

ELLORA'S CAVE *Sophisticate*



**COPPING A FEEL**  
**COUGAR CHALLENGE**  
**LEXXIE COUPER**

## **Copping a Feel**

*Lexxie Couper*

*A standalone title in the Cougar Challenge series.*

Darci-Rae Whitlam doesn't know which is more disturbing, receiving scads of obscene phone calls—or getting so turned-on by said phone calls. Then there's the email from her American friend, Rachel, taunting Darci with something called a Cougar Challenge. Just the thought of seducing a younger man is enough to permanently soak her knickers. No wonder her ever-disapproving sister thinks she's oversexed!

Cybercrime Detective Jarrod St. James is investigating a case of stolen identity. He quickly learns the fiery redhead claiming to be Darci-Rae Whitlam is the real deal (his shoulder trapped in the jaws of her gargantuan dog might have sped that decision along). He really should go back to Sydney, continue tracking the imposter who's operating a phone-sex business in Darci's name...but the woman proves too tempting. Job be damned, he has to have her. The fact she's got a titillating challenge to complete only helps his case.

Darci just may be the fastest cougar to snag her cub yet. Being the victim of a crime has never been more fun!

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Copping a Feel

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# *COPPING A FEEL*

Lexxie Couper

### *Dedication*

For my mutt, Hudson, who died while I was writing this tale. For eleven years you made me smile with your unconditional love, goofy doggy grin, wagging stubby tail and protective, unwavering loyalty. Writing without you curled up at my feet will somehow feel wrong. Thank you for being a part of our family for so long. Will miss you like crazy, mate.

Just try not to cock your leg on the Pearly Gates, okay?

### *Author Note*

You'll find the women of Cougar Challenge and the Tempt the Cougar blog at [www.temptthecougar.blogspot.com/](http://www.temptthecougar.blogspot.com/)

## *Trademarks Acknowledgements*

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## **Chapter One**

*Newcastle, Australia*

Darci Whitlam stared at the handset of her phone as if it had grown a set of arms and was trying to feel her up. Well, not feel her up as such, but grab her nipples through her t-shirt and bra and twist them until she cried uncle. What the hell had she just heard?

Her frown pulling hard at her eyebrows, she returned the handset to her ear and said, "Excuse me?"

"I want to bend you over the sofa and pump your sweet, tight cunt full of my hot cum."

Darci blinked. "Umm, yeah, that's what I thought you said."

Face igniting in red heat, she clunked the handset of her phone back in its cradle and chewed on her bottom lip. Bloody hell, that was the third dirty phone call she'd had this morning! Each from a different man, each describing in great detail what the caller wanted to do to her. What the hell was going on?

Turning back to the phone, she picked up the handset again and stared at it.

*It's not going to give you the answer, Darci.*

That was true, but she had to do something. For starters, find out why three men thought she, Darci-Rae Whitlam, an unassuming high-school English teacher in a small city on the East Coast of Australia, was, in fact, a telephone sex worker. How the hell did they get her private number? Not even the smartest student at school had unearthed that number, and Terry Cahill had been trying since year nine.

*Shouldn't you be more worried about how everything that last caller said made you feel?*

She pulled a face, dropping the handset back into the cradle once more and blowing at the fringe of her bangs. Probably yes, but two things kept the worry at bay.

A) She was a black belt in Tae Kwon Do and could, if needed, kick some serious ass.

And B) The explicit nature of the phone calls made her, well...kinda horny.

*Okay, that's it. You're officially insane. This is why Vivian calls you oversexed. You get, let's face it, a mildly disturbing call and instead of being scared, you're bloody well excited.*

Darci blew into her fringe again, a frustrated exhalation that did nothing except contribute to the unruly mess of curls falling over her forehead. She shouldn't have thought of her older sister. Whenever she thought of Viv, she got antsy. Viv was the achiever in the family—the famous literary novelist who followed in their father's famous shoes. Viv had the doting doctor husband, the two med-school-grad children, the well-trained, pedigreed King Cavalier Spaniel and the three-story mansion overlooking Sydney Harbor.

Darci, as Viv often pointed out, was a forty-year-old, unmarried high-school teacher who still went out to bars on the weekend, wrestled on the beach with her totally untrained mutt, Jay Jay Jones, ate carbohydrates until they came out her ears, drank beer straight from the bottle and often forgot where she'd left her one tube of lipstick.

Darci also, much to Viv's dismay and shame, had no qualms about her relationship with Mr. Tibbs, her rabbit (the vibrating variety, not the furry kind), and still enjoyed flirting when given the chance—especially with sexy young men.

*Which is why she calls you oversexed. God, if she knew you were getting excited over an obvious case of mistaken identity, she'd throw a pink fit.*

With one more huff into her fringe, Darci walked away from the phone. She probably should do something about the calls, but not now. Now she wanted to connect with someone who didn't care if she flirted with strange—but always handsome—men in bars.

Dropping into the worn, comfortable leather recliner tucked under a low reading lamp in the far corner of her living room, Darci woke her laptop and opened iChat. If she was lucky, Rachel would be online. The American knew how to make her laugh



and didn't care one iota if she owned a rabbit. In fact, Darci was pretty damn certain the physical therapist owned one herself.

Rachel, however, wasn't online, her little Bugs Bunny avatar just a ghosty-gray image in the buddies list, which probably meant Rach was still in bed. Darci grimaced. "Bum." She dragged her hands through her hair, which disturbed the curls even more than her earlier melodramatic hyperventilating. She should close her laptop and get to marking assignments. She had a pile the size of Ayres Rock waiting for her, itching at her subconscious, but she just wasn't in the mood. For starters, the three phone calls this morning were still affecting her and she just felt...unsettled.

*Don't you mean horny?*

Rolling her eyes at her own ridiculousness—*oh yeah, that's an elegant word for an English teacher should use, Darc*—she shut down iChat and opened her email instead. She'd check her inbox, answer what needed to be answered and then give Jay Jay a bath. The pair of them had spent yesterday afternoon surfing and the dog still smelled like a seaweed farm.

"Ah," she murmured, spying Rachel's name in the From column. "Talk about freaky." Wriggling her butt deeper into the recliner, Darci toed off her flip-flops and opened Rachel's email, the mysterious subject header making her grin—*Go here now!*

The email opened and Darci's eyebrows lifted. Unlike Rachel's normal emails, which provided lovingly detailed descriptions of what Rach had been up to, what book she was currently reading as well as what hero she was currently in lust with, all info Darci loved to read, this email contained just two things.

A web address.

<http://temptthecougar.blogspot.com/>

And the words, *You're invited to become a Cougar, Darci. Join us.*

Darci frowned. "What the hell?"

Moving her finger over the laptop's trackpad, she clicked on the link.

And double blinked when a website unlike any she'd been to opened.

"Bloody hell, Rach," she muttered, her gaze flicking over the various images of very hunky, very naked men filling her screen. "Where have you sent me?"

She studied the men before her, her pulse quickening. There was text to go with the images, but for the moment it may as well have been ancient Mandarin for all it meant to Darci. What held her attention were the men.

The *young* men.

She shook her head, unable to drag her stare from her screen. "Oh my..." Sculpted muscles Michelangelo would have been proud to create defined bodies devoid of any middle-age spread. Artfully messy hair tumbled over foreheads free of wrinkles, not a gray strand to be seen in the thick, glossy locks. Clear, direct eyes gazed out at her—blue, black, green, hazel. Eyes smoldering with open desire and seduction.

Darci sucked in a sharp breath. "Twenties. Can't be any older than mid-twenties."

*And so yummy your knickers are growing damper by the second.*

The unexpected thought took her by surprise and she sucked in another breath, this one a little less sharp and a little more...ragged. Pulling at her bottom lip with her teeth, Darci read the blog's header—Tempt The Cougar—and then the first post. She half-frowned, half-grinned at a section of the first paragraph.

"...women who dare to take the challenge and experience the delights of sex with a younger man. Women who cast off their cloaks of conventionality and indulge their inner wild woman.

"Stay tuned for updates!"

"Oh, Rachel Bridges," she chuckled, returning her attention to the gorgeous men clearly a decade younger than her. "You bloody naughty girl."

The last time she and Rachel spoke, Darci had mentioned—in passing, mind you—how cute the fresh-out-of-university Phys. Ed. teacher just appointed to her school was.

Rachel had giggled, her broad New York accent still evident in the joyful sound, and changed the subject. Until this very moment, Darci thought she'd embarrassed her friend. Now...

She shifted in the recliner, pressing her thighs together in a vain attempt to squelch the growing throb between her legs. The young men on her laptop screen were delicious. She couldn't think of another word.

*Oversexed and now under-vocabbed? What would Viv say?*

"For starters, she'd point out there's no such word as under-vocabbed," Darci muttered, gazing at one particularly fine young thing with bulging muscles, piercing blues eyes, skin the color of toasted honey and thick, black hair messed-up in such a way her fingers itched to mess it some more. She swallowed, the throb between her legs growing more insistent. Demanding attention.

Closing her eyes, Darci leaned back in her chair, her pussy constricting with impatient want. An image popped into her mind of the dark-haired young man from the site and she let out a soft moan.

Jay Jay was outside gnawing on an old bone. The house was hers alone for a good half hour. All she needed to do was imagine how wonderfully smooth and taut Mr. God I'm Gorgeous' skin was under her palms, how hard and perfect his biceps, how sublime the undulations of his abs beneath her lips and she'd be more than halfway to an orgasm. With a little help from her fingers, she'd be at the moaning destination with some extra mileage thrown in for gasping, heart-hammering fun.

She slid her fingertips under the waistline of her shorts —

And her phone rang.

"Oh, you've got to be kidding me!" The exclamation burst from her on a strangled breath. She jolted to her feet, her pulse pounding, her sex thick and heavy with expectation. Hurrying to the phone, she snatched it from its cradle and rammed it to her ear. "What?"

"Is that the thanks I get, Ms. Whitlam?" Rachel's accented chuckle slipped through the connection and Darci bit back a curse. "Or have I interrupted something?"

"Ha," she shot back, fighting to get her heart rate back under control. At her age, she couldn't afford to get too excited.

*God, now you sound like Viv. What the hell is wrong with you, Darci? You're forty, not eighty.*

"Ha?" Rachel echoed, her voice slightly tinny with the miles between them. "That's it? Where's the sarcastic Australian wit I know and love so much?"

"Busy." Darci shot her still-open laptop a quick look, a pang of disappointment stabbing into her core at the sight of her screensaver activating. She caught a fraction-of-a-microsecond glimpse of her man, with his sculpted muscles and piercing eyes, and then an image of Jay Jay jumping into the surf after a seagull filled her screen and she let out a frustrated sigh. "Sorry, Rach," she said, turning her back on her laptop to give her American friend her full concentration. "That wasn't nice of me."

Rachel laughed, the sound throaty and infectious. "I recognize that tone, Darci-Rae. You *have* received my email, haven't you?"

Darci rolled her eyes. "Bloody hell, am I really that much of a deviant? What made you think I—"

"Because I did almost the very same thing when Cam first sent me the link." Rachel laughed again. "It's okay, hon. There's nothing wrong with tending to your needs. Especially when the view is oh so fine."

Darci suppressed a snort. Rachel was a true wordsmith. She'd love to see her uptight sister have a conversation with the New Yorker. "The view was very fine indeed," she admitted, feeling her cheeks heat. Blushing? For the second time in one morning? There really was something wrong with her.

Rachel burst out laughing. Really laughing. If Darci didn't know it was physically and geographically impossible, she'd have sworn she felt the planet shaking with Rachel's mirth. "I knew it! Aren't they gorgeous? Tell me, which one took your fancy?"

Darci dropped to the floor and stretched out on her back, crossing her ankles on the edge of the phone table. "Black hair, the bluest eyes I've ever seen, a body so divinely perfect it must be illegal and shoulders so broad I doubt he'd fit through my door."

"Ah," Rachel answered. "Rico. Yeah, he was Monica's favorite too."

Darci rolled her eyes. Rico. Of course. What were the odds she'd fall in depraved lust with someone called George or James or...or...Jim? None.

*Oversexed, under-vocabbed and now exotically clichéd?* Viv's sniffed voice whispered through Darci's head. *Where will all this end, sister of mine?*

"In the bedroom with Mr. Tibbs. Now shut up."

"What?"

Rachel's laughing question made Darci blink and she slapped a palm to her face. Damn it, she'd said that aloud?

"Sorry, Rach," she hurried, dropping her ankles from the table and pulling herself into a sitting position. Who was she kidding? Lying on the floor? Like a teenager?

"Is that your absent sister you're talking to, Darc?"

Rachel's question tickled her ear through the connection, the American's obvious enjoyment at the situation turning each word to a husky chuckle. She let out a sigh, giving her laptop a lingering look. Images of Jay Jay running about on the beach slowly scrolled over the screen, hiding from view the delightful Rico and his young, firm, entirely too-desirable body.

*And that's the way it has to stay, Darci Whitlam. Fantasies are all well and good, but you have to live in reality.*

She pulled a face once again. "How is it you know me better than my own flesh and blood, Rach," she began, crossing her legs, "and yet we've never met? Are you stalking me?"

Rachel laughed again. "Stalking? No. Giving you a kick up the— How do you Aussies put it? Aah-ss, yes."

"A kick up the arse?" Darci's eyebrows rose. "About what?"

"There's a reason I sent you the invite to join the blog, Ms. Whitlam," Rachel answered, and for a second Darci swore she could hear something close to pride in her friend's voice. "It's time I laid down a challenge."

Darci's eyebrows shot up higher. "A challenge?"

"You are one of the most flippant, unconventional women I know, Darci-Rae. You have multiple degrees in literature and yet you devour erotic romances and pulp horror books like they're becoming extinct. You look like a model and wear jeans tighter than a teenager, you can probably kick anyone's ass and still have enough breath left to sing an opera—but you're afraid to *live*."

Before Darci could respond to the ludicrous statement, Rachel continued, her American accent broader with each word. "The shadow of your famous family keeps you trapped in the dark; the voice of your older sister prevents you *truly* going after what you long to experience and it's about freakin' time someone did something about it. I've decided that someone is me. So here's the challenge, Darci. As of this very moment—three a.m. New York time—you are on the hunt. I *dare you* to find yourself a younger man and live the fuck out of every fantasy you've ever had and be damned what Vivian thinks.

"I dare you, Darci-Rae, to become a cougar." She chuckled. "And blog about it."

For the second time that morning, Darci stared in dumbstruck disbelief at the phone in her hand. For about the fourth time that morning, her sex constricted at the words she heard.

*Find yourself a younger man...live the fuck out of every fantasy...*

"A cougar?" she echoed, throat tight. "As in—"

"A woman ready to show a younger man exactly what it's like to *really* make love. A woman not afraid of the years she's lived and the mileage she's traveled. As in, *you*."

For a moment, Darci didn't know what to say. And then she did. "You're out of your bloody mind, Rach."

Rachel laughed one last time. "Tempt the cougar, Darci. Take a long look at the blog, take a long look at your innermost desires and then take a long look at the lifeguards down on that beach you spend so much time at with your dog. I want a full report by the time I'm having my bagel and juice."

"And when's that?"

"In about four hours. Jump on the blog, introduce yourself and share with all of us a piccie of one of those sexy lifeguards you've told me about."

Darci opened her mouth. To say what, she wasn't sure.

"Oh, and by the way," Rachel said, filling the silence with confident ease. "Did I ever tell you how old Ethan is?" She disconnected the call before Darci could find whatever words were tumbling around in her head, leaving her to stare at the telephone handset for the third time that morning.

She blinked, the conversation whirling through her head. What the hell was Rachel up to? What was going on? Why was Rachel up at three in the morning on a weekday? How old *was* Ethan? And just *what the hell was going on?*

*Tempt the cougar, Darci.*

Mouth dry, pulse pounding, Darci hung up the phone and shuffled on her knees over to her recliner and sleeping laptop. She pressed the tip of her right index finger to the space bar, staring at the image of Rico returning in delicious color to her screen. Young, perfectly formed, gloriously endowed Rico. Her pussy fluttered and she swallowed the lump in her throat.

*Tempt the cougar, Darci.*

Scrunching her eyes closed, she thought of the secret fantasies she'd long harbored but never shared with anyone. Fantasies involving the experience of her age and the stamina and enthusiasm of a younger man. Fantasies she'd flirted with in the safety of the local pub but never dared dream to fulfill.

Fantasies her friend on the other side of the world had picked from her brain and placed in front of her when she, herself, had been too worried about what her famous sister would say.

She let out a sigh and shook her head. Rachel was right. Viv spoke too often in Darci's ear. Too often and too loudly.

"So, are you going to do anything about it?"

The answer to her own muttered question didn't come.

Instead, she found herself moving her cursor to the invitation link Rachel had sent...and clicking.

Ten minutes later, she sat back and read the very first blog post she'd ever written.

Hello. My name is Darci and I'm a cougar. Well, a cougar wannabe. Actually, that's not right either. Let me start again.

G'day. I'm Darci, I'm Australian and my friend Rachel Bridges just laid down a challenge I can't possibly refuse. Before I even knew I had a thing for younger men, Rach did (she's quite intelligent, isn't she?). After only a few telephone conversations, Rachel realized what I needed and sent me the best kick up the butt I could ask for (although I'm still in shock that she did \*grin\*)—an invitation to join this blog and the amazing women on it.

Why the hell can't a woman in her forties have the best sex of her life with a man in his twenties? Who decided we have to settle for the saggy-bottomed, remote-hogging men of our own age? Why the hell do I feel guilty when I flirt with a younger man?

Enough, I say! I want what society has long said I can't have, dammit!

Rachel, I accept your challenge. This Cougar Down Under is ready to be tempted.

(BTW—I hope you like the pictures of some very delicious Aussie "cubs" I've included.)

(BTW, again. Is it PC to use the term "cub" or am I just bowing to the media's latest manipulation of the English language?)

(BTW, one last time. I babble. A lot. Sorry.)



She looked at the two images she'd included. Both gorgeous Australian lifeguards, their bodies muscled to perfection, their smooth skin bronzed by the sun, their bright red Speedos leaving little to the imagination.

A deep ripple of excitement shot through her and she let out a sigh. Damn, she really was insane. Vivian was going to have a field day with this.

*Delete it, Darc. Stop this insanity now!*

The shocked voice in her head could've been her sister's. Or hers.

She leaned forward, placing her finger on the trackpad.

And the phone rang.

Her heart smashed into her throat and, face aflame once more, as if she'd been caught redhanded doing something far too naughty, she slammed her laptop shut. But not before quickly hitting Publish on the blog entry.

Storming across to the phone, she snatched up the phone and rammed it to her ear. "Bloody hell, give me a chance, will you?" she laughed.

Silence answered her. For a second. "Is this Darci-Rae Whitlam?" a deep male voice asked on the other end of the connection.

Darci's heart smashed harder into her throat. "Yes."

Silence again for a split second, followed by, "I want to press you against the wall and make love to you with my tongue."

Darci closed her eyes, her sex flooding with damp heat. *Oh God...*

"I want to eat out your pussy and fill my mouth with your cream," the man continued. "I want you to ride my face until you scream and then I want to flip you onto your stomach and fuck your sweet cunt with my dick."

He stopped. Waited.

Pulse pounding, mouth dry, Darci opened her eyes and looked at her closed laptop, her sex constricting. She licked her lips and pressed her thighs together. "And then what do you want to do?" she asked.

## Chapter Two

Detective Jarrod St. James stood in the cool shadow of a massive eucalyptus tree and frowned at the view before him. That his investigations had led him to *this* house, in a quiet suburban street complete with front-yard tire swings, children playing in the sprinklers and old men mowing their lawns in brightly colored shorts and straw hats, still didn't sit right with him.

He might be a suspicious big-city cop, he might be hardened from dealing with Sydney's bastard crooks, but everything in his gut told him the house in front of him, with its rambling beds of native wildflowers, its granite birdbath teeming with raucous magpies, its neatly trimmed edges and perfectly painted gutters, was *not* the home of an illegal phone-sex worker.

*And yet, when you called the number listed for this address, that's exactly what you got. A very sexy female voice more than willing to talk very sexy things.*

Jarrold let out a silent breath. Cybercrime detectives rarely stepped away from their computers, let alone *physically* tracked their perps. It wasn't the done thing. Cybercrime detectives did all their work with a keyboard and mouse and let the blokes with the guns round up the bad guys.

Trouble was, Jarrod hadn't always *been* a cybercrime detective, and this case—a stolen-identity case with hundreds of unsuspecting victims—had struck too close to home. He knew what it was like to have your identity stolen and used by someone else for less-than-honest reasons. Shit, he'd needed to resort to changing his name to escape the debt collectors hounding him after he'd been the victim of identity theft five years ago. One innocent purchase over the net, one not-so-safe use of his credit card and BAM! Sydney homicide cop James Dubois-Jarroldson is suddenly also Melbournian

James Dubois-Jarroldson, a man with very dubious moral ethics and a penchant for very illegal buying habits.

It was the reason Jarrod had moved to cybercrime. Catch the bastards before they fucked up someone's unsuspecting life. His head always worked its best when it was focused on computers. Shit, he'd been offered a full IT scholarship to the University of New South Wales six months before finishing school.

His fists, however...well, they always worked their best breaking some lowlife's jaw, a situation probably due to the fact he'd been a bully's favorite target—a geek. He'd answered the call to the police force straight after graduating high school and somewhere along the line became a homicide detective. And then came the theft of James Dubois-Jarroldson's identity—and he transferred divisions as the newly known Jarrod St. James.

As right as that choice was, however, the move to cybercrime had left him restless.

Pursuing a case of identity theft beyond the computer lab was exciting—but wasn't meant to end up in a quiet street in coastal Newcastle. What kind of criminal mastermind lived in a neat little two-story surrounded by gum trees, wattle and tree ferns? With a 1996 Volvo in the driveway? A Volvo wearing a "Public Education. It's Our Future" bumper sticker, no less?

Jarrod breathed another drawn-out sigh. Maybe he'd been too long in front of a computer after all. This couldn't be right. This felt wrong.

"But this *is* the only address for someone claiming to be Darci-Rae Whitlam," he muttered, scanning the front windows, the gauzy curtains and wide awnings concealing the interior from his inspection. "And it *was* someone claiming to be Darci-Rae Whitlam who spoke to you on the phone a mere three hours ago."

With alarming ease, his cock twitched at the memory. The woman—whoever she really was—had the most amazing voice. A voice created to send a man wild. She'd said very little that could condemn her. Asked a very husky question about what he would do with his tongue after he brought her to orgasm with his fingers, wondered if

he had staying power, pondered what it would be like to be tied up by him. But in that voice of hers, like smoke and velvet playing in the back of her throat...it was enough to set his groin on rock-hard alert and his pulse quickening beyond fast.

*Is that the real reason you're here? 'Cause a possible crook got you horny with just her voice?*

For the third time he let out a protracted sigh, this one tainted with deprecating disgust. Fuck, what was he doing?

"Catching a criminal, Detective." His growled whisper rumbled deep in his chest. "That's it. Catching a criminal who's stolen the real Ms. Whitlam's life – and making her pay."

He forced away the sensation of stirring steel in his cock, narrowed his stare on the front door of the house and crossed the front yard, the delicate perfume of the native violet ambling through the flowerbeds wafting into each breath he took.

Climbing the five steps leading to the front porch on silent feet, he unclipped the holster on his Glock, planted his feet slightly apart, squared his shoulders and raised his hand to knock on the door. Ready to take on whatever came –

The door flung open and a goddess with brilliant green eyes and wild, fiery-red hair smacked straight into him.

Followed immediately by a bear cleverly disguised as a dog. A *growling* dog.

He stumbled back a step, grabbing the goddess's upper arms even as the bear – err, dog – slammed two paws roughly the size of the Opera House against his chest.

"Eep!" the goddess cried, and Jarrod's balls prickled in instant interest as the sexiest voice he'd ever heard caressed his ears for the second time that day.

Still struggling under the dog's massive force, he tightened his grip on her arms, his fingers telling him exactly what his mind had already decided. The goddess was smooth, warm and firm to the touch. Sex and sin and toned feminine strength in one incredible package. He could feel her triceps flex and coil beneath his hands, a realization that made his balls not just prickle with interest but rise up and grow heavy.

Fuck, he was in trouble.

The dog shoved him, teeth bared, muzzle wrinkled, and before his stupefied brain could process the situation, he fell backward, stumbling down the front porch steps, dog and goddess joining him—reluctantly, by the sounds of the dog’s snarls and the goddess’ surprised shout—in a very undignified free fall.

“Oof!”

The ground hit his ass, or more to the point, his ass hit the ground, at the exact moment the dog decided snarling just wouldn’t cut it anymore and the goddess decided she needed to slam into him with her entire weight. Wicked teeth latched onto his shoulder just as a slender, curved knee rammed into his crotch, followed by a palm heel to the solar plexus.

Jarrold’s groin and chest exploded in black stars of pain. He let out a shout that sounded like a croak, thanks in part to the strangled pain in his chest and the dog’s canines threateningly latched to his shoulder.

*Yep, definitely been in front of a computer for too long, Jarrod.*

The surreal thought flittered through his reeling mind, seconds before another palm heel struck him in the jaw.

“Let go of me, dickhead,” the husky voice growled, a dangerous caress. “Or I’ll let my dog eat you.”

“Wait, wait, wait!” Jarrod choked out, struggling under the massive dog’s rather insistent attack. Thank God for his thick cotton shirt, otherwise his shoulder would look as if it’d been through a cheese grater. He gripped the goddess’s arms tighter still, the base *male* part of his mind pointing out she reclined full stretch atop him now, her firm softness separated from his body by nothing more than two layers of clothing and a seriously protective mutt.

The thought sent a surge of eager blood through his veins, flooding his already semi-hard dick with wildly inappropriate intent. Unable to do anything else, Jarrod flipped the goddess and her hellhound, dislodging the dog’s teeth in the process, and

straddled them both. "Wait!" he panted, staring down into eyes the color of raw emeralds. With an abrupt shift in position, he pressed his knee – gently but forcefully – on the dog's neck, pinning the animal to the ground so the bloody thing couldn't take any more bites out of his hide, and then grabbed the goddess's wrists and pinned them to the ground beside her head.

"Get off me!" she snarled through clenched teeth, squirming beneath him. "Who the hell are you? Get off me, you prick."

She bucked again and Jarrod bit back a groan. With all her thrashing and writhing, there was no way she would have missed the growing bulge in his jeans. Damn it, his bloody erection kept poking her in the belly every time she moved, contained by his jeans or not.

*Way too long in front of a computer, Jarrod. Way too long.*

"Wait," he snapped one last time, and for a dizzying moment he wondered what the hell had happened to his vocabulary. Maybe he'd left it on the front porch along with his pride and professionalism.

The dog struggled to escape his weight. The goddess glared at him some more, her breasts heaving in furious contempt underneath the pristine white cotton of her t-shirt. "Wait? For what? You going to serenade me next? Get your knee off Jay Jay *now!*"

Jarrood sucked in a breath and the delicate scent of the woman trapped beneath him rushed into his being. Making his head spin. Bloody hell, she smelled so good.

"Get off me!" she roared. "*Get off me now!*"

Her voice cracked, the husky tones becoming raw. Throaty.

It was too much for Jarrod. Her voice, her eyes, the tousled insanity of her hair...hell, even the menacing worry for her dog. It was all too much. He couldn't help himself. Fuck, he couldn't *stop* himself.

Tightening his grip on her wrists, Jarrod St. James—once the poster boy for the NSW Police Force, now the poster boy for their geek squad, lowered his head to the woman imprisoned between his legs and kissed her.

Two seconds later, her bear disguised as a dog escaped his knee—most likely due to the fact his brain was focused entirely on the soft fullness of her lips—and sank its teeth into his shoulder. Again.

“Fuck!” he shouted, rolling off her and reaching for his gun.

*What? You going to shoot the dog now?*

“Jay Jay! Sit!”

Immediately, the dog dropped into a motionless sit, black stare locked on Jarrod’s face.

*Damn.* Jarrod stayed equally still, his attention on the mutt, his shoulder throbbing. *That’s impressive.*

“You have exactly twenty seconds to tell me who you are and what you want, young man,” the goddess said, “before I let Jay Jay have you.”

Jarrod jerked his attention back to the woman standing beside the part Doberman, part Wolfhound, part Kodiak bear. *Young man?* How old did she think he was? Come to think of it, how old was *she*? The real Darci was forty, he knew, but this woman looked nothing like the photo on Ms. Whitlam’s driver’s license.

He ran his gaze over her form, taking her in from head to toe. She was short, no more than five-five at an educated guess, and had the kind of body he usually associated with gym junkies—all firm, toned limbs and smooth curves deliciously exposed to his inspection thanks to the short denim shorts and snug white t-shirt she wore. A body well looked after. Vibrant and fit with the right amount of flesh in the right places to grab.

But her direct green eyes, almost hidden by the wild tumble of red curls and edged by small creases he could only call laugh lines, spoke of a confidence and inner strength

unusual for someone his own age. Hell, he'd rarely seen women in their thirties with such self-assured poise, let alone their twenties.

It was bloody sexy and his cock twitched in appreciation—even as he began to suspect he'd found the real Darci-Rae Whitlam after all. *Shit.*

"Five seconds, stud," she said in that sinfully husky voice, "and I'm calling the police."

The threat sent an unexpected shard of something thrilling into the pit of Jarrod's belly, and he laughed. "I *am* the police." He stood and reached into his back pocket, the muscles in his shoulder protesting as he withdrew his wallet. He was going to have a hell of a bruise there, thanks to her mutt. *Maybe she'll kiss it better?* "Detective Jarrod St. James," he said, showing her his I.D. "Cybercrime."

She blinked, her lips parting slightly, her right hand moving to rest on the top of her dog's head. "Cybercrime?"

He gave her an easy smile as he returned his wallet to his pocket. "Crimes involving illegal activity perpetrated via the use of computers and the internet."

Her eyes narrowed, an unreadable expression flickering in their depths. "I know what cybercrime is, young man. What I want to know is what a police officer *from* cybercrime is doing at my front door?"

*There she goes with that "young" crap again. How old is she?*

*An insistent tightening stirred in his groin. Who cares?*

"I have some questions for you," he said, shutting down the notion behind *that* thought. She may be the sexiest creature he'd ever seen, but he still had a job to do and at the moment, his job was telling him she might be a phone-sex worker possibly operating under a stolen identity. "Firstly, are you Darci-Rae Whitlam?"

Straight red eyebrows rose up her forehead and she stoked her dog's head. "Yes."

He studied her face. "Can you prove it?"

The mutt growled.



The goddess—damn, she really was beautiful—arched an eyebrow. “Would you like to see my last pay statement from the Department of Education?”

Jarrold shifted on his feet. The cop in him responded to her question—evidentiary proof? Real? Fake? The primitive male animal in him, however, responded to her strength. Everything about her turned him on. The sensual, sexy body, the unbelievable chaos of her flame-red hair, the laughter lines around her stunning eyes...even the steely challenge *in* those stunning eyes.

*God, what would it be like to fuck her?*

“Yes, please,” he blurted out, the unexpected thought jolting him to the, well, to the groin.

She cocked her eyebrow again and turned away from him, presenting the round perfection of her ass. The denim of her shorts hugged the shapely curves and Jarrold had to bite back a moan.

Christ, he was in trouble.

She climbed the stairs, her ass cheeks bunching with each step, and nothing could drag his stare away. Not even a loaded gun pointed at his head and a threat to pull the trigger.

*God, I fucking want her so badly.*

Without pause or a backward glance, Darci-Rae Whitlam—or her imposter—disappeared inside the neat suburban house, the soft sound of the security screen hitting the doorjamb followed immediately by a low growl.

Jarrold blinked, jerking his gaze to Jay Jay.

The dog-bear-hellhound studied him, motionless.

“I won’t bite,” he muttered, remaining as still as the dog. “Wish I could say the same ‘bout you.”

Jay Jay bared long, sharp, pointed teeth.

“Hey.” Jarrold assumed a wounded expression. “I’m the good guy here.”

"That may be," the goddess spoke at his right, and he swung his head back to her, noticing the cell phone she held in her right hand. "But I rescued Jay Jay from a very abusive male owner when he was just a puppy. In his eyes, *all* men mean pain." She held out her left hand, an expectant look on her wonderfully mesmerizing face. "May I see your I.D. please?"

Jarrold frowned. "You don't trust me?"

For an answer, she laughed. A low, throaty chuckle, and Jarrold's groin tightened in immediate attention.

Flicking the silent Jay Jay a quick glance, he withdrew his wallet, slipped his credentials from their sleeve and handed them to her.

Their fingers brushed and for the first time in his life, Jarrold understood the concept of fate.

For whatever reason, he was *meant* to meet this woman. He just hoped to God it wasn't to arrest her, because frankly, he doubted he could do it. He'd more likely beg her to run away with him. To Melbourne, Prague...shit, Greenland would do. Just as long as she was with him and he got to bury himself in her —

"Hello, Sergeant Rylon? Yes, may I speak to someone in Cybercrime, please?"

Jarrold raised his eyebrows, the goddess's question once again throwing him for a loop.

She smiled at him, the action more than a little smug. "What?" she whispered, dropping the mouthpiece of the cell away from her lips a little. "You expected me to invite you in without checking who you were?"

*Actually, he wanted to say, I didn't expect you to invite me in at all.*

Not after the way he'd dragged her from the front porch, rolled her to the ground and kissed her, all within a minute of laying eyes on her. While wrestling with her dog, at that.

He opened his mouth to reply, his blood pumping through his body with excited anticipation. Christ, he was acting like a hormonally imbalanced schoolboy!

*And doesn't it feel amazing? When was the last time you felt like this? Really?*

"Can you confirm Detective Jarrod St. James, badge number 42-01-10, is, in fact, a cop?" She ran her gaze over him from head to toe, an inspection so thorough he felt his balls rise. His cock, already at half-mast, grew fatter in his jeans. He wanted her to look at him like that again while he was naked. Fuck, did he.

"Yes, I can see why he's called that." Her smile stretched wider. Cheekier. "Quite fitting, really. Thank you. You've been a big help."

She touched the screen of her cell and slipped the slim device into her back pocket, eyeing him again. He fought the urge to shuffle on his feet. And the urge to fold his hands in front of his crotch. There was no way she could fail to miss the sizeable bulge in his trousers. No way in hell.

Green eyes twinkled and she patted Jay Jay on the head once more. "Would you like to come inside, Detective St. James?"

## Chapter Three

*What are you doing, Darci?*

Darci walked through the foyer, heading for her living room. Jay Jay trotted beside her, completely at ease with the fact Detective St. James followed behind them.

*That* itself was worrying. Jay Jay rarely warmed to anyone. Vivian's husband, the benevolent Dr. Carmichael, CMO of the country's leading children's hospital and recipient of the Order of Australia, couldn't walk two steps into her home without Jay Jay growling up a storm.

*So, is that why you've asked St. James in? Because Jay Jay's no longer trying to eat him? Or does it have to do with the way he looks? Like Sin and Sex got together and created your ultimate fantasy? Or maybe it has to do with the way the crotch of your knickers are sopping wet with a desire that borders on illegal? Or the fact the kiss he stole from you when you were pinned beneath him was truly the most wonderful, arousing thing you've ever experienced?*

*Is he the one? Have you targeted your cub already?*

Darci pulled a face and entered her living room, all too aware of Jarrod St. James' presence. "Just let me get my pay slip," she said, crossing to the bureau under the far window.

St. James didn't answer and she turned, finding him standing before her framed *Rules of Attraction* movie poster hanging above Jay Jay's large day bed, his fingers massaging his shoulder where Jay Jay had bitten him.

She pulled in a silent breath, stealing a brief moment to study him. Tall and lean with broad shoulders and well-muscled arms, he wore his jeans and black polo shirt with the same casual confidence she'd admired in the new Phys. Ed. teacher—a relaxed cockiness that said *I'd look this good in a hessian sack*.

Unlike Mr. Montgomery, however, Detective St. James seemed totally unaware of it.

*No wonder they call him Calvin Klein at the cop shop. He could make a fortune as a model.*

As if sensing her gaze, he turned from the movie poster and fixed his thousand-kilowatt blue eyes on her. "Copulating teddy bears?"

For a split second the reason for the controversial poster's existence in her house hovered on her lips—a present from her favorite senior class five years ago after she'd adamantly and unwisely declared there was *no way* teddy bears could be vulgar—and then, a shard of characteristic contrariness stabbed into her and she cocked an eyebrow. "Copulating teddy bears."

He regarded her silently, what looked like a small grin playing at the corners of his mouth.

Her own smile pulling at her lips, she turned back to her bureau, opened the top drawer and withdrew her latest pay slip from the Department of Education.

*You're enjoying yourself, aren't you?*

The thought whispered through her mind and her pulse quickened. *What kind of lunatic enjoys a visit from the police? Especially one questioning your identity?*

*The kind who's not blind. Have you seen the way he –*

"Have you recently purchased anything online using your credit card?"

St. James' question, spoken with such formal detachment, guttered the rising heat in Darci's core. Shame and self-disgust flooded through her and she pushed the drawer closed with aggressive force. A cop doing a cop's job. That's what she had to remember, no matter how sexy he was. A cop in her living room asking questions. Not a cub waiting to be seduced—or was that devoured—by a cougar.

"Yes," she answered, turning back to him. "A few things." She held out her pay slip, waiting for him to take it.

He didn't, his attention back on the film poster and its teddy bears in various sexual positions. "Was one of those purchases a U.S. visa waiver application?"

A lump formed in Darci's throat. "Yes."

His attention didn't move from the poster. "Why are you going to the U.S., Ms. Whitlam?"

"I'm going to the RomantiCon convention in—" She snapped her mouth shut, her cheeks filling with heat. *Oh, you idiot, Darci.*

That killer blue gaze returned to her. "RomantiCon?"

Darci fought the urge to fidget. What did she say? Make up some fictional convention? Give him a half explanation? Was omitting the full details to a cop wise?

She lifted her chin slightly, meeting his stare. "It's a convention for readers and writers of erotic romance."

St. James' unreadable expression didn't change. "Erotic romance."

Frustrated anger stabbed into Darci's chest and she met his stare. "Erotic romance." Here we go again. Someone casting judgment on her. He may be as gorgeous as all hell with the body of a sex god, but he seemed just as opinionated as Vivian. She let out a sharp sigh. So much for fulfilling her Cougar challenge with—

"Can you tell me what site you purchased your visa waiver from?"

Still a detached, professional tone. Darci suppressed the need to fidget again. Why did she feel guilty? Was this how her students felt when she interrogated them over missing homework?

"Ms. Whitlam?"

Darci ground her teeth, the ambivalent tone in St. James' voice putting her on edge. "I can show you," she said, crossing to the coffee table. She deposited her pay slip beside her closed laptop, angry and worried at once. "I have it bookmarked."

Her fingertips brushed the cool titanium of her computer just as Jay Jay whined, nudging her leg with his cold, wet nose. "Oh God, mate, I'm sorry." New guilt rolled

through her. She'd totally forgotten he was still in the house. She scruffed his ears, shooting St. James a quick look. "We were on our way to the park when I opened the door and you..." She faltered a second, swallowing the words "grabbed me" before they could fall from her tongue. "Arrived."

The Sydney detective said nothing.

Patting Jay Jay again, she skirted the coffee table and headed toward the back of her house. "I'll just let him out and be right back."

St. James nodded once, still silent, and Darci hurried from the living room, a prickling sensation telling her that his stare was fixed firmly on her back. She should be excited. This was what she'd wanted, wasn't it? The undivided attention of a younger man? Isn't that really why she'd invited him in?

So why was she so...unsettled? Damn it, what was going on? She didn't like this feeling of...of... Damn it! She couldn't even find a word to define the feeling she felt! Argh!

Unbolting the back door, she pushed it wide, giving her small backyard a quick scan before turning to her dog. "Cop or not," she muttered, "if you hear me shout, come and bite his sexy ass off, okay?"

Jay Jay wagged his tail, its long length thumping against her leg in soft lashes. With a jovial *woof* and a goofy doggy grin, he trotted out the door, nose skimming the ground in search of the perfect place to pee.

Closing the door, she reached down and unlatched the dog flap then took a deep breath. She had to regain her calm. Her head was all over the place. She had to remember the young man standing in her living room wasn't just the embodiment of all her carnal, oversexed fantasies packaged into one delectable form. He was a cop. A detective, here to investigate a crime. Something was going on, and she got the feeling it wasn't good.

She took another steadying breath, dragged her hands through her hair, closed her eyes, counted to ten and walked back into her living room.

And stopped.

Detective Jarrod St. James sat on her sofa, his elbows resting on his bent knees, his blue, blue eyes taking in something on her laptop. Her *open* laptop.

"Rico seems a touch fond of spray tanning, don't you think?"

Darci frowned, his question making no sense to her.

And then it did.

Oh God. Her face flooded with heat. Tempt the bloody Cougar!

He lifted his head, an unreadable expression on his face. "Copulating teddy bears, erotic romance reading and now a blog dedicated to seducing younger men filled with images that borderline porn? A blog I see *you* have posted on. What kind of English teacher *are* you, Ms. Whitlam?"

Hot anger scorched away her shame. She stormed across the living room and slammed the laptop lid shut, glaring at him. "The best kind."

He stood. Slowly. Towering over her. His stare never leaving her face. "I wish you'd been *my* English teacher then," he murmured.

Darci narrowed her eyes. "And what does that mean?"

"This," he said, rounding the coffee table in a single step before snaking his arms around her waist, yanking her body to his and crushing her lips with his own.

His tongue delved into her mouth, urgent and hungry. The man kissed like a demon—wild and aggressive and dominating. It made her pussy weep with pleasure.

She'd wanted to kiss him the moment the last one ended on her front lawn. She'd never in a million years dreamed it would be this good, however.

His hands raked her back, cupping her ass cheeks in a squeezing grip. She whimpered, the surprised sound caught by his kiss as he tugged her harder to his body, pressing her hips to his.

His erection rammed into her belly, thick and hard and undeniable despite the denim of his jeans. A constricting pressure knotted in Darci's core at its insistence and



she whimpered again, sliding her arms around his back to tangle her fingers in his hair. Goddamn it, why shouldn't she enjoy herself?

Wicked desire licked through her veins and she deepened the kiss, battling his tongue with fierce purpose, her knickers growing wetter with each tussling thrust and stroke. Her head spun and she held him tighter, lifting one leg and hooking it around his thigh. The change in position drew her sex closer to his cock. A low growl vibrating in his chest told her he was pleased with the new sensation. As did the less-than-gentle way he squeezed her butt again.

*God, what are you doing, Darci?*

She shut the question from her mind and rolled her hips, grinding her spread pussy against the bulge in his jeans with a purpose he could not misinterpret — *more*.

He obliged.

With another growl, he hauled her backward, surprising and delighting her when he dropped onto the sofa, dragging her with him. In a frantic jumble of arms and legs, he repositioned her astride his lap, her knees pressed on either side of his hips, his growing shaft nudging her pussy through their clothes.

*Nudging? Damn, Darci. If you were both naked you'd be so impaled on his dick the neighbors would hear your screams.*

Another wave of base pleasure crashed through her at the thought and she bowed her back, wanting *exactly* to be impaled on his shaft. Wanting it more than a rational woman in her forties should.

*Oversexed.*

She didn't have the chance to tell her sister's voice to fuck off. Jarrod tore his mouth from hers, dragged his lips down her neck, up again, dipped his tongue into her ear and returned to her mouth, pretty much destroying any chance of Vivian's righteousness sinking in.

Darci fisted her hands tighter in his hair, a part of her afraid he was going to remember he was kissing an older woman. She didn't want that. Not yet. Damn, not ever. Not when he made her almost come with just a kiss.

He groaned, thrusting his hips upward to stab his contained erection against her pussy. "Fuck, I want..."

His words—growled against her lips with raw lust—drenched her knickers again. He plunged his tongue into her mouth once more, each kiss growing harder, more demanding than the last. She'd never been kissed like this before—a sheer force of elemental, sexual urgency. He was dominating every second of the moment, taking from her, feeding on her mouth and lips and tongue. It was possessive, frightening. Christ, it was amazing.

With another groan, this one cut with something close to anger, he snatched at the hem of her t-shirt with one hand, shoving it up her rib cage. His fingers found her breast and he cupped its heavy shape, palming it, squeezing it through the thin satin of her bra.

*Oh yes.*

Concentrated pleasure shot through her. Spearing out from her breast, rippling through her body until her pussy flooded with wet need. She broke the kiss, throwing back her head to suck in breath after ragged breath.

And still he didn't ease his assault on her body. He shoved her shirt higher, yanking her closer to his hips, ramming his cock harder to her cunt even as he closed his mouth over the aching point of her nipple.

*Oh yes!*

The elated cry shot through her head. A second before he bit down on the rock-hard nub of sensitive flesh.

"Oh, fuck!"

She bucked against him, fresh pleasure sodding her knickers.

In answer, he snatched at the edge of her bra, tore it aside and claimed her exposed nipple with his mouth.

*Oh, oh, oh.*

Darci froze, every molecule in her body instantly on fire. She held on to him, fisted hands buried in his hair, her thighs gripping his hips. No one had sucked her breasts for a long time and she'd forgotten how amazing it felt. Or was that just the masterful work of St. James' mouth? Surely she'd have remembered something that felt like *this*? Ribbons of pleasure unfurled through her, sinking into the pit of her belly. Ribbons of pleasure threading through her existence, from her nipple down to her sex. She moaned, her head lolling backward, her eyes closed.

She hadn't forgotten. It had *never* felt like this.

His mouth and tongue and teeth still worshipping her left breast, St. James shoved the other side of her bra aside and closed his hand over her right. He captured its pebbled tip between his splayed fingers, pinching it between two knuckles. She bucked against his cock, the painful pleasure of the caress shooting through her, wetting her knickers more. "Damn, that feels so good."

"God, you've got the horniest voice," he groaned against her breast, his lips and teeth nipping her flesh on every word. "It's enough to give a bloke wet dreams."

The statement made Darci's pussy contract. She whimpered, rolling her hips back and forth so the rigid steel of his cock rubbed against her trapped clit. Damn, she was close to coming. So close.

*Oh, you are an oversexed thing, aren't you? About to orgasm after just a little suck and grind.*

St. James yanked her closer to his body, thrusting his cock upward as he squeezed her right breast again. "Say my name with your sexy voice."

Her sex constricted again at the demand.

He shoved his erection into the junction of her thighs again, the hand on her breast growing fiercer. "Say my name, Darci."

"St. James," she whispered, throat tight. Oh, she was going to come. How could she be ready to come? Wasn't she meant to be seducing *him*? Wasn't *he* the prey?

"No," he ground out through clenched teeth, his nostrils flaring. "My full name. Say, 'fuck me, Jarrod St. James'."

"Fuck me, Jarrod St. James!"

The words fell from Darci's lips before she could stop them. Jarrod's eyes widened. His nostrils flared again and in a single fluid move, he tore her t-shirt over her head and threw it away. His gaze raked her exposed upper body, an inspection so thorough and unhurried, Darci's heartbeat doubled. "You are the sexiest thing I've ever seen."

She chuckled, tugging his head closer to hers. "And you talk too much." She kissed him, silencing his own humored laugh. Their tongues battled again, a wild war she knew she was going to lose. She couldn't defend herself against the way he kissed. It was impossible. He fucked her mouth with his tongue, turning her into a creature of sheer sexual slavery. Her voice would give him wet dreams? His kisses would feed her fantasies for the rest of eternity.

His hands raked her back, charting wild paths over her skin, lingering at the dip at the base of her spine, skimming the angles of her shoulder blades until, with a dexterous skill that made her gasp, he unclipped her bra with one hand.

The satin cups fell away from her breasts, the cool air-conditioned air of her living room tickling her flesh immediately. Her already-hard nipples puckered harder and a soft moan escaped her, growing louder when Jarrod flattened his hand at the base of her neck, pushed her away from him a fraction and captured her right nipple with his lips.

He suckled, one hand splayed at the base of her spine, the other pressed to her chest, keeping her upright. As if he knew she was on the verge of crumpling into a melted puddle of screaming release.

*So close, Darci.*

"Fuck me, Jarrod St. James," she begged, her voice a raw breath.

With barely a break in skin-to-skin, mouth-to-breast contact, he rolled her beneath him, straddling her thighs, his knees taking all his weight. His hands fumbled at his fly, his mouth leaving her nipple to utter a short curse as his belt resisted his efforts to yank it open.

"Let me." Darci removed his hands and tugged at the length of leather threaded through the metal buckle.

He looked down into her face, a grin playing with his lips. "Yes, Miss."

His words should have insulted her. Or at the very least, disgusted her. She'd never played the teacher-student game with any of her past lovers, mostly because she hadn't wanted to. They'd been too boring. Jarrod, with his young, nubile body, seam-free face and cocky mirth, was far from boring, however.

She held his gaze, slowly pulling his belt through its buckle. *Oversexed, Darci. So oversexed.*

Jarrod's teeth flashed at her as his grin widened. "Maybe I should remove my jeans before we go any further. And my gun."

"Good idea." Darci nodded, a wanton part of her incensed at the idea. He had to climb off her to do so. Take his gorgeous, sexy body a few inches away from hers. She didn't like that idea. She wanted him so close an anthropologist would have difficulty figuring out where one ended and the other began.

*Oh, for God's sake, Darci! Listen to yourself! You're a grown woman! What are you doing?*

"Making out," she chuckled. "With the hottest cop I've ever seen."

Jarrod raised his eyebrows. "Thank you." He straightened. Slowly.

Darci squirmed on the sofa. He obviously knew he was driving her insane and by the glint in his eyes, he was enjoying it.

As was she.

His hands went to his gun holster first, unclipping the strap with a snap. He withdrew the weapon and bent sideways slightly, depositing it on the coffee table without removing his gaze from her face.

For a split second Darci wondered why a cop from Cybercrime would be armed, and then Jarrod's hands returned to his fly and her mind forgot about everything except the sound of his zipper lowering.

*Oh, oh, this is really happening. You are about to have sex with a younger man. A bloody gorgeous younger man. Shit, what if he doesn't have a condom? What if—*

Her phone ran.

Jarrold flicked the annoying device a less-than-impressed scowl. "Machine?"

Darci chuckled. "What do you think?"

*"Heya, this is Darci-Rae. If this is one of my students, consider yourself on detention. Otherwise, leave a message after the beep."*

Jarrold laughed. "You really *are* unlike any teacher I—"

"Hello, Darci-Rae. This is J.D. I want to spread your legs wide and fuck you with my—"

Darci's blood drained from her face. She stared up at Jarrod, her breath stuck in her throat. *Oh no. Nonono.*

"I want to tie you up and—"

She leapt from the sofa, crossing to the phone in two strides and snatching the handset from its cradle. "Goddamn it! I am *NOT* a phone-sex worker!" she yelled into the mouthpiece.

Silence followed. Absolute silence.

She slammed the phone down before the miscreant on the other end could recover, her pulse pounding in her ears.

"Damn it." The muttered curse scratched at her dry throat.

The sound of a zipper made her spin around and she found Jarrod buttoning his fly, his face expressionless. "Thank you, Ms. Whitlam, for your assistance." He retrieved his gun from the coffee table, sliding it back into its holster with decisive force. "If you'll excuse me, I have paperwork to complete."

"Jarrod..." she began.

He turned and walked from her living room without another word, the solid thud of the front door telling her he was really gone. The sound of the security screen slamming after it just a mocking exclamation point to the fact. She crossed back to the sofa and sank onto the cushioned seat, only a moment earlier occupied by St. James.

She stared at nothing, numb. What had happened?

*What? You mean the fact you almost had sex with a complete stranger? Or the fact that the complete stranger abruptly left?*

Her pussy throbbed, still waiting to be filled. Ready. Wanting.

*Oversexed, Darci-Rae, Vivian's voice whispered in her head. You should be ashamed of yourself.*

She let out a shaking breath and leaned forward, lifted the lid of her laptop. Opening iChat, she clicked on Rachel's Bugs Bunny avatar, uncaring that it was gray.

You will not believe what just happened, she typed. I just made the biggest mistake of my life and had the most amazing experience while doing so.

She hit send.

Almost immediately, Rachel replied.

Is it a younger guy? Ooooh, you *are* accepting the Cougar Challenge! Details! I want details!

Mouth dry, sex still pulsing, nipples still hard, Darci leaned forward again.

And her doorbell rang.

She jumped, her already-pounding heart slamming harder against her breastbone. Rising slowly to her feet, she walked toward the front door, pausing to collect her t-shirt

from the floor where St. James had tossed it. She pulled it over her head, the sensation of the fine cotton rubbing over her nipples almost unbearable. When whoever was at the door left, she was going into her bedroom and firing up Mr. Tibbs. With this much sexual tension in her body, if she didn't do something she'd explode. Literally.

She opened the door.

"Darci-Rae Whitlam," Jarrod St. James said, stepping into her house. Towering over her as he drove her backward into the living room until her ass hit a wall, his hands pressed on either side of her head. "You're under arrest."



## Chapter Four

Her eyes grew wide, her lips parting in a soft gasp. “For what?”

Jarrold lowered his head to hers, the scent of her perfume — *jasmine?* — threading into his brain. “For being so fucking gorgeous I can hardly think straight.”

She gasped again and he caught the sound with his mouth. Kissing her before she could say anything. He didn’t want her to say a word for fear she’d tell him to get out of her house. *That* he couldn’t do.

Not now.

*And when will you, Jarrod?*

He ignored the question, pressing his hips to Darci’s until she was pinned to the wall behind her. It wasn’t what he’d planned. He’d planned to apologize for his abrupt departure when she opened the door. He’d planned to ask her to dinner, maybe offer to drive her and her Kodiak bear to the park. But those plans went out the window when she stood before him again and all he could think about was having her. All of her. Starting with her mouth.

He kissed her, plunging his tongue past her lips. She moaned, a little hitching sound he liked a lot. Part frustration, part supplication, part invitation. He understood all too well.

Snatching one hand from the wall, he thrust it under the hem of her t-shirt, claiming her right breast. Her bare skin burned his palm, a branding as surely as it was a possession. He squeezed the heavy swell, pushing his erection to her belly as he did so. He’d never been so hard and he wanted her to know what she did to him.

She pushed her hips forward, rolling them upward until the junction of her thighs pressed against his groin. He groaned into her mouth, squeezed her breast harder. Pinched her nipple and cupped her breast again.

Now. He wanted to fuck her. Now.

He tore his mouth from hers, sucking in breath after gulping breath as he stared down into her face. "Jesus, I want you. So badly."

She swallowed, her hands brushing his collar, as if unsure what should happen next. "How old are you?"

He kissed her again, a brutal conquering of her mouth. "It doesn't matter. Consider me tempted beyond control."

She shook her head, fingers skimming his jaw. "I'm not what you think I am. I'm not—"

"I know what you are, Darci," he growled, lips scoring a line up to her ear. "You're a fucking sexy woman. I don't give a rat's ass how old you are, how old I am." He took her earlobe in his teeth and nipped gently, loving the way she whimpered when he did so. "I don't care one iota about our age difference."

She whimpered again, louder this time. That he was nibbling on her neck may have something to do with the increase in volume. Or the fact he was rolling her nipple between thumb and fingers. "But the phone call," she whispered, her hands slipping around his shoulders.

He smiled. She may be fighting with her head, but her body was doing its own thing. And he liked that thing. A lot. "I don't care about that either, Ms. Whitlam. Now let me make love to you before I embarrass myself and come in my jeans."

His utterly shameless statement made her whimper once more. Her arms wrapped completely around his neck, drawing him closer. She lifted one leg and hooked it around the back of his thigh, the action bringing her sex closer to his. "Okay."

The simple response was Jarrod's undoing. The trust in her voice—the voice of a sex goddess granting him access to heaven. He grabbed her shirt and yanked it over her head, throwing it aside. She stood before him, naked from the waist up. "Gorgeous." The adjective rumbled deep in his chest, more growl than word.

"Insane," she muttered, a wry smile on her lips.

Jarrold chuckled, stepping closer to her. "Insanely gorgeous, then."

He smoothed his hands down her rib cage, luxuriating in the satin warmth of her skin. There was nothing distracting his enjoyment – no bellybutton piercing, no tattoos of butterflies or Chinese peace symbols. Just beautiful skin and a flat stomach. The body of a woman comfortable with who she was.

"You have a thing for hyperbole."

Darci's low murmur made him smile. He moved his fingers to the waistband of her shorts. "Do I, Ms. Whitlam?" He popped the lone button of her fly.

She sucked in a swift breath. "'Insanely gorgeous, horniest voice, fucking sexy woman'."

Jarrold slowly lowered the zipper of her shorts. "Not hyperbole. Fact."

She laughed, the throaty sound making his balls grow heavier with want. "Yeah, right."

He grinned, enjoying their banter. He could talk to her all day. He *would* talk to her all day. After he did...this.

He shoved her shorts over her hips and down her thighs.

"Shit," Darci burst out.

Without a word he dropped to his knees, sliding the item of clothing farther down her legs until the denim bunched at her ankles. He skimmed his palms over the finely muscled shapes of her calves, up and down the long lengths of her thighs, his thumb stroking the lips of her pussy through the sodden material of the black knickers she wore. "*You* seem to have a thing for profanity."

Her eyelids fluttered nearly closed and she studied him through thick, dark lashes bereft of mascara, her breasts rising and falling with her rapid, shallow breaths. "Only since *you* walked through my door."

He leaned forward, brushing his lips over the exposed plane of her lower abdomen. "Then I best not waste it with idle chit-chat." He slid one hand down to her ankle, lifting her foot off the floor so he could free her of her flip-flops and shorts. He tossed them over his shoulder, cocking an eyebrow as he did so.

"Enjoying yourself?" she asked, the smile on her lips cheeky.

"Oh, you'd better believe it," he chuckled, smoothing his hand back up her leg and under her thigh, lifting it until it rested on his shoulder. "Now tell me, if I suck your clit through your panties, will you moan 'fuck'?"

Before she could answer, he pressed his mouth to her pussy—still covered by its shield of thin black cotton—and sucked on her drenched labia.

"Fuck!"

The word *was* a moan. A low, drawn-out moan that sent fresh desire surging to his cock. He flicked the tip of his tongue over the tiny button of her clit, her knickers so wet with her juices his head spun. The urge to rip those snug black undies from her body and bury himself up to the balls in her sweet cunt almost overwhelmed him. His cock ached, a physical pain he'd never experienced before. He licked at her pussy, stroking her clit with his tongue through the cotton of her panties even as his hands worked their way to the elastic band.

"Damn, that feels so good."

There was no surprise in her voice, only surrender and pleasure. "You *taste* so good," he answered, rising to his feet to gaze into her eyes. He brushed his lips over hers, tracing them with his tongue. "See?"

She stiffened a little, her mouth closed beneath his before, with a trembling breath, she parted her lips and touched her tongue to his.

A ripple of joy coursed through Jarrod. What he'd just done—let her taste her own juices, her own pleasure—was new to her, he could tell. Her hesitation and uncertainty spoke volumes. That she'd trusted him to be the first to let her experience such a beautiful thing filled him with inexplicable warmth. And made him hornier than ever.

Hooking his fingers under the elastic of her undies, he pulled his mouth away from hers. "You taste like liquid pleasure, Darci, and I so want to taste more."

Sinking to his knees, he pulled her underpants down, his breath catching at the sight of her neatly trimmed thatch of russet curls. *A real woman.* The disconnected thought floated through his head as he leaned close and touched his tongue to those soft curls, parting them until he found her clit.

"Oh!"

Darci's groan caressed his senses. Her fingers knotted in his hair, holding his head to her sex.

"Oh..."

He stabbed his tongue past her folds, tugging at one side of her bunched underpants until she lifted her leg and wrapped it around his shoulder.

Yes.

Her pussy opened to him, her cream slicking his lips as he lapped at her slit. She moaned above him, rolling her hips forward to meet his tongue's penetration, her hands tightening in his hair. "Oh!"

She moaned the little exclamation once again, louder. There was a truthfulness to the uninhibited sound that made his balls ache and his dick harder. Sliding his hands over her thighs, he stroked her nether lips with his fingertips before parting her folds farther still. He moved his mouth over her mons, sucking on her clit with gentle force. Her pussy grew wetter against his chin, the musky scent of her pleasure infusing every breath he took.

Darci pushed her hips forward, pulling his head closer to her sex with a subtle tightening of her leg. He fucked her with his tongue, rolling it over her clit in broad, flat strokes, stabbing into her folds with pointed penetrations, painting her clit again before sucking on it some more.

"Damn, that feels so good." The honesty of her earlier moans echoed in the panted statement. She thrust her cunt to his face, a low gasp escaping her when he slipped his thumb into her sodden pussy. "Even better," she murmured, tugging on his hair.

His chin grew wetter, her juices flowing from her with every wriggle of his thumb and caress of his tongue. He dragged one hand down her leg, reveling in the smooth curve of her calf before fumbling with his belt and fly. His cock was achingly rigid with desire. If he didn't feel something more than the inside of his jeans on the stretched skin, he'd go insane.

Shoving his hand past his open fly, he grabbed his erection and squeezed, the brutal pressure sending stars of painful pleasure through his groin. He wanted to sink its length into Darci's drenched cunt more than anything, but not until he'd made her come with his mouth. The raw rapture scalding through his veins was too intense for him to penetrate her now. If he did, he'd shoot his seed with the first thrust. He wanted her to orgasm before that happened. Only then would he allow himself release.

But holy fucking hell, he couldn't last much longer.

"Oh, oh, oh yes," she moaned, grinding her clit to his mouth. He licked her out, driving his thumb deeper into her pussy as he did so. Her clit dragged against his tongue—a pebbled knot of undeniable response. "Yes, yes."

Her leg tightened around his shoulders, her belly jerking with each hitching breath she took. She was close. He could feel it in the tension claiming her body. Taste it in the juices flowing from her cunt. With a twist of his wrist, he replaced his thumb's delving exploration with two fingers, scissoring them inside her tight passage as he nipped her clit with his teeth.

"Oh *yes!*" She bucked once, her grip on his hair turning painfully strong. "Yes! That feels so...so..."

He bit her clit again, plunging another finger into her sex, wriggling all three.

"Oh fuck, I'm going to...I'm going to..." She bucked again. "Oh, oh, oh, oh."

Her cries grew wilder. Rawer. Her pussy gushed with cream.

“Fuck yes, yes, yes!”

She came, her cries turning to whimpering mews, her hips thrashing in rhythmless thrusts.

Jarrold’s cock jerked in his fist, his balls rising, the pit of his belly exploding with wet heat. He was going to fucking erupt. No matter how hard he choked his hard-on, he was going to come. Darci’s release triggered his own and he couldn’t stop it. He’d never had a woman respond so openly to his lovemaking. It was empowering. Awesome.

Overwhelming.

He tore his mouth from her cunt, stumbling back onto his haunches, eyes shut, face scrunched in agonizing pleasure. He squeezed his cock with brutal force. Fuck, he was going to come. Right here, right now. On her rug. Like a hormone-crazed teenage boy. How fucking embarrass –

A foot planted on his chest, shoving him backward. Hard. He fell on his ass, eyes snapping open to stare up at Darci as she straddled his splayed legs and dropped to her knees without a word.

“Darci,” he began, voice choked, heart hammering.

She smiled at him, a wicked smile that turned the mounting pressure in his cock to a volcanic force, and reached for his erection with one steady, purposeful hand. Her fingers closed over his fist, her gaze holding his for a split second before she bent at the waist and closed her lips over the bulbous head of his cock.

He let out a groan that was more of a scream. Releasing his stranglehold on his dick, he fell backward onto the rug, whatever blood not already surging into his cock roaring in his ears. *Here it comes, here it...*

Darci’s mouth plunged down his cock’s turgid length, her lips sealed tight around its distended girth, her tongue lapping at its underside.

"Fuck!" he groaned, bolts of liquid electricity arcing through him. Radiating from Darci's sucking mouth. A violent spasm claimed him, followed by another. And another. He threw back his head, teeth grinding together, jaw clenched tight. Christ, no. He was coming. He couldn't stop it. He couldn't.

She took him deeper in her mouth, her lips pressing the hard rocks of pleasure his balls had become, her hands smoothing over his stomach.

"Fuck, Darci," he panted, staring sightlessly at the ceiling, the walls, the top of her head. "I can't hold back any longer. If you don't want me to come in your mouth you should st—"

She slid one hand between his thighs, cupped his balls in a firm grip and slowly sucked back up his cock, flicking her tongue along his length as she did so. And then plunged back down again. Fast. Hard.

Jarrold lost rational thought. His body convulsed, his cock jerked and his orgasm ripped through him like wildfire, scorching away any resistance to the elemental rapture of his release.

Taking him, possessing him. Draining him.

His seed pumped into Darci's mouth and she took it all, the back of her throat working over the head of his cock, her hands massaging his balls, her fingertips pressing at the puckered hole of his anus.

Jarrold let out a raw groan, hands grabbing at the rug, legs quivering, pulse pounding until, all control deserting him, he gave himself over to the pure pleasure of the blowjob and rode each cresting wave.

"Well," he muttered when the throbbing tension in his groin subsided somewhat. "That didn't exactly go to plan." His hands found their way to Darci's hair as she laid her head on his belly and he combed his fingers through the cool strands.

"What plan?" She settled herself between his spread legs, her breasts cupping his groin, her own fingers drawing lazy circles over his rib cage. "The one to arrest me?"



He laughed, shaking his head as he did so. "Well, that too, but that's not what I meant."

She lifted her head and studied him, eyebrows dipping a little. "You really were going to arrest me? Should I be calling my solicitor now?" She gave him a mischievous smirk. "You do realize what we just did could be considered entrapment, or accepting a bribe or something official sounding I'm sure they mention often on *Law & Order*."

Jarrold laughed again, the sound more at ease than any he'd heard himself make in a long time. "No, Ms. Whitlam. I'm not going to arrest you, although I have to admit the idea of putting you in handcuffs *has* crossed my mind an obscene number of times since I first saw you."

She cocked an eyebrow.

"I know you are who you say you are," he went on, his pulse kicking up a notch when her fingers played with his nipple. "What didn't go to plan was my utter and complete lack of control just now."

Darci studied him for a still moment, a smile pulling at the edges of her mouth. "I wouldn't berate yourself too much, Detective." She straightened to her feet and began to walk away from him, seemingly uncaring of her naked state. Jarrod watched her go, his cock growing heavy. It wasn't just refreshing to meet a woman so relaxed with her body, but a bloody turn-on. She flipped him a quick look over her shoulder. "A woman my age would consider what just happened the ultimate compliment."

Pushing himself up onto his elbows, he frowned at her before she disappeared through the doorway leading to the kitchen. "There you go with that 'my age' bullshit," he called, tucking his dick back into his jeans. "I *know* you've only just turned forty and you're talking as if you're checking yourself into a nursing home any day."

She came back into the living room before he could zip up his fly, a bottle of water in her hands. Her eyebrows rose up her forehead. "How do you know I've just turned forty?"

He gave her a pointed look. "I'm a cop investigating a crime, remember? I may not have known what Darci-Rae Whitlam looked like until the moment you slammed into me on your front porch, but I know your date of birth. Just out of interest, your driver's license photo looks nothing like you. When did you stop being a blonde with black horned-rimmed glasses?"

She snorted, the soft sound far sexier than it should have been. "When my sister told me to grow up."

Jarrold frowned, detecting an edge to her voice. What was that about? "Well," he said with a slow grin, wanting to see her relaxed and comfortable again, "I like the way you look now. A lot."

Lifting the bottle to her lips, she took a slow drink, her gaze never leaving his face. She still hadn't made any move to cover her nakedness and Jarrod's cock gave a little twitch. If she was standing any closer to him, he'd drag her back down to the floor and fuck her silly.

*What are you waiting for then?*

"And how old are *you*, Detective St. James?"

He grinned. "Young enough to qualify."

She narrowed her eyes. "Qualify?"

"Tempt the Cougar," he prodded, despite the uncertainty at his bravado. Why was it he could bust up a gang of Hells Angels without breaking a sweat, but the idea of suggesting what he *thought* he was suggesting, to a woman he'd known for all of seventy-four minutes, made him as nervous as all hell?

She turned and gave her closed laptop a long look, her expression neutral. Studied. "What crime are you investigating?"

The question took him by surprise. He bit back a curse, a sudden stab of professionalism making him start. "Stolen identity," he answered. "Someone has been using your personal information to establish a new identity."

Darci turned back to him, unreadable expression still on her face. "Would that identity have anything to do with being a phone-sex worker?"

Jarrold nodded. He was breaking so many rules right at this moment he could barely keep up. If the head of his division found out what he was doing he could face suspension, but he didn't care. Seriously, he'd just shared the most amazing act of fellatio with his key witness and was ready to do more. Telling her someone was using her name to operate an illegal phone-sex business was the least of his transgressions.

She let out a ragged sigh, crossing to where he still lay stretched out on her rug before dropping to her knees beside him. "That explains a lot then, doesn't it?" She took another sip of water, gaze fixed on the poster of the copulating teddies.

Jarrold looked at her, something indefinable stirring deep inside him. She looked so beautiful, so confident, and yet at the same time, vulnerable. The contradiction squeezed his chest and it was all he could do to not reach out and pull her down to his body and kiss her senseless.

*Then do it!*

"Based on the last phone call I heard," he said, struggling to keep his hands to himself, "I'd say yes."

She turned her attention from the poster and gave him a level look, her stare direct. A teacher's look if ever Jarrold had seen one. *Don't lie to me or there will be consequences.* "So," she said, tone calm but serious. "I have to ask—why did you run from the house earlier if you knew who I was?"

He swallowed, suppressing the urge to fidget. Not just because he didn't know how to answer her question, but because he was growing more and more aroused by the second. Every facet of Darci Whitlam's personality turned him on, from the quirky woman who talked to her dog as if he were a person to the sensual creature of assertive passion to the no-nonsense educator. *Oh man, you're sinking fast, Jarrold.*

"Two reasons," he answered, forcing his own voice to stay steady. "The phone call reminded me what I was here for. And made me realize what I was just about to do."

She studied him, teacher gaze unwavering. "So why did you come back?"

Swallowing again, he met her stare, throat—and other parts of his anatomy—thicker still. "I realized what I was just about to do."

His cryptic answer curled the corners of her mouth. "Hmmm."

She took another drink, her breasts moving slightly as she raised the water bottle to her lips. Jarrod pulled in a slow breath, enjoying the sight. He'd never known someone to be so at peace with her naked body. Every woman he'd ever fooled around with had so many hang-ups about the way they looked they'd scramble for the sheets or clothes the second he withdrew. Darci-Rae, however...

*Fuck, she is sexy. Sexy and confident and gorgeous and...*

His cock jerked, his balls growing swollen and hard.

*I want her. Again. Now.*

Unable to stop himself, he slid his hand up her thigh, skimming her hip before charting a slow path up to her left breast. She felt like sinful perfection and his cock flooded with eager heat.

Darci's eyes widened. She looked at him, her expression stunned, her body motionless.

A sinking sensation settled in the pit of Jarrod's gut. He froze, hand still on the heavy swell of her breast. *Oh fuck. You've read the signs all wrong, Detective. Get your hands off her, say you're sorry and get out of her house.*

"What?" she began, her stare sliding to his rising erection. It jutted from his open jeans like a bloody pole, thick and stiff and already purple with hungry desire.

Before he could grab the offending thing and shove it back into his trousers, however, Darci turned her gaze back to his face. "Already?" she asked, her smile hot enough to make Jarrod's head swim.

He snaked his arm up around her neck and buried his fingers in her hair, a wave of something very like bliss rolling through him. "One of the benefits of a younger man,"

he murmured with a grin, tugging her head down to his. "We're ready to go almost straight away." He brushed his mouth over hers, delighted when her tongue touched his bottom lip. An invitation.

With a growl, he yanked her against his body, capturing her laugh with his kiss. Capturing her breasts with his hands.

Fuck, if he was going to break the rules, he may as well do a damn good job of it.

## Chapter Five

He crushed her mouth with his, his tongue slipping past her lips to mate with hers. Darci kissed him back, the subtle taste of her sex lingering on his lips and breath turning her on more than it should. Damn, the *whole situation* was turning her on more than it should. She was rolling about on her living room floor with a man probably in his twenties, who she'd known just over an hour, and the junction of her thighs was so wet with her juices she wondered why they both weren't floating.

This kind of thing didn't happen in real life. This kind of thing happened in the erotic romances she read, the ones she discussed with Rachel over the 'net. The ones Vivian scoffed at with such derision.

Jarrold's hand massaged her breast a little harder, nipping at her bottom lip as he did so, and she groaned in appreciative capitulation. Fiction or no, it *was* happening. To her. Right now. The hottest, sexiest guy she'd ever met was feeling her up and kissing her with such smoldering talent she could barely breathe. She was stark naked beneath him, her legs entangled with his, her pussy throbbing with a need she couldn't pass off as fantasy, her breasts crushed against his chest – and it was *real*.

*Oh, wait until I tell Rachel.*

The delighted thought flittered through her head. Seconds before Jarrod hauled himself backward and off her body.

She blinked, her chest constricting with shock as she watched him take a step away from her. "What...?"

He grinned, toeing off his boots. "I think it's a touch unfair you're the only naked one here, don't you?"

Darci laughed, her pussy throbbing harder when he un-holstered his gun, tossed it onto the sofa and shoved his jeans completely down his hips.

His cock—longer and thicker than any she'd seen—stood proudly from the thatch of dark curls between his legs. She ran her gaze over it, her pulse quickening at the memory of its impressive length in her mouth. She'd never been one for giving head, but Jarrod's cock...

*Jarrold in general, Darci. There's nothing about him you don't like.*

It was true. So far, in their very short relationship, he'd pushed all the right buttons—both metaphorical and physical.

Her clit joined her pussy's eager throbbing, as if to prove the point. She watched him tug off his socks and discard them beside his jeans and gun, her sex growing tight when his shirt joined them.

*Oh...*

The inarticulate interjection whispered through her mind, the sight of Jarrod's naked body robbing her of intelligent thought.

Her mouth went dry. Her sex, wet.

Damn, he really was stunning. Long and lean, with muscles so divinely sublime they could only have been sculpted by a master artist. A mottled bruise marred his right shoulder—courtesy of Jay Jay's teeth no doubt—but the short stab of guilt sinking into Darci's belly got lost in her rising desire as she continued taking in the sight of his naked form. The smattering of dark hair across his chest only served to highlight the smooth strength of his pecs, and she followed its trailing descent down his six-pack stomach, past his shallow navel until it joined the curls from which his rigid cock jutted.

"I can see why they call you Calvin at the station," she blurted.

He chuckled, a faint pink tingeing his cheeks. "Don't believe them. I'm the ugly one of the unit."

She laughed at his obvious joke. She doubted the word "ugly" had ever been applied to Jarrod St. James. Nor that there was anyone alive better looking. It was impossible. "Don't believe you."

He ducked his head, running his hands up his stomach in an act she recognized as pure self-consciousness. Self-effacing. "You know us computer geeks. We're all sex gods underneath our clothes and pocket protectors."

Before she could respond, he stepped toward her, planting his bare feet on either side of her legs and extending one hand to her.

She took it without question, her trust in him not surprising her in the slightest.

He pulled her to her feet with fluid ease, the sight of his muscles flexing as he did so making Darci's impatient, licentious sex throb some more.

*This is real, Darci. So very, very real.*

"I'm going to fuck you now, Darci-Rae," he said, looking down into her face when they stood toe-to-toe. His lopsided grin returned, cocky and boyish at once. "I'm going to spend the rest of the day showing you just how much stamina I have." He slid one hand up her arm, over her shoulder to the back of her neck, a tender caress that made her shiver. Her nipples pinched into hard peaks and she swayed toward him, wanting nothing more at that very second than to feel them brushing against his hard chest.

A low, uneven moan rumbled in his throat as their bodies touched. "How much stamina *you* have," he murmured, nostrils flaring.

He snaked his other hand around her bare backside and yanked her hips to his, his lips brushing hers in a teasing kiss. "Bedroom," he whispered against her mouth. "Now."

The order sent a jolt of wet tension spearing into Darci's core. It wasn't the first time his sensual commands made her horny and she drew in a shaky breath. Surrendering control to someone else had never been her strong point. What did it mean that she wanted to do so with Jarrod?

Head buzzing, pulse pounding in her neck, she slipped from Jarrod's embrace and walked toward her bedroom. She'd read a few BDSM novels, Rachel having suggested more than one. They always aroused her, but she knew deep down she wasn't cut out to be a submissive.



So why did her sex constrict with wanton anticipation when St. James ordered her around?

Was there such as thing as lite-BDSM? BDSM sans the B? And S? And M? Or was his natural power and dominating personality—the kind she believed all good cops should possess—a turn-on for *her* specifically, a woman who spent every weekday being in control of the uncontrollable?

Or was it just Jarrod, full stop?

A man more suited to her than any of the ones she'd tried on before?

*Connection. On a soul level?*

She came to a halt in the doorway of her bedroom, suddenly unsure. What was she thinking? What did she *think* she was thinking? Connection? What the hell did that mean? Sex with a younger man? Trusting him when she knew almost nothing about him? This *was* real life, not a novel. She had to be out of her bloody mind if she thought anything apart from shame and regret could come from this.

Viv *was* right. She was oversexed. It was time to grow up.

Warm lips pressed to the side of her neck, Jarrod's hands skimming over her hips and up her rib cage. "I like the copulating teddies better."

She started, her heart racing, her stare jerking to the framed poster for the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* hanging above her bed. "It's a classic," she murmured, her throat tight. She looked at the image of Colin Firth as Mr. Darcy, the epitome of the alpha romantic hero—handsome, arrogant, dominating, rent vulnerable by the one woman he fell in love with.

Arrogant. Dominating.

Handsome.

She closed her eyes, the image of the actor cast as her favorite fictional character replaced by an image of Jarrod St. James, his lopsided grin cocky, his eyes ablaze with undeniable desire.

*Oh, Darci, what you're thinking is lunacy, you know that, don't you?*

Jarrood's lips moved up the column of her neck with languid intent. "'In vain, have I struggled'," he whispered against the sensitive dip beneath her ear. "'It will not do'."

The breath left Darci in a groan, the words of Jane Austen's most famous hero flooding her sex with cream. No, it wasn't Mr. Darcy's quote that did it. It was Jarrod. Jarrod saying them, Jarrod knowing them, and knowing what they meant. Jarrod admitting what was between them wasn't expected nor deniable.

Jarrood touching her, kissing her, holding her.

Jarrood. Just Jarrod.

His lips moved to her ear, nibbling on her earlobe as he ran his hands up to her breasts. He took each one in a gentle grip, pinching her nipples between his fingers before sliding his hands farther up her chest to her throat.

She moaned, tilting her head to the side when his lips moved to her jawline. The way he kissed her now, unhurried, focused, made her breaths shallow. It was as if he had all the time in the world and wanted to spend every minute of it exploring her in great detail. Gone was the surprised hunger of their first kiss, gone the frantic lust of their second.

This was something unlike anything she'd experienced—a man in no rush, giving pleasure to the woman in his arms with just the innocent connection of his lips on her skin.

With tender force, he pulled her back against his body, his mouth nipping and sucking the bowed column of her neck before moving to her shoulder. His erection nudged the crevice between her butt cheeks, a long, thick rod she ached to feel buried in her sex.

"You have no idea how much I want you," he murmured against the curve of her shoulder. "I shouldn't be here. I should be on my way back to Sydney. I should be tracking down a crook, but you tempt me like..." He dragged one hand down her body, slipping the tips of his fingers between her closed thighs. "Fuck, I have no idea what

you tempt me like, I just know I can't walk away from you. That's how sexy you are. That's how much I want you."

Darci rolled her hips, stroking his cock with the curves of her ass. How did someone so young know what to say to make her want to melt into a puddle of concentrated pleasure at his feet? She stroked her fingers down the length of his arm, pressing them to the backs of *his* fingers resting between her thighs. With gentle pressure, she pushed them harder against her drenched folds. "I'm beginning to get an idea," she answered on a low chuckle.

He groaned in her ear, taking over her unspoken suggestion and plunging his fingers into her pussy.

She gasped, arching her back into the sudden penetration. He cupped her right breast in his other hand, fucking her with two fingers as he did so. Slow, deep fucking, seeking out the sweetest spot within her sex, his lips still charting hot paths over her shoulder and throat.

"Tell me again why you shouldn't be here," she breathed, his kisses making her head swim. Or was that the determined stroking of Jarrod's fingers inside her sex? She didn't know. Didn't care. The swollen heat of her pussy throbbed and she felt the tops of her thighs grow slick.

"I haven't a fucking clue," he whispered. He withdrew his fingers from between her legs and turned her to face him, cupping her face in his hands and claiming her mouth with his.

The kiss was just as slow, just as languid as his earlier worship of her throat and shoulder. Thoroughly, and yet so very gently, his tongue traced the lines of her lips, slipping past them to take possession of her mouth completely. With each swirl and caress of his tongue, he took a step forward, guiding her deeper into her bedroom until the backs of her knees bumped against the edge of her bed.

She gasped, clinging to him as they both tumbled backward onto the mattress, the involuntary intake of breath turning into a laugh when Jarrod's cock nudged the folds of her pussy.

"Oh, you're laughing at me now, Ms. Whitlam?" He smiled against her lips, shifting until he had her pinned completely beneath his body. His cock head pressed at her sex again, with a little more assertion this time.

Darci shook her head, wrapping her arms around his shoulders to hold him closer to her still, letting him feel her answering grin with his lips. "Not at all, young man." She rolled her hips and his cock pressed slightly into her sodden slit. God, she so wanted to be impaled by it. Deeply and completely.

"Young man, young man." He growled, lifting his head enough to give her a smoldering glare. "Let's cut the 'young' and stick with just 'man', all right?" He shoved his hips forward, pressing his cock harder to her slick pussy. She was so wet she felt him slip past her outer lips easily, penetrating her a little more. Her head spun. She'd have to stop him soon. This whole thing was an act of sheer lunacy, but she wasn't *that* crazy. Before they went any further she'd need him to —

He nipped at her bottom lip with his teeth before kissing it with such thorough attention, she lost her train of thought and tightened her arms around his shoulders for fear she was about to be swept away by the flood of raw pleasure rolling through her.

"As I've pointed out before," he continued, lips scorching a path along her jaw, up to her temple, back down to her mouth again. "I don't give a rat's ass about your age or mine. Now shut up, stop laughing, stop pointing out the unimportant, stop doing *anything* except letting me fuck you until we're both covered in sex."

Darci's heart leapt into her throat. She arched her back, the branding contact of his mouth on her neck, working down her throat toward her aching, pleasure-swollen breasts, almost overwhelming her. "Don't you mean sweat?" she rasped, scrambling at his shoulders when he brushed the upper swell of her left breast with the tip of his tongue. *Oh...oh yes...*

He growled, the sound sending wicked vibrations through his body and into hers. “Right, that’s it. You are so going to get it.”

Before she could ask what “it” was, he closed his lips over her nipple and sucked. Hard.

She whimpered, awash with delicious bliss. She’d always known there was a reason she had breasts, until now she just hadn’t known what it was. Now she knew—it was so Jarrod St. James had something to suck and bite and worship. What other reason could there be than the absolute—no, the *pure* ecstasy coursing through her?

She’d read more than one erotic novel in which the heroine came with just mouth-to-breast stimulation but until right at that very moment, she believed it a work of fiction. Now...

Jarrold moved his lips to her other breast, his fingers fondling the abandoned nipple with equal fervor. Twin ribbons of exquisite heat shot through her, sinking into the pit of her belly only to blossom into a mounting, pulsing tension. She moaned, rolling her head to the side, eyes closed. A distant, rational part of her mind recognized with relief that Jarrod’s new position had removed his unsheathed cock from her cunt. A wanton, depraved part of her mind wept for the loss. She wanted him inside her. She couldn’t deny that anymore, and it had nothing to do with the fact he could quote Austen, looked like sin, was devoid of any wrinkles and gray hair and had the most impressive dick she’d ever seen in her life.

It was because, above all else, he wanted to make her feel pleasure. *Her* pleasure. He wanted to make her come. He wanted to give *her*, Ms. Darci-Rae Whitlam, something she’d hungered for her whole adult life. Complete and utter rapture.

And who was she to argue with a cop?

“Fuck, I love how your skin feels like velvet,” he murmured against her breast, smoothing his hand over her rib cage, down over her belly to the tight curls of her pubic hair. “I could get off on just that alone.”

She laughed. Or maybe she moaned. She didn't really know. Because at that moment, he replaced the hand on her mound with his mouth and her mind lost focus of anything else apart from the flicking pressure of his tongue on her clit.

He lapped at her sex, slow, firm strokes that made her want to weep. And still he explored her flesh with his hands, sliding his palms over her hips, up her rib cage, down her waist, over the tops of her thighs. They never stopped, his hands, touching her wherever they could reach. Never deserting his deliriously forceful occupation of her pussy with his teeth and tongue, he marked her flesh as his property.

Just when Darci knew she could hold on no longer, when she knew she was about to be washed away by her second orgasm of the day, he pulled away slightly, blowing a fine stream of cool air onto her hot, sodden folds.

She bucked, the unexpected contact of breath on feverish flesh sending a wicked chill up her spine. Her nipples pinched harder, her cunt constricted. "I don't know if I can—" she began.

"Of course you can," he cut her off, the conceit in his voice—muffled somewhat by the length of her thigh he was busily exploring with his lips—making her sex squeeze again. As if to prove his point, he ran one hand down her leg, cupping the back of her knee to lift it from the bed. He raised it straight, stopping only when her toes pointed at the ceiling and resting her calf against the hard strength of his chest.

Blue eyes glinting with an emotion Darci swore was devilment, he gazed down at her. "Now this is what we are going to do, Ms. Whitlam." He skimmed one palm down the length of her thigh, his fingertips feathering the outer lips of her cream-slicked slit in a teasing stroke before snaking back up to her ankle. "I am going to kiss every part of your body starting with this unbelievably sexy leg until you beg me to do otherwise. When—and only when—you tell me you can't take any more, I will sink my very stiff cock into your very sweet pussy until you realize you can take a *whole lot* more." He grinned, that lopsided grin Darci bet could make any female on the planet wet with lust.

*And that grin is all for you, Darci-Rae. How does that make you feel?*

Amazing. Utterly amazing.

She gazed up at him as he towered over her, hugging her leg like a warrior holds his weapon when in a state of waiting repose, his stare fixed on her face, his cock pressing against the back of her thigh. "Is it wrong of me to be glad I'm a victim of crime?" she asked on a whispering breath.

His grin turned into a slow smile, softening the edges of his youthful bravado until Darci's heartbeat quickened. "Only if it's wrong of me to be glad of the same thing."

The silence stretched between them, heavy and pregnant with unspoken possibilities.

*Say something. Anything.*

She couldn't think of a word.

Smile fading, Jarrod studied her down the length of her extended leg, his Adam's apple jerking up and down his throat before, with a low groan she swore was a curse, he closed his eyes and pressed his lips to the side of her ankle.

She sucked in a swift breath, closing her own eyes. If she didn't, she would die of sensory overload. The touch of Jarrod's lips on her ankle—a part of her body she never would have labeled an erogenous zone—was almost too much to bear. How would she survive *watching* him kiss her there? How would she withstand the sight of his naked body pressed against her leg, knowing his cock hovered but a hairsbreadth from her hungry cunt?

She bit at her bottom lip. Sensory overload. Sight and touch. God help her if she started to catalogue the way he smelled, the lingering taste of his sweat on her lips, the sound of his ragged breath drawn with tenuous control through flaring nostrils...

"Oh, Jarrod..."

Her groan fell from her, her nails driving into her palms as he ran a slow path of hot kisses down her calf to the sensitive hollow at the back of her knee.

Her pussy constricted again. Harder. The tension in her core grew thicker.

He kissed the back of her knee with total adoration, running his hands up and down her leg as he did so. With each caress of her thigh, his fingers brushed her drenched folds. Again, again. Again.

Darci began to moan, lifting her hips to his downward stroke, the need to be filled with his strength growing more compelling. "Jarrod," she groaned, pushing her hips upward. "Jarrod...please..."

And still he kissed the back of her knee. Tiny, nipping kisses, tiny flicks of his tongue on her skin. She whimpered, the pressure between her thighs building. Her clit throbbed, a world of concentrated want. Swollen need. "Please," she moaned again. "I can't..."

He slid his mouth down to her cunt in one long, dragging kiss and plunged his tongue into her wetness.

Shards of tension shot through her. "Jarrod!" she cried, shoving her hips upward.

Her climax rushed at her. She could feel it coming. She couldn't stop it. She couldn't. And she wanted Jarrod inside her more than she wanted breath. "Please..."

He tore his mouth from her sex. "Condom."

The word was a growl. Low and raw.

She waved her hand at the bedside draw. Head spinning. Pulse racing. Eyes closed.

The mattress dipped and bounced beneath her, the sound of wood sliding against wood filled her ears and then he was back. Where he should be. Between her legs, his flesh sliding over hers, his hands owning her body. Her pleasure.

"Can you take any more, Darci?" he asked, his breath as shaky as her own.

She shook her head.

His fingers closed around her ankle and he lifted her leg off the bed again, extending it straight up. "Yes," he murmured, sliding his arms around her calf as he shifted on the mattress. "You can."



With one sudden, fluid thrust, he sank his cock into her sex.

Her cry burst from her throat, her back arched. She grabbed at the duvet beneath her, needing something to hold onto. Oh lordy, he felt —

“Jesus, Darci, you are so tight!”

Jarrold’s proclamation, ground out from between clenched teeth, sent electrifying shards of wet tension straight into her center. She closed her eyes, her body, her *mind*, so aware of the stretching thickness of his length filling her completely, her breath caught in her throat. Of his heavy balls pressing to her ass cheeks every time he thrust into her. Of his warm fingers circling her ankle, his strong arms holding her leg to his even stronger chest.

“So tight,” Jarrod moaned, his lips on the instep of her foot. “So amazingly tight.”

She wanted to say something witty, something loaded with innuendo, but the words were lost. Stolen by the intense pleasure roaring through her. She closed her eyes, her teeth catching her bottom lip. With every stroke of Jarrod’s length inside her, her ability to function on a higher level—to articulate, rationalize, vocalize—was stolen by pleasure until she was left with just thrumming, indescribable need and want. A woman barely capable of expressing how amazing Jarrod made her feel. “Oh,” she breathed, “yes!”

Jarrold answered with a drawn-out groan, ravishing the sole of her foot with his mouth as he plunged deeper into her sex.

“Yes,” she whispered again. “Oh yes.”

“You have the sexiest fucking foot,” Jarrod stated against her sole, his hands sliding over her calf.

For some reason, the absurd claim made her heart quicken. “Thank you.”

He laughed, the sound vibrating through his chest and into her leg. He pressed his lips to her foot’s arch and thrust harder into her sex, each stroke growing quicker. The base of her spine tingled, her orgasm rushing at her with such alacrity her head spun.

She drew her fists closer to her body, dragging the duvet with her, afraid of being swept away. As ludicrous as it sounded, if he kissed her foot again, she might very well erupt.

How was it she'd had lovers before, orgasms before, but she'd never felt like...like *this* before?

"Sexiest fucking foot." Jarrod's fingers moved back to her ankle, his lips skimming a line down to her calf. "Sexiest fucking calf." He tugged her leg a little higher, the action lifting her backside off the bed a fraction, just enough to cause his cock to sink deeper into her sodden sex. She ground her teeth, her breaths shallow. Rapid. "Sexiest fucking knee." He kissed the back of her knee again, exploring the very place he'd only so recently charted as if he'd never been there before, all the while thrusting into her deeper and deeper, faster and faster, his balls slapping her butt.

"Sexiest fucking *everything*."

That was it. Jarrod's proclamation, uttered in a low growl, was it. Darci's climax ignited, surging through her body like a firestorm of exquisite tension. She rammed her hips higher, taking him into her even deeper still. Wanting all of him. "Oh God," she cried, fingers scrambling at the tousled duvet, palms slapping it. She pushed into Jarrod's penetrations and, just when she knew she was about to die in the inferno engulfing her, when she couldn't take any more—she couldn't, *she couldn't*—Jarrod's rhythm turned wild and he slammed into her harder yet, his arms imprisoning her leg to his chest, his fingers digging into her flesh.

And then he threw back his head and let out a choked roar, his cock jerking inside her sex, his orgasm claiming *his* body as surely as he'd claimed hers.

## Chapter Six

Something very wet and very cold touched Jarrod on the cheek. He jerked fully awake, his semi-dozing state evaporating in an instant, his hand snatching for the spare Glock he kept under his pillow.

*Not your pillow...not your house...*

The confusing thought barely registered in his brain before his sleep-fogged eyes focused on the massive creature sitting motionless but a foot away from his head.

Jay Jay.

He stared at Darci's dog, remaining flat on his belly. "Hey, mate."

The dog thumped its long tail. Once.

With slow, obvious actions, Jarrod rolled his head to the other side, expecting to find Darci grinning at him.

Nope. The other side of the bed was empty. He was on his own. The only evidence he'd just spent the last two hours fucking the most amazing woman he'd ever known were the rumpled sheets and three empty condom packets on the bedside lamp table.

And a slightly tender pecker already growing stiff at the untimely memory of said fucking.

He swallowed, rolling his head to look at Jay Jay again. "Where's Darci, mate?"

The dog thumped its tail again, but still didn't move.

Which meant Jarrod didn't know if *he* should either.

He'd never owned a dog. Being the computer-nerd-slash-bully-victim he was growing up, he'd kept pets less likely to take him away from the computer or be used against him by the local thugs. A blue-tongue lizard residing in a fully decked-out terrarium beside his desk in his room was not only practical, the creature could never

be attacked and hurt by Wilson “Billy” Laylor down the road. All well and good while growing up, but of no help to him now. If he tried to climb out of the bed and go to Darci—something he very much wanted to do right at that moment—would the dog leap at him?

He gave Jay Jay a lopsided smile. “I’m going to sit up, mate. Is that okay?”

Jay Jay’s tail thumped one more time, his tongue lolling from his mouth.

“I’ll take that as a yes,” Jarrod muttered, pushing himself slowly into a sitting position on the mattress.

Jay Jay straightened to all fours instantly, stare fixed on Jarrod’s face.

“If I climb out of this bed, will you try to eat me?”

The dog cocked its head to the side, ears pricked, and then, without so much as a woof goodbye, turned and trotted out of the room.

Jarrod let out a rather embarrassed chuckle. He’d faced down dogs before when he was working homicide. Why the hell did *this* dog unnerve him so much?

*Are you kidding? He’s Darci’s dog. Isn’t that reason enough? He almost gnawed your shoulder off when you first met him. Anything that reminds you of Darci unnerves you. Bloody hell, the woman herself unnerves you. And turns you on.*

The straining pole of his cock, jutting up from his groin, illustrated that quite clearly.

Ignoring his erection *and* still tender shoulder, he looked around the room. Where was Darci? They’d had quite a bit of fun in the last two hours. Enough to feed his fantasies and make his dreams wet for many, many months to come. Trouble was, he wasn’t inclined to leave. In fact, the thought of driving back to Sydney, of walking away from Ms. Whitlam and her acerbic wit, sexy-assed body and throaty voice, made his chest ache.

Planting his bare feet firmly on the floor, he straightened from the bed. The unexpected physical response to ending this...*thing* with Darci unsettled him. What he needed right now was some hard, fast, loud sex to ease his mind.

His cock twitched in approval and he left the bedroom, casting a parting glance at Colin Firth hanging above her bed. "Still like the copulating teddies better."

He walked through Darci's quiet house, the cop part of his mind wondering why it was so quiet, where Darci was. Another side—a side he'd rarely allowed out to play—enjoying the act of just being in a comfortable environment. He had no clothes on, he was horny, there was a bloody big dog-slash-bear living in the house but he felt...at home.

He grinned, scruffing his hair as he entered Darci's living room. He'd never felt at home anywhere apart from behind a computer or chasing down a crook. Who'da thought it?

Padding across the small, neat room, he paused at Darci's partially open laptop, giving the glowing apple on its lid a contemplative look. If he quickly checked out the fraudulent site from which she'd obtained her U.S. visa, they'd have more time for fooling around before he had to head back to Sydney.

His chest squeezed again at the unwelcome thought. He didn't want to head back to Sydney. Two hours south was two hours too far from Darci. How could he see her smile anytime he wanted if he was two hours south?

*Uh-oh. Are you hooked already?*

Pulling a face, he dropped his naked butt onto the sofa and pushed the laptop's lid completely open.

He noticed two things immediately.

One, the Tempt the Cougar blog was still open. And two, Darci had recently been iChatting with someone called Rachel.

Are you serious? OMG, girl. That is fan-freaking-tastic! You know we're gonna want to know alllll the details, don't you?

He read Rachel's last line of communication again. His fingers itched to scroll the session back so he could read whatever Darci had said beforehand. He shifted on the cushion, his dick growing harder still. Why he was getting even more turned-on over the idea of Darci talking about him as a conquest, he didn't know – but boy, was he.

Welcome to Tempt the Cougar, my lucky Australian soul sister, Rachel suddenly typed, and Jarrod started, jerking back a little from the laptop. Can't *wait* to hear what Vivian has to say about this. God, she's going to freak! Wish I was there to see her reaction.

The phone rang. Loudly.

Jarrod jolted to his feet, completely, inexplicably flustered, his stare locked on the noisy, inconvenient device.

*"Heya, this is Darci-Rae. If this is one of my students, consider yourself on detention. Otherwise, leave a message after the beep."*

"Hello, Darci-Rae," a thin, somehow crude male voice crooned over the connection. Jarrod's gut rolled, a deep sense of rage surging through him. "Fancy my surprise when I found your name and number on hotcalls.com.au. You know what I want to do to you, don't you? I want to bend you over your desk and –"

In a whirlwind of naked flesh and wet hair, Darci ran into the living room. She bolted past Jarrod without a second glance, snatching up the phone handset and slamming it to her ear. "Terry Cahill, I know it's you!" she snapped, her voice like cracking ice. "When you get to school on Monday you better be prepared for a –"

Before Jarrod even knew what he was doing, he crossed the room and jerked the handset from Darci's white-knuckled grip. "Terry Cahill," he all but snarled, the disgust in his gut threading through an unexpected, overwhelming need to protect Darci. "This is Detective Jarrod St. James of the Sydney metro police department. The number you are calling is being monitored and I am tracking your location as we speak. I will be there within the hour to collect you." He paused. For a second. "Better be telling your parents they need to contact their solicitor."

The other line fell silent. For two seconds. Then, "It was a joke!" the less-crude, far more thin and wavering voice squeaked, the teenage boy's terror flooding through the connection like an erupting wail. "I didn't mean, I didn't mean to—"

Jarrold cut him dead. "I suggest, then, you think twice about harassing my girlfriend in such a way," he snarled. "Or we'll be having a nice little chat in the interrogation room. Do you understand?"

The phone clicked, the connection killed.

"Oh my God!" Darci burst out laughing beside him, sliding her arms around his waist and pressing her very naked body against him. "I don't believe you *did* that!"

Jarrold looked at the phone in his hand, the pulse in his neck thumping. He gave Darci a grin, fully aware it was a little stunned. Even more aware his erection was trapped between their bodies—its length pressing against her belly with unabashed intention. "Neither do I."

She shook her head, her smile so happy and open his head swam. "Girlfriend? Considering what we've just been doing it may sound a little odd to say this, but isn't *girlfriend* rushing it a bit?"

No.

The absolute certainty of the word filled his giddy head, catching him off guard. Frowning, he gazed down into her face. It *wasn't* rushing. Fuck it. He'd only known her a few hours but he wanted to know her for longer. Much longer. He slid his hand down to her wet ass and tugged her closer to his body. "I think there're distinct possibilities here, don't you?"

Darci's smile faded. A slow desertion of her happiness. She stiffened in his arms, her expression becoming guarded. Closed. "I need to finish my shower and get dressed." She pushed at his chest, and it was all he could do not to tighten his arms around her back and refuse to let her slip away from him.

But he did, and she walked away, the tension in her body obvious.

Jarrood frowned again. What had just happened?

Gut knotting, he followed her, breaking into a half-trot to catch up. "Hey," he said, snaring her wrist as she walked through her small kitchen. "What's going on?"

She pulled at his hold, refusing to meet his eyes. "Nothing. I've just got things to do, and I'm sure you have to get back to Sydney."

"Err, no." This time he refused to let her go, curling his fingers more firmly around her wrist, forcing her to stop walking. "I don't have to go back to Sydney. Not yet. And you have nothing to do except explain to me what's going on? Why the cold front all of a sudden?"

Direct green eyes lifted to his. "I'm forty, Jarrod. I'm past the age for meeting parents and necking in the movies." Her jaw bunched and she pulled at his grip on her wrist again. "I'm past the age of being a *girlfriend*. Especially to a man almost half my age."

A heavy beat thumped in Jarrod's temple. He narrowed his eyes, stepping closer to her. "'Why the hell can't a woman in her forties have the best sex of her life with a man in his twenties?'" he said, keeping his stare locked on hers as he quoted her own words from the Temp the Cougar blog. "'Why the hell do I feel guilty when I flirt with a younger man? Enough, I say. I want what society has long said I can't have, dammit'. Was that a lie? Just a frivolous blog entry designed to make people believe you have convictions, that you actually want what society says you shouldn't?"

She tilted her chin, the anger stirring in his chest clearly echoed in her level gaze. "Wow, you really did take a good look at that blog, didn't you? See anything else that interested you?"

"I'm not interested in the blog, Darci." He stepped closer, the heat from her body warming his own naked flesh. "I'm interested in *you*."

She stared at him, the little pulse in her neck beating so wildly he could see it. "Don't do that, Jarrod." She shook her head, trying to pull her wrist free once more. "Don't pretend you're going to be here for breakfast in the morning."



He closed the miniscule distance left between them, pressing his body to hers as he slid his free hand up her neck, over that wildly beating pulse to cup her face in his palm. "I'm not pretending, Darci." He dipped his head, almost—*almost*—brushing her lips with his. "How do you like your eggs?"

Before she could answer, before she presented some other lame arguments against the amazing *thing* they'd discovered, he kissed her, dipping his tongue into her mouth with hungry force.

She hesitated. For exactly two-point-five seconds.

With a low groan, she kissed him back, her tongue mating with his, just as hungry, just as forceful. He pushed her backward, moving her across the room until her ass hit the kitchen counter. The gentle impact jolted her hips forward, mashing the curve of her sex to his groin, and his cock erupted in pleasurable pain. Oh Christ, he wanted her. So badly.

He knew the argument wasn't over. He knew, despite her bravado on the cougar blog and her own self-assuredness, there was *something* stopping her from giving herself over, heart, soul *and* mind, to the possibilities he felt between them. He'd get to the bottom of that something later. After he showed her just how amazing she was—*they* were. Together.

Releasing her wrist, he grabbed at the backs of her thighs and yanked her legs upward, lifting her off the floor and onto the low counter. The height was perfect. Her backside rested on the edge of the smooth wood, his cock nudged the folds of her pussy. "See?" he murmured against her lips, raking his hands up and down the backs of her thighs. "Even the kitchen gods know we fit."

She didn't answer. Not with her usual sardonic wit, at least. She moaned, her head dropping back to bow her neck, her hands burying in his hair, her legs wrapping around his hips. The underside of his cock pressed against the velvet lips of her sex, parting them ever so slightly, and he let out a raw groan. He hadn't thought this through. He wanted to sink his dick into Darci's sweet cunt so much it hurt, but her

dwindling supply of condoms was back in her bedroom. He didn't think he had the strength or control to leave her long enough to get them.

"Fuck, woman." He groaned again, dragging his lips up to her ear. "You're driving me insane."

She laughed that low, throaty chuckle he loved so much. "I think the feeling's entirely mutual."

Pulling back from her a little, he gave her a stern glare. "Don't move. Don't even breathe. If you're off this counter when I get back, I'm giving your ass a damn good smack."

She cocked an eyebrow at him. "Isn't that all the more reason *to* move?"

Jarrold's heart skipped a beat at her question, a thick spasm jerking his cock harder. An image of Darci bent over the kitchen counter flashed through his head, her tight, firm backside stuck up in the air, waiting for his palm to —

He shook his head, smoothing his hands up her thighs until he could squeeze her hips. "Oh, Ms. Whitlam, don't tease me like that."

She leaned forward, tracing the tip of her tongue over his bottom lip. "Hurry up. Before *this* old lady smacks *you*."

He ran to her bedroom. Stark naked, hornier than ever, his stiff dick whacking his stomach, his aching balls slapping his thighs. He didn't care how ridiculous he must look. He didn't care about anything except the promise in Darci's eyes and the happiness in her voice.

Thirty seconds later, he ran into the kitchen again, both delighted and downright disappointed to see her sitting in the exact same position he'd left her.

She watched him stalk toward her, her full breasts rising and falling quickly, her tongue darting out to wet her lips.

Without a word, he stepped between her thighs, shoving them apart. Grabbing her hips, he yanked her to him, her gasp filling his already engorged cock with new hunger.

He explored her body with skimming hands, traveling over the curves of her hips, the dip of her waist, up her rib cage to her breasts. He cupped each swell in his palms, captured her nipples between his fingers. "Lift your arms and grab the cupboard handle," he ordered, flicking his gaze above her head for a split second.

She did as he bid her, holding his stare as she raised her arms and closed her fingers around the wooden knob on the cupboard door.

He sucked in a deep breath, the feel of her breasts lifting and stretching in his hands almost undoing him. "Don't move," he ordered, his voice scratchy.

She nodded, remaining silent as he began to massage each breast in slow, circular caresses. He lowered his stare to his handiwork, the sight of her bountiful flesh overflowing his hands sending fresh blood into his already-throbbing cock. They were magnificent. Lush and full and ripe. Later, he would fuck her breasts. He would press them around his cock and pump into their perfection. Now, however...

He lowered his head and took one rock-hard nipple into his mouth, rolling his tongue over its distended form until he heard her moan. Dragging his mouth to the other nipple, he did the same, his balls rising when that raw whimper vibrated in her chest again. He closed his teeth on the nub—a sharp little bite that made her hiss and buck harder into his cock.

"Oh!" she cried.

He straightened, rubbing his thumbs over her nipples as he stared down into her face. "Have you ever had someone make you come just by sucking your breasts, Darci?"

She shook her head, her breath shallow.

"Would you like me to do that now?"

Her lips parted, her breaths coming faster.

"Say, 'suck my breasts until I come, Jarrod'."

"Suck my breasts until I come, Jarrod."

Her voice was barely more than a whisper, and yet her absolute desire reverberated in every syllable.

He returned his mouth to her breast, sucking on the erect nipple of her left first. Soft, gentle sucks, giving way to harder, stronger pulls. She squirmed, shoving her hips forward. Her cream-slicked folds ground against the base of his cock and the top of his sac and for a sheer second of torture, he thought he was going to come himself. How could he not, when his mouth and hands were full of her lush flesh, her musky pleasure filled his every breath and her wet desire drenched his groin?

Forcing the building tension in his sex to abate—a little—he dragged his mouth to her other breast, flicking his tongue at its nipple in a quick series of stabs before sucking it sharply.

“Oh,” Darci cried, bucking against his cock again. “Oh...”

He increased his torment of her nipple, stroking her breasts with his fingers, squeezing them, pushing them together and stroking them once more, all the while suckling on her nipple until he felt the muscles in her legs and belly begin to tighten.

And still he continued to adore her breasts, rolling her nipple between his teeth, nipping gently, biting harder. He pinched her other nipple with his fingers, echoing the rhythm of his mouth, drawing from her another cry. “Jarrod,” she gasped, shoving her pussy at his swollen cock. “I’m going to...”

He rolled his tongue over her nipple, bit it once and then sucked it better, his hands cupping and squeezing, squeezing and cupping.

“Oh, oh.” She writhed against him. “Oh, just...just...just...”

She cried out, hips bucking, her orgasm flooding from her pussy, painting his dick and balls with cream.

It was almost too much. He almost came himself there and then.

Almost.

Snatching at one of the condom packets he'd grabbed from the bedroom, he dropped to his knees. Tearing the foil square open with his teeth, he slipped the condom out and placed it over the tip of his cock. With one hand he slid the sheath down his length, with his other he parted Darci's folds until he exposed her clit, its pink beauty slicked with the product of her climax. As his fist pumped his own cock, he leaned closer, stabbing his tongue at her clit, again and again and again. Milking her of her orgasm.

"Oh fuck, Jarrod." Shocked disbelief rang through her cry. Her thighs began to quiver. She cried out again, a keening sound that made Jarrod's cock throb to an almost unbearable steel. "Oh God, again?" she gasped, her cunt pushing against his mouth as another climax took her. "*Again?*"

Her cream filled his mouth, coated his tongue. He drank her pleasure, lapped at it, his own fist pumping his cock, torturing himself even as he readied for what came next.

"Yes. Oh yes, yes..." Darci continued, each cry louder than the last, each word ringing with astonishment.

His head spun and he knew he couldn't hold back any longer.

Snapping to his feet, he grabbed Darci's backside and slammed his cock into her cunt. Burying himself up to the balls in her tight heat.

Just as his own orgasm began to shear through his very soul.

## **Chapter Seven**

Jarrold's nails dug into the cheeks of her ass, his hands gripping her hard as he pumped his cock into her sex. He stretched her to the limit, his size and length filling her completely.

Her third orgasm detonated deep in her core and she threw back her head, beyond caring how clichéd the action was. Holy God, she felt as if she were exploding. The soles of her feet tingled, arcs of pleased electricity shot up her spine. Her sex constricted, squeezing Jarrold's thrusting cock, the force of her climaxes shuddering through her.

She cried out again, the sound echoed by Jarrold's own. His rhythm grew erratic, his pounding penetrations faster, wilder. She held him for dear life, sure she was about to be swept away by the blazing release claiming them both.

Oh God, how did she survive this? How did she —

Jarrold roared again, a long, drawn-out cry that sounded as if it were being torn from his body. His fingers drove harder into her butt cheeks, and suddenly he was holding her motionless, his nostrils flaring, his eyes squeezed shut, the muscles in his shoulders and jaw bunched. And yet, deep in her sex, his cock jerked, powerful spasms she felt in her core.

"Fuck," he groaned, slamming into her one last time, his hands turning gentle, his lips finding her neck. "Fuck, Darci, I didn't..." His lips moved over her throat, across her shoulder, his hands and arms smoothing up her back to hold her in an embrace she could only describe as reverent. He pressed his forehead to the curve of her shoulder, a slight tremble in his body. "I never..."

The words stumbled to silence and she closed her eyes. He didn't need to finish. She knew what he was thinking, what was going through his mind. She'd never

experienced anything like this either. Nor expected it. This was something more than just fucking. She could feel it. In her heart, her soul. In whatever mysterious part of herself that governed all her base, elemental behavior and thoughts.

Something had changed from the lust-driven frenzy of their earlier sex. Something she couldn't fathom. Or believe.

"Christ, Darci," Jarrod murmured against her jaw, his fingertips stroking small patterns across her upper back. His cock, still buried deep within her pussy, pulsed once more, and Darci bit back a moan. He felt so right inside her. *She* felt so right. She'd never felt...righter.

*Righter? There goes your vocabulary again, Darci-Rae. Along with your dignity and sense of shame.*

The scoffing interjection whispered through her head and her stomach rolled. She let out a sigh, fighting like hell against the warmth of Jarrod's arms, the gentle pleasure of his kisses on her neck and jaw. Without uttering a word, she leaned back a little and pressed her palms to his chest, pushing him away.

His shaft slipped from her pussy, an overwhelming sense of emptiness taking its place inside her. Not looking at him, she lowered herself to the floor and left the kitchen, scooping up his discarded polo shirt from the back of the sofa in the living room as she made her way to the back door.

She pulled the item of clothing over her head, Jarrod's distinct scent—sandalwood and subtle aftershave lotion—taunting her with each breath she took. Opening the back door, she stepped out onto the small deck and dropped onto the edge. The warm wood kissed her naked butt and she closed her eyes for a moment, her folds still tender with the memory of Jarrod's thrusts.

*Oh Darci, what have you done?*

A cold, wet nose nudged at her hand and she opened her eyes to find Jay Jay standing before her, tail wagging, a big doggy grin on his furry face. She rubbed his

ears with both hands, pressing her forehead and nose to the top of his head. "I don't think this has gone the way I thought it would, mate."

Jay Jay twisted his head to the side and licked at her cheek. She straightened with a small smile, swiping at his loyal kiss with the back of her hand.

"Not the way I thought it would at all," she muttered, gazing at the rambling native shrubs and trees lining her back fence.

*A quick fuck to prove I could. Tempt the Cougar. Power to the old broads. That's what this was meant to be. How could it have gotten so...so...complicated so damn quickly?*

She pulled in a slow breath, Jarrod's scent permeating her body as she did so. God, what would Vivian say if she turned up at the next family dinner with Jarrod in tow? What would her sister say if Jarrod accompanied her to the next black-tie charity event? Or award ceremony? What would the media say? The Australian press would have a field day! She could see the headline in the *Sydney Morning Herald* already.

*Sister of famous author Vivian Carmichael drags infant lover to auspicious event. Family appalled. Students shocked. Parents disgusted.*

She swallowed, her mouth dry, her throat thick.

Jay Jay's friendly woof alerted her to Jarrod's arrival and she tensed, the sight of his jean-clad legs appearing in her peripheral vision telling her he'd plunked himself down beside her.

Jay Jay woofed again, tail wagging. He nudged Jarrod's knee with his nose and the Sydney detective laughed, the wry sound making Darcí's throat thicker still. "At least *you've* accepted me, mutt." He scratched at Jay Jay's ears and, despite keeping her gaze locked firmly on the back garden, Darcí couldn't help but notice his arms were bare. Which meant his chest was too.

*Oh, Darc...stop it! Of course he is. You're wearing his shirt now.*

Suppressing an exasperated groan, Darcí turned and gave Jarrod a level look. "Jay Jay also licks his own butt and eats the neighbor's cat litter. What does that say about his tastes?"



Jarrold laughed again, his eyes crinkling. "That they are eclectic, individual and unpredictable. A lot like his mistress, really."

Heart trying to leap into her tight throat, Darci turned back to her garden, staring at the empty birdbath nestled amongst the grevilleas and bottle brush trees. "I think it's time you left, Detective. I'm pretty certain you've gotten everything you need from me for your case."

Jarrold didn't answer her.

She sat motionless, wishing he would just go. It was easier that way. Maybe she could order Jay Jay to bite him...

"Actually," Jarrold said, and Darci's pulse thumped harder in her neck, "I still have a few questions. To start with, is Vivian your sister?"

The breath burst from Darci in a sharp gasp. She looked at him, not hiding the surprise in her face. "How do you know that?"

Jarrold's expression remained neutral. Cop-like. "Your friend, Rachel, said she couldn't wait to see what Vivian said about this—'this' being you and me, I'm assuming."

"So? How did you make the leap to her being my sister?"

"You mentioned your sister earlier. When I asked you about your hair." He looked as if he wanted to do something then, the muscles in his shoulders flexing a little before he shook his head. "I sensed a certain...edge to your voice. Being the amazing cop I am, I put the two together."

"We don't always see eye to eye, Vivian and I." She frowned, her pulse not only thumping harder, but faster. "Why do you ask me about my sister, anyway?"

He raised his eyebrows, his forehead barely wrinkling. "There's gotta be *someone's* voice in that stubborn head of yours, telling you what's happening between us is a dumb idea. I figured it was hers."

*Damn, Darci, he's perceptive.*

And right. How can he be so right about her so quickly?

*Because he's right for you?*

The thought made her chest clench and she licked her lips, her mouth suddenly so dry she wondered when she'd swallowed a glass full of dust.

"Vivian's voice is the voice in *everyone's* head in this country," she said, returning her stare to the birdbath. "She's Australia's most revered author."

Jarrold straightened, his hands grabbing at his knees with such ferocity Darci started. "Vivian's *that* Vivian? Vivian Carmichael?" He rolled his eyes, shaking his head in melodramatic awe. "Why didn't you tell me earlier? Well in *that* case she's completely right. I don't know *what* I was thinking, hanging around with an old hag like you."

"Hey!" Darci glared at him, indignation hitting her hard. No, not just indignation. Pain. And rejection. "You've just been fucking this *old hag* and having a bloody good time while you were at it."

Jarrold burst out laughing, his eyes twinkling with that same devilish mirth she'd first seen on her front lawn about a lifetime ago. "Ah, you see? It's not Vivian's voice in your head now, is it? It's your own. Telling you that what Vivian thinks is a load of bullshit. Reminding you how good we are together." He grinned. "How *right* we are."

The wind left Darci in a grunt, as if someone had smacked her square in the chest. She stared at him, unable to find the words to tell him he was wrong.

*Perceptive bloody bastard, isn't he?*

"Y'know," he went on, his grin pulling at one side of his mouth. "I've read some of Vivian Carmichael's books." He leaned toward her, his expression growing surreptitious, as if he was about to share a great secret. "She's no Jane Austen."

The snort escaped Darci before she could stop it and she gave him a wry smile, even as her heart started beating faster. "She's won more awards than you could poke a stick at."

He shook his head. "She's a bit of a prude, in my opinion."

"My father doesn't think so."

Jarrold cocked his head. "J.R. Whitlam? The Prime Minister's Literary Award for Excellence winner? The 'voice of a nation', I think he was called back in the sixties, correct?"

Darci nodded, Jarrold's literary knowledge leaving her more than impressed. A tight tingle began in her belly and she grabbed at her bottom lip with her teeth. What other books had he read? What other genres? Horror? Did he read Stephen King? Koontz?

*Dammit, Darc. No. Stop it. Now.*

"If I remember correctly," Jarrold commented, the offhanded tone in his voice undermined by the pointed gleam in his eyes, "your father is responsible for the first book ever to be banned by the Federal public education system for being too..." He pulled a contemplative expression. "Raunchy."

Darci narrowed her eyes, her gaze never leaving Jarrold's face. "How do you know all this?"

His lopsided grin widened. "Geek, remember? What else does a computer nerd do when trying to avoid the school bully but hide out in the library?"

Darci shook her head, her eyebrows pulling into a frown. "You are —"

"Amazing?" Jarrold cut her off. "Thank you. No more than you, Ms. Whitlam." He leaned toward her again, this time so close his lips almost brushed hers. "I think your sister needs to worry about herself and your father only needs his youngest daughter to show him what he's forgotten."

"And what's that?" Darci whispered, her throat so tight she could barely breathe. Oh God, he was so close, so funny, so sexy, so goddamn...*right*.

His smile crinkled the corners of his eyes. "How to live."

"And how do I do that?"

He chuckled, one hand coming up to cup her face. "For a smart, educated, witty, sarcastic, stubborn woman, you really ask some silly questions, you know that?" Before she could respond, he brushed his lips against hers. "By living *your* life, Darci-Rae. Any fucking way you want."

He kissed her. A deep kiss that reached all the way to her soul.

She moaned into his mouth, sliding her arms around his shoulders and pulling herself against his chest. His tongue delved into her mouth, dominating, demanding, and she gave everything back, loving the way it felt sliding over hers. Loving the way Jarrod yanked her even closer to his body, his hands tangling in her hair, his heart beating beside hers.

They both came up for air, gasping, staring at each other, Jarrod's eyes blazing with an undeniable need that Darci felt in the pit of her stomach. "What do we do now?" she wondered, still in shock.

He ran his thumb over her bottom lip. "First, we go inside."

She smiled, letting her eyelids become heavy. "Hmmm."

"Then, we cancel your credit cards."

She blanched, giving him a puzzled look. That wasn't what she'd expected him to say.

"There's still someone out there pretending to be you, Darci." He traced her bottom lip with his thumb again, dipping it into her mouth this time to skim the edge of her bottom teeth. "I don't want them bankrupting you before you get the chance to buy your cub something totally expensive. Like a personalized collar or some such thing."

She cocked an eyebrow, an exquisite tension blossoming between her thighs. A happy little throb she knew was on its way to being a big, demanding throb. "My cub?"

"Then," he continued, ignoring her question, his hand slipping from her lips to skim the column of her neck, the swell of her breasts. "You jump online and post a blog

entry at Tempt the Cougar. I'm pretty certain Rachel is waiting with bated breath for The Details."

Darci laughed, enjoying not only Jarrod's cheeky words but his hands on her body. "The Details," she repeated, leaning into his cupping caress of her breast, her nipple pinching tight as he rolled his thumb over its tip.

"And then," he murmured, smoothing his hand down her body far enough to slip it under the loose hem of his shirt and capture her bare breast beneath, his fingers gently but firmly massaging its pleasure-swollen weight, "we give Jay Jay a really big bone, promise to take him to the beach later and set about making all sorts of new details to share with Rachel. Long, hard details. Hot, sweaty details." He brushed her lips with his again, the tip of his tongue touching hers with teasing cockiness. "Details deserving of an erotic romance novel. How does that sound?"

"Like the perfect afternoon," she murmured against his mouth.

"Oh." He pulled back a little, his expression puzzled. "Just one more thing. How *do* you like your eggs?"

She grinned, a slow, dirty grin she knew would disgust her sister. "Scrambled. With toast and bacon, please."

"Always gotta be bacon," Jarrod mumbled, the words almost lost to his kiss. He plunged his tongue back into her mouth, squeezing her breast in one hand as he fisted his other in the hair at her nape. He held her motionless, plundering her mouth, worshipping her body – and she let him.

"Ah, fuck it." His breath fanned her lips as he pulled away ever so slightly. "Who wants to go inside on a day like today?" With fluid grace, he scooped her up in his arms, capturing her little squeal of delight with his mouth before crossing her lawn to the outside dining table sitting under the blanketing shade of an ancient wattle tree. He laid her out on its worn, wooden surface, standing between her spread thighs, his eyes ablaze with a hunger she felt all too well in the rigid length of the erection pressed to her pussy. The throb in her core increased. Grew warmer. Damper. She pulled in a

shaking breath, the smell of summer in her backyard lost to the musky potency of her desire.

His hands working their way beneath her shirt, he inched the cotton higher up her torso, the tips of his fingers kissing the under swell of her breasts as he pushed his denim-trapped cock harder to her cunt. "If I make love to you here, right now, on this table," he murmured, dancing his fingers over the straining tips of her nipple, "will Jay Jay bite my naked ass?"

The squirming heat in Darci's sex constricted and she lifted her hips a little, desperate to have Jarrod's long, thick cock inside her. "Not if I tell him to go inside," she replied.

Jarrod pressed his upper body to hers, nuzzling her neck, his hands cupping her breasts. "Tell him to go inside, Ms. Whitlam."

"Jay Jay," she croaked, struggling to raise her voice past a panted rasp. "Inside, mate. On your bed."

She heard her dog's nails scramble over the deck floor, the soft thud of the dog door banging shut, and then Jarrod grabbed at the hem of his shirt, tugged it over her body and she was naked. Wonderfully, gloriously, totally naked. Outside. In her backyard.

About to be made love to by a sinfully gorgeous younger man.

"Oversexed, Darci," she chuckled, closing her eyes at the sound of Jarrod lowering the zipper of his fly. "And loving every minute of it."

"Nothing oversexed about you, babe." His voice was rough. Raw. "Just absolutely sexy."

She smiled, sucking in a swift breath through her nose when she heard the distinct crinkle of a little foil packet being torn open. Oh, how she'd grown to love that sound in the last few hours. Almost as much as she'd grown to love —

Jarrod's cock sank between her spread folds, sinking so deep she felt as if he'd pierced her very core and all train of thought derailed.

He thrust into her in long, slow strokes, each one driving deeper, each withdrawal almost driving her mad with pleasure. His mouth moved over her throat, her shoulders, down to her breasts and up to her lips. His hands worshipped her breasts, her nipples, the flat plane of her belly and finally, her clit. He pumped into her, rolling his fingers over the swollen button of flesh, two perfectly harmonized assaults on her sex.

She moaned, arching into his penetrations, uncaring if her neighbors heard the unmistakable sounds of pleasure. Uncaring if the *world* heard.

“Darci-Rae Whitlam,” Jarrod growled, plunging his cock into her pussy with rising speed. “You are under arrest for making me fall in love with you so fucking quickly.”

Darci’s heart slammed into her throat and she opened her eyes, staring into his burning blue ones. “And my punishment?”

His nostrils flared, fine beads of sweat glistening on his smooth forehead, his cock sliding almost out of her sex before plunging back in again. “Life sentence. No chance of parole.”

She bit back a whimper, both of pleasure and sheer rapture. “What if I talk dirty to you? I’ve been told I have a great voice for phone sex.”

Jarrold chuckled, withdrawing ever so slowly, ever so slightly, until the bulbous head of his cock stretched the lips of her pussy. He pinched her clit, once, twice, his lips curling into a wide smile as she cried out, the shudders of her orgasm beginning deep in the pit of her belly. “Not even then,” he murmured.

And sank his cock back into her sex.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Australians never waste time when a challenge has been thrown down.**

Well, who would have thought I’d post so quickly after only just joining? What has it been? Seven hours? Wow. Umm, what can I say? I came, I saw, I cougared?

Apparently, and unbeknownst to me, I was the victim of identity theft. The site I went to in order to arrange my American visa waiver for my upcoming trip to RomantiCon (pause for excited squeee \*squeeeeeee\*) was a fraudulent one. The bastards got my name, address, passport number, phone number and credit card details! Can you believe it! (I have since discovered “I’ve” bought close to five thousand dollars worth of sex toys from a shop called Plug and Play. Wow, I didn’t know I was that sexually ferocious. Actually, yes I did. \*grin\*)

Anyway, to cut a long story short (although not that long, it *has* only been seven hours), a very, very, *very* fine young police officer from Sydney’s cybercrime division arrived at my front door to investigate the situation and, well, to put it bluntly—I cougarized him.

Okay, admittedly, he probably helped cougarize *me*, but can I say, this is the first time in my life I’m more than happy to be a victim of crime? I’d like to take this moment to say a big thank you to the rotten sod who stole my identity and used it to established an illegal phone-sex business. If you hadn’t been so hideously horrible, Detective St. James never would have arrived at my door.

To the ladies of Tempt the Cougar...I can’t wait to meet you all in person at RomantiCon (note to self, Darci. Organize a new passport ASAP). I have lots and lots of details to share. And a story idea bubbling in the back of my head. One about a high-school English teacher in her forties who has her identity stolen online and meets a very sexy, young detective trying to track down the bad guys... What do you think? Sounds too unrealistic? LOL

To Rachel, my friend who knows me better than my family. Guess who I’ve invited around for breakfast tomorrow? Yep, Vivian. It’s been too long since my sister and I had a chat. Oh, and guess who is cooking said breakfast? Detective St. James tells me he makes a mean plate of scrambled eggs. With bacon, of course.

Now, if you will excuse me, I need to get back to what I was doing. I have a young cop handcuffed to my bed and I really think he needs tending to. \*wink\*

## Comments

Rissa: Actually, the story idea sounds very plausible. I’m an about-to-be-forty elementary teacher anxious to be cougared. Way to go on your quick conquering of the challenge. Umm...but if he’s cuffed to the bed, why the heck are you on the computer?



Edie: Things happen, don't they? Once you let the possibility of a younger man into your life, there he is, and in the most unexpected way! But you go for it, girl, and have mucho fun!

Monica: And we have a winner!!! Fastest cougar out of the gate goes to Darci. ::BG::

Lynn: Darci, you work fast! A woman after my own heart. Did I ever tell you how my “cub” and I met? We were getting it on the back of his limo within two hours. There's something about sex with a near stranger. Yum. And, when it turns into something more... Well, it's the best of both worlds, I say. :)

Welcome to the club. Can't wait to meet you in person at RomantiCon! Actually, my man and I might be in your neck of the woods sometime soon. We've been traveling in Asia and I've always wanted to go down under. Maybe we can meet up for a double date! So...where would one find the Plug and Play?

What? A girl can never have too many toys!

Autumn: OMG! I nearly spit my coffee on my keyboard. And now Mitch is behind me, nibbling my ear and saying, “About those handcuffs. Do they only have them in Australia or can two more play that game?”

Lori: Handcuffed to your bed??? Hell, woman! What are you doing talking to US??? Go get him and we can't wait to meet you at RomantiCon.

Rachel: OMG! Call me later. I need deets!

## About the Author

Lexxie's not a deviant. She just has a deviant's imagination and a desire to entertain readers with her words. Add the two together and you get darkly erotic romances with a twist of horror, sci-fi and the paranormal.

When she's not submerged in the worlds she creates, Lexxie's life revolves around her family: a husband who thinks she's insane and her daughters, who both utterly captured her heart and changed her life forever.

Living in Australia makes it a bit tricky for Lexxie to pop by for coffee, but she still loves to chat! Contact her by email or find her at her website or her blog (<http://lexxiecouper.wordpress.com/>).

Lex welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her [author bio page](#) at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

### *Tell Us What You Think*

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