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A Change of Pace

an erotic romance short by

MICHELLE HOUSTON

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Nicole leaned back in her chair, debating whether she should knock off for the night or get a head start on next week's work. Looking out of the glass enclosure surrounding her office, at the already empty cubicles and the cleaning crew that was just arriving, she decided to call it a night. As if her body added its agreement she yawned, automatically covering her mouth with her hand.

Giving a mirthless laugh, she stood and packed up her things. Setting her computer to secure mode, she placed her keyboard in her desk drawer and locked it. Pulling her purse from the bottom drawer of the filing cabinet, she headed out of her office. There was no point in locking it—the cleaning crew had to get in to do their job.

As she walked down the lonely path to the elevator, she couldn't help sighing at what awaited her at home. A few plants that needed watering, a pile of laundry she needed to drop off at the cleaners, and a stack of bills to be paid. The weekend loomed ahead, empty.

Running a hand through her graying hair, she wondered for the thousandth time if this was the life she wanted. Ten years ago, fresh from college and idealistic as hell, she thought she could make a difference. She would start dating and maybe settle down in a year or so, when her career was steady, and hopefully a year or two later have her one and only child.

Now, here it was, ten years later, and she didn't even have a pet. Long hours at the office would leave it cooped up and alone inside her home. She didn't believe in doing that to a living creature. She had tried a fish, and ended up killing it when she kept forgetting to feed it. Even buying a supply of the vacation feeding pellets hadn't worked on the replacement fish. It had lasted only a month longer.

As she reached the elevator, she pushed the down button and waited. And waited. And waited.

"Elevator's out!" a helpful voice called out behind her. Groaning at the six-flight hike in high heels that awaited, she

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moved to the stairs and opened the door. Stepping into the stairwell, she was immediately enclosed in near darkness. Slipping off her shoes, she held them in one hand and gripped the rail in the other. Starting out slowly, she headed downstairs, grumbling with each step as the cold slowly seeped into her skin.

Rather than the prosecutor's office she had planned on joining out of college, student loans had forced her to accept an offer from an estate firm that had recruited her right out of law school. She had planned to stay just long enough to pay off her debt but had wound up buying a house, and now she found herself alone, thirty-five years old, with a mortgage that would take at least another twenty years to clear. In the darkness of the stairwell, she admitted to herself she hated her job. Writing wills and dealing with probates wasn't what she had planned on doing, or even imagined, when she graduated. But it was too late to start over.

Feet aching, she finally reached the ground floor and, before stepping out, she put her shoes back on, then moved out of the darkness. Waving to the security guard, she was buzzed out.

The muggy night air had her feeling sweaty and more irritated before she made it halfway to her car. Fed up with it all, she decided she wasn't ready to head home to the silence that would surround her, slowly suffocating her until she gave up and called it a night.

As she climbed into her car, she decided to head to a nearby bar and grill that some of her co-workers had been raving about. A few of them had tried to get her to go with them but, conscious of the strong chance she had of making junior partner within a few years, she had chosen instead to put that time to use at work.

Switching on the stereo as she pulled out of the parking lot, she wanted to try something besides her normal soft jazz. Switching the stations until she found one playing a familiar tune, she felt her mood lightening as the 80's music washed over her. She used to love Genesis, but somewhere along the way, she had forgotten that.

Invigorated for the first time in a while, she was tapping her fingers against the steering wheel when red lights started flashing in her rearview mirror. Glancing down at her speedometer, she cursed as she saw that she was going fifteen

miles over the speed limit. She pulled over to the side of the road, cut the engine, and waited for the cop to stroll up to her window.

"License and registration, please."

At the deep voice, Nicole felt an unexpected shiver. Her nerve endings stood up and took notice. There was something achingly familiar about that voice. Something sexy that awakened her slumbering libido.

Looking up as she handed over the documents, she tried to see the man's features, but with the darkness of night and the wide brim on his hat, all she got was a glimpse of a strong jaw and the briefest dusting of stubble.

"Ms. Johanssen, are you aware you were doing forty-five in a thirty mile an hour zone, ma'am?"

Not bothering to lie her way out of it, she responded simply, "Yes, sir." Her mind raced, trying to figure out what was so familiar about the cop. When he turned and walked back to his cruiser, she caught a glimpse of his butt in her side mirror. Her pulse fluttered in response. He had the type of ass a woman, especially a sex starved one, could drool over. Tight and slightly rounded, he had enough cushion for a handful, but not enough to be flabby.

When he climbed into his car, she tried to see his features. Although there was enough light, the distance prevented her from seeing more than a hint of his cheekbone.

The view as he walked back towards her was even better. Watching until the last possible second, she licked her lips at his deliberate and powerful movements. He was leashed animal magnetism coupled with a uniform, and a deep, husky voice—the perfect combination.

It was beginning to drive her nuts, the sensation that she knew him from somewhere.

As he started writing on his pad, she glanced at his hand and didn't see a wedding ring, but that wasn't anything to judge by. Plenty of men she knew didn't wear a ring. So, he could still be a co-worker's husband.

Ripping the paper off, he crouched down beside her car and Nicole got her first good look at him. At first it didn't register, until he started talking again. "Seeing as how you helped me

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through all those torts, and you have a mostly clean record, I've decided to let you off with a warning."

"You're getting me off with a warning?" Horrified as soon as the words were said, Nicole slapped her hand over her mouth, only increasing her embarrassment. If she had played it cool, he might have thought he heard her wrong. But, flustered by her realization that the sexy cop was a former classmate, and secret object of more than one lust-filled night of self-pleasure, she overreacted.

Alan's chuckle sounded warm and incredibly relaxed as he handed a piece of paper through the window.

"No, Nicole, I'm *letting* you off with a warning. Now if you want, I can do the other after dinner some night." Instinctively grabbing the paper, she curled her fingers around it and sat in silence as he walked away. Through her open window, she could hear him whistling.

He pulled out from behind her, and with a wave took off into the night. After he had become nothing more than taillights winking in the night, she smoothed out the paper and found a note instead of the expected warning ticket.

My place. Tomorrow. 8PM.

1012 Elm Drive. And wear those reading glasses of yours.

Tossing the paper onto the passenger seat, she pulled back out onto the road and, rather than heading for the bar, decided to call it a night and headed for home. She pulled into her driveway several minutes later and sat there, mentally debating if she should take him up on the offer. If she did, what would they talk about? What if he wanted to do more than talk? What if all he wanted was a quick booty call?

It had been years since they had seen each other last, and obviously he hadn't followed through with law school if he was a cop. She found herself nonetheless intrigued. She had always wondered what kind of a lover Alan Viviano would have made. But, she also wasn't looking for a quick orgasm or one night stand.

The fact that he had a dominant enough personality to go into law enforcement only added to his appeal. Tall, darkly good

looking with a hot Italian temper, he was the perfect foil to her blonde Scandinavian looks and frosty temperament. Where she had always hesitated, he often spoke up, many times offering and defending her point on something in class.

Smiling, she reached over and picked up the paper, then climbed out of the car, heading into her lonely house. She would sleep on it and, in the morning when she was clear-headed, then she would decide if she wanted to explore what could be there, or if she wanted to stay with her status quo.

* * * *

When the alarm went off the next morning, Nicole slapped at it until it fell silent. Curling into a ball under the covers, she tried to drift back to sleep, but images from last night kept teasing her consciousness. She could recall in vivid detail the pull of material across Alan's legs as he had walked toward her, and the curve of his pants where they cupped his groin and wrapped around his trim hips.

He had aged well, from what she had been able to see. There were a few new lines around his eyes, but they only added to his appeal. He had lost some of the boyish charm, and gained a ruggedness that she could only guess about.

Imagining how his hands would feel, no longer smooth as a baby's butt, but calloused and rough, sent a shiver down her spine. Stretching out her legs, she rolled onto her back and lightly caressed her stomach through her nightgown. As the silk brushed across her nipples and caught for a brief moment on the hard nubs, she trembled. Tiny sparks ignited within her pussy, as the desire to be filled washed over her.

Closing her eyes, she could see Alan rising over her, his hands gripping hers, holding them immobile over her head as his mouth plundered hers. His tongue would thrust past her lips, claiming her mouth as his.

Sliding her hands up to cup her breasts, she stroked the silk over the straining beads of her nipples as she imagined the rough rasp of his tongue, lapping at them. Then his hands would release hers, but a demanding glare would hold her immobile. She'd lay there submissively as he learned her body, slowly gliding his tongue and lips over her shoulders and neck, down to

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her breasts, and further still over her stomach and down to her aching core.

With a whimper, she followed the path of her fantasy lover with her hand, stroking along her belly, lightly caressing her inner thighs before pulling the material up and slipping a hand into her panties.

Stroking the wet flesh of her clit, she slid her fingers down past her moist lips and into her pussy. Lightly, her fingernails scraped against her inner walls as she thrust them deep, pumping it in and out of her core. She rocked her hips as she imagined the weight of her lover pressing her down into the mattress.

With her other hand, she caressed her breasts through the soft cloth of her nightgown, imagining it was a dress instead. She pinched her nipple, rolling it slowly between her fingers as she pictured Alan's teeth nipping as he slowly stroked in and out of her body with his cock.

Giving her nipple one last pinch, she slid her hand down her body and into the waistband of her panties to join the other. With one hand pumping into her pussy, Nicole stroked her clit with the other.

The first shuddering waves of her impending orgasm made her arch against her hands. In her mind's eye, she could see the smoky look in Alan's eyes as he neared his own orgasm. His lids would be half closed, like they had been many nights when they stayed up way too late studying. But instead of exhaustion, it would be desire clouding the brown depths.

Nicole could almost feel his body over hers. His tense muscles strained against hers as he pounded her pussy with his cock, his body sliding and brushing, grinding and sweating. Arching her hips, she pinched her clit between her thumb and forefinger as she thrust her fingers hard, rotating them as they slipped past her lips. With a soft whimper she climaxed, her cream quickly soaking into the material of her panties.

Gasping for breath, she continued to plunge her fingers in an imitation of her fantasy lover's thrusts, working her clit as she rode the wave of her orgasm, drawing it out as long as she could.

Reality was slow to return, but as it did a sense of loneliness followed quickly on its heels. Opening her eyes, she turned her head on her pillow and found Alan's note staring at her from her

nightstand. She reached out and grabbed it, her fingers still moist with her juices. Rubbing her thumb over his instructions, she made up her mind.

* * * *

As Nicole had expected, by seven-thirty she was running behind. Her salon had managed to squeeze her in for a quick cut and style, she managed to shave her legs without cutting herself, and she found a dress she could live with. But she was having absolutely no luck with Alan's one request—the glasses.

She had gone through several boxes of saved items and was beginning to despair that she had tossed them out a year earlier when she switched to contacts. Just as she was digging in her tax information box on a lark, she found them.

Triumphant, she slipped them on and looked in the mirror. The moment her gaze met her own in the reflective glass, a colony of butterflies took up residence in her stomach. Sorely out of practice at the whole seduction thing, she pulled at the hem of her dress and glanced at the clock.

Red numbers glared back at her. Seven thirty-four. if she was going to make it to the address Alan had given her by eight, she had to hurry. There wasn't time to debate if another outfit would be better, or if what she was wearing would send the wrong signals. In fact, there wasn't time to do anything more than grab her purse and keys, lock the door, and head out.

Her hand shook as she tried to insert her key into the ignition, and for a moment she almost backed out. But, the possibility of ending the evening in Alan's arms rather than alone in her bed steadied her nerves. Backing the car out of her driveway, she set out, and before she knew it she was pulling onto the road in front of his house. A sudden case of nerves had her driving past his house and circling around the block. When she pulled back around, Alan was standing on his porch, leaning against the wood column, watching her. Taking a deep breath, she pulled into the driveway and killed the engine.

Her hands shook even more as she tossed her keys in her purse and climbed out. She headed up the walkway, conscious of Alan's gaze following her movements. As she climbed onto the porch, she saw him push away from the column.

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The moment she reached the top of the steps, she was pulled into his arms. Before she had time to decide if she wanted to protest, his lips were covering hers, right there in front of anyone who might be watching, and devoured her mouth. Nicole felt her knees give out, and she feared that at any moment she would slide to the ground at his feet.

His hands, firm and warm against her hips, were the only things keeping her upright as his tongue rubbed against hers. Clutching at his shoulders, she leaned into the kiss, and followed as he moved to pull back.

As his lips left hers, she dropped her head to lie against his chest, breathing heavily and feeling like she had just run a sprint—in heels—with a rabid dog chasing her.

"Alan, I—"

He tipped her face up and brushed a soft kiss against her lips. "No regrets. I'm done wondering, and waiting, and torturing myself with what ifs from the past." His fingertips brushed against her cheek and down the column of her throat to her shoulder and—slowly, achingly tender—down her arm where they curled around her wrist. He stepped back into his house, pulling her with him. The decade melted away as his dimples flashed with his smile, taking her breath away.

His place was lovely, from the warm inviting colors of the furniture and rugs to the stark photos adorning the walls. Everything had obviously been chosen with care, including the candelabra that held lit candles on the coffee table.

Large pillows had been arranged on the floor on either side of the glass topped table, and the aroma of oriental food filled the air. Nicole could remember many evenings spent studying with him over Chinese food at one of the local restaurants. She was surprised he remembered as well. As she allowed him to draw her to the table, the evening began to take on a surreal feeling.

While they ate, they talked about anything and everything. Why he had dropped out of law school and joined the police force, what her hopes and dreams were for her career. His failed marriage, and her near brush with matrimony that had ended with the knowledge her fiancée was doing more than dictating to his secretary. Even about her failure as a pet owner.

And she laughed. More than she could remember doing in a long time. The last time she had enjoyed such a simple date had been years before. Most of the men she had found time to go out with recently had been higher maintenance than she was.

As the evening progressed, she found herself reaching out to caress his hand when she made a point, or his foot would brush against her leg as he shifted on his side of the coffee table. Each touch, each accidentally purposeful brush of their bodies, increased the desire he had ignited on the porch, until she was ready to scream at him to take her and finish what he had started.

But for some reason he seemed content to wait, to tease her a little more.

She had just taken a sip of her wine after swallowing her last bite of sweet and sour chicken when he stood and held out his hand. "Dance with me," he commanded, his tone no-nonsense. Rather than bristling at his highhandedness like she would have with any other man, she found herself placing her hand in his and allowing him to pull her up.

"There's no music."

With a quick grin, he crossed the room and turned on the stereo. Moments later soft strains of music filled the room. "Now there is."

He took her into his arms, pressing her tight against his muscular frame. The fire inside her turned into a raging inferno. Moving where he guided, she was achingly aware of the glide of his thigh between her legs, the brush of his groin against her hip, the tight press of his chest against her breasts.

Laying her head on his shoulder, she pressed a soft kiss against his neck, just above the collar of his shirt. When he shuddered, she grew bolder and nipped at the slightly salty flesh, her tongue following to lap at the sting she knew she caused.

His hands slid from her back down to her ass, cupping her and pressing her tighter against his body. Emboldened, she ran her hands up and down his chest, pausing occasionally to undo a button and spread the material for her lips to caress. All the while, he slowly worked her dress up until his hands cupped her bare ass, stroking over the thong that parted her cheeks.

With a groan, he lifted her against him and she wrapped her legs around his waist, continuing to kiss his chest and shoulders

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as he walked down the hallway to his bedroom. They fell to the bed, and his lips claimed hers.

In the back of her mind, Nicole was shocked at her wanton behavior. Even though she had known him in college, ten years had passed. She had no clue what kind of man Alan had become. But the way he was making her feel pushed the logical part of her mind aside. A creature of pure passion rose to the surface, demanding more of his touch.

As he settled into the valley of her thighs, his groin moved against hers, generating such a delicious friction she could feel the lace of her thong growing damp with her cream. She finished unbuttoning his shirt and slipped it from his shoulders.

His hands clasped hers and pulled them over her head. "Grab the headboard," he whispered against her lips. As her fingers curled around the metal rungs he moved down her body, his breath hot enough to sear her through the thin dress. "Don't let go, no matter what."

Alan continued his downward path, until he rested at her feet. Picking up one, he cupped her ankle and pulled off her shoe. Tossing it aside, he pressed a kiss to her instep and moved up her thigh until he reached the top of her stocking. Unsnapping the garter clasp, he rolled the gossamer material down, baring her skin inch by inch, kissing all along her exposed flesh until he reached her foot again.

He pressed another kiss on her foot before dropping it to rest on the bed. Picking up her other foot, he repeated the process until her legs were bare. Knees bent, feet planted firmly on the bed more than shoulders width apart, her pussy was almost bared, except for a thin strip of lace and material covering her lips.

"I've pictured you like this for years," he said as his gaze met hers. His eyelids were half-closed, giving him a sleepy appearance, but there was nothing sleepy about his voice. Rough and hoarse with passion, his tone was like whiskey.

"You have?"

She had often fantasized about that, that after their study sessions he would head back to his place and stroke himself, imagining it was her hand caressing him. Normally it would take three fingers buried to the hilt in her pussy to fulfill her, as she'd

close her eyes and picture him standing over her, his firm hands stroking his cock as he watched her masturbate.

"Yes."

She wanted to ask if she had been as much of an obsession to him as he had been to her during college, until time slowly diminished the memories, until she had forgotten all about him the last few years. Only to have that obsession renewed with the flashing of his lights in her rearview mirror.

"I almost failed the final, because of you."

"How so?"

He smiled and said, "I was so wrapped up in watching your lips wrapped around your pencil as you worked your way through the questions, I could hardly concentrate. Did you know you did that?"

Nicole shook her head. She hadn't known she sucked on her pencil, but given that her own mind had been flirting with images of sucking him off after the final, a reward for all their hard work, it wasn't surprising.

"You did. Sitting there, so perfectly untouchable with your glasses, and prim hair. Most of the guys didn't even know you existed—"

How well she remembered that part. Plain and shy, she had quickly adopted an 'ice queen' reputation to mask the hurt of not being asked out. While all her dorm-mates were out partying and enjoying life, she had been at home with her books, studying and determined to make something of herself.

"But I knew there was more to you than the icy attitude," he continued, unaware of her thoughts. "I'd watch you as we studied, and sometimes your eyes would go all glassy, your breath would catch, and I would wonder what you were thinking about. My dick would be hard, aching to rub against you, and then you would snap back to reality, and go on like nothing had happened."

Nicole started to let go of the headboard, wanting to pull him against her, but his eyes caught the movement and his gaze locked on hers, holding her immobile. He moved up between her upraised thighs and glided his hands up her body. He grasped the waist of her thong and slid it down, baring her pouting sex to the air. Sliding up further, he pressed the hard length of his frame

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into her body as he unhooked the strap of her dress. As he worked it down her body, she wiggled and arched, helping him all she could while still holding on to the headboard.

"The most frustrating moment of all was when class was over, and I started to ask you out, but Bill King beat me to it."

Nicole closed her eyes at the memory—what a mistake that had been. Although they hadn't worked out, he had introduced her to his cousin, who had invited her to the party where she met her former fiancée.

If only she had said no, and Alan had asked her out.

"And I watched you blossom with him, your skin glowing at the attention he showered on you, and I called myself all kinds of a fool. I let you go...because I had to. Slowly, I forgot. Or so I thought." As he talked, he caressed her body, running those roughened hands over her smooth flesh. Her breath hitched as his palms scraped over her nipples then drifted away. "Until I saw your car zipping down the road, and I ran your plate. Looking at you, sitting there so perfect and calm, honest to a fault, not even trying to worm your way out of a ticket, and I remembered all those nights we spent studying. I knew I couldn't let the opportunity slip away again."

His dipped his head and pressed a kiss against her belly button, then slipped lower. As he settled on his stomach between her thighs, his breath warm on her inner thighs, Nicole would have given anything to go back ten years before, to have discovered this moment with him then. But, knowing her younger self, she probably wouldn't have appreciated it as much as she did now, with years of lukewarm passion sprinkled with hot blasts that fizzled almost as soon as they started.

"There's so much I want to do to you, one night will never be enough." With that he dipped his head and stroked his tongue along the seam of her pussy. Like a flower unfurling for the morning sun, her pussy lips parted, welcoming the velvet heat of his tongue into her depths. He lapped and licked along her clit and the slick inner walls of her core, until she was gasping and twisting on the bed, panting and begging for more.

"You like that?" he tormented, running a fingertip along her slick skin. "Does this feel good?"

"Yes," she panted, her fingers tightening on the metal above her head.

"Tell me what you want, Nicole."

"I want you. To fuck me."

"How?" he taunted. "With my fingers, like this?"

He thrust two fingers deep within her pussy, and Nicole moaned in response. Her pussy clamped down, trying to stop the gradual withdrawal. "Is this what you want?"

"No," she gasped. She could hear the frustration lacing her words.

"What then? You have to say it, Nicole. I have to know this is what you want."

"With your dick, Alan, I want to feel your dick inside of me, fucking me!" she wailed. As the words poured forth, it felt like a wall had come crumbling down within her. "Fuck me, Alan, make me come."

Years of repressed desires, of holding herself back, were gone in that moment.

His eyes gleamed with predatory pride as he leaned over her, pulling a condom out of a drawer on the bedside table. Unzipping his pants, he quickly sheathed himself and settled between her thighs.

But unlike how she had hoped, he slowly stroked his cock against her pussy lips, barely dipping into her core before pulling back. "Alan," she whimpered.

"So prim and proper, so contained all the time," he whispered against her lips. "I always knew there was more to you that was hidden, waiting to be unleashed." Without warning, he thrust hard, sliding more than halfway in. "Do you want it soft and slow?"

Nicole looked into his eyes and saw a warmth there she hadn't seen in any of her former lovers' eyes. It was as if he was looking into her soul. "No," he answered for her, "I don't think so. You want it hard, and maybe a little rough. You want to walk out of here and know that you've been fucked."

Her eyes widened, then closed as he slammed down on her. She could feel her teeth snap together at the force. Tightening her hold on the headboard, she wrapped her legs around his waist

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and gripped him as tightly as she could. He pumped his hips, driving his cock so deep inside that she felt him filling her.

One of his hands cupped her ass, holding her almost immobile while the other slipped between them, and his fingers danced along her clit while he rotated and thrust his hips, creating such a delicious friction. It was so delicious that she wanted to cry and scream at the same time.

Gasping, she fought for breath as he settled into a hard and fast rhythm, the headboard beating its protest against the wall. She held onto the metal rungs as if they were the edge of a lifeboat and she was stranded in the middle of the ocean. She rode the crest and ebb of her passion as he worked them both higher and higher until, with a soft scream, she climaxed. Ripples of pleasure arced through her, drowning out everything except for the feel of his body against hers, the rough glide of his pants against her bare legs.

Even the feel of his zipper scratching at the tender skin of her inner thighs increased the sensations, until she swirled so high, her body clenched so tight, that the world went dark.

As consciousness returned, she stretched and found her hands still grasping onto the headboard. Alan's hands covered her wrists, and together they pried her stiff fingers from the metal. He pressed a soft kiss against each finger as her eyes flickered open and focus slowly returned.

He was stretched out beside her, his pants still undone, his cock lying soft against the dark material.

"I blacked out," she murmured, surprised that it had happened. Normally orgasms were nice, but never mind-blowing. Even with her battery-operated boyfriend, she hadn't experienced such a rush of adrenalin.

"Mmm, I know." Rather than the self-satisfaction she would have expected in his voice, she heard only tenderness that made her heart ache. "Shakespeare wrote of such things, a petite mort, or little death. It's poetic on paper, but more delicious to actually witness."

Rolling over, she curled up against his chest and pressed a soft kiss over his still racing heart. Despite his nonchalance, he was just as affected. She had a good idea why he was acting like he wasn't—for her.

"Has that happened before?"

Alan brushed his lips over her hair before answering. "No."

Nicole grinned as a wicked idea started to take root. "It could have been just a reaction to years of abstinence."

"Possibly." She could hear the smile in his voice, and knew he had some idea where she was heading. Trailing her hand down his chest to the hard lines of his stomach, and down to his groin, she found his cock stirring to life.

Before her fingers could close over him, she found herself pinned on her back.

"So, we'll change the pace and take it nice and slow this time, just to be sure."

* * * *

The next morning, Nicole woke slowly. A delicious feeling of warmth surrounded her. Feeling nature's demanding call, she reluctantly rolled over, only to find herself held immobile by a weight surrounding her waist. Her eyes flared open to find Alan staring down at her, lids half closed with sleep.

"Morning," he whispered, his warm breath brushing over her cheek.

Feeling utterly shy, she managed to whisper back a somewhat respectable "hi." Years before she used to fall asleep wishing she was in his arms, and she'd wake up wanting to be held by him. Now that it had actually happened, she was at a loss what to say.

Opening her mouth to tell him what a great time she had had the night before, she managed to blurt out, "I have to use the restroom" instead.

Alan's warm chuckle filled the room as he lifted his arms so she could climb out of bed. Feeling sudden warmth in her chest, she knew she had to be blushing beet red. Grabbing the edge of the sheet, she wrapped it around her in an attempt of modesty as she hurried to the bathroom.

After taking care of her morning ritual, she leaned over his sink and turned on the water. Splashing cool water on her face did nothing to remove the blush she knew would stay there for a while.

Nicole knew she couldn't stay in Alan's bathroom forever. Deciding to brave it out, she opened the door and was confronted

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by a very naked Alan standing on the other side of the door. Sometime in the night, he had managed to pull the covers over them, but they must have kicked the blanket to the floor. When she had wrapped up in the sheet, she hadn't thought that it might have been all that was covering Alan.

"Um, I guess you need to use the bathroom, too, huh?"

"Nope. Ran down the hall to the other bathroom while you were in there."

Rather than shift to the side and let her pass, he stepped forward, and reflexively she stepped back. "I want you to know that last night wasn't normal for me," she said, more for herself than him.

A quick smile creased his lips moments before he leaned down and kissed her, stealing her breath. The sheet dropped to the floor as she grabbed on to his shoulders for support as her knees threatened to give out.

When he pulled back, Nicole was certain she was going to fall flat on her face if he let go.

"Last night wasn't normal for me, either. And for the record, I wasn't looking for a fling."

Nicole gazed into his deep brown eyes, searching for the truth of his words. As much as she wanted to believe them, they echoed too closely her own wishes for her to be certain she hadn't heard him wrong.

"Let's take it one day at a time, and see what happens."

After a moment's hesitation, Nicole nodded.

"Good. Let's have a quick shower and we'll swing by your place for a change of clothes and go somewhere for breakfast and just talk."

Nicole slowly stroked her hand down his chest, thrilled that she could touch him as much as she wanted to, exploring the changes ten years had made to his general build. Alan's groan caused her to lose focus in her task and find him staring down at her, a heated look in his eyes. Trailing her hand just a bit lower, she brushed against the hardness of his cock.

"Lunch is good, too," he growled.

Nicole's embarrassed laugh was smothered by his lips as he kissed her again and guided her further into the bathroom for a not so quick shower.

About the Author

Born to ride on the back of dragons, to journey among the stars in a ship traveling faster than light, or to dance the night away in the arms of a mysterious vampire, Michelle Houston willingly shares the worlds in her mind in an effort to bring them to life.

Writing everything from short and sweet stories, to hot and spicy tales of kink, from contemporary tales of romance to erotic romances featuring Greek gods, vampires and were-creatures, she has crossed sexualities and has gone wherever her mental muse has guided her, a journey she has never regretted.

Beyond that, she has a love of the natural world around us (except for insects, spiders, snakes, scorpions, and she reserves the right to add more at any time) and hopes to share the enjoyment of the earth with her students once she finally earns her degree in secondary Biology/Earth Science Education.

In other words, she is an ordinary woman with an imagination that is only held in bounds by how fast she can type.