
MASTERING MEREDITH

Cruel Masters - Book Two

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This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only.
Nothing in this book should be interpreted as the publishers' or the author's
advocating any non-consensual sexual activity.

For Michael

Chapter 1

Rohan

There were many times in his life Rohan Gautne had woken up with pain. He rather liked the intensity of the feeling, the aching, the inability to satiate his body until the craving was satisfied. This wasn't one of those moments.

Having dodged awareness for several weeks now, he didn't even know what day it was anymore. The last he'd been fully awake and justifiably aware, he'd been on the floor of a cell. A burly man stood over him, then he saw his arm raise, and he felt the monster of a man's fist fall—over and over and over again. Rohan hadn't even fought him, hadn't been able to even if he'd tried.

He'd been chained up then, also. Everyone knew it was best to keep a man like him constrained.

So imagine his surprise when his eyes opened to her, standing in the staled air openness of his cell in the hideout of wherever it was Ruben Vanguard and his mindless pets had placed him, a pout on her sweet lips and a frown upon her pretty face. He

thought he'd seen an angel, soft and radiant, his goddamn savior. Rohan tried to lift his head from the tangle of chains, to move his bruised and battered body towards her. He couldn't. He was immobile, and the sweet angel of a woman didn't come any closer. No closer, not until she jabbed the needle into his arm and the darkness pervaded once more. Fuck... his angel was nothing but a devil's spawn in disguise, and damn him for believing her to be anything else.

He awoke. Rohan didn't know where he was, just that he was tied up to a bed in someone's home, a single room home where the bed lay out in the open and he was exposed more than he might have been otherwise. He rapidly blinked his drug-addled eyes. The seductive mockery of that sweet angel was there in the room with him, humming and darting around on the opposite side of the large, comfortably decorated expanse, not paying any attention to him. He lay in the bed unable to move for many moments, his head so woozy that when he tried to disconnect the binding from his chained wrists, he was unable to do so. He closed his eyes. He might have slept for hours or perhaps days. Nothing seemed real—not even her.

Again his eyes opened, and he was more alert this time, though time was still inconsequential to him. Rohan's motivations, though, were decidedly not. He would break free, come hell, come any maniacal state of mind, or any devious passions of emotions thrown at him by the woman in the room. No one kept him as a slave, certainly not a female who would barely reach his shoulders if he were set loose to stand before her in all his glory.

His captor seemed unconcerned by him as he lay there in his enslaved state, going around the tiny room as she gathered dried flowers and other medicinal shit. They hung up along the rafters; she gathered them, crushed them, and placed them into small bottles.

Her beauty was a distraction. It hid how merciless and diabolical she was. She saved him; in return, she kept him bound. What kind of monster was she?

In return for her ruthlessness, he would retaliate by his own method. As he watched her, the need to press her down to the cobbled floor and expel the air from her lungs as he plunged into her with each greedy thrust of his cock when he took her ruthlessly from behind, became more prevalent. He yearned to feel her squeal for mercy as he rutted on her viciously, bringing her to the edge of orgasm and never letting her attain her desire. He thought he might get off on that feeling, he sure as hell wanted to. His dick was growing rigid getting ready for that perfect moment.

“Hey,” he said, his voice harsh. “You.”

Rohan sneered, looking at his captor. His balls were heavy with repressed lust, his treacherous shaft hard as a fucking rock.

“You want to play, baby girl?” he said, disgusted loathing in his voice. She looked at him, not moving. For a moment, she stepped so close to him it wouldn’t take much to slide his chains about her delicate wrist, to wrap them around her fucking neck. That was his fantasy, and her downcast eyes encouraged the beast within.

His murmur taunted. “We’ll play my game one day,” he said, so low he wasn’t sure she heard him. “Cut Daddy loose, little girl, and see how dark your nightmares can become when the Master of Pain finally gets hold of you.”

She kept ignoring him. Not that it mattered. Rohan meant to enact his fantasy when able. He’d fuck her, make her scream with a pleased pain. Then she’d see how much he enjoyed her goddamn needles and silence.

His cock rebelled against him, equally demanding of his attentions as the wounds seeping along his skin. Someone had beat the shit out of him. If he were anyone different, he’d be

thinking about that instead of his hard-on. But Rohan wasn't just any man. He liked pain; yearned for it. Gave it pretty good, too. Almost snorting, he yanked at the chains again. Some master... he couldn't even get the fuck loose.

"You. Bitch," he said again, his tone forceful. "Let me the fuck loose."

The woman turned, examined him with neutrally observant hazel eyes. They were huge, ringed by a halo of green, with long, dark lashes that swept down and hid her gaze from him. Her hair was a halo of curls, wild and to her shoulders, a mixture of honey and dark brown. He kept looking her over, as she did him. Her body was... hell. It was fine as fuck. Ample. Maybe a bit too rounded for his tastes, but he wasn't that discerning when it came down to it. He liked the feel of curves, and she had them in abundance.

She wore some damned ugly dress that came to her shins and attempted to hide her figure. That was impossible. Rohan's ability to pinpoint a woman's shape was notorious. He wasn't half bad at determining a man's physique either, though he'd preferred females for some time now. Being dominant meant he didn't like anyone attempting to overthrow his authority. Not ever. That didn't mean women didn't try to supplicate him, using their femininity to win him over, or men try to puff out and rooster their way around. If they knew anything, they'd know Rohan never bowed under, he refused to cave.

This female standing before him was trouble. Rohan knew it. She refused to cower. When she met his gaze, her eyes remained steady, unafraid. Didn't she know who he fucking was?

He thrashed at his bindings. His voice raged. "Let me the fuck out," he said, trying to catch her gaze again. The pretty bitch refused it. She wouldn't even speak, not a single word.

He was sweating as he knocked the chains, blood dripping from his wounds. Someone had tried to ruin him. His body was a fucking mess and he had little doubt of who'd done this to him.

He only hoped Vidal made it home from where he'd left her, but he suspected she, too, was in some deep shit. If Adric was half the man he knew his brother to be, he'd recover his woman from that rat-bastard who attacked them in the forest.

Vidal's former fiancé, Douglas, had been forefront in Rohan's beating and in taking Vidal away. He'd pay, though. He'd fucking pay. They all would, including this pretty little slut who religiously ignored him and refused to utter a damn syllable.

Rohan growled, making the woman in front of him pause in filling her glass bottles and look at him. She frowned slightly, taking a step towards him before she stopped. She frowned further, then inhaled and sucked in at her plump lower lip as she concentrated on those damned bottles again.

Rohan tried again, cajoling this time. "Hey... let me go. I won't hurt you. Just talk to me?" He fucking lied. He needed to hurt something, and if that meant her, so be it. His cock—exposed and vulnerable—strained at the thought, and he pressed down the flare. He was a monster, but he wasn't a rapist. Anyone he fucked wanted it, and when he gave his brand of pain to them, they fucking begged for more. His head tipped contemplatively, debating whether the bitch in front of him would beg. He bet she did, and prettily, too. The woman who kept ignoring him certainly knew how to inflict pain, but was she good at taking it?

A small voice popped out from over his head as his growl rumbled louder and louder from his muscled chest, damned near ripping the rest of the skin from his wrists when he yanked and turned at the sound. Rohan scowled. Being propped by multiple pillows in the huge four poster bed didn't leave him any range of motion, but he managed to see who dared interrupt his construed plea.

"Mama doesn't talk. Only to me, anyways."

A boy, not much older than three, crawled out from behind the back of the headboard. He was surprisingly articulate for such a young one, the gibberish Rohan expected from all chil-

dren was missing from this one. How he'd squeezed in the space back there, Rohan didn't want to contemplate. Dark haired, dark eyed, the boy was otherwise a miniature of his mother. With new insight into her, Rohan gave her another examination. She didn't avoid talking just with him? Interesting. Her self-imposed mutism could be remedied, possibly though, with enough time and persuasion.

"Where'd you come from?" Rohan said, grunting. His eyes darted to the woman, whose avid gaze stayed firmly on him now that her son was near. Her fingers stilled and she made no pretense to work.

The boy shrugged his slight, bony shoulders, a toothy grin on his face. "Behind you."

Obviously.

The boy leaned in, examining Rohan closely for many long moments, his eyes peeking over the side of the mattress. He jumped up and down a few times as Rohan watched with a compelled curiosity. Then his fingers reached out to touch what he shouldn't. Rohan jerked, surprised as hell by the boy's audacity. Then again, maybe it was a kid thing; he wouldn't know, not having any.

"What's that?" the boy said, taking his rebuttal in stride. "I don't have that on mine." He looked down, and made a point of tugging the drawstring of his pants open, peering down into them. "Nope. I don't." The boy turned and with a question in his voice, called out, "Mommy, come see."

"My piercing," Rohan said wryly, looking at the woman. "It's always been exceedingly popular." She flushed, then she came closer with a pout of exasperation on her puffy lips, resting her hand on the boy's head. The boy spun back around to face Rohan, looking again, his interest only piqued.

"Can I have one, Mommy?" he asked, his eyes wide. "Can I?"

She blushed further and shook her head. Her eyes darted

down at his cock. The so-mentioned piercing gripped the end of his dick, a thick bar and ring that ran through and along the tip. Right now he was fucking swollen as she stared at him, and growing harder by the second. It didn't help that he hadn't fucked in days—and who knew how long he'd been comatose before that. She sucked in her lower lip again, the gesture making his dick pain magnificently. He smirked, and she quickly threw a towel over his midsection. Why the hell he'd been naked in the first place, he'd sure as fuck like to know.

The child persisted in staying near, way too good at pestering Rohan, apparently another form of his captor's torture. She'd pay too, and he also could be highly inventive with his methods of vengeance.

“What's your name?” the child asked, chattering. He pointed at his chest. “I'm Samuel Kingston Uriah...” he said, fading out at the end. He looked to his mother, then whispered, “And there's more, but I can't 'member.” His cheery voice begged for attention. “What's yours?”

Rohan frowned. He'd always disliked children. Too... chipper.

“Mister,” he grunted.

The boy—Samuel—tried climbing up on the bed with him, though the mattress was high, and his knees wouldn't grip. He pulled on Rohan's torso instead, appallingly attempting to drag himself up.

“Mister,” the boy said, as his speech ran together in rambling excitement. “I like when my Mommy tells me stories. Can you tell me a story? You're big, way bigger than me and Mommy. Are you a giant? Hey, Mister—”

Rohan rarely felt speechless, but in this he was horrified. He kept sending out scathing looks to the woman. Finally she took pity and took her son by his waist, pulling him away.

Carefully avoiding Rohan's eyes, she led her son across to the other side of the room. Soon the boy was distracted with some

bottles, and he spent his time endlessly talking as he helped his mother. Rohan watched, his mind whirling with possibility. Something about the whole situation incongruously and dangerously triggered his need to protect, to ravage, to consume. He surely couldn't understand the former feelings, for they were so out of place. But more than that, he had to destroy. She was not a real game player in the whole scheme of things, for quickly she'd revealed two things which could potentially lead to her downfall: her determined ploy of silence and her boy.

Rohan wouldn't actually hurt the child. But he'd sure as hell hurt her. Just as soon as he was able to get the fuck loose. Damn. He struggled some more, then heaved a heavy sigh. The chains securely fastened him to the bed, sitting unfashionably out in the open in the tiny cottage.

He supposed there wasn't any other place for a bed to go. The home was fucking small.

Looking around, he took in his surroundings. Like one of his sex retreats, the cottage had one main room with a bathroom attached to the back of the building and a smaller room jutting off from that. Small, rustic in appearance, the damned thing even had a thatched roof. He could see the eave hanging down, and he buried an aggravated groan from escaping his lips. He was in Hell. Whatever he'd done in the past was finally catching up with him, because this was his punishment. This beautiful woman he couldn't touch, a hard dick he couldn't get off, and an overly excitable child to avoid; Rohan knew there was some demented God out there that wanted to see him duly disciplined. Served him right, he supposed. He certainly doled it out often enough.

"Are you hungry?" Samuel asked from across the room, his tiny voice piping into his thoughts.

Rohan met the woman's eyes, innuendo dripping. "Starving."

She frowned at the sexual cant in his tone, then she went to the stove, reached over her head to grab a bowl, and ladled some

stew into it. Fixing her son a bowl first, Samuel ate with gusto, then after being cleaned up, plopped down on the floor near Rohan. He sprawled. He rolled. He talked to himself. Poor little fucker. Having to hold up a conversation on his own must be dull, especially if he preferred someone like him for company. Though the boy had said his mother talked—just not to Rohan.

Then it hit him with the clearest understanding, and he spat out a scathing remark. “You’re Mad Meredith. Damn. I should have known.”

With deliberation she looked at him, scowling, then she dumped the bowl she’d fixed for him right back into the pot, slamming the lid back over it. His stomach growled. Crazy bitch. That she had ties with Douglas and Vidal’s father didn’t—and wouldn’t—surprise him. She had to get money somewhere, and she was a known recluse. It was obvious she’d taken money and gotten help to take him captive, for how else had she dragged a man of his size into her home? Obviously, she worked for the enemy.

All through the evening Rohan kept testing the binding of the chains. He knew it wouldn’t do him any good, but to sit there feeling useless wasn’t like him. Meredith put Samuel to bed in the little room in the back of the cottage, just after the little guy came near enough to try to climb up and gain a goodnight—whatever the hell that meant. Meredith pulled the boy away when he got too close. Rohan didn’t have any idea how she thought he might hurt him; he was solidly tied and not likely to get loose anytime soon if she had her way. He was so fucking glad he wasn’t a parent. If being that damned uptight was part of the deal, he’d never sire his own.

Alone again, he sneered at her as she readied for bed. Until, that is, he realized she was going to climb in with him and he experienced a whole different reaction to her.

Lust.

She was fully covered by a voluminous white nightgown in

the shape of a tent, but that didn't stop him from looking. The material of her gown was diaphanous. She likely wore it because the weather was warm out, especially with the wind having died down for the night. Rohan hated hot weather. He was far too used to the coolness of his underground lair. But that didn't stop him from wanting her, his passion gone into high gear as he watched her avidly. He saw the clear outline of her body, highlighted by the amber glow of her dimly lit lanterns.

Her head turned as she caught him looking. He smirked, tugging at the chains again, rattling them to gain her attention. She pulled the gown to her body, saying nothing but quickly blowing out the lights.

Because he was tall and muscular, taking up most of the bed, she had to climb over him to get in. He liked the sway of her hips as she gingerly put one thigh over him and then the other, until she rested on her side of the mattress, so close their bodies brushed. The hair on his legs stood on end with erotic pleasure as he observed her, sitting with her knees raised and her arms resting on them. His dick readily stood tall, too. Not that she paid the least attention. He didn't see how she could avoid staring at what he'd been so generously endowed with. It poked up and hit his abdomen, with enough length and girth it was damned impossible to ignore.

He let out a low groan, closing his eyes to half-mast as the fabric of her cotton nightgown pulled against the piercing on his erection. It hurt. It felt damned good.

"Fuck..." he said, clenching his teeth.

Her eyes darted to his, widening. Quickly and with a flush upon her cheeks, she slid her gown away. The gesture exacerbated the issue. The tip of his cock pearlized with his seed, slowly dripping down his erect shaft. Her eyes followed the movement, her body frozen beside him.

Narrowing his eyes, he growled at her. "Either suck it, pump it, or take your eyes off it, woman," he said. She met his gaze,

her brow furrowing. He snapped at her again, peevish at her rectitude. “Clearly I need a fuck. I’m not a man that goes without, little girl.” She touched her earlobe, her fingers nervously working down her throat. He followed the oddly sensual movement, his voice rough. “I won’t apologize for the state of my damned dick. It’s not like you’ve never seen a goddamn cock before.”

She shifted, and her breath caught as her eyes skimmed along his body. She frowned some more. Rohan lifted his hips, the motion feeling so damned good he sucked in a deep inhale.

He let out an aggrieved groan as he quietly muttered, his eyes closing, “I need to fucking come. If I didn’t have these damned chains—”

Her scent wafted to his nostrils, musky, tinged with a mix of vanilla and lavender and the sultry heat of her clean body. He was a man who fucked often, so when he got around an aroused female, he knew it. His eyes opened to half-mast, smoldering with repressed desire as he unobtrusively watched her from under his lashes. She was fascinated with his cock ring, her gaze running quickly from his face—as if to see if he’d catch her—then back down to his dick. His erection jerked towards his muscled core as if the damned thing were cognizant of her curious gaze. She tugged her lower lip between her teeth, and then her tongue swept out and licked upon that same plump lip. He nearly spewed, barely containing himself.

But now Rohan had one way of getting back at her. He wasn’t averse to using his body for revenge. Hell, he wanted to. Right now, he fucking *needed* to.

Purring, his voice sounded out seductively, enough to catch her attention. She looked at him as he spoke, a stain of color on her cheeks.

“Are you being a naughty girl, Meredith? Does looking at my big cock make your pussy wet?” Her eyes darted up, widening. She shook her head, but he didn’t buy her reticence. “Now, don’t

fib,” he chastised softly. “I bet you want to see how it feels, how it tastes. Don’t you, you little nasty girl?” Her flush was beautiful, and he wanted to reach out and just *touch* her. She made that impossible. But her touching him was not.

Inserting practicality, because after all, he was tied up and at her mercy, Rohan asked, “Have you ever seen a cock ring?”

She nodded, making him frown. That was a wholly unexpected response. He wasn’t sure he liked her reply, though he didn’t know why he should have an ounce of jealousy or care. Smoothly he continued, as if she hadn’t just thrown him off balance, “Then you know it won’t hurt you... unless, of course, you want it to.”

She snickered. He caught himself from chuckling at her sassiness. He liked her quiet fire, in spite of his usual aversion to women who weren’t completely submissive to him. That, and loud. He definitely liked to hear a woman when he fucked her. This woman would hold in her screams, if only to spite him.

“Go ahead,” he taunted. “Touch it. I can’t fucking hurt you. As you see, I’m still tied down.”

She turned to him, her face distraught, though she was highly misguided if she thought he’d care. A tear rolled down her cheek and he watched, rapt. Not that he understood the sudden crying. Her eyes fastened on him, then she reached out and her hand smoothed along his cheek, temple to jawline, a tender touch. He flinched at the intimate contact, but his damned cock was ready to spew.

“What do you want?” he asked, his voice demanding but soft. “What the fucking hell do you really want from me?”

She stared at him as if she were horrified by the question, her hand going over her mouth. With a stain of tears on her face, she pressed her lips lightly to his, then she shook her head. She wasn’t going to answer his question, and clearly she wasn’t going to give relief to his dick either.

Mad Meredith leaned over him, extinguished the lantern,

Mastering Meredith

and without another word went to her side of the mattress and gave him her back. Well fuck. Rohan kept his gaze on her for a long while, fuming and plotting, watching the unsteady rise and fall of her body as her sobs dissipated into slumber. Then finally, after much debate, he succumbed himself.