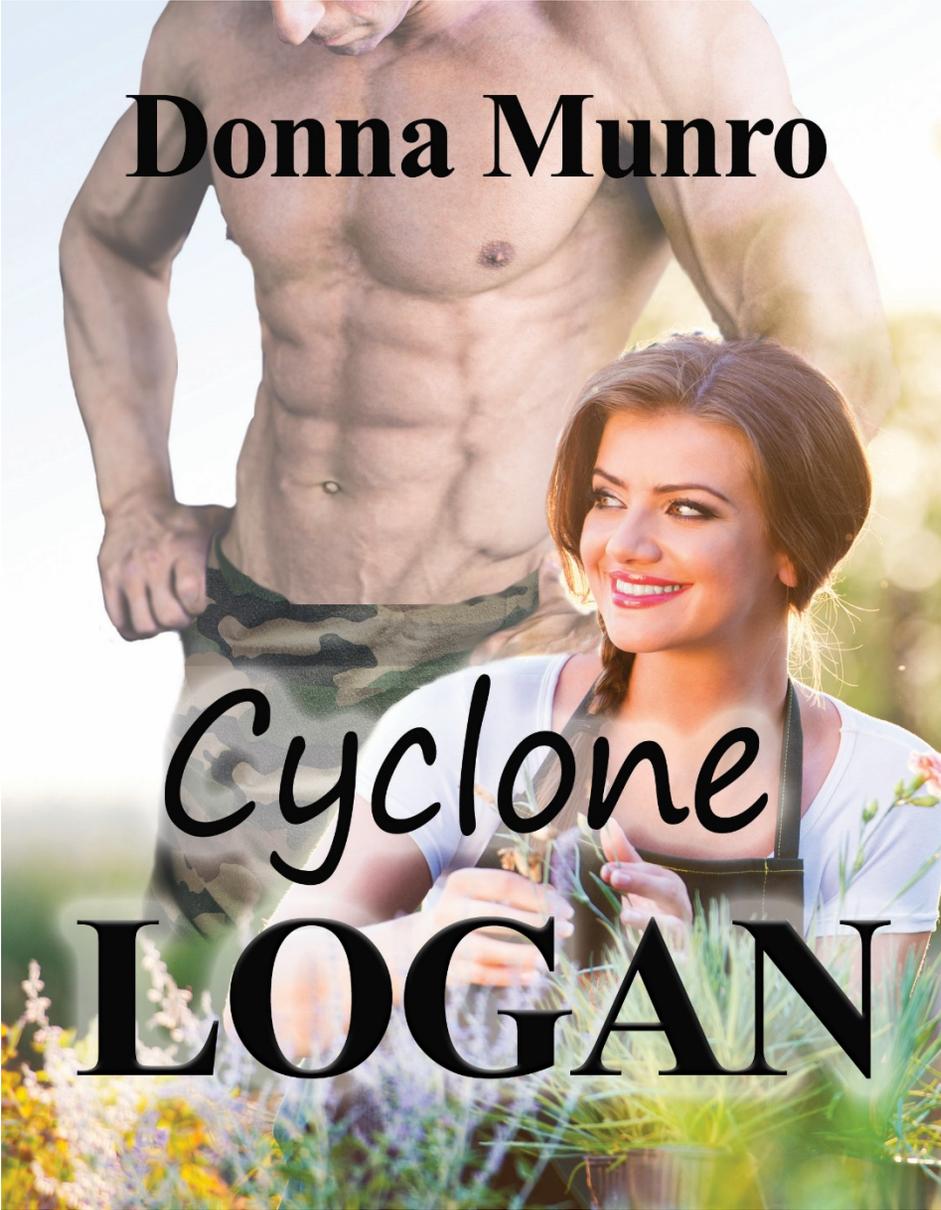


Cyclone Logan – Donna Munro



Donna Munro

Cyclone
LOGAN

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By Donna Munro

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Cyclone Logan

White cockatoos flew overhead in a raucous flock, momentarily masking the sound of an oncoming car with their distinct squawks. The 4WD sped down her long driveway spitting red dust and gravel like an oncoming storm. Cyclone Logan had arrived.

On the wide veranda, Bridee bit her trembling bottom lip, tucking long straight dark hair behind her ear. Glancing at the snug pale blue dress, she wished she worn something looser. She tugged it lower at the hem. Her curves were too obvious, her cleavage too low. Damn him. She'd already changed outfits four or five times.

Slamming the driver's door of the dirty ute, he strolled to the tray, retrieving a bag. The way he walked was cat-like stealthy, long animal strides. Before Bridee knew it, in the seconds that she closed her eyes to control bubbling anger, he was in front of her.

Unwanted emotions washed over her as he moved close wearing a self-assured lop-sided grin with perfect pearly whites. Shuffling his feet from side-to-side, the large khaki bag draped over his shoulders, made the arm holding its biceps bulge. She dropped her eyes, not wanting to admire his physique. More importantly not wanting to look into his gold-flecked eyes.

Steely muscles shined with sweat where his open camo-shirt was rolled up at the sleeves to reveal a tight black t-shirt molded onto his wide chest. *Surely he'd been dipped in molten gold.* Standing two steps below

Bridee, he was tall enough that they were face to face. He grinned again tilting his ridiculously handsome head.

Damn him.

As he was in the midst of a friendly, "Hi...", she turned away, but not before noting how much the crew cut accentuated his sharp cheeks and bristled chin, not to mention his mesmerizing gold-flecked eyes. Eyes you could drown in and never resurface.

"You're in the spare room," she said abruptly, opening the screen door to let him in.

Letting out a low whistle, he shrugged his wide shoulders. "Nice introductions. I'll start then shall I? I'm Logan, and you must be Bridee?"

Feeling his breath on her neck as he walked inside was like clutching testosterone from the air. This was one very manly man. The lump in her throat was a boulder. Tears blurred her vision. As she followed him inside, he abruptly stopped, turning.

Bumping into him was like hitting warm steel. “Sorry, I was just going to ask where to put my stuff.” His free hand rested too easily on her slender shoulder.

“Don't get comfortable,” she warned.

“Come on, Bridee. What kind of reception is that?” He hadn't expected a hero's welcome. Perhaps a little gratitude. He'd even imagined she'd be more than happy to see him.

Corey said Bridee was a strong, resourceful woman. He had warned that her temper was quick but her heart as wide as an ocean. To Logan, she was more like a fragile kitten that looked about to melt right into the milk bowl. Cute as a kitty with her pert pouty mouth and sexy pocket-rocket body. There was something so sweet and appealing about the vulnerability he saw in her shocked eyes. He'd noted the almost-tears at the sight of him. It was discouraging, but he wasn't about to be easily discouraged by her. He thought of the photo in his pocket, which made him smile.

Though from Corey's description, he had imagined more firecracker than leaky tap, he was pleasantly surprised by her emotions. Rubbing his jaw, shaking his head he followed her cute behind up the hall. *Man, that dress was something else. Her curves. Her legs. Her aura.* Tossing his bag on the bed, he tried

to ignore his raging libido as she stormed into another room, without another word.

Bridee Dean was a bigger puzzle than he'd expected but he was good at puzzles. He shifted the camo shirt off his shoulders, tossing it on the bed. He tugged his t-shirt out of his jeans to lift it and shake the fabric for airflow. *Was it hot in the house or was it just Bridee Dean making him boil?*

Bridee hadn't meant to be so rude. All the lonely nights she'd conjured him from the pictures Corey had sent. The hot nights she'd imagined his strong arms around her were arousing enough, let alone the real version. Logan was no longer one dimensional. The 3D version was off the Richter scale of what she had conjured.

God she missed Corey. She'd loved him so much. One stupid horrible bomb in a messed-up far-off land, in a no-one-wins war and he was gone forever. *Could Logan possibly explain that better than he had in his letters?*

It was a comfort for Logan to be back in clean clothes without the smell of dust and death. Flexing his arms above his head, he twisted his neck, telling himself to relax. *Don't jump each time that dog barks in the next paddock. Don't cringe when you hear a revving car. Don't avoid the beautiful woman who has invited you to her home.*

There was no need to look over his shoulder. The danger wasn't with him anymore. The only menace he

faced was his own nightmares. And quite possibly the wrath of a petite, gorgeous woman.

The smell of garlic led him to the kitchen where he found Bridee stirring a pot over a gas stove. “Mmmm, smells delicious,” he said. The flowery shampoo in her luscious long hair, mingling with sweet perfume, even more so.

“Thought you'd be hungry,” she said, tilting her head away from his breath. *Too close.*

Wedging between her and the bench so that their hips touched slightly, he ignored her startled doe-eyes. *A sizzle. Not in the pot.* With his index finger, he gently lifted her chin. “Why can't you look at me? What's wrong I came here to help you? You asked me to come here.”

Moving sideways, then backward, she pushed his hand away. The frown on her pretty face twisted his heart. “Better late than never,” she said sadly, wiping at her eyes.

Trying to diffuse the bomb as he usually did, he shrugged, grinning sheepishly. Understanding the Taliban and their suicidal hatred was easier than fathoming what Bridee was thinking. A gorgeous woman's anger was not computing in his brain. He scrambled to say something meaningful but remained mute.

“I thought you commandos were supposed to be the smart ones.” She poked a menacing finger at his chest.

Surprised by her venom, he stepped towards the dining table. Befuddled as he was, she looked rather

cute when she was angry. A hard-on firmed in his trousers. *Man, not the time.*

“You really are that dumb,” she stated, slumping onto a dining chair. “What took you so long to come here? You promised Corey. I’ve had eight months of nothing from you.”

He chewed the inside of his cheek, looking away briefly. Finally, he sat, placing his hand flat on the table. “It was my duty to go back.”

“You promised not to. You promised, him, you’d not die. You swore you’d look out for me.” Tears brimmed in her beautiful eyes, soon dropping on the timber table causing moisture stains.

Reaching slowly for her tiny hands, he took them in his. They were dainty with beautifully manicured nails with soft pink nail polish; very girly. “I didn’t die.

I'm still here.” He gave her a half smile. “I can't take Corey's place, you know that. But I'm finally here for you.”

“Why didn't you write more often? Email that you were okay? You didn't even come back for his funeral.” Tears dripped on the table. She wiped at them angrily, from her eyes and then the table.

“I...we...we, Corey and I, said our goodbyes in that hell hole. Then....” He ran a hand through his short hair. “I was sooooo angry. I had to get back to work or go crazy. I had to focus to stay alive. To do my job.”

“But you promised, him...me.”

“You were a distraction. If I saw you in real life, I knew I couldn't do my job, and I'd probably get killed. I'd look at the pictures of you often.”

“Pictures? Corey gave you pictures?” It felt like bees were buzzing through her body.

Logan lifted his hips, reaching his back pocket. Arm muscles bulged nicely, making her want to reach out to touch him. She placed her hands under her thighs. Letting her eyes drag across his chest, the black t-shirt accentuated every ripple of muscle to narrow hips. “Yep. This one is my favorite.” He handed her a photo not noticing her gulp. The photo showed her wearing a bikini at the beach. She was tanned, smiling at the camera, jumping in the air with the surf behind her.

She gasped. “When did Corey give you this?”

“Straight after he explained you were the best woman in the world. He knew I'd appreciate it. I sure did...and do.”

Snatching it from his fingers, her mouth agape, she struggled to say anything.

“He knew we'd hit it off,” Logan said, tugging the photo back. She let it slip.

“But I'm in a bikini.” Flush colored her cheeks.

“I'm sorry if you think it's out of line but that photo got me through some tough stuff.” Suddenly, he wiped his soft brown-gold eyes, looking away from her up at the ceiling.

At that moment she knew that she hadn't imagined the love. It had been formed during the awful months since her brother had died. Though her and Logan had

never met, Corey had created their bond. He loved his friend enough to share her, his twin with his best friend, Logan.

Logan leaned forward, cupping her chin with his big hand. Soft, warm lips met her's blending into an intense deep kiss that she reciprocated eagerly. The bees buzzing in her stomach became exquisite feelings tingling through every nerve. They created honey that traveled deliciously to her womb.

Between kisses, he mumbled. “I always keep my promises,” kiss, “eventually.”

Perhaps Cyclone Logan was more a whirlwind. A whirlwind romance at least.

~end~

(or is it just the beginning?)

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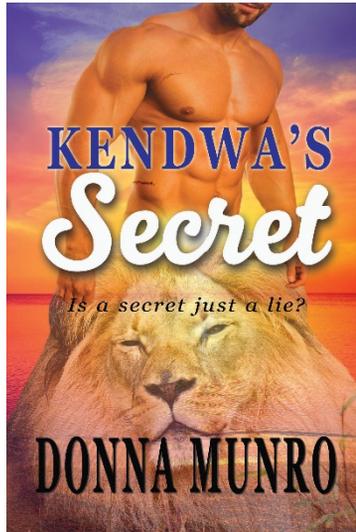
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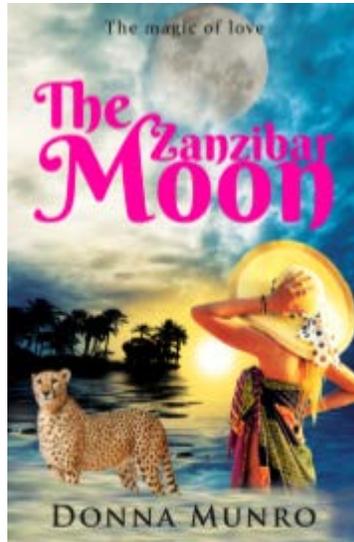
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