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An Excerpt From: CONVINCING SILVIA

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Chapter One

As soon as she rounded the corner onto her street, Silvia held her breath in gentle anticipation. The last three Tuesdays Andy's vintage red pickup had been parked right in front of her house. Not this time, though.

She let out a heavy sigh. Andy was just way too young to attach himself to a woman her age, so she shouldn't develop any illusions of permanency. No expectations meant no disappointment down the line. As long as she took the affair for what it was she could have a lot of fun while it lasted. But god, she needed him tonight.

She pulled into her driveway and parked in front of the garage, which was still full of boxes waiting to be unpacked. Relaxing her head against the seat, Silvia cut the engine. She should have been ready, damn it. Nurses lost patients from time to time. When she'd gone back to work, she'd known it was a part of her job but how could she know it would feel like watching Roger die all over again? If only Andy were here. With him, the past didn't exist.

She got out of the car and followed the red brick path between the garage and the front door. It swerved slightly through thick California lilacs, which

obscured the view of the porch. She loved the porch so much that she'd had the porch swing put in before unpacking a single box.

The sound of the swing's gentle swish back and forth stopped her in her tracks. Excitement bubbled in her chest, propelling her forward.

There he sat, his denim-clad long legs crossed at the ankles of dusty black leather boots. His arms were raised, hands cushioning his head in a position that showcased the perfectly toned shape of his triceps. Silvia had to swallow. Drooling had been one of her body's reactions to Andy from the moment she had first laid eyes on him in the nursery four weeks ago. Dream on, she'd told herself and proceeded to give him the list of flowers and plants she'd come to buy for her new garden. He was at least ten years younger than she and guys his age simply didn't notice forty-six-year-old widowed nurses.

And here he was, on her porch, fourth Tuesday in a row. His gaze covered her head to toe in one omniscient sweep and one corner of his lips tipped upward lasciviously. When his eyes met hers, however, doubt overshadowed the sexy smile. Andy rose and opened his arms.

How could he read her with a single glance? She ran into the refuge of his firm arms, trembling all over as the tension she'd held in check all afternoon finally broke. Andy held her for a long time, stroking up and down her back while taking slow, deep breaths as if to encourage her to do so herself. She followed his lead, drawing in the musky scent of man. He smelled raw and unbreakable and she took in another invigorating breath. The smell of a real man. Funny how her late husband's scent had never had that kind of impact on her. A single whiff of Andy after he'd worked for a few hours was enough to make her claw the shirt off his back.

Gently, he pried her away and met her gaze. Tender understanding filled his deep-set brown eyes. Silvia fought back tears. She didn't have to say a word but he appeared to know how much she needed him.

"I'm glad you're home," he said.

She nodded and fished the key out of her bag. "I didn't see your truck out front."

He took the key from her and unlocked the door. "It's down the street."

He pushed open the door and let her go in first. It had become a routine of theirs every Tuesday afternoon. He shut and bolted the door behind them then took off his boots. She heard them thud on the hardwood floor while she crossed toward the living room.

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