

Accept My Surrender

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eISBN 9781682524046

Editor: Keren Reed

Cover Artist: April Martinez

Published in the United States of America

Loose Id LLC

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San Francisco CA 94117-0549

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Chapter One

"Logan—" Seth whimpered and wriggled his bare ass in a way that was surely meant to be enticing, but Logan wasn't playing. He took this seriously, and he'd already warned Seth once.

He sharpened his voice to a knife's edge. "What's my name?"

Seth's breath caught as he realized his mistake. "*Sir*. I'm sorry, *Sir*."

"You should be sorry." Logan had been prepared to end the spanking he'd been giving Seth in favor of fucking him, but now he'd dole out a punishment instead.

And with something other than his hand, which throbbed, as painful as Seth's reddened ass must be. He reached between Seth's thighs and gave his balls a squeeze while he considered his options, ignoring Seth's whine since it was clearly involuntary.

"Your choice," he decided. Making Seth pick wasn't a kindness. Seth had told him once it made each stroke sting more, knowing he'd asked for it. "Five strokes with my hairbrush, or ten with the paddle."

The paddle was nearby, a classic choice he'd used dozens of times. His hairbrush was a wild card that caught his eye, a spur-of-the-moment option. Logan had never used it for anything but its intended purpose, so he wasn't completely sure of where it ranked as a spanking toy. Maybe it should be ten with the brush, five with the paddle? Sometimes a Dom had to be spontaneous, but he didn't want to screw up.

While he waited for Seth to decide, he scratched his chest. The tattoo around his left nipple was a month old and had healed well, so the itch was in his head more than anything. New ink took some getting used to, his reflection catching him off guard at first. Before the session he'd changed into clothes that allowed him to move freely and

strip quickly, and he'd paused before the mirror for a while, admiring the way the addition blended into the art already decorating his body.

It wasn't vanity. He was appreciating the skill of the artist, not the body Jody had used as a canvas.

Maybe he'd apply some moisturizing cream after the session. Make sure the skin wasn't too dry. Swap soaps. Or—

"I'll take the hairbrush, Sir."

Jolted from his thoughts, Logan took a moment to process Seth's words. "Oh. Yeah. Good choice."

Shit, what was wrong with him, zoning out like that? Seth deserved his full attention during a session. Chiding himself, he reached for the brush.

The brush was clogged with his hair, long dark strands wound around the bristles. It seemed wrong to use it like that, but he couldn't fiddle around cleaning it with Seth waiting, ass up, cock rigid.

Oh, what the hell. He scrubbed the bristle side over Seth's ass and grinned at the surprised, indignant squeal.

"Gonna leave you bruised."

Seth moaned, clearly on board with that. "Yeah. Please, Sir. Something to remember you by. Love being marked."

"Are you saying without them you'd forget me between now and Friday?" Logan didn't wait for Seth to reply. He brought the brush down, ridged wood striking flushed, tender skin, and yeah, these marks weren't like his ink; they were temporary, random, but beautiful too.

For this, he was the artist, and he loved applying each and every stroke.

One of the reasons Seth was a challenge as a sub was that he was more into the pain than the play. It was fine; a different mind-set. At least his tendency to forget

focusing on pleasing and obeying Logan created plenty of opportunities for the punishment he craved, though Logan was sure most of the time it was accidental.

Seth gasped with the next stroke, shoulders hunching. Good. That allowed Logan to make the next one harder. Logan relished the rush of swinging his arm with the right amount of force, the pained whimper that escaped Seth's lips.

"How many is that?" he asked.

"Four, Sir."

He aimed number five for the spot on Seth's ass that was darkest red, knowing it would be the most sensitive. Seth howled when the brush struck him, then dropped his head. He was trembling, sobs escaping him, stifled, soft sounds.

"Now I'm going to fuck you." He let the brush fall to the floor and squeezed some lube onto his fingers, tracing Seth's hole, creating a space of a few seconds for Seth to protest without expecting him to.

"Please." Seth was definitely crying. "Please, Sir, I want you to."

"Doesn't matter if you want me to or not." Logan rolled a condom onto his dick and pressed against the entrance to Seth's body. "I'm going to." He thrust forward, less careful than with some partners, and shut his eyes as the exquisite clench of Seth's ass sent a wave of lust over him.

Dirty talk was wasted on Seth when his ass was the focus of attention, but Logan enjoyed it, so he let himself go. Words poured from him, honing his arousal until it sliced through his control, leaving it shredded. Words that taken out of context would seem cruel, but here, in the shabby bedroom he rented, were his way of complimenting his sub. And sure, they might seem cheesy too, but in his experience, few people were capable of poetry and romance balls-deep in a guy they'd spent the last hour tormenting and spanking.

Gasping now, a familiar tingle intensifying at the base of his spine, he snarled, "That's it, you slut. Take it. Every single fucking inch."

Seth wailed, then shrieked, incoherent now as Logan pounded into him mercilessly. Too loud a wail. Sheila, his elderly landlady, was a sweetheart, and even with her hearing aid turned up high, she didn't hear much, but close to climax Seth's cries were high enough to shatter glass.

Logan paused, balanced on his knees, and grabbed a handful of Seth's curly blond hair, yanking back, then slapping his free hand across Seth's mouth when it was within reach. "Keep it down, or I'll gag you with the dildo I shoved up your ass earlier. The one I need to clean with fucking bleach because you're a dirty little slut with no respect for your Dom."

The threat was empty, and he'd never use a harsh cleaner on a sex toy, but his irritation was real enough. He wasn't squeamish, but he liked his subs to prepare for a session, and that included a douche as well as being in the right mind-set. Seth had arrived whining about the price of gas, chewing on cinnamon gum when he knew Logan hated the smell, and complaining that the room was too cold to go naked. He'd earned each hard, punishing slap, each twist of the clamps attached to his nipples and balls.

He hadn't earned a climax, but too late to forbid it. Seth licked Logan's palm, frantic wet laps followed by a bite, and shot over the towel Logan had spread across the lurid purple bedspread Sheila had bought for him. In her weird and wonderful world purple was the official color of gayness.

"Jesus," Logan muttered, then shifted his grip to Seth's waist and fucked him harder. It took a couple of thrusts before he came too, dizzy with the rush of spunk and the accompanying pleasure.

Seth stayed cooperatively still until he was finished, then melted away from him and down onto the bed, apparently indifferent to the wet spot he lay on. "Mmm. You're so good at wearing me out." He lifted his face, showing off his dreamy smile. "Thanks for the fuck."

They had an agreement that once they'd come, playtime was over. It didn't suit Logan, which was why their relationship was casual and limited, but with no long-term partners on the horizon, it was better than nothing. "No problem." Logan patted Seth's hip—one of the places he wouldn't have a bruise tomorrow—with one hand while disposing of the condom with the other. Then he flopped down onto the bed beside Seth, who rolled toward him.

"Did you have fun?"

"Sure. Did it seem like I didn't?"

Seth shrugged one shoulder. "No. I'm checking. We said we'd keep doing this as long as we were both on board. I'd hate to find out later you were humoring me." He sounded confident that wasn't true. Seth's ego was as resilient as his ass, in Logan's opinion.

"Do I seem like the kind of person who'd go along with something I wasn't enjoying to make someone else happy?" Logan heard what he'd said and lifted an eyebrow at Seth. "Don't answer that."

Grinning, Seth said, "You're fun. I like hanging out with you, but I wouldn't be emotionally devastated if you wanted to move on. Or if you met someone else. Someone serious, I mean."

Logan snorted. "I meet people all the time. Doesn't mean I want to commit until death do us part."

"Same here." Seth yawned without showing the slightest desire to snuggle in closer. "Got any juice? Water? My mouth's bone-dry."

Didn't he always? Drinks were on the table under the window, beside a bowl of trail mix; a soft throw was draped over a chair in case a sub become shivery.

He went for water, not out of a bottle because that was hell on the environment, but tap water he'd chilled in a filter jug. Seth seemed pretty together, so he poured the cool water into a glass, skipping the straw, and took it over to him.

"Thanks." Seth gulped it fast, then held it out for a refill. "More?"

He hated the way Seth switched off after they were done. None of his submissive behavior carried over. Once the immediate afterglow faded, Seth seemed to relish pushing limits he stayed within when they were playing. Tempting to call him on it, but what was the point? Seth would resent it, and it wasn't part of their agreement.

Part of him got a kick out of the aftercare, so he nodded and refilled the glass, then brought the trail mix over to the bed. He took a handful, craving the quick energy boost. He was the Dom, sure, but he needed some TLC too, though the session hadn't been intense. Hard to get in a good frame of mind with his landlady's TV blasting out a daytime soap and in a room decorated mostly in pink because the last person to use it was Sheila's granddaughter. Leanne had moved out of her mom's home after her parents' divorce and stayed with Sheila until she went off to college. Sheila spoke about those two years wistfully. Leanne hadn't kept in touch beyond a Christmas card or the odd phone call. Too busy enjoying life in LA as a hairdresser to the stars. Or so she said. Logan suspected the hairdresser part was accurate and the clientele more down-market.

"So we're good for Friday?" Seth stretched, slopping water over the pillow. He swiped at it, doing nothing to dry it but making a great job of spreading the dampness. "Oops. Never mind, it'll be dry by the time you go to bed."

Or he'd swap it out for the spare he kept on the top shelf of the closet. He hated musty-smelling pillows and took them to the laundromat regularly for a wash and dry in the huge industrial machines. Sheila was happy for him to use her laundry room, but the first time he'd tried to put a pillow into the washing machine, the thing had gotten unbalanced and made a break for freedom, lumbering across the floor and scraping it in the process.

"Friday's fine," he agreed. It wasn't like he had anyone waiting in the wings. He picked what he suspected was a sliver of almond from between his teeth. "What are you doing this weekend?"

"Going hiking with that gay men's meet-up group."

"You don't sound too thrilled about the prospect."

Seth shook his head. "I'm not much of an outdoor person, I guess. Kind of out of my element. But I promised Meg I'd give it a shot after she listened to me complain for hours about how I didn't have a boyfriend."

"Is a boyfriend who drags you up a mountain most weekends better than no boyfriend?" It seemed like a fair question to Logan, but Seth's face fell.

He recovered quickly, though, and countered, "Well, maybe some of them aren't outdoor people either. They can't all be jocks. But for the right guy I'd learn to love hiking boots and sleeping in tents." Seth reached over and ran his fingers over Logan's chest, tracing the design of one of his older tattoos. "I do like a man with definition."

"Mine's from the gym, not from traipsing through the wilderness," Logan pointed out.

"Still hot." Seth continued his exploration of Logan's ink. "Why only on your arms and chest?"

"I like to see them, so my back's out, and my legs are too damn hairy for them to look good there." It was a question he'd answered before, so he replied without thought. He had definite ideas about where they worked on him and where they didn't. He didn't judge anyone else's choice of placement; their body, their business, but he saw his tattoos as a kind of clothing, a layer of protection, and he didn't want them visible unless he chose to share them.

So at certain clubs, he went bare from the waist up, and at work he went with his mood, sometimes taking pleasure in wearing a long-sleeved shirt, buttoned high, hiding all of them, sometimes letting them show in glimpses—his arms, a flash of the ones under his collarbones. Any negative reaction, he met with indifference.

Seth squirmed, reaching back to touch his ass. "Jesus, that hairbrush stung like a bee. Loved it."

"Yeah? Maybe next time I'll put you over my knee and use it properly. Roll over and let me see the marks."

That was an order Seth was eager to obey, if his speed was any indication. He arched his lower back, sticking his ass out for Logan's inspection. Logan touched the reddened skin, observing the places where the marks were darkest, then pressing on them lightly. He smiled when Seth hissed.

"Will I have bruises?" Seth was hopeful, not worried.

"Yeah. Not for long, though. Maybe a week." Which meant he'd be able to see them again on Friday. "I'll try harder next time."

Seth smirked. "Only if you're willing to go for more than five strokes. I can take twice as many."

Logan was sure that was true, and it wasn't that he wouldn't have enjoyed doling them out, but part of him suspected it would take their relationship to a place neither of them wanted it to go. Better to keep it light, a spank and fuck, nothing too emotionally draining. "Could and should are two different things."

"Yeah." Seth sighed and rested his head on his arms. "You want to kick me out?"

"Not until you're ready, but I have a lecture in an hour. Can't be late."

"Guess not." Seth didn't ask what the lecture was about, and Logan didn't offer any details. Kink aside, they didn't have a lot in common. Logan considered himself a political activist, and Seth had never cast a vote in his life, at school or as an adult.

"*No point,*" he'd said dismissively when Logan mentioned the long line at the voting booths. "*People who want to be in charge don't need my help to get there.*"

A tap on the door had them sitting upright. Logan resisted the urge to cover himself with a sheet since the door was locked and Sheila respected his privacy too much to walk in even if it wasn't. "Yeah?" he called. "What is it, Sheila? Do you need help with something?"

He did a variety of odd jobs for her, from humane spider disposal to replacing lightbulbs and opening jars.

"I don't want to interrupt you and your friend, dear, but I need a word with you before you go to college."

"Sure. I'll be with you in five minutes."

She sounded vague, her voice wavering in volume. "Thank you, dear."

He waited for the creak from the last step that told him she was safely downstairs, then slapped Seth's ass, enjoying the jiggle of spanked-hot flesh. "Okay. Time to go."

It didn't take more than a few minutes for Seth to put himself together and get dressed, wincing when he pulled his jeans up past his thighs.

"You gonna live, tiger?" Logan asked.

"Are you kidding? I'm gonna be checking out my bruises in the mirror tomorrow morning and thinking of you." The look Seth gave him was a little too close to hero worship for Logan's comfort. That was the danger with playing Dom to a sub on such a casual basis – the relationship had a tendency to get intense even when you didn't mean it to.

Ugh. He'd have to consider whether continuing this was a good idea. "Well, I'll see you on Friday." Logan finished dressing and glanced quickly in the mirror to make sure his hair wasn't too out of control. "I'll walk you out."

"You don't think I got you in trouble, do you?" Seth stage-whispered when they stepped out into the hallway. "I mean, I didn't think I was *that* loud."

"Okay, one, you were, but two, I've told you before she's practically deaf. So no, I don't think you got me in trouble." Still, if he decided he needed to back off things with Seth, Sheila made a convenient excuse.

After seeing Seth out, Logan headed for the kitchen, knowing a mug of tea would be waiting for him. Sheila's parents had emigrated from Wales before she was born, and she'd been brought up to consider no conversation complete without a hot drink to sip. He'd refused her offer of tea a few times after moving in until he saw how upset it made her to see him sitting without a mug in his hands. It wasn't bad once he'd

acquired a taste for it. She brewed it strong and added milk, no sugar, leaving the inside of the mugs tannin stained. God alone knew what the tea had done to her insides over the years.

"There you are." She patted her white, fluffy hair into place, the gesture automatic, a faded attempt at flirtation. She'd been a minx in her day, or so she'd told him. He believed her. Her mind got lost in the past sometimes, but as she put it, she knew her arse from her elbow, a saying she used with a dimple showing, as if she thought she was being naughty.

"Did we disturb you?" If she had heard more than he intended, he'd make that the last session here. It would be awkward, but he'd manage. No way was he upsetting or embarrassing her.

"What? No, of course not. I like it when your friends visit, you know that. Bit of life around the place."

He took a seat across from her and helped himself to a cookie from the plate she'd set out. Store-bought cookies, though she'd shown him her grandmother's recipe book, the pages marked with greasy fingerprints, crumbs deep in the creases. Lard featured a *lot*. Listening to her muse over her favorite cakes had left him with an urge for a Victoria sponge without knowing what it was.

"You wanted a word with me?" Sometimes she forgot between one breath and the next, and it bothered her when she realized, so he kept his tone light.

Without preamble, she launched into what she had to say. "Well, this is awkward, but you know my son, Dylan, has been pressuring me to move down to Florida with him, and as it turns out, he contacted a realtor on my behalf, dipping his toes in the water, so to speak."

Logan saw where this was headed, and he didn't like it.

"I haven't enjoyed the winters here since I was a child, and the thought of the sunshine..." Sheila gazed wistfully at a calendar on the wall showing a tropical beach scene. "In any case, we decided to list the house, a bit of an experiment as it were. To

see if there was any interest. I didn't mention it to you because..." She frowned as if her train of thought had gone somewhere she didn't want it to. "What was I saying, dear?"

Dismay filling him, he prompted her automatically. "You listed the house."

"That's right, I did." She nodded her approval, as if he'd been clever. "The realtor insisted it would sell in the blink of an eye, with the way the market's been, and what do you know if she wasn't right. We had four offers in twenty-four hours—she never had time to set a sign out front or organize an open house—and, well, one of them was too good to pass up. Thirty thousand dollars over the asking price, can you imagine?"

"You sold the house," Logan said flatly. The way she'd talked about it, he'd thought he'd have a few months at least before it went on the market, plenty of time to find another place to live.

"Now, don't be upset." Sheila's hands twisted on the mug she held, and Logan shoved another cookie into his mouth to keep himself quiet. She deserved a chance to explain as much as she deserved to sell her own house. "It happened so fast! If I'd thought for a minute it would sell, I'd have told you about it, of course."

Logan cut through to the meat of the matter. "How long until I have to be out?"

"Thirty days. I know, I know, it's so soon. I wish I'd been able to give you more notice, but the buyer sold his house, and these things are so complicated. Don't worry—I'm going to return this month's rent and your security deposit immediately, and I'd like to offer you two thousand dollars to help make getting settled in a new apartment a bit less stressful. If you think that's enough?" Her eyes were worried.

"What? No! I mean, yes, it's enough, but it's not— You don't have to do that. I mean it." He took her hand, giving it a reassuring squeeze, then hiding a wince. His palm throbbed from spanking Seth. "You're a sweetheart, but I'll be fine. I'll miss you, though."

"I want to do it. You've been so good to me. I know I'm always asking you to do jobs for me, and you're so patient when I forget where I put things."

Choosing his words, well aware Dylan mistrusted him, seeing his tattoos and piercings as the outward sign of inward degeneracy, Logan said, "I do that because I want to. Because we're friends. The rent and the deposit, fine, but that's it. If you want to make me happy, keep in touch, okay?"

Tears formed in her eyes, then spilled down over cheeks soft with age. She wiped them away with a tissue pulled out of the sleeve of her cardigan. "I'll miss you too. Miss this town. But oh, I want to be where it's warm. By the ocean. Dylan says I can see it from my bedroom. Imagine that!"

"Sounds idyllic." He caught sight of the clock by the door and groaned. "I'm going to be late for my lecture if I don't go. Can we pick this up later? And don't worry. Anything you need – packing, forms to fill out, whatever – I'm here if you need me."

"Goodness me, yes, off you go." She smiled at him. "Can't start without you, though, can they?"

He grinned, picturing the Gender and Justice first-year class, all eagerness to learn and take that knowledge out into the world. "Knowing my students, they probably could and would. Now give me a hug, okay? I'll miss those as well."

Logan didn't let himself think about how fucked he was until he pulled out of the driveway onto the street. It was wide, with plenty of room for on-street parking, and far enough from campus that most of the people who lived there weren't students. On particularly nice days in early fall and late spring, he'd sometimes walk to college for the exercise, but he didn't have time for it today even if it would have given him an opportunity to figure out where the hell he'd live.

He'd moved in with Sheila after breaking up with his boyfriend. They'd been sharing an apartment two streets away from Eli's job at a print shop, and it seemed unfair to ask him to move when it was so conveniently located for him. Plus the breakup had been Logan's idea, mostly. One of his students had been friends with Sheila's granddaughter and hooked him up with her. At the time, he'd believed the universe was smiling down on him, compensation for his ruined relationship with Eli.

Plenty of his friends would be happy to let him crash on their couches for a couple of nights, and he had the money for hotel rooms, but those were short-term solutions, and he needed a more stable situation. For the first time in years he wished his family still lived nearby. His parents were in California now, though he'd grown up here in town, the Atlantic coast an hour away, the town surrounded by rolling hills and farmland.

Living with Sheila had been the perfect compromise, saving him from the complications of needing to set up utilities and deal with buying new furniture. Maybe he'd find something similar if he asked around.

The noticeboard outside the office seemed the ideal place to start asking. He borrowed a pen and a card from Alan, who worked the reception desk with chilly efficiency. Alan handed them over with one hand, reaching for the phone with the other. Logan mouthed a thank-you, then drafted a quick plea in bright-green marker.

WANTED! URGENT! Lecturer in need of furnished rental appt/room in private house. Willing to share utility bills and help out with chores.

He added his contact details in pen when the marker ran dry on him, and attached the note to the board using four pushpins.

He'd do more toward solving his problem later. Time to do his job.

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Want to know what happens next?

<http://www.loose-id.com/accept-my-surrender.html>