

A Samhain Publishing Freebie

*A Little Harmless
Kalikimaka*

Melissa Schroeder

Dear Reader,

I hope you enjoy *A Little Harmless Kalikimaka*. Be sure to read Cynthia and Chris' story in *A Little Harmless Pleasure*, now available in [print](#) and [digital](#). *A Little Harmless Obsession*, Evan's story, is coming in 2010 from Samhain Publishing.

Mele Kalikimaka,
Melissa

A Little Harmless Kalikimaka

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"Pussy whipped."

Chris turned off his office computer and threw a nasty look at one of his best friends Evan Chambers .

"What did you just call me?"

"You heard me."

The smile Evan offered him told Chris he was itching for a fight. Well, dammit he wasn't going to give it to him. He didn't want to propose to Cynthia with a black eye or busted lip. And with Evan, there was always a chance that could happen.

"If you think I am, why did you insist on going with me to pick up the ring?"

Evan shrugged. "You were acting like you needed moral support."

Chris did. Picking up the ring he had designed for Cynthia was the next to the final step in his plan for Christmas. They had slipped away after Cynthia left for work. And, he knew how much of a friend Evan was when he agreed to go to Kahala Mall on Christmas Eve.

But now they were back at Dupree's, Chris' restaurant, Chris was worried Cynthia would say no.

He knew she loved him. That he had not one doubt about. But, marriage, that was a whole other kettle of fish. She'd been engaged before, to one of his best friends. And he knew that she had been adamant that she would only marry when she felt as if she could trust a man. She trusted him...but was it enough?

"Why do you want to screw it all up with marriage?" Evan asked. He wasn't being an ass. Evan just opposed any permanent relationships. Of course, with Evan's childhood, Chris understood.

"I just do. I want the whole thing."

"And if she says no?"

Chris shrugged and willed his second thoughts away. He wanted Cynthia as his wife, wanted her to be there by his side. And, he wanted children. He would do it without the ring and license if that is what she needed to be her. It had taken her a long time to find the true Cynthia and he would not do anything to damage that. It would drive him insane, but he would do it for her.

"You're such a traditionalist," Evan said as he chuckled.

It was a put down for anyone who lived the lifestyle. Who would think a man who lived as a switch would want all the trappings of marriage, but he did.

"What can I say? It probably has something to do with my upbringing."

Evan clapped his hand on Chris shoulder. "Tell you what. If she turns you down, just let me know. I'll be happy to step in, help out."

Chris shot him a look that would have scared most men, but Evan smiled.

"Kiss ass, Chambers."

Evan unfolded his length from one of the office chairs and stretched his arms above his head. "I gotta get going."

"Plans?"

Evan shook his head. "I need some down time to recover from that crazy mall trip."

Chris cocked his head and studied his friend. Something had been bothering him, but he had yet to confide in Chris.

"Are you and Micah coming over tomorrow?"

Evan and Micah were business partners and friends. Neither had family and Cynthia had adopted them in a way.

Evan rubbed his stomach. "There is no way I am missing any of the cookies your magnolia has baked. We'll be there around noon."

After the door shut behind Evan and Chris started thinking about his plans for the night. The only thing left to do was lock up the restaurant, pick Cynthia up from work, and then ask her to marry him.

He just hoped she said yes.

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Chris stopped just inside Cynthia's new bakery kitchen and smiled. Who would have thought the buttoned down, uptight woman he'd met in Georgia would be so happy playing in a kitchen? Her face was flush with exertion, her unruly blonde hair curling around her face. The smudge of flour on her nose added, rather than detracted, from her appearance.

Satisfaction whipped through him because he knew he was part of the reason for her happiness. It had taken them awhile and he'd almost screwed it up. But thank god for Cynthia's patient and her love. Now, if he could keep everything he had planned for tonight a secret just a bit longer, everything would be great. He'd used subterfuge to keep his Christmas present a secret, but with it being Christmas Eve he figured he'd succeeded. Besides, he didn't think he could wait any longer.

She noticed him then and smiled, the joy and beauty of it hit him square in the chest. He would never get used to seeing her like this. Even as the gravity of his plans weighed on his shoulders, he smiled. There was nothing else he could do. Her happiness was his quest in life.

"Hello, lover," she said with that soft, sweet Georgia accent. She came to him, the smell of cinnamon and vanilla filled his senses as she pressed her body against his. "I've missed you."

She leaned up and brushed her mouth against his. Just enough to tempt, not enough to please. Still, his blood heated and his heart beat sped up.

"Hey, cherie. Are you about ready to head home?"

"Yep. I even have some biscotti for breakfast tomorrow. Your favorite flavor."

"Chocolate macadamia nut."

She smiled. "Of course. Let me double check the locks on the front door and I'll be ready to go." He watched her sashay out of the kitchen and took a deep breath. His body was already craving her. He needed her more each day, and tonight, he would make sure that she would stay around forever.

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Cynthia hummed with pleasure as Chris' hands slipped up over her arms to her wrists. Heat shimmered over her flesh as he teased her. She curled her fingers into the soft red handcuffs he had latched onto her earlier. They'd been her birthday present and they were his favorite cuffs to use on her.

He'd barely touched her and she was ready to explode. Her attempt to keep herself under control was getting harder by the minute. But, it was her lover's fault. There was something about him tonight. Every now and then she heard something in her voice she couldn't interpret. Whatever it was, she was responding to it. Chris definitely wanted to be the Dom tonight.

Chris straddled her naked body—he was still fully clothed—and smiled down at her. "Now, rules of the game tonight. You do not speak unless spoken to."

She opened her mouth and he chuckled as he placed a finger on her mouth. "Ah, now don't make me punish you right off the bat, cherie."

She had to fight the bubble of laughter that welled up in her throat. Although she was sure she'd enjoy whatever punishment he came up with, she wasn't going to let him win so easily. Being switches, they enjoyed taking turns being in charge. It was always a challenge to see how long the submissive could hold out.

"Good girl." He trailed his fingers down her arm again. "I have something special for you."

Excitement surged as he continued down her body, his fingers roaming over her flesh. The room was cool but her skin was hot. Each inch he covered with his hands burned. It was like this every time, and in the time she had known him it had yet to dissipate. Every time he touched her, she melted. It had not changed since the day she met him.

He bent his head and took a nipple between his lips. His teeth brushed over the tip, then he covered it with his mouth. As he swirled his tongue around the base, his fingers teased her other nipple. Heat surged, her whole body lighting up. Before she was satisfied, he was moving down, his mouth gliding over her flesh. He moved over her stomach. Her muscles bunched, tightening with desire. He broke the tension when he dipped his tongue into her belly button. She giggled in response, but it ended on a moan as he slipped between her legs.

He brushed his thumbs over her slit, then slipped a finger inside.

"Look at me." She hesitated and his voice hardened. "Now, Cynthia."

She did as ordered. As he lowered his head he didn't break eye contact. He touched his mouth to her pussy, immediately brushing his tongue over her clit. Heat singed along her nerve endings as she shuddered, her orgasm just out of reach. Before she was satisfied, he pulled away and smacked her pussy.

"I didn't say you could come."

Cynthia bit her lip to keep from responding.

He chuckled. "You please me, Cynthia."

She shivered against her rising need. It wasn't going to take much because she was almost there, but she knew he was in a mood to control. His authoritative tone always got her wet, got her heart pumping. Instantly, she wanted to please him, wanted to be rewarded. No one who saw her act out her Domme role would think she were the same woman. But when Chris took charge, she could give him her trust, her body and her soul.

Chris spread her legs wider and the cool air washed over her heated pussy. She had to resist the urge to close her legs to relieve some of the pressure. There would be hell to pay if she even tried it, even though she knew it impossible with Chris in between her legs. He rested his hand on her mound once again, then he lowered his head and set to driving her insane once more. This time, he didn't hold back. He slid his tongue between her damp folds, then up to tease her clit. Every bit of tension slipped to between her legs, her body begging for relief. When she thought she couldn't take it anymore, he lifted his head.

"Look at me, cherie. Now."

Lust deepened his accent. She used all of her strength to open her eyes and do as he commanded. The moment they locked eyes, he slipped his finger between her folds and pressed his thumb against her clit. In that next instant, the dam burst. She screamed as her orgasm rolled through her and she arched against his hand.

She was still shivering from her release when he pulled back and began tearing at his clothes. It only took seconds, but it seemed like forever as he tossed them behind him on the floor. He settled between her legs on his knees. Grabbing her hips, it pulled her up and pushed inside of her with one hard, swift thrust.

His fingers dug into her flesh as he pulled out and thrust back in again. With measured ease, he built her back up, her body tensing again for another orgasm. He pulled her legs up to his shoulders, changing the direction of his thrusts. The tension in her stomach grew, slipped down, and with one fast hard thrust, he pushed her over the edge. She screamed his name as she came. His rhythm changed, sped up, became erratic. She was just coming down from her orgasm when Chris pushed her back over again, her body convulsing with her release. He joined her this time, her name on his lips as he followed her into ecstasy.

Moments later, he released her legs and collapsed on top of her. He freed her wrists and pulled her close to him, his heart beating the same rhythm with hers.

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Cynthia came awake slowly. She stretched her arms over her head and enjoyed the pleasant pull of well-used muscles. She knew she should get up, but the bed was so warm

and comfy. Still, as she felt herself drifting back to sleep, the scent of tomatoes, pepper and garlic reached her. Her stomach grumbled and she sighed realizing that her body was not going to allow her to be a slug. It was probably close to ten at night and her last real meal had been lunch at about eleven that morning.

She pushed herself out of bed and grabbed one of Chris' t-shirts off a chair that sat in the corner. After slipping it over her head, she padded barefoot down the hall and found Chris in front of the stove. Quietly, she stood and watched him, and thought about the first time she saw him cooking. She'd taken a big leap of faith and come to Hawaii. One of the first things she had done was go to his restaurant. She knew the moment she walked into his kitchen it had been worth the chance. Other men looked good at the beach or working out. Chris looked good at those things too, but when he was cooking, he was in his element. Maybe it was because he was doing something he loved, or he used the same dedicated attention when he cooked as when he made love to her. He was irresistible like this.

He flipped a pan of sautéing vegetables and moved to grab the olive oil. It was then that all that attention moved from the stove to her. And just like the first time she had walked into his kitchen, her whole body lit up like the Friday night fireworks in Waikiki. The smile that moved over his face shot right to her heart. Damn, she would never get used to the love and acceptance he gave her.

"I thought you'd sleep a little longer. You've been working too hard, cherie."

She smiled as she walked to him. "I tried, but then, you started cooking in here. How can I stay in bed with something so delectable simmering in the kitchen?"

She slipped her arms around his waist and laid her head on his chest. His chuckle vibrated against her cheek.

"Is it the food I'm cooking or something else you're interested in?"

She smiled up at him. "Both. But, at the moment, my stomach is grumbling."

He laughed, patted her on the butt, and let her go. "I thought I would get us something to eat. Jambalaya."

"Hmm. I figured from the smell." Chris was originally from New Orleans and it infused all of his cooking.

She walked over to grab a couple of bowls but he stopped her. "I set the table."

"Oh, well, I need a drink—"

"I'll get it."

His voice was abrupt and the shift in mood startled her. He was avoiding eye contact, something not normal for Chris.

She opened her mouth and he sighed.

"Just go sit down."

Cynthia frowned but did as he asked. She rounded the corner to sit down at the breakfast bar. Chris stopped her.

"In the dining room."

She paused and looked over her shoulder at him. He'd gone back to working with the food at the stove and was muttering something under his breath. Cynthia listened for a second but gave up when she realized that she couldn't make out what he was saying.

With a sigh and a shrug, she went to the dining room. It was odd because they normally didn't use it but for special occasions or when they had company. She stepped into the room and came to an abrupt halt. Candles covered every available surface bringing a golden glow to the room. The table was set for two. He used the good china and an elaborate candelabra she had never seen before. She shook her head. The man never failed to amaze her.

She approached her chair and found a small wrapped package on the plate. Her heart leapt into her throat. She glanced over her shoulder and found Chris leaning against the door jamb watching her with a guarded expression.

"May I?" she asked.

"It's yours."

She picked up the package and pulled the red ribbon, then slowly took off the wrapping. She opened the box to find a cork from a bottle of Dom Perignon in the box. Confused, she picked it up and set the box down on the table. This time when she looked at him, he was walking toward her.

"What's this from?" she asked.

"Do you remember the night we met?"

She chuckled. "Most parts. I mean I had a lot of champagne..."

She looked down at the cork again. Memories of their first night flashed through her head. Dancing with Max...her confession to Anna...telling Chris she wanted to lick him. It was the beginning of a whole new Cynthia, one she liked much better than her previous self. And it all began with their night together thanks to her overindulgence of champagne. Tears sprang into her eyes.

"I kept it all this time. I packed it away in my suitcase, then I would take it out and look at it before you moved here."

She looked up at him, but her vision was blurred. She couldn't swallow past the lump in her throat.

"I knew that night you were the one for me."

She finally swallowed. "You did?"

He nodded. "Granted, I almost screwed it up along the way, but that night, I fell in love with you. If it took moving to Valdosta, Georgia, I would have done it. It's corny to say, but I knew you were my other half. I had never had a woman who made me so complete, in and out of the bedroom."

She sniffed and held the cork to her chest.

"Chris...I love you so much."

"That's good because I have another gift."

"This is plenty," she protested, but he shook his head.

He pulled another box out of his pants pocket. This one was covered with red velvet. He went down on one knee and a fresh wave of tears filled her eyes and poured down her cheeks.

"I want to make this permanent. Marry me, Cynthia."

He opened the box and in the satin lining sat the most perfect ring. Not a boring solitaire diamond, but a sapphire surrounded by a ring of colored stones.

"Cynthia."

She looked at his face and was surprised to find worry darkening his eyes.

She cupped his cheek and bent down to give him a kiss. "I can't imagine what would have happened to me if I hadn't met you. There isn't another man in the world for me. Yes, I'll marry you."

He smiled, a flashing brilliant smile that lit up his whole face and those wonderful chocolate eyes. He stood, pulled the ring out of the box and slipped the ring on her finger. "You don't mind that it isn't a diamond? I just don't see you liking that."

She shook her head as she slid her arms around his waist.

"Good, because every time you look at it, I want you to think of me...and the way I see you. You are all those colors and more, cherie."

Tears continued down her cheeks. Love filled her, warmed her, the lump growing in her throat. "Oh, Chris, only because of you."

Chris cupped her face brushing his fingers over her cheeks. "You were there all along. I just brought out the naughty bits."

She laughed and brushed her mouth over his. "That you do, and I'm gonna show you just how naughty."

Grabbing his hand, she dragged him in the direction of the bedroom.

"Dinner..." He protested weakly as he chuckled.

"Will keep, but *I* will not."

"I do live to serve."

She pulled him into the room and into her arms as she laughed, her heart filled with love.



About the Author

Melissa Schroeder is an AF brat born at an Army hospital, so she has always been a little screwy. Years of watching Python and her crazy family further warped her. She is now married to a Major in the AF and raising her own AF brats and has had close to thirty short stories, novellas and novels released since her debut in 2004. She is happy to report that they are finally living some place where the bugs die in the winter.

If you want to contact Melissa, be sure to stop by her website, www.melissaschroeder.net for all things Harmless, including another free Harmless story.