

Naked Eyes

Cat Marsters

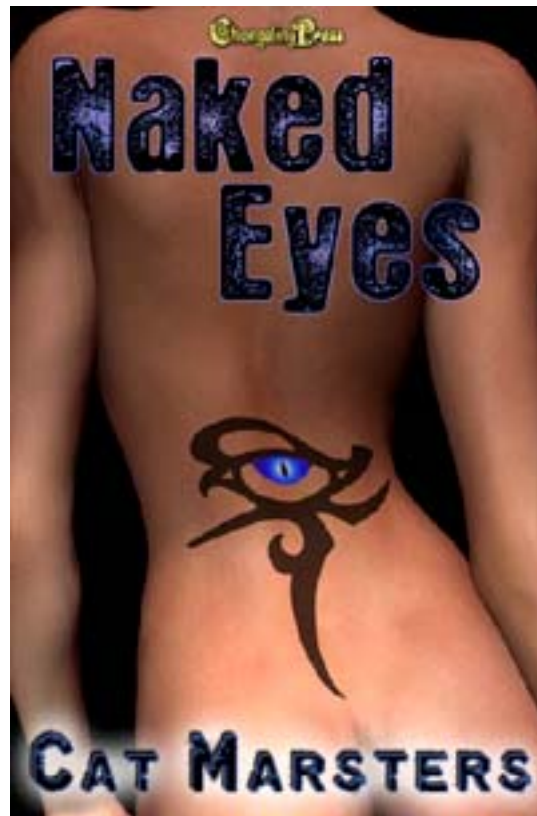
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Chapter One

"That bloke over there. He wants to see inside your knickers, don't he?"

"No."

"You din't even look."

"I don't have to."

"What, you can tell from here?"

"Kenneth, I'm not playing this game."

"Come on. He's lookin' at you like that. He wants to know what color your wossnames are."

"Well, he can keep on wondering."

"But can't you tell? If he wants to know?"

Laura looked up from her coffee and fixed the ghost with the sort of look she usually reserved for passengers who'd had too many pre-flight gin and tonics. "Shut up," she said.

"Or what? What you gonna do to me, eh? Report me? Shoot me? I'm already dead, love," Kenneth said with the sort of tone that led her to believe he rather enjoyed this state of affairs.

"I'll ignore you, is what I'll do," Laura said, and the ghost looked horrified for a moment before he regained his composure.

"You don't scare me, love," he said.

"Well, I'm still learning."

"Got no respect for me, you haven't," Kenneth moaned.

She tuned out.

Perhaps taking a leave of absence had been a bad idea, especially in Edinburgh. Old cities were full of spirits, and somehow they all knew she was there, knew she

could see them. Which might not be so bad, except there always seemed to be a Kenneth wherever she went. The sort of ghost who really, really wanted to make conversation. Only he never had anything interesting to say.

"What are you doing in Edinburgh, anyway?" she asked. "You sound like a Londoner."

Kenneth assumed a mournful expression. "Bloody seminar, wasn't it?" he said. "Couldn't hold it anywhere nearby, oh no. Sales center's in Milton Keynes, and where do they hold the seminar? Bloody Scotland. Arse-end of the universe, that's where." He heaved a sigh. "Reckon the journey's what did it for me. Did I tell you I had a heart attack?"

"Three times so far," Laura said, thinking uncharitably that it was probably the fact that he was a hundred pounds overweight that had given him a heart attack, not the journey from southern England. Besides, she was never particularly well disposed toward people who called her country the arse-end of the universe.

She stared out of the window while Kenneth rambled on about the deal he was just about to clinch when he had a heart attack after four pints and a meat pie. It was a grey day in Edinburgh, the air heavy with an unrelenting drizzle that murdered hairstyles and ruined any outfit not made of synthetic fibers. She glanced at her bedraggled wool coat and sighed. Maybe she should have found somewhere to stay in London. Or dead-headed out to Rome or Barcelona, somewhere a bit warmer. Scotland was the home of her heart, but the weather wasn't half depressing.

Idly, she gazed at her coffee while Kenneth continued detailing the minutiae of his life as a salesman. The dark liquid -- black, no sugar, quick and easy to make, how she'd learned to like it when she first started working shifts -- reflected back the tall building outside.

Wait -- the café faced onto a row of two-story buildings. What was the drink reflecting?

Her stomach fluttering, Laura, blinked and looked back at her coffee. All it reflected was her own face. But the building...

Yes, she'd walked past it on her way here. An office building of some kind, tall and quite spectacularly ugly, which was why it had stuck in her mind. Other than that, it was completely ordinary. So why was it showing up in her coffee cup?

Laura looked up, and from the corner of her eye she swore she could see someone falling.

Goddamn it. Bloody visions!

Shoving back her chair, she jammed her arms into her coat and grabbed her bag.

"Blimey love, where's the fire?"

"Gotta go," she said, dropping some money on the table. "Nice meeting you, Kenneth," she lied, and darted from the café into the street.

The office building was a couple of hundred yards away and Laura nearly bowled over several people before she got there, skidded to a halt and stared up at it.

No one was falling. There was no body on the street. Had she got it wrong?

Then something swooped by at the edge of her vision, and she snapped her head around to look down the small service alley that ran alongside the building.

Everything seemed to happen at once. Laura began to run, opening her mouth to shout for help, and a man far above let out a cry of dismay as he tumbled over the edge of a metal fire escape and plummeted toward the hard concrete of the alley below.

And something flashed by Laura, only not at street level but higher, something flying fast, zooming up to meet the falling man.

She stopped, time seeming to slow down as she watched. It was a man, flying through the air. Actually flying. Going upwards, not down. Like a superhero, only he was wearing jeans and a leather jacket, not skin-tight Lycra.

Shame, she thought distantly, I could stand to see a little more of that body.

He caught the falling man, jolting in the air with the extra weight, and then floated back down to earth. The whole thing was over in a few seconds.

Okay, Laura said to herself, I know I can talk to ghosts and see the future, but this is just impossible.

The flying man with the hot bod didn't seem to know what to do now. Laura shook herself and went over as he was laying the other man on the ground, checking his temple where there was some blood.

"Is he alive?" she asked, and the hot bod looked up at her, startled.

"I, er, I don't know. He hit his head when he fell. From the fire escape up there," he pointed. "I was just passing."

He was babbling, Laura thought as she checked the falling man's pulse. Nervous. Well, she'd just seen him fly into the air unaided. No wonder he was nervous.

"He's got a pulse," she said. "And he's breathing. Just unconscious. Do you have a phone, Jack? Can you call for an ambulance?"

The hot bod blinked at her, then nodded and reached into his jacket and brought out a mobile phone. Shit. She'd called him Jack, hadn't she? Called a total stranger by his name. Stupid bloody Second Sight --

No, wait. Not Second Sight. She knew him from somewhere. Those dark, dark blue eyes. That mouth -- strangely shaped with a real dip in the middle. Familiar -- but she couldn't place him. Wasn't concentrating.

The Sight had slipped his name into her head, but it wasn't being very forthcoming with any other details.

While he dialed, Laura mechanically checked the falling man's wound and felt for broken bones. Jack was pacing as he talked to the dispatcher, and she got to thinking that he filled out those jeans very nicely. Great shoulders, too. Scruffy blond hair, already tousled. Strong features. That mouth...

Stop it, Laura, she told herself. Stop drooling over him, it's not appropriate.

The unconscious man didn't seem to have any other injuries. He'd only fallen a few feet before Jack had caught him -- a few feet from a fifth storey fire escape. It could have been worse, much worse.

"They'll be here in five minutes," Jack said, putting his phone away. He had a great voice, Laura thought, even if it did seem to be an English one. Deep and warm, a

calm reassuring voice. Yeah, she definitely knew it from somewhere. But that was the problem with this Sight shit. It distracted her from everything else.

She glanced up at his handsome features again. Maybe he'd been a passenger she'd served -- it was hard to keep track after a while. Seeing people out of context was always confusing. Once she'd walked right past her own grandmother in the supermarket because she hadn't expected --

"He's waking up," Jack said, and Laura yanked her attention back to the present.

* * *

The ambulance came, and while the paramedics bustled around doing their thing, and people came out of the nearby buildings to watch, Laura watched 'Jack' and tried to figure out where she knew him from. Hell, with those looks he was probably on TV. That had to be it. It would explain why he didn't look right in a casual setting. Maybe he was a model or something. No, he was too manly for that, and besides, there was that voice. That warm, dry, wonderful voice. London accent -- somehow, infinitely more appealing than Kenneth's nasal whine.

Then the ambulance was gone, and she was left standing on the street with Jack. Well, time to go; she'd ogled enough for one day. She'd figure it out later.

"Fancy a drink?" he said, but she presumed he was talking to someone else and started walking. "Hey, Laura? Wait up. Do you want to go and get a coffee or something?"

She blinked. "How do you know my name?"

He gave her a crooked grin, all white teeth and smile lines, and she lost her breath for a moment. "It's on your name badge. No," he laughed as she looked down in puzzlement, because she wasn't wearing one, "on your uniform. At work. You're cabin crew, right?"

She opened her mouth to ask how the hell he knew that, then she looked at him and it fell into place. Of course! The reason he looked wrong in this setting was that she'd only ever seen him in epaulettes and aviator shades, sitting in the cockpit of a plane.

"And you're a pilot," she said.

That pilot.

He grinned that dazzling grin again and held out his hand. "Cap'n Jack," he said.

Was that the Sight pissing around with her? "Oh, you're kidding."

"Of course I am. I'm only a first officer. But it's fun when you're walking through the airport and someone shouts, 'Hi, Jack!'"

Laura took his hand -- warm, strong, long sure fingers that held hers in a firm grip, fingers that put inappropriate ideas into her head -- and smiled. The other girls called him Jack-the-lad. Laura was probably the only one he hadn't spent a casual night with. "Jack...?"

"Tremaine. And you're Laura...?"

"Kincaid. I'm sorry I didn't recognize you. You looked familiar but out of context, and I wasn't paying attention. I mean, I was distracted..."

He was still holding her hand, and she was getting flustered.

"Sure," he said easily. "Well. How about that drink? I reckon I could do with more than coffee."

Laura nodded hastily. She could, too.

Chapter Two

She was cute, the little air hostess, all soft black curls and big brown eyes. Tiny pointed chin and a clear, calm voice. Adorable accent, too. Jack had noticed her before, but the first time he saw her had been *that flight*, when he'd been a little too shaken to really do anything about it.

He took her to an up market bar, ordered large drinks, and sat her down at a table in the corner. Cute she might be, but he needed to make sure she didn't think she'd seen anything. Flying like that in broad daylight, in the middle of a busy city -- he must have been mad! Jack still hadn't figured out quite what was going on with this flying gig, wasn't entirely sure he hadn't imagined the whole thing, but he sure as hell didn't want anyone else knowing about it.

"Some afternoon, huh?" he said.

"Sure. That guy's lucky you were passing."

"Yeah, and I'm lucky he wasn't heavier, or I'd have been flattened."

"Mmm." She sipped her drink. "Actually, you're lucky you could fly, or you would have been flattened anyway."

Jack stopped with his pint halfway to his lips. She'd said it so matter-of-factly. As if she were telling him he was lucky he'd been wearing a coat because it was a wee bit nippy out.

"Uh, fly?" he said nervously. "Not without a plane, sweetheart."

"No? Maybe you can just jump really high. And float back to earth really slowly."

"Have you been drinking already?"

She fixed him with a look. "I know what I saw, Jack. On days when I'm not getting fried by electrical storms I'm very observant. It's my job. I saw you flying, no plane, no wings, no... jetpack, or paraglider."

"Then you're --"

"And I've got a built-in lie detector." She sighed. "It's a curse as well as a blessing."

"Look, Laura." Jack put his drink down and tried to look calm, even though his heart was thumping. "I don't know what you thought you saw, but people can't fly. We just can't. We're not aerodynamic." He gave her a smile.

"Neither are bumblebees."

"We don't have wings."

"Neither do flying squirrels."

"Yes, but they don't fly. They jump."

"So were you jumping?"

Grasping at straws, he nodded. "Yes. I jumped. I'm a hell of a basketball player."

"How come you didn't fall, then? I saw you."

He was starting to sweat. The thing was, she was taking it all so calmly, and that was more frightening than anything. A normal person would freak out. How could she be calm, unless she already knew what he was, what he could do?

Unless she was out to get him?

"I -- no, you're mistaken. You must have imagined it. It's all impossible."

She frowned.

"Look, Laura. You're an intelligent, rational person." He hoped. "You know this sort of thing is impossible." Sure, just like he did. "So how about we forget about it all?"

She turned her head and stared at the large mirror reflecting the bar, ignoring him.

Maybe not intelligent and rational, then.

"I mean, can you imagine what the guys would say if this got out? You know what pilots are like. I don't need anyone laughing at me, I'd never be able to concentrate and you know, I really need to be able to --"

"Jack?"

"What?"

"Shut up a minute."

"What?"

She waved a hand at him, apparently listening to something he couldn't hear. Her gaze kept floating back to the mirror. Irritated, Jack wondered what the hell she was looking at. Herself? Was she that vain?

Then he saw what was reflected, and his blood ran cold.

The nondescript man was very familiar to him. Jack had no idea who he was, but the guy was just always...there. Watching him. Following him. It was why Jack had come to Edinburgh while he was on leave. To escape this creep.

And now he was here.

"Okay, Laura?" he said in a low voice.

"We need to leave," she said, not looking back at him.

"Uh --" How did she know he was going to say that? "Yes. That guy -- don't look -- over by the bar, in the --"

"Grey suit, dark hair."

"Yes, he's --"

"Following you."

Jack stared at her. Shit, she really was in league with him! That's why she was so calm, she was out to get him, and --

"And he's not following you to tell you you've won the lottery," Laura said, draining her gin and tonic. "Where are you staying? Do you live in Edinburgh?"

"Uh, no, I have a room across town --"

"Then he'll know that." She frowned as she thought. "Okay. Uh. Right."

"What?" Jack said, wondering what the hell she was thinking and dreading finding out.

"We need to leave. Now."

* * *

The cab driver didn't bat an eyelid when she told him to take a circuitous route to her place, but Laura figured he thought they wanted makeout time in the back. In actual fact, she needed time to think.

In the middle of her conversation with Jack, Kenneth the whiny ghost had shown up again. "He still wants to see your wossnames," he'd said, and she'd glanced at the bar with chills going down her spine.

Bloody Sight! Why couldn't it be reliable, and tell her about the guy who'd been watching her in the café *before* he followed her and overheard her asking Jack about how he could fly?

The man in the gray suit meant trouble. That much, she didn't need the Sight for. Trouble for her, at least, and when she'd looked at him, she'd known it meant trouble for Jack, too.

"Where are we going?" Jack asked her in the taxi.

"My place."

"Which is?"

"A flat." A tiny, cheaply furnished flat whose main attraction was its close proximity to an all night supermarket.

"No, I mean --"

But Laura wasn't listening any more. Her tiny flat had its door loose and open, hiding the men inside who waited with knives and guns and syringes. Waited for her, and for Jack. The windows were cracked and broken, the furniture was smashed, her clothes torn, burnt, destroyed, everything was blackened rubble...

"Laura!"

Her eyes slammed open and she saw Jack looming over her, his face concerned, and she realized she was backed up against the car door, clutching at the seat, breathing hard, terrified.

"Are you all right?"

No, I'm not bloody all right, those people are after me too!

But Laura just nodded and tried to steady herself. It was just a vision. It wasn't real. Couldn't be: it was too contradictory.

But it was a warning.

"Change of plan," she said, pushing Jack back into his own seat and righting herself.

"Are you sure you're all right?"

"Is she gonna throw up?" the cabbie wanted to know.

"I'm fine," Laura said, willing it to be so. "We need a different destination. A hotel. Somewhere quiet. Out of town."

The cabbie frowned at her in his mirror, but nodded and changed routes.

"Hotel?" Jack said. "All right. What the hell is going on? Why not your place?" He twisted to look behind him. "Are we being followed?"

Laura concentrated. No, they weren't following. They'd just gone straight to her place as soon as they'd seen the direction the cab was taking.

"No. They're waiting at my house," she said.

His eyes narrowed. "And you know this because...?"

She sighed. "I'm psychic."

"Funny."

"How did you catch that man?" Laura shot back, and Jack scowled at her.

"I don't trust you," he said.

Laura folded her arms and looked out of the window. Fine, if he wanted to live in denial, it was his problem.

"How did you know who that guy was?" Jack persisted.

"Look. Do you want me to explain it to you here," she flicked her eyes at the cab driver, "or in private?"

"That sounds like a trap to me," Jack said.

She wrinkled her nose at him, irritated. "Pilots," she began, but then Jack's arm brushed against hers and a jolt of electricity went through her. Oh, so what? Yes, he was hot -- he was also a bit of an ass. Electricity be damned.

Her vision went fuzzy.

"What's *that* supposed to mean?" Jack said, and she closed her eyes because even when he was annoyed, his voice was great.

That electricity felt good. Like fingers running over her skin. Hot flesh moving against hers. A mouth -- that mouth -- brushing hers...

Okay, so the Sight was finally handing her a favor. Hot steamy sex -- visionary style. Maybe this was a sign of something to come. She sure as hell hadn't had any action like this recently.

"Laura?" Jack said, but his voice was distant. Because his mouth was closed over her breast, she guessed, in her vision at least. His tongue flickered over her nipple and volts of heat zapped right down to her clit.

"Yes," she murmured, as his clever fingers stroked her stomach. One hand slipped between her legs and skillfully parted her folds, finding her clit and pressing gently against it. "Jack!"

Oh hell, wait. She was Seeing Jack? *Jack* was going to be making passionate whoopee with her?

"You've got to be kidding," she moaned, as the vision-Jack licked her hip and the real one muttered something under his breath.

Chapter Three

The cab driver took his time selecting a hotel, and the one he eventually found was way out of town, a big country house affair with money written all over it. Jack wasn't impressed, but Laura didn't seem to notice. She'd broken off suddenly in the cab and just ignored him, her fingers clenching, her breath coming quick and fast.

"Are you all right?" he asked, but she just nodded and kept her eyes tightly closed.

She was a nutcase. Clearly. He intended to drop her off at the hotel and get out of this damn country.

Okay, maybe he'd fancied her a little bit before. She wasn't as gregarious as some of the cabin crew, hadn't really come to his notice, but she'd been quiet and pretty and always remembered how he liked his coffee. But now? Now it was clear. She had problems, serious mental problems.

She managed to come to long enough to hand him a fistful of notes for the cab driver. Jack halved the fare, gave her some money back, and helped her out of the car. Big mistake. She clutched at him like she was having some sort of fit, losing her footing and falling heavy against him.

Jack tried to ignore how nice that felt, and called, "A little help here?"

Hotel staff rushed toward them, oozing concern. Laura was clinging to him now, her face buried in his neck, moaning softly. Her breasts heaved against him. Her skin was soft and warm. Her hair tickled his face.

"She needs to lie down," he said, and Laura shuddered in his arms. "She's not well." Mentally.

He'd give the staff their due, they knew how to handle this sort of thing. In an instant, he and Laura had been bundled upstairs to a very pretty room with a very large bed. Cold cloths and glasses of water were produced, and the offer of a doctor.

Jack laid her down on the bed and unfastened her coat, unwound her brightly patterned scarf. Her soft dark hair spilled out over the pillows, black against white, very fetching, and her eyes fluttered open.

"No doctor," she said. "I'm fine. Just a funny turn."

Jack hadn't heard that phrase since his Great Aunt Millie died when he was seven.

"Do you want anything to eat? Drink?" asked the terribly obsequious manager.

"No. Thank you. I just need to lie down a while."

The manager and his toadies left, and Jack was left standing there in a rather expensive hotel room, watching Laura's breasts heave. He realized, rather belatedly, that he was probably stuck with her now, because he wasn't so much of a bastard that he'd go ahead and abandon her like this.

"What just happened?" he asked her. "Because I've gotta tell you, if that was some kind of act, I'm not amused."

"No act," Laura said. She looked exhausted, but her eyes were glowing and her cheeks were flushed. She'd been moaning softly as he carried her into the hotel, shaking and writhing. If he hadn't been worried about her health, he might have been turned on.

"So what was that? It happened in the car, too."

She nodded slowly and sat up, pushing her coat, scarf and gloves away. Her outfit was weird, a sweater and a dress over jeans and boots, but hey, this was Edinburgh, it was cold and layers were not to be sniffed at.

"All right," she said. "You're not going to like this."

"I already don't like it."

"Well." She pushed her hair out of her face, that lovely silky soft hair of hers, and Jack got distracted by the paleness of her wrist as she moved. "You know how you can fly?"

"If I have a plane."

She gave him a patient look. "You can fly, I've seen it. And I know it's true. I'm sort of...well, it's what my grandmother would have called Second Sight."

Jack rolled his eyes. Okay, she was playing on the Highlands Lassie thing, och aye the noo, me grandmammy could see the future, aye, she was a wise lassie. Et cetera.

"Well, maybe not my grandmother, because she thought all that psychic stuff was a load of bollocks, but you know. It sounds better that way," Laura amended.

"Second sight," Jack repeated.

"Well, yes. I can sort of... see things that aren't..."

"There?" Jack asked snidely.

"No. That's just it. They're there, but ordinary people can't see them. I didn't used to be able to see them, not until about three months ago. Then all of a sudden, bam, there are ghosts everywhere, wanting me to talk to them, they never shut up, and I get these confusing visions that don't mean anything until after something has happened, and words and names just pop into my head, brand new facts, like I've always known them, before anyone's told me."

Jack rubbed his face with his hand. She was talking bollocks, she was insane -- her behavior in the cab had proved that -- all he needed to do was humor her until he could get out.

Of course, there was that nagging little voice in the back of his head that said, "You can't call *her* a lunatic, flyboy."

Jack chose to ignore that voice.

"Which is how I knew that guy was following us," Laura went on, watching him. "He was there earlier, I was having a drink in a café before that man fell --"

"And you just happened to be there for that?"

"Er, no. That would be a Second Sight Vision Special. You know, I don't think I've ever had so many visions in one day before. Usually, all I get is a vague idea something's about to happen. It's only afterwards that I realize I wasn't surprised at all, because I knew what was happening."

Jack fell back into a plush upholstered chair. He grabbed the room service menu for something to do.

"You don't believe me, do you?" Laura said.

"Well, why would I?"

"Because you've got a weird talent too. I'm not gonna go around telling people, Jack. Your secret is safe with me. Point of fact, I just rescued you from those guys chasing us."

"Guys? There are *guys* now?" He'd only ever seen one. "How many visions have you had today?"

She rubbed her eyes tiredly. "Three."

Jack ticked off on his fingers. "The falling man, the guys following us, and... what?"

"Uh." She went pink. It was faintly adorable. Not that he should be noticing. "Nothing."

"Since the other two seem to concern me, I think it's only fair that you tell me about the third one."

Not that they were real. Because she was making it up. But even so...

"It was..." Her gaze slipped off to the right. "Uh, just about this hotel. We... we were coming here. Boring. Really."

Hah. "And you say *you've* got a built-in lie detector," he said scornfully.

"Look, it was personal, all right?" She looked around wildly, and her eyes settled on the menu he was still holding. "Are you going to order? I'm starving."

"You're changing the subject," Jack said, but he picked up the phone anyway.

"Don't have the tuna," Laura said, and he scowled at her.

"Why? Does it have salmonella or something?"

"No. It's just..." She waved her hand. "Bad for you."

"Tuna is not bad for you. It's full of... uh, you know. Those oily things you're supposed to have." He hit buttons on the phone. "I'll have as much of it as I like."

He ordered a tuna sandwich and salad, then thought about the day he'd been having and added fries and a beer. Laura requested soup and bread, very boring, he thought.

Just before he put the phone down, he checked, "There isn't any avocado in any of that, is there? I'm allergic."

"Yes, sir, in the tuna sandwich, I'm afraid."

Jack glared at Laura, who was ignoring him, and asked them to make it without the avocado.

"You've been here before," he accused Laura as he put the phone down.

She closed her eyes. "Oh, sure, I always stay in fancy hotels when I come home. Don't you?"

"This isn't home," Jack said moodily. He glanced at the French windows, which led onto a small balcony overlooking the golf course. If he just went for a little fly, he'd surely feel better. He could hop off the balcony, zip around, and be back in time for his tuna-without-avocado sandwich.

Laura's eyes were closed. If he rose into the air, she'd never hear him move.

He casually floated toward the balcony.

"Stop," she said, her eyes still closed, "whatever you're doing."

How did she know? *How?*

"If you go zooming around outside here someone will see you."

"Someone already has," he said peevishly, glaring at her and coming back down to earth. "I was just," he improvised, "going to check out your place. I could fly over there, be back in time for the food --"

That opened her eyes. "You don't know where I live."

"You could tell me. I could look on your driving license."

"And besides, I thought you said you couldn't fly."

He scowled. "Oh, all right." He rose six inches into the air. "Happy now?"

She smiled. Then she beamed. "Yes," she said. "Very." Her smile faded. "But you really shouldn't go over there."

"Why not?"

"Did you not hear the part about the bad guys waiting there?"

"Are you sure they're bad guys?"

She closed her eyes momentarily and shuddered. "Oh yes," she said. "Trust me, they're not waiting there to give us flowers and chocolates."

Jack really needed to get away. Not that he'd admit it, but she was freaking him out, which made him mad, because he hated being freaked out.

"Well, okay then. I won't go there. I'll just go --"

"Outside, where anyone could see you flying around. I mean it, Jack. Superman had Lex Luthor. We have... well, whoever they are." She put her head on one side. "Hey, does this mean we're superheroes?"

"Being psychic isn't a superhero power."

"I'm not psychic. I'm just... super-intuitive."

"Super-intuition," Jack grinned. "Yep, they write comic books about that all the time."

"Hey, you can scoff, flyboy. Whose superpowers saved your butt today?" She glanced at the door. "Food's here."

Jack looked at the door too. No one knocked. "Hah, you're not always right --"

Someone knocked.

Laura was very carefully not smiling. Jack, glaring at her, went to open the door and let in the room service trolley. As the lid was pulled off Laura's soup bowl, an idea occurred to him. Well, time to see how *intuitive* she really was.

"Mmm, smells good," she joined him, sniffing appreciatively. She made to pick up the soup bowl, but Jack got there first, picking it up to carry to the small table by the window. "Oh, thanks."

So far, so good. She didn't seem to suspect he was doing anything, but when he 'accidentally' tipped the soup all over her -- carefully soaking her sweater, dress *and* jeans -- she somehow didn't look surprised. She looked resigned.

"What did you do that for?"

He shrugged, trying to look nonchalant. "Accident." He frowned suspiciously. "Which you didn't see coming."

She shook her head. "Well, that's the thing about Second Sight. It generally comes after first sight."

While Jack was trying to work out what the hell that meant, soup was sliding down her clothes. "You're incorrigible," she said, and started peeling off her soupy sweater.

"Look, why don't you go and take a shower, I'll call room service to clean your clothes, and get some more food..."

She gave him a knowing look. "While you take a little trip around the skies? I don't think so."

Dammit.

Her dress was clinging wetly to her breasts. She had a lacy bra on underneath, a bright pink one, and her nipples were hard. Unexpected heat arrowed through Jack.

"Well, you can't sit around covered in soup." He reached out and touched a tendril of long dark hair. "It's in your hair." Well, it was now. "You definitely need a shower."

"No. Uh-uh." She shook her head and plucked at her dress. "The minute I go in there, you'll be off out the window. And someone will see you. They have eyes everywhere, Jack."

"Who? Who are they?"

"I don't know. But they're not nice. Stay in here until we've figured out what to do." She started taking her dress off.

"Uh," Jack swallowed, "what are you doing?"

"I'm all covered in soup. I need a shower."

"Right." Somehow he wasn't relieved. "Well, I'll go and turn the water on for you." And then he needed to get out of there. Before he got even more inappropriately turned on.

Laura smiled. Her eyes sparkled. Jack suddenly realized she was a step ahead of him again.

"That's very kind of you." She dropped the dress on the floor and stood there pointing her pink lace bra cups at him. "I hate stepping into a cold shower."

Jack licked his lips. She had really nice breasts. Not too big, just nice and round, rising above the cups of her bra, wonderfully soft and creamy. Like scoops of ice cream, which was a stupid thought to have popped into his head, but they were definitely lickable.

"I, er..." He edged toward the bathroom door. Best get out of here as soon as she was in the shower. Go for a fly. Jump into the lake. Cool himself off.

Laura unsnapped her jeans, and he caught a glimpse of pink lace underneath.

"Shower," she prompted, and he nodded like an idiot, moving automatically into the bathroom and switching the thing on.

He heard the door close behind him. Then lock. Laura and her breasts were standing there, in front of the door.

"Uh," he said. Was she trying to seduce him?

"I know what you're planning," Laura said, dropping her jeans on the floor. "Spill soup on me, get me in the shower where I can't see or hear you, and then do a runner. Well, I'm on to you."

Jack stared, dry-mouthed, at her standing there, in her raspberry pink bra and French knickers.

"You," she pointed, "are gonna stay in here while I take a shower, and you're gonna talk to me the whole time so I know you're not going anywhere." She looked triumphant.

Stay in here. Oh, hell.

Laura put her hands on her hips. "And you're also going to turn around so I can get undressed and get in there." She pointed at the shower, which had a frosted glass screen. Jack would really have preferred an opaque curtain. Well, actually, that was a lie. Ogling a pretty girl in the shower was always fun, but something told him Laura wouldn't appreciate it.

Obediently, he turned around. It didn't help. He heard the rustle of clothing, her footsteps across the tiled floor, and imagined her naked, those wonderful supple breasts of hers bouncing gently as she walked. Her stomach softly rounded, not too flat, her bottom sweet and smooth, her legs, lovely strong bare legs, leading up to --

"Jack? Still with me?"

Her voice was muffled by the shower. Jack turned around, wondering if it was the hot water making the room steam up, or the sudden arousal thumping through his body. His cock was hard, pulsing, wanting her. Through the frosted glass he watched the outline of her body.

"Yeah," he said, and had to clear his voice and try again. "I'm still here."

"Right. I can tell you're watching me, you know."

"What do you expect? You drag me into the bathroom and take all your clothes off and refuse to let me out." He watched her soaping her arms. "Nice breasts, by the way."

There was a small pause, then a giggle. "Thanks." She ran her hands across them. "I've never had any complaints."

She was killing him.

"So how's that soup?" Jack asked desperately. "Is it stuck in your hair? Dried in? All tangly and smelly?"

"No," she sounded amused, "it's only been there a few minutes." He watched her bend over -- oh God, if only that screen wasn't there! -- and pick up something. She started lathering her hair. "Mmm, this shampoo is nice."

"Is it?" He could smell it, could imagine it sliding soapily down her arms, over her breasts, her stomach, down to the dark hair between her legs, trickling down her thighs. Oh God, oh God.

"Mmm, can you smell it?"

"Yes," Jack said helplessly.

"Maybe you should have a shower when I'm done."

Maybe I should have one now.

For a second he couldn't breathe, just from the image, the idea of climbing in the shower with her and running his hands over all that naked, wet, soapy skin, the taste of her on his lips, the feel of her body pressed against his, shuddering and hot and slick and --

"Jack? Talk to me. Are you still there?"

His cock was throbbing so hard he thought it might burst. It had taken the entire blood supply from his brain. That was for sure. He couldn't think of any words at all.

Well, he could, but they were all along the lines of 'for the love of God, please fuck me!'

"Jack? Are you there?" Laura's outline stilled. He thought he heard a sigh. "For God's sake..."

Then she pushed the screen aside, and Jack couldn't breathe. Laura was standing there completely naked. Water was running down her body, all that glorious pale skin just there to be looked at. Her nipples were hard, her hair clung wetly to her shoulders, and between her parted legs neatly trimmed dark hair hid her pussy from him.

Well, not for much longer.

His brain no longer remotely active, his body ruled totally by his penis, Jack moved forward, slid his hands around her waist and kissed her.

Chapter Four

Laura was startled for a second, but only a second. Well, come on, she thought fuzzily as Jack's tongue stroked along her lower lip. That vision in the car... her knees went weak at the memory. And then hadn't she just demanded he keep her company in the shower?

She'd known it was coming way before he did.

And besides, she was standing there all naked and soapy. If he hadn't taken advantage of the situation, Laura thought she might be pretty offended.

His hands slid round, over her soapy buttocks, and pressed her against him. He must be getting soaked, she thought, but he didn't seem to care. Neither did she. There was a rather impressive bulge in his jeans, pushing the rough denim against her bare skin, and the friction was wonderful. She felt herself rubbing against it, feeling the wet cotton of his t-shirt abrading her nipples, which tingled shamelessly in response.

Peeling herself away from his hot mouth for a second, she told him breathlessly, "I didn't plan this, you know."

"I don't care if you plotted out every move and told the local papers," Jack replied, lifting her up and stepping into the shower with her, kicking his shoes off as he went. "Tell me right now if you want me to stop, or it'll be too late and I won't listen."

"Don't stop," Laura said, smoothing her hands over his shoulders, feeling the heat throbbing through his wet clothes. "Except to take these wet things off."

Jack grinned at her, kissed her mouth until she couldn't breathe, then stepped back and peeled off his sodden t-shirt. He had wonderful golden skin, and she spared a second to wonder how come she'd gotten stuck flying to Chicago, Boston and New York all winter when clearly he'd been on the Barbados flights.

Apart from That Flight, when he'd been on the way to New York, too...

Thoughts fled her mind again when Jack pressed his lovely naked chest against hers, kissing her neck and stroking down her back. Water cascaded over them both, hot and wet, and Laura lifted one leg to prop over his hip.

"You should take these off too," she said, rubbing her thigh against the soaked denim. "It's very bad for you to wear wet clothes. You'll catch your death of cold."

"Right," Jack said indistinctly, busy investigating the hollow of her collarbone. Clearly, he was too busy to do it himself, so she unfastened his fly and eased the wet fabric over his hips.

"Oh Christ," he gasped when she slipped her hand inside his boxers and cupped his very hard, very hot, and very large cock.

"Back at you," Laura said, impressed. "Oh, Jack!" she pushed him away as something occurred to her. "I don't have a condom."

Jack shook his head, smiling at her dismay as he shoved his jeans and underwear off, dropping them in a soggy pile on the bathroom floor. "I do," he said, and then all of a sudden he zoomed away, literally flying out of the bathroom and reappearing seconds later with his jacket, from which he produced a box of condoms. Unopened.

Which meant she'd get to have sex at least three times tonight.

Grinning as Jack took a foil package out and laid it next to the shampoo, Laura welcomed him into her arms in the shower and let him pin her against the cold tiles.

"Now, where were we?"

She slipped her hand between his legs and fondled his balls. "Somewhere around here, I think."

He gulped. "Yep, seems familiar," he said, his voice going up a tone or two, and Laura laughed. Then she gasped, because he dropped his head and sucked her nipple into his mouth.

"Oh," she moaned softly as he ran his tongue over her, sending pleasure shooting right through her body to her clit. Too bad he only had one mouth, she thought indistinctly, because her other nipple was tight, tingling so hard it nearly hurt. Her own hand moved up to soothe it, but got intercepted by Jack.

"If you want to play with something, try this," he said, guiding it down to his cock so that she had both hands on him. When she wrapped her fingers round his shaft, he returned the favor by stroking her aching nipples, one with his hand and the other with his tongue.

Laura let her head fall back against the wall and watched the water falling on Jack's blond head as he sucked and licked at her breast. Well, it was nice to know her precognition was working properly. Of course, this raised all sorts of nasty issues about the men at her flat, but right now, she absolutely didn't care. Especially since Jack's other hand was stroking her thigh, her buttock, sweeping round in a leisurely fashion toward her pussy and her suddenly rather wanton clit, which would have been jumping up and down and screaming 'Me! Me!' if only it could.

Then Jack parted her folds and stroked her, one long sweep of his fingers through her wetness, and her whole body trembled. When he actually touched her clit, her knees gave way and she clung to him dizzily, her arms around his neck, forgetting all about the cock she was supposed to have been stroking.

Well. Not forgetting entirely. In fact, it occupied most of what was left of her brain. But she couldn't have coordinated herself enough to stroke, fondle or otherwise play with it even if she'd tried. Jack's mouth and his hands were driving her to distraction, stroking and tugging and licking and biting. She was shaking all over, uttering little gasps of incoherent pleasure, clutching blindly at his shoulders.

When he looked up, leaving her breast hot and tight and wet from more than the shower that was still pulsing down on them, Laura was breathing raggedly. She wasn't far from coming and she knew he could tell.

"You're like ice cream," he murmured, kissing her neck. "Soft and sweet and good to eat."

Laura swallowed. Shuddering as a mental image of him doing just that came to mind. An image that, apparently, also occurred to Jack, because he chose that moment to slide down her body, kissing her stomach as he went. She trembled violently in

anticipation, so violently she was sure he'd have trouble holding her still long enough to lick her.

But he had no trouble at all. Holding her with both hands on her hips, one leg draped over his shoulder, Jack slid his tongue into her pussy and licked all the way up to her clit.

Laura came, shaking and gasping and nearly sliding sideways down the wall and into the bath.

"Really good to eat," Jack murmured, his breath hot against her quivering flesh, and then he stuck two fingers inside her and proceeded to suck and lick her clit until she came again.

When the stars and lightning flashes had faded away, the water was running cold and Jack was picking her up in his arms and she was floating -- no, he was floating -- out of the bathroom. He laid her down on the bed, watched her dripping all over it, swore, and zoomed back into the bathroom.

He came back with a towel in one hand, a condom in the other, and the biggest hard-on she'd ever seen in her life.

"Hope you don't mind," he said, laying the towel out on the bed and rolling her onto it, "but I really, really need to get inside you. Or I might actually die."

"That would be a tragedy," Laura said, watching him roll the condom on and move her legs apart. Her thighs trembled. Two orgasms in such quick succession had turned her whole body to jelly. She just wasn't used to such pleasure.

Jack slid onto the bed with her, his skin wet and gloriously naked, and then he moved between her legs and the hot tip of him was pressing against her throbbing wet pussy lips.

"Yes," she said, gripping his hips and trying to pull him in. "Now."

Moving forward Jack laughed, and then he was inside her, sliding right up until he couldn't go any further and his balls were resting against her. Laura's eyes rolled back in her head.

"Christ, you feel good," Jack gasped, his eyes squeezed shut.

"Back at you," she said again, faintly, because he really did. She was so full, so completely full of him and it was wonderful. When he started moving inside her it was even more wonderful, the feel of his thick cock stroking her from the inside making her writhe and pant and wonder if a third orgasm might be on its way.

It was. Jack plunged into her, harder and faster, making the bed rock, making her head spin. Laura felt the heat spiraling through her, felt her pussy contract around him, and yelped in amazement, "I'm coming!"

Jack let out a shaky laugh. A haze of white-hot pleasure rocketed through her. She heard him moan, "Me too." Then he did, and they lay together, panting and heaving, finally still. Laura thought she might pass out from bliss.

* * *

Jack felt her stirring beside him, kicking away the damp towel and cuddling against his side. Half asleep, he wrapped a lazy arm around her.

"Jack? Are you awake?"

She really did have a cute accent.

"No," he said, enjoying being sleepy and having a pretty naked girl cuddled up to him.

"I think the food's cold."

"Don't give a fuck." He yawned and opened his eyes. Yep, she was still there. Her hair was damp and tousled, her eyes sleepy, her lips pillowy from all the kissing they'd done.

She smiled. "No, neither do I, really." She laid her head down on his chest, and Jack tried to remember what he'd been doing before she took all her clothes off and his brain dissolved to mush.

"You know how you asked me what that third vision was?" Laura asked, and he nodded drowsily, stroking her shoulder. She smiled. "It was this."

"The hotel?"

"No." She shoved lightly at his chest. "This. You and me." Her pale cheeks colored slightly. "Didn't you wonder about all the moaning and gasping in the taxi?"

Jack raised his head to look at her properly. "You had a vision of us having sex?"

She nodded. "One of my better ones."

"So you knew this was going to happen?"

She gave a half-shrug. "Put it this way: I'd have been surprised if it hadn't."

A thought occurred to him. "Is that why you took off all your clothes and made me come in the bathroom with you?"

"You came all by yourself, and it was right here in this bed," Laura said mildly. "And I made you stand in the bathroom because I didn't want you escaping off while I was in there."

"I'm a big boy now, I can take care of myself."

Laura grinned and nudged his cock with her thigh. "I know you are," she said. "And I know you can. But these people..." Her smile faded. "They're not nice, Jack."

"Who are they? Have you seen them before?"

She shook her head. Then she frowned. "I don't know. I don't think so."

"Then how do you know --" Jack began, and stopped when she gave him a look. "Okay. Never mind that." He propped one hand behind his head and tried to think. "Why are they after us?"

"Offhand, I'd say they fancy me like crazy and want to ask you about your fantastic lovemaking skills," Laura said.

Jack rolled his eyes. "You know what I mean. I'm pretty careful to not do anything in public, and as for you, how do they know you're... you've... well, whatever it is you've got."

"Well, you flew today in public."

"Yeah, but there were extenuating circumstances. And he'd been following me since way before then."

Laura frowned, lying there tucked against his side. She felt nice there, soft and warm and very pleasant indeed. Jack was struck by the odd thought that he'd like to keep her there. Him, Jack-the-lad, getting all misty-eyed about a girl he barely knew.

It was the sex, that was all. He hadn't had sex that knee-tremblingly magnificent for a long time. Not since that mad Brazilian dispatcher had locked him in the plane toilet and made him see God. But then she was a mentalist, screaming temper tantrums all the time. Not like Laura, who was... well, a mentalist, slightly, what with her visions and all. But she was a hell of a lot more restful than psychopathic Rosario.

"I don't know how they know," she said finally. "I really don't."

They lay quietly for a while. The sun was low in the sky and the light in the pretty hotel room was dim. There was no sound but their breathing, and no movement from Laura but the rhythmic press of her breasts against him as her chest rose and fell. Jack was just starting to drift off again when Laura suddenly sat up.

"Jack," she said. "Jack, wake up."

Her voice was urgent. His eyes snapped open to see the not unattractive sight of her sitting there bared to the waist, the sheet pooled around her hips, her hair brushing her breasts.

Lucky hair.

"I'm awake," he said, trying not to be distracted by her dusky pink nipples and failing.

"Your tan," she said urgently. "You don't get a tan like that flying to New York all winter."

Jack blinked. Okay, she was back to being a mentalist again. "I've been on the Caribbean and South American routes," he said. "Rio, Barbados. Hard life, especially with the layovers." He grinned, but she didn't smile back.

"I only get layovers in North America," Laura said slowly. "Look at me, I'm detergent-white."

"All over," Jack agreed, taking this opportunity to ogle her shamelessly.

"Which is why we rarely fly together," she said, and looked at him significantly.

Mystified, Jack nodded slowly, waiting for the rest of her train of thought to come into the station.

"But we did fly together once," she said. "To New York. You probably don't remember --"

"Oh, I remember," Jack said with a shudder. "The electrical storm flight? Jesus, I thought we were all going to die."

"Right," Laura said, and gave him the significant look again.

Once more, Jack waited. He entertained himself watching her breasts jiggle as she sighed.

"When was that?" she asked, as if she couldn't remember.

"Three months ago," Jack said promptly, thinking about how her nipples had felt on his tongue.

"And when was the first time you noticed you could fly?"

Jack stared at her, effectively distracted from her breasts. "Three months," he said. "But surely you're not suggesting the two things are related?"

"I had my first vision two days after that flight," she said, as if he hadn't spoken. "It was perfectly ordinary, an image of a baby throwing up all over me, but it happened just like I'd pictured it. Then this woman in first class asked me for a tampon and I had one all ready for her. I figured I was on a roll. Then more things happened like that. I knew who was going to be sick, who was going to ask for tea instead of coffee, who was going to get drunk, who wasn't going to turn up on time and make us late."

"I still say we should go on time and leave them," Jack grumbled. He hated missing his takeoff slot because some twat had been getting drunk in the departure lounge.

"Not if they're first class, we don't," Laura said. "Do you know, there was even one day when I got dressed, did my makeup extra carefully and took time with my hair and everything, and I'd no idea why. Then George Clooney boarded the flight and complimented me on my perfume."

Jack scowled at the thought of anyone else complimenting her on anything. Then he scowled because he shouldn't be scowling because someone else had complimented Laura.

He'd slept with her once. His brain was just broken because it had been so good. And because he was so relieved at finally being able to talk about this weird thing that had happened to him. "So you reckon that electrical storm gave us super-powers? Is that it?"

Laura shrugged. "I'm saying it's a hell of a coincidence. Both of us developing these... powers at the same time, a time that just happens to coincide with that flight?"

Jack conceded that it was a little too much of a coincidence. He slid his arm around her waist and pulled her back down to him, so those breasts were within easy reach again. She nestled at his side, warm and soft, and he toyed idly with her nipple.

Ignoring how right it felt to be holding her like this, he said, "Okay. So let's say..." He felt stupid even voicing it. "Let's say we got superpowers from that storm. What's to say we were the only people affected? I mean, we weren't both in the same place at the same time -- there was only me and the captain in the cockpit."

"Who was the captain? Have you spoken to him since?"

Jack ran his finger in a circle around her areola. "It was Karen Nicholson, and no, I haven't. I don't usually fly with her -- I was filling in for some guy who was getting married."

"Which explains why you were flying a route you don't usually do."

"Yep." Jack shifted, and her bare thigh brushed his cock, which responded happily.

"So you think there might be other people like us?"

"It's a strong possibility." There were two more condoms in that box, Jack thought. He wondered if room service would bring up some more.

"People ask me for them all the time," Laura said, and he looked at her, startled. "Condoms," she explained.

Jack stared. "Did I say that out loud?"

Laura lifted her head. "Er, no. The thought just popped into my head." She nudged his eager cock with her thigh again. "But then that's probably because this is trying to get my attention."

He looked sideways at her. She wasn't smiling, but her eyes were shining.

"Is it working?"

Laura slid on top of him and kissed him, her hard nipples grazing his chest. As she settled her legs on either side of him, her damp pussy lips brushed his cock, which leapt to attention. Her tongue swept his mouth, her fingers sinking into his hair and caressing his scalp.

"Does that answer your question?" she breathed against his mouth, and Jack laughed.

Chapter Five

Room service did deliver condoms.

Jack, quite adorably, had been too embarrassed to ask, until Laura licked his cock until he very nearly came in her mouth, then sat back and said, "Not until you're inside me."

He grabbed the phone and gabbled into it. Laura spared a thought for the poor receptionist on the other end, then she looked at Jack's splendid naked chest and decided she couldn't quite bring herself to care.

She suggested he might like to return the favor and lick her pussy while they waited, which he did, but didn't allow her to come. She supposed it was only fair of him. Besides, if she came much more she might die.

After the first time, they'd wasted a condom by pulling it off halfway through, because Laura had just had an incredible orgasm and decided she wanted to feel Jack's penis in her mouth. Jack obligingly stripped off the condom and indulged her, but then decided he wanted to get back inside her before he came.

When the porter arrived with two large boxes of condoms, Laura tipped him a twenty pound note, locked the door and showered Jack with the little packets.

She had no idea where this sudden wantonness was coming from. For most of her adult life, Laura had found dates hard to come by. Although men -- and even occasionally women -- propositioned her on planes all the time, she'd yet to take anyone up on the offer. Working the bizarre hours she did and frequently being away from home for days at a time meant her social life left a lot to be desired. Even when she'd managed to pin down enough time and energy for a love life, she'd never had ecstatic sex quite like this before.

When dawn broke, the hotel room was littered with condom packets, bits of food, and the remains of Laura's old life.

She couldn't go back to her job. Not now. Not knowing what she did. As soon as Jack had said, it, Laura knew he was right about the flight and the other people on it.

They weren't the only ones affected.

She could *feel* them out there.

Her body ached from too much sex, muscles she didn't really know she had protesting as she lay draped over Jack while he slept. Wide awake despite herself, Laura watched the shadows moving across the floor and wondered what the hell she was going to do in the morning.

* * *

When morning awoke Jack, he was alone in the big soft bed. Frowning, he looked around for Laura, but the bedroom was empty.

"Laura?"

"Balcony," her voice drifted back to him, and he smiled and pulled on a fluffy hotel toweling robe.

It wasn't warm outside, but Laura was standing barefoot, dressed only in a robe like his, leaning back against the balcony wall. In the pale dawn light, her skin shone, pale and beautiful against her dark hair. She gave him a distracted smile as he came toward her and kissed her mouth softly.

"Aren't you cold?"

She gave a distracted nod.

"I could warm you up," Jack offered, grinning.

"Mmm," she said.

"Okay, what's wrong?" Jack frowned and pulled her toward him. Vaguely, she curled an arm around his waist.

"You were right," she said.

"Well, of course I was. About what?"

That made her smile, and her eyes met his for the first time. "About the plane. We weren't the only ones on it who were affected."

Jack drew back a little. "Are you serious? How do you know this?"

She gave him a dead look.

"But until yesterday you didn't even know *I* was affected."

Laura sighed. "No. I didn't."

"So...?"

"I didn't say the Sight was helpful. Look, after you suggested it --"

"I wasn't really serious."

"I know, but after you did, I knew you were right. And I've been... thinking about them. Concentrating. Jack. I can feel them."

Dammit, just when he thought it was safe to go back in the water. "Feel them?" he asked dubiously.

"Don't give me that look. I'm not crazy. Well," she considered, "I'm only half-crazy. But they're out there, Jack. Dozens of them. Maybe hundreds. They were all affected by that... whatever it was that hit us." She cocked a wry eyebrow. "I don't think it was an electrical storm."

"All of them?" Jack was appalled. He tried to remember what he'd been flying that day. Transatlantic planes were rarely small and their passenger capacity was huge. "Four hundred people like us?"

"No. Not four hundred. They weren't all affected." Jack opened his mouth and she cut him off. "I don't know why. It's not all of them."

"How many?"

Laura seemed to be looking off into the distance. "Lots," she said.

* * *

They ordered breakfast, and this time got around to eating it. Laura, still unsettled by her newest revelation, didn't pay much attention to Jack's conversation as she drank her coffee and shredded a croissant.

"How can you be sure?" Jack asked her. "That we're not the only ones?"

"I told you." Laura closed her eyes and felt them, all those other people, pulsing with life, connected like a web. "I felt them."

"Are you sure you trust a... feeling?"

She opened her eyes and raised an eyebrow. "Says the man I knew I was going to sleep with before we even got here."

Jack grinned. "Fair enough." He reached over and pinched a piece of toast from her plate. "So what do you want to do today?"

As if they were just on holiday.

"I'm not sure you've grasped the severity of this situation," Laura said.

"I'm a pilot, I deal with situations all the time," Jack said.

"No, you sit in your cozy cockpit, insulated from the four hundred hungry, irritable, nervous and frequently vomiting passengers on board. *I'm* the one who deals with the situations."

"Okay, next time a storm front approaches the plane, I'll let you deal with it," Jack said, and she stuck her tongue out at him.

Jack leaned across and licked it.

Laura jumped, and he laughed before he kissed her, moving round to her side of the table and cupping her head in his hands. His clever lips and agile tongue teased her mouth and he tasted like coffee and marmalade.

When he let her go, her lips were tingling, her nipples were hard and her head was swimming.

"You were saying?" Jack said.

Laura licked her lips. "I have no idea."

He gave a self-satisfied smile, and she rolled her eyes. "Do," she said, remembering. "Today. Things to do."

"I could think of a few things," Jack said persuasively.

Laura could, too, and they had her face heating up.

"No," she said, shaking her head emphatically, and Jack pouted like a little boy. She kissed his lip, then said, "No. I have to go home."

"Home? Is that safe?"

Laura shrugged and tried to see. But that was the thing with visions, they never came when she really wanted them to. "I don't know," she said. "They could still be watching it."

Jack sat back down with a sigh. He ran a hand through his hair and frowned, and Laura's heart sank. She'd been about to ask where he lived, and try to suggest that perhaps she might come and hide out with him until things looked safer, but as soon as she'd mentioned something that wasn't to do with sex, he'd lost interest.

So. She was okay to sleep with, but he wasn't interested in her actual life. Well, and who would be? On the run and half-mad to boot. Yep, she was a catch all right.

"I'll pay for half the room," she said, and Jack waved irritably.

"No, don't be silly. I earn way more than you."

"You probably shouldn't stay here, though," Laura said. "They might be able to track, I don't know, your credit card or something. It's probably safest to go and stay with someone, if you can."

Jack glanced up at her, still frowning. "Where will you go?"

She shrugged. "I don't know yet. I'll find somewhere."

His frown deepened.

"Jack, please don't dismiss this," she said. "I mean it. Those people at my flat weren't there to deliver hugs and puppies. They wanted to hurt me. They wanted to hurt you too. I felt it coming off that guy at the bar."

Jack nodded distractedly. "Okay, shh a minute," he said. "I've just had a thought."

Clearly, such an occasion required silence.

She sat back, blinking, as Jack picked up his phone and scrolled through the memory. "You want that coffee?" he asked as he pressed the phone to his ear and Laura, depressed, shook her head.

"Billy, hi!" Jack said, reaching over and commandeering her coffee cup. "Not bad, not bad, mate. You?"

This was Jack-the-lad, Laura realized, listening to him banter over the phone. Jack, who had a girl in every airport. Jack, who seduced anything in a skirt. Jack, who was clearly totally uninterested in her personal problems.

Even if he did believe she was psychic. Well, if she could prevent those people, whoever they were, from hurting him, then that was something.

"Edinburgh, mate. Well, little hotel just outside. Very ni -- well, yes I am as a matter of fact." He glanced almost unconsciously at Laura. "No, you don't know her. She's one of the -- " He caught Laura's eye and amended whatever he was going to say -- she'd have bet good money it involved the words 'trolley' and 'dolly' -- to, "She, uh, flies with Zephyr. Yeah, she's adorable. Laura. Listen, mate, that's not why I called."

To brag? Jack? Surely not? Getting annoyed now, Laura got up and went to the laundry package that had been brought up last night. Her clothes were all clean and fresh, and it was time she put them on and stopped lounging around in a dressing gown. It would give Jack the wrong idea.

"You don't mind? We'll clear up all the mess." Jack laughed. "All right, will you let her know I'm coming?"

Her? Well, that was peachy.

"Yeah, yeah, and you're short and ugly too, you bastard. All right, cheers mate, see ya." He hung up.

Belatedly, Jack realized Laura was getting dressed. By the time he bothered to look at her she was fastening her dress, having dispensed with the jeans and sweater in an attempt to look as if she hadn't just spent a dirty night with a stranger.

Hah!

"You going somewhere?" Jack asked, chucking his phone on the table.

"Yes." Laura jammed her feet into her boots. "Home."

Jack blinked. "Home? But you just said yourself, it's not safe. Why are you rushing off like this? Hold on a minute and --"

"No, I really have to get going." To her horror, tears were gathering behind Laura's eyes.

"Why? Are you all right? Laura," Jack grabbed her by the shoulders and she wrenched away, leaving him standing there looking confused and hurt. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," she said, and forced a smile. "I just have things to do. Have to find a place to stay."

"No," Jack gestured toward his phone. "That's all sorted."

What was he talking about?

"That was my mate Billy," he explained.

"No, really?"

Ignoring her sarcasm, Jack went on, "He's on some private gig, flying a bunch of rich Americans around the world for three months. He's got a house near Bristol and no one's living in it. His neighbor's been watering the plants for him. He says we can stay there."

Laura stared at him.

"He doesn't even work for Zephyr," Jack said. "We met in training. We haven't seen each other in six months, it's very hard to trace the link. No one will find us there."

Us.

Oh, hell.

Laura had the awful feeling she'd just grabbed the wrong end of the stick and beaten herself over the head with it.

"Us?" she said. "You and me?"

"Well, sure. I mean, I know you're bent on going home, but unless there's anything there you really need, we can buy or borrow other things." He put his head on one side. "And it's not far from Bristol airport, so we can go and get the passenger manifests. Start looking into this thing."

Laura swallowed.

"Uh," Jack rubbed the back of his neck, looking uncertain. "If that's okay with you."

She nodded.

"Are you okay?"

Laura found a smile. "Yes. I just wish this damn Sight was more reliable."

Chapter Six

They took the train. Laura had no car and Jack's was in London, besides which it would be possible to trace the plates. For the same reason, hiring a car was out, as was flying: the reservation could be found. Jack withdrew a lot of cash, and booked train tickets to London on his credit card.

"This way," he said, "even if they trace the booking they'll think I've gone to my place. They'll probably still wait here for you. We can change in London and pay cash to get a train to Bristol."

The journey was long and boring, and the carriage too public to get up to anything they shouldn't. Changing trains in London, Laura dashed into a travel shop and bought a blanket and a couple of pillows for the last leg of the journey. Tired after her long night of sex and day of traveling, she curled up against Jack, napping for an hour or so.

When she woke, night had fallen, the carriage was dimly lit and Jack was idly stroking her thigh.

"The only other people here," he murmured into her ear, "are an old codger over there who's been snoring since Reading, and that kid with headphones on."

"Where are we now?"

"Fuck knows. Want to make out like a pair of teenagers?"

Laura glanced around the carriage. There wasn't anyone else in the carriage but the old man who was, indeed, asleep, and a teenager with his back to them. Tinny music drifted over the rhythmic sound of the train.

Jack's fingers were sliding up under her dress. His lips brushed her neck, and Laura shuddered. They were covered by the blanket, and when she trailed her hand down his stomach to his fly, his cock leaped to attention. Her heart pounding, Laura

unzipped Jack's jeans and wrapped her fingers around his thick length, which was getting harder and thicker as she held it.

Swallowing, she looked around to see if anyone had noticed, but they hadn't. Her eyes met Jack's and his mouth twitched in a smile.

"See?" he mouthed.

Laura had never actually done anything like this before. Even when she was a teenager she hadn't made out like a teenager. She sure as hell hadn't stroked anybody's cock in public. Feeling very daring, she reached down and fondled his balls as he pulled her closer and kissed her.

The train rocked them gently. Jack had his arms around her, kissing her urgently as she stroked him. His cock was fully hard now and she explored it, unseen, learning it with her fingers. The soft skin, the hard strength, the vein that ran up the side. She ran her nails lightly over his ball sac and he shuddered against her mouth.

"Don't tell anyone at school I did this," Laura giggled as she caressed him. "I don't want anyone to think I'm not a good girl."

"Don't worry, your reputation is -- *Christ* -- safe with me."

She stroked her fingers right up the length of his cock.

"You're going to make me come," he panted.

"So long as you return the favor," she replied, and ran her thumb around the head of his penis. It twitched in her hand and she felt a surge of power. "I'm already wet for you," she told him, kissing the words into his neck. "I can almost feel you inside me."

"Oh God," Jack breathed shakily.

Laura was amazed at herself. She'd never talked dirty to anyone before. Never felt the slightest compulsion. Yet here she was, murmuring suggestions to Jack while she stroked his cock in a public place.

And she was telling the truth, too. She was wet for him. Incredible how he could turn her on like that. He'd done nothing more than stroke her thigh and kiss her mouth, and she was practically panting for him.

She wrapped her fingers around him and he thrust into her hands, his breathing shallow, his pupils dilated. Laura licked his neck and nibbled on his throat as he pulsing in her hand. She felt his balls draw up against the base of his cock.

"I want you so much," she said, and Jack came in her hand.

She continued stroking him, smoothing the sticky come over his cock and fantasizing about licking it all off again while his breathing returned to normal. Which did she want first? To do the really daring thing and dip her head under the blanket to suck his cock, or to get his fingers between her legs to relieve some of the pressure building in her pussy?

That first, she decided, because it wouldn't take long for her to come, she was so incredibly horny, and then --

Her head came up abruptly. Someone was coming, and it wasn't her or Jack.

The door between carriages opened, and Laura hastily withdrew her sticky hand from Jack's jeans.

"Tickets please," said the conductor, and the old man on the other side of the carriage woke up with a noisy start. Jack was also roused from his stupor, his eyes meeting Laura's. The tickets were in his pocket but she didn't dare dig them out, not with her hand all covered in come. It'd get all over the tickets, which she'd have to hand over...

Thankfully Jack had the presence of mind to get them and pass them to the conductor. He even managed a friendly smile, which faded as soon as the man moved on and they saw that the old guy in the corner was now awake and glaring beadily about the carriage.

"He better go back to sleep again," Jack murmured in Laura's ear, "because I want to fuck you silly."

Laura squirmed. She wanted to be fucked silly, too. But not while some old bloke with eyebrows like angry caterpillars was watching with disapproval. Hell, all she was doing was cuddling Jack, and that wasn't indecent.

Instead she wiped off her hand on the inside of the blanket and tried to get her brain in order. A thought had occurred to her earlier, while the train was full and her mind was roaming, but she hadn't been able to voice it without shouting over everyone else.

"I thought of something earlier," she whispered to Jack, her mouth by his ear.

"Laura, please. I'm having enough trouble trying to keep this down," he gestured to his crotch, "without you talking dirty in my ear."

She grinned and squirmed a little. "It's not dirty," she said. "Well, not directly. I'm on the Pill."

"Right," Jack whispered. "So why were you making me wait for condoms last night?"

"Because it wasn't the right moment to have the unprotected sex talk," she said.

He looked sideways at her. "The one where you ask me if I've been tested lately? Full physical, sweetheart, six months ago, and I came out clean. And no, I haven't had unprotected sex since."

Laura kissed his neck happily, ignoring the old man's glower. "Me either," she said.

"Great. Tell me why we couldn't have done this last night?"

"I forgot. Plus, it was kind of fun making you squirm," she said, and her voice rose into a breathless squeak as his hand ran up her bare thigh under the blanket.

The old man harrumphed.

"Sweetheart," Jack said loudly. "There's an awful draught coming down the aisle from the door there, and you have bare legs. Are you sure you wouldn't be warmer by the window?"

Laura blinked at him, but he was already standing up, and then she realized that she'd be hidden from view much more on the other side of him, and scooted over. Jack sat down, tucking the blanket around them both once more and drawing her against him.

"He still might notice if we're actually having sex," Laura whispered in Jack's ear.

"Well, that depends on your definition," Jack said, smiling at the old man and running his hand up her thigh.

She was wearing underwear, but she might as well not have bothered. Jack slid the damp fabric aside and ran his fingers over her labia in a feather light caress that had Laura shuddering.

"Shh," Jack soothed, using his free hand to press her head against his shoulder. "Go back to sleep, darling."

A small thrill ran through her at that word, even though she knew it was for the benefit of their audience. And, okay, maybe the thrill was also because his fingers were parting her folds and slipping gently inside. Her breathing quickened. If he so much as touched her clit, she was going to come.

"That's it, back to sleep," Jack said, and she squeezed her eyes shut, buried her face in his shoulder and clutched at his shirt under the blanket.

He slid a finger inside her, and her whole body trembled.

"We've only a few more stops to go," Jack murmured. "Nearly there."

And then will you fuck me silly? Laura wanted to ask, but right then he started moving his finger in and out of her pussy, under her dress, under the blanket, on a train. In public.

"Jack," she gasped, but he just shh'd her and stroked her hair. While sliding another finger inside her. "Jack," she bit into his shoulder through his shirt. "I want to come."

"Not likely," he murmured. "You're a screamer." Out loud he said, "It's all right, sweetheart, just a few more stops and we can get you some medicine. Not much further."

He wasn't going to let her come. His fingers were thrusting into her pussy, which was so slippery wet, so desperate for him that she clenched rightly around him and tried as hard as she could to brush her clit against his hand.

But Jack seemed to be an absolute expert at keeping her simmering and not letting her come.

"I'm going to kill you," she muttered weakly, slumping against him, wrapping her leg around his waist and humping his hand. "I'm gonna focus this Sight and melt your brain."

"Not until I've melted yours," Jack said, laughing.

Chapter Seven

The bastard was true to his word.

By the time the train pulled in at Temple Meads station Laura was a quivering mess, hardly able to stand and using what breath she had to curse Jack. She'd tried concentrating on her own orgasm, she'd tried grinding against him, she'd tried threatening and bullying him but all to no avail.

"I won't let you come," Jack said, "until I'm inside you." He hauled her to her feet. "Consider it payback."

"I hate you," Laura moaned.

Jack dragged her through the ornate Victorian station, spied a double-decker bus idling at the curb, and pulled her behind it.

"Do you trust me?"

"What are you -- waaah!" Laura yelped as he swung her into his arms and rose into the air, using the bus as cover and quickly ascending higher than anyone from the main concourse could see in the darkness.

"Who needs taxis?" he grinned, as Laura clung desperately to him. "Don't worry, I won't drop you. If I did, I wouldn't be able to have sex with you."

Laura dug her fingers into his shoulders and tried not to look down.

"I trust you," she said in a small voice, and Jack brushed his lips against hers.

"Atta girl."

Minutes later he was dropping into the shadows of a small house and carefully placing her on her feet. "Not long now," he said, counting the plantpots outside the door and lifting one to reveal a key.

Laura shivered, glancing around her at the dark street. A cat sauntered down the middle of the pavement. A car drove past the end of the road. There was no one in the shadows. No one had followed them.

Jack opened the front door of his friend Billy's house and tugged her inside. "Still want to have sex with me?"

Yes. "I'm not sure." Laura tried to look affronted. "After that stunt you pulled..."

Jack kicked the door shut and pulled her into his arms. "Which one?" he asked, kissing her neck.

She tried not to react, and failed. Between her legs she was sticky and swollen and still wanted him desperately. "You wouldn't let me come on the train."

"Like I said," his hands were busy divesting her of her coat, "you're a screamer."

"I'm not!"

"Well, okay, you're not." He grinned at her in the darkness, and Laura reached out to hit the light switch. Funny how her Sight told her where *that* was, but neglected to mention Jack was a sadistic bastard. "I was getting my own back."

"For what?" Laura cried, her body shaking as he caressed her breasts through her clothes.

"I won't let you come until you're inside me, Jack," he mimicked as he pulled her dress up over her hips, her breasts, and tugged it off. "Call for some more condoms, Jack."

"Better safe than sorry," Laura protested, helping him off with her bra and pushing her sodden knickers to the floor.

"Hmm," Jack said, considering her breasts. "You know, you're right. Perhaps we should carry on using condoms. Only, I don't have any on me. Just wait five minutes while I run to the shop --"

"Jack!"

"Oh, all right, ten, but no longer, I promise."

"*Jack Tremaine, you useless English bastard, stop pissing about and fuck me!*" The hallway echoed with her cry.

Jack stood back, and his lips twitched with a smile. "If you really insist," he said, and then he pulled her flush against him, kissing her hard while his hands slid down her back, pressing her hips closer to his. He was hard, hot and hard under his jeans, and Laura fumbled with useless hands to unfasten his fly as fast as she could. Grinding herself against him, she pushed him backwards, off balance, and he fell against the stair banister.

"Get them off, get them off," she babbled desperately, tugging his jeans down as he kicked away his shoes. Finally freeing his cock, she wrapped her hand around it and Jack moaned. He pushed her away, which confused her for a second until he straightened and shoved off the rest of his clothes.

Naked, he watched her with a predatory gleam in his eye. Laura beckoned him with one finger, backing into the darkened living room. Jack came after her, and she backed a few steps further, coming up against the sofa and toppling backwards onto it, her legs akimbo.

"Just how I want you," Jack said, and launched himself at her, making Laura giggle deliriously as all his hot, naked skin smoothed over hers.

Then his hot, naked penis slid inside her and she stopped giggling because it felt too good to be frivolous about. The orgasm he'd been denying her for far too long came back into sight as he surged deep inside her, filling her up totally, stretching out the walls of her pussy in a way that felt so good she nearly screamed.

"Deny me this time and I'll castrate you," she panted, digging her nails into his back.

"Couldn't if I tried," Jack said, pulling out of her, flipping her onto her stomach and surging back in.

Laura's voice rose a couple of octaves. "Oh God, more, more," she squeaked, and Jack slid his hand down her stomach, stroked the place where he disappeared inside her, then finally, finally touched her clit, and she exploded.

Jack kept on moving inside her, pounding faster and harder, but she was hardly aware of it because she just kept on coming, her whole body coming undone around him.

When she finally came back down to earth, he was easing out of her, rolling her onto her back, and cuddling her to him, exhausted.

“I really needed that.”

He laughed shakily. “Me too,” he agreed, stroking her damp hair back from her face. “Me too.”

Chapter Eight

"So, plan for tomorrow?" Laura asked, and Jack, idly stroking her right nipple, shrugged.

"Well, sex in the morning, obviously," he said, and she smiled, leaning back against him while the soapy water tickled her skin. "Then breakfast."

"Then?"

"How do you feel about al fresco sex? I'm sure Billy has a hammock."

"I feel we'll get frostbite in sensitive places," Laura said.

"Oh no, I'll keep those places covered." To prove it, his hand slid down her stomach, under the water, and stroked the insides of her thighs.

"We could take another bath," Laura said, splashing water at him.

"Yes, cleanliness is important." Jack nodded vigorously behind her. "Because after that we're going to be having more sex."

"We are?"

"Of course we are."

"Ah, well in that case, let me wash you properly," Laura said, moving away from him and picking up the soap. "I'd hate to have sex with someone dirty."

"I don't know," Jack said, exhaling rapidly as she ran the soap over his cock, "dirty can be fun."

Laura cocked an eyebrow. "Can it now?" She washed the soap off with her hand. "Do me a favor, Jack?"

He swallowed. "Hmm?"

"Float up a bit."

He frowned at her, confused.

"I can't breathe underwater," she said, licking her lips, and then he floated up so fast water shot everywhere. "Now," she said, "while I'm making sure you're properly clean," she gave his penis a lick, "I want you to come up with a plan for tomorrow."

"You want me to think?" Jack asked incredulously as her tongue slid over his balls.

"Mmm." He shuddered as the vibrations ran through him. "How're we going to track down the other people on the flight?"

Jack was starting to breathe hard now. "The, er, the, er, the... manifest!"

"Mmm." Laura took his balls in her mouth and hummed again. Then she let them go and said, "But that won't have all their addresses on it. Only the booker's address."

"Then we phone the booker?" Jack asked as she kissed the base of his cock.

"Mmm, good boy." Laura took his penis into her mouth for a few sucks. Jack loudly expressed his appreciation, sliding his fingers into her wet hair and holding her there as he thrust gently into her mouth.

Then she moved back again. "Okay. So, the manifest. But then we do have one other problem."

She sat back on her heels and looked up at Jack, who stared around wildly at the loss of his blowjob.

"What?" he said urgently.

"We're being followed."

"Not here." He drew her head back down, but she resisted with a stern look.

"No, not here. But at your home, and mine too. We need to stop that."

"Fine, I'll throw them off a building."

"That's not very nice," Laura said.

"Then I'll ask them nicely," Jack said, desperately. "What do you want me to do?"

"I don't know," Laura said. "You think about it."

"I can't think about it, woman, not when you're sitting there all naked and wet and licking your lips inches from my cock. Be reasonable. I'm dying here."

Her eyes sparkled. "Rotten, isn't it? Okay, okay." She lowered her head again. "But we need a solution."

Jack, of course, stopped thinking entirely the moment her lips touched his cock. She moved up and down with sure strokes, sucking and licking, fondling his balls and kissing the soft skin behind them. He felt the pressure build and build, felt his balls tighten, and grabbed her by the hair. "Laura, I'm going to come."

She pulled back, licking her lips. "Do you want me to swallow? Or do you want to come inside me?"

Jack's vision went fuzzy at her words. "Yes," he said blindly, and she laughed and pushed him down to the bathroom floor, straddling him.

Jack only managed two thrusts before he came in her hot, tight pussy, gripping her by the hips and watching her perfect breasts bounce above him.

He came and came, but Laura didn't stop. She kept on moving, squeezing around him, undulating her hips, and he felt himself start to get hard again.

"Jack," she murmured, her eyes closed as she moved, stroking his cock with her silky hot cunt.

"Muh?" He cleared his throat and tried again. "Yeah?"

"Have you ever had sex in the air?"

"No, I'm usually busy flying the plane."

She laughed, and the tremors ran through him. "I don't mean in a plane. I mean in the air," she said, stroking her hands down his stomach, making him shudder.

"No," he said.

"Do you want to?"

I want to have sex with you anywhere, anyhow, anytime. Jack licked his lips and raised himself off the floor. "Like this?"

Laura leaned down, her hair brushing his chest, and licked his nipple. "Outside," she whispered.

"Thought you were worried about frostbite?"

"Well, you'll just have to make sure I'm warm." She took his hands and placed them on her breasts. "Keep rubbing me. For circulation."

He looked up at her, her sparkling dark eyes and her wet hair and her creamy skin, and nodded helplessly.

"Hold on," he said, and pulled her against his chest as he flew them toward the window, opened it, and floated out. Nervous, she tensed in his arms.

All of her tensed. Jack tried to concentrate.

It was dark outside and the row of back gardens was dimly lit. Soaring up above the rooftops, the cold air chilling him everywhere but where he was hard inside her, Jack held Laura close and kissed her mouth.

"Do you trust me?"

She nodded without speaking. Jack kissed her again, long and slow, and ran his hands along her arms where they were wrapped tightly around his neck.

"Put your hands on my shoulders," he said. She hesitated, as if gathering her nerve, then did so, gripping tight. He smiled and ran his hands up her spine. "Now, lean back."

She gave him an incredulous look.

"Lean back," Jack said. "Wrap your legs around my waist. You'll be safe." He gave a little thrust of his hips. "I'm as hard as a tent-pole, sweetheart, you're not going to fall off me."

She swallowed, closed her eyes, then after a long moment, leaned back. Jack held his breath, because as she moved she slid on his penis and it felt so bloody good he was glad he'd come earlier, else he'd be shooting his load into her right now.

Then he looked at her spread out beneath him, her breasts turned up to the moonlight, and figured the load-shooting might not be so far off.

Like this, he was supporting her whole weight, and a lot of it was on his cock. He shifted his grip on her back and a light of panic came into Laura's eyes.

"Relax," he said, "I've got you."

Then he moved inside her, and this time when she tensed around him she wasn't looking so panicked. He slid deep, then back out so just the tip of him was inside her. Her legs tightened around his waist, drawing him back in, and he smiled.

"Now you're getting the hang of it."

"Thought you said," she broke off to gasp when he filled her up again, "You'd never done this before."

"No." Jack tried to angle his hands so he could reach her nipples, and failed. Dammit. "But I'm a guy. I think about it all the time."

"Oh, thank God for that," she said, and her head rolled back.

She came, tight and wet around him, a minute later. Jack was sorely tempted to stay out there and keep pumping into her until he came, but he didn't want to lose control and drop her. He floated them back down to Billy's house, laid her on the flat kitchen roof with her legs hanging over the edge, and hovered in the air, fucking her hard.

To his amazement, she came again, grabbing him and yelling his name as he emptied himself into her.

"Sweet Jesus," she panted as he pulled her into his arms and floated back down to earth to lie in a trembling heap on the grass. "Is it always going to be like that?"

"God, I hope so," Jack said, and didn't really think about what he'd just said until much later.

Jack figured he might be going crazy when he looked at Laura asleep beside him and realized he didn't want to ever let her go. Two days and some pretty fantastic sex, and he was head over heels in love with her.

He knew he was going crazy when he found himself stealing out of the house in the early hours of the morning. He went to Bristol airport, logged into the flight system on the Zephyr office computer, and printed the passenger manifest for That Flight, complete with addresses of all bookers. Laura, he hoped, might be able to use her Sight to tell which of the passengers had been affected.

He put the manifest in an envelope, flew back to Billy's house and slipped it through the letterbox, resisting the temptation to go back in and see her. He couldn't take the chance that she might wake and follow him.

Then he flew back into town and caught the first train to London. Laura would be okay. No one knew she was in Bristol, no one would follow her there.

But they'd expect him to go to his flat in London. And if he didn't, they'd keep on tracking him until they found him, and her too, and he just couldn't let that happen.

Forty-eight hours and he was willing to risk his life for Laura. That had to be about more than just sex, right?

Arriving in London, he caught the Tube to his flat and fought to stay awake as he unlocked the door. Great sex was one thing, but he'd hardly slept in days.

Of course, they were waiting for him. Two men in shiny suits, looking large in his compact flat. Well, if you wanted a top-floor apartment in a decent area, you paid top whack for it. Compact was all he could afford.

"Hello, gentlemen," Jack said, then wondered why he had. They certainly weren't gentlemen.

"Mr. Tremaine," said one of the men, who had squinty eyes and a flat nose like he'd been in one boxing match too many. "We'd like you to come wiv us."

"Would you?" Jack said pleasantly. "What for?"

"I fink you know," said the other, who had freckles marching across his shaved scalp.

"Humor me," Jack said, crossing to the large windows that overlooked the Thames.

"We know you got superpowers," said Flatnose.

"Superpowers?" Jack said in amazement. He stared to laugh. "Is this a joke?" He made up a name at random. "Did Robin set you up for this?"

"You can fly," said Baldy, stubbornly.

"Uh, yes," Jack said. "In a plane."

"No, wivout one."

"Nope, sorry. I don't do helicopters. Or -- what are they called? Microlites? I know Robin has a thing about them, he reads all the magazines and stuff. I'm starting to think he thinks he can fly. Hey, fellas, when you go back to him, do me a favor and call him Tinkerbell? I rather like that. I'm sure if I get the girls to call him that it'll catch on -- whoa!"

Flatnose shoved him, hard, against the glass of the window.

"I dunno who Robin is," he growled, flecks of spittle at the corner of his mouth, "but we ain't come from him. And we know you can fly. We've seen you."

"Yes, in a plane," Jack said. His heart was thumping now. He hoped to God this worked.

"No, in the air, like Superman."

"No one can fly like Superman," Jack said. "It's just not possible."

"We *seen* you," Baldy insisted.

Jack figured this could go on for some time, but was prevented from replying by someone hammering on his front door. What the hell? Jesus, if this was one of his neighbors or someone selling door-to-door, they'd picked a really bad time.

"Who's that?" grunted Baldy.

"I have no idea," Jack said honestly, but then the visitor started shouting through the door and his blood ran cold.

"Jack? Jack Tremaine, are you in there?"

Female. Scottish. *Laura*.

Oh, hell no.

"I know you are, you bastard. How could you just leave me like that? How could you walk out? I know where you live, I looked it up at the airport. I bet you've got another woman in there, haven't you? Open up, you bastard!"

All three of them stared.

Okay, she was a psycho.

Baldy moved toward the door and Jack yelped, "No! Don't open it!"

Baldy grinned. He hadn't many teeth. "Don't wanna see your girlfriend?"

"She's not my girlfriend," Jack said, but it was too late and the door was open. Laura came tumbling in, her hair in disarray, her eyes brimming with tears, her coat falling off her shoulders.

"Jack!" she yelled. "How could you just run off and leave me like that? I thought you loved me! Have you got another woman in --"

Belatedly, she looked around and saw who'd opened the door.

-- here," she finished, lamely. She hitched her coat back in place. "What's going on?" Her eyes widened. "Oh my God, are you a mobster?"

Jack nearly laughed as he realized what she was doing. Of course, of course. "No, I'm not a mobster," he assured her. "These gentlemen just have me confused with someone else."

"Who?" Laura said. "Did your wife send them?"

"Your wife?" Flatnose said.

"My wife?" Jack said. "Oh, er, yes, my... wife. Er. No. Did she, fellas?"

"Wait," Baldy said, peering at her, "ain't you that other one we was after? The psychic one?"

"Oh my God, you do have a wife!" Laura cried, and promptly burst into floods of tears.

The two thugs looked horrified. Jack tried to look suitably chastened. "Yes, sweetheart, but it's all over between us, I swear," he said.

"That's what they all say!" Laura shrieked. "I thought you were different! Why do men always do this to me? You give and you give and you give," she sniffed. "And they just take. Why can't I ever see this coming?"

"Blimey, got a right one 'ere," Flatnose said. He still had hold of Jack's shirt, but he let go. "Listen, mate, fink we made a mistake."

Baldy was still staring, appalled, at Laura as she wept noisily. "She ain't psychic," he said, "or she'd've been able to see what a twat he is. Shame on you, mate, messin' your missus around like that. And breaking her heart, too." He gestured to Laura. "And she's such a pretty fink, too."

“How could you?” Laura sobbed in a suitably broken-hearted fashion. “I loved you, Jack. I really loved you, and this is how you treat me?” She shoved her disheveled hair out of her face and glared at him determinedly. “I hope your wife has decent insurance,” she said, and next moment she’d shoved him, hard, into the large window behind him.

It cracked, and he fell.

Chapter Nine

Jack yelled as he fell, half a dozen storeys down, enough to break anyone's back. Laura prayed she'd interpreted her vision correctly. If Jack didn't halt his fall properly, he'd be crippled -- he could die. Her heart clutched.

He could actually die.

With the thugs swearing and panicking behind her, she forced herself to watch as Jack fell down toward the collection of metal dustbins outside the building's back door.

Then he hit them, and with an almighty clatter rolled off, onto the concrete, and lay still.

Very still.

"Jack!" she screamed.

"Bloody hell, she's killed him!" muttered one of the thugs.

"I don't fink he can fly," said the other.

"Oh my God, he's dead!" Laura wailed, and shoved past them both, racing out to the lobby and down six flights of stairs, not willing to wait for the elevator. Her heart was thumping. The vision had said Jack would only pretend to hit the metal cans with a huge crash. He'd stop himself an inch or so above them, then drop down to make the sound authentic. The worst he'd suffer would be some cuts and bruises. He wouldn't actually *die*.

Please God, he wasn't actually dead.

She tore out of the building and into the little communal garden where Jack had fallen. Shoving past the rather sudden crowd of on-lookers, she fell to her knees by Jack and grabbed his shoulders.

"Jack! Jack, please be all right. Open your eyes. Say something!"

There was a horrible pause. Laura buried her face in his neck, tears rolling down her cheeks.

The Jack's warm voice murmured, "It's lucky for me you're such a terrible actress."

Her head snapped back. Jack's eyes were open and he was smiling faintly.

"Oh thank God, you're alive."

"Yes, no thanks to you, you madwoman," he said, but he put his arms around her and let her hold him. "Nothing to see, folks, move along," he said.

"But you fell six storeys!" someone said. "I saw you!"

"Trick of the light," Jack said.

"These cans broke his fall," Laura said, and she caught Jack's eye and hid a smile. "Come on," she pulled him to his feet.

"Hadn't you better see a doctor?" someone said.

"Nope, I'm fine," Jack waved them off, wincing heroically. "Just a little bit of rest and some ibuprofen, I'll be good as new."

"And you said *I* couldn't act," Laura murmured as they went back inside the building. She paused, trying to focus on the thugs, but they'd disappeared as soon as she ran down the stairs.

"Did it work?" Jack asked as she pushed the elevator button.

"You mean, are they gone? Yep, and for good, I reckon," she said, a little smugly.

The doors slid open and Jack staggered theatrically inside. "Don't tell me you actually Saw all that?" he said.

"Nope. I'm actually stalking you. You did run out on me in the middle of the night," she said. "And for all I know you could be married."

"I'm not."

"Yes, I know you're not," she smiled. She touched his back. "Are you hurt?"

Jack adopted a sorrowful expression and pulled her against him, his body warm and strong. "I may have to stay in bed for a few days."

"Oh no! So I suppose you'll have to avoid strenuous exercise," Laura said, sympathetically.

"Yep," he said sadly, then realized what that meant and amended, "I mean, no. No, I think some exercise would be fine."

"Good," Laura said, her mouth finding his. "Because I foresee some very," she kissed him lightly, "very strenuous exercise in your future."

"With your Second Sight?" Jack asked, and she smiled.

"That too."

Cat Marsters

Cat lives in a village in south east England, which, while not quite a fairytale setting, is nonetheless very pretty and was mentioned in the Domesday Book of AD 1087. She shares a house with only slightly batty parents who hardly ever tell her to get a real job, and a musician brother who knows there's no chance she'll ever get one if he doesn't. Life is kept from being boring by the often hilarious antics of three geriatric cats and a dog who thinks she's Marilyn Monroe.

Cat has been writing all her life, but in order to keep herself rich in shoes and chocolate, she's also worked as an airline check-in agent, video rental clerk, stationery shop assistant, and laboratory technician. She's aiming for a fairytale cottage, and asks all potential Prince Charmings to apply in writing with pictures of themselves and their Aston Martins.

Visit's Cat's web site at <http://www.catmarsters.com>.