

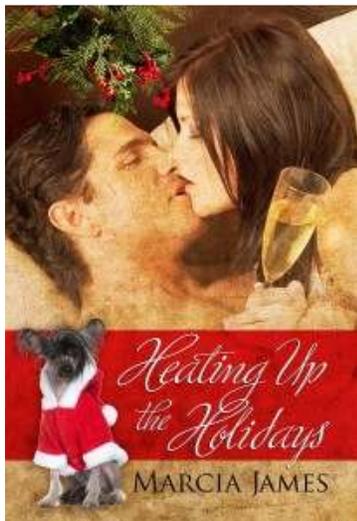


December 14, 2010

THE MORNING AFTER: Three Cheers for Four-Legged Match-Makers...or why my books always feature a canine Cupid.



Don't you just love it when an animal character brings together the hero and heroine? I'm not talking about werewolves or other shape-shifters. Just every-day, garden-variety dogs and cats. Of course, Smokey, my Chinese crested hairless dog mascot, would object to being called a garden-variety anything. He's very proud of the fact that, in my books, he and his cousins continue to work their magic when it comes to introducing or reuniting soul mates. In *Heating Up the Holidays*, my first novella for Liquid Silver Books, a pretty little "crestie" helps two high school sweethearts find their super-sexy Happily Ever After.



Heating Up the Holidays:

<http://www.liquidsilverbooks.com/books/heatinguptheholidays.htm>

Blurb: Nicky Paxton is up to her pointed elf ears in work—filling in for a sick Santa’s helper, corralling kittens in a mechanical winter wonderland and running her family’s department store. With only 14 shopping days until Christmas, the last thing she needs is the return of her high school heart-breaker.

Single dad Chris Spencer leaves the LA rat race to raise his five-year-old daughter, Holly, in his sleepy Virginia hometown. His first goal is to make sure Holly has a Christmas to remember. His carefully laid plans don’t include a second chance with his first love.

When Holly asks the store Santa for a “fairy pony puppy”, Chris enlists Nicky’s help to track down the elusive item. Despite Nicky’s resolve not to re-gift her heart to Chris, their sexual attraction could power the town’s holiday light display. With the help of mistletoe, a hairless dog and a lonely child, Chris and Nicky just might get their Christmas desires.

Excerpt: Nicky heard Chris mutter something under his breath, but she kept walking from the kitchen to the foyer of her home. If he didn’t want to leave, he shouldn’t have ended what was the sexiest damn kiss she’d had in thirteen years. Of course, she had no plans to actually let the too-honorable-for-his-own-good man walk out her front door. He was back in town to stay, and she was staking her claim on him tonight.

She stopped by the staircase and hung his leather jacket on the mahogany newel post. Then wiping the huge grin off her face—something Chris wouldn’t appreciate under these circumstances—she turned to meet his disgruntled gaze. “Thank you for the pizza and wine.”

Chris nodded. His expression was pleasant, but a vein ticked in his temple.

Gesturing to the snow-battered windows in her nearby living room, she continued. “Looks like the weather’s gotten worse. Could be a dangerous drive back to your place. Did you say Holly is sleeping over at your parents’ house tonight?”

He nodded again, a mix of hope and amused suspicion flickering in his eyes. Maybe she wasn’t so skilled at presenting a poker face.

“Well,” Nicky glanced at her nails in an exaggerated show of nonchalance, “then I guess you have two choices.” She met his gaze again, her lips curving despite her efforts to control them. “You can put on your jacket and head out, your virtue intact. Or...you can come upstairs and show me your tan lines.”

He made a grab for her and she danced away, laughing. Chris put his hands on his hips and smiled. “You had me going there, brat. I thought you were throwing me out.” He pointed to the floor in front of him. “Come here and kiss me.”

“Like I’d take orders from some surfer-dude lawyer.” She charged up the stairs with Chris on her heels. Nicky made it halfway to the second floor before he caught her and lifted her into his arms. It was like flying. The autumn of their senior year, he’d chased her, picked her up just like this, then thrown her laughing into a pile of leaves they’d raked together. Those had been such wonderful times. Tonight they’d make even better memories.

She circled his neck with her arms as he took the rest of the stairs two at a time. When he reached the upstairs hallway, Chris asked, “Which room?”

Nicky tugged on the hair at his nape. “Put me down before you get a hernia.”

Lowering his head, he nibbled her ear. “You’re a flyweight, Nickels. And unless you want our first time together as adults to be against this wall right here, you better tell me which room.”

A delicious full-body shudder ran through her, one that literally knocked off her fuzzy slippers. “Why don’t we save the wall ‘til next time.” She pointed down the dark corridor. “Last room on the right.”