

The
EDGE



KELLI SCOTT

CATERED
AFFAIR



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Catered Affair

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An Edge Erotica Story

By
Kelli Scott

Chapter One

Chantal Gutierrez loved a kick-ass kitchen even more than chocolate. Well, maybe not chocolate, but something... something less essential than sweets.

Not trusting anyone else's cutting board or counter tops, she chopped the carrots at warp speed on the cutting mat she'd brought from home. Add knives to that list. She liked her own equipment, the weight and feel of it, the familiarity and functionality.

Her partner, Monty, so much more than merely a business partner, hauled a crate of market-fresh produce from their van parked in the underground garage.

Kick-ass kitchen or not, the twelve-floor hike proved to be a pain.

However, the Laytons did have a private express elevator to their penthouse apartment. Layton Industries' annual employee Christmas party extravaganza was a good catering gig to get, considering her and Monty's actual work experience. But they'd established an awesome reputation in a short time, racking up clients by word-of-mouth alone.

Besides, this was about as close to a traditional Christmas as she could get her partner to agree to, him being Jewish and all. She'd resigned herself to attending her family Christmas gathering without him—again—essentially

breaking her holiday heart. The fact he'd compromised and agreed to be in the same room with a Christmas tree for this catered affair was not lost on her. However she did have to listen to his strong opinion about the commercialism of holidays in general.

Winded, he set the last box on the counter, blowing out a breath. "All I have to say is, nice fucking kitchen." He loved a modern kitchen with stainless steel, granite and dark wood.

She preferred a lighter, brighter, sunny work area, like one found in a cottage in the French countryside, including frilly curtains billowing in the breeze. One of many things she and Monty disagreed about. But there was something to be

said for double ovens, an eight-burner cook top, and a Sub-Zero refrigerator.

Chantal glanced around for the weasel-looking guy who'd let them into the apartment earlier. "Ixnay on the anguagelay."

Monty squinted a clueless look in her direction. "What?"

She whispered, "Pig Latin."

"You know I'm not fluent, sweetie." He swatted her rump with a firm, open hand.

She planted her knuckles on her hips, the knife still in her grasp. "Do you remember nothing from culinary school?"

He'd partied hard through his higher education, getting by on raw talent,

charm, and ego, while she worked her tail off in the kitchen. And then he'd worked her tail off in the bedroom. They'd started out as kitchen buddies in school, best friends first and then housemates, pooling their financial resources. One night after too much good food and cheap wine, inhibitions were lost, along with her panties.

Still squinting or squinting again, he asked, "Did they teach Pig Latin in culinary school?"

Wagging the knife at him, also strictly prohibited, she said, "They taught germ and bacteria eradication. So please keep your hands off my butt. Germs. Bad. Bacteria. Bad," she reminded him, just in case he'd been hungover that day of

class. More importantly, butt-smacking appeared unprofessional if someone were to see.

Monty sidled up behind her, wrapping his arms around her waist, also unprofessional. He drummed on her belly like a bongo. “You have the cleanest butt in town.” He planted a wet kiss on her neck that traveled the length of her spine like an express elevator, landing with a splash between her legs. “I should know. Love you, babe.” He ended with smacking her ass again so she’d know not to tell him what to do, and more importantly, what not to do.

Message received. But she’d keep trying anyway, enjoying the push and pull of the relationship. Personal and

business.

She smiled despite his immature approach to—well—everything. His easygoing personality drew people to him. Her included. His cooking brought customers back. Chantal appreciated his many qualities, not the least of which was cooking for a crowd. Or cooking just for her. They served as each other's guinea pigs for virgin recipes. Some experimental dishes made the cut and ended up on their growing menu—others did not.

The weasel returned. Through thick eyeglasses, he peered at her. Looked at Monty next. Followed by glancing at his wristwatch. "We're at T-minus two-hours and twenty-five minutes," he

reported.

Thanks. I needed that extra helping of stress. “Plenty of time.” She smiled pleasantly. “Not to worry.” *Leave that to me.* Worrying and a keen attention to detail, that’s what she brought to the table.

Monty gave Weasel Guy a double thumbs up. He thrived on pressure, chaos, and last-minute disasters he could swoop in and fix with his awesomeness. His weakness balanced her strength or vice-versa. They complimented each other’s styles when they weren’t butting heads.

Weasel Guy left to go about his business of snooping through Mr. and Mrs. Layton’s dresser drawers, or

whatever a personal assistant does in the absence of his boss. *I wouldn't know.* They were the bosses of their business, such as it was. Someday they'd have a restaurant booked days or weeks in advance.

Monty whipped out his sauté pan, tossing it in the air, catching it by the handle on the way down. He flipped the burner on, placed the skillet on the low flame, and dribbled a dollop of olive oil in it. "I love cooking with gas."

He juggled an onion, apple, and lemon while waiting for the oil to heat. Starting out as a street performer, he'd entertained pedestrians and tourists on the streets of New York for spare change before finding his love for cooking.

Creativity flowed through his veins. She envied him that. Showing off, he bit a chunk out the apple each time it passed his lips.

“You’re going to be sorry when you miss that apple and bite into the onion,” she said. “Or worse, the lemon.”

All three landed nicely in his right palm. “That’s the point.” He resumed juggling and biting. “I’m taking a bite out of the big apple. Get it?”

Shaking her head, she ignored him as best she could and continued the prep work. She’d already done as much prep as she could in their meager kitchen at home while he’d watched *Top Chef*, yelling at the TV same as her dad and brothers did while watching college

football.

Men!

He stopped juggling. “Where’s your engagement ring?”

She groaned. “Do you know how many germs hide under a ring?” The same unattractive kitchen attire he rocked made her look like a short, homely man instead of a feisty *chica*. She didn’t mind the chef headdress or the sensible footwear. But she hated wearing gloves. The alternative meant stripping off the ring and short, clean nails without nail polish. End of story.

“It’s bad enough you refuse to take my last name,” he muttered. “Now you won’t wear my damn ring.” He fought a battle they revisited often.

Her traditional upbringing demanded she take his name. And yet, she hesitated, wondering if her reluctance hinged on more than merely the name. She waved her hand at him. "I refuse to give up my identity just because I gave up my heart." *And I refuse to be Chantal Goldblat. Why couldn't I fall in love with a Smith or Jones?*

"We are T-minus two-hours and twenty-one minutes," he sang like a jingle.

She blew out a deep breath. *Thank heaven for men and their short attention spans.* His fuse burned short, but his irritation always fizzled out quickly. Unlike her own short fuse, long memory, and stubborn streak.

Steven Layton stood at the picture window, mesmerized by the scene outside. He watched the snow come down. It reminded him of his TV when the cable went out. He dragged his fingers through his hair.

Alexa broke into his thoughts. “Watching and hoping won’t make it stop.”

“I can dream, can’t I?” Since when had the magic of snow flurries abandoned him? He’d loved snow as a kid, as a college student, and up into his late twenties. He and his wife enjoyed walking through Central Park in the

snow, holding hands. Now the cold, wet, white stuff spelled trouble and inconvenience. “Couldn’t have happened on a worse night.”

She vanished into the shabby hotel room bath, probably to perfect her hair and makeup before dinner. “Pick a better night, Steven.”

“Huh?”

She poked her head out of the bathroom. “Whip out your electro-gadget-thingamajig-calendar and schedule a better night or day or—”

“Don’t start.” When had the magic of their marriage abandoned him? Correction. Them. Their quality time spent together had a shelf life of about fifteen minutes of polite pleasantries.

After that, a quarrel erupted over time spent at work versus time spent at home, or some other related or sometimes unrelated topic. And then there was the silence. The solitude. The separate interests.

Business had taken him from New York to Los Angeles. The prospect of sunshine and an all-expense paid shopping trip gave Alexa the perfect excuse to tag along. On the way back to New York, snow had grounded them in, of all places, Idaho. Las Vegas would have been better. She could go to a show and he could donate some money to his favorite casino.

While in L.A., his wife had lunched with an old college friend then

Christmas-shopped 'til she nearly dropped. Together, at her request, they took in a tour of movie stars' homes. They'd decided to make the trip an early Christmas gift to one another. He'd hoped the mini-vacation would bring them together, or at the very least, get him laid. No such luck.

As always, he'd left her alone too long, worked too much, and generally showed up late to everything she had planned. At least, that's what she'd said right before she'd clammed up and sulked. He preferred to be called a selfish, egomaniacal workaholic. They could have had a knock-down, drag-out fight, he'd sincerely apologize, and then they'd make up the old-fashioned way.

But to be fair, L.A. traffic was a bitch and he had nothing to be sorry for. They were on a business trip. A fact he'd pointed out often.

Steve looked at his watch. "The party should be getting going right about now."

"It's just like you to be missing from your own party," she called out, flippantly.

"Since when is snow my fault?" He'd be the first to admit to being controlling, but he wasn't God or the FAA. Flipping open his laptop, he powered it up.

On mile-high heels, Alexa strolled out of the bathroom looking like the perfect trophy wife. She took his fucking breath away nearly every time he saw her. *Why can't I just say that to her?* In business,

poker, and romance, it's never wise to let an opponent know your true feelings unless you're poised for a fleecing. If she knew he knew she was too good for him, she'd leave, taking half his dough with her. He'd simply let her go—with half his money—if only he didn't love her so damn much.

At first sight. To that very day. Forever.

Why is marriage like warfare?

Alexa had been a debutante. He'd come from a humbler background. She'd been slumming, maybe to rebel against her parents. Who knew?

He'd surprised her, her folks, and himself, by making good on his promise to take care of her in the manner to

which she'd grown accustomed. Somewhere between there and here, her love for him had dropped into a hole in the ground, never to be seen again.

"I'm starving," she said.

He snorted a laugh. She never ate an entire meal, instead snacking on fruits and veggies to keep her trim figure, the same excuse she used to avoid having a baby. His baby. The anchor that would keep her tied to him. A baby would complete her, complete them. Alexa never denied wanting a baby to round out their family. She simply insisted they had plenty of time. Apparently her biological clock ticked louder for him than her.

"I just want to check on the party," he

said.

She swooped in close to him, close to the computer screen. “You can do that?”

Her hot breath beat against his neck, and the short hairs stood on end in response. The scent of her expensive perfume snaked a path to his brain.

“Yeah. It’s that new security system we installed after the neighbor’s break-in last month.”

Alexa groaned. She made no secret of her disdain for the alarm she routinely set off by accident.

Despite a doorman, an on-duty security guard 24/7, and cameras on every floor, a neighbor had been robbed, and with Steve gone so much, that scared the shit out of him. He pressed a key and

the screen filled with an image of the penthouse elevator.

Pointing, he said, “There’s Mallory Dunlop from accounting. I think that’s her boyfriend.” He waved hello at the screen like a jackass.

Laughing, she swatted his arm. Her laugh lightened the weight he always carried. The burden to stay on top, to make another buck. All he really wanted was to make her happy.

He pushed a button. An image of their living room, the gas fireplace ablaze with holiday ambiance, replaced the elevator scene. The giant Noble fir by the picture window, decorated with gold balls and matching bows, lit with white lights. Very elegant. So classy and

stylish. Terribly boring. Nothing like his childhood holidays with handmade ornaments and blinking multi-colored lights. Tasteless, Alexa had said. He surrendered to her on all things decoration-related. Furniture, art, window treatments. Hell, she even picked out his clothes so he wouldn't come off looking on the outside like the nerd he was on the inside.

All fell into her field of expertise. She'd created visual magic even when they'd been penniless newlyweds. Back when she still smiled at him, laughed with him, and talked to him.

People mulled around *their* apartment, chatting, mingling, and nibbling on catered food in their

absence.

“The food looks magnificent,” she said.

Better than what they’d likely get in the hotel restaurant. “A good time will no doubt be had by all. With or without us.”

“I feel like a voyeur.” Her voice jingled with giddiness.

He shrugged and clicked to their master bedroom. “Our place. Our party.”

Dan Schnelling from sales had his tongue down the throat of an administrative assistant as they rolled across the king-size bed. One of Dan’s hands snaked up the gal’s blouse, the other up her skirt. Knowing Dan, if he had a third hand, it would be in his own

pants. The guy was a womanizer and hedonist. Deep inside, Steve sort of envied him his debauchery while simultaneously condemning his actions and his constant bragging about his conquests. Steve never regretted committing to one woman. *Alexa*. If he had it all to do over, he'd marry her again, but doubted she'd sign on if given the choice.

“Ew!” Her face puckered up in disgust as the couple grappled and groped in their private space.

Whipping out his electro-gadget-thingamajig, as she called it, he scrolled to Dan's number and cleared his throat. “Hey, Dan,” he said when Dan found his buzzing phone under the woman's butt.

“Get the fuck off my bed and out of my bedroom.” He hung up.

Alexa laughed as she watched Dan on the screen, flustered as all hell. “Too fun.”

Steve grinned, satisfied he could make her laugh again like he had in college and in the early days of their marriage before he’d switched to making money. “Still hungry, honey?”

“Yeah.” She planted her hands on his shoulders, which surprised him a little. “But I want to go to our virtual party instead. We could order room service.”

“It’s on a loop.” He boldly placed his hand over hers, going so far as to give her fingers a little squeeze. “We can watch the fun and festivities later.”

Chapter Two

Monty worked *it* hard, starting to sweat a little, due only in part to the hot kitchen, the gas fireplace, and all the warm bodies in the apartment. He loved an audience, all the laughs feeding his ego. People always said he'd missed his calling as an actor or standup comic, choosing the culinary arts instead. He'd had a hell of a time in high school, always acting out to be noticed. In his opinion, even bad attention was better than none at all. Until he'd gotten expelled and his parents had driven him out of the house and onto the streets with all their rules and punishments in

response to his antics.

In retrospect, not the smartest or easiest path, but it eventually led him to cooking, and more importantly, to Chantal.

He flipped food onto serving trays with a spatula, dealt plates like cards, and his claim to fame—juggling. He'd juggle food, plates, glasses or utensils—whatever. She hated the showmanship, but loved the man. She wanted to be known for great cooking, but lots of chefs cook great food. She said he didn't trust his own culinary talent.

Dinner and a show were their forte. Everyone needed a niche. And the Laytons had a great kitchen for entertaining. Open. Elegant. Efficient.

The guests were just buzzed enough to enjoy his antics. Too bad Mr. and Mrs. Layton were snowed in. They were missing a great party. He guessed the employees would be a little less drunk, and a lot more reserved, if the big boss were around.

For the most part, Monty behaved. Not an easy task, working side-by-side with his sexy, red-hot chili pepper, Chantal. Black braids hung behind his fiancée's shoulders, and even with a colorful bandana around her head, and the baggy, unflattering double-breasted chef's whites, she looked too cute not to marry. If she'd have him. In a moment of weakness, she'd said she would, even if she refused to wear his ring or take his

name. He suspected a bad case of regret on her part.

He decided to stop focusing on what she wouldn't wear and start focusing on what she did wear. Bikini undies and a matching bra. Party panties. He gave his fingertips a mental kiss in homage to her lingerie. She wore it to compensate for the uniform she found unflattering, and he remained one-hundred percent on board with her efforts, and determined to tell her so very soon.

The party stragglers wandered home around midnight. Monty and Chantal were already well on their way to full-on, cleanup mode. She was famous for cleaning and packing as she went along. Efficient, just like the kitchen. He was

the mess maker. Together they made a great team, and not just with cooking.

Mr. Willard killed the gas fireplace, switched off the tree, and searched the house for squatters, then stopped where the hardwood met Italian tile, and glanced at his watch. Glanced at the two of them next. He let his impatience speak for him. A top-heavy, tipsy woman waited by the front door, her burgeoning cleavage nearly bursting from the neckline of her party dress. Willard would want to hit that before too long... before the woman crossed back over the line to rational thought. Twenty to thirty minutes by Monty's estimation. After a short stint as a bartender, his intoxication-detection skills were more

accurate than a blood alcohol test.

Shrugging, he said, “We’ve got a ways to go before we’re packed up.”

Mr. Willard, looked at his watch again, followed by tipsy chick, probably calculating her potential sobriety ratio index, too.

Monty mouthed, *Twenty to thirty minutes*, including hand signals in case his lip-reading skills were rusty.

“Go on.” Chantal didn’t care for the scrutiny of others while she toiled. They made her twitch. He would put Weasel to work washing dishes, and tipsy chick, too, if they were in such a damn hurry to be rid of them. “We’re insured and bonded,” she added, whatever that meant.

She took care of the business side of things for good reason. He simply wanted to cook for a wad of cash—preferably under the table. She insisted on running everything on the up-and-up, including a business license and keeping detailed records of their income and expenses on spreadsheets and graphs.

“And there’s a big, burly security guard downstairs,” Monty reminded him, just in case the Weasel worried about them making off with the good silver. Not that he’d seen any.

“I’ll return in an hour to check,” he said in a stern tone.

Tipsy giggled. “No, you won’t.”

“I’ll be back. Later.” He handed them a check with the final payment for the

catering. “But if I’m not, here’s your fee. And I know how to find you.”

Monty pointed to Chantal. “She’s the money handler.” He cared little about money. A roof over his head, food in his belly, and her by his side; that’s all he wanted. And maybe a kick-ass kitchen like the one he’d worked in that night. And a big flat-screen TV. Oh yeah, and his own little bistro somewhere he’d be appreciated, respected, and worshipped.

Is that too much to ask?

Weasel marched to the elevator, pushed the button, and waited for the ding.

Tipsy put her finger to her lips and whispered, “He won’t be back.” She pulled a pair of handcuffs from her purse

and rattled them before stepping onto the elevator.

“Cute couple,” Monty said, once the doors slid shut. “I think that’s a love connection.”

“A match made in heaven.” Chantal gagged and mimicked puking then held out a bag of garbage to him. “Would you run the trash to the chute?”

“Sure, babe.” Her way of getting rid of him. He’d play along, taking his time returning.

They both knew without him underfoot, cleanup would be easier. Same with the packing part. Everything had a place and everything needed to be in its place, according to Chantal, the organizational guru. Left up to him, he’d

toss everything haphazardly in the box and bolt.

By the time he returned, she'd tossed her butcher's jacket aside, wearing a tight, pink, spaghetti-strapped shirt. Her dark skin against the top and the patch of belly peeking above the white drawstring pants, reminded him of Neapolitan ice cream. Which would have gone great with the cakes, pies, cookies, and pastries she'd baked for the party.

I think I'm hungry.

“You were amazing tonight.” Fusing his body to hers, he kissed her nape. She felt so good, warm, soft, like the comfort of home after a long, hard day. The scents of rosemary and lemon mixed

with her natural scent of fresh, clean soap. He ignored the bleach smell. “That check will go a long way in getting us that little restaurant we’ve been dreaming of.”

He dropped kisses on her neck, shoulders, and jaw then fanned his fingers out, one hand on her flat stomach, the other tilting her face in his direction for a kiss.

“Behave, Monty.” Her words told him to stop, but her breathlessness and fluttering eyelashes told another story. Working together always gave them a sexual rush. “You heard the Weasel say he’d return. I need all fifty-nine minutes to get this place clean. Unless you’re going to help.”

“I’ll take these crates to the van.”

“That’s a start.”

With the right motivation, they were cleaned, packed, and ready to go in less than twenty. Without a doubt, Weasel would not be returning anytime soon. Just to be sure, Monty disabled the elevator with a push of a button. The security guard would buzz them if anyone wanted up. Maybe someday he and Chantal would have a fancy-schmancy apartment with a private elevator. Wouldn’t his family be surprised? Then his dad would be forced to admit he wasn’t a good-for-nothing bum after all.

His stomach growled, breaking into his thought of the future and the past.

Monty was still hungry. Hungry for Chantal. Sure they'd make a mess, but sometimes a mess was unavoidable for the right dish. And she was the right dish.

She stood, knuckles planted on her waist, surveying the clean kitchen. "You did good, Monty."

"We," he reminded her. She never gave herself enough credit. Chantal was every bit the chef as him and twice the—everything else.

She smiled and bobbed her head. "We did good."

He pulled the tie on her white uniform pants. They were so baggy, probably a pair of his, judging by the way the cuffs were rolled up. They fell to the floor

around her ankles. “I’m not done cooking yet.”

“The Laytons could come home at any minute,” she whispered.

“Why are you whispering, babe?”

Lifting her effortlessly, he plopped her on the kitchen island. She hissed. Monty didn’t apologize. Life was all about hot and cold, hard and soft. Nothing made one more alive than hot oil splattering or cold stainless steel slicing into skin. Not that he’d ever hurt her. Far from it. He was always Johnny-on-the-spot with the first-aid kit for her. Him, he’d power through the pain, fueled by the hurt. To him, the culinary warrior, cooking was like the field of battle. If not for her, he wouldn’t bother with a first-aid kit.

“I just cleaned this island,” she complained.

“Of course you did.” He zoomed in, stealing a sensual kiss that spiraled into a mind-numbing necking session. “I’d never expose your pretty, pink pussy to a dirty surface.” Talking about her sweet privates in the crudest way possible hardened his dick. His for the taking, in any way he desired.

She chuckled, and clutching his face between her hands, planted a kiss on his lips. A job well done and a big, fat check in her pocket always brightened her disposition. And he wasn’t above capitalizing on her happiness. Spreading her thighs, she wrapped her legs around his waist, locking her ankles, pulling him

close. His cock rested firmly against her hot cunt. He pressed. She moaned. Work time was over. Playtime had begun.

He loved playtime. "This kitchen is sexy."

"Super sexy." She said something in Spanish that sounded extra sexy, although she might have been calling him an idiot for all he knew.

"English, please." Although he loved to hear her foreign mutterings.

"Fuck me."

They kissed, tongues twining in swirling warmth and wetness. Monty groped her ample flesh. His mouth watered in anticipation at the mere thought of kneading the firm curves of her hips and kissing her soft, naked skin.

He never tired of her abundance. His Chantal was a lot of woman in a tiny package, spilling out in all the right places.

She reached for the ceiling and he peeled her T-shirt away, tossing it aside. He cherished the act of stripping, assisting as needed.

He laid her out on the island and she gasped, arching away from the surface. Unhooking the front clasp of her hot pink bra—slowly, she tortured him with anticipation. Her dark nipples jutted toward the ceiling once she'd treated him to the big reveal. Monty leaned closer, palming a breast in each hand in a gentle squeeze, while dropping wet kisses on her abdomen. He rubbed her

rock-hard nipples with his thumbs and she moaned, placing her hands over his.

He broke the connection. “Don’t move.”

She relaxed into the stone. “Where would I go?”

True, he had the van keys and the driver’s license. She preferred public transportation for her personal needs. Plus, she happened to be topless.

Monty rummaged through a bin of produce, spices, and sauces. All the ingredients left over from the party. He loved food. *Loved her.* Loved creating and experimenting with it, and her. Opening a container of party leftovers, he found a cupcake with Chantal’s signature buttercream frosting. He

picked it up and inhaled the sweet-scented confection before turning it upside down and twirled the topping on one taut nipple and then the other.

“I love your cupcakes,” he murmured, following behind the icing, swirling his tongue around the peak of her nipple, lapping up the buttery goodness made sweeter by the taste of her warm skin mixing with the sugary concoction.

Her mouth opened expectantly. He touched the cupcake to her lips so she could taste the pastry. “Yum.”

“You’re an artist, babe.” Monty dragged his finger through what remained of the frosting, wiping the creamy topping along her abdomen, between her breasts and all the other

areas he hankered to sample. Marking his intended path for her to anticipate.

Chantal's chest rose and fell. "You're the artist."

After painting her skin, he used his lips to clean up. He traced a meandering trail through the peaks and valleys of her body. Hips. Thighs. Neck. His hard cock ached to be free. He licked his way to her lips, giving her another taste of icing, tangling his tongue with hers.

He smiled, cherishing her coos and whimpers of ecstasy, sliding his mouth down her torso to follow the trail. "I have a sweet tooth tonight," he whispered against her inner thigh. She spread her legs wider, begging without words for him to lick a path between

them, but it was way too soon for that.

No harm in teasing her a little though. Dragging her closer, he ground her center along his erection.

“Oooh.” She arched and pushed hard into him.

His brain couldn't decide what to do with his hands. One hand caressed her breast, the other stroked the panel of her panties still covering her warm pussy. Peeling them off might be his undoing. Every time he eyed the pink perfection between her legs, his cock twitched in her direction like a divining rod. “I'm rock hard for you, babe.”

“So fuck me already,” she begged. “I'm suffering here.”

He pressed his palm to her cunt in a

circular motion, rolling her folds beneath his hand like pastry dough.

“Oh, yes.”

Reaching into his box of tricks, he pulled out a huge cucumber. He winked.

“Oh no, you don’t,” she protested, wide-eyed with alarm.

Chapter Three

Alexa stabbed the keycard into the slot and turned the doorknob. Nothing.

She hated those damn things, never getting the hang of it. Her fantasy—to put the keycard through an industrial-strength shredder, personally smash the remaining shards with a sledgehammer, then mail the pieces back to their cruel inventor with a terse note touting the virtues of good old-fashioned keys. She tried again to no avail.

Add debit cards, email, and her cell phone to the endless list of things she couldn't get the hang of. Anything electronic or automated. Although she

had to pretend it all came quite naturally. Only Steven knew of some of her trepidation, and she resented him for it. He'd do it all for her, programming shortcuts instead of forcing her to overcome her anxiety. She resented him for that, too.

“Let me.” He took the card from her hand and pushed through the door of the cheap airport hotel room with no trouble at all.

Their travel agent advised them never to stay in a hotel beneath the standard of their own home. They hadn't been given much choice under the circumstances. Current circumstances being a snow storm.

“That was fun,” he said.

“Yeah, it was.” Alexa smiled, her insides warming and melting, unlike the precipitation outside. They’d laughed and talked more in the last two hours than they had the entire trip. He’d been charismatic and attentive, going so far as to turn off his cell phone at the dinner table—a Christmas miracle. Or maybe he had no signal. “I can’t remember the last time we went out to dinner together.”

“What do you mean?” he protested. “We just went out a couple weeks ago.”

“With your clients.” She’d had to be guarded, and charming, and pretend to be interesting as well as interested. It felt more like an exam she hadn’t studied for than a social function. Only he knew

of her chronic anxiety, but she hid it well in most situations by avoidance, or any means available. *I cope.*

He shrugged. Steven came off as interesting, if not charming. He was too clever for his own good sometimes, always the smartest guy in the room. So smart, people had to wonder why he'd married her. Had to be her looks, which would fade. She'd rather be talented, intelligent, or gifted, and yet she clung to her looks with a tightfisted death grip. Padded pushup bras were her best friend, along with wrinkle creams and Pilates class.

She kicked off her high-heeled pumps. "I wonder if the party is over."

She'd thought about the party off and

on through dinner. When Steve's company was a start up, they'd celebrated the holidays with a potluck at the office after hours. As business became better, she played hostess, making all the food herself. The last few years, she'd farmed the entire ordeal out to a caterer and been all the happier for it. But entertaining stressed her, even without the cooking. Catered fare was also a reflection of her taste and status, so she never scrimped or cut corners.

Steven sat down at the computer. Wagging his eyebrows at her, he said, "Let's see, shall we?"

He loved his gadgets and technology. His business revolved around innovation. Layton Industries

manufactured a widget or gizmo for computers that did something or other she couldn't grasp. Operating her phone she could handle, but mastering the finer points of texting or taking a photo from her phone and posting it online to share eluded her. She pretended not to care about social media, as if above such time-sucking gizmos. When in reality, they were above her. Steve tackled their home theater system, voicemail, and all things Internet-related.

His fingers flew across the keyboard at warp speed. "Here's where we left off before dinner."

She pointed at the screen. "Who is that?"

"That's Dave from R&D. Research

and development,” he added when she wrinkled her nose at him.

She much preferred meeting his employees via hidden camera, rather than meeting them in person. She’d gone to college, but felt so dumb around *them*. Shallow. Never knowing what to say.

“Is that his wife?” Wives were more her style. They could chitchat about fashion, movies, or books, if they were into that sort of thing. Alexa had little in common with most of the women, also smart, who worked for Steven. He sought out the best of the best for his company, surrounding himself with the finest minds money could buy.

“Yes.” He tapped the screen. “Rhonda.” He had a great memory for

names and faces.

“Pretty dress.” That’s what she’d say if she were there, although the party was probably over. They viewed a recording of it, Steven had explained at length over dinner. “She’s young.”

“They’re both young. Starting a family soon.” He cleared his throat and grabbed a chair, pulling it close. “Here. Sit.”

His baby jab hit home, landing heavily in the pit of her stomach. She lowered into the chair. “I wish I could get a better look at the food.”

She’d blown off the party planning for too long that year and should have delegated the entire affair to Steven’s assistant years ago, but she feared they’d serve pigs in a blanket and force

everyone to suffer through one of those white elephant gift exchanges. He would love it. Maybe his employees would as well. In an effort to provide an elegant affair for his staff, sometimes she suspected her parties lacked an element of fun and frivolity.

She sighed.

Her usual caterer had been booked solid through December by the time she'd called. She'd taken a chance on Catered Affair, letting the couple charm their way into the job with optimism only the young could afford.

Steven zoomed in on the buffet table of exquisite finger foods. "How's that?"

"Looks scrumptious. The food. The presentation. Everything." She cringed

when someone spilled red wine on her oriental rug. The caterer, Chantal, fetched a washcloth. On her hands and knees, she blotted at the stain with club soda, the same thing Alexa would have done. The party rested in good hands. She'd chosen well, surrounding herself with the cream of the crop. "No sound?"

"Nope. Sorry, honey."

He fast-forwarded through the party, stopping whenever she asked. Alexa wished she had the same opportunity to zip through the real thing sometimes. Watching it in double time like a fly on the wall was fun.

Pointing at the screen, she asked, "Do you think that girl knows Mr. Willard can see right down the front of her

dress?”

“Don’t you gals always know?” he asked, his voice wry.

“Yes.” She tilted her head. “I suppose we do.” Sitting so close, he brushed up against her every so often. A tingling rush of nostalgia coursed through her, reminiscent of their college days when he’d accidentally touch her at the library as they studied, although he later admitted it hadn’t always been an accident. Were his touches now on purpose?

Steven threw his hands in the air. “I can’t believe Willard is leaving the caterers in the apartment alone.”

“Maybe he’s just giving the drunk girl a ride home.” She patted his thigh. “I’m

sure he'll return."

"He's giving her a ride all right," he mumbled. Fast-forwarding some more, he scanned for Mr. Willard's return. "See." He pointed at the screen. "This is a perfect example of why you can't leave people alone in your apartment."

Her mouth dropped open and salivated a little. The caterer—Monty, if she remembered his name correctly—was a strapping man, his face full of character. He'd been a real charmer the one time they'd met. Chantal was nothing, if not spirited. Their mischievous foreplay in her gourmet kitchen made her skin prickle. "Did he just...?" She gasped. "Are they going to...?"

Steven banged his fist on the desk.
“Yes!”

“Do they have any idea how porous that granite is?”

“I...I...well...I suppose,” he stammered. “They are professionals.”

She scoffed. “Professional what?”

He hit a button, and the screen went dark. “I’m sorry you had to see that, sweetheart.”

With the push of a single button, he’d stopped the prickling sensation of her hair standing on end with anticipation. The delightful rush of excitement ended. She’d rather enjoyed the zing of watching the couple kiss and fondle each other the way she and Steven used to do. “Turn it back on!”

“Uh...okay.” He did, albeit with some reluctance. Glancing between her and the screen, he hovered his fingers over the keyboard at the ready to end the peepshow.

She pointed at the screen. “What is that?”

He zoomed in again. “Cupcakes.”

“Oh!” She clutched his bicep through his dress shirt, and hard muscles flexed beneath her grasp. He routinely exercised his body as well as his mind. “She makes cupcakes that are to-die-for. She brought me some samples.” All her samples had been yummy, one of the reasons Alexa took a chance on the couple.

“They look good.” He cleared his

throat and glanced at her out of the corner of his eye. The fact that his gaze slid down her form to her red polished toenails, slowly returning to her eyes, was not lost on her. His stare nearly tapped her on the shoulder and begged for her attention. “They’re huge. Fluffy. Decadent.”

Fattening. “They look like they’re holding their shape despite the late hour.” Chantal had probably made them the morning of the party or even the day before. “Icing looks immaculate. Or well, it did...until he...you know....”

“Smeared it all over her tits and licked it off?” Steven thankfully finished the thought for her.

She giggled at his crudity. The same

crudity she often admonished him for. He'd grown up in an entirely different world from hers, and she'd tamed him over the years, but the foul language crept back from time to time.

Her skin went from prickling, to tingling, to searing in six-point-five seconds. One more swipe of *his* tongue on Chantal's nipples and Alexa would sizzle, pop, and vanish in a puff of smoke. "Yeah." She wrapped her fingers around Steve's necktie, pulling him close, and crashed her mouth into his.

He reminded her of a guy on a ledge losing his balance, flailing his arms, fighting to keep from falling. He recovered quickly, steadying by grasping her arms and matching her kiss for kiss

just like in the good old days. Their kisses smacked right, left, and center. His tongue broke through to explore her mouth. She bit at his lips, her grip tightening on the tie and yanking sideways.

“Honey, you’re choking me,” he complained in a strangled plea, his hand coming down on the pause key of his computer, freezing the action. “Strangulation is not as arousing as it’s made out to be.”

Letting the tie loose, she hiked her skirt up her thighs and straddled his lap, clamping her legs tight around him. Her crotch pressed along his erection through their clothes. She grasped the nape of his neck, drawing him to her. He didn’t try

to escape. On the contrary, he grasped her ass with one hand, kneading and squeezing.

Alexa shuddered from the warmth and strength of his touch in a flood of nostalgic memories. His other hand cradled her face tenderly, contradicting the sheer force of his kisses.

“Steve,” she muttered, roaming a hand through his hair. “I’ve missed your touch.”

“Really?”

He looked so handsome. Time was cruel to women, more forgiving to men. A little graying at his temples told the world he had experience under his belt. The extra inch around his middle came from living the good life and all that life

had to offer—fine food, good liquor, and a job using his brain, not his brawn. He did have an impressive grip on her breast though. His thumb pressed hard into her nipple as though it were an *on* button, engaging a twinge that reverberated through every nerve ending.

“Really,” she confirmed with another scorching kiss.

She slid to her knees on the floor, unfastening his trousers with shaky hands. *When did I get so bad at this?* She was out of practice. At least he didn’t insult her by offering to help or do the unfastening for her. Steve tossed his head, dragging a hand over his face and groaned when she eased the zipper

down. His free hand swept the curtain of hair from her face.

While she yanked his pants off his hips, Steve unknotted his tie, slinging it across the room. His erection sprang from his boxer briefs, ready to perform.

“Oh, Christ,” he mumbled when she petted the soft skin. He worked at the buttons of his shirt. “Please.”

She gave his cock a gentle squeeze. “Please what?”

“Yes.” He hung his head again as if unable to watch without exploding.

Part of her wanted him to look away in case she botched this up or looked like an inept school girl giving her first blow job. Deep inside she needed him to watch her every move, savor his

pleasure with all his senses, craving his approval.

She swiped her lips along the head of his cock to taste the drop of dew clinging there.

“Just as I remember.”

His fingers tangled in her hair, pulling taut at the roots, just enough to get her attention. Not enough to hurt.

She swirled the tip of her tongue around the rim of his cock head, squeezing her fingers tighter around the root, torturing him. Slowly she slid her mouth along his shaft, returning equally slow. He breathed in deep as she skimmed down, breathing out as she glided up. Together they developed a nice little rhythm of licking and

breathing. It sounded to her from his labored inhalations that he had the tough job.

He tapped the keyboard, bringing the picture on the screen to life. She didn't appreciate his interest wandering to the computer, needing his interest on her mouth closed around his shaft. It hadn't felt like she'd had his full attention since their college days. Back then Alexa had him wrapped around her little finger. Letting her feelings about his wandering eye be known, she skimmed her teeth along his length.

"Careful." He flinched a little. "He's smearing icing all over her now. Breasts. Torso. Hips and thighs."

"Is he licking it off her again?" She

hauled her tongue up one side of his thick dick as if he'd been frosted.

Drawing in some air, he hissed, "Yes."

"Do you wish we had some frosting?" she asked, her voice smoky with desire.

"Do you?"

Swallowing his shaft again, she hollowed her cheeks and sucked his length as she withdrew. "I like the way you taste just fine."

"You won't believe this." A laugh rumbled low in his throat. "He just pulled the biggest fucking cucumber I've ever seen from a box."

"What?" She poked her head up. "I wish we could hear what they're saying."

He snorted a laugh. “She’s saying *over my dead body* by the look on her face.”

“That cucumber isn’t that big.”

Her caterer closed her mouth around the cucumber, same as she’d wrapped her lips around Steven’s cock seconds earlier. Mimicking her, she drew him deep into her mouth, same as Chantal took the cucumber. He moaned.

They watched for a few more seconds that ticked by like minutes. Alexa followed the caterer’s lead, doing to him whatever she did to the vegetable. Hopefully she wouldn’t bite into it.

Pointing at the screen, he said, “How ’bout that banana? In your expert opinion, is it big?”

She let Steven's cock drop out of her mouth. "He's not going to...?"

Chapter Four

Resting her heels on the ledge of the kitchen island, Chantal snapped her knees shut when she saw the monstrous vegetable.

“If it’s bigger than your cock, it’s not going in my pussy.” A line needed to be drawn somewhere. Monty had no boundaries, sexual or otherwise.

He dragged the cool, smooth cucumber along her collarbone, detouring around the curve of her breast, making a U-turn to cut a path between her breasts.

She giggled when he skimmed it along her lips. “Mmmm.” Snatching the green

monster from him, she licked it, pretending it was his cock then feathered her overheated skin with it. To drive him mad, she wrapped her lips around it, shoving it in her mouth. She could put her entire fist in her mouth, although she did have small hands. Or so she'd been told.

He watched without blinking as she worked the cucumber in and out, licking and sucking, twirling her tongue around it.

“How do you feel about bananas?” From his fingertips, he dangled the big, yellow fruit.

She told him exactly how she felt about bananas although her mouth was full and she sounded like a gagged

hostage begging for mercy. But her protest made him chuckle.

Sliding the veggie back out, she said, “They’re very curved.” She wrinkled her nose at him, because her vagina wasn’t curved. It wasn’t meant to be. “Beeeeeeep. You lose. Try again.”

If he produced an eggplant from that crate, she’d tell him what he could do with it.

He always joked about sticking food up her vagina. Chantal assumed it was a form of word play—all in good fun—a fantasy, and tried to play along. But he’d had her plenty worked up when he’d frosted her earlier, and during the subsequent tongue action.

Monty pulled a zucchini from the box.

Holding it up, he wiggled his eyebrows.

She whimpered. He knew she had an affinity for the underappreciated vegetable, liking it fried, raw, dipped in ranch dressing, in bread, cookies, you name it—she liked it. And he must have picked it out special because it wasn't bigger than his cock. Longer maybe, but not too much thicker except possibly at the head. Slowly he circled the island, stalking her. "You wouldn't."

Stopping at the end of the kitchen counter, he eased her knees apart and drew a knife from the block on the counter.

"Oh, you better not," she warned.

He could be so selfish, doing as he pleased, begging for forgiveness later. A

true narcissist in every sense of the word, loving himself nearly as much as she loved him. She always caved to his wishes. Eventually. Just once or maybe twice, she'd like to be in the spotlight... the star...the object of his obsession instead of vice-versa.

He snipped her panties, one side followed by the other.

“Do you have any idea how much those cost?” Chantal complained.

Shrugging. “Mine are three pair for twenty bucks.” And that's about all he owned. Three pair. He tossed her ruined panties in the direction he'd thrown her top and slid the knife into the holder, sending a shiver down her spine. “Stop your whining. We just got a big, fat

check. I'll buy you a dozen pair."

Hello! That money is to pay bills, and the rest goes into savings. "I guarantee, Monty, you try to stick that zucchini up my cunt, there'll be hell to pay." Molesting veggies had to be a sin punishable by eternity in produce purgatory.

He twirled the zucchini around in his mouth seductively, wetting it. She didn't believe her own threatening words. Her chest heaved with excitement. Anticipation. Fear and longing of the unknown nagged at her. His kitchen skills always excited her.

"This zucchini should be so lucky." He petted the tuft of hair between her legs.

Now we're talking. Her thighs fell open for his fingers, and hopefully for his kisses. Why men prided themselves on the size of their dicks, she'd never know. *Gimme a long, wide tongue any day.*

For all his dirty talk, at the end of the day, he was just a basic guy with basic guy needs. The pad of his finger trailed a circular path through the folds of her cunt. Sparks of desire shot off in her belly every time he neared her clit. Teasing her, he bypassed the nub to make her beg for relief.

“Oh yes.” She undulated her hips. “That’s it, baby.”

He eased his digit inside and skimmed the pad of his thumb along her clit,

working it in harmony with one finger, petting and rubbing, churning up her wetness, getting her ready for his cock. Chantal squeezed and massaged the swell of her breasts as she lifted her hips to meet his thrusts.

Monty had some signature moves and a sexual playbook she'd memorized. She gasped, her eyes flying open when he added a second digit, not part of his usual repertoire.

Her clit ached for satisfaction from any source. Biting her lip, she moaned and moved in sync with his double digits. He controlled her with his rhythmic in and out. From the day they'd met, he'd controlled her. And she fought his power over her, or her lack of power

over him by not wearing his ring and hesitating to change her name. He'd consume her slowly, leaving her a shell of a woman if she let him. *Just give me a sign—any sign of my place in your heart.*

Monty spread her labia with the thumb and index finger of one hand while he drove into her pussy with the other. His lips closed around her swollen clit and pulled, drawing the bud into his mouth, rolling it with his tongue.

“Oh, yes,” she squealed. Chantal loved and hated how he turned her into a writhing mass of flesh with zero self-control or common sense. And he always kept his cool. *Damn him.* He risked their livelihood by fucking her in

a client's kitchen. And she let him.
“Faster, baby.”

He tickled and twirled her clit in his mouth, finally flattening his tongue against her throbbing nub, pressing hard side-to-side, up and down while working a third digit into her.

Her belly heated fast, caught up in a wet, spinning whirlpool of pleasure. She tightened around him, the shards of ecstasy ripping through her, more of an implosion than an explosion. Waves of satisfaction washed over her. But something else ate at her soul.

“Wow!” Steve said. “That girl could

park a Chevy in her mouth.”

Alexa laughed. She continued feathering Steve’s dick, keeping his erection on the right side of firm, and he appreciated her efforts. He wasn’t a kid anymore. This would end one of two ways. Scenario one—he’d eventually go soft. Scenario two—he’d ejaculate, preferably into his wife. Her mouth. Her cunt. Anywhere near her if she’d allow him.

Usually he did his business in the privacy of the shower, behind a locked door. Or anywhere he wanted when she wasn’t home. They hadn’t had actual sex for—*let me think*—going on six weeks. And that had been a mercy fuck on her part. She’d been a trouper, going through

the motions—all the motions, except there'd been an element of detachment and the absence of her climax at the end.

To him, a blowjob was nothing but a distant memory until she'd surprised him with the hummer of his dreams. And he had a pair of caterers to thank. There would be a substantial tip in their future.

Alexa clearly didn't want to admit to being in a sexless marriage. She'd read somewhere that copulating less than ten times a year was considered sexless, so she'd give *it* up monthly or bi-monthly just to stay barely within the *normal* marriage parameters. Relenting for special occasions like his birthday, their anniversary, and being stranded in a blizzard. If he'd only known sooner,

he'd have arranged a blizzard a long damn time ago.

Mesmerized by the scene playing out on his computer screen, she slowly scaled his body and straddled his lap again. Steve held her, caressed her, one hand over her blouse, one hand slipping under the fabric to take pleasure in the soft, warm feel of her skin. He savored her long-absent touch. And her scent. Expensive perfume mixed with arousal churned in his brain.

“Oh, my God!” She gasped, gripping the back of his neck. “He’s got a knife. Our knife.”

Steve tensed, holding his breath. He relaxed when the chef cut away his assistant’s hot pink panties and tossed

them aside. “What’s their story anyhow?” he asked between her heated kisses.

Her lips brushed his cheek. “They’re a couple. In and out of business.”

Steve always assumed that business and pleasure didn’t mix. He avoided talking about work with her. She usually appeared bored by his day-to-day schedule anyhow. He also discouraged dating between his employees. “No way.”

“Engaged, I think.” She nodded. “They are...partners in all things. I wish they’d fuck in their own kitchen though, not mine.”

He snorted a laugh. “It’s not like you actually cook in there.”

Before it left his mouth, he regretted his comment, although true enough. In the beginning of their marriage, she'd prided herself on cooking for him and others, while also working for little or no pay in not-for-profit and various charity organizations. Not so much anymore. She mostly gave money, rather than time. Her entire world became smaller with every year that whizzed by, and he had no inkling how to give the world back to her.

The whole idea behind remodeling the kitchen had been to get her enthused about cooking again. She'd planned on taking gourmet cooking lessons, culinary vacations to France and Italy. It had been nice to see a spark in her eyes again for

something. Never happened. None of it. Except the kitchen remodel.

Alexa's breath caught in her throat. "Is he going to...?"

"He wouldn't." Steve feared going soft in the absence of her hot lips around his cock, moving her searing tongue up and down his shaft. But strangely enough, the image of a zucchini near a stranger's cunt equaled rock hard dick. And he didn't even like zucchini. "He didn't. Huh? What do you know?"

"They. Are. Smoking. Hot."

"Hey." Steve took her firmly by the shoulders. "We're hot."

She snorted a laugh, very uncharacteristic of his refined wife. "We're so dull, nobody would bother to

watch us fuck if we dropped trou on a busy New York street corner.”

Probably true. But only because New Yorkers had seen it all. He stood, sweeping her up in an embrace. She squealed her delight and tightened her hold around his neck. His unfastened trousers barely clung to his hips. With her long legs wrapped securely around his waist, Steve walked her over to the mattress where a hundred people or more had probably fucked before. He planned on doing it better.

“Should I order room service?” he teased.

Alexa chuckled. “I doubt they have whole raw zucchini on the menu. If they did, I’d wonder what kind of

establishment we were patronizing.”

Laying her gently on the turned-down bed, he committed her image to memory. She looked up at him through smoldering, sexually charged eyes, a sight long absent from his life. Her silky hair fanned out, framing her flushed face. Maybe he should have savagely tossed her across the bed, but too many things could still go wrong. One misinterpreted look or misconstrued word could shut this operation down. He feared failure.

Why do I feel like I'm about to take a test I forgot to study for?

She blinked. “Are you going to fuck me bow-legged, Mr. Layton, sir?”

“Y-yes.” He braced for her to rise off the bed, like steam rose off his

cappuccino every morning, and slap him. She didn't. Instead she cooed her approval seductively.

Choose your words carefully, Stevo.
“First...first I'm going to lick your sweet pussy until you come in my mouth.” He nearly flinched, waiting for her to ram her heel into his face, crush in his skull, and call him a filthy pervert.

Alexa skimmed her knee-length pencil skirt up her thighs to her hips in invitation, showing off slender legs that went on forever. He loved her tall stature, never intimidated by being eye-to-eye, or even the possibility of being dwarfed by her when she wore her fuck-me-shoes. Not that she fucked him when she wore them. That was a myth,

probably propagated by the shoe industry to get men to buy expensive shoes for their wives.

Steve swallowed a lump the size of Idaho. With that giant task complete, he reached under her skirt and peeled her pantyhose away.

She had fantastic underwear. Expensive. He should know since he'd paid for them, rarely allowed to see them except in the confines of her underwear drawer. Where had they gone so fucking wrong in their relationship? Hopefully it wasn't too late to set their marriage right.

Her legs parted a few inches. Not like the gal in his kitchen at home who'd nearly split herself in two for her man.

What would he do for a little of that action? What wouldn't he do? To have a woman turn herself inside out from desire—fantasy time.

Steve tenderly caressed the cream-colored panel of her panties. She thrashed her head from side-to-side. He'd love to see her cunt dressed up in hot pink, but she'd almost certainly say the color looked tacky.

“Let me take the skirt off,” she said in a breathless whisper. “It's a Giorgio Armani.”

He stumbled back a step, swiping his fingers through his hair. “Oh sure. Of course.”

“No.” She tossed her head from side to side and chuckled. “Come all over it.

Make me come all over it. Ruin it.”

“No, no, no.” Smiling, he lowered the zipper at her hip. After so many years, out of habit, he still mentally engineered the fastest and most efficient exit strategy for every outfit she owned. Even though he rarely had use for such a plan, due to her being tired, having a headache or being on her period. The woman had a long list of excuses, so he usually didn’t bother asking to fuck her. “I know how you love Giorgio.” He grinned at her. And rather enjoyed peeling her clothes away.

While he removed her skirt, she slowly unbuttoned her blouse. It fell away, revealing a bra of creamy lace to match her panties. She had amazing

breasts. Most of her friends had great ones, too, but God had given her a perfect pair, not a surgeon. Another reason she balked at having a baby—who could blame her for not wanting to ruin their perfection? He pushed all their problems and his insecurities out of his mind. He didn't need them dogging him in the bedroom. Not tonight.

After shedding her panties, he fell to his knees next to the bed, cradling her thighs, caressing them. She slid her foot up his chest to his shoulder. Steve circled her ankle with his thumb and one finger, bringing her foot to his lips, peppering kisses along her instep, arch, and heel. Alexa hooked a leg over his shoulder, the other under his arm and

around his back, pulling him closer.

Her warm scent of excitement filled his senses, weaving a path through his brain, retrieving memories long forgotten. Steve groaned low in his throat. He thought about regaling her with odes to her perfect pussy with its symmetry and flower-like appearance. Instead, he left the gentle tenderness at the door and dove in, caveman-style, complete with grunting and groaning.

“Oh, God, yes.” Alexa arched off the mattress. Using her legs for leverage, she thrust her cunt to his lips. And he appreciated her enthusiasm. She normally remained so reserved in the bedroom. Elegant lovemaking was no substitute for mad, hot sex.

He cupped her butt cheeks in his grasp and kneaded her ass and hips while his tongue stabbed into her pussy, licking and lapping hungrily. He starved for the nearly forgotten taste of her. *Why don't I do this more often?* Maybe if he did, she'd have fewer headaches and less fatigue. He swirled his tongue in tight, precise curlicues on and around her clitoris.

"Steve, please," she begged. For what, he didn't know. Release, he guessed. Her hips jerked off the mattress.

Plunging his middle finger deep into her, he massaged her inner walls. He'd found her G-spot in the past. It couldn't have gone far. He'd find it again.

“Please, sir, may I have another.” Her plea slid out from between her lips, smooth like melted butter.

Obliging her, he eased his index finger in. Eager to satisfy her, he twirled his tongue, swishing and licking with feverish strokes, alternating between up and down, and back and forth against her nub, while his two fingers worked together, thrusting hard and fast into her slick opening.

It really was like riding a bike. Reason and thought took a hike. Instinct took over.

“Oh.” Her stomach muscles tightened, and she clamped down on his fingers. Alexa grabbed his hair, holding on for dear life. He lapped at her juices through

wave after wave of her pleasure. “Yes, yes, yes,” she muttered.

Who needs a zucchini?

Chapter Five

Chantal covered her face with her hands. “Thank you for not turning me into some sort of produce whore. I’d never forgive you.”

“Sure you would, babe.” Monty buried his face between her thighs, rooting around in her pubic hair. He loved her patch of thick, black hair, not understanding why women shaved and waxed the curls away. Her hair captured her scent, holding it between her legs for his enjoyment. He rubbed his nose along her clit. Yeah, she’d forgive him anything. Maybe even beg him to defile her with a banana some day if he could

find one straight enough. “What’s our record?”

“I will not stand by and watch while you make me come four times,” she squeaked in protest. “Not in a client’s kitchen, Monty.”

“That’s a given.” He kissed her inner thigh. “Since you’re not standing.”

She swatted at his head, still positioned between her legs. “About that—this granite is freaking hard.”

He straightened and grabbed her hips, gently pulling and turning her over as he tugged her across the kitchen island. She landed with her feet on the floor, legs apart in a V, chest pressed against the granite. Playfully slapping her upturned ass gave him all sorts of wicked ideas

she wouldn't condone. Chantal yelped and giggled. She carried so much guilt and propriety around in her busy little brain, it was nice to see her leave all that behind for the night. Monty placed a kiss on the red spot his slap left on her butt.

Keeping her in place with his tender caresses, he admired every curve with his hands. She spread her arms across the granite lip of the counter, gripping it with her fingers. They both knew they weren't finished yet. She flinched when he snapped a rubber glove in place. She hated them. He did, too, but they always brought some in case the client insisted. But they liked the freedom of working gloveless...yet sometimes the situation

called for them.

“What are you up to?”

“Trust me,” he said. “You do trust me, don’t you?”

“Not for one second.” She muttered something else under her breath in Spanish.

He laughed at how well she knew him, accepting him with all his quirks and shortcomings, loving him in spite of himself. He splashed a dollop of extra virgin olive oil in the crease of her ass, same as he’d done to the sauté pan earlier that evening. Her body tensed, but soon relaxed when he seductively dragged the oil along the crack to her tight, puckered anus. So beautiful. A work of art. His gloved finger swirled

the oil around the darkish ring, letting a puddle of oil pool in her asshole. The oil slowly slid down to Chantal's labia. *Lucky oil*. She had amazing pussy lips that reminded him of butterfly wings. She fretted they looked like elephant ears. He loved the feel of them fanned out, hugging his cock, which he eased slowly into her pussy.

While he watched, he stepped out of his pants. No drawers. Not caring for the feel of cloth over his body, he chose to spend his time at home nearly naked, if not completely naked.

“Ah.” She gasped, tossing her head. “That’s the spot.”

“Oh,” he said and eased farther inside, “I know it is, baby.”

She pushed against his cock as he drove forward until his length completely disappeared into her warm, wet body. She inched onward. He pulled back. Together they created an undemanding pace that brought them closer to a climax with each effortless motion.

He had time to play before he reached the end. His finger returned to her anus, tracing a lazy circle in the divot. He applied pressure he knew she felt in her pussy. That was the point, after all—for her to stop thinking, and fretting, and start feeling his love for her.

“Monty.”

“You say stop when you want me to stop,” he soothed. He wouldn’t hurt her

for any amount of money, nor fame. Not for his own restaurant or a five-star review. His world revolved around Chantal.

He worked his finger slowly into her ass. He nearly panted from excitement. The vision of his gloved fingertip vanishing into her ass delighted him beyond words, but this was all about her.

“Oh, hell yes.” Her head dropped to the granite.

He pressed only up to his fingernail, withdrawing and entering in sync with his cock. She remained stationary, letting him work his magic. When Monty figured she could take it, he pushed in up to his first knuckle, listening for her to

cry to stop. She didn't.

She moaned. Her breath drew in and out in labored puffs on the cold stone. He guessed her heart pounded strong and hard in her chest, much the way his did.

“Talk to me, babe.”

“More,” she said in a garbled plea. “More.” More seemed to be the word of the night.

His tomfoolery had gone further, and on longer, than he'd ever dreamed. He'd wanted to take their intimacy to a different level, maybe shock her a little, keeping things fresh and new, but couldn't risk losing her due to sexual complacency. The possibility of being caught copulating in a client's kitchen, coupled with teasing her with the other

love of his life—food—dove far enough into the kink zone. The oil was a spontaneous afterthought. He'd had no idea she'd want more. He'd had no idea he'd need more. But each thrust into her tight pussy pulled at his climax.

“Fuck me harder, Monty.”

“Who's the boss, Chantal?” He slowed the in and out, nearly to a stop, finger and cock both, but withdrew neither. “Who's in charge?”

“You are.” She squirmed, trying to get things going again. “You, baby.”

“And what's your name?”

She shook her head, obviously confused. “What?”

With his fingers, he traced the path of her spine, marveling at her perfection.

“Your name, baby. What’s your new name going to be?”

“Chantal. Chantal Goldblat. Now fuck me!”

Gradually he worked his finger into her ass up to the second knuckle. The oil seemed to be holding out, doing the trick, keeping her lubricated. He didn’t want her to be sore later. Maybe a little sore so she’d have a gentle reminder, unable to forget their sexual misconduct. He slammed his cock harder and faster, as ordered, but it had an adverse effect on him. A battle waged within. Every cell in his body sparked with awareness. Hair and fingernails included.

“Babe,” he warned. “Babe. Oh!” Coming hard and fast like a shotgun, he

was unable to stop the inevitable, and her bodacious, round ass jiggling in front of him, drove him mad. Her breasts, pressed into the counter, spilled out on each side of her body. "I'm so sorry."

"Don't stop," she begged. "Please."

Without his previous momentum, he continued driving into her pussy with his cock, and plunging his finger past the second knuckle into her ass. Their skin slapped together in thunderous ecstasy.

"Oooh." Her grip tightened on the granite. "Oh yeah. Deeper." She smacked her palm onto the stone over and over. "Ahhh."

The tremors of her climax pulsed around his dick like an echo, tightening and contracting. He smiled wide,

listening to the symphony of moans accompanying her orgasm. “Do you love me?”

“Yes,” she mumbled. “Yes, yes, a thousand times, yes.”

“And maybe next time—the zucchini?”

“No!”

Alexa chuckled at Steve setting some sort of world stripping record—kicking his shoes off, yanking his pants and shorts down, tossing them aside, lastly hauling his T-shirt over his head. She slowly unhooked the clasp between her breasts, shrugging out of her bra.

“I have missed those.” He swooped in to suck at one nipple. “Hello, girls.”

“Steve, really. Take your socks off.”

“Oh sure.” He tugged one off, balancing on the opposite foot, followed by the other sock. His childish eagerness was endearing. For him to still be so zealous to bed her after so many years together touched her heart.

“Do you want to watch some more of the security footage?” She sort of did, if only to see what *they’d* do next. She sighed, completely sated, not having been treated to an orgasm like that since—maybe ever. It was Steve’s turn. She owed him that. He’d really outdone himself and should be rewarded for exceptional service.

“I’m good. I don’t need that. Just you. It’s always been you who does it for me.” He zoomed in, latching onto the opposite nipple, giving equal time to each breast. Her lower belly tingled from the play of his lips.

Men and boobs. She’d never understand it.

“She’s kind of chunky, isn’t she?” Something about Chantal and her curves screamed sexy to the world. Her hips were wide and her breasts full. Alexa could never pull it off.

“Who? The caterer?” He laved Alexa’s nipples. “She’s gorgeous. Round and full in all the right places. But she’s no you.”

Dragging her nails through his hair,

she said, "Good answer."

"You want to go put in your diaphragm?" He switched again to the other nipple. "I mean, you know, before we get started. Or finished."

She shook her head.

"Am I jumping to the wrong conclusion?" He locked eyes with her. "I mean, we are going to do *it*, right?"

She wrapped her fingers around his dick. "Oh, we're going to do it all right." She squeezed and released him.

Nesting between her legs, with his shaft touching her opening, he cradled her face in his palm. "Are you saying what I think you're saying?" Without waiting for an answer, he knelt. Grasping his cock, Steve rubbed the

head along her slit until it glistened with her moisture, then smoothed the wetness onto her clit, starting another fire in her pussy.

Inclining in, he eased into her.

“Oh,” she moaned. “It’s been so long.” Something about his length filling her completed her like it hadn’t in a very long time.

He heaved out only to drive deeper into her. “Too long. You’re still so tight. So wet.”

Would she retain that taut wetness after giving him the baby he so desperately wanted? Childbirth wreaked havoc on a body, and sometimes that’s all she felt she had left. And she often times doubted her ability to give one-

hundred percent to another person. Christ, she didn't want to bring a baby into the world only to fail him or her. But for the first time in a long while she felt connected to Steve. Truly loved by him, although it might all be an illusion of desire. His as well as hers.

But he had no time for a family. In the end, the business he'd worked so hard to make successful so he could give her everything he thought she wanted, kept him from her day and night.

"Come for me again." He plunged into her, punctuating the command.

She thrashed her head side-to-side. "Can't."

Steve dragged his thumb along her clit. "You haven't even tried." He

brushed his pad lightly back and forth along her clit while continuing to thrust, balls deep. He'd always been a multitasker, not to mention an overachiever.

Her insides warmed. Maybe he was right. Alexa thought one earth-shattering climax could satisfy her. Multiple orgasms were for the young, like her caterers. They were daring and sexual adventurers same as her and Steve had been before money and success and responsibilities took over. Now, they had to be heavily insured and responsible for employees and elderly family members. With money came accountability. And Steve wanted to add children to the mix.

The tightening took over in her lower belly despite her dark thoughts, or maybe because of the hopefulness—the light at the end of the tunnel—of a family. Her hand caressed the stubble on his jaw. “I think you were right.” She pushed her hips in time with his thrusts.

Steve gripped her ass, hauling her to him as he ground into her. His breathing blew out labored along her neck. Beads of sweat formed at his temples. “Touch yourself for me.”

“No,” she choked out. “I can’t.”

“I’m not going to last much longer.”

She squeezed her breasts.

“No.” His fingers dug into the flesh of her buttock. “Like when I’m not home.”

She gasped. “You don’t watch me

from your laptop, do you?"

Steve closed his eyes. "No." Something told her he wished he'd thought of it sooner. "But I will, if you'll let me." His gaze flitted from her eyes to her cunt, back to her eyes. "I want to. I want to watch you play with yourself."

The thought of him watching her on his laptop from the office heated her pussy. She imagined him pulling his shades, locking his office door, and stroking himself as she touched her cunt for his entertainment.

Using two fingers, Alexa began massaging her clit in circles. She bit her lower lip. "Mmmm."

"That's it," he muttered. "Show Stevo how you like it."

She laughed, but continued rubbing and pressing. Usually she found it annoying when he called himself Stevo, his childhood nickname. He always referred to Stevo as if it weren't really him, but a character in his life. At the moment it amused her like an inside joke they shared.

“That is so hot.” He grunted out the words. “You, you’re so hot.”

“Ah! Steve. I’m so close.” She worked at her clit with one hand, pinching her erect nipple with her other hand. “Don’t come without me.”

A drop of sweat cut a path down his jaw line, dropping onto her shoulder. “No. No I won’t.” Outside a snowstorm crippled the airport. Inside their hotel

room, they both sweated in the heat of passion.

“Oh yes!” She pressed her fingers harder against her bud like it was a stubborn light switch that refused to illuminate. Heat spread like a grass fire throughout her pussy. “Ahhh!” she sang out, only a little afraid the neighbors in the next room might hear. What if they were from their grounded flight? *Fuck 'em.* “Yes, baby! Yes!”

He plunged one last time, holding within her as he spilled his seed and groaned the way he always did. Loud. Deep. Guttural. There was something to be said for the comfort of the familiar.

She imagined she could feel his sperm shooting into her. She never had before,

although she'd always used her diaphragm. Perhaps it was just wishful thinking that she could feel his sperm like she felt his love, and they would make a baby while having the best sex of their lives.

His hands snaked up the sides of her body. Resting his face in the crook of her neck, he said, "I love you."

His declaration wasn't unusual. He often said, *love you* at the end of a phone conversation or as he headed out the door to work. The way he said it this time sounded different. With conviction. She'd taken his love for granted. His pecks on the cheek before he dashed out the door to work had sometimes annoyed her, especially if she slept.

Cradling one hand at the back of his neck, she combed the fingers of her other hand through his short hair. “I love you, too.”

Chapter Six

Chantal slung the bag over her shoulder. It held all their treasured knives, utensils, and personal items. She patted the pocket where the check rested and glanced back at the kitchen in the glow of the modern track lighting and took a mental picture she'd treasure always.

“Nice fucking kitchen,” Monty said again.

She chuckled. “Real nice.”

Of course, she'd cleaned it again. The weasel had never returned, probably still in handcuffs, chained to the bed of his co-worker. Monday morning around

the water cooler would prove to be awkward for some, amusing to others, and completely forgotten by the severely intoxicated. The lucky ones. She hoped the Laytons gave them the opportunity to cater again next Christmas.

She opened the refrigerator-freezer, where she'd stacked the leftovers in labeled storage containers, some in the refrigerator, some in the freezer, depending on the contents. The Laytons had bought and paid for the product. They might as well enjoy it after their harrowing night snowed in at an airport hotel. She'd left them a nice note about what a success the party had been and what a pleasure it was to work in their kitchen. Among other things.

Monty draped his arm over her shoulder, and they strolled to the elevator. “I love you, babe.”

She smiled up at him. “I love you, too.”

Grinning big, he asked, “Or should I say, *te amo*?”

She stopped in her tracks. “What did you say?”

He cocked his head. “Did I say it wrong?”

“Are you learning Spanish? For me?” Chantal spoke perfect English, but her family often regressed into conversing in Spanish. Her grandparents spoke very little English at all. Not that Monty spent much time with her family. She wished, and hoped, and sometimes prayed for

him to embrace her family, since they meant so much to her.

He flashed his thumb and index finger at her to show how little Spanish he knew. Just a pinch. So far. “*Poquito español*. Every Wednesday night at the Community Center for the past three weeks. What did you think I was doing?”

She looped her arm around his neck. *It's the thought that counts*. “I’m going to learn Jewish for you.” She poked her finger into his chest. “I promise.”

“Uh, it’s not Jewish, babe,” he said, giving her an endearing squint. “It’s Hebrew, and I don’t even know much.”

She wrinkled her nose. “So you’re not Jewish. You’re Hebrew?”

Closing his eyes, he shook his head.

“Never mind.”

“Happy Hanukkah, *mi amor*.” She laughed. It wasn’t quite Hanukkah yet, but they were getting close.

Pressing his lips to her temple, he said, “*Feliz Navidad*, Chantal Gutierrez.”

“Goldblat,” she corrected him. “Chantal Goldblat. We better start getting used to the new name now.” *I’d better get used to it.*

He kissed her again. “Please tell me this means you’ve changed your mind,” she begged. “You’ll come with me to Christmas dinner with *mi familia*.” They both knew he was her family now. But her extended family was important to her, as his was to him, although he never

admitted as much. Their problem had been meshing their two families with the difference in beliefs and customs.

He shrugged. "If you'll come to my parent's house."

She swatted at him. "I did last year, and we weren't even engaged yet."

"Because you're going to be the best wife ever, and I'm trying to be a passable husband," he admitted.

"You get an *A* for effort." She handed him the last bag of trash they'd dispose of on their way out. She pointed to the corner of the ceiling. "What's that?"

"What?"

Still pointing, she said, "That. Is it... is it a camera?" Her phone buzzed, and she fished it out of her bag. "I'm getting

a text.”

“Who’d text you at this time of night?” He glanced at his wristwatch. “Or rather, this time of the morning.”

“The Laytons.” She bounced up and down on the balls of her feet. “If it’s not too short of notice, they want us to cater their New Year’s Eve party.”

The twinkling white lights from the Christmas tree shone against Alexa’s skin in iridescent splendor. She was the best Christmas decoration in the entire apartment. Alexa—his gift that kept on giving day after day. Hopefully into the New Year and beyond. They’d made

love twice more in Idaho, and then again when they arrived home. Steve saw no end in sight.

He popped a grape past her parted lips, followed by a tender peck. Never had he pictured himself laid out on a blanket in his living room in front of the fireplace, feeding grapes to his wife. Maybe that had been the problem with their marriage.

“Told you it’s never too cold for a picnic,” she said with a mischievous grin.

He’d concede to her on that point. “You were right.”

She feathered her fingers through the hair on his chest. “And the dancing?”

“Also right.” Apparently one didn’t

need music in order to dance, or a bed to make love. “You’re a very smart woman.” There was book smart, and there was heart smart. Sometime during their marriage he’d stopped listening to her heart smarts. He’d arrived late to too many dinners and dashed off to work in the mornings without giving her the attention she deserved. He would not make those mistakes again.

“It was nice of the caterers to leave us all this food.” Alexa dragged a cracker through some crab dip.

It was nice to see her eat and enjoy. It was better to see Alexa smile a genuine smile, especially during the holiday season. He aimed to keep the smile there, add some laughter, and sprinkle

their happiness with more sex.

“What do you want for Christmas, Steve?” A crab-dipped cracker disappeared into her mouth.

He liked her calling him Steve instead of Steven. The way she'd say his name reminded him of his mother, the way she'd always called him Steven when he got into in trouble. He placed his hand on his wife's abdomen, leaning in to plant a kiss where hopefully he'd planted a baby. “You've given me everything I'd ever want.”

“It's only been a couple days. You can't know.”

“It means everything to me that you're willing to go there with me—together—us as a family. And I'm willing to try

over and over as many times as it takes until we get it right.”

She scoffed. “I’m sure of that.” Frowning, she asked, “That’s not the reason you decided to have a New Year’s party, is it? To announce a baby? It’s way too soon for that. Even by New Year’s, we won’t know. I don’t want to jinx it. And I don’t need the added pressure.”

New Year’s Eve loomed a couple weeks off. “I just want to celebrate our happiness with friends and family.” He peppered kisses on and around her belly. “No hidden agenda.”

“Good.” Her frown vanished. Her body relaxed into the warmth and comfort they’d created in front of the

fireplace.

“What do you want for Christmas?” He usually stopped by the jewelry store, letting the sales girl talk him into whatever was fashionable in his price range, which grew every year.

“You.”

“Done.” He’d been giving her the wrong thing all these years. “How ’bout I promise you Sundays? Sunday—family day. No phones. No work. No computer.”

She snorted a laugh of disbelief. “Sounds like I died and went to heaven.”

Alexa had reason to doubt his word, but he’d prove to her over time he could make good on his promise. “We’ll do the museums like we used to. A matinee.

Takeout for dinner.” He kissed a path up her torso, between her breasts, to nuzzle her neck.

“What about when we have kids?”

Kids, not kid. He liked the sound of that. “We’ll go to the park.” Steve pecked at her lips. “The zoo. Maybe we’ll move out of the city.”

I’ll do whatever it takes to hang onto this.

~ABOUT THE AUTHOR~

Left for dead in an enchanted forest, Kelli was raised by wolves, which explains her thick coat of fur and keen night vision. As an adolescent, she was exiled from the pack due to her love of well-done steak smothered in ketchup (her penchant for blackened beef has also caused her ejection from several fine eateries). On her own, she roamed the streets, eating from dumpsters and sleeping in abandoned dog houses. Cold, starving and destitute, Kelli turned to the oldest profession—writing. Since her fall from grace, she has penned several smutty stories for which she has

received many accolades. And despite her limited vocabulary, inability to punctuate properly and her well-documented spelling disability, Kelli has collected an assortment of awards (some of them for her writing). But what she wants most in the world is to return to the enchanted forest and her pack. As soon as she figures out north from south and east from west, she will do just that.

Until then, happy reading.

You can visit with Kelli at:

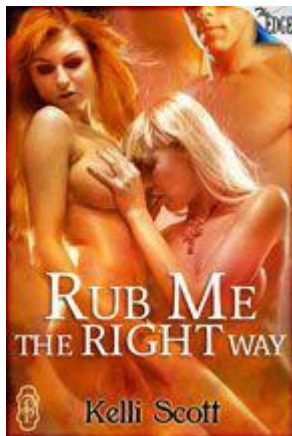
www.kelliscottbooks.blogspot.com

Rub Me the Right Way

Heather Bowen is an uptight, stressed out insomniac in desperate need of a massage or a shrink or an orgasm to cure what ails her.

On doctor's orders, she starts with a massage to work out her knotty/naughty kinks. At the hands of a talented massage therapist, Heather gets a full body rub down. And more. Next stop—a psychiatrist to get at the root of her anxiety and sleeplessness. But is she ready for Dr. Simon's controversial treatment?

What begins as prescribed therapy becomes a wild fantasy ride of erotic discovery that makes Heather question her sexual orientation along with everything she believed about her carnal desires.

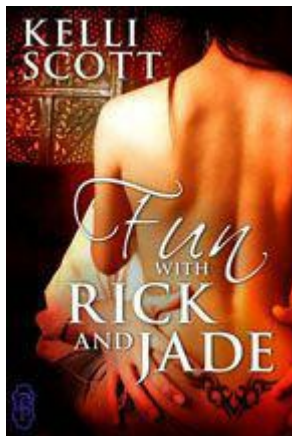


Fun with Rick and Jade

Jade Li only wants what's coming to her from her high-profile baby daddy—some child support and she'll stay out of his life and off his radar. Committed to being a good mother, she's left her high-priced-call-girl lifestyle behind and wants a fresh start. But because of her sordid past, she's terrified of losing custody. What she needs, according to her attorney, is a husband.

Enter Rick Jette, younger brother to Jade's attorney. Rick could use a wife and child for a business deal his future

hinges on. Plus, he owes his brother a huge favor that not even marrying a sexy ex-call girl could repay. Marriage is not what he'd expected. At. All. The good, as they play house, was better than he'd ever dreamed. The bad—having feelings for his instant family—turns out to be worse than he ever could have imagined.



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