

Mel and Tia – Lace Cuffs

"Eeww, this pasta's cold. And... wait! The chicken is dry too!" Margie drops her fork back on her dish with exaggerated disgust. Her proclamation is pitched high enough to reach the two tables closest to us. I can see the patrons cut us those sly looks reserved for the uncouth. "Pam get that waitress attention, hey! You over there! Mmhm sweetheart come here."

Her we go. Margie lays into the waitress and I roll my eyes.

I have to admit my sister does have a point. My Pepsi is flat and the food is bland. I won't mention it though. Instead I sit here staring at my food and listening to Margie chastise the flustered waitress, demanding the establishment have the meal removed from her check. I do this in silence. Dragging my sisters with Margene in tow out to eat is never easy. Margie picks apart everything at a restaurant from the service to the silverware. And don't get her started on what's missing from the food. It was a better idea than sulking in my home office alone.

While my sisters go on and on over family drama and restaurant dilemma's I can't help but think about the conversation Mel and I had this morning over our anniversary.

Mel's home.

When did my sweet-hubby come to bed? It'll be Valentines Day in the morning and work for the past two weeks between his two stores has kept him on the move. He's been absent from the dinner table night after night, and it's been so hard to tow the line. The kids are cranky, I'm cranky, we've needed him so badly. Thank you lord he wakes me like this.

Mmmm...

The front of my nightdress goes pulled down and my left breast is exposed. The slow roll of his tongue over my nipple stirs heat between my thighs, and striking pangs of desire through my coochie. It melts my core.

Yes baby... I hear myself say.

Please baby... I hear myself moan.

And his response is that deep guttural grunt in his throat that warns me he plans to go the distance. Please, please, please go the distance... I keep thinking. We've been married now three, almost four years. Sex with Mel is a missed privilege reserved for the weekends or a rare stolen moment found when both of the kids are asleep. It's been like this for the past year with our hectic schedules. He opened a new store and me I started my own advertising consulting firm I run out of the house. Plus we both juggle raising two hyper toddlers ages three and two.

We make it work though. I guess.

Tonight he comes home and he just doesn't roll over and fall asleep. He's in our marital bed, reminding me why I'm his Princess. And this is exactly what I need.

Mel's pinning me down. My wrists are both trapped by his hands and he forces my arms to rise above my head. He eases between my thighs, which forces them to part. It's the best feeling in the world when your husband's weight crushes you down into the mattress. When my eyes open I see the top of his head moving as his tongue teases my nipple and his mouth closes on it. Mel starts to suck and I swear muscle in my body goes hard.

Yes.... is my open sigh. I tilt my head back with my chin steadily rising. My head sinks into the fluff of my pillow. I lift my pelvis and wrap my thighs, legs around his hips. Melvin's dick is released from the slot in his boxers, or maybe he's naked under the covers. I don't know. I don't care. He's rubbing the length of his dick up and down my pussy with a slow rhythmic pace. And it feels so good. Oh my gawd it feels so good.

Up and down, slow and easy, rub, rub, rub. The friction, the tease, the promise of him treating me like his princess has become overwhelming sweet for me. He's grinding and working his cock against my sex and I'm rolling my hips, struggling to get my hands free so I can touch him. It's complete torture.

You have to understand. I miss my man. Melvin's passion and attention is something I've craved since the first day we met. He's the only man I've ever loved, known physically. He's my soul mate.

"Princess, I want you so bad," he says "I've wanted this pussy all day."

I giggle. "Get it baby," I tease pumping my pelvis up at him with a little roll of my ass. His mouth covers mine and his hips slowly rise to angle his cock for the strike.

"Dad-die? Dad-die Hi."

My eyes flash open.

No! No! No!

Melvin goes still. I know that little voice and so does he. It's Nikki. Our three-year-old daughter who is more hair than face.

"Dad-die?" Nikki repeats the name as if it were a question. "Hi Dad-die!" she pushes at Melvin's arm.

This can't be happening! Please God don't let this happen! Give me one night. All I need is just one night for me. Melvin lifts on his elbow and looks over to the side of the bed. I can't. I refuse too. Maybe if I squeeze my eyes shut tightly she'll go back to her room. Maybe he'll get up and make her go back to bed instead of putting her in the bed with us? Maybe?

"Sunshine!" Melvin says to our daughter and I hear it in his voice. He's not upset over the intrusion. He's happy. "What's the matter sweet pea?" he asks.

"I can't sleep." Nikki pouts in that little scared voice that should spark my maternal instincts. "I want to get in the bed with you."

And so it shall be...

I groan and scoot from under Melvin to the opposite side of the bed without being told too. Seen this play-out before. He does have on his boxers thankfully. He fixes the dick that should be mine back into the front of his boxers, discreetly. Melvin keeps the sheet up as he does so. He starts talking to our baby girl like he used to talk to me.

She's his Sunshine and Sweet Pea, the apple of his eye. Nikki is just as possessive and needy for his attention as me. I had to deal with a temper tantrum earlier when Melvin called and said he'd be home late. I was the one to tuck her in. Little Melvin isn't as needy, but he's a different kind of child. A two-year-old terror who likes to climb and wrestle more than be coddled, and find little bugs in my outside garden that scare the hell out of me. In other boys he most certainly must be the boy my husband was at two.

"Come here baby," Melvin says. He brings her in the bed with us. Sits her on top of the covers while he stays underneath. I reach down to bring up the comforter to cover them both. When I look over Nikki is snuggled up under Melvin. She actually has a grin to her little chubby face as she settles in next to him to fall asleep.

"Princess, go get my boy. I want him to sleep with us too." Melvin yawns. "Huh?" I say.

He cast those dreamy eyes my way. "C'mon babe. I've missed you all so much. Go get little Melvin. You don't mind do you?"

I roll my eyes. "Yeah. Whatever." I snatch down the covers and leave the room. I know it's stupid. I mean I'm not jealous of my children. I'm not that shallow. But damn this is really getting on my nerves lately. Just once can it be him and me?

When I enter my son's room I find him hanging off the side of his Thomas the Train toddler bed Melvin and Chuckie put together. He's so cute. Half of his pull-up is in stuck in his little butt. He must have woke in the night because several toy trains are on his bed. Shaking my head and smiling I lift him into my arms. The boy drools all over my shoulder as his head drops on it. Mel says that Nikki looks like me. She has a deeper shade of brown to her skin and thick hair like mine except she has a bit of a natural curl that makes it crinkly and bushy. She definitely has my temperament. Melvin Jr. is truly my little Mel. We looked at each other in the delivery room and knew there would be a third Melvin in the family. The first being Melvin's father.

My son has green eyes like his daddy, light toffee brown skin and a head full of curly hair that Melvin keeps cut low and faded on the side. In fact the other day Melvin had Chuckie Jr. give my baby boy a low faded Mohawk. It is so cute. I know Margie spoils all of the kids but when Melvin Jr. stumps around her house she's a puddle of oohs and aahs, giving him whatever his little heart desires.

I have him now. In my arms. And my maternal instincts finally kick in. I return with him to our bed and we all get under the covers together. Our children are sleeping between us. Okay I will admit that I do love my family moments like this. I look over to Mel who winks and then turns off the night lamp. I try to hide my disappointment under a smile. It's hard—cause I'm torn, and suddenly I know why. Even with all this love for our children and us I feel lonely. And it's a new desperate feeling that I don't like.

A few hours later when I wake up I'm alone in bed. Of course I expect to be. If they woke before me Melvin would usher them out of our room to let me sleep. And I'm not surprised to see flowers in vases all over the room. Every Valentine Day I wake to this surprise. He's so considerate like that. Best husband in the world. So why am I a little pissed with him not being there to give me a morning kiss?

After a shower and quick grooming session I go downstairs and find my family at the table eating and laughing. Mel is feeding oatmeal to Melvin Jr. while talking to Nikki about eating her eggs.

"There's mommy!" Melvin says when he sees me.

"Mama!" Nikki grins. "Pappy Valentine Day," she giggles. Melvin grins. I can't help but smile at them both.

"Is there coffee?" I ask and go in the kitchen.

"Yea Princess. I made you a fresh pot. You want me to take the kids with me while you get a early start on day?"

I roll my eyes with my back turned. "No Mel. You can't keep up with my babies dealing with Valentines Day deliveries at your stores. Take them to day camp. We talked about this."

"Nah baby. Nikki been a little clingy this morning. Think they need to be with me. I got it covered. I can—."

"No," I say firmly. I cast him a look of irritation over my shoulder that makes his brow rise with surprise. A few weeks ago I found out that he again was skipping on taking them from daycare. When it was just Nikki I understood his plan to keep her at the store while he worked. But now he had Melvin Jr. Besides it was good for them to be around other kids.

I pour a steamy stream of coffee into my cup and countdown all the things on my to do list today. Melvin eases up behind me. His tall frame, hard chest, rigid thighs, press into mine. Contact is so good. My eyes flutter for an instant. His arm circles my waist slowly and his hand reaches to give my left breast a squeeze. "Mmm, wsup Princess. Happy Valentines Day."

Smiling I lower the coffee mug. His scruffy jaw knocks my head over as he kisses my neck. "What you wearing this morning girl? Smells good."

"Soap." I sigh when he starts to rub between the apex of my thighs to make them part so his hand slips between. My robe parts to give him access.

He chuckles, pinches my nipple and pushes his groin into my backside as he tickles my clitoris through my panty. I groan. Why is he touching me like this? Nothing can come of it. The babies are just a few feet away. Jesus! Just stop it already!

"What's the matter Princess, you tensing up on me baby. Giving me attitude this morning."

Really? He has to ask? We haven't had sex in two weeks and he wants to know what's the matter? There was a time I could sneeze and the man was running down his zipper. And through both my pregnancies I had sex with him up until they rolled me into the delivery room. How could he now be wondering what's wrong? Please!

My eyes begin to tear. I'm not going to cry and frustrate him but I feel like screaming the truth at him since he's so willfully blind. I want my husband. Two days of uninterrupted time with my husband I'll feel so much better. I just need him again.

"Talk to me baby," he says against my ear.

"I... it's nothing Mel. I'm just under a lot of pressure with this new account," I say.

"Been thinking. We need a stress reliever, a break. I've been too caught up lately and not taking care of business. Ya feel me?"

"Really?" I ask.

"Yeah. And we got our anniversary tomorrow. Going to be four years since you gave my sorry ass a chance."

"Best decision of my life." I say, smiling.

"Damn right. So what you say, you ready to be spoiled Princess?"

He steps back and I look over my shoulder at him. He has that look in his eye. He's feeling it too. That old familiar burn for me that makes him mine. It's how we used to be together. "What's this plan Mel?"

"Let's get out of here." His voice speaks softly against my ear. It's so enticing it's like he's speaking from within my mind. Verbalizing my needs. "Let's get a cabin rental

upstate for a few days by the lake. Luther is handling business at the new store. I can get Stevie to hold it down at the other while I'm out. You can take a few days off Princess. Can't you?"

"Un huh, I can." I exhale deeply. "What about the kids? You want me to talk to Margie?"

Melvin looks back at our children. My head turns as well to look at them. Nikki is trying to convince little Melvin to eat his oatmeal. She's so cute, and bossy. The love in Melvin's voice is so pure when he answers me. "Nah, we take the little shorty's with us. It's their anniversary too. Right? You see how clingy Sunshine's been with me? Feeling really bad about coming home late these past few weeks. My plan is to put in work, make it up to all of you."

His eyes return to me and I quickly look away so he doesn't see how disappointed I am. "Oh... uh okay. Yeah, I guess that's a good plan."

"Cool." He breaks our connection. He steps back. "You get ready for your day and I'll get the babies dressed." He smacks me on the ass and walks out of the kitchen. He says something or makes some kind of goober face to our children and they both squeal with laughter. The ruckus or celebration makes me grind my teeth. Not only can I not have him to myself, but I can't even have my anniversary now? Perfect. Just perfect.

"Tia why you so quiet?" Pam asks, scooping up her pasta and stuffing her face. Damn. Here goes Pam stating the obvious. Did she have to call me out?

Margie and Alicia look over my way. "Yea? What's up with you baby-girl?" Margie asks.

I can feel my sister's critical stare and I'm too emotionally drained to cover my sadness. The corners of my eyes sting with the promise of tears.

"Its her anniversary tomorrow. She got that red bag over there. I see it." Alicia pointed at the bag dangling off the side of my chair. "Probably got some freaky stuff planned. Huh?"

I roll my eyes. "Not hardly," I mumble. This afternoon is the prelude to my naughty girl party with Mel, but with his plans including a family vacation I'm not hopeful. I got out of the house and bought the stupid stuff in the bag to cheer me up. But as I sit here with them I know it's just going to be put in the closet never to be used. This is my life.

"Oh yeah. Mel wake you up with a bunch flowers this morning?" Margie grins. "As long as I get my babies yawl do what you do. When Melvin bringing over Nikki and Melvin Jr.?" Margie asks, before taking a sip of her soda and frowning. "Yuck! This place can't even give you a good Pepsi?"

"My soda is fine." Pam chimes in.

Alicia phone rings and she gets up from the table and walks away. I can't help but smile at the thought of my kids with Margie. But I'll be the bearer of bad news. Mel and his toddler crew are probably together now. My husband is hard headed. I doubt he took them to day camp like I said. My babies behave for no one but Melvin and Margie. Little cute terrors are what Jackson calls them as he spoils them rotten.

"He's not bringing them," I say.

"What?" Margie gasped. "I always keep them on Valentines Day and then the day after for your anniversary," Margie says.

"You already got KJ for Sherry," Pam reminds her. "That might be too much Margie."

"Hush your mouth. I keep your six kids all the time," Margie says.

Pam cut her eyes. Between her work at the church and her hours working at the restaurant she's the breadwinner for her family. Clarence still aint found a job. So she really don't have room to talk. But that never stopped Pam before.

"Anybody talk to Sherry?" Pam asks changing the subject.

"I did," I answer. I need to change the subject to keep from blubbering my misery to them all. I can see Margie eyeballing me. "She and Kelvin are having a good time in Japan. She said she should be home in two weeks."

"Yeah, yeah," Margie waves it off. "What's wrong with you baby girl? Is Mel bringing me my babies?"

Here she goes. I don't need this aggravation.

"Pam, you got to run me back to the restaurant," Alicia says. She returns to the table and picks up her purse.

"What's wrong?" Margie asks alarmed.

"Barbara called and said the lunch crowd is huge. They need help."

Now I feel bad for making them come out and cheer me up. Lunch is a busy time for the restaurant. "Yawl, go. I'm good." I say.

Margie gives me a critical squint. Then she settles in her seat. "Pam and Alicia can handle it. I'm gonna stay with you. Talk."

My sisters reach in their wallets to drop cash on the table but I tell them I have it. Lunch is on me. They snatch up their money and are out the door in a flash. Now it's just Margie and me. She's staring, and I'm avoiding her eyes. But I do need some advice. I'm at my end. I look over to Margie and smile. "You ever read Fifty Shades of Grey?" I ask.

"Fifty what?" Margie asks.

"It's this book. Everybody's talking about it. Oh never mind."

"Wait, I heard about it on the View. Whoopie was talking about it! Yeah. A sex book."

I nod. Now Margie is looking at me with concern. So I better explain. "I got a copy of it from one of my sorority sisters. It's kind of interesting. Sex things, you know. Stuff."

"Why you need a sex book Tia? Something wrong with you and Mel?"

"No. Yes. It's stupid I sigh." And then I can't keep it together. Tears explode from me shocking them all. Damn it I tried not to cry. I really did. But I'm so damn frustrated. Margie gets up from her seat. She hurries over to my side of the table and sits next to me. The others just stare as she hugs me. "What is it? Tell me what it is? Is Mel cheating on you?"

I laugh through my tears. If he was cheating I might be able to deal with the betrayal. At least I would know where to channel my frustration. How am I supposed to be angry with my husband who is the perfect husband, and father? He's doing everything I need him to do, except me.

"Tia! What is it girl?" Margie dumps the forks and knives from a napkin and gives it to me. I'm so embarrassed because a few people are again looking to our table.

"We haven't had sex," I whisper.

"What did you say?" Margie asks.

"No sex. Not really. Oh my gosh. I feel stupid even saying it aloud." I laugh to keep back the tears. "He's under so much pressure with opening the new store and here I am complaining because we can't have sex."

"So that's why you read that sex book?" Margie frowns. "You don't need that Just cook him dinner, put the kids to bed, and do your thing."

"You don't understand. It's different with Mel and me. I've tried, but he either falls asleep, or ends up getting the kids and bringing them into the bed with us. He's so crazy about them. I feel so guilty for saying this but I'm lonely for him. How we were. Sexually I mean. That's why I read that stupid book. Hell it's better than what's happening in my bed."

"Oh calm down. It's okay. It'll pass. Hell I got six kids with Chuckie. We had our moments."

I nod. Of course it'll pass, but I want my Mel hot for me like he was before. That's how we were. That's what I miss.

"What you got in this bag."

Before I can stop her Margie yanks out the box on top of the lingerie. She frowns. "What are these?"

"Lace handcuffs, put it down before someone sees." I snatch them from her. Now Margie has a look of disgust on her face.

"Handcuffs made of lace? For Mel? Tia are you crazy!"

"Forget it."

"Tia that thing's silly. You going to cuff Mel to the bed and he'll rip them off, if he let you anywhere near him with that."

"Actually I was hoping he'd cuff me. For your information. They're girl cuffs. It's a sex game, I've been doing research."

Margie drops her head. I can here her now. I'm in no mood for her lecture. "You don't understand Margie. I don't have much experience in how to spice things up. Mel and I... well I only know what he taught me."

Margie head shoots up. "Now you do sound silly!"

"Really? Margie I was a virgin when I married Mel."

"What? What did you say?" Margie laughs. "No you weren't."

I stare at her.

"You weren't no virgin. Were you?"

"Yes! I was. He's the only man I've ever been with. And trust me he taught me plenty. But..."

"I didn't know that?" Margie nose and brow wrinkles with confusion.

"Now do you understand? With us being like this I'm a little desperate to spice things up for us. Get him back focused on me just a little. I love him so much and I miss him. I miss us."

Margie sighs. She then looks at me with pity. Now I really want to get up and leave. Maybe confessing wasn't the right thing to do. I cant share this with anyone

but her. Every girlfriend I have gushes when Mel calls me Princess, or talks about how fine he is and how lucky I am.

"I was a virgin too with Chuckie. And Pam swears she was one but you and I both know she gave her virginity to Andy Sheffield when she was in the eighth grade. I found her panties so I know what I'm talking about. Alicia been screwing around since—."

"Let's not talk about it." I roll my eyes

"My point is I understand Tia. I really do. Listen to me sweetie. You just need time alone with your husband. All married couples need that time. Let me take the kids tonight. You cook Mel a good dinner and talk to him. Girl if I don't know anything I know that man is ga-ga over you. He's crazy for that family of yours. Just talk to him."

Smiling I wipe away my tears. "You right. Yeah, I'll do it." I nod. "He has some night deliveries, so I'll bring the kids to you around four."

"Good. I miss my babies." Margie grins.

I look over to my bag. "Mel might like the sex game I got planned for him tonight."

Margie sits back. Her eyes goes up to the ceiling as if she's conjuring a memory. "I tried to get some fancy lingerie for Chuckie once. He laughed. Never tried it again. We just do it traditional." My sister said smugly.

Personally I don't want to think of her and big Chuck doing it all, but I smile. She's my best friend and Margie never gives me bad advice. "Well I know Mel. He comes home and finds me wearing those and he's all mine tonight."

Margie snickers. "Get him girl."

"Boss we good?"

I let go a wide mouth yawn and my eyes tear. *Damn I'm tired*. I look up when the crew comes out with the last of the load to stack carefully in the back of the van. My Navigator has the rest. "You run those down to the women's shelter and I'll take the night drops." I say.

My phone rings in my pocket. Wiping the sweat from my brow I check for the caller. It's Princess. "Sup baby?"

"When you coming home?" she asks.

"Got two or three more stops. Loading the van and truck now. Kids okay? You good?"

"Mmhmm, but what time Mel? I... I have a surprise for us."

Stopping at the door to my ride I pause. She has a surprise? And I hear it in Princess voice. It's soft and seductive. "What kind of surprise?"

"Just hurry okay? Love you! Bye."

She hangs up. Princess has been moody with me lately. She thinks I haven't noticed it but I have. And I've been missing her bad. Can't blame her. She quit her job after Melvin Jr. was born. Started her own thang. And it's all good. But I had to put down a little more work to keep the family going. Not that I'm complaining. It's how I want it. But the cost is my family time and it's beginning to wear on us both. Last night I really wanted to come home and just be with my lady. I failed.

The house is silent and I'm wiped out. Every cell in my body is struggling to maintain. Keeps a man in shape working with his hands. But I'm no spring chicken. Some days can be harder than others. Especially the holidays. Right now I'm walking on reserves.

I go through the motions to turn off the alarm and then reset it with my we-infor-the-night code. I do my walk around to make sure the crib is secured tight. After Nikki was born I was extra careful about security. Crazy shit goes down on the regular these days. I see it on the news. Fools run in for some home invasion bullshit on unsuspecting families and business owners. Wackos are stealing kids out of their bed now while you sleep down the hall. Crazy shit. Sounds like 'my issues' I know, but I can be fucking insane when it comes to protecting what's mine. Ya feel me?

I shed my jacket. What I want more than anything is a gun. The storeowners have had two robberies down on the avenue in the last month. No matter how much we try to change the old neighborhood you got your bad element that wants to keep it and everything about it down. Problem is I'm a convicted felon and I can't carry a weapon. Fucked up. I can die like a man but can't protect my family and myself as one.

I step over toy dolls and Tonka trucks. I'm a man on autopilot. When I check the fridge and see the plate my baby left me a strong surge of guilt slices through my gut. I should have called and told Princess that I wouldn't make dinner. Hate she cooked this food and I wasn't here.

Maybe I should go out to my ride and get her flowers. Set up everything nice for her. We got us a tradition where she gets my best fresh blooms from the store for Valentines Day. She opens her eyes and sees nothing but my love for her. On our first Valentines Day she gave me her virginity and I covered the bed in rose petals. Never could forge how Princess grinned with happiness. Love putting a smile on her beautiful face.

But I'm too bone weary to trek back outside. I opt to climb the stairs and crash. I'll wake before she does and handle business. Yep, that's how I'll play it. Just need to put my arms around her and get some sleep.

That was my plan until I saw her.

I can say it a thousand times man and it won't be enough. My wife is beautiful. Two kids later and my baby is as fine as she was the first day I laid eyes on her. And when she sleep not talking my ear off or giving me attitude I can just stare at her and feel blessed, favored, highly privileged. Love her this way from a far. When a man has a crush for years on a babe he develops these habits. I spent so much time checking for Tia Jackson in the streets I do it even now. Yes she mine, but I get off on watching her. When she walks bye in those heels smelling all expensive in a business shirt that's snug on her ass. When she's being mommy and bending and stooping in front of me. When she showers and I'm in the bathroom to distracted to shave because of her silhouette tempting me. And when she sleeps. Fuck. I could go on.

Tonight I stand for an eternity at the foot of the bed staring at her. Remembering our beginning, our struggles, our tears, and my heart is heavy. Want to barricade the doors to the house and trap her and my babies inside.

Princess don't like to be forced into anything. And she worries when I obsess, taking it as something missing or needed when its just the way I love them all. These

lessons I learned early in our marriage. So I keep the true reasons behind my peeping habits to myself.

I'm unbuttoning my shirt and the more I undress the more excitable I get. I'm a man deprived you see. Every night I stagger in here and ignore the burn in my loins for her. Every night I let her sleep. She's doing a lot you know? The kids, the house, the business she's building. No complaints. No tears when she don't get her way, my Princess is much stronger now as a wife and mother. My baby is good. All good. So I don't put nothing more on her than I think she can handle.

Tonight is going to be different. I can't shake the mood I'm in. I'm on empty. I need her. Bad. I'll apologize for waking her later. My pants drop. I toe off my shoes and step out of them. Now I'm standing before the bed in my socks, boxers and with a dick so hard I won't be able to sleep if I don't just get a little. So I abandon my vow to just get in the bed and go to sleep, and allow her to rest. No, instead I crawl over her. She stirs but doesn't wake. Don't need her to wake. Not yet. When my lips brush her skin she moans. Her hands move and I pin them both above her head. She smells so damn good. I can tell when she bathes the kids cause she has the Johnson & Johnson fresh smell to her skin. I'm between her soft thighs and she's talking to me, telling me to go for it. Giving me the privilege and I'm so damn grateful. When my dick slides up and down, between the folds of her pussy, and gets harder and harder I'm ready for her. Going to fuck her good tonight. Make up for lost time. And her nipple is thick, swollen, pert on my tongue. I intend to suck each while I ride my lady's sweet body.

And it's going down. Before my little Sunshine shows up and sex with my wife goes south. Kid got the worst timing in the world. No time for mommie and daddie. I aint mad though. When I put baby Nikki in the bed and Tia goes and brings my little soldier to bed I'm complete. A man sleeps good with his family in his arms. I live and die for them all.

"Yo. Stevie. Hold up." I slam the door to my ride. It's time to call it a night. I'm done.

"Yea boss? What is it?" my manager sticks his head out of the driver side window. I scratch my brow and think it over. The last of these deliveries are for some of my high-end clientele. I see to it personally. But I've been at it for twelve hours. Enough of this.

"Do me a solid. Make these deliveries for me. Deliver them first before you do a run to the shelter because they for our top clients. And don't fuck it up man, cause it's important."

"Cool. I can handle it," Steven says. "I got you boss."

I get down to business and help him switch out my haul to add to his. Stevie isn't as loyal as Alejandro or as driven as Luther, but he good folks. And he thirsty. My man is the only cat under my employ who did time for killing a man. Since I got a wife and kids I don't hire ex-murderers no matter what story they tell. Stevie case was different.

When I spoke to his parole officer I had to consider his reasons. Stevie wanted justice after some drunk driving clown mowed down his two-year-old son who played in his yard and walked away with probation. Vigilante justice was the route Stevie took. He served a hard 15 years and came out of the joint with nothing,

not even the wife and kids he gave his heart and life to protect. So I'm giving him a chance. I'll let it ride on my man, hoping for the best. The sooner I wrap this up the sooner I can get home to Princess and the kids. Maybe she's ready for that road trip I proposed. I got to admit. I'm looking forward to it.

"How my babies?" I ask. I remove the casserole dish for Melvin's favorite lasagna and turn off the stove. He likes when I let the cheese get crisp on top to give a little crunch to it. And my garlic rolls are fresh from the oven.

"They fine. Melvin Jr. won't leaver Jackson or Chuckie alone. Trying to wrestle with them. He all boy Tia."

"Don't I know it. I swear Mel is training my baby to be a combat soldier in his own little private army," I smile.

Margie laughs. "Yep. He tussling with his cousins and running away from me when I want a kiss. He's in my lap eating a cookie. He mine now." Margie let go another peal of laughter. "I spoke to soon. He done dropped down and took off."

I shake my head. Margie goes on. "I told Chuckie to sleep on the sofa cause my the babies are sleeping with me."

"Margie? Don't do that. The kids are spoiled enough. I can't get them out of my bed. Besides you got KJ to look after. Don't overdo it."

"Hush. I know what I'm doing KJ is on my other hip. He got a runny nose so I got to work on him too. Got it all covered. What about you? You ready for your sex therapy?" Margie snickers. "Mel gone laugh at you with those handcuffs you know."

Maybe I shouldn't have said anything to her. Especially about being a virgin when I met Mel. It's only a matter of time before Alicia and Pam know my secret.

"I guess I'm ready."

"You guess? You crying and pouting over sex? Girl please. I told you to just..."

"I got it under control Margie! I don't care what time he gets home I'm ready. Melvin Reed is mine. Tonight I'm going to remind him why. We're going to figure our schedules out too. You were right. I just need—."

The door opens and closes at the front of the house. My heart jumps to my throat. "Margie I got to go. Bye." I say in a rushed whisper and then hang up on her. I haven't even gotten dressed yet. Lord why is he home early? I thought I'd have at least another hour. "Mel?"

"Yeah babe, it's me," he says. "Something smells good?"

When I walk out of the kitchen he's headed straight for me. "Hi. You're early? I'm not ready." I say, fixing my hair. My curls and makeup is the only thing I had time to do. At least I showered. I have on a raggedy pair of shorts and one of his Miami Heat t-shirts. He's looking at me hard before his heavy lidded gaze switches to the kitchen behind me. He hungry for the lasagna I bet. Yep, the baked cheeses, garlic bread got my baby's nostrils flaring. Margie gave me her recipe a few years back and I got it down now. He and the kids eat it up.

"Where the kids?" he asks.

With a smile I close the short distance between us. "Margie has them. And before you say anything, it's the day before our anniversary. It's the day we fell in love. It's the day I knew you were the man for me. Remember when I came to your store after my sisters wedding and you told me about Nikki? You thought I didn't

know what we could have because of your past? You were wrong sweetheart. And look at us now. Two babies of our own. Me and you, we both have the family we always wanted." I said it all in a rushed voice with so much emotion it comes out awkward. He's staring down at me. That intensity I only see when he tries to sort out my motives flashes behind his beautiful eyes. I swear my heart is pounding so fast it's affecting my breathing.

The corner of his mouth lifts in a smile and he kisses me. *Oh yes!* It's a slow soft press of his lips that make my knees weak.

"And that's why I came home Princess. I knew something was up."

"I do Mel." My eyes tear and my voice breaks. "I need you so bad. I'm sorry, I don't want to cry, but I..."

"Hey? I miss you too baby," he brings me in, up against him and fully into his embrace. Those strong manly arms of his muscle tight from lifting and loading all day fold around me. I'm held against his chest so snugly I can hear his heart beating. It's racing as fast as mine. I close my eyes. Thank you lord. I have missed my man. Oh how I have missed my man.

"You hungry Mel? Smell that? Made lasagna for you tonight."

He doesn't answer. He continues to hold me. Desperate to hear him talk sexy to me, tell me how special I am and how grateful he is for the effort, l I lift my head from his chest and look up into his eyes thinking I need to repeat the question. Mel turns with my hand in his and starts for the stairs. I'm forced to follow. I had all these plans. A dinner with a seduction, all of it nice and sweet just for him. I wanted to play submissive tonight. Though it wouldn't be an act. My man is King in our bedroom. Submission for his lady is a golden rule.

I'm just giddy that I don't have to explain anything. My husband knows me. He knows what's missing, what I need and I know he wants it too. Before Nikki came in and woke us up he was on me last night.

When we enter the bedroom he stops. Confused I stepped around him to see what has his attention. I have to laugh. "Ah, I can explain that."

Mel releases my hand and walks over to the bed. On top is the black lace negligee, garter and stockings I intended to wear and to the side of my naughty garment is the lace handcuffs He picks them up with and studied them.

"You came home early. I was going to put that on. And the other thing... um, the handcuffs, well I thought we could spice things up. You know? Make things... good between us again. I read this book—."

Mel casts a look back over his shoulder and my voice falters. You have to understand my baby is old fashion in everything. Our financial woes are his to burden. No contractor can work on our house without Melvin joining him with his tool belt fastened to his hips. And he never needs candles, lingerie or massage oil to get him ready. The few times I've tried to dress up for him he ripped my lingerie to shreds so I stopped buying the expensive stuff.

"Take off your clothes," he orders me.

"What?" I say.

We stand there in silence for a few seconds before he speaks again. This time he does so with a firm and exact tone. "Take them off. Everything Princess."

Mel holds the cuffs in his hand and his fingers rub the lace while he's all over me with his eyes. I can never shy away from him when he's in this mood. Should we start this way? Shouldn't I do it all sexy like? Mel never plays games in the bedroom, what does his order mean? Is he willing to experiment?

Oh lord why am I overthinking this? His brows lower as if he interprets my hesitation as a refusal. My man couldn't be further from the truth. First I remove the Miami Heat t-shirt I swiped out of his top drawer. I pull it over my head and cast it away—forgetting that I make a mess of my curls. He doesn't seem to notice.

My bra goes next. Mel loves my breast so I figure I'll give him a glimpse of what loves best. I was right. His eyes fasten to my nipples. I put on some extra pounds after I gave birth to our son but Alicia and me work out together on Wednesdays. Plus I started Weight Watchers again. So I'm almost back into my size 8. Almost.

Next goes my shorts and I make sure to pull down my panties with them. Just get it all over with. Naked as the day I was born I'm standing there, with my heart racing. Mel looks down at the cuffs in his hand and then again his gaze goes from pussy to my breasts. He walks over to me. Something in the way he approaches I know to be still. To stand silent and wait for him to make his move.

He takes my wrist into his hand and he rubs his thumb over my pulse. His gaze slowly lifts from neatly trimmed pussy hairs and locks with mine. Lord. If the man doesn't touch me soon I swear to God I will lose it. Melvin nods to my other hand and I raise it. He then puts on the cuffs. They're these soft lace cuffs that feel like wristbands. The chain is very dainty between, but surprising strong. I try to pull hard on them and they don't give. When I look up into his eyes the desire pooling in my husbands makes me smile.

"What do you want, where do I... should I go to the bed?" I ask.

Melvin reaches down for his belt buckle. I know better than to look anywhere but into his eyes. I know I look silly with my grin on my face but I can't help it. I'm so excited.

"Lie down on the bed for me Princess." *At last he asked!*

She walks around me to the bed with her wrist cuffed before her and my eyes are constantly drawn to her ass. In my throat my breathing stalls over the sexy way she moves. And baby-girl doesn't have to work at it. Her body is almost as trim as it was when we first met. I was hoping she'd keep some extra weight on her ass and thighs. I love the way they look in jeans, feel me? But I keep that wish to myself. Tonight I plan to enjoy all that is mine.

Once I run my belt through my loop and out of my pants my attention returns to Princess. She turns over on the bed and lies in the center. She raises her cuffed wrists above her head and stares at me. Bold. Confident. Ready.

Princess makes me burn. Tonight I have a lot to make up for. Dropping my knee on the bed I reach for the tiny chain between her little lady cuffs. Where the hell did she find these things? They're as cute as she is. She blinks those round brown eyes up at me when I loop my belt around the chain. Our King bed has a headboard that doesn't offer a traditional cuffing. The only way to lock her down to the head

board is for me to run some slack on the belt and connect it to the grill designed at the top of the head board. This stretches her arms a bit but not by much, she can still bend them.

In doing so I can't help but notice her breasts heave and her nipples peak. Those round thick buds are ripe for a sucking. I'll be sure to keep one in my mouth when I fuck her. How long has it been? Two maybe three weeks? Feels like an eternity. I run my index finger across her cheek, down her throat and over her collarbone to her nipple. My touch is purposeful and slow when I reach her nipple. I circle it twice.

"Mel..."

"Don't speak Princess. No words. Just us. That's the game."

She nods and stares at me with a bit of wonder in her eyes. Patient, but frustrated I know this look. How do I keep the balance? Worship her the way I want but grow our family and make us financially secure? I told her it was okay to quit her job, to lean on me. And we're doing good. Princess is a wiz at investing. She has over eight hundred thousand saved in her bank account. That money isn't touched. She's my princess and I'll give her the world, she deserves it and much more.

Turning from the bed I begin to undress.

He has me where I want to be. I guess he thinks it's his idea. This time it's ours. I can lay here all night and watch him undress. But I see it in his eyes. He feels it too. That burn I've been carrying for weeks for us to be alone, free, husband and wife. Oh my. I can't tell you how sweet being married to your soul mate is.

His shirt is off.

Melvin works a lot with his hands. He and Chuckie do a little boxing for sport at the gym they belong too. I see the way women cast him looks when he's out with our children and me. That's with him clothed. Without his clothes he's body tight gladiator. Oh am I grateful.

I swallow and exhale. His focus returns to me and my stomach clenches with anxiety.

"I'm going to play with you baby. Take my time." His gaze is leveled under lowered brows. "The game is you don't say a word. Nothing happens without my permission."

Mel turns and goes to my top drawer. He shuffles through my things and brings out a red silk scarf. I open my mouth to ask what for but he gives me this look. It's kind of galvanizing. All I can do is tug on my bindings with the chained together cuffed wrists to let him know I want him to hurry up.

Melvin lifts my head and I try to keep it up so he can ease the scarf around my eyes and tie it securely. I'm a verbal person. Learned it from him. Tonight silence is the price I will have to pay for my reward. I press my lips together and freeze. I can't take down a single breath because I don't know what he'll do next. I can feel the bed shift near my feet. Maybe from his knee pressing down upon it. His hand grasps my ankle. Not hard. Not soft. A touch to part my legs wider. And then comes his hands. Both of them going up my legs and gliding between my thighs. A soft caress that teases me to the brink of madness.

"You remember the rules?"

I nod.

"No spankings, or whatever people do with those," he gestures to the handcuffs with his chin. I roll my eyes and shake my head. It's not like I'm suggesting I will tie him up and spank him. But in his mind, and with my track record of bringing him home speedos and g-string's he refuse to wear to bed, I understand why he makes this leap. Mel goes on. "This is us, just me loving you Princess. Want you to stay quiet, hold back, until I say you ready. Simple rules baby. Can you do this for me?" he says to me in a voice both soft and husky.

I nod.

His left hand grips my thigh and he adjusts me. Tongue play I suppose is his motive and there is nothing kinky about it. Except when that coil of an orgasm squeezes my pelvis and tickles my clit with an internal explosion of sensation I wish to push down on his head and ride the wave without him. But I'm restrained and that might make things a bit interesting.

Melvin's thumb brushes the outer lips of my vagina. I struggle to keep quiet. A soft moan dies on my lips. My brain blinks out. Nothing escapes but harsh pants of excitement. His other thumb touches me lower, presses against my opening. The pressure soothes my ache for penetration while he uses his top thumb to gently massage my clitoris in slow circles.

"Very nice," he says in a deeper tone than I'm used too. "So sweet Princess, I've missed this pussy."

I smile. Stifle a giggle. It's silly but when he says the words princess and pussy in the same sentence it tickles me. I guess the game is he'll be verbal and I'll be silent? Coming from the man that made sure I knew the pleasure of expressing my love for him through sex—I find it odd. But when I open my mouth to speak and can't I understand the conflict. My chest and pussy are both now tight with restraint. Wow. *Go for it baby.* I draw my knees up and his left and right hand comes up to press against the back of my thighs to open me. Warm air softly brushes against my heated core. There's a pause. For what I suppose is his inspection.

"My pussy," he groans.

A long swipe of his tongue comes first. I shiver hard. He's licked me there before, but when you are denied one of your senses the feeling is felt so much more. He swipes his flatten tongue from the sensitive skin at the entrance of my pussy up over the hood of my clit. A deep long lasting swipe that makes my moth stretch open in a silent cry of mercy.

Help me! I want to scream, or say something. I yank against my restraint wishing to touch his soft hair, grip it. I want to smash his face down into my vagina. I want so much, desperately. He pauses and then he does it again, exactly like he did before. With my eyes closed I imagine his face between my thighs and how his tongue goes from south to north and then stops to tickle my clit with it's tip.

Yest

I'm clenching my jaw damn tight to hold back the outcry that rose again in my throat. My hands curl into the fists and the lace cuffs feel tighter more restricting around my wrists. Lick, suck, lick, suck, he does this to the brink of madness. And then his lips seal on my clit and he sucks long and hard.

My head is thrashing fro left to right. My ass is bouncing on the mattress. My restraint is slipping. I'm sucking down hard breasts and groaning so far back in my throat I'm near choking. I'm trying to keep it down but it's hard and I'm failing. And now Melvin's groaning and sucking tighter. He has such a seal on my love button I'm near climaxing.

How can I not speak? How can I do this?

I'm fighting with the cuffs, twisting my hips, breathing from my nose and mouth if that's even possible. Ever muscle below my waist is rigid. Rapture shreds me with his masterful tongue. I want so desperately to beg him to stop, to let me climax my way not his. The other part of me wants to hold to our bargain and remain silent. But how can I?

I can't! I can't damn it! I can't!

He tugs, sucks and rubs the tip of his tongue across my clit until I lose the battle. And that thumb that once pressed at my opening now pushes into my pussy just as I go for the release. I clench my teeth hard, so hard I can feel my jaws trembling as pleasure explodes between my thighs making my vaginal walls clench on his invading thumb. My brain implodes in my skull and I gag on a plea for mercy.

I never break my vow.

Mel's mouth leaves my ravaged pussy. He yanks hard on my hips and I'm dragged down the bed until my arms are stretched and I can't resist him in the slightest. The lace handcuffs hold. He makes my legs straight and comes on top of me so that are pelvises are leveled.

"You like that Princess?"

I nod.

"You did what I asked you."

I nod.

"But we aren't done."

I want you so bad baby, I say in my mind. *I'm ready. I swear I am baby*.

My legs are pressed together tight. He rubs his long cock down against the apex of my sex and I part them a bit to let his dick slip between. Now he's rubbing against my vagina. And it's good.

"Keep your legs closed Princess."

I shake my head, wanting to spread them wide so he could plunge inside. "Good girl."

His hard thighs go between. My arms are stretched to the point that I can't bend them and my legs part only to accommodate him as he grinds up and down. Mel's lips brush mine and I taste my sex on his breath and his sticky lips. It's intoxicating. I'm inviting his tongue to delve deeper, wanting more. I had just come but I'm starting to ache inside my pussy to do it once more. His tempting cock is as solid as steal and it keeps gliding up and down in a tantalizing rhythm.

"Fuck. I can't stand it," he groans and I smile. It's his game but he wants what I want. I know it.

His head goes down and my nipples tighten as his hot breath fans then his mouth covers. I feel him lift, and his hands slip under both my ass cheeks. He squeezes and tilt my hips upward for the strike.

My hands clench into a fist but my arms are stretched so tight I can't buck against my restraints. And with his sheer will power instead of his hands he guides his thick tipped cock right to my opening. He sucks harder on my nipple as he feeds my cunt inch after inch with sheer pleasure. He releases my nipple and groans loudly. I'm pressing my lips together and trembling all over to keep my vow of silence.

"Ugh, so damn tight Princess, so fucking hot and tight," he says thrusting and pumping his hips He goes deep and draws back, and I work my ass in an attempt to clench my pussy tighter around his invading cock.

His arm hooks around my waist anchoring my pelvis up against his. The rhythm is now slow and deep. My body remembers it all at once, the pleasure and love to be found with Melvin in our bed. And then he says the words I long for against my ear. "Talk to me Princess, tell me what I want to hear."

"Yes baby! Yes! Yes! Do me, fuck me, oh, yes, please fuck me!"

The ecstasy was so intense all I wanted to do was howl. And before long I was chanting his name so loud nothing could be heard over my screams. His thrusts increased in velocity and he fucks me harder. The sounds of our skin smacking against each other repeated as we both panted and kissed each other. The climax hit without warning for us both. Maybe him first, me second, I'm not sure. I cried out with explicit joy and crashed beneath him.

Melvin kissed my face, my brow. "You okay, Princess?" he asks.

"My arms hurt," I say in a broken cry.

Melvin snatches the scarf from my eyes and he reaches above to undo the belt buckle looped through the chain of my handcuffs. All the while his dick is still semi-erect inside of me.

Once freed the strain in the muscles of my arms relaxes and I can too. "You okay?" he repeats again.

"Better than okay Melvin. I'm in love."

He chuckles and rolls over bringing me on top of him. My wrists are still locked in the cuffs. "Ah Mel? Where's the key?"

"Mmm..."

"Mel?"

"Huh?"

"The key?"

"The key?"

"Yeah baby." I laugh. "Where did you put it?"

"Oh shit." He sits up. I shake my head and roll off of him. He looks around the bed. "I don't know where it is?"

I recline back on the bed. "I guess that means I'm yours all night."

He glances back over to me. I wink and smile. Melvin spoons me from behind and kisses the back of my head. "We're going to be okay Princess. As long as we never forget."

I yawn. "What's important, right? Never forget."

"And that's you baby, you and our family," Melvin whispers. "I got you girl. Always."

Now I'm coasting on his words as they wrap around my heart like a warm blanket. I'm his. He's mine. What else could a girl ask for?