

KITCHEN MATCHES by Marianne Arkins

EXCERPT

“I’m fairly new in town and don’t know any good car repairmen.” Micah shrugged.

“I do,” Cori said.

“Oh? Do you get a kickback for referring me?”

“See...I knew you didn’t like me.” She smirked. “And, no I don’t get a kickback, exactly.”

“What’s ‘exactly’ mean?”

“I mean that it’s me.” She stuffed her cold hands into her jacket pockets and rocked back on her heels.

“It’s you, what?”

“I’m a reputable car repairman.”

He stared at her again, and that little habit of his was really making her uncomfortable. That look cut through her tough outer skin, right to her soft and easily embarrassed center. His gaze scooted up to her face, down to her toes and back again. The look was as soft as a caress and she fisted her hands, annoyed at her body’s reaction to it.

“You’re no man,” he announced.

“What? Are you some kind of Neanderthal? You think because of my chromosomes I can’t fix a minivan?”

“I didn’t say that.” The corner of his mouth turned up in a smile, the first real one ever aimed in her direction. “You called yourself a repairman, and I only said that you aren’t a man. That’s a fact. Despite your dress and demeanor, you are very much a woman.”

A thrill of attraction shivered up her spine and left her unable to speak coherently. She fell back on a simple, “Oh.”

His mouth widened into a full-fledged grin and he reached out to straighten the collar on her jacket, fingers brushing the skin of her throat as he did.