

ELLORA'S CAVE *Sophisticate*



EDUCATING

*Macey*

MISSY JANE

ELLORA'S CAVE *Quickies*®

## **Educating Macey**

*Missy Jane*

Sex has taken a backseat on my priorities list for a while now—being a single mother never allowed me the chance to dwell on it. But then my daughter grew up and Max moved in next door. Just seeing his sexy-as-hell body and hearing the way he growls my full name, Macey Lane, gets me all hot and bothered. I am not a woman of experience, but Max is more than willing to teach me. His lesson plans may be too delicious to pass on, but is hot sex worth the risk of becoming another of his conquests?

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[www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com)

Educating Macey

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# *EDUCATING MACEY*

Missy Jane

## *Dedication*

*To my constant support staff: Sandy, my minion, and Martin, my muse. Love you both.*

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## **Chapter One**

I bent my head slightly to the right as I watched the screen, trying to decide if the acrobatics were physically possible for the average person. Beside me, my twenty-five-year-old neighbor, Max, sipped his beer and watched in silence as gasps and moans filled the room from the television. I took a sip of my soda and wondered exactly what was going through his head. He didn't seem the least bit bothered by my storming into his house and taking up residence on his sofa as he watched sex on his flat screen.

I'd been in the process of mowing my lawn and decided to see if he had anything cold to drink. Max always keeps the brand of soda I like in his fridge and I have the bad habit of going weeks without buying groceries. He answered the door after my first knock and didn't say a thing as I brushed past him into the house. He wasn't wearing a shirt and his jeans were unbuttoned, but I assumed he'd just rolled out of bed by the look of his spiky black hair. It was barely nine o'clock on a Saturday. I guess I didn't really expect him to watch porn so early in the morning.

He followed me into his kitchen with a grin on his face, but said nothing as I kept up a running commentary on the state of my lawn while rummaging through his fridge. This was almost a ritual for us. I'm the talkative one and he just lets me go at it while half listening. I know a lot of what I say slides right past but I don't care. We're not exactly negotiating treaties here. I shut the fridge and popped the top of my soda can just as a loud moan sounded from the living room. I whipped my head around and frowned at him.

"What was that?" Max chuckled and his grin widened, but he remained silent. "Um, did I interrupt something? Shit, Max! Why didn't you tell me you have company?"

My face heated as I breezed past him, headed for the front door. He made no move to stop me, just started laughing.

“Relax, Mace. There’s no one here but me and you.”

He then turned away and walked into the living room. I remained by the front door where the wall created a small foyer and blocked the living room from view. I could still hear moans and they seemed to be getting louder. Biting my lip, I stood there wondering if I should let my curiosity get the better of me. I was raised in a strict Catholic family and, despite becoming a mom at seventeen, didn’t even know what a vibrator was until college. Pornography no longer seemed the taboo sinful indulgence of my youth, but I’d never actually watched one beyond the distorted image on the cable channels we didn’t subscribe to.

I felt like I was in a horror movie, creeping down the hallway into the unknown. The sounds were becoming more insistent and I knew the screen would reflect the crescendo. I rounded the corner and focused on Max sitting on his sofa with a beer in his hand. His jeans were still unbuttoned but the zipper remained up. As I walked in he looked over and smiled, patting the seat beside him.

“Ever watched a porno, Mace?”

I had to clear my throat and take a drink of my soda before I answered. “N-no.”

He chuckled, disbelief clear on his face. “Not even for research?”

I frowned, though pleased he didn’t make a reference to my age instead. “No.”

Annoyance filled me, but it felt better than the humiliation of still being so naïve at thirty-five. I write romance for a living, not erotica. So what if my characters were as innocent as me? I wanted to throw my soda into his knowing gaze.

“Well, my good little Catholic schoolgirl, it’s about time you did.”

I snorted and rolled my eyes at his “little girl” reference. I was ten years, five months and eight days older than him—yes, I’d done the math. Maybe not as experienced, but definitely not a little girl. I simply couldn’t let the challenge in his

voice go unanswered. He picked up the remote while I sat next to him and watched the action on the screen reverse at a fast pace. It was almost funny seeing it that way and I bit my lip to keep from laughing. He started the regular play again and I watched in horrified fascination as two women began undressing each other. We didn't speak, didn't touch, we just sat there and sipped our drinks as scene after scene of people having sex played in front of us.

I wondered if he'd planned on masturbating until I interrupted him and glanced over at the front of his jeans. With the way he held his beer against his thigh I couldn't really tell, but it didn't look like he was even hard from watching the porn. I have to admit it excited me. Slickness formed between my thighs and I squeezed them together tightly. I can count my past lovers on one hand with a few fingers to spare. Most of the guys I'd dated were interested until they discovered I was a mom. After a while I just gave up and started writing out the romance I wished I could experience.

The soda did little to cool me off as the movie progressed and the positions became more outrageous. My heart sped up and I tried not to pant as two men settled a buxom blonde between them. The men were well built and I couldn't help admiring the muscular ass of the one on top. I watched him flex as he drove in and out of the blonde, his balls slapping the guy beneath her. I'd never seen anything like it before and I was riveted. I licked my lips and set my empty soda can on the coffee table, never taking my eyes from the screen.

"You like this one?"

I jumped slightly at the feel of Max's breath on my ear and turned to find him inches away from me. When had he moved closer? I had no clue, but his thigh now touched mine and the feel of denim against my bare skin felt almost too good.

"Um, yeah. It's...interesting."

He laughed and set his beer down next to my soda. "Interesting? Have you ever tried it?"

It took a moment for me to understand the question.



“Uh, that? With two guys?” He nodded. “No! I-I mean, uh...no, I’ve never had the chance.”

He laughed again and placed his hand on my leg where my shorts gave way to bare skin.

“I know having Haley might not have left a lot of private time, but...you’re not very experienced are you, Mace?”

Being a single mother definitely put a damper on my sex life, and in the couple of months my daughter had been away at college it hadn’t changed.

“Um, no, not really I guess.”

“Hell, baby, you write romance for a living. Don’t your characters have sex?”

Frowning at his reference to my precious characters, I sat up straighter and pointed accusingly at the television.

“Not like that. I write historical romance and there’s more romance than sex in my stories. They’re sweet, not...steamy.”

I was blushing again and it made me angry. I pushed his hand away and stood, fully intending to leave. Max grabbed my arm and pulled, making me lose my balance and land in his lap. I discovered I’d been wrong about him not being hard, and froze.

“I like sweet, though there’s definitely something to be said for steamy,” he whispered in my ear.

“Let go of me.”

My breathless demand came out a lot weaker than I’d meant it. He released my arm, but wrapped his other arm around my waist and brushed his lips against my neck. I shivered and he tightened his hold.

“Don’t get upset, baby. I didn’t mean to offend you. I think it’s cute that you get all flustered about sex. Let’s just watch the rest of the movie and I won’t even talk anymore, okay?”

It was absolute insanity, but I softened against him. Max was too damn sexy for his own good, and even though I knew he went through women like newspapers I wanted to be in his arms. I let him hold me on his lap with his erection pushing into my ass and his lips pressed against my neck. He kept one arm wrapped around my waist while his free hand rubbed up and down my bare thigh. Wearing my shortest pair of shorts to mow out in the killer Texas heat might not have been my wisest decision. I fidgeted, trying to decide between squeezing my legs shut and opening them wider. He certainly didn't seem to need much encouragement as he whispered into my ear.

"Historical romance, huh? I guess an English Duke didn't exactly have a Barnes and Noble on every corner to pick up a copy of the *Kama Sutra*."

I froze, delightfully surprised by his reference to my latest release, and chose not to point out his promise not to talk. I turned in his arms to peer at him over my shoulder.

"You've read my books?"

He grinned and pulled me tighter to his chest, forcing me to face front again.

"I might've flipped through a few at the bookstore...once or twice."

"How many?"

He remained silent for nearly a full minute and I thought he wouldn't answer.

"Five, but I've only finished four of them. The last one was a killer. How in the hell can you expect anyone to read over six hundred pages?"

It was my turn to grin, though I was too shocked to do much else. I furiously thought back over our past conversations, trying to remember if he'd ever mentioned my writing before, but drew a blank. We'd talked about work from time to time but he usually let me talk while pretending to listen. Action on the TV caught my attention and I leaned against Max again. His muscular chest pressed against my back, his warmth seeping through my shirt. Sitting on his lap was a bigger turn-on than the porn.

The scene changed, and now instead of two guys and a girl there was just one of each again. The guy undressed her slowly, kissing and nibbling every inch of skin he

uncovered as if he had all the time in the world. I moaned involuntarily and Max squeezed me a little tighter. The action began to progress more quickly and my hips seemed to take on a life of their own, rocking back and forth in his lap. He seemed to grow even bigger and I wondered just how big he could get.

One large palm cupped my breast and I gasped at the sound of my zipper going down. I hadn't even felt him unbutton my shorts. He slipped his hand inside, past the edge of my panties to my damp curls. It became harder and harder to get enough air into my lungs and I realized I was panting. His fingers gently combed through the hair between my thighs and I opened my legs wider. That had the unfortunate effect of pulling my shorts tighter against me and he cursed.

"Damn zipper is cutting into my hand, baby."

His deep voice in my ear brought me out of my lust-filled daze, like a bucket of ice water on my libido. I gasped and tried to jump off his lap with his hand still stuck between my legs.

"Let go. I gotta go."

"Damn it, Mace, wait."

He pulled me back onto his lap and freed his hand. The moment I felt the loss I jumped back up, and would've run for the door if the room hadn't suddenly turned upside down. I gasped when my belly hit his shoulder and watched the carpet move as Max began to walk. I grabbed his upper arms and caught my breath as I felt blood rush to my head. I kicked my legs and couldn't help but laugh.

"M-Max! Max, put me down."

He walked down the hallway to his bedroom door before lowering me to my feet. His hands were on my hips, gripping as if he'd never let me go. I looked up into his hazel eyes and nearly flinched at the frustration I saw there.

"Baby, what's wrong? What's got you so spooked?"

I frowned and considered how to point out the obvious. I was too old for him and too old to play games. He terrified me in the way only a truly experienced man could. We knew each other rather well, but our sex lives had never been a topic of discussion. I took a deep breath and tried to pull away slowly. His grip tightened.

"Max, please. Let go of me so I can go home."

The frustration left his face to be replaced by confusion. I thought he'd release me, but he pulled me closer until only a breath separated his lips from mine.

"I don't want to let you go, Mace. I want to touch every inch of you from head to toe. I want to make you scream louder than the chicks in that video and watch your eyes glaze as you come."

I shivered as his breath whispered over my dry lips, and licked them without thought. He was so close, my tongue inadvertently touched his mouth and he growled low in his throat. The sound made me want to moan and I closed my eyes.

"I c-can't. Max, please—"

"Can't? Can't what? What are you afraid of, Macey Lane?"

I heard the challenge in his voice as he used my full name, but had no intention of meeting it. He was way too much man for me and I knew it. There was no way I could ever satisfy him for even one midmorning fling.

"You, this...please, Max. I'm too old for this and you'll be disappointed. Just let me go."

I felt his grip relaxing and fought the urge to bolt. He let go of my hips but then slid his hands around to grip my ass possessively.

"First of all, our age difference doesn't mean shit. Second, nothing about you has ever been a disappointment. Look at me, Macey. Look me in the eye and tell me you don't want this."

I opened my eyes and looked up into his breathtaking face. His gaze had softened but I still felt the tension in his grip. He was looking at me like a man starving for my taste, but I knew better than to think I could be any more than an appetizer.

"I'm not going to lie to you, but I don't want to mess up our friendship. I'll disappoint you and then you'll start avoiding me, and I really like hanging out with you."

"You know my preferences so well that you're sure sex with you won't make the grade?"

His angry tone humiliated me. I turned my face away in the hopes the tears burning the back of my throat wouldn't surface. He blew out a breath and was close enough for it to whisper across my cheek. His grip on my ass remained relentless as he leaned his chest into me, caging me against the wall.

"I don't know how many assholes you've been with, but I swear less-than-stellar sex would not keep me from talking to you. We've known each other for over a year. Surely by now you know me better than that."

I thought about all the women he always had over and knew he was friends with many of them.

"Only three," I whispered.

"What, sweetheart?"

I took a deep breath and gathered my courage as I turned back to face him again.

"There have only been three assholes. Only three guys I've ever been with, including Haley's father, and they were all disappointed."

He didn't try to hide the surprise from his face. Whether it was my inexperience or obvious lack of technique he didn't say.

"How do you know they were disappointed? Maybe they were just assholes."

I gave a bitter laugh and shook my head. "One of them told me I should take a class or something."

"What? Do you know where that son-of-a-bitch lives?"

I bit my lip to keep from laughing at the anger in his tone. It felt good to know he was offended on my behalf. "No. We'd only been seeing each other a few weeks. Anyway, I think he moved."

He finally let go of my ass and put his arms around my waist, pulling me away from the wall and into his embrace. It was pure bliss.

"Mace, I already know you don't have a lot of experience and I'm okay with that. As I said, our age difference doesn't mean a thing to me. Give me a better reason or I'm not letting go."

I sighed and wrapped my arms around his neck. My face was buried in his chest and knowing he couldn't see me blush again made it easier to be honest.

"I can't, um...finish. I mean, you can and I won't be mad, but trying to finish me won't do any good no matter how long you try."

I felt his body go completely still and cursed myself for saying too much. Now he would push me away. Now he would realize I was right and a complete waste of his time.

"What do you mean you can't finish?"

I closed my eyes and wished I'd stayed outside and finished my damn lawn. Could this get any more humiliating?

"You know...c-climax. I can't with a guy. I mean I've never tried with a girl, but by myself I'm fine."

He groaned and pushed his hips against me. I wondered if he was picturing me with another woman or by myself. I opened my eyes and pulled my arms back to rest against his chest. He was looking at me with the hunger in his eyes again, but there also seemed to be acceptance.

"Kiss me. Just once, Mace. Let me at least satisfy my curiosity and craving for those beautiful lips of yours."

My breath left me when he pushed his erection into my lower belly. Warmth pooled between my legs and the arousal made me weak. Without waiting for consent he took command of my mouth, sucking my lower lip between his. I moaned and melted against him again, unable to fight the draw of innate sexuality. The man was a menace, an absolute rogue and a danger to women everywhere. I felt completely helpless to stop him.

He made me breathless and I wondered how I would ever recover from his sensual assault. I'd never been kissed so thoroughly before and began rubbing against him without realizing it. He growled again and I shivered. Goose bumps broke out on my skin and I felt a draft. I suddenly realized he'd pulled my shirt up when he broke the kiss to pull it over my head.

"Max..."

I whimpered but couldn't find the strength to stop him as he rained kisses over the tops of my breasts. I'd donned a sports bra that somehow gave me better cleavage than any push-up. Max slipped his tongue between my breasts and I moaned, letting my head fall back as he held me up.

"I want you, Mace. Please, I need you."

I shivered again as his breath whispered over my heated flesh. I was more aroused than I could ever remember being in my life and didn't think I had the strength to say no. I simply nodded, deciding in that moment to let him find his pleasure even if I wouldn't find mine. He slipped his thumbs beneath my bra and pushed me forward until I felt the wall behind my back again. I looked down and watched him push my bra up, revealing my stiffened nipples. He rubbed his unshaven face against them, the friction making me squirm. I was panting again as I pulled my bra over my head and dropped it on the floor.

I ran my hands over his biceps and across his shoulder blades, the only skin I could reach as he went to his knees before me. My shorts were still undone and he made quick work of pulling them completely off, taking my tennis shoes with them. We were

in the hallway leading to his bedroom now and I could no longer see the TV, but I could hear it. The sound of skin slapping against skin was almost as stimulating as watching Max run his tongue around my bellybutton and down to the top of my panties.

“Max...”

He bit my upper thigh lightly before grasping the waistband of my panties with both hands. Then he looked up and kept his gaze on mine as he slid them down my legs.

“You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to do this, baby.”

What? We’d been neighbors for over a year and spent a few minutes nearly every day in each other’s company, but he’d never even hinted at wanting me. If anything I’d been more concerned with keeping an eye on how he interacted with my seventeen-year-old daughter, but he was always politely friendly with Haley. He never said anything inappropriate in front of her and she treated him like an old man. When I had mentioned his looks to her, she’d smiled but didn’t seem to notice him like I did. I’d been secretly happy about that.

Even without Haley as a concern, he’d had no shortage of female attention. I’d once joked that he had a revolving door on the front of his house from all the women I saw in and out. He’d laughed, though I could’ve sworn he’d looked a little wary. We’d never flirted, not that I did much of that anyway. Whenever I needed a strong back he would pitch in. If he ever needed sugar or milk I provided it without hesitation. We were neighbors but not best friends. I’d had no clue he’d even noticed I was female.

The moisture from his tongue on my inner thigh interrupted my thoughts and I looked down to see him bury his face in my curls. I gasped and fought my self-conscious desire to push him away. He moaned and lifted one of my legs from the floor, draping it over his shoulder and opening me for further exploration. All thoughts of pushing him away vanished as he slipped his tongue inside me. I ran my fingers through his hair, barely fighting the urge to tug on it.

“Oh yes,” I moaned as he licked me like his favorite treat.



He ran his hands up my thighs and used his thumbs to massage my folds, making me shiver with desire. My knees were growing weak and I didn't know how much more I could take, when I felt one strong finger slip inside.

"Oh my god."

He moaned again, sending stimulating vibrations through my sex. I was getting closer and closer to an amazing climax, made more so because it had been so long. I'd never dreamt I would end up with Max between my legs, but I'd had my share of fantasies about his muscular body. Knowing he wanted me too added to my arousal and brought me to the edge quickly. This was the dangerous part. Usually I'd stay on that razor's edge indefinitely while my partner grew impatient and aggravated. I wanted it so bad, but knew if I tried too hard it would slip away.

"Max...oh, Max." He slipped a second finger into me, pumping them in and out slowly and suckled my clit. "Oh!"

It was perfect, amazing, earth-shattering bliss, but still I didn't come. I wanted to weep as I felt it slipping away from me and Max lifted his head.

"Don't think about it, baby. Just feel it. There's no time limit. I could stay here on my knees all day."

I looked down at the top of his head as he bent back to his task. He started nibbling on the insides of my thighs as if he indeed had all day to enjoy the treat. I let the tension leave my shoulders and rested my upper body against the wall. Max kept the fingers of one hand inside me while the other hand splayed against my ass. I couldn't decide between closing my eyes and watching him. It was so erotic seeing his tongue against my skin. I moaned and he answered, making me shiver.

"When you play with yourself, what do you like to do?"

I opened my mouth, but had to swallow a couple of times to answer the question. I'd never spoken to anyone about masturbating before.

"I-I have a vibrator."

Max grinned and leaned forward to hum against my clit. A spark of sensation shot through me and I gasped.

"Was that too much or not enough?" he asked.

"Oh...perfect."

He chuckled and lightly bit a spot below my bellybutton before murmuring, "Not quite."

He ran his lips across my abdomen and I watched his fingers still pumping steadily in and out of me. I felt my temperature rising again.

"I think you might be close, Macey Lane. Tell me, has anyone ever talked dirty to you?"

I shook my head. "N-no."

"Hmm. Maybe we should see if that will make you any wetter. What do you think, baby? Will telling you how hard my cock is getting just from the taste of your sweet pussy on my tongue make you any hotter?" I whimpered and he grinned in triumph. "Oh yeah, you like that don't you? You're sweet cream is like ambrosia in my mouth. I could lick you for hours, running my tongue up one side of your pussy lips and down the other. I want to fuck you with it until you flood my mouth. Then I'll swallow your juices and slide my cock in deep."

My breath caught and all coherent thought fled. Max grinned as if he knew exactly what he'd done to me, before once more taking my clit between his teeth for a little nibble. Like a flash of lightning, I suddenly came so hard my knees gave out and I would've fallen if he hadn't placed both hands firmly on my ass. I screamed his name, but felt like crying in relief. Good thing he had plenty of upper body strength, or I would've taken us both down. He slipped my leg from his shoulder and gave one last slow lick from front to back. I gasped and gripped the sides of his head, ready to push him away from the sensory overload.

"Y-you made me come."

"Fuck yeah, I did. You're delicious, sweetheart," he said, his deep voice nearly making me climax all over.

"Th-thank you."

I was gasping for breath as he stood and pulled me into his arms. Shaking and shocked to my core, I looked up at him in a daze.

He grinned. "Though it would be so fucking hot to take you against the wall, I think I want our first time to be in my bed."

Something about his statement struck me as odd but I was still too frazzled to figure out what. Completely boneless and sated as never before in my life, I just whimpered and nodded in agreement. He'd made me come. I'd let him do any damn thing he pleased. I simply went along passively as he took me by the hand and pulled me into his bedroom. I'd never been in there before, but wasn't surprised by the king-sized bed that dominated the room. It had a four-poster frame and a mirror on the ceiling above it. I laughed and shook my head in disbelief.

"What's so funny?"

He pulled me against him and kissed my neck, making it hard to think, much less answer.

"A mirror on the ceiling? Really?"

He chuckled. "Hell yeah. I want to see that beautiful ass of yours when you're on top."

I shivered as he ran the tip of his tongue around a nipple. He was holding me by the waist and gently pushed me onto his bed. I scooted on my back to the center as he pulled his jeans off. My heart nearly stopped when I got my first look at his hardened cock. Even as inexperienced as I was, I knew it was impressive.

"Oh wow. Uh...I don't know if I can take you."

He seemed surprised by my comment and glanced down at his erection appraisingly before looking back up at me with a grin.

"Sweetheart, we've got all day to work it in. Don't worry, we'll go as slow and easy as you need."

I shivered, whether from his tone or the words themselves I didn't know. I vaguely considered my lawnmower, left in the middle of my semi-cut lawn, and wondered what our neighbors would think if it sat there all day. That thought quickly vanished as Max crawled onto the bed, a predatory gleam in his eyes, his muscles bulging with the graceful movements. He was glorious and I felt my heart speed up as he crawled between my legs.

"M-Max—"

"Don't worry, baby. I'll go real slow, even if it kills me. I've waited too long to mess this up now."

I opened my mouth to question him on that comment, but he silenced me with another overwhelming kiss. He was awfully good at those. I soon found myself wrapped around him, rubbing my body against his with my fingers tangled in his hair. I moaned in ecstasy as he nibbled on my neck, sending delicious shivers down my spine. He hadn't tried to enter me yet, which was a surprise. I'd expected it immediately after he'd crawled on top of me. However, he covered my body with his and seemed content to just feel our skin sliding together as he explored my mouth.

He whispered my name against my skin like a prayer and again I wondered at how much he seemed to want me. Max had no shortage of women at his beck and call and I was extremely plain in comparison to the beach bunnies I'd seen him with. What could he possibly see in little ole me that made him crave me like a drug? And why hadn't he ever given me a sign? I tried not to think of anything but the feel of him, but my mind wouldn't stop working at the puzzle. Why did he want me and how long had he been waiting?

"Max..." I panted. "How long...have you wanted this?"

"Since the day I moved in," he whispered against my breast.

I tried to process that as he began to suckle my nipple. The thought of me in his bed was so ridiculous, I'd never allowed that fantasy to take hold. As he continued to lick my nipples, going from one to the other as if afraid I'd accuse him of playing favorites, I tried to wrap my brain around what he'd just confessed. He'd wanted me since he'd moved in...impossible. I didn't want my doubts to ruin this once-in-a-lifetime experience, so I pushed them from my mind. Closing my eyes, I reveled in the tactile journey of his body against mine and moaned in approval.

"Are you ready, baby? I don't know how much longer I can wait."

I nodded as I felt him move away for a moment, but he returned before I could protest his absence. My eyes opened when the sound of ripping foil filled my ears and I watched him slide a condom on with expert efficiency. Nope, wasn't going to think about that. He kissed the tip of my nose before positioning himself against me and my heartbeat sped to triple time. We stared into each other's eyes as he slowly worked his way into my body. I gasped and panted while he moved his hips gently back and forth. His glorious cock slid through my moisture invading my tightness as I began to relax enough to allow entry. I was gripping Max's forearms with both hands, he was holding my hips steady as he set our pace. It took a few sweaty minutes of groaning and huffing, but finally he was seated deep.

"There, sweetheart, all the way in. You okay?"

"Yes," I replied breathlessly as he lay still atop me to catch his breath.

He was completely inside me and it was the most perfect feeling I'd ever experienced. I wanted to cry and laugh at the same time, but settled for moaning and wrapping my legs around his hips as he began to rock against me.

"Fuck. You're perfect. I knew it would be good, but...fuck."

His explicit words made me smile as I began to meet his thrusts, pushing my hips up against every stroke. It was glorious, fulfilling, the best feeling of my life. I never wanted it to end.

"Max..."

“Yeah, baby. Come for me again, sweet Macey. Come all over my cock.”

His command pushed me higher and higher, and I closed my eyes as he again took control of my mouth. He thrust his tongue through my lips as his cock filled me below and the twin sensations broke the last of my control. Amazingly I came a second time, moaning his name incoherently into his mouth. He growled and bit my bottom lip lightly then began to thrust faster.

“Oh, fuck...fuck.”

All I could do was hold on as he moved against me faster and harder than before. I knew he was close and tightened my inner muscles. He groaned and buried his face in my neck. His completion was nearly silent but for his heavy breathing. Two heartbeats later he relaxed against me and the weight of his body was a comfort. I was finally breathing normally again when he moved.

“Baby, you okay?”

I stretched as he moved away, loving the soreness in new places.

“Yeah, better than okay.”

He chuckled and I looked up to find him watching me from where he sat on the side of the bed. He rose and stepped into his bathroom for a moment, then returned with a wet cloth. He’d discarded the condom and now seemed intent on taking care of me. I remained silent as he slowly wiped the insides of my thighs.

“Did I hurt you?” he asked quietly.

I wondered at the serious tone of his usually carefree voice, but pushed my concern away.

“No.”

He got up to toss the cloth in his hamper and I couldn’t help but admire his body as he walked around the room naked. He came back to bed and got in beside me, pulling me toward him to snuggle. My back was spooned against his chest and his heavy arm

held me in place at my waist. It was still early enough that going back to sleep sounded like a great idea, but one niggling thought kept intruding on my peace.

“What did you mean when you said you’ve wanted me since the day you moved in?”

He sighed deeply, his warm breath tickling my ear and sending a chill down my spine. I shivered and he hugged me tighter.

“Just what I said. From the first moment I saw you come out of your house with that bright smile on your face, I’ve wanted to have you here like this in my arms. You’re so beautiful, Macey. I feel like the luckiest guy in creation right now.”

His words warmed me, but I wondered what had taken so long for him to let me know about his feelings.

“Why didn’t you tell me?”

He sighed again and said nothing for a few minutes. The silence started to become uncomfortable and I tried to wiggle out from under his arm, but he tightened his hold.

“Macey, baby, please...stop.”

He was too strong for me to remove his arm from my waist, but I succeeded in turning to face him. I let my anger show on my face.

“How do you expect me to believe that when there have been so many others?”

The flash of pain that crossed his face was unexpected and brief. He hid it so well I wondered how long he’d kept it from me.

“Piss-poor substitutes for who I really wanted, I assure you.”

I rolled my eyes and huffed out a breath. “Not for lack of trying, I assure *you*.”

The bastard actually chuckled.

“Mace, in all the months I’ve lived here how much time do you think we’ve actually spent together?”

That question wasn’t the response I’d been expecting and it threw me for a second.

"Um, I don't know. This past year was really crazy with everything Haley had going on, and lately I've been out of town a lot."

"Yeah. And when you get back and I offer to make you dinner, or take you to the grocery store or hell, even help you mow your lawn, you always turn me down."

I stared at him in shock as all those seemingly innocent invitations came back to haunt me. I'd thought he was just being neighborly. How clueless was I?

"Max, I didn't know."

He gazed into my startled eyes and seemed to realize how perplexed I felt. The anger that had been creeping onto his face disappeared to be replaced by something softer.

"You really didn't know, did you?" I suddenly felt very vulnerable and tears stung the back of my throat. "No, sweetheart, don't cry."

I sniffled and hit him lightly on the arm as I turned my face away. "I'm not crying."

He pressed his face into my neck and chuckled again. "Of course not."

"I'm sorry."

He pulled back enough to look me in the eye. "You don't have anything to be sorry about. Just promise me this isn't a one-time thing."

I opened my mouth to reply before abruptly shutting it again. There I was in Max's bed and he was saying he didn't want me to leave? Oh yeah, definitely a fantasy come true. Bring out the pumpkin.



## **Chapter Two**

Max Thornworth, known as “Mad Max” to his drinking buddies, was the lone son of a friendly couple living in Colorado. I’d met them when they helped him make the move from their home state of Arizona to the empty house next door. I’d done the neighborly thing and made a light dinner for everyone on the first night of the big move. They’d been talkative and personable with both me and Haley. Max had piped in on our conversation as needed in between taking boxes from the moving truck to various parts of his new home. At dinner he’d been quiet and I’d chalked it up to exhaustion. Over the next few weeks, as women in all shapes and sizes of Barbie walked in and out of his house at all hours, I’d come to the definite conclusion that we’d never be more than friendly neighbors.

That thought made me smile as I watched streams of sunlight play across the smooth expanse of his muscular back. It was getting late and my lawnmower was still sitting in my yard, but I was finding it hard to actually care. We’d fallen asleep and when I woke Max was still softly snoring beside me. It was such an intimate moment I didn’t want to move, barely breathing to keep from waking him. The only man I’d ever fallen asleep with was Haley’s father, Luke. He’d been a three-year mistake I was still trying to justify. Haley had made living with him bearable, until he decided a woman and kid weren’t worth the trouble. Leaving was the best thing he’d ever done for us.

Max was as opposite from Luke as night from day. Where Luke was always looking for the next best thing, Max seemed content. Luke was vain and conniving. Max was completely honest and open. I watched him sleep and wondered what I was getting myself into. As if he’d heard my thoughts, Max turned and opened his eyes. His gaze found mine and I felt the impact like a sledgehammer. How could I have been so blind for so many months?

"Hey, beautiful."

Even whispered, his deep, sexy voice sent a thrill through me. Heat suffused my face and I smiled.

"Hey."

"How long have you been awake?"

I barely thought it over before shrugging. It really didn't matter as I had no plans to move any time soon. He chuckled before stretching his glorious body. His fingertips and toes hung off the edges of the bed as I looked my fill from one end to the other. I felt like a starving woman being presented with a buffet of chocolate decadence, and licked my lips while eying one particular area I longed to taste. The erection I was ogling continued to harden under my attention and Max groaned in mock agony.

"Damn, baby. You keep looking at me like that and we're never leaving this bed again."

I reached over and slid the tips of my fingers down his shaft from tip to root in a single, slow glide. He hissed out a breath but made no move to stop me. His silence encouraged me to explore and I took the opportunity to fulfill at least one long-standing fantasy.

"I want to taste."

Max groaned again as I rose to my knees and bent over him. "Fuck."

His curses made me smile as I took him into my mouth and slowly became acquainted with his girth stretching my lips. He was larger than the only other guy I'd ever attempted to give a blowjob to and it took a moment to relax.

"Mmmm."

"Fuck, baby. You don't have to do this if you're not sure...oh, that's good."

All doubt left me with his breathless admission and I set myself to the task of pleasuring him. Too inexperienced to actually have a technique, it took a moment for

me to know what to do. I swallowed and he groaned, gently running his fingers through my hair.

“Slowly, angel. Just move up and down slowly. Or keep me in your mouth as much as is comfortable and move your hand instead.”

I didn’t know if his instructions were insulting or sweet. It was a little humiliating that he knew how inexperienced I was, but also comforting that he didn’t seem to mind. His taste filled my mouth as his musk filled my nostrils. I was swimming in a sea of new sensations and almost completely overwhelmed. Not knowing what else to do, I began to move, letting his cock slide in and out of my mouth. One hand tightened around the base while I used the other to explore his sac. The softness of his skin surprised me and I let his shaft pop out of my mouth to run my lips over him.

He was panting and his fingers in my hair tightened, but I continued to play. I ran the tip of my tongue over his balls before suckling one into my mouth. He let out a string of curses and grabbed my shoulders.

“Enough. Come here.”

He pulled me over him, my slick skin easily sliding against his, until I straddled his hips. The passion in his eyes had reached a fever pitch and he almost looked a little feral. I grinned.

“I wasn’t done.”

“I nearly was and I’ll be damned if I’ll come before you do.”

“But —”

Then he was kissing me, effectively clearing my mind of anything I wanted to say in response. All thought fled but how good his tongue tasted against mine. Growls and pants filled the air with the scent of sweat and need. I felt his hands everywhere on my skin as I tried to touch every inch of his. With a quick move he rolled me under him and pulled back to look down at my face. He stared at me so intently I fought not to squirm. Just when I thought he was going to say something, he buried his face in my neck instead.

The wet slide of his tongue across my throat made me moan. I closed my eyes and pushed my head back to give him better access. Despite my invitation, he left my neck and moved down my body. One hand covered my left breast while his warm mouth covered the right. I wrapped my legs around his hips and clutched his shoulders as tightness formed low in my body. Another orgasm was building slowly and I prayed I wouldn't lose it.

I was concentrating so hard on my arousal, it took a second before I realized someone was knocking on the front door. Max continued to suckle my nipple as if he hadn't heard or didn't care.

"Max. Max...the door."

My breathless pants finally got through to him as I was pushing at his shoulders. He lifted his head to look at me when a sharp knock sounded again.

"Who the fuck could that be?"

I laughed breathlessly as he pushed away from me to rise from the bed. He grabbed his jeans and yanked them on before turning to me with a heated look.

"Don't you dare move. I'll be right back."

Before I could open my mouth to respond he was walking through the door. I sat up and pulled the comforter around me, tucking it under my arms. Voices sounded from the front of the house and I stood warily. An unfamiliar soreness between my legs slowed me down, but I was halfway across the room when a gorgeous woman walked in. Long, curly blonde hair fell in waves down her slender back. Her large blue eyes stared at me menacingly below perfectly sculpted brows, arched high in apparent disbelief. I froze and waited awkwardly as Max rushed in behind her. The blonde put her hands on her hips and looked me up and down.

"You've got to be kidding me. You were pushing me out the door for that?"

Anger rushed through me even as humiliation reared its ugly head. I knew she was every man's fantasy and I'm...not. But there was no fucking way I'd admit it in front of her.

“Now wait just one fucking minute—”

“Macey, hush. Darla, you need to leave.”

I stood in open-mouthed shock as he stepped in front of Darla, turning his back to me in dismissal and giving her his full attention. I looked around for my clothes, only to remember they were crumpled on his hallway floor. Max and Darla were blocking the door as he took her by the arm and tried to push her out.

“No! I’m not leaving, she is. We have a date and you’ve never broken a date before, Max. This is bullshit.”

Her whining gave me a headache and the last of my arousal was officially gone. Max had forced her from the bedroom and down the hall, so I took the opportunity to retrieve my clothes.

“I’d planned to call you. Hell, you’re hours early anyway. Look, we’ve never been exclusive and we’ve talked about this. You need to go now.”

I tried to ignore the pain in my chest as I realized I was just another conquest. He may have talked about it to her, but not me and I felt like an idiot. I dropped the blanket and put my clothes on right in the hallway where I’d found them, more intent on escape than modesty. I heard the front door open as Darla continued to whine and I quickly pulled on my shoes.

“You said she wouldn’t give you the time of day. I didn’t know you were fucking her already.”

My pulse continued to race and my stomach clenched. He’d talked about me to his flavor of the week? Was that a good thing? Fighting tears, I made my way through his kitchen to the back door. I didn’t look over my shoulder to see if either of them noticed, I just ran. Luckily the padlock on his side gate was open and I didn’t have to climb the six-foot wooden fence. In my state I would’ve tried anything to get away, but within seconds I was safely locked behind my door peeking through my living room curtains. Darla pulled out of Max’s driveway with a squeal of tires as he watched with his arms

crossed over his chest. I wondered how quickly he'd realize I was gone when he stormed back into his house.

The tears finally came and I angrily brushed them away. I was too old for this shit. Every single day women had uncomplicated sex with men they knew. Why couldn't I be like them? I hugged myself and stood in a daze, staring at nothing when someone pounded on my door.

"Macey!" I jumped and stared at the door. "God damn it, Mace. Let me in." He pounded again and I wondered how much my door could take. "Baby, if you don't open the door I'm coming through it. I'm not even fucking kidding. We need to talk...please."

What sounded like an open-handed slap came next and propelled me into motion. He almost sounded desperate and he had said please. I sighed, wiped my face on my shirt and unlocked the deadbolt. Before I could even reach for the knob, it turned and Max rushed in. I gasped as he grabbed me and held me tightly to his chest. His body was trembling as he buried his face in my hair. One of his hands held the nape of my neck while the other cupped one half of my ass. I sighed against his bare chest and tried to step back. He growled low in his throat and tightened his hold.

"Max, the door."

Lifting me against him, he stepped farther into the house and kicked the door shut. I vaguely wondered if any of the neighbors were watching.

"I told you not to leave my bed."

Annoyance filled me and I pushed against his hard chest, making no visible difference in how tight he held me.

"Now wait just a fucking minute —"

"Mace —"

"Oh, don't you *Macey Lane* me you...Neanderthal!"

"Neanderthal?"

He finally let go, but the amusement on his face only pissed me off. "Argh! Go away, Max!"

"Hell no." I turned away and stormed through my house to the kitchen. He was hot on my heels, all amusement drained from his voice. "Baby, listen..."

"I'm not your baby." I stopped at the refrigerator and jerked it open. The empty space I'd noticed earlier mocked me. "Damn it!"

I slammed the door and turned to face Max. He took the opportunity to cage me against the refrigerator by putting his hands on the door, but I was too angry to appreciate the closeness.

"Macey, why are you so angry at me? I sent Darla packing. She won't be coming back."

I crossed my arms, nudging him with my elbows until he moved a step back. The breathing room calmed me a bit and helped clear my thoughts.

"Great, I'm thrilled. Now what about your other groupies?" He sighed and stepped farther back, running a hand down his face. He suddenly looked very tired, but I refused to back down. "You said Darla was your date for tonight. How soon will tomorrow's entertainment show up?"

He whipped his head back to shoot a glare at me. If I hadn't been against the refrigerator already, I would've taken a step back.

"That's not fair. Months, Mace. It's been months since we met and you never once gave me a sign that you wanted more than friendship."

"Well...neither did you." He raised one brow and I realized how weak my argument must sound. "How in the hell was I supposed to know you were flirting with intent? You talk like that to all women and I'm..."

He frowned and closed the distance between us again. "You're what?"

I shrugged and looked away before answering. "Old, out of shape, boring."

He growled again and gently took my face between his palms. I looked up into his hungry gaze and barely suppressed a shudder.

"At any time while you were in my arms did it feel like I see you as old, out of shape or boring?"

"N-no."

"Good. Because I don't." His warm lips pressed softly against mine and I melted. He pulled back and looked me in the eye. "What's it going to take to make this work?"

I took a deep breath and released it slowly. "I don't know. Why would you want to? I mean, you have no shortage of female company without adding me to the list."

He scowled and stepped back. "You're more important than any of them. Just give me time to prove it."

"I'm too old for games, Max."

"And I don't want to play any, Mace."

I opened my mouth without knowing what I was going to say when his cell phone rang. He ignored it but I raised a brow and stared at his pocket. With a huff of annoyance he pulled it out and silenced it with barely a glance.

"Not even going to see who it was?" I asked.

He shrugged. "Doesn't matter. I'm talking to you right now."

"It could've been one of your *dates*."

His jaw hardened and I knew I'd really pissed him off.

"Maybe, but like I said, it doesn't matter."

"Whatever. She'll probably call back."

"It doesn't fucking matter, Macey. Right now I'm talking to you, only you."

"Yeah, but the phone calls will keep coming all fucking day long."

"And I'll tell every one of them the same thing I told Darla. No thank you."



For some reason his answer just aggravated me more. "And how long do I have before you tell me that too? I've never seen you date the same girl for more than a week, Max. A week! I don't want that to happen between us."

"It won't. You just have to give me a chance."

I sighed and rubbed my hands over my face, suddenly exhausted. "This is ridiculous. I never should have watched that porno with you."

He threw up his arms then let them fall to his sides. The slap of his hands against his hard thighs made me jump.

"Yup. You're right. The power of suggestion was just too much. I'm just a man-whore and you're my flavor of the hour. Fuck our year-long friendship. Fuck the fact that I'm always ready to do absolutely anything for you at a moment's notice. Don't you see me dashing out of my house at all hours to do the same for every woman in Houston? Damn that reminds me. I need to pick my cape up from the cleaner's."

"Oh shut up!"

I shoved against his chest, actually backing him up a step.

"Well fuck, Macey! What do you want from me?"

I was so confused and angry I didn't know what to think. The worst part was I suspected my anger was aimed more at me than him.

"I want you to stop yelling at me!"

"You're yelling too!"

"Oh you...bastard."

"Am not. You've met my parents."

With a growl of frustration I turned away and stomped out of the kitchen. Since I knew he was following I didn't want to go to my bedroom, but that didn't leave many options. I walked out the front door.

He didn't say anything as he followed me to my lawnmower. I checked the gas and tried to ignore his presence beside me as I attempted to start it back up. The sun was

now high in the sky and sweat quickly beaded on the back of my neck. I vaguely realized the ponytail I'd started the morning with was no more thanks to Max's thick fingers.

"Macey..."

He sounded as aggravated as I felt. He was barefoot, bare-chested and probably furious with me, but he still pushed me gently aside and started my mower with one strong tug of the cord. My chest tightened and I bit my lip as tears burned the back of my throat. This was such a bad time to go girly. He looked up from the mower as the first warm tear slipped down my face.

"Macey..."

His voice softened and he reached for me. I turned and ran into my house, slamming the door shut behind me and locking it just as the flood started. Sex with Max was turning me into an emotional mess.

\* \* \* \* \*

An hour later I finally heard the mower shut off. He'd cut my entire front and back yards. I wondered if he'd taken the time to put on shoes. I'd been crying hard enough to not know what was going on for a few minutes. I was lying in my bed staring at my ceiling when I heard my garage door slide shut. Apologizing for freaking out on him would have been the right thing to do. However, though I was humiliated by my behavior, I didn't think I was completely wrong. Maybe I should've had more faith in him but I did have a valid argument. With a sigh, I rolled onto my side and stared at my closed bedroom door. My front door was locked and he didn't have a key. I couldn't remember if I'd locked the door leading into my garage, but if he'd stayed inside when the door shut he'd be in my house by now.

I listened hard for any sound beyond my bedroom door. My head began to ache from listening so damn hard. I didn't even know if I was hoping he was inside or praying he wasn't. After what felt like an eternity I finally heard a familiar sound. Max

revved his motorcycle as he pulled away from his house and headed out of the neighborhood. I turned my face into my pillow, feeling like the world's biggest idiot.

"Shit."

That about summed up my love life. If I was lucky Max would still be talking to me tomorrow. I pushed away thoughts of the alternative and sat up, determined to salvage the rest of my day. The clock showed that an impossible three hours had passed by in seconds. My stomach growled to confirm it was nearly dinnertime and I groaned. My damn refrigerator was still empty. I'd just returned to town the day before and had put it off until after mowing the lawn. It had seemed like a good idea at the time.

"Shit, shit, shit."

I mumbled curses all through a quick shower and as I threw on whatever clothes I grabbed first. I didn't even take the time to match, just slipped my feet into sandals and threw my purse strap over my shoulder. Within seconds I was backing out of my garage and heading to the closest grocery store. My hair was a wet mess I'd finger-combed before pulling it into a bun at the top of my head. I wore no makeup. Other people's opinions of my lack of fashion sense never bothered me before but I was suddenly self-conscious.

I pulled into a parking space and stared at the front of the store for a minute to drum up some courage. I just had to run in, grab a TV dinner and some sodas, then run back out. Simple. If I was quick enough, only the cashier would even notice me when she rang me up. Piece of cake.

Max cornered me in the dairy department when I remembered I'd need milk for breakfast. I hadn't noticed his bike in the lot, but an airplane could've been sitting there and I would've missed it. I had just placed a half-gallon jug in my cart when he walked up.

"Hey, beautiful, you still mad at me?"

Startled, I just gaped at him for a moment while waiting for my heart to stop racing. He stepped around my cart until only a breath separated us.

"N-no, not really. I was actually thinking of...um...apologizing."

He grinned and brushed a few errant strands of hair behind my ear. "Really?"

I took a deep breath and nodded, leaning back a bit until his hand dropped away.

"Um, yeah. I shouldn't have been such a bitch."

His grin disappeared and he shook his head. "You weren't." I opened my mouth to argue and he placed a finger on my lips. "You weren't. Look, I think we both just needed to cool off a bit. How about we go to dinner and talk about it, okay?"

I looked down at myself then back up at him and frowned. "Like this?"

"Sure, why not? You look beautiful as always."

I rolled my eyes and moved past him to push my cart down the aisle. He fell into step beside me and I finally noticed he had no basket, or anything else in his hands.

"First of all, I don't even remotely match. Second, my hair is a mess. Where are your groceries?"

He looked at my nearly-empty basket and shrugged. "I don't need any."

"Then why are you here?"

We reached the front of the store and I got into the only line available.

"I was at the gas station across the street when I saw you park. I've been driving around to clear my head. I wanted to make sure you were okay."

My cheeks burned in a full-out blush as we stepped up to the register. Max placed my groceries on the conveyor belt without a word. I smiled at the young girl that rang me up but her eyes were all for Max. I didn't get mad because I sure as hell couldn't blame her. However, I did notice he never took his gaze off me.

"So what do you say? We'll drop this stuff off at your place then go to dinner."

"Um, sure." I paid and the girl frowned at me. "I'll just need to change."

He shook his head and took my bag before I had a chance to reach for it. We walked out the door side by side without touching, but his scent tantalized my senses. I

unlocked my car and he opened my door then reached in to place my bag on the passenger seat. I tried to hop in once he moved out of the way but he grabbed my waist.

“Sweetheart, I’m sorry. Please don’t be mad at me.”

His kiss was sweet and gentle. There was no way to fight my feelings for him. When he finally pulled away, everything I’d always wanted to hear from a man was in his eyes.

I sighed and shook my head. “I’m not mad at you.”

His smile brightened the world. “Good. I’ll be right behind you.”

With a quick peck on the tip of my nose he was gone. I watched his jeans tighten as he walked to his bike. Damn. What was I getting myself into?

The drive home took all of five minutes. Not nearly enough time to think over what was about to happen. I was going out on a date with a guy ten years younger than me, but light-years ahead of me sexually. My hands began to shake as I turned the car off and Max opened my door.

“I’ll get that.”

I looked at him in confusion as he leaned past me and grabbed the groceries I’d already forgotten about. His arm rubbed against my breasts, budding my nipples into tight little peaks. I gasped and he froze. His gaze told me he knew exactly what I was feeling. I swallowed hard and tried to think of something to say.

“I...uh, I just need to put those up and change.”

He pulled the bag past me and straightened. “I’ll put them away while you change.”

Retreat seemed to be the best course of action. It took three tries for me to unlock the door before I all but ran to my room. Behind me, Max whistled off-key as he headed for the kitchen.

“Take your time, sweetheart. We’ve got all night.”

I blew out a breath and shut my door, leaning against it for support. Was I really going to do this? Go out with Max tonight like a regular couple? I guess we could be considered lovers now, but for how long? How far should I let this go?

Knowing Max waited in my living room propelled me into motion and I headed for my closet. Casual dining with a young, hot guy? I could do this. I tore through my dresses and slacks trying to find something flirty and fun. Costume from the vampire ball at last year's romance writers' conference? Nope. Fairy princess dress? Uh, no. Navy blue business skirt suit? Sigh. I had nothing to wear. Considering I hadn't had a date in about ten years that wasn't a big surprise. I'd promised myself a shopping spree once Haley graduated and left for college but hadn't gotten around to it.

A soft knock on the door startled me from my thoughts. I cracked it open to find Max leaning against the wall with his hands in his pockets. Just the sight of him took my breath away.

"Hey, baby. I just wanted to know if I should go change into something nicer."

I slowly ran my gaze down his delectable frame, taking in the well-worn jeans slung low on his lean hips. His t-shirt stretched against his chest and shoulders, hugging his muscles like I ached to. Head to toe he was masculine perfection. I licked my lips and looked up into his curious gaze.

"No. You're good."

He chuckled and stepped closer. "Yeah?"

"Yeah. There's no need for you to change. I'm just trying to find something to wear."

"Can I help?"

I hesitated, but only for a moment, before letting him into my bedroom. He'd been in it a couple of times when I'd decided to redecorate and enlisted his help to move furniture. As I walked to the closet he stayed close behind, placing his hand on my hip as if I needed support. It felt almost too good.

"Where are we going anyway?"

He shrugged and started pushing around my hanging clothes. "Wherever you want." He laughed and pulled out my vampires dress. "So long as you wear this."

I laughed too and shook my head. "No way."

He put it back and rummaged some more. "Why do you have so many suits? I've never seen you actually wear one."

"I used to work in an office and that's all I ever wore."

He looked at me with a grin. "And now that you're an author you can wear sweats to work?"

I smiled back and shrugged. "Working at home definitely has its perks. But, as you can see, I haven't updated my wardrobe in about a decade."

"You can wear whatever you want, sweetheart. It doesn't matter to me."

He closed the distance between us and I marveled at how my walk-in closet seemed to shrink with him in it. His warm hands settled on my cheeks and he leaned in slowly. His kisses seemed to get better every time. Though my experience was limited and it had been a while, Max's firm lips moved over mine with a practiced ease I'd never experienced before. He tasted and teased, igniting a fire in my blood that had me squirming against him. I finally came up for air and tried to remember what we had been doing.

"Max...dinner..."

"Mmmm?"

"Clothes, Max. I need to change for dinner."

"How 'bout dessert first?"

I opened my mouth to protest and his tongue immediately slipped inside. With a groan of surrender, I leaned into him and kissed back. He pushed his thick fingers through my hair, angling my head for deeper penetration of his questing tongue. Our differences melted away as our sexual compatibility took center stage.

He removed my clothes with practiced ease. I didn't even realize he was still fully dressed until he turned me around. His cotton shirt rubbed against my naked back, firing a jolt of sensation up my spine and I gasped.

"Max."

"Shh, just look, baby. Look at how fucking sexy you are in my arms."

I opened my eyes to find my reflection staring back at me from the full-length mirror on the closet door. Shock ran through me at the erotic image I made. My fair skin was flushed around my breasts, and a fine sheen of moisture was barely visible on the inside of my thighs. My pupils were dilated and my hair hung in disarray around my shoulders. I looked like a woman who had been thoroughly ravaged.

Max's thick biceps circled me as he placed one large palm on my lower abdomen. The tip of his longest finger rested just above my pubic hair. He surrounded me in his heat, boiling my blood and warming me from the inside out. I could barely catch my breath in anticipation of what his strong fingers would do next. He lifted his free hand and cupped one breast, weighing it in his palm as he rubbed my nipple with his thumb.

"Oh, Max. Stop teasing me...please."

He chuckled low in his throat, almost a growl as he lightly pinched my nipple. It stood out, erect and so tight it bordered on pain. My panting breaths sounded loud in the silent closet. I felt closed in from the world, as if we were the only two people in existence. Nothing else mattered at that moment but Max and how he played my body like a well-known instrument.

My full concentration was on the nipple in his grip until he slid his other hand lower. As if he had all the time in the world he inched his fingers through my hair, over my swollen mons and into the depths of my moisture. I cried out in relief and exasperation as he quenched one ache and woke another. Lifting my head, my gaze caught his in the mirror. Sweat beaded on his forehead and his hazel eyes glowed intensely. The look of concentration on his face would've been funny if I wasn't so



aroused I could barely think. He kept his gaze locked on mine and started rubbing one calloused finger directly over my clit. My knees buckled and his grip tightened.

“I’ve got you, baby. I’m not letting go anytime soon.”

My mind barely grasped the double meaning of his words, but I was too close to climax to form a coherent response. I nodded slowly and let my head fall back against his shoulder. He started sucking on my neck just as he inserted a finger into my pussy and I shot off like a rocket.

“Max!”

I shouted my release as I came, trembling in his arms. He thrust his fingers in and out, milking my orgasm for all it was worth, while gently kneading my breast with his other hand. The bulge of his erection pressed against my ass, his jeans rubbing roughly against my sensitized skin. I pushed back and he chuckled.

“Ready for me, baby? I need to be inside you.”

I leaned forward, bracing my palms against the mirrored door. His zipper was a loud hiss that brought goose bumps to my arms. I thrust my ass back the moment I felt the brush of his flesh.

“Whoa, hang on, baby. Give me a second.”

He was panting and the evidence of his slipping control gave me courage. I wanted to make him as crazy as he made me. The rustle of foil told me he was covered. I reached back and found his thick cock with ease. He groaned as I gently squeezed the head and pulled him toward me.

“Now, Max. Now.”

He pushed on my lower back to bend me forward with one hand as he used the other to grip my hip. I rubbed the head of his cock against my slick flesh and eased him inside.

“Oh, yesss.”

As soon as he was seated deep I placed both palms flat on the mirror and braced myself. His first few thrusts were slow and easy as he teased us both. I mumbled encouragement in what may have been a foreign language even though I'm not bilingual. It was just so damn good I'd lost all reason. His thrusts quickened and I became fascinated with the reflection of my swaying breasts. He leaned into me, pushing me flat against the mirror. The cool surface rubbed against my nipples and I cried out in pleasure.

"Almost there. Fuck...I'm almost there, baby."

I pushed back against his thrusts and he sped up. He gripped my hips with both hands, his jean-covered thighs hitting the backs of my legs.

"Fuck me, Max. Fuck me!"

He groaned long and loud and came with one last hard thrust.

"Ah, god, Macey."

My face was plastered to the mirror, panting breaths fogging it in a small circle. I shut my eyes and tried to send whatever strength I had left to my knees. Max eased out of me slowly but kept his hands on my hips. A squeak escaped my lips before I cleared my throat to form coherent words.

"That was...oh...Max..."

He chuckled breathlessly and kissed the back of my neck.

"Hell yeah, baby. It was."

So glad we could communicate.

## **Chapter Three**

We stayed in for a dinner of cold cereal eaten in my bed. I slurped down the last of the milk in my bowl while Max watched with an amused expression on his face.

“What?”

“I never knew a milk mustache could be sexy.”

I immediately swiped my hand over my lips, self-consciousness finally rearing its ugly head. I’d just been sweaty and naked in front of this glorious man and it took a milk mustache to make me blush.

He grinned and took my empty bowl, placing it in his on my bedside table. I’d talked him out of his clothes shortly after we returned to my bedroom. Now we both sat naked in my bed leaning back against the headboard.

I turned to look at him, marveling again that I had this young, sexy guy in my bed...and he wanted to stay. I sighed and shook my head at the unexpected turn of events.

“That sure was a heavy sigh.”

I smiled, though I was far from amused as I again considered the impossible relationship he was asking for.

“Now what, Max?”

His grin faded to complete seriousness but he remained silent, watching me for a moment. I was searching for something to say when he left the bed, leaving me temporarily speechless as I watched his delectable ass while he walked around the room. He found his jeans crumpled on the floor and picked them up, removing something from the pocket. I waited to question him until he returned to bed and slipped back under the covers with me.

"What's that?"

He kept his hand beneath the blanket and turned to face me. With his free hand he brushed loose hair from my face and leaned over to kiss me.

"I'm in love with you, Macey."

I was speechless. I searched his eyes and found the truth staring back at me in his open, honest gaze. He wasn't asking me for anything, just offering me all he had to give. For only a second the age argument sounded in my head. I squashed it into dust and decided it really didn't matter.

"I love you too, Max."

He smiled and kissed me again. I was warming to it, leaning forward and ready to wrap myself around him when he pulled back.

"Baby, there's something I need to explain to you." I straightened and forced down my libido. "I know I've seemed like a...um, man-whore, since moving in last year."

I bit my lip to keep any amusement from showing while he continued.

"I'm sorry if my actions ever hurt you. I never, ever meant to hurt you. It's just...well, I know I never really explained why I moved here."

I perked up at full attention. Over the past few months I'd asked in a variety of ways what had prompted his life-altering move, but he'd always evaded my questions. He'd never tried to give a false answer, just changed the subject whenever I brought it up.

"I'm sure you had your reasons," I said.

"Yeah, I did. As you know I grew up in kind of a small town. Everyone knew everyone, and they all knew I'd planned to marry my high school sweetheart, Lilly. We'd decided to wait until after college. I went to the community college and she went to a university a few miles away. We saw each other every weekend."

He stopped talking and looked away, an echo of pain etched on his face. I reached over and ran my fingers through his hair.

“What happened?”

He sighed and turned back to face me. “She cheated on me. I didn’t catch her or anything dramatic like that. Hell, I wouldn’t have even known, never would’ve suspected if the guilt hadn’t been eating at her and she confessed. It was our anniversary. Seven years we’d been together, off and on but mostly on. I was in love. I forgave her. Things were great for a while. I’d proposed and the date was set and everything.”

He got quiet as memories played through his mind and different emotions showed in his eyes. I waited patiently, knowing this insight to his past would help my concerns about our future.

“I don’t know exactly when it all fell apart. It seems like even though I forgave her, she couldn’t forgive herself. And irrational as it is she blamed me for that. She cheated again, and again. My friends started telling me things. Her friends started telling me things. Like I said, it was a small town, but Lilly stopped trying to hide it. I think she wanted me to punish her.”

He sighed heavily and rubbed a hand down his face. I wanted to comfort him but didn’t dare move until he was finished.

“So I broke off the engagement. I let her keep the ring and said I would be waiting when she grew up and realized we were meant to be together. I waited for two years. We were off and on again the whole time, until one morning I woke up alone and thought, what the fuck am I doing? I knew she was seeing someone else, and the whole time I’d remained loyal to her. I mean, I’m not a fucking saint. I’d fooled around during our off times, but I hadn’t actually had sex with any other girl. That’s when I realized I’d fallen out of love with Lilly.”

I raised a brow in surprise, thinking Lilly was a fucking idiot.

“So did you give her an ultimatum?”

“No. I packed my things, called my parents and rented a truck. I knew if I stayed there I would never get out of that rut. As you know, my uncle owns a construction

company here. I figured a big city like Houston was as good a place as any to start over. So that's what I did." He looked at me and grimaced. "I also fucked my way across Texas."

I chuckled and shook my head, but he just shrugged. "Hey, I was making up for lost time."

"And where do I fit into this new leaf you've turned over?"

He grinned and cupped my face in one hand. "I wanted you from the first moment I saw you, but quickly realized you wouldn't be a one-time fling. Getting to know you has been the best thing that's ever happened to me, Macey. I want you now and will continue to want you for as long as you'll let me. I swear."

I kissed him lightly on the mouth and leaned into him as he wrapped his arms around me.

"My age really doesn't bother you?"

"Not at all, baby."

"And you're really willing to give up other women for me alone?"

"Absolutely. I've had my fill of meaningless sex. Making love to you more than makes up for it."

I smiled and snuggled closer as he brought his hand out from beneath the blanket. The small, black box gave me a jolt and my heartbeat sped up. He must have felt me tense because he tightened his hold.

"Don't freak out on me, baby. You don't even have to open it right now. I just want you to know how serious I am about you...about us."

My hands shook as I took the box from his outstretched hand. I swallowed down my apprehension and opened it.

"Oh, Max. It's beautiful."

A ruby surrounded by small diamonds set atop a white-gold band glittered from the box in my hand and I damn near dropped it.

"Whoa." He caught it with a chuckle and placed it back in my palm. "Are you okay? What do you think?"

I sniffed and looked into his warm gaze through the sudden moisture in my eyes.

"I think I'll hold onto this for a little while. I'm not going to put it on yet, but... I'll just keep it for now."

He kissed me deeply before lowering his lips to the side of my neck. "That's all I ask, baby. Just give me a chance."

I sighed and leaned back, placing the ring on the bedside table to free my hands for other things. He gasped when I wrapped my fingers around his semi-hard cock. I echoed the sound when he tasted my nipple.

"Mmm, this is kind of like when Prince Alric asked Julia to marry him in the garden. She made him wait too."

I giggled and pulled him on top of me. "So you have read my books."

"Hell yeah I have. I've been waiting for you to write a juicy love scene."

"Maybe now that you've shown me some new things, I will."

He grinned and nibbled on my other nipple before saying, "I can think of a few more things to show you."

"Nothing that will shock my readers I hope."

With a mischievous gleam in his eye, he rose and flipped me onto my belly.

"Max!"

"Relax, sweetheart. I promise you're going to love this."

I tensed for a heartbeat before remembering that I loved and trusted him. Everything he'd done to me had been wonderful. He started massaging my shoulders and I relaxed completely. He leaned over me and moved his hands down my torso. His lips replaced his fingers, trailing kisses across my shoulders and down my back. A moan escaped my lips as my eyes drifted shut. I'd never known my back was so sensitive. He continued down to my ass, kneading and kissing each cheek.

"You have such a perfect ass."

I didn't respond, knowing there were a couple of stretch marks from pregnancy and an old scar. If he didn't care, neither did I.

He massaged my thighs, working past the place I wanted him most and kissing the backs of my knees. His mouth worked its magic all the way down my calves to my ankles, but his fingers moved on to the soles of my feet. I moaned again as he massaged my arches and rubbed my toes.

Just when I was a boneless mass of relaxation, he gripped my hips and urged me to my knees. I complied, pushing against his hand when he cupped my sex.

"Mmm, Max."

"Yeah, baby. So hot and wet for me. I fucking love this."

He licked a trail from the small of my back to my neck, then entered me in one strong thrust. I cried out in bliss and immediately climaxed.

"Oh, god. How...do...you do...that?"

He chuckled and pulled back to thrust again. "Patience. Your body was just waiting for someone who knew what to do with it."

I couldn't argue with that as he picked up the pace and I felt another orgasm building. Within three thrusts I was screaming his name and gripping the sheets for dear life. He nipped at my neck, sending shivers down my spine. I tightened my inner muscles to squeeze his erection and he grunted, panting my name as his seed filled me.

I dropped flat to the bed and he lay down beside me, planting a kiss on my forehead.

"Macey...I forgot to...grab a condom."

I remained quiet for a moment as my pulse slowed to normal. He watched me with caution in his gaze and I smiled nervously. "I haven't been with anyone but you in years. I know I'm clean, but I'm not on the Pill or anything."

He didn't look at all concerned as he ran his fingers through my hair.



"I've never had unprotected sex, but I still get tested every year. I'm clean too, sweetheart."

I continued to stare at him but he didn't respond to my mention of birth control.

"Max...I'm not protected against—"

"We'll jump off that bridge when we get to it, okay? Don't worry about it right now, sweetheart. I'm not."

After a few more seconds of watching the smug grin on his face I gave up my concern and sighed in contentment. The odds were against me being pregnant but I couldn't help my spark of excitement at the thought. Haley was grown and gone from the nest. It was time for me to start a new chapter in life. I might have just gotten used to the idea of Max being a part of the change, but adding his child into the mix didn't scare me. His child. Our child. I smiled up at him and he must've seen some of my thoughts in the expression. He kissed me and smiled back.

"If you're pregnant, you better marry me."

I snorted and lightly hit him on the chest. "I thought you wanted me before that possibility existed."

"Hell yeah I did, but if it helps you say yes I'll go throw all my condoms away."

I laughed out loud and nestled against his chest.

"Max, I love you."

He kissed the top of my head and squeezed me tight to his chest.

"I love you too, my undersexed romance author."

With a growl I sprang on top of him as he erupted into laughter.

## About the Author

Ms. Missy Jane is the alter ego of a married mother of four who was born and raised in Texas. A few years ago she finished reading a book by Mercedes Lackey and thought “Now, what if...” and a monster was created.

Missy now spends most of her time lost in worlds of her own making, alternately loving and hating such creatures as vampires, shapeshifters and gargoyles (to name a few). When not writing, she spends her time reading, taking photos of her beautiful daughters and training her husband to believe she’s always right. She lives near Houston and doesn’t understand why everyone hasn’t moved to the South.

Excerpts from Missy’s paranormal and erotic tales can be found on her website, and at <http://msmissyjane.blogspot.com/>.

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

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