



CHAPTER 3

A swath of morning sunshine fell across Tru's eyes, and she came awake, aware of the sharp pounding in her head, and the television which sat silent, bolted to a steel pole extending from floor to ceiling. She vaguely remembered her decision to get a motel the night before, and wasn't sure whether she had been too drunk to remember to call Brittany and let her know. She pressed both hands against her head, wishing for ibuprofen.

Tru blinked her eyes into painful focus and saw her reflection in the mirror over the dresser. Her appearance told her more than she wanted to know about how much she had had to drink the night before. Also in the reflection, a lump under the blanket next to her, and she turned quickly to find the lump was a leg, and that the leg belonged to Travis. His chest was

bare, and she immediately discovered that hers was, too. Tru jerked the sheet up under her arms and stared at him, horrified. "Travis?"

He stirred, his eyes fluttered open, and he smiled warmly. "Morning, Sugar." He ran his hand down her arm.

Tru jerked away, grabbing the blanket and drawing it around her as she got up. "What the hell are you doing here?" she rasped, swallowing the cotton that seemed to be growing abundantly on her tongue.

He pushed himself up into a sitting position, his face filled with a boyish grin. "Enjoying the morning after, Sugar-"

Tru coughed involuntarily and pressed a palm to her head. "Travis. . .we didn't. . .I mean, I don't-please tell me we didn't-I don't remember what happened last night-"

He lifted one eyebrow in a smirk. "I'll never forget it. I never suspected you of being such an animal in bed. You even-"

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph! What have I done?!" Tru searched for and found her clothing heaped upon the floor by the bed, and began to dress beneath the blanket.

“Hey, why so uptight?”

“Why so uptight?” she squeaked. “Are you out of your mind? Do you have any idea what sort of mess this is? Oh, my God. . .she’ll kill me, I am dead meat. She’ll never understand this, I don’t understand this—” Tru dropped the blanket and began to button her shirt. “Travis, you have to swear you’ll never breathe a word of this. I was drunk. I didn’t know what I was doing-“ she babbled.

“You most assuredly did know what you were doing. I can’t remember the last time I stayed that har-“

“Travis!” she shouted, groaning and holding her head, then more softly. “Spare me the sordid details.”

“Don’t worry, Tru. Your secret is safe with me. I wish you could stay a little longer-“ He reached toward her and she lurched away, grabbing her socks and shoes and making a quick visual sweep of the room, before she headed for the door, hopping in place as she shoved the sneakers onto her bare feet.

“Where’s my Cherokee?” she asked, her hand on the doorknob. *And where’s my sense?*

Travis folded his arms. “Still at the club.”

Tru dug in her pockets and came up with twenty-five dollars, lifting her eyes to him, quizzically.

“I paid for the room, Sugar,” he admitted.

She slammed the door behind her, and hurried to the front office to call a cab.

Travis reclined, his fingers locked behind his head, admiring his reflection in the mirror. He flexed his pectorals and began to sing an old Carole King tune, “It’s too late, Baby, now it’s too late. . .” It had been remarkably easy. Remarkably. He checked his image in the mirror again, rubbing his chest with both hands, absently, and he began to whistle.