

Domme by Default



Tymer Dalton

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Domma By Default
by Tymber Dalton

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* * * *

Kinky never looked so normal.

When a wife is faced with the question of what she is willing to do for love, her answer is ... anything. She sets aside her own inhibitions to fulfill her husband's wildest fantasies.

But at what cost to her peace of mind?

Content Warning: erotic m/f BDSM sex and activities including anal play/sex/toys, a home-improvement challenged husband, a sarcastic wife, and a portrayal of the kinder, gentler side of BDSM.

Highlight

"What did you think of Syd's story?"

"It was good."

Why was I going there? "It didn't freak you out?"

His silence was killing me. "Lots of straight guys like anal sex. It's no big deal."

"Yeah?"

How long had he wanted this and been scared to ask it?

"Yeah. If it's something you want, it's okay."

The story wasn't about anal sex, but an Owner and pet. Master and slave.

I closed my eyes. "What else did you like?" Mentally I chanted to myself, *Shut up!*

I didn't need to look to see he studied my face.

"I would like to do that." Another long pause. "For you. With you."

"More than just play?"

He rested his cheek against my flesh. "Yeah. More than just play."

Breathe, I thought. Air in, air out.

"What do you want to do?" I asked, trying to confirm what I'd heard in the least threatening way possible.

"I'd like to be your slave."

Okay, so I did hear him right.

"I won't go around beating you like a dog. I can't do that, I love you."

"I don't want that. I want you to be in control, to be my Mistress."

Okay then.

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by Tymber Dalton

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Dedication

to him

Author's note

While this is a fictional story, the portrayal of a 24/7 M/s relationship is accurate. There is a rich and varied diversity to "the lifestyle" that most people never know about because their information comes from BDSM fetish sites on the internet. Try to define normal, either in a vanilla or kink relationship, and it's truly impossible.

You might be more "normal" than you think...

Author's Foreword

While this story is a standalone work, Tony also appears in "The Reluctant Dom," available from Lyrical Press.

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Prologue

I found myself standing outside the adult store, remembering a completely polar opposite set of circumstances that brought me here the last time.

Nicely Naughty was actually a better class of adult establishment than you saw in many places. It fulfilled the apparently legislative requirements of being a minimum distance from churches and schools, was painted purple and pink on the outside, used lots of neon, and located slap next door to a tattoo parlor.

I stood beside my car, staring. I didn't want to do this. But I thought of the man waiting for me at home, eagerly anticipating my return, the hope in his eyes and his bare ass in the air...

I closed my eyes, fighting my tears.

I didn't want to do this.

I remembered when he held my hand, strong, comforting—and more than just a wee bit seductively—as we walked in together the last time. During a particularly hot night of pillow talk we'd jokingly decided to buy a vibrator. Not that I needed one, because he was The Man With the Golden Tongue as far as I was concerned.

We'd walked in, me with my face beet red and trying to meld into his body I pressed so close as the friendly and oddly chipper young salesgirl showed us to the wall of vibrating wonder. We'd left with a fairly plain, tame purple

one that only resembled a real life penis in that it was slightly phallic shaped.

I stared at the front windows as I recalled his voice that night. "That vibrator won't buy itself."

And now, here I was. Alone.

I didn't want to do this.

I got back into my car and sat with my forehead resting against the steering wheel. If I returned home empty-handed with a lame excuse, could I face the crushing disappointment in his eyes? He would nod and look away and be a good sport about it. But like always, he would know I was lying. He would spare me from telling the truth.

He would be a good husband for me.

I cried. I didn't want to do this.

And he did.

Little girls dream of white knights and superheroes who keep them safe and sane and secure. They dream of being protected and cherished. Unless they are into a little kink, they don't dream of whips and handcuffs and anal plugs.

Unless it's their guy wielding them.

They certainly don't usually dream of being the one holding them, using them on the man they cherish.

I sat back and wiped my face and thought about the series of IMs I'd exchanged over several days with a friend of mine who I knew was into "the lifestyle" as I tried to come to terms with this.

Get what you want to get him. It's your call. You're in charge.

But I didn't "want" to get one for my husband. *He* wanted it. He'd finally found a deep inner well of courage to quietly admit this to me.

With wide-eyed terror, I'd done a little online research. Ironically, I didn't feel I could buy something like this sight unseen for fear of it being too big.

Tony's ever helpful advice?

Get him a small and a medium, tell him to go play with them. Don't forget the lube.

I swallowed hard and looked at the store and thought about my sweet husband's face, the eager anticipation in his eyes when I'd told him I was going shopping ... for him.

The hope.

The love.

I didn't want to do this.

But as I stepped out of the car, I knew that's exactly why I had to.

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Chapter 1

Her

What can I say about our marriage? It was the second try for both of us. We each had a child with our exes, and while he was over a decade older than me it wasn't an issue.

He was my guardian angel, I was his prom queen.

I felt rescued in many ways after a decade of an emotionally abusive marriage. He felt loved and desired after a decade and a half of a frigid ice queen who blamed him for everything from her PMS to global warming.

When we'd first met on the downside of our divorces, we'd spent hours IMing back and forth some nights as we worked. And I'll never forget how tickled I was.

I feel like the prom queen likes me! he'd said one night.

No one had ever talked to me like that before, made me feel like that.

Cherished. Loved.

When we finally got together and moved in, the sex was phenomenal as far as I was concerned. I'd had a few decent partners before my ex—who was crappy in that department. My new husband had a total of three partners—including me—and had never had a blow job before I gave him one. He'd also never gone down on a woman.

I had a lot of fun teaching him that. He proved to be a natural and eager student.

The kids fledged and we were on our own and I felt everything was great. We never fought. We could disagree and go to bed and kiss each other good night. Perfectly matched temperaments. Mine on the heated side, his a little cooler. A great give and take that worked well for us.

Open and honest, as our individual emotional scars from our previous woundings healed we found an easy middle ground we called our own and enjoyed our time there.

I never felt anything lacking, except that I wished he'd be a little more...

Dominant.

I trusted my husband in a way I never trusted my ex. Or any other man, for that matter. I *wanted* to give him that control over me. I wanted to submit to him. Now that I knew I could fully trust someone in that way, I craved it. While we'd play on occasion, he never took what was freely offered.

Over the years we opened up somewhat in the bedroom, the dynamic slipping back and forth in play. I resigned myself to the fact that while our marriage wasn't textbook material, it worked for us and I wouldn't trade him for anything. So what if our traditional roles were anything but?

I called my dad one afternoon, my cell phone wedged between my shoulder and cheek, as I studied the wires in the ceiling fan I was changing out.

"Why isn't your husband doing this?" he snarked.

I bit back a less than daughterly reply. "Because he's at work. I'm perfectly capable of doing this, Dad."

I got the impression my father looked down his nose at my husband for some things. Not that he didn't like my husband,

because my parents adored him, especially after I spent years with a real jerk.

But he always seemed to think my husband should do it all.

"You can't wait to do this until he gets home?"

I didn't want to admit my husband was clueless about home electrical systems. I would sooner lick a porcupine than let my husband touch wiring. "Dad, please, just answer my question."

His tone turned gruff. "Listen to me, young lady—"

Only my parents could get away with calling a nearly forty year-old woman that. "Dad, you are the one who taught me how to change my own oil and tires, right? Why the heck can't you help me do this, too? My husband works very hard at a good job that pays pretty damn well and allows me to work from home and do what I love. I'd think you'd be happy for me."

Low blow, and I knew it, but it worked. I could almost hear him backtracking.

He sighed the big, put-upon *I know she's right but I'm still her father* sigh. "How many wires did you say you have?"

I finished an hour later. I turned on the breaker for the living room circuit and watched as my new ceiling fan lazily spun to life.

When my husband returned home later that evening, he wrapped his arms around my waist and kissed the back of my neck. "It looks great, sweetheart. Why didn't you wait for me? I would have helped you."

I shrugged as I leaned against him, feeling calm and settled with him home. "No big deal. I don't mind." That was the irony. I didn't mind, *per se*. It was nice knowing I wasn't one of those weakling, wussie women who couldn't even use a pair of jumper cables properly. I felt a little pride—okay, a lot of pride—that I had done it by myself. Well, with my Dad's advice, but mostly by myself.

No matter what kind of pretzel I'd contorted myself into, my ex had rarely paid me complements about my accomplishments. Usually he found fault and picked my doings apart, all under the guise of constructive criticism.

Not my husband.

He kissed the top of my head. "You're so good at this stuff. I'm so proud of you."

I hugged his arms tighter around me, wrapping me in a cocoon of strength and security. No, I wouldn't trade a thousand handymen for my husband. Not on your life.

Men are no more born with a fix-it chromosome than women are born with a shopping gene. My husband and I were two living proof examples of that. How perfect that we'd found each other.

And yet ... there were still traditional roles that we filled. When he had to have his gall bladder out I sat alone in the waiting room, near panic, feeling stupid that I was crying and looking like a moron. One of the hospital chaplains saw me and must have thought my husband was dying until I admitted he was only in for a routine gall bladder removal. Hell, he was supposed to go home with me that afternoon as long as there were no complications.

I'll never forget how the chaplain sat back and looked at me like I'd grown a third eyeball.

He's my angel, my husband is. How do you explain to someone? Who cares if I can rebuild a car engine, the thought of ever losing my husband terrifies the crap out of me. When he leaves the house every day, a piece of me leaves with him, worry always in the back of my mind until I see his sweet face walk through the door again that night.

I had never felt more relief than I did when the nurse called me back to recovery and I could hold his hand and reassure myself that he was okay.

He came back to me.

He always came back to me.

Thank God!

Later that night, after I'd got him settled in our bed and his pain medicine had taken him securely off to dreamland, I curled next to him with my ear pressed against his chest and listened to his strong and steady heartbeat.

I needed him. I'd spent so many years in a mental and emotional wasteland before him that to lose him, I knew, would be a pain I could never bear. I would do anything for him. With the exception of my child, I'd never loved anyone as much as I loved my husband.

He always made me feel safe and secure. Cherished. Loved. I knew he would die for me to protect me if ever put into the position.

I couldn't say the same about my ex, that's for damn sure.

So what if he couldn't remember which was the master cylinder and which was the power steering pump when checking the fluids? Who the fuck cared?

He loved me.

And I loved him.

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Chapter 2

him

I love making love to my wife. She's always said she enjoys it, and when I've felt less-than, it never fails to raise my spirits ... among other things.

I truly don't see her imperfections. What kind of hypocrite would I be to poke fun at a woman who lights my world when I don't have a perfect body? When she is apparently blind to my shortcomings?

Never.

As far as I'm concerned, she's the most beautiful woman in the world, and she always will be.

There were times I'd chafe when she'd take control of something in our lives, my male pride bristling that there was yet another thing I couldn't do well. Whether it was changing out a part in the toilet so it didn't run up the damn water bill, to changing out the power steering pump on the car.

Yes, she did that. All of that. She's an amazing woman and I'm fucking lucky to have her.

I'll be the first to admit I'm not good at that kind of stuff and she is, from training and instinct. At first I think we both danced around things in the early years. I would watch her literally pull herself up during a discussion, the wheels practically turning in her head as she stopped short and either yes-deared me or simply changed subject, not wanting to bruise my ego.

Another thing I loved her for.

Men are supposed to fix the car and the roof and the fucking toilet. I'm not a moron, but I'm book smart and I know it, not good with my hands at all. Men aren't supposed to be standing on the ground holding the ladder while their wife is up on the roof applying a tar patch around a vent pipe to keep water from leaking in.

She never rubbed it in.

Ever.

I'm more likely to get yelled at for a stupid computer question that she's answered for me a dozen or more times, or for not locking the keypad on my cell phone and texting her a bunch of blank messages while my phone is in my pocket.

When the first fantasies started, mild hints and nudges from her in bed to take control, I tried. I really did. I wanted to do that for her. But there's some things, no matter how much you love someone, that you can't admit.

How could I admit to her that I wanted those same things ... from her? She already did so much. Was I supposed to dump one more thing on her? Here, do it all, honey. Take control of it all.

That wasn't fair to her even though the thought made me harder than fucking granite.

I spent a lot of time alternately resentful and hating myself for it. Not resentful of her, of the situation.

One night we were making love. As I fucked her, she reached behind me and stroked my balls. Damn, I love when she does that. And as her hand rested on my ass, I bit back

the urge to say, "Just a little more, baby. You're almost there."

She'd been through so much before we were together. I'd seen her at her worst and knew there were things she never wanted to revisit. Would it make me any better than her ex to ask those kinds of things of her? Was the context that much different despite us being together over a decade?

How do you finally say to your wife, "Honey, I want you to fuck my ass"?

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Chapter 3

Her

I remember how my friend Carole laughed in my face when I told her I'd never write *romance books*.

"Girlfriend, you already do. Just because you don't think of a book as a bodice-ripper makes it any less a romance."

That shocked me.

That should have been a hint. In a book it would have foreshadowed the earthquake about to rock my soul and sanity.

Nada.

I wrote a lot. The erotica was fun to write, and after finding out the MMF *ménages* were great sellers, it gave me even more incentive.

Bless my husband's heart, he uncomfortably squirmed when he read through the parts where the guys got it on. I was okay with that. Frankly, it relieved me.

I think it would have bothered me if it had turned him on.

How little did I know.

My teasing comments at the time didn't help the situation, as it turns out.

After six months of writing and selling the erotica, we were having a fairly hot session in bed one night. The fantasies and foul language were flying. He'd revisited the fantasy of me making him ride naked in the car one night, taking him

somewhere, parading him around, like at a deserted beach. Leading him around.

Commanding him.

He was really into it, so it didn't hurt to play along.

"What else would you like me to do?" I purred in his ear.

I barely heard his whisper. "I'd like you to play with my ass."

I froze for a second, because he'd never in over ten years of marriage even hinted at this before. Not like this. Not that it freaked me out...

Okay, so it freaked me out. But not for that reason. The fact that my husband, the man I thought I knew so well, pulled this rabbit out of his ass, so to speak, startled me.

What else didn't I know about him?

"Does that bother you?" he asked in that same, scared whisper. Yes, I'd identified the tone. Terrified.

Shitting bricks worried that I'd freak out.

"No, it doesn't bother me." Well, it didn't bother me. Freaking out about something and being bothered by it can be mutually exclusive reactions.

I didn't want to ask, but did anyway. "What else do you want to do?" Was this a road I even wanted to follow?

He tucked his face against my shoulder and I almost couldn't hear him. "I wouldn't mind playing your slave," he whispered.

We'd switched the game back and forth many times over the years, a bit of fantasy fun that ended after all the orgasms were over and we rolled over to go to sleep. Pillow talk.

Mostly talk.

Never much in the way of action, especially outside of the bedroom.

This was different. His voice, his demeanor.

I took the chicken way out. I pretended it was no different than anything else we'd done. One surprise in a night was almost more than I could safely process without hurting his feelings or steamrolling his emotions.

* * * *

A writer acquaintance of mine published a story about a man who is trapped on an alien planet and ends up as one of the alien's pets. The guy was gay and submissive—a sub.

It was a story that simultaneously disturbed and wowed me when I first read it, one of those stories I had to digest for a while, go back and re-read several times to get the full impact. The emotion more than the sex is what got to me.

Yeah, I mean, I'll admit I'm one of those pervy women who doesn't mind the thought of guy-on-guy action in fantasy life. Don't want to see my husband doing it with another dude, but fantasy in my head or watching strangers on the internet, it's all copacetic.

He was using my laptop one night and looked through some of my e-books. "What's this one?" he asked, clicking it.

I choked a little on my tea and laughed. "You probably won't like that one, honey. It's male-male D-s."

"Dee-ess?"

"Dom-sub."

"Oh." He read it.

Later that night we were making love and I noticed more of an urgency to his actions than I'd seen in a while. Some of the e-books I'd bought were pretty racy.

All right, erotic. Happy?

I finally had to ask. "What did you think of Syd's story?"

"Hmm?"

"The alien pet story. What'd you think of it?"

He froze. I felt the fulcrum tipping as if we were actually lying upon it.

"It was good," he whispered.

Why was I going there? "It didn't freak you out?"

He didn't answer.

I had to say it. The silence was killing me. "Lots of straight guys like anal sex. It's no big deal."

Part of the tension drained from him. I felt him relax against me. He still didn't look at me, his face pressed against my stomach, his lips warm and damp against my flesh.

"Yeah?"

I stroked the back of his head. How long had he wanted this and been scared to ask it?

And how much more was there?

"Yeah." I loved the feel of his hair between my fingers, soft and smooth. I left my hand resting on the back of his head, gently cupping it. "If it's something you want, it's okay."

He kissed my stomach. "Okay. Thank you."

But the story wasn't about anal sex, although it contained it. It wasn't even about a gay relationship.

It was about a Dom and a sub. An Owner and a pet.

A Master and a slave.

I closed my eyes. "What else did you like about it?"
Mentally I chanted to myself, *Shut up shut up shut up!*

He froze again. I felt him watching me, didn't need to look to see he studied my face.

"It was a good story."

This was not my husband's voice, the strong, confident tone I was used to hearing.

This soft, nearly submissive whisper was new, alien territory.

"What did you like about it?" I calmly asked again, hoping he didn't pay attention to how my heart raced.

He took a long time answering. I still felt his eyes on me, testing, gauging, trying to spin the answer in any way he thought wouldn't totally flip me out and send me running for cover.

I felt him rest his chin over my navel. "I would like to do that." Another long pause. "For you. With you."

"More than just play?"

He kissed my stomach and rested his cheek against my flesh. At ten o'clock at night he had a little stubble on his chin, scratchy, real.

"Yeah. More than just play."

Breathe, I thought. *Air in, air out.*

It took me a moment to sort things out in my mind. "What do you want to do?" I asked, trying to confirm what I'd heard in the least threatening way possible.

"I'd like to be your slave."

Okay, so I did hear him right.

"I need a little time to get my head around that." I thought about things I'd seen on the internet, stereotypes I wasn't comfortable with. "I won't go around beating you like a dog. I can't do that to you, I love you."

"I don't want that," he whispered. "I want you to be in control. Not just in the bedroom. I want you to be my Mistress."

Okay then.

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Chapter 4

him

I couldn't believe she didn't freak out.

I did some research and no, we weren't exactly textbook bondage folks. Although touring through a few sites left me drooling for some of the restraints, my dick throbbing when I imagined how it'd feel to have her truss me up.

I didn't have any idea how to vocalize to her why I needed this. I trusted her. I've never trusted another person in my entire life as much as I trust my wife.

Once the kids were on their own, it wasn't unusual for me to walk naked around the house in the evening. She enjoyed it, and I know I did. Once we started this, I would voluntarily shed my clothes as soon as I got home and stay that way until I had to dress to go to work or to the store or something.

I asked her if she wanted me to keep a journal, because it was something I read about online that other Masters made their slaves do. I wanted a list of rules, of chores, of tasks to do for my Mistress.

I took it upon myself to start preparing her coffee and bringing it to her every morning. I made sure her laptop was always turned on when I got up.

Somehow, it helped satisfy some of my need. I craved to do things for her and wished I could afford to quit work and

stay home and spend all day being with her, taking care of her.

Serving her.

When I'd sit at work and listen to co-workers bitch about their wives and girlfriends, complaining that they had their free time scheduled, my dick would harden. I wished my wife would do that for me, tightly schedule every second.

Owning me.

After a week or so I came home and she'd set up an online task list for me, with a spreadsheet for me to check off every day, acknowledging I'd read it and for me to note any questions or concerns or requests.

I nearly drooled.

What the fuck was wrong with me?

But she loved me. She did this for me.

My Mistress.

The first couple of days, I nearly raced home to see if she'd added anything. It started out very basic, mostly things I was already doing.

Biting back my disappointment, I diligently filled out my daily log as I was instructed. I wanted more.

Needed more.

Craved it.

The third day, a new line. *You will always take proper care of your toys and know exactly where they are so you can get them immediately if Mistress wishes to use them on you.*

Ah! Yes! Wait. Toys? What toys? I didn't have any toys.

Yet.

Then the next line. *You are not allowed to come without Mistress unless she tells you it's okay.*

Licking my lips, I fought the urge to fist my cock right then. Reading the words had given me a hard, throbbing woody. *This* is what I wanted.

It wasn't enough but I knew it wasn't fair to push her harder than I already had.

Besides that, she was my Mistress. It was her call.

I knew she was worried about taking me too far too fast, worried it might be a passing phase and hesitant to do anything that might hurt me.

I wanted to beg her to jump in with both feet.

But I loved her for her caution, for her level-headed approach to this. She was right, and I had to trust her.

I had to trust my Mistress.

She called to me from the living room. "Go wait for me in bed."

As if a switch flipped inside me, without question I immediately jumped up from my chair and ran for the bedroom. When she walked in a few minutes later, she found me kneeling on the bed, my ass in the air.

Her hand caressed my ass, sliding between my legs, nails gently raking across my sac.

Ahhh...

"I'm going shopping," she said.

Toys!

I didn't know if I was supposed to say anything, so I knelt there, fighting the urge to grind my ass against her hand.

Her voice faltered. "You're sure you want to do this?"

I nodded, my eyes closed, wishing she'd do more than just rest her cool hand on my ass. "Yes, Mistress. Please." I knew it had to sound like begging.

I was beyond caring.

She gently patted me on the ass. "You can have some free time until I return." She paused. "Did you read your list today?"

"Yes, Mistress."

"Any questions?"

"No, Mistress."

She hesitated, like she was going to say something, then I heard her step away from the bed. "I'll be back soon. Enjoy your free time."

Before I could look, she was gone. I heard the front door open and shut a moment later. Something about her voice sounded off.

There was no way I could grab something to cover myself in time and go after her. Something about her tone gnawed at me. I hadn't heard that tone in ... years.

Like maybe she was trying not to cry.

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Chapter 5

Her

I had to back up a few steps. I was in virgin territory—forgive the pun—and had no clue how to proceed. I wouldn't beat my husband. I would look like a nightmare in latex, not that I wanted to wear it in the first place.

I didn't want to be one of "those" people you could download off the torrent sites and watch writhing in agony and ecstasy.

Oh, gods, please don't let him want to be wrapped in a diaper or dressed like a girl!

There were limits to what I could do for him. Limits that even if I tried to cross I knew would send me over the edge. I desperately wanted to give this man any and everything he asked of me. That was the depths of my love for him. There were some things, however, I knew I could not do.

Not if I wanted to hold onto my sanity and self-respect.

I remembered that one of the writers I knew was a Dom. A real life, wield a whip Dom.

The next evening, I saw Tony on IM. I sent him a message.

I have a question.

Shoot.

I knew he'd keep his mouth shut, but it was still hard to type the words.

My dh wants to be my sub.

A moment of panic as his reply was delayed.

What do you want?

I'd always joked that in our house, I was queen of all she surveyed. The Alpha bitch. The final voice.

Joked.

Yes, in many things that was true, but I tried when I could to get my husband to make the call.

I want to make him happy.

That was a cop-out answer and I knew it. Tony either gave me a pass or missed it entirely.

So what do you want to know?

He wants to try anal.

So get him a butt plug...

And so the conversation went. That's how I found myself standing outside the adult toy store, alone, fighting my tears, trying to suck it up and be a Domme.

Domme by default.

The opportunist in me mentally filed away details for future use in a story. Hah! I admit it, everything's fair game in my life. It's how I make my living.

I never realized anal toys came in such a wide variety of sizes, shapes, and colors. They ranged from *why bother?* to *is it in yet?* to *holy fucking shit there's no way in hell that'll fit.*

I stared at the display and the chipper sales girl helped me make a decision. I picked two that didn't scare the living daylights out of me. The girl suggested a bottle of silicone lubricant to go with them, offered me some surreally helpful advice for my husband for his first time using them, and twenty minutes later I was back in my car with my purchase.

That was a long drive home, even though it only lasted twenty minutes.

I'd had no idea what to do. I'd worried I'd hurt my husband, had no clue how to introduce these to him and had admitted this to Tony.

I recalled Tony's advice. *Give him the butt plugs and the lube and tell him to go play for a set amount of time. He'll come out blushing and grinning.*

Well, I had to start somewhere.

I'd done a little research ahead of time, before leaving on my unusual shopping trip. My husband was sitting at his desk, naked, reading email on his laptop.

His eyes lit up when I handed him the bag. He started to stand and I said, "Wait." I reached over him and typed in a website, navigated to the page I had already scoped out, and pointed. "Reading assignment. After you read, you can go into the bedroom and play for thirty minutes."

He eagerly nodded, apparently no longer capable of coherent speech.

I took a deep breath. "Remember, you're not allowed to come."

He smiled, nodding.

"Don't open the bag until after you're in the bedroom."

He nodded again. As I moved out of the way he saw the page was a user-friendly instructional guide for newbies to anal plugs and how to properly use them.

Yes, there are such pages.

I know, surprised the crap out of me, too. I guess you really can find anything on the internet.

I returned to the living room and tried to write. I wasn't sitting in a direct line of sight of our bedroom, but I heard him get up a few minutes later and walk into our bedroom and close the door.

I swallowed hard.

I tried to read email. I tried to web surf. I tried reading news and ten minutes later I was tiptoeing down the hall and standing outside our bedroom door, listening.

I couldn't hear much. I heard the bed move, meaning he was in it. I thought I heard him moan, I wasn't sure.

It was tempting to join him but I needed to do this.

He needed to do this.

He wanted me to be his Domme. That meant I needed to learn to hold my ground when I gave him a command. That was part of it, right?

I forced myself back to the couch and thirty minutes after I'd heard the door shut, our bedroom door opened.

He was blushing, grinning from ear to ear, and his hair looked like he'd been through a wind tunnel.

I'll be damned. Tony was right.

"Well?" I asked.

He nodded and leaned over the back of the couch and kissed me. "Wow!"

I tried for cool but knew I veered hard into curious. "So you know how to use them?"

He eagerly nodded.

I mean, how do you hold a conversation like this with the man you love? Do you say, "Hey, honey, how's it feel to have a butt plug up your ass?"

What's the etiquette for a situation like that?

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Chapter 6

him

Holy crap it felt great! I was nervous at first, my eyes bugged when I looked at the webpage she'd pulled up.

I could only guess what was in the bag.

I didn't peek. Mistress ordered me not to look, so I didn't.

The hard part was not coming. Fuck! It was uncomfortable at first, an alien feeling but as I relaxed ... holy crap!

I've never been so hard in my life.

I could not believe she was going along with this.

And I desperately loved her for it.

I didn't dare touch my cock. I knew if I did I'd be fisting myself and there's no way I wouldn't come.

I didn't want to disappoint Mistress.

My Mistress.

I knew this couldn't be easy for her, but ... dammit. I've never been so fucking turned on in my life as I was laying there working the small butt plug up inside me. I wanted to walk out to the living room and drop to my knees in front of her.

But those weren't my orders.

After a few minutes I was brave enough to try the medium one.

Wow!

I squirmed on the bed, trying to obey Mistress. Jesus I wanted to stroke my cock. The only thing that could make this better...

I froze as the website I'd been looking at before she returned home flashed through my mind. Would she go for it?

My dick throbbed at the thought.

Visible proof that I was owned. I wanted it so bad. What did that say about me?

I didn't want a cheap-assed pet store collar. I wanted a real one, thick and lockable, something marking me as hers.

I tried to wipe this vision from my stupid head because it wasn't helping me obey my Mistress. It only made me hornier.

I rolled over onto my stomach and tried to finish working the medium butt plug in.

Mistake.

I froze on the bed, willing my cock to soften. I hadn't counted on how it would feel rubbing against the bed.

I finally got the plug all the way in and rolled over again. My cock stood straight up in the air. I hadn't spent this much time hard since high school.

I had to take several breaks, holding myself perfectly still because it felt like I could come if I thought hard about it.

That was the longest—and possibly best—thirty minutes of my life. As I finally and reluctantly removed the butt plug and took everything into our bathroom to clean up, I allowed myself another fantasy, imagining what it would feel like to have her fucking my ass not with a tame butt plug, but with a large strap-on.

Would I ever be brave enough to ask her?

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Chapter 7

Her

You cannot take control of someone *and* have them take control of you at the same time. The clarity of this truth hit me. One or the other. Give up one dream to make room for another.

His ideal or mine.

I had to choose.

He would serve me. He would die for me. He would kill the spiders and stand toe-to-toe with a drunk who hit on me at a hotel bar. He would love me with every breath in his body until the day the light finally left his eyes and they closed for good.

There were many things he wanted from me, but they were his desires, not his cravings. He asked only one thing of me above all others. In his heart it was all he needed—the *only* thing he needed—from me.

He needed my control.

He needed me as his Domme.

If he had that from me, he knew he had the other, lesser cares. If I was willing to do this for him, he knew no matter what direction the play took that he had my love and faith and trust.

Control.

I closed my eyes and laid my glasses on the table next to my laptop. Hadn't we done this anyway? Except with me

spending years trying to goad him into taking a more dominant role in our relationship while he silently ceded control over to me?

And didn't I owe him this? Not that he would demand it. Even now he was proving to be a good sub. He would never demand anything from me. I could tell him to sit in a corner while I went out to have meaningless sex, and to be in that corner when I returned, and he would sit there.

He wouldn't like it or enjoy it, but he would do it.

Not that I would ever do anything like that. The thought that there were people out there who would prey on subs turned my stomach.

I opened my eyes again and looked at the screen. Because of his line of work he couldn't wear a collar all the time. But I liked the look of the lockable leather collar he'd sent me the url for. I ordered it.

I also ordered an inexpensive ID bracelet, a heavy one, and had it engraved. On the outside, the first letter of my name.

On the backside—OWL.

Owned and Well-Loved.

Discreet, and yet it would serve as a tangible reminder of who and what he was.

The regular collar arrived first. When he got home from work that night, after he stripped I called him into the living room and pointed to the floor. He dropped to his knees and looked up at me with...

Love. Devotion.

Eagerness.

He wanted this. Could I really deny him? He was happier than I'd seen him in years, and we'd always had a great relationship to begin with.

"You said you wanted a collar, and you sent me a website."

He nodded. "Yes, Mistress."

I still couldn't get used to those words coming from his mouth, but I guess I needed to suck it up and deal with it. I held up the collar and his eyes widened.

And his cock hardened. I mean as if I'd snapped my fingers and poof, there was his woody. Pavlov couldn't have done any fucking better.

"This collar."

He nodded.

I'd also had a small tag made for this, with OWL engraved on it too, as well as my first name.

"You want this?"

He eagerly nodded.

I swallowed hard, fastened it around his neck and snapped the small lock shut.

It wasn't going anywhere.

He stared up at me with a broad, beaming smile. "Can I go look?"

I nodded. He jumped up from the floor and, his stiff cock leading the way, ran to the guest bathroom.

Behind him from the doorway, I watched as he stared at his reflection and ran his fingers over the collar, his smile etched on every inch of his sweet face.

"Do you like it?" I finally managed to ask.

He turned and hugged me hard. "I love it, Mistress! Thank you so much!"

I tried to stay in the moment and not break down and cry. Here was my sweet husband, eagerly thanking me for collaring him like a dog.

I took a deep breath and tried to stay in character for him. "Here's how this will work. Once your day collar gets here, you'll wear it to work. You won't wear this one to work. This one is for at home in the evenings and on weekends. When you get home every day, you will come to me so I can collar you, then you can take off your day collar. In the mornings, before you go to work, you can put your day collar on and I'll take this one off you. Otherwise, you don't take this collar off yourself unless it's an emergency, got it?"

He nodded. "Yes, Mistress."

His stiff erection poked my hip. "Go put your medium toy in and wait for me in bed."

He raced to do it.

I watched him run down the hall.

Run. Eagerly.

I turned and stared at myself in the mirror. I felt like a monster and yet I didn't look any different. I wanted to break down and cry and knew if I did it would hurt him. He would feel guilty, and that's the last thing I wanted to make him feel.

I washed my face, sucked it up, put on my metaphorical big girl panties, and went to go take care of My sub.

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Chapter 8

him

I found the information about the Munch, held at a local restaurant on the mid to upscale end of things. I printed out the information, walked into the living room and knelt in front of her.

She finally looked up from her laptop. "Yes?"

I handed her the paper. She studied it for several long minutes. "You want to go?"

"Yes, Mistress."

She frowned. "Okay, seriously, let's talk about this. Are you sure you really want to do this?"

I'd thought about it.

I did.

I nodded.

"You're not worried about seeing someone there you know?"

I shrugged. "They'll be in the same boat I am." I hoped I'd made that sound as casual as I planned. Frankly, I was nervous about it, but my desire to go overrode my common sense. If she knew how nervous I really was she'd put the kibosh on it.

She studied the paper for a little longer, then nodded. "Okay. You can make our reservations."

* * * *

Three days before the Munch, she added several new lines to the daily task list I had to read through. Safeword protocol. She was more worried about this than I was, apparently.

God I loved her for it. She always took such good care of me.

I would wear my regular collar for this as well as my day collar. My dress shirt and necktie mostly hid my regular collar. Hid it well enough.

She drove. As soon as the car was in park, I jumped out and raced around to her door to open it, waiting, holding it for her while she took her time shutting down the car and getting out.

She smiled and kissed me. "Thank you."

"You don't have to thank me, Mi—Sweetheart." I almost screwed up. One thing she insisted on was me not calling her Mistress in public around others. We'd mutually agreed upon Sweetheart in its place. Vanilla and safe enough for any location.

I offered her my arm and held the restaurant door for her. We checked in with the hostess and my wife handled things from there, as she'd instructed me she would. She told the hostess we were part of the "computer club."

We were escorted to a large back meeting room. Around twenty people were already there. We were about fifteen minutes early.

I remained at my wife's side as she found the woman in charge and introduced us by our first names. Everyone seemed friendly and nice and ... well, normal. A couple of the women and two of the men wore what could probably safely

be called collars of some sort, but not obvious ones. A few had some tattoos and body piercings, but for the most part everyone there could have been us.

We took our seats. I hurried to hold my wife's chair for her. Another couple sat next to us, a woman and a man, and he held the chair for her, too.

The woman, speaking to my wife, introduced themselves. My wife handled our introduction. After a few minutes the four of us were chatting about pretty much everything except the elephant taking a craptacular dump in the middle of the room.

My wife apparently hit her limit and finally asked the other woman, "Tell me to take a hike if this isn't the right protocol, but this is our first Munch and I've got a lot of questions..."

Twenty minutes later, us two men had learned far more intimate details about each other than we ever would have in normal polite company, I'm sure. And we didn't have to say a word. At one point he looked at me and sort of shrugged, and I did the same.

Staying quiet seemed a safe option for both of us.

My wife asked me a direct question. I was about to respond when my eye fell on the doorway. While we were talking, several people had arrived, bringing the total number of attendees to around thirty-five. But the latest arrivals...

Holy shit.

I didn't know the woman. I knew that Tom, the guy in the office down the hall from me, wasn't married. Beyond that, I didn't know much about him. I had a feeling I was about to learn a lot, though.

The *holy shit* look on his face when he saw me had to mirror mine.

My wife snapped her fingers at me and then she recognized my expression and followed my gaze.

"Do we need to go talk?" she quietly asked. That was our pre-arranged code.

I nervously shook my head. "Not yet."

The only open place for two people at that point was on our other side. My co-worker looked like he was being marched to the electric chair.

Then the first woman who'd sat with us smiled and waved at the woman with Tom. "Oh, hey! Glad you made it."

The three of us men sat there quietly listening to the conversation until our food arrived.

Eventually the women brought us into the chat and we all loosened up a little.

I'll admit I was too nervous to look around and get to know many of the people there. Most of them were male Doms with female subs, one female Domme with a female sub, a couple other female Dommies with male subs, then these three women with us. A couple of people were there alone, male and female, and seemed to know several of the other members.

I have to admit I did enjoy myself. As we mingled and talked with others, I learned we weren't alone on the "tamer" end of the scale. That relieved me. I felt a little less freakish amongst the freaks, so to speak.

By the time we were finished a couple of hours later, I stood at my wife's side while she said our good-byes and my eyes met Tom's.

He nodded.

I nodded back.

When we bumped into each other at a meeting Monday morning, neither of us acknowledged the other any differently than we had on any other day. But now I realized what the unusual necklace he always wore, intricately braided leather with a small pewter tag I'd originally assumed was a charm, probably signified.

He made no comment about my ID bracelet either.

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Chapter 9

Her

Mojito Mamas ... Mimosa Mamas ... Margarita Mamas.

I had no idea so many alcoholic beverages started with M.

Why not the Milk Mamas or the Metamucil Mamas?

At the rate my friends were drinking, they'd be the Mylanta Mamas.

This week they'd opted to dub themselves the Martini Mamas. Each had a glass with a different flavored variation before them. I sat back and sipped my iced tea and watched them with a writer's eye. I felt more unconnected from them than I ever had in my life. Was this a result of my inner turmoil, or a natural instinct to stay in control?

There was no way in fucking hell I'd ever admit to any of them what my husband and I were now doing. I would not subject him to their uneducated snickering behind his back. I could care less what they thought of me for doing it, but I damn sure wouldn't have them thinking less of my husband.

On our girls nights, I was invariably the DD—Designated Driver. Not that they ever asked me. I'd always silently volunteered by ordering first, iced tea or coffee or something non-alcoholic. Over the years it became a natural assumption on their part. They trusted me to get them home to their husbands and families in one piece.

I sighed and looked at the ceiling. It had always been like this. The only one I ever drank with when out and about was

my husband. And then he was my DD. Even in high school I was the "safe" friend who parents always looked at and smiled, knowing their child would come home safely. Perhaps late, or early depending on your point of view, but safely and not in the back of a squad car. I was the "good girl." I was the one my friends used as a front for their crazy-assed behaviors. I was welcomed not because of my stellar personality or brilliant conversation, certainly not because I was rich, because I wasn't.

But because I was in control.

I could keep them in control, under control, or at the very least from getting too much out of control.

How fucking stupid could I be?

My filter had shifted as I watched my friends laughing and talking. I could be any of their husbands sitting here, waiting for them to finish to drive them home. When they weren't drinking, I was one of the girls. Although...

When Angie's husband was away on business, I was the one she called for advice on the lawnmower or the garbage disposal.

When Jane's husband was still gone on deployment, I was the one she called in the middle of the night when her water heater split wide open and flooded her utility room.

I got the call early one morning when Susan's husband had already left for work and her car wouldn't start.

Caroline frantically IM'd me when she turned on the central heat system and smelled something "funny."

Why she didn't call 911 immediately, to this day I'll never understand. Fortunately it was just normal dust burn off from sitting unused in the Florida heat for a year.

Me.

Not my husband. Not their own male relatives or neighbors.

Moi.

I pretended to smile and nod at another story they thought was amazingly funny in their inebriated state. Frankly, I hadn't paid the slightest bit of attention. I was too stunned.

When I worked for other people, I was the natural leader despite not wanting the role. I always ended up appointed team leader, like it or not. The project manager, even when others volunteered and I sat there praying the boss wouldn't see me. The one everyone joked, "Give it to her, she always gets everything done. You're always so busy I don't know how you have time for it all!"

Well, it had to get done, one way or another.

I never refused, although I could have.

So it should only be natural I ended up with a husband who subconsciously saw me in the same light, right?

Strong.

Safe.

Reliable.

I was so sick of it on a cellular level. I wanted to be taken care of. I didn't want the decisions. I didn't want the responsibility.

It took every ounce of my will to not stand up and silently walk out of there without my friends.

I wanted to go home and hit my husband. Not bend him over the bed and playfully spank him until his ass and my hand both looked like the skin on a MacIntosh apple, but slug him in the jaw and call him a bastard for forcing me into this position.

Which was exactly why I didn't move. I stared into my glass of tea. When the waiter returned, I nodded when he offered me a refill. My friends were still drinking, would be good for at least another round and thirty minutes.

I couldn't go home like this, feeling like this. I needed to calm down.

I needed to regain control.

Part of me hated my husband, for my guilt, for my shame. I never wanted to be a Domme. I wanted to be a loving wife. I wanted a strong, dependable husband.

Now I think I understood maybe one reason why our variation of BDSM seemed to be the exception, not the rule. No matter what Tony or my new acquaintances from the Munch said, it seemed like many dominant women in "the lifestyle" were full-blown Dominatrixes or whatever term they wanted to use for themselves, turning their men into playthings.

At least that's the information I kept finding. I intellectually knew there had to be more to it than that, but a serious lack of information I could relate to left me feeling lost and alone.

Maybe this was why, because eventually some women became aggravated at what they'd been pushed into and took on the role wholeheartedly.

Or, maybe not. I knew some women genuinely enjoyed the full-fledged kink, but I wasn't one of them.

It was difficult to find information on men like my husband, who only wanted to serve, not be used and abused. Even more difficult to find information on women like me who wanted to fill that need for them, not because they wanted and craved the control over their man, but because they wanted to fill that need for their man because they loved him.

I wasn't doing this for me, that's for damn sure.

I finally got my friends out of the restaurant and safely poured into their respective homes. I'd texted my husband before I left the restaurant and told him my approximate return time.

I'd also told him to be waiting for my return.

I opened the front door and he was sitting exactly as I'd instructed, naked, on his knees on the floor, his arms behind him, waiting with an eager smile on his face.

"Did I please you, Mistress?" he asked.

I nonchalantly dropped my purse onto the couch and nodded. How could I ever admit to him what I'd felt earlier? A horrible wave of guilt washed through me. I didn't want to be selfish, I wanted to make him happy.

This made him happy.

"You pleased me," I lied.

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Chapter 10

him

Part of me worried I'd come home one day and she'd stop me before I could strip, tell me the game was over, and we'd go back to our vanilla ways.

I would, if she asked me to.

I prayed she wouldn't.

It never failed that my cock hardened every day as I packed to leave work and drove home. I wanted to strip my clothes off on the way to the front door so I could kneel, naked, before her as soon as I walked in.

I loved the feel of her hands on me as she gently buckled the collar around my neck, the soft *snick* as the lock snapped into place.

A weight lifted from me. A physical sensation of lightness that I was home, with my Mistress.

Where I belonged.

Where I could relax and forget the day and focus only on her or on what she allowed me to focus on.

I could spend hours kneeling on the floor beside her, my head resting against her knee, as she sat on the couch with her computer in her lap. I loved it when she tangled her fingers in my hair and kept her hand there, touching me.

Owning me.

She wanted me.

Maybe I'd died and I was now in Heaven, because that's what it felt like.

I always took her hand and kissed it after she collared me. It wasn't something she asked of me, it was something I felt I needed to do. I wanted her to know how much I loved her for this, for doing this.

I knew I was the luckiest bastard in the world.

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Chapter 11

Her

My first major meltdown came four months after we took up our new "lifestyle."

What a fucking euphemistic word that's absolute meaningless bullshit.

I was on my knees late one Saturday morning in the guest bathroom, trying to fix the goddamn toilet. I couldn't get the supply line detached and yelled for my husband to bring me a pair of Channellock pliers.

Just as I was about to get up and get them myself, I heard him in the bathroom doorway. Saturdays were always play days, and he wore nothing but his locking leather collar.

I reached back, my palm open. He laid the tool in my hand.

A monkey wrench.

I bit back my sarcasm and tried again. "No. This isn't what I asked for. This is a wrench. I need a pair of Channellock pliers. They look like regular pliers, only they're larger, longer, and the business end looks offset and weird.

"Okay."

He took the wrench back and I knew from his tone of voice he felt badly.

A few minutes later, he returned. "Is this it?"

I turned to look, not really wanting to get up because it'd taken me a minute to wedge myself down there in the first freaking place.

He held up a pair of needle-nosed vice grip pliers. They looked nothing like Channellocks.

I closed my eyes and tried to count to ten. I didn't make it past five.

"Never mind," I whispered, prying myself out of the tiny fucking space between the tub and toilet.

"No, honey, I—"

"Never. Mind." I knew I growled it, because he flinched.

I snatched the vice grips from his hand and stomped out to the garage, spied the Channellocks on the bench right next to the tool bag—he'd had to take them out of the bag—and threw the locking pliers in without caring where or how they went.

He'd started to follow me and dodged out of my way as I stormed past him through the living room and down the hallway.

"Honey, I'm sorry."

I wheeled around. I had to whisper, because if I spoke any louder I'd be screaming. "Don't. Just stay. The fuck. Out of my way."

He flushed red. I felt like shit and alternately glad that I'd hurt his feelings. This wasn't his fault, not really. I thought I could handle this. On top of everything else, I thought I could do it.

I was wrong.

I didn't speak to him, didn't look at the bathroom doorway although I sensed his presence as he stood and watched while I swapped out the tank guts. Twenty minutes later it was back together and the water on. No leaks.

I left all the tools and old parts on the bathroom floor, washed my hands, and pushed past him.

"Clean that up."

He jumped to it.

I wanted to sob.

He was taking care of that while I changed clothes and quickly threw a few things into an overnight bag. He was still out in the garage putting my tools away when I walked out the front door, bag, purse, cell phone, and laptop case in hand.

I thought I'd calm down before I reached Tampa International, but I didn't.

* * * *

When the captain announced we were touching down in Denver, I buckled my seat belt and wondered how many messages I'd have on my cell phone when I turned it on. It was eight hours later. My husband had to be worried.

I'd checked my overnight bag. I turned on my cell while waiting in baggage claim.

Ten messages.

Each sounded more worried than the last. The final one, three hours earlier, nearly broke my heart. I wanted to drop to my knees right there and cry.

"Please call me. I'm so sorry I disappointed you. I want to do better, I promise I'll try harder." Desperate. Pleading.

I sat in my rental car and considered my next move. I didn't know if Tony would be at work or not. I opened my laptop and used the aircard to log in to IM.

He was there.

Hey there, he greeted me.

I need to talk to you.

What's wrong?

I mean, I need to talk to you. Can I please meet you somewhere?

There was a long gap before his reply. *You're in Denver?*

The airport.

What happened? Do you have your cell?

I sent him the number. Seconds after I did, my phone rang from a number I didn't recognize.

The deep, smooth, soothing voice almost immediately calmed me. "What happened?"

I broke down sobbing, hating myself for doing this, imposing on someone I really didn't know that well and running from my responsibilities.

I never did get the story out. I was too busy crying. When he got me calmed down he gave me directions. I dug a notepad out of my laptop case and wrote them down.

"I'll be there as soon as I can," he promised. "I've got to finish up a couple of things, you'll probably beat me there by at least twenty minutes. Just get a table, leave your name with the hostess."

"Thanks, Tony," I sniffled.

"It's okay," he said, soothing me. "I'll see you shortly."

* * * *

I found the restaurant without any trouble. There was a decent hotel across the street, so at least I wouldn't have far to go late at night.

I sat there nursing a rum and Coke when I noticed a man walk in. Dark brown hair, dressed neatly in khaki slacks and a chambray shirt. He talked to the hostess, who pointed me out.

Maybe it was knowing who and what he was. Maybe it was my nerves.

Maybe it was my second rum and Coke.

But I felt it. The secure confidence. No swagger, no strut. Just a quiet self-assurance he wore like a cloak. He could have been a computer programmer or a graphic artist or even a lawyer.

I had to look like hell and wished I'd at least taken a shower before running away from home.

He stopped across the table from me and smiled, kind and gentle, concerned. I wanted to burst into tears right there.

"You okay?" he asked.

I nodded.

He walked around to me and leaned in, hugged me. "It's okay," he whispered in my ear. "You're not losing your mind."

He took his seat across from me as I harshly laughed. "Sure fucking feels like it."

The waitress walked over and took his drink order. I noticed he ordered coffee.

When we were alone again he reached across the table and placed his hand over mine, gently squeezed. "What do you need from me?"

I didn't know. To be honest, I hadn't thought that far ahead. All I knew was that I had to get away for a while. I needed to get my fucking head on straight before I did something and hurt my husband, literally or figuratively.

When I looked up I realized his eyes were an incredibly deep shade of green. Combined with his quiet power, it felt impressive to me. He waited for my answer.

"Tell me how to get my head on straight."

He smiled, full of kindness. "Why don't you start from the beginning?" he suggested. "What happened?"

I took a deep breath and started from the beginning. The waitress interrupted me for our dinner order. I wasn't hungry, but I knew if I didn't eat something I'd need Tony to pour me into the check-in desk across the street. I ordered fettuccini Alfredo, hoping they couldn't screw it up and figuring it would be easy to choke down.

He listened without interrupting. When I finished about the time our food arrived, he studied me for a minute before speaking.

"You don't have to do this, you know. You can sit him down and tell him you need things to go back to the way they were. It has to be a two-way street."

I shook my head. "You don't see the look in his eyes when we play. It's like he's a new man. I can't take that away from him. He enjoys it so much."

"But you're not having fun." He looked at me. "Are you?"

I thought about it. "Sometimes," I admitted. I thought about it longer when Tony didn't reply. "I enjoy that he enjoys it. I like that I can make him feel that good. That part I really enjoy."

"It's a powerful feeling, isn't it?" he quietly asked.

I nodded.

"Everyone's in it for their own reason. But being able to make someone feel like that," he said, his voice low but still somehow strong, "is very powerful. To fulfill someone's desires, to give them the feelings they want to experience, to in essence, make their dreams come true."

I snorted. "Fairy fucking godmother."

He laughed, a low, warm sound that stirred something inside me I knew should remain dormant.

He wore no wedding ring and I stupidly realized for the first time I'd flown halfway across the country to meet with a man who was practically a stranger, and no one knew where the hell I'd gone except Delta, American Express, and Avis.

Proving yet again why he was the more experienced Dom, he studied me. "You didn't come here for a play date." It was a statement, not a question.

I shook my head.

"I didn't think so. I'm glad to hear it, because frankly, I couldn't have given you that right now anyway."

I breathed a sigh of relief. He smiled again.

"You're safe. Although I might need to see you to your hotel."

I laughed, feeling the buzz of the rum course through me. No, I wasn't driving anywhere anytime soon.

I'd put my phone on silent and glanced at it halfway through the meal. The restaurant was open twenty-four hours, and it was now after ten local time.

Was my husband sitting on the couch with the phone in his hand, praying I'd call? Was he waiting on the bed for me, hoping I'd walk through the door any minute?

Had he fallen asleep?

I jumped, startled, as my phone lit up again.

Question answered.

Tony silently held out his hand and I passed my phone to him. He stood. As he walked away from the table, out the front door, he answered the call.

The longest twenty minutes of my life. I was glad Tony had at least finished his meal so it wasn't going cold. Tony returned and handed the phone to me.

I didn't know what or how to ask, so I didn't.

"He's worried," he finally said.

"I kind of guessed that."

He leaned back in his chair. "Don't you want to know what I told him?"

Unable to meet the weight of his gaze, I looked at my phone and shrugged.

He leaned forward so his voice wouldn't carry. "I'm not your Dom," he whispered. "I can't be that for you. Not like this, at least. Not under these circumstances."

"I don't want that from you. I just need..."

What? What did I need?

Tony helped. "Grounding?"

I nodded. Good as word as any.

I took a deep breath and met his eyes again. "I need to learn how not to hurt my husband, even when I really want to."

"I thought you weren't into pain play."

"I'm not," I whispered.

He slowly nodded, understanding. "You're afraid you're losing control."

"I wanted to fucking punch him. I wanted to order him onto the floor and kick the living shit out of him." Tears silently coursed down my cheeks and I wiped them away. "I was so fucking angry. I mean, goddammit, over a pair of fucking Channellocks!" I was hissing by the end of my tirade and I sat back, took a deep breath. "Is it too fucking much to ask to have a husband who knows a pair of Channellocks from a pair of vice grips? Most women don't know a goddamned wrench from a pair of pliers, and here I am having to teach my husband!"

"But you didn't teach him."

My jaw opened, then snapped shut.

Tony's eyes burned into me and I realized how right he was.

I hadn't taught him at all. I never had.

"You know these things," he patiently explained, "but you can't expect him to know something he hasn't been taught."

More fucking guilt. He was absolutely right.

I felt the tears again, close to the surface. I really didn't want to break down sobbing in a strange restaurant in front of a strange man in a strange town two thousand miles from home.

He reached across the table again and gripped my hand. "I told him who I was, and I told him basically where you are and that you're safe and that you'll call him in the morning. I also took the liberty of telling him he didn't do anything wrong, and that you would give him instructions when you call him, but he was to go to sleep and you wanted him to carry out his day tomorrow until he heard from you."

I nodded. And my husband would do just that, knowing him.

He was a good sub.

The bottom line was I felt mad, guilty, put-upon, and cheated out of what other women had.

But what *did* they have? Husbands who cheated on them, or who were too busy working to pay attention to them? Husbands who could fix things but who didn't give a damn about their day? Husbands who didn't make their wives the center of their universe as mine so obviously had?

We talked for another hour and I felt guilty I'd pulled Tony away from his life despite his kind reassurances to the contrary. It was nearly midnight by this time and my rum buzz was a thing of the past. Still, he insisted on driving me across the street to the hotel. He waited until I was safely checked in and we agreed to meet for a late brunch downstairs at the hotel restaurant the next day.

I took a long, hot shower. Because I hadn't brought any sleeping clothes, I crawled into bed naked with *CNN Headline News* playing on the TV to drown out other noises. I felt exhausted to my very core and still couldn't sleep. My

husband's hurt eyes haunted me. My guilt that a perfect stranger had to tell him where I was.

What was he thinking? Did he assume I'd flown out here to sleep with Tony?

More guilt.

I'd made no secret about talking with Tony. I had to get my information somewhere, and figured if we were in this together, there was no reason to hide what I was doing from my husband. There was nothing *to* hide.

There had to be more to their conversation than what Tony told me. Twenty minutes was a long time to say what he told me.

I'd have to ask him in the morning.

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Chapter 12

him

I stared at my phone, praying for her to call, hoping I hadn't made her more upset by calling so much.

Crying was the last thing I wanted to do.

But I did it anyway. I thought about the man's voice, how strong he must sound to her compared to mine right now.

The strange man who'd answered my wife's phone.

Oh God, please let her come back to me!

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Chapter 13

Her

I felt like shit the next morning. I stared at my reflection. Puffy, red eyes and a pounding headache. I could not believe I'd done this. I took a shower and dressed. Then I sat on the bed, stared at my phone.

I dialed.

He answered immediately. "Hi."

I swallowed hard and closed my eyes. "I'm okay."

"I'm so sorry, babe. Please whatever you want—"

"Shh. It's okay." I took a deep breath. "I'll be home tomorrow evening."

I worried for a moment the call had dropped when he eventually replied, "Okay." His voice sounded soft, hurt.

It ripped at me.

"I love you," I said. "I mean it, you didn't do anything wrong."

"I love you, too. I promise I'll try harder." He sounded frantic, near panic.

"No, you're trying hard enough. I'm the one who needs to try harder. I need to take a step back for a little bit and figure things out, that's all."

He sounded so sad but I knew he'd never admit it to me even if I asked. "What do you want me to do until you come home?"

I forced myself to maintain a steady, level tone of voice. "I want you to go to work tomorrow like you normally do. I'll see you when I get home tomorrow night. I should be home around seven thirty or so, maybe eight. If it'll be later than that I'll try to call you."

"Okay."

No questions, no recriminations, no accusations.

Acquiescence.

"I love you," I said again. "Be safe."

"I love you, too. I miss you."

That's when I nearly lost it. "I miss you, too. Now let me get off of here before my phone dies. I don't have my charger with me." I hung up before he could hear me sob.

* * * *

I put myself back together before I met Tony downstairs in the restaurant. He cocked his head and watched me from across the table. "Feeling better?"

I shook my head. "Worse."

We were seated by ourselves in a corner booth. He clasped his hands and leaned in close, his voice low. "I'm going to ask you something, and I want you to say the first thing that comes to mind, okay?"

I nodded.

He turned the full force of his green eyes on me. "If you could have your husband do one thing, what would it be?"

Without missing a beat I replied, "Have him take control and fuck me silly."

Tony smiled. "Then ask him."

"How's he supposed to do that?"

One eyebrow slid up. "I thought you had kids. You don't know how they get here?"

I laughed. "Duh. I mean, if he's playing sub, how's he supposed to take charge?"

He eyed me and I suspected I was about to learn a lesson. "Does a general go out in the field and fight every battle personally?"

I wasn't sure where he was leading, but I followed. "No."

"Do field commanders call generals up every five minutes and ask for new orders?"

I frowned. "I don't think so."

"What does a general do?"

I shrugged. "Beats the fuck outta me."

He smiled. "A general gives a command. Is a general always in command over a lower officer?"

"Is this our Yoda moment?"

"Answer the question."

I nodded. "Yeah, I think so. I mean, I guess so."

"Okay. But field commanders, they make 'in charge' decisions, don't they?"

I shrugged again. "I guess."

He leaned back. "Do you ever tell your husband to make dinner?"

"Yeah, he does it all the time."

"Do you stand over him and tell him how every little thing is supposed to be done?"

"No. I'd do it myself if I had to do that."

"You give him a goal-oriented command and tell him to get it done, correct?"

I nodded, seeing his point.

"And does he do it?"

"Yeah."

"Just because he makes decisions in the process doesn't make him any less your sub."

"Right."

"So you tell him this is something you need. He can serve you by doing it. You get the best of both worlds."

I closed my eyes, feeling like a fucking moron. It was one of those things that was so easy and clear that I'd totally fucking missed it *because* it was so simple.

"I think you just made the connection," he observed.

"Yeah. I did. So I can order him to be in charge and he's still my sub by taking charge."

"One of those little ironies that makes the lifestyle so interesting. You can have your cake and beat it, too."

It took me a second to realize what he'd said, then I laughed.

We had a good brunch. We didn't just talk about that, although he let me get my thoughts on the table and offered his insight. He never told me I had to do one thing or another.

Before we ended our discussion four hours later, he looked at me. "Any more questions?"

"How do I go home and explain why I did this?"

He shrugged. "You're his Mistress. You don't have to tell him anything if you don't want to."

"I'm also his wife. Don't I owe him an explanation?"

"Do you? Why?"

"Because I love him."

"Show him you love him. Be honest, have communication, but you can't sit there worried about what hasn't happened yet. Just be honest. Maybe he'll surprise you."

* * * *

Miracle of miracles, I didn't have a seat mate on the return flight home. I stared out the window at the alien landscape as it slipped by below us, thousands of feet away.

How would he greet me?

I still wasn't sure what my next step would be. Should I consider ending this "game" once and for all? I loathed myself. I hated that I could rip into him emotionally, even in as minor a way that I did, and hurt him. I didn't want that power.

I feared it.

The sun was dipping into the Gulf of Mexico as our plane banked over Tampa Bay, landing from the south. An hour later I sat in my car and pondered my next step.

What would await me?

I gave him no instructions when I told him about my flight. Would he be home? Would he be watching TV or working?

Would he be sitting there, naked, only wearing his collar?

Would he be there at all?

I personally feared and felt I deserved the last.

Yes, he'd asked for this lifestyle. I tried, but no matter what, I couldn't deny that there were needs I had that this

game ran totally contrary to. I needed him, his strength. I needed his support.

Could I reconcile what I needed and still give him what he craved?

That was. The longest. Fucking. Drive. Of my life. Period.

I sat in our driveway for a moment, his car was there. Lights were on inside.

With a deep, nervous breath, I gathered my things, locked my car, and stepped inside.

The smell hit me first, rolling out the door like a luscious cloud. He'd been cooking. Considering my last meal was a bagel off the hotel's continental breakfast bar twelve hours earlier, saying my mouth watered wasn't an exaggeration.

The lamp in the living room was on, but the rest of the kitchen and dining room were bathed in candlelight.

Stunned, I couldn't move. I was vaguely aware of something soft and jazzy on the stereo. I'd envisioned many homecomings, but nothing like this.

He stuck his head out of the kitchen and raced over to me. Naked.

Well, except for his collar.

He threw his arms around me and I barely had time to put down my stuff before he swept me into his arms, his face buried in my hair.

"I'm sorry. I'm so sorry," he kept repeating.

I think that made me feel worse.

I let him hold me, hugging him back, closing my eyes and trying to live in the moment. Obviously he wasn't upset with me for my sudden departure.

"You didn't do anything wrong," I whispered.

And, of course, he hadn't.

We made it to the couch. When he tried to sit on the floor in front of me I refused to let go of him until he was seated next to me, on the cushions, his arm around me.

I couldn't look him in the eye. "We need to have a talk," I managed.

He kissed the top of my head. "Okay."

I'd planned this talk all day. Somehow, the words failed me. Every line I thought I'd memorized went right out the fucking window.

"What did Tony say to you on the phone?" I asked.

I felt his body tense a little. "He told me you were having a normal reaction and that you needed a little time to think things through."

"What else?"

I felt him shrug.

"I didn't sleep with him. That's not why I went out there. All we did was talk."

His body relaxed, as if tension drained from him.

I sat up and forced my eyes to his. "I would never do that. I don't want anyone but you. He's right though. I needed time to think. I needed to talk to someone face to face about this who wouldn't look at me like I was a freak."

His eyes widened. "I'm sorry, babe. I didn't mean for you to feel like—"

I shook my head, cutting him off. "You didn't. You didn't do anything wrong. This is about me." Now the words would come, the ones I'd said to Tony, his advice to me. "I need to get better at asking for what I need from you. I haven't done a very good job of being your Domme."

"Honey, you've been great. I'm sorry I've put you through this." He looked at our hands, where he'd laced his fingers through mine. "We can stop if you want. I understand."

"No." I took a deep breath. "That's not what I want. You enjoy this. And I enjoy making you feel like that. But there's going to be times I need you to be and do things for me, too."

His hopeful eyes met mine and he eagerly nodded. "Whatever you want, you ask."

"I need to do a better job telling you what I want, of teaching you. I didn't realize that before. I guess I assumed since we were playing this and you asked me to do it that you knew what you wanted and what I wanted." I asked the question. "What do *you* want out of this?"

His mouth opened, then closed.

That actually made me feel better, that he was as lost as I was.

He shook his head. "I want to have fun."

"Okay, that's a start. Why do you want to be my sub?"

He pursed his lips as he thought about it. I was having a hard time concentrating with what smelled like beef stew calling me to the kitchen, but I wanted this handled. Now.

He finally spoke. "I enjoy doing things for you like this. I enjoy letting go and giving myself to you. I like knowing you have full control over me and trusting you like that."

I didn't know how far he could go. I kept Tony's advice in mind. "I will do that for you, but I need to be honest with you. I wish there were times I could just let go and you would be in charge. At least in the bedroom. There will be times I need you to do that for me, to give me a break. Give me a chance to recharge."

I read the surprise in his eyes. Maybe he hadn't really understood me before, all the times in the past when I'd tried to nudge him into a dominant role.

"What do you want me to do?" he asked. "I'll do it."

I shifted position, sitting in his lap, his strong arms around me, my head on his shoulder. "Sometimes, I need to just *be*. I need you strong and taking care of me, not just serving me. I don't know how to explain the difference."

He nuzzled the back of my neck, making me shiver. "Okay."

"Not all the time. Sometimes I need to recharge. Tony said it was called 'Dom drop' or something. I don't mean you need to play my Dom, but sometimes I just need you to be my husband. Sometimes I need you to be more than that." I took a deep breath. "I promise I'll do a better job teaching you things so you understand what I want."

"I love you so much." He hugged me tightly and I didn't want to cry, but I did. I sobbed against him, loving this man and knowing I had to find a way to get a handle on this for him. As hard as this was for me, I craved the look of unadulterated joy in his eyes when we played. I enjoyed seeing him looking years younger than he had.

I relished the comments from my friends that he seemed like a changed man, a younger man.

I enjoyed how sexy he made me feel, and that he was practically like a horny teenager with me, when most of my friends were complaining they could barely get their husbands to look at them in bed anymore.

We both were changed.

I could—would—do this. I had to.

I finally quit bawling and we ate. He held my chair for me and served me dinner, smiling when I complemented him on his cooking. He wouldn't let me help him with the dishes. I had to admit there was something incredibly sexy about watching a naked man's ass while he washed dishes.

A thought hit me. "You didn't wear your collar to work today, did you?"

He turned from the sink and nodded. "Yes."

I felt horrible. "Why did you do that?"

"Because you told me I wasn't allowed to take it off except in an emergency. That wasn't an emergency."

"But that had to be uncomfortable."

He shrugged, then the faintest of smiles curled his lips. "I loosened it one notch so it rode lower under my collar. And I wore a necktie. No one could tell."

I watched as his cock slowly inflated.

Fuck. That was...

Hot.

"You liked having your collar on at work?"

He nodded, still stiffening. "I liked knowing I was still obeying you." He arched an eyebrow at me. "Of course,

Mistress could punish me for loosening my collar and not wearing it properly."

His cock stood at full attention at the thought.

Oh boy.

"Did you have it locked?"

He nodded. "I only had the lock off long enough to loosen it one notch. Then I put it right back on. As soon as I got in the car before I came home I put it back the way it belonged."

I imagined him doing that, loosening his tie and unbuttoning his collar, looking in the rear view mirror to see what he was doing. My mouth went dry.

"So what did you do with your day collar?"

He looked at me like I was nuts. "I wore it."

"Why?"

"Because you told me I'm always to wear it when I'm not at home."

"But you had your collar on."

He nodded. "Yes?"

Now I was wet.

What the hell was *wrong* with me? Or was there anything wrong with me? Maybe I *was* meant to do this with him.

When he finished the dishes he walked over to me and took my hands. "If you can't do this, I understand. I have fun doing this with you. I spend half my day imagining what I'm going to do for you when I get home, and I don't just mean sex, either. I like knowing that as soon as I walk through the door my world begins and ends with you."

His stiff erection poked against my hip.

"But the sex is hotter."

He nodded, smiling. "Fuck, yes. I spend most of my day at work hard as a rock. I haven't felt like this in years."

I wanted honesty, I got it.

I knew we couldn't go back. Frankly, I really didn't want to. Maybe I *could* find a balance I could comfortably live with.

I wrapped my arms around his neck and ground my hips against him. "I want you to take me to bed and make love to me. If you're a good boy, I'll reward you."

He shivered with anticipation. "Really?"

I kissed the base of his throat. "Yes. Make love to me right now, and I'll let you spend the rest of the evening with one of your toys in your ass—"

He scooped me into his arms, crushing his lips against mine, practically running with me to our bedroom.

Something inside me broke free in a good way. I could live like this.

Maybe I hadn't been trying hard enough. Maybe I hadn't spent enough time looking for my path, had spent too much time focused on his, trying to do it the way I thought he wanted it done.

An hour later, he'd made me come twice and left me a melted puddle of flesh in the middle of our bed. I crooked my finger at him. "Fuck me, baby."

I didn't have to ask twice. As his eyes squeezed shut I wrapped my legs around his waist. Then I stretched just a little, running my finger down the crack of his ass and settling it over his rim.

He gasped, his strokes harder. I teased him, not fucking him with my finger, just pressing firmly enough against the puckered ring of muscle to give him a tantalizing hint of what I knew he wanted.

I tangled the fingers of my other hand in his hair and pulled his head down to my shoulder. I growled in his ear, "You come really hard for me, and scream when you come, and I'll make sure your sweet ass is full all evening, baby."

He screamed.

* * * *

As tired as I was, I felt determined to keep my promise. Five minutes later he was on his hands and knees on our bed, his sweet ass in the air, his cock already half-stiff again.

I couldn't deny it was hot.

I stood next to the bed and lubed the butt plug, carefully slid it home.

His sigh of pleasure stirred something deep inside me in a good way.

I patted his ass. "There you go. You can keep that in until bedtime."

He rolled over and grabbed my hand, kissed it. "Thank you, Mistress." His cock had fully inflated again, rigid, throbbing. I had a feeling we'd have a second round at bedtime. I couldn't in good conscience leave him hanging like that. He'd been so good.

He was a good sub.

I pulled him to his feet and grabbed his cock. "You've got free time until we go to bed. If I catch you playing with yourself, you won't get any relief for two days."

His cock throbbed in my hand, even stiffer than before. "Yes, Mistress," he eagerly replied.

My heart pounded. How could I enjoy this? What the *fuck* was wrong with me? Or was anything wrong with me?

I'd do anything short of killing to see that playful, eager light in his eyes all the time. I craved it. "Very good, that pleases me." I patted his ass again. "Go on, check your email or whatever."

He kissed me and walked to his study. I imagined he'd sit there, squirming in his chair, enjoying the full feeling in his ass.

I needed to check my email, let Tony know I'd made it home all right.

He was on IM as it turned out.

You okay? he asked.

I'm good. We had a short talk. First of many.

Talk is good.

I apologized to him for leaving. Told him I'll do a better job teaching him.

You've learned well, grasshopper.

I laughed. Tony always cracked me up. *Thank you.*

For what?

For putting up with a crazy woman.

LOL you guys are sooo vanilla girl, you have no idea. I'm glad I could help. I'm always here if you need an ear.

Thanks.

I checked my email, read the news. An hour later I shut down my laptop and walked to his study.

His left hand firmly gripped the arm of his chair, as if he struggled to keep it there. His right lay on his desk, on his mouse.

His cock stood straight up in his lap.

I leaned against the doorjamb. "Have you behaved yourself?"

He nodded. "I had to scratch but I didn't play with myself, Mistress."

I fought—and lost—against the urge to laugh. "That's okay. Scratching is allowed." I nodded, indicating his erection. "You ready to do something about that?"

He eagerly nodded.

"Shut down your computer and get your ass in bed so I can fuck you." I was already wet again.

The man could move wicked fast. I think he bypassed the normal shutdown and simply held the power button. He zipped past me and landed on our bed, wiggled his ass at me.

I couldn't help it. I laughed again. He was so damn cute like this.

At least I knew I wouldn't have to worry about him cheating on me.

Later that night as he folded his body around me, pressed against my back, his arm draped around my waist, I closed my eyes and knew somehow, some way, we'd make this work. I'd quit making the mistake that it was all on my shoulders to figure it out. I would involve him in the process, ask for input, tell him what I needed.

We could do this.

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Chapter 14

him

She came home!

Oh thank you, God, she came home!

And she still wants me.

I closed my eyes and breathed deeply, inhaling the scent of her shampoo as she lay sleeping in my arms.

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Chapter 15

Her

The next night, as soon he got home from work and before he could strip, we went through our collar ritual. I never realized how important this all was to him until now, I think. I paid attention this time, thanks to my talks with Tony. I watched as my husband actually relaxed, tension draining from him as I buckled the collar around his neck and snapped the lock shut.

I'd never noticed that before.

Maybe there were a lot of things I'd never noticed before in my attempts to do everything the right way for him.

He took my hand and kissed it, nuzzled it against his cheek. "Thank you, Mistress," he said, as if a sigh of relief escaped him.

"Go get naked, sweetie."

He stood, walked to our bedroom and stripped. He returned to me, knelt before me.

"Come on," I said. "I want to show you something."

With a puzzled look, but without question, he followed me out to the garage. I'd already prepared. I indicated a large, folded towel neatly laid on the floor. "Stand there," I indicated, then sat on the stool in front of the tool bench.

I didn't want his feet getting cold on the concrete floor.

Emptying the tool bag, I went through each tool with him. Some he already knew, duh, he's not a moron. The ones he

knew, I let him return to the tool bag. The ones he didn't we went through several times, their names and basic functions, how they differed from similar tools and why I might ask for one instead of another.

After an hour I was starving and knew he had to be hungry, too.

"Any questions?" I asked.

He shook his head. "No, Mistress. I don't know if I'll remember them all though."

I smiled. "That's all right. We'll keep going through them until you do. Okay?"

He nodded and smiled and I took a deep breath. I could do this. I sent him to go start dinner and gently swatted his ass as he passed me.

He turned and grinned and my heart did little summersaults in my chest. Jesus I loved this man.

* * * *

I quizzed him each night after he got home from work. There was no punishment for forgetting, but every time he got one right I reached over and stroked his cock.

He worked really hard to remember.

I had a purpose for this. On Saturday, I planned to change out the kitchen faucet, which was dripping. Since the damn thing was so old it was far easier to replace the whole thing with a newer style rather than trying to gut the old one to replace a washer.

Saturday morning, I lined up everything I thought I'd need and made him empty out the cabinet below the sink. He looked nervous.

I couldn't blame him.

I was so proud of him. He gained confidence with everything he did right. When I kept my cool the one time he got confused, he tried even harder to please me. By the time we finished a half hour later, I had a new faucet and he had a raging hard-on I couldn't wait to relieve him of.

I stood up and gently swatted his ass. "Clean up those tools for me, then go get your ass in bed."

He hungrily kissed me. "Yes, Mistress."

I couldn't help but laugh when he jumped into bed, practically on top of me, fifteen minutes later. I had him kneel while I slid his medium-sized butt plug in, which had him squirming under my hands. Then he went down on me and sent me into orbit.

The Man With the Golden Tongue has never failed me.

I crooked my finger at him and he fucked his rock hard cock inside me. I wrapped my legs around his waist and reached behind him and gently pressed on the butt plug.

"Oh, fuck!" he moaned, taking a few hard strokes before he came.

I held him, refusing to release him. I stroked his hair and trailed my fingers down his back.

God I loved this man.

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Chapter 16

Him

We had a lot of talks over the next week after her return. I began to understand her point of view. I thought she'd enjoy what we did because I thought all women dreamed of a guy slaving over them.

I didn't understand at all.

I thought I did.

But I started to.

I felt uncomfortable with that role at first, what she wanted and needed on occasion. I replayed my conversation with Tony on the phone, the things he'd told me that I resented and didn't understand then. How *dare* he try to tell me he knew my wife better than I did?

I realized he was right. Then it finally clicked home for me that I wanted to serve her in all ways. Serving her meant giving her what *she* needed, not just what I wanted to give her.

He'd called me a selfish sub, but had said it matter-of-factly as he explained it was a common newbie mistake in a relationship like ours.

At the time his words stung. If he'd been standing in front of me I would have decked the bastard.

He was right. This couldn't all be about me.

She *needed* me. She had tried so hard to do this for me and I never once asked her what I could do for her in this

way. I was doing what I wanted to do, even though she benefitted from it.

I had never sat down and asked her what her needs were the way she'd sat down and tried to figure out and meet mine. She never asked for things for herself. Her focus was always on me.

Tony's words finally made sense.

If I wanted to really be a sub, I needed to serve my Mistress. That meant serving Her, not just playing a one-sided game for my benefit.

As that realization sank in, I knew I could do this for Her and still be Her sub. Mistress wanted me to do and be things for Her on occasion. I was serving Her needs by doing that.

Suddenly, I wanted to do it more than anything.

I planned.

The weekend after I helped her with the faucet, she ran out on Saturday afternoon to do errands. I watched her car pull out of the driveway, and when I knew she'd really gone I raced to the bedroom.

It felt wrong taking my collar off. She'd placed it around my neck the night before when I got home, our daily ritual that I craved. Because it was a Friday night I would normally wear it until Monday morning.

I put it on the dresser and put my day collar on my wrist, enjoyed the heavy feel of the ID bracelet. I was still her sub and hoped she didn't mind I needed this tangible sign of my role for her.

I knew what she'd like. I dressed, leaving my underwear off. I put on work slacks—khakis—and a button-up shirt. A tie.

I checked myself in the mirror and brushed my hair. Slipped on my loafers. I could be leaving for work. I laid out an outfit for her to wear.

One I wanted her to wear.

She returned an hour later. She couldn't see me where I stood in the kitchen.

"Where are you?" she called out.

"Here."

She walked in and pulled up short, surprised by my appearance.

I took the grocery bags from her and kissed her, fighting the urge to drop to my knees before her.

"What's going on?" she asked.

I pulled her to me, kissing her hard. She resisted at first but I held on tighter. Then she relaxed against me as if something had given way inside her, giving herself to me.

"I'm giving you a break tonight," I said, gently holding her chin. "I want you to have a chance for some down time."

Her smile alone was worth this. "Thank you." Her eyes dropped to my wrist and she flicked the bracelet. "Down time?"

I shrugged. "Is it okay?"

She nodded. "It's okay."

I helped her put away the groceries. "I'm taking you out tonight," I said. "Okay?"

She nodded.

"Go get changed, baby. I left your clothes on the bed. It's what I want you to wear."

She grinned and raced out of the kitchen.

My cock throbbed and I fought the urge to follow her and fuck her right then.

I could get used to this.

I took her to one of our favorite restaurants. When the waitress appeared to take our order I immediately ordered for my wife without asking her, knowing what she liked. Her playful smile stirred my cock again. Maybe we wouldn't make the movie after all.

It was a good dinner. We talked, laughed, enjoyed each other's company.

When we finished and the waitress brought the check, I immediately reached for it, pulling my wallet out, calculating the tip, not even showing my wife the bill.

She sat back and smiled.

I still opened doors for her, because as far as I was concerned it's what good husbands do. I bought our movie tickets without asking if she wanted to see what I'd picked. I paid for the popcorn and soda and led her by the hand to the seats I wanted.

As the lights dimmed and the opening previews rolled, she leaned into my side and one hand dropped to my lap. My cock throbbed inside my pants and I grabbed her hand, gently squeezed it.

"Not here," I whispered. "I'll come in my pants."

She laced her fingers through mine and snuggled tightly against me. "Later?"

I nuzzled her temple and whispered in her ear, "If you're a good girl."

There was no mistaking her low, hungry moan. I knew if I slipped my hand inside her panties I'd find her soaking wet.

My heart raced. Part of me wanted to drag her out of there right then and fuck her in the back seat of the car. My mind whirled. I'd waffled about part of my plan, not sure if I had the balls to do it.

Now, I knew I did. For her.

After the movie, I firmly clasped her hand in mine and led her to the car. I'd parked far out in the lot, the passenger door facing away from the building. I set a slow, leisurely pace. By the time we reached the car, traffic from our movie crowd had thinned considerably.

And the lot was dark.

I gripped her right hand as I helped her in, then stopped her from swinging her legs inside the car. "Put your purse down," I ordered.

She set it on the floor and looked up at me, not speaking.

I'd turned off the dome light. The area was dark. Our car sat alone in a pool of inky blackness in the parking lot.

"Unzip me," I commanded.

She swallowed hard, but did.

"Suck me, baby."

She nearly took my knees out from under me, she went down so hard and deep on me. I firmly gripped the back of her head and groaned, trying not to shoot my load down her throat that fast.

I kept an eye out, no one around.

My wife always knew how to give me a great blow job, but tonight's was beyond compare. She eagerly worked her lips and tongue down my shaft. I fisted my hands in her hair and fucked my hips against her face.

"Get ready," I gasped.

She moaned as I came, swallowing every drop. I had to lean against the car for support because my legs were shaking.

I had to make her let go, she didn't want to stop sucking me and I'd already started getting hard again.

Patting the top of her head, I said, "That was very good, baby. Good girl. Zip me up so I can take you home."

She carefully tucked me away and looked up at me with eager eyes and a gorgeous smile.

I leaned in and kissed her. "That was fucking fantastic. Did you have fun?"

"Yeah!" Her voice sounded breathless, eager.

She'd be jumping me as soon as we walked in the door, I suspected. The question was, did I have enough willpower to finish the game I'd started for her?

When we got home she tried to squirm against me in the foyer and I carefully untangled her, firmly gripped her wrists. "Go get in bed and wait for me," I softly commanded. "Naked."

She ran to do it.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath, forced myself not to race her to the bedroom.

Taking my time, I got a drink of water from the kitchen before making my way to the back of the house. She lay

naked in our bed, spread-eagled and squirming, a seductive smile on her face.

"Like this?" she asked.

I leaned against the doorjamb. "Almost." I slowly loosened my tie, taking my time, making her wait and anticipate.

"Almost?"

"You won't look right until I've got you bouncing up and down on my cock, baby."

Her whole body flushed and she moaned, squirming.

I pulled my tie free and sat at the end of the bed. "Touch yourself for me."

She froze. This was one thing she'd never done, that I'd never asked. "What?"

"You heard me. I want to watch you finger yourself." I waited her out. I wanted to see her do this. If she flat out refused I wouldn't force her, but it certainly would lead to more talks as to why she didn't want to.

She closed her eyes as her right hand slowly moved toward her mound. "No," I said. "I want you to look at me."

She froze again. Again, I waited her out. She finally opened her eyes and took a deep breath while my cock throbbed in my pants. This was something I'd never had the nerve to ask before.

One finger, then two slipped between her legs. It took her a couple of minutes before her body overrode her emotions and she really started getting into it.

"That's it, baby," I encouraged. "Get yourself good and wet for me."

Her soft, mewling reply made me harder than I ever thought possible.

I stood, never breaking eye contact with her, and slowly unbuttoned my shirt. "I want you to come for me before I finish undressing. If you're a good girl and do what I say, I'll go down on you and suck your clit."

She gasped, her hand speeding up between her legs.

Fuck that was hot!

And why had I not wanted to take charge for her before? That would be because I'm a fucking moron, apparently.

I smiled and slowly slid my shirt off, dropped it in the hamper. "I'm going to take my tongue and fuck your sweet pussy with it," I said, enjoying the game.

Her responding gasp made my cock throb again.

Fuck.

I leaned over and propped my arms on the bed, "I'm going to slip a couple of fingers into that wet cunt while I lick your clit, baby. Would you like that?"

A slight sheen of sweat covered her body and she eagerly nodded, her eyes never leaving me. I reached out and stroked her chin. "Then you'd better come for me. Otherwise, I'm going to tie you up and leave you tied up all night long so you can't reach your pussy and I'm going to fuck you and not let you come until tomorrow morning."

She moaned, nearly frantic, her fingers buried between her legs. Damn I wanted to jump down there and help her!

I leaned in closer, my mouth inches from her ear. "After you come for me, I'm going to flip you onto your knees and

fuck you from behind, and I'm going to play with your clit while I do. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

She cried out and her eyes squeezed tightly shut. I struggled not to touch her as she came. I wanted to give this to her.

As she lay there catching her breath I quickly shed the rest of my clothes and rolled her over, pulling her to her knees and sinking my cock into her.

Dammit she was hot! She moaned, fucking her hips against me.

I reached around her and found her clit. I knew she'd still be sensitive so I carefully rolled it in my fingers, drawing another moan from her.

"What do you want?" I asked, my voice hoarse from the strain of holding back.

"Fuck me!"

I took a few hard strokes. "Like that?" I slowed down, pulling almost all the way out and slowly sliding balls-deep again. "Or like that?"

She moaned, wiggling her ass against me. "However you want to fuck me."

I stopped. "That's not what I asked. I asked you how you want it. I want an answer or I won't fuck you, baby."

Her whole body vibrated. "Fuck me. Hard."

I grabbed her hips and did just that, knowing I wouldn't last long as horny as I was. Then I had an idea.

When I pulled out she groaned in complaint. I rolled over onto my back and grabbed her, pulling her on top of me.

"Ride my cock."

She knelt over me and eagerly impaled herself. I took her hand and placed it over her clit. "Now make yourself come again, baby. I want to feel you come for me."

It was easier for her this time. I let her close her eyes and the feel of her muscles contracting around me was indescribably wonderful. I stroked her thighs and whispered encouragement to her.

"Tell me when you're coming," I growled.

She nodded, her hair hanging in her face. From the way she gasped for breath I knew she was close. Then I felt it.

About the same time she cried out that she was coming, I felt her muscles squeezing me in a way I'd never felt before. I knew she couldn't come from just fucking, she never had, so I always tried to get her off first.

There was something indescribable about the feel of her milking my cock like that.

I grabbed her hips and thrust, hard, coming with her. Then I pulled her down to my chest as she cried. I stroked her back, brushing my fingertips up and down her spine.

"Are you okay?" I finally asked, almost fearing the answer.

She nodded, but didn't raise her head. "Real good." She sniffled.

"Why are you crying?"

She shook her head. "I don't know. But it's not bad."

"If you're sure."

"Yeah." She lifted her head, a gentle smile on her face. "I'm sure."

I rolled her over and worked my way down her body, settling between her legs. "You earned a reward." I didn't

know if I could get her off again. I'd damn sure try. It took a little while, but I finally made her come a third time. Then I crawled back up the bed and pulled her tightly against me, kissing her.

"I love you."

She snuggled in my arms. "I love you too. Thank you."

"Is this what you wanted?"

She nodded. "Yeah."

"Did I do good?"

"You did great." She was already falling asleep. When I knew she wouldn't wake up, I carefully got out of bed and in the dark I found my collar on the dresser. I buckled it around my neck, locked it, and carefully removed my day collar. Trying not to disturb her, I slipped into bed next to her, wrapped my arms around her and drifted to sleep.

* * * *

When I awoke the next morning she was staring at me with a playful smile on her face.

"Did Mistress have a good night last night?"

She grinned and kissed me, hard. "When did you put your collar back on?"

"After you fell asleep."

She kissed me again, rolling over on top of me. I stiffened in response and offered no resistance when she fucked me.

This time I used my thumb on her clit, stroking her. "You were so beautiful, baby," I said. Her eyes crinkled in amusement and I caught myself. "Mistress was very beautiful last night."

She laughed and fell forward, hugging me. "You're too much."

"Did you really have fun?"

She nodded. "Yeah. I liked that you surprised me like that." She ran her fingers through my hair. "You don't need to be formal with me all the time either, you know. We can just talk even if you're collared. Just be together."

"Can I still call you Mistress?"

"At home."

I nodded. "Okay." I could live with that. "There's times I really want to be formal though."

"Let's just change it up sometimes. Mix it up. If you really need a play night, you tell me."

"That's fair," I agreed. "What about when you need a play night? Do you want to tell me, or should I just surprise you on occasion?"

"I'll tell you. But honestly? I liked it when you surprised me like that."

"How about I try to surprise you at least one night a week? Is that okay?"

Dammit, I love her smile. "It doesn't have to be every week. Maybe a couple of times a month, at least. I know there's nights you really need to play. And just because you're my sub doesn't mean you can't be top every so often."

I rolled over on top of her and took a few long, hard strokes. "Like that?"

She eagerly nodded. "Yeah, exactly."

I could live with that.

I could live like that.

Domma By Default
by Tymber Dalton

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Chapter 17

Her

My IM window flashed one Tuesday evening. Tony.

You there?

I responded. *I'm here.*

Whassup?

Not much. It was a little more than two months since my venture to Denver. Life was good. I talked to Tony once a week on average. My husband even had a few IM conversations with him, finally brave enough to get some of his questions answered about his own feelings and desires in this new venture of ours.

How's tricks?

I laughed and looked up from my laptop. I sat on the couch with my computer in my lap. My feet comfortably rested on my husband's thighs. He sat, on his knees in front of me, his rock hard cock at attention, his hands cuffed behind him.

"Tony wants to know how's tricks."

His eyes crinkled. He couldn't respond with the large red ball gag in his mouth, but I knew from his eyes he was smiling.

And his cock enticingly twitched in his lap.

Real good, I typed.

Three weeks earlier I'd surprised my husband. I handed him one of our credit cards, pointed him to a website, and

gave him a dollar limit and one rule: only buy things he wanted me to use on him.

And they *would* be used on him.

When the box arrived four days later while he was at work I opened it, shocked, amused, and...

Well, aroused.

I didn't tell him the order had arrived. It amazed me how much he'd managed to get on the budget I gave him. He'd spent well.

That pleased me. It also meant I'd have to let him go toy shopping more often.

I decided to surprise him and drag out the experience. I hid the box and took out a couple of the items.

The first night I used the blindfold and soft leather flogger.

Two days later, the leather-lined wrist cuffs were added to the mix.

I waited several days before surprising him with the ball gag.

I think it amped up his anticipation of each session, wondering if and when which toy would be used on him next.

I had to go on the website and look up the spreader bar to see the picture of how it was used. I finally figured it out. I made him kneel on the bed, his hands behind him, gagged, blindfolded, and his ankles spread, unable to move.

Then I slowly slid the large butt plug he'd bought into his ass and gently dragged the leather flogger over his balls.

I didn't realize a guy could come without being stroked, sucked or fucked, but they can.

They can come hard, too.

Three days later, I used the last toy in the box. Again I had to refer to the website—I wished the sex toys came with better fucking instructions—but I figured it out.

I'll admit this one made me nervous. I ordered him onto the bed and trussed him, blindfolded, gagged, and stroked his ass.

I think he knew what was coming.

It wasn't a normal strap-on because it didn't actually strap-on, per se. It had no straps. Part of it actually slipped inside me, and it had a little vibrating bullet that fit inside it. I nervously and liberally slathered it with lube and dumped a more than generous amount between his cheeks.

Stroking his hips, I tried not to moan at how good it felt positioning my end inside me. I turned on the vibrator and pressed the head against his ass.

"You want it?" I whispered.

He moaned around the ball gag, vigorously nodding, wiggling his ass at me.

There is no weirder feeling in the world, I think, than the first time you do something like that. I worried I'd go too fast or deep and hurt him, but he fucked his hips back against me, hard, impaling himself with a satisfied grunt.

I swatted his ass with my hand. "Did I tell you to do that?"

The sound, accompanied by his body shaking, could be nothing other than amused laughter. He shook his head and mumbled a muffled, "Sorry, Mistress," around the ball gag.

Well, he did the hard work for me. I started to fuck him, then realized logistically I needed to hear him so I didn't hurt him. I reached over and undid the buckle on his ball gag.

"Talk to me." I slid deeper and he moaned.

"Fuck, yes!"

"You okay?"

He nodded. "Please fuck me!"

I did.

My original plan had been to reach around and jerk him off while I did, then let him go down on me and get me off. Damned if it didn't feel really good fucking him with that thing. It hit me perfectly on the clit, the vibrating bullet just enough to...

I grabbed his hips and ground into him, moaning as my orgasm hit me.

My husband flexed his hips, trying to encourage me not to stop. When I regained my wits I curled my body over his, reached around his waist and grabbed his cock as I fucked him.

"All right," I said. "Now you'd better show me how good this feels—"

"Aw fuck!" He came, his whole body tensing as he pumped hot juices over my palm. Then he shuddered and we collapsed to the bed, both of us breathing heavy.

I untangled myself from him, took the dildo into the bathroom and left it in the sink for him to take care of. Then I unlocked his ankles and wrists. He ripped off the blindfold and grabbed me, kissing me hard.

"That was so good," he whispered, holding me tight. "That was so. Fucking. Good."

I closed my eyes and pressed my ear to his chest and listened as his pulse eventually slowed and evened out.

I came back to the present and looked at the IM screen and realized I didn't want to be sitting here talking on the computer when I had a horny sub squirming at my feet. I reached out with my toes and stroked my husband's cock, sliding down and stroking his shaved balls. I never left him sitting like that for more than half an hour because I didn't want him getting too uncomfortable. Thirty minutes was a comfortable limit for him, especially when I tormented him with my toes.

"You ready to take care of me?" I asked.

He eagerly nodded, his cock twitching again. He loved being trussed up like that. I found I kind of liked having a nice, warm, soft footrest when I was on the computer. And the angle of his thighs when he sat on his knees like that was perfectly comfortable for me with my laptop.

I typed, *I think I'm going to call it a night. I have something I need to take care of.*

Or someone? Tony replied.

I laughed. *Someone.*

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About Tymber Dalton

www.lyricalpress.com/tymberdalton.html

Tymber Dalton will never be accused of writing bland, cookie-cutter books. She strives to connect with her characters on an emotional level, hopefully imparting that same emotion to the reader. She follows her characters and the story they want to tell rather than trying to force them into a pre-determined plot outline.

She's happily married to a man who understands her writing isn't just a job, it's a passion. (And he does dishes. Back off ladies, he's all mine.) She lives in southwest Florida with her husband, son, and a houseful of neurotic, misfit animals of various species. A bestselling author, she also writes under the name Lesli Richardson, and her books span a variety of genres.

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