



Anne Brooke



**The
Delaneys
And Me**



THE DELANEYS AND ME

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The driver said something I couldn't hear, and Mark turned in the front seat towards us. I stared at him, all the time sucking Johnny's finger. Another one joined it, and I sucked on that one, too. Mark's lips opened slightly. After a few moments, Johnny removed his fingers and began trailing them down my neck, leaving a line of saliva dampening my skin. I stretched my head up to give him easier access. When he came to my top button, he began to undo it.

"Leave him," Mark said suddenly, his voice rough. "We'll have time enough later, if we want to."

At once, Johnny obeyed and shifted back to his seat. I sat there, panting a little.

"Yeah, Mr. Delaney," I whispered, slow and soft. "You can have anything you want from me for as long as you want it. Do whatever you want to my body. How does that sound?"

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THE DELANEYS AND ME

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THE DELANEYS AND ME
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It's a truth universally acknowledged, particularly in this city, that you don't mess with the Delaney twins. Ever. If you know what's good for you. I, however, am not known for my caution under duress and this, therefore, is the story of how I did the opposite.

The Delaneys lived on the shady side of town. I don't mean where the majority of the trees are. They're not really park people. No, I mean on the shady side of the law. Here, if you wanted a dodgy deal, a hot gun or dirty money, the Delaneys were your first port of call. If you wanted to give an enemy a serious fright or get overdue money paid to you, the Delaneys were the people you see. Hell, if you even wanted to start a new, above-board business, you'd have to check with them first. Unless you wanted your

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windows smashed on your first week of trading and your potential customers never to show up.

They were bad enemies to have, but loyal friends. Which meant that, at the end of one particular sultry August night, when their beloved cousin Brandon dumped me publicly and in no uncertain terms, and when I'd expressed my opinion equally publicly and in terms just as committed, I knew I was going to be in a damn sight of trouble.

Not that the Delaneys had any kind of reputation for gay-bashing at all. No, quite the opposite, in fact. But when I'd poured a nearly full bottle of Dom Perignon from the next table over bloody Brandon's head and told him—and the whole of Luigi's restaurant—I was going straight to the police with what I knew or guessed at about his more dubious activities, and see him buggered good and proper, even I, in my understandable rage, could tell my prospects weren't good.

All the next day therefore, I was waiting. Not that I wasn't still angry because I was. I thought Brandon and I had had something going. We'd been screwing for ten months, and serious about it for seven of those months. Which was pretty long-term by my standards. Especially as my parents had been tight-lipped about me seeing him at all because of the Delaney connection. The gay aspects of it didn't worry them; my elder sister already had the grandchildren, thank God. But they'd been worried about me hobnobbing with *dubious* people, as they so succinctly put it. Naturally, at the time, I'd ignored their words of wisdom, but now, after realizing just quite what a little two-timing, lying *shit* Brandon actually was, I wished I'd paid more attention.

I wished I didn't have quite so much of a temper when wronged, too, but I couldn't change what I'd done. So the day after

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I'd doused Brandon with the most expensive bottle of bubbly I could lay my hands on, I went to work. Like any other day. I worked in an art gallery, mainly number crunching and sending out boxes and boxes of marketing bumph, not to mention helping to hang pictures and handing out wine glasses at numerous functions. The gallery owner—a no-nonsense, elegant woman in her fifties called Melissa—knew her stuff and knew how to sweet-talk people into doing exactly what she wanted, too. We were all terrified of her. When Melissa walked in, you straightened your back and doubled your efforts. And then some. It was through her that I'd met Brandon—she and the Delaney twins seemed to have some kind of mutual understanding, and they'd never bothered us. Now I wished she hadn't been quite so pally with the Delaneys after all.

So, I spent all morning packing boxes and calming down and then all afternoon worrying and glancing at the door every time it opened. Retribution wouldn't happen here, of course. I wasn't stupid. Melissa would never stomach it. Besides, the Delaneys weren't old-time gangsters. Then again, neither was anyone foolish enough to mess with them. Even though I'd never go to the police and didn't know anything anyway, I'd said too much—and in public—for them to let it go. I briefly toyed with the idea of begging my boss for help and standing stark naked in the middle of Luigi's with a huge sign on me reading: *Please forgive me. I'm sorry. I'll never do it again.* Bearing in mind the fact I'd never be allowed back in to the scene of the crime anyway, that one was probably a no-hoper.

With all this going through my head, I was pleased I was the only one in to work today. I wasn't sure how I'd have coped with conversation of any sort. Plus being at work didn't give me much of a chance to miss bloody Brandon too much, the tosser.

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Six P.M. came way, way too quickly, and when I'd done all I could to elongate the time before my inevitable kicking—God, I hoped whoever was tasked with my punishment wouldn't be too mean and I wouldn't be in the hospital too long—I finally locked up and started on the ten-minute walk for home. I was never any good with the concept of pain.

I clocked the bloke following me almost at once. Medium height, dark-haired and well-built, and no doubt with muscles like rocks, which he was soon going to put to good use.

Oh, God, this is it then, I thought. Prepare for the inevitable.

Every step of the way I fully expected he was going to leap on me, drag me into some dark corner of the city streets and beat the life out of me. Though I hoped he might leave me with the odd breath. Just to keep going.

It didn't happen like that. Strangely. Still, he was probably just stretching out the tension until I was so terrified *I'd* be helping *him* to beat me up, but to be honest it was doing my head in, and by the time I got to the front door of my block of flats, I was shaking like Jackson Pollock after one whisky too many.

It was then that a strong hand descended onto my shoulder and swung me round.

"Okay, okay," I began to say, or rather stammer. "It's—it's all my fault and I'm sorry. I'll take my punishment, whatever way you want to dole it out. But, please, I..."

But it wasn't the man who'd been following me, and I shut up at once. And swallowed. "Oh. Where's..."

"He's not here right now, Liam," the Delaney twin said. "It's just you, me, and my brother."

I blinked. A moment later and the mirror image of the man in front of me loomed up from the shadows near the hedge. Two tall,

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fair-haired and grim-looking men faced me down. I had no idea which was which—I'd never been able to tell. Not that it mattered, not now.

"Let's not forget this," said the other twin. He put his hand into the pocket of his long dark coat and drew out something metallic. For a wild and very stupid moment, I thought it was a novelty cigarette case before sanity kicked in and I knew exactly what it was.

Oh, God—a gun. That was all I needed. I began to shake then in truth. If I could have found the words I would have begged, but my mouth was dry and I couldn't think straight. There I was, trapped like a rabbit in the spotlight and unable to run, unable even to move. All I could think of was the gun.

Which right now was jammed against my face, cold and hard and terrible. I wanted to fall to my knees, but didn't dare move. Apart from the shaking. There was no way I could control it. At last I found my voice.

"Please, Mr. Delaney, please..." I whimpered, trying to move my mouth as little as possible. Would the gun go off if I spoke too much? I had no idea. I'd never even seen a gun this close. Let alone felt it. Brandon had never carried one. He'd carried a lot of other shit, but never a gun.

The first twin swore. "For fuck's sake, stop bloody shaking like a girl, would you? And keep your mouth shut. I can't hear myself think."

I obeyed at once. I shut my mouth and tried to bring the trembling under control, but complying with his last command was harder. I hoped he realized I was making the effort.

As I waited for whatever the hell was going to happen next, with the gun still pressing into my cheek, the first twin began to

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pace up and down. Two steps right and two steps left. The pathway wasn't long. I hoped that wouldn't upset him even more.

"All right, the situation is this, Liam," he said, as my eyes followed him back and forth, back and forth. "You've fucked up, big time, and neither my brother nor I take kindly to what you've done. We're not vindictive people—oh, no, not at all—and we've been pleased to have you with us for a while. Almost a member of the family, you've been. It's been good to see my cousin so happy. Family can be difficult, you know?"

This seemed to demand an answer, so I nodded. As carefully as possible. Bearing in mind the gun. My small gesture seemed to satisfy him. Thank God.

"Yes," he continued, "family is hugely important. We have to support them, no matter what idiocy they come up with. Now, we're the first to admit young Brandon's never been the smoothest bullet in the barrel, but he's one of us. So, when someone humiliates him in a public place, we just can't let them get away with it. No matter what our private thoughts may be. We've got our reputations to uphold and a business to run. You fucked up, Liam, and you have to take what's coming to you. Do you see?"

I nodded again. This time it wasn't enough, as Twin One grabbed me by the chin and shook me. "What's the matter? Something happened to your tongue?"

"N-no, Mr. Delaney," I managed. "And y-yes, I do see. I fucked up and I need to take what's coming. But, please, I'm sorry, I'm really sorry, believe me."

He stopped shaking me and smiled. Neither was particularly reassuring.

"Too late, my friend," he said, and this time his voice was a whisper, reeling me in. "Because you still need to learn what you

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can and can't do when it comes to the Delaney twins. Now, because you've somehow managed to make Brandon happy for a while—longer than anyone else ever has with the mean bastard, I have to admit—my brother and I are going to give you a choice of punishment. What do you say?"

He let me go and cocked one enquiring eyebrow at me. I swallowed again.

"Very kind of you, Mr. Delaney," I said, the words tumbling from my lips as if they couldn't wait to get out. "That's very kind of you both because I don't deserve it. No way."

"You're right there," he replied. "So listen to me and listen well. Your choice is this: my brother tends to be a little trigger-happy and I'm willing to let him shoot your balls off right here and right now. Don't worry. He won't kill you. We're not unreasonable men, and the hospital's not far. You won't die, though I wouldn't bet on being a father any time soon. Not, of course, that you're the sort of man to be concerned with family life."

He paused, and I felt my prick shrivel away to nothing. I hoped it wasn't an omen. "Please, sir, Mr. Delaney, what's the other choice?"

My voice was a hell of a lot higher than I'd anticipated, though I was amazed I had the courage to speak at all. Quite honestly, I was desperate to move on, in case he decided to withdraw the alternative completely. I quite fancied keeping my balls intact for as long as possible.

"The other choice?" he said at last, just as I could feel Twin Two easing the gun downward, in a direction I didn't like to think about. "The other choice is you let the both of us fuck you. All night, for as long as we want to, in any way we want to. Until you don't even know who you are and you're as sore as a cold razor on

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a winter morning. What do you say to *that* then?"

I stared at him, my mind flying off in all directions, hardly able even to think. "Um. Thank you, Mr. Delaney. I'll take the sex. Please?"

God, no choice there—terrible injury or rape. No choice at all. What the hell were they playing at? I hadn't even realised they were gay. Maybe they weren't and this was just some weird mind game.

Twin Two spoke again. His voice was softer than his brother's was, but twice as threatening. "This isn't some game we're playing with you. We mean it."

"Yes, yes, Mr. Delaney. I know. I see you're totally serious. You've got the gun. Believe me. I'll take the sex, thank you."

A short pause followed, during which I wondered just what the hell I'd asked for and—worse—whether they might change their minds and shoot me anyway.

"Good," said Twin One at last. "You've decided quickly. In which case, we'll have time to eat."

"Eat?" I echoed him, my voice somewhere up on the high side of soprano.

"Yes, eat," he said, glaring at me. "As I keep telling you, we're not uncivilized men. Now give me the gun, Johnny, and we can all get going."

Twin Two frowned, like he'd been promised a treat and then had it taken away from him, but he handed the gun over anyway. It was obvious Twin One was the man in charge. I was glad Johnny didn't have the ability to kill me any more—not unless he could use his bare hands, of course. And I wouldn't have put it past either of them really. Twin One—who I suppose would have to be Mark—pocketed the gun with a sigh and strode off down the path.

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Still trembling, I followed him. Johnny brought up the rear. I thought we must have looked quite out-of-place, the Delaney twins and me, there in the evening sunshine walking with purpose down the city street. We passed a couple of people, one of whom I recognized as a neighbour, but nobody spoke to us. I couldn't blame them for that. Everyone knew about the Delaneys. I could only imagine my neighbour might already be preparing his statement to the police for when they found my body, but I could only hope it wouldn't come to that. If it did, I hoped he might find something nice to say about me.

At the end of the road, a black BMW drew up alongside us. When I glanced inside, I recognized the driver as the man who'd followed me from work. That would explain where he'd vanished to.

"Get in," Twin One—Mark—said as he opened the back door and gestured inside.

I did so. Johnny slid in next to me. The seats were cream leather, and I could smell polish, something sharp and lemon. Mark got in the front. He turned around, then took out the gun and laid it for a moment across the back of the seat. I stared at it.

"Look at me, Liam."

My gaze shot upward to his face.

"Are you listening?" he said.

Wordless, I nodded.

"Good. I want you to know that just because I have the gun and my brother doesn't, it doesn't mean I won't use it if I have to. What we're going to do is this: we're going to go to Luigi's, where you made such a scene last night. We're going to sit down, nice and polite, and then you're going to apologize to Luigi in the way in which I tell you to do. Afterwards, if Luigi accepts your apology

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and *if* my brother and I are happy with how you've performed, we'll eat. I mean, Johnny and I will eat, and you'll watch us. If you're very lucky, you might get the odd mouthful, but again it depends on whether you can behave properly.

"When we've finished, we'll go back to your flat. We'll go into your bedroom, and if we still want to fuck you, then we will. If we don't, or if we're not happy with you in any way, then Johnny will shoot you. Where we promised he would. Is that clear?"

"Yes, Mr. Delaney." My voice was barely above a whisper, but he seemed to understand it well enough.

He turned back around again and snapped a command. "Then let's drive."

Our journey progressed in silence for a while. Through the gap in the seats, I could see the gun where it now lay on Mark's lap. I tried not to look at it, instead staring at anything else I could focus on. The streetlights, other cars, even my own knees.

A cool touch on my cheek almost made me jump. When I glanced to my left, I could see Johnny had eased over the seat so he was right next to me. Somehow, I hadn't heard him. Now he was stroking my face, his finger moving across my skin. I tried to steady my breathing and, when he touched my mouth, I opened my lips and sucked his finger inside. His breath hitched.

The driver said something I couldn't hear, and Mark turned in the front seat towards us. I stared at him, all the time sucking Johnny's finger. Another one joined it, and I sucked on that one, too. Mark's lips opened slightly. After a few moments, Johnny removed his fingers and began trailing them down my neck, leaving a line of saliva dampening my skin. I stretched my head up to give him easier access. When he came to my top button, he began to undo it.

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“Leave him,” Mark said suddenly, his voice rough. “We’ll have time enough later, if we want to.”

At once, Johnny obeyed and shifted back to his seat. I sat there, panting a little.

“Yeah, Mr. Delaney,” I whispered, slow and soft. “You can have anything you want from me for as long as you want it. Do whatever you want to my body. How does that sound?”

In all honesty, I couldn’t believe I’d spoken at all, let alone had the balls to tease them. Hell, at least I still had my balls. This was something to be grateful for.

Johnny made a groaning noise and ran one hand through his hair, but Mark simply stared at me. I might have been wrong about this, but I thought he might not have known quite what to say. So I smiled at him and finished undoing my top button. I did it nice and slow, just how I’d spoken to them. Then another button and another, while he kept on looking. When I reached inside and pinched my left nipple, it was he who gasped. It broke the spell.

“Jesus, Liam, do yourself up, would you?” he said, spinning around until he faced the front again. “We’re nearly at the bloody restaurant. What are you, some kind of man-whore?”

“Maybe, when it comes to you, Mr. Delaney, maybe,” I whispered, but he made no reply. I wasn’t even sure he’d heard.

So I did myself up, like he said, and I was as dapper and neat as a suit on a Monday morning by the time we arrived at Luigi’s.

Luigi’s had always been a classy joint, until I brought its standards crashing down yesterday. Maybe it was why Brandon had chosen it as the place to dump me. He’d thought I wouldn’t make a fuss somewhere like that. *Tosser*. He’d have to rethink his assumption now. It was coming up to seven P.M. by the time we arrived, and so there weren’t many people eating yet; just a

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scattering of post-work groups and a couple of family outings. I hoped to God neither Delaney twin was planning to use the gun in here, not with children about. But they were a law unto themselves, so you never could tell. I thought I'd bloody well better make sure I was on my best behaviour so they didn't want to.

Mark pushed open the door and strode in like he owned the place. Probably he did, in a round-about way. I followed him, and Johnny was last. It seemed to be the order we'd taken up. Inside, the deep red carpet was a soothing base for the solid wooden tables and the soft glow of candles sending shadows and light flowing over the walls. The smell of warm bread with a faint hint of garlic filled the air. It was the perfect place to bring a date to, really, which was, I supposed, what we were. Kind of.

I didn't recognize the waiter who trotted over to the three of us, smiling, but I couldn't help my sideways glance to the table in the corner where I'd made my feelings about Brandon's announcement perfectly and utterly clear only a day ago. It all looked relatively unscathed. No wasted champagne and no sparkling slivers of glass.

As he got closer, the waiter's expression changed. I could almost follow his thought processes: *Oh God, it's the lunatic from last night. We can't let him in. Should we call the police? And then, just as quickly: But he's with the Delaney twins and we must be nice and sweet and offer appropriate discounts so we don't wake up with broken kneecaps and horses' heads on our pillows.* I'd always thought the Italians were surprisingly open people. Must be all the pasta.

By the time the wretched man arrived with us, his expression had been schooled into one of suitably bright hospitality. "Ah, Mr. Delaney and Mr. Delaney, how lovely to see you both tonight. And you have brought your...friend with you; how delightful. Can I

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offer you your usual table?"

"Naturally," Mark said, barely looking in his direction. "We expect nothing less."

"Yes, of course, of course," the waiter said hastily, as he grabbed a sheaf of menus and trotted off. "Please, come this way."

The table he led us to was already occupied by a young couple, but they, like the crockery and glasses, were quickly cleared away. In no time at all, the three of us were ensconced in a prime position from which we could see the whole restaurant and the doorway. And everyone could see us. Fresh napkins, glasses and cutlery were brought and a wine list given to Mark. He frowned at the elegant black writing on its background of cream and handed it back almost at once.

"The usual," he said. "You know what food and drink we want."

"Yes, sir, certainly, sir. And what about..." The waiter turned to me, and I could see he was sweating.

I smiled back at him and raised my shoulders in a slight shrug. God, I wished I *was* him.

"Our friend will have nothing. At the moment," Mark replied. Then, "Tell me, is Luigi here?"

"Yes, sir. Of course. Shall I get him for you?"

"Please do."

The waiter scuttled away, the relief of escape obvious from his rapidly disappearing back. A few moments later, a broad man with dark curly hair hurried over to our table. He wore a crisp suit and a rich red-and-gold waistcoat. It was the most stylish thing I'd seen in a long time. This had to be Luigi. I'd never met him, but his reputation as the best restaurateur in the city was second to none. Also he had a reputation as the best womanizer and party guy.

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When he saw the twins, he smiled, and shook hands with them both. The gesture looked genuine, but then again the waiter had warned him. The smile disappeared when he looked at me. It seemed to be becoming a habit, but not one I could blame anyone for.

Luigi didn't offer to shake my hand and looked like he might be about to say something. Mark got in there first.

"Luigi," he said, and the restaurant owner's eyes instantly snapped to him. "Everyone—all of our associates—are very sorry to hear about the terrible scene in your fine establishment yesterday. My brother and I like to think we're a close-knit community of business folk in this area and so we have taken it upon ourselves to bring the perpetrator along with us in order to offer you a heartfelt apology. Liam?"

At the sound of my name, I jumped. "Yes, Mr. Delaney. Of course. Please, Mr. Luigi, I—"

"On your knees, Liam."

"What?"

He sighed. Stroked his hand down past his pocket where he had hidden the gun. "Ah, Liam, Liam, I had such high hopes for you. I think to show Luigi here just how sorry you really are, any apology would be better coming from a position of humility, don't you?"

My mouth was, by now, extraordinarily dry, but I managed to squeeze out some suitable response. "Y-yes, of course, Mr. Delaney. No-no problem."

Then, before Mark could decide he wanted a closer look at the ruddy gun, I slid out of my seat and fell to my knees before the astonished restaurateur. For good measure, I clasped my hands together in front of me and looked him right in the eye. The room became suddenly very quiet.

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“Please, Mr. Luigi,” I said, licking my lips in order to find some moisture. “Please, I behaved appallingly rudely yesterday and I upset both your customers and your staff. I want to say how very sorry I am and how terrible I feel about it today. More terrible than you can possibly imagine. There’s nothing I can do to change what happened, but I want you to take whatever money you need from me to help compensate for the damage, and I want you to know, more than anything, how much I regret my rudeness and how very sorry I am. I promise to behave myself in future. If you can find it in yourself to do so, please forgive me. I apologize to you from the bottom of my heart.”

By the time I’d finished speaking, Luigi had turned pale, even in the candlelight, and his eyes were flicking from me to the twins and back again. Then again, I didn’t suppose he’d ever had one of his customers in this position before, at least not a male one and not in a public place. The situation must have bamboozled him so he didn’t know how to react at all.

In the end, he simply nodded and bowed. “Thank you very much, Mr... Liam. That is a very gracious apology, and I am happy, for the sake of my valued business associates here, to accept it. You are welcome in my restaurant. Mr. Delaney and Mr. Delaney, your order will be with you very shortly.”

Another bow and he had gone. I couldn’t help but be impressed. In his place, I wasn’t sure I would have had the sheer chutzpah for it. Still on my knees, I glanced at the twins to see what they wanted me to do now.

Johnny was folding his napkin into a variety of shapes, but Mark was gazing straight at me.

He snorted. “Not bad. Why don’t you get off your bloody knees then and sit properly at the table? Show us you know how to

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behave.”

“Yes, Mr. Delaney.” I slid up onto the chair again, my heart pounding in my chest. There I waited, not interfering, not calling any undue attention to myself, and not looking anywhere but at the table, until the twins’ wine arrived, followed almost immediately by their meal.

They both had the house pasta—chicken with wild field mushrooms. How I remembered it. I’d ordered it myself yesterday, but never got round to eating anything. Now it smelled delicious. Spices and garlic, mixed with the glorious scent of a fresh supply of ciabatta. The steam rose from the bread when Mark pulled it apart. I watched its journey from the plate to his lips.

When he finished, he looked at me. “Do you want some food, Liam?”

“Please, Mr. Delaney.”

He nodded as if he’d expected it. “All right. Beg us for it then.”

My heart rate went up double-time. I had no real idea what the hell was happening here, or what they wanted me to do, but I was ravenously hungry and, if tonight panned out anything like how they’d told me, I’d need all my strength and wits about me simply to get through it. Without another thought, I was down on my knees again between them, that rich red carpet feeling more of the weight of me than it had expected to this evening. Whatever happened, I was giving the clientele one hell of a show, though rather more measured than the one I’d given them yesterday.

“Please, Mr. Delaney,” I whispered, hands clasped once more, and eyes darting first to one twin and then the other. “Please, I’m so hungry and the food you have looks so good. I really need to eat. Please, just one mouthful? That’s all I’m asking for. Just one, if you can spare it. Please, will you give me some food? I’m

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begging you. Please let me eat.”

Mark looked across the table at Johnny, who shrugged and then nodded. As if by an agreed signal, Johnny then speared some pasta and chicken on his fork and held it out toward me. I closed my eyes and opened my mouth. It tasted heavenly, though I was surprised I could taste anything at all. I chewed slowly, keeping my eyes shut. I only opened them again when I’d finished.

“Thank you, Mr. Delaney,” I whispered.

All through the meal, I knelt there between them, with either one or the other occasionally feeding me the odd mouthful. The final time, Mark fed me with a torn-off piece of ciabatta. When he placed it in my mouth, I wrapped my tongue around his fingers, just as I had with Johnny in the car. I licked him, tasting garlic on his skin.

When, after a few moments, he pulled himself free, gently, I groaned. “You taste so good, Mr. Delaney. I’d love you to fuck my mouth. I bet you’d taste good then, too.”

“Jesus.” This came from Johnny, the first time he’d spoken since we’d entered the restaurant. His knife fell onto the table with a clatter. “I can’t...”

“Shut it, little brother. Don’t let him get to you. For God’s sake, Liam, sit at the table and keep your mouth shut while we’re eating. I’m sick of the sight of you.”

Wordless, I obeyed. I said nothing more, but watched while they finished their pasta and drank the wine. They didn’t order coffee. And nobody asked about payment.

At the car, Mark shoved me in the back and followed me inside, so Johnny had to make do with the front seat. I thought that was a little unfair as he was the one who most seemed to want a piece of me. And right now he was the one without the gun.

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Once we'd set off, Mark was all over me, touching my face, my back, my crotch. I spread my legs as wide as I could so he could do whatever he wanted. What he wanted was kissing. He thrust his tongue into my mouth so quickly I barely had time to draw breath. It wasn't what I'd expected at all. The next moment he was tearing at my shirt buttons and pulling at the hairs on my chest, tweaking my nipple, making me groan and cry out, though he swallowed up the sound of it.

Then, just as suddenly as he'd started it, he pulled away again. I was gasping, spread-eagled like a pro on the posh leather seats, while the driver stared at me in his rear view mirror and Johnny stared at me from the corner of his headrest.

Mark snorted. "God, Liam, you're such a whore. Brandon was right about you."

I thought this was a little near the bone, under the circumstances, especially as *he'd* jumped *me*, and anyway he was planning to get his fill of me later on—I hoped—but I didn't argue. Hell, I was learning fast.

Instead, I skittered closer to him and laid my hand on his leg.

"You bet, Mr. Delaney," I whispered. "I'm always a whore where you and your brother are concerned."

He didn't respond to that; he didn't even look at me. However, all the way back home, he let me stroke his prick through his upmarket trousers. If I was going to get raped—which was infinitely preferable to getting shot after all—I'd do my level best to make sure I got some kind of fun out of it.

At home, Johnny got out first and came around to my side of the car. Mark pushed me out and got out himself. By the time he was standing next to me, the gun was in full view once more. I supposed he didn't want me to try to run. Hell, I didn't have the

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courage to run. I was planning to do exactly what he said every step of the way. Mark tapped the roof twice and the car rolled away.

“Get inside.” He gestured with the gun at my front door, and I reached for my keys. “No funny business.”

“No, sir, Mr. Delaney, no funny business at all. You got it.”

My hands had begun to shake again so it took me a while to open the door, but neither twin commented. Mark simply laid the gun against the back of my neck, a gesture that made the rest of my body want to shake, too, but I tried to quell it. I led them through the shared hallway in silence and up to my flat.

This is it then, I thought. This was where I got buggered. I *had* to get buggered, if I didn’t want to die. And there was only one way I knew to be sure of a chance at that.

I walked to my bedroom, the two of them close behind. Inside, I closed the door behind the three of us and looked directly at Mark. I swallowed before speaking.

“You’ve got the gun,” I said. “You can do whatever you like with me. But I thought that, after such a romantic dinner and an evening of being so considerate toward someone you’ve every intention of buggering anyway, you might like to try this.”

Then, trying to ignore Mark and the gun, I knelt in front of Johnny, leant forward and undid his zipper with my teeth. It was something my first boyfriend had taught me. I always knew it would come in handy one day. By the time I’d nuzzled down his briefs, his cock was already at half-mast and, with a moan, I wrapped my lips around it and began to suck and lick it as if my life depended on it. It no doubt did. I heard a muffled gasp from Mark behind me. I think it might have been enjoyment. I hoped so.

Funnily enough, he wasn’t the only one enjoying it. I took great

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pride in the fact I gave a damn good blowjob. It was something I'd always loved to do. Johnny appeared to be having a fun time as well. His legs were buckling and, by the time I'd swallowed down the length of him and tasted his explosion in my mouth, he had all but collapsed onto the bed.

"Jesus," he said, "that was..."

"Good," I whispered. "I know. Do you want more?"

When he blinked at me, I licked my lips clean of his cum, but let some of it remain on my face. I'd always thought it was sexier.

"Why don't you fuck me now?" I whispered, half-turning and bringing Mark in on my question. "Like you want to. That would really teach me a lesson, wouldn't it?"

This was too much for him.

"Stop screwing with us and get undressed," Mark snarled at me, his face flushed and his hand still clutching the gun. "Now."

I obeyed. No more flirting, no more teasing them. I stood up and undressed as quickly as I could. I didn't mind them seeing my body. I'd always been proud of the shape I was in. My hands still shook a little, but I couldn't help it and, in any case, it was hardly surprising. When I was completely naked, I looked him right in the eye.

"How would you like me?" I asked him.

Mark tossed the gun to the edge of the room. My eye followed it. I was glad to see it go.

"Forget the gun, Liam. Look at me."

Again, I obeyed him, without question. He took a couple of paces to stand in front of me, and my cock was instantly rock-hard. God, that was another surprise. I supposed this was at the very least going to be sex under duress. I'd never expected to have a hard-on, too.

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“This isn’t about the gun,” he continued, his voice lowering so he was whispering to me. Hell, it was almost romantic. “Not any more. This is about me, my brother and you. Okay?”

Wordless, I nodded.

“Get on the bed then. All fours.”

I did so. Johnny shuffled backwards, toward the headboard, to allow me room. His cock nudged the side of my face. I opened my mouth and took it in again. It seemed like the natural thing to do. Behind me, the bed creaked as Mark leant against it. I heard the sound of him undoing his zipper and opening my bedside cabinet drawer. Then a satisfied sigh. The next moment, fingers, slick with gel, pushed into me. I would have gasped at their coldness, but my mouth was rather full at the time and there was no room for anything to escape but a muffled squeak. I’d never been at my most dignified during sex. Then again, who is?

Still, the sheer courtesy of Mark’s actions all but undid me. I’d assumed he’d go for the wham-bam-thank-you-ma’am approach. I’d never imagined he’d try to make it easier. After a few moments, the fingers withdrew, and I heard the sound of him tearing open a packet. Then I felt the warmth of his hands on my legs positioning me, and the feel of his sheathed cockhead lining up against my arsehole.

“Okay, I’m ready. Let’s fuck him,” he whispered. “Both ends. You fuck his mouth, Johnny, and I’ll fuck his arse.”

Then he pushed inside me. At the same time, Johnny groaned and began slamming his cock into my mouth, making my jaw ache. Mark followed suit at my other end and, for long moments, the only sensations I had were of being between the two of them, caught, ravaged, and well and truly plundered.

God, how I loved it. It was bloody *fantastic*.

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Then they began to shout. All sorts of words.

“Jesus, I love you.”

“Baby, I...”

“I’ve always wanted this...”

“Oh, God, yes, but I never...”

“...thought we could...”

“...actually do it.”

The last words they shouted were in unison. Another wave of warm spunk filled my mouth and, at the same time, I felt Mark shudder and collapse against me. The weight of him drove me down just as I reached my own orgasm and I twisted sideways, pumping my load onto the sheets. He came with me and nestled me with surprising gentleness onto the bed. Johnny turned to follow us, his cock still filling my mouth. I pushed back a little so I could hang on to the feel of his brother inside me for as long as possible and kept on licking that glorious mouthful.

For a while, all three of us just lay there. The twins caught their breath, while I thought about the things they’d said to each other during the threesome fuck. Well, I supposed that was the city for you. We were full of mysteries. Buggery and group sex in these mean streets. Around here, people probably saw it as a good evening out. Nobody would even think twice about it.

Finally, Johnny slipped from my mouth, and Mark slipped from my arse. Hell, but I really missed the feeling of being full to the brim with them both. It felt empty without them. I was sore and aching, but utterly and strangely satisfied.

Neither of them said anything about what they’d shouted, and I thought it would be best for my health and safety, too, if I kept quiet about it. All things considered. Every family had its secrets after all.

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Not too much later, they swapped positions and did me again. Johnny was gentler in my arse than he'd been in my mouth, and even Mark took it a little easier as well. I wasn't complaining. I didn't really want to end up in hospital trying to explain how the hell I'd got there, plus I wanted to be able to sit down the next day. At some point. And chew food properly.

Mark even touched my cock and let me come all over his hand, whilst Johnny stroked my back and murmured words I couldn't hear against my neck.

Then we did it again, same way around. As we lay there afterwards, I shuffled sideways so I was on my back between them both. Then I reached out and eased Mark's mouth down to mine. He seemed to like kissing. I hoped he wouldn't object to what I had in mind. I opened my lips as wide as possible and his tongue filled me. At the same time, I reached up to Johnny and eased him closer to me as well. I opened my mouth even wider and brought him down so the three of us were kissing, the twins' tongues exploring me together. One of them groaned, maybe both. I couldn't tell.

I could feel Mark trembling where I held him. I wondered if they'd ever touched each other like this before, or if this was their first time. It was certainly mine. Like this. And, hell, but it was messy. Saliva dripped down my chin. After a while, I couldn't tell where my mouth ended and theirs began. It made me feel bloody good, though, the three of us kissing, in bed. Fucking and kissing. Sweaty and hot. I didn't think I could ever get enough of it.

Eventually, though, the kissing stopped, and they cuddled me for maybe another ten minutes or so. After that, I must have fallen asleep because the next thing I remembered was the early morning light beating its way into my eyes. I blinked until I was able to

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focus and then became utterly and incredibly still. Mark was sitting on the bed, fully dressed, with Johnny lurking behind him. On Mark's lap lay the gun. It was pointing at me.

A long, long moment went by. Then Mark began to talk. Not looking at me, but simply speaking, almost as if to himself.

"Very nice, Liam. Very enjoyable. And I think I speak for my brother as well." Johnny nodded, but Mark paid him no attention. "I think we both had the best evening with you that we've ever had with anyone. I trust you understand. And we're men of our word, as I'm sure you know. Yesterday, you chose to have sex with us and we promised if it was good enough, then we wouldn't shoot you. I think I can safely say you passed the test. With flying colors."

I let out the breath I was holding, and Mark glanced at me and smiled briefly.

"Yes, with flying colours," he went on, picking up the gun and turning it over and over in his hand. "But it might be that some things, some *private* things, were revealed last night in the heat of the moment, which it would be better by far in the cold light of day for you to forget. Because neither Johnny nor I would want to have to go back on our promise. Do you understand, Liam?"

"Yes, Mr. Delaney, I understand perfectly well and, believe me, you can rely on me," I said, nodding my head with vigor. "You can rely on me totally. I'm the soul of absolute discretion. I promise you."

Mark gazed at me then, his eyes seeming to pierce mine and to search out all my secrets in an instance. He nodded and put the gun down on my bedside cabinet. "Good, because both Johnny and I were hoping you'd see things sensibly. We'll be on our way then, and leave you to recover. But there is one thing I'd like you to

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know before we depart.”

“What’s that, Mr. Delaney?”

He shrugged. “We both think Brandon’s a fool. You’re well rid of him.”

And then they were gone. I could hear the heavy tread of their feet making their way toward my front door. I collapsed back onto the bed, thanking all the gods I knew and some I didn’t that I’d come out of this whole thing in one piece.

Then I saw the gun. *Bloody hell*, it was the last thing I wanted in the flat.

“Mr. Delaney, wait! Please!” I yelled, springing out of bed as naked as the day I was born and edging round the wretched weapon as if it might go off all on its own. Hell, from the little I knew about guns, it might well do, and the Delaneys would have the last laugh in the end. *Goddammit*.

The footsteps stopped and then came back. Just one set this time. Mark opened the door and stared at me as I hopped round the cabinet gesturing and whimpering. “The gun, sir, you’ve forgotten the gun...”

As I blinked at him, a slow smile spread over his face.

“Keep it,” he said, “as a memento.”

“But, Mr. Delaney, I...”

He swore softly. “Bloody civilians. For God’s sake, Liam, it’s not loaded. It’s not even a bloody gun. It’s a replica. Your boss—the lovely Melissa—can be very persuasive on her employees’ behalf. Don’t forget to thank her when she next pops by the gallery.”

As I stared at him, unable to speak at all, he began to laugh. Deeply and from the belly, as if watching me was the funniest thing he’d seen in years. Perhaps it was. The sound of it echoed

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through my bedroom and onto the landing. It brought Johnny back into the room and, when he saw me, he began to laugh as well.

Just what I needed—two hysterical twins and one naked idiot. Correction: one naked, loved-up and thoroughly, satisfyingly buggered idiot.

But it wasn't quite over yet. When the laughter died away, I smiled, too. I picked up the gun and held it out to Mark. Before he took it, I spoke, no more than a whisper really.

"If it's worthless," I said, "it does you no harm carrying it around, does it, Mr. Delaney? Unless, of course..."

"Unless?" One eyebrow went up and he cocked his head at me. I couldn't ever be sure, but I thought Johnny might have winked, too.

"Unless you want to leave it here, sir, so you can come back and claim your property whenever you feel the need? And anything else you might feel like claiming as well. After all, it's a shame to waste a good set-up, isn't it? Mr. Delaney, sir? Milk it for all you can get is what I say."

The twins looked at each other for a few moments. Johnny nodded. Then Mark nodded. I took the gun back, placed it carefully in the drawer. And then? Well, then we all began to laugh.

And that, so you see, is how I messed with the Delaney twins and lived.

ANNE BROOKE

Anne Brooke's fiction has been shortlisted for the Harry Bowling Novel Award, the Royal Literary Fund Awards, and the Asham Award for Women Writers. She has also twice been the winner of the DSJT Charitable Trust Open Poetry Competition. She loves reading dark and quirky crime novels and has a secret passion for bird watching and chocolate. Preferably at the same time. She once took a balloon flight in Egypt but spent most of the time screaming, and she hopes she never has to do it again.

To learn more about Anne and her writing, please visit her website at:

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* * *

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Jamie Chadwick is straight. Determinedly straight. Or so he keeps telling himself. His small conference business is doing okay and, even though he looks after his ailing father, he loves living in the countryside and life is good. Sort of. But the arrival of old college friend, David Fenchurch, who's just come out on the distinctly

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