



MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S STEAM  
*HOT SUMMER NIGHTS*

# BAD MOON RISING

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**“Bad Moon Rising” by Leeanne Kenedy**

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*Cover art by Anne Cain*

Does a full moon really cause naughty behavior?

*A Midsummer Night's Steam story*

Hailey Burke has heard that full moons cause people to behave in strange ways, but she never thought it would apply to her until the night she winds up in bed with a man she doesn't even like. So she'd had a temporary loss of sanity when she slept with Zack Creighton, the womanizing photographer. Big deal. Doesn't mean she's going to do it again, right?

Wrong.

Unfortunately, Zack has something else in store for Hailey. He's liked the sassy redhead from the moment he met her, but he can't get the stubborn woman to let go of the misconceptions she's formed about him. Sure, he's played the field, but Zack is no womanizer, and he has no intention of leaving things at one night. Once he's had a taste of Hailey, he wants another. And he's determined to convince her that he's not the bad boy she's always thought.

**Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language.**

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# Bad Moon Rising

*Leeanne Kenedy*

## Dedication

To Lori Borrill, the best friend and critique partner a girl could have. Thanks for your advice, support and that unfailing ability to make me laugh.

## Chapter One

Hailey Burke needed two things: aspirin and sex. The former could be easily attained and simply required a quick car ride to the drugstore. The latter? Well, she'd have to settle for her vibrator. Which seriously annoyed her. Considering she'd spent an entire week crying and cursing Todd for sleeping with his secretary, she felt she was owed some decent rebound sex.

This was California, for Pete's sake—where the hell were all the available, casual-sex-minded men?

*Probably sleeping with their secretaries.*

With a rueful sigh, Hailey slid into the driver's seat of her ancient Mazda convertible and stuck the key in the ignition. Overhead, the moon dominated the inky sky, a perfect white circle surrounded by a yellow glow that reflected off the eerily calm ocean a few dozen yards away. A full moon. She stared at it for a moment, trying to remember what it was people always said about full moons.

Something about insomnia, she recalled. And about people behaving in abnormal ways, though she wasn't sure if that was actually true.

Turning her gaze away, she flicked the ignition and reversed out of the gravel driveway of the small oceanfront cottage she shared with two girls from work. Marilee and Sam were away for the week at some ritzy Caribbean resort, probably screwing every guy who crossed their path

and having that time of their life the *Dirty Dancing* soundtrack boasted about.

Then there was Hailey. Alone in Malibu. Mourning over an asshole that didn't deserve it. Horny as hell. And suffering from a headache so irritating she was driving to the pharmacy for some pills.

She let out another sigh. She really had to quit sulking. Her mother always said it gave you wrinkles. Then again, her mother was also the spokeswoman for every plastic-surgery procedure out there, so what did the woman know about wrinkles?

Hailey switched gears and headed for the twenty-four-hour drugstore off the Pacific Coast Highway. It was a little past eleven, but the summer breeze was warm. Sultry. Brushing over her bare arms and reminding her that she hadn't been touched by a man in—what? Three months? Todd always claimed to be too tired for sex. Lawyers worked hard, they got tired.

Apparently lawyers got tired from working their secretaries.

Five minutes and one aspirin later, Hailey sank back against the Mazda's torn leather seat and inhaled the salty air. She didn't want to go home just yet, so she sat in the well-lit parking lot of the plaza for a while, breathing, thinking, cursing Todd for wasting eight months of her life.

Before she could run their breakup over in her head for the millionth time, her purse started ringing. With Todd shoved back to a tiny dungeon in her brain, she fumbled for the phone and let out a breath of relief when she saw the number flashing across the screen. Austin.

"Thanks for calling me back," she chided into her cell.

"Are we not talking right now?" came his dry voice.

"I called you hours ago."

"I just got in now. The magazine had me review this new club that opened up in Santa Monica."

She leaned back in her seat again. "Was it any good?"

"Naah. But Britney Spears made an appearance, so I got a few paragraphs out of that. What are you up to?"

"Absolutely nothing. Do you want to get together?"

"Uh..."

"C'mon, don't blow me off. I need to get out of my house. I need to hang out with a friend."

"Look, you know you're always welcome at my place but—"

"Thanks, Austin! I'll be there in ten."

She clicked off the phone before he could object. So what if she was being pushy. She couldn't mope around forever, and besides, she hadn't seen Austin in weeks. He was her best male friend, probably the one normal presence in her life seeing as her mother was a Barbie doll and her roommates were sex-crazed swimsuit models. Not to mention two-timing Todd, the jerk who'd turned her life upside down the last couple months.

Maybe it wasn't sex she needed, she thought as she started the car again. Maybe what she really needed tonight was a friend.

\* \* \*

"We're no longer friends," Hailey hissed ten minutes later.

She stood in the narrow front hallway of Austin's loft, trying very hard not to poke her head into the main room and glare at the man inside. Next to her, Austin shrugged. "Hey, I tried to warn you."

"You should've tried harder. I'd never have come if I knew he was here."



He was Zack Creighton. Zack, the guy who worked out at the same gym as Todd. The guy who'd probably known all about Todd's adulterous ways and hadn't said one word to her. Zack, the guy who'd fucked both of her roommates, never to be seen again.

She didn't like Zack.

Clutching the strap of her purse, she edged toward the door, the headache she'd just gotten rid of returning full force. Screw friendship. If she left now she could make it home in time for the last half of *The Tonight Show*, and maybe enjoy a nice vibrator-induced orgasm afterwards.

"C'mon, he's not so bad," Austin said quietly, his blue eyes softening. "You two just got off on the wrong foot."

She stuck out her chin. "He broke my roommate's heart."

"Which roommate?" Austin flashed an impish grin.

Hailey didn't return the grin. She'd had to deal with one sleazy, arrogant man this month and she wasn't in the mood to spend her night with another. Zack Creighton annoyed her. His bad-boy persona annoyed her. And right now, she wasn't up for any more annoyances mucking up her life.

"What, you're not going to come in and say hello?" came a mocking voice.

Hailey glared at Austin, who simply shrugged again. "You can't ignore him now," he pointed out.

Green eyes narrowing, Hailey stepped back into the doorway and peered into the main room. And there he was. Sitting on Austin's tattered leather couch, one denim-clad leg slung over the other, his seductive black eyes taunting her from across the loft.

"Hello, Zack," she called coolly, crossing her arms over her chest.

The corner of his wide mouth lifted. "Don't sound so enthusiastic, babe."

She moved out of Zack Creighton's line of sight. "He called me babe," she grumbled. "I'm leaving."

Austin chuckled, then curled his fingers over her arm. "Stay and have a beer."

"Austin."

"One beer." He swept his gaze over her face, his expression wry. "Come on, you look like you need it."

## Chapter Two

“Full moon,” Zack remarked, glancing out the window as he sipped the cold beer Austin handed him. He turned to the curvy redhead sulking in the armchair next to the couch. “You know what they say about full moons, don’t you, Hailey?”

Her lush red lips tightened. “What do they say, Zack?”

“That full moons make people act crazy.”

She arched a brow. “Gotta be some truth to that, seeing as I’m spending the evening in your company.”

He swallowed back a laugh. Damn, she really didn’t like him, did she? Zack had sensed Hailey’s dislike for him the moment they met, though he wasn’t sure he blamed her considering the circumstances in which they’d been introduced. It had been seven o’clock in the morning, and a sleepy-eyed Hailey, dark red hair all tousled from slumber, had walked into the kitchen to find her roommate Marilee on her knees, er, servicing him.

Not the most comfortable of meetings, to say the least.

But hell, the way Hailey had balked and rushed out of the room...it was like she’d never seen a guy getting a blow job before.

Maybe he was the asshole Hailey thought he was. Maybe he’d dated her roommates and broken it off with both. But Marilee and Sam had known exactly what they were getting into when they got involved with him. He hadn’t lied, or cheated or manipulated the women in any way. In fact, he highly doubted either one had cried or moaned over the

breakups. Swimsuit models didn't sleep with photographers hoping for a long-lasting relationship, they did it to get ahead.

Not that Hailey would understand. She only worked as an assistant at the modeling agency, not a model like the women she shared a house with.

Though with her gorgeous face and mouth-watering curves, Hailey Burke could definitely give her roommates a run for their money.

"You know," Austin piped up, "maybe this full moon could do some good. Maybe the two of you will stop bitching at one another."

"Not likely," Hailey said under her breath.

Zack cast her a grin. "C'mon, babe, you don't find me the least bit appealing?"

"Nope." Although she fixed her gaze on the television, she didn't seem too interested in the mindless sitcom flashing across the screen.

Zack wasn't fazed by the way she ignored him. He was used to it by now. Funny how wherever he went, Hailey seemed to pop up. He'd first met her through her roommates, but once both those brief romances fizzled he'd figured he'd never see her again. Until he'd learned that she was good friends with Austin, who worked at the magazine Zack freelanced for every now and then. Of course, Hailey made sure to visit her good friend Austin whenever Zack wasn't around, but even then their paths kept crossing. She'd started dating his workout buddy. Then it turned out they visited the same dry cleaner, liked the same restaurants, went to the same movies.

Fate kept throwing Hailey Burke right back in his path, whether or not she wanted to be there.

Too damn bad for her. For him, her constant appearances in his life amused him.

Not to mention strengthened that unbelievably foolish urge to fuck her.

“So how’s your sister?” Hailey asked Austin, continuing to ignore him.

“Gracie’s fine. She’s back with Steve.”

“Slimy Steve?” Hailey made a face.

“The one and only.”

“God, the sex must be really, really good if she took him back again. She hates that guy.”

A pained expression crossed Austin’s face. “As much as it revolts me to think of my sister having sex with anyone, you probably have a point. Gracie has admitted numerous times that she doesn’t like the guy.”

“Like I said, really good sex.”

Zack cocked his head. “So you think it’s perfectly acceptable to sleep with someone you don’t like?”

Hailey flashed him a sweet smile and tossed her silky red hair over her shoulder. “Sure. Women go to bed with you all the time and I can’t see why any of them would like you.”

Ouch.

Normally he’d have a snappy comeback ready to go but he came up empty-handed. Besides, Hailey was actually speaking to him, and *looking* at him while she did, so he had no inclination to rock the boat.

“What about you, babe?” he asked, curious. “Would you have sex with a man you didn’t like?”

She licked her bottom lip. He fought the urge to march over to the armchair and lick that lip with his own tongue.

“It depends,” she finally replied.

“On what?”

“On whether the attraction is stronger than the hatred.”

“So if you’re hot enough for the guy you’ll fuck him regardless of how you feel about him?”

“Again, it depends.”

Their gazes collided and something in the air shifted. Oh man. Was that a glimmer of arousal he saw in those forest green eyes? Sitting in the darkness of the loft it was hard to tell, but the faint moonlight streaming in from the window blinds provided just enough light to confirm it. Arousal.

Imperceptible, but there.

The full moon. That had to be it.

Hailey shifted in her chair and fought the spark of desire heating her thighs. No way was she attracted to Zack Creighton. No way in hell.

It was the moon. And maybe there was something in the aspirin too. Why else would she be imagining him naked right now?

And boy, it wasn’t hard to conjure up a nude image of Zack. She’d already seen him naked. Once. In her kitchen, while Marilee licked his rock-hard cock.

The memory should’ve evoked some sense of revulsion, but all it did was make her clit ache.

“Hey, we’re getting somewhere,” Austin declared, looking pleased as punch. “You two are having an actual conversation.”

When she glanced over she didn’t miss the flush on Austin’s cheeks and that slightly glazed look in his eyes. “Are you drunk?”

“Buzzed. I only had a few drinks at the club.”

She pointed to the two empty beer bottles on the splintered oak coffee table. “And two more here.”

“Hailey, it’s Friday night. I’m allowed to drink.”

He was right. She didn't know why she'd turned mother hen on him all of a sudden. Austin was thirty years old; he had every right to drink however much he wanted. In fact, she really ought to follow his lead. She'd been so stressed out lately. All the problems with Todd. Her hectic work schedule.

Her roommates always teased her about needing to lighten up, but she rarely ever listened. Mari and Sam, their jobs were in no way as demanding as hers. They posed for pictures in their bikinis. Hailey was the one who helped the head of the agency schedule the shoots, talked to the photographers, made sure all the girls got paid. Tons of irksome, menial tasks that kept her busy. And prevented her from lightening up.

But maybe it was time to unwind. Just a little. It was summer, after all. Summer meant lazy days and hot, endless nights. Not only that, but it was the weekend. No work. No responsibilities.

It really wouldn't kill her to have some fun.

Even if it meant having fun with Zack Creighton.

With a sigh, she polished off the rest of her beer and got to her feet. "You guys want anything from the fridge?"

Both men requested beers, so Hailey made her way across the spacious loft toward the open-concept kitchenette. She bent down in front of the mini fridge and grabbed three longnecks from the top shelf, then headed back to the main living area and tossed each guy a drink.

Popping off the lid, she raised the bottle to her lips and drank in the chilled, bitter liquid. It felt nice as it slid down her throat. Her body cooled, then warmed again as the balmy breeze drifting in from the open window met her bare shoulders. Her tank top clung to her skin a little, not just from the warm air but from the alcohol slithering its way through her veins.

Although she tried not to, she glanced over at Zack again. His black T-shirt stretched across his chest, emphasizing the defined ripples of his stomach, and her mouth grew dry as she imagined walking over there and sliding her hands underneath the cotton material, running her fingers over all that hard muscle.

He caught her staring, and one dark brow lifted. He looked amused. "See anything you like?" he asked in a sandpaper-rough voice.

A flurry of shivers danced up her spine. She banished them away. "I thought we already established that I don't like much about you, Zack."

"And yet you're attracted to me."

Her mouth opened but nothing came out.

"So is this the situation you were describing?" He uncrossed his legs and leaned forward, his rugged features creasing with amusement. "Being attracted to someone you hate?"

"I'm not attracted to you," she lied.

It shocked her that she even *had* to lie. Twenty minutes ago she would've laughed at the thought of being attracted to Zack. Twenty minutes ago, however, she hadn't had two beers in her system. She wasn't drunk by any means but still...

It was the alcohol. That's why her head felt a little light, and her body was humming with sexual awareness.

One aspirin and two beers. Obviously when you put them together you got a weird, potent reaction that made you want to do stupid things. Like have sex with Zack Creighton.

Might as well throw the full moon in there too. Maybe it really was some phenomena that made people feel a little nuts.

"Come over here and prove it," Zack challenged from his perch on the sofa.

"Excuse me?"



“You heard me.”

“What exactly do I need to prove?” Her voice came out as a squeak. Damn it, she was *not* allowed to squeak in front of this jerk of a man.

“That you don’t find me attractive.” He shrugged, causing a few strands of unruly dark brown hair to fall onto his forehead. “Kiss me. Touch me. Do whatever you want, sweetheart. Just prove that the attraction isn’t there.”

She looked over to Austin for help, but her friend’s eyes were even more glazed than they’d been before. God, why had she brought him another beer? Austin was supposed to be her ally. He was supposed to make Zack back off and be that normal presence in her life.

So why was he just grinning at her?

“He’s got a point,” Austin said. “You can’t tell a man you don’t want him without providing some kind of proof.”

“And my word isn’t enough?” she grumbled.

“No,” both males said in unison.

Before she could argue, the cordless phone on the coffee table began to ring.

Leaning forward, Austin grabbed it. “Hello?” He paused, and a slow smile tugged at his mouth. “Now? I’m afraid I’ve had a bit to drink. No driving for me tonight, honey.” Another pause. The smile widened. “You’re outside?”

He hung up a few moments later and stumbled to his feet. “You two feel free to stay as long as you like.” He glanced at the beer in Hailey’s hand. “In fact, spend the night, Hails. I don’t want you driving home.”

Her jaw fell open. “Where are you going?”

“Denise is waiting in her car outside.”

“Who on earth is Denise?”

Austin grinned. “Just a lady friend.”

“Fuck buddy, he means,” Zack spoke up, rolling his dark eyes.

Hailey stood and trailed Austin to the door. He shoved his keys in the front pocket of his khakis, plunked his cell phone in the other one and reached for the doorknob. She intercepted his hand. “You can’t leave,” she hissed.

“Oh, don’t take it to heart. I’m buzzed and I’m about to get laid. Try to be happy for me.”

She frowned. “You can’t leave me here with Zack.”

“You two seem to be getting along.”

“He’s flirting with me.”

“So?”

“So I don’t like it.”

Austin patted her upper arm. “Sure you do.”

With another grin, he slid out the door, leaving her standing in the hallway in disbelief. She swallowed, trying to figure out what to do next. Austin was right. She really shouldn’t drive home, not when she was feeling this light-headed. Normally she’d have no problem crashing on her friend’s couch, but tonight wasn’t normal. Tonight Zack was here, and tonight her traitorous body was reacting to Zack in a way it never had before.

She sagged against the wall. If she went back in there, Zack would start flirting with her again. And God help her, but she wasn’t sure she could fight off his advances.

Or that she even wanted to.

## Chapter Three

“I’m not going to bite you,” Zack called from the main room.

She swallowed again. Harder this time.

Back straight, she reentered the room. Zack’s voice stopped her before she could sink back into the armchair. “Sit next to me.”

She moved over and sat on the couch. The couch that suddenly seemed to shrink. He was too close to her. She could feel his body heat. Smell the intoxicating scent of his aftershave.

She turned her head, just a fraction of an inch, and saw fire burning in his dark eyes.

“Stop looking at me like that,” she murmured.

“Like what?”

“Like you’re imagining me without my clothes on.”

“I *am* imagining you without your clothes on.”

“Well, stop it.”

“I’m afraid I don’t really want to.”

She shot him a glare, but that only made the scorching flames in his gaze deepen. Before she could blink, he slid closer and placed one big hand directly on her thigh. The warmth of his hand seared right through the thin material of her Capris. Her nipples instantly hardened and poked against her tank top. Damn it. Why hadn’t she worn a bra?

“Hailey,” Zack said.

“Yes?”

“Why exactly don’t you like me?”

Her jaw tensed. "You know why."

"You think I'm too much of a ladies' man."

"Yep."

"You think I'm arrogant."

"Yep."

"Yet I still manage to turn you on."

"No," she lied.

He gave a knowing glance before fixing his gaze on her breasts. "Your nipples are hard."

"I'm cold."

"It's ninety degrees." He licked his lips in a way that should've been sleazy but instead looked pretty damn enticing. "What would you do if I put my hands underneath your shirt? Would you stop me?"

Her clit swelled as a rush of liquid heat pooled in her panties.

"I don't think you would," he continued, moving even closer. He dragged his palm up her thigh, over her navel, until it was inches away from her breasts. "I think you'd beg me to keep going."

"Your arrogance astounds me," she squeezed out.

"Deny it all you want, but we both know what's running through that pretty red head of yours right now."

"Oh, please enlighten me." It was a miracle she managed to keep her voice calm. Inside, she was a trembling mess, hot, needy, so painfully aroused it hurt to talk.

"You're thinking about all the things I could do to your body. With my hands and my tongue." He dipped his head and bit her earlobe. "And my teeth."

A jolt of excitement shot from her ear, to her breasts and straight down to her pussy. Somehow she was wetter than she'd ever been.

"Let's not be coy, Hailey. Admit you want me."

Their eyes locked and something inside her caved. “Fine. So maybe I do. Just a bit. But I still don’t like you,” she added.

“Didn’t we just establish liking each other had nothing to do with wanting each other?”

*Had* they established that? He seemed to think so. She was beginning to think it too, what with her hard nipples and damp panties.

The window blinds rustled as another gust of hot air drifted into the room. She shifted in her seat, agitated, her lower body tight with anticipation. Aw hell. Would it really be so bad, going to bed with this man? He was deliciously attractive, with his dark, smoldering eyes and that strong jaw covered with stubble and those wicked lips she couldn’t help but want to kiss. The moonlight brought out the roughness of his features, making him appear dangerous. And totally sexy.

She found herself leaning closer to him, angling her chin so that their lips were millimeters away. His warm breath fanned against her, minty, with just the slightest scent of alcohol. She knew he wasn’t drunk; he’d only taken two sips of the beer she’d brought him. Which meant that Zack Creighton, in all his sober, magnificent glory, wanted to have sex with her.

And God help her, but the feeling was mutual.

“One night,” she blurted out.

He tilted his head. “Huh?”

“I don’t want to get involved with you.” She inhaled, hoping to bring some much-needed oxygen to her lungs. “This will just be a one-night thing.”

“Whatever you say.” He winked. He actually *winked*.

Before she could weasel a promise out of him that this wouldn’t go beyond one night, he kissed her.

Mouth crushing over hers. Lips rubbing against hers. Hot, wet tongue thrusting inside her mouth without invitation. Hands down it was the most erotic kiss she'd ever had. Deep and greedy, fast and passionate.

Zack's stubble chafed her chin, the rough sensation making her moan against his lips.

God, his mouth felt nice.

Really nice.

Flicking his tongue over hers, he shoved his hand under her shirt and palmed one breast, rubbing her nipple with the pad of his thumb. Then, to her dismay, he broke the kiss.

"Why are you stopping?" she complained.

"I'm not." Without another word, he lifted the tank top right over her head and tossed it aside. A second later, he lowered his head and covered her breast with his mouth.

A gasp tore out of her throat. Now she understood the reason for the incessant moaning that had come out of Mari's bedroom when she'd dated Zack. The man's tongue was...lethal. Skilled. He licked the underside of one breast and kissed his way up to her nipple, rubbing his lips against it and then sucking it hard into his mouth.

It was a tongue that refused to stop. Licking, swirling, gliding down to her navel, and circling her bellybutton. And soon his hands came into play once more. They tugged at the zipper of her Capris and slid it down with a metallic hiss. He peeled the pants off her tanned legs, threw them aside and dropped to his knees in front of her.

"What do you want, Hailey?"

His voice teased her, mocked her. It was too confident, too heavy with sexual promise, but she couldn't muster enough indignation to respond with. Truth was, his confidence excited her.

"You know what I want," she returned, feeling bold as she widened her legs.

He reached out and brushed his fingers over the damp crotch of her black bikini panties. "You want me to stroke you?"

"Uh-huh," she breathed.

"Suck on your clit?"

"Mmm-hmmm."

"Make you come?"

"God, yes."

She swallowed and tried not to cry out. Her body ached, actually ached for this man. He continued to kneel there, planting featherlight caresses on her pussy, and to make it worse, he was still fully dressed! Here she was, her breasts bare, her nipples painfully hard, her panties practically begging to be flung aside, and Zack was still in jeans and a T-shirt and looking unhurried to remove them.

"I'm curious, sweetheart," he said, stroking her with one hand. "Do you come fast or slow?"

"Huh?" She tried to focus but it was difficult seeing as his fingers kept pressing against her clit that way.

"If I took these panties off and pressed my tongue between your legs, would you come right away?" He shot her a small grin. "Or are you the type who prolongs the pleasure and tries to control your orgasm?" He emphasized his last word by rubbing lazy circles over her clit.

"I come fast, Zack," she choked out.

He nodded. "Not tonight, Hailey."

He hooked his fingers under the waistband of her panties and pulled the material to her ankles, then eased her legs open. Licking his bottom lip, he stared at her for a moment, and only his sharp intake of breath betrayed his cool, take-charge composure.

“Like what you see?” she found herself taunting.

“Very much.”

She gestured to his clothes with one trembling hand. “When do I get to see you?”

“Later.”

Ever so leisurely, he slid closer and lowered his head to her throbbing center. Her body tensed, waiting, anticipating, and finally, finally his tongue darted out and touched her swollen clit. She shivered. He licked again. She shuddered.

“More,” she pleaded.

He ignored her and began tracing her labia with the tip of his tongue. He licked a wet line down her slit, then stole the breath right out of her lungs by shoving his tongue deep inside her pussy.

“Oh God,” she gasped.

And so it continued. Languid torturous licks and soft, barely there kisses, and then he’d switch it up and tongue her hard. Slide a finger inside only to withdraw it the second her inner muscles clamped over it. He was an evil man. Every time she got close he stopped. Sometimes he chuckled at her agitated whimpers, other times he ignored them altogether. He made her believe he’d allow her to climax, stroking her faster, sucking her harder, but then slowing the pace before she could topple over the edge.

It was a seesaw. Pleasure rising, pleasure climbing, pleasure dropping back to a throbbing ache that Zack refused to tend to.

“Please,” she whispered.

“No.”

The seesaw continued its up-and-down routine. She was close, so close...and then she wasn’t. Close, far, close, far.



Hailey didn't know how much time had passed, how long Zack knelt there between her legs, torturing her into oblivion, and when he finally pressed his mouth against her clit and shoved two fingers inside her she didn't even see the orgasm coming.

Her body exploded. A tsunami of ecstasy slammed into her, so intense it almost hurt. And the moonlight bathing the room only heightened her fierce reaction, teasing her senses, shining in Zack's dark hair in a way that made him appear like an apparition, a ghostly, sexy vision between her thighs. It was all too much. She trembled violently, moan after moan slipping out of her mouth and filling the unlit loft.

With one final brush of his tongue, Zack straightened his shoulders and leaned back. "Get up," he said in a rough voice.

The taste of honey and vanilla lingered in Zack's mouth as he lifted a naked Hailey to her feet and led her toward the double bed on the other side of the room. His gaze kept darting to her delectable curves. Her firm ass. Those perky breasts, nipples hard and skin reddened from his day-old beard scraping against it.

He hadn't planned on sleeping with her tonight. Hell, how could he? He'd come over here to have some drinks with an old friend, nothing more. And yet the moment Hailey walked in with her clingy tank top and tight pants he'd reacted to her.

He'd always reacted to her.

Her sass. Her fiery personality. The way she never backed down from a challenge.

She might not like him very much, but he liked her. Yes, he antagonized her every chance he got, but for no other reason than to ruffle a few of her feathers. Zack wasn't used to women not liking him, avoiding him and rebuffing his advances. Hailey did all those things, yet

tonight she'd somehow dropped her guard. Tonight she'd responded to his presence, to his kisses, and he planned on making sure she didn't walk away from him so easily this time.

She said she wanted this to be a one-night stand but after watching her come apart on the sofa he had no intention of leaving it as that.

Hailey lowered herself onto the bed, stretching out on the blue bedspread and eyeing him expectantly. He didn't join her, not yet. Instead, he pushed his zipper down and shucked his jeans and boxers, then pulled his T-shirt over his head and dropped it on the hardwood floor.

It pleased him the way Hailey's eyes widened.

His cock twitched, hardening even more—which seemed impossible. He'd never had a hard-on like this before. It almost troubled him, how turned-on he was.

"What are you waiting for?" Hailey grumbled.

Her green eyes were dark with sex and impatience, and though he would've enjoyed teasing her, testing her self-control by having her lie there in wait, his body wouldn't allow it. He grabbed a condom from his wallet and rolled it onto his shaft, then lowered his body next to hers. Once more he tried slowing the pace, running one hand up her thighs, lightly stroking her hot sex while his other hand slid up to cup a breast.

A strangled breath exited her lush mouth. "For God's sake, Zack. Fuck me."

What man could deny a request like that?

Shifting over, he moved between her firm, tanned thighs and touched her opening with his index finger, tormenting her just a bit longer. When she gave a desperate little whimper, he replaced the finger with his cock and eased his tip into her, then chuckled as she let out a mumbled expletive. "More," she ordered.

“This much more?” He pushed in another inch.

“No, *this* much more.” Before he could blink, she dug her hands into his ass and drew him deeper inside her.

A red haze clouded his vision, his entire body throbbing at the way her tight wetness surrounded his dick. “Jesus,” he hissed out.

With Hailey’s fingernails drawing half circles on his butt, he started to move. Thrusting forward so his entire length was encased in her velvet heat, then withdrawing fully as they both groaned.

The slow pace didn’t last. Before long, he was pumping furiously, driving into her over and over again as white-hot pleasure rose inside his body like a plane ascending in takeoff.

“You realize I’m...” Hailey gasped, “about to...” she moaned, “come again.”

And come she did. Her pussy tightened around his cock at the same time she let out a sexy cry that made his pulse drum in his ears. He tried to hold off, tried to enjoy the feel of her shuddering beneath him, groaning in his ear as she wrapped her arms around him and sucked on his neck. Resisting was futile. He came a second later, a violent, bone-numbing release that had him cursing and grunting loudly. Ten minutes later, the waves of pleasure finally ebbed.

Ten minutes after that, he fucked her again.

## Chapter Four

Hailey snuck out of Austin's loft at the crack of dawn without so much as planting a kiss on Zack's sleeping, stubble-covered face. Call her callous, call her a coward, but she couldn't fight the overwhelming urge to get away from him. As fast as she humanly could.

Outside Austin's small building, the air was as warm as it had been the night before, only instead of that potent, ethereal moonlight, the sun was shining. Not one cloud tainted the clear blue sky, and yards away the beach already boasted a few early-morning joggers, their sneakers leaving fresh footsteps over the stretch of clean sand, the ocean peaceful and the waves quiet.

A seagull squawked in the distance, prompting Hailey to snap out of her melancholy scrutiny of her surroundings. She made a beeline for her car, flopped inside and started the engine. Her right foot shook as she stepped on the gas pedal.

Her body still ached from Zack's erotic assault.

What had gotten into her last night? Was it the full moon, the two beers she'd consumed? What had inspired her to go to bed with a man she didn't even like?

Not that the sex had been bad. Oh no, it had been great. Hot. Mind-blowing.

In fact, if she were honest, she'd admit it was the best goddamn sex of her life.

She drove fast, willing to risk a speeding ticket if it meant putting Zack Creighton and his talented hands and wicked tongue far behind her. She didn't want to think about him, or his cock, or the way he'd set her entire body on fire. If she allowed herself to relive it, she feared she'd turn the car around and hop back into bed with him.

\* \* \*

Zack had barely zipped up his pants when Austin entered the loft with the swagger of a man who'd gotten laid and the grin of a man who'd gotten laid good. The smile on Austin's face faded, however, the second he spotted Zack standing in front of his bed, clad in nothing but jeans.

Austin instantly moved his head from side to side, scanning the brightly lit apartment. "Where is she?"

"Gone." One word, punctuated by a bitter frown.

Never had a woman walked out on him after a night of mind-blowing sex. *He* was usually the one who did the walking, and it had seriously pissed him off to wake up and find Hailey AWOL.

Austin held up his hand in a warning gesture. "Don't tell me you slept with her."

"Okay, I won't tell you." He bent down and picked up the T-shirt he'd tossed on the floor. Slipping it on, he met his friend's disapproving gaze and shrugged. "For Christ's sake, man, it was consensual."

"She was drunk and you took advantage."

"She was not drunk, and trust me, Hailey wasn't telling me to stop."

Austin tightened his lips and strode toward him. "She's a good woman, and a good friend, Creighton. What the hell made you decide to mess around with her?"

Zack paused. Though he'd been asking himself the same question since he'd woken up, the answer still eluded him. He'd always been attracted to Hailey Burke, yeah, but he'd never made a move because truth was, she really didn't seem to like him. At first he'd told himself it was a playing-hard-to-get kind of dislike, but after a year of running into Hailey through mutual acquaintances and at random places, he'd realized the woman wasn't playing games.

And he knew all about games in his line of work. As a freelance photographer for some of the top fashion magazines in the country, he constantly encountered women who liked to toy with him, models who flirted shamelessly in hopes of landing a shoot with him. He could always tell the difference between a woman who was being coy and one who flat-out detested him.

Sadly, Hailey was the latter.

Well, too fucking bad for her. Last night proved they had chemistry. Hot, combustible chemistry that he'd never shared with any other female.

Could he really ignore that kind of chemistry?

"I like her," he told his friend.

Austin raised one dark blond eyebrow. "Since when?"

"Since always." He blew out an exasperated breath. "She's the one who has a problem with me, not the other way around."

With a dubious expression, Austin said, "You're being straight with me?"

"I sure as hell am."

"So she wasn't just a one-night stand for you?"

"Not by a long shot."

A faint smile crossed Austin's face. "Does Hailey know that?"

"Not yet. But I intend to let her know."

\* \* \*

Although Zack had called the cottage five times since she'd snuck out of the loft earlier in the morning, Hailey didn't pick up the phone. She'd seen his number on the Caller ID and let the calls go to the machine, hoping sooner or later Zack would give up and leave her alone. She didn't want to talk to him. Again, it was taking the coward's way out, but she didn't care. What happened between her and Zack last night was too...confusing.

Yep, she was thoroughly confused.

For Hailey, caution and relationships went hand in hand. She'd never been impulsive when it came to dating, and certainly never reckless about sex, so her actions last night made no sense to her. It was as if an external, erotic force had taken over her body and sent her straight into Zack's arms. Casual sex... It wasn't like her to indulge in something so crazy. Her roommates wouldn't hesitate indulging, but that's why Mari and Sam were models and Hailey was an executive assistant. She was too rational, too careful-minded to be wild.

Zack, on the other hand, had written the book on wild. At the modeling agency, Hailey had heard plenty of rumors—and witnessed most of them firsthand—about the sexy, spontaneous photographer. His work truly was good, but she knew the reason most models liked working with Zack Creighton had more to do with his flirtatious bad-boy ways than his photographic talent.

Bottom line—he wasn't her type. And that's precisely why she didn't answer the phone when he called, and why she deleted his messages from her answering machine. Last night she'd told him she didn't want more than one night with him, and she'd meant it. Didn't matter how

phenomenal the sex had been—men like Zack weren't cut out for relationships, at least in her humble opinion. So it had, *had* to end at one night.

Unfortunately, Zack didn't agree. She realized this later in the evening when she opened her door and found the dark-haired bad boy standing on her doorstep.

"You were avoiding my calls," he said with a disapproving frown.

"I was busy," she lied.

Without waiting for an invitation inside, Zack strode into the cottage and dropped his car keys on the hall table. She watched openmouthed as he marched into the living room and flopped down on the plush white couch.

"I want to take you on a date," he announced, clasping his hands on his lap.

She laughed. "No you don't. You just want to have sex with me again."

He met her gaze, eyes narrowed. "That too. But I'm serious about the date."

"Well, forget it." She crossed her arms over her chest. "I told you, I don't want to get involved."

"You got involved with Todd, and he's ten times the sleaze you think I am." He imitated her by crossing his arms over his broad chest. "And I'm no sleaze, Hailey. In fact, you're so wrong about me it's almost laughable."

"I'm wrong about you, huh?"

"You sure are."

"Then you didn't sleep with *both* my roommates?"

"I did. Not at the same time, though."

"And you don't get involved with the other models you photograph?"



“Not as many as you think, sweetheart.” He set his strong jaw, then raked one hand through his hair. “Let’s get a few things straight, Hailey. I like sex, sure—what man doesn’t? But I don’t gallivant around sticking my dick in anything that moves. I’ve had one serious relationship. It ended. Since then I’ve been playing the field, but there’s no crime in that.”

He leaned forward, his features softening. “I take my work seriously. I’m *proud* of my work. So is my family, for that matter. My parents have all the covers I’ve shot framed and hanging over their fireplace. Every Sunday I go over to their house and play chess with my father. Then I help my mother cook dinner.” Sarcasm dripped from his tone. “How sleazy does that sound?”

Her resolve faltered. She didn’t miss the fondness in his voice when he mentioned his parents or the pride he felt over his work. In a split second, he’d transformed from a one-dimensional womanizer to a three-dimensional man with a family and ambitions. It freaked her out a little.

“So come on, Hailey, let me take you out to dinner.”

She swallowed. “You don’t even like me.”

He chuckled, and the husky sound made her shiver. “I’ve liked you from the moment I met you.”

“You have?” She tried to keep her jaw up where it belonged.

“Oh yeah.” Without breaking their gaze, he got to his feet and moved toward her. “I like the way you challenge me, the way you make me laugh, the way your cheeks get all flushed when you’re pissed off. And”—he reached out and touched her lips—“I like the way you felt in my arms last night.”

“Oh.”

Her mouth suddenly grew dry while her mind worked overtime trying to figure out whether he meant everything he’d just said. It was hard to

think, though, with him standing so close to her, with his spicy, male scent drifting into her nostrils. Fighting the urge to kiss him, she stepped back and rubbed her forehead.

“I need some air.” She swallowed again. “Do you want to walk on the beach with me?”

## Chapter Five

Baby steps. She hadn't agreed to a date with him yet, but Zack would take what he could get. Hands shoved in the pockets of his khakis, he walked alongside Hailey on the warm sand, breathing in the salty summer air. He hadn't lied back there. He really did like the redhead next to him. He just wished Hailey would drop all the unfounded misconceptions she'd formed about him and give him a chance to prove he wasn't the badass she thought he was.

Deciding to take a chance, he reached out for her hand. For a moment she didn't respond, but then she twined her fingers with his and continued walking.

The beach was surprisingly deserted. Not a person in sight. And the ocean was calm, the tide barely making a sound as it crept onto the shore before retreating again.

They stopped in a secluded spot, where a set of large boulders dug into the sand and a thick palm cast a shadow over them. With a sigh, Hailey turned to face him, her green eyes swimming with something he couldn't decipher. Confusion maybe. And definitely a flicker of desire.

Before he could blink, she pressed her body against his and kissed him.

Her lips were hot and pliant, her tongue hesitant as it darted out and touched his lower lip. He returned the kiss, but didn't deepen it, just let Hailey take the lead as he rested his hands on her slim waist.

"This is crazy," she whispered into his mouth. She pulled back, and again her eyes glittered with a mixture of uncertainty and arousal. "I've gone crazy."

"Because you like kissing me?"

She nodded. "Not to mention the fact that I can't stop thinking about taking your pants off."

Instant erection. Fighting back a groan, Zack shifted, willing his cock to go down. If he was going to convince Hailey to go out with him, he couldn't come off as a horny Neanderthal.

Unfortunately, she refused to allow him his honor.

With a mischievous smile, she lowered her hand and cupped him through the khaki material. His cock twitched against her palm.

"What are you doing?" he said in a low voice.

"God, I don't know." She rubbed his hard ridge. "Like I said, I think I've gone crazy."

They might have been standing under the shadow of a palm, and slightly shielded from view by the boulders beside them, but Zack knew any passerby would be able to see what Hailey was doing to him.

"We should go back to the cottage," he murmured.

"Not yet."

She squeezed his crotch. Then, to his shock, she reached for his waist and unbuttoned his pants. His zipper soon slid down.

He intercepted her hand. "Hailey..."

"Oh come on," she teased. "Don't tell me you actually want me to stop."

"We're out in the open."

"So?"

She tugged on his waistband and pulled down his pants and boxers, just low enough that his cock jutted out.

“Can I tell you something?” she asked.

He grunted as she touched the tip of his dick with her index finger.  
“Mmm-hmmm?”

“I’ve wanted to do this to you since the day I walked into the kitchen and found you and Marilee together.” She met his gaze with a slight flush on her cheeks. “I know, it sounds perverted, and to be honest, I never even admitted it to myself until now. But I think I was jealous. Of Mari. I wanted to be the one on my knees, sucking you off.”

His penis went hard as granite. He would’ve never pegged Hailey as the dirty-talk kind of woman. He liked it.

What she did next, he liked even more.

Sliding down to her knees, she licked the sensitive underside of his shaft, then took his entire length into her wet mouth.

Zack almost came on the spot. It was too much, glancing down and seeing Hailey’s full lips wrapped around his cock. Too much, feeling her hot tongue circling his tip, sucking the drop of moisture that had pooled there.

A few yards away, the waves grew louder, matching the turbulent arousal swirling through his body. At each crash of the water against the shore, his pleasure heightened.

Screw being in public. With Hailey licking and sucking him, he couldn’t help but forget his surroundings. Reaching down, he tangled his fingers in her red hair and thrust into her mouth, enjoying the soft moan that exited her delicate throat. She quickened her pace, moving one hand over to cup his balls, kneading and tugging until he thought his legs would buckle under him.

“Jesus, Hailey, that feels... You’re so...” he choked out, unable to formulate coherent sentences.

He leaned against one of the boulders and closed his eyes, losing himself in the sensations her mouth and tongue created inside him.

The pleasure became too much to bear. With a low groan, he came. Hard. Fast. Pouring his seed into her mouth and then releasing a ragged moan when he felt her swallow every drop.

His knees shook as he tried to recover from the explosive release, and Hailey continued to kiss his cock until finally he hauled her to her feet and forced her to stop. "You're going to kill me," he muttered into her ear, planting a kiss on the top of her head.

She gave a throaty laugh. "That was the plan."

With shaky hands, he pulled up his pants. "It was a very good plan."

She laughed again. "Come on, let's go back to the house. You could show me just how much you want that date of yours."

"Now *that's* a plan."

\* \* \*

The sex they had at her house, in her bed, was not as rough or exciting as it had been the night before, but it was just as passionate and more than satisfying. Afterwards, Hailey rested her head on Zack's chest, enjoying the masculine scent of him and the hard muscle pressing against her cheek. She couldn't remember the last time she'd felt so at ease with a man, lying in bed after sex, not needing to fill the silence that had fallen over the bedroom.

Todd had always chattered after they made love, using mindless snippets of conversation to keep his distance. He'd never let her get too close, and now, after learning about his affair with his secretary, she knew why. Todd had never loved her, he'd never looked forward to a future between the two of them like she had.

Not that she was planning a future with Zack.

She just liked the level of comfort between them, that's all.

"How come you never went into modeling?" His rough voice broke the silence, sounding more like a curious question than a need to ruin the quiet moment.

"I don't like it. Mari forced me to take some headshots once, but I was never comfortable in front of the camera. I prefer the behind-the-scenes stuff." She smiled wryly.

"So you want to be an assistant to a modeling agent for the rest of your life?"

"For now, yeah, not for the rest of my life. Once I save up more money, I want to..." Her voice drifted.

"You want to what?"

"Start an event-planning business," she sighed.

"Why do you sound so ashamed of it?" he asked with a laugh.

"I'm not ashamed. It's just...a lot of people don't take party planning seriously. They think it's frivolous work."

"Hey, if a bunch of rich folks want to pay you to plan their shindigs, who am I to judge? I think you'd be good at it."

She twisted her head to meet his dark-eyed gaze. "You do?"

"Sure. You're very...organized."

"You say it like an insult."

"I don't mean it as one. I've always thought you were detail oriented." He chuckled. "And stubborn. And a total pain in the ass most of the time."

"Funny, I thought the same things about you."

"Thought? As in you've realized your mistake and want me to take you on a date?"

Damn it. Why did he have to bring that up again? It was absurd, really. She'd already had sex with the man—why did the thought of having dinner with him make her apprehensive?

"I'm still thinking about the date thing," she finally said.

"Okay." He sounded disappointed.

"Like I said before, I'm not sure I want to get involved."

"With anyone, or is it just me?" he asked in a flat voice.

She didn't answer. Fortunately, he didn't pressure her to continue. Instead, he threaded his fingers through her hair and tilted her head so that he could kiss her. She kissed him back.

Sooner or later she'd need to give him an answer. Right now, however, she didn't want to think about anything other than the feel of his delicious mouth against hers.



## Chapter Six

As it turned out, Hailey never ended up agreeing to or rejecting Zack's date invitation. Her workweek started with full force, bringing with it numerous headaches, a slew of problems at the agency and the return of her drop-dead-gorgeous, sex-crazed roommates.

Dealing with work problems was a piece of cake.

Telling Mari and Sam about Zack was not.

Every Wednesday night the three of them gathered around the television to watch *Lost*, and though it was the summer and the show was on hiatus, that didn't stop their routine. As a *Lost* rerun flashed across the plasma screen, Hailey polished off the homemade margarita Sam had whipped up and decided there was no point prolonging the inevitable.

Taking a breath, she said, "I slept with Zack."

Marilee, of course, was the first to respond. She shoved a wayward blonde curl out of her eyes and fixed Hailey with a perplexed look. "What?"

"I slept with Zack," she repeated.

"As in Zack Creighton?"

"Yeah."

She held her breath, waiting for the fireworks, waiting for either Sam or Mari to blow up at her.

They surprised her by grinning.

"He's great in bed, ain't he?" Marilee sighed.

Hailey swallowed. "That's it? That's all you have to say? Aren't you going to yell at me or something?"

"Why would I yell?" Mari asked.

Hailey turned to Sam, who was still grinning. "What about you? No vile things to scream at me?"

Sam's pale blue eyes flickered with amusement. "Of course not."

"But you both dated him!"

"Had sex with him," Mari corrected. She swiped up the hair elastic on the coffee table and proceeded to tie her mass of curls into a low ponytail. "It's not like we had a relationship."

"Besides," Sam spoke, leaning back against the sofa cushions, "he always had a thing for you."

Huh? Where had *that* come from? As usual, her roommates were making her head spin. She'd known what she'd signed up for when she'd agreed to room with two spontaneous, high-strung models, but since the rent in Malibu was astronomical she'd figured living on the beach was worth some harmless head spinning.

The last thing she expected to hear was that Zack had the hots for her. And to hear it from two females who'd shared his bed, no less.

"He always used to ask a ton of questions about you," Mari added with a grin. "I thought it was cute."

"Who are you people?" she asked in amazement. "Shouldn't we be getting into a catfight or something? You know, take your hands off my man and all that."

Both women burst out laughing.

"Seriously," Hailey insisted. "Get mad at me."

"Sorry, hon," Mari chirped. "I'm not about to lose my roommate over a guy I had casual sex with."

She was either living with the most easygoing women in the world, or the sluttiest. Regardless, Hailey felt better knowing her roommates didn't hate her guts. She might not have a lot in common with Mari or Sam, but she liked them both, and she didn't want to lose their friendship over Zack Creighton.

Again she thought about his request that she go on a date with him. Though she'd been considering it before, sitting here with Mari and Sam, being reminded of the fact that they'd both slept with him, brought back a few doubts. The night he'd showed up at her place Zack said he'd had one committed relationship and that he'd been playing the field since it ended, but seriously, how big was this field? There was a difference between engaging in a few casual encounters and screwing any female who came his way. He'd been around the block way more times than she had, and she wasn't sure she believed he wanted something deeper with her.

In fact, he hadn't even *said* he wanted something deeper. All he'd asked for was a date. Just one date.

"Uh-oh," Mari said. "Why do you look so troubled?"

She hesitated for a moment, then decided to voice her thoughts. Since these women didn't seem to care about Zack one way or the other, she might as well milk them for some advice. After all, they'd been around the same block as Zack.

"I don't get the problem," Sam said when Hailey had finished. "He said he likes you."

"Yeah, but does he mean it?"

"Zack doesn't really lie," Mari mused, making a clicking noise with her tongue. "He's a pretty straightforward guy."

"Are you saying I should give him a chance?"

"It's only fair seeing as he gave *you* a chance," Sam pointed out.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“It means you’ve been nothing but rude to him since the day you met him. I get that you were acting on some protective level toward Mari and me, but it wasn’t necessary.” Sam paused thoughtfully. “You should apologize for all the nasty things you said to him, Hails.”

She couldn’t help a laugh. “Who are you people?” she asked again.

Mari grinned. “See, this is why your wacko mother always warns you about wrinkles. You stress too much. Sam and I could pretend to be pissed if you want, chide you for sleeping with Zack, but what would be the point? You’ve got to learn to let things go.”

“Zack and I have nothing in common,” Hailey finally said, still trying to find reasons not to give him a chance.

“You both love your work,” Sam answered.

“You both like to argue,” Mari added.

Hailey shook her head. “That’s hardly enough to base a relationship on.”

“Sure it is. Opposites attract, remember? Look what happened the last time you went for a guy you had tons in common with,” Mari reminded her. “Todd was responsible, focused, a bit uptight—same as you. And look how that turned out.”

“You’ve got a point there,” Hailey said with a sigh.

She felt something inside her caving in. Maybe it wouldn’t be so bad, going out with Zack. She already knew they were capable of having some damn good sex. She knew she found him amazingly attractive and that she purred like a kitten when he held her in his arms. She knew he challenged her. Knew he pissed her off. Made her laugh. Made her feel bold and wild and not the least bit uptight.

That had to count for something, right?

\* \* \*

“Miranda, is it okay if I take a longer lunch today?” Hailey asked the next morning as she popped her head into her boss’s office.

Miranda Sanders eyed her from the rim of her designer reading glasses. The modeling agent, despite the fact that she’d celebrated her fifty-eighth birthday last month, looked absolutely spectacular in her skintight Prada business suit. Her long, toned legs were resting on the desktop, feet boasting a pair of thousand-dollar heels that added three inches to her six-foot frame.

Hailey had been intimidated by the woman when she’d first started working at the Sanders Agency. Miranda had a sharp tongue and hard-as-nails demeanor, but Hailey had learned early on that if you stayed on the agent’s good side, she could be a real sweetheart.

“Of course you can, honey.” Miranda shot her a dry smile. “To be honest, I’m shocked you’re taking a lunch at all. You’ve skipped your breaks all week.”

She shrugged. “I work hard.”

“Too hard.” Miranda paused. “I hope you take that vacation time I offered you, Hailey. You need to let your hair down and have some fun every now and then.”

*That’s what I intend to do.*

She left her boss’s office with a slight spring to her step. She’d already decided when she’d opened her eyes this morning that she would agree to go out with Zack. Her roommates were right when they’d urged her to do it. And Miranda had been right just now. She really did need to have some fun. She was twenty-six years old, for God’s sake. Far too young to be a workaholic.

She left the building and stepped outside onto the sidewalk. The streets were bustling. Everyone was outdoors today, enjoying the warm afternoon and the un-smoggy air that was unusual for Los Angeles. Commuting to the city every day was a bitch, but to Hailey it was worth it. She loved Malibu too much to leave, even if it meant enduring the never-ending morning traffic.

Zack's studio was fairly close to the Sanders Agency—Mari had given her the address last night—so she decided to walk instead of taking her car only to pay the underground parking fee for a second time. Inhaling the warm summer air, she quickened her pace, dodging passersby as she walked toward Zack's photography studio.

She didn't even know if he would be there, but she might as well take the chance. Even if he wasn't working, she knew he lived in the loft over the studio, so there was a good possibility he'd be around.

She reached his building fifteen minutes later, panting from the brisk walk, her white shirt clinging to the sheen of sweat on her skin. If Zack wasn't home at least she'd gotten a good workout from the trek.

But he was home, she noted after spotting his black SUV parked at the curb a few feet away.

A grin tugged at her mouth as she climbed up the front steps and pushed her finger down on the intercom button next to the door. The intercom crackled, then released a loud buzzing noise indicating the front door had been opened. She reached for the knob and stepped inside, nearly gasping as a wave of heat rolled over her. The front hallway was so hot she was surprised there wasn't any steam puffing out of the walls.

To her left was a narrow staircase leading to the second floor. To the right was another door with the name of Zack's business etched on the glass. Creighton Images.

Hearing the soft sound of movement from behind the studio door, Hailey stepped toward it and knocked.

She grinned again, wondering how Zack would react when she agreed to give him that date he'd asked for. She was slightly surprised that he hadn't called her since he'd left her place Sunday night, but she figured he'd been as busy with work as she was.

She figured wrong.

The door swung open to reveal a shirtless Zack. A layer of sweat coated his broad chest and unruly strands of dark brown hair stuck to his forehead. He looked frazzled, and startled to find her at his doorstep.

"Hailey. What are you doing here?"

She edged backwards. "Um, I probably should've called. You look...busy."

"Huh? No, I'm just—"

"Zack!" a female voice rang from the interior of the studio. "Come on, let's finish!"

Hailey took another step back, a sliver of wariness climbing up her spine. Before she could comment on that sultry voice, a woman appeared behind Zack. Topless. Beads of perspiration sliding over her big, bare breasts. Her skimpy panties clinging to a pair of pale, slender thighs.

"Zack?" the woman said.

"Give me a second, Rita," he responded without turning around.

Hailey met his eyes, unable to stop a scowl from twisting her mouth. "You're such an ass," she muttered.

Then she turned on her heel and stalked away.

## Chapter Seven

Zack listened to the sharp sound of Hailey's low heels clicking against the hallway floor, then winced when he heard the front door slam. Goddammit. The day from hell just refused to get any better, didn't it? First the A/C went on the fritz, then Rita showed up demanding he shoot some boudoir-type shots for her portfolio. And now Hailey knocking on his door and thinking he was fooling around behind her back.

Without bothering to put on the sticky T-shirt he'd had to remove due to the heat, he told Rita he'd be right back and took off after Hailey.

The air outside was a lot cooler than the temperature in his studio, and he inhaled deeply, needing to lower his body temperature. He glanced around the street and spotted Hailey tearing down the sidewalk. Ignoring the strange looks from a few pedestrians, he hurried after the angry redhead.

"Hailey," he called.

She ignored him and kept walking.

"Christ, Hailey, slow down." She didn't, so he jogged faster, finally catching up to her and curling his fingers over her lower arm.

She stopped, turned and glared at him. "Shouldn't you be finishing whatever you started with *Rita*?"

He sighed. "She's just a model."

"A topless one, apparently."

"She needed some tasteful nudes for her portfolio."

"I'm sure." Sarcasm oozed from her voice.



“You’re being irrational.”

“Really? So I didn’t just walk in on you and some girl, half-naked and covered in sweat?”

“I’m half-naked *because* I’m covered in sweat,” he burst out, fighting back frustration. “The air conditioning broke. In case you didn’t notice, my entire studio is a sauna.”

Hailey didn’t respond.

“I didn’t sleep with her, for God’s sake. I was just taking her picture.”

She crossed her arms over her breasts, causing her cleavage to swell against the neckline of her white button-down T-shirt.

“I didn’t sleep with her,” Zack repeated.

A moment later, Hailey released a heavy sigh. “I think I actually believe you.”

Irritation prickled his skin. Her tone conveyed zero faith in him and that bugged the hell out of him. He’d always known Hailey’s opinion of him was less than high, but her complete and total mistrust was ridiculous. She actually thought he would be screwing some model three days after they’d spent the weekend together? What kind of slime did she take him for?

“You know what, Hailey? Maybe you’re right. Maybe we shouldn’t be together.” His hands curled into fists. “I don’t think I want to get involved with a woman who thinks I’m some kind of manwhore.” If he weren’t so pissed off, he would’ve laughed at his use of the term manwhore.

Her throat bobbed as she swallowed. “Zack—”

“No, forget it,” he cut in. “You obviously have your mind made up about me, and to be honest, I don’t feel like jumping through hoops to prove to you that I’m a decent guy.”

His jaw tight with anger, he turned around and marched away.

Hailey stared at Zack's retreating back, utterly stunned. Okay, so maybe he had a point. Maybe she'd overreacted, acted irrationally and accused him of screwing another woman without giving him a chance to explain.

But what did he expect? She'd known him for a year now, and in that year he'd dated both of her roommates, not to mention a half dozen other sexy models. He couldn't expect her to forget all that and just hand over her trust on a silver platter.

And yet...what had he really done for her not to trust him?

She swallowed again, the question her conscience raised making her confused. It wasn't like Zack had ever hurt her personally. They'd never been an item before this weekend, so why should she care who he'd slept with before her?

But when she'd seen that girl back at his studio, her brain had instantly roused up the image of finding Todd making out with his secretary, and the anger and bitterness had returned, and...well, she'd taken it out on Zack.

She really was an idiot.

As a wave of shame rolled over her, she headed off after Zack, wanting to slap herself for freaking out on him like that. Sam had told her Zack had given her a chance after she'd acted like a brat from the moment they met, and Hailey realized her roommate was right. Zack might be cocky, he might be a relentless flirt, but he'd always tried to remain civil toward her, no matter how catty she'd acted.

He'd given her a chance, and now she needed to give him one.

She caught up to him just as his hand gripped the knob on the front door.

"Zack, wait," she called.

He turned slowly, looking far too sexy without his shirt on, the afternoon sun making his wide chest appear more tanned and rippled.

"What is it now, Hailey?" he asked with a sigh.

"I'm sorry. I overreacted."

"No kidding."

"It's just hard for me to remember that some men can be truly decent. Especially after what happened with Todd."

Zack descended the steps and stood in front of her, his black eyes wry. "I'm not Todd."

"I know."

"And like I said before, I won't jump through hoops, Hailey."

"That's okay." She shot him a sheepish smile. "I'm willing to do the hoop jumping, if you'll let me."

"Why would you want to do that?"

"Because I like you," she admitted. "I'd like to say it was the full moon that brought on the realization, but I think I've liked you all along."

His mouth lifted in a grin. "Of course you did."

"I still think you're arrogant, though."

"Which I am."

"But I don't think you're a manwhore."

A husky laugh rolled out of his throat. "Well, that's a start."

"And if the offer still stands, I want to take you up on that date."

Still grinning, he moved closer and planted a quick kiss on her lips. "Only if it's your treat. That'll be your first hoop."

"Deal."

"And one more thing. You need to wipe away all the negative thoughts you've ever formed about me. Relationships based on negative thoughts never work out."

Her heart jumped. "Oh, so we're in a relationship now?"

“Damn right we are.” He cocked his head, looking thoughtful. “I have a good feeling about us, sweetheart.”

“You do?”

“Yep.” Amusement danced in his eyes. “In fact, I think you’re going to marry me one day.”

She couldn’t help a laugh. “Oh really?”

“Yep.”

“Let’s see how the date goes. Then we can discuss our engagement.”

He returned the laugh, but there was a hint of confidence in the gruff sound. “I’m already half in love with you, Hailey. Trust me, there’ll be an engagement.”

As it turned out, he was right.

And exactly one year later, after Zack slipped an engagement ring on her finger and made love to her on the beach, he pressed his lips to her ear and whispered, “I told you so.”

And overhead, another glowing full moon dominated the night sky. Hailey wasn’t sure, but she could swear the moon winked at her.

## About the Author

Leeanne Kenedy wrote her first romance novel when she was twelve years old—her writing has gotten a lot better since then, but her love for romance (and steamy stories!) remains the same. She resides in Toronto, Ontario and holds a B.A. in English. In her spare time, she reads, oil paints and chats with her critique partners. She is also an accomplished Battleship and Trivial Pursuit player.

To learn more about Leeanne, please visit [www.leeannekenedy.com](http://www.leeannekenedy.com).  
Send an email to Leeanne at [leeanne@leeannekenedy.com](mailto:leeanne@leeannekenedy.com).

Look for these titles by Leeanne Kenedy

Now Available:

*Bad Moon Rising*

Coming Soon:

*Dance of Seduction*

*A young minister's celibacy is challenged by an earthy, Appalachian woman.*

## **Blackberry Pie**

© 2007 Bonnie Dee

*Available now at Samhain Publishing*

On a blistering summer afternoon, Reverend Nathan Andrews climbs a mountain to meet backwoods members of his congregation. Fresh from seminary, the young man isn't prepared for the onslaught of lust that hits him when he encounters a sensuous girl picking blackberries.

Determined to implement his outreach plan, he helps her harvest the fruit. But their potent sexual chemistry is too intense to deny and they engage in passionate sex surrounded by the beauty of nature.

Grace is earthy and primal, the opposite of the proper young lady he expects to take as a wife some day. Can there possibly be a future for a college-educated minister and a primitive mountain girl?

Enjoy the following excerpt from *Blackberry Pie*:

"Blackberry?" She held up her bucket. The sweet aroma that had teased his senses since he entered the glade rose strong and potent from the mass of fruit.

"Thank you." He reached into the bucket and picked a berry. It was pulpy and moist from the heat. He nodded at the girl and popped the fruit into his mouth where it burst, syrupy and rich. Hard seeds crunched in contrast to the mushy flesh of the fruit.

She watched him chew. Her gleaming eyes made the act seem too intimate, as if he was doing something other than eating in front of her. Although the bite of berry was small, Nathan swallowed hard. "Very sweet. Thank you," he said again.

“This ’ere’s the best patch around.” The girl lifted a berry to her own mouth. Her indigo-stained tongue slipped out between rosy lips. She placed the berry on her tongue and drew it slowly back inside.

Nathan watched, mesmerized, searching for something to say, but his mind was completely blank. Pleasantries like asking about her family, where she lived, whether she ever attended the Grace Baptist Church—which ironically shared her name—all that was beyond him. He could only stare at her moving mouth and the subtle fluctuation in her throat as she swallowed. His erection swelled harder and he backed away a step, looking past Grace at the blackberry patch. “What will you make with the berries?”

“Preserves and pie.” She reached into her bucket and selected another berry. Her eyes sparkled like the sun on a dark pool as she extended her hand toward his mouth. If chewing in front of her had felt intimate, the offering from her fingers directly to his lips was downright erotic. Her eyes challenged him to open his mouth and accept the fruit, and he couldn’t refuse it without looking like a flustered fool.

He opened his mouth, throat dry as sandpaper, and felt the feather-light touch of her fingers brushing his lips and the berry settling on his tongue.

She smiled as she withdrew her hand and let it drop back to her side.

Nathan’s heart pounded like a blacksmith’s hammer. His cheeks blazed with heat and blood rushed in his ears. His cock throbbed in time to his rapid heartbeats. The glade’s heat seemed intensified, smothering. Nathan’s head swam and he wondered if he was about to pass out—all because a country girl hand-fed him a blackberry.

A charge like ionized air before a thunderstorm smoldered between them for several seconds before the girl broke it by speaking. “Must be thirsty from all the walkin’. There’s a stream over yonder.” She pointed toward the woods on the far side of the glade.



“Yes, water would be good,” he agreed weakly.

“Best come ’round the patch lessen you want to get your nice clothes all ruined.” She turned and walked in front of him, hips swaying slightly from side to side.

It took every ounce of Nathan’s willpower to drag his gaze away from the undulations of her hips and buttocks and the long, lean legs stretching down below the short hem of her shift.

“You been to Cadey’s Pass, seen the family up there yet?” she asked as she led him up a slope and through a stand of pine trees. He heard the trickling of water and his mouth salivated in response.

“Um, no. I had directions, but got lost on the way.”

“Easy to get twisted ’round on the mountain.” Her light voice drifted back over her shoulder, rising up and down with a musical lilt.

“Where do you live?” he finally remembered to ask. “What’s your last name?”

“Owl Ridge over yonder. Last name’s Parkins.” She stopped walking suddenly and Nathan ran into her. He stepped back so quickly he tripped on a branch half-buried in the leaf mold. It took him a few stumbling steps to regain his balance.

“Here.” She crouched and pushed back a tall clump of ferns to reveal water bubbling right up out of the ground and meandering away in a thin stream. “It’s plenty cold.” She lay down on her belly and bent her face to the surface of the water.

Nathan could hardly breath, watching her natural ease as she sprawled on the ground and scooped water to her mouth. Her dress rode even higher, revealing a lightly haired expanse of leg all the way up to the rounded shadow where her thighs met her bottom. He swallowed the hard lump in his throat and raised his eyes to the canopy of green leaves above them. This was a test—surely a test from God of Nathan’s dedication to the ideal of chastity.

Back in the seminary it had been easy to talk analytically with his peers about moral and spiritual matters. The seminarians all expected to work in the mission field for a year or two, return home to meet and marry a suitable young woman and begin life as a family man. Full of religious fervor and the desire to grow new spiritual communities, none of them considered delaying sexual gratification a problem. The young men had been celibate so long, what was another year or two? But out in the world, Nathan had discovered working with real people was considerably more complicated than he'd anticipated, and today's sudden, unexpected and powerful surge of physical desire for a strange young woman took him completely by surprise.

"Ain't you thirsty?"

He looked down at Grace. She had pushed up off the ground and squatted by the water, looking up at him, her lips glistening wet. Her hair was darker here in the shadows with no sun highlighting it. Her eyes looked darker too. She gazed at him over one bare shoulder, the sleeve of her shift having slipped down her arm. The vulnerability of the soft curve of flesh made his heart twist. She looked like a young girl wearing her older sister's too-large dress.

"Yes," he finally answered her question. He dropped to his knees on the leafy forest floor, setting his jacket aside. With one hand pressed flat to the ground, he lowered his face close to the bubbling stream and scooped icy cold handfuls of water to his mouth. The sharp mineral tang soothed his throat and cooled his raging libido a little—until he turned his head and faced Grace's eyes, only a couple of feet away, looking back into his.

*This summer, it's going to be Steamy...*

Samhain Publishing Presents

*Midsummer Night's Steam*

24 Sizzling ebooks

\$2.50 each

*Duty wars with affection when Racor's greatest spy must decide who to trust, the evidence against her sexy suspects, or her heart?*

## A Scorching Seduction

© 2007 Marie Harte

Lt. Col. Trace N'Tre and Assassin Vaan C'Vail are hiding out in the only place the military can't touch them—on a pleasure planet in an island resort owned by Vaan's cousin. Gathering evidence on the outside, they know it's only a matter of time before they'll have to face their accuser, a high official in the Racor government.

Unbeknownst to them, Myst, Racor's greatest spy, has had her eyes on them for some time. The puzzle of these two alleged traitors doesn't fit, and Myst has made it her mission to find out why. But when the tables are turned and she's caught spying under the planet's hot summer suns, pleasure and affection confuse the issue, making her wonder who to trust—her heart, or the evidence against her lovers.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, frank language, ménage, m/m action, and hot sweaty adventure.

*A young minister's celibacy is challenged by an earthy, Appalachian woman.*

## Blackberry Pie

© 2007 Bonnie Dee

On a blistering summer afternoon, Reverend Nathan Andrews climbs a mountain to meet backwoods members of his congregation. Fresh from

seminary, the young man isn't prepared for the onslaught of lust that hits him when he encounters a sensuous girl picking blackberries.

Determined to implement his outreach plan, he helps her harvest the fruit. But their potent sexual chemistry is too intense to deny and they engage in passionate sex surrounded by the beauty of nature.

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Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language.

*Can a straight-laced business student and an indie boy with a thing for extremely personal electronics turn one night's wild ride into a trip to last forever?*

## Catching a Buzz

© 2007 Ally Blue

Adam Holderman isn't your typical twenty-something college boy. He prefers jazz to Goth, shuns body piercings and street-waif clothing, and despises the lack of vocabulary among his peers. Some call him uptight, but Adam doesn't see it that way. Just because he prefers his men articulate and well-groomed doesn't make him a stick-in-the-mud. He simply has standards, unlike most guys his age.

The new employee at Wild Waters Park, where Adam works, single-handedly throws a monkey wrench into Adam's orderly world view. Buzz Stiles wears eyeliner and black clothes, listens to emo bands, and talks like a teenage skate punk. He's the polar opposite of Adam's avowed "type". So why can't Adam get him out of his head?

When Adam finally agrees to go out with Buzz, he finds there's much more to Buzz than a hot body, a sharp wit, and a Goth fashion sense. Buzz is someone Adam can see himself being with for the long haul. But you need more than mind-melting sex to make a relationship last. Can they keep their hands off each other long enough to find out if they have what it takes?

Warning, this title contains the following: graphic language, explicit male/male sex, inappropriate use of personal electronic devices, and gratuitous disco dancing.

*Her boyfriend is back...and that's a major problem. Antonia isn't ready to face the one man who shakes up her world...*

## Full Disclosure

© 2007 Mary Wine

Antonia doesn't need to look at forbidden fruit. The taste still clings to her lips, haunting her with just how good she and Danton had been together...

...Right up until he informed her that he had to get married because he was going to be a father. That just made it worse. Inside him was a man worth dreaming about, even if she knew it was in vain.

Danton always double-checked his facts. It was a habit that kept him alive during missions that should have killed him. His impromptu wedding was no exception. There wasn't going to be any consummation of the vows until he had a paternity test. But doing the right thing had cost him the one woman he loved.

Until the test came back negative. Now there is nothing that will stop him from coming back with the prize he'd been forced to abandon three

months ago. Toni was going to be his, right after she got the full disclosure on his hasty wedding and the blunt fact that he loved her.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language and bondage bedroom games with toys.

*How can masturbating in a hotel Jacuzzi lead to love? Cassidy Yates is about to find out.*

## Beyond the Tears

© 2007 Michelle Cary

A year after her husband died while serving in Iraq, Cassidy Yates still nurses a broken heart. Thinking a vacation will help, she agrees to a week in Key West with her best friend, April. Upon arrival, April suggests a way for Cassidy to ease her pain—sleep with the sexiest stud she can find.

Not the type to bed hop, Cassidy refuses April's idea and ends up alone. Abandoned by her friend, Cassidy decides to take a nighttime swim. In the Jacuzzi, she masturbates to the memories of making love to her husband. Mortified by her own behavior, Cassidy retreats to her hotel room, hoping no one witnessed her exhibition.

Chase Dempsey is a man with rugged good looks and a killer smile. He isn't looking to fall in love and only wants few days of relaxation before returning to his Texas ranch. Still, he's curious after watching Cassidy's erotic display and wonders what makes the gorgeous redhead tick. When he finds her dropped sarong, he realizes she's just given him the opportunity to find out...

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex and graphic language.

*Is their passion real, or only a mirage?*

## La Mirage

© 2007 Jennifer Colgan

On a lonely stretch of I-95 in the middle of the Nevada desert, journalist Savanna Blaine and photographer Ben Lantano find themselves stranded by engine trouble on their way back from an assignment. Their quest for a gas station leads them to La Mirage, a beautiful resort nestled in a secluded canyon where they are the only guests.

Invited to spend the night in lush accommodations, passion flares between Savanna and Ben who have suppressed their hidden desires long enough. A single touch ignites an unforgettable night in each other's arms, but the next day, when La Mirage mysteriously disappears, they're left to wonder, is their newfound intimacy real or nothing more than a trick of the summer heat?

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, oral sex.

*One tempting heiress. Two sexy cowboys. Three means fun beyond her wildest dreams—until her Cord starts to unravel.*

## Take Me

© 2007 Mackenzie McKade

Thoroughbred rancher's daughter Caitlyn Culver has always wanted playboy Cord Daily, even after her daddy threatened to bankrupt him. But winning a racehorse in a poker game means Cord is no longer just a cattle rancher. He's come back wealthier and more wicked than ever.



Snaring this cowboy won't be easy for Cait, and keeping him will be even harder. Still, his sexual antics and taste for *ménages* won't scare her off. She knows the best way to snag a man like Cord is to pretend indifference. So when he comes onto her in the barn, she plays along—only to leave him tied to a ladder, aroused and unfulfilled.

It's payback time.

Cord seeks out Cait and brings along his playboy cousin, Dolan Crane. The two cowboys are enough to set her body afire. She's bound and determined to resist their sexual allure, but ends up experiencing a night beyond her wildest fantasies. Now Dolan wants Cait for himself. Cait's father wants Cord's racehorse. And Cord wants Caitlyn to choose—her father's money or her cowboy's love.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, *ménage a trois*, and BDSM.

*Can a jaded lawyer and a reformed criminal really find true love in the tropics?*

## Fijian Fling

© 2007 Sami Lee

Dumped by her boyfriend and on thin ice in her law career, Sophie Edison badly needs to re-evaluate her life. She escapes to her favorite hideaway on the tropical island of Fiji, where the attentions of the resort owner – the enigmatic and lethally sexy Dominick 'Nick' Dufour – prove a temptation too great to resist. Nick's obvious desire to take her to bed is just the salve her battered confidence needs, and she embarks on an affair that leads her to uncharted waters. Before long she starts to wonder if she can ever go back to her old life.

Nick has lusted after Sophie for years. When she turns up at his secluded resort alone for the first time he wastes no time in making her his lover. Sophie is his perfect match in bed, and in the ocean and the shower...but although he might long for something more, Nick knows theirs is just a holiday fling. For he is keeping the secret of his checkered past from Sophie and it could prove the ultimate deal breaker...

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language.

*Newlywed Catalina Robinson thinks it's not possible to be more satisfied...but then she learns what it's like to love two men.*

## Honeymoon Castaways

© 2007 Dawn Halliday

Cat has just married Dave Robinson, the man of her dreams. Their Best Man, Andreas Bailey, is flying them to their honeymoon resort in Barbados. But over the middle of the ocean, something goes horribly wrong...

Cat, Dave and Andreas find themselves stranded on an uninhabited Caribbean island. Though she's never thought of him as more than a friend, Cat finds herself connecting to Andreas in a way she never expected and is shocked and aroused to learn that her husband feels the same way. Together, the three of them discover a heat and passion uninhibited by the conventions of society. But will they ever be rescued? And what will happen to their unusual relationship once they return home?

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, ménage a trois, voyeurism and skinny dipping.

*Two men and a bottle of nut cream...*

## Nut Cream

© 2007 Jade Buchanan

Nut [nuht] noun, verb.

1. A dry fruit consisting of an edible kernel or meat enclosed in a woody or leathery shell.

2. Slang, Vulgar – a testis.

Cream [kreem] noun.

1. A soft solid or thick liquid containing medicaments or other specific ingredients, applied externally for a therapeutic, or cosmetic purpose.

2. Slang, Vulgar – to have an orgasm.

Toby Madison is coming into his mating phase, and is leaking pheromones all over the place. He is about to find out what happens to bad little wolves, in the best possible way. Cliff Bullen is more than ready to place his mark on the man he has always wanted as his mate – with a little help from a bottle of nut cream.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit male/male sex and graphic language.

*Welcome to Fantasm Island! Leave your inhibitions at the door and let your fantasies soar.*

## Fantasmagorical

© 2007 Annmarie McKenna

That's what the brochure said anyway. A week long fling with a stranger. Where's the harm in that? Take a compatibility quiz and a slew of other health tests, sign a strict privacy agreement and give license to any sexual fantasy you've ever had. Evan Knight couldn't wait.

Gabe and Lance have been searching for their perfect third for what seems like forever. One look at the woman he and his best friend and lover Lance have chosen to claim during her time on the island, and Gabe thinks they may have finally found her.

But what if Evan isn't interested in more than the fling she signed up for? Or worse, what if she can't handle two men who are into each other too? Gabe and Lance have one week to convince Evan that the three of them belong together...and they'll use every bit of seduction in their arsenal to make sure when the fantasy ends, their reality together will only just be beginning.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit fantasmagorical sex, graphic language, ménage a trois, and hot nekkid man-love.

*Falling in lust with a sexy Elvis impersonator gets complicated when Vanessa discovers the real Elvis Presley may have hoaxed his death.*

## Hunk of Burnin' Love

© 2007 Veronica Wilde

Summer should mean hot men and toe-curling sex—at least that's what Vanessa believes, but a bad break-up has left her spending her summer nights alone. Then her sex life erupts into flames when she meets two very different Elvis impersonators on the same night. One is a sexy young musician who gets her all shook up in a steamy midnight

swim. The other is a graying older man who looks just a little too much like Elvis Presley for comfort.

Vanessa can't help falling in love with her new summer hottie. But their burning love gets complicated when the mysterious older impersonator begins dropping disturbing hints about his true identity—hints that suggest Elvis Presley never died at all.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex and graphic language.

*Chastity Cuthbert is determined to bring love and romance to the Last Frontier.*

## Ladies! Meet Red Hot Alaskan Men

© 2007 Nancy Lindquist

Chastity Cuthbert is in love with love. Its too bad that she's so busy working on everyone else's happily ever after that there's no time left to work on hers. Her company, The Alaskan Connection, matches single women with sexy Alaskan hunks. Business is booming. Until Dave Wellington drags his personal vendetta against outsiders right to her doorstep.

Dave Wellington, Mayor of Smithfield, Alaska won't allow Chastity's cadre of red-lipped floozies to take over his town. A she-bitch from the lower forty-eight broke his brother's heart and no one else is gonna go through that. Not if he can help it. Besides, Smithfield is welcoming tourists for the first time. The male residents need to keep their minds on business. Not sex.

Determined to change Chastity's mind, he travels to Chicago to talk her out of her plan. Chas is so pissed off at the sexy mayor that she forgets her "no one-night stands" motto. Right into Dave's bed.

Now she has to travel to Smithfield and face him. She's strong. She can face Dave again. Just because she snuck out of his hotel room in the middle of the night doesn't mean she's a big ole chicken. Right?

Warning: This book contains hot naked Alaskan guys, all looking for love. Read it at your own risk. I am not responsible for any sudden urges to go to the Last Frontier, nor travel costs incurred. Oh, and there's explicit sex too.

*One hot summer night and a scorching balcony interlude light the fuse of hidden attraction between neighbors Jill Reed and Cole Adams.*

## One Night on a Balcony

© 2007 Samantha Lucas

Jill Reed has spent her entire life denying her sexuality, but living next door to Cole Adams the past few months has made it near impossible.

Cole is fresh off his third divorce and considers himself a one-man relationship train wreck. He purposefully keeps his lust for Jill in check because, after all, she's the kind of woman a man keeps.

Jill and Cole have been denying their bone-deep attraction for months, but one night on a balcony, passions ignite, an adventure starts and everything is about to change—forever.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, sex in a public place, graphic language.

*Sometimes the truth is the greatest aphrodisiac.*

## Liaisons in Jubilee

© 2007 Jamie Craig

Katie Mayes is the Executive Manager for a large, east coast beach resort. Unfortunately, her boss has discovered her one secret – her seasonal flings with Caleb Beckett, the Entertainment Director for the resort. Company policy dictates no internal fraternization, especially between managers and their subordinates, so her boss gives Katie a choice. Caleb or her job.

She avoids personal encounters with Caleb, until one fateful night a week before the resort's big summer launch. Then, she runs into him at a local nightclub. When Caleb approaches her, she tries to give him the cold shoulder, but he follows her onto the dance floor where the music, her desire, and his persistence break her will. She claims it's only one more night before they break it off completely, but Caleb insists on more. Far from an ending, he views the summer as their true beginning.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, spanking, light bondage.

*A bad marriage is like a fierce thunderstorm on a fragile field of wheat.  
Will a proud Texas cowboy and a stubborn Boston-bred lawyer find  
shelter from a real summer storm long enough to rebuild their love?*

## Second Wind

© 2007 Dee S. Knight

Cocky cowboy Rafe Walker doesn't plan to meet a beautiful woman in designer jeans and ostrich boots at the rodeo, but the beauty catches his gaze just before the gate opens for his bull ride. Talk about losing focus! With one glance, his thoughts are of sex-scented sheets, not hard, sawdust-covered dirt.

A city girl like her would never fit in on his ranch, but a weekend in Dallas? Yes, Ma'am, she'll do just fine. Little does he expect a ride wilder than with any bull. She grabs hold of his heart and his hottest fantasies and holds on tight.

Cathy Fitzgerald, raised in a wealthy eastern family, half falls in love with the rakish cowboy after one impulsive weekend of wild sex. She returns to Boston, breaks off her near engagement and waits to hear from Rafe. After months of silence, he surprises Cathy with a proposal. It's a shock to both of them when she accepts, and moves to his ranch in nowhere, Texas.

They soon find that passion alone can't sustain a marriage. Rafe's pride and Cathy's long hours at work breed distrust and broken hearts. Giving their marriage its second wind will take an act of nature.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex and graphic language.

*Life's not always about the journey, but who takes you on the ride.*

## Custom Ride

© 2007 K.A. Mitchell

A stint in the Air Force left Ryan MacRae with a bitter memory of life in the closet. Jeff Allstein is a mechanic who has too much to lose if his



private life becomes public. The heat of their attraction boils over on a stormy summer night, but satisfying that need only makes them both crave more.

Their searing connection makes it hard for Ryan to understand the road blocks Jeff continually puts down. Ryan will have to buckle up if he's going to find love at the end of his custom ride.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit male/male sex, graphic language.

*What Leilani wants, Leilani gets...and she always gets her man.*

## Skin to Skin

© 2007 Dionne Galace

What Leilani wants, Leilani gets. That is, until she meets the enigmatic Oliver Clayton, her new neighbor. For some reason, Oliver seems to be intent on avoiding her even though he's obviously interested. Leilani has tried to everything to get his attention, from wearing skimpy little outfits to walking a neighbor's dog six times in front of his yard. Leilani wants Oliver...and she always gets her man.

In the heat of the summer, the temperature's not only thing rising. Luckily, Oliver has that pool in his backyard and Leilani knows just how to cool off...

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, light bondage.

*Hot summer nights make people do crazy things.*

## Spontaneous

© 2007 Karen Erickson

Sophie Kincaid doesn't want to be attracted to her boss but she is. Sick and tired of being used by men, she's sworn them off. But her hot and now slightly drunk boss just became too hard to resist.

His girlfriend dumped him and now Ian Grey is drowning his sorrows in alcohol, something he never does. Flirting with Sophie the sexy bartender inspires him to do even more things he'd never consider. Like have hot sex with her in the storage room.

They can't deny their attraction for each other but Sophie's afraid she doesn't measure up. And what does Ian want from her anyway? She'll have a naked good time figuring it out...

Warning this title contains the following: Hot, steamy, explicit sex and graphic language.

*Roping the naughty girl is all fun and games until someone falls in love.*

## Knotty Girl

© 2007 Maggie Casper

Shelby Langley was not sub, slave or Mistress, she was merely kinky. Point her to a BDSM club where she could watch and experience pretty much anything the mind could conjure, without the tangled web of an actual relationship, and she was in orgasmic bliss.

Long into the lifestyle, Craig Jensen was able to spot a submissive in denial from a mile away. Usually he left them be to find their own way,

only keeping an eye out for their safety while on his turf, but there was something about the sweet, young blonde who had a love for rope bondage that called for him to claim her as his own.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, anal play and an overall spanking good time.

*When a school teacher with a backbone of steel meets a hard-nosed lawman, more than the desert will heat up.*

## Marielle's Marshal

© 2007 Beth Williamson

Marielle Bloom never expected to be the victim of a stagecoach robbery stranded in the desert in the middle of summer with a sexy marshal who sets her body on fire with one look from his steely eyes.

Marshal Ramsey Whitfield doesn't know what to make of the outspoken teacher, but he does know she feels perfect in his arms. As they trek together across the barren landscape, searching for civilization, they discover that their desire for each other is hotter than the desert sand.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, violence.

*When a man who isn't human is accidentally enslaved by a woman who has no idea what he is, the result is magical.*

## Sealed With a Kiss

© 2007 Lila Dubois

Signing up for a one-week adventure vacation, Helena expects to be kayaking in the Pacific, not having every sexual fantasy fulfilled in her guide's bed.

Ocean is more than he seems, his kayaking business a cover for his deepest secret.

When Helena accidentally enacts old magic, enslaving Ocean, he doesn't know if she is the luckiest girl on earth, or an enemy of his kind, bent on imprisoning him forever. Ocean's strange behavior worries Helena but she's distracted by the mind-blowing sex.

After the truth is revealed, will their budding love be Sealed with a Kiss?

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, voyeurism, and fantasy fulfillment.

*When his girlfriend demands he settle down and start a family, Cole Winchester has some hard decisions to make. Marry his girlfriend, or finally own up to his taboo attraction to other men.*

## Taboo Desires

© 2007 Amanda Young

Cole Winchester feels like a rat, boxed into a corner. Faced with the prospect of being trapped in a passionless marriage, he makes the hard choice to end his relationship.

A run in with an old friend on the beach, propels Cole's fantasies out into the open and forces him to confront his taboo desires. Before him, lies the choice of a lifetime—embrace his desire for another man and all

the pitfalls that come along with it, or return to his girlfriend and live out the safe half-life he carved for himself.

Warning, this title contains the following: explicit sex, graphic language, and hot nekkid man-love.

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