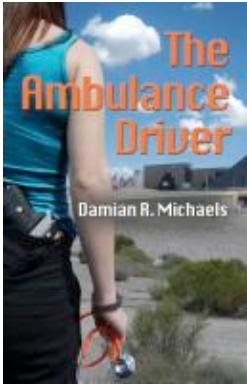


The Ambulance Driver

Damian R. Michaels



Megan Alroy is a young, idealistic, street hardened Las Vegas paramedic who relies on a cutting sense of humor to get her through the day. She is befriended and unknowingly manipulated by Dr. Scott Pitts. His desire is to destroy her spirit, and make her into his involuntary submissive and house cleaner. Similar to life, it's a story of deceit, disease, death and butt pus. Similar to life, it is also funny as hell.

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**THE
AMBULANCE DRIVER**

DAMIAN R. MICHAELS

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ISBN: 978-1-63490-985-3

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, Florida, U.S.A.

Printed on acid-free paper.

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Allopath Writing Works, LLC
2016

First Edition

Copyeditor: Dave Carew
Cover Design: Todd Engel
Cover Model: Erin Nelms

BOOK ONE

Chapter One

A dusty ambulance crept into a sleeping apartment building's parking lot. Its bright emergency lights danced on the surrounding windows. Megan Alroy was sitting in the shotgun seat. She took her feet off the dashboard, leaned forward, and flicked off the emergency lights.

Michael Clark put the ambulance into park and looked over at his partner, but before he could speak she put a finger to her lips.

"Shhhhhh, maybe they'll stay asleep." She reached down for the mic, and whispered over the radio, "Valley Ambulance, Medic 575, copy us 10-23, holding short for Metro."

"10-4, 575," blasted over the radio.

When at work, Megan wore her long black hair in a tight ponytail, which pulled her skin taut over her cheekbones, her blue eyes elongated into a hint of an almond tilt. Her paramedic uniform could not cover—in fact, it accentuated—her curves. Strong shoulders gave way to breasts only God and nature could only have created. Mike loved having this sensual creature as his partner. If it was slow, they would park the ambulance behind an empty building and spend maybe an undisturbed hour together. Tragically for Mike, this sensual creature of a partner was also his best friend.

Mike was a little older and built like a rock with arms. His affect was as dry as the desert, but his eyes could melt a young girl's heart.

Mike shifted his body in the bucket seat.

"Believe this shit?!" Shattered the silence. "I mean, do you fucking *believe* this shit? Our last goddamn call for the night, and here the fuck we are! Holding short for Metro. And

where the fuck are they? We shoulda clocked out already! When we get back to the station I'm going to kick that mother-fuck-ing dispatcher's ass! What an asshole! What *bullshit*. Allow me to translate this call. Let me tell you what it *really* says: Two female life partners decide to have drama. One of them drinks a twelve-pack and takes a handful of over-the-counter energy pills. Wow—big fucking deal. Caffeine and alcohol? Isn't that the same as a fucking Irish coffee? Drama? *I'll* give them fucking drama!" Megan ranted.

With just a lift of his eyebrow, Mike told her that she had about as much sincerity as a Vegas hooker.

Megan sat back and replanted her feet on the dashboard.

"I hope they're lipstick lesbians," Mike said.

"What?"

"You know, lipstick lesbians. Pretty...with hot, tight little bodies. You know, the type you see on late night Spank-Vision."

"Ugh, bet you also make a mess."

Mike didn't answer.

Megan looked through the window at the apartment complex. "Lipstick lesbians?" she asked. "Are your hormones fogging your mind... *again*?"

"M, you're destroying my visual."

Megan thought for a second, then said, "No, wait—I'm not done." Laughing between her words, she said, "I bet at one time, they were both men. Then for some insane reason, they decided that they were trapped in their bodies. So they had their dicks cut off...only to find that they were really lesbians at heart. It's Vegas. *You* know."

Flashing lights and diesel engine noise announced the arrival of the fire department. The huge yellow behemoth blocked Megan's view of the caller's apartment building. To

announce its existence, the driver smashed the accelerator three times, causing the truck to roar and belch blue smoke.

“Look at those ass—,” Mike began, but was cut short by Megan.

“Thank God, it’s Fire!” she said. “Now we’re *all* fucking saved!”

The trumpeting arrival of the fire truck awakened the occupants of the apartment complex. Some of them stood at their front doors, while others stood on their terraces or peered out from their dust-caked windows. They were awakened for a show, and by God, they weren’t moving till they got one. They stared at the emergency personnel, who stared back at them.

“Don’t you think this is a little strange?” Mike asked.

“Strange? Why, Mr. Clark, whatever do you mean, strange?” Megan drawled. She easily summoned a honey-sweet accent from her Alabama childhood. “Four firemen and two paramedics waiting for a police escort so that they can safely approach the apartment of two females who got into a tussle? Strange? Well, Mr. Clark, I got no idea what in the world you’re talking about. This’ll all be as easy as sliding off a greasy log, honey.”

A police cruiser parked next to the firetruck, which instantly greeted it with a blast of blue smoke. The driver’s door flew open and out jumped a short man with short cop hair wearing short sleeves. When he saw Megan, he puffed up his chest and struck a pose.

“Check this guy out,” Megan said, as she tried to imagine who would pop out the other door. The door didn’t fly open; it spread itself ajar and the cop inside seemed to be fussing with his hair and hat. Before getting out he tucked in his shirttails.

“That guy has some ass,” Mike said.

The police officer turned and faced the medics.

“That guy has tits!” Megan shouted.

“Hello, Betty,” Mike agreed.

Half asleep, the four firefighters lumbered out of their truck, joined the two cops, and dragged themselves toward the apartment complex. Mike and Megan removed the stretcher from the back of the ambulance, loaded it, and followed.

“Those poor, poor firemen, they must have been sleeping,” Megan whispered.

“Hey, M,” Mike said, inclining his head at the firemen, “that’s the job for me. EMS—Earn Money Sleeping.”

Megan pushed the stretcher into Mike. “You would be bored out of your mind.”

“Unless there was a fire,” Mike said.

“You’re too good of a medic.”

Mike took in a whiff of desert air. “Cooled down nicely. My guess, it’s about a hundred and...”

“Oh, look at her,” Megan cooed, nodding toward the female police officer. “Doesn’t she look cute in her uniform? She has that big gun and those shiny little handcuffs. Hey, Mike—I bet you’d love to be handcuffed by her. Want me to ask?”

“Ask her for me? I saw you reading that book.”

“What book?”

“*Fifty-seven Shades of Cop Blue*. Yeah, I can see it: you naked in her bed, her standing there, wearing only a gun belt and black boots. Sweat beading up on your body, your naked chest rising and falling, rising and falling...”

“Hold on, Clark. Was that on Spank-Vision?”

Mike continued, “I can just smell your fear: fear and anticipation...There you are, passively surrendering your wrists while she *sn—naps* the cuffs on. Hmmm? Four-point

restrains and she's pleading, 'Officer, please! I've been such a bad girl!'"

The police and firefighters halted in front of the apartment.

"Come on," the fire captain barked at Mike and Megan.

"You believe this shit?" Megan grumbled to Mike. "Those lazy-ass bastards. Again they're expecting us to do all the work."

The female cop's hair was having a party all on its own. Mike stopped and gave Megan an ear-to-ear grin. She tried to get him to keep moving, but he wouldn't budge.

Through his shit-eating grin, Mike whispered, "Come on, I know it's late, but add it up: the uniform, the hair, the reason for their delay..."

"Hey, let's go! I don't want to be here all night!" yelled the short-haired, short-tempered cop, now posing at the door. He gave it a few raps with his nightstick. "Open up! Police!"

The peephole went dark, and everyone waited for the door to open. Everyone except for one fireman, who was staring at Megan's body and apparently trying to burn her clothes off with sleepy eyes.

Bang, BANG!!! the nightstick sounded.

The dim light reappeared through the peephole.

Giving up on her hair, the female cop shouted, "Open the goddamn door!"

"How do I know you're the police?" said a muffled voice through the door.

"Who the fuck *else* did you call at two a.m.?" the short-tempered cop spat back.

The sleepy-eyed fireman never moved his gaze as a creepy smile took over his face.

"Come on! Open the fucking the door!" Megan shouted.

"No! I want to see some ID."

Megan held up her empty palm in front of the peephole. “Can you read it?”

“Okay, that’s better,” said the muffled voice. “Hold on.”

The door crept opened and the rescuers were struck by a pungent odor of stale beer and puke. Standing in the doorway was a thin, attractive woman (attractive at least to the sleepy-eyed fireman), in her late twenties, who was covered from her neck to her ankles by a pale blue terrycloth bathrobe. Her face was as pale as a full moon, her hair was bleach-blonde, and she had two flaming-red marbles that had replaced her eyes. Either she was just balling her eyes out—or smoking some good weed.

Mike and Megan turned to each other and whispered, “*Ooh, lipstick!*”

“Are you the patient?” asked a rather large fireman, who, Megan noticed, was smiling at the blonde from his crotch.

“No,” she said, her voice barely audible. “She’s in her room. Let me show you.”

The other rescuers parted like the Red Sea so Mike and Megan could go first. They humped the heavy cardiac monitor and rescue bags and followed the blonde inside. Mike knocked on the bedroom door.

“Leave me the fuck alone!” greeted him back.

Megan twisted the doorknob and walked in. “Paramedics. We’re coming in.”

“I didn’t give you permission. Get the fuck out!”

The room was dark, and it took some time for the eyes of the two medics to adjust. In the middle was a four-poster bed with dark purple or black sheets.

“If you don’t leave now, I’m calling the cops,” the cigarette-burnt voice said. It came from the person sitting up in the middle of the bed. She was wearing a red, plaid flannel shirt and baggy men’s jeans and had a body that might have

once belonged to a guy—better yet, a wrestler. A midget wrestler. In contrast to the rest of the apartment, the furnishings in this room appeared new. A large TV hung on the wall.

“The cops are right outside,” Megan said. “Do you want me to get them?” She continued to study the room. Her attention was drawn back to the woman’s Linda Blair stare.

“What the hell are you doing here?” the woman asked.

“We’re here to help you. We got a call that you tried to overdose.”

“Fucking *overdose*? On *what*?”

“Alcohol and pills,” Mike said. “Do you think we *want* to be here?” He sensed a fight.

The woman realized that Mike could easily have thrown her out the window. She relaxed her posture. “Hey, heyyyyy...I was just trying to get fucking high—not kill myself—asshole.”

Then it started: logorrhea. And she wouldn’t shut up. She spouted on and on about how no one gave a shit about her, how she was a victim of this and that, and on and on and on and on and on.

Mike caught Megan’s eye. A few years earlier, they’d invented an intelligence index. They would use a certain number of fingers to communicate to each other how long they thought it would take before a patient would start repeating himself or herself. The smartest never repeated, but the dumbest ones? They’d go around and around in circles and, if they weren’t stopped, eventually would forget what they were saying. Megan had one finger pointing down, indicating less than one minute. Mike held two fingers down: about two minutes. Megan won. The woman finally switched to the all-time favorite, the “Get Me My Fucking Lawyer” song.

They scanned the room and Megan was the first to notice that each bedpost had a length of thick, white nylon rope dangling from it. Suddenly Megan's jaw dropped, and her arms reflexively wrapped around her stomach. Hundreds of little eyeballs were burning into her. She'd always hated dolls, and now she found herself surrounded by shelves of them—male and female—with each face meticulously painted with an expression of fright, pleading, agony. Some were hung by their thumbs or tied down on tiny torture devices. Some were naked and had their genitals mutilated or completely bit away.

Bent over on a separate shelf was the most famous action-figure hero of all time: G.I. Joe. And behind Joe was the most famous boyfriend doll of all time: Ken. Ken was sodomizing G.I. Joe! Both dolls were staring at Megan with a look of anguish permanently painted on their faces. It was as if they were both stuck in some kind of toy hell. Megan tensed and held her stomach tighter, feeling as if she had a time bomb of laughter ticking away in her gut. She could no longer look at the dolls—and she definitely couldn't risk looking at her partner.

The woman became angry when she noticed that the paramedics were no longer paying attention to her.

“Who the fuck called you?” the woman demanded. “It was my little bitch, wasn't it!?” She looked from Megan to Mike. “You fucking assholes! Look at the two of you, fucking *losers*, playing doctor...” Her face twisted into a sneer. “Awww, what happened? Failed out of med school?” She stood up on the bed and said, “I'm fucking out of here!”

“Sit down!” Megan ordered. “As I see it,” she continued, “we have two options. The first? We can have a discussion like three intelligent individuals and come to the conclusion that this call has been a misunderstanding. Then we can all go

home”—Megan looked up at the dolls—“and you can go back to your life and hobby. The second option? You can continue to act like an asshole, and we can drag you out of here like the psycho animal you are.”

Then Megan made a mistake. She turned her back.

“Oh, fuck,” Mike mouthed.

Bam! The woman jumped on Megan and wrapped herself around her. Mike tried to help, but started to laugh at Megan started spinning around, trying to rid herself of the piggyback rider.

“Get off me, you crazy bitch!” Megan said, starting to laugh.

“Megan, stop turning, and I’ll get her off of you,” Mike pleaded, trying to stifle his own laughter.

Megan didn’t want help. She abruptly stopped and fell backward, slamming the midget wrestler onto the floor. *BAM!* The room shook so violently that the shelves and TV gave in to gravity and crashed to the floor. Megan spun and jammed her knee against the wrestler’s throat. “Move, and I’ll shatter your fucking trachea.”

The firemen and police rushed in. Mike stood back and allowed them to physically remove Megan’s knee from the patient’s throat. Unfortunately, no one held on to the patient. She scurried across the floor and began throwing dolls at them. Spiderman, who had his buttock bitten out, smacked the female cop square in the face.

“That tears it, bitch!” the female cop said. She leaped across the room and tackled the patient.

Megan was speechless as she and everyone else in the room watched the cop and the woman roll around on the floor. The sort cop joined the dance, while the crazed woman spat, bit, kicked, and cursed her way into handcuffs.

The woman turned towards Megan and yelled, “This is not over, bitch!”

In her innocent Alabama drawl Megan said to Mike, “Oh, my.”

“Oh, my God! Oh, my God! Don’t hurt her!” Someone must have flicked on the blonde’s switch. She began to scream, cry, and hyperventilate.

“Get her out of here,” the short cop ordered.

“Let her go! Don’t hurt her!” she yelled.

“Come with me,” Megan said. She took her by the arm.

“Owwww,” the woman whined.

Alone in the kitchen, Megan was able to examine her. She was an obvious cutter, with multiple razor-thin slashes on her arms, legs, and abdomen. The back of her legs had caning bruises at different stages of healing.

“Do you like this?” Megan asked.

The blonde looked at her feet.

“You’re a beautiful girl. Why do you scar yourself like this?”

“She likes to watch.”

“You do realize how messed up this is?” Megan continued. “Let’s get you some help. Okay?”

“I can’t leave. She wants me here.”

“She! What about you?” Megan had had it. Had it with the late call. Had it with this late bullshit call. “I don’t fucking understand,” she said. “You’re surrendering your life, your freedom. This is America. You’ve got the right to pursue happiness! Is this fucking happiness?”

The girl moved away from her, but Megan turned her back her way and peered into her eyes.

“I don’t understand. Look at you, don’t give it away. To thine own self be true.” Megan stormed back into the bedroom. “I want her arrested for assault on a paramedic!”

The patient was handcuffed and on the floor. Someone placed a T-shirt over her head to prevent her from spitting, but the shirt didn't prevent her from spreading verbal cheer.

The short cop faced off with Megan. "Honey, you can press all the charges you want, but we're not arresting her."

"Honey!?! Listen, sweetheart, she attacked me! She even attacked you!"

"That's your fault. You shouldn't have come in without us. And besides, she's a psych patient. It's a medical problem."

"Getting drunk and violent?"

The cop didn't acknowledge her remark, and Megan stormed out of the apartment to find refuge in her ambulance. She swung open its back doors, sat on the back step, and put her face in her hands.

It was some time before she heard Mike's voice: "Megan, you all right?"

"I'll be okay."

Mike sat next to her. "You know we're stuck with the transport?"

"No, we're not."

"After you left, Metro asks her if she wants to go to jail or to the hospital."

"Typical."

"No, it gets worse. So he asks her if she took the pills to hurt herself, and she tells him to fuck off. Then he says that attacking a medic is a felony, and if she didn't take the pills to hurt herself, she would end up in prison. He then gives the female cop a cute little smile and she goes nuts. Now she agrees with you and wants the Spiderman assaulter booked, and out of nowhere she says, 'The next time you get horny, you better go home to your wife.'"

“Damn, I wish I had stayed for that,” Megan said, a small grin taking over her face. “The end of another great love affair. So did the patient admit that she was trying to kill herself?”

“No, but they decided that ‘she is unable to make rational decisions’—so he ‘formed’ her.”

“Formed her?” Megan asked. “The old legal 2000 form? The cop’s friend? Fill in the blanks, and the perp is mentally unfit for jail?”

“Yup,” Mike said. “That’s why we’re stuck.”

“No, we’re not. I took us out of service. Either way, we’ll have to make a report. Fuck them.”

“Is another unit on their way?”

Now Megan was smiling from ear to ear.

“There are no units available?” Mike guessed.

“Yup, Level Zero. And to make things just a little sweeter, I made it a Delta response.”

“Delta? They’ll be stuck here for hours.”

“Yup. Let’s load up and go pee,” Megan said.

“Go pee” is an expression that the medics use for a drug test. Anytime there is an incident, the ambulance crew is sent for a drug test. The clinic the company used for the “go pee tests” was located up a hill in Green Valley. Megan was done first and sat in the ambulance waiting for Mike. She watched the strip’s neon lights battle the dawn until the sun finally took over the sky.

New York is the city that never sleeps; Las Vegas is the city that can’t sleep.

It is a city built out of bad luck. Conceived in the desert, fertilized by buried Mob hits, and continuing to flourish in an endless supply of disposable and non-disposable income. Vegas is a town full of greed, hate, violence, ignorance,

drugs, and perpetual alcohol. Megan loved Las Vegas; it was her office.

Mike joined her. "I don't know why I had to pee," he said. "You're the one that got humped." He started the engine.

"Mike, I can't get that run out of my head."

"Which one?"

Megan continued, "I can't believe that girl."

"What're you getting soft on me?"

"No really, I'm serious. How can anyone give up their free will?"

"Come on. M must be late. People give up that shit all the time. Alcohol, drugs, some stupid-ass debilitating psychogenetic disorder. Life is pain; it was never supposed to be easy, and if it was it would be boring."

Mike steered the ambulance out of the parking lot. "It's a choice."

"You can't say that. Everyday we see people who have been crushed by real disease or injury. They don't have a choice."

"Some still return to the arena."

A car ran a stop sign, causing Mike to jam on the brakes. "Asshole! I bet he's from California."

"Hey, wait a minute. My mom lives in California."

"Yeah? And I bet she is such a good driver," Mike retorted.

Megan wasn't in the mood to snap back at him. "Arena? Now you're getting soft in the head."

"Yes, the arena. Think back on the call we had at the chemo infusion center."

"You mean that female who went into respiratory arrest during her treatment? That was a good call."

“Kind of. Do you remember the other oncology patients in the room?”

“I didn’t pay attention. I was *kind of* busy saving the patient’s life,” Megan replied.

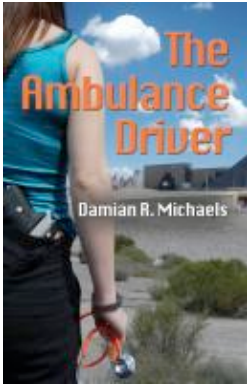
“I’ll tell you what you missed. They were all witnessing the resuscitation of one of their own. They watched you shove a plastic tube down her throat, throw her on a stretcher, and rush out of the office. All the while allowing the same type of poison to infuse into their veins. That’s returning to the arena.”

Megan stared out the windshield and finally turned towards Mike, “You have to feel sorry for that girl tonight. A little?”

“Yeah, I guess you’re right,” Mike said. “But I’ll tell you who I *don’t* feel sorry for. I don’t feel sorry for the firefighters who were woken up from a dead sleep. I’m not at all sorry for that kook who jumped you. Forget about any sympathy for the cops who were interrupted in the middle of playing hide-the-billy-club. But I’ll tell you who I really *do* feel sorry for.”

“Who? Yourself?” Megan asked.

“Nope, not even myself. Out of all the hurt, sickness, and sadness that we’ve been a part of tonight, the one person I feel truly sorry for is G.I. Joe.”



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