

MY SECRET
LIFE

An Erotica Collection

Various Various

My Secret Life

«HarperCollins»

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Pursuing a secret liaison that you dare tell no one about, ever, is an enduring sexual fantasy. 'My Secret Life' is a collection of sexy erotica including new stories by Megan Hart, Kim Dean, Justine Elyot and Charlotte Stein. Being married but meeting a stranger in a motel room, returning to an ex for great sex while every instinct screams "stay away from him!", going too far with a husband's best friend ... just a few of the thrilling private moments revealed in 'My Secret Life'.

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MY SECRET LIFE
What Only I Know
A Mischief Collection of Erotica



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First and Last

Megan Hart

This is the first time.

She wears a dress from her closet, the material smooth and clinging, holding her curves like a lover's hands. It wraps around, ties at the side, dips low in the front. If the wind catches it just right, it'll also show off the black lace garter belt she pulled from her drawer and the span of bare skin at the tops of her sheer stockings. She hopes he'll like what she's wearing, but she dresses for herself. This is how she feels best, sexy underthings beneath a dress any woman might wear. Of course, she's not any woman. She's herself.

She waits without moving, despite the urge to pace. She stands at the window looking out at a parking lot, trees beyond it. Cars pull in and cars pull out. She couldn't tell you the make or model or colour of any one of them. She looks but doesn't see. She waits and waits, every moment tick-tocking through her, while she tries without success to slow the beating of her heart. It throbs in her chest, her throat, her wrists. Between her legs and, just like that, she has to close her eyes and put out a hand to touch the wall and keep herself from falling.

When the door opens behind her, she almost can't look. All of this is real now. Everything they've talked about but never done is going to happen in this room, and she's afraid that when she turns, he won't be the man she's been imagining. That she won't be the woman he's expecting.

If she never opens her eyes, will that make this less real? Or more? There's only one way to find out, and no fear can keep her from wanting to know. She opens her eyes. Turns.

He's smiling, thank God.

'Tess,' he says.

It's not her real name but a secret joke between them. She has blonde hair, blue eyes, fair skin. He says she could be a milkmaid like the one in Thomas Hardy's famous book; sometimes she calls him Angel as part of the game.

It's a little awkward in these first minutes with the door shut and locked behind him and the big bed between them. He doesn't move right away; she's afraid if she takes her hand off the wall she'll have nothing to keep her from going to her knees right there – and there should be something that comes before that. Some dialogue. Some pretence, maybe, that this is something more than what they both know it really is.

Because he doesn't move, she does. One, two, three steps towards him across the soft carpet that threatens to snag the heels of her shoes. She thinks he might say something then, but instead he takes her in his arms and anything that might've been awkward has no chance to grow.

'Hi.' His lips brush the side of her neck.

It's not technically the first time he's touched her, but it lights her up. Sets her on fire. Turns her inside out.

She forgets how to breathe.

His hands settle on her hips and toy with the material of her dress. The hem inches upwards on her thighs. His smile drifts along the slope of her neck to the sweet spot at the curve of her shoulder.

She takes his hand, curls her fingers against his. Moves it over her hip. Slips it inside the slit in her dress, between her legs.

He breathes in when he touches her bare thigh, the top of her stocking, the metal and elastic clip of the garter. When she curls his fingers against her cunt, he breathes out. It's her turn to smile.

He pulls away, just enough to look at her face. When he opens his mouth to speak, she seals off whatever it is he means to say with a kiss. Their first one. Mouths open, tongues stroke, there's the chance their teeth will clash but they don't.

‘You taste like chocolate,’ she murmurs into his mouth.

Then his fingers shift, and the words are gone. He slides beneath the lace. Finds her clit, the pressure sweet and perfect, just right. She doesn’t mean to bite him, but her teeth catch his lip. She mutters an apology but gets out only one syllable before he’s kissing her so hard she can’t be sure if the blood she tastes is his or her own.

She doesn’t care.

His hand is on the back of her head. His mouth on hers. His fingers slide against her, then oh fuck, inside. All the way, thumb still pressing her clit, and she has to grip his shoulder, bury her face in his neck. She bites him again. This time, she means to.

If this had been something sweet and slow, both of them taking their time, something with blowing white curtains and scented candles, music playing in the background, she wouldn’t have been surprised. But there’s nothing slow about this, and the only music is the sound of his belt unbuckling, the snicker-snack of the zipper going down. The only smells are her perfume and his skin.

Somehow, his shirt is pulled off over his head and tossed aside. His pants go too, kicked off and forgotten as a couple of steps take them to the bed. She’s on her back. Mouths fused, he’s on top of her for too short a moment until he pushes up onto his knees to undo the tie at her side. He opens her dress, and she watches his face.

He *does* like what she’s wearing. He also likes when her back arches, just a little, at the pass of his fingers across the slopes of her breasts exposed by the demi-cup bra. His palms caress her ribs. Her mouth opens. Eyes close.

She wants to touch him. But later. Now, she can think of only being touched.

His hands smooth down, down, over her belly. Her hips, where his fingers squeeze just briefly. When he snaps the lace of her garter belt, she laughs, low. Just a little. Opens her eyes.

He’s not looking at her face, so she watches him. How serious his expression as he moves his palms over the outside of her thighs. Then the inside. When his fingertips brush over her panties, the tip of her tongue gets caught tight between her teeth.

‘You wear them ... over?’ Clearly this is not how he ever imagined it to be, the panties worn on top of the garter belt.

So, he’s never been with a woman who actually wears such things, or at least never wore them for him. This thought ... that she is a first in some way, no matter how small, again punches the breath out of her.

She pushes up on her elbow to hook a finger in the lace, to show him. ‘So you can take off the panties without taking off the stockings.’

He blinks. Then again. His lips part and nothing comes out but a wisp of air.

She laughs again. ‘You want me to leave the stockings on.’

She didn’t ask a question, so he doesn’t have to answer. He gives her one with a kiss though, on the softness of her belly. On the jut of her hip bone. His fingers hook into the lace on either side and slide it down as she lifts her hips to make it easy for him.

For the first time since he walked through the door and put his arms around her, she wants to cover herself. Her hands move; she is intimidated and shy and terrified and so turned on she thinks she’ll explode.

His hand covers hers. Slides it gently away. She should close her eyes again, in case the truth of how she imagined this doesn’t live up to the reality of it, but though she tries to look away, she can’t. She doesn’t want to see.

She has to.

This is a different kind of kiss, also their first, and softer than the mouth on mouth of earlier. Not hesitant, but gentle. He lingers, the pressure of his lips unbearable until his tongue adds to it and then she understands exactly how much more she can take. Smooth and slow and soft and sweet,

that's his tongue against her. The brief press of teeth. The gentle tug of his lips on her clit, and then oh, fuck yes, one finger, then two inside her.

She's been on the edge for days, thinking of this moment. She's been so caught up inside her head that hours have passed without her knowing the full passage of time. She sits down with a book and the pages turn, the chapters end, the book is finished and she can't recall a word of what she's read. People talk to her and she replies without being sure of the question or the answer. The memory of his voice saying her name has made her weak.

And now, all of this is real. It's happening. His mouth is moving on her cunt and she is going up, up and over. She is breaking. Undone. She comes so hard she's not sure if it's a pleasure or a pain, only that sensation slams through her so fiercely she can't do anything but let it hit.

Forever ends, and she looks to find him kneeling between her legs. He's smiling. His hand cups her still-throbbing flesh.

'One,' he says.

She's joked that she'll require at least two, possibly three orgasms before he has one – it's something to aspire to at any rate, though she was only ever half serious. At the moment she's not sure her body could ever possibly rise to climax again, that's how hard the first one hit her. But she's sure willing to try.

She sits. She traces the line of elastic at his waist and admires the bulge of his erection as she cups him through the soft material. 'Take these off.'

He does and kneels again between her legs as she takes his cock in her hand. It's lovely, not that she has a requirement for length or width. When she strokes him, he shivers. She cups his balls while the other hand moves along his shaft, palms the head. He bites his lower lip; it's his turn to close his eyes.

She lies back, her dress still open but not removed, her panties gone but not the stockings. She rubs a satiny foot up his thigh to his belly, then back down. Her legs spread, nothing to hide, he's already had his mouth there after all.

'Fuck me,' she says.

But he doesn't. Instead, he moves his body over hers, his cock thick and hard against her, not inside. She's wet from his mouth and from her orgasm, and his prick slides slippery smooth over her clit. Back and forth. His weight covers her. His mouth finds her neck, kissing. Nibbling. When he pushes up on his arms to keep from crushing her, his cock pushes against her. Always against, not inside, though it would take nothing but a shift of his hips, a tilt of hers, to put him there.

Pleasure builds, slow and steady. She moves with him. Her fingers cup the back of his neck, hold him close as they kiss until, gasping, they need to break for air. Tongues, teeth, lips, he mouths her jaw, her throat, her collarbone. She turns her head to offer her neck, and his teeth leave marks she will only notice later.

There is a point where nothing can stop, no matter what. She's reaching it. His cock on her clit, teasing, teasing, then just the taunting press of the head against her entrance – but he doesn't push inside. He's just getting himself a little wetter so he can slide over her flesh with his and make her crazy. Make her beg for him to fuck her, and she'd do it. She would beg if only she had the voice for words instead of the low and breathless moans.

She uses her hands to speak instead. Nails scratch lightly down his back, anchor at the base of his spine. She pulls him closer and opens herself, tilting her hips so that maybe, just maybe he'll slip inside all the way. Fill her up. And then, before he can, she's coming again in silent, quivering spasms.

'Two,' she hears him say and even in the midst of ecstasy, she's able to laugh.

After that comes a string of words, maybe hers or maybe his. *Fuck me, I want you to fuck me, I want to fuck you, yes, yes, oh, please. Fuck me.*

Fuck me.

I want to fuck you so much. So hard.

Yes. Fuck me hard.

Mindless fuck-talk, it would sound ridiculous if they weren't both naked and sweaty, if he wasn't poised with his cock against her cunt. If he hadn't already made her come on his tongue. But he has, and the words spill out, raw and rough and more honest than anything else they'll probably ever say.

And then at last, he's inside her. All the way. Fills her so deep it almost hurts. And when he moves, oh fuck, oh God, the pleasure doesn't stop, it just keeps going on and on. Her knees press his hips, her feet anchoring at the backs of his thighs. Her hands run up along his smooth chest and discover all his sensitive spots.

It would be OK with her if he let the weight of his body cover her, but he's more of a gentleman than that. He holds himself up to fuck her, at least until she can't stand it any more and pulls him down for another round of kisses that bruise. Bites that sting and send shudders of pleasure through her.

She might be coming again, or she might not have ever stopped. It doesn't matter. They move together just right. Like magic. He's magic for her, and maybe she's a little bit magic for him too.

He's said her name before of course, both the real and the false, but now there's an edge in his tone when he murmurs it. Once, then again. These are not words of love. That's not what this is or what it's meant to be. He says her name as he fucks her because he knows how it makes her feel to hear him say it. Or maybe, she hopes, just a little, he can't keep himself from saying it.

Her name becomes a groan when he comes. His face, pressed to her neck, is hot. Their bodies have become slick with sweat, and her dress has crumpled beneath her. The fabric has bunched and shifted and will leave marks on her skin.

Afterwards they don't sleep, but they do lie side by side in companionable silence while the sweat dries and cools their skin. The sound of the air-conditioning unit kicking on is loud and startling. It turns her head towards him, and she pushes up on one elbow to brush a kiss over his mouth.

She doesn't say she's leaving. She simply gets dressed and goes. In the hall outside the room, she pauses when the door clicks behind her. She turns and puts her hands on it, presses for a moment her cheek against the cool metal, but though she has the key and could open the door, go back inside, get on her knees for him the way she's thought about ... she doesn't.

Tess leaves her Angel and goes home to her family, where she wears a different name and is a different woman. Where she cooks and cleans and folds laundry, where she carools, where she sends spouse and spawn off to work and school every day with a smile so shiny and bright nobody would ever guess what it hides.

This is the last time.

They meet at his house, a flattering honour she's not sure how to accept gracefully except by agreeing to go. They make small talk in his spotless kitchen. It feels somehow safer and more intimate than meeting in a hotel as they've done every other time. That's why it scares her.

That's why as they face each other from a distance made up of uncertainty and desire, she takes one step, then another, until a third puts her right up close to him. Her hand on his shoulder pushes him back against the marble-topped counter. He's wearing khaki shorts, a white polo shirt. A belt. Nothing wrinkled or rumpled about him. There never is – unless she's had her hands on him the way she does now, tugging his shirt out of his shorts. She slips her hands beneath, palms flat on his belly for a moment before she pulls his shirt off over his head.

Then she goes to her knees.

It's not her natural place, on her knees. Not her usual kink. But for him ... she wants to be here. Slowly, her hands travel down his sides, his thighs. Her skirt rides up. Beneath it she wears no stockings. Bare legs. Summer heat makes it too uncomfortable for stockings. The tile floor is hard on her knees. She hopes for bruises to remind her later of what she's done.

Not that she could ever forget. This moment and all the others have left their imprint on every inch of her. They won't know each other for ever, she knows that much is true. But she'll never forget.

Her hands skate up the backs of his bare calves. She unbuckles and unbuttons him. Unzips. She bares him to her and nuzzles the inside of his thigh while her hand guides his feet out of his shorts and briefs. Details, details. She wants him naked.

Her mouth pressed to the inside of his knee, she looks up. His fingers have curled over the edge of the marble countertop. His mouth is open just a little as he watches her. His cock's already hard. He smiles. She smiles. Her mouth drifts higher, his hair tickling her nose and cheeks and her now-closed eyes. She finds his cock with her mouth and engulfs him.

Her hand on the base, her mouth on the head of his prick, she takes him in as far as she can. Hand meets lips, moving. She sucks a little harder on the head, tongue swirling. She wets him so when her hand strokes the only tug on his flesh is smooth and slick. Good friction. Her other hand cups his balls, thumb stroking backwards to find that lovely pressure point that makes him groan.

Then she slides it between her legs, inside her panties, finds her cunt already wet and slick and hot. Her clit's tight and throbbing under skilled fingers that know just how to move. She could come in half a minute with his cock nudging the back of her throat, but she holds off. Slows down.

She wants all of this to last, even though she knows it's almost over.

She puts his hand into her hair and makes him curl his fingers tight. Makes him pull her hair, just a little, makes him guide her though the truth is she doesn't need him to. She knows where and how to touch him, but making him show her turns her on.

She thinks of herself as a woman, not a lady. Not a girl. But that's what he calls her sometimes, and though she loves it when he says her name in that low voice, edging sharp and hard onto a moan, she also loves it when he calls her his girl. She's not, of course, and never will be. Maybe that's why it hits her so hard in her heart.

This last time, she'd gladly suck him until he comes down her throat, swallow the taste of him, feel him pulse and shudder on her tongue, but he has other ideas. His fingers pull her hair until her face tips up. He's still smiling. He pulls her to her feet – their kisses still haven't become burdened by familiarity. They never will. His hands roam her back, her front, him naked, she clothed. He moves into the family room and the couch.

She's straddling him in a minute, their mouths locked tight, his hands now under her dress. Laughter interrupts their kisses when she shifts and moves to help him get her panties off. When he opens the buttons at the front of her dress and puts his mouth on her breasts, she can no longer laugh. She can barely even sigh, because again she's forgotten how to breathe.

She wants this to last and can't make it. Her body's got an agenda that has nothing to do with what's in her head or heart. She lifts up so he can push inside her all the way, so deep. He fills her. She settles onto him, her forehead to his, her hands cupping his face. Her knees grip his sides and press the back of the couch.

For a long, long moment neither of them moves. Then he murmurs something. Her name, a plea, encouragement. Something low and hoarse and full of need. His voice turns her volcanic. Liquid lava, molten. Her mouth finds his. He whispers into her, breathes for her since she's still unable.

He puts a hand on her hip while the other slides between them to centre on her clit. Just right. Perfect.

They move together at the same time. Time goes thick and slow, a dripping of syrup, of honey. She grips the back of the couch with one hand, his shoulder with the other. They are cheek to cheek, the pleasure too intense for kisses. Fucking's all they can manage. Slow, slow, she moves on his cock, his hand pressing her clit. Her fingers dig deep into his bare skin. Mouth open, her teeth press the side of his neck. When she bites, just a little, he fucks into her hard enough to make her gasp.

I love fucking you.

Yes. Please. Harder. Fuck me.

This feels so good. You feel so good.

Yes. Just like that.

The words come, and she comes with a quiver and a cry, her face pushed against the side of his neck. He knows just how to ease off the pressure on her clit. She pushes herself onto her knees and he keeps moving inside her, not stopping, faster now. And faster. He grips her harder when he comes, his cock so deep inside her they've become one person, just for now. Just this moment, this endless, eternal moment that has become everything. Until there is nothing left.

She cups his face in her hands. She kisses his mouth. They stay locked together for another minute or so, but the moment's passed. She doesn't want to, but she has to move. She has to go. People are waiting for her, and she's lost the ability to hide behind her smile.

He catches her by the wrist just before she steps out the front door. Pulls her back, just one step. 'You can stay. I mean ... just for a while.'

She does, for just a while, because although this has ended, she's still not ready for it to be over. If only time was still like syrup she thinks when finally she leaves him with one last kiss. Another hug. No promises of course, that's never been their thing.

That's their goodbye.

It's easy as anything to delete her email address, her instant message account, to unfriend and unfollow and disconnect. To make herself invisible to him. It's so easy it breaks her.

He calls her, once.

She doesn't answer.

And eventually, she remembers how to breathe.

Women's Studies

Kim Dean

'You look tired, Ms Lang. Long night?'

Tressa looked up from her iPad to her driver. As always, Marco's eyes weren't on the road. They were dark in the rear-view mirror and on her. 'Not too bad. I just needed to get ready for this meeting with Professor Walton.'

Marco shook his head. 'You work too hard, boss lady. You should have other things keeping you up at night.'

His gaze flicked down, and she felt it on her thighs where her skirt had ridden too high. She shifted her iPad to cover her bare skin. It didn't matter what the man said to her, there always seemed to be sexual undertones. Still, he was right. She'd worked double-time to get her promotion, but now that she was the first female VP at Catharsis Pharmaceuticals, she had to work even harder to prove she deserved the job. The long hours left little time for things such as a personal life, men, or even flirtation.

'This meeting is important,' she said with a sigh. 'With our budget tightening, I'm trying to determine if we should continue funding the professor's research.'

'What's he study?'

Marco's gaze had slid up to her chest, and Tressa suddenly felt as if the silk tank was cut too low. Her cleavage warmed, and she murmured an answer as she tugged at her suit jacket.

'What was that?'

'*Women.*' She cleared her throat. 'Professor Walton is a leading expert in Women's Studies.'

The grin on Marco's face nearly filled the mirror. 'A man after my own heart.'

'Not like that,' she snapped. 'He's researching the effects of gender and social inequalities on health care.'

As far as she could tell, anyway. It was one reason why she'd taken the time for a personal visit. With as much money as her company had delegated towards the professor's research, she'd been having trouble tracking down the actual study protocols and results.

Marco winked. 'Believe me, beautiful boss. With men, it's always *like that*.' Slowing, he pulled over to the kerb and parked. 'Here we are.'

They'd already arrived at the university. Tressa hurried to collect her things but her driver rounded the car before she could exit on her own. He opened the door and took her briefcase. When he extended his other hand, she took it. The clasp was warm and firm, somehow more intimate than a handshake with other men.

The intimacy increased by ten-fold when she stretched her foot to the kerb. The skirt that was already riding too high crept up to her hip. Marco let out a low hum when a sliver of her white panties was exposed. She scrambled out of the car, stood and yanked down the material.

He smiled at her. 'Have a good meeting.'

He tucked her briefcase in her hand and she turned away, feeling far from professional. How did he do that to her? With just a look and a touch? She felt his stare on her ass with every step she took and by the time she made it inside the Women's Studies building, she was a warm, flustered mess.

Smoothing her hair, she searched for her composure before knocking at Office 248.

'Come in.'

She was in control again when she opened the door. 'Dr Walton?'

'Ms Lang.' The professor stood and shook her hand. His touch was firm but cool. He was a thin, erudite man, the opposite of Marco in nearly every way. 'Welcome. We're excited to have someone from Catharsis visit the lab.'

Her nod was non-committal. He wouldn't be excited if he knew the reason behind her visit. 'I'm interested to see your research.'

'Wonderful.' The professor adjusted his glasses. 'We've been doing some innovative things with the funding your company has provided. So far, the results have been very enlightening. If you'll come this way ...'

Intrigued, she followed as he led her to his lab. Would she finally get some answers? The door was locked. She watched as he put in a complicated code and verified it with a thumbprint sensor. As far as security went, he got top marks. Stepping aside, he let her enter. Tressa looked around with curiosity. The space was cramped. Books and manuals took up one entire wall, while equipment and tools were scattered everywhere else.

'This is an important area of work that has been largely ignored,' the professor said. 'We believe that women will benefit greatly from the results.'

Tressa wasn't familiar with the devices, but she wasn't a physician or a scientist. Her background was in business. 'I'm sorry, but what area would that be?'

The professor's head cocked and his brow furrowed. 'Why, orgasmic manipulation, of course.' Orgasmic ... The words slowly took meaning in her head, but he couldn't be talking about ...

'Sex toys, Ms Lang. You look surprised.'

Tressa gaped at him. Surprised? She was shocked, to say the least. 'Catharsis funded you to look into issues in women's health care.'

'Yes, that's precisely what we're doing here. Women's sexual health, to be precise.'

Oh, dear Lord. Tressa's fingernails bit into her palms. Marco was right. It was exactly *like that*. She felt blind-sided. Nothing in her preparation for this meeting had indicated this was what was going on at Western University. Had her predecessor known?

She shook her head. 'I'm sorry, Professor, but Catharsis can't support something like this.'

As harmless and scholarly as the professor looked, his eyes went steely. 'Like what? Billions of dollars have been spent studying erectile dysfunction in men. Are you saying, Ms Lang, that women's sexual satisfaction is unimportant?'

'Of course not.' Not when he put it that way.

Walton sighed heavily. 'Ms Lang, I have five graduate assistants relying on that money to get them to their degrees. Five young, brilliant *women*, as a matter of fact. Before you decide to cut our funding, at least take the time to learn more.'

Tressa wasn't sure what she was supposed to do. There was clearly a double standard in play, but where did the ethics stand? He was studying *sex toys*. She needed to talk to the company's lawyers and marketing at the very least, but all that attention would put the spotlight on her. This was not how she wanted to start her career as VP.

Her brain clicked fast. 'Explain to me exactly what the research entails.'

The professor's eyebrows jumped above the rims of his glasses in hope. 'I can do more than explain it to you, I can show you.'

She held up her hand. 'I won't watch something like this.'

'Don't watch. Participate.'

Her mouth dropped open. 'You want to use sex toys on me?'

'How old are you?'

'Thirty-two.' But that was immaterial. It wasn't going to happen. Was it?

'Perfect. I need more data points in that age group. Most of my research subjects are in their early twenties.'

Tressa's weight shifted uncomfortably from one foot to the other. She couldn't actually be considering this – but she was. If the research was on the up and up and she cancelled it, women's groups would surely come after Catharsis. Yet if the studies were strictly prurient, right-leaning

political groups would come out with guns blazing. It was a no-win situation for her. 'I suppose I should learn more. Let's just look at our calendars and find a time.'

'Let's do it now.'

She stopped short. 'Now? But ...'

'I don't have another class for hours, and I do have the protocol established for my next study.'

'But ...' She couldn't think of a good excuse. She needed to clear up this mess as quickly and quietly as possible, but Marco was right outside, waiting for her.

Marco.

Oh God. Her body began humming again. What would he say if he found out? What would he do if he learned what had happened in here? In the back of her mind, she could hear him daring her. She'd worked for too long. Wasn't it time she got some pleasure in return?

'All right,' she agreed. 'But nobody can know about this.'

'Nobody will. Your identity will be kept confidential.' The professor's shoulders relaxed. Now that he'd been given the chance to fight for his funding, he seemed more at ease. 'I'm sure you'll be happy with your decision. Is there anything in particular that you like? Is there an erogenous zone I should pay special attention to?'

Tressa squirmed. She'd die before she'd tell this analytical geek what got her off. 'Where do we start?'

'You can take off your clothes.' Walton glanced about the room and drummed his fingers against his chin. 'I need to get things ready. I wasn't prepared to run a test case today.'

With that, he left her. Tressa didn't know whether to laugh or be grateful when the studious man practically forgot her. He began puttering around the desk, and she hesitantly reached for her clothes.

The insanity of it all made her numb.

What was she doing? She was the VP for a Fortune 500 company. Had she seriously just volunteered to be a test subject for sex research?

'Modesty is unnecessary.' The professor glanced her way, but then went back to unloading books off a medical table she hadn't noticed before. 'I want you to feel secure and open to new experiences.'

With a deep breath, Tressa took off her suit jacket. The top that she'd thought too low-cut went next, but her hands were sweaty as she reached for the clasp of her bra. The need to hide her nakedness became too strong to ignore. She turned her back on the professor and felt her face heat with embarrassment.

Just get it over with, she told herself. It was too late to back out now.

She yanked on the zipper of her skirt with shaking hands. At last, the only thing holding it up were her clenched fists. Taking a deep breath, she lowered the skirt and stepped out of it.

'The shoes, too,' Walton said. 'It arouses some women to keep them on, but I need you comparable to my control case.'

God, could he be more clinical? Still, it was only that impartiality that allowed her to continue stripping. Soon, she was standing in nothing but her skimpy white panties – the ones Marco had liked so much. She looked down at them.

She simply couldn't.

'Here, let me assist.' The professor was suddenly in front of her. Kneeling, he pulled her underwear down to her ankles.

'Oh!' Tressa gasped. The cool air touched her private parts, and her nakedness was suddenly overwhelming. She couldn't take the intimacy. This man was a stranger and his face was practically in her crotch! She covered her breasts with a forearm as her other hand clamped over the light-coloured curls at the juncture of her legs.

'I need to get some measurements.' Walton walked to his desk and returned with a notebook, a pencil and a tape measure. 'Lift your arms, please.'

Lift her arms? She didn't think so! Remembering the situation, though, forced her to act through her shyness. By fits and starts, she held her arms out to the side. Conflicting emotions ran through her, and she didn't know quite how she felt about this.

'Are your nipples always this turgid?'

He flicked one with his pencil, and she jumped. 'No, not always,' she stammered.

Instinct made her reach for herself again, but Walton had already wrapped the tape around her and was measuring her bust.

'I'll make a note of it. To ensure consistency, next time I'll have to manipulate them to arousal before I take my measurements.'

Her stomach sucked in hard. Next time? 'This is a one-time deal.'

He looked at her over the top of his glasses. 'Yes, well, one can never tell.'

What did he mean by that?

Tressa yelped when he crouched down in front of her to take another reading. She shifted as embarrassment filled her again, only this time the discomfort was tinged with arousal.

The tape measure ran directly through her pubic hair, but the professor remained clinical in his evaluation. His nearly stoic behaviour was ironically sensual to her. Her body began to feel almost challenged to gain his attention.

'You have a very nice shape, Ms Lang.' He rolled the tape measure up in his hand. 'You should do well in our experiments. Now, if you'll please move onto the table, feet in the stirrups.'

She eyed the gynaecologist's table with something close to dread, yet Walton seemed immune to her uneasiness as she climbed onto the table. He attached sensors to her chest and neck to monitor her temperature, heart rate and blood pressure. She leaned back but, when he moved to stand between the stirrups, her legs instinctively clamped closed. He waited patiently until she summoned the courage to lift one leg and place her foot in the metal support.

She froze when his gaze went straight to her pussy, but his academic mask was firmly in place. Suddenly, Tressa realised why she was so hesitant. He'd gotten her horny. With all his seeming disinterest and absent-minded touches, he'd aroused her.

It didn't make her feel any better. Now, she was embarrassed that he'd see.

When she didn't move, he caught her other ankle and shifted her into position. Vulnerability made her squeeze her eyes closed. Her pussy was bare and fully visible, but this man wasn't her doctor or her lover.

'Slide down closer to the edge of the table,' he instructed.

The move forced her legs wider open, but even that didn't meet with his approval. He adjusted the stirrups until her knees were spread and her hips were tilted. The position made her defenceless, and her heart began pounding like a big bass drum.

'I need to touch you now,' he said. 'Please relax.'

It was impossible to relax as his hands settled on her inner thighs. Her muscles tightened almost painfully, yet he paid no attention to her resistance. Using his thumbs, he smoothed out the lips of her pussy. 'You're wet. Have you been excited sexually earlier today or are you becoming aroused?'

Her breaths were coming hard. He was looking right into the depths of her, yet Marco unwillingly came to mind. 'Both,' she said in a strained voice.

He slid a finger into her. She was unprepared for the penetration, and the muscles of her lower back contracted reflexively. 'Ooooh,' she moaned as her feet pressed hard against the stirrups.

'That's good.' The professor removed his finger and wiped it on a towel. 'You need to be aroused for the experiment to be effective. It will reduce the amount of lubricant I have to use.'

Tressa's fingers curled into the paper sheet beneath her. Arousal was one thing, but she was fighting to keep it under control. For some reason, she felt she needed to stay at his level, which was purely observatory and analytical.

‘I have one more measurement to take before we begin the actual test,’ Walton said as he tinkered around his desk. ‘I should warn you that you may experience some discomfort.’

Her eyes widened when she saw him pick up a long cylindrical object. ‘What is that?’

‘I need to measure your vagina. Today’s designers have come up with a wide array of orgasmic manipulators, but I wouldn’t want to hurt you. The measurements will help me choose the most appropriate device for your pleasure.’

‘Oh.’ The air seeped out of her lungs. His clinical language reinforced her need to stay controlled, but as she looked at the tool, she didn’t know if she could stay objective. ‘How does it work?’

He showed her the markings. ‘This will measure the length that you are comfortable taking.’

He showed her a switch at the base of the instrument. When pressed, the device expanded. ‘Obviously, this will determine the breadth. It can cause some discomfort, but our studies have shown that this can be a key factor for females to achieve orgasm.’

‘I understand,’ she said inanely. Size mattered.

Once again, the banal little man stepped between her legs. Her hips automatically tilted and he nodded with approval. He tested her wetness with a swipe of his finger and decided to avoid the lubricant entirely. She felt the blunt end of the tool press against her a moment before it was sliding into her.

The hard plastic went up, up, and up. ‘Oh! I didn’t ... *Ooooooh!*’

The smooth cylinder was touching her in places that had never been touched. She felt thoroughly impaled, and she squirmed until the professor placed a comforting hand on her tense thigh.

‘There are straps overhead if you need something to hold on to.’

Blindly, she reached upwards. Her fingers wrapped around the nylon straps, and the muscles in her arms flexed. With her legs splayed open, there wasn’t anywhere she could move. The hardness pushing into her made her want to move, though. Badly.

‘A little more ... Yes, there.’ Walton leaned down and read the markings on the instrument sticking out of her opening. He picked up his pencil and carefully noted the measurement in his lab book. ‘Now this will be a little more intense.’

Tressa’s fingers turned white around the straps. God, she wanted to move. The professor, though, was still cool as a cucumber. ‘All right,’ she said with as much dignity as she could muster.

He flicked the switch, and the effects were devastating. She could feel the pressure increasing. It was as if a man’s cock was swelling inside her. Closing her eyes, she let herself enjoy the sensation. Almost immediately, Marco’s rugged face appeared.

She whimpered when her mind latched on to the fantasy and wouldn’t let go.

‘You’re doing well.’ The professor’s hand dropped onto her abdomen. With a firm touch, he tried to calm her.

She was too caught up in the erotic daydream to be soothed. Marco’s cock was deep inside her, and it was growing. Her hips surged off the table to take more of him.

‘Oh, my!’ Professor Walton tried to settle her, but she couldn’t stop writhing. Finally, he used his weight to pin her to the table and watched the diameter measurement increase. ‘Don’t fight it. Let yourself open. Yes, that will do fine.’

‘Move it,’ she begged. ‘Please, do me with it.’

‘Now, now. If you orgasm too soon, the experiment will be a failure.’

Tressa groaned as he reversed the motion of the tool and pulled it out of her. She felt empty. She needed something inside her. Her pussy was crying for it. ‘Professor, hurry.’

He seemed thrown by the sudden change in her demeanour. Drumming his fingers against his chin, he finally chose a strange-looking item from the nearby table. ‘I think this new manipulator will suit you. It’s an exciting innovation. The phallic module moves in a lateral fashion, thus simulating the thrusting motion of a man’s hips.’

She didn't really care. She just wanted something, *anything* inside her.

'With this option, an added feature is engaged. This doughnut-shaped structure will traverse the length of the phallus, giving added stimulation to the walls of your vagina.'

'Please, Professor.' All her carefully cultivated poise had left her. She was a woman dying to be screwed.

'All right.' The professor frowned as his carefully designed experiment threatened to go awry. 'We'll get started.'

Tressa felt no shyness when he assumed his position between the stirrups. Her hips lifted and her shoulders pressed hard against the table as she waited. The professor didn't waste any time. He'd measured her carefully, and she was displaying all the signs of a woman ready for penetration. He settled the knob of the device against her.

She let out a cry when it slid firmly home.

Walton didn't need any more prompting. He turned on the automated sex toy and watched her reactions closely as the rod pumped in and out of her. 'That's working admirably.'

God, was it! Waves of pleasure coursed through her body. When the shaft lodged deep inside her, she ground her hips into the mattress. In her fantasy, it was Marco fucking her, making her do things they shouldn't.

She jerked, though, when the professor turned on the other feature and that delectable little doughnut began creeping up inside her. The sensation was alarming, and it threw her out of her erotic daydream. She wasn't with Marco. She was on a table in a research lab with her pussy being stretched and invaded.

'Is that stimulus enjoyable?'

She wasn't sure. It felt foreign and unnatural. Sordid. 'Yes,' she groaned.

Her body began thrashing about on the table, and the professor jotted down observations in his notebook as fast as he could write.

'Ahh. I can't ...' Tressa's breath rasped in and out of her lungs. 'Help me.'

The professor frowned. 'You can't climax?' The question prompted his curiosity, and he bent closer to watch the toy fuck her. 'Oh, I see. You have no stimulus on your clitoris.'

His thumb settled against her clit, and her hips surged. Her hands clamped down on the straps, and the stirrups bit into her feet. Electricity swept through her body, and she cried out as she crested. The orgasm held her for a long time. Her body strained to enjoy every last second of it before collapsing onto the table.

Eyes closed, she sank into sated oblivion. Her body lay motionless as the professor removed the toy from her tired pussy.

'That was a most successful case study. I will certainly enjoy analysing the results.'

Tressa flinched when she felt a cool rag settle between her legs, but she was too exhausted to shy away. The professor cleaned the stickiness from her mound and thighs before helping her sit up. 'So what is your conclusion, Ms Lang?'

Her conclusion? God, she couldn't *think*, much less conclude. Her mind was still reeling.

'About the funding.'

Oh, that. The real world came back in bits and pieces until she realised she was a vice president at Catharsis Pharmaceuticals – and she was sitting stark naked in front of a man she didn't even know. She swallowed hard. 'Your funding is secure.'

He was right. Women's sexuality was just as important as men's, and she'd been ignoring her own for too long.

Walton handed her her clothes and she dressed, but he was already entering data into his computer when she slipped on her shoes.

Tressa licked her lips nervously. 'Should I let myself out?'

The professor glanced up and adjusted his glasses on his nose. 'Can I expect you back next week?'

She stopped in her tracks. 'Oh, I don't know. In my position ...'

He looked anxiously at his computer. 'I really need to replicate the results in order for them to have any significance at all.'

Tressa vacillated. 'My schedule is very busy.'

'Twice monthly then.'

She bit her lip. It was tempting to continue. 'You can assure me confidentiality?'

'None of my test subjects has ever been revealed.'

She glanced at the stirrups and felt a tremor run through her. Not even she had been able to find details of these studies, and her never-ending stress had been lifted. She felt relaxed, fulfilled, and sexy as hell.

Marco would never know the better.

That sealed the deal. 'Have the confidentiality agreement written up. I'll be here the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month.'

Walton smiled. 'Your data could mean the difference to countless women struggling with frigidity.'

And it would mean the difference to her in a life that had become too intent on work and so devoid of pleasure. A secret little interlude. Tressa smiled softly. She couldn't risk her job by having an affair with her driver – not yet – but she could be a test subject for one of the country's leading sex researchers.

She just had to make sure Marco drove her every week.

Mr Wrong

Justine Elyot

He's a dangerous person. He's bad for me. Everybody hates him. He's arrogant and faithless, self-absorbed and cruel.

When he dumped me, three years ago, by publicly feeling up another woman at my twenty-fifth birthday party, all my friends practically haemorrhaged with relief.

'I didn't like to say anything at the time but ...'

'I know you were really loved-up but ...'

'I was dreading the wedding invitation because ...'

Followed by the chorus: *'I've never liked him.'*

I couldn't possibly blame them. I don't like him either, for all the reasons outlined above.

So why am I meeting him, in secret, every chance I get?

My dictionary defines addiction as: 'the condition of being enslaved to a habit or practice to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma'. It's as good an explanation as any. I'm not sure I experienced severe trauma when we split, but there were a lot of wet pillows on my bed for months afterwards. And even when the pillows were dry again, the bed felt so empty, so bleak. I couldn't envisage a replacement for him there, even if I did go to the pictures or eat out with the occasional nice guy. The occasional nice guy never made it up the stairs. He just seemed to have the wrong pheromones. He wasn't Luke.

He didn't size me up and strip me with his eyes within a second of looking at me. He didn't do that slow burn over the table linen that had me gagging for it by the time the dessert menu arrived. There wasn't that constant low-level possibility of being thrown up against a wall, whenever and wherever, and taken.

Those things were part and parcel of Luke. If only they didn't come with the cruelty and the self-absorption and the rest of it.

It helped that we didn't live in the same town, and I thought I was over it until he walked into my estate agency, looking for details of executive one-bed apartments by the harbour.

I was in the back office at the time, so I didn't see him come in. I walked out with a sheaf of mailing lists to put into envelopes and almost dropped them all over the floor. I thought perhaps I'd been shot. That face, that hair, that tall athletic body. The shock of the initial bullet through my heart spread to infect my crotch with unwanted waves of sense-memory. The things he'd done to me ... wicked, delicious things that nobody had done since. I couldn't look at his fingers without recalling their explorations, nor hear his soft-spoken voice without the words mutating into the hot-breathed obscenities he used to whisper into my ear.

He looked up and I gripped the mailshots harder, determined to look unflustered and indifferent.

'Ruthie.' That smile. Why was it having the same effect on me it used to have? I looked for hatred and bitterness, found only lust. 'I was just asking after you. I hoped you'd still be here. Do you mind?'

He dismissed my colleague, who vacated his chair for me and disappeared, taking over my envelope-stuffing task.

'Of all the estate agents in all the world ...' I said, trying to keep control of my wobbly voice, keep it calm. 'What are you doing here?'

'I got a promotion to the local office.'

'You aren't moving here?'

'On the contrary. So I need your finest selection of bachelor pads. You're looking well.'

The change of tack steered me off course. I think, to my horror, I might have blushed.

‘Bachelor pads,’ I said, studiously ignoring the compliment, clicking my mouse ostentatiously and scrolling through pages of listings.

‘I’m just grateful you didn’t knock my block off,’ he said, as if to himself. ‘Can’t really ask for more than that.’

‘What’s your upper price limit?’

‘It’s wonderful to see you again. I think about you a lot. About how we were ... I was so stupid. There’s never been anyone like you.’

‘Price limit?’

‘Oh, I don’t really have one. I’m loaded. Just give me anything you’ve got that’s fucking huge with a sea view.’

‘You’re still an insufferable show-off then.’

‘Yeah, you know me. What have you got?’

He leaned forwards, trying to get a view of my computer screen. I caught the whiff of his aftershave, the same one he used to wear. I had to pinch my lips together so as not to groan at the procession of images of us fucking that ran through my head. I clamped my thighs. My knickers were wet. Damn him to hell.

‘New development – Anchor Quay. Seems to be popular with the more-money-than-sense crowd. There’s a penthouse you might like.’

‘Take me there.’

I stared at him. ‘What?’

‘I want to look at it. I won’t have time unless I do it now. I’ve got meetings all afternoon. Set up an appointment.’

‘I don’t have to. It’s vacant. I’ve got the keys.’ This is what came out of my mouth, instead of my intended *Fuck off*.

‘Even better. So what are we waiting for?’

Me to get a grip, presumably. But the grip remained ungotten. I found the keys, grabbed my handbag and gave a brief explanation to the office manager, then we were on the street, striding up towards the harbour under a sun whose very heat seemed to be warning me off.

I couldn’t help scoping the crowds of daytime shoppers for people I knew who might see us together and gasp and gossip. Luke’s behaviour had been the talk of my little section of the town for weeks. He was pretty much on a par with the Antichrist around here.

‘You’ve got some front,’ I muttered, once we were off the main drag and heading across the cobbles towards the quayside. ‘Rolling up and expecting me to talk to you after the way you ... ugh.’

He put his hand on my shoulder. *He put his hand on my shoulder!* How dared he? But I didn’t shrug it off. I half-expected the fabric of my jacket to burn through where he touched it. I think I was trembling.

‘Ruthie,’ he said, in that gentle, hypnotic, evil way of his. ‘Ruthie, Ruthie, Ruthie. I know I can’t make that up to you. I know I broke your heart, and I can’t tell you how sorry I am.’

‘No you didn’t! Don’t flatter yourself. My heart’s perfectly fine, thanks.’

‘Good. That’s great. So you’re seeing someone?’

Busted! But I could always lie.

‘Yeah, yeah, I am actually. It’s fantastic. I’m really happy.’

‘Well, I’m really happy for you. You deserve a good man.’

The hand came off my shoulder. Had my fake boyfriend done his work? We arrived at the apartment complex and I showed him through the airy plant-filled atrium to the lifts.

Being alone in a lift with Luke was a test of resolve. He stood close to me, the sleeves of our respective linen jackets touching, his heat pouring over me, his smell filling me up. We’d snogged in a

lift before. We'd come pretty close to shagging, if I remembered correctly. I didn't want to remember correctly. I didn't want to remember at all.

I was light-headed when the lift doors pinged open at the top floor.

'Here it is,' I said with exaggerated bonhomie, fitting the key to the lock. 'The penthouse apartment.'

I let him in before me, giving him a good few moments to get out of my personal space.

'I like it,' he said. He would. All that smoked glass, clean lines, blah, blah. It was impersonal enough for his tastes.

Within a minute, he had slid open the balcony doors and stood looking over the ledge at the harbour and the vast blue sea beyond. 'It's wonderful. Come and look.'

'I've seen it.'

'I know you have, but come and see it again.'

I had this presentiment that he wasn't just talking about the view. My good sense held back, but my treacherous feet ignored it, dragging me over to him.

Beside him, leaning against the railings, high above the street, I seemed to have also risen above my inhibitions. Nobody could see us up here. Nobody could hear us. We were alone. Together.

'You're still angry with me, aren't you?' he said after a pause to take in the clean air and the idyllic view.

'Wouldn't you be?'

'Yeah. I would. I behaved like a dick. But I don't want you to be angry with me.'

'I feel so terribly sorry for you. Must be awful when people dislike you for behaving like a dick. What a cross to bear.'

'I didn't give you the chance to take your anger out on me either. I just disappeared. Maybe I should give you that chance now.'

'What do you mean?'

'Hit me.'

'What?'

'Go on. Slap my face. Really hard. Give me what you've been fantasising about since I hurt you.'

It wasn't a good idea but I didn't care. The temptation was too strong. I stepped away from the balcony railing at the same time as he did, swung back my arm and dealt him the hardest, loudest, most brilliantly satisfying smack to the side of his face anyone could describe or imagine.

After I did it, I laughed with delight and jumped up and down.

And he smiled.

And took hold of my wrist.

And made me put the flat of my palm against the hot red patch.

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