

### $\mathbf{BY}$

# ALESSIA BRIO & WILL BELEGON

www.VenusPress.com

The scanning, uploading and distribution of this book via the Internet or via any other means without the permission of the publisher is illegal, and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized electronic editions, and do not participate in or encourage the electronic piracy of copyrighted materials. Your support of the author's rights is appreciated.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, places, organizations, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

## ARTISTICALLY INCLINED Copyright © 2006 by Alessia Brio & Will Belegon ISBN: 1-59836-371-9 Cover Art © 2006 by Dan Skinner

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any form without permission, except as provided by the U.S. Copyright Law. Printed and bound in the United States of America.

For information, you can find us on the web at www.VenusPress.com

Dedication:

To the Pittsburgh patrons of the arts

#### Chapter One

Cyndi wiped her forehead with the back of her hand, leaving a smear of deep red paint across her furrowed brow as she concentrated on the work in front of her. Skirting the large canvas taped to her studio floor and tripping over a pile of stretcher bars in assorted sizes, she lurched toward the computer workstation in the corner. The everpresent clutter reminded her of the need for organization, but the artsy chaos did provide a level of comfort.

The work in progress—commissioned anonymously by a local businessman as a Valentine's Day gift for his lover—throbbed with a sticky sensuality, which made the air in the room feel like a viscous fluid flowing over the exposed skin of her arms and legs. Adding three times the usual amount of acrylic gloss to the mix in order to achieve the desired effect, the textured moiré sheen practically jumped off the canvas to stoke her libido.

As the piece neared completion, Cyndi began to dread parting with it. It had come to symbolize, in her mind, pure passion—the uninhibited, raw, pounding sex that left one dizzy with exhilaration. Although there was nothing particularly explicit about it, the work oozed eroticism. It evoked in her a desire to inhale the heady scent of arousal, to taste sweet silky skin, and to feel the rasp of a hot tongue across her nipples.

Wrenching her eyes away from the painting, Cyndi turned her attention to the oversized monitor and once again read the e-mail message she had sent just over forty minutes ago:

From: SympliCyndi@aol.com

**Sent:** Thursday, February 9, 2006 12:55 PM **To:** KTRogers@RogersSportingGoods.com

**Subject:** Valentine's Day

Kevin,

Sorry to bug you at work, but I have to send this NOW...while I still have the nerve.

I've been thinking a lot about Valentine's Day. Rather than spend a bunch of money on candy and flowers and dinner, why don't we try something a little different?

You know how we were talking the other night about our failed marriages and how we had allowed ourselves to fall into a sexual rut? Well, I thought maybe we could try to keep that from happening to us by creating a different sort of Valentine's Day tradition.

Now, before you reply, I want you to know that I do NOT think our sex life is boring. Quite the contrary! We're still getting to know one another and everything's still new and fresh and exciting. However, as we both know, it was once new and fresh and exciting with our exes, too.

Okay, here's my idea...\*deep breath\*

We each write down a few (say, five) of our sexual fantasies. On Monday, we'll swap lists. If anything appears on BOTH our lists, it takes precedence for Tuesday evening. Okay so far? (If more than one fantasy is on both our lists, we'll cross that bridge when we...um...*come* \*grin\* to it.)

Next, we each pick one fantasy from the other's list and fulfill it within a couple weeks. Sounds simple, doesn't it? (Then tell me why my hands are shaking as I type this!)

What do you think? Please don't make me wait long for your reply. I'm going crazy already!

~ Cyn

She'd first encountered Kevin on a rainy Saturday afternoon in September at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History while visiting *The Mysterious Bog People* tour. His physical presence—confident yet subdued—intrigued her, and she amused herself by following him shamelessly, albeit discreetly, around the exhibit.

Later the same day, Cyndi found herself seated next to him at a benefit dinner for Pittsburgh's Contemporary Arts Center. It had surprised her to discover that he recalled seeing her that afternoon given the change in her appearance from one venue to the next—from torn jeans and a Pirates jersey to a curve-hugging aubergine satin gown. He had also undergone a stunning transformation and looked downright delicious in his Armani tuxedo. They each interpreted the random encounters as more than mere

coincidence and, before the evening ended, arranged to meet again the following morning for brunch.

The beep of an incoming message interrupted Cyndi's reverie.

**From:** KTRogers@RogersSportingGoods.com **Sent:** Thursday, February 9, 2006 1:37 PM

**To:** SympliCyndi@aol.com **Subject:** RE: Valentine's Day

Hello? Has anyone seen Cyndi around there?

You DON'T want to go out to dinner and everything? Fine with me, gorgeous. Food always tastes the same around you anyway, seeing as how I'm never paying any attention to it.

Frankly, I love your idea. We keep our lists secret from each other until we actually exchange them, right? So then maybe we need to keep things simple if we want to do them on the very next day, at least if we actually chose something the same.

Let's try to keep things that we have done before off our lists, since the whole point is to make things "new, fresh & exciting."

Kevin

Cyndi beamed as she fired off a brief reply:

From: SympliCyndi@aol.com

**Sent:** Thursday, February 9, 2006 1:39 PM **To:** KTRogers@RogersSportingGoods.com

Subject: Re: RE: Valentine's Day

Oh, phew! I'm so relieved. I was practically sitting ON my computer waiting for your reply.

Okay, back to work—assuming I can concentrate. I want to finish this commission so I can devote my full attention to drafting my list.

Call me later?

~ Cyn

\* \* \* \*

Kevin grinned as Cyndi's reply came back almost immediately. He envied her that freedom, the ability to be, as she had just put it, "practically sitting on the computer". His employees thought that—because he was the boss—he got to do everything he wanted the way he wanted it done. If anything, the opposite was true. Even his ex wife admittedly assumed that any delays meant he was ignoring her. Thankfully, Cyndi seemed to have avoided that trap—perhaps because she herself sometimes went quite a while before calling back or replying, especially if she got caught up in a piece. She could go for hours without stopping if she really got involved.

That creative side of her must've led to this. He called up the original e-mail again. Five fantasies. It should be simple—the way a man's imagination purportedly worked—but somehow Kevin found it rather intimidating. It was one thing to *have* the fantasies, quite another to write them down and put them out there for possible criticism.

But that's exactly the point, isn't it? Getting outside one's comfort zone. He could do it. Hell, if I can give a speech at the company Christmas party, I can do this! Letting the woman I love know five twisted little thoughts cannot possibly be as hard as trying to appear calm and confident in front of a couple hundred people when I'm dying of fright inside.

The first one, at least, was easy. Amazing that in all the years of running his own business, he had never done it, even though if anyone had the opportunity it was Kevin.

For the second thing, he thought about Cyndi working in her studio—paint flying as she got really into it; little splatters of red and black on the cutoff jean shorts and the plain tank top she usually wore when painting. Few people thought of painting as hard work, but when Cyndi got going or when she worked on a large canvas, she often built up quite a sweat. The mixture of the sheen from her efforts and the colors of the paint she was using, of how warm it could get in that studio, the tank top sticking to her skin—those few times she had let him watch—had a remarkable effect on him. He didn't think it was any coincidence, either, that she allowed him to stay while she worked quite a bit more often. Cyndi had noticed.

For the third? He reached back in his memories to Rebecca DeMornay in *Risky Business*. A scene of moving light and shadows and public daring, of a fantasy fulfilled. *Train travels are hardly the norm anymore, and this isn't Chicago with the El to work with, but the idea...very intriguing*. Kevin wrote, "I want to have sex on a moving train."

"Mr. Rogers?" Karen, his secretary, gently interrupted his daydreams. She walked in to lay last night's final sales figures on the desk for his review.

"Yes, Karen?"

"Robert from the Penguins is here. The one about doing the water bottle promotion? He has a box of the way they are going to look.... Oh, and he brought tickets! Can I have one? I love hockey!"

"I don't think that will be a problem, Karen. I assume you want a pair, for you and John?"

"Nah, we broke up. I wouldn't know who to take. Especially seeing as how you have this policy against dating your employees..."

"Not to mention ones that are half my age and whose parents I went to college with, Karen. It's sweet of you to say something like that, but I think you can do better than your mom's old boyfriend."

"I don't know, Mr. Rogers. Mom says that if dad hadn't come along she'd have had you back for sure. What're you writing?"

"Just e-mailing Cyndi. Making plans for the weekend. Tell Rob I'll be down in a second, will you?"

"Sure thing, Mr. Rogers."

Karen turned, walked out slowly, and pulled the office door shut again behind her. Kevin caught himself watching her leave before shaking his head to snap himself out of it. Laura would kill him for thinking about her daughter that way, but it did give him an idea for number four on the list.

I wonder if she saw what I was writing? Kevin thought. That would be embarrassing—although not half as embarrassing as having Karen learn about some of the things that had really happened between Laura and him.

"I want to see you kiss another woman," Kevin typed quickly for number four, and then saved the file and locked his screen to go talk to the guy from the Penguins marketing department.

\* \* \* \*

Cyndi threw herself back into her work, determined to make some additional progress before calling it a day. She really wanted to take a break to relieve some of the sexual tension but knew that keeping the edge would help her infuse the piece with even more sensuality—and that was what her customer had ordered. The mysterious, and obviously well-to-do, man piqued her curiosity. He'd contacted her just over two weeks ago via her gallery website to inquire about a custom painting. He said he wanted something so erotic that it would make his girlfriend horny just to *think* about looking at it. "But," he cautioned, "It must be innocuous enough to hang anywhere—school, church—*anywhere*."

A tall order, Cyndi mused. She'd questioned him via e-mail about his girlfriend—her tastes, likes and dislikes—but he'd been maddeningly vague. Two days later, she received a generous down payment in the form of a money order with a note saying he would pay the other half when he picked up the finished painting on Valentine's Day. She really wanted to be a fly on the wall when he presented the piece to his girlfriend, but settled for his assurances that he would let her know how it was received. As she worked, Cyndi envisioned the lucky woman's eyes widening with surprise and then narrowing as the painting worked it's magic. She had raised her hand to her mouth to cover the gasped "oh" then slowly lower it, palm flattened to her chest, as she exhaled with exhilaration. Cyndi hoped the woman would be so appreciative that she'd jump him on the spot, wherever the spot happened to be.

Wicked thoughts of the couple coupling beneath her work danced through Cyndi's mind. Perhaps she would jump Kevin if he stopped by on his way home from work—take him right there in the studio before he knew what hit him. Not that he would object. She knew he liked watching her work, although it made her uncomfortable at first. Exposed. The incredible intimacy—artist to canvas—often felt sexual. He might as well be watching her masturbate.

Cyndi studied the smooth, rich ground color flowing across the canvas like melted milk chocolate and imagined Kevin stroking his cock as he watched her *paint* herself. The first fantasy on her list began to take shape.

She circled the canvas, viewing it from every angle, before scooping up a fistful of the wet, crimson gel and applying it in the southwest quadrant. The mound gradually spread across the surface but remained somewhat raised, almost like a welt. Bemused, Cyndi took a smaller scoop of the paint and dropped it onto her bare thigh, watching the welts appear. Did she dare? The thought of Kevin's hand tenderly caressing her ass on the heels of a sharp slap—his tongue tracing the raised red marks as if to blend them into her skin—removed any lingering doubts. Two down; three to go.

Just how intricate should these fantasies be? she wondered. Too much detail would result in a script-like performance. Better leave Kevin some room to be creative.

Cyndi pulled herself from her daydreams and returned to the work in progress. Another application of gel—a deeper cherry shade and slightly thicker—gave the work more depth. It wouldn't go under glass. No, this piece begged to be touched. She fought the urge to strip off her paint-spattered clothes and just roll on it; to feel the silky colors sink into her skin and her psyche.

Since the reds would have to set and at least partially dry before she could continue, Cyndi peeled off her work clothes and padded into the bathroom she'd added to the east end of the studio last year. The fiberglass shower stall was streaked with a cacophony of watered-down acrylics. She had long since given up on keeping it free of paint splashes, and it became a work of pop art in and of itself. When WQED interviewed her for its artists' showcase last July, the cameraman had even insisted on shooting the shower—resulting in several offers to purchase it.

Cyndi chuckled to herself as she towel dried her hair. Everything in her home studio, once merely a dusty attic, was splattered with paint—including the commode, which no one had yet offered to buy. She glanced out the bathroom's tiny octagonal window just in time to see Kevin pull into the driveway. Pulling on a sweater and jeans, she rushed downstairs to meet him at the door, wondering if he had worked on his list at all.

#### Chapter Two

"Sorry if I'm overdressed, but it never seems like I can get out of there without someone having one more little crisis. I can ditch the tie and roll up the sleeves if you like."

"Hmmmm. I don't know, Kevin. Sometimes I like the idea that you're wearing a leash for me," she said as she reached out and curled the tie around her fist, giving it a tug. Kevin followed the unspoken directive and leaned in to give her a kiss. He intended it to be short and sweet—the kind that started an evening, not finished it—but Cyndi had other ideas. Her hand let go of the Nicole Miller original and darted around to the back of his head at the first sign that he might pull away.

Her tongue tapped insistently at his lips and he opened to let her in, letting a little of the daily frustrations of the workplace release in the passionate appreciation of the taste and feel of her. He could smell the barest hint of apple from the soap of her shower and could taste the mint of her toothpaste. He lifted her to her toes and gave her a little squeeze as he placed his hands on her hips. Cyndi let the hand that didn't hold a fistful of hair slide down his back and rest over the back pocket of his slacks.

Eventually he lifted his head away, holding her down with his hands and ignoring the hand curled in his hair.

"You are riled up tonight, aren't you? If I wasn't so hungry, I'd be tempted to just throw you over a shoulder and carry you back inside. As it is, it will just have to wait. C'mon, I'm in the mood for something basic but satisfying. Let's go to Mineo's and have pizza."

"Hardly the most romantic of spots to go eat, lover," replied Cyndi

"Then call ahead while we're driving, and we'll take it somewhere else to eat. I just have a craving. Carbs be damned! Besides, what's not romantic about it? I can *make* it romantic. We can eat it without napkins...or shirts. Let the sauce and the cheese fall where they may. I'll lick the little drops off your chest...hmmm? Maybe I oughta revise that list...."

"Oh! Already finished?"

"I thought that was supposed to stay a secret until time to exchange them?" Changing the subject, he tugged her along, "C'mon, let go get something. Doesn't have to be pizza, but I am very hungry—for lots of things. But let's save that discussion for after we eat...."

"What if I don't want to wait?"

"Are you gonna make me carry you to the car?" Kevin laughed. "Come on, Cyn. Let's go! I never took a lunch today."

Kevin groaned as he saw the expression on her face. "Cyndi, don't look at me like that. I know very well that you can go for hours without stopping for as much a drink of water. I've seen you do it. Hmmmm. But then when you do stop..."

"Uh oh! Kevin, what are you thinking? The last time you trailed off and then got a look like that on your face you nearly got me in a lot of trouble."

"Hey, you were on time for that meeting. Barely, but on time."

"And because of it I know better than to trust you when you start grinning like Loki's ghost!"

"Don't worry. It's just one little idea I had, that's all. We'll discuss it over dinner."

\* \* \* \*

Cyndi gave Kevin a chaste peck on the cheek, winked, and shooed him out the door with a parting swat to his tight backside. His butt, firmed by frequent tennis and even more frequent fucking, made her appreciate sculpture in ways she'd never before considered. Nothing beat sex for toning a man's ass, especially a man over forty, and Kevin's ass certainly spoke to his activity level. Most men, even those who spent hours and hours at the gym, neglected their asses—focusing almost exclusively on arms and shoulders and abs.

Kevin's ass looked awesome in tight jeans, but it was the dress slacks that completely undid her. The lightweight wool pair he'd been wearing draped so elegantly from the curve of those glorious gluts that she'd nearly asked him to stay over—something they usually reserved for the nights before his days off, since sleep so often took a backseat to more vigorous activities. Over their draft beer and stuffed crust, double cheese pizza, Cyndi had opened her mouth to extend the invitation just as Kevin revealed his wicked little idea: that they abstain from sex until next week.

The man could be damned ornery, and apparently this little idea of hers had brought out the trait in full force. The bastard didn't even give her a single hint about what his list might contain, in spite of her not-so-subtle prying. She knew only that he'd

worked on it already. Cyndi wondered, not for the first time, if they would have any of the same fantasies. What if their lists were so far apart that they could find no common ground? Better to learn that now, she reassured herself, before we become more entangled in one another's lives.

Cyndi climbed the narrow stairs to her studio and flipped on the track lighting, chasing the shadows from every corner. During the day, she worked by the natural light provided by over a dozen skylights. The nights, however, often brought out characteristics not always evident during the day. Something about the envelope of darkness made things jump out at her in ways that sunlight could not evoke.

Cyndi immediately felt the pulse of the piece, pulling her toward the center of the room. It spoke to her in a primal tongue, so instinctive and pure that all the arbitrary constructs of sin and salvation were obliterated by passion. She unbuttoned her jeans and slipped a hand inside to cup her sex before remembering their promise: no orgasms 'til Tuesday. *Good Lord, I'll have a hair trigger by then!* 

I came up here to type my list, she reminded herself, averting her eyes as she skirted the painting to reach her computer. After clearing her inbox, she opened a new message and addressed it, for the time being, to herself. She'd change the recipient to Kevin on Monday morning but didn't want to risk sending it prematurely by accident. If Kevin was going to be so secretive, then damn it, she would be, too.

She typed the first two items onto her wish list without pause and then froze, fingers poised over the keyboard, pondering her options. It didn't take long for her to realize that she had no clue how Kevin felt about so many things—including one of her most enduring fantasies. Well, he'll have others from which to choose if this one is not his cup of tea, she thought as she typed: "I want to have sex with you and Tony."

Tony—Kevin's tennis partner and close friend since their college days at Pitt—lived just outside the city in Monroeville. They'd recently celebrated his appointment as Chief Engineer with the Port Authority over dinner at Le'Mont. Cyndi sensed a deep bond between the two men, although neither ever outwardly acknowledged it. They appeared to be the stereotypical frat brothers: drinking buddies and sports aficionados. There was something more, though— something neither openly acknowledged. Of all the men she could think of for a threesome, Tony seemed like the best choice. At least, she believed, Kevin would not immediately reject the idea if it involved Tony. Maybe.

Two more. Cyndi threw in one she fully expected him to pass simply to improve the odds on the others. If he surprised her by picking it, fine. It had added yet another interesting layer to their sex life. The one time they had discussed anal sex—

hypothetically—Cyndi had said she'd only consider it if her partner was willing to take it as well as give it. "Fair's fair," she'd winked, and Kevin had quickly changed the subject.

Now that only one slot remained, a myriad of enticing possibilities flooded her imagination. Cyndi began to regret not suggesting their lists contain ten fantasies instead of just five. If all went smoothly, though, perhaps they'd make it an annual tradition.

With a shrug and an eenie-meenie-miney-mo, she settled on the last: "Sex in public—preferably oral."

\* \* \* \*

**From:** KTRogers@RogersSportingGoods.com **Sent:** Friday, February 10, 2006 11:39 AM

**To:** SympliCyndi@aol.com **Subject:** RE: Valentine's Day

Maybe this wasn't such a great idea of mine after all. I missed you last night—work night or not. I lay there in the dark, imagining you doing the same. Were you tempted to touch yourself like I was? I could see you, as though I were sitting in the arm chair by your dresser—soft yellow light from the bedside lamp throwing your body into stark relief. I wanted to call you—knowing you would answer, knowing that we might resort to phone games like we did when I got stuck in Phoenix for a couple weeks back in November.

Only four more days, lover. Surely we can hold off until then? Build that thirst, baby **~wink~** LY, Kevin

Kevin backed away from the computer and cracked his knuckles. His ex hated the gesture, but Cyndi had quickly figured out that it simply meant he was under stress. Even though his own idea, he could tell this short period of abstinence was really going to wear on him. It wasn't as if he *couldn't* get laid. That would have been easier. No, what bugged him the most about this situation was that he knew he *could* stop at any time—that he did not have to play out the string.

Cyndi, at least, would be busy with her commissioned painting over the weekend. He'd asked to see it last night, wondering if it was the reason for her exceptionally

seductive mood, but she'd changed the subject. Kevin currently had nothing along those lines to fully occupy his thoughts—or his hands. No big projects. No lengthy to-do list. Hell, even the business' income tax returns were nearly completed. And Valentine's Day was not exactly a booming holiday sales period for sporting goods.

Kevin looked over the draft ads for the *Post-Gazette*, made a few phone calls, and double-checked the January inventory reports. Busy work, but it kept Cyndi—and what she might be putting on her damned list—from completely overwhelming his thoughts.

"Mr. Rogers?" Karen's voice announced over his intercom, "Cyndi's here." His finger was just about to press the *talk* button to respond when Cyndi's head peeked around the door frame.

"I brought you—well, *us*—lunch," she beamed with a devilish glint in her eyes. "Just some, um...finger foods."

"Oh, sure! That's going to make it easy for us to keep our promise. You wicked wanton little witch. Okay, let's test our resolve. What did you bring?" Leaning back in his chair, he pushed himself away from his desk to get a clearer view of her.

"I found a little Chinese place not too far from here. Not one of those Rice King buffets, but a real restaurant. So I brought egg rolls, potstickers, and..."

Kevin laughed hard as Cyndi pulled open the little box and held out a cream cheese won-ton towards his mouth. She smiled at her little joke, looking just as pleased as he was over one of those instances when the universe seemed to be exerting its influence. He leaned forward and took the morsel in his mouth, all the time maintaining eye contact and enjoying the teasing look in her eyes.

"Okay, baby. Today you're the won-ton witch instead of the wanton witch. Too classic! Here, let me clear a spot on the desk so you can put that stuff down. Did you bring anything to drink or should I go grab a couple of sodas from the break room?"

"Way ahead of you, lover. I asked Karen to bring us a couple as repayment for *her* lunch. I called earlier and asked what she wanted and when would be a good time."

"That explains why Tom rescheduled for later this afternoon, then. It seemed odd for him," Kevin commented. "You enlisting my secretary in your devious little schemes now?"

"No." Cyndi replied, perching on the edge of his desk. "Though I don't think she would mind. She likes you quite a bit, or hadn't you noticed?"

"I noticed—but I won't do anything about it. Number one: I already have a girlfriend, and I'm very happy with her. Number two: Karen is Laura's daughter and

young enough to be mine. Number three: she is an employee. Besides, she might be more interested in you than me."

"Really? What would give you that idea?"

"Karen just broke up with her boyfriend, but before John she was dating more girls than guys. I try to keep a level of professional distance, but I have known her for a long time and I do notice such things."

"That's an interesting thought. I think you're wrong about her being more interested in me, though. A woman can tell some things."

"So can a man. Here, wait a second." Kevin pulled a notepad over, wrote something quickly, folded the paper, and pushed it to one side of the desk. "Five dollar bet that what's on the paper happens?"

"You're on! But I can think of things much more fun to wager than money."

"No, no, you naughty girl. Not until next week, when..."

"Mr. Rogers?" Karen called from around the slightly open door, interrupting him. "I brought some pop for you and Cyndi."

"Thank you, Karen. Bring it on in. Did you want anything? There is plenty here for three..." Kevin gave Cyndi a mischievous glance as he said it and was a little surprised to see his wanton won-ton girlfriend blush slightly.

"No, thank you, Mr. Rogers," Karen said, coming in and setting the pop cans on the desk. "Cyndi brought me some Kung Pao chicken. Thank you, Cyndi." She leaned over and kissed Cyndi on the cheek before turning to leave.

It was all Kevin could do to keep his composure and not burst out laughing. Instead, he simply raised an eyebrow and nodded at the folded paper on the desktop.

"You've got to be kidding me, Kevin!"

"She's been working for me since she was eighteen years old, and she gets her personality—and appetites—straight from her mother. Go ahead; open the note. Read it out loud."

"If Karen likes you she will kiss your cheek for bringing her lunch." Cyndi read. "So if you have her so figured out, why haven't you done anything about it? Don't preach the age thing at me again either! It might keep you out of a relationship, but it wouldn't stop you from playing. I know you too well."

"No, that's true. But the fact that she works for me would. And the fact that her mother and I dated in college would create some really weird vibes. Plus, I already have a girlfriend who keeps me very busy." Kevin grinned and looked deeply into Cyndi's eyes, trying to express both satisfaction and hunger.

"And she intends to keep it that way," Cyndi replied as she looked at him over the meal.

Cyndi leaned in to see if Kevin would try to avoid kissing her under the rules of this little game he had created. While he didn't hesitate to kiss her, he broke away faster than he normally would and quickly popped a bite of egg roll into his mouth to give him an excuse for it.

Cyndi sighed. "Are you really sure you want to keep this up until next week? I have nothing else planned for the weekend. Are you sure you don't want to come over tonight?"

"Nope. If I come over there, I won't have the strength to go home and you know it. It is because of how much I want to that I won't come over this weekend, baby. Besides, you have a painting to finish. Unless you wanted to show it to me?"

"Oh, no you don't! You're not getting into that studio unless you give me what I want—and I don't mean a five dollar bet, either."

"Blackmailing me, baby? I just want to see what you're working on this time. That's all, I promise," he grinned.

Kevin thought he was being subtle, but Cyndi wasn't buying it. She grinned right back at him and ran her tongue across her upper lip in that way she knew drove him nuts.

"You finish your list yet, Kevin? You wanna start on 'em early?"

"Do I want to? Hell, yes. But I'll finish the game, thanks. I wouldn't want you to get some kind of complex about me not being able to finish the things I started."

"Now that is one thing I am not worried about at all, sexy man."

Kevin looked at the little smile on her face and way she was poised, like a lioness ready to spring on her chosen prey. *God, if this woman is a curse, then smite me with it and let me never recover*!

"The food's getting cold. Egg roll?"

Cyndi said nothing, but took the egg roll from his fingers, and slid it into her mouth. Slid *all* of it into her mouth; her lips pursed around it and her eyes boring into his to find the triggers hidden behind them. Kevin actually trembled with the effort it took not to grab her and throw her down on the desk. That would take care of the first item on his list in a hurry, and if Karen heard, it might take care of number four as well.

"Um, if you keep that up you're gonna get spanked, woman."

"Promises, promises. Let's see you do it!" Cyndi's voice was playful, be he couldn't miss the way her eyes widened. And with that image, he had his number five.

"Nothing until next week, baby. C'mon, let's eat before it really does get cold, despite how hot this room has gotten." Kevin winked and turned his attention to the potstickers.

\* \* \* \*

Joe DeNardo's familiar voice woke her early on Sunday, promising at least seven inches, before the snow stopped. Cyndi ran a hand through her hair and struggled to get her bearings. She felt hungover—strung out—although she'd not had anything to drink since a glass of wine with her leftover Chinese dinner on Friday. *Probably dehydration*, she thought as she pulled herself from the sofa and peeked through curtains at the thick white blanket covering the view.

She'd spent the entire previous day in her studio, absorbed in her work, pausing only long enough to scarf down a Snickers bar around mid afternoon. The details, when Cyndi tried to recall specifics, stubbornly refused to come into focus. She could clearly remember the ache, though, while working on the painting. It burned through the fog of her memory like a torch and again came to rest between her legs. *Damn Kevin and his blasted ideas*!

She too was wrapped in a white blanket; hers flannel and warmer than the earth's. Apparently, she'd crashed on the sofa right after showering—the television on WTAE, which she only ever watched for local news. So, it must've been around eleven o'clock although she had no recollection of leaving the studio.

Nude beneath the blanket, each movement increased Cyndi's awareness of her nipples as they brushed against the soft fabric. Bits of cream-colored paint clung to her hands, and she studied them. Fleeting images—more visceral than visual—teased her consciousness. *I got stoned on adrenaline*, she mused, *and endorphins*. While Cyndi often got lost in the creative process, it had never resulted in such drunken disorientation.

After a moment, she raised the back of her hand to her mouth and licked it, savoring the taste of skin and the feel of her hot breath offsetting the chill where her tongue left a wet trail. What she wouldn't give for that tongue to belong to Kevin right now. Her clit pulsed in emphatic agreement. *Oh*, *hell! I'll probably come in my sleep before Tuesday*.

Cyndi pulled the blanket more tightly around her bare body, cocooning it, kicked up the thermostat a notch, then headed toward the kitchen to start a pot of coffee. As she turned off the television in passing, the phone rang—making her think for a split second that one somehow caused the other. Kevin's ring.

"You bastard!" she said in lieu of *hello*. "Get your ass over here and fuck me. Now!"

Kevin's hearty laughter erupted after a moment of stunned silence. "Well, now! Aren't we the horny minx this morning?"

"Yes, we are...and it's all your damned fault. I can't remember when I've ever gone longer than two days without an orgasm."

"Patience, baby. It'll be worth the wait. I promise. It's not easy on me, either, y'know? In fact," he paused, "it's quite *hard*."

"Mmm," she purred. "How hard? Tell Cyndi all about it. She'll just drop this blanket she's wearing and run a finger through..."

"Stop that this instant, wench! You don't play fair."

"Make me."

The sound Kevin made fell somewhere between a groan and a laugh, but he dissembled quickly. "I called to see if you wanted to have lunch with me."

"I'd love to—but I'm going to pass. Too much temptation, y'know? Plus, I've gotta put the sealant on that piece so it'll be completely dry by Tuesday evening. I finished it yesterday, although I couldn't tell you what it looks like."

"You just lost me, there."

"You've heard the expression *in the zone*? Well, that's where I spent the day yesterday. I can feel a sense of completion, so I know it's done—but I can't for the life of me remember precisely what I did. Guess I'll find out when I go upstairs, huh?"

Kevin paused to digest the information. "So—do you think he'll be *satisfied* with it? Is it as erotic as ordered?"

"Hmm. I think anything I'd create in this mood would be erotic, but.... Hey! How'd you know about the order?"

"You told me, of course. Remember?"

"No, I don't," Cyndi replied as she poured herself some coffee. "Anyway, I'm gonna take care of that and then head over to Digging Pitt Gallery to check out their *Collaborations* exhibit. I did a mixed media piece with an up-and-coming sculptor a while back, and it's included. That's assuming the buses are running, though. I'm not driving my car in this weather."

"I talked to Tony earlier this morning, and he said everything's still fully operational. They don't expect any service interruptions."

"Good to know. How is Tony, by the way? I haven't seen him since that dinner party."

"Busy, but he's lovin' the new job. We should get together with him soon."

"Yes," Cyndi said once she'd stopped choking on her coffee. "We most certainly should. Well, I'm going to get dressed and get busy. I guess tomorrow's the day. We email our lists at noon, right?"

"Yup. Are you nervous about it? I am," he paused, "just a little."

"Just a wee bit. More eager than apprehensive, though—and mega curious."

Kevin laughed. "Yes. Me, too. Okay, then I'll be over on Tuesday evening. How's six-ish sound?"

"My client is scheduled to pick up his commission at five thirty, so six is just perfect."

\* \* \* \*

"Mr. Rogers? Mr. Rogers, were you going to pick up line two?"

"What? Oh, right. Rob's on line two about the water bottle promotion. I'm sorry, Karen. My head was in the clouds. Would you pick up and make an excuse about me being elsewhere in the store and then I'll pick up in a second?"

Kevin shook the daydreams out of his head and looked at the clock. Was it really only ten-thirty? Monday mornings always seemed to drag out, but this was the worst ever. It seemed as though noon was weeks away instead of an hour and a half. The phone on Kevin's desk gave an insistent ring as Karen put Rob through.

"Rob? Kevin Rogers. Sorry about that. Had a customer service challenge to take care of on the sales floor. So, are we settled for March 24<sup>th</sup> then? Great, I'll see to my end. Tickets? Yes, I have some employees who would like to go. No, I'm sure twenty will be plenty. What? Well, sure. Why not? Four for the game against Carolina on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Yes, we'd be happy to meet for drinks first. See you then."

Kevin hung up the phone and glanced at the clock again. *Okay, an hour and twenty-eight minutes, now.* He wondered what was going to be on her list.

"A little distracted today, Mr. Rogers? Wow! You've got it bad."

"What's that, Karen?"

"You heard me. I know who you're thinking about. Not that I blame you. So, what did you get her for Valentine's Day?"

"Actually, I let her pick something out for herself." Kevin said it with a touch of pride, allowing himself some smug satisfaction with how things had played out. Everything had come together perfectly.

"Oh, Kevin Rogers, you didn't! Please tell me you didn't buy her something impersonal like a gift card to Victoria's Secret or something? After the stories Mom has

told me about your knack for finding the right present, I would be so disappointed in you!"

"Really? And since when have you been asking your mother about me, Karen?"

That got a blush. The question seemed to catch Karen off guard, as though she had not quite realized what she'd said until he threw it back at her. She looked quite uncomfortable. Kevin was deciding whether to press on this development when Karen was spared further questioning by the ring tones of Maroon 5's *She Will Be Loved*. She jumped at the excuse to get off the hot seat.

"Better pick that one up the first time, boss." Karen smirked as she walked back out of the office and Kevin pulled out his cell phone to answer Cyndi's call.

"Kevin," said the voice on the other side, "I don't want to wait. How about we hit send now?"

"What makes you think that I've been waiting on that all morning?" Kevin fired back.

"The same thing that lets me know you stare at Karen's ass every time she turns around. Don't try to pretend you're not just as keyed up as I am, Kevin. It won't work."

"Okay, I admit it. Frankly, I've had the e-mail sitting on my desktop just waiting to click the send button."

"Me, too. Want to be naughty and jump the gun by an hour?"

"You're on! I'll race you!"

"Too late. I just beat you to it." Cyndi hung up with her victory assured.

Kevin leaned over and clicked the mouse to send his list on its way as the bold print of Cyndi's e-mail showed up in his inbox. He double-clicked the subject line and read down the list, his smile mixing with a slight widening of the eyes and at least one quiet laugh.

Kevin picked up his cell phone and punched a number from his speed dial.

"Tony? Hey, it's Kev. I wonder if you could manage a favor for me?"

#### Chapter Three

Cyndi started her Tuesday by rereading Kevin's list, which only served to heighten her already intense excitement. No big surprises, but some new territory. Nothing she would consider a deal breaker, though. It came as no surprise that their lists contained several common threads. She shivered—not for the first time and certainly not for the last—in anticipation of the evening ahead. Kevin had said he'd be over at six o'clock, and they'd decide where to go from there. Work to do, first, she reminded herself.

She'd photographed the painting yesterday afternoon, during the brightest part of the day, using a laser-sighted camera mounted in a track suspended from the studio's ceiling. The images were instantly downloaded to her computer, colors analyzed, and topography mapped. The state-of-the-art system produced high quality digital images, which could then be used for catalogs, brochures, and prints; an elegant setup that had paid for itself within a year of installation.

Cyndi stared at the finished piece, still taped to the studio floor. Better get it stretched, so it's ready for pick up. She struggled to let go of it emotionally, but there was more of her in this one than she'd ever invested in her other artwork. Those viewing it would know her—intimately—and she recalled an article she'd once read about authors of erotica feeling the same way. I understand that now. It was both terrifying and liberating.

Circling the canvas, she pulled the wide masking tape from its perimeter. Little threads stuck to the tape, giving the canvas a fringed appearance and setting off its borders in stark relief. Silky latex edged by coarse, raw canvas. Striking. Some artists prepped their canvas with gesso, but that required it to be stretched in advance. Cyndi preferred to work with a softer, unstretched fabric. Not only did it cut costs if she elected to scrap a piece, but it also made the work in progress less susceptible to damage.

The many applications of paint had soaked through the densely woven cotton duck, and it would have to be peeled from the smooth linoleum of the studio floor.

Like a dominatrix peeling off her shiny latex opera gloves, Cyndi mused as she reached for one corner of the canvas.

Her computer beeped with an incoming message, and she seized the excuse to procrastinate further. An e-mail from her commission informed her that he'd been called out of town on a business emergency and would contact her upon his return. Apologies, etc.

Relief tempered Cyndi's disappointment. She could keep the piece a little while longer! Abandoning the work at hand, she opted instead to spend the day responding to an interview for an upcoming issue of Carnegie Mellon's alumni magazine. By the time she finished updating her vitae, attaching photos of some of her favorite paintings, and answering the many questions, it was nearly five o'clock. At least the busy work had kept sex just simmering in the back of her mind, instead of boiling on the front burner.

Showering quickly—and not allowing her touch to linger on some ultra sensitive areas—Cyndi donned an ecru silk sweater and camel suede skirt. "Dress casually," Kevin had said when he called. He hadn't said anything about underclothes, though, so Cyndi opted to go without. Her nipples were clearly visible—something she typically eschewed. Tonight, though, it made her feel daring. Rather than her ever-present ponytail, she wore her hair down, allowing it to fall in thick waves around her shoulders. Thigh-high stockings and brand new chestnut riding boots completed her ensemble. Not too terribly casual. She'd learned not to fully trust the male assessment of *casual* versus *dressy*.

With the barest touch of *Quelques Fleurs* between her breasts and in the hollow of her throat, she was ready for whatever the evening had in store. The doorbell rang just as she emerged from her bedroom, and she glanced at the hall clock. Only five-thirty.

Cyndi threw open the door and yanked Kevin inside, sandwiching the box of *Bacis* between them. "Kiss me," she ordered. "Like, right now."

"Has he already come and gone?" Kevin asked after complying with her imperative. "Mmm. You smell good—and you feel damned good, too."

"He who? Oh, my commission. He had to cancel."

"Well, damn. I came early hoping to see it. Here," he said, unceremoniously handing her the chocolates and looking at his watch. "C'mon. We've gotta scoot. Maybe you can show it to me later."

"Where're we going?" she asked as she pulled on her coat and gloves.

"To eat, of course. Hungry?"

Cyndi grinned, "Oh, I've got an appetite, all right!"

They were silent—contemplative and almost shy with one another—during the brief ride to Mount Washington. Cyndi's eyes widened as they pulled into the parking lot of Tin Angel.

"Kevin! How in the world did you score a reservation here? They book special occasions years in advance."

"Guess I just know all the right people, eh?"

He rounded the car to open her door and extended a hand. As she lowered her legs to the pavement, a blast of icy air raced up her skirt, eliciting a gasp. Kevin looked at her quizzically, but said nothing.

\* \* \* \*

Kevin wondered at her gasp, but said nothing. He'd test his theory about it soon enough. He helped her out of the car and reached into the back seat for his grey sport coat.

"I thought you said to dress casually, Kevin?"

"A stunner like you can dress however she wants in any room in America, Cyndi. For this place, *I* need a jacket. My influence doesn't extend that far."

"I'm not sure I believe that if you can get us in here on Valentine's Day on short notice."

"Who said it was short notice? After you, milady." Kevin held the door to the foyer open and used a small bow and sweeping hand to gesture Cyndi into the restaurant. At any other place and time, it would have been unforgivably corny. Tonight, from the look on Cyndi's face, it just worked.

The hostess looked up as they entered. As she made eye contact, a small smile crept across her lips. She hurried over and kissed Kevin on both cheeks before stepping back.

"Kevin! I'm so very pleased to see you! It's been *far* too long," she winked. "And the lady...?"

"Nikki, this is Cyndi. Cyndi, this is..."

"Cyndi, I'm delighted to meet you. Please, come this way. We have your table ready. I think you're going to love the view. You're right on the window! And if this old man gets too forward, you let me know and Diane will gladly put saltpeter in his steak."

Nikki led them upstairs to the second floor of the dining room and to a table against a large glass window. Below, downtown Pittsburgh sparkled in a way that belied its blue-collar reputation.

"Oh, Kevin!"

"Gorgeous, isn't it? The view here is unbelievable. The only thing more impressive is that it doesn't live up to the food."

"I find that rather hard to swallow, Kevin."

The phrase hung in the air, and the hint of shyness he'd been feeling melted away from the heat of Cyndi's innuendo. Kevin just looked at her. His eyes held hers in a way intended to make her feel their caress over her body, a tingle as they stroked her inner thigh, and the pressure of his hand at the small of her back. Yet Kevin's eyes never left hers, and his hands remained at his side.

"We shall see."

Dinner was served in five courses. Kevin suspected that Cyndi could've made a meal out of the vegetable boat alone, with its marinated artichoke hearts and stuffed grape leaves. The main entree was amazing: a ten-ounce filet mignon sliced open and stuffed with pitted cherries and topped with creamy béarnaise sauce.

"Oh, it's absolutely heavenly," Cyndi purred. "The atmosphere, the view, and—especially—the company. And you were right about the food! Mmm. I adore cherries. They're so...sensual."

Near the end of the meal, Kevin's phone buzzed. He fired off a return text and then turned it off, apologizing for the oversight and promising no further interruptions. By that time, Cyndi appeared to feel as he did: both more and less relaxed. The wine and food had eased his nervous tension and slight apprehension, but had left untouched his anticipation.

Stepping into the chill air of the February night was refreshing, especially after a big meal and so much wine. The sweetness of the crème brûlée mingled with the aftertaste of the *Opus* on the edges of Kevin's tongue, and the vibrating edge of his nerves mingled with it to make him feel like a kid after too much candy. He slipped his arm around Cyndi's shoulders and waited until they were almost back to the car before redirecting her to the right.

"We're not going back to the car yet, baby. Let's take a ride on the Incline."

"Okay..." said Cyndi slowly. Kevin could hear the suspicion in her voice and knew she wondered what he had up his sleeve.

"I called Tony and made some arrangements. We have a private ride to view the Golden Triangle. Have you ever been up here at night, Cyndi?"

As he spoke, they rounded the Duquesne Incline station house and stepped onto the viewing platform. Downtown Pittsburgh was below them. The Allegheny and

Monongahela Rivers flowed together to form the Ohio, and the lights of the city filled the space between them—skyscrapers thrusting upwards into the night. The city was decorated by bright strands of light across the dark river waters: the bridges like necklaces with a sparkle of diamonds created by the headlights of moving cars.

Cyndi said nothing, but Kevin heard her deep breath and the arm around his waist squeezed him harder. He knew she felt it, too.

"I love it, Cyndi. The city has a reputation for being hard and rough—and maybe it is—but it's beautiful, too. Anyone can appreciate this view, but only someone who really knows the 'Burgh can really get it. It's like how I feel about your paintings. Anyone can view your finished work and appreciate it. You communicate so much.

"But I look at one of your paintings, and I see things they don't. I see you biting your lower lip with red paint in your hair. I see you standing to the side and looking for the next image to leap out of the canvas and into your mind's eye. I see the frenzied passion: how you won't stop for hours, how you become one with the work. And I dare to hope you love me half as much as I do the sight of one of your paintings."

Kevin leaned over to kiss her and found her waiting for it. He brought her into his arms and poured his intensity into her—crushing her lips and letting what he had said and what he had planned transform into a more direct expression of his love. Cyndi's hands caught in the hair at the back of his head as her tongue darted out to meet his, and he lost all track of the view, the evenings chill, or the other couples scattered around the observation deck.

"Kevin?"

Tony's voice brought Kevin out of his trance. He pulled back and for a moment, he just stared into her eyes, becoming lost again until Tony brought him back with a hand on his shoulder.

"Hey, buddy. Much as I hate to interrupt, we do have a schedule to keep here. Hiya, Cyn. Good to see you again."

"Hi, Tony. How are you?"

Kevin could hear the extra note of concern in Cyndi's voice. Even six years after Robin's passing, Valentine's Day was hard on Tony.

"I'm good," Tony replied, as he wrapped Cyndi in a hug. "Shall we get you two going? Lots of other couples waiting, and I also have employees here who'll be very happy to get the big boss out of their hair."

Cyndi kept her right arm around Tony as he walked with them over to the funicular car; her left slipping back around Kevin's waist.

"When are we all going to get together for dinner or something, Tony? I was asking Kevin about you just yesterday. He said you enjoy your new position."

"I really do," Tony said, "but I could use a night out. We'll get together sooner rather then later, Cyndi. I promise."

Kevin glared at Tony over Cyndi's head, a warning in his eyes, but Tony just laughed. "Here you are. Go ahead and board. I'll go get things started. Enjoy your ride, Kev."

"Tony seems to be in good spirits tonight," said Cyndi as she and Kevin stepped into the car and headed toward the front windows. The Duquesne Incline, following the tracks of an old coal hoist, was one of four such transports constructed to provide convenient downtown access to the residents of Coal Hill—now known as Mount Washington—in the late 1800s.

"Yes, almost too good. Come here, you. Kiss me."

Cyndi melted into his arms without hesitation, driving him back against the window. Kevin lifted her to her toes and let the wall support him as he slipped his tongue between her lips and captured hers. Her body crushed against him, and he felt the hard pebbles of her nipples through the silk of her thin sweater against his chest. His hands wandered down to her waist and slipped inside the waistband of her skirt to test a theory. As he ran his fingers outward from the small of her back, he knew he had been right. She wasn't wearing anything beneath the skirt, either.

Kevin heard the door click closed and a few moments later the car gave a small lurch as it began its slow trip down Mount Washington. He reached around to the center of Cyndi's back and took the head of the zipper in his fingers, starting to pull it down.

"Kevin?"

"Don't worry, baby. There's no one here to see what you wouldn't mind seeing, right? And, I know you want me as bad as I want you."

"Mmm, but we don't have that long of a ride. Do we? Besides," she said with a wink in her voice, "this isn't a real train."

"It's a real train if I say it's a real train. This qualifies. It's what we make of it, Cyn. But it's not my fantasy I'm working on here, either." Kevin pulled Cyndi hard against him and shut her up with another kiss. He attacked her fiercely for a few moments, then pulled back and turned his head to her left.

Cyndi's eyes widened and she gave a small gasp as Kevin's arm left her waist and reached out to pull Tony into a shared embrace. Kevin heard an even sharper intake of breath as he leaned into Tony and kissed him for the first time in many years.

Kevin felt Cyndi's head lean against his shoulder as Tony's tongue thrust into his mouth. He had forgotten how much larger a man's mouth was, and Tony was obviously eager to remind him. There was no gentleness between the two of them, just a hard animal-like intensity.

Tony's arm locked around Kevin's back as the kiss continued forcefully, his head changing angles and driving Kevin's back against the glass. Kevin let it go for a while before he finally twisted away.

"Wow. A little keyed up there, T? I'm glad to know you missed me, but tonight isn't about that..."

"Right," said Tony. "I know—but it's been a long time."

Kevin looked down at Cyndi. She just stared, her head resting on his shoulder. He tried to decipher the look in her eyes, which reminded him of a child who has just seen a new toy in the window of the department store and is breathless at the possibilities.

"You okay with this, baby?"

"Have you ever known me to back off when I set my sights on something?"

As Cyndi punctuated her words by pulling his head down for a kiss, Kevin slid his left hand into the waistband of her loosened skirt and squeezed at the bare flesh beneath. Cyndi shivered at his touch, and he didn't think it was due to the night air.

Kevin reached out with his right hand and put it on the back of Tony's neck, pulling him into the kiss. For a long moment, all three of them seemed to be kissing each other—lips and tongues leaping about and mingling—but it was awkward, and their time was very limited. Kevin pulled back and watched Tony and Cyndi kiss.

"Tony, let's move her over to the bench."

"Hey, don't I get a say in this?"

"Shhh! We don't have time to discuss this in committee."

"I am NOT a comm..."

Kevin laid his finger across her lips.

"You said you wanted this. If you've changed your mind, say so right now." Kevin's tone was firm and no-nonsense.

Cyndi stared into Kevin's eyes. She started to say something twice and stopped, then said in a low and lusty voice, "I haven't changed my mind."

Kevin nodded at Tony and the larger man swept her up into his arms, carrying her across the small space and setting her down on the wooden bench. "I'll be right back, Kev. I'm going to give us just a little more playtime."

Tony moved to the back of the car as Kevin reached down, slid his hand to the small of Cyndi's back and kissed her again. As he captured her tongue once more, he gave the zipper a sharp pull and the skirt came loose. At the same time, the railcar gave a jolt and stopped.

"We can take about five extra minutes here, guys. Not much more."

Tony joined them on the side bench as Kevin pushed up on Cyndi's hips. She hesitated for just a moment before she raised them off the wood, and Kevin quickly slid the suede skirt down her legs.

He let his hands run up her stockings to the bare skin of her thighs and then to the bottom edge of her sweater. As he passed her pussy, she again raised her hips, but he ignored the gesture and instead pulled her sweater up to reveal her tits.

Kevin took Cyndi's left nipple into his mouth, sucking it hard as she voiced her pleasure after the weekend of abstinence. He felt Tony settle on her opposite side and then Tony's head joined his, assaulting Cyndi's right breast as Kevin worked her left.

Cyndi squirmed with the pleasure of it, her bare ass gliding across the wood seat. Kevin sucked as much of her breast as he could into his wide-open mouth then released it and bit gently at her nipple. As he did so, he let his hand travel downwards.

He could feel the heat emanating from her pussy even before he slid his fingers across it. She was incredibly wet, and her hips leapt up to meet him as a long tortured moan escaped from her throat.

Kevin knelt down and kissed his way across her belly while Tony continued to lean across and suckle her breasts, taking advantage of Kevin's absence to fondle the left while he licked at her right nipple. Kevin smiled as he put his head down and exhaled sharply onto Cyndi's soaked cunt.

She lifted it to meet him and he did not hesitate, but stuck his tongue out to taste her. As he got the first silky taste of her, she cried out wordlessly and her hands found his head. She pulled him down hard as she thrust upward, and Kevin forgot all notions of subtlety as he sucked her clit hard into his mouth.

"Oh, my fucking God!" Cyndi cried out. Kevin reached beneath her and filled his hands with the cheeks of her ass, pulling her into him as he moved his head side to side, releasing his suction to lap at the hard knob of her clit. Cyndi's vocalizations lost all resemblance to real language, becoming a wordless sound of pure release.

Then, her thighs squeezed his ears and her hips bucked as the sound morphed into staccato gasps with the force of her orgasm. Even with all the buildup and the forced

inactivity, he was surprised she came so quickly. It certainly didn't lack intensity. As the pulses subsided, Kevin raised his head with an evil grin on his face.

Tony watched as Kevin kissed his love and she attacked him—recovering quickly from her head-thrown-back abandon to pull him tightly against her.

Kevin broke the kiss, looked into Cyndi's eyes, and winked.

"Your turn to give now, Cyndi. I got the impression from the way you wrote your list that you wanted to give head in public, not just receive it, so..."

"Oh, yes," said Cyndi, her hands running down Kevin's chest to the waist of his black slacks and grasping the front button.

"No, not me. Tony."

Cyndi just stared at him, looking both puzzled and hungry. Kevin nodded and smiled.

"You sure about that, man?" Tony asked. "I mean, I definitely want it, but..."

"Shut up and stand up, Tony. I know what I'm doing."

Tony stood and Kevin grabbed the waist of his jeans. He pulled him over to stand above the two of them, then turned and stared at Cyndi as he unbuckled Tony's belt.

"Your call, baby. You wanna suck his cock together?"

"Hell fucking yes!"

Kevin pulled Tony's jeans open and pushed them down around his hips. Tony's hard cock stood out from the top of his boxers, and Kevin pushed those down as well. He took it in his hand as Tony shivered slightly and looked into Cyndi's eyes.

"Ready, baby?"

"Shut up and give him to me!"

Kevin laughed as Cyndi leaned forward and took Tony in her mouth, never losing eye contact with her lover. She slid Tony's hard cock into her mouth until her lips rested against Kevin's hand, then closed her eyes and relaxed her throat. Kevin took the hint and moved his hand as more of Tony's cock disappeared into her mouth. Above them, Tony closed his eyes and threw his head back. Kevin had to let go to grab Tony's hips so he would not lose his balance.

As Cyndi lips traveled up Tony's shaft, her eyes opened and she looked at Kevin. There seemed to be a hint of nervousness there, but Kevin watched it evaporate when he didn't flinch or frown, and Cyndi let her hand move to Tony's cock and her fingers follow her lips.

She pulled her mouth from Tony and leaned hesitatingly toward Kevin. Kevin reassured her by capturing her lips in a kiss, and all the worry seemed to leave her as she ground her mouth against his.

Kevin pulled away and grinned at her.

"Don't worry, baby. I know what to do."

Kevin leaned over and put his lips on the tip of Tony's cock, then took the head slowly into his mouth. He let it rest there for a moment, closed his eyes, and stifled a chuckle as he heard Tony's groan and Cyndi's soft sigh at the sight of it. He moved his mouth farther down, raising his right hand to grasp the shaft and gently pumping—just as he remembered Tony liked—and was rewarded with another groan.

He felt Cyndi moving and then her mouth was playing over the fingers resting on Tony's cock. She kissed each finger separately and let her tongue slide into the spaces between them while Kevin moved his mouth up and down.

Tony's cock was rock hard but soft at the same time—smooth skin covering an iron bar. He could feel the contours of Tony's glans against his tongue. Kevin paused every few stokes to actually suck at it in truth as well as name; the air leaving his mouth and his cheeks collapsing around it.

With his eyes still closed, he felt Cyndi moving between Tony's legs and taking his balls into her mouth. This caused more appreciative noises from above, and this time Kevin couldn't stop himself, he had to pull back to laugh lest he choke on Tony's hard cock. "Still got it, don't I?" he teased.

Cyndi's eyes sparkled as she quickly kissed him and then took his place—pulling Tony's cock back into her mouth and again taking him deep into the back of her throat, eyes closed in concentration. Kevin just stared, fascinated. Suddenly, Tony gave out a small cry that seemed out of place from such a large man, and his hips thrust forward. Cyndi's eyes sprung open and looked at Kevin.

Kevin just nodded, and she moved her head back a bit. Kevin grasped the shaft of Tony's cock and began to pump. Tony's hand caught at Kevin's wrist, and he felt the pulse as Tony came into Cyndi's mouth.

Cyndi locked her eyes on Kevin's as she swallowed. He watched her throat move and smiled to let her know he approved. When she took her mouth away, Tony collapsed on the bench next to her. Cyndi looked at Kevin and gave such a cat-got-the-canary grin that once again he burst into laughter.

"Best put this back on," Kevin said, picking the suede skirt off the floor and pulling it up her legs. Cyndi stood to allow him to pull it over her hips, and then he zipped it back up.

"Kiss me?" she asked—a little hesitation in her voice.

"I don't mind," Kevin replied and showed her by doing so. "I've tasted it before—it's just been a long time."

"Time? Holy shit! We need to get moving!" Tony sprang to his feet and moved towards the controls, pulling up his jeans, as Kevin and Cyndi collapsed on the bench giggling—the thrill of the adventure overcoming them.

As the railcar again began to move, Kevin again kissed his love and settled back to enjoy the rest of the ride in a more traditional sense.

\* \* \* \*

Cyndi stopped on the observation platform for one more look at the Golden Triangle in all its sparkly splendor. The rivers' confluence brought to mind a woman of water with a brilliant, hot tongue between her legs. With that image cemented in her memory, she turned to Kevin and grinned.

"Just the two of us now. Where to next?"

"Back to your place," he said softly. "There's something I want to give you."

"What've you got up your sleeve now? This," she gestured, "all of this, was just amazing. There's more? I feel...overwhelmed."

Kevin wrapped his arms around her and kissed her forehead. "Let me sweep you off your feet for a change, okay? You blow me away on a daily basis. It's my turn."

With the edge of her lust tempered, the tenderness resurfaced and Cyndi looked with wonder at the man who thrilled her with his passion, his openness, and his *joi de vivre*. "Then, take me," she grinned as she paused to allow the double meaning to register, "home."

As Kevin drove, she recalled her list and marveled that two of the five fantasies had already been fulfilled—and one of Kevin's, too. If the evening ended now, she'd still consider it a success. Cyndi had a feeling, though, that the best was yet to come.

At her place, after they'd shed their coats and kicked off their shoes, Kevin grabbed her hand and pulled her toward the stairs. Her bedroom was on the first floor, and she opened her mouth to question him. He silenced her with a kiss that vanquished all traces of the earlier tenderness.

"No more words," he cautioned as his hands unzipped her skirt, allowing it to fall to the floor. "Upstairs. Now."

The tone of his voice brought her desire roaring back to the surface, and she could feel his returning through the soft flannel of his slacks as well. His eyes burned with an intensity that made Cyndi grow wet with anticipation.

She felt deliciously wicked walking ahead of Kevin wearing only her sweater, stockings, and boots—her ass level with his face as they slowly climbed the stairs. The first smack took her off guard, and she cried out.

The second came as they reached the entrance to the studio. "No more words," he growled, pressing his body into her back. "Remember?"

Cyndi bit her lip and nodded, challenge flaring in her eyes as he spun her around and again kissed her. His hands left her ass just long enough to hit the wall bank of rheostats, chasing away all the silvery shadows created by the moonlight. She grabbed at his belt buckle, but he stopped her. "Not yet."

Kevin looked over her shoulder into the center of the room and gasped. "Cyndi... Oh, wow! It--it--I..." he stammered before abandoning the search for appropriate words. She turned to face the painting, and even knowing what to expect, its sensuality hit her hard. She wanted to lick it. To taste its cream. To roll it around on her tongue and then feel it slide down the back of her throat, leaving a residue to remind her for the next hour or so of what she'd swallowed.

Cyndi moaned softly and ground her bare ass against Kevin's fly as she reached under her sweater to pinch her nipples.

"Not so fast, baby." She could hear the sticky sweet syrup of sex in his voice and knew he felt the power of her work just as strongly. He kicked a small, wheeled stool toward the painting and sat upon it, pulling her prone across his lap.

Cyndi could feel the heat of his cock against her ribs. His hands traced the contours of her ass. A finger dipped into her wet pussy and smeared her juices around her rosebud—testing, teasing.

"You've done," Kevin said in conjunction with the sharp crack of his hand, "such an incredible job with this commission." He kneaded her cheeks and probed again with a finger, eliciting a deep groan. Cyndi wanted to speak—to insist that he fuck her immediately—but she maintained her silence. "I am so impressed with your work."

Another blow landed, followed by a caress and Kevin's fingers penetrating both ass and cunt. She writhed against his hand, seeking more, and her clit throbbed with each twist of his knuckles.

With his free hand, Kevin fished in his breast pocket. Cyndi wanted to see what he was doing, but the stinging and the stroking and the need for it to continue without

interruption kept her paralyzed. The sound of paper—of paper being unfolded—registered just as something fluttered to the floor in front of her face.

"Read it to me," Kevin commanded with another slap. "Read it, or I'll stop."

Cyndi struggled to focus on the text; fighting to shift her attention away from her ass long enough for her eyes to work. Kevin varied his pace—finger fucking her hard, lightly flicking her clit, then icing it all with another bare handed slap before starting the cycle again.

"Ms. Ellington," she finally rasped when Kevin withheld his touch. "I would like to commission a piece of art work for my love." The rest of it she knew without having to read, as it was etched in her memory. As her tears fell onto the print out, she recited:

"She is the most remarkable woman I've ever known. I must have a gift that moves her as she moves me—something that stirs the passion which lives in her eyes and makes her ache for my touch, just as I ache for hers."

Kevin lifted Cyndi from his lap and kissed her. "I love you, y'know?"

This time, Kevin didn't stop her when she tugged at his belt. "Mmm. Don't you think is long past time to fuck? I want to show you how much I appreciate your gift, after all."

Cyndi disrobed him slowly, taking time to touch and taste his skin as she exposed it. She bit at his nipples, and raked her nails across his ass and sucked his neck. And, when he finally stood naked before her, she pulled him onto the painting.

He hesitated, apparently fearing to damage it, but Cyndi reassured him with a smile. Without words, she directed him to lie down on his back, and then—on her knees—she straddled his thighs. She whipped off her sweater in one smooth motion and tossed it aside, her hair falling wildly about her face.

They were in a sea of chocolate silk with the succulent cherry oozing from its pierced shell, cream flowing alongside. Cyndi ran her hands up her thighs and across her stomach, cupping each breast. To the rhythm of her passion, she swayed—eyes closed—as her hands traveled over her lush body, eventually coming to rest between her legs.

Knowing Kevin watched, she opened herself. Fingers danced. Hips thrust. Her breathing became ragged as she approached the edges of her bliss. Beneath her, Cyndi felt him move, and she opened her eyes. He held his cock and stared at her with wonder as he joined her in the fiery dance.

She hovered over him—her sex scant inches from his pistoning hand. His wrist pounded against her inner thigh, and their knuckles brushed one another as both picked up speed. Together, now, they climbed.

As Cyndi neared her climax, she moved her hands to her breasts and ground her pussy hard against Kevin's hand. He lifted his cock and she immediately lowered herself onto it. Kevin's hot length filled her completely, and she fell into a new tempo.

He held tightly onto Cyndi's hips, fingers digging into her sides, as she rode him. Each time his cock slide inside, it felt hotter, and harder and thicker. Kevin followed her lead, but she could tell he fought the urge to thrust. He wasn't, by nature, a bottom kind of guy.

When her orgasm overtook her, Cyndi lost her rhythm. Her thighs trembled from both the exertion and the waves of pleasure radiating from her center. Kevin caught her before she lost her balance and eased her on to her back, separating only momentarily. The walls of her cunt pulsed around his cock, and Cyndi shuddered with each. Kevin's thrusting gained speed and strength, and before her orgasm had completely waned, he joined her in ecstasy.

"I was dreading saying goodbye to this piece," she admitted, as they lay together recovering on the studio floor, Cyndi's painting slick with their juices. "I could never let go of it now. You are one deliciously devious man, Kevin Rogers! I never suspected your hand in this."

"Mmm. I thought I tipped that hand on Sunday, but you didn't catch my *faux pas*. Now," he said seriously, "about the balance of your fee..."

"Don't be silly! You know I won't take your money."

Kevin nodded. "I suspected as much. That's why the check in my wallet is made out to your alma mater—where it'll create a scholarship in your name for the *artistically inclined*."

#### About the Authors

Alessia Brio is a work-from-home mom and an outspoken advocate for the civil and human rights of people with disabilities. In her "spare" time, she writes erotica and poetry. She lives in the mountains near Pittsburgh and prefers to spend her days immersed in *research*.

Will Belegon writes erotic romance as an exploration of his more primal side. He finds the combination of his overactive imagination with his love of poetry and prose to be a good fit for the genre. Throw in his love of moonlit beaches and first kisses, and the words just flow.