

OPEN  
DOOR

*Invitation*



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### **Open Door Invitation**

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## Open Door Invitation

The first time I spied the dark silhouette of a man standing just outside the doorway, cold fear swept over my limbs as a scream tried and failed to claw its way out of my throat. Paralyzed, I stood there, watching him as he watched me. No part of my anatomy would obey my brain's commands to turn and flee into the safety of my bedroom only a few feet away. Hell, even my breathing stopped. Only my heart hammering inside my chest heard the internal pleas for my body to do *something*.

"You shouldn't leave your door open like this."

I didn't recognize the voice. I certainly had no idea where he came from. I did start breathing again though.

His voice was rich, deep and reminded me of a truffle I once tried on a dare. None of us thought the dark chocolate seasoned with cayenne could elicit such a powerful reaction. Not until the moment it melted on my tongue.

That his simple admonishment could send the memory rushing back should have been a warning. Instead of heeding it, I fought the urge to lick my lips, now dry from the memory of that day. All because of his sultry voice.

He cocked his head to the side, the shadows still hiding his face from me. I couldn't see them, but I knew I didn't imagine the heat of his eyes. The trail he blazed started at my feet and traveled up to my face. As if he tried to memorize every inch of me.

A sound escaped my throat. Not the scream of terror still stifled beneath my cowardice, but the strangled squeak a tired couch might make if someone dared bounce on it.

For some reason, he considered that a request to leave. Without saying another word, he turned and left. The doorway brightened, as if it too was relieved by the absence of his menace.

In this serene neighborhood, the most heinous crimes usually involved teenagers and joyrides. Startled into action by something so out of the ordinary, I could bet my life the police would arrive in under five minutes when I called.

*If I called.*

What would I tell them? Some man stood outside of my door and gave me the advice any grown woman living alone should already know? I could hear their laughter now.

With a start, I realized I could move, the spell he cast on me lifted. Instead of fleeing into my bedroom for the phone, I ran to the back door, pulling it closed. It slammed shut, the loud clap a whisper compared to the sound of the deadbolt sliding into place a moment later.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sometimes I wonder about my memory.

Four months later, one would think that night stayed forever engraved into my mind. The stark terror, the strong grip of uncertainty, the powerful apprehension laying claim to me on that night should have prevented me from making the same error again.

But I didn't think about it even one iota when I left the door open.

I enjoy grilling in relative darkness, the glow of embers against a night sky hypnotic in its simple beauty. On occasion, I have to retreat into my living room away from the smoke sure to clog my lungs. But not tonight. I couldn't have asked for better cooperation from the gentle breeze, the heady smoke and the cool night air.

Wafting in from outside, the enticing smell of sizzling meat over a charcoal flame made my stomach howl with anticipation. On my meager budget, tonight was a rare treat. A moment to be savored.

Glass of red wine in hand, I danced around my living room, almost giddy with joy of what was to come and at the same time, fatigued from a long day.

So I danced in circles, killing time. About three more minutes to go. I could already taste the succulent bites I would take in a little while. Just a few minutes more until perfection called for me.

Light on my feet, I twirled closer to the door, only noticing the bulk looming in the darkness beyond right before I crossed the threshold. My mind registered the size and shape as quick as snoose through a goose as my grandpop would say. Even faster, I

skidded to a halt, almost toppling over in the process, but managing to catch myself just in time.

Memories flooded over me in pounding waves and I recalled too late his previous advice. I shouldn't leave the door open.

To this day, I really can't say why I wasn't more terrified. If I had to pinpoint, maybe it had to do with knowing somehow this was the same man who could have tried something before but hadn't. That a timid noise drove him off the last time.

Naïve? Sure.

But I was curious too.

"Nice night."

Jesus. That voice. That sultry, decadent voice. How could two little words sound so much like an invitation to sin?

"It is," I replied. The tremulousness of my own voice might have been my body's natural fear peeking out. Or maybe a barely disguised longing dropping in to say hello.

I waited a few beats, but he didn't move and neither did I. Impatient, I dusted off the courage gathering cobwebs deep in my psyche and decided to do something against my nature. I asked him a question.

"Who are you?"

I heard noise coming from the darkness. A crinkle of cellophane.

"Just someone out enjoying the night air." He followed the statement with movement. More crinkling resulted. Then a match slid against sandpaper, whispering a secret so scandalous it could only react by exploding into a brief flare of light. It was through that bit of illumination, when flame met cigarette, that I got to see the face belonging to that voice.

And my poor, beleaguered heart stopped beating.

Not literally, of course. But great moonpies in the sky, if I thought the sound coming from a mere mortal could make between my thighs grow slick, the vision of the god standing before me hastened me to near orgasmic.

The light and shadows caught him just right. Highlighted deep, brooding eyes, high cheekbones, a sculpted nose and full lips pouting over a stubbled chin. In that glimpse, that brief flash of unveiling, I realized why artists drove themselves to madness trying to capture the beauty of man. In that moment, my fingers itched for pencil and paper, for a camera, for clay... for anything with which to immortalize him for my personal viewing pleasure.

One simple glance.

We stood in darkness together again, but that memory, it stayed with me. My stunned silence must have amused him. I could hear the smile in his voice.

"You left the door open," he said. The end of the cigarette glowed red as he spoke, ghostly white puffs of smoke lingered in the air. The slow mesmerizing dance held my attention.

I pointed my chin at the smoke. "That'll kill you, you know."

"Not me."

I couldn't see his face any longer, but he continued with the same amused, smiling tone. For some reason, that made me smile back.

We stared at each other for a moment longer before he started to turn. At the last second, he stopped. Looking over his shoulder at me, he said, "You shouldn't leave your door open like this."

Feeling bold, I took a diminutive step forward. "If you come back another time and find that door open, mister, you can—"

"Careful," he cautioned softly.

"Come on in."

I didn't see it, not really, but I swear he kind of *shuddered* at my words. It didn't stop him from leaving for good though.

Too bad, because I could have used the company and might have invited him to join me. The steak, although a little more overcooked than I would have liked, was divine.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the middle of August, a person without an air-conditioner living in Florida was begging for heat stroke. The repairman said two days. Two days of hell before he could get the part needed to fix my antiquated machinery. I fumbled with the idea of purchasing a window unit in the meanwhile, but it seemed almost pointless.

The ceiling fans in my small bungalow served to stir the humid air, adding to my misery. Stubbornly, I refused to turn them off. A hot breeze was better than none at all. I did turn off almost all of the lights. One tiny lamp in the corner served to provide what illumination I needed.

Too hot to sleep, I cranked open every window, threw open the back door and lounged against the soft couch wearing no more than a flimsy pair of cotton panties and a bra. Still, rivulets of sweat made zigzagging trails over my skin. The condensation from a small bowl of ice similarly sweated puddles on my coffee table. Any other day, it would have annoyed the tar out of me, but right now it wasn't going anywhere. I dipped my fingertips in the cool water and flicked it on my sizzling skin every couple of minutes.

Nights were supposed to be refreshing, a time for renewing strength. This night I wilted, waiting for morning to come so I could head to the library or the mall or any place else that offered free air conditioning to someone who didn't have the money to actually purchase anything. Until then, I lay dejected, my skin sticking to the couch, peeling away with a sickening sound any time I shifted.

By now, his presence did little more than ruffle me. When the doorway filled with the dark shadow of a man, a thrill traveled through me. Not a thrill of fear, but excitement.

I couldn't see him well, but knew he hesitated at the threshold. I watched him as he stood there in a black t-shirt, which clung to muscled arms and a defined chest. It was tucked into fitted dark pants. Comfortable looking loafers peeked from beneath.

When I looked up again, I realized he'd caught me scrutinizing him. Our eyes locked onto each other. From this position, I could barely see much more than something akin to desire flaring in his gaze. He took a step forward and for the first

time, even if by one foot, technically stood inside my house. He hesitated again, as if waiting for my permission or for me to react with a scream or some such nonsense.

Miserable, I didn't move. The heat weighed me down too much for me to be bothered. Besides, I owned nothing of value. The only danger might have been to my person. Since twice before he had the opportunity to mug, rape or otherwise maim me but left me untouched, unscathed and in truth, longing, I held my breath, silently urging him to come further inside.

He did.

The soft glow of lamp light retreated with each step he took. His presence sucked the light from the room, bringing with him instead the darkness of the night. Perhaps another warning I should have heeded. I was too busy pressing my thighs together to give it more than fleeting attention.

He glanced into the bowl of water on the table. The ice cubes were no longer existent, having long since given up the fight. When he dropped to his knees, he kept his attention fixed on me but found the bowl with his hand. Long, slender fingers met the cool water and when he pulled them out again, water dripped from them in fat droplets.

The shock of his fingers on my thigh made my breath catch. My nipples hardened, my pussy clenched from the intimacy of the caress. Not just the cold affected me. The way he stroked over me, learning my thigh, made my heart stutter.

The water rolled down my skin and onto the couch. He spared me no more than a second's glance before his head lowered. A soft moan escaped my lips as his warm tongue traced the path of the cool liquid. His mouth could have been molten fire, a direct contrast to the fingertips exploring me. Sharp teeth scraped my flesh, each delicious slice a shock to the system, and caused me to arch into his touches.

My eyelids fluttered closed, my mind drunk with yearning. I shouldn't allow him to do this. A virtual stranger walked into my home and within seconds tasted the sweat of my body. Used his tongue to give life to goose bumps and shivers. Expert fingers teased until my moans and sighs whispered into the humid air.

Dear God, I couldn't help the way my thighs spread before him. My panties were damp, not just from the heat of the night, but from the heat he generated within me. He continued to spread cool water over my skin, never going higher than the edge of cloth covering my sex.

Despite my writhing, the twist of my hips encouraging, pleading with him for more, he moved patiently. Lingering over me until he knew my skin inch by inch. Staying there until he could determine what it felt like when doused with water or sucked dry by his mouth.

When at last his hands slipped beneath the sides of my panties, I raked my fingers through his hair. Although he hummed a soft noise of approval, no relief came to me.

My lover — *Jesus ... I didn't even know his name* — pressed burning kisses over my panty line, stopping long enough on occasion to pull on the material with his teeth. I almost watched, but the image of this man's head between my thighs made me dizzy with anticipation each time I tried. His grip tightened against my sweat-slickened skin. If my lack of clothing bothered him, he did an admirable job of not showing it. Instead, he pulled me closer, alternately licking the water he drizzled as well as my body's perspiration. Then he hovered over my pussy.

In thirty-one years of living, I have never ached for something so badly in all of my life. And he seemed to know it.

He just waited there.

I watched him deeply inhale the scent of my arousal. He even looked up at me beneath hooded lids. The flash of his midnight-dark eyes caused my heart to pound. They were decadent, raw, and undressed me in a way that was more intimate than what he was about to do.

My thighs trembled in his hands, my hips writhed and I hissed in frustration, but he waited.

Then he grasped my panties in his large fists, in the slowest, most excruciating way, enough that I ignored the sharp bite of pain he created. I forgot the tightness of the

material as it bunched against me. All I could focus on was the slow drag he created when he started pulling the hated material down. When he peeled it away from my body, my musky scent perfumed the air.

He maneuvered out of the way just long enough to free me completely before resting his head over my pussy again. When his lips descended, I thought the electricity he sparked would ignite the both of us.

His mouth consumed me.

I couldn't contain my cries as his broad tongue stroked over me, found my clit and teased the hardened nub into submission. He attacked my pussy with extreme prejudice, teeth and tongue marking themselves as masters. Then with brutal force he slipped two fingers inside of me and my world exploded.

My body went rigid as the orgasm raced through my limbs, ignited my overheated blood and turned my insides to lava. I was dimly aware of a sharp pain, but the pleasure to which he subjected me overrode all other sensations. The mere act of breathing threatened to be more than my overwrought system could handle.

I floated back down to earth, realizing finally his thumb stroked my sensitive clit. His fingers thrust leisurely inside of me. My body's moisture coated between my thighs. I calmed my breathing as best I could.

If I thought I was hot before ...

Long fingers wiped the excess moisture from his chin and lips after he lifted his head. That's when I saw the red.

"Oh, Christ, I'm sorry!"

He didn't seem fazed. Just licked his fingers with the enthusiasm of a gourmand.

I rambled on. "You're bleeding or I'm bleeding ..." I grimaced. "I don't know what happened ..."

I realized two things at that moment. First, his fingers were still inside of me. Moving with sensual ease. Second, and most important, the inside of my thigh burned.

The burning wasn't the heat of the night or the heat of the way he manipulated my body. It was a sharp sting, gaining in focus and intensity, spreading so acutely it rivaled my recent orgasm in speed. My hands trembled and I let out another moan.

I knew somewhere in the back of my mind that he withdrew himself to stand above me. I saw him tugging his shirt out of his slacks, loosen the belt at his waist. Through a haze, I watched him undress, male perfection revealed to me as he pulled away the layer of clothing.

I saw all of this but didn't move or react. I was too busy being consumed by wave after unrelenting wave of pleasure. The sting, which began at my thigh, melted into pure ecstasy, heaven on earth. Shudders wracked my body and I fought to control them. I had to rub my thighs together to ease my aching, needing pussy.

The bra covering my chest chafed against my skin. I made quick work of removing it, exposing myself completely to him.

He nudged my thighs open and I glimpsed the lovely hardness of him up close for the first time. His arousal leaked from him and I reached forward, catching some of it on my thumb. I swiped at it with my tongue, tasting copper and salt and musk and desire rolled up into one.

When he impaled me with his cock, my urgency calmed to a quiet roar.

He rode me for hours or days or an eternity. His lips traveled over my neck, raining down kisses on both sides. Sometimes his teeth scraped me. Sometimes I felt a sting similar to the one at my thigh. Sometimes I only felt the delicate brush of his cool lips.

A craving for him rose with such ferocity I forgot to question the red stain of his mouth. The flash of teeth too white and canines too long didn't hit me until later.

I had this *need*. This *hunger*.

The pulse at the base of his neck throbbed. My body throbbed with it. I could hear the blood rushing through his body. He matched the rhythm of his lovemaking against it.

He knew. He knew my hunger, my craving. He knew it and fed my desire.

“Now,” he urged through clenched teeth. A strangled command. He was close. I didn’t think. I just gave in. I heard the call and was helpless to do anything but follow it.

When my teeth sank into his flesh, when I pulled the sweet taste of his blood into my mouth for the first time, another orgasm rocketed through me. He stiffened against me, his cock sending a torrent of his cum against my womb. My pussy drank from him, pulling his offering in spasms that echoed through me.

I heard him moan, a rich sound that sent another surge of want through me. He panted in my arms, as if he struggled to breathe. The quick puffs of his breath against my hair for some reason reminded me to pull away.

“Lick the wound. Seal it.”

I did as instructed.

He pressed his mouth against mine. A gentle kiss of approval. He was still hard inside of me, and despite the heat of the room, I did not want him to leave. He didn’t seem to have plans to remove himself anyway. As if he read my mind, he pushed forward, gliding back a moment later.

Against a flutter of pleasure, I tried to gather my thoughts. “What have you done?” I whispered. It morphed into a moan.

“I’ve traveled a long time without a companion. It was time.”

His body inside mine distracted me, but I knew the answer to my question before I’d even asked. I’ve seen the movies and read the books. By now, I knew what he was. I didn’t know they existed. Not until now. That he wanted company didn’t surprise me, not if what they said about their longevity was true and not just fiction.

“I don’t know your name. I don’t know you.”

“Lucien. We have a lifetime to get to know each other.”

I could feel myself rushing headlong toward another pinnacle and tried to suppress it for just a moment longer. “Why me? Why now?”

“Some of the things they say about us are exaggerated. But believe it or not, some things are very, very true.” He swept my mouth with another drugging kiss. “I’ve

watched you for close to a year now and stupidly hesitant, didn't know the best way to approach you. How to tell you about me, who I am. That is, not until ..."

"Yes?" I tried to focus. Tried to stay with the conversation, but he was doing things to my body which distracted me beyond reason.

"Not until you invited me in."

On a fleeting memory, I remembered the door. My words to him that night.

But then my body reached for the stars and I pushed aside that matter for now and gave myself over to bliss.

*The End*

### **Author Bio**

Dee Carney is an award-winning, best-selling author of paranormal and contemporary romances. She lives at home in Georgia with her husband and their four-legged children. To learn more about all of Dee's books, please visit her on the web at <http://www.deecarney.com>.