



Burning  
Down  
the  
House.

A JAMISON & NOAH VALENTINE'S DAY SHORT

L.D. BLAKELEY

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To *my* funny Valentine. I love you, Alex ♥

“Hold on! Hold on! Hold on!” Noah Hawkins grabbed at his cellphone with oven-mitted hands, fumbling it to the floor in a move worthy of instant replay and colour commentary. Breathing a sigh of relief that the screen was still intact, he pulled one hand free from its mitt, and managed to answer before the ringing stopped. “Hey babe, you on your way over?”

“Should be there in ten,” came the reply. Jamison’s voice in his ear had a way of turning Noah’s knees to Jell-O, even over the phone.

“Let yourself in when you get here, lover.” It was their first Valentine’s Day together and even though he’d never really bothered celebrating before, Noah wanted to make it a night to remember for Jamison. He’d given Jamison strict instructions that he was to head straight over after he finished work.

“Do we really have the place to ourselves?” Jamison had griped about the day being a made-up Hallmark Holiday, but Noah could hear the excitement in his voice.

“Damn skippy we do,” Noah mock-growled. He had treated Abi and Julia to an all-expenses paid overnight at a hotel spa. A Valentine’s Day Girls Night, he’d called it. A No-Holds-Barred Fuckfest, his sister had teased. Didn’t stop her from accepting the gift, though. Whatever. It worked.

He and Jamison had been exclusive, hot and heavy since they’d been brought together by circumstance and Christmas retail hell. And while they’d yet to discuss anything with regard to co-habitation, Noah did yearn for a place with no distractions. There was certainly nothing keeping him from moving out of his sister’s spare room; the sale of his condo had left him with more than enough for a down payment. More often than not, he and Jamison spent their nights together at Jamison’s apartment anyway. But tonight Noah wanted to be able to spoil Jamison on his own terms. So he did what any good boyfriend would do and resorted to bribery to properly set the scene.

He’d been fussing for hours, making sure everything was just right. Mood music: check. Romantic table setting: check. Red wine breathing: check. Dinner for two: check. Sister's Pomeranian in a corner, happily distracted with a chew toy: check.

It wasn’t fancy, but his Spaghetti Bolognese had always wowed in the past. Granted, he usually made it for his sister and niece and family was obligated to say nice things, but still. He knew good pasta. And his fit the bill. He’d even gone so far as to follow a YouTube tutorial for heart-shaped mint meringue cookies—and they’d turned out delicious. All that was left was to light the candles and pop his garlic bread into the oven. He didn’t give a damn what anyone said; pasta was meant to be eaten alongside carby, garlicky goodness, bad breath be damned. Besides, if they both ate it, they cancelled each other out. Right?



There was no way Jamison was going to let their first Valentine’s Day go without marking the occasion. He knew Noah was up to something. And despite his best efforts, he was unable to glean a single detail. Even Abi was keeping quiet, which was so not like her. Whatever Noah was up to, he wanted to be prepared. So he knocked off work a bit earlier than usual to grab a quick shower and run an errand of his own before heading over.

Juggling an overnight bag and a bouquet the size of his head, Jamison hit the lock button on his key fob and maneuvered up the slightly icy driveway unscathed.

“Hi, Mrs. Vargas.” He waved as he spotted the elderly lady next door peeking out her front window as he approached the house. Stealthy she was not.

Out of habit, he knocked before letting himself in. Music was coming from the dining room and

the scent of herbs and tomato wafted out, making his stomach growl. The sight greeting him as he made his way into the kitchen made his mouth water.

“Delicious.” Jamison’s could hear the hungry rumble in his voice. It elicited a chuckle from Noah who was bent at the waist tending to the oven. Perfectly tailored trousers pulled snug across his backside and he flashed a saucy wink over one shoulder as he slowly shimmied to standing.

“I bet you say that to all the boys.” He grinned, wiping his hands across the front of his apron. An apron with the not-so-subtle suggestion to Kiss the Cook embroidered precisely at crotch level.

“Only the ones who—what are you wearing?” Jamison laughed, finally noticing the fine print. Noah had no shame. It was one of the things that he loved most about the man.

“You like?” Noah gyrated his hips like an old school burlesque dancer and waggled his eyebrows.

“Well it’s no elf costume, but it certainly has its charm.” With one hand still behind his back, Jamison grabbed Noah by one hip and planted a sweet, promise-filled kiss on his lips.

“I could go change if you like?” Noah deadpanned.

Jamison grinned. “Maybe later. Right now, you need to put these—” he deftly presented the bouquet, hoping it wasn’t too cheesy a gesture “—in some water.”

Noah stepped back, neither responding nor taking the roses from Jamison. Instead he covered his mouth with one hand and stared in silence.

“Too cliché?” Fuck. He knew he was out of his element with the whole *romantic gesture* thing. But flowers couldn’t be that bad, could they?

“Too perfect,” Noah finally answered, his voice barely a whisper. And as he took the proffered gift, added, “Nobody’s ever given me flowers before.”

“Oh thank God.” Jamison let out a huge sigh of relief before realizing what he’d just said.

“What?!” Noah’s voice was back at full volume.

“I mean—” Jamison couldn’t help laughing “—not thank God that nobody’s ever given you flowers. Obviously. Thank God you like them. I thought I’d fucked up. I’m no good at romance.”

“Says you.” Noah found a vase and began filling it with water. “These are absolutely perfect.” He led Jamison through to the dining room and set the vase on the table next to the opened bottle of Merlot. “See? Perfect.”

Jamison’s eyes widened as he took in the scene Noah had orchestrated. Seductive music, dimmed lights, wine and a beautifully set table; the room could easily have doubled as a Lifetime romance-of-the-week film set. “Holy shit, Noah. You did all this for me?”

“Actually, I have date coming over in about an hour,” Noah teased. “But I mean, it is Valentine’s Day, so I guess I could have a glass of wine with you in the meantime. You brought these beautiful flowers, after all.”

Jamison closed the space between them in two steps, taking Noah in his arms. “You really are such a brat,” he said, kissing Noah thoroughly.

“I like to keep you on your toes,” Noah murmured against Jamison’s mouth. “Or your knees. Whatever works.” He gently nipped at Jamison’s bottom lip before capturing his mouth in a scorching kiss.

Jamison lost himself in Noah’s taste. He never got tired of exploring the sweet, warm confines of his lover’s mouth, each delicate flicker of their dancing tongues more tantalizing than the last. A moan escaped him as he felt Noah’s hands slide slowly up his biceps to his shoulders. Working the shirt from the top of Noah’s trousers, Jamison slowly trailed his fingers through the sparse trail of hair he knew led to far greater delights.

“What time did you say your date was getting here?” His breath was already laboured. Jesus, but Noah turned him on.

“We have a bit of time. Why?” Noah continued the tease. “What’d you have in mind?”

“Fewer clothes. And a lot more lube.” In one deft move, he hoisted Noah over his shoulder.

“Well, damn,” Noah drawled. Jamison felt hands grasp firmly at his ass as Noah braced himself. “I take back every bitter, bitchy thing I ever said about Valentine’s Day.”



Noah was in heaven as Jamison manhandled him into the bedroom. Not bothering with the door or the lights, Jamison crossed the room and tossed Noah into the centre of the bed. Propping himself up on his elbows, Noah grinned slyly as Jamison quickly shed his clothing, leaving everything in a heap on the floor.

Noah’s eyes glimmered in delight. His dick stood in full salute to Jamison’s he-man-like performance. Unashamedly naked, Jamison strode to the edge of the bed. His cock jutted out proudly, hard and already glistening at the tip.

“Fuck me,” Noah whispered, more to himself than anything.

“That is the plan.” Jamison grabbed him by the ankles and pulled him forward. Noah sat up, attempting to scramble out of his clothes only to be thwarted by a damn apron. The knot at his waist was stubborn and he cursed his bright idea to wear the stupid thing in the first place. *Last fucking time I go for cute.*

“Oh, for the love of—” His frustrated tirade was cut short as Jamison kissed him soundly, reaching behind his neck to unsnap the novelty garment. The tie at his waist was quickly unknotted and Noah wriggled out of the rest of his clothes, leaving him blissfully naked. “Much better,” he drawled, scooting closer to the edge of the bed and grabbing Jamison by the hips. “Here I was worried that I hadn’t made any appetizers to go with dinner.”

In one smooth motion, Noah sucked the spongy head of Jamison’s dick into his mouth, twirling the tip of his tongue along the sensitive ridge. With his hands still guiding Jamison’s hips, Noah pulled him closer as he slowly swallowed him down, inch by inch.

Jamison managed to moan out an unsteady, “Noah.”

Noah built a steady rhythm, carefully covering his teeth with his lips and adding a hand to the mixture. Jamison’s moans were like music, spurring him on. A quick flick of his wrist caused an involuntary jerk of Jamison’s hips and Noah chuckled.

“This isn’t gonna last long if you keep that up.” Jamison’s voice was barely above a whisper.

Noah hummed then let Jamison slip from his lips. “’s only the appetizer, babe. It’s not supposed to.” He smiled lasciviously. “But far be it for me to thwart whatever plans you had.”

Flipping over and crawling on all fours to the middle of the bed, he pulled a strip of condoms and bottle of lube from under one pillow, then smiled back at Jamison. “What sort of plans did you have, exactly?”

“Don’t move.” Jamison’s voice was firm, pinning Noah in place. Inching forward on his knees, Jamison palmed Noah’s ass gently with both hands. “Perfect,” he murmured before thwacking a bright, red hand print across one cheek.

Noah yelped. “Fuck!” But he didn’t move.

He heard the snick of the lube being opened and shivered in anticipation. Jamison’s strong, blunt fingers were at his hole in an instant, the gel still cool to his heated skin. This was going to be quick,



hard and dirty; it was just the pre-game show, after all. And they had all night. Slow and romantic was for later.

“I’m ready.” Noah thrust his ass back onto Jamison’s fingers. “Please, Jamison.”

Fingers were quickly replaced by something much larger and Noah wriggled his hips as Jamison breached him. He palmed his own aching dick and thrust back again, impatient and needy.

“Jesus, Noah,” Jamison hissed. With one forceful thrust he was balls deep, precisely where Noah wanted him.

Jamison’s fingers digging into Noah’s hips were bound to leave marks. The thought made Noah light headed but it didn’t stop him from meeting each cant of Jamison’s hips with a counter-thrust of his own.

Jamison was right, this was fast and furious ... and wasn’t going to last long at all. Noah could already feel his orgasm start to build and, when Jamison reached around his hip to take his heavy cock in hand, he knew he was done.

“Come with me,” Noah panted.

Placing one foot flat on the bed, Jamison altered his angle slightly to slide across that magical bundle of nerves, forcing an indelicate shout from Noah. “Holy shit, Jamison.” Noah babbled and grunted as Jamison fucked into him hard and fast. Grasping the bedding for purchase, Noah cried out and came hard as Jamison continued to pummel him from behind.

Mere moments later, Noah felt Jamison’s steady rhythm falter. And with a bellow that made Noah happy he’d bribed his sister to leave for the night, Jamison thrust one last time and Noah swore he could hear bells.

*What the fuck.*

No, not bells...



“What the fuck—” Jamison was off the bed like a shot. “Is that the smoke detector?”

“Oh shit—my garlic bread!” Noah hopped from the bed in a panic and ran for the kitchen. “The alarm’s there in the hallway by the door,” he yelled.

“On it,” Jamison answered, running from the bedroom. The smoke alarms were hard-wired, so hitting the reset button on one did the trick for the whole house. He could hear Noah banging around, frantically tossing dishes into the sink and decided now might not be the best time to be running around the house naked.

He had just slipped into his boxers and was about to grab clothes for Noah, too, when there was a thunderous knocking on the door followed by several deep, bellowing voices, “Toronto Fire Department!”

Oh shit.

In a flash, he grabbed for the first garment within reach and sped toward the kitchen. Noah had opened several windows in a desperate attempt to get the smoke to dissipate and was headed to the door, seemingly forgetting his current state of undress.

“Noah—catch!”

With a grateful eyeroll, Noah made quick work of covering himself and answered the door—to three strapping young men in turnout gear.

“Evening,” one of the men stated. “I’m Lieutenant Walker. We’ve had reports of a fire at this address.”

“Noah Hawkins.” Noah nodded politely.

Jamison had to hand it to him, not much ruffled his lover’s feathers—including answering the door half naked to a team of firefighters.

“The smoke detector isn’t connected to anything—I mean, how did you...” Noah sounded perplexed.

Shrugging into his shirt, Jamison joined him at the door, wondering the same thing himself.

“Your neighbour,” the second man answered. “A Mrs....” He paused, consulting his field notebook. “Vargas?”

“Busybody,” Noah muttered.

“Call came in and said she heard the smoke alarm next door but that she thought her neighbour was away for the night.”

“My sister is away. Clearly I’m not.” Noah gestured at himself, hip cocked and Kiss The Cook proudly emblazoned across his groin. “Nor is my boyfriend.”

“Didn’t you hear the smoke alarm?” Lieutenant Walker’s face was stoic, but Jamison could have sworn he heard a snicker from one of the other firefighters. “Your neighbour seemed pretty concerned. Said she thought she saw someone home earlier and that the alarm had been going off for at least ten minutes before she called.”

Oh. Gawd. Jamison could feel his face burning up. Of course they didn’t hear it.

“Oh. Um.” Noah struggled to answer with a straight face. “No we didn’t hear it. We were... I made dinner and, um, my garlic bread.” Noah gestured toward the kitchen, giving a glorious full-moon view to several of Toronto’s first responders.

“We’re really sorry,” Jamison jumped in. “It was just a failed attempt at a romantic dinner.”

“You might want to pay more attention to that smoke alarm,” Lieutenant Walker said with a grin. “Especially with such helpful neighbours.”

“We will. And again, we’re so sorry.” Jamison wanted to crawl into the floor.

“Well since everything’s fine here—other than your garlic bread, that is.” The twinkle in Lieutenant Walker’s eye didn’t go unnoticed. “And the call obviously wasn’t malicious, I guess we can be on our way.”

“Happy Valentine’s Day, boys,” one of the other firefighters called out. “Try not to burn the place down.”

Jamison bolted the door behind the firefighters and huffed out a laugh. “I don’t know about you but I sure could use a glass of that wine.”

Noah had already poured two glasses. “I’m really sorry I ruined dinner,” he said, dismay obvious in his face.

“Are you kidding me?” Jamison took a hearty swig of his wine. “So we have some singed garlic bread. I happen to love cold pasta. And this room looks gorgeous. Plus wine.” He gestured comically. “That’s always good.”

“I just wanted to make our first Valentine’s Day memorable.” Noah set his glass on the table. “I know it shouldn’t matter, it’s just a day. But I wanted it to be special.”

“Let’s see. I came home to my gorgeous boyfriend who screwed my brains out the minute I was through the door. And when that was over, half the fire department showed up. Plus there’s the still half-naked part.” He waved his glass at himself, then at Noah. “I promise you, honey, there is no way in hell I will ever forget this Valentine’s Day.”

Noah wrapped his arms around Jamison’s waist and raised his face to be kissed. Jamison was only too happy to comply.

“Oh, my God, I love you,” Noah murmured against Jamison’s lips.

“Well, that’s good. Because I love you, too.” Jamison wrapped his arms around Noah’s waist and buried his face in the hollow of his neck.

“Fucking Mrs. Vargas. I’ve seen her ogling you. I think she was just hoping to get a good look at you naked,” Noah teased.

Jamison chuckled and drew Noah closer. “Move in with me.” *Fuck*. That was not what he’d planned to say. At all. Was it?

“What?” Noah blinked up at him.

“Yeah.” Realization dawned that he had, in fact, meant it. “Why not? I mean, we're together all the time anyway. I certainly have room. And my place is closer to your salon.”

“Holy shit.” Noah’s shoulders were shaking. But Jamison couldn’t tell if it was in laughter or something else.

“I’m serious,” he reiterated. “Move in with me.”

“Okay, then.” Noah beamed at him. “Who knew fucking up dinner would be the start of such a perfect Valentine’s Day?” He chuckled once more before pressing a gentle, playful kiss to Jamison’s lips.

Slightly dumbstruck at his sudden decision—not to mention Noah’s immediate acceptance—Jamison knew in his heart it was the right choice. “Who knew?”



## About the Author

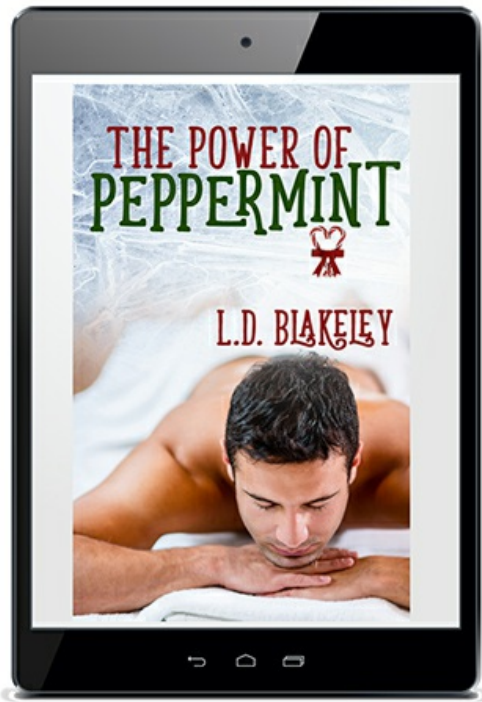
A pragmatist with a romantic soul & a dirty mind, L.D. is a fan of horror movies, hot sex, and Happily Ever Afters. Easily distracted by shiny things, she's a slightly neurotic, highly ambitious dreamer who enjoys dabbling in photography & pretending she can carry a tune.

In another life, L.D. was a newspaper reporter, an entertainment & music writer, travel writer, website content editor, and a marketing shill. Now she prefers to spend her time writing hot, steamy fiction with a healthy dose of romance.

Although she dreams of living some place isolated with an endless supply of wine and an infinite number of titles on her eReader, she currently lives in downtown Toronto with her husband and their rock star cat.

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Also by L.D. Blakeley



**THE POWER OF PEPPERMINT**  
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*The most wonderful time of the year?*

When Jamison Pritchett is roped into replacing the mall photographer at Santa's Village a week before Christmas, he's certain he'll be spending the holidays recovering from a nervous breakdown. A throng of sugar-frenzied kids might be enough to send this uptight photographer back into the darkroom permanently. Inappropriate thoughts about his far-too-attractive—and far-too-young—assistant aren't helping fight that urge to hide, either.

For Noah Hawkins, adulting is a snap. Too bad relationships aren't. With his business temporarily closed for repairs, he's happy to help his sister out of a jam, even if the costume he's given to wear borders on obscene. Constantly being mistaken for a teenager is no treat either, especially when he discovers his temporary new co-worker is sexy as hell and 15 years his senior.

Can Noah convince Jamison that age is just a number? Or will Jamison resist the gift Santa seems to be handing him on a platter?

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