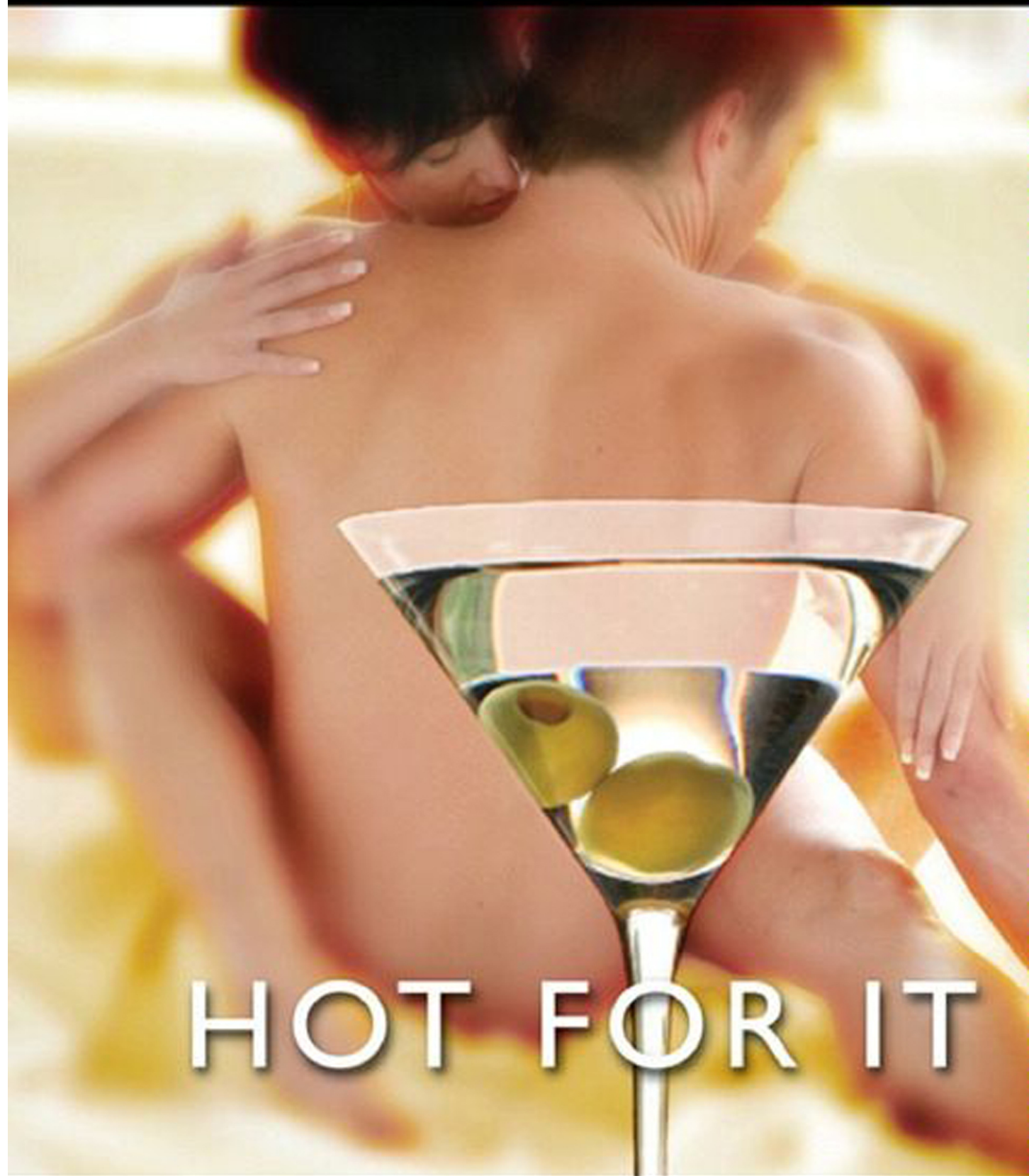


Jodi Lynn Copeland



HOT FOR IT

Spice BRIEFS

Jodi Copeland

Hot For It

«HarperCollins»

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Bosom buddies since childhood, Carinna and Jack have long harbored secret lustful fantasies for one another, but hesitated to act on them for fear of ruining their cherished friendship. When a family tragedy leaves Carinna in need of comfort, she surrenders to temptation and seduces her best friend. Jack's a fireman, and used to putting out blazes, but this is one conflagration he can't quench. As their passions explode with pent-up need, they fearlessly explore their deepest desires with an intimacy they've never realized with any other lover. But once the genie is out of the bottle, how will they ever be able to go back to being just friends?

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Hot For It

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A stylized, cursive signature of the word "Spice". The letter 'S' is large and loops around the 'P', which is also large and loops around the 'I'. The 'C' is smaller and loops around the 'E'. The word ends with a long, horizontal flourish.

Carinna

Vegas. The city of lights, laughter and illicit sex.

Tonight, when I craved each of those things almost more than my next breath, not a damned one of them was to be found.

The lights in the off-strip funeral home couldn't have been further from the clichéd glittering lights of Sin City. Already dimmed throughout my father's afternoon showing, with night fast falling and every other visitor gone, I'd had the funeral home director take the lights even lower, as if that somehow would make it easier to accept that my father was dead. That the heart-clogging meals he'd been ingesting for fifty-plus years had finally gotten the better of him.

Christ, how long had I been after his ass to give healthy eating a try?

Not long or hard enough, judging by the sickening pallor of his skin and that his final breath had been drawn two days ago. Approximately one hour after I could recall laughing for the last time. Laughter I'd shared with Jack Dempsey, my best friend. The bosom buddy who'd been by my side for over two decades.

The man who wrapped his arms around my waist now, pressing his strength against my back and reminding me that I wasn't alone but with a guy who knew exactly what I needed tonight.

"There's a bottle of Bombay Sapphire waiting for you in the passenger's seat of my truck." The words left his mouth as a whisper.

But the deep timbre of his voice could never be mistaken for a true whisper--Jack's voice was as solid as the rest of his big body. Perhaps from ten years of yelling to be heard over the chaos that ensued while fighting fires. Perhaps just because he was one damned fine-looking man--with thick, wavy black hair that matched his mustache and predatory blue-green eyes--and God had seen fit to gift him with a sexy-as-hell voice to match.

Whatever the case, he was offering what I wanted. A chance to drown the tension and sorrows I had amassed over the last two hellishly long days.

I turned in his arms, burying my face against the crook of his neck and inhaling his familiar masculine scent. Normally I had a serious loathing for letting my emotions show, even around Jack. Tonight, now, I just had to say "fuck it" to appearances and sniffle.

I went with the need for a few minutes, blubbering into his neck, probably ruining his best dress shirt. Then I sucked back my grief, accepted the shitty hand fate had dealt me--first my mother walking out years ago and now my father gone as well. At least I still had my grandmother, irrational as her aging mind could be at times.

At least I still had Jack.

I stepped back from his embrace to offer up an appreciative smile. "What would I do without you?"

His own smile flashed; a touch of the cockiness coming through which--along with our mutual take on relationships being for others--made us such compatible friends. "Get shit-faced drunk, hook up with an asshole, then wake up tomorrow wondering who the hell the guy in bed with you is and where the hell are you anyway?"

Yeah, it was a damned good thing I had Jack. Just like that he refilled my laughter well with his spot-on observation of my character. Not with bust-a-gut laughter, but laughter all the same; it rolled from my lips and felt like everything I needed right then.

Well, that, alcohol and an old friend to share it with.

Turning to my father's casket, my momentary amusement vanished with the roiling of my insides. I said a final goodbye, laying the last kiss I ever would upon his pasty cheek and shedding a few more of those unavoidable damned tears.

Then I turned back to Jack and nodded. "Take me home and get me smashed."

Jack

I'd been to Carinna's apartment thousands of times--hell, I even had my own key. But something about tonight was different. From the moment I stepped inside her small but cozily decorated living room, something had my gut tightening and every nerve in my body going on full alert the way only an all- alarm fire could typically accomplish.

I knew that something had to do with the weakness she'd let show back at the funeral home; those brief minutes when she'd cried and let me hold her. I knew that letting her more tender emotions show meant she was down and out in a way I'd never seen her before today, and for good reason. I also knew the last thing I should do was sit on the couch beside her and get hammered the way she was asking me to do.

We shared a healthy love of sex, and experience had taught me that mixing sorrow, alcohol and a member of the opposite gender generally led to precisely that. I valued our friendship way too much to risk ruining it over a hasty screw.

"C'mon, Jack," Carinna goaded me from the couch.

The bottle of gin I'd picked up on the way to the funeral home dangled from her fingertips, open now and several drinks shy of full. Those drinks seemed to be working their magic on her mood--all trace of vulnerability was gone from her gray eyes, the self-assured arrogance I knew and respected shining through.

A teasingly sultry smile lifted her lips. "Be a man and drink up."

Precisely the problem here was that I was a man. One who had long ago noted she was more than an average woman. With her centerfold curves and Latin coloring, she was stunning, gorgeous. Thoughts of her body, nude and sweaty and on the verge of orgasm, had been my masturbation material for years.

Those X-rated thoughts attempted to enter my mind and harden my body. I quashed them by grabbing the transparent blue bottle from her hand and crossing to the open kitchen. "Tonight's a martini night."

Much as she might prefer to get sloshed fast, I knew she wouldn't say no to martinis. They would still get her drunk, and possibly me as well, but with luck we would pass out before she forgot I was her best friend and I forgot I was a gentleman.

I almost laughed over the irony of that thought--I liked my loving fast, hard and dirty, and for the time being, with no strings attached. I probably *would* have laughed if Carinna hadn't chosen that moment to start undressing.

First, the black slacks came down her long, toned, naturally golden brown legs and were kicked aside.

Then the black, short-sleeved silk shirt was unbuttoned and shaken off her shoulders and down her arms.

As a cocktail waitress for a tequila bar on the strip, she was required to wear a risqué uniform that exposed more of her stunning body than it covered. Still, that uniform concealed more than her miniscule black panties and matching bra.

Or not panties, I realized on an indrawn breath as she turned and bent to grab her slacks from the floor. A thong that disappeared between her firm butt cheeks, and had my heart pounding like a jackhammer and my cock rock solid in the space of a heartbeat.

Before I could disengage my brain from the vicinity of my balls and question her motive, she had her clothes in hand and was moving past me, down the short hallway that led to her bedroom. "I just want to relax and forget for a while," she tossed over a slim, bare shoulder. "That isn't going to happen dressed in this crap."

I grunted with the closing of Carinna's bedroom door, the sound sharp enough to make my erection jump. Then I considered beating my head against the overhead cupboard in the hopes of knocking some sense into it.

Shit, I was an idiot. Make that an ass. She wanted to relax with an old friend, and all I could think about was plowing into her from behind and fucking her stupid.

While her emotions might be in turmoil, despite the confident, even teasing face she currently wore, I was damned glad her head was on straight. Much as I wanted to think I would be a good friend and turn down an offer of sex dealt at the hands of grief and gin, I honestly wasn't sure I could be that strong.

Carinna

With my bedroom door firmly closed, I sank down on the edge of the bed, pushed my hands through my tangle of curls, and accepted the throbbing ache in my core for what it was: the raw desire to fuck Jack.

The want came as no surprise, or was anything I could pin on alcohol--though the handful of drinks I'd downed before he'd confiscated the gin bottle did have my tension lessening and my belly buzzing with warmth. The truth was I'd had dreams of sleeping with Jack since I was old enough to appreciate the concept of fitting tab A into slot B.

Tonight was no dream, and I'd long since moved past giving juvenile names to body parts. What I wanted was to strip him naked, put my hands and mouth all over his work-hardened body, and take his cock into my dripping pussy again and again. I wanted to forget the events of the last two days completely. Forget how weak my father's death had left me, how emotionally drained and wrung out.

I wanted to feel whole, and I knew Jack could give that to me.

But would he?

Parading around in my underwear had definitely roused his interest--I'd seen the flicker of male awareness in his eyes. Had it roused the rest of him, as well?

Any other night and with any other man, I wouldn't be sitting on this bed wasting my time by wondering. I would be out in that kitchen, pushing him up against the table, taking his cock inside me and riding him hard. But tonight was no typical night and Jack was no ordinary man. With him I had to consider the repercussions. All those many reasons that had stopped me from giving voice to my desire for him in the past.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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