

Lace on Clay

By

Cooper McKenzie

Dedicated

To my favorite fireman.



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Chapter One

"Close your eyes, lay back and put yourself in my hands for the next thirty minutes," Sam's gentle voice requested.

Lace's stomach knotted and she fought down the giggles that had popped up frequently during the last hour of their phone call. "If I do that I might fall asleep," she said softly, suddenly nervous.

It had only been a month since she'd met Sam, but that time had carried her to an unknown realm far beyond anything she'd ever dreamt of. They flirted and traded observations and innuendoes, on the same page on so many levels. It was as if they'd known each other forever. They even agreed the pottery making scene in the movie Ghost was a major turn-on.

"No way will you fall asleep. Are you all wrapped up and warm?"

"Yes," she breathed, looking down through the semi-darkness at the old quilt covering her from chin to toes.

She'd turned out the lights and stretched out on the couch, but the streetlight across the road offered plenty of light to see by. With a winter storm raging outside, she'd been chilled all day, even now wearing a warm cardigan over

her oversized sleep shirt and flannel pajama bottoms. She'd taken her socks off earlier when they began to bother her.

Her sleep shirt was nothing fancy, just an old T-shirt faded from black to medium gray from many washes. Nowadays she could barely read the phrase "If you're not living on the edge, you're taking up too much space," printed on the back. That saying was why she'd bought the shirt. She wanted to remind herself to be brave, take chances and outgrow her past.

The shirt had become a comfortable old friend, perfect for lounging around in. No one had ever seen it. Maybe it was time to go shopping for a new nightshirt, something sexy and frilly. Something that wasn't four sizes too big. Something she wouldn't be embarrassed to be seen in.

"Now we're going to relax your bones."

"Mmmm, okay."

Lace clutched the cell phone to her ear as his gentle voice hypnotized her.

His soft words carried her out of herself and her little house to a place where they were together, at least in their imaginations.

"I'm blindfolded and hungry for something sweet. Have you placed the M&Ms?"

Lace thought of the small bag of candy on top of the microwave. Tempted to fetch them for a late night snack, she decided against leaving her warm,

comfortable cocoon. Though nervous about the turn this conversation had taken, she also grew more excited by the minute.

"They're in place."

"Okay, I have to find the M&Ms, but I have to drop straight down on top of them. No birddog snuffling around," Sam murmured in her ear, his voice dark and low. A quiver started in her stomach, causing her breath to catch for a second.

"Snuffling wouldn't be so bad," Lacy sighed as she eased deeper under her quilt.

"Do your girls, the twins, liked to be played with?"

The candy game forgotten, the conversation veered off in yet another direction, as all their conversations had, drifting from serious to funny to sensuous and back again. What started as a few minutes of teasing and flirting between strangers at an art show where she'd displayed some of her work had turned into a flurry of emails over the last weeks and now this first phone call. Laughter and innuendoes flew back and forth easily with the mood growing more intense and intimate with each moment that passed.

"Oh yeah," she breathed, her face burning with heat.

"So playing with the twins is a good thing?"

She grinned into the darkness. The hand not occupied with the phone unbuttoned the sweater's button sitting between the twins. Then it slid through

the hole and across her chest. "Playing with the twins tunes everything up," she purred as she pinched one already erect nipple between thumb and forefinger.

"Really?" He sounded like he'd never heard that before from a woman. Or maybe it was that she so easily shared the information that caught him off guard.

"Oh, yeah."

"Then we'll have to do something about that. But first a kiss. Long, slow and easy before I move down to visit with the twins."

Lace found herself panting at the thought of kissing Sam. It had been so long since she'd kissed a man, especially one with a mustache. For a moment she wished she was brave enough to bundle up and venture out into the storm for a late night visit, but this thing between them was still new enough that she didn't know if he would appreciate the gesture or not. Or if he'd take one look at her and turn away in disappointment.

Except for that first meeting, email had been their only contact.

"Still with me?" he asked when she didn't respond.

"Oh yeah," she breathed.

"Good. My tongue is a paintbrush. What do you think my favorite shape is?"

Chapter Two

Lace smiled, "A circle?"

"Yep, a circle. I'm going to paint tight circles around the twins, first one, then the other. Tight little circles. Then I'm going to trace down your body and trace circles over your stomach," Sam's voice deepened. "How you doing?" He asked after a long pause.

"Good," she managed to whisper, not sure how much longer she'd be able to form words. She was panting and couldn't hold still. Her skin had grown so sensitive she thought she could feel his touch.

"Then I'll go even lower and move from hip to hip, brushing your skin with fingers and tongue. Back and forth, slow and easy from hip to hip."

Lace's panting turned to gasping, though her heart clenched and a cold shiver chased away the hot ones Sam's words sent through her. All at once she was fighting the urge to hang up and break the connection as a distant echo of her exhusband's voice reminded her that men don't like fat women.

She tried to push the condescending voice away, but when her eyes opened, all she saw was her belly bulge under the blanket. Sam had only seen her fully

clothed and standing. One time. She shivered at the thought of being with him in reality. She could barely stand being naked long enough to take a shower, how could she take off her clothes in front of a man?

Whoa, girl, you're way over thinking things. This may be all you ever have. Her sensible side stepped in and reminded her. Enjoy what you have while you have it.

"Lace, you still with me?" Sam's gentle voice pulled her away from her depressing thoughts and back to him.

"Uh huh," she gasped, "still here."

Tears of anxiety pressed for release and she couldn't breathe, but she was with him for as far as he wanted to take this.

"I'm moving even lower. My fingers are tracing circles on the skin from your knees up your thighs. Then I move down lower and my tongue moves down and starts to draw circles around your... clit." He whispered the last word hoarsely, as if he didn't say it often.

Lace shifted under her quilt, spreading her legs wider and canting her hips up to meet his phantom touch. She couldn't speak, couldn't ask for more, her breath coming faster and faster.

He heard and knew. "Easy. Easy. Nice and slow. I lick up and down, up and down and then wrap my lips around your clit and...suck."

Fire shot from the nerves of her clit out through her entire body, her breathing growing even faster and shallower as stars filled the darkness behind her closed eyelids.

"I'm moving up and over you. I slide just the head of my cock inside you, nice and easy." Sam's voice grew rougher and softer, still caressing and gentle as it touched not only Lace's ears, but her entire body.

"Oh, yeah," Lace breathed, not able to come up with anything else to say. Her brain had shut down. All she could do was listen and feel. It had been so long since a man had touched her. She'd once heard the term "born again virgin" and identified with the sentiment.

"Slow and easy. I push a little deeper then pull out until only the head is left inside. Slowly in and then out, a little more this time. Feels good, doesn't it?" "Uh huh." Lace grunted softly.

Her hand left her breast and emerged from the sweater. Her fingertips brushed over her belly as they slipped under her flannel pajama pants and plain cotton panties. She didn't stop until two fingers spread her lower lips and the tip of her middle finger brushed over her tightly knotted clit. Her breath caught as fire raced through her.

"I'm moving faster now and as I do I run my hands down your body until my thumbs are on either side of your clit. Then I squeeze it." Lace gasped as her finger rubbed harder over the button of nerves. Without thought her fingers rearranged themselves and gave action to his words.

"Where do you want me to come?" Sam gasped, surprising her with his politeness.

"In me. Come in me," she whimpered.

"Really?" Again he sounded surprised.

She would have to tell him of the surgery she'd had years earlier that had left her without any birth control issues. Later, if things ever got that far.

"Yes. In me."

Two racing heartbeats later he groaned. "Oh. God. Coming."

Lace heard him drop the phone. Then she heard another low groan and couldn't help herself. She giggled. So, she wasn't the only one hot as a firecracker. Joy filled her that he had been able to find pleasure from just talking to her. Wasn't imagination a great thing?

A moment later he picked up the phone again. "Wow, didn't expect that. Sure hope we don't get called out right now. I can't feel my toes."

Knowing she needed to stay something she opened her mouth, but couldn't speak. Her wildly pinging emotions got bogged down in fear and suddenly she wanted to cry. What would happen now? Would he think she was easy? A slut? Would he ever want to meet face to face again? Or would this be all they had--late

night phone calls when he had downtime at work? She sniffed as tears pressed for release.

"Still with me?"

"I'm here," she murmured, knowing the thickness in her voice betrayed her as soon as the words came out.

"What's wrong?" His voice was still gentle and mellow, but now had a sharper edge to it. He was worried? About her? No one worried about Lace. She was the strong one, the independent one who'd left her abuser ex-husband. No one bothered to look past the façade of strength to the fragile creature within.

"I'm scared."

"Nothing to be scared of."

She smiled. Of course he'd say that. He was a fireman. She was sure there wasn't anything he was scared of.

"I don't know about that," she murmured, feeling happy and relaxed, mellow and content, while still scared and anxious. Giant shivers ran through her body, from breast to clit, belly to clit and clit to everywhere else.

"Whatcha thinking?" he asked when she didn't say anything further.

"I'm afraid, she breathed.

Chapter Three

"Afraid? Of what?"

Lace blinked then swallowed. She'd always promised herself that when she found a man she could be herself with, she would be open about all things, including the past insecurities that still haunted her. "Afraid of disappointing you," she admitted in a voice so small she wasn't sure the phone would pick up on it.

But he'd heard her. "Disappointing me? Didn't we have a conversation just this afternoon about confidence?"

Lace smiled. Yes, while they had discussed many things, confidence and being brave had been one of the big topics. "It's not the internal I'm worried about, it's the external," she murmured.

She wished for a moment he could be there with her so she could see his face. She wished they could cuddle together on her sofa under this old quilt that held the love of her childhood. But if they'd been together, they wouldn't be having this discussion.

She wouldn't have the courage to say the words in person.

"Oh, honey, you don't need to worry about that. Not at all."

His murmured words went a long way to easing the clenching around her heart, while at the same time she wasn't sure she should believe him. He was after all, a man, and in her experience, men lied and hurt just using words, though so far he hadn't. Could he really be that different?

She couldn't respond, couldn't ask if it was because he didn't care that she was voluptuous or because this was all they would have, one night of phone sex.

"So are your bones all relaxed and your toes warm?"

She could hear his grin through the phone. "Oh yeah. So much so I don't think I'll be able to walk down the hall to my bed."

"So sleep where you are. As long as you're warm and comfy."

The conversation continued, easy and mellow, more personal than it had been. They shared information about their children and plans for the next day and then talked of nothing of importance. When they yawned at the same time it was decided to call it a night.

"I will call you later," he said.

"Later," she agreed. She wished she had the right to ask when, but they were still strangers even though they had connected on a level she couldn't explain.

"Later," he responded.

She closed the phone then tried to stand, but her body refused to cooperate.

It took a moment to stiffen her relaxed bones enough to stagger down the hall and

fall into bed. She was exhausted and content and couldn't stop smiling. Snuggling into her pillow, she figured she would be asleep in seconds and turned off her alarm so she could sleep late.

Except her mind wouldn't shut down. Then he body started shaking as it adjusted to this new relaxed state. She'd been without sexual release for so long that she hadn't even realized how stressed she'd become This relaxed satiation was something she hadn't felt in more years than she could remember. Even playing with the few toys she'd collected over the years had never left her feeling like this.

It took another hour to shut down mind and body enough to sleep. When she did she slept deep and without dreams. She woke feeling better than she had in a long time, relaxed, loose and ready to face the day. Then she looked at the clock and saw that she'd only slept a few hours. It was still the middle of the night.

Then her body remembered what she'd done earlier and began shaking all over again. Her mind wobbled from amazement to horror. Amazement that phone sex with a near stranger had been better than any in-person sex she'd ever experienced. Horror when she wondered what Sam would now think of her. To have phone sex before even having met for coffee? Was that sort of thing done? Which led her to the question of whether or not they ever would have a proper date.

If nothing else, she wanted to return the favor of relaxing his bones. Though her emotions continued pinging from high to low and everywhere in between, she began testing phrases and wording in her thoughts, thinking of things she'd like to do to him, things she'd never been comfortable with before, but would like to try again. Then she wondered if she had the courage to seduce Sam by phone.



Over the next weeks, emails were exchanged sporadically. Lace couldn't tell if Sam was just being polite, or if he had been affected by the intensity of their phone call as she was. Neither referred to it, though it was always in the back of her mind. She tried to keep busy, but found herself checking her email way too often, hoping for word from him.

Though they'd talked about being brave, brash and confident without getting cocky, she remained nervous. They were just talk buddies, people who had an instant chemistry that spiraled out of control for a few moments out of time. But she found she wanted more. She wanted to build a relationship with Sam based on more than emailed sexual innuendoes and heavy breathing by phone lines.

His voice was stuck in her head now - gentle, soothing and oh so sexy. His words began to replace the negative she'd lived with for so long. Just the memory of his words was enough to send hot shivers through her body and heat her

cheeks. Though wanting to take things slow and easy, Lace couldn't help herself and wished for more.

Chapter Four

Then the dreams began. As she'd told Sam in one of their early email exchanges, she sometimes dreamed in full color, lights and sound. Normally it was like watching a movie. This time, it was different, much more intense.

They'd been talking for a while that evening and she knew if she was ever going to be bold and brave, this was that time.

"Do you trust me?" she murmured into the dark.

"Should I?"

"It will be worth it if you can."

"Well, okay then, I'll trust you," Sam answered instantly. "What are you going to do?"

She heard the grin in his voice and giggled. "I'm going to relax your bones."

"I like the sound of that," his voice remained soft and low.

"Close your eyes, lay your head back and relax. Let me do all the work."

"I can do that," he murmured.

"Feel my fingers on your face, tying the black silk scarf, blinding you."

"I thought you wanted to wear the blindfold this time," he protested softly.

She ignored him. "Once it's secure I massage your temples with small gentle circles. My fingers trace around your ears, and run through your hair then down to brush over your cheek bones. Soft and slow."

"That feels good."

Lace smiled. "Now down the sides of your nose to your mustache. You still have it, right?"

"Oh yeah, it's still there."

"I do like a good mustache," she purred closing her own eyes. "The tip of one finger brushes over your 'stache. Back and forth and then it brushes across your lips, first the top and then the bottom. Do you feel me?"

"Uh huh."

"Now I'm going to take my finger away and replace it with...the tip of my tongue. And lick your mustache."

"Mmmm," came through the phone as a half groan.

"Meanwhile, my fingers are tracing down past your chin and your neck to explore your chest, all of your chest," she purred. She shifted as her own body heated up from the images she was creating

"My hands have reached your waist. Do your pants have a zipper or buttons?" she asked gently.

"Sweats," he ground out, his breathing growing shorter.

"Perfect. I'll just ease my fingers under the waistband and ..."

"No need, they're already out of the way," he panted.

"Now why did you do that?" she asked with a grin. He sounded way too wound up. "I wanted to tease you some more."

"That's why," he whispered, sounding hoarse.

"Your mustache feels so good against my tongue, but it's time to move on, so I drop down and ... taste your lips. First the top, then the bottom and then I slide in between just far enough to touch your teeth with the tip."

"Mmmm, more."

"Easy, we're taking this slow, remember?"

"Won't last," he whimpered.

Feeling the need to move faster herself, Lace took pity on him. "Spread your legs so I can kneel between them," she requested, her voice soft and low. Her hand reached down and slid through the wetness between her legs.

She heard a soft rustle of fabric. "Okay."

"I slowly run my palms up the insides of your thighs, the curly hairs tickling my skin. I stop just before I reach... your cock."

Sam didn't respond, but then she didn't expect him to.

"My hands lay right where thigh meets body, my thumbs almost, but not quite touching the base of your cock."

Still he said nothing.

"You still with me?" she whispered as her fingers zeroed in on her clit, rubbing, pressing, finding the right pressure and rhythm. Would she be able to hold out long enough? Pulling her fingers away she took a breath to calm herself.

"Uh huh," he breathed.

"Now, without touching you anywhere else, I lean forward and breathe on your... cock. Can you feel it? My hot, wet breath brushing against your skin?"

"Umm," he moaned.

"I lean closer. With just the tip of my tongue I trace that heavy vein on the underside from base to just under the head. Then...I pull back."

Sam groaned in denial as fast, harsh breathing filled the otherwise silent phone line.

He sounded close, so she returned to playing between her own legs and built herself up again, "One hand shifts to wrap around the base of your cock to lift it so I can lick the head and taste you. Mmmm, you taste so good," she whispered. "Another taste and..."

"Oh. Shit." His words burst forth softly as the phone clattered, much as it had the last time.

Humping her hips, she pinched her clit and soared over her peak as well. She fought to hold onto her phone. If she dropped it the cell would flip closed and this magical connection would be lost.

She relaxed, allowing the heat and relaxation to race through her body, making her weak and lethargic. All she wanted was to cuddle with a man who was too far away to touch.

"You okay?" She asked when she heard the phone shift again.

Before he could answer a rowdy country song about friends in low places jerked her awake. Lace opened her eyes and stared at the ceiling. "Damn," she murmured, "only a dream."

But it gave her some great ideas for their next late night phone call.

Chapter Five

A few weeks later she knew she had to have the small pottery bowl as soon as she saw it. It sat easily in the palm of her hand, too small to be very useful, but it made her smile and reminded her of Sam. The potter had left the clay its original red-brown color, only adding a clear gloss to seal it. What made it unique was the delicate lace she'd attached around the top of the pot. The lace had also been sealed so it rippled stiffly. Reading the tag taped to the bottom her smile turned wistful. The tiny pot was named "Lace on Clay."

"Do you have any more like this?" she asked the older woman behind the table, hoping for a second one.

"No, I'm sorry. I wasn't sure the technique would work so only made the one. It did turn out nice, didn't it? I'm thinking of doing more, though it was a real challenge to get the lace on there and not mess it up in the kiln."

"It's beautiful. I'll take it," Lace said, holding out her hand.

"Could you this in it before you wrap it up?" She dug into her bag and handed the potter a small bag of candy.

"Sure, no problem."

The potter carefully wrapped the pot in bubble wrap then several sheets of newspaper before placing it into a box three times the size of the pot itself. "That should keep it from being damaged," she explained as she exchanged the box for Lace's money.

"Thank you," Lace said with a grin. "I'm sure it will be fine."

As soon as Lace returned home, she found a gift bag and after writing a note which she tucked into the bag as well, she took a deep breath. "Be brave and bold," she ordered herself.

Climbing back into the car she drove to the fire station. She parked in the front parking lot and for a moment prayed Sam didn't see her. If he did, he might want to take her on a tour of all the hiding places the fire station held.

A young man in yellow turnouts approached the car. "Can I help you, ma'am?"

Lace winced at being called ma'am, but smiled anyway. "Could you please give this to Sam?" she handed him the bag.

"No problems. Can I tell him who it's from?"

"He'll know," Lace turned back to her car. "Thank you."

She was only halfway home when the phone in her pocket rang. Digging it out, she grinned. "Hello, Sam."

"I was just handed a bag with the most interesting contents," he said.

"Really?"

"Yeah. Note in the bag said it's a belated birthday gift."

"Uh huh," Lace said, fighting down her giggles.

"My birthday was two months ago."

"I didn't know you then. And I didn't have this gift for you."

She heard rustling paper as Sam unwrapped his gift. "No fair playing dirty.

M&M and a pretty little pot that we didn't make together."

"Just something to thought you'd enjoy," she teased, her giggles spilling over.

In the background bells and horns began to sound. "I've got run, but I will call you later and we'll talk about this some more."

His words sent a shiver of heat through Lace.

"Okay, later," she agreed, her grin so wide her cheeks hurt. She already had her vision of how at least part of the conversation would be going. Hopefully he would be able to find a quiet place and they wouldn't be interrupted while she relaxed his bones.

"Later," he promised before hanging up.

Lace couldn't wait.

The End

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Author Bio

Cooper McKenzie always thought she had been born a hundred years too

late, but has come to appreciate air conditioning, computers and other

conveniences of modern day living. She enjoys the slower pace of New Bern,

North Carolina as well as the history and small town community found there. In

addition to dreaming up her next story, Cooper enjoys reading everything from

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