

A shirtless man with a hairy chest is the central figure, shown from the chest up. He is positioned on the left side of the frame. The background is a dark, snowy night scene with a path and several streetlights. The lighting is warm and golden, highlighting the man's skin and the snow. The text "CHRISTIANE FRANCE" is in the top right, and "A TASTE OF HONEY" is at the bottom.

CHRISTIANE
FRANCE

A TASTE
OF HONEY

A Taste Of Honey
by Christiane France

Amber Quill Press

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by Christiane France

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A TASTE OF HONEY

By

CHRISTIANE FRANCE

* * * *

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A TASTE OF HONEY

Antoine Auguste, *Marquis de Vernnay*, lay on the chaise in his mother's bedchamber, playing with his stubbornly unresponsive cock while he stared up at the white-painted ceiling. He could not recall even one single second in his entire twenty-four years when he'd felt quite so miserable and depressed as he did at this particular moment. He was bored with his friends, bored with the stream of simpering young ladies his mother constantly paraded before him in the vain hope he would take one of them to be his wife, and bored with the phony screams and crocodile tears of the whores at the house on *la rue Charles V*.

The girls in that house were supposed to be the best in all of Paris—or so Antoine had been told by his friend, de Sade—trained and experienced in the complex desires of men to the point he would have thought they understood a little pain increased their mutual pleasure a thousand-fold. But no, the merest touch of the whip on their delicate little backsides, the sight of the tiniest drop of blood, or the odor of burning pussy-hair from the brush of a hot poker, and they were screaming for *madame*, and *madame* was doubling, and sometimes even tripling her fees, then threatening to send for the police if it happened again.

Antoine wouldn't have minded so much about *madame's* charges or her threats, if he'd received at least some satisfaction for his money. But lately, it seemed all his efforts were in vain, no matter what new devices he used or bizarre

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efforts he made on the basis of suggestions made by de Sade and others in their group of friends. If he was lucky enough to get an erection, which was happening less and less often, the whore made such a fuss about his methods he had to stop what he was doing to her, wait for her to collect herself and leave, and finish the job himself. Then there were those totally appalling days, like today, when he couldn't even get his dick to whimper a little, never mind actually stand up. At his age, the situation was embarrassing to say the least. He was only twenty-four—a young man in his sexual prime, not some doddering, old fart to whom sex was only a memory.

With a sigh, he got off the chaise, pushed his flaccid penis back into hiding and fastened his breeches. He needed to find something or someone more intriguing and more titillating than those bitches on *la rue Charles V*. It was too bad the pretty one he'd met that day at lunch, the one he'd intended to take away from de Gaspard, had spoiled his fun by running away. The instant she'd picked up that fork and stabbed his hand, he'd known she was the one. The one person who just might give him the kind of challenge he'd long been seeking—a woman with fire in her eyes, passion in her blood, and a mind of her own. She was not the type to let him have everything his own way, and that was exactly what he wanted and needed. He could even imagine her picking up the whip ... practicing until she could make the thin strip of leather sing as it passed through the air and then, once she had the knack, she'd use it to caress his buttocks until they sang like a cage full of larks.

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As he smiled in remembrance, he picked at the tiny scab still remaining on the back of his hand, and already he could feel a stirring between his legs. Returning to the chaise, he re-opened his knee-breeches and released his now hard and throbbing shaft.

Closing his eyes, he began to caress himself as he recalled the pretty one's face and features, then tried to imagine those soft, sensuous lips and darting pink tongue paying homage to the magnificent fellow nudging against his hand, begging for release. She would suck him into her mouth, one millimeter at time, and when he was all the way in, she would play with his balls, while she teased him with her tongue. And then, just before he came, he would withdraw from her mouth, open her legs and feast on the hidden delights waiting for him there.

A shudder ran through his body as he remembered the miniscule taste of her that he'd managed to steal that day at lunch. She'd tasted delicious, like strawberries and cream. The memory made his fingers move even faster as he thought about tasting her again. He imagined his tongue, slipping between her folds, licking and nuzzling until her juices flowed like a river and he could sup his fill. He'd wait until the very last moment before entering her hot, dark depths, and when he did, he'd empty himself inside her and just maybe...

His fingers had taken on a life of their own, and he forgot about the girl as they began moving faster and faster until, finally, he pushed himself up, over the edge and into the longest-lasting and most glorious orgasm he'd had in months.

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As the wonderful feeling gradually faded and he flopped back against the cushions, tired and spent from his exertions, he realized this was the first time he'd managed to satisfy himself without the use of elaborate rituals or devices since he could not remember when.

Perhaps that was the answer to his problem—he needed something or someone who excited and inspired genuine passion in him, rather than a jaded, nameless whore who made him feel like a pervert and a freak, a man incapable of producing a man-sized orgasm. Remembering the girl at lunch had given him a moment's pleasure. But a moment was all it would ever be. Even if he'd bedded her once or twice, the attraction wouldn't have lasted. She'd have faded from his memory as fast as any other pretty whore.

But then he'd always had trouble in that way. When he'd confided his secret to de Sade, his friend had introduced him to the orgies, the rituals and the devices in the belief it would cure the problem. For a while, it had helped. For a while, he'd felt as invincible as the next man—he'd even succeeded in outdoing de Sade in some respects by thinking up wilder and even more outlandish practices. Now, he was bored with it, sick of the game playing and all the other nonsense, because the truth was he could no longer even count on that to bring him the kind of release he craved.

Perhaps his problem lay in the fact that he adored sex, but had never felt comfortable with women and their constant whining and complaints. Even within his own family and class, he'd never found a woman capable of capturing his attention for more than a few minutes at best. He'd never met one with

whom he shared a common interest, or whose conversation progressed beyond the latest rumor or scandal, which was the real reason why marriage had never appealed to him. He wanted a partner, a confidant, and a lover with whom he could discuss subjects of interest and share his innermost thoughts and fears. But if not with a woman, then with whom? Must he follow the example of some of his friends and resort to the attentions of a willing young man on occasion?

He wanted something new and different—new friends and new amusements, and different avenues of pleasure to pursue. And while he was perfectly willing, even eager, to experience sex with another man, the question was where did he find a suitable partner?

He wanted someone who could give him more than the momentary satisfaction provided by encounters with whores or even a mistress. He wanted to feel true passion, he wanted to care whether the person lived or died, he wanted to feel their anger, their despair, he wanted to both need and desire such other person with an intensity he could only dream of—deep, emotional feelings that would control his life and hold him in thrall, hating and regretting each and every moment they were out of one another's sight. He wanted the kind of passionate, committed relationship that would perhaps, if he took the greatest care of such a treasure, last him a lifetime.

He had friends, some of whom were married, who he knew preferred sexual encounters with other men and were reputed to take their pleasures wherever they found them—in the stables, a dark stairway, or even an attic or outhouse. He'd even heard of such an accommodation being made available

to anyone who might be interested at the house on *Charles V*. But he couldn't ask any of the men he knew for advice or instruction, for the simple reason it was unlikely anyone of them would openly admit to enjoying anything most people considered a weakness.

Unsure where to start searching for what he had in mind, he returned to his rooms and summoned his manservant. The perfect liaison would be with another man of his own class, and while everyone knew that type of secret liaison existed, he had no idea how the arrangement began, let alone the mechanics of how it worked. He could hardly approach another man and pay court the way he would with a woman who'd caught his eye.

After his manservant had helped him out of his soiled clothes and into something suitable for taking a drive in his carriage or visiting friends, he said casually, "I need your advice, Jacques. I'm feeling dreadfully bored and out of sorts, too. I need to find something different and interesting to occupy my mind. Something that will restore my good humor and make me laugh. Do you have any suggestions? You always seem to know what I like. Perhaps you've heard of something. Something you think might amuse me, yes?"

The manservant, who had attended *le marquis'* needs since childhood, gave his charge a knowing grin. "I'm sorry, my lord. If the house on *la rue Charles V* no longer captures your interest, I'm afraid I know of nothing better. And as for something new, I know of nothing ... except..."

"Except what? Spit it out, man. A new café? What?" Maybe that new club he'd overheard the odd whisper about. He

didn't know where it was located, its true purpose, how one gained admittance, or even if it actually existed. But if it did exist, he was certain Jacques would know.

"Not a café, *m'sieu*. A new club where I understand fashionable young men such as you can meet and perhaps play cards, or simply enjoy each other's company. I'm not sure what they do, my lord, or even if it offers anything you might find to your taste. But I think I may know someone who does. If you wish, I'll speak with him and find out the details, then you may go there and see for yourself."

* * * *

Later in the day, his manservant returned with a little more information. But Antoine waited until well after nightfall before ordering his carriage and giving the driver the address in Montmartre that Jacques assured him was a new and exclusive club for men. Whether it was the same club Antoine had been hearing about recently or something else entirely, he had no way of knowing. What he did know was that it behooved him to proceed with extreme caution. There had been a lot of unrest in the city of late, and Antoine half-suspected the club could be a meeting place for young men to indulge in dangerous political talk. If his suspicions proved correct, he would leave immediately.

However, there was also the very real possibility the club had been opened for an entirely different reason—one that nothing to do with politics or traitorous thoughts. The few intriguing scraps he'd overheard related to a secret club that catered to certain sexual tastes rather than politics, and

perhaps this was it. Until now, he'd had neither the opportunity nor the courage to investigate the rumors.

The address in Montmartre turned out to be a tall, narrow house on a quiet side street. The windows were all tightly shuttered and, for an instant, Antoine was tempted to tell his driver to leave. But just then the door of the house opened and a liveried footman trotted down the steps and opened the carriage door.

"*M'sieu?*" the man inquired with an interrogative lift of thick, dark eyebrows.

"Is this the new club I've heard about?" Antoine asked, not knowing what else to say.

"Perhaps. Did someone recommend you?"

"Not exactly."

"You heard about us somewhere?"

"I've heard a few comments at parties and in the *cafés*. And I believe my manservant may have mentioned something."

"And you wish to come in?"

"Umm..." Antoine knew better than to bring the king's disfavor on his mother by involving himself in politics or negative talk directed against the royal family. But with a few carefully posed questions, perhaps he could discover the real purpose of the club without actually going inside. "I'm not sure. I'm looking for a new diversion. Something that will amuse me and spare me the boredom of a long evening that would otherwise be spent alone."

"Ah." A knowing smile teased the footman's thin lips. "I assume you realize there are no women available here, *m'sieu.*?"

"None?"

"Not even one, *m'sieu.*"

"And what about conversation? Will I be expected to partake in stuffy, boring conversations on subjects of which I have no knowledge and, therefore, no interest in discussing?"

"No, *m'sieu.* Whatever reason prompts one of our guests to seek us out, I can assure you it is not for the conversation."

So, there *had* been a little truth to all that whispering. "I see."

"Do you still wish to come inside?"

"Why not?"

"And your name, *m'sieu*?"

After telling his driver to wait, Antoine gave the man his name, along with the bag of coins his manservant had assured him was the price of entry. He then allowed the footman to assist him out of the carriage, feeling a sharp thrill of anticipation as he followed him through the door and into the building.

He'd heard talk of houses where men were trained in the art of pleasuring other men, but it hadn't amounted to more than a little ambiguous chatter and a lot of lewd sniggering, so he had no real idea what to expect. Inside, it was much darker and more mysterious than the house on *la rue Charles V*, but at least the *salon* to which the footman showed him was a tiny scrap brighter. Enough for him to see there were a

dozen or more men scattered around the room, either standing or lolling on the chairs, but not enough for him to recognize anyone from this distance.

Just then, a young boy appeared at his side. "Would you care for something to drink, *m'sieu.*?"

"No, thank you." Antoine wasn't about to compound his foolishness in coming to a place like this alone by accepting drinks from unknown sources. For now, he needed to keep his head clear and his wits about him. If he decided to leave at some point, he could do so without difficulty.

As he looked around the room, unsure whether he should sit down and await events, or strike up a conversation with one of the other men, he felt a hand glide down his back and come to rest on his buttocks.

"You are looking for company, *mon ami*?"

Antoine turned toward the speaker, a sleepy-eyed young man with his hair pulled back in a simple queue, and informally dressed in tan breeches and a partially opened, loose white top that looked rather like a nightshirt. Antoine guessed the man to be perhaps two or three years his junior. "Company?"

The young man smiled and lifted his slim shoulders in an offhand shrug as he moved his hand to the juncture of Antoine's thighs. "If you wish, we can sit here and talk. Or, if you prefer, we can go to one of the private rooms and get to know one another better." He paused, his mobile lips twisting in a faint grimace. "Alternatively, if you prefer, I can introduce you to someone else."

"No. No one else."

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Until tonight, Antoine had never been touched in so intimate a manner by a member of his own sex. He'd never experienced even the slightest urge to be touched like this, and he couldn't believe he was allowing it to happen now.

But the truth was, he found the experience rather stimulating, and he suspected the man knew it, because the moment the fellow inserted his hand between Antoine's legs, Antoine had started to stiffen and grow. There was something special about the man now caressing his cock, something in his eyes, and something mysterious and addictive about his touch that Antoine couldn't identify, but he knew he didn't want the man to stop. Although poorly dressed compared to everyone else Antoine had seen in this establishment so far, the young stranger had the most wondrous golden skin that appeared to glow in the candlelight.

Antoine's mouth felt suddenly dry, and he rubbed his tingling fingertips down the side of his white satin breeches. One glance was enough to tell him that the man's skin was the kind that just begged to be touched and petted. He could just imagine how it felt ... soft like satin, and it probably smelled wonderful, too—a combination of jasmine, roses, verbenas, cinnamon and clove and a thousand other exotic spices and scents.

"We give only first names here. Mine's Honey," the man said. "What's yours?"

"Antoine." He sighed as the man opened his breeches and slipped a hand inside, and he felt the delicious touch of cool fingers slide down his unusually responsive prick.

"You've never done this before?"

"No."

"But you've found your way here tonight, so perhaps it's something you've been wanting to do, yes?"

"I don't know. Perhaps."

Honey wrapped his free arm around Antoine's waist and drew him closer. "You like what I'm doing to you?"

Up close like this, Honey smelled even better than Antoine had anticipated—a mixture of herbs and spices that made him feel a little intoxicated. And the touch of Honey's soft, satiny skin against his own was like nothing he'd experienced before—not even from the most costly whore. "I'm not sure. It feels a trifle strange to be touched in this way by a man."

"And what about this?" Releasing Antoine's dick, Honey pushed his hand farther between Antoine's legs, inserted a fingertip up his butt and wiggled it around. "You are very tight. I like that. It's good."

Antoine felt light-headed with shock at the unexpected intrusion into his rectum.

Honey laughed and kissed him on the mouth. "Come, let us go somewhere more private, and I will show you."

Antoine experienced a bit of nervousness at the thought of going off somewhere with a man he didn't know, a man obviously determined to seduce him. "Can we not do whatever it is in here?"

"Not unless you want to suck my dick in public."

Antoine took a backward step. "I don't want to suck it here or in your room. I'm sorry, but..."

"Don't be sorry. Just come with me, and I promise in no time at all you will want to suck me just as desperately as I

want to suck you," Honey insisted. Taking Antoine's hand, he urged him to the door and into the hallway beyond.

"And if I don't?"

"Fear not, *mon ami*, I won't force you. And I'm the one who should apologize. I fear I have this dreadful habit of going too fast, and now I've frightened you, yes?"

"No, I wouldn't say I'm frightened."

"No? But I think you're a little nervous. A little unsure, too, I imagine. After all, this is your first time."

A short way down the hall, Honey stopped, opened a door and waited for Antoine to precede him into a small, candlelit room.

But once inside the chamber, Antoine felt the first fluttering of panic. He was shaking, he felt sick, dizzy, and he needed to leave. Now. He had no idea what had possessed him to take such a dangerous step as coming to a place like this. Even worse, he could not imagine what was about to happen to him now. Whatever it was, he'd lost his nerve. He just wanted to go home to his boring, unsatisfying life. He...

"Calm down," Honey murmured, his magic fingers dipping into Antoine's breeches and extracting his now-shriveled cock. "Give me a second to turn this little man back into a big brave soldier again, and you'll feel much better. You'll see."

Along with his warm, golden skin and delicious scent, Honey had a soft, singsong accent when he spoke that intrigued Antoine. "Where are you from?"

"I am a Creole from the Antilles. The beautiful island of Martinique in the blue Caribbean Sea. My previous master was a ship's captain, and I was his cabin boy. Unfortunately,

the captain lost me to another man in a game of cards here in Paris."

As he spoke, he dropped to his knees and took Antoine into his mouth. The moment Antoine felt the warm, wet, velvety texture of Honey's tongue wrapping itself around his dick, he began to grow hard again. From that moment on, he was lost as the world spun faster on its axis, and everything became dreamlike and unreal.

He didn't protest when Honey removed all their garments and pulled him down beside him on the bed, or when Honey kissed him, and their tongues engaged in the most delightfully erotic dance imaginable. And when Honey asked if Antoine would like to suck his cock, he hesitated for no more than a second before he complied.

However, Antoine did experience a tiny surge of doubt when Honey positioned him on all fours on the floor. And a slightly bigger surge when Honey spread his ass cheeks, and he felt Honey insert the head of his cock in his hole and begin to push.

Honey's penis felt huge, far bigger than his finger, and it hurt quite horribly. Antoine started to whimper, and begged Honey to stop. "No, no. Please, let me go. It hurts too much. I cannot do this."

"Yes, you can. But you must try to relax and have a little patience," Honey soothed as he pushed even harder.

As far as Antoine was concerned, it felt as if someone was pushing a red-hot poker into his rectum, and he felt a fleeting moment of pity for the whores he'd teased with the genuine article.

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As the pain increased, Antoine tried to shake Honey off, but the man had wrapped his arms tightly around his waist, making escape impossible. "Relax, my friend. The first time is always difficult. But wait and you will see this little bit of discomfort is nothing compared to the pleasure you'll receive."

Antoine didn't believe that for a second, but as he stopped fighting the inevitable and made himself relax, the pain did lessen a little. And then went away completely as Honey stopped pushing and began to squeeze and stroke Antoine's prick.

"I'm big, and you're a virgin, so if you could just oblige me with a few drops of your cum, it will make this much easier. You understand what I mean?"

"I'm afraid not." What one thing had to do with the other was beyond Antoine, and anyway he was right on the verge of coming and didn't care.

Honey gave his cock another squeeze and the orgasm exploded like a dam bursting. It curled Antoine's toes and spread through his body, but as he felt Honey cover the head of his dick with his hand, catch his juice and spread it over his hole, he realized there was a connection. A little lubrication and Honey was now able to slide all the way in with no problem.

It still hurt, but now Honey was able to ride him in earnest. He was now pumping in and out of Antoine's back entrance with a powerful thrust Antoine found more satisfying than anything he'd experienced with a woman. And if that wasn't exciting enough, Honey proceeded to increase Antoine's

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pleasure even more by using his hands to rub his shaft back to life.

The second time he climaxed, Antoine felt it happen for Honey, too. He felt the tiny hesitation, the sudden tightening of muscles, and spurts of hot semen running down his legs. Then, the rush of emotional gratification gradually ebbed into nothingness, and they collapsed in a heap.

* * * *

Antoine awoke to a soft tapping sound somewhere nearby. He looked around for Honey, disappointed to realize the other man had gone and that he was now alone in the small, candle-lit room.

The last thing he remembered was being held in Honey's arms and the two of them lying naked on the floor, gasping for breath while their hearts beat in counterpoint. Now, he was fully dressed again and lying on the bed.

He sat up and rubbed his sleep-filled eyes, wondering how his clothes had magically put themselves back on his body. Had it all been a dream? Had those magnificent orgasms been nothing more than the product of his imagination? A drug-induced illusion, perhaps? No, that wasn't possible. He had neither eaten nor drunk as much as a crumb or the tiniest sip of anything. He'd heard all about the dangers that lay in wait for the unwary in the lesser-known establishments such as this, and he'd taken the appropriate precautions.

The sound came again, and he realized someone was knocking on the door. A moment later, the door opened a few inches and the face of the footman filled the space.

"Your driver attends, my lord," the man informed him.

"Thank you," Antoine muttered. Awakening alone like this had made him feel nervous and uncertain. He wanted to inquire as to Honey's whereabouts, ask when he could see him again, but first, he needed to feel his way—find out what was expected and how one went about things here. Even the house on *la rue Charles V* had rules, an established code of behavior all clients were expected to follow, even though it was never spelled out.

After what had transpired, be it part illusion, part dream, or all cold, stark reality, he knew this was no men's club where members sat around and discussed politics or plotted the destruction of their enemies. This was the ultimate house of pleasure—a place that catered to a man's innermost needs, although he hadn't realized until tonight just what his needs were or how powerful his response would be to another man's touch.

There was soreness in the region of his rectum and between his legs, but the feeling was more exciting than painful, and Antoine knew he would want to return here, time and time again. But could he do so whenever he wished, the same as with the house on *la rue Charles V*? Or was this the type of establishment where his membership would require the owner's approval?

What if, the next time he came, the door was slammed in his face?

As the footman saw him to his carriage, Antoine considered asking if there were any rules he should be aware of. But before he could do so, the man expressed the hope

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milord had enjoyed his evening and would come again soon, and Antoine felt an unexpected rush of relief, knowing his worries had all been for nothing—his acceptance as a regular visitor had just been confirmed.

* * * *

The following evening, when Antoine arrived at the club, the same liveried footman appeared to help him alight from his carriage and escort him inside. However, when he told the boy who served the drinks he was looking for Honey, the boy informed him there was no one there of that name.

"Not at this moment or not tonight?" Antoine demanded.

The boy lifted his thin shoulders in an offhand shrug, and said, "Not any time, my lord. I have not heard of anyone by that name. But you are welcome to look around. There are plenty of attractive young men in the *salon* for you to choose from. Whatever your pleasure, lord, you have only to ask."

Antoine wanted Honey. His dick was hard as a rock and throbbing with the need to be touched by Honey and only Honey. "Perhaps someone else here has heard of him?"

The boy treated him to another shrug. "If there was someone here of that name, I would know of him. But I do not."

Antoine stared at the boy, again wondering if the events of the previous evening had been some kind of strange dream or illusion. Perhaps the perfume on the young man's skin had affected him in the same way smoke from an opium pipe affected the smoker's brain. *No!* Honey had not been a figment of his imagination, an illusion or a wispy,

insubstantial character in a dream. Honey had been very real, very strong, and Antoine had a sore hole as proof. "Is it possible Honey was a guest like me?"

The boy appeared to relax slightly. "That is certainly a possibility, my lord. Although if he was a guest, it is impossible for me to know whether or not he will return."

"You're saying guests can ... er ... umm ... commingle, so to speak?"

"It would be most unusual, my lord. But if that is what the guests desire, it is permitted."

"And how do I tell the difference between the guests and the..."

"The men of this house wear a narrow gold band on the second finger of their left hand. I suggest you confine your selection to one of those, my lord, the boy advised as he turned away.

Antoine considered following the boy's suggestion, but after glancing over the various men who wore the requisite gold band, he flicked his fingers at the footman and said he wished to leave. He wanted Honey, not some weak substitute.

As he waited for the footman to inform him his carriage had arrived, a young man, with his head bent low, came hurrying along the hallway and disappeared into what Antoine knew from the previous evening to be one of the private rooms. Despite the man's attempt to avert his face and the fact he was even more poorly dressed than he'd been the previous evening, Antoine knew right away it was Honey. The same slight Asian caste to his dark eyes, the same high cheekbones, and the same pale golden skin that combined to

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make him quite the most handsome man Antoine had ever seen. Just then, Honey reappeared, holding something covered with a cloth that he held in a way that shielded his face as he hurried back in the direction from whence he'd come.

The mere sight of Honey had made Antoine's dick thicken and grow. He was tempted to call out his name, but he held back. Whatever game Honey was playing, he wasn't dressed like last night, or even like one of the other men of the house, and yet he clearly wasn't a guest either. Nevertheless, Antoine knew he wanted to have him ... again and again. He also knew it was a need that surpassed mere obsession. He wanted to possess and be possessed by Honey to the exclusion of everything he'd ever had before or even contemplated for the future.

He wondered briefly if these strange feelings could be love.

He'd never been in love, but he'd heard other men talk of the phenomena and how it made them deaf, dumb and blind to everything but the object of their adoration. How they would do anything, up to and including murder, for just one touch, one kiss, or a single night of passion held close in the arms of their beloved. And now, for the first time, Antoine understood exactly how those other men felt. He would do anything, if his reward could be one more moment of Honey's time

The boy with the drinks reappeared, and Antoine clutched at his sleeve. "Him. That's the one I want," he hissed, pointing to Honey's fast disappearing back.

"No, no, my lord. You must be mistaken. That man is not a member of this household. I cannot say for certain, but I imagine he must belong to one of our guests." He gave a derisory sniff. "A servant of the lowest class by the look of him. The kind who does odd jobs and runs errands."

"I don't care if he also empties the chamber pots and wipes his master's backside," Antoine shot back.

A thin smile covered the boy's face. "I imagine he does that, too, if his master demands he perform such services."

"Your carriage is here, my lord."

Antoine frowned and turned in the direction of the speaker. "My carriage?"

"You ordered it to be brought 'round, sir."

"Yes, so I did." Antoine pushed his lips out in a pout and fluttered a hand at the footman. "Well, now you can send it away. I've changed my mind."

The footman disappeared, and Antoine returned his attention to the boy. Something was going on here, a mystery he intended to solve. "If he's a servant of one of the guests, what, pray tell, is he doing here?"

"That, my lord, I do not know. I agree, it seems a little unusual, but then I often find life itself very unusual."

The boy's flippant attitude was starting to irritate Antoine. If he were in his employ, he'd have the little bastard flogged. "Then find me someone who does know."

The boy gave what Antoine interpreted as an impertinent sniff and set his tray of drinks on a small table. "Wait here, my lord. The only person who may know is *la patronne*. I will see if she is willing to speak with you."

Willing? Antoine's temper moved up another notch. He was not particularly surprised to learn the owner of the establishment was a woman. In his experience, the so-called fairer sex were often cleverness itself in matters of business, even better than their husbands in seeking out opportunities to turn a *sou* into a gold *louis*. However, he was more than a little taken back a few minutes later when he was shown into a small room furnished with a small desk and a single chair, and found the sole occupant to be the elderly *madame* from *la rue Charles V*.

"You seem surprised, my lord," the woman said, her dark eyes as cold as two chips of ice. "Surprised a woman would own this house? Or does the surprise lie in the fact the woman is me?"

Antoine smiled, well aware this particular woman reacted far better to a steady stream of flattery than she did to a litany of complaints and criticisms. "I confess to being a little surprised on both counts, *madame*. However, I applaud your business acumen in understanding the rules of supply and demand, especially as they relate to the needs of a man."

As he'd expected, the woman preened like a peacock. "I thank you for your kind words, my lord. I realized some time ago that adjoining houses were not acceptable to some of my clients. Some of them require—how do I say this?—more secrecy, more distance, more..."

"More privacy, *madame*?"

"*Exactement!*" She hesitated, using two fingers to smooth out a non-existent wrinkle in her black dress. "I have been

given to understand you wish to know why one of our guests has his manservant in attendance. Is that correct?"

"Yes, *madame*. If you consider the question improper, then I apologize. However, I assure you I have a most excellent reason why I must ask."

"And that is?"

Antoine smiled. "You first, *madame*."

Twin spots of color appeared in the woman's cheeks, but she managed to hold her annoyance in check. "The answer to your question is quite simple, my lord. The guest was taken ill yesterday afternoon—whether he'd had too much to drink or had eaten something that disagreed with his stomach, I cannot say. He was in considerable discomfort and when he asked if his servant could be summoned to attend to his needs, I saw no reason to refuse the request. The guest is both important and influential. I'm sure you understand my meaning, my lord."

"Of course." Antoine hesitated. On the one hand, the explanation sounded perfectly plausible. On the other, he knew *madame* well enough to know she was lying through the few rotten teeth she had left in her miserable head.

"Although, if the situation is as you say and the man was called to administer to his master's indisposition, then pray tell me what he was doing consorting with guests in the *salon* yesterday evening? In case you are not aware, *madame*, he approached me. And I had every reason to believe he was part of this establishment since he introduced himself as Honey and took to me one of the private rooms, where he seduced me."

"Yes, yes, so I understand." The woman tapped her fingers impatiently on the desk. "I am sincerely sorry, my lord. Perhaps his master was asleep, and with time on his hands, he entered the *salon* out of curiosity. He is young and easily excited, and I am sure what he saw intrigued him. I assure you it will not happen again."

"And what if I want it to happen again?" Antoine murmured, wishing such relief were available for his aching cock.

A faint but regretful smile softened the thin lips. "Then I am afraid you are in for a disappointment, my lord."

"Why not? Give me his master's name, and I will ask him to name his price."

"No. I cannot do that." The *madame* shook her head. "My business is based on trust, my lord. To divulge names and break that trust would be foolish. And I can assure you I am anything but a foolish woman."

Antoine was starting to feel more than a little irritated with *madame's* attitude. He was not in the habit of having his demands refused or his wishes thwarted. "In other words, he doesn't wish anyone to know he is a guest here. I understand and respect such a wish. In fact, I feel the same way myself. But whoever he is, I can assure you his secret will be safe with me."

Madame rose to her feet, indicating the interview was over. "All the assurances in the world will not persuade me to reveal names to anyone, my lord. I have both my reputation and my livelihood to consider."

A Taste Of Honey
by Christiane France

Antoine took a deep breath, pulled in his stomach, and straightened his backbone. "I am not *anyone, madame*. I am the Marquis de Vernnay. Royal blood flows in my veins."

"Yes, my lord. I am aware of your lineage. And if I could tell you, I would. Unfortunately, as I have already said..."

"You can't. Or is it that you won't?" Antoine muttered as he slammed out of the room, adding, "You stupid *vache*," under this breath.

"Your carriage, my lord?" the footman inquired as Antoine returned to the main door.

"At once," Antoine confirmed, pacing back and forth, his temper mounting with each step he took. How dare the wicked old *putain* refuse to give him the name of Honey's master? Honey was clearly a servant of the lowest class and, therefore, easily replaceable. In fact, in the man's place, Antoine would be furious at *madame* for denying him the opportunity to make a handsome profit. Then again, perhaps she thought she could arrange the matter herself and charge him double, or perhaps even triple her normal fee.

Although that was assuming the mysterious guest with the even more mysterious malady actually existed, and Antoine had long ago learned to never assume anything. What if there was no guest and everything *madame* had told him was a pack of lies? Part of some elaborate game of her devising, perhaps?

He paused. *Yes!* Unless he was very much mistaken what the old cow was up to had to be one of the cleverest and most audacious plans Antoine had encountered in some time.

A Taste Of Honey
by *Christiane France*

What if the master and his lowly servant were nothing more than a spur-of-the-moment fabrication? A story invented by the greedy, grasping old *madame* once she realized the money-making potential of a naïve young man of low birth? Honey was handsome, personable, and immensely sexual, and when it came to pleasing the guests, Antoine suspected Honey had the ability to perform whatever trick was demanded of him. Plus, he could almost guarantee that Honey was incredibly innovative, too. In other words, with careful handling, Honey could be the star attraction of the new club. Once his reputation became known, he would bring the customers flocking in, and *madame* stood to make an absolute fortune.

A soft groan escaped Antoine's lips. He'd always known the wretched woman was incredibly clever in matters of business, and capable of just about any underhanded trick imaginable. If he'd interpreted what she'd told him correctly, she'd baited her hook by allowing Honey to display his talents just enough to attract the right amount of interest. Then, with the bait successfully swallowed, and with at least one important fish on the line, she'd made her golden goose *unavailable*, by the simple process of dressing Honey in servant garb and saying he belonged to one of her guests. And that nonsense about her being unable to reveal the guest's name was, in Antoine's opinion, an extremely clever touch—the proverbial icing on the cake. She couldn't reveal it because there was no guest.

As his carriage arrived and the footman helped him safely inside, Antoine decided there was nothing quite like removing the object of a man's desire beyond his reach to increase its

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value a thousand-fold. A fact, he was quite certain *madame* knew all too well. He leaned back in his seat and wondered how long she would make him wait. One week, or would she stretch it out to an agonizing two weeks, before she sent him a discreet note to the effect that, due entirely to her efforts, an arrangement had been reached with Honey's master?

For now, he'd let the woman think she'd won. But *madame* was nowhere near as clever as she believed herself to be. She'd not only reckoned without Antoine and his family's resources, she'd apparently forgotten, in matters of the heart, most men were capable of doing just about anything to get what they craved.

And he wanted Honey with all his heart and soul. He wanted them to be together again, mouth to mouth, skin to skin, with Honey's big cock pumping in and out of his ass, bringing him again to the glorious heights of passion he so desperately craved.

As his carriage rattled and swayed, bearing him home over the uneven cobbles of the Parisian streets, Antoine pushed the physical aspects of his experience with Honey from his mind and tried to analyze his feelings for the man instead. Was this all-consuming need he felt to be with Honey just a passing fad—a feeling predicated on nothing more than his first, albeit unexpectedly satisfying, sexual experience with another man? Or was it something more? The magical state of being in love that people constantly raved about perhaps?

He'd heard his friends speak of what they swore was love—the unbelievable yearnings, the sleepless nights, the unreasonable demands, the promises, the tears, the anguish

of a broken heart, and he'd sworn to avoid involving himself in such nonsense. But as he'd now discovered, a man was not always given a choice in these matters.

From the very first moment he'd discovered the pleasurable purposes for which his cock could be used, Antoine had discovered the joys of sexual intercourse and how his carnal feelings could be satisfied. Since then, he'd lusted after and enjoyed more women than he could remember, never mind count. But he'd never felt this way about a single one of them—not even the pretty one he'd met at lunch the other day. He'd been mad to possess her only so long as the possibility he might succeed had existed. Once he heard she'd disappeared, he'd lost interest and gone in search of someone new.

However, in the case of Honey's so-called *disappearance*, the exact opposite seemed to have happened. Instead of giving up and seeking his pleasures elsewhere, it had exacerbated his desire for the man with the golden skin to the point Honey now consumed Antoine's every thought and every fiber of his being. The mere thought of either him or Honey being intimate with another person made him feel physically ill.

He pressed a hand hard against his still aroused and aching penis, wishing the horses would move faster or the driver would encourage them with a few cracks of his whip. One way or the other, and with or without *madame's* cooperation, he intended to possess and be possessed by Honey whenever he so desired. To do that, he needed to reach his rooms without delay and start planning his strategy.

And what if he'd misjudged madame and she'd told him truth. Was it possible the ailing guest did, in fact, exist, and Honey was his property?

The thought had come out of nowhere, taking Antoine completely by surprise. Even so, just because *madame's* outlandish story had *sounded* like something she was making up as she went along—especially the part about Honey entering the *salon* out of curiosity, didn't mean that she had. Truth was often stranger than fiction, and Antoine knew better than to assume anything without proof. If he hoped to see Honey again, he must first learn Honey's true status under *madame's* roof—whether Honey was, as he'd first suspected, *madame's* property, or whether he was the property of a guest.

In the event the latter was true, any delay on his part could cost him his heart's desire. The moment he got back to his mother's house, he would solicit the help of her secretary—a man who'd assisted him with certain delicate undertakings on a number of other occasions. Denis St. Amand was a silver-tongued charmer with the manners of a gentleman and the slippery talents of a pickpocket when it came to extracting information—the one person Antoine could depend on to find out whatever he wished to know in a timely manner without anyone else finding out.

* * * *

The following morning, Antoine awoke feeling depressed and out-of-sorts. What little sleep he'd been able to get had been full of highly erotic dreams involving himself and Honey.

Which wouldn't have been so bad, except each and every time he was on the verge of an orgasm, *madame* burst into the room, brandishing a fearsome red-hot poker and forced them apart.

Thankfully, he didn't have to wait long for his mother's secretary to return with the information he sought. He'd barely finished his *pétit déjeuner* and poured himself a second cup of coffee when his manservant entered the room and informed him that *M'sieu*. St. Armand was in the ante-room and craved a moment of his time.

"Send him in," Antoine instructed, then waited for the manservant to withdraw and close the door before turning his attention to his visitor.

St. Armand looked younger, but was several years older than Antoine, and Antoine regarded him without speaking for a moment. Finally, he put his cup and saucer back on the table, and said, "Well? You have good news for me?"

"Very good news, my lord." The secretary gave him a sly, self-satisfied smile. "What the *madame* told you was the truth. The servant you mentioned is the property of a guest—a certain English lord who was taken ill while enjoying the amenities of the club. Something to do with eating oysters while drinking cognac. I understand the two do not agree and are known to cause a sick stomach."

"What English lord, pray tell?"

"Your aunt's husband, Lord Whittlesea."

Antoine could not contain his surprise. "Whittlesea's here in Paris?"

"Not only is he here in Paris, my lord, the moment your mother heard he was ill, she instructed me to send a carriage to fetch him. She felt it her duty to have him recuperate here in this house for a few days prior to returning to his home in England."

"Did she indeed?" Antoine smiled. "And how, may I ask, did my mother learn of Whittlesea's unfortunate indisposition?"

St. Amand shrugged. "From me, of course. Who else? Forgive me, my lord, but since the man is married to her sister, I thought she would wish to be informed of a certain disturbing rumor I'd heard was making the rounds."

"Perfect! And what about Whittlesea's servant?"

"That's where things became a trifle complicated."

Antoine frowned. "Complicated? In what way?"

"We both know the man is not a servant in the regular sense. And we both know his lordship swore to cease gambling and give up any romantic liaisons with young men of that particular type when he married your aunt. In fact, I believe these conditions were included in the marriage contract, yes?"

"That is my understanding, too. Did you ask the young man how he came to be involved with his lordship?"

"He said some months ago his lordship won him in a card game somewhere here in Paris. However, certain arrangements had to be effected before he could join his lordship in England. His lordship left without giving him any money or providing him with a place to stay, so, in order to

support himself, *madame* allowed him to remain at the club on the condition he work for her."

"And now, I suppose, these arrangements are complete, and Whittlesea is here to claim his prize."

"From what the young man said, it appears his lordship has leased a suitable *pied-à-terre* in London where they can meet secretly."

"Has he indeed? Hmm..." Antoine added a little more sugar to his coffee and smiled. He recalled there had been considerable negotiation prior to his aunt's marriage to Whittlesea. And, as he stirred his coffee, he tried to recall the major points of the contract. The nuptials had taken place slightly more than one year ago, and it had been no secret both bride and groom each had something the other desperately wanted. Gambling and loose living had left Whittlesea virtually penniless, so he'd wanted the money Francine had inherited from her first husband, and Francine had wanted the title of Lady Whittlesea.

"His lordship's an idiot even to consider engaging in such a dangerous game," Antoine said thoughtfully. "My Aunt Francine is no fool. She knew all about his reputation for gambling and his sexual preference for young men long before they were married, and for that reason I know she took steps to ensure her money came with strings attached."

"I wonder how she managed to do that?" St. Amand murmured.

"I believe there's something in the contract to the effect that if Whittlesea breaks his promise to abstain from gambling and consorting with young men, he'll get no more

money, my aunt will leave him, and the marriage will be over."

St. Amand appeared faintly confused. "How can she stop him spending her money, my lord? Under English law, a man takes control of his wife's property upon marriage."

"I knew that, and so did Francine. And I fear the knowledge cost her a few sleepless nights." Antoine chuckled, recalling the look on his aunt's face when she told him how she intended to protect what was hers by right. He and Francine were only a year apart in age. They'd played together as children and remained confidants. "Her ladyship is an extremely clever woman by anyone's standards. She knew her husband-to-be thought he would have full control of her money once they were married, and she did nothing to disabuse him of the idea."

"However, with the help of her previous husband's brother, a man well versed in matters of finance, I understand a way was found around the English law with a series of irrevocable trusts and clever financial arrangements that make my head spin to even think about. The end result being Whittlesea will never have control of anything greater than the amount of a monthly allowance, which will cease immediately in the event the marriage fails."

Antoine took a sip of his coffee and pushed the cup away. "And knowing my dear aunt as well as I do, if she finds out about his lordship's latest escapades, not only will she make certain he's left with nothing but the clothes on his back, she will also do everything within her power to have him thrown in debtor's prison."

"What about your mother?"

"What about her?"

"I was merely wondering what she might do if she knew the exact location where his lordship was taken ill and about this so-called servant. Do you suppose she would inform Lady Whittlesea?"

Antoine knew his mother to be a gossip of the first order. If she knew the truth of this particular tidbit, not only would it upset his own plans as far as Honey was concerned, the whole household would be in an uproar for weeks. "If my mother finds out, a sick stomach will be the least of his lordship's problems. So, I suggest you make sure that doesn't happen. What did you tell her?"

"That Lord Whittlesea was taken ill in a café."

"And what have you done with the servant?"

"Rather than risk gossip by giving him a bed in the servants' quarters, I've put him in that small room in the attic—the one your mother's maid swears is haunted."

"Who knows he's there besides the two of us?"

"No one, my lord. I instructed him to remain at the club while I brought his lordship here, then went back and fetched him myself. I took him to the attic via the back stairs. It was well after midnight and the whole household was abed, so I'm confident we were not seen."

"And what if he lets the cat out of the bag by wandering about the house?"

"You have no reason to worry about that, sir." St. Amand smiled as he produced a key and showed it to Antoine. "The

young man understands the situation and the need for secrecy. Anyway, this is the only key to the attic."

"And where will his master be?"

"Your mother thought Lord Whittlesea might be most comfortable in the rooms formerly occupied by his wife."

"Meaning the front corner suite on the second floor on the other side of the house—the one with the view of the park?"

"Exactly. I trust this arrangement pleases you, my lord."

"*C'est parfait!*" Antoine shook his head, a little amazed by the man's quick understanding of the situation and consequent clever maneuverings in separating master and servant before any harm could be done. In point of fact, the arrangement pleased him immensely. He picked up a small pouch from the table and tossed it in St. Amand's direction. "Of course, the young man cannot stay here. He must be moved elsewhere quickly, before his presence becomes known."

The secretary smiled as he caught the pouch and slipped it into a pocket. "You have somewhere in mind, my lord?"

Antoine handed St. Amand a scrap of paper on which he'd written an address in the hope it would be needed. "A house on the Left Bank, just off the boulevard St. Germaine. When it becomes dark enough for you to leave here unobserved, take him there. Someone will be there to let him in and attend to his needs."

"And what should I say if his lordship inquires as to the young man's whereabouts?"

Antoine laughed. "He's in no position to make such an inquiry, and I doubt he will. If perchance he is foolish enough

to bring the matter up, say you have no idea what he's talking about. That he was brought here alone, and you know nothing of any servant."

As the door closed behind his mother's secretary, Antoine chuckled gleefully, unable to believe his good fortune. His ownership of the house on the Left Bank was known only to a few close friends and was, in fact, the perfect hideaway. With Honey living there out of sight, he could fuck the beautiful young man with the golden skin as often he wished, and without anyone but the two of them knowing a thing about it.

The thought excited him, and he closed his eyes, imagining Honey's surprise when he paid him a visit. He would, of course, have to content himself in patience until tomorrow when he could leave the house openly and without comment. He would have his carriage drop him at that new Left Bank café and tell the driver to return in a few hours. The moment the carriage disappeared, he would slip around the corner to the tiny house on *la rue Violette* and knock on the door.

The servant would let him in, and then ... he opened his breeches and slipped his hand inside. He drew in a deep breath. The mere thought of Honey had made his cock hard as a rock, eager for attention, and there was no possible way Antoine could wait until sometime tomorrow to find the relief he so desperately needed. He began stroking his engorged member slowly, stretching out the moment as he tried to imagine his fingers were Honey's mouth, licking and sucking, gradually moving him closer and closer to the ultimate satisfaction.

For several minutes he managed to hold himself on the brink, enjoying the delightful sensation of knowing he was about to orgasm ... until, finally, it happened. He trembled with excitement, feeling his heart rate increase and the blood rush through his veins as his juices spurted forth in a hot shower that covered his hand and his legs.

Once the delicious sensation faded, he felt drained, completely satiated, and he remained where he was until his heart settled down to its regular beat, and his breathing returned to normal.

A knock on the door brought him back to earth. He quickly rearranged his clothing and covered his stained breeches with a linen napkin. As expected, it was Jacques, his manservant.

"Your mother has a guest for lunch today and wishes you to join them," Jacques said, as began to gather up the breakfast dishes.

"Who's the guest?"

"Lord Whittlesea, your aunt's husband. He arrived very late last night."

"Whittlesea? I wonder what he's doing here," Antoine said, pretending complete ignorance of his uncle's visit. "Is my aunt with him?"

"Apparently not. I understand his lordship came to Paris on business and was taken ill. When your mother found out, she had him brought here in order that he may receive proper care and be able to recover before returning home to England."

"He was all alone when this illness beset him?"

"So I am told, my lord."

* * * *

Antoine wasn't the least surprised when Whittlesea failed to put in an appearance at lunch. According to Antoine's mother, his lordship was still feeling unwell and had asked to be excused. Antoine didn't know if the man was genuinely ill or if he were hiding in his room, wondering how much his sister-in-law knew, and praying his secret would not be divulged. But, suspecting the latter to be the case, Antoine murmured something about it being unfortunate Francine was not there to care for her husband, then listened while his mother updated him on a number of new scandals involving various mutual friends.

After returning to his rooms, Antoine wandered to and fro, picking things up and putting them down again, wishing the hours away. His nerves were in tatters, rendering him unable to concentrate on anything except the unfulfilled ache in his cock and a burning desire to see Honey again. In an effort to calm himself, he poured a small amount of cognac into a crystal snifter, but while the strong liquor burned his throat and warmed his belly, it did nothing to cool his ardor or curb his impatience.

He thought about ordering his carriage in the hope he could fill the intervening hours by finding some form of distraction elsewhere. He could visit one of the cafés and spend time with his friends. Or perhaps an hour or two at the house on *la rue Charles V* would relax him sufficiently to endure this tedious but necessary period of waiting.

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But before he could make up his mind as to what he would do, the most marvelous idea dropped into his head. Instead of wasting time with friends or the dubious pleasures of *madame's* girls and remain awake most of the night, why not go to the house on *la rue Violette* now and await Honey's arrival?

Suddenly, he was in a froth of impatience and indecision. What to do first? What to wear? With it already late in the afternoon, there wasn't a moment to lose. In another hour or two it would be dark, and he wanted to be there first. He rang the bell for Jacques.

A knock on the door preceded his manservant's entry into the room. "You rang, my lord?"

"Yes, Jacques. I wish to go out. My dark blue velvet, I think."

By the time it was fully dark and candles had been lit throughout the house, Antoine was dressed in his new blue velvet jacket and cream breeches, and his wig had been freshly powdered. He was now ready to venture forth into what promised to be the most exciting night of his life.

When he reached *la rue Violette*, the house was in darkness, but the man he employed to live there and attend to the comfort of his guests answered the door the instant he'd made his presence known with a quick rat-a-tat-tat with the brass knocker.

The servant bowed and bade him enter with a soft, "My lord."

"Is he here yet, Thomas?"

"Not as yet, my lord."

Thomas picked up a silver tray from a nearby table and followed Antoine into the salon. "A glass of wine to soothe the nerves, perhaps?"

"An excellent idea."

At one time, Thomas had worked for *madame* as her *majordomo*. But when Thomas slipped on the ice-covered front steps, broke his right leg and was left with a permanent limp, *madame* told him his services were no longer needed and threw him out. Antoine knew nothing about the man's dismissal until he found Thomas begging on a street corner, and demanded to know what he was doing there.

Horried to hear of *madame's* ill-treatment of a longtime, loyal servant whose age and disability prevented him from finding other employment, Antoine had taken pity on Thomas' predicament by entrusting him with the care of this house—a step that had proved beneficial to them both. In exchange for a home, Thomas had proved himself capable and trustworthy, both in the care of Antoine's property and the occasional guest. Most important of all, Antoine knew he could count on Thomas' discretion. No matter who came into this house or what happened beneath this roof, Thomas would never breathe a word to a single soul.

In exchange for the glass of wine, Antoine placed a small leather bag of coins on the tray. "This should be enough to cover the extra food for our guest and any other expenses he may have, and I put a little extra in there so you may purchase yourself a new pair of boots," he added with a smile as he glanced down at Thomas' cracked and broken footwear. "It's almost winter now, and it won't do for a man of your age

to walk about the streets like a barefoot urchin. You will probably catch *la grippe*."

Thomas' eyes looked extra-bright for a moment, but then he looked down at the floor. "Thank you, my lord. You are too kind."

"Loyalty and honesty should always be rewarded," Antoine replied virtuously. "And since our new guest will likely be here for some considerable time, you need to be properly garbed. There should be enough in there for you to purchase new breeches, along with a new shirt and vest and whatever else you may require. You should also stock up on provisions. Buy whatever our guest desires. If you need more money, you must tell me."

Antoine took a sip of his wine, and as Thomas returned to his duties, he heard what sounded like a visitor at the front door, demanding entrance.

There was the mumble of voices and then the door to the *salon* opened and Thomas announced, "A *M'sieu* Honey has arrived, my lord."

Honey managed to take one small step across the threshold before he hesitated and stared at Antoine in obvious surprise.

"I remember you," he said, depositing the cloth-covered bundle he carried on the floor. "Antoine, correct? I believe we met a few nights ago at a certain establishment in Montmartre."

Antoine swallowed his feelings of impatience, along with a little more of his wine. "Two nights ago to be precise."

"Ah, yes." Honey smiled and ran the tip of his tongue slowly along his upper lip. "I remember you very well, *mon ami*. It was your first time."

Honey had on the same tan breeches and white tunic he was wearing the first time they met. The casual outfit suited him, emphasizing both his male beauty and his undeniable sexual appeal. Antoine felt his knees weaken and his dick stand up to attention as he returned the other man's smile. "But, hopefully, not the last."

Honey shrugged and made a frustrated gesture with his hands. "There is nothing I would like more. But at this moment, I am not what you might call the master of my own fate. My life is in complete disruption, and I have no idea what is to happen next. I do not even know what I am doing here. Unless, perhaps, you have had some hand in the strange happenings of these past two days?"

"The man who brought you here didn't explain?"

"No." Honey shook his head, and Antoine noticed the young man looked bone-tired as well as confused. "He came to the club last night and said he'd come to take his lordship to stay with members of his wife's family who would care for him properly and where he would be more comfortable. Later, he returned and took me to the attic of a private house where he said I must remain hidden until new arrangements could be made for me. This evening, the same man came to see me again. He told me that I now had a new *patron* and then he brought me here." Honey's smile was tentative as he took a cautious step in Antoine's direction. "Please, Antoine, tell me. Is it you who will be my new *patron*? If not, then who?"

"Would you like it to be me?" Antoine's cock literally ached with the need to feel Honey's magic touch.

"I would like it very much." Honey twisted his lips and shivered. "I cannot, in all truth, say I wish to continue in the service of the Englishman."

"You don't like his lordship?"

"Not at all." Honey shivered again and moved a little closer to Antoine. "His lordship is a most unpleasant person. Slightly mad, too, I suspect. He has no interest whatsoever in making love. All he wants is for someone to whip him and urinate on him, then have them insert strange objects into his rectum. I do not enjoy doing such disgusting things. I promised myself that once we reached London, I would find the opportunity to run away."

Antoine knew he shouldn't ask. Honey might sound and act like a gentleman, but he was a servant and a whore, a man of the lowest possible class. Nevertheless Antoine had to know.

"Did you enjoy yourself when you were with me?"

"With you, Antoine, it was wonderful." Honey's smile lit up his face until his golden skin glowed like sunshine. He moved closer, so much closer Antoine could smell his essence and feel his heat, and the ache in Antoine's dick became unbearable. "The other night, I know it was your first time with another man and so you are completely inexperienced in this regard. Perhaps what I am about to say will sound strange, and indeed perhaps it is, but from that first moment when I saw you enter the *salon* at the club, I felt a certain ... *je ne sais quoi*. Almost as if I'd been waiting for you all my

life, and suddenly there you were. I think it was the same for you, *ne c'est pas?*"

It had been exactly that way for him. "Perhaps. I don't remember." Antoine's mouth felt dry and his nerves were tighter than violin strings. He didn't know if it had truly been that way for Honey, too, or if his words were merely flattery, and if it was the latter, he didn't want to know. He just wanted Honey to cease this ridiculous conversation and proceed with what they both craved.

Honey smoothed a hand down Antoine's belly and gently squeezed his cock. "Would you like me to remind you?"

Antoine clenched his hands to stop himself from ejaculating prematurely. "More than anything else I can imagine."

Honey laughed softly, a delicious sensation that heated Antoine's blood and made his heart beat faster. "Very well. But first, I would suggest we lock the door."

"Lock it if you wish. But I can assure you it will be quite unnecessary. We will not be disturbed."

"In that case, why don't you sit down in the chair over by the window and make yourself comfortable."

Antoine settled himself in the chair, and Honey knelt on the floor before him. Leaning forward, Honey pressed his lips lightly against Antoine's and, at the same time, he unfastened Antoine's breeches and began to gently caress his shaft. "You are already very hard, *mon ami*," he observed. "Much too hard for the leisurely lovemaking I would like to share with you, so rather than spoil our pleasure, we must attend to this fellow's needs first."

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by Christiane France

Honey took Antoine's penis into his mouth and began to suck him, and for a moment, Antoine thought he might faint from pure pleasure. This was even better than the first time because now he knew what to expect. He took a deep breath and let it out slowly, determined to hold himself back long enough to enjoy what Honey was doing to him and to allow the wonderful tension he felt to build gradually.

Honey started to suck him a little harder. But then Honey stopped what he was doing, urged Antoine forward on the chair and pulled his breeches down to his ankles. As he resumed the sucking, he added to Antoine's pleasure by squeezing and fondling his balls until Antoine began to emit small groans of excitement. He was on the edge. One more hard suck, and he would explode.

But before that could happen, Honey again released him and moved back. Antoine wanted to scream with frustration. "Please, please don't stop."

"If you'll stand up, I can make it even better for you."

Antoine wasn't sure he could contain his orgasm, let alone stand. His legs were trembling like leaves in the wind. But, with Honey's help, he struggled to his feet, and, as Honey pushed the chair away, Antoine leaned against a nearby cabinet and grasped the edges for support. "Please..." he muttered. "Please..."

As Honey resumed sucking his cock, Antoine felt Honey's fingers move wetly up his crack and begin to explore his hole. First one finger moved inside, then it was joined by a second, the two digits pushing and stretching, then they began pumping in and out in tandem with Honey's sucking, a

delicious sensation which seemed to grow stronger by the second.

Antoine tried to hold back, he truly did. However, he was no match for Honey's clever tricks, and as his juices burst forth, draining him of everything, including his ability to remain upright, his legs let him down and the next thing he knew, he was beside Honey on the floor.

"You feel better, yes?" Honey purred as he began nibbling Antoine's ear and laving it with his tongue. "How did you like that?" he inquired a moment later after his inquisitive tongue had delved beyond the outer rim of Antoine's ear and made Antoine shiver with excitement.

To Antoine's surprise, his ears were apparently every bit as sensitive as his cock. This latest trick of Honey's had brought his rod back to life, demanding attention, and he wanted more. Now!

He fumbled with the opening of Honey's breeches. He wanted to suck and feel, too, and show his magnificent new lover some of the same kind of pleasure he'd been so willing to share.

But Honey laughed and pushed Antoine's hand away. "It's much too soon, *mon ami*. Better that we wait a little while. Loving is a serious matter that should be relished and enjoyed, not rushed. Much better we take some refreshment to restore our energy and a little wine to help us relax."

"You're hungry?" Antoine demanded.

Honey nodded. "To be honest, yes. I haven't eaten since yesterday evening."

Antoine was feeling a tad peckish himself. "The man who brought you here didn't give you food or drink?"

"He brought me a jug of water after he took me to the attic room and promised to come back with food. He must have forgotten. But it didn't matter. I felt so nervous and upset, I could not have eaten so much as a crumb."

"But you feel better now?"

Honey's dark brown eyes sparkled. "Oh, yes. Thanks to you, *mon chère ami*, I am feeling quite myself again."

After rearranging his clothing, Antoine rang the bell for Thomas and asked him to bring food and more wine.

In what seemed like no time at all, Thomas returned with several platters containing cold roasted chicken, an assortment of cheeses, a *baguette*, a bowl of fresh fruit, and a large carafe of red wine. "*Bon appétit, messieurs*," the elderly manservant said as he bowed low and backed out of the room.

Honey snatched up a chicken leg and quickly devoured the succulent meat, then he reached for a second piece. "*Mon dieu*, Antoine, this is so good, and I am so very hungry. Please excuse my terrible table manners."

Antoine leaned back in his chair and watched Honey eat. He was fascinated by the way Honey's flashing white teeth and mobile pink tongue stripped the flesh from the bones in so expert a fashion that not a shred was wasted. There was also something so deliciously primeval about the way Honey ate, Antoine could imagine him hunting for his food in the forest and then returning to a cave to cook and eat his kill.

The thought sent a shiver of sexual awareness sliding down Antoine's back and he poured himself a glass of wine in the hope it would calm his nerves. He had never wanted anyone with the same intensity he wanted Honey, and he'd never had a lover who could push him to such heights or reward him with such satisfaction.

The women of *la rue Charles V* and all the dreadful rituals and devices were an embarrassing memory he could not forget quickly enough. After experiencing Honey's gentle hands and mouth, it was difficult to believe he could have been so cruel and wicked. Of course, he had been so dreadfully frustrated there had been times when he couldn't have stopped himself even if he'd tried.

"What are you thinking about?"

"Nothing important."

Honey reached across the table and touched Antoine's hand, then he picked up the last piece of cheese, popped it into his mouth and leaned back with a sigh. "There. Now I feel better."

Antoine pointed to the carafe. "Another glass of wine?"

"No. However, I would like to change my clothes if that is permissible. I must take care of what I am wearing for those times when I would like to look my best."

"Those are the only clothes you have?"

"I also have what I call my house clothes."

Antoine had a dim recollection of torn knee-breeches and a disreputable grey shirt. "You mean those rags you were wearing while you were tending to his lordship's needs at the club?"

"They're old but quite clean. Perfectly suitable for indoors."

"No. Absolutely not. The only place they're suitable for is the nearest rag bag. I can't believe his lordship would allow a servant of his to dress so ... so poorly." Antoine took Honey's hand in his. "Promise me that you will throw those dreadful things away, and tomorrow I will have my tailor attend and measure you for new clothes."

Honey frowned. "You do not have to do this. I am quite content with what I have."

"Perhaps so, but I am not content," Antoine said, gripping Honey's hand firmly. "I am not suggesting you should have clothes fit for the king's court, just a few more items. Better quality materials, and a bigger selection from which to choose."

"If that's what you wish. But may I put on my old things, just for tonight?"

"Tonight, you have my permission to do whatever you wish," Antoine purred as Honey began stroking the palm of his hand.

"Do you like what I'm doing to you?" Honey inquired.

"It's very..."

"Arousing?"

"Yes."

"Then let us go upstairs where we can be more comfortable."

At the bottom of the stairs, Honey hesitated. "Perhaps you would be kind enough to ask your manservant to bring us a jug of hot water and a cloth."

"What for?"

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"Be patient, *mon ami*. Just have him bring what I ask, and you will see."

* * * *

As if anticipating the need, Thomas had closed the curtains and lighted a fire in the main bedroom. The room was warm and cozy and, after Thomas brought the jug of hot water, a wash cloth and several towels, he withdrew.

Honey opened his bundle, took out a small bottle and poured a little of the contents into the hot water. "Lavender oil," he said in response to Antoine's unspoken question. "It's both relaxing and refreshing. Now, let me help you remove your clothes."

After Antoine's clothes were gone, Honey divested himself of what he was wearing. He then pulled back the bedcovers, spread one of the towels over the sheet and asked Antoine to lie down.

Once he had Antoine arranged to his satisfaction, he dipped the cloth into the warm, lavender-scented water, told Antoine to close his eyes, and began to gently bathe his body.

At first, Honey kept to the non-erogenous areas, like Antoine's face, arms and lower legs. It was the most erotic thing Antoine had so far experienced, and when Honey began to wash his belly, he could barely keep still. The warm cloth touched his dick, and Antoine gritted his teeth, then bit down hard on his lower lip when Honey pushed back the foreskin and carefully cleaned the tip.

Honey gave him a nudge with his knee. "Turn over, please."

After Antoine complied with the request, Honey bathed his back, rubbing the warm cloth down his crack and inside the opening of his rectum.

When he was finished, he took another bottle of what Antoine assumed was oil from his bundle, poured a little on Antoine's back and shoulders and then began to give his muscles a deep, relaxing massage. "Feels good, yes?" he muttered in response to Antoine's sigh.

"Fantastic. It feels so good, I don't want to move."

"I think you will like this even better," Honey said, as he positioned Antoine on his knees and spread his ass cheeks, and Antoine felt the delicious slide of Honey's hot, wet tongue.

At first, he just teased the sensitive skin around Antoine's butt-hole, then his tongue dipped inside. A moment later, Honey's fingers began manipulating and stretching the tense muscle, and Antoine held his breath. The antics of Honey's tongue were wonderful, so erotic, so exciting, but what was to come would, he knew, be even better, and he could hardly wait.

Honey's hands moved around Antoine's body and began milking his cock for a little pre-cum. When he had enough, he slathered it over Antoine's hole, spread his ass cheeks as wide as they would go, and Antoine knew The Moment had finally arrived.

"Ready?" Honey asked as he inserted the head of his aroused shaft into Antoine butt hole.

"More than ready."

"Just relax, and we'll take this slow and easy," Honey replied as he took his time pushing all the way in. He pulled partway out and pushed in again.

Antoine was so excited he was ready to come now, but he realized if he were to truly enjoy Honey's talents, he must learn to hold back. Perhaps, in time, if he forced himself to relax a little, he could make this special moment last for however long he might wish.

Unfortunately, he could not do it now. As Honey began to pump faster and run his hands up and down Antoine's cock at the same time, Antoine exploded, and his juices burst forth in a steady stream he thought would never stop.

A moment later, he felt the warm, wet evidence of Honey's cum down his legs, and Honey collapsed beside him on the bed. But as soon as Honey had his breathing under control, he pulled up the bedcovers and tucked Antoine into his side. Sliding a finger beneath Antoine's chin, he kissed him on the lips. "You feel better now?"

"Much better. But would you mind if..."

"You want to suck me?"

"I would like to, yes."

"I am your servant, master. Yours to command in any way you wish."

Antoine cringed at Honey's use of the word *master*. "Do you think we could be friends, rather than master and servant?" He smiled and stroked Honey's cheek. "While I can never take you into my world, we have our own world here in this house on *la rue Violette*, and with that we must be content. But if anything should happen to me, then I want

you to know that this property and everything in it, including Thomas, will belong to you and be your responsibility. What do you say?"

"I would love to be your friend, Antoine, your real, true friend because already I have given you my heart. But it is not necessary for you to give me your property. I will never leave you, not so long as you wish me to stay here with you and there is breath left in my body to show my love."

"Nor will I leave you, *mon chère ami*. If this be true love, then we will find a way to cherish every last moment."

Honey smiled. "Until we are so old we no longer have enough strength to make love."

"You think that day will arrive?"

"The day we are no longer interested in making love?" Honey looked pensive for a few seconds, but then he laughed and dropped another kiss on Antoine's eager mouth. "No. I intend to pray to all the gods and make novenas to all the saints. I promise on the blessed memory of my sainted parents I will do whatever is necessary to make certain that day never comes."

Antoine relaxed against the soft pillows and closed his eyes. Finally, he had everything a man could ever want or need—a true and loyal partner who would cater to his every whim and the wherewithal with which to enjoy it all.

Yes, he was indeed a very lucky man, and for that he must remember to thank *le bon Dieu* when he attended church on Sunday with his mother.

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Christiane France

Christiane truly believes that love makes the world go round, so she likes stories with both happy and bittersweet endings. Christiane has been writing romance for the past twenty years and lives near Niagara Falls with her husband and The Boys—two black and white Persian cats.

* * * *

Don't miss *Dirty Love*, by Lacey Savage,

available at AmberHeat.com!

Isabel Warren wouldn't dream of defying the morality statutes that forbid women over forty from ever making love again. As a medical practitioner, she understands the need for laws preventing "dirty love." The S.O.S. virus of 2030 left most of the male population infertile and turned human DNA into something resembling a microscopic jigsaw puzzle. The virus itself is undoubtedly dangerous, but older women are perhaps the most significant threat humanity has ever faced.

Yet knowing what's forbidden and keeping her feminine urges under lock and key are two different things. Especially when Isy's most recent assignment requires her to run intimate tests on Connor Flynn, a man sixteen years her junior, who seems determined to prove she's not the monster everyone else thinks she is. And if such delicious temptation wasn't bad enough, she's also got Trevor Jones to worry

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about. It seems he, too, is willing to risk everything to be with her.

Two sexy men, and one woman who could destroy them both ... if they don't destroy her first...

* * * *

Don't miss *At Long Last*, by Shawn Lane,

available at AmberAllure.com!

When his best friend's younger brother gets a job at their law firm, Preston Reynolds begins to feel the same overwhelming attraction he felt for Scott Trask years earlier. But he couldn't be sexually attracted to the young gay man. Preston isn't gay.

Scott has been in love with Preston for years, but the man is straight, and he was married. And now that Preston is divorced, that doesn't mean he is any more available.

The more Preston tries to ignore his attraction, however, the more he thinks about it. Finding himself alone at the office one night with Scott, he finally surrenders to his urges. Afterward, Scott wants to talk about what happened, but Preston doesn't want to analyze it, still certain he couldn't prefer men. When Preston suggests to the openly gay man that they keep things between them secret, however, the situation comes to a head.

Both men are forced to make difficult decisions, but will their choices tear them apart forever?

* * * *

Don't miss Dressed For Dying by Janet Quinn,

available at AmberQuill.com!

In 1892, reporter Sean Madigan is pitted against the New York police when he's assigned his first high-profile murder story, the slaying of the wealthy Marshal Haversham, clothing industry mogul and sweatshop owner. While Sean hunts for the killer in order to prove his worth to his newspaper editor, the madman goes on a violent spree, burning down Haversham's warehouses and sweatshops and killing young women who work within them. Each victim is found dressed in a fancy ball gown that was secretly made within the sweatshops themselves.

When Madigan's sweetheart, Bridget, becomes the killer's next target, Sean determines he will find the man and his connection to the ball gowns. But the murderer has other designs, and it soon becomes a race against time and the police to discover the fiend's identity before he silences Sean or Bridget ... permanently...

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