

~ Laney's Beginning ~

by Robin Hicks

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'Laney's Beginning' picks up where we left the gang in '[Dakota's Way](#).' Recently divorced and new to Virginia Beach Police Department Detective Laney Jacobs is finding it very hard to understand why she seems to be having these disturbing feelings for a young woman who was a victim in a robbery.

Chapter One

"God, I'm starving." Laney Jacobs told her partner Koty as they sat down to eat amongst the mass of people during the middle of lunch hour at Fuddrucker's.

"I've been hungry all week; all I've done is eat. At this rate I'm gonna be as big as a house."

"I really doubt that Laney. You're the type of person that could eat all day long, and never gain an ounce. Kasey is the same damn way." Koty told her as she took a bite of her mushroom burger dripping with hot sauce.

"Geeze Koty, how can you eat that thing with all that crap on it? Especially that much, it looks like you used half of the bottle. Your stomach is gonna rot out from the inside."

"You should try it sometimes Laney, it's really good, and it will clean out your sinuses." Laughing, Laney just shook her head, "No thanks, I'll take your word for it, and just stick to what I have..."

Laney and Koty were both detectives for the Virginia Beach Police Department. They became partners right after Laney was transferred from Richmond. Laney had divorced her husband, who had been cheating on her with a much younger woman, and she had requested a transfer to get away.

When she first started at the beach precinct, there was a young rookie at the station who was all too eager to inform Laney of Koty's sexuality. Actually, she couldn't have cared one bit, and when she approached Koty with it, Koty confirmed that it was true. Laney had told Koty then, that it didn't matter to her what Koty's lifestyle was. She never had a problem with it, and besides, Koty had fast become one of Laney's best friends.

It had taking Koty awhile to become comfortable enough to fully open up to Laney. Laney had told her over and over that she wanted Koty to feel comfortable enough to talk to her about anything.

At a party Koty had once taking Laney to, Laney over heard Koty's best friend Jamie, tell Koty

that a woman by the name of Kasey was there at the party. She remembered the look on Koty's face, which led the detective to believe that this particular woman, must be, or had been, very special to Koty. Just last month, she finally told Laney all about what was happening in her life back then.

Laney finally got to meet Kasey, Koty's lover, about three months ago and she immediately realized why Koty was head over heels for this woman. She was absolutely stunning, and was obviously totally crazy in love with Koty.

When Laney had first met Kasey, she almost felt a little jealous, and for the life of her, she couldn't imagine why that had left her feeling a little uneasy. Laney could also sense that Kasey was a little jealous of her at first too. You could see it in her eyes, even though you couldn't read her face.

Through a couple more meetings, Kasey started to loosen up a little more around her. She was actually a very pleasant woman when she didn't feel threatened. Laney felt that with enough time, they could even become friends. Well, as long as no one tried to put the blast on Koty that is...

Laney jump from her thoughts as Koty spoke. "Kasey wanted me to invite you to dinner Saturday night. Jamie and Trish are also coming. It's nothing big, just some steaks on the grill and some drinks. If it's not too cold out, maybe we can eat out on the deck. So what do you say?"

"Sure, but are you sure that you want a fifth wheel hanging around?"

"You know that we don't see it that way Laney. Besides, Kasey told me not to take no for an answer, so I guess it doesn't matter what you say, you've gotta show up any ways."

Laney smiled. "You ladies are awful pushy, you know that?"

Leaning back in her chair, Koty rubbed her full belly and grinned. "Yes, I know that. So that is a yes, right?"

"Yes..."

?Later that evening, Laney sat on her couch with her feet propped up on the coffee table, and thought about Koty and Kasey. It was obvious to any one that knew those two that they were soul mates. 'Hell, they were probably lovers in previous lives met up yet once again to enjoy another life together.'

What would it be like to love somebody as much as those two loved each other? To know passion, to know fire and hunger for each other. Once upon a time, Laney thought that she was in love with her ex-husband, but learned very early on, that all she really wanted from him was a way out of her parent's house. Out from under her mothers strict to a fault ways.

She loved her mother dearly, but they were never really close. Not the way that Laney and her

father were. She knew that it was proven statistics that fathers and daughters were close, and that mother and sons were close. Laney used to think that maybe that was part of the problem. She had no brothers, or other sisters for that matter, and maybe her mom was just a tad bit jealous of Laney and her father's closeness.

Not until ten years ago when her mother suddenly died of a massive heart attack, did she realize just how much she was going to miss her. Laney's father had taken her death extremely hard, and it took Laney a long time to get him over the major hump of his loss. Three years ago, he married his high school sweetheart, a woman that Laney took to right away.

When Laney had found out about her ex-husband cheating on her she wasn't hurt by it, she was totally pissed. After awhile it actually became rather funny. Not as funny though as the look on his face when she told him that she was divorcing him. That was a look that the detective would never forget. 'Oh yeah. Talk about a Kodak moment!'

She had known the whole time that he was really only after her family's money, but Laney being Laney, she stuck by his side. That is until she grew up and got a little taste of freedom. Free now, of playing the dutiful wife of a snobby but very successful lawyer.

Richard was the center of attention at all of the big parties. So he thought anyways. He never got the clue that the only reason that any one put up with his dry jokes, and his I am better than you attitude was because of Laney. They were all actually her friends, and were only nice to Richard because of it.

What a shot to his inflated ego when he started bringing his little girlfriend to some of the parties when Laney was un-able to go. He couldn't fathom why his 'so-called friends' would rat him out, and leak it back to her.

Then his father talked him out of trying to fight Laney for his share of everything she owned. His father told him that he would never win, and would only end up embarrassing himself and his family.

Shortly after the divorce was final, the Detective decided that she needed a change, and put in her request for a transfer. Laney had told Richard that they could sell the house and divide the money, or, if he chose to stay there, he would have to buy out her half. She was still waiting on an answer from him.

Chapter Two

Wednesday afternoon Laney and Koty were called to an Antique store where a burglary had just taken place. One of the women had been shot, and the other had been knocked unconscious. When they arrived, the gun shot victim was just being taken to the hospital, and the other was sitting on a large coffee table where a paramedic was cleaning a gash on her forehead.

Laney watched the woman's face as the paramedic was finishing up. 'Very attractive.' "Ma'am, are you able to answer a few questions for me, and maybe tell me what happened?" Laney asked

her as she pulled up a stool next to the young woman. Green eyes peered upwards, then, a small frown as those same eyes fell on the Laney's badge being flashed in front of her. 'Wonder what that is about?' Laney silently mused.

"Well...it all happened pretty fast, but I'll do my best detective. Jodi and I were putting some stuff away that we received last night right before closing. The next thing I knew, I came around the corner just in time to see a guy reaching into that glass cabinet right over there." With a shaky hand, the young woman pointed to the cabinet.

"When I yelled at him, I...he turned and started hitting me. I guess Jodi heard the noise, and came out of the back room. I...Jesus, I heard a shot ring out, and saw her fall. Oh God... is she going to be alright?"

Koty came to stand next to Laney, and softly spoke to the shop owner. "They emptied the register. Ma'am, do you know of anything else that has been taken?"

"I don't really know, he was obviously after something in that cabinet, but I haven't been able to check it out yet. God my head hurts."

Laney reached over and gently touched the woman's cheek, looking at the gash on her forehead. "They're gonna take you to the emergency room, and get you checked out. We will have more questions for you though. What is your name, honey?"

"It's Randi. Randi Daniels."

"Ok Miss Daniels, we're gonna let them take you now, and we will talk with you a little more later on. Oh, and one more thing. What is Jodi's last name?"

"It's Case. Jodi Case."

Laney watched as the Paramedic helped Randi up, and out the door to the rig. Shaking her head she hoped that the woman she called Jodi, would be all right. She knew that outside of being pretty shaking up with some cuts and bruises, Randi would probably be just fine. Physically anyways. Finalizing a few things with the officer in charge, she and Koty decided to head out for the hospital to check on the two young women...

They arrived at the hospital about thirty minutes later, and waited while the nurse was getting Randi prepped for the doctor to see her. While they waited, Koty went to check on the other young woman, Jodi, to see how she was doing.

"Detective," the nurse said as she came through the curtain, "You can go in and see her now the doctor will be in shortly."

Laney poked her head around the curtain. "Knock-knock. Can I come in for a moment Randi?"

"Um... sure, I guess detective, come on in. Have you heard anything on Jodi yet? They won't tell me anything." She frowned as she laid her head back on the hard lump that the hospital called a pillow.

"I can't believe that this happened. We have had the store running for three years now, and nothing like this has ever happened. Not even to any of the other merchants."

"Can you think of anything specific that they might have been after Randi? Was there something of great value in that cabinet?"

"Nothing in that particular cabinet had anything worth more than maybe a hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars. The more expensive stuff was in the cabinet beside that one but it was locked, so I guess that they either didn't know the value or they thought that it would be easier for them to get something from the one that he was in. I just don't know."

Just at that time, the Doctor walked in and Laney smiled at Randi, and told her that she would talk to her again if they had any more questions, then turned and walked through the curtain.

As she walked away, looking for Koty, she thought about the woman in the room that she had just left. All cleaned up, Laney thought about her earlier assessment of the young woman being attractive. She was beyond that. She was a very striking woman. 'I'm sure she is older than she looks'.

She wondered why all of a sudden she was noticing different things about women. How their hair fell, how they had certain smiles for different things, and even the soft curve of their waist's before it tapered into the waistline of their pants.

Laney felt her face flame at that thought. 'Holy shit, it's got to be the divorce.' Or maybe the fact that half of her friends now a days were lesbians. She had never had any lesbian friends before. Or had she, and just maybe didn't know it? Come to think of it, she wondered about one of her friends Kathy that worked for her father. She always had seemed a little stand offish around some of the men that they knew, but was always very sweet and friendly towards Laney herself.

Laney saw Koty over by the nurse's station and walked over to see if she had found out anything on the young woman that had been shot.

Koty smiled as she walked up to her. "Jodi is in surgery right now, but Liza here said that she was real alert and talking when they wheeled her to the O.R. So I guess that she will be alright. Did you find out anything from Randi that could help us?"

"I'm not sure, but it seems that the guys who did this don't have a clue to what's valuable, or they were definitely after something in particular..."

Laney and Koty had gone back to the station at the end of their shift and were walking each other to their cars.

"Hey Laney, you want to go with me to Laces and have a drink? Kasey and Trish are going to meet me there. Jamie has to work tonight or she would be there too."

"I don't know Koty."

"Come on Laney, you had a lot of fun the last time that you went with me, besides, I promise not to let any of them beautiful women hit on you. You can even tell them you are with me." Koty told her with a smile and a playful punch to her arm.

"It's not that and you know it Silvers. Besides, everybody, probably on the whole East Coast knows who you belong to. I was just thinking about going home and taking a very long and very hot bath, but I can do that later. I'll meet you there in a few minutes."

Laney and Koty arrived at the same time, and walked in together to find Kasey and Trish already there at their favorite table. Kasey stood and pulled Koty into a hug and gave her a light kiss on her lips. "Mmm. Hello Detective."

She then hugged Laney and gave her a kiss on the cheek, surprising Koty, and Laney both. Blushing, Laney sat down by a smiling Trish who was grinning at Kasey. They all decided to go a head and have dinner there as well.

"Tina came into the clinic today." Kasey said off handedly, looking at Koty.

Koty's jaw dropped just as all of the insides of her hamburger dropped to her plate, leaving her holding just the two ends of the bun, which caused an up-roar of laughter at their table.

"What the hell was she doing there?"

"Well, it seems that she got an early case of the flu. Chris is the one who treated her, and told me about it later when I asked the same thing. She was looking pretty ill, had a fever of 103."

Scooping the insides of her burger back onto her bun, Koty just shrugged her shoulders then took a bite. They had seen Tina, Koty's ex, a couple of times when they all went out, but she never approached them. She was caught a couple of times watching Koty from a distance, but was smart enough to stay at the other end of the bar, away from Kasey.

Laney looked between Koty and Kasey to watch their expressions. She had only heard a little of Koty's ex, but enough to know that Kasey would flame with jealousy at the mere mention of Tina's name.

Laney laughed out loud trying to picture Kasey's beautiful face having a 'temper tantrum' as Koty had put it. Koty asked her what was so damn funny?

"Nothing." And then she laughed again...

"I rode here with Trish honey, maybe I should ride back with her." Kasey told Koty as she reached for her hand as they walked out of Laces.

"Nonsense Kasey," Trish said, "You go get in the car with your woman and go home."

Koty opened the passenger door of her lavender Jag for Kasey, and then hollered out to Laney. "You are coming for steaks on Saturday aren't you?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'll be there. Go home Koty, I've seen your mug far too much for one day, see you tomorrow."

Chapter Two

Saturday nights 'little dinner' ended up being a small party of about twelve people. The weather turned out to be absolutely wonderful, and Laney sat in a lawn chair with her feet propped up on the porch railing with a glass of wine in her hand.

"Koty, you didn't tell me it was going to be a party, you said a small dinner."

"Yeah well, Kasey gets a little carried away sometimes when she invites people over. Are you disappointed?"

"Not at all, I think it's great, and I am having a really good time. Stop worrying so much Koty, you're friends are a lot of fun."

The party went on well up until two in the morning with Trish telling Laney to leave her car at Koty's, because there was no way she was going to be able to drive.

"Wellll...if Koty wouldn't...'hic-up'...have made me drink that whole bottle of wine, I would be jusst fine. She said laughing and leaning against Jamie for support.

"I'll pick uup my car tomorrow Ko...'hic-up'...Koty." She said patting Koty on the head the way you would a good little puppy.

"Jesus Trish, take this drunk home would you." Koty said and they all laughed, including Laney.

"You had better watch it little mi... I mean big Miss Dakota, I'...'hic-up, "I have friends on the po...lice...department."

"Yeah, yeah. Take her away," Koty laughed...

"That was a great little party sweetheart." Koty told Kasey as she slid up next to her, and pulled her closer for a deep kiss. "Mmm. You taste really, really good Kase. I think that I will have myself a little snack before I go to sleep." A low growl escaped Kasey's throat as she wrapped

herself around Koty's tight muscular body.

"Ooo, is that a promise?"

Something about the burglary at the antique store was plaguing at Laney's mind. Something just didn't fit. The perps had only gotten a measly three hundred dollars from the register, and two ugly porcelain statues valuing at a hundred and seventy five dollars.

That just didn't seem like much considering that they had brought a gun with them and shot a woman in the process. 'They had to have been after something else,' Laney thought to herself. 'Just what in the hell was it that they were after?'

Putting the lid back on her water bottle, Laney told Koty that they needed to swing by the antique shop so that she could talk to Randi Daniels again.

"What's up Laney, you figure something out?"

"No, not really, it's more of a hunch than anything. I want to look at some of the other statues in that case. The two that were stolen are very similar to the one that is still there. Maybe they came from the same place."

"Well, then let's go check it out. You're hunches have been pretty accurate so far."

Randi was just finishing up with a customer when Laney and Koty walked through the door. A small frown creased her lips at the sight of Laney walking up to her.

Randi thought that Laney was one of the most attractive women she had seen in a while, 'well, Laney's partner was pretty hot herself, but they were still cops. And she didn't like cops too much. Not since one had shot and killed her brother just because he was gay, and at the wrong place at the wrong time.

A guy that her brother had been seeing for only about a month had gotten into an argument with a cop after leaving the club they were at, and pulled a gun on him. The cop beat him to the draw and shot him.

Her brother Boyd had no idea that his friend even had a gun to start with, and when the officer fired and Boyd tried to catch his lover before he fell, the officer shot him as well. He had stated on record that he thought that Boyd was going for the dropped pistol, and of course every one including the Norfolk Police Department believed him.'

That was over three years ago and Randi still had a problem with cops because they just acted like they were above the law, and people as well. She had some mixed feelings with this detective though. Laney acted like she was really concerned but then again, so doesn't any other cop at first.

"Hello Detectives, what can I do for you?"

Noticing the slight frown on Randi's face, Laney cautiously approached her, "Hi Miss Daniels, would it be all right if we took a look at some of the other statues in the case?"

Randi didn't say anything at first, just held Laney's eyes for a moment then shook her head and blinked. "Um...yea, let me unlock it for you. Since we were robbed, I keep just about everything around here locked up tighter than a gnat's ass." She walked over to the case, unlocked the door and slid it open.

"Something in particular you're looking for Detective?"

Laney looked Randi in the eyes momentarily; trying to figure out what the problem was that Randi was trying hard not to show.

"Did any of these statues here come with the ones that were stolen?"

"Well, this one here did." She reached in the cabinet for the piece.

"Why?"

Laney reached for the statue and took it out of Randi's hands, their fingers brushing in the process. Laney felt like an electrical jolt went through her fingers almost causing her to drop the statue.

Wide eyed, she just said "sorry." 'I'll think about what that was all about later.' She thought to herself as she rolled the statue over in her hands.

"Hey Koty, come take a look at this. See how on the bottom here in the middle is two different colors?" Koty nodded her head. "Looks like that its fresh or something, in the middle, like it's just been made."

"My thoughts exactly, what do you think about that?"

"Well, I think it's pretty strange considering that this is supposed to be an antique. Shake it Laney."

Laney shook the statue and could feel something sliding around on the inside of it. "There is something in here Koty do you have your pocket knife on you?"

"Yeah, here."

Randi stepped closer. "Hey, you can't just..."

"Miss Daniels, there is something inside of this and, what ever it is, could tell us what those guys

were after."

Laney started digging into the middle with her eyes wide opened because the knife easily went through. Less than two minutes later, Laney pulled a bag full of powder out of it.

Randi's jaw dropped. "Holly shit, what in the hell is that?"

Koty took the bag out of Laney's hands and opened it to smell the contents and dipped her fingernail in the bag then brought it to her mouth to taste it.

"Heroin."

Laney looked over at Randi's startled expression. "Miss Daniels, do you keep records of the things that you get in here?"

"Uh...yeah...I...I keep everything documented in my notebook behind the counter. Jesus, is that what they were after?"

"I would imagine so. Let's take a look at that notebook of yours."

Randi went through the notebook for a minute and pointed at it. "Mrs. Willard brought these to me saying that she was cleaning out her shed again. She goes to a lot of yard sales, and after a while she realizes that she really doesn't have a place for some of the things that she gets, so she brings them to me. You don't think..."

"Does this Mrs. Willard have an address ma'am?" Koty asked while she pulled out a little notebook.

"Yeah, she lives over on Sullivan Ave. This is her address right here."

"What else did she bring you with this batch of stuff besides this piece here, and of course the other two?" Laney asked as she set the statue on the counter.

"Just the two that they got oh and that end table right over there."

"Koty, call the captain and have him send the boy's over here to get this stuff. As soon as they get here, you and I need to go pay a visit to this Mrs. Willard..."

"Hi. Mrs. Willard? I am Detective Jacobs, and this is my partner Detective Silvers." Laney told the older woman, and they flashed their badges. "Can we come in and ask you a couple of questions ma'am?"

"Well...I guess so. What's this got to do with detectives?"

"Actually ma'am it's about some statues that you took to The 'Old Past' Antique Shop."

"Well all right, come on in. Can I get you something to drink?"

"No thank you, and we'll only take a few minutes of your time."

'Jesus, it looks like maybe she should take a few more things over to that store. You can hardly move in here.' Laney thought as she sat down in the chair Mrs. Willard pointed at.

"Mrs. Willard, you took some oriental statues to the Antique Store, and we need to know where they came from. Do you remember which ones I'm talking about? There were three of them all together and also an end table."

"Well, the end table I got from a yard sale a couple of months ago. The statues, I really don't remember where I got them from. I don't even remember picking them up anywhere, but sometimes I forget. My memory isn't what it used to be you know, I'm 75 years old. Could I get you young ladies some tea or something?"

"No thank you ma'am." Koty said with a smile.

"I just remember seeing them in my garage and thought that they were really kind of ugly. I can't imagine myself buying them. Anyway, them being ugly and all I just took them with that old table. Was there something wrong with them?"

Laney held back the smile that almost slipped out. 'Geeze, they were ugly weren't they' ??

"Someone robbed the antique store and took two of the statues; the one that they didn't get had some drugs stashed inside of it. They shot one of the women there and assaulted the other." Laney told her as she propped her elbows on her knees.

"Oh my goodness!" Mrs. Willard said bringing her hand to her heart. "Are those young ladies all right? They are always so nice to me when I go there. Giving me more money than those old things are worth I'm sure. Why would somebody hurt those girls, and how did drugs get inside of them I wonder?"

"Well, that's what we are trying to find out ma'am. If you remember where you might have gotten them from, could you please give me a call?" Laney stood and handed the old woman her business card.

"Why yes, I sure will detective. I wonder if those statues are what my grandson was looking for last week. Oh my, come to think of it, he did ask about some statues."

"Where is your grandson at now Mrs. Willard and what is his name?" Koty asked looking at Laney.

"Well, it's Tommy, Tommy Willard. He doesn't live here he just comes by about twice a month to take my dry cleaning in for me, and to take me to the grocery store. He stays with a friend of

his at the Bottoms Apartments in Norfolk."

"Do you have an address for him Mrs. Willard?"

"No, can't say that I do, but I do have a phone number if that might help you Detective. Let me just go get my purse. Are you sure you young ladies wouldn't want something cold to drink?"

"Quite sure Mrs. Willard, thank you though."

"Koty, I can get Reba at the station to get an address to go with this phone number here, and then we can go check it out." Laney said as the older woman went down the hall to retrieve her purse.

Mrs. Willard had giving them her grandsons phone number, and they left directly after that. Koty smirked. "You could get Reba to do anything that you asked cause she's got the hots for you."

"Stop Silvers." Laney laughed as she slapped Koty's shoulder. "I don't know why you tease me like that."

"I'm not teasing Laney, she does have the hots for you, and she's really cute."

"Just shut up and drive Koty." 'She is kind of cute though. Shit! What am I thinking? Maybe I need a vacation already.'

"By the way, I thought about going to see a movie this weekend. You think that maybe you and Kasey might want to come? I thought about asking Jamie and Trish also."

"Well, I need to check for sure with Kasey, but I can't think of a reason that she wouldn't want to go. What do you plan on seeing?"

"I'm not sure yet, I just thought about it this morning."

"Sounds good to me but like I said, I need to check with the boss lady..."

Chapter Three

The following Tuesday morning found Laney and Koty at the Bottoms Apartments on the south side of Norfolk. Putting the vehicle in park, they sat there momentarily looking at all the trash and broken bottles that littered the parking lot.

"My, what a beautiful place to live," Laney mumbled getting out of the car and shutting the door. "I'm glad we didn't bring your jag Koty. I would seriously have problems leaving it for more than twenty seconds."

"I hear you. Though, I don't think that I would even trust leaving a rust bucket here. Oh well, what do you say we go and knock on Mr. Willard's door, and see if he's at home?"

"Lets."

The hallway that divided the four apartments was even more littered than the parking lot. They had to step over boxes and beer bottles to reach the door to 107.

"Christ, what a pigsty. Well here goes," Koty said as she loudly knocked on the door. "Come on bastard, answer the door." After a moment Koty knocked again. Nothing.

"Come on Laney, let's go find some of my contacts and see if we can dig up anything on Walters. We need to get a search warrant."

The detectives were unable to find out much more than they already knew. Deciding to give up for the day and trying again tomorrow, Koty had told Laney that there were a couple more people she could check with later.

As they went to turn on Virginia Beach Blvd. from Newtown Road, Koty heard a low rumble, and turned to face Laney. Dropping her blue eyes to the detectives stomach, Koty laughed, "Oh boy, the beast is awake."

Laney swatted Koty's arm, but grinned. "I told you, I am so hungry all the time. Before long, they're going to have to widen the station doors so I can fit through them."

Koty snorted, and glanced her way. "Maybe you got worms. Hee hee, I think I'll just start calling you 'Worms' for now on."

"You do that Silvers, and I'll just have to start calling you pussy whipped," Laney grinned.

"I...I am not! I don't believe you just said that."

"Yes you are."

"Am not." Koty laughed as she pulled up to a stop light.

"Well...maybe a little."

"A lot."

"Bite me."

"Let's go to Golden Coral for lunch, you're buying Silvers."

"Man, you are so abusive."

Chapter Four

Laney stepped out of the shower, and pulled the soft robe around her long solid frame. Padding

to the kitchen to get a wine glass, and the bottle of wine from the fridge, she decided that it was time that she started to look for a house. Her apartment was nice, but too small for her taste.

She knew she didn't need anything huge by all means, but she needed an office larger than the spare bedroom here allowed. A fireplace would definitely be nice. Oh yeah, a huge whirlpool bathtub. One that could easily fit her 6' frame.

The detective sat on the thick soft cushions of the long couch, and propped her feet on the coffee table. Reaching for the bottle of wine that was sitting on the end table, she poured herself a full glass.

"Mmm. Oh God that, taste good." Laney leaned back and, turned the TV on the Disney Channel. 'That's So Raven', one of her favorites had just started. Closing her eyes during a commercial suddenly, emerald eyes flashed through her mind.

Her eyes popped open, and the green disappeared. 'Jesus, what is with that?' The detective couldn't figure out why this woman's eyes just kept, seeming to appear at the oddest times.

Three more glasses of wine, then Laney stood, and turned the TV off. She went to the kitchen to put the wine back into the fridge, and shut the light out.

In her bedroom she removed the robe, and tossed it on the foot of the bed then climbed under the cool sheets. Sleep over took her before she had much time to think any more about those green eyes...

Koty and Kasey were snuggled up on the couch watching 'The Seventh Sign', when the phone rang and made them both jump. Kasey reached for the offending object with a nervous laugh and answered. "Hello?"

"Kasey? Are you ok?"

Chris asked as she heard Kasey's voice. "Chris, hi. Um yes I'm ok. We were in the middle of a scary movie, and when the phone rang it scared the shit out of us."

"Ha! Did I make Koty jump? The big sissy. Anyway, Monty and I want to stop by for a minute, we have something to tell the two of you."

"Well ok Chris, is there something wrong?"

"No. Everything is ok, we'll be there in ten minutes so don't go anywhere."

Kasey went to ask another question, but Chris had already hung up the phone, and all Kasey got was the dial tone.

Koty pulled Kasey to her, and kissed her cheek. "Was that my lovely sister-in-law?"

"Yes. She and Monty are on their way over. She said that they have something to tell us, and wouldn't give me a clue as to what it was."

Kasey stood then rubbed Koty's shoulder. "I'm going to get me something to drink Honey; do you want me to fix you a drink?"

"No Baby, just bring me some Dr. Pepper."

Kasey smiled to herself as she walked into the kitchen. Koty hadn't exactly quit drinking, but she now limited it to going out, or if company came over on the weekend. This was quite a feat in itself. The detective was on a downhill slide before she and Kasey got back together and it was devastating to watch when she knew that she was a part of the reason.

"Here you go Hon you may as well stop the movie for now until they get here."

With that said, the doorbell rang, and Kasey walked over to open the door. Chris gave Kasey a kiss on the cheek, and bounced through the door.

'Bouncing? Oh boy.'

Monty hugged Kasey as well then followed his wife into the living room. Koty stood, and hugged Chris. Koty looked at her flushed face, and huge smile. "Geeze Chris, did you swallow a canary or what?" Koty asked as she sat her glass on the table.

"As a matter of fact Aunt Dakota, I did swallow the canary."

"Aunt? What the hell, you have to be...Oh my God." Koty squeaked as she unceremoniously plopped back on the couch.

Kasey screamed then threw her arms around her best friends' neck. "Oh my God Chris, when did you find this out?"

"We just found out for sure about two hours ago."

"And what, you're just now telling us?" Kasey laughed.

"Well, I did have to wait until Monty came home for me to tell him."

"Kasey, go pop the cork on that bottle of 1990 Krug Brut Champagne that you picked up last week. I imagine this is worth it," Koty said when she was finally able to speak again.

Kasey smiled inwardly, as she had just thought about Koty's drinking. 'Well, this is definitely worth it. Oh my God, we're going to be aunts!'

Koty walked over to her twin brother, and hugged him tight with tears in her eyes. "Damn Bro, I am so happy for you guys." Monty hugged his sister back with a hint of tears in his eyes as well.

"Oh man, how did this happen?"

A dark brow lifted into Monty's bangs. "Shit, I know how it happened, I mean...oh never mind"

"Ok folks, champagne time, Kasey said as they all heard a pop from the cork as it hit the ceiling.

Chapter Five

"Hold on would you!" Koty yelled as she wrapped the robe around her naked body, and looked through the peep hole of her door.

"What the...Laney?" Koty pulled open the door.

"What's the matter; it's one in the morning?"

"Evelyn Willard just called me. Her grandson is at her home passed out. Evidently, he came to her busted up pretty bad. She said he wasn't making any sense. I'm going over there now, and thought maybe..."

"Yeah, just let me go get some damn clothes on."

Koty was quietly pulling on a pair of jeans, when she heard Kasey's voice. "Honey, you don't have to be that quiet, I'm awake."

"I'm sorry Baby, go back to sleep. I've got to run with Laney to pick up a suspect from the antique store."

Kasey slid her legs off of the bed and padded to the bathroom. When she came out, she slipped on her robe, and walked out into the living room. "Don't you keep my woman out too long Detective?"

"Kasey, I'm so sorry about waking you guys up."

"No worries Laney, I'm starting to get used to it."

At that moment, Koty came around the corner, up behind Kasey, and wrapped her arms around her. "Ok Baby, go back to bed, and I won't be gone too long."

Kasey turned into her arms, and gave her a light kiss. "Be careful Dakota."

"Mmm. Bye Baby. Come on Jacobs, let's get this over with."

Kasey walked to the kitchen to pour herself a shot of brandy. She knew she would not be able to

go back to bed until Koty walked back through the door. She remembered back last year when they wheeled the detective into the emergency room after Jamie found her in that burning building, and she had been shot.

They were not together then, but Kasey thought that her heart would jump right out of her chest. The stabbing pain that she felt, she would not forget anytime soon.

The doctor sat on the couch and pulled the blanket that was folded and sitting on the back of it over her legs. This is where she would stay until her lover came back through the door...

"Thank you ladies for coming so quickly. I didn't know who else to call, and when I found your card in my wallet well..."

Laney stopped, and turned. "That's ok Mrs. Willard you did the right thing. Now where is your grandson?"

"Follow me he's right in this bedroom here. When he finally passed out, I found this in his windbreaker." The older woman said as she opened her purse and showed Laney a gun.

Both detectives looked into the purse then looked at each other. "Ma'am, if you don't mind, I'm going to need to take this with us," Laney told her as she lifted it out of the woman's purse, and dropped it into a plastic bag.

"Now I want you to go wait in the other room for a minute ok ma'am?"

Koty nudged the young man, and got no response. "He's not going to be answering questions anytime real soon, so let's get an E.M. vehicle to take him over to Beach Generals emergency room, and we can go from there."

Once at the emergency room, Koty called one of the officers that just arrived over to the cubical she was waiting by. "Officer," blue eyes dropped to the name on his badge. "Officer Rossi, I want you to stay parked outside of this room at all times. I want you to be his constant shadow until he is either taken to the station or admitted. When he wakes up, and is able to talk, I want to be informed immediately. This man is a suspect in a case we are on, so I am holding you personally responsible for him. Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes ma'am, do not let him out of my sight."

"Good man, here's my card. Remember, call me."

"I will ma'am."

Koty made her way over to Laney, who was talking to a female officer. Laney came towards her when she noticed that Koty was finished. Koty watched the young officers' eyes as they followed

Laney's backside the whole way.

The officer looked up, and caught Koty's eyes. Koty grinned, and the young woman's face flushed a deep red then dropped her eyes to her feet.

"You know Jacobs; you are leaving a long trail of broken hearts throughout the station. I thought that girl was going to spontaneously combust when she was watching you walk away."

"Oh horseshit Silvers. Why do you keep doing that to me?"

"Why don't you turn around and have a look at her face?"

"No."

Koty just laughed as they walked out of the emergency room to Laney's Toyota 4Runner. "Let's try to get a little sleep tonight. Or should I say this morning. We won't be able to get anything more out of him for several hours at least. He was able to name his roommate though."

When Koty walked through her door, she saw Kasey asleep on the couch. She shook her head, and knelt down beside her. "Hey Baby. Come on, let's get you to bed."

Kasey rose from the couch, and wordlessly hugged the detective. She reached down to take Koty's hand then walked with her to the bedroom.

"Baby, when are you going to start staying in bed when I have to leave like that?"

"The day that you either quit the force or at least stop leaving in the middle of the night."

Koty pulled the doctor to her, and placed a soft kiss to her lips. "Come on, let's get some sleep."

Chapter Six

"Well, the bullet that they removed from Jodi Case, matched the gun that Tommy had in his jacket. We have enough to book him on. Between all the assault charges he has, he'll be in for a while."

Koty handed Laney a file. "Here is his file. He's been in trouble off and on since he was a kid. Nothing real serious, but he was on parole for B&E. Now he has broken his parole, it will be even worse for him. We'll go check on him at the hospital. First though, I think we ought to check out his roommate Billy Crystal that Tommy mentioned, and bring him in for questioning."

"Sounds like a plan. But first, I need java, java, and more java."

"Let's hit Starbucks right down the road. I could use a gigantic Vente Carmel Macchiato, or three, myself." Koty quipped as she reached for her keys. "Let's roll."

They were both finishing their coffees as they sat in Laney's Toyota in the Bottoms Apartments parking lot. Laney dropped her empty cup into the little pink plastic bag she had in between the two front seats.

Koty lifted the bag, and smelled it. It smelt...flowery? A dark brow lifted behind her bangs. "Scented bags? This is what I've been smelling?"

A grin appeared on Laney's face. "They're actually...um... dog poop pick up bags."

"Well eww!!!" Koty snorted, and then dropped the offending bag. "What the hell Laney?"

"Jesus you big ole sissy, it's not like they're used. I found them at this cool little pet shop off of Diamond Springs."

"And, you were at a pet shop why? Looking for a little pet gold fishy or something?"

"Nooo, I went to lunch the other day with Julie from records, and she said she had to pick up her dogs some food while we were out that way. We walked by this isle when the scent caught my attention, and I thought they were cute."

"Dog poop bags, and cute just doesn't go together Jacobs."

"Yeah? Says you."

"Says me...there's our guy," Koty said as she opened the SUV's door. You go in front of him, and I'll come up from behind. We'll catch him right before he enters."

"Excuse me. Billy Crystal?" Laney asked as she walked up to him. His eyes looked her over in appreciation until they stopped on her badge.

As he turned to run, he slammed right in to a brick wall. 'Brick Wall?' He looked up, and right into hard blue eyes that made a small shiver run through his body.

He didn't even try to resist as Laney pulled his arms behind his back, and slapped cuffs on him. She read him his rights as they walked him to the patrol car that had been waiting around the corner.

Slamming the door behind the perp, Laney turned to the two officers. "Take him in. We'll be right behind you."

"Jesus Silvers. I thought the kid was going to piss himself. What did you say to him?"

"I didn't say anything to him, I just looked at him."

Laney chuckled, "you gave him THE look didn't you?"

"What look are you talking about Jacobs? Just what the hell is THE look?"

"Get in the car Koty we have work to do..."

For two long hours they tried to get the kid to talk. He was really scared, that much the two detectives knew.

Billy was not willing to talk. He told them that he had nothing to say to them, he was waiting for his lawyer. Knowing that they wouldn't get anywhere with him tonight, they left the station.

Chapter Seven

"Hey Jacobs, wanna have a drink before we go home?"

"Ya know what? I think I do. I'll meet you at Laces."

Pulling out of the parking lot of the police station Koty hit the send button on her cell phone to call and let Kasey know where she was going.

"Hello?"

"Hey Baby, I'm gonna stop at Laces and have a drink with Laney, so I wanted you to know."

"Yeah, your psychic powers are turned up high today aren't they honey? I bet you knew that Chris was going to come by and ask us to go shopping with her didn't you?"

"Uhm...Oh man Baby, and I really wanted to go with you guys too."

"Cut the crap Dakota, you are sooo full of shit! You had better be thinking of a way to really make it up to me."

"Hee hee" Koty let out a lecherous laugh.

"Un ugh, better think again, I get that for free. You be thinking about it before you come home. Bye bye." Kasey laughed then hung up on Koty.

"Wha...why you little shit." Koty laughed, and then closed her phone...

"I'm going to the little girls' room, and then get us another drink Laney."

"Thanks Silvers."

Laney leaned back in her chair, and watched as a group of women came through the door. Before she knew it, her eyes were locked on to amazing green orbs. On its own accord, a smile came to her lips. 'Jesus, she is beautiful. Well now, fancy seeing her here.'

Randi told her friends that she would be right over, and to save her a seat. Putting her hands on the back of the chair across for Laney, she asked if she could sit down for a moment.

Laney jumped up, and gestured to the seat. "I'm sorry, yes please. How are you Miss Daniels and how is Jodi?"

"We are both fine, thanks for asking Detective any news on the case?"

"Well actually, we have the young man in custody right now as we speak. He gave us another name and we have him in custody as well. He isn't talking right now but it's just a matter of time.

"Wow, that was pretty fast. Who is he?"

"Tommy Willard."

"Tommy? Mrs. Willard's grandson?"

"Yes, do you know him?"

"No, well I know of him from Mrs. Willard talking about him so often. Shit. This is going to kill her."

"Well, if it's any consolation, she is actually the one who called us when he was at her house."

"No shit?"

"No shit." Laney smiled. 'She has a beautiful smile.' Laney thought.

'She has a beautiful smile' thought Randi. "Hey listen, I gotta go but that's really great news. Will you keep me posted?"

"Absolutely Miss Daniels."

"It's Randi please."

"Ok, absolutely Randi."

They both held each others gaze a moment before Randi slowly turned and walked away. Koty followed Laney's eyes as she watched Randi's soft swaying hips as she walked away. 'Well now, that's interesting.'

"I thought she looked kind of familiar. Cute as shit too don't you think?" Koty turned and looked

at Laney to judge her reaction. Very surprised to see the deep blush set in her cheeks. When Laney didn't respond, Koty chuckled. "I take that blush as a yes."

"Silvers..."

"Look Laney, look who it is asking you this question. No judgments ok?"

"You ready to go?" Laney asked as she took a long sip of the drink that Koty sat before her.

"Yeah."

As they walked out to the parking lot, Koty put her arm around Laney's shoulder. "Laney, I'm very serious here, if you ever want to talk...or...you just have questions or something, you know I'm here right?"

Koty was a little surprised when Laney pulled her into a tight hug, and just as quickly released her. "Thanks Silvers." Then Laney left. 'Geeze, woman.' Koty smirked.

Chapter Eight

?Laney's thoughts were on Randi Daniels, and for the life of her she couldn't figure out why she felt attracted to her. 'Yes, I know I'm attracted to her. I can deny it to everyone else but I can't deny it to myself.'

Pouring some Calgon bath beads in the tub of hot water, Laney stripped her clothes to take a long hot bubble bath. "Oh man this feels good! The only thing that might make it better would be a larger bath tub." Fitting a 5'10" frame in a standard tub made it hard to get but so comfortable.

After checking out several different areas, and neighborhoods she had located a house she was interested in buying in the Thoroughgood section of Virginia Beach. She had an appointment on Saturday to see it.

"Yeah, the first thing I'll do is install a huge bathtub. A huge bathtub with whirlpool jets, a huge bathtub big enough to fit two with whirlpool jets. Oh yeah." She spoke aloud as she submersed herself up to her ears in hot water and bubbles.

She liked the apartment that she was in now, but she needed a house. She was use to having much more room than she had now. She didn't need as much room as the house she and her ex-husband Richard had, that was what he wanted, but she did need larger than an apartment.

Laney couldn't believe that she had stayed with Richard for as long as she did. Oh well, she was rid of the lying, sneaking, cheating, money grubbing little bastard now, and his little 23 year old girlfriend would eventually find herself in the same situation as soon as another little cutie came along...

Laney slowly opened her eyes to see deep green ones just inches above her. She caught her breath as Randi lowered her head and so very lightly placed a feather light kiss on her lips. A gasp, as a thigh slipped between her legs. Deepening the kiss, Randi's hands and lips were everywhere at once. As Laney felt herself ready to explode, she suddenly bolted upright.

"Oh dear God!" Laney panted as she realized that it was just a dream, and that she had fallen asleep in the bathtub. She was so turned on by the dream she immediately pulled the plug on the bath water then stood to turn on the cold water for a shower. 'God that felt so real. Maybe I ought to talk to Koty...'

Laney donned a ratty old Melissa Etheridge t-shirt and boxers, then poured herself a shot of Southern Comfort, and curled up on the couch contemplating rather she should call Koty or not. Then she laughed. "Jesus Jacobs, get a grip. You're 38 years old; you can handle this by yourself. You are not a teenager anymore. 'Yeah? Then how come I feel like a teenager with a crush?'

Laney went around shutting off the lights in the apartment. She had poured herself one more shot, hoping that it would help her fall asleep without a repeat of the dream she had in the bathtub. 'I really don't feel like taking another cold shower.'

Chapter Nine

Randi Daniels slapped at the offending noise that came from her alarm clock. "Ugh. I so hate mornings." One green eye opened to check the time. 8:00 am. At that same time, her phone rang as well. "Hello?"

"Morning sunshine, get that cute little ass of yours out of bed and have breakfast with me."

"You are obviously feeling better, and I HATE to be called sunshine."

"Well I know that, why do you think I call you that. And, yes I am feeling better. Please say you'll have breakfast with me, I'll buy..."

"Oh what a sweet talker you are Jodi can I at least have enough time to take a shower?"

"You better jump in now because I'm on my way." With that, Jodi hung up on her.

"Shit, why do I put up with her again?" 'Because she is your best friend and you love her. Besides, she puts up with my shit as well. Well...what are best friends for?'

They were sitting at their favorite table in IHOP when Randi said, "Your color has come back Jodi, but are you sure you should be out gallivanting around town?"

"Yes Mom, I'm fine. Really Rand, I know it's going to take awhile to fully heal so I promise not to push it too far ok?"

"Ok, I'm sorry; I just worry about you that's all."

"I know. Now, enough about me, what about those two detectives on this case. Man, talk about powerhouses. And...they are gorgeous to boot. I don't know about you, but they can protect me any day."

"Yeah, their ok."

"Ok? Come on Rand, they are more than ok! I know for a fact that both of them are your type."

"Yeah, but they are also cops Jodi."

"Hon, not all cops are like the asshole that shot Boyd and you know it. Those two seemed genuine to me."

"I know you're right. Besides, Detective Jacobs is pretty nice. I actually saw them at Laces the other night, can you believe that? I almost died when I walked through the door and saw her sitting at a table. I spoke with her briefly, and she told me that she had Tommy Willard and another guy in custody."

"Tommy? Old Mrs. Willard's grandson?"

"Yep, that's the one. Laney told me that it was Mrs. Willard that called them about Tommy."

"Laney?"

"Um...yeah... Detective Jacobs."

"Well well now. Ain't that something? She blushed when she said her name and I'd bet a thousand bucks she doesn't even know it. Huh, what do ya know?"

"So they pretty much have it solved?"

"Well, they have the guys who did it so our part is over, but I got the feeling it went deeper than that but I'm not for sure. Lan...Detective Jacobs said she would keep us up to date on what's happening."

"Well that's the best news I've had all week. That's great... Oh, and um...speaking of the dynamic duo, look who just walked in the door."

Koty noticed the two women first and walked over to them. "Good morning ladies. Miss Case, how are you feeling, you sure look a lot better than the last time that I saw you."

"Thank you, I think." Jodi laughed. "Actually I am much better, thank you for asking. We were just discussing the case, funny you two walked in when you did."

"Yes well, we do have them both in custody now. There will be a trial date and the two of you will be notified as to when. It will be pretty much cut and dry as far as the robbery goes. It shouldn't take long for the jury to make their decision. Willard has already pleaded guilty to the shooting."

??The whole time Koty was talking to Jodi, Laney was watching Randi then averting her gaze before getting caught. Too late. Green caught blue and time stood still as Laney felt her heart beat increase. 'Oh shit.'

A sweet smile came to Randi's lips when she saw the deep blush on the detective's cheeks. 'Huh, pink looks really good on her.' She was drawn out of her musings when she heard her name being called. "I'm sorry, what was that?"

"The detective told us to have a nice day Rand, now say thank you." Jodi told her and laughed. Now it was Randi's turn to blush.

"Thank you Detective, you have a nice day as well."

As Koty and Laney walked away, Randi elbowed Jodi in the arm. Jodi burst out laughing. "Oh man Randi, what was that all about? You should see how red your face is. Don't feel so bad though, hers was just as bad..."

"It's good to see the Case girl doing good she looks real good too." Koty replied as they waited for the waitress to bring their coffee. "Do you think they're together?"

Laney stared at Koty for a moment. "Um...I don't know, I guess they could be." 'I wonder if they are?' For some reason, this thought made Laney uncomfortable. "Why do you ask that question Silvers?"

"No reason, I guess I'm just nosy that's all. Well...actually I don't think they are together. I think you were being check out."

"Checked out? What do you mean by checked out, like checked out checked out?"

"Yup, checked out."

"And which one do you think was doing this checking out Silvers?"

"Woman, I know you're not that blind and, I know you know it was the blonde. She's very sexy." Koty laughed at Laney's deep blush.

"Alright Laney, I won't tease you anymore, but when you decide to talk about it you know I'm here. Right?"

"You're killing me Silvers. Yeah, alright already, someday I'll talk."

'Well that's not admitting anything but it's probably the closest I'll get for now' Koty thought to herself.

"Good enough for me, I can wait."

Chapter Ten

Kasey surprised Koty and Laney by asking Laney if she wanted company to go check out the house in Thoroughgood. Laney surprised herself even more by saying yes. A person just could not help but to like this beautiful woman that owned Koty's heart. There wasn't a single reason Laney could think of, not to like this woman. Koty just stood back and grinned...

"Oh my Laney, this is wonderful. Look at that view of the lake right off of the deck. Can't you just imagine the sunsets you're going to be able to see here?"

Laney smiled. "God, I bet they are beautiful too. So you really like it?"

Kasey laughed. "Well, what's not to like about it Laney, but it's you that has to like it."

"Oh...I like it alright. I think this is the one. Yep it is the one, I want it."

"You sure you don't want to look at some other houses? Maybe you'll find something even nicer."

"No Kasey, this is it. I felt it when we first walked in here, and I'm not going to give anyone else the chance to snatch it up from underneath me. There's something about it, and it has a really huge bathtub in the master bedroom, a bathtub with whirlpool jets." 'Oh yeah.' "Yeah, I want this one. I'm going to talk to the real estate agent. She should be done with her call by now."

Kasey laughed then walked out on the deck, and leaned over the deck railing. A light breeze was blowing and Kasey caught the light scent of vanilla and licorice. Curious, she followed the scent that took her to some lilies that were planted off the side of the deck. "Oh my, I have to have me some of them."

"Have you some of what?" Laney asked as she and the real estate agent came up behind her.

"Some of these lilies. If you get this place, I am for sure going to get me some cuttings from these. They smell wonderful."

Jean Dawson, the Realtor sided up close to Kasey to lean over her shoulder to smell them. Too close as far as Kasey was concerned, and Laney picked up on her uneasiness. Reaching for Kasey's hand, Laney pulled her up next to her side. Kasey flashed a smile of thanks.

Jean was getting ready to say something to Kasey, but changed her mind when she saw the protective look in Laney's eyes. "Well Laney, if you're sure this is it, why don't you come by the office on Monday, and we can get all of the papers drawn up. What do you say?"

"Sounds pretty good to me, how about around 9:00? I have that day off so really anytime will be fine."

"Actually, nine will be perfect. I have a few things I have to do the first thing, but I should be there around 8:00 or 8:30. How about you Kasey, will you be there too?"

'Man, is this woman dense or what?' "No, Kasey won't be there with me. Her wife was very generous to let her come out and play with me today. It's just because she is my partner that she let her go today."

"Oh...um I see, you must be that beautiful Amazon Koty's partner. Well, that settles that then doesn't it?" 'I know damn well I'm not going there.'

All three women laughed at that as they locked up the house and shook hands before going their separate ways. "Thank you for that back there, she was starting to make me real uncomfortable."

"I could tell, and no problem. Besides, Dakota would whip my ass if I let something like that happen. I need to stay on her good side; I'm going to need her to help me move."

"Ah motivation. Good thinking on your part but thank you anyway."

"Like I said no problem. Actually, if you really want to pay me back, you can help me go shopping for my new place. I was going to ask Trish, but maybe you would like to come as well. I absolutely HATE shopping, and between the two of you, I could get it over with almost painlessly."

"Ah like I said, motivation. I would love to help. Between Trish and myself we could get it done in a respectful amount of time. I have to warn you though I really love spending other peoples money."

"I consider myself warned. Now let's go find your women and give her the great news about the house, and her being elected to help me move. Then I will tell her that she can buy us lunch."

Kasey smiled, "Sounds good to me."

Chapter Eleven

"What do you mean you will let me buy you lunch? You steal my wife so I have to fend for myself for breakfast, and now I can buy YOU lunch? Geeze Jacobs, that is so damn nice of you to allow me to do this. And where should I take you two?" Koty asked as she kissed Kasey's cheek.

"Wellllll... How about the Cheesecake Factory? I think that would suffice. What do you think Kasey, wanna let her take us there?"

Koty laughed. "And what's in it for me?"

"Well that, my dear partner, you will have to take up with Kasey here."

Kasey grinned up at Koty and reached for her hand. "What do you say love, worth something to you?"

Koty rested her hand on her chin as if in deep thought. "Well, to quote someone that is very dear to me I get that for free, so you better come up with something else."

"Oh, I'm sure that I can."

'Oh I'm sure you can...'

The Cheesecake Factory was pretty busy with the near by shoppers from Pembroke Mall across the street. If one hadn't been to the corner of Virginia Beach Blvd and Independence Blvd in awhile, they would never recognize it.

What used to be just a Taco Bell and Virginia Pilot now had two high rise buildings with several new restaurants and shops. A huge above ground parking lot and brand new condos.

The Taco Bell and Virginia Pilot was still there, but seemed rather minute with the huge concrete jungle behind them. That's ok though, because Koty would never totally give up Taco Bell. She loved it as a kid, and still does.

"I'm glad we got here when we did. By the way Koty, Kasey is going to help me shop. Wanna come?"

"Not on your life Jacobs, you're on your own with that. I hate shopping with a passion, that's why I'm glad that she and Trish hooked up. Totally lets me off the hook. Well...most of the time anyway."

"Yeah, I'm going to enlist Trish as well if I can."

"Hah, I'll warn you now then, you better bring a really really big charge card then. These two love, and I stress, love to spend other people's money."

"Funny, that's what Kasey told me. Oh boy, this should be interesting."

Kasey laughed outright. "We're not that bad Dakota, only with yours and Jamie's money, are we that bad. Besides, who would do your shopping if I didn't?" She turned to Laney, "She use to

have Trish and Chris do most of her shopping."

"Damn Silvers, you are worse than me. I at least can shop when I have to."

"Bite me."

The waiter came to take their orders. Koty ordered the Kobe Burger for herself and the Chicken and Biscuits for Kasey. She turned to Laney for her order. "Laney, what are you going to have?"

"I think I'll have the Shepherds Pie with an unsweetened ice tea."

Koty drew a face. "You know, that pie would be a whole lot better if they didn't put all of those carrots, peas, and zucchini in it. A whole lot better."

"Well honey," Kasey laughed. Then it would just be called a beef and mushroom pie, now that doesn't sound very fun."

"Fun? Since when is food suppose to be fun? Oh, I know when..."

"Be nice Dakota." Kasey blushed.

"Yeah Dakota, I am sitting here too you know. Don't be talking that kind of smack with me here."

Koty grinned and threw a wadded up napkin at Laney. "Ya'll just have trashy minds, keep it clean cause we're in a family restaurant ladies."

Laney laughed, "Ha, me keep it clean..."

"Alright children," Kasey laughed and covered her face. Time to change the subject. "Honey, you ought to see the house, it's beautiful. She will be able to watch sunsets over the lake right on her deck."

Laney laughed again. "Oh yeah, by the way Silvers, you've been elected to help me move."

"Oh man," Koty moaned...

They waited until the server delivered their food and was walking away when Kasey remembered that Jamie told her to invite Laney to her and Trish's party the following week.

"Yeah, that's cool then I can rustle up more strong bodied women to help me move."

"You have no shame Jacobs. Absolutely no shame."

Laney grinned, "Never said I did..."

Chapter Twelve

Laney was early to arrive at Jamie and Trish's. She wanted to ask Trish about the shopping that Kasey had agreed to help her with.

"Oh boy Laney, you don't know what you've just gotten yourself into my friend," Jamie laughed as she finished emptying three bags of ice into the cooler that they put on the back porch.

"Yeah, Koty already warned me."

"I warned you about what?" Laney heard Koty walk up behind her.

"About how Trish and Kasey, like spending other people's money. I consider myself warned."

Koty and Jamie just laughed. Neither one of them liked shopping and was glad that Trish and Kasey had each other to shop with...

The party was in full swing when Koty sat next to Laney and pointed to the front door. "Looks like a friend of yours just came through the door. That is Randi Daniels isn't it?"

Laney looked towards the door and caught her breath. 'Oh man, what is she doing here? God she looks good tonight.' At that moment, Randi turned and caught her eyes. Randi smiled, and Laney blushed then dropped her eyes.

Koty stood back up and laughed, then patted Laney on the back. "Oh boy, this party is going to be fun now."

"Shut up Silvers..."

Randi grabbed another beer from the cooler, and told her friends that she was going to mingle for awhile. She had been just a little shocked when she walked in and saw the detective sitting on the love seat. She had just agreed to come to the party with a friend of hers that knew Trish.

She stopped right in front of Laney, "is this seat taken?" she asked then sat down not waiting for an answer.

"Oh, umm...no. How are you going Miss Daniels?"

"I really wish you would quit with the Miss thing. I'm only 30."

"Sorry Randi. It's just habit I guess."

Randi smiled. "So, do you know Trish and Jamie?"

"Yes, Jamie is my Partner Koty's best friend. They grew up together. How about you, do you know them?"

"No, actually Rita, the friend that I came with knows Trish real well from the book store that Trish owns, and she asked me if I would like to come with her. I almost told her no but now I'm glad that I didn't. It's good to see you again."

Laney blushed again, and Randi thought that it was the sweetest thing that she has ever seen. "So...I know that Detective Silvers is your partner, but is she also your partner?"

Laney was confused for a moment before she caught what Randi was saying. She blushed again. "Um...no. The woman beside her now is her partner."

Randi followed Laney's eyes and saw where Koty was leaning against a very nice looking woman. "Wow, they make a striking couple."

"Yeah, they do don't they?" Laney replied. Laney couldn't believe the next thing that came out of her mouth. As if on a will of it's own she asked, "So, is Rita your girlfriend?"

Randi laughed. "Rita? No she is a good friend of mine, at the moment I have no girlfriend."

For some reason, this made Laney smile. 'Shit, what do I care? It's not like I'm interested or anything. Christ Laney, what is going on with you?'

"Would you like another beer?" Laney asked as she quickly stood.

"Yes, that would be great, thanks."

Randi watched as Laney walked away. 'Jesus, those legs go on for ever, and that butt...oh my.'

"Who's your girlfriend?" Randi looked at up at Rita from where she sat. "Not my girlfriend, but she's nice looking though huh?"

"I'll say, so who is she?"

"Her, and the tall brunette by the entertainment center are the detectives working the case for the antique shop."

"Their partners?"

"Ayup."

"Damn, I bet between the two of them, they could be a hell of a force to mess with."

"Yeah especially her partner. Now she can be intimidating as hell."

Rita had to agree with her friend. Though she thought that both women, as good looking as they were, could both be rather intimidating if they so chose to do so. Well...even if they didn't choose to. She would hate being on their bad side.

Just then, Laney walked up with Randi's beer, and handed it to her. Rita jump up and told Laney to sit back down, "Oh no...you can sit there."

"No, please sit back down." She extended her hand to Laney. "Hi, I'm Rita Lang, Randi's friend."

Laney hesitantly reached for the woman's hand. "Hi. Laney Jacobs, nice to meet you."

"Hi Laney please, sit down. I was just checking on my friend here because I didn't think that she knew anyone here, but it looks like I don't have to worry about that at all. I guess I'll go mingle now." Rita turned to Randi. "I'll catch up with you in a little while." Then she was gone.

Laney sat down. "She seems really ni..."

"Have lunch with me tomorrow?" Randi blurted out.

"Excuse me?"

'Shit' "Um, I asked if you would have lunch with me tomorrow."

"Randi, I...um...I'm not gay."

'Really?' "So, does that mean you can't have lunch with a woman, or just a gay woman? Or maybe just not with me?"

"Christ. Look I'm sorry, I didn't mean for it to sound that way. I was just caught off guard."

"So, is that a yes?"

"Um...what did you have in mind?"

"I don't know, maybe The Olive Garden or something? We could meet there. Or if there is somewhere else that you would prefer."

"No...The Olive Garden is fine, what time?"

"Let's say around 12:00 or 12:30. Would that be ok?"

"Ok, that would be good. I could meet you there."

"Great! Now I'm going to mingle a little. Enjoy the party Laney."

"Yeah, you too Randi..."

Chapter Thirteen

Laney couldn't for the life of her figure out why she agreed to go to lunch with the young blonde. What was she thinking? Obviously, she wasn't thinking, that was the problem. 'What do I care? Jesus, you would think I was going on a date or something.

'It's not a date Jacobs, its lunch. Yeah, just lunch. Lunch between a straight woman and a lesbian. Just a lunch between two women, that's all...

Laney watched Randi throughout the evening, and vice versa. Periodically they would lock gazes with Laney looking away first. Koty of course watched both women with a smile on her face.

"Honey," Kasey said as she sided up next to Koty, "what has you smiling so much?"

"Well, you of course." Koty whispered as she leaned down to place a soft kiss on the doctor's lips.

"Mmm, nice try Baby, but try again."

"I've been watching Laney and Randi. They can't keep their eyes off of each other."

"Honey, Laney isn't gay. Well...is she?" Kasey asked as she slipped her arm around Koty's waist.

"Well, if you would have asked me a month ago I would have told you no. I'm not quite sure now. I don't think Laney is even aware of it yet. Though, I think she might be getting the hint now. I don't think I've seen her blush so much in the whole time I've known her."

"Isn't Randi the girl from the antique store?"

"Yep, that's her."

"She is cute."

Koty grinned. "Just cute?"

"No, actually she is very very cute, and you can just keep your eyes turned this way woman," Kasey pinched Koty on her belly.

"Hey, what was that for? I didn't do anything wrong," Koty laughed.

"Yeah, well that's for just in case you ever think about it."

"No way Baby, I fought too damn hard to get you, I don't have any plans to lose you now."

"Smart woman, let's go out back and see what's going on. Jamie set things up for a make shift dance floor, and I feel like a dance or two. How about you?"

"That sounds good. You want me to grab you a coke or a water?"

"Yeah, get me a water. I'll meet you out back ok?" Kasey leaned into give Koty a soft kiss before she walked away.

When Koty made it to the back yard, Kasey was up dancing with Trish. She walked over to where Laney was sitting in a lawn chair by the picnic table. Koty pulled a chair next to her and sat Kasey's water on the table.

"Hey," she said to Laney as she sat down, "having a good time?"

"I always have a good time at these party's. Jamie and Trish throw great parties. How about you?"

"Oh yeah. Jamie is always coming up with a reason to throw a party. Two years ago, she threw one to celebrate them redoing their bathroom. Two months after that, she threw one to celebrate cleaning out her garage to where you could actually find tools and such."

Laney laughed. "Well, whatever works right?"

"Absolutely. So...how is Randi doing?"

Laney just looked at Koty wondering if she would dare tell Koty about her lunch date tomorrow. 'It's not a date. Yeah, well whatever.'

I told her that I would meet her at the Olive Garden."?"She asked me out to lunch tomorrow." 'So much for not saying anything.'

"Really? Well that's great. How did that come about?"

"She just blurted it out from nowhere, kind of shocked me actually."

"Laney, why would it shock you? Is it because someone thinks you're attractive, or is it because she is a woman? Is this a date or just lunch?"

Laney blew out a deep breath then finished off the rest of the wine that was in her glass. "I don't know really. I keep catching her eyes and it's like she is seeing right through me or something. Sounds crazy huh?"

"No, it doesn't sound crazy at all. Are you attracted to her?" Koty cautiously asked.

"Shit Koty, what the hell, I feel like a fucking teenager or something. I don't know how I feel. Surely I'm not attracted to her. I can't be can I? Christ."

"Wanna talk about it?"

Laney blinked, and so softly that Koty almost didn't hear her, "yes, but not tonight ok?"

"Absolutely. Tell you what, I'm going to ask my lovely wife to dance, and you decide what you are going to say to Randi, because here she comes." Koty stood and walk towards Kasey on the deck.

Randi sat down in the seat that Koty had just vacated and smiled at Laney. "Hi, you wanna dance?"

"Um...thanks for asking, but I am getting really tired and I think I'm just going to call it a night." Laney stood, and Randi quickly stood as well. "Hey Laney, are we still on for tomorrow?"

"Yeah, we're still on for tomorrow, I'll see you then ok?"

"Sure, I'm looking forward to it."

Randi watched as Laney said her goodbyes and walked through the back door. 'God, that woman is so way out of my league I know, but I can't seem to help myself. She makes me smile.'

Randi tried to think back to the last time someone made her pulse quicken like Laney did. She really couldn't come up with anything. Maybe the closest she could come was Candice back in her second year at Old Dominion University.

They had dated for nearly a year, and right as Randi was getting ready to confess her feelings, Candice told her that she had met somebody else, and hoped that they could still be friends. That friendship lasted just long enough for Randi to see them together, and she hasn't spoken to her since.

She has had several relationships since then, but nothing solid. Nothing that made her heart rate pick up like the mere sight of the tall detective. A straight detective. A beautiful straight detective. 'Damn'

Chapter Fourteen

Randi showed up at the Olive Garden twenty minutes early. She tried to delay enough to where she would show up on time or at least the same time as Laney. She was too excited, nervous, and couldn't help herself from nearly running out the door, and breaking the speed limit to get there.

Boyd would have really like Laney, Randi had thought. She was still so saddened by the fact that her brother would never be able to meet her, or anyone for that fact. He had always gone for the bad boy types, but she was sure that he never bargained for the one he was with when the shooting happened.

She will never forget the day that she got the news. She had never felt so alone, so vulnerable, and so afraid at the same time. So much pain. So much hatred for the cop that shot him, and so much hatred for the man who had put her only sibling, and the last of her family in the position to lose his life.

Her mother had died much too young. She had worked never less than two jobs at a time to keep Randi and her younger brother clothed, schooled, and properly taken care of. They never had a lot, but they did ok.

Her mother had just gotten a promotion at her new job, and things were finally starting to look up for the small family. Then one day she collapsed at work. Taken to the hospital, she was diagnosed with Renal Cell Carcinoma. Kidney cancer. Hypemephroma. Adenocarcinoma. Shit, words that Randi could hardly pronounce. Bottom line, fucking cancer. Fucking bad cancer.

Her mother had complained for nearly a year about her back hurting, but her regular PC kept telling her she was having kidney infections and kept prescribing antibiotics. Doesn't that just bite the big one? Would they have found it in time if the doctor would have just went a little further with his prognosis? Well, we would never know now, would we?

Renal Cell Carcinoma affects roughly about 3 in 10,000 people a year, killing around 12,000 people in the United States. That many people, and it happened to pick her mother.

By the time that they had diagnosed her mother, the cancer had already attack both kidneys, her lungs, and most of the other organs in her body including her brain. Three short months later, her mother passed at the young age of 38. Much younger than the common ages for the cancer of between 50 and 70 years old.

Funny, a good friend of hers, mother was also diagnosed with the same cancer, but they had found hers in the early stages, accidentally while testing her for other problems, and once they removed her right kidney she was rided of the ugly disease and is healthy to this day.

Her mothers passing had left 18 year old Randi, to raise her 16 year old brother by herself. Their Father had been out of the picture since three months before Boyd was born, and nobody had seen or heard from him since. Nothing was known about any of his family.

Randi had to drop out of collage where she had gotten a full scholarship to take a fulltime job at a tiny antique shop in Norfolk during the day, and a part time job bussing tables at a popular club by ODU.

Boyd had wanted to drop out of school to get a fulltime job to help his sister pay bills but Randi refused telling him that their mother would roll in her grave if she allowed that to happen.

Boyd had settled on a part time job after school at an ice cream shop working with a friend of his from school. His friend Marty had a car, so he would take him to and from work.

Randi had always tried to give Marty gas money for driving Boyd to work but Marty always

refused to take it. Marty had secretly harbored a crush on Randi.

Marty had been the first person to show at her door when the news of Boyd's death was released. He had always been Boyd's best friend. Even when Boyd had told him he was gay, Marty never batted an eye and told him he didn't care. He would always be his best friend.

Still to this day, Marty shows up now and then at the antique shop to check on Randi to see how she is holding up. He had shown up on her door step when he had heard the news of the robbery at Randi's Shop.

Randi was brought out of her thoughts as she felt more than seen, someone behind her. She stood quickly, "Hi Laney." "Wow, she looks wonderful, and she's punctual too. 12:00 o'clock on the dot."

"Hi yourself, are you ok?"

"Yeah. Yeah, just thinking about things. Please, have a seat, I've only been here a few moments myself," Randi lied...

Laney sat in awe at the amount of food the younger woman consumed. "Would you like to order more? I don't want you to leave hungry." She joked.

Randi laughed out loud. "No, but when I'm done I will order desert." She eyed the remaining shrimp on Laney's plate. "You gonna eat that?"

Laney just smiled. "Um, help yourself."

'She has the most beautiful smile. 'Randi thought as she stabbed her fork into the two helpless shrimp left on Laney's plate.

"You know, if I ate that much I would have to do a whole lot more exercising than I already do. Is this the normal for you?"

"Well...no, I normally have more. I don't want to make a pig of myself on our first date." Randi realized what she had just said. "I'm sorry; I didn't really mean it like that. I mean...I know it's not a date, I..."

"No worries, I know what you meant." Laney smiled to herself at the slight blush on the blonde's face.

"It's just that I have a very fast metabolism, and if I don't keep the animal fed, I tend to get really lightheaded. Besides, eating is one of my favorite hobbies."

Laney took the opportunity to look at Randi's body. "You must really work out a lot then because

you can't tell by your trim waist."

"Well thank you for the compliment but no, I really don't work out that much. I do a little kick boxing now and then, and even though I own a Stairmaster, I hardly use it..."

Lunch was going exceptionally well, surprising Laney at how relaxed she felt in the younger woman's company. They had spoken of their jobs, their friends, and briefly about the case. As much as Laney could disclose anyway.

"Wow, it's already 2:00 o'clock," Laney said as she looked at her watch.

"Oh, I'm sorry that I keep you so long, we can leave if you want."

Laney blinked. "What? Oh, no. That's not what I meant. I am really having a good time. I was just surprised at how long we had been talking is all. I'm sorry though, I do need to be leaving, I'm meeting a man from the moving company in an hour."

"Moving company? Are you moving somewhere?" Randi asked almost panic-stricken. "Christ, don't sound so panicky."

Laney laughed. "Just from the apartment that I am living in at the time. I haven't been here long so I was just staying in an apartment. I just recently bought a house in Thoroughgood."

"Oh yeah? That's about ten minutes from where I live, do you need any help? Jodi and I may look small, but we are compact and strong."

Laney took that moment to once again, look the younger woman over. "Yes you are aren't you?" A powerful blush rose from her neck to above her eyebrows. 'Shit, did I just say that out loud?'

Randi laughed, causing the blush to deepen. "Yes well...seriously, here is my card, and it has my cell phone number on it. "I am offering my services, no strings attached. Well, except maybe having dinner with me sometime in the near future."

Laney smiled as she reached across the table for Randi's card. "Ok Randi, but don't back out when I call you." Laney stood, winked, and then she was gone.

"Oh, no chance of that Detective Jacobs," Randi said to Laney's retreating, wonderful backside. She knew Laney couldn't hear her, and smiled as she blew out a breath she didn't even realize she was holding. She called the waiter over and asked for the check.

'Oh yeah, I could really be in trouble here. That woman just doesn't know what she does to me. I don't think she knows just how beautiful she is. Yep, she is so way out of my league...'

Laney had just left Sears after going over the details for them to deliver her new appliances. She rubbed her thumb across the card in her hand as she drove home. 'God, I can't believe how much that woman makes me smile.'

Laney knew enough about attraction to know that she was attracted to Randi. What was not attractive about her? Warm personality, beautiful smile, and those eyes...a person could drown in those sea green eyes.

Laney didn't think she had ever seen that color of green before, in a persons eyes. Crayon colors, paint maybe...but never an eye color. 'God, what am I thinking? She is soo way out of my league...'

Laney pulled into her parking spot and slowly got out of her SUV. Shutting and locking her apartment door, she started to strip right there and walked into her bathroom for a long hot shower.

With just a towel around her hair, and one around her body, she stretched her long muscled body across the king size bed. Closing her eyes with a smile, the last thing she saw was sea green eyes looking deep into her soul.

Chapter Fifteen

A soft hand slid up her thigh and rested just below the edge of her underwear, causing goose bumps to appear. A soft moan. The smaller woman pulled herself up and over onto her, then slipped a knee between her thighs.

Sea green eyes appeared just inches above her face as soft lips came to claim hers in a heated need. She reached her arms around the smaller woman and pulled her into her body as close as she could get her. The knee between her thighs pressed harder causing her to buck and gasp...

Laney's body bolted straight up, and almost off of the bed. "Jesus Christ!" Laney looked around, she was alone. A dream. A fucking incredible dream. The second dream that she had of those amazing green eyes.

Laney rose from the bed and went to put a pot of coffee on. Her alarm would be going off in thirty minutes anyway. Flipping the switch to turn on the machine, she turned to go take another shower. Another cold shower. She seemed to be taking a lot of them lately.

Why was she all of a sudden having erotic dreams of a woman? Well, not just any woman, but Randi Daniels. "Maybe I need to watch a comedy or something before going to bed instead off thinking about her eyes," Laney grumbled out loud.

She turned off the shower, and pulled the towel from the holder for her thick tresses. Wrapping the other towel around her body, she placed her hands on the sinks edge then peered into the mirror.

At 36 years old she was still the picture of beauty. Yeah, she had some crows feet, and a few more lines had been added on her face but she still had it. The beauty of her youth, only more mature.

She had never paid much mind to her looks, thinking that she was pretty average. Many people had told her that she was beautiful before but, people will say just about anything when you are rich hoping to one day cash in...

Laney reached for her keys hanging on the wall by the door then headed out to work. Today was the day for her and Koty to go through the mounds of paper work that was piling on their desks...

"Morning Jimmy," she said to the older man as she passed the front desk.

"Good morning to you too young lady, ready for a new day?"

"Ha, no way. Today is paperwork day."

Jimmy smiled. "My condolences then to you Miss Randi. Try to have a nice day anyway." He watched as the detective walked to the end of the hall and turned left. He always had a smile for her and Koty because they always had a smile for him...

Koty looked up as a Vente size coffee from Starbucks was placed on the desk by her phone. "You're here early Jacobs and thanks, I was just thinking about getting a cup from the break room, but I'm not feeling very suicidal right now. So just think, you could have just possibly saved my life."

"I hear you. I think they let it sit until the next day. Looks so damn thick, like you could stand a spoon up in your cup. Anyway, I guess it's time to climb under the paperwork, if you don't hear me for awhile, send in rescue..."

About an hour into her work, the hair on the back of Laney's neck stood up as she heard a familiar voice.

"Damn it, I said back away fellow, she will talk to me just tell her I'm here!"

Laney looked over at Koty. "Shit, its Richard."

"You don't have to talk to him Laney; the guys will get rid of him if you like."

"No, maybe I better talk..."

"Laney!" A very handsome and well built man leaned over her desk and into her face. "I want to talk to you. Come outside with me now."

Laney never batted an eye, and just leaned back and sighed. "What do you want Richard? I'm at work and you should be too, I don't have time for this."

Richard grabbed for Laney's arm but froze when a steel like grip on his shoulder stopped him.

"Back off buddy and get out of the lady's face. You have something to say to her you can do it here." Koty said, never letting up on her grip.

Richard looked around him and saw that nearly every cop in the room was surrounding him just waiting word from Laney or Koty. He eased back and lowered his voice. "Look Laney, please come out and talk with me. If you can't do it here then have lunch with me."

"Richard, we have said all that we needed to, there's nothing left to say. If you have any questions then talk to my lawyer, I'm sure he can help you. Now please just get out of here."

Koty released the grip on his shoulder then turned him to face two detectives. "Could you guys please escort this gentleman out of here?"

"Lets go mister, you heard the lady."

Richard turned one last time to Laney, "This isn't over. If I have to I'll come to your house and..."

Koty was in his face in an instant. "Are you threatening her asshole? I don't take kindly to someone threatening my friends!"

The two detectives pushed Richard towards the door before Koty lost her temper. That was a sight that they all had witnessed, and didn't want to ever see it again.

Koty turned to Laney, "are you ok?"

Laney just laughed at Koty. "Yeah, thanks tiger, did you see the look on his face? I thought he was going to shit himself! Oh man was that priceless."

"Sorry."

"Shit Koty, don't be. I thought it was funny. Looks like I got myself a real live hero."

"Shut up Jacobs."

"Wait until I tell Kasey, she's going to love it."

"Shut up Jacobs..."

"I'm still going to tell Kasey how sweet you are." Laney said with a grin.

"Laney," Koty said in a sickeningly sweet voice, "Kasey learned a while back just how sweet I am."

"T.M.I. Silvers, you are such a pervert."

"Yeah? Well come have lunch with me and you can tell me about your date with Randi Daniels."

"It wasn't a date Silvers, it was just lunch."

"Un huh, come on and I will even let you buy."

"No way, if I have to endure you torturing me, you are buying lunch. Where are we going? No, let me rephrase that, you are taking me to Red Lobster."

"Red Lobster? But that's where the touchy feely waitress works! No way, pick any where but there."

"Aw Koty, but she's harmless."

"Oh yeah? Then I will let her know that you are available and interested how about that?"

"Did I say Red Lobster? I meant to say Max and Erma's."

"I thought you'd change your mind. Come on..."

??Chapter Sixteen

Two weeks had passed and Randi hadn't heard anything from Laney. She wondered if the detective was really going to call for help with moving. It was crazy but she couldn't stop thinking about her.

Since Boyd's death, she had stopped liking, and trusting cops. She had seen the one responsible for his death a few times, and he just sneered at her like she was a plague. As he had walked by her, he made sure that his hand brushed against her. Bastard.

Pulling herself out of her funk, Randi made a decision. "I will just have to go find her at the station and tell her that she needs to give me her phone number. Yeah. Yeah right you wimp. Well I will still go and find her..."

"I'm sorry Ma'me but she isn't here at the moment. They are due back anytime though, this is the usual time that they show up. You are welcome to wait over there where the chairs are."

"Thank you sir, I'll do that."

"Call me Jimmy, everyone does."

"Ok, thanks Jimmy. I'll just wait for awhile."

Randi didn't have long to wait as she soon watched Laney and her partner walk towards her from the doorway. Butterflies were dancing in her stomach and she wondered for a frantic moment if she was going to be sick. 'Shit.'

As the detectives walked up to her and she saw Laney smile, all she could do was smile back. "Hi," she said to Laney when she stopped in front of her. Randi turned to Koty. "Hello Detective."

"Hello yourself Randi." Koty turned to Laney, "I'll catch up later." She turned and smiled at the younger woman. "Have a nice day Randi."

Randi looked back at Laney. "Um...I'm sorry; maybe I shouldn't have come here. I..."

"Randi, is something wrong?" Laney asked in a concerned voice.

"Oh no I...look, how much longer before your shift ends? Can we grab a coffee somewhere?"

"Well, ah...let me go drop something off at my desk, and tell Koty goodbye. I'll be right back.

Randi placed her hand lightly on the taller woman's arm, "Look, Laney if this is a bad time we can do it some other time."

"No, it's ok. Are you sure you're alright?"

"Yes I'm sure; I'll just wait here for you."

Randi watched as Laney walked down the hallway then took a right. 'Oh God, what in hell am I doing here?' What indeed, she was tired of waiting for Laney to call her. Somehow Randi knew that even if nothing romantic came of this, she at least needed her friendship. Why it was so important, Randi had no clue...

"Laney," Koty said as she watched her partner put a folder in her desk drawer. "Want to fill me in on what's going on? I know it's really none of my business, but you've been evading my questions for awhile now."

Laney blew out a deep breath. "I know. I need to figure out what's going on in my head first. I promise we will talk. I have a feeling I am going to need a lot of advice."

"Ok, just come to me anytime you need to Laney. I'm a good listener too if you just need to talk."

Smiling at Koty Laney said, "Thanks Partner, I really do appreciate it..."

Laney stood at the end of the hallway watching the antique store owner sitting in the chair as she waited. 'She really is beautiful.' "Ok Randi lets go to Starbucks down the road. Do you want to follow me or ride together and I'll drop you off back here?"

Not one to look a gift horse in the mouth, Randi jumped at the chance to ride with the tall detective. "I'll ride with you, and then you can drop me off."

"Ok, let's go..."

"So what's going on Randi? Are you sure everything is alright?" Laney asked as they sat down with their coffee.

"Why do you think something has to be wrong just because a friend shows up and wants to have coffee with you? Does there have to be a motive? I enjoyed our lunch that day and thought I would check up and see if you still needed help moving." 'God Rand, that was even lame to me.'

Laney laughed. 'That's so cute. The tips of her ears just turned bright red.' "No Randi, you don't have to have a motive. I too enjoyed our lunch. As for moving, I'll be moving in this weekend, and yes, I will need your help if you are still offering."

"I am offering. Like I said before, no strings attached except for maybe having dinner with me."

'She's persistent, I'll give her that.' Laney smiled to herself. "How is Jodi doing? She recuperating ok?"

"Yes, and she has volunteered her services. She won't be able to carry anything heavy but she is great at packing if you need help there."

"I don't know I really love the packing part, well almost as much as I love getting a root canal. So, I would absolutely love for her help there."

"Great. So when and where? I have a student from ODU that will run the shop while we're helping. She's always begging for hours, and when I told her we might need her for a weekend she was ready to dance in the street."

Laney pulled one of her cards out and turned it over to write her address on the back of it before handing it to Randi. "Saturday around nine I guess would be a good time."

Randi reached for the card and looked at it. 'Hmm. It's got her cell phone number on it. Now I won't have to be embarrassed by asking her for it.'

"That time is fine, we'll be there. So...can a friend ask another friend out to dinner?"

Chapter Seventeen

Koty had just walked through her front door as her cell phone started to ring. Dropping the mail on the table near the door, she pulled her phone from its case on her hip. "Hello."

"Koty, its Tina. Jamie was just rushed to the emergency room. She was hurt in a fire we were at off of Haygood."

"What the hell! Is she at Bayside or Beach General."

"No, they took her to Norfolk General. I'm on my way there now, and knew you would want to be called."

"Shit. Yeah Tina thanks." Koty pushed the end button and closed her phone. Opening it again as she ran out the door, she called Kasey's phone. She almost hung up when it rang for the fourth time but then heard Kasey answer.

"Hey Honey, I'm on my way home now."

"Go to Norfolk General, Jamie's has been hurt."

Kasey went to ask Koty more but her lover had already hung up the phone. "Shit..."

As Koty drove, the thing that was bothering her the most was where they had transferred her best friend. Haygood Rd where the fire had been was only a few miles from Bayside Hospital. For them to take her to Norfolk General must mean its bad. Norfolk General Hospital was the only Level One Trauma Center and burn Unit.

When Koty arrived in the emergency room it was already packed with firefighters still in their bunker gear, sans helmet, gloves and coat. Trish rushed to her side... and Koty couldn't quite understand what she was saying.

All Koty could do was hold Trish tightly. Looking up, she saw Tina and beckoned her with a nod, to come over and explain what was happening.

"Tina, what happened, and what's the news on Jamie"

"We haven't heard anything yet; the doctors are still with her. As far as how the accident happened is still unclear. Jamie was part of the team that went in first. The fire was pretty intense, and we were told that there were people inside.

"I was outside holding the pipe when Jeremy came running out screaming that we needed to get the R.I.T in there that Jamie had fallen through the floor. As soon as the Battalion Chief arrived, along with Station Three, we quickly got things under control. We've only been here about twenty minutes."

Kasey came through the door and momentarily hesitated at the sight of Koty's ex standing there talking to Koty. 'I'll deal with that later.' The sight of Tina still rattled her a little.

Kasey quickly kissed her lover then gently pulled Trish from out of Koty's arms and into hers. When she was able to calm the hysterical woman in her arms, she would go try to find out what

was going on. Being a doctor, she knew that she could find out things quicker than the rest...

An hour later had finally put Trish in the room with Jamie, and Kasey talking to the attending physician. It would appear that Jamie was one lucky woman. Granted that she had broken her leg in two places, and had a concussion.

When she had fallen, her face gear was push off of her face so she had inhaled a lot of smoke, but nothing too serious. She had several contusions on numerous parts of her body and would be very sore for weeks to come, but all in all, she would be just fine.

When Kasey made it back to the waiting room, most of the firefighters were gone, including Tina. Sitting next to Koty was Laney. She had just dropped Randi off at her car and was heading home when she heard of the fire, and that one of the firefighters were brought to the hospital on her car radio. She had called Koty's cell phone as she was driving.

Koty and Laney both stood as Kasey had walked through the door. Giving Koty a kiss, and Laney a hug, she told them what the attending physician had told her.

Sighing with relief, Koty pulled Kasey into a fierce hug. Kasey could feel the release in her lovers' body, and hugged her even tighter when she heard a sob. "She's going to be fine Honey."

"I know."

The only other time that Laney had seen her partner cry, was when she and Koty got the call that a man on drugs was holding his five year old daughter over the ledge of their balcony on the third floor.

When they had reached the apartment, they found a man so high on crack cocaine, you could barley understand what he was saying. He was holding his daughter by one leg, ready to drop her.

Koty didn't trust the man to not drop her so she went and stood directly under where the little girl was hanging. She prayed to God that he would come to his senses, and pull her up. Or at least she would be able to catch her if he didn't.

After twenty minutes of standing in the one spot, Koty had watched in horror as the man lost his grip and the child fell. Koty was able to break the child's fall with minimum damage.

The little girl broke her left arm, arm Koty received a black eye but that was it. When rescue took the young girl from Koty's arms, Koty had dropped to the ground and cried.

Witnessing Koty's tears for the second time, Laney could not stop the tears from coming to her own eyes. She was happy for Koty and happy for Jamie.

Chapter Eighteen

Koty and Trish were both sitting in Jamie's room when they looked up to see a young man standing in the doorway. Looking like he would bolt at any moment, Jamie called him into the room.

"Jeremy, it's ok. Please come in."

The rookie that Jamie had been on duty with the day of the accident, looked as if he was getting ready to cry. "I'm...man, I am so, so sorry Jamie."

Jamie introduced the young man to Trish and Koty. Trish was confused by the apology. 'Why is he apologizing? What did he do?'

"It's my fault that Jamie fell." Jeremy stated as he looked down to the floor. "I was running to get to the stairway. One of the things we are taught in the academy is never run. You can trip and delay any rescue, or you lose your energy way too fast. So many things can go wrong.

"I went too far too fast, and didn't hear her warning me that the floor was getting ready to let loose. She ran to me and shoved me to the side by the stairs when suddenly the floor collapsed.

"I turned around when I got my feet steady, and Jamie was gone. One minute she was right behind me, then the next, she wasn't. I knew instantly what had happened but I couldn't see her, and she wasn't answering my calls. I panicked. I didn't even call for back up until I was outside."

Jeremy turned to face Jamie. "It was my fault, and you could have died. All because I forgot what I was trained to do. You probably saved my life, and I nearly took yours."

Trish was very angry now. She wanted to lay into the young firefighter but the look of sadness on his face, and Koty's hand on her shoulder stopped her. She knew it was an accident but really wanted someone to blame. Just then, the young man said he was sorry once more then walked out of the room...

Jamie was released from hospital three days later. Still very bruised, and a cast up to her thigh, she would be unable to use the crutches for awhile yet so she had to depend on the wheelchair she was sitting in.

Koty and Laney stopped by to check on her during their lunch break. Laney was sitting in the overstuffed chair next to the couch drinking the iced tea that Trish had made, and shook her head. "I think this was just a ploy to get out of helping me move this weekend Jamie."

"Hey, I resemble that remark. Besides, I can still help. I am very good at supervising, and telling people what to do."

"She ain't lying either." Koty said as she playfully and gently popped Jamie in the back of her head."

"Hey! Injured woman here Silvers."

Koty stopped suddenly, and got a serious look on her face. Kneeling before Jamie, she pulled her into as tight of a hug as her friends injured body allowed. Jamie reciprocated eagerly.

The room grew quiet as the two best friends shared their moment of bonding. Koty tenderly reached up to wipe the lone tear that escaped down her best friend's cheek, and then lightly brushed a kiss on the corner of her lips.

'Christ.' Laney thought as she watched the emotional moment. 'No wonder all of the women fall in love with Dakota. She has more emotion in her pinky than most women have in their whole bodies.'

"Alright guys, damn it. You two always make me cry when you do this," Trish stated and Koty pulled her into a tight hug as well.

"Sorry Trish got lost in the moment there."

"So' Kay. She did the same when you were hurt last year. I wouldn't have it any other way and you know that. More people should be as lucky as the two of you, to have a friendship like yours."

"Like all of ours Darling." Koty smiled as she kissed Trish on the lips.

"Dakota Silvers, if I would have met you before I met Jamie...I don't know..."

'Shit, see what I mean?' Laney burst out laughing and the three turned curious looks towards her. "Sorry guys, I hate to bust up the party but..."

Koty looked at her watch. "Yeah, we need to head out but we'll see you two on Saturday, and Jamie? Don't for a second think you are gonna boss me around..."

"So, she can be bossy huh?"

"Oh you just wait and see. Although in this case it can actually be a good thing. She really is pretty good at just looking and telling someone where to put something. Of course, then you'll go through later and do your thing."

"Well we should have plenty of people at least. You have a lot of great friends Koty, thank you for asking them."

Koty burst out laughing. "My asking wasn't the deciding factor. One, you're single. Two, you offered to cook and that is two of their favorite things. By the way, didn't you tell me Randi was going to be there?"

"Yes, she said she would be there."

"Well, they'll have to settle for one of their favorite things then. You're gonna break some hearts."

"Silvers..."

"Buck up Laney. You are going to have to find some way to deal with it. Randi is very interested in you, and I know you're interested in her. If you're not, or you're going to be too afraid to try, please don't lead her on. Be up front with her."

"Shit Koty! What do you think I am?"

Koty starred but didn't utter a sound for a moment. She didn't want to piss Laney off but knew it needed to be mentioned. "Laney, I know you would never do anything intentionally. This is all brand new to you, and you could be the one to get hurt as well if not more. I don't want to see that happen either. I tend to be very very protective of the ones I care about."

Laney smiled. She felt the warmth go through her at Koty's admittance. She never really had anyone feel protective over her. It felt good. It felt real good.

"I'll try my damndest not to fuck things up I promise, and yes, I do like her. Do I like her in that sense? I don't know. I'll figure it out one way or another. And Koty thanks. Thanks for caring and thanks for being a friend."

She leaned over and kissed Koty on the cheek. "Ya tell anyone I did that and I'll call you a liar."

"Shit Laney, nobody would believe me..."

Chapter Nineteen

Moving was in full swing. Laney was amazed at the amount of body's coming and going with loads from her apartment. At this rate, all she would have to do tomorrow would be to clean the apartment and she would be done. She had really thought it would take two full days of moving.

She felt the presence behind her before she actually felt the soft hand on her lower back. She turned and locked onto sea green eyes. "Hi."

"Hi, sorry it took so long to get here. Debbie's car broke down on her way over, so I had to go and pick her up. Where would you like me?"

'Is that a trick question?' Um, where's Jodi?"

"She's coming, she spotted someone she knew in the kitchen and stopped to chat. She normally doesn't need guidance; she just seems to know where to jump in. Me, I normally need guidance."

Laney put her arm around Randi's shoulders. "Well, come on Miss I need guidance, you can help me over here with this table."

Kasey, who was helping Koty reload the armoire, elbowed her partner to watch what was happening between Laney and Randi. "God, they look so cute together don't they Honey?"

"Kase, you think everyone looks cute together."

"I think we look cute together."

"Well duh, we ARE cute together..."

Randi had watched a tall, well stacked, well muscled blonde just finish helping Laney place the dryer in the laundry room. The blonde, whom couldn't seem to keep her hands off of Laney. Koty had watched Randi watch the blonde. Randi was obviously displeased.

When Laney announced that she needed to go back to the apartment to break down her bed and bring it, and a few other odds and ends here, the blonde jumped at the chance before anyone could say anything.

"I'll take you Laney, I have a big truck."

Koty saw the anger on Randi's face and watched as the young woman's fist opened and closed tightly. Koty walked up to pat the tall blonde on the back.

"Hey JJ, I could really use your muscles here girl. Randi, you have a truck, why don't you run Laney over to the apartment real quick."

'Bless you Detective, because I think I was just getting ready to get my ass kicked!' "Sure, I'd be happy to. Come on Laney." Randi couldn't wipe the smile off her face if someone slapped it off. 'Ha, take that you big dumb muscle head.

Kasey pulled Koty's face close to hers then kissed her lips. "You big softy."

"No Ma'me, softy had nothing to do with it. I think Randi was getting ready to try and kick JJ's ass, and it was getting ready to get ugly."

"Oh Lord."

"Un huh..."

"So, who was Captain Canine back there?" Randi asked as she turned the volume down on the CD player in her truck.

"Captain Canine?"

"Yeah. You know, Steroid Barbie."

Laney barked out a laugh. "Oh Randi, now that is rich. I will not be able to look at her again without busting out laughing."

"Good."

"Easy Sparky."

"Sorry. She was pretty though." 'If you like brick buildings.'

"I guess if you like that type."

"Do you? Like that type I mean?" Randi asked quietly.

Laney glanced over and smiled inwardly. "I didn't know I had a type."

"Um, right. I...if you did though." 'Shit.'

"She's got a nice smile. She's got nice green eyes." Laney grinned.

'Hey...I have green eyes.'

"She's got a nice build. She's too hard though."

"What do you mean?"

"She's too hard. Too much muscle. IF I were to go for a woman, I don't think I would want that much muscle. I had that with my husband. The softness would definitely be a benefit to being with a woman."

"Oh yeah, softness is most definitely a benefit." Randi laughed, but had to wipe the sweat from her palms onto her jeans. A change of subject was due before she got herself in trouble.

"Ok Laney, which way from here."

'She's so cute when she's flustered.' "Um...We're here Sparky."

"Damn it Laney, don't call me that." Randi gruffed as she threw the truck in gear. As she got out, and right before she closed the door, she barked loudly.

"Jesus, you are certifiable Miss Daniels. Are you aware of that?"

"Oh yeah..."

"Here Lane, slide that this way, yeah...that's it. Okay, let's go get that dresser and those few boxes and we can get going." Randi said as she went to walk in front of Laney.

With a smirk, she back handed Laney in the gut, and then reached for her bicep. "Damn Laney, your pretty damn toned and, muscled yourself." Then she jumped off the back of the truck. 'Ha, take that you smart ass. Two can play your game.'

Laney halted to a complete standstill. 'She means hard...and muscled doesn't she? Shit, that's a bad thing! Knock it off Jacob's, and get back to work.'

"Hey Thing."

Laney turned to look at Randi. "Thing?"

"Yeah, you know, Thing." Randi struck the pose of a body builder. "Thing. Rock body thing from Fantastic 4, Thing." Randi grinned.

"Ooh Sparky, don't get yourself into water so deep your short little legs can't doggy paddle out."

"Oh, now it's a short thing is it?" She tossed the last of the boxes to Laney. "Come on 'Thing,' let's get out of here."

The ride home got quiet as Laney thought about the comment Randi had made about her muscles. Knowing that it really shouldn't bother her, it did just the same.

Laney didn't think that she was too muscled. Toned, yes but only because she tried to keep herself in shape. Hell, compared to Steroid Barbie, she was by no means muscled.

Randi's not too muscled. Very compact but not too muscled. Though when she lifted the dresser her biceps did bulge, but that was kind of sexy. Yeah, but Laney knew that Randi was still very soft. When Randi accidentally brushed against her trying to move around the said dresser, and Laney had to reach out to hold her so she didn't fall forward...

Randi looked over at Laney, "Hey, penny for your thoughts. You got real quiet all of a sudden."

Laney smiled. "Sorry, got caught up in an old person zone for a moment. Stop at that 7-11 so I can get us some water or something ok?" She turned and smiled very sweetly. "Puppies are always thirsty."

"Get out of my truck Detective..."

Winding down, and in the process of grilling steaks for everyone that helped her move, Laney was sipping a beer. She had just leaned back against the railing of the deck when she heard...

"Hey Thing!"

She turned her head just in time to be smacked in the face by a lawn chair pillow. "That one goes on your chair." Of course everyone laughed.

"Sparky, if I had the energy, I'd get up and chase you into Norfolk."

"Ha, chasing is what you'd be doing cause you know damn well you couldn't catch me."

More laughter.

A dark eyebrow rose. "Couldn't catch you?"

"Thing, on a crisp new morning, with a 'Sobe Energy' Drink and a brand new pair of 'Nike Airs,' you couldn't catch me."

Now everyone on the deck was outright laughing hard. Including Laney until she watched as Randi slid behind Jodi on Jodi's chair, and wrapped her thighs around Jodi's waist.

Jodi smiled and looked back at her friend with fondness. "Normally Rand's fondness for cockiness exceeds her size but, this is one time she has a right to be cocky. Her school records, for the 100m and the 200m hasn't been broken yet."

"Ok I'll bite," Kasey offered as she leaned against Koty, "What was her record?"

"100m was 11.6 seconds and the 200m was 24 seconds."

"Well hell, I'm not wasting my money on any new Nikes then." Laney smiled. 'But she can still unwrap her thighs from around her waist.'

Randi winked at Laney and went to say something else, but her attention was drawn to warmth at her thigh. Moving slightly she noticed blood on Jodi's t-shirt.

"Christ Jodi, you're bleeding." She jumped up then knelt in front of her friend and went to lift the shirt from the side. Kasey was at Randi's side in a heartbeat, and covered her hand to drop the shirt.

"Come on inside Randi where we can see this better, ok?"

"Shit. Right."

Koty walked to Laney to take the long forks from her. "I'll take over here, why don't you go see what's going on."

Laney just starred at Koty for what seemed an eternity. "Yeah, right. I'll be right back..."

Laney walked up behind Randi and slid her hand along her back. Randi turned into Laney and wrapped her arms around her neck.

"Hey, what's wrong?" Laney pulled the young woman to her, sensing her need.

"I saw it Laney. Something's not right. That's where she was shot and it should be healed and it's not. Hell, it was healed, at least 95 percent. Her side didn't look like that a week ago. Something's wrong. Shit Laney something is really wrong."

"Hey now, I've got you Randi. Here comes Kasey, let's see what she has to say."

"We need to get her into the E.R. Randi, if you don't mind though; I'd like to take her to Norfolk General."

"That bad huh?"

"That's not what I meant Sweetheart. Laney, I'm going to get Koty, Jamie, and Trish to carry on you party, will you go with Randi and I?"

"Of course. Let me drive you there. I'm sure Koty will want to pick you up later, and if not I'll take you home."

"Great, let me go tell her and the others. Randi, go get your girl..."

Laney could hear Randi chastising Jodi in the back seat of her Toyota as they drove west on 264 to Norfolk General Hospital. "Damn it Jodi, why haven't you told me about this Honey? How long has this been going on? Hell, you wouldn't have told me tonight if I wouldn't have seen the damn blood myself!"

"Please Rand, I didn't think it was serious." Jodi laid her head on Randi's shoulder, knowing that Randi couldn't fuss at her when she did this.

Laney looked at Kasey. "So what do you think Doc?"

"Hard to say really, maybe missed a piece of bullet? I wouldn't want to guess, but she definitely has an infection from something."

Laney peered at the rearview mirror. "Yeah, got her buddy pretty upset."

Kasey smiled, and spoke softly so that only Laney could hear. "They're best friends. Like Koty and Jamie." Like that was supposed answer all questions. Then, in a much louder voice, "Hey," Kasey elbowed Laney, "don't worry about it, 'Thing'."

A burst of laughter from the back seat caused Laney to swear. Causing even a louder round of laughter...

Koty lounged with her ball cap pulled over her eyes, blocking the bright fluorescent overhead lights from her tired eyes. Randi paced the small area by the vending machines, and Laney's eyes slowly followed the young book store owner as she nervously moved about.

Kasey walked through the door. Randi slowly sat by Laney, and the detective took her hand to offer what comfort she could.

"Somehow or another Jodi has picked up Staphylococcus."

Randi made a face. "Staph...what...wait a minute. Like Staph infection? Isn't that a dirty infection or something, caused from being dirty? Jodi is clean..."

"Hold on Randi, Staph is a bacteria that can be picked up anywhere. You can have a tiny little cut or something and pick up the bacteria. She could have..."

"Oh shit, it's my fault." Randi dropped the detective's hand and quickly stood. "It's my goddamsonofabitchin fault!"

Laney stood next to the younger woman, and laid a hand on her shoulder in hopes to calm her. "Randi, what do you mean it's your fault? It's not your damn fault."

"Yes it is. Last week I made her go with me to recon the dump to rummage for antiques. We do it about every six months. She hates it, but does it anyways for me! If she wasn't totally healed and still had a little opening, then I may as well ripped her open and applied the fucking bacteria myself."

Randi pulled away and turned towards the window not wanting anyone to see her tears. Taking a deep breath and swiping at her face, she turned to Kasey.

"Ok, staph isn't really that big of a deal right? I mean, kids get it all the time, and with some antibiotics they're as good as new right? So what are we talking?"

Kasey reached for Randi, "Sit down with me Randi, and I'll see if I can explain it to you a little. Of course Jodi's doctor will be out shortly too..."

Randi sat down, "You're making me nervous Doc."

"Alright, let's see. Staph alone is very simple to take care of. Sometimes staph can lead into other problems as well. In Jodi's case, she has a little Septicemia as well.

"Her heart rate is pretty high, her respiratory rate is high, and her white blood count is off. Now while she has a low grade septicemia, it is still septicemia and they are going to keep her here until it is totally out of her system."

"What would have happened if we wouldn't have brought her in tonight? How bad would she have gotten?"

Laney decided to cut in. "Randi, she would have let you know before it got too bad. She's going to be ok, and that's what counts right?"

"Yeah."

Randi looked at Kasey then reached up to hug her. "Thank you. You don't even know me, and you pulled strings just to make sure my best friend was ok. I'll never forget this."

Kasey hugged the younger woman tightly. "You are welcome Honey, that's what friends do for each other. As far as I'm concerned, you are now a part of our little pack."

Randi laughed. "Should I be afraid?"

Now it was Koty's turn to jump in. "Oh Baby...Be very, very afraid."

"Cool."

Randi pulled away from the doctor. "Look guys, it's late. Why don't ya'll go home? I'm gonna hang out here, but there's no reason for you to miss out on sleep."

"Mmm, sleep sounds good Baby." Koty nuzzled Kasey's neck, and the doctor blushed.

"Right. Well ok, we'll check in with you tomorrow then Randi to see how she's doing. Night Laney."

"Good night guys, drive careful."

Randi turned to Laney. "You too Detective, why don't you go and get some sleep, you've babysat me long enough today."

Laney just starred for a long moment at the younger woman, and Randi briefly wondered if she had said something wrong.

"I'll tell you what, you really can't do her much good tonight, as soon as her doctor talks to you, let me drive you home to get some sleep and you can come up first thing in the morning."

"No deal detective. I wouldn't be able to sleep anyway; I may as well be here just in case I'm needed."

"You have got to be a Taurus."

"Was that just a good guess or have you been checking out my file?"

A soft laugh. "Actually just a good guess, but you fit the sign."

"Oh? Stubborn, hardheaded..."

"Ah, yeah but seriously, at least let me take you to get you something to eat. You didn't get a chance before we came up here." Laney held her hand up forestalling Randi's protest. "I won't take no for an answer Randi, and I'm not leaving without one."

"And you call me stubborn?"

"Yes."

"Ok, I am kind of hungry."

As if right on cue, Randi's stomach chose that moment to emit an outrageously loud noise.

Laney's smile grew huge. "Um, am I safe with that thing?"

"What's the matter detective, scared?"

"Yes, but I know how to tame it."

"I bet you could." Randi said hopefully low enough to where Laney didn't hear. Laney heard. Laney blushed...

Chapter Twenty

Laney swatted at the pesky noise coming from her nightstand. "Ugh, shut up would you?"

Ring ring.

"This better be good!"

Silence.

"Hello?"

"Um Laney?"

"Randi?" 'Shit' "I'm sorry, I just...what time is it?"

"It's twelve twenty five in the afternoon Detective. Shouldn't you be up by now?" Randi smiled to herself, but was sorry for waking Laney, knowing that she didn't get home at least until two thirty in the morning because of her.

"Look, I'm sorry Laney, I shouldn't have called..."

"Nonsense Randi, it's ok. Is everything alright? Is Jodi ok?"

"Oh, yeah. I was just calling to um...to thank you for last night. For being there, and for breakfast. You didn't have to do that but..."

"Hey, it's ok. I did it because I wanted to alright? Besides, it's about time that I got my lazy ass out of bed anyway. I can't even remember the last time that I slept this late."

"Yeah, well I happen to know that you didn't get to bed until really late either, no wonder you slept in."

Laney sat up and threw the covers off of her bare legs as she slid her feet to the floor. "Randi, I bet I went to sleep before you did. How long have you been up anyway?"

"I got a couple hours sleep. My body's not use to too much as it is. If I get more than four or five hours a night, I'm doing good." Randi answered without really answering Laney's question.

"You know, that did not tell me how much sleep you got, but for now I'm going to let you slide. Are they going to release Jodi today?"

"No, I mean she's doing great, but they just want to be sure all of the infection is gone." Randi's voice dropped an octave lower. "I can't believe I took her to the dump and let that happen to her."

"Randi...we went through this last night. This was not your fault. Hell, you don't even know if that's where she picked it up. It was a fluke Rand, please let it go. Your beating yourself up isn't going to change anything.

There was a moment of silence, and Laney briefly wondered if Randi was still on the line.

"Randi, are you still there?"

"Yeah, I'm still here, and I know your right but." In mid sentence Randi asked, "Have dinner with me?"

It took a moment to register in Laney's mind what was just said. "Um...excuse me?"

"I asked you if you would have dinner with me?"

"Whoa." I'm sorry Randi, I'm driving to Richmond this afternoon and won't be back until last this evening." Laney actually felt a little disappointed that she wouldn't be able to and that surprised her.

"So' Kay, maybe another time. Thanks again for last night Laney." Click.

"Randi? Shit! She hung up on me." Laney hung her phone up and padded to the bathroom to take

a shower. 'I can't believe she just hung up on me like that! What a little shit!'

Laney didn't know rather to be pissed off or hurt so she settled with a little of both. The younger woman didn't even give her a chance to try to explain or even maybe take a rain check.

The detective found herself breezing through her shower quickly, and stomping into the kitchen to make a pot of coffee, not quite sure why she was so agitated.

Looking at the time on the stove, she realized that she should really get moving if she wanted to miss the rush hour traffic on I64. Grabbing her cup of coffee, she took it to her bedroom to drink while she got dressed.

Right in the middle of putting her leg through the pants of her Armani suit, Laney paused then sat down on the bed. 'Oh Christ Laney, don't do it.' It had been a month since she had seen her father, and had dinner with him. She really didn't want to miss it.

Laney stood back up and placed her other leg into the pant leg, then paused again. 'Oh come on Jacobs, fucking grow up will you?' She fastened the pants and grabbed her keys, purse, and cell phone as she headed out the door.

Backing out of her driveway she shook her head and reached for her cell phone that sat in the console between the driver and passenger seat. "Hi Pop? Look, something has come up and I need to reschedule coming up there to see you...No, no, nothings wrong, there's just something I have to take care of. Yeah, I love you too, bye..."

"Why in the hell did you hang up on me?"

"Aaakkk!" Randi squealed as she spun away from Jodi's hospital room door. "Shit Laney! Ya damn near gave me a heart attack. Why are you sneaking up on me like that?"

"Why did you hang up on me Randi?"

Laney was now just inches from Randi's face. The younger woman felt her heart rate pick up double time, and it had nothing at all to do with fear. 'Sweet Jesus she is beautiful.' "I...I'm sorry Laney, I didn't mean to upset you, I just..."

"I HATE when people hang up on me Rand." Laney growled. 'WOW, she has gold flecks in her green eyes...She's beaut...Oh man, Shit!' Laney backed away and turned her back on Randi to compose herself.

"Laney?"

No response.

"Laney please, I'm sorry." The blonde said softly, and place her hand on Laney's arm to try and turn her around. "Laney please..."

That last please pulled at the detectives' heart, it sounded so pitiful. Laney turned slowly, caught the hand that was sliding off of her arm, and lightly grasped it in her own. "No Randi, I'm sorry. Look, where would you like to go for dinner? My treat for being such an asshole ok?"

"You're not an asshole, and what about Richmond? I don't want you to mess up your plans Detective just because I'm a sensitive brat."

"Laney chuckled. "Brat works." Her smile got huge when she saw the blondes eyes squint to try and make a mean face. "But...I already changed my plans, so now I'd like to take you to dinner. Well, that is unless you haven't already made different plans that is?"

Randi boldly looked Laney over. Slowly. Bringing a red tinge to the detective's cheeks. Reaching out with her free hand, she ran her fingers over the soft material of the suit, bringing a bright red tinge to the detective's cheeks. "Armani, nice." 'Hot, sexy, gorgeous.' "I'm a little under dressed Detective."

"I was already dressed when I changed my plans. I can go home and change. I don't have to..."

"No Laney, this is nice. I can play dress up once in a while if you want to go like this. Can you take me by my place and let me shower and get dressed?"

"Of course. Why don't we check on Jodi first, and then we'll go ok?"

"Kay."

Randi smiled, and made Laney changing her plans all worth while." 'She has such a beautiful smile...'

"Ok, just make yourself at home Detective; it won't take me too long. Can I get you a drink or some wine while you wait?"

"I'm fine Rand; just go do your thing ok?"

"Kay, be right back."

?Laney watched the tight jean clad ass walk towards the stairs and plopped down on the soft overstuffed recliner blowing her bangs out of her eyes. "This can not be happening to me."

She pinched the bridge of her nose and wondered not for the first time, if this was really a good idea or not. 'Christ, its just dinner. It's not a date. It's not a date. That's right Jacobs; it's not a date...'

Laney's eyes flew open when she felt a hand on her shoulder. "Shit. I'm sorry, I must have dosed

off." Her eyes took in the sight before her and was glad that she was already sitting down. Surely the sight would have buckled her knees if she had been standing. 'Holy Christ!'

Randi stood in front of the detective in a tight mid thigh pale yellow leather skirt, white silk blouse, and matching yellow leather jacket with white stiletto heels. This totally brought out her deep tan and emerald eyes.

Randi took pause at the look on the detectives face. "It's too much isn't it?"

"Absolutely not. Jesus Randi, you look...you look...stunning."

This time it was Randi's turn to blush, and in her best southern draw, she said, "Awe shucks Ma'me."

At that moment, Laney had the most ungodly urge, to lean down and kiss the younger woman. 'God, just take me now. I'm not sure if I can handle this.' "Does this mean that you are ready to go then?"

"After you Detective." Randi held the door for Laney to precede her as she locked it behind her.

Before Laney even realized what she was doing, she opened the passenger door of her Toyota, and held it open for Randi to climb in, then closed it behind her. She walked around to the driver side with a blush.

Randi pulled her seatbelt over her shoulder with a huge smile. 'Ha, who said chivalry was dead? I bet she doesn't even realize she just did that.'

The blonde turned as Laney was buckling herself in, and noticed the blush on the detectives face. 'Hm, I take that back.' "Do you have any ideas on where you want to go Laney?"

"No, not particularly. There are still a lot of places that I haven't been to. I say let's not waste our night of playing dress up though, is there somewhere you could recommend?"

Randi thought about it for a moment then grinned. "Actually yeah, there's this quaint place on Laskin Rd called 757 Fire & Vine. They have Woodfire Cuisine foods; I really think you'll like it."

"Well, if you think I'll like it, then you just tell me where to go." Laney turned to her friend, "And no smartass answer on that one."

"I wasn't going to say a thing Detective. Honest. Cross my heart." Randi couldn't hold it back any longer, and croaked out a laugh with Laney laughing right along with her...

Chapter Twenty One

"Kase, we've been to three stores already, can't we stop for the day?" Koty gave her best pout

that she could muster.

Kasey smiled at her lover then patted her shoulder. She knew how much Koty hated shopping, yet the tall detective still came with her just because she had asked her to.

"Ok Honey, I'll get Trish to come with me later. Thank you for lasting as long as you did, even though you hate it."

"I hate shopping Baby, but I love being with you so a little compromise is fine. What exactly are we looking for anyway? I know it's something for our little niece or nephew, but do you even have a clue?" Koty laughed as they walked out the door of Lynnhaven Mall.

"I'll know it when I see it."

"Huh, that's what I thought. Lord woman, you're killing me, but I love you anyway. Come on; let's go get something to eat."

"Ok, but can we go to Romano's Macaroni Grill? I feel like Italian tonight."

The detective smiled, and rubbed Kasey's back. "Hum...I don't think that you feel Italian at all."

"Smartass."

"Un huh. Your smartass." Koty said as she held the door to her lavender Jaguar open for the doctor to slip inside. "So, what do you think about Laney and Randi?"

"As in, do I think they will get together or not? I think it is most certainly going to happen, what about you?"

Koty pulled onto Lynnhaven Pkwy to head for Virginia Beach Blvd. "Well, sometimes I think yes, and then sometimes I can't help to think that Laney is definitely straight. Shit Baby, we all know how bad my judgment is. I thought you were straight for a long time."

"That's alright Detective, in the long run, your judgment brought you to me. Hey, you wanna call Chris and Monty? See if they want to meet us there for dinner?"

"Good idea Babe, go ahead and call them."

"So what do you think about this place Laney?" Randi asked as she took another sip of her Rumball Sparkling Shiraz. "This is really good wine. I've never had this before."

Laney smiled at her companion. "It's a decent Australian wine. I've had it a few times, though I'm glad that you like it. As far as this place goes, I think I've just found a new favorite. Thank you for suggesting it."

"Thank you for bringing me. The Argentinean Sirloin was fabulous, how about the Woodfired Grouper?"

"I don't think it will ever taste the same anywhere else. I've had grouper many times before, and cooked many different ways, but I can honestly say, this is probably the best I've had."

Over the course of the dinner, they had shared a bottle of wine. The detective leaned back and crossed her legs. "Would you like some more wine Randi? I can get another bottle."

"I don't think I better, but thank you. Wine tends to get me drunk quicker than any other alcohol. I know it's less proof but..."

The tall detective just smiled, and motioned for the waiter to get their check. Laney was not really looking forward to the evening ending, and desperately tried to think of something else that they could possibly do.

"Randi, do you mind if we go to visit the Virginia Aquarium?"

"What?...I mean...you want to go to the Aquarium?"

"Well, yes."

"Oh. You just don't look the type that..."

"And what type do you have to be Randi?"

"Now see there, you put words in my mouth before you let me finish what I was saying," Randi blushed. "I happen to love the Aquarium so that would be great if we go."

"Okay then"

"Cool."

Laney stood back, and just watched the happy emotions on the younger blonde's face as she enjoyed the antics of the seals in the tanks in the front of the Aquarium on General Booth Blvd. 'She really is a lovely vision.'

Just then, the said blonde tuned, and caught Laney staring. "What's wrong Detective?" She asked as she lightly laid her hand on Laney's arm.

Looking down at the hand on her arm then locking onto emerald green eyes, she finally breathed, "Nothing, ready to go inside now?" Then she abruptly turned towards the door.

Uhhhg!!! Of all the pig headed sonofagoddamazonuhhg!!! What did I do now Detective?"

"Randi, you didn't do anything wrong, ok? Come on; come show me around this place." Laney did damaged control by reaching for the younger woman's hand. It worked. Man did it work.

"Ok, but you have to buy me some popcorn Detective."

"Popc... Tell me you are not serious. Jesus woman, we just finished eating dinner! Plus, I might add, you ate most of my appetizer, and finished my Grouper."

"I want popcorn."

"You want popcorn. Ok, Ok. I'll get you some popcorn; you just show me the way."

Randi laughed loudly and wrapped her arm around the tall detective's waist, pulling her closer to her body. Laney either didn't notice or didn't care because they continued down the hall that way.

They ventured the darkened hall of the brightly lit tank of beautiful saltwater fish of all shapes and sizes.

"My brother Boyd used to have a saltwater tank. It was absolutely huge! I used to love just sitting on the couch and looking at it with all of the lights out. It was amazing Lane."

Laney watched as Randi got a far away look in her eyes. Then, just as quickly, Randi laughed. "The little fuck decided he wanted a snake instead, and got rid of the fish. I put my foot down though on the snake so he got rid of the tank. Come on, let's check out the next one."

Randi still had a grip on the tall detective's hand. Laney didn't seem to mind though, and would even step up behind the antique shop owner, and rest her hand upon her shoulder when looking into one of the tanks...

"Absolutely not Randi! I am NOT going to put my hand in a tank with those stingrays!"

"Laney, look Honey, those kids are even doing it."

'Did she just call me Honey?'

"I don't care. Maybe I should take my revolver out of my shoulder holster and shoot their parents, but I am not doing it."

"Pussy." Randi whispered under her breath.

"What did you just call me?"

"Nothing."

"Randi Daniels, what did you just call me?"

"Nothing." Randi started to back away.

"That was not nothing Miss Daniels." Laney advanced towards her.

Randi was backed against the edge of the touch tank. The crowd around them was enjoying the show the two women were giving them, and were curious as to what was going to happen next.

Laney leaned into Randi, and asked one more time with a husky voice, "What did you call me?" By now she was only inches from the blonde's face.

"Nothing?" Randi squeaked.

Laney leaned even closer, and Randi thought that the detective might kiss her, but...Laney pushed into her body, reached behind her to scoop up a hand full of water, then lift the blonde's shirt and toss the water on her back.

The crowd erupted in laughter as Randi gasped at the cold water on her back. Green piercing eyes locked onto blue. "You. Are. In. Deep. Shit. Detective."

The crowd erupted again in laughter, and this time Laney backed up a little. "Now Rand, you started it." It was Laney's turn to back away as Randi advanced on her. "Now Randi..." Laney turned and bolted with the blonde hot on her heels.

"Ladies!" The security guard yelled, "No running in here!"

Located right out to the side of the museum was the river otter exhibit. It housed five very playful river otters in a 30,000 gallon aquarium and adjoining habitat. Carpeted stairs invited visitors to watch the never ending antics through an underwater/overwater viewing window.

The two women must have stayed there at least an hour enjoying the funny little otters. "Hey," Laney said as she leaned close to Randi's ear. "They're getting ready to close, you about ready to go?"

"Mmm, if we have to." The younger woman said with a slight pout.

"I know what you mean; I'm having a lot of fun too. I tell you what, if you behave yourself, I'll bring you back here sometime soon. Ok?"

"Oh Darling, I know how to behave..."

Laney gulped. Randi laughed. Laney swatted Randi's shoulder. "Come on Rand; let's get out of

here before they kick us out..."

"Lane, go ahead and just drop me off at the Hospital so I can check on Jodi." Randi told the detective as she buckled herself into the Toyota.

"No way Randi, you heard Jodi. Her mother is going to be there tonight, and you are going to go home to get some sleep."

"So who are you, my mother?"

"I...I'm sorry, I didn't..."

"Jesus Laney, I was teasing you; I'm the one who's sorry. Please forgive me for sounding like that."

"So' Kay, I think we both are probably due for a full nights sleep."

Twenty minutes later, Laney pulled up to Randi's house, and had to lightly shake the blondes shoulder to wake her. "Hey Rand, wake up."

"Shit, why didn't you wake me before now Laney?"

"You looked so peaceful."

"Would you like to come in?"

"I'd love to but I have a very early morning tomorrow."

"Ok. Well, thank you for tonight. I really had a great time." Randi leaned over, and placed a light kiss on the detectives cheek. "Goodnight Lane."

"Night Randi."

Chapter Twenty Two

Koty, And Laney were both sitting at their desks one morning when Detective Krause announced that Laney had a visitor. Both Koty and Laney looked up to see a very handsome man about 6'3, and well built lean over Laney's desk.

"Richard. What brings you down here to this filthy part of Virginia?"

The way the words were spoken, alerted Koty that this probably wasn't going to be a pleasant visit. She stood, and walked around to the front of her desk to let the man know she was right there in front of his face.

Richard turned and slowly looked her over from head to toe then back. Remembering her from

before, he smirked, and then mouthed the word dyke. The room erupted with laughter causing the lawyer to stand his full height and look around.

'Oh Richard my dear, you are really getting ready to pick on the wrong person.'

"So Rich, do you have anything important to say or did you travel all this distance just to insult my Partner?"

"This is your Partner? You can do much better than this my dear. You have refused to return my phone calls. You refuse calls from my father, and from the attorney, so I figured I would come and talk some sense into that thick skull of yours."

"It's a shame you wasted your time Richard, I have nothing to say to you so you can just go back home."

The attorney went to reach across the desk but Koty grabbed him by the collar of his Armani suit and nearly lifted him off of his feet.

"You lay one fucking hand on her and so help me God I'll forget that you are the low life scum sucking slug that you are, and I'll beat the breath right out of you right here in front of everyone. Don't think for one minute your title means jack shit to me if you are going to lay a hand on a lady. Don't think for one minute that anyone here will see a thing either, because they all here love Laney more than they love me!"

At this, the attorney turned to look around, and all he saw was everyone turning their backs on whatever it was Koty wanted to do. Koty gave him a hard shove, and he landed on his ass in front of the water cooler.

The room erupted in laughter. The attorney jumped to his feet, and leered at Laney. "You're going to pay for this Laney."

"Hey asshole!" Koty yelled at him. "Just in case you might not have noticed, you just threatened an officer of the law in front of eight other officers, you Dickhead!"

Richard Jacobs once more looked around him then stormed off without another word, slamming the door behind him making everyone jump, then laugh.

Laney walked over to Koty. "You know, if you weren't already married, I'd have to ask you to marry me."

"Hell, I'd have to ask her to marry me!" Detective Banks said as he came up and patted Koty on the back. "Ya did the right thing Silvers. I was ready to put the bastard's lights out, and I don't even know who he is."

"THAT was my dear sweet EX husband, Richard Jacobs. He's a little bent out of shape because I took him to the cleaners when I caught him with a twenty three year old."

"Is that bloke daft or something? He left you for some little honey? Posh on him Darling, I hope you put the screws to him good."

"Thank you Dom, that's sweet of you. Now come on Koty, we really have a lot of work to do."

Just then Captain Riggs walked in and told everyone to 'listen up.'

"Patrol found a car on 264 & Witchduck this morning. They didn't think anything of it because it had a white rag hanging from the window. Apparently the car had been there since yesterday, but because of the rag, no one checked it out."

"Well, they checked it out this morning and there is blood on the seat, and a ladies purse, so it looks like it could be foul play. Silvers, And Jacobs, I want you two to go to the crime lab and find out what you can. Price and Banks, you two hit impound. The rest of you continue what you were doing."

"Yes Sir." Everyone said in unison.

"Jacobs, everything ok? Some crazy son of a bitch just went busting through here cussing your name."

"Yes Sir Captain. Everything is fine. He's only cussing me because Silvers hurt his feelings." 'And maybe his soft little ass when it hit the floor.'

"Silvers, what did you do?"

"She didn't do anything wrong Cap. We were all here and will verify that won't we guys?" Detective Jason Price, one of Kotys' best friends stated.

Everyone nodded and mumbled their agreement, and that really made their captain suspicious, though he laughed anyway. "Yeah right. Hit the road..."

"Mmm, mmm, mmm. And what is that brings my dream girl down here to see me?"

"Hey Alex" Koty said as she leaned in and lightly kissed the full lips of the short Spanish woman. "We're here about the car that was found on 264 this morning."

"Should have known it wasn't to see me. Now that you are married, I've been booted huh Amiga Hermosa?" Alex looked over at Laney. "Did you bring me a treat Mujer Alta?"

Laney felt a powerful blush hit her face, and Alex laughed.

"Oh yum!"

"Aleex, be nice. This is my partner Laney Jacobs. Laney, this feisty little woman is Alex Hernandez, and this lab is her home away from home."

Alex extended her hand to Laney, and laughed again when Laney cautiously reached for it. "Laney, really I do not bite unless I am asked to so you can relax. I have been trying to get this tall one to ask me to bite for years now with no success."

"Come over here, I think this is what you are looking for. The wallet from the purse belongs to 17 year old Kelly Preston. We found blood, unidentified as of yet. We did find seminal fluids on the back seat. We got a hit on that, it came back to a...let's see here...here it is, Trent Falens."

"Trent Falens? He went up for rape of a high school girl about two years ago. When did he get out?" Koty said as she leaned against Alex's desk.

"About nine months ago. He's been quiet, nothing else on him. He had still claimed his innocence the whole time, and he had no other priors."

"Ok thanks Alex, we'll go see what we can find on our lover boy. By the way, Jamie and Trish are having a party in two weeks, you gonna be there? You've missed the last two or three. Makes me think you don't love me anymore." Koty grinned.

"What are they celebrating now? Did they buy new dishes or something?"

"You know them; they come up with some excuse or another." Koty laughed.

"Well...is this pretty lady going to be there?" She asked smiling at Laney. Once again, Laney felt a blush hit her face, and Alex laughed again.

"You Detective Jacobs are going to be sooo much fun. I'll see what I can do, now get out of my lab, I have work to do..."

As Koty and Laney got into Koty's jag, Laney laughed. "I bet she is a riot at parties, and ain't she a handful?"

"Yeah, but she's harmless. She just adores Kasey though. I think if it came down to it, she would do me bodily harm if she thought for one New York second, that I hurt Kasey."

"Yeah, I bet she could do it too." Laney laughed.

""Don't you doubt it for one second."

"You two ever...you know?"

"Oh please Jacobs. I thought you knew me better than that?"

"I do, I was just trying to get a rise."

"Well it worked."

"Good, I got to keep you on your toes. By the way, what was it that she called you when we got there?"

"Oh, you mean *mujer alta*?"

"Yeah, what does that mean?"

"Tall woman."

Laney burst out laughing. "Well that you are sweetheart that you are."

"Hey Jacobs, ever looked in the mirror? You are almost as tall as I am."

"Almost only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades Silvers, you're still taller than me."

"Women"

"Oh yeah. Now take me by Starbucks, I really need some coffee."

"That sounds like a plan to me. Then we'll check with Jason to see who's car little Miss Preston was driving. I find it a little odd that somebody took the time to put a white rag in the window of the car. Don't seem like they were in too much of a hurry to get away."

"Yeah, I kind of thought the same thing. You think that maybe these two knew each other?"

Koty turned into the parking lot of Starbucks, and up to the drive thru. "I think it's worth checking out. Something is off with this..."

The car turned out to be registered in Kelly's father's name. James Michael Preston, some big shot corporate boy who owns a home in Courthouse Pines.

Kelly's mother, Leanne Preston, and her father had been divorced for six years, and Kelly has lived with her father since he won custody of her. Leanne still resided in Virginia Beach, and was at the precinct when the two detectives arrived...

"Mrs. Preston, I'm Detective Silvers, and this is my partner Detective Jacobs. Please have a seat." Koty directed Leanne, and another woman that was with her.

"Detectives, this is my partner Dylan." Koty gave a knowing smile.

"Is there any news yet on my daughter?" The woman said as she wiped the tears from her eyes.

"Not yet Mrs. Preston. What can you tell us about a Trent Falens?"

"Trent? What does my daughters' ex boyfriend have to do with this? I think he's out of prison now but I don't believe they have seen each other. Why?"

"We have reason to believe that Trent Falens was in your daughter's car before she disappeared Mrs. Preston. Did she have that car before he was sent to prison?"

"No, she just got it for her seventeenth birthday. What makes you think he was in the car detectives? Did you find something that belonged to him?"

"You could say that. How violent do you know this man to be, has he ever hurt your daughter?"

"Trent Falens wouldn't hurt a hair on my daughters head detective. Trent is not a violent person. Contrary to the time he spent in prison, he did not rape that girl. I believe that with everything that I am.

"My daughter told me he was with her that night. Trent wouldn't let her speak up because she was only fifteen, and Trent was eighteen. The alleged rape happened at 3:00 am, my daughter had snuck out of the house to be with Trent. Her father would have killed them both. She wanted to testify, but Trent told her he would say she was lying. He knows my ex husband well.

"The young lady that accused him of raping her was very jealous of Kelly and Trent's relationship, and swore she would come between them, and so she did."

Laney was writing all of this down while she watched the other woman Dylan silently rub Leanne's back as she spoke. 'Wonder if this is why she lost custody of Kelly. That would have to suck.'

"Mrs. Preston, do you think it's possible that Kelly, and Trent may have set this up since she is still a minor? You know, because of her father." Koty hated to ask that question but it was one that was bugging her.

Leanne sat there stunned for a moment. "I would hope not, but I honestly can't say for sure. You don't know James. He is an unbelievably controlling man. God only knows what he would do if he caught them together."

"Would he harm your daughter Mrs. Preston?" This came from Laney.

"Oh. No, he wouldn't, but he would Trent if he found him. Kelly turns eighteen in two months. There will be nothing he can do to her then, maybe that's what they are waiting for if it is a set up. God, I hope it is a set up."

Koty leaned back in her chair and studied the couple. "I don't want you to get your hopes up on this Mrs. Preston this is just an angle that we are looking at. Do you know of anywhere they may go to hide? Maybe some of their mutual friends or something?"

"Well, I may know of a few places..."

Chapter Twenty Three

"Mmm, that feels good Baby. Right there...that's it right...ooh."

"Koty, if you want me to scratch your back, you are going to have to sit still, and stop wiggling." Kasey laughed at her lover as she always acted like a kid when she got her back scratched.

"But Baby, it feels so good." The tall detective whined.

"I know Honey, but it's hard to get the spot if you don't sit still. So how was your day? It must have been something because I heard from Alex. You don't have to go to the lab often."

"Yeah, they found a young girls car on the highway with blood in it. We already have a pretty good lead on it though, and with some good luck, things will turn out ok on this. Too early to tell though. How about you? How was the clinic?"

"Not to busy. Chris left early though, she wasn't feeling too well. She was a little nauseous so I told her I could handle it, and that she should go."

Koty turned to face her lover with concern written on her face. "Is she alright? Should I go and check on her?" She stood and would have walked to the door if Kasey wouldn't have reached for her hand.

"Honey, come here. Chris is pregnant. Pregnant woman get nauseous. It's very normal sweetheart I promise. Now come back here and sit down. Remove your shirt, and let me massage your shoulders. You've done gone and gotten yourself all tense."

Koty turned back to the doctor with a smirk on her face. "I'll make a deal with you. I'll remove my shirt if you remove yours."

"Well in that case, we may as well move this into the bedroom Honey." Kasey said as she slipped her finger through Koty's belt loop, to lead her towards their bedroom...

Laney eased her long frame into the large tub in her bathroom. 'God I love this big tub, and whirlpool jets!' She had poured plenty of Lavender bubble bath into the steaming hot water, and couldn't wait to soak her tired muscles.

"Oh God this feels good." She leaned back, closed her eyes, and let the last week seep from her body. This was just what she needed. She was very glad that this new house came with the extra large tub...

Soft lips worked their way down to her breast, and then stopped to feast. With barely controlled desire, Laney pulled the head closer to her, wrapping her hands in soft blonde hair.

Laney whimpered, and a soft cry of 'please' escaped her throat. The blonde head obeyed, and slowly kissed its way down to the hidden treasure awaiting her.

Laney's hips bucked, and strong hands grabbed her hips for better control. Once the blonde woman had Laney exactly where she wanted her, she slowly lowered her head to taste the nectar of the beautiful woman below her.

It wasn't long before Laney was taken to heights she had never been to before. Thrashing and bucking wildly, Laney finally released.

"Oh God Randi!!!"

Blue eyes flew open as water was sucked into her lungs. Laney gasped for air as she tried to figure out what just happened. "Oh shit!" Was all she could pretty much say when she realized she had just came while dreaming in her bathtub.

She had just came while dreaming of Randi Daniels in her bathtub. "Oh shit!" She said aloud again. She looked around and there was water all over the floor around the tub. 'From my thrashing no doubt!'

"Oh man, oh man. What in the hell am I going to do about this?" She wasn't even sure she would be able to stand right now because she still felt the arousal between her thighs. 'This. Is. Not. Fair.'

Slowly, she climbed out of the tub and reached for a towel deciding to clean the mess up later. She mumbled a thank goodness for tile floors under her breath then walked to her bed to lay down.

"What are you doing to me Randi Daniels? Why me?" Just then, the phone rang.

"What?" She answered harshly to whoever the unlucky person was on the phone.

"Um...Lan...Laney?"

Randi. 'Shit!' Laney didn't know how to respond. After what happened in her tub, she felt like Randi would know exactly what happened. She was sure she would be able to tell just by hearing her voice.

"Laney...are you alright?"

Nothing.

"Laney sweetheart, talk to me! What's wrong?"

"Um, Randi hi. I'm ok, un...I was just napping." 'She called me sweetheart again.' "What can I do for you?" Laney knew she was being short with the younger woman but she couldn't help herself. She didn't know what else to do.

"Well...I was just calling to see how you were doing, but I see I've caught you at a bad time so I'll let you go."

"No wait. Wait Randi, I'm sorry." 'It's not her fault you are having these dreams.' "Like I said, I was napping and I'm trying to get my mind together." Laney lied.

"I'm sorry to wake you Lane. I really just wanted to see how you were doing and to say hi. It's nothing important. Did you have a bad day or something? Is everything ok?"

"Everything's ok. I just took a hot bath, and like a kid, they always seem to put me to sleep. What about you? You sure you're just calling to check up on me, or is there something on your mind."

'Hmm, well detective, there is always something on my mind but we won't go there.' "I really did just want to check up on you." 'And to check you up!' "I have tickets to the Tides game this Saturday, and if you are free, I wanted to know if you would like to go with me?"

"Um...Tides huh? Can I let you know by tomorrow night?"

"Yeah sure, that would be fine. Night Lane."

"Night Randi..."

Laney hung the phone up then pulled the pillow over her head. "God Randi, what am I going to do with you?" 'You are single handedly turning my life upside down. You continuously push your way into my personal space, you look at me as if you are looking into my soul, and your touch...just a simple little touch to the arm or hand, makes me come alive.'

"Makes me God damn crazy is what she makes me!" The tall detective threw the pillow across the room then stalked to the kitchen bare assed naked, to pour a glass of wine.

Why not go to the Tides game with Randi? Laney loved baseball, though if they happen to be playing the Richmond Braves, she and Randi will just have to fight or something. Laney liked the Tides, but the Braves were her team...

Chapter Twenty Four

Randi hung up the phone from talking to Laney then leaned her head back against the couch. 'What am I going to do about you detective?' I can't get you out of my mind. Hell, I don't want to get you out of my mind.'

Randi knew it was possible that she was falling in love with the detective. She also knew that

there was a good possibility that Laney would not return her feelings.

'She is straight.' Randi's mind piped in.

"Maybe not."

'Do you forget that she was married?'

"That doesn't mean a damn thing and you know it. Lots of people that are gay have been married."

'She told you she was straight when the two of you met. Do you not remember that?'

"YES, I remember that all too well thank you very much. Maybe...maybe she just doesn't realize it yet. I can't be wrong on this damn it! I need her in my life. We belong together. I know it, and so do you, so just shut up and leave me alone."

Randi knew she had never really been in love before. Oh, there were women she had been with that she cared deeply for but had never felt that connection. Not like she did with Laney Jacobs.

From the moment she had seen Laney in the antique shop she had felt a shift in her heart. Even though she didn't care much for cops, she knew that this cop would be different.

'I could look into those baby blues forever. They call to me. She needs someone to care for her, and hold her. Someone to tell her just how beautiful she is. I am the person to do that.'

Randi was tired of being alone. She was tired of coming into this empty house every night with no sounds unless she played the stereo or television. She wanted human contact. She craved it.

When her brother Boyd died, she was left by herself. No family left to call her own with the exception of Jodi. Jodi had been her best friend forever, and was the closest thing to family she had. Everyone thought they were sisters.

She had no desire to contact her father. He was just a tool to help in her creation as far as she was concerned. Any man who could up and leave his children like that with no contact, no letters, and no calls could just burn in hell.

The blonde knew that she looked like her father from a picture that was still in the old photo album in the bookcase. Same blonde hair, same green eyes, even the same nose, though her father was much taller. Her height she got from her mother.

Her mother had spoken very little of the man when they were growing up, and somehow both Randi, and Boyd seemed to understand that he was a sore subject. Even their friends never brought up the subject of their father. They just seemed to know that it was taboo or something.

Neither child seemed that interested in his whereabouts. They did know that the man had hurt

their mother badly by leaving, and they were angry at him for this. What they didn't understand is why she never seemed to be interested in anyone else or never remarried.

She seemed happy enough as time passed by just spending time with her friends. That is, when she had spare time from working so hard between all of the jobs the woman had. It wasn't until later, when Randi and Boyd were both working that she was able to really start to go places with her friends.

She still missed her mother so much. They were close friends as well as mother and daughter. She could tell her mother anything, and did. The day she told her about her sexual preference, her mother had hugged her, and told her that she knew. She knew, and it was ok.

Her mother had asked her if Jodi and she was a couple. "Mom, Jodi's my best friend, that's it." She and Jodi almost crossed that line once a long time ago. Fully undressed, and in each others arms, they both busted out laughing then pulled away from each other.

They climbed out of bed, got dressed in their t shirts and shorts. Climbing back into bed, they cuddled up, and held each other until they fell asleep. That's the way it's been every since. They have slept together many many times, but only to hold and comfort one another, or after a night out and one was too drunk to drive home.

Randi reached over and picked up a picture of her mother off of the end table by the couch. "I wish you were here right now Mama. I really need you. I miss you and Boyd so much."

Silent tears slid down her cheeks as she buried herself deeper into the plush cushions of the couch, clutching her mother's picture to her chest. That's how she was when she woke up several hours later, still holding the picture...

Randi climbed into the steaming hot shower, and just stood there for several minutes trying to wash away the melancholy that she was feeling. Hopefully the tall detective would take her up on her offer for the baseball game this weekend.

The blonde needed to be around her, and would come up with any excuse she could think of to make that happen. Hell, she was damn near tempted to go camp out on the detectives doorstep, but she didn't want to seem desperate. 'I'm starting to get desperate though.'

After five minutes of just standing under the spray, the shop owner reached over and shut off the water to the shower. She grabbed a towel from the rack to rub her body down then her hair. Tossing the towel on a chair by her bed, she climbed under the sheets then turned off the lamp on the night stand.

Randi tossed and turned all night long. She had dreamt of her mother, her brother, and of losing them all over again. After the third time of waking up crying, she finally decided she may as well stay up.

"Cripes, I'm gonna be totally useless at the shop today." She made a pot of coffee then went to

pick out something to wear for the day. Something comfortable. Yes...

Knowing Jodi wouldn't be back to work until the end of the week, Randi probably would have called in. She had to go in and at least open. Linda could run the shop during the day since Monday was one of their slow days, then all she had to do was go in and close up afterwards. 'Now that sounds like a good idea to me...'

Dawn hadn't even come yet and the blonde had already been awake for two hours. She had consumed three quarters of the pot of coffee, and she was ready to bounce off the walls. She hated mornings, and usually wasn't a pleasant soul until around 9:00 am.

This was a new experience for her to see the sun rise, or at least it hasn't happened in a long time, and normally it was because she hadn't been to bed yet. 'Maybe I can come home and take a nap later.' "Yeah Right, when was the last time you were able to do that Rand?"

Three hours later, Randi grabbed her purse and was walking out the door to go open 'The Old Past' Antique Store. Business has been real good lately despite the robbery. Granted Randi was more alert to customers that came and went, but she was bound and determined that those men were not going to have that much control over her mind...

"Morning Randi." Linda said as she came through the glass door and the chimes rang.

"Hi Linda, how was your date with Peter last night?"

"Oh man, A.B.S.O.L.U.T.E.L.Y. wonderful. Just fabulous!"

"Well, I guess it went ok huh?" Randi laughed.

"Randi, he's the best thing that's ever happened to me. And my mom loves him, so that is a plus."

"I'd say. There's no shipments coming in today so it should be pretty quiet."

Linda watched as Randi buzzed up and down the isles tagging a few items here and there, disappear in and out of the office a few times, and then back to the counter.

"Geeze Randi, how much coffee have you had this morning?" The young college student asked her boss.

"Don't ask, it was a lot. Look, I have to run out but like I said earlier, it should be pretty quiet today. If you have any problems, call my cell phone, and I'll come back. Otherwise I'll be back in plenty of time to close. Ok?"

"Sure thing Boss Lady. Hey, why don't you just kind of take it easy today, you've been running yourself pretty ragged here lately."

"You saying I look like shit?"

"You...couldn't look like shit even if you rolled in it."

"Mmm, no wonder Peter loves you so much. It's a good thing you're taken young lady, and bat for the other team. You're good for my soul."

'Yeah, but if I did bat for your team, you would be just my type.'

"You wait Randi, that woman that is PERFECT for your soul is just around the corner beautiful."

"Sweet talker. Bye..."

Chapter Twenty Five

"Silvers, Jacobs, there's a Mrs. Preston here to see you two."

"Mrs. Preston, Ma'am," Koty referred to Dylan. "Please have a seat, what can we do for you?"

"My daughter called me last night Detective. Seems you were right on the money. As I was making some phone calls around to some of her closest friends, she called me. She's terrified that her father will find out about Trent, and keep him away. The boy is not a bad boy at all, like I said he was accused of something that he didn't do."

Koty looked between the two women then asked, "Mrs. Preston, why doesn't she just come live with you? I mean, she turns eighteen in two months anyway."

"Because the bastard has custody of her."

This time Laney spoke up. "Ma'am, no judge in his right mind is going to do anything now that she is seventeen. If she wants to move in with you, and you want her to, there is really nothing your husband will be able to do about it legally."

"You mean she can come live with us?"

"I don't see why not, but you should speak to your lawyer for more specifics."

Leanne buried her face in her partner Dylan's chest and cried. Dylan circled her arms around her lover, and held her close. "It's going to be alright Baby, we'll go see Myra today."

Koty cleared her throat a little to get the attention of the two women. "I will need to see Kelly and Trent before I can officially close this case you understand."

"Yes Detective, we understand. We will bring them in ourselves won't we Dylan."

"Yes Baby, we will." The tall woman said smiling at her lover.

The women finished, shook the detective's hands, and stood to leave. Before they turned, Koty stopped them, pulled out one of her cards, and wrote something on the back of it.

"Some friends of mine are having a party on this day. My partner and I, as well as Laney here will be there. We would love to have you two come as well. It's just a lot of food and good friends. I know you'll have a good time."

The two women got matching huge grins on their faces as Dylan reached for the card in Koty's hand.

"We don't know what to say, but yeah, we'll be there."

"Great, have a nice day ladies."

As the women left, Laney shook her head and turned to Koty. "You just charmed the pants right off of them two. No wonder all of the women are in love with you Silvers. That shit just comes so naturally to you, that you don't even realize that you are doing it."

"Shut up Jacobs."

"Holy Shit. OH MY GOD. You are blushing! You wait till I tell Kasey about this, the powerful Oz is blushing."

"Like she will believe that."

"Oh...Kasey believes everything that I tell her."

"What's that suppose to mean?"

"Oh...nothing."

"Jacobs."

Ring. Ring.

"Sorry Koty gotta answer my cell phone."

'Ha, saved by the bell.'

"Hello?"

"Hi Laney, its Kasey. I called you because I don't want Koty freaking out on me. I had to bring Chris into the emergency room this morning. She passed out at the clinic. Can you drive her over here, but don't tell her where you're going until you're already in the car?"

"No problem, we're leaving right now, see you in about ten minutes."

Laney closed her cell phone, and looked at Koty. "Come on Silvers."

"What? Who was that?"

"Just come on, we have somewhere to go." With that, she walked out the door with Koty rushing behind her.

"Shit Laney, wait up..."

Laney had just turned onto First Colonial Road when Koty finally got her to answer her question. "Are you going to tell me where we are going now Laney? You're making me nervous."

"We're going to the emergency room. Kasey had to take Chris there a little while ago, she passed out."

"Shit! I knew something was wrong yesterday, why didn't she call me? Why did she call you!?"

"Because you would freak out just like you are doing right now Silvers. You would have busted every damn traffic law there is if not get us in an accident. She was worried about you."

"Worried my fucking ass! That's my damn Sister in Law we are talking about who just happens to be pregnant."

"Don't you dare be pissed at Kasey for this Koty, she did the right thing." Laney glanced at her partner.

"Bullshit!"

"Where's Chris Kasey, what's going on?" Koty bellowed as soon as she came in through the doors to where Kasey was sitting in a chair in the waiting room.

Kasey glanced between her lover and Laney. 'Uh oh.' "The doctor is still with her Honey." She said as she stood to go to hug Koty. When Koty stiffened, Kasey pulled away hesitantly.

"Honey we should know something soon."

"Why didn't you call me Kase? What happened? I told you yesterday that something was wrong, why DIDN'T you CALL me?"

"Honey, I wanted you to get here safely, I didn't want to have to worry about you too."

"Damn it Kase, I...where's Monty? Have you called him yet?"

"He's on his way he should be here any time now. Baby, I'm sorry." Kasey approached her lover again to pull her into a hug. This time Koty wrapped her arms around the smaller woman and pulled her close, leaning down to place a soft kiss on her lips.

"No, I'm sorry. I know I can be a complete ass sometimes."

"Yeah but you're my ass and I love you, she's going to be ok Honey."

A short thin woman with a white lab coat and clip board in hand, came through the doors and approached the three women reaching for Kasey's hand. "Hi Kasey, you are here with Chris Silvers Right?"

"Hi Kara, and yes. Chris is mine and my partner here, Koty sister in law. How is she doing, and what happened?"

"Chris is fine for now; you can go back and see her as soon as I'm through here. They will be working on her release papers in a few minutes. Let me tell you what we think is happening here.

"Chris's blood pressure was elevated quite high when you brought her in here. 170 over 100 to be exact. Her pressure is down and stable for now, but she needs to see her doctor a.s.a.p. for a follow up. As far as her passing out, that could be a number of things. The pregnancy in itself along with the stress and the combination with the high blood pressure isn't a good combination.

"Now I know that I don't have to explain to you Kasey what high blood pressure and pregnancy can mean, but I will explain it to Koty, and your friend here. First, does Chris have high blood pressure?"

Kasey looked to Koty for this answer, and Koty shook her head. "No, she doesn't. Could this just be a fluke thing Doctor?"

"Yes, it could be, that's why I want her to follow up with her doctor. If she doesn't normally have high blood pressure, and starts now, it's what we refer to as Gestational Hypertension. This must be closely monitored by her doctor.

"Hypertension can cause harm to the mother's kidneys, and other organs. It can also cause low birth weight and early delivery. In severe cases the mother can develop Preeclampsia, or, toxemia of pregnancy which can threaten both mother and fetus.

"Now, Preeclampsia doesn't typically start until after the twentieth week, but it can be a very serious complication. Now that is not what I am saying is going to happen, but it is something that needs to be monitored and watched. Kasey I'm sure you can answer more questions if there are any. Right now I know you're anxious to see Chris, so I'll take you back there."

Laney placed a hand on Kasey's shoulder, and gave a light squeeze. "The two of you go back there, and I'll send Monty back when he arrives. Go on now."

"Thanks Laney."

Kasey reached for her tall lover's hand, and followed the doctor through the doors then down a long hall to the emergency room cubical that held individuals with different stages of emergencies. Koty had not spoken a word since the doctor had approached them, and Kasey squeezed her hand, and pulled her a little closer to her side as they walked.

"She's going to be alright Honey we will make sure of it. We'll make sure she makes that doctors appointment in the morning, and she can tell us a lot more, ok?"

Koty just nodded, and squeezed her lovers hand back. She was afraid to speak. Afraid, that if she opened her mouth, she would cry. Nothing could happen to Chris. Monty would never be able to survive it. Hell, she would never be able to survive it.

Monty, Chris, and Kasey were the only family she had left, besides Jamie and Trish and she wasn't prepared for anything to happen to either one of them. Now her little niece or nephew is involved as well...

Chapter Twenty Six

Chris was released with the promise to make an appointment with her doctor first thing in the morning. Koty assured the attending doctor that Chris had no choice but to make that appointment if Koty herself had to make it for her.

After hugs and many promises to take it easy for the rest of the day, Monty took his wife home while Kasey decided to have lunch with the two detectives.

Through out the whole lunch, Koty seemed distracted, and Kasey knew that her partner was thinking about Chris and her condition. Kasey knew that as long as Chris took it easy, and followed her doctor's orders, she should be just fine.

Convincing Koty of this however was a completely different story. Since the whole ordeal with the Roy Coleman case, Koty tended to be a little overly protective when it came to her family. She seemed to always be looking over her shoulder like something was going to happen at any giving moment.

Right when Kasey thought that the tall detective was finally starting to relax a little, this happened with Chris. Kasey knew that she would have to work a little bit harder at trying to ease her partners' fears that something bad was going to happen to one of her family.

Kasey just hoped that this wasn't something that would start Koty to drinking heavy again. Koty's drinking habits earlier in their relationship had a lot to be desired. The tall woman just recently cut way back, only drinking occasionally. Kasey prayed that this wouldn't set things off.

The doctor was brought out of her quiet thoughts by hearing Koty laugh at something Laney had just said to her. She just caught the tail end of the conversation, but it was something about

Laney swinging, and Laney blushing a crimson red.

"Sweetheart, would you leave Laney alone, why do you insist on picking on her?"

"Because Baby, she has a crush on one little Miss Randi Daniels."

Kasey rubbed her hand over her face to hide a smile because she was sure that Koty was right on the money on this one, but kept that smile to herself. "Honey just leave Laney alone, and quit picking on her...So what's going on now?"

Laney wadded up her napkin then threw it at a smirking Koty. "She's picking on me because Randi has asked me to the Tides game on Saturday, and I decided to tell her yes, that I would go with her. And, just because I decided to go, your wife here thinks that I have a crush on her. Like two grown women can't go to a game together without something going on."

"Hey wait a minute," Koty protested. "I think two women can go to a game together without something happening, I just know that there is something between you two, even if you two don't see it."

Koty threw the napkin back at her partner. "Besides, look at how much you blush when ever her name is just mentioned. Much less if you see her walk in a room."

Koty then lost her cocky grin. "Besides Laney, even if you are, which I'm not saying that you are, but even if you are...well...you know that Kasey and I are behind you all the way, and will help you in any way. It's not easy when you first figure these things out about yourself. So...just know that we will help."

Laney lost her smile, and briefly all color left her face. Suddenly a huge grin split her face. "You sappy shithead, just finish your lunch and drop the subject."

"That's a great idea," Kasey interjected. "Let's finish our lunch Sweetheart because I have to get to the clinic. Susan is filling in for me until I can get there, and I don't want her overwhelmed..."

Koty walked her wife to her car then pulled her into a tight hug. Leaning down she placed a quick soft kiss to the doctor's cheek, taking note of many people standing around in the parking lot watching them intently.

"Ok Baby, I'll see you this evening when I get home." Koty released her tight hold, but still held her at arms length.

"Ok Detective, but promise me you won't dwell to much on Chris's condition while you're at work."

"I...I'm not..." Koty just gave it up though because she knew that Kasey had her. "Alright Baby, I'll try not to."

Kasey reached up and kissed her lover lightly on the lips, not giving a shit what people saw or thought. "Thank you for not trying to deny it, I'll see you tonight." Then she climbed into her Mustang, and drove off.

Koty walked back to Laney's SUV and climbed in. "Ok Jacobs, let's go see what our friendly city has waiting for us. Call in, and let them know that we are off lunch."

"Let's do that, but Silvers? You call in that we are off lunch; I'm the one that's driving."

"Yeah yeah, just a small technicality. Just drive James..."

The two detectives drove to a liquor store that had just been robbed and, the clerk had been shot. As they arrived, the area was already surrounded by three police units.

Fortunately for the clerk, he was only hit in the shoulder, and would be alright. He was standing outside talking to an officer as Koty and Laney arrived at the same time as the paramedics.

A description had already been giving, and units were searching for a young white male in camouflage pants and, a black hoody jacket. He was last seen running through the parking lot of the Plaza, then across Virginia Beach Blvd.

Unfortunately, traffic was still thick from the lunch hour and they lost sight of the shooter. Moments later, a unit called in that they spotted him running through Pinewood Gardens Apartments.

Just as two of the units at the liquor store were getting ready to respond, a call came in that they caught him, and had him in custody. Koty and Laney, no longer needed, headed back to the station...

Chapter Twenty Seven

Saturday morning arrived with Laney feeling just a little apprehensive, and a little excited about the upcoming baseball game with Randi. 'Well, it's not like it's a date or anything right? I mean...well...it's not is it?'

Just as Laney was rinsing out her coffee cup her phone rang, and brought her out of her musings. "Hello?"

"Hi Laney its Randi."

Laney felt the smile come to her face, and the blush that instantly followed. 'Oh Christ!' "Hi Randi"

"Are we still on for today? You're not going to back out on me are you?"

"No, I told you last night that I would go, and I'm actually looking forward to it. It's been awhile

since I've been to a ball game, by the way; who are they playing?"

"The Richmond Braves."

"Oh boy, and who are you going to be rooting for?"

"Well the Tides of course! Who else?"

"Um...you and I might have a problem then Randi."

"Oh no way 'THING', don't you dare tell me you are going to be rooting for the Braves!"

"Fraid so Dear, this is going to be sooo much fun, don't you think?"

"Oh, you are a brave one Honey."

'She called me Honey again.' Laney smiled to herself.

"Be ready in an hour Detective, I'm coming to pick you up a little early, I won't take no for an answer."

"Pushy little thing aren't you?"

"Don't start with the little jokes 'Thing'.

"Ok Sparky, see you in an hour..."

"No way Blue! That was a foul ball, you need glasses!" Randi was standing while yelling at the umpire who just called a fair ball down the third base line, bringing a Richmond Brave to first base putting a man on first, and second.

Laney was finding it hard to contain the laughter that was building up with Randi's antics. 'Feisty, and cute.' She could no longer deny that she thought Randi was attractive. Very attractive.

"Face it Sparky, it was a fair ball. Maybe I'll buy you a pair of glasses."

"Fair my a...butt. If it was the Braves that hit that ball you would be singing a different tune, and you know it."

"Yeah maybe. But. It wasn't the Braves so sit down like a good little girl and eat your hot dog."

Almost under her breath, Randi came back with; "I'll show you little."

"What was that Sparky?"

"Nothing, want another beer?"

"No, I'm going to be driving us home."

"Ok then, I'll have another. Sure you can handle my big truck?"

"Yes Rand," Laney said with an exaggerated eye roll. "I think I can handle it."

'I like it when she calls me Rand. The way it rolls off her tongue is...'

"Oh come on Blue! He was safe!" Laney wasn't standing, but she was yelling just as loud as Randi had done only moments ago causing the shop owner to burst out laughing.

"Face it 'Thing', he wasn't safe. You having fun?"

As Laney turned to face her, and gave her the most beautiful smile Randi had ever seen in her life. Her breath caught as her heart picked up double time.

"Rand, I can honestly say, this is the most fun I've had in a long, long time. I'm really glad you invited me."

Randi couldn't take her eyes off of the intense blue of Laney's, and in a raspy voice she replied; "It was my pleasure Laney."

'No. I think the pleasure is all mine.' Laney quickly looked away as she felt her cheeks go aflame, as well as her southern region. 'Christ, she's going to know exactly what you were thinking Jacobs.'

'I would give a million dollars to know what she was just thinking of to make her blush like that. She is going to be the death of me yet, I want to be with her so bad...'

Chapter Twenty Eight

The Tides ended up winning 5-4. Randi was grinning, and Laney was sulking. They gathered up their belongings including the pink 'Tides' hat that Laney bought for Randi on one of her bathroom trips.

Exiting through the gate, Randi felt Laney lightly place her hand at the small of her back, guiding her through the mass of people leaving. She smiled to herself and decided to just enjoy the moment.

It took them twenty minutes just to get out of the parking lot, and another ten to the interstate going back to Virginia Beach. The traffic was just crazy, and Randi was secretly glad that Laney was driving through it all and not her, since she tended to get a little road rage every now and

then.

"Why don't I buy you a cup of coffee Detective?"

"I'll do you one better. Why don't you come over and I'll make some fabulous French Vanilla coffee?"

"Mmm, French Vanilla. A woman after my own heart."

'Yeah, you could kind of say that.' "So that's a yes?"

"That is most definitely a yes." 'Absolutely, positively a yes...'

As Laney was making coffee, Randi was in the living room looking at some pictures that were sitting on the bookshelf that was in the corner by the big bay window.

The one that had caught her attention was an old photo of a young Laney between a man that could not deny being the tall detectives' father, and of a statuesque brunette who looked like she could have graced the covers of model magazines. 'Well, she was bound to grow up beautiful, look at her parents.'

"My parents and I when I was seventeen." Laney stated as she walked up behind the Antique Shop owner.

"Your father is a very good looking man, and your mother is beautiful. You get your good looks honestly."

Laney blushed, and bent to sit the coffee on the table to try and hide it. "Um, thank you."

Randi just smiled and acted as though she hadn't notice the blush. "Thank you for the coffee, it smells yummy."

"It is yummy, sit down and try it. It's my own recipe."

Randi took a taste and emitted a soft moan causing Laney's throat to tighten. As Randi closed her eyes to savor the taste, the look on her face held Laney spellbound.

Randi opened her eyes and locked onto Laney's. Neither looked away for what seemed an eternity to Randi, until finally she spoke. "You've mentioned your father before, but what about your mother?"

"She passed away almost eleven years ago."

"Shit, I'm sorry Lane...'

"It's ok. We weren't really that close, but it hit me pretty hard when it happened. Kind of like

why didn't I do this, why didn't I do that, that sort of thing. It was a long time ago though, so I'm alright with it now..."

Looking around the living room and appreciating the way that Laney had decorated her new house the young blonde smiled. "You really have a touch for decorating Laney; I should take pointers from you about my own place."

"I think your place is rather cute; well...except maybe your lavender dining room."

"Hey, what's wrong with lavender?"

Nothing's wrong with lavender; I personally like the color, just not for a dining room. A bedroom wouldn't be too bad."

"My bedroom is a pale yellow."

"Now pale yellow is pretty." 'Especially the pale yellow leather outfit you wore when we went out.' This thought brought an instant blush to Laney's cheeks, and once again she turned her head to try and hide it.

'I wonder what made her blush this time?'

The two women talked about many topics, from childhood stories, antiques, baseball, likes and dislikes on different foods. Before either of them noticed it was already 10:30. Randi rose to take her coffee cup into the kitchen.

"Crud, its getting late and I need to open the shop in the morning."

'I don't want her to leave yet. I don't want her to leave ev...' "Um... alright. Thank you for inviting me to the ballgame Rand, I really had a great time. I'll walk you to the door."

"No, thank you for going with me Detective; I too had a great time." Randi smiled and grabbed her new hat that Laney had bought her.

Randi turned to face Laney as she got to the front door and regarded the almost fearful look on the older woman's face. 'Is she afraid of something? Why would she... Oh God, I just need to turn and walk through this door without looking back.'

Before she could consciously think about what she was doing, the younger women took the two steps forward to close the distance between them. Reaching up, she placed a hand on Laney's cheek, and then stood on her tip toes to place a soft butterfly kiss on her lips.

Pulling back to leave, she was surprised to feel Laney leaning in to return the kiss. Several kisses actually. Just soft feather like touches at first, but when she felt Laney's lips part she thought that

she would pass out from sheer lack of oxygen reaching her brain. 'Oh sweet mother...'

As the kiss intensified she reached her hands into Laney's hair. Randi felt the taller woman place her hands on her butt and pull her into her pelvic. At the sound of Laney's whimper, Randi knew she needed to pull away right then or she wouldn't be able to hold any of her emotions back.

"Laney. Laney Honey...we need to quit now."

"What...why?" Laney was breathless and her heart was beating so hard that it almost hurt.

Placing both hands on the taller woman's face, she made her look into her eyes. "Because you are not ready for what is going to happen if you don't quit kissing me like that."

"I...I'm sorry."

"Don't you dare apologize Laney Jacobs. Don't you dare, and please don't regret showing your feelings. You have no idea how long I've been waiting to do that, and you have no idea how close I am to taking your hand and leading you to your bedroom."

"Like I said though, you are not ready yet and to tell you the truth, I don't think I am either. I know what my heart and body wants, and it definitely wants you. I hope I get another chance, but if not I'll savor this moment for the rest of my life."

"You Miz Daniels, are a sweet talker. Please drive careful, there are assholes that don't know how to drive around here and I don't want to get a phone call saying you were in an accident."

"Can I call you in the morning?" Randi reached for the door handle and opened the door.

"If you feel the want."

"Oh don't you worry about that Laney Jacobs, I FEEL the want." Randi leaned in and placed the most sensuous kiss on her lips then drew back.

"Go Rand." Laney managed to croak out and lightly push the shop owner to the door. 'Please go, I'm about to die of embarrassment because of my desperate behavior.'

"I'll call you tomorrow." With that, Randi was out the door.

Chapter Twenty Nine

The tall detective leaned against the door when she closed it. She could not believe what she had just done. 'Shit...I kissed a woman. Not just any woman Jacobs, Randi Daniels. Sweet, beautiful, sexy Randi Daniels.'

"Christ, what in the hell am I going to do? I can't believe I just did that." She spoke out loud to the lamp sitting on the table in the hallway. 'I can never let that happen again. Never, ever again.'

She won't understand; what is she going to think of me?' "It doesn't matter Jacobs, just make sure you end anything before it even starts..."

The detective tossed and turned for the better part of her sleeping hours. Thoughts of the young shop owner kissing her, was plaguing her mind and she just couldn't seem to stop her brain from hitting the rewind button to view those kisses over, and over again.

Richard had never invoked the feelings in her that Randi seemed to do. Even in the early part of their relationship had she had never felt the hot desire that she felt just being in close proximity to the woman.

She didn't really understand any of this and wondered if she should even try. Randi was after all a beautiful and desirable woman, why wouldn't she be attracted to her. 'Because I have never been attracted to a woman before... Well, I can't really say that... Just not in a way that I wanted to be with them. Sexually that is.'

When morning finally came around, she wasn't the least bit surprised that she was in a cranky mood. As she sat at the kitchen table drinking her coffee, she contemplated calling the younger woman so she could explain why there couldn't be anything more to what had happened the previous evening. Just then, she was jarred from her thoughts when the phone rang...

"Hello?"

"Hi beautiful, can I come over so that we can talk?"

"Um, hi Rand." 'Maybe I don't have to be the one to say anything. Maybe she has realized that this cant be.'

"Ok," was all that she could muster up to say at first. "If you haven't had coffee yet, I'll make you some when you get here."

"Are you ok Lane? You sound a little off this morning."

"Of course I'm ok. Just didn't sleep to well last night." 'Oh great Jacobs, why don't you just blurt out why you didn't sleep well.'

"Are you hungry? I was going to stop by and pick up some bagels."

"Oh man, you just made my stomach growl that sounds wonderful. And Rand?"

"Yes?"

"Hurry, now I'm starving."

"You got it Honey, be there shortly, bye."

With the last line being said, the blonde hung up the phone. She had an uneasy feeling in the pit of her stomach and wondered if Laney was regretting what had happened. 'You'll just have to accept whatever it is she has to say ole girl. Please don't tell me that you regret it Lane...'

Before Laney even had a chance to fully open the door she found her arms full of the soft yet firm compact body of the shop owner. "Um, hi Ra..." She found her sentence cut off by the extremely soft lips pressing into her own.

"Before you say anything Laney, please let me say something first?"

"Alright, but first can I have a bagel?"

The blonde laughed and softly placed a quick kiss on the detectives' cheek. "Sure, come on. I'm starving myself and I had a hard time not eating one of those on my way over here."

The two women ate in silence except for the soft moans the detective was making over the taste of the soft blueberry bagel she was eating, which caused the younger woman's mouth to go completely dry.

'God, she can be so sensual and she doesn't even know it. Her ex was a fucking fool to cheat on her, an absolute fucking fo...'

"More coffee Rand?"

"Sure, that would be great. You know, you are going to spoil me with your coffee. I'd even turn down Starbucks for this every morning.' 'Uh oh, I guess I shouldn't have said that.' Randi contemplated the look on the detectives' face.

"Look Laney, what I wanted to talk to you about is what happened last night. Wait Lane," Randi said quickly when Laney went to speak. "I don't want to push you into anything that you aren't ready for or don't want."

"Randi I...I have never been wi..."

"Another woman. I know this Honey, that's why I want to take this slow for you if this is something that you even want to try."

Laney looked at her friend for a moment before she spoke, deciding that she needed to be truthful with this woman. "I'd be lying to you and myself if I said that I wasn't attracted to you Rand. You are a very beautiful, caring, and sexy woman."

'She thinks I'm sexy? Oh man is this lady something or what?'

"I'm a little frightened of my feelings for you; I've never felt this way towards another woman"

before." 'Towards anyone but I'm not telling you that.' "Can you give me time?"

"Honey, I'd give you anything in the world that I possibly could. Um... You are absolutely the best kisser that I have ever met."

The taller woman's face turned a crimson red and Randi chuckled to herself. 'I so love it when she does that. It brightens her eyes and brings such a sparkle to them.'

Randi stood and looked the detective in the eyes. "Ok, I have to go open the shop. I just wanted you to know that I won't push you into anything but know this Laney Jacobs; I will not give up even if it takes me a lifetime. You got that?"

"Yeah, I got it." Laney smiled and walked the younger woman to the door. 'This morning wasn't so bad after all Jacobs. I'm surprised that she didn't go running for the hills.' She was pulled out of her musings when she felt the soft lips touch her own.

"Have a good morning Detective, I'll call you later."

"Bye Rand..."

'So much for telling her that this couldn't go any further.' "Shut up, I couldn't help myself." The tall detective argued with herself after the younger woman left her house.

'Yeah well, you didn't even try. You were too busy playing suck face.'

"I said shut up!"

Chapter Thirty

"I have to tell you something Silvers' but you need to promise not to be smug or tell me you told me so." Laney told Koty when it was just the two of them sitting at their desks' before anyone else had shown up.

Koty looked at her partners' serious expression and knew that this wouldn't be a good time to tease her about whatever it was she was going to tell her.

"What's up Laney is something wrong?"

"Yes...well no nothing is really wrong so to speak, I... well I... shit this is kind of hard for me."

"Out with it Jacobs, whatever it is I promise I won't be smug or tell you I told you so."

"I kissed Randi Saturday night."

Laney saw Kotys' surprised expression as her eyes went wide.

"And Sunday morning."

Koty was silent for such a long time Laney didn't think that she was going to say anything. "Say something Dakota."

"Wow. Um... you said night and morning... did you two umm..."

"NO! Shit Koty I was scared to death just kissing her. She stayed for coffee Saturday night after the baseball game and it just happened. She brought over some bagels yesterday morning before she had to open her shop. "

"Well did you like it? I mean going by the flaming red color of your face, which suits you by the way, I'm just assuming that you did."

The detectives face turned even a darker shade as she remembered just how much she liked it. "Yes I did." Laney said softly. She blushed again then leapt from her chair.

"Shit Koty what am I going to do about this? You're the expert here."

"I'm hardly an expert on this, and I can't tell you what to do. This has to be something that you decide to do on your own Laney. It has to be something that you really want. If it is something you want to pursue with her I will be here for you to talk to.

"I will even give what advice I can and help you anyway that you need. Hell, I think she's a hotty myself. If I wasn't married I would..."

"Watch it buddy."

Koty laughed out loud at the slight look of jealousy on her partners' face. 'Now that is just fucking cute as hell.'

"This isn't funny Silvers don't laugh at me."

"I'm not laughing at you Laney I was laughing at the jealous look on your face."

"What!? I DO NOT have a jealous look on my face that's just bullshit!" Laney realized just how loud she had said that and blushed hotly as two other detectives walked into the room.

"Can we discuss this later? This is so embarrassing to me."

"We can discuss it later but Laney, please don't be embarrassed by this at least not with me ok?"

"Yeah fine..."

The tall detective couldn't get Randi out of her thoughts. She still thought that this was a really bad idea but couldn't seem to help herself. She slapped Koty on the shoulder when her partner busted out laughing when she caught Laney blushing furiously.

"Quit laughing at me Silvers."

"I'm not laughing at you Laney, I just think it is cute as shit."

"It would be cute if we were in first grade. I'm 38 years old damn it!"

"Well, it's still cute if you ask me but I'll try not to laugh anymore."

"See that you don't. You and Kasey are going to Jamie's party tonight right?" Laney said trying to change the present subject they were on.

"Oh yeah, I wouldn't hear the end of it from Jamie or Kasey if I said that I wasn't. You're going right? I know Kase will be upset if you don't."

"Yeah I'm going, I promised that I would."

"Good. Why don't we pick you up so you don't have to worry about driving? That way you can have a few extra drinks."

"Yeah, that would be cool, can't have an officer of the law driving around this city intoxicated now can we?"

"Nope, we sure can't." Koty laughed as they drove towards Virginia Beach Blvd...

The two detectives and doctor walked into Jamie and Trish's house which already had about fifteen people there around seven pm. "Sweetheart, why don't you and Laney go ahead and find somewhere to sit and I will bring you two something to drink." Kasey told Koty as she rubbed circles on her back.

Koty leaned down and placed a soft kiss on her lovers' lips. "Thanks Baby." Turning to her partner she said; "Hey Laney, you want a mixed drink or wine?"

"Just wine for now thanks."

"Make that two wines for now Kase, maybe I'll have a drink a little latter."

"Kay."

Emerald green eyes watched the two detectives come into the living room to find somewhere to sit smiling widely as she watched the shorter of the two. Well if you could call 5'10 short.

'God, I was hoping she would be here tonight, I'm glad Kristi invited me and Jodi to come with her.'

She was brought out of her musings as a napkin was wiped across her chin. She turned with a frown when she saw Jodi laughing at her.

"You were starting to drool and I didn't want you to make a fool of yourself."

"You are such the comedian aren't you?" Randi snatched the napkin from her friend then threw it at her."

Laney turned at the sound of loud laughter and caught her breath as she spotted Randi and Jodi as they started wrestling on the love seat. Green eyes looked up and locked with blue and momentarily neither one seemed to be able to breathe.

The moment was broken when Koty elbowed her friend in the side. "I'm going to have to ask Jamie to turn the AC down lower if you put off any more heat from that look Jacobs."

"Shut up Silvers!" Laney hissed under her breath. "I didn't know that she was going to be here tonight." 'And I know that she said that she and Jodi were just best friends but do they have to be touching each other like that all of the time?'

"Jamie and Trish know a lot of people Jacobs, I'm sure one of their friends probably invited them. Besides," Koty smiled, "aren't you glad to see her?"

"You're asking for it Silvers. I'm going to tell your wife you are picking on me again."

Koty gave an indignant huff. "And I am supposed to be frightened?"

Koty squealed as a hard pinch was placed on her rear. "Dakota Silvers, quit picking on Laney and behave yourself and you damned sure better be frightened." Kasey said as she handed her lover and Laney their wine.

"Yes Ma'am."

Laney broke out in a sharp laugh. "Ha, you are so whipped!" Now it was Laney's turn to squeal as a pinch landed on her rear as well.

"That goes for you too Detective Jacobs, you behave as well."

"Yes Ma'am."

Kasey grinned brightly at her control of the two tall detectives. "That's right, always listen to and respect what your Mama says."

Koty leaned inward to leer at the doctor and whispered. "I'm not having very motherly thoughts

about you right now Miss Brooks." Kasey blushed and Laney laughed at loud again.

"Hello detective." Laney felt a feather light touch on her hip where a small hand rested. Her eyes followed the hand up to the owner's eyes and smiled.

"Miss Daniels, how are you?"

"Much better now, good to see another face that I know. A friend invited Jodi and I and now I'm real glad she did. How is the house coming along?"

"Well actually pretty slow, I haven't had much time in the past day and a half since I've seen you last. I've been sooo busy, with flying to France, visiting the Statue of Liberty and..."

"Everyone has to be a comedian tonight don't they?" Randi laughed at Laney's attempt at the small joke. The detective finally seemed to be feeling a little more comfortable around her.

"Can I buy you a drink from this nice establishment later and maybe have a dance?"

Laney's eyes widened just a bit before she spoke. "The drink will be fine. I don't know about the dance. I..."

"So'kay Laney, no pressure alright?"

"Alright." She watched Randi walk away from her to speak to a large man walking in the door with a box that looked like it might be full of comic books. 'Comic books huh, wonder if he has any Fantastic Four?' Laney blushed again as she remembered Randi calling her the Thing.

Koty was walking towards Laney when the front door suddenly opened and she saw two familiar faces come through. A huge smile lit her face and she went to greet them giving the taller of the two a crushing hug.

"Mel. God it's good to see you." She turned to the shorter one with the curly hair and gave her a light kiss on the lips causing her to blush and smack Koty on the butt. "Gina, you are looking as cute as ever, how are you?"

"You Miss Dakota Silvers are a big old flatterer and I'm doing just great, where's your wife?"

"I'm right here, how are you guys?" Kasey said as she hugged Koty's long time friends. "I'm really glad you guys could make it, I wasn't so sure you would with your new rehab center being built."

Mel and Gina had been doing wildlife rehab at their home in the mountains of West Virginia and decided to open up a medical center for the wildlife and actually bringing on two veterinarians and four assistants. Mel said she had so much money from her father's will that it would have

made him proud to know that she did this. He had been a huge animal lover.

"We have two people we trust to handle things for two days while we're here and Gina's sister is at the house watching the dogs while we're gone."

"Dogs?" Koty asked as they walked further into the house so Mel could place their suitcases by the bedroom door they would stay in while they were here.

"Yeah, dogs. We rescued two little beagle puppies from the shelter a week ago. You guys are due to come up there soon and I know Kasey that you will just fall right in love with them."

Kasey grabbed Gina's hand and pulled her towards the living room making their partners follow behind them. "We will be there for the opening of your clinic you can count on that."

"Good, now lead me to Jamie and Trish. I haven't seen them since Jamie was in the hospital..."

Randi watched as a short Spanish looking woman walked up to Laney with two glasses of wine in her hands and scowled at the look on the other woman's face.

"Hello good looking woman. I see mi alto Amiga really did bring me a present si?"

Laney ducked her head slightly embarrassed at the attention Koty's friend was giving her. "Hi."

"Relax Detective, Koty will tell you I really am harmless. Sometimes." She said with a laugh when she saw the blush on Laney's cheeks. "Please, I just brought you a glass of wine since I noticed your empty glass and just wanted to say hello."

"Sorry, and thank you for the wine. It's Alex right?" Laney asked as she extended her hand for the smaller woman to shake.

"Yes, and you're Laney correct?"

"I am. So Alex, what makes a woman want to be a Coroner?"

Alex directed her hand towards two chairs that had been placed against the wall for extra seating. "Please sit with me for a moment Detective will you?"

Laney sat as the other woman sat as well and turned towards her. "I have always liked solving puzzles even as a child. The more complicated the puzzle, the more I just had to figure it out. Solving a crime is much like a huge puzzle no?"

"Well, I guess it is. I've always liked puzzles myself. It's so fulfilling when you finally put the last piece in place and see the whole picture. I guess our professions are very similar really but mine is a lot easier."

"Maybe, but yours is also a lot more dangerous. The dead can't harm you. Your puzzles carry guns and knives and such. I don't envy you that Detective. So I say maybe we both have similar jobs. Speaking of jobs how is that case going with the young ladies car?"

"Pouting doesn't suit you my friend." Jodi said as she sat next to Randi. "Who is that she is talking to?"

"Don't know, I've never seen her before but she doesn't have to sit so close to her and she damn sure doesn't have to keep touching her while they are talking."

"So why don't you just go over there and claim your territory?"

"It's not like that Jo, she isn't my territory. She isn't my anything."

"But you want her to be don't you?"

"Jesus, am I that obvious?" Randi sighed as she plopped her head against the back of the love seat.

"It's only obvious to those who know and love you Sweet Cheeks. And to those who don't know you so well but are watching you now."

Randi followed Jodi's gaze and met up with the blue eyes of Koty. She sighed harder and slumped further into the cushion she was sitting on. 'God I am so out of my league here. I feel like a teenager.' She glanced once more in Laney's direction just in time to see the Spanish woman stand.

She felt the tension start to leave her chest only to rush back like a blow to the stomach and shot invisible daggers across the room when the woman leaned over and placed a soft kiss to Laney's cheek...

"Thank you pretty lady for joining me in conversation, I think I will take my leave now before that cute little blonde sitting in that love seat comes over and kicks my ass."

Laney's eyes widened as she quickly glanced at Randi. 'Why does she look so pissed off?' "Thank you Alex and enjoy the party." She told the Coroner and stood to go stand by the love seat and cute blonde in question.

"Hey Sparky."

Randi looked at Laney then over to the evil harlot walking into the kitchen. She looked back at Laney and the hard lines around her mouth softened into a smile. "Hello Thing. Enjoying the evening?"

"Quite. I'm going out on the deck for a few minutes to get some fresh air, care to join me?"

"Lead on." Randi stood and followed the woman in front of her while she enjoyed the view of Laney's backside until she almost slammed into the back of her when Laney stopped to allow two women to come in through the patio doors before she walked out.

Other than a couple that was walking towards the end of the back yard they were the only ones out there. Laney leaned against the railing of the deck and took in a lung full of air. "It's really nice out tonight. I'm surprised that more people aren't out here right now."

"Um, it is nice out but right this minute I'm glad they are inside."

"Yeah, How come?" Laney turned towards her companion just as Randi moved in closer causing her breathing to cease completely.

Randi moved in even closer and put her hand behind the detective's head. "Because right this second I really want to kiss you."

"Randi I..."

"Shhh." The younger woman pulled Laney's head down and placed her lips on the softest she had ever known in her life. She pulled back briefly but when Laney didn't seem like she wanted to stop her she leaned back in for a more passionate kiss.

Time seemed to stand still as Randi found her hands wondering slowly up inside Laney's soft blue t-shirt. She heard a muted moan as her thumb brushed under Laney's right breast. "God, I must have died." She husked out.

"W...What do you mean?" Laney breathed out harshly trying to catch her breath.

Randi placed her lips to Laney's left ear. "I must be dead because surely you are an Angel. I know that sounds like a line but it isn't, I really believe that."

"Rand, I..." Laney cleared her throat to try again. "I..."

"Talk to me Lane. Don't be afraid to..."

"Come home with me." Was whispered before total silence.

"Laney, don't say things that ..."

"I mean it Randi. Please don't make me beg, this is really hard for me. Say no if you don't want to but..."

"Yes." Was all that was said before the younger woman pulled Laney into a full bodied hug.

"Lead on."

The detective reached down and gently entwined her fingers with Randi pulling her towards the sliding glass doors. Randi went to find Jodi to tell her where she was going and Laney went to seek out Koty and Kasey finding them leaning against the wall with Koty's arms wrapped securely around her partner.

"Hey guys, I'm going to take off, I..." She stopped briefly as Randi slid up next to her and placed her hand on her back.

"Ready?" The antique dealer asked with a sweet smile.

Koty got a shit eating grin on her face and barked out a laugh which she quickly stifled when she felt an elbow to her ribs from her lover.

Kasey smiled at her friend. "That's alright Laney. Do you need to take the Mustang? We can borrow Jamie or Trish's car later."

Laney turned to the woman at her side with a raised eyebrow. Randi grinned and said, "No, I have my truck. Jodi is getting a ride home with Kristi."

Laney smiled sweetly at her companion and Koty rolled her eyes and had to smother a laugh for fear of Kasey's wrath. "You two drive careful." She said instead.

Chapter Thirty One

Laney closed the door behind them and leaned against it reaching behind her to turn the knob of the deadbolt. Briefly closing her eyes she felt Randi's hands slide on both sides of her hips. She slowly opened them and felt as much as saw the raw need in the younger woman's emerald eyes.

"Laney, you have been awfully quiet the whole trip here, having second thoughts?" Randi asked as she slowly slid her hands up under her friends' breast.

The taller woman's body shuddered as her eyes closed once more. "No. I..." She swallowed hard. "I'm not sure what to do. You know I've never been with..."

"I know. And yes you do. All you have to do is go with what you feel Sweetheart."

"But I feel so much right now, where do I start?"

"Hey, why don't we just lie in bed and let me hold you for awhile first. We will take it from there and see what happens. If something does...then beautiful. If not, then we always have tomorrow or the next day okay? This won't happen until you are completely ready Lane."

Randi gently pulled Laney towards where she remembered the bedroom was when she helped her move the bed in there. Kicking her shoes off by the bedroom door she reached down and

pulled off the older woman's sneakers.

She took Laney's hand again to lead her to the bed. "Come on, let's just lie awhile."

Laney pulled her to a stop. "Wait Rand."

Mistaking the hesitation Randi paused. "It's okay Honey; we can do this another time."

"No. That's not what I mean. I..."

"I won't hurt you Lane. I would never ever do that."

"I know." Laney clasped the edges of the younger woman's green Polo shirt and slowly pulled it over her head pausing to just take in the sight in front of her before she dropped it on the floor at their feet. She swallowed hard then leaned in for a soft kiss.

"Are you sure about this?"

Laney couldn't speak so she just nodded her head to let her companion know that she was sure. She placed her hand on the cheek close to her lips and leaned for yet another kiss.

Randi reciprocated and pulled the t-shirt off of the lean body before her placing a series of soft kisses to the swell of Laney's breast. "So soft," she murmured...

As Randi lowered herself onto Laney's body both women gasped at the sheer erotic feeling of skin meeting skin for the first time. "Jesus Rand..."

"I know Honey, I feel it too." She lowered herself fully putting all of her weight on the taller body beneath her and truly felt as if she were in Heaven. Slowly she slid her hand over her lovers' hip then down over the muscle hardened thigh.

"Let me love you Lane. Let me show you how beautiful it is between two women." She whispered.

"Please." Laney rasped. And Randi did. Then Laney did. Then Randi did again.

A single blue eye opened and looked down. Seeing the blonde head asleep on her shoulder with an arm across her belly and a toned thigh draped over her leg, she smiled and sighed deeply. 'Adorable.'

"Are you okay?" Randi asked in a raspy voice when she felt the slight movement below her hand.

"I'm fine. You?" Laney slid her hand into the blonde locks. "Go back to sleep, it's only 3am."

"Umm." The younger woman turned her head and caught sight of a beautiful mound. "Oh my..." She whispered as she latched on.

"Christ Randi...!"

Much later a deep guttural cry escaped Laney's lips. "Are you trying to kill me Sparky?"

"Huh un. But boy what a way to go if I was huh?"

"Oh yeah, I'd say. Come up here." She said as she pulled Randi up in her arms. "You are incredible."

"You're pretty damn incredible yourself. I thought you said you were a novice."

"I'm a fast learner and had a beautiful teacher. You are beautiful you know."

"And you are such a charmer Thing. Guess what, I'm hung..."

At that moment Randi's stomach chose to let itself be known and a tremendous rumble came from it causing both women to burst out laughing until they almost rolled off the edge of the king size bed they were laying on.

"Damn Rand, that thing is worse than mine and let me tell you, THAT is pretty bad."

"Hey, I didn't eat supper tonight."

"Raannnd." Laney admonished. "You should have said something Sweetheart. I would have made sure that you were fed."

"As I recall both of our minds were on something else at the time and I was going to grab something at the party but then someone tried to seduce me."

"Hey, wait a minute. I didn't start this as I recall. I seem to remember someone backing me into the deck railing and kissing me first."

"Details My Dear, details."

"You know, I make a pretty mean cheddar cheese and bacon omelet. Want one?"

"Honey," Randi looked at the clock on the bedside table. "It's 3:45 in the morning."

"Well, I'm sure its 8am somewhere Sweetheart. Come on, let me make you breakfast. It's the least I can do since you missed dinner..."

Randi turned from the front door one last time to place a tender kiss on Laney's lips. "When can I see you again Detective?"

"When do you want to?" Laney asked as she pulled slowly away. She didn't really want the younger woman to go and yet she was suddenly a little apprehensive. This confused her because she didn't even know why.

"I'd love to see you tonight but I already promised Jodi I would go to a movie and then Laces with her. I wouldn't even be leaving right now but I need to go shower before I meet her for lunch. We are going to Suffolk afterwards to check out some stuff this man has in his garage he wants to get rid of."

'Hmm maybe that's why.' "That's fine. Just call me sometime when you have a chance. See you later."

Randi immediately felt the distance and sucked in a breath. 'What the...back off Rand, she's probably scared. This is still all new to her.' "Ok, take care today Laney and I'll see you later. Bye."

The door closed and Laney leaned against it and dropped her head. She saw the hurt look on Randi's face and felt bad for being the cause of it. 'Shit Jacobs, a bit green aren't we?'

Chapter Thirty Two

"Ha! That's 10 to 5 now Price." Koty grinned after making the basket with the small Nerf basketball they had set up on the wall behind Koty's desk.

"All tall people can play basketball better." He pouted as he missed yet another shot as it bounced off the desk chair.

Koty snorted. "Jason, you are the same height I am I'm just better than you face it."

"Maybe it's a dyke thing then." He grinned knowing Koty wouldn't take offense to his gentle joking.

"Go to work loser I hear the Captain calling you."

"Later Shaquille O'Neal!"

Koty laughed and watched him walk out the door just as Laney was walking in. She was just getting ready to tease her about Saturday night when she noticed the dour look on her friend's face.

"Morning Laney, you alright?"

Laney starred for a moment then she smiled. "Yeah fine."

Koty saw the smile but knew it wasn't real because it never reached her partners eyes. Laney always had a certain sparkle in her eyes when she smiled and that spark was missing. She left her chair and went to perch on the side of the detectives' desk.

"Talk to me Jacobs. What's going on and don't feed me no bullshit, we're too good of friends for that."

Laney scrubbed both of her hands over her face to try and rub off the flush rising from her neck to the top of her cheeks succeeding only in making it worse. When she lifted her head to face Koty there was a definite sheen in her eyes.

"Whoa, Laney what's up?" Koty grabbed her chair and pulled it beside Laney's then placed her hand on her shoulder. Whatever this was, it was really bothering her friend.

"I think maybe I messed up."

"What do you mean by messed up?" Koty noticed the woeful look on her friends face. "Doe's this have anything to do with Randi?"

"Umm yeah. I um...shit...I slept with her Koty."

It took everything Koty had not to smile but she knew this was obviously something that was really eating at her friend so she bucked up to try and at least sound like an adult.

"Wow. So you are thinking maybe it was a mistake?"

"Yes. NO! I mean God Koty, it was the most incredible thing that has ever happened to me I think. I treated her like shit the next day though and now I'm too damn immature and embarrassed to call her to apologize.

"She didn't do anything wrong, I guess I just have issues with this new little green monster that I've suddenly acquired. My mind starts to wonder and I think was this just a kick for her? You know, something like 'I conquered the straight woman' so time to move on. I know I hurt her feelings when she was leaving my house but...I don't know the rules here Koty. It's all happened so fast for me my head is spinning."

"Laney, there are no rules here. If it feels like its going too fast then maybe you should just take a couple steps back but don't turn from it completely if your heart is telling you differently.

"Maybe you should both take a moment to decide if this is something ya'll really want. For the record though, I think she is genuinely interested. Why don't you call her and tell her what you are felling?"

"I can't. Not yet anyway cause I don't know what to say. Do you think I'm being stupid?"

"Hell no, I know this is all new to you and I think until you know for sure if this is what you want you shouldn't lead her on. Neither one of you deserve that. Now, why don't we shake this sad shit, put on our butch faces and go to see what the Captain has in store for us today?"

"You're right. My brain feels like it is getting ready to have puppies and I know I am thinking this to death. Maybe he will send us to Tasmania or something. That would take my mind off of it..."

It wasn't Tasmania but it was a very bazaar case where apparently out on Potters Rd, there was a certain spot people would get to around 2:00am and their car would suddenly stall. As they would try to turn the engine over, two men in ski masks would show up at their windows with a gun and demand them to get out of the car so they could steal it.

So far there were two Jaguars, three BMW's and one Lexus SUV. All were new vehicles purchased with in the last three months in Virginia Beach. As of yet they didn't have a whole lot to go on.

Captain Riggs leaned against the generic metal desk and folded his arms across his large chest. "So far nobody has been hurt. Pushed around a little but that's it so maybe it will stay that way until we can catch these assholes. One man said he thought one of the guys sounded kind of young, maybe even a little scared."

"So the Blues have no leads yet at all? Anyone else around the neighborhood complaining about anything weird going on?" Koty asked as she looked across at Laney.

"We haven't heard any yet. Got some of the boys going around asking questions about it though. Maybe we'll hear something today.

"Wait a minute," Koty said as she tried to recall an article she read somewhere about engine stalling devices that some officers in England or somewhere like that were using. Some kind of Police transmitter with a coded signal that could stall engines to avoid a high speed chase.

On request by an Officer, the Department would radio him the current signal coding for a particular make (model, year) of vehicle, which would expire an hour later. Koty explained what she had read, at least as much as she could remember. It had stayed in the back of her mind because she thought that this device could save many lives in high speed chases that ended fatally.

"Maybe somebody got their hands on such a device. That's something we might want to look into. I know it might sound crazy but if nobody else is having a problem somebody is doing something somewhere in that area."

"Sillers you might be onto something there. How come I've never heard of it?"

"You normally can't get that kind of information from reading Spider Man comic books Capt."

"Hey...I read other things as well. I read the Bass Pro magazine."

"Like I said... Anyway, I'll try to remember where I found that article and we can check online. We also may want to check with the surrounding cities as well maybe someone else might be having the same problem."

"Alright you guys see what you can find out. Lomaz and Jenkins, you two need to head out to Pembroke Elementary School. Could have a stalker out there. Just go talk to the Principal and she will fill you in. Let me know what everyone finds out..."

"You know Silvers; I think I read that same article or one just like it. What if it's some Cop using it?" Laney said as she stood up and stretched her back.

"I'd rather not think that but we need to look everywhere. Let's grab our jackets and go to Potters Rd. I want to take a look around and maybe talk to a few people myself."

"Alright but it's your turn to buy Starbucks."

"I bought it yesterday." Koty protested as she slid her jacket over her broad shoulders.

"Silvers, we didn't work yesterday."

Koty paused. "Oh yeah...Hey, we didn't work Saturday either so that means it's your turn Jacobs." Koty drew her friends name out.

"Fine, let's go. Hey is that my phone ringing? Laney asked as they were walking out the door."

"Probably but they'll leave a message, lead on."

Chapter Thirty Three

"Shit!" Randi yelled as she slammed the phone down. "What the hell happened? I know she felt something." Randi plopped down on the loveseat and threw her head back against the big cushion. She didn't think that Laney was just satisfying her curiosity but at this point she wasn't really sure. She didn't know what to think, she didn't know what to do.

Everything about the detective was opposite of what she had always been attracted to. She normally like red heads, she did like them too tall but she most definitely didn't like cops. She was a little more muscular than she was use to. Why was this one woman so different from all of the others?

Randi didn't consider herself an expert with women or love but she had been with a few and felt she had at least some experience with them. The only thing she knew to be true was that the tall detective made her respond like no other. Made her feel like she was on top of the world. Made

her experience a release that she thought she might actually die from.

Laney. Brunette not red headed. Muscular, AND a cop to boot. Shit, what was her life coming to? Why did she suddenly feel so out of control, so lost? She had tried to call the Detective several times but all she was able to get was the answering machine and she liked answering machines about as much as she liked root canals.

Well, at least with root canals you were able to get a shot to numb the pain. Was there some kind of shot she could ask her doctor to give her to numb it all? No, she knew there was nothing.

She decided that she would just go to the Police station tomorrow and confront her. Yeah, that was exactly what she would do. Not in front of the other officers of course but she would make her talk to her if it was the last thing she would do.

Right this minute though, first things came first. And right this minute that first thing was ice cream. Ice cream had always been a drug of her choice when the world just wasn't agreeing with her.

"Double Fudge Chocolate Chip with Hershey's chocolate syrup squirted on top just to add to the chocolate."

Sitting alone at her desk with nobody in the small precinct office Laney was alone with her thoughts. She sometimes really loved this time in the morning before anyone else came in. It was when she did some of her best thinking. Because of this thinking she didn't hear the door opening until she heard the voice.

"Morning Laney."

She froze thinking that this morning really wasn't the time for this. Maybe no morning would be but there was no use in trying to ignore it because she knew it wouldn't go away.

Laney turned with what she hoped was a pleasant enough smile to fool the world. "Good morning Richard, I hope you aren't here to give me a lot of grief because let me tell you, today is not the day."

Her ex husband slowly approached her to show he meant no harm. "I'm not here to give you grief and I'm not here to pick a fight. I am here to say that I am sorry. Sorry for everything that I have done to you and all of the trouble that I caused you. I truly never meant that to happen."

Laney stared at him for a long moment. She had always been able to read Richard even when they had first married. At this moment she didn't see any malice, but wasn't sure if she could fully trust her own judgment. Look where it had gotten her with Randi.

"What do you want Richard I really do have a lot on my plate today and don't have enough hours

in the day as it is."

"I'm serious Laney, I am only here to say I'm sorry. I know I can't change what happened and I don't even know if I am grown up enough to even try. I do know that what I did to you was totally wrong. I want you to know if there is anything in this world I can do for you I will.

"If you are happy here then that is great. If you want to hang around with cops, gay people, green people, gypsies or aliens that's ok with me. I don't really care as long as you are happy. I know it took me a long time to figure this out but I feel better about myself knowing I'm not truly a lost cause."

Laney stared at him some more then put her hand on his shoulder. "Richard, have you been smoking pot again?"

Though the Lawyer laughed, he had the ability to blush a little one of the things that had attracted her to him in the beginning. "Sweetheart, you know I haven't done that in years. Although it would probably mellow me out some."

"You used to be quite charming when you got high Richard."

"Yeah well... Seriously though I really just want you happy. Take care of yourself Darling and do call me if there is anything I can do for you. I won't keep you because I know you are busy and I have to be in Richmond in two hours for a meeting."

He pulled Laney into a slight hug then leaned down to give her a light but lingering kiss. "I better go before that Partner of yours comes in and kicks my ass. Bye Babe."

"I will not back away, I will not back away." Randi kept repeating to herself in a whisper so nobody could hear her as she followed a Detective showing her where Laney's office was but got called away. Holding her breath she reached for the door and let out a heavy sigh. "Ok, I'm ready."

She opened the door just in time to see a very well built and handsome man lean into Laney and kiss her. She watched also as Laney kissed him back. 'What the FUCK?'

With a desperate gasp, she finally got her feet moving enough to tear her away from the door and the sight of Laney kissing someone else. And that someone else, being a man. "Fuck fuck fuck!!"

She left the door at not quite a run but not quite a walk either. She tried desperately to not bring attention to herself as she made a hasty retreat out the main door.

Koty watched as the young shop owner practically ran her over in her haste to leave. She doubted the woman even saw her and she could have sworn she saw tears in her eyes.

"Shit. Laney." The detective made a bee line towards their tiny office when she was once again nearly run over by a man coming around the corner.

"Scuse me the man said as he side stepped and looked upon her face. He stopped short and placed a hand on her shoulder. "Detective Silvers. I apologize for being such an ass the last time we met. Take care of my ex wife will you?" Then he stepped around her and left.

"What the Hell?" Was everyone a little more crazy this morning than normal? Was it going to be a full moon tonight or what? Shaking her head, the tall Detective walked through the door to find Laney sitting on the edge of her desk reading some files.

"Hey Laney... Everything ok?"

Laney looked up with a question on her face. "Huh? Yeah why?"

"Just saw your Ex Husband out in the hall and he apologized to me for being such an asshole."

"Yeah? He came and apologized to me as well and told me if I need anything to let him know. I don't trust him as far as I can throw him but I've always been pretty good at judging him and I didn't see any ulterior motive but I have been wrong before about him."

"Well for what its worth I didn't get any bad vibes from him but you know him better than me so just don't let your guard down."

Koty waited a moment before she spoke again. "So what was up with Randi?"

Laney slowly stood from her desk. "What do you mean what was up with Randi, how should I know?"

"Well, she damn near ran me over trying to run out the door. She didn't even see me."

"What was she doing here Koty?"

"Don't know that's what I was asking you? Whatever it was she left here crying."

Laney felt as though she had been punched in the gut by a prize fighter, the color was slowly draining from her face. 'Why didn't she come to me if something was wrong?'

"Damn if I'm not going to find out." She said as her long legs carried her quickly through the door with Koty right behind her figuring she would be there for her friend.

Chapter Thirty Four

"Hey Detective Jacobs?" Laney turned to see a younger Detective walking towards her coming from an office off to the right of theirs.

"Hi Savage what's up?"

"Did the lady find you? I was showing her to your office but got called away so I told her just to go on in."

"What lady was that?" Laney said getting an uneasy feeling in the pit of her stomach.

"Some real pretty blonde, kind of short. Didn't get her name though sorry."

"How did she seem to you Savage was she upset or anything?"

"Uh no. She was full of smiles, bright green eyes and very talkative. If you ask me I'd say she was on top of the moon."

"Then why..." Laney stopped mid sentence as a realization came to her. "Oh Shit!" She said as she pushed back through the office door to go plop in her chair with her head in her hands.

"Laney, what's going on?" Koty asked as she sat on the edge of the Detectives desk. She wondered for a minute if Laney was going to answer her.

"When Richard was getting ready to leave he kissed me goodbye and I let him. It didn't mean anything but just that but to anyone looking it might have looked like I was kissing him back." "Fuck. I wonder what is going through her head?"

"Oh boy." Koty sighed. "So you think she may have walked in just in time to see the kiss but didn't stick around to find out anything else?"

"I don't know but what else could it be? Savage said she was just fine when she was getting ready to come in here and you said she most definitely wasn't when you saw her. That's the only thing it could be.

"I guess I will have to try and talk to her later. I have a Captain coming over from the 17th who says he may have some info on the stolen cars." Laney looked down at what Koty was holding in her hands. "Please tell me one of those are for me."

Koty handed off one of the Starbuck coffee's she had been holding onto when she first came into the precinct. "Oh yeah, sorry."

"Ooh Silvers, you are so my hero right now. You better hurry and drink yours or I might take it too."

"Mine is almost empty but after we talk to your guy we can stop for another on our way to Bridgewood. The Perps got a gold Escalade last night and I want to talk to the woman who owned it."

"Your on, hopefully this Captain can give us something we can use."

"Hopefully I can." Came a low rumble of a voice from behind them. Both Detectives turned to see a large mountain of a black man come through the door.

"Ladies I am Captain Haggen. I think I might have something you can use."

"Captain I'm Detective Laney Jacobs and this is my partner Detective Koty Silvers." They all shook hands and Laney told him to have a seat at her desk.

"Detective Silvers I've heard of you. My wife works for the EMT squad that got you to the hospital when you were pulled out of that fire. She recognized your name.

"You donated a very large sum of money to the fund raising group to help pay my sons hospital bills. He had been severely beating in a hate crime and lost his leg because of it. My family owes you our deepest gratitude."

"Your son is Josh Haggen? I've met him a few times. You have a very brave son Captain, how is he doing?"

"He's doing just great. He's off to William and Mary studying to become a Criminal Lawyer. Now, for what I came for. I do believe that device you are looking for came from my office."

Koty and Laney looked at each other then back to the Captain. "And where is it now Sir?" Koty asked as she sat on the corner of her own desk.

"Now that Ma'am is a very good question. We got one at our station to try it out. Before we were even able to test it, it and all of the codes disappeared from my office.

"Now I really hate to say this but the only ones who had access to my office are people who work for me. Now that pulls my underwear into a huge knot knowing it's one of my people. I assure you that EVERY measure is being taking to find out who is behind this because I personally want to fry their ass.

"I don't take to kindly to being made a fool like this. You two will be one of the first to know if I find out who did it. All I ask of you is if you do catch the sonofabitch, you turn him over to me. I will do anything in my power to help you ladies."

Laney looked at Koty and the taller Detective nodded her head. "Well Captain we don't have a problem turning them over to you and this does help a lot. At least now we have somewhere to start and it has narrowed it down quite a bit.

"We really appreciate you coming over to us with this information. We know you didn't have to do this and I can't imagin how it feels to know it is one of your own Sir. You have our word they will be turned over to you if we catch who did this."

"Think nothing of it Detectives. Now I'll bid you ladies farewell and let you go get that Starbucks

coffee you are craving. Think I'll stop there myself and get one."

He stood from the desk and shook both of their hands. "Detective Silvers, it was a pleasure to finally meet you, I would truly love it someday if you would be my guest at my house for dinner one night. I know my wife would love to talk to you. That invitation goes to you as well Detective Jacobs."

"Captain after all of this is said and done I just might take you up on it. Give your wife my regards." Koty told him as she opened the door for him to exit out of and he left.

Laney sat in the chair the large man just vacated. "Well, we wondered if it was a cop. This really does help a lot."

"Yes it does. Now let's go get that coffee and head over to Bridgewood."

Thirty Five

"Shit, why isn't she answering?" Laney paced back and forth in her living room. She had been calling Randi for the past hour. She pulled out the wrinkled up business card from her pocket that had Randi's cell phone number on it making sure for the fifth time that she was dialing the right number.

'I don't have her home number. Hell I don't even know that she has a home number.' She searched in her mind if she had seen a phone the last time that she was at the younger woman's house. She couldn't remember if she did or not.

Looking at her watch the Detective wondered if maybe she should run over to Randi's house. It was only seven pm so she knew that it wouldn't be too late to just show up. Making her decision she grabbed her keys off the hanger by the front door and left...

Pulling to the curb three houses down from Randi's, Laney saw her truck in the driveway. She sat with her SUV in idle trying to get up the nerve to pull up to the house. Just as she was getting ready to pull forward she saw a silver Honda pull in front of the house and park.

The passenger door opened and she watched as Randi stepped out of the vehicle. Then the driver side door opened and she watched as the woman got out then walked up to Randi and place an arm around her shoulder as they walked towards the house. 'Jodi, shit.'

Laney felt her heart rate speed up considerably and dropped her head to the steering wheel releasing a breath she didn't even know she was holding. She waited until the two women were in the house before smacking the steering wheel and pulling off...

"You ok Rands?"

"Yeah, it just bites big ones you know? She is the first woman I have ever truly been in love with and even though the sex was just incredible it isn't even about that. I guess I was just an

experiment for her. I really thought she felt the same way Jodi. Nobody can make love like that and not feel something."

"Well Honey, maybe it isn't what you think. I mean you didn't really stick around to find out what was going on now did you?"

"Jesus Jodi I couldn't. I thought I was going to die right there and then. I'm just glad that other Detective was called away before I got to the door. I felt like I had just been sucker punched in the gut."

Jodi walked up to her best friend and pulled her into a tight hug. "Sure you don't want me to stay with you tonight Babe?"

"No, I know you have a hot date and I want to hear every detail tomorrow. Well... not every detail but you know what I mean. I'll be ok I promise."

"Kay, I'll talk to you in the morning. Call me if you need anything cause you know you are more important to me than some date right?"

"Right. Go home Jodi and have fun tonight."

"Bye Babe."

Randi fell onto the couch and propped her feet up on the coffee table. She noticed her cell phone sitting on the end table that she had forgotten earlier and it was blinking showing that she had a missed call.

She picked it up and opened it. Six missed calls to be exact. Six missed calls from Laney. Randi sucked in her breath and felt the tears well up in her eyes once again.

She went to throw her phone but tried to hold back at the last minute but it was too late. The phone flew from her hand, hit the wall then dropped right into a vase she had on a table against the wall. A vase that held flowers and was full of water.

She starred wide eyed with her jaw dropped for a moment. Suddenly she burst out into uncontrollable and hysterical laughter. Falling face down into the cushions she pulled a pillow over her head and that is how she awoke several hours later.

Dragging herself to her bedroom and stripping along the way, she climbed into her king size bed and pulled her body pillow close to her wrapping herself around it. One again the tears slowly slid down her face then and she closed her eyes...

'Well, she obviously isn't too upset! Jodi is always in the picture no matter what.' Laney was at odds with herself because deep down she really liked Jodi and Randi had told her that they were just friends. For some displeasing reason the term 'Fuck Buddies' came to mind.

"That's disgusting Jacobs, you really need to try and give Rand a little more credit than that." The Detective had spoken out loud.

'You really need to trust her.' Her inner mind spoke.

"Yeah well I'm not too big on the trust thing."

'She hasn't giving you reason to has she?'

"I haven't known her that long asshole. Look at what happened with Richard."

'She isn't Richard.'

"No she is not but that doesn't really prove anything does it?"

'You really like her a lot.'

"Well of course I like her Sherlock!"

'Maybe a little more than like?'

"What the hell are you talking about?"

'Maybe you are in love with her.'

"Now hold on buster...I never said anything about that, you are way out of line!"

'Am I? Just think about it for a minute. If you aren't in love with her why are you taking this so badly?'

"I'm not taking it that badly. I'm...just concerned. I like her and I'm really confused on this and don't know what she is thinking. I don't want her to think that I was kissing Richard."

'Why did you chase her away after you slept with her? If you truly think that you aren't in love with her why not let her to continue to think you were kissing him? That way she can get over you quicker.'

"I don't want her to get over me damn it!"

'Because you are in love with her.'

"I. AM. Not. In love with her!"

'Are too.'

"Am not."

'Are too.'

"Am...AGGGHHH! Will you please SHUT UP!!!"

"Jesus Christ I am absolutely losing my fucking mind! I am now arguing with myself. They are going to lock me up in some looney bin if I keep going at this rate!"

Laney shook her head then went into the kitchen to open a bottle of Merlot. She didn't know just when it was that her life turned totally upside down. She had never felt so out of control before. She had never felt so lost before. 'I have never felt so alone before. Not even with Richard.'

Bypassing a glass she just grabbed the bottle to take to the living room and plopped on the soft couch throwing her long legs up on the coffee table. Putting the bottle to her lips she took a long pull and tried to contemplate what she was going to do about this situation.

"What do I want to do about this situation? Hell, what can I do about it if she is unwilling to talk to me?"

Chapter Thirty Six

"Hello?"

"Sis? It's Monty. There's been... Chris has been in an accident can you meet me at General?"

"Jesus Christ Monty! Wh..."

"Slow down a minute Koty it's not that bad. She is alright but... um, she is bleeding Sis. They're not sure about the baby. The fuc... the air bag deployed."

"Monty I'm on my way just sit tight. I'll call Kasey on my way." Koty was already running out the door when she hung up the phone. She had heard the tale tell signs of slight cracking in her brothers' voice.

"Hey Baby listen to me."

"Dakota what's wrong?" Kasey could nearly feel the tension in Koty through the phone and immediately knew there was something wrong."

"Kase she is ok but Chris was in a accident and is at General. I don't know all of the details yet but Monty said she is bleeding and there may be something wrong with the baby. I'm heading over there now and thought you would want to meet me there."

"I'll have Joan take over my patients and I'll be there in about fifteen or twenty minutes. Don't speed Sweetheart one Silvers in the hospital is enough. I love you."

"Love you too I'll see you in a few minutes."

Kasey knew it was a futile attempt to tell Koty not to speed but had to try anyway. The stubborn Detective would usually answer with 'it's OK, I have connections.' Not that she has been stopped for speeding since she was a teenager...

Koty walked into the waiting room to see Monty hunched over in one of the chairs with his elbows on his knees and face in his hands. 'Shit.' "Monty are you Ok?" She asked as she sat down beside him.

"Oh, yeah. My back is just a little soar. The Doctor is in with Chris right now, I just came out of there a little while ago."

"How is she and what are they saying?"

"She has some bruises and some kind of residue from the air bags in her eyes along with a red patch on her face where it hit her. They haven't said anything about the baby yet."

Koty heard a noise and looked over her shoulder to see Kasey and Laney walking through the door. Kasey came up and placed a soft kiss to Monty's cheek. "Hey big guy, want me to go see if I can find out what is going on?"

"That would be great Kasey thanks." Kasey stood and reached over to give a soft gentle squeeze to Koty's shoulder before walking away.

Koty looked up at Laney and smiled. "Hey Laney have a seat."

"Thanks, I hope you don't mind but Kasey called me to tell me what happened. Do you know anything yet?"

"No, the doctor is in with her now. Apparently she is OK we just don't know about the baby yet but Kasey might be able to find out something."

"Why don't I go and get you two some coffee?"

"I could stand a cup how about you Bro?"

"Yeah that sounds good." Monty reached into his pocket to give Laney some money for the coffee but she waived a hand at him. "I've got this one."

"Thanks..."

All three stood as Kasey came through the door with the Doctor. "Mr. Silvers I am Doctor McBride." The Doctor said as he shook Monty's hand. "Your wife is just fine and so is your baby. The bleeding was not caused by the airbag. I suspect she had already started to bleed before the accident and hadn't noticed yet."

"The stress of the accident probably made it a little worse but everything is fine. Some women do a little bleeding in their second trimester and if it continues or gets worse then she needs to see her Doctor. She is going to be sore for awhile and I gave her some drops for her eyes. Other than that she can go home as soon as I write up her release. Any questions?"

Monty finally released the breath that he didn't even know he was holding. "Christ what a relief thank you so much Doc. If we have any questions later my wife or Dr. Brooks here will be able to answer them I'm sure." Monty reached for the Doctors hand to shake. "Once again thank you."

"No problem, I'm glad everything turned out like it did. That airbag saved your wife's and unborn baby's life. According to her, her car was totaled. Ya'll have a good evening."

They all stood deathly still until Koty finally spoke. "Did you see her Durango Monty?"

"No, I got a phone call that they were bringing her here so I came straight from work. Guess I need to find out where they towed it to."

"I'm sure that is something that can wait until morning Bro. Come on lets go see Chris before you take her home..."

"Just a minute. Shit." Laney said as she stubbed her toe on the table leg trying to get to the door. Peeking through the little peep hole her breath caught in her throat and hastily she opened the door.

"Hi, I know it's late but..."

"Randi come in please."

"I..."

"No wait Rand I have something to say first and then you can say or do whatever you want. I think you saw something the other day that wasn't what it seemed."

"Laney you don't have to..."

"Just hear me out please." Laney said softly. Randi just gave a slight nod for her to continue.

"That was my ex husband. He took me a little by surprise when he kissed me. It wasn't a pissed off kiss or even a come on kiss. He had just wished me good luck and I think it was a goodbye kiss. I didn't stop him but I didn't kiss him back. I think you walked in at just that moment when he did."

Laney became quiet and briefly thought that Randi wasn't going to say anything. "I'm sorry

Lane. I did jump to conclusions but I think I upset you the morning after we made... the next morning. Then I didn't hear from you and I didn't know what to think or do. I..."

Randi's sentence was cut off by soft lips claiming hers. What started as a quick kiss just to soothe the younger woman soon became a burning urge to reconnect. Hands and lips were everywhere at once and both women were gasping when they finally came up for desperately needed air.

"Will you stay the night Rand?"

The younger woman thought that she might cry due to the astounding relief she felt at those few words. In fact, she felt the tears slowly fill her eyes then spill over to her soft cheeks.

"Hey," Laney whispered as she gently wiped the tears away. "I didn't mean to make you cry. What's wrong sweetheart?"

"They are happy tears Laney. I just lo... I just have missed you so much and thought that maybe you thought it had been a mistake."

Laney placed both hands on the sides of the younger woman's face and thumbed the tears away. "You." She softly kissed her. "Could never be a mistake. Never," she husked out before capturing the tempting full lips in front of her.

Laney reached for her young lover's hand. "Come with me sweetheart, I've missed you too."

Many hours later the two women held each other with arms and legs entangled together. Laney, still unable to grasp the profound feeling of her skin against Randi's. "Do you have to open the shop tomorrow Rand?"

"I was supposed to but maybe if I have a better offer I could persuade Jodi to open. Why, do you have something in mind?"

"Not particularly but I would like to spend the day with you. I don't care what we do as long as we can be together."

"Aren't you the sweet talker and I am quite sure we can find something to pass our time together." Randi said as she pulled herself on top of the Detective.

"I think that I love the way you think Miss Daniels..."

'And I think...no, I know that I love you. Just wish I was brave enough to say that out loud.'

Chapter Thirty Seven

"Stop! Ya'll are going to make me pee my pants!" Randi said as she was holding her sides from laughing so hard. Randi and Laney were having dinner with Koty and Kasey at Monty and Chris's house. Koty and Monty were telling them stories about when they were kids.

Laney and Randi had been seeing each other for several weeks now spending most of their nights at each others houses. Koty had called earlier to say that Chris had invited them to dinner. Nobody had to work the next morning so they were just relaxing with some after dinner drinks.

Chris wasn't drinking and neither were Koty or Laney they were having ice tea. Kasey was drinking Grand Marnier while Randi and Monty were drinking Corona's.

Randi could feel her cheeks starting to get warm and thought maybe she should stop before she got too drunk. Looking at her watch she gasped. "Jesus, it's already midnight." Everyone else was startled to see it had gotten that late as well.

"Time fly's when you are in great company." Randi said as they all stood up. "Chris, thank you so much for inviting Laney and me for dinner that was really very sweet of you."

"Thank you two for coming and I'm glad to finally meet you. It's been a great night and I plan on having more of these. I'll have Dakota call you with details the next time also."

Everyone said their goodbyes then Koty, Kasey, Laney and Randi walked out to their vehicles. Laney kissed Koty and Kasey on the cheeks and Randi hugged them...

"Christ Randi! Are you trying to get us killed?"

"No, I just felt like touching you. I've wanted to all night tonight."

"You can touch me there once we get home. Otherwise you are going to make me drive us right off the road."

Randi gave a cute little pout and Laney started laughing. "Me thinks someone has had a little much to drink tonight haven't they?"

"Maybe. But not too much." Was her reply as she removed her hand from the hard thigh then reached for her lover's hand. "Can't you drive faster Detective?"

Laney just smiled and shook her head. "Behave young lady I'm already doing seven miles over the speed limit. Do you want us to get pulled over?"

"Well, like Koty would say 'you have connections' right"

"You're a mess Sparky."

"Yes Thing but I'm yoourr mess..."

Lying in a tangle of arms and legs and a light sheen of sweat on their bodies, Laney leaned forward and kissed Randi. "Mmm that was wonderful."

Randi had a serious look on her face as she stared into her lovers blue eyes. Laney stared at her pensively. "Rand, what's wrong Honey?"

"I love you" she whispered.

"What?"

Randi looked away thinking that maybe she spoke too soon. "I said I love you."

"Say it again."

She turned back to look into those eyes again this time with tears in hers. "I love you." She said as she kissed Laney's lips. "I've loved you for awhile now. Maybe even all of my life and I was just waiting for you to finally walk into my life."

If possible, Laney's smile would have been ear to ear. "I love you too Baby I have for awhile now as well but was to chicken shit to say it."

"Never be afraid to say what's in your heart Laney. My mother used to tell me that. She said the heart can only hold but so much before it finally breaks and take a long time to heal."

"I think your mother was a wise woman."

"That she was that she was." They fell asleep still entangled together with smiles on their faces.

Epilogue: Six months later

"You know, you are going to have to get you one of those soon don't you?" The tall detective said to her partners' lover. "She really is a natural at that."

Kasey watched her lover playing with their new niece, 'Dakota Christine Silvers' for whom Chris had named her daughter. Koty had cried for a week unbelieving that Chris and Monty had giving their child her name.

The sheer joy on Kotys face had everyone in the room smiling from ear to ear. Turning to Laney Kasey replied; "We have been talking about adoption for the last 3 or 4 weeks now, neither one of us wanting to actually deliver. I know that Koty would be one hell of a mother so we will just have to see."

The look that the Doctor was sending Koty at this moment made Laney silently bet her life's savings that this would be something that would be happening in the very near future.

"Holy Mother of God!" Koty yelled as she cast a quick glance at Chris. "Why did she all of a sudden scrunch her face up like that and why is she so damn red? I don't know..." Koty finally got a good whiff and turned to Chris with a terrified look. "Is she...did she... Oh my God she stinks!!!"

The whole room busted with laughter as the big strong afraid of nothing in your face Detective handed the baby to Chris like it was a fire ball...

The End for now...

By Robin Hicks

Remember I am NOT an English major so please excuse poor wordage and pronunciation. Let me know what you think....

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