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Watching

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BY MAYA

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Contemporary Romance

WATCHING

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The Office

You watch his eyes. Those sleepy, sexy, intensely green Irish eyes. You listen to his words, his tone, and the inflection of his baritone voice as he tells you briefly, always briefly, of his classes that day, his students, and some short Internet news bite of a mysterious supernova that appeared then disappeared. He is standing right in front of you, but his mind is still in the observatory. His thoughts are waltzing with the stars. Still, you watch his face with trembling knees and a desperate longing in your soul. You watch his hands, his smooth, long-fingered hands, longing for his touch against your cheek, your breast, or even a gentle stroke across the top of your head. But most of all, you watch his eyes, wishing he was watching you.

He is not watching you. He didn't even touch you when he walked into the room. You are the only two people in the graduate student office and still he says nothing, does nothing. He stands before you, green eyes staring over your shoulder and out the window at those spears of silver-white that you know will always be his one true love. You don't have to turn around. You know without looking that they wink flirtatiously at this man who will never give you what you need as long as there are stars in the sky. But this, you have decided, is your penance. It is the price you must pay for having fallen in

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love with a man whose passions are spread throughout the universe.

You wonder if he even knows you are still in the room. You take a step forward, take a risk, and lower your head to his dusty shirt, breathing deep the smells of cigarette and sweat. You catch a hint of perfume, her perfume, the woman in whose arms he wakes up every morning while you lie in bed alone.

You close your eyes and take a quick step back before he can push you away. You have broken the rules. You have touched him in public.

He chooses to ignore the moment. It's not the first time you have intentionally broken the rules, though you're fairly certain you've never been seen. He handles the situation the same way, every time. He moves and speaks and looks at you with the same respect that he has shown you every minute of the past two years that you have spent together, and you want to scream. You want to press your hands against his stubbly cheeks and look into those tired eyes and scream that you are not invisible. You want to tell him you don't care about that other woman, and you would never interfere with her, or his children, or his job, or his public reputation. You just want him to look at you, to see you the way that you see him—pure, precious, and far more thrilling than anything you've ever seen through a telescope.

He is looking out the window again, and suddenly you want to slap him. You want to hate him. You want to forget him, start fresh, exploding on the scene like a protostar, a star about to be born, a glowing cloud. Then he will become your interstellar matter, the dark spots in the midst of your light, and you will pull him in with your

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gravity, instead of the other way around.

But for now, you say and do nothing that might possibly save, change, or destroy. Instead you sit, watch, listen, and tremble. Tremble on the inside where you want and need him most. Tremble on the inside where he can't see.

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The Hotel

He is asleep. You gently lift his arm and lay your head upon his chest, listening to each breath. He has made love to you twice and you want more. You can still taste him on your lips and tongue.

"I am so hungry for you," you whisper in his ear. You know he isn't listening, but you're hoping he'll hear you. You want to feel him in your mouth again. You want to slide your hands across his cock, feeling him pulse and throb beneath your fingers because you know, in your heart, as you know each time you are together, that it might be the last time you will ever touch him that way.

You do touch him, massage him gently, trying to arouse. He groans and rolls onto his side away from you, but you can't stop thinking about him. You are obsessed with his taste, consumed by his touch. Your skin is hot and your legs are twitching and you know that if you spend one more second on that bed you will come just thinking about him. You need a cigarette.

You crawl from the bed and slip into your blouse and skirt. You creep to the door, open it slowly, careful not to wake him. He doesn't know you smoke. You only smoke when you're frustrated.

The cigarette does not appease your hunger. It never does. So, once again you creep through the door. This

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time, you head for the bathroom.

You stand before the large vanity mirror, watching as you slowly remove your blouse, pretending those are his fingers tugging at the buttons. You stand with your back against the wall, pinching your nipples with your fingers. You close your eyes, thinking of his hands grabbing your thighs and spreading them wide as he lowers his mouth and licks you hard and fast, thrusting with his tongue.

You drop your hands, unzip your skirt and let it fall onto the floor. It lies in folds about your ankles. You spread your legs, watching in the mirror as you tease your clit with your fingers. You throw your head back, moaning.

He opens the door just as you slide your fingers deep inside.

You are embarrassed and try to turn away as he steps toward you, but you are held in place by the skirt that has wrapped itself around your ankles like cuffs. He puts his hand on your wrist, holding your fingers in place, forcing them back inside. He leans forward and kisses you long and slow and deep, making you far wetter than your fingers ever could. You step out of the skirt, spreading your legs wider. He nudges you forward, moves behind you, presses his chest against your back, and you are both watching in the mirror. He slides his arms around your chest and reaches for your breasts, pinching and teasing your nipples. He reaches between your legs, still watching in the mirror as he plays with your clit. Then he forces your legs even further apart, and slides his fingers inside, twisting them about.

You can feel his hard cock throbbing against your back. You bend over and brace your hands against the

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sink. He grabs your hips and fucks you hard and deep as he stares at your face in the mirror. He uses his strong grasp to pull you back onto his cock, rocking, and digs his nails into your flesh when he comes.

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The Lecture Hall

Your back is moist beneath your bra, and you lean forward to loosen your sweater and save the cream cashmere from a nasty stain. Your black wool skirt slides across your pantyhose, scratching your thin knees, and you realize you have forgotten to wear a slip. You cross your legs, rubbing the top of your right knee with the back of your left knee; then, switching legs, you rub the top of your left knee with the back of your right knee, then you switch...

"Hold still, Kathryn," John whispers harshly, grabbing your right knee, scratching your skin, his green eyes staring out the window behind you. His hand is warm, and his touch makes your skin tingle. You close your eyes, savoring his warmth, wishing he would slide his hand higher up your thigh and beneath your skirt.

He suddenly looks down at his hand, realizes he has shown too much familiarity, jerks back and glances quickly at his wife who is sitting on his other side. She sees nothing. Sometimes you think she sees it all and pretends to see nothing. You lower your chin, feeling thin strings of yellow hair pull free of the barrette on the back of your head. You wonder if your legs will be striped with red welts when you undress in a few hours.

"Professor John Anderson," the announcer says loudly. John leaves his chair, moving slowly down the

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aisle toward the front of the room. As his assistant, you follow diligently behind, standing back and to the right throughout the ceremony, briefly introduced, never speaking. He begins his speech and your lips move silently to the words that you have memorized from beneath those cold, cotton sheets as you watched him pace your bedroom floor, rehearsing. You wince when he skips a line, then you clap when it is appropriate, smile at the audience, shake his hand when he offers and follow him back to your chairs.

The woman in front of you crosses her legs and you look up at her heavily sprayed hair that shines and reflects like aluminum foil. You swallow and choke on a laugh, turn your head, and catch the stare of a dark-skinned, dark-eyed young man who is obviously looking for some meaningful eye contact. You switch your legs and slide your knees, scratching. You notice the dark-eyed boy is smiling seductively, and you wonder if he has misinterpreted your movements as a message of physical attraction in his haze of mental masturbation. You are tired of these students whose main goal in life is decreasing the amount of time it takes to unbutton their flies. Then you realize you are still staring and lower your head, feeling your skin burn on your cheeks and neck, wondering if your freckles are shining through your damp makeup.

The speeches end and John escorts his wife, hand on elbow, through the wools, and tweeds, and artificial blushes, and lipstick smiles. He leaves her at the coffee table and goes calling after one of his students. The girl is moving swiftly through the crowd, her spike heels clicking, her thick curls bobbing to the rhythm of her

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twitching thighs. You look down at your shoes, unconcerned, knowing he won't look in her eyes, either.

There is movement beside you and fingers on your cheek lifting the yellow strands and tucking them behind your ear. You know without looking that it is the dark-eyed boy, but you look anyway and once again find yourself staring into his eyes. The heat of his gaze brings a rush of damp warmth between your thighs and you are hoping John will see you and stop you from flirting with this seductive stranger, but you know that he won't. You are hoping the man beside you will say and do nothing to take things further, but you know he probably will, and you know you will be receptive to his immature advances simply because you do not want to spend another night alone.

He makes his move. You knew he would. He touches your cheek once more, then drops his fingers to your shoulder, whispers in your ear, brushes soft lips against your skin, tongue touching swiftly as it moves between teeth, breath hot and sweet. You strain to concentrate on his words, glancing around to make sure no one is watching. John isn't watching.

"Have you ever had something that everyone else wants, but you don't always want to share?" the dark-eyed boy asks with a pretentious smile, and you think about how easy it would be to hate him if it didn't feel so good to have his lips brushing against your ear.

"And then," he continues, "you find someone you really want to share it with, and that someone is already taken?"

You turn to face him. He is close and does not back away, though he knows he is in your space. You know

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him. He is one of John's students. He knows too much. He has seen a touch, a glance, a stare that seemed a bit too lingering to be a casual mistake, and has drawn his own conclusions. Most likely the correct ones.

"What do you want from me?" you ask. He smiles.

"Whatever you will give me," he says. He leans forward once more with hot, sweet breath, lips, tongue, a rush of warmth in your stomach as he whispers in your ear. And you can always pretend that he is John, you tell yourself. You've certainly done that before.

"Meet me in an hour," he says. He hands you a slip of paper with the name of a local bar and his name and phone number scribbled on the back. "Call if you can't make it," he tells you, "but I know you can." He walks away and leaves you. You stand trembling, glancing around the room for John, but he has already left with his wife.

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The Bar

"He's not coming," you say into your glass, fingering the stem with the chewed stubs of nails, wondering if you're more upset or relieved. You replace the glass on a pink-stained napkin and dig in the bottom of your black-beaded purse for coins. You move through the crowd toward the phone, ignoring the men who are watching you move. You slip the coins into the slot, imagining the sound of John's voice, but not hearing it. Even his voicemail betrays you as a professionally recorded, generic message requests that you leave your name at the beep. You return to your seat, watching for the dark-eyed boy in the wall-length mirror behind the bar. You decide this is too obvious. You look desperate, and you are not. Not for him, anyway. You look around for someone to dance with while you wait.

You are watching from the dance floor when you see the dark-eyed boy enter the room. He tugs his wallet from the back pocket of his jeans, and as the bouncer checks his I.D. You wonder, only briefly, how much younger he is than you.

He is moving up the stairs to the dance floor when the song ends and you head back to your table to meet him. You look into his dark eyes and he looks back, smiling. You like the way his body moves when he walks. You like the way the other women watch him, and

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you smile. There are no nods of recognition, no waves of the hand, and you know that this place that he has chosen is far enough away from the university to be safe.

He tells you of his family in New York and of his friends at the many universities he has attended. You wish he would stop talking, even though you can barely hear him over the music. You do not want to get to know him. He is not the man that you need him to be.

Then he tells you how he figured out that you were having sex with John. Throws it out like a meteor crashing down on your world. He thinks he's being funny. You are irritated and disappointed. You now know nothing is going to happen. Not with him. He's trying too hard to be sly, as if he thinks he's going to manipulate you into doing something you don't want to do.

He reaches for your hand and you rise from the table. He escorts you to the dance floor and you turn to face him. He pretends to accidentally brush his hand across your nipples; they harden to his touch, though you wish they wouldn't. It's all a game to him, you know. He thinks you're easy because he knows you're having sex with a married man. A woman who sleeps around and does not want a commitment. That's how he sees you, and it's not an accurate portrayal.

He guides you backward with the same, slow rhythm that is flowing from the hidden speakers. He presses his fingers against your lower back, just above your hips, and your green silk dress sticks to your damp skin through the slip you finally remembered to wear and now decide is much too clumsy. He pulls you closer and you can feel him growing hard beneath his jeans.

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"I was afraid you might have left," he whispers, touching your ear with his tongue. You smile and lower your cheek to the collar of his shirt, thinking of how your cheek rests halfway up John's chest, wishing this man was just a little taller, that his eyes were green instead of brown, that his hair was a smooth, soft brown instead of curly and black.

"I was just getting ready to leave when you showed up," you tell him. He laughs. The song changes to an even slower beat and he pulls you harder up against his hips.

"You were dancing when I came in," he says. "And it looked to me as if you were enjoying yourself." He laughs again. You do not like him. You close your eyes.

You close your eyes and see yourself in a flowing white gown, with long, thick waves of black hair, ivory skin, and violet eyes, silver shoes that spark stars as you spin and twirl across the polished oak. The crowd moves back, crowds of men reaching, pushing, trying to touch your breasts, trying to grab your thighs and spread them wide. But they all move back as if they are being pulled further and further into the dark shadows, and John enters the circle. He takes you in his arms and holds you tight against his chest as you spin and twirl together. He pauses to lean forward and you lean back, your hair brushing on the floor as he looks into your eyes.

The song has ended and the dark-eyed boy escorts you to the table. Your purse is buzzing. It is your cell phone. You fumble for the button, but cannot find it. It buzzes again, and again. It is John. You know it is. He can only call when he is able, and when he's able, he calls, and calls, and calls until you answer. You move away

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from the dark-eyed boy, raise your phone from your pocket and smile apologetically.

"I have to take this," you say, mouthing the words as you turn and walk backwards off the dance floor. The dark-eyed boy stares in shock and disbelief. He knows it is John. He must know. He rolls his eyes. He looks away, puts his hands in his pockets. He is pissed, you know he is, but you can't help yourself. You have to take that call.

You run to the restroom and wait. John calls back. He wants to meet at your apartment. You walk back out into the darkness and search the bar for the dark-eyed boy, trying desperately to come up with a quick, yet believable excuse, but he is gone, and even if you do find him you know he will never speak to you again.

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The Bedroom

You have showered, again, scrubbing away at the smells of the bar and the dark-eyed boy. You feel dirty, as if you've been cheating. You smother your skin in perfumes and lotions and powders to mask your sins. You light all the candles you can find and throw a blue scarf over the bedside lamp. You climb beneath the sheets to wait, carefully arranging your hair so that it flows seductively across the pillow.

John unlocks the door and you can hear him walk across the apartment floor. You are trembling, waiting for his touch. You slide up on the bed and pull down the blankets just far enough so he can see your breasts and a tease of nipple. You pinch your cheeks and bite your lips to make them darker, redder, and sexier.

John pops open the bedroom door and smiles when he sees you. He turns around and walks back to the kitchen and you frown, though you enjoy the view of his tight ass in his jeans.

He comes back into the room and sets a glass of water on the headboard's bookshelf. You pose seductively for him and he smiles once more, but it's the same smile he would use for one of his children, so you slide back down beneath the sheets.

"You are so cute," he says, tapping your nose with the tip of his finger. It wasn't the reaction you wanted, but

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even that minor touch is enough to make you squirm with pleasure. He slides his arm beneath your back and raises you up, tilting the water glass to your lips.

The room is hot and his skin glistens with the light of the moon shining through the ice on your bedroom window. He traces a line across your chest with the tip of his finger and you can feel the trail across your skin as if it's made of fire. He slides the silken straps across your shoulders and lowers his mouth to each breast, tugging at your nipples with his warm lips. You are lost, floating away in the darkness of empty space.

He holds your breast with both hands as if he is drinking your flesh. He is your sun, warming the dark nucleus of your soul, and you can feel his heat spreading through your breasts and thighs. You throw your head back, gasping. He brushes his lips across the peak of your breast and kisses your neck. Then he parts your lips with his tongue.

You are crying now, hot tears dropping from the corners of your eyes onto the bed. You gasp as he once more thrusts his tongue inside your mouth and you breathe in his breath. He takes your hands and slides them up above your head then climbs on top of you. Then he lets go of your hands, braces himself on the headboard behind you, and thrusts his hips forward. You lick his cock, sucking it deep into your throat. You grab his hips and pull him in closer.

Suddenly, he pulls away. He slides down to face you and kisses you long and deep. You arch your back, press yourself against him. You beg him to fill you with his cum until you drown. He laughs and you blush.

He kisses your chin, your neck, your left nipple, and

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your belly. He slides his hand between your thighs and moves his fingers up inside of you, exploring the damp, hot folds. You gasp and moan and grab his hand with both of yours, forcing his fingers in deeper.

"Come inside," you whisper. "Come inside of me and I will explode around you like a dying star."

He does come inside. He moves hard and fast inside of you, and his cock goes deeper than it ever has before. You slide upward on the sheets and press your fingers against the headboard, savoring each thrust. You arch your back and beg, plead, cry out for more, so he slides his hands beneath your hips and raises you up to meet each thrust of hard, throbbing cock.

John lets out a deep, throaty groan as he spreads his warmth inside you. He closes his eyes and drops his head onto your chest. His breath slows to an almost imperceptible pace. You can feel his body relax as more and more of his weight comes down upon you. You wrap your arms around him and stare up at the ceiling, knowing he has already left you. He has become the supernova, the one that mysteriously appeared then disappeared. His thoughts and dreams dance in a distant galaxy where you can never touch him.