



Beautiful Trouble Publishing

A Little Bit of *Dis*

Jeanie Johnson & Jayha Leigh

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To us, because sometimes you just simply have to shout-out yourself. To the Karlo in our lives...thank you chica. To the All-Madden, All-time moderators—the Von-glorious and Dr. Rolanda. You rock multiple hats and in doing so you make us look like we know what we're doing. Thank you. To Dréa and Laura Guevara congratulations on your books! To Alcira—the administrator and chief marketer for the MFP Posse Empire; to the former lurker, Stephanie D. who is now the official Lexiconeer of the Posse; and to Sunnii for the frying pan/fire line. To the peeps in our groups for wanting to be a part of the chaos. We appreciate the sense of community.

—Jeanie and Jayha

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This work of erotica contains adult language and sexually explicit scenes, which are smoking hot. This book is intended only for adults, as it is defined by the laws of the country in which the purchase is made. Keep this book out of the hands of under-aged readers.

Prelude

Introducing the First Lady, with Stress on the Lady

There are a few things one has to understand about the world in order to get along. And one of those things is who to fuck with and who not to. Corinna Parkinson belonged to that second category. And to get along with Corinna Parkinson one only had to understand three things. One, don't mess with her babies—and it didn't matter that her 'babies' were both over 6'5" and 235 pounds and had '*doctor*' in front of their names—they were still her babies. Two, act like you have some damn sense. And three, you didn't first name her...regardless of what your title was, unless she invited you to do so. Oh yeah, and then there was that fourth thing: One and two thirds cups of sugar were required for every half gallon of iced tea.

Corinna Parkinson was a bad woman. She had multiple official titles including doctor, executive

secretary and play grandmother to Stone Chase III—the president and CEO of Alamain Enterprises. She also had multiple unofficial titles including *Diva* and *Crusher of the Nut up*, but most people simply called her Dr. Corinna.

One did not try Dr. Corinna unless that is, one wanted to be on the wrong end of a flawless victory...for starters. It wasn't Dr. Corinna's official or unofficial positions that made her a dangerous adversary. It was her. Dr. Corinna was Julia Sugarbaker™ before Linda Bloodworth-Thomason created Julia Sugarbaker.™

Dr. Corinna's official title might be secretary, but she wielded great power at Alamain. There were rumors that she ran the company. Those rumors might have started because she was one of the few secretaries that actually had her own secretary and a corner office that was nothing but view.

There were also rumors that along with running Alamain she also ran the the current CEO. However, anyone seeing them together would say it wasn't rumor but outright fact. Stone Chase Jr., III might be a brilliant, risk-taking, ruthless bastard to his

adversaries but he was all awe and wonder in Dr. Corinna's presence...as were most people including the powers that be.

The movers and shakers she was on a first-name basis with might run most of the free world, but it was *her* extension that they called when they wanted to schmooze up to Stone. It was to *her* lavish office that they sent future world leaders, billionaires, and CEOs to learn what all of their overpriced private schools didn't teach them. In fact, it was often she who told them their first '*no*' and often their first '*hell no*' and '*motherfucker please*.' And it was *she* that they called when they needed to hear the truth. She had no problem relaying the fact that '*no, your pants don't make your ass look big; those five rolls of fat in that size smedium (cross between small and medium) top make you look fat. And ain't a damn thing wrong with being fat, but there's something wrong with not knowing what size you wear*'.

Dr. Corinna was *the* woman and right now, in between sipping her iced tea, she was listening to Nigel Drystan. Yes, *that* Nigel. The Nigel who owned...everything in Atlanta, including all four

professional sports teams, a good chunk of the university, and the mall—the *entire*, fucking thing.

“He’s a good kid, but he’s so damn hard-headed,” Nigel grouched.

“You mean Dario’s just like you were at his age, Nigel?” she returned while absently admiring the kickass strappy sandals she wore.

She smiled upon hearing Nigel sigh. It was always amusing witnessing (or in this case listening to) a man realize that despite his aspirations, he would never be God or even a reasonable facsimile.

“Well, yes, but dammit why can’t he simply pay more attention to business instead of partying like a rocket scientist?”

“Rock star,” she corrected in between laughter. She couldn’t help but laugh at Nigel’s attempt to be current on coolness. “And have you seen a lot of rocket scientists partying lately?”

“You know I absolutely hate it when you laugh at me.”

“Which is exactly why I do it. Don’t you own the company that has the rights to that song?”

“Probably, but if I don’t, I should. I’ll check with Karlo.”

“And when are you going to put in your bid for Heaven?” she asked.

“There’s such a thing as a line you know, but you just keep crossing it.”

“Someone has to stop you before you do something foolish like trying to construct another Tower of Babel.”

“I wouldn’t do that. Although their mistake was probably in the engineering process.”

“And you have the nerve to accuse me of being over the line. Not only would you attempt such a foolish endeavor, you’d take it a step further and name the tower after yourself, being that you seem to have a fondness for splashing your name on buildings.”

“Oh look, there’s the line and there’s you zinging right past it,” Nigel said.

“Once Karlo realized that she couldn’t talk you out of your foolishness, your brilliant marketing director would launch a campaign that would include t-shirts and bobble-head dolls.”

“Again, that thing called *‘the line’*.”

“Again, what about it?”

“Are you going to help me?”

“Nope, I’m going to let you figure it out all by yourself.”

“Why?”

“Because when you fuck it up, you’ll only have yourself to blame.”

“That’s cruel.”

“You say cruel, I say not really,” she sing-songed.

“What do you want?” he sighed.

“How about you select ten single mothers from the women’s center, provide them with top-notch training and then give them jobs.”

“Done.”

“And provide benefits and daycare.”

“Fine.”

“And a donation to the men’s ministry would be nice.”

“Done, done, and done. Now are you going to help me?”

“Don’t I always, Nigel?”

“Only after you get your way. You can squeeze blood from a rock...” he started.

“It’s a gift that keeps on giving,” she smiled. “Now settle down and listen,” she said, as they hashed out ideas to get his godson more involved in something that didn’t have big titties and outstretched hands. It wasn’t that Nigel didn’t appreciate women as he had a bevy of them himself; he was simply concerned that Dario liked women and toys more than he liked money.

“It’s not that he’s shiftless or anything. I just don’t want to see his brilliance go to waste,” Nigel sighed.

“And it won’t. Just give him the opportunity to learn who *he* is. You, Theresa, and Augustinus are giants in your worlds and you cast big shadows. Stop hovering and give the boy room to breathe, Nigel. When you started constructing your little empire you didn’t have twenty-four hour news eyeballing every move. Your failures weren’t fodder for afternoon tea. He’s a young, virile male. He’s supposed to like beautiful women and fast cars. Hell, isn’t that a requirement of being male?”

“It’s not that I mind him liking those things. It’s just that I’d like him to pay more attention to business. He’s not going to be young forever,” Nigel sighed.

“No he’s not so let him enjoy it while he can. Look Dario is a spoiled male, but he’s still male and males take challenges seriously. *Offer* him a challenge—a real challenge where he fails or succeeds on his own merits instead of *giving* him a carefully-choreographed life. You might be surprised.”

“Or disappointed.”

“You will be disappointed if you continue to judge everyone’s success based on your wet dream of success. Being a billionaire playboy might be a great job, but it’s not a great job for everyone.”

“As always I am amazed by your brilliance.”

“And having known me for so long, you shouldn’t be.”

“You know I rather enjoy this business of directing lives.”

“You would.”

“It has a whole *Trading Places* feel to it.”

“Yes, except without the whole fucked-upness, ruining people’s lives simply for your personal amusement thing.”

“The line.”

“Oh, am I over it?”

“Absolutely.”

“Hmm, I merely thought that I was flirting with it.”

“Flirting with it? You’re having a full-fledged affair with it!”

“On that note, I’m off. I have to get myself all dolled up for the line since according to you it’s coming over.”

“Thank you, Corinna.”

“You’re welcome, Nigel.”

Placing the phone in its cradle, Corinna smiled. Yes, give them space and let people think that what you want them to do is *their* idea. Dario wasn’t a bad kid. He was simply the typical millionaire playboy. He needed a challenge and although Nigel didn’t know a damn thing about hip hop music or human beings for the most part, Nigel was brilliant when it came to making money. Nigel would find Dario the

perfect challenge and Dario, being halfway intelligent, would ask his uncle for access to his resources. Nigel's greatest resource was his mind but his second-greatest resource was his brilliant marketing director who just happened to be her goddaughter.

Dario would want the best and Karlo was just that. Nigel wouldn't want to part with Karlo for even a little while, but would do so and be sulky as a result. Karlo, proud southerner that she was, wouldn't want to leave her beloved south for any reason and would be rightfully pissed off. But because she truly liked Nigel (probably because he spoiled her shamelessly) she'd do it. Of course she'd give Nigel the hurt look followed by the cold shoulder but Dario would get the full brunt of her pissed-offness. Dario had never met a woman that didn't like him, but that's because he didn't know Karlo. Oh, this was going to be fun. Nigel was right. Directing people's lives was fun.

Chapter One

Dear, Diary

Eighteen months later...

Dr. Karlo J. Adams is an impressive woman and it has nothing to do with her B.A. in Economics from the prestigious University of North Carolina, her J.D. and MBA from the ivy-league University of Pennsylvania, or her Ph.D. in Marketing from the highly-ranked Emory University Business School. It also has nothing to do with that lush figure encased in only five feet nine inches of height, her luxurious curls that frame a caramel-colored face dominated by expressive eyes and those lips. *Those lips, ah, those lips, those lips, those suck me, fuck-me, kiss me lips.* Oh, yes.

Where was I? Oh yes, Dr. Adams being impressive. So many things about her are impressive but what stands out is her method of informing someone that they're not shit—the dismissal, or the *dis*

for short. The *dis* is a beautiful thing, so beautiful in fact, that it belongs in some music hall of fame, on the wall of some museum, or on the menu of five-star restaurants.

Always at her brilliant best whether in the halls of academia, at the head of boardroom tables full of CEOs of Fortune 500 Companies, or even amongst her peers at the water cooler, Dr. Karlo Adams really puts it down when she is driven to put a motherfucker in his or her place. Oh, her getting-someone-told is a true thing of beauty. It's not merely the dressing that it's cloaked in; it's the stealth in which her 'fuck-you-and-the-horse-that-you-rode-in-on' is delivered. It's also the addendum that follows the *dis*. I call it the *and by the way, you ain't shit*.

Yes, Dr. Karlo J. Adams is the undisputed master of the *dis*. And the true beauty of the *dis* resides in the fact that the whole insult is delivered in perfect silence. Not one word falls from her gilded tongue; not one sound of distaste flows from within her tempting body.

As I said, the *dis*, it's beautiful...unless it's being delivered to you. And then it's like hundreds of

microscopic cuts...in the places that bend like your knuckles, and the creases between your fingers...infected with a slow-moving poison that infects but doesn't kill...right before exploding into a fiery ball of pain in the vicinity of your ego, leaving you exposed and your reputation decimated. The *dis* is categorical in its completeness—a flawless victory if you will. I should've figured counted on the *dis* being absolute in its deliverance being that her favorite comeback is: *it isn't enough that I win; others must lose*. And I lost—my dignity, my cool, and eventually my heart.

Dr. Adams regarded me as utterly useless. I think that was due to...actually, I'm not really sure why. From what I gather it might have a little something to do with me having the nerve to open a business some place other than in the south.

She was pissed off with me from the moment that she first saw me. Wait, that's not entirely accurate. When Dr. Adams first saw me, she didn't even spare me a glance except to demand that I hold the monstrous bag that she tossed at me. And before I could respond, she thrust a mirror into my hand.

Without even sparing me a glance, she applied color to her tempting mouth.

If she had bothered to look at me she would've seen what other women saw when they looked at me: a good-looking man who held the world in the palm of his hand. But she didn't bother to look. No, she merely turned my wrist this way and that and told me off. *'Dude, come on. It's just like when you held the flashlight for your dad back in the day. Hold it still!'* To my surprise, I did just that. When she finished she shook out those spring-form curls and twisted them into some kind of fancy knot thing. Taking her mirror back and relieving me of her bag, she finally spared me a glance, smiled, thanked me ... and promptly ignored me.

What the fuck? Did she just ignore me? As an Italian man of privilege I was accustomed to a certain amount of deference, of which she showed me none. That was a new experience. Luckily I grew accustomed to it because her ignoring me or failing to show me deference was as Americans say, par for the course. I considered that perhaps she was a lesbian. It wasn't that far-fetched. I mean, she had to be a

lesbian if she'd failed to notice what a good-looking man I am...what a big man I am...the privilege of which I reek. I remember my internal debate being interrupted by the ringing of her phone. Unabashedly, I listened in.

'Hi, Godmommy. Yes, I'm in one piece.' Big sigh. *'Unfortunately, I'm above the Mason-Dixon Line.'* Disgusted laugh. *'And of course it's freezing.'* Her comment threw me off. *Cold?* It was fifty degrees outside. She was a southerner. Figured. Southerners acted tough, but let a 'cold front' come in and the cracks in their armor showed.

The elevator arrived stopping my debate, but not my perusal of her lush, full figure. Stepping onto the elevator, I was mildly surprised to see that we were headed to the same floor...and I was floored when I discovered that she was the brain behind the brilliant marketing of everything that mattered. She had a head for business, but she had a heart for people. Though she was coveted for her business acumen, Dr. Karlo J. Adams was praised for her advertisements that spoke out against racism, poverty, and injustice.

Her advertisements won awards; her marketing strategy increased revenues exponentially. And that is why I wanted her on my team. Unfortunately, she already had the job that she wanted, that being the highly-paid marketing director for Nigel Drystan. Uncle Nigel owned pretty much everything and thus could pay Dr. Adams whatever price she demanded. Being a smart man, he gave her double her asking price, as much time off as she wanted and full control. Uncle's trust had earned her loyalty; still knowing how much Dr. Adams hates being anywhere that's not in the south, he must've worn his voice out pleading for her to help me.

Despite their friendship, it had taken Uncle a full month just to get Dr. Adams to consider it. I don't know what he promised her but it must have cost him. When he'd called me alerting me to the fact that she had agreed to assist me, he laid down so many rules that you would've thought that I'd asked to marry his virgin daughter instead of having asked for the assistance of his top-notch marketing director. He was *my* uncle - well actually he's my godfather but I cannot go around first-naming the man even if he and

my father are best friends. As I said, he's my uncle, yet when it comes to Dr. Adams I get treated like the proverbial red-headed stepchild.

Uncle actually gave me the *'Karlo's not one of your big-tittied call girls/you treat her with respect or I'll cut your balls off'* speech. Did the man actually spend time with Dr. Adams? If he had, he wouldn't have wasted his breath. Karlo wasn't the type of woman who needed men to run interference for her; Karlo was the type of woman who rocked up and let you know that you were going to respect her. And she was mean...well, at least to me. Uncle should've plied her with the *'Dario's not scum under your shoes so attempt to treat him like a human being'* speech. But *noooooooooo*, Uncle was under the misguided notion that his Karlo was an angel.

I wanted Dr. Karlo Adams, not that I told her. Hell, I didn't even know it myself until another man showed serious interest in her. Let me qualify that statement. Men always showed interest in her, she just didn't generally return it—not because she was a *prima donna* but because she never noticed their interest. She'd made it clear that she was here to do a

job and just as soon as it was over she was in her truck and out of the door. Her announcement didn't stop the males from flocking to her. She collected friends like housewives collected knick-knacks. She had so many guys rolling with her that she could start a revolution.

When she finally appeared to be demonstrating an interest in something other than getting back to the other side of the Mason-Dixon Line, I couldn't handle it. I expected her to read my mind and hear my heart. It didn't matter that it was an unreasonable expectation. What did matter was that I wasn't the man in her life and she couldn't even consider me as a man without laughing her tempting and voluptuous ass off. I knew this because she routinely critiqued my moves with the women I had dated. Even when I was too caught up in my life to admit that I wanted her; the beast in me knew what it wanted and it didn't give a damn about sexual harassment laws, equal rights, or fairness. It wanted her, demanded her, and called to her.

When I was able to admit that I loved her, I did what any frustrated, red-blooded male in love with a

woman who routinely belittled his moves would've done: I picked fights with her—*continuously*. It was a good thing she was a strong woman, because I had one of those tempers that some people described as legendary and what she labeled as being a straight bitch. I may have intimidated lesser individuals but then, Dr. Adams wasn't a lesser anything—*which is why I called her Dr. Adams for so long, well that and the fact that I had no desire to find out what would happen if I didn't*.

We had squabbles. Well, no we didn't. I'd say something to piss her off and she would either shoot me the bird or laugh in my face. Sometimes she did both. We rarely had knock down-drag outs because a—she always won, and b—arguing with Dr. Adams required too much energy. Someone should've informed us males that an argument with a woman was never finished until they decided that it was finished.

We once had an argument that spanned two weeks. It only ended when I signed the concession that she drew up stating that I, Dario Aurelius Vittirio, had lost the argument. I only signed it to get some

peace. If I had known that she would have gone out and got it matted and framed before mounting it on her wall, I might've reconsidered. Then again, the way that she argued, perhaps not. It was over-the-line for her to shrink it down to credit card size and keep one in her pocket. Then again, she had a history of being over the line with me.

When we did argue, people took cover. Hell, if I could've I would've taken cover because I was going to have my say, and she was a southern black woman so she was definitely going to have her say. And if you've ever had the privilege of arguing with a southern woman, a world of advice: don't, because their say usually lasts a hella long time and looked a lot better. You know, I never thought that I'd ever be called a wet chunk of maggot-infested mastodon feces.

There is no where she wouldn't go to put a motherfucker in line. Case in point, other than church, there is almost no place in Creation that would save me from a cuss out and when I say no place, I mean *no* place. Dr. Adams once ruined a planned night of seduction when still having leftover insults from her why-I-wasn't-shit dissertation, she finished it

when she spotted me out on the town with a former Ms. Something or other. She only paused when my enraged date made the mistake of speaking to her with a tone. I still haven't figured out what exactly denotes a tone, but apparently my date had adopted it. And all she received for her trouble was Dr. Adams' laughter and some advice that until she grew enough ass to get the crease out of her pants she might want to reconsider bucking up to her, which was followed by a remark about her drapes probably not matching her carpet. So as you can guess, I never did get the chance to see if my date's carpet matched her drapes.

Yeah, that's why we rarely argued because losing to her was a little lesson in humility that I didn't need nor had ever experienced before her. And now being humiliated by her was a daily occurrence. I got up, groomed, took my vitamins, was chauffeured to work and then at some point in the day was told the fuck off by my beautiful, lush, too-intelligent-for-words marketing guru. The same guru who'd told me in a fit of happiness that I wasn't half of what I thought I was. I was a no name brand human being. Like most privileged white males I had a no name brand life that

included generic looks (expensive), generic game (according to her my one come on line was letting women know that I'm rich), and a generic lifestyle (the obligatory private schools, fast cars, and slim blonds).

It took us a couple of months, but we finally settled into a routine. We were getting along fine, teetering between arguments of varying degrees. But that was before *'the day'*. 'The day' was the Wednesday afternoon that she arrived late from lunch with a smile on her face that practically screamed that some other male had put it there. It wasn't that I didn't want her to smile; I just didn't want another man making her smile like *that*. I lost the tight reign I had on my temper. Instead of maneuvering, I reacted on the most base level and drove her away in the process. That was the day that I finally understood how deeply I loved her...and like she'd yelled across the office, whispered in the elevator, and told me via fax: I wasn't shit without her.

When romantics discuss the all-time greatest love stories, they probably shouldn't include ours...not because it's not romantic, but because it's full of so many words with 'fuck' as some part of it. Ah, but she

ran the gamut of the word fuck without even breaking a sweat. But when people discuss those fiery, all-consuming loves that never fail, they should speak of ours. Alone, neither of us are perfect, but we're both perfect to each other. I know that most people aren't aware of our romance, but alas, that's why I'm putting it to paper. The world will know that there once was a woman...and that *this* man loved her with everything within him.

— *Dario Aurelius Vittirio*

Chapter Two

The Beginning

Dario Aurelius Vittirio was contemplating the unusual silence in the office when his secretary interrupted his reverie. He didn't like artificial silences—he didn't trust them as they were usually succeeded by all hell breaking loose.

“Mr. Vittirio, Dr. Adams will not be meeting you for lunch today sir,” his secretary announced.

“What do you mean Dr. Adams won't be joining me for lunch today? She's always ready for lunch,” he quipped, “especially when it's my turn to treat because I've conceded yet another victory to her.” *Before yesterday. Already this day was going to crap. And to think that yesterday was the granddaddy of all 'shot to hell' days, he recalled while massaging his aching rib cage.*

“Well, sir,” she began, “she did, um, leave a voice mail.”

“Well?!” He spat the question out. “What did it say, Mrs. Smith?”

He didn’t need this—the eerie silence or Karlo’s conspicuous absence. And he definitely didn’t need his well-paid executive secretary hovering in the door stammering like a schoolgirl.

“Something regarding it being um, *El niño* so she’s heading home.”

“*El niño!?*” he yelled. *Are you fucking kidding me?* He scrubbed his hand over his jaw. “Well, then she’ll probably drag in sometime after the weekend,” he said more to himself than to Mrs. Smith.

“Um, I don’t think so sir,” Mrs. Smith began.

“The rest of the week?” he offered, already beginning to concern himself with other matters. He would discuss this impromptu vacation with Karlo when she returned. *If she was still speaking to him.*

“I believe that she plans on being gone a while, sir.”

Dario looked up to see his secretary still hovering. “What are you talking about Mrs. Smith?”

In deference to her delicate nature, he concentrated on keeping his voice level. Many of his

employees were intimidated by his large stature (*he was six and a half feet tall*), abrupt manners (*Karlo frequently informed him that he had the social skills of one who'd been kicked out of a hyena clan*), and brusque tone (*one syllable away from getting my teeth kicked in*). Nothing about him fazed Karlo one bit, because she was a grand champion at ignoring people she hated. She rarely batted an eye when he displayed his infamous temper. She would take a seat and calmly work a crossword puzzle or she would rage right back at him—*all five feet nine inches of her*.

His secretary's small voice brought him out of his reverie. "I believe that Karlo plans on being gone for a while."

"How long is a while?" he nearly exploded.

"I don't know..."

"Thank you," he interrupted.

"There's more."

"What else '*more*'?"

This day was light years beyond crap. 'More' with Karlo was generally more than the average man could handle. *Not that he was in any way average.*

Handing him an envelope, she muttered something about being at her desk, and left him alone with his foul temper to peruse the letter's contents. He actually began to sweat, being that Karlo was legendary with words. When she actually resorted to expressing her displeasure on paper it was beautiful in its succinctness, absolute in its finality, lethal in its delivery. He warily scanned the envelope with her distinctive scrawl, which had she signed the Declaration of Independence, no one would have known who the fuck John Hancock was. The eerie premonition he had earlier pressed down on him as he opened the envelope and scanned the pithy missive. Scrawled in her bold script was the following message: "*Dr. Karlo Adams, most badass marketing executive on planet earth, out.*"

Those eleven words hurt him. It must be her turn to quit since he hadn't fired her yet this week. They traded. One week she'd quit and the next week he'd fire her. They'd been doing it for the past six months. Still, she'd never actually resorted to penning her resignation. He would place this one under the glass on his desk. It was a classic resignation and one

day when she was famous for going on some kind of cussing out spree, he'd make a mint. That brought a smile (or a reasonable facsimile) to his lips.

Just to play out the charade, he pulled out a piece of company stationary and tendered yet another 'new' offer of employment. His earlier premonitions of unease were all but gone so he decided to walk it over to her office himself instead of bothering Mrs. Smith. When he walked over to her closed office door, he realized with a shudder that the silence, instead of merely being unusual, was now ominous.

Stepping into Karlo's office, he felt as if he had been kicked in the chest—again. A quick perusal of her office confirmed the veracity of her letter. She really had resigned. The playground that had been her office was now faceless and sterile. Gone were the posters of Angela Davis, Sojourner Truth, and Mary McLeod Bethune. Gone were the cans of Cheerwine. Gone was the collage of southern food that she kept under the glass of her desk to remind her of why she needed to get back home. Gone was her essence. Gone was his piece of mind. It was as if she had existed only in his imagination.

Standing motionless in the doorway, he took a moment to get himself together. If anyone noticed the ominous silence, no one commented upon it. In fact, everyone seemed to be unusually occupied, silent, and watchful. Waiting...waiting...waiting. They didn't have long to wait. At exactly ten fifteen a.m. EST, Tuesday morning, all hell officially broke loose.

Pocketing the letter, Dario walked to the window and gazed out at the bustling city below him, yet seeing none of it. Sinking into the opulent leather chair, he closed his eyes and was besieged with images of Karlo. Karlo smiling, Karlo laughing, Karlo deep in thought, Karlo patting his hand and congratulating him on his little degree from that little school in Boston as if his M.B.A. wasn't shit. Absently, he rubbed his jaw as he thought about their latest *and greatest* row.

Chapter Three

How It Went All to Hell

Dario had been having one of those days. He had a lot to argue about and no one to argue with, as Karlo was out doing goodness knew what. He had decided to wait around for her and had become increasingly angry as the minutes ticked by. For the millionth time, he wondered how long one person needed to do whatever it was that she did. She had already been gone for two hours. Normally, he didn't keep track of her comings and goings, as he was usually busy being shown deference by ladies who were infatuated with his good looks, big cock, and even bigger bank account. Lately, he was becoming increasingly aware of Karlo. Karlo was everything that all of his past dates were not. She was real and she had the intellect and personality to back it up.

She often took long lunches, using that space of time as an opportunity to research the area and the people in it. He usually didn't mind. She was as

serious about her work as she was about her play. She didn't kick back until everything was to her liking, and perfectionist that she was, sometimes that could take a while. He couldn't fault her work, or how long she took for lunch but damn it if he couldn't fault the man she went to lunch with. She didn't usually go to lunch with the same person more than twice in the same week, however, she had gone to lunch with this particular guy several times in the past month. He didn't know what was going on, but he didn't like it one bit. Dario had worked himself into quite a temper by the time Karlo returned from lunch--almost three hours later, wearing different clothes and practically glowing. He had confronted her as soon as she stepped into the office.

"Where the hell have you been?"

Accustomed to his tirades, she'd simply ignored him and continued walking to her office. He was hot on her heels. Since their arguments were legendary, the rest of his staff didn't bother paying them any attention. They were most likely simply glad that his temper was not directed at them.

"Who was the guy you went to lunch with?"

“None of your fucking business.”

“It is my business when you stay gone for three hours.”

“First off, I’m not your fucking employee. I’m here as a favor. I don’t need your damn money or your attitude. You’re killing my lunch buzz so leave.”

It was then that he commented on her clothes. “Why are you wearing different clothes?”

“You’re in rare bitch form today. Before I come back at you, let me know if you’re PMSing,” she said.

“Don’t see him again. I won’t allow it.”

Apparently Karlo had a problem with the ‘don’t’ and ‘allow’ parts of the sentence. “Don’t...Allow?” She asked in that ‘tread lightly motherfucker’ tone that she adopted when she was angered.

“Motherfucker, unless you’re channeling my momma, you need to back the fuck up. What you need to understand is that you don’t have the power to allow or disallow me to do jack when it comes to my personal life.”

“Don’t see him again.”

“Dario, I’m going home before this gets out of hand. I suggest that you do the same. Get some

pussy or something to take the edge off of your attitude,” she said as she picked up her briefcase and walked out of her office.

“Are you sleeping with him?”

Karlo stopped mid-step. “Why, Dario? Do you want to fuck him?”

“I mean it, Karlo...”

“Or what? Dario, you need to tread lightly. We can debate almost any subject but one subject that will never be up for discussion is my sexuality and what I choose to do with it. I know that males have a history of controlling the sexuality of women, but this is not the context. And though **you** may be that type of man, I can assure you that **I’m** not the type of woman who will put up with that shit.”

“You might not be **that** woman, but you’re **my** woman,” he challenged.

“You’ll never be man enough to handle me being your woman.”

“That is where you are grossly incorrect.”

“Whatever, motherfucker. I’m out,” she said as she headed to the elevator.

Dario let her walk out, knowing that she wouldn't get far. He had plans to make. Walking over to Mrs. Smith's desk, he commandeered her computer and typed up a letter. Luckily, it was a short letter and they were on the thirtieth floor. With any luck, Karlo would still be awaiting the elevator. And even if she wasn't, he could race down thirty flights of stairs and be at the ground floor before her.

Strolling out to the lobby, he smiled seeing the hot, full-figured Karlo stamping her foot, impatiently awaiting the elevator. He simply leaned against the doors of his office instinctively knowing that unlike Lot's wife, Karlo wouldn't look back. He waited in the background allowing her to think that he'd remained where she left him. It was only after the elevator arrived that he moved. The doors had just about closed when he shouldered his way in. He almost smiled noting the look of disgust that Karlo shot at him.

"Were you trying to leave without saying farewell?"

"Yeah, I was," she snapped without looking at him.

“I hate to inform you of this but there will never be a farewell between us.”

“You know Dario, stalker is not a good look for you.”

“Perhaps, but despite you thinking me all kinds of sorry bastards, you know that I would never lay my hand on any woman in any way that was not pleasurable to her.”

“Yes, I do know that, but it doesn’t make you any less of an asshole, Dario.”

“I am many things, an asshole among the lengthy list, but first and foremost, I am yours.”

“The problem with your little assertion is that I don’t want you...or your generic lifestyle.”

“Not yet, but that is because I just now recognized this myself. Once I begin to court you properly, you will want me. In fact, you will never want to be apart from me.”

“So do you read a lot of romance books, Dario? Maybe those lines work on those one-dimensional women you date, but I demand more in my intimate relations and definitely a lot more in my men.”

“I have more of everything that you need. More money, more cock, more time to fill you with this cock,” he drawled.

“I have my own money and a big cock in the drawer of my nightstand. I don’t need your generic cock or the generic sex that it produces.”

“I might be generic everything else, but I assure you that my lovemaking isn’t generic.”

“Yeah, whatever, but I still don’t need it.”

“You may not need it but you want it, don’t you?”

*“**You** don’t even want it Dario, because you keep giving it away to any woman with pleading on her tongue, submission in her stature, big titties and a pussy that will admit you.”*

“That hurt, Karlo.”

“I meant it to, Dario. Being a privileged white male you may have the privilege of being spoon-fed bullshit, but I have neither the privilege nor the inclination to dress up reality for you or anyone else.”

“Luckily, I’m not easily hurt. Go home and rest. I will have dinner sent to you this evening.”

“I plan to rest, Dario, but I don’t need your guilt offering of dinner. I have on my big girl panties so I can handle making my own dinner.”

“This is not a guilt offering, Karlo. I merely want you to rest as much as possible so that you may conserve your strength because this afternoon I’m going to my physician and getting tested for any and everything that might cause you concern. And soon after, I’m going to slide those big girl panties off of you and fill you with my big boy dick.”

Chapter Four

Waiting for the Shit to Hit the Fan

Dario had a hard dick just reliving that fight and the subsequent elevator ride. No wonder Karlo had resigned. Had he expected anything less? Yes. He'd expected Karlo to stay and fight him because that's what she did. She never backed down and that's why he respected her.

Though he was sure that she wouldn't back down, a tiny part of him was concerned. Karlo didn't back down, but occasionally she did relegate people to the you-and-your-entire-lineage-do-not-exist-to-me file. That was a file that he really didn't want to be in. Whereas Karlo who was telling someone that they weren't shit was feisty and passionate; Karlo who acted like someone didn't exist was cold...and not ice cold, but absolute zero cold. He shivered just thinking about it. No, he definitely didn't want to be on *that* list.

He shrugged his massive shoulders and smiled. He had to think positive. Karlo would be back...especially when the calls began. And they would. How could they not? After all, he was Dario Aurelius Vittirio, oldest son of the prominent Vittirio family of *Non Saremo Mossi*, Italy; CEO of Vittirio Enterprises; heir to the Vittirio title, and six and half feet and two hundred forty pounds of alpha man that didn't acknowledge surrender.

Yeah, he was all that and more, but Karlo didn't care about those things. She wouldn't be back because of his money, his title, or his prestige; she'd be back simply to tell him once more to fuck off. And he'd given her a big reason to tell him that. He relaxed in his chair and smirked considering his scheme. Yeah, it was below the belt, but Karlo was his and he needed all of the help that he could get to bring operation 'Make Dr. Karlo J. Adams, Signora Vittirio' a reality.

He'd made sure that the copy of Friday's paper was delivered to her door and the doors of all of the people on her emergency contact list. Well not the whole paper, just the society page, which announced important goings on. And though there were

undoubtedly important events going on, the only one that concerned him was the announcement involving him.

He smiled every time he read it. And Mrs. Smith had smiled when she sent it—of course she'd spell-checked it and inserted all of the details that he'd inadvertently left out. There was a reason that he liked that woman. He'd had a smile on his face ever since reading it.

Dario Aurelius Vittirio (with his lowly MBA that his intended informed him wasn't jack), son of Augustinus and Theresa Vittirio, Duca and Duchessa of Non Saremo Mossi, Italy announces his upcoming wedding to Dr. Karlo J. Adams (whose brilliance is only surpassed by her beauty and courage), daughter of Drs. Aveolela "Avie" and Booker Douglas Adams of Atlanta, Georgia. Dario asks that you pray for him as his intended has already told him that he wasn't worthy of her. She's right but he doesn't intend to listen to her no's and if he has to drag her down the aisle—so be it.*

He wondered how pissed Karlo was going to be when she was bombarded by calls from her family...and his family...and the media. He wondered how beautiful she would look stomping down the aisle giving him that *'you're not shit'* look. He wondered if he was going to be able to let her out of his bed before a full month had passed. Hell, he wondered if he was going to be able to let her out of his bed...ever.

Yes, Karlo would be back, but first she'd try reaching him by phone. He just had to make sure that he wasn't reachable. It wasn't that he was scared—quite the opposite. He wanted her to come to him. Smiling, he paged his secretary.

“Mrs. Smith, when Dr. Adams calls, advise her that I am unavailable to take calls,” he instructed.

“And if she asks if you are present?” she inquired.

Mrs. Smith was a smart woman, which is why she was his executive secretary.

“Let her know that I am indeed in the office, just that I'm not taking any calls,” he smiled before disconnecting.

Sitting back in his chair he couldn't help but smile. He'd paid an exorbitant amount to get his test results back the next day, but it was worth every penny. Patting the paper that resided in his breast pocket, he sat back and awaited the calls that he knew he was going to receive. And peeking in his drawer he looked once more at the ring that he'd selected for Karlo. He'd selected a red diamond because it was rare in nature like her, and the color complemented her fire. He called Karlo *Fiamma* (flame) because she was his *calore* (heat) and without her he was cold—an endless arctic that saw the sun but didn't feel it. Yes, she was coming...all day and night long when he got her beautiful self under him.

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Karlo could not believe Dario's fucking nerve. She was going to cuss his fine ass out. Oh shit, where did that descriptor come from? First, Dario conveniently ignored the fact that she'd told him to fuck off. Then he sent her an absolutely scrumptious dinner, like that five-star cuisine was going to stop her

from getting all up in his shit. Truth be told, the dinner didn't do it but the delivery of Bojangles sweet tea had brought her temper down from boiling to a light simmer. Instead of outright killing Dario, she might be placated with a light maiming of him, she'd thought as she swirled her iced tea in her glass. By the time that she'd finished off the first half gallon, she was feeling merciful, so she toyed with the idea of only having one of her brothers—as opposed to all five of them—beat the shit out of Dario.

Yeah, she was feeling good...until that first fucking phone call. You know that don't-have-shit-to-do-and-going-to-enjoy-every-fucking-moment-of-it buzz you get after spending several hours indulging yourself? You know the one that sees you dressed in your favorite pjs, lounging in a sumptuous bed, surrounded by peace, with your favorite music CD soothing you...the latest Shara Azod erotic in one hand, and your favorite vibrator in the other hand? Now imagine you getting to the good bits, your pulse is accelerating, your body is flushed, the hero has finally gotten his wish and has the heroine (lucky bitch) underneath his massive, heavily-muscled body

and...your motherfucking phone rings. And you're going to ignore it but it's your momma threatening to destroy the entire crop of tea if you don't pick up the phone right this very instant.

Imagine picking up the phone and listening to an irate woman launch into a mixture of Samoan and southern, cussing and praying, asking and telling. And then imagine said irate woman expecting an answer to a question she hasn't even asked. And before you can form the first syllable, imagine her backing up her threats, accusations, and deliberations with the momma trump card...the *'I carried you for nine months and endured x hours of labor'* accusation.

First of all, after her momma's tirade, she still didn't know what was going on. Second, she was a grown damn woman with her own house, car, and Ph. D....and when she'd made the mistake of letting those words pass her lips, she was a grown damn woman with her own house, car, Ph. D. and her own set of bleeding eardrums because her momma had gone straight into *'you-got-one-mo'-gin'* mode. What a fucking buzz kill. But what really killed it even more

than getting told off good and proper, was hearing Dario's name. *What in the hell?*

"I cannot believe that you are getting married and did not tell me. I didn't know that you even liked boys!" her mother accused.

"Um, Momma, what are you talking about? I'm not getting married."

"It says so in the paper," her momma said right before reading the notice.

Karlo listened in absolute disbelief. *Dario's parents were royalty?* No wonder he was such a fucking cunt. And he was so fucking dead when she got her hands on him.

"Momma, I don't know what's going on but I'm not getting married. I may, however, be obliged to flee the country after I have a word with Dario."

"Is Dario a good boy?" her Momma interrupted.

"Ha, maybe in a parallel universe world, but in this world, he's an a-hole, Momma."

"But he wants to marry you," her Momma continued.

"Well, yeah. That's because I'm hot, hella intelligent, and I have a kickass job that gives me

playoff tickets to every major sporting event as a perk,” she threw in.

“Have you been giving that boy a hard time?” her Momma inquired.

“Absolutely,” she answered unabashedly, smiling at the way her Momma kept referring to Dario Aurelius Vittirio as a boy.

“Young lady,” her Momma began.

“Yes, Momma?” she asked.

“What’s going on between you two?”

“Dario is the quintessential privileged, white male accustomed to having his own way. He doesn’t want me, Momma; he simply wants to win.”

“And has he lost much?”

“Only every single time.”

“Being that this privileged boy continues to lose, why do you think that he continues to play, *pepe*?” her Momma asked.

Karlo had been her Momma’s *pepe* for way too long not to recognize when she was setting her up. She just couldn’t think of a way to avoid stepping into her Momma’s well-oiled trap. Sighing, she continued knowing that she was being led exactly where her

Momma wanted her to go...and that she couldn't do a damn thing to stop it.

"Because he has an ego, Momma."

"Well then, despite being privileged and having that shiny MBA from that ivy-league school, he must not be too smart," her Momma mused.

"Momma, that's not fair. Dario may not be as smart as me, but he isn't stupid."

"Hmm," her Momma sighed sounding all unconvinced. "He doesn't sound very smart to me, *pepe*."

"He just needs to stick with what he knows."

"And what is that, *pepe*?" her Momma asked.

"Looking pretty, making money, and women that never say '*no*.'"

"So you admit that he is good-looking?" her Momma asked.

"Yes, but," she began.

"Does he have viable sperm?"

"WHAT?!"

"Does. He. Have. Viable. Sperm?" her Momma reiterated.

Karlo could not believe the words coming from her mother's mouth. What in the hell do you say to a question that came way the hell out of left field? You can't exactly cuss your mother out, so what do you do?

"I don't know, Momma. I don't care. I'll be sure to ask him when I deliver the *coup de grâce*."

"You want to make love with him, don't you?"

"Momma, I'm..."

"About to tell me a lie. You want to make love to him so why don't you?"

"Mom-ma," Karlo whined.

"Kar-lo," her mother sing-songed.

"Momma, why are you taking his side? I'm the wronged party."

"Yes, darling. You are the wronged party, yet still you defend him. "

"I was merely stating the truth, Momma."

"Well since you're being all truthful with me, why don't you be truthful to yourself and admit that you want this smart, good-looking boy who's so crazy about you that he is trying everything that he can think of to make it up to you."

“By telling everyone that we’re getting married even though a) he never asked me; and, b) I can’t stand him.”

“Does he know that you can’t stand him?”

“The entire office knows.”

“And yet he gives his arch nemesis the one weapon that can slay him?”

“Over-the-line, Momma. Just because Mr. International Playboy Millionaire Duke-in-waiting and I aren’t best friends forever doesn’t mean that we’re arch enemies.”

“Really?” her Momma practically drawled before lapsing into silence.

How she managed to sound all smug even when silent baffled Karlo. Dammit, Karlo knew that her Momma wasn’t finished speaking but she also knew that her Momma wouldn’t say another word until she prompted her to do so.

Karlo closed her eyes and blew out a breath.

“Okay, Momma. Say your piece,” she said defeated.

“No, no. I don’t want to be accused of being a pushy momma,” she sighed dramatically.

So this is how the fly felt when staring into the eyes of the spider.

“Momma,” she prompted.

“Karlo, do you know that in addition to my M.D., that I also have a Ph.D.”

“Yes, Momma.”

“Having all of these letters behind my name isn’t what makes me smart; it’s what makes me paid. Now you may not have an M.D., but you do have a Ph.D. so I know that I don’t need to finish my sentence to get my point across. Saying that, I saw that boy’s picture on the internet.”

“Okay.”

“He would make beautiful grandbabies.”

“Oh. My. Goodness.”

“And by the way, I’ve already over-nighted your medical records.”

“Great. Maybe he can check my teeth also,” Karlo pouted.

“I’m a thorough physician so I included your dental records in the package, *pepe*.”

“You’ve drunk the Dario juice haven’t you?”

“No, but perhaps you should. You might find it rather enjoyable. Now about this wedding...”

“It’s not going to happen.”

“So, I’m going to have to go shopping. If Dario’s mother is a duchess, she’ll definitely look glamorous. She might have more money than me, but I cannot let her think for one moment that she has more style than I do.”

Karlo wanted to interrupt but her momma was so past listening, so she simply sat on the phone and waited for a chance to jump in.

Ten minutes later she finally got her chance, only to be cut off again.

“Momma, I’m not getting married.”

“Well make that decision while you’re all up under him screaming his name or while he’s all up under you screaming yours,” her Momma said before hanging up.

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Dario Aurelius Vittirio was due an ass-whipping of monumental proportions. After her momma had

called her, the rest of the family decided to call. After her cousins (three times removed) dug up her number and called, she'd decided that she'd had enough. Still a little bit pissed about Dario's assholishness, that had led to the interruption of her groove and her sleep, she'd called his private line only to get his voice mail. Oh fuck that, if she was going to be bothered, so was he. That is why she'd re-routed her phone calls to his private line. Yeah, she was a bitch like that when so pushed. Completing that little chore, she dimmed the lights and went to sleep with thoughts of revenge dancing in her head.

Chapter Five

Revenge Is a Wish Best Served Gold

Rising, Karlo stretched languorously. It was amazing what a good rest she'd had once she'd decided on a plan of action. Having seen to her toilet, she made yet another call to the office. And yet again, she was told that though Dario was in, he wasn't taking any calls. So Dario wanted a face-to-face battle. Fine, if that's what Dario wanted; that's what she'd give that asshole. Fine, hot, body-like-a-gym-ad, asshole.

Dario was getting a special cussing out for this and she decided that she should look especially good while delivering it. Looking at her attire she smiled. Rocking a gold three-quarters length lace camisole with sheer gold tap pants that accentuated her mocha-colored skin, she felt decadent. Though she rocked kickass business attire, her real fetishes were the kind of clothes that made a woman glad to be a woman. Looking at her handmade knee-length black leather boots with the three-inch heel that sported her

interlocking initials near the top, she made a quick decision. Selecting her favorite body butter, she slathered it on before stepping into her bring-a-motherfucker-to-his-knees boots. Wrapping herself into her black leather swing jacket which fell to the top of her boots, she removed the clip from her hair allowing the decadent curls to cascade down her back. Glossing her lips with her coconut-flavored lip gloss, she admired herself in the full-length mirror. Winking at herself, she grabbed up a handful of condoms, stuffed them into her designer briefcase right next to that handy packet of medical records that arrived that morning and walked out of the door. She had a man to bring to his knees.

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Dressed as she was and wearing her *Breakfast at Tiffany* shades, she looked nothing like the high-powered businesswoman that she was and everything like the kind of woman that other women kept their men away from ... and that's the look she was going for. Workplace Karlo came to work with the frying

pan; but Outside of Work Karlo planned to leave with the fire. Making sure to arrive at lunchtime so she'd have plenty of space to cuss Dario out, she strolled into the office like she was fixing to set it off ... and she was. She didn't look to the left or right, nor did she stop at Mrs. Smith's desk to announce herself. She simply strode straight to Dario's door and strutted in like her name was on the building.

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Dario was sitting at his desk staring out at the skyline, wondering all kinds of things. He wondered if the view was worth ten grand a month, he wondered how Napoli—his football team—would finish in the World Cup, but mostly he wondered where in the fuck Karlo was. She needed to get her feisty self here. Dammit, she should've already been here, especially after his last move. He knew that she was aware of what he'd done, especially after he'd spent an hour fielding the calls that she'd re-routed to his personal line. Yeah, wherever she was, she was good and mad...and tempting. Before he could finish wishing

that she was here to confront him, his door slammed open.

“You have an ass whipping coming!” he heard Karlo yell.

Smiling, he turned around. Dario was prepared to feign irritation when his eyes took in the vision before him. It was Karlo, but not the Karlo to which he was accustomed. He could barely keep himself off of the business suit-wearing Karlo who wore the let’s-take-over-something look. There was no way in any kind of hell he could keep his hands off of the fuck-me-outfit-wearing Karlo who wore the I-know-you-want-me look. The everyday Karlo was hell on his libido; this version was working it raw...and he wanted both versions with intensity.

Clearing his throat, he asked, “Why is that?”

“Oh don’t even act like you don’t know why. There are at least ten thousand reasons you deserve a beat down, but I’ll start with the primary reason.”

“Which is?”

“You’re a tool.”

“Well that doesn’t exactly narrow it down, Karlo.”

“Pick anything that you’ve done. Whatever it is, it’s probably pissed me the fuck off.”

“But I’m just sitting here, Karlo. I haven’t done anything.” *Yet.*

“And that’s the first fucking problem. You’re just sitting there. Get your punk ass up out of that chair and face me,” she challenged.

It took everything in him not to smile. Making a big production out of straightening his tie, he finally made his way around the desk to face the fiery bundle of woman that he wanted.

“Yes, Karlo?” he drawled.

“You make me so sick.”

“You wound me, Karlo.”

“Not yet, but soon,” she said as she thrust the newspaper at him.

Catching the newspaper, he lifted an eyebrow. “So asking you to be my wife was offensive?”

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Karlo could not believe Dario’s fucking nerve. *How dare he sit there looking all fine and*

nonchalant? And did he just smirk at her? *Oh no he didn't.* Fuck that. The gloves were coming off...well actually, the coat was coming off. Then they'd see just who was left smirking. Palming the condom she'd stuck in her coat pocket, she set her briefcase down, kicked the chair from in front of his desk and shimmied out of her coat.

Noting his eyes go dark, she shot him a take-that-you-fine-motherfucker look.

"I know that you did not wear *that* outside," Dario growled.

"I know that you're not trying to front like this doesn't turn you on," she countered.

"Irrelevant. That is not an outfit that is supposed to be worn outside of our bedroom!" he spat.

"I know that you're not even trying to tell me what to wear considering the outfits that some of those chicks you've dated wore."

"Those women were not my wife," he hissed.

"And neither am I, Dario. Now shut the fuck up and listen. Since you're so interested in playing my *marito* (*husband*), then I'm demanding what I'm due

as a wife,” she said as she pushed him in the direction of the couch.

Taking advantage of his surprise, she straddled him and jerked his shirt apart so not giving a shit about the buttons that went flying. Jerking his t-shirt from his dress slacks, she pulled it up, exposing his well-sculpted torso *aka*—her appetizer. Running her hands up his abdomen, she reveled in the feel of his tight, hard muscles, and the tiny tremors that her touch elicited. *Mercy*. Dario was a whole lot of man...and she was going to enjoy every bit of him...several times.

Licking her lips, she bent her head and tasted him...and her taste buds stood up and walked it out. Using her right hand to unfasten his belt, she took a moment to gather herself. Flattening her tongue, she started at the bottom of his abs and slowly traced her way up the impressive ridges that comprised his abdomen. It was a daring expedition, far surpassing anything that Lewis, Clark and York could’ve hoped for in their wildest dreams. Over and up she went, savoring his slightly salty taste and reveling in his scent. Dario tasted like adventure and smelled like

come hither, and she was definitely going to accept the invitation that his body was issuing.

Sliding her body over his she enjoyed the meshing of hard under soft and curves against angles. And from the growls emanating from him and the way his cock was grinding into her, so did he. Having finished her exploration of Dario's abs, she smiled and made her way over to his nipples. Gently tugging with her teeth, she felt him inhale. Smiling, she reached up and stroked his face savoring the feel of his strong jaw before switching to his other nipple.

Releasing his nipples, she sat up and placed his hands on her silk and lace covered breasts. Taking a moment to enjoy the feel of Dario's big hands on her highly-sensitized skin, she closed her eyes and leaned her head back as she gently ground her hips into him. Damn, damn, damn. She shouldn't have started this until after Dario was undressed. Her pussy was impatient to be impaled on that cock, but before she could do anything about rectifying the situation, Dario roared.

Dario was enjoying the sights of Karlo too much to immediately realize the taunt that she threw out. Hell, he would've been hard-pressed to identify it on a regular day because Karlo threw out challenges so much that she needed a referee to walk around declaring *hajime* (*begin*) so that her opponents knew that they were about to engage in a battle. Most of them would still lose, but at least they'd know that it was coming.

Though he enjoyed gazing at how well she filled out that bra and panty set, he was riding a dangerous mix of jealousy and anger. *How dare she wear that out?* Yes, yes, she had on a coat over it but still. That was attire for their bedroom. Karlo might be the smartest person he knew, but she was wrong when she'd accused him of wanting to play her *marito*; he wasn't playing at a damn thing. He was going to be her husband.

And as her husband, the first thing that he needed to show his *moglie* (wife) was that although he wasn't her boss—and therefore couldn't tell her what to do—when it came to lovemaking, he ran things. He

definitely planned on telling the beautiful and voluptuous Karlo what to do...and the first command he was going to give her was to say 'I do' at the appropriate time. Right after she accepted, he'd give her the rest of her directives. Directives such as *'get on your back,' 'tell me who this body belongs to', 'touch me.'*

But before he could exercise his rights as her husband, first he had to prove his desire to have her as a wife. And beyond that he had to make her believe that his wanting her wasn't simply the whim of a wealthy playboy, but a deep need. Karlo was an intrinsic part of him. True, he could live without her...but he wouldn't want to. The last few days had proved that to him. Now he had to prove to her that his feelings did not stem from his sexual desire, but were instead rooted in a respect and love that were strong enough to weather the storm of her whys, the barrage of her doubts, and the reality of their differences. He loved and appreciated the whole her and wanted her to love the whole him in return.

So far none of his standby quality traits had impressed Karlo. Even discovering that he was royalty

hadn't moved her. Though it frustrated him, the fact that Karlo liked and despised him solely on his merits as a human being instead of his net worth and social standing stroked the don't-give-a-damn parts of him. Dario smiled knowing why it was Karlo could do this. It was because she didn't have a need for his money or titles because she had a healthy self image and she'd earned every title and every penny that she had with hard work.

Still, despite being a millionaire in her own right, despite having the title of '*doctor*', and despite being beautiful, Karlo was first and foremost a woman. And though modern women in the industrialized context didn't need for a male to drag a dead animal back to the cave, they still needed to know that a man could take care of them. And as much as he wanted her he had to prove to her that he placed her wellbeing before his wants. Reluctantly, he set her from him. Looking into her eyes, he breathed.

"Karlo, I want you but you have to decide."

"I've already decided, Dario," she said as she handed him a condom.

Looking at the condom, he took it and tossed it aside. “Not about making love...about being mine.”

“You don’t have to say that,” she began.

“I’ve never said it before.”

“Because you’ve never had to,” she stated.

Dario looked at Karlo and almost wept from the emotion in her eyes. It wasn’t sadness. It was acceptance of how things are. And the way things are often excluded women like her. Before he’d met Karlo, he’d excluded women like her (bigger than a size six, IQ higher than his, and an ego that was willing to go toe-to-toe with his).

Karlo was too much woman for the old Dario, but she was just right for the man he was becoming. Pulling her to him, he kissed her mouth and answered her question. “No, I never had to, but the reason that I never said it was because I never wanted to.”

He watched Karlo as he spoke. Though she said no words her eyes told him all that he needed to know. She was giving him a chance.

“I have my medical certification in my jacket pocket. I want you to know that you are safe with me.”

“I have my medical papers too. They’re in my briefcase.”

“In that case, may I?” he asked.

“Yes,” she breathed.

Moving his hands over her breasts, he grabbed her hips and dragged her closer. He took her mouth in a deep kiss before lifting her in his arms. Sitting up, he waited for Karlo to wrap her legs around his waist while keeping those pleasure-giving lips on his. Taking her up on her offer, he sank his hands deeper into the flesh of her hips and rose from the couch easily supporting her weight. When he straightened to his full height, he walked over to his desk. Without relinquishing her lips or his secure hold on her, he fumbled in his drawer and located the ring. Taking it from the safety of its box, he removed Karlo’s hand from where it was buried in his hair.

“I’m not the same man, Karlo. I’m not the same man that you first met.”

“I know, Dario. I don’t expect you to be the same man you were yesterday or the day before.”

“You deserve so much more than I’ll probably ever be. I hope to become the man you deserve, but right now I’m not there.”

“The fact that you want to get there is enough.”

“Am I enough for you?” he asked.

“More than enough,” she answered.

“Will you take this flawed man?” he asked as he slid the ring onto her finger.

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Karlo was busy trying to get her mack on when Dario decided to take over. Dammit. She was about to tear him a new one when she felt him hesitate...and then ask her to marry him.

“Yes, Dario,” she answered before retreating into silence. Silence was called for as there was something sacred in that act...so sacred that she didn’t bother looking at the ring. It wasn’t that she didn’t care about the ring. Knowing Dario it would be an incredible work of art, but despite the beauty and expense of it, the ring would always pale in comparison to what it symbolized.

In the past few months she'd witnessed the gamut of Dario's emotions. That is, she'd seen him furious, insolent, arrogant, bored, and smirky...and for the most part, she'd ignored them. But the Dario before her was a Dario she'd never before witnessed. He looked at her with such intensity she felt the need to check for scorch marks. Passion dripped from his person. Passion spilled from his eyes and deliberation underlined his touch. She almost shrunk away from Dario, not because she was afraid of him but because she was afraid of herself...afraid that she would lose herself in him...and not notice or for that matter even care if she did happen to notice.

The man before her was raw, completely stripped of his social polish and giving the middle finger to all expectations that weren't his own. This was a Dario that gave her pause. His body language demanded that she submit while his eyes pleaded for acceptance. Though she had no problem denying him a victory in their skirmishes, this was not a skirmish. This moment was watershed and every moment that led up to it divinely planned. Their love was sacrosanct and she could not deny him her honesty

because to do so would be to deny God. And she honestly wanted, needed, and loved...yes, loved...this man. Saying yes with her eyes before singing it through lips dewy from their kisses, she melded her softness to Dario's hardness and pulled him down for a kiss.

"Dario," she breathed. "Dario, Dario, Dario."

"Karlo," he exhaled. "*Fiamma, Fiamma, Fiamma. Scaldarmi* (warm me). *Confortarmi col suo calore* (comfort me with your heat). *Scaldarmi così sento sempre l'estate nelle sue braccia* (warm me so that I always feel summer in your arms). *Consumarmi con la sua passion* (consume me with your passion). *Fondere la mia indifferenza col suo calore* (melt away my indifference with your fire).

Every man has a testimony. Lincoln had the Gettysburg Address; Prince had that guitar rift in Purple Rain; Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth had Birmingham; and, Dario had his confession. And it was among the best things that she'd ever heard.

Karlo wasn't sure if Dario knew that he'd lapsed into Italian or that she spoke conversational Italian. Though she didn't know every word he uttered, she

knew every word had meaning. The exact translation may not have registered in her mind, but her body understood his intent and knew that Dario's words were praise. Arching into him, she wrapped her legs around him pressing her body into him and basking in the feel of his words of praise, the strength of his body and the hardness of his cock.

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When Dario heard Karlo's yes he couldn't stop the words that poured from him. With her fire, Karlo exposed his lifestyle as unfulfilling; his women as wastes of his time; his arrogance as unimpressive. Without trying, she crashed the gates around his privilege, settled in and did what she damned well pleased with his stuff. Karlo tormented him; she challenged him; she gave him no quarter and then demanded more. Somewhere along the way he gave her access to his id and ego and in doing so gave him access to himself. And it was within him that he learned that his life was too big without her in it. Too big, too empty, and too lonely.

She deserved more but all he had to give her was all that he was...as fucked up as he was. And right now, she was tempting him with her body, with her fire, with her everything. And he was going to take her up on it.

Pulling her plump bottom lip with his teeth, he captured her moans on his tongue and breathed promises and pleases into her mouth. Grinding his cock into the vee of her thighs, he groaned feeling her lock her legs in the small of his back. Gently pushing her back on the desk he kissed a trail down her neck before feasting on her breasts. The chorus of moans that escaped from those lips caused him to pull back and look at the picture she made.

Karlo was woman. Eyes closed, back arched, lips parted in pleasure, breasts decorated with his marks, nipples wet with his saliva, his ring on her finger, she was everything, everything. When she opened her eyes and locked in on him and whispered his name, he was broken, his control was gone, and his world became her. Karlo. *Fiamma. Moglie.*

Karlo was on fire with need. Dario was loving her so good and she'd only had his mouth. What would happen when he invaded her with his beautiful, sculpted fingers and stroked her with his cock? Would she go up in flames? When Dario stopped moving, she opened her eyes and looked into his, and saw...inside of him. Gasping, she pulled him closer and took him into her hands. She needed him. She needed him now. Somewhere along the way, he'd lost the rest of his clothes. And somewhere along the way she'd lost her inhibitions and he'd lost his arrogance, so the only things that separated them were the tiny scraps of bra and panty. Not able to wait a moment longer, she reached down and ripped off her own lingerie heedless of its cost or the consequences of her actions.

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She was already temptation, but when she ripped off her panties and flung them across the room, she may as well have waved a flag in front of a bull or poked a grizzly with a stick. He was already aware of her scent but without panties containing her nectar

and with her voluptuous thighs wide open in invitation, he could only growl out his acceptance of her challenge. Dropping to his knees he roughly spread her open with his fingers, bent his head and took a sip from her fountain of youth.

Dario was not a novice to cunnilingus. Nor was he a novice to a woman's body. He knew how women reacted to his touch. He knew all of that...but what he didn't know was how he'd react to the taste and feel of Karlo. One touch and he was smitten; one taste and he lost all control. Shoving his face into her he lapped at her clit like his life depended on it. Like ripe fruit, she was sweet, juicy, and succulent. Like wine in massive quantities, she was intoxicating. He couldn't get his face in close enough; couldn't get his tongue in deep enough. Dragging her thighs over his shoulders he used his big hands to spread her wider. He enjoyed the feel of her ass in his hands, the scent of her arousal in his nostrils and the flavor of her nectar on his tongue.

Fervently, he worked her clit with his tongue. He sucked it. He licked it. He shoved his tongue as far in her as he could get it and added his fingers to the

mix. He worked her pussy to multiple orgasms in an effort to release her juice. His face was in so deep that he caught her nectar before gravity had time to bring it to him.

He ate like a barbarian without etiquette or concern for anything save sating his hunger. And he hungered for Karlo. He knew that he sounded like an animal as he feasted—not because he could hear anything with her thighs wrapped around him so tightly—but because he felt the vibrations emanating from his own chest.

He felt Karlo attempting to drag him away from his meal and he couldn't have that. He wasn't stopping until he was good and full. Lifting his head he growled at her and snapped a warning before returning between her thighs.

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Oh. My. Damn. Karlo could do nothing but lay there as Dario ate her pussy. Oh. My. Damn. This motherfucker was the business when it came to eating some pussy. She'd had oral before, well, she thought

she had. One also thinks they've flown before...that is until they fly in a private, customized jet. One also thinks that they've reclined in a chair before...until they experience the Tantra Chair.TM She thought she'd had her pussy eaten...until Dario had dropped between her thighs and proved that she hadn't. Damn, he was good. So good. Too good. She'd already had a handful of orgasms but she wanted more. Pulling his hair to indicate that she wanted more, she was surprised when Dario finally released her clit.

Dario dragged his tongue away and looked into her eyes...and growled. That motherfucker actually growled at her like she was encroaching on *his* territory. She was about to cuss him out when he gave one last snap and went back to eating. Oh, no he didn't. It was game on now.

Digging her heels deeper into his back, she used her lower body strength and dragged him closer. Thrusting her pussy deeper into his face she was about to flip him over when that pussy-eating expert hit her spot and hummed out his pleasure. She arched so far off of the desk she imagined that she looked as if she

was floating in mid-air. She couldn't think; all she could was feel...and shout out motherfucker, motherfucker, motherfucker.

One moment she was floating and the next thing she knew she'd flipped them both off of the desk and had Dario pinned under her. Taking a moment to moan out her appreciation of his body, she stroked his cock and watched him shudder. Then she moved down and cupped his sac testing its heavy weight. The diva smiled as she watched him throw back his head and moan. He reached for her and she danced away before coming back and settling herself over him. She waited one heartbeat...one Mississippi, and then a few more...two Mississippi, three Mississippi, four. Almost violently she slammed herself down the length of his hard cock.

She got the vapors before she was fully seated. Throwing her head back she howled. Not moaned, not screamed, but howled. Biting her bottom lip, she tightened her grip on his hips and rocked into him. She lifted up before crashing back down. Though fucking him was hard work, she couldn't slow her fast pace.

The sounds of skin slapping against skin mixed with the sounds of Dario's grunts and her howls echoed in the room. When she tired Dario simply grabbed her hips and took over the control. Being stronger, he was able to speed up the ride.

Their lovemaking was raw; their movements frenzied. Her curls whipped around her head in time to the crazy beat that she and Dario set. She tattooed a beat on Dario's abs with the palms of her hands. Dario added the boom to their song when he slammed his feet into the floor.

It was so good. So good. So good. She came and it wasn't enough. She was coming, yet she wanted more. Dario snapped her control. Part of her despised him for being able to do that. That's the part that battled him for dominance.

True, he might be controlling their pace but he couldn't control her body. She put her entire body weight into the down strokes. She clinched her muscles on every up stroke, forcing cusses from his mouth and hisses from his throat.

"Let go, Karlo."

"No," she said as she continued her assault.

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Dario had never had a woman steal his control or battle him for dominance. Then again, he'd never had Karlo. Physically smaller, Karlo didn't let him dominate her; she made him battle for the right to try and do so. And though every touch was laced with love, it was a battle.

Gritting his teeth in an effort to stave off his orgasm, he rolled her under him. Though he heard a litany of clangs and thuds, he paid them no attention. Instead he zeroed in on Karlo. She was beyond beautiful. Passion graced her body, challenge blazed in her eyes and taunts fell from her lips. "Fuck! Bastard! Motherfucker! Now!" she screamed.

Taken out of context her words didn't make sense, but when coupled with the pleasure on her face and the contortions of her body, it made perfect sense. Karlo spoke a language only he could understand and he answered in kind.

Linking her thigh over his forearm, he sunk into her heat. Exhaling a chorus of grunts, he pounded into her with relish. He didn't back off. Even when he

felt himself slipping, he merely braced his foot against something sturdy and kept stroking. He stroked into her so deep he felt he could lose himself in her. He stroked so hard their pelvic bones collided. And through it all, Karlo not only took it, she demanded more.

He wasn't sure how they ended up across the other side of his office, nor did he really care. As much as he enjoyed her body, he had to get her on something softer. Spying the sofa, he rolled to his feet. Pulling her up, he barely gave her time to shout out her outrage before bending her over the couch and sinking into her from behind.

"Fuck!" he roared.

She was so tight. Her pussy was so good. It was all his.

"Mine!" he roared. "Say it!" he demanded.

"Fuck you!" she answered as she slammed her voluptuous ass into his groin.

"Tell me!" he reiterated.

"Make me, Dario."

Grabbing handfuls of breasts, he preceded to do just that. He slammed into her and backed off. He

remained still knowing that having to wait drove her to the edge. When she turned around and demanded his cock, he grabbed a fistful of curls and forced her head back.

“Mine,” he declared before taking her lips in a bruising kiss.

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Karlo didn't know how she got bent over the sofa. She only knew that Dario was straight working her pussy out in between demanding that she tell him who she belonged to. Clearly she belonged to him but he was going to have to work to get her to admit it.

Tossing back her curls, she met his cock halfway. Thrusting her ass into him, she relished the feel of his big, hard body pounding into her. He was wearing her out, not that she'd admit it. Biting her lip, she continued to meet his thrusts even when her legs were on fire, even when her knees buckled, even when she could barely stand.

Dario didn't show her any mercy and if he did, she wouldn't respect him. She didn't want to have a head start; she didn't need him to spot her points; she

needed him to meet her on a level battle field and give her everything he had. Anything less would be dishonest. And though Dario could be all kinds of assholes, he'd always been honest even in his assholishness.

She didn't want polite sex. She wanted the raw, animal kingdom mating. She wanted Dario to fuck her until they both were too tired to move. She wanted to go to sleep with his cock embedded in her and wake up to an orgasm. She wanted every step she took to remind her that Dario had been in her pussy and was now in her heart. She wanted it all...and she wouldn't accept anything less. Twisting out of his grip, she grabbed a handful of his hair and pulled them both over the back of the sofa.

Looking into his startled eyes, Karlo licked her lips and threw out a challenge. "Bring it, Dario. Piss or get off of the pot!"

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Dario felt Karlo's legs tremble and knew that she was getting tired. He also knew that she wouldn't ask for a reprieve. Being a gentleman, he was considering

the best way to bring her to orgasm when he felt himself being tossed over the sofa. *What the hell?*

And then he heard her challenge. Jerking open her thighs with his, he settled in between her legs and found his way back into her heat. He stroked into her so hard that he damn near fucked her through the sofa. Hearing her guttural screams, he answered with roars in bass. She spurred him on with her nails, her words, her whole being. And he answered her summons with everything he had.

He felt the sofa moving but he paid it only scant attention. Right now he was in pussy that was too good to consider anything else. He felt her tremble beneath him so he altered his angle and continued driving into her. Harder, faster, stronger, deeper, he gave her everything.

He heard a crack but being that Karlo was busy calling him all kinds of motherfuckers and telling him to bring it, he paid it no mind. He remained on course. Turning her over, he arranged her on her hands and knees and plunged into her heat. Hearing her chorus of yeses made him smile, but it wasn't enough. It wasn't what he wanted to hear so he

continued to drive. Lifting her to his chest, he took her mouth in a kiss and repeated his demand.

“Tell me who you belong to.”

And she looked him in the eye and laughed. He was mid-thrust when he felt the sofa begin to rock. Having fast reflexes, he was able to take the brunt of the impact when the sofa tipped over and skidded across the floor. Frantically, he checked to see if Karlo was injured.

“*Fiamma*, are you okay?”

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Karlo was too busy getting fucked properly to realize that Dario was tearing his opulent, Italian leather sofa all to hell. Even if she'd known, she probably wouldn't have cared. Right now she cared about the man behind her.

She'd been surprised when they hit the floor but she was uninjured because Dario took the brunt of the fall. Though she was winded, it wasn't because of the fall; it was because of Dario's lovemaking. Reaching up, she smoothed his hair away from his face and reassured him.

“I’m fine Dario, are you okay?”

“Always when in your presence, *Fiamma*.”

“Then finish what you started, Dario,” she demanded.

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Dario couldn’t help but smile. His Karlo was a demanding little something and he loved all that she was. Yanking her up, he backed her into the wall. Bending to kiss her, he savored her taste and lifted her in his arms.

Looking down into her eyes he warned her. “Brace yourself, *Fiamma*.”

And then he slipped into the tightest, wettest pussy he’d ever sampled and conquered it in a handful of strokes. Hearing his name torn from her throat only served to spur him on. He liked the way his name sounded on her lips but that wasn’t what he wanted to hear so he stroked harder. Feeling her nails rake across his chest woke his beast but it wasn’t enough. Tasting the orgasms exploding within her placated his cock but his heart wanted its due. Bending his knees and widening his stance he brought her down so hard

that for a moment he wobbled. And as he was battling his fatigue he heard it.

“Dario, Dario, Dario, I love you. I belong to you.”

And then he finally let go. He’d never come so hard or so long. It felt like the world was ending and beginning all at once. Having no strength left, he sank to the floor and brought her with him. He loved this woman...with everything in him.

“I love you, Karlo.”

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A crowd had started to gather in the office. The crowd had started forming when Karlo strutted in and then busted into Dario’s office like she was five-o. That wasn’t new. Karlo and Dario had a history of going at it. Even the motherfuckers, sons-of-bitches, and fuck yous were old hat. That wasn’t what drew the crowd. What drew the ever-increasing crowd were the sounds of breaking glass, the screams, the thuds, the pounding, the roars, and the large objects hitting the wall. It would have been one thing if only their work staff was on hand, but when the CEO from downstairs

and the Executive Vice President from next door called complaining about the noise, it was out of Mrs. Smith's hands.

She could handle the curious staff. She could placate the disgruntled CEOs. What she couldn't do was stop emergency services from kicking in the door that they'd been banging on for the last minute. Oh dear, this was going to be one of those days she thought as she witnessed the police walk into the room that used to be a pristine office.

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Dario was pretty sure he'd passed out. Turning to look at his woman, he was sure that she'd passed out being that she was no longer slinging demands. He was just about to rouse her when his door was kicked in. Without thought, he covered his woman. Feeling her gasp, he bent and kissed her assuring her that he'd protect her. Whoever had burst into his office was so fucking fired. And when he found his pants he was going to whip their ass. Taking his eyes from her face he looked up into the eyes of...the police.

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For a few moments Karlo wondered if she was dead. The last thing that she heard was Dario's whispered "I love you." She couldn't hear; she couldn't move; and everything was bathed in a bright light. Feeling Dario gather her in his strong arms she was about to speak when the door burst open. Suddenly thrust beneath a tense Dario, she peeked out from under him and looked into the startled eyes of... the fucking SWAT team.

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After a few moments of explanations, the police were fully satisfied. She had to explain being that Dario was busy trying to get them both dragged off to jail. It had taken her thrusting out her ring finger for them to finally believe her. If she'd been wearing more than a pair of badass boots, a diamond ring, and a hot-blooded, big-dicked, mad-as-hell, Italian man, she might've found the whole thing funny. She wasn't worried that anyone could see anything with the way Dario had her covered. Apparently, he suffered no

qualms about having his bare ass exposed to anyone who walked by.

A half hour later, after filling out a mountain of paperwork and issuing copious apologies, she sat on the edge of the desk wrapped in the remnants of Dario's dress shirt and her coat. He was busy trying to locate his other shoe. It had taken them a while to find the rest of their clothes but Dario's other shoe was nowhere to be found. Hearing his 'found it', she looked around the office as he put on his shoe. His office was totaled. All of the pictures had fallen from the walls. His desk would be alright after a few drawers were replaced but his sofa was ruined. Lying on its side against the wall, she looked at the broken arm and sighed. The waste basket had a dent in it; his smashed computer was strewn all over the room; his wall had a huge hole where his name block had sailed through it.

Dario, of course, didn't give two shits. Approaching her, he gathered her in his arms and dropped a kiss on her mouth. She couldn't help but smile. He loved her and his love felt good.

Gathering his hand, they walked to the door. Taking one last look around at the destruction, she sighed. Dario smiled and kissed her all the way out of the door. Closing her eyes she savored his touch. She was about to say something when their moment was interrupted by catcalls and thunderous applause. Looking into the eyes of her colleagues, some rubberneckers, and building security, she should have been embarrassed. And she was, but not that much. Fuck this. She was the diva. Saluting them with the middle finger, she grabbed Dario's hand and sashayed her hot diva ass to the elevator. Turning back, she watched as Dario accepted the many congratulations thrown his way. Smirky bastard—her smirking bastard, but a bastard nonetheless.

Endnotes

The I Told You So

Dr. Corinna Parkinson sat back and smiled at the wedding invitation. Inserting the date into her PDA, she opened her file and crossed out both Karlo and Dario's names. And taking a moment to gloat, she highlighted the next name on her list: Stone Chase III.

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*Fictional Province (translation: we shall not be moved) in the Calabria Region of Italy.

This concludes A Little Bit of Dis–Book One in the When Wishes Come True (Wishes) series.

Thank you for reading. We hope you enjoyed the tales as much as we enjoyed writing them.

~Jeanie & Jayha

Praises, compliments, adulation and the like for Jeanie and Jayha can be left at:

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Besides being intelligent divas who pen kickass prose, Jeanie (the shagalicious wordslinger) and her momma, Jayha (the ninja master of prose), are dessert-eating, take-no-shit, tell-it-like-they-feel instead of tell-it-like-people-want-to-hear-it women. They are women who have brains and aren't afraid to use them; feelings and aren't afraid to express them; and, middle fingers which they'll happily use to salute out of line peeps. Independently, both are forces of nature that leave you begging for mercy or begging for more.

A kickass tag team duo bound together by the pen, they plan on ruling the world side-by-side. Jeanie will be ruling in her favorite hoodie and her Chuck Taylors; Jayha will be wearing her Crocs and a blue t-shirt along with her halo. Of course, all ruling will be done swiftly as Jeanie is always out getting into sh*t and Jayha is busy indulging in her torrid affair with ESPN.

See people, this is the kind of praise you get when you have Yvonne as your MMFIC and Rolanda as MNWIC. Thanks Von and Rolanda.