

A close-up photograph of a man's bare torso and a woman's hand resting on his chest. The man has extensive, intricate black tattoos on his left arm and shoulder, including a large skull and floral patterns. The woman is wearing a black lace top. The background is dark and moody.

KNIGHTS DISCIPLES MOTORCYCLE CLUB BOOK 1

A NEW DAY

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Part 1 of *Knights Disciples MC Trilogy*

Laura Mills woke up that morning with such a feeling of well-being. Her night's sleep was amazing and she awoke totally rested. She saw her baby brother off to school. Lucas was a freshman at Western High School and Laura wasn't delusional; she saw him get on the bus. She even took a few minutes to herself before committing to the grind, lazing with a cup of hot coffee and checking her email.

None of how the morning was any kind of clue as to what would happen next. Her serenity came to a screeching halt with a loud thud against her front door. The air was jammed with the racket of motorcycle engines and police sirens. She opened the front door and Lucas's lanky frame pushed past her trying to avoid a rough looking teen trying to get at him.

Laura was a slight woman but she was a mother bear when it came to her brother, her ward. She had been mother and father to him since their parents died about eight years prior. He was half her age but nearly a half a foot taller. A couple of hard looking teens with spiked hair, earrings, and tattoos crawling up their necks were on his heels. Laura did her best to body block them, but she was mowed over. She felt the solid pressure of their boots press into her gut. She thought she would be squished but then the pressure lifted. They backed off. She was being helped to her feet.

When Laura focused, she saw her lawn was mobbed with bikers and teen boys and on the outside of that were squad cars blinking with urgency, but right in front of her was Will Shriner. Every time she saw him she forgot how remarkably good looking he was. His dark, shaggy hair was just outgrown enough from the last haircut so that the style could be detected but unruly enough to make him look so hot. His beauty parted the drama.

It had been such a long time since Laura had had any kind of relationship with a man and she always thought Will Shriner was fine. She met him while working at the Girls and Boys Club in downtown Baltimore. Laura was forever working on her criminal justice degree. She was required to complete so many practical hours and Will and his club members volunteered there.

Laura lived in the Greenspring Corridor of Park Heights, which was considered a good neighborhood but parts of that community were responsible for the highest crime rate in all of Baltimore – perhaps the highest in all of the country. Members the community, however, didn't feel as though it were the best move to have the Boys and Girls' Club associate with a motorcycle club; Laura had nothing but amazing experiences with them. If it weren't for the presence of the motorcycle club, the local street gangs would overrun the community facility.

The Members of Park Heights Gang – or M.O.P.H. – was a particularly aggressive gang, one that was chasing Lucas just now. Without the Knights' Disciples, the entire Park Heights area would be completely unsafe. The misunderstood motorcycle club was like the unofficial security, making it possible to put in her hours to complete her degree and they created a positive influence in the fairly bleak lives of inner city kids.

Between taking care of her brother, working and finishing school when she could, Laura had no time for a love life. Although there was an intense attraction between Laura and Will, he never pushed. Laura was sure that if the opportunity presented itself she would make time for him. Having him start

in front of her now in the door of her home, their bodies so near, was not what she had in mind; although she didn't mind.

"Hi there," he winked. "Let's get you out of this tangle." Without any more warning than that, he lifted her off her feet and onto the sleigh bed just off the entrance in Laura's office. Laura didn't know Will *that* well but he pulled up the hem of her shirt to inspect where the boys had stepped on her stomach. He pressed and he probed.

Laura was too stunned to protest. Finally she asked, "Do you have some medical background that I don't know about?"

Will smiled. "Why? Am I doing this wrong?"

His question shook her. The sweet friction their intense chemistry raised in her was one thing, but to bother that with playfully suggestive questions was almost more than she could bear. Her brother was almost clobbered, her house was under siege, and yet he managed to completely arouse her.

"I have to check on Lucas," she said, coming to her senses.

"Only if you promise me you're okay," he said.

"I'm fine," she rolled off the sofa and rushed to Lucas's room. His door was locked. "It's me. Laura. Open up."

For the first time ever, Lucas completely defied her. "Go away," he said.

"No," she said. "I'm not kidding. If you don't let me in-"

Like a shadow, Will was up and behind Laura. He was so warm and soothing. "Lucas," he said, taking hold of the door knob. He turned it so hard he broke the lock and entered the room.

"Get out! They are after me!" he shouted.

"No one is after you now. Especially no M.O.P.H. Not while I'm captain of the Knights' Disciples. Whatever is going on, we will set it right."

Lucas wouldn't answer. Laura pushed.

"They want me to join and I keep putting them off. They were bugging me again. It gets worse each time."

Laura shook her head. "I knew there was something going on."

"You have to let me handle it," Lucas pleaded.

"Your sister was nearly seriously injured with you handling it. I'm handling it from now on. The Knights' Disciples are going to handle it," Will said decisively.

Lucas started to argue, but Will's kind and gentle demeanor suddenly took on a steely vibe. There was no talking back to the captain of the Knights' Disciples.

A police officer made his way back to the room. As he asked Lucas questions, Will stood side by side with Laura with his huge strong hand pressed at the small of her back, grounding her, warming her. An immense wave of grief rose within her, thoughts that she inadequately took care of her young brother that she didn't know what she was doing. Will's quiet hand on her grounded out all the negative noise in her head.

Now a couple of the Knights' Disciples joined them. The police advised that, for the time being, Laura's brother stay home from school. He loved school and protested that he would not be bullied there. Everyone chuckled softly.

"Hmm I wonder where his gets his scrappiness from?" Will asked rhetorically.

The other Knights invited the boy to hang out with them. They were about to go to breakfast and then to the shop where they had bikes being customized. He reluctantly agreed.

And just like that, Laura's house—previously overrun by bikers, cops and gang members—was quiet and still...except for the erotic turbulence Will Shriner stirred in her. And it was now just the two of them in her very cozy restored Park Heights row house.

"I guess I'm going to have to research private schools," Laura said, trying to reduce the sexual tension.

"A private school isn't your solution. It's a good start, but what you need to do is move," he said frankly.

Her jaw dropped. "I work and go to school here, not to mention that this is my little brother's home. He has been through so much. We can't just change everything."

"You've been through a lot as well, assuming you went through whatever it was he endured. You are raising him alone. You are a single parent and as such, you can't live life looking over your shoulder or wondering if you're going to get a terrible telephone call."

"God. I don't know what to do," she said. She blamed herself for this. Her idea was to go to school so she could do both what she loved, earn a pretty good living, and have a flexible schedule for Lucas. But what she did instead was get involved in the Girls and Boys Clubs where the gang members first met Lucas. "I did this," she said out loud.

Will closed in on her almost spiritually cradling her. "You don't have to make any moves today. One question, though," he said.

"What?" she asked dejectedly.

"Where is the spare room? I'm moving in."

Laura could hardly catch her breath. Of course she could say no. She was, after all, in charge of her own home. But somehow, in a few minutes really, their relationship went from a kind of a distant and vague one to very familiar one. It put a whole new spin on standing next to him. "You're moving in?" she asked.

"Yep. I'll stay in the guest room. I may ask if some of my guys can camp in the family room," he said casually.

"Until when?" she blinked.

"Until we figure out how to get rid of the gang and keep young Lucas safe."

"What if I have a boyfriend? And he objects to the arrangement?" she asked, a little annoyed that he had just assumed. She took her offense back when she saw his disappointment.

"Do you?"

"No," she was embarrassed to say.

"Well," he replied with a little of his wolfishness, "then this should work. I'll have a couple of the guys be Lucas's personal body guard and then I will shadow you."

"Shadow me?" she thought she would faint. He had this disturbing habit of looking her directly with those dreamy eyes of his. It was just about all the attention she could handle.

"Yeah. Eat with you. Sleep with you," he flinched. "I mean eat when you eat." Will's face turned the most adorable shade of red.

"I must admit, you haven't live until you see a biker blush," she teased.

"Turnabout is fair play," he said. His eyes grew smoky and his hand snaked around her slight waist.

She felt his strength course through her as he pulled her close to him. He tipped her chin upwards, guiding her mouth to his, and kissed her. A rush of heat washed through them. His hot, commanding tongue owned hers, sweeping and tasting. He cupped her hair with his large powerful hands, holding her still so he could savor her.

Laura was certain that, until now, she had never really kissed a man—or been kissed. She faltered and Will was quick to steady her. She was certain she heard her own voice in her ears as she whined with pleasure. Their bodies swayed, as they couldn't get enough of each other. His hands braced her ribs just below her breasts. She felt so petite by comparison to him. He was large and looming and luscious.

He broke the kiss. He rested his forehead on hers as he spoke. "I don't want you to get the wrong idea

that I'm going to camp here and then just expect to hook up with you. This was spontaneous. It couldn't be helped," he said.

Laura's heart sank. Of course she wasn't going to jump in bed with the guy just because he was smokin'. She wasn't just going to pull back the covers and crawl underneath with him because she had always thought the fact that he was not just part of a motorcycle club but the Sargent at Arms made him hot and the fact that he was compassionate towards kids even hotter.

Just because she made out with the guy in her house seconds after he announced he was moving in for her protection - who was she kidding? Given the opportunity, Laura was dangerously vulnerable to him. If he hadn't pulled away she wasn't sure she could stop. Even if their connection hadn't been about that before, it felt suddenly as if they always had a sort of intimacy. And the smoldering chemistry she just experienced with him was, for her anyway, a once in a lifetime deal. She had never had such a strong, delicious reaction to a man in her life. And she already craved more.

There must have been something in her face that gave her away. His thumb grazed her cheeks delicately and, for a moment, he seemed to be contemplating taking back what he had just said. She could see it. He wanted her as much as she wanted him.

"What just happened here?" she asked him, kind of lost in the frenzy of their passion.

"I don't know," he said, his eyes dark and erotic. He was, indeed, contemplating making a move. She could see it and she could feel it. She stepped ever so slightly towards him and that was all he needed to close in.

The atmosphere in the space where they stood shifted and became surreal. The intense events of her kid brother being chased into the house by vicious gang members had been wiped from Laura's mind and the entire world at the moment consisted of just Laura and Will. He took her head into his gentle grip and cradled her as he drew in for a more devouring kiss.

He tugged the hem of her shirt, up and off her body. Laura's satin demi bra pushed up her full, generous breasts – almost too heavy for her petite body – up for his eyes to feast upon. His gaze dropped immediately to them, their rich, full arcs pushing up and over the seams so fresh and firm. He pressed his lips softly to them sending a twining current of erotic pleasure to her core. She clutched and twitched and came alive.

She returned the gesture, trailing her hands up the rigid array of muscles gridding his rock hard torso. They were splendid to touch. So warm, so firm and soft at the same time and as her fingers glided across them, his sweet scent rose and filled her nostrils. He smelled so good. He tasted so good. Her hands dropped to the waist of his jeans and unbuttoned his pants. He corralled her against a wall and did the same. Her pants were unfastened and around her hips. His giant powerful hands coursed the smooth curves of her buttocks.

With his feet, he removed her jeans completely and lifted her, guiding her legs up and around his hip. She could feel his erection graze her soft, sensitive center. She ached and was wet for him. He pinned her bodyweight against the wall so that she didn't have to grip him with her hands. They were free to explore. Her fingers found the opening in her pants and felt for the soft-skinned hard length of him.

She had the urge to put him in her mouth but mentally noted to wait until she was in a better position to fully take him.

He freed a breast from its pillowy containment and touched the tip of his wet hot tongue to her erect nipples. Reflexively, she grinded her hips into his, pressing against his erection. She clutched his wild hair, darky wispy strands, through her fingers as he sucked on her. She lowered her leg down, touching the floor so that she could tease him. She broke from his mouth and turned, pressing her hands on the wall and jutting her buttocks outward. She knew she looked amazing in this position. It flexed every muscle in her body, posing them at their best. She knew he liked what he saw because he whimpered. That made her hotter.

Will covered her, his body over hers. He wrapped his arm around her hips and pulled her against him, impaling her with his arousal. He slid into her easily for she was completely worked up. She arched even more as she received him. He was well-endowed and he filled her incredibly.

The heightened excitement created by their fast forbidden union promised to make the climb to climax a short one for Laura. Will's wanton thrusts were tense and rigid. Laura suspected that the pleasure for him was as paralytic as it was for her. She moved in and out of a daze created by erotic dope. Will murmured graphically how much he liked being inside of her and Laura was gone. Her body started to tremor from the inside out. Ripples and waves of pleasure pulsed her flesh on his as he drove into her. It was the most intense, if not the easiest, orgasm she had ever endured. She wilted against the wall, her body wet with sweat as Will peaked, as well, pumping into her like thunder.

Finally he was blanketing her, spent from the ultimate pleasure. As the passion ebbed from her and she regained a clear mind, Laura was trying to figure out what she had done. She had had sex with a man she hardly knew. From the moment she woke up until now, almost every aspect of her life had changed in ways she could not predict.

Will withdrew from her, guided her to the bathroom. They stood under the shower together but hardly said two words. They did not kiss. They dressed and went their separate ways. The only thing he said as he was leaving was that he would come back later with his stuff. He meant what he said. The Knights' Disciples were going to protect Laura and Lucas.

CHAPTER THREE

After the way the day began, it was tough for Laura to focus on work but she had no choice. She had obligations and the lights didn't pay for themselves. She worked as a paralegal for a firm not too far from the Boys and Girls Club where she met Will. She had flexible hours so the fact that her day got started later than usual was not a big deal. By sometime late afternoon, her stomach roiled. She had forgotten to eat. The only thing that she had that day, outside of anxiety and sex, was really strong coffee. She felt weak and nursed herself with ice water until quitting time. She texted Lucas's cell so they could connect for dinner. She was thinking she would bring home take out. She got a response: "Already have dinner here for us."

Lucas had dinner for them? He was moderately self-sufficient, but dinner was a little advanced and he had never made the effort before. Laura speculated her little brother was trying to bring serenity to their home. She left her office building to go to her car, comforted by the idea she would eat in the few minutes it took her to get home. Despite a rocky start and the bothersome threat of a gang wanting him to join, all was good in their world at the moment. And they would be together for the evening.

But the day was continuing to be filled with surprises and, out of nowhere, a young man cropped up. He walked way too close to her, almost shoving her with her body. He was crowding her, causing her to stumble. He wasn't just any kid. He was a M.O.P.H.

"You Lucas's sister?" he asked but she didn't answer. "I already know," he continued, running his hands all over her. He honed in on her nipple and pinched it. "We see a very bright future for him if you stay out of the way. Not so much if you don't." Laura remained speechless. "And your little motorcycle ridin' friends? They won't do him no good. His best move is to come with us. Here," he said closing his hand around hers holding a key, pressing the button to unlock the car, "Allow me."

As soon as Laura got in the car she locked it. Thoughts of bombs plagued her as her imagination ran wild with fear. She felt defenseless despite the shelter of her car. She started it, put it in gear. The gang member stood there ogling her with a slight grin. He meant to terrify her and he had succeeded, though she struggled not to show it.

Then something came over her. She backed out of the space but turned so that as she continued backing up, she threatened to hit him. If she did so maliciously, she would lose everything. She couldn't do her practicum at the Boys and Girls Club, which would mean she would have to put off school again. She'd probably get in trouble at work, if not lose her job. Yet the temptation to just crush this kid was powerful. She got so close to him, though he was calling her bluff, and slammed on the brakes to make her car screech before speeding away.

Laura's house was minutes away. The only thing she could think of as she was driving was that she wanted to be home, safe. But the M.O.P.H. knew where she lived. If what she learned so far in her Criminal Justice studies were accurate, they knew everything there was to know about her. Driving fast or side streets were useless. Still, she wanted to just be inside that warm and cozy space she had worked so hard to create for her kid brother and herself.

Laura parked recklessly in the drive and bounded up the stairs into the house. Immediately she was struck by sensually delicious smells. Though the days were warm still, the mornings and evenings were cool and whatever Lucas had prepared for them smelled like autumn. It brought her down to a peaceful space and she was able to put the aggression the kid in the parking lot worked up.

"Lucas?" she called. "I'm home." She hung her purse up in the entryway and tried to slip her cardigan off to hang it up, as well, but got tangled. Her body was a little bit sore from her spontaneous sex with Will. She bent forward to slip the sweater off when she felt magical assistance from behind. Will. The sight of him was both awkward and warming. A part of her was kind of happy to see him. "Thanks," she said shyly.

Laura burned with the recollection of what they had done not but a few feet away from where she was standing. She was pretty sure she would have to clean the walls in the hall. They had to be speckled with finger prints. She wasn't sure if she could look at Will she was so overcome with the memory.

"You okay?" he asked softly.

"Yes," she lied.

"Dinner is ready. Two of the guys are here. Lucas is here. I thought we could sit down and talk about logistics," he said almost a little too professionally.

Laura wanted to see just a hint of the sparks that flew between them earlier in the day, but Will seemed distant and it kind of hurt. "Great," she said and went into the bathroom to wash up. It had been perhaps the weirdest day of her life. She sobbed a little, splashed her face, and went to the table with a stiff upper lip.

There at the table was Lucas, three Knights' Disciples including Will, and a spread that was absolutely amazing. Someone had dug up her mother's china and made beautiful use of it. There was a vegetable soup in the tureen and a loaf of artisan bread sided with a pot of herb butter. There was a plate of cold cuts, but not like from a sandwich pack; someone had gone to the deli and bought fresh cuts. It was simple and wonderful and pretty. Laura could hardly speak. "Lucas? You did this?"

"We did this," Lucas replied. "Mostly he did this." He pointed to Will. "I've spent the bulk of the day getting my head screwed on straight."

"Why don't we sit," Will interjected and moved behind Laura. He held the head of the table chair for her and pushed her in. "And we can talk all about that. But first, let's eat."

Will ladled out the soup into bowls and they were passed around. There was an incredible salad of greens with Dijon vinaigrette. Laura thought this was awfully light fare until she realized the size of the platters of deli. This would be gone with no leftovers; she would bet on it. Will thoughtfully loaded up a plate for her. He set everything in front of her before working on himself.

"You don't have to wait on me," she said softly. "But thanks."

"I have a feeling it's been a while since anyone has. You have been very good to the Knights' Disciples," he began as he took his seat. "When we wanted to contribute to the community and everyone was against us, you were there for us. You made it possible to not only get involved but to make connections across the city and to change people's way of thinking. Just because we are a motorcycle club doesn't mean we are drug using gangsters. It's because you stood up for us that everything has changed. The Knights' Disciples consider you and Lucas one of us, and we look after our own."

Just when it seemed like Will was going to warm up after his momentary coolness, he did not. He was being cordial to her because he felt a debt of gratitude. It was then she realized that, as rushed as it was, she had a thing for him. She didn't want to go slow. She wanted it now. Of course he was a grown up and based in reality. These things happen and she had the welfare of her young brother to think of. But seeing now that the dinner was likely all him, she could not help but daydream at his amazing facade while he and his men discussed how they were going to keep Laura and Lucas safe.

Will Shriner had just about the greenest eyes she had ever seen. And the way they were fringed with such rich dark lashes, so long and gorgeous, was perfection. And that mouth – those just perfectly full lips surrounded with a sexy five o'clock shadow. Those lips were on her earlier that day. Those powerful, warm and nurturing hands gripped her hips and pushed into her.

She must have got carried away on her thoughts for the table called to her. "Earth to Laura? Hello?"

"Sis, where did you go?" asked Lucas.

Laura burned with the truth that she was reliving the torrid sex she had with the dinner chef. Her delay in answering told on her with at least one of the people at the table. Will's gaze connected with hers. He tilted his head as he held her eyes and winked. The corners of his lips curled slightly. He knew.

When it was apparent they had her attention, Lucas continued, "Anyway they're going to teach me self-defense. Mixed Marshall arts sorta like your kickboxing and then Pete and Darren here are going to take me to the range."

"Golf?" Laura asked confusedly. They erupted with laughter.

"Really?" Lucas asked. "No. Gun. They're going to take me to a shooting range."

"No!" Laura shook her head and chanted. "No guns."

"Oh that isn't even negotiable. You're both going to learn to throw and block a punch and fire a

weapon," said Will.

"What good will that do?" Laura argued. "What's the old rule 'any weapon you use can be used against you'?"

"Where did you learn that?" Will grinned.

"My sister was a karate junkie as a teenager a million years ago. We have a few choice trophies to prove it. That and 'if you can't show no shit don't show no shit' were her sensei's favorite expression. I know because she uses them to give me wisdom." Lucas's mild teasing made the table smile.

Will's teeth flashed. "Oh I see. And are we already a karate kid?" he asked Laura.

"It should be easy to brush her up," Lucas replied continuing to answer on her behalf.

"I don't know," mused Will. "Thinking you know what there is to know might make you unteachable. Are you unteachable?"

The way he looked at her when he posed that question caused her to clutch. He sent erotic tendrils to her core. She fought very hard not to squirm. The only defense she could take against the rush he gave her was to change the subject. "So how is all of this going to help us? The Members of Park Heights gang is like an army. There are only two of us. You guys can only hang around so long," Laura remarked.

Will grinned slowly. "Patience," he counseled. "I am getting to that. So this won't be an overnight fix. First off, Lucas has something he needs to share with you." Will nodded in the teen's direction.

The atmosphere in the room got a little tense as Laura had the feeling her brother was about to reveal something everyone knew but her.

"Well the M.O.P.H. didn't just come after me," Lucas began hesitantly. "At first one of my friends at school, just someone I hang out with at lunch, dared me to introduce myself to some of them."

"Some of the gang members," Laura clarified. Her heart was in her throat. She was so close to her brother and it threw her that there was actually things about him she didn't know.

Lucas shrugged. "Yeah so I took him up on it. I guess they got the wrong idea. They told me now that they knew who they were, I was kind of obligated. So I have been stringing them along and I guess it made them mad."

"Is that it?" Laura demanded because now she was mad. "Is that all there is to it? You took a dare and opened up a can of worms? You didn't go to them acting like a badass or anything?" She spoke to her brother uncharacteristically harshly. But she went back and forth as to whether she was enough for him, whether it was better to devote her free time to them or to take a risk, date, and find a male figure for him. Maybe if she had been a little tougher, they wouldn't be having this conversation now.

"Eh," Will made a noise at her cursing.

“Don’t ‘eh’ me,” Laura protested. “I appreciate all that you have done. And believe me I am going to get some sleep tonight because I know all of you are here, but I don’t know you. And this is between my brother and me who, technically in the eyes of the law, is the equivalent to my son. So if I need to pull him up by the shorts a little, I will.”

Will glared and spoke quietly. “Understood. But like it or not, you do know me.” He paused so that she could let his words sink in. A mixture of anger and passion rose in her. He was talking about their hookup in code at the table. “And we can’t change what is. Lucas here has made an admission just not because of our influence. Like I said, you are one of us now.”

“Well that doesn’t make you my, I mean our, captain,” Laura snapped back.

“Laura,” Lucas chastised. “Ease up. I screwed up here. Not these guys. You have no idea what the M.O.P.H. can do and our only chance here is the Knights’ Disciples. Do you think a Baltimore City cop is going offer us protection?”

“How about I sum up what our idea is, we shelve it so we can eat and maybe sleep on things?” Will offered diplomatically.

Laura had been ravenous since before quitting time. Everything looked so lovely but now that she had had words with Will, she was not the least bit hungry. She contemplated making a dramatic exit, but any day had had its fill of drama, this one had. She decided to keep her mouth shut and pick at her food to not make any waves.

But that didn’t work.

After the guys had finished up, Will asked Darren to switch places with him. It signaled all but Laura to get up from the table, leaving Will and Laura alone. She had to face him, but she could only turn away.

“Look at me,” he ordered. He loaded up a spoon with the soup. “Open.”

She hesitated. She looked him in the eye to ask if he was serious, but apparently he was for he was not budging. She rolled her eyes and opened her mouth. He fed her soup that was now mildly warm...and out of this world delicious. If anything, she was foolish for denying herself. She reached for the spoon and was about to gobble when he pulled away.

“Nuh-uh. Not until we come to an understanding,” he said, his eyes dark and predacious. “You and I now have a history but we have a real situation here. For all intents and purposes, I am your captain. Am I understood?”

Laura had been prepared to concede but his arrogance was too much. “A ‘history’?” she demanded. She decided to be as bold as he was. “Just because you fucked me in the hallway doesn’t mean you get to boss me around.”

Faster than she could have imagined, he put the spoon down and grabbed hold of her wrist. He leaned into her and kissed her fiercely. “I did fuck you in the hallway,” his voice rasped in a low tone that only they could hear, “but remember this, you fucked me back.”

Laura had a weakness for graphic language. Everything about Will Shriner turned her on and she did not want to be at odds with him except for that if they were fighting it was easier to get past her crush on him.

“I know you are the head of your household and you have been calling the shots here for you and for Lucas. And I am real sorry if I let things, if we let things, get the better of us today. But you’re in a jam and you need to follow some direction. We have to keep our heads and stick together. To that end here’s the plan.

“We stay here for as long as the M.O.P.H. doesn’t bother you. I suggest you take Lucas out of school and we homeschool him. There is a huge homeschooling community here. He can still maintain friendships with his current school mates, those without gang affiliates. Pete, Darren and I will mentor him. In addition to learning how to protect himself, I think he needs some community service. You have done an awfully good job making up for his losses, which are, by the way, your losses, too.” The reference to the loss of her parents made Laura choke up. Working as hard as she did, she didn’t have to think about it too much. “But he needs to learn to be responsible and maybe a little grateful. I don’t think he would have done what he did if he had more gratitude.”

It was so much to think about and she was overwhelmed. Plus she was trying to stuff her tears for her parents. “I need a drink,” she rasped. She rarely indulged ever. The Kentucky bourbon she had had been her father’s and she only tasted it once after she buried her parents.

Will crooked a brow in judgment over her request.

“Oh my God, if you are going to scrutinize everything I say and do, I won’t be able to handle it. I think if any day called for a drink, it’d be this one. I will even let you mark the bottle, which is right behind you.”

Will grabbed it. Fortunately it needed a little dusting. “Okay I see what you mean.”

“Yeah. Thank you,” she said indignantly. “I couldn’t keep it together if I was a lush, but I need something.”

He poured a drink for both of them in their empty water glasses. It tasted awfully good. He was going to pour some more after they knocked back their first but she stopped him.

“No. That’s special.”

Will recapped the bottle and put it back in its place. “Will you please force yourself to finish dinner? I don’t think you eat enough,” he said.

“I am hardly underweight,” she snorted.

Now it appeared Will was blushing. “You’re perfect,” he uttered as he seemed to be recalling. The room shifted and they were visited again with the reality that they had hooked up that morning. “This might not work,” he said finally. He looked her right in the eye. “I don’t think I am going to be able to keep my hands off of you.”

Once again the undeniable force between them overtook them. The two of them pushed away from the table and snuck away while the rest of the house gathered in the family room to play video games. Will and Laura were on autopilot, guided by the passion that crazed them. They both headed to her bedroom, locking the door. They took it one step further, to the master bathroom for added security and privacy. Laura hiked up her skirt all the way beyond her hips and scooted up on to the bathroom vanity. Once positioned, they locked mouths, feasting hungrily on each other, feeding each other. Laura parted her knees. Will slid her body forward to join his so that the sink supported just the edge of her buttocks, just enough to allow them to work furiously, pumping against each other to achieve the ultimate pleasure.

Laura had never known such a drive to be one with a person before. It was as if she could not get enough of him. She wanted to fuse with him completely. She waffled in and out of an erotic intoxication and saw above herself the parts he was touching. His long hard length stroked her sweetly as he gently tweezed her nipple. When he touched the nipple that had been abused by the teenager in the parking lot, she howled.

Will stopped still. "I barely touched you," he looked at her quizzically.

Laura came back to clarity for a moment. She had forgotten completely about the parking lot incident. She must have blocked it from her mind. Feeling the pain shoot through her, she was remembering it now, but she didn't want to stop and have a discussion about it at the moment. She was on such a blissful path and she wanted to savor it. She did what she did best. She changed the subject.

She leaned into him, closed in on his mouth and reached beneath them to play with him. She grazed the soft skin of his testicles wickedly. As anticipated, Will began his carnal rhythm, driving into Laura like he was on fire. They were both lit up completely with forbidden passion.

The feel of him filling her so perfectly, with pressure and friction in the spots drove her crazy. As he began to move, instantaneously she felt her body shift into climax mode. Her pleasure heightened; her flesh tightened around his. The contours of his body fit hers perfectly lighting up her erogenous spots so she was fully aroused. As amazing as the experience was earlier, this once matched, if not surpassed, it. Her body tensed so exquisitely as he pistoned until she could take no more. Little ripples rolled throughout, escalating and growing until she wildly clamping with erotic heat.

"That's it," Will encouraged her as he fiercely rode, "Come for me."

Laura tilted back against the mirror, limp with about as much pleasure as she could take, her thighs spread open so that her body was his for the taking. She cried out but he caught her sound with the palm of his hand. He held it there as he continuing, pounding her flesh. She watched through her lowered lids as his eyes walked all over her. He craned his head upwards as his pleasure hit, closing his eyes as he savored the sensation.

Now both of them were climaxing, every twist and turn a sweet agitation. They had to ride the orgasmic waves as silently as possible. She reached to remove Will's hand from her face, breathing

hard through her nose.

As their moment waned, Will leaned down. "Oh my god," he declared. "That was incredible." He brushed the hair back from her face, studying her. She was equally absorbed not able to take her eyes off of him. "I don't know what we are going to do about this," he said after a while.

"I think we just did it," said Laura. Will softly laughed. She would love nothing more than for him to sleep in her bed with his arms around her but she had a feeling that was not happening. He had the look of someone who about to tell her this sort of thing could not keep happening. Instead he said that he should go down and clean up the kitchen and connect with his guys.

"I'll clean up," Laura said. "You cooked."

"No," he said. "We wanted to do this. You take it easy. Take a bubble bath if you want to and if you and Lucas want some time alone, whatever you want."

Knowing it was not good time, Laura blurted out, "Wanna take a bubble bath with me?"

"I'd love to, but I'm thinking they're going to miss the both of us soon. I've got the guest bath. I'll be fine." Will kissed her forehead and left her alone.

The bubble bath was a genius idea. Laura undressed and stepped into the tub with the water running as hot as she could possibly tolerate it. It felt luscious against her body. The wonderful thing about being in an older home was that the tubs in the house were especially deep and large. She could immerse herself completely and comfortably. It drew out the emotional turbulence of the day. She looked down at her breast where the punk had abused her and saw that she was bruised. In the melee of their frenzied sex, Will must not have spotted it. It was unmistakable now.

The gang that was after her young brother knew where he went to school, where they lived, and where she worked. They were able to come out of nowhere and get her, the way they had today. She forced herself to let it go, to not let fear ruin her rare moment of luxury.

She closed her eyes and dozed for a moment but was roused by a knock on the door. Laura jerked for she had indeed been drifting off to sleep. She turned to see Will enter with a dish of vanilla ice cream drizzled with honey.

He knelt beside her. "Thought it might nice if you had your dessert in here," he said.

"I thought I already had dessert," she said wistfully.

He placed the loaded spoon into her mouth slowly, suggestively. "Mmm, careful or you might get seconds."

And like that the electricity between them flowed. Blood rushed to her core and she needed to be filled by him. The shift into erotic gear was halted when Will spotted the bruise on her breast. He scrunched his brows. "I didn't do that, did I?" he asked, tracing the mark lightly with his fingers.

Laura felt a little ashamed she hadn't told him about it sooner but she had genuinely blocked it. "No," she answered reluctantly. "There was this guy in the parking lot," she began.

Will's eyes widened. She didn't have to finish. He filled in the blanks. "And you didn't tell me? God damn it!" he cursed. He set the bowl of ice cream on the edge of the tub and stormed out of the bathroom.

Laura dunked under the water, quickly shampooed her hair and got out of the tub. She wrapped up in a terry towel and went after him. When she found him, he was in the thick of it with the other Knights' Disciples in the family room. When he turned to see acknowledge her presence, he just glared at her. His scowl confused Lucas who looked at her and mugged a question. Laura shook her head as if to say *I'll explain later*.

"Change of plan," Will announced. "These two are coming to my house. Knights' Disciples are now camping out. Laura, Lucas, pack a bag," He looked directly into Laura's eyes and said, but a breath apart from her, "You're going to an extended sleepover."

"What?" Laura squawked.

"I don't want to hear a single protest. They put found you at work. They put their hands on you. You are now changing your routine," Will proclaimed.

"But they could follow us to your place. What makes that any different?" Laura countered, really not wanting to be uprooted. The motorcycle club members chuckled.

"My place is substantially more secure than this one is. We can change that and will, but for now, you're coming with me," he said.

"I don't have a problem with it," Lucas announced.

"You see?" said Will. "The kid doesn't have a problem with that. You should follow suit. I am not that much farther from your work than you are, so your commute won't be too different time-wise."

Laura studied him. She understood that his dominant nature probably made him a great leader for the motorcycle club, but she wasn't sure if she liked him trying to be the leader of her life, even if the circumstances *were* special. "I will for at least one night but then I have to think about things."

"I'm going wherever Will wants me to go," Lucas said.

Laura was floored. The authority she thought she had over Lucas had just been given to Will. Her nose was definitely out of joint. "Tell you what, Lucas, why don't the two of you go over to Will's and I will stay here with the boys. I am sleeping in my own bed." She stomped off towards her room.

She heard a very definite "Excuse me?" from Will. He wasn't taking no for an answer. He was up behind her, guiding her firmly to her room. "Where's your overnight bag?" he asked her.

"I don't have one," she answered with snark. "I don't exactly go overnight anywhere."

“What do you have?” he asked devilishly. “Lunch hour bags?”

Laura was pretty sure he implied she had lunch hour hookups and took that as a slight because of their fast connection. She hauled off and slapped him. He took hold of both her hands and waltzed her to the bed. They collapsed there.

“Now, listen you,” he said half playfully. “I don’t know how to spell it out to you, but you’re in danger. And you are coming with me. I will make all of this up to you when this is over, but for now, you are putting on a pair of jeans and a sweater, and tossing some stuff in a pillow case if you don’t have a suitcase, and you’re coming to my place. I am going to get up. You have to the count of three. If you give me a hard time, when we get to my place, and we will get to my place, I will put you over my knee; is that understood?”

“I don’t find you charming right now,” she said coldly. “And I don’t like how you undermine my authority with my brother.”

“What authority?” Will replied bluntly. “The boy got himself mixed up with a gang and was lying to you about it.”

“Not that I answer to you, Mr. Shriner, but if your inference that I have wild sex during lunch suggests I am the reason the boy went astray – “

Will stopped her. “I think you have done an incredible job with him. He’s a great kid and he is his own person who makes his own choices. This could happen to any parent.

“As for your wild lunchtime sex, I didn’t mean to suggest you were cheap or easy. I think just the opposite and if you had taken more time for yourself all along, I am pretty sure that I wouldn’t have gotten so lucky – and that’s what I consider myself. I am not sad it happened between us and I don’t judge for it. Got it? So no more smacking.” He laughed. “Please come to my house? If you don’t want to share my bed, I understand totally. I have to confess, I may be completely addicted to you but things have gone crazy-fast. I have a lovely room for you and Lucas has his own room. Darren and Pete are coming with since Lucas already knows them, but then my other guys are coming.”

“Why are you doing all this for us again?” Laura asked with wonder.

“Um in case you hadn’t noticed, Miss Mills, I kinda like you,” he said and he leaned down to her to give her a soft slow kiss.

It was strange sleeping in a place that wasn't hers. Her brother, however, liked it. To him it was a giant sleepover, but Laura liked being settled. She and Will decided it was, perhaps, a smart move to sleep in separate rooms, though when she saw his sumptuous bedroom, pangs of desire tortured her.

She was instantly filled with fantasies of making a complete mess of his room with intense erotic acrobatics. And then she got a little jealous of the other women who might have had the amazing fortune to share it with him. Will Shriner was a handsome and sensitive man. He was a total catch and a wonderfully gifted lover. No doubt he sowed some wild oats. She started comparing herself to imaginary women and wondering about this man that she had basically had stranger-sex with. Well he wasn't a stranger any more.

Laura was to make the transition from having Lucas in public school to homeschool without missing work. When it was decided that she would be driven to and from work, she asked one of the guys to do it. As much as she was dying for Will to take her, she was trying to slow things way down between them, but her request confused both Pete and Darren.

"I think Will was planning on doing that," they said.

Will walked in on the conversation. "Plan on doing what?"

"I was thinking it would be better if one of these two took me in," she answered hesitantly.

"Why is that?" Will asked intently.

Laura blushed. "You know," she answered, "Because."

Will plucked her keys off a hook where he hung them. "Okay, we can talk in the car." It was kind of funny seeing a member of the Knights' Disciples, who looked awesome and appropriate on a motorcycle, drive her car.

"So do you mind me driving you?" he asked her. There was something devilish about how he asked it like he was gently teasing her. She blushed again. It overtook her like a little wildfire. "That is the second time you have done that. Is it too much for me to drive you?"

"I just thought we probably could do with some space," she said. Just being near him aroused her. "As much as we can under the circumstances."

"I see. So you thought we needed space or you needed space or I needed space?" he asked for clarification.

"I – I," she stammered. "I am not sure I know that answer to that question,"

Whether the Members of Park Heights had backed off or were waiting for Laura and Lucas to resume their former pattern of living, no one knew. One night, over yet another dinner that Will prepared, Lucas expressed his gratitude to the Knights' Disciples for their protection and their hospitality. Laura beamed. She liked the results the male influence had on her younger brother.

The guys had been working out like crazy with Lucas and, against her better judgment, teaching him how to defend himself with weapons. His school work hadn't really missed out in quality. Laura wouldn't have been able to achieve all of that on her own. They even taught him how to ride a motorcycle. That, however, Laura was not too happy about; she thought they were dangerous.

"So is falling in love," winked Will.

"So I was wondering," said Lucas as the bread was being passed around, "how does someone become Knights' Disciples?"

His question stopped the flow of dinner. The Knights regarded each other as if to look for the answer and Laura looked at Lucas. "Why? Do you want to become a member?" she asked.

"Yeah," he said shyly.

"Why?" Laura inadvertently asked as though it were the worst possible choice.

"Ahem," Will smiled. "There are worse fates. So, Lucas, this would be something you would really have to think about. I know we've spent a lot of time together in the past couple week but there is a lot to being a Knights' Disciples. We have a code."

Now Laura smiled. "What would that be?" All sorts of playful answers rolled around her head, answers that she would only be able to share with him.

"No gangsters," Pete chimed in.

"That's right," said Will. "Some of my guys have records. We aren't choirboys, but we live by the straight and narrow now. We take care of ourselves and don't eat a bunch of crap. We drink in moderation and no illegal drugs. We don't break laws, so if you were looking for a different kind of cool, we ain't it."

Laura couldn't quite read it, but she thought, for a moment, that her little brother was disappointed in Will's response, but of course a teen would romanticize a motorcycle club. She must have had some idea that having the positive male influence for her younger brother would solve everything. It wasn't going to be that easy after all. But for the few weeks of camping at Will's remarkably lovely house, life did seem to go back to normal. Lucas was getting along great with the two members Will assigned to him.

Will and Lucas seem to hit it off, as well. The Knights' Disciples managed to teach the kid to shoot

and break cinderblocks with his head, elbows, and feet, and help him keep up with his studies. The focus on her brother definitely took the heat off of Laura and Will. She wasn't really heartbroken about it. It was nice to slow things down to get to know him better, to really come to admire him.

And his solution was right on target. Moving Laura and Will to his place worked miracles. They didn't hear a sound from the gang members. No more pop up appearances by M.O.P.H. Nothing. So one day on the fly, Laura and Lucas went over to the Boys and Girls Club to do some volunteer work. It just came up in conversation during one of those rare moments when they were alone and they just went with it.

Lucas liked to use the gym there and she could put in some much-needed hours. Her criminal justice degree required so many hours of elective community service. It was just a short bus ride over from Laura's work to the club. She would ride over and meet Lucas there when he was finished with school and whatever else the guys had him do. Since everything died down, they figured they would start living a normal life again. It was a relief and exciting at the same time.

"See you there," said Laura, "just remember to let the guys know, because I'm in depositions all day with my boss and I won't get a chance."

Lucas showed up and Laura double-checked that the guys knew what they were doing. Lucas said yes so they bused over and that was that. So it was confusing as to why Will and about five Knights' Disciples rode into the lot as though they were ready to do battle.

"Where's Lucas?" were Will's first words. He had a scowl on his face that gave Laura a hint as to what he looked like when he in a confrontation.

"He is in the weight room. What's up?" Laura asked a little nervous about what he might say.

"I told him to wait for me and that we were going to go over and talk to a detective about the gang stuff and he split on me." Will was furious.

She was hurt beyond belief. Her brother was lying. "We had plans to come here and he said he told you all."

"You left that up to the teenager?"

Suddenly there was a loud crash. It sounded like a stampede in the weight room complete with the noises of breaking glass. The mirrors were being shattered. The Knights' Disciples flew down the lower level to address what turned out to be Lucas and another kid. This time Lucas has the upper hand, literally, and was holding a shard of broken mirror. He had the room paralyzed, hoping that if they were still, he would be still.

"Lucas," Laura scolded. Her stomach was in knots. Will just glared at the boy and it was enough to have him release his opponent. Pete and Darren held Lucas and disarmed him.

"I had to show him he couldn't push me around," Lucas offered.

The gym was a disaster. In minutes the air was filled with sirens. The cops had arrived. And so had the director of the club. She was speechless. She faulted Laura with not having good judgment to stay away given the circumstances and basically said she invited the trouble to the club. She barred Lucas and her from volunteering. They were dismissed.

Will stepped up and offered to cover the cost of the damage and he said he and his men would have the place restored by the morning.

"Impossible," said the director.

"Watch us," said Will.

"In that case, I accept," said the director. "By the crack of dawn, this place better be put back together or I may level criminal charges against you."

Laura was without words. The emotion that rested in her body tangled her tongue. She knew that Lucas was no more than the average teenager but, at the moment, she was destroyed by his behavior. She really didn't like him at the moment. She wasn't even sure that she liked the director's decision to not press charges against the teens even though, by all accounts, the other kid started it. The cops agreed with Laura, but if the Knights' Disciples could fix the place like they said and they could keep the controversy to a minimum, that was how the director wanted it.

Laura stood by quietly as Will read Lucas the riot act. "We had a date with a detective," he began.

"This was something I had to take care of. They were calling me a bitch and I had to show them," Lucas replied with no remorse.

"So while you were talking to me and talking to your sister who lives and dies by you, in case you hadn't noticed, you were lying," said Will.

"I had to do what I had to do," said Lucas.

"So do I and so does your sister, but we don't tend to use people to do it. That would be a hint and half for your ass that you're doing the wrong thing," said Will.

"Man, don't talk to me like you're all cool and shit," said Lucas. He affected a street accent that sounded just like that the M.O.P.H. gang members had.

"Laura, I apologize for interfering. Clearly this young man doesn't need his fellow man. I suggest you send him back to public school and let him handle things." Will unlocked Laura's car and when Lucas started to get in, Will stopped him. "Where do you think you're going?" Will asked.

"I am going to be with my sister," he said.

"Oh no. You're staying here to help us clean up this mess. She is going home with some of the guys," said Will.

"But the other guy doesn't have to help!" protested Lucas. "And he started it."

"Did you two arrange to meet here to fight it out?" Will demanded vehemently.

"Yes," Lucas replied.

"Well then you both started it. I can't make him stay, but if I could, I would. I can make you stay. You can go your own way after that, but you're pulling an all-nighter like the rest of us."

"I'll stay," Laura volunteered

"No," Will said shortly. "You go home. Get into bed. Besides, I don't think the director wants the bot"

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