

The book cover features a close-up of a muscular man's bare torso and arm on the right side. He has long, dark hair. In the background on the left, a classic pink convertible car is visible. The author's name 'A. J. LLEWELLYN' is at the top left, and the title 'MY FAVORITE HUSBAND' is at the bottom in large red letters.

A. J.
LLEWELLYN

MY FAVORITE
HUSBAND

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My Favorite Husband
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MY FAVORITE HUSBAND

BY

AJ LLEWELLYN

DEDICATION

To Herve, who is my Tem...

CHAPTER ONE

“I’m not doing it. I am *not*, I repeat, doing it.” My husband stared at me. “Divine Thunder, you’re being a colossal ass. Come on, what’s the big deal?”

I was aghast. “What’s the big deal? I’ve been a vampire for almost three hundred years and I’ve managed to get around these islands without resorting to—”

Tem interrupted my tirade. “It’s just public transportation, Div.”

“Public transportation? You can use all the elegant names you want. It’s still a *bus*.” I shuddered. “I’ve lived my whole life never taking it. I have no intention starting now!”

“Come on, Princesca.” Tem sounded exasperated as he dragged me aboard the bus, or *TheBus* as it is known in *Hawaii*. I would have protested about the fact that he kept mouthing *I’m sorry* to everybody in line, but I’d just started to realize there was some fine man candy on board.

“Two tickets, one for me, and one for the big baby here,” Tem told the massive island woman

squeezed behind the wheel. She looked pissed. I'd feel the same way if I was glued to such a confined space. Tem popped four singles into her *Perspex* slot and she watched him like a bleak-eyed hawk. She was a little scary to me so I was happy to shuffle on down the back of the bus as other passengers joined us.

"Hey, Jimmy," said a voice and I looked across the aisle. One of the employees from the computer store I own in *Ala Moana* mall waved to me from a window seat.

"Hey, Freddy," I responded.

Freddy grinned. "You guys take *TheBus*? Man, that is so cool!" He reached into his shirt pocket and pulled out his cell phone. "I'm gonna text the guys. That is so cool that the boss takes *TheBus*." Freddy got busy with his thumbs, his *iPod* earphone slipping from his ear. I could hear Bruce Springsteen telling me we were *Born to Run*. My thoughts turned churlish again. Yeah, according to the real Boss, we were born to run, not take *TheBus*. Tem greeted everybody like they were his best friends and we settled into our seats. He had a beatific smile on his face and I read his thoughts. *How nice Div gets to enjoy the ride and not have to worry about traffic.*

I was about to put my arms around him and kiss him. I was being an ass.

"Where's your car?" Freddy asked, reaching

across the old Japanese woman sitting beside him.

My car, my beloved Lincoln Continental was a very sore subject. The previous week, Tem and I had been to hell. Yes, as in the real deal. *Hell*. We tangled with the devil and other unsavory folks. We'd left our car in a parking lot at *Diamond Head* outside a dentist's office and it was stolen. *Stolen!* You'd think a dentist's office would be like a doctor's office or a church. A sacred place.

We'd tried hard to find the car, which before I knew Tem, was a deceptive wreck. It was actually a superb piece of machinery I kept in poor condition on the outside exactly for this reason. Nobody coveted it. In fact, when I drove it, people moved out of my way, in case its shabbiness was contagious. Once I met and fell in love with my life partner, I fixed it because he wanted a pretty car.

Now look where we were. On *TheBus*! I sighed, catching Tem's slight shake of the head. Freddy took the hint and resumed whatever he'd been doing and Tem's fingers crept into my hand. A woman across the aisle spotted our entwined fingers and her eyes widened. Fuck her, I thought. I love this man. I also loved my Fiesta red, cherry 1965 Lincoln with white leather seats, extra legroom, whitewall tires, the moon roof and the suicide doors. Our cat, Moontime, was pissed because he rode in back, like the feline Pasha that

he was. Now he was cooling his heels at home, probably plotting my death.

We'd just left the police station on *South Beretania*. They didn't hold out much hope and said the car hadn't been impounded. It had been stolen. The desk sergeant, an obnoxious mainlander named Kendra Huffman, even suggested I was wasting my time filing a report.

"Have you looked up on the north shore?" she asked me at least five times. "Some kids probably took it for a joy ride and left it up there, burned out."

I hyperventilated and Tem tried to soothe my hysteria.

"Of course nobody did that. It's a beautiful car."

I felt bereft. I wanted to rent a car until I found mine dead or alive. I fretted about the things we had stowed in the trunk. Soft, butter-yellow suede jackets Tem hand stitched with fringes. Leather flying coats, handcuffs in the glove compartment...for sexy interludes. Sexy interludes. Man, I loved fucking Tem in the backseat of that huge car. I couldn't even hold his hand on *TheBus*.

Tem got the clever idea of taking *TheBus* instead of renting a car. Being vampires, daytime flight is sketchy until sunset. Besides, we were still recuperating from our trip to hell. *TheBus*

lumbered down *Ala Moana* Boulevard and I realized we were near Magic Island, on the south end of the beach. I stared out the window, longingly. Tem and I had been there once together.

You want to get hot dogs? Tem telepathed to me.

"Oh, yes," I said aloud.

We ran up front, got transfers from the driver and got off *TheBus*. I had to admit, it was quite pleasant not having to worry about finding a parking spot for my big tank. We ran across the park like children, marveling at all the idiot travelers crowding the sand at *Ala Moana*, when our stretch of beach was empty. It was serene. It was beautiful. It was perfect.

Magic Island was a manmade stretch of peninsula you won't find in guide books because most of the authors are not local and don't know about it. Completed in 1964 and destined to be the site for a cluster of ritzy hotels, it all fell apart and the city turned it into a public park. In 1972, the name was changed officially to *Aina Moana*, meaning land from the sea, but nobody calls it that. It's still known as *Magic Island*.

We each bought a hot dog from a vendor in a white truck. He was listening to the radio, bopping to Bob Marley. We took our boots and socks off, walking along the pale white sand. Dipping our feet into the sheltered lagoon, we

reveled in our solitude. The afternoon deepened and we went back to the white truck. The vendor was now listening to Johnny Clegg.

"I love your taste in music, man," I told him.

He grinned, his teeth pure and white in his dark face. "I love your threads." He pointed at Tem, whose skintight leather pants didn't leave much to the imagination.

"Thanks," Tem said. "I made them myself."

Before Tem could ask him his pant size and offer to make him some, I asked for shave ice. Tem adored shave ice.

"Oooh, baby, let's split some." We bought a strawberry shave ice and I am pretty sure the vendor poured extra syrup over the paper cone Tem held in both hands. I enjoyed the taste of that from Tem's tongue, sucking it with abandon until he laughed.

"You're so fucking bad," he gasped, pushing me away. "How can you even make shave ice so erotic?"

"I'm married to the sexiest man on earth. It's not difficult, Temeura."

Lust glazed his eyes as we walked back across the island. I rubbed his crotch, knowing he was commando under the soft black leather and his huge cock didn't disappoint me. The head jutted out like it was trying to break free of its confines and the shaft lay upright, leaning to the left. I still

got a kick out of making Tem feel this way.

He abandoned the paper cone from the frozen treat and pushed me up against some rocks. Oh man, my husband was about to do my favorite thing in the whole world. He was going have a party in my pants. For one exhilarating second, I took pleasure in the tiny strip of beach with its completely uninterrupted view of the ocean, the sun setting golden as Tem tugged at the last two buttons on my *Aloha* shirt.

"Baby, what if we get caught?" I whispered. "What if someone sees us?"

"They can't have any," he growled. "This cock is mine." He took it out of my stonewashed, low-rise button fly *A and F* jeans. I was aware of the hot dog vendor closing up shop, the smell of the cooling franks carrying across the breeze as Tem's impatient mouth worked around my cock. I had never had anyone suck my cock like Tem did. He took it between two fingers, just to get the ridge under the head all worked up. He knew I liked that sensitive vein licked right there and he moved back forth with his tongue. My cock was already so hard, leaking badly, but I enjoyed feeling its thickness, its satin smooth length against the hot wet tongue that was my obsession.

I moaned as he took my cock out of his mouth, then stuffed it back in, sucking only on the head, careful not to use his teeth. I felt the wind picking

up and it lent a feeling of urgency to what we were doing.

He wrestled my tight jeans down my thighs a little, one hand caressing my flat belly before moving to my balls, which were heavy and full, yearning for his touch. He held them in his hand as he knelt before me, all his attention on me. He sucked my entire length into his mouth, looking up at me.

You know I love this cock, he telepathed to me. *I would kill anyone who tried to take it from me.* He pulled back with pursed lips, making me hiss. He kissed the head, moving his tongue underneath again.

“Oh fuck, don’t stop,” I groaned. I loved the lust I saw when my man looked up at me, exciting me even more. I begged him to stop teasing.

He laughed, my cock sliding back into his mouth, almost making him gag, but he kept me in his mouth, his expression intense. I moved back and forth, my cock safely banging against his throat. He went for it, wanting it all, all my juices. For a moment, I wished I could stick it into his ass and fuck Tem. No, we’d do that when we got home.

Tem pawed at my ass, holding my ass cheeks in his greedy fingers, feasting on my cock like a starving whore.

I love you Div. I want you to come in my mouth. I

need to feel you tensing, releasing it all inside me, he telepathed.

He pulled back again with his lips and tongue, his mouth glued to the head, his tongue flicking at the hard ridge under it. He tightened his hold on my balls.

I need that come, baby...fucking give it to me. I waited all day for it. He sucked harder and harder, fucking me with his mouth. He had such a grip on me with his mouth and hand, I thought my cock might break, but I was excited, stroking his gleaming hair. I came so hard it was difficult for him to swallow it all, but he handled it like a champ, licking and slurping. We laughed together. It felt so good. I slumped against the rocks as he finished cleaning me up with his tongue, a gleam of pride igniting his eyes.

Tem looked up and said, "Fuck *TheBus*, we're flying home."

I lifted him to his feet and kissed him, buttoning up my fly with difficulty. We walked across the sand hand in hand and, as we prepared for takeoff, I stopped.

"Oh my God!" Tem screamed out, seeing it at the exact same moment I did. Some asshole was driving down the street in my beautiful car!

CHAPTER TWO

“Cheer up, Div, it’s just a car.”

I squinted at Tem, but he was so busy sucking on a wedge of pineapple, he didn’t see how upset I was. It wasn’t *just a car*. To me, it was a living, breathing entity. That car and I had been together for more than forty years. It had outlasted numerous girlfriends, the hippy movement, a few US Presidents, *the Bay City Rollers*, *Duran Duran*, and *Cabbage Patch dolls*. Most importantly, it had been a mobile love nest for me and Tem.

The song *Baby You Can Drive My Car* started up on the restaurant’s sound system and I grimaced. Boy, the universe was having some fun with me, I decided. *Duke’s Canoe Club* was in full swing and Tem and I had found stools at the bar, ordering *Mai Tais* to cool us down after our manic chase. I was still bummed that despite immediate action, we had lost the thief who was tooling around *Honolulu* in my baby. We lost sight of him on *Atkinson Street*. I was pretty sure he’d gone into

either *Ala Moana* mall or the apartment complex opposite. We'd get him. I kept picturing him, his arm dangling outside the driver's door as he drove my baby as if it belonged to him.

"How do you feel about some *pupus*?" Tem asked, angling his lovely body into mine. The bar was ridiculously packed and I noticed a table opening up. I grabbed our drinks and we pounced on it before the waitress could object. I slipped her a twenty and she asked smoothly, "Can I get you fresh drinks?"

"Please do." She left menus on the table, picked up the empty glasses from the previous occupants, and dropped them onto a wooden tray, wiping down the table with a wet terry cloth towel. The table remained sticky so we kept only the edges of our elbows on it.

"Tem, there's something you have to understand. I loved that car."

"Yes, I know, darling, but —"

"No buts. It was good to me. I trusted it. It used to be me and him, you know. Before I had you. He was like my husband."

"He? The car was a he? Er...I mean, *is* a he..."

I didn't respond, staring into my almost empty glass.

"Div, are you crying?" Tem looked incredulous.

"No," I lied. I blew my nose into a cocktail napkin as our waitress dropped our drinks on the

table. I drained the first *Mai Tai* and moved onto the second.

"We'll have the *Kumu Nui* mussels," Tem told the waitress. "Can you go heavy on the coconut lemongrass broth please? And we'll have the *poke* rolls." He paused. "The *ahi* tuna is very fresh, right?"

She nodded.

Tem continued. "We'll also have the spicy sugar cane shrimp. *Mahalo*, thank you."

The waitress took off.

Tem touched my face. "I am glad you had a faithful companion before me, my love. Cars tend to outlive dogs, sadly. But if he was your first husband, you are officially divorced. It's my turn now." He looked so pleased with himself I couldn't bring myself to argue with him. I loved driving around our island, Tem's feet on my lap, dragging him to the backseat on a whim...his or mine for fast and furious man on man action. I thought he loved the car, too.

"I do love the car, baby," he whispered, accurately reading my thoughts. "I just love you more." He leaned closer and kissed me as the waitress put our plates on the table. I glanced up to thank her and noticed two young boys, thin and pale, hanging from the wooden railing on the edge of the restaurant. The youngest must have been around nine or ten and he was crying. His gaze

was on a half-filled plate left on a table. A waitress plucked it away with the dirty glasses as his little hand shot forward, trembling.

The older boy I put in his early teens, pulled at the younger boy's T-shirt sleeve. "Come on," I heard him saying and I knew in my heart these children were starving. The younger boy wept as the older one dragged him away.

"Do you think they're street kids?" I asked Tem, feeling guilty about the array of food on our table.

"I don't know, but I'm going after them."

Staring at the tempting morsels in front of me, I hoped the boys wouldn't reject our offer of food. Tem soon came back, looking miserable and flopped back into his seat.

"I lost 'em. Everyone's escaping us today, Div." He let out a heavy sigh. "They disappeared down the beach and I was afraid of flying after them. I didn't want them to think I was a pedophile." He stared at a *poke* roll, picked it up and held it to my lips. I bit into it, putting my arm around him, holding him closer, wanting to see the happiness come back to his face again.

We flew home, hand in hand and I kept one eye on my husband's gorgeous ass, the other swiveling across the ground in case the car thief popped into view.

"You are hilarious!" Tem shouted at me, his hair flying back, making him look even more exotic and gorgeous than he is. He let go of my fingers, zooming ahead, playing with me. I caught up to him and snatched him into my arms, my lips grazing his.

"I'm taking the fucking bus!" I announced and he laughed in my face. I heard our cat's meows as we zeroed in on our property. We owned a magnificent piece of land in the old-style mountain section of *Tantalus*. This was one of the best pieces of real estate with an eclectic mix of homes going back generations. Families rarely gave up their properties unless death parted them. My sister, Heavenly, and I inherited our estate with two extremely different houses on it, a horse corral and grounds containing vegetables and fruit, from our aunt who died over a hundred years ago.

Our family was small. Apart from me and Tem, Heavenly and her wife, Clancy, shared the property with us. Tem's brother, *Todah*, his wife, *Elenai*, and their baby son, *Akua*, came and went. They were welcome to live with us and we would have preferred it, but ever since the devil abducted Tem and held him for ransom for baby *Akua*, they had become even more skittish and fearful about his safety.

Akua was a baby storm demon as well as a

vampire, like the rest of us. He was destined for great power, but I was anxious to teach him all the things I knew about the living and the dead. One day I would assert my patriarchal authority, but in the meantime, Tem and I kept a close eye on *Todah's* little family. They were currently on the Big Island of *Hawaii*, checking it out as a future domicile. I knew one day they would come home to us, but it had to be their decision.

Our ad-hoc family matriarch Blossom, who had endured an enforced opium rehabilitation, at Tem's instigation, was now in Japan checking out the old hood. She hadn't been back since she'd been brought to *Honolulu* as a prostitute in the early nineteenth century. Her family knew she was different and couldn't get rid of her fast enough. She was different all right. She was a kind of vampire queen. Sobriety had wrought strange changes on Blossom. Frankly, I wasn't sure I didn't prefer the old Blossom. At least I knew what I was getting with her.

She now called us each day with news of her travels and told us she was opening a new series of cat cafés in Tokyo.

"Jimmy-San," she purred down the phone, "I was so entranced by your description of the one you visited. I have found my calling!"

I was certain she would miss the income and the lifestyle of running opium dens and brothels,

but maybe I was wrong. I also had a feeling by the time she came home, she'd be back to smoking or chewing the dreaded black stuff again, and I was worried Tem would take it hard.

The closest thing Tem and I had to a baby, was our cat, Moontime, whose mouth opened into a long, unpleasant yowl from his post at the kitchen window. Since our home invasion, we kept him confined indoors. It was for his own safety. In the weeks since, we'd more or less settled back into our lives, we had trip wires, traps and other unsavory objects installed on our land. It had incensed us that the devil had gone to such lengths to hurt us.

We had almost finished combing the property and eliminating all hidden dangers, but it would have broken our hearts if anything happened to our cat, bossy little beast that he was. We flew to the ground, the house was in darkness, but I heard no human heartbeats. That was a good sign. No strangers lurking.

"Front door?" Tem asked me. I could tell he was anxious to hold Moontime, but if we went through a window, he'd jump right out. We liked to confuse him, choosing different entry points each time.

I nodded, but that smart little guy was there, ready to dive bomb around us, paws in the air. He didn't get far. Tem gathered him into his arms,

kissing his ears and Moontime's large yellow eyes closed in bliss as he purred his approval.

Switching on lights, I glanced around. I was pleased that many of our priceless heirlooms had been repaired. Ahead of us, the living room bore drop cloths everywhere. This was where most of the damage occurred during Tem's abduction. The kitchen, in which baby *Akua* had attacked the Nguyen lord Quent, ultimately killing him, had been fully restored. The ugly scene of blood and one old, dead vampire was but a memory. There were four bodies we'd had to dispose of after the carnage—two eunuchs, whom my sister and I dispatched in the wine cellar, our grounds man, Jose, and Quent who plotted to take possession of our nephew.

Two of the eunuchs had initially stolen our two horses, *Maui* and *Lanai*, and then left them to fend for themselves once we all traveled to Vietnam. The horses survived for days, chomping on Tem's prized, organic garden, which incensed him until we found all the booby traps on our property. We were lucky our equine family members hadn't been killed.

As soon as he fed Moontime his evening portion of *ahi* tuna, Tem and I walked around the house, still feeling a little unsettled. We were repairing everything and making elegant upgrades while we were at it.

“Good evening.”

I jumped and glared into the darkened living room. My new nemesis—apart from my car thief—was this fellow, Gideon Quent, pronounced Kent. I’d never heard of anything so pretentious in my life and didn’t believe Gideon when he said Quent was his real name. He was the most ridiculous, over-starched art restoration expert on the face of the planet. He had a huge crush on Tem that was really starting to bug me. In the beginning, when our new sommelier, BethAmi Caldwell, sent him to us, Tem thought he was silly, too. Now he seemed to enjoy the attention Gideon gave him.

“What are you doing here?” Even Tem was startled. Gideon was climbing through the living room windows from outside. These were the same windows the eunuchs used to kidnap Tem. I still shuddered inwardly, remembering how I heard Tem scream and I was too late to save him. I ran to the room to find the windows smashed, blood dripping from them. I thought at first Tem had been injured and the thought still terrified me...how close we had come to disaster. We replaced the windows with tempered, bullet-resistant glass and extra security features installed all over the house.

“I fell asleep out back.” Gideon shrugged his arms into a blue suede jacket I recognized as being

one of Tem's creations. He was thirty, tall, blond, veddy English and veddy, veddy obnoxious. His hand went straight to his hair to make sure his immaculate, Beatles-style hairdo was in place. He wore jeans and a French shirt Tem had drooled over when he first saw it. Gideon Kent, with a Q, had been wearing it constantly ever since. I was beginning to hate anybody whose name started with a Q.

Tem switched on living room lights. We both looked around, reading each other's thoughts. *He's done almost nothing since we left.*

"I should go." Gideon made a big show of checking his watch and yawning, then smacking his lips. "I'm hungry."

"Well, we don't want to keep you," I said pointedly.

"Div and I are about to have some dinner, aren't we, darling?" Tem looked at me and telepathed, *Be nice, Div.*

I'll be nice when he gets some work done. I want dinner alone with you, Temeura.

Tem shook his head. "How did it go today?"

Gideon shrugged again.

Dang. I was losing my touch. Normally when I used Tem's full name he knew I meant business. My scowl deepened as Gideon whined about the cat.

"I feel like he's watching me."

"He's a cat," I said, wondering where he was going with this.

"I felt like I was being supervised."

Tem adored Moontime and I stole a glance in his direction. He seemed surprised, but said nothing.

"What have you been doing since we left?" I asked Gideon.

He looked at me in wonderment, as if he'd suddenly realized I was in the room.

"I have been working on the Tang Yin piece. Really a remarkable painting. I've never worked with a genuine Ming Dynasty master outside of a museum before. I must admit I'm nervous."

Not as nervous as we were. The painting, a self-portrait of the Chinese artist riding an ox, was painted around 1500. It was one of our most prized possessions. It was one of the few things my grandfather won in his gambling sprees and managed to hang onto. Tem had found it in the cellar shortly after we got together and we still marveled over owning such a magnificent work of art.

It had been slashed by our attackers and, valued at five million dollars, I wasn't about to let that piece out of the house, insured or otherwise, and this was why Gideon was here. He was supposed to be restoring our ruined masterpieces.

It didn't look like he'd done anything.

Tem glanced at the piece and back at me. "I'm getting dinner organized. Give me fifteen minutes and we'll have a feast. Darling?"

I snapped to attention. "Yes?"

"You want to bring up some wine?"

"I adore your wine cellar. May I come with you?" Gideon asked. I resisted rolling my eyes and beckoned him to follow me. We walked down the stairs to the cellar, which held some truly wonderful bottled wines. Tem and I had to replace some broken bottles and hired a wonderful sommelier. She was one of only fifteen women in the world certified to do this job. She selected some outstanding replacements and kept a notarized ledger for us. I adored Beth Ami, but since Gideon had come to us on her recommendation, I was not as ecstatic about her these days.

My desire to show off drove me to select one of our newest purchases, the amazing *Henschke* label *Hill of Grace*, a very nice Shiraz that retailed for four hundred and fifty dollars a bottle. We had a case of the stuff, well...we did have a case and were down to a few bottles. Tem and I were enraptured with this Australian wine. I checked off the bottle from the list and paused. Were we really down to three bottles? Gideon, peering over my shoulder at the list, distracted me.

"Let's go," I said and we trooped back upstairs.

I was shocked to see Moontime sitting at the top, slitty-eyed, staring at Gideon, who trembled as he brushed by the cat. Moontime's extended claws only narrowly missed the Englishman's ankle.

"That cat hates me," Gideon whispered, his expression less than friendly.

I could smell wonderful things from the kitchen and was about to walk in there when Tem came out with a tray laden with napkins, silverware and our best crystal wine goblets. He glanced at me.

Div...I want him to finish this job. Please be nice.

I was incensed. I was being nice. I was being plenty nice! *I don't trust him, I telepathed. And by the way, Moontime hates him.*

Tem looked astonished, but moved quickly into the dining room and set the table. This room had also been ransacked during our troubles, but we had restored it to functional use, the damaged family heirlooms now sitting in the living room with everything else awaiting Gideon's attention.

Moontime was really acting strange, growling at Gideon who moved away from him. Tem returned to the kitchen, coming back with a proper Sommelier's knife, with which I opened the wine.

"BethAmi really educated you two," Gideon said, taking a seat to my left, with Tem sitting to my right, close to the kitchen. I sat at the head of the table.

"No, Div always used one," Tem said and there was an edge to his tone.

Don't leave him alone with Moontime, Tem telepathed to me.

"Would you like some wine?" I asked Gideon as Tem returned to the kitchen.

He slid his glass toward me and I filled it halfway. I really didn't like the way he gulped it down. To me, wine should be savored. When Tem arrived with his amazing feast, my toes curled from the pleasure my eyes sent them. He'd prepared chicken sang choy bow, one of his delectable yet easy to make feasts. He'd chopped up a couple of heads of lettuce to use as edible bowls and Gideon watched us scoop the mix of chicken, noodles, chopped fresh chili and cilantro into lettuce wraps.

One bite and the fusion of tastes left me drooling.

"The wine is wonderful." Tem lifted his glass to toast me.

"You know," said Gideon, holding his glass out for a refill. "The ancient Egyptians invented wine. Their wine god, Shesmu, used to crush his victims' heads like grapes and drink their blood."

Tem and I stared at him. He could not have known we were vampires. He threw back his second glass and continued. "In fact, one of the earliest Egyptian petroglyphs is a wine-press.

Quite remarkable, really.”

I lost my appetite and so apparently did Tem. The attack on our home, the assault on our lives was still fresh. Tem excused himself. I knew exactly where he was going. I heard his soft voice from our bedroom. My bat’s ears picked out the words *Todah* and *Akua*. He was checking on our family.

“Is Tem all right?” Gideon asked, holding his hand out for a third glass of wine.

“He’s fine,” I said. “You have to drive, buddy. Don’t you think you should slow down?”

“I wondered if I might stay here tonight. My apartment is so lonely —”

My steely stare stopped his hopeful barrage. There was a rustle of laughter on the wind and I relaxed just a little. My sister, Heavenly, and her wife, Clancy, were home. Tem came back with dessert as they unlocked the front door.

“Man, will I be glad when we can fly through the window like normal...oh, hi,” Heavenly said, when she glimpsed a flushed-faced Gideon sitting at the dining table. Heavenly glanced at me. I knew she wasn’t crazy about the art historian either.

“Did you say fly?” Gideon asked as Tem put a tray of cheese and fruit on the table.

“No, she did not. No more wine for you,” I told Gideon. “I’ll make coffee.”

"I think I should leave," Gideon whined. "That cat hates me."

Indeed, Moontime was sitting on one of the dining chairs, his little ears and slitty eyes the only things visible over the edge.

We bid Gideon a farewell and Tem escorted him outside and watched him drive away. On the sound of his retreating vehicle, Clancy exploded.

"What a tool. He did nothing all day!"

"I know," Heavenly added. "Every time I came in here, he was looking at things, or he was down in the wine cellar. "

"The wine cellar?" This piqued my interest. I didn't say anything, but I was starting to get a bad feeling about this guy.

Tem moved to my lap and fed me a sliver of brie from his fingers.

"I hated leaving him alone here, but we needed to get Clancy's violin down to *Tangi's* music store. They say they can repair the damage." Heavenly looked pleased. Clancy's rare violin, named *The Baltic*, had been crafted by Joseph Guarneri del Gesu in 1731. It had sustained minor scratch marks, thanks to our attack.

"It took us so long to find this guy through *Tangi's* and I didn't want Clancy going on her own."

"Of course not." Tem reached for some strawberries and popped one into my mouth.

"That's a valuable violin. How long will they keep it?"

"Two weeks." Clancy's face twisted with the force of separation anxiety. "On the plus side, my beautiful wife bought me a nice little distraction. An *ukulele*." Clancy pronounced it the way we *Hawaiians* do, oo-koo-lay-lee.

Heavenly's eyes shone for a moment. "Well, you've been saying you wanted to learn it." She looked at us. "It sounds so magnificent in her hands. It's a *koa* wood mango tenor."

"Oh, that's a *Tangi* specialty," Tem said. "You must play it for us, Clancy."

"Give me twenty-four hours to get used to her and I will." She paused. "What do we really know about this Gideon guy?" Clancy asked.

"Not much," I admitted. "We were impressed with BethAmi and she knew we needed restoration work done, and said there was nobody better than Gideon. Next day, he showed up."

"Moontime hates him," Tem said. "I hadn't noticed it at first, but I trust this cat's instincts."

"So do I." I was glad we were finally on the same page regarding Gideon Kent with a Q. I reluctantly disengaged my husband from my lap.

"Where are you going?"

"I'm doing what I should have done a few days ago. I'm going to look him up online. He has to be on there somewhere."

In our room, I fired up the laptop as Tem scurried in with the rest of the wine and our glasses. I sprawled on the bed. The first listing for Gideon was his *Facebook* page.

"Div." Tem handed me a glass. "Don't you think this is a little like spying?"

"No, not at all. A stranger is in our home. A weird stranger. I'd like to see what he's got to hide."

I clicked on the *Facebook* link and the default photo was a Chinese scroll painting. I couldn't access his account any further because he'd set it to private. You had to become his *Facebook* friend in order to see more. I would have kept surfing except that Tem was getting frisky, rubbing his hands all over my ass. I put the computer to the bedside table, careful not to disturb the cat curled up on my pillow. Thank God we had a huge bed.

"Tem, you're being such a naughty boy, interrupting me when I am doing research. That's so disrespectful."

"Are you going to punish me?"

His eyes gleamed and I sat up, taking a sip from his glass.

"I'm thinking punishment is definitely in order." I dropped my head and unbuttoned his leather pants. He was commando, just the way I liked, and he was already hard. I loved the way his balls and cock fit perfectly through the space

left by the open buttons. I immediately started licking him. I took a sip of wine, let it pour over his cock from my warm mouth, and sucked it all up before the wine splashed on his leather. I loved the combination of cock and Shiraz.

Tem's thoughts followed mine. "It is a very exotic mix. Somebody should bottle it. I think we need to think about this, baby. A wine for horny gay guys."

"And straight women."

"They might enjoy it, too," he agreed.

"I am torn between your cock and the wine since it is a good vintage, your cock I mean, and the wine isn't bad either."

Tem smiled as I had my fun. His cock was hard, pointing up toward his belly. It wanted relief, but I was into tormenting the cock of my dreams. I gave it a good tongue bath, pulled his pants down, and pushed him onto his back. I don't even bother taking off his pants. I got between his legs, which moved over my shoulders and started sucking earnestly on his balls. He held his cock in his hand, gently stroking it.

"Shit that feels good," he muttered. A few seconds later, he said, "Div, I am going to shoot."

"Stop playing with yourself," I barked, but it was too late. All the stimulation had sent him over the edge and I got to his cock just in time. I sucked him as he exploded in my face. I licked and

sucked him until he stopped coming. He was still in a high state when I removed my mouth from him and took off his pants. He knew what was coming next and his legs naturally opened up to me. Each time I fucked Tem, it was like the first time. I never lost the feeling of thrall for how I felt about this man.

"Fuck me, please," he moaned.

I sucked his ass in a possessive, ferocious way that kept his cock hard. His fingers tightened around his shaft, the head still being so sensitive. He begged me again to fuck him and I couldn't wait. I rubbed my cock against his, against his sweet hole. I held our cocks together and he looked into my eyes.

"Div, I want you."

I stuck it into him. I took my time...after all, getting inside him was the sweetest revenge for having to wait all day for him. I loved how he felt, hot and tight and his ass grasped me closer, deeper. I was afraid I was going to come too soon. I loved being in him so much. He made little noises, whimpering for me to fuck him, and I did. I gave him everything and he smiled up at me as my cock moved into him harder now. I leaned down and kissed him. I could taste the wine on his tongue and he held my head in his hands. He said something amazing.

"Woe betides anyone who ever hurts you."

I just wanted to fuck him until we both died. I reached between our bodies for his cock, but his hand was still there. He was leaking again already. I knew how hard he came with my cock inside him and I couldn't wait to bring him that intense fulfillment again. I was lost in his kisses, his touch. I loved how he wanted every inch of me inside him. I told him I loved him over and over again and then started to come. His face ignited and he came in my hand, all over our bodies and I felt his soul crying out to mine.

Yes!

CHAPTER THREE

I couldn't sleep. Around two in the morning, Tem and I took turns feeding from each other, a ritual that always sent us into a sexual frenzy. Swapping blood and semen, sated and sweating after a hot sixty-nine, we fell back against the pillows. Tem sighed and snuggled against my shoulder, sinking into a peaceful sleep, but I was wide-awake. Good blood wasn't keeping me awake. Bad blood was.

"What is it, baby?" Tem's warm, moist fingers trailed across my jawbone.

"Gideon Quent. Something's off, baby. He really bugs me. I...I just think with his credentials and his stuffy background, he is not what I thought an art restoration expert would be."

"I admit, he's quirky." Tem kissed my chin. "He's an artist, like me. Some people probably think I'm a freak."

"Who?" I asked, starting to anger. "Tell me who said that."

Tem laughed. "I'm just saying." He leaned over

and kissed me, his long, dark hair falling across his magnificent face. He was so beautiful and I still couldn't believe he was mine.

"Would you like some cake?"

"Cake?" I perked up immediately. "What kind do we have?"

"Red Velvet." Tem threw back the damp, crumpled bed sheet and took his lovely body away from me. Keeping my gaze on his hot ass, I followed him like a hungry hound.

"That's my favorite," I whispered, not wanting to wake the girls, although they slept in another part of the house. We paused at the entrance to the living room, our second favorite room. The ghosts of our ancestors mingled. I could hear my aunt's voice and wished I could understand what she was saying. Sometimes Tem and I felt her strongly. She would have loved him in my life and for a man who doesn't believe in regrets, my only one is that she never met Tem or Clancy. She would have adored them.

"The spirits are happy," Tem said.

I nodded. They were happy that the house was coming back to itself and that under Tem's loving hand, minor repairs Heavenly and I had ignored, were finally being done. When my aunt was alive, our house was a festive place. I remembered dinners, dances, lengthy *luaus* that stretched over two or three days.

With her death, Heavenly and I, the only vampires in our family, remained alone. We were alive, but really not. We existed, lonely and sad for decades, no, longer until I met Clancy and brought her and Heavenly together. And then I fell in love with Tem.

Our house became a home again and our evenings were long, romantic nights of meals shared and our new relationships cemented. Heavenly and I treasured each other's romantic partners and we spent a lot of time together. We really enjoyed one another's company and now, the house was undergoing yet another new change and our *aumakua*, our family guardian spirits, were pleased. I felt now, a renewed sense of protectiveness. I would get rid of Gideon Quent one way or another.

My thoughts switched to more pleasant tracks. I loved this time of night, when moonbeams glowed and the voices of the *'aina*, the land, sounded strongest. In the kitchen, Tem cut a couple of big slices of cake and we poured out the rest of the wine into a single glass.

"Do you smell the jasmine?" he asked me as we opened the door and stepped outside.

Moontime's forceful protests reverberated from inside as we sat on the back *lanai* in the old porch swing, legs entwined, eating cake.

"What was Gideon doing out here?" Tem

wondered aloud, obviously picking up on my thoughts. "I admit that was weird. Seeing him out here, coming through the windows into the living room was a big surprise."

"Yeah." I sipped the wine. New blood always enhanced the flavor of food. It also strengthened my vision. I could see so many star constellations, Arcturus, or *Hokule'a*, as we *Hawaiians* called it, being my favorite.

"Look, baby." I pointed. "*Hokule'a*."

"I love it," Tem said, feeding me thick, creamy cheese frosting with his fingers. "The star of happiness. And it's right over our house, Div."

Pulling him to me, I kissed him, putting the glass and the dish on the *lanai's* wooden floor.

He leaned away from me for a moment. "I think first thing in the morning, we need to finish a sweep of the property for more booby traps and then we need to stay on Gideon until he finishes his work. I want him out of our house."

"You won't get an argument from me." I caught his hair in my hands, drawing his face to mine. We kissed with a deep intensity for a moment.

"Div, what *do* you think he was doing out here?"

I shook my head. My hard cock was ready for action, but his troubled expression was so unlike him, I swung my feet to the *lanai*.

"What are you doing?"

"Getting a head start on those booby traps. This is our special time of night, baby. If he was doing something out here, maybe we'll find it."

"Not so fast, bucko. I'd kinda like a little action."

"You little tramp."

"Yeah...I am a tramp. I'm *your* tramp." He straddled my naked hips, his cock hard as he rode his gorgeous ass and thighs back and forth across my own swollen erection. I was enthralled by the way he could just turn me into an instant fucking machine. I loved the way he was caressing my cock, using his muscled legs to keep it between his thighs, the head just peeping out.

"Shit," he gasped. "Fuck me." He rose high enough for me to stuff my cock into his ass and we both let out gasps at the renewed, blissful contact. I fucked that man on top of me, the porch swaying like a lazy *hula* dancer underneath our jack-knifing bodies. I never got tired of fucking Tem. His fingertips gripped my nipples and my mouth latched onto his. I grabbed his hips and pushed him down hard onto me.

"Fucking come all over me," I demanded as I grabbed his cock and pumped. His ass muscles clamped down on my own cock and I was a goner, coming inside him so hard, my brain produced some new constellations of its own. Tem pounded up and down on me harder, shouting

into the sky as he came. I gripped his shaft, loving the feel of his cream all over my hands and torso.

We did not slow down for a full minute. At last, he collapsed on top of me and my thoughts drifted back to Gideon Quent.

Tem flittered into my mind and shivered. "He must never be left alone here again."

Again, he wasn't going to get an argument from me. We reluctantly parted and stepped onto the land that was ours, every inch lovingly tended by Tem and Clancy who had planted so many exotic fruits and vegetables, most of it destroyed in our personal day of infamy. The land, like our house, was coming back to itself and we had put red flags on parts of the property that hadn't been searched and green flags for the places that were now safe.

"We're naked." Tem grinned.

"I love you naked."

He leaned in and kissed me and something caught my gaze. I quickly put him behind me.

"What is it?" he asked me.

I followed the long, silver line, my eyes easily seeing it in the darkness. There were three rows of it, not far from the house. My heart skipped a beat. It was in the green zone. Somebody had been here since we scoped the place out and put in a fresh booty trap. Was it Gideon Quent? The thin silver lines disappeared through the trees ahead of us.

Picking Tem up in my arms, I carried him into

the house. If I hadn't seen the wires, one more inch, and his legs would have been severed at the ankles.

Tem didn't say a word and even the cat sensed better than to try and brush past me as we returned to the house. I picked up my cell phone.

"Div, it's three o'clock in the morning. Who in the world are you calling?"

"Francois Amaury, our alleged security expert."

He was ex-Special Forces, ex-Green Beret, current paranoid, secretive security expert. Francois was a big, beautiful, muscular black man with dreadlocks, a serious air of menace and a very sexy French accent. Tem and I found quite intoxicating.

By six o'clock in the morning, he was kneeling in our yard as stunned as we were by the mysterious appearance of the wires.

Francois, a man with some serious hardware and a keen sense of instinct said the wires had been up for a couple of days.

"Gideon," Tem and I said in unison.

He raised a brow and listened as we told him about our strange art restoration expert.

"Show me what he's been working on," he said.

In the living room, he scanned our walls with an infrared camera and other fancy stuff. He had two guys working with him while the rest of his

team of security experts were out on the property.

Francois took our fingerprints so he could rule us out as potential villains. I was quite impressed with the little black box he used to take the prints. Tem roused Heavenly and Clancy so they, too, had their prints taken and I thought Clancy perked up just a little at the sight of our security expert.

"You might want to put your cat in the bedroom," he said at one point. Moontime's hackles rose. He doesn't think of himself as a cat. He thinks he's a mountain lion.

"Don't raise your hackles at me, cat." Francois peered down at Moontime. "It's for your own good. We're about to dust for prints and the stuff we use is bright pink. It will take days to get out of your fur."

The cat glared at him, then meowed at me as if it was all my fault and I swear, he stomped off to the bedroom. Tem scuttled behind him and closed the door. The dusting, the checking, the whole palaver went on for hours until Tem and Clancy made eggs, toast, fruit and coffee. We all ate outside, *Hawaiian*-style, sitting on the wooden decking of the *lanai*.

A fine layer of pink dust sprinkled across Francois's nose and eyebrows. Preoccupied, he hunched over his tiny computer, checking and rechecking his diagrams and notes.

This will do his paranoia no good at all, Tem telepathed to me. When I turned to him, my husband slipped me a grape and I chewed it, the cool fruit exploding with sweet vengeance in my mouth.

"Okay," Francois said. "Family members stay here. Security team, follow me." Off they went. Tem, Clancy, Heavenly and I started talking at the same time.

"You think it's Gideon?" Heavenly asked the question we were all wondering.

Seconds later, Francois was back, with his team surrounding him.

"Here's the deal." He paused and I knew it was bad news. "The lettuce garden, where Tem and Clancy spend a lot of time, has several clusters of new devices planted within the rows of lettuce heads. Tiny, mini landmines."

I thought I was going to have a heart attack, but Tem chose to make jokes.

"Boy, somebody sure hates salad."

"Somebody's gone to considerable trouble to tamper with our security system."

I liked the word *our*. It showed me Francois took his security work and our safety seriously. He dismissed his team, dispatching the men to dismantle all the new hardware.

"I am going to reconfigure everything on my own without my team," Francois said. I could tell

he was furious. "As soon as we finish removing all the devices, I'm sending them home. I want to get to the bottom of this. Alone."

"You don't trust your team?" I asked him, incredulous.

"I don't trust anybody," he said. "Until this house is under my complete control, nobody is to come and go—"

"Oh, no. Gideon Quent starts at ten o'clock," Tem said. "Should I cancel him?"

"No. I want his fingerprints. Pour him a cup of coffee and as soon as he's done, it's Jimmy's job to get him out of here and keep him busy."

"My job?" I squawked. "Why does it get to be my job?"

"And what's he supposed to do with him?" Heavenly asked.

Francois considered the question a moment, a slow smile spreading across his face.

"Jimmy could always go back to the police station and file a follow-up report on his missing vehicle. I hear that gave them quite a laugh yesterday."

"You heard about that?" I asked. "Say, did you know we saw the thief driving around in my car right after that?"

Francois gazed at me, his expression unreadable. "I am sure the cops would love to hear about that. Keep your friend Quent out of

here for at least an hour.”

The front doorbell rang as if on cue and Tem went to answer it. My sister and her wife wanted to scour the property to look for more booby traps, but Francois wouldn't hear of it.

“Can't you find something a little less dangerous to do?” he asked. With the house overrun by Francois and his crew, the girls exchanged lusty glances and ran back to their room.

“I bet I can guess what they're doing,” Francois said, allowing himself a rare smile.

“Do lesbians turn you on?” I asked him.

“Hell, no. I'd rather watch you and Tem fucking.”

I was surprised. Francois was gay? It never occurred to me he might know who we were when I first enlisted his help.

“Let me put it this way,” he said. “If you and Tem are ever interested in a three-way, call me.”

I didn't know what to say, but I must be a sex pig because the idea of watching him with Tem was both tantalizing and frightening. I was so possessive of my man. What if he fell for Francois's dark charms?

“Baby.” Tem was at the *lanai* door and I wondered if he'd heard our conversation. “Gideon's here.” Tem looked spooked.

I don't want to leave you here, I telepathed to him.

You must, Div. I'll make him coffee and you get him out of here.

He turned on his sexy heel and shot back through to the kitchen.

I loved that man so much. Gideon walked toward us, hovering at the door and I remembered our plan.

"Do you two know each other?" I asked, quickly introducing him to Francois. Tem brought a cup of coffee to Gideon who seemed surprised that we were encouraging him to loaf. He finished his coffee and finally, I got a nod from Francois.

"Jimmy needs a ride to the police station," he told Gideon. "Mind taking him?"

He liberated the coffee cup from Gideon who looked startled.

"The police station? Why? What's the matter?"

"My car was stolen and the thief is driving it around town and —"

"What kind of car do you drive?"

I took a deep breath. "A 1965 Lincoln Continental, she's —"

"Somebody stole *that*?" I caught Tem shaking his head at Gideon, but Gideon was on a derisive roll. "Somebody stole that...that...museum piece and you're upset? You outta be thanking them for liberating you of that gas guzzler —"

Too late, he glimpsed Tem's frantic hand signals and my murderous expression.

"Wow," Gideon said, trying to recover. "Bummer. Okay. I'll take you to the police station." He didn't seem petrified at the prospect of being around the men and women in blue so I didn't figure him for a fugitive. It still didn't mean he wasn't an asshole.

I tried to muster up some dignity. "Apart from the fact that the car is my baby, if he gets into an accident or hurts somebody with it...man, I couldn't live with myself."

Gideon glanced at me. "You're really pissed."

"You just noticed that? Let's go."

In the living room, Tem gave me a finger wave. I wanted more and he smiled when I reached in for a kiss.

"I love you," he said. Telepathically, he announced, *I only want you, Div. Nobody else.*

He would get huge rewards later for that comment. Huge.

Gideon drove his brand new Corvette Coupe, which was the color of poop, like a blind, drunken lunatic down the mountain road from our house. He screamed its attributes at the top of his lungs.

"She's got a V-eight engine, short throw, six-speed manual transmission, removable roof panel and four wheel ABS traction control."

Yeah, but she didn't have extra legroom or suicide doors. She also had bucket seats and I

loved my full bench. Tem liked me to drive with his feet on my lap. He had done this since our very first date. *Tem*. I thought again about the booby traps on our property. I trusted Francois to figure it out. He took the fresh assault as a personal attack.

Gideon was still blathering about his car and I happily tuned him out. I always wondered why people came to an island and shipped these kinds of vehicles here. Firstly, you were begging someone to steal it. Secondly, you were asking someone to vandalize and break into it. Thirdly, we had the highest insurance rates in the nation and a Corvette's insurance, not to mention maintenance, would keep you car-poor. And fourthly, the salt air ruined cars so their value quickly depreciated. Lastly, you were just begging for a vehicle like this to be stolen.

We came down to the intersection of *Beretania* Street and stopped at a red light. I glanced two cars across, the traffic was going the opposite way, and there was my car!

"I don't believe it!"

"What?" Gideon asked.

"My car!"

On the radio, Gary Numan was singing *Cars* and I wanted to punch his mechanical lights out.

"Follow him!" I screamed, glimpsing a black

man's arm dangling from the driver's window. My window.

Gideon moved forward with the flow of traffic, the other car shooting forward in the opposite direction.

"Turn around!" I barked. "Here, here. Do a U-turn!"

Gideon ignored me and I would have jumped out and taken to the sky, but it would have freaked him out, not to mention everybody else who saw me. I twisted around in my seat, trying to get a look as my car turned a corner. Well, she still looked to be in one piece. That was a good sign, I supposed. *Beretania* was one-way traffic only. It was now too late to turn around. I seethed in silence.

"I'm a lover, not a fighter." Gideon shrugged. "Let's just leave this in the hands of the police."

"You big wuss," I muttered, but Gideon just ignored me.

We arrived at the main branch of the *Honolulu* police department, a long, white building with several *Hawaiian* flags flying out front. The white and blue cop cars lined up along the curb outside, each car had written on its side, *Serving and protecting with Aloha for Seventy Six Years*. I got out of the Corvette, leaving Gideon to find parking in the cramped lot across the road, which also

serviced the courts and *Iolani* Palace, the only palace on American soil.

I heard the rom-pom-pom of drums. It must be Friday, I realized. The Royal *Hawaiian* Band was in the grounds, playing *Hawaii Pono*i and I dodged cars to run across the street and join the throng. I was pleased to see so many people here on their lunch break. Four of our island's best female vocalists lined up, ready to sing and it was a powerful moment. A couple of hundred years ago, I stood almost in the exact same spot and listened to the original Royal *Hawaiian* Band. I was the only person alive who could testify to the sound being exactly the same.

I stole a look up at the palace windows, the ones screened with white shades. These had once been our last Queen, *Liliuokalani's*, prison rooms during the American invasion. I remembered the night I came to the gates, anxious to help the revolution only to find her imprisoned and her home torn up.

Taking a deep breath, I forced my mind back to the present. Men, women, children, *kama'aina* and *haole* alike, had come to pay their respects, to listen to the songs she and her brother, King *Kalakaua*, had written. As the sound of children's laughter joined the adult voices in song, I felt Queen *Liliuokalani* would be pleased. She always loved children and her legacy of music, her gift to us all,

lived on.

God bless you, I said to her ghostly presence. I didn't see her, but I could feel her circling the musicians. After her confinement, the Queen had been forbidden to attend large group events. Not allowed to entertain more than ten people at one time, the provisional government, which took over the islands, was afraid she would incite a fresh riot, an even stronger revolt.

Her revolution was not dead, I realized. She had always understood music united, music healed.

And the band played on.

I walked back across the road and into the police station. I immediately caught Officer Kendra Huffman's gaze. It galled me that Francois said she got a good laugh out of my stolen car saga. She smothered a smile and nodded as a tall, sandy-haired man in front of me, tried to explain his problem.

"So," she said, arms folded across her chest, "it's your assertion that this man is assuming your identity...for what purpose?"

"He's making money using my name. Ripping people off. He got a brand new Corvette and he's never made a payment. I've got creditors calling me night and day. He's ruining my life! There is a warrant out for my arrest and I am an innocent man!"

"Wait a minute," I said, stepping forward.

"Excuse me, Mr. Thunder, you wait your turn," Kendra Huffman snapped.

The man turned to stare at me.

"What's your name?" I asked the man, ready to swamp him with vampire pheromones if I needed to do it.

"Why?"

"I am not a weirdo, I promise you."

Kendra Huffman sipped on her coffee and choked. The man and I looked at her and she put her mug back on the desk.

"It's just that..." I glanced over my shoulder in case Gideon Quent was walking into the station. He wasn't. "My...family hired an art restoration expert—"

"Oh, shit! No! Not you, too!"

My heart sank. "His name is Gideon Quent."

The man's face went white. "Don't let him touch a thing! He's a fraud! He's a fake! *I'm* Gideon Quent."

Kendra leaned across the desk and tapped my arm. "Did you say Gideon Quent?"

"Yes. He brought me here in his Corvette. He's parking it right now."

She looked stunned. "I don't know what's going on here." She picked up the phone receiver beside her.

"Are you serious? He's here?" The man in

front of me tore out of the building and I followed.
I've always loved a good fight.

CHAPTER FOUR

Gideon Quent—the fake Gideon Quent was nowhere in sight. The real art restoration expert was a mess. His story tumbled out and it was shocking that in a few short weeks, the imposter had ruined the man's good reputation and some priceless art pieces and didn't seem to be slowing down any time soon.

"I thought the name had to be fake. I was sure it was a porn star name," I said.

"Of course it is," the real Gideon Quent said. "Where do you think I got it?"

I was beginning to like this guy.

"Look, I gave up the skin flicks many years ago, but I capitalized on my name, completed my education, and I've worked hard at my craft. If I ever find out whom this weasel really is..."

"You have no idea?"

"Believe it or not, I think it's Gideon Quent. I have no idea how he got the name, but I am beginning to think it's his real name and he's

figured out a great way to make money with it."

"Wow." I called Tem who was shocked by the news, but assured me the phony Gideon had not attempted to come back to our property.

"Francois is still working on our security system. I'm coming down to you right now, baby. Okay?"

"Okay." Since our home was in the hands of our security expert, I was happy to have Tem by my side.

"Francois ran his prints. He's checking the *AFIS* system." Tem sounded dazzled. "He's way cool, Div." His voice dropped. "I can't fly out of here. Too much going on. I'll get one of the girls to bring me."

By the time Tem hitched a ride on the back of Clancy's motorbike and arrived at the police station, the real Gideon Quent had calmed down a little. He was in the middle of a nightmare that didn't seem to be going away any time soon.

Tem and I perused a stack of snapshots of known forgers and con artists on the islands and let me tell you, there was no shortage of them. I was astonished to find my home was being overrun by bad guys of all persuasions.

"Oh, look." Tem held up a photo of one of our former porn co-stars.

"What's he there for?" I asked Officer Huffman.

"Sorry, I can't tell you that." She really, really

didn't like me, but got along famously with Tem. She even gave him a chicken recipe.

"How'd you do that?" I asked him as we left the station.

"Do what?" Tem asked me, stuffing the recipe in his back pocket.

"Make everyone love you."

"I look at them as if they are my one true love," he said, giving me a glorious smile.

"Hey." We turned to look at Gideon Quent. "I'd like to have a look at the work he's been doing at your home. I want to see how bad the damage is."

I tried practicing Tem's true love smile on him.

"Are you okay?" Gideon asked me.

"Yes, why?"

"Your eyes look all funny. Like maybe you're having a stroke."

Clancy zoomed by on her motorbike and gave us a wave.

Tem and I agreed to take Gideon back with us and he gave us a ride in his new SUV.

"This is nice," Tem said, climbing in front with Gideon. "Very nice."

I stole a hurt glance at him.

"For a modern car, darling." He reached back and patted my arm, but I saw the longing looks he gave the DVD player mounted on the roof and the digital dashboard system.

"Div's car was stolen," Tem explained to

Gideon.

"What kind was it?"

"A 1965 Lincoln Continental," I said. It hurt, really hurt, mentioning *theft* and *my car* in the same breath.

"Bummer."

Yeah, bummer.

He took our directions and motored up *Tantalus* as Tem rifled through the thousands of songs Gideon had stored in his system. *Mustang Sally* filtered through the SUV and Tem and Gideon bopped along to the music. I sat in the back and moped. I was really missing my suicide doors.

"Who's this?" Francois asked when he saw us and I feared he would frisk Gideon Quent on the spot.

"This is the real Gideon Quent," I said.

Francois smiled, but it was not a pleasant one. "Mind if I get your fingerprints?"

I was about to protest, but Gideon seemed hypnotized by Francois and immediately submitted himself to scrutiny.

"Div, I'll make lunch and you can show Gideon around. Is there anything you don't eat?" Tem asked the art historian who was staring at a rare antique Chinese screen in our living room. Carved in the early seventeenth century, it was made of Elmwood.

"Hmmm? Oh...no. I eat anything. Oh, wait. I'm not overly fond of rhubarb."

"Too bad. I was going to make a rhubarb pie." On Gideon's crestfallen expression, he said, "Kidding."

The wooden screen lined an entire wall and was one of my favorite pieces because it featured intricately carved flying bats. Being a vampire, I was partial to bat art and this screen, comprising six massive door panels, was one of the few worldly things I truly treasured.

"This is exquisite. It's from the Shanxi province, isn't it?" Gideon asked me.

I nodded. Now I was *really* starting to like this guy.

"Where did you get it? I don't think I've ever seen anything like this in *Honolulu* before."

I almost told him the truth that my grandfather won it in a card game, but since that happened three hundred years ago, I couldn't. I went with, "It's a family heirloom."

"It's quite...magnificent." Gideon tore his gaze away from the piece. I understood how he felt. I spent hours studying those flying bats myself.

He glanced around the room. "I have never seen such exquisite work in one room before. May I see the piece my impostor has been working on?"

I indicated the Tang Yin painting, which now

laid on thick pieces of muslin on a sideboard.

Gideon made a low noise in his throat and I watched him slip cotton gloves on his hands before he touched the piece.

"This has been torn...it looks like an animal."

Try a vampire bat in full bloom..."We had a robbery," I said. "Some of our most valuable pieces were damaged."

Gideon picked up the scroll painting by its wooden corners. "It doesn't look like he's done anything to it."

"I knew it," I said. "He was here all day and —"

"He was probably trying to figure out how to fix it. He did a job in *Maui* and put superglue on a Ming vase. This is from the same dynasty, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"It's beautiful." He put the painting back gently. "I would love to help you restore this."

"We're open to that idea," I told him as Tem came bustling in with lunch.

Clancy was still out tooling around *Waikiki* on her motorbike and my sister came moping into the living room. She and I were useless without our lovers. I got the same way without Tem.

She set the dining table, laughing as Gideon freaked out about us using our two-hundred year old *koa* wood table for informal dining.

"It's been in my family for generations," she

told him. "It's meant to be used."

He sat down at the table, running his hands along the polished rims.

"It's in gorgeous condition. Are you sure you use it all the time?"

"Every day," Tem told him, handing us all salads and home baked *Parker rolls* stuffed with crab and fresh *ahi* tuna.

"What do you use to clean it?" Gideon asked.

"I make my own mix of boiled linseed oil, turpentine, and white vinegar," Tem said, glancing at me. I was listening, but my mind was on the passionfruit pie I could smell in the kitchen.

It plunged me into an instant state of melancholy. It was my aunt's favorite dessert. Tem had uncovered her recipe in a box in the pantry. He had perfected it and it was even better than she made it. Suddenly, I missed her terribly. I could hear her favorite music. In my mind, I was transported back to the days when she played Richard *Kauhi's* Quartet on her *Crosley* turntable. His very slow, an almost maudlin version of *My Yellow Ginger Lei* was a family favorite and I would dance to it with her. She worried about dying and leaving me and Heavenly. She worried about neither of us having love. She would have adored Tem, I thought, not for the first time.

Such thoughts were futile. She was long gone and although I often sensed her spirit, Heavenly

and I had mourned her passing long ago. I reached for another bread roll and decided I was thinking about her since many of her precious gifts to us were the object of discussion.

"Div." I felt Tem's hand on my thigh and it put an instant smile on my face. "Gideon was asking about the car and where you got it."

"Oh..." Bringing back more memories, these were at least not so painful. "I bought her right off the ship at *Honolulu* harbor. It was *lei day* 1964 and —"

"1964?" Gideon interrupted me. "Are you kidding me?" I caught Tem's giddy grin as Gideon went on. "How old are you? You don't look a day over thirty-four, maybe thirty-five."

Give or take a few hundred years. "I was a child," I said.

"Good God, you islanders age well." He shook his head. "So you're the original owner. I hope you find the thief and give him what-for."

To start with, yes. I was about to change the subject to less painful topics when Tem piped up with, "Div even has a name for her." He shook his head. "A name, for his car!"

There was a moment of silence. I couldn't believe he was spilling all my secrets. Next, he'd be announcing we were a family of vampires.

"I have a name for my car," Francois said. "Alfredo." He grinned, but I swear I saw tears in

his eyes. "All my cars have names. They're kinder to you that way, if you make friends with them."

"Oh geez," muttered Tem. "It's such a guy thing."

"Mine keeps changing," Gideon said. "The last one was Piece of Shit. Because it was."

We all laughed, but Tem seemed hell-bent on destroying the good reputation of my other husband.

"Div's car is called Marion."

Heavenly bit her lip, gave me a guilty glance and joined in the hysterical laughter.

"Marion!" Gideon laughed so hard, tears rolled down his face.

"You gave her a girl's name?" Francois shook his head. "Women are nothing but trouble."

"Hey!" Heavenly protested.

"Marion is the only woman who's never given me a lick of trouble," I said.

"Hey!" Heavenly said again.

"Marion..." Francois glanced at me. "Who's she named after?"

"A woman I once knew." My thoughts tumbled into the past and a wonderful woman I'd met and thought was the ultimate in womanly loveliness. Nothing ever came of it. I could see her now, blonde and laughing. A goddess. She'd been a nurse in *Honolulu* and something might have happened between us had she not been killed

during the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Tem glanced at me, reading my thoughts. I'd never allowed myself to think about her. I felt his tremendous guilt to have caused me such pain as he reached out a hand to me.

"You don't need her anymore, Div. You have me now."

"I think you should buy another car," Heavenly said. She might as well have said I should shop for a new husband.

"Fantastic idea," Tem brightened. "Baby, let's go shopping."

"I don't want to go shopping. I have a car. Somebody stole her and I want her back."

"Don't you think it's weird the thief just drives around town in her?" Gideon asked. "I mean, it's really quite brazen."

"No more brazen than some guy impersonating you and taking over your life. I know the islands are small, but we've been a hot bed of crime here for a long time."

"True enough." Now two of us were depressed.

"When did it start?" Francois asked him. "When did you first realize you had an imposter?"

Relieved to be off the hook for the moment, I tuned into his response.

"I moved to *Oahu* six months ago and all of it started about three months ago." He paused. "I moved here from Los Angeles. I bought a place up

on the North Shore and I've been living there. I came initially to work on the *Turtle Bay* project." Francois opened his mouth, but Gideon lifted his hands to stave off any protests.

"I know that resort is controversial, but a job is a job. I came here for a vacation and loved it. I rented a condo in the *Turtle Bay* condo community and took a walk down to the beach every morning. I met the manager of the hotel resort one day and we got talking. They'd bought some fine art pieces for the hotel that were damaged in transit. Long story short, he offered me work and I bought two condos in the complex where I was staying. I rent one out as vacation property and I live in the other one, which is right next door.

"My tenants have mostly been good. I charge a huge deposit and believe me, I charge them for the smallest infractions. I think knowing I live next door keeps most of them in line."

For the first time since I'd met him, I realized Gideon's British accent wasn't nearly as pompous as the fake Gideon's.

"So I scored a couple of months' work out of the hotel and made some friends, got some great referrals. I have clients who ask me to travel and bring pieces back that they buy at auction. I was on one such trip, gone for two weeks and when I returned, there was a stack of mail waiting for me. Most of it was bills for bizarre things I would

never use, and certainly never did.”

He sipped at his water glass. It was almost empty.

“I’ll get coffee in a moment, but I want to hear this,” Tem said.

Gideon nodded, twirling the stemmed glass in his fingers. “I was stumped by the bills. There was a dry cleaning bill for tuxedos, bills for rental cars, hotel dinner charges from the resort, an astronomical bill from an Internet café in *Haleiwa*. I started calling these places, but the bills kept coming. I paid a couple just to stop the phone calls. I’d never had a bill collector call me in my life.

“Somehow, this guy appropriated my identity and was managing to get people to give him stuff for free. Some of the places, like the dry cleaning place, when I went in there, it was obvious to them I was not the guy who’d been dumping stuff and promising them a steady stream of business from his big-shot friends. He’d beg them for his clothes, saying he’d left his wallet at home.

“I found it unbelievable he managed to get a rental car on a cash deposit and left it at the airport kiosk a few weeks later. He’d disabled the tracking system. He got in line with all the other tourists returning rental cars and managed to slip away. They showed me the rental agreement. It had my name and my address. This guy targeted

me and he's enjoying turning my life to crap."

"We'll get him," Francois said.

Gideon didn't seem to hear him. "The car rental company reported the vehicle as stolen. I had to pay all the fees on it. I even had to pay for a new tracking system on it to stop them getting a warrant for my arrest. I put out one fire and then another one bursts into bigger and better flames."

"Have you seen him?" I asked. "Do you know what he looks like? Do you think this could be one of your former holiday renters doing this to you?"

"Funny you should ask that. Up until a week ago, I had no idea. He went back to the dry cleaner's and when they told him they wouldn't take anymore of his clothes, he went berserk. They told him they knew he was a phony, that he wasn't the real Gideon Quent and they said he laughed. They said he got really weird then. They called the police, and he left.

"They have surveillance cameras and they showed me the tape of the whole incident. I have never seen him in my life. I do not know this man. If he was ever a tenant in my unit, he came as somebody's guest. It might have been during the two weeks I was out of town, but..." his voice drifted away.

"The dry cleaners were kind to me. They gave me the tape and the police now have proof that somebody is stealing my identity. As far as I

know, however, this incident is when he decided to escalate his activities. He bought that Corvette, again sweet-talking the sales people into just giving it to him. He's got his victims convinced he's some kind of celebrity restoration expert. I am a guy who has worked hard to make a life for myself. I moved to paradise and found hell instead."

I thought for a moment. "So he has a driver's license as Gideon Quent."

He nodded. "And a couple of credit cards, though they are maxed out." He blew out a sigh. "When this whole thing started, I didn't know what to do. I have a friend in the forgery section of the Los Angeles Police Department. Nobody here would believe me or listen to me. My friend in LA started investigating this as a favor. He came out last week for a few days and he says the fake Gideon seems to know a lot about me. He's connected. He gets information on me and gets jobs. Up until my friend's visit, I had no idea the imposter was taking jobs under my name. He takes the jobs, takes a deposit, and vanishes. That's recent. That started about a month ago. Up until now, he's been just getting free stuff."

"Do you know a woman named BethAmi Caldwell?" I asked him.

He frowned. "BethAmi...why do I know that name?" He snapped his fingers. "She's a

sommelier, isn't she?"

"Yes. She's the one who recommended you. She handles our wines here."

His eyes widened. "She recommended me? I barely know her. She—" He paled suddenly. "She was at *Turtle Bay* stocking their wines when I worked there. We spoke a couple of times. She seemed interested in what I was doing. I was more interested in what *she* was doing. There are only about a hundred licensed female sommeliers in the whole world, you know."

"Yes," Tem said. "I was fascinated by her. I have always loved wine, but never had anything like the cellar Div has. He...after we had our...robbery recently, we wanted to upgrade and buy more wine. She has been amazing. She's suggested new purchases, told us which wines to drink first...I trusted her."

We all sat with this for a moment.

"This is a juicy mystery." Heavenly yawned and stretched. "Do you think she's behind it? And if so, why?"

"Good question," I said. "If she really is involved, she's risking her own credibility."

"She really recommended me?" Gideon seemed genuinely bewildered.

"Yes," I said.

"She gave us his—your—his—business card," Tem said.

"Which I now have," Francois responded. "I dusted it for prints to compare with the others in the house.

"Really?" Gideon looked excited. "May I see it?"

Francois reached underneath his chair, extracted a leather folder, and withdrew a plastic bag. He handed the bagged card across the table to Gideon.

"Maybe she doesn't know he's a fake," Francois said.

"But Gideon here met her. She has to know he's a fake," Tem pointed out.

"Oh my God," Heavenly said. "What if she's in love with him and he's got her bamboozled, too?"

Gideon's expression turned gloomy. "These phone numbers are cell phones. This is the same card he gave the car dealership where he stole the Corvette. These cards were all printed by the Internet café in *Haleiwa*. I ended up footing the bill so they'd leave me alone."

"This guy's like a virus," Francois said. "As far as I can see, he's been here a couple of days...he's done very little except snoop. I am intrigued by the sommelier connection since his fingerprints are all over the wine cellar."

"I knew it!" I slammed my hand on the table. "He's pinched a couple of bottles of wine. I'm certain of it. That little runt."

"He stole wine?" Tem glanced at me.

"When I went down with him to get a bottle for dinner last night, I was surprised we seem to have raced through the *Wolf Blass*. There were more bottles checked off than I thought, but I had no proof."

"You didn't say anything."

I shrugged. "Babe...it wasn't like I knew then that he was an imposter. I thought it was odd. I'm only putting it together now."

"But if BethAmi's a sommelier, surely she has access to great wines, right?" Heavenly said. "Why would he need to steal wine?"

"We are all assuming she's involved with this and that he is connected with her," Gideon said. "The business card she gave you is definitely not the one I gave her."

"You gave her one?" Francois asked.

"Sure. You do that in business."

"So does this one resemble yours?" I asked.

"Sort of. Mine is plain and simple, but I use good, quality cardstock. This is flimsy rubbish and I paid two hundred dollars for it, a hundred of them to be exact, to keep that store off my back. "

Oh, boy. That meant there were ninety-nine other cards floating around the island ready to do further damage to Gideon's battered reputation.

"I'm getting the pie and coffee," Tem said. He looked upset when he left the table and Francois

leaned toward Gideon.

"Excuse me." I followed Tem into the kitchen.
"What's wrong?" I asked.

"I can't believe this man has been in our home. I thought...I thought I was doing everything I could to secure our property and..." he pressed his thumbs into his eyes.

Stepping forward to cover the short distance between us, I took him into my arms.

"I love you, Tem. There is no *I* in this house. It's *we*. We are not all knowing. We are not supernovas. We had no idea what we were dealing with."

He lifted his face up to mine and I kissed him. God, I wanted to be in bed with him, showing him how much I loved him.

"Pie first, then I need a really good roll in the hay," he whispered as my mouth claimed his in a long, loving kiss.

We didn't get around to that roll in the hay. Clancy came home and Francois talked to the four of us once Gideon left late in the afternoon. The house secured, Francois told us he was going to pretend to leave and sneak in the back way and come and spend the night in the living room.

"What back way?" I asked.

"Ah. I found a way to get in that I believe our perpetrators used."

"Perpetrators? As in plural? As in more than one?" Tem asked.

"I can't answer that yet, but I am gathering evidence. In the meantime, I have motion sensor cameras with infrared film set up all over the place. I want to get to the bottom of this as much as you do."

"So you don't think he set up the wires in the garden?" I asked him.

"No. I don't. That's something else." He frowned, indicating a battery of computers set up in the living room, lining our antique sideboards. "I want you to keep the plantation shutters closed this evening. Don't worry about how I will get back in here. I just will." His cell phone rang. He checked the readout.

"By the way, are you aware that BethAmi Caldwell is hosting a Portuguese wine-tasting event tomorrow afternoon in *Turtle Bay*?"

"No," Tem and I said in unison.

"I think you should attend. Did either of you call the fake Gideon and ask what happened to him today?"

"Tem and I looked at each other. "No," I said.

He pointed to my cell phone. "Call him now. I want him to be off guard. Be nice. Act casual. Act as if you were so busy you forgot to call him. You just want to make sure he's okay."

"You're kidding, right?"

"No, I am not kidding."

"He must have seen me with the real Gideon. Or he saw me talking to him in the police station."

Francois spread his hands. "Act dumb. We don't want him to know we're onto him."

"But I want to fucking strangle him." I sputtered. "I don't want him back here."

"We are setting a trap, Div. I mean, Jimmy. I'm sorry. I'm so used to Tem calling you Div."

"It's all right," I grumbled. "Call me whatever you want."

"Tomorrow, I want you to go to the wine tasting. I want you to leave him here and I will be hiding in the house. I will be watching him. I want to see what he's up to."

"My God, what if he robs us blind?" Tem asked.

"I won't let him," Francois assured us. "We need proof of his activities. Ask him to come back to work tomorrow. Let's say at eleven, okay? The wine tasting is at three. He has a few hours here with you and you leave. Then we see what he gets up to."

"Okay." I sighed. I already hated this. I picked up my cell phone. "Oh, one more thing, Francois."

"What's that?"

"I don't want him alone with our cat. I don't care if he fucking steals every last thing we own, but Moontime is a special boy and I think

Gideon...the fake Gideon is mean to him."

Francois thought for a moment. "Well, I plan to watch him from the underground cavern rooms you've built."

Tem and I started.

"You found our safe house?" Clancy seemed on the verge of tears.

"I wouldn't be much of a security expert if I didn't. I didn't stumble across it until today." He saw our grim expressions. "Don't worry. Nobody else knows about it. I'm like the church. You pay me for my protection, I won't blab. Since I am going to be down there, I can take Moontime with me. I like that little guy."

Tem beamed. "He's so sweet, isn't he?"

"Sweet? Hell. He's about as sweet as a serial killer. He's a gangster stealth kitty. He's smart, sassy and damned funny."

"Hey!" Tem was indignant.

"You got that one right," I said. "So you'll keep him down there with you?"

"Absolutely."

"What do we do? Do we come home after the wine tasting?" Tem asked.

"Yes, but tell him you're coming home later. Surprise him. If anything horrible happens before you make it back, I will take control of it."

I reluctantly called the fake Gideon who didn't answer on the second ring like he normally did. In

fact, his cell phone number was disconnected. I tried the second number I had for him and he picked up.

"Oh...Jimmy...I've been meaning to call you." He sounded nervous.

"Hey, no problem. You didn't show up back at the police station."

We both paused. I knew he was waiting to find out if I was about to drop an anvil on him.

"I waited a while and I figured something came up and I got a ride back home."

"You...you did?"

"Yeah. Say, Tem and I are wondering if you are coming to work tomorrow?"

"Sure. Yeah. I'm sorry. I had car trouble."

"Car trouble?"

"Yeah, it's a long story. But I'll get a ride up there."

"What happened to your car?" I couldn't resist needling him a little.

"Let's talk tomorrow. What's a good time?"

"Is eleven good for you?"

"Perfect. See you then."

"That was quite a performance," Tem observed, a wicked grin on his face as I ended the call.

"Wasn't it?" I started punching numbers. "I should call *Turtle Bay* and book us in for the wine tasting tomorrow."

"Already done." Francois waved his hand

airily. "I did it this afternoon. You got any Portuguese wine in the house?"

"None," I said.

He nodded. "Good. Beth Ami knows that, right? And she knows you like to spend money on good wine, so she'll be buttering you up...or should I say, liquoring you up."

Moontime chose that moment to climb into my lap. He'd been confined to our bedroom most of the day and his little face looked up at me, his mouth opening in a tiny, kittenish meow I'd come to recognize as his parental greeting. I stroked his head and his yellow eyes closed in pleasure.

"You want some *ahi*?" Tem asked Moontime whose eyes flew open. He took off running, darting into the kitchen behind Tem who said over his shoulder, "I'll get some dinner on. You'll stay, won't you, Francois?"

He checked his watch. "Sure."

Moontime accompanied me to the wine cellar. He did look like a kitty who was on a stealth mission, except the tiara he was wearing really should have been a do-rag to really qualify him as a gangster.

"Meow," he said. *Oops. Can the damned cat read my mind?* I paused by our newest purchase of pinot noir. We had twelve bottles of *Archery Summit Arcus Estate* from Oregon. *Oops.* No we didn't. Two bottles had been checked off the list.

This was weird. I knew none of us had touched this case. Each bottle retailed around ninety dollars. I pulled one from the rack and checked it off the list.

"None of us have touched the stuff," Tem said when I mentioned it in the living room. "Why in the world is he stealing our wine?"

"It's almost like he's seeing how much he can get away with," Heavenly said.

"Yeah." Clancy's mood darkened and she stomped off to the kitchen to help Tem prepare dinner.

"She's mad," Heavenly whispered. "She's kinda got a crush on BethAmi."

"You know, she might not be involved," I said.

"And I *might* be Santa Claus, but I'm not. Open the wine, Div."

Tem and Clancy cooked a feast of fresh, fragrant vegetables they'd picked from the garden before they realized it was booby trapped, and fresh salmon.

Dinner was fun, even though the five of us rarely strayed from the topic of the fake Gideon Quent. Francois excused himself as Tem went to make coffee and said he had a few things to take care of before coming back to spend the night.

"Don't worry about letting me in...I'll manage."

The girls slipped off to their room and Tem and

I sat on the *lanai*, enjoying the last of the wine. It was a wonderfully smooth, full-bodied wine. Whatever else she was up to, BethAmi sure knew a good grape.

We sat on our porch swing, Tem leaning against me, our feet playing with one another's. We looked up at the stars, swapping kisses when a sound came out of the nearest thatch of bamboo. Francois crept toward us. He was dressed in black and he looked damned sexy.

"Nobody else is on the property right now." He looked right at Tem's crotch as he said this. I felt the ripple right then, the underlying sexual tension. I knew he wanted Tem and I knew Tem liked being wanted. I read Tem's thoughts. He was picturing Francois kneeling before him, taking his huge head into his mouth.

As soon as he became aware of my presence in his mind, Tem wiped the thought from his mind. I was both turned on and petrified of him getting it on with Francois, but Tem had the most gorgeous cock and ass and it seemed sort of cruel to deny them both a bit of fun when Francois was so obviously in need. He didn't trust anybody and he'd been quietly drooling around Tem all day.

"The wine was really good," Francois said, licking his lips. He wasn't thinking about wine, he was thinking about come. Specifically, my baby's come.

"Yes, wasn't it?" Tem asked.

I finally interrupted the endless though pleasant, small talk. "Francois, would you like to suck my husband's cock?"

Tem reacted badly. "Div! What are you doing? I want only you. We haven't been near another man since..." he did not say aloud, *since we became bonded in blood.*

"It would be a turn on to watch Francois suck you, baby. Look how hot he is. You can't tell me you haven't thought about it."

"You know I have."

Francois's face lit up in the semi-darkness.

"You can suck his cock, but that's it," I told him. "Nobody fucks Tem, but me." I could tell that despite his denials, Tem was excited. He was so exotic and beautiful, the idea of this big black man's face between his legs got us both hard. Instantly, in spite of his trepidation, I knew Tem was on fire.

I kissed him and he accepted my kisses. We were really going for it when I felt Francois's clumsy fingers at Tem's button fly jeans. I brushed his hands away and asked him, "Haven't you ever unbuttoned another guy's jeans before?"

He was almost mute with need. "Not for a long time. And not somebody like this." He let out a sound...a sigh of relief as he slid Tem's jeans down and realized he was commando. He saw

that big, hard cock spring toward his mouth and went straight to town.

"What a feast," he said, his gluttonous lips descending on Tem's cock. I sipped my coffee, enjoying his oral exploration of my man. Tem was enjoying it. He sat beside me, his crotch jutting forward. He glanced at me a couple of times and he could see that I was okay and he started to get into it.

He gazed down at the big guy servicing him. Francois was in such a state of arousal, he kept rubbing the head of Tem's cock around his lips and finishing each swipe with a lick from the very tip of his tongue.

"You've been thinking about this," I said suddenly.

"Oh yeah, I watched all the movies. I've wanted Tem for a long time."

I watched him suck Tem, this big, muscular guy reduced to a helpless puddle of sexual need. He sucked his cock, his eyes closed, and his long dark eyelashes against his skin. He loved that cock and took it out again to kiss the head of it, rubbing the slit around his mouth. I wanted to tell him to quit teasing Tem, but then he sucked him back in and Tem's hand moved to his head. He stroked it and I knew he was enjoying it. He made Tem come, keeping his mouth still. I watched my man's face muscles contort as he exploded hard and fast

in our security expert's willing mouth. He sank back against the porch swing and smiled. But Francois was bereft. Tem's cock was still hard and Francois was still swallowing his cream.

Gulping, he looked at me, his expression intense, pleading. "Can I please lick his ass? I know I can't fuck him, but just let me lick him. *Please*. Just for a minute."

We both glanced at Tem whose eyes glazed over with the unexpected craving for that hot tongue on his body. Of course, I had to let Francois suck that hot ass. Tem had been, as far as I was concerned, the most delicious bottom in gay porn. They were both in such an advanced state of desire, all I had to do was tell Tem to turn around and kneel on the swing, and he did.

"Turn around, facing away from us." I couldn't believe I was telling the man I coveted, worshipped, and in every way adored, to let another man tongue him. His sexy ass poked out to Francois, who buried his face in it before Tem could brace himself. He licked and sucked and I wonder how many times he watched Tem in movies, wanting to suck him this way.

Tem's sinewy, beautifully toned arm reached behind him. He held Francois's head closer to him and I saw Tem's canine teeth elongating. Extreme sexual gratification brought the bat out of my man. Francois meanwhile was going crazy. He

took his tongue out of Tem, gazing at me as if dazed. I could see Tem's hard cock pressed against the back of the swing, pointing down between his thighs. Man, I wanted to jerk him off.

"Beautiful," Francois murmured, his lips against Tem's tailbone. He went back to worshipping him orally. I watched him for a moment, the jealousy making me nuts. I moved my hand in front of Tem and his eyes opened. He poked his bottom back and his cock sprang into my hand. I started suckling him and he moaned as Francois's tongue worked his ass.

"His tongue is in me," Tem rasped and I knew he needed me now. I released him from my mouth. I stroked his cock for a moment so I could watch Francois eat him. His ass was grinding against Francois's face and I watched that big, black hand reach under Tem's T-shirt to play with his nipples. I went back to sucking him and I felt his body shaking. He was going to have a monster orgasm, I could tell.

"I love him sucking my ass, but I want to come with your cock inside me. I can't wait. Please fuck me, baby."

Pushing Francois out of the way, I put Tem on his back on the swing and whipped my cock out of my own jeans and stuck it right into him. I looked into his eyes and Francois put his face between us. I let him suck Tem's cock a second

time as I fucked my man hard, telling him over and over again that he was the sexiest man alive.

It was hard staying in him with Francois's head between us, but I loved fucking Tem as Francois sucked him. Tem glanced down and saw the two of us working on him, and he looked back into my eyes and it was all over. We both came hard. He groaned and I felt Francois's hand on my ass. He was pushing me into Tem. I felt my baby coming.

"I love you so much," I roared.

Tem grabbed my head, his teeth sinking into his favorite spot on my throat. I covered him with my hands and arms so Francois couldn't see Tem's pleasure in feasting on my blood. Taking what was his, licking the punctures closed. Blue and red love fire blazed in his eyes. I picked Tem up and carried him to our bedroom. I was going to fuck him all night long.

"Can I keep his jeans as a souvenir?" Francois asked as I stepped into the house. I turned and looked at him, at the jeans dangling from his forefinger.

I could feel Tem's cock still throbbing against my arm, all steel and silk. I loved that cock and wanted nothing more than to be alone with the man attached to it.

"No," I said with as much dignity as a man who had just pimped his husband out could muster. "This is *Hawaii*. On these islands, when

you visit a sacred site, you leave with nothing but memories."

"Wow," he said. "That's beautiful, Jimmy."

CHAPTER FIVE

Tem and I played for a couple of hours, falling on each other in a hot, sweaty stupor. Our passion soon gave way to the reality of stolen cars, imposters and genuine menace in our lives.

"I'm nervous."

As long as I've known my husband, I have never once heard those words tumble from his sexy lips. He once took on five guys for a sex scene on a plane. He wasn't nervous then, but he was nervous about this sudden, strange activity that once again made us the targets of...who?

The ancient blood of vampires raised my hackles and I covered his body with mine.

"It's going to be okay, Tem, I promise you."

He shook his head, my lips seeking his and I quashed all his concerns with a searing kiss that threatened to turn passionate again, except I read his thoughts. We had a security expert in the house and he wanted to know we were safe.

I felt Francois would wake us if there was news

to report, but we threw on robes and I took his hand in mine. Padding into the living room, I felt Moontime threading his way between our legs. Francois hunched over one of the computers, clicking a pen with manic fingertips.

"Nothing," he grumped. "Not a damned thing."

"Humph," Tem said. "You want some coffee?"

"Sure." Francois yawned and stretched.

"You want to take a break?" I asked him.

"Nope. In the morning, I am moving underground. I'll rest until you go to your wine tasting."

"Do we really have to go?" Tem asked. He picked up Moontime who rubbed his little head against Tem's chin.

"No, you don't have to go, but I thought you wanted to get to the bottom of this," Francois said.

Tem turned and walked to the kitchen.

"We had a very bad experience about a month ago," I said quietly. "We're still not settled...and somebody just put wires in our supposedly safe garden."

"Yes, and you were here the whole time." Francois rubbed his face. "I am so surprised they haven't come back."

"They know you're here."

He frowned. "I'm inclined to agree, but I don't know how. I haven't said a word to anybody. I

deliberately dismissed my crew earlier today. You didn't tell anybody I was staying here tonight, did you?"

"No." I tried to think. "I haven't spoken to anyone outside of this family except for the fake Gideon and the real Gideon...you don't s'pose they planted bugs in here, do you?"

"Give me some credit," he smirked. "I checked. And no, they did not."

I looked at the computer screens. One was trained on our stables, the rest in various places around our property.

It was four o'clock in the morning, past the witching hour of three.

"We're not home free yet. They might still come. If not, I plan to be here tonight as well."

"Where did you park your car?" I asked.

"I left it at the base of Round Top, parked in a line outside somebody else's place. It was a long walk up here."

Tem bustled in with three bowls of coffee and homemade dark chocolate biscotti. The three of us sat around the computers, eating and drinking.

"Chocolate and coffee always make me feel better," Tem said and I felt anguished, just remembering the day he was stolen from me.

"Don't, Div," he said, and immediately came and sat on my lap. "This isn't your fault."

I put my bowl down, wrapping my arms

around him.

"Can you leave these computers here tonight?"
I asked Francois.

"No, I'm taking them underground with me. Lookit, you guys hired me to do a job and I'm doing it. Your job is to get some rest."

He turned his gaze back to the computers, and I got the immediate sense this for him had just gotten personal.

Fake Gideon never showed up at eleven. I was surprised quite honestly and was willing to cancel the wine tasting, but Francois wanted us to go. Around noon, he went underground, our kitty in his arms, and Moontime, who seemed to be in love, never looked back at Tem.

"That cat is a shameless hussy," Tem said to me.

"You've still got me, babe."

Tem laughed. "Yeah...I've got you. You wanna save some water and shower with me?"

"Of course I do." Out of my sister's quarters, I could hear ukulele music and Tem and I grinned at each other.

"She sounds good," Tem said. We leaped into the shower, our cocks hard, but we didn't bring each other immediate gratification.

We washed each other's long hair. Tem's hair was so beautiful and soft. I held his face in my

hands, kissed him, and took hold of his beautiful cock, stroking it to full hardness.

"What are you doing?" Tem whined when I took my hands away from him.

"I want to wait. I have an idea. There's a waterfall at *Turtle Bay*. I bet we'd be the first ones to christen it. I want to fuck you there."

"Why can't you fuck me here and fuck me there, too?"

"Don't you find the anticipation sweet?" I asked him, turning off the taps and drying off his lovely, silken skin with a fluffy towel.

"I find it a little frustrating."

"It will keep us sharp." I dipped my head and kissed his cock head, making my way down the shaft and back again.

"Tease," he said and started combing out his hair.

At a quarter to two, Clancy, Heavenly, Tem and I climbed into Heavenly's black hybrid SUV. My sister took the wheel. Tem and I climbed in back.

"We all scrub up so nicely," Clancy said with a grin. We were not wearing our favorite flying outfits. The girls were wearing matching skirts and silk sweaters. Tem and I were both wearing our best silk shirts and pants. Tem had made all our outfits. We were dressed up for our respective afternoons in chi-chi establishments.

The girls weren't interested in wine tasting.

They, too, struggled with the sun and were heading down to the *Moana Surfrider* hotel where they planned to sit on the balcony—Clancy’s newest fixation.

“I can never get a seat on that balcony,” she said. “I’ve sat there once. Just *once*, the whole time I’ve lived here.”

Locals and tourists alike fought over the balcony of the gracious old hotel like a prized oil well. You could sit, facing *Kalakaua* Avenue, watching the world go by on the main street in *Waikiki* or turn your big old wicker chair around and stare into the hotel and beyond it, the beach.

Waiters brought you drinks or coffee and the ambience, the sheer gentility was really quite wonderful.

“You will get your seat, my love, if I have to knock off a couple of tourists to do it.”

I smiled to myself as Tem put his feet on my lap. Heavenly was as fiercely protective and obsessed with Clancy as I was of Tem.

The heavily tinted windows gave us all an extra barricade against the sun. The four of us vampires did okay in daylight, but we couldn’t fly and had half our usual energy.

“I hope this works,” Heavenly said, her thoughts invading the same lines as ours.

“Yeah,” I said. “You’re going to be okay coming back home tonight?”

"Sure," Heavenly said. "We're going to have dinner at *House Without a Key*, maybe a little nooky on the sand..."

"Nooky on the sand. That sounds so good, Div," Tem piped up and the four of us laughed. It lifted some tension.

"We'll fly back at our leisure once Francois allows us. Clancy kind of fancies Francois. Don't you, baby?"

She grinned at her wife who squirmed in her seat.

"When all this is over, would you mind if we had a little threesome with him?" Heavenly surprised me with that question.

Tem and I glanced at each other.

"Oh man." Clancy glanced over her shoulder at us. "I know that look. Don't tell me he's gay."

I shrugged. "Maybe he's bi."

"Bi?" Clancy turned around again. "I can never meet a straight man," she muttered. "I thought he was too nice to be straight." She rummaged in the glove compartment.

"We got a new iPod and I put some of my own music on it," she said, pointing it at the computerized console.

"Hey, we heard this last night. You're really good on the uke, baby," Tem said and we all bopped along to Clancy's sexy, sassy music.

Heavenly and I owned the computer store at

Ala Moana mall and all of us being music lovers, we picked up the latest musical gadgets the second they became available.

I felt morose for a moment when I realized my iPod was in my car. Probably the thief was enjoying my music as well as my favorite ride.

We zeroed in on the hotel and the girls jumped out at the curb, inviting a flurry of annoyed honking from the taxicabs behind us.

"Drive safe," Heavenly said and hugged us.

I took over driving, my beautiful man riding shotgun. I drove south to catch the *One* freeway heading to the North Shore.

"You know, Div, this is a very nice vehicle. The back is nice...you know for emergency fucking."

"We do get a lot those, baby," I acknowledged, grinning at him.

"Except I can't put my feet on your lap." Those gear thingies are in the way." He paused. "We need to get our car back, Div."

"I know." I reached a hand across to him. "You want to give me one foot?"

"No. Not comfortable," he sniffed. "And the legroom is not what I'm used to."

I tried to hide my triumphant glee.

"If we don't find our car, we're buying another one. As close to the original as possible." Tem leaned back and sighed. "I can't believe we finally got that car looking so sexy and it got stolen. Do

you s'pose he realizes that's all original leather interiors?"

We were both quiet for a moment. I was glad the loss was finally hitting Tem. We were almost at the entrance for the freeway and I couldn't help looking around for my car.

"Oh, look," he said. "*Leonard's* bakery. I'd like to get a pastry. Wouldn't you, Div?"

I swerved off *Kapahulu* Avenue into the snuggest parking space in history. I tried not to think about the fact my beloved Lincoln would never have fit into it. I still loved that car.

Tem and I ran into the bakery and inhaled the incredible scents.

"I smell *haupia*," my husband's gaze zoomed on the coconut-filled *malasada* donuts that had just come out of the oven.

"Look, Div. Chocolate! We're never in time for chocolate!" We bought six of each and one custard, which we ate before we even climbed in the car. At least, Tem ate and I lapped up the sloppy seconds from his mouth.

As every good islander knows, if you don't eat *malasadas* when they're piping hot...they're just no-hole donuts.

"Div...I want to get married."

"Hmmm?" I was dizzy from licking his gorgeous mouth and lips. This man just intoxicated me.

"I know we had a private ceremony on *Kauai* and I know the wedding we had was for Clancy to have a husband, but she was marrying you. I want to marry you. I want a proper wedding."

"Is this about last night?"

"No." He bit into a *malasada* and drew my face to his. "When all this crap is over...I want to have a special ceremony. A kind of re-bonding."

"Okay," I said as his tongue met mine, trading warm chocolate sauce for custard cream.

"Okay?" He licked his lips, happier than I'd seen him in weeks.

"Of course."

"Div...last night was fun... it reminded me that I like belonging to you. I like being part of a couple. I've been with you longer than anyone and I..." He glanced into the paper bag holding the rest of our sweets, as if searching there for answers. "I want to celebrate loving you."

We kissed for so long, we were now running late for the wine tasting. Flying was not an option. We were still low on gas from our long-distance travels a few weeks ago and nighttime was our time. Not the peak of the afternoon.

Merging with the heavy flow of traffic again, I found my thoughts mingling with Tem's. We both were thinking about a bonding ceremony.

On the freeway, we lowered the windows and allowed the wind to blast us.

"Fuck it," Tem said, twisting around to place his feet on my lap. "It's not comfortable, but it's *my* lap." I zoomed past the airport, past the air force base and the exits for Pearl Harbor and started to relax. Tem fumbled in the glove compartment, found a pair of rhinestone covered shades and slipped them on his face.

"Wake me up before we go-go," he grinned and left me alone with the wide open spaces and the memories of my earliest times in *Hawaii*.

I loved the North Shore. Heavenly and I as kids spent long summer days at the beach. The long, long days left us feeling strange once we were on dry land.

Once cursed as vampires, our lives changed, but our love for the *aina*, the land, never wavered. *Turtle Bay* and much of the extreme north end from *Waimea* to *La'ie* was unspoiled and undeveloped. A huge battle between conservationists and rabid developers had dragged on for years about virgin beach property at *Turtle Bay*. The conservationists had lost. Tem and I hadn't been together then, but we discovered later we'd both been at the protest meetings.

Tem suddenly sat up. "I smell shrimp. We have to stop at Giovanni's shrimp truck."

I glanced at the dashboard clock. "We're late, baby." I took the exit for *Kamehameha* Highway

and indeed, the smell of garlic shrimp and even coconut shrimp greeted our nostrils.

When we approached the beach road down to the resort, Tem grimaced. "I feel like a bit of a traitor coming here, but, Div, haven't they done a gorgeous job?"

"Yes. I can't deny it." The valet guy came for the SUV. I asked Tem to wait. I always escorted my lady friends out of vehicles and the man I loved was no exception. Tem jumped out and into my arms, pushing the sunglasses further onto his nose.

"The sunlight hurts my eyes," he said and I put my arm around him, leading him inside. The place was awash with sun, but I'd had a couple of hundred years on Tem and had gotten more used to it. Love made me conquer a lot of things and the harshest daylight hours became the times I became more vigilant over Tem.

Moontime...I hoped he was okay.

Tem read my thoughts. "I want to check on him." I extracted my cell phone. Francois had promised he would call with any news. He sounded annoyed by the sound of my voice.

"Your cat is fine," he rasped.

"What's bugging you, Francois?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"No, I mean that's what's bugging me.

Nothing's happening. I gotta go. I gotta take a leak." He ended the call.

"Look, Div. Isn't it amazing?" Tem was agog at the hotel. "I want our wedding ceremony here," he said. "Out by the ocean."

I looked at him helplessly. He could have anything he wanted, but it was bad enough we were going against our principles to be here for a wine tasting.

"There you are." BethAmi Campbell marched toward us. As always, I was stunned by her beauty and by her crisp, professional attire. She had hair the color of caramel cut in straight lines to her shoulder. Her large blue eyes set off a pretty face free of obvious makeup and she wore eye-catching black and pink pearls at her throat and wrist, offset by a pale pink linen skirt and jacket, matching pumps and a tiny white shell under the jacket.

"I'd just about given up on you." She hugged us both and I could smell *Ma Griffe*. Boy that took me back. I had no idea they even made that perfume anymore. The floral chypre was quite distinctive, edgy even. And in spite of her perfect, almost sterile appearance, I was starting to get second thoughts about BethAmi.

"Gideon told me he had a problem getting to you this morning. Did he tell you his car was stolen?"

"No." I glanced at Tem who was staring at her in surprise.

"It was stolen?" he asked her.

"Isn't it peculiar? He has the worst luck with cars." She slipped an earbud into her ear, her cell phone, the same shade of pink as the rest of her attire. I heard her say, "We're going to come and taste the wedding cakes tomorrow."

"Wedding cakes! You're getting married?" I asked.

She blushed. "Gideon popped the question. "Isn't it romantic? We've only been dating a few months." She removed the earbud. "We're in the Sunset Room and everything's ready. Have you been drinking your wines, marking everything off?"

"Yes," I started to say, but Tem cut me off.

"How did you meet Gideon?" he asked her point blank.

"Oh, he came out from England to see his dad, his name is also Gideon. He's also an art appraiser, but something..." she hesitated. "Something bad happened between them. My Gideon never wants to talk about his father—"

"His father?" *Oh boy, wait until the real Gideon hears this.*

"Yes." She glanced at her cell phone, discreetly sending the incoming call to voice mail. "It was so strange. I met them both here, but it's like they're

complete strangers. I've had it in mind to tell his father a thing or two about how badly he's treated Gideon."

She saw our grave expressions. "I know you both love Gideon and you know how wonderful he is—"

"Wonderful isn't quite the word I had in mind," Tem said.

She squeezed his hand, completely misunderstanding his mulish expression. "I told him you were coming here. He's been so depressed about his car, he won't leave the house. He promised me he'd come this afternoon." She turned and saw a group of well-clad folks streaming into the conference room.

"Oh wonderful," she said in a tone suggesting the exact opposite. "They're travel agents from a French airline. Let's go, before they finish every last bottle. They like a drop...or ten. "

Tem and I followed her. My gaze remained on her toned calves as he nudged me.

"I'm going to get to the bottom of this. I want to know the whole sordid story. She thinks that fool really is Gideon's son!"

"How are you going to do that?" I was wondering about getting a room for a few hours after a healthy amount of wine tasting.

"I'm going to get her schnocked." Tem brushed past me to zero in on his unsuspecting

quarry. BethAmi seemed suddenly flustered.

"He promised me he'd be here," she muttered.

"Who?"

"Gideon." BethAmi was coming unglued. "He promised! Now I can't get hold of him at all. His voice mail is full."

We stepped into the conference room that was dazzling, thanks to the incredible display she had arranged.

Tem was awed. "She might be absolutely stupid when it comes to men, but she sure knows how to throw a party." Boy, could I read his thoughts clearly. *She's going to do our wedding.*

A trio of folk musicians sat on a stage playing a song that sounded morose, but had a kick to it. Surrounded by live plants, even a couple of small trees along with two gorgeous male models passing around trays of hot appetizers, I quickly found some new enthusiasm for this venture.

"This is a savory cheese pastry from the Estremadura region. Our wines today will be coming from there," said the waiter in front of me.

"You don't say?" The beauty of this man, not to mention his compelling accent, mesmerized me. I had a mouthful of food when the second waiter approached me with a small aperitif.

"This is *ginja* and in Portugal, we give this to visitors as soon as they enter our home."

"Nchhdysht," I said, trying to stuff down the

pastry that prevented me from speaking correctly. The waiters exchanged looks. They thought I was crazy. Nice.

"It is made from the *ginja* cherry," he said, as I took the glass from his hands.

Tem's voice grazed my ear. "I just did something very naughty."

"How naughty?"

The trio's song turned peppy and suddenly there were bagpipes as well. Oh lord, I was gonna need a lot more booze.

"I called the *real* Gideon and invited him down here."

"You did...what?" But Tem was already gone and I needed more *ginja*. I dutifully sipped the excellent liqueur as the waiter told me, in the Estremadura region, they had many roadside *ginja* stands where you could stop by and buy a glass. I was amazed. I couldn't imagine that idea flying in America.

The waiter accommodated me with a second glass and I was certain I wanted to order at least a case for our cellar. It was sweet, but clean. I hoped it wasn't addictive.

I spotted the French airline folk who were, rather than sampling the trays of the red wines, just inhaling them.

BethAmi told one man, "Slow down," but he seemed to take it as his cue to speed things up. She

grabbed glasses and passed them around. I glanced at the label on the arrangement on the table. It was a Shiraz from the *Tinta Roriz* winery.

I moved about the room, taking sips of everything. The wines were all very good and the buzz in the room grew happier by the second.

"Here, try this." Tem held a tiny custard pastry to my mouth. "It's called *Pastéis de nata* and it's the most popular dessert in Portugal. BethAmi flew these in today from Lisbon!" He happened to look toward the door and then exclaimed, "Oh, Div, there's Gideon now."

He moved in that direction and I saw the real Gideon glancing around, looking uneasy.

It all happened like a movie. BethAmi turned and saw him, surprise giving way to pleasure and she raced across the room. I ran to meet her at the door just in time to hear her say, "Oh, Gideon! I am so happy to see you. I wish Gideon would show up. I want you two to bury the hatchet. Will you let me do that, for the sake of our wedding?"

Gideon just stared at her. "What are you talking about?" He looked at us, bewildered. "What is she talking about?"

"Nchhdysht," I said, pissed to be stuck yet again with a mouthful of food.

"What Div is trying to say," Tem paused dramatically, "is that the fake Gideon told her that you're related."

"Related?" Gideon looked like he was going to have a heart attack.

"Fake Gideon?" BethAmi asked, her head bobbing in several directions. "What do you mean, fake?"

"Related, how?" Gideon asked.

"He told her you're his father," I said, finally finding my voice.

"His *father*? Right. That tears it. Where is the little prick?"

"Aren't you his father?" BethAmi's eyes were glassy with shock.

"Young lady, you are the victim of an imposter. Or did you already know that?"

Her complete silence, followed by a long, low, wild, guttural scream, stopped everything. Even the damned bagpipes.

Tem grabbed and hugged her, BethAmi's anguished shrieks leaving the real Gideon in the certain knowledge that she had been duped.

People rushed over to her. The French airline folk brought her wine, which she downed in great gulps until Tem led her away from the conference room. The hotel staff scrambled to reorganize the afternoon event, which looked like it was over by the way people were leaving.

"I don't understand it," BethAmi said in a large wicker chair out in the courtyard. We ordered hot mint tea for her from the outside waiter and she

calmed down enough to tell us her story.

"He turned up here one day and I met him at the *Hang Ten* bar. They have the best *Mai Tais* on the island and I told him so. We talked for a few minutes and he told me his name, I was stunned. I'd just met you a few weeks before," she told Gideon.

"How did he react when you told him?" Gideon asked.

She thought for a moment. "He was shocked. But I'm realizing now he's a good liar. I guess I should have known then, but I wanted to believe him. He...he kept saying you were his father."

"Yes, I know."

"Sorry," she said. "I should have known you weren't old enough to be his father." She blew out a breath as the tea arrived and Tem poured her some in a tiny, porcelain cup. Some of the French partygoers were running along the corridors with unopened wine bottles in their hands. Oh, boy.

"I wanted to be loved," BethAmi said. "He told me he was as good as you in the field of art restoration and I've gotten him jobs..." her voice faltered.

"He's done a lousy job. And he's ruined my reputation." Gideon clenched and unclenched his hands on the arms of his chair.

She looked at him, her broken heart pouring hot tears from her eyes. "I do know he handled

one assignment badly, but I defended him, even after I lost my own account there. They told me he didn't know anything. He told me *they* didn't know anything." She dabbed at her face with a pink linen handkerchief.

Gideon seemed to melt. She was in obvious distress.

"Where was he living when you met him?" he asked her, his voice a shade more gentle now.

"Some apartment near here, you know, the *Turtle Bay* condos."

Gideon frowned. "Did you ever go there?"

She nodded. He pushed her to describe the place.

"I knew it! He was renting my holiday unit."

She scrunched her face. "Holiday unit?" Realization dawned on her. "He gave me this long story about how you wanted him out of there. I wanted to say something to you many times...you know about a week after I met him, he turned up at my house and he's never left."

"Have you given him any money?" Gideon asked.

"Lots. I lent him thousands of dollars. I had to stop this week. I started getting weird phone calls from car places...I don't know how he got his Corvette, but I...I finally told the car dealer I could not handle the payment for a car like that. I work like mad and I still can't afford a car like that.

Gideon got really angry. I've never seen him like that. He told me he parked the car on the street and he was walking away and the repo guys just took it, right before his eyes."

"How did he get it without a down payment?" I asked her. "From what I understand," I indicated the real Gideon, "he's been able to convince people to give him free stuff on a promise ever since he arrived."

"He gave them five thousand dollars, which he stole, right off one of my credit cards."

"Oh, my God." Gideon looked horrified. "And you didn't report him to the police?"

She looked guilty for a moment. "He would get into these moods. It wore me down. If I questioned him even slightly, he'd go off the deep end. I wanted to believe him. We were making wedding plans—"

"Wedding plans!" Gideon's face went slack. "You were going to marry this guy who was using you....lying to you...stealing from you?"

"I really didn't think he was doing all of those things." Her tears returned and he gallantly offered her his own handkerchief.

"Unfortunately, I got into a world of hurt over that credit card charge. I had bill collectors calling me, the fraud department of my bank...he was writing himself checks. He kept saying he'd pay me back. He was waiting for this big windfall. He

said he had an aunt who's dying and she was leaving him everything. I told him I could not afford the charge on my card. I've been hearing for two months now about these windfalls. Then my parents called me and told me about the porn."

I glanced at Gideon.

"You mean my former career?" he asked her.

She nodded. "They were appalled when they found out you were...you know...once in the adult industry. I went online and that was the first time I saw your age. You are only ten years older than my Gideon. I realized you couldn't be his father, but he claimed you lied about your age, that you're really ten years older than you say." She sipped her tea. "But it also said on Wikipedia what your real name is. Martin White. He said you legally changed your name and loved it so much you gave it to him. As far as I know, that is his real name. He had an explanation for everything."

"Con men usually do," Gideon murmured. "His world is closing in on him. I've stopped a lot of his nonsense. Now you've started."

"I should have known that you're not kin," she suddenly said. "I saw naked pictures of you. You're hung like a horse. He is not."

Gideon smothered a smile.

"So let me get this straight," I said. "He came here on vacation and happened to be a guest of somebody's and found himself next door to his

absent landlord who happens to share the same name as him and so begins an elaborate...shell game?"

"Looks that way." Gideon sighed. "I am sorry you got mixed up with this guy," he said to her.

"Has he...has he affected you very badly?" she asked, genuine remorse showing on her face.

"You have no idea."

They started comparing their wounds and injuries at the hands of the other Gideon Quent and Tem and I rose. The afternoon sun had burned off and I was feeling incredibly horny.

"Guys," BethAmi said, "they gave me a hospitality suite, which obviously I won't be using now. You want to have some fun with it?"

"Give us that key," Tem said, "and nobody will get hurt."

She smiled and we left her and Gideon, heading back into the hotel, excited about our little fun out of the sun.

"Where do you s'pose the fake Gideon is now?" Tem asked me as we made our way to the *Pikake Suite*.

"Hopefully, not anywhere near our house."

We opened the door to the suite and were delighted to find a king size bed, and bottles of wine waiting for us. The gigantic floral display of purple orchids was truly something. Suspended from almost invisible wires from the ceiling,

orchids hung in their individual plastic holders filled with water. They lined the entire wall behind the bed and gave you the sensation of being in a waterfall of flowers.

"This is really spectacular," I said.

"Yeah, so's this. Wow." Tem held up a pair of handcuffs lined in black fake fur. "Our Beth Ami's a very naughty girl."

"Yes, she is. You have to be careful of the color-coordinated ones. Did you notice even her handkerchief matched her clothes?"

"Of course," he said. "I bet she was wearing pink undies, too."

I picked up a bottle of red wine and Tem snapped a handcuff over my wrist. He kissed me and he reached down, grabbed a necktie out of a basket, and slipped it around my head. Putting it over my eyes like a blindfold, he tied it off.

"You okay?" he asked.

"Perfect."

He kissed me again and ordered me to turn around and he cuffed both my hands behind my back. It was not particularly comfortable, but very erotic. He turned me back around and I felt his hands on my thighs. He was on his knees now. He took my cock out of my pants and hungrily sucked it. I gasped with the surprise of his attack, but I was hard as a rock when I heard him unzipping his fly. Next thing I knew he was

standing and he pushed me down to my knees in front of him. His hot cock found its way to my mouth.

“Suck it,” he commanded.

I got harder still from his contagious exhilaration. He pulled himself away from me, leaving me dizzy with desire on my knees in that hotel room. He raised me up by my elbow and kissed me, frog marching me, I was certain, toward the bed. I felt his excitement and he pushed me on the bed on my back and attacked my cock again. I knew he was very aroused by the faint scrape of his canine teeth against my shaft.

“Oh, Tem, I love what you do to me.”

He made happy, cock-sucking sounds and I moaned when he took his mouth off me again. He pulled me up and as I sat there, took one handcuff off and cuffed me to the headboard, my arms stretched over my head. He went back to sucking me and I was so hot for him I thought I would shoot except that he took his mouth and then his body away from me.

“Where are you?” I asked.

He did not respond. I heard him shedding his clothes, heard his shallow breathing and then he roughly pulled my trousers down so they were around my thighs. He pushed up my shirt and bit me, but it wasn't to feed from me. It was a love bite. He climbed on top of me, letting my cock rub

up against his ass crack and up to the tailbone. This drove me wild. His fingers gripped me, feeling my wetness. I was leaking like a sea.

"Please let me have your ass," I begged.

"Shut up or I'll gag you," he muttered and I almost came right then. I couldn't believe he was talking to me like this, but it excited me even more. He got off me again and leaned forward, stuffing his cock in my mouth. He fucked my face aggressively and I gorged myself a moment longer until he pulled away and straddled me again. I felt him taking my cock. He rose up and let my cock stab at his ass hole. He gradually worked my hard, neglected cock into his ass and rode me like a fucking cowboy.

"You're so tight, baby," I panted.

He truly was the most spectacular fuck I had ever had. He could work a man's cock like...well the professional gay porn star he once had been. He grunted, powering down on me and I knew he, too, was close. I could not touch him because of the hand restraints. I struggled to free myself, stupid as that was. The cuffs seemed to get tighter.

Tem chuckled. I was so frustrated. All I could do, pinned underneath him as I was, was to keep thrusting upward. I loved his greedy ass sucking my cock into it. I fucked him relentlessly. I whined when he came too far off me on the upstroke. We were really going for it and I was aware of his

beautiful cock bouncing around on my exposed torso and I finally have to hold it...stroke it.

"No," he said, reading my mind. "Just fuck me. You're my bitch. Now give it to me."

He reached forward, taking the blindfold down and looked into my eyes.

"You'd better come inside me and come hard or else there will be big trouble, Div." He grinned as I started to come.

"I love you," I shouted.

"I love you, too. Now shut up and make me come with your cock inside me, hammering at me. I love it, baby."

He came hard and I hated not being able to touch him. I didn't think he was ever going to stop coming. He collapsed on top of me, his head on my chest. I could feel my cock slipping out of him.

"Damn baby, you are one hot mofo," he whispered, putting his hand to my nose and lips. I could smell our mingled scents on him and my cock hardened again.

My cell phone rang, but it was in my jacket pocket underneath me. Tem raised himself and fumbled for the phone. I watched his face as he listened to the voice on the other end. He didn't need to repeat the message. I heard his voice loud and clear.

"I caught the culprits. You can come on home now."

CHAPTER SIX

I wanted to fly home, especially now that it was dusk. Sex had renewed me, but revenge blinded me and I knew Tem was right. We had to drive. Heavenly would kill me if I came home without her precious SUV.

"You remember what happened the last time we left our car some place, right, Div?"

Yeah, I remembered. We were both tense on the entire hour-long drive home.

"Who do you think it could be?" we asked each other repeatedly.

Francois had refused to tell us and I started to speed up once we were back on the freeway.

Amy Gilliom's haunting version of *Aloha Oe* came on the *iPod*. All my life music has been my guide. Music has been my signpost. I used to see an old Chinese man's ghost in Chinatown and his presence always signified trouble. Music, however, could bring good or bad adventures. I'd hear certain songs and I would just know things.

As soon as I heard our last Queen's lovingly penned words of lost and painful love, I knew, just *knew* it was somebody we trusted, somebody close to us who had invaded our home.

The charming one who dwells in the shaded bowers...one fond embrace...'ere I depart, until we meet again.

"It's somebody from our past," Tem said, once again reading my thoughts. With us so thoroughly bonded, this was both a blessing and a curse. I hated causing him distress.

I ran through the people we knew and loved, and the ones we didn't love. Nothing made any sense. As we neared our property, rain spattered the windows of the SUV. Rain brings news in the islands. Yeah, well, we'd soon get more news than we wanted to use. I parked in the driveway of our house and the place was lit up with bright lights. We dashed through the back door and I was stunned to see Francois sitting on the sofa in the living room, talking to Freddy, one of our employees from the computer store. I remembered seeing him on the bus the day before, when he'd taken my photo. Right beside him was Lambert, our new store manager. He'd only been with us a few months, but this was truly shocking.

"Freddy?" Tem looked stunned. "I don't believe it."

"I'm sorry, Tem," he mumbled. "I'm so sorry." He stared at the floor, huge tears pooling in his eyes.

"Lambert?" I was genuinely bewildered. We looked after all our employees, paying them very well and providing all the extras we could think of, such as new *iPods*, new phones.

"You are gonna love this story," Francois said as Moontime jumped from his lap and padded toward Tem, rubbing against him. The cat yawned, showed my ankles some attention, and walked off to our bedroom, well, really, *his* bedroom.

"We never meant to hurt anyone." Lambert was nervous and I realized now that both men were handcuffed.

"They thought by finding out your property was unsafe, you'd be looking for a good, reputable security company to come and help you," Francois said.

I opened my mouth, but Francois held up his hands. "I know. I've never heard anything so dumb either. But I ran a check on them...under their real names. They're wanted in five states back on the mainland for doing similar, stupid shit. Lambert here for instance, or should I call him William? He was a park ranger for the Los Angeles Forestry Service and they cut his job. How does he react? He sets a fire to show how

indispensible he is and he's unable to contain it. He set off one of the biggest fires in California history. The courts convicted and released him here six months ago. That's when he sent for his little prison bitch boyfriend..."

"Little?" Freddy huffed.

"Yeah, little. And shut up or I really will fucking shoot you." Freddy quaked and Francois continued. "Heavenly and Clancy went into the computer store and Freddy overheard them talking about having me come here last night. Guess they kinda want a threesome with me!"

He broke into a big, ear-splitting grin. "Well, I thought that was sexy, but I digress. I had these two clowns subdued when I heard a noise outside and I glanced out to find their third partner, your lovely friend, Gideon Quent."

Tem looked at the two guys sagging on the sofa. "Let me guess. He told you we were going to a wine tasting this afternoon. You thought you'd sneak back over here."

"They were after your tiara," Francois said.

"My tiara! Oh, give me the gun," Tem exploded, but I easily restrained him.

"That's not all," Francois said. "I found this bag." He picked it up and opened it. "They were going to plant some bugs in the house and check on their outdoor handiwork."

"You thought you would rob me and that I'd

hire you to protect me afterward?" I was incredulous.

"We were going to give it back," Freddy said, his gaze not leaving the floor. "We're thieves. Who better to show you how to protect yourselves from people like us?"

"He's got a point, but I'm still calling the cops." Francois took his cell phone out of his pocket.

There was a moment of silence. "Where is Gideon?" I asked him.

"Oh, he's trapped in the asparagus patch. I thought that was kinda fun—a fruit getting trapped in a vegetable garden."

On Lambert's irate stare, Francois shrugged. "I'm gay myself. I call it as I see it. Anyway, one wrong move and Gideon will lose a hand." Francois grinned. "Would you like me to call the police now?"

"Sure." I was bewildered. I held Lambert's gaze. "I still don't understand. You could have injured, or worse...killed us. Didn't you think about that?"

"He didn't think about the consequences of setting that fire either," Francois interjected. "That's the trouble with stupid people. Stupid and crazy. They keep doing the same shit over and over, hoping for a different result."

Freddy rolled his eyes. "I kept telling him that."

"Shut up!" Lambert screamed.

"No, you shut up." The arguments went back and forth.

"Can't you just shoot them?" I asked Francois, who laughed. He'd cracked his case and was in his element.

Since he seemed to have things under control, I went into the backyard with Tem. I heard the sound of sobbing.

"Oh geez," Tem said when we came up on Gideon, on his knees, his hand in an old-fashioned animal trap. I glanced at the tree to the left. There was a hollow in it I hadn't noticed before.

"He put the trap up there," Gideon sobbed. "My fingers are breaking. Help me!"

"Help you?" I was beyond pissed. "That's what you were doing the other night! You hid the tiara in the hollow...a hollow you dug out and you were going to come back and get it."

"And you knew where all the booby traps were so you weren't worried about walking into anything...nasty." Tem looked like he was going to stomp on Gideon's trapped and bloody hand.

I crouched down. "Why, Gideon? Why did you do this?"

"Why not? I needed money. I—"

"Not just this. BethAmi. She's devastated, you know."

"Win some, lose some."

Oh man, he was a piece of work.

"You don't care about her at all, do you?" I asked.

"Would it make you feel any better if I said that I do?"

I shook my head. "She's a wonderful woman, she did not deserve this."

"She's an idiot," he snapped. I reached out a hand and punched him. He fell right on top of the trap and we heard a loud crack.

"That'll smart when he wakes up," Tem said, reaching down to me. I rose and put my arms around him.

"The cops are here," Francois said from behind us.

"*Honolulu* has sure had its fair share of crime, baby, this one was a *Honolulululu*," Tem giggled.

"I guess we're gonna need a new store manager and a new clerk," I said.

"We'll start looking tomorrow, Div." Tem kissed my cheek. "Please don't feel bad. We're doing the right thing."

"I don't feel bad," I said.

"Yes, you do."

"Well, it's just..."

"Oh no...not the damned car." Tem rolled his eyes. "Tomorrow we'll start looking for a new one, okay?"

"I don't want a new one. I want Marion."

"Hmm," Tem said as we stepped into the

house.

"Ambulance is coming," Francois said. "Pity about Gideon falling unconscious like that, on his trap, eh?"

"Yeah, pity." I suddenly had a thought as the cops started asking us questions. "Which one of you has been stealing our wine?"

Lambert and Freddy exchanged glances. "Gideon," they both said. I suspected they were lying, that they'd all helped themselves to our stash. Maybe we'd never know.

Francois was very proud of his camera work and played the footage on his computer of Gideon sneaking into our backyard, heading straight for the tree. Gideon removed all the camouflaging sticks and leaves from the hollow and stuck his hand in, expecting to find jewels and found a trap instead.

"I retrieved the tiara two days ago," Francois told the cops.

"You didn't say a word," I reminded him.

He shrugged. "Just doing my job."

"I have the tiara here and dusted it for fingerprints." Francois held up Tem's precious Empress Eugenia's tiara in a plastic bag and covered in what looked like dirty ashes. Tem kept that thing gleaming and I could see he was stricken. It was one of the first pieces I bought for him from our matriarch, Blossom's, extensive

collection.

"You don't have to take that, do you?" Tem asked the cops. He might have been a macho mofo, but he did have a few quirks. I gazed at his anguished expression and loved him even more for his little passions.

Francois turned over the original tapes of the three men invading our property. The cops, who seemed very impressed by Francois's abilities, wanted crime scene photos taken, but Francois had taken plenty. He handed them a stack of pictures all dated and labeled with print evidence.

The cops went from being impressed to being utterly shocked. Francois had impeccable credentials from years of *Special Forces* work. They finally left, taking the tiara. They promised we'd get it back. The ambulance took Gideon away, and Lambert and Freddy left packed into the back of a police car. With *Aloha*, of course.

Our girls returned home and were excited to hear the whole story.

"I thought Freddy was hanging around us. Didn't I say, I thought he was eavesdropping in the store the other day?" Clancy said to Heavenly. "It was really weird. He never spoke to us, but every time I turned around, he was there."

The doorbell rang and I answered it, surprised to find BethAmi and the real Gideon standing there.

"The police just called me and told me they arrested Gideon. They said he was trying to steal jewelry. They said he stole wine." Tears flew down her cheeks and Gideon put his arm around her.

"So," she said, her bottom lip quivering, "I come bearing gifts. I have some wonderful bottles of wine and a case of *ginja*. I know you enjoyed that. I also have three boxes of amazing Portuguese pastries."

"Pastries!" Tem was by my side instantly.

"Conventual pastries," BethAmi said. "There's nun's bellies and heaven's lard. I had them shipped all the way from Portugal for my party today. They're no good after tomorrow and I figured this was better than sitting at home eating ice cream."

Her face crumpled and Gideon's arms held her tighter.

"Well, they found a good home at last." Tem beamed at her.

Tem and I rustled up a quick pasta dish with smoked salmon and asparagus, with a huge baby green salad from our garden. Gideon opened a couple of bottles of wine and Clancy put on one of her own violin concertos transferred to her *iPod*.

"You're really talented," Francois told her and she gave him a smile that showed me she planned to show him some of her...er...other talents.

"The *Aragonez* is my favorite," Tem said, letting me sip the wine from his glass. Francois preened under the adulation he received from everybody and played the footage again. Of course, he'd saved a copy.

He told the whole story for Gideon and BethAmi's enjoyment, describing being in his secret room—he didn't say where—and how he observed Freddy and Lambert sneaking onto our property.

"To be honest, it surprised me that it was Div's own employees. I'd begun to suspect members of my own team. I'm thankful I was wrong. Now explain heaven's lard to me, please." He lifted out a square pastry dusted with powdered sugar and examined it. "I smell almonds.

BethAmi nodded. "In Portuguese, this is called *toucinho do céu* and the old monks invented it. It's made of egg yolks, simple syrup, which is sugar and water and finely ground almonds, and baked.

"It reminds me of a Greek dessert, baklava," he proclaimed after taking his first bite.

"Yes. Early Mediterranean sweets were heavy on syrups and nuts." BethAmi seemed to be doing okay and I had a sneaking suspicion she and the real Gideon might make a perfect match.

My sister reached across the table and fed Francois a piece of her own pastry and I suspected, after a couple more glasses of wine, the

girls might get their threesome with him.

There was peace in our home and Gideon and BethAmi seemed content to sit at the table and talk. Tem and I walked outside, the night deepening and bringing with it the scent of promise. I felt secure in the knowledge our home and property were safe.

"You know what I miss, Div?"

"What's that, baby?"

"I miss driving around town in our car with Moontime on the backseat. I miss the moon on my face."

"Me, too, baby. Maybe you're right. We should go car shopping tomorrow."

We stopped by a patch of flowers I had never liked until I met Tem. *Naupaka*. They are each half a flower. A perfect, even, half. It always reminded me I was missing my other half and then, I found Tem. I now believed in love, in two halves finding each other to make a perfect whole.

"Div, there is a classic car sale in *Maui* next week. I think we should go there. I'd like to buy you another car, one as nice as Marion."

"And as soon as Blossom gets back, I'm going to buy you another tiara," I said, leaning in for a kiss. "But before we do anything, I want that wedding."

"Cool," he said, and wound his arms around my neck.

"Div?" said a voice and I turned to find BethAmi, tears on her face, walking toward us. She would be on an emotional roller coaster for a while, I realized.

"Francois just told me you spoke to Gideon out here, before the police and the ambulance arrived.

I hesitated. "Yes, I did."

"Did he...did he say anything about me?"

I looked her right in the eye and said, "All he could think about was himself, BethAmi. He never once showed remorse for anything he did. He's a grifter."

"So he never mentioned me at all?"

How could I hurt her and tell her he called her an idiot? On the other hand, she was softhearted and I was afraid she'd start thinking he needed her.

"Gideon expressed only remorse for getting caught. He didn't care about anything else."

She nodded. "I guess I don't understand...I thought he loved me. I thought..."

"BethAmi, you met what I call a really bad actor. He was wearing a disguise. He has hurt a lot of people. You and Gideon the most. The man you fell in love with is actually inside this house. All the things you thought the other Gideon was are the qualities that man really has. You'll mourn, you'll cry, you'll get really mad and one day his memory will simply make you laugh."

"I can't wait," she said, and started crying again.

Tem and I took to the skies that night, with Moontime in his special safety harness on my chest. He much preferred traveling by car, but he was happy to be out and to be with two favorite peeps. We flew to an old Chinese cemetery in the *Manoa* Valley and found to our dismay, one of those goofy ghost bus tours where the two operators were trying to scare the high-paying tourists, who were huddled in a group, into believing there were ghosts in and around a large *koa* tree.

"Be careful," warned the older man who led the group. He was a real *Hawaiian*-style grandpa in a flannel shirt and Chinese *slippahs* on his feet. "The ghosts are angry!" he thundered. "If you don't believe they are here, they'll follow you home!"

"What a ham." Tem shook his head as the guy *shook* lit sage leaves, chanting a pseudo-*Hawaiian* chant at the sky.

Tem was the *Ma Ma Loa*, the chosen protector of the children's ghosts and he liked to come in the evenings sometimes to bring the children candies. So yeah, there were ghosts all around, but not anywhere near the tree. The children came out, and laughed and danced around us. The tourists turned to see what the sound was, but Tem and I

hid behind gravestones, and they completely freaked.

“They sure got a bang for their buck,” Tem said when they climbed on board the bus and took off for the next haunted *Hawaiian* site. We left piles of sweets on each grave and pieces of *li hing* mango, and I knew for Tem, loving and nurturing the ghosts of our island’s tiny ancestors was rewarding and deeply fulfilling. For we believe on our islands, that if you take care of the dead, they will protect and care for you.

Moontime yawned and burrowed his head in his harness.

“Home, baby,” I said to Tem and took his hand in mine.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BethAmi found the perfect salve for her fractured soul. She added wedding planner to her many accomplishments. She became engrossed with Tem in our wedding plans, which suddenly went from a small, intimate gathering to a huge event. I didn't care, because I was in a party mood. We settled on a splashy, sunset party at *Turtle Bay*, which redeemed her in the hotel's eyes since it cost us a small fortune. We settled on a civil ceremony between us, since I was legally married to Clancy. Our entire family, minus the cat, put on our finest threads and headed off for a wonderful time.

Tem and I arrived a couple of hours in advance. He was stressed out. I was a little bit stressed out, too, realizing I was probably, officially a bigamist, but hey, I loved my man and he could have whatever he wanted.

"I have a little surprise for you, baby."

"No surprises, Div. We're about to have three hundred people here for our wedding. You

surprise me with anything and I'm likely to come unglued."

"It's all under control and besides, you'll like this surprise."

"Are you sure about that?"

"Yes, Tem. Darling, don't you trust me?"

"Of course I trust you, but I have put a lot of work into this, you know."

"Yes, I know, baby. You will like this. I booked a special massage. A pre-wedding massage."

"I don't have time for a pre-wedding massage, Div!"

"Yes, you do."

"If you say so."

"I do say so." I gave him my best killer vampire smile. "It comes complete with a cabana boy."

"A cabana boy!"

I nodded. "Who brings us drinks."

"Oh, baby!"

I took Tem's hand and led him along a flower-strewn path to a little cabana all our own. Tem stripped off everything and got onto the massage table and I drew a soft white sheet up to his pelvis. Our cabana boy came in wearing the teeniest, tiniest white bikini. This had been at my insistence when I booked the session. He was muscular and gorgeous, deeply tanned. He was very attracted to Tem, I could tell. He was like an island god, stepped out of the pages of time. A true *Hawaiian*

Adonis.

Div, I have no idea how he keeps that pecker contained in that tiny thing! Tem telepathed to me and I almost laughed out loud.

I caught him staring at the cabana boy's boner, not that I blamed him. He was very hot. He handed us small glasses of *ginja*, again, at my direction.

"Lord, I love this stuff." Tem licked his lips. The cabana boy let Tem take a few more sips of the cocktail, and then asked him to lie on his back. When he reached across Tem to remove the glass from his hand, I saw his cock was mere inches from my man and I was surprised the guy wasn't hard yet. He had nerves of steel, this guy. I got a kick out of Tem's sly smile as the cabana boy dipped his fingers into the warming pot of oil. I'd asked for an essential oil blend of ylang ylang and rose – aphrodisiacs – with a touch of black pepper oil, which is good for stress and stiff muscles. I was pleased to see how fast Tem relaxed as the cabana boy started massaging his head and shoulders. I sat back and sipped my drink. The cabana boy's hands worked my man like putty, across his shoulders and down his arms.

"Your left shoulder is very tense. I feel knots," the cabana boy said.

Tem roused himself from his stupor. "I sleep all over my husband on that side." He glanced over

at me. "Oh, Div, you are so right, I needed this."

The cabana boy swept his strong hands back under Tem's neck and he really dug in there, under his shoulder blades, releasing all that tension.

I listened to the sound of *George Helm* singing...the only CD he ever recorded and his voice was cracking. It was a raw, beautiful CD recorded live before George was murdered. I sighed, trying not to think of my fallen friend. I still missed him deeply.

He had fought so hard to stop government missile testing on the island of *Kaho'olawe*. He disappeared at sea mysteriously one day with Kimo Mitchell, another activist. Everyone knew someone murdered them. George and Kimo's martyrdom was not in vain, however. The government banned testing on the island and *Kaho'olawe* was put under strict, native *Hawaiian* rule.

The waves lapping at the stilts of our cabana reminded me to think of today, not the past.

I could tell by his hardening cock that the cabana boy was into my baby and I became quite jealous. Tem had a tent going on under his sheet, too. The cabana boy told Tem to turn over and he did, giving the masseur a good look at his glorious, naked body. The cabana boy smiled when he saw how hard Tem was. Of course, he

was hard!

He started working his way down Tem's back, the sheet barely covering Tem's ass. I allowed him to work his hands all the way down Tem's body and I saw his cock very close to Tem's face again. Tem could stick out his tongue and lick it he was so close.

The cabana boy turned away and returned with a basket. There were six very hot lava stones in it. I could see the steam rising from them. He placed them with wooden tongs down Tem's back and then he pushed the sheet down and started kneading Tem's ass, just underneath the tops of his thighs. Tem was squirming around on the massage table.

The combination of all these things—the oils, the touching, and the hot rocks, along with the cabana boy running his hand up my man's butt crack—drove me wild. As his ass rose, I shoved the cabana boy aside and stuck my whole face in, licking Tem's ass. I could smell ylang ylang oil, the ultimate oil for desire and I smelled my baby. He let out a cry as the cabana boy moved to his head. Tem's head came off the table as our rock-hard masseur reached down and removed the rocks from Tem's back.

"Please turn over," he said and Tem complied, his cock sticking up. It was so hard, ready for me...just ready for me to suck him. I went straight

for it. He held my head to him and the cabana boy put his fingers on various pressure points on Tem's face at the same moment.

Tem moaned as those fingertips sank into the soft, sensitive part of his upper lid. The cabana boy started at the corners of the eyes and moved out. He did this twice and I knew Tem was going to come like crazy. The cabana boy dipped his fingers back just underneath the brow bone, which I knew from experience was like sending his soul into somersaults. Tem came so hard and fast, he gripped my head as if I was going to go some place. I sucked my baby like this was my last meal and I glanced up to see the cabana boy's fingers moving across Tem's cheekbones.

"That was a massage that one had a very happy ending," the cabana boy said and he was so hard, his cock made a wet spot on his little bikini pants. I handed Tem a \$20 note and he folded it up.

"Want me to put it down your pants?" he asked. The cabana boy nodded, unable to speak, and Tem pulled open his little bikini and moaned.

"Oh man," he said. "You're uncut. Ever since I met my husband, I have come to love uncut cocks." He slipped the folded bill into the bikini and I saw cabana boy bite his lip as Tem made sure the money was snug next to that thick cock.

I knew the poor guy was desperate to jack off. He yelped out thanks and ran out of there, a towel

clutched at his crotch.

"You are such a tease, Temeura."

"Just making sure I haven't lost my touch, baby."

I laughed. "You will never, ever, lose your touch."

"Kiss me when you say that, Div."

And I did.

Our wedding was spectacular. I don't remember much because I confess I had a lot to drink, but Blossom arrived, saying she was going to open a chain of cat cafés and some churches across the islands.

"I'm a changed woman," she said. "I am closing down my brothels."

Oh, boy.

Francois hooked up with the cabana boy. The last I heard, Francois was in love.

The day after our wedding, Tem and I prepared to fly to *Maui* to find me a new car. We took *TheBus* to the airport. I don't know why. I guess it was for old time's sake. Tem and I had even decided to fly the normal way, again, I think our new settled lives made us want to slow down and enjoy everything.

As we chugged along *Ala Moana* Boulevard, I glanced out the window and saw the guy driving my stolen car. Tem and I got off at the next stop

and cornered him at a red light.

I was stunned to see he was a very old, tiny, hunched-over black man.

He had no idea my car was stolen. He'd bought my Marion from some other guy for two hundred bucks. *Two hundred!* He told me his car had been stolen and was almost identical except his, had oval windows in back. He started to cry and I stopped him with the words, "It's okay, you can keep her."

"I...I can?"

"Yes," I said. I blew out a breath. I could tell he was taking good care of her, my first husband. Tem and I waved him goodbye and he drove off, enjoying my ride, my suicide doors. I should have asked him for the *iPod*, but he'd already taken off.

I thought it was fitting that I said goodbye to my Marion right by the *Aloha* Tower, the very first place I met her, as she came off the ship all those years ago. No, I would never forget my first husband, but I would never ever let anyone take Tem from me.

"Should we wait for another bus?" Tem asked me.

"No, baby. Fuck normal. Let's just fly."

"Okay with me." He shrugged.

And so, there I was a happily married vampire in *Waikiki* about to go car-shopping, hand in hand with my favorite husband.

Hawaiian Glossary

A Word about the Hawaiian Language:

There are 12 letters in the Hawaiian alphabet: the five vowels: a, e, i, o, u and the following consonants: k, l, m, n, p, v and w.

Until western missionaries arrived in the islands, there was no written Hawaiian language. The early missionaries worked at creating a written language. Though many Hawaiian words are long, they are actually pronounced as written – but here is a rule of thumb:

A is pronounced like a in ‘father’

E is pronounced like e in obey or fete

I is pronounced like i in marine or pique

O is pronounced like o in rose or vote

U is pronounced like u in rule

Ukulele for example is pronounced Ooo-ku-lay-lee
W in the middle of a word is often pronounced like a V

Vowel combinations:

Ai together are pronounced like aye

Ae together are pronounced ah-ay

Au and Ao sound the same: ow

Ou together are pronounced oo

Words *

A'a (ah-ah): a lava stone

Ala'e (Aha-la-ay): Mud hen

Ali'i (ah-lee-ee): Royalty

Aloha (Ah-low-ha): Love, a greeting, hello, good
bye

Aloha Aina (Ah-low-ha eye-na): Love for the land

Aumakua (Ow-mah-koo-wa): Family guardian
spirits

Awa (Ah-wah): Piper methysticum, also known as
kava. A non-addictive drink used by the *kahuna*
ceremoniously, it induces a euphoric state

Da kine (Dah-kyne): A local island expression
word frequently used for good, also, means 'like,
you know'

Ha (Hah): breath

Hale (Hah-lay): House

Hana (Hah-na): A town in Maui, also means work

Hanai (Hun-aye): Adoption, literally and
figuratively

Haole (How-lay): Foreigner

Hau 'oli la hanau (How oh-lee lah-hun-ow):
Happy birthday

Heiau (Hay-yow): Temple of the Hawaiian islands

Honu (Ho-noo): Turtle

Ho'oponopono (Ho-oh-pon-no-pon-no): To make
things right, family process for resolving problems

Hui (Hoo-ee): group

Hula: dance, a sacred dance

Huna: secret, to conceal

I'ao (Yow): Sacred mountain in Maui

Ike (Eee-kay): Spiritual knowledge, power

Iki (Ee-kee): Little

Ipo (Ee-po): Sweetheart

Ipu (Ee-poo) gourd

Ka: Exclamation of surprise: Ka!

Kahu (Kah-hoo) Guardian, caretaker

Kahuna (Kah-hoo-na):

Kai (ky): sea water

Kalakaua (Kah-la-kow-wa): Last Hawaiian King,
also the major thoroughfare in Honolulu

Kamapua'a (Kah-ma-poo-ah-ah): Revered Pig
God, lover of Goddess Pele

Kamehameha (Kah-may-ha-may-ha): Dynasty of
Hawaiian kings

Kamohoali'i (Kah-mo-ho-ah-lee-ee): Shark God,
brother of Pele

Kanaka (Kah-nah-ka): Local, islander

Kane (Kah-nay): Man

Kapu (Kah-poo): sacred, forbidden, taboo

Koa (Ko-wah): Native hardwood, also means
brave

Kokua (Ko-koo-wa): Help

Kukui (Koo-koo-ee): candlenut tree, also means
light

Kumu (Koo-moo): Teacher, source

Kupua (Koo-poo-ah): Spirit being

Kupuna (Koo-poo-nah): ancestors

Lahaina (Lah-high-na): Capital city of Maui, old whaling town

Lanai (Lah-ny): Hawaiian island, also verandah

Lani (Lah-nee): Sky, heavenly

Lehua (Lay-hoo-wa): Flower of the Ohi'a tree, sacred to Goddess Pele

Lei (Lay): garland

Lili'uokalani (Lily-oo-oh-kah-lah-nee): Last Queen of the Hawaiian Islands

Lolo (low-low): Crazy

Lomilomi (Low-me low-me): Massage

Lono (Lon-oh): Hawaiian deity

Lua: (Loo-wah) Ancient form of dark arts, sorcery

Luau (Loo-wow): Feast

Mahalo (Mah-ha-low): Thank you

Mahalo Nui (Mah-ha-low-noo-ee): Many thanks, big thanks

Maika'i (My-ky-ee): Good, fine. Also, a Maika'i Card is a widely used discount card for Foodland supermarkets

Maile (My-lay): A fragrant vine used for ceremonial leis

Makai (Mah-ky): Toward the sea – a typical way to give directions in Hawaii

Makani (Mah-ka-nee): Wind

Makua (Mah-koo-wa): Parent

Mala'ma (Mah-lah-ma): Take care

Maluhia (Mah-loo-hee-yah): Peace

Mauka (Mow-ka): Toward the mountain - a typical way to give directions in Hawaii

Mana (Mah-na): Spiritual power, vital life force

Mele (May-lay): Song, chant

Menehune (Men-ay-hoo-nay): Hawaiian fairy folk, also an early race of people living in the Hawaiian Islands

Moi (Moh-ee): majesty, king or queen

Molokai (Moh-low-ky-ee): Hawaiian island, former leper colony

Ni'ihau (Nee-ee-how): The Forbidden Island, accessible only by invitation

Noa (No-wah): Freedom

Noho (No-ho): seat, possession by a spirit or god

Oahu (Oh-wah-hoo): Island

Ohana (Oh-hah-na): Family

Ola (Oh-la): Life, health

Olelo (Oh-lay-low): Language

Ono (Ohn-oh): Delicious, tasty, good

Pahu (Pah-hoo): Drum

Pakalolo (Pah-ka-low-low): Marijuana. Each region has its own colloquial variation such as

Puna Butter, Kona Gold

Paniolo (Pan-ee-oh-lo): Cowboy (from the Portuguese language)

Pau (Pow): Finished

Pele (Pay-lay): Hawaiian Goddess of the volcanoes

Pilikia (Pee-lee-kee-a): Trouble

Pohaku (Po-ha-koo): Stone

Poi (Poy): A paste made of ground taro root

Pomaika'i (Poh-my-ka-ee): Blessed, fortunate

Pomaika'i au (Poh-my-ka-ee ow): Blessed am I

Pono (Po-no): Right, order

Pu'a'a (Poo-ah-ah): Pig

Pue'o (Poo-ay-oh) Hawaiian owl

Pule (Poo-lay): Prayer

Tapa (Tah-pa): bark cloth made from the mulberry tree

Taro (Ta-row): The most important food source for the Hawaiian people. This root crop is the basis for poi.

Ti (Tee): A plant of the lily family. Its leaves are used in ritual

Uhane (Oo-hay-nay): Spirit

Unihipili (Oo-nee-ee-pee-lee): Spirit of the deceased, often residing in the bones

Wa'a (Wah-ah): Canoe

Wahine (Wah-hee-nay): Woman

Wai (Wy): Fresh water

Waikiki (Wy-kee-kee): Capital city of Oahu

Wehiwehi (Vay-hee-vay-hee): Fish goddess

***Please note; all of these words appear in A.J. Llewellyn's books, though not in every story.**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A. J. Llewellyn lives in California, but dreams of living in Hawaii. Frequent trips to all the islands, bags of Kona coffee in his fridge and a healthy collection of Hawaiian records keep this writer refueled. A. J. loves male/male erotica, has a passion for all animals (especially the dog, the cat and the turtle). A. J. believes that love is a song best sung out loud.

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