

Roadside Assistance

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Isaac slammed the trunk closed and pulled out his cell phone. Last week his nephew borrowed the car. When he returned the car the following day, sparkling clean with a tank full of gas, Isaac had been suspicious, but decided not to act like the paranoid uncle and inspect every inch of the car. Now he was stuck in the middle of the desert with a flat tire and no spare. It had to be at least thirty minutes since he passed the last sign of civilization, and he had no idea what lay ahead.

“Oh great...” Not even one bar on the cell phone was lit. Nothing but Joshua trees, cacti and various desert plants were as far as the eyes could see, and the oppressive heat of the afternoon sun was stifling.

Leaning against the car with his head down, he mumbled, “This is not happening.” The sound of a truck pulling up lifted his spirits. He turned in hopes whoever was stopping to help. Seeing the driver was a female, he worried his six foot plus stature would scare her off. With so many nuts out there, he knew if he were an attractive woman alone in the middle of nowhere, he’d be leery of strangers.

“Did I just see you at the gas station in Surprise?” she asked as she exited her SUV.
“Actually, I saw your car. I want a Lexus.”

He had stopped at the gas station, but had missed this beauty. Now he worked over time not to gawk like some silly teen who had never seen a stunning woman before, but her soft eyes, kissable lips and a body that would fit perfectly with his made it difficult.

She held out her hand. “Hello, I’m Desiree.”

Not shy in the least bit, he liked that. “I’m Isaac.” The shake was more than hand touching hand. If he were a woman who believed in that romance goop his sisters went on and on about, he’d say he felt a charge pass between them. The shocked look in her eyes told him she’d “felt” the same thing.

“Unfortunately, my car has a flat, I have no spare, and my phone doesn’t have a signal. Do you have a cell phone I can borrow for a second.”

“My cell never gets signal out here. I live about ten minutes from here. You can use the phone at my place.”

“Thank you.” As soon as he entered her Escalade, he saw why she wasn’t fearful of approaching him. Two of the largest, meanest looking Rottweilers he’d ever seen were in the back.

“You’re not allergic to dogs are you? I can let the windows down.”

“Oh no. Have they eaten lately,” he teased.

“Don’t worry about Get’cha and Got’cha. They’re protectors, not attackers.”

By the time they arrived at her ranch style home that set back a ways from the main road, the dogs had decided they liked Isaac, and he’d decided he wanted to know everything there was to know about their owner. During the ride, she’d had him laughing and opening up in ways he had never thought possible. His sisters always accused him of being a “tightwad” who “needed to loosen up,” but somehow he felt free with Desiree.

“You know better,” she warned the dogs away from the entrance of the house as Isaac followed her indoors. “The phone is over there.” She motioned to the end table beside the couch.

The décor of the house was as kind, warm and inviting as Desiree. They’d had such a nice time, he feared asking her out might change the dynamics and chase her off. He called for roadside assistance, then hung up and gave her the bad—or good, depending on how you looked at it—news. “Since I’m not out in the sun baking, they said it will be at least three hours before they can change my tire.”

“Then I reckon you’re stuck with me for a few more hours. Water, tea, soda?”

“Water works for me.” He followed her into the kitchen. “If my next question makes you feel uncomfortable at all, I swear, I’ll stay with the dogs until my car is ready, but I have to ask.”

“Go for it, and I doubt anything you ask will relegate you to the back yard,” she said with the cutest smile.

“Why aren’t you married?”

Laughing, she pulled a bottle of water out of the refrigerator. “You sound like my mom. Seriously though, I don’t meet too many men out here, and those I do meet want the fast life of the city.”

“Their loss is my gain. How about dinner?” he asked before thinking.

“I’d love to.”