

*Call It  
What You Want*



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Life and love...in vivid color!™

“I’m tired of that bedroom. I’d like to return to the land of the living.” He looked at me, and I could have sworn I caught a glimpse of something else unrecognizable in his face.

“Okay. I’ll bring you some pillows and a blanket. How are you feeling?”

“I feel itchy. And I hurt. If I start to scratch, I’ll probably scratch all my skin off.”

He grinned. “Why don’t you take an oatmeal bath, and later on I’ll give you a calamine lotion rub down.” He disappeared down the hall, before I could respond to that last statement. It provoked images of feeling him pressed against me, and his hands caressing my body. I heard myself moan, and I couldn’t tell if I’d uttered it aloud or just inside the replay in my head.

*I have no business thinking about sex right now, not with all this going on and feeling like I do. And especially not with T.J. again.* I’d managed to escape sure destruction after the first encounter by not calling him again, and I couldn’t hope to be so lucky a second time. I went on to the bathroom where he was running the bath and wondered if I could get away with taking a cold one.

The bedding was waiting for me when I returned to the living room, actually feeling a little soothed after my bath. T.J promptly arranged the linen so that I was propped up on the pillows like a china doll. He bent down and placed a kiss on my forehead. “As soon as I get done with the dishes, we can get started on that rub down.”

I began to feel uncomfortable about the way he was waiting on me hand and foot. The feeling was foreign to me, and I wasn’t sure I liked it. “Hey, T.J., you don’t have to do this.”

He spun around. “Do what?”

“You know, this whole pity thing with taking care of me in my sick bed. I’m sure I’ll be okay here by myself if you want to leave. I’m not completely helpless and I can take care of myself.” He stalked over to where I sat, and got down on his knees, right in my face.

“You wouldn’t be half bad if you didn’t let that mouth of yours get you in so much trouble. Did it ever occur to you that I might want to be here? I’m a grown man, and I could’ve left you alone if that was what I wanted to do.” He brought his hand to my face and stroked my cheek. It was probably the only place he could find where there were no bumps. “Besides, I’ve promised Terrence and Deidra with my life that I would take care of you until you are either better, or one of them returns. So why don’t you just chill and let me do this, okay?”

I didn’t say anything, but I gave him a half-nod. *I want him to kiss me.* He caressed my cheek again. *He wants to kiss me.* Neither of us moved. “Damn, girl. You’re trying me.” He moved back to the kitchen to wash the dishes, and I settled in on the couch. “How did you end up with

the chicken pox at nearly thirty, anyway?”

“I must have caught it from little Melissa Turnley. She had them during the last week of school, and I never thought to call Daddy to check and see if I’d ever had them. You have had them before, haven’t you?” He threw me one of those looks, and I grew sheepish. Obviously, he decided he would answer me despite the glare he sent my way.

“You’re fine and all, but definitely not worth catching the chicken pox over. Of course I’ve had them, when I was ten. Didn’t Terrence ever tell you the story about how we were in quarantine together?”