

Excerpt from Night of the Living Bread

“You are such a sucker.” My business partner and bestie, Dixie Spicer, pointed a finger at me. Albeit it was a finger tipped with a dollop of chocolate frosting. Which made it difficult to take her seriously, but that was beside the point.

It’s true. I am a sucker.

I’m a sucker for little kids with lemonade stands, old ladies selling daffodils, and any and all varieties of animal rescue fundraisers. Adopt a dog, save a cat, dollars for donkeys. They see me coming a mile away.

“Sugar, it’s impossible for you to say no.” Dixie had spotted the frosting and licked it from her finger.

“I can, too.” Picking up a spoon, I reached in front of her and dipped some frosting from the bowl. Why fool around with only a finger of frosting? You’ve got to lean in.

Yum. I sighed in ecstasy.

The rich dark chocolate was pure bliss.

And it would nicely complement the praline pecan cupcakes cooling on the counter. A test recipe for our latest project, a community cookbook for the local band boosters.

Dixie swatted my spoon away, but a smile quirked her lips.

I’d grown up in cities but was madly in love with the small town where I’d lived for the past couple of years. I cherished the friendships, the simplicity, and the slower pace. It was perfect for someone looking for fewer distractions and a sense of belonging. And ideal for the types of cookbooks that we produced at Sugar & Spice Publishing.

“The *Tasty Notes Cookbook* will make them money and still turn a profit for us.” I reached in for another spoonful of frosting. “I ran the numbers, and we’re good.”

“Agreed.” Dixie touched a couple of the cupcakes and, apparently deciding they were cool enough to frost, picked up a knife and scooted the bowl of frosting out of my reach. “You’ve got a much better head for business than I do, but you’re still a sucker.”