

Barely
Breathing

Amelia James

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a short story by

Amelia James

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“Hi, baby. Sorry I’m late.”

Amber Montgomery crawled out from under the mountain of baby clothes she was folding and scowled at her husband. Late? Dinner was so cold Dr. Frankenstein couldn’t bring it back to life. The baby decided her food looked better on mommy than on her plate, and when Amber finally got Kaylee to bed, she spent half an hour cleaning up that disaster—by herself.

“I missed you.” Paul leaned over to kiss her cheek.

But Amber recoiled. “Where the hell have you been?”

“My last appointment wouldn’t stop talking, and by the time I got out of his office, traffic was a bitch. Did you hear about that accident on the interstate?”

“I didn’t have time to watch the news. I didn’t have time to eat dinner. I didn’t get a damn thing done today because your daughter decided she didn’t need a nap.”

Paul cringed. “Tough day, huh?” He retreated to the kitchen, wincing when he found the stone-cold remains of dinner.

Amber followed him. “Why didn’t you call me?”

“Battery died.” He held up his useless phone, showing her the black screen.

She snatched it from his hand and plugged it in. “I need to be able to call you. What if there was an emergency?”

“Did something happen?” His head popped up over the refrigerator door, his eyes worried.

“No.” Amber crossed her arms. “But if it did, you wouldn’t know.” She looked around the kitchen. Paul’s briefcase was lying on the counter, his coat tossed over a dining room chair. Everything was as it should be. Nothing extra...nothing special. “Do you know what day it is?”

“Um...Tuesday?” He looked at the calendar. “Yeah, Tuesday...all day.”

His adorable little boy smile wasn’t going to get him off the hook so easy. “It’s Valentine’s Day!”

“So that’s why you’re pissed. Shit, baby. I forgot.”

Amber forgot too until she checked the expiration date on an ancient container of sour cream, but she wasn’t going to tell him that. “When you were late coming home, I hoped you were getting me last-minute flowers or chocolate or at least a sappy card. But no, you walked in empty-handed.” She stomped to the dining room and grabbed the unused dishes, throwing clean silverware back in the drawer.

“I don’t see any flowers or cards for me.”

“You want flowers?”

“That’s not the point. You forgot too.”

She seized a plate and pondered throwing it at his head. “Yeah well, I’m too busy—”

“You’re busy?”

Amber gasped, her mouth falling open but words failed her. Paul’s eyes turned panicked, and he backed up a step when she grabbed another plate. “Don’t you even...do you have any idea...? I work—all day! I cook, I clean, I try to raise a baby and run a business—which, by the way—I missed a deadline for because Kaylee decided she didn’t need a nap today. I barely had time to apologize to my client.”

Paul held up his hands in surrender. “I’m sorry. I know you do a lot. I wasn’t thinking.”

“Damn right, you weren’t thinking.”

“But I’m busy too. They let a sales person go last week so I’m covering his territory and mine. I don’t know when—or if—they’re gonna hire someone new, and I can barely breathe as it is.”

Amber put the plate away and leaned against the cabinets. They were both overworked and overwhelmed, and she didn’t see a way to escape. Life—even the things she used to enjoy—smothered her like a musty old bathrobe. “Kaylee missed you.”

“I know. I missed her too. I’m gonna go kiss her good night.” He dashed up the stairs before she could warn him not to wake the baby up.

The dining room was clean when he got back. The laundry was folded and put away. The kitchen was dark, and Amber was sitting in the living room on the couch, flipping through channels with the remote. “Nothing good on.”

“She’s down for the count.” Paul stood in the hallway, bracing himself against the wall as if he was afraid to enter the room. “She’ll sleep all night.”

“Good.” She yawned and stretched, knowing he was watching. She used to love it when he looked at her like a starving man. His dark eyes glittered in the evening light, and he ran his long fingers through his black coffee hair. A tingle shot through her when she remembered how his hands felt on her skin, how his lean, hard body felt on top of hers. The fluttering desire disappeared too soon, replaced by an urgent need for sleep.

Paul sat down beside her, a charming smile on his sweet, dangerous lips. He took the remote from her hand and turned the TV off. “It’s not too late to do something.”

“Do what?”

“For Valentine’s Day. We can get dinner—”

“We’re never going to find a babysitter on such short notice.”

“We’ll order pizza. Open a bottle of wine, light a couple candles.”

She smiled and cuddled close to him. “That sounds nice.”

He wrapped his arms around her. “When was the last time we had sex?”

Amber rolled her eyes. “I don’t remember.” Two weeks ago, maybe? When they had the time; she wasn’t in the mood. She wasn’t in the mood much at all lately. So many other things got in the way—work, baby, life. Their sex life used to be hot, but it was one of the first things she sacrificed on the altar of mommyhood. It went kicking and screaming, but honestly, she didn’t miss it much.

His hands slid under her shirt, and Paul nibbled at her neck. “I remember how you love it when I kiss this spot right here.” His lips touched the base of her throat.

Amber gasped and that tingling flutter reappeared, zipping from her nipples to her thighs. Okay, maybe she did miss her sex life, but she was always so tired. His fingers floated over her abs, fiddling with the button on her jeans. Her stomach growled. And hungry. She put her hand on his chest and sat up. “I’ll order the pizza. You get the wine.”

Paul sighed and mumbled something unpleasant.

She lit a vanilla-scented candle and set it on the coffee table, turned on some romantic music, and helped Paul drink half the bottle of wine before the pizza arrived. They were both so hungry it disappeared in minutes.

“I love you.” He pulled his wife into his arms and kissed the top of her head. “You know that, right?”

“Yes. I love you too.” Amber found a blanket and draped it over them. “We don’t have much time for us anymore.”

“Remember how we used to watch a movie and grope each other under this blanket?” He pulled up her shirt and caressed her breast, slipping his fingers under her bra cup.

“Remember how we used to sleep naked and spooning? Now we have to wear pajamas in case the baby wakes up.”

“Yeah. Marriage doesn’t kill your sex life; kids do.”

“Remember sleep?” Amber yawned and brushed his hand away. She felt Paul let out a big sigh and wished she had the energy to yank his pants off and give him the blow job of his dreams, but thinking about it drained what little spark she had left. Sleep. Yes, sleep was more appealing than sex, and as she felt her husband squirm underneath her, she hoped he would understand—again.

Paul’s eyes snapped open, and he looked at his watch. Ten twenty-three p.m. Wow. He fell asleep too. Amber was curled up against him, snoring softly. She was so damn cute when she snored. Holy shit, that turned him on? Her breath stirred her long chocolate brown hair and he tucked it behind her ear, careful not to wake her. Red bow lips curved in a sleepy smile, and her lashes made a pretty fan on her pink cheeks. She shifted and her hand slipped down his chest to his stomach. He held his breath and thought about baseball. These days he was so sex-deprived any attention from his wife made him hard as a rock.

But she was never in the mood. Whenever he asked—if he asked—she said she was too tired. He knew she worked hard. He was lucky he still had his head after that ‘you’re busy?’ comment. But rejection sucked no matter what the reason. He knew she wanted him. When he got his hand in her bra, her nipple turned stiff against his palm, but she was asleep before he could pursue it further.

Dammit, how could he forget Valentine’s Day? He wanted to make it a good one this year. Take Amber out for dinner, buy her a little present, spoil her rotten and then get a hotel room where they could have privacy—and peace and quiet—so they could tear up the sheets like they used to before Kaylee was born. Paul loved his daughter. He wouldn’t trade her for the world, but damn if the little squirt didn’t bring his sex life to a grinding halt.

Amber sighed and stretched, her thighs rubbing against his crotch. That did it. Solid wood in half a second. New record. He leaned down and touched his lips against her ear. She gave him an encouraging moan so he kissed her cheek. She brushed his hand away and buried her face in his chest, dammit.

Paul groaned and smacked his head back against the couch, his hot little wife still curled in his lap, and the boner in his pants demanding attention. He needed to do something about it, but he’d be damned if he’d do it by himself—not on Valentine’s Day. “Hey baby.” His hand slid under her hair and he lifted her chin.

“Mmf.” Amber grunted and blinked at him.

He rolled her back against the couch, giving his wandering fingers easy access to her body. She braced unsteady hands on his chest. He grabbed one and pressed it against the bulge behind his zipper.

“What are you doing?” Amber woke up.

“I got a Valentine’s package for you.”

She laughed, squeezing his hardon. “Feels like a nice one.”

“Wanna unwrap it?” He nibbled her neck, dragging his tongue down her throat.

“I’m so tired.”

Yep. He knew that was coming, but this time he was ready for it. “I am too, but it’s Valentine’s Day, we’re alone, Kaylee’s sound asleep....”

“I should be too.” Amber pushed him away and sat up. “I have work to do tomorrow, and if she won’t nap again, I’m in trouble.” She stood and headed for the stairs, but Paul grabbed her hand and pulled her back.

“Amber, please.” He wasn’t above begging. “I need you.”

She looked back at him and let him pull her down on the couch.

“We never have time for each other anymore, and I miss it...I miss you. You think you can do everything, and you never ask for help. You’re determined to be a good mommy and a successful graphic designer, but you’ve forgotten how to be a wife.” Anger flashed in her eyes, and Paul knew he was skating on thin ice, but he had to take the chance. “I need my wife back. I need my lover.”

The anger disappeared and exhaustion slumped her shoulders. “I need you too, and I miss you, but—”

“Shh.” He kissed her quick. “No buts. We gotta stop sacrificing sex and take some time for us or we’re not gonna....” He didn’t want to finish that sentence. Changing his tactic from desperate begging to flirty tempting, he smiled and winked at her. “I’m willing to give up a couple hours sleep for a sweaty roll on the floor if you are.”

A skeptical smile lit her eyes. “A couple hours?”

“More if you can take it.”

“I don’t know....”

Jesus, she’d better be teasing him. “Stay right here.” He jumped up and ran to the linen closet, taking the stairs two at a time—three on the way down—and dumped a pile of blankets and pillows at her feet. He shoved the coffee table aside, lit the gas log fireplace, cursed at the empty wine bottle, and made a cozy bed on the floor in front of the fire. Amber lit a few more candles and found another bottle of wine, but he set it aside and pulled her down on the fluffy mound of pillows. “Just lay back and relax.”

She sighed and nestled in the impromptu bed, closing her eyes.

Paul felt her body go limp. “Not that much.”

Amber laughed and opened her eyes, reaching for him. “I know it’s hard—”

“Damn right.” He unbuckled his belt.

She shook her head and fiddled with the buttons on his shirt. “—when I say no, but please don’t stop asking.”

Paul cupped her face in his hand, stroking her cheek with his thumb and looked deep in to her liquid green eyes. “I will never give up on you.” He leaned down to kiss her, and she arched up to meet him, her fingers tangling in his hair while he fed on her mouth. God she tasted so good, especially after weeks of declined invitations. He wanted to rip her clothes off and satisfy his cravings, but no, he enjoyed her slowly...whetting her appetite for more and hoping he wouldn’t go hungry again.

He pulled her sweater up, and she helped him take it off. Hmm...good sign. One of her bra straps slipped down her shoulder and he traced it with his finger, following it over to her half-exposed breast. Paul loved Amber’s body, especially her lush breasts. While they weren’t having sex, he stole a peek at her naked whenever he could. Having her nearly topless under him was almost too much excitement for one night, but he decided to risk more and tugged her bra

cups down, revealing fat pink nipples made for lovin'. He savored each one, so lost in his decadent feast he didn't notice his shirt was unbuttoned until her hot hand touched his bare chest.

Amber smiled when he groaned, pulling his tie off and tossing it across the room. Her arm flopped across a pillow. When did undressing him become such an effort? She wanted him naked, but her fingers felt like lead and getting his shirt undone was a major achievement. "Come here." She grabbed his collar and pulled him down, licking his chest while he unzipped her jeans. His fingers searched under her panties, fumbling like an uncertain teenager afraid of going too far. Was he expecting her to stop him again? Oh god. Was he used to rejection?

The tip of his tongue flicked her ear. "I want you."

"I want you." She turned her head and caught his mouth, her tongue seeking his and taking hold. He moaned and grabbed her hip, grinding his erection against her thigh. She felt his pent-up need throbbing through his pants, and a spark lit inside her as she imagined what she could do with all that lust building between his legs, begging for release.

"Paul?" She whispered his name on his lips.

But he wouldn't let her escape their kiss. "Hm?"

"I'm not tired anymore."

"Whoa." Fire flashed in her eyes as she flipped him on his back and yanked his pants down, pulling his cock into her mouth and sucking the life out of him. His entire body hungered for more, more of her, more of the only woman who could say no to him but make him keep coming back. She devoured him with an eager tongue, and all he could do was offer his body on her carnal buffet.

Amber sat up and flipped her hair over her shoulders, shedding her dangling bra and unzipped jeans. Naked and renewed, she crawled on top of her husband. "Let's do something dirty. I'm not mommy tonight. Remember what you used to call me?"

Paul grinned. "My trashy tramp."

"That one's my favorite. I want you to fuck me like that again. Fuck me like your dirty whore—"

Before she could finish, he knocked her back on the pillows and grabbed her ankles in one hand, lifting them above her head and exposing her wet pink flesh to his starving tongue. Oh god, so long—too long. He ate her up, nibbling every delicious morsel like it was forbidden fruit.

Her legs quivered and ached, but she didn't dare escape his grasp. She didn't want to— not until he made her come like lightning—fast and furious. His hand relaxed and her legs fell apart, spreading wide under his relentless mouth. He nibbled and licked, twisting two fingers inside her empty core. Oh how she missed being filled by him. She grabbed her thighs and held them apart for him, feeling dirty while she did it, but oh god, she needed to feel dirty. She needed to feel like a woman—only a woman—with lusty needs to fulfill and wicked desires to explore. His tongue flickered over her aching clit, sending crackling arcs of white-hot pleasure sparking through her limbs. "Don't stop. Oh please don't...."

As if he would ever stop. Nope, he was going to make this last all night. But first, he had to feed the hunger inside him so he had the strength to satisfy her cravings. "Tell me you want me to fuck you."

"Fuck me." Amber groaned and twisted. His fingers weren't enough. She wanted cock. "Fuck me hard. Now!"

Paul drove into her and pounded, trying to put out the sizzling fuse. Explosion was near, flirting with danger, and when her fingernails raked down his back, he couldn't contain it any

longer. Fire ripped through his body and consumed him, leaving him sweating and gasping on top of his quivering wife.

“Mmm...” She trembled in his arms, flinching when his lips touched her nipples.

Firelight flickered on her damp skin, casting an erotic orange glow over their twisted limbs. He knew she wasn't finished yet. “Don't worry, sweetheart. I have plans for you.”

“Oh really?”

“Hell yes.” He looked at his watch. “It's still Valentine's Day, and I'm gonna make sure you get everything you deserve, my nasty slut.”

“Is that right?” She inched away from him.

He didn't notice. “Yes it is.”

“You gotta catch me first!” She jumped up and ran down the hall.

“Where the hell did she get all that energy?” Paul climbed to his feet and chased her through the house, naked and laughing. She ducked behind the dining room table, giggling when she spun away from his flailing hands, but he cornered her in the kitchen and pinned her against the refrigerator, shoving his cock between her thighs and fondling her breasts.

“Mmm...you're hard again.” Amber's giggle turned into a groan as he tried to thrust into her.

“That's from chasing your bare ass.” He grabbed a handful of her butt and nipped her ear.

But her sweat-covered body was hard to hold and she slipped away from him, skipping up the stairs until she tripped. He fell on top of her, grabbing her hair and planting his knees while he nudged hers apart.

“Now you're mine.” His mouth covered her mound, and his tongue danced wildly over her clit.

Amber surrendered, spreading her body out on the stairs, his for the taking. She was well aware their daughter slept behind a closed door only a few feet away, but right now—under her husband's naked body and relentless tongue—she gave up her mommy role and became his wife, his lover, and his wanton slave. “Take me.”

“Patience, love.” He licked her hot pink flesh and stuffed her with two fingers. Casting a quick glance at the nursery, Paul banished all his worries and filled his senses with the naked woman squirming beneath him. Her long dark hair cascaded down the steps like a waterfall, and her fingers trickled over his hot skin. Soft sighs and short gasps escaped her while he licked her plump lower lips, tasting her sweet juicy bits. He inhaled an intoxicating mixture of soap and sex as the heat from her skin seeped through his body.

She groaned and braced her feet on a step, throwing her arms above her head and digging her fingers and toes into the carpet. Her butt slipped, but he caught her against his mouth, impaling her with his tongue. “Hold on.” She moaned and arched as the floodgates burst open and rushing waves sent her on a wild ride, clinging to her husband and gasping for breath.

Paul smiled as he nibbled her quivering skin from her damp thighs to her heaving breasts. “Now darlin', where do you want me to take you?”

“Right here.”

He laughed. “I intend to. Where do you want to go from here?”

“Away. Far, far away to where I can't think.” She panted and sighed as his lips touched hers.

“Sounds like you're almost there.” He kissed her neck, deliberately avoiding the spot that drove her crazy.

“I just need a little push.” She grabbed his hair and held his face to her throat while she spread her legs under him and ground against his hard cock.

“Hm. Like this?” He slammed into her at the same moment his mouth found the base of her throat.

“No! Yes! I—oh!”

He laughed and groaned. “Oh baby, I missed this.” He pounded her slow, insistent, punishing her for denying him so long, tormenting himself for neglecting her needs.

“I did too. Let’s never...oohhh.” Amber grabbed his ass and pulled him in deep, smiling on his shoulder when he swore, biting him when he fucked her like his favorite trashy tramp, kissing his tender lips when he made love to her like his new bride. Another flood was building, spilling over the dam in quick, intense splashes. When the wall collapsed, she let go and let the surge carry her away, unable to think or speak or breathe.

Paul felt her come—hot, wet, crashing waves. He held out as long as he could, knowing she could ride it over and over, but the riptide took him with her, clinging to her and hoping they came up for air—but not too soon. A soft kiss on his neck brought him back to life.

“Still breathing?”

“Barely.” He kissed her warm lips, gently playing with her tongue.

She smiled at him. “We’ll make it.”

“I know.” He sighed, struggling but confident.

“I don’t want to move.” Amber groaned and dropped her head back on the stairs. “But my back is killing me.”

Paul grinned. “I have rug burns on my knees.” He stood up and pulled her to her feet.

“We’re not as young as we used to be.”

“Speak for yourself, tramp.” He slapped his wife’s bare ass and chased her to the bedroom.

They tumbled into bed and rolled around naked, kissing and groping like they did when they were young newlyweds. Amber cuddled and squirmed in his arms, nearly making him hard a third time.

“Lay still if you want to get any sleep.”

She giggled and wiggled her ass against his crotch. “Sorry. I’m teasing.”

“You’re lucky I’m too tired to do anything about it.”

But she flipped and rolled, tugging at the blankets. “I forgot how it feels to sleep naked.”

“Feels good.” His arm snaked around her waist, and he pulled her close.

“Yes it does.” She turned and looked over his shoulder at the clock. “Valentine’s Day is over.”

“It’s doesn’t have to be.” He kissed her. “There’s no reason we can’t make a little time for each other—naked—every day.”

“Every day?”

Yes! Every day, dammit! “Maybe not that often, but...” But he’d take what he could get.

“No, I like that. We need a little naked every day even if it’s just a flash or a peek—”

“Or a grope.”

“Like this?”

He yelped when her hand sneaked between his legs and squeezed. “Just like that.”

She sighed and rested her cheek on his chest. “I’ve been going crazy trying to do it all—mother, business owner, wife.... No, I’ve been neglecting wife.”

“You’ve been neglecting your husband.”

Amber stuck her tongue out at him. "I need a little naked escape to preserve my sanity."
"A lot of naked." Paul yawned.

"As much as we can get."

At last they agreed on something. But he knew it would take effort from both of them. He touched her cheek and kissed her. "I know you're busy. I'll try to help out more."

Amber smiled and slid her hand down his stomach, the nasty slut he loved lurking in her eyes. "Now that's the way to turn me on."

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About the Author

Amelia James started reading steamy romance novels in junior high, but her mom took them away from her, so she started daydreaming instead. After she got married, she wrote some of her naughtier daydreams down and sent them to *Playgirl* magazine. Two of them got published. She kept daydreaming and writing stories until her dirty stories turned into trashy books.

She lives in Colorado, but she'll always be a loyal Wisconsin Cheesehead. When she's not lusting after her next bad boy hero, she looks for inspiration in sci-fi and action movies, football players, bloodsucking lawyers, muscle cars, and kick-butt chicks.

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Ebook Titles: available on Kindle, Nook, iBooks, and any ebook format at Smashwords.

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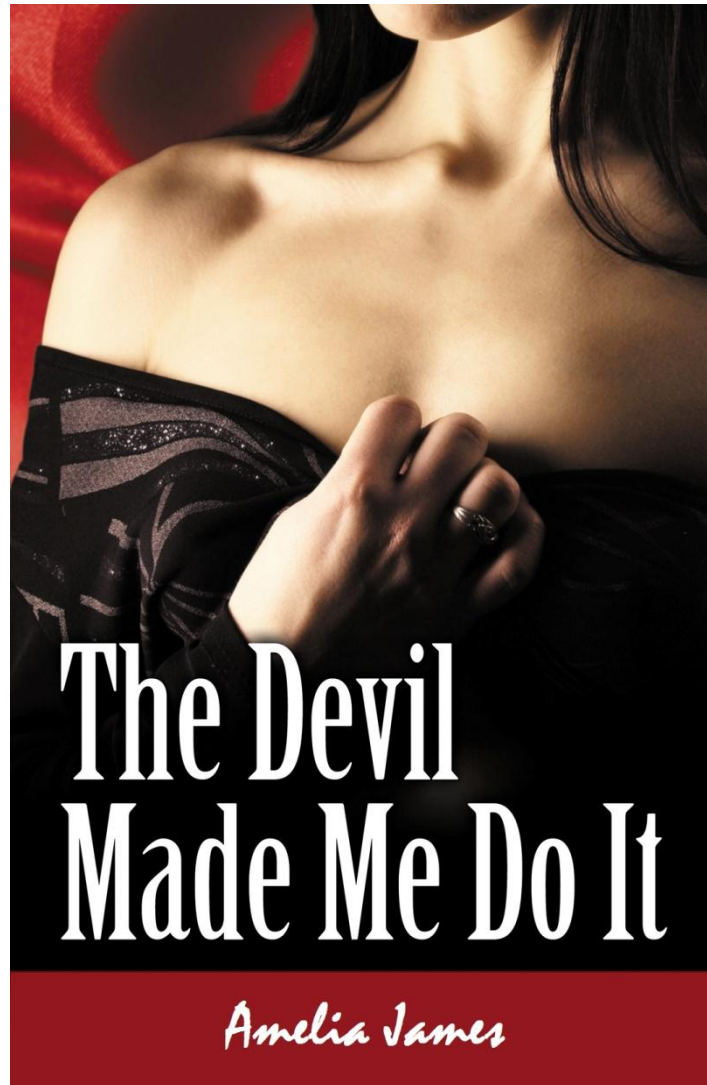
Erotic short story collection:

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Don't tempt me.... Erin wants her husband to rip her clothes off...literally. Does she dare provoke him? Natalie wants to make love outdoors. Can she convince her shy husband? Melissa wants the bad boy she just met in a bar. Should she or shouldn't she? And Heather watches from a secret room....

These women and others like them know what they want in bed. But sometimes they have to be a little extra bold to get it. Watch them bring their naughtiest fantasies to life in some very interesting ways.

It wasn't my idea...the devil made me do it.