were coming up behind the car with pistols in their hands. Dirk, yanked the wheel of the car, shot out into the intersection and was struck broadside by another car. Feeling the impact from his side of the car, he was thrown onto his wives lap. Before anyone could do anything, shots rang out and then the sound of the bullets tearing through the car. Screams came from onlookers as the men continued to shot at the car until they ran out of ammunition. Long minutes went past before the sounds of sirens came closer to the scene, not one person went near the car, and they were in too much shock to do anything.

With Police Officers running to the cars followed by paramedics, it was a miracle that none of them saw the shooters standing up against a building watching the entire rescue. The first officer on the scene ran from the side of the car and threw up in the gutter. Falling to his knees, he cried from the horror that was inside the car. For years afterwards he would always see the blood covering his brother and his small family. With four ambulances at the scene, each body was loaded and taken to the nearest hospital. The chief of Police paced the floor of the waiting room waiting to hear one tiny bit of information. What he received dropped him to his knees before the surgeon.

"I'm sorry sir, we did our best but the husband and wife were to seriously injured."

"What about the girls, are they?" His pleading green eyes looked into the shaken doctors.

"Please...I need to know."

"The tall dark haired one is in surgery right now, she had multiple gun shoot wounds to the back and the younger one to the shoulder and legs. From what I can tell, the older of the two threw her body over her sister. She saved her life that way but may very well loose her own." He looked to his blood covered surgical gown and sighed. "I'll take you to the ICU unit where the younger one is. When she wakes up I need to tell her about her sister and parents."

The chief rose to his feet and took a deep breath, locking eyes with the surgeon he shook his head no. "I'm their uncle, I'll tell them."

After the funerals and being released from the hospital, Dirke and Sage were taken home by their



maternal grandmother where they lived with her and their uncle. Dirke being the oldest, she took the job of taking care of Sage. They were joined at the hip, with Sage doing what ever Dirke did. Even with the love of relatives, Dirke felt that she had been robbed of her entire family. It wasn't long before she was running with the worst crowd she could find, drinking, abusing drugs and being picked up by one uncle or another and run into the station. She finally came to her senses years later when Sage got mixed up with a street gang and was made to run the gauntlet to get out. Dirke found her lying in an alley way so severely beaten that she could barely recognize her. Carrying her six blocks to a free clinic, she barged into a treatment room, laid her down onto the bed and grabbed the first person in white that she saw.

Ice blue eyes drilled into frightened hazel. "Help her or I kill you and if she dies, I'll make sure that you follow right behind her." The feral look on the tall woman's face had the young doctor shaking in her shoes. Before her brain could register what she was doing, the doctor was yelling for her only nurse. They worked on Sage for hours with a stoic presence standing in the doorway. When Dirke was told that Sage would recover, she went back onto the streets to find the gang members that had beaten her little sister. One by one they dropped by her hand, by the next afternoon the morgue was packed with dead mutilated gang members. Dirke returned to the clinic and refused to move from the small room that Sage was in, three days later she watched as gold eyes opened and looked around the room. Tears flowed down pale cheeks, she knelt on the floor next to her sister until she felt a hand squeeze her shoulder.

A soft voice came close to her ear. "You have to get her out of here, the police are searching for witnesses to the gang war." Pale blue eyes looked into hazel. "I can't take her home, our uncles the chief of police."

The young doctor made a decision that moment that changed the rest of her life. She wrote an address on a piece of paper and handed it to her along with her car keys. "This is my address, take her there." She pressed the paper into her large hands. "Trust me."

"OK Doc, I'll trust you but..."

"Call me Danielle, and stop worrying. Now go before they get here."

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Dirke wiped the tears from Steve's face, running her thumb across the dampened cheek, she avoided green eyes.

"Danielle from your story, is she the same one I met?"

A slight smile crossed Dirke's face, she glanced quickly to see green eyes watching her.

"Every time I see them together I thank the Gods that I went to that clinic. Danni tamed my wild sister, she made her go back to school and then on to college. I don't want to think of how she would have turned out if not for the Doc."

"I'd say that the fates had a little hand in how things went." She tipped Dirke's face so that she could look into troubled blue eyes. "What about you, has anyone ever tamed you?"

A soft snort came from Dirke. "I'm not exactly the relationship kind. I've only used my body to get power. Men are so stupid when it comes to women, show a little leg and ya have them hook line and sinker." She shrugged her shoulders, ran her tongue across her front teeth and then gave Steve a dazzling smile. "No one seems to want to try taming me, they're all scared shitless and that includes the men. Like I'd want a man anyway."

"I'm not afraid of you." Steve stared deeply into Dirke's eyes and seen the loneliness and pain. "But taming is not what you need."

"Really. Then what do I need?"

"To get your ass in the house, supper's nice and cold now." She crawled off of Dirke's lap and took her hand. "Come on, I'll throw everything in the microwave for a few minutes."

"What I do here doesn't bother you?"

"I'd be lying to myself and you if I said no, but I see why you're doing it." *But there are better ways of dealing with the guns and drugs.*

During their meal they sat in total silence, each woman trying to figure out what they would do now that some secrets were out in the open. Dirke kept stealing glances at her small friend trying to think of what to say to her.

"Stevie I have to go out tonight."

Steve looked up from where she was pushing her food around. "I'm going with you."

"Ohh no you're not!"

"Ohh yes I am!" She stood up from her chair and pointed a finger at Dirke. "I'm going with you and that's that!"

"And I know there's not a damn thing I can say to make you change your mind." She held up her hands in surrender. "We'll leave in an hour, I want you to carry a gun."

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Dirke checked her guns one last time before she zipped her leather jacket closed. Looking over at Steve, she grinned when she saw her going through a check of her own, slipping the Glock 19 into the shoulder holster she wore and then checked the boot knives she had strapped to her boots.

"Soo badness, how are we getting there?"

Dirke's face broke out into the biggest grin Steve had ever seen, she laughed when Dirke rubbed her hands together and jogged to the far side of the garage and pointed to a tarp.

"OK, so were going to hold it up and wait for a strong wind to carry us to where ever."

"Haa! Funny, sorry but I'm not real fond of heights." She whipped the tarp off with a flourish.  
"Well, what do ya think?"

"Is that a jet engine on that thing?" She bent over to look at the matte black engine. "Dirke we're going to need asbestos suits for this thing."

"Hey it only goes about 160mph, until I got a hold of it that is."

"Now it'll do a mach 10 huh?"

"Close." She grinned at her. "It's the only Honda in this garage." She lowered her voice. "Don't tell anybody, they'll never let me live it down that I own a crotch rocket rice burner."

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Steve hung onto Dirke for dear life, she wasn't kidding about the speed that the Honda could travel. She swore that the tips of her toes were on fire. She took a breath when they started to slow down, looking over Dirke's shoulder she saw that they were approaching a dilapidated building out in the middle of no where. Once they were off the Honda, Steve grabbed onto Dirke's belt and walked beside her.

"What are we picking up?"

"Cocaine and a lot of it."

"OK, and how are we going to carry it on that rocket thing?"

"You get to stick it in your jacket." She gave Steve a grin then pulled her up the rickety steps and knocked on the wooden door.

Steve's jaw dropped to her chest when she saw that the place was actually a drug lab. Scruffy looking men worked at tables with all sorts of beakers and propane flames. Others were putting the narcotics into small bags and packing them into boxes. Slowly, she unzipped her jacket and kept her hand close. At one point she had taken Dirke's hand and was squeezing it so hard that she heard knuckles cracking. Leaning into the tall body, she whispered a sorry but didn't let go or move away. She maybe a cop but being in close quarters with twenty or more men who were all armed was just plan nuts.

"Whatcha got for me Scorpion?" Dirke asked with a deep voice that sent shivers down Steve's back.

The man brushed back his greasy hair from his yellowed eyes. "How much ya got?"

"Fifty, what can ya do with it?"

Steve held back a snort at the thought of what fifty bucks could get. She knew the market for drugs and fifty wouldn't get you much. She used Dirke's body as a shield as she was taking everything in. She knew that she would have to tell Jacob about this place, that is if she could figure out where it was after they left.

"I tossed in some crank for ya, it's a new blend that we've been working on."

"Sounds good." She pulled the thick envelope from her inside pocket and handed it to him. "Here ya go Fifty grand. It's all there but you can count it if ya want." She turned her head when she felt Steve fall against her side, wrapping an arm around her shoulder, she pulled her close and placed a kiss on her temple. "You OK?"

"How much for your bitch?" The man asked as he striped Steve's clothes off with his eyes.

"She's not for sale."

Steve's temper flared. "Why does everyone want to buy me? I am not for and will never be for sale!" She growled at the man.

Dirke stage whispered to the man. "Besides, she's high maintenance."

"What! You wait till we get home!" She said as she jabbed a finger into Dirke's chest.

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Steve faced off with Dirke, she jabbed a finger into her chest and glared at her. "Now tell me why everyone seems to think that I'm for sale?"

Stifling her chuckles when a finger jabbed her harder, she gave her a few reasons.

"One, those sorry bastards can't get a woman unless they buy her. Two, it's common in this line of work to sell human flesh and three you're a very beautiful and desirable woman."

Steve blushed shyly at her tall friend. "If that's the case then how come I'm all alone?" She mumbled under her breath not thinking that Dirke could hear her.

*If I wasn't such a chicken shit, you wouldn't be able to get me off of you with a crowbar.* She remembered what Danni had said to her and sighed.

"What was that for?" Steve asked.

"What?" Dirke tried her innocent look and found it didn't work.

"The sigh."

"Just something that Danni the oracle of relationships said to me."

Steve was now very interested in what Danni had said to her sister-in-law, she found Danni a very caring person and knew that she must have been ragging on Dirke.

"That I'm a dumbass." She took Steve by her hand and dragged her to the steps that led to the loft. "While you were playing around in the kitchen today, I fixed up the loft a little. You can change it if you want."

Steve looked around the large open area, a double bed stood against one wall beneath a skylight, a dresser and wardrobe on another and then a large wooden desk with chair was near the walnut railing that over looked the living room.

"Is it OK, I can get you more furniture if you want?"

Steve's heart fell to her feet, she liked sharing a bed with the tall biker; she would feel lost in a bed all by herself. Plastering a smile on her face, she turned and gave Dirke a tight hug.

"It's perfect, thank you."

Dirke was happy that she liked the loft, but then a heaviness took hold of her heart. She knew deep down that she would miss the small woman in her bed, even if it was an innocent arrangement.

It was early in the morning when they finally turned in to sleep in separate beds. Two bodies flipped every which way and were unable to find a comfortable spot to sleep. When sleep did claim them, they kept looking for something in their dreams.

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Dirke had been up for hours, she had already drunk a pot of coffee, been out to the garage and was now stirring a couple of spoonfuls of sugar in a cup from the fresh pot. Hearing a shuffling noise behind her a bright grin came across her lips. Hiding the grin behind the cup, she turned and almost dropped it at her feet. Steve looked like she had been attacked by wild animals, her hair stood out at odd angles, sheet wrinkles covered one side of her face, her shorts hung low on one hip and her shirt was on backwards. The more Dirke took in the sight, the wider the grin became, a half awake Steve was the cutest thing she had ever seen. Placing her cup on the table, she stepped forward and pulled her into her arms for a long hug. Smoothing down the hair at the crown of her head, she placed a soft kiss there and mumbled when small arms wrapped around her waist.

"Sleep well?"

"Extinct animal." Steve mumbled against her breast.

*I know what you mean.* She said to herself then pulled back enough to lead Steve to a chair. "I'll get you some coffee, it's strong so it should wake you up."

Two pots later and half a loaf of bread, Steve was finally able to utter a few recognizable words. She wanted to go grocery shopping so that they had some real food in the house. They maybe bachelors but they didn't have to starve like them. If there was one thing that Dirke hated in the world, it was shopping of any kind with the exception of going to the Harley shop for parts. She gave into pleading green eyes and the puppy look that Steve gave her. The small blonde had her number and she knew it. She just wished that she was on the same team that she was. It was always her luck that all the beautiful women that she knew all went for the male gender.

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Dirke was lying across the seat of the Goliath motorcycle she was building, her tight faded Levi's showing off her attributes to perfection and causing Steve to hyperventilate. Green eyes couldn't be pulled away from wandering across Dirke's ass even if her life was in danger. A ragged breath was pulled in when Dirke shifted one leg to reach around the frame better, Steve now had an unobstructed view of the area between Dirke's legs. She felt her temperature hit the boiling point and a burning feeling assault the tips of her ears.

"Stevie you around here somewhere?" Dirke called out.

"Uuggg!" Was all that Steve could force out of her gaping mouth. *By the Gods I'm a dyke...lesbian...nuttier than a fruitcake and in love with a biker dyke!* He eyes dragged themselves from where they had been burning into tight flesh to twinkling blue. "Huh?"

"I need your little hands for a minute."

*How about a life time and then some?* "Kay, where?" She asked then listened to her evil little voice. *In a nice warm and wet place that would give you a heart attack.*

"I can't get my fingers in here to put the fuel line on." She pointed to a tight area under the gas tank and near the carburetor. "I don't want to take the tank off again." Steve dropped to her knees and looked up into the small space, she felt Dirke's warm breath caress her cheek. It took every ounce of strength she had to not tilt her head up and capture the parted lips only inches from hers. *Ohh Gods help me!* Dirke screamed internally, she had forgotten that Steve was wearing a tank top and now with her right below her, she could see right down the front of it to see her firm breasts. Gulping in a breath from the sight and the pair of dark green eyes looking at her, she did the one thing that she had told herself she would never do, recruit! Moving closer to Steve, she slipped her hand behind her neck and pulled her closer, with just a whisper of their lips meeting, she pulled back and refused to open her eyes. Her voice strangled, she whispered sorry.

"Don't be." Was all she heard before she felt soft lips connect with hers and a deep moan come from Steve when she reached out with her tongue and licked at Dirke's parted lips. They kissed softly at first, testing the waters until they each needed more. Steve being the braver of the two,

slipped her tongue between Dirke's lips and explored slowly.

Dirke had never been kissed the way that Steve was kissing her now, all the other times with women, it was like two animals fighting, with teeth gnashing and biting at each other. But this was gentle and loving and killing her slowly by the second. She was losing control of her body as fingers ran through her hair and scratched the back of her neck while the other hand cupped her face. She was feeling faint from the kiss as well as from laying over the Goliath. Just as she was about to slip over the seat on her stomach to get closer to Steve, she heard a deep chuckle come from beside them.

"Damn! I knew I've been fixing scooters wrong all these years, I need a woman to help me." Stump stood with his feet spread apart and his beefy arms crossed over his chest. "Damn Boss you look a little flushed." More chuckles came from the giant man as Dirke flailed around trying to get to her feet. Steve was looking for someplace to crawl under, it figured out right for her, the first time she ever kissed someone and she got caught. "That sure is a pretty shade of pink Steve."

"You're a dead man Stump!" Dirke growled.

"Why cuz I caught you playing kissy face? I just wish I walked in later, who knows what I may have seen!" He ducked the greasy rag that Dirke threw at him and ran from the garage.

"Stevie are you OK, I...damn." She looked to the floor and shook her head. "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have done that." She felt soft hands cup her face and pull her downward. Her lips were caught in a deep lingering kiss that had her heart skipping beats. When they came apart, they took deep breaths to calm the fires.

"I told you don't be. You may have started it but I'm a far from ending it. I'll go make lunch, you see what Stump needs." Dirke watched as she walked towards the house with a definite swing to her hips.

"She's going to be the death of me." Wiping the sweat from her brow, she went to find Stump and plant a foot in his ass.

The big man gave her a wicked grin and a wink, he just couldn't help but laugh when she growled at him and tried her most feral look on him. "Big boss has lost her heart to a half pint blond."

"This is bad Stump, I mean it doesn't matter if I have fallen for her or not." She turned her head to look at the log cabin and sighed. "She may just be curious, and not have any feelings for me at all."

Stump placed an arm across Dirke's shoulders and gave her a hug. "Dirke, from what I saw there's more there than curiosity. What would scare me if I were you is if she finds out what you're doing on the side."

"I told her, I had no choice." Her shoulders slumped and she spoke in a softer voice. "She caught me coming up from the dungeon yesterday."

"And what did she say, obviously it doesn't bother her after what I saw."

"She said that she knows why I do it but she's not real happy about it. I took her with me last night to get the coke."

"I hope you can trust her not to say something."

"I don't know why but I trust her with my very life."

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Steve was at a loss as to what had come over her, she had never imagined herself as being bold. She knew that she had to have a talk with Monica, so while she prepared lunch, she grabbed up the cordless and called her surrogate mother.

*"Stevie is that you? My Gods girl what are you doing calling me?"*

"It's OK, Dirke is out in the garage and I really need to talk to you." Her voice dropped a level towards the end in a desperate scream for help.

*"What's wrong baby, you sound kind of funny. You're not in trouble are you?"*

"Not the kind of trouble I'm usually in." She paused for a few minutes trying to get her thoughts in order. "I think I'm in love."

*"That's great Stevie, who is he?"* Monica had a good idea who the person was but she wanted to see if Steve would tell her.

"Now that's the problem, he is a she and part of..." She left the rest un-said.

Monica broke out in deep laughs, she tried to calm herself but found it hard.

"Monica it's not funny, I'm serious here."

*"I'm sorry baby, it's just that I knew as soon as I saw your pictures the other day. She's a beautiful woman."*

Steve was confused, she didn't know how Monica could tell from the pictures she had taken.

"You lost me, what about the pictures?"

*"Half of them were of a very stoic looking woman with pale eyes. She's the one isn't she?"*



"Yeah, how do I know if this is really love?" She asked as she made a gigantic size sandwich that would need a chainsaw to cut it in half.

*"Does she make your heart slam in your chest with one look?"*

"Uhhm...does hyperventilating count?"

*"You're a goner Stevie, I'm glad you finally found someone to love. You better get going and do something about it."* With that Monica hung up on her end and ran to tell Jacob the latest news.

During lunch, they kept sneaking peeks at each other to the point where they gave up and just stared at each other with goofy looks on their faces. They continued to stare at each other even with two other sets of eyes watching them.

"Are they breathing?" Sage asked in a low whisper. "They look like those dummies in the wax museum."

"Fuck you evilness." A deep growl came from Dirke.

"It's alive!" She yelled, faked a faint and then dug her own grave. "So have you two been doing hip thrusts?" She ran from the kitchen with her sister hot on her heels.

"So Stevie, what have you two been up to today?"

"Fixed a fuel line, kissed Dirke, made lunch, talked to my surrogate mother." She turned a deep pink and couldn't look Danielle in the eye.

Danielle sat down at the table and looked at the downcast head. "Sounds boring to me."

"What?" Steve jerked her head up and saw smiling hazel eyes regarding her.

"Gotcha, you've fallen for her haven't you? I tell ya those Rathson women are hell on wheels when it comes to the bedroom." She grinned at the slack jawed look on Steve's face. "I'm assuming that Dirke's like Sage that is."

"I don't know, we've never..."

"So tell me, who made the first move?"

"That's kind of complicated. Dirke kinda gave me a very light kiss and then I more or less attacked her."

"Good for you, those two need a firm hand on them at all times."

Steve told Danielle that Dirke had told her about being in trouble when she was younger and how she and Sage had meet. She included what she now did with the guns and drugs. Danielle

sat and listened to every word and knew that Dirke had it just as bad as Stevie if she told her everything.

"You know she's in love with you?"

Green eyes widened, Steve thought she heard the words wrong. "How do you figure that?"

"Dirke isn't the type to spill her guts like that unless she trusts someone and from the way you two were looking at each other, she's fallen hard."

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With her feelings for Dirke clearly known, Steve had a huge problem. She had to do her job, but if she did then she would lose the woman that she was in love with. If she didn't do her job, then the police would send in someone else and the end would be the same. Either way, she would lose Dirke. Unless she could get a deal made with the police department, where Dirke would turn state's evidence. She could possibly be released on parole or spend a short period in prison. The more she thought about it the worse it seemed to get, Dirke had a juvenile record that shouldn't have any warrant on what she was doing now, what Steve needed to know was whether or not she had an adult record. Only one way to find out, she grabbed her laptop and sent out an e-mail to Monica.

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"I don't care what you do with the blonde bitch once this is done. I want Rat!" The crazy blond screamed with an inhuman sound that had the men covering their ears and cringing. "She's mine and no one is gonna stop me from having her! Now get your scraggly asses out there and get her!" A dozen filthy bikers trudged past Camellia and headed for their scooters, they had agreed to help her and she agreed to give them everything that belonged to Dirke, including Steve. They would have a six hour ride to Dirke's cabin; afterwards that would be their new home. Camellia crawled into the old Pontiac Lemans that she had stolen from a roadside café earlier that week. Gunning the engine, she took off after her little army and to her future with Rat. Searching on the seat for the rubber hose and syringe, after finding them, she used her teeth to tighten the hose around the upper part of her arm and with the efficiency of an OR Nurse; she shot the drug into the large vein of her arm. A few seconds went by before a huge smile appeared on her face and she floated in a drug induced world.

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Jacob read the name Dirke Rathson from the e-mail that Steve had sent him. Using the database, he pulled up her name and found "Not a damn thing!" Rubbing his tired eyes, he looked again at the page with Dirke's name at the top. "Come on Stevie, you have to get me something I can work with." Typing in a different search, he came up with a report from many years ago. It was about her parents being killed by unknown shooters and herself and Sage being wounded. Reading the report, he came across her uncle's name and saw that one of them was the retired Chief of Police for Dade County and the other was still on the force in the homicide unit. Picking

up the phone, he called Florida information and got the number for the police station. After ten rings the phone was picked up on the other end, a deep baritone voice laced with boredom said.

*"Homicide Lt. Rathson."*

"Hello, this is Lt. Freeman of the Richmond Narcotics Division. I'd like to ask you some questions about your niece Dirke."

After the conversation, Jacob still had nothing on Dirke. Her uncle hadn't heard from her in years and didn't even know where she was.

"Damn it to hell and back!" Tossing a file across his office, Jacob leaned back in his chair and stared at the ceiling. There was only one thing to do and that was to get a hold of the other contact on the case and find out what the hell was going on. He just hoped that Steve didn't find out that he had another person that had been on the case for the last couple of years. It was common for departments to lend out their under-cover officers to other agencies and so far, he had a total of three on different assignments and lost just the one officer. He didn't want to lose Steve; she was family and meant a lot to Monica and him.

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After another sleepless night and quiet breakfast, Steve and Dirke went outside to do some yard work. With a yard that was five acres of grass to cut and trim, Dirke was glad for the help. Using the gas powered weed trimmer, she had Steve using the big John Deere riding lawnmower. That was another battle Dirke won, the weed trimmer was a good two foot longer than Steve was tall.

Steve saw that Dirke's shirt was soaked with sweat and her hair hung damply down her back and around her face. Getting off the lawnmower, she went into the house to get her friend a much-needed bottle of water. She knew that Dirke would wait until she felt like she had been lying out in the desert before she would stop for a water break. Scrounging around in the refrigerator, she found large bottles of Gatorade, looking at the label, she grinned when she saw that they were grape rush and arctic ice. The former reminded her of Dirke's eyes. She had seen her temper take hold and saw her eyes turn a very pale almost white with anger. Grabbing a handful of cookies, she stood leaning against the sink counter watching Dirke from the window.

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Dirke looked up from her trimming to see a pack of bikers coming across the front yard and towards her where she stood trimming the grass near the garage. She shut the trimmer off and watched as the lead biker pulled a pistol from his belt and aim it at her. Dropping the trimmer, she lunged to the side, rolled and came to her feet to sprint towards the garage door. Before she made it around the corner, she stumbled and hit the side of the garage with her shoulder. Grabbing her thigh, she brought a bloody hand away. More shots rang out, bullets chipped away at the edge of the garage around her body. Rolling to the ground, Dirke fell through the door and forced her wounded leg to carry her to the trap door in the back room.

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A scream came from Steve as she saw what was happening in the back yard. Grabbing the phone, she dialed 911 and gave the needed information. Taking the steps to the loft two at a time, she ran to her bed and pulled a small bag from under it. Taking her two Glocks out along with extra clips, she ran back down the stairs and out the front door. Easing around the corner of the log cabin, she looked for the bikers and found two of them standing outside of the garage with shotguns in their hands. Taking careful aim, she fired off two shots and watched them drop to the ground. Before she could swing back around the corner shots rang out and hit above her head, ducking she sprinted across the front and down the other side. Her breathing was heavy and labored from the sprinting, taking a deep breath, she kept checking both corners until she found herself being able to breath. Creeping back to the same corner she had come from, she peeked around it and saw that no one besides the downed bikers were in sight. Sprinting low to the ground, she made it to the side of the garage.

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Dirke used her belt to slow the bleeding in her thigh, it wasn't a life threatening wound but it was still dangerous the same. Taking stock of what she had at her disposal, she grabbed an M-16 and two of the matte black magnums. Slinging her shoulder holsters on and grabbing enough ammunition, she went to where a bookcase was standing next to a wall. Easing her fingers at the top edge, she pulled until it swung freely away to show a dark tunnel. Slipping in, she pulled the bookcase back to its original position and grabbed the flashlight that hung on the wall. She never imagined having to use this escape route but was glad that it was there. It would bring her out a good distance away from the garage and into the tree line.

"Where the fuck did she go?" The lead biker asked as he grabbed one of the others by his vest. "She couldn't have just disappeared! Now find HER!" Kicking over spare scooter parts and sweeping everything off the workbenches the bikers destroyed the garage looking for Dirke. Giving up, two of them went outside and decided to check the log cabin. Steve saw the very edge of a man's body as he stood at the corner waiting for his friend. Easing a few steps back, she raised her Glocks and was about to shoot when he turned and spotted her.

"GET THAT BITCH!" He yelled and brought the others running with him. Steve turned and sprinted towards the tree line but not before, she felt a burning in her left shoulder. All she could think of was *why the left side?* It was hard enough to do anything with the splint on and now worse when her shoulder felt like it was going to fall off. Taking a leap, she flung herself into the brush and fell hard onto a wooden door that was trying to rise beneath her. Rolling to her side, she waited until the door came up and pointed the Glock between two ice blue eyes.

"Fuck!" She yelped when she saw who it was. "Four coming this way." She forced out and pointed to where the men were running towards her.

"Stay low and get the hell outta here." Dirke growled as she slid across the ground on her belly with the M-16 in her hands.

"Not! I'm staying with you." She dropped her head when bullets tore through the brush overhead. Rolling a distance away, she opened up with her Glocks and then rolled back where she came from. "Fucking bastards!"

The men had split up, going different directions to try and trap them in the tree line. Dirke knew this so, she did the one thing that would get her killed. Giving Steve one last look, she jumped from her position and ran from the brush firing at the men she could see. Steve let out a scream of no when she saw what Dirke was doing. Getting up she went right behind her, took aim at one of the bikers and dropped him where he stood. As he fell, his pistol went off and shot directly towards Dirke. It was like slow motion to Steve, she watched Dirke's body jerk forward and then fall forward to land on the ground. Letting out a yell, she ran to Dirke, fell to her knees and started shooting anyone who came near. When she heard the click of an empty clip, she picked up the M-16 and unloaded it into the last man who was shooting as he ran towards her. She felt her body jerk to the side right before he fell. Looking down at her side, she saw blood seeping through her shirt.

"Fuck me." She pressed a hand to her side and rolled Dirke over onto her back. A bright red stain showed above her right breast, ripping her shirt open, she pressed the heel of her hand over the hole and prayed for someone to help them. Tears filled her eyes when she saw how much blood Dirke was losing. Tearing the rest of her shirt off, she pressed it to the wound and pressed harder.

"Don't you die on me Dirke!" She growled close to her ear. "You're not leaving me alone after I just found you." Dropping her head down, she rested it against Dirke's neck and cried.

Camellia pulled the car up to Dirke's garage, when she opened the door, she had to step over the two dead bikers. Picking up one of the shotguns, she walked towards the back yard looking for anyone that might be around. What she saw sent her insane temper over the edge. Dirke lay on the ground with Camellia's enemy draped across her.

"You weren't supposed to kill Rat you stupid mother fuckers!" She screamed as she walked towards the closet man and kicked him in the head. "You were only supposed to kill her bitch!" Staggering towards Dirke, she caught movement of a blonde head as Steve rose up to look at her. "Fucking useless men can't follow orders! Guess I'll have to finish this!"

Dirke heard the crazed voice of the addict, moving her hand down towards her thigh, she gripped the throwing knife she always carried. Peeking through a slit eye, she watched as Camellia came closer. The second she raised the shotgun to pump a shell in, she raised her arm and threw the knife. Camellia clutched at her throat and felt the handle of the knife sticking out, she opened her mouth and blood poured past her lips. A gargling noise escaped her throat a second before she fell to the ground.

"Dirke?" Steve cupped her pale sweaty face in her hands. "Come on wake up, you have to stay with me here." Two pain filled dark blue eyes opened and gazed at her.

"Yard work is dangerous to your health."

"From now on we're hiring a gardener." Steve replied. Leaning forward she placed a soft kiss to Dirke's lips. Sirens wailed along with the static of police radios, seconds later the back yard was swarming with uniforms. The officer in charge shook his head at the carnage around him, it looked like a Saturday night in Washington DC.

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Lights flashed above her face, the sound of rubber-soled shoes squeaking on tiled floor as they pushed the gurney towards a curtained off room. Green eyes looked to the side and watched as the other gurney carrying Dirke flew past her.

"Dirke! where they taking her? I have to go..." She tried to sit up and found strong hands holding her down.

"She's going up to surgery, you can't go up there." An older nurse said as she pulled a pair of scissors from her pocket and began to cut Steve's shirt from her body.

"I have to...I..."

"Stevie behave your self and stop worrying." Steve looked up to see golden eyes looking down at her. "Danni's in the OR right now waiting for her."

Green eyes filled with tears, a soft sobbing came from her as she tried to wrap her mind around everything that had happened. "Sage, is she..."

"More stubborn than a mule, a little bullet in the chest and leg isn't going to stop her. What I'm pissed about is you two didn't invite us." She grinned down at Steve and squeezed her uninjured shoulder. "We're going to take good care of you, so behave yourself until the doc can suture you up."

A pleading voice stopped Sage from leaving the room. "Sage please stay with me."

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Danni was gowned and ready for the arrival of her sister-in-law. She and Sage had been listening to the scanner when they heard of gunshot wounds and then Dirke's address was broadcast across the scanner. They jumped in the car and took off to the hospital to wait for the ambulance to bring who ever it was in. As soon as they leaned who the victims were, Danni pulled rank and took over the OR. No one was going to touch Dirke but her, she knew all to well the bikers temper and hatred for hospitals. She moved to the side as the gurney was pushed through the doors, a smile came to her face when she saw Dirke struggling with an orderly.

"Get off me you fucker!" She slapped his hands away and gave out a noise that sounded like a wounded animal.

"Dirke if you don't stop beating up the help, I'll knock you senseless!" Danni ran her hand across Dirke's sweaty forehead. "Jumping around with a bullet hole in your chest is really stupid." She watched as Dirke calmed and let the nurses and orderlies take care of what needed to be done.

"We tried to stabilize her Doc, but she's so damn strong!" The large orderly said as he hung the IV from the charley stand.

"It's OK, she's just a pain in the ass." The second she turned to walk away, the loud pitched scream of the heart monitor went off.

"Doc she's flat!"

"MOVE! Get the cart and get the hell outta my way!" She shoved the unnecessary people out of the way and went to work on Dirke.

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Deep in her guts Steve knew that something was wrong, she tried to get out of the bed but found her legs weak and the room spinning. Bracing her hands on the edge, she tried to push herself upward and then found strong hands on her shoulders.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" Sage asked her. "You keep your little ass in that bed."

"There's something wrong with Dirke! I have to go to her NOW!"

"You stay right where you are, I was on my way to see what's going on." She pointed a finger at her and growled. "Don't move!" Sage had a bad feeling, she ran towards the stairs that would take her to the floor where the OR rooms were. She had faith in her wife's surgical skills but she wasn't a Goddess.

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Sweat soaked Danni's head covering and mask, she was doing chest compressions in between using the paddles. There was no way that she was going to let Dirke die on her table.

"I want two more bags of AB positive hung and Bicarb!" She yelled at a nurse.

"We're out Doc, all we have is O."

Hazel eyes connected with hers, a deep snarling came from behind her mask. "Get my wife, she's a match." Sage blew through the door and heard the last part of the conversation. Grabbing an alcohol swab, she cleaned her arm.

"Come on people move it, I need a set-up here." She yelled and grabbed a bottle of iodine scrub and cleaned the inside of her arm. "Direct line Danni, take all you need." She dropped down into a chair near her sister and held out her arm. One of the nurses looked between the two and was

about to say something but thought better of it when golden eyes pinned her where she stood.

"Hook them up, I'm opening." Using a scalpel, she cut down the center of Dirke's chest until she came to the breastbone. Using the rib spreaders, she opened Dirke's chest and searched for the reason she was bleeding out. The second she moved her heart, blood spurted out and hit Danni in her chest, Dirke's aortic arch was nicked by the bullet as it traveled through her body. "I need 30 silk and get a heart specialist in here." With quick movements, she was able to stop the spurting blood. Massaging Dirke's heart, she called out. "What's her stats?"

"We've got a weak pulse, BP's climbing, and blood gases are looking up."

"Ok people, close her up and take care of her leg."

"I need a transfusion." Sage said just before she fell out of the chair.

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Steve used the wall to walk down the hall, finding the elevator, she took it to the OR area and stumbled down the hall. Finding the room that Dirke was in, she slid down the wall and sat on the floor.

She sobbed into her hands. "You can't leave me, you can't." She didn't know how long she had been sitting there, time seemed to have stopped for her. Lifting her head at the sound of the door opening, she saw Sage being wheeled from the room. The woman was very pale and delirious.

"Vampires all of ya! Stole my blood, I'm BATGIRL!" She started laughing like an idiot until her eyes rolled back in her head and she passed out.

On unsteady feet, Steve got up and grabbed onto the arm of the wheelchair. Her eyes red and swollen from crying, she looked at the nurse.

"What happened to her and where's Dirke?"

"It's OK Stevie."

Steve turned at the sound of Danni's voice, her eyes grew huge at the sight of her blood soaked gown.

"Dirke?"

"Is fine, let's get you back to your room and Sage to a padded cell." She draped an arm around Steve's waist and helped her to the elevator.

"Danni how bad was it?"

"I'm not going to lie to you, we almost lost her. She went flat for about 4 minutes; we did CPR



and it did squat. I couldn't wait any longer so I opened her up. The bullet nicked the aortic arch. Dirke was bleeding out."

"Ohh Gods." Steve grabbed onto the railing of the elevator. She looked into hazel eyes and started spouting out medical terminology and shocking the hell out of Danni.

"How do you know all that stuff?" She asked after she was able to close her gapping mouth.

"Two years of Medical school. What happened to Sage?"

"Dirke is AB positive and so is Sage, we needed blood so Sage ran a direct line between them." They looked up when they heard a funny noise coming from the nurse's station.

"Nanananana Batgirl! Where's my Bat cycle?"

"I think she's a little low on oil." Danni said as she took Steve into her room.

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Steve not being one to take orders, was sleeping in a chair next to Dirke's bed in the ICU unit. It had been four days and Dirke was yet to gain consciousness from the coma she had slipped into. During that time, Steve had filed her reports with Jacob and the Police officers that came to ask questions about the incident. When they attempted to take her into custody for possession of the M-16 and other weapons, and killing seven people even though it was self defense. She lost her temper and gave them Jacob's phone number. Her features changed to show an evil grin when the officer's mouth dropped open while he was listening to Jacob bellow over the phone. When he hung up the phone, she thought that she was going to have to use the call button to have a nurse perform CPR on the man. He was surprised to find out that she was a veteran cop of ten years, had gotten her detective's shield in under five years, was the most decorated and had the highest arrest record in her department. She made sure that he kept his mouth shut about who she really was, all she needed was for it to get out and she could kiss her ass goodbye.

A slight noise brought her attention to the doorway, turning her head she saw that it was Danni and Sage. They had been stopping in a couple of times a day to check on both her and Dirke. Steve could see the pain in their eyes when they looked down at the tall bikers pale face. They were all worried that Dirke would remain in the coma, she had been clinically dead for minutes and the recovery from that was very dire.

"How are you two doing?" Danni asked her as she pulled Dirke's chart from the foot of the bed.

"Still the same, Danni is there anything I can do for her?"

"They say that people in coma's can hear things going on around them. Try reading to her."

Before they left, they each kissed Dirke on her forehead and whispered in her ear. Steve decided to tell Dirke of her childhood and college years, at this point she didn't give a damn if she told

her she was a cop. All that mattered was that she came out of the coma. After sitting in the chair for so many hours, Steve lay down on the edge of Dirke's bed and ran her fingers through her long tresses. She was fighting the sleep that she so badly needed, her eyes heavy and feeling like she had sand inside the sockets. She started telling Dirke another story but fell asleep before she could finish the sentence.

Dirke could feel a warmth snuggled up against her side, and a terrible pain in her shoulder and chest. Rolling her head to the side, she felt soft hair brush her face and picked up the soft scent of Steve. Trying to take a deep breath made a sharp pain radiate through her chest and lungs. She couldn't remember anything past being taken away in the ambulance and was confused by all the pain. Raising her hand, she touched Steve's tear stained face and wondered why she had been crying.

"Stevie." She rasped out through a dried throat and lips. Brushing the soft hair from Steve's cheek, she tried to speak louder. "Stevie wake up."

Steve could swear that she was hearing Dirke's voice in her dreams, a small smile graced her face as she heard it again. What confused her was the soft caress of her cheek and warm breath that moved the wisps of hair at her temple. Cracking one eye open, she saw the most beautiful blue eyes looking back at her.

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"Don't you ever do that again! Who do you think you are Xena?" Steve was throwing her weight around since Dirke was stuck in bed and couldn't do anything to stop her. She paced back and forth at the foot of her bed throwing her one good arm in the air to punctuate her words. "I can't believe that you ran out there and thought that you wouldn't get shot!" She stopped and pointed a finger at the grinning biker. "You scared the shit out of me and on top of all of it, that crazy ass bitch coming after us and you sticking her like a pig with a knife! That thing whizzed so close to my nose that I swear it trimmed my nose hairs!" She walked to stand next to the bed and glare down at Dirke. "And if that wasn't bad enough, you have to go and die on the operating table, drain all of Sage's blood and turn her into Batgirl. You know they had to tie her up for the rest of the night." She was silenced by two fingers covering her lips.

"Can I say something here?" A lopsided grin lifted a corner of her lips and her left eyebrow. "Why are you so bent out of shape over me doing what I did?"

"Bent out of shape? You want to know why I'm bent out of shape." Her voice was getting louder as she went on her tangent. "For the love of Gods! I'm in love you God damn it!"

Dirke reached up and pulled her head down close to her, with a deep purr she spoke and sent tingles down Steve's spine. "Ditto." Their lips brushed against each other for a brief second before Dirke deepened the kiss to singe Steve's senses.

"Damn I'm too early again." Stump said from where he was standing in the doorway.

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He had been keeping an eye on the log cabin since they were both in the hospital. After spending hours cleaning up the mess that the bikers had made in the garage. He decided to stay there instead of driving back and forth. His wife wasn't to happy but then she understood the situation. Both he and his wife were at the age that they wanted more out of life, Florida or Arizona were looking better and better everyday. He just had to wait his time, for some reason he knew it was close. He hoped that his friends would be OK when everything hit the fan. He was still pissed at himself for not taking care of Camellia; he should have turned her ass over to the police and not worried about what happened. Now because of his mistake, his two friends almost died and the police were swarming all over the place.

"I put your garage back in order and recovered the secret passage in the tree line." He gave her a smirk. "Thought I was nuts when I told you to dig that escape huh?"

"I owe ya one Stump; guess there's a lot of pissed off bikers out there waiting for me?"

Steve looked between the two, she hadn't thought about the fact that anyone would be pissed about the death of the bikers. Fear surfaced and over flowed to her eyes that were tearing up.

"I never thought of that." She slumped down onto the edge of the bed. "This is my fault, I killed those men."

Dirke gripped her hand in hers and gave it a soft squeeze. "It's not your fault, as soon as the others find out who was behind all of it, they'll calm down." She looked to Stump. "What club did they belong to?"

"None, they were all rogues. Each one of them had their colors taken for some reason or another. And as far as the crazed Camellia goes." He shrugged his shoulders.

"That solves that little problem, now all we have to deal with are the police." She nodded her head to her friend. "Thanks Stump I owe ya one."

"She owes all of us!" Sage said from the doorway. "Especially me! I gave her all my blood and what thanks do I get? Tied to a gurney for a whole night! It wouldn't be so bad but the dumbass orderly stuck me beside a dead guy!"

Dirke gave her sister a huge smile that lit up her tired eyes. Gripping Steve's hand in hers, she cast a glance to her.

"Her royal Sageness hates dead bodies. I keep telling her that it's the dead ones that can't hurt you."

Steve gripped her hand back; she tried to look like she was listening to the conversations going on around her. All she could think about was what she was going to tell Dirke about the police. She jumped when Dirke placed her hand on her thigh.

"You OK? You looked a thousand miles away."

"Just tired, I haven't slept much in the last week or so."

Danni snorted at her. "Except in that nasty hard chair."

A dark brow rose over a pale blue eye. "You've been in here all the time I was out and sleeping in a chair with your shoulder all messed up?"

"And a gunshot wound to her side." Danni narrowed her eyes at her. "I told you Steve that you needed rest, not torture."

Danni told everyone it was time to haul their sorry asses out of them room. She pointed a finger at Steve and told her that she had better get some sleep or she was going to tie her to a bed somewhere for a week. Once they were all gone, Dirke pulled Steve closer to her body and kissed her temple.

"You need to get some sleep."

Steve cuddled closer to her and laid her head against her shoulder. Placing her arm around Dirke's waist, she gave out a huge yawn. "I like it right here. Dirke about the police...I kinda...took care of them."

Dirke's voice dropped a register. "What do you mean you took care of them?"

"I gave them a statement when they came here. It was ruled self-defense."

"Even though we had enough gun power for WWII, that M-16 isn't legal I could..."

"Give it a good cleaning when you get out of here."

"They didn't take it?" Dirke was surprised; usually they take all the weapons afterwards. "Why didn't they take the guns and where did you get to Glock's from?"

Steve just tossed the last of the dirt from her grave; the next part would throw her in for sure.

"Dirke, the cops in this area are stupid. I showed them my gun permit and they said "Kay Ma'am." The Glock's are...kinda mine." She tilted her head back and looked into surprised eyes. "I'm a single woman, vertically challenged and innocent looking."

"Well two out of three ain't bad." Dirke chuckled at the narrowed look she got. "You are far from..." Leaning forward she brought their lips together in a searing kiss. When they parted and caught their breaths, she added the last word. "Single." Kissing her softly one more time, she tried to turn on her side and let out a loud groan. "Why's my chest hurt so bad?"

"Because Badness, Danni did open heart surgery on you. You know she held your heart in her hand?"

She gave Dirke all the gory details of the surgery and the time that poor Sage was tied up because she thought she was Batgirl after being drained by the vampire nurses.

"What's with all the medical jargon, you sound like Danni and Sageness."

"Two years of medical school, my parents disowned me when I dropped out. I haven't spoken to them in years."

Dirke saw the tears forming in Steve's eyes, with a little pain, she turned on her side and pulled Stevie up against her. "Sorry Stevie." Within minutes, they joined Morpheus and dreamed of each other.

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Jacob was fit to be tied, the veins popping out on his forehead to throb under his beet red face. Every pencil on his desk had been snapped or crushed into tiny pieces. He was about ready to throw his paperweight at the door when Monica stepped in and pointed a finger at him.

"You had better calm down before you have a heart attack!"

"But Mama...I just can't win around here!" He threw his hands in the air and moved his yarmulke so that it covered his eyebrows. "What are you doing here, not that I'm not happy to see you."

"One of your Detectives called me and said you were throwing a temper tantrum, he said there was no way in Hell that he was going to give you CPR if you keeled over."

"Ungrateful slobs, they'll kiss my ass but not my lips." He grumbled and smoothed down his mustache.

"He said he didn't want to have to explain the rash he would have gotten from your mustache. Anyway, what is the problem today?"

"Mama, you know I can't tell you everything."

"Bullshit Jacob, I'm the dispatcher. I probably know more than you do! Not out with it." She dropped down into the chair in front of his desk and gave him a glare that reminded him of a small blonde. If he got his hands on Stevie, he was going to kick her little ass.

"All my contacts on a certain case have zilch!" His face was turning red again and he got the warning point of a finger from his wife. "They have nothing on that Dirke woman, besides that she builds motorcycles for a living, is the president of the Rats and stays at home and bakes cookies for the orphans."

Monica gave him a funny look. "Orphans?"

"She takes care of Stevie the orphan Annie of the precinct."

"Well Daddy Warbucks, maybe she's clean, ever think of that?"

"She can't be, I mean how can every agent, undercover cop, DEA officer and the ATF officer that has ever come in contact with her, come up with the same damn story? I think they're all protecting her, including Stevie."

Monica closed her eyes and leaned back in the chair, she knew she had to tell Jacob of her conversation with Stevie. She would be breaking a rule of her own but saw no way around it.

"Jacob, Stevie's in love with Dirke Rathson." She looked to see Jacob with his jaw resting on his desk, his eyes wide and short gasping breathes spurting from his mouth. "I talked to her the other day."

Collecting himself, Jacob let out a shuddering breath, smoothed his mustache and grabbed up the phone.

"What are you going to do?" Monica asked as she jumped up to stand beside him.

"I'm pulling her out of there, that's what. She's too involved, and it could cost us years of work."

"For God sakes, she watched the women she loves get shot, was shot twice herself, and almost lost Dirke in the OR. If you pull her out then you will never see her again." She took the phone from his hand and hung it up. "Give her a week and see what happens, what's a week when this case has been going on for years?"

Jacob rubbed his face with his hands and nodded his head. "OK, but I'm calling all the other agencies involved and setting up a meeting. We need to pull in all the people we have evidence on and have them put away. Maybe one of them will roll over onto the big boss." Thinking to himself, he hoped that one of them would have something on Rathson, he just couldn't accept the fact that she was like the Virgin Mary in all of this. He spent the rest of the day calling all the agencies and then getting together all the files he had on the case. He wasn't going to take any chances on any of the guilty going free because of a simple mistake.

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They were released from the hospital mostly due to Dirke threatening the nurses who came into try and take care of her. Stevie was getting tired of jumping in between Dirke and them so she begged Danni to do something. So she released them under strict orders that neither one of them was to do anything but lay in bed for the next week. Stevie thought that it would be easier to hold back the tide than keep Dirke in one spot for more than a minute. She had to keep an eye on her at all times because she knew the minute she stepped away from her, she would run to the garage

and start doing something. After Dirke had fallen asleep, she went into the kitchen and booted up her laptop to check her e-mail, after signing on to the secure ISP, she smiled when she saw an e-mail from Monica.

"Stevie

Trouble brews in the health food department, junk food is taking over and causing problems. In one week, the HoHo King will be meeting with the other realms to bring an end to everything.

Love you. M.

"Shit! What the hell does he think he's doing?" She closed the program with out responding, she had to talk to him and soon. He had to give her more time to get the evidence she needed. Then it hit her what would happen, Dirke would be arrested and spend the rest of her life in prison. "I have to warn her, let her disappear even if it means losing her forever."

Dirke was tired of lying around, her body was getting stiff from inactivity. Listening carefully, she blocked out all the normal noises of her cabin. She could here Stevie in the kitchen and knew if she didn't move now, she'd not have a chance again for a while. Swinging her legs over the edge of the bed, she stood slowly and let the dizziness end. Going over to the window, she slid the sash up, looked back one more time to the doorway and then slipped out into the yard. Walking slowly, she made her way to the garage and unlocked the door with the key she had hidden behind a loose board. Once inside, she went down into the hidden room and booted up her computer. She had work to get done, she had to make plans for what she was about to do. After years of dealing in illegal activities, it was time for her to escape and hope that Stevie would join her. It was because of the small woman that she wanted to do this, Stevie had stolen her heart and there was nothing she wouldn't do to keep her by her side. She just hoped that everything worked out the way she had planed. If not, it could mean their lives. Taking all the files she had and placing them all on to a CD, she dropped it into an express envelope and sealed it, making another copy, she placed it into a plastic container and labeled it with Steve's name. One more copy would be held in the floor safe that no one knew about, not even Stump knew it was there. Signing onto a secure ISP, she uploaded at her files and sent them onto the boss along with a brief message. As she was waiting for the files to finish, the mail box flag went up signaling that she had mail. Opening it she read the message and groaned. She had a direct order from her boss to meet with him. It had been years since she had met him face to face and she was not looking forward to it now. Turning in her chair at the sound of feet coming down the stairs, she plastered an innocent look on her face.

"I knew I should have tied you to the bed." Steve growled close to her ear. "How did you get past me?"

"I have many skills?"

"You have no brains, now get back in the house before I plant a foot somewhere." Stevie grabbed her by her ear and pulled her from her chair. "I swear you've given me more gray hair in the last week."

"I don't see any gray hair." She tried to look at the still tousled blonde hair from the crouched position she was in.

"Ohh believe me it's there, just like the gray at your temples."

Steve came to a jerking halt when Dirke stopped in her steps. "I don't have gray hair." She ran her fingers through the hair at her temples.

"Wanna make a bet, if you do you cook. If not, I'll cook."

Dirke sealed the deal with a deep kiss that left Stevie holding onto her until her legs became steady.

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Dirke was standing in the back yard at the grill watching the steaks, she kept trying to see her reflection in the sliding glass door. She couldn't believe that she had gray hair at her temples, she knew damn well that she didn't have it before she was shot. Maybe the stress and the coma did it or Stevie dyed her hair while she was sleeping. A dark brow rose at the thought of her mischievous little companion. "I bet she did this to get out of cooking."

"Did what?" Sage asked from the doorway.

"Dyed my hair." She turned her head sideways and pointed to her temple. "Look it's gray!"

She gave her sister a huge grin. "Shows you're an old woman. Time to eat yet?"

"Depends on if you're gonna carry them in or not, ya know with me being so ancient and all."

"I think it adds to your grumpy appeal, ya know old and stodgy. And you can carry them in yourself, you need the exercise."

"Uhhmm Sage, I need to talk to you about something." She looked down at her hands and clenched them a few times as she tried to get her words in order. She looked up to see golden eyes watching her. "It's time I end all the bullshit I've been doing, I have to get out for Stevie's sake." Sage wrapped an arm around her sister's waist and gave her a hug.

"When are you planing on doing this? And what do you need for us to do?"

"In a few days, the sooner the better as far as I'm concerned. I have to see the boss man and I'm going to tell him then that I'm done." She took a deep breath; held it and then let it seep from between her lips. "Will you guys keep an eye on Stevie while I'm gone? There's a CD in the dungeon with her name on it, will you give it to her after I leave?"

"No problem. Are you sure about this, I mean it could be dangerous?"



"More now than ever, it's time it ended."

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Steve pulled Danni up the stairs to the loft, she searched through her bags until she came across a black plastic CD box with Dirke's name on it.

"I need to go away for a few days, if I don't come back I need you to give this to Dirke for me."

Hazel eyes regarded the woman in front of her, she didn't like the looks of this one bit. She was getting the feeling that something bad was going to happen.

"What is this Stevie, I don't like the look of this." She waved the case in the air.

"You might say that it's my confession of sorts, I have some business that I have to attend to and I've always been leery of having a relationship with someone and something happening to me and that person never knowing my feelings." She dropped down on the edge of her bed and wiped the errant tear that slid down her cheek. "Dirke means more to me than anything in this world and I want her to know it for years to come."

Danni sat down next to her and took her small hand in hers. "Where are you going, I won't tell Dirke I promise."

Steve looked into hazel eyes and saw the truth looking back at her. "I'm an undercover police officer, I was sent here to collect evidence on the drug and weapons selling. I never figured on falling in love with one of the main players. I have to try and make a deal with the attorney general and all the other agencies to save Dirke." She wiped at more tears and sniffled. "If it doesn't work, then I have to arrest her. Danni I can't do it, I want her to escape."

Danni sighed deeply, she looked down at the black case and then into tear filled green eyes. "When do you want me to give her this?"

"Tomorrow morning, I'm leaving here as soon as she falls asleep."

"How will we know if you've set up a deal?"

"I'll come back here and hope that she can forgive me."

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After everyone had eaten, they sat around outside and enjoyed the night air, the soft breeze ruffled past leaving the scent of freshly cut grass and the lingering scent of the flowing lilac trees. Dirke had always loved the smell of lilacs, so she lined her back yard with every color she could find. On nights like this, she often sat outside to enjoy their fragrance. She watched as Stevie tilted her head back and took a deep breath, the tightness in her shoulders was evident in the way that she

moved her head. She was strangely silent that night, not her normal chatty self. Dirke knew that there was something wrong but she just couldn't put her finger on it. She would wait until the others left before she made any attempt to find out. Stretching as much as her body would allow without screaming at her in pain, Dirke stood from her chair and placed a hand on Sage's shoulder.

"I'm gonna turn in, see you in a few." Squeezing her shoulder one last time, they connected eyes and spoke silently through the gaze. Taking one last glance at Stevie, she headed inside to go to her room. The pressure that was surrounding her heart from seeing Stevie so different, squeezed her heart tighter with her absence. "What am I going to do?" She asked herself in a low voice.

Stevie swung her head around and caught Dirke's back as she stepped into the house, she felt the tears start to flow down her cheeks. She hoped that she would be able to help her friend, if not, she didn't know if she could live with herself. Getting up from her chair, she gave each other the two women tight hugs and retired to the house. "Can I do this, can I just simply walk away from her?" Climbing the stairs to the loft, she stripped out of her clothes, pulled on her silk robe and sat on the edge of her bed. Trailing a finger across the satin comforter, she thought of the woman in the room below her. Her heart pounded in her chest with an urgency to do something. Her legs with a mind of their own took her down the steps to stand outside of the cracked open door to Dirke's bedroom. Peeking through the crack, she saw that Dirke was sitting on her bed with her elbows resting on her knees and her face buried in her hands. Easing the door open, she stopped in front of her and brushed the long silky hair away from her cheek. Dirke's head raised at the soft touch, her blue eyes filled with a sadness that Stevie had never seen before. Stevie untied her robe and let it drift to the floor to puddle around her feet. Stepping closer, she leaned down and kissed her gently upon her lips. Without breaking the connection, Stevie pushed her back onto the bed and straddled her trim hips. Moving her lips down to Dirke's neck she felt her gasp and a shudder travel through her body.

"Stevie?" She questioned with a deep voice.

"I want this." She purred into Dirke's ear, then traced it with her warm tongue. She could feel strong hands run down her back to her hips, where they massaged her rear. She moved so that she was sitting back on her calves, running her fingertips from throat to the tops of firm breasts that were slightly red from excitement. Dirke's hands traveled up to cup her breasts and tease her nipples with her calloused thumbs. A deep moan escaped her parted lips as her head fell back. Her hips moved against Dirke's tight stomach in slow thrusts. She could feel her senses picking up with each caress of her hands.

"You are so beautiful." Dirke whispered to her and then sat up to bring their breasts together. Bringing their lips together in a sensual kiss had them moaning into each other's mouths as hands caressed and teased. Flames were ignited to burn steady with each touch or kiss until Dirke lay back on the bed, taking Stevie with her and rolled so that they were facing each other. She traced a fingertip across swollen lips. She looked into green eyes filled with so much love that her breath was stolen from her chest. She forced out two words with a roughened voice.

"Why now?"

"I almost lost you, I want to show you how I feel." Tears filled her eyes as the walls fell down behind dark blue orbs to show the emotions welling in them. "I love you Dirke." Were the last words that were spoken between them. Their bodies moved against each other with the slowness of memorizing. Hands and lips caressed and tasted the flesh for the first time, bringing passions to a crescendo punctuated by the cries of release. They lay wrapped in each other's arms with tears tracing down their cheeks until the soft snores of sleep came to Stevie's ears. Placing one last kiss upon Dirke's lips, she moved from her lovers arms and slowly left the room without looking back. Once she was dressed, she went downstairs and out to her Jeep. She had a long ride ahead of her and hoped that she would be able to make it to Richmond without falling asleep behind the wheel.

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Dirke woke slowly, a smile came across her lips with the memories of the night before. Rolling over she reached out a hand and found cold sheets, her brows dipped in the middle with confusion. Blocking out the normal sounds she listened for her lover and heard nothing.

"Stevie!" She yelled from where she was laying to go unanswered. Getting out of bed, she padded down to the kitchen and found it empty except for a note on the table.

Dirke

I love you with all my heart, please understand that I had to leave. I have to fix something before we can g on with our lives. Talk to Danni, she has something for you.

All my love

Stevie

Dirke let out a howl that shook the windows in the panes, she flung a chair across the room in her anger and swore until she was short of breath. Running back to her room, she quickly dressed and went out to her truck. Peeling out of the driveway, she threw gravel as the tires spun out onto the hardtop. She looked like a possessed demon behind the wheel, speeding down the road to Hell.

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Stevie dropped into the chair across from Jacob's desk, her eyes blood shot and swollen from the tears that flowed the entire way back to her office.

"Are you all right Steve, you look terrible."

"What do you expect, I was shot twice and now I have to arrest the woman I love!" She jumped up from her chair and paced in front of his desk. "I'm sorry Jacob, it's not your fault." She turned pain filled eyes to him. "Can we get a deal for Dirke? Maybe a state witness or something?"

He ran his finger through his sparse hair and sighed. "Look Steve, I don't think that they'll go

along with this." He held up a hand when he saw that she was going to blow her top. "We have a meeting with every agency involved in this, you can talk to the attorney general then and see what can be done." He took a closer look at her when her shoulders slumped. He hated seeing her like this, so defeated. "Come here Stevie." He stood and held out his arms to her, when she stepped into them he held her close and whispered comforting words into her ear. He was never one for the comforting department, but seeing her in so much pain he would give it a shot. "Go clean up a bit and meet me in the big conference room downstairs in an hour." He watched her stagger from the room, dropped into his chair and used his cell phone to call his wife.

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Dirke slammed the door to her bosses office open so hard that the pictures on the wall fell with a crash. Striding right up to the front of his desk, she leaned down on the palms of her hands and glared into his dark eyes.

"I want out now!" She growled and saw him flinch. "Call the others or I will!"

He gulped and held up his hands in surrender. "It's all set, the meetings in an hour in the conference room." Grabbing a bottle of antacid from his drawer, he poured a handful out and ate them like candy. "You gave me these ulcers and bald head, go change and I'll meet you there." He sighed with relief when she walked from his office. "She's going to be the death of me."

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Steve was told to wait in the small room adjoining the conference room. Jacob told her that he would come and get her when she was needed. She knew that with the little bit of information she had turned in and what the other officer had given that they would have enough to bring the people in. She just hoped that Jacob was able to make a deal for Dirke. It felt like hours to her as the meeting went on behind the closed door, she was about to storm the room when it opened and she was motioned out to stand before a packed room full of officer and agents from every branch. Scanning the room, she came upon a man with a beard and mustache dressed in leathers with Rat's colors displayed below his left shoulder, next to him was Stump. Her hope of saving her lover went right out the door.

"OK people now listen up, this is Sergeant Stephanie Carlton of the Richmond Police Department, and with her help along with others we will be able to apprehend around 120 people today." A light blush came to her face when the bearded man and Stump waved at her and mouthed her name. "But the main person who brought this all together is Agent Dirke Rathson of the ATF." Stevie swung her head towards the door to see her lover walk in dressed in black fatigues with a Kevlar vest on and her double shoulder holsters. Her jaw dropped when Dirke strode down between the chairs with the air of command oozing from her pores. They connected eyes for a brief moment before Dirke walked to stand in front of a large board with numerous pictures of bikers and others that would be arrested that day. Steve knew that some of the pictures there were ones that she had taken.

Her voice deeper than Steve had ever heard it, Dirke named off the people from the pictures, she

pointed to certain people and assigned them who they would pick up. When she was finished, she took Stevie's hand and pulled her into the back room, closed and locked the door. Steve didn't know what to say or do, the look on her lover's face was so terrifying that she thought she would drop dead on the spot from one look.

"I'm sorry Dirke, I..."

"Stevie." She moved so that they were but a breath away. "I know what you tried to arrange for me, your Chief talked to me while you were in here." Seeing green eyes fill with tears, she pulled her lover into her arms and whispered into her ear. "No one has ever cared enough about me to want to save me. I love you Stevie." She pulled back and placed a soft kiss to her lips and then deepened it until they broke for need of air. "I want you to stay here until this is over." She knew instantly that was the wrong thing to say when green eyes caught fire and she found the lapels of her fatigues gripped between strong fingers.

"I don't even think so! Where you go, I go! GOT IT!" She yelled the last part wanting to make sure that her lover heard her. "Now lets go bust these mother fuckers so I can retire."

"Retire? What are you saying?"

"I'm tired of being out in the field for sometimes years, I want to settle down with you...if you still want me?"

Blue eyes twinkled, a beautiful smile broke across Dirke's lips and took Stevie's breath away. "Ohh I want all right, lets get this over with." She leaned down and placed a gentle kiss on her lips. "We only have one asshole to bust." She entwined their fingers together and led them out of the room and right past a grinning Monica and Jacob.

"Where are we going?" Stevie asked as she jogged to keep up with her lover's longer stride.

"To the richest part of Richmond. We have a hell of a big fish to gut and fry."

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Monica grabbed her husband's arm and turned him to face her. "Was that the one that our Little Stevie is so over the edge with?"

"Yep, Agent Rathson. She's ATF, which explains why she came up so damn clean. Leave it to Stevie to find the most terrifying agent in the business."

"Come on Jacob, you can't leave me hanging like this." She gave him pleading eyes.

"All I can say is that she has a perfect arrest record and is their number one agent."

"Ohhh." Was all she said before Jacob led her from the room. "Come on Mama, let me buy you a cup of coffee."

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"Don't argue with me little one, put the vest on or you get handcuffed to the steering wheel." She placed a finger over parting lips. "He may be a very important person, but that doesn't mean that he's not dangerous." Stevie mumbled under her breath while Dirke fastened the Kevlar vest for her. "Are you locked and loaded?"

"You better believe it, I'm loaded with cop killers."

"Holy shit, where the hell did you...never mind. Lets go."

They didn't even bother knocking on the front door, Dirke had been here so many times that she felt like it was a second home to her. When she heard a voice coming from a room down the long hallway, she moved towards it with Stevie right on her heels. Pushing open the door to the library, she walked in and dropped down into a leather chair and watched as Stevie stopped behind her and placed a hand on the back of the chair. She waited until the man hung up the phone and turned to look at her.

"Agent Rathson so nice to see you." He gave her a bright smile and then pointed to Stevie. "Who's your friend there?"

"My lover, Sergeant Stephanie Carlton, Stevie this is Director Charles W. Snyder of the ATF." She felt the small hand squeeze her shoulder in shock.

"So tell me something Agent Rathson, I thought you were retired from the ATF. Why are you in uniform?"

"Ohh a little thing of coming here to place you under arrest for being the mastermind behind the theft and selling of Government property and illegal drugs." He let out a boisterous laugh and pointed a finger at her.

"You always were a riot Dirke. I must say you had me going there for a minute. So why are you really here?" He raised both of his dark eyebrows to his hairline.

"Stevie do you believe this asshole? He thinks I'm kidding!" She stood up, pulled her cuffs from the pouch and motioned for him to get up. "No joke sir, now stand up and turn around with your hands on your head."

"You're insane Rathson, I have nothing to do with what ever you're talking about."

"Sir, we have you on tape, pictures, eyewitnesses and enough paperwork to kill three paper shredders."

"This is all a big mistake, now get out before I call the police and have you thrown out." Dirke shook her head in astonishment, she couldn't believe this asshole. He picked up the phone and

tried to call for his assistant.

"Sorry sir, but he was all ready taken away a few hours ago. Plus we got your man at the airport freight facility that was stealing the weapons that were being shipped to the other agencies, the guys from the evidence room are locked up and singing like tweedy bird. Your drug labs are shut down and those guys are on their way to lock-up." She scratched her jaw and glared at him. "And I have all the records of the sales for every single thing that you sold. You see..." She started to walk around his desk and stopped when he pulled out a small handgun that fit in the palm of his hand and pointed it at her. "I'm the Rat, the one who bought all the shit in the black market that you set up. No put the gun down and turn around, NOW!"

She heard two clicks and knew that Stevie had drawn her Glocks.

"Give it up sir, you shoot me and she shoots you."

Before she could move a shot rang out and he dropped to the floor. Blood seeped from the small hole under his chin.

"Damn! There goes my perfect record." She used a pen off his desk to pick up the gun and placed it in the center of his desk. Pulling her cell phone from her pocket, she called in what happened. "Come on Stevie, lets get out of here."

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Stevie and Dirke were laying on the couch together completely naked after spending the entire day celebrating Stevie's retirement from the police force. Dirke was on her stomach with Stevie laying across her back tracing the dragon tattoo with her fingertip.

"What's this stand for?"

"A big ugly dragon." She yelped when her ass was pinched. OK, it's for protection. I had it done after one of my cases went bad and I got shot in the back." She felt warm lips press against her back.

"I'm your protection now." Stevie moved up her body until she was able to kiss the nape of her neck. "The only danger you'll ever encounter is in the bedroom."

"Ain't that sweet? Looky Danni, big bad biker dyke's been captured." Sage chuckled at the dark blush covering Stevie's body.

"Well guys, I guess we can throw these CD's away huh?"

"Toss away Danni, we defiantly don't need them anymore. We're both retired and we're gonna grow old together building scooters."

The End  
Rat's Bitch  
By Larisa  
[Hecate3366@frontiernet.net](mailto:Hecate3366@frontiernet.net)

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