
FOR THE LOVE OF A
PHOTOGRAPHER

KS WEACHTER



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This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only.
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the author's advocating any non-consensual sexual activity.

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Chapter 1

Janie

"**J**anie, with all the complaints, we can't keep you here."

"What?" My voice rising above the clatter of dishes.

"Six tables lodged complaints tonight. I can't afford to have negative reviews because of you," Carlos, the manager of the diner, clarifies.

Shaking my head, I move my hands to my hips. "It's not my fault the cook is slow or people think I should spend more time at their table. I get their orders and serve the food as soon as it's done. Isn't that what I'm supposed to do?"

"You could show some cleavage, be nicer to them." He raises his eyebrows then gives a wink.

"This is a diner, not a dating site, Carlos. Just because Rita and Peggy do that, doesn't mean I have to."

"But Rita and Peggy get more tips, have no complaints, and still get their jobs done."

"So, you are firing me unless I have my boobs hanging out, is that what you're saying?"

"No. I'm firing you because six complaints in one night is five too many."

My hands fly up into the air amid a huff. I rip the tail of the string holding my apron and wad it into a ball on my way into the kitchen.

"Hey, Janie." The dishwasher follows me into a small room.

"What, Simon?" I ask, my voice cracking.

"Don't forget your dinner." He thrusts a box into my hands.

"Thanks."

"He's wrong, you know."

"Huh?"

"He just wants his waitresses to flirt with everyone because it turns him on. If there were complaints against you, he'd be screaming about them to everyone in the kitchen."

"Whatever." Grabbing my bag and the box, I shove the door without a flinch when it bounces off the wall.

Random streetlights provide just enough light to see the sidewalk. Trudging toward home, I mumble with every step. "Carlos hates me. Let him wait on those tables, I don't care. I shouldn't have to show my boobs like they do. We aren't the same."

My toe kicks a rock. Following its journey, I weave toward the wayward rock, kicking it again and again until it disappears down a storm grate. Turning down the alley, I cut through a driveway and make my way up the steps leading to my loft apartment. Unlocking the door, I lift my lips into a smile when the tuxedo cat greets me as the door swings wide. Kicking it shut, I flip the lock with a sigh.

Meow. The black and white feline presses his head along

my leg. Weaving between my shins as I move into the room, he lets out another meow.

"I've got it, Bernie, just wait." Dropping the bag on the counter near the door, I slip off my shoes and drop my apron into the chair. Pulling the Styrofoam container out, I open it and tear off a piece of steak then hold it out to the demanding cat. My lips part and the corners lift as he takes it.

With him occupied, I pull out a plate, knife and fork. Transferring the fish and broccoli from the container, I pop it into the microwave. Cutting up the steak, I slide some onto a small plate. Bernie jumps up on the counter, sits down and waits, bright eyes watching every move. Setting his plate on the floor, I turn to the microwave, tapping a nail while the machine hums.

My eyes drift from the drab walls, old futon sofa covered with a well-loved blanket, and the table someone set out for the trash; the furniture fit into my price range, cheap. The rug clashes with the blanket, but as long as it muffles my footsteps, who cares. It's not like anyone is coming up here to visit.

The ding draws me away from the mishmashed room. Pulling the plate from the machine, my lips turn down a bit before I carry the food to the table and sit down. Bernie, smelling the fish, jumps up on my lap. Turning a circle, he meows.

"No, Bernie, you had your dinner. Get down." Lifting the feline, I set him safely on the floor before turning my attention to the plate. Breaking off a bite of the fish, I pop it into my mouth and chew.

"I have to find a new job. Where do you think I should look? Hmm, Bernie? I guess it needs to be someplace I can get good food for you. Should I try the grocery store?"

The cat watches, his head following my every move while I eat. Pulling a piece of the fish off with my fingers, I offer him a bite.

"Pretty good, huh?" I continue the one-sided conversation.

Taking the dishes, I run some water into the dishpan and drop them in. With a few drops of soap on a sponge, I wash off the plates and silverware, rinse them all using the least amount of water possible, and set them in the drain rack to dry.

I move to the apron, pull out the tips for the night and deposit them in a pile on the table. There isn't any sorting of denominations, all I have are ones. Counting them out, I release a heavy sigh.

"I guess it's not bad, Bernie. We got thirty-five dollars tonight. Damn," my head shakes, "I need to get my last check from Carlos. Remind me, will ya?"

Taking the bills, I move to the cabinet near the sink. Pulling down a can, I open it and drop the money inside. Per routine, I write down the amount and add it to the total on the paper then deposit it on top.

"Well, we've got the rent for another month but need to come up with money for the electric and food."

Bernie remains on the floor, wide-eyed.

My evening routine continues with a shower and flossing and brushing my teeth. Pulling on the old t-shirt I'd won at a ball game several years ago and a pair of shorts, I make my way to the futon. Bernie, on the arm of the makeshift bed, licks his paw and wipes his face.

"Well, Bern, let's get some sleep and hope tomorrow's a better day." I give the fur ball a half hug and brush my lips on the top of his head before turning off the lights and crawling under the cover.