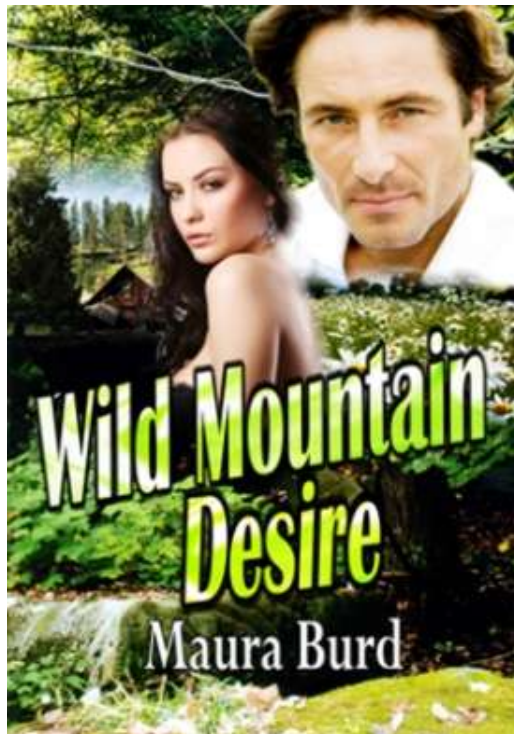


WILD MOUNTAIN DESIRE By Maura Burd © 2009 ISBN#978-1-4389-8889-4

## WILD MOUNTAIN DESIRE

*Sample 'Chapter One' Excerpt*



## Chapter One

### *Present Day*

Shawna Lang stood alone at the railing overlooking the valley below the cliffs of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Closing her eyes, she took in a deep breath of the clean mountain air. The scent of freshly fallen maple leaves brought a comforting smile to her lips. And as the sea of rolling hills throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains showcased their spectacular fall colors, Shawna wondered why she'd waited nearly twenty years to come back to North Carolina.

The natural landscape was indeed a visual enchantment. Shawna stood still and listened to the wind as it blew through the mountains. The stiff, rustling sound of dry oak leaves dancing on the branches and the soft, rousing sound of swaying hemlocks throughout the mountains seemed to be whispering its wondrous secret that it was a magical place.

Shawna's hazel eyes gazed languidly towards the west as the sun began to disappear behind the majestic mountain terrain. It had been so long since she'd taken time out to appreciate the tremendous beauty of nature. She'd wasted so much of her adult life rushing to

do something or hurrying to get somewhere that such awe-inspiring moments like this was a rare occasion.

Somehow, middle age was catching up with her and she didn't have even one serious love affair to either rejoice in or to regret. From the beginning, her life was set into high gear, thrusting her into adulthood at an early age. This was the main reason Shawna chose to get away for a while. Her spirit was hungry for a change. She thought if this trip couldn't breathe inspiration into her soul, perhaps nothing could stimulate excitement back into her life. She looked down at her wristwatch and saw that it was nearing 7:00PM. Feeling suddenly rushed, she turned away from the lookout and walked back to her car.

Estimating that she had a few more miles of driving before reaching Bev Rutherford's estate, she thought she'd let her friend know she was almost there. But when she attempted to call, her phone had no signal.

Her last pit stop had been over 4 hours ago. She was incredibly thirsty, but she didn't want to waste time by trying to locate a convenience store. She remembered a spare bottle of water that had rolled underneath the passenger seat a few days earlier. Seeing no approaching traffic, she leaned over to her right and reached underneath the seat. Keeping her eyes on the road and her left hand firmly on the wheel, she felt around the floor till she located the bottle. The bottle, though, was lodged firmly underneath one of the seat brackets.

Reaching down as far as she could, her car swerved dangerously over the road. But no matter how she tried, her fingers couldn't pry it loose.

After giving it her best shot, she sat back up in her seat. She glanced in her rear view mirror and saw a car coming up from behind at a high rate of speed. She slowed down her speed when the car caught up to her, but the vehicle wouldn't pass. It was so close to her bumper that she thought if she put on her brakes the car would run into her.

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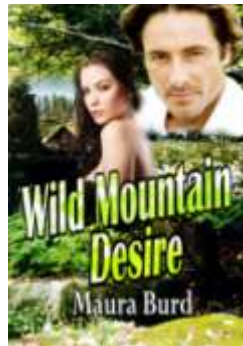
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