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# WHEN THE GAVEL FALLS

Masters of the Castle Box Set

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Blushing Books

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Tabitha Black, Maren Smith, Darling Adams, Abbie Adams  
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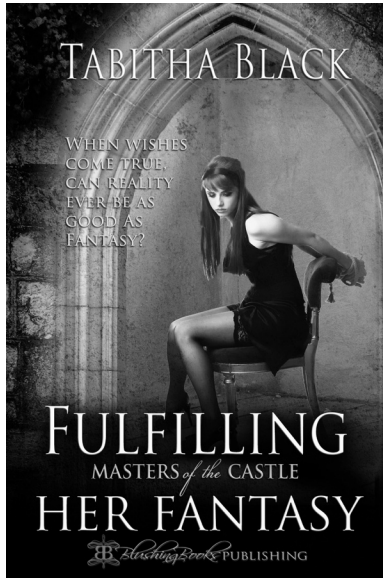
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# Fulfilling Her Fantasy

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TABITHA BLACK



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## Chapter 1

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"**T**hank you all for coming, and for taking the time to attend this meeting." Master Marshall smiled, which instantly softened his icy blue gaze. "I have an announcement to make."

He glanced around the vast chamber in which, in the evenings, the nightly Supper and Shows were held. Now, at midday, it was filled with Castle staff... all the people who helped make this the best BDSM resort possible... dungeon monitors, all the permanent kitchen bitches, Little Maids, butlers, stable hands, Nannies, governesses, Salon and Wardrobe attendants that mingled in so seamlessly amongst the guests that no one would know they weren't guests themselves. They gazed at him; a sea of respectful, expectant faces.

"As most—if not all—of you no doubt know, we have been meaning to do something to honor our dearly departed Founding Master Don's memory. Something of which he would have approved; and something which would have tickled him."

Marshall took a deep breath, waiting for the stab of grief he still felt when thinking about his friend to pass. Glancing across the vast chamber, he caught sight of Kaylee, an expression of



love and encouragement in her soft gray eyes. With renewed energy, he continued. "After much ribald discussion, we've decided to hold a charity auction in Don's name, right here at the Castle. Submissives will be able to put themselves up for sale, and Dominants can purchase them. We want this to coincide with the New Year's Eve celebrations, so the event will take place on the thirtieth of December."

At the collective gasp which rippled around his team, he held up his hands. "I know that's just a few short weeks away, but we've already set up ads on Fetlife and in a few other places online, and we figured we'd have a much larger attendance if we schedule it for a holiday period. Winter is normally our quietest season, so I have no doubt that if we all work hard, we can make this a roaring success. I know I can count on you to give this your all. The auction period will be from Tuesday evening, when the actual purchasing takes place, until ten o'clock Friday morning. There should be no shortage of Dominants who are keen to bid generously in order to spend three whole nights with the submissive of their choice. And, after some deliberation, we have decided to match the bids—that is, for every dollar spent at the auction, the Castle, too, will donate one dollar. This should raise a tidy sum for charity in our beloved Don's name."

A spontaneous round of applause broke out, and Marshall gave them another smile before raising his hands to shush everyone once more. "Anyone here is welcome to take part. Submissives will fill in forms listing their likes and dislikes and, of course, their hard limits, which *will* be respected. As usual, sexual favors will not be included automatically... that will be left for the participants to decide. Are there any questions?"

Ethan, one of the dungeon monitors, raised his hand. "How much will it cost?"

"Nothing," Marshall raised an eyebrow, and grinned, "for the submissives. The Dominants will pay standard Castle rates just as

they would for any other three night stay—not including the amount they end up spending at the auction."

One of the governesses asked whether it was to be a closed event, or whether there would be other guests staying as per usual.

"No, this will not be a closed event. I can't say for sure yet how many submissives will want to take part, but I think the Castle is large enough to accommodate both regular guests and auction participants."

"I've always fantasized about being bought by a handsome man who then goes on to do whatever he wants to me," Selena piped up. "Can I take part?"

There was a ripple of laughter. Marshall fixed his gaze on her. "You'll have to take that up with Master Bill, sweetheart."

Blonde curls bouncing, Selena pouted. "That's a 'no', then. Fooie."

"I know what I'm going to do to you in a minute, just for asking that question," Bill reached over and tugged her hair, to more laughter.

"What if we have a submissive on stage and no-one bids for them?" Jackson was leaning against the far wall, huge arms folded across his chest. "That would be awkward."

"We've already considered that possibility," Marshall answered him. "There will be contingencies in place in the highly unlikely event of that happening." Then, when no more questions seemed to be forthcoming, "I hired each and every one of you because you share my passion for this place. You are all excellent at what you do, and the Castle would not be the top BDSM resort it has become if not for your dedication and hard work. I realize that I'm asking you to work over what is essentially the most important holiday period in our calendar, but that's just the way it is when you're in the hospitality industry. Still, I would like to extend my gratitude and announce that everyone who

works through the last two weeks of December will be receiving an extra little holiday bonus. Just to show my appreciation."

"Will there be fireworks?" Selena's hand shot up even as she spoke again, to renewed ripples of laughter.

"There most certainly will," Marshall replied, evenly. "And Bill, I'll have a signed gag permit waiting for you in my office, just in case you'd like a moment's peace."

Selena's husband nodded and grinned, as the vivacious blonde crossed her arms with another dramatic pout, and more chuckles echoed off the stone walls of the chamber.

"I've taken up more than enough of your time, everyone, so I'll let you get back to work. Please keep an eye on the staff message boards for updates about this event as and when they are decided. Thank you for coming."

As everyone began to shuffle out, Marshall ran his fingers through his pale blond hair and sighed.

"This is a great way to honor Don." Kaylee slipped her hand into his and kissed his broad shoulder. "He would have adored the idea."

Marshall pulled his wife into his arms. "I miss him," he groaned.

"We all do, my love," Kaylee whispered. "But if anyone can take an idea like this and turn it into a roaring success, it's you. And you know I'm here for you every step of the way."

Burying his lips in her neck, the Master of the Masters inhaled her sweet scent and held her for a moment. "I know," he said at last. "I love you."

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"WOULD YOU DO IT?" Ellen said, wickedly. "I think it's such a hot idea!" Pouring more oil into the palm of her hand, she began to rub it across her friend's shoulders, soothing the tight muscles.

"I don't think I'll get a chance." Janice closed her eyes and

sighed. "Bound to be the busiest time for us Wardrobe attendants. Oh, this is great."

"You're so tense. What gives?"

"I don't know. I guess December always makes you feel lonely when you're single. At least, it does me. Ouch!" She squealed as Ellen applied additional pressure to a particularly vicious knot on her right shoulder.

"Don't be such a baby. You can take far worse." Ellen giggled. "I've watched you."

"Ugh, don't remind me." Janice buried her face in her arms to hide her blushes. "I had no idea we'd managed to draw such a large audience until I turned around and saw all those people ogling my bare butt."

"Your crimson bare butt," her friend corrected her. "You should know better than to cheek a Dominant—especially in public. Fancy telling him he shouldn't wear tight hose."

"I was only being honest. He had scrawny legs! As a Wardrobe attendant, it's my job to make everybody look good. Just like it's your job here at the Salon. Except you make them feel good as well. If you keep doing that, I'm gonna start purring."

"Feel free," Ellen said, rubbing her knuckles up and down Janice's spine. "Anyway, that entire incident was ages ago. I'm sure everyone's forgotten it by now."

"I haven't."

"Me either. I heard your shrieks from across the way and came running, only to be greeted by the sight of that geriatric applying a small wooden paddle to your bouncing butt until your ass was as red as your face!"

"He was pretty strong for such a wiry, slender man. I was surprised. I guess looks can be deceiving," Janice said, with a shudder. "But as you said, that was ages ago. I just can't believe that was the last form of play I've had. Nothing since then."

"Really?" Ellen sounded horrified. "Why don't you just do something to get yourself into trouble, like the rest of us?"

Brown curls bouncing, Janice shook her head. "That's just it. I want play, not punishment. There is a difference. Well, for me there is, anyway. I want to be teased and tormented by a gorgeously dominant alpha male who pushes me to my limits but doesn't break me—God, I just want a good, hard play with someone seriously sexy."

"Honey, we're at the Castle. This place is crawling with handsome alpha males; many of whom you count as close friends. Have you considered just asking someone? Master Alan? The twins? Master Grimsley? Master Collins? Master Davis? If you like the smell of hay, there's Master Brody." Ellen paused. "Or, if you prefer a woman, there's Mistress Hardwick, Mistress Casey... shit, just go into the kitchen and get under Cook Connie's feet—"

"Okay, okay, you can stop listing everyone who works here," Janice said, smiling into her forearms. "I've known them for at least as long as you have."

"Which begs the question, how come this lovely body of yours," Ellen gave her friend's towel-clad buttock a playful pat, "hasn't been spanked, paddled, caned or brought to any other extremes of pleasure and pain in so long? You get days off, I know you do. You're not one of the dowdy maids."

Janice suppressed a sigh. "Because, my dear inquisitive friend, I'm scared to ask for what I really want. Now can we please drop the subject and get back to what is supposed to be your early Christmas present to me: a nice, *relaxing* massage?"

"Fine," Ellen muttered, digging her fingertips so hard into Janice's lower back that she reared up with a squeal. "But we're going to get some coffee after this, and then you're going to tell me. Or..." she lowered her voice menacingly, "I'm gonna find a way to *make* you."

"RIGHT FOLKS, now that it's just us, I'd like to elaborate on our contingency plan in the event that we actually do end up with a submissive on stage for whom no-one is bidding," Marshall said, scanning the room to make sure all the Masters were present around their private dining room table. "Wait, where's Dominick?"

"Here," Dominick said, as he sauntered in. His thick, spiky dark hair was dripping wet.

"Is it raining, oh Master Gaoler?" Travis said, with a grin.

"Gym," was all Dominick said by way of explanation. Finding an empty chair near the door, he slid into it and leaned back, folding his arms.

"Sometimes I think you spend more time there than you do at work," Travis continued.

Dominick raised an eyebrow. "Unlike some people, I take my job very seriously, actually. I merely prefer to keep *all* my muscles in shape." He smirked. "Not just my pelvic ones."

As everyone around the table chuckled, Master Marshall cut in before Travis could respond. "Okay, okay guys. As I was saying... we need to make sure that none of the brave boys and girls who go up on that stage to be auctioned end up feeling humiliated. No sub left behind. Which is why I need volunteers. Any of you who aren't actually going to be participating will be expected to step in and bid for a slave in the highly unlikely event that no-one else does. I need at least a few of you to be 'plants'—not to drive the bids up, mind, just to bid in an emergency."

"Happy to," Dominick said.

"Sara's not due to give birth until around mid-January, anyway, so I'll do whatever's necessary," Jackson said. "So don't you dare decide to make an early appearance, little one," he added, rubbing his wife's protruding belly.

Sara sighed. "Oh God, I hope you haven't jinxed it. What

with my sister coming for New Year's, and now this, the baby's bound to come early."

"Only if it's as stubbornly determined to be as naughty as its mother," Jackson said, patting her cheek. "The list of demerits you've accrued over the last couple of months is astonishing. You're gonna be one sorry little girl once this child has arrived and you've recovered from giving birth."

Marshall looked at the others. "Is there anyone here who's considering actually taking part in this auction for real?"

The Dominants with partners all shook their heads, as did most of the others. "Do we have a list of participants yet?" Master Alan asked idly, the grim set to his jaw belying his casual tone.

"A few," Marshall told him. "No doubt it will be grow over the next few days. Why?"

"No reason." Alan's dark, exotic features were unreadable.

"I must admit, I do like the idea of buying a pretty little thing to torment and tease the way *I* want to for a couple of days," Dominick growled.

"How exactly is that different to what you do on a daily basis?" Trevor countered.

"Simple. Money always changes things. A real s-type would have an extremely hard time saying 'no' when she knows the Top has paid for what he's doing to her. Especially if it's a decent amount of cash. At the very least, she'd stop and think hard before protesting... it's the ideal example of consensual non-consent."

"You have a point there," Trevor was forced to concede. "You'd have to make sure you got a girl with very few limits though, to make it really worth your while."

Dominick turned to Marshall. "Is there any way we'll be able to find out limits ahead of time?"

"The current plan is to hand out some sort of program at the door, along with a small gift; maybe a commemorative paddle or

something," the blond Master replied. "The pamphlet will list the participating submissives—by their pseudonyms, of course—their number in the line-up, and their hard limits. The full file will only be given to the winning bidder when he or she makes payment."

"Fair enough." Dominick sighed. "I'll agree to be a plant, then." Leaning back in his chair, he folded his hands behind his head.

It had been a quiet few weeks for him, and he was growing restless. Dominick was the Dungeon Master, the Master Gaoler, the man renowned for making women—and some men—run screaming from his dark, menacing chambers. Often he was asked to do just that... threaten excruciating and severe punishments to recalcitrant slaves, who bolted back to their Masters and Mistresses before he'd even raised his notorious bullwhip, promising to be on their best behavior if only they didn't have to submit to the burly, terrifying figure in the dungeon. He enjoyed it; and it wasn't difficult to act the part, for he was a deep, dark sexual sadist at heart. The only problem was that it was rare that he actually got to follow through. Making threats was like foreplay, he mused. *And weeks and weeks of foreplay is frustrating as all hell if you don't get your rocks off at some point afterward.* He was so deep in thought it was a moment before he realized someone was talking to him.

"Sorry, I was miles away. Yes?" Dominick turned to the new in-staff Masters, Eric and Reeve. They were still in training; Marshall was anal about making sure his Dominant staff had learned all they could about all aspects of BDSM before they were actually allowed to play with real guests. A lot of that learning was done hands-on, with the established Masters guiding, teaching and testing the newbies.

"Breath play," Eric said. "We've done the class but we need more practice sessions. We were wondering whether you had any free time."



"It's a tricky one," Dominick mused. "Lots of people are terrified of it. I guess you could always practice on each other. I'd be happy to supervise."

Eric and Reeve exchanged nervous glances. "But... we're Tops!" Reeve said, incredulously.

"We're men!" Eric added.

Everyone else in the room chuckled. Dominick merely raised an eyebrow. "So?"

"So... I thought we'd practice on girls."

"You're not allowed to practice on guests, are you?" Without waiting for a response, Dominick continued. "So unless any of these lovely Ladies present would like to volunteer... it's each other or nothing."

Hope flaring in their eyes, Eric and Reeve glanced at Kaylee, Sara, Chelsea, Hannah, Sinclair and Selena in turn. As one, the girls shook their heads, to the delighted amusement of the other Masters sitting around the table.

"Besides," Dominick said, reaching out to pour himself a glass of water, "the best way to learn anything is by experience. You both have necks and lungs, don't you? We've all tried things out on each other—or ourselves. How could I possibly claim to be an authority on the bullwhip if I didn't know, first-hand, what it feels like? He," he pointed at Trevor, "likes to set girls on fire. You think he's never tried it on himself?"

"Actually, he tried it on me," Travis said, grinning. "Took all the hair off my arm. Much easier on freshly waxed skin." He wrinkled his nose. "Smells better, too."

Ignoring the bellows of laughter, Dominick nodded. "I think you'll find," he once again addressed the two newest Masters, "that Marshall here will never let you loose amongst the guests unless you've experienced what being on the receiving end of most things we do feels like."

"Correct," Marshall said, his pale blue eyes twinkling with amusement.

"So come see me at four this afternoon, and I'll spend an hour or so watching you both strangle each other."

"Oh," Selena gasped, wiping the mirth from her eyes, "I would love to see that. May I, please, Sir?" she asked, turning to Bill.

"No!" Eric and Reeve said in unison.

"Christ," Selena went on, still giggling, "It looks like we now have two sets of twins!"

Eric and Reeve both glared at her. "We're not related," they said, in identical offended tones, to more shrieks of laughter.

"All right, bugger off you lot, we have a Castle to run," Marshall said, lightly. "You know where I am if you need me."

As Dominick drained his water and got up from the table, he couldn't repress a sudden surge of hope that today would be the day where a pretty little painlut came barging into the dungeon, threw herself at his feet and begged him to make her suffer in all the ways he enjoyed the most. Alas, he was well aware of how unlikely that was. Instead he would be doing what he usually did... supervising guests' scenes, teaching people how to exert control and deliver pain safely, being held up as the Bogeyman for naughty slaves—and now, watching two ex-soldiers choke each other. *Don't be so fucking ungrateful*, he told himself sternly. *You love this place and you love your job. Even if you don't get to play out your own twisted fantasies all the time, this is a million times better than any other place you've ever worked.* At the memory of his last desk job, he suppressed a shudder and, squaring his shoulders, set off back to his room to get changed into his dungeon attire.