

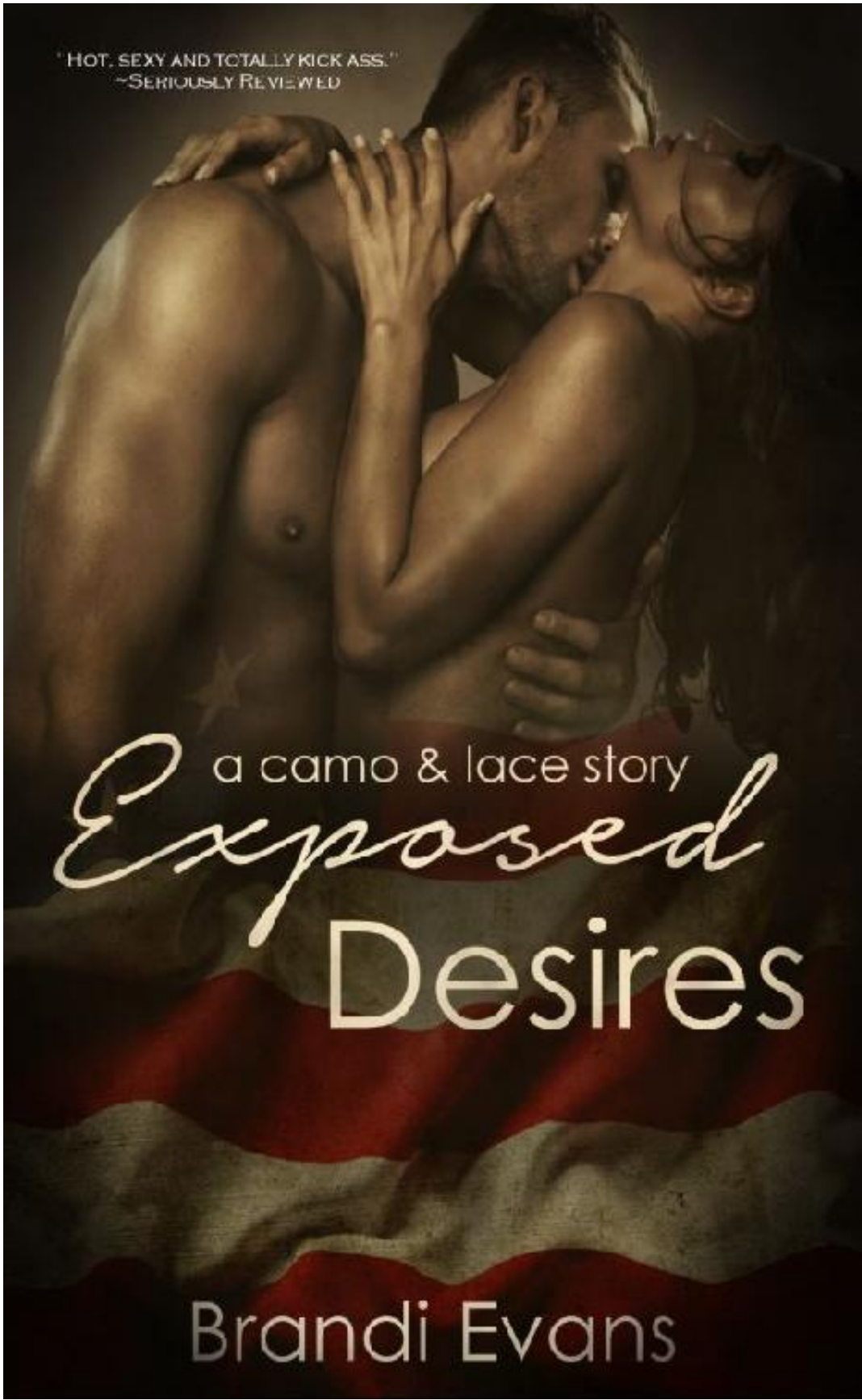
A romantic couple is shown in a close embrace. The man, on the left, is shirtless and has a beard. The woman, on the right, is wearing a dark lace top and has her eyes closed in a blissful expression. They are lying on a red and grey patterned blanket. The background is dark and moody.

"HOT, SEXY AND TOTALLY KICK ASS!"
- SERIOUSLY REVIEWED

a camo & lace story

Exposed Desires

Brandi Evans

A romantic couple is shown in a close embrace, nearly kissing. The man is shirtless and has his arms around the woman. The woman is also topless. They are positioned in front of a large American flag, which is draped across the lower half of the image. The lighting is soft and intimate, highlighting the couple's skin against the dark background of the flag's stripes.

"HOT, SEXY AND TOTALLY KICK ASS."
~SERIOUSLY REVIEWED

a camo & lace story

Exposed Desires

Brandi Evans

EXPOSED DESIRES

Brandi Evans

What says *I love you* like a lap dance?

Sophia Raines has the looks, the charm and the hottest strip club in Dallas. So why's she so glum? The man she loves is deploying to Afghanistan, and she hasn't had the courage to tell him she loves him. Tonight, however, that will change. Sophia has devised the perfect plan to *show* Bret just how she feels.

Bret Dowers has loved Soph for years, but between two tours of duty—three if he counts his disastrous marriage—things have never worked out. When Soph rocks his world with some serious PDA, however, their friendship takes a dramatic turn into Sexville. But with the separation of deployment looming, can their newfound love survive or will this weekend be all they ever have?

ALSO BY BRANDI

THE EROGENOUS ZONE

A Soldier's Seduction (*interactive erotic romance*)
Seduced by the Marine Dom (*coming August 2016*)

ROCK-HARD HEROES

In the Middle of Nowhere
Operation a Better Tomorrow (*coming soon*)

CHASING MAX

Lust, Lace & Lingerie (*re-releasing soon*)

CAMO & LACE

Exposed Desires
Game Night (*re-releasing soon*)

STANDALONE STORIES

His Forbidden Submissive
Tempted (*re-releasing soon*)
Seducing Jason (*free read*)

Learn more at www.BrandiEvansAuthor.com.

EXPOSED DESIRES

CAMO & LACE

BRANDI EVANS

EXPOSED DESIRES

by Brandi Evans

Copyright © 2016 by Brandi Evans

Formatted by The Romance Geek

Edited by Grace Bradley

Cover by The Romance Geek

This eBook is not transferable. It cannot be resold, shared or given away because that will be considered an infringement of the copyright of this work.

This book is a work of fiction. The names, characters, places, and incidents are products of the author's imagination and should not be construed as real. Any resemblance to persons (living or dead), actual events, locales or organizations is entirely coincidental.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author, except for brief quotations for review purposes.

This eBook is licensed for your personal enjoyment only. It may not be re-sold or given away to other people. If you would like to share this book with another person, please purchase an additional copy for each recipient. If you're reading this book and did not purchase it, or it was not purchased for your use only, then please return to www.BrandiEvansAuthor.com and learn more about purchasing your own copy.

PRAISE FOR BRANDI

“...Brandi Evans takes the age-old battle between the pleasure of the flesh and the soul to erotic heights.” ~**The Pen & Muse Reviews**

“Ms. Evans created a very sexy story that will keep your heart pounding.” ~**Literary Nymphs Reviews**

“Ms. Evans has created characters so real it feels as if you could meet them walking down the street.” ~**Whipped Cream Reviews**

“[Brandi Evans] writes some HOTNESS...” ~**Amy, Romancing the Book**

“[His Forbidden Submissive] literally gave me goose bumps while I was reading it.” ~**Heather, Sizzling Hot Book Reviews**

“Wow [Lust, Lace & Lingerie] is HOT...[it] has very detailed sex scenes and an interesting storyline that kept me reading, I couldn't put the book down!” ~**Wanda, Romance Writers Reviews**

DEDICATION

To anyone who's ever fallen in love with their best friend.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Front Matter](#)

[Also By Brandi](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Praise for Brandi](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Table Of Contents](#)

[Chapter One](#)

[Chapter Two](#)

[Chapter Three](#)

[Chapter Four](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Coming Soon](#)

[About The Author](#)

[Seduced by the Marine Dom](#)

CHAPTER ONE

It was now or never.

Sophia stared across the smoke-filled club as the man she loved took a long pull of his Heineken. Regret expanded in her chest like a lead balloon, so heavy she could hardly breathe. She'd had over a year to tell him the truth. A fucking year! But somewhere along the way, time had become her enemy.

In two days Bret, her best friend for almost ten years, would ship out for another tour in the Middle East, and he might never return.

Never return...

The thought made her physically ill. Trying to fathom the next eighteen months without him was like trying to figure out how to reconfigure her lungs to process carbon dioxide instead of oxygen. So picturing the rest of her life without him...?

Nope.

Not gonna happen.

He was her rock. The only man aside from her father she trusted explicitly—even if she'd never told him how much she cared. But no more. Tonight she'd finally *show* Bret Dowers the truth she'd been hiding for so long.

She wiped her hands on the rag she kept draped over her shoulder when helping out at the bar, gathered every ounce of courage she possessed and—

“Can I get a beer?”

Well shit.

Sophia turned her gaze from Bret to a patron at the bar. Despite her annoyance, she gave the sandy-haired young man a flirtatious smile and flipped her dark hair over her shoulder. “What can I get ya, sweetheart?”

She really didn't like using the Brazilian Bombshell appeal her bitch of a mother had cursed her with, especially now, but her customers expected

her to flirt. Expected all Sophia's girls to flirt. Why else would they be at a strip club with rolls of bills straining their jeans?

"Hmm," he said to her breasts, "what all do you have on tap?"

Ugh, she didn't have time for this. She had a plan to put into motion. Nevertheless, she kept her smile glued on and listed off the names of the fifteen beers on tap. Boy-Man might be twenty-two. *Might*. If she didn't have confidence in her bouncers, she'd ID the guy herself.

Sophia expected—and received—integrity from her employees. Exposed Desires was many things. Sexy, sensual...naughty, but it wasn't dirty. When she'd taken over almost six years ago, she'd worked hard to change the club's image, and as a result, her club had become one of Dallas' most-talked-about erotic hot spots.

"Bud Light," Boy-Man finally said.

What an original soul. "Coming right up, hon." She grabbed a frosted mug from the freezer, filled his order and then turned to Mindy, the busty redhead at the end of the bar.

"All yours, Min."

Mindy waved without turning her thousand-watt grin from Baldy McBeergut and the serious tip she was building.

Sophia smiled at a group of businessmen as she passed their table. The guys were regulars, came in twice a week. Sometimes three when business was really good. The club had lots of regulars these days, most of whom she knew by name. And by the size of their, um, tips.

When she reached the DJ's station—an elevated platform along the club's back wall—she chanced another glance at Bret. This time, his gaze met hers and locked on.

Despite the distance and the distractions between them, desire simmered to life and kicked her heart into high gear. Bret had the physique of a serious athlete. Not bulky but with the hard lines and sculpted ridges of a man who worked and worked out hard. Tack on his sandy blond hair and eyes as blue as the Texas sky, and he was a shoo-in for the WWDAs—Walking Wet Dream Awards.

Sophia looked away before her cheeks heated to the point Bret would be able to see the redness from across the club.

She plucked a wireless mic from the cabinet beside the turntable then tapped the DJ on the shoulder. "After this number, Tee." She'd told him of

her plan earlier and given him the song she wanted to play. “And don’t forget to dim the house lights when you turn on the spotlight onstage.” She wanted the mood to be as intimate as possible.

“Got it, boss,” Tee said then went back to jiving along with the pounding bass pumping through the speakers.

From the corner of her eyes, she noticed Bret still watching her, and like Odysseus to the call of the sirens, she couldn’t help but turn her attention back to him.

He waved her over. She took one step toward him. Then stopped. Bret asking questions was the last thing she wanted. Lying to her best friend wasn’t her strong suit. Then again, neither was telling him the complete truth.

She flashed him a smile and pointed behind her, mouthing the words, *I’m needed backstage.*

Bret over-exaggerated a sigh, complete with sagging shoulders and pouty lips. The sweet dork. Shaking her head, she headed backstage.

A bouncer with shoulders about as broad as a semi-truck swept back the curtain hiding the employees-only area of the club. “Ms. Raines,” he said with a slight nod.

Sophia returned the head bob.

A frenzy of exposed skin, friendly chatter and flying underwear greeted her. Vanities ran the length of the parallel walls and costumes hung along the far wall. Most importantly, laughter floated through the air.

Lots and lots of laughter.

A grin tugged at Sophia’s lips. Her girls were happy. Safe. Just the way they should feel on the job. Too bad *her* boss hadn’t cared for her when she’d been a dancer.

Sophia pushed the dark thoughts to the back of her mind. Those incidents were in the past. She’d moved on. Taken control of her life and her body.

If that was true, why haven’t you danced since that night?

She ignored the voice. No time for distractions now. The current song was fading, slowly being replaced by the applause of the crowd. Oh, crap. That was her cue.

It was time.

“You can do this,” she whispered. “You can *do* this.” Taking a deep breath, she grabbed the chair she’d set by the stage entrance earlier and headed into the spotlight. “Give it up for the lovely and limber Ginger!” Sophia called, motioning toward the other woman on stage.

Ginger waved and blew seductive kisses to the crowd as she promenaded around the edge of the stage for tips. By the time she retreated backstage, her purple G-string had a wealthy trim of George Washington green.

Sophia placed the chair under the spotlight and waited for the crowd to settle. Her gaze found Bret’s and she smiled. “If you’ll allow me a moment, ladies and gentlemen,” she said, “I’d like to invite my dear friend Bret Dowers to the stage.”

Bret’s eyes went wide, and he glanced at the man beside him as if he knew what was going on. Liam, Bret’s longtime friend and Army buddy, merely shrugged, so Bret returned his focus back to the stage.

A smile curved her lips. *That’s right, Bret. You’re mine tonight. All mine...*

When he didn’t budge, she waved him her way. “Come on, Bret! I don’t bite.”

“Unless you want her to,” someone called from backstage, and a swell of laughter swept through the space.

Finally, Bret surrendered, handed his beer to Liam and sauntered on stage. “Soph? Um, what’s goin’ on?”

Holding her hand toward him, she winked, and when he twined his fingers through hers, she tugged him to her side. “Bret here has been my best friend since college, and in two days, his National Guard unit is shipping out for another tour in the Middle East.”

The audience clapped and cheered, acknowledging and thanking him for his service.

“But before he leaves,” she said when the applause faded, “I have a special surprise for him.” She stepped so close her breasts smashed against Bret’s solid chest. “For the first time since I took over Exposed Desires, I’m gonna dance again, a combination floor show and lap dance, and you, Bret Dowers, are gonna have an onstage seat. Up close and *über* personal.”

~ * ~

Bret's heart pounded as he waited for Soph to return to the stage. He felt as if a band of armed insurgents had surrounded him, not a crowd of harmless bar patrons, but in truth, his out-of-control heart rate had little to do with the crowd and more to do with the anticipation of *finally* seeing Soph dance.

From the moment she'd told him she'd become an exotic dancer, his mind had surged into erotic overdrive, but unfortunately, her short stint as a stripper had started and ended while he'd been convoying through the hot-ass Iraq desert on his first deployment. She'd needed a way to pay for her last year of college after her CEO father's business had been hit hard by a series of lawsuits. Her employment choice had almost shocked her old man right into a damn heart attack. Hell, it'd shocked Bret too but for entirely different reasons.

Complete strangers getting to see *his* Soph naked but not him—talk about fucking torture.

The house lights dimmed, and a crescendo of applause and catcalls echoed in the darkness beyond the stage. The sultry *bah-bump-shick* of Peggy Lee's hit *Fever* slinked through the sound system, a laid-back rhythm that teased the senses. He knew the song well. It was one of Soph's favorites.

Fingertips played over his shoulder, around the curve of his neck, and teased his jaw. He turned his head in the direction of the touch, and Soph stepped into view. His cock twitched, filling, lengthening. The slinky fabric of her super-short red dress sparkled beneath the bright light.

Yeah, like he was looking at her outfit.

She rolled her hips to the rhythm of the music and waved her ass at him. God, her legs had never seemed so long. The distance between the hem of her outfit and the ultra-high heels stretched on for miles.

She turned her head and smiled at him over her shoulder and, with a wink, sent the dress careening to the stage floor. Bret swallowed. Hard. Soph dancing for him, gyrating her beautiful body while he greedily looked his fill? Ten times better than he'd imagined.

Her dark skin practically gleamed, a stunning Brazilian beauty. *His* Brazilian beauty. She slid her hands over her body, slow swipes that sent his dick into a frenzy. How many times had he dreamed about her touching him like that?

Although her back was still toward him—no, *because* her back was still toward him—his imagination went wild. Was she running her hands over her tits as she danced for him? Over her pussy? Was she making herself wet, getting as turned on as he was? Did she want to fuck him like he wanted to fuck her?

Easy, hero.

Goddamn it, if he didn't tame his wild thoughts, he'd cream his pants right here and now.

Bending slowly at the waist, legs straight, Soph touched the floor with her palm. And stayed there. The sight was...was...

Ah, fuck.

He fisted his hands. No words did that justice. The thread of her G-string stretched tightly between her cheeks, leaving little for his imagination to do. At least on the visual side.

A shiver overtook him. What would it feel like to cram his cock tight and deep into that puckered hole? Was Soph even into that kind of thing? Not that he'd have a chance to find out. He was just her—*gag*—best friend. If she only knew the kind of non-friendly fantasy positions he'd had her in while jacking off in the shower.

He shifted in his chair. The denim imprisoning his aching cock rubbed against him. Shit, he needed to calm down. No, what he needed was Soph.

"Come on, turn around," he muttered, although seeing Soph's naked tits would likely be his undoing. He doubted he'd be able to resist the urge to bury his face between them and go nuts.

Soph pushed back to her feet—hell and heaven in the same movement—and turned to face him. The cups of her bikini-type top were nothing but sheer black fishnet.

Hello, nipples.

He bit his bottom lip. God, those babies were beautiful. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he knew he should stop staring at her like some teenager sneaking his first glimpse of a naked woman from the pages of his father's *Penthouse* magazine. Especially considering the tits he was ogling belonged to his best friend. But damn! Almost naked breasts. He couldn't *not* stare. He wasn't a fucking saint.

Need pulsed through his cock so hot his blood felt close to boiling. Was this what Peggy meant when she sang about fever?

Soph sank to the stage and crawled toward him. Temptation painted her face in a way that made her look like she wanted him too, as impossible as that was. Fucking friend zone.

She planted her right hand and then her left on his knees and practically crawled up his body. Her top caught the loose material of his t-shirt and pulled the cotton along for the ride. She worked her palms up his torso, stopping only when she reached his shoulders, and sat on his lap.

Her face hovered inches from his, her fingers sliding into his hair. For a fleeting moment, he thought she'd kiss him, but she stopped short. She tucked her feet behind her, hooked them on either side of his knees, and began grinding her panty-covered pussy against his cock.

Oh, sweet heaven.

His hands clenched, itching to touch her as she dry humped him, but he couldn't. The rules at Exposed Desires about touching dancers were strict. They got to touch, but patrons didn't. Nope, nada, no exceptions, but fuck...this was Soph! And with the spotlight creating a veil of darkness around them, he could almost pretend they *were* alone.

Almost.

Soph planted her hands on his shoulders and pushed straight up until her arms locked. Her barely covered nipples kissed his face, so fucking close all he had to do was open his mouth—but she reversed direction and slid back down. Down. Down. All the way down, her breath scorching his skin through his clothes. And when she reached his throbbing cock, his eyes rolled back in his head.

Famine.

Disease.

Starving children in Ethiopia.

Ambushes.

He conjured image after image, anything that might check his mounting desire, but it was like trying to put out a five-alarm fire with a water gun. Luckily, fortune was being merciful, and Soph and her lava-hot mouth moved away.

She pushed to her feet and sat on his lap again, this time in reverse. Her back against his chest, she ground her ass against his dick, his erection caught between her cheeks. Fuck, he was about to blow.

She hooked an arm around his neck as if she were about to pull him down for a kiss. The position gave him a spectacularly unobstructed view of her breasts. Her nipples pointed to the ceiling, begging to be fondled, and damn, he wanted to touch them.

Touch *her*.

But he couldn't.

Damn it. He'd never wanted a lap dance to end this much in his life.

Soph's husky voice tickled his ear as she sang along with the fading music—only her whispered words didn't match Peggy's. "You know how to make me burn..."

The pressure in his balls rocketed to DEFCON 1, and he lost it. He palmed his best friend's breasts. And squeezed. "Fuck me, Soph?"

Shit.

He realized his fuck up the instant it happened—the words and the action—but taking either back was impossible.

He dropped his hands to his sides and clenched his eyes shut. He didn't want to see the rejection on her beautiful face. Couldn't see it was more like it. To ruin things between them in an instant of uncontrolled hunger...she'd hate him for the rest of his life.

Her breath caressed his ear. "I thought you'd never ask, my love."

His eyes popped open.

She didn't just say...?

Did she?

The last strains of the music faded away, replaced by the swelling cheer of the crowd, and Soph pushed to her feet. With one hand, she waved to the audience. With the other, she grabbed his shirt and pulled him backstage in much the same fashion a bratty kid might pull his mom to the toy section of Walmart. His heart—not to mention his cock—pounded with possibilities.

Sex.

Soph.

Shit!

As soon as they were backstage, Bret wedged his friend into a corner. Her dark eyes glowed with the same need echoing in his body.

He drew his index finger down her dark cheek. "Soph?" Dozens of questions resonated in that single word, and she answered them all with a

searing kiss.

CHAPTER TWO

Sophia kicked her office door shut and all but slammed Bret back against it. Or maybe they fell against it. Who knew? Their bodies were so intertwined, she could hardly tell where she ended and he began.

How could she have gone so long without this, without him? The simple answer was that she was an idiot. The complicated answer? Well, that was a combination of the fallout from her attempted rape six years ago and the venomous she-bitch who'd swooped in and stolen Bret when Sophia had pushed him away during the long dark months after her attack. But that gloom was in the past. She'd gained control over her life since then. The dark ghosts couldn't touch her, especially not with Bret wrapped so deliciously around her.

Right now, nothing existed but her and Bret.

His kisses devoured her, his hands seemingly everywhere at once. "You feel so damn good," he mumbled into her mouth.

Right back at ya.

She was practically naked from her dance and still not naked enough. She needed the feel of Bret's hands against her skin, no barriers between them. She tugged the ties of her top, and her breasts spilled free.

Bret wasted no time covering the mounds with his palms and squeezed hard. Maybe a little too hard but that was okay. This was Bret. He'd never hurt her.

Never.

Her nipples hardened against the rough lines of his calloused palms, and she moaned into his mouth. "Bret..." She dipped her hands beneath the hem of his shirt and explored the contoured skin she'd fantasized about for years. His beautiful toned back felt incredible beneath her fingers, just like she'd always thought it would. Hard and soft at the same time, a tantalizing combination.

She wished they were at home so they could spend every minute until he left completely naked, physically and emotionally, but getting home was

proving to be difficult. Bret was on the verge of losing it. Good thing she knew a tried-and-true way to put a raging hard-on in check.

“Don’t move,” she whispered and dropped to her knees. She had his pants unzipped and his cock in her hands before he even reacted to the fact she’d moved.

“Soph...”

“You might want to hold on to something.” And with that said, she sucked his length to the back of her throat. No teasing. Just wham. Full penetration.

“Ah fuck.” Bret sliced his fingers through her hair. “Soph.”

She let him guide the depth and tempo of the blowjob as she tugged on his jeans until his balls hung free. She palmed his sac and massaged the orbs in time with his thrusts. He mumbled unintelligible nonsense—at least it sounded like nonsense—and drove his cock deeper into her mouth, stroking in and out faster, harder. She lavished him with her tongue, loving the way he felt, the way he tasted, the way the veins of his erection collided with her tongue, the way his tip tapped against the back of her throat, almost gagging her.

“Soph. Babe.” His hands tightened around her hair, and he forced himself deeper still. “So close. So—”

His body went rigid, and hot cum splashed against the back of her throat. *Fuck yea*. She could handle choking on cock or cum, just not both, so wrapping her fingers around the base of his length, she took control again.

Again?

Had she ever really had control?

His climax was the most intense aphrodisiac she’d ever experienced. With each spurt of cum against the back of her throat, her sex descended into erotic freefall. It was as if the shock waves of his orgasm were directly stimulating her pussy. The desire to reach between her legs and stroke her clit was almost too much to resist, but she did resist. She wanted Bret to bring her to climax. Lord knew she’d given herself enough orgasms while dreaming of her best friend.

He went still, and his fierce grip on her hair turned soft, caressing. And he sighed. Still, she kept him in her mouth, kept sucking him. Couldn’t stop sucking him was more like it.

She watched him from her kneeling position. His forehead was wrinkled, his eyes clenched shut. His mouth was a thin line as he seemed to rein himself back in. She'd done that to him, made him lose control. Talk about a turn-on.

After a long moment, he finally opened his eyes, and his glossy gaze fell on her. Not-quite-fulfilled desire painted his face. The blowjob might have given him a bit of control, but he was not a sated man by any stretch of the imagination. Thank god for that.

He brushed flyaway hair from her face. "You have no clue how fucking sexy you look right now."

Oh she had a clue. Unfortunately, she did "fucking sexy" a bit too well.

He slid his semi-flaccid cock from her mouth and knelt in front of her. For a long moment, he searched her eyes. "Should I be worried about, ya know, the fact I just had my dick in my best friend's mouth?"

She shook her head, reaching for him and hooking her index fingers inside his front pockets, and pulled him closer. "I enjoyed having it there."

"So I noticed." He ran the pad of his thumb around the corner of her mouth and, when he pulled it back, semen moistened the tip.

Smiling, she drew the cum-covered finger into her mouth and sucked it like she'd just sucked his cock. "Mmm."

His nostrils flared, and he cradled her face between his hands. Not soft but not rough either. Urgent? Yes, with great urgency.

A thousand questions darkened his blue eyes. Did she regret this? Where did they go from here? What exactly did the blowjob mean? She didn't know the answers to them all, but she did know the answer to the most important one, the only one that really mattered tonight.

"I didn't *let* this happen, ya know?" She kissed his nose. "I *wanted* this to happen, Bret. I have for a long time. I just didn't know how to tell you."

"Same here."

Bret wanted her too. Overwhelming emotion clogged in her throat, and she crushed her mouth against his. It was that or cry, and tears would only slow things down.

Bret pushed her backward onto the carpet, and she pulled him along with her, wrapping her arms and legs around him. But he pushed away from her grip. No, not away.

Down.

He clamped his lips around her nipple, sending rivulets of pleasure shooting straight to her core. She needed release and she needed it now, but more than that, she needed him inside her.

She tugged on his shirt until he unlatched from her nipple and she could pull the material over his head. "I hadn't planned on doing this here," she whispered. "Not that I'm complaining, mind you, but—"

"I don't want to wait any longer, Soph. I need you too much." The passion saturating his voice was gasoline on the fire in her core. To know he wanted her as much as she'd wanted him...

Shit, those pesky tears returned and pushed against the back of her eyes, but she refused to let them fall. Not now. There'd be plenty of time for tears once he was gone.

He slid lower, his tongue slithering over her belly, and impatient hands pushed her thighs wide. "Hold your legs open for me, Soph."

She obeyed without hesitation, putting her own spin on his order. After all, she used to be a super-flexible stripper. Sitting forward slightly, she locked her hands around the inside of her ankles, her elbows resting against the back of her knees. The position pulled her legs so wide her ass lifted off the ground.

"How's this?" she asked, using the emotion lodged in her throat to her advantage. The result was a 1-900-number-sexy drawl.

"Damn, that's a sight, Soph." He peeled the crotch of her panties aside. "But this is even better."

He traced the tip of his tongue along the outer lip of her pussy, and she jumped. So much sexual energy charged her body she feared she'd come the second his mouth made full contact with her clit. A hard and fast freefall into pleasure because—she smiled to the ceiling—because it was finally Bret.

He sucked one side of her labia into his mouth and worked the flesh between his lips. The wet, heat overwhelmed her senses the same way a tsunami would a shoreline. With total devastation. And her pussy gushed in apprehension, her inner muscles clenching.

"Mmm, Bret. I need you inside me."

"Soon, sweetheart."

Not the words she wanted to hear. Something along the lines of “Don’t worry, Soph, I’m about to fuck your brains out” would have been ideal.

“Please, Bret.” Shit, she’d been reduced to begging. She’d sworn years ago never to give a man this kind of control over her again but... “Please.”

“Not until I make you come too.”

She shook her head, quick almost out-of-control jerks. “Not without you.”

“We’ll see about that.”

Keeping her panties securely pulled to the side, he slipped a finger—two fingers?—inside her. Sophia ground her head into the carpet, her inner muscles clenching around his invading digits as Bret rubbed and manipulated and—

“Oh shit!”

“There it is.” He pressed and released, pressed and released the pads of his fingers against that sweet spot on the front wall of her pussy. She’d been fingered before but never like this.

She dug her fingers into her ankles. “I can’t. Too intense.”

“Of course, you can.” He worked her G-spot with slow, steady strokes, milking pleasure from her womb, and heat filled her belly. The need for release was so strong she could hardly see straight. Or breathe.

Her grip faltered, and her legs fell to the floor. “Bret...please.” Her back arched, and she clawed at the carpet. Damn it, she needed to come. “Fucking fuck me!”

His laughter tickled over her clit moments before his lips closed over it. He sucked the engorged bed into his mouth, and she was gone.

A scream ripped from her throat, so loud she feared those in the main club might hear her and come rushing to her aid. And wasn’t *that* just what she needed.

She spasmed around his fingers as pinpricks of pleasure goosefleshed her skin. The orgasm fucking rocked her to her core. She’d wanted this, wanted him for so long, but she hadn’t been prepared for the intensity threatening to drown her. Time stopped, morphed at its edges until reality blurred, and only she and Bret remained.

When she had rudimentary brain function back, she extricated her fingers from the carpet and cradled his head. His Army-short hair scraped

over her palm. “Just so ya know, you could have snuck into my bedroom at any time over the past year to do that. I would *not* have minded.”

“Good to know.” The words were garbled, his lips still playing over her folds. “I like the way you taste when I make you come. The way you smell. It’s fucking incredible.”

Fighting back tears, she smiled and, millimeter by millimeter, relaxed her tightly wound body. Her back burned. She wouldn’t be surprised if she had rug burn. Carpets just weren’t designed for sex with Bret.

“I wasn’t prepared for this,” she said. “The intensity of being with you. Ya know, naked?”

“And to think, we haven’t even made it past third base yet.”

She touched his cheek. “Speaking of which...”

Grinning, he lifted his head from her sex but left his fingers where they were, sliding in and out, in and out. “We’ll get there. As soon as I get you home and we have access to an actual bed, I’m gonna rock you so hard you won’t be able to move tomorrow.”

A smile tugged her lips. *Home* was the quaint cabin she’d shared with Bret since he’d returned from his last deployment. After his she-bitch of an ex-wife Janet had mailed him divorce papers while he’d been in a warzone, he’d needed a place to crash while he put his affairs in order. The living arrangement was supposed to have been temporary, but somewhere along the way, temporary had turned into permanent. Hell, he’d even set up his carpentry business in the previously unused shed in her backyard.

“Then again...” Grinning, he slid his fingers from her pussy and played with her supersensitive clit. “Why wait when I’m this close to completing my ultimate fantasy.”

She’d been his ultimate fantasy too?

Ultimate?

Uneasiness mixed with elation and expanded in her chest. Maybe telling him about her feelings right before he shipped out was a mistake, especially considering what the she-bitch had put him through during his last deployment. Sophia had only been thinking about her emotions. She hadn’t taken into account what a relationship might mean for him. She didn’t want to send him overseas with any distractions—distractions got soldiers killed. But could she really stop this train now that it was racing

down the track? More importantly, how was she supposed to deny him something he'd wanted for so long?

Plastering on what she hoped was an erotic smile, she whispered, "Take off your pants and go sit at my desk. I'm gonna give you the lap dance I really wanted to give you onstage." But first, she needed a moment to rein in her emotions.

Something had changed.

Bret tossed his jeans and boxers onto the leather sofa across from Soph's desk and then sat as instructed. He couldn't quite put his finger on his sudden unease, but he'd bet his left testicle Soph had been about to cry moments ago, and not in the I-just-made-love-to-the-man-of-my-dreams-and-I've-never-been-happier kind of way.

Had she been lying about how much she'd wanted this to happen, as opposed to letting him fuck her? He hoped not. He'd rather be celibate the rest of his life than hurt Soph in any way. But if she really wanted this to happen as much as he did, what was with the mood change?

He wished he could read her mind. She was positively glorious as she moved about the office in all her naked glory. She checked to make sure the door was locked, the candles she loved to decorate with were all lit, the radio was playing the right music. In other words, she was procrastinating. And it was obvious too. Why else divert the sexual convoy when the destination was in sight? It was as if she didn't really want to fuck him but was unwilling to be the one who backed out. Like playing chicken, but with sex instead of cars.

Finally, Soph found whatever she'd been looking for on the radio and headed in his direction—and his dick took over.

He loved the way her hips swayed as she walked. Hell, there wasn't much he didn't love about her amazingly flawless body. She had the kind of physique not even the finest plastic surgeon could duplicate. No lumps or sags. Breasts capable of making grown men weep. Long, lean legs that seemed designed to wrap around a lover's waist. Curvy hips with the perfect amount of flair, ideal for grabbing onto while slamming into her over and over and over...

Was it any wonder she hated her body so much?

Her Brazilian appeal could give a man an instant hard-on, something she considered a curse. And he concurred. Well somewhat. Her cock-hardening good looks had caused her problems in the past. People caught in the tractor beam of her beauty sometimes lost the ability to make rational decisions, tried to take from her without permission—

He pushed the thoughts away. They had no place here. Not tonight. Not when Soph had put that part of her life behind her. He should know. He'd helped her wield the shovel that had buried that dark part of her past. The incident might have shaped the woman she'd become, but it didn't own her.

Nothing owned her.

When she stopped in front of him, he traced his thumbs over her reddened nipples before tugging her close, wanting to taste her again, but he stopped himself. He needed to make sure this was truly what she wanted before they went any further, but then Soph knelt between his knees, grabbed the base of his semi-flaccid cock and nearly shattered his good intentions.

He sucked in a sharp breath. *Now or never, hero.*

“Soph?” He pried her hand from his dick. “Are you sure you want to —”

“Suck your cock until you're hard enough to fuck me brainless? Yeah, I'm sure.” She swatted his hand away and gripped his length again. “And I'm gonna take my time this go around.” A smile played at the corners of her mouth, and she dipped her head, drew a circle around the tip of his glans with her tongue.

His head rolled back. His brain slipped deeper into hibernation mode. Her hands were so soft against him. And her mouth? Her mouth was—

Shit!

He tugged her hair, not hard, just enough to lock their gazes. “Sophia, please. We need to talk about—”

“I'm all talked out, Bret. Besides, *this...*” Still looking up at him, she drew her pink tongue over his glans, sucked it into her mouth for a quick tease. “This is what I want right now. Unless, of course, you'd rather I didn't suck your cock?”

“Of course not. It's just—”

She closed her lips around his erection and drew him all the way to the back of her throat, and he was done fighting the pleasure. More like

couldn't fight the pleasure. Relaxing his knees wide, he gave her unencumbered access to his package, and man oh man, she didn't disappoint. She took his length in one hand, stroking him as she nipped her way along the underside of his shaft. Oh sweet Jesus, was she going to—

She swiped her tongue over the bottom of his sac, moved his balls around before drawing an orb into her wet mouth. Oh sweet bliss, this woman was God's gift to blowjobs.

She worked the stone between her tongue and the roof of her mouth, applying the perfect amount of pressure, and his eyes went cross. A current of lust shot straight to his cock, and he was instantly, painfully hard. The BJ earlier had been nothing like this one, a quick explosion of gratification that had helped him gain control. This one, on the other hand, had a slow-burning fuse.

He forced his gaze to realign so he could watch her mouth him. She worked his shaft in time with her tongue, her long manicured fingernails dark skin setting off a striking contrast to his skin. He slid his fingers into her silky black hair. "You're incredible, Soph," he murmured. "Incredible..."

She chuckled, the vibration sending a rocket of pleasure through him, and switched to the opposite side. She repeated her magic before drawing both his balls into her mouth.

"Mmm...yeah." He tightened his grip on her hair. "Now suck me deep again."

And boy did she.

She bobbed up and down, up and down his cock. Each stroke was faster than the next, but it still wasn't fast enough, wasn't frantic enough. He wrenched his fingers around hair, encouraging her, guiding her. He dug his heels into the ground and pumped up into her mouth until—

She pushed to her feet. "I think that's good enough."

"What?" He fought through the sexual haze. She was stopping? How could she do that when he was so—oh.

She had a condom in her hand.

Soph ripped into the foiled packet. Thank god she was a prepared woman and kept rubbers around for those moments when passion struck, which, of course, hit him with a pang of jealousy. Just who'd she have in mind when she'd bought them?

As her best friend, he knew she wasn't seeing anyone—socially or exclusively—and she wasn't the kind of woman who slept around either. Had he been her intended fuck? The idea she'd bought them with him in mind sent a jolt to his already aching cock. She did say she'd intended for this to happen.

She slid the condom onto him in one smooth motion and then straddled his legs. "Hold your cock steady for me, Bret."

Taking his erection in hand, he sucked in a deep breath. *Calm the fuck down, hero*. Unless he wanted her to remember him as a pathetic lover who erupted on entry, he had to get some semblance of control over his body.

Easier said than done.

Her brown eyes glowed with a burning need he recognized, but as she slid down his cock, her pussy hot, wet, everything he'd fantasized it'd feel like, he could believe that all her need was for him. That she desired him as much as he desired her.

That she loved him as much as he loved her.

CHAPTER THREE

Sophia forced her eyes to stay open as she took Bret deeper, as his hands curled possessively around her waist.

I'm yours...

The words lodged in the mass of emotions clogged in her throat, which was a good thing. She'd keep her love inside, wait for him to come back home, and then she'd tell him. The last thing she wanted was to be a strain on him while he was away. Dealing with Janet's bullshit had almost killed him twice while he'd been in combat. Distractions killed and the she-bitch had given him plenty to be distracted by.

Is she cheating on me?

Why's my bank account overdrawn again?

She fucking mailed divorce papers to my FOB (Forward Operating Base)!

No, Sophia refused to do that to him. She'd send him off with a kiss and an incredible weekend of fucking. No strings attached.

At least on the surface.

She cradled his face between her hands, sliding deeper still, and pressed her lips to his. She wanted to watch him, to see the way emotion and passion darkened his eyes, but he was looking at her too. If she wasn't careful, he'd figure out just how much this meant to her.

He might realize she loved him.

When his cock was wedged completely inside her, she tucked her legs behind her—like she'd done during her lap dance—and rolled her torso as if she were doing a sexy version of the hula, not making love to her best friend.

"Bret," she moaned into his mouth, grinding faster against him. Harder, deeper. The friction of his cock inside her stoked the raging fire in her belly.

He palmed her breasts. "This's how I wanted to touch you onstage. And this..." He dipped his head and captured a nipple in his hot mouth.

Pinpricks of pleasure flittered over her skin. “Yeah, this might have given my patrons the wrong idea of what I would and wouldn’t allow with my girls.”

“Might have?” He switched to the other nipple and worked the peak in much the way it had her clit earlier, with hot, hungry strokes.

“Would have,” she corrected. “Most definitely *would* have, but god, it feels so good.”

The first eddies of climax swirled in her womb, and she sucked in a harsh breath. How was it possible to be this close to orgasm so soon after her last one?

Bret lifted his head from her breasts and looked at her. “Know what else I wanted to do to you onstage?”

“No, but—” Her heart stuttered. Her arms goosefleshed. “Feels so good.” She rode him harder, her head rolling back as she clung to him for dear life. Tingly branches of sensation reached out from the spot where their bodies were joined, and she knew she was only moments away.

“That’s it.” Bret slid his thumb between her folds and found her clit. Stroking the nub, he kissed her neck, nibbled his way to her ear. “Come for me again, Soph.”

She quivered.

He rubbed her clit faster. “I want to feel your pussy spasming around my cock. Come for me...”

For me.

Pleasure flooded her with liquid ecstasy, scorching, intense. All-consuming. And reality teetered on its axis. Was it possible to pass out from passion?

Bret’s strong arms closed around her. She couldn’t breathe, but she let the love sweep her under, and all the while, he kept whispering to her.

“I love making you come, Soph, when you scream *my* name. I wonder how many times I can make you come tonight?”

Was a million really a feasible expectation?

When her lungs had regained the ability to process oxygen, she devoured his mouth, and he kissed her back with equal fervor.

Her lover.

He pulled away. "Turn around, Soph. Like when we were onstage and your back was against my chest. Remember?"

Oh yeah, she remembered. The one where he'd lost it and grabbed her tits onstage. She also remembered something else he'd like...

She pushed straight up, locking her arms at full extension, and then slowly started back down. When her breasts were eye level, he caught her around the waist and held her steady. He buried his face between the mounds and rooted around until he found a nipple.

Laughter rumbled in her chest. "Was this the other thing you wanted to do to me onstage?"

"No. But I *did* want to do this." His words were a mumbled mess as he spoke around the nipple in his mouth. "I'd just forgotten until your tits were in my face again."

The tip of his tongue slashed at her pebbled peak like it was an enemy who needed to be destroyed. Each flick sent pleasure straight to her pussy, her channel feeling cold and abandoned without his cock crammed inside.

As if he'd sensed her thoughts, he released her. "Now turn."

"With pleasure."

She finished her super-slow slide down his body. When she was back on her knees, she kissed the tip of Bret's cock. She also took a moment to make sure the condom was still in place after sliding against it, but she made the move sexy by lifting his length as she inspected him and then giving his sac a few playful licks.

Bret groaned. "God, I really like it when you play with my balls."

"So I noticed." She pushed to her feet and turned around.

Bret slapped her ass before palming both cheeks. "Has anyone ever told you your ass is smoking hot?"

She chuckled. Figured he'd be an ass man. She, however, had never been a big fan of ass play. The idea of finding sexual release through the back door had never excited her, but maybe, with Bret, that might change.

Bending forward, back flat, knees straight, she touched the floor with her palm, displaying her ass to him.

His hands froze, fingers digging into her backside. "Fuck, Soph."

She wished she could see his face!

Bret circled a playful fingertip around her ass hole. He didn't try to penetrate her. Just played with it. "Have you ever been fucked in the ass?"

"No."

"Would you like to be?"

"Maybe," she said honestly. "But not tonight."

"Shame." He pulled her into his lap. "Later then."

She reached between her legs, gripped his cock where it rested against her sex and wasted no time taking him back inside her. Mimicking her onstage movements, she leaned back and hooked an arm around his neck. The move limited her ability to ride him with the eagerness she wanted, but she'd make do.

He cupped her breasts. "*This* is what I wanted to do onstage."

"You did do this onstage," she reminded him.

"Not with my dick inside you."

"True." She pulled him down for a kiss. This position might not give her lots of motion, but with the from-behind angle, his cock tapped against her G-spot with every stroke.

He pinched her nipples, twisted and tugged them so hard her breasts lifted. "You feel so good," he murmured. "I wish we'd—" His voice hitched, and he buried his face into her neck.

Their position meant his face remained completely obscured. Damn. She needed to see him, needed to see if his vocal hitch was the result of his body succumbing to the pleasure they were creating or if it was purely emotional?

"Wish what?" she asked.

"Shh." Aggressive fingers sliced between her folds and stroked her like he had earlier, only with a better angle and with better exposure, which meant more friction against her still-sensitive clit.

And more potential for pleasure.

She bit her bottom lip. If he thought this would distract her from her inquisition—oh hell. Who was she fooling? His manipulations *were* distracting her. How could she think when pleasure was clawing at her?

An orgasm flicked to life in her belly, electric sensations that would start the avalanche. Her pussy muscles clenched around his cock. "More."

Bret locked an arm around her collarbone, crushing her against him.

“Harder. Please, Bret. *Harder.*”

She clenched her pussy as hard as she could around his dick, his fingers continuing to work her clit, his glans slamming against her G-spot over and over and over...

“Bret.” His name escaped on an airy sigh, and she covered his hand where he fingered her bud, increasing the pressure, increasing the speed. “Bret.” Her body went stiff. She’d have flipped from his lap if he wasn’t holding her in place. “Bret!”

And she came.

Violently.

She bucked against his cock, her body no longer under her control. Her orgasm must have set his off because her name ripped from his lips, deep and gravely, and she clung to him as he clung to her, both breathing hard. Shaking. She waited for her world to realign. But after an orgasm like that, she doubted her world would ever be the same again.

~ * ~

She looked like an angel when she slept.

Bret ran his hand over Soph’s bare back, enjoying the way the early morning sunlight filtered into the bedroom and highlighted the body he’d explored so thoroughly last night, especially while they’d played around during that three a.m. shower. Now, he knew why Soph had splurged on that detachable massaging showerhead.

Tall, dark and exotically beautiful, the words described her to a tee. So did kind, giving and insanely protective. When they’d first met, he’d found her so intimidating. Hell, in a lot of ways, he still did. She made him think about sex and settling down, all in the same heartbeat.

He kissed her shoulder. “Are you awake?”

“No.” A smile played at the corner of her mouth, and she opened her eyes. “At least I should still be sleeping. After all that strenuous physical activity you put me through, I don’t know how I can still move.”

“Me? You gave as good as you got, love.”

“True.” She lifted her head and pressed her lips to his, a lazy kiss that scared him. It spoke of an ease married couples had after twenty, thirty, even fifty years of marriage. They had it after an evening.

Yep, he was a total goner.

He pulled back. Even without makeup and sporting a severe case of bedhead, she took his breath away. It still boggled his mind this bombshell wanted *him*. Not that he was complaining.

He kissed her nose. "I wish we'd have done this years ago."

"Me too."

She sat up and turned away but not before he noted sadness dimming her eyes. It was something he understood all too well. The next eighteen months were gonna be hell for both of them and in so many different ways.

He moved in front of her and cradled her cheek, turned her face back toward him. "I wish I didn't have to go."

"I know." Her voice was barely audible, and she looked away again, fingers tangling in the sheets. "I, um, don't want you going to Afghanistan with any regrets about us."

"Regrets?" What was she talking about? How could he ever regret being with her? "You'll have to explain that one to me, sweetheart."

"I know how much Janet hurt you with all the crap she pulled, and I know how distracted it made you. You told me more than once how much it messed with your concentration, that it almost cost you your life. I'd rather die before I put you in that sort of danger, Bret. I would."

He squeezed his eyes shut against a sudden rush of tears. Sophia loved him. She might not have used those exact words, but she didn't have to. She'd rather *die* than put him through the same hell Janet had. It didn't get much more definitive than that.

"I trust you with my life, Soph." He pressed his index finger against her chin, tugged until their gazes locked. "I trust you with my heart, Sophia. Nothing's gonna change that."

He studied her for signs of recognition. Did she realize the significance of what he'd said?

Her bottom lip quivered. Her forehead wrinkled. And her luminous brown eyes glistened bright with unshed tears. "R-really?"

"Really." He kissed her nose. "It's always been you, Soph. Always. I was just too scared to tempt fate. Those damn 'what ifs' had me by the fucking balls. *What if* we become lovers and things didn't work out? *What if* you rejected me? *What if*—"

“You beautiful idiot.” She laughed through tears. “I’d never deny you anything. *Anything.*”

She captured his mouth in a hard kiss, and he pulled her onto his lap. She wrapped her mile-long legs around his waist wrenched them closer together, as close as two people could get without actually being forged together.

She pulled back and rested her forehead against his. “So where do we go from here, Bret?” she whispered, breath ragged.

“I don’t know.” And he honestly didn’t. He wanted Soph. That much was evident. On the flip side, he couldn’t ask her to put her life on hold for the next eighteen months. The last time he’d left a woman behind during a deployment, it had ended disastrously—to put it mildly—and that woman had been legally bound to him for almost two damn years.

Did he really want to put Soph in that same position?

“I know things are different between us now,” he said, “but that doesn’t mean I expect you to wait for me. I can’t ask you to—”

“That’s not what I said.” She paused, touched his cheek. “Where do we go from here? In other words, do you *want* me to wait for you?”

More than anything.

But he didn’t dare say the words.

“I would,” she said. “Just so ya know. I’ve waited most of my life to be with you. What’s another eighteen months?”

Shit, she was breaking his heart into a thousand damn pieces. No matter which path he chose—push her away or make her put her life on hold—she could get hurt. Maybe a few more hours would give him some clarity.

Yeah, and maybe The Adjutant General would call him personally and tell him the deployment was off.

“What do you say we table this discussion for a few more hours so I can make love to you again?” He laid back and pulled her with him. “And then again and again and again and again.”

She nodded, smiled, but the expression didn’t reach her eyes. He wished he had the words to assure her, but they eluded him. So he did the only thing he could think of. He’d use his body to show her he loved her more than anything else in this fucked-up world.

Between one heartbeat and the next, he flipped her beneath him and, pressing hot, open-mouth kisses down her body, pushed her legs wide. As he neared her sex, the sweet-musk of her arousal teased over his senses. His mouth watered, and he drew in a deep breath, held her scent in his lungs.

Glorious.

When he couldn't hold his breath a second longer, he pushed her labia apart and blew the air directly at her clit.

"Mmm," she moaned, rolling her hips. "Do that again."

He did. Over and over. Until he felt lightheaded. God, he fucking loved how responsive she was to him. He doubted he'd ever get tired of drawing pleasure from her.

Or momentarily denying it.

The only thing sexier than giving her pleasure was when she begged for it. He liked that she didn't hold back. She let him know exactly what she wanted, what she liked and didn't like.

He suctioned his lips over her clit and drew the bud into his mouth. He kept the pressure constant, drawing blood to the surface, plumping her clit until it felt thick and heavy against his tongue.

"More," she whimpered. "Please. Yes. Just like that..."

Bret smiled into her wetness and flattened his tongue against her clit, creating a flat surface for her to grind against. He licked, sucked, going back and forth, back and forth until she was visibly shaking and clawing at him, begging him to make her come.

He pushed her labia wider, the move exposing her swollen clit even more and giving him more surface to play with, and man, she seemed to like it too. She started thrashing, whimpering. Oh yeah, one more good suck and—

"Bret!" she screamed, muscles quivering, body jerking. She'd lost complete control. "God yes!"

Her passion-soaked cries were music to his ears, and he prayed this wouldn't be the last lazy morning they shared.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sophia dug her fingers into the mattress, so flooded with whatever hormones the body released after orgasm that she could hardly breathe. Bret had already given her two orgasms, and he didn't seem in a hurry to stop. He lapped at her clit like he was getting his first drop of water in days and he didn't want to miss a drop, but then, he shifted his attention to her opening and she found another use for his incredible tongue.

She looked down at him. "Bret," she said, her breath ragged. "Your mouth's, shit, incredible, but I can't, can't—fuck. My legs are, are starting to cramp."

"One more orgasm?"

She shook her head. "Leg cramps. Need massage. ASAP."

"All right." Chuckling under his breath, he kissed her sex one more time. "But I quit only under extreme protest. I was thoroughly enjoying the way you quiver when I make you come. Talk about sexy."

His words made her shiver all over again. Would she ever get enough of this man?

She held her arms out to him. "I didn't say you had to *stop* stop. My legs were just cramping."

"In that case..." He kissed her jaw, her neck, her breasts, slowing working his way back down. "I'll just go back to eating your pussy until I leave then. I'll walk out the door smelling like sex, your flavor still on my lips."

Fear swirled through desire. The thought of him leaving for a war zone scared the shit out of her, but knowing he'd be going with her juices on his lips as if she'd claimed him, she'd lie if she said she didn't like that.

Bret pushed off the bed and headed for the door. "Be right back, babe."

She sat up and rested on her elbows. "Where're you going?"

He didn't answer.

The sweet bastard.

Grinning, she collapsed back against the mattress. Bret wanted her the same way she wanted him. How often did that happen? Not as often as fairy tales led people to believe.

Something small landed the bed beside her. What the...?

She opened her eyes just as Bret strolled through the door—and then launched himself at her. Practically squealing she was laughing so hard, she pulled her hands up to protect her face as Bret crashed onto the mattress. The bed made a screech of its own too.

She playfully punched his arm. “What’re you trying to do? Break my bed?”

He wagged his eyebrows and climbed on top of her. “I can think of much more exciting ways to break a bed than simply jumping on it, can’t you?”

“No.” But she betrayed her words by wrapping him in a full-body hug, catching his cock between their pressed-together bodies. She rocked against him. Could she get him off like this, without any actual penetration? Who knew. But it’d be fun to try!

A moan echoed deep in his chest, and he pulled back. “Easy, girl.”

“Easy?”

He grabbed the object he’d tossed on the bed and waved it at her. It was a bottle of massage oil. “I thought someone needed a leg massage. Or were you just trying to find an excuse to change positions and ravish *me*?”

“Of course not,” she answered with a smile. “I have no clue what you could possibly be talking about.”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah.” He tossed a pillow at her head. “Get comfy, sugar.”

He grabbed a second pillow and shoved it under her ass. The position bowed her low back and forced her knees to fall wide. It was strangely comfortable, well, at least until Bret settled between her splayed legs and comfort turned to desire.

He lifted her right leg and positioned it so her ankle rested against his shoulder, her knee bent slightly. “Now relax, Soph. And let me take care of you.”

Relax? With Bret naked between her legs? Yeah, she’d get right on that.

He rubbed the self-warming oil up and down her thigh. Applying even pressure, he kneaded away the cramps with a confident, skilled hand, not that she'd expected anything less. She'd been on the receiving end of many of his foot rubs. Never naked though, so this was a first.

She let her worries slip away and focused on nothing but the soothing strokes. "Mmm...this feels good."

"Looks good too." He teased a finger over her labia and then slipped the digit into her sex. The sensation of the heated oil there...

She laughed. "That's not exactly helping me relax."

"I know. But I can't let you get too relaxed, now can I?"

"True."

Grinning, he withdrew his finger and switched to her other leg.

Something he'd said—more precisely something he *hadn't* said—while they'd been making love in her office floated to the front of her mind. "Bret, how long have you wanted to be with me?"

For a long moment, he didn't answer, and his gaze fused to some point on her lower torso. Most likely her pussy. "Six months into my first deployment, some of the guys in my unit were sitting around and joking about what they'd do if, somehow, they got their hands on a hooker or some otherwise willing woman. Ya know, trying to make light of the fact we were horny as hell at this point. But it wasn't some faceless woman I wanted to fuck brainless. It was you." He forced a laugh. "Pretty pathetic, huh?"

She shook her head. Finding Bret pathetic under any circumstances was impossible.

He glanced back up at her. "That was the first time I actually admitted to myself that I wanted to be more than just friends with you."

She swallowed against the emotion clawing up her throat. "Why didn't you tell me when you got back?"

"Because of all the shit that happened with your sleazebag boss. He'd attacked you—fucking tried to *rape* you..." He shook his head as if the memory was too painful to bear. "I just wanted to give you time, ya know?"

And in return, she'd pushed him away. Pushed pretty much everyone away really. The attack had traumatized her. PTSD the psychologist had said.

For months, she hadn't been able to close her eyes without re-living the assault. Her fat bastard of a boss had liked playing grab-ass with his girls, and Sophia had desperately needed the money for her last year of college, so she hadn't wanted to rock the boat. She made more in two days at the club than she could at any of the other jobs she'd looked into. Plus, it had left her evenings free during the week to study.

So she'd gritted her teeth and tried to ignore his wandering hands, but then one night, he'd pushed things too far. He'd pulled her into his office to inform her that, if she wanted to keep her lucrative weekend schedule, she'd have to do a little somethin', somethin' for him. In other words, she had to suck him off before he'd put her back on the schedule. Every week. She'd promptly told him just where he could shove his dick, and that was when he'd grabbed her.

Luckily, he'd been just drunk enough she'd been able to fight him off, and she'd fled the club and went straight to the nearest police station. The next day, she'd met with an attorney and then a self-defense instructor. The self-defense instructor had helped her feel powerful again, and the attorney had helped her sue the pants off her boss and eventually take possession of the club. The victory was bittersweet, one in which her father and the woman she considered her true mother had stood behind her one hundred percent, unlike the she-devil that had given birth to her.

"Did I ever tell you what my birth mother said to me during the trial?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"She told me that unwanted sexual advances were simply a part of the job, and that I should keep my mouth shut and be grateful for the paycheck he gave me."

"That bitch."

"Yup." She paused. "I know this probably sounds ridiculous, but I kept thinking that if she hadn't cursed me with her beauty, I wouldn't have been attacked. And for a while there, I actually found myself contemplating ways to make myself uglier."

His hands stilled. "You...what?"

"I know." She closed her eyes. "Like I said, it's stupid, but I wasn't exactly in my right mind. I honestly thought that maybe, if I was ugly

enough, no man would ever attack me again, and it made me hate my birth mother that much more for cursing me with her beauty.”

But her looks were only one of the many things Sophia hated about her birth mother. That hate-affair starting with the way she’d used her good looks to charm and betray Kyle Raines, Sophia’s father. Her dad had been in Brazil for a week-long vacation, and the too-geeky-to-tie-his-own-shoes young man had been no match for the seductress. He hadn’t realized the woman was the devil in a red string bikini—at least until it was too late and the she-devil was pregnant with Sophia.

Bret kissed the outside of her calf. “Now, full disclosure, I admit your looks might have been what first attracted me to you way back when but that wasn’t what kept me captivated all these years. You’re such a genuinely kind person, Soph. You care about people’s welfare. Why else would you have fought so hard to get Exposed Desires and then turn it into a place where your dancers can truly feel safe?”

Love swelled in her chest, and she grabbed one of his hands. He had this wonderful way of boiling everything down to their base elements and making her see the situation more clearly. “I wish I hadn’t pushed you away back then. I might have avoided a lot of pain if I’d have just let you in.”

He shook his head. “I shouldn’t have *let* you push me away. I shouldn’t have let my frustration and anger—” He shook his head. “You just started avoiding me, and I thought I’d missed my chance to be with you. And there was Janet. A warm body when I needed one. And for a while, I thought I was in love. Then I got deployed again.”

“And she broke your heart.”

He didn’t respond but his expression said everything.

She tightened her grip on his hand. “Did you suspect her of having an affair before you left?”

She should stop asking questions, but Janet was one of the few subjects they’d never really discussed. During all their long conversations since he’d moved in, they’d always talked around *her*, but Sophia wanted to know more.

“Not really.” He went back to massaging, slid his hands lower. “Looking back now, I can see the signs. Getting home late from work most nights, talking about ‘getting together’ with friends I knew she hadn’t seen

in years, an increase in sexy new clothes—then there’s the fits she’d throw whenever I tried to use her cell phone.”

“I’m sorry, Bret. Life can be a real bitch sometimes.”

A smile played at the left corner of his lips. “And then you marry one.”

“I’m still sorry.” *And I swear I’ll never hurt you like that.*

She’d almost let the words out, but she still wasn’t sure what Bret wanted from her. He kept avoiding the question of whether or not he wanted a relationship with her, not just a pre-deployment fuck-a-thon. She’d meant what she’d said earlier. She wouldn’t be a distraction to him. She’d let him set the tempo, and then she’d follow along.

“But it all worked out for the best,” he said, smiling at her. “Look where I am now. Between the legs of the woman I’ve wanted most of my adult life.”

Those pesky tears made a comeback, pushing against the back of her eyes.

“And she’s naked too.” He lowered her leg back to the mattress and rubbed her inner thighs, keeping her sex open to him. The fire that had blazed in his eyes during last night’s lap dance was back.

Obviously, he was finished talking.

She let the Janet issue go back where it belonged—on the bottom of the deepest trench in the ocean where it couldn’t cause Bret any more pain.

He pressed his thumb between her labia and stroked her clit. He kept his movement slow, playful, as if he intended to excite her but not bring her all the way to climax. Do enough to help her up the mountainside but not push her off the cliff. Looked like she’d have to take matters into her own hands.

Literally.

She palmed her breasts and squeezed them until they squished. Her nipples hardened beneath her palms, and she caught the peaks between her thumbs and forefingers.

“Damn, Soph. That’s hot.”

“What is?” she asked, knowing exactly what was getting him all hot and bothered.

“You. Playing with your tits.”

She pinched her nipples harder. “So you like watching me play with myself, huh?”

“Fuck yeah.”

His eyes were wide, a kid in an erotic candy store. She fought the smile trying to curve her lips. An ass man *and* a voyeur. He’d be so much fun to play with, and if he liked seeing her touch her breasts, then he’d *love* her next move.

She pushed a hand slowly, sensually down her belly. Down, down, down. She kept her focus on Bret as she pushed his hand away then sliced her fingers between her labia and spread her lips wide for his voyeuristic pleasure.

The muscles of his jaw tightened, and with hands against her inner thighs, he pressed her legs even wider. “Finger yourself.” His voice sounded so gruff.

So sexy.

She slid her middle and ring fingers into her slit. The act of self-pleasure might not be a new one to her, but when she usually played with herself, she was fantasizing her fingers—or dildo—were Bret’s cock. The fact he was watching her now?

Hot, hot, so fucking hot.

She fingered herself. In and out, in and out, working her pussy into a frenzy. With every pumping motion, she worked her clit with the back of her hand, and moisture soaked her fingers. Biting her lower lip between her teeth, she pinched her nipple too, upping the sensations. She’d be able to get herself off in no time, but she wanted more than simple release.

She wanted Bret.

Inside her.

Making her come.

“Fuck me, Bret,” she begged. “Make me come.”

The bed shimmied, and he yanked her fingers from her pussy. A heartbeat later, he slammed his thick cock into her and started pounding her pussy. He plowed into her with a nearly unrestrained fury that shoved her right to the edge, and the tension she’d wound in her body while fingering herself went critical.

She drew her hands up his sweat-glistened torso and cradled his face. His eyes shown dark with his arousal, his need for *her*. Restraint played in the hues too, and she knew he was focusing hard to keep from coming before she did. It was such a Bret thing to do and one of the multitudes of reasons she loved him.

As the first flicks of climax heated her blood, four little words slipped out in the monsoon of pleasure. “I love you, Bret.”

Bret fucked Soph harder, her words spurring him into a state of frenzy unlike any he’d ever known.

I love you, Bret.

Arms straining, he held himself over her as he pounded into her. He was so close. Close to coming. Close to begging her to wait for him while he was deployed.

I love you, Bret.

She wrapped her legs around him, steadying him, her hands still cradling his face as her pussy quivered around his dick.

I love you, Bret.

His climax boiling in his balls, he threw his head back. It felt so incredible inside her. Her tight, wet heat encircling his cock. So much hotter than before. She was on fire. He was seconds away from—

Oh fuck!

He froze, his erection buried deep inside her cunt, a hairs breath away from erupting.

She pushed her hands up his arms. “What—what’s wrong?”

“Condom.” As in he’d forgotten to put one on. Shit, shit, *shit*. He was too primed and hot for her he feared he’d come if he tried to pull out.

Soph laughed. The gentle movement of her body beneath him almost pushed him over.

“Be. Still!”

“No.” She wrapped her arms around his neck and upper shoulders and pulled herself up so he was supporting both their weights. “Don’t stop. Don’t ever stop, Bret.”

She must not understand. “Afraid. You. Pregnant.”

“Then I get pregnant,” she whispered, her voice deep, her hips curling up, rocking up and down his cock. “And I’ll love our child as much as I love you.”

That was it.

He was a goner.

He came in a fiery rush. Stunning. Hard. Perfect. He spilled more into her than just his seed. He poured himself into her too. All of him. All his love. Everything he was, he freely gave to her, and he finally admitted the truth he’d been trying to avoid.

Fighting their love was pointless, so he’d wait for her while he was deployed. He’d be faithful, even if he couldn’t, in good faith, ask her to do the same for him, and hopefully, if he came back—*when* he came back—they’d pick up where they left off.

He collapsed on top of her, happiness making his world spin. “And Soph?”

“Hmm?” she asked with a breathless sigh.

“I love you too.”

~ * ~

Close to a hundred duffle bags lined the ground outside the armory where Bret’s National Guard unit was set to load up. The entire area was a portrait in somberness. Families huddled together, saying their goodbyes, knowing it could be the last time they ever saw their father, their mother, their husband, their wife. A few feet to her right, a blond-haired boy no older than four clung onto his father as if he never wanted to let go, tears glistening on both their faces.

Watching them felt like an intrusion, so she looked away. She knew exactly how that boy felt. Bret might as well have packed her heart away in one of his duffles because it sure as hell felt as if he were taking it with him.

From behind, the man she loved slipped his arms around her and kissed the side of her neck. “I’m gonna come home to you.”

“I know,” she said automatically but she knew that was a promise he might not be able to keep.

She traced the digital pattern of his ACUs—Army Combat Uniform—where his arms met at her belly. Why wouldn’t these damn tears leave her

alone? She didn't want him to see her in pain. There was no need to make this any harder for him.

"Tell me again what you'll be doing while you're over there," she said for the hundredth time.

"Nothing I haven't done before, love."

"I know. It's just that..." She swallowed against the emotion rising in her chest. "You're not gonna be in the middle of the fighting, right?"

He turned her around, molded his hands against her cheeks so she couldn't look away. "I'm the commander of a transportation company. My primary duty will be to coordinate troop and supply movements within my area of operations. Most of the time, my job will be done from the safety of the FOB. I won't be out kicking in doors and looking for insurgents. That said, it's not gonna be a cakewalk either. If we come under attack, I will fight."

To the death.

He might not have said the words, but she'd "heard" them. Whether she imagined them or he implied them, she couldn't be certain.

"I'm gonna send you money every month," he said. "It'll make me feel better knowing I'm helping take care of you while I'm gone."

The thought was incredibly sweet albeit unnecessary. "I don't need your money, Bret. The club's doing well now and—"

"I didn't say you *needed* it. It'll just make me feel better to know you'll have everything you need." He cradled her lower belly. "Just in case."

She nodded. Just in case she was pregnant. She doubted that would happen. Wrong time of the month, but she had to admit she liked the idea.

She would have kept arguing, but the stubborn set of his jaw told her it would be pointless. Still, she wouldn't use the money. Maybe she'd put it into a savings account so, when he got back, they could go on a month-long vacation or he could upgrade his carpentry equipment.

"If nothing else," he continued, "think of it as back pay for rent."

She rolled her eyes. "You don't owe me anything for rent. All the work you did on the cabin more than made up for anything I might have charged. Tenfold."

His expression turned serious. "Also, I'm going to add you to my life insurance."

She closed her eyes and shook her head. She couldn't even think about him dying.

"It's just a precaution, Soph, because I *am* coming home."

"You'd fucking better." She threw her arms around him. "Because I need you to come back to me. Need you..."

His arms were like vises around her, and for a long moment, they clung to each other in the early-morning sun, standing in a sea of other people doing the same. But when the low hum of some diesel-powered monstrosity sounded on the horizon, he pulled back.

"Sounds like our ride's almost here."

Don't cry. "I'll be here when you get back."

She studied his face to see if her real meaning had penetrated. She'd be here—as in, she'd wait for him. Just because he refused to ask her didn't mean she couldn't give him the gift of faithfulness, of her faraway love.

"I love you, Soph. You know that. But I don't expect you to—"

"I'm waiting for you." She smiled, her eyes heavy with unshed tears. "I love you, Bret Dowers, and I *swear* I'm gonna be here to pick you up when you get back. Then on our way home, we'll stop at the first hotel we see, and I'll show you just how much I missed you."

He rested his forehead against hers. "Now that's a reason to come home."

She sweetened the pot. "And I'll let you take me however—*wherever*—you want."

He grinned, sliding his hands down and squeezing her ass. "Anywhere?"

"Anywhere." She pushed to her toes, her mouth hovering inches from his. "Because it'll mean you're home. More importantly, it'll mean you're in my arms again."

"There isn't anywhere I'd rather be."

Sophia yanked her lover in for a kiss he'd never forget.

EPILOGUE

Eighteen months later...

Bret knelt behind Soph and pushed her ass cheeks apart. His dick twitched at the sight of her puckered hole. And okay, maybe it wasn't the sight but the thought of what he was about to do to it that had him close to losing control. While he'd been in Afghanistan, he'd fantasized about what Soph had said in the armory parking lot. His dirty mind had conjured scenario after scenario of him bending her over any and every available surface.

He didn't feel the least bit of shame over his daydreams either. Quite the contrary. The thought of making it home again so he could make those fantasies reality had kept him going. Kept him sharp.

Kept him alive.

"You sure you want to do this, Soph?" *Please god don't let her change her mind.*

She looked at him from her "bowing" position—ass in the air, elbows and knees on the mattress—and nodded.

Not very convincing, love.

"If you don't want to, we don't have to. I know you said you would, but I thought about this so much while I was over there, I'm not sure I'll be able to stop once we start."

"I'm sure, Bret," she murmured. "One-hundred percent. I love you, and I want to do this."

I love you...

God, those words were still a kick in the heart, even these eighteen months later, and they filled him with awe. She'd waited for him. She loved him. And she wanted to give him this incredible gift. He doubted it was possible to love her more.

"I love you too, Soph."

Pure adoration saturated her face. “Now fuck me. Just...go slow, okay?”

Slow wasn’t something he managed very often with her, but he’d make it happen. What wouldn’t he do for her?

He pressed the tip of his lubed pinky against her hole, and Soph instantly tensed.

“Relax, love,” he murmured. “And don’t fight me.”

“Easier said than done,” she mumbled into the mattress. Yet somehow, she managed, and he slid his little finger past the tight ring.

He worked her hole slowly, adding lube and fingers until she was stretched and ready for something a bit more substantial. Only then did he drizzle lube over his glans and stroke it along his cock—then he stroked his tip between her crack, up and down, up and down.

She shivered. “Feels weird.”

Weird was better than painful.

He shifted his hips forward and breached that first band of resistance. Fuck, she was so tight sweat dampened his forehead, and he grabbed her by the waist and pushed deeper still.

“Oh, my *fuck!*” Every muscle in her body seemed to tense.

“Relax, love.” He kept his voice as soothing as he could manage, rubbing a hand over her ass, her lower back as he pressed even deeper into her. “Just relax.” He pulled back, slid in again, repeating the move until he was so deep he wanted to weep.

“Mmm.” Soph pushed back against him. She may have said something, but his pulse pounded so fast and furious between his ears it blocked out everything but the pleasure boiling in his balls.

And he started thrusting.

His strokes were hard, fast, and he had almost no control over them. Soph’s screams sounded somewhere over the roaring in his ears, and it took most of his dwindling concentration to decipher the cries.

Pleasure?

Pain?

“Oh fuck, I’m coming!” she screamed as she stroked her clit.

Okay, pleasure.

That was definitely pleasure.

He pounded her faster, harder, over and over again until he couldn't stand it a second longer, and he came, cum shooting from his cock and adding seedy lubrication to their lovemaking.

When the last eddies of his climax faded, he collapsed on top of her. Heart pounding. Head spinning. Dick reeling. "God, Soph, that was incredible."

"Incredible," she agreed, turning her head and brushing her lips against his jaw. "So incredible I think we should do it again very, very soon."

He'd like that. A lot. *His* Soph. His lover. His everything.

Joy filled his chest. After Janet had devastated him, he'd never imagined being happy again, but he was. And he owed it all to Soph. And god willing, he planned to spend the rest of his life showing her how much she meant to him.

"For you, my love," he drawled, kissing the side of her neck, "we can do whatever you want, as many times as you want."

THE END

WELCOME TO The Erogenous Zone

Seduced by the Marine Dom

Brandi Evans

When Lily attends a WWII-themed War Ball at The Erogenous Zone, the hottest sex club in Dallas, she's looking for a night of no-strings-attached fun, but things get heated when she finds herself drawn to sexy Marine Captain Damien. He's dripping in alphatastic perfection. Strong, powerful, emotionally broken—and a Dom.

Damien pushes Lily to her sexual limits. She pushes him to his emotional limits. And together, they create enough heat to burn down the club.

Coming August 2016
(keep reading for a sneak peek)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brandi Evans was raised by a caravan of traveling Gypsies. She spent her days learning the ways of her people and her nights lost in legends as old as time. Okay, not really, but that's way more interesting than the truth!

In reality, Brandi grew up the oldest child of an ordinary family. Grade school, middle school, high school. Nothing extraordinary happened until she left the nest. She joined the military, went to college, got married, and became a mom. And somewhere along the way, she discovered she liked to read—and write!—stories hot enough to melt eReaders.

These days, she calls The Natural State home, where she lives with her hubby, two beautiful daughters, two dogs and a cat who has yet to realize she doesn't own the place. Soldier. Wife. Mom. Multi-published smut writer. Brandi's life might not be "traveling Gypsy" interesting, but she's had fun. And in the end, isn't that all that really matters?

For more info about Brandi, visit her website at www.BrandiEvansAuthor.com.

SEDUCED BY THE MARINE DOM

Brandi Evans

Sir reached behind him and removed a black flogger from his bag.

Oh god.

No.

No, no, *no*.

I'd seen those in use before, and yeah, I'd wondered what it would feel like to be on the receiving end of those tails. I enjoyed a good ass slap as much as the next kinky gal. Flogging, however, took kink to a whole new level, but the sight of the flogger in his hands, the excitement in his eyes, knowing I was his intended target, set loose a flood of volatile emotions.

Arousal and trepidation.

Anxiety and anticipation.

Fear.

"Will it hurt, Sir?" The question rushed out before I could stop it.

"It could if you had a bad or inexperienced Dom. Or if you got off on the pain."

In other words, with him, it would be toe-curlingly incredible.

Shivers swarmed over me like a transparent silk sheet and wrapped me in a cocoon of heightened perception. I was flying, my feet still bolted to the ground.

Hand fastened over my pussy, Sir trailed the leather tails over my shoulders, my breasts, and the heady aroma of leather filled my nostrils. "I like to use gentle clitoral stimulation on subs who've never been flogged before. The constant vibrations keep a baseline of pleasure simmering in the body and starts creating an association in the brain that flogging equals pleasure."

I sucked my bottom lip between my teeth and let the sensations fill me, both the heavy, teasing braids of the flogger and that of the vibrator. I didn't

know about any pain/pleasure association going on in my brain, but pleasure was most certainly building again.

“A good flogging doesn’t have to be about pain, my sweet.” He trailed the tails up my arms, over my back, between my shoulder blades, and then back down to the swell of my ass. “It can be quite sensual too.”

His words seduced me as much as the physical touches. They were hypnotic. *He* was hypnotic. Every syllable, every caress, every kiss of leather against my skin coalesced, and something greater than need gathered within me. Something unfamiliar and bold. It terrified me, but I wanted more.

“Sir...”

“I know, my sweet. I feel it too.” Sir cranked up the vibrations on the pump, took several steps back and let the flogger fly.

He didn’t strike me. Not yet. Whipping the tails in a fluid motion, he circled me in a slow, erotic dance. He was absolutely magnificent to behold. The flex of sculpted muscles, the flick of the tails, the hunger shimmering in his baby blues.

I watched in breathless anticipation, awaiting that first strike, knowing it could happen at any moment...

Coming August 2016