

# A Walk Around the Lake, Chapter 15

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They decided to leave Jasper and head back to Banff. A leisurely drive back to the more cosmopolitan town would be good for both of them. He had called ahead to the largest hotel in the town. It was also the oldest. For a price, they would take care of every detail. He was counting on that. He wanted perfection, and could pay the price for it. As they approached the town, a slow sweet smile crept onto her face. She felt a peace in her heart that she hadn't felt since the passing of her beloved Michael. The sun was shining, and the snow capped mountains glistened in the bright sunshine. To her, it was Michael, smiling down on her, encouraging her to go on with her life, to move on with this wonderful man she had met and fallen in love with. She had mourned long enough. She reached over, and lay her hand on his thigh. His own hand left the steering wheel, and covered hers. He gave her left hand a gentle squeeze. She had taken her wedding ring off that morning, before they left Jasper. It was tucked safely into a pocket of her purse. He smiled at her. He had such plans for this evening. He had booked her into the hotel spa, for a day of pampering. A relaxing massage, a pedicure, a manicure, and her hair and makeup done. He had arranged for several dresses to be waiting for her at the spa, so she could dress without seeing their room. He had called ahead to the exclusive jewellery store in the old hotel. He had asked to have several engagement rings, available for him to choose from. He wanted the perfect diamond, set in platinum. He wanted perfection for her, for he had found perfection in her. They stopped at her friends to pick up his rental vehicle, and then he asked her to follow him to the hotel. The valet was there, ready to park their cars. The bell boy dispensed of their luggage in quick order. He escorted her to the spa, gave her a passionate kiss on the lips, his tongue dancing briefly with hers. He told her to relax and enjoy her time there and he would meet her in the dining room when she was finished. The look on her face was worth all his planning. He left her in the capable hands of the girls who worked at the spa. The spa was out of this world. She was led into a room with a whirlpool tub, filled with warm water and rose petals. The whole room was scented like roses. She was left alone and stripped out of her clothes. She slid into the warm scented water, and touched the button at the side of the tub and the water began to bubble. She slid down into the water, up to her neck, and breathed in the sensuous fragrance. She felt so pampered and decadent. She enjoyed the tub until the water started to cool. She rose from the water,

and reached for the fluffy robe that was draped over the warming rack. Sliding her arms into the robe, she tied the belt around her waist. She stepped up and out of the tub, almost reluctant to leave the silky rose scented water, but at the same time, excited to see what else he had planned for her day of relaxation. She no sooner was out of the tub, when a young woman who seemed no bigger than a minute, slipped into the tub room, after knocking gently on the door. The young woman led her into a serene candle lit room with soft music with a babbling brook dancing in the background played on a CD player. The massage table was draped in a soft flannel sheet, with rolled towels for her head to rest on. A light blush spread over her face...she'd had massages before, but she usually kept her panties on. She had nothing under this robe, but the young woman was a professional, and encouraged her to get comfortable on the table, and covered her with a warmed flannel sheet, so that she could take her robe off. The warmth of the sheet seeped into her bones, as the young woman told her her name. "I'm Nikki. I'll be doing your massage. Do you have any problem areas that you'd like me to work on?" "No, but I'd love it if you'd do a relaxation massage, rather than a "therapeutic" one." She'd had both in the past, but she just wanted the pampering of a relaxing touch. She felt the young woman's hands with warmed oil begin to massage her shoulders, and work on the knots that always seem to form there from driving. She closed her eyes, and let the experience take her away to a place she didn't dare go very often. She allowed her mind to drift to her memories of Michael. He was there, in his tuxedo, just as he was on their wedding day. She saw his smile, his perfectly straight, white teeth, his brown eyes twinkling with all the love that was in his heart for her that wonderful day. But this dream was different. Before, she always walked down the aisle, toward him, but this dream was different. Her feet couldn't move, she couldn't walk down that aisle. She looked down at the aisle, at her smiling husband, and watched him, as he blew her a kiss, and said, "It's okay. I love you, I always will, but it's time for you to move on. He's a good man...you deserve so much more than what you have now." "Michael..." was out of her mouth, in a whisper, and she closed her eyes against the tears that were threatening to overflow. She knew in her heart of hearts now, that Michael was giving her his blessing to move on with this handsome Texan she had met, and yes, fallen in love with. If the young woman who was attending to her heard her, it was discretely ignored. Now with her heart at true peace, she gave in to the feelings of relaxation and let the love she had found settle in her heart. Her hour massage was over, and the young woman told her to just take her time, and that someone would be along to escort her to the next part of her day of pampering. A pedicure was next, and she sat in the big leather chair and soaked her feet in more of the rose scented water. The young girl doing her pedicure looked as if she was barely out of high school but she knew her craft. After a relaxing foot massage, a pale pink nail polish was chosen for her toes. The young girl covered her feet with paper slippers so she wouldn't slip and the nail polish would dry without smudging. She was then led to the manicurist's table, and her hands were given the same pampering treatment and her fingernails were painted with the same pale pink nail polish to match her toes. The next station was a table that she reclined on, and she chose to have her brows waxed and a facial done before the makeup application. She smiled to herself, she had only pampered herself like this once before...that was the week before her wedding to Michael. As she pondered on

the evening ahead of her, a rack of dresses and several boxes of sandals were brought for her to try on. The girls in the spa were all a twitter, saying that her "man must be very wealthy" in order to go to such lengths for this day of pampering. She hadn't thought of it before, but this must be costing an absurd amount of money. She really hoped this wasn't "payment" for favors received. No she thought, he had professed his love for her. Goodness knows she had fallen hard for him. She would just let this day of pampering continue and see what else he had in mind. She was led then to have her hair shampooed and styled. Her makeup was expertly done, and she had chosen a beautiful pink dress that had a fitted bodice and a full chiffon skirt. The man had thought of everything. There was even a selection of bras and panties to choose from. It was obvious she wasn't going to see any of her own things, until after dinner. To be honest, she felt like Cinderella getting ready for the ball with her handsome prince. When she was dressed and coiffed, she looked in the full length mirror and barely recognized herself. The girls that worked their miracles on her stood around with smiles on their faces. She wanted to leave them tips, but she had been assured that that had been taken care of as well.