

Paperback Romance

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By Selena Kitt

Chapter One

Thunder rumbled in the distance, and Jessica Sweet scrambled to mount her horse, hopping up and swinging her long leg over his back. She leaned in close as she urged him toward home, knowing she was racing against the coming storm. She always rode him bareback, the wind whipping through both her long auburn mane and the horse's chestnut one.

She whooped and dug her heels in, sensing that they weren't going to make it. The rain came down in sudden, slashing sheets, soaking them both to the skin. The horse broke into a full out run, heading toward the shelter of the big barn, neighing and nickering and shaking his big head from side to side as he entered it.

"Good boy," Jessica murmured, patting his neck. She got him settled in a stall and made a run for the house, bursting into the front door and slamming it behind her with a sigh.

She stood there catching her breath, her breasts heaving in the white blouse now plastered to her wet skin. When she opened her eyes, she saw him, a big hulk of a man looking even larger in the small rocking chair next to her fireplace.

"Jake!" she gasped, her eyes narrowing. "Get out of my house."

The man advanced toward her, grabbing her around her tiny waist and pulling her hard against his chest. "Not until I claim what's mine!"

His kiss burned her mouth, her throat, and even as she struggled against him, she could feel herself giving into him, as she always did...

"Maya!"

The voice startled her and she knocked the ladle into the steaming vat, splashing her apron with tomato soup. She sighed at the mess, glanced over at Alex and shrugged, looking sheepish.

“Sorry,” she mumbled to her boss, continuing to dish out soup, smiling an apology to the girl over the counter. She grabbed some napkins out of the receptacle behind her and wiped at her apron.

“You need to stop daydreaming.” Alex came to stand behind her. Maya glanced over her shoulder at the woman, who was frowning, her arms crossed over her chest.

“I’m sorry,” Maya apologized again, grabbing another bowl and filling it, handing it across the counter to the next student in line.

“That’s what I keep telling her.” The voice made Maya drop the ladle yet again as she looked up and saw her creative writing professor standing in line. She sighed, grabbing the napkin and dabbing at her apron once more.

““Out, damned spot.”” He handed her a napkin from the top of the counter. She looked up at him when he referenced Macbeth and saw a familiar sarcastic smile playing at the corners of his mouth. “No crime in spilled soup, but daydreaming romantic fantasies? Perhaps...”

“How do you know what I was daydreaming about?” She had an urge to stick her tongue out at him.

“Write what you know, Maya.” His eyes were full of knowing.

Maya flushed. “I doubt Shakespeare was ever a power-hungry woman. Soup, Professor Reardon?” She picked up the ladle and filled a bowl. She held it out to him and his hand brushed hers as he took it. She was startled by the electricity in that moment. Maya met his dark eyes and they were smiling at her, but his mouth wasn’t.

“Touché!” He winked. “See you in class.” He moved up to the front of the line. Teachers didn’t have to queue like the rest.

“What was that all about?” The older woman handed her a new apron, and Maya took off the dirty one, tossing it under the counter.

“Nothing. He just...” Maya looked after him, seeing his tweed coat through the myriad of bright splashes of student color. There was the man who’d dashed all her hopes with the stroke of a red pen. “He doesn’t like my writing, I guess.”

Alex raised her eyebrows. “Not doing well in his class?”

“No.” Maya sighed. She’d always done well in writing classes, and she’d won award after award in high school. She’d been sure she would shine in college, and here she was a sophomore, finally in her first writing class, and she was finding out what it was like to be a little fish in a very big pond. She didn’t like it at all.

“Why don’t you go swipe cards up front?” Alex’s eyes were kind. “You’re awfully distracted today. I’ll take over here.”

Maya gave her a grateful smile. “Thanks.” She liked swiping cards. It was easy, and much less messy when she was caught daydreaming about her next story.

* * * *

She hated the big, round table where the students sat together as they rifled through the pages of each other’s work. She would’ve preferred to hide at the back of the classroom, tucked away in a little boxy desk.

“Hey, Maya.” Connor sat next to her—again. This was the other reason she hated the big table. Personal space was becoming an issue. Somehow his knees and feet and hands kept getting all tangled with hers under cover of the table, and she wasn’t quite sure how to stop it without making a scene.

“Hi.” She pretended to be engrossed in the story they were discussing today.

It was a long, depressing piece about a girl whose father had sexually abused her, told entirely from the point of view of the girl soaking in a bathtub. At the end, she slit her wrists. Maya hated it, but she was already famous among the group for loathing unhappy endings. She was just thankful that no one put their names on their pieces, especially after her epic WWII tale of a soldier falling in love with the nurse who took care of him was ripped to shreds last month by the entire group of Salinger-wanna-be’s.

“Great story, isn’t it?” Connor leaned over her shoulder, and she could smell the tuna they’d served in the cafeteria this afternoon on his breath.

“Is it yours?” She glanced at him. He was what her roommate, Jen, called a “hottie”—blonde, blue-eyed, strong jaw, great cheekbones. Male model material, really. He could pose for romance novel covers, she mused. Still, in spite of everyone else’s enthusiasm about Wheaton College going co-ed this year, Maya still couldn’t get used to having boys in her class. All the boys her age seemed so immature.

“I wish!” He nudged her with his knee under the table. “Hey, what are you doing tonight?”

Maya looked up in surprise. She knew she should have been attracted to Connor, all things considered, and she thought she was supposed to be grateful for the attention, but she just wasn’t.

“Studying.” She pulled her limbs in and made herself as compact as possible.

“Connor!” It was Betsy Monroe. Bouncy and blonde, she was the perfect feminine bookend for the boy sitting next to Maya.

Maya turned away from their conversation, trying to decide what to say about this story when it came around to her. Poignant was a good word. She’d try that one. She wrote her comments at the end, in her rounded, girlish handwriting. By the time she finished, Professor Reardon had come in and was looking for a place to wedge in. There were only about fifteen of them around the table.

Maya looked up when he set his briefcase next to her, popping it open and pulling out a stack of papers. She noticed what a mess it was, how unorganized, and smiled. So Mr. Reardon wasn’t Mr. Perfect, was he?

“Alright.” He snapped the attendance book closed and slipped it back into his briefcase. “We’re going to have to go on to the next story in the queue. The author of the story we’re intending to do isn’t here today.”

They all looked around, trying to figure out who was missing. The stories were anonymous, but they could usually tell who wrote what.

"Which one is next?" Betsy asked.

"The Captive Bride." Professor Reardon held up Maya's story and she shrank even further in her seat, willing herself not to blush. It wasn't working—her face already felt hot. The rest of the class was shuffling through their papers, locating the story. "So, who wants to start?"

"The sex was wicked hot!" Connor remarked. The room tittered, and Maya could feel his thigh brushing against hers, back and forth. "What? I'm serious."

"Alright, the sex was hot." Professor Reardon shook his head at Connor. "It's a start. Anyone else?"

"It was kind of formulaic," Betsy remarked. "I mean, I liked it, don't get me wrong. What girl doesn't like a good romance, right? But it didn't break any new ground or take any chances."

"It was really well-written." A small, dark haired girl who wore huge glasses spoke up. Maya didn't know her name. "I mean, it could've been something that was published. It was that good."

"You're right," Professor Reardon agreed. Maya felt an immediate flush of pride. "The quality of the writing itself is easily publishable, as is, for the genre. This author has a great deal of talent and natural ability."

Maya sat staring at the words on the page—the words that she'd written—trying not to get all glowy and starry-eyed. She thrived on praise like no one else she'd ever known, and his approval was like vital sustenance to her.

"But it's just a little romance." The voice that spoke up belonged to Joseph Kramer. He was on the staff of the school paper, a freshman with his own column already called "My View."

"What's wrong with that?" Professor Reardon asked the class again.

"Nothing, I guess." Joe shrugged. "But if I'm writing something, I want it to be different. I don't want my stuff to be like everything else out there."

"Do you realize what kind of market is out there for romance writing?" Betsy tossed in. "It's huge! Women eat this stuff up."

"Yeah, it's like porn for women," Connor agreed.

Maya winced. "I don't know if I agree with that analogy."

"Why not?" Professor Reardon looked over at her. His eyes clearly stated that of course he knew who wrote it, and of course, he was talking directly to her.

"I guess I just feel a difference," Maya said with a shrug. "Romance is about love, and porn is just... just sex."

"So, what's wrong with writing romance?" Professor Reardon asked again.

"Nothing, if you want to be mediocre," Joseph replied with a snort.

"And make a million dollars," Betsy retorted. "Look at Danielle Steele."

"Yeah, well," Joseph went on. "No matter how good you are in the genre, you'll never win a Pulitzer Prize, will you?"

"No," Professor Reardon replied. "That's very true."

"It just seems like a waste of talent to me," Joseph replied.

Maya's face was on fire and she felt tears stinging her eyes. She blinked them back, biting at the inside of her cheek.

"So what about the story itself, then?" Professor Reardon went on. Under the table, Maya felt a hand on hers, a brief squeeze, and then it was gone. She was so used to Connor touching her, that at first it didn't register that it had come from her other side. She stared at Professor Reardon for a moment, incredulous. The discussion was still going on.

"Ok, but this is about a pirate abducting some young girl," Joseph was saying. "Shouldn't he be dangerous? He sounds like a big pussy to me."

"Girls like bad boys," Connor agreed.

Maya tuned them out. For the rest of the discussion, all she could think about was the brief touch of Professor Reardon's hand on hers. It stayed with her, like a brand.

After class, she stayed and asked him if she could have her story. They were supposed to pick them up at his office (to keep the air of anonymity.) He handed it over to her, though, and she saw through the cover page that it was full of red marks.

"You said it was good!" She sighed, flipping to the end to see the grade. "B-". She had never earned less than an "A" on any piece of writing in her life. At least it was better than the "C" she got last time.

"It is." He packed up his briefcase. The class had departed, and they were alone.

"I don't understand." She shook her head. "What do you have against romance stories?"

"Nothing, per se." He snapped his briefcase shut, his eyes on hers. "But I do agree with Joseph. You have an incredible talent, and you're wasting it writing fairy stories."

"But you don't understand—this is what I want to write!" she cried, smacking the table with her story.

He shrugged. "That's up to you. I just want you to know what you're capable of." He started toward the door and Maya felt tears stinging her eyes again, but she refused to let them fall. "Maya," he said from the doorway. His voice was soft. She turned to look at him, but his back was still to her, his hand on the door. "Would you come to my office tomorrow at two? I'd like to talk to you about something."

She frowned, but said, "Okay."

He nodded, opening the door and walking out, leaving her alone.

* * * *

"Oh come on! Skip it just this once!" Jen nudged Maya with her foot from where she was lying on her bed.

Maya looked back from the mirror, pulling her auburn ponytail tighter. "I can't, Jen. Work-study means I have to work in order to get to the study part."

Jen sighed. "Well, who really wants to study, right?" She flashed Maya a grin and wiggled her eyebrows. "I know you'd rather come into Boston with us and see a movie."

Maya shook her head. Of course, she was right. Jen had been her roommate since freshman year, and they had become fast friends, but she clearly still didn't quite understand what it meant to be going to a small, private New England college entirely on grants and the work-study program. Jen's parents paid her tuition, among other things.

"Sorry, sweetie, I really do have to work." Maya glanced at the clock. Dinner shift started in an hour, and she was doing "run and set" tonight, meaning she was in charge of filling everything that was depleted on the school's huge salad bar.

"Hey, your mom called this afternoon." Jen flipped over onto her belly with her book.

Maya turned slowly away from the mirror. "Did she leave a message?"

"Just to call her." Jen took a swig of her diet Coke. They had two cases of it stacked in the corner. It was Jen's version of coffee.

"Thanks." Maya went out into the hallway and headed toward the front desk. There was a dorm phone out there. They had a phone in their room, but it was Jen's and Jen's parents paid the bill.

Up until recently, this year in fact, they had someone called a "Den Mother" at the front desk. She answered the phone and left messages for the girls, and she also made sure that no boys entered the dorms. Like any good girls' school, boys weren't allowed anywhere but downstairs in the group room.

Now the dorm phone was left unmanned (or un-womaned in this case) and the dorms were a basic free-for-all. Maya picked up the phone and dialed the operator. It wasn't long before she heard her mother say, "Yes," to the question, "Will you accept the charges?"

“Mom? Jen said you called, what’s up?”

“Your father.” Her mother’s voice turned immediately cold and angry. “He won’t send the check, and he knows damned well your brother is still here freeloading off me.”

Maya sighed, resting her forehead against her palm. “Mom, was there something important?”

“This is important,” her mother retorted. “If you want any help with that ticket for your flight home over spring break, you might want to call your father and remind him to send a check!”

She realized that going home to Detroit was the last thing she wanted to do. She remembered her freshman spring break at Wheaton. It had been perfect.

Jennifer had invited her to her home and they had spent the time chatting with her parents in their BMW all the way to Hartford. She had spent a week playing tennis (Tennis! She’d never even picked up a racket before!) and swimming in their huge in-ground pool. They had a housekeeper named Sal, who was always bringing them more to eat and drink, every time she turned around. It was like a whole other world.

“I can call him if you want me to, Mom,” Maya agreed, just wanting to end the conversation.

“Good.” She sounded satisfied. “So how’s school? Are you working hard? Getting good grades?”

Maya closed her eyes and her smile was grim. “Yep. Always do. I have to go, ok?”

“Don’t you forget to call your father!”

“I won’t,” Maya replied. “Bye.” She replaced the receiver and sat there for a moment, staring at it. She could look out the dorm room windows and see the cafeteria from here. She was going to be late for work.

She stared off into the distance, over the pond, where the ducks swam year round because everyone fed them and made them fat and lazy. Now, in the spring, they

were in their prime, quacking loudly whenever anyone walked past, demanding attention. She could see someone feeding them now, squatting down by the edge.

Her mind wandered back to Jessica Sweet and Jake, and she longed to sit down at Jen's laptop and write the rest of the story. She wanted to escape into their world for a little while. Just a little while. Her mind drifted...

Jake pulled Jessica closer, his mouth slanting against hers, forcing her to open to him. She moaned as he pressed his thigh between hers, pinning her against the door. She lost herself in his embrace, as she always did, but finally came to her senses.

"Jake!" she gasped, shoving at his shoulders, but not feeling him move at all. "Your brother is going to be home in less than an hour. Do you want him to find you here?"

Maya sighed, shaking her head to clear it. Maybe Professor Reardon was right. Maybe she did just write "fairy stories" so she could escape the realities of her own life. She remembered that she had promised him that she would go by his office tomorrow.

She dreaded it, but she was also curious. What could he want? *Probably to tell me I should forget about writing, drop out of college and just become a waitress like my mother.* Maya shuddered at the thought, looking back out the window, realizing that the figure by the edge of the pond was her creative writing professor.

On a whim, she decided to go down there. Maybe he would tell her what he wanted.

* * * *

"Hi." Maya's voice made him jump and he turned to look at her, startled.

"Oh, hi, Maya." He stood and pocketed something, brushing his hands off. "I come down here to think," he said, as if she required some explanation.

"Oh, me, too." She watched the ducks squabble in the water for the bread that he had been throwing in. "All the time. Great thinking spot."

They stood there for a moment, and it should have been an awkward silence, but it wasn't. The pond was like glass, and the sun was just beginning to set, giving a fiery, orange tinge to it all. Maya found herself wanting to touch his hand again, and when he looked over at her, she wondered what he was thinking about.

"I saw you from my dorm." Maya squatted down and held her hand out to one of the ducks. It came toward her, but edged away when it realized she didn't have food. "I wanted to talk to you."

"Oh?" His voice didn't reveal anything. He was still in his professor role, a little distant.

"About fairy stories..." Maya stood and faced him. He was waiting, his eyes on hers. "When I was a little girl, my dad used to tell me a fairy story. It was about a little ugly duckling, who grew up to be the most beautiful swan."

He smiled. "I'm familiar with that one."

"Yeah." She smiled back. "Most people are. Anyway... my dad left us when I was twelve and my brother was six, and life pretty much completely sucked after that. Nothing was ever the same. I hardly saw him when I was growing up. He was traveling a lot."

"I'm sorry, Maya." His voice was sad, full of sympathy, and when she looked at him, she saw that it was genuine.

"No, it's ok..." She put her hands in her jeans pockets and looked across the pond, watching a couple walking on the other side. "But what I wanted to tell you... I always remembered that story. How the little duckling grew up into something really spectacular."

He touched her shoulder. It was a brief thing, but it held the same heat, the same connection, she had felt before. She didn't look at him. She was afraid to. "Sometimes I think we need fairy stories—romance, love, happy endings. Just to have something to hold onto, when our own lives seem so dark."

They were quiet for a moment, both of them staring off into the distance.

“Anyway, that’s all,” Maya said. “I have to get to work. I’m already late.” She turned to go, and she felt his hand again, this time on her wrist. She looked down at it, and then up at him, her breath caught.

He was smiling, his eyes full of something she didn’t quite understand. “Thank you, Maya.”

She shrugged. “I’ll see you tomorrow. Your office at two?”

“Yes.” He nodded, letting her go.

Chapter Two

“Professor Reardon?” Maya raised a hand to knock on his door when she heard voices inside. She took a seat on the chair outside and waited. It was a feminine voice she heard, along with the professor’s.

Maya took out her notebook and started scribbling a few notes about her next story. She had gotten an idea last night at work, watching two freshman girls arguing at one of the cafeteria tables. It was crazy, sometimes, the things that inspired her.

She checked her watch. It was now quarter after two. He had said two, hadn’t he? The voices inside were growing louder, and she could make out some of the words now.

“I don’t care, James! You said this year!”

James? Was his first name James? For some reason, that thought made Maya feel slightly warm. She could hear him speaking, but his voice was lower than the woman’s, so she couldn’t make out anything.

“Goddamnit, why don’t you quit this dead-end teaching gig, then?”

Maya stared at the door. Quit? Professor Reardon had been there for ten years. He was one of the most well-respected faculty on campus. His classes were almost impossible to get into—she had tried to get into creative writing her freshman year and hadn’t made it.

Suddenly the door opened, and something sailed across the hall and hit the opposite wall. Maya ducked instinctively, even though it wasn’t aimed at her. It was a book, she saw.

“You know you could make ten times what you do here, if you’d just write some more of that trash! Then maybe my alimony payments would improve!” A tall, dark haired woman stormed out of his office, her high heels clicking on the tile. She slammed the door shut behind her and the force of it shook the whole wall. She glanced down at

Maya, who was staring at her, wide-eyed. “What, you didn’t know that your dear professor was really Rebecca Winters?”

The woman sneered at her and then turned and stalked off down the hallway. Maya looked at the book on the floor and went to retrieve it, looking back over her shoulder at Professor Reardon’s door. She was surprised that no one had even stuck their head out of their office to see what the commotion was.

The book was a paperback, and she recognized it immediately. She’d only read it a hundred times. “Sweet Ecstasy” by Rebecca Winters. It was one of her favorite writers. She carried it back to his office door, standing there for a moment, contemplating. Then she slipped it into her backpack and turned, going down the hallway to the bathroom.

She stood at the basin, her hands shaking as washed her face and took a drink with cupped palms. The cool water felt good, calming somehow. A thousand questions were running through her head. She didn’t know what to do. She remembered her conversation out at the pond with him yesterday, and that decided her. She went back to his office door and knocked, softly.

“Come in.”

“Professor Reardon?” Maya poked her head into his office. He was sitting at his desk, his chair turned away from her so he could look out his office window. He had a view of the duck pond, she saw, from the opposite side of campus from her dorm.

“Hello, Maya.” His voice was warm and he turned and indicated that she should sit. She did, perching on the edge of one of the chairs on the other side of his desk. “Thanks for coming.”

“I’m sorry I’m late.” She hadn’t been late, of course. Not really.

“That’s ok. I got... sidetracked.” His eyes fell to his desk. “So, do you know why I asked you here?”

Maya shook her head. “I have no idea.”

“Have you ever thought about writing a novel?” he asked her. She stared at him. “The William Faulkner writing competition is coming up. They take entries for anything, of course, from poetry to novels. They pay \$8000 for the winning novel, and \$2000 for the winning short story.”

Maya's eyes widened. “They do?”

“However...” He raised an eyebrow at her. “They don't accept romance as a general rule.” Leaning back in his chair, he looked across his desk at her. “I thought it would be a good opportunity for you. Both financially, and to expand your horizons a bit.”

She nodded, still not able to find the words. She couldn't imagine what she might do with that much money at one time.

Professor Reardon opened his desk drawer and pulled out a slip of paper. “These are the submission guidelines.” He slid them across his desk toward her. “Think you might be interested?”

“I don't...” She looked at the paper but didn't reach for it. “I've never written anything else. I mean, romance is what I read... it's what I write.”

“It can't be all you read.” He smiled. “And I'm sure it's not all you're capable of writing.”

“Maybe.” She touched the paper, but still didn't take it.

“Maya.” He leaned over his desk and put his hand on hers. It reminded her immediately of the feel of his hand pressing hers under the table, and brought the same warmth and tingle. “I don't think you know how good you really are.”

His words made her feel even warmer. “Really?”

“You remind me a lot of me,” he said, nodding. “When I was your age.”

She smiled. “You make it sound like it was a hundred years ago.”

He smiled back, but his was a wry smile. “I think it was.”

“No,” she whispered, turning her hand over under his, pressing her palm upward. The pressure of his hand kept hers on the desk, and she felt if it made her flush. Her eyes moved from their hands back to his eyes, and she saw her own feelings reflected there.

He cleared his throat and moved his hand slowly off of hers. “So, what do you think?”

Maya sat back and looked at him for a minute. “I have one question.”

“What’s that?” He opened his desk drawer and took out a small scheduling book and a pen.

“Are you really Rebecca Winters?”

Her question made him drop his pen, and it rolled under the desk toward her and settled against her shoe. He stared at her, opening his mouth to say something, but nothing came out. He did that twice more, but still, nothing.

Maya reached into her backpack and pulled out the book, setting it on his desk. There was a picture of a half-naked woman on the cover, her breasts nearly spilling out of her bodice, with a shirtless man leaning over her, kissing her neck. When she looked up at the professor, she saw that he had gone very pale.

“Did you... were you...?” He couldn’t seem to finish the question.

“Before,” Maya said. “The woman who left, she threw the book.”

“My ex-wife...” He closed his eyes, leaning back in his chair. He actually looked like he was going to be sick, and Maya was concerned, but she didn’t know what to do, what to say. When he opened his eyes again, and he saw her looking at him, he offered her a small smile. He wasn’t her professor anymore in that moment—he was the man she had talked to yesterday standing by the duck pond.

“I need to get out of here.” He stood and grabbed his suit coat off the back of his chair. “Do you want to come?” She stared at him. “I know a place we can talk.”

She didn’t know why, but she said the first thing that came into her head. “Okay.”

He stood, leaning over to open the door, and she followed him out of his office to his car.

* * * *

“You can call me James.” He ordered them Heineken’s at the bar and Maya helped him carry them to a spot by the window.

“I won’t be twenty-one for another six months,” Maya said in a low voice as they sat down in two small booth seats, facing each other across the table.

He smiled. “Live dangerously.” He tipped his beer, clinking the bottleneck with hers before drinking half of it in one long, continuous swallow.

“So is it true?” Maya sipped at her beer. They had been quiet on the drive over. She didn’t quite know what to say.

He frowned out the window. “I have to know something.” His eyes skipped back to her and then out the window again. “Who do you intend to tell?”

Maya opened her mouth to reply and then closed it again, watching him tip his beer up, the sun glinting off the dark green glass. He had never looked so human to her before, the lines around his eyes a little deeper, his mouth drawn down, instead of pulled into his usual lopsided, sarcastic smile.

“So it is true,” she breathed, lifting her beer and taking another drink. Her English professor, the winner of not one, but two, O. Henry Awards, as well as a National Book Award for his one and only novel, “The Unsung,” (or so everyone had believed)—he was one of America’s best-selling romance writers of all time?

“I’m asking you again...” He leaned forward over the table toward her. “Who do you intend to tell?”

Maya set her bottle down. “No one.”

He raised his eyebrows, but his face relaxed a little. “It would ruin me.”

“I know.” She turned her beer bottle around on the paper coaster.

He chuckled, shaking his head. “And after everything I said to you...”

Maya smiled. “You mean about my writing fairy stories?”

He groaned, putting his head in his hands. “Maya, you really are talented.”

“Coming from Rebecca Winters, that’s quite a compliment.”

He snorted, picking his beer up and downing the rest. He called the waitress over and ordered two more, although Maya hadn’t made it halfway through her first.

“I started just for the money,” he explained when the waitress returned and he paid for their beers. “I had no intention of writing romance novels for a living. It was a way to make some quick cash.”

“It worked,” Maya said, still working on her first beer. It was two-thirds gone now.

He sighed. “I’ll say. The publisher wanted more. The fans wanted more. And once I started the ‘Misty’ series...”

“I love the Misty series!” Maya broke in, leaning forward in her seat.

He groaned, cradling his head in his hand again as if it hurt. “Everyone loves her. I can’t get rid of the bitch. She reminds me of my ex-wife.”

“The woman who threw the book?” Maya inquired. He nodded, picking up his beer. “I bet she’s got Misty’s expensive tastes, too, huh?”

“You have no idea.” He stared out the window and Maya studied his face.

He wasn’t a traditionally handsome man—his nose was a little too long, his face too round, almost boyish, his dark hair, slivered with silver in the light, was an unruly mess, like he had just rolled out of bed.

Yet to Maya, he had always been her picture-perfect dream professor. She had fantasized about being in his class for a year before finally getting to experience him first hand, but her fantasy had crumbled after his first review of her work. Now that she saw him this way, exposed, vulnerable to her, she discovered that he was even more attractive than her fantasy had been, by far.

“Professor Reardon—”

“James,” he corrected her with a smile.

“James...” She tried it out in her mouth and found it felt good. “I don’t understand.”

“What don’t you understand?” He leaned back.

“Why were you so hard on me?” Maya found she could barely get the words out. She had spent months longing for, looking for, his approval. “I mean... it can’t be that I write romance, which is what I thought it was, what it had to be... because now I know that you write it, too.”

James shook his head, frowning, but didn’t interrupt her.

“It must... it must just be me, then?” She heard how small her voice was and tried to hide it behind the lip of her bottle. “Am I so awful?”

“No.” He sat up and reached across the table, grabbing her beer and setting it aside, grasping her hands in his. They were large and warm and everything Maya thought a man’s hands should feel like. “Don’t you get it?”

She was shaking her head, willing her tears not to fall.

“I discouraged you from writing romance...” He leaned in to capture her eyes with his and she felt her lower lip trembling. “Not because I think you’re a *bad* writer, but because I think you’re a *good* writer. You have an exceptional talent.”

The words made her feel warm, or maybe it was the alcohol working its way through her system. His hands, cupping hers, were a point of human contact that she hadn’t allowed in for a long time. She found herself craving more.

“I don’t want you to get stuck doing what I’m doing.” His eyes pleaded with her. “You have no idea what it’s like, being stuck doing something you hate. And believe me, as fun as the fantasy is now, you will eventually grow to hate it.”

“Why do you think so?” She shook her head. She didn’t understand people when they said things like this to her. The fantasy and the romance, they were something she

lived for, something she craved. Real life had plenty of sad endings and ambiguous situations—in a romance, everyone finally lived happily ever after. For once.

James touched her cheek, brushing a stray hair away and tucking it behind her ear. “Because, you beautiful girl... there is a great deal of depth in you—that even you have yet to touch.” His eyes were following his fingers, down the soft skin of her cheek, over the line of her jaw. “A depth that most people in your life don’t even see.”

Maya felt like she couldn’t breathe. “You see that?”

“I do.” The hand still holding hers squeezed gently.

She opened her palm to him, like she had in his office. “You’ve touched it.”

“Have I?” He smiled at her, and for a moment, he was her teacher again with that same sarcastic little smile. “I’ve seen it perhaps, but touched it? No.” He shook his head.

Maya bit her lip, looking over at him, and asked, “Do you want to?”

His eyes flew up to hers, searching, that electric charge passing between them like a pulse. “Is that an offer?”

“Yes, it’s most definitely an invitation...” Her palm pushed up against his, feeling faint at the tension of his hand pressing hers back down to the table top.

He nodded slowly. “Yes. Yes, I very much want that.”

“Then, let’s go.”

Chapter Three

She waited in his car while he went to check them in, feeling a little nervous, but also like she was on some sort of exciting adventure. It was a beautiful day, and James (James! She was still having a hard time thinking of him as James) owned a little British roadster convertible, so they drove all the way with the top down. Every time he reached down to shift gears, his hand brushed her leg and it thrilled her. Maya had freed her hair, letting it whip in the wind, and now she tried to tame it again while she was waiting. It was a tangled mess.

It had seemed so clear to her, in that little booth, what she wanted, what they both wanted, but now that she was looking at the row of log cabins by the lake, which by all rights should have been the picture-perfect romantic spot, she wasn't so sure. He came back out to the car, hopping in and starting it up. He drove around the cabins, toward the lake, and stopped near one of the rows not facing the street.

"We're in the one on the end," he said. "Still have a nice view, though, huh?"

"Beautiful..." She listened to the ticking of the engine, the lapping of the water on the shoreline, the sound of the birds in the trees above them. His hand moved over hers as it rested on her denim-clad thigh and she looked at it, not him. His hands were soft and looked like they would be gentle and his nails were neat and squared off, as if they had been manicured.

"We don't have to," he said and she smiled, still looking at his hand, so large it nearly swallowed hers.

"I want to," she replied, finally looking up and meeting his eyes. She couldn't read his expression. "Don't you?"

"Yes." He slid his hand up her bare arm. There wasn't much of a gap to bridge between them—the car was small and the two bucket seats were very close. She could feel his breath, and he smelled like the beer they had been drinking in the bar not half an hour ago.

She wouldn't remember later who leaned in first, but they kissed there for the first time, their mouths doing a slow, tentative exploration together. He broke the kiss and she opened her eyes to see him looking at her as if he were trying to figure something out.

"Here, you take the key." He held it out to her. It was attached to an orange rectangular tab with the number 110 on it. "I'm going to put the top up and I'll meet you inside."

She nodded, leaving her backpack and feeling free as she hurried to the little cabin on the end. The key slid into the lock with a delightful click, and she turned it and stepped inside. It was the typical New England rustic décor, with bears on the comforter and fake (at least, she thought they were fake) moose antlers over the bed. She shut the door and went to the bathroom, washing her face and straightening her hair the best she could.

She heard him come in, and she found herself hesitating to go back out, staring at herself in the mirror. Her eyes were bright, her cheeks flushed, and her whole body was tingling, like a limb that had gone to sleep and was just waking up.

What was happening seemed so out of character for both of them—it seemed too fantastic to be real. Was she really sitting in her Ancient History class right now, looking out the window, chewing on a pen cap, and dreaming all of this? Part of her thought that must be the case. When she opened the door, he was standing by the open window, looking out at the lake. He smiled at her and held out a hand. She took it, still marveling at his touch, and joined him. The sun was brilliant on the water as it rippled toward shore.

"Look." He pointed toward the mallards that were paddling toward the reeds. As she watched, she saw a mother duck leading her little downy ducklings all in a row for a swim out on the lake.

She watched them in wonder, all too aware of James' body, his hip against her hip, his hand moving around her waist. "I wonder which one is going to grow up to be a swan?"

He smiled down at her, his attention shifting, his eyes falling to her mouth. “This one.” He tilted her chin up and kissed her. This wasn’t like the tentative kiss in the car. This one was full of passion and an eager longing that matched her own. She whimpered against his lips, seeking his center with her tongue.

He breathed her in—she could feel the expanding of his chest as he pulled her in tight, his hands seeking the bare skin of her back under her t-shirt. The bed seemed miles away as they kissed and touched their way towards it, peeling off clothes and exploring each other as they went. His mouth seemed to want to devour her and she met him like a lifetime of pent-up breath until they were gasping, collapsed, his body pressing her to the floor still five feet short of the bed.

Her t-shirt was pulled up, his jacket off, shirt unbuttoned, and they were pressed belly to belly, but it made the thickness of her jeans too much—she couldn’t feel the heat of him like she wanted. Her fingers fumbled with the snap and zipper, wiggling out, and the writhing of her under him as she exposed her panties and bare thighs brought a growl from his throat that sent a shiver through her.

She toed her jeans the rest of the way off, wrapping her legs around him when they were free, digging her heels into his lower back and arching. He fumbled with the front hook of her bra and she brushed his hands away, impatient, rolling on top of him and sitting. His eyes were full of lust as he looked up at her peeling off her t-shirt, unhooking her bra and letting her breasts spill out into his hands as she leaned forward to kiss him, her mouth hungry.

She rocked her hips, her thin panties rubbing against the material of his trousers, the bite of his belt a shock as he grabbed her sides and slid her up so he could lick and suck at her nipples like a man who had never tasted flesh before. The eagerness of his mouth made her hips rock hard and she wanted more still. She slid up his belly and sat on his chest, pulling her panties aside to show him the red fuzz between her legs. The groan that elicited was so gratifying that she gave him a little more pink, spreading her lips open so she could rub her clit.

“Stand up,” he said, tugging at her panties. She did, letting him slide them down. She stepped out and spread her lips again for him, sliding first one and then two fingers into her wetness, watching his eyes as she slowly fingered herself. She could see his hand beginning to slide down between his own legs and heard the sound of his belt buckle.

“Ohhh, but I want to do that,” she murmured, turning around and sinking down on him, her thighs straddling his chest as she brushed his hand away, undoing his belt and unzipping him. She felt his fingers beginning to explore between her legs as she tugged down his trousers and boxers. His cock sprang free, seeming to aim directly toward her mouth, and she took him in, the whole length of him in one warm, wet swallow.

“Oh god!” he cried, plunging his fingers into her, finding deeper, wider places than she could reach herself. She spread her legs, grinding back against his hand, trying to get more of him into her. His cock was pulsing under her tongue, thrusting into her hand, asking for more, too.

His hands cupped the soft flesh of her inner thighs, running from her knees all the way up to where her legs met her pelvis, hooking his thumb and finger there on either side, the perfect handhold, like he was framing her soaking wet pussy. He lifted her, making her gasp as he slid her backward toward him, and she moaned when his fingers moved to open her up for his mouth, his tongue.

“Oh James,” she whispered, his name still thrilling and at the same time incredibly intimate in her mouth. “Oh yes!”

His tongue slipped deep into her and then he followed his tongue with his fingers, probing further while his mouth searched for her sweet spot. She hissed when he found it, forgetting about her mouth on his cock entirely, rubbing her cheek over the soft skin of his belly, then, too lost in the sensation to do anything but lazily stroke him with trembling fingers.

“Faster,” she begged him, wiggling more toward his mouth, arching her back. “Oh please.” He moaned at her words, his tongue making quick, darting movements over her clit, back and forth. Maya squeezed him harder, stroking him a little faster as she felt

herself being carried away. She found herself rolling her hips, round and round, making his tongue do little circles.

“Yes,” she gasped, pulling the skin of his cock down tight, biting and licking at the skin of his belly. “Oh don’t stop!”

He wrapped his arms around her hips in answer, pulling her fully down onto him, her knees spread out onto the floor, her pussy a slick, wet pulse against his mouth. She was moaning and twisting on him now, edging closer with every delicious sweep of his tongue. She couldn’t take any more—her body was wound too tight, waiting to be sprung, everything centered on the little trigger between her legs that his tongue had found and refused to abandon.

“James!” she cried, and it came as a plea—for more, or for release, she didn’t know which. He grunted, sliding his fingers deep into her as he licked her, moving them in and out now, pushing her forward onto him. Maya thought she would scream with pleasure and she took his cock into her mouth instead, moaning around the thick heat of him.

She felt herself slip over the edge, the point of no return, and she was falling, with him buried deep in her throat as she came, her mouth closing around his cock, matching the same fluttering rhythm as her pussy around his fingers. She kept him there, her body trembling and quivering against him, his cock like steel heat against her tongue, until she couldn’t stand it any more.

“Wait,” she gasped, coming up for air, crawling off of him, her hair hanging to the floor as she turned around and collapsed next to him. She kissed him, tasting herself in his mouth, her juices glistening on his cheeks, down his chin. She swallowed the sweet, musky taste of herself, sucking it off his tongue.

She broke the kiss and, with a little smile, she started crawling toward the bed. Her legs didn’t feel strong enough to walk. When she got to the edge, she looked over her shoulder at him, still laying there, his head twisted to watch her. Maya grabbed the comforter and pulled herself up, leaving her legs dangling over the side, spread open,

resting her belly against the bed. It was a soft haven, and she still felt like she was floating.

She watched as he rolled over, getting up to crawl toward her. She could feel the air over her thighs, the wetness there, and then she felt the heat of his breath as he reached her. He kissed her thighs, working his way down to her knees, kissing and licking the backs of them, making her moan and sigh. He kissed each instep of her foot, flicking his tongue there, making her smile and squirm.

Maya put her feet on the floor, going up on her tiptoes and lifting her bottom in the air. She could see him when she looked down between her legs, his eyes shining, and she smiled at him. She didn't think she had ever seen that expression on his face before, and she wondered at it. His hands started at her ankles, moving their way up the smooth skin of her calves, the soft flesh of her thighs, over the rounded curve of her behind.

He stood behind her, and she could feel his cock like a fiery exclamation against her thigh. She reached between her legs for him, stroking him against her pussy, slow and easy. He moaned, his hands moving over her ass, her lower back, grabbing at her hips as she rubbed him up and down her slit.

James moved her hand, grasping his cock and pressing the thick, bulbous head between her lips. He grabbed her hips and pulled her toward him, onto him.

"Oh!" Maya cried, feeling the thick length of his cock slip into her.

He groaned as she wiggled back against him, still up on her tiptoes. The word from his lips thrilled her and she wanted to hear it again. She squeezed her pussy hard around his cock as she slipped forward a little, so he was almost out of her, squeezing and releasing just the tip of him. Then she tightened her muscles and slid back toward him, settling her behind against his pelvis with a push.

"Maya!" he cried, holding her hips still, his fingers digging into her flesh. "Jesus!"

"Come on," she whispered, looking back at him through a tangle of fiery hair. She was squirming in his hands. "Come on, James. Fuck me."

He groaned, driving forward into her hard enough to make her lose her foothold, sliding her across the bed. Maya gasped as he pressed his weight into her from behind, his cock buried into her as she lay spread-eagled before him. He pulled out until their bodies nearly lost contact, and then he began to fuck her, using just his hips in tight, shallow circles, spreading her thighs even further with his. It was a slow, easy grind, a delicious tease, and she found herself caught in it, spiraling upward.

Her hands against the comforter were pulling images of bears and deer into tangled fistfuls of material as he thrust into her, his cock still teasing, staying in the shallows, toying with her pussy until she was arching and moaning and bucking underneath him for more.

"Please," she begged, her voice muffled as she bit at the material against her mouth, tugging at it with her teeth. "Oh please, please, please, James, god...!"

He seemed to know what she wanted, and he slid himself deep into her, so deep it almost hurt and she moaned low and loud, burying her face against the bed. Then he was teasing her again, the head of his cock working her pussy open, round and round.

"Oh please," she cried. "Deeper. Oh, harder!"

He slid himself all the way in again, meeting her grinding hips with his. He stayed there for a minute, rocking, the tip of his cock massaging the deepest parts of her, and then he pulled out, as if he meant to tease her again, but this time thrust hard back in, all the way, and she could feel his balls slap against her when he did.

"Yes!" she whispered, meeting him. "Fuck me!"

He leaned into her for a moment, the weight of him crushing her, and she reveled in it. He bit at her shoulder, pulling her hair to the side and whispering in her ear, "Tell me again."

She moaned and gasped, "Fuck me! Oh James, please, fuck me hard!"

"Yeah," he growled, sitting back, sliding almost out, and using all his weight to come back into her. Maya moaned, arching her back. He grabbed her hips and lifted her

to her knees in one swift motion, moving in and out of her pussy in long, hard strokes. "Is that what you wanted?"

"Yes," she said, closing her eyes and feeling him filling her, again, again, again, the wet sound of them together coming faster now. "Oh, yes, yes yes!"

She opened herself up to him, let herself go completely, just letting him take her, his cock impaling her flesh over and over, driving her across the bed with every thrust. Maya wanted more of him, and she wiggled forward, grabbing his thrusting cock in her hand as it slid out of her slippery wetness.

She rolled beneath him, turning over and putting his cock back inside of her. He was propped over her now, thrusting again, his eyes closed. And still, she wanted more. She groped at him, pulling him down to her, wanting to feel the weight of him. She pressed her breasts against his chest, rolling her hips in circles as she wrapped herself around him, wanting him as deeply as he could go now.

His breath on her cheek was hot and labored, their bodies slippery together as they rocked, the delicious friction building between them. Maya began squeezing him again, pulling him deeper, and she heard him groan.

"Ahhh, I'm so close," he warned against her ear, and she gripped him harder, using his shaft to tease her aching clit, working hard now. She couldn't stop. "Oh god! Maya!"

"Yes," she whispered, licking at his ear, his throat, tasting the saltiness of his sweat. "Cum for me."

He grunted at her words, driving forward hard and she could feel his body shuddering against her, every muscle tight and pulsing. Maya pressed up against him, belly to belly, feeling his quivering as she pushed herself over, grinding her clit against the base of his throbbing shaft.

"Ohhhhh!" she moaned, digging her nails into his back, wrapping her legs around him tight as she pitched and rolled underneath him, the sensation like a blinding white heat searing through her, again and again.

He rolled off of her, breathing hard, closing his eyes. Maya stared up at the ceiling, her eyes wandering down the wall, marveling at how the logs fit one another, tongue and groove, as she found his hand and squeezed. Outside, she could hear the ducks calling, and she smiled.

“Are you sorry?” James asked her.

She glanced over at him. His breath was returning to normal, but his eyes were still closed. “No,” she said, smiling back up at the ceiling. “Should I be?”

“Most of the time, the fantasy is always better than the reality,” he murmured, turning to look at her.

“Not this time,” she replied, putting her arm over him, fitting her cheek against his chest.

“Maybe there is a little romance left in the world,” he murmured, kissing her hair.

“It’s always there,” she whispered, snuggling closer. “You just have to look.”

* * * *

“And the winner of the William Faulkner Award for Best Novel of the Year goes to Maya Reardon, author of ‘Swan Song.’”

James leaned over and kissed her cheek, and she stood, using his shoulder to stay steady. She wanted to pinch herself, to make sure she wasn’t dreaming, to convince her that this really was her life.

She moved toward the stage, smiling at the white-haired man who handed her the certificate, turning her eyes back out to the applauding crowd. She saw him standing there, his eyes bright—the man who knew everything about her there was to know, and who loved her still.

“This is for my husband, James,” Maya said into the microphone. “Without him, I never would have known that fairy tales sometimes really do come true.”

The End

ABOUT SELENA KITT



Like any feline, Selena Kitt loves the things that make her purr—and wants nothing more than to make others purr right along with her! Pleasure is her middle name, whether it's a short cat nap stretched out in the sun or a long kitty bath. She makes it a priority to explore all the delightful distractions she can find, and follow her vivid and often racy imagination wherever it wants to lead her.

This sassy, outrageous author lives with her husband and children in the rural Midwest, all of whom she thinks are the cat's meow. Her writing embodies everything from the spicy to the scandalous, but watch out—this kitty also has sharp claws and her stories often include intriguing edges and twists that take readers to new, thought-provoking depths.

When she isn't pawing away at her keyboard, she loves spending her time belly dancing, attending drum circles, gathering in women's groups, and taking beautiful pictures of everything in her world.

Her e-publishing credits include: [*Rosie's Promise*](#) published by Samhain and *Torrid Teasers* #49 published by [Whiskey Creek Press](#) featuring two short stories, *French Lessons* and *I'll Be Your Superman* in 2008. Her stories and poems are in the following anthologies: [Coming Together: For The Cure](#), [Coming Together: Under Fire](#) and [Coming Together Volume 1](#) and [Volume 3](#). Two stories, [Sacred Spots](#) and [Happy Accident](#), have been published by [Phaze Publishing](#), and her novels *Christmas Stalking*, *Blind Date*, *The Surrender of Persephone* and *The Song of Orpheus* are coming soon. She has also been published online in [The Shadow Sacrament: a journal of sex and spirituality](#), [The Erotic Woman](#), and her story, *Connections*, was one of the runners-up for the [2006 Rauxa Prize](#), given annually to an erotic short story of "exceptional literary quality," out of over 1,000 nominees, where awards are judged by a select jury and all entries are read "blind" (without author's name available.) She can be reached on her website at www.selenakitt.com or email selena@selenakitt.com

If you enjoyed [A PAPERBACK ROMANCE](#), you might also enjoy:



ESCAPING FATE

By Selena Kitt

Sam has an unusual interest in humans—well, considering she’s a fairy of fate whose profession it is to determine their futures, it’s no wonder! But it isn’t just Karma she’s curious about... Sam has what her fairy-pal Alex thinks is an inordinate and rather wanton interest in certain biological aspects of human behavior—most notably, s-e-x.

When Sam’s job leads her into the path of a handsome man who rocks her world, Sam’s interest becomes obsession. Alex reminds her that fairies get one Christmas wish – will Sam consider using hers to become human to experience one night of bliss?

When things become even more complicated—Sam discovers that Drew, the sexy stranger she’s been fantasizing about, can actually see her—Sam finds herself immersed in a complex and tangled web of human experience. She has to make a choice that will teach her a twisted lesson in fate, ultimately change the course of human existence and even reveal the origin of Santa Claus!

Warning: This title contains graphic sex acts and strong language.

Excerpt From ESCAPING FATE:

Cats are the worst. It's the wings. They love to play with the damned wings. I can't count how many times, out of nowhere, I've become some feline's personal play toy. You'd think I'd been rolling in catnip, the way they come after me!

One minute, I'm just sitting here minding my own business—okay, so I'm minding someone else's business—perched on the footboard and watching the show, and the next minute—wham! Now I'm rolling around on the bed with Anna and her new Beau, except they're having a good old time, and I'm trying to save myself from Fluffy's claws!

"Beau, put him out," Anna begs.

Brilliant idea! The damned cat's got my wing pinned and he's about to pounce on my head! I'm flopping like a landed fish and the cat's tail is swishing like mad when Beau grabs him by the scruff of the neck. Just in time! I stick my tongue out at the cat and shake off my wings while he hisses and spits and sails out the door.

"Where were we?" Beau climbs back into bed and dives under the covers, making Anna giggle wildly at first, until she begins to moan.

Damned comforter! I give her a little "push," and she kicks off the covers, revealing the spread of her hips under his hands and the swell of her breasts with their hard, dark nipples. His face is buried between her legs, and he's making those noises, like he's eating something sinfully delicious.

Anna is rolling her hips, her eyes closed, her fingers gripping his head, guiding his tongue. The cat's mewling on the other side of the door, but they're both oblivious, of course. I've got that funny feeling in my belly again, and I'm thinking about what Alex said the other day. I haven't gotten up the nerve to go back... to the man who could see me. Okay, so I flew by his window and peeked in, but it was dark, and I couldn't see anything.

"Beau, yes, oh god!" She gasps and squirms, spreading her thighs wider and pressing up against his mouth in fast, rhythmic thrusts. Her head goes back and forth, side to side, and she's making this noise in her throat, not unlike the cat outside of the door. When her body stiffens and threatens to buck right out of his hands, he grips her ass, his mouth fastened tight between her legs, his eyes dark and full of lust as she shudders and quakes.

"Oh god, oh god, oh god," she breathes as he kisses his way up her belly. She clutches him tight, reaching between them to find his cock. I can't see well enough, now, and I float down toward the mattress, moving off to the side so I can watch them join together. She strokes him, squeezing, and I watch his face—that look of bliss as she slides him between her pussy lips, guiding him inside.

Their eyes meet, and there it is, that low communication, something passing between them, unsaid, but completely understood. It hasn't even been long, a few weeks since they met, but they are deeply connected in this moment. Is it possible, I wonder, watching them move, their hips rocking in a slow-building rhythm. Is it possible

to feel it so quickly, to have that instant feeling of euphoria with someone you hardly knew?

The cat's scratching at the door now, still mewling like mad, but they're kissing, completely oblivious to anything but one another, whispering things, urging each other on. His thrusts become deeper, faster, and her nails dig into the flesh of his back, making him arch into her...

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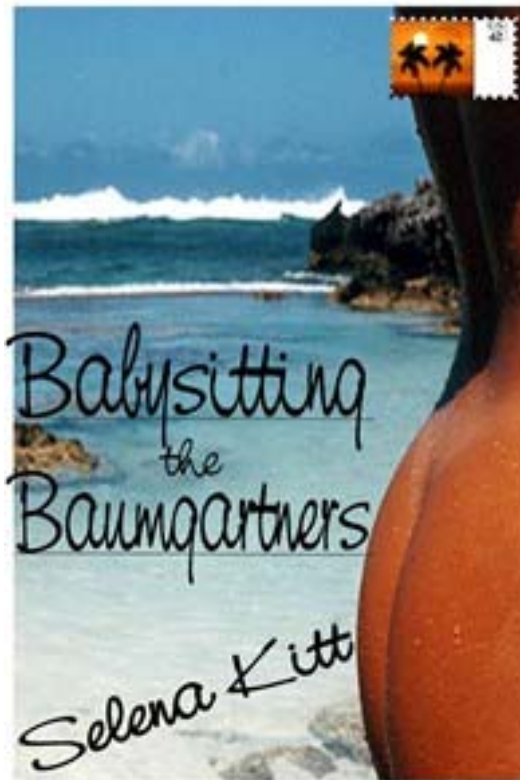


NAUGHTY BITS

By Selena Kitt

David has been brightening up his gray Surrey, England days with the porn collection hidden in his parents' shed, but when he find that his older sister, Dawn has discovered his magazine collection, things really begin to heat up. Their parents insist that their just-graduated son look for a job, but their daughter has the week off and is determined to work on her tan. Distracted David finds himself increasingly tempted by his seductive older sister, who makes it very clear what she wants. Her teasing ways slowly break down the taboo barrier between brother and sister until they both give in to their lust... but what are they going to do about the feelings that have developed between them in the meantime...?

Warning: This title contains incest and anal sex.



BABYSITTING THE BAUMGARTNERS

By Selena Kitt

Ronnie—or as Mrs. Baumgartner insists on calling her, Veronica—has been babysitting for the Baumgartners since she was fifteen years old and has practically become another member of the family. Now a college freshman, Ronnie jumps at the chance to work on her tan in the Florida Keys with “Doc” and “Mrs. B” under the pretense of babysitting the kids. Ronnie isn’t the only one with ulterior motives, though, and she discovers that the Baumgartners have wayward plans for their young babysitter. This wicked hot sun and sand coming of age story will seduce you as quickly as the Baumgartners seduce innocent Ronnie and leave everyone yearning for more!

Warning: This title contains MFF threesome, lesbian, and anal sex.

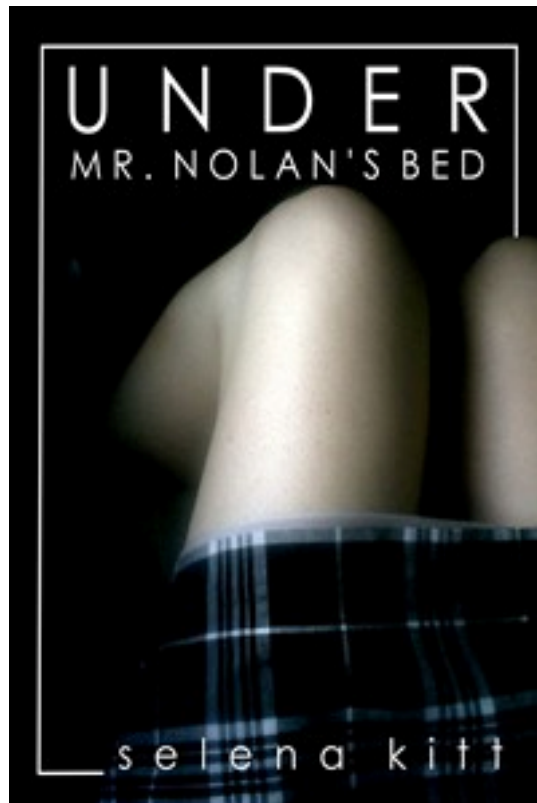


BLUEBEARD'S WIFE

By Selena Kitt

Tara's husband has never shared a fantasy with her, or even masturbated—that she knows of. However, this curious wife discovers a phone bill full of phone calls to sex lines and realizes her husband has been living a double life! Instead of getting mad, Tara's curiosity leads her to begin listening in on John's steamy conversations in hopes of finding out what he really wants in the bedroom. After several failed attempts at bringing fantasy to reality, however, a frustrated Tara turns to her much more adventurous best friend, Kelly, for help. A quick psychology 101 diagnosis from Dr. Kelly marks John as having a classic "madonna/whore" complex, and she quickly sets about making plans to rectify this situation. Tara goes along for the ride, hoping that Kelly may have the answer to bridging the seemingly ever-growing gap in her marriage...

Warning: This title contains a MFF threesome, a daddy/daughter role play between consenting adults, strong language, minor drug use and F/F sex.



UNDER MR. NOLAN'S BED

By Selena Kitt

Leah and Erica have been best friends and have gone to the same Catholic school since just about forever. Leah spends so much time with the Nolan's—just Erica and her handsome father, now, since Erica's mother died—that she's practically part of the family. When the girls find something naughty under Mr. Nolan's bed, their strict, repressive upbringing makes it all the more exciting as they begin their sexual experimentation. Leah's exploration presses deeper, and eventually she finds herself torn between her best friend and her best friend's father—but even she couldn't have predicted the shocking and bittersweet outcome of their affair.

Warning: This title contains a threesome, lesbian sex and incest.



THE SYBIAN CLUB

By Selena Kitt

Tasha convinces her husband, Max, to buy her a the ultimate female pleasure machine – a Sybian – but he only agrees if she can come up with a business plan to pay for it. Determined to keep her promise, she creates The Sybian Club and begins bringing women to the basement room set up just for her new toy. It becomes so popular, she has to enlist the help of new friend, Ashley, to keep up with the demand, and the women enjoy an exciting ride as the business thrives. But Tasha has developed feelings for Ashley, and doesn't know how to tell her husband that she wants to add more to their sex life than just a new toy...

Warning: This title contains a threesome, lesbian and anal sex.



STARVING ARTIST

By Selena Kitt

Ellie is living the life of a true starving artist in a small efficiency apartment in dangerous downtown Detroit, but more dangerous than her surroundings are the men to whom she pays rent. Denied help by her prosecutor father, who believes his daughter is wasting her life in art school, Ellie finds herself in a precarious position and surrenders helplessly to her predicament. However, a strange twist of fate gives Ellie a chance at revenge. Will she take it?

Warning: This title contains graphic language, nonconsensual and anal sex.



ON CHERRY HILL

By Selena Kitt

Midwife Anne gets pulled over in the middle of the night on Cherry Hill Road. She's on her way to a birth, but her urgency doesn't sway the unsympathetic officer. When the cop discovers something suspicious on Anne's driving record and insists she get out of the car, she knows she's in real trouble. When he cuffs her and bends her over the hood, things go beyond trouble...

But the surprising outcome of this tale gives both Anne and the reader a jolt they never could have anticipated...

Warning: This title contains graphic language and nonconsensual sex.



TICKLED PINK

By Selena Kitt

Who says sex can't be fun - or funny? You'll find more than enough amusing mishaps and uproarious situations to tickle your funny bone—and more!—in this delightfully wicked and delightfully sexy anthology from Selena Kitt.

Warning: This title contains graphic language and sex.



TAKEN

By Selena Kitt

Lizzy’s friendship with her older boss, Sarah, turns into something deeper and much more exciting one rainy day after work, and Lizzy finds herself drawn into a world she never knew existed. Sarah has a dominant streak, and as she leads Lizzy into the role of a submissive, the two women become closer than they ever thought possible. But while Sarah, hurt too many times, wears a ring, and tells guys she’s “taken,” Lizzy knows she secretly longs for a man. Determined to find one for them both to share, Lizzy is just about to give up when a dark, handsome, virile answer shows up right under her nose. Lizzy may think she and Sarah are going to seduce David—but she underestimates their handsome co-worker, and David turns the tables on them both. But will he be able to tame the untameable Sarah?

Warnings: This title contains graphic language and sex, a m/f/f threesome and mild bdsm elements.



MERCY

by Selena Kitt

Mercy was a typical lesbian in life - at least, that's what her beloved, dearly departed Dee always said - but she's definitely not a typical vampire. Mercy, known as Mary in her former life, is now secretly in love with Angie, her roommate, whose profession as a hospice nurse has taken Mercy on an unusual path in her journey as the undead. Like her acquired name, comes as a dark angel of mercy, delivering eternal life to the dying—but will Mercy's mission of compassion serve to save the one woman she loves most in the world?

Warning: This title contains graphic language, sex and elements of horror.



SILENT NIGHT

By Selena Kitt

Justine has left Bruce for another man, left him all alone with their young daughter - while he slowly goes insane. His building, impotent rage leads to sudden, unexpected brutality. But how far will he go?

Warning: This title contains graphic language, infidelity, sex and shocking, horrific elements.



[A TWISTED BARD'S TALE](#)

By Selena Kitt

Did you ever wonder what started the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues? Check out this naughty version of Romeo and Juliet - you'll be surprised and delighted by this twisted Bard's tale!

Warning: This title contains graphic language and lesbian sex.