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Making it Real

A short novel of erotic romance by

VICTORIA BLISSE

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A Phaze Production

Phaze Books

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Cincinnati, OH 45211-5222

Phaze is an imprint of Mundania Press, LLC.

To order additional copies of this book, contact:

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www.Phaze.com

Cover art © 2008, Debi Lewis

Edited by Will Belegon

eBook ISBN-13: 978-1-59426-515-0

First Edition – August, 2008

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Chapter One

It's amazing what you can find online, especially when you're not really looking for it. I was bored, blocked and searching for inspiration for my latest romance tale when I came across Thirty-Something, a forum created specifically for those folks slipping genteelly into middle-age.

I joined out of curiosity and boredom really, but I found myself amongst like-minded procrastinators from the world over. Within a matter of days, I'd created hundreds of posts. After a couple of months, I had established friendships with people throughout the globe.

I kept strictly to the nice threads and questions on the board and avoided controversy and debate. It seemed they always turned nasty. I'm more of a "give peace a chance" kind of girl. So, it was a bit of a surprise to find a full-fledged debate raging in an innocuous thread started by a friend. Just a thread about preparations for Christmas. One person stated that October was far too early to be thinking about Christmas and the thread totally derailed into a discussion of commercialism and the apparent exploitation of the purchasing public.

I was intrigued. Normally such in-depth debate would send me scampering to a safe, fluffy thread on favourite colour or bands or simple word association. However, I found one of the posters in this argument fascinating. William Blake was not a name that I'd run across before and with it being the Internet, I was pretty certain it was neither his real name nor the eighteenth century poet resurrected. The little picture beside his post, something I knew was called an avatar, or AV for short, was a smug-looking handsome young man, gazing into a camera.

"Hot," I exclaimed, fanning myself. As I continued to read through his posts I found him intelligent and witty, too. Unfortunately, the end of the debate had changed from

intellectual exchanges of opinion to open mud-slinging. In an effort to calm the situation, I took a long time composing my opinion. I incorporated a plea for a return to intelligent debate, since posturing whilst slinging insults was not helping anyone prove their point.

I was delighted when a little box flashed up on my screen, proclaiming, “You have a new Private Message from William Blake.”

You’re right. I lost my temper, will cool down before posting there again. Thanks.

It was not the most exciting PM ever. The words and message were unexceptional. Only the identity of the sender made it extraordinary. I spent several minutes composing a reply, as I knew it was an opportunity to get to know the handsome rebel better. I sent my message masterpiece off into the ether and settled down to wait for a reply. To bide the time, I read through his past posts.

“No wonder we never crossed paths,” I Mumbled, as I read yet another contentious political debate thread. “He posts on everything I don’t.” I was disappointed not to receive a reply straight away, but people have lives away from the computer. So I waited patiently. I enjoyed looking through his old posts, anyway.

I was intrigued to find he was significantly younger than the thirty years stated in the forum name. He’d stumbled across the forum while researching something for his latest company. He was a whiz kid, a successful businessman and a sharp debater; my complete opposite. I waited tables in a local café to make ends meet whilst I pretended to have a career in writing. I was getting stories published, but I wasn’t challenging JK Rowling is the sales stakes.

I couldn’t get the guy out of my mind and, as we’d barely interacted, it was kind of worrying. I logged off the Internet and attempted to concentrate on the novel I was working on at the time. As I tapped away at my laptop keys, I found myself placing William’s features on the character I was writing. The scene twisted into something completely unsuitable for a non-erotic historical romance.

“Why, Sir, you flatter me.” She giggled and hid behind her fan.

“But you are the most beautiful and desirous female her,” he replied, his dark, almost black eyes fixing her in their gaze. “I want you, Mary and I want you now. Right here on this dining table. Push away the cutlery, candlesticks and napkins and lie down for me, whilst I undo all your layers and bury my face in the sweet musky smell of your muff.”

“Snap out of it!” I yelled out loud. I highlighted and deleted the erotic paragraph. I stared at the blank space for a good fifteen minutes before I gave up, switched off the computer and went to bed. He was in my mind even as I lay under the heavy duvet. Each time I closed my eyes, I saw that big, knowing smile. *What does he know?* I wondered and imagined he knew I was there, lying naked in my bed.

My eyes closed and my hands skimmed to my fleshy breasts with their excited nipples, and then further down over my softly rounded stomach. My fingers flitted through pubic hair and down into the hot valley between my thighs as I fantasised.

I saw him above me. He pulled the duvet away and feigned shock at the naked body beneath. I imagined those intense chocolate eyes running up and down my curves, lust evident in their twinkle. He lunged for me. Our lips met as his hand ran up and down the curve of my breast and hip. He pulled me to him, so I could feel the hard bulge.

His lips slipped lower and he sucked and nibbled on my neck. Alone in my bed, my fingers slipped in the slickness the fantasy created. I rubbed firmly over my excited clit as my imagined lover’s lips roamed down, hunting out and capturing the hard pellets of my nipples. Impatiently, he hurried even lower, over my stomach. He split my legs around him as he delved deeper. He kissed over my soft, curly mound and his tongue flicked out and found my tender pleasure spot.

I looked down in my dream world. His eyes were fixed on me; he was licking and kissing my pussy with great fervour, his fingers inside my slick tunnel. He filled me and I anticipated how his hard cock would feel there instead.

My mind raced with imagined passion as I stroked my clit. I felt his imaginary lips licking and loving me in such an intimate

way. Each breath came in shorter bursts as my arousal continued to grow. My chest heaved as I rubbed quickly, desperate to reach my peak on his imagined tongue. I came hard and fast as I envisioned him sucking eagerly, drinking down the refreshing flow of my feminine juices.

Panting, I pulled the duvet tighter around my vulnerable nakedness and sighed. Will was young, virile and handsome. I was convinced he'd never be interested in me, a mid-thirties fatty.

"Pleasantly plump," I verbally chided myself. I was really trying hard not to use negative descriptors about my body. I'd seen a wonderfully positive life coach on Oprah and that was one of his rules. Always think positively about your image. The problem was that what other people thought of my pleasantly plump and ample curves really mattered to me. It often pulled my thoughts towards the negative. Also, I hadn't been in a real relationship in the past eight years. If I was desirable, there would surely be a queue of men on my doorstep. In reality, Pete was the only man who showed any interest.

Pete lived locally and we met on Thirty-Something.

"It's a small world." I exclaimed when I found out he lived in the next borough along from mine. I flirted with him and we went as far as having cyber sex, which was a completely new experience for me. At the time, I found it quite exciting, though I did feel that I was often left high and dry once he'd received his pleasure.

But meeting in real life was a folly. It became apparent that everything he'd told me online had been a blatant lie. He was not thirty-five, the same age as me. Add twenty years to that total and you'd be closer. He didn't look at all like Nicholas Cage, and he certainly wasn't charming. I had to physically fight him off at one point. It had to be the adrenalin which allowed me to wrestle with such a brute and win. I called it off because of his lies and intolerable behaviour. How could I have a relationship with someone who was so deceptive and violent? I simply could not.

Unfortunately, Pete could not see why I made such a fuss. He continued to bother me online. Emails, PMs and threads appeared, trying to engage me in conversation once more. I

never answered any of them and each time a new thread appeared, I cringed with embarrassment. But, at least it was just embarrassment. I never revealed my real life location to him in any detail and I'm very thankful for that. A man stalking you online can be ignored, but in real life, it would be a very scary thing indeed.

After an hour of tossing, turning and not sleeping, I returned to my computer and got back to work. I resisted checking my email and forced myself to write one thousand words of Felicia and Felix's stilted and formal courting. After that, I deserved a break.

My heart thumped like a techno beat when I saw that a PM awaited me from William. I couldn't open it fast enough. Even with broadband, the page was loading far too slowly. I needed to know what was in that message.

Actually, the reply was not filled with innuendo, as I would have liked, though the simple statement enclosed within it seemed to hint at future flirtations. Well, it did once I ran it through my sex-starved brain a few hundred times.

It was the start of an interesting and unlikely online relationship. LadyUK (my highly original username) began to frequent more and more debates. I followed William Blake into them all. I found it refreshing to be taking part in the intellectual and stimulating discussion. I was learning much about the world; politics, religion and people. It was fascinating.

I mostly did it to read William's words, though. He was so smart it made my pussy ache with need. He was so handsome that a mere sideward glance at his sweet, seductive smirk had me wishing for something hard and masculine between my thighs. I knew I was being daft. I knew I was acting like a schoolgirl with a crush, but I couldn't stop it and, to be honest, I didn't really want to. It was just a bit of innocent fun, I thought and I certainly wasn't hurting anyone at all. I was enjoying being a complete and utter sexpot. However, my light and flirty romance story kept getting derailed and pushed into darkly sensual erotica. Something I was a fan of but not something my publisher would approve, I was sure. I ended up deleting so much during editing that it seemed like one sentence forward, two paragraphs back.

Chapter Two

“So who is it?” Mum asked as I sat staring into her mountain of mashed potato one Sunday evening.

“Who’s who?” I answered, moments before shovelling a mouthful of gravy-sodden carbohydrates into my mouth.

“The young man you’re mooning over.”

“I’m doing no such thing,” I huffed, attacking a piece of well-done roast beef with my blunt knife.

“Oh, you are young lady.” Mother shook her fork for emphasis. “You keep staring off into space, you’re not eating properly and I’m your mother. I know these things.”

“But I’m not mooning over any boy.” I sighed, but felt my cheeks flush as I rolled my eyes.

“A girl, then.”

“Mother!”

“What? I know all about them lesbians, you know. As long as you’re happy dear, I don’t care if you marry a woman or a man.”

“I’m not in love with a woman, mother, and I’m certainly not marrying anyone.”

“Oh, so you are in love with him then.” Mum smiled smugly, then placed a brussel sprout between her red-rouged lips.

“I never said...well, I didn’t mean...Oh, mother.” I sighed again, exasperated.

“See, you can’t pull the wool over your mother’s eyes.” She beamed.

“There is one guy I’m interested in, but he lives in America and I’m certainly not in love with him.”

In lust, but not in love. I added to myself.

“Yes, dear,” Mum answered, twirling a grey curl around her finger. “Whatever you say.”

It was not a good sign that mother had noticed my obsession, not a good sign at all. Why was I so tied up in knots over this guy? I didn't really know. Sure, he was cute, intelligent and pretty friendly, but he had made it perfectly clear what kind of woman he liked. He had posted it in the "*What kind of women do you like?*" thread at Thirty-Something. You can't get more obvious than that. I wasn't trim, slim or model-like in my proportions. Well, unless you counted the Michelin man as a model. Any way you looked at it, I was too old, too ugly and too damn far away for William to be interested in me.

I didn't usually suffer from such low self-esteem. I've always fought in my own corner. I was plump and curvy and yes, sexy. I'd had several boyfriends in the past who thought so. In fact, throughout college and university, I had no trouble getting boyfriends. But I had been single for a long time and it had made me feel slightly less confident. I found the old cliché to be true; it *is* hard to juggle a career and a love life. I had been concentrating on my writing and had stopped actively looking for a man. Which was no bad thing, I was getting too old to be hanging around bars anyway. But not looking for love, I seemed to avoid it altogether.

I was lonely and turning into the stereotypical batty old spinster. I knew it was only a matter of time until I had a house full of cats. I'd visit the corner shop in my curlers and dressing gown. No doubt my Mum was thrilled I was actually showing signs of being interested in something other than books. It had become my life, as it became my main source of income. My life revolved around it. I had a massive imagination and loved to write, but what would I do if my inspiration ran out or if I lost an arm? You know you've spent far too many hours awake and alone in the early hours when you think about mutilation as purely a financial burden.

I did not sleep well that night. All kinds of things floated through my mind and I felt very morose. However, like night always passes and turns to day, my depression lifted with the sun. It helped that by waking extra early I got time to exchange a few private messages with William. William, I found out, is in fact his real first name. Although in essence I already knew it, there was a thrill in finding out something personal about him.

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It was good to just chat with him. He was always so busy with work. I couldn't figure out how he managed to juggle all his work and have any kind of free time. I guess Thirty-Something must have been a procrastination tool for him, as it was for me.

After chatting with William, my day was sunny. I went to the supermarket and actually enjoyed the experience. I doubt I bought all I needed, as my mind was otherwise preoccupied (imagining him naked more often than not) but I could go back and get the missed items another day.

I wasn't sure why I decided to pick up a paper. I never read much of it, so it seemed like a waste. I would start at the back, read the sports and stop when I got to the cartoons and stars. Anyway, it was my zodiac that caused me to chuckle. It was something I'd never believed in, but I liked to read it now and then. Just to see how wrong it could be. That day's was particularly chuckle-worthy.

"You have a unique opportunity today, but you mustn't be afraid of a little hard work. You can realise your deepest desires if you just keep the channels of communication open. Don't be lazy, or you will miss it."

What a crock, I thought. Nothing specific, just a hollow promise. What was my deepest desire, though? To succeed in my writing? Well, I was writing my second novel. It had already been accepted by my publisher, so that was some measure of success. What other desires did I have? A threesome with two hot guys, maybe. But unless they came knocking on my door, I'd be spending the rest of my day writing. I really couldn't see any kind of desire getting fulfilled that day at all.

I'd forgotten all about the daft prediction until, in a moments need for procrastination, I was surfing the Thirty-Something boards. As I refreshed the page, a PM notification leapt out. It was from a friend I'd not heard from in forever.

Dave was British, but had moved to the US. Since the move, our paths had rarely crossed. We'd always had a good connection and the sexual sparks were soon hissing between our respective computers. With my newfound experience at cyber sex under my belt, I confidently seduced Dave with a rather convincing blowjob. I typed and he enjoyed it, as did I, in fact.

I *loved* writing out that blowjob. I loved the control, the way I could really enjoy the experience. I could replay it in my mind and treasure every moment. I really got into the scene and imagined Dave stroking his cock on another continent because of what I was typing. It turned me on all the more.

I had heard the sly remarks on the forum about typing one-handed, but I didn't try it. I think it's pretty much impossible for a woman to wank and type at the same time and I was too involved with my scene to remove even a finger from the keyboard.

When we parted, it was around midnight. His evening was just starting and mine should have ended a couple of hours earlier. I was editing, just typing up a loose end in a paragraph, when I refreshed my Internet page for one last time. A PM popped up from none other than William Blake.

Hi, how're you?

Remembering the earlier prediction, I wrote a cheeky reply that I knew would push the envelope a bit.

Hiya William,

*I'm well, *blushes* kinda horny. Just had an interesting cyber sex session and I was really kind and let him, erm, see to himself whilst I typed. How are you?*

I held my breath and waited, refreshing manically until a reply showed up.

I've never got that cyber thing.

I replied that, when done right, it could be a really sexy experience. However, I thought it was far too easy to do it wrong. Trying to wank and type, for example, was pretty much a no-no.

How do you do it then? He asked and I replied before I even thought.

I could show you. Do you have IM?

My heart was in my throat, my typos going unchecked. I couldn't look at anything open on my desktop. My hands were jittery and I felt like I couldn't quite catch my breath. I had just asked this handsome young man to have cyber sex with me. Not only that, I made it sound like I was some kind of expert at it. What on God's green earth had possessed me to do that?

Yes. My IM is WilliamBlake1.

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I shakily typed in the name and sent off a request to chat with him. Now I was pretty sure I was dreaming. I would wake up and find my head on the keyboard. Still, my heart pounded all the harder when I remembered the enormous pressure on me to perform well. This could well be my one chance to show William that cyber sex was good...and maybe, just maybe, get him to interact with me sexually.

I might have been nervous, I might have been clammy and my fingers might have shaken a little, but my nipples were hard and my crotch was tingling.

Hey Mary, Would you do me a favor? While we're chatting like this will you just call me Joe? I want to immerse myself in the fantasy.

Not a particularly weird request and one I acquiesced too easily.

Okay, and you can call me Lucy, then we're both in character.

I couldn't believe that it was really happening to me. I was waiting for him to call my bluff as I sent out my highly original message. All my imagination had left me. I was flailing and uninspired.

Hi, Joe.

He replied straight away, catching me off guard. *Hi Lucy, so what have you got to show me?*

I thought for a moment, then typed. I decided to continue with the cheeky theme. It had gotten me this far.

Well I do believe, Sir, that you would like a demonstration of my Cyber sex technique. I'm going to show you how it's done.

What do I have to do? He asked.

Answer when you can, but mostly just sit back and, erm, enjoy the experience. Now, what would you like me to do for you, Sir?

I knew he was a dominant kind of guy. I hoped to use that knowledge to my advantage.

Well, Lucy, I've had a long day at work and I ache all over...

I grinned as a spark of inspiration exploded in my mind.

Well in that case you need the cyber-deluxe whole body massage. Take off your clothes Sir, all of them, and lie yourself

down on the massage table right there. I, of course, shall look the other way whilst you do so.

It seemed to be a long time before he got back to me. I squirmed in my chair, feeling my sticky thighs clinging to the soft leather beneath me.

Disrobed and lying down, ready for your ministrations.

I let myself have a moment to imagine that. His tall, lithe body stretched out, naked and waiting to be caressed by my hands. I was starting to wish I had some practice at typing one-handed.

Okay Sir, let me just get some of this oil warmed in my hands, I don't want to chill you. Just lay still and relax, I'm going to start here on your shoulders. Oh, you are tense.

I imagined the scene completely as I lost myself in typing it. I was wearing a plain white overall, tight around my chest and left partially unbuttoned, revealing my creamy cleavage. I was leaning over him, feeling the heat rising from his body as I rubbed the knots from his shoulders and upper back. I took sly glances down to his perfectly curved and strokable, but only imagined, arse.

As he typed his moans, I heard them. The gasps and appreciative groans moved my hands lower down his back. I was smoothing and massaging as I spread silky soft oil with each stroke. I could visualise it. His taut, toned back with its sandy sun-dusted tones contrasting against the English paleness of my hands. I could feel my heart pumping harder, my loins contracting as I slipped down, heading towards those soft hillocks that I'd be desperate to get my hands on in real life.

I was hoping all my sexual tension and longing was coming through as I typed. I knew there would be typos since I was so worked up. I couldn't take time to look at what I'd actually typed. I was just lost in the fantasy and I gave it my all.

I smothered his butt with soft caresses, then harder more massaging actions. A brief, light kiss and I slipped down and worked his thighs. The muscles were so hard and strong. If I thought really, really hard, I could almost convince myself I was tracing my fingers over his skin and not tapping away at my keyboard.

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If you'd like to roll over, Sir, I'll finish you off...I mean your massage of course, sir.

All I wanted to actually do was finish myself off, but that would have to wait until I had pleased him. I was being tested and I needed to get an A plus to have any chance of a repeat performance.

Erm, I would but there's one part of me that is less than relaxed right now, and I don't want you to be offended.

I grinned as I typed my reply, thrilled that he was actively joining in the game.

Don't worry Sir, I'm trained to relax all parts of the body, I'll deal with it.

I would have loved to deal with his un-relaxed part, firm and throbbing in my hands. As the words, "*Okay, I'm rolling over,*" appeared on my screen, my mind's eye focused on the hardness bobbing at crotch level. I stared, its awe-inspiring sexuality leaving me breathless.

I typed all my thoughts and fantasies as my paragraphs came out in fragments, with words and sentence long forgotten and grammar a thing of the past.

I started again, mirroring what I had done on his back. I smoothed down his shoulders, constantly aware of his imagined eyes on me as I slipped my oily hands over his hard chest.

I felt his excited heartbeat thudding below my fingers as the tension grew. I could hear his moans as they became more frequent and I moved lower. I inched down over his giving stomach, and aimed for the hardness located just below it.

All playful banter had been forgotten. Need and lust drove my fingers to dance over the keys as they would dance over his hard on. I grasped him gently, but professionally, remembering my masseuse role, and proceeded to relieve the tension in his hard cock.

Description dripped through my keyboard like drips of precum through my fingers. I wanked him with my words. I couldn't leave it at just my hands. Imagining such a gorgeous specimen in my hands just led me to taste it. I licked and sucked as I tickled his balls. I felt proud of my blowjob technique. I was convinced I was realistically portraying his hardness stretching my lips as I plunged him into my mouth and down my throat.

I was more turned on by that wordplay than I had been by some past real-life experiences. I swore that if I had moved a hand down to my crotch I would have exploded in orgasm, just from one gentle caress. I was so close. I was enjoying the wet, warm tingling between my thighs and used the need to enhance my written technique.

I soon became aware that he'd not replied for a while, not even the drawn out mmmmmm of a person so turned on they could only manage to hold down one letter on the keyboard. As I wondered what that might mean, one word flicked up on my screen.

Yessssssssss!

If I had been writing an erotic story, I'd not use that for a climax, but it was obviously his orgasm. I felt myself throb with pleasure as I imagined his hot, sticky come exploding in my mouth, me sucking eagerly to clean him off. I typed and waited for some kind of acknowledgement, maybe even a promise of more in future or a breakdown of my cyber technique and what he thought of it.

He signed off.

He had not typed a word after his orgasmic utterance of surrender. It takes a lot to anger me, but his lack of manners resulted in me slamming down the lid of my laptop. I stalked off to my bedroom to sulk. It was not unusual for William. He was a busy guy and always doing more than one thing at a time. I knew that when he normally disappeared on me that it was nothing personal, just life over-taking his attention.

However, it was unforgivable to experience that kind of level of sexual connectivity and then just bugger off. Fuck. I was so frustrated and worked up that I lay in bed tossing and turning 'til I fell asleep. My unsatisfied desire led to a night filled with strange, nightmarish dreams, where I was yelling and cursing at people for no reason and where I was locked in a room and unable to get out.

The next morning, I was further annoyed by a lack of apologetic email and contemplated sending a venom-filled missive William's way. But in the end, I decided it wasn't worth my time or effort, he'd only ignore it anyway. I worked out my frustration in my writing. I concentrated on a screaming lover's

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tiff, a part of my novel I had been struggling with before. I grudgingly decided that truly, if I ever heard from him again, that I should thank him for the inspiration.

Chapter Three

Days passed and I grew less agitated and more concerned. It wasn't very unusual to not hear from William for a few days or more. His Internet time depended on many variables and he didn't always have the time to spare. But in my heart of hearts, I couldn't accept that he'd just fuck and run like that. After a week, I began to doubt myself.

It was my technique, my cyber sex that drove him off. I read over the history of that conversation and cringed at each typo and fragmented sentence. Still, I inexorably found myself turned on to the point that I slipped my fingers into my panties and took care of the tingling therein.

It wasn't pretty. Nobody would ever write an ode to my masturbation technique. I simply rubbed and caressed until the throbbing built into gasping, panting, thrashing release and left me sobbing into my hands. It was at that point I decided to compose an e-mail. I had to let him know it was okay, that I wasn't mad and also that I was concerned about his well-being.

Gone was the bitter, frustrated me. It was replaced by the worried, cowed and contrite me that I hoped would bring him out of hiding. Pathetic, wasn't I? A feminist would have bitch-slapped me for such male-dependant and dominated behaviour, but still I did it. I couldn't bear to think that I had imagined that sexual tension, that all of it was on my side. I must have written seven or eight different emails before I settled on the one I hoped would get the best reaction.

Dear William,

Hi love, how are you? I hope you're doing okay and that you're not working too hard.

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I've not seen you in ages. My cyber sex technique wasn't that exhausting, was it? I hope you enjoyed the demonstration but am petrified that maybe you didn't.

Anyhow, I thought I'd let you know that I'd just love to chat to you again, forget the cyber stuff if it was that bad, but please let me know you're okay.

Love,

Mary x

I sent it out into cyberspace and waited. I tried to get on with my life in the following days and weeks, but I kept coming back to William and our cyber experience. "*Grow up!*" I wanted to yell at myself, stop *mooning over a man you barely know*. But as much as I wanted to forget him, I couldn't.

I had been smitten from the first moment I saw his AV. His knowing little smirk stirred up all kinds of wanton desires. I kept returning to that AV and making myself feel even more morose as I wondered if by taking a chance I'd ruined a friendship. It had been a strange but happy little friendship; based on shared faith, shared humour and shared respect. That friendship was what I was missing most. I felt that by pushing my luck, I'd broken something I had really enjoyed and been left with nothing.

Every time I logged onto my computer, I flicked on my IM and checked my email, hoping beyond hope that he might be around. As is often the case with these things, when the moment came, it caught me by surprise. I'd just nipped offline for a moment and when I returned there was an IM box open on my screen.

Hi Lucy, I'm really in desperate need of one of your wonderful massages, can you fit me in at all?

Now, I bet there are many a man and woman reading this thinking that I should have given him a damn piece of my mind. I can almost hear them yelling at me. "*Stand up woman, don't let him use you like a sex toy!*"

And yes, I'm sure they're very right. With hindsight, maybe that is what I should have done. However, being all excited about receiving the message, I decided that something was better than nothing and replied:

Well hello, Joe isn't it? You're in luck, I've just had a cancellation so I can fit you in very nicely right now. You know how it goes, strip and lay on the massage table whilst I sort out my oils.

Quickly he replied.

Yes ma'am.

A million and one questions flitted through my mind and I wondered if I should ask them. Should I make William drop the act and face up to the issues at hand? Maybe I should have made him talk to me. After all, I'd tortured myself about this situation for days and days. He deserved a piece of my mind, a great big boiling and seething piece of my mind, in fact.

It was both my saving grace and my condemnation that I possessed a forgiving soul. It meant that people often never even knew they've hurt me, because I would just sweep all that under the carpet and carry on. However hard I tried to gather my bitterness and annoyance, it always seemed to crumble, like the battlements of a sandcastle battered by the waves. Really, I was just glad he was there and more than a little flattered that he wanted some more of my cyber.

Okay, Sir, just relax and I'll take care of you. Are there any areas you feel I need to concentrate on?

I decided a bit of flirting from the word go was not a bad thing. My body already anticipated the word treat; that typed masturbation. My body was on a promise and knew it.

I have to say, just at the top of my legs, I have a lot of tension.

There was no messing about. He went straight to the source of things.

Front or back, Sir?

I wondered how far he'd take it.

Front.

All the damn way, apparently.

Turn over then, and I will thoroughly examine the area before treating you. Don't worry, you're in good hands.

I was swept away to the heart of this scene. I was there, right there as he turned over and slowly revealed the long, thick bar of tension that rose from just above the juncture of his thighs. As I typed out the words, I was inspecting him in my mind's eye.

I was getting right up close, running my hands up and down his legs, and over and around his hips. I was pressing and massaging his inner thighs, tickling his balls with the very edge of my hands as they brushed up and down. I could feel his erection as it strained straighter, bobbing and waving as sweet sighs of building tension escaped from his lips.

Oh, Lucy, the tension is building, it's getting more intense, help me please.

He must have had enough foreplay. I was feeling just a little bit wicked though, and I realised this could be the little bit of revenge my soul craved for all the worry he'd put me through over the last few weeks.

I know, Sir, don't worry. I'm a trained professional. I know exactly what I'm doing. I have to build the tension to a level where I can safely alleviate it.

And so I continued to stroke his thighs, straying just a little more onto the softly puckered surface of his balls. I could see his manliness rising potently before my eyes as I leaned in close to watch what I was stroking. I imagined it brushing against my cheek as I moved closer and heard his gasp as the touch sent pulses through him.

Right, I do believe the tension levels are perfect now.

I touched him. I touched where he needed it most. I could feel him straighten and strengthen between my fingers and I moaned out loud from the strength of the fantasy. The words melted away and the sound of my fingers tapping on the keyboard faded into background noise as I slipped my hand up and down his cock. I pumped it in time with the bucking of his hips and my other hand slipped around, to cup and squeeze his balls.

I imagined leaning over the massage table, my lips kissing the tip of him. My hand stopped running up and down his shaft and my lips carried on where my fingers left off.

A more efficient way to achieve release.

I explained and he Mumbled his agreement. I imagined the glaze of bliss slipping over his face as my lips slid down his shaft, until his hair tickled my nose. I didn't want to bore him or make him think I was just a one trick pony. I made my decision and feverishly typed what the next move would be.

Excuse me, Sir, whilst I just remove my uniform. It seems a lot of liquid is being displaced by my massaging and I do not want my uniform to be dirty. I have a full day of massages to do after this one.

Sure.

The shortness of his answer made me pretty certain that he was only using one hand to do the typing. Oh, how I wished I could use just one hand, too. I described the way I disrobed in minute detail. The white, starched cotton falling into a pool around my feet and the dark scarlet underwear below being exposed to his sight.

You'd better take those off, too.

I posted my agreement as I slipped the bra down from my shoulders, unclipped it and threw it to the ground, freeing my large breasts. Next, I turned my back on him and slipped out of my panties. I was naked and wondered what to do next.

I'm just going to tilt the table, Sir. I typed, getting a wicked and hot idea. *Just relax, the bed will change into a chair, making it a lot easier for me to treat your inflammation and stiffness. I have a very special liquid which will work wonders on it, but you need to be sitting up so I can administer it.*

He replies, *Okay, I'm happy in your hands.*

It made me smile. The further I got into this fantasy and the playful banter, the more I was forgiving him for being a bastard over the last few weeks. As I played my role, caressing him, checking him all over to make sure he was comfortable and relaxed, I grew more absorbed by the scene. As I typed, I saw myself splayed over his body, a leg either side of him. I could see myself squatting, holding his cock in my hand and easing it inside my wet cunt. I felt that hardness as it penetrated me, and wiggled down on my chair as I imagined I was pushing him in to the very limit. He was completely filling me and I was moaning out loud as I imagined the ecstasy.

A few more thrusts, a few descriptions of my bouncing breasts and he sent me a wordless line.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I took it to be an indication that he was replete.

Well, Sir, I can see the problem has been fixed. I typed, explaining that I'd stepped away from him. Now was time to try

and establish why there'd been no communication for so long. *I hope you enjoyed your treatment and hope you will be back again really soon. Don't leave it as long as last time, okay? You're my favourite customer.*

Not a word was typed for minutes, and I was beginning to think he'd dosed off, when I saw the IM indicator flash.

Okay.

I read it and noticed he'd gone offline. A natural optimist, I was grateful that he at least acknowledged what I was saying. I mean he did, didn't he? Maybe I'd see him on Thirty-Something and we'd be able to chat it out. I logged in to see if he was around but was disappointed. He wasn't there. I was even more dismayed when a PM box flashed up.

Hey, Gorgeous. We need to schedule a second date. I can't wait to get my hands on those big tits.

I sighed and shook my head. I didn't know how Pete was unable to get the message the last time.

"You lied to me," I had said, moments after we first met in real life. I pulled his hands out of my bra and walked briskly out to the main street before he could fondle me any more. "There will be no more of this date and certainly no second date."

"Lie? I've not lied to you, my sweet." He had simpered, knotting his fingers together and looking confused. "What do you mean?"

"Oh fuck off, Pete," I'd cursed, making a very well-to-do looking woman stare at me down the length of her nose. "You don't look like you said you look, you are older than you said you were and you're a bloody leech."

I waved my arm frantically in the road, hoping beyond hope that the black cab approaching was free.

"Oh, but everyone exaggerates online, you did."

"How do you make that out?" I'd snapped, relieved to see the taxi slowing and heading towards me.

"You said you weren't that good looking and you're gorgeous." I looked at him and he was nigh on drooling, his gaze fixed directly between my breasts.

"Drop it, Pete." I sighed as I opened the taxi door. "Goodbye."

VICTORIA BLISSE

I couldn't have made it any clearer at that moment but I sent him a PM reminder anyway.

Leave me alone, Pete. I'm not interested in a second date, now or ever.

I was relieved to get no reply before I headed off to my bed.

Chapter Four

“Penny for’em,” Rita said as we busied ourselves cleaning cafe tables.

“Pardon?”

“For your thoughts. You look completely absorbed with something.”

“Oh, it’s nothing.” I shrugged, not wanting to get into the ins and outs of cyber sex and stalking.

“It’s that young man you told me bout, isn’t it? You went on the date with him.”

“Oh, no. Well, not really.” I sighed.

“Ooooh, I sense a story. Tell me all. I’ll just make us a brew.”

“Well, the date was a disaster.” I shook my head and then explained in brief that Pete was a lying, cheating bastard. “And he tried chatting to me online last night. I’m having none of it, though.”

“I don’t blame you,” she snapped. “Men like that need stringing up by the balls.” Rita had been married for thirty years and she had started to channel her inner lesbian. She had definitely gone off men. “So who’s the guy you’re mooning over?”

“No one,” I exclaimed, my cheeks flushing with colour.

“Don’t lie to your Auntie Rita,” she said with a stern look. “At my age I can tell when a girl’s in love just by the colour of her eyes and you’re certainly infatuated with some young man. Is it another one of them inter-web-net pals?”

“Might be.” I shrugged.

“So you’re not going to tell me, then?” She rested her hands on her impressive hips.

“No, I’m not.”

“Well, fine. Just be careful, missy. There are all kinds of perverts out there.”

“Yes, Rita.” I rolled my eyes at her and we laughed. Rita was a good woman, despite her rough exterior and harsh words. She had a good heart and was generous to a fault. I think it was the main reason why customers went to her café every morning, come rain and come shine. Rita imbued the place with hominess that you missed out on in places that where chic and elegance took precedence over friendship, trust and good nosh. I loved her. She was like a second mother to me and spending time with her lifted my spirits.

* * * *

I threw down my jacket and slumped into the chair by the PC. I didn't really want to bother, but I had edits on my hysterical, sorry, on my *historical* romance to finish and send off. I loved creating and I adored writing but I despised editing. It was one of those necessary evils, though and I just had to suck it up and get on with it.

I opened my email and I wondered what on earth was going on. There was a list of Private Message notifications, a good half dozen of them. More than I'd typically get in a week. I clicked though to Thirty-Something and checked out the titles.

“He's a moron,” pronounced one.

“Ignore him,” said another. What the hell were they on about? I clicked through and found clues to what the hoo ha was. Someone had said something about me on the boards and all these people were showing me their support and bemoaning “the idiot” for what he had said. I went to find the thread but I already had an idea of who it would be by and found it with very little effort.

“LadyUK is a Slut.”

It was good to see he'd taken time to find an imaginative title for his rant. My heart thudded quickly and I could feel the blood rushing to my temples. I felt pressure building, I didn't get angry easily, but I could feel that red mist rising.

LadyUK is a slut. She led me on, cyber fucked me then when it got to real life she fucked me over. Because I don't look like a model or a Hollywood movie star she told me she wasn't

interested. She used me and then broke my heart. She's not the nice, kind lady she portrays herself to be.

Below it was attached a word document which contained one of my explicit, sex-filled conversations with Pete. In it, I said that looks meant nothing and it was all about personality. I could see why he'd quoted that bit, but the whole thing? That was just rude.

I wasn't sure what I was feeling most. Embarrassed? Yes. My cyber sex technique was laid bare for everyone to see. It wasn't the cyber sex so much. I was more embarrassed by my awful spelling mistakes and some of the phrases I used. I hadn't been particularly turned on by the conversation in question and wasn't really paying much attention to what I typed. It was filled with cliché.

After fuming over his message for a while, I read other people's replies. It had been posted in the early hours of my time, which is always a busy time for the American posters. So I had two pages of messages to flick through. I was genuinely touched by the people who were defending me, and there were quite a lot of them. Many were more non-committal, but all said that posting a private conversation was wrong. There were few posts defending what Pete had done. One particular message, just recently posted, really warmed my heart.

Lady UK is just that, a lady. She has never hidden her sensuality from any of us, we all know she writes romance and erotica for a living. All you have managed to do is show us what a fucking idiot you are and scare off any females who might have possibly shown interest in you.

We all know Lady and we all know how kind, sweet and generous she is, this will change no-ones mind about her. I can guarantee lots of people now think you're a complete bastard, though.

It was a post made by William and reading it made me beam. After taking a moment to compose myself, I wrote my reply.

I just want to say thank you to all my friends for sticking up for me. I want to say thank you to those who don't even know me who have also stuck up for me. That is all I want to say. Thank you.

Next I composed replies to all those who had PM'd me and then I allowed myself a PM to William. I felt as if I had to ration myself on such things or I might scare him away by being over enthusiastic.

*Thanks for your support, Will, I miss chatting to you.
Mary x*

Once I had covered everything I looked at my watch and cursed. Over two hours had passed since I came in from work. I opened up my word document and got on with the editing.

I don't know about you, but I am a procrastinator, especially when it comes to things I have to do but don't really want to do. So I only edited a few pages before I checked my email, answered a few PMs and checked out some threads. It's like that famous quote by whatsisface—I can resist anything but temptation. However, if I had tried to work with the Internet switched off I would have found myself incapable of concentrating and would have ended up getting even less work done than if I were just regularly procrastinating.

"Edit, edit. I must edit," I muttered to myself as I rubbed my eyes. I wasn't far from being finished, but as it was well past my bedtime I was starting to flag. Not unlike a gremlin, bad things happened to me after midnight if I didn't go to sleep. I'd be ratty and impatient. I knew I had to get the editing done though, so I pressed on until the last page was finally finished and I could go to bed.

It's an indication of how addicted I was, but before I dragged myself to bed I had to check my email. Suddenly I was wide awake; a message from William. I clicked to check it.

Mary, I'm so sorry. I've been as much of a bastard as that idiot Pete.

I don't know how to say all I want to say. I like you, Mary. I miss chatting, too.

Not for the first time, I wished he didn't speak in vague riddles. What was he saying exactly? After a moment of pondering I decided to ask him.

Will, what do you mean? There is nothing stopping us from chatting is there?

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Noticing Will was online at the time, I sent the PM. I forced myself to stay awake a bit longer. Thank God I didn't have to go to the café the next day. I'd not have been able to keep my eyes open. Thankfully, he replied swiftly with what I suspected he would say.

Joe and Lucy.

Joe and Lucy is a separate thing all together, I replied. Them existing does not mean that Will and Mary can't be friends and just chat. Surely, we can do both?

Again he was quick to respond.

I guess so, but you must know Joe and Lucy can only ever exist online.

I know, I replied. I did know it. It was bittersweet. I wanted to be able to touch this man who ignited all my senses, but I knew I would never be able to do it with anything but my written words.

Does this make us friends with fringe benefits ;) ?

I laughed out loud.

I guess it does. The friend is the most important part though. Past my bedtime now, love. Goodnight.

The last refresh I did before switching off brought one more message.

Goodnight, friend. Chat soon.

To some maybe, the offer of friendship would not have been enough. To me, it was all I could ask. I could have lived without the Lucy and Joe fun and frolics but I could not imagine a life without Will as a friend, even after such a short span of time.

Sometimes there are people you've known since you were a child, but yet you don't really know them. Acquaintances that will never ever know you other than to recognize you when you're out shopping and to enquire after your health. But then there are people you've met and within just a short space of time they really know you and you really know them. You feel as if they've moved into your heart. William was there. He was in my heart and as much as I yearned to be more than just a friend, to be his friend was a privilege that I didn't want to lose.

It was good to be back to normal with Will. I thought of him more by his shortened name, as our friendship had

developed to a new level of intimacy. We chatted on an almost daily basis as the long summer days shortened, chilled and caused the leaves to start falling from the trees. He was still cryptic and hard to pin down to a definitive answer, but I became better at reading him. I'd told Rita all about my online friend, and she was quite impressed by him. This was high praise indeed from Rita. She admired his work ethic and his gentlemanly manners.

I loved the gentleman in him, too, the gentleman who would slip and call me "ma'am" when answering a question. The guy who would always ask how I was doing and listen to the answer, even if it interested him very little. Actually, I loved the whole damn package. As a friend, of course. I always had to add that bit, because it couldn't be any other way and I had to keep reminding myself of that.

Mum had even offered him an invite to Sunday dinner. "Such a lovely young man." She would smile after every little tale I told her of him. "Damn shame he's in America." Then she'd shake her head and continue to mash potatoes or stir gravy. I had to agree. It was a damn shame he was in America. I would love to have him with me, to touch his hand as we chat for real, to feel him when I offer *hugs* which he never, ever reciprocated.

But when I was being sensible, I realised it was best that he was so far away. If he were here he'd not look twice at me. I'm a brunette, short and plump. A dead opposite to blonde, curvy and leggy, his professed preference. At least with him being so far away when I played Lucy and he played Joe, I could pretend he was interested in me and he could pretend I was good looking.

Joe and Lucy was a bit of a regular thing. On a Friday or Saturday night at the end of the working week, Joe would knock on the imaginary door of Lucy's massage parlour and relaxation would take place. The massage set up was something we'd fall back on every now and again, but I liked to surprise him.

Good evening, Master. I greeted him one evening. *I'm on my knees wearing nothing but a collar just as you requested, I am yours to use in any way you desire.*

Oh, Lucy. He replied as I bit my lip nervously. *What do I want to do to you? Oh, what do I not want to do to you?*

MAKING IT REAL

I enjoyed being his slave, and it became another regular piece of fun. I enjoyed letting out my submissive side and I know he loved being the Dom in the relationship.

An email arrived as I was writing. Yes, we authors never stop. If we're not editing one thing we're writing another. Actually, I don't feel alive unless I've got some kind of story in the works. I've suffered from writers block and it is torture. As an author, the words that you pen are like your heart beat, like breathing. When you cannot make those words flow, you feel sick. I went on holiday and the change of scenery inspired me, thank God. Anyway, I digress, on to the contents of that email.

Lucy,

I'll be visiting you later (6 my time) and I want you to be ready in your collar for me. I have a special treat for you.

Love,

Master Joe.

Special treat? I was beside myself with excitement. The worst of it was that six his time was midnight my time. A whole six hours away from the time I received the message. I didn't know how I'd manage to concentrate on my writing 'til then, but I tried my best.

At ten minutes to midnight, I got a wicked idea. I stood up and away from my work desk and computer and pulled off my top. The heating was on and the room was warm, so the heat change was minimal. I felt just a little crawl of coolness brushing over my back. I pulled open my jeans and slipped them down my legs, stepped out of the pool of clothes and pulled down my knickers. I felt deliciously exposed, even if no one else could go to see me, naked my living room. I pulled off my bra and flung it to the floor before I sat back down on my leather chair. I gasped as the cold, slick material touched my bottom and thighs.

Those last few minutes until midnight dragged and dragged and dragged. Finally, the computer clock clicked round to twelve and he came online.

Lucy, are you ready? I squeezed my thighs together, realising I was moist with anticipation.

Yes, Sir.

I switched into the role as I shifted down into my chair and made myself more comfortable. I knew Will had thought about this, as he typed quickly and precisely. I was transported to the scene, and as I only needed to post the odd “Yes, Sir,” I found my hand slipping down my body and between my thighs.

I’d been blindfolded and led to a large wooden table. I was pressed over it so my arse was in the air and my breasts were smooshed against the cold, unyielding wood. As I read, I could feel the cold seeping through my front. My nipples were hard and grazed the wood surface. It sent sparks of pleasure through my chest to suffuse my whole body. I was so exposed, bent over and on display so that anyone could have been watching. It gave me an extra thrill.

The first spank caught me off guard. Right in the middle of describing how I looked laid over the table, he threw in a vicious swipe to my buttocks. Over and over, he explained the whack of his hand. I practically heard it and felt it as it sent shockwaves through me. He made my buttocks sting and sing with the punishing pleasure.

In the comfort of my chair, I was running my fingers up and down my drenched slit, pushing back my sticky lips and grazing over my bulging clit. Knowing that Will had worked out what I liked and was relaying that whole scenario for me took my breath away. It was not just the imagined scene of spanking debauchery that had me wet. It was knowing he’d done it all to turn me on that was mind blowing.

I can’t punish those buttocks anymore, I have to unzip and free my hard cock. I stand behind you and thrust into your wetness.

His images inflamed me and I rubbed myself harder as the words flowed onto the screen.

Slamming in to you, I pull your hair, wanting to force you to take all of me inside.

I could feel him inside me. He filled me up as I rocked back and forth. My breath came in short gasps.

As I fuck you, I slap your ass, making you jump and moan.

I did moan, and typed a long, drawn out row of *m*’s to show him my pleasure.

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Thrusting hard, I love the sight of your reddened buttocks. I want to fill you, explode inside you and make you scream in orgasm with me.

Those words pushed me over. My hips lifted off the seat as juices flowed through my fingers and noise leaked from between my lips. As soon as I'd shuddered to a climatic stop, I typed out what I had just experienced.

Thank you, Sir.

I typed I was finished, that I needed to sleep.

Believe me, it's been my pleasure, darlin'. Gotta go now. Bye.

Isn't it funny how a generic pet name can make your heart thump harder and your tummy do flip flops when it comes from the right person? Or maybe I was still recovering from that orgasm. It really was something special. I'd just orgasmed for him, in front of him, with him. Even though I knew it was not as real as him being in the room with me, I still felt as if we'd shared something incredibly intimate.

Chapter Five

The next day I was far less chipper. It may have been an orgasm inspired by his words, but he was probably still thinking of a blonde bombshell as he was typing them. I was just playing the pleasure piece for him.

"Hey Mary. You look like shit this morning." Rita chirruped.

"Thanks Rita. I didn't sleep well."

"You up to workin'?" she asked, her tone softer.

"Sure." I smiled. "I'll grab a nap this afternoon."

"How's Will?" She was obviously fishing for something.

"He's fine, thanks." I certainly was not going to tell Rita what had happened between us the night before. Partly because I'd be embarrassed but mostly because I knew she'd ask a ton of questions I'd be unable to answer. The Internet was a foreign thing to Rita. I really didn't think she'd be able to grasp the idea of cyber sex.

"Oh, some guy was asking after you last night."

"You don't work evenings, Rita," I replied, confused by her statement.

"No, I don't. Becky told me to tell ya. She said she played dumb about it. You can't be too careful these days."

"Did she say what the guy looked like at all?" I was curious. Who would be asking after me?

"Oh, she said he was a short, older fella. Grey hair, a bit sleazy looking. He pushed right up close to her as she was cleaning a table, so close she could feel his wodger in his pants, but the rest of the café was deserted. Pervert."

"Oh God, no," I exclaimed, dropping a teaspoon with a loud rattle.

"What's the matter?"

“You know the loser I had a date with a month or two back, the online liar?”

“Yeah.”

“That sounds just like him.”

“It’s okay, love,” Rita soothed, running a calloused hand down my arm. “Becky said she didn’t know of anyone by your name working here. He won’t be back.”

“I hope so Rita, I do hope so.”

“And if he does show up, just show me to him and I’ll beat the son-o-bitch with my frying pan!”

We both laughed then, but mine sounded forced. I was still worried that he might come back. I also wondered how he’d found out where I worked, with only my first name to go on. Maybe it was just coincidence. I wouldn’t put it past a loser like him to try every café and restaurant in the area to see if he could figure out where I worked. Prick.

He’d kept that crappy thread going for ages, taunting me, asking me to defend myself. Asking me why I was such a bitch, leading him on in such a way. I never once gave an answer, and pretty soon my friends got sick of answering for me. I’d get the odd PM from him, but seeing the name “Pete” on a PM just got it deleted without it being opened.

When Will turned up on IM that evening, I rushed to tell him my spooky news.

Don’t worry. He’s not clever enough to work out your mate was lying.

I hoped he was right, and let him know that, but he seemed somewhat distracted.

What’s the matter? I asked, perplexed. *You seem a bit off tonight.*

Today is always a bad day.

A cryptic reply. Well, Thursday’s had never seemed to get him down before. I could only guess he meant the precise day, that date.

An anniversary of some kind?

He affirmed my guess with a brief reply and I asked him if he wanted to talk about it. I knew that he wasn’t a big emoter. He wouldn’t tell anyone how he felt, but I had learnt to pick up on his moods via the way he typed. Actually, he rarely talked

about himself, his childhood or his past. He tended to only talk about his here and now, his work and his studies.

Not really, a few years ago today my heart was broken. Every year I feel like shit on this day and the days around it.

Ahh, heartbreak. In itself, that was surprising at first, but when I thought about it, maybe it wasn't. He was a self-proclaimed one-night-stander. His relationships rarely lasted longer than a week and this heartbreak was possibly the reason why. What could I say to help?

Sorry to hear that. I struggled for something poignant to say. *She must have been a fool to break your heart.*

He took ages to reply.

I was the fool, really but thank you for the sentiment. I should probably just go. I'm not good company today.

No, no. Stay. I type hurriedly and sent it, hoping to reach him before he signed off. *I shall be your partner in misery. I shall offer you imaginary alcohol and squeeze you tight when you need a hug.*

You're so sweet. Okay, I'll stay for a while, but it's strictly for the imaginary alcohol, right?

I laughed and responded positively. I was just glad to be able to make him smile and joke on a day that must have been difficult for him. I'd resigned myself to the fact I would never be completely sure how he felt for me or exactly what he thought of our relationship. He was like James Bond, a man of mystery. He constantly kept me guessing. I kept up the inane chat, something I was very good at and then he suddenly blurted out.

She was lovely, the girl who broke my heart. My best friend. I'd known her, well, since she was born. We were never apart, always together, getting into mischief. High school separated us somewhat, you know how it is. We were together at university, we worked out we were meant to be. A kiss and we became inseparable. Until that poncy fucking Canadian transferred to our campus. She left me for him.

I was half way through a sympathetic reply, when another message came in.

He romanced her. Roses, poetry, picnic in the park. I was too busy getting good marks, working at my business to set up a comfortable future for us. I was working my fucking ass off and

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he was stealing her away from me, right underneath my nose. I was the fool, Mary. I was the fool.

Again I begin to type, but this time I finish my response.

*We all live and learn, Will. You were doing your best for her, but now you know it's not all about money and security and the future. It's about romance, and time spent together too, a lesson learnt. *hugs* love, big, tight, comforting hugs. You'll love again, I know it.*

I know it too. He replied and signed off. Damn it! Had I said the wrong thing again? Maybe I was too physical, too close. Maybe I had said something that hit too close to home. That guy would drive me to total distraction with his disappearing acts and his locked up emotions. I decided it would be best to email him before I went to bed.

Hey Will,

Hope I didn't upset you tonight. I was trying to help, but sometimes I'm a bit overenthusiastic. You're a good bloke and I know you will find love again soon, just don't close your heart up to the possibility. Take care and we'll chat soon, love, Mary.

Chapter Six

Several days later I was still waiting on a reply from Will. No IM, as himself or Joe, and no PMs or emails either. It was as if he'd dropped off the face of the planet. Had I scared him off or something? Had I shown too many of my true colours? Maybe he'd latched on to the fact I adored him? No, he knew I fancied the arse off him. That wouldn't have stopped him chatting to me, would it? Maybe he suspected I loved him. I quite imagine that would have him scared half to death.

He was obviously off love. Keeping to short flings and fancies, avoiding actual relationships.

Oh, the penny dropped. How long had Joe and Lucy been playing? A good month or two. If that wasn't a relationship, I didn't know what was. I decided to email again.

Hey Will,

Not heard from you in ages, I hope you're okay. I hope it's not something I've said or done that's upset you, I'm worried that somehow I'm to blame.

Oh, I best just let you know I'll be offline tomorrow through Friday. I'm swapping ISP's and so I'll be netless for a few days. If you need to contact me here's my phone number.

Take care,

Love,

Mary.

* * * *

"How's that lovely American friend of yours?" Mum asked as I spoke to her over the phone.

"I've not heard from him for a few weeks, Mum. "

"You've not upset him have you?" she sighed.

"No. Well, I don't think I have."

“Ah, men are funny. He probably just needs some space, or something like that. I don’t understand ’em really.”

“Neither do I, Mum, neither do I.”

“Anyway, I’ll see you soon. Don’t forget we’re not home this Sunday. Your father and I will be in Blackpool sunning ourselves.”

“Sunning yourselves in November? I don’t think so, Mum.” I laughed. “But I won’t turn up on your doorstep Sunday, don’t worry.”

“We always have good weather in Blackpool. We might have to wear our big coats, hats and gloves, but we’ll have a lovely time. And I’ll be able to get some Christmas shopping done. Anyway, see you when we get back love, take care.”

“See you, Mum.” I clicked the phone down and chuckled. That woman could win the lottery and still she would drag Dad to Blackpool for every holiday. The funny thing was, Dad hated it. He just went along to keep my mother happy and to carry her bags. Wedded bliss at it’s finest.

The phone rang again, moments after I put it down.

“Hello,” I chirped, expecting it to be mother, remembering some tit-bit she’d missed out of our hour-long conversation.

“Hi, is this, erm, Mary?”

“Yes, it is. Who’s speaking?” I wondered if it was some kind of telesales call. The voice was masculine, deep and American.

“Hi, Mary. It’s Will.”

“Oh, hi, Will.” As my heart leapt, my legs went wobbly; I dropped down onto my sofa. He sounded as sexy as I’d always imagined he would.

“Mary, I, I just want you to listen, okay? Just listen.”

I nodded my head, then realised he couldn’t see me. My mind was addled with the surprise.

“Okay,” I whispered.

“I’m sorry I just haven’t been in touch for so long. I had to take some time out to think. I know that’s no excuse and I feel bad for leaving it like this for so long.” He let out a long sigh, which twisted my heart and made me want to reach out and hold him. “I’m a twisted, bitter man. I’m a mess. Mary, I’m not the good bloke you think I am.” The word bloke sounded strange

with his accent, and I smiled despite my worry about the negative tone in his voice.

"I can't keep doing this. Mary, I really like you and you've been an amazing friend. Joe and Lucy have been great fun too, but I can't keep on like this. Joe and Lucy are going nowhere. It's just a game. I feel like I am playing you for kicks, and that's wrong. You and I have a friendship, but I'm worried that it's based on something that isn't, that can't be. This conversation has to be it, Mary. I'll not contact you again, and please don't contact me. We can't keep doing this."

"Why not?" I couldn't just listen anymore.

"Please, Mary, I can't do this." His voice was strained with pain.

"Just offer me the courtesy of listening to me as I've just listened to you, please."

Silence, just silence. Probably only a few seconds of it but it stretched on and on and I held my breath and hoped he wouldn't hang up.

"Okay." He let it out in a long, pent up breath.

"Will, I'm quite aware that our friendship is a little, well...weird. I know that what we have will only ever exist in a digital world, via typed words and images on a screen. I'm not expecting anything more. I think as long as we know our limitations this can work. I think it would be foolish to loose such a good friendship over, I don't know, whatever it is. If it means losing the fun of Joe and Lucy, so be it. As much as I really enjoy all that, it's not as important to me as your friendship is. Honestly Will, you're a dear friend and the thought of losing you..." I choked up. Tears fell down my cheeks.

"I'm gonna have to think it over, Mary," he said, gently. "I can't make this decision right now."

"Okay." I sniffed "Just please, let me know what you decide. Don't just disappear, okay?"

"Okay," he replied, and put down the phone, leaving me crying, listening to the monotone beep left behind.

"Oh, pull yourself together." I sniffed and shook my head. "You're a grown woman." I stood from my slumped position on

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the sofa, replaced the phone receiver and went to the kitchen to put the kettle on.

That's an English thing. If a crisis is happening, or a disaster has occurred, we run for the kettle. Tea will make it all better. I sat down at my computer and sipped the warm, milky goodness as I looked at the blank word page on my screen. I began to type. It was something I always did. When life got too much for me, I wrote. I escaped into my own little fairy book world and I wrote. However, when I was faced with losing something so very important to me, someone I loved, I found writing romance wasn't easy.

I only got down a few paragraphs before I started to cry again. I had to stop typing because I just couldn't see what I was doing.

I wiped my eyes with the back of one hand and clicked the mouse over my email with the other, then I cried all the harder when I remembered that I was without Internet for one more day.

Chapter Seven

“What’s the matter, Mary?” Rita asked,

“Just tired,” I replied, shrugging. “I didn’t sleep well.”

“Well I can see that. The bin men would take those bags from under your eyes and fling them in the van if it were bin day. Why didn’t you sleep, you feeling ill?”

“No, I’m fine Rita.” I sighed and unbuttoned my coat.

“Stop right there, young lady. I am not having you serve my customers. You look like death warmed up. Go home.”

“But, Rita...”

“But me no buts.” She crossed her arms across her ample breasts. “You’ll scare the damn customers off. Go home. I can cope, or Len can help if he has to.”

“Okay.” I sighed. I knew it wasn’t worth arguing. Rita was not the kind of woman who brooked arguments. I turned around and walked home. I knew I’d be able to get online once I arrived home and thought about checking my email and finding some online pal to chat aimlessly with for a while. I got so little sleep the night before, worrying about what Will might have decided. Did he treasure our friendship at all? I didn’t know.

Spam, don’t you just hate it? When I opened my email I found myself faced with almost a hundred messages, accrued in just three days. But how many of them were real? Once I deleted all the *enlarge your penis*, *Buy Viagra* and *get a loan* headings, I had barely a quarter of that total left. However, one of those caused my blood pressure to rise. An email from Will, titled “Decision.” I didn’t know whether I wanted to open it. Was it bad news? I couldn’t bear it if it was. I looked at the time and date on it, and it was sent only an hour or so after we talked. It was bad news, I was convinced it was. I hoped it wasn’t. I clicked to open it.

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Mary,

I do not make friends easily, because I do not like to open myself up to hurt. I am petrified of making a mess of this, but, after surprisingly little thought, I have decided our friendship is more important to me than preserving the armor wrapped around me. I've been a fool and I am sorry. I just panicked when I realised how important you are to me. It's hard for me to type this Mary, but you need to know. I treasure our friendship. I look forward to our good mornings and our goodnights, however brief they may be.

Forgive me?

Will.

I was crying again, but tears of joy not sadness, it was not exactly a poetic confession of love, but it was a heartfelt proclamation of like, and I could live with that. I much preferred having just his friendship to not having anything at all.

Will,

So good to hear from you, sorry it's taken me few days to get back to you, but my Internet only just came back on. I'm so glad you've decided our friendship is worth saving. There is nothing to forgive, we're all human and we all have our foibles. It's all worked out well in the end and that's what counts. Chat soon,

Love,

Mary.

* * * *

As I typed feverishly into my latest novel, a little window opened up. I didn't expect to be playing Lucy after the tone of the phone conversation and email I'd received, so I was very surprised to read its contents.

Are you there, Lucy?

I finished off my sentence, and then replied.

Yes, I'm here, I didn't expect to be seeing you, though Joe.

I know, I am just in desperate need of some relaxation.

I wondered what had made him so desperate for an escape, but at this moment I couldn't ask.

*Well, I was kinda busy, but as it's you, I'll squeeze you in.
smiles provocatively what do you want today?*

My eyebrows rose to the ceiling when I read the reply.

*I hate to be so blunt with a lady, but Lucy, I just really need
to fuck.*

I needed to fuck, too.

*Well then, let's fuck. *kisses you, pressing my body against
yours**

The action heated up quickly, with him running his hands through my hair, down my shoulders and back, kissing me deeply, long and hard. I was not used to him taking so much action, apart from the one time he'd arranged it all and played Dom. Usually he was just the recipient of my typing, of my fantasies. This time he was really throwing himself into it.

He typed furiously and I found my cyber clothes falling off. He slowly stripped me and kissed and nibbled and licked until I was writhing with pleasure.

*Before I go crazy with desire, I pull at the buttons of your
shirt, clumsily unfastening them as I press my naked breast
against your cold, hard chest. I dip to your jeans and rip open
the button, throw down the zip and slip you out of them and your
pants. My hands rundown your thighs, grasping and stroking
your buttocks, wanting to give you as much pleasure as you've
just given me.*

I stroked him, caressed his hard cock. I felt his hands on me, rubbing, grasping and squeezing my big boobs. I forgot that he preferred his women to be petite and imagined him revelling in the abundance of my flesh. I was really getting into it as he typed out the way he would spread wide my thighs and slip between them. I groaned as he described his cock piercing my opening, stretching me around him as he ever so slowly pressed inside of me. I could feel every last inch of him sinking into my hot pussy.

I could see him above me, looking down into my eyes as he withdrew and thrust over and over again. Slowly, rhythmically, teasing me, making my pussy tingle with tiny orgasms. I could imagine the lust in his eyes as he fucked me. Lost in the moment, I closed my eyes momentarily. When I opened them, he was gone.

“What the...?”

I sighed. I wondered if his net connection had died, or if he'd been interrupted. We had really connected. Then it hit me; it scared him. It was too intense. Shit.

Quickly, I emailed. My fingers stumbled over the keys.

Will,

Sorry, love. I think you're freaking out. I didn't mean it to get as intense as all that. Please tell me this isn't going to ruin our friendship, I'd hate that. I don't know what to say really, I just don't want you to do something crazy 'cos you're scared.

Take care,

Love,

Mary

I tip-tapped away at my story again, trying to take my frustration out on the keyboard. I was worried. I'd been in that position before. It wasn't unusual for me not to hear from Will for weeks after such an episode. I was also worried about the intensity of the scene; was it me giving it all that heat? If it was, why was I so bloody stupid? I shouldn't have let it out; he didn't need to know just how crazy about him I am.

Mary,

Sorry. I'm just going to have to take a break for a while, I have some things to think about. It's not you, it's not what happened today, although that might have been a catalyst. I'll miss you, but I have to just get away from the computer for a while, I will be back.

Will

Bollocks. That's just what I didn't want to read. At least he said he'd be back. God alone knew when that would be, though. I wondered what he needed to think about. It had to be something to do with the way he connects with people, if the prematurely-ended chat session had been the catalyst. Maybe it was about the way he had connected with me.

“Men.” I tutted, channelling Rita. Why he couldn't just talk to me about it, I didn't know. Well, I suspected that he, for some

reason, had trust issues. Oh, I lamented my bad taste in men; I always picked them. I could never just fall for a nice guy, straight forward and well, not screwed up. Oh no, I always fell for the fixer upper. Oh yeah, there'd been Jason, when I was all of fifteen years old. He loved to kiss, but conversation was difficult, past discussions about football and our beloved Manchester United. Once I finally broke through his shell, it turned out he was confused about his sexuality. I think we came to the conclusion he was bi. Last I heard, he was happily living with a guy named Paul in one of the snazzy new flats built out by the river.

Then, as I hit eighteen, there was Stephen. He was a bit older than I and a definite charity case. He lived on his own, estranged from his family and struggling to keep himself afloat whilst he attended university. He'd been abused as a child, and his trust levels were almost non-existent. It took me two years just to get him to admit to me when something was wrong. He could fuck forever, and he threw his whole heart into it, but he just could not talk to me. He couldn't admit the love that was obvious through his lovemaking.

Break ups had always been a trial. Of course, when you pick on unstable types, they go to pieces when you split up with them. Or even when they split up with you. Messy, it was always messy. It was partly why I'd been single for so long.

Not that it was a break up or even a relationship with Will. It was just a very complicated friendship. Why did I always pick them? Just lucky, I suppose.

Chapter Eight

It was six weeks since I'd last heard from Will. He'd posted once or twice at Thirty-Something, just to let us know he was okay. He'd apparently been on holiday, I mean vacation, as they call it in the States. This was mind boggling in itself for such a workaholic. I wish he had emailed me though, even if just to say hello. Every time I saw a post, I expected an email or a PM or something and never received a thing. I'd emailed him once a week or so and kept him up to date on me. I sent quotes, jokes and links that I thought he'd love. Ever the optimist, I waited hopefully for a reply, but never got one. As typical for this man of mystery, when contact did come it was out of the blue.

Where are you in England again?

I was confused but ecstatic; he was back!

Manchester, Well, close to Manchester, why?

Business, he replied, I've got to meet someone in Manchester, talk about expanding my company to the UK.

Oh, I exclaimed and hoped he might say what I wanted him to say.

I was thinking we could meet up, if you'd like.

Yes! That was the response I wanted. But I didn't want to seem too eager and scare him again. I took a deep breath and tried to play hard to get.

When are you coming over? I'll have to see if I'm working or not.

Oh, I'm coming in on Friday and going back, like Wednesday.

I waited a few minutes before responding.

I don't work on the weekends, and only do mornings Monday to Wednesday. We could do dinner on the Saturday, then.

He replied quickly, *Dinner? Like, evening meal or dinner at noonish?*

I shrugged my shoulders nonchalantly, pretending to myself that I was cool and calm. I decided to push my luck.

Whichever is best for you. I've got the weekend to myself. Might it be easier if you ring me?

I was relieved when he replied with a single word.

Okay.

Nervously, I waited for a few minutes, hopping from foot to foot. I jumped when the phone rang.

"Hello." I made sure I smiled as I answered. I wanted him to hear the happiness in my voice.

"Hiya, Mary," he replied.

"As I was saying, I'm free on a Saturday, so whatever is best for you. Where are you going to be staying?"

He named one of the big hotels in the centre of Manchester.

"Well, I'll come and meet you about lunchtime. We can grab something to eat, then do something touristy. Maybe look at the museums or something."

"That sounds great," he enthused, his deep voice warm and snugly, like a familiar, favourite jumper.

"Then, if you like, you could come back to mine for tea. I could cook you something really British."

"Like fish and chips or something."

"Yeah, something like that."

"Sounds good to me, toots. I'll ring you once I arrive on Friday, give you my room number and things, okay?"

"Alright. See you."

"See you, Mary."

It was like the last weeks hadn't passed. It was like we'd been on good terms forever. I couldn't believe that in just three days he'd be in Manchester, meeting me. I panicked. How was I going to drop six dress sizes in three days? I was convinced he wouldn't look twice at my plump body. I was being silly; no diet in the world was going to alter me that much. I decided to book an appointment to have my hair done, and I'd get a sexy, winter outfit, too. I was determined to look my best. If I wished for it hard enough, maybe the impossible could happen.

* * * *

MAKING IT REAL

"You must invite him for tea on Sunday," Mum gushed when I told her the news. "I'd love to meet the lovely young man."

"I'll ask him, Mum, but can't promise anything. He's here for business, after all."

"Never hurt me, mixing the two," my dad chipped in. "Kept me sane, it did."

"Well, I'll ask him. That's all I can do."

"Oh, good. It'd be nice to entertain a young man, it's been so long since you last brought one home with you."

"Oh, mother."

"Don't 'oh, mother' me. It has. You're too young to be settling for spinsterhood."

"I'm not, Mum. But Will isn't anything more than a friend anyway."

"That's what they all say." Dad peered at me over the top of his paper. "Your Mum and I were *just friends* when we were first courting. Remember, Lilly?"

"I do, Jack, I do." Mum smiled and simpered. It was kind of sickening when my parents got all lovey with each other.

"Anyway, I gotta go or I'll be late. I don't want to face the wrath of Rita."

"Dear God, no one would," my dad exploded. "See you Sunday, love."

"Bye, Dad. See you, Mum."

"Don't forget to invite young William."

"No, I won't." I called over my shoulder, being vague on purpose. I didn't think I wanted to scare Will by introducing him to my parents. I had little to no chance of seducing him as it was, without bringing them into the mix.

There was a message on the machine when I reached home.

"Hey, Mary, Will here. Just got in and my room number is 22. See you at twelve-thirty tomorrow. Looking forward to it."

At the end of the message was his mobile phone number, or "cell" as he called it. I give it a quick ring.

"Hey, Will, just checking that I copied your number down right."

"Yeah, you have. Hiya, Mary."

"Hiya. How was your flight?"

VICTORIA BLISSE

“Long. Otherwise it was okay.”

“Cool. Okay, well I’ll let you get some sleep and I’ll see you tomorrow. Twelve-thirty, right?”

“Yeah, twelve-thirty.”

“Bye.”

Chapter Nine

I didn't sleep a wink that night, least it felt like I didn't. All kinds of plans and scenarios roamed round and round in my mind. Sleep just didn't come. I got up early and had a long bath. I pampered myself with rich body creams and then put on the new outfit I'd bought for the occasion. The long, brown cotton skirt swished just above the edge of my matching boots. I'd been wearing them on and off for the last few days, to get used to walking with a heel. The top was also brown, but a darker chestnut colour that added warmth to the cold winter day. It had long sleeves and a plunging neckline that my mother would never approve. A small Amber jewel in the centre of my cleavage pulled and gathered the material in to emphasise one of my best features—my breasts.

I enjoyed having my hair washed, cut and styled by the cool, professional hands of my hairdresser. She brought my curls to life and they bounced around my face as I walked to my car. I'd never normally drive into Manchester, but I had decided that Will could live without being introduced to the delight of British buses on a Saturday in December.

Parking wasn't as horrific as I expected, and just before I left the car I checked myself in the mirror. I even slicked on a little light lipstick, and a touch of mascara. I never really liked makeup, but in my nervousness, I felt the need for a little artificial addition to my natural beauty.

It was bitterly cold day, and I wrapped my brown coat tight around my body as I walked towards Will's hotel. It was very close to the town centre and I watched as the busy Christmas shoppers scurried by. The fountains at Piccadilly spurted and squirted into the sky, then fell back to the sparkling silver that surrounded them. Children giggled while teen boys rode onto the fountains with their bikes, playing chicken with the water;

cursing when they didn't move off quickly enough and the freezing liquid soaked up their baggy trouser legs.

My heart thumped in time with the rhythm of my heels on the tarmac. Click-clack, click-clack, click-clack. I couldn't remember being that nervous before, ever. As I approached the hotel building, I noticed a man. He was tall and wearing a long, black coat, but his back was turned to me. The treacle colour hair was cropped close to his head. As he moved, I saw a mobile phone glued to his ear and then the tell-tale fringe at the front of his hair swayed. As he batted it out of his eyes with his free hand, I knew.

It was Will. The eyes that smiled at me were the same ones that smiled out from his forum AV. He waved and I waved back. He pointed at the mobile with a long finger and shrugged his shoulders.

"We'll discuss it all on Monday, John. Yes, that's right. I've got to go now, yes. Bye."

He clicked his phone shut and opened his arms. I stepped into them and wrapped around him. He smelt spicy, like Christmas cake and Mexican food and he felt so soft in his expensive cotton coat as his strong arms squeezed me back.

"Hey, Mary, good to meet you."

"Lovely to meet you, too. I knew it was you from way over there, chatting away on your phone and absorbed in your business dealings." I grinned and he laughed. The tone reverberated through my mind and into my pounding heart.

"Well, John is even worse than I am. I only spoke to him last night. He had nothing more to add, really. He's nuts."

"Is that the guy you're setting up business with?"

"Yep."

"Well then, you're the perfect match." We both laughed heartily, my tinkling giggle highlighting his deep guffaw.

"So, I'm in your native hands. Where're we going for lunch?"

"Fish and chips, of course," I answered and he looked confused.

"The other night you mentioned fish and chips, so I thought it would be nice to go and get some proper English fish and chips for our lunch, that alright?"

“Cool. Yeah, sounds awesome to me.” He grinned. “I want to experience lots of English things while I’m here. I’ve always wanted to visit England.”

“How long are you here for?” I asked as I walked in the direction of the chippy.

“Unfortunately, only ‘til Wednesday this time. But if this venture goes through, I could be here on a more regular basis...and for longer stays.”

“Cool. I know you’ll like England.”

“I’m sure I will,” he replied and I was dazzled by his grin. Do you know those kinds of smiles that just dazzle? They fill the person’s whole face and you just can’t help but smile back? Well, that’s the kind of grin Will had.

“It’s not far now to the chippy.” I smiled as Will tried to imitate the way I said ‘chippy.’ It was bizarre for me to feel like I had an accent, but I felt that mine contrasted against his beautifully.

“Mmm, you can smell the chips, now,” I commented as we reached the right side-street.

“That smells pretty damn good.”

“Wait till you taste it,” I grinned.

“Fish, chips and mushy peas twice. To eat now, please.” I ordered as we walked through the blue door into the white-tiled chip shop. The young girl set to covering two fillets with batter, then dropped them in to the hot oil with a sparkle of sizzles.

I stood close to Will and tried to adapt to the fact he was there with me. It seemed weird, but perfectly normal at the same time. It was amazing. I’d never seen him before but I felt completely at ease, because I knew him so well from our online chats.

“Salt and vinegar?” the girl asked, shaking out a scoop-full of chips to the bright, white tray

“Please,” I replied, watching as she shook on the condiments, then balanced the battered fish on top and dribbled the peas into a green pool on the side. I skewered a chip with a little wooden fork, passed the tray to Will, and waited for my tray of potato and fishy goodness.

Outside, we walked for a few minutes before we found a bench. I sat down next to a skinny granny who was resting her stockinged legs. Will sat next to me.

"Sorry we haven't got a prettier view, but you don't get many in the middle of a city."

"This is pretty in its own way. It's different, anyways."

"Good point." I tucked into my chips. "What do you think to lunch?"

"Very nice," he said, finishing a mouthful. "Comfort food in a tray."

"That's it," I agreed. "That's spot on." There was something very comforting about the fluffy white fish, soft and giving encased in the crunchy batter shell. And potatoes are one of the most reassuring foods there is. Fry them till their bubbling hot and fluffy on the inside and you're feeling blissful, no matter what is troubling you.

"So, what've you got planned for me this afternoon?" Will asked as he finished off his portion.

"Well, I thought we'd go all cultural and check out a museum or two. What do you think?"

"Sounds good to me," he replied. "I don't normally get to do anything like that at home. I'll feel like a real, proper tourist, walking round a museum."

"To the museums, then."

* * * *

I stared at an Egyptian Mummy whilst I stood next to the man I loved. I might not have been able to admit it to myself before, but at that moment, in that bizarre situation, I realised it was true and I couldn't deny it any longer. I sighed.

"What's up?" he asked, looking up at me.

"Oh, nothing., I replied, smiling weakly. "Just that this place is kinda, haunting, you know."

"I getcha." He grinned and gently squeezed my arm. I felt a bit bad for the white lie, but it passed as I reacted to his gesture. His touch was electric and the shock spread through me. My cheeks flushed like a ripe English apple. "It is awe inspiring," he added, "to see these artifacts of a civilization that lived so very many years ago. It's fascinating."

"It is. I often come here and stare at these guys for hours. I feel like I get more cultured, more knowledgeable just by being here."

"Now if that were true, museums would be able to charge a fortune for entry." Will grinned and we moved on to the next section of the museum.

"Don't you feel like there's someone watching you in here?" I giggled, as we walked into the darkened hall filled with glass cases. In those cases were stuffed animals, lots of different, wild but stuffed animals. Their eyes stared at us from their frozen poses.

"Yeah, it is a bit creepy." Will nodded. "Well, a lot creepy really. Let's walk quickly through this one." So, we were striding quickly when Will stopped. He stared into one particular display case. "It looks just like Fang."

"Like who?" I asked, moving to stand beside him.

"Fang, our dog when I was a kid."

"This great big snarling wolf reminds you of your dog?"

"Yeah, he looked just like this. Kinda wild. People thought he was a wolf. The kids would call me wolf boy. Not to my face though, in case I set Fang on'em."

"He sounds so, erm, sweet." I smiled, my face telling a wildly different story.

"No, really, he was. He was my best friend for a while. He might not of liked anyone else, but he sure liked me, looked after me. He was a good dog."

"He sounds it." I could see the love written all over his face. I knew this dog had meant a lot to him.

"I remember one day I came home from school and he had some deadbeat cornered by the garage. There were all kinds of stuff from our house strewn over the floor. They'd obviously fallen out of the trash bag the guy was holding in his hand. I got the police down and Fang held that guy till the sheriff took over. When he let go of the robbers bag, inside it was a blanket. My baby blanket that my Mom had knitted for me. It was, like, my most precious possession. I loved that dog."

I was witnessing deep emotion and I felt honoured. He didn't share things easily and he never mentioned his childhood.

I gently stroked my hand down his arm, I didn't have any words and I hoped my touch would comfort him.

"Anyway," he said, shook his head then smiled at me. "We've got more museum to see."

I smiled back and let my hand fall to my side.

"And there's plenty of it left, too," I replied and led off into the next gallery.

Chapter Ten

“It’s getting kind of late, Will. I think we better make our way back to mine if we want to eat before midnight.”

“Wow, is that really the time? I think you’re right. I’m going to have to come and stay here for a month to fit in all the cool stuff I want to see.”

“A year if you want to go further than Manchester.” I laughed, and took his arm to lead him in the direction of the car park. It felt so natural to link arms with him, and he didn’t try to pull away from me as we walked through the cold, frosty streets. The shop windows were lit up with Christmas trees, Santa’s and stars. People were hurrying between shops with bags filled with gifts, wrapping paper and love.

“It’s getting cold.” I commented, as a shiver travelled the length of me.

“Are we far from the car?” he asked.

“Nah, not far. I can’t say it’ll be much warmer in there ‘til we get going, though.”

“Oh, I’m not worried about me. I don’t want you freezing.”

“Oh don’t worry, I’m a hard northern lass, I’ll survive.”

“You seem kinda soft to me.” He winked and I blushed once more.

“Thanks, I think.”

“My pleasure.” He chuckled. I loved that sound, the rhythmic rise and fall of his voice as he expressed joy. I tried not to think that, realistically, it may have been the only opportunity I had to hear it.

When we reached the car I was reluctant to let go of his arm. It felt so comforting being close to him. However, I needed both hands to drive. I let him go and climbed into my side of the car.

"I told you it'd be no warmer in here." I laughed and turned the key in the ignition, then slowly drove out of the car park into the darkening night.

"How far are we from your place, Mary?"

"Oh, a few miles. Fifteen, twenty minutes or so depending on the traffic."

"Cool," he nodded, "isn't that sky beautiful?"

Between the tall red-brick buildings, you could see the sky, striped pink and peach, almost neon bright against the twilight dark.

"Gorgeous." We admired it in silence as we slowly inched our way out of the city. It was a soft silence, a loving silence, a friendly silence. It could have gone on and on and it wouldn't have felt awkward at all. It was a meeting of minds, a sharing of thought-space that only happens with the closest, most intimate of friends.

"Here we are, chateau de la Mary," I proclaimed as I pulled into my driveway.

"Nice house." He commented as we walked towards it.

"Well, thanks, I'm kinda partial to it. It's my pride and joy actually. It's mine, all mine."

"This will sound weird, but it looks like you."

"I hope you don't mean it's bulging at the seams," I laughed nervously as I opened the front door.

"Oh, don't be silly. Your kind of curves wouldn't work as well on a home as they do on you. No, it just has something very *you* about it."

I was gob-smacked by the compliment, though not quite sure what he meant by the house looking like me. I took it as a compliment, as I had always felt that the house was meant for me.

"Thanks," I replied, "Come on in and make yourself at home. Do you want a cup of tea?" It was an automatic response; someone comes into your house, you offer them a brew. Then my brain caught up with who I was inviting inside. "Or, I do have coffee if you'd like."

"Coffee would be wonderful, thanks." In the narrow corridor, we got tangled together as we took off our coats.

“Oops, sorry,” I giggled, as we danced around each other. I pulled my arm out of my coat and struck his hand as he struggled out of his own. I tried to move out of the way but we ended up tangled in the middle, our coats in a pile on the floor. “I’m dizzy now,” I said, my cheeks flushed pink from the exertion and close contact.

He placed a hand on my arm. “I think that’s you, and this is me.” He grinned. “Does that help?”

“A bit.” I blushed and took his coat to hang on the end of the stairs. “I’ll get your coffee now.”

“Okay.” He stood right behind me, so when I turned to walk towards my kitchen I had to pull up sharp centimetres away from his chest. “Erm, if you go to the left, into the living room, I’ll erm, bring your, er, coffee through.” I couldn’t think with him so close. I just wanted to grab a fistful of his soft, expensive sweater and pull his lips down to mine.

“Will you need a hand?” His question jolted me from my daydream.

“No, no. I’ll be fine. You make yourself comfy, I’ll only be a moment.”

I needed the space, the time to think and gather my wits about me, or I was going to do something stupid which would make him pick up his coat and run all the way back to Manchester. Or America, even.

“Okay then.” He finally stepped away from me, and towards the living room. I scurried to the kitchen where I filled and flicked on the kettle. I took a shuddering breath, grabbed my temples and calmed down. *Damn it.* He only stood by me, he only rested a hand on my arm. I felt like he’d taken me in his arms and kissed me ‘til I was breathless. I tried to imagine how I’d feel if he really had done that.

I shook myself. I had to focus. I smelt food and decided to concentrate on that, so I checked the casserole. The warming smell of beef in ale brought me back to the ground with a bump. That was better. I could focus properly once again.

“How do you take it?” I yelled, then followed up with, “your coffee, I mean.”

“Milk, no sugar, thanks,” he replied and I went to the fridge to find the milk.

As I backed away from the fridge, my mind was solely on the whereabouts of my colander when I bumped into something solid.

“Oh, sorry.” It was Will. “I thought I’d come and find out what smells so damn good.”

“That’s the beef in ale casserole in the oven.” I grinned, shut the fridge and dodged round his hard, masculine body to add milk to his coffee. “I was just gonna peel some potatoes for the mash to go with it.”

“Mash?”

“Yeah, mashed potato, it’s the perfect accompaniment.”

“Sounds and smells delightful. Want help with the potatoes?”

“Okay then.” Obviously he needed to feel useful. “Could you get the potatoes from the pantry?” I pointed to the door in the corner.

“Sure.” I took the opportunity to draw a few deep breaths and steady my nerves. The moment he came close to me, my whole body was filled with interference. I tingled and zinged and I just couldn’t think of anything but touching him. I remembered where the colander was and opened the cupboard. I stood on tip-toes to get it but it was just out of reach. I resolved to put the damn thing in a better place next time as I fished my hand in the cupboard cavity. Finally I grasped something metallic. As I drew it out, I became aware of body heat and the gentle caress of layers of clothes pressing into my layers of clothes. The colander was lifted from my hands, and put on the surface before me. The arm holding it brushed over my shoulder and pulled me into a casual embrace.

“You should have asked me to reach that for you Mary, instead of struggling.” His breath tickled my ear and his head was temptingly close to mine.

I giggled and ducked under his arm to the cutlery drawer. “I’d forgotten I had a tall, handsome man to help me.” I cleared my throat. Trying to cover up my flustering with activity, I pulled two paring knives from the drawer.

“Flattery will get you everywhere,” he commented as I passed him a knife.

“Well, that’s good to know.” I smiled at him, and my stomach lurched as he grinned sexily back at me. “Pass me a potato, gorgeous.”

“Certainly, sexy.” He was still grinning and looked me straight in the eye. I had to lower my gaze as my cheeks were so hot. I felt like they might explode at any moment. “How many potatoes will we need?”

“Six or seven should do it,” I replied, trying my best to get my breathing under control. I concentrated on the knife and potato in my hand. I pressed the metal against the yellowy skin and exerted more pressure as I skimmed the blade underneath. I kept my thoughts strictly centred on the potato, just on the potato. By the time Will spoke again, I was under control once more; calm, cool and three potatoes to the good.

“I think we’re done now,” he said, putting down the knife.

“Great, I’ll get these on to boil, then we can eat in twenty minutes or so.”

“Cool, I’m so hungry now I’ve smelled that stew.” He grinned.

“Right, let’s go sit in comfort for a while ‘til its ready.” I strode into the living room and flicked on the TV and the gas fire in quick succession. I sat down in my favourite corner of the sofa and was somewhat surprised when Will came and sat next to me, instead of picking one of the single armchairs. The news was on, but I was not paying much attention to it. My body was all on edge with him being so close. If I reached out my hand, I could have touched him.

“How long have you lived here, Mary?” Will asked. I looked up into his eyes, my cheeks flaming once more.

“Oh, about, I dunno, four years or so now,” I replied.

“It’s really welcoming.” He smiled. “I feel really at home, here.”

“You’re not the first to say that. I think this house has a welcoming history. It seems to wrap people up in warm cuddles. It was why I was so determined to buy it and not to settle for another place. I walked in and it just felt like home.”

“Yeah, I get that.” His smile was so appealing. It lit up his whole face, his whole being. “But maybe it’s the hostess which makes the home so appealing.”

“Why, thank you,” I stuttered, flustered yet again. “I do my best.”

I was not very used to compliments; my Mum had never been particularly excessive in her use of them and the only thing that drew positive comments about me was my writing, though I got my share of negative feedback there as well.

“So,” I searched desperately for a way to change the subject. “Are you enjoying your stay in England so far?”

“Oh, very much so.” He turned to face me. “I’ve always wanted to visit England. It’s painted as such a romantic and wonderful place.”

“And is Manchester romantic and wonderful?” I giggled.

“So far it’s definitely wonderful. I’ve caught a glimpse of the romance a few times, too. I hope to see more of that before I leave.” He had the most warming dark eyes. As I looked into them, I could hear the suggestiveness in his words, in his tone; but he couldn’t possibly mean what I hoped he meant.

“I love Manchester, love England,” I replied and took a steadying breath whilst I attempted not to get my hopes up. I knew I wasn’t the kind of woman he fancied, even if I had noticed him staring into my cleavage a time or two. “I’d not move away from here, not for anything less than true love or imprisonment anyway.”

“I dig that,” he replied, nodding his head. “I think I feel the same about the good ‘ol US of A.”

“It’s good to love where you live.” I smiled, then noticed the clock over the fireplace and leapt to my feet. “I better check those potatoes.”

Will followed me in, “Anything I can do to help?” He asked.

“Erm, any good with a potato masher?” I asked in reply as I strained the boiling water off the fluffy white potatoes.

“I have no idea, but I’ll give it a go.”

“Thanks, I’ll set the table whilst you’re mashing these.”

I poured the hot, floury lumps of comfort back into the pan, and pressed the metal masher into their softness. “You just have to keep smashing them up with this until they’re smooth. I’ll add some butter when I come back.”

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I scurried into the dining room, where the table was already prepared. I lit the candles and placed a bottle of red wine in the centre of the table. When I walked back into the kitchen, Will was done.

“Wonderful, these are mashed to perfection,” I exclaimed and slipped a generous lump of best butter into the creamy clouds of potato. Gently, I mashed the melting yellow sunshine into the clouds. “Lovely.”

I took the stew from the oven and served out a generous ladle full on to each plate, next to a mountain of mash.

“Dinner is served,” I quipped and Will picked up the plates and followed me into the dining room.

He scooped up the wine bottle, removed the cork and poured a glug of velvety red into each glass. Sitting down he picked up his knife and fork and dug into the meal before him. I watched his face as he um’d and ah’d. Obviously, he enjoyed the taste of Britain.

“Oh God, that is soooo good.” He grinned. “Thank you so much for inviting me here for dinner. I might have to invite myself every night if I get food like this.”

I flushed with pleasure. There is nothing like someone genuinely enjoying a food dish you have lovingly planned and prepared.

“It’s my pleasure. Oh, and if you’re looking for a dinner invite, my Mum has insisted I ask you to join us at her house tomorrow for a traditional Sunday lunch.”

“Well, that sounds delightful.”

“My Mum would be thrilled if you join us, but be warned, she’s even wackier than me.”

“Wackier. Heh.” He chuckled. “Sure, I’d love to have a traditional Sunday lunch, sign me up for that one.”

“Well, I’ll pick you up from the hotel tomorrow about eleven-ish then.”

I can’t believe that I’ve actually invited him to Mum’s. That’d put him off England for sure.

“That sounds cool,” he replied and continued to dig into the meal before him.

Good food, wine and candlelight seem to form a spell when they are mixed together. The atmosphere was heavy with

tension, and as I giggled and chatted, I felt light-headed. My body was fizzing and popping with sexual energy. I spun the stem of the wineglass in my fingers and let out some of my built up energy before I exploded. I was aware that my knickers were damp. When I shifted in my chair the expensive satin rubbed my mound and I could feel it slipping and sticking with my juices.

"Hey, look at that. It's snowing," Will exclaimed, excitedly. "It's snowing."

"It's coming down thick and fast," I added as I looked out of the window to see the flakes swirling through the heavy darkness of the night. Will was like an excited child. As he pressed his nose up against the window I couldn't help but laugh.

"I don't see snow much where I live, too far south," he exclaimed. "This is awesome."

"Well, put your coat on and we'll go out and experience the snow properly."

"Cool." He whipped out of his chair and through the dining room door before I could blink, bless him. It warmed my heart to see the excitement in his eyes. I followed at a more sedate pace, wrapping my scarf round my neck and putting on my hat and gloves before slipping into my coat. Will was impatiently moving from foot to foot, urging me to go quicker. He was relieved when I finished fastening up and I strode towards the kitchen and the back door.

I slid back the bolts and slipped the key into the lock. He was behind me, right behind me. I could feel his body heat on my back. My hand jittered as I turned the key, and it took an awkward moment before the lock clicked and I could open the door and move out into the garden.

The air was crisp, cold and soft in that unique way you only ever get when it snows. The flakes fluttered down in fast flurries and obscured everything more than an inch or so from the end of my nose. As I got used to the closeness of the snow, I could see my lawn was already coated with an inch thick layer.

Will stood next to me, bare hands raised to the sky, his face lifted up to the tickling snowflakes. He straightened his head with a smile and a laugh, then shook it furiously and ran his fingers over his cheeks to knock away the snow which lay there.

"Snow," he cried.

“Snow,” I replied, his enthusiasm contagious. He ran onto the lawn and I could hear him whooping and laughing. I ran over to join him.

Whoomf! Snow hit my coat just above my breast and showered my chin with snow drops.

“Hey,” I yelled. “You little bugger.” I dropped my shoulder and scooped up some snow and packed it into my hand as another snowball hit my arm. “That’s it,” I shouted, “you’re in for it now.” I followed the shrieks of laughter. As I glimpsed his dark coat through the snow, I launched the cool sphere in its direction. I was soon rewarded by the dull thud of it making contact. “Ha, take that.” I giggled and scooped up more. I ducked as I heard the whoosh of displaced air flying behind another snowball, straightened up and launched my own. “Ha, you missed me.” I heard another satisfying thud and a muffled curse.

“No more mister nice guy,” he exclaimed and I heard the fast-paced crunching as he rushed towards me. I turned to see where he was heading and got whacked. A rocket of snow impacted and exploded on my face, covering me in cold, cold snowflakes that tickled my skin.

“Mary, you okay?” Will was beside me, looking concerned. I laughed and pressed my handful of snow into his cheek.

“I am now,” I giggled. I ducked and ran away, laughing as he cursed then guffawed. Another ball left my hand, but I missed him. I was so engrossed in making a new missile that I didn’t hear him creep up behind me, but suddenly I felt the scarf pulled away from my neck and a flurry of ice hit the hot flesh of my neck and flowed down as it melted into cool streams. I screamed and shook.

“You bastard,” I cried, when my breath returned from the icy shock. I ran at him, snow in hand and grasped for his coat. He shook, shimmied and escaped. I ran at him again and grabbed him at the front, pulling on that expensive coat and forcing the snow in my right hand down into the space I managed to create between his neck and the material.

“Ha, sweet revenge,” I giggled as he shook and shuddered. His hand shot out and held me by the collar. “No, no, no.” I tried to wriggle from his grasp, but as he leant down to the ground to

scoop up the snow, he pulled me with him. I kept giggling, shrieking and struggling to escape, but he was holding me fast and he pulled the zip down on my mac until my chest was exposed. He smooshed a massive handful of cold whiteness into the creamy flesh there, pressed it down and squashed it against my exposed skin. It took my breath away. He held his hands there as it melted. The icy shock tickled and made me giggle and gasp. When the mass of moistness melted completely, he left his cold hand pressed against my warming skin. The shock of his touch, so intimately pressed over my heart, took my breath away.

“I surrender.” I gasped, my heart thumping.

“Well, I’m not going to let you.” He grinned, turning to scoop up more snow.

“No!” I screamed and tried to pull away from him. All I managed to do was overbalance. I fell to the snow covered lawn, pulling Will down on top of me.

Laughing hysterically, he spluttered, “Are you okay?”

I was giggling, too.

“Yes, I’m fine.” I felt his body heat warming me. I became aware of my breath as it escaped in short pants.

“You’ve got bit of snow just here...” he barely whispered the words as his fingers brushed gently against my cheek. They were cold but they heated me up, slowly at first. The flames of lust licked down his fingers to my cheek and then to my neck and lower to suffuse my chest. His fingers traced a light pattern, softly stroking as our eyes locked. I was lost in the depths of those treacle-coloured orbs. I wanted to lean up and press my lips to his.

I thought I was dreaming when I realised his lips *were* pressed against mine. My eyes closed and my hands wrapped around his neck. His lips were cold, but then so were mine. As we gently undulated them, the heat flowed through from the points where we were joined to suffuse our lips, mouths, hearts and whole bodies with a burning urge, a fiery need.

The kiss was not satisfied with being small and tight-lipped. It compelled me to press my lips harder to his, to move them apart and slide them all over the surface of his mouth. His lips were soft, supple and giving. He was kissing me as strongly as I was kissing him, his hand gently cupped my face. The snow

below me was cold, but it was a delicious contrast to the heat of his body on top of mine. He pulled his lips from me.

“We should go inside,” he gasped, “before you catch pneumonia.”

“Yes.” I panted, “yes, sure. Inside.” He slipped his body off me and held out a hand to help me up. I sprung into his arms and he wrapped me in a tight embrace. Our lips found each other again and continued the crazed kiss of moments ago. Snow was falling and every other sound was muted. All I could hear was the gasping of our breathing and the slapping of our lips against each other.

I stepped backwards, and he stepped forward. Our lips strained, parted and then joined again. It was like they were joined with sticky glue, incapable of parting. I couldn’t breathe, and it was wonderful. Every time I gasped, I breathed in more of him. Every move I made, I found his body pressed up against mine. My hands moved up and down his back, slipping and sliding through the snow. My gloves were soaked through, my fingers chilled.

“We must get inside.” He forcefully pulled his lips from mine. I saw the lust and desperation in his eyes but he was right, we needed to get inside, I could feel my extremities freezing already. I turned and walked towards the back door and into the warmth of the kitchen. He shut the door behind us and I turned to talk to him, to ask him what was going on. But his mouth was there again and we were kissing and nothing else mattered. As the kiss developed once more, re-tracing its steps of a few moments earlier, I slipped my hands out of my sodden gloves.

“Good idea,” Will gasped and grabbed a handful of my coat. “We need to get out of these wet clothes.”

As he unzipped me, I ripped open the large, smooth buttons of his coat. He helped me shrug my arms out of mine, and I pushed his off his shoulders. My back impacted against a wall. I groaned and ran my hands over the warmth of his jumper and pulled him tightly into me. He plucked the hat from my head and ran his fingers through my hair.

I pushed up and away from the wall, making him step back. Our lips seemed incapable of breaking away from each other for

more than a second or two as I moved towards the doorway. Shuffling to the side, I backed into the hall.

“Upstairs,” I gasped before his lips captured me once more, and his tongue invaded my mouth. “We should go upstairs.” He nodded and grabbed me and held me tighter as he walked backwards towards the stairs. I stumbled and he caught me but fell back and ended up sitting partway up my stairway.

I should have asked if he was okay, but I looked into those eyes and my lips took control again. They sought out his and kissed them and then led away from his lips and down his chin, to his neck. Here I nuzzled, nipped and nibbled as he murmured his appreciation. Somehow, he stood and we walked up the stairs together, almost like crabs, sideways stepping whilst our mouths were engaged in kissing every inch of exposed flesh.

At the top, I pulled him to the left, towards my bedroom. I kicked open the door and walked in backwards. I pulled him after me until my knees buckled on the edge of the bed and I crumpled down on top of it. He fell on top of me. We tossed and turned from side to side. We wrestled for dominance as we kissed, nibbled and licked. I felt his lips on the side of my neck and I melted. He kissed and nibbled, then bit. I gasped and arched my back, which made my crotch hit the hard, solid bump of his.

I was sure it was a dream, but I never wanted to wake up. I scrambled further back onto the bed and lifted my torso as he pulled up the material of my top. I was quite thankful that the light was off. Even though I was lost in the lust, I remembered the kind of girl Will liked and knew I was not that kind of girl. Will pulled the cold clammy material over my head and I lunged to take off his pullover. I ran my hands up the hardness of his ribs and chest and rolled it off over his head.

He was above me and our lips joined as I let my hands explore the hardness of his back. He was warm and taut and I loved running my hands all over him, just like I had fantasized a million times or more. His lips slipped lower and lower. Chin, neck, shoulder blade, down beside the strap of my bra, lower onto the meat of my breast before he buried himself in my cleavage. His fingers were warm from their explorations of my body. They ripped down the straps of my bra, one side and then

the other. He folded down the cups and my breasts gently slipped to the side, parting in the middle. I held my breath, scared that he would be repulsed by my less than pert breast but he kissed right between them. I felt the growl that emitted from between his lips before I heard it. He slipped over the side of one breast, up until he found the nipple. He keened with joy as he took it between his teeth. He gently pulled on it as his lips engulf its puckered hardness and my fears melted away.

I mewled, pushed up and forced more of my pleasure-tortured breast into his mouth. He left that one with a pop and moved to the other. He nibbled and sucked the flesh there as the abandoned breast prickled and cooled in erotic contrast. As his lips slipped down off my breasts to my rounded stomach, I began to feel self-conscious again, but his growls and moans eased my worries. His hands moved to my hips and tugged down on the waistband. He captured my knickers at the same time as my skirt. Lower and lower he pulled. His lips ran all over my stomach, then left my flesh completely as he concentrated on pulling my skirt and knickers away from my body.

I mourned the loss of his hot kisses and hot body, and I reached out my hands until I felt the hardness of his chest and the protuberance of his hard, tiny nipples. I wanted to run my hands all over every inch of him, but he pulled away again, leaving me bereft until I felt his lip on my toes.

I giggled and shook my leg. "That tickles." And he kissed again, harder this time, his tongue slithering between them. "That really tickles," I gasped and tried to pull away from his grasp, but he pressed his face into my foot. He kissed down the sole, to the heel and I moaned gently. I had never had my feet kissed before, and the tickling sensation became achingly erotic as I became accustomed to it. I could feel the pulsing pull of lust in the pit of my stomach and lower as his mouth skipped to the other foot. Once again, it tickled my toes.

Will changed direction and moved up my body. He kissed over my tiny ankles, his body slipping between my legs and his kisses climbing up the inside of my calf. His tongue licked out and tickled the soft flesh behind my knee and I giggled in surprise. I was beside myself with built up tension as his lips skimmed seductively over my inner thigh. I knew he could smell

my musk. I could smell my musk and I was hoping beyond hope that those lips would end up licking that spot, the burning central spot which most craved his caress.

Will stopped kissing and I heard him drawing deep breaths, then felt his fingers delicately skim over my sex lips. He pulled them apart gently and stroked them. There was the electric spark of his tongue as it flicked my clit and set my whole body ablaze with glorious lust. Another tentative flick and I was writhing. One more and I ground down, moaning and whimpering as his lips fastened around my pleasure nub and sucked rhythmically. My head thrashed from side to side and I slipped my hands down between by breasts, over my stomach and into his hair.

My fingers splayed and scrunched rhythmically as he licked, lapped and moaned into the folds of my wetness. I thrust my hips off the bed and groaned loudly as he pushed my pussy to peaks of pleasure. Bliss shot out and stimulated every nerve ending in my body as I panted and gasped my way closer and closer to climax.

“Yes,” I hissed. “Yes, oh yes, Will. Oh fuck yes.”

I was delirious with pleasure as his tongue returned to rhythmically bathing my clit. It started with a shudder, a tightening of my fingers in his hair and a tensing of my thighs. I chanted ‘yes’ over and over, quicker and quicker, louder and louder. I came. I exploded, literally as if I were blown apart. My body tingled and popped with pleasure. I was consumed by the hot ball of lust that careened through my thrashing body like a pinball in a pinball machine.

I’d barely gathered my breath, when I heard the clunk of a belt and the hiss of a zip. I felt the press of strong thighs spreading my own and a hardness as it forced its way between them. Will swiped his cock up and down my dripping slit and teased my over sensitised clit until I whimpered my submission. He guided the thick, blunt head between my lips and pressed inside my eager cunt.

“Oh, fuck.” He groaned as he slipped deeper inside me until he was fully sheathed. I could feel him pulsing and hot inside me. I felt complete. I felt content, until he moved. He pulled back and pushed in, creating a see-saw of tension and want. I was no longer content just to feel him resting inside me, filling

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me as if he were made to fit there. No, I needed to feel the sweet friction of his thrust, I needed to feel him come.

His strong arms braced him above me. I traced a finger down his shoulder blade, to his thick upper arm and I gripped there as his cock hammered home. Over and over, he caught clit and sent shockwaves of ultra-pleasure through my being. My other hand cupped his face, and in the dim, ethereal glow of the snow-filled sky our gazes met and we smiled at each other. They were smiles filled with lust, need and want, but also with contentment and joy. I could barely believe it, barely understand what I was seeing in his eyes, but I somehow knew that it was a reflection of the love in my own.

My eyes closed, unable to take the joy without bracing myself, without retreating into my own mind. Will panted harder, stiffened and groaned and intensified the pace of his thrusts. My hand still gently cupped his face as he drove my pleased pussy into overdrive. He roared like a wild lion as his essence forcefully flowed into me. I could feel his cock pulsing and shivering inside me as his taut body loosened and his stomach came to rest on mine, his chest upon my breasts, his head cradled in my shoulder.

I wrapped my arms around him and we lay like that for a long moment, gasping and shuddering. Ecstasy replete. As our breaths became longer and deeper, he shifted off me. The absence of him was cold, so I shimmied and coaxed our bodies until we were immersed in the soft, downy comfort of my duvet. No words were spoken as I snuggled into his body. His arm wrapped around me. My hand rested on his breast, where I felt the rhythmic thumping of his heart.

I slipped happily into sleep, his lips gently resting on my forehead. I was wrapped tightly in the arms of the man I loved. If it was a dream, and part of me was sure it was, I prayed I would never wake from it. Happiness was mine. Contentment and joy filled my heart as I drifted off to dream.

Chapter Eleven

I was scared for a moment when I first woke and found another body in my bed. Then I remembered and peace descended. He was curled away from me, and I was curled around his back. My arm lolled over his middle, my cheek snuggled into his hair. I lay there in the weak sun and thought.

I remembered that the backdoor wasn't locked, that there were be pots to wash. The pan Will mashed the potatoes in would be a nightmare to clean. I wondered what time it was and if I was going to end up late for Sunday lunch at Mum's. I didn't really care though. I wasn't worrying. I didn't leap out of bed to see if I'd been burgled or I'd ruined a pan. I just snuggled closer to Will, and stroked my hand over his hip and tried not to think about any of the big questions lurking in the back of my mind with my doubts and insecurities. I knew that those questions would have no easy answers.

Will stirred, and I paused in my stroking. He stretched, placed his hand over mine and squeezed, then rolled over to face me.

"Good morning." He smiled, his eyes relaxed from sleep.

"Morning, love," I replied, my cheeks red and hot. I was suddenly reminded that I was naked and so was he. All thought processes ended as his lips touched mine. They clung together at first, still dry from a night of sleep, but as they moved and caressed they loosened up and glided sensually against each other. His body fit itself into me, and I felt his cock, awake and straining as it poked me in my stomach. I worried briefly about that. There was no denying my body now; the room was softly illuminated by snow-lit sunshine and the duvet slipped slowly down to our toes.

"I can't keep my hands off you," he groaned, cupping my breasts, kneading them as he kissed me once more, "or my lips."

He drew a breath, then buried his face in my neck. I pressed against him. Scraping my fingers down his back, I cupped his buttocks, squeezed them and enjoyed the bouncy firmness in my hands.

“Yes,” he hissed, a hand skimming down over my hips to my ass and slapping it as I squeezed his. He rolled away from me and pushed me on to my front. With a hand in the small of my back he knelt, then smacked my buttock with his other hand. It was sharp and stinging, but it was pure pleasure. As he alternated from cheek to cheek, I found myself moaning and writhing against the sheets.

“What a pretty pink ass,” he groaned and encouraged me to lift up on to my knees. “Fuck, you’re gorgeous.” I felt him penetrate me before he finished his sentence. Will’s cock slipped inside me with ease, slowly sinking further in and filling me. Soon, I felt his groin pressed up hard against me. He grabbed hold of my hips and pulled back, only to sink in again a second later. I was so wet, so ready for him that he glided effortlessly in and out of me. His speed increased and I felt his balls slapping up against my lips, impacting my clit. I squealed with delight.

My breasts were pressed down into the softness of the mattress and with each thrust forward they shifted up and down. The almost painful grazing sent sparks of pleasure to my brain. They coalesced into mini-orgasms that shook through my body as he used me, almost violently, for his pleasure.

Each thrust came quicker. His fingers dug into my hips as the tension mounted. I could feel him tensing up as he slammed into me harder. His voice broke as he gasped out his pleasure. The cracked moan was like an orgasm to my ears as he held still and filled me with his essence.

He collapsed beside me and I rolled into his arms, still hot and aroused from the hard fucking I’d received. I spread my thighs wantonly, like a bitch in heat, and he responded by slipping a hand between them and parting my plump folds. He ran his finger over my excited clit.

“Do you like that?” he crooned, and I whimpered my reply.

“Oh you do, don’t you? Yes, you like the feel of my big fingers stroking your wet, hot slit. You’re a dirty girl, a dirty, nasty, sexy girl.”

His voice added an extra dimension to my arousal, and the pre-orgasm spring tightened in the pit of my stomach as he kept up his rhythmic rubbing.

“That’s it, baby, come for me. Yes, I want to feel your juices flowing down my fingers, your pussy sucking me in as you explode.”

I mewled and buried my head into his chest as he continued with the same frantic rhythm.

“That’s it, darlin’, that’s it. Oh yes, you’re so sexy, so beautiful.”

I couldn’t believe my ears. The compliments he covered me with were things I’d never expected to hear from his lips; but then I’d never imagined I’d be coming all over his fingers for real, either.

“Yes.” I gasped as my muscles tightened.

“Oh yeah, baby, come.”

And I did. The spring released, the tension drained and pleasure sparked and set alight every fibre of my being.

He wrapped me in a body-encompassing hug, and I buried myself in it. I was replete, and those fears I’d been holding back were coming once more to the fore. I blinked back tears, and kissed his flesh as a distraction.

“What time is it?” I popped my head up, remembering something.

“Erm,” Will glanced around, until his gaze fell on the bedside clock.

“Nine thirty-two A.M.,” he replied.

“Oh geez, we need to get up and get dressed. Get tidied and get out. Gotta be at Mum’s by twelve and we’ll have to leave here at like, eleven.”

“No time for round two, then?” He grinned.

“No, no, sorry.”

“You sure?” He kissed me and squeezed my buttock.

“Yes,” I moaned. “Quite sure.” I was tempted, but I had only been late for Sunday dinner once and it still got regularly brought up in arguments. I just didn’t want to cope with that today as well.

“Oh, okay then.” He grinned and leapt from the bed. “I claim first shower, though.”

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I jumped up with a giggle. “If you can find it,” I called. I darted the other way down the corridor and made it to the bathroom first.

“Alright then, I’ll watch and wait,” he drawled. “Do you have a toothbrush I can borrow?”

Chapter Twelve

“So, just a few things before we get to Mum’s.” I smiled at him, then focused back on the road ahead.

“Mum is...particular. So you’ll need to take your shoes off before you go in to the house. We’ll also have to take a gift, so we’ll stop off at the one stop and grab some chocs.”

“Okay, that’s nothing too, erm, particular.”

“Make sure you use the white towel in the bathroom, it’s for guests. The blue is for regulars and if Mum suspects you’ve used it, she’ll be mortified. She only uses softeners on the guest towels.”

“Ah, now we’re getting particular.”

“Everything else can be picked up as you go along. I did warn you they were a bit, well, weird.”

“It’s cool,” he replied. “All parents are pretty weird to their kids.”

“No, mine really are.” I nodded my head, “really, really.”

We laughed together, then I concentrated on driving and he admired the snow-covered hills around us.

“So this is William,” my Mum cooed as she welcomed us into the hall. “Mary has told us so much about you.”

“All good, I hope.” Will smiled and passed Mum the box of Roses we’d just purchased.

“Oh, you shouldn’t have,” Mum simpered. “Look George, your favourites.”

“Yes, dear,” Dad answered, without looking away from the telly. “Hi, Mary.”

“Hi dad, what’s the score?”

“Nil-nil so far, love.”

“Dad’s watching Manchester United,” I explained to Will. “He used to go to all their matches, but he can’t sit in the seats

now, his sciatica plays up. So he watches it on television instead. We won't get a sensible word out of him 'til it finishes."

"Go make yourselves at home. I'm just going to go and check on the vegetables." Mum shooed us towards her floral living room. Will and I sat on the sofa.

"Hello, Will. Do you know much about football, I mean soccer?" Dad spoke, but didn't once look up from the TV screen.

"Well, sir, not much really, no," Will replied.

"I'll let you off, you being a yank and all." Dad pulled his skinny frame up in his worn, green velvet seat. He refused to have one of Mum's lacy covers over it. "You'll learn all you need to know right here." He pointed at the TV. "The ones in red are Manchester United, the best damn football team in the world. The yellow bastards are Arsenal. Ignore them."

"Okay, sir," Will replied.

"Oh, and call me George. I'm certainly no Sir."

"Okay, George," Will replied, and Dad smiled.

He'd only just walked in the door and already my parents liked him more than they liked me.

"How are you finding England?" Mum shuffled in to the living room and inserted herself between Will and me on the sofa, slowly lowering her delicate frame down into the seat.

"I'm loving it so far, ma'am."

"Call me Lilly, dear." She flashed him a smile and placed a hand on his arm.

"Okay, Lilly. Thank you. England is wonderful, and your daughter is wonderful for helping me see that."

I flushed bright red and Mum turned to smile at me.

"Well, we've tried our best to bring her up well, Will."

"And you have, Lilly, you have."

I knew that soon Mum would want to trade me in, swap me for Will. She'd always said she wanted a son.

"Get in there, aw, bollocks."

"George, language!" Mum tutted as Dad roared from his chair.

"Sorry, love." Dad looked sheepish, but then winked at me. I knew he did it just to wind her up. Dad had a bit of a mean streak through him.

"Anyway, us girls will leave you lads to the football, dinner needs serving up. How long till the end of your match, George?"

"Oh, about ten minutes I guess, love."

"Right, come on Mary. Let's go."

I jumped up and followed Mum, smiling at Will as I walked past.

"He is lovely," Mum squealed as we entered the kitchen. "Will you do the mash?"

"Okay, Mum." I reached under the sink and pulled out the colander whilst Mum carved the beef.

"He's so handsome and thoughtful, and obviously very intelligent. He'd make some lucky woman a wonderful son-in-law."

"Yeah, he would," I answered. I knew what she was driving at, but I was not going to let on about my relationship to Will. Hell, I wasn't even sure of my relationship to Will, if I was honest.

"When's he here 'til, love?"

"He goes back Wednesday morning, Mum."

"Oh that's a shame. I was going to invite him to our bridge night on Thursday."

"I don't think Will would even know what bridge is, Mum."

"Maybe not, but he's clever. He'd soon pick it up and Maureen would love to meet him."

"More like you'd love to show him off to Maureen." I shook my head as I served out spoonfuls of mash.

"Oh, Mary. No such thing at all. I don't care what Maureen thinks."

She'd been saying the same thing for years. Maureen's surname is Fitzroy, not Jones, but Mum had been struggling to keep up with her since I had been a teenager.

"Well he's going home on Wednesday, so it's not even an issue, Mum."

"Maybe he'd like to come next time he visits."

"I don't know. I don't know if he'll be visiting again."

"Now he's met you, dear, he'll be back."

"Thanks, but I just don't think it's quite as simple as that."

"Well, we'll see." You know that one don't you? Your Mum has probably used it on you a million times. It's as if she's

saying *I'm your mother and I know more than you*. Without saying it.

I picked up two plates as Mum signalled they were fully filled. A second later, I jumped, knocking the plates against each other.

"I think United just scored." The deafening yell was definitely a combination of my dad and Will's voices.

"Oh, he can be so uncouth sometimes. And he's leading that cute boyfriend of yours astray, too."

"He's not my boyfriend, Mum." I sighed.

"Yes dear, whatever you say."

She was so exasperating sometimes and you could never get her to change her mind. Once she'd decided something, there was no changing her mind about it.

"Lunch is ready," Mum trilled as we walked into the dining room.

"Alright," Dad replied. "Good timin', the game just finished."

"Another last minute winner, then Dad?" I grinned

"Yeah, and a cracker it were too, weren't it Will?"

"Yes, it was." Will agreed then turned to me and shrugged. I didn't think he'd got the hang of English football yet.

"This looks and smells delicious, Lilly." Will smiled and Mum giggled coquettishly.

"Why thank you, Will, tuck in, tuck in."

Beef, Yorkshire pudding, mashed potatoes, roast potatoes and parsnips, carrots, swede and gravy—a typical Sunday lunch at Mums. As I ate, I felt a hand on my leg. I looked up and Will was smiling at me. The hand on my leg left and he got back to eating. My pulse was thudding loudly between my ears as I kept eating. My tummy was full of butterflies from his touch but Mum would have a fit if I didn't eat her dinner all up. Eating was taken seriously in our house and so we sat in silence. Taps of knife or fork on plate were the only sounds.

"That was delicious, Lilly," Will exclaimed and put down his knife and fork. "But I couldn't eat another mouth full."

"That's quite alright dear, you've made quite an inroads into that. I served you up a large portion. You will have room for some apple pie and custard though, won't you?" It was less of a

question and more of a statement, but Will nodded his head anyway.

"There's always room for dessert, ma'am." He smiled.

I carried the empty plates into the kitchen, then cut up the apple pie and placed a slice each in four bowls.

"Take that big piece for Will, he needs feeding up."

"Yes, Mum." I replied and placed the apple pie in front of Will, whose hand cheekily squeezed my butt as I did so.

"Thanks," he said and I blushed in answer, then sat down to my small slice of dessert.

"Lilly, I must insist on washing the dishes. You made such a wonderful meal for me."

"Oh, Will, you don't have to."

"Yes, I do. It's only polite."

"Well, if you insist."

"I'll give him a hand, Mum," I added, and she smiled at me.

"Of course, dear." She flashed that knowing smile again and I held down the urge to throttle it off her face. I was always very placid until my Mum got involved. She knew just how to rub me up the wrong way.

"So, did you enjoy the football?" I asked Will once we made it behind the closed kitchen door.

"Sure," he replied, up to his elbows in soap bubbles. "It was good."

"Be thankful it's not cricket season," I laughed. "Dad would have driven you mad trying to explain it."

"He's a good man," Will said. "You've got lovely folks, Mary."

"Why, thanks. Want me to pack them up so you can take 'em home with you?" I laughed.

"Oh no, I couldn't deprive you of them." He grinned back, his eyes twinkling.

"I can't even give them away," I tutted and shook my head dramatically, drying a plate and putting it away in a low cupboard.

"Speaking of going home," Will said, "I'll have to go back to the hotel tonight. I've got that meeting early in the morning."

"Of course," I replied. "We'll finish this off and I'll drop you back at the hotel, no problem."

“Okay, cool. I’d love to stay with you again, but you know.” He smiled, his cheeks flushed.

“Sure, I know.”

When he’d finished washing, he helped me dry the remaining pots. As I bent down to place pans in the cupboard under the sink, I felt him pressing his crotch against my bum. I could feel him straining in his pants and I got the urge to flip up my skirt so he could slip that cock inside of me. I took a steadying breath and stood.

“Hey, that’s sexual harassment,” I exclaimed and turned around to face him.

“Not when you enjoy it so much,” he replied. “I bet you’re wet.”

He slipped his arms around me, pulled me close and forced our mouths together for a kiss. I forgot where I was and returned the kiss with gusto. Before I knew it, he was dipping his fingers down my waistband, under my skirt and into my knickers. His fingers made me gasp as they slipped past my clit.

“Soaking,” he groaned, pulling out his hand but continuing to kiss me.

“Are you two finished?” Mum walked into the kitchen and we hurriedly parted.

“Yeah.” I replied, my cheeks red. I felt my blood pumping as it rushed through my veins.

“Ah, good.” She smiled that knowing smile again.

“But we’re going to have to go, Mum, Will’s got to get back to his hotel.”

“Oh right, I thought he was staying with you.”

“I wish.” Will smiled, taking the heat of Mum’s stare off me. “I’ve got a business meeting in the morning, early, so I need to be in central Manchester for that. I can’t stay at Mary’s tonight.”

“Fair enough,” Mum replied. “It’s been a pleasure meeting you, Will. I hope to see you again soon.”

“Same here, Lilly,” Will replied. He kissed her cheek and made her giggle like a teenage girl.

“Bye Dad,” I shouted as we walked into the corridor.

“Ta Ra, love,” he replied.

“Bye, George,” Will added.

“See ya, mate,” Dad replied once more.

“Oh, he likes you,” I smiled, as we stepped back into our shoes, “mate.”

“What can I say? I’m just adorable.” We laughed, then walked out of the house together.

Chapter Thirteen

“Wanna come in for a while?” Will asked as we pulled up outside his posh hotel.

“Erm, I don’t know, where can I park?”

“Oh, just jump out and the doorman will sort that out.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, don’t worry about it. It’s so early and, well, I’d like to spend some more time with you.”

How could I refuse? I passed my keys to the doorman. Will told him the room number and I was informed that the keys would be waiting for me when I left. It was awful funny seeing that austere gentleman fold himself into my cheap baby of a car.

“Come on.” Will took my arm and marched me through the gleaming gold doors and into the expensive hotel lobby. I felt somewhat overwhelmed. I’d never been in such a grand place before, and I gripped on to Will tightly.

As we walked into the massive, shiny elevator I let out a deep breath and admitted to Will how nervous I was.

“Oh, I know how you feel. I’m a farm boy at heart. You just have to pretend you belong here, like it’s a game. You’re Lady Mary of Lancashire and you’ve been in so many posh hotels you barely take notice of a new one.”

I give him a sceptical look.

“Oh, go on, give it a try.” Will smiled, “I’ll even be your servant.”

My eyes lit up.

“Really?” I grinned lustfully.

“Really,” he replied in a low, rumbling growl.

The lift doors pinged open. I took on my new persona and strode out of the lift.

“Which is our room?” I asked. I didn’t even say please or excuse me, but Will answered immediately.

"This way, ma'am." A thrill streaked through my body. I straightened up and followed Will. I didn't know where this was going to lead, but I knew of Will's dominant leanings and so I knew that what was ahead was going to be a bit of a voyage of discovery for both of us. I already loved bossing him around, even if it was only role play.

"Here we are, ma'am. Your state room."

It was impressive. A massive dark wood, four-poster dominated the room, with expensive burgundy bed linen. The carpet was deep shag pile that I literally sank into. The room was the height of luxury.

"Is it to your liking, ma'am?" I remembered Will was there, stopped gawking and got back into my role.

"Well, I suppose it will do." I grinned wryly and sat down on a smooth, soft sofa that made me 'oh' with delight as it cradled my body.

"Shall I take off your shoes, ma'am?" Will asked.

"Yes, please."

I got a shocking, lustful thrill as Will knelt before me. His long fingers were soft and delicate as he slowly slipped off one shoe, before lifting up my other foot and de-shoeing that too.

"Thank you, Will." I smiled.

"Relax there a moment ma'am. I'll be right back."

He ran his hand lovingly up my calf, squeezed it just below my knee, then stood and disappeared through a door on the left.

The sound of running water echoed through the room, I stood up and took a walk round. All of Will's stuff was still in a suitcase, the bed obviously freshly made. I was already amazed at what had happened the evening before, but seeing all this blew me away. He chose to stay with me, in my little house when he had this palace.

"Is the room not up to standard?" Will came up behind me and I jumped, pulling my hand off the bedside cabinet.

"It will do, Will, it will do." I smiled. He took me by the hand and led me into the white, sparkling bathroom.

"Let me help you out of your clothes." He began by slowly unbuttoning my blouse. I felt his fingers shake slightly, and I smiled. I wondered if it was nerves or lust or a mixture of both. I loved the tentative flick of his fingertips against my skin as he

slipped the material off my shoulders. Taking it reverently in his hands, he folded and placed it on the chair near the door.

He stepped behind me and rolled the heavy skirt down over my hips and into a pool on the floor.

“Step forward, please.” He requested, his tone quiet, his voice muted. I followed the request and watched him place my folded skirt on the chair with the blouse. Next, his fingers were on my back as he squeezed and released my bra. I felt a little bit self-conscious, knowing that when the bra fell away my breasts would drop with their own weight. I flushed a deeper red as he walked around to the front of me and pulled the bra down my arms and off onto the pile. He gasped, then moaned eagerly as he watched my breasts drop, wobble and settle. His noises fired my lust. All self-consciousness was forgotten.

He knelt before me. His hands were on my knickers, which clung to my hips. He slipped the slinky material down, peeling the sticky crotch away from my, well, my sticky crotch and down to my knees and lower, until they pooled on the floor around my ankles. He was close enough that I could feel his breath on the slickness of my inner thigh and my body tingled with pleasure as he exhaled.

“Okay, ma’am. Let me help you into the bath.” His words may have broken the silence, but the sexual tension was still very much intact.

“Thank you, Will.” I smiled. He took my hand as I delicately stepped over the side of the bath and into the warm, fizzing bubbles therein. I sat down in the bubbles and let out an appreciative moan. Lying back, my head found the soft material of a headrest and my skin tingled all over with the popping air pockets as I settled into the warm water beneath.

“I will help you bathe in a moment, ma’am.” Will grinned wickedly. “Just allow me a moment to disrobe, so I don’t get my clothing wet.”

“Certainly, Will. The sight of your naked body will only heighten my pleasure, I assure you.” My voice was thick with teasing. A look into his eyes showed me that he was tempted, lustfully and completely tempted.

“Thank you, ma’am,” he replied whilst loosening his belt. I slipped my hands over my breasts as he lowered his trousers,

folded them and placed them on top of mine. I ran a lazy finger around my areola as he slipped the soft jumper over his head, folded it and added it to the pile. I pinched my nipple as he took off his t-shirt and repeated the process. My hand flowed down over my stomach to the juncture of my thighs as he slipped down his underpants and revealed a straining bugle to my wondering sight. My breath let itself out with a low, whistling moan and his mouth creased into a sexy smile as he moved over and knelt beside the tub.

He picked up a soft, white flannel and dipped it in the water before wringing it out. My eyes did not leave his long, lithe fingers as he rubbed the rich soap up and down the soft surface and then spoke.

“I’ll start with your legs, ma’am.” I lifted up my right leg, which he held with one hand and washed with the cloth in the other. His fingers, plus the slightly rough stimulation of the wash cloth, made my leg tingle all the way up to the thigh. When he’d washed both legs, the tingle was firmly lodged in my crotch.

He then moved up to my stomach, gently rubbing in circles with his cloth, making the bubbles pop and fizzle as he moved up to my breasts. He took each one lovingly in his hands, lost the cloth and used the soap in his palms to rub around, up and over each hillock. His thumbs grazed and rubbed my nipples as he stared at my chest intently.

Up to my neck he swept and gently cupped a cheek in his hand then leant forward and gently, softly, briefly kissed my lips. He scooped up water in his hands and sluiced it down my body to rinse me off.

“I think you’re done, Ma’am.” He smiled. “If you’ll stand, I’ll get you a towel.”

I stood up, and as soon as I was upright he wrapped a large, fluffy towel around my body and held my hand as I stepped out of the bath.

“Let me dry you.” His voice came from behind my ear, and it was full of gasping wonder as he ran his hands over the top of the towel and rubbed. His arms wrapped round me as he hugged me dry. His hands eased the towel up and down my curves. When a corner slipped away, I felt his chest pressed against my back. He grasped my shoulders and twisted me and I ended up

chest to chest with him. After a moment of enjoying the friction, he moved back and set to drying my breasts, individually and thoroughly. I couldn't help but moan as he did so. My body was alive and zinged with arousal. I was soundlessly begging for more than the fleeting touch I had received so far.

He slipped lower and knelt as he dried my stomach and thighs.

"Just spread your legs a little, please ma'am," he gulped and I complied. I let him caress my inner thighs through the fullness of the towel. Briefly, he pressed up against my pussy. He dried me as well as aroused me. My knees wobbled and I placed a hand on his head to balance, and then slipped my hands through his hair simply for my enjoyment.

He dried down to my knees and calves before asking me to kindly lift a foot.

I did so, pressing down on his head as he gently and thoroughly wiped. He surprised me by pressing his lips to my toes before he moved on to the other, drying it and then kissing each clean toe.

"I'm going to lie down for a while now, Will. Would you care to join me?"

"Would you like me to, ma'am?"

"Yes, Will. It's a command, even."

"Very good, ma'am. Lead the way."

I walked back into the bedroom with my heart thumping. I could hear it in my ears and feel the beat throughout my body. I smelt the light, vanilla musk scent of the bubbles lingering on my skin and felt the fibres of the deep carpet tickling my soles. I was hyper-aware and ultra-sensitive to everything. Will had aroused my senses with his slow, sensual seduction.

The sheet was like liquid bliss as I skimmed over it, folded down the duvet and blankets, and patted the sheet beside me, to beckon Will over.

"Would you enjoy a rub down, Ma'am.?"

"Yes, Will, yes, I think I would."

I rolled over, then rested my head on the cool pillow and watched Will as he shifted around and laid his hands on my shoulders. His warm fingers rubbed and squeezed, eased my pains and made me ache deep inside.

His fingers dipped lower, and I purred.

“You have the most wonderful fingers.”

“Thank you.” I glanced up and he was smiling, but there was something wistful in his glance. I turned over.

“But the ache isn’t in my back.” I smiled, then took his hand and pressed it to my breast.

“It’s down here.” I pressed his hand over and under my breasts, undulated it over my stomach and down to my pussy. Apparently, Lady Mary was not in the least bit shy.

“Oh yes,” he groaned “I can feel your pain.” He slipped his fingers between my lips and teased my clit. My body screamed its pleasure at this direct contact and I thrust my hips up towards him.

“And I want to taste it.”

He lifted his fingers to his lips and sucked off the juices, then lay down beside me. His cock was rock hard and pointed skyward.

“Would Ma’am care for a ride?” He winked at me and then pointed to his face. I grinned back; surprised, but pleasantly so.

“I think ma’am would love to go for a ride.”

I did wonder about my thighs and his view of them as they descended, but all I heard was appreciative moans as my pussy opened up before his eyes and then slipped down to cover his face. I rested my hands on the wall and gasped as I felt him moving. His nose bumped against my most sensitive and private parts, his lips tasted me, his tongue darted out and explored my innermost flesh.

I couldn’t believe the pounding pleasure which flooded my body. I rubbed myself against the wall and felt my nipples pucker as they hit the cold surface, which contrasted deliciously with the hot, wet tongue driving up my internal temperature.

I moaned, cursed and groaned. His tongue lapped and poked, his lips sucked and brushed and caressed my most intimate place and I felt alive. I felt so sexy and unbelievably in love. As that realisation shot through me, the orgasm caught me, squeezed me tightly then stretched me out as the pleasure pounded and pulsed through my veins. My head snapped back and I screamed out my ecstasy.

I slipped down the wall, liquidly lying beside him as I pulsed and panted my recovery.

"Thank you," I gasped, then leant up and kissed his lips. He tasted of me, smelt like me and I felt a new jolt of arousal. I couldn't believe my body was still needy after such a wonderful, body-thrashing orgasm.

"My pleasure," he moaned as I ran my hand down his body and grasped his eager shaft.

"Yes, I can feel it is." I giggled, then kissed him again as I rolled my body onto his. Our chests clashed and I clambered to my knees. "Now Will, lie back and let me use you."

"Yes, ma'am." He grinned as I swung a leg over him and settled myself above his hot cock. I grasped it and slid it up and into my warm, wet hole.

"Oh yes," I moaned as I settled onto him and he throbbed within me. I looked down into his face. His eyes were closed, his lips barely parted as he enjoyed the sensation of finally being offered relief. I rocked my hips and established a rhythm. Up and down, I rode him and took my pleasure once more from his body. But I enjoyed giving him pleasure just as much.

I knew it was pleasing him because he was moaning and cursing.

"Oh, Mary," he groaned and I looked down into those deep, dark soulful eyes. My heart painfully contracted. I could see something there, a raw, unfettered emotion that thrilled and panicked me at the same time. I knew that what was in his eyes was going to cause us pain, and he knew it too. For a moment, our hearts joined and I knew what was in his and he knew what was in mine and I could have cried. I settled for moaning as I lifted the tempo, determined now to drive this to completion. I was almost relieved when his eyes closed and the connection faded, the realisation set back as the bodily pleasure once again took control.

"Yes," he hissed, "oh hell, yes." I could hear a catch in his voice and I knew he was as shaken as I, but I closed my eyes and concentrated on the physical pulses that drove through my body as it pumped and pulled, pushed and took its pleasure from Will.

Will's whimpers of delight encouraged me to a faster tempo, making my breasts bounce. He reached out and cupped

them, stilling them with a squeeze. He held on to them for dear life as I pressed down on his pelvis. As he straightened and stiffened, I knew he'd reached the apex of pleasure. He yelled out as he orgasmed, literally screaming out a guttural noise that reverberated around and through me as my pussy clenched and shook in an echo of him.

I held still for a moment then slid to his side. I was tired, fulfilled and fearful. I snuggled into him and he wrapped his arms around me. We both knew what was to come, but for that moment we chose to snuggle together and deny it. I drifted into sleep.

* * * *

As I woke I became aware of strong, soft fingers tracing through my hair and down the side of my face. I glanced up and Will smiled at me.

"How long have I been asleep?" I mumbled, hoping I'd not been snoring.

"Not long. An hour or so maybe."

"Oh, right." I yawned and stretched my toes down the bed, noticing that I was covered by soft, cotton sheets. "Mm, I guess I'll have to be going then." I sighed.

"Yeah," he replied. "I guess. I have to be up early tomorrow and I have bits to prepare tonight."

"Yes, and I guess I should write, as I've not done so in days."

It was all very awkward as I slipped out of the bed and tiptoed to the bathroom to get changed. There was an atmosphere and I knew exactly what it was. Things were complicated and sometime soon we were going to have to talk about *us*.

"Well, I'll be seeing you." I smiled softly as I walked back into the bedroom. "Are you going to be busy right 'til Wednesday now?"

"Tomorrow and Tuesday, sure. I might be free Tuesday night. Want to do dinner?"

"Yes, I'd like that."

"I'll take you out this time."

"Well, okay. What time?"

"I'll phone you and let you know."

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“Okay then, love.” I reached out for the door and looked back at him sitting in just his boxers on the bed. My heart twisted again.

“See you,” I choked out then shut the door. Tears pricked my eyes as I hurried down the corridor.

Chapter Fourteen

The next morning, I awoke looking like death warmed over. It made me very glad that I'd taken the whole week off from the café. I would have scared off the punters with my black bags and pale face. I had slept very little that night. Actually, when I got my car back from the valet, I went for a drive with window cracked open and the music loud. I drove as long as I could stand to feel the cold, frosty air whipping my cheeks.

All night I tossed and turned. I'd found love, I knew it. I had found a soul mate, someone who fit me perfectly. But, he was going to leave, he had to leave. I knew once he left that I'd never see him again. It had to be that way. How could we continue a relationship in separate countries, especially not even admitting that the relationship existed?

And I missed him. I'd only spent one night snuggled up in my bed with him, but his scent lingered. Every time I drifted off, I'd wake up and reach out for him, my heart breaking anew when he wasn't there. I cried until my pillow was sodden.

Writing romance is not easy when you're hurting. Since I had opened the document, I'd typed around 500 words. I'd been sitting there for four hours. I just didn't have the energy to do anything else. Partly because I was sleepy, but mostly because I was morose as I thought about Will before he left for home.

Dring-Dring.

I opened an eye and winced. My back and neck ached; where was I?

Dring-Dring.

I opened both eyes and realised I was slumped in my computer chair. I winced as I reached out and picked up the phone.

"Hello?"

"Hi, Mary, it's Will."

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“Oh, hi.” I managed to smile. “How are you?”

“Great. I’ve done some mean business today. Are you okay?”

“Yeah, I was just napping in my chair. I’ve got a crick in my neck.”

“Aw, you shouldn’t nap in your chair then.” He chuckled.

“Thanks for that sparkling advice, dear.” I shook my head and laughed.

“You’re welcome.”

“So the business stuff went well?” I stood up and stretched, then carried the handset over to the sofa.

“Oh, yes, really well. We’ve set up a really good deal which should make me a lot of money. I’m excited about it.”

“Good for you,” I replied. I could hear in his voice that he was not excited; well, least not right at that moment.

“So, tomorrow and dinner. I was just ringing to set a time. How’s six in the evening for you?”

“That sounds good. Just meet you at the hotel?”

“Yeah, you’re best coming up to the room. I’m not sure how ready I’ll be by six.”

“Sure, no problem. I’ll just pretend to be Lady Mary when I arrive. Oh, which reminds me, do I need to dress up?”

“Well, I am partial to French maids,” he replied saucily.

“I mean do I need to wear something fancy?”

“A French maid’s outfit is pretty fancy,” he chuckled lustily. “But yeah, wear something smart.”

“Okay, I will,” I replied. “Lady Mary might have to go shopping tomorrow.”

“What a chore, eh?”

“Actually. Yes, it is. Finding clothes for me is never easy, but something smart? Pfft, it’ll be a massive challenge.”

“I don’t know why, you’d make anything look amazing,” he said. What was truly remarkable was that I could tell he really meant it.

“Why, thanks,” I blushed. “That’s really nice of you to say.”

“Just the truth, darlin’. You’re gorgeous.”

“Aw heck, you’ve made me blush now.” And he had. My cheeks were burning.

“You look so cute when you blush. Wish I could see you right now.”

“I wish you could see me, too.”

“Well, tomorrow babe, tomorrow.” He replied, and he sounded as wistful as I felt.

“Well, see you.” I smiled.

“See you,” he replied and the line went dead.

“Tomorrow,” I repeated to myself, “tomorrow.” I knew tomorrow was going to be a very emotional day.

* * * *

Thankfully, I found a dress in my wardrobe that saved me from the trauma of shopping. I’d bought it a few years ago for a wedding and was thrilled that it still fit. The flared black dress with red rose print also went well with my long-line black cardigan. Since I had no idea exactly where we’d be going or if I’d be required to walk anywhere, I thought taking the cardigan made sense.

The day had passed slowly. As I got dressed and put on my make up, I started to feel nervous and excited all at once. I was going to see Will, and that was wonderful. I tried hard not to think about the conversation we’d have to have. I just hoped we’d manage to have a happy evening before it got brought up. I wanted some more positive memories from this trip to keep me warm when I was an old, crazy cat lady in my dotage. After his perfection, I knew I’d be unable to settle for anything less.

I felt much more like Lady Mary in my posh frock and heels and was surprised when the gentlemen on the doors remembered me. It made me feel good to walk into that posh place, somewhere completely out of my social league, with my head held high and my eyes gleaming. I nodded to a very fine gentleman as I passed him on the way to the lift, and he tipped his cap to me. It was fun being Lady Mary.

In the elevator, I became nervous. I didn’t know exactly what was going to happen but I knew deep inside I was not going to end the evening happy. I couldn’t see how I could. Unless he confessed his undying love for me and planned to move to Manchester. Even I, the eternal optimist, thought that was pretty unlikely.

I knocked on his door and a few moments later, I heard the click of the doorknob turning. He smiled around the door at me.

"Hi, darling." He pulled open the door and held out a hand. I took it and he pulled me into his room, shutting the door before kissing my cheek.

"I hope you don't mind, but I thought we'd have dinner here. It's more intimate." He was standing so close to me and him holding my hand so tight that I could definitely feel the intimacy.

"No, I don't mind at all."

The room was bathed in the subtle light of many, many candles. The small table near the window was set for dinner and Will walked me over to it.

"You look gorgeous, Mary." He kissed my neck as he took my coat.

"Thank you, you too." My eyes roamed up and down his body. The milk brown of his expensive suit brought out the depth of his tan.

"Thank you."

He held the chair away from the table, and pushed it under me as I sat down.

"Hopefully room service will arrive soon." He smiled and looked at his watch.

"Good." I smiled, though I wasn't really that hungry, nerves do that to me.

"How's your day been?"

"Oh, pretty empty really. I've done some writing, chosen my outfit and not much else. You?"

"More business stuff." He was interrupted by a knock at the door.

"Ah, dinner. One moment." He strode confidently to the door and I enjoyed the view. His strong buttocks swayed seductively as he walked. I wanted to sink my teeth into them.

Will opened the door and in trundled one of those hostess trolleys with several silver platters covered in silver, sparkly cloches. I felt like a heroine in a posh Hollywood movie as the waiter bowed to me before Will dismissed him.

"I've just ordered something light for us both." He smiled. "I hope you don't mind."

“Not at all, I’m easily satisfied.” His eyebrow rose. “When it comes to food anyway.”

We chuckled and I blushed. He passed me a stark white plate. Three oysters sat upon it, still in their gnarly grey shells.

“Oh, I’ve never eaten one of these before.”

“You just let it slip down your throat.” He winked as he put his head back, tipped his shell and swallowed.

“Well, here goes.” I grinned.

“It’s an aphrodisiac, you know,” he commented as I leant my head back. “As it slips down your throat, you’ll know why.”

And yes, as the soft sea-scented circle slipped down my throat I could imagine myself sucking cock and could almost feel soft, silky come coating my throat.

“Oh yes,” I gasped, “that is divine.” We finished the starter in silence, a frisson of sexual heat between us. The main course was steak.

“What’s this? A bit of red meat to keep our strength up?” I laughed.

“Ah, you’ve read my mind. That is exactly it.” He stroked my arm as he placed the plate before me.

“They say great minds think alike,” I replied.

“It must be true.”

I delicately cut into the soft meat and lifted it to my mouth. It dissolved between my lips and bathed my mouth with richness. I moaned my appreciation.

“Maybe it’s the steak that’s the aphrodisiac,” Will said, a slight leer on his lips.

“It’s certainly orgasmic.”

“My father always said you can judge a woman by how much she loves steak. He’d love you.”

“Well, that’s good to know.” I smiled but was not quite sure how to take a compliment like that. I knew it was something big and I wondered just how I could do it justice. We finished our steaks mostly in silence, broken only by ums and ahs of pleasure.

“Now, for dessert I’ve got a picnic of delights. But, you can’t eat picnic at a table, can you? Join me on the bed?”

“Certainly.” My body zinged in anticipation.

“Oh, and that beautiful dress should come off. Some of this food is a bit messy.”

"I'll take mine off if you're taking yours off." I smiled seductively.

"Certainly," he replied as he wheeled the trolley over to the side of the bed. "Let me set out the food first."

A crisp, white tablecloth was spread on the bed as I took off my cardigan. Onto it went an array of gorgeous fruit, including strawberries, raspberries, bananas and grapes. There were whole peaches, mangoes and plump, yellow pears. As I slipped off my shoes and undid my dress, rich, dark chocolate joined the feast. Some in hard tablets and other in small bowls wrapped in warm wet towels, keeping it melted. Thick cream in a little jug joined the rest, as my dress dropped to the floor.

I sat on the side of the bed very carefully, making sure not to spill the liquids.

"This looks divine." I commented as Will shrugged off his jacket and pants.

"Doesn't it? And I'm a big fan of finger food."

"Me, too," I replied, sinking my teeth into a plump strawberry.

"Hey, wait for me." He unbuttoned his shirt and showed off more of his hard, tanned chest.

"Sorry, I couldn't resist." I grinned, "You should know I have little self control."

"True." He laughed and flung his shirt to the floor. He sat beside me.

"What do you recommend?"

"The strawberries are lovely." I picked one up by the stalk and pressed it to his lips, which parted and enveloped the rounded end. His teeth pressed into the soft flesh and deep pink juice spilt down his chin.

"Mucky pup," I chided, then leant in and licked up the dribble from his chin.

"Have you tried a peach?" he asked and held one up for me to bite. My teeth sunk into the pillow-like flesh and the juice sluiced down from my mouth, dribbling over my chin and on to my chest.

"Oops." Will bent over and licked up the drip that was heading for my bra, "And you said I was messy. You better lose

the bra.” The lustful twinkle in his eye was apparent as I faked reluctance with a sigh.

“I will not be paying for any ruined lingerie,” he said seriously and bit into my peach.

“Well, if you insist.” I shook my head and reached behind me. I unclipped my bra and let my breasts loose. I didn’t feel as self-conscious this time but I barely had a chance to anyway, because as my tits were freed Will grabbed and smooshed the peach all over them.

“Oh, that’s cold,” I yelped and then moaned as his lips enveloped my nipple. He tried to suck as much of my breast into his mouth at once, as he could.

“Mm, these peaches are gorgeous.” He picked up another, squeezed it in his fingers until juice began to flow then squished it against my breast. He licked, sucked and nibbled the juice and pulp left covering my breasts.

My hand came down in the centre of the cloth, and a soft, juicy fruit gave under my fingers. I gripped it, and lifted it to my lips. It was a piece of mango.

“Fancy some mango?” I asked as he came up from air. He nodded his head in assent, peach juices smeared over his lips. I placed the piece of mango between them, then took the other end between my teeth and bit down. The mango was unctuous, the juices sweet and refreshing. I continued to chew down the chunk until my lips met Will’s and we kissed in an orgasmic explosion of fruits.

“It is gorgeous,” Will panted, as the kiss faded.

“The mango?”

“Yeah, that also.” He grinned, dipped a raspberry in the melted chocolate and pressed it to my lips. The tart raspberry, soft and giving, contrasted wonderfully with the bitter creaminess of the dripping chocolate that Will kissed off my lips and cheek.

“I want to try some of this,” I took the bowl of chocolate and poured a dollop onto his chest, “with some of this.” I grabbed the cream jug and let a steady stream slip and meld with the chocolate on his sloping chest. I put the jug and bowl on the trolley and set to lapping up the creamy chocolaty goodness that rested on the most handsome plate I’d ever seen. I put my hand

out and grabbed whatever was near. A soft, green grape was plunged into his cup-like tummy button to scoop up the chocolate cream. I ate it as it sat there, the fresh fruit cutting through the silky cloyingness of the chocolate. I ran a slice of pear up and down his chest and stomach. It tickled him and picked up the last traces of my indulgent dessert. We shared the pear, then Will sat up. He gripped two sides of the cloth, picked it up and lowered it and its fruity contents to the floor. He pushed me back and smeared his sticky chest all over mine.

Sticky lips glued together, our shaking hands skimmed up and down our sides. I didn't want to think, I didn't want to breathe. I just wanted to kiss and feel more of his flesh against mine. He pressed my head into the pillows with the strength of a kiss that travelled down my chin and to my neck as his body shifted and his hand reached for my knickers. He tried his best to rip them down one handed, but as he struggled I helped him. Grasping them in both hands, I lifted my hips, trying to ignore how it bumped my pelvis against his hard cock. Slipping them down to my knees, where he took over and managed to slip them down to my ankles.

I moved my busy hands to his pants. As he nibbled my neck and his fingers slipped forcefully into my cunt, I pulled down his boxers and reached for his straining cock. Our kiss was wild and passionate, raw and violent as I wanked him. I pulled hard on his swollen cock and mimicked the delightful roughness of his fingers as they plunged into me. There was no playful teasing or delicate touching. We were on fire; we burned intensely with lust.

I pushed his lips from my body. He forced my legs apart with his knee, and moved into position between my spread thighs. He slammed into me, totally inside me, in one hard grunting thrust. I ran my nails down his back and clung onto him for dear life. He fucked me hard and fast and nipped at my bouncing breasts as I dug my nails into his back and clamped him between my thighs.

Ripe fruit, intense chocolate and sex mingled, producing an intoxicating scent that filled my nostrils and my mind as his pounding drove me to sweet distraction. My body was raw with

ecstasy. Every move made me ache all the more, the need almost painful.

“Yes,” I hissed, and “Yes,” once more. Will was grunting with pleasure and pressure, he was banging into me so hard that the bed was shaking. I screamed as an orgasm ripped through me like a tornado, powerful and selfish. It pulled me and jolted me as it came out of the blue and surprised me. It took my breath away and I clenched tight around him, which triggered off his own surprise orgasm. He growled loudly and held still. His cock throbbed inside my pussy and made me shiver.

He lay on top of me for a while, head sheltered in my shoulder as I stroked his short, soft hair. His hand rested across my other shoulder and gently caressed my neck. His cock freed itself from my thighs grip, and he slipped from between them. I shifted so I could press my chest to his and press my hair to his cheek as he cradled me in his arms.

I knew the moment had arrived, the conversation I had been dreading for days. I hoped to hold it at bay by shutting my eyes tight and memorizing that moment, the second of pure contentment after such a raw, passionate fuck. That moment of repletion filed with musky sex and sweat scents, with underlying tones of fruit and chocolate. I wanted to remember the way my skin tingled and felt every undulation of him pressed to it. I scrunched my eyes closed and imagined that the end was not in sight and never would be. I wanted it to be the beginning of a glorious future with the fruit-scented fuck just one wonderful memory in a book of hundreds. Not the bittersweet last fuck it really was. But, I couldn't live in that imagined world. Just like my stories, I could bury myself in them for awhile, but eventually I had to get back to reality.

“What happens now, Will?”

There, I'd said it and it couldn't be taken back.

“Oh, Mary,” he sighed and cuddled me tighter. “I've been dreading this for days.”

“I know,” I replied, “So have I.”

“I mean, what can we do, Mary? We live in different countries, on different continents even.”

He propped himself up on his elbow and looked down into my eyes. They pricked with the sting of tears.

"I know."

"And I don't know when I'll next be in England."

"I could come to you." I knew the outcome of this, but I'd be damned if I wouldn't try and at least fight it.

"Yes, Mary. I'd love that. But how many trips a year can we do? Two or three? I don't know about you, but I can't bear to see you just two or three times a year."

"We'd have the telephone and the Internet between times." He'd pushed away from me now, retreating across the bed. The gap between our bodies pulled at my guts and turned my stomach over in nervous frenzy.

"We would, when I have time to use them. Mary, I'm a busy man. I don't have time for this."

"Time for what? A relationship?" I snapped.

"Exactly. And a complicated one at that." He sat up and shook his head, running his fingers through his hair.

"There's more to life than making money. I can't believe you're throwing this away." The words caught in my throat.

"Can't you see, Mary? Can't you see I have to? I can't *not* have you. I can't bear the idea of an ocean parting us. I can't imagine wanting and needing you, becoming more and more frustrated with limited ways to contact you. I'll go out of my mind. It's not all about my business."

"Sure," I hissed and pulled myself up. I flipped my legs out of the side of the bed.

"Mary." The word hung in the air. "I can't do this. Please don't make me do this."

"Do what?"

"Tell you its over."

I sobbed and yanked my knickers up my legs. "Did it ever bloody begin?" I was angry, angry that inevitability had overcome romance, that my fairytale ending had crumbled.

"Mary, oh Mary, I never meant for this to happen." His voice was filled with emotion too, but I tried to ignore it as I found my bra and put it on, followed by my dress.

"Mary." He put a hand on the small of my back, on the flesh between the unzipped sides.

I turned to face him, my eyes full of tears.

“Mary, I...” He let out a shuddering breath and his eyes searched mine. A single tear dripped down his cheek.

“I have never felt like this about anyone before.”

I reached out a hand and gently wiped the tear from his eye. My heart went out to him as I realised he was in as much pain as I was. My hand rested there, cupping his cheek. “I’m just overwhelmed by how you make me feel and I can’t cope with it. Please understand.”

He wrapped his arms around me and pulled me into an embrace.

“I do,” I whispered. My arms curled around his neck and my lips were pressed to his cheek. “I do.”

I pulled myself away from him, I had to. I slipped on my shoes, and as I straightened he spoke again.

“Here, let me help.” He ran his hands up my back, zipping me up, then squeezed my shoulder. I pulled on my Cardigan and walked to the door.

“I’m going to miss you.” I turned to him, tears openly soaking my cheeks.

“I’m going to miss you, too,” he replied, pain etched in his brow.

With that, I shut the door and bolted down the corridor. I was no longer Lady Mary, and I didn’t belong there.

Chapter Fifteen

When I arrived home, I collapsed. I crumpled into a pile on the sofa and sobbed. My body was wracked with the intensity of my grieving. I couldn't believe he was gone. I couldn't believe that moments ago I had experienced such perfect bliss and it was gone, he was gone.

The phone rang and I left it.

"Mary, it's Rita. Pick up the phone lass, I know you're there typing away at your keyboard. Come on, I've got something important to tell you."

I picked up the receiver.

"H...hello Rita."

"What on earth is the matter, Mary?" Rita gasped and I just cried.

"Oh, Rita, he's going away."

"Who? That Will? Of course he is, he lives in....oh." The penny finally dropped. "Oh, Mary, I am sorry. What happened?"

So I told her. I told her the whole story from beginning to end, but I left out the private details.

"And now he's going. It's over, we're through." I sobbed again.

"Did you tell him all this? Did you tell him how you feel?"

"No."

"You should you know."

"Why?"

"He needs to know Mary, he needs to know what he's walking away from. True bloody love doesn't turn up every week, you know."

"I know. But, he's going home Rita, he's got a flight at like four a.m."

"So? Find him at the airport."

"I don't know the flight number."

“You know where he’s going and the approximate time of the flight though. You can find him from that.” I was about to protest, but Rita cut me off. “No, no. Don’t give me excuses. It’s one in the bleedin’ morning and I have to be up at five. Get in your car and drive to the airport. Find him. You’ll regret it forever otherwise, believe me. Now go.”

“Okay.”

“Good girl. I’ll come and see you tomorrow. Now go.” Rita put down the phone and I picked up my handbag. Rita was right, and not for the first time. I had to go to him. Otherwise, I’d regret it forever.

The drive to the airport seemed so very long. The motorway was nigh on deserted, apart from the odd taxi doing a late night airport run. It was nice to be able to pull up close to the terminals. The car parks at Manchester airport were eerily quiet. It was half past two in the morning and I looked at the big departures board to work out Will’s gate. I found his flight by its departure time, 4:05 A.M. He was in the departure lounge at terminal three.

I was glad it was still so early in the day. It was so quiet that it was easy to spot a person in amongst the few who were there. At any other time of the day, it would have been almost impossible to pick him out from the crowd.

I spotted him. He was hunched over a newspaper in the far corner of the lounge, his suitcase beside him. I took a deep breath and walked over.

“Will?”

He looked up, startled. A half smile briefly played on his lips, then disappeared.

“What are you doing here at...at nearly three in the morning?”

“Looking for you,” I replied.

“Oh, Mary,” he sighed, “I don’t think there’s anything left to say.”

“Well, I think there is,” I replied firmly, “So you’re going to listen, okay?”

He nodded, his eyes fixed on me.

“These past few days have been amazing. I’ve been so happy.” He opened his mouth to speak, “No, please don’t

interrupt. I've got to say this all quickly before I start crying again."

"I never thought it could happen, never thought me and you could have anything more than a friendship and now we do have more than a friendship, much more. I've never, ever felt like this about anyone before, Will. I love you, I really love you."

I took a big breath, and before Will could say anything, I rambled on some more.

"I know some people might scoff at this, but I've known that since we first met. You are something special Will, and though I know...I know I don't deserve you, *we're* something special, Will. When we're together, I feel whole. This, this parting is pulling me to pieces."

Tears careened down my cheeks as I took another breath. "So all I'm asking is that you think it over, that you consider not throwing away this beautiful relationship just because it's complicated. Will, as scary as it is, I would move to deepest, darkest Africa to be with you, or the North Pole or Australia. I'd do it for you, Will, I would. I love you, I really love you."

I couldn't speak anymore. The sobs wracked my body and suddenly I was wrapped in strong familiar arms and crying into a soft familiar shoulder.

"Hush," he comforted me. "Hush, darlin'." He stroked my hair and I looked up. His eyes were pooled with tears, too. He kissed me. Our lips met and melded and all our emotions swept through us, burning in their intensity. The kiss ravaged us as we clung to each other for dear life. The high waves and strong winds of emotion battered us but we stood firm, together.

"I love you," I whispered as our lips parted.

"I know, I know," he replied and kissed my cheek "and I love you. I do, I know it."

I had no time to let that sink in. His arms left my body, and he picked up his bag.

"I have to go, Mary. I have to. I'll be in touch, promise."

Then he was gone, and I was sobbing. I stood in the middle of a very public airport and howled like a baby.

Chapter Sixteen

I don't know how I got home and into bed, but I woke the next morning with the sun pouring in through the window, stinging my eyes and the phone ringing and ringing and ringing.

It stopped. There was no message left and the number was unrecognisable.

"Bloody cold callers." I cursed, and then the phone rang again.

"Oh, thank goodness." It was Rita. "How did it go?"

"I don't know," I replied, sighing.

"Did you tell'im?"

"Yes, yes I did."

"And he still went?"

"Yes, but he said he loves me."

"Well there you go then, he'll be back."

"I wish I was so sure, Rita. I really do. By the way, what was so urgent last night?"

"What do you mean?"

"When you were talking to my machine, you said it was urgent."

"Oh, it was. I urgently wanted to know what had happened with you and Will."

Rita was covering something up. I could tell. However, I didn't have the strength to dig into it.

"I'll be back in work tomorrow."

"But you're off till next Monday."

"I know Rita, but if I sit around here 'til then I'll go mad. I'll come in tomorrow for my morning shift, okay?"

"Okay, but I'll send you home if you look miserable. I'm not having you upsetting my customers."

"Okay, Rita." I smiled, "see ya."

MAKING IT REAL

In the morning, I plastered on a smile and went to work. I had to get back to my life. I chose to view the last few days as a dream. A beautiful, sweet amazing dream, but a dream all the same. I have a strong imagination and a stubborn will, so I managed to kid myself pretty well and kept up the façade.

I served customers, laughed and joked with the regulars and even sang along to the radio as I cleaned the tables. Nobody saw my sorrow. Except Rita.

“You don’t fool me, you know.” She shook her head.

“What?” I put on a puzzled look as I took off my work uniform and grabbed my coat.

“It’s a front, love. I can tell. How are you holding up?”

“As long as I keep up the front, fine,” I replied. “I have to keep it up. I’ve got to live my life.”

“Sure,” Rita replied, nodding. “I understand. Just be gentle with yourself for a while, okay?”

“I will.” I smiled weakly, “I’m off to buy chocolate and ice cream now.”

“See you tomorrow. Oh, and put your Santa hat on. It’s only three days till Christmas.”

Mum reminded me of the same thing when she rang.

“I know, Mum, I’ll be there. Yes, I’ve got the marzipan on the cake, yes I’ll ice it tomorrow and no, I won’t forget it.”

I don’t quite know why Mum always panicked so much as it’s only me, her and dad who did Christmas together. We never had guests. Oh well, I suppose old age takes some people like that.

“So, will that lovely young gentleman be joining us for dinner again anytime soon?”

I mentally thanked my Mother for the painful reminder of reality.

“I don’t think so, Mum, he lives in America.”

“Oh, right. I thought he might be back soon for, well, business.”

“I don’t know, Mum. I’ll let you know if I hear anything.”

“You do that. It’d be such a pleasure to have him here again. Such a charming young man. Even your Dad liked him.”

"I know. Miraculous, eh?" I joked along then put the phone down and let the tears roll down my cheeks as I walked over to the freezer to find ice cream.

* * * *

"I love Christmas," Rita sighed, happily.

"Yeah, because you're only open 'til lunch time on Christmas Eve. Then you're off for two whole days together." I laughed.

"That is so right," she chuckled. "And everyone is chirpy on Christmas Eve."

"Even with all this snow we've got this year."

"Especially because of that. It's like ye olde Christmas that we've all read about and seen in movies and films."

"Yep." Any other Christmas it would have excited me, *any* other Christmas. I always loved the snow and the twinkling lights and I had always warmly wished the customers a Merry Christmas and really meant it. But that Christmas I was empty inside. I felt hollow. Everything was tainted by the fact that I was in love.

Love was eating me up inside, it was making me sad and bitter. Love caused waterfalls of tears and hours of insomnia. I'd not heard anything from Will and he had left three days ago. I couldn't see him ever emailing me and if he did, I was certain it would be a cursory dismissal.

I told myself that I mustn't dwell. I mustn't ruin other peoples Christmas. I had to slap on the smile, sing the Christmas songs and pretend like I was having a good time.

"Mary, love. Could you put these bags out back while it's quiet?"

"Sure." I smiled. I'd be glad for a break from fake smiling.

The two black bags were heavy, and as I struggled through the back door, I was surprised to feel a hand taking one of them from me. I turned to see who it was, but they'd ducked the other way. I heard the heavy, self-locking back door bang shut after me.

"Shit," I cursed, and a familiar voice tutted.

"Language, Mary."

I froze in position; suddenly I was scared, really scared.

“Pete!” I exclaimed, over brightly, “What are you doing here?”

“I’m here for you, Mary.” There was something in the phrasing of that sentence that chilled me to the core. The snow fluttering around my face was warm and comforting in comparison.

“Pete...” I began, but I didn’t get to finish as a hard slap to my cheek knocked me sideward and the bin bag dropped from my hand.

“HELP!” I screamed and he just laughed.

“They can’t hear you, you know.” He was right. It was a deep alleyway and I could hear the Christmas music blasting out of the café even here. No one was going to hear me over that.

“What do you want?” I backed up until I felt the crunch of snow and the hard unforgiving brick beneath it.

“You Mary, I want you. I want all you promised to me.”

“I never promised you anything.” I could only see his body through the swirling snow. I was glad I couldn’t see his face properly, because I knew what would be etched in his face and I knew I wouldn’t like it.

I tried to inch slowly down the wall. It was a long way to the street, but with the snow and Pete’s madness, I thought I might just have made it.

An arm slammed down on the far side of me and suddenly Pete loomed, his face directly before mine.

“You’re not running away from me this time, bitch.” He spat the last word and the greasy spittle landed on my cheek. I could smell stale alcohol on his breath.

“You promised me a whole lot, you whore,” he whispered and pressed against me. I was frozen with fear as I felt the obvious bulge in his pants digging into me.

“It wasn’t real, Pete,” I whimpered, trying to talk sense into him. A man in his right mind wouldn’t attack a woman like this. I hoped there was some sanity somewhere in him, behind those stark, wild eyes.

“No, it wasn’t Mary, I couldn’t touch you or feel you but I fucked you.” He pushed his crotch harder against me and I tried to press back into the hard wall itself to escape from him. “And I

want to fuck you and feel you even though you're a shallow bitch, dumping me 'cos you don't like the way I look."

"You lied to me," I yelled and lifted my knee and hit him hard in the groin. His hands instinctively grabbed for his private parts and I launched myself sideways. I ripped my overall on the prickly wall and scraped the skin beneath. Once I had gotten past him, I turned and ran. I screamed and ran harder. I could just see the street through the heavy flurry of snow and I screamed and screamed at the top of my voice but then I felt a weight thrown at my back and I fell heavily to the ground. I hit my knees, elbows and chin as I collapsed to the ground. I tried to scramble up and flipped over to my side, but he pushed me onto my back.

"Shut the fuck up, bitch. Shut the fuck up!" He shoved a dirty hand into my mouth and I bit it. His other hand gripped my breast and squeezed, squeezed so hard I yelped in pain.

"Shut the fuck up or I'll twist yer titty right off, whore." I stopped yelling. I was scared, deeply scared. I'd done everything in my power to get away from this psycho but it hadn't been anywhere near enough.

"Now you are mine. I'm going to stuff you full of my cock, bitch. Yeah, I'm going to have what you promised me, slut. You're mine, now."

Suddenly the weight lifted off me. The pressure on my boob was released.

"No, she's mine." I thought I was hallucinating, because it sounded like Will's voice.

"Who the fuck are you?" Pete's voice had changed. It was whimpering and puny. I sat up and peered into the blizzard. I could see the back of a tall figure. It had a smaller figure by the collar backed up against the wall.

"I'm her boyfriend." And I heard the soft, harsh smacking thud of fist hitting cheek.

"Mary, just stay there." It *was* Will. I couldn't believe it, but it really was Will. I heard him drag the cursing Pete towards the café and I sat in the wet, cold snow and tried to work out what was going on.

I was dreaming, I was convinced of it. It was a nightmare, because my breast throbbed painfully and my knees and back were streaked with thin scratches of agony. I was shaking and

shivering because of the snow piling up around me. It was turning me into some kind of live snowman. Even in my addled mind, I knew I couldn't let that happen, I knew I had move. But my legs were like jelly and I couldn't get them to take my weight.

"Whoa, there." It was that voice, that wonderful, American voice that sounded so much like Will's. "I've got you." He slipped his head under my shoulder as one of his strong arms wrapped around my waist and when he straightened, he provided himself as a prop for me to clamber up.

"Will?" I mumbled, dazed, confused and unbelieving.

"Yes, Mary it's me."

His lips landed on mine and I knew it was him as the kiss, that soft, warm, sensuous kiss, enveloped me.

"Oh Will, Will... you're here."

I sobbed. My body shook with tears of joy.

"I'm here Mary, I'm here. I couldn't leave you, Mary. I love you. I had to come back."

He was crying as hard as I was and between the words, he kissed me, stroked me and hugged me tight. He felt the rips in my uniform and he pulled back.

"Got to get you inside, Mary. What's that bastard done to you?"

"I'm okay." I smiled. It was the first genuine smile to cross my face in days. "I'm okay now that you're here."

"I'm okay now that I'm here, too," he replied, wrapping an arm around my waist and helping me to hobble back into the café.

Chapter Seventeen

Even as I sat in the living room, snuggled into Will's body, I couldn't really believe it. The afternoon had passed in a haze. Rita plied me with hot tea whilst we waited for a police car to take away the cursing Pete, who was being held down by two of our bricky customers. They also called an ambulance for me. I kept protesting that I didn't need it, but no one listened. They patched me up, took photos for evidence and I was interviewed by a sympathetic female police officer. Pete needed to be put behind bars and I didn't mind reliving the whole experience as much as I might, because Will was holding my hand through the whole thing.

"Are you alright?" asked Will for the millionth time.

"Yes, I am." I smiled and kissed his cheek. "You're here."

We hugged, body to body, lip to lip.

"Why are you here?" I asked as our lips parted.

"Because I was miserable without you," he replied, sighing, and ran his fingers through his hair.

"I got on that plane and my heart broke. I couldn't concentrate on anything and it continued when I got home. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat and I cried far more than I'd admit to anyone. I missed you."

"I missed you, too." I squeezed him, a tear in the corner of my eye.

"And as I thought about you, what you said at the airport and what we'd shared, I knew I had to come back here. I had to come back and be with you, because you're my happiness, Mary. You're my life."

The tear slipped down my cheek and he rubbed it away with his thumb and gently cupped my bruised cheek in his hand.

"So, I booked a plane and I came back. I came back here to ask you something."

He slipped to one knee on the floor before me and dug around in his pockets. He drew out a small, black velvet box. My heart swelled and the tears flowed freely down my cheek.

“Mary, will you marry me?”

“Yes,” I gasped out, before he’d properly finished his sentence. “Yes, yes, yes.”

He slipped the ring on my finger, I barely noticed what it looked like. I knew it was perfect, because he chose it. He kissed me, kissed me long, hard and passionately. I felt his love washing over me like a cool, refreshing Atlantic wave.

“But your business,” I exclaimed as we broke apart for air.

“All sorted. My partner will take over things back in the US and I’ll concentrate on the UK expansion.”

“Really, you don’t mind?” I looked down at him. He was still on his knees before me, and I drank in the way he looked. His eyes told me he hadn’t slept since he left for America those few year-long days ago. His hair was unruly and his skin was incredibly pale, but there was a glow. It lit up his eyes and warmed his skin. It was purely his love for me.

“Home is here,” he said and placed his hand over my heart, “as long as I’m with you, I’m happy.”

I searched his eyes. He was telling the truth. I pressed a kiss to his forehead and winced as the scratches on my back stretched.

“Take it easy, darlin’.” He pressed me back into the sofa, and sat next to me, cradling my right hand and tweaking the shining ring it bore. “Mary, I’m so glad you said yes.” He sighed and I smiled.

“What else could I say? I love you.”

“I love you, too. And Mary, that scares me.” Before I could say anything he continued, “I’m not good with emotions, I never have been. I have a whole list of issues with intimacy and trust. I’m a mess, Mary, a real mess.” I placed my other hand over his and squeezed. He looked up into my eyes and sighed.

“I’m going to say the wrong thing sometimes, or I’m not going to say something I should. I’m going to get moody. I’ll be grumpy and self absorbed. I’m going to work too hard, muddle my priorities and I’m going to hurt you, Mary. Oh, that terrifies me because...because I just want to cherish you. I want to be

perfect for you. I want to love you and hold you and support you. I want to be the perfect boyfriend, the perfect husband but I'm so, so scared I'm going to let you down."

I tipped his chin up with my finger and then cupped his face in my hand.

"Will, no one is perfect. I'll do all those things, too. I'll get absorbed in a book and I'll leave dishes in the sink and I'll forget to do the shopping. I'll be moody, I'll be grumpy, and I'll be snappy sometimes. I'll say things wrong, I'll not say things I should. I'll make you angry, I'll make you sad and, Will, I'm so sorry about that." I stroked his face with my thumb and smiled. "But most of the time I'll be ecstatically happy, I'll be in love and it will be beautiful. Don't worry, I don't expect perfection because I can't give it. We'll be together and that is all that matters, ever."

I felt a trickle of water slide down the curve of my palm and I leant in and kissed his lips, the perfect exclamation mark to what I'd just said.

"Geez, I'm turning into a pussy." He sniffed and wiped a hand over his eye.

"Lack of sleep, excitement and love does make you emotional." I smiled.

"Well, let's go to bed then, fiancée."

"Okay, fiancé, lead the way."

Chapter Eighteen

“You’ve outdone yourself, Lilly,” Will took my mother’s hand and kissed it. “This looks so delicious.” Mum went red and simpered.

“Oh, you’re too kind, Will. It’s lovely to have you here to enjoy it.”

I knew I wasn’t going to have to worry about Mum not being thrilled with my choice in husband. We pulled the gaudy Christmas cracker and strewed tiny fake moustaches and mini puzzles over the table and in our groaning plates, piled up with Christmas Turkey and all the trimmings.

“Very handsome.” I smiled at Will as he placed his red, paper hat on his head at a jaunty angle.

“Thank you, my dear. You look lovely in neon pink, too.”

We dug in to the big Christmas dinner. I mean, it could feed a family of four for a week, it was that big. And we still had my Christmas cake to manage for dessert.

“I’ve just thought,” Mum said, “Won’t your family be missing you, being over here for Christmas?”

“I don’t have a family now, Lilly. Mom died when I was a little boy and my dad passed away two years ago.”

Mum went white, “Oh, I am so...”

“Don’t apologise, Lilly, you didn’t know and I’ve got a new family now. My wife to be,” he smiled at me, “you and George and any little ones we might have in the future.”

“Hang on,” Dad gathered his wits first. Mums jaw was still hanging down somewhere around tablecloth level. “Are you saying you’re going to marry my daughter?”

“Yes, sir. Mary has agreed to become my wife.” He lifted my hand and showed off the ring.

“Oh Will, oh Mary, what a Christmas present!” Mum flustered, leaping to her feet and wrapping Will in a bear hug.

She grabbed my hand and stared at the ring. "Oh Mary, that's a diamond and a half. I'm so excited." She laughed. It was a beautiful moment and she was so very happy.

"Congratulations." Dad said, smiling. "You've got a good'un here, Will."

I blushed and Will pulled himself from Mum's embrace. "I know, George. I know."

* * * *

"Well, I've already had my present." Mum beamed as she passed me a box wrapped in red paper, "now it's time for you to open yours."

Mine was not a surprise, a cookbook I wanted and a book voucher. I held back a guffaw as Will opened his gift, one of Mum's jumpers in an, erm, attractive sludge-green colour. Ever the gentleman, Will shrugged himself in to it.

"It's beautiful, Lilly. Thank you."

"My pleasure, Will. You make it look really good."

He does, actually. I think he'd make anything look good. Dad was chuffed with his own jumper, bright red with a gaudy and somewhat twisted Manchester United shield across the middle. I was just pleased that Mum hadn't had time to knit me anything.

"Here's something for you." I passed a small envelope over to Will.

He grinned and ripped it open, to find a piece of paper with a website URL on it.

"It's our story." I smiled. "I kept getting so distracted from my historical story by you that I decided to write a book about us. I recently got it accepted by a publisher, and there is the first copy of it."

"Why, thank you." Will beamed and pressed a kiss to my cheek as my Mum swooned in the background. "I can't wait to read it. Now for your present."

"My present? I thought I already had it?" I stuck out my hand and waved my beautiful ring.

"Oh no, I've got something here for you."

He passed me a small, black velvet box. I clicked it open and gasped as I saw the most beautiful gold pendant inside.

Dangling off the gold chain was a gorgeous red rose, sparkling, with rubies on its petals and emeralds along its stem.

“It’s beautiful,” I gasped and lifted it out to show Mum.

“It was my mom’s. I’ve had it since I was a little boy. I remember her wearing it at Christmas and special occasions.”

“Oh, Will.” My eyes teared up as he slipped the chain round my neck. This was far more than an exquisite piece of jewellery. It was a part of his life.

“It looks so good on you.” Will sounded equally as choked up as we hugged and kissed ‘til Dad cleared his throat. We parted, blushing.

“Young love, George. Ain’t it grand?”

“Yeah, grand.” Dad smiled. “Old love ain’t ‘alf bad either, Lil’.”

As we laughed, my heart swelled with happiness. Could I get a more perfect Christmas? I guess only time would tell.

Chapter Nineteen

"I can't believe you told my parents like that." I said as I walked over to the bed. My red nightgown swished around my curves.

"Oh, they were going to work it out eventually. This," he picked up my hand, "is a bit of a giveaway. Anyway, I can't believe you hadn't told them already." He pulled on my arm, making me roll onto my front with a shriek. "I think that deserves a spanking."

"No, no, no." I gasped as he flicked up my gown and bared my buttocks to his sight.

"Yes, yes, yes." He slapped his hand down with each word and I squirmed. Not too much though. I didn't want to actually get away, but I wanted to play along. "You're a naughty, naughty girl." The hot blows continued to rain down as I wiggled, "And I'm going to have to discipline you a lot, I can tell."

His fingers slipped down between my buttocks and slid in between my slick lips. Teasingly he pressed a finger partially inside my wet pussy. I pushed back and he pulled away.

"Oh no, young lady, you're not getting away that easily." He slapped my arse again and I hissed from the sting and the frustration.

"You are a seriously naughty girl," Will sighed, flipping me over, "what am I going to do with you?"

"Erm, may I make a suggestion, sir?" I looked up at him as his arms held him above me, his body between my thighs.

"Certainly," he nodded.

"Fuck me, sir, please?"

"Hmm, that actually sounds like a really good suggestion." He smiled down at me with a wicked glint to his eye, "but first, you've got to show me how much you want me to fuck you."

I spread my thighs and pushed my hips up so that I grazed his hard member with my wet slit. I mewled my frustration as he sat back on his heels. I shifted my body away from him, sat up and rolled onto my stomach. I wiggled forward 'til my face was between his thighs. My tongue reached out and lapped at the hardened heat of his balls.

"Oh yeah, that's it." He pulled his cock back, stretching it and pulling his balls up so I could insinuate my tongue beneath them. I loved how they wrinkled and crinkled under my licks and hardened in anticipation of what was to come.

I pouted as he moved back again and stepped off onto the floor. He beckoned me forward with an arrogant flick of his fingers. I slithered off the bed and onto my knees before him. He was magnificent, and he was soon to be my husband. I smiled with joy as I looked up and our eyes met.

"I love you," I whispered, then added, "sir," as an afterthought. I leaned in and lapped from his balls onto his shaft, licking right up to the very tip of him. I tasted his eagerness as I pressed tight-lipped kisses across him.

"I love you too, oh so much." He sighed with pleasure as I opened my lips and pushed forward, allowing his cock to enter my mouth. Slowly I inched down his shaft, then retreated to the tip again. I established a rhythm to the cadence of his moans and held on to his tensed thighs for support. As my tongue writhed over his hardened flesh, he yelled, "Stop!" I gradually pulled back, anointing the tip of him with a kiss.

"I need to be inside you, now." Our eyes met and I stood up, then stepped back until I reached the bed. I kept our gazes locked as I shimmied back on the bed. I lay my head on a pillow as I stretched, then opened my legs wide and beckoned Will towards me.

He was between my thighs in a split-second. He locked his cock into position at the opening of my slick, soaked cunt.

"So beautiful," he hissed, his dark eyes shining as he pressed into me and I yelped in pleasure. His cock stretched me and filled me, satisfying me momentarily as I felt the man I love joining with me. But we were not satisfied just to be joined. I bumped my hips up as he pulled back and dragged his cock

across my sensitive spots. He made me shudder and shake with desire.

“Fuck,” he hissed as I clenched around him. Mini-orgasms eased my pussy with pleasure, “I’m the luckiest guy alive to have you.”

I reached up with my hand and cradled his face in my fingers. I locked my gaze with his as my body shook in ecstasy. “I’m lucky, too, Oh, so, lucky.” His thrusts punctuated my sentence as his lips savagely pressed down and demanded I open my lips to allow his probing tongue entrance. He pummelled my mouth into complete surrender. His tongue mimicked his cock and my whole body felt as if it had been invaded by him.

He lifted up, resting on his heels and letting me gasp in the lungful of air I needed. He watched my breasts bounce and watched his cock slide into me.

“Touch yourself,” he commanded, his voice thick with lust. I did not hesitate. I slid my hand down and over my stomach and sought out the wet nub between my lips. I cried out in pleasure as I found it and stroked it lightly. His cock pulled from me. I felt empty. As if he knew my disappointment, he whispered.

“I want to see you come, Mary. I want to watch you finger yourself to orgasm and I want to come all over that hot cunt. I want to bathe your pulsing pussy with my seed, splash over your fingers as you come for me.”

His words filled me, and my fingers danced quickly over my clit and built up the internal pressure.

“Yes, that’s it,” he continued in a low, rumbling whisper, “Rub that clit, yeah, make that naughty pussy explode for me. I’m so close, I’m going to shoot all over you, Mary.” The urgency in his voice was the catalyst my body needed to let go, to release the pleasure pressure that had built up in my pussy.

“I’m coming for you,” I gasped as my body was overtaken by the waves of bliss radiating from my rubbing fingers.

“Oh yes, come for me,” He cried and I felt his unctuous fluids spit onto my fingers, a hot splash landing on my exposed pearl and extending my orgasm. His release aided mine and I yelled his name over and over until my orgasm subsided. We slipped under the sheets together and into a night of peaceful slumber wrapped in each others arms.

Chapter Twenty

“That was a beautiful ceremony.” Mum smiled as she kissed my cheeks, “You look so beautiful in that dress and so happy.” She sniffed, a tear dripping from the corner of her eye.

“I’m so proud of you,” My dad added and leant in to kiss my cheek.

“Thank you,” I beamed and took them both into a big bear hug.

“Oh, be careful,” Mum hissed, “you don’t want to crush that beautiful dress.”

I laughed and shook my head. My Mum would never stop fussing.

“Hello, beautiful wife.” A hand slipped around my waist.

“Hello, handsome husband,” I replied. Our lips met, formally recognized as being joined together forever, along with the rest of our bodies, of course. I felt like a princess, dressed in a traditional white dress with my black-suited prince beside me. The wedding ceremony was simple but glorious. I spent the majority of it staring into his eyes. I just couldn’t wait for the reception to be over, I wanted to rip Will out of his suit and fulfill one of my most pleasant wifely duties.

We genteelly spun around the dance floor. I followed him and tried not to step on his toes—I’ve never been much of a dancer. He didn’t seem to mind, though, and I enjoyed being pressed so close to his body.

“I don’t think I can dance a step more,” I whispered in his ear as one song finished and another started up.

“Want to skip out, wifey? I’m sure we’re allowed and I don’t think anyone would miss us.”

I looked around and decided he was probably right. People were eating, laughing, dancing and paying not a blind bit of notice to my new husband and me.

“Come on, then, let’s go,” I hissed, but Will put his hand on my shoulder and stopped me.

“We’ll have to sneak out individually, or we’ll get caught. You first, I’ll meet you at the taxi.”

“What taxi?” I asked, confused.

“The one outside that I ordered for us.”

“Oh, you think of everything. No wonder I married you.” I kissed his cheek and smiled with pure joy. “Okay, I’ll disappear off, pretend I’m going to the loo and sneak out.”

“Then I’ll come to find you.” He kissed me. His lips were hot with promise and I walked over to the door, heart thudding, praying, hoping beyond hope that no one would stop me. I breathed a sigh of relief as the cool night air caressed my shoulders.

I sighed a breath of ecstasy half an hour later, as Will unzipped my dress and admired my curves.

“Beautiful,” he gasped and ran a gentle hand over them, “I’m so lucky.”

“I’m the lucky one,” I butted in, pulling off his tie and working on his shirt buttons. “I still can’t believe this is all real. You were my fantasy, my dream, yet here you are.”

I pulled open his shirt and ran my hands over his chest as our lips met and we exclaimed about our luck silently, expressing ourselves in kisses and soft moans. I unbuttoned his trousers, pulled down the zip and let them fall to the floor.

Then it was his turn, and he made quick work of my bra, though I felt his fingers shuddering as he slipped the light, creamy bra from my shoulders. He pulled down my knickers with reverence and knelt at my feet looking up. I flushed. I still felt a little self-conscious about my stomach and I wrapped my arms across it.

“No, no.” His hands came out and grabbed my wrists, then pulled them apart and down to my side. “You’re beautiful, my wife. Don’t hide from me.”

He rose from his knees and pressed his hard edges into my soft curves. I melted into him, aware of my body only as a sexual instrument. I rubbed my breasts against his chest as he captured my mouth with a kiss. It was a kiss full of hard lust and gentle love, a kiss that burnt into my lips as my hands grasped at his

buttocks and pressed his hard-on into my stomach with more force. We tangled together and fell onto the bed. I gasped as his hard body slammed down on top of me. He insinuated himself between my thighs as I wiggled up the bed. I could feel his naked hardness as it pressed urgently against my wet slit. I didn't need any foreplay; I'd had that all day with my body teased by chiffon and silk and my mind focused on the wedding night.

"Fuck me," I begged as he nibbled on my neck.

"Oh, I will," he promised, his eyes meeting mine. "I've got something special for you tonight, though." He climbed to his knees and slipped out from between my thighs.

"Close your eyes," he insisted, and I did so, wondering what my surprise would be. His hands touched my head and I realised I was being blindfolded.

"That is so you won't be tempted to peek," he said and then a cold liquid splashed on my skin. It made me wiggle and gasp. His warm hands followed and rubbed the cold oil into my skin, warming it and arousing me in one go. His hands stroked over my shoulders and chest and lingered around my breasts. They plucked at my nipples before continuing lower to skim over my stomach and, much to my consternation, slipped straight onto my thighs and down to my toes.

"Roll over, baby," he asked and I complied. Once again the drips of cold oil came, tickling my back and buttocks. Then his strong hands warmed it and smoothed it into my body, letting out a heady, citrus smell that seemed to only add to my sexual frustration. I sighed in relief as his hands caressed my bottom and I pressed up onto my knees. I exposed myself shamelessly to him. I needed to be filled.

"Fuck," he exclaimed and ran his finger down the cleft of my arse and down to my open pussy. I hissed with pleasure as his fingertip brushed my clit but keened with disappointment as its gentle touch was removed all too soon. I felt cold oil pouring down between my buttocks and I shivered with the shock. My pussy was aroused by the sudden cool stream and I wondered what he was doing. I was wet enough already. Surely, I didn't need any more lubrication.

I understood what he was doing as his finger pressed the oil into my puckered hole and I tensed up.

“Relax, baby,” he cooed gently into my ear, “I’m not going to hurt you, not at all. I’ve got a treat for you. For you, my wife.”

I relaxed as his fingers entered me. A jolt of arousal zinged to my brain and it totally surprised me. He planned to fuck my arse, but I thought I might like it. His finger fucking me there felt good; all the better as his other hand was on my cunt, tickling my clit. Two fingers inside stretched me, but he continued to play with my wet slit. I became accustomed to his rhythm and actually moaned when he pulled his fingers from inside me with a pop.

Both hands left my body. I felt so exposed with my rump in the air.

“What a sight,” he whistled. His weight fell fully on to the bed behind me and I knew he was going to fuck me. I tensed up. I was scared that if he fucked my arse it might hurt.

“Don’t worry.” His hand stroked down my back. “I’m not going to fuck you here,” he touched my arsehole, “not tonight anyway. Relax baby, and this will feel so good. I promise.”

“Okay.” I sighed in relief, then gasped as I felt something cold pressing against my anus. It pressed deeper and its cold hardness slipped inside me; the oil and the stretching made its journey into me a smooth one. I groaned as it popped inside. I felt full, so full but empty all at the same time.

“That looks so good.” Will whispered as he leant back from me and peeled my buttocks apart. “Mary, you’re so fucking hot. Roll over baby.”

I rolled over, the plastic inside me bumping and juggling around. I whimpered as a new feeling overtook me, but I enjoyed the hardness inside my butt. It was not enough, though and I spread my legs in silent supplication. I needed Will’s cock to fill me, to fuck me.

He was between my thighs and hanging over me. I saw that for myself when he pushed up my blindfold and I blinked into the soft light. His lips descended towards me and pressed down on mine.

“I need to look into the eyes of my wife.” He smiled and pressed his pelvis into mine. His cock slipped into me without effort.

“Oh, Will.” I clutched at his arm as his cock in my cunt rubbed through to the plastic phallus in my arse.

“How does it feel?” he asked, holding still inside me.

“Strange, but so good. I feel so dirty having something stuck up my bum. It’s so deliciously naughty.”

Will pulled his cock almost out of me, then slid it back in slowly. I bucked beneath him. The cocks inside me drove me insane.

“I knew you’d love this.” Will panted as his thrusts became wilder. He was assured that I was enjoying this, as I squealed and squeaked with delight at each thrust.

“Yes,” I yelped, “yes, Will. I love it. Fuck me, I feel so full, like I’m going to burst.”

As he pumped harder and faster, as my legs wrapped around his hips and my body lifted up to welcome all of him in to me, I did burst. My orgasm broke through the barrier and shook me from head to toe as he roared out my name. He flooded my insides with his come.

“I love you,” I sighed happily, his head rested on my breast as his cock slipped from inside me.

“I love you too, darlin’. I love you so damn much.” He pressed his lips to mine and I luxuriated in the radiance of his love. I was content knowing that I was in the arms of my soul mate.

Epilogue

Hello, readers. I am now eighty years of age and have decided to add a little extra to my story. Will and I have been married for forty-five years and we're still as in love as we were back then. I may have bad knees and he may be as deaf as a doorpost, but we are content with our lot in this world.

Two years after we married, our first child Amy was born. She was followed a few years later by her brother, Paul. They have families of their own now and we have three grandchildren and one little great-granddaughter. They are our constant delight.

It feels like I met Will only yesterday. I can still remember how I felt when we first met on that cold day in Manchester. I remember fondly our wedding day and our wedding night. I still feel like the luckiest woman in the world to have him. Oh yes, we've had our ups and downs. We knew we would, but love took us over each bump in the road, strengthening us as we learnt to live together. The bottom line has always been that we could not live without the other. Our lives are intrinsically entwined together, like our hearts.

So, dear readers, I hope you have enjoyed this tale of love. I have enjoyed living it, so very much. Now go, go out and live your life. Grab your opportunities and squeeze your loved ones tight. Don't waste a single day and then you'll be able to look back on life from a grand old age and regret not one moment of it. Thank you, and bless you all.

About the Author

Victoria Blisse is a mother, wife, Christian, Manchester United fan and erotica writer. She is equally at home behind a laptop or a cooker and she loves to create stories, poems, cakes and biscuits that make people happy. She was born near Manchester, England and her northern English quirkiness shows through in all of her stories. Passion, love and laughter fill her works, just as they fill her busy life. If you want to know more about Victoria and her books please check out her website at <http://www.victoriablisse.co.uk> Victoria loves to make new friends, so if you're on Myspace pop over and say hello: <http://www.myspace.com/victoriablisse> Or send an email to her at Victoria@victoriablisse.co.uk ..