

A SEAL's Surrender (Uniformly Hot SEALs Book 2)

By Tawny Weber



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Status: On leave

Mission: He's home to take care of some family business.

Obstacle: Eden Gillespie. The girl who always lands in trouble...has landed in

his bed!

Lieutenant Commander Cade Sullivan is the job. His commitment to the Navy SEALs is absolute—almost. Worse still, he's been summoned home, where his family is the town royalty and women vie to be one of Cade's conquests. One of them in particular....

Ever since they were kids, Cade has been rescuing Eden Gillespie. Now she's decided she owes him one heck of a thank-you—one that involves a bed, naked bodies and sweet satisfaction. But when their sexy trysts are discovered, Eden becomes a bit of a town sensation—and not in a good way. Can she convince her SEAL to risk one last rescue operation?



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Editorial Review

About the Author

Avid reader, neurotic writer and die-hard shoe fanatic, Tawny Weber has been writing sassy, sexy stories for Harlequin Blaze since her first book hit the shelves in 2007. When not obsessing over deadlines, she's watching Johnny Depp movies, scrapbooking or hanging out on Facebook and Twitter. Come by and visit her on the web at www.tawnyweber.com

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I wish for a guy who worships my body, is great at sex and makes me feel like a goddess. Someone who loves me, for me. Inside and out. And is really, really good at it.

And if he could be six foot two, with sandy blond hair and dreamy green eyes, a body that made nymphomaniacs weep and a smile that melted her panties, that'd be cool, too.

Eyes scrunched tight, Eden Gillespie let that visual play out for just a second. Then, with a deep breath, she opened her eyes wide and blew.

The flame went out. Thankfully. Because she'd blown so hard, the candle toppled from its perch on the chocolate cupcake. Good wishes did that, she told herself as she scooped up a fingerful of frosting and grinned at the woman sitting across from her.

"So? What'd you wish for?" Bev Lang leaned forward, her wild red curls bouncing like springs around her cheerful face.

"It's a secret. If I tell, it won't come true," Eden said primly before bursting into laughter. Yeah. Like she was gonna lose out on her body-worshipping lover because she put the word out that she was waiting? Still, she pulled her cupcake closer and, since it was filled with molten chocolate, used a fork to enjoy the next bite...and fill her mouth so she didn't blurt anything out.

Because you never knew with wishes.

"I can't believe you won't tell me. How long have we been friends?" Bev asked, putting on her best 'affronted' expression. It wasn't very effective since she still looked like she was waiting for a white apron and her boyfriend, Raggedy Andy.

"Eleven years?" Eden guessed, counting back to the first day of high school. That'd been the year her dad had died, leaving her mom too broke to keep paying the exorbitant tuition to the private school Eden had always attended. Secretly terrified, Eden had put on a brave face in hopes that the public school kids would accept her more than the private school snobs had. Bev had been the new girl in town, unaware that Eden wasn't acceptable because of her zip code. By the time she'd learned the ins and outs of Ocean Point social politics, she and Eden had been too good of friends for it to matter.

"Then as your best friend since ninth grade, I figure it's my job to help you with the wish," Bev decided, leaning back in Eden's faded and frayed Queen Anne dining chair and digging into her own cupcake. "I think this should be your year for sex."

"An entire year, dedicated to sex?" Eden asked with a laugh. She was sure there was nothing more than dust motes and the faint air of neglect floating through the formal dining room. But, still, it was all she could do not to look over her head to see if the wish was written there in the candle smoke.

"You should dedicate this year to the *pursuit* of sex." Bev scrunched up her nose. "I don't want to hurt your feelings or anything, but it might take a little effort on your part," she added.

When was the last time she'd had sex worth the effort? Definitely not with Kenny. Not with any guy, if she were being honest. Eden swirled her fork in the gooey rich chocolate, using it to make a design on the Meissen plate. After all, what better time for brutal self-truths than a girl's twenty-fifth birthday.

Kenny, the last guy she'd had sex with, had broken his foot trying to prove his manliness by doing it against a tree. Instead of accepting that he just wasn't he-man material, he'd blamed her.

No wonder her love life sucked. Look at what she had to work with.

"So I know why I should want good sex," Eden said, standing to clear their plates. "But why is my personal life on your radar?"

She didn't have to look to know Bev was following her to the kitchen. The rat-a-tat-tat of her high heels was a giveaway.

"Janie was in the shop yesterday," Bev said, sounding like her cupcake had been bitter lemon instead of rich chocolate. Bev owned Stylin', the best salon in town. And despite her penchant for wearing her own hair in rag doll fashion, she worked pure magic on everyone else. Enough magic to lure in the well-paying Oceanfront set.

"Ah." Eden didn't need to hear any more than that. She wasn't sure of the what, when and where, but she was sure she was the who the chatter had revolved around. That's how Janie and company worked. They wouldn't check in with Eden directly—they'd go to her best friend and mine for gossip.

"Don't let her get to you." Eden set the plates next to the sink.

"I'm just so tired of them talking about you," Bev grumbled, throwing the cupcake wrappers in the trash so hard that they bounced right back out. "They are all so snooty and rude, with their perfect lives bought and paid for by someone else."

"You think they have perfect sex, bought and paid for, too?" Eden asked, keeping her tone, and her expression, serious. She lost it, though, when Bev glared. Laughing, she asked, "What? You think I should get upset because they are talking about, let me guess... My love life, or lack thereof?"

"Well, it's not like they are saying nice things."

Eden shrugged, so used to pretending she didn't care that it pretty much came naturally to her now.

As if realizing she'd brought the bummer cloud to dim the party atmosphere, Bev clapped her hands together and exclaimed, "Presents! I'll be right back. I'm going to get your gift from the car."

Eden kept a cheery smile of anticipation on her face until the wooden screen door clapped shut behind her

friend, then let it drop. She sighed, tossing the forks into the dishwasher and squirting liquid soap on a sponge.

Hot, happy sex.

Her chances of finding that were about as small and slender as the half-melted candle she'd just blown out.

What a waste of a wish.

She should have used it on her career.

Only out of veterinary school six months, she still had student loans and now a substantial mortgage on this house. It'd taken every bit of daughterly influence she had to convince her mother to let her buy it instead of putting it on the market. It'd also taken her entire savings account and the tiny trust fund left to her by her grandfather, but Eden loved her home and her heritage too much to see it sold to the highest bidder. And then there was the fact that there was enough property for her to set up her veterinary clinic.

With a shake of her head, she carefully dried the china and walked over to place it in the ornate cabinet with the reverence her great-great-great-gramma's plates deserved. Like most of the furnishings in her childhood home, the glass-fronted hutch was an antique. Rattling around here alone all the time, Eden sometimes felt like the house was just waiting for her to join the ranks of antiques so she'd better fit in.

It wasn't that she minded being alone, really. But like sex, sometimes a girl got tired of going it solo.

"The postman drove by when I was at my car," Bev said, returning to the room with a huge polka-dot box with a ribbon as curly as her hair. "I brought your mail in. Look, I think there are a couple of birthday cards here."

More because Bev was looking worried again than because of any curiosity to see who'd remembered her birthday, Eden took the stack of mail. Before she could get to the telltale bright envelopes, she noticed one from the bank. It was addressed to both her and her mother.

"What's up with this," she muttered, tossing the others on the counter and sliding her fingernail under the flap. She and her mother had no bank business together. And since Eleanor was tooling around the country, following the craft fairs in a new RV, Eden didn't hesitate to open the missive.

"What the..." She had to wait for the room to stop spinning and the buzzing to clear from her ears before she could read the letter again.

Nope. The words hadn't changed.

"I'm going to kill her," she muttered through gritted teeth.

"What? Who? Where's a shovel so I can help you bury the evidence."

"My mother took out a loan against the house." Fury pounded at her temples like a gorilla with a sledgehammer. Knowing the words wouldn't change, no matter how many times she glared at them, Eden crumpled the letter in her fist and threw it against the wall.

"I thought the house was yours," Bev said quietly. "I thought you bought it from her."

"My cousin Arnie is a lawyer. He wrote up a legal document that said the house was mine once I took over the mortgage, and then added my name to the title. But he'd advised against transferring it out of my mom's name at that point because I was still carrying student loans and needed the bank to approve another so I could start a new business."

But why hadn't he checked for loans against the property when he'd changed the title?

"She didn't warn you? Talk it over with you before taking out the loan? Give you a heads-up that you were about to get hit with a big ole bill? Nothing?"

"Warn me? She didn't even call to wish me a happy birthday," Eden said, her laugh only a little bitter, wishing she could be as shocked as Bev. "To her credit, she probably forgot."

"About the loan?" Bev scoffed, her freckled face furrowed in fury.

"About my birthday."

And how sad was it that the fact that her mother forgot her birthday hurt more than a bill for thirty grand. Eden reached for the phone, then curled her fingers into her palm. As much as she wanted an explanation, an assurance that the payment-infull had been mailed to the bank, she knew better.

Eleanor Gillespie didn't worry about little things like money. She was too flaky to let the mundane rain on her creative lifestyle.

Glancing at the bank's letter, Eden cringed. Flake or not, her mother had made a mess of things. And, as usual, Eden was the one who had to figure out how to clean it up. Because if she didn't find some money quickly, she could lose the house. The property that'd been in her family for five generations. Her home, her place of business.

Her life.

As if reading her mind, Bev asked, "What are you going to do?"

Eden blinked fast to clear the dampness from her eyes. What she wasn't going to do was cry, dammit.

"I guess I'm going to find thirty thousand dollars." Where on earth was she going to find that on top of her other debts? And why hadn't her mother arranged for a repayment plan? Coming up with that kind of money in one fell swoop was close to impossible. Eden rubbed her fingers against the sudden pounding in her temple, then walked over to retrieve the letter. She'd have to study it, contact the bank, so she understood all the details.

"You're really going to take on your mother's loan?"

"It's against my property. I have to take it on. At least, until she turns up again and deals with it herself. But she's tooling across the country from craft fair to art show right now. I have no idea when I'll hear from her. Or when she'll come home and clean up her mess."

"How are you going to get the money?"

Hell if she knew.

Every penny she earned was earmarked. Despite her fancy address, she was living a ramen noodle lifestyle here.

There was nothing of value to sell. Oh, sure, she still had her great-grandma's china and there were a few antiques left floating around. But they were all she had left of her family. Well, those and her mother. And right now she was pretty sure the china was worth more.

Eden took a deep breath. There had to be a way through this. She just had to think. Think, Eden.

Her eyes fell on a square envelope embossed with ivy and roses. The monthly garden club meeting. She wrinkled her nose, wondering if they resented having to send her the invitation as much as she hated getting it.

Because she was the last person the socially upstanding ladies wanted invading their exclusive get-togethers. But the Gillespie name guaranteed her an invitation.

"The Oceanfront set," she exclaimed, snapping her fingers.

"What was the question again?" Bev asked with a confused look.

"I'll hit up the country club ladies."

"For loans?"

Eden cringed. Handouts? Oh hell, no. She was nobody's charity case.

"For clients. They are all big on their designer pets. I just have to get two, maybe three of them to start using my veterinary services, and more will follow."

"How much are you going to charge?" Bev asked, her eyes huge with a horrified sort of glee.

Eden laughed.

"Just enough that they consider the services exclusive. All it will take is a few of them using me as their vet, a little behind the scenes hype and pretty soon I'll have a well-heeled clientele. I might not be able to pay off the entire loan at once, but if I can get enough of a down payment and show the bank that I have the potential income, I'll bet I can swing a deal."

Maybe.

And maybe was all she needed.

Eden reached for the phone again, quickly dialing the head of the Garden Club.

Five minutes and three grimaces later, she hung up with a triumphant smile.

"Why'd you RSVP for two?" Bev asked, pulling her head out of the pantry to give Eden a suspicious look.

"Because you're going with me."

"Oh, no," Bev declared, emptying an armload of bins and jars onto the chipped tile counter. "I'm not a member. They won't let me in."

"You're my guest."

"They aren't going to want me there," Bev predicted.

"They don't want me there, either." Eden shrugged. "They'll just have to deal with us. Because I need you with me."

"For moral support?"

Eden wasn't sure how much good moral support would be when faced with forcing a tight-knit group of women to accept an outsider at one of their chichi meetings. But she did need someone to play off. Someone who could talk up her veterinary skills and give her the verbal setups she'd need to spike home her point if this plan was going to work.

"What are you doing?" Eden asked, eying the eggs and butter that had just joined the flour, brown sugar and peanut butter.

"This is clearly a cookie situation," Bev said, digging a bag of chocolate morsels out of the freezer.

Before Eden could decide if the two of them eating what, if the butter and eggs were anything to go by, would be a double batch of peanut butter chocolate chip cookies was a good idea, there was a rumbling outside.

Company? Or another birthday surprise? Maybe her mother had found a way to send the plague by UPS.

Or, Eden squinted, in a shiny new Jaguar.

"Hey, cool. It's like the birthday fairy heard your wish," Bev joked, joining Eden at the door to see who was pulling up the weather-pitted driveway.

Recognizing the car, Eden frowned.

Even though they were neighbors, Robert Sullivan never visited.

So the only way the birthday fairy was playing into this particular arrival was if his son, Cade, had hijacked the Jag and was driving up to make all of Eden's fantasies come true.

Cade Sullivan.

Tall, blond and gorgeous, with hypnotic green eyes and more charm than a proud momma's bracelet. The sexiest guy to ever set foot in Ocean Point. High school quarterback. Class president. Navy SEAL. Her hero.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Allen Brown:

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