

Bonus Content for CHASING MRS. RIGHT

Ian pulled up to his house and shut off his truck. It had been a hell of a long day at work, and the sight of his windows lit up warmed him in a way he still wasn't used to. Home. That's what this house had become, and he had one person to thank for that—Roxanne.

Since she moved in, it was like the house was never empty, even when she wasn't there. Because he knew she was coming back. He smiled and climbed out of the truck. And when she was there? Well, that was even better.

Which is why he was late today. He'd had to make a stop on his way home, and the box occupying his coat pocket felt far heavier than it really was. He patted it, just like he had half a dozen times on the fifteen minute drive home. Still there.

He opened the front door, and kicked off his boots. Even months into this, it still felt a little strange to hear her bustling around the kitchen, or find her curled up on the sofa, or—his personal favorite—surprise her in the shower.

This time he found Roxanne in the pantry, hauling a giant pot off one of the shelves. "What are you doing?"

She jumped. "You've got to stop doing that, or I'm going to put a bell around your neck so you can't sneak up on me."

"And take away my entertainment? Never." Ian pulled her into his arms and kissed her. She immediately twined her arms around his neck and went soft against him. He took his time, exploring her mouth and letting her know that he missed her today. Because he had. If he thought his need to be around Roxanne would've lessened over time, he couldn't have been more wrong. Oh, he didn't need her touch to steady him as much as he used to, but that didn't stop him from craving it more than he ever craved anything in his life.

Roxanne brought color into his world, taking it from a dull gray into a bright Technicolor rainbow. He never wanted to give that up, and he was pretty sure she felt the same way. "What are you cooking?"

"Nothing yet, but I'll try my hand at gumbo. I was over at Elle's today, and Gabe was trying to teach us to make it—trying, and failing. So now I'm determined to figure it out." Roxanne smiled. "Next time we have them over for dinner I'm going to make it and it's going to be fabulous."

"I'm sure it will be." In the meantime, he'd be the one testing out the trial runs. He grinned. A small price to pay for the pleasure of having Roxanne in his life.

"Want to help?"

"Definitely." Ian got to work chopping vegetables she dumped in front of him. "So, how was your day?"

"Full of shenanigans. Do you remember that teenager who was giving me such a rough time?"

"The one with the strippers?"

"That would be her." She shook her head and dumped spices into the pot. He didn't know if he should be worried about the amount of hot sauce going in there, but he tried not to think about it too hard. Roxanne continued on, "Apparently she told her friends, and now I have an army of teenagers demanding their own parties, and they all want to outdo the next one. It's going to be a nightmare."

He could only imagine. "I'm sure you'll rise to the challenge."

"Oh, no doubt. And I'll make a killing while doing it." She gave an evil grin. "Knowing that definitely makes it easier to put up with their attitudes."

That was what he loved about Roxanne – she could find a way to spin any situation into her benefit. This one would be no different. He slid his hand into his pocket to touch the ring box, the feel of it in his hand reassuring.

"What have you got there?"

"Nothing." He jerked his hand out of his pocket so fast, the box shot out as well, tumbling across the floor to land in front of her. Shit. "I don't suppose you can pretend that didn't just happen."

She bent down and picked it up, turning it over in her hands. "Is this what I think this is?"

This wasn't how he'd planned for this to happen. He should have left the damn thing in his glove box. "I swear to God, nothing goes the way it should when it comes to you." He crossed to her, and took the box out of her hand. "And, to answer your question, this is exactly what you think this is."

"Holy shit."

He opened the box, and turned so she could see the ring. It was a princess cut pink diamond, and he had the band specially made, a twisting spiral that was both delicate and strong.

"How were you going to...?" She reached out, but stopped short of touching the ring.

"It doesn't matter now." He planned on taking her out to dinner, then down to Pine River Park for a walk under the moonlight. They'd sit on that picnic table where they made things right between them and then he'd propose.

Ian got down on one knee and lifted the box. "Roxanne Stokes, I've never met a woman like you, and I don't need to travel the world to know that there's no one else I'd rather be with. Every time I think things between us couldn't get better, you go and prove me wrong—usually in ways I never expected. I love that about you. I love that you've never met a challenge you wouldn't meet, that you face every day with a sense of humor, that you have no problem walking through fire for the people you care about. Hell, I just plain love you. I want to spend the rest of my life waking up next to you. Will you do me the honor of becoming my wife?"

She nodded, her eyes shining. "I am so damn glad your little sister slapped some sense into me. I love you forever, Ian Walser, though I have to tell you right now—it's never going to be smooth or easy."

"I know. I wouldn't have it any other way." He stood and slipped the ring onto her finger. It fit her, just like he'd known it would. "I love you so damn much." He framed her face with his hands and kissed her, the knowledge that he could spend the rest of his life doing just this settling in his chest. This was right. Hell, this was more than right.

"I love you too. Now, let's get this gumbo going so we have something to feed Gabe and Elle when we invite them over and tell them about this." She kissed him again, melting into him when he nipped her bottom lip. "On second thought, there's got to be one room in this house we haven't broken in yet."

Ian laughed, nibbling his way down her neck. "I think the laundry room might have been neglected."

"Then, by all means, let's try out that spin cycle." She slipped out of his arms and snagged his hand. "Best. Day. Ever."

He sure as hell wasn't arguing that. He was the luckiest man in the world.