

THE UNMASKING

an erotic short romance

by
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Thirteen-year-old Taylor Edwards put *Pride and Prejudice* down on the window seat along with her strong eye glasses and ran to the mirror. She was smart all right, just like Miss Elizabeth Bennet. But she was afraid her stupid Super Nose and disgusting bushy eyebrows would ruin any chance of finding her Mr. Darcy.

She ran, full of hope, to find her mother, who, as usual, was typing madly at her computer and didn't glance up when Taylor appeared.

Taylor asked, "Mama, Mama, am I pretty?"

Needing to finish her paragraph, her mother said without looking at her, "Darling, you are different. And...interesting." When she looked up to hug her daughter, she was gone. Taylor ran outside, dress notwithstanding, and beat up Johnny Bolt. As usual. And threw him into the bushes. As usual.

From that day on, the only parties Taylor Edwards ever enjoyed were costume parties where she could wear a beautiful dress and a mask. And pretend to be who she wanted to be. She even liked it when Johnny kissed her on the mouth beneath her mask during the Halloween "Spin the Bottle" game.

Now a grown woman Taylor clicked efficiently in her low-heeled pumps into her company's R&D regional meeting. She was confident and thoroughly prepared with her presentation to wow upper management from corporate headquarters. And she did. Facts, figures, statistics and visionary projections were her thing. The VIPs surrounded her with accolades and congratulations. She glowed.

The Senior V.P. of the company said, "Taylor, we want you to be sure and join us at our annual Black Tie Gala in the city. She froze. The thirteen-year-old Taylor came back, fear driving her away into the little girls' room. She slammed the stall door shut and locked it. She shook, she broke out in a cold sweat. Even though the adult had tweezed her eyebrows and highlighted her shaggy brown hair with white and gold streaks, her eyesight alas was too bad to be corrected with Lasik or contacts. To spite her mother who had offered to pay for a nose job, she had kept her own Super Nose.

One month later she and her best friend Melissa stepped up the outdoor marble staircase to the gala. Melissa wore customary black. Taylor had chosen a white and silver princess A-line with a slit that exposed her shapely leg up to the middle of her thigh. "You look absolutely stunning in that gown. Like a princess."

"Thank you, Meliss. How great to have a friend like you." She hugged her and with that encouragement dared to wish she might meet someone exciting for a change.

The next moment that Melissa looked over at her friend, Taylor had put on a gorgeous white and silver feathered eye mask that covered her nose.

Melissa stared. "You've got to be kidding! This isn't a costume ball."

"For me it's got to be, or I don't go in."

"Well, you'll be a sensation, that's for sure."

“Just one problem. I can’t see without my glasses.”

Melissa shook her head. “I’ll get you into the ballroom. After that, I’ll be cruising and you’re on your own.”

They entered to many murmurs from the crowd. Melissa spotted a circle of men over by the bar. “You belong over there with the VIP’s,” she said to Taylor.

“Forget it. I don’t feel like schmoozing.”

Melissa grabbed Taylor’s arm. “Omigosh there is one drop-dead gorgeous guy over there with our Senior V.P.! I want to meet him even if you don’t. He must be six three, wavy blonde hair. He’s in a hot trendy tux.”

The Senior V.P. said to that drop-dead gorgeous gentleman in question, “Bolt, welcome to the company. In a minute I want you to meet our head of R&D, Taylor Edwards.”

The guy looked shocked, then grinned. “So, she never got married then?”

“She did but after he divorced her she went back to her maiden name. She’s a sharp woman. But I don’t see her yet.”

“I think I do. Excuse me, gentlemen, I have some unfinished business with that lady.”

Melissa said, “Omigosh! He’s coming this way! Be still my heart.”

But it was to Taylor he came, kissed her hand, said “Dance?” and swept her away before she could resist, much to the chagrin of her friend.

Taylor figured any man who had the confidence to do that could dance. She was right. She liked the feel of being in his arms, was attracted to the power that exuded from his very pores. Although that impressive power did worry her just a little.

He said, “Do you always wear a mask?”

“Only to parties.” She liked the cleft in his chin.

“And why is that?”

“It makes me feel more daring.” She kissed the cleft on his chin.

“As opposed to what?”

“Feeling shy?”

He choked and laughed.

“What?” she asked.

“Somehow I have the feeling you’re not shy.”

“How come?”

“You just kissed me. Besides that, you took my hand and here you are.” He dipped her.

“It’s the mask.”

“The mask separates you, you know.”

“Precisely. It also separates the men from the boys. And here you are.” She grinned. He laughed heartily. She liked his laugh.

“Masks hide things. What are you hiding, lovely lady?”

She changed the subject. “I guess I should be honored. Melissa said you’re drop-dead-gorgeous.”

He stopped dancing. “What, and you don’t think so?”

“I can’t see in this mask.”

“Really? Interesting. Very interesting, in fact. In that case, come with me.” He took her by the elbow.

“Where?”

“You’ll find out.”

“But, but...”

“If you need to see, take off the mask.”

“No.”

“In that case, guess you’ll have to trust me, won’t you.”

Taylor thrilled inside. This proved her mask was a good idea. This felt like one of the erotic sexy contemporary romance novels she had never let her mother know she was reading.

He guided her off the floor through the back glass doors. Under the moonlight on the jasmine-perfumed patio, he drew her close. Her heart pounded, she could feel his warm breath close to her face. Why did his scent seem vaguely familiar?

He traced the sumptuous outline of her lips with his index finger. “I’m going to kiss you now.” It was a demanding kiss. He possessed her with that kiss. She loved that kiss. Why did the taste of him seem vaguely familiar?

She felt like kissing him back but felt obligated to be indignant so instead tried to pull away, even though she never wanted to leave his embrace. He held her so tightly. She felt the heat of his body. She hated it she hadn’t come out with a sardonic comment worthy of a feisty romance heroine. All she could croak out was “What’s your name?”

“John. And it’s payback time.”

Her stomach jumped into her throat. His tone had turned dangerous. He bent down and in one smooth move scooped her up and threw her over his broad shoulder, obviously enjoying the feel of her ass in the derriere-hugging gown. She shrieked. Even though she was in heaven. He carried her down the stairs and across the lawn.

She pounded his back and kicked. To no avail. She was glad. This was more fun than beating up the thirteen-year-old skin and bones Johnny Bolt. She did the obligatory romance heroine scream, “WHAT are you doing?”

He said grimly, “I heard you like to play in the bushes.”

“You’re crazy!”

“The wild woman in a mask is calling ME crazy?” He set her down. “You’ve got a lot of unresolved anger issues, lady. I’ll bet if you took off that mask, they’d disappear.”

She tried to run, he grabbed her and pulled her wiggling body against him. She felt him rising up hard against her tummy. Mmmm, nice. Not a prepubescent boy, that was for sure. Nonetheless, the thirteen-year-old AKA Romance Heroine pulled back, kicking him in the shins. She kicked off her heels and with a taunting catch-me-if-you-can laugh, she ran. On the run she ripped the slit in her dress up higher so she could run faster.

He grinned. “Wanna’ play rough, do you?” Under his breath he muttered, “You always did.” He took off his tux jacket and threw it aside. He tackled her. She crashed down on the ground, he on top of her.

She should be petrified, shouldn’t she? But, strange, she felt more than okay. Kind of at home. Having fun even. It somehow all seemed so familiar. He stood up, pulling her up with him. He scooped her up into his arms, carrying her around, seemingly looking for something in the dense thicket. He found it—a bit of an opening with a relatively soft landing spot. Then he threw her into the bushes.

“Ouch! You ARE crazy! And mean. That hurt!” she yelled, rubbing the scratches on her arms.

“Yes, it does, doesn’t it.” His voice sounded very serious, but the corners of his mouth were turning up slightly.

He jumped into the bushes with her on top of her, holding her down while she struggled until, worn out, she could struggle no more. For a few minutes anyway.

He said, “You’re tough. You haven’t shed a tear.”

“I never cry!”

“I believe it. Might be good for you if you did. Shall I make you cry?” She felt chills of excitement. The mask worked magically.

“You just go ahead and try!” her thirteen-year-old said out of belligerent habit but also in confidence because he hadn’t really hurt her yet. It seemed like a game.

“You asked for it.” He pinned her arms down and kissed her hard. At first she turned her head to the side, resisting. He found her mouth again, forcing his tongue in. She squealed. He let go of one of her arms to free one of his hands so he could run it up her leg on the outside of her exposed thigh. She tried to stop him with her free arm but couldn’t, he was too strong. She was glad. She was getting wet, really wet. She sure didn’t want him to know. Or maybe she did. Good thing because his hand had gone inside her hot sanctum and found that she was. Very wet. She wasn’t worried because that would only be if she didn’t want this man. But she very much did. Want him.

She did glare at him and tried to press her thighs together. Why not prolong the most arousing moments she had ever experienced in her whole life? He moved his pelvis up against her, separating her thighs with his nicely muscled legs. She wanted to kiss the golden hairs just above his belly button, but he still had her pinned down.

Letting go of her arms, he unclasped his trousers, pulled them down and felt her wet warmth against his groin, poised himself for insertion. Not knowing when to surrender, the thirteen-year-old with a scream ripped his shirt open, exposing a nicely muscled but not too ripped chest and abs.

“Sure wish you hadn’t done that,” he said. “Forces me to do this.” He took hold of the slit in her dress that she had ripped and he ripped it up even further, laying open to his view her inviting temple of love beckoning under the bikini panties. He ripped them off. She gasped.

“Want me to continue? Do you, do you?”

“Yes, yes, please, please,” she panted, staring at his impressive engorged member poised at the ready. “But hurry up, for godssakes.”

“Damn it all, woman!” he said, “Do you always have to prove your dominance?”

“Oh” she said meekly. “You do have a point there.” Then, raising her glistening opening up toward him, she teased, “Now who’s the one with anger issues?”

“No argument there,” he chuckled. He penetrated her gently, savoring. “Now let’s explore the softest spot of your whole delicious tough ass body.”

“Oh yes, please, but harder, harder...”

He thrust deeper and accommodated her on the harder.

“Ouch, yes!” she squealed. “You are big.”

“Bigger than you?”

“Well, since I don’t have a penis...”

“Am I bigger than you? Say it!”

“Yes, you’re bigger than me!” she yelled. Then softly, “Oh, yes, yes, so much bigger. More, more please...” He thrust and thrust, harder and harder. She clawed his back. They both growled and screamed like big cats in the jungle in love battle. Then they collapsed, panting, exhausted. Satiated. Holding each other.

At last, she broke the silence. “That was something.”

“Different, all right.”

“Don’t say that word. I hate that word.”

He raised up on one elbow and looked at her. He felt behind her head and took hold of the strings of the mask. “Time for the mask to come off.” He began to take it off gently. She tried to keep it on.

“Don’t, please. I feel more beautiful with it on.”

He took it off anyway. “You don’t need it. You never did, Freckles. And don’t try to cover up your nose. I always loved your nose.” He kissed it tenderly.

“Freckles?” She sat up and stared at him. “Johnny!” she screamed. “Johnny Bolt?” She hugged him as if she’d never let him go.

Surprised, he grinned. “The one and only.”

You’ve gotten so..so BIG!

“Yeah.” He held her out at arms’ length and looked at her. “And it’s time you stopped beating up on guys littler than you, Taylor Edwards.”

“Sure wish I had my glasses. I could see you better. Even without them, I can tell you’re drop-dead gorgeous. And I can tell you most definitively that you’re not smaller than I am anymore.”

“At long fucking last,” he sighed with a smile.

“Lesson well learned, Johnny. Do you think this is what all our wrestling was about when we were thirteen?”

“Probably, except I didn’t know what to do with it then.

“You sure do now, mister.”

“Yeah. Except I’m sorry if I was too rough, Taylor.” He searched around in the leaves, looking for his pants without success. “I was so angry, you were right. I did want to get even. At first. So many years of wanting you. And being afraid you hated me.”

“Hated you? Johnny, I loved you.”

“You had a funny way of showing it.”

“Yeah, guess so, huh.” She kissed him for real this time. And her nose didn’t even get in the way. “Hey, back at the ball, how did you know it was me behind the mask?”

“I never forgot the only time I ever got to kiss you. The thirteen-year-old woman wearing a mask.” She looked at him in wonder and kissed him again.

“Tonight I wanted to take that damn mask off of you sooner. So you’d know you were loved. For the real you, Taylor. But then when you wanted it so hard...I figured it would be my only chance. Before you knew who I was.”

“Oh, no. Are you for real? I’m so sorry. I didn’t know.”

“Tore me up, Taylor. Knowing you’d rather do a stranger than Johnny Bolt...”

She cried for the first time, caressing his face. “I didn’t know, I didn’t know. I do like the real Johnny Bolt. So, so very much.” He held her, stroking her hair. She looked over his shoulder. And laughed.

“What could possibly be funny?”

“Well, it seems the whole Gala is on the lawn on its way over to find us. Whatever will we do?”

He stood up with resolution. “Okay then. It’s an opportunity to show them. The real you. Without a mask.”

She laughed, looking down. “And without a dress.”

He grinned, looking down. “And the real me. Without a shirt.”

“And without pants.”

“Oh, what the hell.”

The drop-dead gorgeous naked man scooped his love up in his arms at long last and carried the soon to be very real Taylor Edwards to meet the world.

