

ICE STORM

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Chapter 22 - New Storm

One Friday in the late fall I had been with an inspection by drilling concrete cores in the foundations when my Blue Ray phone vibrated on my ear. The company had provided that phone. A real girl at the office named Sharlene called me saying Sam had called and needed me on the crane. The operator for the crane at Sam's site had said a storm would be coming. The operator lived over an hour west and wouldn't come to work when one of those storms had been predicted. They had a big concrete pour scheduled with the ready mix trucks arriving soon.

I asked. "Sharlene. Did Rick authorize this?"

"He's at some damned meeting and wouldn't answer his cell phone." Well, Sharlene worked in a rough business so her using swear words came with the territory.

I asked. "How about Joe Reed?"

"He's on the West Coast talking with a manufacturer about a bigger crane."

I caught myself from saying 'oh shit'. "Sharlene, I'm on a duty assigned by Rick. Get somebody to authorize pulling me off my assignments for the day. Sam is a good man. Betcha what he says is true, but I can't walk off what Rick assigned me. Call Supply to confirm in your notes all those trucks are arriving. Cook up an authorization. Please. Gotta gotta."

She called back a few minutes later. "Geraldine authorized it."

"Thanks. Call Sam and tell him I'm coming just as fast as I can. Call the inspector and explain." Both Sharlene, Geraldine, and everyone else there were fudging, but emergencies happen. Geraldine had to be about the most junior person in Supply Orders. Because she had served hard time in a penitentiary as a 'he', she only checked the orders for accuracy. She made no calls. She became an unhireable person when the background checks came in. The cross dressers in the Supply Department had voted to keep her and find something she could do.

Rick interrupted the call. "Sandy. A big crane collapsed on the West Coast. Buckled in the middle. I know the owner of that construction company through our National Organization. I talked him into having you at the investigation. Run home. Pack a bag with everything you need for three days. Sharlene is buying your airline tickets, and Supply will send a car to hurry you to the airport. Go; go; go; go."

My voice boomed. "Rick! I don't know any thing near enough."

He answered. "Well, you do. Let's not argue. You be your sweet naive self in dresses and hard-hats. Ask questions. We are sending you a camera. You tell me, not any of the ding-a-ling investigators out there. Oh, yes, wear your best skirt-suits. This is important, Sandy. I really want you out there learning all you can. I say again; go; go."

I hurried home at the end of the day at Sam's work site. My thick style protection and extra padding for three days, make that four, wouldn't fit in any of the suitcases I could find in the house. I made do with wrapping those in newspapers. I did find a hanging travel carrier and used that for two more skirt-suits, bras, inserts, hair conditioner, razors, blouses, and everything else.

Abby from Supply Orders drove me to the airport. She drove very fast on Rick's orders to hustle. At the airport, security took away the big bottle of hair conditioner. At the scanner I whispered what had been packed in the newspaper. That raised eyebrows, but they let that through. I hated taking off my shoes and being scanned where they found my thick damp diaper and asked me about it in a loud voice. I blushed and answered "medical". They let me through.

The last minute procurement put me into business class. The guy sitting next to me of my parent's age intimidated me until I mastered my self-esteem. He asked me what I did. I showed him my new name tag Abby had passed to me with a quick title of Inspector. I held my own discussing that until I asked him what he did.

He said. "Major claim insurance adjuster. I'm flying out to that collapsed crane. I expect to deny coverage for errors in installing that crane."

Now I knew what Rick meant.

He had a car provided by the insurance company. I let him disappear before I admitted my identity to the car sent for me.

At the site the next morning, I had on my hard hat and my new name tag when he saw me next.

He glared at me with pure venom.

I thought. *And the horse you rode in on, or kicked you in the face.* I told the construction company owner, and asked for a security escort, which they provided.

The problem at the crane seemed clear enough to me. I took pictures, and many of those were closeups. The metal at the base unit of the crane had fractured and failed. That implicated the manufacturer instead of the construction company. The failure in the middle where the crane had buckled had split a bolt in two places. I towed the company owner behind a tree, whispered what I thought I had found, and would report as ordered to Rick. I flew home that night.

The next morning I returned the camera, and gave my report in oral form to Rick. He called the big fancy law firm to take my deposition. He insisted they send an attorney and a stenographer to us. I appreciated that instead of that intimidating office of that law firm. My gut clenched up anyway, but I got over it.

Sam, his crew chiefs, and I were delighted to be working together again. Up that crane ladder I went, and hustled loads of concrete all day just as fast as that crane would go. I became so busy I had to pop soda cans while standing at the controls. Sam

had somebody bring me sandwiches since I hadn't packed a lunch, and more sodas too. My diaper became very handy that day.

The sky to the west looked bad again. Sam called up to me in the crane cab and said there would be no gathering at Thirsty Bernies that evening. There could be an ice storm coming. I asked if there were any special precautions needed for protecting the crane from the weight of the ice. His answer the only effective precaution would be to take the crane booms down, but none of the mobile cranes for doing that were available.

In the heated crane cab near the end of the day I changed my diaper as it seemed particularly soaked and I needed to go again. Which I did. All hints to the contrary that I should be tired of wearing diapers didn't affect my enjoyment of them particularly when freshly wet and hot could mean a good orgasm. I locked the crane in place in a direction he wanted and came down for the evening. Even though I wore a heavy overcoat coming down the steep steps that evening, the cold breeze chilled the calves of my bare legs.

In my car as it warmed up for warming my legs I called Andrea for any shopping she wanted on my way home. She answered from inside the grocery store and told me Denny had accompanied her. I didn't tell her how my skin tingled on hearing of Denny's presence.

Traffic had snarled with so many people changing their routines and their schedules for the storm. One lane of the multi-lane highway had become blocked with a backup into the grocery store parking lot.

Denny had parked her car in the driveway which told me Andrea's car was already in the garage. I backed into the driveway so I faced out for driving on the predicted ice.

I smelled charcoal lighter when I stepped out of my car, and rotated the wiper blades away from the windshield. I carried my hard hat in one hand with my backpack in my other hand as I went inside.

Denny smiled radiantly inside the door. She took my backpack, but knew enough to leave my hard hat in my own hand. She tossed the backpack towards the kitchen door with a clunk for the cooler inside. She had her hands on the shoulders of my overcoat as I reached for putting my hard hat in the closet.

"Denny, please. I can do this. Why the attention?"

She kissed me on the cheek as if that answered everything, or anything. She tugged at the overcoat drawing it down my arms and then she hung it up in the hall closet. Before I could stop her she had a hand up my skirt and around my plastic pants. "You changed yourself, didn't you?"

I scowled. "Please Denny. I change myself all the time, and late today was especially wet and heavy. Who are you to ask?"

She grabbed my hand and towed me into the kitchen.

Andrea beamed. "Sandy you look magnificent in that outfit all set for an evening at Bernie's. Come into the light. I don't get to see you often when you dress your very

best. You must drive the men nuts looking so good. Denny, comb out Sandy's hair where that hard hat matted it down." Andrea pulled out a chair and pointed for me to sit. Denny grabbed a brush and a bottle of conditioner that had been sitting nearby.

As always that brush pulled on a few tangled hairs. "Ouch."

"Oh sorry, Sandy, but Andrea has made this a special dinner and I, that is we, want you to look your best. Sorry, hold still."

Which I did.

Andrea took me by both hands and had me stand. She backed up several feet in the kitchen and held her hands together. "You are stunning, Sandy. Where's a camera?"

Andrea took pictures of me alone, and with Denny, and with both of us holding each other with arms around the others' waist. "Wanna beer?"

Denny took two from the fridge. "You're old enough now, Sandy, have one."

"No. I'm so used to fending those off everywhere, so let me have a nice glass of ice and tap water. Please."

Andrea handed me one. "Since we're all going to be here for the weekend, or so it seems, the grill is lit and we have steaks fresh from the store. Would you two mind the stove and oven, and I'll take the meat outside to the grill?" Andrea went out the door quicker than I could think of a thing to say.

Denny pointed a finger right at my nose. "You sit. Just let me. Please."

She quickly turned to the stove.

I said. "Stop bossing me."

"Oh, wow!" Denny beamed at me. "Finally. I thought you would never learn to fight back. Now I can have that friend I have wanted for so long." She came over to me, put her lips against mine, and took a kiss with her tongue in my mouth.

I pushed her away. "But Andrea."

"Oh pooh. Andrea has been all for us for a long time, but told me to wait. I'm tired of waiting." She held a finger to her mouth for silence just before Andrea returned.

"Hi, kids. It does look bad in the sky out there."

Denny scooted back to the stove.

Andrea cocked an eyebrow at me. "Just sit Sandy. You are the big hero out there with a trip to the West Coast to prove it, and we want to please you for an evening. Let's check the weather." She flashed a remote at the small TV in the kitchen and went to the weather channel. The prediction seemed terrible.

Dinner could only be described as delicious.

Andrea talked non-stop about what had been going in Denny's and my lives.

I protested. "Andrea. Stop please. If you want me and Denny to be together, let us find each other."

I think I detected a little blush at the edges of Andrea's ears.

"Ice cream first."

Denny spoke faster than I. "Oh, Andrea, that delicious dinner, and I'm stuffed. How about a cup of hot tea? Camomile maybe. I'll go outside and close down the grill." Which she did.

"You want hot tea or ice tea?"

"Iced, please. Now, Andrea, what the hell is going on?"

"Denny has wanted you as her boy friend ever since she met you. The Japanese have a saying for this of 'Koi No Yokan' for the feeling that the person you just met is going to fall in love with you and you with them. But that Female Lead Relationship business only goes so far. She resigned as an intern this week because she's up to here with waiting for you. But can you stand up for yourself?"

"Aw c'mon, Andrea. I ran that Jaycees concession, am a big cheese in a cross dressing support group, and that crane job is no place to be timid either. I picked a fight this evening with Denny. A small one or two. How long have you been the old campaigner for Denny and I?"

"Almost forever. You are impossible you know. I think Denny is crazy, but love does that. I hope the two of you can be friends first before you go crazy with sex."

The door opened stopping the conversation with a cold wind through the kitchen.

Denny made her face dead pan. "Going to be bad out there. How soon does it start?"

I answered. "Weather channel said soon. I need to empty my cooler for it to dry out over this weekend, and you two let me do something myself. Please." I fetched my backpack from the next room, put the cooler on the counter, removed the two fresh sodas, and poured out the melted ice. I felt better for doing something.

I popped open a soda and took it with me to the table.

Denny had cleared the table as Andrea rinsed and put everything in the dishwasher.

They came to the table with cups of hot tea.

My tension abated. We had the most pleasant quiet time sitting there as everything became very still outside. When I went to the window the power and phone wires were glistening with ice as were the tree limbs.

Andrea drained her cup. "I'm tired. You kids close up and have a good time. But it's my house and I insist. This is the last time we can persuade Sandy to give up the girl

clothes and the diapers. No one is coming, and no one will walk by.”

She paused. “For this weekend I want Sandy to run around in here only in a toddler uniform of t-shirt, diapers, and plastic pants. Emphasize the diapers with the bulk of cloth diapers. Denny is the Nanny.”

Andrea stood up. “Either both of you won’t like this with the embarrassment, or you’ll never find that intense intimacy with anyone else.” She stood up and went to the door. “Nighty night.”

Denny never complained about changing three messy diapers that weekend.

We kissed and petted a lot, and she brought me off several times, but she wouldn’t let me do her. We didn’t go all the way.