

Ace of Hearts

By Jean Holloway

To learn more about Jean Holloway visit www.deckofcardz.com.

Prologue

Lenora's hands shook as she lit the candles.

Everything had to be perfect.

This is your chance with someone that can help your career... your life, she thought. Besides, he was *gorgeous*. Having grown up in a totally middle class home, she was never satisfied with her surroundings. Everything had always looked just a bit shabby to her.

In 1963 at the age of seven, Lenora boxed up all her toys and began reading. At fifteen, she was at the top of her class. Several prominent universities had vied for her attention during her senior year. College was a breeze. There she learned a lot more than academics. She learned about men and used it to her advantage, vowing never to return to the humdrum life she had left. Pleasing men had become her specialty.

Lenora saw great things in her future, *great things* and she was determined to have it all. Tonight was her first step up the ladder of success.

First impressions were important. So it had to be just right, from the Chicken Marsala she checked for the fifth time to her appearance, which had to be capital S-E-X-Y. By eight o'clock, everything would be ready.

At seven forty-five, Lenora slipped into her one pair of imitation designer lounging pajamas. The turquoise color set off her caramel brown skin. She was in the process of admiring her reflection in the mirror when the doorbell rang. *Right on time*.

She smiled so wide and hard the corners of her small mouth cracked, causing her the slightest pain. She quickly forgot it when she opened the door and saw him. He was everything she had remembered and a little bit more.

He was wearing an impeccably tailored charcoal gray Brooks Brothers three button suit with a crisp white shirt and a gray, blue and white tie. The blue in his tie

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matched his dark blue eyes. His polished black wing-tipped shoes had a shine so bright the reflection of light bounced off them. In her eyes, he could have passed for a lawyer or politician. He was exactly what she wanted in a man: rich, powerful, handsome and tall. Not so tall as to overwhelm her or cause her strain, but just enough that if she fell into his arms, he could catch her without bending.

“I’m glad you could make it,” she said leading him into the living room. She watched him look around her townhouse. She was very proud of her little place. Even if her money was limited, she did well with what she had and she had the mortgage to prove it.

“Let’s have some wine before dinner. I picked up a bottle, just for the occasion. Red okay with you?”

Lenora reached for the chilled bottle of Chianti.

He nodded in agreement.

She poured each of them a glass, and then settled down on the couch for what she believed to be the start of something wonderful for both of them. She wasn’t much for small talk, so she jumped right to the subject.

“So, what is it exactly that you do?”

She almost knew the answer before he could start. She did her research. She patiently listened as he went on and on about his education, but didn’t mention family until he revealed he was stuck in an unhappy marriage. Next, came the line about his wife not understanding his needs.

Lenora smiled a wicked smile. That was something she was more than capable of providing. She knew he hoped she would take care of that, but prayed her office reputation hadn’t preceded her. She didn’t want him knowing how *understanding* she could be.

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They sat in the little dining nook, under the dim lights, exchanging small talk, drinking, eating and enjoying the ambiance of the evening. Lenora had him right where she wanted.

“Let’s go back to the living room,” she suggested.

Lenora stopped as she passed the small liquor cabinet in the corner and took out a bottle of Martell cognac she saved for special occasions and her smoke box. Once they settled on the couch, she rolled a few joints of Panamanian Gold and then poured two stiff drinks. She lit a joint and passed it to him. Soon, between the joint and the drinks, they were happily on their way to cloud nine — laughing, snuggling and simply enjoying the moment. He moved in closer, placing his hands on both sides of her face.

“I want you,” he whispered, and then kissed her deeply, with so much passion, Lenora moaned with excitement and anticipation.

They necked like teenagers on the couch for almost an hour. Although Lenora knew she should stop him, she couldn’t, wouldn’t, not when it felt so damn good. They couldn’t get enough of each other.

Before she realized it, they were both lying on the couch. He had her pinned down, squeezing her breasts a little too hard. It hurt. Since the affects of the joint they smoked was wearing off, she was no longer feeling as hot and horny as before, in fact she just felt tired. *I have to put a stop to this*, she thought as she sat up and gently pushed him away.

“Hey, slow down,” she warned him.

He smiled back at her, but said nothing. She tried to get up and he pushed her back down onto the couch. It scared her a little.

She was surprised that he was being so forceful. She had already decided he would get nowhere tonight. She knew how to handle anxious men. She also knew she had to hold off for a little while and not give in to keep him interested.

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“I invited you for dinner, nothing else,” she said firmly. “I mean it. If you can’t control yourself, you’ll have to leave,” she said, struggling beneath him, but to no avail, he was so much bigger and stronger than she was. Her efforts to remove herself only left her more exhausted.

In an instant, everything changed and Lenora knew she was in big trouble, but she hoped she could talk her way out of it, as she had done so many times before.

When he spoke, she looked into his eyes and saw them go cold, reminding her of a snake.

“You don’t get it, do you,” he asked in a voice raspy with lust. “The last thing I want to do is control myself.”

Lenora sat straight up as that comment set in.

“Don’t ruin a perfectly good evening,” she said in a stern tone, hoping to stop him from thinking anything more would transpire that evening.

It didn’t stop him. Instead, he grabbed her by her top and slammed her back against the couch.

Shocked, Lenora slapped him, hard across the face. They struggled for several minutes before he pinned her down, his hands around her throat.

“Who the hell do you think you are,” he asked, as his hands grew tighter. She would have answered, if she could, but she was trying too hard to breathe.

He kept glancing around the room, as if someone else was there or someone was coming in, but there was no one else. It was just the two of them.

She begged and pleaded for him to let her go, but it all came out in indistinguishable sounds — nothing anyone could decipher, just choking. At one point, he seemed to let up, his eyes drawn to a small picture on the end table. She realized he was staring at a family photo. *Why would that make him so angry?*

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Lenora was losing the fight. She tried to scream, but couldn't. There was no air. Darkness closed in. As her life dissolved, she focused on his face. He was smiling.



He knew it. *The bitch had everything he had ever wanted, even a real family.* His anger ignited like spontaneous combustion.

“Heartless bitch, you should have wanted me,” he seethed, increasing the pressure against her larynx.

He watched her struggle, fiercely at first and then futilely. He knew she couldn't stop him and watched her begin to lose consciousness. She tried to claw at his hands, get them off her throat, but he was too strong. She tried to smack him again, but his arms were longer and she couldn't reach his face. He smiled as he felt her body twitch and go limp.

Damn, if she hadn't refused, she would still be alive. *Why did she have to be such a heartless bitch? That's when it dawned on him.* The reason he had no luck with women. They were all heartless. Suddenly, he knew exactly what he had to do.

He returned to the kitchen and found a pair of her latex gloves under the sink. He realized how small they were as he struggled to put them on. They fit tight, like a second skin. Then he searched the drawers until he found a knife that was as sharp as a scalpel and grabbed a pot from the dish drain.

Quickly, he went to work, performing the operation with a surgeon's skill. Since she was dead, the bleeding was minimal. Then he scooped his prize into the pot, carried it to the bathroom and flushed it. It disappeared, just as he hoped it would.

Next, he went back into the living room, sat down and stared at her lifeless body. Shit, if it wasn't for that gaping hole in her chest, she would still be beautiful. If he turned

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her on her stomach, he wouldn't have to look at the mess he had made that marred her beauty. He flipped her over on the rug.

Now, staring at her ass, his past fantasies returned. He visualized himself inside. All he had to do was pull down her pajamas bottoms. She couldn't fight anymore.

As he admired her body, he began to touch himself and found his hands slipping off the silk fabric that enclosed his desire. At last, someone who would accept him without any argument.

He knelt down over her, stroking her body with the tip of his engorged penis. Slowly, holding her buttocks apart, he pushed inside. The warmth and strangeness thrilled him. He put his arms under her and pulled her body up to meet him. God, it was better than he had imagined. He counted, but couldn't go any further than four strokes. Since satisfying her wasn't his concern, he let himself go and had the most heart-wrenching climax he'd ever experienced.

After regaining his composure, he pulled up his zipper and — good husband that he was — took the dishes off the table, scraped the remnants of her great meal into the sink, neatly filed the plates into the dishwasher and turned it on.

He looked around the living room one more time. *Everything is in its place*, he thought and casually knocked over the ceramic lamp, breaking it against the second ledge of the end table. He systematically tossed pillows across the room, dislodging pictures from the walls, sending them shattering to the floor. He swept the ashtray, centerpiece, and smoke box to the floor. He stopped for a moment and stared at the picture of her family, then threw it like a Frisbee, shattering glass against the walls, crushing the rest of its frame under his heel. Now, it would appear to be the work of some random vandal. He dragged Lenora's body by her ankles and laid her behind the couch. His work here was done. He went back into the kitchen and removed the dishes from the dishwasher. After locating the right cabinet, he put them away. On his way out,

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he spotted Lenora's purse on the counter. He took out her wallet. There was thirty-eight dollars. *All of this and a tip too!*

Ace of Hearts



Something sinister is going on...
And Love has nothing to do with it.
First, he seduces them...
Then he kills them...
What he does next is unspeakable.

NY Detective Shevaughn Robinson gets her first big case, investigating an especially gruesome murder case, which emerges into serial murders.

The story evolves as she follows murder after murder trying to solve the case, not realizing the murderer is a man who not only becomes obsessed with death, but also obsessed with her.

Title: Ace of Hearts

Author: Jean Holloway

ISBN: 9780977412662

Price: \$14.00

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...Wanna Play?



Shevaughn Robinson has gone from the cop everyone doubted to the "golden child" of the Portsborough Police Department.

Helene Elliott is found dead from an apparent suicide the police department is pressured to take on the investigation. Elliott's case awakens a complicated relationship with Terri Becker who resents Shevaughn for the death of her husband, the serial killer dubbed Ace of Hearts.

Will Shevaughn's attempts to move forward inadvertently lead death to her front door yet again?

Black Jack is the sequel to Jean Holloway's acclaimed debut novel, *Ace of Hearts*. Buckle up and follow Shevaughn as she moves closer to solving the Elliott murder, unknowing rekindling old grudges and awakening sinister spirits. Get ready; it's going to be a bumpy ride

Title: Black Jack

Author: Jean Holloway

ISBN: 978-0-9824475-0-5

Price: \$15.95

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