

LONELY PRIDE EXCERPT:

With her face pressed against his shirtfront the steady thump of his heart filled her ears. The scent of him wafted around her, so familiar, yet so alien.

Slowly, Sam lifted her head, bringing her face on a level with his. His brown eyes were fixed on her mouth and she swallowed hard as he captured her chin in his fingers—fingers that trembled as violently as hers.

His warm breath fanned her cheeks and the hand on her chin felt hot. A deep frown marred his forehead and it shook her to the core when she realized she was waiting for him to kiss her. Sliding his hands down until they rested on her waist he suddenly pulled her close to him and brought his mouth to hers.

The kiss began gently but rapidly deepened until he was searching the inner recesses of her mouth. Their combined breathing echoed in the hush of the cabin as she laced her fingers through his hair, some distant part of her revelling in the feel of its richness beneath her touch.

Sam was aware her breasts were aching for the hand that had moved to her shoulder to continue on its journey and ease the ache. He didn't disappoint her, his palm covered one swollen peak while the other tangled in her hair. In an involuntary response, she arched into him.

He pulled back a fraction, just enough to murmur her name. His breath sounded tortured and his nostrils flared as he said her name again. "It's been so long." Any further words were lost to her, smothered under the intensity of his kiss. It contained a ferocity that would have frightened her in anyone else. But this was Mac.

That realization came like a slap in the face. With a push she separated them. Her lips burned and she touched a fingertip to them, shuddering. She'd never been kissed like that, by anyone. Long ago Mac kissed her when she'd been barely more than a child and he'd awakened a sensuality in her that had never been satisfied.

It seemed she'd waited all her adult life to feel this way. One of his large hands still stroked up and down her arm, arousing all sorts of sensations within her. She closed her eyes and turned her head away for fear he would see the wanting she knew was blatant there.

"I always knew it would be like that between us," he said huskily, and she flinched. His had been the kiss of an experienced man, while she felt like an innocent teenager.

"And just where did you learn to kiss like that," she sniped, pushing at his hand still wandering up and down her arm. "How many women have taught you their skills? Or did Clare teach you all the tricks she knows?"

In the ensuing silence while he stared at her she struggled to straighten her dress where it had rucked up over her knees. The glitter in his eyes made him look wild. Whether with anger of frustration she didn't know.

“Good God! Still on about Clare. When will you get over this obsession about her? You are so far removed from the child and young woman I knew and...” He swore softly.

“So are you.” With a hasty movement Sam turned, only then remembering they were on an angle, tipped sideways. Everything had been forgotten while in his arms.

“Isn’t it about time we forgot the past. It’s been a long time.” He mussed his hair, and she noticed his fingers still trembled. Good. It was pleasing to know she wasn’t the only one affected by those kisses. But he was more likely annoyed rather than impassioned. Just like a man to think he could kiss and make up so easily. “You’re practically engaged to this Peter. It would be nice if we could be friends.”

“Friends?” She felt like screaming. How could he suggest such a thing? “Friends trust each other. I could never trust you any further than I could see you. How could you trust a man who swears to be faithful to her...then makes love to another woman?”