WICKED PANCAKES

“Something smells delicious,” Emma Preston said, walking into the kitchen of the restored Victorian to see her husband, Clint standing at the stove.

Walking up behind him, she slid her hand over his naked back. His low-slung jeans hugged his lean hips, his hair slicked back from the shower they’d just shared. She still couldn’t believe all those muscles and warm skin were hers to caress.

“Mmm, that feels nice,” he murmured in his deep voice, then turned his head to kiss her. “Izzie asleep?”

“Yes. She nursed like a hungry little piglet, then went right back to sleep.”

Their family had grown to include their three-month old daughter, who was the delight of everyone, especially her twin older brothers.

Emma leaned in to kiss his shoulder and watch him slice a banana in half. “She should be out for hours. It was nice to be able to sleep in.”

“It was nice of your cousin and his wife to take the boys and the dog camping this weekend.” Gage gave her a wink and smile, reminding her how they’d spent the night indulging in hot sex and woke up like honeymooners to do it all again.

Heat coursed through her and he laughed.

“I like it when you blush. All that red-headed complexion of yours going beat red against the white of my shirt.” He focused back on the bananas caramelizing in the fresh butter. “Like the way your legs look beneath it too. Very sexy, woman.”

Her blush deepened and she wrapped her arms around him, pressing her face against the warm skin of his body, feeling like a giddy teenager. “What are you creating this morning?”

“Something special. Coconut banana pancakes with caramelized pecans and bananas.”

With one brow arched, she peeked around him. “Really?”

“Yes, really. Why do you look so skeptical?” It was his turn to blush a little.

“Well,” she said, letting the word drag out as she released him to turn and prop one hip against the counter so she could watch him as she teased. “It’s a well-known fact that even though you’re the town doctor, your idea of the perfect breakfast is Lorna’s sausage gravy and biscuits down at the Peaches ’N Cream Café.”

“Well, there’s perfection, then there’s daring,” he said with a shrug.

“Daring?” she asked, watching him plate up two big pancakes, then sprinkle on some crunchy pecans that looked like they’d been candied.

“Yes. The pancake has almond flour instead of wheat, mashed bananas and coconut oil instead of vegetable oil and shaved coconut for some texture. I thought since we were alone, almost, we might need to keep our strength up with something that was nutritious and decadent.” He laid the caramelized banana slices on top and drizzled the whole thing with some locally grown honey they’d purchased at a local farmer’s market.

“It smells heavenly. Where did you get this recipe?”

“You’re never going to believe me when I tell you.” Picking up the two plates of pancakes, he nodded to the small bowl of homemade whipped cream she’d served on strawberries last night. “Get that, please.”

Now he had her curiosity, as well as her appetite piqued. Following him to the breakfast table that sat in the bay window, she set took her seat. “Spill it, what made you decide to not only cook me breakfast, but something that smells and sounds so delicious?”

“Harriett.”

She blinked and watched him plop whipped cream on her pancakes. “Harriett?”

Clint’s irascible office nurse was notorious for not cooking.

He laughed. “Yeah, I know. But I caught her watching this Australian chef making these pancakes on the internet at work one day.”

“An Australian chef? That wouldn’t be Dan Churchill would it? The girls at the café were talking about him the other day. Apparently, he’s a very handsome chef who promotes healthy cooking and has a new cook book out. Fresh ingredients, no gluten, but tasty. Why was Harriett watching him?” She scooped up at bite of pancake, banana, pecans and whipped cream.

“Don’t know if it was the chef or the food she was watching, but the recipe looked easy enough for me to follow. So I thought I’d surprise you this morning.”

She slid the fork in and flavor exploded in her mouth. Her eyes popped open as she chewed and swallowed. “Oh. My. God. That’s delicious.”

Clint leaned in, gathered the small dollop of cream caught on the corner of her lip with his finger then held it to her lips. She opened her mouth, her gaze locked on his as he slid his finger inside. “You can show me how much you appreciate my efforts later.”