

RANDOM HOUSE *e*BOOKS



No Reservations

Megan Hart and Lauren Dane

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About the Book

Four days in Vegas. Two sexy and determined men. One penthouse suite ... And no reservations.

Christmas isn't so merry for Kate and Leah. Kate's romantic winter holiday is destroyed by the sudden and uninvited presence of Dix's annoying ex-wife, while Brandon's super-perfect family and a diamond ring send Leah running for the refuge of a girl's holiday in Sin City with Kate in tow.

But Dix and Brandon both know what they want. In hot pursuit, the men show up in Vegas, ready to use every sensual trick they have to convince Kate and Leah to take a gamble on forever.

About the Authors

Megan Hart and Lauren Dane spend way too many hours chatting via IM and giggling, but between them they've written 39 books across several genres. They are the authors of *No Reservations* and *Taking Care of Business*.

Also by Megan Hart and Lauren Dane:

Taking Care of Business

No Reservations

Megan Hart and Lauren Dane

BLACK
LACE

1

STANDING, KATE TOOK a deep breath and smiled tightly at the other women in the house. 'I'm going to go and read for a while. Good night, everyone.'

Adrienne, Dix's younger daughter, ignored her, continuing to chatter to her mother who'd ensconced herself on the couch, right where Kate had been sitting for the last four days. Yes, Eve, the girls' mother. *Dix's ex-wife*. Still, Kendall, the older girl, got up and hugged her. 'Night, Kate. Sure you don't want to watch this movie with us? Gerard Butler, tiny leather undies? Come on, what's to say no in that?'

Kate laughed, liking Kendall a lot. Still, even her secret celebrity boyfriend in leather undies wasn't enough to keep her in this wood-panelled room filled with memories and Eve Dixon who'd just *shown up* a few hours before.

Dix looked up from his paper, surrounded by the women in his life and met her eyes. He had *that* look in them. Oh no, he did not even think she was fucking him now!

'I'll come too.' He stood, putting the paper down.

Kate took a step away from him. 'No. No, it's fine. You don't need to. I'm going to sleep right away anyway.' She sent him a look which he conveniently ignored.

He kissed and hugged each one of his daughters and nodded at Eve before he turned back to Kate. Grabbing her, he pulled her to his body and kissed her. It was quick but he made his point. Pickles, Kate's not-so-nice nickname for the ex-wife, saw it and her eyes narrowed. Kate stifled the desire to pop her one.

‘Of course I don’t need to. But I’m tired and I’ve already seen this movie with you four times. I can give time number five a pass.’ The look in his eyes told Kate he wasn’t going to be swayed. He wanted what he wanted and he was certainly not above turning her into a puddle of goo if he had to.

A brittle cough interrupted their little struggle. ‘Well OK then! Gosh I sure do appreciate you sharing the holidays with me, Katie. It’s lonely you know, being a mom without her babies,’ Pickles chirped. ‘It’s just you and me, girls.’

Bitch.

Resisting, only barely, her urge to slap the shit out of Pickles for calling her *Katie*, Kate dug her nails into her palms and left the room. She climbed the stairs towards their shared bedroom, the heat from his body right at her back so she couldn’t escape.

Once inside, she glared at him but he’d moved to build a fire in the fireplace.

‘I know you’re mad. I didn’t know she was coming. I’ll talk to her tomorrow.’ He spoke as he worked, his back to her.

‘Don’t talk to me with your back.’ She knew it sounded petulant but so be it. His ex-wife, a woman who seemed terminally unable to do stuff like open pickle jars without his assistance, had just shown up on the porch unannounced! And she called her Katie. She was *not* a Katie. And if she was, that thundertwat downstairs would not have the privilege of calling her that anyway. Over the months she and Dix had been seeing each other, the woman had gotten worse and worse. It had gotten to the point where Dix spent most of their time together at her place since Eve wouldn’t dare show up there. Unfortunately, she’d taken to showing up lots of other places and Kate found that distasteful as well as pitiable. It was beyond over between Dix and his ex. That Eve was being so pathetic now with her attempts to break him and Kate up

spoke volumes about how crazy or how clueless the woman was.

Finishing up, Dix covered the grate and turned to face her, the corner of his mouth twitching. 'There, it should warm up in here soon. For now, let's preserve our body heat, shall we? I hear two people naked are good for that sort of thing.' He tossed his sweater to the side, tousling his hair and looking very tasty. *Bastard.*

'Well, I'm sure Pickles will be glad to snuggle up to you then. You may have noticed, *Charles*, I'm not in the mood. I'm going to read and then I'm going to sleep. Fully clothed.'

'Do you really want me to go downstairs to a woman I ceased loving a long time ago and have been divorced from for nine years now? When you're right here and clearly in need of a little exercise to work off your mad? I don't want her. I want you. I always want you.'

Warmth spread through her at the way his voice lowered and then more as he traced the back of his knuckles down the line of her jaw.

'I love you, Kate. I'm here with you. I am sorry she showed up, but that doesn't mean you and I are any different than we were before she came.'

She arched a brow at him. 'Stop being logical. I don't want that from you right now.'

His face softened, losing that predatory gleam he had in his eyes. He pulled her into a hug, kissing her before looking into her eyes. Christ, he made her love him so much. It didn't scare her any more, but he still needed to be fended off at times when he tended to try to take control of every situation.

'How is it you're even hotter when you're being prickly? I need therapy, but I'd rather have you. I know you're upset. I'm sorry. Do you want me to go down and make her leave?'

She sighed. 'Gah, you're abominable. I told you I didn't want to be rational right now. And you had to go and be all nice.' She rolled her eyes and kissed him. 'I don't want her here. I hate her voice. Her perfume is cloying and needy, just like she is.' Kate groaned and pulled at her bottom lip for a moment. 'No. I know why you didn't make her leave tonight. I don't want you to put the girls in the middle.' Pickles had done that already.

'You're a good woman, Katherine.' The predatory gleam was back as he made very quick work of her sweater and then her bra. She sucked in a breath as he palmed her nipples. 'A good woman who likes my hands on her nipples.'

She shrugged. 'They're just hands. Anyone's hands would do. And we are *not* having sex tonight. Not with her here.'

He pushed her back and she bounced as she hit the mattress. The sounds of the movie downstairs floated up and under the door as the fire began to pop and crackle. She was never sexier to him than when she put him and his daughters first. She didn't know of course, so it wasn't about her manipulating it like Eve had done by showing up.

It'd been hours since he'd had her last. Since they'd fucked, hard and fast, still mainly clothed in the thick forest behind the house. Her breath had misted in the air as he'd backed her against a tree. Her body received him, the shock of her heat a stark contrast to the cold air. And still, he'd wanted her, even as the sweat on the back of his neck had cooled.

Whatever it was about her, he wanted to possess it even as he couldn't help but let the strength of her fierce independence shine through. That she wanted to be with him, that she sought him out and let him hold her, thrilled him and comforted him at the same time.

Right then, as he divested her of her jeans and those tiny panties, but left on the over-the-knee socks she knew

he got off on so much, he was far more thrilled than comforted.

'I love those socks. So sexy and silly. Every time I see you I want to devour you in three greedy bites,' he said as he got rid of the rest of his clothes and returned to her. She was still pissed, he saw it in the set of her mouth, but it made seducing her, making her want his touch, making her crave his cock in her cunt, even sweeter.

'I want to read.' But she hadn't moved, in fact her eyes were glued to his hands as he'd unzipped his jeans and pulled them down.

'Hmm. I want to lick your pussy.'

In the low light, he caught the sound of her indrawn breath. He reached out to open the curtains, silvery moonlight flooding into the room, illuminating her as she waited for him. His cock jumped against his belly when she caught her bottom lip between her teeth.

He chuckled, taking in the way her nipples stabbed skywards and not because of the cold. Her scent, of desire flushed skin and her pussy, rose to meet him as he got onto the bed beside her.

'So, darling Kate, open your thighs for me.' He leant in and her hand rested gently against his shoulder. He wanted to laugh triumphantly, that hand was meant to push him back but neither one of them had the energy to play that game.

In the dark, in the quiet of the room with the night settled in all around, Kate couldn't help but arch into his mouth. He left hot, wet kisses down her neck and gooseflesh in his wake. Halfheartedly, her hand rested on his shoulder where she'd been ready to shove him back. Instead, she breathed him into her lungs and let him touch her.

Any way he wanted to.

It was always this way with him, had been since the first moment she'd opened her hotel-room door to find him

standing there nearly a year before. He touched her like he was meant to. Her body and her heart certainly agreed. Charles Dixon was her favourite addiction, even if he was an arrogant man with an ex-wife who'd ensconced herself downstairs watching Kate's Gerry Butler and probably trying to steal him, too.

'Quit it,' she managed to say, the words thick on her tongue as desire bloomed, slow like honey, through her veins. Her nipples hardened, her pussy slickened and readied for him.

'You don't want me to stop.'

She didn't. But damn him, his ex-wife was under the same roof! '*I don't, but Eve does.*'

He snorted just before he caught a nipple between his teeth, sending bright shards of pleasure/pain skittering through her. 'I don't care about her. Plus, I hate to break it to you, darling Kate, but she knows I'm having my way with you right now.'

'That is ... oh, holy Christ, you're not playing fair.' His knuckles brushed against her labia, stroking against the slick knot of her clit.

He laughed, that dark, wicked chuckle as he inched downwards. 'I'm playing the way you like it. Hard, hot and bad. I'm going to eat your pussy until you have to scream into the pillow. And then I'm going to fuck you until every damned spring on this bed squeaks. I will have you, Kate, and then I'll have you again and once more after that.' His tongue swirled decadently around her belly button before he caught the ridge between his teeth briefly.

What could she say to that other than, Yay! She really should be firm with him but when he did that thing, oh yes, *that* thing with his tongue, well she wasn't a saint. Plus she sucked at being firm with him. He was bossy and pushy and arrogant when it came to sex and their relationship. Truly it was part of his appeal. Though it did get exhausting sometimes. She'd dated a lot of men but Charles Dixon was

a capital-M *man* and she loved it when he played at pushing her around. As long as he respected her, she sort of liked how he took charge.

He licked through her cunt, savouring her slowly. The palms of his hands held her thighs open wide and down. That bit of restraint flipped her switch.

Her fingers tunnelled through his hair as she urged him closer, needing more and knowing he'd give it to her. He moaned then and it vibrated through her clit, up her spine, lodging in her brain, the sound/sensation fluttering like a moth.

The flat of his tongue slid back and forth over her clit. Until he pulled back. 'Mmm, you taste so fucking good. Now hush, you don't want anyone to hear you. You don't want anyone to know my mouth is on your cunt. To know I'm just about to make you come all over my face.' His voice was a breath of sound she barely heard above the water lapping the lakeshore and the wind blowing through the trees.

Still she heard it and it did her in. Her gasp was involuntary and a shiver roiled through her. 'Get to it already. All talk, you,' she whispered back and he laughed.

He surged up her body, kissing whichever parts of her were within his reach. 'Tough talk for a woman so wet, her thighs are glistening.' He kissed her, owning her mouth, not letting her take refuge but instead making his point. She wanted him and he knew it. He knew just how to get to her, knew her buttons.

Their little game and she loved it as much as he loved him.

'God, what am I going to do with you?' she moaned and he nipped her bottom lip.

'I have many ideas. First of all, stop being so uptight. No one is going to hear us. The girls are watching a movie so loud I can hear it and I don't give a damn if Eve hears. She

wasn't invited. Anyway, you're not usually turned *off* by the notion someone might hear.'

'That's strangers, dumbass. This is a house full of your women.'

'If only it were as lurid as you make it out to be. I told you, the television is on so loud I can hear it and so can you. And Eve is not my woman. *You* are my woman. And right now, you're undoing my work on your pussy.'

'Your *wife* did that.' She wanted to cross her arms across her chest and glare at him but it was impossible to pretend she didn't want him to shove his cock into her even if she was pissed. The damned man was beyond irresistible.

He slid his cock along the seam of her pussy and she widened her thighs to get more contact. A grin, quicksilver, flashed across his face.

'She's not my wife. *You* would be my wife if you stopped freaking out every time I asked and just married me already.'

Gah! Not that while they were doing this. 'We've been ... oh that's very nice ... seeing each other, going steady, whatever you want to call it for less than a year. You come with a lot of baggage including Pickles downstairs. We don't need to rush. Except you need to make me come or put your dick into me.'

He started laughing and rolled her over so that she was on top. 'That's better and I'll give you five dollars to stop calling her that.'

Taking matters into her own hands, she grabbed his cock, angled him and slid down the thick stalk of him until he was inside her fully. 'If you want the job done right, do it yourself. And anyway, she invites mockery, Charles. She just *plays* at being helpless to keep you hopping.'

He grabbed her hips and slammed into her cunt and then pulled out, slamming in again. 'Mmmm, juicy. Now can we speak of something, anything else? Like how you haven't come yet?'

‘I’m always willing to talk about that.’ She smirked down at him, the lines of his face lit by the moon reflected on the snow outside and the golden light of the fire in the fireplace across the room. ‘You’re too good looking.’

‘Thank you. It’s all for you. Now get to work up there. I think we should start off with a nice, hard orgasm for you and then we’ll follow up with another in a few minutes.’

She arched, letting her head fall back as she rose and fell, repeatedly taking him into her cunt. His finger traced around her nipple and then down the curve of her left breast. Around her belly button and then *at last* he danced the very tip of it over her clit. They gasped in unison.

‘I love the way your cunt grabs me when I do that,’ he murmured. ‘I love the way you look, above me, gleaming in the firelight, your pussy hugging my cock. Your tits swaying as you fuck me. You’re so beautiful, Katherine. Beautiful and sexy and all mine.’

He looked up at her and meant every word he said. God damn, she was gorgeous. Mouthy, opinionated, independent and damned sexy. Her pussy was an inferno and he never wanted to leave it.

Her inner walls contracted around him as he drew slick circles around her clit. She was close, he could tell. Her nipples were dark, beaded against the cool air, her breath quick and shallow as she squirmed down on him over and over, grinding herself into his fingers as they played over her clit.

He hadn’t been kidding when he’d brought up marriage. He wanted to be with Katherine Edwards forever. But he’d take living together. And he’d planned to bring it up over a few glasses of wine, some sex, a fire, all designed to get her resistance low.

Instead, his ex-wife had shown up saying she’d missed their daughters and what could he say? Toss her out of the vacation house they still shared? In the presence of their daughters? If it had been just them or the girls had been

away at the time, he would have, but they'd seen her drive up and he'd been trapped. Kate had been really angry but had hid it well, behaving, as always, kindly in Eve's presence, but Eve played games and he planned to have yet another conversation with her about it.

There was a steadfastness of will Katherine possessed that Eve simply didn't have it within herself to understand. Just because Kate didn't tantrum or cry didn't mean she wasn't totally immovable. That was Eve's critical mistake. She underestimated Katherine. All the things Eve didn't get were all the reasons why Dix loved Kate so deeply. Eve hadn't stood a chance at getting him back before he met Kate, but now that she was in his life, no one would take her from it. He had no desire for anyone else and, though she was courteous in the presence of his girls, he knew it was only a matter of time before Kate unsheathed her claws with Eve.

Kate wasn't a passing phase. She was with him. *With him*. But right then, he wanted to bring her off, so he added pressure to his touch, bringing another gasp to her lips followed by a low moan. He smiled, closer, *come on then ...*

Her head shot forwards as she leant over him, her fingers tunnelled through his hair as she rode him hard and fast.

'That's it, take it from me.' He dug his heels into the mattress and surged up as she ground down on him, her cunt wet and hot. When she came he nearly lost his mind at how good it was, rippling and squeezing around him as she continued to fuck herself down onto him over and over. Thank heavens they'd finally reached the stage in their relationship where they could stop using condoms so he could feel all that hot wetness without latex between them.

'Sweet Christ,' she panted out, slowing her pace and letting him take over again.

'I take it that was to your liking, milady?' He rolled, landing on top where he could control the pace better. That

and he liked the sight of her spread out beneath him, her face flushed from her climax.

'You'll do.' Her voice had gone lazy, her muscles loose as she took him in. Her fingers slid up and down his spine as she wrapped her legs around his waist, holding him against her body.

He gave himself over to the pleasure of being with her, losing all other concerns but for what he felt for the woman beneath him. No other woman had provided such a refuge for him, had accepted him the way this one did.

'Have I told you lately how much I love you?'

'Mmm, it's not like I have a problem hearing it more than once a day or say, when your ex-wife shows up with a suitcase.'

'My darling, Kate, that horse is dead. Now unless you want me to go soft, let's speak of it no more.'

Teasing him amused her. He got the cutest little furrow in his brow when she agitated him. Delicious really. Plus, he thrust into her a bit harder, and who could find fault with that?

'Fine, fine. I love you too, by the way. You're very handy when you're naked.' And he fucked like a rock star.

He stroked into her, deep and hard, keeping his rhythm steady. The subtle stretch of her skin around her clit, along with the way the angle he kept brought his cock over all the right spots, warmed her, filled her cells with pleasure. Instead of the hot rush of climax when she'd been on top, this was languorous and decadent. Much like him.

'I like that smile.' He flashed that grin of his. 'It means something naughty in store for me.'

He pulled out and untangled himself from her legs despite her protest about it.

'I was busy here the last time. Before you started bitching.' With that, he pressed his mouth to her cunt and kissed, leaving her arching and breathless.

On and on he went, his mouth, tongue, lips and even teeth working in concert to blow her mind as he went down on her. She was ready, already close, but he kept her dancing right on the edge of climax until she pounded the mattress with her need to come. He sucked her clit in between his teeth, gently but surely, and it shoved her right into orgasm with one gasped whisper of his name.

Her muscles still jumped as he slid his cock back into her pussy with a satisfied sigh. His lips met hers, tasted of her, of them. She hugged him tight as he fucked her. Harder and harder and she knew he was close. Her nails scored into the hard muscle of his shoulders, her calves ached, holding him as close as she could get him, and he grunted in her ear as he thrust as deeply as he could and came.

He lay against her as his heartbeat slowed, their sweat and body heat fusing them together in a not altogether unpleasant way. 'Tomorrow after breakfast, when the girls go out with their friends, you and me, naked all afternoon.'

'Charles, where do you propose we put Pickles during this time? Because, while I am not opposed to sex with women, I am opposed to sex with *her*.'

Oh. Yeah. He had to deal with that issue.

'I'll talk to her in the morning. And then we can talk about the whole sex with a woman thing. You know it's one of my favourite subjects.' He grinned up at her and she sighed.

'I'll take a walk then, shall I? Or maybe I'll go into town. We're getting low on milk and bread.' She stretched and he admired the long line of her body, the dips and curves of her.

'Why don't you stay? I want you to be there, I want to underline to her that you and I are together.'

'Dix, I don't want to be an underline.' She sat, arranging the comforter around her legs but leaving her breasts bare. 'I appreciate how much you've worked to make it clear to

her that you and I are a couple. And I don't blame you for this little stunt. But she knows we're together. She knows I'm not a passing phase. She. Doesn't. Care. She wants you back and she'll do anything she can to drive us apart. It's boring but true.'

'Well, what do you suggest I do? If you would just move in with me, we'd have that to stand on.'

She froze. 'What? I live two hours away from you, which means my job is two hours away. I don't think I want to commute like that every day just to tell your ex something she already knows.'

'We can move to Lancaster. We'll get a house near enough to the station so you can commute and so can I. That's an hour out for each one of us. I can work from home two days a week anyway. Don't you want to be with me every night?'

She sighed. 'Why are you bringing this up right now?'

'Because it's time and because you won't marry me. I want something more from you, Kate.'

'I won't marry you right now and you know why. Anyway, what about the girls? Adrienne already hates me, if you and I move in together and she has to commute to school, or she loses the place she's lived in for as long as she has, it'll only make matters worse. It's just two more years until they both graduate.'

He truly admired the way she thought of his kids. She didn't push them out of the way, wanted him to keep his focus on being a good father. It was one of her best qualities. Still, it wasn't insurmountable.

Sighing he pushed the hair from his eyes. 'You and I are smart people who love each other. We can work this through somehow. They already spend most weekdays with Eve because of work and school. We can work this out. And Aid doesn't hate you, she's just getting to know you. Kendall likes you.' Thank God for that. His oldest daughter had taken to Kate from the first time they'd met. Eve didn't

like that much but, so far, he couldn't see that she'd interfered or criticised Kate to the girls. He had the feeling that was next on Eve's list though and it ruffled his feathers. He shouldn't have to tell Eve things like 'Don't badmouth my girlfriend to our daughters.' He shouldn't have to tell her lots of things, but Eve's behaviour had only become more and more childlike and annoying the closer he and Katherine had become.

'So what? You'd give up your weekdays with your daughters? Be a weekend dad? They adore you, Dix, and they should, you're a great father. I am really not comfortable with having you spend less time with your daughters so we can live together. Even if they spend all that time with Pickles, they will blame me if you move. It's only natural. I would too in their shoes.'

'That is just an excuse to keep yourself away from me.' He narrowed his gaze at her, moving towards her to take her again.

Until he heard Adrienne call his name from the bottom of the stairs. Kate raised that damned right eyebrow at him again and he snorted.

'Go on. I need to shower anyway.' On her way off the bed, she kissed him and he grabbed her, delivering a very thorough kiss instead of a quick peck. She got up and he admired how good she looked from the rear, her juicy, tight ass swaying as she walked.

'This discussion isn't over, darling Kate. There are solutions if you really want to find them,' he called out as he pulled a pair of boxers and sweats on, following with a sweatshirt.

'Yeah, yeah. Tell it to Pickles,' she said before she shut the door on him.

2

LEATHER SLID THROUGH Brandon's belt loops, one at a time, with a sound that sent a spiral of desire straight to Leah's too-long-denied clit. *Thwap. Thwap. Thwap.* He gripped the belt's buckle end in one of those big hands and yanked it free, finally, to dangle from his hand.

He was grinning, the bastard.

'Look at this nice new belt.' His voice dipped, husky-low.

Leah kept her chin high, expression neutral. 'I see it.'

Brandon didn't seem swayed by her lack of reaction. Looping the leather in his fists, he tugged it with another *thwap* that weakened her knees so much she had to grab the back of the nearby desk chair to keep her balance. Her pussy pulsed, her clit a tight, hard knot against the silk of her panties, but Leah was *so* not going there.

Not in Brandon's parents' basement with them doing God knew what just above. The house was quiet, but that didn't mean they were asleep. And it was the rumpus room for fuck's sake!

'What a nice belt this is.'

God, he knew just how to tease her. *Thwap* went the leather in his hands and he tucked the end through the buckle to make a loop just large enough for both his wrists. He held it up.

'Leah, don't you want to help me use this belt?'

She'd given him that belt, supple black leather with a plain silver buckle, just over a week ago. She'd given it before Christmas because they'd be spending the actual day with his family, and how, exactly, do you gift your lover

with a belt you intend to tie him up with and have him open it in front of his parents?

She should've waited, she thought as his tongue swiped across his lips and all she could do was imagine it buried between her legs. Above their heads, Leah heard the skitter of claws on linoleum. That would be Scamp, the Longs' appropriately adorable mutt. That, along with the squeak of the back door opening, was also a reminder that, although the house was dark and mostly quiet, they weren't alone.

With the belt still dangling like sin from his fist, Brandon reached over his shoulder with his free hand to grab at the neck of his white T-shirt and pull it off over his head. It snagged on the belt and he tugged it free to toss the shirt onto the faded and spring-busted recliner in front of the battered television. Most of the white-painted basement had been decorated with cheery bright furniture and posters on the walls, a billiard table and Brandon's dad's prized possession, a vintage KISS pinball machine. But this guest space contained, in addition to the lumpy pull-out sofa, the cast-offs from when the Longs had redecorated. The fact Brandon had told her he'd received his very first blow job on that chair might have offended her except the thought of it had turned her on so much she couldn't look at the chair without wanting to make him forget any other woman had ever touched him.

'Brandon,' Leah said warningly and watched his pupils dilate. Fuck. She was only going to turn him on more, at this rate. Herself, too.

This could be a problem.

Bare-chested, he stood straight. It was just an illusion that the top of his dark head brushed the ceiling beams. At least she thought it was. He was seventy-thousand feet tall, after all, and she knew every single inch of him.

'Your parents,' she managed to say with another glance upwards as the door squeaked open and shut and Scamp clattered across the floor again.

‘That’s my dad letting the dog in. Mom’s in bed. He’s going to bed, too.’

But she couldn’t fuck him in his parents’ house, she just couldn’t. It was bad enough his mom had greeted them with a cheery grin so much like Brandon’s it had been startling, had given them this basement guest space instead of, as Leah had assumed, assigning them separate rooms. Brandon had seemed to take it as a matter of course, not noticing as he slung their bags onto the couch and showed her the tiny but functional bathroom that Leah had been shocked into silence by his parents’ seemingly easy acceptance of their son’s relationship with an older woman.

They’d been there for four days. Arrived on Christmas Eve and planned to stay until New Year’s Day. It had been four days of whirlwind activity from morning until night, with present opening, visiting relatives, taking tours of Brandon’s hometown and viewing the hot spots – his elementary school, high school, the grocery store where he’d had his first job.

The chair where he’d had his first blow job.

Her eyes flicked towards it against her will, and he didn’t miss the look. Brandon hooked a finger in the button of his jeans and tugged it open. Then the zipper, notch by notch. When he pushed the denim over his hips and stepped out of it, still without letting go of that damned belt, Leah’s heart set up a steady thumping that sounded so loud she was sure he could hear it. He had to see the way her mouth parted and her breath hissed in over her tongue. He never missed anything like that.

Down went the jeans and he stood there in his soft cotton boxer briefs, already bulging in the front. Lord have mercy, he was a knee-trembler. Her grip tightened on the desk chair, which swivelled a little.

‘Brandon.’ Leah tried to sound stern. ‘This is not the place.’

He grinned again, damn him. 'Why not?'

Because your mother wears sweatshirts with pictures of kittens on the front, and I can't deflower her son in her house without feeling like a fucking slut. Because your dad looks just like you will in another twenty years and is only a couple years older than my last lover. Because I'd prepared myself for them to hate me, and instead they've welcomed me into your family like a daughter, and I don't know how to handle that.

She didn't say any of those things, because Brandon had moved step-by-step closer, and she could smell him. Soap and water. A hint of cold fresh air. They'd been out visiting his grandparents and aunts and uncles, had taken a walk around the neighbourhood. His hand had kept hers warm.

He was so tall and stood so close she had to tip her head back to look at his face, but she was helpless not to. With the desk just behind her ass, Leah let herself sit on the edge so she could lean back far enough to keep her neck from cricking. That was more of a mistake than giving him that damned belt had been, because all she could think about was the first time he'd gone down on her, in that Harrisburg hotel room. She'd told him to eat her pussy and he'd gone to his knees like a pro. How long had it been since she'd had his mouth on her cunt? The five days she'd had her period before they left Pennsylvania for Iowa, and four days here, but who was counting?

Leah was not a woman who gave up control. When Brandon leant down to offer his mouth to hers she didn't turn her head, but neither did she lean to meet him. His grin curved his lips and his breath teased her. He didn't kiss her.

He was waiting for her.

Oh, they'd come so far. Six months ago she'd have said there was no way this beautiful man, sexy and self-confident, strong and secure, would ever have put himself in a place where she could get him hard with nothing more

than a murmured command. She wouldn't have believed it of herself, either. And yet here they were, not mistress and slave but something far, far deeper.

'I love you,' he whispered into her ear when she didn't grant him the privilege of her kiss.

Her pulse throbbed in her wrists and throat, and between her legs. Leah drew in a soft breath, not because the words were new or even unexpected, but because her world still rocked a little every time she heard him say them. He knew it, too. He was working her, but did she care?

He'd braced his hands on the desk on either side of her hips, his upper body a mere inch from hers and his mouth teasing her ear. Now Leah reached to sink her fingers into the deep, dark depths of his hair at the base of his neck. She traced the familiar curve of his skull and arched her back as his breath gusted over her skin on his hiss of pleasure.

She pulled, hard, harder than she'd have dared six months ago when this was all still new. She knew better, now, what he could take. Brandon could take a lot.

She pulled his hair as she turned her face to his and held him with their mouths a breath apart. It wasn't that her grip kept him still. She had her fingers tightly woven into his hair, but he was big enough to get away if he wanted to. She tugged again to remind him of that, and another slow exhale drifted over her face.

Leah leant in and, eager, Brandon almost kissed her. Her hand in his hair arrested him, and his dark eyes went wide. She'd surprised him.

The white, soft hum of arousal filtered out all the other sounds. Leah looked deep into her lover's eyes and felt her smile teasing him. 'No.'

Her hand cupped the back of his neck for a moment before sliding over his shoulder and down to his chest. She pinched his nipple lightly until it pebbled under her touch

and his skin humped into gooseflesh. Brandon let out another breath, this time with a shiver.

‘You don’t want me to kiss you?’

She loved it when he asked her what she wanted, how to give it to her. How to please her. She wanted a lover, not a mind-reader. She loved it even more when he got cocky and thought he knew. Most of the time he did, without question, but there were still times like now when she was able to remind them both of the rules of the game.

‘Oh, I want you to kiss me, Brandon.’

Heat had bloomed between them, more now against her thigh where his crotch pressed. It was his name, the way she said it. Turned him on, and knowing that it was his trigger got her revved up, too.

He smiled. ‘Not on the mouth?’

Leah wanted to smile, too. She always did when she saw Brandon’s grin. It lit him up from inside, infectious, and made her want to kiss him breathless. She raised a brow instead and kept her expression cool.

Without saying anything, she put her hand on the top of his head and pushed down. The desk creaked when he shifted and went to his knees in front of her, when he pushed her legs apart under the long corduroy skirt she’d chosen for both warmth and fashion.

The material dipped between her knees and made a well into which he pressed his face. Looking down, she ran her fingers through his hair as his hands came to rest on her ankles. She still wore her knee-high leather boots, flat-heeled for walking. He’d bought her those boots.

His nose nudged her through the multiple layers of her skirt, tights and panties. He sat back on his heels, his dark eyes alight with desire. The belt had fallen to the floor, forgotten.

Leah leant back on the desk a little and put her foot into his lap. ‘Boots.’