

When He Was Wicked



Book Summary

London's most notorious bachelor Michael Stirling falls deeply in love with Francesca Bridgerton at first sight, but she's about to marry his cousin.

Summary of Concerns

This book contains; alcohol, death/grief, explicit sexual activities/sexual nudity, infertility, lying, miscarriage, profanity, sexism, smoking (minor), and violence (mild).

Adult

By Julia Quinn

ISBN 0-06-053123-1,
9780060531232

CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

4 / 5

Adults Only

Page	Content
232	<p>He heard Francesca gasp, but she didn't tell him to stop, so he just pulled and pulled and pulled until one breast popped free.</p> <p>God, he loved current women's fashions.</p> <p>"Michael?" she whispered.</p> <p>"Shhh." He didn't want to have to answer any questions. He didn't want her thinking enough to ask one.</p> <p>He ran his tongue along the underside of her breast, tasting the salty-sweet essence of her skin, then reached out and cupped her. He'd touched her through her dress the first time they'd kissed, and he'd thought that was heaven, but nothing compared to the feel of her, hot and bare, in his hand.</p> <p>"Oh, my," she moaned. "Oh..."</p> <p>He blew lightly on her nipple. "Shall I kiss you?" He looked up. He knew he was taking a chance with this, waiting for her answer. He probably shouldn't even have posed the question, but even though his intent was to seduce, he couldn't quite bring himself to do it without at least one affirmative word from her.</p>
233	<p>"Shall I?" he murmured again, sweetening the deal with one light flick of his tongue across her nipple.</p> <p>"Yes!" she burst out. "Yes, for God's sake, yes!"</p> <p>He smiled. Slowly, languidly, savoring the moment. And then, after letting her quiver with anticipation for one second longer than was probably fair, he leaned in and took her into his mouth, pouring years and years of desire onto the one breast, centering it wickedly onto one innocent nipple.</p> <p>She wasn't going to stand a chance.</p> <p>"Oh, my God!" she gasped, grasping the edge of the table for purchase as her entire body arched back. "Oh, my God. Oh, Michael. Oh, my God."</p> <p>He took advantage of her passion to slide his hands around her hips and lift her up until she was seated on the table, her legs parting for him as he stepped into their feminine cradle.</p> <p>Satisfaction raced through his veins, even as his body screamed for its own pleasure. He loved that he could do this to her, make her scream and moan and cry out with desire. She was so strong, always so cool and composed, and yet right now she was simply and purely his, a slave to her own needs, captive to his expert touch.</p> <p>He kissed, he licked, he nibbled, he tugged. He tortured her until he thought she might explode. Her breath was loud and gasping, and her moans had grown more and more incoherent.</p> <p>And all the while his hands were moving silently up her legs, first grasping her ankles, then her calves, pushing her skirts up and up, until they settled in a rumpled pool above her knees.</p>

Page	Content
233	<p>And it was only then that he pulled away and gave her a hint of a reprieve. She looked at him, her eyes glazed, her lips pink and parted. She didn't say anything; he didn't think she could say anything. But he saw the questions</p>
234	<p>in her eyes. She might be beyond speech, but she was several minutes away from total insanity.</p> <p>"I thought it would be cruel to torture it any longer," he said, lightly taking her nipple between his thumb and forefinger.</p> <p>She groaned.</p> <p>"You like that." It was a statement, and not a particularly sophisticated one, but this was Francesca, not some nameless woman he was tugging while he closed his eyes and imagined her face. And every time she mewled with pleasure his heart raced with joy. "You like it," he said again, smiling with satisfaction.</p> <p>"Yes," she whispered. "Yes."</p> <p>He leaned in until his lips were brushing her ear. "You'll like this, too." "What?" she asked, surprising him with her query.</p> <p>He'd thought she was too far gone to question him aloud.</p> <p>He nudged her skirts a little higher, just enough so that there was no danger of them falling off her lap. "You want to hear it, don't you?" he murmured, sliding his hands until they were just above her knees. He squeezed her thighs gently, circling against her skin with his thumbs. "You want to know."</p> <p>She nodded.</p> <p>He moved toward her again, lightly touching his lips to hers, close enough to feel her, yet far enough to speak. "You were always so curious," he murmured. "You asked so many questions."</p> <p>He slid his lips along her cheek to her ear, whispering all the way. "Michael," he said, softening his voice to mimic hers, "tell me something naughty. Tell me something wicked."</p>
235	<p>She blushed. He couldn't see it, but he could feel it, sense the hot rush of blood to her skin.</p> <p>"But I never told you what you wanted to hear, did I?" he asked, lightly nipping at her earlobe. "I always left you outside the bedroom door."</p> <p>He paused, not because he expected an answer, just because he wanted to hear her breathe.</p> <p>"Did you wonder?" he whispered. "Did you leave me and wonder what I hadn't told you?" He leaned in, just so she'd feel his lips move whisper-light against her ear. "Did you want to know," he whispered, "what I did when I was wicked?"</p>

Page	Content
235	<p>He wouldn't make her answer; it wouldn't be fair. But he couldn't stop his own mind from racing back in time, remembering the countless times he'd teased her with hints of his exploits.</p> <p>He had never been the one to bring them up, however; she had always asked. "Do you want me to tell you?" he murmured. He felt her jerk slightly in surprise, and he chuckled. "Not about them, Francesca. You. Only you."</p> <p>She turned, causing his lips to slide along her cheek. He drew back so he could see her face, and her question was clear in her eyes.</p> <p>What do you mean?</p> <p>He moved his hands, exerting just enough pressure on her thighs to spread them open one more wicked inch. "Do you want me to tell you what I'm going to do now?" He leaned down, running his tongue along her nipple, which had grown hard and taut in the cool air of the late afternoon. "To you?" he added.</p> <p>She swallowed convulsively. He decided to take that as a yes.</p> <p>"There are so many choices," he said huskily, sliding his hands up her legs another few inches. "I scarcely know where to start."</p>
236	<p>He stopped to look at her for a moment. She was breathing hard, her lips parted and plump from his kisses. And she was mesmerized, completely under his spell.</p> <p>He dipped closer once again, to her other ear, so he could make sure his words fell hot and moist upon her soul. "I think, however, that I would have to start where you need me most. First I'd kiss you..."—he pressed his thumbs into the soft flesh of her inner thighs—"... here."</p> <p>He held silent, just for a second, just long enough for her to shiver with desire. "Would you like that?" he murmured, his question intended to torment and tease. "Yes, I can see that you would.</p> <p>"But that wouldn't be enough," he mused, "for either of us. So clearly, I would then have to kiss you here." His thumbs inched up until they reached the hot crevice between her legs and her torso, and then he pressed gently, so she would know exactly what he was talking about. "I think you would enjoy a kiss right there," he added, "almost as much"—he slid along the crease, down, down, closer to the very center of her, but not quite all the way—"as I would like to kiss you."</p> <p>Her breath came a little faster.</p> <p>"I'd have to take my time there," he murmured, "switch, perhaps, from my lips to my tongue. Run it along the edge right here." He used one fingernail to show her what he meant. "And all the while, I would be pushing you farther and farther open. Like that, maybe?"</p> <p>He drew back, as if to examine his handiwork. The sight of her was stunningly erotic.</p>

Page	Content
236	<p>She was perched on the edge of the table, her legs open to him, although not nearly enough for what he wanted to do. The skirt of her dress still hung down between her thighs, shielding her from his view, but somehow that made her almost more tempting. He didn't need to see her, he realized, not yet, anyway. Her position was sultry enough, made even more wicked by her breast, still bared to his gaze, its nipple pink and taut and begging for more.</p>
237	<p>But nothing, nothing could have speared him with more desire than the sight of her face. Parted lips, eyes darkened to cobalt with passion. Every breath she took seemed to call to him— Take me. And it was almost enough to force him to abandon his wicked seduction and plunge into her right then and there. But no—he had to do this slowly. He had to tease her and torture her, bring her to the very heights of ecstasy and then keep her there as long as he could. He had to make sure they both understood that this was something they could never, ever live without. But still, it was hard—no, he was hard, and it was so damned difficult to exercise restraint. “What do you think, Francesca?” he murmured, giving her thighs one last squeeze. “I don't think we've opened you enough, do you?” She made a sound. He would never know how to describe it, but it set him afire. “Maybe,” he said softly, “more like this.” And he pushed, slowly, inexorably, until she was spread wide. Her skirt went taut over her thighs, and he tsk tsked at it, murmuring, “That can't be comfortable. Let me help you with that.” He hooked his fingers over the hem, and slid it up until it pooled about her waist. And she was completely exposed. He couldn't see her yet, not with his eyes still focused inexorably on her face. But the knowledge of her position made them both shiver, he with desire, she with anticipation, and he had to steel his shoulders just to maintain his control. It wasn't his time yet. It would be soon, to be sure; he was quite certain he'd perish if he didn't make her his that night.</p>
238	<p>But for now, this was still about Francesca. And what he could make her feel. He put his lips to her ear. “You're not cold, are you?” Her only answer was her shivering breath. He brought one finger to her womanly center and began to stroke. “I would never allow you to remain cold,” he whispered. “That would be so ungentlemanly of me.” His strokes slid into circles, slow and hot against her flesh. “If we were out of doors,” he mused, “I would offer my coat. But here”—he slid one fingertip inside, just enough to make her gasp—“I can only offer my mouth.”</p>

Page	Content
238	<p>She made another incoherent sound, this one barely more than strangled cry. "Yes," he said wickedly, "that is what I would do to you. I'd kiss you right here, right where it would pleasure you the most."</p> <p>She could do nothing but breathe.</p> <p>"I believe I would start with my lips," he murmured, "but then I would have to use my tongue so I could explore you more deeply." He used his fingers to tickle her, demonstrating what he planned to do with his mouth. "Rather like this, I think, but it would be much hotter." He ran his tongue along the inside of her ear. "And wetter."</p> <p>"Michael," she moaned.</p> <p>She'd said his name. And nothing more. She was getting closer to the brink. "I'd taste everything," he whispered. "Every last drop of you. And then, just when I was sure I'd explored you completely, I'd part you further." He spread her with his fingers, pulling her open in the most wicked way</p>
239	<p>possible. Then he tickled her flesh with his fingernail. "Just in case I'd missed some secret corner."</p> <p>"Michael," she moaned again.</p> <p>"Who knows how long I'd kiss you?" he murmured. "I might not be able to stop." He moved his face down a little, so that he could nuzzle her neck. "You might not want me to stop." He paused, then slid another finger inside of her. He whispered, "Do you want me to stop?"</p> <p>He was playing with fire every time he asked her a question, every time he gave her a chance to say no. If he were colder, more calculating, he would just press on with his seduction, and he could sweep her away before she could even begin to consider her actions. She'd be lost on her wave of passion, and before she knew it he would be inside of her, and she would be, finally and indelibly, his.</p> <p>But something in him could never be quite that ruthless, not with Francesca. And he needed her approval, even if it was nothing more than a nod or a moan. She'd probably regret this later, but even so, he didn't want her to be able to say, even to herself, that she hadn't been thinking, that she hadn't said yes.</p> <p>And he needed the yes. He had loved her for years, dreamed about touching her for so damned long. And now that the moment was finally here, he just didn't know if he could bear it if she didn't really want it. There were only so many ways a man's heart could break, and he had a feeling his couldn't survive another puncture.</p> <p>"Do you want me to stop?" he whispered again, and this time he did stop. He didn't remove his hands, but he didn't move them either, just held still and allowed her a moment of quiet in which to make her answer. And he pulled his head back, just far enough so that she had to look at him. Or if not that, then at least he would be looking at her.</p> <p>"No," she whispered, not quite raising her eyes to his.</p>

Page	Content
240	<p>His heart jumped in his chest. "Then I had better get to doing everything I talked about," he murmured.</p> <p>And he did. He sank to his knees and he kissed her. He kissed her as she shuddered, he kissed her as he moaned. He kissed her when she grabbed his hair and pulled, and he kissed her when she let go, her hands scrambling wildly for purchase.</p> <p>He kissed her in every way he'd promised he would, and he kissed her until she almost climaxed.</p> <p>Almost.</p> <p>He should have done it, should have followed through, but he just couldn't manage it. He had to have her. He'd wanted this for so long, wanted to make her scream his name and shudder in his arms. But when it happened, for the first time at least, he wanted to be inside her. He wanted to feel her around him, and he wanted to...</p> <p>Hell, he just wanted it this way, and if it meant he was out of control, so be it.</p> <p>Hands shaking, he tore open his breeches, finally allowing his manhood to spring free. "Michael?" she whispered. Her eyes had been closed, but when he moved and left her she'd opened them. She looked down at him, her eyes widening. There was no mistaking what was about to happen.</p> <p>"I need you," he said hoarsely. And when she did nothing but stare at him, he said it again. "I need you now."</p> <p>But not on the table. Even he wasn't that talented, so he picked her up, shuddering with delight as she wrapped her legs around him, and set her down on the plush carpet. It wasn't a bed, but there was no way he was going to make it to a bed, and frankly, he didn't think either of them would care. He pushed her skirts back up to her waist, and he covered her.</p>
241	<p>And entered her.</p> <p>He'd thought to go slowly, but she was so wet and ready for him, that he just slid inside, even as she gasped at the intrusion.</p> <p>"Did that hurt?" he grunted.</p> <p>She shook her head. "Don't stop," she moaned. "Please."</p> <p>"Never," he vowed. "Never."</p> <p>He moved, and she moved beneath him, and they were both already so aroused that it was a mere moment later that they both exploded.</p>
260	<p>With one hand on his chest, she pushed him back onto the bed, and he stared up at her with fiery eyes, his lips parted with desire as he watched her in disbelief.</p> <p>She took a step back, then reached down and lightly grasped the hem of her chemise.</p> <p>"Do you want me to take it off?" she whispered.</p>

Page	Content
260	<p>He nodded.</p> <p>“Say it,” she demanded. She wanted to know if he was beyond words. She wanted to know if she could reduce him to madness, enslave him to his needs, the way he’d done to her.</p> <p>“Yes,” he gasped, the word coming out hoarse and ripped.</p> <p>Francesca was no innocent; she’d been married for two years to a man with healthy and active desires, a man who had taught her to celebrate the same in herself. She knew how to be brazen, understood how it could whip up her own urgency, but nothing could have prepared her for the electrical charge of this moment, for the decadent thrill of stripping for Michael.</p> <p>Or the staggering rush of heat she felt when she raised her gaze to his, and watched him watching her.</p> <p>This was power.</p> <p>And she loved it.</p> <p>With deliberate slowness, she edged the hem up, starting just above her knees, and then sliding up her thighs until she’d nearly reached her hips.</p>
261	<p>“Enough?” she teased, licking her lips into a sultry half-smile.</p> <p>He shook his head. “More,” he demanded.</p> <p>Demanded? She didn’t like that. “Beg me,” she whispered.</p> <p>“More,” he said, more humbly.</p> <p>She gave him a nod of approval, but just before she let him see the thatch of her womanhood she turned around, wiggling the chemise up and over her bottom, then across her back and finally over her head.</p> <p>His breath was coming hot and heavy over his lips; she could hear every whisper of it, almost feel it caressing her back. But still she didn’t turn around. Instead she let out a slow, seductive moan and slid her hands up the sides of her body, curving slightly to the back as she passed over her derriere, then moving to the front when she reached her breasts. And then, even though she knew he couldn’t see her, she squeezed.</p> <p>He would know what she was doing.</p> <p>And it would drive him wild.</p> <p>She heard rustling on the bed, heard the wooden frame creak and groan, and she let out one sharp command:</p> <p>“Don’t move.”</p> <p>“Francesca,” he moaned, and his voice was closer. He must’ve sat up, must’ve been seconds away from reaching for her.</p> <p>“Lie down,” she said in soft warning.</p> <p>“Francesca,” he said again, but now there was a hint of desperation in his voice.</p> <p>It made her smile. “Lie down,” she repeated, still not looking at him.</p>

Page	Content
262	<p>She heard him panting, knew that he hadn't moved, that he was still trying to decide what to do.</p> <p>"Lie down," she said, one last time. "If you want me."</p> <p>For a second there was silence, and then she heard him settle back against the bed. But she also heard his breath, now tinged with a dangerously ragged edge.</p> <p>"There you go," she whispered.</p> <p>She taunted him a little more, running her hands lightly over her skin, her nails skimming the surface, raising goosebumps all along their path. "Mmmm," she moaned, the sound a deliberate tease. "Mmmm."</p> <p>"Francesca," he whispered.</p> <p>She moved her hands to her belly, then slid them down, not deeply to touch herself—she wasn't certain she was wicked enough to do that—but just enough cover her mound, leaving him in the dark, wondering just what it was her fingers were doing.</p> <p>"Mmmm," she murmured again. "Ohhhh."</p> <p>He made a sound, guttural, primitive, and entirely inarticulate. He was nearing his breaking point; she wouldn't be able to push him much further.</p> <p>She looked over her shoulder, licking her lips as she glanced at him. "You should take those off," she said, letting her gaze fall to his still-covered groin. He'd not undressed entirely when he'd removed his wet clothing, and his manhood strained furiously against the fabric. "You don't look very comfortable," she added, infusing her voice with just the barest hint of coy innocence.</p> <p>He grunted something and then practically tore off his undergarments.</p> <p>"Oh my," Francesca said, and even though she'd planned the words as a part of her teasing seduction, she found that she very much meant them. He</p>
263	<p>looked huge and powerful, and she knew she was playing a dangerous game, pushing him to his very limits.</p> <p>But she couldn't stop. She was glorying in her power over him, and she couldn't possibly stop.</p> <p>"Very nice," she purred, letting her gaze roam up and down his body, settling directly upon his manhood.</p> <p>"Frannie," he said, "enough."</p> <p>She let her eyes level onto his. "You answer to me, Michael," she said with soft authority. "If you want me, you can have me. But I'm in charge."</p> <p>"Fr—"</p> <p>"Those are my terms."</p> <p>He held still, then settled back slightly in acquiescence. But he did not lie down. He was sitting, leaning back slightly, his hands on the mattress behind him for support. His</p>

Page	Content
263	<p>every muscle was straining, and his eyes held a feline air, as if he were poised to pounce.</p> <p>He was, she realized, with a shiver of desire, simply magnificent.</p> <p>And hers for the taking.</p> <p>“What should I do now?” she wondered aloud.</p> <p>“Come here,” he answered gruffly.</p> <p>“Not quite yet,” she sighed, turning toward him until her body was in profile. She saw his gaze drop to the hardened tips of her breasts, saw his eyes darken as he licked his lips. And she felt herself tauten even more, as the mental image of his tongue on her sent a new rush of heat through her body.</p> <p>She brought one hand to her breast, curving around the underside, pushing herself up, like some delectable offering. “Is this what you want?” she</p>
264	<p>whispered.</p> <p>His voice was nothing but a growl. “You know what I want.”</p> <p>“Mmm, yes,” she murmured, “but what about in the meantime? Aren’t things sweeter when we’re forced to wait for them?”</p> <p>“You have no idea,” he said roughly.</p> <p>She looked down at her breast. “I wonder what would happen if I do... this,” she said, and then she moved her fingers to her nipple, rolling it about, her body twitching as the motion sent shivers down to the very center of her being.</p> <p>“Frannie,” Michael groaned. She glanced up at him. His lips were parted, and his eyes were glazed with desire.</p> <p>“I like it,” Francesca said, almost in wonderment. She’d never touched herself this way, never even thought to until this very moment, with Michael as her captive audience. “I like it,” she said again, then brought her other hand to her other breast and pleased them in unison. She pushed them up and together, her hands making a sultry corset.</p> <p>“Oh, my God,” Michael moaned.</p> <p>“I had no idea I could do this,” she said, arching her back.</p> <p>“I can do it better,” he gasped.</p> <p>“Mmm, you probably could,” she acceded. “You’ve had lots of practice, haven’t you?”</p> <p>And she shot him a look, one of sophisticated elegance, as if she were comfortable with the fact that he’d seduced scores of women. And the strange truth was, until this very moment, she rather thought she had been.</p> <p>Now he was hers. Hers to tempt and hers to enjoy, and as long as she had him exactly where she wanted him, she wasn’t going to think of those other women. They weren’t here in this room. It was just her, and Michael, and the sizzling heat rising between them.</p>

Page	Content
265	<p>She edged closer to the bed, batting his hand away when he reached toward her. "If I let you touch one, will you make me a promise?" she murmured.</p> <p>"Anything."</p> <p>"Nothing more," she said, her tone slightly officious. "You may do what I allow you and nothing more."</p> <p>He nodded jerkily.</p>
266	<p>"Lie back," she ordered.</p> <p>He did as she asked.</p> <p>She climbed onto the bed, not allowing their bodies to touch in any way. Raising herself onto all fours, she let herself to sway above him, and then softly she said, "One hand, Michael. You may use one hand."</p> <p>With a groan that sounded as if it were ripped from his throat, he reached for her, his hand large enough to grasp her entire breast. "Oh, my God," he gasped, his body jerking as he squeezed her. "Both hands, please," he begged.</p> <p>She couldn't resist him. That one simple touch was reducing her to pure flame, and even as she wanted to exert her power over him, she couldn't say no. Nodding because she could barely speak, she arched her back, and then suddenly both of his hands were on her, kneading, caressing, whipping her already heightened senses into a frenzy.</p> <p>"The tip," she whispered. "Do what I did."</p> <p>He smiled stealthily, giving her the impression that she might no longer be quite as much in charge as she thought, but he did as she commanded, his fingers torturing her nipples.</p> <p>And as promised, he was better at it than she was.</p> <p>Her body bucked, and she almost lost the strength to hold herself up. "Take me in your mouth," she ordered, but her voice was not so authoritative any longer. She was begging him, and they both knew it.</p> <p>But she wanted it. Oh, how she wanted it. John, for all his ebullience in bed, had never loved her breasts the way Michael had done the night before. He'd never suckled her, never shown her how lips and teeth could make her entire body squirm. Francesca hadn't even known that a man and woman could do such a thing.</p> <p>But now that she did, she couldn't stop fantasizing about it.</p>
267	<p>"Come lower," Michael said softly, "if you want me to remain lying down." Still on her hands and knees, she leaned down, allowing one breast to swing achingly close to his mouth.</p> <p>He did nothing at first, forcing her to swing lower and lower, until her nipple was brushing lightly across his lips.</p> <p>"What do you want, Francesca?" he asked, his breath hot and moist over her.</p>

Page	Content
267	<p>“You know,” she whispered.</p> <p>“Say it again.”</p> <p>She wasn’t in charge anymore. She knew it, but she was past caring. His voice held the soft edge of authority, but she was too far gone to do anything but obey.</p> <p>“Take me in your mouth,” she said again.</p> <p>His head snapped up and his lips nipped her, tugging her down until she was in a position for him to have his leisurely way with her. He tickled and teased, and she felt herself sinking deeper into his spell, losing her will and her strength, wanting nothing but to lie down on her back and allow him to do whatever he wanted to her.</p> <p>“Now what?” he asked politely, not releasing her from his lips. “More of this? Or”—he swirled his tongue in a particularly wicked fashion —“something else?”</p> <p>“Something else,” she gasped, and she wasn’t sure if it was because she wanted something else or because she didn’t think she could stand one more minute of what he was doing just then.</p> <p>“You’re in charge,” he said, his voice holding the barest hint of mocking. “I’m yours to command.”</p>
268	<p>“I want... I want...” She was breathing too hard to finish the sentence. Or maybe she just didn’t know what she wanted.</p> <p>“Shall I offer you a few selections?”</p> <p>She nodded.</p> <p>He trailed one finger down the center of her belly to her womanhood. “I could touch you here,” he said in a devilish whisper, “or if you’d prefer, I could kiss you.”</p> <p>Her body tightened at the thought.</p> <p>“But that presents new questions,” he said. “Do you lie back and allow me to kneel between your legs, or do you remain above me and lower yourself onto my mouth?”</p> <p>“Oh, my God!” She didn’t know. She just didn’t know that such things were possible.</p> <p>“Or,” he said thoughtfully, “you could take me into your mouth. I’m quite certain I would enjoy it, although I must say, it’s not really in the tenor of the interlude.”</p> <p>Francesca felt her lips part with shock, and she couldn’t help but peer down at his manhood, large and ready for her. She had kissed John there once or twice, when she’d felt particularly daring, but to take it into her mouth?</p> <p>It was too scandalous. Even in her present state of debauchery.</p> <p>“No,” Michael said with an amused smile. “Another time, perhaps. I can tell you’ll be a most cunning pupil.”</p> <p>Francesca nodded, unable to believe what she was promising. “So for now,” he said, “those are our options, or...”</p> <p>“Or what?” she asked, her voice more of a harsh whisper.</p>
269	<p>His hands settled on her hips. “Or we could just proceed right to the main course,” he said commandingly, exerting a gentle but steady pressure on her, guiding her down</p>

Page	Content
269	<p>toward the evidence of his desire. “You could ride me. Have you ever done that?”</p> <p>She shook her head.</p> <p>“Do you want to?”</p> <p>She nodded.</p> <p>One of his hands left her hips and found the back of her head, pulling her down until they were nose to nose. “I’m not a gentle pony,” he said softly. “I promise you, you will have to work to keep your seat.”</p> <p>“I want it,” she whispered.</p> <p>“Are you ready for me?”</p> <p>She nodded.</p> <p>“Are you certain?” he whispered, his lips curving just enough to taunt her. She wasn’t sure what he was asking, and he knew it.</p> <p>She just looked at him, her eyes widening in question.</p> <p>“Are you wet?” he murmured.</p> <p>Her cheeks grew hot—as if they weren’t already burning, but she nodded. “Are you sure?” he mused. “I should probably check, just to make certain.” Francesca’s breath caught as she watched his hand curve around her thigh, moving toward her center. He moved slowly, deliberately, drawing out the torture of anticipation. And then, just when she thought she might scream at it all, he touched her, one finger lazily drawing circles against her soft flesh.</p> <p>“Very nice,” he purred, his words echoing her own.</p>
270	<p>“Michael,” she gasped.</p> <p>But he was enjoying his position too much to allow her to rush things along. “I’m not sure,” he said. “You’re ready here, but what about... here?”</p> <p>Francesca nearly screamed as one finger slipped inside of her.</p> <p>“Oh, yes,” he murmured. “And you like it, too.”</p> <p>“Michael... Michael...” It was all she could say.</p> <p>Another finger slid into place next to the first. “So warm,” he whispered. “The very heart of you.”</p> <p>“Michael...”</p> <p>His eyes caught hers. “Do you want me?” he asked, his voice stark and direct.</p> <p>She nodded.</p> <p>“Now?”</p> <p>She nodded again, this time with more vigor.</p> <p>His fingers slid out, and his hands found her hips again, guiding her down... down... until she could feel the tip of him at her opening. She tried to move her body down onto him, but he held her in place. “Not too fast,” he whispered.</p>

Page	Content
270	<p>“Please...”</p> <p>“Let me move you,” he said, and his hands gently pushed at her hips, edging her down until she felt herself being stretched open by him. He felt huge, and it was all so different in this position.</p> <p>“Good?” he asked. She nodded.</p>
271	<p>“More?”</p> <p>She nodded again.</p> <p>And he continued the torture, holding himself still, but moving her body down atop his, each impossible inch of him sliding into her, stealing her breath, her voice, her very ability to think.</p> <p>“Slide up and down,” he commanded.</p> <p>Her eyes flew to his.</p> <p>“You can do it,” he said softly.</p> <p>She did, testing the motion, moaning at the pleasure of the friction, then gasping as she realized that she was sliding farther down onto him, that he wasn’t yet entirely embedded within her body.</p> <p>“Take me to the hilt,” he said.</p> <p>“I can’t.” And she couldn’t. She couldn’t possibly. She knew she had done so the night before, but this was different. He couldn’t possibly fit.</p> <p>His hands tightened on her, and his hips arched slightly up, and then in one mind-numbing jolt, she found herself seated directly atop him, skin to skin.</p> <p>And she could barely breathe.</p> <p>“Oh, my God,” he groaned.</p> <p>She just sat there, rocking back and forth, unsure of what to do.</p> <p>His breath was coming in fits and starts, and his body began to writhe under hers. She grasped his shoulders in an attempt to hold on, to keep her seat, and as she did, she began to move up and down, to take control, to seek pleasure for herself.</p> <p>“Michael, Michael,” she moaned, her body beginning to sway from side to side, unable to hold itself up, unable to maintain strength against the hot</p>
272	<p>tide of desire sweeping across her.</p> <p>He just grunted, his body bucking beneath her. As promised, he wasn’t gentle, and he wasn’t tame. He forced her to work for her pleasure, to hold on tight, to move with him, and then against him, and then...</p> <p>A scream ripped from her throat.</p> <p>And the world quite simply fell apart.</p> <p>She didn’t know what to do, didn’t know what to say. She let go of his shoulders as her body straightened and then arched, every muscle growing impossibly taut.</p>

Page	Content
272	<p>And beneath her, he exploded. His face contorted, his body lifted them both off the bed, and she knew that he was pouring himself into her.</p>
320	<p>One of her hands cupped the back of his head, and she pulled him down for another kiss, this one deep and hot. "I need you," she said, her voice almost a groan of need. "I need you so much."</p> <p>"I want to see all of you," he said, practically tearing the silk from her body. "I need to feel all of you."</p> <p>Francesca was as eager as he was, and her fingers went to the sash on his robe, untying the loose knot before pushing it open, revealing the broad expanse of his chest.</p> <p>She touched the light dusting of hair, almost feeling a sense of wonder as her hand moved across his skin.</p> <p>She'd never thought to be in this place, in this moment.</p> <p>This certainly wasn't the first time she'd seen him this way, touched him in this manner, but somehow it was different now.</p> <p>He was her husband.</p> <p>It was so hard to believe, and yet it felt so perfect and right. "Michael," she murmured, tugging the robe over his shoulders.</p>
321	<p>"Mmmm?" was his reply. He was busy doing something delectable to the back of her knee.</p> <p>She fell back against the pillows, completely forgetting what she'd been about to say, if there had been anything at all.</p> <p>His hand wrapped lightly around the front of her thigh, then slid up toward her hip, to her waist, and then finally to the side of her breast. Francesca wanted to take part, wanted to be adventurous and touch him as he was touching her, but his caresses were making her languid and lazy, and all she could do was lie back and enjoy his ministrations, occasionally reaching out to trail her fingers along whichever part of his skin they were able to reach.</p> <p>She felt cherished.</p> <p>Worshipped.</p> <p>Loved.</p> <p>It was humbling.</p> <p>It was exquisite.</p> <p>It was sacred and seductive, and it took her breath away.</p> <p>His lips followed the trail his hands had forged, sending tingles of desire up and across her belly, coming to rest in the flattened hollow between her breasts.</p> <p>"Francesca," he murmured, kissing his way to her nipple. He teased it first with his tongue, then took it in his mouth, biting it gently.</p>

Page	Content
321	<p>The sensation was intense and immediate. Her body convulsed, and her fingers gripped frantically into the bedsheets, desperate for purchase in a world that had suddenly tilted right off its axis.</p> <p>“Michael,” she gasped, arching her back. His fingers had slipped between her legs, not that she needed anything more to ready her for his eventual</p>
322	<p>entry. She wanted this, and she wanted him, and she wanted it to last forever.</p> <p>“You feel so good,” he said hoarsely, his breath hot on her skin. He moved then, positioning himself at her entrance. His face was over hers, nose to nose, and his eyes glowed hot and intense.</p> <p>Francesca wiggled beneath him, the movement tipping her hips to welcome him more deeply. “Now,” she said, the word a cross between an order and a plea.</p> <p>He moved slowly, inching his way inside with tantalizing deliberation. She felt herself opening, stretching to greet him until their bodies touched, and she knew that he was embedded fully.</p> <p>“Oh, my God,” he grunted, his face stretched taut with passion. “I can’t... I have to...”</p> <p>She answered by arching her hips, pressing herself even more firmly against him.</p> <p>He began to move within her, each stroke bringing a new wave of sensation that spread and burned through her body. She said his name, and then she could not speak, could do nothing but gasp for air as their movements grew more frenzied and desperate.</p> <p>And then it came upon her, in a lightning wave of pleasure. Her body exploded, and she cried out, unable to contain the intensity of the experience. Michael thrust into her harder, and then again, and again. He called out as he climaxed, her name a prayer and a benediction on his lips, and then he collapsed atop her.</p>

Profanity & Sexual or Derogatory Terms	Count
Ass / Jackass / Asshole etc.	7
Bastard	2
Breast / Tit	19
Sacrilegious & other offensive language usage	Count
Damn	50
God / God damn etc.	89
Hell	33
Jesus	2
Christ	2