

ELLORA'S CAVE *Spectrum*



*PLAYING  
FOR REAL*

MADISON BLAKE

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Playing For Real

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# *PLAYING FOR REAL*

**Madison Blake**

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## Chapter One

"Please, guys," Shelli looked beseechingly across the table at her best friends. The bar music blaring from the overhead speakers was the same volume as it had been for the past eight years but tonight, it seemed particularly loud to her. Thus far, she had been speaking two decibels louder than she normally did. "Either one of you would do. I know you don't like to be seen with women but —"

"Don't place words in our mouths!" Adrian shifted uncomfortably, his green-eyed gaze sliding away from her. He could never say any embarrassing thing to her straight in the face. Not that he thought whatever he had to say would embarrass her but that he was embarrassed to say it. "We like women very much but —"

"Really?" She sat up straight, interested at this new finding. "Doesn't the fact that you like guys mean you don't like women anymore?"

"Have you ever heard of the term 'bi-sexual'?" Ethan asked drily. "That's what Adrian and I are but since we haven't met *her* yet — and even if we never did get to meet her — Adrian and I are happy with each other."

"I know the word of course," she said, sending him an annoyed glance, "but I've just never associated it with you guys. I guess I never really thought about it. But now, you're saying that if the right woman comes along..."

Ethan and Adrian exchanged a glance. "We've decided to cross that bridge when we get there. There are so many factors involved in such a scenario that it's hard to predict what we would do, or what *she* would do, for that matter." At her questioning look, he clarified, "She might not like either one of us, or she might not like having two men in her life."

"Oh but —"

"But what we're discussing is that though we like women very much," Ethan cut in, "our dating you would feel weird because you're our friend, our best friend," he finished pointedly. "Best friends don't date—they...they...they hang out together." He was more candid than Adrian and had never had problems with being frank and outspoken.

And she loved them both. Inseparable friends since kindergarten, the three of them had grown up together and shared both happy and trying times. And she had been positively ecstatic more than two years ago when Adrian and Ethan had seen each other in a new light and became a couple. Of course, it made her lonely at times but until she found the other half of herself, the situation was not likely to change.

"So let's hang out together," she said brightly. "It'll just be one more night this week in addition to our weekly Friday night gathers." At their expressionless faces, she sighed. "I'm sorry—I wouldn't have sprung this on you if Peter hadn't cancelled at the last minute." Peter had been her on-off date for the last year and after leaving her in a lurch like this, he was definitely off.

"Then just tell your colleagues what's happened. It's not your fault," Ethan said matter-of-factly.

"It's more complicated than that." She sighed again and slumped in her seat. "See, my boss, the manager of the accounting division, has been hitting on me big time. Ever since I started at the company three months ago, in fact," she added, grimacing.

Ethan laughed at her. "Oho, so he's bald and old and ugly and our lovely Shelli naturally wants someone to match her beauty."

"Oh no, you're getting it wrong," Shelli protested. "He's a very handsome man in his mid-thirties and he *is* very much my type."

Adrian lifted his brows. "What's the problem, then?"

"He's also a slimy bastard who's very much married with a pregnant wife."

Ethan whistled. "Your story?"

"It seems that wifey, being in advanced pregnancy, decided to stay at home. So, he invited me to the company's annual dinner and dance. It's tomorrow night, by the way, if I haven't yet mentioned it." As she paused and took a swig of her beer, Adrian butted in with a comment, "Looks okay to me. A nice and caring boss asked his newest employee to the dance, hoping she'd fit right in and save him the trouble of going through another round of interviews to find someone to replace her."

"That's the CEO in you talking," she retorted and placed the bottle back on the table with a small thud. "I know what you're saying. It could all be very innocent and it's my own dirty mind twisting and placing a lascivious interpretation to the whole thing. Maybe you're right but I also trust my own instincts. There's something...something..." She threw up her hands and gave up explaining. Something in Everett's actions and tone of voice had caused her to feel uneasy. "Anyway, the thing is, he asked me in front of my colleagues—and no, I don't know why he did that. I thought at the time it was quite foolish of him too. Maybe he thought I would be coerced into agreeing to save his face—and my job? I really didn't want to go with him, so I turned him down, very politely too, because, as I told him in a loud voice that everyone in the office could hear, somebody's already going with me. And now you want me to go to the party without a date!" She couldn't help it. She practically screeched in their ears, not that anyone would notice above the din the rock music was making.

Ethan whistled again. "You, my girl, are in big trouble."

"So give up the job," Adrian advised. "If your boss is really lecherous and —"

"He is," she insisted, though she had nothing to go on but instincts. "But I don't want to leave the job just yet. And it's not only because I'm just three months into it but the company also gave me a twenty-five percent increase in salary and they're letting me handle the accounts—both receivables and payables—which is an exposure I didn't have in my previous jobs. Please, guys, help me this once."

"Give me Peter's address." Adrian held out his hand, a menacing glint in his eyes. "I'll beat him into going with you."

Shelli grinned. She enjoyed the glimpses into Adrian's barbaric nature, especially when it was on her behalf. "Too late. He left on a plane last night."

"Lucky bastard," he muttered.

She couldn't help it, she laughed. After a while, she turned serious. "If there was anyone else to ask, I would. But everyone I know would've made plans by now and I hate to disrupt—"

"So why are you doing this to us?" Ethan asked plaintively. "We also have plans. Good plans. *Excellent* plans," he emphasized.

"Because you're my best friends. Who else would I turn to?"

The moment she saw the resigned expressions on their faces, Shelli knew she had them.

Adrian looked at Ethan and asked, "Who is it to be? You or me?"

"You," Ethan immediately said. "You love parties."

"I just remembered." Adrian slapped a hand to his forehead. "I want to watch that *National Geographic* show tomorrow night. You go."

"I'll tape it for you. You go."

"No, you go."

Though they were resigned, it was obvious neither of them really wanted to go with her. She didn't bother to be insulted, though she was piqued and decided to make them both suffer. She felt a sly sense of satisfaction as she interrupted them in mid-sentence, "Children, children, behave! I'll give you a treat and allow you *both* to accompany me."

Their heads swiveled around so fast she thought she heard them snap. Adrian's mouth fell open, while Ethan's eyes boggled. "Two dates?"

"Why not? It wouldn't be fair to take only one of you, since you're both absolutely *dying* to go with me," she said with as much sarcasm as she could muster. "This way,



there's no need for anyone to make the sacrifice and stay at home. Isn't this my best idea ever?" She beamed.

"Very," Adrian said dryly.

"Totally," Ethan chimed in.

"Great, I'm so glad you agree." She distributed smiles, picked up her bag and stood. "You may pick me up at seven."

"As long as we have dinner at your house next Friday," Ethan called out after her, "and you make your specialty – shepherd's pie."

She waved a hand in acknowledgement, though she didn't look back.

In the end, they decided she should bring her things over to the men's place during the afternoon and they could go over to the hotel from there, since it was nearer. And ever since she arrived at about three, she had been holed up in the spare bedroom.

Adrian and Ethan started getting ready at about six, after Shelli had prodded them for about the seventh time since the clock struck five. Fifty minutes later, they stared into the floor-length mirror as they made minute adjustments to their clothing—long-sleeved polo shirt with collar, no tie and black trousers. Ethan was in a light blue polo while Adrian had on the dusky rose shirt that made him look both manly and delicious at the same time.

Ethan wished Shelli had bothered somebody else for tonight. And speaking of the devil, he had never realized she had such a loud voice until she hollered from her room down the hall. "Hey, guys, are you done yet?"

"Just about," Adrian yelled back, then grinned at Ethan. "Sorry to drag you into this. If I had just said 'yes', you wouldn't have to go."

"I'm glad I'm going, if only to keep other men away from you," he replied breathlessly, his gaze intent on Adrian's full, kissable lips, which tilted sensually at the corners. "You're too sexy for words." Knowing they didn't have time for even a quick

dalliance, he ruthlessly turned his mind back to Shelli. "That is one woman I know who dresses faster than a man."

"She's been at it since three this afternoon," Adrian pointed out. "It's no surprise if she reaches the finish line first."

"I know, still..." Their eyes met in the mirror and there must have been something in his eyes because Adrian turned around and they were face to face.

Helplessly, Ethan took the necessary step to bring them within an inch of each other. His breath caught at the intensity in his lover's eyes, now that he was looking into them directly. His head reached across the space between them.

"It'll be over before you know it," Adrian murmured, just before their lips merged. They tasted each other's mouth with soft, licking kisses before Ethan parted his lips and drew first Adrian's upper, then lower, lip into his mouth and sucked on them. He forgot everything and buried his hands in Adrian's hair to press him closer, moaning with need and desire, and in response, Adrian angled his head and they shared an open-mouthed kiss, tongues playing and chasing in the caverns of their mouths.

"Hmmm..." Gripped in his lust and never breaking their kiss, Ethan pulled Adrian's shirt free of his pants, threw it over his lover's head, then buried his fingers in his lover's luxurious chest hair. Moments later, his lips replaced his fingers and his nose snaked a sizzling path down Adrian's chest, ending when his tongue darted in and out over Adrian's turgid nipple. Adrian groaned and gripped Ethan's shoulders tightly when he sucked on the nipple and the sounds that Adrian released affected his groin directly, making his cock ache with furious longing. The hand gliding down his back did nothing to assuage the painful ache.

There was no one like Adrian. Ethan felt the same dizzying wonder as he had many times before, that this magnificent, breathtaking man loved him, lived with him and was willing to grow old with him—as both lover and friend. The amazing thing was that he'd known Adrian for years but never in his life had he imagined that their friendship would grow deeper by their becoming lovers. They'd shared a lot with each

other when they were merely friends—hopes and dreams, joys, sorrows, ambitions—but as lovers, they'd opened up their entire souls and nothing was secret from the other.

Ethan unfastened Adrian's trousers and lifted his head. "I want you, now, here, right this minute." The trousers fell unheeded to the floor as Ethan cupped his hand over Adrian's straining erection. "God, Adrian, I can't wait anymore. I want to suck your cock, to ride you hard and fast—" His chest was so tight he couldn't continue and he let his fingers do the talking. His hand wrapped around Adrian's rigid cock and pumped with firm, deliberate strokes. Up, down. Up, down. Feeling Adrian growing longer and harder made him salivate. He wanted to take Adrian's thick cock into his mouth, to feel his mouth filled by Adrian's hot, pulsing rod.

Adrian's green eyes were molten with desire as he stepped out of his trousers and maneuvered them toward the bed. Ethan never relinquished his hold on Adrian's cock, he continued pumping and stroking as they shuffled toward the bed. Finally, Adrian was lying spread-eagled in the center of the mattress and he invited huskily, "Come, lover."

Ethan took a moment to shrug out of his clothes, as they constricted his movements. He knelt in between Adrian's legs and lowered his head to rub his lover's stiff cock on his cheek, enjoying the heated, silky sensation of Adrian's cock against his skin and heightening the sense of anticipation and sexual tension that hovered between them.

"Agh...Ethan, you tease," Adrian roared. "Suck my cock, damn it."

Ethan gave a light laugh, then obeyed the command. He filled his mouth with Adrian's throbbing staff and fondled his balls with his free hand. He sucked Adrian's cock with relish, loving it when Adrian arched and writhed restlessly on the bed.

"Ethan," Adrian panted, "wait."

Curious, he lifted his head and looked up at the long line of Adrian's muscular body and his blood pounded at the sight. His cock pulsed with need and urgency. He noted that he'd mussed Adrian's hair during their kiss, which made him all the more

kissable and fuckable. He was *so* in lust and love with Adrian Greene and his hot, hot body.

“Turn around. I want a shot at your cock,” Adrian said.

Ethan grinned and did as bidden. His rampant cock was raging for some action and it was finally going to be rewarded. He sucked in a deep breath when Adrian ran his hand tantalizingly up his calves and caressed his thighs. Adrian placed brief, wet kisses on his inner thighs, inching his head closer and closer—

“C’mon, Ethan.” Adrian’s voice rumbled up his thigh to the other parts of his highly sensitized body, especially his cock, which was now curved close against his stomach. “Don’t stop sucking on my cock.”

Ethan choked back his laughter and wheezed. “How about you do mine and I’ll get back to yours?”

“Deal.” Adrian’s scorching hand grabbed his stiff erection and started stroking and fondling.

Ethan jerked, then sighed as swirls of pleasure coursed through him at Adrian’s slightly rough handling. Adrian always knew the surefire way to turn him on big-time. Ethan breathed raggedly as he forced his beleaguered mind back to the task at hand and he licked Adrian’s pulsing length the way he would an ice cream cone. He inhaled the fascinating, enticing scent of Adrian’s sex and sealed his mouth over his balls. Quick, sharp bolts of mingled pleasure-pain lanced through him, originating from Adrian’s enthusiastic activity on his cock.

He wanted to give in to the desire to wallow in the sensations Adrian was generating in him but he dragged his attention from it with some difficulty. Heart pounding, he engulfed Adrian’s cock in his mouth once again and he sucked in counterpoint to Adrian’s rhythm. Adrian’s expert rubbing soon had him at the edge of tension and his cock and balls were aching so badly he wanted to erupt and bask in the coming ecstasy. He could almost feel the pleasure—it was so palpable—and it gave him the incentive to tease Adrian harder, to heighten the pressure that was snaking its way

along his cock, until Adrian was bucking and surging his hips up into his mouth and he was doing the same, his hips lifting and plunging and he was fucking Adrian's hand –

He exploded a second later than Adrian, his mouth filled with salty cum that he swallowed as fast as he unloaded his own onto Adrian's neck and chest.

"Can we go n – oh!"

Shelli's voice broke into the passion-filled haze in Ethan's brain and caused him to lift his head up. Adrian's next jet of cum hit him on the chin, making him look down at the beautiful hard cock and, without conscious thought, he bent his head and sucked his lover dry. Dimly, he registered that Adrian had finished with his cock as well and he rolled over to lie on his back, out of breath yet highly satisfied. Languor seeped through his entire body as his mind replayed the events of the past few minutes.

Shelli. Oh. Right.

She was staring at them from the doorway, hands gripping the doorframe and her expression was both fascinated and horrified. Fascinated, maybe because she had never seen them make love before and horrified because...

Ethan frowned. Did their display repulse her? Well, for a heterosexual woman, she should be used to seeing a naked man. But maybe two naked men going at it was a different matter altogether.

He sat up and flipped the comforter, which had fallen to the floor in their exertion, over his and Adrian's bodies. Not because *he* felt embarrassed but more for her sake.

Her reason was made clear when she regained the use of her vocal chords. "I'm so sorry. I never meant to intrude... I mean, I didn't know you'd be..." She turned scarlet, which was a nice foil for her black evening dress.

He whistled.

Little Shelli cleaned up pretty nice.

Her lovely, bouncy, blonde hair was tied up in a bun on top of her head too restrictive and stern for his taste but the stray tendrils curling at the side of her face lent

a softened overall effect. Her dress—he couldn’t help but whistle again—was simply daring. The top part was a plunging neck halter that barely covered her full breasts and flowed down in a mini-skirt that ended mid-thigh. Relief came in the form of a silver buckle in the middle of her waist. Her arms were bare and, if he wasn’t mistaken, so was her back.

Unbelievably, he felt a stirring in his groin.

*Again? So soon?*

*For Shelli?*

No, it couldn’t be. It must be Adrian. He and Adrian had experienced several all-night sex marathons early on in their relationship, they were so hungry for each other.

He recalled her embarrassed apology and latched on to it for conversation. “Don’t sweat it, sweet, although you should get used to it if you plan to be around us for the next, oh, fifty years probably, especially if you intend to overnight here now and then. And you’re not helping your cause, honey, by wearing that delightful creation,” he drawled, as much to bring her back to herself as to silence the irritating inner voice.

“Oh, this?” She dismissed his concern with a glance at her attire. “I’ve worn things more adventurous than this.”

And his imagination went into overdrive.

Definitely irritating.

“Give us a few minutes and—” Adrian was saying when Shelli interrupted, “Uh, yeah, I’ll, uh, go powder my nose or something.” She had been fidgeting the entire time she spoke, dancing from one foot to another while looking everywhere but at them and the moment she finished speaking, she sped off without a backward glance.

Did this signal a change in their relationship? What kind of change? Would it be for the better or for the worse?

Shelli rushed down the hall into the guest room, breathing hard, and shut the door behind her. She closed her eyes but that only made her recall the image with greater clarity.

She could still see them in her mind's eyes – their embrace, the way their hands and lips caressed, stroked and fondled each other's body. Their palpable lust for one another affected her more than she thought possible, if the liquid heat that had shot through her – and was now pooling at her groin – was any indication. Her nipples had puckered and chafed against the smooth cloth and she had barely managed to grab the doorframe as her knees suddenly became weak. She had never seen men have sex before and the sight of it aroused her more than she thought possible. The picture of them locked together like that was so sexy it was positively sinful.

How could she –

She shied away from the thought that she was sexually attracted to them – no, that wasn't and couldn't be possible – and latched on to a more plausible explanation. She must be a voyeur. That was it. But to get her kicks from seeing other people making out was a first for her. However, she couldn't help it if the picture they made was so erotic that they even made her want to join them.

Determinedly, she shook her head and strode to the mirror. She re-applied her lipstick with hands that trembled and she had to stop or she would ruin her make-up. She was a voyeur but she wasn't going to give in to it. Ethan and Adrian were her best friends and their private life was their own. She would respect them by keeping her eyes where they belonged – firmly attached to her eye sockets.

\* \* \* \* \*

Adrian was...unsettled. Yes, that was the word. The people who were his rock and foundation all his life, who were as familiar as bread and butter, were suddenly acting strangely. Ethan had become stiff since Shelli had caught them making love. Goodness, Ethan couldn't be shy about that, could he? He hadn't been at all shy in his younger

days when they'd indulged in foursomes with their respective girlfriends. Moreover, Shelli had known about them since they started courting and she'd seen them kiss a lot of times. *Although*, he admitted, *sex was definitely a very advanced step from kissing*.

What grated on him more was that he couldn't even talk to or reassure Ethan about it with Shelli around. Not that he was deliberately excluding her but there were some things private to a couple that one didn't share with other people, not even one's best friend.

But Shelli herself was also behaving weirdly. She had lost her usual grace and coordination, bumping first against her bedroom door as she was coming out and then against the car door as she was going in and she clutched her tiny beaded bag in a death grip. Her laughter was strained around the edges and so he had brought out his entire repertoire of corny jokes and managed to coax them into bursts of reluctant laughter. She must be more worried about this party than she had told them and if that was so, then he was glad both he and Ethan were going to be there to lend her support.

When they finally arrived at the hotel, he had succeeded, more or less, in getting them to relax. They were back to their normal selves. Well, almost.

After asking for directions from hotel staff, they stood at the entrance of the Pearl Ballroom, the biggest ballroom in the hotel. It was bedecked with multicolored strings of crêpe paper hanging from the ceiling with a flashing disco ball right in the center and a huge, glittering banner announcing the company's name and event at the opposite end of the room. The entire room was noisy with conversation and laughter, and the lights reflected off sparkling jewels and sequins on the women's gowns.

Adrian was stunned at the crush of bodies inside the room—there didn't seem to be enough space left to breathe. The logistics committee didn't seem to have done their job very well. Having gone to more than his share of company events, he realized that Shelli's company must have invited their suppliers and valued customers as well as their staff, and the numbers had gone out of control. He was just wondering, if maybe, they should go home and watch *National Geographic* instead when several people right



in front of them shrieked with laughter and pointed above their heads. "Kiss, kiss, kiss!"

He looked straight up and, lo and behold. Mistletoe. Bunches of it decorating the whole doorframe, an unexpected trap for the unwary. He stared at them, nonplussed and wondered why there should be mistletoe. Someone's idea of a bad joke, or an innovative ice breaker to get everyone in the party mood.

"Oh," Shelli glanced first at her colleagues, then up at the mistletoe, dismayed, then spread her hands helplessly, "but they're my —"

The distress on her face registered in his mind simultaneously with one other thing. If she admitted they were only friends, then all was lost. He and Ethan might as well have not come. He spun her toward him before she could complete her sentence. "Give in gracefully, Shell," he said, laughing, playacting for the benefit of their audience. "It's tradition." He slid his hands from her shoulders up to cup her head and brought her inexorably closer. Her head, her entire body strained away from him and her eyes communicated mute panic. "You stupid fool," he hissed near her mouth, willing her to relax, to trust him. "Don't give the game away, not when we've come this far. And it's just a kiss. We might have to play it up to make it look real..."

His lips brushed hers, once, twice. He had meant for it to end there but her lips were so soft, so sweet, so intoxicating, he just had to taste them again. He was drawn in and unable to pull himself away. He forgot that they had an audience. He forgot that he'd suggested for them to work at making the kiss look real because it was suddenly all *too real*...

He pressed his mouth more fully against hers and nibbled and licked and begged for a taste of the rich flavors he was sure she was keeping from him in her mouth.

He wanted in.

## Chapter Two

His tongue stroked across the closed line of her lips and coaxed and persuaded. He repeated it several times before she relaxed totally against him and her slight moan allowed him the entry he sought.

He was right. Hot honey, tangy orange and minty lemon. Lush essences that were Shelli.

Shelli?

*Shelli?!*

He raised his head and her eyelids lifted a moment later to reveal warm, slumberous eyes. Her warm breath caressed his mouth and he had to fight the urge to kiss her again. She was a fool if she trusted him because he couldn't have anticipated the rush of desire that sped through his body, demanding that he take her and make her truly his.

It seemed they didn't need to play it up for the crowd after all.

Shock crawled all over her face. She had been warm and pliant in his arms but now she turned rigid. Was there a tiny flare of desire in her eyes? He couldn't be sure because somebody turned her around and thrust her into Ethan's arms.

He shook his head, unable to believe that *she* caused the lust that was raging through him at that moment. She, Scheliena Madison, his best friend for so long.

What had brought it about? Yes, she was as sexy as a siren tonight but he had seen her in provocative clothes before and she hadn't been able to elicit such a reaction from him. Maybe it wasn't Shelli at all. Maybe the lingering effects of the desire he was feeling for Ethan hadn't dissipated, which was normal, since he seemed to lust after Ethan all the time and Shelli had fanned the embers with her sexy clothing and her sweet, soft mouth. Yes, that must be it. After all, he wasn't immune to feminine charms.

Feeling a bit better, he turned to watch his two best friends kiss and all his rationalizations flew out the window. Ethan and Shelli appeared to be trying to devour each other and the passion on their faces—on *both* Ethan's and Shelli's—inflamed him and sent a surge of fierce lust rippling through him.

Damn, he wanted them both.

Shelli moaned in protest when Adrian lifted his head from hers. She didn't know how she had gone from dreading the act to wanting more of it—wanting more than he was willing to give, from the looks of it. She felt sick when he shook his head, as if telling her there couldn't be more of such kissing. But before she could say anything, someone had turned her around and pressed her into Ethan's arms, who had to catch her before she tripped over her heels.

His hands steadied her around the waist, then traveled with driven reluctance up her bare back, the heat of his hands searing her skin. Clutched tight in his embrace, Shelli lost her breath and drowned in the banked fires in his deep-blue eyes. "God, you're *so* beautiful, Shelli," he ground out. "I never realized— And your skin," his hands caressed her naked back, "so soft..." He groaned, as if he couldn't bear what he was feeling.

Surrounded by his strength, she made a brief, token struggle before his lips claimed hers and it was every bit as arousing and scorching as Adrian's kiss. She opened her mouth for him almost immediately and she was lost in his heat, in the cinnamon taste of his mouth. Time seemed to stand still as she arched into his chest and her puckered nipples found relief against his solid muscles. Her hands crept up to ruffle and tease his hair. Their tongues met and were dueling in the cavern of her mouth when wild wolf whistles penetrated her skull and scattered the passion-hazed fog in her brain.

Again, it was the man who released her because she didn't know where she could've found the will to push him away. Ethan's limbs fell to his sides and she stepped back reluctantly from the hard embrace of his arms and the harder contours of

his body. Her lips were swollen with use, her nipples ached and chafed against her dress and her insides tightened with need and want.

Unconsciously, she lifted a hand to touch her lips, Ethan's eyes following her movement and darkening. What was he thinking? How wanton she was to press against him? Her colleagues' voices recalled her shakily from the intensity in his blue eyes. She decided she couldn't bear the censure in his gaze and looked away blindly. What about his muttered praises awhile ago? He had said them unwillingly, as if she forced them from his mouth.

*Stop. You're getting nowhere.*

Turning to her officemates of three months, she mustered a smile for them as they crowded near.

"Amazing dress, Shelli," the girl who sat beside her in the office—her name was Rose—said enviously as she reached out to touch a fold of her dress.

"Thank you," Shelli said automatically. She started to walk with her colleagues into the ballroom, not caring where they were leading, as long as it was away from that damn mistletoe. She wasn't about to take the chance on being forced to kiss again should they remain standing there the entire time. She hoped there weren't any other such hazards hanging in the ballroom because she didn't know if she or their friendship could survive the evening. In any event, she would make sure not to touch *any* part of them, or she might not be able to restrain herself. How embarrassing—and *shocking*—to realize she was in lust with her best friends.

She didn't know whether that was better than thinking herself a voyeur or not.

"Trust you to be an original and come with two escorts. Who's the boyfriend?" Laughing curiosity shone in the eyes of her newfound friend in the company, Lizzie Wyatt, who held the position of supervisor in the department. Technically, Lizzie was her direct boss but the two of them had hit it off so well Shelli sometimes forgot Lizzie was low-level management while she was only a rank-and-file staff.

"I'll leave you to guess," Shelli replied breezily. "One boyfriend and a spare. I've got all the bases covered."

"You're crazy," Lizzie teased, then tugged her arm. "Come on, let's get some food before it runs out."

"In a buffet?" she asked in disbelief but allowed herself to be led. She didn't bother looking around for Adrian and Ethan. They could fend for themselves.

"The hotel could refuse to replenish the empty plates," Lizzie said in a mock-horrified voice, then she giggled. "They didn't know what they were taking on when they confirmed our booking. I'm sure they've never encountered such pigs as us."

"And I'm equally sure they'll charge us exorbitant rates, so they're duty-bound to keep the food coming."

Bantering with Lizzie was good. It relieved her tension a bit, though it couldn't make her forget the memory of Adrian's lips over her own or Ethan's arms around her. Both of them were very good kissers, better than any of her past lovers, in fact. Great. Now she would have to raise the standard, which would make it even more difficult for her to find someone. Before, potential boyfriends only had to measure up to her best friends in terms of character and personality. Now, they would have to be even better kissers, to boot.

Did Adrian and Ethan take apart their kisses and help each other analyze what worked and what didn't and how to improve on them? She had the most insane urge to giggle. Was that how they had become such good kissers? After all, they'd had more than two years to practice on each other —

The thought sobered her. Their friendship was the singular most important relationship in her life and she was going to do everything in her power to keep it that way. Moreover, Adrian and Ethan were devoted to one another and she wasn't going to ruin a perfect relationship for an insane lapse in her libido. Obviously, she had been far too long without a man. Yes, she was going to ignore this aberration in her behavior and attribute the desire running recklessly in her veins to...stress. Adrian and Ethan

wouldn't appreciate knowing their female best friend suddenly woke up one day lusting for them and they wouldn't know how to handle it. Adrian, especially, wouldn't be able to look at her for months afterward, never mind speak to her.

Good. She was clear in her mind.

Adrian. Ethan. Friends. Best friends. Period.

Before long, her plate heaped high with food from the buffet table, Shelli followed Lizzie toward an empty table. They grabbed it before anybody else could claim it for themselves. Unfortunately, as with all the scattered tables in the room, there were no chairs, so everyone stood around their chosen tables, chatting and eating and mixing around with ease.

Shelli was laughing uproariously with her female colleagues, three of whom had arrived minutes earlier to share the table, when Adrian and Ethan appeared with their own plates of food. Two girls cleared the space between them with alacrity when they realized the guys were intent on joining them. The two men reluctantly set down their plates in the indicated space and smiled through the introductions.

Shelli grabbed the opportunity while they were busy and let her eyes take in their greedy fill. She saw them as she usually did—regular handsome features, though Adrian's were more rugged than Ethan's, and tall, rangy bodies, though Adrian was an inch or two shorter—but now she noticed the sensual tilt to Adrian's mouth and the sexy droop of Ethan's eyelids. Their bodies, she knew, were hard and solid and without an ounce of fat, due to their religious attendance at the gym. But what she had known in theory, she now knew in practice, experienced by her avid eyes, her fingertips and her crushed chest. Her fingers tingled and she was horrified to realize she itched to touch their muscled chests again, to run her hands over their hot bodies and hotter—

She slammed the mental door, dismayed to find her thoughts running southward. There should be a law against mental stripping. Disconcerted, she looked up to find that introductions were over and the men were staring at her with dark intensity, as if—as if—

As if they want to consume her, devour her. The hungry look in their eyes caused her insides to perform somersaults and churn with longing.

The blood roared in her ears and she dropped her gaze to her food. Hunger was making her see things that weren't there.

Beer. She needed to drown her senses in the alcoholic stuff and hoped it blurred the edges. She snagged one from a passing waiter and sipped it along with her food, careful not to look at them and happy that they were standing on the opposite side. She didn't know how she would take it if they were standing on either side of her. Her colleagues would probably be treated to a threesome on the ballroom floor.

Threesome? Though no one could hear her thoughts, Shelli cringed nevertheless. How would her best friends react if they knew she fancied not just one of them but *both* of them? No wonder she was aroused from seeing Adrian and Ethan kiss. She was worse than a voyeur—she was a nymphomaniac who couldn't be satisfied with one man. Even now, the memory of it was enough to send her pussy dripping and clenching with need. And she was curious, insanely curious. She wanted to know what sex would be like with two men and the combinations they could play with—oh my!

But these were her friends. Best friends. What right had she to risk their long-time friendship?

She drained her beer in one long gulp, needing the refreshing, cool drink to quench her thirst, to bring down her temperature and make her forget about the silly idea. Thinking about her best friends had made her warm and the beer didn't help. She was still hot, feverish.

She plucked two bottles of beer from another waiter and drained one in two breaths. The girl who had commented on her dress earlier, Rose, now standing beside her, whispered, "Shelli, where'd you find them? They're hot..."

Hot? Oh my god, yes. Shelli almost laughed out loud but restrained herself, certain that nobody would appreciate the crazy laughter that was jumping to be released from her throat. All through high school and university, she had had scores of female

students approaching her, pretending to be friendly and all angling for an introduction to her best friends. Hot? By god, yes and she was finding out for herself just how hot they were. How much she was burning because of them.

Which was a no-no.

But her colleagues found them hot as well, she noted with a frown. Except for Lizzie, all of their female colleagues at the table were fawning over them, including them in conversations and using all sorts of reasons and excuses to touch them, to bump into them.

A hot flare of jealousy consumed her. When the woman beside Ethan spread her hand across his chest and blatantly stroked him, it was all she could do to control herself and not to rage, *Take your hands off him. He's mine.*

Dangerous thought and even more aching pain.

She drained her third bottle in one breath and felt her head buzz. Good. She didn't want to think clearly, or even to see clearly. Some male colleagues came over and eyed her appreciatively. *That's more like it.* She flirted and laughed with them, toasted beer with them, danced with one or two, forgot the food on her plate and all the while, she was fully aware of Ethan and Adrian on the other side of the table with their own little harem. She was on her sixth bottle when a hand curved around her wrist. She looked up blearily. "Oh, ish you, Adr'an."

"Give me the bottle, Shelli." He gripped the bottle at the neck and she noted with detachment that his mouth had tightened to a thin line and his brows were an angry slash across his forehead. If she was seeing clearly, that was. "You've had more than enough."

"No...want more..."

"You'll have the biggest hangover in your life tomorrow."

Her head was already spinning and the beginning of a headache was pounding her skull but she was determined to continue drinking. Drinking was her salvation, she dimly remembered telling herself awhile ago but why, she didn't know anymore. "Doe-



don't care." She loosened her grip on the bottle, so that the sudden movement caused the liquid to slosh inside the container. "You have it." She swayed and smiled up at him, feeling expansive and happy and generous. "I get another."

"You have enough—"

"Oh, posh!" She wagged her finger in his face. "I de-shide...what I want."

"I'll take you home, Shell, c'mon—"

Why was he taking her home so soon? She hadn't finished her dinner—she wanted to drink and to dance some more. "No," she struggled for him to release his grip on her wrist but she was somehow weaker than she normally was. "Dansh. Wanna dansh—"

A new voice entered their conversation. "And dance you shall."

Shelli turned to her other side and peered at the newcomer. Her big boss, Mr. Gavin Everett, bowed with a flourish and held out his hand. "May I have this dance, Miss Madison?"

"Coursh." She placed her left hand in his, since Adrian still wouldn't release her right hand. She gave Mr. Everett a big, lopsided smile, his tanned good looks pleasing to her eyes. A moment later, she frowned. There was something about Mr. Everett, something...but she couldn't remember.

When Mr. Everett led her away, Adrian had no choice but to let go of her hand. She giggled as she tried to walk a straight line but it wasn't possible with the throng packed like sardines and it didn't seem important anymore when they reached the equally crowded dance floor.

Mr. Everett clasped her hands around his neck and supported her by the waist as they swayed to the slow music. "Do you know how beautiful you are?" he breathed against her ear.

She giggled again, not sure if her feet could support her. His hands roamed her bare back and she squirmed a bit, some dim part of her not liking his octopus hands. They settled on her buttocks and he pulled her close, pressed tight against him.

Though she was terribly sleepy and the drum in her head pounded louder, somehow, she knew she didn't want that. "No..." she cried, trying to tear his hands away ineffectually. But her hands wouldn't cooperate and she couldn't seem to lift herself from his body. Her strength was gone. She could only beat weakly against his knuckles and his arm but her hands sometimes slid sideways without hitting their intended target.

"I'll give you what you want, my darling," he crooned. "Anything you want."

Panic beat feeble wings against her consciousness when she felt his hand on her bare breast. "No...please..."

### **Chapter Three**

Ethan had successfully extricated the woman's hand from his person when Adrian appeared at his side. He could see his lover trying to hide his irritation and exasperation at the persistent woman. To the woman he might be all charm but Adrian knew every nuance of his expression and Ethan couldn't wait to be rid of the whole bevy of women at their table. Except for Shelli, maybe.

"Excuse us, please," Adrian said politely, even though he also wanted nothing more than to yank Ethan out from among these man-eaters. He had his share of "accidental" caresses and blatant suggestions too. Many times, he wanted to shout at them in frustration but these were Shelli's colleagues. He and Ethan may not have to face them come Monday but Shelli had to.

"Where is she?" Ethan's teeth worried his lower lip as he scanned the crush of bodies around them.

"A certain man dragged her off to dance." Adrian held up his hand when he saw the scolding on the tip of Ethan's tongue. "There wasn't anything I could do, short of making a scene." He grabbed Ethan's arm and led him in the direction that Shelli and the man had disappeared. "They went through here. Let's see if we can find them."

He maneuvered and wound his way past wriggling bodies, politely making his excuses all the way. At times, he wanted to vent a curse at the human obstacles but he held his tongue. Damn it, where was she? He shouldn't have let her go off by herself but he had thought the few seconds it would take to get Ethan would be of no account, that she couldn't have disappeared so fast, considering the throng they would have to get through—

He stopped so abruptly that Ethan rocked into him.

Shelli was right in front of him and she was draped all over the man. The slime had one hand on her breast and another on her buttocks. If her movements were any indication, she was roaring drunk and encouraging him with her hand on his.

If he hadn't seen it with his own eyes, Adrian would never have believed the man was stupid enough to paw a subordinate when the top bosses were present at the same party. But apparently, this man was stupidity defined, that and the fact that he *was* slime, the alcoholic drinks having given him the dutch courage to follow the demands of his lust.

Without even considering that she might be mad at his interruption, he took the last necessary step and yanked the man's offending hand from her breast with an enraged roar, never mind that it was muted by the conversational din. Fury disintegrated all thoughts from his brain and he was about to slam his fist into the man's startled face when Ethan caught his arm. One look at the hard glitter in his lover's eyes assured him the man would not be spared. Grim satisfaction coursed through him. He relinquished his hold on the man's hand and concentrated on disentangling Shelli from the man's embrace.

Great. She was boneless and totally incoherent and she draped herself all over him in much the same manner as with the man seconds earlier. He lifted a finger and caressed her cheek, stunned at the swell of tenderness that rocketed through him, an emotion he hadn't associated with Shelli before.

Some magic was at work this night, a magic that brought forth these new emotions in him and caused him to see Shelli as he had never seen her before. He wondered if this magic had also worked on her and on Ethan. Then he remembered that she had flirted with other men and preferred and encouraged another man's pawing when she wouldn't even look at him or Ethan the entire evening. What if she didn't feel the same way as he? What about Ethan? What if his lover was disgusted with him for lusting after their best friend?

His jaw firmed and his arms tightened around her with determination. Somehow, he would find a way to change her mind. He would make Ethan see that the three of them together was the best idea he had come up with in the thirty years of his existence.

The opening strains of a slow song drifted across the room and he swayed and shuffled with her to the edge of the dance floor and out of the ballroom.

\* \* \* \* \*

Adrian laid her carefully on the bed and she sank into the soft mattress with a sigh. He debated whether he should change her into more comfortable clothing but then decided she probably wouldn't thank him in the morning. Despite their being best friends for so long and she probably thought of them as her "girlfriends", she had always acted modestly when with them.

He did allow himself the luxury of running a finger down her cheek and further down to her shoulder and one bare arm. He was marveling at the softness of her skin when his gaze was caught by the sight of her rosy lips. He ran a shaking thumb over the fullness of her mouth and, before he could stop himself, wondered how it would feel on his cock, if her ruby lips would purse and her blue eyes would gaze at him in sensual regard, if she would be able to take his whole length into her mouth, if she could suck him the way he liked, if —

He groaned softly, his wayward member having reacted to his vivid thoughts and become hard.

He pulled his hand away with a curse and covered her with a blanket. He strode to the door, switched off the lights and shut the door behind him.

He entered his bedroom to find Ethan coming out of the adjoining bathroom, fresh and clean and naked from his brief shower. Riding on his frustration and night of unfulfilled lust, he grabbed Ethan, pressed his mouth on his and crushed his hips against him. The towel dropped from Ethan's hand as he held Adrian's head in a strong grip. Ethan moaned his annoyance at the barriers to fleshly contact. Their mouths

kissed wildly. Their hands flew and tore off Adrian's clothing. They were apart for all of the five seconds it took to take off Adrian's shirt, shoes and trousers. This time, when they came together, both hissed in satisfaction. They ground their hips hard into each other. Their cocks crossed and rubbed and squeezed against each other. A few hard strokes and they both erupted with harsh cries, jetting their cum onto their stomachs.

The fierce need assuaged a bit, their kiss gentled. Adrian maneuvered them onto the bed, where he proceeded to kiss his way down his lover's body and lick up his cum. He loved Ethan's body and he still couldn't get enough of him, after more than two years of staying together. But he knew it was more than that. They stayed together because they loved each other, the kind of love that books and movies talked about, the kind that involved enjoying the sunset together, long walks and companionship. As he circled his tongue around Ethan's navel, he had a sudden vision of them walking together with the sunset in the background but they were older, much older, with lines on their faces and age spots on their skin. Wouldn't it be nice if a child or two could be running around near them, children of the son or daughter either one of them had with some woman...

With Shelli?

Remembering the discussion he wanted to have with Ethan, Adrian moved down his lover's body and gave his cock one regretful lick before sliding up to settle beside him. "You were in a hurry tonight." He referred to their wild coupling.

Ethan raised his head and supported it on an upraised palm. They stared at each other intently before he answered wryly, "So were you."

Though he had always been able to speak with reasonable frankness with Ethan, his usual embarrassment with Shelli overcame him just then. His gaze slid away. "I, uh, there's something I have to tell you. I don't know how you'd feel about it but I'd appreciate if you could, uh, that is, keep an open mind —"

"Is it Shelli?" Ethan interrupted.

Adrian's gaze flew back to him in a hurry.

"Have you suddenly realized what a desirable woman she is, how frustrated she made you feel tonight and you want to fuck her but you're afraid she doesn't like you in that way?"

With each phrase, Adrian nodded, though he was bewildered as to how Ethan could know what he was feeling. They were close and could almost read each other's minds but this —

"Good," Ethan said with a savage light in his eyes. "Because I feel the same way."

Incredible joy ricocheted through him. "You do?"

"Yes. So now we go about seducing the lovely Shelli Madison."

Now that he knew Ethan shared his goal, Adrian was able to voice his doubts. "But tonight, it didn't seem like she wanted to fuck us. For one thing, she flirted with all her colleagues when she wouldn't even give us the time of day, though we were supposed to be her dates." He sent Ethan a sardonic smile. "For another, she went off with that guy and let him have his way with her." He looked curiously at his lover. "What did you do to him anyway?"

Ethan cracked the knuckles of one hand and sent him a very satisfied smile. "Let's just say he won't be bothering Shelli anymore."

A sudden thought struck him. "You didn't beat him, did you?"

"No," Ethan said, annoyed. "I don't want to get Shelli into trouble. I just warned him very succinctly and fiercely what would happen to his crown jewels should he go near Shelli again."

"Maybe you shouldn't have. What if she fancied him?" Adrian sighed and shook his head. "Because it sure looks like she's very satisfied being just friends with us."

"We'll just have to change her mind."

Which was just what he was thinking earlier on. "I don't want to ruin our friendship for the sake of a fuck, Ethan."

"We won't," Ethan said impatiently. "Look, I was there at the party too and I saw what you saw and I agree, your interpretation of things could be right. But what if—for the sake of argument—what if she's hot for us the way we're hot for her? She could be confused and bewildered at her new feelings and so, she hid behind safe and known actions. Until I get a definite 'no' from her, I'm not giving up."

With each word that Ethan uttered, Adrian felt hope springing from within him. "What's the plan?" Adrian had a good brain and if he applied it diligently, he could have come up with something. But Ethan's was more cunning and he always had a lot of tricks up his sleeve.

That was why he knew better than to interrupt when Ethan's eyes lost their focus the way they always did whenever he was thinking. But when he laughed some time later, Adrian knew his lover had hit onto something.

"I'll tell you about it later," Ethan promised as he lay back on the bed. "But now, shouldn't you continue what you were doing with my cock?"

Adrian laughed. "With pleasure."

Their mood changed, shifting to one tinged with sexual anticipation. Adrian heaved himself up and bore Ethan onto the bed and at the same time, claimed his lips. Their flesh rubbed and slid against each other, causing his blood to rush through his system in pounding excitement. Ethan's mouth moved sweetly beneath his and the duel with his rough tongue sent a pleasurable tension to lodge in his belly.

Ethan moaned a protest when he trailed his lips down his chin and over his throat. "Later, baby," Adrian rasped. "We'll go back to kissing later."

He worshipped his lover's muscular body with his lips, licking the hard muscles on his chest, the tight ridges on his abdomen and laving the begging nipples. He sucked on them for a while and Ethan's gasps of pleasure heightened his exhilaration. All this while, he was aware of Ethan's engorged cock thumping against his thigh and calling for his attention. So while he sucked on his lover's nipples, his hand found the iron-hard cock and stroked with deft skill.



Ethan strangled on a breath and a moment later, Adrian felt his hands pushing into his thick hair and gripping tight. He loved these evidences of Ethan's wild hunger for him but if he wasn't careful, he would probably be bald before he reached forty.

Holding Ethan's cock steady by the root, he treated him to several languorous licks up and down his entire throbbing length. "Adrian..." Ethan's voice pleaded both torment and redemption and his fingers gripped his lover's hair even tighter as his breathing grew harsh and shallow.

Adrian wasn't unaffected. His own cock had grown hard and aching and he itched to take it in his other hand but he restrained himself. He wanted to lose himself in Ethan's tight ass, after he had given his lover his pleasure.

Heart pounding and trembling with expectation, he licked and lapped his way up to the purple mushroom head, swirled his tongue around the pre-cum that had oozed out and felt Ethan's gasp snake its way down to his swollen cock. He opened his mouth, enveloped Ethan's cock and sucked him—deep, strong pulls that soon changed to fast, choppy ones as Ethan's hands guided the rhythm. His free hand moved down to fondle Ethan's balls and by their tightening, he knew Ethan was near—

Ethan erupted and filled his mouth with his cum. He gushed and Adrian loved this evidence of Ethan's desire for him. He swallowed as much as he could and he chased the few stray drops that dripped down his lover's cock.

Once Ethan had emptied himself and was panting for breath, Adrian ordered huskily, "On your knees, lover." He reached for the bedside table and hurriedly put on a condom.

Ethan complied lazily. "I wonder if Shelli is as good at giving blowjobs as you."

The image of Shelli's red, full lips around his cock came back to haunt Adrian and his already aching cock tightened even further. He hissed in anticipation. "When are we putting this plan of yours into action?"

"Tomorrow." The word ended in a gasp as Adrian worked quickly to prepare him for his entry, and he squeezed a liberal amount of lube liberally inside Ethan's ass.

Adrian couldn't wait another second. Already, his throbbing cock was close to bursting. Finally, he knelt in front of Ethan's upturned ass. Spreading his butt cheeks with both hands, Adrian guided his cock to Ethan's sweet opening. He grunted and sweated as he inched inside. "Damn but you're so tight, Ethan. So good." His cock was being squeezed and stroked by Ethan's hot ass. "I wonder if Shelli would be as tight—" He pushed and was buried up to his balls. The moment he did, he ached to withdraw and slam back in, over and over until he exploded. But he controlled himself and held back with great effort. Sweat ran in rivulets down his forehead to his back. He leaned over his lover and hugged him to his chest. "Okay?"

Ethan nodded. "You feel so right there, Adrian." Eyes closed, he turned his head and they shared a brief kiss. Then Adrian started moving, withdrawing and plunging back into Ethan's tight ass. His hand caressed down Ethan's chest, over his ridged abdomen and grasped his half-hard cock. He stroked it in time to his slow, steady fucking and was pleased with Ethan's response when his cock grew hard and thick. He increased the tempo and released the control he had imposed on himself. He was shouting and yelling and moving with incredible speed by the time he exploded inside Ethan's gripping heat.

\* \* \* \* \*

Shelli woke up with a pounding headache. Oh god, the light! With a weary groan, she stumbled from the bed and drew the curtains closed. Ah, much better.

She cursed herself for drinking so much, then stopped when excruciating slices of pain flashed through her head.

Aspirin.

Checking to see if she was properly clothed—surprise! She was still in her party things—she wrapped herself in a bathrobe before shuffling her way out the door and down to the kitchen, her destination the cupboard where the guys kept their first-aid kit

and medicine. However, she stopped at the entry before she could move one step into the kitchen.

Her head swam.

Flesh everywhere.

Adrian and Ethan lounged against the kitchen cabinets with plates in their hands, laughing and talking while eating what looked to be lunch. They were unselfconsciously naked – tanned muscular bodies, long, powerful legs and – oh my!

She couldn't really see properly through her squinting eyes but the little she saw caused blood to roar through her body and slam into her poor throbbing head. Long, erect cocks. Straining cocks. Beautiful. She closed her eyes, groaned and slumped against the doorway. They were gorgeous and tempting and she didn't really need it this hellish moment. She wished they would go away and leave her alone.

"Shelli?" Ethan said solicitously beside her, one hand on her brow. "Are you okay?"

Oh god. He smelled so good, so delicious. And the heat. Oh my. She wanted to bask under it, wallow in it and wrap herself in it.

Goodness.

"Headache," she croaked. "Aspirin. Please."

His head brushed against hers and a tingle went through her spine. The rushing blood almost split her head as well. A glass of water was placed in one hand and a tablet in the other and she gulped the medicine down. She handed the glass back and when it was taken from her, she turned to face the staircase and it was only then that she felt safe enough to open her eyes. "I'm going back to sleep." She staggered up the stairs with one hand on the banister, marveling at her self-control not to jump them and knew it was for her own self-preservation.

Back in her room, she collapsed on the bed, pressed both hands to her closed eyes and rolled as much as her aching head would allow. One thought kept screaming over and over in her mind. *Why are they naked?*

Damn, what was she going to do? If they persisted in going around in the buff, how was she going to stop herself from jumping them, once her hangover was gone?

## **Chapter Four**

Behind her retreating back, Ethan and Adrian stared at her in dismay, aware that their ruse had flopped. Ethan had forgotten to account for her headache. Though sick and wrapped in her thick bathrobe with her hair all ruffled, she still looked good enough to eat. His cock had certainly noticed. Which gave him an idea...

"What now?"

"Now, we go to step two," Ethan said confidently. "She's bound to come down again later and this time, we'll be ready for her. In the meantime..." He glanced down at Adrian's straining cock and wasn't surprised to feel an answering stirring in his groin. Lust was a very big part of the love that he felt for Adrian. He plucked Adrian's plate from his hand and placed both their plates on the countertop, deliberately brushing his front seductively against Adrian's body, bumping and nudging against him. Adrian's raw groans came from some deep place within him, so harsh and solid were the sounds. The elusive touches were more powerful than the direct ones, as Ethan had discovered to their sensual delight.

He cut through Adrian's moans, whispering hoarsely, "I'm hungry for my dessert..." He twined one hand around Adrian's neck and pulled him in for a kiss, muffling the last word against his lover's lips. A sense of homecoming filled him, one of rightness and belonging. Whatever happened with Shelli, he still had Adrian. Somehow, he wasn't as comforted as he thought he would be.

Confused by his feelings, he shut his eyes and concentrated on licking the corners of Adrian's mouth that held a hint of the bacon's saltiness from brunch a while ago. He moved down to nuzzle Adrian's rough-stubble chin, down to the pulse beating madly at the bottom of his neck. After sucking on the skin, which caused Adrian to grip his shoulders and his fingers to tighten spasmodically, Ethan moved languidly to lave the

thick shoulders while he caressed Adrian's muscular chest and relished the softness of his hair. He moaned at the silken texture and he realized once again how utterly attracted he was to Adrian's maleness.

He caught Adrian's turgid nipples between his thumb and forefinger. He pinched sharply and was rewarded with a loud whimper. Though he had made love to Adrian thousands of times, every sound that emerged from his lover's throat excited him and made each time they come together new and thrilling. Perhaps it was because they weren't having sex but making love, with love underscoring their every action.

Now, he made love to Adrian's nipples with his mouth, pursing his lips and sucking on the dark brown buds with enthusiasm and skill. He caught the bump and grind of Adrian's hips with his body, knowing that the attention paid to Adrian's sensitive nipples was magnified with sensation in his groin.

"Ethan!" he shouted. "Are you trying...to kill me?"

"Ah but what a way to go," he teased back shakily, then caught his breath as Adrian returned the favor by grabbing his cock.

"Repeat that," Adrian invited softly.

"Damn." Ethan grabbed Adrian by the neck and pulled him down for a hard kiss, moaning as Adrian pumped the rigid length of his cock. He gripped Adrian's wrist. "Stop that. I haven't satisfied my hunger yet."

"Tough." Adrian growled. "You're making me hungrier by the second." But he relinquished Ethan's cock. With much reluctance, Ethan was pleased to note.

Ethan dropped down to his haunches and knelt on the cold tiled floor. He opened his eyes and stared at the raging cock in front of him, mouth watering, his own cock aching. He breathed in Adrian's musky scent and was delirious with his nearness. Shelli shouldn't have anything to complain about with their length and girth.

Damn but why was he thinking of Shelli at a time like this?

He took hold of Adrian's cock with a delicate hand and rubbed slowly along the turgid length, when what he wanted to do was to take it into his mouth and suck him until Adrian fell apart in his arms. Then, he would plunge his needy cock into Adrian's ass and thrust until he found his own release.

But Ethan restrained himself, reminding himself that he wanted to savor his lover. So he leaned close and mouthed his balls, sucking lightly and rolling them in his mouth, aware of Adrian's ever-rapid breathing, of his humming as his fingers plowed into Ethan's shock of thick hair and held tight. Ethan then dragged his tongue over Adrian's balls and followed the thick vein up his rigid cock. He swirled his pointy tongue over the purple cockhead, delighting in the salty taste of the pre-cum that had slipped out. He ran his tongue up and down the stiff length, over and over, resisting the insistent tug on his hair until Adrian exploded, "Damn it, Ethan, suck me! Take me into your mouth."

He enveloped Adrian's cock with his mouth, Adrian's satisfied hiss echoing in his ear. His mouth was stretched wide by Adrian's girth but he was damned if he couldn't satisfy his lover this way.

"Yes, that's it, god," Adrian groaned. "You're good at this."

Ethan bobbed his head as he sucked, with eagerness, with expertise, with love, while Adrian guided the speed of his head with a hand among his hair. He moaned as Adrian's thick cock went in and out of his mouth and soon he wasn't sure anymore if he was fucking Adrian's cock or Adrian's cock was fucking his mouth. He slipped a hand to his own rampant cock, sliding it now and again over his throbbing balls and rubbing in time to the rhythm that Adrian had set.

Groans and whimpers and wet, slurping sounds dominated the room, filling his ears and the heat of the noonday sun couldn't hold a candle to the heat they were generating between them. He felt as though they were burning, the red-tipped flames within threatening to incinerate them both to ashes, to nothingness, where the only solid things in the world were themselves.

They exploded together, Adrian coming in Ethan's mouth while Ethan jettied his load onto his stomach, some splashing against Adrian's legs. Ethan swallowed as much of Adrian's cum as he could, assuaging the "hunger" that he'd proclaimed earlier. Finally, he took Adrian's cock out of his mouth and lay against his legs, panting for breath. Adrian, he was happy to note, was as wrung out as he, puffing as he leaned over the countertop.

Adrian lifted his head. "Now it's my turn." His eyes gleamed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Shelli felt better when she woke up again in the late afternoon, close to twilight if she deduced correctly from the darkening sky. Her stomach grumbled loudly but she ignored it, changed into more sensible clothes and packed her things with great efficiency. She didn't think she could withstand another display of hot, male flesh—not and keep her hands to herself.

After she had checked to see that she hadn't left anything behind, she went out of the room and down the stairs on tiptoe. She hoped to sneak out of the house and just call later to thank them for everything. She crept past the kitchen and the dining room without seeing a glimpse of them. They were probably napping in the bedroom. She was sighing in relief when she stepped into the living room, glanced diagonally to the left toward the sofa and stopped, shocked.

Her breath was knocked out of her at the sight of two gloriously naked men who were in the throes of passion.

Ethan was lying on the sofa with his eyes closed, head rolled back and body arched and Adrian was leisurely kissing his way down Ethan's body leisurely while one hand stroked languorously at his own cock.

She couldn't breathe, couldn't move except to follow Adrian's journey with her eyes. She had seen them sucking each other's cocks before but this was different. This was the process, the journey that culminated in the cock-sucking.



A deep hunger yawned in her, though she knew it wasn't for food. Or maybe it was for food but food of a different kind. Her breasts became achy and heavy and her lips tingled, as if they were tracing the hard contours of Ethan's body, her lips worshipping the flat abs and circling around his navel, her lips kissing his hard length, her tongue licking his cock in one long swipe, her mouth enveloping his heated erection...

Ethan's groans snapped her out of her sensual haze and she jerked and gasped, aghast to realize she was wet. Soaking wet, if her panties were any indication. She wanted to be there on the sofa with them. She wanted to suck Ethan's cock herself and present her pussy for Adrian's pleasure.

Stifling her moans behind gritted teeth, she dropped her bag to the floor and fumbled with the zipper of her pants. Her eyes locked on Adrian's bobbing head as he went down on Ethan, she leaned against the wall and plunged her fingers into her dripping pussy. Her breath caught as she mimicked Adrian's rhythm—up-down, in-out. She imagined herself in Adrian's place and Ethan was pushing his thick rod into her, thrusting with urgency and filling her and Adrian's skilled fingers were brushing over her clit, rubbing with frantic speed, pinching and escalating the burning need inside her—

Her teeth clamped down on her lips as her pussy tightened around her fingers, her entire body shuddering. Her knees felt like lead and if it weren't for the wall, she knew she would've crumpled to the floor.

She closed her eyes and released a sigh of ecstasy. If she already felt this way, how much more would the rapture be if she had actual sex with them? She'd probably fly off the mountain and soar through space for an endless time.

A rough exclamation brought her down to earth and made her open her eyes, only to see them both staring at her and the expressions on their faces were...shocked and expectant.

She turned crimson at being caught with her hand in her pussy. Embarrassed to the core, she could only think of obeying the urgent need to get out of the house. She hastily

withdrew her hand and arranged her clothing. Wild-eyed, she picked up her bag from the floor and rushed past them without saying goodbye.

The door slammed behind her and she took the stairs down and out of the building and fled toward the bus stop.

Ethan closed his eyes, trying to reject the hopelessness that was settling like a rock in his stomach. He was so affected even his raging cock deflated. "Failed again."

"We deserve one more chance." Adrian leaned back and trapped Ethan's legs between his body and the sofa. Ethan was so attuned to his lover that he could hear the rhythmic motion of Adrian's hand as he continued stroking his cock absentmindedly. He wished Adrian could have continued to suck his cock to release as well but they would get to it later. He had been just that one second away from coming when Adrian stopped, riveted by the sight of Shelli masturbating. His own release had been forgotten as he also stared at her.

She was beautiful in her passion, glowing with an inner light that was almost painful to look at. Her breath had come in small pants between red, full lips that he yearned to kiss. He'd noticed her rapidly thrusting fingers, hidden behind her beige silk panties and he'd hungered to replace her fingers with his aching cock, to thrust into her and bury himself deep within her heat, to plunge into her over and over until they both exploded into oblivion. Her orgasm had come swift and sure and he'd wanted to take her in his arms as she fell apart.

Whatever else they had failed to achieve, one thing was sure—she had been aroused by the sight of their lovemaking. But who was she thinking of as she masturbated? Adrian? Himself? Both of them? Or another man?

However, her rushing out presented a problem. She was obviously embarrassed at having been caught masturbating while staring at them. He focused his attention back on his lover, who was saying, "Let's try again. Third time's the charm anyway and if it doesn't work, then..." Adrian shrugged. There was no need to complete his sentence,

Ethan knew what he meant. Then they'd have to give it up. Adrian continued, "Maybe we should go for something more subtle."

"Something that would force her to give us an answer."

"Get her somewhere where she wouldn't be able to run away."

"I like that suggestion." Thoughts and ideas tumbled through his head. After a while, Ethan's eyes popped open. "I just thought of something." When Adrian looked at him inquiringly, he said slowly as he sorted out his sudden revelation, "We keep focusing on solutions to maneuver Shelli into giving us an answer as to whether she feels the same attraction toward us. But what if she does like us, and is afraid of showing her attraction for fear of ruining our friendship, because she thinks *we don't feel the same way?*"

The same dawning realization crossed Adrian's face. "Which could explain why she ran out just now."

"Yes, or she could just be severely embarrassed at being seen doing what is really a private matter."

Adrian's voice turned wistful. "I wish I could hold her in my arms as she came, or be inside her as she—" He broke off and gritted his teeth.

*You and me both, my friend.* "The thing is, we shouldn't just trap her into admitting her attraction—or not—to us but we should also make our own feelings very clear to her, lay all our cards on the table so there's no ambiguity." He couldn't stop the slow lifting of his lips into a wicked, mischievous smile. "And I know just the thing but I need some time to prepare. We should, however, be ready by next week."

## Chapter Five

Aside from confirming with the guys over the phone that they were still coming to her house next Friday night for dinner as arranged, Shelli avoided any encounter with them. She didn't know if she could continue to maintain her indifferent facade and she would just as soon not put it to the test until then. Throughout the week, she had tried to keep her mind busy and away from disturbing images but most of the time she failed, especially at night when she was about to sleep. And these thoughts, these fantasies accompanied her as she drifted off to dreamland.

There was one particular fantasy that kept surfacing in her dreams.

*Adrian and Ethan were kissing when she walked in on them in the bedroom in her sexy black, sleeveless and backless dress. She shivered with desire and her pussy dripped with her juices. She felt several drops trail down her thighs but it made her feel sexier and more wanton. She stopped at the doorway and struck a provocative pose. "Can I join you?" she asked in her best throaty, bedroom voice.*

*The men broke off, turned to her and the surprise in their eyes changed to smoldering fires of lust. She held their gazes with her eyes and somehow, without any of them moving, they were on her, tearing her dress away from her. Adrian's and Ethan's clothes disappeared by magic, their heated flesh rubbing silkily against hers.*

*Adrian captured her lips in a hard kiss while Ethan was in raptures over her breasts. He laved and licked them with his hot and skillful tongue and sucked her nipples with his hotter mouth. His hands roamed over her body and settled on the cheeks of her buttocks, kneading and squeezing. She gasped and arched and someone's fingers – must be Adrian's, since Ethan's were busy with her buttocks – slipped into her pussy and thumbed her clit.*

*She moaned with excitement and pleasure, wanting more, yearning for more.*

*Adrian's lips trailed to her neck and he sucked and bit at the sensitive skin there. His fingers grew more adventurous and two of them entered her wet channel, withdrew and thrust again.*

*She groaned at the new sensation and the tension in her belly grew unbearable and spiraled her toward heights she had never reached before. His fingers weren't enough. She wanted them both in her, both their cocks fucking her.*

*She reached between their bodies and Ethan's heartfelt grunt filled her ears when her hand closed over him. His cock was full and heavy, and it throbbed as she caressed and stroked the firm erection.*

*"I want you, Ethan." She barely recognized the harsh, needy growl as coming from her. "I want your cock in me. Now, now."*

*"Yes, yes."*

*Ethan brushed away Adrian's fingers and positioned his cock at the entrance of her pussy. His eyes glittered down at her. "Adrian..."*

*She didn't understand why he would stop or call her Adrian. Her head thrashed on the bed as her hips arched and her pussy tried to take in his cock but he held her down by the waist.*

*"Hurry, Adrian."*

*And then she knew.*

*Her heart pounded in excitement and her breath hitched just as Adrian stepped up behind Ethan and slammed his cock into Ethan's ass. The movement caused Ethan to slide his cock into her pussy. Adrian's every thrust propelled Ethan's cock deeper into her tight sheath until he was buried fully in her.*

*They lay on the bed, panting, with her legs drawn up and gripping Ethan's sides.*

*Ethan withdrew and poised above her –*

*Yes, yes, yes! She wanted him to pound into her, for him to take her hard and fast. Her heart squeezed with exquisite longing. She wanted to know his possession...his absolute mastery...*

*And she knew that even as Ethan's cock branded her and made her his, Adrian was also in the act, branding her and making her his. Adrian gathered himself to plunge again into Ethan and she readied herself to welcome Ethan back into her body and...*

She woke up.

She always woke up before consummation, her belly heavy and aching. She would scream in frustration at not being able to even achieve orgasm in her wet dream. She would then take out her dildo and slam it into her wet pussy and ride it to oblivion.

Every night without fail.

She squirmed because just reviewing it in her mind made her wet. She sighed.

She fancied them and wished she could have them but she valued their friendship too much to risk it for the sake of satisfying her curiosity and her libido. Unless they themselves were in lust with her too, like in her fantasies. Her blood quickened at the thought and her pussy dripped. But they had never said so by words or actions –

*What about that kitchen scene? Or the one in the living room?* a tiny, beguiling voice in her mind asked. *Weren't they hoping to tempt you into having sex with them?*

*No, no.* She shook her head. She deliberately recalled Ethan's words on the night of the annual dance and deduced that they were so comfortable in their own home that they went around half-naked and made love whenever and wherever the urge hit them without regard to any visitor. Perhaps they had been so lost in each other that they had forgotten she was even there. She knew denial was better than to give her tempting thoughts full rein and allow herself hope where there was none.

But seriously, how would she survive tonight, when they came over for dinner? Could she rely on them to behave themselves and not to kiss each other the moment her back was turned? She didn't know if she could restrain herself a third time when faced with the scene of two very hot men kissing one another. She groaned, cursing herself for agreeing to host the dinner in her house when they could've gone to the bar just like always. An impersonal setting was always best when one couldn't control oneself –

"Yoo hoo, are you in there?"

Shellie came back to herself to see Lizzie waving a hand in front of her face. A hot flush crept up her neck as she recalled she was supposed to be balancing her ledgers. "Sorry, I was, uh, planning tonight's menu."

"So absorbing that you didn't hear me for all of two minutes?" Lizzie teased.

"Uh, yeah." Shelli managed an embarrassed smile. "I couldn't decide what to make for dinner." Although shepherd's pie was definitely on the menu. "Speaking of which, would you like to join us?" Brilliant idea. Maybe if another person were there to act as a buffer, she wouldn't feel the urge to jump them.

Lizzie lifted her brows. "Who's us?"

"You've met them. My friends," she deliberately lowered her voice when she remembered the avid interest her colleagues had shown during the annual dance. "Adrian and Ethan."

"I'd love to, honest but I've already got a date lined up." Lizzie looked faintly regretful. "And I can't break this one."

Hope deflated. "Maybe next time," she murmured.

Just then, their boss, Mr. Everett, passed by, turned back and stopped at her desk. "Lizzie, would you mind running over to the IT department? They need these urgently." He held out a pile of folders, which Lizzie took dazedly from him, murmuring, "Sure, Mr. Everett."

He inclined his head toward her, "Shelli," then went on his way.

Shelli stared after his retreating back in perplexity. "What's come over him? He's been nothing but polite and proper toward me this week."

Lizzie snorted. "You're complaining?"

"No," Shelli admitted. "But you know how he could never keep his hands to himself. I just wondered what happened to make him change so drastically. And he shouldn't have sent you on that errand when he could've sent me."

"I'm puzzled as well but maybe it's something he ate at the annual dinner." Lizzie shrugged. "I'd better go to IT, if these files are as urgent as he made out."

As her friend and supervisor turned to go, Shelli stopped her. "Wait. Did you want me for something?"

"Oh yes, I almost forgot." Lizzie pulled out a folder from the pile in her arms, opened it to make sure it was the right one and handed it to her. "Here are the latest invoices for you to record."

"Thanks."

The hours passed quickly and before she knew it, she was at home and taking out the shepherd's pie she had baked from the oven. She had finally decided to go for simplicity with her menu but she couldn't cook everything in such a short span of time, so she had detoured to a nearby eatery on her way home and bought a plateful of honey lemon chicken. The spaghetti noodles were done the way Adrian liked them best—firm and supple—and the spaghetti sauce was simmering gently on the stove. She was expecting them any time now —

The doorbell pealed.

Speaking of the devils. She slid the pie dish onto a nearby empty rack, took off her oven mitts and hurried toward the living room. She opened the door. "Come in. What did you bring?"

Adrian held up a plastic bag and grinned. "You're in for a real treat. Lobster."

"Ooh, great! I hope you didn't cook it yourself." She had loved both of them since childhood but she wasn't blind to their faults and if she didn't want to suffer from indigestion, she would rather they bought their potluck contribution from a restaurant.

"You wound us." Ethan grimaced, then laughed. "You're in luck. We need to be hale and hearty for the evening, so no, we bought the *cooked* lobster on our way over here." Adrian turned the bag around, showed her the printed name of the gourmet restaurant and winked. "What did you cook?"

"Shepherd's pie and spaghetti. I also bought some fried chicken." She took the bag from Adrian's hands, though she noticed that Ethan was holding another bag as well. But it must not be food because he kept a tight grip on it. "I don't need to tell you to make yourself at home. Dinner will be ready in ten minutes."



Dinner was ready in less time than that. When they were seated around her small table, she suddenly realized there was no wine to go with the dishes. However, she wasn't a wine connoisseur and the only bottle of wine she had in the house was an unopened bottle of champagne that her sister had left behind previously, so she brought it down from the cupboard anyway. Adrian looked at her teasingly when she handed it over to him. "A quarter glass should do for you. We don't want you drunk like that night at your company party."

She blushed as she went around him to take her seat. Did he have to remind her of that? She supposed he would. It was the greatest boo-boo of her life thus far and anyway, all three of them had always taken great fun in teasing each other. "Yes, sir." She meekly accepted her champagne flute with its designated volume of contents while Adrian poured more of the bubbling liquid into his and Ethan's glasses. "A toast to our friendship."

"Cheers." They clinked glasses and drank.

Shelli was careful to take only a sip. "All right, let's eat!"

For a while, there was only the tinkle of cutlery against the plates and sighs of appreciation.

"Man, you sure do know how to cook, Shell," Adrian said with his mouth full of spaghetti.

She held up her champagne flute, a mischievous grin on her lips. "Does that merit another shot of the bubbly?"

"No," Adrian exclaimed at the same time that Ethan said lazily, "Uh-uh. We'd like you sober for the game later on."

Ethan's oh-so-casual voice didn't fool her one bit. *Don't ask, don't ask.* She lost her fight with curiosity. "What game?"

He winked at her. "You'll know later on."

"Aw, tell me, Ethan, please?"

"Anticipation is good, Shell, so I'm not telling." Ethan popped a piece of chicken into his mouth and chewed. Mesmerized, she stared at his sensual mouth, remembering how it had felt on her lips—firm and dry and moving with certainty over her lips. She couldn't take her gaze away, even when he swallowed and said, "Keep you in suspense so that you'll...hunger for it."

Was that a slight pause? Was it deliberate? Why did a tremor shake through her at his words? And why did "hunger" evoke images of Adrian and Ethan entwined on the sofa last week? She recalled perfectly how she had wanted to be in Adrian's place and taste Ethan's cock, to know him by touch and sensation and to be in Ethan's place as well and have Adrian make slow, wonderful love to her. Heat settled heavily in her pussy and she shuddered.

Forcing the pictures away, she refocused to see the men looking at her expectantly. Caught off guard, she snapped, "What?"

Adrian gestured at her plate. "You're not eating. Anything wrong with the lobster? You haven't touched your pie yet." His eyes twinkled. "We've still got lots of food, so don't even think of bailing out on us so early into dinner."

She forced an answering smile to her lips. "The thought never crossed my mind." She slouched and hoped her baggy t-shirt hid her aching protruding nipples. Was she supposed to be in this constant state of arousal the whole night? She wished Lizzie had broken her date and joined them. She tucked into her shepherd's pie, which tasted bland. "It's very good. Delicious. I surpassed myself this time." *Stop babbling!*

"Which reminds me." Ethan's deep, smooth voice flowed over to her.

No, she was *not* looking up again. She had great interest in her food, especially as she maneuvered her utensils to extricate lobster meat from its shell. Finally, she was able to liberate a piece and popped it into her mouth.

"The food at the party was pretty good as well."

She almost choked on the meat she was chewing. Did he have to talk about the party again? It was the worst party of her life, an experience she wanted to forget.

Adrian snorted. "Are you sure you're talking about the food? How about those women climbing all over you? I would've thought you enjoyed them more."

She gripped her fork and knife in clenched fingers, then compelled herself to relax. She would *not* be drawn into a jealous fit. Adrian had more right than she and he was perfectly complacent about the whole thing. In a moment, she was able to lift her head and say, "You're very popular with my colleagues, Ethan. All of them asked me for your number. I forgot to ask if I can give it to them."

She felt grim satisfaction to see a flare of panic crossed his face before he schooled it and said, "Sure, the more the merrier."

Somehow, that hurt. She shrugged. "Okay. I know one of you has told me previously that you also like women but if you don't mind my asking, aren't you and Adrian a couple? Shouldn't you ask his permission before you even entertain a lady?"

The two men exchanged a significant glance and lazy smiles before Ethan turned to her and answered, "We've already talked about it and we've decided we need a woman to soften our lives."

They were opening their relationship to a woman? And he and Adrian already had a discussion on the matter. They must be serious about it. Then, she felt her eyes widen as a thought struck her. "You've already decided on who it's going to be?"

Ethan merely looked at her, winked, then took a sip of his champagne.

Drat the man, he was keeping her in suspense and prolonging her agony. The need to know was a sharp knife turning its serrated edge within her. She wanted to know what this woman had that she hadn't, how she could've enticed her best friends to —

Her face fell. It didn't matter what the woman had. What was more important was what the unknown woman *didn't* have and that was friendship. She didn't have a friendship to lose, not like Shelli.

"All right, never mind," she said, subdued and went back to picking at her plate. "I'm sure I'll know about it when the time comes."

"Before the night is over, I think you'd know who."

Ethan's jovial voice grated on her nerves. "I don't want to know anymore," she said quietly. The thought of her best friends with another woman was more pain than she could bear. She didn't think she could stand knowing who it was. What if it was someone she knew? Would the pain be better or worse? How could she continue having weekly meetings with them if they brought their woman with them every time? Maybe she could have the meeting changed to once a month. Yes, once a month might be more bearable.

She hadn't thought she would feel this way, oh, more than a week ago. But that damn night of the party changed everything between them. At least, what she felt for them.

"You don't want to know?"

She could tell Ethan was perplexed at her reaction. Ordinarily, she would have squeezed them until she wrung the woman's name from their lips, as she used to do back when both Adrian and Ethan were still chasing skirts instead of each other.

"No," she said very firmly and kept her gaze on her plate.

"Uh, okay." He seemed to be disappointed but then perked up with his next statement, "Oh, yeah, forgot to apologize for two scenes that you walked into back at our house. You know, the one before the party and the one before you left our place to come back home. We sort of forgot that you were in the house and normally, whenever Adrian and I feel the urge, we just take care of it wherever we happen to be—"

"Stop!" she burst out. She was shouting at them as much as herself, for with his words, the image of Adrian and Ethan in a tight embrace came to mind, followed by her embarrassing activity and a trace of the remembered pleasure. She didn't know how much more she could take. Her emotions swung from lightheartedness to curiosity to lust to jealousy to disappointment and back to lust. Lust dominated, not to mention the need to keep said lust from tainting their friendship. She was suddenly so tired from all the effort she was expending. She glanced up at them and noted their shocked

expressions. "I, uh, apologize. Ah, just had a bad day at the office." After she said it, she cringed inwardly. Why did she feel the need to give an excuse? And she had lied as well, for goodness' sake. This was her house and she was entitled to behave any way she liked. "And, uh, I accept your apology. But please, let's not talk anymore about the party or anything that happened before or after." She pasted a determined smile on her face and turned to Adrian. "How's it going with your work? Mind sharing with us lowly mortals stories about your job as chief executive officer of your own company?" Not really dinner topic material but the very dryness of it suited her.

The conversation went pretty much the way she liked after that—tame and safe. She recovered her equilibrium, enabling her to smile at both Adrian and Ethan the rest of the meal, though she recognized that the raging heat in her pussy was just banked for the moment. She was determined not to let anything happen that would turn it into an out of control inferno.

After dinner, they cleared the table and she stacked the dishes in the dishwasher. She pressed the button for it to begin washing, then turned to the two men hovering in the kitchen. "Would you guys like some coffee?"

They exchanged a glance before Adrian answered, "No. We thought we'd go ahead with the game."

She had forgotten about it. "Okay, what is it?" She wiped her hands on a towel. "Another one of Ethan's famous board games? Don't tell me it's Monopoly, okay?" she teased because they were looking uncertain. Maybe her earlier outburst had affected them more than she realized. "I think I prefer some mindless game right now. My brain needs a rest from work."

"Well, it *is* mindless," Ethan answered dryly. "Though there may be some physical activity involved." At her questioning look, he said, "Chutes and Ladders."

"Great, nothing more strenuous than rolling the die and moving my token. You're on."

"Wait." Adrian caught her arm just as she was about to leave the kitchen.

She looked at him questioningly.

"It's...um...a heavily revised Chutes and Ladders —"

"Revised?" She frowned and looked at him skeptically. "I wasn't aware there was a revised edition."

"Would you know more than Ethan?" Collecting board games was Ethan's crazy hobby, or crazy Ethan's hobby. Whatever. The man was crazy about them. He had every one that came out on the market and whenever his sales job brought him overseas, he would be sure to bring some local board games back.

"No," she had to admit reluctantly.

"Now, where was I?" Curiouser and curiouser. It was not like Adrian to lose a thought and he was more nervous than he appeared. In fact, the hand holding her own was trembling. She frowned and looked closer at him. His green eyes, so direct, skittered away. Ah ha. He was going to say something that embarrassed him greatly. "We're, uh, we're giving you the option of looking at the game board first before you decide whether you want to play it or not. But once you're in the game, you have to play it to the finish. That's the rule. Okay?"

*There's nothing embarrassing about that speech,* she thought, perplexed. Outwardly, she nodded. "Let's go to the living room now, shall we?"

Ethan spoke from beside them. "I, uh, placed the board game in your room when you were in the kitchen getting dinner ready. Why don't we just go there to, uh, save time?"

*Save time? What are they talking about?*

She opened her mouth but before she could speak, Adrian ushered her up the stairs and overrode her protests. "Good idea."

They entered her bedroom, with Ethan on their heels. "Okay, where's the board game?" she asked irritably.

Ethan went to the right side where her wardrobe was located and where she now saw a plastic bag leaning against it, reached down and withdrew a thin, rectangular box. He took away the top and removed the board from the box. He held it in his hands for a while, then glanced at Adrian, as if to gather strength and encouragement.

Shelli had never seen such trepidation and breathless anticipation in a man as Ethan handed over the precious game board. It made her own heart beat in triple rhythm as she received it from his hands.

Taking a deep breath, she started to open it, when Adrian shut it with a loud bang. She jumped. "I forgot to say something. Whatever you'll see in there, Shell, whatever your decision, please promise you won't let it affect our friendship."

Disappointment and a certain bittersweet finality weighed like a huge stone in her stomach. She was so right to choose their friendship over lust. Adrian's words practically confirmed it.

She nodded blindly. Whatever she found on the game board, surely it wouldn't be worse than the painful certainty that her lust for them was never going to be requited.

Adrian took his hand away and moved to stand beside Ethan. If she wasn't mistaken, the two of them seemed to be holding their breaths expectantly.

She opened the game board. She stared at the boxes, at the elegantly drawn ladders but she didn't *see* anything.

Ethan cleared his throat. "Uh, that's our version."

"Your version?" She frowned up at him.

"The messages. We revised the messages in the boxes and for those boxes originally without a message, we added one."

She looked down with effort, knowing now the reason for their anxiety. They must've wanted her opinion as a game player on how the revised game would be received in the market. Perhaps Ethan was even thinking of quitting his job and going

into designing board games but she was a little bit hurt that he hadn't seen fit to share the process with her.

Now that he mentioned it, she noticed slivers of paper taped on each of the squares. She read the messages on a few without their penetrating her brain. When some sort of meaning trickled through, she stopped, held her breath and started again from the first square.

*French kiss the person on your left.*

*Do a belly dance while taking off all your clothes.*

From squares 94 to 99 – *If anybody still has some clothes on, it's time to take them all off.*

Square 100, the finale – *Everyone make love, no exception. Everyone wins!*

Instead of the usual “take another two steps” or “go back to square number three”, the whole damn board was replete with erotic suggestions and each command was heating her up more and more. She couldn't stop the pictures from flashing – her going down on Ethan, Adrian going down on her, the three of them locked in a threesome and exploding with the force of their orgasms.

She shuddered.

Her comment? There was a whole adult market out there for this kind of board game. She wondered why no one had thought of it before.

But it was so unfair of them to torture her like this, when she was already so hot for them. How could they ask her to play –

Wait. They asked her to play. Knowing what the board game entailed, they asked her to play. It meant – It meant –

A searing rush of joy sped through her, along with a deep, throbbing longing. She laughed out loud, an excruciating happiness that found expression in glee. She gazed at them, knowing that before the night was over, she would belong to them and they to her. She nodded. “Yes.”



## Chapter Six

They settled down to play on the floor beside her bed because from the moment she'd said "yes", nobody could back out of the game. They had to wait until one of them reached the final square but the wait was going to be riddled with so much tension she knew they were going to jump one another as soon as the token hit the hundredth square. Maybe even before then. But they could afford to wait because each knew what the final stake was. Now she realized why they insisted on playing in her bedroom. *The location is absolutely perfect.*

As Ethan arranged their tokens beside the first square, she was beginning to get nervous because this was new territory she was exploring and she only had that brief flare of lust in their eyes to comfort her. She wasn't aware she was fidgeting until Adrian reached over and clasped his hand over hers. "It's okay, Shell. Let's try this out, in the spirit of the game. If it doesn't work out," he shrugged fatalistically, "then it doesn't. But whatever happens, we're still friends, remember that."

She nodded, reassured a bit by his solid presence. He gazed steadily into her and she could feel herself drowning in the green depths of his eyes. He raised a hand and caressed her cheek with one finger, burning a fiery trail that dipped to her chin. "But we do want you very much, Shell, very, very much. So much that it's hard to breathe sometimes."

She swallowed. Hard.

Ethan handed her the die. "You go first."

She shook it a bit in her trembling hand, then let it loose. It rolled across the board and stopped at "five".

*Take off your blouse-shirt.*

"That's easy." She hooked her fingers under the hem of her shirt and, in one smooth move, raised it over her head and threw it behind her. The action might be easy but facing the men's burning looks wasn't, especially as they examined her at their leisure, their gazes touching on her creamy complexion from her shoulders to her navel and lingering on her breasts. Her nipples hardened behind the silk cup of her bra. "Next," she said breathlessly.

Ethan grinned. "My, you've become very eager to play, suddenly."

His teasing comment was just the right thing to dispel the last of her unease. She was playing with her best friends again, just like always but now, they were playing with fire.

"Get to it, Ethan. No slacking now."

"Wouldn't dream of it."

He threw a "six". *French kiss the person on your right.* He motioned to Adrian. "Come here, lover."

Shelli held her breath. The moment their lips met, she melted. There was something very erotic about seeing two powerful men kiss. She couldn't see them frenching but it was there in the way Ethan cupped Adrian's head and in the way Adrian clung to his lover. Heat and tension mounted in her with every second that their lips remained fused together.

Finally, they broke apart but her belly remained heavy, painful.

Adrian also threw a "six". "Wow, my night for kissing," he commented just before he drew her into his arms and pressed his lips down on her.

He kissed her like he had the night of the party, savoring her with passion, devouring her and drinking from her mouth. He kissed her like there was no tomorrow. It thrilled her to be wanted this much. She hadn't done more than stand in his arms the last time but now, she did her own share of ravishing. She was kissing Adrian, finally and he tasted so good. He tasted like heaven. He *was* heaven.

Ethan had to pry them apart and he scowled when he handed her the die. The scowl soon turned to a leer after she rolled and he moved her token to the corresponding square. "Lose the clothes, sweetheart."

She squawked. "So fast?"

"That's what you rolled."

"Fine." She stood up and took off her jeans and panties in one smooth move. She sat down quickly but they could still see the dark blonde thatch at the juncture of her thighs. Her embarrassment disappeared though at the smoldering looks of lust in their eyes. Highly aroused, she wasn't surprised to discover she had started creaming.

The tension in the room notched two levels higher.

"Pretty," Ethan breathed. He reached out a hand, then dropped it when it was still midway to its goal.

She knew she ought to remove her bra—she had forgotten it in the embarrassed move to cover her pussy—but she couldn't move, not even if her life had depended on it. She was hypnotized, caught, by their intense gazes.

Still looking at her, Ethan groped blindly for the die, then threw it. He glanced down long enough to move his token. "Lie down, sweetie."

"Why?" Her gaze flitted from one man to the other, exhilarating in their desire for her.

"I need to get between your legs." His breath wheezed out, as though in pain.

Her heart quickened. He was going to fuck her. Now. Right this minute. Yes, yes, yes!

She lay down on her back and slowly opened her legs to his gaze. He sucked in his breath at the view. She rolled her hips tantalizingly to entice him further. *C'mon, Ethan, come fuck me.*

A moment later, she was bewildered when he didn't stand up to shuck his jeans. The soft slithering sound on the carpet told her instead that he was crawling and his

destination was between her legs. His intent was made known when she felt his thick hair brush against her inner thigh. She held her breath until he kissed the soft flesh, then she let it out in a whoosh, his actual touch more exciting than her imagination.

“Lovely, lovely smell, Shell. I could die here.” His fingers touched her, opening her up for his mouth and his warm breath brushed over her pussy one second before his mouth pressed against her slick folds and his tongue began its skillful magic. He delved into her folds with expertise, knowing where to touch and how to touch. He flicked over her clitoris once, twice and sent her soaring but he always withdrew before she could reach the shattering level.

“Ah, ah, ah...” She shrieked and writhed with abandon. Her hands reached for anything to hold on to and they were captured by Adrian who steadied her and chided, “You left on your bra.” His deft hand unclasped the front hook and lifted the cups away and before she could say anything, he took one breast into his hot furnace of a mouth and sucked. The deep pull of his mouth sliced through her body to pool at her pussy. Their combined attack threw her for a loop and she resumed her wriggling and twisting with renewed vigor, aided by the most incredible tension that lodged in her belly.

Men had gone down on her before and still more men had sucked her breasts but none had brought her to the edge so quickly, none had kept her there so magnificently on the brink of a fall and none had...left her so bereft so instantly.

“What are you doing!” she shouted. She sat up and tried to crawl over to where Ethan had retreated, licking his lips with an expression of bliss on his face. But Adrian clamped his hands around her arms from behind and made her stay put. She struggled. She was incensed beyond belief at how they teased her, brought her to boiling point, then withdrew from her. She demanded satisfaction and she wanted it now. “Let me go!”

“Sorry, Shell,” Adrian said in a ragged voice. “No orgasm until someone reaches the finish line.”

“Whose stupid rule?” She twisted her head to look up at him.

"Ours."

"Rules are made to be broken."

Adrian shook his head. "Not this one."

"You cheated," she accused, determined to find all the loopholes so she could get what she wanted. "You sucked my breast but you shouldn't even be in on the action."

He grinned, unrepentant. "Your breasts called out to me, sweet, shouting of neglect. How could I ignore them?" He released her arms and reached over her shoulders to cup her aching mounds in his palms. "So beautiful." Despite herself, she moaned and arched into his hands, her bra falling to the ground with her action. He thumbed her nipples into prominence and caused the hunger to deepen. "I'm sorry I didn't notice before."

"Adrian," Ethan growled from his place. "Your turn. Quick, before we all explode from unreleased sexual tension. Anticipation is good but this is ridiculous."

"It was your idea but maybe we should have used two dice, instead of one." Adrian moved away from her, though not without a great deal of reluctance at taking his hands away from her flesh, she was glad to note. "Oh, happy move, I got the longest ladder and up I go. We'll reach the finish line sooner than you think, Ethan." He stood up and shucked his jeans and boxers without an ounce of self-consciousness. "Your turn, Shell."

Shelli couldn't move. For the second time that night, she couldn't stop staring at something and that something was now Adrian's cock. She hadn't seen it properly the last time and now that she could, it was beautiful. The long length of flesh stood proudly erect against his stomach, purple at the tip, thick and fat and mouth-wateringly delicious.

A need so acute shafted into her and she moaned deep in her throat. Her pussy dripped and clenched. She wanted him, wanted that enormous cock in her, stroking her, filling her —

"Shelli!" Adrian's sharp voice recalled her.

*How could he not be delirious with lust like I am?* she thought resentfully until she saw that the green of his eyes had turned dark with the roiling of deep emotions and strong urges held powerfully in check.

Wordlessly, she picked up the die and rolled. Her token landed in a box that read... She could scarcely breathe...

Their eyes met and held across the small space between them. She moved toward him as though in a dream. She was going to suck Adrian's cock, hold it in her hands —

It was hotter than she thought. The heat practically scorched her hand but she wouldn't relinquish it for all the ice in the world. She moved her hand reverently up and down the length, amazed that each throb and pulse was echoed by the clenching of her pussy. She wanted to explore every inch of his cock and so she traced the big vein that ran its length with wonder and spent some time examining the purple, mushroom head. She squeezed experimentally and was gratified to hear Adrian's groan. She squeezed some more and a drop of pre-cum oozed out at the tip of his cock.

"Are you gonna sit there and admire my cock?" Adrian rasped.

"Huh?" She heard his voice from a great distance and her automatic response was to words she didn't understand.

"It says there on the board to suck my cock..."

The rest was lost on a sigh as, entranced by the tiny drop, she leaned forward and licked it delicately. The moment her tongue touched his cock however, he jerked and began to pump. Her head snapped backed in surprise.

"Hold, hold." Ethan's hand jumped in between them and he did something to Adrian's body but she didn't know what and Adrian's hips stayed on the carpet. "That's it. Release your hand, baby." Ethan gently circled her wrist with his hand until she let go of Adrian's cock.

"Damn you, Ethan," Adrian growled.

"It's for your own good," Ethan shot back. He moved her back to her place some distance away, saying soothingly to her, "I don't think Adrian could hold on if you were to suck him, baby, and you know the number one rule."

*No orgasm.*

Despite herself, she felt a savage pleasure for turning the tables on one of them at least but Adrian's groans of pain did nothing to assuage her burning need. She realized then that the rule had backfired on her, just as it had most probably backfired on Ethan awhile back.

She wasn't clear on what happened after that, as she was in a fever of longing, her skin burning and her mind chanting, "Hurry up, hurry up. Next, next, next." She knew Adrian sucked her breasts, both of them this time and he took his time about it and she French-kissed Ethan and it was just as hot and wild as when she had kissed Adrian. Ethan also sucked her fingers one by one while looking into her eyes and the eroticism of his act tingled her spine down to her pussy. She thought Ethan went down on Adrian once, or was it the other way around? She couldn't be sure.

Finally, finally, Adrian's token reached "97".

*If anybody still has some clothes on, it's time to take them all off.*

She thought that was a nice touch. It would ensure that everyone was ready for the final square, when, by this time, everyone would've been salivating to get there.

Shelli had already lost all her clothes, so she watched as Adrian shrugged out of his shirt. His tanned muscular body was a perfect fit to his lower half and she wasn't surprised to discover that her fingers itched to dive into his hairy chest and luxuriate in the springy curls.

"You look like you want to eat him for breakfast, lunch and dinner." Ethan's wry voice broke her fascinated stare. "What about me?"

Shelli's head swiveled around and caught her breath. No, Ethan was the one who had gone down on Adrian, was her first incongruous thought, because if Adrian had gone down on Ethan, she would have seen Ethan and she hadn't *seen* him before.

If Adrian's body was gorgeous, Ethan's was more than gorgeous, a perfect symmetry that boasted of years of hard training at the gym in between rigorous physical exercise. She knew he loved to swim and to play tennis but she hadn't guessed how it would reflect on his body. Now she knew and her belly grew heavier and the ache between her thighs intensified. His broad shoulders tapered down to a slim waist and long, powerful legs. His flat abs practically begged for her caress but it was his erect cock—longer but leaner than Adrian's—that snagged her attention. She wanted to hold it in her hands and discover for herself if it was as hard as it looked, if its heat would match that in Ethan's eyes and if she could take it in and how far it would go in her, how wide he could stretch her—

She met his dark, stormy eyes and remembered his question. She drew in a trembling breath. "I'm hungry enough for the two of you."

"You'd better be." It sounded like a warning—and a promise.

The next two rounds were hazy. She couldn't even remember what she did or to whom she did it. She was at a fever pitch of excitement for the last square on that board, the tension drawn so fine and taut that she was ready to snap at the slightest provocation. She had never prayed so hard in her entire life than for Adrian to roll at least a "three". A "three" would mean reaching the final square, which guaranteed a free for all.

*Everyone make love, no exception. Everyone wins!*

She didn't think she could take another round, her nerves were already too frayed. *Please, please, please. Three, three, three...*

Adrian cupped the die in his hand and shook it, then holding her eyes with his own, he opened his hand, palm down. The die rolled on the game board, over and over. With bated breath, she waited until it stopped.

Five.

For a moment, no one moved. She couldn't even think what it meant for a while, so intent was she on a "three." Then, Ethan jerked to a standing position and rushed to



their bag. He rummaged inside it frantically and withdrew a box, which he tore open with hasty fingers and fished out a square foil. Striding over to where she was still sitting on the floor, he dragged her up and pushed her toward the bed. She stumbled backward, her legs hit the bed and her back landed on the mattress. "Perfect." After putting on the condom, he moved into position, his eyes alight with a glittering excitement and unabashed lust and his jaw clenched with the effort to control. "I'm sorry, love." He held his cock in his hand and guided it to her entrance.

The swollen head touched her folds and her insides clenched. She was breathing hard too hard from anticipation, hardly believing that the moment was here. Now.

"I know this is your first time with us but I can't wait," he confessed through gritted teeth as he inched into her pussy. Her fingers clenched on her bedspread, fisting handfuls of the cloth. *More, more.*

"I...don't want you to wait," she told him breathlessly.

"I mean—"

"Come into me, Ethan and stop talking," she ordered.

He surged into her in one elegant move and buried all his cock in her tight sheath. They both cried out the moment they were joined hip to hip. Her pussy shifted and adjusted to accommodate his girth. She was delirious with sensations, which bombarded her from every nerve ending in her pussy. Full. Stretched. Complete.

Oh, heaven.

*Heaven.*

"I can't believe this, sweet--you're so tight." Ethan groaned above her, his eyes tightly closed with his head rolled back. She had never seen a sight more beautiful than him.

"Ethan, Ethan, Ethan..." A trailing laugh toward the end. "I couldn't believe we'd be in this situation one day, with you fucking me." She wrapped her legs around his waist and rolled her hips experimentally. Ethan groaned. "I can't believe both of you

are having sex with me.” He pumped into her involuntarily for several strokes before he stopped and held himself completely still, sweat rolling off his forehead in big drops. “So good,” she whimpered. “I want you Ethan, want you, want you...” She thrashed her head on the bed, her insides roiling with need. She wanted to move, to shatter, to come apart in his arms. His cock felt so good in her pussy, so huge and filling her up so completely. “Adrian...I want Adrian in my ass.” Having two cocks plunging in and out of her had been her hottest fantasy the past week.

“Demanding lady, aren’t you?” Ethan managed a grin, seemingly pleased with her idea. He scooped her up in his arms and staggered backward until he was half-sitting on the bed with his back to the wall. “Adrian, for god’s sake, hurry up.” Her hands came up of her own volition to clasp around his neck while his hands roamed down her bare back and settled on her buttocks. He engaged her lips in a torrid kiss while he pried her butt cheeks apart and Adrian prepared her for his entry.

She gasped when the cool liquid hit her ass but other than that, she didn’t allow anything to hinder her enjoyment of the kiss or the sensation of Ethan’s hard, naked body against hers, the minute strokes of his cock in her pussy or the impossible tension that kept bearing down on her —

Adrian’s thick rubber-encased cock eased up into her ass. The pain from his entry cooled the tension a little and she moaned because it had been awhile since she’d had anyone up there.

“Easy, sweet,” Adrian murmured against her ear and Ethan whispered his own reassurances. “Just push out...relax....there...one more...good...”

And when Adrian was completely buried in her ass, the three of them were still. “Oh god oh god oh god oh god...” She sobbed at the pleasurable sensations of having two cocks in her, separated only by a thin membrane. The tension was back, sharper, edgier, more unbearable. “Move, move, please.”

They moved. There might have been rhythm at the start, a fine counterpoint of one cock plunging in with the other withdrawing but after a few strokes, both men must

have realized the futility of it. This was their first time together and they were too hot, too eager, too *hungry* for each other.

The result was frenzied fucking, no orderly rhythm to gradually increase the pressure but an explosion that hit her right between the eyes and straight to her pussy. Ethan plunged and thrust with no finesse into her and she gripped and gloved him with her muscles as she writhed and pumped her hips to urgent music of her own. Adrian's desperate strokes from behind escalated her destruction as her rectal muscles contracted madly around his cock.

Sounds permeated the room—bed creaking, headboard banging against the wall, bodies slapping, panting breaths, groans, moans, cries and shouts.

The tension built to an excruciating pitch and the desperate way they pushed into her body drove her spiraling upward until she screamed and shattered around them, milking both their cocks with her body. Both men surged into her, one after the other and shouted her name as their cum jetted into the rubbers.

She rolled her head back onto Adrian's shoulders and enjoyed the mini-orgasms that shook her body as they moved inside her, no matter how minute the actions. Their cocks were still inside her, though both were shrinking fast. Ethan dropped his head on her cleavage and nuzzled her breasts and she turned her head sideways to meet Adrian's lips for a scorching kiss.

After their chaotic three-way activity, somehow, someone maneuvered them so that they lay sprawled on the bed, one man on each side of her. For herself, she had no more energy to move but she couldn't contain the idiotic smile from splitting her face. Amazing. The sex was simply, beautifully amazing. She hadn't known making love with her best friends would feel so wonderful. Marvelous. If she had, she probably wouldn't have wasted time and would have dragged both of them to her bed long ago.

She thought for a moment. No, probably not, because it was only at her company's annual dance that she had begun to look at them in a different way. If not for that

dance, they wouldn't have known the explosive heights they could reach making love with each other.

Perhaps she should forgive Peter.

She giggled.

Ethan opened a bleary eye. "What's so funny?"

"I was thinking it's a good thing my queen-sized bed could hold us all," she improvised, though the thought did cross her mind, sometime after they had all fallen onto it. All three of them were pressed close together in bed and their limbs were entwined around one another such that she couldn't tell which leg belonged to whom.

He managed a smile. "We're still friends?"

"Still friends," she confirmed. But she knew that was because each of them wanted this. She didn't want to imagine the outcome if one of them had an objection to their making love with each other.

"That's what's been holding you back, isn't it?" Adrian asked gently from behind her.

"Yes." His hand stole into hers and she tightened her grip. "I was so very afraid you didn't reciprocate my desire for you and I didn't want to ruin our friendship."

He kissed her between the shoulder blades. "Don't you know there's no chance of that happening?"

Ethan was staring at her directly and the intensity of the naked desire in his eyes took her breath away. "Don't you know that best friends make the very best of lovers?"

"Now I do." She managed a tremulous smile. "The very best."

## About the Author

Madison Blake is a firm believer in love and happy endings. That's why she loves stories wherein the characters go through adversities to emerge victorious in the end. An eternal optimist, she always tries to see the positive side in every negative situation, the silver lining in every dark cloud, so to speak. She has gone through a lot of failures and disappointments in life, but there is one thing she would never give up on: the fulfillment of her dream, which is to be a multi-published and award-winning author.

Holding a day job means that she doesn't get much time to write, so Madison tries to cram her free time with as much writing as she can. Even so, she would make time to read her favorite genre (romance), especially when she's experiencing writer's block. She loves to read and write about strong heroines, and she's on the eternal quest for the powerful, attractive, mysterious, yummy hero, the kind of man who'll make you sigh and say, "He's the one."

The author 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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