



## The Enticement (The Submissive Series)

By Tara Sue Me



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Abby West has everything she wanted: a family, a skyrocketing new career, and a sexy, Dominant husband who fulfills her every need. Only, as her life outside the bedroom becomes hectic, her Master’s sexual requirements inside become more extreme. Abby doesn’t understand Nathaniel’s increased need for control, but she can’t deny the delicious way her body reacts to his tantalizing demands...

Between Abby’s reluctance and Nathaniel’s unyielding commands, the delicate balance of power between the Dominant and his submissive threatens to shift. And as the underlying tension and desire between them heats up, so does the struggle to keep everything they value from falling apart ...



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## Editorial Review

Review

### Praise for the Submissive Series

“I was blown away.”—The Good, the Bad, and the Unread

“Very spicy...Well written and certainly entertaining.”—Dear Author

“Very passionate...Intense and very, VERY H-O-T. Definitely worth reading!”—Harlequin Junkie

“For those *Fifty Shades* fans pining for a little more spice on their e-reader.”—*Los Angeles Times*

“This book is going to make you say ‘Fifty What of What?’ ...[Me] is so talented and captivating.”—*Southern Fiction Review*

About the Author

**Tara Sue Me** is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Submissive series, including *The Submissive*, *The Dominant*, *The Training*, and *Seduced by Fire*. She lives in the southeastern United States with her family, two dogs, and a cat.

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## PRAISE FOR THE SUBMISSIVE SERIES

### ALSO BY TARA SUE ME

### Acknowledgments

### Chapter One

There were times I felt I came alive only at night. When the world was quiet around me and the kids were asleep and for a few precious hours there was nothing but me and Nathaniel. Those sacred nights had become more and more infrequent lately, as there always seemed to be something else to do, but I often thought I could survive on the anticipation alone.

I checked in the bathroom mirror to make sure my face didn't reflect the day's stress. Satisfied, I pulled my hair out of the ponytail it'd been in all day and brushed it until it fell soft and loose around my shoulders. I threw the yoga pants and T-shirt I'd been wearing into the hamper. Before heading into the bedroom, I took the body lotion Nathaniel once said smelled like sin wrapped in silk and ran it over my arms and legs. I rummaged through my lingerie drawer and finally settled on a long opaque satin nightgown. Silver, of course, since that was his favorite color on me.

Most nights I didn't take so long getting ready for bed, but tonight was different. When he'd gotten home, we'd chatted briefly before our two kids interrupted us. I'd swallowed a laugh as four-year-old Elizabeth expressed her grief at not finding the purple crayon she insisted she had to have for the castle she was coloring. Not to be outdone, our eighteen-month-old son, Henry, kept his arms uplifted and repeated, "Dada! Dada! Dada!" until Nathaniel swept him into the air.

After that, the room was filled with Henry's delighted shrieks. At least it was until Nathaniel caught a whiff of something.

"Again?" I asked. "I just changed him less than an hour ago."

"Has to be the antibiotics," Nathaniel said, which was probably true. Henry was desperately trying to get rid of recurrent ear infections, but the medication upset his stomach. "Come on, big guy, let's get you changed." As they walked away, he looked over his shoulder. "We need to talk later, Abigail."

*Abigail.*

Hearing my name from him like that stopped me in my tracks, lit my body with desire, and echoed in my brain throughout dinner, baths, and bedtime. As he, no doubt, knew it would. When he called me Abigail, it didn't matter that I wore his collar only once a month or that sex was otherwise often hurried and infrequent. With just one word, my husband became my Master. And my body didn't only respond; it begged for his dominance. Just thinking about the way he said it, in a tone of voice that managed to sound so matter-of-fact and commanding at the same time, sent shivers up and down my spine.

I walked down the stairs and found Nathaniel in the living room, reading. He looked up as I entered, his green eyes traveling over every inch of me. I took a seat beside him and my heart rate increased as he slipped a hand into my hair and pulled me close for a kiss.

"You smell incredible and you look sexy as hell," he said against my lips.

"You're not bad yourself," I replied, running my fingers through his black hair. He'd changed out of his suit when he'd gotten home and throughout the evening had worn the old jeans that hugged his ass and a T-shirt that similarly hugged his abs—my favorite outfit for him.

He pulled away and settled his back against the couch. "I had a call today from Simon."

"Oh?" Simon had moved into the area years ago and was part of our BDSM group. He, like Nathaniel, was a Dominant.

"He's met someone online and she's relatively inexperienced. He was wondering if they could come over on Saturday."

Before getting pregnant with Henry, we'd started mentoring couples. Years ago, my weekend with Nathaniel's old mentor and his wife, Paul and Christine, had helped me so much. I wanted to do the same for new submissives. But after getting pregnant and, in particular, after giving birth, there hadn't been much mentoring going on.

Without thinking, I stroked my bare neck, missing the long, intense playroom sessions that lasted all weekend. These days they were just about as likely to happen as me getting forty-five uninterrupted minutes to make dinner.

"I'm probably the one in need of a mentor session," I joked. "It's so long between our scheduled dates."

Nathaniel didn't laugh. "I miss the way we used to be, Abby."

"I know . . . me, too."

He leaned forward and studied me silently for a few seconds. "Is everything all right?"

"Yes, everything's fine. Just life happening."

"I wonder when we decided 'fine' was an acceptable way to live?" He took my right hand and twisted the ring there. The one he'd given me on our wedding day that symbolized his dominance over me. "I wonder if once a month is enough? I miss seeing you kneel before me, wearing only my collar, waiting for me to decide how I'll use you."

"Oh, Nathaniel."

"Shhh." His finger traced my lips and brushed the hollow of my throat. "You miss it, too. You know you do. The way you yield your body to me, longing for the release you know I'll give."

I didn't even attempt to argue. I knew for a fact how many times I'd nearly begged him to take me over his knees and spank me during the week. The release I found with him was so soothing. Held tightly on my stomach across his lap. His free hand striking my ass over and over.

Other times I'd watch him move around the house and I'd remember how years ago, he'd be the one watching me. I recalled how his eyes would follow me until finally he'd get up and either force me to my knees or push me against a wall. His barely controlled lust kept me constantly ready for him.

"Show me I'm right. Show me how much you miss it." He slipped his thumb inside my mouth. "Suck it like a good girl."

My belly tightened as I drew his thumb into my mouth. I could deny him nothing when he touched me.

"That's it," he said. "Do it good enough and I'll let you taste my dick. Do it really good and I'll take you over my knees and bring out the strap."

I opened my mouth in shock.

"Suck it, Abigail. I didn't say to stop." When I continued, he started talking once again. "You think I don't know what you want? What you need? You're due for a sound thrashing and a long, hard fuck."

I moaned around his thumb and he slid his other hand to cup my breast, gently rubbing my nipple.

"That's it, my lovely. Suck it. Think about how turned on you'll be when I drag you across my knee. Imagine me spanking your ass and fucking you with my fingers."

I bucked my hips up, trying to get some pressure on my clit, but he tightened the hand at my face. "Be still. You haven't earned my cock yet, much less an orgasm."

I kept up my work on his thumb, sucking and licking, just as I would have if his cock was in my mouth. All the while, his fingertips fondled my breasts. It drove me mad that he wasn't paying any attention to anything below my waist.

Finally, he slipped his thumb from my mouth. "I hope you don't have anything else planned for tonight

because I'm going to *fucking wear you out*."

"Please," I moaned.

A wicked look came over his expression. "But not just yet. First, I'm going to fuck that mouth and throat of yours. Then maybe I'll take that sweet pussy. Or beat your ass. I haven't decided yet."

"Yes, Sir. Please. All of them."

"Greedy girl." He nodded to the floor.

I slowly rose to my feet and slipped the gown over my head.

"Very nice," he said as I lowered myself before him in the middle of the room. "Spread your legs. Let me see how wet that greedy pussy is."

It had been over three weeks since I'd knelt and I struggled a bit getting into position. The entire time he watched, sitting relaxed on the couch. The only sign he was affected was the growing bulge of his erection.

"Something to work on," he said. "Your knees are still out of habit. Though I do see you've waxed."

I held back a snort. Like I'd ever forget THAT again. "Yes, Sir."

"Come get my cock out."

I crawled over to him. Years ago I hated crawling. It still didn't rank very high on my list of things I loved to do, but I knew how much he enjoyed watching and that alone made me hot when I did it.

I made my way over to him and knelt up between his legs. He leaned back into the couch, giving me room to move. I palmed him several times through the material of his pants, enjoying the way he grew harder.

"Take it out," he said through clenched teeth. "Now."

I worked my hands up to the button of his pants and undid it, then slowly took his zipper down. He lifted his hips, allowing me to slide his pants and boxer briefs off. I sat back on my heels once I had him naked from the waist down.

"All this for me, Sir?"

He stroked himself. "Every fucking inch. Be a good girl and give it a kiss. Just lightly on the tip and then hold still."

I licked my lips. I loved taking him orally. Loved everything about it. The way he felt. The way he tasted. The way he would moan, deep in his throat. Needless to say, I wasn't thrilled about just giving him a little kiss.

With a sly smile I came up to my knees and bent my head, my dark hair falling around my face. Very slowly I lowered myself and kissed him the way he asked, remaining in place after.

"Now hold your hair back with both hands and keep your mouth open."

My heart pounded. It'd been months since we'd had any sort of power play during the week. This felt so

good in every way I realized we had to schedule more time.

“Now, Abigail. I don’t want your hair in the way of my view as I fuck that sassy mouth.”

“Sorry, Sir.”

I spread my knees wider for balance and, holding my hair behind my head, I opened my mouth, offering it for his use. I thought he’d thrust himself up and into my mouth, but he surprised me by grasping my hands and pushing my head down.

I had only enough time to relax my throat before he filled it with his cock.

“Fuck, yes.” He pulled my head up and brought it back down. “Fuck.”

He started a punishing rhythm, working my head and eventually his hips, powerfully, as he used my mouth for his pleasure. He wasn’t soft and he wasn’t gentle, somehow knowing, as he usually did, that I didn’t need his tenderness. I needed my Master. And I needed him to take control away from me.

My eyes started to water as he hit the back of my throat. But even so, my own arousal grew and I shifted my hips trying to find a small measure of relief. Surely there was something. The edge of the couch. Part of his leg. Something.

“Fuck.” He yanked out of my mouth. “Got to stop.”

I halfheartedly got back into position on my knees. I really wanted to finish him off, to take him to the edge of his own control, and feel him lose himself in me. But, if he pulled back now, that could only mean he had more in store for us.

Which was why I didn’t understand when he pulled his clothes back on and tucked his still erect cock inside.

“I’ve changed my mind,” he said. “Neither one of us is coming tonight.”

“What? What happened to your hoping I didn’t have plans? To wearing me out? To—”

He stopped me by putting a finger to my lips. “Stop right there or I’ll make good on my threat to beat your ass.”

I almost decided to say something. The small touch of dominance he’d given me wasn’t enough. Maybe goading him into a spanking would be worth it.

“You better wipe that thought out of your mind,” he said, as if reading my thoughts. “There are better ways to get what you want.”

I knelt patiently and waited for him to explain.

“I’m going to ask Linda to keep the kids overnight Friday and bring them back Saturday evening.”

Linda was Nathaniel’s aunt. She and her husband had raised him after his parents died in a car accident when he was ten. I’d never met his uncle, who had passed away several years before we met. He also had a cousin, Jackson, who was like a brother to him. Jackson had fallen in love with my best friend, Felicia, when I introduced them, and they had married too.

“And,” he continued, “if you’re okay with it, I’ll call Simon and tell him we’re on for Saturday?”

“I think I’d like that,” I said. With the kids spending the night with Linda, Nathaniel and I could play a bit on Friday night, even before Simon came over with his girlfriend.

The smile on his face told me he knew how I’d answer. “I’ll call her in the morning and let you know. If she agrees, once she picks the kids up on Friday, you are to prepare yourself and wait in the playroom for me to get home. Understood?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Then on Saturday, Simon and his submissive will come over.” He pulled me to him and whispered coarsely in my ear. “After, I’ll make good on my threat to wear you out. You won’t be able to move for three days without remembering the wicked things I did to your body. You’ll lose count of the number of times and ways I fucked you.”

I whimpered and tried to rub my legs together, desperate to ease the longing that pulsed between them.

“Not going to happen, so you better stop. Or else Simon and his submissive will watch as you’re punished.” He put a hand on my knee and squeezed. “Now, since you brought me to the edge, I think it’s only fair that I reciprocate. Get on your hands and knees, presenting that needy pussy to me.”

I knew better than to argue. If I complained about not coming tonight, he might not let me come during the weekend, just to prove a point. I crawled back to the middle of the room to better position myself.

“Don’t look so put out,” he said with a smile.

“You’re evil. Did you know that?” I asked, while moving into position.

His laughter sent chills of anticipation down my spine. “Oh, Abby, you’ve yet to see just how truly evil I can be.”

\* \* \*

I shivered the next day, remembering that laugh and those words as I sat at my computer. Years ago, when I was a new submissive, Nathaniel had given me a journal to document my journey of sexual submission. I’d quickly filled that notebook with my thoughts and questions, and even my fantasies. When I filled a second, I’d suggested to Nathaniel that I keep the journal online as a blog.

I’d expected him to say no, but instead he agreed with me. His only request had been that I never wrote anything that could lead back to either one of us or our family. In the beginning he’d simply read my posts, but now it had grown to the point where he commented on them as well. My readers always liked it when he did.

I started out with Nathaniel as my only follower, but we were both amazed at how rapidly my readership grew. What began as a way for me to document my thoughts and experiences for myself and my Master had grown into a blog visited daily by thousands of people. The Secret Life of a Submissive Wife was growing into a real phenomenon.

Even so, I had never imagined getting an e-mail like the one currently sitting in my in-box. I read it again for the fifth time, just to be sure I wasn’t making it up.



Dear Submissive Wife,

I work at Women's News Now. As you may be aware, we are part of the National News Network, the second-largest media corporation in America. I have been an avid reader of your blog, almost from day one. I love the way you discuss BDSM. You make it real, approachable, and sexy.

We are planning to increase our coverage of intimate relationships. As part of that expansion, I'd like to know if you'd be interested in talking with me about potential opportunities for you at WNN.

My contact information is below. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Meagan Bishop

My hands trembled and I sat dumbfounded. I had actually been contacted by someone who worked for National News Network. Not only that, they read my blog and wanted to talk to me about "opportunities." What kind of opportunities?

They owned several leading magazines as well as a handful of television networks. I didn't know enough about them to know what else they had their hands in. Either Meagan would tell me or I could do some Internet research.

I glanced at the clock. I couldn't call Meagan back immediately because it was time to pick Elizabeth up from preschool. Probably for the best, anyway; I didn't want to appear overly eager. I would pick Elizabeth up, we'd have lunch, I'd cross my fingers that both she and Henry would take a nap at the same time, and then I'd call this Meagan Bishop back.

I found it difficult to think about anything other than the e-mail. I tried calling Nathaniel, but I got only his voice mail. I hung up with a sigh. I was busting to tell *someone* but it'd probably be more fun to tell him in person. And by the time he got home, I'd have spoken to Meagan, so I'd have more information.

Lunch took forever. While Elizabeth ate, I threw dinner together in the slow cooker. Henry refused to let anyone help him eat, so of course, when he finished, he had to be cleaned up. Fortunately, he went down for his nap quickly, but Elizabeth loved being read to and would try as hard as possible to stay awake so I could read multiple stories. She usually fell asleep halfway through the second and today was no different.

The house was blissfully quiet when I made it down the stairs to the library. I opened the e-mail again and, with my heart thumping so hard I could take my pulse by watching my shirt, I called the number Meagan listed in the e-mail.

"Meagan Bishop," she answered brisk and businesslike.

I was surprised she answered her phone herself but I realized it meant she must be a pretty direct person. I liked that. "Meagan, hello. My name's Abby. I run the Submissive Wife blog. I got your e-mail."

"Oh, hey. Did you say your name's Abby? I'm so glad you called. I've been dying to talk to you." Her tone changed. It became friendly and less brash. "I love your blog. The writing, the content, all of it."

"Thank you."

"I feel like I halfway know you already, just from reading you. Crazy, isn't it?"

"Not too much," I said. "I try to be realistic and everything I write about actually happened. I don't make

anything up. What you read is the real me.”

“I thought so but it’s so good to have you confirm it.”

“I’ll be happy to answer any questions you have.”

“There will be plenty of time for that. Right now, you’re probably wanting to know more about our interest in you and your blog,” she said.

“I’ll admit I’m very curious about what opportunities you have in mind.”

A hint of her businesswoman persona slipped back into her voice. “Ultimately, that will depend on you and what you feel comfortable with. And we’re willing to break it up into baby steps. You can start out slow and if you want to do more and the need is there, we’ll look into you doing more.”

I smiled. “Baby steps. I like that.”

Meagan laughed and then continued. “We’re wanting to start a roundtable talk show about love and sex. As a tie-in, we need someone to write content for the Web site and we want that person to know what they’re talking about. You could still keep and post to your personal blog.”

My head spun. Me? Write? For a job?

“Meagan, I’ll admit my first thought is that surely you can find someone with more experience to write for you,” I managed to sputter out.

“Of course we could,” she said. “But we don’t want them. We’ve seen your work and we want you. Like I said before, your voice, your use of language is delicately sensual and that appeals to a lot of people.”

“Thank you,” I said, but my head was absolutely spinning. “Listen, I’ll have to give it some thought and get back to you.”

“Yes, please, take some time to think about it. For now, I’ll forward you some information. Also, if you think you’re interested, there’s a meeting in April in New York City. We’d love to have you come talk with us.”

I took the dates down and we said good-bye. I didn’t realize how long we’d been chatting until we hung up and Elizabeth came down the stairs.

I held out my arms and she gave me a not-quite-awake-yet hug. “Sleep well, Princess?” I asked her.

She nodded. “Can I cook with you tonight?”

“I’ve already started dinner, but you can help me make biscuits.”

That woke her up. Henry would probably sleep for another thirty minutes, so I gave Elizabeth another quick hug, said, “Come on,” and we headed to the kitchen.

\* \* \*

I waited until the kids were in bed for the night before bringing anything up with Nathaniel. I found him in the living room watching a college basketball game while on the phone with his cousin Jackson. Technically speaking, they weren’t really talking; they were arguing about a call one of the referees just made. I sat down

beside him and waited for them to finish. Nathaniel ended the call when the game went to commercial break.

He smiled. "Tell me."

I didn't even ask how he knew I had been waiting to give him some news. After so many years together, it had become second nature for him to read me so well.

"I got offered a job today," I said. "A writing job."

"You applied for a job?" There wasn't any judgment in his voice, just surprise.

"No, nothing like that. They found me through the blog." I summarized the call with Meagan while he listened intently.

"Wow," he said when I finished. "What an incredible opportunity for you. You are going to meet with them, right?"

"I really want to." I realized exactly how much when I said it out loud.

"Then do it. Chances like this don't often fall in our laps."

"To think something that started as a journal could possibly lead to writing for NNN's Women's channel."

"I expect all the credit," he teased. "Since I'm the one who made you start the journal in the first place."

I punched his arm. "Going online was all my idea."

"I know." His expression grew serious. "I always said you were a wonderful writer. It's about time someone else noticed. I'm proud of you, Abby."

"Thank you."

He brushed my cheek softly. "I had a phone call today, too. Though not nearly as exciting as yours."

"Simon?" I guessed.

"Yes. His girlfriend's name is Lynne. He said they'd be over at nine on Saturday."

"Tell me about her. I don't remember her from our last meeting with the group."

He shook his head. "She wasn't at it. Simon met her online a few months ago. They only met in person about three weeks ago. She's really new."

Without coming out and saying it in so many words, he was letting me know not to expect anything too intense in the playroom Saturday. Knowing Nathaniel the way I did, he wouldn't want to do anything that could potentially turn someone off to the lifestyle.

"Simon's really smitten, huh?" I asked. Though I didn't know him too well, he'd been in the group for a good number of years and played with a variety of women. I couldn't recall him being in a long-term relationship.

"Well, he wouldn't be the first Dom in history to become *smitten* with an inexperienced submissive." His hand moved to my knee and danced along my inner thigh. "I've never regretted collaring a certain untrained

newcomer to the scene.”

“That certain untrained newcomer is thankful you took a chance on her.”

“The difference, I think, is that you were a natural, and apparently Lynne is very skittish.” He frowned. “I wouldn’t have had you over for the weekend if you were skittish.”

“Are you worried about Lynne? Do you think she’s jumping into this simply to be around Simon?”

“I thought about that, but Simon said it was just her personality. To be honest, I’m going to set aside some time for the two of you to talk. I’d like your view on her.”

I raised an eyebrow at him.

He laughed. “Don’t look at me like that. You’re an excellent judge of character and you’ve been in the lifestyle long enough to have an honest opinion about things.”

“I guess that makes sense.” What would it have been like if a more experienced submissive had talked to me before Nathaniel collared me all those years ago? Would they have found it odd I wanted to submit only to him and not any other Doms?

I set my hand over his and entwined our fingers. “I’ll talk with her, but keep in mind, the heart isn’t the most rational organ.”

His smile was soft and warm. “I know that all too well, Abby. All too well.”

## Chapter Two

Friday afternoon I waved good-bye to Elizabeth and Henry as they drove off with Linda. The silence of the house greeted me when I stepped back inside and I stood in the foyer to let the stillness wash over me. I took a few deep breaths as if I could inhale quiet and make it a part of my body. I’d enjoy the quiet while I could; it wouldn’t be too long before I’d miss the messes and giggles.

As it had every other free moment I’d had this week, my mind immediately drifted to Meagan and her e-mail and phone call. I had answered her the night before and was waiting for her to confirm our meeting dates and times.

Thrilled to finally have some private time to be at the computer, I went into the library and checked to see if Meagan had replied. I tapped my foot as I waited for my e-mails to load and my heart jumped up to my throat when I saw she had. I read over the information she sent, marking on my calendar the meeting details. She’d also sent more information about the television show.

I finished reading everything and looked at the time. Four thirty. *Shit*. I shut the laptop down and hurried up to the bedroom. I’d have to rush if I was going to have time to prepare for Nathaniel. He worked in the city, so it’d take him a while to make it home to our Hampton estate.

He expected me to be in the playroom, waiting, by five o’clock. I barely made it.

Normally, a feeling of peace and contentment washed over me as soon as I knelt in place. But as I dropped to my knees the only thing on my mind was Meagan’s e-mail and the upcoming meeting. I thought about who

I'd have watch the kids and what I'd wear to the meeting. My brain spun around in multiple directions before I realized how much time had passed. I couldn't be entirely positive because he didn't have a clock in the playroom, but I was fairly certain it was about a quarter after five. *Where was he?*

My knees ached. He wouldn't mind if I stood up and stretched, would he? He'd never know and I'd hear him when he entered the house and could quickly get back into position. I wouldn't even have to do it that long, just a quick stretch and roll of my shoulders.

Should I or shouldn't I?

Another minute passed.

I should.

I lifted my head—and screamed.

Nathaniel was standing in front of me.

“Abigail.”

“Fuck, you scared me,” I said, my body shaking. How did he get into the house, much less the playroom, without me knowing?

“Obviously,” he said.

I straightened my posture and took a deep breath.

He walked with careful steps over to me. He simply stood quietly for several long seconds before saying, “Put your forehead to the floor with your ass in the air and remain like that so I can enjoy the sight of you.”

I was comfortable for about zero seconds. The position was humiliating; I knew how exposed I was. Behind me, he saw everything. I could hide nothing. To keep my mind off what he was looking at, I thought once more about the blog and the upcoming meeting.

Based on how the weekend went, I would have plenty of material to post. I wouldn't have to resort to our past like I'd been known to do. The last three posts had been recycled from years ago. The downside to recycling posts was that he didn't comment on them.

“You're not with me, Abigail,” he said in warning.

He was right, so I cleared my mind of everything except him. I focused on what he needed and how to give it to him. At the moment, that was obedience. But thoughts of what he needed made me think of topics I could write about and it hit me that I'd have to find a way to fit blogging into my daily routine. It could no longer be something I did haphazardly.

I'd been a bit scattered since first receiving the e-mail. What I needed to do was create a schedule. Check e-mails only during specific times. I should probably set a schedule for writing, too. If the position proved to be what I hoped it might be, I needed to make sure everything was organized and balanced.

Behind me, Nathaniel sighed. “Move to the table. On your back.”

I stood up slowly, afraid if I moved too quickly I'd get dizzy from having my head down for so long. I didn't

look at Nathaniel as I crossed the room to the padded table. I knew I'd probably see disappointment in his eyes and I hated that more than anything.

I climbed onto the table, my body nearly sighing as it sank slightly into the supple leather. I closed my eyes and gave a tiny gasp as he blindfolded me.

"To help you concentrate."

So it was that noticeable? I cringed inwardly that the weekend had gotten off to such a bad start and took a few deep breaths to clear my head. His hands swept over my shoulders and down my side. One of his fingers brushed a ticklish spot and I stifled a giggle. There were times he would tickle me during play, but I didn't think this was one of them.

He made a noise deep in his throat and I stiffened. Maybe he'd wanted me to laugh. I wasn't sure, and with the blindfold I couldn't read his expression. I focused on his touch. He stroked over my hips, but didn't go below my waist. He wasn't gentle, so I didn't think he was trying to be ticklish, but he wasn't as rough as he sometimes got.

I jerked when his lips pressed against my hip bone and again when he gave it a light nip. Usually, it would have turned me on, but at the moment, I was too concerned I was doing something wrong.

Which was stupid, I told myself. He wanted me on the table ready for his use and that was what I was doing. The only wrong thing was being so worried and scattered. I tried to force myself to relax into his touch.

There are times your mind can come up with crazy stuff. On the table, trying to feel nothing but his touch, my brain came up with the most ludicrous thoughts:

*Maybe you're not submissive anymore.*

*You're doing everything wrong.*

*This probably means you shouldn't take the job.*

I wasn't sure how long I stayed on the table, lost in my own mind, imagining nonexistent mess-ups. But I knew the minute something was horribly, horribly off.

His hands started at my ankles and moved up the inner portion of my leg. Moving slowly and intently, he circled my thighs and then slid a finger into me. I couldn't hold back the yelp that followed because it fucking hurt.

"You're not the slightest bit aroused," he said, sounding just as surprised as I was.

"I'm sorry, Master," I choked out. "I don't know what my problem is."

He slid the blindfold from my eyes and I blinked in the soft light, finally focusing on his worried expression. "You think you should apologize?" he asked. "Why is it your fault I'm not turning you on?"

"The way you say it makes it sound like you're doing something wrong."

"Sit up," he said, helping me get upright. "One of us doesn't have to be doing something wrong. It could be any number of things and is probably a combination of several."

“But—”

He placed a finger against my lips. “Stop. You shouldn’t need a reminder that it *is* wrong for you to argue with me in the playroom.”

“Sorry, Master.”

His lips brushed mine. “Let’s go for a jog together, clear our heads. Do you have something you can put together quickly for dinner?”

I ran through what I had in the refrigerator. “I have some tuna that won’t take long to cook. I’ll do that with a salad.”

“That sounds delicious.” His smile was easy now and my heart lightened. While I knew not to look for something or someone to place blame on for my lack of arousal, I couldn’t help but think that if I hadn’t been so distracted, the evening might have been different. But Nathaniel was aware I’d been distracted and he wasn’t placing blame.

Our jog together reminded me of how we used to be when I wore his collar every weekend. We knew each other so well now, our bodies automatically adjusted to the other’s speed. Granted, he could run a lot faster and farther than I could, so in reality he was probably the one adjusting his speed. I felt touched by his love when I thought about how he was doing that. It was a beautiful evening and we headed out at an easy pace. Apollo whined when we didn’t take him with us, but he was getting older and would hurt himself trying to keep up with us.

We jogged around the perimeter of our estate. I’d forgotten how much I enjoyed running with Nathaniel. Every so often, I’d peek out of the corner of my eyes to watch him. There was such grace in the way he moved. Such strength in his legs.

He caught me one time and smiled. “I think I’ll have you jog naked next time.” I almost tripped over my feet and he reached out to steady me. “Careful.”

“What?”

“Have you jog naked. I’ve never had you do it. It might be fun.”

I snorted. “For you.”

“Exactly.”

We turned slightly and headed toward the flower garden. It was spring and we’d recently had some landscaping done, so many of the plants were small and new.

“Like little babies,” I said.

“The cleomes?”

“Yes, it’s like we have a little plant nursery.”

He didn’t say anything for several strides and then he surprised me with, “Are you pregnant?”

“Because I mentioned babies?” Honestly? Where had that come from?

“It just seemed strange bringing up babies in the middle of the garden.”

“It was just a metaphor.” I still didn’t make the connection. Unless he meant something more with his question. “Do you want a third child?”

We’d talked about it when I was pregnant with Henry and at the time, we’d decided to have only two. I really hadn’t given much thought to another child. It hadn’t even registered in my mind that it would be something that could happen.

He slowed to a brisk walk and I followed. Good. The slower pace would give me time to think.

“I hadn’t thought about another child until right now,” he said. “I’m content with two. A third? I don’t know. That would give us odd numbers. We’d have to have four to even it all out.”

I laughed. “That’s seriously part of your thought process? Not which room we’ll put them in or if we’d have time for everyone or even if we would need a bigger car to fit five or anything like that, just that the number is odd?”

“My mind likes even numbers.” He spoke so matter-of-factly, I couldn’t tell if he was being serious. Sometimes his dry sense of humor threw me. But then he gave a little grin to show he was joking. At least a little bit.

“Then I’m going to say *I don’t think so* to child three, because I don’t think I could do four.” My mind still couldn’t wrap itself around three. Four? There were plenty of women who could do it. I didn’t think Felicia would have a problem, for instance, but I couldn’t get there. “The doctor visits alone would do me in. Can you imagine two more children with ear infections like Henry has had?”

“No. I honestly can’t.” His nose wrinkled up. “And the diapers.”

“Right? I’m looking forward to when Henry’s out of them and the entire house is potty trained.”

He laughed softly and reached for my hand. “That will be a wonderful day.”

We walked back to the house and it wasn’t until we stepped inside that I realized I hadn’t thought of the blog the entire time we were outside or jogging. Instead, I’d been caught up in spending time with Nathaniel, simply enjoying the evening with my Master. It wasn’t just the sex I missed when I didn’t wear his collar; it was everything about our D/s relationship.

Once inside, he stroked my cheek, told me he’d eat at seven, and went to take a shower. Since it was a bit late, I took mine in the bathroom attached to the old submissive bedroom I used so long ago. That way I could start dinner without being sweaty and having to wait for Nathaniel to finish.

While I prepared our supper, I tried to remember how long it’d been since I’d served him a meal while wearing his collar. I couldn’t recall. I pulled out my favorite china, a set I’d found in the attic right after our engagement. It was Japanese inspired and decorated with vibrant reds and blues. I assumed he would have me serve him in the dining room, so I prepared the table for one.

He entered the dining room at seven and his lips curved up slightly when he saw the china. “Very nice, Abigail.”

“Thank you, Master.”



I remained standing to his side while he ate and a feeling of peace and contentment washed over me. I needed this. It was part of who I was, of who we were. We had to make room in our schedules for it.

He suddenly pushed back from the table. "Come here, Abigail."

I looked at his plate in shock. Was something wrong? Was the tuna raw or overcooked? It had looked good when I took it out of the oven.

"Here." He patted his thigh. "Sit in my lap."

*Oh.* Well, that was much better than burned or undercooked fish. I threw my shoulders back and climbed into his lap in as sultry a manner as I could. *This would be more fun if I was naked. Or if he was. Or if we both were.*

"Open." He held a forkful of tuna to my mouth. I parted my lips and he slipped it inside. "Good, isn't it?" he asked.

"Not bad," I said, licking my lips. "Maybe a little heavy on the pepper."

"Mmm." He focused on my eyes. "I think it's just right."

"Thank you, Master."

He fed me a bite of salad and a drop of Italian dressing landed on the corner of my mouth. I shifted to get his napkin, but he shook his head. He leaned forward and wiped it away with his thumb.

"May I, Master?" I asked, stilling his wrist with my hand.

"Yes."

I kissed his thumb and then sucked it into my mouth, all the while keeping my eyes on his. His eyes had grown dark and his breath was ragged. I wanted him to kiss me, to touch me, something. But he inhaled deeply and pulled away.

"You need to eat," he said.

I didn't feel hungry at all, but lunch had been hurried. If I didn't eat now, I'd be wide-awake at two in the morning with a growling stomach. He took his time feeding me and after a few bites, he put the fork down and held his wineglass to my lips.

Usually when he fed me while I wore his collar, we'd be in the playroom. Sitting at the dining room table felt slightly wanton. He shifted his hips and his erection pushed against my thigh. He ignored it, focusing his attention on ensuring that I ate. Bite after bite he fed me, giving me sips of wine in between. Being so close to him, sitting in his lap, I was acutely aware of every inch of him. The firmness of his thigh, the strength of chest, his warmth.

"I should fuck you on the table," he said.

It was so easy to picture. He'd stand up and lay me down on top of the table. Maybe even pushing the dishes aside like they always did in the movies. I'd put on a dress for dinner and all he'd have to do is lift the hem to my waist. I didn't have any underwear on. He could take me so easily. It would require hardly any effort for him to climb up along with me, or roughly grab my legs and pull me to the edge.

*Please.*

“Abigail.” His fingers danced along my upper thigh, dipping a bit lower to tease the hem of my skirt. He stroked my knee and ran his hand almost, but not quite, up my leg entirely. “Tell me. If I fingered you now, would you be wet?”

“Yes, Master.” I squirmed just a little, letting him know he should feel free to check.

“It would take nothing for me to lift you onto the table and have my way with you.” He whispered in my ear, “I’ve never had you on the dining room table.”

“That’s a travesty, Master. We should fix it.”

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