

~ Street People ~

by Larisa



Disclaimer: They're mine.

Violence: Yep.

Sex and bad language: Yep.

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The day was dreary with the misty rain that didn't know whether it wanted to continue or stop all together. Jocelyn O'Shannon hit the windshield wipers on intermittent once more as the rain came down a little harder. Her pale blue eyes squinted trying to see the signs on the street corners; she was to start her new job today after transferring from another office in New York to this one in Washington DC. She felt that she could do more help here than in her previous office. In New York, she had spent time sitting behind a desk going over files and reports trying to find the best way to help the numerous homeless people and women from abused homes. However, what she really wanted was to be able to get out on the streets and get her hands dirty by seeing the conditions that these people lived in with her own eyes instead of reading reports all day long.

She slammed the brakes of her rental car on and slid around the corner onto Constitutional Ave. The address she was looking for was supposed to be somewhere in the center of the street she was now on. If she did find it, she would play hell trying to find someplace to park; the streets were packed on both sides with cars and not a square inch in sight to squeeze the small rental in. Not being from around here, she had no idea where she would park.

20 minutes later, she had found a parking spot four blocks away and was now walking towards the building she was to have her meeting in. Her 6ft figure cloaked in a black suit was now soaked through to her skin, her long black hair hanging in wet tendrils across her high cheekbones and letting the water drip down her neck. Her temper was flaring with the knowledge that her former office had not told her of the bullshit she would have to go through to just make it to where her new office was going to be. Stomping up the concrete steps to the duplex house that was the office for the Social Services Department, and once in the foyer, she shook her head throwing water all over walls and floor. Her black boots oozed water with every step across the tiled floor, a small self-satisfied grin was on her lips at the thought of someone falling and busting their ass in the hallway from the water she was dripping. Her grin erased itself from her lips when she walked up to the main desk in the large back room.

An older woman with long brown hair streaked at the temples with white looked up from her keyboard with warm green eyes.

"Can I help you?" She asked with a smoker's roughed voice.

"I'm Jocelyn O'Shannon; I'm supposed to have a meeting with a Mr. Arron Ruperts.

The woman checked a screen on her computer terminal, giving Jocelyn a large smile she stood and put out her hand.

"Glad to finally meet you, we've been waiting for the famous fighter of evil to grace our doors and hopefully put some fire under the seats of those stodgy assholes over in the main office." Jocelyn gave her a raised left eyebrow with a smirk, she was slightly confused as to how her reputation as a cast iron cold as ice unfeeling bitch had gotten here so fast since it had only been 3 days since she had accepted the transfer.

"I see the confusion in your eyes. Let me introduce myself, I'm Arron Ruperts." She smiled at the shocked look on Jocelyn's face. "My parents were illiterate and the Doctor who delivered me wasn't the best at spelling either so hence the male spelling of my first name. Let me show you your office and I'll fill you in on what you'll be doing here in the Capital of morons."

Jocelyn couldn't help but chuckle at the way Arron thought of all the politicians in the country's Capital and home of the President of the US. She followed Arron up the stairs to an office at the end of the hallway. The room was small and contained just an old government desk, chair and ugly green filing cabinet. She didn't expect much, but she thought that at least, her office would have a view other than looking down into the filthy alleyway.

Arron cleared her throat to get Jocelyn's attention. When she turned, she held out a piece of paper to her.

"This is a check in your name so that you can get your PC and any office supplies that you'll need. But you have to remember that this is all you get for the fiscal year, the powers that be cut our expenses way back that the only thing that keeps us from joining the people we're trying to help on the street is that our husbands have jobs."

Jocelyn looked at the check for \$2000.00; she pulled a pen from her suit pocket and signed the back of it.

"I want you to take this check and put it in the funds to help these people; I don't need anything for my office." She gave her new boss a small smile. "I have my laptop and that's all I need." She handed the check back to Arron as she left her dismal office. Arron stood looking down at the check in her hands. She grinned at the back of the tall figure walking down the hallway.

"You sure are something lady, you maybe a stoic one but your not greedy." She said as she stuck the check back into her pocket.

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She looked at the homeless people huddled under cardboard boxes and plastic bags on her way back to where she had parked her rental. In every nook and cranny blank stares of the lost looked out at her. Dressed in rags and left over pieces of cloth that they had pulled from trashcans and dumpsters were the people of the streets. Some of them had served their country in the armed forces, later to return to a country that didn't want them. Broken and with their pride striped from them they made their existence living where no human should have to. The Government feeling that their own need to live beyond the normal needs of anyone, had passed the bill to give themselves raises and take what little bit of food from the people who gave their very souls to make sure that we remained a free country. Now her job was to go to war for these people and get their rights back. She watched as a woman pulled a tattered blanket up over the head of a small filthy child that clung to her legs, dirt covered cheeks hollowed from not enough food and big blue eyes watched her as she walked past.

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She stepped into the small efficiency apartment that she had rented near Georgetown. Years of inhabitation by college students had given the walls the look of a huge dartboard. Small holes making outlines of where posters had decorated the walls along with sports pennants and playboy centerfolds, one of the former still hung on the one wall in between two grimy windows. She ran a critical eye over Miss August, taken notice of the unruly blonde hair and firm young breasts that peeked out from the button down shirt that was laying low across her strong shoulders.

"My kind of picture," She chuckled to herself as she looked around her humble hovel. "All right any little creatures that maybe hiding in here," Looking under the small kitchenette cabinets with narrowed eyes. "You can stay as long as you stay out of my boots and clean up after yourselves!" Dropping her two bags onto a shaky table, she went back to her rental car to get the cleaning supplies she had picked up on her way.

Hours later with the place smelling of Lysol and floor wax Jocelyn sat in a fold up lawn chair she had found in one of the two closets. Large black leaf bags sat next to the door where she had placed them after filling them with that of the last occupants left over possessions. She could just imagine what the place had looked like before they had moved out.

"Well, Miss August or should I call you Sandy since your hanging on my wall?" She gazed into the green eyes outlined by black eye shadow. "Don't give me that look; come on the place doesn't look that bad. So I need some furniture, give me a break." Shaking her head at the realization that she had just been talking to a finger-smudged centerfold. "Yeah I know I need a life."

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The alleyway was dark; the stench of rotting food and human waste brought tears to the eyes of the small figure that hugged the grime covered brick wall. She made her way towards the opening to Pennsylvania Ave. Looking both ways, she took off at a jog across the street towards where she knew a restaurant would be throwing out the left overs from the meals they had served that night. She had to get there before the others or she would go hungry that night. It had been two days since she had eaten as it was, two days that she had spent hiding in an old condemned warehouse from the police. They were always lurking around trying to grab them and haul them off to who knows where. Anyone that was caught was never seen again and if they were, they had been turned into vegetables. Her best friend Denny had been one of them and when she reappeared, she was but a shell of her once vibrant self. She rounded the corner to see two young guys sorting through the garbage cans; she knew who they were and that they were trouble.

Picking up a mop handle, she snuck up behind them. "That's my supper you're taken!" She growled deep in her throat as she readied her weapon. "Now get outta here before I take your heads off!"

The larger of the two turned his head and smirked at the small filthy girl.

"What? You gonna hit me with your little stick? Get real bitch and go away, we've got some garbage to sell to some homeless bums." She spun the mop handle overhead and connected with his jaw, reversing the arc; she caught the other guy across his forearm and grinned when she heard the loud crack of his forearm bones. His scream of pain sent a thrill through her body. Bringing the stick back around, she caught him in his chin; his body flew back and dropped into the garbage-strewn alley with a thud. She grabbed as much of the thrown out food as she could and ran from the alley to where she knew her friends would be spending the night.

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Garbage cans sent the flickering of lights from the flames that shot from the tops of them; homeless people hovered around them trying to dry their ragged clothes from the rain that had drenched them all day. The reek of unclean bodies and wet clothes was enough to send the sewer rats into hiding, but these people after so many years of living this way had gotten use to it. One of the older men saw the small form coming towards them; he smiled with the few teeth he had left in his mouth.

"Oh little savior, hey ya Sammy how ya doing this nasty night?" He called to his little friend. She came up alongside of the small group and gave them all a brilliant smile with even white teeth.

"Better now Buster, I got us supper and took out the smucks who have been stealing it every night! They won't need any solid food for a while so we're safe until they outgrow the straws they'll be using for the next six months." They all slapped her on the back and thanked her as she held out the food to them.

"Any word on who's causing all the trouble with us?" She asked an old black man they all called Sarge.

"Some cops were around yesterday in a plain car, they kept looking at us real close but they ended up leaving in a big hurry."

Her brows dropped over her green eyes at what he had said then her left brow raised and a tiny grin formed on her lips "What did you guys do?"

"Us?" Sarge gave her an innocent look. "Not us, it was the pervert, while they were looking at us he snuck up alongside of their car and pissed through the window on them." Sammy started laughing; she grabbed her sides as she snorted with each breath. She could just imagine the looks on the cop's faces when they realized what was going on.

Buster chuckled right along with her. He had run across her months earlier fighting off some punks down by the docks and knew that her small five foot five body wouldn't last long down there by herself, so he had brought her up here where he and the rest of the Veterans could protect her. They all found out later that her father had served his time and died years later from recurrent bouts with the malaria that he had picked up while in Vietnam. Sammy was like the daughter they never had a chance to see grow up and they tried to be the father she had never had in her life. They all knew that it wasn't the material things that counted in life but how you treated and were treated in return by others. And with all of them, they would give their lives for each other if that's what it took.

Sammy made her way to the small shelter that they had made for her out of scrap wood and tarps. She removed her outer clothes and hung them over the wooden slats inside so they could dry out for the next day. Rolling herself up in an old blanket that she had gotten from Social Services, she laid down on the layers of cardboard that was her bed and drifted off to sleep to dream of green fields and sweet flowers.

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After taking a few days off to furnish her apartment and do the usual moving stuff, Jocelyn returned to work.

She pulled her car into the closet spot she could find by her building. It was about six blocks away and a long walk through DC since she had to go down alleys and cross streets, where you took your life in your hands just standing on the street corner waiting for the light to give you the go sign. She had made it to her office and was about to close the door when Arron came running down the hall towards her. The older woman was breathing hard and sweat was running down her face from her temples.

"Jocelyn wait!" She stopped to lean against the wall to try and catch her breath. "I'm too damn old for this shit! Can you get down to the soup kitchen on Ohio Street, they're short two people and if we don't send someone they won't be able to feed all the homeless that show up for lunch."

"Ohio Street?" She raised her eyebrows at Arron.

"Don't worry I'm going with you so I'll drive, we have some stuff to take over there anyway and it's in my car."

Jocelyn wiped the sweat that was running down her face with her shirtsleeve, she had gotten stuck at the serving table and the steam that rose from the heating inserts was killing her. Her long black hair had become wavy and she now looked like a demented wild woman. She would glance up at each person as they stepped in front of her, offering them a small smile as she put mashed potatoes on their plastic trays. She had lost count after the first 100 people came past her and her legs were feeling like they wanted to fall off from so many hours of standing in one place. She was scraping the last of the potatoes in the steel insert when a tray came into her line of vision; she took notice of the small hands holding the tray. The dirt and grime covered very delicate fingers, the nails broken and filthy. She scooped potatoes onto the tray and was about to put the rest of them onto the tray when it moved from before her.

"Hey wait!" She called out in a voice rough from breathing steam all day long. "She scraped the last of the potatoes and held them out to the tray, after placing them on there; she glanced up into warm green eyes staring back at her. Her hand froze in mid air she had forgotten what she was doing, and all that mattered was the person standing a few feet before her. Her breath was trapped in her lungs and her heart had stopped in between beats.

She cleared her throat and whispered to the small woman. "If you want more to eat come see me." She received a slight nod and a smile then watched as she walked over to a table that had a group of older men eating at it. She pulled the empty insert out forgetting all about the hot water below and burned all of her fingers. Dropping it with a loud clatter and a string of curses, she blushed when everyone started clapping.

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Sammy sat at the table and watched the tall dark woman blowing on her burned fingers. A weird feeling traveled through her body when she had looked into the blue eyes of the Social worker. Her heart had stopped for a few seconds as she stood there and she had found it hard to breathe. Maybe it was the kindness of the woman giving her extra food, or the fact that she had looked into her eyes and smiled at her, even though she was filthy. Kindness was not something that she had found around places like this. The people that often volunteered did it because it made them look good when they went to their fancy dinners and bragged to their high-class friends about feeding the poor and unfortunate at the soup kitchen. She would make sure that she and the men came back here more often. Then she smacked herself for the thought knowing that the woman probably wouldn't be here again.

Arron came up to a still cursing Jocelyn and squeezed her shoulder. "Hurts like a bitch don't it? Go get some ice and I'll take care of this for ya, plus you look like you could use a break."

"Thanks, yeah I could use one." Stretching her legs, she groaned at the stiffness. "I'll be back in a few minutes." She went back into the kitchen and started searching through the large refrigerators, finding loaves of bread and lunch meats she went to work making sandwiches for the group of men that the small woman was sitting with. In the few moments that she had watched the table, it became obvious that they were all together and cared a great deal for each other. She was glad that the young woman wasn't alone. She had no idea why she cared because it had never bothered her before whether young ones had others to protect them, but this was quite different. After she had finished, she put everything away and put the sandwiches along with small cartons of milk in a huge bag. Looking out the windows on the door to the eating area, she saw that the small woman was leaving with the men. She grabbed the bag and jogged down the hallway to where a door was to the outside. She had just rounded the corner as they stepped out; she jogged up to the small woman and handed her the bag of food.

"There's enough in there for everyone. Take care." She noticed the tears in the eyes of the men as they realized what she was giving them. Sammy looked up into her blue eyes with tears of her own flowing down her dirty face.

"Thank you, and may the Gods bless you for your kindness."

Each person touched her in some way, either by shaking her hand or by touching her shoulder before they wandered off into the night. Her heart was full with emotion and she found it hard not to let the tears flow down her face. She was feeling something that she had never felt before, protectiveness and it was towards the little blonde. She was still standing there when Arron came out to find her.

"Are you playing Archangel or something?" She asked as she placed a hand on the taller woman's shoulder.

"No, lets just say that I'm trying to repay an old debt and leave it at that." She wiped the tears from her eyes and took a deep breath. "Are we done here for the night?"

"Yep, just waiting on you is all. Ya know that little one has been taking care of all those men for months now. She goes out and gets them food from a restaurant over on Penn Ave."

Blue eyes turned to look down at Arron. "And how do you know all of this?"

"Because I happen to know the boss lady and I asked her to put food out there for them. But don't you dare tell anybody, it'll ruin my bitch status." She chuckled as she pulled Jocelyn back inside. "Here you thought you were the only one huh?"

"No, it's just that there's something about that little one, I don't know what it is but there's something."

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Sammy inspected the bag that Jocelyn had given her; her green eyes grew wide at the amount of food that was there. She pulled thick sandwiches and milk out and started towards her friends handing each one of them food. She left the last sandwich and milk in the bag and placed it on the wooden crate next to her. She still couldn't believe what had happened at the soup kitchen, she was off in space when Buster pushed the bag into her hands.

"Sammy take it, if it wasn't for you we would all be going to sleep hungry tonight."

Her green eyes looked up at him questionably. "What do you mean because of me? I didn't do anything."

"You floored that woman! Hell the first time she looked at you I thought she was gonna fall over right there!"

She shook her head and chuckled at her friend. "I was the one that almost fell over, did you see her eyes? My Gods, I've never saw eyes so blue!"

He wrapped his arm around her shoulders and gave her a quick hug. "You're a dawg Sammy but keep on flirting with her and we'll never go hungry."

"You're awful Buster, and I did not flirt with her, so has anybody gotten any more news on our boys in blue?" She asked him as they made their way back to the small group of men.

"Nothing so far, but there is a rumor that they've been over by the Social Services building snooping around. And I heard that one of the hoods got grabbed last night, he was beat up and laying in the alley and the cops grabbed him and hauled him off and no ones seen him since."

She rubbed her eyes and pinched the bridge of her nose. "Where are they taken them and who the hell is allowing all of this to happen?" Pulling her coat tighter around herself, she wandered off towards Constitutional Ave. and the SS Building (Social Services)

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Jocelyn pulled the hood of her sweatshirt over her head, the weather had gotten colder and a stiff wind slapped at her body as she walked towards where she had parked her car. She had returned the rental that day and leased an older model Chevy, she didn't want anything that had a huge theft number and was something that would not have to spend most of it's time in a garage being fixed. She had just rounded the corner to the street that she had parked on when a police officer hit her in the shoulder as he ran by. Her mind reeled at the possibilities as to why he was on foot, living in New York it usually meant that someone was involved in a shooting and that alone made her take off at a sprint towards her car. She didn't want to be in the area if they started shooting it out.

She watched as an unmarked police car flew past her with its grill lights flashing, pulling out she

turned left down an alley to head back to her apartment. She pulled out into the street just as a small figure ran in front of her car, she slammed the brakes on but it was too late the small body went up onto the hood then slipped to the ground in front of her car. She slammed it into park and jumped out the door. Kneeling in front of the figure, she pushed back the dark hood of the jacket to see dirty blonde hair covering an equally dirty face. Her breath caught in her chest when she recognized the figure of the young woman from the soup kitchen.

"Oh Gods no!" She cried out as she rolled her over onto her back. She saw a bruise forming on her left cheek and blood coming from her nose, searching for a pulse she found it beating strong. Pulling her cell phone from her pocket she was about to call for an ambulance when she felt a small hand touch her.

"Don't...please don't." Sammy whispered to her. "No police...dirty cops."

"Can you move? I'll take you somewhere, anywhere you want." Jocelyn whispered back as she saw green eyes trying to focus.

"I'll be OK, nothing broken." She took a deep breath and winced. "Can you help me up?"

She had just gotten back in her car and was pulling away when a cop car went past her coming from the other direction at a high speed. She looked over to her small passenger to find her unconscious; she didn't have any place to take her except to her apartment.

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Pushing her door open with her hip, she walked in with Sammy cradled in her arms. Kicking the door closed she went over to the couch she had picked up at a second hand store and gently laid Sammy down. She looked down at the bruised face and noticed a thin trail of blood that had run down inside of the dirty collar. Her heart started to pound in her chest at the thought of what she had done, she was worried that maybe the small woman was seriously injured and should be in a hospital. She changed her mind when green eyes opened to look up at her.

"Are you OK? Should I take you to the hospital?"

"No hospital, the cops will get me, just give me a few minutes and I'll leave." She struggled to sit up and groaned as a sharp pain sliced through her side. She knew that either she had bruised or broken ribs from where she had hit the front of the car.

"Shit you're hurt; let me get this jacket off so I can look at your side."

"No it's OK; I'm just a little sore is all." Jocelyn opened the jacket and pressed her fingers along her ribcage; she got a yelp out of Sammy and watched as pain filled her eyes.

"I'm taking this off and I won't argue with you so just forget it." Pale blue eyes drilled into green, Sammy knew she couldn't win this one. She nodded her head then helped remove her jacket; she flinched when Jocelyn went to take her shirt off.

"No, leave it on."

"Ohh for the love of Gods, it's not like I've never seen a woman's body before, I mean...I see my own body everyday!" She patted herself on the back for her quick save; she didn't want to have this young thing think she was some kind of pervert or anything.

"I don't even know who you are and you want me to take my clothes off in front of you?" Her green eyes filled with cloudiness from the pain.

"Well, I could close my eyes and check your injuries but there's no telling what I may grab doing that." She gave her a grin. "I'm Jocelyn O'Shannon by the way." She held out her large hand. "Sammy Chartier, I'm still not taking my clothes off." She crossed her arms over her chest and gave Jocelyn a stubborn look.

A dark eyebrow rose up; Jocelyn gave her a vicious smile. "I could just dump you in the bathtub and pour Lysol all over you."

Green eyes narrowed in confusion. "What are you trying to tell me?"

"You reek! And I may have to burn my couch afterwards."

Green eyes flashed anger then calmed as she started to chuckle at the thought of Jocelyn her setting fire to her couch.

"OK, but I do this alone without your help," She held out a dirty hand to Jocelyn. "Deal?"

"Deal, now come on I'll show you the bathroom." She helped a sore Sammy up off of the couch and to the bathroom where she left her to take a shower, her hands had started to shake the second she was alone. She had no idea what she was doing or why she had brought Sammy here to her apartment. Grabbing a bottle of ale out of the refrigerator, she sat down at the small kitchen table. Running her hands through her hair, she tried to think of anything that would help calm her. Leaning back in the chair, she looked at Miss August who was now on the refrigerator door.

"Well, Sandy now what?" She jumped as a voice came from behind her.

"Clothes would be good unless you want me to put my dirty ones back on."

She turned in the chair to see a wet blonde head peeking from around the doorframe. "Sorry I wasn't thinking, just give me a second and I'll find something for you to put on."

Grabbing one of her T-shirts and a pair of silk boxers, she knocked on the bathroom door, it opened a crack and a small hand reached out and grabbed the clothes.

"Modest aren't we little one?" She said to the closed door.

"Can't be too careful, ya never know when a pervert's going to run you over and try to see you naked." Jocelyn stood frozen at the door; she was at a loss for words until she heard a low chuckle come from behind it. She was just about to go back to the kitchen when the door opened and a clean Sammy stepped out. Jocelyn couldn't move from where she stood, the woman before her was beautiful, her short blonde hair was slicked back from her freshly scrubbed face, and green eyes sparkled up at her.

"Are you going to let me out or keep me hostage in the bathroom?"

"Oohh... uuhhmm ...sorry, come in the kitchen and I'll look at your ribs." She grabbed a small glass jar from off a shelf in the bathroom and joined Sammy, looking into green eyes as she grabbed the bottom of her T-shirt.

"Trust me. I won't hurt you I promise."

Sammy looked into pale blue eyes and knew that Jocelyn would never hurt her in anyway; she nodded her head and took a deep breath as she felt the shirt being raised to show her ribs on her left side. She crossed her arms under her breasts to keep the shirt from going any higher than necessary. Jocelyn grinned at her; she had never met anyone so modest in all of her twenty-six years. Opening the jar of Tiger balm, she put some on her fingers and rubbed it into the area that was showing signs of bruising. She stopped the second Sammy gasped.

"I'm sorry if I hurt you."

"It's cold, that's all." *Yeah right, she just sent shock waves through you!* "What is that stuff it smells awful?"

"This coming from someone who could have cleared a head cold."

"Hey, I washed every time it rained so there!"

"Well it wouldn't have done much unless it was raining disinfectant." She rose from where she had been kneeling. "Now don't move I'm going to get something to cover your ribs so that the Tiger balm won't get all over your shirt."

Sammy watched as Jocelyn walked away from her, she watched how her long legs moved in her tight Levi's and the way they hugged her tight ass. A crooked grin came to her lips as her gutter of a brain started to send erotic thoughts to her. "Busters right you are a dawg Sammy." She mumbled to herself. "I know this but I also know what I'd like to rub on her."

Jocelyn leaned onto the bathroom sink counter, taken a deep breathe to steady herself. Her blood was rushing through her body from just touching the soft skin on Sammy's ribs. "Get a grip Joc, she's a kid for Gods sake and you're loosing it quick! Just keep thinking of a naked Dr. Ruth and you'll be OK!" She grabbed a hand towel, went back in the kitchen, and caught Sammy drinking

her ale.

"Are you old enough to drink that?"

"Yep, been legal for years now, would it matter anyway? It's not like I'm going to drive anywhere."

"Guess not, here put this on your ribs." She then went to the refrigerator to get another ale out. Before she opened the door, she looked at Miss August. With her left brow raised, she looked over her shoulder at Sammy then back to the pin-up. Sammy noticed what she was doing and winked at her.

"You have good taste in women."

"Uuhhmm it was here when I moved in, you know you have a strong resemblance to Miss August."

"Bullshit, do you think if I was her I'd be homeless and living on the streets in DC? And if it was here when you moved in then why did you keep it?"

Jocelyn took a deep breath and forced it out from between parted lips. She might as well go for broke; hell what did she have to lose?

"Because I have good taste in women and I happen to like blondes." She pulled a chill bag from the freezer and handed it to Sammy. "Put this on your cheek, maybe it won't look so bad in the morning."

"Blondes huh? I like tall dark bad girls myself." She took a long pull off of her beer watching Jocelyn the entire time. Hot damn, things are looking up! Her little voice told her.

Jocelyn had caught what she had said but filed it away for future reference. "OK, can you tell me what you were doing tonight that I ran you over?"

"Trying to avoid being picked up by the dirty cops."

"How do you know they're dirty? And why would they be after you?"

"Street people have been disappearing and I just happened to walk into one of their little kidnapping or what ever you want to call it."

"Disappearing, do you have proof of this and have you talked to someone about it?"

Sammy got up slowly and got another bottle of ale for both of them. She noticed that the refrigerator was empty. "You don't eat much do you?" She gave a quick glance over her shoulder at the dark beautiful woman.

"I can't cook worth a damn so I order out a lot, now are you going to tell me what's going on or

what?"

"Yeah all right, now a few months ago one of my friends Denny comes up missing, me and the boys searched for days and came up empty. Then one night, she comes stumbling into where we live. But there's something wrong with her, she has this blank stare and won't say a word. We tried for days to get her to tell us what happened but all she did was sitting against the wall and stare at us. I finally went over to the SS Building and told Arron about Denny and she had some people come and take her to the hospital. The last I heard was she was in the mental ward and still hasn't said what happened to her. Since then we've watched cops pick up homeless and gang members from the alleys and no one ever sees them again. That's what I was trying to avoid tonight when you ran me over, which I want to thank you for."

"You're thanking me for hitting you with my car?" She pinched the bridge of her nose and closed her eyes for a second. "You are something."

"I figure if you hadn't I'd be who knows where right now, so yeah I'm thanking you." She covered her mouth as she yawned.

Jocelyn got up from the table and headed for her bedroom; she came back with a blanket and pillow and put them on the couch.

"Sammy, you can have the bed, I'll take the couch."

Green eyes rolled back in her head. "Are you nuts? Your legs will hang over the end, you sleep in your bed and I'll take the couch, after all this is your place and I'm used to sleeping on layers of cardboard."

Jocelyn came to stand toe to toe with her. "No, you're taking the bed. You have bruised ribs and sleeping on that couch will just about kill you tonight."

"You are one stubborn woman!" She looked up into pale blue eyes. "Let's go!" She grabbed Jocelyn by the hand and pulled her down the hall towards her bedroom. Flipping on the light, she looked at the queen size bed. "You take one side I'll take the other, and if you touch me I will knock you into next week! You got me?"

Jocelyn gave her a lopsided grin. "Got ya, no problem little one." She went over to her dresser and pulled out a T-shirt and shorts; in one quick movement, she pulled her shirt over her head from behind and dropped her Levi's. She couldn't help but notice Sammy's huge eyes watching her. When she was finished, she crawled into bed on the side facing the doorway.

"Are you coming to bed or are you going to stand there and drool all over the floor."

Sammy wiped her chin then cast a slanted eyed look to Jocelyn. "I wasn't drooling!" She walked from the room and came back seconds later with the extra pillow. Throwing it on Jocelyn's head, she crawled over her body to the other side of the bed then took the pillow back. After she bounced all over the bed just about making Jocelyn seasick she settled down on her side.

"Are you done jumping around?"

"Yep, nice bouncy mattress you have shows it's never been used." She chuckled into her pillow.

"Keep it up and you'll find yourself on the floor." Jocelyn picked up a tennis ball off of her nightstand and tossed it at the light switch knocking the lights off.

"You are just too weird." Sammy mumbled before she fell asleep.

Jocelyn lay with her hands clasped behind her head listening to the deep even breaths coming from Sammy. *"Now what have you gotten yourself into Joc? You run her over and now she's sleeping in your bed right next to you!"* She told herself right before she fell asleep.

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Jocelyn woke to a stiff back and a weight on her stomach, cracking her eyes open, she looked around her sparsely furnished bedroom then down at the blonde head that was resting right below her breasts. Running her long fingers through the unruly hair, she loved the feel of the silkiness falling through her fingers. A small hand moved under her shirt against her warm skin, fingers caressing in a sleepy manner as they moved back and forth across her ribs. Such an innocent touch sent tingles through her body; she couldn't help but moan when they reached the tender flesh beneath her left breast.

Sammy pushed her face further into the softness beneath her cheek, taking a deep breath of the scent of dryer sheets and something primal. A soft thumping relaxing her further as well as the heat that surrounded her. Her arms wrapping tighter around the anchor that gave her such peace and comfort, her fingers running over the warmth lulling her back to a deeper sleep. Until she felt a rumbling then a low moan, her brain worked its way to the surface. Cracking her sleepy green eyes open, she blinked several times to clear her blurred vision. Looking down, she caught a light blue color of material then the white of the bed sheet draping over her and the body she was laying on. She jerked her head up and looked around her to see a dimly lit room then her warm breathing human pillow below her. She was about to move back to the other side of the bed when she felt fingers run through her hair. Turning her head, she looked into the warm blue eyes of Jocelyn.

"It's OK, go back to sleep." Jocelyn's sleep roughened voice calming her beating heart. She went to move but Jocelyn's arms brought her back down to rest against her body, fingers brushed through her hair and across her cheek. Minutes later, they were both sleeping in each other's arms.

Hours later Sammy woke to the smell of food and coffee, her stomach growled loudly reminding her that she had only eaten once the day before. Crawling from the bed, she sucked in a breath when a sharp pain shot through her side. Grabbing her ribs, she then remembered what had happened the night before. Her cheek was sore and swollen enough that her vision was a little

distorted. Walking slowly from the room, she watched as Jocelyn put food on a plate, she turned with it in her hands when she felt eyes watching her.

"How do you feel? I got us some breakfast I hope you're hungry." She placed the dish on the table and gave Sammy the come-hither motion.

"Starving! Where did you go to get all this?" She looked down at all the food on the table.

"There's a little Deli about a block away that serves breakfast." She kneeled beside Sammy's chair, looking at the side of her bruised face, she ran her fingers over the swollen area, and pain came to her eyes at what she had done the night before.

"I'm so sorry about last night; I wish I could go back and change what happened."

"Will you stop blaming yourself, it was more my fault than yours! I should have been looking where I was running, anyway if you hadn't hit me than the Gods only know where I would be. So just forget about it and eat." She pulled the hand from her cheek and kissed the knuckles before releasing it, her green eyes sparkled from the effect the kiss had on her tall dark savior. "I'm sorry I used you as a pillow last night, I feel bad 'cuz I told you hands off and then I laid on top of you."

"Don't worry about it." She ruffled the blonde hair as she stood up. "If it had bothered me I would have thrown you on the floor." Giving her a lopsided grin, she went over to her own chair and sat down to eat.

They ate in a comfortable silence until Jocelyn's curiosity got the better of her.

"Are you going back out on the streets today?"

"Yep, I have to let the guys know that I'm OK. I know they're probably worried about me right now since I never got back to camp last night."

Jocelyn pinched the bridge of her nose between finger and thumb, her mind racing 100 miles a minute. "You can stay here and rest and I'll get word to the guys where you are. I know you must be sore and it's cold as hell outside and that won't make you feel any better."

Green eyes looked at her from below lowered brows. "I should really get..."

"Please just humor me will ya, I feel really bad and I don't want to worry about you out there, especially since the cops may be looking for you."

Sammy thought for a minute, she had forgotten that the cops might be looking for her. "All right but I'll repay your kindness some how. I'm not a leach."

Jocelyn knew that arguing would get her nowhere so she agreed then went to get ready for work. She had just pulled her leather jacket on when she noticed that Sammy was cleaning up the

kitchen. A familiar feeling ran through her mind at the scene before her, her heart swelled with a warm feeling of belonging. She walked up to her and touched her on the shoulder.

"I'm going to work; the number is by the phone if you need anything. OK?"

"No problem, have a good day and I would be grateful if you could find Buster and the guys and warn them." Her green eyes showed fear for a split second before a deep warmth pushed it away.

"I'll find them, I promise." She pulled the small blonde into a gentle hug, placing a kiss upon her crown, she smiled down at her before she left for work.

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Arron was at the front desk when Jocelyn came through the front door of the building; she looked up to see a bright smile on the normally stoic woman's face.

"Damn! I don't believe it you do have teeth in there! I was thinking you were toothless since you never smiled." She cocked an eyebrow at her employee and friend. "Ohh did you play caveman last night, club and drag a woman off to your apartment?"

"Nooo...actually I ran her over with my car and then took her home." She gave Arron a sly look. "Clubs mean you're kinky now a days, plus it didn't turn out like your dirty little minds thinks." She stood with her arms crossed and resting on top of the tall counter. "Where can I find those men that the little blonde was with at the soup kitchen?"

Arron's green eyes opened wide. "You have her in your apartment?" Receiving a nod with a bright smile to go with it she hissed through her teeth. "You are a brave one I'll give you that! The last person who tried to help her ended up with a broken nose!"

Shrugging her shoulders, she replied. "What can I say? She likes tall dark bad girls. Now where can I find a man by the name of Buster?"

"Easy one, the soup kitchen on Ohio Street, which is where we're needed again today, I have some blankets and extra food in the back of my car for them. I got a little crazy last night with my culinary skills."

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Sammy had the radio on listening to a station out of Frederick Maryland that played all country music. She had found cleaning supplies under the kitchen sink and was cleaning the bathroom as she sang along to Trisha Yearwood. After she had cleaned the entire apartment including washing all of her and Jocelyn's clothes, she searched through Jocelyn's dresser for a pair of Levi's, shirt and socks. When she left the apartment, she left the window unlocked off of the fire

escape so that she could get back in. She had some errands to run; in addition, she had to check her post office box for mail.

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Jocelyn watched for Sammy's friends to come into the soup kitchen, after hours of them not showing up she went to talk to some of the other homeless people. She found out where they lived and after telling Arron her plans, she left on foot to search for them. She walked towards the abandoned buildings where she was told they would most likely be; as she came around the corner, she found them sitting on wooden crates around a fire. She approached them slowly not wanting them to think she was a threat. Her dark hair blew around her face and shoulders as the wind whipped between the buildings as she closed the distance between them. Stopping, she called out Busters name; she was surprised when a burly man turned to look at her. At first, he didn't recognize her then a huge smile graced his face and crinkles showed at the corners of his rheumy eyes.

"Look boys it's the Angel, come on over here and get the chill off of ya." He held out his gloved hand to her. "Welcome to Da Nang." He introduced her to the rest of them by their rank and branch of service. She was surprised that they were all veterans and that the reason that they looked after Sammy was because her father had served in the forgotten war with them.

"I wanted to let you guys know that Sammy is safe, she's at my apartment resting." She went on to explain to them what had happened the night before and asked them for any information they could give her on the cops and the missing people. All she received was that they always used an unmarked patrol car and lurked around the alleyways. As she was walking back to her apartment on the dark sidewalks, she kept her eyes open for police cruisers. She would ask Arron in the morning what she knew if anything and then link into the police files and see if any of the disappearances had been reported. She would find out what was going on and put an end to the fear that ran through out the area.

She opened the door to her apartment; the first thing that hit her was the glow of candles and then the smell of food cooking. Her stomach rumbled letting her know that it was beyond empty, searching the area she didn't see Sammy anywhere. She was just about to call out her name when she caught movement out of the corner of her eye. Sammy was sitting in a recliner that hadn't been there before reading a hardback book. Green eyes looked up from the pages; a grin covered her face at the look on Jocelyn's surprised expression.

"I hope your hungry, I have a chicken roasting and mashed potatoes with fresh veggies and New York Cheese cake for desert."

Jocelyn's jaw dropped open at the mention of all the food that Sammy had made, she knew she didn't have that kind of food in the apartment and wondered if Sammy had stolen it.

"Don't worry, I didn't steal it or take it out of the garbage. I get a check each month for \$20.00

from my asshole mother and I've been saving it for something special. And this is the most special thing that has happened to me in years." Tears welled in Jocelyn's eyes; she didn't know how to take such an unselfish act.

Sammy saw the unshed tears in the pale blue eyes, leaving the book in the chair she stopped in front of Jocelyn. Wiping the trailing tears with her fingers from the high cheekbones, she wrapped one hand behind Jocelyn's neck and brought her head down to rest against her shoulder. "What's wrong Joc?" She whispered in to a small ear, kissing the side of her head she pulled her away to look into her blue eyes.

"It's just that you are such an unselfish person and people look down on you because of the way you live."

"I don't worry about what people think of me." She continued to hold her friend, running her hands up and down her back in a soothing way. "Come on lets eat before the bird is burnt black."

After their supper they cleaned up the dishes then sat down to watch TV, Jocelyn was laying on her side across her couch while Sammy sat in the recliner.

"Where did you get the chair from?" Joc asked her after her curiosity couldn't wait any longer.

"Ohhh it was sitting out at the back of a building where some new people were moving out of. I asked them what they were going to do with it and they said they were throwing it away. They even brought it over and helped me bring it in."

"I should take you with me dumpster diving, we need some end tables and maybe a coffee table." The 'we' didn't escape Sammy's ears; she raised an eyebrow at Joc.

"We?"

"Uuhmm...yeah... that is if you want to stay. I like coming home and having you here, it's not so lonely."

Sammy got up from the recliner to sit on the edge of the couch. "Is that the only reason?"

"Well, uuhmm...no, I can't cook and you can." A lopsided grin graced her lips as she thought of no more greasy take out food and a beautiful little blonde cooking in the kitchen with nothing on but an oven mitt. "Please say you'll stay, I promise no strings attached. You can come and go as you please, just be careful out there."

Sammy pulled her legs up onto the couch so that she could crawl on top of Joc.

"Can I put some strings on this?" She gazed down in to warm blue eyes, running her fingertip across a dark brow all the way down to outline soft pink lips. Joc nodded her head. She took a shallow breath not wanting the warm finger to move from where it was. "I get to volunteer at the soup kitchen, I want to be able to see my friends and know that they're OK and eating."

"Anything you want."

"Promise? Your not going to back out and run are you?"

"Nope, you have my word." Her heart slammed into her chest when Sammy leaned down and placed a soft kiss on her lips. Sammy pulled away enough to look into passion-filled eyes. Leaning forward again, she placed more kisses upon Jocelyn's lips until she felt lips part granting her entrance. They moaned when their tongues touched for the first time, slowly they explored the depths of each other until the lack of air forced them to break their first kiss. Sammy tucked her face against Jocelyn's neck and inhaled the scent of a soft musky perfume that she had come to associate with the tall woman in a short period. Her whole body tingled as she snuggled against the woman who had become to mean so much to her, she felt so complete when she was near and would never forget the night she rolled on top of her car. The fates sure had a funny way of throwing people together.

Jocelyn wrapped her arms around her back holding her tight against her chest, her heart beating in rhythm with Sammy's. Breathing in the scent of strawberry shampoo and conditioner, she let her mind wander to the first time she looked into her sea green eyes and felt her heart stop. She knew now that she couldn't be without this small woman, how fast the heart can fall when the right one comes around. She thought, and then ran what she had just thought over again. She found it to be true; she loved Sammy with her whole heart. She kissed the top of her head and sighed.

They slept the entire night on the small couch and regretted it the next morning when neither one of them could move. Joc decided right then and there that she would get a new couch because she couldn't not stand another night with springs poking her in the back.

"Sammy, we need to get you some clothes, you look awful cute running around in mine in the apartment but for anywhere else I think you need some that aren't three sizes too big."

"There's a second hand store near Penn Ave. Could we go there?"

Joc pulled her in for a hug. "Anything you want. Let's go now and then we can go to my office, there are some things I need to check on. Then we'll go to the soup kitchen and see if your friends are there."

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Arron almost fell out of her chair when Joc and Sammy walked through the door and went up the stairs to her office.

"Damn! I'd jump over the fence for her!" Arron thought of Sammy as she watched her walk up the stairs in her skin tight Levi's.

She was still grinning like an idiot when they came back downstairs.

"Arron, can you check the fax machine in a few minutes? I've got some information coming from a friend of mine."

"Sure, where are you two going?" She gave them a big smile when she saw that they were holding hands.

"The soup kitchen, Sammy wants to volunteer and check on her friends. So if it comes in can you bring it over to me?"

"Sure, no problem, I'll be over as soon as it comes in. Now you two be careful out there, lots of weirdo's out there today."

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They stood side by side at the serving table dishing out food to the homeless as they went past, quite a few looked up and smiled when they saw that it was Sammy giving them their food. Jocelyn kept glancing over at her giving her a smirk every time one of the men gave her a smile.

Sammy blushed when Joc whispered in her ear. "You clean up beautifully."

"You're not so bad yourself." She whispered back.

Sammy was just about to leave to get refills for the line when a deep voice caught her attention. She looked up right into Buster's eyes, and smiled bigger than Joc had ever seen. She ran around the end and jumped into the mans arms and hugged him until he was turning purple. "Geez Sammy, are you trying to kill me?" He put her down and gave her a good look. "Boy kid you sure do look different clean."

"I have no choice; Joc burned all my dirty clothes!" She threw a look over her shoulder at a grinning Joc.

"Don't let her kid you, she helped me burn them! But I do make her take a shower everyday or she has to sleep on the couch."

"Joc! I can't believe you just said that!" She ground out between her clenched teeth.

"Hey, I want these guys to see how lucky I am!" She said over her shoulder as she took the empty inserts back to the kitchen.

Sammy shook her head then grabbed Busters hand and went with him over to the table so that she could catch up with him and her other friends.

Buster squeezed her shoulder and gave her a big smile. "So Sammy, I see you've fallen hook, line and sinker for the dark one and the feeling is very mutual with her."

"You think so do you?"

"Sure if ya take a peek right now you'll catch her looking over here with a stupid grin on her face."

She looked and he was right, she did have a stupid grin on her face that was so endearing to Sammy that her heart thumped in her chest. Right at that second, she knew that Buster was right. Her heart belonged to Jocelyn.

After the guys had left, Sammy came back in to rejoin Joc at the serving line, sneaking up behind her she ran her hand up the inside of her thigh and dragged her fingernail across the seam between her thighs.

She moaned deep in her throat and almost fell to her knees. "You'll pay for that later." She hissed between her teeth.

"Promise?" She jumped when Joc slapped her on her ass and ran her hand up between her legs.

"Yep!" She gave her a lecherous grin.

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They walked hand in hand down the sidewalk ignoring the looks they received from onlookers. They decided to walk through the areas where the homeless hung out so that Joc could get a real feel for what they needed to survive, and the best way that she could help them. One alley that they came upon was the one where Joc had hit Sammy with her car, at first Joc felt a little uneasy about coming down it until Sammy said something about this being the place of their first date. All she could do was chuckle at the way Sammy saw things; she saw the little things in a big picture.

Coming out of the alley, they saw an unmarked police car go past them at a slow speed, the spotlight on and scanning the dark areas.

"That's them!" Sammy yelled. "That's the car that was chasing me that night!"

"Come on lets go follow them." Joc took off at a jog after the police car with Sammy at her side. They stayed far enough back so that the police wouldn't see them. When the car stopped and one of the cops got out they ducked into a doorway and watched as a homeless man was thrown into the back of the car. Joc pulled a pen from her pocket and wrote the car number on her palm. She would run the number by her connection later and find out whom the cops were and who had signed that car out. When the car moved on, they stepped from their hiding spot and continued to walk behind keeping an eye on where the car went. Both of them gave a sigh of relief when it

turned the corner.

They held hands on their way back towards the direction they had come, Joc stopped when she caught the reflection of a bright light flashing off the windows to the side of them. Looking back over her shoulder, she saw the unmarked cop car coming up behind them.

"Sammy, they're back and I think they've come for us this time." She felt Sammy grip her hand tighter.

"So what's the plan?"

"If they stop, we run like hell!"

"Uhhmm...run like hell?" She looked up at Joc with a raised eyebrow.

"Yeah...like now!" The car had stopped and the cop on the passenger side jumped out and came after them. Joc let Sammy stay in front of her; she knew if she had to, she would take out the cop chasing them giving them time to get away. She had no idea that her little blonde could sprint so fast. Joc heard the cop coming up behind her, she dropped back a few steps, grabbed a metal garbage can lid, and flung it like a Frisbee at his knees, she heard a grunt of pain come from him as she took off after Sammy. She had come to a tall wooden wall just in time to see Sammy go over the top. Picking up the pace, she jumped and hit the wall halfway up with her one foot and launched herself over the top with a front flip. She landed in a crouch on the other side to see Sammy holding her ribs and gasping for air. Getting up, she pulled the small blonde into her arms to keep her from falling over.

"Come on lets get out of here before he finds his knee caps." With one arm around Sammy's waist, they took a short cut through one of the buildings back doors and found themselves in one of the 24-hour eateries. Sliding into a booth in the back, Joc pulled Sammy against her side. Pulling her head down under her chin she placed a kiss on the crown of her head, she ran her fingers through the hair at Sammy's temple to the back of her head where she left her hand. She could feel her body trembling against her and knew it was from being afraid.

"It's OK, we're safe now." She kept whispering to her until a waitress came to their table. After ordering them some coffee, she pushed Sammy away so that she could look into her face. "I'll never let anything happen to you." She placed a soft kiss on her lips then held her until their coffee arrived.

"We have to find out where they keep taking all the people they pick up." Sammy said in a low voice. "Too many people are coming up missing, and even if the public thinks that the homeless are expendable it's still not right."

"Sammy the homeless are not expendable, no one is. If that were the case you and I would have been gone years ago."

Sammy gave her a questioning look, her green eyes shifting between the blue eyes before her. "I

don't understand what are you talking about?"

"Up until a few years ago I was a homeless person living on the streets of New York City, I had given up on the human race until this older woman more or less slapped me around a few times and told me to get my shit together."

"So who was this woman?" The green monster was roaring to the surface at lightning speed.

"My Ma, she came all the way from Kansas and found me and knocked the living shit out of me both mentally and physically."

"She beat you, what kind of woman would do that to her kid?" Now rage was pushing the monster to the side with the thought of Joc being beaten.

"Ohh believe me I deserved it! She slapped me a few times and planted her foot in my ass half a dozen times all the way to her hotel room. And till this day I am very thankful for what she did." She remembered her little five foot four mother with her Irish accent yelling at her in their native tongue all the way down the sidewalks of New York. Every time she tried to stop, she got kicked in the ass with a size 4 shoe. She chuckled at the picture, which made Sammy even more confused.

"What's so funny?"

"Ohh well, see my Ma is this tiny little Irish woman who's not even as tall as you."

"So now I'm tiny? I'll have you know that I am vertically challenged! Thank you very much."

"I think you're just the right height, you fit me perfectly." She drained the last of her coffee then pulled her cell phone from her pocket and called them a cab.

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The cop limped back to the unmarked car; his kneecaps were killing him. He thought that maybe one of them had been broken, because with every step he felt a sharp pain shooting up his leg. He was pissed beyond belief, because he had let a woman take him down and they had gotten away. He knew that the boss was going to be pissed because they had missed the little blonde again. However, they would get her no matter what it cost. They had already taken the one guy to the old warehouse for the competition that the boss had planned and with the four they had gotten the night before there would be more than enough for the spectators and gamblers to be amused with.

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Sammy had taken her shower last; she had something that she needed to do in private and knew

she would have enough time to do it while Joc was in the shower. She pulled back the curtain to find Joc leaning against the doorway. At first, she looked for something to cover her nakedness with but changed her mind when she saw the look of wanting in Joc's eyes. She waited while Joc made her way over to her and pulled her into her arms, running her hands up over Joc's strong shoulders then wrapped her arms around the back of her neck and pulled her head down for a deep kiss. She was shocked when Joc picked her up without breaking the kiss and carried her to their bed and laid them down.

Joc covered her body completely with her own, moving sensuously against her as their kiss continued. Sammy reached down and pulled Joc's shirt up over her back from behind then over her head to toss it somewhere in the bedroom. They moaned at the feel of their breasts touching, Joc pressed down further rubbing her now hard nipples into her future lover's soft flesh. Fire ran down her body igniting flames in her center, she could feel Sammy's body shiver with excitement and her body temperature rise after their kiss broke. Joc sucked on the side of her neck, she kissed or licked every part of Sammy's body, making her squirm and thrash on the bed. Squeezing her nipples between her fingers she made her way down the tight stomach of her lover until she came to the soft blonde curls, running her tongue through them she teased her mercilessly until Sammy pleaded with her.

Sammy could feel her wetness soaking into the sheets beneath her; she was on fire from what Joc was doing to her body. She didn't know how much more she would be able to handle before she went insane. She wrapped her hands into the long black hair of her lover and pushed her down to where her throbbing center was begging for attention. She kept pushing her hips upward trying to make some kind of contact and hope that Joc got the hint to hurry. She kept gasping every time she felt a warm wet tongue touch her skin.

"Joc...please! I need to...feel you!"

She raised her head up to look into pleading green eyes; a lopsided grin covered her face. "What part of me do you want to feel?"

Sammy dropped her head back on the bed and groaned; she raised her head back up to see smiling blue eyes looking back at her.

"Your tongue Joc...You're...OHHH GODS YES!"

Joc slipped her tongue between Sammy's wet folds, taking her first taste of her lover's gift. She moaned against the throbbing neither lips, pushing her chin down and spreading them apart so that she could run the flat of her tongue back and forth. She wrapped her arms around her lover's hips to keep them in place, she felt Sammy's thighs start to tighten around her head with her oncoming climax. Pulling back to prolong the moment she looked up into green eyes shooting daggers at her, she smirked before she captured the swollen bundle of nerves between her lips and flicked it with the tip of her tongue. Sammy's body arched off of the bed as her climax claimed her. She screamed out Joc's name with the first rush through her body and with every tremor afterward until she fell back onto the mattress. Pulling her lover up beside her, Sammy cried into her shoulder. Her wracking sobs confusing Joc as she comforted her.

"Baby what's wrong, did I hurt you?"

Sammy pulled back to look into worried blue eyes, her tears flowing down her face to drip off her chin onto her lovers breast. Leaning forward she licked a teardrop from where it had fallen then looked back to simmering blue eyes.

"No, you didn't hurt me, you healed me. My soul and heart has been incomplete for my whole life and now you have filled that emptiness. I love you Joc."

Sammy rolled over on top of Joc pinning her to the bed with her body as she captured her soft lips in a hungry kiss. Pushing her hips downward into Joc, she felt her rise up to meet her with her own thrust. Releasing her lips, she bit down on her chin and traced the small cleft in Joc's chin with the tip of her tongue. Moving down her throat with the tip of her tongue, she teased the hollow at the base of her throat. Her fingers touching sweat dampened skin while her tongue drank of its saltiness.

Joc's mind was spinning out of control, her nerve endings all firing off at the same time as she replayed her lovers words repeatedly. Placing her hand below Sammy's chin, she raised her face to look into her eyes. "I love you Sammy." Her head slammed back into the bed when she felt small fingers slide in her wetness.

"Ooohhh Gods!" She cried out then whimpered when the fingers left her.

"Joc look at me." She opened her eyes to watch Sammy lick her juices from her fingers, then coat her lips to be licked clean. She could feel her juices flow freely from her as Sammy licked all the way down her body and then hover above her center, her warm breath making her center contract. In a split second, her world crashed around her when she felt a wet hot tongue enter her. Her muscles contracted with such strength that she tore the sheets with her fingers at the same time she screamed her lover's name. The veins bulged in her throat from the tension her body was in with each contraction. Finally, her body gave out and she dropped in a limp bundle on the bed. Her breath ragged and chest heaving made her wonder if she would live. Sammy crawled up her lover's body to lie on her chest, using three fingers she caressed parted lips then licked the moisture from them. Joc could taste herself upon her lovers tongue. Moaning with returning arousal, she ran her hand down Sammy's stomach to stop between her thighs, circling her center slowly she waited until her lover thrust towards her hand. Sammy held herself up on one elbow and used her other hand to guide Joc's fingers to her opening.

"It's OK, I trust you." Sammy whispered to her lover right before she pushed herself down onto her fingers. Holding still, she waited for her body to grow accustomed to having something inside of her. "Just hold still baby, I have to get use to this."

Joc hadn't even considered that Sammy had never had a lover before, tears welled in her eyes as she thought of what Sammy was giving her. She was about to say something when she felt two fingers slip through her folds and enter her, she arched her back off the bed, hissing through her teeth at the fullness inside of her. She waited until her muscles relaxed.

"Ohh Gods Joc! Why didn't you tell me!" Tears filled her eyes when she realized that she had hurt her lover. Joc ran her fingers through sweat dampened blonde hair. Pulling them closer, she placed soft kisses at the corners of her lover's mouth.

"Just love me."

Slowly they began to grind against each other's hands making their way to the pinnacle where they would fall off together in a fiery storm. Their breathes mingling as they kissed until the last second when they thrust one last time. When their souls merged into one it was like the room had been lit up with lightning and thunder. With the last ripple, they fell into each other's arms, gasping for air and totally exhausted.

"I thought you would think that it was stupid of me to save myself." Joc whispered into her lover's ear. "Why didn't you tell me?" She asked.

"I saved myself for you, I knew you would come into my life and my innocence would be my gift to you."

"I love you Sammy."

"I love you to Jocelyn."

Still wrapped in each other's arms sleep claimed them.

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Joc woke to an empty bed, with one blue eye open she searched with one hand where Sammy should be, finding nothing but cold sheets she rolled over into a warm body. Searching around, she ran her hand up a thigh then all the way to tousled blonde hair. Pulling Sammy down to her, she wrapped her arms around her body and held her close.

"What are you doing up?" Joc mumbled into a warm neck.

"I was getting breakfast; I worked up a good appetite last night. And I all ready know what I want for lunch." She mumbled in Joc's ear then ran her tongue around the outside edge. Joc moaned deep in her throat from the tingling that ran through her body.

"And what would that be?" She asked as she ran her fingers down to cup her firm cheeks.

"Cookie dough ice cream!" Sammy nipped her ear lobe then pulled away. "Come on it's time to eat."

After breakfast Joc worked on some documents for her job, she had gotten the fax from Arron the night before and was disappointed that it showed absolutely nothing. None of the homeless

people had been reported missing nor had any bodies been found that had not been identified. Her mind tried to come up with a reason someone would be taking them, slave market didn't fit, maybe medical experimentation?

"Sammy your friend Denny, did she have any signs that she had been drugged, you know needle marks?"

Sammy came from the kitchen and sat down on Joc's lap in the recliner. Wrapping her arms around her neck, she rested her head on a muscular shoulder.

"No, we checked for that and didn't find anything. She was as if she had been scared real bad and was in some kind of shock. Maybe the doctors would tell you something since you're a Social worker?"

"Maybe, can you think of any reason what's so ever that they would be doing this?"

"Not a one. Maybe if I let them grab me and you follow them in a car we can put an end to it?"

"NO! I'm not risking your life! Absoulfuckinglutly not! If any one goes it'll be me."

"OOHH NO!! I'm not going to loose you after I've waited all these years to find you."

"Okay, well we'll have to come up with something else. I'm going to change the subject here." She looked into calming green eyes. "If the men had a house to live in, that they would have to keep up. Would they get off of the streets?"

"I don't know, I guess it would all depend on how the place was run."

"Lets say Buster was in charge, he made all the decisions, took care of repairs and by doing this they got paid so that they could buy stuff?"

"Let me see if I get this. They get an old house, do the repairs, upkeep, live there and get paid for doing it?"

"Yeah."

"How about this, after they have done that one house. Social Services gets another one for them to fix up for say...a homeless family and then the Government does their thing with the HUDD arrangement?"

Joc gave her a big kiss and a hug. "You're a genius! I'll see what can be done, I know there are lots of old houses and buildings that can be rescued in the area for just a project. We'll talk to the guys and see what they think and I'll talk to Arron and all the morons and see if we can get a house that has been abandoned or foreclosed on."

"Joc, I know the money situation with SS. How are they going to get money for a house and pay

for the repairs and everything?"

"I have many skills little one, just leave it up to me."

Sammy's mind was spinning with the possibilities of Joc's plan. She had to get a letter out telling her friend about this development. On the other hand, maybe use Joc's laptop and send an e-mail? It would be quicker and she could always delete it afterwards. She also needed to check her mailbox.

"Penny for your thoughts."

"I was just thinking, I need to check my mail box. I may have my monthly check in there."

"We can check after we go and get ice cream."

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Arron was ecstatic about the idea; she knew that they would be able to get money donated to get the plan underway. All they needed was the word go from city councilman Jennings. She was really happy the way Jocelyn had changed. She was no longer a cold bitch like her reputation from New York. It had to be that she and Sammy were living together. However, there was something about Sammy that she couldn't put her finger on, she knew she was hiding something but she didn't know what.

Sammy had been using Joc's laptop to e-mail her friend but what she had to pick up at the post office was something that Joc couldn't know about. She would never forgive her if she knew what was really going on. She only needed one more day and then it wouldn't matter. She figured that she would pick the package up when Joc was at the office, take care of it and then send it out that same day.

Joc had just finished the proposal that would go to the city councilman about a house that was being foreclosed on. She had all the money sitting in a bank account just waiting to be put down on the house. She would know tonight after the council meeting if they could start. She had one stop to make before she went home; she just had to find a way to do it with out Sammy. She grabbed her laptop and went down the hall to one of the spare offices that Sammy had been using.

"Can you take this home with you?" She held up her laptop bag. "I need to swing by the councilman's office with the paperwork and wait around to make sure he gets it in his greedy little hand."

"Okay, I can do that. I'll get supper ready so when you get home we can eat." Joc pulled her in for a long kiss that made them each want to say the hell with everything and lock the office door.

"Maybe supper can wait?" Sammy wiggled her eyebrows.

"We'll just heat it up in the oven. I love you Sammy."

"I love you to. Hurry home; I have a surprise for you?" Blue eyes opened wide.

"For me, can I have a hint?"

"Nope, now get going before I change my mind."

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Joc ran into the councilman's office just about threw the papers at his secretary and ran all the way to her next destination. She made it ten minutes before they would close their doors for the night. She leaned on the glass counter gasping for air.

"I'm Jocelyn O'Shannon...I'm here for..."

The proprietor smiled at the heaving woman lying on his counter. "I was wondering if you would make it or not, I was surprised when I got your fax of the designs that you wanted. But I had no problem at all getting them done for you."

He pulled two small black boxes out from the wall safe and handed them to her; looking into each one, she smiled at him and tossed her Platinum Visa card on the counter. Five minutes later, she was back out the door and running for home.

Sammy turned the oven on low and slid the roaster in along with the rest of the containers with their supper in them. She pulled a thin box from under the reclining chair and opened it; a sly grin covered her face at what she had gotten for her lover. It had come with the other package she had picked up earlier along with another check that she put into her bank account. She knew all hell was going to hit the fan when she opened her surprise but she would get over it real quick. She had just slid the box back into its hiding spot when she heard footsteps running up the stairs and down the hall, then a loud thud as Joc fell through the door.

"Honey I'm home!" She said from where she was laying on the floor. "She pulled one of her boots out from under her." "Maybe I shouldn't leave my boots inside the door huh?" She gave her lover who was standing over her a sheepish grin.

"That might be wise." She dropped down on top of her. "But then again I kinda like you right here." She bent forward and placed numerous soft kisses on her lover's lips. Crossing her arms on Joc's chest, she rested her chin on top. "Do you really like Playboy centerfolds?" She got a raised eyebrow as her answer. "That was a dumb question huh, since you have Miss August on our refrigerator." Rolling off her lover, she reached down and helped her to her feet. "Come sit with me for a minute." She pulled her into the living room and pushed her into the recliner then crawled up onto her lap. "You want your surprise?"

"You mean you sitting in my lap ain't it?"

"Uuuuhmm nope," She leaned over and pulled the thin box from under the chair and handed it to a confused Joc. "Open it."

Joc pulled the lid off the box and gasped, lifting a year 2000 August issue of Playboy in mint condition out of the box.

"It's Miss August, and it's signed!" The look on her face was of a little kid at Christmas. She gave Sammy a breath-stealing kiss and thanked her.

"Baby look inside at the centerfold." She flipped to the center and pulled it out.

"Oohh my Gods!!!!"

"What is there something wrong?"

"Not a damn thing wrong, OOWW! What did you expect me to say, she has saggy tits?" Green eyes narrowed at her. "OOOWW, why did you hit me again?"

"I didn't expect you to drool like a big dawg over a strange woman and she doesn't have saggy tits, now read the damn message she wrote." Sammy pointed to the message wrote in black marker.

"To my soul mate Jocelyn, I'll love you for eternity. Samantha Sandoval Chartier" Her blue eyes grew wide when she saw Sammy's name. "Sammy?"

"What's it feel like to know that you're sleeping with a Playboy centerfold?"

"It's really you?"

"Of course it's me! But don't you dare tell anybody, this is our secret."

"Huummm...what do I think?" She put the box on the floor then carried her lover into the bedroom. Sitting her down on the bed, she searched through her pocket and pulled out the rings she had made. Taking both of Sammy's hands in hers, she looked deeply into her eyes.

"I know this is a little soon to be doing this, but my mama always tells me to not let a chance of a lifetime slip by." She held up one of the rings to Sammy. "I love you with all of my heart, will you marry me?" Sammy held out her right hand and let Joc slid the ring onto her finger, wiping the tears from her eyes, she leaned forward and kissed her deeply.

"I love you Jocelyn, you've made me the happiest woman in the world." She took the other ring, slipped it onto Joc's finger, and placed a kiss on it. Looking at the intricately woven silver and gold band, she knew the meaning. It was of darkness and light brought together as one.

Two hours later with the sheets pulled off the bed and two sweaty satisfied bodies lying at a sloping angle on the bed, Sammy looked into sleepy blue eyes.

"So you're not upset that I posed for Playboy?"

"Nooo, I was just wondering why you were so shy when I first met you? All I wanted to do was look at your ribs and you acted like I was going to do a Pap test and breast examine."

A sheepish grin covered Sammy's face as she looked over at her lover. "I was testing the waters and I don't usually strip in front of strangers. When I did Playboy, I distanced myself from what I was doing. And I knew that the photographer wasn't interested in my body sexually."

A dark brow rose over a half-lidded blue eye. "And you thought I was interested in a sexual way?"

"No, but I was! How could I not be? My Gods after one look into your silvery blue eyes at the soup kitchen you're lucky I didn't jump you then!"

"I don't think they have that on the menu baby."

"I hope not 'cuz I don't share anyway, who would ever want anything to do with a filthy homeless person and I didn't know what side of the fence you were on either."

"But you're not a homeless person you're a Playmate." She licked the nipple that was in front of her. "My dirty minded little playmate."

Sammy kissed the crown of the dark head below her. "Right now I'm a starving playmate. I made a beef roast for supper, you interested?"

"I guess I should eat something, I'll need the strength later." Giving her lover a lecherous grin, she rolled from the bed and pulled her with her. "I'll fix the bed frame later, maybe put some bricks under it for extra support." Sammy cast a glance at the poor slanted bed with its broken leg. And thought that maybe they should just put the mattress and box spring on the floor. She was glad that Joc wasn't mad about her posing for Playboy so maybe when she found out the rest of the story she wouldn't be mad either. However, before she could end her little charade she had to find out what was happening to the homeless people.

The entire time they were eating Joc kept giving her a wiggling eyebrow along with a wicked little grin. Sammy found out as soon as she watched were her lovers eyes kept going. Her centerfold was over her right shoulder hanging on the refrigerator.

"Joc what are you doing?"

"Looking, comparing, wanting."

"Which one of us? Your looking at my centerfold more than me and I'm sitting her naked!"

"It's the bunny ears; I think you look cute with bunny ears." She sucked her bottom lip in-between white teeth then ran her tongue across her upper one. "But it's the real one that will feel

my tongue lick her centerfold."

Sammy gave her a lecherous look of her own, throwing one leg up on the table she leaned back in her chair. "Care to join the photo shoot?"

They would never think of the kitchen floor in quite the same way again, nor the table. After christening, every room in the small apartment they fell asleep cuddled together in the reclining chair.

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One week later Sammy was on her way back from running errands for Arron, she had just come up the alleyway two blocks away the SS building when someone came through a side door of the building. She turned to look over her shoulder and everything went black. The tall man dragged her back through the door and deeper into the building, pulling a gag and cuffs from his pocket. He cuffed her, tied the gag around her mouth, and left her laying face down on the dirty floor. Within five minutes of using his car phone, two more men came through the door and joined him.

"Take her out to the car and then to the holding place." The tall man said as he pulled his phone from his pocket. "I'll call the boss and let him know that everything is set for tomorrow night."

Jocelyn walked down the hall to Arron's office; she peeked around the doorjamb at her boss.

"Arron has Sammy come back yet?"

"No, what time is it?" She asked as she looked to her wall clock. "She's been gone two hours, if every thing went like it should have she should have been back about 20 minutes ago. Maybe she's down stairs?"

Blue eyes took on a worried look; she chewed on her bottom lip as she thought of where she could be. She had a bad feeling for the last hour or so but thought it was just because they were never apart and this being the first time she, thought maybe she was over reacting. But now she knew that something was wrong. She took off down the stairs two at a time, ran across the floor towards the foyer and right into Sarge.

"Jocelyn! Come quick they got Sammy!"

Joc's heart slammed in her chest, her knees felt weak from terror. Sarge saw the fear wash over her face. "Come on we know where they took her! We have to hurry!"

Joc took a deep breath to gather her emotions; she grabbed Sarge by his arm and went with him out the door.

"We'll take my car; it's down the block a ways."

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Joc and Sarge tore down the crowded streets of Wash. DC; If Sarge was lucky he wouldn't die from a heart attack. She had her car up on two wheels at one point after hitting a concrete median strip as she went around a corner too sharp. The poor man was covering his eyes and screaming like a little girl every time he felt the car make a turn. Joc's determination made her road rage come out ten times worse than it ever had in the New York traffic. Her heart had stopped pounding the minute she got behind the wheel, what was driving her on was terror. She had to save her lover at all costs and if anybody got in her way, they had better move or get run down. Her eyes had turned a silver color devoid of all color or emotion except for murderous rage. She had to get to the North East Side of town to a building that was supposed to house a machine operations main office. But Sarge had told her that one of the other men had snuck in and the place was empty upstairs but the basement was used for some kind of barbaric fighting and torture. He also said that they had one part of it set up as a cell type area. She didn't know how she was going to get in but she would find a way if she had to kill everyone in the place to get Sammy back. Sarge told her that all the men were on their way there and would help her get Sammy, she couldn't think of any better reinforcements than a bunch of Vietnam veterans to back her up. She figured from the information that Sarge had given her that they had maybe an hour before the people in charge would start there little show.

She roared when she saw at the time, the fights had already been running for fifteen minutes. She prayed that her lover wasn't one of the first ones to be put into the ring or whatever the hell those people called it. Her mind reeled as to what she would do to them if they had as much lay one hand on her.

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Sammy's head was pounding; her one eye was blurry making it had for her to see clearly. Running her finger across her eyebrow to her hairline she felt a wet stickiness and a huge lump right at her temple. She didn't remember hitting her head but who knew what the hell they did to her since she was jumped in the alley. Her mind went right away to Joc; shivers overtook her body as she thought of her lover and what she must be going through right now. She knew that she would have to get out of this place no matter what. She tried to heavy metal door to the small room she was in and found it locked tight, there was no way she was going to break it down or even pick a lock since there wasn't even a door handle on the thing. That meant to her that it must have some kind of bar on the outside or a slide bolt, she was stuck until someone opened it from the outside. She looked around for something that she could use as a weapon but found that the room had absolutely nothing in it except for the bloodstained mattress that she sat on. Moving as far away from the stains as she could, she pressed her back into the corner. As her hands came down to push the offending mattress away, she pricked her middle finger on something sharp. After examining the cut to her finger tip she looked at the edge that she had touched, peeking out from the frayed end was a piece of wire that at one time gave the mattress

it's rounded corners. Working it loose she bent it to fit inside of her hand with two pointy ends sticking out from her top knuckles. It reminded her of a wicked pair of ninja brass knuckles. She hid her hand and waited.

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Joc and Sarge had parked the car a good distance away from the building, walking close to the sides to hide their movement they came to a back door that had been barred years ago to keep anyone from breaking into the building. One of the men was working on cutting through the bolts that held the bar in place when they came up to him.

"Almost got it, just a couple more minutes." He whispered.

"Sammy may not have a couple more minutes!" Joc hissed back. "Can they hear anything out here from inside?"

"I don't think so, there's only one guy up front and I don't think he can hear all the way back here."

"Good not get outta my way." They gave her a funny look when she grabbed hold of the bar with her hands and braced one foot on the door."

"I tried that already, that's why I was cutting the last..." A loud groan came from both the bar and Joc as she strained against the tension in her back and arms. Taking a deep breath she held tight as she pushed with her one leg, a tearing sound was heard then she was falling backwards into Sarge's arms.

"Fucking mother of God!" The man whispered. "Sarge I'm sure glad she's on our side, I ain't never seen anything like it."

Joc gave him a leer. "It's what I had for breakfast." Sarge knew that was something he wasn't going near with a ten-foot pole. "Let's go find Sammy."

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Sammy was ready, she had heard the mumble of voices outside the door, and she figured if she could take one out then run like hell that she might stand a chance. That was until the door opened and three guys the size of the uniroyal man stood there with 9-mm pistols pointed at her. Crossing her arms over her chest, she hid her weapon. She would need it in the ring or what ever to make it a fair fight.

They took her down a long hallway that branched off in two directions; one she thought went to where the spectators would be the other was to her untimely death. The hallway ended a large

steel door with a huge bar across it. One of the uniroyal men lifted the bar and opened the door while the other two pushed her into the large open area. She looked around to see three walls that were all glass with spectators of every breed standing watching her. She felt like a gold fish in a small tank, her heart slammed into her stomach as she saw the two police officers that had tried to abduct her the night that Joc had hit her with her car. She wondered what they were going to do with her until the door opened again and a man tied to a hand truck was brought in. She thought she had her work cut out for her since he seemed like he was have dead already. That was until he was cut loose and dropped to the floor, and his body started to twitch in convulsions of some sort. One of the men grabbed his arm, gave him a shot, and ran for the open door. All of her worst fears stood right before her with thick drool dripping from his mouth, the red of his eyes and jerky movements told her that the man was high on something. Her luck most likely PCP or something far worse, she prayed for Joc to find her or to die of a heart attack when he came near her.

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Joc ran through the building looking for a stairwell to go down to the lower level, they knew that everyone else used an elevator to get there so there had to be another way. She found it she went through it hoping that Sarge and all the others would be right behind her in the next few minutes. She raced down two flights of steps until they ended at a door; she put her ear to the door and heard voices cheering. She eased it open and slipped in with the unknowing people. She looked to the front of the room and her heart stopped. She saw Sammy trying to maneuver a man as he swung a pipe at her head. From the way she was moving Joc knew that he must have made contact at least once because her lover was holding her ribs. She had to find a way out of this room and to Sammy, she saw a man come through a door to her right shoulder. She stuck her hand out and caught it before it closed and slid out. She found herself in another hallway then a room like she had just left; she kept going until she came to the last one. Her rage soared through the roof at who was sitting at a fancy table along with some other men sipping wine. She knew that they couldn't hear her for all the yelling that was coming through speakers on the wall, with her hand still on the door knob she put all of her weight on it and felt it bend and then snap off in her hand. Slipping it into her pocket, she quietly made her way behind them and to the other door. Once out she snapped that handle off to, they were now stuck in the room and she knew unless they had cutting torches in there they weren't getting out since the doors opened inward.

Sammy was exhausted, she had been dodging the crazed maniac for Gods knew how long, her ribs were hurting where he had got a lucky shot in with the pipe he was using. However, she had gotten lucky a few times to with her piece of wire, he had blood dripping off his chin where she had slashed his one cheek. However, it was getting harder and harder to move, her legs felt like lead and with every breath her lungs burned. She didn't know how much longer she would be able to survive before her took off her head with the pipe.

Joc came around a corner to find a huge fat man, reaching in her coat pocket for the only weapon she had she gripped the doorknob like a baseball. He stood there staring at the wall across from him as if he was in a daze; she crept closer towards him. When she felt that she was close enough

she clicked her tongue, when he turned towards the noise, she let go of the doorknob and smacked him right between the eyes. He grabbed his face and stumbled a few paces before crashing to the floor in a huge heap. She made her way over to him and searched him for what she knew he had to have. Sitting down on the floor, she put her feet on his blubbery sides and pushed as she pulled on his shoulder harness. When it was out far enough she pulled the 9mm free and got to her feet. At the end of the hallway she came across two of the fat slugs, taking out both of them would be hard because she didn't want to use the gun, but thought better of it when the picture of her lover went through her mind. She came at a dead run up behind them, at the last second she jumped and kicked out with both feet catching them in the backs of their fat heads. Her momentum sent them head first into the wall and all she heard were thuds when contact was made. Stripping them of their guns she pushed them into her waistband and went towards where she knew Sammy was.

Sammy was dragging her right leg; the addict had caught her on the side of her knee. She had heard a crunching sound and knew that her leg was broke, but if she went down, she knew he would kill her. She had just dropped and rolled to the side when she saw green field jackets rush through one of the spectator rooms, it could only be her friends coming to help her. With the few seconds that she spent looking, she forgot about the threat behind her. She spun around at the sound of the vicious roar bouncing through the room and saw the metal pipe coming towards her head. She closed her eyes and hoped the end was quick. Five loud shots were heard then she felt something heavy hit her in the legs and take her down. Her scream of pain echoed with the ringing of the shots as her right leg bent beneath her. The last thing she remembered was that Joc was going to kill her.

Joc kicked the addict off of her lover and cradled her in her arms as she carried her out of the room, as she was leaving Sarge and Buster came running towards her from the opposite direction she had come in.

"I called the police their on the way, what do you need us to do?"

She pointed to the uniroyal men and told them to "Get all the lard asses into the ring and then guard the doors to the spectator rooms. No one is to leave until the police get there."

"There's a hidden door down the hallway on the left, it's an elevator to the top floor." Sarge told her as the others came to drag the lard asses away. "Get Sammy out of here."

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She walked outside to see lights flashing on the tops of police cars and ambulances. She sat down on the ground and held onto Sammy, brushing her blonde hair off her forehead she placed a soft kiss on her lips then whispered in her ear that she was safe. Tears ran down her face to soak Sammy's collar and neck as she sobbed against her lover. She had come so close to losing her; if she had been a few seconds to late Sammy would have been killed. She knew that if that would have happened she would have put the gun to her own head and pulled the trigger. She

was pulled from her dark thoughts by a small hand running through her hair and a soft voice whispering to her. She pulled back to look into tear filled green eyes. Their lips came together in a tender then a more demanding kiss that was interrupted when someone dropped to one knee next to them.

"Ohh my Gods Sammy! What happened?" Silvery blue eyes looked into the brown eyes of a small blonde. Her sheepish look made Joc tilt her head to look at her lover.

"Joc, I need to tell you something and I know you'll most likely hate me."

Joc feared the worst; her rage started to rise in her chest. She was about to flip Sammy onto the ground when small arms locked around her neck.

"Calm down lover, it's not what you're thinking." She rubbed the knot at her temple and groaned as she looked into brown eyes. "You owe me big time Lena! Next time it's your ass on the streets!"

Joc was confused; she looked from one to the other waiting for an explanation. "What the hell is going on?" She asked them.

"Joc this is my boss Lena Chambers, she's editor of the Washington Post."

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Sammy sat on her couch with her broken leg elevated on the coffee table; she was woozy from the pain medication that they had given her at the hospital so that left a pissed off Joc to wonder around her lover's apartment. She had her hands stuffed into her pockets as she stomped around the gourmet kitchen. Thinking to herself of what she wanted to say to Sammy before she actually said it meant that she had one hell of an argument going on in her head.

'You lied to me! You made me believe that you were this homeless person that needed protection and I fell for it hook line and sinker! Why didn't you tell me? Do you think I would have turned my back if I knew the truth? God damn it I love you it doesn't matter what you are!' She froze in her pacing. "It doesn't make any difference because I love her!" Now calmed down from her revelations, she went back into the comfortable living room to kneel in front of her lover.

"Sammy I love you!" She put her head down in her lap and cried.

"Joc I know how you must feel, I lied to you and pretended to be something I wasn't. I did all this because of Denny." She started to sob as she thought of gentle Denny, how she saw so much good in the world and now she was just an empty shell. Joc looked up to see tears falling from Sammy's eyes.

"Sammy tell me about her, tell me about Denny."

"Joc, she's my sister." Joc crawled up beside her, pulled her into her arms, and rocked her back and forth until the sobs had stopped. "She lived here with me and used to go out into the streets to take food and stuff to the homeless. One night she just disappeared. I searched along with the Police and after a few days of being out there, I talked to Lena and asked if I could do an undercover expose` on the homeless, connecting it to the disappearances that I had learned about while looking for my sister. I had been out there for months with the guys and they did take me under their wings." She leaned back to look at Joc. Everything that I told you about myself was the truth; I just didn't tell you that I'm a high paid journalist. I'm sorry Joc."

Wrapping her arms around Joc, she began to cry because she thought she had just lost her best friend and lover because of her lie. Joc took a deep breath as she absorbed everything she had just learned. Picking Sammy up, she carried her into the bedroom and laid her down. Crawling in beside her, she pulled her into her arms and wrapped her self around her.

"It doesn't matter Sammy, I still love you with all my heart but one thing. No more secrets between us, so I'm going to come clean to."

Sammy pulled her head up from where she had it rested against her lover's breasts.

"Excuse me?"

"I'm really a Social worker but I don't need the money. I'm rich."

"How rich?"

"Filthy."

"Well, that settles it!" She pushed away from her lover; standing next to the bed, she planted her hands on her hips and tilted her head to the side. Joc had a worried look on her face. "You're taking me out for supper and I'll warn you now, I'm starving!"

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In the Wednesday paper, Sammy made the front page of the Washington post with her expose`. With all the evidence, she had found while on the streets and working with Joc at the SS building, the prosecuting attorney had enough to put everyone that was in the building away for years. One of the biggest surprises for the Washington area was that the city councilman who was in charge of the Social Services budget and decisions was the main person behind the abductions of the homeless. When the police had shown up at the building where the fights were being held, the uniroyal men started running their mouths before they could be put in the cruisers to be booked. They spilled everything they knew including the names of the police officers that were responsible for the abductions. Internal Affairs was having a field day with them, when done, the officers would be joining the rest of the arrested members of the ring in prison.

Between Sammy and Joc, they were able to get the house for Sarge, Buster and the other men to

fix up. They had found out the next day that all the work that Joc had done on the paper work for the city council hearing was found in the trashcan. It never made it to the meeting, but that didn't matter because the homeless were going to be taken care of, Sammy and Joc would make sure of that. They now stood side by side in front of the first house that would begin the change. Sarge pulled up in a pickup truck that they had got him. It was filled with materials that were needed to start the project along with a handful of men who would do the work.

He stepped up along side of them and placed his arm across both of their shoulders.

"Well girls, are ya ready to get dirty?"

Blue eyes twinkled down at Sammy. "I guess he doesn't know me very well does he?"

"Nope, and he will never know how dirty your little mind is either!"

Sarge laughed at them and smacked them both on their asses as he went into the house. "Girls, I know all I need to know." He yelled from the doorway. Joc pulled Sammy into her arms and hugged her tightly. Pulling her head close she gave her a tender kiss that grew more heated by the moment. It was broke when a drop cloth fell from an upstairs window and covered both of them.

"I think that was our hint to get inside and help." Blue eyes twinkled from below dark bangs. "I love you Sammy."

"I love you to Joc." Holding hands, they walked into the house with the sheet still over their heads. "Ya think we should take this sheet off?" Sammy asked.

"Naw, we'll let the guys wonder what were doing under it."

The end