

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

STRAY
Lovers
DALTON DIAZ

ELLORA'S CAVE
Quickies®

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Stray Lovers

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STRAY LOVERS

Dalton Diaz

Dedication

This story is lovingly dedicated to the memory of a lovely young lady.

Lara Anne Punches

10/4/1989 to 2/12/2009

You touched the hearts of more people in your short nineteen years on earth than
you could have ever imagined possible.

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Chapter One

The stray cat hissed, ears back, and Jane Tipper quickly threw a towel over him before he could attack Marcus. She and Dr. Marcus Hill had developed a smooth dance between animal control officer and veterinarian, as well as a strong friendship over the last two years.

Now Marcus was leaving their small New England town. Jane was seriously going to miss him but she, more than anyone, understood his need to fulfill his dream of being a large animal vet.

"I can't believe you're willing to leave all this to stick your hand up cows and horses."

Marcus grinned as he deftly maneuvered the towel-covered tom to begin the exam. "That's a unique way of looking at it. What about the year-round warm weather in Florida?"

"Heat will make the smell overwhelming. Ever fry a cow patty?"

"Er, no."

"Me either but I'll bet it stinks. Plus, there are no alligators in the Charles River," she pointed out.

"That's because they're smart enough to live in warmer waters."

They were both quiet as he did his best to listen to the cat's heart with his stethoscope. Jane studied Marcus even as she kept a firm hold on the patient. Thick lashes shielded dark brown eyes that were nearly as black as his thick hair, which he wisely kept short. His was not a profession that allowed for loose long hair and he wasn't the ponytail type.

It was the end of the day, which meant he needed a shave. Teasing him about that wouldn't be the same over the phone. Last Christmas, she had given him a shaving and manicure set that included an electric nose trimmer. She'd given it to him at the vet clinic's holiday party and he'd thrown back his head and laughed before chasing her with it.

After that he was always clean shaven when she saw him outside of work, starting the very next night when they'd caught a movie together. Jane would have felt bad if he hadn't used the opportunity to leave a little package behind at her place. Inside was an extremely brief pair of red panties with *bite me* scrolled across the front.

She almost burst out laughing again just thinking about it. Was it inappropriate? Yeah but so was her gift to him. Besides, she loved that she could be that free with him. He not only understood her sense of humor, he shared it.

She suddenly had to swallow a huge lump in her throat. "I'm going to miss you, Marcus."

He didn't look up at her. "I'll miss you too, Janie. You know it's not just about the weather. Not having to slog my way through snow is a major bonus but I would stay if there were enough working farms in the immediate area. You know that, don't you?"

Jane nodded because he was looking at her now, letting her see that he hurt too. She'd even miss the way he called her "Janie" every once in awhile.

They finished up with the cat in silence and finally put the poor guy back in the carrier. The tom was yowling mad at all the poking and prodding and his mood wasn't going to get any better with the required quarantine time. Or the neuter.

Marcus peeled off his gloves and made some notations in the chart. "He's cleared for neuter. Do you have a place for him at the shelter?"

"He's being fostered. I'll drop him at his temporary home when we're done here."

"I should have his FIV status in a minute." He cleared his throat and with that seemed to clear the melancholy air that had sprung up between them. "I'll meet you at your place at seven. My turn to bring dinner. Chinese?"

"Sounds great. Don't forget the chopsticks this time."

"Yes, ma'am," he said over his shoulder as he left the exam room.

Jane scooped up the carrier and headed out the door. By the time she had the cat loaded in the back of the animal control truck, Marcus had opened the clinic door to give her a thumbs-up. The cat was FIV negative. She called the tom's foster mom and got on her way.

She couldn't wipe the look on Marcus' face off her mind. Though they'd shared many close moments over the time they'd known each other, some of them pretty darn awkward, she couldn't let it drop as easily this time. It didn't take a genius to figure out it was because he was leaving next week.

For the thousandth time she wondered if they could make a go of it as a couple. For the thousand and first time she willfully discarded the notion. Anything beyond friendship was not on her agenda and that wasn't going to change until she was done with chiropractic school. She'd veered from that course once for a man and it was never going to happen again.

It didn't take her long to drop off the cat and some supplies and head home to shower. Even with the diversion her mind went right back to Marcus.

She'd met him three years ago, though they didn't become friends until the following year. She had just taken the job as town animal control officer and Marcus was working at the clinic for a week as part of his requirement from Tufts University. She thought he was cute and a nice guy but she'd politely declined when he asked her out. She was six months out of a bad relationship that had started in high school and she wasn't ready for anything. Even dating. That still held true today.

To the clinic's delight, Marcus had accepted their offer to work for them after his graduation a year later. That had been two years ago and he'd once again asked Jane out. He'd also again accepted her polite refusal and with it her offer to just be friends.

If she were going to date anyone, it would be Marcus Hill. He was a great guy. But a wonderful thing had happened to her when she'd broken it off with her controlling

jerk of a boyfriend. She'd grown up, figured out what she wanted to do with her life, and nothing was going to deter her. Besides, until she achieved her goals, how could she expect to know what she'd want out of a relationship? She definitely knew what she *didn't* want but that wasn't good enough.

No relationship potential, no need to date. Well, she did miss sex but that's why toys were invented.

She sighed as she pulled into her parking spot and killed the motor. No doubt her vibrating friend would get a good workout later tonight.

* * * * *

Marcus pulled up to Jane's apartment building and cut the engine. He was hungry and the smell of the Chinese food coming from the large paper bag on his passenger seat wasn't helping but he needed a minute to get his head in the right place. This could well be the last dinner and movie night he shared with Jane Tipper and he didn't want it filled with sadness.

It wasn't time to tell her how he felt. God but from the first moment he saw her he knew she was something special. She'd come to the clinic on the first day of his last set of internship hours, a small blonde pixie wearing cargo pants and shitkickers and carrying a dart gun. The minute he was able to pick his jaw up off the floor, he'd checked her left hand for a ring, heaved a sigh of relief and asked her out.

She'd instantly shot him down.

He'd finished out his week there without seeing her again but he couldn't forget her. When the offer came to work at the same clinic after graduation, he knew only two things mattered. The first was easy. One phone call told him that Jane Tipper was still the town animal control officer. The second was to inform the clinic that his ultimate goal was to work with large animals and he wasn't sure he could give them more than two years. They'd wanted him anyway and he couldn't get there fast enough.

When Jane had come to the clinic, he was ready. There was still no ring on her left hand, so he'd given her his best smile and asked her out again.

She'd instantly shot him down. *Again.*

This time, though, she followed it up by welcoming him to the community and telling him she'd like to be friends. He'd swallowed the urge to ask her if that came with benefits and was rewarded over the next two years for choosing not to be an ass.

Getting to know her and hearing bits and pieces about what she'd been through had only made his feelings for her grow. Her love of animals, the compassion for people she showed time and time again—everything about her blew him away and he'd fully intended to stick around until she was ready to see him in a different light. He respected her dedication to achieving what she wanted and it wasn't as though she dated other guys. There was a chance that would happen and if it did he'd deal. Her friendship and her happiness were important to him. She'd taught him that.

That was until a couple of months ago, when the offer for his dream job had come. He'd been doing work with a large animal vet group one weekend a month and it was one of those things where one of the doctors knew someone who knew someone who thought Marcus was a perfect fit. The opportunity was too perfect to decline. As much as he loved her, his happiness mattered too and it was time to go.

What *he* wanted was to beg Jane to go with him. Yeah, that would go over real well if he planned on wearing dinner instead of eating it. She still had two years of school left, more if she had to drop a class to pick up another job to support herself. Tuition had risen as well as basics like gas and rent, so that was a likely scenario.

He'd come into a large inheritance that took care of his school loans and still left him in decent shape. Jane wasn't so lucky. Her only living relative was her mother, who barely managed to scrape by herself. Jane had never asked him for help and he knew that if he wanted to help her, the absolute wrong way to go about it would be telling her she could move to Florida with him and go to school full-time on his dime.

He'd not only be wearing their dinner, he'd be praying she'd left her dart gun in her locker at the police station.

So how could a guy friend help a girl friend without it being about something else, especially when said guy was really in love with said girl? He hadn't figured that one out yet and he was rapidly running out of time.

He was also now five minutes late. He grabbed their dinner and locked the car before heading in. Whatever the night might bring, it was sure to be interesting.

Chapter Two

Marcus showed up at her door freshly showered, shaved and dressed as she was in jeans and a T-shirt. He looked as delicious as the aroma coming from the bag of food he carried. He'd probably taste as smooth and rich as the bottle of red wine in his other hand.

Good lord, she really did have sex on the brain. All through her shower, one thought wouldn't go away.

They could be friends with benefits for an entire week!

Was she being selfish? If so, was it more selfish *to* suggest it or *not* to suggest it? They couldn't support a relationship from two thousand miles apart, that was a given. Heck, she didn't even have time to support one living in the same town.

The pro list continued to grow by the minute while the con list held a mere four words, albeit powerful ones.

They could get hurt.

The con rebuttal was also short and equally powerful.

They could have sex.

It had been a long, long time since she'd had sex when she wasn't the only person in the room. She'd bet it had been at least two years for Marcus considering he'd only been out on a handful of dates since moving to town. After each one she'd asked him how they'd gone and his answer was always the same. He'd shrug his shoulders and say, "Eh."

Sex between them would *so* not rate an "Eh".

By the time she was dressed, she knew she was going to seduce him and how she was going about it.

"Hello? Earth to Jane."

"What? Oh! Sorry, come on in."

He followed her into the living room and put the bag of food on her coffee table, then went to the kitchen with the wine. Jane had never thought much about the fact that he was so comfortable in her home, as she was in his. It was the same way with all her close friends, yet this felt different. It felt more intimate.

Wow. She was really hard up if it turned her on that he knew where she kept her corkscrew.

She shook her head and opened the food bag to start pulling out the cartons. "Potstickers and steamed chicken with veggies?"

"Yep. And house fried rice and beef lo mein with no onion."

"Great." She pulled out a fourth carton as he popped the cork on the wine. "But I don't see any chopsticks."

"Keep going."

There was something else in the bag but it was much too big to be a couple of individually wrapped sticks. He knew the rule and agreed with it—no plates or silverware allowed with Chinese food. The problem was, he was a guy and guys always assumed stuff was in the bag. It was a DNA factor, right along with never asking for directions.

The writing on the box in her hand was in Chinese. She flipped it over and there was a picture of a pair of wooden chopsticks. They were the only type she liked to use because the food didn't slip off like the fancy plastic or glossed wooden ones.

He'd bought her an entire case.

"It's so you'll think of me every time you have Chinese food." He'd come up behind her and set two full glasses of wine on the coffee table.

She just stood there holding the box. It was so simple, yet she couldn't remember ever receiving a more thoughtful gift.

"Thank you," she managed to murmur. Maybe they didn't even need to start the movie. Maybe she could simply lean over to kiss his cheek and take it from there.

Before she could act on that impulse he moved to sit on the couch and the moment was gone. Jane silently cursed herself for hesitating and promised it wouldn't happen again. She'd done some heavy self-analysis after her last relationship and it only took a split second to realize what was going on now.

Tonight wasn't just about getting laid after a long hiatus. They were important to each other and this was going to be a meaningful night for both of them. For her, it was also going to be her first time with a man since she'd flushed her ex-boyfriend and his controlling ways from her life.

Hot damn!

She gave Marcus a smile and sat beside him, ready to get the show on the road.

He should have kissed her.

There was no way she would go to Florida with him, no way would she accept a loan from him, so what the hell did he have to lose? It was probably his last opportunity to kiss her and he'd wimped out, no doubt from his stupid thoughtfest out in his car. Or maybe he'd missed in the OR today and snipped his own balls.

Christ.

Something was up with Jane tonight. There was a weird vibe in the air and if he didn't know better, he'd say she was giving sexual signals.

God, please let it be true, even if it makes me a bigger idiot for not kissing her.

He handed her a carton and a pair of chopsticks and took the same for himself. He loved the way they ate Asian food on movie night. You got what you got and when you tired of it, you grabbed a new carton. He'd probably never eat Chinese or Thai in a restaurant again.

He looked up at the TV screen, only now noticing it was already frozen at the beginning of the movie, past the opening credits. That could only mean one thing.

"Shit! It's our last movie night and you chose a chick flick, didn't you?"

She grinned as she opened her carton. "One of my favorites. I own it. *And* I got the lo mein."

He groaned. "Are you punishing me?"

"Not at all. Don't worry, you'll like it."

Doubtful. "Is it subtitled?"

"No."

"Well there's something. Can I have the lo mein?"

"No."

"I didn't think so." Marcus opened his carton, sighed and dug into the steamed chicken with veggies. "One of these days I'm going to bring all lo mein."

He realized what he'd said a second before her sad response.

"Guess you should have done that tonight."

He nodded and sat back as she aimed the remote and pressed play. It didn't take long for Marcus to realize it was going to be a long night. There was a chick in pigtails and wearing way too much red lipstick, a boat and a woman's voice narrating a story set in Indochina in the 1920s.

Cripes.

He thrust his container of food toward Jane. She took one look at his face and handed over the lo mein.

The story meandered on and he had to admit it could at least hold his interest if he wanted it to. He didn't want it to and half his attention was on not looking like a complete slob with the noodles anyway. Let her gnaw on broccoli for choosing a flick without a gun, a helicopter, or an explosion in sight.

He wished he'd brought beer. Her request for red wine should have been the first clue he was in for a chick flick. There was a lesson learned for his dating file. He put the noodle carton down with a glare that dared her to try to go for it as he took a healthy slug of the wine.

Jane only gave him a serene smile and swapped her container for what turned out to be the steamed potstickers.

He turned his attention back to the screen and nearly dropped the wineglass. The onscreen couple had gone to some kind of crowded city and they had entered a private room. If he wasn't mistaken, they were about to —

Holy shit! They were!

Gotcha.

Jane put the container of potstickers down on the table and washed down her last bite with some wine. Marcus had sat back on the couch and was watching the screen as the man took the young woman's virginity.

It was an incredibly erotic scene and both she and Marcus were breathing faster by the end of it, food and wine forgotten. He had his right leg raised slightly higher than the left and his left hand oh-so-casually dropped in his lap. She couldn't wait to see what he was trying so foolishly to hide.

She heard his breath hitch when she reached over and traced the back of his hand with her finger.

"Janie..." Her name was almost a groan and it excited her beyond belief.

Until he kept talking.

"I'm leaving next week. No matter what."

Oh, he did *not* just say that. Her arousal took an immediate nosedive and she pulled her hand away. "Are you implying that I want to sleep with you as a way to make you stay? Because if that's the case, forget waiting a week. There's the door."

"No!" He shook his head, frowning. "Of course I don't think that. That's just my inner conscience wondering if it will make it harder on us both when I leave. Carry on. I fixed the leak, honest."

Jane had to laugh but the moment was still gone. Ten more minutes of the movie would do wonders toward making it return but she felt the need to explain her thoughts. In hindsight, blindsiding him and not talking about it first wasn't the best plan.

"It probably *will* make it hurt more but what's the difference? We create this memory and you leave, or we don't and you leave. Either way you're gone. I'd like the memory but if that's not what you want, it's okay."

"You're fucking kidding, right?" He made a sound of disbelief. "Memory. I want the memory."

He was looking at her with such heat in his eyes she felt the burn inside and out. Yet he didn't move.

"What are you waiting for?" she asked when she couldn't take it another second.

"Me? I thought you'd want to call the shots. After everything you went through with your ex—"

"You seem to have sprung another leak. And speaking of leaks, I don't remember telling you a whole lot about my past relationship."

"It's a small town. Look, I just don't want to do anything that reminds you of him. Including talk about him. Shit."

Jane swore she felt her heart turn over in her chest. He obviously wanted this badly but he still thought of her first. "Nothing about you reminds me of him." She assured him. "I want us to be ourselves. If we do that, we can tell each other if we don't like something. Although I highly suggest you stop talking."

A smile curved his lips and he took her hand and slowly pulled her across his lap. "I don't like how you eat all the beef in the lo mein when you get it first."

“Tough shit.” She looped her arms around his neck. “There, see how easy that is?”

She felt his hot breath on her face seconds before his lips were on hers, remarkably still hesitant until she didn’t retreat. Only then did the kiss become bolder, his tongue tracing her lips for entrance.

He was done asking and she reveled in it. She opened her mouth to him, explored him in return and instantly wished she’d spent the past two years kissing him. He tasted of Chinese food, wine and a hint of delicious dark spice she’d never tried before. Ah, damn, it was Marcus himself. If only he could bottle it for her before he left.

He was right. This was only a kiss and it was already going to make it harder to say goodbye. He wasn’t even inside her.

Yet.

Chapter Three

Jane Tipper was in his arms. His tongue was in her mouth as he slowly lowered their bodies to the couch. His knee was between hers, nudging her legs apart so he could settle his erection between them.

The fact that he'd dreamed this moment a thousand times made it all so surreal, as if when he stopped kissing her he would wake up alone having fallen asleep on his own couch. But what if it was real? What if he could make love to her tonight?

Praying he wasn't dreaming, he slid his hand under her shirt.

Oh god. She was a small woman and her breasts were in proportion to the rest of her but the round weight was firm, her aroused nipple poking at the sensitive center of his palm right through her bra.

He wasn't anywhere near ready to move his hand but a search with his thumb told him the bra had a front clasp and his desire to satisfy his curiosity won out. What he wouldn't do, couldn't do, was stop kissing her. She tasted like nirvana and she kissed exactly like she lived life, sweet, sassy and determined all at the same time.

He managed to maneuver on his elbows to slide both hands under her shirt without releasing her mouth. The effort was more than worth it when she gasped against him and arched into his hands as he cupped both of her breasts.

Pinching the front clasp in his fingers, he gave it a twist. It didn't budge. He tried again with the same results. She was moving around a bit, so he used his left hand to steady the clasp on one side and twisted with his right.

It held firm.

"Son of a bitch," he swore as he released her lips. *"Is this thing glued together?"*

It didn't help him feel any more suave when she started laughing.

"I'll tell you what," she offered. "I'll show you mine if you'll show me —"

His shirt was off before she even finished.

"Yours," she finished slowly, checking him out. "Nice abs, doc."

He raised his eyebrows and sat back further, giving her room to reciprocate.

"Okay, okay," she said, reaching for the bottom of her shirt. "But I have to warn you I'm not as impressive with *my* shirt off. I'm kinda small."

She thought he was impressive? He kept himself in good shape with regular workouts but he wasn't a huge guy. Compared to her, yeah but...

He narrowed his eyes. "Don't try to distract me."

He heard her take a deep breath and in one move the cloth was over her head to join his shirt on the floor.

Then she reached behind her and undid the bra.

The thing he'd felt in the front was a decorative ring of plastic, not a clasp. "Now that's just mean," he said. "You could have told —"

The bra came off and there, in front of him, were the most perfect breasts he'd ever seen. They were set high and tight and very round, with pink nipples the color and shape of eraser tips.

"You're beautiful, Janie." He reached out with the back of his index finger and touched her nipple, watching it harden even further on contact. It was like stroking velvet.

He leaned down for a taste and settled in, figuring he'd be happy right there for an eternity. Only they didn't have that luxury. He didn't even know if they'd have more than this one night together.

Thinking about never holding her this way again, of being relegated to weekly phone calls that would wane with time, was not how he wanted to spend what little time they did have together.

He wanted to make her soar. Multiple times.

Jane wanted to check out more of the hot bod Marcus had been hiding from her but *oh my god!* What he could do with his tongue was wild!

He released her nipple with a little pop and before she could take a breath he wrapped his lips around her other nipple and slowly laid her back on the couch.

The fluttering sensation hit again and she clasped his bare shoulders, her nails digging in to the hard muscle. My god, what *was* he doing with his tongue? She could feel it against her nipple with an answering throb clear down to her pussy.

Her thoughts scattered, half of them wanting this to never stop, the other half afraid she'd miss something if she came too soon. She wanted to touch him and drive him crazy too. Then his knee nudged her legs apart again and his erection pressed against her right as another throb of pleasure hit her there.

He released her nipple. *Damn!* If he stopped now, she'd have to kill him. No sooner did she have the thought than he captured her other nipple with his hot mouth, leaving the first one wet in the cool air.

It was electrifying. She arched against him, discovered it gave her a nice rub from his cock, so she did it again. And again. He was making sounds, adding to the fluttering thing he was doing with his tongue, letting her know she too was giving pleasure.

No way was it as good as she got, though. That would have to come later, because *oh my god, she was coming now!*

She clenched his shoulders, no doubt leaving ten crescents on his skin that wouldn't be fading anytime soon as her body exploded from the inside out.

She milked every drop of the best orgasm she'd ever had, still giving off little shudders as she pried her fingers from his shoulders and wriggled them for circulation. Marcus gave a strangled groan and she realized that not all of the trembling came from her.

"Wow." She stretched beneath him from her fingers to her toes, pleased to feel his erection as hard as ever between them. It couldn't have been easy for him to hold back. "I don't suppose I can do the guy thing and roll over and fall asleep now?"

"You're a riot." He kissed her gently on the lips. "I'll laugh later when it won't make me come."

"I was hoping you'd be able to hold off."

"Yeah," he smiled. "Me too." He lowered his chest to hers, rubbing against her sensitive, wet nipples and closed his eyes on another tremble. "But I don't know for how long. It's been over three years for me, Jane."

Three years? That would be right around when they'd met for the first time. He was watching her and he looked like he wanted her to understand something profound. It scared the crap out of her. Not because she didn't want him to mean since he met her but because she did. What was she supposed to say, "Hey, you've waited so long for me anyway, what's another three or four years?" Not fair, to Marcus or to her.

She had to acknowledge she was the one who'd brought on the rule change by wanting to make love with him before he left, though she had been careful to specify that tonight was about making memories. This was meant to signify the end of something, not the beginning.

It was important they stay on that track. "It's been that long for me too," she said. "So what do you say we go into the bedroom and end this ridiculously long dry spell for both of us?"

He continued to look at her in silence for a few heartbeats and then he slowly rose from the couch, scooped her up and headed for her bedroom.

It was a nice gesture and Jane had to admit her knees were still wobbly from that whopper of an orgasm.

Speaking of which...

"It's my turn to show you what I can do with my tongue," she informed him.

He stumbled, nearly taking her down with him. "Jesus, don't say stuff like that until we get there! It's hard enough to walk in this state!"

Jane wisely kept all jokes about third legs and kickstands to herself. They made it to her bedroom without further incident but if he thought she was kidding about it being her turn he was *so* wrong. The walk across her apartment while feeling all that smooth skin and muscle at work had ensured that.

He deposited her on the bed and reached for his belt buckle but she quickly got to her knees and put her hand over his to stop him. His groan of protest cut short when she slowly slid her palms up his chest to his broad shoulders, down his muscular arms and back across his flat stomach. She knew he worked out and she had seen him a few times without a shirt but never with the freedom to explore at will.

Marcus Hill was beautifully made. He wasn't a particularly tall guy but as a woman who topped out at five-foot-two, that suited her just fine.

Oh yeah. Majorly fine.

She couldn't resist another go up and around. He was breathing fast as she traced his biceps with her fingertips, his gaze glued to her chest. She took it as a challenge that she wasn't distracting him enough with her touch and skittered her fingertips across his nipples. They were hard points, darker in color and smaller than hers and begging for more of her touch. Stretching up, she leaned forward and licked one. *Bingo!* He threw back his head and groaned and it wasn't until she licked her way down the intriguing hairline from his navel to the top of his jeans that he stopped her.

"I want to be inside you the first time I come. Please, Jane. It's important to me."

"The *first* time?"

"Oh yeah. You'll get to explore, I promise."

"How close are you?"

"Remove your hands slowly and don't breathe on me." He was looking down at her again, eyes on her bare chest. "Shit. Don't breathe at all."

Jane pulled her hands back from her treat, slowly running a finger down the tantalizing ridge straining his jeans, but he jerked away before she could reach the bottom. She offered no apology, just sat back on her haunches to eagerly watch the show, sure he was every bit as impressive there too.

He got the button undone but his fingers fumbled with the zipper. She loved that! He finally got them to work the pull but then he stopped again with a heartfelt curse. "Do you have condoms?"

Jane shook her head. "I'm on the Pill." When he hesitated, she added, "It's a new thing to regulate my periods. I've never done it without a condom."

He groaned. "Me either. God, Janie. I may not survive this."

"*La petite mort*," she agreed. "I felt it a few minutes ago. It's fabulous."

He smiled and pulled down his jeans to reveal that he was a boxer briefs kind of guy. Her favorite, until he pulled those down too. Commando was her new favorite.

And it was definitely impressive.

Shit! She couldn't touch him. At least not yet. She'd never thought cocks were a particularly beautiful appendage. Intriguing and fun to play with for sure, especially when they shot off like a rocket but they tended to be kind of funny looking, really.

But Marcus was beautiful. He was a bit bigger than she she'd imagined all those nights she'd given in while alone in this very room. He was long and thick and so aroused his cock jutted out and slightly up and was vibrating. He looked as smooth as marble with a perfectly shaped mushroom head.

She wanted desperately to reach out and touch it, to taste the clear pearl beading the tip. Something that beautiful was sure to taste good too.

The jeans and boxers came all the way off, his cock waving wildly as he toed off his shoes and stepped out of every remaining stitch of clothing. The dresser mirror behind him gave her a clear view of his backside, proving why he looked so good in a pair of jeans.

She licked her lips, not realizing she'd done so until Marcus groaned. All of that wonderfully naked skin was inches from her face but she didn't have time to react to it before she was flipped onto her back. Frenzied hands reached for her jeans and there was no fumbling with her zipper. He had those jeans open and pulled down in seconds flat but they suddenly stopped at her knees. She was barefoot, so she had no idea what the holdup was.

The last thing she expected to hear was his laughter.

Chapter Four

Jane was wearing the red *bite me* panties.

She frowned at his reaction, until she looked down. "Oh yeah. I can't believe I forgot I put these on."

If he weren't already in love with her, that would have done the trick.

He relished the sound of her feminine squeal as he yanked her jeans the rest of the way off, spread her legs and gently closed his mouth over her mound, panties and all.

"Marcus!"

No way was he stopping. He was finally there, surrounded by her scent, her taste, her trembling body. He worked his tongue under the lacy red edge, unable to wait even as his fingers hooked the bit of silk at each hip and tugged them down. Then it was all her. Her soft moans filled the air as he got lost in the exotic taste and feel of her sweet pussy. He doubted he would last long once he got inside her. Not after three years of celibacy, if he didn't count his own hand. Besides, he wasn't in any hurry to give up this long-awaited delicacy.

Using the tips of his thumbs, he held her open and speared her with his tongue, drawing out her nectar before giving several long, leisurely licks up to her clit to create more.

"This is not... what I had...in mind," she gasped.

"Right." Marcus gave her another flat-tongued lick. "My bad." Then he gave her a gentle bite.

She sucked in an audible breath and went completely still until he released her. He wondered if he'd hurt her but the second he let go she let that breath out on a moan filled with frustration.

“Do you still want me to stop?” He gave her another little nip, this more gentle than the first, directly on her clit. “Before you answer that, you should know that I can do that nipple thing with my tongue here, too.”

He proved it.

“Oh. My. God.”

The last word was nearly a scream as he flicked his tongue until her legs shook and her body jerked against his mouth, only to slow things down by licking everywhere but her clit until she calmed. Then he started all over again.

When she was begging and he couldn’t take not being inside her a minute longer, he sat back between her legs.

“Christ, Janie.” His whispered reverence was heartfelt. It literally made him ache to look at her but he couldn’t tear his gaze away. Those small firm breasts with their pouty nipples, trembling with arousal like the rest of her body. That perfect little blonde pussy, already glistening from his tongue.

He couldn’t help saying her name again, groaning it as he covered her, aligning his cock for entrance into that warm wet haven. Then he kissed her and pressed between her legs, pushing deep with no barrier between them.

They both cried out at the exquisite moment of penetration. He framed her face with his hands and looked directly into those blue eyes so heavy with desire. “This is the moment I’ll remember most, Janie. I’m never going to forget how it feels to be inside you and I’m never going to stop wanting it, no matter how far away we are from each other.”

It was risky but it was the truth and it needed to be said. He was leaving but he was not going to leave behind any impression that this wasn’t making love. So he’d said it but—*aah god*—he couldn’t give her any time to respond. He already felt the tingle at the base of his spine, the hot rush as he pushed deeper, retreated, then pushed deeper still. He had zero control, crashing into her again and again, feeling his chest vibrate with animalistic sounds he barely heard.

Any hope of holding off was over the second she raised her palm to his cheek and whispered his name. The hot rush roared to an explosion as he came, barely slowing in time to register it when she tightened around him and cried out with her own orgasm.

Now came the reckoning for his earlier words. The minute he felt able to, he began to lift his weight off her.

"Wait," Jane said, wrapping her arms around his neck. "Don't leave yet."

"I'm here."

He buried his face in the crook of her neck and stayed right where he was. For a second he let himself believe she didn't just mean staying inside her, that she wanted him to stay in her life too. Hope filled him, made his cock twitch to life again, which proved the wrong brain was at work. *He* was the one leaving.

"Whoa!" Jane laughed. "Hold that thought. I need a minute here."

But he was already halfway hard again. How could he not be? He was inside Jane, his cock surrounded with their mingled hot wash and caressed by her satin walls. It was so corny it was too embarrassing to say out loud but being inside her made him feel downright poetic.

He went back to the pulse point he'd discovered in her neck, gratified that it was still beating double time after her orgasm. It didn't take long to increase it to triple time as he licked and nuzzled her there to get her back in the game. Bracing both elbows on the bed, he pushed himself up and used the momentum to press deep inside her as he angled his hands to cup her breasts.

"Oh god, that's it," he groaned when she clenched around his cock.

He almost came again at the sound that tore from her throat, the vise-like pulsing grip of her pussy making his body shake. He managed to hold on this time by not thrusting, just letting her energy build until she was pushing against him and begging him to move.

Then he rolled them over so she was on top.

Jane froze, her heart in her throat. She'd tried this once and only once for all of a minute with her ex-boyfriend, who'd made it quite clear that guys didn't like their women on top. She'd always wondered if it was just him. Control freaks are funny that way.

Marcus couldn't know about that and he'd put them into the position with her in charge. And he was watching her with encouragement and lust in his eyes.

"I thought guys couldn't come this way," she said. Oh, she wanted to ride him, very much so, but she didn't want to be stopped once she started. Once was humiliating enough for a lifetime.

"I can imagine who told you that. Prove him wrong."

Oo-kay. She took a deep breath and balanced her palms on Marcus' chest, then raised her body up then lowered herself even more slowly down, watching him the entire time. His eyes glazed over and he bit his bottom lip. That looked like fun, so when he let go she leaned down to do it for him.

His hands came up to grasp her hips and he turned it into a hot kiss.

"Oh no you don't!" She pushed herself up on her forearms, much like he'd done to her. "Why did you say that? It's only going to make it harder to let go."

He held her gaze. "I couldn't stand it if you thought I was only doing this to get laid."

"I wouldn't think that. I know we've got something good here. The timing is just wrong."

"We could –"

She kissed him again and when she stopped he left it unsaid. He was still hard inside her, his hands stroking from her shoulders to her butt.

"It seems to me that you promised I'd get to touch you once you came inside me," she reminded him.

"I'm still inside you."

"So you are." She squeezed him with her inner muscles and he groaned and grasped her hips again to control her movements.

"Keep your hands flat on the bed," she demanded. "No matter what I do."

A wary look shadowed his eyes but he did as she said, hands at his sides, palms down. "I don't get to touch you?" he asked.

"There's no way I'm falling for that one again."

She silenced him with a kiss, taking his mouth with an aggression she'd never acted on before. It was empowering, especially when Marcus gave back as good as he got but it wasn't a battle for control. It was equal give and take and damn, it was good! When she did end the kiss he raised his head off the bed in an effort to follow but he could only go so far without lifting his hands from the bed.

His head fell back to the pillow and he gave a groan of frustration.

"I know," she laughed. "But if I stop kissing you, I can do this." She pushed with her hands until she was sitting up, grinding down on his cock.

This time his groan was pure pleasure. Jane leaned forward again but only enough to run her palms up the muscles at his abdomen, his chest, then down those sculpted arms to his hands, which now fisted her sheets. His body trembled most when she touched the soft skin at his abdomen, so she decided to focus there for a bit.

She traced her fingertips to where her thighs sat on his hipbones, across the smooth expanse to his bellybutton, then the thin trail of hair from there to his pubic bone. God he was sexy, especially how he watched her so intently, his brown eyes glittering with lust.

Her own belly rippled at the sight, at the feel of him still buried deep inside her. If she started to ride him, she would come and she didn't want it to end so soon.

"Please." His gaze dropped to her chest and he actually licked his lips. "Let me touch you."

Jane smiled. That was so *not* where this was headed.

"Where?" She ground down again, squeezing her inner muscles. "Here?" She cupped her own breasts as though offering them.

"Oh yeah."

"And here?" She pinched her nipples between her thumbs and index fingers and watched his eyes dilate before his lids dropped halfway.

"Yes! God yes!"

Oh, this was fun. Seeing him struggle for control of his body, watching him fight the need to come from her touch, was the sexiest thing she'd ever seen. And she wasn't done with him yet.

"No," she said, putting one hand back on his abdomen. "It's still my turn."

"Janie, I— Whoa!"

She'd reached behind with her other hand and given a light scrape up his inner thigh with her fingernails before cupping his balls.

It was designed to bring him into the red zone and there wasn't a thing he could do about it unless he moved his hands off the bed. She started to ride his cock, keeping her hand right where it was, alternating between gentle cupping and letting her fingers caress every reachable inch of skin between his legs and the tops of his thighs.

"Aah!" His back arched, his knuckles clenched white on the sheets.

His cock started to throb and she rode him faster, harder, on the verge of coming too. It was not only physically out of this world, she felt her power as a woman with each stroke, with each groan and shudder from the man beneath her.

He came seconds before she did, the hot splash sending her right over the edge with him.

I am woman, hear me roar.

* * * * *

Jane awoke with a start and a moment of panic that she wasn't alone.

Of course she wasn't. Marcus was there in the bed beside her, still sleeping peacefully.

They'd gone to bed together and woken up together for almost an entire week but that borrowed playtime was over. He was working the ten a.m. to seven p.m. shift and she had class tonight.

Besides, he was leaving in two days and she could only imagine the number of things he had left to do since he'd spent his weekend in her bed instead of doing them. Even the few animal control runs she'd had, he'd come with her.

Would she wake up in a panic tomorrow morning because she was *alone* in bed?

She sighed. If she did, she'd get over it with time. Meanwhile, they had about three more hours of sexual bliss to achieve and he was sleeping through it.

He'd awakened her the previous morning by having her for breakfast. It would be fun to see how long it would take to wake him up that way. Kind of like that retro Tootsie Pop commercial with the owl. *How many licks does it take...*

She slid under the covers.

The second she breathed on him he gave a soft groan and became partially erect. She licked his length to moisten his skin, lapped at the head until he was hard before taking him into her mouth. She knew it the second he woke up, even before he slid his fingers in her hair.

They'd learned each other's preferences in a very short time. For instance, she knew that slowly taking him to the back of her throat and holding him there with suction would make him groan. That skimming her fingertips over his balls would make them tighten. And that doing both at once could make him come in thirty seconds flat.

She didn't know that doing so first thing in the morning would make him bellow so loudly it echoed in the room long after she'd milked him and swallowed every drop.

She didn't release him until he gently pulled her off with shaky hands. The covers were pulled off her head and Marcus still looked dazed when she crawled up to lay beside him on the pillow.

"Wow." He said after a few steadying breaths. "I'll take that over an alarm clock any day."

"Mm, I'll bet. Except you have to bring me coffee in bed now."

"Yeah, for life."

She didn't know what to say to that. Oh, there were a hundred flippant answers at her disposal but not one of them gelled. Marcus had gone silent, as if only then realizing what he'd said. She couldn't even get mad at him for saying it, after she'd scrambled his brain by taking him from dead sleep to launch at warp speed as she had. Instead, she was horrified to feel tears gather and felt even worse when she couldn't stop them from falling.

She wasted fifteen of their precious minutes watering his chest while he silently stroked her hair and back. After the sex and the crying, her throat hurt something fierce.

"I'm sorry," she said when she got herself under control and rolled into the crook of his arm.

He pulled back to look at her. "I'm not. I think this would be a good time to talk about it."

"What's there to talk about? You're leaving and it makes me sad."

She felt his chest rise before she heard him sigh. "Jane, it makes us both sad when we don't have to be. We could make our relationship work if you'd just let it happen."

"Why are we back to this?" She pulled away and sat up, feeling vulnerable enough to cover her nudity with the sheet. "Don't wreck what we have. I told you from the start that I don't have time for a relationship in my life and if you weren't moving thousands of miles away, *this*," she gestured at them in bed together, "would never have happened."

"You're right," he nodded. "We probably would have kept on seeing each other a few times a week and talking on the phone when we couldn't get together. What do you call that if it's not a relationship?"

"It's different! That's friendship. I'm talking about a romantic relationship where we can't keep our hands off each other. Where all we can think about is seeing the other person or talking to the other person and everything else in our life falls by the wayside."

"That's not a romance, that's an obsession. It shouldn't work that way. Not when two people really love each other. I would never try to hold you back."

"Right. We've really proven there's a difference here, haven't we." Once again she gestured at the fact they were in bed together. "How many times have we had sex in the last few days? Have we done anything else *but* spend every moment we can together, having sex?"

"I've spent two years doing everything I can with you, *except* having sex," he argued, his eyes flashing with anger. "Would it really be so bad to live together so you can go to school full-time? I'll stay, or you can come to Florida. Don't just throw this — *us* — away."

Jane closed her eyes and took a deep breath, trying to keep calm. It would be so easy to say yes, so easy to let someone take care of things so she could focus on her career. So easy and so wrong. "It's not the right time. Even if I go to school full-time, I'm looking at years before I could dedicate myself to a relationship."

"We're going around in circles." He reached out and smoothed a lock of hair back from her face. "Take a leap, Jane. Let me love you."

Her emotions warred so hard in her that she almost threw up. Above all, one truth rang clear. "I made a promise that I won't find myself in the same situation as before."

He jerked as if she'd sucker punched him. "That's not fair. I've never tried to control you like he did. I love you and one of the things I love most about you is your strength. I would never try to prevent you from achieving your goals."

"That's exactly what you're trying to do right now by telling me you love me two days before you're due to leave! Look me in the eye and tell me that's not intended to make me want to drop everything and go with you."

"I can see why you think that. I really can. But that's not the case and I did offer to stay. God, Janie, don't *you* see? If you're too scared to make a commitment because of what your relationship with him turned into, isn't he still controlling your happiness?"

"This isn't about him!"

He was quiet for a heartbeat. "Isn't it?"

Son of a bitch! "I want you to leave now, Marcus. We're done here."

"Shit. We're both angry and we shouldn't be. Just talk to me. It'll be okay, I promise."

"You don't do too well with promises, Marcus. If you did, we wouldn't be having this awful conversation right now instead of sticking to making memories."

"Hey!"

"Just. Go," she said through gritted teeth.

"Janie—"

"GO!" The word was shouted loudly enough to shut him up. Oh god, if he made her cry again she might hate him. This was hard enough, why wouldn't he go?

He got up and dressed in silence. Jane stayed put with her eyes closed, just wanting it to be over. She felt awful and it didn't help when he came back to the bed and stood there until she opened her eyes.

His eyes glittered with moisture, his expression equal parts pain, anger and defeat. She knew defeat had won out when he kissed her tenderly and said, "I love you, Janie."

Then he walked out the door.

Chapter Five

One year later

Jane hung up the phone in shock, her eyes drawn to the piece of paper in her hand. The one from her college with a big fat zero in the “Amount Due” column. According to the bursar’s office, her entire bill for the B.S. in human biology she’d just earned was completely paid off by a Marcus Hill. On a whim, she’d dug through her paperwork to find her last loan statement and called them.

Also paid off by Marcus Hill.

Jane backed up until she felt the couch hit her calves and she sat down hard. There was no reason for him to have done this. None at all.

When he’d left a year ago, it had been hard to get back into her normal routine. He’d been such an integral part of her life and she missed him, especially when she brought an animal to the vet clinic to be greeted by Dr. Michelle Dalmas, the perfectly nice veterinarian who’d replaced Marcus.

It just didn’t feel right.

She’d finally called him six months ago and admitted she was sorry for the way they’d parted. Not that she was wrong, or that he was either, but she was the one who’d pushed for them to sleep together even if it ended up hurting more when he left. Yes, his parting words had stung but what broke her heart was seeing and feeling the finality to their friendship.

Calling him had been the right thing to do. He had been genuinely glad to hear from her and admitted he’d picked up the phone to call her a hundred times. They had been talking ever since, starting with once a week and now every few nights. Yet he’d never said a word about paying off her loans.

Why?

Was he worried she'd see it as a control issue? She *could* take his current gesture as a way of trying to control her independence. A year ago, she wouldn't have seen it any other way. Today, sitting on her couch in her own apartment, alone yet halfway toward her career goal, she knew better. She would reach her goal with or without Marcus Hill but it would have been a lot more fun to have him by her side.

For the zillionth time, she wondered what he would do if she showed up on his doorstep saying she wanted to give their relationship a chance. After an entire year without even a hint from her that she wanted to be more than friends. After having already given her two years of supreme patience to learn to appreciate him for who he was and what they could mean to each other.

Right. She could picture him, looking at her with pity as his new girlfriend listed the reasons that wouldn't work. He hadn't mentioned dating anyone but she'd been out a few times and hadn't mentioned it to him either. And he hadn't mentioned paying off her loans, which was a tidy little sum.

He knew she wouldn't do that anymore than he'd made the gesture to control her.

Where did he get that kind of money? She'd never asked him about it but vet school was expensive and he probably had loans of his own to pay off.

She had to call him as soon her summer class ended tonight. He was probably out in some pasture avoiding sun fried cow patties at the moment anyway.

But when she got home and called, his cell phone kept bumping to voicemail. She left a message asking him to call her but he didn't. He still hadn't by two o'clock in the morning with her having left two more messages.

Was he on an emergency visit? Out of cell range? Out with some chick who waited tables at Hooter's?

The thought of Marcus sharing his life—and his bed—with another woman was excruciating. Did she make him laugh like Jane could? Give better head?

God, she was pathetic. She'd let him go because she'd been so sure that he and his needs would dominate her life. Now she was the one wanting to rip out chunks of some hypothetical woman's hair. Jealousy was a bitch.

At three in the morning she made her decision. The worse thing she could do was not try. Been there, done that. She needed to see him in person to see if they could work this out.

* * * * *

Marcus stood with Warner Durran watching the new foal gain strength and steadiness by the minute. It had been a difficult birth and the mare wouldn't have made it without help, meaning they probably would have lost the foal too.

"Thanks, doc." Durran held out his hand. "I can't tell you how glad we are to have you around."

Marcus pried off his gloves and shook his client's hand. "Glad to be here."

And he was. Even covered in slime and stinking to high heaven in the Florida heat, he could only think of one other place he'd rather be, which was anywhere Jane Tipper stood. Well, that was only partially true. He'd prefer her lying down next to him. Make that under him.

Shit. Yeah, he missed the sex. But he missed his best friend more and that was only a phone call away. He hoped. He still hadn't returned her phone calls from a couple of days ago.

With a sigh, he made his way to a hose and cleaned up the worst of it, then gathered up his gear and headed for his pickup with a final wave of congratulations. He was tired and hungry, though he'd refused the offer of an early supper with the Durran family. He'd had a few working nights in a row and it was obviously affecting his ability to think straight because he couldn't get Jane off his mind. The last thing he wanted to do was sit around with a happy family celebrating life.

Jesus. He didn't even want to spend time with himself in this state.

The drive back to his clinic wasn't a long one and he needed the boost of pride he got every time he walked in the door. It wasn't a huge place but it was his and he had big plans for the future. Part of that was hiring another vet so he could be open for more actual clinic hours, leaving him free for the livestock house calls. He was interviewing two veterinarians next week and one of them seemed very promising.

After a shower and changing into fresh shorts and a T-shirt he kept at the office, he restocked his bag and finally headed to the little ranch house he rented on the outskirts of town. Buying his own place was going to take a while since he'd paid off Jane's remaining debts with the money he'd earmarked for a down payment. She deserved it. It wasn't as though he'd earned the inheritance that had paid off his school loans, so why shouldn't someone else benefit too?

He wondered what she was doing now and if she'd been notified of the payments. Was that why she'd called so many times? Most likely. Would she be happy, or want to kick the shit out of him? He couldn't tell from the brief messages she'd left asking him to call her but he didn't think she sounded angry.

He turned down his street and crap, there was a strange car parked at the curb. Someone was probably waiting on his porch with an injured animal. Wouldn't be the first time but damn, he wanted a break tonight. Some pizza, a cold beer or two and a few minutes in hand to get rid of the carnal images of Jane that came with this mood. The focus this time seemed to be the amazing things she did with her mouth.

He parked in his driveway and headed toward the front porch, stopping short when Jane stepped into the light.

He took her breath away. Jane had sat on Marcus' porch for an hour, going over everything she wanted to say for about the millionth time in the two days it had taken her to make arrangements and fly there. One look at him and she couldn't speak.

At least he was alone. That didn't mean there wasn't a girlfriend on the other side of the swamp grove but she had hope. And maybe a place to dump the body.

"Jane?" He stopped halfway up the walk, his tone and expression pure disbelief.

She nodded. Neither of them moved for what felt like forever and then, god love him, he could still read her like a book. He held out his arms.

She ran down the couple of stairs and into his arms, loving that he held her every bit as desperately as she clung to him. When he moved his head, most likely to ask her what the hell she was doing in Florida, she kissed him. And kissed him.

It felt so right.

He didn't kiss her back like someone who had a girlfriend. His tongue was in her mouth, touching and tasting her with the same ferocity she felt. It wasn't until a car honked and someone yelled, "Way to go, doc!" that he pulled back long enough to say anything.

"You're really here?" he asked. "I'm not dreaming this time, right?"

She nodded, lost in the love and hope shining in his brown eyes. Still... "Unless I'm too late. Are you seeing someone else?"

"No, never. You're it for me, Janie Tipper."

Jane felt her heart burst with happiness. "I drove by and saw your clinic. You've got something good started here and I...well, before I left home I checked and there's a good option for a chiropractic college here." She took a deep breath and let it out. "I'm willing to see if they meet my needs."

"Ah, Janie." He hugged her tighter. "I swear, if the school isn't one hundred percent perfect, we'll move. We'll find somewhere that fits *both* our needs."

If there was any lingering doubt that she was doing the right thing, it hit the proverbial floor. "Deal."

He kissed her again, pulling away with a groan when she rubbed against his erection. "Christ, you're killing me here. We need to go inside. *Now*."

They made it to the living room floor. The bedroom was a possibility until he fumbled and dropped the keys trying to unlock the front door. Janie picked them up

and there, in the shadows of his porch, she pressed her mouth to his cock right through his shorts.

The keys were snatched out of her hand and he gently hauled her to her feet, opened the door and kicked it shut behind them. He led her toward a hallway, shedding clothes along the way, until Jane tripped trying to kick her sandals off while walking.

He turned around and there she was, on her knees in front of him again, only this time she was on carpet, they had privacy and his shorts were undone. One tug at his hips and both shorts and those sexy boxer briefs were halfway down his thighs. His cock jumped free, literally bopping her in the chin with eagerness.

Marcus froze. Jane glanced up and caught her breath at the look of sheer desire and anticipation on his face.

"This better be real, not the fantasy," he groaned. "Shit. I won't last. I haven't had sex in a year and I can't—"

"It's been the same year for me." She licked at his slit with the tip of her tongue, using his rich pearls of pre-cum and her saliva to get the entire crown nice and wet. He stopped protesting and she assumed he was using his energy to focus on hanging on. Silly man.

She opened her mouth and took him in as deep as she could, then pulled back, leaving him gasping and trembling where he stood. He tasted so good and she felt so empowered by his reaction that she did it again and again until he groaned and tried to back away.

"I want to be inside you," he rasped. "I want to make you come too."

It only took one nod of consent for him to push his shorts and boxers the rest of the way off and step out of them along with his Texas. She already had her sandals off and had pulled her sundress over her head. He stopped for a second when he saw that she wasn't wearing a bra, then they were both tugging on her underwear.

"Let me," she said. "You're not helping."

"Can't wait," he shot back, tugging them right out of her grasp and down her legs. "Next time will be in a bed, I promise."

Jane laughed at his clumsiness, only to suck in a deep breath as he lined up between her legs and began to push inside her. "Marcus," she sighed at the heavy pressure, her nerve endings singing with pleasure as the head slipped through. "God."

"Yeah. Oh yeah." He kissed her, groaning into her mouth as he steadily slid home. He stopped there, pressed so deeply inside her it bordered on uncomfortable, until he pulled back and raised himself on his forearms to look into her eyes. "Tell me again this is real."

Was he really trying to hold back? "I'm real. We're real. I love you."

The breath whooshed out of him in a roar and Jane wrapped her legs around his hips and held on for dear life. He was completely out of control and he rode her hard but she was right there with him. *With him*. She felt him throb inside her and knew he was close but it was more than that. She could feel a connection that wasn't physical, felt his exhilaration and knew he could feel hers too.

"Janie!"

She heard her name trail off on a groan as the throbbing inside her intensified, bringing her with him to the edge of reason. There was a final deep thrust, hot bursts of explosion that echoed her own and they leapt together off a cliff with no bottom, just a slow glide to a quaking halt.

Jane slowly came back to reality in time to catch Marcus' muffled, "Holy shit!" and she couldn't help laughing. She couldn't have phrased it better.

"Damn, Janie, I wasn't thinking. Tell me you're still on the Pill."

"I am. I do want to take it slowly from here. I want to finish school and establish myself before we make any decisions about taking it to another level.

"No argument here. And to prove that I keep my promises..." He scooped her up and brought her to his bed. "We get to have slow sex in a bed."

She quickly rolled them over and straddled his hips. "Is that a challenge?"

He sucked in an audible breath and she proceeded to show him, slowly, that it was a challenge they could both win.

About the Author

If a story doesn't have romance, it isn't worth it. If there's hot sex, it's extra worth it.

Let's face it, fantasy is usually a lot more fun than reality. Not always, but usually. As a writer, one can be anything, do anything, say anything that comes to mind. There are a thousand and one ways to make things happen, each one more exciting than the last.

This is the best job in the world.

The author welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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