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# To Cop A Kiss

Inez Kelley

*Holiday eBook Freebie*

Happy Holidays, everyone!

On the cusp of the New Year, the promise of a fresh start with a clean slate fills you with hope. The exhilaration and optimism of one single night and the magic it holds is breathtaking. At the stroke of twelve, when the New Year is drawing its first breath, Hope is born. Hope for love, for health, for success, whatever your secret desire may be, it is caught between the last night and the first day. It is ripe for plucking.

Symbolic of this new beginning is the traditional kiss as the clock strikes midnight. Come in from the cold and share in that first taste, the kiss that promises a new beginning. Welcome and I hope you experience all The Flavor of Romance You Crave...with me.

~Inez Kelley

To Cop A Kiss  
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She hoped her brother got a scorching case of crabs with itty bitty lice on top of a painful outburst of withered-winkie syndrome. Resisting the urge to vent her colorful language around her nephews, Dayna Thompson bit her lip until it bled. As a weekend father, one would think Mark would stay home with his kids even if it was New Year's Eve but no, not Mr. Finally-Free-to-Be-a-Player. He'd dropped the kids off at her house at three thirty and disappeared for the night without so much as a 'See ya, Sis'.

*The turd.*

What if she'd had a date? It was New Year's Eve, after all. A time for alcohol and kissing and looking forward to the clean slate of a brand spanking New Year... Yeah, she had nothing other than a standing date with a big shiny ball on her widescreen that would fall just like her man-luck lately. Now she was stuck babysitting the twin terrors her darling sibling had let consume far too much sugar. Babysitting was for fifteen-year-old girls who couldn't get a date. Not twenty-nine-year old schoolteachers...who couldn't get a date. Gawd, she was depressed. She was never going to meet Mr. Right sitting home with her cat and the Demolition Duo.

Trevor and Tyler were six going on twenty to life if you judged them by their behavior tonight. So far, they'd pulled the hair out of her cat Sinjin's tail, poured her designer bath salts down the toilet and used her maxipads as Spiderman boats in the bathtub. She wanted her tubes tied...now. Scraping her dark brown hair back into a messy ponytail, she surveyed her destroyed living room. There wasn't a couch cushion to be found. They were all piled around the kitchen table to make a fort for the boys to hide in. If only they stayed there until they passed out. She wasn't that lucky.

"Alright, buckaroos, bath time."

Silence.

Silence with the Destructive Duo was never a good thing. Come to think of it, she hadn't heard a peep in at least fifteen minutes. She'd chased them out of the bathroom and spent a few moments plunging the hell out of the frothy pink passionflower scented water until it finally swirled down. And now, silence. *Uh oh.*

"Trevor? Tyler? Come on guys, out of there." She pulled one flowered cushion away from the table and...nothing. No twins. Oh, this was not good. Dayna raced through the bungalow, looking under beds and in closets and behind doors. No twins. *Oh Gawd, where could they be hiding?* Sinjin glared at her from the top shelf in her closet, cursing her in feline for bringing the little demons into her house but she ignored the cat.

"Guys, come on, this isn't funny now." *Silence.* "Okay, whoever is hiding doesn't get ice cream." *Nothing.*

She searched for five more frantic moments, each second speeding up her heart and chilling her skin. *Where were they? Oh gawd, what if they'd been kidnapped while she plunged thirty bucks worth of fragrance down the toilet?* She jammed her feet into ratty tennis shoes, snagged the keys from the hook and headed for the door. Maybe they went for a walk and got lost in the dark. It was cold out there. North Carolina might not be North Dakota but it was still chilly and damp this time of year. Did they have their shoes and their jackets?

Spying those items on her deacon's bench beside the door sent her pulse rate through the roof. They *had* been kidnapped! Right out from under her nose. Mark was going to kill her and she deserved it. What kind of aunt let two precious little angels out of her sight long enough for some sicko to grab them?

A knock sounded from the front door. Dayna bolted though the house and tears blurred her eyes as she swung the front door open. She came face to face with a dark

haired police officer with a grim expression. Her heart sank. They'd been hurt, she knew it!

"Ma'am, do these belong to you?"

His huge hands were holding the scruffs of their damp sweatshirts until they dangled there, each beaming wide innocent smiles from matching cherubic faces. Gasping in utter relief, Dayna dropped to her knees and grabbed them, pulling them closer for a squeezing hug.

"Oh my gawd, where have you two been? You scared the crap out of me!"

"Boys," Gruff and deep, the rich male tone sent shivers up her spine that had zero to do with the weather. "Tell your mother what you've been doing."

"She ain't our mom. That's just Aunt Dayna." Trevor shrugged away from her. Tyler, the shyer of the two, clung a bit longer to her leg as she stood.

"Fine, tell *Aunt Dayna* what you were doing."

The don't-take-no-bullshit attitude came complete with crossed arms and a bulged set of biceps that normally would've made her mouth water. But at this minute she was too worried the twins had done something terrible to be lusting over beefy biceps. She did peek a little though. Just a little. A smidgeon really.

*Nice. Verry nice.*

Near the left bicep, the silver name tag above his pocket read Ofc. J. Rafferty. Officer Rafferty had a really great chest. Oh, she knew he probably had a vest under that black shirt, what did they call it, Kevlar? But still, unless that sucker was three inches thick, he had a nice chest. He wore short sleeves even in the cold but she guessed those vests could get kind of hot. He was pretty damn hot himself even without the Kevlar. Did she dare look up and see if the above the nametag matched the behind the nametag? Yeah, she dared.

No man should be allowed to carry a firearm when his eyelashes were longer than a woman's. It just wasn't fair. Especially if those ebony lashes circled eyes the exact shade of the sapphire in her high school class ring. No, pretty eyes belonged on models and gay men and people named Raphael. A police officer's eyes should be cold and unmerciful and driven...and should definitely not be looking at her boobs.

The night air knifed through her thin t-shirt and pebbled her nipples into two hard points that no padded bra could hide. If she were wearing a padded bra. Hell, she wasn't wearing a bra at all. *Do your boobs hang low, do they wobble to and fro...* She hadn't expected company. She was stuck at home babysitting the future cellmates of prison block C. She'd opted for comfort over glamour.

"Boys, I'm waiting." How deep could a man's voice get before it was declared a lethal weapon? "We had an agreement. You confess and I don't charge you."

Sudden humor sparkled in those blue eyes and he winked at her but kept his face firm and directed at her nephews. They looked at each other and shuffled their dirty bare feet. *Bare feet? In this weather?* Some weird maternal instinct must have kicked in. That had to be it. It couldn't be that she wanted Officer Good and Plenty to come inside her house. Nope. It wasn't that at all. Latent Maternal...something.

"It's really too cold to be standing here with the door open and the boys don't have shoes or coats on. Can we talk about this inside, please?"

With a brisk nod, Officer Rafferty stepped into her small entry way. The walls were too close together to hold two small guilty wanna-be felons, a braless woman and a police officer with mile wide shoulders and a gun. Her hands clamped onto each boy's blond head and marched them toward the kitchen. Officer Rafferty followed, a rich masculine scent sucking all the oxygen out of her lungs.

Since when did cops smell like sex on a stick?

The sight of the partial destroyed cushion-fort puking action figures and matchbox cars in her kitchen made her wince. She didn't live in a frat house normally but you couldn't tell that now. Embarrassment heated her cheeks. She whirled to find amusement on the officer's face. His lips were pressed tightly together as if he were concealing a smile and a twinkle shone in a sea of azure.

"Please forgive the mess. I don't have them that often and they...just kind of...well, you were a little boy, weren't you? I'm sure you made a mess or two before."

The overhead 75 watt glow glimmered on his midnight hair casting a sheen that had to be a trick of the light. Could black shimmer? No way could it be as soft as it looked. But wouldn't she just love to find out? *Excuse me Mr. Policeman, can I just run my fingers through your hair for a second?*

His small smile did amazing things to her stomach, turning the organ into a contortionist's dream. "Ma'am, this isn't a mess. This is a play fort. A mess is something that takes three rolls of paper towels and a bottle of 409 cleaner."

"That was the bathroom earlier. It's how they escaped without me knowing. What did they do this time?"

The grin which had crept out faded a little and he stared at the twins. Trevor and Tyler wouldn't look up. "Boys."

There was a warning in that baritone. She heard it and apparently so did they because Tyler immediately welled up with tears.

"Trevor did it, I just watched."

"Nu-uh, you did it, too, crybaby." Trevor's lips twisted into a scowl and he pushed his twin into Dayna's leg. The slight movement shifted her toward Officer Rafferty. His hand shot out to cup her elbow. Instant heat surrounded her arm and she looked up. Those ocean eyes twinkled down at her with curiosity. An old rhyme flew into her head. *Curiosity killed the cat but satisfaction brought it back.*

The lawman in front of her looked like he embodied satisfaction guaranteed and then some. A tiny smile softened her lips and he raised his dark brows in a silent acknowledgement. *Body language, baybee!!*

The boys started shoving each other and using words which begged for a taste of Ivory soap drawing both adults' attention. Before Dayna could speak, Officer Rafferty stopped them cold by pulling a set of handcuffs from his belt. The barely audible click silenced the squabble and two sets of huge brown eyes locked on to the hard metal rings.

"I told you both, own up to what you did or I'd have to stop being nice."

"We rubbed soap on the car window," Tyler rushed to explain. "It was dirty. We were trying to wash it."

Dayna buried her face in her hands. "Whose car window?"

"Uhm, his car window?" Trevor peeped quietly as if guessing.

Dayna's jaw dropped and she stared in horror at Damien and his brother The Omen. "You soaped a cop car window on New Year's Eve? What are you two, juvenile delinquents in training?"

"Mommy says we're gifted," Tyler offered meekly.

"He made us wash it off and we got all wet. Now we're gonna get ammonia and die!" Trevor accused. He glared at the uniformed man before looking at his aunt for rescue.

*He was so outta six-year-old luck.*

"You are not going to die from ammonia," she sighed. Her finger whipped out and pointed toward the staircase. "I'll let your father deal with you two in the morning. You both have ten minutes to shower and get your pajamas on or I'm letting Officer Rafferty take you home to your mother."

The threat worked like a charm. Both boys disappeared like a popcorn fart in a Chicago wind. She waited until the elephant thudding feet climbed the stairs before glaring at the scrumptious uniformed officer.

"Handcuffs? Wasn't that a bit much? They are only six."

"Did I say what I was going to do with the cuffs? I don't recall threatening those kids in anyway." He cocked one thick dark brow as he slid the cuffs back into a holder on his belt. "You're the one who threatened them with their own mother."

"Yeah, well, if you knew their mother, you'd understand." Dayna muttered with a twist to her lips.

Her former sister-in-law ranked right up there with Barbie, way too preppy and perky to be real with oversized plastic boobs. Had Officer Rafferty really taken the boys to her house, she'd have fainted dead away in a graceful and dramatic swoon designed to land right into his arms. Not such a bad idea, actually, but Dayna had never gotten the *Poor poor pity me, I am so frail* routine down pat. It stuck in her capable throat like a too big bite of taffy.

"I'm sorry about your windows. Really, I had no idea they snuck out."

One broad black swathed shoulder shrugged. His boyish grin could have melted the North Pole. A warm jiggle brewed in her belly and seeped outward filling her with half-baked chocolate chip cookie goodness.

"It's okay."

How could one man make two little words sound like a caress? Dayna had no idea but he did it.

*Quick, call 911, I've fallen in lust and can't get up.*

When his mouth moved to speak again, she nearly licked the words from his lips. "I do need to wash the cruiser. I just haven't had time this week."

"So what's the J stand for?" she asked pointing toward his name tag. *Was that a flirt?* It sounded like a flirt. Oh gawd, she'd just flung a flirt at a police officer in her kitchen while braless and with children in the house. That had to break a law or go against good manners or something. Thankfully, he didn't seem to notice. He was too busy staring at her mouth.

*Dear Blistex, Thank you for the free sample. Sincerely, Dayna.*

"Jace."

In no hurry to go out and buy a donut or something, he hitched his hip against her counter and smiled at her. It was a naughty smile, the kind that said *come to bed* and didn't mean to sleep. Heat from her cheeks plummeted to her stomach and kept on whizzing downward until it hit between her legs.

*Damn, he was fine.*

"You have a last name, Aunt Dayna?"

"Yeah, Thompson."

*His name was Jace? Hot! How damn sexy could this man get?*

"So, Aunt Dayna Thompson," The sexual purr in his voice traced her skin with invisible fingers of lust and tickled her in secret places. "How come you got stuck babysitting two pint-sized troublemakers instead of going out on the biggest party night of the year?"

Dayna could have sworn that sounded like a flirt, too. Maybe she was coming down with the Filipino Flirtatious Flu or something. Her face felt hot, her pulse raced and she had this nearly uncontrollable desire to frisk the cop in front of her. Jace definitely looked like he was packing something. To keep her hands busy, she knelt and started picking up matchbox cars from the floor. The fact she just happened to be wearing her 'check out my ass' jeans never entered her mind.

Nope, never, not once.

Okay once, but it didn't stay there.

Long.

"Well, going out means either hanging out with friends or with a guy who asks. All my friends right now are in couple mode and since I didn't get asked out, I didn't feel like being a third wheel. Besides, someone has to keep control of the terrible two up there."

"I've gotten stuck on duty the past three New Year's in a row," he grumbled good-naturedly. "Usually it's drunks and bar fights. I've never had to deliver a set of matching mini-hoodlums to their pretty aunt before. It's been an interesting diversion."

"Glad we could brighten your shift. I'll consider it our civic duty for the day." She quipped while dumping tiny toys in the plastic bin.

*He called me pretty!*

She stood to say something but whatever it was slipped from her mind. He'd moved. Jace no longer stood by the counter. Instead, he was right behind her...well, now in front of her and she was staring directly at his Adam's apple.

*Good Lawd, he smells good. Like leather and spice and pure sex. Wonder what the penalty is for licking a cop?*

"You missed one." In his hand the tiny red sports car looked miniscule. He'd dropped his voice to smooth husky level and bent his head until his moist breath trailed along her cheek as he whispered. "If I'd been off duty and if I'd met you before this, I'd have asked you out tonight."

"Lot of *ifs* in that sentence." Dayna raised her face and nearly grazed his nose with hers.

"True. Let's try this. *If* I asked you out, what would you say?"

"I don't know. Try it and find out *if* I say yes or no."

Jace's lip curled with a grin. His head dipped a fraction closer.

Closer.

Closer.

Her eyelids fluttered shut in anticipation of his kiss.

*"33-64, what's your 10-20?"*

Dayna yanked her head back and stared at the squawking box clipped to his waist. Jace's shoulder slumped in regret and he pulled away. He reached up to his collar and pressed the side button of a small black square while his face filled with apology. There was no trace of flirt in his tone now, it was all business.

*"33-64, I'm 10-6 for a few."*

*"10-4, 33-64, reported Signal 12A in progress, corner of Elm and Prospect."*

*"10-4, dispatch, got a 10-20 on 42?"*

*"33-64, be advised 33-42 is 10-15, 10-17 three males Signal 10 PRJ."*

Jace dropped his head and groaned before pressing the little button again. "10-4 dispatch, 10-22 previous, I'll be 10-17 with a four minute ETA."

"Wow," Dayna breathed in kissless resignation. "Whole lotta tens in that gobbledygook."

"Yeah," Jace handed her toy car and sighed. "Look, it's just a fist fight. If everything goes alright, I should be clear in like a half hour...can I come back?" His now empty hand lifted to her face, tracing the curve of her cheek with one knuckle. The slightest touch and her crotch throbbed. "I'd like to come back...if that's okay with you."

The blatant tease scored along her skin baking her with lust. Who knew she had a thing for men in uniform? No, not men. Man. This man. Licking her lips, she delighted when his gaze dropped to her mouth again.

*Did he taste as good as he smelled?*

"You know where I live. I'll be here all night. No cover charge for lawmen."

His beaming smile stole her breath and she stood there feeling all mushy and googley-eyed as he turned and walked out with a wink.

*Oh my, uniform pants did wonderful things for his ass. Mama mia.*

The second her front door closed, Dayna ran up the stairs determined to make herself more presentable before Jace came back. Half hour, he said. Surely she had time to tuck the boys in bed, slap on some make-up, brush her teeth and comb her hair not to mention putting a bra on. If she hurried she might even have time for a quick—

“What in the hell did you two do to my bathroom this time?”

Two midget artists in Transformer pajamas stared at her, each holding a tube of lipstick. The formerly pristine cream wall had a game of hangman going on with the Long-Lasting Luscious Licorice colored letters P\_LICE\_AN filled in beside a half-hung stick figure. The floor resembled a slick swamp smelling vaguely of Herbal Essence shampoo. Blue gel toothpaste was smeared over half the sink and the toilet was running.

“We were leaving you alone while you kissed the policeman,” Tyler volunteered.

“I didn’t kiss the policeman,” Dayna grumbled lifting the lid off the toilet tank.

*But I’m going to if you get your identical butts to bed.*

After righting the caught toilet chain in the frigid water, she threw four large towels over the floor and prodded the boys into her guest room. They squabbled over sharing the double bed for a second but settled down fast enough when she threatened to serve oatmeal for breakfast instead of Lucky Charms. She ruffled damp hair, kissed them on the foreheads and flicked on the nightlight.

In a fairly decent imitation of the USS Enterprise, she hit warp drive and sped into the bathroom. Shuffling her feet across the towels, she managed to get a good bit of the water off the floor while wiping the sink down. The wall was still faintly pink but she didn’t dare spend anymore time on it as she reached for her hair brush. Slimy goo covered the handle and oozed between the bristles.

“What the...Those little brats have been in the Vaseline!” In a fit of frustrated irritation, she tossed the brush in the trash can and resorted to her old travel kit with the cheapy plastic brush. In just a few vicious strokes she had the snarls worked out and a shiny barrette wrestled into place to hold everything in to a nice smooth mahogany ponytail. Not bad, not too much, not too little, just neater.

Her cosmetic bag had been emptied inside the vanity drawer and she couldn’t find her eyeliner or her concealer. At least the mascara helped make her green eyes pop. The lipstick she owned, both of them, had been mashed and mushed into the wall so she settled for a tube of sticky clear gloss that was supposed to taste like bubble gum but didn’t. Lord only knew how old it was but since her lips didn’t fall off, she assumed Jace’s would survive, too.

Dashing into her bedroom, she checked the time. Oh gawd, twenty eight minutes had already passed! The drawer flew out of her hand and hit the floor with a loud thud when she yanked too hard. Lingerie went sailing. Dayna kicked the entire mess inside the closet and grabbed a lacy red bra from the top of the pile. Sinjin growled at the noise which had roused him from his catnap.

Wait, red? A red bra? Did that scream slut? Did it matter? It wasn’t like Jace was actually going to see the bra, right? Right? Well, a girl never knew so she hesitated.

*Oh, screw it, it’s clean.*

She tugged the T-shirt off, donned the bra and snapped a different clean T-shirt over her head. The barrette caught and sprang open, pinging across the room like a drunken bat. It fell behind the headboard to her bed. Dayna fought a groan and raced back into the bathroom for another barrette to tame her once again wild hair. Her feet skidded on the not-quite clean but ultra-slick floor and she went sailing. She knew it was going to hurt before her ass hit the floor and she wasn’t wrong.



OW!

She wasted precious seconds sitting there feeling her bottom thump. Only the flashed memory of Jace's smile propelled her to move. She grabbed a plain white elastic ponytail holder and shoved the thick mass of hair into strangled submission while bolting down the stairs. She made it back to her kitchen in thirty two minutes. Not bad. Now where was Jace?

Just to kill time, Dayna dismantled the kitchen fort and redressed her sofa. There. Now maybe she could get him to come into the living room and out of the kitchen. The couch was definitely a much better place for...stuff than the kitchen was. The crunch of tires along the road grit outside was a shot of epinephrine straight into her bloodstream. Trying not to appear too over eager, she waited until she heard his footsteps on her porch before she opened the front door.

The black shirt and shining badge were not attached to the body she expected. Instead of her prospective New Year's kiss, Father Time stood on her porch bathed in the pale yellow light. This name tag read Capt. T. Mosee and the lines on his face were deep enough to spackle.

"Ma'am," The older man dipped his head. "Are you Dayna Thompson?"

A bolt of fear shot through her.

*Jace was a police officer.*

*That Kevlar vest had a purpose.*

*He hadn't come back.*

*There was another cop at her door.*

"Where's Jace? Is he okay?"

Father Time-Served smiled showing yellowing teeth and chuckled softly. "Yeah, he's fine. He just got hung up and didn't have your phone number. Going through dispatch to get it can be a pain in the ass 'cause those girls get nosy so he asked me to drop by and get it for him."

"Oh," Dayna did her best not to deflate in front of Jace's captain but it took effort. Jace wanted her phone number. Normally that would have made her happy but she'd really wanted his kiss. Tonight. At midnight. A New Year's Eve kiss.

The older man held one finger up and reached for his collar. He pushed a button and spoke into his shoulder not bothering to hide his mischievous grin. "33-21 to 33-64."

The radio at his waist squawked back with electronic squelch but it had a toffee-rich tone she immediately recognized.

*"33-64, go ahead."*

*"64, I'm at that location and have that subject. What do you advise?"*

*"10-4, advise subject I've been detained but will be able to complete that detail as soon as I'm clear."*

A warm bubble burst in her stomach, speeding a rush of expectation through her. *Jace was coming back!* The Captain asked for her phone number and she rattled it off without thought. She'd been taught to obey a police officer's instruction.

*"33-64, be advised last four six zero zero five."*

*"33-21, 10-4 copy six zero zero five."*

Before his hand released the button, her phone rang. With a shaking head and a chuckle, the captain waved and left her porch. Dayna ran to the phone and snatched it up.

"Jace?"

"Hey."

*Pour some sugar on me!*

She was seriously becoming addicted to his voice. It was like chocolate coated crack with a Jack Daniel's chaser. Addictive. She was a Jace junkie already and needed a hit in the worst way.

"Sorry about that. I didn't want you to think I'd stood you up before I even ask you out."

"I was scared to death when that other guy showed up! I'm just glad you're okay."

"Yeah, I'm good. This turned out to be a little more involved than I thought but I should be clear in a few minutes. Still okay for me to swing by?"

"Sure. I'm just going to be hanging out with cable TV." That sounded smooth enough, didn't it? None of her lusty hunger shone through in those words, right?

"Alright. See you as soon as I can."

Dayna hung up the phone and wiped her hands down her face. What was she doing? She just met this guy. Sure, Jace was sexy as holy hell and smelled like hot sex on a buttered biscuit and had a voice that turned her insides to Jello but what in the hell was she doing? She was lusting, that was what she was doing, and she was doing a damn fine job at it. Determined to be calm and collected when he 'swung by', Dayna turned on the TV, dimmed the lights and brushed her teeth. He should be here anytime.

An hour and a half later, her brain was nearly mush after watching too much drunken celebration. The New Year crept across the planet. She watched three different countries send fiery plumes of fireworks into the midnight sky and a pre-recorded splattering sparkle from Australia. Still, no Jace Rafferty. Dejected and fighting a blistering case of the bitches, Dayna noted it was two minutes until midnight. It didn't look like she'd get her New Year's Eve kiss after all.

Suddenly, she heard tires screech in front of her house and the slam of a car door. Her heart jumped into overdrive. Popping off the couch like a timer in a turkey breast, Dayna bolted for the door and flung it open just as Jace hit the top step. The wind whipped his dark hair back as he reached for the screen door. She opened it before he touched it, a wide smile making her cheeks ache. He was so worth the wait.

Jace thrust a bottle of water at her. "Sorry. I got another call after I hung up. It's a busy night. Here, crack that open. Hurry, it's almost midnight."

"Bottled water?"

"Hey, I can't have champagne on duty. Just pretend with me." She'd pretend to be the Queen of Sheba if he just kept smiling at her like that. She opened her water while he twisted the cap off his matching bottle. Standing in her darkened entrance way, she overheard the TV announcer begin his countdown. Jace heard it to and paused. Electric blue eyes snagged hers and her breath caught. Without planning, they both echoed the countdown in breathless soft words. "Four...three...two...one."

The TV volume shot to high and the strains of Auld Lang Syne blared in stereo but Dayna could only hear the frantic pound of her heartbeat.

*Was it going to happen? Would he do it?*

Jace raised his water bottle and tapped it against hers in a frosty plastic to plastic toast.

"Happy New Year, Dayna."

"Happy New Year, Jace."

She moved her hand to take a sip of water and instead got a mouthful of Jace Rafferty. He tasted of creamy coffee and sexy sizzle. A flutter began in her belly and spread to every single molecule. He did wear a vest. The hard material pressed firmly into her breasts but his arms were real. Real and solid, they wrapped gently around her waist as she trailed her hand up, up, up and onto his shoulders.

*Damn, he can kiss!*

She nipped along his lower lip and sighed when his tongue grazed hers. December's last breath of night air had left his pitch-black hair cool and silky between her fingers. The weight of his belt bit into her stomach but it was easily ignored when he slid his mouth firmer against hers.

"Aunt Dayna, are you kissing the policeman again?"

The squeaked question from the top of the stairs parted their mouths but she felt Jace smile against her lips before he pulled away. She kept her eyes locked with his and answered her nephew.

"Yes, Trevor, I am. Now go back to bed."

"Did he use his handcuffs on you?"

Jace's eyebrows shot up and a hearty laugh poured from him, warming her face. "Now there's an idea. But maybe I should actually ask you out first. I'm off tomorrow. Want to do something?"

"I kind of like what we're doing now." Dayna teased reaching up for another kiss.

"My duty is to serve," he obliged before capturing her mouth.

## **Author Biography**

Inez Kelley writes what she reads which is pretty much anything with a romantic flair. Deep in the boonies of the Appalachias, she lives with her hero, three school-age sequels, and two cats. Following the logic of her scattered mind, she took her Honors Level Advertising degree and became first a restaurant manager and then an E911 dispatcher. Finally the voices in her head became too loud to ignore.

She now divides her time between creating stories that touch your heart and picking up piles of dirty underwear and socks off the floor since no one in her family has the ability to actually hit the clothes hamper. The NBA is safe from her genes.

Her first Samhain Publishing release, a romantic comedy titled JINXED, comes out in June 2009. Stop by <http://inezkelley.com/> and drop her a note! Or you can check out one of two blogs: <http://chicks-n-scratching.com/> or <http://talesfromthecrit.wordpress.com/>

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