



**Trixie Stilletto**

**FIVE ALARM  
LOVE**

## FIVE ALARM LOVE

...He was hard and hot everywhere she came in contact with him. His chest smushed her breasts and it felt so good she wanted to be even closer.

The hard ridge of his abdomen against her round stomach made her hungry to run her mouth and hands over him without any barrier between their skin. Below his hips, the ridge of his cock against his jeans was a delicious torture. She would only change one thing.

"I wish you were naked," she whispered, her lips centimeters away from his. "I wish I could feel you everywhere."

He stepped back, and she wished she hadn't said anything because his arms weren't around her now.

"That's easy," he said, starting to remove his shirt. "I wish the same. I want tonight to be all about your wishes and making them come true."

Lisa gulped. It'd been a long time since she stripped for a man who wasn't Johnny. She wasn't sure if it was a good idea, especially with a light on. He'd taken his shirt off, and she gulped at the sight before her. Firemen were noted for their bodies...it came from lugging around the heavy hoses and equipment according to the research she'd done for an article years ago, but she had never experienced it firsthand.

"Wow," she said on a breath. Her hand was on his chest without her realizing her arm had moved. Her fingers trailed over his well-defined shoulders and then along the edge of an amazing pectoral muscle that flexed in response. His nipple was a yummy looking chocolate against his bronze skin. He had just enough hair for her to play in, but not so much she needed to get out the Weedwhacker. She hungered for so many things she forgot all about clothes. And he did say this was about delivering on wishes...

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# FIVE ALARM LOVE

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BY

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FIVE ALARM LOVE  
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*For Tom. Always.*

# CHAPTER 1

Lisa put down the toy and looked at it in exasperation. She was still completely unfulfilled and now \$89.99 poorer. This had never happened with Johnny.

She sighed and leaned back against the thick pillows of the bed and battled tears. That was the problem. Johnny was gone. He was never coming back, and here she was a young, healthy widow with needs and no wonderful man to love and laugh with. She played with her hair and that made the tears start to build stronger. She knew if he were here, he'd cajole her with funny stories or some silly wrestling to try getting her out of her mood. If that didn't work, he'd simply jump her bones and kiss her until his love and tenderness surrounded her. Sometimes she played hard-to-get just because the getting there, which hadn't been in doubt since the

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moment they'd met when they were both just starting out in life, was such a joy.

Afterward, they would lay together, arms and legs entwined in pleasant exhaustion, and relax. As much as she missed feeling him pound deep inside her body bringing them both to orgasm, she missed the after—laughing, talking or just laying side by side—even more.

She looked over at the life-sized vibrator and frowned. It came with a guarantee to do everything and anything a woman needed. She should write the manufacturer and tell them they needed to change the guarantee. Not only had it not given her what she needed, it hadn't even lasted long enough to give her at least one good orgasm. She picked it up and tried the power button again.

Nada. It was dead as a doorknob. That's what she got for going with the high tech one rather than the old-fashioned one that ran on batteries.

The power pack didn't matter. A woman didn't need a plastic object that pulsed, swirled and buzzed. She needed a man, a real man who was interested in the long haul. A man who was invested in the blood, sweat, tears, and above all else, laughter that is life. How was a woman to find a man like that when she'd had the real deal once already? Wasn't there some cosmic rule about one soul mate per person?

Lisa got out of bed. Well, if she couldn't find her release and she sure couldn't sleep—that's what had started this prolonged frustrating toy session—she might as well work. She had an article that was due at the end of the week. She might as well get started on it now. Anyway, sleep was overrated and it seemed it was about the only thing she did these days. Sleep and eat anything that wasn't moving.



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The thought of food made her stomach growl and her mouth water. There was a new place down the street that had just opened up a month or so ago. It was a breakfast bistro and offered everything from the mundane to the sublime. She wondered if they delivered since she didn't really feel like getting out of her writing costume and pajamas—Johnny's ragged T-shirt and a pair of panties. Although right now it wasn't a complete outfit. She was without panties since she'd been planning a mini solo orgy a few minutes ago.

She went over to the desk across from her bed. She'd sold their house and had moved into this efficiency apartment after Johnny's death. She just couldn't stand being where everything reminded her of their time together. It reminded her of all she'd lost when he died, a victim of urban crime. This reminded her of a hotel room. It was small, it was sterile, it was all she could handle at the moment.

Don't go there, she told herself. Focus on the positive, the moving forward. The loneliness was like a living, breathing beast that never let her escape. The only thing that helped was work. Writing and selling, and doing it all over again every day until she fell into bed at night, praying her mind, if not her body, was exhausted enough to sleep. Then she fell into a restless sleep, only to awaken and realize she had to do it all over again.

She booted up her laptop and opened her writing program. First things first; physical and emotional needs could come later. She had work, an article on the pitfalls of exotic travel, to do and a deadline to meet. She had her research at the ready and she dove in.

She'd only been working about an hour when the phone rang. She picked it up, saw the number of her best friend and answered.

"Hi, Helen, how're things going?"

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She'd only been talking to Helen about five minutes when the smoke alarm in her apartment and the hall of the building started shrieking. She sniffed and thought she smelled a hint of smoke.

"Helen, I think something is burning."

"I can hear the alarms. Get the hell out of there," Helen advised. "I'm on my way."

Lisa disconnected, stuffed her feet in a pair of flats, and pulled on a coat because she was still in her pajamas and it was a still a little cold on this early May morning in Buffalo. She stuffed her wallet into her coat pocket while she called for her cat Scooter and picked him up. The only other things in her apartment that couldn't be replaced were her wedding picture, which she took from the bar in the tiny kitchen, and Johnny's urn. It was too large to carry while she had Scooter in her arms and she didn't want to take the time to dig out Scooter's carrier from the bottom of the bedroom closet. Decision time—should she save the living or the dead? Johnny's urn was fireproof so, with the building alarms shrieking, she left the urn on the shelf and joined the rest of the tenants heading down the steps to safety.

\* \* \*

Lieutenant Brad Pittsburgh arrived at the scene of the upscale apartment building and took a look around. There wasn't much damage on the outside, but that wasn't always a clue. He glanced at the crowd of people milling around because sometimes, if it did turn out to be arson, the suspect liked to watch. It was his job to search scenes for just such clues as the newest arson investigator in the city. He liked his job, but he had to admit that sometimes he missed the adrenalin punch of beating fire at its game.

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Of course, not that it would matter, since he could no longer fight fires after he fell through the roof of the twelve-story building last year. He was only forty-five and sometimes it preyed on his mind that, because of a criminal act, he had been forced to step away from what he loved when he still had some good years left. But Brad tried not to dwell on the past.

Brad always looked forward. He couldn't fight the fires, but he could solve the crime that fire often was. His surgically repaired knee, injured in that fall through the roof, worked perfectly fine for most jobs. He put on his turnout and helmet just in case there was falling insulation or roof tiles. The engine chief had reported they had found the hot spot on the third floor, but he hesitated before going inside and making the climb. It was an older building, once a high school, which had been completely remodeled into luxury apartments and efficiencies a few years ago.

His job gathering evidence started outside the building. So, as he leisurely adjusted coat and hat, then reached for his duffle bag with his evidence gathering supplies inside, he scanned the crowd. His gaze collided with a beautiful pair of blue eyes in a round face. The face wasn't the only thing round about the woman who stood chatting to another young woman and an elderly couple. The round woman was wearing a coat that gaped open and, if he wasn't mistaken, a tattered Buffalo State University T-shirt and a pair of shoes. Her legs were bare and he had a fleeting wish to run his hand up them. The shirt was long, hitting her mid-thigh, but he knew, with every ounce of testosterone in his body, that she wasn't wearing anything else under that shirt.

Her breasts were full and heavy, and his mouth watered at the thought of revealing them and kissing, licking and biting them before sinking his hardening penis into her depths.

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He pulled his gaze away from that amazing body and looked again at her face. She was holding a big orange cat in one arm, while she used the other arm and hand to talk. He wondered what it would be like to have all the animation and...well...energy he sensed coming from her, focused strictly on him.

Whoa, boy, he thought as he turned away and strode to the building. He really needed to get a grip and do his job. Now wasn't the time to think about sex. He had a possible arson to solve. It was his first solo case and he wanted to do it right.

He climbed the stairs and went through the door to the hallway following the trail of hose as it wound past the elevators and into the end apartment. That door was standing open and he entered what realtors and landlords called an efficiency unit. Basically, it was one big room with dividers and nothing else.

"Hey, Lieutenant," the young fireman said, "you're going to love this one."

Brad tried to place a name with the voice and face. "Hey, Zimmer, you guys think it's arson?"

Zimmer smiled, and Brad had the idea he was trying to hold back a chuckle. "Well, that's what Cap Hailey says. All I know is it was a hot one."

Brad frowned. Again, he got the idea Zimmer was saying one thing, but meaning something else entirely. *Kids*. Maybe it was a good thing he wasn't fighting fires anymore. He just didn't understand the younger generation.

He stepped further into the apartment and took in the scene. It was immediately obvious there hadn't been much fire before the boys got here. Although the carpet was soaking wet from the dripping of their hose as they had wet the walls and ceiling to be certain the fire hadn't gotten into the walls.

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There was an undamaged laptop computer on a large desk that took up a huge portion of the living area. A cup of something, coffee maybe, was sitting beside it, along with a cordless telephone. Separating the main or living room was a bar and a tiny galley-style kitchen. It was pristine as well.

He left the main part of the apartment and went around a partition to where Bill Hailey was standing. Here was an unmade bed with a nightstand beside it. He knew in an instant that they were standing in the apartment of the T-shirt-clad woman downstairs because he got an immediate picture of her twisting restlessly on those hot pink sheets.

“Hey, Bill,” he said, trying to forget about the immediate image of him greeting that woman by fucking her on the thick, soft mattress. The mattress and her wonderful body would be the only things soft in the room. “Whaddya have?”

“Hiya, Brad. I think we’ve found the source of the fire,” Hailey said. “But whether it’s arson or just a flare, that’s your call.”

Brad nodded and moved to stand by Hailey. Again he thought he was missing a joke, but if there was one thing he didn’t joke about it was fire. He looked at the bedside table where Hailey was staring. There was no doubt this was where the fire started. The blackened top was a dead giveaway as was the strong smell of burnt plastic. Was it the wood? He pulled on his gloves to keep from damaging any fingerprints that may still remain and reached to shift through the mess.

It only took him a few minutes to get to the source.

“Is this a vibrator?” he asked.

“Yeah, I guess it was a hot morning for someone,” Hailey said, on a laugh. “In more ways than one.”

Now the chuckles were unleashed around the room. “Welcome

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to the arson squad,” Hailey said, slapping him on the back.

“Funny, guys. Real funny.”

\* \* \*

The building’s owner had arrived a few minutes ago and had gone inside. Lisa had thought everything must be under control because the firemen seemed to be in a clean-up mode. She, Helen, who’d arrived a few minutes ago, and the Pattersons, an elderly couple who lived on the first floor, had just been commenting on what had happened when one of the men, a definite hunk who only had one flaw—he looked like he’d just started shaving last week—had come over to where they stood.

The fireman had asked which of them was Lisa and then had told her she needed to go inside. She’d rubbed her free hand against her coat, feeling her nerves kick in. God, she hoped it wasn’t something bad. She didn’t know if she had it in her to handle any more bad news. Not after the last three years.

She’d sold everything she owned and started fresh. It had helped in some ways, although not the most important one, but she’d felt she was starting to turn the corner on getting a new life started.

If they had bad news about her new things, well, she’d do what was necessary. They were just things after all. Scooter, Johnny’s last present to her before his death, and she were fine. She could replace everything else.

Lisa shifted Scooter in her arms as she followed the young fireman back into the building.

“This way, ma’am,” the fireman said as he led her up the stairs.

Lisa hadn’t exercised in this millennium, but walking behind

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the obviously fit young man, she wondered if she'd ever been in that good shape because he took the steps like he was running a marathon. When they reached the top, she was breathing heavily and sweating like crazy. She told herself it was just because she was lugging Scooter's twenty pounds. She knew it was a lie.

She couldn't control the little gasp as she went into her apartment. A sinking feeling in the pit of her stomach developed as she saw the way the door was hanging off the hinges. When she entered, she realized that her new laptop, her research papers and everything else was soaking wet. She sniffed and added, smelly, as smoke permeated everything.

She looked over at the faux mantle where the urn resided. It was still there, so she breathed a sigh of relief.

There were two older men, one of whom she recognized as the man who'd arrived last in a car not a fire truck, standing on the other side of her divider. She saw the other man slap her man—no, he wasn't her man—on the back, turn and, when he saw her, dip his head. "Ma'am, Pittsburgh here is your man. Nice kitty."

He reached out a hand, and Scooter reacted predictably with a hiss. The fireman withdrew his hand, but was still smiling. Ever since Johnny, Scooter had reacted negatively to any man. That wasn't much of a problem because the only men regularly in her life were her brother Will and Mr. Patterson. She didn't count the pizza deliveryman because, well, it was never the same one and they were all ridiculously young.

"Catch you later, Brad," he said and then he left, taking all the other firemen with him. Lisa looked at the fireman left and held her breath.

"Are you Ms. Jones?" he asked.

"Mrs."

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He nodded. "Is your husband here?"

"No. He's deceased."

That answer seemed to startle the fireman.

"Oh. Sorry for your loss."

"Thank you." He actually sounded like he meant it. However, that didn't quell the nerves building in her stomach like a boulder.

"I'm Lieutenant Pittsburgh."

"Lieutenant." Lisa nodded. "Did you find the spot where the fire started?"

"Yes, we did." He moved his hand, and her tummy nerves went from boulder to cliff size. Though it was a misshapen lump of plastic now, Lisa had a sinking feeling she knew exactly what he was holding. It was an embarrassing and oddly arousing feeling.

"Oh." She really couldn't think of a single other thing to say in response.

"Oh? That's it? Do you realize what could've happened because of your carelessness?"

"Uhh..."

"That's not an excuse. Whatever possessed you to leave this unattended?"

"It wasn't working," she said.

He blinked. "Wasn't working?"

"No. I, er..." Lisa felt her face heating again. She wished she could just curl up and disappear into the floor. The way the hunky fireman was looking at her was terrible. She could see anger, disbelief and pity in his eyes. "Look, it really isn't your business."

"Maybe not, but arson *is* my business. That's what I'm considering charging you with. It's a miracle no one was hurt."

Now Lisa bristled. "You can't charge me with arson, Chief, I mean, Lieutenant. I wasn't deliberately trying to set anything on



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fire.” She felt her temper bubble dangerously. This was the most embarrassing moment of her life and *he* was making it worse.

“We still had a situation here that could’ve ended in disaster,” he said. “And I’m a lieutenant. If you and your boyfriend want to get your kicks, at least try to do something that doesn’t put other people in danger. This entire building could’ve burned to the ground in a flash. What do you say about that?”

There he stood, all superior and condescending, smirking at her while berating her and pitying her for having sex games with a pink, penis-shaped vibrator. It was too much. Lisa just lost it.

“I don’t have a boyfriend or anything else. That’s the problem. Believe me when I tell you that thing wasn’t powerful enough to burn this building down. It couldn’t even give me one orgasm without shorting out. But then isn’t that just like a man?”

For a moment, he looked like he was so surprised by her remark that he was going to turn tail and run. Which would have been perfectly acceptable to her because then she could forget this whole embarrassing incident.

“Oh. Well, just be careful next time.” He stood another moment as if not sure what he should do next. They both looked at the melted vibrator simultaneously. “Well, I guess...”

“I’m sorry...” she said at the same time.

After another moment, they laughed uncomfortably.

He looked like he wanted to say something else, but whatever it was, he didn’t. Instead, he sat the melted plastic down and nodded once. “Ma’am.”

He was gone before Lisa could nod. Now she turned and looked at the mess that had been her apartment and tried to battle back the tears. What did she do now?

## CHAPTER 2

Lisa wallowed in her self-pity for all of five minutes because that's how long it took before her friend Helen arrived in the apartment. Helen had taken the time to call a few other friends and, before Lisa could do more than blink, she had several willing helpers at her place to go through the stuff she wanted to keep and start the process of moving again.

The move wasn't really her choice. Her landlord was not too happy to find out she'd started the fire even inadvertently—and, yes, the fire department had reported it to him—although, according to the report he showed her, all it said was a personal appliance, thank you Jesus. But that was enough to kind of ruin the landlord-tenant relationship.

However, Helen and her friends had helped her box the stuff

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she wanted to keep and loaded it into Helen's van. Then they'd whisked her off to a nice hotel where she would stay until she found another apartment. The intervention, as Helen called it, didn't stop there. Helen had scheduled an afternoon for them at their favorite spa and, after a delicious dinner, had convinced Lisa what she needed was to be with people. That's how they'd ended up at this bar in the trendy downtown section of Buffalo.

"Come on, Lisa. You've got to admit this was just what you needed," Helen shouted over the rock music blaring from the dozens of the speakers scattered through the room.

Their other friends, Pat and Carol, nodded their heads. The place was jammed and, although she hated to admit it because Helen was a steamroller once she got going, exactly what she needed. It was hard to be depressed with the lights pulsing, people dancing and laughing, and all enjoying life completely.

"Well..." Lisa hated to lie and the look on Helen's face showed it would do no good. Pat and Carol were also smiling as if they knew the answer as well.

"I knew it. I knew it!" Helen chortled. "Here's a toast. To you moving forward and me being right."

Lisa had to laugh, but before she could respond other than raising her glass, Helen leaned across the table and whispered, "Good Lord, look who's here. I think it's that hunky fireman."

*Oh, hell.* Lisa didn't have to turn and look. She could tell by the way her nerves were tensing up her spine. He was here. *Of all the gin joints in all the towns...*

"Ladies. Ms. Jones. Had anymore close calls with inanimate objects?"

Helen, Carol and Pat nearly choked on their drinks they were trying so hard to contain their laughter. Lisa just sighed. There

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were two ways to handle this and neither of them was good. She'd never been one to run away from adversity, though this time it was mighty tempting if not to run literally to do it figuratively by ignoring him. She sucked it up and turned to face him.

"Chief Pittsburgh, I believe. Here to threaten more citizens or did the fire department send you for something really important like putting out a cigarette?"

Carol and Pat looked at her like she was crazy. They only knew the fire in her apartment had started from a small appliance, not what the appliance was. Helen knew all the facts, but she was still frowning at Lisa. Lisa shrugged at Helen. She didn't have to be a mind reader to know what was on her friend's mind. She didn't care that it had been two years since Johnny's death. She wasn't ready for another relationship, and that's what Helen and her friends wanted for her. The way she'd been feeling lately, she might never be ready.

She wasn't even sure she was ready for a man. If and when she was, it wouldn't be an overbearing bore like Pittsburgh. She'd rather deal with non-effective sex toys.

"No, I'm actually off and some of the guys talked me into coming here to celebrate my promotion."

*What a doofus.* Pittsburgh didn't seem to get that she had just insulted him.

"But when I recognized you over here, thought I'd better come over and be certain you weren't about to cause more trouble."

Now all three of her friends were looking everywhere but at Lisa and Pittsburgh. She felt a pang of guilt. She was really acting like a bitch, but she just couldn't help it. Couldn't he understand it was embarrassing that she was so lonely she'd resorted to a sex toy, but had only succeeded in starting a fire that put her out of her

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home and almost endangered others? Why couldn't he be a gentleman and leave her alone?

She felt tears start to burn at the back of her eyes. She just couldn't stay here one minute longer.

"I'm sorry, Helen, everybody. I can't stay." Lisa stood quickly, so quickly Pittsburgh had to jump back two steps, nearly knocking over a waitress. "I'm going home."

She knew Pittsburgh was apologizing to the waitress, so she grabbed her purse and fled the club. She was out on the sidewalk before she realized she couldn't go home. She didn't have a home any longer, just a sterile hotel room where only Scooter was waiting. Tears of desperation sprang up.

She was digging in her massive bag for a tissue when she felt a hand on her arm.

"What's your hurry, little one?"

God, couldn't he take a hint?

"Hey, are you crying?"

She closed her eyes for a second and huffed out a sigh. "Can't you please leave me alone?"

"Oh. Look, I just wanted to come and say I'm sorry if I embarrassed you earlier today," Pittsburgh said. "There really isn't anything to be embarrassed about. I mean, starting the fire was a boneheaded thing to do, but don't be embarrassed about having the vibrator."

Lisa had her head down looking in her purse for her keys. She'd driven her own car because it had seemed silly for Helen to have to drive her all the way back to the northern suburbs where her hotel was when Helen lived south of the city. Of course, just like always, her keys had picked that moment to find the deepest, most hidden part of her cloth bag, and were delighting in playing

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hide and seek. She rolled her eyes, but kept her face hidden while she was looking for her keys.

"Why would I be embarrassed about having a vibrator? I'm a healthy woman without a man. What else would you have me do?"

There was a pause. Hopefully, he was finally taking the hint and leaving. But still she was kind of disappointed he hadn't at least tried to find an answer to her question.

"I really find it hard to believe you can't find a man," he said, his comment bringing her head up immediately.

"I'm sorry?"

"I said I can't believe you can't find a man if you want one," he reiterated. "You're a beautiful woman and all a beautiful woman has to do is crook her finger and guys fall over themselves."

"Ah. Well, you're right about one thing. I haven't tried to find a man. I had the man I wanted. Now I don't." Let him chew on that for a little while, Lisa thought as she went back to digging for her keys.

"What happened?"

Lisa sighed heavily. "Okay, obviously, you won't do the decent thing and leave me alone, will you?"

Now he smiled at her, and the sight of it did something to Lisa's insides. It was so damn sexy it nearly took her breath away. "No."

There was also a hint of humor in his eyes. Lisa decided that instead of taking offense as she had so far today, she would talk to him. He was just a man, and in her younger days, Lisa had counted many men as her friends. The best of which was Johnny.

"If I tell you what happened will you leave me alone then?" she bargained.

He hesitated.

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“Oh, don’t bother making up a lie.” She withdrew her question. “Are you really interested in knowing what happened?”

When he nodded yes, she continued.

“My husband died, okay? He got shot during a convenience store robbery. He’s been dead three years, and I...” Now her words stuttered. She didn’t know why she was on the verge of crying again. Not in embarrassment, but in sadness.

“And you haven’t been with a man since?” he asked.

“No.”

“But you’re a young, healthy woman.”

Lisa laughed. “Right. I’m on the other side of forty. Frankly, I’m just too tired to do the whole dating thing. Especially considering I don’t want a relationship. But I have needs, you know.”

She couldn’t believe she was telling this stranger, this man who’d threatened to charge her with arson, all this personal stuff. He was quiet for a few minutes. When he spoke, he made a statement. “So you bought a vibrator.”

Some of her sense of humor resurfaced. “Not just a vibrator. That was the Super Roger Rocket. Guaranteed to send a woman to the moon. It was closer to a Roger Reject. I didn’t even get off the launching pad.”

She heard a deep sound. She looked over at him. “Go ahead...laugh. It is funny. In a pitiful, sad way.”

He did laugh and after a few seconds she joined him. They sat down on the curb outside a club in one of Buffalo’s trendiest suburbs and laughed their butts off.

“Well, maybe it was just a defective unit,” Brad said, when they had gotten down to chuckles.

“I don’t think so,” Lisa said, shaking her head. “I think the

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problem was that it was pink. Bubblegum pink. It kind of set the wrong tone.”

Now he put his arm around her shoulders, and she didn’t feel like it was intrusion. It was actually kind of comforting.

“I don’t know. Pink *can* be a masculine color in the right situation.”

She nodded as if she was considering it. “But not in a ten-inch cock. All I could think about was having a big old bubble pop on, well, you know. I guess it’s better than purple, though.”

“Well, I’ll leave that opinion to you,” he said with a fake shudder.

She laughed again and then they sat companionably for a few minutes.

“What you need is a fuck buddy,” he said.

“Duh.” She punched him lightly on the arm. When he just grinned at her, she knew he didn’t take it the wrong way. “But how do you go about getting one of those? Advertise? Fuck buddies R Us? I never really liked bars and I work at home so it’s not like I’m surrounded by eligible men every day. Even if I knew some guys, I’m not what they’re looking for. Everybody wants young, firm and perky. I’ve never been perky and my young and firm days aren’t much more than a memory.”

“Well, I’d apply.”

She started to laugh that off and realized he was serious.

“You mean that?” She couldn’t believe she was even considering this. She held her breath while she waited for his answer. Plus she couldn’t deny the fact she was getting excited about something for the first time in longer than she could remember.

“Absolutely,” he said, now holding her hand. His fingers were



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moving on the back. It was a small thing, not intended to be erotic in any way, but it was mesmerizing to her. His large, brown index finger making small circles on her skin. She wanted it to touch her like that everywhere. “Want to release some steam?”

“Your place or mine?”

## CHAPTER 3

They decided on his place since she was ashamed to admit her hotel room was a complete mess. When she pulled in the driveway behind his car after following him from the club to his home in a Buffalo suburb, though, she felt the nerves in her stomach. Was she crazy? She was about to go into the home of a man she didn't know. She didn't even like him. What if her initial opinion was right and he was a doofus? Or worse, what if he was terrible at sex?

That thought gave her pause. What if he was just as inept as the vibrator at giving her good sex? Did she really want to risk everything just to have a warm, live penis within her reach? She thought of the way she'd reacted to his impersonal touch on her hand and had her answer. She wanted this.

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So she turned off the engine and got out of her car. He was standing at the back of his smiling at her.

“Are you sure this is what you want?” he asked.

“Well, I wasn’t a minute ago,” she answered honestly.

He nodded. “That’s okay. I understand. If you’d like, we can postpone this. Maybe go out and have coffee or something first. Or forget it all together.”

Lisa hesitated again. He didn’t sound upset at all about her indecision. Maybe he wasn’t really attracted to her.

“Well, that’s it then. I know you were just trying to be nice back there at the bar. I understand if you’ve changed your mind,” she said. She could hear the disappointment in her voice and didn’t want him to feel even sorrier for her. “Call me and we can do lunch sometime.”

She started to turn away, but he took her hand stopping her.

“I haven’t changed my mind about anything,” he said. “Lisa, look at me.”

She was trying to keep the tears from falling so it took a few seconds before she could do as he asked. When she finally felt in control, she looked at him. He looked serious.

“Since I saw you outside your apartment building, I wanted you,” he said.

Lisa started to laugh.

“Don’t laugh, it’s true. Today was my first day on the job as arson investigator. I was a fireman. When I got the call and arrived at your place, I was looking over the crowd because a lot of times, the arsonist likes to watch the whole thing. You stood out immediately.”

She wasn’t laughing now. She was listening. He still could be giving her a line of bull, but it was bull she really wanted, needed,

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

to hear.

"I got aroused just looking at your legs and wondering what you had on under your coat."

"Ah. I didn't mean...I just grabbed Scooter and ran, so I wasn't really dressed," she stammered. She never stammered, but Brad was moving closer. Soon he was standing so close that if she let out the breath she was holding, she was certain the tips of her breasts would brush his chest. Her nipples were hardening from the way he was looking at her while talking about seeing her this morning. He had her turned on and pretty soon, it would be more than obvious.

She wasn't the only one being obvious. Since he was standing so close to her, she could feel and see the way his penis was growing under his well-fitting jeans. Her lips were dry and she wanted to lick them, but only after she had a taste of what he offered. Size wasn't everything, but Johnny had taught her that size, when used well, could be pretty damn special.

"I know. You weren't doing anything wrong. And you absolutely didn't do anything wrong leaving your apartment. Even though the fire was small, you should never stay anywhere fire is suspected. Leave it to the professionals." He was talking fire safety, but watching the way his mouth moved, feeling the way his fingers rubbed hers and trying not to grab hold of his firm butt to pull his pelvis and that now rock-hard penis against her was setting her ablaze.

She couldn't help it. She had to lick her lips or die. "I bet you say that to every girl," she managed to reply before doing so.

Now he laughed. "No. Just incredibly sexy women who drive me crazy with need. But understand me on this, Lisa. I don't want to rush you. You say the word, and we'll take this as slow as you

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

want. You tell me yes, though, and I may not be able to let you into my house before having you.” His free hand was now stroking down her cheek in a feather-light touch.

When a finger reached her lips, her breathing was definitely heavy. When it stopped at the middle point on her bottom one, pulling it down a bit, she lost what little control she had left. Her tongue darted out, but instead of licking her own lips, she licked his finger, mimicking what she wanted to do to his cock.

“Fast or slow?” His question was almost a whisper, but she heard it in every part of her body.

“Fast, now,” she said. “Slow later.”

He smiled and turned, pulling her after him into his house.

\* \* \*

There was a lamp turned low in the living room of the brick Cape Cod-style house and wooden floors under the large circular, deep plush rug at their feet. She saw a comfortable looking leather couch and chair and light walls. That was all the decoration she could or cared to notice. He had told her he couldn’t wait and he showed her what he meant by taking her lips in a kiss that spun out of control in a heartbeat.

All she could do was stand there and be overwhelmed. It was a wonderful feeling. His arms, strong and heavy, wrapped around her, snuggling her closer to his body. What a body it was, too.

He was hard and hot everywhere she came in contact with him. His chest smushed her breasts and it felt so good she wanted to be even closer.

The hard ridge of his abdomen against her round stomach made her hungry to run her mouth and hands over him without any

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

barrier between their skin. Below his hips, the ridge of his cock against his jeans was a delicious torture. She would only change one thing.

“I wish you were naked,” she whispered, her lips centimeters away from his. “I wish I could feel you everywhere.”

He stepped back, and she wished she hadn’t said anything because his arms weren’t around her now.

“That’s easy,” he said, starting to remove his shirt. “I wish the same. I want tonight to be all about your wishes and making them come true.”

Lisa gulped. It’d been a long time since she stripped for a man who wasn’t Johnny. She wasn’t sure if it was a good idea, especially with a light on. He’d taken his shirt off, and she gulped at the sight before her. Firemen were noted for their bodies...it came from lugging around the heavy hoses and equipment according to the research she’d done for an article years ago, but she had never experienced it firsthand.

“Wow,” she said on a breath. Her hand was on his chest without her realizing her arm had moved. Her fingers trailed over his well-defined shoulders and then along the edge of an amazing pectoral muscle that flexed in response. His nipple was a yummy looking chocolate against his bronze skin. He had just enough hair for her to play in, but not so much she needed to get out the Weedwhacker. She hungered for so many things she forgot all about clothes. And he did say this was about delivering on wishes.

She leaned down and started kissing her way across his chest. She let her tongue do an extended cruise around that nipple and it turned out to be a succulent little button. She could have happily stayed there, but since this was shaping up to be a sensual buffet, she might as well see what else was on the table.

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

He had a perfect hair trail nestled between his breasts. He smelled clean and tasted heavenly, so she let her fingers play a little there as she sprinkled kisses along the bare skin that formed a barrier to the hair. Moving downward over his washboard abs, she tried to express her delight in what he offered with murmurs and encouragement.

Finally, she reached his pants. On her knees in front of him, she lifted her mouth and looked up at him. She wanted to see his face as she took this next step.

His eyes were closed, hands fisted at his sides and breathing ragged, showing he was enjoying the sensation of her mouth on him but exercising control, letting her set the tone. She had the thought that if a jeans designer photographed him just like this, shirt off, jeans riding low on his hips, erection straining the button fly, the pants would sail off the shelves in amazing numbers. No woman could resist this, even if her man would never look the same. Lisa certainly couldn't resist and, at least for this night, she didn't have to.

She licked the edge of his stomach just above the top button, then traced the button with the tip of her finger before easing it open. She kissed the small round of skin revealed, then moved to the second button, using the same technique.

She discovered two things very quickly. He'd gone commando and his cock wasn't false advertising. By the third button, the moist tip was winking invitingly at her. She dipped her tongue into the slit, getting a taste of his essence.

Although her sense of taste loved this exploration, the rest of her senses were feeling left out. She let her left hand move up his chest and play there, while using her right to continue opening his pants. She tweaked his nipple, and he spread his legs, thrusting his

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

cock closer to her mouth. She was all for that.

She released the third button and she was able to get her tongue around the head of him. She closed her eyes at the exquisite feeling of that hard, pulsing knob inside her mouth. This heat was something she'd never been able to achieve with her sex toy. It had been cold, unresponsive plastic. He was hot, alive man. She had forgotten just how much she loved giving head. While some of her friends complained about doing it to their boyfriends, she'd just smiled. For her, it wasn't about control; it was about enjoying every facet of the male body.

Her plan had been to take this slowly, to savor every moment. But enough torture, she decided, and released the rest of the buttons, then pushed his pants down to his thighs. Now she could touch, taste and enjoy every inch of the essential male in front of her. She leaned back a little to get one last full-body image of him, bronzed and aroused to Herculean lengths. All for her.

She leaned in and started licking and kissing him from his testicles upward. She forgot about time and place, concentrating on giving him the utmost pleasure. When she finally took his wet length into her mouth, he was wild for her. His fists were clutching her hair, holding her in place and his hips were thrusting wildly, demanding that she give him his completion. There was nothing she wanted more. She kept her jaws as loose as possible, her mouth forming a perfect "O" to grant him the deepest penetration. He was huge and the way he was thrusting while keeping her head locked in place, she could feel the tip of his cock butting against her tonsils.

Taste, smell and touch consumed her, and it felt so damn good she wanted it to last forever. She knew, however, from the urgent tension in his body, the way his balls had swelled and how his cock



### ***FIVE ALARM LOVE***

was quivering that he couldn't give her that. So she gave him the little extra incentive to send him over the edge.

She ran one finger down his scrotal sack and let her nail bite in just a hair. It did the trick and he thrust one last hard time before his release exploded from him. She swallowed as much of his cum as possible, but it was just too much. Some leaked out from the corner of her mouth. She waited until his cock was limp before licking him clean and finally pulling away.

She looked up at him and smiled.

"That's what I call getting acquainted," she said.

## CHAPTER 4

Before she could finish congratulating herself on giving him what he needed, he turned the tables on her, lifting her off her knees and into his arms in one smooth move. The next thing she knew, she was naked and on her back on the couch.

She wanted fast and she got her desire. Because he had his knee between her spread thighs and she saw that where he'd been limp only minutes before he was rapidly hardening again in front of her eyes.

"Wow," she murmured. Granted it had been almost three years, but she didn't recall even Johnny having that quick a recovery.

He chuckled, and the low sound sent waves of pleasure over her nerves.

"Yep. That's what you do to me," he said.

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

He went to the end table next to the couch and reached in the drawer. She watched as he put on the condom. Another time, she would be helping him and they'd both enjoy that. Now, though, watching had its rewards.

In seconds, he was back between her legs. He leaned forward and took his time licking up one leg, ignoring her pulsing core and moving up to her hips, stomach and breasts. He kissed her twice gently on the lips and then raised himself up a little. She had a moment to revel in the flex of hard bicep muscles as he did an erotic version of a one-armed pushup before sliding a small part of his long, hard cock into the entrance to her pussy.

Lisa closed her eyes on the wave of longing because just the tip of him inside her felt so delicious she couldn't contain the moan that escaped.

"You okay?" he asked, stilling his movements.

Lisa couldn't answer. Words were beyond her. She nodded her head and managed to find the strength of will to raise her hands and clutch his hips. She didn't need to force him down; her movement was all the affirmation he needed.

He began stroking and pumping his length inside her. He shifted again and now had both arms holding his upper body away from hers so she could breathe. Breathing was highly overrated, she thought, as she became desperate to feel him deeper inside her.

"That feels so good. Please don't stop." Her voice sounded breathless, which wasn't surprising because of the way he was riding, not shallow but not deep, as if he feared he would hurt her. She sensed the orgasm she'd been seeking for so long was on her horizon, but it seemed far away at this moment. He was keeping a steady pace and, damn it, she needed much more. But she didn't know how forceful she could be. She didn't want to turn him off

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

with her demands.

"I won't," he promised. "Damn you feel good. Wet, hot and tight."

Another inch of him slid inside her. "You're hard, hot and I want all you've got." She was almost crying with the need to feel him as deep as he could go, to the place no other man than Johnny had ever touched.

He paused a moment. "Open your eyes. Look at me," he demanded.

It took some effort for her to do as he commanded. Not because she didn't want to, but because she couldn't seem to make her body respond to her mind's commands.

"Are you sure?" His question was tender and followed by a brief caress across her lips.

She nodded, only knowing he wasn't giving her everything and she needed everything.

"Take me." Her voice was breathless.

He shifted a bit and slid out of her vagina. She almost wept at the loss, but that changed as he lifted her legs so they bent at the knees with the calves resting along his biceps and him on his knees. He moved forward and his cock slid in like the first time, except now his length was rubbing against her clit with delightful pressure. He began to move faster and faster until his strength was both her anchor and missile, keeping her firmly locked in his arms, but allowing her to soar to the climax she hungered for.

Where moments before she'd been desperate to reach the pinnacle, now the ride was so wonderful she didn't want it to end. She closed her eyes to keep it at bay and quickly opened them again when he changed the angle of his penetration by a centimeter.

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

“Oh, my,” she cried.

“That’s right, baby. Come for me.” The simple command sent her over the top and falling into the abyss of extreme pleasure.

She may have scratched his back. He didn’t complain. She absolutely screamed with her release. Again, it didn’t seem to bother him as she felt the way his cock jerked inside her as he found his orgasm right after her.

“Wow,” he said a little bit later as he rolled off her, letting her legs straighten and relax while he dealt with the condom.

“Wow is right,” she replied. She used a finger to wipe away the tears from her eyes, hoping he wouldn’t see them and try to comfort her. She had to keep this light. She could examine her feelings later. When she was alone. “I don’t really know what else to say and that’s a first for me.”

He came back to the couch and pulled her against his side. “Don’t worry. I’m sure the words will come soon. Besides, better wait for round three. Maybe something will happen there to inspire you.”

At first, she thought he was joking. “Round three?”

He nodded and stood, picking her up in his arms as if she weighed nothing. That alone almost made her swoon—again. “That’s right,” he said as he left the living room. He carried her up some stairs and then turned right down a short hall. When he shouldered open the door to a bedroom, she allowed the thrill to race through her.

She was a big woman, and no man had been able to carry her very far. He stopped once to give her a lingering kiss that took all thoughts of anything other than touching him, feeling him inside her, from her mind.

The next thing Lisa knew they were in a large bedroom and she

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

was lying on a huge mattress. There was a low glow of light from a lamp on the bedside table and the comforter behind her was soft and luxurious.

“As a fireman, I was taught to make sure the flame is completely out. And I believe there’s still a little fire in here,” he said, trailing his fingers across her hips to her mound and tracing his fingers gently across the outer lips of her labia. Her reacting body sent up a cheer. “Besides, I’m a great believer in equality. We had one for me, one for us and now there needs to be one for just you.”

She just lay there silent because he had astounded her.

“Lay on your side, please,” he instructed. “My buddies call this the ear muffs position. I don’t know about the name, but I do love it because I can give you as much or as little pleasure as you want. You’re in control.”

She did as he asked stretching out with her head and shoulders resting on the pillows, and he walked around to the other side of the bed. Then he lay on his side across the bottom of the mattress and raised one of her legs so it was between his shoulder and ear. His head was right between her thighs now and she could feel his breath on her pussy. It was an odd position for her. Most of his body was behind her with only his upper body between her legs.

It felt a little weird looking down at his head and forehead, but if she raised herself up on one elbow on the pillow she could see a little more of his face. His big hands were on her thighs and as he started kissing and licking her, slowly at first, she began to develop a rhythm of moving her hips to match his mouth working her. It was amazing the feelings he was bringing to her with nothing but his mouth. She moved her other hand and put it on top of his head

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

to pull him closer, tighter, against her pussy. His tongue was treating her like she was a buffet and he couldn't get enough.

Her moans and groans were getting louder and louder as he teased and tasted, bringing her to the brink of another orgasm, but backing off just before sending her over the edge.

Her hand was on his head and she was pushing hard to get him back where he wanted, but he resisted.

"Do you like this Lisa?"

"God, yes," she said.

"Would you like to touch yourself?" His question was soft and his breath brushed her growing clit as he spoke. He blew again on her clit to provide extra incentive and then delved his tongue deep inside her pussy.

"Oy, yes," she said. "Right there."

He moved his head to the left and dug a little deeper inside her. "Touch your clit," he instructed.

Without thought, her hand left his head and two fingers slid to her clit. She pressed against it and she felt the ridge of his forehead just before she found the spot that needed a little extra pressure.

He moved his head back a centimeter and then she felt his tongue joining her fingers on her clit. That was all she could take. She felt her orgasm rocket through her as her body began to shake and she came hard. She fell back on her side, her vision wavering as the desire rolled over her from the inside out.

A long time later, she was in his arms, and he was stroking her shoulder gently. "So what do you think? Want to get together again tomorrow?"

She raised her head from the comfortable pillow of his chest and looked at the clock on the bedside table.

"Well, since it's past midnight, do you mean today or

## ***FIVE ALARM LOVE***

tomorrow tomorrow?”

He laughed. “I mean whatever you want. Hell, you can just stay here in my bed the whole time.”

She smiled up at him. “Well, you know, I do have a lot of catching up to do.”

He hugged her tight against him, and she could hear the rumble of laughter in his chest. “So you do. So you do.”



## CHAPTER 5

So this is what having a fuck buddy was like, Lisa thought two weeks later. She had to wonder what the heck took her so long to go this route because it was great. No, he was great. Brad Pittsburgh was even turning into a regular buddy.

“This box go, too?”

She looked at the young man who was holding one of the largest boxes of her stuff—kitchenware—in arms that were like steel beams and smiled. His name was Zimmer and he was the other benefit that came with being Brad’s buddy for sex and other things.

“Yes, thanks. Zim, what’s your first name? All I’ve ever heard Brad call you is Zim or probie.”

“It’s Tony, ma’am. Or Anthony actually.” He was cute as a

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

button and impossibly young.

He and the four other incredibly large guys were part of the fire community. When Lisa had mentioned to Brad that she would be moving into her new place this weekend, he'd offered to show up. He'd brought the guys with him, and it was as if she had a whole family helping her. At the rate they were going through her stuff, she'd be finished moving before the afternoon.

"If you don't mind me saying, it's neat that you and the lieutenant hooked up."

Lisa tilted her head. "Oh, we didn't hook up. We're just friends." She turned away from the young man so he wouldn't see her blush. Friends with extremely hot extra benefits, she was thinking. And thinking about those benefits caused more than a blush to heat her skin.

She didn't know what she'd expected when she took on a lover. The only other lover she'd had she'd married, and she was in a relationship with Johnny long before they ever had sex. The friendship had developed along with the intimacy, but the lines were also clear. Johnny had been a photographer and writer, just like her, someone who could share her love of words and storytelling; also someone who could understand when things weren't working.

Johnny had loved giving her critiques of plot and characters and had been great for brainstorming on fiction. He'd also had interesting ideas for sources for the nonfiction stories she wrote. In fact, many times after lovemaking, she and Johnny had dreamt up writing ideas for each other, turning the physical energy into creative energy and that had been addictive for them both.

Things with Brad were different. He didn't really understand the creative process, and although he was interested whenever she

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

talked about a story she was writing, he'd just smile and say it all sounded great. Then he'd ask if she wanted to join him and his buddies for a drink or go to the station picnic. Or better, just lead her to bed and scramble her thoughts with unbelievable lovemaking.

"I don't know about that, ma'am. The lieutenant is different since you guys met," Zimmer said. "But that's just what the guys think."

He turned and clambered down the steps.

"He's right, you know." Lisa turned back again and saw Brad standing there. Her heart lightened and pulse quickened at the sight. He was so damn gorgeous it sometimes took her breath away.

"Right about what?" Lisa asked.

He came into the room and stood in front of her, taking both hands in one of his big ones and using the other to brush a strand of hair that had fallen into her eyes back behind her ear.

"I am different since we hooked up," he answered.

"Different?" Lisa felt her heart pounding. She didn't know if it was in fear or happiness.

"Yes. I'm happy. I haven't been happy for a long time."

She smiled. "I'm happy, too."

He nodded. "I thought you were, but I wanted to make sure. So instead of moving into another apartment, why don't we just take all this stuff to my place?"

Lisa felt her breath stutter in her chest. "Move in with you?"

"Yes. Look, it isn't like I'm a kid who doesn't know what he wants. I'm forty-five and life is short. I think I'm in love with you. Hell, I *know* I'm in love with you. I want us to be together."

Lisa was stunned. She didn't know how to react. "I thought you

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

just wanted sex.”

He shook his head. “No, that’s all I thought you could handle. Sure, I want sex. With you and only you. And I have from the moment I saw you, standing outside the building holding that monster cat and wearing just a coat, shoes and a T-shirt. Hell, I even wanted to fuck you when I thought you were an arsonist.”

“But you didn’t know me.”

“No. I do now. Besides, don’t you believe in love at first sight?”

“Not for me,” she said. She looked at her hands. She was shaking. She couldn’t believe she was shaking like a leaf.

“Well, you should. I do. But all I’m asking now is for you to give us a chance. I don’t expect you to love me as much as I love you. I just want us to have the chance to build on what’s there. I want you with me, every day and every night.”

She covered her face with her hands. She didn’t want him to see her crying.

“Please, Lisa, don’t shut me out. I know I should’ve handled this better. Done this with hearts and flowers,” he said, pulling her hands from her face and forcing her to look at him. “But I thought it’d take you longer to find a place. Remember, we were just going to go to the lake today? I thought that today when we got together, I could sort of throw the option of moving in with me out there. Take it easy. But then you said you’d found a place and wanted to move today.”

She looked in his face and could tell two things immediately. One, he was telling the truth and two, he was nervous, just as nervous as she was. Could it be he was afraid she would say no?

“This isn’t easy,” she said. It wasn’t what she wanted to say, but she was afraid herself, afraid of hurting him, afraid of failing

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

him.

“No, it isn’t. Maybe it isn’t supposed to be,” he said, then was silent.

She took a deep breath. “I should tell you about Johnny.”

She took his hand in his and led him to her bed, the only remaining place to sit in her apartment.

“Johnny was a photographer and a writer,” she said starting at the beginning. “We met when I took a class he was giving.”

He nodded and placed his other hand on top of their joined ones. “So you worked together,” he asked.

“Yes. And no. Johnny was already a big success in photography when we met. His photos had won awards and he’d even had some showings in a few minor galleries.”

He didn’t respond, just stroked the back of her hand, lending her his strength while letting her know he wanted to hear as much or as little as she wanted to tell him.

“He was also an accomplished writer. He wrote nonfiction articles, but he was a creative genius. He could’ve done anything he wanted. I was thrilled when he picked me out of the entire class to mentor.”

“I think he was lucky to have you in his class,” Brad said.

Lisa smiled. “Thank you. So, we had a lot in common, but it wasn’t just our work. Johnny was my soul mate. He completed me.”

Brad didn’t respond to those words. What could he say?

“But he died,” he finally said.

“Yes.”

“And you’re still living. Would he have wanted you to stay like this? Would he have wanted you to settle for sex only?”

Lisa paused. “I don’t know. I think I’m...”

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

“Scared,” Brad finished for her. “I think you’re scared to let yourself feel again. But, the way I see it, you’re already feeling again. You just don’t want to admit it to yourself.”

Lisa started to dispute him, but realized she couldn’t without being dishonest with herself and him.

“But you know what, I’m willing to wait and let you see what happens. This doesn’t change my proposal, though. Let’s take this stuff to my place. Stay a while...if you don’t like it or it doesn’t work out, I’ll move you into another apartment whenever you say. You’ve got nothing to lose.”

Lisa took a deep breath. “What if I can’t ever love you?”

The words were out. She hated to say them, but she couldn’t ignore their existence.

“Are you asking if I can be satisfied with just the sex?”

She felt like such a slut for even thinking it. “Yes.”

He was quiet for a moment. “I don’t know.”

At least he was honest.

“But I know this—I want you with me every moment. When we’re not together, I’m thinking about you, wondering what you’re doing. I want to know if you’re laughing or crying, if you’re stuck on one of your stories or doing research. When the guys want me to go out and watch the game, my first thought is bringing you with us. I love to make you laugh, I love to watch you come, I love to just have you lie in my arms and tell me about your day.”

Now Lisa was crying. His words were heartfelt and full of love.

“You deserve so much better than what I can give you,” she said through her tears.

Now he took her in his arms and kissed her hard. “Listen to me. I want and deserve you. Any way I can have you.”

He kissed her again, and this time she wrapped her arms around

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

his neck and held on for dear life. She might not be able to give him her love, but she could give him what he asked.

A long time later, he separated their lips a few inches.

“Is that a yes?”

“Yes,” she replied on a laugh. “I’ll move in with you.”

\* \* \*

### *One Month Later*

Lisa heard the door slam and she smiled to herself. Brad was home. He never came or left without it reverberating throughout the whole house. She had come to expect it.

“Lisa, I’m home. I’m going to hit the shower!”

“Okay,” she called absently.

She closed the word processing file with her latest story and started to log off and shut down her laptop. For some reason, she looked at the shelf on the wall above her desk. Sitting there was the urn with Johnny’s ashes and right beside it was a picture Helen had taken last week of her and Brad at the Firemen’s Fund picnic. They lay tangled on the grass after having come to a bad end in the sack race. Brad was smiling down at her and the love was obvious in his face.

She picked up the picture and smiled. Then she stilled. It was all in the picture..she just had to see it. She was smiling at Brad as well and what surprised her was the look of total contentment on her face as well. She was happy and in love.

She set the picture on her desk and picked up the urn. In that moment she realized that loving Brad didn’t mean she loved Johnny less. It just meant it was time to move on. She was ready to

## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

face life, and love, again.

“Hey, babe, we don’t have to go out tonight if you aren’t up to it.”

She turned as Brad moved in the doorway.

“Oh, no. I’m looking forward to it.” She looked at him and smiled.

“Are you sure?”

“Yes. And then do you mind if we take a ride down to the lake this weekend?”

“No. We can go wherever you want. What do you have in mind?”

She put the urn back on the shelf and went to him, wrapping her arms around him.

“Well, I think it’s time to let Johnny go. He always wanted his ashes sprinkled over the lake. I thought maybe we could do that this weekend.”

He wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her closer to his heat and strength.

“Absolutely. If you’re sure that’s what you want.”

“Yes,” she said and kissed him long and hard. “Now, big boy, I think it’s time you and I both hit the showers. You can wash my back, and I’ll wash yours.”

“That’s the best offer I’ve had all day,” he said. “I’ll go get the water running.”

“Okay,” Lisa let him get almost to the door before she stopped him. “By the way, did I tell you today that I love you?”

He stopped still and then looked back at her. “No, I don’t think you did.”

“Oh, well, I do, you know. I love you, Chief Brad Pittsburgh. I love you with all my heart.”



## *FIVE ALARM LOVE*

He came back and pulled her in his arms. "I love you, too. But how many times do I have to tell you I'm not a chief, I'm a lieutenant?"

"Well, you're the chief of my life and my love," she said. "The rest is just semantics."

He kissed her, and she put her heart into it, telling him without words she meant what she'd said. She *did* love him. After long, sensuous moments, they separated.

"Will you let me love you?" he asked gently.

"Always," she replied, but instead of letting him lead the way, she took his hand and led them to their bath.

Although only a short distance from her office, it took eons to get there because every few feet, they stopped to touch or taste. There was no hurry this time, and they took their time, luxuriating in their desire to share the utmost pleasure with each other.

They were naked and the water was running hot over her head, surrounding them in steam and desire. He knelt at her feet and began to worship her body.

"You're beautiful inside and out," he said when he had worked his way from her toes to her mouth. "I love you more than I ever thought I'd love anyone in my life."

She pulled her head back from his, not to stop him, but to be certain he could see the truth of her words in her eyes. At that moment, his cock slid into its rightful home in her pussy and they stood in a grotto of wet, hot love.

"I love you too, Brad. With all my heart."

Their lips joined at the same time as he began thrusting, taking them over the peak of immediate need and into their forever.

## TRIXIE STILLETTO

“Life is a smorgasbord of men. I believe in diving in like a starving woman hitting an all-you-can-eat buffet!

“Seriously, I love men and have been fortunate enough to work, and play (thank God) with some of the most intriguing ones on this fair earth. There’s a little piece of each one in every hero I create. I’ve had all manner of odd jobs, such as waitress, cook and bottle washer for an all-night dive, truck driver, and, of course, writer. I write erotic romances because it’s much more fun to keep the bedroom door wide open.

“My philosophy in life is simple. Love what you do and who you’re with and they’ll love you in return. Come and join me as I dive into the next delicious dessert.”

\* \* \*

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*Quarterback Cody Wyatt has set every record in college football—on the field and off. Now he’s being wooed by all the biggest names and agents in the game. In truth, his passion is marine wildlife, but nobody seems to care that he’s going to graduate from*

*college with a Masters degree. All they see is his sun-bleached hair and ability to throw a football faster and farther than anyone else in history. Can he keep his intellect under wraps until he signs the sweetheart deal that will allow him to have the best of both worlds?*

*Lyssa Smithton, the baby of the Smithton family, has been sent to Southern California by her older brother and father with one edict—don't come home without Cody's name on the dotted line. Lyssa's body is more suited to Alaskan winters than California sun. But she has creativity and intellect on her side. She figures one surfer-boy quarterback won't stand a chance if she can only get him away from the stars and models camping on his doorstep...*

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