

# Sunny's Safe Haven

*The Red Petticoat Saloon*

By

Vanessa Brooks

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# Chapter One

Tey rode into town at mid-day, the unseasonable warmth of the October sun was beating down, his horse's head hung low. Tey knew Mustang was in dire need of water. He was exhausted, they both were. He spotted the saloon sign and guided the horse slowly across the dusty street. As they moved in the direction of The Red Petticoat saloon, Tey noticed a burly man arguing with a slim blonde woman on the boardwalk. The woman half turned at his approach, catching his attention. Tey stared into the brightest pair of eyes he'd ever seen. Two things registered; she was young and pretty with compelling yellow green eyes that reminded him strongly of a mountain cat.

Just as Tey assimilated her good looks and trim figure, the older man standing beside her lifted his arm and backhanded her. She spun off the wooden boardwalk out into the dirt, landing at Mustang's front legs. The shocked horse reared up in alarm and Tey had his work cut out bringing the horse under control and back down to earth, safely away from the recumbent girl.

After the man had lashed out at the fallen girl, he hurled curses down upon where she lay, spittle spraying from his mouth with the accompanying abuse. Tey dismounted and hitched Mustang to the rail outside the saloon where a water trough stood full; the water instantly gained the horse's attention and he calmly began drinking, ignoring the human drama unfolding behind him. A small brown and white dog sat atop the horse on Tey's blanket roll. He watched his master with intelligent brown eyes, staying safely up where he was, well out of the fray.

Tey quickly reached the girl and was about to help her up, when a tall dark haired man appeared from inside the saloon and jumped down into the sandy dust beside her.

"Are you all right, *chiquita*?" he asked, obviously concerned. Tey surmised the man to be of Spanish or more likely, Mexican descent.

"She yorn?" he asked the man who was hunkered down on one knee beside the prone girl. He glanced up at Tey and stretched out his hand.

“I’m Gabriel Vasquez. Nope, she is not mine. This is Stephanie Kendrick, she is the daughter of that sonofabitch there,” he said, nodding at the irate man still bellowing obscenities from the sidewalk.

“Tey.” He held out his hand and shook Gabe’s hand. “Hell of a way to treat your daughter.”

“I agree. Come *chiquita*, let’s get you up, all right?” Gabriel placed his arm under the girl’s shoulders and lifted her up.

“*Dios mío*, she is bleeding... Kendrick!” he bellowed, “fetch Doc Norwood... fast!”

Tey saw that the back of the girl’s dress was crimson with blood. He looked over to where the girl’s father stood, his mouth gaping wide, lips flapping wordlessly at the sight of his daughter’s blood-stained dress.

“Godamnit,” Tey muttered, disgusted by the man’s inaction. “The doc, where does he live?” he called to him urgently.

Kendrick pointed down the street, his bulbous eyes fixed upon his daughter, who was by now swooning in Gabe’s arms. “I will take her inside, you fetch the doc,” Gabriel stated, nodding at Tey whilst scooping the girl up into his arms.

Tey gave a brief nod and was about to set off in the direction the man had indicated, when Kendrick suddenly yelled, “That’s right, take her into the bawdy house, that’s where she belongs, the little slut. She ain’t no daughter of mine... she can stay there and good riddance!” The man cursed some more before turning and stomping off in the opposite direction to where he had signaled the doctor’s house to be.

Tey swore under his breath, turned and ran down the street until he spotted a doctor’s plate set upon a door. He hammered hard, until he heard a man within shout, “All right, I hear you. I’m fetching my bag... Be right with you!” The door was flung wide and a pretty smiling woman greeted him.

“I’m Mrs. Della Norwood, my husband Anson is the doctor. He’ll be right with you, cowboy.” At that moment a man side stepped around her, stopping briefly to drop a kiss on her cheek as he passed. Tey heard him say, “Be good,” as he hefted his black leather doctor’s bag. “Where to?” he asked.

“Saloon,” Tey replied briefly before setting off at a lope, leading the way.

“Man of few words I see,” muttered the doctor, drawing alongside Tey.

“Yup, name’s Tey, just arrived in town.”

“So, do you know who my patient might be?”

“Pretty girl, amazing green, yellow eyes like a mountain cat.” Tey frowned. “I think they said her name’s Stephanie Kendrick. She fell off the walk outside the saloon. She’s bleeding heavily all over her skirts. A man called Vasquez took her inside the saloon.”

“Stephanie Kendrick... really?”

They reached the saloon and Tey followed Doc Norwood inside. A large aproned woman waved the doctor over to the back of the room where they both left through a door.

Tey turned toward the bar and slid onto a stool. “A shot of the good stuff, and a bowl of water,” he told the pretty girl who was serving behind the bar, wearing a fetching smile and a pretty dress. He gave a high pitched whistle and the small dog who had sat atop his horse outside, scooted under the swinging doors, skidding to a halt beside him. A bowl of water appeared on the bar but no whiskey.

“You have to check the hardware in before you get a drink in this establishment, Mister.” A woman’s pleasantly accented voice came from behind him. English, Tey surmised, but part with his guns? No way!

He swung around and studied the woman, a beautiful blue eyed blonde. Her gaze met his steadily without fear. Tey liked that. “Ma’am,” he said quietly and touched the brim of his hat to her.

“I am Madam Jewel, part owner of this establishment. I believe you met my partner Gabe earlier, out in the street. Thank you for fetching Doctor Norwood.”

“You’re welcome. How’s the girl doing?”

“I am sorry to say that Stephanie has lost the baby she was carrying but the doctor is with her now and seems confident that he can stop the bleeding.”

“An’ her husband?” Tey asked.

Jewel shook her head. “She has none that I know of and apparently her father has disowned her. We will care for her here and try to help reconcile Stephanie with her father.”

Tey nodded. His heart contracted at the familiar but pitiful tale of a girl taken advantage of before she had a ring on her finger. Still it was none of his business, he was here to do a job and that’s what he was gonna do. In his line of work, it didn’t pay to get attached to female folk, they always wanted more than he could offer them. Nope, he’d stick to sweet whores and good rye whiskey. Speaking of which...

“Sorry, ma’am, I don’t part with my guns, no time, no how.”

“Then we can’t serve you Mr...”

“The name’s Tey.”

“Well, good day to you then, Mr. Tey.” She turned and walked away and Tey watched the sway of her hips appreciatively until she was out of sight.

Tey turned back to the bar. “There another saloon in this town?” he asked the pretty bar woman who was polishing glasses with a surprisingly clean looking bar cloth.

“Sorry, only the Red Petticoat and you won’t get a better run saloon than this one. Our gems are sweet and clean, food is great and the roulette wheel isn’t fixed but if you want whiskey, you’re going to have check in those pistols, cowpoke.”

What was it with the women around here, all of them assuming he was a cowboy? Still, wouldn’t hurt for them to assume that for a while, it sounded better than the truth.

Tey sighed. He hated to be parted from his guns. He felt undressed without them but by God he wanted that drink. He’d been out on the trail for just over a couple of weeks, traveling on horseback across Arizona to California in one of the hottest Octobers that he could recall. A hand on his shoulder shook him out of his reverie and he looked down into the pretty smiling face of a girl dressed in a white laced bodice and a bright red flounced petticoat.

“Well, howdy, cowboy. I’m Peridot, I work here. You lookin’ for company maybe?”

He tilted back his hat and grinned at her. “Surely shall be later on, baby girl, just as soon as I get me a glass of rye and a hot bath.” He ran his eye speculatively over her body. He liked what he saw; a good pair of creamy pillowing breasts swelled out of her pretty camisole top and her small waist flared out over shapely hips and a curvy ass. His shaft instantly hardened, it had been a while.

Tey stuck to whores but only the young and the clean. Frankly the fresh variety was few and far between out west and he had to make do with his trusty old right hand more often than not. Both his cock and his hand were sick of the sight of one another. According to his eyes and his manhood, things were looking up. Tey saw the woman look down at his hardened crotch with a small knowing smile.

“We have a bathing room in-house, buster, so how’s about you leave the hardware here and come with me for a real hot, hot bath, hmm?”

“Tell you what, I gotta take Mustang to the livery, so you fill that tub and I’ll be right back.” He trailed the back of one finger down the sloping cleavage of Peridot’s breasts. “Oh an’ honey, when I say fill the tub, I mean I want you in it, with these babies floating free where I can see ‘em welcoming me on my return.” She giggled, agreeing with a nod. Tey pulled out a wedge of notes and peeled off a couple of greenbacks, handing them to her. “Bring a bottle of the good stuff with you. I assume I get to keep my guns inside the bathing room?”

“Yes, sir,” Peridot replied. Tey gave her a look of approval. He did like a woman who knew how to address a man. Once he’d gone, his small dog trotting beside him, Peridot fanned her face. It had been a long time since a client had such an effect on her. “Phew!” she muttered, she was slicker than maple syrup just at the thought of bedding the man. Pulling herself together, she bought the bottle of rye from Amy behind the bar and headed off to the bathing room to fill a tub designed for two.

Tey left Dog with Mustang, curled up in the hay next to the horse, happy now that he had some strips of beef jerky digesting inside him.

When Tey finally entered the bathing room, he heard a sultry voice calling to him. Pushing the door wide he stopped and leaned against the doorjamb to admire the view. The woman named Peridot was laid back in the widest tub he’d ever seen, her tits floating free in white foamy bubbles, they looked just as he’d imagined them. Full and magenta tipped, they beckoned him to join them.

“Howdy, cowboy, planning on coming in?” she asked, her voice low and sexy. She held his gaze as she parted her legs in open invitation. Tey needed no further solicitation. He began to strip, his eyes never once leaving those buoyant pleasure globes of hers. He watched her eyes widen when he unbuttoned his trousers and his impressive cockstand sprung free.

“Now that’s just the kind of welcome I like,” she purred, licking her lips unconsciously. Tey stood by the side of the tub, his hands slipping over and around the silken, slippery balloons of her breasts, enjoying the sensation of kneading her soft flesh.

“Hurry up and wash my cock, woman. Then wrap that naughty mouth of yours around it and show me what a good little girl you are. If you can prove you are a good girl, well then, I might not tan that delectable ass of yours... but then again, what else is a man supposed to do with such a delectable rounded rump?”

“A cowpoke’s poke maybe?” Peridot suggested naughtily, batting her eyelashes.

“You’re a real sassy minx. Yup, you’ll be getting that wicked little ass whapped tonight, and if you’re really bad, I’ll certainly give it a cowpoke or two!” Peridot sniggered delightedly. If she was any judge of men and she surely was, then this was going to be a very good night! After her hands soaped and rinsed his goodly sized shaft, she slowly lowered her open mouth over the blunt head, loving the way he filled her mouth as she sucked him down slowly, accustoming her throat to his size. Her action was accompanied by his resonating groan of pleasure.

Yup, tonight sure was gonna be a *very* good night indeed.