Three-way

One Wild Wedding Night 3
Three-way
(One Wild Wedding Night Part 3)
Scheduling a January wedding in Chicago probably hadn’t been among the world’s best ideas. Especially since the Windy City had been humped all week by a meteorological snow monster that seemed to want to stick around for the entire winter.

Somehow, though, despite the thick, white flakes that had swirled down around the church, everything had gone as planned. And now a winter wonderland surrounded the hotel where the afternoon reception had been held. In Izzie Santori’s opinion, the day had been perfect.

“Happy, Cookie?” her new husband, Nick, asked as he kicked the door to their room shut. His hands were too full to do the job. Full of Izzie, still clad in her long-trained wedding gown.

“Deliriously.”

He pressed a kiss on her throat as he lowered her onto her own feet. “Only you could make a white wedding gown look sinful.”

“I’m a natural at sin.”

“Don’t I know it. I work with you, remember?”

Arching toward him, she twined her fingers in his black hair, which had grown out from its military cut since he’d left the marines. The length suited him, especially when he pulled the silky strands back into a ponytail at Leather and Lace, the upscale strip club where they both worked. “I’m so glad we had an early wedding so everyone from work could come.”

“Me, too. I doubt that church has held so many strippers, cocktail waitresses and bouncers at one time before.” He kissed his way to her earlobe. “You were so beautiful today, Iz. Like always, you made every other woman fade into insignificance.”

“I did have some very pretty bridesmaids,” she pointed out.

He nodded, lifting her hand to start unbuttoning the long row of tiny buttons at her wrist. “You did, not that they looked anything alike. Talk about variety.”

That was true. Izzie’s bridesmaids had certainly run the gamut. Her maid of honor—and cousin—Bridget, was a quiet, sweet-faced brunette who never had a harsh word for anyone. She’d been Izzie’s best friend since childhood.

Bridget was nothing like Leah, a feisty stripper who worked with Izzie at the club. The girl was young and sweeter than anyone would suspect, given her rough background. Blond and bouncy Leah was definitely the antithesis of Izzie’s sister Mia, with her short, jet-black hair and hard edge.

Mia’s years as an attorney, prosecuting some pretty awful crimes, had made her even tougher than she’d been growing up. A fighter and a tomboy, Mia had eschewed big sister Gloria’s good-girl desire to be a housewife and little sister Izzie’s bad-girl desire to be a dancer. Frankly, Izzie had held her breath after asking Mia to be in the wedding, knowing it was not her sister’s thing. But family was family. She’d come through.

Then there was Vanessa. While, like Mia, she had some serious attitude, Vanessa also oozed sex appeal and warmth. The stunning African American was a good friend of Izzie’s from her Radio City days.

Finally came Gloria, the oldest Natale girl. Married, thirtysomething. Pretty in an Italian housewifey way. Gloria was bossy and old-school, which was why Izzie had both a maid and a matron of honor. Gloria would have been mortally offended if Izzie hadn’t asked her.

Definitely a varied menu of bridesmaids. All of whom had looked stunningly beautiful in their dark red velvet gowns. All of whom were women she adored, for their strengths and their kindness, their intelligence and their loyalty. “They were so wonderful and supportive,” she murmured.

“Well, hopefully some of my single cousins are keeping them company downstairs in the hotel lounge this evening.”

“Sorry to disappoint your cousins, but Leah just led a group of them to a bar up the street.”

Nick frowned for the first time in days. “In this weather?”

“It’s stopped snowing and I’m sure the roads are slowly being cleared.” Nibbling her lip Izzie added, “It’s only a couple of blocks away and I paid the limo driver to make sure they got safely back here to their rooms tonight.”

“Look out, Chicago, horny bridesmaids are on the prowl.”

“I don’t imagine too much can happen since Gloria’s with them.” Gloria was happily married to Nick’s oldest brother. The mother of three had seemed relieved when her husband had offered to take their boys home so she could enjoy the night on the town with the rest of the bridesmaids. “She’ll play chaperone.”

“Oh, right. Chaperone to a lawyer, a bookkeeper, a stripper and a Rockette.”

“You got something against strippers and Rockettes?” she asked, cocking a challenging brow.

He had finished working her sleeves open and slid around behind her to start on the long row of tiny buttons up the back of the dress. As he slid each one free, he kissed the tiny bit of skin revealed, sliding his lips over each of her
verte-brae with heart-pounding restraint and sensuality.

“Uh-uh, Cookie. Some of my favorite people are strippers and Rockettes.”

She dropped her head forward, sighing as he continued to undress her. Conversation was the last thing she wanted. Thoughts of her bridesmaids began to fade.

But before thrusting the whole subject out of her head altogether, she reassured them both. “They’ll be fine. They’re grown women, they’re not driving, and they’re in a group. What could possibly happen?”
Chapter 1

“Oh, god, is that the fire alarm? We’ve got to get out of here. Is that smoke? I think I smell smoke!”

There was no smoke, Mia Natale instantly realized. Not unless you counted the steam rising off the skid marks the customers near the door had made when the fire alarm started wailing. The club was emptying rapidly.

“We have to get out of here…we’ll be crushed, stampeded!”

Leave it to Gloria to go nuts in a crisis. Mia sighed, not sure whether to argue that there was no smoke, or just push her sister’s melodramatic, married butt toward the door.

Vanessa saved her from having to make the decision. “Follow me,” she announced. The woman was tall—Amazonian—almost six feet without the bridesmaid heels. So when she moved toward the exit, the crowd parted. It was like watching a queen on parade.

“How does she do that?” Gloria whispered as they followed.

Mia shrugged. “No idea. But I’m glad she’s with us.” She’d just met Vanessa this week, but she already understood why her younger sister, Izzie, counted her among her closest friends and had asked her to be a bridesmaid.

The other bridesmaids made just as much sense. Gloria, of course, would have been mortally insulted had she not been asked. And Leah was a good friend from work. Bridget and Izzie had been inseparable as kids, more like twins than cousins.

Yes. All perfect bridesmaid material.

Except Mia. She didn’t fit. Frankly, she was pretty sure that if Izzie hadn’t felt obligated because they were sisters, she would not have asked Mia to be in the wedding.

And that would have been okay.

It wasn’t that she didn’t love her sister—sisters—but she wasn’t like them. Even when growing up, she’d known she was different. Not homey and traditional like her older sister. Not flamboyant and talented like her younger one.

She’d been the tough kid. The scrubber, her father had called her the son he’d never had. She’d spent her childhood pitching baseballs and playing street hockey with the boys, rather than taking ballet lessons like Izzie or playing with an Easy-Bake oven like Gloria.

Her adult life hadn’t changed matters much. She still played with the boys—rough games like, I’ll Put You in Jail for Life, You Scumbag, and Don’t You Dare Underestimate Me Because I’m a Woman. Her job with the Pittsburgh D.A.’s office had been a full-contact sport, and she’d been damn good at it. At least, until she’d decided to try playing for the other team, accepting an offer with a Chicago firm specializing in criminal defense.

“There’s the car,” Gloria said as they burst outside, pushed along by the crowd. “Bridget and Leah must have had the driver come straight back.”

Vanessa suggested leaving immediately and Mia couldn’t agree more. She wanted to go back to her room and go to bed. Actually, she wanted to go to her apartment and go to bed, but each member of the wedding party had been given a minisuite at the hotel. It would have been rude to refuse.

A few months ago, when Mia was busting the chops of every pimp, druggie and pusher in Pittsburgh, she wouldn’t have cared about something like rudeness. But she was back home now. All the niceties she’d let slide in her drive to succeed were oozing their way back into her life, whether she wanted them to or not.

Along with them had come regrets. There’d been moments when she’d wondered if she’d done the right thing in coming back. Maybe more than a few moments…especially this week. Reaching the date on which she’d pinned a lot of hopes and built a lot of sensual fantasies—and spending it alone—had been more painful than she’d anticipated.

She still couldn’t believe she’d stood Brandon Young up on the night they were supposed to become intimate in every way.

Don’t think about him. Fortunately, Gloria jabbered throughout the ride, so Mia couldn’t think about anything but how badly she wished she’d brought her drink from the bar. Ten bucks a shot or not, Mia was breaking into the minibar in her room the minute she got there.

Inside the hotel, Vanessa asked, “Want to hit the lounge?”

“I can’t,” Gloria said. “Tony and the brats are waiting.”

Mia made a snarky comment and got a snarky comeback. Typical sister stuff, part of their MO after all these years. Despite that, she knew her sister didn’t mean the word brats. Gloria’s adoration was plain; she was a born mother.

Mia couldn’t even imagine that. It was hard enough to do something as girlie as a girls’ night out. Though, she had to admit, tonight had been fun. But it hadn’t come naturally. She was exhausted from the effort to keep up with
the conversations about sex, relationships and the three M’s: men, makeup and marriage. None of which she currently had in her life.

So, exhausted, she refused Vanessa’s offer. “But let’s meet for breakfast in the morning,” she said before heading for the other tower of the high-rise hotel. She just couldn’t socialize anymore. Weddings might bring out the jolly side of most women.

But Mia wasn’t most women.

She could have been. Could maybe even have had those things the other women had been talking about all evening. She’d come close to having them.

Six weeks ago she’d been involved with a great guy who’d made her totally happy. They’d planned to take their relationship to the next level this week, after he’d returned from a long overseas trip. Then, on their last day together, he’d told her he was falling in love with her.

Maybe that’s why she’d left.

Because Brandon Young had been too nice, too boy next door, too laid-back and thoughtful and wonderful. An easygoing software designer, he was liked by everybody.

And Mia was a cold, brass-balled bitch. Hadn’t everyone—her boss, defense attorneys, even the Pittsburgh media—said it?

As had her one serious lover. The only man she’d ever lived with, a colleague from the D.A.’s office, had accused her of having a heart of ice as he’d walked out the door.

Mia hadn’t opened herself up to another man again…not until Brandon had caught her off guard with his warmth and his self-deprecating charm. “You did the right thing ending things with him,” she reminded herself as she got on the elevator.

Maybe if she hadn’t been falling in love with him, too, she could have been ruthless enough to take what she could get. But she had been falling and falling hard. So she’d done the right thing—for him—and ended it before he got hurt.

The good intentions didn’t make her feel any less a witch for leaving town with nothing but a message on his machine while Brandon was out of the country. She could have at least called to make sure he got back okay and to wish him well.

She did wish him well. With someone…nice. Someone unassuming, gentle and kind. Someone with a big heart. Someone loving and maternal. Someone who was everything Mia was not.

That she already hated that unknown someone for having him when she, herself, couldn’t, just proved what everyone had always said about her. She was a first-class bitch.

By the time the elevator reached her floor, Mia had unbuckled her high-heeled shoes and slipped them off her aching feet. They dangled by the straps from her hand. To her annoyance, however, as she stepped out, one fell from her grip. The sparkly torture tool landed inside the elevator…and the doors closed before she could retrieve it.

“Wonderful,” she muttered, picturing having to chase an errant shoe in this huge hotel. From her experience with high-rises, she knew that particular elevator wouldn’t be near her floor again for several minutes. Damned if she was going to wait or leap into another one and chase it down. “Screw it.”

She strode barefoot down the empty corridor. Reaching her room, she slid the electronic key card into place, turned the handle and walked inside.

It wasn’t until she tried to push the door closed behind her—and couldn’t, because it was being blocked by a large, strong hand—that she realized she’d been followed.

He’d been waiting for Mia Natale all evening. Having kept an eye on her sister’s wedding festivities earlier in the day, knowing the reception had ended around seven, he’d expected her to come back to her room much earlier than now. He’d figured she’d come up to change or take a nap or even pack up her stuff for her return to her apartment…which he’d also swung by after his arrival in Chicago yesterday.

Oh, yes, he’d been watching her. Waiting to make his move. Planning on how best to gain his revenge…and make his point. Judging by the instant of fear, followed by shocked recognition on her face, his point wouldn’t be that difficult to make.

She was intimidated by him…by his presence here. For the first time since the night they met, he had the upper hand.

And he intended to use it.

“Brandon!”

“Hello, Mia,” he murmured, pushing the door back open and following her into her suite. He wasn’t waiting for any invitation. Waiting for Mia to invite him into her bedroom certainly hadn’t done him any good during the weeks they’d dated. Because, though they’d planned to move their relationship to the next level as soon as he returned from
an overseas business trip this month, she’d skipped town before ever following through.

Now he was going to make sure she followed through. Not by force, of course. He planned to make her beg for it. He’d played the gentleman before but that wasn’t what she’d wanted. Now he’d see if she really liked the kind of man she thought she did.

“What are you doing here?”

“Nice to see you, too,” he murmured as he took stock of her suite. It was the same as his, which was just across the hall. This first room had a writing desk, love seat and broad windows with a view of the city. And the next—also just like his, as he saw through the open doorway—contained a huge king-size bed.

His gaze fell on the bed. The covers were turned down, the pillow replete with a mint. A silky pink nightgown rested there, obviously laid out by a member of the attentive hotel staff.

The nightgown caught his attention. And kept it. It was silky smooth, about the color of Mia’s full, lush curved lips. It would be striking against her pale skin, and her short, jet-black hair. Mia was more sexy than beautiful and would have to be called dramatic, not pretty. Yet she’d stopped his heart the first time he’d seen her when he’d been testifying against a former embezzling client.

She’d ripped it out when she’d run away like a cowardly little girl rather than let something real and meaningful develop between them, as Brandon knew it could have.

“I see you made it back safely from Japan.”

As if she cared, considering she’d packed up her apartment and left the state in the six weeks he’d been gone. Calling her and receiving a “this number has been disconnected” message had been shocking. Calling his own answering machine from Japan and hearing her cryptic, “I’ve taken a job and am moving back home to Chicago,” message had made things worse, not better.

She owed him more than that. She owed him, at the very least, an explanation.

He’d get to that. Eventually.

“Got back a few days ago. Have a good holiday?”

She nodded slowly. “Very nice.”

“How’s the new job?” he asked, knowing she was disconcerted, waiting for some kind of emotional reaction that she had to know was coming. She’d be waiting a long time if she thought she’d see regret or loss or worse, pleading. And she’d probably never suspect what she was very soon going to get.


“It’s fine.” Clearing her throat, she added, “You remember my father had a stroke last spring. It’s done him a lot of good having me back in the area.”

Justifications. He nearly tsked in disappointment. He’d expected defiance from her, not nervousness. At least, until she found out what he’d really come for.

Then, what he most wanted was excitement.

“When, exactly, did you apply for this job?” he asked as he opened her minibar and scanned its contents.

Without asking, he reached in, helped himself to a small bottle of whiskey and poured it, neat, into a hotel-provided glass.

“I interviewed for it last fall. Before we met.”

“Ahh.” He sipped. “And you never thought to mention it.”

“I didn’t think I’d got the job. I hadn’t heard anything at all, not until early December. After you’d gone.”

Right. And she didn’t know how to pick up a phone and make an overseas call. Considering he’d called her three times after leaving the states, he knew she was aware they had such things as telephones in the Pacific Rim.

Looking back, he knew she’d had to have already made her decision by his third call. She must have, in order to have given her notice and moved by the twentieth when he got the disconnect message, followed by the Dear John one on his machine. Yet she’d never said a word.

“You got my message, I hope?”

Brandon’s hand tightened around the glass. If it had been of more fragile stuff, it might have crushed beneath his fingers. How could she act so casual about it…as if her damned ninety-second voice message could possibly be enough to explain, to put an end to what they’d shared?

No, they hadn’t had sex yet. But they’d been intimate in many other ways. In the month they’d dated—before his trip—they’d seen each other four or five times a week. She’d sought him out with frequent phone calls and e-mails. She’d brightened his winter days and he’d warmed her winter nights in every way but one. And when it had come to that one thing—he had been the one who’d offered to wait until he got back.

He had not wanted to take her to bed then fly away a day or two later. Because he had the feeling that once he did get inside Mia’s beautiful body, he wouldn’t want to leave it for a very long time.

The anticipation of their first time would, she’d assured him, be the highlight of her holidays and she had
promised to greet him on January 8 in the sexiest lingerie Santa Claus could buy. But on January 8, she’d been living in another state, her apartment rented to someone else, her office now being used by another lawyer.

He’d checked. Even after getting her message, he’d had to go make sure it was true—that she’d bailed with no real motivation or explanation.

“Brandon?”

It took a great deal of self-control to loosen his grip on the glass, but he did it, maintaining an even expression.

“Enough of this. What is it you’re really doing here?” she asked, tilting her head back and staring straight into his eyes. Her surprise and nervousness had kept her off guard for the first few moments of his visit. Now the Mia he knew—the strong, powerful woman—was returning.

“Can’t an old friend stop in for a drink?”

She glanced at the minibar, looking so longingly at it, that he raised a brow and held up a tiny bottle. When she nodded, he cracked the seal on it and poured a shot into the other clean tumbler. As he handed it to her, their fingers brushed—just a soft, quick connection—yet Mia’s hand shook and the amber liquor sloshed in the glass.

He nearly smiled at the lapse of control.

She gave a good try at disguising it, sipping once, then tossing out a casual query. “So, what, did you follow me?”

“Don’t flatter yourself,” he mumbled, his tone uninterested—though he was very interested, indeed. “I’m here on business, heard your sister was getting married in this hotel and figured you’d be here.”

Mia nodded slowly. “And you…just happened to be walking by my door just now?”

Slowly smiling, Brandon shook his head and turned to give her his full attention. “No, I’ve been watching your door. My room’s directly across the hall.”

Her mouth rounded into a surprised O. “Coincidence…”

Slowly smiling, Brandon shook his head and turned to give her his full attention. “No, I’ve been watching your door. My room’s directly across the hall.”

Her mouth rounded into a surprised O. “Coincidence…”

He shook his head again, slowly, stepping closer to her. His eyes narrowed, his steps measured, he watched the way her face flushed and her pulse fluttered in her throat. Not controlled at all. No, she was still intimidated. Still unsure what he was doing here. Good.

“It wasn’t a coincidence, Mia. As soon as I found out you were staying here I had my room changed.”

Reaching up, he smoothed his thumb across her bottom lip. When in the courtroom, Mia kept her full, sensual lips unadorned with makeup and tightly compressed. But she had a mouth designed for pleasure and he’d quite enjoyed the pleasures that mouth had provided. During their very last sensual encounter—the night before he’d gone away—he’d briefly met the wild, wanton woman she kept under tight rein during her day-to-day life.

Tonight, he’d get to know that woman thoroughly if it was the last thing he did.

“No, I’ve been watching your door. My room’s directly across the hall.”

She didn’t move, just watched him with those wide, brown-black eyes, usually so unreadable but now holding both curiosity and excitement. She didn’t recognize him, he knew that much. She didn’t see the nice programmer in the threatening man who’d accosted her at her door tonight. And the woman was wildly excited by that fact, as he’d known she would be.

“What exactly do you think I owe you?” Visibly swallowing, she added, “I suppose you want an explanation for my leaving the way I did, without talking to you about it?”

“I know why you left. That’s not what I’m referring to.”

And he did know why she’d left. He’d known she wasn’t happy in Pittsburgh and she missed her family, especially since her father had had a stroke. Though they drove her nuts, she obviously loved them.

He’d also known by her final message that he—nice, dependable Brandon—would never be enough to entice her to stay.

His jaw tightening, he stepped closer, until the ends of his shoes touched her pretty toes. He ran the tip of his finger in a light caress from her mouth, over her chin and down the long line of her slender throat.

Her voice trembling now, she asked, “Then what?”

He didn’t reply at first, just stared down at her, watching the way her skin reacted to the ever-so-delicate scrape of his fingertip. She was rosy and flushed, tiny goose bumps of anticipation appearing on her skin, all the way down to the soft crevice of cleavage rising from her ruby-red gown.

He loved her breasts. Loved toying with them and tasting those perfect brown nipples as he had during a few of their more intimate moments. He’d known that when the time came, he’d have her on top of him, thrusting up into her in rhythm with each powerful suck and that image had kept him hard and desperate during many long, sleepless nights in Japan.

“Brandon, answer me. What is it you think I owe you?”

“What you owe me, Mia,” he murmured, moving even closer so the smell of her hair and her body overwhelmed his senses, “is a night in your bed.”
Chapter 2

The earth stopped turning. At least, the little piece of it on which Mia stood. And her heart stopped with it. Because of all the things she’d expected to hear from Brandon Young, the idea that he’d tracked her down in Chicago to demand that she sleep with him wasn’t even in the realm of possibility.

She should have been shocked. Offended. Instead, a warm drizzle of hunger, which had started coursing in her blood the moment she’d set eyes on his incredibly handsome face, roared through her like a tsunami.

“My bed?” she whispered, unable to tear her stare from the strong jaw, prominent nose and the curved lips she’d once loved to nibble on when they’d kiss good-night in his car or hers after a dinner date.

He might not have been her usual type, but from the moment they’d met, she’d seen past the nonthreatening, easygoing demeanor to the stunningly handsome man beneath. His green eyes had always been dreamy, his brown hair usually tousled, but the body had been pure, mouthwatering male from day one.

“Young bed, my bed, any bed,” he replied, his tone even, his form still, as if he had enough patience to track her to eternity to get what he wanted.

Her breath emerging choppily from her mouth, she stared at him, wondering what, exactly, had changed about him in six weeks. He was still, of course, very tall, built like someone who broke rocks for a living rather than a man who fiddled with computers. But he was dressed differently. The suit he’d worn to court on the day they’d met hadn’t fit well, as if he couldn’t be bothered to wear one very often. It had clung to his broad shoulders and hung baggily over what she’d come to learn were a very lean waist and hips.

Tonight, though, wearing a black turtleneck and soft, faded jeans, his incredible form was highlighted to perfection. The shoulders were broader—stronger. The arms beneath the tight black cotton thick and flexing with muscle. His chest was hard and huge, and Mia was suddenly struck by the memory of one of their last conversations, on the phone, before he’d gone away.

They’d spent at least an hour sharing whispered fantasies, growing a little—okay, a lot—more outrageous as the call wound on. Particularly since Mia had been drinking rich red wine and lying in a bubbly bath while talking. Even now, weeks later, her panties grew wet at the memory of his gravelly voice, telling her how much he wanted her to sit on his chest, spread her legs for him and let him devour her into a screaming orgasm.

It was a fantasy she’d had for a while and she’d promised to let him during their sex date. Especially since she’d fulfilled one of his fantasies in the car outside the airport the night he’d left. Now, it appeared, he was here to collect on that promise.

Swallowing, she closed her eyes for a second, wondering if she was really crazy enough—brave enough—to say yes.

He bent toward her, brushing the stubbled cheek—so unlike his usual clean-shaven look—against her face. His thick hair was longer than it had been, as if he’d had no time to get it cut. It was now sleek and straight, falling past his collar in a look no nice boy next door would ever wear.

But the eyes…those green eyes still mirrored a warm, romantic soul. He might change the rest, but those emerald-green eyes could never be anything but open, honest and beautiful.

“You promised to greet me at the door ready for sin when I got back. Imagine my disappointment when you weren’t there.”

She shivered, wondering how she could keep her thoughts together enough to deal with this when the man was brushing his lips ever so lightly against her neck. She felt his warm exclamations flowing on her skin and moaned at the contact. When he scraped his teeth on the fragile lobe of her ear, she actually began to shake. “Brandon —”

“Give me tonight, Mia. Give it to me not because you promised, but because you want it just as much as I do.”

She did. God help her, she absolutely did.

“We take the pleasure we’ve both been looking forward to, then tomorrow we walk away. No questions asked.”

That should have cinched it, since it was what Mia had wished could have happened the first time around. She’d regretted not having lain naked in Brandon Young’s arms, at least once, every single day since he’d left.

But she’d also been long telling herself that having sex with him before leaving Pittsburgh would have complicated things—that he’d never have let her go, never have admitted how wrong she was for him, if they’d gone to bed together.

Now he was offering her what she’d been dying for with absolutely no expectations. No fears that he’d fall deeper in love with her and set himself up for an even deeper hurt later on when he came to see her as the rest of the world did.

So why did the words tomorrow we walk away sound so stark—almost painful—as they hung in the warm, sensual air of her room?
“Come to me, Mia.”

She didn’t understand at first, since she was separated from him by only a sliver of night air, until Brandon released her. Without waiting for her answer, without allowing her to say a word, he moved away, giving her space, taking his warmth with him. With a slow smile that promised delights she’d never dreamed possible, he walked to the door, opened it and stepped into the corridor.

“My door will be unlocked.”

And then he was gone.

* * *

What if she doesn’t come? “She will,” he murmured in the quiet of his room. He knew it. In fact, he was so confident of it, he kicked off his shoes and took off his shirt, knowing he wouldn’t have to walk back across that hallway tonight.

They might not have dated long, but during the month they’d spent together, Brandon had come to understand Mia Natale in a way he doubted even she did. She wouldn’t be able to resist, if only out of her innate curiosity. Mia didn’t like being wrong about anything. And if she sensed she’d misread him, she’d have to find out the truth. He could predict the thoughts going through her head and all would inevitably lead her to his room in less than five minutes.

The only thing he had never been able to comprehend about Mia was why she’d dumped him before being absolutely sure he couldn’t give her the wild, sexual affair she craved. For that, he was certain, was why she’d ended things the way she had. They’d built toward something explosive; she’d decided he couldn’t deliver and had cut her losses and run without even giving him a chance.

She’d liked the guy the world knew, he didn’t doubt that. But, he strongly suspected, she’d just never really believed he could be the right match for her sexually, since she was a brash, untamed woman and believed him a nice, conservative man.

Oh, how sad for her. She’d mistaken nice for unadventurous. Because when it came to sex, Brandon was up for just about anything. There wasn’t much he hadn’t done. There wasn’t much he wouldn’t do.

Especially tonight.

And once he’d shown her just how foolish she’d been to underestimate him—to never realize that the nice guy the world knew was not the one who would have shared her bed—he’d be the one walking away.

Thrusting away a stab of regret that thought caused him, he lifted his glass in a silent toast to the night. But he hadn’t even had time to bring it to his lips before a soft knock intruded. Glancing at his watch, he murmured, “Two minutes,” and laughed softly.

As he opened the door, seeing Mia’s almost nervous half smile, he had to wonder something. If she knew what he really had in store for her tonight…would she still have had the nerve to show up here?

Didn’t matter. She was here now and it was much too late for her to back out.

So, reaching for her, he took her hand. Then Brandon drew her into his room for what he vowed would be the most erotic night the woman had ever experienced.

She might not remember the fantasies she’d once whispered to him during a long, sensual telephone call.

But Brandon most certainly did.

* * *

Mia had known there was something different about Brandon from the moment he’d pushed his way into her room earlier. The anticipation in his eyes and his lazy, almost jaded smile reiterated that. But somehow, she didn’t care. Because at the sight of that huge, bare chest, rippling with muscle and covered with miles of glorious golden skin, she was stripped of all rational thought.

She wanted. She simply wanted.

“Drink?” he asked, walking over to the bar, which was positioned in mirror image to the one in her room across the hall.

“No, thank you,” she whispered, as she dropped her purse. She had to wonder why he’d let go of her hand and stepped away. Was he going to make this difficult on her? Make her work for him after all he’d done to get her here?

Well…she could do that, she immediately realized. She could most certainly do that. “Brandon?”

Glancing back at him, he remained a picture of ambivalence, as if she were an acquaintance, rather than the woman he’d lured over here with promises of incredible sex and eroticism.

Not for long.

Mia reached for the zipper at the back of her neck and slowly began to tug it down. Her red velvet gown parted, gapping away until it finally fell off her body onto the floor.

Brandon devoured her with those glittering green eyes. His stare burned her. Every place it landed—her throat,
her breasts, her hard nipples thrusting against the lace of her bra—silently pleaded for attention from his hands. His mouth. That magnificent erection straining hard against the zipper of his jeans.

He was not at all ambivalent about what was happening here.

The stare dropped to her waist, small and snugly wrapped in a red garter belt, then went farther. A tiny uptilt of one brow noted her lack of panties, which were right now on the floor of her room where she’d dropped them a moment ago.

Then he noticed the rest and he froze. His lips parted as he breathed over them. Because only the tiniest little tuft of curls remained above Mia’s recently plucked sex. Her lips were silky smooth, already glistening with her arousal, he suspected.

She could hide absolutely nothing.

Some men got off on it, she knew. Frankly, though, Mia just liked the way it felt—liked the erotic wickedness of it beneath the conservative lawyer persona she played on a daily basis. Not having had a lover in a very long time, she’d never much cared what anyone thought. Until now.

“I can’t wait to eat you,” he murmured matter-of-factly.

That made her legs tremble, but she put a hand on the back of a chair to remain upright.

As if he hadn’t just said something so blatantly sexual, Brandon continued surveying her, noting the silky stockings rising high on her thighs. The longer he stared, the tighter his jeans grew, highlighting the erection that would soon be buried deep inside her.

She licked her lips, knowing what was to come and hungering for it. Because while she’d never taken him fully, she had pleased him in other ways and knew exactly why that bulge seemed so powerful.

On the night she drove him to the airport for his trip, Mia had demanded the right to take the edge off before his long journey. Brandon had tried to resist, swearing he wouldn’t be able to keep his hands off her if hers were on him, and they’d already agreed to wait until his return to fully consummate their relationship.

But some devil had pushed her on, so she hadn’t listened. Maybe because he’d told her it was one of his fantasies. Maybe because she wanted him to remember her—to long for her—when he was far away, surrounded by beautiful, exotic women. Or maybe even because something deep inside her had already known there would never be a consummation.

Whatever the reason, she’d been relentless. Right there in the airport parking lot, she’d unfastened his pants and released his sex. She’d pleasured him with her hand, stroking that thick, smooth member, toying with the vulnerable sacs beneath. Then, hearing his groans as his control fled, she’d shocked him by bending over and finishing him with her mouth, sucking him right through his powerful orgasm.

It wasn’t something she’d ever particularly enjoyed before. Oh, she liked oral sex, she just preferred to finish things off the usual way. But exploding into the back of her throat was something Brandon had whispered about that night on the phone.

And she’d loved making it happen.

“Must have been cold today like that,” he murmured with a half smile as he zoomed in again on the V between her thighs.

“It’s very warm,” she replied in a purr. She reached for the front hook of her bra, unfastened it, and let it fall to the floor. “As I’m sure you’ll find out. Soon.”

“Uh-huh.” He stepped closer. But rather than taking her in his arms, Brandon shocked her by immediately dropping to his knees. Before she even had time to prepare herself, his mouth was on her, licking deep. Devouring her, as he’d once promised to do.

Mia howled, then shoved her fist in her mouth to try to control the sounds. He hadn’t kissed her, hadn’t touched her, but in under a minute, he’d pleasured her throbbing clit so thoroughly an explosive orgasm rocketed through her.

She was still shaking from it as he rose, nibbling his way up her body, pausing to nip a hip or sample her belly. The pause was a bit longer when he reached her breasts. He sucked one nipple into his mouth while reaching for the other and tweaking it between his fingers. The pressure with just the tiniest hint of pain had her ready to come all over again, and if he dropped his hand between her legs, she knew she would.

He didn’t. Instead, he kissed his way up to her neck, whispering, “I have a surprise for you in the bedroom.”

She quivered, wondering how his hands could be everywhere on her at once. “You do?”

“Something you once told me you wanted.”

Mia wasn’t sure what he meant, but since the bed was where she most wanted to be with him, she was definitely ready to follow him into the bedroom. “Take me there.”

He entwined his fingers with hers, then led her across the small living area of the suite. Mia’s curiosity grew, until she was almost holding her breath in anticipation.
When Brandon pushed the door open, she let the breath out in a quick exhalation, now remembering what she’d said. And when she’d said it. “You remember that conversation?” she asked, seeing and understanding the lengths he’d gone to in order to fulfill her fantasy. What else, she wondered, did he remember about that long, erotic phone call?

He nodded and led her to the massage table standing at the foot of the bed. On a small table beside it stood an array of lotions, as well as some candles, which he quickly lit. Soft, melodic music played in the background, setting a scene of pure relaxation. “You wanted a sensual massage. To be stroked everywhere, every muscle soothed with silky lotion and an expert touch.”

She remembered uttering those words, exactly.

“Like any other professional massage. Then to gradually be seduced into eroticism by a pair of powerful hands going far beyond the boundaries of a normal session.”

Mia’s whole body went soft, almost boneless, at the thought of his big, male hands kneading away all her tension. She loved massages, as she’d told him, and had long wondered what it would be like to get one from a lover. One whose touches would start firmly, professionally, then segue into wickedly seductive caresses.

“I can’t believe you got a table,” she said, almost stalling for time as she stepped closer and touched the fluffy white towel he’d draped across the top. She was dying for him to do as he’d said, but almost nervous. What if, having voiced the fantasy, the reality wasn’t as good?

Then she glanced back, saw his confident smile and the powerful muscles flexing in his arms and hands, and knew it would be very good.

“Get on,” he told her, holding out a hand to help her.

Mia did. But she didn’t lie down right away, instead extending one leg straight out, silently ordering him to remove her stocking.

Brandon reached for the front clasp, deftly unfastened it, then did the same with the back. He rolled the silky material down slowly—with infinite patience, touching her only with the slightest brushes of his fingertips.

By the time he’d removed the second one, she was already a quivering mess. She didn’t know how much of the massage she’d be able to stand before begging him to fill her.

“Lie down, Mia,” he ordered as he removed the garter belt.

She did, rolling into her stomach. The table was a portable one, with no opening for the face, which was fine with her. She didn’t want to remain removed and separated from the experience—she wanted to watch, to savor whatever he did to her. So she turned her head to the side, following every move he made.

“Now, ma’am, you requested our full service package,” he said as he moved to the door and flicked down the light switch. The room didn’t plunge into darkness, it was still lit by the half-dozen candles. The shadowy lighting, the music, the smells and the anticipation all combined to build her senses to their highest peak. “Yes, I believe I did,” she replied, playing along, wondering how a man as laid-back and friendly as this one could so easily fall into fantasy play-acting with a lover.

She’d never have suspected it. And it delighted her.

“As you wish.” He retrieved another of those towels, a smaller one folded into a long, slender strip. Just as if he were a professional, he carefully draped it across her bottom, covering her curves. He took his time about it, trailing his fingers across her skin in a way no massage therapist ever had.

“Close your eyes,” he murmured. “Relax and enjoy this. Remember, you said it was what you fantasized about.”

She did, letting everything fill her head. She remained entirely relaxed as Brandon drew out the moment, not touching her right away as she’d expected him to. Then, finally, she felt a drizzle of silky liquid on the soles of her feet…followed by a pair of warm, strong hands. “Mmm, finally.”

He worked them thoroughly, rubbing away the pain of the wicked bridesmaid shoes before slowly moving up to her ankles and giving them equally delicious attention.

“Wow,” Mia said, “you are very good at this.”

She wasn’t really expecting an answer, but she got one. “He’s paid to be very good,” a voice whispered, close to her ear. Very close to her ear.

Which was physically impossible, since Brandon ‘s hands were on her calves.

Not understanding, still a little drugged by the sensations battering her every pore, Mia opened her eyes, wondering how Brandon was able to take this fantasy so very far.

She became more confused when she realized she was face-to-face with him. He was sitting on a chair, bare chested, sprawled back, just a foot or two in front of her.

Meanwhile, the delicious strokes continued on the back of her calves, at the opposite end of her body. And
suddenly the truth washed over her.
  They were not alone.
Chapter 3

Brandon gave Mia a second to grasp the implications of what she was feeling. When shock caused her whole form to stiffen and her mouth to open, he leaned forward in his chair. Dropping his elbows onto his knees and staring into her beautiful, confused eyes, he murmured, “I want you to enjoy yourself. Just the way you talked about that night on the phone.”

If he concentrated, he could still hear her whispers during that sultry call. The way her throaty voice had almost purred during the revelation of her most secret fantasy—which she’d said she’d never told to anyone before that night—had emphasized to him just what a chance she was taking by revealing so much of herself.

She’d be taking a much bigger chance tonight…by letting it happen.

Disbelief continued to hold her in silence. He saw the physical effort she made to remain calm, to hold still, while she analyzed the situation. Mia was trying desperately to figure out exactly which fantasy he intended to fulfill. He could almost hear her thoughts: Did he hire a professional masseuse just for the massage? Or is he planning to fulfill the other—even more wicked—desire?

He also saw one more thing—a touch of fear, and that immediately concerned him. He didn’t want her afraid. He wanted her drowning in pleasure.

“It’s okay, Mia,” he murmured, as if trying to gentle a wild animal, “it’s just a massage. You can enjoy it or stop it right here and now. Your choice.”

The man he’d invited to join them paused, lifting his hands off Mia’s beautiful legs, waiting for her response. More proof, in Brandon’s mind, that he’d engaged the right person to assist him in this complete seduction of Mia Natale.

There was no listing in the yellow pages under “gigolo” and Brandon wouldn’t have trusted a complete stranger, anyway. So it was very fortunate that, while in Japan, he’d met Sean Murphy. The expat had been charming his way around every bored wife of every American executive staying in their upscale hotel and he and Brandon had hit it off right away. Murphy had been a perfect escort-for-hire, squiring the wives to functions their husbands were too busy to attend, serving as interpreter, as well as, occasionally, bodyguard.

Whether he serviced them in their bedrooms, Brandon had no idea. But the guy certainly knew how to treat a woman. And he’d accepted Brandon’s proposition with a firm handshake and a promise to treat the lady exactly as she wanted to be treated.

Whatever that entailed.

They’d also set one more boundary. The entire focus of the night would be on Mia…just Mia. Brandon was a free-thinker, but he was most definitely not into anything homoerotic. Nor did he in any way suspect Sean was up for it. The man appeared to be addicted to sensual women. And right now, Mia was the most sensual woman Brandon had ever set eyes on.

“I’d be happy to go if you want me to. Just say the word,” Murphy murmured softly, his brogue hardly noticeable. He, too, had recognized this as a make-or-break moment.

Brandon hadn’t been sure until this crazy thing had gotten underway a few minutes ago how he’d take seeing another man touch a woman he’d wanted for so long. But so far, he was fine. Murphy was a professional, there to service her, to please her. And while Brandon didn’t know how he’d respond if Mia let things go a lot further—or all the way—for now, it was okay.

Because, as he’d often reminded himself, he didn’t have any claim on her or any future with her. Tonight was about driving her insane with pleasure before walking away tomorrow. Teaching her a lesson. Making sure she never forgot this night…or him.

“Mia?” He still waited for her answer. “It’s your call.”

Her lips were parted, her breaths ragged. He didn’t think he’d ever seen her looking so disconcerted—confused. Yet there was excitement in the movement of her mouth and the wildness of her eyes. Best of all, there was no more trace of fear.

Her body slowly relaxed, though not to the level of boneless contentment she’d achieved earlier. That was probably understandable—a faceless, completely unknown man had his hands on her bare legs. And she still wasn’t exactly certain which fantasy was about to be played out here.

“Okay,” she whispered with a nod. “It’s just a massage?”

Brandon leaned closer, rising to brush his lips against the corner of her mouth. Putting his hand on her back he stroked the tender, vulnerable flesh there, knowing he wouldn’t be able to watch for long—he’d have to be in on this massage in very short order. “It’s just a massage.”

She sighed in relief. At least until Brandon added, even more softly, “Unless you want it to be more.”

* * *
Oh, god. Mia closed her eyes, gulping, as everything that was happening sank into her consciousness. Rather than being naked in the arms of the man she’d been dying for over the past two months, she was being touched by someone else altogether. Someone she had never even seen but whose silky, oil-coated hands were doing lovely things to her legs. And could do lovely things to the rest of her. If she wanted him to.

“You remember everything I said that night, don’t you?” she whispered, hearing accusation and anticipation in her voice.

It came as no surprise when Brandon nodded. That was the only thing that had come as no surprise tonight. Everything else—from the moment he’d pushed his way into her room, until right now when he was laying an incredibly sensual offer at her feet—had come as a complete shock.

“You remember that one particular fantasy,” she said, still wanting to be absolutely sure.

Because it seemed almost impossible to believe he was offering her the wicked eroticism she’d almost been too embarrassed to admit to him during that long sultry call: a night with two men in her bed.

What she would do with both men, she’d never quite figured out. Oh, she knew the possibilities, knew the slots and tabs of the human body. But she wasn’t sure just how far she’d let herself go, how much she’d dare.

It was shocking. Outrageous. Incredibly titillating.

And now, it looked like it might actually be happening.

“Yes, Mia, I do.”

Honestly, if Mia had time to consider this whole thing, she probably wouldn’t have the guts to go through with it. No matter how far things went—whether she stopped Mr. Sexy Voice at a typical relaxing rubdown or invited him to perform the erotic part of the massage—this whole setup required a serious element of trust. She wasn’t sure she’d have been able to muster that trust if given the time to consider it.

But she didn’t have time to think, she had to go on instinct. And her instincts told her—that she could trust Brandon Young. No matter what his motives for setting up this elaborate fantasy scene, she did trust him.

More, she wanted him. And whether or not she had the nerve to go all the way through this night, fulfilling fantasy after fantasy, she was at least willing to follow his lead and see how far they went. Because he wouldn’t let anything happen to her that she didn’t want to let happen.

It just remained to see how much she wanted to let happen.

She sucked in and released a quivery breath, already wondering if she was making a mistake. But finally she offered him a sultry smile and settled back down for more treatment from the man with the magnificent hands and the sexy voice.

“Good,” Brandon whispered. Glancing past her, he added, “I think you can proceed, Sean.”

Sean. That was as much as she knew about the man who could very well be doing some pretty intimate things to her tonight.

So be it. “You are going to get involved with this at some point, aren’t you?” she asked, wondering why Brandon was content to sit there, rather than using his hands on all the parts of her body not already being attended to.

“Don’t you remember everything you said that night?”

Distracted by the particularly delicious stroke of a strong knuckle on the back of her calf, she didn’t answer at first.

“You wanted to be watched,” he reminded her. “You swore there was an untapped exhibitionist inside you.”

She remembered. And she also recalled something else. “You had the same fantasy. And as I recall, you were part voyeur.” Challenging him to deny it, she added, “So we’re not just fulfilling my fantasies tonight, are we?”

He shook his head, settling back in his chair. His legs were sprawled apart, entirely relaxed. His incredibly broad, bare torso glowed in the low light of the candles and Mia licked her lips as she stared at him, her fingers itching to stroke all that firm, supple male skin.

Brandon’s stare slowly shifted from her face, studying her naked body, lingering on the curve of her shoulder and the line of her back. His eyes narrowed in intensity and he appeared unable to tear his gaze away when he beheld the masseur working on the aching muscles of her upper thighs.

He seemed fascinated by the sight of another man’s hands stroking her into pure physical contentment. “Oh, yes, we are definitely fulfilling a few of my fantasies, too,” he admitted.

She didn’t ask about participant number three, Sean, and what he expected out of this evening. Brandon had called him a professional—whether that meant he was a professional masseur or a male escort, she honestly didn’t know. Nor was she certain she wanted to know.

She wanted faceless eroticism. Anonymous pleasure. The other man didn’t matter so much and she wasn’t entirely sure she wanted to see him clearly. It was enough to feel the long, firm stroke of his hand down her thigh...
and the brush of his fingertips across the sensitive skin behind her knee, wondering—always wondering—where he’d touch next and whether she’d really be ready for it.

“Mmm,” she groaned as he worked his hand between her legs and gently pushed them apart so he could access the inner thigh muscles. He remained close to her knees, working her skillfully, still well within the bounds of any other massage she’d received. But Mia remained on edge, every nerve ending anticipating the next move, knowing that eventually one would cross that boundary.

Brandon’s hungry stare made her want that touch to come soon. She wanted to see him as insanely excited as she was. Wanted him driven beyond control, until he had to push the stranger out of the way and be the only man touching, experiencing, loving her.

But he doesn’t love you. The thought came rapidly, unexpectedly, and she couldn’t force it away. Brandon had thought he was falling in love with her. That, however, had been before she’d run out on him with nothing but an easy lie for an explanation. Any fragile, early feelings had to have been crushed by her actions.

It was far too late to regret pushing away any chance of a future—of love—with Brandon, because tonight wasn’t about love. It was about lust and unkept promises and unfulfilled desire. It was about eroticism and pleasure. And, she strongly suspected, it was probably also a little bit about revenge.

Mia wasn’t stupid. She’d sensed Brandon’s anger and knew his taunts about having one sexual night with her before they parted forever had been partially inspired by payback. He wanted to show her what she was missing out on.

His plan would work. She wouldn’t soon forget this night, though not for the reasons he might expect.

It wasn’t just the sensuality she’d remember…it was the realization that she might have made a horrible mistake. She’d refused to let him love her, pushing him away, without realizing that maybe—just maybe—Brandon was strong enough for her after all. Perhaps he wasn’t too good or too nice. Tonight had shown her he was real and unpredictable and open to absolutely anything. Maybe even handling a relationship with a cold, bitchy woman like the Mia the world knew.

And she’d tossed him away.

“How far, Mia? How far do you want to go?” Brandon asked, still watching through heavy-lidded, half-closed eyes.

Thrusting off her cloak of sadness for the mistakes she could not unmake, she forced herself back to the moment. She had one night…damned if she’d waste it on regret.

“Mmm…further.”

He smiled in approval and Mia licked her lips, wondering why it was so exciting to watch him watch her. Something wicked deep within her wanted to push him, to drive him to insane lust. So she arched her back slightly—two inches at most. Lifting her bottom, she silently invited the stranger massaging her legs to move his attention higher.

He did so. Immediately. When Mia felt his hands slide high enough to brush the cotton towel and the vulnerable curve where her cheeks met the backs of her thighs, she groaned in sensual response. He soothed her, caressed her…but moved no further.

“God, I need another drink,” Brandon whispered hoarsely. He slowly moved out of the room, still watching, as if loath to miss a moment of what was happening.

When he disappeared from sight, Mia tensed. She had a stranger’s hands on her—a faceless stranger’s. She suddenly realized that Brandon’s presence was the only thing that had given her the courage to do this. And that watching his pleasure and excitement had made this interlude a warmly erotic one. Now, with him gone, what had been so damned exciting seemed incredibly risky.

The man seemed to know it because he immediately moved back down her legs, massaging places he’d already covered. Safe places. Non-intimate places.

A very intuitive one, this Sean.

When Brandon reentered the room, he was carrying something in his hand. Something that was ringing. “Hmm, Bridget Donahue, that’s your cousin, isn’t it?” he asked.

Mia sucked in a shocked breath, realizing he held her cell phone. “Brandon, don’t you dare answer that…”

But he did. “Hello?”

Mia swung her arm out, trying to grab for it as he passed by her. She missed, of course.

Brandon held the phone out of reach, grinned and sat back down where he’d been before. “You’ve got the right number.”

What her cousin must be thinking, Mia had no idea. Especially when Brandon leaned close to her, pressing a kiss on her bare shoulder and saying into the phone, “I’m sorry. Mia’s in the…middle of something.”

She heard a low chuckle from the man behind her and closed her eyes in shock. Hopefully her sweet little
bookkeeper cousin would never realize that the very wicked Brandon Young meant Mia was in the middle of two men.

“I’m going to get you for that,” she vowed after Brandon disconnected the call and tossed the phone onto another chair.

“Give it your best shot.” He leaned back, lifting one leg and draping it over the arm of the plush chair. “I’m completely at your mercy.”

His green eyes sparkled with amusement, but Brandon wasn’t the only one who could tease. In fact, Mia knew exactly how to tease him into losing that confident smile.

She parted her legs bit. “Um, my thighs could definitely use some more attention.”

The invitation was immediately accepted. Big hands encircled her thighs and strong male thumbs slid close—achingly close—to the bare lips of her sex. Mia hissed, dying for the completion of the caress, not giving a damn that she’d never even seen the person doing the caressing because all that mattered was the tension rising between her and her one-man audience.

Across from her, Brandon reacted. His laughter faded and he ran one hand through his thick, tousled hair. With a hiss of approval at the show she was providing, he dropped his hand onto his lap, as if to control his physical response.

She didn’t want him controlling it. “More,” she murmured, to both men in the room.

She was rewarded with the removal of two things: the towel covering her bottom. And Brandon’s last bit of control.

Because as he watched a pair of strong hands move over her cheeks and begin stroking—the touch sliding dangerously close to the seam between them—Brandon slowly unfastened and unzipped his pants. Mia gasped as she watched him release himself, his powerful member fully engorged. He stroked it, obviously needing to pleasure himself as he watched her being pleased.

The sight sent hot, liquid desire flooding to her sex. She swelled so much she had to part her legs even further, which, to the man doing wild and wonderful things to her backside, must have seemed an invitation to go further. And he did.

She cried out when those wickedly fast hands moved again. Before she could even comprehend it, powerful fingers were sliding between her cheeks. The massage oil smoothed the way as he slid past the sensitive opening of her bottom, which he teased lightly before moving on, as if reminding her of the kinds of games they could get up to this night.

Before she even comprehended the fact that it was happening, she felt his touch gently sliding between the folds of her sex. “Oh, yes,” she groaned, urging him on.

When her masseur slowly slid one finger into her wet channel, she let out a quivery sigh of delight. The man used his other hand to tug her up a bit more, then reached around to toy with her sensitive, swollen clit, until she shook and trembled.

Her eyes locked with Brandon’s and she saw he was stroking himself harder, obviously in no way turned off by seeing what was happening. He appeared as aroused as she was.

“You’re incredible,” Brandon muttered.

It felt incredible, but Mia needed more. Needed to see more, feel more, experience more. “Brandon,” she groaned, begging him without even knowing what it was she begged for.

He rose, kicking off his pants. His throbbing sex was a few inches away and she wished she could bend far enough off the table to cover it with her mouth. She wanted to suck him in a steady rhythm matching the deep strokes of the other man’s fingers inside her, until all three of them were connected.

“How far do you want to go, Mia?” Brandon whispered, repeating his earlier query. He bent until eye level with her, then, before she could answer, covered her mouth with his and plunged his tongue deep. He was warm and delicious and Mia cried out against his lips as the sensations continued to build. They were still kissing as her climax rolled over her, making her gasp and shake against his mouth and against Sean’s slowing hand.

When Brandon lifted away and she was finally able to speak—or breathe—she whispered, “Further.”

His answering smile was positively wicked. “You got it.”
Chapter 4

Every time he asked Mia how much further she wanted to go, Brandon held his breath until she answered. The truth was, he didn’t know how he wanted her to answer. He was waiting for that moment when something inside him would rebel at watching someone else touch her so intimately, but so far, all he felt was out-of-his-mind excited.

One thing he knew, he could no longer remain an impartial observer. He had to touch, to taste, to savor. So, with a nod of warning at Murphy, he reached for Mia’s shoulders and helped her sit up. The other man remained behind her, between the table and the bed, still stroking her hips, continuing the massage as if he hadn’t just fingered her to a rocking orgasm.

“Kiss me, Brandon,” she begged. She reached for him, grabbing his hair, twining her fingers in it.

“Nothing I’d rather do.” He came down to her, covering her mouth in another breathless kiss. When it ended, he tasted his way down her neck, wanting to sample those puckered nipples, roll his tongue across them. “You have the most beautiful breasts,” he muttered before licking one tip. It was as delicious as he’d expected, and hearing her cries of delight made it taste even better.

Sean remained behind her. He was stroking her shoulders now, digging his fingers into the tight muscles there. He probably needn’t have. Any remnants of Mia’s tension appeared to be long gone, replaced by pure sensual pleasure.

“I still can’t believe this is happening,” she whispered.

“Are you all right?” Brandon asked.

She nodded.

“Good,” Murphy whispered, and Brandon completely understood the reaction. Because watching Mia experience what they were doing to her had to be driving the other man as wild as it was him.

Seeing her so into it made him curious about just how much further she meant. So he nibbled and kissed his way down her body. He breathed in the essence of her skin and the remnants of the heady massage oil, knowing her intrinsic scent was much more heady. Especially as he got closer to her quivering sex, pink and luscious and swollen for him.

She’d allowed another man to use his hands on her while Brandon watched. How would she feel about intense oral pleasure under the watchful eyes of a stranger?

“She’d allowed another man to use his hands on her while Brandon watched. How would she feel about intense oral pleasure under the watchful eyes of a stranger?”

“When she answered by arching toward him, groaning when he covered her pretty clit with his tongue and played with it. Mia gasped and sagged back…into another man’s arms. Brandon watched for a second as another strong pair of hands moved across her shoulders and down, covering her breasts and tweaking the nipples Brandon had just been sucking.

That was when the queasiness started. He ignored it, focused on her little cries of pleasure as he loved her with his mouth. But even as he brought her to another shattering orgasm, he wondered what would come next. If he asked her again how much further she wanted to go…what would be her response?

Whether they’d go all the way—whether she’d actually take the other man into her body, he didn’t know. A quick tightening of his chest and the unconscious clenching of his fingers told him he probably didn’t want to consider that yet.

He’d set some ground rules with Sean and one of them was that he’d stop short of actual penetration, unless Mia really wanted it. When he’d said that, he’d intended merely to protect her, in case things got too carried away too quickly. He hadn’t considered how he would feel about it.

Well, he told himself he hadn’t.

Because tonight wasn’t supposed to be about finally having the woman he’d been crazy about six weeks ago. It was supposed to just be about having wild, dirty sex with a woman he was hot for…giving her a night she’d never forget, then walking away without ever looking back.

That woman he could take in any number of wicked ways. And the idea of being inside her while she was being pleasured by another man, too, was at the very least intriguing.

But this wasn’t that woman. This was Mia. The sharp-edged lawyer who had an adorably sweet giggle that she almost never let anyone hear. The brown-eyed beauty who’d cried in his arms one night over a particularly brutal case she’d had to try. The great cook who’d single-handedly prepared an entire Thanksgiving feast for all their friends.
The woman he’d fallen in love with.
Brandon stopped what he was doing, having to close his eyes to mentally acknowledge the truth. What she’d done hadn’t stopped his feelings for her…he loved her more now than he had the day he’d left. And he absolutely did not want anyone else making love to her, having sex with her or fucking her.
Not while he was in the room. Not while he wasn’t. He wanted to be the only man plunging into her. Ever.
Which was pretty bad considering he had handed her to another man.
“What are you thinking?” she whispered.
Brandon looked up at her, lost himself in her big brown eyes, and knew he couldn’t be the one to make the choice. “I’m thinking of how badly I want to be inside you.”
She smiled down at him, sighing lightly in anticipation. Reaching for his shoulders and tugging him up, she touched her mouth to his and murmured, “Then be inside me, Brandon.”
He deepened the kiss, tasting her fully, telling her silently everything that he hadn’t been able to say out loud. And she kissed him back, languorously meeting the thrusts of his tongue, wrapping her arms tightly around his neck and her legs around his hips as if not wanting an inch to separate them.
But there remained one question to ask. “How much further, Mia?” he whispered.
She nibbled his earlobe. Then, casting a quick, apologetic look over her shoulder at Murphy—who she was actually seeing for the very first time—replied, “As far as two people can possibly go.”

Brandon made exquisite love to her for the rest of the night. There was nowhere on her body he didn’t caress, no inch of skin left un kissed. His stamina amazed her—because though he had seemed insane with need by the time the very handsome, black-haired Mr. Murphy had left them, he still managed to fill her for hours. And within minutes of coming inside her, he’d picked her up, carried her into the bathroom and started all over again in the shower.

She’d never experienced a night like it in her life.
And she almost had trouble believing it had all really taken place.
“Did we really do those things?” she whispered to the ceiling early the next morning. Brandon was sound asleep beside her, one arm resting in casual possession across her middle. “Did it truly happen?”
Glancing at the massage table, now collapsed and leaning against the wall, she sighed and acknowledged that yes, it had really happened. Brandon had brought an incredibly sexy stranger into their bedroom. Had watched while that man had brought her to orgasm with his hands. Had dropped his mouth to her lap and licked her to ecstasy while another man toyed with her breasts and watched every move they made.
Women went their entire lives fantasizing about the eroticism of such a night. Now Mia knew exactly what was possible. How far she could go, how much she would demand. And when, exactly, she would stop.
Murphy had pleasured her…but when it had come right down to it, she just couldn’t go that final step. Maybe if she hadn’t realized that she still loved Brandon, she’d have been able to do it. God knows when she’d seen the Irishman’s incredible body and ruggedly handsome face, she’d had a mental flash of what could have been.
But she didn’t regret it. Any wicked, erotic delights she’d gained from the two of them couldn’t come close to what she’d experienced later. Brandon had thrust into her, over and over, whispering sweet, sexy words in her ear as he drowned her in pleasure. Mia was already certain she’d never be able to get used to the emptiness of not having him inside her.
Especially not a lifetime of that emptiness.
“You’re awake,” he whispered beside her.
Startled, she glanced over and saw him watching her. Mia quite honestly didn’t know what to say. She’d had mornings after before, but never ones that had involved not one man but two.
In the light of day, would he regret what he’d started or judge her for going along with it? Now that he’d done what she suspected he’d set out to do—gotten even with her—would he casually toss her aside, thinking less of her for her wanton behavior of the night before?
“You okay?”
She nodded. “You?”
“I don’t know,” he admitted.
Oh, God. She sat up, shifted her legs to the side of the bed and prepared to stand, needing the floor beneath her and clothes on her body for the conversation she suspected was to come.
“Mia—” he ran a hand through his already bed-and-sex tousled hair “—wait.” She hesitated.
“I know I won’t be okay if you get up and leave. Last night…”
“Was a fantasy come true,” she whispered. When he opened his mouth to interrupt, she added, “I know why
you came here, I know why you set this whole thing up. And believe me, it worked. I won’t ever forget it and I
know no man will ever make me feel what you made me feel last night.”
As if he heard the sadness in her voice, he slowly sat up. “That’s a bad thing?”
“Revenge is never a good thing.”
He opened his mouth, then closed it, unable to deny what she already knew was true.
“But neither is cowardice,” she added. “And me leaving Pittsburgh the way I did was pure cowardice.”
His beautiful lips twisted into a frown. “Because I was too tame for you. Too nice, I think your voice mail
said.”
Hearing the bitterness in his tone, Mia immediately reached for him, putting one hand on his arm. He allowed
the contact. “I am so sorry. I know you think that’s why I left and what I meant. But it wasn’t.”
He remained motionless. “Then why?”
How to explain? How to tell him that she’d been trying to do what was best for him? That she’d misjudged him
so completely as to think he’d end up with a broken heart—or worse, hating her—if they stayed together?
It was the ultimate irony. Because at that moment, knowing it was one of their last, Mia’s was the heart that felt
utterly pulverized.
“You were better off without me because I’m a heartless bitch,” she finally admitted in a shaky whisper.
“Like hell…”
She held a hand up to stop him. “It’s true. I’m ambitious and cold and I often trample over other people’s
feelings.”
still on fire for you.”
“I don’t mean sexually.”
“Neither do I,” he insisted.
Brandon, the last man who loved me ended up hating me when all was said and done because he couldn’t keep
up with me and I always had to be in control.”
“Then he was no man.”
She blinked.
“Relationships aren’t about control. And anyone who demands control doesn’t understand the beauty of
occasionally surrendering it.” He bent and kissed her fingertips. “Like you did, last night.”
Oh, she’d most definitely surrendered control last night, let herself be pleasured in as many ways as she could.
“Loving someone is about trusting them enough not to be in a constant state of struggle. Who gives a damn
about who decides which restaurant to go to or who pays for the popcorn or what color the new curtains should be?
That’s not control, that’s pettiness.”
Good lord, it was as if he’d looked into a crystal ball and seen her past. The arguments he’d mentioned exactly
described the final months she’d lived with her former lover.
“Couples who let the small shit tear them apart weren’t meant to be together, anyway. And they play the I
Want/ You Want game to escape a relationship they know isn’t going to work.”
The man had a future as a therapist. Or a seer.
“People who are meant to be together rise above pettiness every single time, Mia.” He pulled her back down
onto him, running his fingers through her hair, then cupping her face. “It’s yin and yang, give and take. Offering
control and accepting pleasure. Compromise.”
She could say nothing, so she answered by brushing her lips across his. For the first time since last night, she
began to sense that perhaps it wasn’t too late for her to fix the mistake she’d made in pushing him away for his own
good.
But he didn’t respond by kissing her back. Instead, he frowned lightly and added, “I don’t need you protecting
me.”
It was as if he’d read her thoughts.
The frown softened as he trailed his fingers across her bare shoulder, gently caressing the tender skin at her
nape. “And I won’t let you try to stop me from loving you.”
Feeling moisture prick her eyes, she asked, “You really love me?”
“I do.”
“Even after last night?” She needed to know for sure whether what had happened last night might ever come
back to haunt them. Better to know now. Her voice quivering, she added, “After everything I let someone else do to
me?”
Brandon rubbed his thumb across her bottom lip. “I loved watching that….”
“But?”
“But I’m glad it stopped when it did.”
“So am I. There’s a fine line between fantasy and regret. I’m glad we didn’t cross it.”
He shrugged. “I know. Because if it had gone much further I would have had to rip that guy’s dick off.”
Mia couldn’t help it, she threw her head back and laughed. “You’re the one who started it!”
“And I’m glad I was the only man who finished it.”
So was she.
“I love you, Brandon,” she whispered, knowing he had to be waiting for the words. His smile told her how much he treasured them. “Thank you for coming after me, even if it was just to teach me a lesson.”
“I think I’m the one who got the lesson.”
“I think we both did. You definitely don’t have to prove anything else to me ever again.”
“Like that I’m your match in bed? That I can go toe to toe with you on anything you come up with?”
Stretching like a cat, Mia slowly rose, straddling his lean hips, feeling him already hard and ready between her thighs. “Hmm…as I recall, you said something on the phone that night about gentle restraint.” She wrapped her fingers around his wrists and pushed his hands over his head, holding them there, pretending he was trapped. “I’ve got you now. You can’t move a muscle, can you?”
He played along with the fantasy, the latest they’d fulfill. But he couldn’t help thrusting up and groaning, “I’m pretty sure I was talking about tying you up, sweetheart.”
“I don’t remember that at all.”
Laughing in helpless desperation, he nipped at her breast, but Mia remained just out of reach. “Okay, okay, I give up. I’m willing to lie here and let you…”
He hesitated over the final unspoken words that echoed in the silent bedroom: be in control. But as if already determined to prove everything he’d said earlier, about give and take, yin and yang, he instead finished, “…have your wicked way with me.”
She giggled at the old-fashioned term and at the helpless expression on his handsome face.
“Just be warned. When it’s my turn? We’ll be using real silk scarves.”
Mia shivered, physically aroused and so happy she didn’t know what to do. So she ended the game, collapsing on his chest and catching his mouth in a slow, sweet kiss.
Then catching the rest of his body in slow, sweet love.
As they rocked and swayed together, Mia couldn’t help murmuring, “I’m so glad I didn’t go back to my place last night.”
“Mmm, me, too. Think they’ll let us keep this room another day or two?”
A wicked laugh spilled out of her mouth. “If they knew the kinds of naughty things that had taken place in here, I’m sure they’d have ordered us out already.”
“Are you saying nobody else in this hotel got lucky last night?”
“Brandon,” she replied, going very still to look down at him with pure love in her eyes, “I don’t think anybody in the whole world was as lucky as we were last night.”
They nearly missed their flight.

After a long, full night of eroticism and tenderness, Izzie and Nick both overslept. By the time Izzie glanced at the clock through nearly lowered lashes, awakened by the slant of sunlight peeking through the slit in the heavy drapes, it was nearly ten. Their flight to Aruba left O’Hare at noon.

The two of them threw their things in their suitcases, washed and dressed frantically, and raced out of their room. The whole way down in the elevator, Izzie snuck glances at her watch, nibbling her lip in concern.

“There are other flights, if we miss it we’ll catch the next one,” Nick said, obviously noticing. Then he smiled slowly, that sexy, insatiable glimmer in his eyes. “We could always come back here. I sure wouldn’t mind spending another night like the last one.”

Oh, goodness, neither would she. Though she and Nick had been lovers for several months, nothing had prepared her for the intensity of being married lovers. It had taken all the physical pleasure and catapulted it beyond anything she’d ever known. She’d never suspected, never dreamed how much better things could get with the exchange of two rings and some vows.

“Wait, is that Gloria?” Nick said as they got off the elevator and strode toward the lobby.

Izzie glanced at the main hotel doors, seeing a dark-haired woman walk out them. Shaking her head, she replied, “I doubt it. She was going home last night. Lots of little boys to take care of.”

Nick must have heard something in her voice. Because even though they were running terribly late, he stopped and put a hand on her shoulder. “We’re not having kids for a long time, remember?”

She nodded. While she wanted Nick’s babies, she didn’t want them anytime soon. She and her new husband were having too much fun by themselves. “I know. But when we do? Promise we won’t be like Gloria and Tony, doing nothing that doesn’t involve the kids, never sparing a private moment for each other.”

He put an arm across her shoulder and started walking again. “I promise.”

Feeling better, since Nick would never break a promise, Izzie murmured, “I feel a little sorry for her. I know she loves your brother, but she’s just so…maternal. Unadventurous.”

“I think you got all the adventurous genes in your family,” Nick said as he led her out the door into the cold Chicago morning. He slipped the doorman a big bill and the man stepped right out in traffic to hail them the next passing cab.

“Mia’s tough, but you’re right, she’s not exactly adventurous when it comes to her personal life,” Izzie admitted. “She never lets herself go, never takes chances. It’s a shame.” Thinking more about the topic, she added, “It seems as if none of my bridesmaids are terribly lucky in the romance department.”

“Gloria and Tony love each other….”

She waved a hand. “Oh, of course they do, I’m not talking about that. I’m talking about wild, romantic, fun relationships.” Her jaw tightening, she muttered, “I wish Bridget could get over that jerk FBI agent who strung her along last year. And that Leah would meet some rich doctor while she’s going to nursing school, someone who’ll pamper her and treat her right after all the garbage she went through in her childhood.”

“I’m sure there are lots of rich doctors at the club,” he offered, a tiny smile on his lips. “Just none who are looking for a wife.”

She smirked. “You found one there.”

“No, I think you found me on a table full of cookies at Gloria and Tony’s wedding.”

Izzie responded by swatting her new husband’s arm. She’d long heard the snickers about how she’d fallen on top of Nick when she’d been a chubby teenager and he a sexy young Marine. He’d called her Cookie ever since.

“You want to continue this honeymoon, don’t mention that again.”

He made a lips-zipped motion over his mouth.

But even the light banter with her sexy hubby couldn’t distract Izzie from her thoughts of her sisters…and her friends. “Even Vanessa, as beautiful as she is, has no one special in her life and hasn’t for as long as I’ve known her.”

“That’s a shame,” Nick said, slipping an arm around her waist. “But it’ll happen. Would you have pictured us being like this six months ago?”

Izzie shook her head. She most definitely had not envisioned this day even as recently as last summer. “You’re right. Something wonderful could happen to any of them.”

“Maybe it already did. Who’s to say they didn’t have as spectacular a night last night as we did?”

They looked into each other’s eyes, both remembering the night before. And both of them burst into peals of laughter at the exact same moment.
Because that was absolutely impossible.

When the laughter faded, Izzie put her head on her husband’s strong shoulder, noting the way he had turned his back to the wind to shield her from the cold. So protective. God, how she loved him.

The doorman quickly got them a cab and they hurried over to it, hopping into the backseat as the driver tossed their bags in the trunk.

“You okay?” Nick asked, once they were under way. “Not worried about your bridesmaids anymore?”

She shook her head. “No. Like you said, it’ll happen, maybe even today. Who knows? This could be the first day of the rest of their lives.”

Her new husband brushed his lips across her forehead, then her cheek. “Just like it is ours,” he whispered.

Meeting his mouth for a tender kiss, Izzie could do nothing but agree. Because a lifetime of loving Nick Santori was all she’d ever dreamed of…and everything she’d ever wanted.

She only hoped that someday her bridesmaids would be equally as happy.