D.N.A.

DOUBLE FIELX

Jaye Valentine

D.N.A. — DOUBLE HELIX by Jaye Valentine

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D.N.A. – Double Helix is an excerpt from the forthcoming novel of the same name.

D.N.A. DOUBLE HELIX

The crowd of mostly teenagers stood on its feet chanting, as usual, during Colton's guitar-solo bridge of D.N.A.'s signature song, *Double Helix*.

I looked across the stage and grinned at my identical twin. Ever since Colton told a reporter the flame-red color of our waist-length hair didn't come from a bottle, the chant had erupted at the same point during every concert.

"Prove it! Prove it! Prove it!"

The choral shouting completely drowned out Colton's solo on this particular

occasion. Up until now, the knowing grins and wiggling eyebrows we flashed each other—Colton stage right on lead guitar, me at stage left on bass—constituted the extent of our acknowledgment of the raucous request. Drove the fan-girls wild. That all changed in a heartbeat tonight, my grin dropping at the moment my brother dropped his leather pants.

Colton, for whatever reason, proved to a screaming sea of thirteen thousand fans that his carpeting did indeed match the drapes.

* * * * *

After the concert ended at "The Dunk"—the Dunkin' Donuts Center in Providence, Rhode Island—our band manager, Holly McCoy, came barreling into my backstage dressing room.

"Holy Christ," Holly said, rolling her eyes. She exhaled in a loud burst like she'd been holding her breath for hours and smoothed back her short, blond hair. "It's a fucking madhouse out there, but at least they waited until the show ended to arrest him. We don't have to reimburse the venue, thank fucking God. Seth, what the *hell* are you doing?"

I stopped in the middle of unscrewing the cap off a jar of Pond's Cold Cream. "Taking my makeup off."

"Oh no, you're not."

"Oh yes, I am." I put the lid of the jar on the vanity and grabbed a handful of tissues from a dispenser. "No way I'm going to a police station in some rinky-dink town to bail out my brother dressed like *this*. Not happening."

Holly ripped the tissues out of my hand and tossed them in a wastebasket. "Leave the makeup alone and put your goddamn stage clothes back on."

For a tiny female, Holly had some really massive balls. I slumped back in the chair with a huff and crossed my arms over my bare chest. "Explain to me why I want to do this."

She reached for my emerald-green Edwardian coat, the one with the oil-rubbed-

bronze buttons and chains. "Because, young padawan, you can't *buy* publicity like this. Now get dressed. You have five minutes to pull yourself together, or I'm leaving without you."

"Fine." I took the coat from her. "A little privacy, please?"

"Fine." She smiled and headed for the door, managing to squeeze out between the two burly bodyguards holding the backstage pass-holders at bay.

"Shit." Digging through my wheeled wardrobe cabinet, I grabbed a new pair of thigh-high stockings made of black fishnet and put them on. Black leather, lace-up granny boots went on next, the eyelets and four-inch heels matching the bronze accoutrements on the coat, which I slipped into last. The coat, although floor length, buttoned down the front from just below my ribcage to mid-thigh, leaving a hell of a lot of chest and leg exposed. I checked my hair and makeup in the mirror and shook my head. I loved my costumes, and I got a kick out of being known as "The Androgynous One," but only on stage and for professional appearances. For an errand of a serious, personal nature such as this, my current attire made me feel like sort of an ass. But who was I to argue with the woman who'd made us multimillionaires inside of two years?

After giving my hair a final finger-combing to loosen the sweaty, natural waves, I crossed the cramped room and opened the door a small crack. "I'm ready to go," I told the bodyguards.

Oh my God, what a nightmare. Even with two linebacker-sized guys running interference in front and two more guards at my back, a full twenty minutes elapsed before I completed the short journey down the corridor to the nearest exterior door. Teenagers shouted for my autograph and tried to worm past the guards to touch me. A fair number of "Colton Girls," with his picture silk-screened on their shirts, sobbed his name and hugged each other. I laughed to myself, knowing how Colton would eat that shit up once he saw the televised reports. My brother, ever the media whore.

Finally, I climbed into the waiting limo in the closed-off parking lot in the rear of the arena.

Holly sat inside, her high-heeled shoes kicked off, her legs tucked under her on the leather seat. She had her cell phone glued to the side of her face, talking a mile a minute. "Look, we can only drive this crate so slow and the station's only a few blocks away. You've got five minutes to meet us there if you want an exclusive." She gave me a crooked grin and rolled her eyes. "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Five minutes."

I sighed. "You called a reporter? Jesus, Holly."

She snorted and dropped her phone on her lap. "I didn't *have* to call a reporter. Your brother took care of that when he decided to wave his dick around on stage. I'm just doing my best to orchestrate some damage control. That was a writer-photographer from *People* magazine who owes me a huge favor. Or would you prefer taking your chances with *The National Enquirer* slime you know will show up? Let me do my job. At least I know this guy won't put some sort of creepy spin on the story."

"And what do you want me to do?"

Holly twisted around and tapped on the dark-tinted glass partition separating us from the driver. The limo pulled away from the curb, and Holly turned back to face me. "Look pretty, smile and wave at the cameras, and keep your mouth shut."

"You don't want me to make a statement?" I squinted at her. "Why not?"

"Well, what the fuck would you say?" Holly slipped her shoes back on and stuck her cell phone in her blazer pocket. "That your brother doesn't have the sense he was born with, or he lost his marbles in the middle of a set?"

Maybe she had a point. Publicly calling my brother a jackass wouldn't do anyone any good. "Okay. I'll keep quiet. Do Mom and Dad know yet?"

"Oh, yeah." Holly grinned and cackled, the evil bitch. "I can't *wait* to hear about this Christmas reunion."

"Christmas." My shoulders drooped. "Crap. I almost forgot."

Great timing, Colt.

The car slowed, and immediately camera flashes burst like monochrome fireworks outside the dark windows. I ran my fingers through my hair, scratching my scalp. I'd never been inside a police station before, and I wasn't sure what to expect. Too much television growing up, I guess. I had visions of Colton in a filthy jail cell, eyes black and nose bloodied, with a 325-pound cellmate named "Tiny" planning to make my brother his bitch.

Panic set in. I stared wide-eyed at Holly. "I'm scared. What if they won't let him out on bail?"

"Oh, for Christ's sake." Holly snorted a laugh. "They arrested him for indecent exposure, not mass murder. Relax."

She tapped on the glass partition again, and a few moments later the back door of the limo swung open. An excited mass of people pressed toward us. Holly and I stayed put until a group of uniformed police pushed the crowd back to create a narrow path.

"You go first." I took a deep breath and plastered on my prettiest smile. "Let's do it."

The journalist from *People* detained us for less than a minute for some photos and a whispered quote from Holly, after which we were swiftly ushered inside. Two policemen shut and locked the doors. A middle-aged cop with gray, thinning hair looked up with a bored expression from behind a huge desk, as if media circuses like this happened in his precinct with regularity.

I gave an engraved nameplate on the edge of the desk a quick glance and smiled at the man. "G-good evening, Sergeant Kemp. I'm here to post bail for—"

"Let me guess," Sergeant Kemp said, smirking. He picked up the telephone receiver and pushed a button. "Kemp. Bring Iggy Pop, Jr. out front."

An inner door on the far side of the room opened seconds later. Out walked an attractive, young policewoman guiding Colton by one elbow. I'm not sure which of them wore a wider smile, and I wasn't sure I wanted to know why. I exhaled a sigh of relief. No black eyes. No bloody nose. No Tiny.

Sergeant Kemp waved Colton over, sliding a multi-part form and a pen forward across the desk. "Read this and sign at the bottom. Your accountant has already wired the bail money. Trial date will be mailed to you and your attorney by the District Court."

Colton skimmed the form, muttering as he read. He scrawled his name at the bottom of the paper.

In exchange for the form, Sergeant Kemp handed Colton a large, manila

envelope. "Here you go, Mr. Wagner. Please try to keep out of trouble for the remainder of your stay."

Colton chuckled. "I'll do my best."

Holly stepped up and grabbed Colton by the arm. "Let's go before the crowd gets anything thicker outside. And don't say a fucking word on the way to the car."

* * * * *

Back at our hotel suite, Colton kicked off his boots and flopped on the sofa. He tore open the manila envelope containing his personal belongings confiscated after his arrest. Putting his gaudy, trademark pewter rings back on his fingers, he looked up at me. "C'mon, big brother. So I played a little prank; it's not the end of the world. How long are you going to keep up this stupid silent treatment?"

Once I'd recovered from the relief of seeing Colton unscathed, I allowed myself to get angry, going so far as to ride to the hotel in the front seat of the limo with the driver. I didn't want our initial discussion of the night's events to take place in front of anyone, not even someone as close to us as Holly.

Shaking my head, I let out a sharp breath. "You really fucked up this time, Colt. This is a lot more serious than pitching plastic soda bottles filled with Pop Rocks off a hotel balcony into the swimming pool."

"Look," he said, tossing the empty envelope to the floor. "I'm nineteen years old, and I made a little over seven million dollars last year playing in a rock-and-roll band. It's practically in my job description to be a fuck-up. Besides, it could've been worse."

"How?" I glared at him. "What could be worse than exposing yourself in front of thirteen thousand people?"

Colton grinned. "I could've waited until New Year's Eve and done it at Madison Square Garden in front of *twenty* thousand."

"You're impossible." I turned from him and walked toward the bathroom. "I need a shower. How about making yourself useful and getting some room service up here? I'm starving."

The sofa springs creaked, and I heard Colton pad across the floor. "Looks like they have the usual hotel fare," he called out. "What are you in the mood for?"

"Pizza. Pepperoni." I took off the Edwardian coat and untied my boots. "And mushrooms."

"Whoa. Mushrooms, really?" Colton laughed. "Feeling adventurous tonight?" "Go fuck yourself, Colt."

"I'd rather fuck *you*." Colton appeared in the doorway, a sexy smile on his face, as naked as the day we were born. "But then that's sort of the same thing, isn't it?"

My pulse started racing, my heart thumping so loud I could hear the beat. Damn him for having that effect on me. "Colt, I-"

"Get in the shower." Colton entered the bathroom and shut the door. "Pizza can wait."

Damn him. I peeled the thigh-high fishnets down my legs and kicked them aside, leaving only the black, Spandex bikinis I wore to keep my junk in place while performing. A thought occurred to me; I laughed out loud. "I wondered why you decided to go commando tonight. Mystery solved."

"See?" He took my wrists in a firm but gentle grip and backed me into the stonetiled, walk-in shower, grinning. "I knew you wouldn't be able to stay mad at me for long."

"I never do." God, he made me crazy sometimes. Shaking off his grasp, I hooked my thumbs under the Spandex and skimmed the bikinis off, tossing them to the bathroom floor. "Now let me shower in peace. I stink."

"Yeah, but you stink so fucking pretty." Colton turned on the water. A square showerhead in the ceiling sent steaming rain pouring down on us. He moved closer, recapturing his hold on my wrists and pressed my arms above my head against the stone wall. With a look of wanton lust gleaming in his green eyes, he leaned in and ran the flat of his tongue along the concave curve of my left armpit. "Love how you smell and taste after you've been working so hard. Great show tonight, by the way."

He licked me again. I shuddered, let out a soft, breathless moan, in one quick instant forgetting why we should stop, why this was so wrong and had been from the

beginning. Colton, close like this and wanting me, always made me forget.

"Don't ever scare me like that again," I whispered.

"Like what?" Colton eased my hands down to my sides, kissing a trail up my neck. He bit my throat hard enough to hurt, like a vampire attacking prey, and once again I'd have to blame a bruised, dental-shaped welt on an overzealous fan-girl.

"Watching you hauled away in handcuffs isn't exactly my idea of a good time." I rested my hands on his hips and looked him square in the face. Our face. *My* face. The identical twin thing never ceased to astonish me, compounded exponentially after we started sleeping together in more than a brothers-sharing-a-bunk-bed sort of way.

Colton laughed and took a sharp nip at my chin. "Wait until people get a look at me on the front page of the tabloids: leather pants, shirtless, dripping with sweat, and in handcuffs. Shit . . . our website hits and record sales will go through the fucking roof. I'm 'The Evil Twin,' remember? Just living up to my reputation, dude."

"Now you sound like Holly." I draped my arms lightly around his neck and drew him close for a soft kiss on the mouth. "Are you sure she didn't put you up to that stupid stunt?"

He froze and stared at me. "How did you know?"

My jaw dropped.

Colton grinned. "Just kidding. I fully expect her to ream me a new one as soon as she gets back here tonight. Speaking of which"—he took me by the shoulders, guiding—"turn around. I'm horny."

I complied, of course; I always did. Never could resist him, not even that first time on the night we turned seventeen. We were on our first tour as an opening act for Syncopated Nightmare, the biggest metal band in the business. Wasted on bourbon and 7-Up, Colton and I lost our virginity to each other backstage after the show that night. One hell of a birthday celebration.

With my hands braced against the wet, stone tile, I peeked over my shoulder at Colton, watching as he left the shower to root through my toiletries case. Grumbling in frustration, he looked into the vanity mirror and raised his eyebrows at my reflection. "Lube?"

"Hey," I said in mock protest. "How come that's always *my* responsibility?"

"Because it's your ass getting fucked. My dick doesn't really care. Next question?"

"Outer zipper pocket."

Colton laughed, unzipped the bag and grabbed the plastic bottle of lube. He returned to the shower and pressed against my back, wasting no time. I heard the click of the cap flip open, the squelch of the lube bottle being squeezed, and I made a mental note to replenish the dwindling supply soon. The bottle thumped and rolled on the shower floor, and Colton's left hand slid between my ass cheeks, spreading me open. The sound of him lubing his cock, jerking himself to hardness, echoed off the tile walls.

"Lean forward more." He pressed the palm of his left hand against the small of my back as I bent over. His other fist bumped against me, guiding his cock.

God, he felt so perfect sliding into me slick with lube, all smoothness and no friction. I took a deep breath and pushed against him with my inner muscles, assisting his slow glide inside. Stars flickered in my peripheral vision, and I prayed for my knees to hold out. My thighs had already started twitching. "Oh fuck, Colt."

He placed his palms against the wall on either side of my head and laid his chest against my back. Fucked into me like his life depended on it, a staccato, pounding rhythm. "Is that a good 'oh fuck' or a bad one, big brother?"

"Good." I put the left side of my face against the wet tile and peered over my shoulder, needing to see him. His eyes, wide open and intense, met mine. Fuck, he turned me on. I'd never tire of this, of him. "Feels so fucking good, always."

He made a pitiful sound and laid his head against my shoulder, continuing to rut up into me. "We're meant to be like this, Seth," he whispered. "Don't understand why, but I know it's true." He grunted, forcing me onto my toes with the impact of a deep, rough thrust. "I can feel you in my soul."

Moaning, I felt like someone yanked the shower floor out from under my feet and I stumbled, cracking my forehead against the wall. My cock, raging hard, skidded along the slippery tile, and I came within a hair's breadth of shooting.

Colton grunted in my ear. "Where do you want it, baby?"

"In me," I said, but no sound came out, my empty lungs refusing to function.

Taking a deep breath first, I tried again and managed to rasp the words out on panting breaths. "Oh fuck, Colt, in me. Want your cum in me."

He roared in my ear as he came, his cock expanding with the heat of him filling me up. Each releasing thrust buried him deeper inside me, until he collapsed and his dead weight crushed me against the tile. I risked moving my right hand from the wall and finished myself off with a half dozen desperate tugs.

"Oh. My. *God*." Colton started laughing as he withdrew and staggered away.

I turned and slid my back down the wall until I achieved a squatting position, no longer trusting my shaky legs. Colton leaned back against the vanity, gripping the marble edge with both hands. He grinned at me so hard I thought his face might crack. "*That*, my brother," he said, "was fucking incredible. I should get arrested more often."

"Not funny. Throw me a towel and go order me a pizza. I need a few minutes to -"

Colton clapped his hands to his ears and yelled, "Too-much-information alert!" Laughing, he pulled a clean towel off a rack and tossed it onto my lap, took one for himself, and left the bathroom.

I heard him order enough room service for a small army while I finished up. After wrapping a dry towel around my waist and hooking another around the back of my neck, I returned to the living room. Colton wasn't there. I shrugged, assuming he'd gone to one of the bedrooms to change into clean clothes. A knock came to the door.

"Man, that was fast," I said to myself. Opening the door a crack, I peeked out.

Holly burst in and breezed by me, heading straight for the bar near the balcony doors. "Christ, what a fucking night," she muttered under her breath like I wasn't there. She crouched and flung open the cabinet under the bar, only to find the shelves empty. "Shit." With a scowl she looked up at me. "You have any booze? I need a goddamn drink."

I clutched the towel around my neck tighter to cover the gargantuan hickey. "No, I don't have anything. Isn't that the purpose of you making reservations for a *dry* room? No underage drinking and all that happy crap?"

Holly rolled her eyes. "I do that because it's in my chaperone contract with your

parents, dumbass. I didn't expect you to take it seriously. Well, maybe *you* I did, but not your brother. Where is Lucifer, anyway?"

As if on cue, Colton emerged from the bedroom: iPod in hand, ear buds in place, stark-raving naked with obviously *no* clue we had company. Eyes closed as he did a bad imitation of vintage Mick Jagger strutting like a rooster, Colton dug us both a treacherously deep grave at the top of his well-trained lungs. "Dude, next time we need to fuck to this song! I'll bang you silly."

The world went silent, started moving in slow motion, and everything looked surreal. Holly's eyes shot open as big as turkey platters, her mouth falling open wide enough to accommodate a compact car.

I felt nauseous, dizzy, and started swaying.

Colton opened his eyes. "Oh, shit."

Everything went black.

* * * * *

Something foul and acrid-smelling made me choke and sputter, burning my sinuses. I sat up with a start and shook my head. My vision and other senses cleared a few seconds later. "What the—"

"Smelling salts. You passed out." Holly rose from her kneeling position on the floor beside me. I frowned, looking up as she scowled down at me with her hands planted on her hips. Jesus, she looked pissed off. "As soon as you can stand, I want you to find me something I can use to gouge out my eyes and ears."

I squinted at her and shook my head. "I don't understand what you're-"

And then Colton—dressed in a pair of innocent-looking, Christmas-themed, footie pajamas Mom had packed us both for this leg of the tour—cleared his throat. I looked at him and everything came flooding back.

Shit. I'd assumed Colton's arrest for indecent exposure would be the worst thing about this trip, but holy crap

Holly looked away from me and glared at Colton. "I know you have liquor in

here somewhere. Get it."

Colton shook his head and shrugged.

"Now!"

I swore for a second I saw actual flames shoot out from Holly's ears. Colton ran off to the bedroom and returned before I could blink, bearing a gift for Holly in the form of a huge bottle of Belvedere vodka. She snatched the bottle out of his hands.

Colton backed away from her, moving toward the bar. "I'll get you a gl—"

Before Colton could utter the "-ass" syllable, Holly had the cap off the booze and the mouth of the bottle to her lips, guzzling. She swallowed hard a good five or six times. I waited, hoping the chug-a-lug would temper her fury. No such luck. She gripped the bottle hard by the long, skinny neck and I put a reflexive, protective hand to mine.

Holly's eyes seemed just shy of ejecting bolts of lightning, or her hair turning into writhing snakes. "You have sixty seconds to convince me that I misunderstood what I heard. Start talking."

I let out a quavering breath and looked at Colton. We'd always been capable of a certain degree of silent communication, and I needed to know what to tell Holly. Colton sighed and shrugged. He clearly had no more of a clue than I did. As the eldest—by exactly thirteen seconds—I made the executive decision to tell Holly the truth.

After climbing off the floor into a more dignified position seated on the closest end of the sofa, I waved a hand for Colton to join me. Rather than sitting on the opposite side like I expected, he boldly took a seat right next to me. I smiled at him, and I don't think I'd ever been prouder.

I took a breath and blew it out, setting my gaze on Holly's angry eyes. "You heard right. We have no excuse, and we're not going to feed you any bullshit. I love Colton and he loves me—a whole lot more than just brothers. We've been sleeping together for two years, and we don't plan on stopping." I turned to look at Colton. "Does that sum things up?"

"Pretty much," Colton said, the softest smile on his lips.

I could have mauled him with a sloppy, tongue-filled kiss at that moment but

thought better of it. Returning my attention to Holly, I gave her a calm smile and a nonchalant shrug, even though my stomach churned with somersaults and my heart pounded like a kettledrum. "That's the way things are, and what you do with the knowledge is up to you. We don't care. We love each other and that's all that matters."

Holly took another swig from the vodka bottle and sat on the edge of the coffee table, facing us. "I will *never* understand this." She let out a long sigh and took another drink. "But I think I do understand this isn't just about sex. It can't possibly be. The two of you have half the freaking planet wanting to fuck you, so it's not like you don't have any other opportunities. It has to be something more."

Maybe we weren't going to die after all. I whistled a quiet breath of relief. "We don't understand it either, Holly, and you're right—it's not just some weird sex thing. It's just the way we are."

Colton gave me another small smile then looked at Holly. "Where do we go from here?"

"I don't know," she said, shaking her head. "We try to get some sleep, I guess. We have a plane to catch for home in the morning. Christmas is in three days." Holly took another swallow of vodka. "I can't tell your parents about this; it would fucking kill them."

Thankfully, Colton didn't jump to his feet and pump his fist and hiss, "Yes!" But I knew he'd thought about it, because so had I.

I smiled, able to breathe again.

Holly took another long drink and returned the bottle to Colton significantly emptier. He took a long gulp, offered the bottle to me, and I took a sip to seal the secret pact.

Then Holly dropped the bomb. "I won't say anything to anyone, but I don't think I can be your manager anymore."

Fuck . . . I knew there had to be a catch. We couldn't afford to lose Holly; she'd made us international stars and kept us safe. Fortunately, I knew her as well as she thought she knew Colton and me. I cocked my head to one side and lifted an eyebrow, smiling my cutest smile. "How much did you make off us this year?"

Holly stood, smoothed the wrinkles in her skirt, and pulled herself up straight. "I hear Madison Square Garden is lovely this time of year. I'll meet you there on New Year's Eve. No stripping on stage, please, or your balls are mine." She turned as if to walk away but weaved back to face us, jabbing the air to punctuate each word with a pointed finger. "No. More. Hickeys."

Colton and I cracked up laughing. Holly stumbled out of our suite, unsuccessfully attempting to maintain an aura of dignity. Once the door closed behind her, Colton tackled me onto my back on the sofa and straddled my hips.

He kissed me harder than he ever had before and came up for air, grinning. "She always was a greedy bitch."

~ The End ~

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jaye Valentine lives in a quaint, lakeside house on Cape Cod with his partner, Reno MacLeod, and their small menagerie of cats and freshwater fish. Jaye writes short stories as himself and also under the pen name Acer Adamson. For more information regarding Jaye and Reno's work, please visit: http://macleodvalentine.com.

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