

Alpha Kanted

Book Four

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Leigh: Drama Queen in Training
Book Four: Alpha Wanted
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Dedication:

Sandy:

For Sarah, Dawn, Stephanie, Nikita and Trudy. Thank you so much for all of your help.

Leigh:

Dedicated to anyone who's ever had a really bad day.

Leigh: Drama Queen in Training

Book Four: Alpha Wanted

Diary Entry #3:

Well, life certainly hasn't been dull. I think I we learned more about one of my co-workers than I ever needed to know. Jim has a girlfriend, he lives in a cute little house and he is the worst kisser I we ever met. Hello? Did you take lessons from Flipper?

And of course I haven't kicked my current addiction for Xyle. The man is bad news. And um, it was rather interesting asking him if he had a girlfriend. I was seriously embarrassed—and considering some of the situations (ve gotten myself into, that's saying something.

Now...what do I do about Jim? He feels sparks that I don't, and we have to work together.

I think I need a vacation.

Or a really good lay.

Oh, Kyle....

"Anything good in life is either illegal, immoral or fattening."

- Murphy's Law

eigh was leaning against the bar, waiting for her drink. Looking around the semi-crowded room, she just smiled and shook her head when she saw her man sitting at a table, arm-wrestling. As she watched, he very easily beat his competition. She hadn't expected anything less.

She couldn't wait to get him back to her apartment. She wanted to strip off his clothes and feast on his body. To feel his dick sliding in and out of her mouth. Then, all too soon, he would throw her on the bed and fuck her. Leigh could feel her pussy almost dripping in anticipation beneath her skirt. Turning to face the bartender, she smiled as she got her drink.

When she was facing Kyle once again, the smile faded. Some bleached-blonde bimbo was straddling his lap. The hussy was pressing her clearly fake tits against him, all but shoving them in her man's face.

"Oh, hells no." With her drink firmly in hand, Leigh approached the table. "You really need to get up right now," she told the woman, all humor gone.

"And I think ya need to mind yer own business." It was clear from her speech that the woman had probably indulged too much that night. But that was not Leigh's problem. She looked at Kyle.

He shrugged. "She said she was making this a fair competition between me and her boyfriend."

Glancing over at the other man, she shook her head. "And he doesn't have the balls to tell her to get up?"

Again, Kyle simply shrugged.

Leigh rolled her eyes and set her drink down. "Get up. I won't warn you again."

The bimbo wrapped an arm around Kyle's neck and pressed his face into her cosmetically-enhanced breasts. "And I said mind yer own business." She squirmed on Kyle's lap as she pressed her breasts into his face. "Mmmm, that feels nice. So, would you like to eat my puss—"

Before the woman could finish the last word of her question, Leigh had her fist twisted in the blonde's hair. She didn't try to be gentle as she jerked the woman backward. The hussy had no choice but to get off his lap or have some of her hair ripped out. Okay, a lot of her hair ripped out.

"What the hell are you doing?" Blondie yelped.

"I told you to get off his lap."

"What the fuck? Are you just going to let her do that?" the woman's boyfriend demanded as Leigh continued to drag the blonde away from Kyle.

Behind her, Kyle chuckled. Leigh heard a chair get pushed backward, but didn't stop to check it out. Nope, her complete focus was on the woman she was hauling through the bar. She'd teach this woman to put her tits in Kyle's face.

She was taken by surprise when a masculine hand gripped her wrist. It was gentle, but forced her to release the other woman. Great, she thought. The bouncer just had to interfere. Her scowl deepened when she saw the blonde smile.

"I knew you wouldn't let her hurt me," Blondie slurred.

Leigh was about to turn her head to look over her shoulder. She wanted to know if it was Kyle or the seemingly ball-less boyfriend who had stopped her. Before she could move an inch, she felt a hand in her hair. It was none too gentle as the man yanked her head backward.

Looking up into Kyle's face, she was ready to start arguing right there that she would not sit around idly while some other woman tried to fuck him in a bar. She wouldn't apologize for what she'd done. And despite how mad he appeared, she wasn't the slightest bit afraid that he'd hit her. In fact, she was soaking wet.

His eyes narrowed more and with no time to stop him, he leaned closer.

Instead of yelling, Kyle crushed her lips against his own. His tongue thrust into her mouth. It was demanding and she was all too happy to oblige—to give him everything he asked for and more. Her pussy dripped in anticipation, and she didn't care who was staring at them.

As the kiss went on—his hand was still holding a fistful of her hair, keeping her positioned exactly the way he wanted her—her entire body started to tremble with anticipation.

From a distance, she felt him release her wrist. He skimmed his fingertips up her arm before dipping to follow the top hem of her shirt. The callused pads of his fingers teased the swells of her breasts before rising. Up to the base of her neck, he didn't stop until his hand covered her neck.

Whenever the ass-her ex-had tried to do the

same thing, she'd freaked. She'd always hated it. But when Kyle did it, her body screamed out for more. With his tongue still possessively in her mouth, staking his claim on her, Leigh silently pleaded for his hand to leave her throat. Not because she didn't want it there, but because she wanted to feel it on her bare breast. She wanted him to reach beneath her shirt, and tease her nipple. She didn't care who was watching.

Hell, right now he could just bend her over and fuck her in the bar and she wouldn't utter a syllable to stop him.

As though he'd heard her silent plea, she felt him moving his hand lower in a slow trek back down her body.

She could feel his fingertips skimming over first the neckline of her shirt, then the lace of her bra. After an eternity, he was dipping beneath the material to caress her flesh—

"Leigh!"

"I didn't do it!" Leigh yelled as she jumped at least three inches out of her chair.

"That is such a guilty look. I don't think I've seen you that red before. I'd almost call it scarlet. Is there any blood left in the rest of your body, or is it all in your face?"

"Um..."

"Fine, I'll behave. I asked you if you were ready to go to lunch."

"Yes. And um, I definitely need chocolate. Lots and lots of chocolate." She so needed to stop fantasizing

about Kyle. But that was even harder to do now that she knew she could. It had been embarrassing as hell asking him if he had a girlfriend, but thankfully he didn't. Now she felt much less guilt when she fantasized about fucking him until she couldn't walk.

"Hmmm," Sally chuckled as Leigh locked her computer. Her voice dropped to a whisper. "Could that be because all women use chocolate as a substitute for sex?"

Leigh felt her face darken. "Um, maybe..."

"Okay, if your face gets any darker, there won't be blood in any other parts of your body. You have got to calm down."

"That's easier said than done," Leigh mumbled. She definitely had to get her mind off her too-sexy neighbor, or these fantasies were going to drive her insane.

"Wherever you were sounds a lot better than where I've been stuck for the last two hours." Sally sighed. "Or even the last two weeks."

"Adam still being stubborn?"

"Yes. I don't know what his problem is. First he doesn't want me to go with him on his weekend of camping. Now he's pissed off because I can't go. I mean, he tells me he just wants to have time with his brothers and now that I've scheduled a chat and promised to have a manuscript to my editor, he wants me to go. I'm sorry that I made plans and he finds out two days before he's supposed to go on his little camping trip that his brothers are bringing their girlfriends. But I cannot just drop everything to go to the middle of the woods." Sally took a deep breath

and slowly exhaled. "So, have you gotten your access back yet?"

It had been a week since Leigh's company had accidentally deleted her user information. "Not yet. But Mr. Green swears I should have it back by Monday at the latest."

"Yeah, but which Monday?"

Both women laughed.

"That's the million-dollar question."

"I have a favor to ask of you." Sally linked her arm with Leigh's.

"Uh-oh. I'm afraid to ask what it is."

"It's nothing horrible. I just have this little chat Saturday night. And I was hoping maybe you would come by. You know, so I don't end up in the chat room all alone, listening to the cyber-crickets chirping."

"Have you ever been alone at one of your chats?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact, I have. It wasn't pretty. At one point I started singing 'one is the loneliest number'."

"You didn't!" Leigh couldn't stop laughing as she imagined her friend singing the song as she typed the words.

"I did. So, you see, you have to be there. At least then we can just gossip."

"We can do that on the phone."

"Come on, Leigh. If you don't have fun, I'll take you to the bookstore for a mini-spree."

Damn her. Sally knew her weakness was the promise of books. "Have I mentioned I hate it that my

friends know me so well?" With an over-exaggerated sigh, Leigh closed her eyes. "Fine. I'll be there. And unless it really sucks...lemons, I won't hold you to the mini-spree."

"You are the best! So, what are you getting for lunch?"

Leigh looked at the hot bar. There were so many tempting choices. Pizza, meatloaf, freshly made BLTs and more. This time her sigh wasn't exaggerated. "A salad. I want to get in shape. And the least I can do is eat healthy. I'm still trying to make myself go to the gym every day."

Sally joined her at the salad bar. "You joined a gym?"

"No. But my complex has one. I've been trying to go everyday so I can work on my pudge. But..." She shrugged. "Half the time when I get home, I sit down, then I think about how much I should go, but that I don't really want to. Before I know it I'm watching Law and Order, then getting ready for bed."

"You know what you should do? Go shopping." "Shopping?"

"Yes. Get a cute workout outfit. Something you like wearing. It'll help motivate you to go. Oh, and maybe buy a cute outfit that's a size too small for you. You'll want to wear it so bad that you'll go to the gym—at least until it fits."

"That is an idea. I'll think about it."

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"Okay, so what should I wear?" Leigh asked Bryna

over the phone as she stood inside her mammothsized closet wearing only a towel. It was one of the things she loved about her apartment. She could fit a single bed inside her closet and still have room to spare.

"What do you have?"

"I have a black skirt that ends just above my knees, black, brown and navy blue skirts that end below my knee—that I use for work, a couple of fun skirts that are ankle-length, and...." She looked at a skirt buried near the back of her closet. "Never mind. That's it."

"I see we are going for a skirt theme. No, not never mind. If you want my help, you tell me what the other skirt is."

"I couldn't wear that in public."

"What is it?"

"A brown skirt. But it ends like two inches below my ass. If I bend over, I'll be mooning the bar."

"And that sounds perfect."

"What? No!"

"Yes. That, and your white lace-up shirt. Oh, and your brown ankle boots. You will have guys crawling all over you."

"I'm going to look desperate."

"You were the one that said you wanted an egoboost. Trust me, in that outfit, you'll get an ego boost."

"I don't know..."

"Hold on."

Leigh could hear Bryna talking in the background, but not exactly what was being said.

"Okay, I just asked Tyler. He completely agrees. Wear that skirt."

"Bryna, I can't..."

"Shut the hell up and put the fucking skirt on," Bryna demanded.

"Yes, Bryna," Leigh said meekly. She pulled the hanger off the pole. "But I am so going to have drinks while I am out, and you are just going to have to deal with drunken phone calls!"

Bryna laughed. "I can deal with that."

"Good. And you better answer when I call." Leigh grumbled as she got dressed.

"Okay. Tyler, Leigh says I have to answer when she calls, so you aren't getting laid tonight."

"Bryna!"

"What? That's what you said."

"Oh no. You totally added the no-sex thing yourself."

Bryna laughed. "Yeah, well, sweetie, I love ya. But I'm not answering the phone if I'm getting fucked."

"Good point. Sorry, Tyler, no sex."

"Are you dressed yet?"

"Almost. Hold on." Pulling the phone away from her ear, Leigh put it down so she could pull her shirt over her head. When it was smoothed into place, she picked the phone back up. "Now I'm dressed. I just need to put my boots on. You do realize I'm going to be tugging on this skirt all night, right?"

"So long as you're doing it at a bar, it's all good."

"Yes, Bryna." Leigh sat down on her bed and pulled her boots on. "And you'll be happy to know I'm on my way out the door as we speak."

"Good girl. Now, let me go. Tyler's grumbling, and if I get off the phone now I can give him a quickie before you get drunk enough to call."

"Have you ever stopped to think that we have some of the strangest conversations?"

"Yeah, we do. Now get your ass out there and don't forget—if a man touches you and you don't want him to, that's called assault."

"I won't forget." Closing her cell phone, Leigh shook her head. What would she do without her friends? For all her bitching, she hoped she'd never have to find out.

After locking the apartment up, she headed for her car. Now that she was in public, second thoughts threatened to overwhelm her. Her friends would never know if she didn't wear the outfit out to a bar.

But she would know. No, she had to do this. If just to prove to herself that she could. Her decision made, Leigh straightened her spine, pulled her skirt down in the back and strode to her car.

She was on her second Alabama Slammer shooter. This was a disaster. Absolutely nothing like how she'd imagined it would be.

Sure, she'd had guys staring at her. She'd even had a couple come over to her and offer to buy her a drink. But they weren't what she'd imagined. She had yet to meet one of the alpha men that Sally always wrote about. Maybe Sally wasn't the one that needed

to get her head out of the books. Maybe what she wanted was unrealistic.

"Is this seat taken?" A young-looking man was standing beside the chair opposite of her.

Leigh looked at him, sizing him up. He wasn't unattractive, but not exactly a guy she'd have approached. His dark hair and eyes were complimented by tanned skin. A genuine smile curved his lips, and she noticed his nose was slightly crooked. To Leigh, it appeared as though it had been broken. Perhaps in a bar fight? Dare she hope?

"Not at all." She returned the smile, taking a chance.

"Do you mind if I sit down?"

"Please do." Okay, so he was a gentleman too. This was promising.

"You're sure I'm not taking someone's seat?"

"Nope." She took a sip of her drink, her hope dimming slightly.

"I can't believe a beautiful lady like you came to a bar alone."

What was so hard to believe? Controlling her impatience, and the desire to roll her eyes, Leigh cleared her throat. "I did."

When the waitress came by, Leigh asked for another drink. Oh yeah, this deserved more alcohol.

"My name is Brian."

"Leigh." She held out her hand to shake his.

The man made small talk. For what felt like the entire time, Leigh wished her cell phone would ring. She wondered if she should go to the bathroom and text Bryna – demanding that the woman call her and

claim an emergency so she could escape. With every word he uttered, her hopes of him being her potential alpha diminished.

"May I ask how old you are?"

"How old do you think I am?" She attempted to soften her question with a smile, then retorted, "How old are you?"

Brian chuckled. "Well, I'm not very good at judging ages. But I'd say you were twenty-three. How old do you think I am?"

Leigh chuckled. "I'd say twenty-five. Maybe twenty-six."

"I'll tell you if you tell me."

"Twenty-nine," Leigh said.

"Twenty-two," Brian shook his head. "I think you're the first person to ever guess I'm older. Are you sure you're twenty-nine?"

"Pretty sure," she giggled. Good. The alcohol was finally starting to kick in. She was only halfway through her third drink. Looking at the almost hopeful look on her companion's face, she knew it was time to cut herself off.

"Would you excuse me for a moment?" she asked, standing up from the table. She exited the bar and pulled Bryna up on speed dial.

"Yes, my dear?"

"Bryna, what am I gonna do?"

"I see the alcohol has kicked in. How many drinks?"

"I'm on my third."

"What are you drinking?"

"Alabama Slammers."

Bryna laughed. "Okay, so what am I supposed to help you with?"

"There's a guy hitting on me." Even she could hear the slight slur in her voice.

"And this is a bad thing because?"

"He's a baby! I think he just turned twenty-two."

"Well, then you can be fairly certain he has stamina..."

"Bryn!"

"Sweetie, what do you want me to say? First you want to get laid, then you don't."

"Bryn, I want to get laid, but I want..." She wouldn't finish that sentence.

"Kyle. And that is probably the exact reason that you should get your ass back in there and talk to this other guy. Come on, think about it. A twenty-two-year-old man hit on you!"

"Bryn..."

"No, I'm not saying take him home and fuck him 'til his legs buckle. But what will it hurt if you talk to him? If you get to know him a little? At least until you sober up enough to go home. Do you need me to come pick you up?"

Leigh shook her head for a minute before realizing her friend couldn't see her. "No. I'll call Sally if I have to." Bryna lived over an hour away. It wouldn't be fair to her to make her drive all that way just to pick Leigh's drunken ass up.

"Okay. I want a phone call when you get home. I want to know you're safe."

"I will."

Hanging up the phone, Leigh reentered the bar. Bryna was right. What harm was there in talking to the guy a little more? If he'd decided to stay at the table by the time she got back. Now that she'd gotten a little bit of fresh air, she could feel herself wobbling as she walked.

To her delight, Brian was still there.

"Sorry about that." This time when the waitress passed the table, Leigh ordered a glass of water.

"No problem. Is everything okay? I can leave if you want me to. I almost chickened out and left while you were gone."

"I just needed some fresh air. I think my drinks all hit me at once. I'm glad you didn't leave."

Brian reached across the table and took her hand in his. He lifted it to his mouth and placed a kiss on it.

Perhaps she'd been wrong. Maybe he was exactly what she needed. It wouldn't be the first time that she'd misjudged someone. Maybe Brian was just shy approaching a woman in a bar. That thought wasn't too outrageous—hell, it was completely plausible.

"So am I."

They talked for a little while longer. Keeping an open mind, Leigh found her companion to be rather charming. Over an hour and a half later, when she felt clear-headed enough to drive, Leigh stood up.

"So, if I give you my number, will you call or text me sometime?" Brian asked, standing with her.

"Yeah, I think I will." She smiled and reaching out, she took a slip of paper from him.

"May I have a hug before you leave?"

"Um, sure." She gave him a hug, then exited the bar.

Climbing into her car, she again pulled Bryna up on speed dial.

"Are you home?"

"I'm out of the bar and on my way home. Can we talk while I drive?"

"Sure. Tell me all about your new boy toy."

"Well, I don't know about boy toy, but he did give me his number."

"Are you going to call him?"

"I think I might."

.

"Wow, sounds like you had quite the night out. Now, don't forget, the chat starts in like ten minutes."

"I won't forget. I'm pulling it up now." Leigh sat in front of her laptop and opened her Internet browser. "I'm on my way to the room now, your highness."

Sally laughed. "That's Author Goddess to you."

"Oh, my most humble apologies." Leigh joined in with the laughter.

"Seriously, is my latest book okay?"

"No, it's better than okay. You're a great writer. Who else has me reading their erotica?"

"You only read it because you're my friend and you love me."

"Well, okay, that's why I started reading it. But I read it because it's good. Why would I lie to you about that? You know I won't finish a book I hate. Plus, look at your sales. You're making a name for

yourself. You have fans, people love what you write. Okay, sometimes I could do without the visuals of you and Adam doing some of the kinky-ass things you write about—but it's still good."

Sally laughed. "Thank you so much. We don't do all of the positions I write about. I don't quite bend that way anymore."

"Ew. And never a problem." And Leigh meant it. Sally was always so calm and poised. She was there for Leigh whenever she was needed. The least Leigh could do for her friend was be at a chat and help calm her nerves.

Leigh was one of the few people that ever got to see Sally less than perfectly confident. And she knew why. Sally put a little piece of herself in her books. It was clear to anyone that knew her and read them—and they probably didn't need to know her to still know the author invested emotionally in her stories. Leigh had read plenty of books that didn't have the soul—for lack of a better term—that Sally put into her work. It was only natural when a person put themselves into something that they be nervous.

"I'm in the chat room. So where, Author Goddess, are you?"

"Um, fashionably late?"

"Try again."

"I'm on my way in now." A second later, Sally's author name appeared in the chat room.

"So, do we hang up now or stay on the phone and talk while we chat?"

"Stay on the phone for a few more minutes at least.

I want to hear more about this guy you met last night."

Leigh told Sally all about the guy she'd met. Much like Bryna, Sally encouraged her to text Brian.

"I'll text him during the chat."

"Okay. But pull up your instant messenger program. I want to know what he says when he responds."

"Don't you mean if?"

"No. When."

Another name appeared in the chat room and both women typed *hi*. Within moments there were about ten other names with them.

"And you said you'd be alone," Leigh teased. "Okay, off the phone so you can concentrate." Opening her instant messenger—the program Sally had insisted she install on her rarely used laptop—Leigh pinged her friend.

Bkworm4life: and yes this is up in case he responds.

Fab_u_lsssss: good.

Bkworm4life: Have I ever told you just how cocky your im name is?

Fab_u_lsssss: Yeah. But I likes it. LOL.

Inside the chat room, the conversation was taking off. Fans were asking question after question the second the moderator announced it had begun.

Dee: Where do you get your ideas? I love your heroes they are so real!

StarrRyder: Thank you. I get my ideas everywhere.

FntsyLvr: Will you give us an excerpt of your next book? The one coming out in a week?

BlueEyez: What genre do you like to write the most?

StarrRyder: I try to write heroes that I would want to read about. LOL.

StarrRyder: LOL – you guys need to slow down a wee bit. LOL.

StarrRyder: FntsyLvr-let me see if I can find one I can post. LOL

StarrRyder: Blue-I like writing contemporaries. I think they are ignored too much by other writers.

The chat went on. Leigh was chuckling as she read the comments and questions. Picking up her phone, she started a text to Brian. After about five minutes of indecision and deleting her texts, she decided to go with a generic 'hi, how are you?' text. That way if he was only being polite, he wasn't really obligated to talk.

To her surprise he responded a few minutes later.

Bkworm4life: He responded!

Bkworm4life: Wow, your chat is rocking. How do you keep all the questions straight?

Fab_u_lssssss: I knew he would. And trust me, it takes practice. LOL.

Fab_u_lsssss: Now, what did you text and what did he respond?

Bkworm4life: Me: Hey Brian. Its Leigh. Just texting to c how u r doing.

Bkworm4life: Him: I was just thinking about u. The bar seems so much darker without u here.

It took Sally a minute to respond. Watching the chat going on, Leigh was amazed that her friend could keep everything straight with multiple conversations going on at once. Leigh felt certain that if it were her, she would probably be typing stuff in the wrong window.

Fab_u_lsssss: Oh! How sweet. What are you going to respond with?

Bkworm4life: I don't know. Um, thank you?

Fab_u_lsssss: Have I taught you nothing?! You have to say something. Have a conversation for goodness sake! You keep

Fab_u_lsssss: complaining that you need someone to replace Kyle. Well, here's your chance chickie! Go for it!

Fab_u_lsssss: And you'd have much more fun in the chat if you joined in.

Looking at the screen, Leigh knew Sally was right. Chewing on her lip, she responded to Brian.

In the chat room, one of the chatters said something that had her joining into that conversation as well.

FntsyLvr: Well, if you ever want to send one of those heroes my way, be my guest. LOL!

StarrRyder: LOL. I think my CP might have something to say about that.

FntsyLvr: Oh! Is she here? Who is she? Who is the

lucky wench?

StarrRyder: Bkwrm. LOL - Sorry girlie, you've been outted.

FntsyLvr: So Bkwrm – can't you share? Help a girl out! LOL.

Bkwrm: Hmmmm. I'll think about it.

FntsyLvr: *pout* Stingy woman.

Bkwrm: roflmao.:-D

Bkwrm: What can I say, I never learned to share.

Okay, so, Sally had been right about that as well. And maybe she'd underestimated herself. She was, after all, following three different conversations herself. And so far so good, she hadn't mixed any of the conversations yet. Of course, it probably did help a lot that one of those conversations was texting.

It took her a moment to respond to Brian. She still wasn't sure she should be doing this. Was she ready for a relationship? Was she ready to be dating? She had always sucked at dating, so, that bit of information didn't help. What if Brian just wanted to get in her pants?

Looking back at the computer screen, the chat had continued on. Leigh scrolled back up to find out what she'd missed while she was in her own little world.

She typed in a few more responses to 'FntsyLvr', trying to play catchup as she supported her friend and laughed.

Her Instant Message program dinged.

Fab_u_lsssss: Too quiet! Brian got your tongue?

Bkworm4life: I'm new at this, I can't keep up with three conversations at once. Lol. At least not with your speed and style.

Fab_u_lsssss: hmmm. Sucking up. What did you text him?

Bkworm4life: Um, I said, that is sweet. Then I commented that he was a smooth talker and sure had a way with words.

Fab_u_lsssss: And he said?

Bkworm4life: He hasn't responded yet. Bkworm4life: Wait my phone just beeped.

Bkworm4life: He responded with Thank you but it's the truth. And I have a way with other things as well. Will you let me show you?

Fab_u_lsssss: Oh, that's sort of cute. So are you going to go out with him?

Fab_u_lsssss: Leigh?

Fab_u_lsssss: Leigh, are you going to go out with him?

Bkworm4life: Your questions are backing up...

Fab_u_lsssss: And they'll keep backing up until you answer me.

Leigh stared at the screen, then her phone. Should she accept? What did she have to lose? What if it was a disaster like it had been with Jim? As she looked back at the screen, she saw people wondering what happened, why Sally wasn't answering anymore.

Bkworm4life: You win. Answer your fans while I stammer out an acceptance.

Fab_u_lssssss: Good girl. And don't forget to post them here.

Bkworm4life: Why am I friends with you? You are so mean to me.

Fab_u_lssssss: You know I loves ya, so Hush and respond. I want to see what you say.

Shaking her head, Leigh wondered why or how she got herself into these situations.

Bkworm4life: Me: How about I give you the chance to prove that you deserve to show me how good you are with other things.

Fab_u_lsssss: You didn't?!

Bkworm4life: I did!I totally will not have him thinking he can just jump into my bed.

Fab_u_lsssss: That was good thinking. Ok, so we'll just wait and see how he responds. I like it. It's sassy. Go

Fab_u_lsssss: head you sexy wench! You are so going to have him drooling from both heads. LOL

Bkworm4life: I cannot believe you said...wait. Yes I can.

Leigh's attention turned back to the chat room.

FntsyLvr: Hmmmm. Bkwrm has been quiet. Maybe she left...

FntsyLvr: Which means maybe I can just sneak off with one of Starr's new heros...

StarrRyder: ROFL. Um, she's still here. I think she's just a little distracted. LOL. This is her first chat.

FntsyLvr: Wow. We popped her cherry? I feel so special now. So, as a reward, I get a hero right? *batting eyelashes*

StarrRyder: Oh that is a good try!

Bkwrm: Um, no. *winks at FntsyLvr* Nothing gets past me. Lol.

She was chewing on her lip, wondering how Brian would respond. Would he like her text? Would it intrigue him? Would he say 'wow, she sounds like a bitch' and never text her again? What if he expected her to keep it up and instead of just being fun he started to expect her to be all domineering and such?

Her brain was working in overdrive. She could feel the anxiety building. What had she gotten into? What if he accepted her challenge? She'd have a date. She wasn't ready to date! Dating involved conversations and...what the hell was involved in dating these days? The last time she'd gone on a date was... Biting her lip harder, she tried to remember if she and the ass had ever actually gone on a date before they got married.

She couldn't think of a single one. More than that, the harder she tried, the harder it was to remember the last time she actually had been on a date.

"No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Not good. I suck at this dating thing," she whined to the empty room. "I'm going to text him and cancel. Something came up! Nope, doesn't matter what day he chooses. Something came up. I have plans I have..." Her phone beeped. "Oh, God, I have a text!"

Opening her phone, she felt her stomach tightening in fear. This wasn't good. Not good at all.

Bkworm4life: Eep!

Fab_u_lsssss: What? What happened?

Bkworm4life: Eep. Eep! And did I mention EEP!

Fab_u_lsssss: What did he say?!?!

Bkworm4life: Him: I would like that. I know its short notice, but what about tomorrow night? I'll admit I really want to see you again.

Fab_u_lssssss: Why are you freaking? That's a GOOD response. Now text him and say "Yes tomorrow sounds wonderful".

Bkworm4life: I can't do this. I was just fooling myself. I cannot do this. No nononononono.

Fab_u_lssssss: Oh for the love of... Accept. I promise I'll call halfway through the date and get you out of

Fab_u_lsssss: it if it's that bad. Ok? You do need to go though. Jeez give the man a chance.

Bkworm4life: fine. I sent the acceptance... Now, if you don't mind... I think I'm gonna go throw up.

Fab u lssssss: ROFLMAO

Leigh wasn't joking. Her stomach was in knots. This was an emergency, and she needed some comforting words of advice. Unfortunately the words of advice she was most likely to get from her friends were more likely to sound like 'grow the fuck up' or 'shut the hell up and go have fun'. Phrases that typically would have her chuckling. She'd realize she was overreacting and all would be right with the world. But right now she was in full panic mode. She really couldn't do this.

Ignoring both of the open chats on her computer, Leigh went outside. She'd get some fresh air, and maybe that would help calm her stomach. At this point, it didn't even matter that she'd be eaten alive by mosquitoes. She just needed to be elsewhere. She didn't even take her phone with her—a rare occurrence indeed.

She sat down on one of the chairs. But not even the beautiful night sky, complete with full moon glowing in the distance, was able to calm her down. Her mind was running a mile a minute—if not faster. She could feel her anxiety growing.

What would she wear?

What if he thought he could have sex with her on the first date?

Should she take money just in case?

What if he tried to kiss her and it was like Jim all over again?

What if things went well and he wanted to see her again? Would he think they were dating?

What if —

"Hey, stranger. Mind if I sit down?"

Leigh's head jerked up as she heard Kyle's voice. It was like a soothing balm to her senses. "Help yourself."

"Are you sure? Maybe I should leave you alone. I don't want to interrupt anything. Especially if you need to be alone."

Looking at him, Leigh had to admit he was incredibly sexy with his closely cut hair and a hint of stubble on his face. Was he growing out a goatee? How would it feel scraping against her skin? Oh, yeah, she was definitely an addict and here was her next hit, standing right in front of her. Would she let

him just walk away? Hell no. She needed this fix.

She stood up and approached him, stopping a few inches short of him. Unsure of where the courage came from, she reached out and grabbed the waistband of his jeans. She tugged him closer. "What I *need* is for you to help me stop thinking for a little while. Will you help me with that?"

Not giving him time to respond, Leigh pulled on his jeans and he followed. She reached her arm higher, her hand resting on the back of his neck. Guiding him lower, she pressed her lips against his. When his tongue entered her mouth—God he tasted better than anything she'd ever had before—Leigh moaned. She pressed her palm against his neck, wanting him closer, as she attempted to unbutton his pants.

What did she care if he fucked her right there? It didn't matter if all of their neighbors saw. The only thing that mattered was that when she was with him, she didn't have to think. Her brain was too overwhelmed with the sensations that he created within her to worry about anything else.

Kyle's mouth left hers and she wanted to complain until she felt him walking her backward. One of his hands had slipped inside her pajama bottoms and gripped her ass as he nipped at her neck.

"Do you think we should go inside?" Kyle asked. Leigh could hear the smile in his voice as she felt him trying to find the doorknob behind her with his free hand.

"Honestly, I don't think I care," she said. Her eyes

were closed and she still felt slightly dazed from his kisses and caresses.

He chuckled and she could feel the vibration of it as she tried to get even closer to him. She stopped fumbling with his jeans to start tugging his shirt upward. He really did not need that on. No matter what else remained, his shirt just had to go.

"There we go," he whispered into her ear as she finally had gotten the entire thing free of his jeans. She smiled, feeling quite satisfied with herself as well. "Watch your step." He guided her backwards and to Leigh's surprise, into her apartment. She wanted to pout. "Now let's see about turning your brain off like you asked."

Ignoring the still-open laptop—which was sure to have blinking squares on the taskbar—and her phone, Leigh released Kyle completely. She was about to rip his shirt off when he smiled and removed it instantly, kicking the door shut behind him. Striding into her bedroom, she didn't look to see if he'd followed her. She knew he had.

When she paused at the bed, rough hands gripped her breasts. She still had her shirt on, but that didn't seem to matter. At least it seemed that he wanted her as badly as she wanted him.

Kyle turned her around and crushed his lips against hers, pressing her backwards. Leigh practically fell on the bed. He continued the kiss and she could feel him removing his jeans. She even tried to help. When he ended the kiss, Kyle yanked on her pants. They easily slid off her hips. She watched, her pussy dripping for him as he dropped them on the

floor.

"Take off your top," he ordered. She instantly obeyed. Kyle reached toward her nightstand, opening the top drawer where she kept her condoms. And her toys. Oh, shit, she'd forgotten to put her toys up. He held one up. Heat flooded her face, and she became wetter—if that was even possible—when she saw it was her biggest vibrator. "We are so going to have to use this sometime."

"Next time," she panted. She really just wanted to feel him inside of her. There was a ripping sound. She wanted to feel him so badly that she didn't even want to stop to suck him into her mouth. "And I am so going to suck that—" Her words were cut off and a moan pulled from her throat as Kyle thrust deep into her.

Just as she'd asked, he cut her brain off. There was no more thinking, just the feel of his back under her fingers, beneath her fingernails as she began to dig her nails into him.

"Oh, God," she moaned out as he continued to pound into her. Kyle lowered his head to her, his mouth kissing her shoulder. She'd never been a moaner before him. Well, unless one counted the times she'd gotten three-sheets-to-the-wind drunk. So drunk she was only one step from the black spots. But those times she'd been too relaxed to care who overheard her.

She hadn't have so much as a sip of anything stronger than water that night—damn diet!—and here she was, not caring if her neighbors heard.

"God, I like it when you get rough with me," she half-whispered, half moaned.

He lifted slightly from her body and positioned his hands on her hips. She felt his fingers digging into her flesh. Oh, there would be marks on her in the morning. But she gasped out encouragement to him.

"Oh, fuck...Yes..."

Kyle's movements sped up, she knew it wouldn't be long before he was out of her and jerking off. That she'd feel his cum landing on her body, and she looked forward to it. "Oh, God," she screamed as an orgasm—how many had she had? Had she even counted?—ripped through her. The second it eased and her muscles relaxed, too sore to move, he was kneeling on the bed beside her. Lifting so she could blatantly watch him, Leigh felt her weak limbs trembling, her pussy dampening in anticipation as his creamy cum arced toward her. It hit her belly, and all she did was fall backward on the bed.

A moment later she felt a towel rubbing against her, cleaning the liquid off of her.

"I never know what to expect when I see you," Kyle chuckled. "I never know if you're going to be screaming like some insane person, smiling like you have a secret, asking me an off-the-wall question, or just attacking me."

"Is that a good thing or a bad thing?" She didn't even bother to lift her head from the bed. She felt too perfect exactly the way she was.

"I'm not sure yet. But you definitely keep me on my toes."

"Okay." She gave a quick chuckle. He was still

coming back for more, so either the sex was good or she didn't scare him too much.

"Did you want to lock the door behind me?"

Damn. That meant she had to move. With a slight groan—from her mouth and her muscles—Leigh sat up on the bed. "I do believe that you, sir, have broken me." She admitted it with a smile.

"Is that good or bad?"

"Very, very good. Mmmmm, when can you do it again?" It took a couple of minutes for her words to penetrate her relaxed and currently obsession-free mind. When they did, she wanted to force herself to stand up and walk on trembling legs to the wall so she could bang her head into it.

"Why don't I give you my number? We can call or text if we want to hook up."

Was it official? Were they fuck buddies? Was this a good thing?

Well, hell, it's not a bad thing!

"Okay. My phone's in the living room."

Very slowly, Leigh followed Kyle out of her bedroom and down the hall. When she reached her phone, she ignored the five texts waiting to be read and the blinking orange rectangle on her taskbar. Opening her address book, she typed in his name then handed it to him to type in his number. After a few seconds, he handed it back.

With a smile still on her face, she nodded, sending an immediate text to his number.

A beep came from his jeans pocket. "And now you have my number too."

"Cool. I'll see you around."

As always, he left without a kiss or any other sign of affection. Leigh was certain that anyone who saw him leaving her apartment would never guess that he'd been buried balls-deep inside her just moments earlier. Well, unless they'd heard her screaming. Shutting and locking the door, she knew it was time to face the music. She had to text Brian and finalize the details of their date. Sally, however, would simply be told she'd get the scoop in the morning.

Very slowly walking back to her bedroom—and still ignoring her computer—Leigh did only what she had to do before collapsing back on the bed and falling asleep.

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"I hope you don't mind Italian food." Brian shifted in his seat.

"Actually, it's great." She was trying to be comforting, but that was hard. She'd agreed to meet him at the restaurant rather than have him pick her up. This way she'd be able to make a speedy exit, if need be.

"So, what do you like to do for fun?"

"I really like to read." Leigh took a sip from the water glass in front of her. "I know it sounds really boring, but I've been a bookworm since I was little."

"No, that actually sounds pretty cool. What kinds of books do you like?"

"I read a little bit of everything."

The topic continued as they waited for their waiter

then placed drink orders—"Just soda for me tonight, thank you."—and ordered their meal.

"What about you? What do you like to do for fun?" There was a smile on her face. She could talk about books all night.

"I body build, read Manga and watch Anime. They have some pretty good series on late at night. They aren't the cutesy ones for kids."

"Really?"

Brian started to talk about Anime, and as much as she really did try to follow him, it all sounded like a foreign language. What made it worse was every time she tried to ask a question, he went off on a tangent about a different show. No matter how hard she tried, she just could not understand what he was talking about.

Finally—thankfully—the food was brought to the table. Taking a deep breath, Leigh sighed. It smelled so wonderful. They began to eat, and the small talk turned to work.

"What do you do?"

"I'm in Data Entry. It's not always the most exciting work, but it is cool. Hey, someone has to do it, right?" She chuckled, then took a bite of her pasta. "What about you?"

"I work in a warehouse. Really long hours, but it's not bad. I have a lot of fun with the guys at work."

After a few minutes of silence, Leigh asked the question that had been nagging at the back of her mind. "What made you walk over to my table the other night?"

"It's going to sound like a total line. But I felt drawn to you. You looked so beautiful and sad. I figured I should take a chance. I'm glad I did."

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At the end of supper, Brian walked Leigh to her car. He gave her a hug and a very gentle kiss. While it wasn't unpleasant, it just didn't give her the same sparks that she felt when Kyle kissed her. When Kyle kissed her, he took her breath away. It felt...she lacked the words to describe what exactly he did to her. When Brian kissed her, it was pleasant. It reminded her of being in high school; of awkward first kisses and crushes.

What made the two men so different? Why did one set her blood on fire and one made her feel so completely out of touch? And what did she want? Did she want passion, or did she want safe? To feel young and desirable, or decadent and adventurous?

She had a lot to think about, and it had been a long, long night. Glancing at the digital clock in her car, she was shocked to see that it wasn't even nine yet. It seemed so much later—and not in a very good way.

Her cell phone rang. It was Sally's emergency call. Just in case she needed to get out of the date.

"You're too late," Leigh chuckled.

"You walked out, didn't you?"

"No, we've had our date. The entire thing, and yes, it's over. He has to go to work really early."

"Wow. That's kind of sad."

"A little bit."

"Was it really that bad?"

Leigh sighed. "No. I don't guess so. He was a perfect gentleman, and—" Whatever she was about to say got cut off by a beep. "I just got a text. Hold on."

When she stopped at a red light, Leigh glanced down at her phone, reading the message aloud. "It's from Brian. He says, 'Tonight was wonderful because it was spent with you. I hope we can do it again soon."

"That is so sweet," Sally said loudly.

"What should I do?" She repositioned the phone against her ear as she spoke.

"What do you want to do?"

"I want..." An image of Kyle and her bar fantasy forced its way to the front of her mind. What I can't have. She sighed audibly. "I'm going to respond." Leigh didn't need to have Sally standing in front of her to know she was shaking her head.

"What are you going to say?"

"That'd I'd like that. To go out with him again, I mean." At the next red light, Leigh typed her text and hit send.

"Do you mean it?" Sally asked, her voice sounding gentle.

"Mean what?"

"That you'd like to go out with him again."

"I had fun. Okay, maybe it wasn't what I thought it'd be, but it wasn't horrible. Brian is a really nice guy. He's funny, and I think I want to get to know him a little better."

"Cool. Well, look, Adam just walked in, so I'm

going to see how his trip went."

"Give me the details tomorrow?"

"Sure will. Have a good night."

Leigh hung up the phone and thought about what her friend had said. Did she mean it? Did she really want to be around Brian again, or was it just something to do?

He really did seem like a nice guy. And she did want to get to know him better.

Glancing down at her phone, she fought the urge to call Kyle. It would do no good to call him. She would simply be getting her next fix. No, she had to resist the temptation and be strong.

"Being strong sucks."

.

Leigh didn't want to be at work. Everything was getting on her nerves. She'd had a severe case of what Sally called 'the anywhere but here's'. That was apparently what one got when—much as the name implies—she wanted to be anywhere but where she was. She'd had it for the past three days.

And it really didn't help that Brian kept texting her.

The texts were sweet enough. But they were getting a little old. Monday he'd sent several texts telling her how beautiful she was. That had her smiling most of the day. What woman didn't want a man to tell her how pretty she was?

Tuesday, he was telling her how much he'd like to feel her in his arms. That was flattering, and she'd

smile off and on.

Wednesday, he was asking permission to kiss her and/or take her to various events.

Now it was Thursday, and she wasn't sure she'd be able to resist the urge to throw her phone if he sent her one more 'Roses pale in comparison to your beauty' text.

Her phone beeped, notifying her that she'd received another text. For a second she stared at it, wondering if it would be Brian—again—or if perhaps it was her ex. She wasn't sure which one she wanted to hear from less. With a drawn-out sigh, she opened the message and bit back a scream.

"Okay, you have got a little too much pent-up aggression," Sally said as she casually leaned against Leigh's desk.

"I can't take much more of this," she muttered.

"This sounds good. So let's not do this here. Come back to my place after work. I'll make us my famous chocolate-chip cookies and you can tell me why you look like you want to play football with your phone." Sally glanced at her watch. "Heck, let's be bad and leave early. It's only twenty minutes."

"Gladly," Leigh said quickly putting items away. She wasn't going to hesitate, not today.

Thirty minutes later, she was leaning against the counter in Sally's kitchen watching as her girlfriend made chocolate-chip cookies from scratch.

After a quick call from her boyfriend, Sally's attention returned to why they were in her kitchen making cookies. "So, what was the text that had you

ready to start screaming? Did the ass send you another picture message? Can we put it on my website with nasty comments about what a whore his girlfriend is?"

That had Leigh laughing. She could totally see Sally doing something like that.

"Hmmm, maybe not. I don't want to get sued. Oh, I know! We can have a caption contest. That way we aren't the ones posting the nasty comments!"

"No," Leigh chuckled, shaking her head. "It's Brian."

"Wow, he's definitely hooked. What did you do to him?"

"Nothing. Seriously, we haven't even really kissed yet." She opened her phone. "His texts are getting... Well, they are a bit much. The last one said—"

Before she could even read the text to her friend, Leigh received another one.

She growled, loudly. "Like this. He says 'How is your day going? I wish we could talk, I miss hearing your voice. But I do enjoy the memory of how your skin felt so silky beneath my fingertips.' What do you say to that?" Leigh growled again, and quickly began responding before her friend could say anything like how sweet he was. "After a day like I've had, I'll tell you what you say..." She typed the message out as she spoke. "You say wow, how do you know my skin feels silky. You didn't feel it. You touched my hand and gave me a hug!" She hit the send button before Sally could stop her.

Flattery was nice, but—and she never would have believed it until she met Brian—there really was such

a thing as too much.

About a minute later, her phone beeped.

"And his response. Great. Just great. Yip-fuckin-ee. 'I apologize for being out of line. I guess I said that because in my fantasy I got to touch more than your hand.' He just doesn't stop! If he gets any more Beta, I'm gonna barf from the sweetness!"

Sally snickered. To her friend's credit, she hadn't stopped making the cookies. Now Leigh felt certain she needed—no, she *deserved* the chocolate more than ever.

"Beta?"

"Oh, come on. You are the writer, for goodness sake. Your heroes are all Alphas. The aggressive guys. The bad boys with a heart of gold that women want."

"Yeah, but you hate them."

Leigh could feel herself blush as an image of having Kyle simply grab a handful of her hair and pull her head back for a kiss in a crowded bar came to mind. "Um, maybe not."

"This I have to hear. But maybe..."

"Fine. I admit it, okay." She interrupted her friend. "I want a man that has balls! I want him to be a man. I want to be with him and know that he is the man in the relationship. Hell, the man on a date! I want him to have a set and not be afraid to go after what he wants!

"I'm so sick and fucking tired of men that go out of their way to show they are caring and sensitive. That want to tell you, 'no, I don't think that's your shade. It makes your skin look a little pasty.' Or guys that—" "Leigh..."

But she paid no attention to Sally. She was on a roll. "Guys that try to tell you that this skirt makes your hips look big, or those shorts just emphasize how fat your thighs are. If I wanted comments like that, I'd take a girlfriend shopping with me! No! If I am out with a guy he needs to have two responses, especially if we are shopping: no, and you look so hot I want to fuck you right now. There, is that easy enough for you?"

"Um, Leigh..."

"But no." Again she paid no attention to her friend. The issues she'd had with her ex-and now with Brian – had bubbled too close to the surface for her to stop. She had to get this out. And it didn't help that she was suffering from Kyle-withdrawals. "They have to try to be caring and sensitive and show that they have a softer side. Softer side, my ass. You know what I want? I want to find the group of women who decided it would be a good idea to take all the little boys who were growing up around them - and all the moms they could get their hands on - and teach them to be pussies! They may as well have cut their balls off, because if what I've been seeing when I'm at the bars are any indication, the men around here have a distinct lack of testicular fortitude!" She practically screamed the last word.

Now that she was finished, she could see Sally covering her mouth with one hand, her body shaking with laughter.

"What?" Leigh yelled.

"I'm sure you guys remember my lovely girlfriend,

Sally. And this charming woman screaming in the kitchen is one of her best friends, Leigh."

Leigh didn't turn around. Her eyes opened as wide as they could go, and so did her mouth. She wondered if she'd ever been so humiliated before.

She could tell from her friend's laughter and the sound of amusement in Adam's voice that not only had he and whomever he had with him heard her entire rant, but they were all male. They had to be male. It was her luck for them to be male. And probably single, and very cute. She just couldn't turn around and face whoever was standing behind her.

"Why didn't you stop me?" Her eyes closed. Yeah, now when it was useless, now her brain decided to kick in and tell her to whisper. She heard at least three different laughs, all from behind her.

"I tried, but you wouldn't listen."

"Come on, guys," Adam laughed. "Let's give the women some privacy, and Leigh a chance to collect herself."

When she was sure they were gone, she opened her eyes. "Sally..."

"You saw me making a double batch of cookies. Didn't that give you any warning that Adam would be bringing people with him?"

"No," she whined. "I thought you were just being nice because I'd had a really bad day. Tell me the truth...how bad was it?"

"It was bad," Sally said with a grin.

"Were they cute?"

"Very."

"Okay, if you will excuse me, I'm going to take this first batch of cookies..." She opened a cabinet and grabbed one of the plastic bowls and matching lid that her friend kept in there. Loading the still-warm cookies inside as Sally spooned fresh dough onto the cookie sheet, she continued. "I'm just taking my cookies—which I have totally and completely earned, by the way—and going. If I'm not at work, you'll know I died of embarrassment. Well, either that or sitting on my couch and eating my weight in ice cream and whipped cream—which I will be stopping and getting as soon as I leave here."

"You don't have to leave..."

"Oh, yeah, I really, really do."

Leigh gave Sally a hug before she put the pan in the oven. "Tell Adam and um, everyone bye for me. And do me a favor? At least give me until Monday before you start teasing me about this."

"Done," Sally laughed.

She tried to exit the house with as much dignity as she could muster. Thankfully at least she managed to retreat without running into any of Adam's guests. At least her luck had been that good.

As she drove to toward her apartment—fully intending to stop as she'd promised and buy at least a gallon of ice cream and the extra creamy and full-offat whipped cream she loved—Leigh wondered how much one woman could take. She'd lost count of how many times she'd managed to completely embarrass herself. Was it a phase, or was this just who she was?

Would she be destined to go around constantly saying the wrong thing until she managed to turn her

flesh into a permanent shade of red?

And what would she do about Brian?

"Yup, these are all things best mulled over while using the cardboard ice cream container as a bowl. 'Cause hey, who needs a bowl when you know you are gonna eat the whole thing anyway..."

Leigh winced when her phone rang. Answering it gingerly—treating the piece of technology as though it were a poisonous snake ready to attack at any moment—she prayed it wasn't Brian. She knew right now it really would go soaring out the window if it were.

"Hey, girl. What's going on?" Bryna asked.

Knowing the other woman would get the entire story sooner or later, Leigh bit the bullet and completely confessed about her most recent humiliation.

As she pulled into a parking space in the semicrowded grocery store's parking lot, she wondered if Bryna would piss herself from laughing so hard.

Part of her really hoped her friend did.

Mext...

Leigh: Drama Queen in Training

Five: Spiderwebs

Supper is never an innocent meal.

After an embarrassing experience, what can a girl do? Leigh has supper with one of the men who overheard her passionate speech.

Has Leigh finally gotten past her bizarre impulse for self-humiliation?

Sandy Lynn

Lynn tries to bring her own sense of humor and style to writing. She loves putting her own twist on old stories.

With a love of Contemporary and Paranormal Romances, she writes books that she enjoys reading.