



It's Only Make-Believe

Shawn
Lane

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by

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Sorcerer's Lover
The Squire

Chapter 1

"So, you're not even having sex?"

Sebastian Kincaid did not want to hear the answer. Except for not wanting to look like a geek, he would have plugged his ears and sung loudly during Melody Jenks's response to Ming Chow's inappropriate question.

The three of them were having lunch on the patio of a lovely little bistro where they frequently dined. They'd been discussing Melody's relationship, such as it was, with eligible bachelor Luther Winthrop.

"Keep your voice down," Melody hissed.

Indeed, Sebastian thought, lowering his sunglasses a tad to glance around at the other tables. No one seemed to be paying particular attention to them.

"But to answer your question..."

Bloody hell.

"No," Melody said. She took a large sip of her mango margarita, leaving a rather large imprint of dark red lipstick on the rim.

Sebastian relaxed a bit. So she hadn't had sex with Luther. Good.

"The thing of it is we aren't really dating." Melody leaned her head on one of her hands. Her polished nails bore the same red as her lipstick. They both went rather nicely with her warm cinnamon skin.

"What? You've been on three dates," Ming protested.

Sebastian shot the perky Asian with the dyed red hair a quick look of disdain. She really needed to keep quiet. He made a note to himself to give his paralegal extra work when they returned to the office. He checked his watch.

"Oh, please," Ming said, watching him. "We haven't been here that long."

"I didn't say anything."

Ming rolled her eyes and turned back to Melody. "You were saying?"

"Luther and I are old friends," Melody said. "Now that he's rich and eligible, women won't leave him alone."

"I should have such problems," Sebastian muttered. He took a large swallow of his beer.

Melody smiled. "You might have those problems if you loosened up." She indicated his Armani suit. "Everyone's causal these days. Haven't you noticed you're the only one still dressing like that in the office?"

"I'm a barrister. I like to dress the part."

"It's *lawyer*, Einstein," Ming said. "You're in America now."

"Well, whatever. What has that got to do with women throwing themselves at me or not anyway?"

"You're not approachable." Melody studied him with her large, chocolate brown eyes. "You're cute enough for a white guy."

Thanks.

"An English white guy no less," Ming said, giggling.

"I think I have a new case you'll need to do loads of overtime on," Sebastian told her.

Ming bowed her head and took a sip of her drink.

Melody laughed. "The point is you look *GQ*, but your expression and your attitude all say 'Get away from me.'"

"Hardly."

"Anyway, we're talking about Mel and Luther, not you," Ming said. "So women want Luther. Why does that mean you're not having sex?"

He hated himself for it, of course, but Sebastian almost wanted to know the answer. Pathetic really. He shouldn't be getting a woody over a co-worker anyway. Definitely bad form.

Melody shrugged. "Like I said, we're old friends. Basically, Luther asked me to pretend to be his girlfriend to keep all the overzealous women away."

Sebastian snorted. He knew it was indelicate, but really. What nonsense.

Both women glanced at him.

"What's the derisive snort for?" Ming asked.

"It's more likely he hasn't come out of the closet and he wants Melody to pretend to be his girlfriend for that reason."

"Oh, no. Luther is not gay," Melody insisted.

Whatever. Sebastian gestured for the waiter to bring the check.

He'd had the hots for Melody since he ended up joining the law firm Peyton, Wallace, and Jenks earlier that year. Melody being the Jenks in the firm's name. He hoped to make partner himself one day, and getting hard whenever he was near Melody would not help his chances. He really needed to get laid. Maybe that would help. Of course, getting images of him and Melody naked out of his head might help, too.

"You're more of a bore than usual, Kincaid," Ming declared, reaching down to pick up her purse. "What's got your tighty-whites in a wad?"

Sebastian ignored her and handed his credit card to the waiter.

Ming rolled her eyes again and turned her attention back to Melody. "Don't you want it to be something more?"

"Sure, but if Luther doesn't, what can I do?"

"Precisely," Sebastian agreed, signing the slip. "She doesn't want to appear pathetically desperate like all those women Winthrop wants to avoid, does she?"

They rose from the table, and Ming grabbed Melody's arm. "Let's go for drinks after work and we can talk about this further. You know, develop a strategy."

"Well..."

"How about Barton's?" Ming looked back at Sebastian. "And you aren't invited, Kincaid. Ladies only."

"I assure you I have better things to do with my Friday night than drink fruity martinis and discuss Melody's lack of sex with Luther Winthrop," Sebastian said.

"All right," Melody agreed. "But I can't stay too long. Luther wants to have a late dinner."

Swell.

* * * *

Sebastian set his coffee cup on his desk and read through the latest brief on his most important case. He leaned back in his chair and yawned. Saturday morning in the office. How sorry was that?

His better thing to do last night was to watch a crime-show marathon on television. What a bloody idiot he was. Melody wasn't attracted to him.

"Get over it already."

"Get over what?" Melody, also known as the object of his lust, poked her head into his office.

God, he hadn't known anyone else was there. He plastered on his most-fake smile. "A headache. I have a habit of talking to myself."

"Oh."

She nodded and stood in his doorway with her arms folded across her chest. Too bad. She was blocking her pert breasts. She was dressed even more casually than during the week, wearing gray sweatpants and a thin white T-shirt. Her thick mass of brown and blond braids had been pulled back by a gray twist. No makeup either. His cock didn't seem to care. It leapt to attention.

"I didn't expect to see you here this morning."

"I just had a couple of things to do since I left early to go to Barton's," she explained. "You didn't miss much. Too crowded. How was your date?"

Sebastian's mind blanked. "Date?"

She shrugged. "You said you had better things to do, so I assumed..."

"Right, right. It was extraordinary." Lord, he was a geek.

"Couldn't have been that extraordinary. Look where you are first thing in the morning." She smiled. For a moment, she hesitated, looking like she wanted to say something.

"Want to have a seat?" He gestured to the chair in front of his desk.

"Yeah, there is something I kind of want to talk to you about. Let me get my coffee and I'll be right back."

Sebastian watched her disappear down the hall. He certainly hoped he hadn't screwed up a case. Though he was new to the firm, he'd been practicing law in California for a few years. He scooted closer to his desk. Wouldn't do for her to see his boner.

She smiled when she came back with her travel mug of coffee and sat down. "I'm glad you're here, Sebastian. I could really use a guy's opinion."

"Uh-huh. What's up?"

"About Luther."

Great, just great.

Melody sighed. "The thing is, I'd like to take our friendship further. I've been in love with Luther for the longest time." She peered at him over her coffee mug. "I kind of doubt you've ever been in love with someone who doesn't feel the same way."

Um, welcome to my life, Sebastian thought.

"Sebastian?"

"Uh, yes, as a matter of fact, I'm in a similar situation myself," he admitted.

She raised her eyebrows. "Really?"

Sebastian pushed away the annoyance. "Why is that so difficult to believe?"

"I don't know." Melody shifted in her seat. "You just seem so--"

"Put together?"

"I was going to say standoffish. Unemotional." She laughed. "No offense."

"Sure, stiff upper lip and all."

"Anyway, we were talking last night at Miguel's Cantina and--"

"I thought you went to Barton's."

She waved one of her manicured hands. "I told you, too crowded. We switched to Miguel's."

And that place wasn't too crowded? he wanted to ask, but decide not to bother. Miguel's was a meat market. He didn't like the idea of Melody there. Not that he had any say, obviously.

"Ming said if I really wanted to get Luther's attention I should make him jealous."

Sebastian raised an eyebrow. Leave it to Ming to suggest something underhanded. He sighed. "Why don't you try something old-fashioned?"

"What's that?" She frowned over her mug.

"Tell him how you feel." Okay, he should probably take his own advice, but the truth was he knew she wasn't attracted to him. Unless Luther really was gay, Sebastian would bet he did like Melody.

"I don't think I could do that. I mean, how embarrassing if he doesn't return my feelings. You know?"

Yes, he knew.

"So, if I do decide to make him jealous, I need a man to do it with."

Okay, his cock perked up at that. He cleared his throat and shifted in his chair.

Melody laughed. "Well, not do it with, exactly. I meant make him jealous. Someone he could see me going out with and think we were doing it."

"Bad idea."

Melody smiled a little. "Sorry you feel that way, Sebastian. I was thinking of asking you to be the guy. But if you think it's a bad idea..."

"Wait." Lord, he'd yelped like a desperate puppy. *Down, boy.* He forced a casual smile on his face. "You want me to be the one to make Luther jealous?"

"Well, yeah, Ming actually thought of it." She sipped her coffee and then brightened. "Hey, maybe it could work for you, too."

"Me?"

She practically bounced in the chair in excitement. "Sure. If the woman you're in love with sees you with me, she might get jealous, too, and realize what she's missing."

He almost told her the truth, but stopped himself with effort. The sky would probably fall first. Still the possibility of a few dates with the object of his desire couldn't be a bad thing, could it?

"Sebastian? Look, forget it. I can see you don't like the idea. I can find someone else," Melody said, rising from the chair.

"No." There was that stupid eagerness again. "I'll do it."

A bright smile lit her beautiful face. "You will? Really?"

"I still think it's brainless and idiotic," he said, "but I am at your disposal."

"Great. Are you free tonight?"

Yes, his cock tried to speak up. "Yes. What do you have in mind?"

"We could go to dinner, and then there's this little jazz club Luther sometimes hangs at. We could go there."

He loathed jazz almost as much as country. "Sure. Sounds great."

"Thanks, Sebastian. Don't worry," she said, pausing to laugh, "it's only make-believe."

Chapter 2

The doorbell to her townhouse rang precisely at seven. Mel grabbed her little black purse and went to the door.

"Right on time," she said.

Sebastian shrugged. "I pride myself on promptness."

Mel smiled up at him. Geez, he was tall. She always knew he towered over her five-foot-six frame, but somehow outside the office he seemed even taller.

His light brown hair was carefully groomed without a single strand out of place. She quickly noted he'd chosen to wear a navy shirt that complemented his blue eyes. Mel blinked. This close, she could see they were a deep sapphire. And if she wasn't mistaken, the shirt was silk. She dropped her gaze and saw he was wearing black dress pants. What had she expected out of Sebastian? Jeans and a T-shirt? Not hardly.

"Shall we?"

"Just let me grab my sweater," Melody said. "Could be cool later."

He turned and headed to his waiting car. Her gaze followed. He had a very nice broad back. Great body, really. And that ass. Yum. Whoever he was in love with must be a complete idiot. Mel shook her head.

He waited at his Lexus for her and opened the passenger door.

She laughed. "I can open my own door, Sebastian. Remember, this isn't a real date."

He shrugged again, got in, and started the car. "Where do you want to have dinner? I know this English pub in Santa Monica."

She wrinkled her nose. "English food? Honey, there's a reason you're all so skinny. You all don't even want to eat that stuff." Melody laughed.

She thought about it for a minute. She'd decided to dress in black leggings and a white blouse. Couldn't go wrong with ebony and ivory, she'd decided with a chuckle. But if she suggested Italian food, with her luck she'd splatter red sauce all over her white blouse.

"Okay, so where?" His tone was a bit impatient.

"You got a bit grumpy in the last few hours." Mexican food would mean salsa, also red and messy. She knew a soul food restaurant or two, but after she dissed his English food Mel suspected he wouldn't be open to the suggestion.

"It's not our last meal, Melody. Make a decision." He tapped his long fingers on the steering wheel.

"Are you always this charming on dates?" She sighed. "How about Marv's Café?"

"Done."

* * * *

Dinner hadn't been too awkward, Mel decided as she slid into the booth in the corner of the jazz club. This was her favorite seat in the place because she could see the entire club, including the entrance. So far she didn't spot Luther in the throng of mostly African-American patrons.

Sebastian frowned. "Are these seats made out of pleather?"

"What?" Melody asked, returning her attention to him.

"The booth seats. These aren't real leather, are they?"

"You really are a snob, Sebastian. Loosen up."

They'd spent most of dinner talking about their respective childhoods--his in London and hers in South Central Los Angeles. Two completely different worlds, but they'd laughed about their differences. Neither one of them had been unhappy.

A waiter in tight black pants, white shirt, and black vest came to take their drink orders. Mel ordered a chocolate martini and Sebastian ordered a glass of chardonnay.

"And just how am I supposed to loosen up?"

"Well, for starters"--she waved her hand at him--"look at you. You always dress like you expect to be on the best dressed list. Do you even own a pair of jeans?"

"I--"

She laughed. "It's okay. I guess it's just you."

His mouth thinned for a moment and he tapped his fingers on the table.

"So where's the stud?" Sebastian gazed around the room.

"I don't see him yet," Melody admitted. She was pretty sure he would be here, though. Luther spent most of his Saturday nights here. She'd been here more than a few times with him. As a matter of fact, she had been surprised when he didn't ask her for this weekend.

"I hope I don't have to sit here listening to jazz for nothing," Sebastian grumbled.

Mel sighed. "Would you rather leave? I can take a cab home."

"No."

"What kind of music do you like? Don't tell me country." She smiled at the waiter who set their drinks down in front of them.

Sebastian shuddered. "Definitely not."

"Oh, Lord, you're into classical, huh? Have you got nothing but Beethoven and Mozart on your mp3 player?"

"Actually no. I like rock, punk, that sort of thing."

She nodded and sipped her drink. "How about the woman you're in love with? What does she like? Do you know?"

"Look, I never said I was in love with her exactly," he said defensively.

"Well, you said you were in a similar situation to mine," Mel reminded him.

"Yes, but really, mine is more--how do you Americans say it?--I have the hots for her."

"Oh, so you mean it's all about sex." Mel rolled her eyes. She should have known. Men were all the same.

"No, not necessarily."

"You just said you have the hots for her and you aren't in love. What else is it?"

Sebastian shifted in the booth. "Sure it's about sex to an extent, but it could turn into more if she showed any interest. That's what I mean."

"Well, shit, Sebastian, you're a great looking guy. Why don't you just ask her if she wants to have no-commitment sex with you and get it over with?"

Hell, what woman in their right mind wouldn't have sex with him? She took another sip of her martini. That awesome body, drop-dead gorgeous face. She licked her lips and tasted the chocolate liqueur.

"Is it warm in here to you?" she blurted out.

"Um, yes, a bit."

"Hi, Mel."

They both looked up suddenly. There, standing at their booth, was Luther. She hadn't even seen him come into the club. The man of her dreams was dressed casually with his white shirt opened at the throat revealing a hint of his chest and the hair that grew there. He had a beautiful smile on his dark chocolate face.

"Luther, hello. May I introduce Sebastian Kincaid? Luther Winthrop."

"Hey, man," Luther said, holding out his hand. Sebastian shook it. "I didn't know you were coming tonight."

"Sebastian loves jazz, so I thought I'd bring him here," Mel lied with a huge smile.

Luther glanced at Sebastian. "Well, hey, that's cool. I came in with some friends." He gestured to a table several booths away. "Enjoy your night. Mel, I'll call you later in the week."

"Great. Enjoy yours, too." She frowned as soon as he walked away.

"What's wrong?"

"He didn't appear to be very jealous, did he?"

Sebastian glanced down at Luther's table. "Not particularly, no."

"Maybe we should dance," Mel said, watching the couples on the dance floor swaying to the smooth song the band played.

"Dance?" He looked like she'd suggested he eat a bug.

Mel got up and grabbed his hand, giving him no chance to protest.

* * * *

Okay, Sebastian, you can do this.

If he didn't stand too close, maybe she wouldn't notice his cock jutting out at attention. Leave it to her to mention asking for no-commitment sex. Now all he could think about was fucking her on the bloody stupid table.

If Luther hadn't interrupted when he did, Sebastian might have suggested sex to Melody. Probably would have laughed in his face, too.

"Closer," Melody urged. "We're supposed to be a couple on a date, remember?"

She tugged on him and stepped several inches closer, putting her arms around his neck.

All right, dead puppies. Er, limbless corpses. Court briefs. Damn, it didn't work. His erection pressed into her.

Her sultry brown eyes widened and her mouth formed an o. She stared at him.

"Just trying to make it look real for Luther?" he suggested lamely.

Screw it. In for a penny in for a pound, as it were.

He lowered his lips to hers, just a brush at first. Testing the waters. When she didn't slap him or pull away, he pressed his lips to hers in a longer kiss. She moved closer and opened her mouth. No way would he pass up such an invitation. His tongue plunged ahead.

Moving his hands from her waist down, he grabbed her ass and ground his pelvis into hers. She moaned low in her throat. Good Lord, if he didn't stop he *would* be taking her on the nearest table.

He nibbled her bottom lip and she pressed herself even closer, if that were possible.

"You two get a room," someone called. Laughter followed.

Melody broke away from him then, putting a wide gap between them, and laughed herself. Then she pulled his hand to lead him back to their booth, glancing over her shoulder.

"Do you think he saw us?"

Ding, ding, reality check, Sebastian. She couldn't care less about you.

"Yeah, I'm sure he saw us," he mumbled. He finished off his glass of wine in one large swallow.

What a chump. His cock's only entertainment for the night would be his own hand.

Chapter 3

Mel told herself it didn't bother her it was almost eight-thirty on Monday and still no sign of Sebastian. He was always there an hour earlier.

It didn't help she'd spent all of Sunday thinking about him. Why?

"You're in love with Luther," she reminded herself. She hit send on the email she'd been typing.

It was probably that kiss he'd planted on her at the club. She hadn't expected him to go so far as to kiss her. Lord, the man could kiss.

She got up from her desk, went out into the hallway, and took the few steps to where Sebastian's secretary sat.

"Did he call in?" Mel felt foolish asking, as she'd already asked the same stupid question a half-hour ago.

Shelly shrugged. "Nope, haven't heard from him. Weird. He's always here before I am."

What did she care? So his kiss was hot. Okay, hotter than hot. She wanted Luther. And besides, Sebastian was in love with someone else. Not to mention, Melody berated herself, she didn't date white guys.

Mel turned to go back to her office and stopped, frozen.

Sebastian walked down the hall in her direction, but he wasn't the normal Sebastian in the Armani suits. This Sebastian twin wore a tight fitting black T-shirt that showed off his bulging biceps. And...jeans. *Whoa*. They looked like they had been custom-made to fit him. His light brown hair, normally so carefully combed in place, looked like he'd just gotten out of bed and run his fingers through it. Or someone had.

"Who is that?" Shelly whispered, sticking her head out from behind her computer to gape.

With him almost to them now, Melody noticed his sexy five o'clock shadow. She was certain her jaw dropped as far as Shelly's.

"Morning." He gave them a wink and went past them to his office.

Mel and Shelly stared at his ass.

Shelly cleared her throat. "Maybe...maybe I should see if he wants me, um, to bring him some coffee or something."

Mel licked her lips. "I'll go see, Shelly."

"But..."

Mel didn't wait for Shelly to finish her protest. She walked to Sebastian's office, knocked once, and opened the door.

His back to her, he was bent over a filing cabinet going through files. Her gaze went once more to his jean-encased ass.

Get a grip, Mel. You're his boss.

"What's up, Shell?" he asked without turning around.

"Not Shelly."

He straightened and turned around. She squelched her disappointment at the loss of his ass, but was soon rewarded with a sexy-as-sin grin.

"Oh, hey."

Say something. "You're late," she blurted out.

He raised a dark brow. "Not really. I wasn't aware we had set start times."

"Well, I meant you're late for you."

"Right." He nodded, but offered no explanation. He went to his desk and picked up a large donut.

"You don't eat those. You have a bran muffin for breakfast every morning." *Oh great, now it sounds like I'm stalking him. I know what he eats. Wait, why do I?*

He shrugged. "I'm loosening up."

"Is that what this is about?"

"Hmm?" Sebastian took a bite and a big dollop of jelly plopped on to his desk. "Oh, damn. I'll go get a paper towel to clean that."

He disappeared through his office door, and she watched his every move. She sat down in the chair in front of his desk. What was wrong with her? She was acting like a teenager with a crush on a rock star.

Okay, so Sebastian was a gorgeous god. She'd always known he was good-looking. All he did was put on a pair of jeans and a T-shirt. No reason to hyperventilate. Taking a deep breath, she tried not to look at the desk where he'd spilled the jelly.

The truth was she'd had a dream last night where he fucked her right on that damned desk. She woke up sweating and her pussy wet. It had been so vivid. Neither of them had even gotten completely naked. He'd pushed up her skirt, ripped her panties off, pulled down his Armani dress pants and pushed inside her. Remembering the dream and wanting him to take her on that very jelly-clad desk wet her pussy all over again.

What was taking him so damn long anyway?

Mel got up and walked out into the hall. Sebastian sat on the edge of Shelly's desk, his arms folded and showing off his biceps. He was laughing at something Shelly said. And Shelly had pulled her blouse down to show extra cleavage.

Gritting her teeth, Mel approached them. "What happened to the paper towel?"

Sebastian paused in a chuckle. "What?"

"A paper towel to clean up the jelly."

"Right," he said once again in that cool British accent. "I forgot. Hey, Shell, I need something to clean up jelly."

Shelly gave him a sunny smile and pulled out some anti-bacterial wipes. "These should do it. I can clean it up if you want."

"No, no, I have it. Can you check to see if that conference call is still on? Let me know, thanks."

He grabbed the wipes and went back to his office. Damn she felt foolish, but Mel followed him.

He smiled quizzically when she followed him in. "Was there something?"

"This is because I told you about loosening up Saturday night, isn't it?"

"Maybe you were right. I'm feeling pretty good, actually." He smeared the jelly with the wipe and tossed it in the trash nearby.

She didn't know what to say to that, and the truth was she liked the sight of him in the jeans too much to make a fuss over it.

"So, I was thinking," she said, trying to be casual, "we should go out again."

"Okay. When?"

"How about tonight?" Boy, did she sound desperate. Well, why not? He was a man; she was a woman. Neither one of them were actually in a relationship with the person they were in love with. What was wrong with a hot affair anyway?

"Sure, where do you want to go? Where will Luther see us?"

Crap. How was she going to explain this one? Tonight isn't about Luther; it's about us getting naked? *Uh-huh.*

"Let's go wherever the woman you want might see us. I owe you after Saturday."

Sebastian looked away toward the window and didn't say anything for a while. Finally he smiled. God, he had a beautiful smile.

"All right. She works at this little Italian place not far from your house. I'll pick you up at--"

Before he could give her a late time, she hurried to say, "Six. Let's go at six."

"Six?" He frowned.

Yes, I want plenty of time to seduce you.

"Got something to do?" she asked innocently.

"No, six it is."

* * * *

Sebastian had no idea which waitress working at Paolo's he would choose to point out to Melody. He knew she would ask.

"Good evening, Paolo," Sebastian greeted the owner as they walked into the dimly lit restaurant.

"*Signor* Kincaid!" The owner, a portly man in his seventies, embraced him. He eyed Melody. "Oh, you brought your girlfriend."

"Yeah," Sebastian said with a grin. "Nice table."

"The best," Paolo promised. "Such a pretty girl."

Melody laughed and followed after the owner as he headed into the main part of the restaurant.

After sitting down and ordering some red wine for the two of them, Sebastian buried himself in the menu, hoping Melody would forget to ask.

"Which waitress is the one you have the hots for?" she asked immediately.

He lowered his menu reluctantly and glanced around the restaurant. He knew the wait staff. He'd been coming to Paolo's for years.

"She doesn't appear to be working tonight." He raised his menu again.

"I have to say I'm a bit surprised, Sebastian. I wouldn't have thought you'd be that interested in a waitress. Not that there's anything wrong with being one. My family did all right, but they also wanted me to learn responsibility, so I put myself through both college and law school waiting tables. I guess I view you as--"

"A snob." He nodded. "Yes, I'm well aware of your opinions of me."

Melody had the grace to look a bit chagrined. "Not a snob exactly."

"Stuffy, unable to loosen up. Doesn't that cover it?"

"Well."

Sebastian sighed. "Forget it."

"Hi, Mr. Kincaid," the waiter greeted them, bringing their glasses of wine to their table. "Are you ready to order?"

* * * *

Dinner had been very nice, but now he was driving her home. Melody tapped her fingers on the arm rest in his Lexus.

She'd actually been glad the waitress he wanted hadn't been there. Seeing the type of woman he was attracted to might have squashed any chance of sex with him.

Mel knew she wasn't unattractive, but she was curvy, no skinny-minnie. Most white guys she knew wanted women who were model thin, and that didn't describe her by any stretch. She liked to think she was rounded in all the right places. What a disappointment it would have been to confirm Sebastian was like the rest of those guys she'd known.

The problem now was what if he just dropped her at the curb with a yawn and a "See you tomorrow"? It wasn't like she could have said at dinner, "Hey, how about some hot sex when we're done?"

Imagining his face if she *had* said exactly that to him made her laugh.

He glanced at her quizzically. "What's so funny?"

The car turned down her street, edging ever closer to her house.

"Just imagining your reaction to something," she said honestly.

"What?"

Oh, hell. She could either be coy and ask him in for coffee or throw coy out the window under the Lexus's tires.

He pulled in front of her house and turned to look at her.

"I wondered if you'd like to come in and have hot sex with me."

Sebastian stared at her in silence for so long Mel decided she had made a huge mistake and should open the car door and crawl out.

He cleared his throat. "Um...what?"

"Forget it." She reached for the door handle.

"No, wait." Sebastian's hand closed around her wrist. "Are you serious?"

Mel knew it was now or never. She could laugh it off as a joke and hope Sebastian laughed, too, and they could forget it ever happened. But the truth was she did not want to laugh it off.

"I'm completely serious, Sebastian. But I understand if you're not interested. It's no big deal." After all he worked for her firm. It was completely inappropriate and possibly unethical.

He made a little half-choking noise. "Oh, I'm interested."

Mel licked her lips, her pussy clenching in anticipation. "Well, then, why don't you park the car and come on into the house?"

* * * *

Sebastian clicked the automatic locks on the Lexus and tried to resist the urge to run to Melody's front door. She'd gone in ahead of him while he parked.

Approaching the door, it occurred to him rather belatedly he had no condoms with him. Lord, he prayed Melody did.

Of course he knew she was only using him because she couldn't have Luther. Sebastian knew he should say it wasn't a good idea and go home. Hell, it could ruin their relationship, and he might even have to leave the firm if things between them soured too much.

But he was also a guy, and he knew very well he was going into the house to have sex with Melody.

He tapped lightly on the partially open front door. "Hello?"

"Come in, Sebastian."

Maybe it was because his cock was hard and stabbing against his briefs, but to his ears, her tone sounded low and sultry and made his balls tighten. Swallowing heavily, he stepped into the house, then closed the door behind him.

"Lock it, will you? Want a beer?"

Her voice came from what he guessed was the direction of the kitchen. He was standing in a large cozy living room with dark hardwood floors and an oversized brown leather couch. Across the room was an archway.

"No, thanks." He walked through the archway and into the kitchen. Melody was bending down to place a dish of cat food in front of a large orange tabby.

She straightened and smiled. "Sorry, Ginger has to have her dinner first."

"Of course."

She opened the refrigerator and returned the can of cat food. "Are you sure you don't want something to drink?"

"Nothing."

Melody held out one of her manicured hands, and he clasped it. She tugged him through a second doorway in the kitchen and down a hall that led past a couple of bedrooms and a bathroom, then to the last room on the right.

"I...um...don't have any condoms," he admitted. He glanced at the queen-sized bed beckoning in the middle of the room. If she didn't have any, he would offer to drive to the drugstore and buy a package.

Melody linked her arms around his neck and pressed her full, round breasts against him. "Don't worry, Sebastian. I've got two full boxes."

Though he was glad to hear it, he briefly wondered if she'd been stocking up in anticipation of taking Luther to her bed.

He was losing it. Did he really care why she had them?

"Sebastian?" She yanked just a little on a hunk of his hair.

"Hmm?" He gazed down into her chocolate eyes.

"Kiss me."

Chapter 4

Sebastian really did know how to kiss. Damn near curled her toes. Melody had always noticed his sensual lips. Well, she realized she'd noticed them now, anyway. And damn if she weren't comparing his kisses to Luther's. Which actually wasn't fair. She and Luther had only ever shared friendly kisses and never passionate. She had wanted to change that. Hadn't she?

Sebastian's tongue slipped in between her lips to mix with hers. He tasted of mint gum. She rubbed her breasts against his chest, wanting him to feel her erect nipples. Mel decided then and there they both had on way too many clothes. She was itching to feel his bare muscles.

She sucked on his tongue, drawing it farther in, learning the taste of it...of him. She reached for the hem of his skin-tight black T-shirt, inching it up over his abs, feeling the warm male skin. Wetness pooled between her legs.

"Mmm," she moaned around his tongue. He pulled at it and she reluctantly allowed him to have it back. Man had an amazing tongue.

"Here, let me," he said. With a swift movement, he shrugged out of the shirt and tossed it on the floor.

Mel took a moment to drool...stare at his muscular chest and sculpted abs. Her gaze raked over his torso and to his biceps.

Lord, talk about man-candy.

How had she missed this guy working at her law firm? Well, she really hadn't missed him. She'd known he was attractive, but she was a partner and didn't date white guys. Yet here she was. Straight past dating directly to taking him to bed.

"Am I the only one getting naked?" he asked, arching an eyebrow.

"Oh, hell, no." Mel pulled the jersey knit dress up over her head and threw it on top of his shirt. She wore only her plain white bra and a rather average pair of pink striped panties. Not exactly "let's have sex wear." It was embarrassing, but nothing to be done about it.

She linked her finger into the waistband of his jeans and tugged. "Now these."

He grinned somewhat crookedly and undid the snap. "Maybe I need a little help with the zipper."

Mel laughed. "I think I'm beginning to see you're a tease, Sebastian."

With one hand she cupped the obvious bulge in his jeans and with the other she slowly lowered the zipper. She slipped her hand inside the pants and then into his navy blue boxer shorts.

"Oh, shit," Sebastian said when she raked her nail along the shaft. He nuzzled her throat, kissing and then sucking at her pulse.

After a few moments of enjoying him kissing her neck, Mel planted her lips on his as her finger now swirled around the tip, rubbing in a drop of pre-cum. Her pussy clenched, anticipating the feel of that cock thrusting in. Melody pushed his jeans and boxers down his thighs.

"Off," she urged against his mouth.

"Okay," he agreed, "but that means something comes off you, too."

Melody reached around her back to unclasp her bra, never taking her gaze from Sebastian. In her thirty-two years she'd seen her share of naked men. Good-looking ones, too. But damn, Sebastian had nice, muscular thighs. The cock straining toward her was pretty nice, too. He stepped out of his pants and left them in a wrinkled pile at his feet.

She inched the bra straps off her shoulders, enjoying the way he was watching her just as closely. Her breasts were larger than she would have liked them to be, but at least she could pride herself in that they were still fairly firm for someone in her thirties.

"You're taking far too long with that." He reached for her bra and removed it the rest of the way. He paused, staring at her chest, the bra still clutched in his large hands.

Mel raised an eyebrow. "You like or too much?"

He grinned. "Oh, I like."

As though to demonstrate, he dropped the bra to the floor and closed his hands over her twin globes. His thumbs flicked over her nipples. Melody shook, frissons of need spiraling through her.

"Oh, God, let me get a condom," Mel said, pushing his hands away when she couldn't take it any longer. She stood on her tiptoes and gave him a quick kiss on the lips. "Be right back."

The boxes of condoms she'd purchased when she'd first started dating Luther...er, sort of dating...were in the cabinet under the sink in her bathroom. Still unopened. After opening a box, she removed a couple of packets. She looked forward to slipping one on Sebastian's cock herself.

She caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror of the medicine cabinet. Her lips were swollen from his kisses and there was a darker spot on her neck where Sebastian had marked her. Mel laughed, wondering if Ming would notice the spot and assume the mark came from Luther.

Melody decided to slip out of her panties here in the bathroom. She fingered her clit, feeling how slick she was. Touching herself brought an involuntary moan.

But as nice as stroking her own pussy might be, she wanted Sebastian's hands on her.

She walked back into the bedroom. Sebastian lay on the bed, having pulled the quilt and top sheets down. Mel licked her lips. He faced her in all his naked glory. The raw lust in his gaze almost buckled her knees.

"Want to toss me that?" Sebastian indicated the packet she held between her thumb and index finger.

"Uh-uh. I'm putting this on you myself."

Mel almost wished she had some of those flavored condoms. She'd never tried them and didn't really know if they tasted like the flavor they claimed or anything, but a strawberry one would have been good.

She tore open the foil and pulled out the condom, heading for the bed and straight for Sebastian's cock. She was unbelievable horny and she wanted him inside her now. Kneeling on the bed, Melody leaned down to kiss his completely kissable lips. He reached out to cup her breasts.

"Oh God," she murmured. "I can't wait." She broke the kiss and slid the condom onto his erection.

Mel pushed him flat on the bed and then straddled him. She lowered herself onto his cock, feeling him fill her pussy. She stayed still, experiencing just the joining of their bodies for a moment.

Sebastian wouldn't let her take too long, for his hands encircled her hips, lifting her off his cock, and then lowering her back down, not slowly but fast and hard, over and over.

When his cock hit her G-spot, Mel couldn't stop a moan of pure pleasure from falling from her lips. She raked her nails in the curly dark hair on his chest, edging her index finger along his right nipple.

"Mel," he groaned.

It was the first time she'd ever heard him use her nickname, and for some reason the sound of it in his rich, deep accented voice sent a tingle through her whole body. She closed her eyes and leaned her head back, letting her braids brush his bare skin.

Since Sebastian held her so tightly in his grasp, her own hands were free, so she slipped her fingers between her legs and rubbed her clit. Her whole body thrummed, like jolts of electricity shot through every pore. Sebastian's thrusts sped up, his breathing heavy. Mel knew he was close. She clenched her muscles around his cock.

"Sebastian," she screamed, as wave after wave of an orgasm hit her.

He stiffened beneath her, joining her in his release.

Mel collapsed across him and his arms came around her to hold her close. His heart hammered in his chest. She was sure hers was doing the same thing.

His fingers tangled in her braids as he massaged her head. It felt wonderful.

"Spend the night," she whispered against him.

Sebastian's fingers stopped their magical massage.

Mel swallowed hard, realizing she must have pushed too fast. She straightened up and looked down at his unreadable face. "You don't have to."

He smiled. "It's not that. I don't have any container or solution for my contacts and I don't like to sleep in them."

"You wear glasses?"

He shook his head. "Not in front of anyone, but yes. If I had known we'd end up like this, I would have been prepared." His gaze went to the clock on her nightstand. "The drugstore is closed now, so I couldn't even go buy some."

Mel hid her disappointment behind a smile. "Well, next time then."

Sebastian tightened his embrace. "Definitely."

* * * *

Now re-dressed, Sebastian stood at Melody's front door preparing to say goodnight. If he'd known wearing jeans and a T-shirt to work would have had this result, he'd have changed his ways a long time ago.

He couldn't help but feel bad that he was running off. He knew Melody wanted him to stay. Hell, he wanted to stay...sort of. It was true he had the contacts issue, but it also gave him an excuse to go back to his own house. Not that spending the night with Melody would be a bad thing, but well, she wanted Luther really. He was just a convenient way to let off some sexual frustration. Sebastian figured it would be best to keep their relationship, whatever it now was, casual.

Melody had pulled on a scarlet bathrobe. She wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled his lips down to hers. The kiss was long and thorough, their tongues dueling.

Sebastian reluctantly ended the kiss. "I'll see you at work tomorrow."

She opened the door. "I know this is bad, but I have a fantasy of sex on the desk in your office."

Sebastian stopped in the middle of the doorway and turned around. He raised an eyebrow. "Really?"

She grinned and nodded. "Totally inappropriate, of course."

He swallowed. His cock was half-hard again thinking about it. "Of course."

"Sebastian?"

"Hmm?"

"I recommend bringing a condom or two to the office."

Chapter 5

Sebastian rubbed the bridge of his nose, the court papers he'd been going over blurring in front of him. He'd been reading them for over an hour. The case was going to be difficult. And concentrating on it proved to be even more difficult.

All he could think about was sex on the desk with Melody. Crazy stupid, but there it was.

He hadn't even seen her since arriving at work. He'd come in before eight like his normal habit. Melody hadn't arrived until nearly nine and had just stopped by to say a quick good morning before heading to her office for a conference call. It was now nearly eleven.

He punched the intercom on his phone, connecting him with his paralegal.

"Yes, Sebastian?"

"Ming, can you come into my office? I've got some papers for you to look over."

"Be right there."

Sebastian shuffled the papers into proper order and paper clipped them together.

Ming tapped lightly on his office door, then walked in and approached.

Sebastian handed her the stack of papers, along with another stack on his desk. "Can you go through this and see if there's anything to help or hurt our case in the Howard matter?"

"Sure thing, boss." Ming lingered, obviously wanting to bring something up.

"Yes?" Sebastian prompted.

Ming grinned, eager to take advantage of the opportunity apparently. "So, how's the plan going?"

"Plan?"

"To make Luther jealous so he realized he wants Mel," she reminded him, giving him a look like he was clueless.

He guessed he probably was.

Sebastian shrugged. "I don't know. Maybe you ought to ask her."

"Oh, I will. I just wondered what you thought."

"It's going all right, I guess."

Ming sighed. "You're a big help."

He shrugged again and Ming waved the papers. "I'll report on this later this afternoon."

"Great, thanks."

With Ming gone, Sebastian checked his email and answered a few, but he still couldn't keep his gaze from wandering to the edge of his desk, imagining Melody laying there, legs spread while his cock thrust inside her.

Brilliant. Now he was getting hard. He shifted in his seat.

He tried to occupy himself with a phone call about another case, but the person he needed to speak with didn't answer, so he left a message.

"Hey there," Melody said from the doorway of his office.

Sebastian set the phone receiver down. His heart raced seeing her standing there in a short navy skirt and tailored white blouse. On her feet were navy high-heeled pumps. She had a touch of peach-colored blush on her cinnamon cheeks and matching peach lip gloss. Other than that she hadn't applied any makeup. Her braids had been pulled back in a navy clip. She was gorgeous.

"Hi."

Melody's dark gaze went to the open blinds on the outside wall of his glass office. "Think I should close these?"

Sebastian didn't miss the teasing glint in her brown eyes. His cock, now fully hard, pressed his pants uncomfortably.

Melody didn't wait for his response, but stepped into his office, closed and locked the door, then used the plastic wand attached to the blinds to shut them.

She turned to face him and undid the first two buttons on her blouse, exposing the tops of her round full breasts.

Sebastian stood and came around the desk, heading straight for Melody. She met him halfway and flung her arms around his neck, plastering her lips to his. He pulled her close to him, pressing their bodies together.

Her lips trailed to his throat where she planted several kisses. "I thought I'd never get off that damn conference call."

"Yeah, I know." Sebastian reached into her blouse, then her bra, to cup her breast and tease a nipple, squeezing it between his thumb and forefinger. He lifted her off the floor by her waist and carried her to the desk. He'd cleared a spot in anticipation earlier. He laid her down, making sure her ass was on the edge.

"Not wasting any time, huh?" Melody teased.

"No. You've had me thinking about this since last night." Sebastian pushed up her short navy skirt and cupped his hand over the crotch of her soaking wet blue panties. He stroked his thumb over her cloth-covered pussy. She shuddered.

"Oh, God, Sebastian, please," Melody moaned.

Sebastian pulled the panties down past her hips, down her silken thighs, and to her feet. He had an urge to take her while she wore her high-heeled pumps, so he removed them and after having taken the panties off, placed them back on her feet. He knelt on the floor at the side of the desk and drew her buttocks slightly forward, his intention to taste her juices.

She trembled as he brought his face near her pussy. "Yes. Oh, Lord, yes."

His tongue flitted out to her clit. She tasted musky, sweet and spicy all at once. She flowed freely and he lapped it up, swirling his tongue around her opening and then back to her nub. She grabbed either side of the desk, straining toward him as he continued licking and sucking her. He darted his tongue into the opening, thrusting it in just as he intended to soon be thrusting his cock.

Her thighs quivered under the assault, her gasps becoming more urgent, louder. He increased the pressure on her clit, harder and faster.

"Sebastian," she cried out, her whole body shaking with her release.

He flicked his tongue a few more times, working her into a frenzy, then stood. Sebastian reached into the pocket of his pants and removed the condom packet he'd placed in there that morning. He undid his belt and lowered his boxers and trousers. Tearing open the packet, he rolled the condom on his rock hard cock.

"Fuck me," Melody urged. "I'm on fire."

Sebastian poised the tip of his erection at her entrance, pushing in slowly. It felt shockingly wicked to be fucking on his desk in the middle of the day. He would never have dreamed in a million years he would be doing this...and doing this to Melody.

"Sebastian, stop teasing me, please," she begged.

He chuckled low and, grabbing hold of her thighs, pushed balls-deep in one long thrust. Lifting her hips, he slammed into her again and again, increasing the power of his thrusts with each one. She wrapped her legs tight around him, linking her legs at the ankles, urging him without words for more.

His balls pulled against his body and Sebastian knew he wouldn't last much longer. Already he could feel the beginning of his orgasm teasing him. But first he wanted Melody to come again. Gripping her thighs, he tilted her, searching to hit her G-spot. He watched her as he probed for it. When her dark mocha eyes widened suddenly, Sebastian knew he had succeeded. He stroked it over and over with his thrusting cock.

"Oh, my God," Melody gasped, she clenched around his cock.

"Yes, that's it, sweetheart, come for me," Sebastian urged. "Give me all you have."

Her body tensed and her head leaned back on the desk. She trembled and thrashed.

"Mel," Sebastian groaned, pumping into her, letting his own orgasm flow freely at last.

They lay together, still entwined, on his desk for several panting moments. Sebastian's limbs felt like gelatin. Eventually Sebastian rose and withdrew from her, discarding the condom into a napkin and then tossing that into the trashcan next to his desk. He adjusted his clothes and then helped her to sit up. The smell of sex permeated the office. He kissed her forehead and she embraced him, leaning her cheek against his chest.

"Wow, that was...just wow," Melody murmured. "You're incredible."

Sebastian laughed. "I think we're both pretty terrific, at least together."

She pulled back and met his gaze, her eyes shining. "You may be right."

"Listen," Sebastian said, as he helped her off the desk and pulled down her navy skirt. He reached down to fetch her panties from the floor. "Why don't you come over to my condominium tonight and I'll make you dinner?"

She grinned. "Not bangers and mash I hope?"

He rolled his eyes. "No. And that's such a stereotype, by the way."

"I would love to have you make me dinner, Sebastian." She gave him a long, lingering kiss. "But now I have to get cleaned up. I actually have a client meeting for lunch."

Chapter 6

Sebastian's condo was in a cozy little Burbank neighborhood. One of those suburban Los Angeles areas that had been around for years, but still retained a lot of personality and everyone watched out for everyone else. For some reason Mel had expected him to live in a newly built starchy condominium in an equally swanky area. She found herself pleasantly surprised.

On impulse Mel had packed a small overnight bag...just in case. Now she felt kind of shy about it, so she left it in the trunk of her car. Sebastian's condo was on the second floor. She approached the door marked number ten and rang the bell.

After a moment she could hear footsteps approaching and then the door opened. Sebastian stood there wearing a checkered apron and holding a spatula.

"Hi," Mel said, holding out the bottle of chardonnay she'd brought along.

He took the bottle and stepped aside to let her in. "Hello. Good choice on the wine. I've actually already got a bottle of the same brand chilling in the fridge."

Sebastian closed the door and then turned right to walk down a hallway to the kitchen. He placed the bottle she'd brought in the refrigerator and pulled out an already cold bottle and poured two glasses.

"Cheers," he said, clinking glasses with hers.

Mel sipped long on the tangy cool wine. "What are we having?"

"Shepherd's pie."

"Really?"

Sebastian laughed. "No, I figured that was the other dish all you Americans seem to think British people live on. Actually, lemon dill chicken with wild mushrooms over fettuccini."

Mel knew her jaw was hanging open. "You can make that?"

He shrugged. "Sure. Thanks to the recipe I saw on a cooking show. According to the chef, anyone can. You'll have to decide once you taste the results."

Mel noticed he'd set the table with china plates decorated with tiny blue flowers. The simple, sweet gesture caused her to tear up and she turned away so he wouldn't see.

"Cute place. Do you own it or are you just renting?"

"I own it. Paid an exorbitant price, I might add. Sit down. I'll be dishing it out in just a minute."

Melody sat down and sipped her wine while Sebastian picked up her plate to dish out the chicken. When he brought it to her, she also noted he had included green beans with bacon on the side. The scents of dill and lemon had her mouth watering.

"It looks amazing," she told him as he brought a plate of food for himself and sat down next to her. She cut a bite of the chicken and tried it. "It is amazing. Wow. Sebastian, I am really impressed."

He grinned and waved his hand. "I just followed directions."

Mel took another sip of her wine and found herself really curious about Sebastian. He'd worked at the firm for a while now and they'd lunched several times a week for many months. And recently, well, she *knew* what they'd done recently. Still she didn't really know that much about him.

"Why'd you decide to leave England?" she asked.

He shrugged and remained tight-lipped for a moment or so, and she thought maybe he didn't intend to answer, but then after a few chewed bites of the chicken, he set his fork down.

"I was married once," he said, his voice soft.

"You were?"

He nodded. "I suppose after all that happened I wanted to get as far away from anything to do with it...with her."

"Divorce?"

"No. She died. Automobile accident."

Mel reached for his hand and closed hers over it. "I'm so sorry."

Sebastian smiled just a little. "Well, it was a long time ago now. Anyway, it was on our third wedding anniversary. I loved her a lot."

Mel blinked, trying to prevent the tears of sympathy from appearing. Her throat clogged for a moment. "Drunk driver?"

"Yes. Only she was the drunk. She plowed into a tree." He looked away from Mel, his eyes growing distant. "We'd been celebrating our anniversary and had met at the restaurant so we had separate cars. I was stupid and thought she was okay to drive. You know she'd only had a couple of glasses of wine."

"That's awful, Sebastian. I'm sorry."

"Yeah. Found out after that she'd had a couple of drinks before I'd even met her there. She didn't tell me. She'd done quite a bit of drinking I didn't know about or tried to ignore. I'm not really sure. Her family blamed me, of course. Things got really ugly."

She linked her fingers with his, but didn't say anything this time. She didn't think saying she was sorry a third time would help anyway.

"So, a change of scenery seemed to be in order," Sebastian said, gazing her way once more. "And here I am."

Mel nodded. "I, for one, am glad you're here. And glad you made this terrific dinner."

"Thanks."

* * * *

"Sorry, I didn't think about anything for dessert," Sebastian said, joining Melody on the balcony off his living room.

She leaned against the wood railing. "It's just as well. These hips don't need the extra calories."

Sebastian eyed her. He didn't see any issues with her hips or any part of her luscious curvy body. He glanced at the pool below. "Not much of a view, I'm afraid. Especially in summer when this pool gets pretty occupied."

"It's nice. It's a beautiful evening," Melody said. Her cell phone, which she held in her hand, vibrated. She gave him an apologetic smile. "Sorry, I was waiting for a call from my mother."

"No worries."

"Hi, Mama. At a friend's house. No, everything's good." Melody walked over to the other side of the balcony. Sebastian sat down in a lawn chair and tried to pretend he wasn't listening. "What time is the party for Daddy on Saturday?"

In the old days, Sebastian would have lit a cigarette. He'd given up smoking several years ago now. But he found himself sort of wishing he had something to do while Melody talked on the phone.

"Do you mind if I bring someone? No, not Luther. His name is Sebastian."

What?

"Okay, thanks, Mama. See you then. Bye."

Sebastian decided if he didn't look at Melody she wouldn't be able to tell him she had just asked her mother if she could bring *him* to a family party. He stood and went back to the railing overlooking the pool. She came to stand next to him.

"Sebastian?"

"You know you're right. It really is a nice evening."

"Sebastian." She touched his arm. He was forced to look at her. It would be impolite to do otherwise. "Saturday's my father's birthday party. I thought maybe you'd like to come."

He supposed he could say no. Should say no. He wanted to keep things casual because, after all, she wanted Luther, not him. But she looked so damn hopeful, he couldn't be a giant ass and say no. "Sure. What time?"

Her glorious smile was worth it. And it sent a jolt of lust right to his cock.

"I'll pick you up around one-thirty."

Sebastian smiled. "Okay."

Enough talk of meeting a family who would never be his or want anything to do with him probably. He went to stand behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist. He nuzzled her neck.

"Mmm." Melody leaned back, lifting her arms.

His hands inched up to cup her breasts. She'd changed into a green halter dress since he'd seen her at work. He slipped his fingers inside to massage her nipples.

"Shouldn't we go inside?" Melody murmured, tilting her head to give him better access to the column of her throat.

"Eventually," Sebastian agreed. He pinched her nipples, extracting a gasp from her lips. He pressed his erection against her ass. "See how hard you make me."

She turned her face toward his to meet his lips with hers. They kissed long and thoroughly, their tongues dancing.

Sebastian inched one of his hands down to her thigh, pulling up the material of the skirt of her dress. "Think you can be quiet?"

"What?" she asked, her voice sounding dazed.

He slipped his hand under her dress to between her legs, parting the folds of her pussy with his fingers. "Think you can be quiet?" he asked again.

Her eyes widened when his thumb found and stroked her nub. She licked her lips. "Oh, my, I...I'm not sure."

"Try," he said directly into her ear.

His thumb continued to stroke her clit as he slipped another finger into her pussy. She shuddered in his arms and bit her lip, but she didn't make a sound. His other hand remained under her dress, playing with her breast.

His cock strained against his jeans, his balls tightening painfully, completely turned on with trying to make her come while telling her she had to remain quiet. He'd done a lot of wicked things he'd never done before since beginning their affair.

Melody hid her face against his throat, making hushed little gasping noises. He added another thrusting finger, while his thumb flicked her bud. Sebastian removed his hand from her breast to encircle her waist when he knew by her trembling she'd found her release. He stroked her a few more times before withdrawing and pulling her dress down.

He turned her to face him and she wrapped her arms around his neck, drawing him down to kiss her. She laid her head on his shoulder.

"You're really gifted. Did anyone ever tell you that?"

"Hmm, not sure." Sebastian chuckled.

"Well, you are a genius." Melody smiled and rubbed against his hard cock. "But somebody still needs something."

"You noticed."

"Oh, yeah." She dropped to her knees and snapped open his jeans. She took her time unzipping them and reached in to remove his cock from his boxers. Her tongue darted out to lick the drop of pre-cum.

"Oh, Christ."

"Hush now," Melody whispered. "Remember, quiet."

"Um, oh...right."

She laughed a deep, throaty laugh and closed her mouth around the tip.

His knees nearly gave out, so he placed his hands on the railing to brace himself. She sucked the length in, taking him slowly but fully down her throat.

Melody cupped his sac, running a nail along the base of his shaft. She pulled his cock out and licked around the head, then pushed it back in again. She repeated the maneuver over and over until he was panting and shaking.

"Mel, you'd better stop," he urged, knowing he was about to come. He tried to pull away, but she dug her nails into his thigh and smacked his hands.

Sebastian couldn't hold it back any longer, the orgasm slammed into him, and he poured into her mouth. After a moment she let him slip out. He collapsed to one knee, his breath coming in short, raspy puffs.

She grabbed his face and kissed him. He tasted himself on her lips, on her tongue, and knew he wanted her again.

"I did good?" she teased.

"Brilliant."

She gestured to the sliding door with a flick of her head. "Now shall we go inside?"

"When I can move."

Chapter 7

Okay, so Melody's family seemed nice enough. Sort of.

He and Melody arrived shortly after two. She wore a pretty, multi-colored flowered dress and looked beautiful as usual. Since he'd actually spent the night at her house Friday night, she hadn't needed to pick him up. When she'd walked out of the bathroom in the dress, he'd wanted to take it off her and go back to bed.

He'd chosen to wear khaki slacks and a boring blue polo shirt. Melody assured him he looked great. But he felt a bit out of place when they arrived and all of the males in her family wore very loud Hawaiian shirts.

"You want something to drink?" An enormously tall and muscular black man who'd been introduced as Mel's brother asked him. Al didn't exactly glare at Sebastian, but the look he got wasn't particularly friendly either.

"A beer?"

Al threw him a bottle of Bud Light he'd removed from the cooler they had placed out in the backyard. Sebastian was very glad he caught it. He had a feeling he'd be the laughingstock of the family had he failed to do so.

Melody was in the corner of the large rectangular yard gesturing wildly with her hands. She was surrounded by a group of women, including an older woman who looked just like Mel. Her mother. Every once in a while she would throw Sebastian a look of disdain.

He twisted the cap off the bottle and took a good long swig. He didn't fail to notice that the lawn chair he sat in was off to the side by itself. It hadn't been that way when he'd first chosen the seat. He and Melody picked two seats next to each other and next to those seats had been several other patio chairs.

However, when Melody went to talk in the other part of the yard with the other women, Sebastian had slowly been abandoned. It was done subtly. Or at least they tried to pretend it was subtle. Al picked up his chair just to move it closer to the grill. To watch the food. Mel's father soon followed suit and then her uncle. A couple of family friends stood beside them. So far, Sebastian was the only white guy there. White person, actually.

One of the ladies had brought her small child, a boy of eight or so, who'd once come by to stare at Sebastian and ask him why he talked funny. When Sebastian attempted to explain he was British, the tyke quickly lost interest and abandoned him like everyone else.

He sighed. He'd known when Melody asked him that it would likely be a mistake. The truth was he'd wanted to please her.

Melody's father said something low to Melody's uncle and then glanced Sebastian's way. After a second or so, her father headed for his direction and sat in the chair previously occupied by Melody.

"Sebastian, is it?"

"Yes, Mr. Jenks."

Harold Jenks had a beer in his hand and he took a sip. He was a large, muscular man with very dark skin. Not quite as large as his son, though.

"So, don't take this the wrong way or anything, but what are you doing here?"

Sebastian admired the man for getting straight to the point. "Your daughter asked me. We've sort of been seeing each other for the past week or so."

"What does that mean?"

"We're taking things slow."

Mr. Jenks nodded. "Uh-huh. Well, let me tell you something. My family does pretty well. We're all educated. Mel's a lawyer, a partner in her own firm. My son's a chiropractor."

Sebastian's gaze flicked to Al and he winced. He couldn't imagine the beating he'd take with Al as his chiropractor.

"My wife and I were both teachers before we retired," Mr. Jenks continued. "My point is we're not some poor black family, and Mel's not the first one in our family to finish college. She doesn't need to be rescued by a white knight in shining armor. You get my drift?"

"No."

He sighed. "A lot of guys like you think they like to experiment."

"Guys like me?"

"Whites. You think getting it on with a black girl will be exciting. Something different. Exotic even. Been happening since the master slept with the slaves."

"Mr. Jenks--"

"But my daughter's a real person with real feelings and a family who doesn't want her to get hurt."

"I'm not out to hurt her," Sebastian protested.

"Look, you're probably a nice guy. You're educated, well-off, got a good job as a lawyer. No offense. But my daughter's been in love with Luther Winthrop for a long time, and we'd all kind of like to see that happen between them."

"I see."

Mr. Jenks stood up. "I hope you do. Enjoy the party."

* * * *

Melody finally extricated herself from her mother and her friends to catch up with Sebastian. She'd left him to her family for too long and she was feeling guilty. She found him standing over the fish pond her father had put in the side yard and filled with koi a couple of years ago when he retired. He had his hands shoved into the pockets of his pants.

She slipped her hand into his arm. "Hi."

He smiled. "Hey there."

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to leave you like that for so long."

"Quite all right. I can handle myself."

Melody stood on her tiptoes to give him a quick kiss. "I saw Daddy talking to you."

Sebastian nodded.

"And then Al."

He nodded again.

"Mama, too."

"Right. They all wanted to give me advice."

Melody froze in the middle of stroking his arm. "Oh, no. They didn't."

Sebastian grinned. "They did."

"What did they say?" Melody's stomach twisted. She knew her family. They meant well, but whatever they'd said to Sebastian wasn't what she wanted him to hear.

The truth was she was becoming very fond of Sebastian. Since the first time they had sex they'd seen each other every night. In fact, other than that first night where he hadn't had his contacts, they'd spent their nights together. They hadn't repeated the desk sex, both agreeing that while it was incredible and exciting it wasn't appropriate and definitely wasn't a good idea. But their sex life was on fire.

She had barely given a thought to Luther, which she felt pretty bad about. He'd called once to ask her to go to dinner, and she'd turned him down saying she had to work. Mel hadn't admitted she preferred to see Sebastian.

"Well?" she prodded when he didn't answer.

"Basically they all said while I seemed like a nice enough white guy, they wanted to see you with a nice black guy, preferably named Luther."

"Shit. I'm sorry."

"It's all right. Like I said, I can handle myself."

She shouldn't be surprised, Mel figured. They'd bombarded her with talk of Luther, too. And it wasn't as though she could really blame them. As far as they knew she'd always wanted Luther and wasn't into white men. Only now she definitely was into Sebastian.

She threw her arms around him and embraced him. "Well, I'm sorry they gave you a hard time just the same." She searched his face. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Of course."

"Do you still think about that woman you wanted? You know from the restaurant?"

He smiled and shook his head. "Mel, want to know something?"

"Hmm?"

"There never was a waitress at Paolo's who I had the hots for."

Melody blinked. She was incredibly glad. Hell, her heart raced with happiness at the news, but...
"Really? Then why did you say there was?"

Sebastian kissed the tip of her nose. "It was stupid. Anyway, it no longer matters. There never was such a woman."

She kissed him hard and deeply, suddenly feeling great. "Want to get out of here?"

"Are you ready to leave?"

Mel nodded. "Sure. I already said goodbye to Daddy and gave him a birthday kiss."

"Okay. Your place or mine?"

"Yours this time."

* * * *

Sebastian was dog-tired Monday morning when he pulled his car into the parking garage of the law firm. He and Melody had spent all Saturday night having sex and well into Sunday morning. They hadn't spent Sunday night together as she'd had a wedding shower to attend that afternoon. She called him when it was over, but both of them admitted to being pretty exhausted, so they spent their Sunday night at their own places.

He parked in his assigned space, got out, and reached for his briefcase. Melody's space was a few spaces from his, but it was still empty.

A big gold sedan pulled up behind him and the passenger side window lowered.

Luther Winthrop smiled out at him. His hands on the steering wheel were covered with several large silver rings. "Hey, man, Sebastian, right?"

"Yes."

"Do you know when Melody's going to be here? I need to talk to her," Luther said.

Sebastian shrugged. "Not sure. Any time though. Anything wrong?"

Luther grinned. "No. No, nothing wrong. Hey, man, you two aren't serious or anything, are you? I mean, I know you guys went to the club the other night, but that wasn't anything serious, was it?"

Sebastian didn't know how to answer that or even if he wanted to answer it. "Why?"

Luther tapped his hands on the steering wheel. "This is going to sound crazy, but I can't stop thinking about Mel. We've known each other almost all our lives and I've always kind of thought of her as a sister. But not lately. Anyway, I want to talk to her about it. I don't want to cut in or whatever on you."

"No, it's...it's fine," Sebastian said, finding it hard to get the words out. This is what Melody wanted. This man. It was why she'd bothered with him in the first place. And her family wanted it, too. "Well, good luck. I have to go into the office now for a call."

He walked toward the elevators that would take him up from the parking garage and to the level where the building was, trying to ignore the bitter disappointment threatening to choke him.

Chapter 8

Melody was surprised to see Luther's sedan near her parking space when she pulled down the aisle. She quickly noted Sebastian's car already in his space. Now, she was sorry she hadn't insisted they spend the night together. She'd missed him terribly. She would have willingly just slept if he was too tired for anything else. But now that she was anxious to see him, here was Luther.

She got out of her car. "Good morning, Luther."

He stepped out of the sedan, which he'd left running, and came to give her a fast hug. "Morning, beautiful."

Melody realized he'd called her a couple of times and she hadn't returned his call. Now she really felt bad. She cleared her throat. "I'm glad to see you, but you didn't have to come to the office."

He grinned. "Maybe, maybe not. Anyway, since you didn't call me back, I thought I'd catch you and see if you wanted to have breakfast. I'll bring you back here when we're done."

Melody mentally went over her schedule for the day. She didn't have any meetings or calls until the afternoon. "Sure, that sounds great." She grabbed her purse and followed him to his car.

Getting into the passenger seat, she speed dialed the office on her cell phone to tell them she would be out.

"Peyton, Wallace, and Jenks."

"Ming, what are you doing answering the phone? Where's Sally?"

"Called in sick. Anyway, Julie's covering, but I was walking by the desk so I thought I'd just answer. What's up?"

"Listen, I'm not going to be in for a couple of hours. I'm having breakfast with Luther."

There was a slight pause, then a definite chuckle. "Oh, Luther, huh? I knew it! So the plan worked. I'm so happy for you."

"What? No, Ming, it's not that."

"Yeah, sure, sure. Breakfast? Come on. Anyway, it's very cool. I'm glad. I'll let Julie know you won't be in until later."

Melody bit her lip, wanting to explain to Ming she hadn't spent the night with Luther. Didn't intend to, either. Ever. But she couldn't talk about it in front of Luther. "Um. Okay, I'll see you later."

Luther glanced over at her as he pulled out of the parking lot. "Everything okay?"

"Sure, no problem. Where are we going?"

"I figured Kenny's Diner over on Figueroa will work. They usually have a booth in the corner that's pretty private."

Melody drummed her nails on the door. "Private?"

"Yeah, I'd like to talk to you, Mel. I've been thinking a lot about things...about us." He shook his head. "Let's wait until we get to the restaurant."

* * * *

"Hey, Sebastian," Ming said from his office doorway, grinning from ear to ear.

"Yes?"

"Success!"

"Pardon?"

She hurried in and raised her hand in a high-five gesture. Sebastian merely looked at her hand and raised an eyebrow.

Ming sighed. "Okay, whatever. But I just talked with Mel and guess what?"

Sebastian frowned. He hoped she wasn't sick or having car troubles. But Ming sounded way too happy for that. "You got a raise?"

Ming snorted. "I wish. No. She called on her way to breakfast with Luther."

Was that his heart plummeting. "Oh?" he asked, making his voice casual.

"Do you know what that means?" Ming sat on the edge of his desk. The same edge where he'd had Melody.

"Don't sit there," he said, waving her off the desk.

She grimaced, but stood up. "It means, Einstein, that she spent the night with him last night. The plan to make him jealous and realize his true feelings worked."

Sebastian feared that was exactly what it meant. And he wanted to scream and rail against it. Of course he wouldn't. It was what Mel had wanted all along. He'd swallow his own pain and squash his own hopes.

"It appears you're right, Ming. Great news," he said. He was proud of how smooth and casual he sounded.

The ringing desk phone saved him from further false celebration

"I probably ought to get that."

Ming headed for the door. "Okay, okay. I know when I'm not wanted." She slipped through the door.

He pressed the button on his speaker phone. "Sebastian Kincaid."

"Sebastian, this is Ernie Phillips."

Sebastian remembered Ernie from a previous law firm they'd both worked at after passing the California Bar. "Ernie, how are you?"

"Good. I wondered if I could convince you to come to San Diego."

* * * *

It was difficult to concentrate on eating her California omelet with Luther sitting across from her wanting to talk. Once upon a time she would have been thrilled to hear him tell her he wanted to talk about *them*. But she had someone else she'd rather have that conversation with now.

The fact was, if she'd been honest with herself, she'd been attracted to Sebastian for a while. She'd always sought him out to talk about nothing in his office or to go to lunch. She'd tried to keep it business. Tried to tell herself that he was just a co-worker or a friend. But she didn't find herself traipsing down to other lawyers' offices in her firm. Just Sebastian's.

She also knew it hadn't been mere coincidence when she asked him to be her date in her bid to make Luther jealous. Mel adored Luther. She always would, but now she realized it was a schoolgirl's crush she'd actually outgrown.

Luther had taken several bites of his pancakes, then set down the fork. He held out his hand, palm up. Mel placed her hand in his.

"Mel, you know I've always cared a lot about you. You've always been there for me when we were growing up and my parents split. And when my business took off and the magazine came around wanting to make a big deal out of my being an eligible bachelor. I knew I could count on you."

"You can always count on me, Luther. We'll always be friends."

"The thing is, I don't want to be friends anymore." He grinned. "I mean I don't want to be *just* friends. I want to take our relationship to the next level."

Mel's eyes filled with tears, and for a moment she struggled to speak. She stared at her plate, unable to meet his searching dark gaze.

"Mel?"

She finally raised her gaze to his. "You don't know how long I wished you'd say that. I've had a crush on you since we were teenagers."

He nodded. "I always knew that. But I thought of you as a sister. Or I thought I did."

Mel smiled through her tears. A drop had fallen onto her cheek. "I know you did. I used to have these daydreams where you'd fall to your knees and tell me how blind you'd been all along and you loved me and wanted to spend the rest of your life with me."

Luther squeezed her hand. "I could get on my knees, if you want me to."

Her breath hitched. "That's what I'm trying to say, Luther, and not very well. I love you, really I do, but I'm not *in* love with you."

He stared at her for a long time without saying anything, then eventually lowered his gaze. "I'm too late, aren't I? There's someone else."

"Yes," she whispered. "It kind of snuck up on me. I didn't want it to happen and I even tried to pretend it wasn't, but I know now."

"Who is it?"

"Remember the guy I went to the jazz club with? Sebastian?"

"That white dude? Really?" Luther frowned. "Are you sure?"

She tugged her hand out of his grasp and wiped away her tear. "Of course, I'm sure."

He nodded. "Well, okay. It's just that I saw him this morning when I was looking for you and I asked him if the two of you were serious. He should have told me you were in love. I would have backed off."

Mel fished in her purse for a tissue. "I haven't told him how I feel yet. We've been getting to know each other, and I just haven't had a chance. When I first brought him to the club, I was trying to make you jealous."

Luther whistled. "So you were trying to make me jealous. I kind of thought that, which is what got me thinking."

"Yeah, that was the plan, but life can be kind of funny sometimes," Mel said as she wiped her eyes.

He snatched her hand back. "Mel, let me give you a piece of advice."

"Okay."

"Tell him. If you love this Sebastian, tell him. Don't make him wonder. Don't play any games. Tell him what's in your heart."

* * * *

"Shelly, have you seen Sebastian this afternoon?" Melody asked his secretary. When she first came back from breakfast he hadn't been in his office. Then she'd had meetings and calls and hadn't had a chance to seek him out. Now it was nearly five and he wasn't in his office.

Shelly gave her a sad face. "He left a few hours ago."

"Left? For the day?"

Shelly sighed. "No. He quit."

Melody's heart dropped. "He...he what?"

Shelly switched off her computer and stood up to collect her purse. "He went into see Mr. Wallace to give his resignation. He said he got a really great offer from an old friend to join a firm in San Diego. Said he'd give his two weeks, but Mr. Wallace said he knew Sebastian would need time to move so it was okay with him if he left right away." She sniffed. "And he did."

Mel's stomach twisted and gave a sickening lurch. She walked away without a word, already reaching for her cell to call him.

"Mel!" Ming called to her from down the other end of the hall. She rushed at her. "Tell me all about it! Was it everything you wanted it to be? How was he in bed? When's the wedding?"

Mel shook her head, placing her hands on her friend's shoulders to stop her excited monologue. "Sorry, Ming. I don't have time to talk. I have to get in touch with Sebastian."

"Oh, yeah, I already told him all about it. What a great thing he did by helping you land Luther."

Mel stared at her. "You...you what?"

"I told Sebastian about you having breakfast with Luther." Ming winked. "And what that meant about where you spent last night, of course."

She placed her hand on her stomach and shook her head frantically. "No, no, no. Oh, no." Mel pushed Ming aside and went into her office and closed the door, ignoring Ming's "Hey" of protest.

Sebastian's cell just went straight to voice mail. Next she dialed his home phone, but it just rang and rang. She'd have to go to his condo and hope he was there.

* * * *

Melody noticed immediately that Sebastian's car was in his personal parking space at the condo complex. Breathing a sigh of relief, she rushed upstairs to number ten, rang the bell, and pounded on the door.

"Sebastian? Open the door, please."

Mel twisted the knob and was surprised to find it turned. She walked into the condo. Sebastian came down the hallway from his bedroom. She closed the door.

"Why did you leave?" she demanded.

Sebastian stared. She saw his Adam's apple when he swallowed.

"Well? Where do you think you're going? What's this about San Diego?"

"I thought it would be for the best. You got what you wanted."

"Oh? I did?" She stepped close to him and jabbed a finger at his chest. "What's that?"

"Luther. He wants to be with you. The plan worked."

Mel reached for his hands and threaded her fingers through his. "Is that what you think? You're wrong. It backfired."

"Luther doesn't want you?" Sebastian frowned.

"No. I don't want Luther. I want you. Sebastian, I love *you*."

"But..."

"But nothing. I love you, Sebastian. I can't believe with what we've been sharing lately, you wouldn't know that. Kiss me."

Sebastian looked uncertain, but pulled her close and leaned down to meld his mouth with hers.

"Doesn't that tell you how I feel?" Mel asked, stroking his jaw.

He smiled, just a little. "I love you, Mel. I do. I don't think your family is going to like us together."

"Maybe not. But they'll get used to it. To us. They want me to be happy. And I want you." She hugged him. "Don't scare me like that. If you need to talk to me, if you have any doubts, talk to me. Okay?"

"Okay. I guess I need to get my job back."

She laughed. "Yes, you will."

He kissed her again, even more urgently. Heat pooled between her legs. He leaned his forehead against hers. "The truth is, you're the woman I've wanted, Mel. Not some made up waitress. It's always been you. It was never make-believe for me."

And that deserved another kiss, a thorough, curl-your-toes kiss.

When they came up for air, Mel asked, "Do you think before you talk to Wallace about getting your job back we could spend some time making up?"

Sebastian gave her a saucy wink. "Most definitely."

Shawn Lane

Shawn Lane believes love and passion know no boundaries. Shawn writes both erotic love stories involving men in historical or contemporary settings and interracial romances between men and women. Shawn is always looking for new stories and new characters to create while holding down life in California.

* * * *

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