

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

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*Lollipop Kings*



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Lollipop Kings

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# *LOLLIPOP KINGS*

**Brigit Zahara**

## **Prologue**

Sherry Martin would never forget the day that her past caught up with her.

It was a bright Monday morning in the fall, the kind when the uniquely autumn hue of the sun, shining warm and richly golden through the executive office windows, clearly signified the imminent end of summer.

She was at her desk, going through her calendar and workload for the day when Neal Reilly's voice drew her attention from the stack of paperwork before her.

"Morning, Sherry. How are you today?"

"Very well, thank you," she looked up, smiling at the dapper senior owner of Reilly's Rockets. Through good old-fashioned blood, sweat and tears, Neal Reilly had spent the past four decades building his candy empire from the ground up. He might be worth billions but not a day went by when he didn't make a point of stopping by Sherry's desk, asking her what others might view as the rather mundane question. From anyone else, she would normally dismiss the query as being professionally polite but smacking of insincerity – after all, how often did people ask that very thing and not even wait for the answer? But in Neal's case, Sherry knew better. Kind, genuine and supportive, the rocket candy tycoon was not only a father figure to Sherry but also the most straightforward man she'd ever met.

Unfortunately Sherry was about the encounter his polar opposite.

Again.

"Sherry, I'd like you to meet our new Vice President of Marketing, Patrick Sullivan."

The name immediately sent a shiver down her spine. And not in a good way. Looking up, she blanched as she stared into those black eyes – as black as the harbor waters at midnight. Only distantly did she note the flicker of surprise within the

devilish gaze that, quickly controlled, was soon replaced with smugness. Then it all came flooding back in a heap of overlapping memories, a fast-forwarded barrage of vivid mental snapshots that spotlighted the six or so months, so very long ago, when she “knew” Patrick Sullivan.

There were images were of him ripping her blouse open, squeezing her breasts and sucking her nipples through her neon pink lace bra. Fucking her hard and fast from behind atop his four-posted canopy bed. His head bobbing between her legs and her his, as she sixty-nined him to an explosive finish. And a whole volley of other intercourse positions that were successful in getting him off—something that become increasingly difficult to do.

That’s when things started to get ugly.

It began slowly enough with Sullivan doing stuff like closing his hands around her throat and pressing down at the precise moment he came, and biting her breasts or pinching and slapping her ass hard enough to leave marks. But when his increasing preference for rough anal sex began to include hair pulling and degrading talk that would turn the stomach of a sex addict, that was enough for Sherry. She decided it was way past time to end the “relationship”. But she made the fatal mistake of telling Sullivan in person, a decision that landed her in the hospital with a broken nose, lacerations, three broken ribs, internal hemorrhaging and emotional scars that now, nearly a decade later, had still not healed.

Sherry could feel the bitter taste of bile collecting in her throat as she glared down at the hand Sullivan extended to her, a square diamond ring on his fourth finger. It was the same hand, the same ring that was responsible for the slight bow in the bridge of her nose and hairline scar on her top lip. Momentarily mesmerized by the glittering piece of jewelry, Sherry wondered if there were little bits of blood, *her* blood, sunken into the grooves of the ring’s setting and long since dried just like she’d seen on some of those forensic crime dramas on TV.

Fighting the urge to vomit, Sherry reached up and with a limp hand, shook Sullivan's hand. At the touch of his flesh, she tensed, every nerve ending in her body recoiling in repulsion.

"It's very nice to meet you, Sherry," he said with an affected authenticity that chilled her to the bone. "From what I hear, you're Neal's right hand. That's good to know. I might need a hand from time to time too," he said, baring his teeth as his lips curled apart in a snarl-like grin. "You don't mind if I borrow her, do you Neal?"

Neal chuckled.

"Not at all. Sherry's here to assist the entire executive team so I'm sure she'd be happy to get you anything you need. Would that be okay with you Sherry?"

*Bless him.*

As her boss, Neal was not required to ask Sherry if anything was all right with her but he always did.

Sherry withdrew her hand, resisting the urge to wipe her palm on her skirt as she and Sullivan exchanged a long, knowing look. "Of course," she concluded, observing the malevolent expression on Sullivan's face that swiftly dissolved to warmth when Neal turned in his direction.

"Excellent. I look forward to *working* with you. In fact, I have some marketing plans that I think I will need Sherry for right away."

Sherry only nodded in response but within her smile she gritted her teeth together so hard, she feared chips of enamel might break off.

"Very good. Well you know where to find her," Neal said, slapping a hand on Sullivan's back.

Sullivan fixed Sherry with a hard stare.

"I do indeed. But you know what?" he asked, tapping his lower lip with an index finger as he cocked his head to one side. "You look awfully familiar. We haven't met before, have we?"

*There it was.*

Deep down, Sherry had been wondering when the arrogant asshole would get around to playing the blackmail card, the very same card she could and should be holding over him. But even now she continued to be too paralyzed with fear to play it.

“No I don’t think so.”

“Are you sure?”

*Unbelievable.*

“Positive,” she said in an icy tone that drew a sideways glance from Neal.

“Ah. My mistake then.”

“Must be,” Neal said with a thoughtful nod to Sherry as he turned to go. “Come then. I’ll introduce you to the other staff.”

“Excellent. See you soon, Sherry.”

And with that he was gone. Again.

Sherry had thought Patrick Sullivan was gone for good ten years ago. Actually she had prayed he was gone. But now he was he back, like some sort of recurring nightmare that disappears, only to return with a vengeance and scare the hell clean out of you. Over and over and over again.

Letting out the breath she felt she’d been holding the whole time, Sherry fought back tears as she pondered her predicament but instead of possible solutions, all she could come up with was more questions.

*What was Patrick Sullivan doing at Reilly’s Rockets? Had he known she worked there? Was that why he had come? And now that they’d re-met, what was he going to do about it? Would he tell Neal? Publicly humiliate her and the company?*

All these questions and many more, went around and around in Sherry’s head, making her temples pound and further sickening her already nauseated stomach. But there was one uncertainty that drummed up the most dread within her.

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*Regardless of the how and why of Sullivan's reappearance in Sherry's life, now that he was back in it, what were his plans for her?*



## Chapter One

“Sherry Martin?”

The young brunette sitting at the tall circular reception desk leaned forward slightly as she called out into the packed waiting room. Behind her on the wall, the smooth gold lettering of the company name—Lancaster Lollipops—shimmered in the harsh fluorescent lights.

Sherry turned toward the receptionist and smiled. “Yes?”

“They’re ready to see you now.”

Ignoring the rampant fluttering in her stomach, Sherry rose to her feet, unconsciously smoothing her tight-fitting skirt down as she began to follow the woman down the carpeted hallway.

*This is never going to work. Why oh why didn't I say that to Sullivan?*

Actually she had. Twice. But the smirking bastard held all the cards.

As the brand-new vice president of marketing at Reilly’s Rockets—the rocket candy conglomerate that just so happened to be Lancaster Lollipops’ top competitor—he had very hastily involved Sherry in his inaugural attempt to upstage Neal Reilly by virtually wiping out the competition.

Not long after assuming his role at Reilly’s Rockets, Sullivan picked up on the fact that Sherry was very fond of Neal Reilly and after putting two and two together, he correctly deduced why.

Nearly a decade earlier, the gentle, widowed owner of Reilly’s Rockets had emerged as the one man she could trust, giving Sherry a job when, unbeknown to him or his staff, she was looking to make a *major* career change. That was also right about the time that Sherry and Sullivan “broke up”. Not that being an executive assistant

utilized all her professional skills but the position *did* appeal to Sherry's care-giving nature and absolute obsession with organization. And it was infinitely safer. Sullivan was keenly aware that Sherry felt deeply indebted to Neal and would never do anything to harm him or Reilly's Rockets.

That in itself was no secret.

What was, however, was Sherry's previous line of work. Unfortunately, Sullivan happened to have intimate, hands-on knowledge of the little known fact that Sherry's former occupation was that of a high-priced escort. Before her start at Reilly's Rockets, Sullivan had personally employed her services on a multitude of occasions until the night he unwittingly ended her career by messing up her face and forcing her to reevaluate her choices. And if the revolting twinkle in his eyes whenever he looked at Sherry was any indication, he'd not forgotten one second of their time together.

Cutting to the chase, Sullivan used this confidential knowledge as leverage, threatening to tell "Old Man Reilly" about Sherry's secret past—indeed reveal it publicly—if she didn't go along with his new covert "marketing plan". An underhanded, illegal scheme to bring down Lancaster Lollipops once and for all. That would be the end of her job and her professional relationship with Neal. And what would news of her disreputable past do to the family-friendly Reilly's Rockets name? Maybe nothing but Sherry wasn't prepared to take the chance.

Even if the salvation of her job, Neal and the Reilly name weren't enough motivation, Sullivan had tossed out an added incentive, warning that if Sherry did not go along with his plan, he wouldn't put her in a hospital this time, he'd put her in a grave.

In the end, Sherry had no choice. A couple of years before Sherry's go-round with Sullivan, a fellow escort had undergone a similar experience and taken the big-spending client to court with devastating results. The escort agency and the young woman's life were dragged through the mud and in the end, all for nothing. The guy got off scot-free. If that wasn't deterrent enough to go to the police, there was the fear

factor. For even today, Sullivan could still terrorize Sherry into compliance simply with his presence. Sickened by the conditions and the means, she was, nevertheless, not entirely opposed to the intended outcome. Filled with loyalty for Neal and Reilly's Rockets, Sherry couldn't care one iota about their primary competitors. In fact, she was blood-boiling furious with Ethan and Sterling Lancaster, the business-savvy, money-hungry brothers who seemed hell-bent on forcing Reilly's Rockets out of business.

Since their emergence into the industry less than two years ago, the duo had virtually wiped out all opposition in their apparent quest for world domination in the knock-em-down, drag-em-out, dog-eat-dog business of hard candy.

They had started with a line of striped lollipops that knocked out their chief challengers, Nellisons, and gave the boys their nicknames, The Lollipop Kings. But once Ethan and Sterling got a – sweet – taste of success, they went looking for bigger fish to fry.

First, they produced a bigger, harder jawbreaker that effectively cracked the clientele of Goode Gobstoppers. With other kinds of candy, that would be no big deal. But everybody knows that when it comes to jawbreakers, bigger and harder is king.

Next on their hit list was Priscilla's Peanut Brittle. Despite having enjoyed a loyal following for close to twenty years, founder Priscilla Templeton was sickened to discover that fans of the English-made treat were going absolutely nutty for Lancaster's take on the classic sweet.

But the Lancaster brothers really showed they had balls when they went toe to toe with the Weathers people. After all, who in their right mind would take on the toffee kingdom that had been around for over a century? Crazy or not, the boys did and when the sales figures came in last fall, the numbers clearly showed that Lancaster Lollipops had indeed sucked the life force out of Weathers with an astounding sixty-two percent of the market.

It was almost as if Ethan and Sterling set their sights on a rival's most popular product, created a superior version and then cornered the market. And now their mouths were watering over the takeover of Reilly's world-famous rock candy capital.

Sherry straightened her shoulders as she and the receptionist came to a full stop in front of a large mahogany door at the end of the corridor, upon which the woman beside her knocked lightly. While Sullivan's plan to have Sherry take a trumped-up leave of absence for a couple of months and pose as an assistant to the brothers in search of information about their rock candy recipe might be a long shot, she pushed the immoral parts of the ploy out of her mind, resolving to focus on the job at hand.

"Come in," a strong voice answered from the other side of the door. The receptionist grasped the knob and opening the door, waved Sherry in.

"Go ahead," she said.

With a deep breath, Sherry walked in, the sound of the door closing behind her signaling her locked-in fate, even though there was another door across the way that, in a pinch, could be used to stage a quick getaway! The bright, window-rimmed room was huge but sparsely furnished, containing only a large desk and chair, with two high-backed roller chairs facing one another on the opposite side, both of which were occupied. The two men in them stood up. For a long moment they both eyed Sherry's tall, curvy frame. Her long blonde hair, large full breasts and long legs always made men stop and gawk.

*Let the games begin.*

"Come in," the one on the right said finally, as he buttoned his suit jacket and moving toward her, extended his other hand. "I'm Ethan Lancaster. You must be Sherry."

"Yes," she replied, feeling a zing of energy shoot through her stomach as their eyes met. Glittering and mossy green, his were not unlike the mysteriously fascinating pupils of a cat.

“And I’m Sterling Lancaster.”

Turning, Sherry shook hands with the one who she guessed was the older of the two. This was not apparent so much in his appearance as in the big brother air that oozed from him. A flicker of response fluttered between her legs as Sterling’s fingers lightly brushed her palm as he withdrew from their handshake.

*This is new.*

One permanent casualty of Sherry’s former career was that her feminine goldmine had turned into what she often referred to as “the dead zone”. It just wasn’t smart to fall for a client and the first step before the fall, was allowing yourself to feel *anything*, be it emotional or physical. So she had been taught to tune out, shut down, turn off. She had been told that the only way to survive in the biz was to do her job and do it *very* well but never get involved. And so Sherry did just that. That, coupled with the fact that any element of sexual desire, trust and hope had been beaten out of her by Sullivan, ensured that some ten years after quitting her pay-for-pleasure profession, Sherry’s once-thriving libido still remained in a coma.

On the flip side, Sherry was left with a knack that routinely came in handy. If anyone knew how to use what the good Lord had given them to their advantage—or in this case, to the advantage of Reilly’s Rockets—it was Sherry. While she was done with selling her body it never hurt to dangle the carrot, and as the first part of Sullivan’s plan was to get her hired on at Lancaster Lollipops, she could think of no better way.

So, letting her resumé float to the floor and land behind her, she turned and bent down to pick it up, allowing both men a good look up her skirt to catch a glimpse of her cherry red thong. Once upright again, and after noting the guys’ goggle-eyed expressions compliments of her recent peep show, Sherry next noticed that the Lancaster brothers looked nothing alike. Where Ethan was all warmth with his chocolate-colored hair and olive skin, Sterling’s black hair and striking blue eyes were coolly contrasted against the pallor of his face.

“Sit down,” Ethan said, indicating the chair he had occupied only seconds earlier as he walked around to the other side of the desk.

With a slight nod, Sherry sat down, immediately feeling the lingering heat of his body on the fabric beneath her. Normally this type of thing grossed her out big-time, most especially on the subway when she had no idea whose heat she was sitting on. Sherry would invariably find herself shifting from one hip to the other as she desperately tried to escape the unintentional but strangely intimate contact. Eventually overwhelmed with discomfort, she would get up and ride standing for the rest of the trip.

But this was *different*. This time, the thought that she was, no matter how indirectly, touching Ethan’s ass and thighs with her own, actually *excited* her – a sensation Sherry hadn’t experienced in quite some time. In fact, she was just this side of flabbergasted at the sudden ache in her nipples that, if memory served right, indicated sexual arousal. Determined to use this amazing fact to her benefit, Sherry went with the flow and hoped that her taut tips would be visible beneath the light material of her blouse.

As she glanced over at Sterling, who was taking the seat opposite her, Sherry saw his gaze was indeed firmly locked on her breasts. When he raised his eyes to hers, he grinned, the question that followed quickly confirming her worst suspicion.

“Is it a little cold in here?”

Sherry smiled back.

*Like shooting fish in a barrel.*

“A little.”

Hitting a button on the speaker phone, Ethan then directly instructed the person on the other end to turn down the air conditioning a couple of degrees. “Wouldn’t want to have to huddle just to stay warm, now would we?” he said with a wink.

At the suggestion, a mental image appeared in Sherry’s head in which she lay sandwiched upside down between the two Lollipop Kings, taking turns sucking each of their “lollies” until they popped, while they alternately drove into her sweet centre.

Lollipops had been a favorite candy of hers for as long as she could remember, but this spur-of-the-moment vision cast a new spin on her preferred sweet treat.

“So, we’ve gone through your resumé and we want you to taste our cream.”

Sherry snapped to with a jolt. Uncharacteristically unnerved by the fiery vision in her mind’s eyes and Sterling’s words, Sherry was equally unsettled by the realization that her panties were damp. *Damp!* She directly erupted into a fit of coughing.

“I-I beg your pardon?” she sputtered.

“The new face of our team?” he said with a slight frown. “You said in your cover letter that you want to be the new face of our team.”

Sherry let out a sigh of relief. “Oh yes. Yes, I do.”

*OMG. Either I seriously have sex on the brain or I am becoming audibly dyslexic. What is going on with me?*

“Why?” Ethan asked, not even trying to hide his skepticism. “You’ve been with Reilly’s a good while.”

To increase the likelihood of being hired, Sullivan had decided she would include her work experience at Reilly’s Rockets.

*Time to flex her acting muscles.*

“Yes but the writing’s on the wall. They are on their way out and Lancaster Lollipops is the way of the future.”

“True. But is that the only reason?”

Sherry’s heart skipped a beat. *What was Ethan suggesting? Was it possible that he somehow sensed her deception?*

“Why of course. Why else would I be here?”

“You tell us,” Sterling took over. “From what we’ve heard, Neal Reilly is a terrific man to work for.”

Sherry bit her tongue. *He was. Is. It’s his V.P. of Marketing that’s the prick, arrogant, selfish, domineering. Just like you two.*

When she didn't answer, Sterling continued.

"It's okay. We don't want to pry. If there was some kind of problem, that's your business. We just wanted to let you know that we have every respect for Neal and his company."

*Right. That's why you're trying to obliterate it.*

Sherry swallowed hard, willing her racing pulse to slow down. Fright and anger vied for dominance within her stomach but she'd be damned if she was going to let her anger screw up what could very well be her only chance at getting on board with Lancaster Lollipops.

"Well thank you for your concern, but I am simply looking for a new opportunity. It's time to move on and where better to move to? When it comes to Lancaster Lollipops, I'm a big fan."

Sterling leaned forward in his chair.

"You are? How big?"

*Time to move in for the kill.*

Sherry mirrored his posture, making sure to squeeze her breasts together with her arms to enhance her already impressive cleavage. Then opening her eyes wide, she did her very best Marilyn impersonation.

"Real big. To get this job and work for this company would mean the world to me."

Sterling's eyebrows shot up. He quickly exchanged glances with Ethan who looked similarly stunned.

"Would it now?" Sterling said as he stood up, his sudden hard-on making a tent of the fabric in the front of his pants. He swiftly moved across the room, locked the door and returned to stand in front of Sherry, his package practically level with her mouth. "Well there are a lot of other women interested in the job. We would need to be convinced of your commitment to us."



*Okay, this was so not part of the plan. Flirt a little, flaunt a little, yes. But fuck a little? Not so much.*

Sherry had to think fast. *Real* fast.

Clearly Sterling was suggesting ye olde “casting couch” as a means for her to secure the job and knowing men as she did, odds were, if he went for it, Ethan would jump in too. The only question that remained to be answered was would she or wouldn’t she? The question of “should” never entered into it as Sherry’s immediate gut reaction was a resounding “No fucking way!” But there were other factors here and not only herself to consider.

Sullivan was counting on her to get information and if she came back empty-handed, would he rush in, drop the bombshell he was holding as collateral, and then inflict the lethal damage he had threatened? Chances are—yes.

Trying to talk herself into doing the deed, Sherry quickly reasoned that she had done a lot worse for not nearly as good a reason. By doing this she would save her job, her relationship with Neal, possibly his lifelong enterprise and as melodramatic as it sounded, potentially her very life. But somewhere deep inside Sherry, a little voice would not quake in the face of such persuasive reasons. Indeed, no matter how many times she rolled the situation over in her mind, Sherry kept coming back to the same conclusion. She had walked away from a life that had her selling her body and trading sex for every reason under the sun—every reason except the right one. Come what may, she wasn’t going back. She had made a life and found a sense of self-worth that she was prepared to fight for. If need be, to the death.

“I’m sorry, gentlemen,” she said, standing and fixing first Ethan then Sterling with a steely-eyed stare. “I’m afraid there’s been a bit of a misunderstanding. Thank you for your time.”

Walking quickly to the door, she unlocked it, left and closed the door behind her. Once inside the empty elevator that took her down to the parking lot on the street across the way, Sherry leaned against one wall as she willed her knees to stop knocking.

It had been a long time since she'd stood up for herself in this way and it felt good, if a little intense.

*Okay a lot intense.*

Truth be told, Sherry was scared stiff but for the first time in a long time, she was looking out for number one.

But what would Sullivan say when she told him she'd botched the interview? Was there a way to get the information he wanted without accepting the job?

\* \* \* \* \*

On the drive home, the muffled strains of Kylie Minogue's "I Can't Get You Out Of My Head" drifted out of her purse. Fumbling around with one hand, she retrieved her cell phone and lifted it to her ear.

"Hello?"

"How'd it go?"

Immediately Sherry's skin began to crawl. It was Patrick Sullivan.

"Well, ah, not exactly as I expected."

"What do you mean?"

Just then a beep indicating another call interrupted them.

"Hang on."

Sullivan's voice grew loud and tense.

"Listen you fucking –"

Putting him on hold, she clicked a button to take the other call.

"Hello?"

"Ms. Martin?"

The voice, carried over a speakerphone, was clear but echo-like.

"Yes?"

"This is Sterling Lancaster."

“And Ethan.”

A long pause followed.

“Sherry, I agree there’s been some kind of misunderstanding and I take full responsibility for that,” Sterling said. “I sincerely apologize if I offended you.”

Sherry remained silent but the warmth in his voice made her heart pound.

“Listen, I can’t deny that I find you incredibly attractive.”

“Incredibly,” Ethan echoed.

“And there’s no point in pretending that a part of me acted very unprofessionally because of that attraction.”

*Yeah and we all know which part.*

“But I assure you that both Ethan and myself respect you as a person, as a woman and as a potential employee,” he continued, “and if you’re willing, I was hoping—”

“We are hoping,” Ethan cut in.

“Yes, both Ethan and I are hoping that we can put this all behind us and start over,” Sterling said.

“Exactly. To tell you the truth, Sterling and I really are impressed with your work experience and would very much like to have you come onboard at Lancaster.”

Sherry sighed.

Was this a legitimate offer or were Ethan and Sterling just trying to get her back so they could play office tag with her after hours?

Given her keen insight into the male of the species, Sherry had to concede that the latter was most unlikely. Okay so they saw her, liked her and went for it. Maybe not the brightest move in the books but not unheard of. However to go to all the trouble of apologizing and hiring her back just to get laid? Not unless they were maliciously determined to exact a little payback which, come to think of it, could very well be right up their alley.

“I don’t think so.”

An even lengthier pause than the one before ensued.

"I tell you what," Ethan said. "How about we double your pay, start you on full benefits from the get-go, give you an underground parking space and do a review in a month just to see how you feel?"

*Are they nuts?*

"Are you nuts?"

Co-mingled throaty laughter floated down the line to send a shiver of unexpected pleasure down Sherry's back.

"We've been accused of it," Sterling said, the smile still in his voice. "Look, we just feel you've been treated wrongly and we want to make it right. That's all this is about. Honestly."

"Absolutely," Ethan agreed. "And you have our word that, from here on in, our conduct will be one hundred percent professional. All work and no play."

"Cross our hearts," Sterling concluded.

Turning into the garage of her condo, Sherry had to admit that this was a golden opportunity to still get in with Lancaster Lollipops and save the day. Switching the phone to her left hand and sticking the shift into park with her right, she squeezed her eyes shut. First an abusive John from her past and now a couple of seemingly horny bosses. Sherry felt like Al Pacino in "The Godfather III". "Every time I try to get out, something pulls me back in." Sucking in a deep breath, she steeled herself and gave them her answer.

"Okay."

Ethan sounded genuinely surprised.

"Okay? Really?"

"Yes."

"Terrific! That's great news. Thank you so much," Sterling said.

"Yes, thanks. We're really glad we could work this out. Are you able to start Monday?"

"Yes. I already gave my notice at Reilly's and tomorrow is my last day," she lied.

"Excellent. Well, we'll see you then. And Sherry?" Sterling asked, his voice kind and soft.

"Yes?"

"I really am sorry about before."

"See you Monday," was all she could muster. Then disconnecting the call, Sherry went back to Patrick.

"Still there?"

"You're fucking lucky I didn't get bored waiting and decide to kill some time by paying Reilly a little visit. Or you."

An irrational rush of fury overtook Sherry.

"Yeah and you're lucky you've got me to do your dirty work so let's just say, we've got each other by the short hairs and call it a day, shall we?"

"Don't push me," Sullivan said, his voice dangerously low.

"Then stop riding me."

As soon as the words were out of her mouth, Sherry regretted them. Wincing, she waited for the comeback that she knew was on its way.

"Been there done that, bitch. And don't forget it. You're nothing but a suck-for-a-buck whore. I know it, you know it and unless you want the world to know it, you'd better do what you're told and shut your fucking mouth or I'll shut it for you. Permanently."

Sherry's rage downshifted to panic.

*A change of direction would be good.*

"I'm in at Lancasters. I start next week."

A disgusting cackle snaked down the line. "I knew the Lollipop Kings would go for a slut like you. Which one did you blow first?"

Sherry bristled as her newly awakened pride rose up within her but she would play her cards close to her chest this time. "I'll contact you as soon as I find out something."

Clicking the END button on her cell, she got out of car. After pressing the auto-lock on her keychain she then made her way to the front door of her unit. It had all worked out in the end. She'd been hired on, which meant she would keep her secret from Neal. For now. And she might even live to see Lancaster Lollipops licked.

But something was gnawing mercilessly at her, something other than the obvious fact that she was being blackmailed to do something illegal in order to hide a secret that could destroy her life and the lives of others, something so unexpected, so implausible that even she could never have imagined it.

*You have our word that, from here on in, our conduct will be one hundred percent professional. All work and no play.*

As Ethan's words came back to her, Sherry felt a sudden shock at the realization that, right smack dab in the middle of this nightmare, contrary to her behavior and for reasons she couldn't define, she wanted nothing more to get very *very* personal with Ethan and Sterling Lancaster.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Are daydreams only unattainable mirrors of your secret desires or, given the reported power of visualization, can they actually create the future?*

That question had been hounding Sherry ever since she had started work at Lancaster Lollipops nearly five weeks ago. It was now Thursday afternoon just before lunch and she sat busily typing in her spacious alcove workstation which, hidden from view from the front lobby, was cozily sandwiched by Ethan and Sterling's individual offices.

From the start, both brothers had remained true to their word, keeping their frequent professional contact with Sherry strictly businesslike and oh-so-appropriate, not unlike her real boss, Neal Reilly. Daily visits just to see how she was doing, recurrent lunches out and thoughtful little gestures like fresh flowers and surprise afternoons off had begun to change her mind about the Lancasters. In fact, after a month of working for the brothers, Sherry had to admit that, as people, she rather liked Ethan and Sterling Lancaster. Too bad they were the enemy.

That all-important detail didn't stop Sherry from fantasizing like crazy about her two new bosses. With little variation she enjoyed a daily daydream that featured a sensual scenario involving the three of them.

In it, she was being interviewed by Ethan and Sterling for the job she now held and once again, Sterling stood before her, not so subtly suggesting there was a way to improve her chances of getting the job. Just like before, he then locked the door and returned to face Sherry, his package practically level with her mouth.

*"There are plenty of women interested in the job. Want to convince us of your commitment?" he said.*

This was practically verbatim what he had said in reality but in her daydream, that one that left her routinely breathless, flushed and hungry for something more than just sex, Sherry gave a radically different answer.

"Yes," she said, letting her gaze caress his veiled cock before sliding back up his torso to his face. She placed one hand on his bulge and began to expertly massage it.

"I'm sure the competition for the position is really...stiff... and it's going to be very hard to make a decision. But if you put your trust in me, deep in me, then I know that you'll come to the right decision."

Ethan, who had been seated behind the desk bolted from it to stand behind her. While Sherry unbuttoned Sterling's belt and lowered his zipper, Ethan eased her off the chair with a gentleness that caught her attention. Turning her head to look at him, she was startled when he leaned down and placed the softest, sexiest kiss imaginable on her

parted lips. Withdrawing, he restlessly kicked at one of the chair's wheels, sending it rolling into the far wall with a thud.

Distracted, Sherry returned her attention to Sterling. Sinking down to her knees, she pulled out his vein-ridged cock from his pants, smearing the drop of cum nestled in its slit around the circumference of his swollen knob.

"God, you're beautiful," he whispered through gritted teeth as he lightly caressed her cheek. Glancing up, Sherry was thrilled by the soft glow in his eyes.

Ethan knelt down behind Sherry, his rigid cock bumping into her back as his hands moved around to swiftly unbutton her top and caress the heavy globes of her breasts. Sherry closed her eyes, savoring the warmth and pressure of his fingers kneading her flesh and squeezing her nipples. Before long, Ethan brought one hand back around and up under her skirt. Working the smooth flesh of her butt, he then dropped down to part her thighs and rub against the now fully saturated fabric of her underwear. Twisting his fingers under the elastic rim, he soon connected with Sherry's hot pussy, his feathery strokes drawing a gasp of astonishment from her.

"Hmmm..." he growled in a voice that raised the gooseflesh all over Sherry's body. "Got a fire going down here."

Without hesitation, she answered him in a breathless voice.

"Better use your hose to put it out."

Leaning forward, she took all of Sterling's cock into her mouth and moved swiftly down to the base.

"That's it," he groaned, the cheeks of his ass involuntarily flexing as Sherry drew all the way back to the head of his cock. Giving it a solid couple of sucks, she then slid all the way back down, her tongue flicking continuously along his shaft as she went. Sterling grabbed the edge of the desk with one hand for support. The other was on the back of Sherry's head pressing her firmly onto his thick rod. With Sherry's mouth moving up and down his ever-stiffening cock, Sterling's eyes rolled back in his head,



the pressure of his imminent ejaculation drawing his full balls up into a locked and loaded position. "Ah...yeah..."

"Hang on," Ethan said, pulling Sherry's hips back a bit so he could enter her from behind. "A gentleman always lets a lady go first."

"Fuck off," Sterling mumbled hoarsely.

"I'm going to but Sherry's up at bat." Ethan stroked her hair as he whispered against her ear. "What do you say princess? How 'bout we knock this one out of the park?"

With that, he ripped off Sherry's thong then slid his stiff cock deep into Sherry's slit, directly falling into an intense cadenced movement that, try as she might, Sherry couldn't ignore. Not only was his powerful cock pushing and pulling her in all the right ways but from where he was, every one of Ethan's thrusts was punctuated with a nice little rub of his fingers against her swollen clit. Holding her secure, Ethan slowly increased the pressure and speed of his lunges, his hard tool driving home again and again while his fingers stroked her sensitive nub. Sherry tensed, giving in to the instinctive jerks her pelvis was making and the surge of tension within that was desperate for release.

"Hmmm," Ethan murmured softly as he kissed the curve of her back through the fabric of her blouse. "That's the ticket. Feels good, doesn't it?"

It did. Unusually good. Like never before.

Sherry turned her attention to Sterling's cock in her mouth, sucking it in a steady tempo that soon resulted in a stream of hot cum hitting the back of her throat, his hips twitching with every spurt. But even that couldn't divert her from the intense pleasure Ethan was producing.

With her ever-tightening cunt clutching spasmodically around Ethan's rock-hard rod as it continually crammed into her, Sherry came to realize the inevitable... She was going to come. More than that, after being orgasm-less for far too long, chances are, it was going to be a heckuva good one.

And it was.

In fact, as orgasms go—even imagined ones—it was 9.9 on the Richter Scale. Complete with flashing lights behind her eyes, trembling spasms from head to toe and the most incredible seemingly endless contractions of her previously comatose cunt she had ever experienced, Sherry was shaken mind, body and soul. Pulling her lips from around Sterling’s cock, she groaned loudly as the convulsions deep inside her echoed outward to every muscle in her body.

“All right,” Ethan said in a winded voice, tense from restraint. “Nice. Time to head for home.”

Redoubling his efforts, he pumped his engorged cock into Sherry’s still seizing pussy, his already hard shaft going nearly granite-like mere seconds before cadenced jets of semen shot from it into the snug, wet canal that surrounded it. When he finished, Ethan surprised Sherry once more. Instead of yanking out of her and disappearing, he pulled her close into a warm embrace, his deflating cock still warm and wet inside her.

Stunned speechless, Sherry struggled to gain some sense of control as her eyes filled with tears. Unaccustomed to being treated with such tenderness, she found herself overwhelmed and dazed.

In front of her, Sterling dropped down to one knee and crooking one finger under her chin, raised her face up to his. Tilting his head to one side, he planted a soft kiss on her lips, then muttered, “Thanks, babe.” From behind her came Ethan’s murmured agreement of “Ditto”, the movement of his lips against her shoulder sending a shiver of sweet surrender down her spine.

Sherry shuddered, her eyes drifting closed at the imagined threesome and the very real feelings and near orgasm it produced.

“Are you bagged?”

Abruptly yanked from her visit to dreamland, Sherry gave a little start as she looked right up into the eyes of Sterling. “I... sorry?”

He motioned toward her.

"Your eyes were closed. Are you tired?"

Seeing Sterling face to face only seconds after sucking his cock, albeit in her mind, brought the color to Sherry's cheeks.

Just behind him stood Ethan, the same Ethan whose strong, thick cock and fabulous sense of rhythm and restraint had just rocketed her to the moon. Or so she had imagined. He too was watching her with a quizzical expression.

"Is everything all right? You look a little flushed."

"Oh yes. Fine. I was just...thinking of something."

"Must have been something good. You were smiling."

*Yeah it was good all right. Tremendous. But it was just a dream.*

"Oh, maybe, I don't remember really," she lied. "I was just resting my eyes. You know, computer work."

"Ah. Right," Sterling said. "Well, we'll be leaving in five."

"Leaving?"

"Didn't you get my memo yesterday?"

"Ummm...which one?"

"About the taste test trip? I said we would be going to the laboratory before lunch to test some of new recipes on rocket candy and we'd like your input."

*Bingo! So they were going after Reilly's. This might be her only opportunity to find out how the Lollipop Kings intended to run Reilly's out of town.*

"No, I'm sorry I didn't but that would be fine. Five minutes it is."

"Might as well all take the company car," Ethan said, first to Sterling then to Sherry. "Does that work for you?"

Sherry grinned angelically.

"Absolutely."

## **Chapter Two**

At five minutes to three, Ethan and Sterling and Sherry were assisted into the back of the limo-like Lancaster Lollipops company car at the rear of the factory by two white-coated lab assistants. Somewhat wobbly on their feet and beaming gleefully, the trio clambered into the plush interior, each clutching a fistful of colorful tubes that contained the company's secret recipe rocket candy.

"Thanks!" Sterling boomed, giving a single sweeping wave to the techs as the door was closed. Flopping back into the plump leather seat, he looked at Sherry and Ethan who were seated opposite. "Phew! I don't know about you guys but I'm feeling a little...loose." He giggled then, his nose crinkling in the most adorable way.

"Yeah," Ethan agreed, nodding over emphatically. "I guess we should have stopped and had lunch."

"Oopsy," Sherry said.

They all laughed hard and long, far harder and longer than the joke warranted. It was the kind of laughter that occurred after a few hours in the bar, which in a way, was accurate.

Three hours back when Sherry and the guys arrived at the lab, she discovered not one but several of the company's secrets including the one she was there to uncover, the one that would save all involved.

Well, sort of.

Actually, in the case of the secret recipe, there was no secret. It seems the Lancaster Lollipops secret recipe crew had not found a way to improve on the family favorite Reilly's Rockets rocket candy. Neal's pride and joy had all the flavor, all the color, all the pop, crackle and fizzle that a rocket candy should, tickling the lips, delighting the tongue and exploding in the mouth. There simply was no way to make a better version.

Dead end. Case closed. As Sterling had said, “We can’t touch Reilly’s and our motto has always been to find and provide a better product when possible. If we know we can’t do it, there’s no point in even trying.”

So that was a surprise but there were other surprises too.

For starters, the Lancaster brothers weren’t brothers at all but rather cousins. This wasn’t so much a deception on the part of the Lollipop Kings as a misreported and never corrected fact.

Then there was the matter of the Kings’ notorious bloodthirsty reputation. After working closely with them for over a month and now having the opportunity to chat with them casually in great detail about their professional practices, goals and motivations, Sherry had come to the conclusion that Ethan and Sterling were simply misunderstood victims of bad press. Pure and simple. They never had any intention of running their competition out of business. They simply wanted to improve the quality of candy worldwide if they could. Of course in the case of Reilly’s Rockets rocket candy, it appeared they were out of luck.

But that wasn’t the end of the story. The powers that be had put their heads together and brainstormed to come up with something that had never been done in the history of rocket candy. Lancaster Lollipops was going to produce an adult version, an alcoholic take on the treat, which would be marketed and sold exclusively at adult only locations like bars and events. Containing liberal doses of brandy, liqueurs and even ice wine, the twenty-one plus rocket candy not only tasted terrific without that sickening sweetness of the kids’ version, but packed quite a punch. And surprising results from a series of early focus groups showed that adults aged twenty-one to forty-one loved the product and would commit to buying the candy on a regular basis.

“I’m hungry,” Ethan said suddenly, leaning over to switch on some music. The spiritual sensuality of Sting’s “A Thousand Years” filled the space.

“Me too,” Sherry said. Lounging comfortably with her legs stretched out before her, she had given up trying to keep down her skirt, which kept riding up on the smooth leather.

“Yeah, food would be good. But hey! We’ve still got these.” Sterling waved his fist of Grand Marnier-flavored “rocket rods” as it was suggested the narrow packets be called.

“Party on,” Ethan said, directly focusing on opening one he too held in his hand.

The car clipped the curb as it rounded a corner, easily knocking the packets he held loosely in his grip, to scatter them onto the carpeted floor at their feet.

“Butterfingers,” Sherry said and they all erupted into laughter as Ethan uncertainly slipped down onto the spacious gulf between the seats and began picking up the multicolored packs.

Crawling on all fours, he was concentrating so intensely as he rooted around, gathering up the long tube-like dispensers one by one that he didn’t realize his head was almost between Sherry’s knees. Sterling and Sherry were in fits but Ethan was like a man on a mission.

“I know I had six. There has to be another one here.”

“Jesus, Ethan, will you stop?” Sterling laughed.

“What? Why?”

He looked up from his partially prone position, his gaze falling directly on the stretch of black satin between Sherry’s thighs only a foot from his face. The warmth from her body carried the scent of her pussy to his nostrils and in a flash, he was hard. Slowly he raised his eyes to her face, a hot blaze and an unspoken question burning within the green depths.

Sherry’s laughter died down as her eyes locked with his, her smile fading as a thunderbolt of chemistry shot through her, only to return ever so slightly with her answer.

Suddenly very serious, Ethan dropped the packets he was holding and placing his hands on her ankles, just above the curve of her sleek high-heeled pumps, he slowly slid them up her nyloned calves. When his fingers reached the back of her knees, he grasped them lightly and inched them further apart. Letting his hands walk up her thighs, he undid her left garter belt, the feel of his fingers brushing her skin making Sherry squirm with need. As he rolled the nylon down her leg and eventually off along with her pump, he followed the trail with his mouth, placing a slow wet kiss on her skin every couple of inches.

“Ethan!”

Sterling’s voice was no longer filled with amusement but Ethan didn’t seem to hear him. He only had eyes, and apparently ears, for Sherry.

Sherry did hear Sterling though and she looked up, giving him the same expression of invitation. Looking flushed and fiery-eyed, he nevertheless seemed less sure as he slowly shook his head.

“It’s okay,” Sherry said, extending her hand in his direction, the soft glow of surrender shining in her eyes. Never before had she been so open, so willing to give of herself to a man and now, as unbelievable as it seemed, she had not one but two who she wanted to share herself with.

Sherry realized that in her jaded state, she’d been dead wrong about Ethan and Sterling. They weren’t the ruthless, power-hungry SOBs she thought they were. They were warm, loving sexy men who wanted to love her and, wonder of all wonders, she wanted to love them back.

Hitting a switch on the door panel that locked the window that separated the driver and the backseat, Sterling pressed another button for the intercom.

“Take the long way back to the office.”

Then he jumped over and, falling to his knees, took her hand in his, gallantly planting a series of warm, moist kisses not on the back of her hand but more intimately, in the sensitive center of her palm.

By now Ethan had her other nylon and shoe off and was trying to push her skirt up further.

“Why don’t we go at it from another angle?” she whispered. Scooting her hips forward, she unzipped the skirt in the back and eased it down over her legs onto the floor. Stepping one foot then the other out of the bunched fabric, she placed one hand in Ethan’s hair, effectively giving him the go-ahead to do what he was dying to. Starting slowly again at her ankles, he kissed and licked and sucked in a northerly route.

Sterling had moved up to sit beside her, one arm around her shoulders while he stroked her hair, watching her expectantly. Sherry felt his eyes on her and turned, their faces only inches apart. Lifting one hand, Sterling traced the faint scar on her lip.

“What happened here?” he whispered.

Grimacing Sherry avoided his eyes, Sterling immediately picked up on her discomfort.

“Hey...”

Gently he placed his hand under her chin and lifted her face and eyes up to his once more. Sherry shook her head.

“I don’t want to.”

Sterling nodded in understanding. “It’s okay. Let’s not go there.”

Smiling, she nodded, a thrill beyond words coursing through her as his gaze drifted lazily down to her mouth, followed soon after by his lips. Strong and warm, moist and skilled, he kissed her tenderly at first, almost respectfully, gauging her desire and working to ignite it. It wasn’t long before their tongues were swirling wildly around each other’s mouths, moans of passion and need murmured here and there as Sherry moved his free hand to one of her breasts. He kneaded the ample flesh for a time before dropping his head to kiss and suck her nipple through her top but they were all at an awkward angle and were in dire need of repositioning.



Taking the bull by the horns, Sterling abruptly got up and eased Sherry over and back so she was lying flat on the long seat and he was kneeling at her head. Ethan scowled briefly as his ardent journey between Sherry's thighs had just about reached its desired destination. But seeing that the new arrangement gave him even better access to his goal, he brightened and, shifting, resituated himself and began again, this time at her knees.

Moving more anxiously now, Sterling unbuttoned her top and easily unhooked her bra, pulling it off and tossing it carelessly aside. With a hunger that made her saturated pussy twitch, he dived at her bare flesh, devouring each of her nipples, the warmth and pressure of his mouth making her moan.

"Hey," he whispered between licks and kisses, "I have an idea." Reaching behind him, Sherry heard the crackle of paper and from her upside down vantage point, saw Sterling pouring a lime-green stream of the rocket candy into his mouth. Then resuming his worship of her breasts, he sucked the achingly taut buds on each of Sherry's breasts, the fizzle and pop within his mouth as it enclosed her, creating the most exquisite sensation she'd ever known.

The pounding need between Sherry's thighs was growing unbearable as Ethan's kisses finally brushed against her veiled mons and pressed insistently along the by now drenched strip of fabric that was all that stood between her pussy and his tongue.

"Take it off," she whispered, lifting her head to make eye contact with him. Looking glazed but incredibly hot, he gave her a sexy wink.

"You got it."

Hooking a finger on either side, he pulled her thong down to her knees in one smooth movement. Then easing the garment over her shins and off, Ethan didn't meander as he'd previously done but dived directly into the down between Sherry's legs, his full lips eagerly French kissing her slit.

Sherry arched her back with a loud intake of breath, her hands moving to caress the back of Ethan's head and press him more fully against her. The skilful probing of his

hot tongue and sweet suction of his mouth sent Sherry into shivering shudders, every move he made indirectly stimulating her clit and pushing her one step closer to climax.

Just as Sterling saw to it that another round of rocket candy was orally applied to her other breast, Ethan brought one hand up from where he had been holding her ass and placing his thumb right onto the swollen nub that was inches above his mouth at the moment, he stroked it slowly, directly applying a gentle back and forth pressure to the sensitive bud that was sure to push her over the edge. Trembling, Sherry exploded with a loud cry, her pussy and candy-soaked nipples tingling and twitching in unison.

“Mmmm,” Ethan mumbled from below, as her cum covered his lips and trickled down his chin. When Sherry finished climaxing, he looked up, wiping his face with his sleeve. “You taste better than that candy. Hey, I wonder...”

“Forget it,” Sterling said in a definite tone as he gingerly licked one of Sherry’s erect nipples. “It’s okay for these pretty points but way too abrasive for there.”

“Ah guys. We have a problem here.”

Both Ethan and Sterling’s faces dropped as they looked down at Sherry’s face.

“What’s wrong, babe?” Sterling asked, a look of concern etching his handsome features as he caressed her cheek lightly.

“I’m feeling a little undressed here so would you mind stripping down?”

Ethan and Sterling shared a quick grin before they started to undress. While Ethan went right for his pants, his thick cock soon springing out, Sterling began at the top with his jacket and tie. Sherry decided to expedite the process. Reaching both hands back behind her head, she unbuckled his belt and unzipped his pants. Grasping him firmly with one hand, she moved up and down his shaft slowly for a number of strokes, before giving way to a series of harder, faster jerks, all of which stopped just short of his head. Then returning to slower pace, she brought her second hand into play. Cupping the cap of his cock with the palm of her hand she began twisting it gently back and forth in a gentle juicing motion that made him twist with need. Feeling the telltale pre-ejaculation stiffening of his cock in her grip, Sherry urged him down toward her lips.

“Come here, down here. I want you to come in my mouth.”

How many times had she said that to some billionaire businessman John without so much as a second thought but this time, with Sterling, Sherry *meant* it.

With a groan, Sterling practically fell forward, aligning himself perfectly with Sherry’s open mouth. Guiding his rigid shaft into the warm, tight confines, Sherry systemically sucked his gorgeous cock. Stretching her hands out and around, she clasped the firm globes of his ass and pulled herself farther down. Holding himself up in a kind of push-up over her body, Sterling gradually eased himself down, his face perfectly in line with Sherry’s hot wet pussy, in particular her still aroused clit, which, from his inverted position, he could easily cover with his mouth. He did, sucking it slowly and gently, stopping only to lay a collection of long, lazy licks on it before taking it between his lips once again.

Seconds later they both came at the same time, a seemingly silent orgasm that still spoke volumes in the way their bodies jerked and jolted endlessly, Sherry’s nails digging hard into Sterling’s ass while his knuckles turned white as he gripped the car’s expensive upholstery. Afterward, he rose to his knees and looked down at Sherry, delicately rubbing the silky strands of her hair between his fingers. They exchanged a smile as he bent down and kissed her on the lips.

“Fuck that looked hot,” Ethan said.

Sherry and Sterling stopped and looked at him. He was now fully naked and was massaging his impressively rigid cock, paying special attention to the bulbous crimson head. He feigned a pout. “But I’m feeling a little left out.”

Sherry laughed. “Aw, poor baby. Come here.”

Rising to a sitting position, she patted the space to her right. When Ethan sat down, she pressed her lips against his. His kiss was different from Sterling’s, kind of all over the place, less experienced but more eager and hotter. His hands drifted up and down her body, caressing her breasts and glancing off her pubic hair. Shifting over, Sherry straddled him, her hot canal seizing at the feel of his hard rod bumping against her

pelvis. Sliding down his body to come and rest between his legs, Sherry licked and kissed her way down his neck and torso to his lower abdomen. As he leaned back, his rigid shaft involuntarily jerked here and there in response to the hot wet pressure of her mouth near but never on it.

Kissing through the mass of dark curls, rich with the scent of sweat, cologne and his own erotic fragrance, she gave his sac a leisurely tongue bath while she casually enclosed his cock in one fist and began to pump it steadily. Glancing up, she saw that Ethan's eyes were closed, his mouth slack and open, his breathing deep and fast. Slowly his lids parted and their eyes locked. Sherry chose that moment to take one of his balls all the way into her mouth and suck it ever so gently while she fell into the foolproof routine of stroke and twist—a balls-to-base upward tug of her hand followed by a tight twist of his cock head and downward pull. When this is done with a fluid movement and relentless rhythm, no guy could last more than a minute.

Clearly Ethan could sense this for after only three circuits of the expert maneuver, he stiffened and jerking upright, lightly pushed her off him.

"No. Wait. Not like this."

Guiding her backward onto the carpeted floor and her legs up onto his chest, Ethan glided his stiff shaft into her dripping pussy. When he was all the way in, the weight of his thick cock filling her in a way she couldn't remember feeling before, he stopped and watched her closely. Dying to have him drive her to that sweet oblivious state that she had only recently rediscovered, Sherry pushed her pelvis against him but he didn't move. She opened her eyes and looked at him in question.

"What is it?"

"Are you okay?"

Sherry shrugged.

"Yeah."

"I just don't want to hurt you."

Sherry's eyes filled with tears. With the exception of Neal, she couldn't remember the last time a man – either in bed or not – had cared enough about her to watch out for her welfare.

"You won't," she said, hearing the strange catch in her throat. "Please."

She held out her arms to him, wanting him now more than ever.

Unhurriedly Ethan began to pulse his hips forward, tentatively sliding his cock in and out of her pleading pussy but with a restraint and gentleness that she found frustrating. At first, she tried to physically direct him, thrusting her hips forward more forcefully and then when that failed, using her hands on his butt to indicate the force and speed she needed. But he continued at a snail's pace, with just barely enough movement and weight to excite her but not enough to send her.

"More," she whimpered. "Harder."

Kissing her lips, her ears, her neck, Ethan complied, his thrusts shifting slightly from mild to moderate but she could still feel him holding back and by doing that, he was holding her back too.

*Time to bring out the big guns.*

Sucking the middle finger of her right hand, she reached around and once again, clasped the hard rounded orbs of his ass. Only this time, she dug her fingers into the tender flesh on either side of his anus before circling it with her wet fingertip. Ethan groaned loudly as his hips shot forward in an instinctive spasm. Pulling him close, Sherry then snaked her tongue into his ear at the precise moment she inserted her finger all the way into his puckered hole, moving it steadily in and out.

Gasping, Ethan squeezed Sherry against him, his teeth grazing her shoulder as he trembled at the unexpected pleasure. That was all it took. The dam burst. Holding her hips steady, he thrust into Sherry's eager cavern with abandon, his slow gentle movements giving way to hard, determined plunges filled with purpose and need, a need they now both shared.

Sherry clung to him, loving every inch of his pulsing shaft as it drove into her over and over again.

“Yes,” she breathed, feeling the tremor in Ethan’s thighs and pelvis that forecast his looming orgasm. At the feel of his body twitching atop hers, his rock-hard cock now being instinctively driven into her time and time again as he exploded within her, Sherry felt another wave of release come over her, and with it a kind of peace, a strange, sort of coming home feeling that she’d never known. While it was beautiful and wonderful and to absolutely die for, it was also unfamiliar, strange and scary.

As the car pulled up to the office tower and the three of them scrambled to get their clothes on, Sherry, being the first one dressed, bolted from the idling vehicle.

“Sherry, wait!” Ethan and Sterling called after her but she was running away. Far, far away. Just like she had done before. Just like she was destined to keep doing.

Until somebody gave her a reason to stop.

## Chapter Three

The following Monday Sherry walked into Lancaster Lollipops earlier than usual and headed for her desk, peering out over the top of incredibly large black sunglasses as she went. She had called in sick on Friday, the day after their trip to the lab and now she was hoping to miss Ethan and Sterling. She would just leave her resignation on her desk and sneak out the way she had come.

As she placed the manila envelope addressed to them both and marked “Private and Confidential” on top of the L-shaped countertop of her station so it would not be missed, Sherry glanced at the computer screen and the lineup of emails in her inbox. One caught her eye. It was from Patrick Sullivan and had been sent yesterday, the same day as their meeting.

Leaning over, she clicked the mouse on the item and opened the message. It was actually a CC. The original had been sent to Neal Reilly as well as Ethan and Sterling Lancaster. It began,

*Dear gentleman,*

*I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news but some terrible indiscretion on the part of an employee common to both Reilly's Rockets and Lancaster Lollipops has come to my attention and I feel obliged to make you all aware of it.*

*Executive assistant Sherry Martin has taken a false leave of absence from her job at Reilly's Rockets to, under the guise of executive assistant at Lancaster Lollipops, find information to use against both companies.*

*More disturbing, Sherry's former work was that of—*

*“A little early isn't it?”*

Starting, Sherry winced at the sight of Sterling standing in front of her. Straightaway, she clicked the message closed.

“Well, I—”

“Come into my office for a moment. I’d like to talk to you.”

“No, I can’t. Really, I should—”

Sterling’s expression was entreaty, the steel blue of his eyes glittering oddly as he motioned toward the door.

“Please.”

*Shit. The gig was up.*

Inside Ethan was sitting in the chair in front of the desk, exactly like the first time Sherry had met him. Only this time, he didn’t stand.

“Sit down,” he said, his expression unreadable.

Taking the chair opposite him, she lowered herself into a sitting position. Looking far more stern than the last time they’d been together, Sterling sighed deeply.

“Sherry, Ethan and I need to talk to you about something. Something very serious.”

Sherry remained silent as Sterling continued.

“I’m afraid we are both very troubled about something you did.”

Sherry bit her lip as she felt the noose tightening.

“I know, I know, I’m sorry. Please, just let me say that it was before I knew you, I mean, really knew you and I would never have done it if I wasn’t being forced against my will.”

Ethan and Sterling exchanged confused looks.

“Forced?” Sterling clarified.

“Against your will?” Ethan asked. “What are you talking about?”

Sherry looked from one Lancaster to the other.

“What are *you* talking about?”

Sterling grinned for the first time that day. “You know, the ride back from the lab on Thursday.”



Sherry stiffened. "What? Was there a problem?"

"Yeah," Ethan said. "You totally bailed on us. I mean what are we supposed to think? Here we all have this terrific, really fabulous –"

"Really fabulous," Sterling interrupted.

"Yeah, fantabulous time, which we all had, right?"

Sherry nodded. "Right."

"Right. Then you go and bolt like a startled deer and ditch work the next day."

Sherry stuck out her chin. "I didn't ditch. I was legitimately sick."

Sterling's voice held a note of skepticism.

"Sherry, come on. If there's some issue, we can work through it, just like we did before but don't tease us with the greatest night of our lives then just walk away."

Sherry shook her head trying to clear the bewilderment within.

"Is this what you wanted to talk to me about?"

"Yes," Ethan answered. "Unless of course you wanted to clarify something in Patrick Sullivan's email message. I think it's pretty straightforward, don't you?" he looked at Sterling. With his eyes glued to Sherry's face, Sterling silently nodded.

Sherry's heart sunk to her feet as she dropped her head to her chest.

"Ah... I... Well,"

"Listen, don't worry about it. Everyone knows Patrick Sullivan is a lying sack of shit. Everyone who knows him, that is. We're not sure how or why you got involved with him but we do know he can't be believed."

Sherry was shocked. "You know Sullivan?"

Ethan nodded. "I went to college with him. He was a Grade A asshole back then and I doubt he's changed any."

"But how did this get past Neal? He's usually pretty thorough."

Sterling shrugged. "My best guess is Neal hired Sullivan as a favor to Sullivan's dad Joe. He and Neal go way back."

Sherry's bottom lip started to tremble and she sensed a full flood of tears about to break free. Scratching her head, she willed herself forward with the truth.

"Maybe. But there's else something you need to know."

"What's that?"

Sherry tittered nervously. "You know all the stuff he said? Well, it's true apart from the using the info against both companies. I was," she cleared her throat, "actually only going to use it against Lancaster Lollipops."

Silence.

Deep, dark, long silence that seemed to stretch out *ad nauseum*.

When she was able, Sherry looked up from her hands tightly clenched in her lap. Both Ethan and Sterling were staring at her with stunned expressions as if she had just punched them both in the stomachs.

"I'm so, so sorry."

"But why Sherry," Ethan asked, his eyes filled with astonishment and, if she didn't know any better, true-blue hurt. "Why would you do that to us?"

That was the last straw. The floodgates opened and Sherry burst into tears. Through gasps and bawls and loud sniffles, she poured out the whole story from beginning to end, starting with her days as a Pretty Woman, Sullivan's near-fatal ending of her former occupation and his present-day threat to expose her past if she didn't spy on Lancaster Lollipops.

With her head in her hands, Sherry sobbed openly, releasing the repressed hurt and humiliation and pain of ten years. Indistinctly she felt a warm caress lovingly rubbing her shoulders and stroking her hair while another gently pulled her hands away from her face to press soft, warm kisses into them.

“Shhhh,” Sterling cooed as he pulled a handkerchief from his suit jacket pocket and removed her sunglasses to wipe away her tears. Instantly, he stiffened at the sight of her black eye and the streaks of purple and green stretching across the upper part of her nose and extending over her cheek. “What the fuck happened?”

“Patrick,” Sherry managed to get out before erupting into another fit of sobbing. “When...when I told him I couldn’t go through with it, I couldn’t steal your plans and betray you, he-he...punched me in the face. He would have done more but we were in a public place.”

“More?” Ethan asked.

Sherry nodded. “He said he’d kill me if I didn’t do it.”

“He gave you this, didn’t he?” Sterling said tensely, fingering the thin white line on her lip. A streak of water fell from her eyes to dribble down over the permanent proof of Sullivan’s abuse. Sherry wordlessly nodded.

Ethan leaned over and pressed a kiss on her tear-streaked lips as Sterling watched her through eyes dark with concern.

“Sherry why didn’t you go to the police? It’s not too late. We’ll go with you.”

Sherry looked up, her mascara smeared under her eyes and her nose red from crying. “I couldn’t. I was so scared of him. I still am.”

The muscle in Ethan’s jaw jerked reflexively in anger but when he spoke his voice was filled with tenderness. “I know sweetheart. But I’m not afraid of him.”

Ethan and Sterling locked eyes over Sherry’s head.

“I’m not either,” Sterling said. “Ethan and I will take care of him. Don’t you worry about a thing. After today, we promise you won’t ever have to think about Patrick Sullivan again.”

Sherry gazed from one to the other, the anxiety shining strong in her eyes and ringing loud and clear in her voice.

“Why? What are you going to do?”

“Don’t worry, baby,” Ethan said, brushing the hair from her forehead. “We’ll take care of him for you.”

“But... Why? After all I’ve done, why would do anything for me?”

Sterling shook his head, a warm smile lighting up his eyes.

“You crazy girl. Don’t you know the difference between a couple of horny pricks and two men who are in love with you?”

## Epilogue

Two weeks later, Ethan and Sterling and Sherry were lounging on the beach at the company's private villa in Barbados. After learning the whole story, Neal, moved by Sherry's deep sense of loyalty to him, gave her a bonus to the tune of a quarter million dollars and a *real*, fully paid, two-month leave of absence.

Sherry looked tanned, trim and terrific, and her black eye had all but healed as she rolled onto her stomach to sun her back. Her gaze moved over Sterling's hands over his face shielding his eyes, his knuckles still badly bruised and encrusted with scabs. Trying for the umpteenth time, she delicately fingered the healing wounds.

"How'd you get these again?"

Sterling didn't miss a beat.

"Shaving."

She leaned over and pressed a kiss at the point where his treasure trail disappeared into the band of his swimming trunks.

"And this?" she turned and asked Ethan laying on her other side, touching the cast on his left arm, which was extended on the sand behind his head.

"Salsa dancing."

Sherry smiled as she let her hand moved down over his belly to rub the warm skin above his swim trunks before she sat up. Wrapping her arms around her knees, she stared out at the ocean. As the warm tropical wind whipped her hair into her eyes, Sterling's words of a couple weeks ago came back to her, drifting on the breeze like the fragrance of the island.

*"Don't you know the difference between a couple of horny pricks and two men who are in love with you?"*

She did now.

## **About the Author**

A former operative for the CIA, Brigit Zahara previously unleashed her passion for excitement and adventure through her work, spending a good deal of her time traveling throughout the United States and Europe, with lengthy spells in New York, Los Angeles, Louisiana, Venice, London, Florence and Malta.

After Brigit took an early retirement, she then looked to her closet habit of writing fiction as a means of indulging her need for pulse-pounding action. From there, her taste very quickly turned to the tantalizing arena of erotica. Brigit has written a number of sizzling titles for Ellora's Cave. She looks forward to writing and publishing many more torrid tales of love and sensuality with this top publisher of erotic literature.

Currently Brigit lives in a seaside villa in Majorca, spending the steamy days penning even steamier stories and the cool, ocean-breeze-kissed evenings researching love scenes with her heart's destiny and husband of nearly eight years. She welcomes hearing from fans.

Brigit welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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