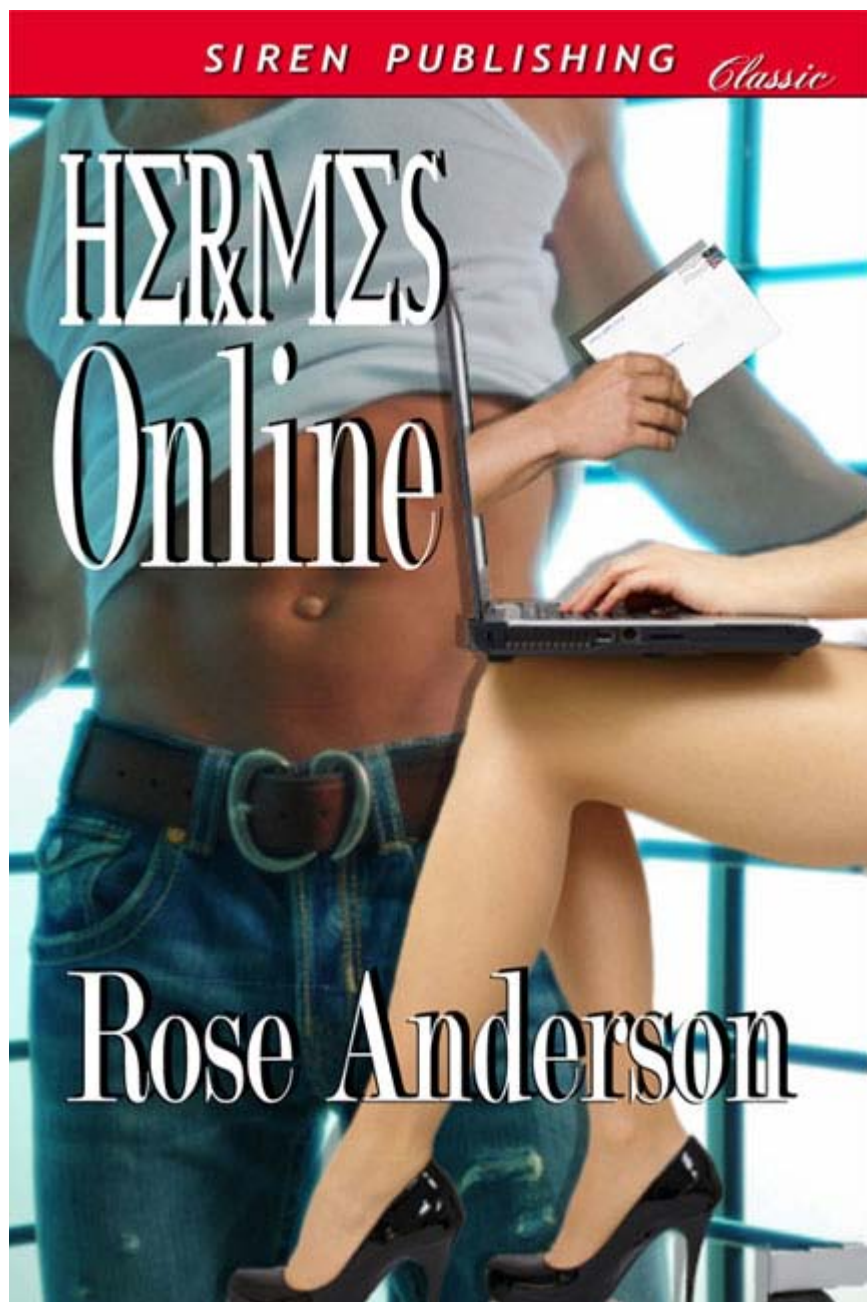


SIREN PUBLISHING *Classic*

HERMES Online

Rose Anderson



Hermes Online

Imagine if you will a story begun in the halls of Mount Olympus long before this modern tale was conceived. It was a time when the god Hermes flew on his winged sandals and carried messages from the gods to the mortals below. And between that time and this, couriers became postmen and handwritten letters became bytes. It is said the gods still speak to those who listen...

Left bruised and brokenhearted after a cruel breakup, Vivienne Bennet finds herself mired in a world of self-doubt. To her surprise, she receives an email that challenges her to rediscover the sensual woman she once was. Together Vivienne and the enigmatic man known only as S embark upon the world of anonymous Internet communication where suggestive emails lead to erotic chat, where cybersex leads to Skype, and C2C sends both into the arms of a love they'd believed lost forever.

Genre: Contemporary

Length: 37,478 words

HERMES ONLINE

Rose Anderson

EROTIC ROMANCE



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A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK

IMPRINT: Erotic Romance

HERMES ONLINE

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DEDICATION

Who would have thought AOL's RPG chat rooms would lead me here? You believed I could do this before I believed it myself. Dearest love of my life, this first is for you.

HERMES ONLINE

ROSE ANDERSON

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“What a day,” I grumbled, feeling mentally exhausted and strained to my soul. Since Dan and I ended our relationship on that horrible note, nothing seemed to go right anymore. I lost a very important landmark today, one hundred fifty-four years old, a stately impressive mansion owned by an early prominent businessman in my area. It was perfect and haled back to a simpler time when people did the right thing, the good thing... The house would be coming down within the month, the second significant landmark lost in as many years. Why couldn’t they see? Did everything have to make way for *progress*? Was the new chain store *really* that necessary?

“See ya tomorrow, Vivienne, have a good night,” came a voice from across the parking lot aisle. I instantly recognized it as belonging to my assistant, Audrey.

“Damn it,” I muttered under my breath. I didn’t want anyone to see the tears welling in my eyes. I frantically tried to blink them away and mentally begged her not to come closer. Only half turning in her direction, I replied, “You too.” To my relief she got in her car and drove away.

In my emotional state I pressed the electronic car lock button a little too firmly and took a substantial chip out of my day-old manicure. My gaze flew to the damage. “Damn it!” I reiterated between clenched teeth. What *else* could go wrong? Opening the door to my Honda, I let my briefcase fly to the passenger side, but no

sooner had the haphazard strap left my hand than it snagged my pantyhose, a new pair right out of the package just that morning.

“Ooh, *come* on.” I turned the key in the ignition, but instead of putting the car in gear, I put my finger in my mouth. The two pointy edges of my broken nail were sharp against my tongue, and the tears unshed a moment ago ran freely now. Eying the half-moon divot in my fingernail, I sat there thinking of the waste. *What a waste* had become my mantra as of late, right next to *what a shame*. Biting off the points, I pulled the lacquered bits from my tongue, rolled down the window, and scattered them to the parking lot as I drove home.

By the time I got there, I was drained. I just couldn’t seem to stop rehashing that meeting’s sad outcome sucking me out to sea like a riptide. After checking the pile of mail under the slot at the door and picking the grain from the chaff so to speak, I headed upstairs to take a long hot bath. My brain was now in overdrive, and my soul was hurting, in more ways than one.

An hour later, my comfort dinner of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in my hand, I found myself at my desk looking for anything to take my mind off things for a while. I connected to my mail server. The familiar “You’ve got mail” voice came over my speaker, informing me my inbox was full. *Yeah, I’ve been busy lately*. My emails at home had taken a back seat to my more pressing emails at work.

“Junk.” I clicked a spam email away to the trash bin. “Junk.” Another followed. I read them off. “My mortgage can be better, eh? I’m pre-approved? Sure I am. Junk, Junk... No, thank you. Junk.”

I smiled seeing an email from Andrea. My best friend, an aspiring poet, occasionally sent me links to her most recent literary find but mostly sent me jokes and forwarded video clips of driving chimps or talking dogs. I could use a talking dog barking out *I love you* to the camera right about now. My aching heart and mind were just this far from seeing me seriously depressed with my head buried under the pillows in my dark bedroom for who knows how long.

Her email read:

Hey, Viv,

I thought you could use a diversion. And this is as diverting as they come!

hugs

Andrea

*P.S. You're allowing Dan to steal your soul. Don't, he's an asshole. We're going out if Kate and I have to come over there and drag you out in your jammies. I mean it. *hugs**

Too emotionally raw in that moment to reflect on her parting words. “You always sense when I’m feeling down.” Since I desperately needed a smile, I followed the link.

Wow. Talking dog take a back seat.

I wasn’t prepared for a link to an adult literature site and nearly forgot how to swallow my bite of sandwich. At a glance there were tens of thousands of stories in a range of topics authors posted for their myriad reasons. It didn’t appear to be a site that paid you for your work. Apparently people contributed what they wished to share. Taking a moment to reply to her find, I sent her an email sidestepping the soul-stealing comment.

Hey, An,

I like this one better than the Riverdance chimps! Thanks, I really needed it this week.

XO,

Viv

Scanning the site was an eye-opener. I was all for internet open source and freedom, and admittedly some titles caught my eye while others were just plain revolting to me. “Eww,” I said, seeing a particular nasty fetish title. *Not for me. Nope, not that one either.*

Scrolling down I clicked on an intriguing title that led to a rather steamy story. Mmm. Nice. Diverting, yes it was. After reading two, I had a comfortable feeling brewing between my legs, and then suddenly the warm feeling became a bruise in the hollow of my belly. Dan.

Since Dan and I broke up, the thought of ever exposing myself to that kind of hurt again...well...I'd live in a cloister first. Thinking of him was like playing with those two martial arts sticks joined on one end with a linked chain. *Nunchucks*. The word popped into my head. Oh sure, you could hold them, but try to spin nunchucks like Jet Li, and more times than not, they caught you right in the armpit, forehead, or chin.

To sum up our two-year relationship, he told me I was dull in bed. Dull. *So* dull in fact he needed to have an affair. *Needed to*. That was funny coming from him. He thought exciting was a dish of hot wings, a full bag of potato chips, a twelve-pack of Bud, and bouncing breasts and ass cheeks on cheerleaders during halftime. What a thing to say. People define themselves by many things. And women put our own sex appeal in the top ten.

I pictured him in my mind's eye, our bed sheet wrapped around his lower half, the smirking implant-breasted cheerleader naked in my bed. I heard his words again exactly as he yelled them and recalled how they pummeled me as I ran out the door and from my house in tears. They had an indelible quality, like a stain that wouldn't wash out. "*You are so dull I had to have sex with a real woman.*"

"You never really knew me, *asshole*," I said to the cosmos, hoping somewhere in Chicago the thought inspired a pigeon to crap on his head at the Bear's game I was certain he was at tonight.

Needing to push that memory away, I read another submitted piece of erotica in an attempt to shove said asshole out of my mind. To my relief it wasn't difficult, not when I'd chosen a story delineated as a hot read by the five chili peppers next to the title. "Ooh...steamy."

At the end of each story, readers had a chance to leave a rating. I didn't leave a message even though that was an option. Instead I gave it five out of five peppers. Swallowing the last bite of sandwich, I licked the grape jelly from my fingers and clicked on another title.

"Oh *my*." I felt tingly all over, like I had been involved in a two-hour long foreplay. *Ha*, like Dan would *ever* consider such a thing. I left another five out of five. I wanted to leave a ten.

Out of the blue I found myself mentally adding an extra scene to the established character's storyline. Yes, *that* would have wrapped it up better. A curious flutter tickled low in my belly. I was feeling sexual for just a moment, and the thought surprised me. I hadn't felt sexy in nearly a year. I looked drab, I dressed drab, I felt drab. Of course my thoughts went back to Dan's parting assessment. Feeling the old hurt anew, my imagination manifested a blob of pigeon poop on the end of the hotdog he was unknowingly going to bite. Shaking him away with the rest of my horrid day, I stared at the words on the screen, lost in thought.

Ages ago, at a time when I actually believed myself a sexual being, I'd written a story, a fanciful erotic romp full of compelling sensual imagery. My story was about seduction. Anyone can have sex, and as the story titles proved on my new favorite website, it came in many flavors. *My* story was meant to seduce, for like many women, I get turned on when seduction is involved. A few mouse clicks later, I found the buried Word document. "I knew this was in here somewhere."

I grinned reading it. It was good. In fact it was better than the one I'd just given a five out of five. Looking for corrections, I only had to rephrase one sentence before I gave it a ten out of ten score. Rereading had me remembering the female power and confidence I once had. I also remembered the jade-eyed impetus that had me write such a thing, and the memories of happier days and abiding love ignited a little smile in my heart.

Several years ago, long before Dan trod on my soul, for shits and grins, I wrote a little story based on a conversation I had with friends one night. Of the six of us at the time, two were under-employed and one was unemployed. Inspired by a magnum of Pinot Grigio, we got to laughing about what they were qualified to do, and the topic turned to phone-sex operator. We laughed and toyed with how we'd answer the phone but really be doing dishes. "Yes, honey, I am taking a bath...all soapy and slick..." Or folding laundry in our sweats with the phone propped on our shoulder. "Yes, baby, I'm wearing a see-through negligee. Can't you see my hard nipples?" Good god, what a hilarious night that was. With these happy thoughts, a sudden flight of fancy took me. I brought the literature site on screen once more and considered. I stared at the computer, talking to myself. *Mine's pretty good, creatively speaking. It's better than half of the other stuff I've read in the last hour. That's my opinion anyway.* I was slowly convincing myself to post my story. Finally I said to the empty house, "I'll do it."

It took me a while to discover just how to make an account and upload my file, but I was pretty sure it went okay. I set the "accept comments" to yes, read one more erotic tale, then took myself to bed.

* * * *

The next day went pretty much the same. It was all ordinances and requests for special variances so Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones could get their windows and roof on before winter. All in all my day went pretty well, filled as it was imagining how my story was received. Did I have chilis? How many? I liked it, but did anyone else? Dan flashed before my eyes and dashed cold water over me. Was it dull?

At home I settled down to dinner with a cardboard box of takeout, feeling a little lonely at that moment. Chinese should never be eaten alone. It should have company. It needs people to laugh with when you crack open your cookie and add the phrase "in the bedroom" to

every fortune. I well knew the schedules of my friends. Unfortunately tonight I was on my own.

I powered up my computer to check my inbox. “You’ve got mail” came over the speaker. Wow. I had no less than a half dozen people comment on my story. *How cool is this?* I read them one by one:

I find your story extremely well written and provocative. I can clearly see the characters come to life. Post more please.

This was superb writing. You might think about publishing.

Very tight, well crafted. I am a fan. Post more please.

I warmed in the praise, and the yoke of “dull” felt a tad lighter on my shoulders. For the first time in a year I was beginning to feel sexual again. I read more, their words a sensual lifeline pulling me from a sea of negative self images.

This has to be one of the most creative concepts I have read on here. Thank you.

Well written and fascinating!

Out of nowhere the chimera raised its ugly head and whispered, “There are thousands of readers on this site and a mere handful responded. How bored were the others they passed you by without comment?” The chimera won. I shut the computer off and put on a movie, a love story. I watched the main couple interact but had my own story running simultaneously, my own movie flickering in the back of my brain. In it I was pointed at and ridiculed and told in no uncertain terms I was less because I wasn’t a plastic-breasted, ass-jiggling, porn-star cheerleader with a case of beer in one hand and a plate of hot wings in the other.

“Why?” I asked the lead actor, superimposing Dan’s face there. Why would another person end a relationship that way? Why not just be nice and say, “This isn’t working out. I wish you well”? Why eviscerate? Why diminish the other person’s psyche? I felt a hot tear on my cheek. It’s not that we were deeply in love, but I thought we were at least friends. I thought we were. I went to bed feeling more than a little low.

* * * *

The following week was a busy one. Overloaded with meetings, requests for variances, and project deadlines as I was, my fan mail temporarily slipped my mind.

A bit of water-cooler conversation late afternoon on Thursday left me feeling particularly low. The first request for zoning information on the Hornsby property had come in and pen hadn’t even been put to paper to sign off on its demolition. Greedy speculators. Needless to say, Thursday was one of those really-need-a-pat-on-the-back days. I didn’t receive one at work, but the drive home had me thinking about checking the literature site. I found myself suddenly craving a good word and wished someone had read my story and liked it enough to write a nice review.

After paperwork and dinner, I made a cup of tea and went to see if any comments had been posted. I felt a measure of panic when I looked for the title and it didn’t come up right away. The spectre of self-doubt looming over my shoulder immediately determined the site managers declared it “too dull, had to delete.” I was surprised to discover my story had been moved. Within a week it had a string of peppers and made the Hot List. More than that, I now had a dozen comments, and they were all very complimentary. One in particular stood out:

V,

I long for a sensuous weaver, a sensual dreamer, a companion to write every hedonistic facet of human desire. Are you such a person? I wonder.

S

I stopped and reread. This was an intelligent person. In some respects the words written here might even be considered a challenge. I sent a coquettish reply, the words implying far more confidence than I really possessed.

S,

I am intrigued. How shall we begin?

V

I bit my lip, debating to the last second if this was something I should do. What if this person wanted more? I wasn't sure I liked the C2C world of the internet where computer cameras linked conversations—and come to think of it, I really wasn't all that into chat either. Needing human interaction tonight, I eventually convinced myself that as long as this person stayed talking in email it would be fine. I clicked send.

The happy male voice announcing “You’ve got mail” over the speaker came loud enough to make me jump. The reply was so quick it startled me.

Dearest V,

Since I have pondered this a long while I shall move forward. I am going to tell you one thing about myself each time we correspond. I desire for you to take your sensual palette and lay the colors out for your use. Your character's physical descriptions were perfect, and I find myself wondering if you paint from life. I couldn't help but see

the glimmer of heat reflected in your story and want that heat to scorch me. Are you up to this task?

S

Wow. Another challenge. I wrote back,

S,

You have not yet told me “the one thing” yet. My paint box is waiting.

V

Once more the tiny envelope popped into my mailbox. “You’ve got mail.” He was on the computer at the same time as I was. Imagining that somehow he could see me there through the computer screen sent a small shiver up my back and across my shoulders.

Dearest V,

My eyes are green like Jonathan’s in your story. I would like you to be these eyes today. Describe yourself to me in full vivid color. Head to toe, V, leave nothing out. Dazzle me with your brilliance.

S

Green eyes. I smiled. I loved green eyes, especially ones that changed shades with the color of clothes or the mood. Sighing with my visual memory, I searched my mind for what he called my palette. The paints in my personal paint box had long since dried out. I reread the last email... *Describe yourself to me in full vivid color.* Did I even have anything beyond shades of gray anymore? I pictured Dan with erectile dysfunction. The thought added water to my dried-out paints.

S,

Where to begin... I suppose we should start at the top and work our way down...

My hair is long and falls straight to the middle of my back with wispy bangs. The color is cinnamon, copper, golds, auburn, and reds. Not Irish setter-red nor ginger red but red-gold like autumn leaves.

My skin is alabaster, not pallid, not ashen but the faintest pale pink. I am all pinks and reds really...pink in places and rosy in others. My eyes are gray like the lining of a storm cloud. I stand five-foot-six and, at a medium build, weigh one hundred forty-three pounds.

I'm a rounded woman, not chunkily so. I'm round—round rumped, round breasted, defined waist. I have a spattering of freckles on my shoulders and nowhere else. A lover once said they were like stars sprinkled there.

I have smooth, lithe arms and long legs, and delicate feet with a frosted peach pedicure that matches my fingernails. Over my left breast close to my heart I possess a small indelible crescent moon and three twinkling stars of henna brown. Is this color enough?

V

I read it, and then, surprised by the image these simple words evoked, I read it again. I could see this color, yes, I did look this way, this *was* me. I wasn't a black and white and gray being after all. These simple words I found to describe myself implied I was filled with color. With that realization making my heart beat faster, I clicked send.

There was no instant reply. I could feel it, feel the rise of doubt coming up like a bubble from a sinking submarine. But this time I pushed it away. I looked in my email's sent folder and reread my painted description once more. To my surprise, my smile returned, and somewhere in my mind, a rainbow started to form—a monochrome rainbow, but a bridge across the pallor of my gray sky.

* * * *

The next day I flew home from work, rushed through a shower, wrote checks to pay some bills, fed my goldfish and myself and went to the computer. My heart was fluttering as I called up the literature site before checking my emails. Overnight I had acquired five more appreciative readers. Their genuine compliments toasting my sensual nature made me feel wonderful. Another color was taking form in my rainbow.

That being done, I accessed my email program. "You've got mail," the happy male voice announced through the speaker while I lip synced.

V,

I can see you in all your glorious color. That was excellent. Your choice of words makes my mouth water. A redhead with star-kissed shoulders, are you? I thought as much. Your description of Lily sounded too personal to be fiction. Do you realize of nine hundred and ninety-nine other people born the same time as you, it is only you who possess red hair? No, I must amend. You have hair of autumn reds and golds. A lovely painting, V. You are unique, one in one thousand. My hair is brown, chestnut brown. Describe this alabaster roundness of yours. I find myself anticipating what words you might choose.

S

I thought a while.

What do my breasts look like? Walking down the hall to my full-length mirror, I pulled the thin, worn, but extremely comfortable sweatshirt over my head, ruched my sweatpants down my hips a bit, and stood half naked before the glass. Hmm, I said to myself, eyeing my breasts critically. I wanted to see them as a man might, wanted to figure out how best to describe these most female attributes. But more than that, I wanted the color my own description might add to my drab life.

Cupping my breasts in both hands, I assessed. They were a good size. My hands were small, and the flesh spilled over and between my splayed fingers. They'd be smaller in a man's large hands, but still, I was confident they'd overflow. I recalled seeing a lover's hands doing just that. They did spill over.

Hefting them and making them jiggle in the reflection, I imagined the tag the last time I went bra shopping—thirty-six B, not too big, not too small, cushiony, dense tissue, fairly heavy weight. My nipples poked from between my fingers on both hands. I pressed them together, trapping the buds in a pinch to make them firm up.

Dropping my hands, I assessed the shade of my skin. The contrast between it and the erectile tissue of areola and nipple offered three very distinct shades of pale pink. "Pink like variegated English roses." I smiled, finding the words in my reflection.

Not bothering to re-dress, I took the shirt and headed back to my computer. I sat there a moment looking down at my chest. My nipples still firm from their tweaking stood straight ahead like the headlights on a '58 Ford Fairlane. It made me smile.

S,

I'm glad you did not ask for bra size. I find it rather crass when men do that online. Really, what man understands the complicated mathematics of bra measurements? My breasts are full and rounded, symmetrical with perfectly centered nipples.

As to size, were a man to cup them in his large hands, his fingers would overflow with soft velvet flesh the color of the palest pink rose petal. My rosy areolas are large, and my nipples are tipped in a darker shade of rose. I've determined their coloring to be that of a variegated pink and white tea rose. When warm, my breasts reflect the heat. The nipples go soft, plump, puffy. When cold or excited, they tighten and harden. Over my heart my skin wears an indelible crescent moon and the three stars from Orion's belt visible as the

constellation rises in the fall. Their meaning is precious to me, precious enough to wear forever.

I reread the email knowing exactly how my words appeared in the flesh a moment ago in the mirror. Yes, this was exactly how my breasts were. Not too shabby actually. I clicked send and stood to pull my shirt over my head.

Just as my head poked through the neck of my threadbare sweatshirt, “You’ve got mail” came through the speakers. The sound made me jump. It was him.

V,

That was lovely and very descriptive. My hands are darker than yours. I can imagine them touching these exquisite rose-blush breasts of yours, spilling over of course. I can imagine your large areolas and heat-soft nipples, imagine too the reaction a warm breath might inspire were I to lightly blow there.

S

That’s it? I read the email again. “Where’s the challenge?” I said aloud. I didn’t know this person, but I found myself really wanting to play this descriptive game. I sat awhile formulating a response.

S,

Thank you for your appreciation. Dark hands, I am wondering if you were planning to say more...

V

I suddenly felt a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. My pen pal had lost interest. That’s why he didn’t go further. I sighed. My niggling doubt came in from the sidelines, the dullness tried to get a hold of me again, and this time, I found it a struggle to push it aside even though my delicate psyche had been reinforced by the nice

responses to my story. I recalled some of the nicest, and these simple comments of strangers somehow made me stronger. They made Dan's hurtful words, "You are so dull in bed I had to have an affair," lose some of their steam.

I was just ready to go to bed when the familiar "You've got mail" electronically sing-songed through the speakers again.

V,

Your email brought a smile to my lips. Yes, as I said, my skin is darker than your alabaster hue. My hands are large. What exactly does that imply to you? You are no naïve schoolgirl. Work this riddle and tell me the answer, and I will paint a description for you. Then you will do the same for me.

S

"What the heck does that mean?" I asked the computer as if it could explain. I looked at the clock. Too bad, it was getting late. I wanted to stay here and work the riddle but decided to go to bed. After all, my eight o'clock breakfast meeting with three key county board members was looming on the horizon. Creatively inspired yesterday, I'd called this meeting together on a whim. The mansion might make a wonderful annex for the historical society. Even a reading room would be better than a big box site or another mini mall. It was one final and extremely thin chance at saving the old building. It was a chance I had to take.

* * * *

After my shower the following morning, I caught my reflection in the mirror as I passed. Still damp, my just-showered skin sparkled in the morning light streaming in through the hall window. A towel held my long hair up in a twist. My nipples were hard, having gone from hot water to cool air, and the rest of me was covered with goose

bumps. I looked myself up and down, my pen pal's words coming to my mind. He has large hands. A bright smile greeted my reflection. I laughed. "Later, buddy."

I wore red and surprised myself over my choice from the back of the closet. Redheads can go two ways with color—the right way and the wrong way. I was fortunate to have emerged from the gene pool with hair and skin coloring that allowed me to wear just about any color I chose. For nearly a year I wore black, brown, gray or drab. In fact, whatever color drab might refer to, I wore it. But for some reason I felt different today.

I turned this way and that, assessing. The bright color made me look... what exactly? Younger? No, not exactly. Bold? *Hmm*. I closed my eyes and opened my mind to the colors of me as reflected there and let them seep into my brain. The descriptor came to me. I opened my eyes and met my own gaze staring back. Yes, that was it. I looked *creative* today. More than that, I looked *dynamic*.

I headed home at the end of the day, my mind occupied with positive prospects. The meeting was good and if all went well might actually have a happy outcome. People had told me I looked great today—perky, confident. I knew it was the red dress. It accentuated the colors of the me I was coming to remember. The bright color helped me feel possibility today instead of hopeless.

Not bothering to change or sort the grain bin of mail the postman stuffed in the slot, I fed the fish and grabbed an apple and a stick of string cheese and went right to my computer. I knew what his riddle was, and it thrilled me that I figured it out. In fact, my heart pounded over the wordy intimacy to come. On top of that, I could swear I felt him at his computer waiting for me to answer when I sat down.

S,

I can tell by your large breast-cupping hands that you are a well-endowed man. Paint me a picture.

V

Four minutes later, “You’ve got mail” came through the speakers. This time I was ready for it.

V,

Nicely deduced. I will paint a vivid picture for you, but I would ask that you go first. Be my eyes as if I were there beside you. Do you have a mirror? Paint your succulent self for me in rich hedonistic detail. My response will be all the more impressive if you do. <grin>

S

My heart was racing. I rose to find a hand mirror.

Digging through the third of three bathroom drawers, thinking to myself how it always is that whatever you are looking for always seems to be in the very last place you look, I found the hand-held mirror and buffed the glass surface with a dry towel. I looked at myself in the oval glass. What I was about to do, I had *never* done before. Gray eyes smiled over how incredibly sexy I felt in that moment, and when Dan predictably popped into my head, I gave my reflection a smirk and wished him a swollen prostate and the frequent middle of the night unproductive urge to pee that came with it.

Back at my desk, I bent the long crane’s neck desk lamp low to shine on the seat of my chair, set the mirror down, reached under my red dress and proceeded to pull my panties and pantyhose down. I saw a problem—my tea length dress was going to hinder my self-portrait, so I took it off and tossed it over the printer, and wearing only my bra and slip, I sat down. The lamp had warmed my desk chair and my bare bottom.

Feeling almost naughty, I picked the mirror up by its Bakelite handle and spread my legs. The kickback reflection from the bright lamp bulb nearly blinded me, but I swiveled in my chair until I found a place that was both well lit and revealing.

My heart was racing. Sure I had made love in front of a mirror before, even used a mirror as I trimmed my pubic hair short on occasion, but in all my life, I never really looked at myself this intimately before, never had I searched for a sensual description in a mirror held between my legs so I could relate that information to another. The thought left me feeling rather giddy.

I discovered the theme of roses carried over. I arranged myself with my fingertips stretching both sides of my labia and letting the soft dangling inner lips fall where they might. I chuckled seeing something in the glass I had never had occasion to notice before. My lips were a tad asymmetrical down there.

That famous self-portrait of Norman Rockwell came to mind, the one with him painting off his own mirrored image. I laughed out loud, the sound almost foreign to my ears. My mind touched upon the laughter...it had been a while. Sure I laughed with my girlfriends, but more to keep step than to actually reflect how I really felt since Dan took a baseball bat to my soul. But now hearing my own real laughter felt good, like my voice had come back after a year-long bout of laryngitis.

I set the mirror in the handle of my file cabinet then tossed one leg up to rest on the edge of my desk, feeling pleased at how resourceful this little erotic excursion had made me. The view was perfect. "Norman, I'll bet you never did *this*." I was feeling turned on by the words forming in my mind and, more than that, by imagining how this anonymous man might take them. So with my palette loaded with crimson peach and damson plum, I turned to my keyboard feeling tingly all over.

S,

I sit here with mirror in hand, my legs spread wide in my attempt to be your green eyes gazing at me in this most intimate pose. This is what I see...

My thighs are smooth, the same creamy paleness as the rest of me. My hair has been trimmed short, and as I am a natural redhead, the fleece is a soft ginger, a full shade lighter than the rest. Or perhaps this is an illusion—perhaps the color difference is the backdrop of my alabaster skin through the red-gold curls.

My vulva is plump, split, and succulent in appearance like two halves of a ripe peach. My lips pouting slightly peek from the center seam. And were I to part my outer lips, I find my inner lips softly wrinkled. One side is ever so slightly longer than the other, creating a wanton sensual asymmetry.

To carry over the peach theme... this flesh is colored exactly like the juicy heart of the fruit. The texture is like velvet, and if I part them, they stay pinned back, posing as a velvet butterfly. If I tug they stretch. If I follow their path upward, they join in the center in a most delightful knot, a hard little nub of pleasure half tucked away under a tiny little sheath.

I find examining myself this way has contributed to a darker crimson in my center as blood floods my sensitive tissues and my flesh begins to swell. In my excitement, my very core glistens with dew. Do you see me?

I put my leg down, and my clit was throbbing. In fact my whole sex was pulsing. I reread it, feeling his green eyes searching out every detail as I did. With a trembling hand, I clicked send, willing him to be online at that moment, willing him to respond now.

Ten minutes went by. I kept my initial heat by reading another erotic tale. The voice came through the speakers...“You’ve got mail.”

V,

Oh, yes, I see you gloriously splayed like an orchid. Very rich colors, V. Beautiful. Sensual. Your words have inspired my body’s response exactly as I knew they would. Allow me to show you how your description has affected me. My cock is a hard nine inches long

from tip to base, the rim of the head now thick and firm from your words. I'd say your fingers would not touch were your small hand wrapped around me. Like the rest of my body, this blade too is darker than your creamy skin. I have been circumcised—the deed done so long ago has left me with a light band of color just below the head, the flesh there extremely sensitive.

My balls, lightly furred with dark brown curls, hang like your luscious pouty lips, just a bit asymmetrically. I find them aching now. Why is that do you suppose? My hand curled around the length reveals a hard pulse, one very hot to the touch. Your lovely storm-cloud eyes would see raised veins that speak of the hot flow coursing there just under the skin. What's this? I find a bead of excitement pooling at the tip like an alchemist's quicksilver, a telling testament to your sensual nature, lovely one.

And now that we see each other, before we go further, we must reward ourselves. I would like you to walk away from your screen, lay back on your bed with your lovely shapely legs spread wide, and with whatever method you employ, I want you to bring yourself to orgasm. I will do the same. And when you are sated, please look in the mirror again, and describe all you see for me in full vivid detail, including the blush I know will paint you from head to toe.

Enjoy, my sweet erotic V. You created this for both of us.

S

Oh my god. I rose from my chair and went to my bed. The bedside table drawer had my electric wand. I tested the switch before I lay down. Buzzzzzzzz, yes, it was working. My heart's blood was pounding in my ears, reverberating in my clit and flooding my entire body with a sexual current not felt since...since...I shook a brief stab of grief aside. I had other things to see to.

I lay back, with my body taking the shape of an inverted Y. My left hand pried my outer lips wide, exposing the pulsing center and my swollen clit to the whim of the vibrator I held in my right. Feeling

hyper-sexed in that moment, the second I touched the switch my back arched off the bed. I'd been primed and ready. The verbal foreplay had taken my fancy, and my body rode it like a stallion. Wave after wave of relentless vibration brought me to a resounding explosion. I cried out to the silent house. It was a primal, animalistic sound, one I hadn't heard in a long while. Lying there stunned and liquidly sated, I realized a total stranger had worked my mind to the point of climax. I was hooked. An instant later, my reply formed in my mind.

Peeling off the rest of my clothes and shrugging into my robe, I headed back to the computer, still tingling from head to toe. Like a flasher in a trench coat, I stood before the full-length mirror assessing once more. My eyes appeared dilated, my bottom lip seemed swollen, and I wondered if I had bitten it when I came. It had been ages since I felt desire, any desire at all, ages since I even considered masturbating. Having been long forgotten, the wonderful sensation of coming had me feeling quite warm still, especially my cheeks. He was right. I did have a flush of dark pink coloring me across my breasts, up my neck, and over my face. Even my nipples appeared darker as the blood of excitement filled all erectile tissues. I turned one leg outward. The deeper color was painting my inner thighs too. The words came to me.

S,

I've just finished bringing myself to orgasm. My entire body feels flushed with spent heat. What remains is the tint of a wanton blush enhanced at the thought of you doing this too. I lay back on my bed as you suggested (a delightful suggestion btw), my thighs spread wide, my vibrating wand pressed against my sex with the switch set first to low then to high.

I bid your green eyes come closer... My clit is still hard and much larger now having been tormented by the wand's powerful oscillations. The nerves themselves feel exposed. My lips are thicker now, and they pout even more. And their velvet flesh is wetter than

moments before. In fact, slippery wetness shines on the inside of my thighs. In a word... I glisten.

V

Sitting back, I stared at the computer screen, the flashing internet advertisements jockeying for attention on the right-hand side.

“You’ve got mail.” Simultaneously the voice and the little closed envelope appeared. I drew a breath and clicked it open.

Dearest V,

I closed my eyes and reread your beautiful descriptions in my mind. As I did, the portrait of you came to life. My balls filled, my cock lengthened and thickened, and my hand glided over the full length of me from base to tip. With deliberate and measured stroking and with your erotic imagery dancing in my mind, yes, I found wonderful release. I thank you for sharing all the beautiful color of you with me.

And now I suspect there is far more to you than you realize, dearest V. Your sensual nature filled in where your paints left off, but is there more color to be had, I wonder?

Let’s take this further, shall we? For tomorrow... I enjoy kissing. Wield your pen. Describe a kiss from your luscious pink lips, and I shall do the same. Tell me, how do you sleep? Do your linens caress your bare skin? If not, allow yourself this treat tonight. For now, sweet dreams, lovely one.

S

I turned off the computer feeling that nature-driven lassitude that makes a woman drowsy after her climax. Smiling inside, I headed to bed. While I stood in my bathroom brushing my teeth, I eyed the hook that held my nightgown. I thought about his words. Never in my life did I recall deliberately sleeping nude. Yes, at various times after intimate exchanges in my past relationships, I fell asleep as naked as

the body next to mine, but never did I set out to sleep without pajamas or nightgown at the end of the day. For some reason, the simple thought felt rather heady.

Being one of those people who actually takes the two minutes each morning to make my bed, for no other reason than not wanting to sleep in a jumble of sheets and blankets at the end of the day, I left the nightgown on the hook and turned down the sheets. My skin felt very hyper-aware as I stripped from the robe and snuggled in. The fabric softener scent lingered on my cotton sheets still, and the smooth flat surface of the fitted sheet felt cool against the remnant of my earlier sexual fever. I rolled over on my belly, one leg bent, one arm hugging the spare pillow that gave the illusion I didn't sleep alone. I laid there assessing. My whole being felt lighter. For the first time in a year, I didn't give Dan power over my dreams.

* * * *

I woke the following morning realizing I didn't wake in the middle of the night as was my habit. In fact, I slept like the proverbial rock. It had been months since I slept through the three o'clock *grief hour*, that subconscious middle of the night wake-up call experienced by the grieving. As I took a long languid stretch, I briefly contemplated revisiting last night's date with the electric company. The corners of my mouth turned into a smile at the thought. *Not now*, I said to myself, tucking the option away and thinking I just might bring myself off later. The anticipation of another sensually charged email grabbed me. I found I relished the idea of writing...and reading...a kiss.

Later in the day I received a call from the county board president. It seemed my thoughts on creative reuse of the old Hornsby mansion had stirred more than one imagination on the board. In fact, so intrigued were they by my proposal that the house coming down was on hold for the time being. He wanted to let me know that my idea

had become an agenda item on the special meeting he called this coming Thursday. Then to my ultimate surprise he paid me a compliment. “Honestly, Vivienne, I just have to tell you, I haven’t seen an idea come out of Planning and Development with this much potential in years. Your idea was inspired.”

I couldn’t believe my ears. For one, they’d suspended the tear-down, two, they’d called a special meeting, three, the board members I’d met with the other day had spoken favorably to their contemporaries, and four, I’d just gotten an extremely rare compliment from a guy who probably never even said “good boy” to the family dog. My idea was inspired!

So, being filled with possibility as I was, the ride home from work had my lips tingling as scenes from the world’s best movie kisses played over my head. To me the best were desperate I’ll-die-if-I-don’t-kiss-you kisses. My mind played with the concept for a mile or so.

Once in my life, and granted it had been nearly a half dozen years ago, I had been kissed just like that. The kind of kiss that throws your back to the wall and sends buttons flying from clothing in a fevered race to shed them just so your skin could make contact with his, to send that kiss to every nerve in your body.

Yes, I’d felt that once. My chest constricted with the memory of the architectural study tour one magical autumn in Greece and the amazing man assigned to my class. Wincing, I remembered the circumstance that ended the budding transcontinental relationship begun with such wonderful potential. My sensually handsome teacher had proposed to a woman he had been in a long relationship with just prior to leaving for Greece.

Neither of us planned to fall in love. It just happened when we found ourselves separated from the rest of the tour on the island of Delos. Waiting for the next ferry, we discovered a connection, one the entire pantheon of gods must have had a hand in, for it was incredibly beyond our control. But as blissful as that week had been, I knew

from the onset there was no hope for anything else between us. His prior commitment was on the table. As surely as the seasons turn, my month-long class was over and with it came a return to cold reality. I felt his loss even now. As brief as our intense liaison had been, I had loved that man and he loved me and it was the kind of love you only got once in a lifetime. Broken-hearted, I left Greece without looking back and I didn't leave my contact information for future study tours just in case I'd meet him again as a married man.

My tenuous emotional state couldn't bear lingering over. In self-defense, I shook the bittersweet thought away and flipped on a talk radio station with its topic on how to get raccoons out from under your porch. Ignoring the rush hour traffic under my forced emotional silence, I got off at my exit and let my mind open to the conversation the experts were sharing with listeners. Twenty minutes went by as I learned about the nocturnal habits of raccoons. *Who knew?* The uninvited raccoons were exactly the distraction I hoped for as my sad thoughts of lost love sunk back into the dusty scrapbook of my memory. Three miles later, raccoons and opening deer season cleared my mind enough to think about the present. I turned the radio off and got to work crafting my perfect kiss, attempting to borrow from Hollywood rather than personal experience.

I settled on the fiddle-tempo kiss from *Last of the Mohicans* and combined it with the wave-crashing beach kiss between Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr in *From Here to Eternity*. That was nice, intensely hot. I then superimposed the kiss in the rain from *The Notebook*, and a bit of the library-shelf-climbing kiss from *Atonement*. "Wow," I said, feeling electrified from the image I had woven.

Taking only enough time to do all the odds and ends one must do, such as making dinner, changing into more comfortable clothing, seeing to a load of hand-wash-only laundry and other less pressing bits on my weekly to-do list, I kept my computer at arm's length until I had enough of a kiss in mind to write about. Two hours later, my computer fired up and so did my mind. I had mail.

Dearest V,

Good morning. I found myself imagining you tangled in soft sheets, your naked body warm and sleepy, the red-gold silk of your long hair fanned across your pillow. The image still raises my pulse et al. I'm wondering if our shared climax still lingers there like ion-charged air after a thunderstorm. My imagination tells me yes.

S

I wondered how it was this unknown man made me feel like this. It was incredible really. He said exactly the words I craved, no, *needed* to hear. They were raindrops on my parched landscape.

I could see him in my mind's eye even though the pieces I had to create the image were sparse. His eyes were green, and how I loved green eyes. His hair was brown, chestnut brown. I could see it. The descriptive color revealed his hair as being rich and shining to my imagination. He was well endowed. His large hands stroked a large, thick cock while his mind was filled with thoughts of my colorful self-portrait. My brain extrapolated, and any way I saw this shadow, he was compelling. I replied.

S,

Yes, I slept nude on soft cotton sheets...and yes, twenty inches of red-gold silk fanned across two pillows. Your suggestion was a new one. I woke this morning deciding I'll never sleep clothed again.

I reread that last line, not exactly knowing where that random thought had come from. Yes. I would sleep nude from now on. The thought brought a languid smile, and my fingers clicked over the keys.

I found myself searching for the best, most intense, most sweetly erotic kiss I could imagine today. It's been a while for me in real life, but several movies come to mind. I think this time you should go first.

V

A moment later the telltale voice announced, "You've got mail."
My smile widened.

Dearest most delectable V,

No, my sweet, your sensual mind holds many images. How do I know this? The sensual story you posted several days ago. Anyone who could describe in vivid detail those intimacies and cerebral interactions between Lily and Jonathan certainly has ready images of heated kisses stowed away in their mind. Find one for me.

Lily and Jonathan's physical appearances speak to me. Please write with their imagery in mind. I shall set the stage. The kiss might begin as their two mouths draw close. They're unsure, even hesitant at first, but eventually as their senses take over they come to full acknowledgment. I wish to feel the heat rising in the space between them. I know this woman exists. Let her use her lips and tongue. Show her to me, V.

S

Another challenge. He used my posted story to tell me he understood there was more to me than met the eye. That he saw this at a time when I desperately needed someone to see sent a thrill over me. The concept coined around my kitchen table by several women having a laugh inspired a story, one that was indeed homage to my creative side, a story written at a bold, vibrant time in my life when, despite the heartache of a love lost, everything was possible. It was also a creative side I'd completely forgotten I possessed and was only now remembering.

I had lived in a one-dimensional drab world for so long I had forgotten the words that had come easily a half dozen years before. For the first time in at least six years, I felt understood. Six years ago I wasn't dull. Six years ago I saw all those sensual scenes between my story characters and made them come alive with color. *My color.*

My friends who knew me on several levels had no working knowledge of my intimate mind, but oddly this stranger with the compelling words did. Remembering who I was made me feel very good inside. It was as if he'd given me permission to give myself a hand up out of the pit of despair I'd been mired in for a full year.

Sitting back in my desk chair with the description of a kiss simmering in the crucible of my brain, I reacquainted myself with myself. I am a romantic above everything else. No matter how bizarre the beginning of that phone sex tale, my mind had to make it work out in the end.

I shuffled through my email trash bin. I couldn't believe the responses I received regarding that tale. Nearly all were uplifting. It appeared that most readers were happy that Lily and Jonathan fell in love. Unbelievably, one was irate because Lily went back to work at Baxter Entertainment where she and Jonathan initially met. So strong was their opinion they felt they needed to let me know they had a hard time believing the ending. I shook my head. That reader had missed the point and the complexity of the story. For Christ sake, it wasn't real life. It was a work of *fiction*. If an author wanted to dangle an elephant off a daisy, they could. Still, my words had inspired responses, and that crazy one aside, the others were all good ones. I thought of the county board president's call. Through casual albeit intimate emails with a stranger, I'd rediscovered an ability to inspire.

The story was all about acceptance and, to a lesser degree, about the damage that could be incurred by pigeonholing, a serious condition people often have. Dan had done just that by ridiculing me and telling me I was dull over and over the day we broke up, *so dull*

I'd forced him into an affair just to *deal* with me. A pigeonhole if there ever was one.

This time I conjured no image of Dan getting run over by a bus or sitting on an inflatable doughnut with thrombosed hemorrhoids. This time the pigeon was out of the hole. And looking back, I wondered how it was the poor bird ever got locked up in there to begin with. How had I let another person dictate how I felt about myself? There was more to me than met the eye, just like the two characters in my story.

I searched my document file, needing in that moment to reread my story in full. I needed to see what my pen pal saw. He was right. The story was me all over, snippets of my personality reflected there for all to see, and S knew this.

I chuckled, remembering the impetus to the story—that night with my crazy wine-drinking, hysterically funny, chocolate-eating friends who I eventually immortalized in print. Being a naturally cautious person, I couldn't help but think in this age of instant information what if the job of phone sex operator wasn't as anonymous as we suppose? What if one of those phone clients figured out who they were talking to and thought everything that was said was exactly what the woman wanted? How could any sane person suppose that, I wondered. And *voila*, Jonathan was born, a lonely grieving man in the throes of a breakdown who, desiring to hear another living person one last time on the day he chooses to end his life, makes a call and finds Lily.

As I have an aversion to creepy people, to even contemplate a creepy person having forced sexual control is completely abhorrent to me. Jonathan had to be gorgeous, had to be clean, be kind, be talented and intelligent, had to be sensitive...and he had to be mentally ill. And Lily had to see all this early on. This is why she feels outrage over fear. I smiled, recognizing another tidbit into my psyche. I'm not a fearful person. I rarely panic, and I'm comfortable and

understanding of myself enough to know that, were I Lily, I could escape when opportunity presented itself.

I closed the Word document and absently twirled my hair, lost in thought. There was so much of me in there—even the decorations in Jonathan’s house said much about me. The fact that Lily looks identical to me was rather Freudian too, come to think. I laughed out loud at the thought. It’s funny how our subconscious mind tells us what’s what sometimes. The subconscious mind intuitively knows what the conscious mind misses at first glance. Yes, the phone sex story was a whim, and who would have thought six years later, it would help me find my way back to myself? I wished in that moment my pen pal stood right here so I could say thank you. I’d thank him for lighting the match that eventually relit the candle of my self-confidence. I’d kiss him for real.

I pressed my fingers to my lips, imagining this curious and compelling green-eyed, chestnut-haired, large-handed, well-endowed man kissing me. And unbelievably, my panties got soaking wet. I flexed my fingers and crafted a scene from the sizzling phantom fire playing over my lips.

Having experienced amazing kisses in my life added just enough realism to the blend of movie kisses. I told the screen, “So, you want a kiss, eh? Then what will you think of this?”

S,

There is so much more to kissing for the first time than meets the eye. The would-be lovers laugh and smile and delight in each other’s company. They talk, getting to know each other, trying to find the choicest morsels of their life and personality to share. They might hold hands for hours as they wander here and there. And when they sit side by side, perhaps on a bench at a museum, they’ll look in feigned interest at the passersby, glance again and again at the exhibit, but not really seeing it. First, one will turn inward, the movement slight, barely noticeable. And then with no clear knowledge

of doing so, the one will magically mirror the other. Their knees may touch, and one set of clasped hands might rest innocently upon a knee.

And then a noise, a temporary distraction, might take their attention for a second, and both heads will turn to the sound, inadvertently closer now than before. When one turns back, their faces will be mere inches apart. Their eyes, green and gray, will hold each other's gazes, darting from one sparkling pupil to the other. They might unfocus to drink in the entire face for a second, perhaps lingering on the person's smile before meeting the gaze once more, a gaze noticeably warmer than a moment ago.

One face may turn a little, and in mirrored image, the other follows, only slightly tipped in the opposite direction. And the eyes ask the silent question as two thoughts become superimposed—"May I kiss you?"-"Will you kiss me?" The answer is subtle, missed by nearly everyone passing by, everyone save the smiling elder couple holding gnarled hands and assisted by their canes. Perhaps they, too, once shared a kiss sitting there, or plan to again later. But locked in their own world, they don't notice the elder pair walk by.

They are aware now only of each other, aware of little things, the flush on her cheeks, the gleam in his eye, the color of her moist lips, the imperceptible flare of his nostrils as he subconsciously reminds his body to breathe. They touch now. The kiss is at first soft, the lips asking permission for the firmness they crave. Another kiss grants this and another and another as faces turn to fit around chins and cheeks and noses. And then loose and pliable, those lips part now to make way for tentative tongues. These too begin their searching, gently at first then becoming bolder as they instinctively react to the warmth of each other's mouths and thrust as hands cup cheeks and arms wind around shoulders, drawing each other ever inward into the private space that shuts the waking world out and lets the dream begin.

Little did I realize when I began this kissing scene that I would abandon the amalgamated movie kisses. I stopped and read those words, my words, my kiss. That kiss had been real, as had the love behind it. My eyes filled with tears, but I sent it on. Feeling alone, I rose from my chair and walked away.

* * * *

The next morning there were dozens of legitimate emails waiting for me amid the pile of crap I normally got each day. It wasn't like me to leave my email program running all night, so it was sort of a surprise to see so many at once. It was Saturday. I had nowhere to go and had only the usual weekend tasks to see to before Monday came rolling around again. Sometime in the mid-afternoon after my groceries were put away and a week's worth of lunches had been made, I sat down at my computer and took a moment to clear the spam and download another spam chaser with a tighter net for catching those intrusive things. I answered a few emails from friends and saved his for last.

V,

That was extraordinary. I could see your gray eyes, see them dart from one to the other of my own as our faces drew close. That was perfection, dearest V. I could almost feel you upon my lips. And now to kiss you in return, a second kiss...

Feeling breathless, we rose hand in hand from our bench and walked mere blocks away to my apartment. Once inside the door, our eyes locked again, our faces drawing closer, closer. Your lips are parted, your lovely breasts rise and fall, your body waits. My hand rises to brush your autumn-colored hair back from your face. Our kiss from before still lingers, but we need so much more from each other now. And we take it. Just how, I will leave to you.

S

Somehow this stranger, this S... Ssss. I rolled the single syllable over my tongue like the end of a snake's hiss. This sensual conjurer from the shadows was an alliteration. I saw the poetry of him, and every word began with S, a shadowed, sexy, sensual stranger, S.

I had no clear true picture of him, so once more my mind, armed as it was with a small basket of his self-descriptive words, extrapolated. He was a beautiful male of course, with his fern-green eyes, his swarthy skin, and his shining chestnut hair. The image my mind created surprised me, and in self-preservation, I shook my embellishment aside.

He had only said green eyes, dark skin, and chestnut hair. No, my mind replied, see him clearly...shining brown, fern green, swarthy...no, I amended. Not swarthy...more...more...sun-kissed, bronzed. I thought on this a while. Though I initially wished it otherwise, in the end I could find nothing wrong with the enhanced image my mind was compelled to assemble from the recesses of memory. My smile widened as I gave myself permission to live this dream. And with my dream view filling in the blanks of the mysterious S, my fingers found the keys.

S,

You stand with your back to the door, facing me. Your large hand brushes my hair back yet lingers upon my cheek once the deed is done. It slowly moves past my ear to the back of my head and gently and purposefully pulls my face closer. Your eyes lock to my lips and mine to yours, both pairs soft, moist, beckoning. They meet again, less tentative, more sure of the yearning behind them. Soft but a moment before, the fingers on the hand at the back of my head curl into my red-gold hair in a grip that clearly says this kiss will continue. And it does.

And when the lips have had their fill for now, they leave to burn a scorching swath down my neck and back along my jaw, accentuated

by the stubble of your beard. We realize clothing is a hindrance. Panting, we pull apart, eyes speaking at once, "Please make love to me. If I don't have you, I'll burn alive." I nod breathlessly. The small acquiescent gesture fires your blood. You grab me hard and pull me roughly against you, your mouth slanting over mine, your tongue conquering any reserve I might have.

V

I pressed my fingertips to my lips. I hadn't been kissed, but my brain had, and the brain told me it was real enough by the tingling I actually felt there.

That he didn't answer right away was disappointing. Then my eye caught sight of the tiny envelope instantly appearing in my small mailbox icon. Momentarily confused by the lack of sound, I suddenly remembered the robotic "Warning!" alert that my new anti-spam program screamed when it found spyware. It had annoyed me so much I turned the speakers off. Wanting as many senses involved as possible in this curious relationship, I turned them back on. With my finger still on the dial, I nearly jumped out of my skin, the words instantly shouted over the speaker, "...ve-got-mail!" I had forgotten to adjust them.

Oh, Temptress V,

Not nearly complete enough. We stand locked in a fierce embrace, kisses devouring. Recall the clothing in the way of scorching lips. Remove them. What do our bodies feel once you've tossed them aside?

S

I remembered the sound of buttons flying across the floor and hitting the window and the sound of a metal belt buckle hitting the floor. They were harmless memories. I chose to use them.

S,

Somewhere in the distance shoes are kicked aside, and a belt buckle drops to the floor with a metallic clatter. We twist and writhe out of clothing gone suddenly too tight to be left where they are. Buttons go flying and stitches rend. One hits the window glass. Suddenly, you grasp my upper arms and slam my back against the wooden door to take your place exactly where you stood a moment before. You press your body against mine. You have a light covering of dark hair across your chest, and it teases my bare breasts. Feel me?

V

I was panting now, reliving a memory. I could almost feel the hard wood, the doorknob bruising me to one side just above the hollow of my back. His answer was instantaneous, and the fact he sat there as I did thrilled me.

Sorceress V,

I feel your words. They conjure heady images out of the fog. Give me more.

S

I narrowed my eyes at the screen, feeling cheated somehow. I said the words aloud to the computer. "All right, S, you want more? Whaddaya think of this?"

S,

Your body glides along mine as your head dips to suckle my breasts. Your hands fill to overflowing with the soft creamy flesh. Your chin is rough. The stubble of a devil-may-care beard rasps against me, and my nipples, once so pale pink, become roses in full bloom. Your mouth closes over one then the other, sucking, drawing deeply into the heat of your mouth. But there is more... One hand

roams over my side, over my hip to circle my belly and down to brush knuckles first over the short red-gold fleece. Wordlessly willed to do so, my thighs part ever so slightly. Your fingers brush up and down. Your mouth returns to claim a kiss. My hand seeks you out, curling around the fullness of your large hard cock. The head is wet against my thigh. You like kissing me.

V

The reply came fast.

Sensual V,

I very much enjoy it. But there is more of you to kiss, my sweet. Your rose-blush nipples are succulent, yes, and I return again and again between ardent kisses to feast upon their delicious plumpness. I'm hungry, V. Part your lissome thighs for me. I'm on my knees now, my eyes looking upward past belly and heaving breasts. Yes, I know you are as breathless as I. My large hands sweep upward over the front of your thighs, thumbs meeting in the center to pry soft, silky rose petals apart to find the flint-hard nub there. Feel me trace your clit with the tip of my tongue, wet circles, V, slow, firm, delightful circles. And once your clit stands hard, I'll draw this tiny corresponding bit into my mouth and suck, and I know, within moments, you will offer the same to me. But we are by no means done for the day. Suck my cock, V. Take me into your luscious mouth. Suck me.

S

Oh my god. I slid my hand inside the waistband of my drawstring pants. I was slippery wet, pulsingly aroused and ready...oh so fucking ready. I couldn't take much more of this. I'd burst into flames.

S,

I hold your head with both hands and lightly pull you away from your most intimate kiss. You rise, your mouth finds mine, and I taste me upon your lips, your kisses seasoned with my scent and wetness. The taste is heady, wanton. But now it's my turn. I gracefully lower to my knees and look up at you. You're breathing hard, but that's not all that is hard. In fact, I am in awe. Your cock is shining, the head thick like burnished bronze. The skin is stretched so taut in your arousal that the veins stand out like knotted cords.

I kiss your balls first, my lips pressing into the soft velvet, first one, then the other, and I nuzzle you, breathing in your hot male scent. Only then do I climb with lips, tongue, and teeth along the full length of you. My warm lips part slightly, and my gray eyes lock to yours of fern green. Fingers curling around you, they slowly, firmly, exactly pump you until your quicksilver heat begins to show. I'll paint my lips then, gliding your cock like a lipstick around and around my mouth to form a delicate O.

And when I open wider, your huge, thick rim gives us both a soft popping sensation. Only now do I draw you in, my heat inflaming you further, my breath hot against the crisp curls at your base. Feel me now?

V

Apparently I held my breath waiting, for when the reply came I gasped.

Amazing seductress V,

Oh, yes, I feel you. I wind my fists into the full twenty inches of red-gold silk and hold you there, afraid the exquisite dream will end. Now go, lovely one. I know your body throbs as mine does. No vibrator this time, V. Be my fingers...explore and thrill yourself as I would were I beside you. Moisten your fingertips and imagine my tongue plying your flesh. Go, find your release then return to tell me,

using every detail. Your words have made it impossible for me not do the same.

S

I didn't even close the email. I yanked down my pants and leaned back in my chair. I was soaking wet, the room filled with the aroused scent of me. I did as he suggested, not bothering to moisten my fingertips as I was already primed. I twirled my fingers for only a few seconds. That was all I needed. My climax was shattering.

When I came down off the chandelier, I wrote it out.

S,

That was marvelous, thank you. The scene we created together was scrumptiously hot. I was so dripping wet I had no need to wet my fingers and never left my chair but worked my clit here, worked it like I was possessed. And maybe I was. LOL I think you've insinuated yourself fully into my imagination. I look forward to our next art project. :)

V

Incredible V,

I agree, a most enjoyable way to spend 3:00 on a Saturday. Yes, I too was ready and only stroked a little before I literally exploded. Thank you. It was wonderful to share that. Tell me...do you see us treating each other at once? Your mouth on my cock and balls was amazing. I'd love to lick your lovely rose-blush pussy at the same time. Do you see the image these words evoke? Write it for me, fiery one. Climb on top of me.

S

Three o'clock? I looked at the small clock icon at the bottom of my task bar. 3:00. He lived in the same time zone as I. I felt a rush of warmth run over me at the thought he was near, even though near in a

time zone could mean next door or hundreds of miles apart. I saw Mr. Weston in my mind's eye. My rotund neighbor on the right wore Bermuda shorts and socks with sandals when he trimmed his hedges. Mr. Blumfeld on the other side of my house was a cadaver of a man who routinely patrolled the sidewalk with a spray can of RAID looking for ants to kill. Nice enough men really, but the thought they might be online right now sharing these intimate words wrinkled my nose and gave me a sensation in my stomach like I'd just downed a cup of canola oil. Pushing that unwanted imagery aside, I went back to my own fantasy of how S looked when he sat stroking his cock over my words.

I licked my lips, envisioning the sensual act he asked for. He asked me to write a scene for mutual oral sex, one of my personal favorites back in the day. I thought of my first time. On the whole it had been a time of many firsts. My mind grew wistful remembering when my heart, mind, and body had made love to another. Then I thought of Dan.

We had sex and some laughs, but I realized something last night. The kiss I wrote out was what I wanted, but I'd never had that with Dan. Suddenly the pigeon that had been pigeonholed flew past my mind's eye, and a smile came out of the pensive thought. I no longer cared about Dan. After eleven months and so many days of low self-esteem, I allowed myself peace. Feeling free, I said to the cosmos, "Go, Dan, go enjoy your life. I hope you eventually find happiness." It surprised me because I meant it.

I thought about this stranger who had become my lover in the ether. Talking intimately seemed to make things go *so* fast. No way would we strike up such intimate conversations this quickly if we were face to face. I smiled realizing there was a part of me that would like to... The image of my belly pressed to his in mutual pursuit of oral fulfillment actually made my heart flutter. The serpent of kundalini energy rising from my sex curled into Ouroboros to become a regenerating circle. I had found myself again.

* * * *

Thunderstorms rolled on and off that entire Sunday. I spent two hours in the late afternoon without power, feeling as agitated as a junkie needing a fix. I threw myself into cleaning my semi-dark house and organizing papers for the week by candlelight. By 8:00 that night the power was back on, but my server was down. Frustrated, I gave up on any more emails and watched a movie instead. The whole time wondering what S was up to and if he was thinking about my words as I thought about his. I found I had so much more to say!

The server was down for two days, and I didn't dare check my emails at work. But surprisingly I was still riding high. I decided to drive past the old Hornsby mansion on my way home from work because a note had come across my desk late that afternoon, an inner-office bit of intrigue actually, as my department's chief assistant had lunch with her friend who just happened to be the assistant to the mayor. Apparently, the mayor played eighteen holes with the county board president Sunday afternoon. I thought briefly about the violent storm that rolled through and wondered why people played golf when a storm was coming and they had a very good chance of becoming a living—for a short while anyway—lightning rod.

The discreetly small bit of folded paper on the seat next to me said the powers that be were sending someone from the preservation commission to assess the mansion. That was good news. I had been inside the stately old place several times. It was perfect—no raccoon under the porch, no mold, sound roof, revamped electric, modern 1970s plumbing, and flawless foundation. My only worry was they might find it too small to adapt to any modern need. Parking curbside, I rolled down my window just as the man was walking to his car. I introduced myself and asked in a roundabout way what his findings were. I was pleased to discover he was pleased. He told me he had it on good authority that the county was looking to “refit the old place

and make it a reading room and archive depository for the historical society.” I was elated.

In the course of the conversation, I began to notice little things about the man. For one, his hair was brown and had a decidedly chestnut quality to the color. He had sunglasses on, so I couldn’t see the color of his eyes, but his skin was definitely bronzed. I licked my lips. The anonymous internet world I had so recently entered was bleeding over into my real life. *Are you S?* I silently asked him. Imagining this man was my shadow lover made my face and other things grow warm. Cursing the redhead’s complexion and the inevitable blush I knew played over my cheeks, I wondered if he could see the color behind those dark glasses. He saw something, because he stopped talking about the house and wanted to know about me, like what department I worked in, did I know so-and-so, would I like to get a cup of coffee sometime if now wasn’t convenient...

I wished I could see those eyes.

I said I would like that very much, but today wasn’t good for me. He asked for my number. I dug around in my purse for a business card and handed it over. He did the same with a handsome smile and grew more and more attractive by the second. I said my goodbyes and headed home with his business card on the seat beside me, musing on how a mere two weeks ago I wouldn’t have even struck up a conversation with an attractive man, let alone given him my real phone number. I had nearly a full-color rainbow going now. With a smile, I pressed my foot to the pedal and headed home... I had a scene to craft.

The enigmatic S wanted me to write a scene of mutual oral sex. This wasn’t something I could piece together from old movies like I did for the kiss. No, I would have to rely on my own experience. I had only had such a sexual exchange with two people in my life. Dan never got the hang of it and we abandoned the attempt after our first try. He didn’t realize that foreplay was essential to a woman, orally or otherwise. No sooner had he started with clumsy, groping hands than

he'd finished and gone right to seeking his own enjoyment. The thought hit me then. I had never had an orgasm with Dan that I didn't produce myself.

Remembering my short-lived romance in Greece, I sighed. That was real. I trembled, I shook, I think I even cried out in the throes of passion. It had been glorious and he had been magnificent. My heart fluttered over images I had stored away, keepsakes of wild romantic love and hot sizzling sex. A man who knew how to really make love was a gift. That man was like Christmas morning.

I took care of all the little after-work things that needed to be done then treated myself to a long, leisurely bubble bath in the dark, complete with scented candles and *Sacred Arias* playing loud from the stereo speakers down the hall.

Closing my eyes, I lay back and conjured images in the hot steam.

I remembered he asked me to lie back then he sensually connected every inch of his body to mine. Everything about him—the way he smelled, the way the hair on his chest felt against my bare skin, the rough, stubbly beard on his chin, the way his breath felt between my legs as he kissed his way over my mound and pressed his tongue between my lips, the way that tongue drew warm circles on my clit, everything—warmed my body as well as my soul. I reached into the water and touched myself, mimicking the sensation of a memory.

He pulled me on top of him, my thighs trapping the full, hot length as his hard cock slid delightfully back and forth in a slippery path. He kissed me hard and said, “Turn for me, little flower. Let me see you.” I rubbed my clit harder under the water, remembering. *Yessss...* I turned and straddled his head, a completely new position for me. His large hands parted my flesh, his fingers opening me wide to his gaze while his tongue traced all of me from top to bottom. And I couldn't help but whimper.

I recalled treating him the same. He lay back, and I covered his cock and balls with kisses and licks, my first time sucking and licking a cock, let alone one so big. I took him into my mouth, tasting him,

loving him, delighting in the fact that I too could make him moan. And with arms wrapped tight around each other's legs, we devoured each other for an hour until we both cried out in mutual ecstasy.

The water rippled as my self-induced reenactment cascaded over me. When my climax died down, I lay back fighting the tears that wanted to come again. No use lingering there at the raw edges of my heart. Because I had loved him so, I wanted him to be happy with the life he built without me. I pressed my moon and stars tattoo to my heart and, picturing him happy without me, wished him well.

Thirty minutes later, physically sated yet emotionally hollow, I sought an intimate connection with another living being, albeit in a totally artificial way. I accessed my email program and ignored the full-to-bursting inbox. Instead, I searched for the succor I found in this unusual alliance and painted a scene out of a loving memory.

S,

Lie back and feel my body cover yours, feel the heat of my body along your thighs. Let me lick you to hardness, You know my warm, moist mouth. Feel as I draw you in, so hard, so large, so smooth against my tongue. Did I tell you I've a penchant for firm, smooth things? Feel me on the head of your thick cock, so thick, so smooth. Feel me pressing the rim's tensile firmness. Smooth things make me want to roll them on my tongue. And when you've been treated to enough and your mind and body crave more, tell me to turn and offer myself to you.

See me? My smooth alabaster thighs straddle your head. My sex hovers just above like a flower. Raise your eyes. See the dewy petals of me? Part them with your tongue, suck them, dip inside, lap the nectar your words have created. I wonder, are you as scent driven as I? I'm thinking perhaps you are, so allow me to paint an olfactory image for you. The scent is hot, primal, animalistic. Imagine the hottest memory of a woman's scent your mind has stored away as a

sensorial keepsake. This is my scent in this moment. My humble words don't do it justice.

Feel my breasts as they flatten against your thighs, feel the rake of nipples gone hard with yearning. But there is more, shadow lover, so much more. My mouth covers you again, so hard, so unbelievably hot. That's right, use your fingers to pry me wide to your gaze, drink in the mystery of me as I will you. The sweep of my red-gold hair brushes your bare skin. I kiss your knees and higher, returning again to the head of your cock where the sensitive, smooth underside beckons my tongue. I feel your nerves dance for me while your body calls upon me to taste flesh exposed and vulnerable. You flex forward as I slowly descend the full length. Feel my lips and chin brush the base as I swallow the impossibly hard length of you. Burst your excitement over my tongue to dribble down wetly. I'll lick you dry. Feed me, feed us. I would lap you until I feel your body tremble and you would do the same to me. Together we would discover where all the nerve endings lead.

My words had me panting again. I could literally feel him against my flattened breasts, and the downy covering all along his body treated my every nerve. They were only words, weren't they? If so then why could I see it, why could I feel this so acutely? On impulse I added,

My fingers read you like Braille through the confines of this electronic device. I admit I find it sadly lacking.

V

I clicked send and waited.

"You've got mail" burst forth from the speakers. I discovered I had been conditioned to have an autonomic response to seeing the envelope and hearing the computerized words. Like Pavlov's dog, I began to salivate.

Dearest V,

Indeed it is sadly lacking. How is it you've reached inside me this way? Are you the sorceress, the witch with unseen powers to tempt me so? I think you are, for I find myself yearning in a way I thought forever lost to me.

Yes, we lay belly to belly, your lovely orchid open in full. Feel my finger slipping inside like a sensual bee seeking nectar. You're so wet, so hot... Feel two fingers now running over your slippery ridges. I have to taste. And taste I will. Feel me, V, feel my mouth draw both lips and clit, feel your pulse pound there as I suck firmly to make your flesh swell. I feel your heart against my tongue as I press into your warm, silky depths. I see you, lovely one. I see your ginger curls so short and soft like down. Feel my fingers open you wide. You enflame my senses and beckon my tongue to return.

Yes, suck me, little flower, suck me down and share this most precious exchange two people may have, for this is far more intimate than any words we have shared so far.

Are you ready for my cock? Will you open your silken thighs for me? Let me sink into your heat. Make it so, V, craft the scene, for my body throbs to bury balls-deep within yours. I find myself quite hungry for you. In fact, I find I crave to discover my soul once again, and I suspect you hold the key. Do you think of me, V? Do you rush home to search for my reply to your own siren's call? Do you crave my words, and when you have them, do they cause you to reach your delicate fingers under your panties to tease yourself or do you wantonly slake the thirst and give that which your mind and body craves? Be assured lover, I do for you.

S

I read then reread those words. *Discover my soul?* In that moment I wanted him. I wanted him for real.

S,

This, my lover in the ether, is the absolute most erotic imagery you have painted for me yet. Yes, I am a witch as you say... I can conjure these images and through sensual alchemy bring them to life. A servant golem, built from desire, and it says feed me. I find it heady to think you sit, cock in hand, reading my words, your knuckles wet and arm muscles taut. Tell me what image of you I see when I imagine you stroking? If you do, does a tremor ripple over you before you explode? Or do you hold it back, balls aching to find your release later? Tell me, do my words stray through your mind when you are otherwise occupied?

V

A reply came so quick at first my mind missed it.

Siren V,

Yes. I can scarcely think of anything else. I stroke for you here at my screen. I stroke for you in bed while your perfect description fills my senses. I stroke for you in the shower, imagining your body slick with soap before me. I stroke for you in almost depraved longing. Paint for me, sensual one. Take my mind where my body would follow.

S

The ache between my legs became an ache just under my breastbone. I was falling in love with electronic print! No, I was falling for the mind who crafted it with such precision. How I ached to make these words real.

S,

Feel my hand curl around you, marveling how desire changes a man from flesh to steel. I desire to trace these bulging veins with my tongue. I want to feel the hot blood course under the velvet sheath. I

want to slip the tip of my moist tongue into your body as you enter mine, swirling and tasting and hotly forcing your focus on the cluster of nerves that correspond to my own. Ah, you have me now. I must admit to pulse-quicken searches for your reply. I read your words and I pulse, yes, pulse and throb. I want you to know that when I am done writing this I will adjourn to create magic. Lying back on my bed with my legs wide, I'll position the head of my vibrator, then close them scissor tight around it. With muscles flexing, I'll surrender to this electric delight humming on the capstone of my nerves. I must.

V

I clicked send and waited with teeth biting down and worrying my bottom lip. I felt tense, no, tense wasn't the right word. I was god-awful horny. Sure I could bring myself off, but I didn't want to. I wanted a time machine, I wanted several years back. I wanted to lie beside bright blue waters on a white sand beach next to the man who heated my blood and made my heart sing. In lieu of that impossible dream, I wanted *this* man. Yes, I wanted S.

No reply.

I played two hands of FreeCell on the computer. Somehow solitaire was too pathetic in my current mental state. The words rang through the silence of my home office—"You've got mail." I felt a rush of wetness between my legs.

Bewitching V,

Your words fire my imagination and heat my blood. They pool in my cock and balls gone heavy now in full desire. Take my hand, lovely V, follow me to my bed, lie back on petal-strewn sheets and fan your autumn-colored hair across my pillows. Allow me to pay homage to the goddess you are. Let me begin at your little feet. Feel me lightly

kiss, and yes, you will feel me bite ever so slightly, for the need to devour you is great. Reply lover.

I await.

S

Petal-strewn sheets. I swallowed. Good god, he was a sexy man.

S,

I smell the roses, their essence rising from the petals as the heat of my body warms them beneath me. I smell my scent, for my arousal is beyond measure in this moment. I draw a sharp breath as your nip to my arch takes me by surprise, but the press of warm lips in the same place cools the nerves gone wild. I feel the stubble of your chin, the rough/smooth dichotomy sending a tingle to run along my spine. Your hands stroke and caress. I feel the tickle of your fingers as they trace my calves. You're at my knees now. I feel your lips, feel your warm breath. Where do you travel next I wonder? I think I know.

V

My heart was pounding. My breath was coming short, and I was aware I needed to swallow because my throat had gone dry. His reply finally came.

My sensual lover V,

No, pretty one, have no expectations, only anticipation, for you never know what my body and mind will treat you to next, but I assure you, all will delight. For now I will leave your shapely legs and kiss you. Feel my body glide along yours, feel my weight press against you on my journey to your mouth. Yes, that is my hard cock grinding down. I can't help myself, V. My body craves the contact. I hold your face between both hands and lightly rub my lips over yours, not quite a kiss, not quite a caress. Open, sweetness, open your lips to mine. Mmm, my tongue traces your bottom lip. How soft you are. I know a

place that is softer still, but for now, I linger here. My tongue finds yours and swirls over and over it.

I break the delightful joining to shower your face with kisses. Feel my rough cheek. The beard I once wore is gone, but the shadow remains and it rasps against your neck, making your lovely alabaster skin glow pink and flushed. I bite down and suck your flesh lightly into my mouth, feeling your body rise to me. I've marked you with a lover's mark, and oh, lovely one, you do wear it well. Hear my breath at your ear, warm, heavy, excited. My lips glide along your collarbone to your upper chest. My tongue finds the crescent moon and stars and traces them, feeling the image slightly raised on your smooth, flawless skin. Your rose-colored nipples entice me... I go there next.

Tell me, lover. Take me there.

S

My clothing felt tight, as tight as a robe and slippers could feel when skin desires to be bare. I took them off because my skin felt feverish. My breath came faster as I sat naked at my desk.

S,

My fingers curl into the warm silk of your chestnut hair as your mouth closes over one nipple. You hear me gasp as you suck both areola and nipple into hot suction. Your teeth graze me, lightly biting, the pleasure/pain skittering along nerve meridians that run in a straight line from nipples to center heavily between my thighs. Touch me, lover, use expert fingers to tease me open, fill me with your fingers as lips and teeth treat one breast and then the other. I'm burning now.

V

Burning was right. I stood just long enough to tuck one leg under me, feeling a need for pressure there against my sex. I ground down

against the calf I straddled, dreaming of words to use next as we culminated our curious relationship.

You Have Mail. “You’ve got mail.”

Looking down, I saw my breasts were flushed in a fevered hue as though a beard had rasped across them. But no, S had no beard. I put another memory aside and read.

Beauteous V,

Your alabaster flesh fills my hands. Feel me now, holding one breast firmly. Your areola bulges, and I treat the full blooming rose with firm licks. Feel as I press both creamy breasts together, drawing your swollen pink nipples close so that I may suckle and lick first one then the other. See how my love bites mark you? Such a lovely canvas. You have no idea how tasty you are, lovely V.

And now feel my hands glide. Yes, part your legs for me, pull them back, hold them wide. My lips run along your ribs and belly. God yes, I smell how turned on you are. It fills my senses, and I know you know we won’t be denied. My fingers lightly pinch and roll your clit until you squirm and moan and make little sounds in the back of your throat. You’re so swollen, so excited. My fingers enter your tight warm body and withdraw. I hold my fingers between our mouths, my desire to taste all of you at once. Kiss me, lover, taste.

S

Oh my god. I wrote a hurried response, not even bothering to correct the inevitable typo.

S,

I reach a hand lower over the light fur on your belly, where it closes around your cock and squeezes firmly to coax your silvery essence to the tip. This I swipe with my fingertip. I touch my glistening fingers to my lips and raise my mouth to yours. “Open,” I whisper against your lips, my own mouth opening in illustration like feeding a

baby from a spoon. Our tongues meet over our mutually damp fingers, the taste wild, primal. I want more, I need more.

I give you proof by sliding a single finger into my slippery, salty-sweet cleft then offering it to your lips. You lick and suck it dry and then my mouth closes on yours for a deep, sensual kiss. Gray eyes meet green, both gazes glazed by the sensual pheromones of desire that pour off our bodies in shimmering waves.

You go on your way, lips burning a swath over the front of my body. My legs widen in invitation. I reach for your cock and stroke you slowly, deliberately. Your fingers brush up and down over my slit. You want me, don't you? Yes, it's true. I see it in your jade eyes. Truth can set us both free. Come to me, lover, for in truth, I can't resist you.

V

Women have an amazing ability to simmer awhile with all their nerve endings dancing, gathering...waiting. My clit had become a pulse point. I was consciously aware of each heartbeat now. I wanted to be filled and fucked so bad. My mind ran through the contents of my nightstand. No, feeling sorry for myself one day a few months back, I had thrown out that perfectly shaped vibrator. I only kept the electric wand because it also worked wonders on sore muscles. Good god, I throbbed like a mare in heat. A brief thought to call the guy who asked me out for coffee that afternoon popped into my head. "Hello, chestnut-haired man, how would you like to come over and fuck me? I can make coffee afterward." He'd be shocked to realize *just* how tempted I was.

Soul-stealing, wonderful V,

You ask if I want you? How can you ask? You fill my every waking thought.

S

I smiled. The words I chose next were a worm on a hook if I ever saw one.

S,

Every waking thought? Tell me, what true thoughts are they? Sex with me in real life?

V

Utterly desirable V,

True thoughts, eh? Then yes, I must admit that I want to fuck you blind! But more than that, I want to make love to you until the lines between us blur and you take my soul completely.

S

Oh my god...

I swallowed hard. The last time a man had said those words to me they made my heart sing. "I want to make love to you too," I whispered to the enigmatic stranger.

We were cerebrally intimate yet knew nothing whatsoever about each other. But I wanted him, god yes, I did. He implied he was well endowed, and I didn't care. I didn't care if he was ancient or young or possessed an athlete's body or weighed four hundred fifty pounds. I didn't care. In my mind he had green eyes the color of a still and shady pond. He had a short devil-may-care beard and hair the color of ripe chestnuts. Had I more details he couldn't have been more desirable in that moment. I read his last email again.

Just as I was about to reply, my doorbell rang.

"Eeep!" I squeaked in surprise, the sound nearly knocking me backwards out of my chair. Sometime in the last seventy-five years, long before I bought my old house, some circus clown had installed a klaxon *ahooga* for a doorbell. I thought it funny.

I was naked at my desk and for an instant thought I somehow had to get back to my room for clothes. Then I remembered my discarded

robe and slippers. My eyes whirled back to the screen. He wouldn't stay on if I didn't reply. I could feel it in my gut. The *ahooga* sounded again. "Ooh!" I stomped toward the door, thoroughly irritated that my internet tryst had been disturbed.

It was Andrea and Kate. My irritation vanished seeing my best friends' smiling faces through the leaded, beveled glass of the front door.

"Viv, *why* are you dressed for bed so early?" Andrea laughed.

"I just finished taking a bath," I told her.

"Come on, girlie, go get dressed. We're taking you out and won't take no for an answer!" Kate said.

I had turned down their offers for evenings out so many times in the last eleven months I was actually surprised they still offered.

Andrea made a shooing gesture. "Go go *go!* Go put on your best outfit. We're going to the Single File. Don't give me that look! You've been locked up like a monk...or nun or hermit or something. *Go!*"

I laughed and shook my head. "You guys know how much I hate going to singles bars."

"This is different," they both said at once.

"What do you mean different? It's always the same...like a meat market. Makes me feel like a prized steer being bought by the steak house." I had an offer of verbal lovemaking sitting in my email inbox. Feeling like so much meat was the last thing I wanted to do.

Andrea laughed, the sound contagious. "No, they have something new. It's Lady's Choice night."

"You're alone too much." Her finger out and pointing the way to my bedroom, Kate ordered, "Now go get dressed or all the good seats will be taken!"

I laughingly gave in and went to dress. Maybe they were right. Maybe a flesh-and-blood evening spent in the real world would be good for me. I rummaged through my clothes, trying to decide what to wear out on the town at the last minute, deciding in the end on a

nice newer pair of jeans and a black merino sweater. I was just putting in an earring when I heard Andrea ask from down the hall, “Hey, how do I turn on your printer?”

Oh my god! No!

I silently screamed and ran to my home office. Two stunned pairs of eyes turned to meet me in the doorway. “What?” they both asked at once.

“It’s tricky...the printer...” I rushed in and pretended to fiddle with the cord.

“You’ve got mail,” the computer’s speaker announced.

“Should I open this?” Kate asked. She was sitting in my chair with the single bar’s website up on the screen.

“No, don’t bother. I’ll check it later,” I said, feeling glad I had the presence of mind to close the erotic email when the doorbell rang. I didn’t recall doing that.

Kate said, “Okay. This is done.” The printer started to churn out print. “This is our ‘one free drink’ coupon!”

“You’re a cheap-ass, you know that?” Andrea laughingly chided. “Honestly, the money you spend on ink and paper negates the savings on your coupons.”

She grinned and wagged the paper in the air. “I have three-ee!” she sing-songed. “One for *each* of us.”

Andrea and I both laughed. “Well, that’s different then.”

“I need to go pee, be right back,” Kate told us and headed down the hall to the bathroom.

“I closed your email. Kate didn’t see,” Andrea said seriously. I could see the question in her brown eyes. “Who’s this S?”

I swallowed, feeling trapped. I loved her and she loved me, and we could share anything. But what would she say if I explained that I had an erotic pen pal? What would she say if I said I talked dirty to some stranger? I knew. She’d throw words of caution at me like so many caltrops scattered on the ground. “I can’t talk about it yet,” I told her, sincerely hoping she’d understand.

Andrea cocked her head and leveled me a gaze that had concern written all over it. “I didn’t read it all, just the part on the screen. I can only guess what page one said. He’s hot. Where’d you meet him?”

I felt a knot in my stomach. I knew what his last page said. I knew what she’d seen. Before I could answer, Kate said from the doorway, “Meet who?”

Andrea grinned, but her look at me before she turned to Kate spoke volumes. It said, *No I won’t tell her but you better call me tomorrow and explain what the hell is going on.* To Kate she said, “Later, we have men to meet!”

It was nearly midnight when the cab dropped me off. I was still grinning from ear to ear as I fumbled the key in the lock. Two margaritas, one paid for by my coupon, and one shot of tequila bought for me by a *very* handsome man had made me tipsy. It was fun. I laughed and interacted with men, real honest-to-goodness men. We danced with them, and we teased. We danced with ourselves and laughed some more.

As Andrea was happily married, she exuded a vibration of *don’t ask me for more than a dance.* But Kate on the other hand had given out the phone number to the dry cleaners down on South Street to more than one persistent man, and I myself declined a half dozen phone numbers from dance partners who wanted more than a dance. It was a nice warm feeling being a desirable creature again, even if those doing the desiring were less than desirable themselves. I hadn’t felt this way in ages. I had a full-color rainbow now, and the spectrum was brilliant.

With one day left in the work week, I gave myself permission to call in sick. It wasn’t entirely false... I was sure to have some kind of tequila headache in the morning. I dialed the office voicemail. “Hello, Audrey, I’m not feeling well and won’t be coming in Friday. Ask Pete to handle any emergencies for me though I doubt we’ll have any. All other calls, just tell them I’ll be back Monday or funnel them to

voicemail. Thanks.” I hung up and went to shower the smoky bar smell out of my hair.

I should just turn in. It's too late, I'm too tipsy. I wasn't going to go back to my computer tonight. I told myself this again as I walked to my office, but I wasn't listening. I had three emails from S. I went to the first, presumably the one after his telling me he wanted to make love to me.

Dearest V,

I'm afraid I shocked you with my candor. Is this so?

S

I read it again, my fuzzy, tequila-spiked brain momentarily confused. “Oh you think my lack of reply means your last statement turned me off,” I reasoned to the screen. “Quite the opposite, you sexy man.” I read his next email.

Incomparable V,

I find myself frustrated unable to see your storm-cloud-gray eyes beyond this mode of communication, unable to read for myself in their depths what you are feeling at this moment. Tell me, sweet V, have I offended you? Please reply.

S

I shook my head, “No, I'm not offended. I was away, that's all.”

The last email said only this:

Precious V,

I've sensed from the beginning that you would not want to chat. I ask you now, please consider. Highlight my user name and right click. I so want to talk with you. Please consider.

S

My heart started to pound. He was right. I didn't like chat, especially the lack of emotion and the time it took. When the internet was new and only the geeks and nerds held the reins, you were guaranteed an intelligent conversation. Not anymore. Back then on rainy days with nothing to do, I even dabbled in cyber sex from time to time with people who could turn a phrase and build a scene. But now, *blah*. Today the internet was too easy to use, where "come on" lines such as "what size bra do you wear?" and *slam*slam*slam* indicated the verbal coupling had finally gotten into "the act." No, it had been years since I cybered. But I knew it would be different with S. I knew it.

I got up for three aspirin and a huge glass of water—Andrea's husband Bob's famous *cure* for the inevitable hangover non-drinkers like me always got the day after. I sat down again, read the last email, and considered.

He didn't say anything about cybersex. No, he was talking about talking. I was almost scared to talk to him. The anonymous distance and separation through email was like armor. I felt safe in email. It was like the difference between a phone call and a face to face conversation. We had been intimate dozens of times. Chat was still in a word format, wasn't it? Just quicker than email. I talked myself into it. Then the room began to spin. *Ugh. Tequila*. I just typed a quick sentence. The evening's partying was making me feel too ill at that moment for more.

S,

I wouldn't mind chatting. I'm off work tomorrow.

V

* * * *

The next day I woke to full early-afternoon sunlight with the sensation of a mile of cotton wadding in my mouth, a throb between

my eyes and, curiously, a cramp in my left thigh. I assessed and remembered the reason. Somewhere in the night I discovered if I planted one foot on the floor the bed would stop spinning. Padding like a zombie to the bathroom, I asked myself why on earth I drank so much. I had just two margaritas and one shot of tequila. Compared to my partying girlfriends, I didn't really have all that much but still... I *felt* like I drained the bottle of tequila down to the worm.

"What a lightweight. You'll be useless at work today," I admonished the reflection in the hall mirror then I remembered. Twinkling gray eyes met twinkling gray eyes. "No you won't. *You* have a day off!"

Twenty minutes later made all the difference in the world as did a shower, a cup of coffee, and dry toasted bagel. I felt almost human again.

I sat before my computer and read the last email my tipsy self had left open.

Precious V,

I've sensed from the beginning that you would not want to chat. I ask you now, please consider. Highlight my user name and right click. I so want to talk with you. Please consider.

S

"I'm sure you're working," I told the email as if it were alive, deciding then and there that I'd just click his user name to read his profile if he had one. I right clicked on his user name. I felt... What exactly? Shy? Why was I feeling shy? I nearly x'd out the box when his words popped into view.

:) You're here. I was hoping you'd come, V.

I smiled. He was hoping... I typed in *I'm sorry I left like that last night. I had friends stop by unexpectedly. They took me out for awhile.*

I'm glad you're here now. This isn't so bad, is it?

What, you mean chatting? No, I suppose not. I'm surprised you're not at work, I told him, guessing he took the day off like I did. I no sooner had the thought when he said...

You mentioned you were taking the day off. I thought it a splendid idea so I did the same.

I smiled at the screen, trying to remember when I said I was taking the day off. *Oh, yeah,* I said to myself as the recollection solidified. That was the last email I sent.

He said, *I have a question. Why do you dislike chat, cyber chat specifically?*

The internet is populated by dullards.

LOL Yes, it certainly appears so, doesn't it? And the other reasons?

I smiled, sensing the enigmatic man knew me somehow. *There is a gross lack of finesse in chat.*

And...?

Honestly?

Of course.

I very much enjoy our emails. I'd hate to see them end.

Then I will be sure to send them, adorable V. I hold my hand out to you. Take my hand, lovely one. We have much to discuss.

I take your hand. Your fingers are warm, the hand itself larger than mine.

I grinned, recalling his original riddle. I could almost hear him laugh when he replied, *My large hand leads you to my bed. No clothes, V, not here, not now. Take them off for me. I'll do the same here.*

Oh my god, right to the chase. Yes, I mechanically obeyed the suggestion. Once more my robe was tossed over my chair. I left my fuzzy socks on my cold feet and smiled. He didn't need to know. I typed...

I follow you to your bed. There are rose petals there as before.

Yes, they are there. English roses to be exact. Are you beautifully bare, my sweet?

Yes. My heart was hammering in my chest.

As am I.

I could see him in my mind's eye, large hand gliding back and forth over his massive hard cock. My clit began to pulse as hot desire pooled between my legs. I wrote,

I stand watching you standing naked at the edge of the bed. Fill your hand with your cock. Tell me what I see.

Oh, sensual V, lie back for me on your side, bend one knee, and tuck your delicate foot under your leg. I adore the way your alabaster breast falls, the shadow below the fullness another shade of rose. What do you see when I stand looking at you? You watch my hand circle my hard cock, hard, hot to the touch and oh so sensitive, V. My balls fill gazing upon your beauty. They feel heavy, as heavy as my cock. See me stroke, darling V, see my hand glide along this shaft and know with a certainty that my body has responded to you alone.”

I felt a flutter in my chest and took a deep breath to steady myself. I could see him in his words.

I watch you, thinking you a most splendid male. Stroke faster for me, just a little. Let me see the heat the friction builds.

And what will you give me in return, lovely V?

I'll lay back and spread my legs...

I'll need more than that, sweetheart.

I smiled. I really loved when he challenged me like that.

I'll use my left hand to part my pussy lips. See how rosy watching you has made me?

Yes, I see your rosy center, the dew glistening. What else do I see as I stroke faster?

You see the fingers of my right hand tracing my velvet lips.

Yes, and you're very swollen, aroused for me. Isn't that so, V?

My breath was erratic. God he was so fucking hot.

Yes, swollen and sensitive and getting wetter.

Be my eyes, V. What are your fingertips doing?

They're tracing slow circles around my clit, a corresponding action to what your hand is doing.

I come closer and sit next to you lying there so succulent and desirable. I'm entranced. The motion of your fingers over shimmering rose-hued flesh draws me closer still.

Come closer, closer...

I'm inches away. You've sped up, your fingers a blur as they work your hard little nub.

Closer...

I abandon my cock for a time and lay my head on the silk of your inner thigh. I must tell you, the hot scent of you quickens my pulse.

Breathe me in, fill your lungs with my arousal.

It's more real to me than my own cock thrumming against your leg. I can't help myself, V. I gently hump against you like a lust-crazed dog.

I whimpered softly, one hand petting my sex, the other trying to compose the next sentence with three fingers.

I feel your cock against my leg...the heat and firmness compelling me to slip two fingers inside my pussy, only to pull them out to show you. Do you see how turned on I am?

God yes. I see your fingers slick and wet. Sink them in your pussy again, deeper now, all the way to your knuckles. You're so unbelievably tight, V. My cock reacts. I feel my heart beating in my hard length. Slip another finger in, and stretch yourself wide for me. Yesss...show me your fingers now. Let me lick them.

I was panting.

I bury my fingers into my slick depths, one, then two and now...three. My left hand rolls my clit between my fingers. I can't help myself. My fingers withdraw, wet, slippery...taste me.

Yess, I taste you. I suck your fingers dry remembering our shared kiss seasoned with our desire. Use your fingers to tease your plump pink nipples now. My fingers have other things to do. I lay on my belly between your open thighs and both hands spread you wide...Open, little flower, let me see you.

For some reason those words made me gush. I was soaked now.

I moan as your large hands splay me, feeling exposed, throbbing even more than a moment ago. My wetness is dripping from my pussy now. I know you see.

Mmm, yes, I see. There is no part of you I cannot see now. One fingertip flicks back and forth over your clit. It's so hard, V, like a little chip of flint. And here, the tiny hole is sensitive too, and here...a tight rosette. But this, this is the place my body longs to slide into. Feel the emphasis of my words as two large fingers sheath themselves

in the delicious, warm tightness of your pussy. You know what comes next, lover.

Tell me what comes next. I learned before to not take for granted where your mind may take us.

I felt him smile.

Yes, that's correct. I did tell you to anticipate, didn't I? Then feel this... My face draws close, my breath warm against your splayed flesh wrapped so tightly around my fingers. They are no longer still. Feel them slowly pumping in...out... Your tight muscles grip me. My cock throbs waiting its turn to be wrapped in these exquisite ridges and slippery walls, but today, this time, is just for you. I draw your clit into the heat of my mouth. I feel your body tremble and suck firmly in response.

Oh fuck yes.

I roll my nipples, the sensation running like electricity through live wires straight to my clit. Feel my heart beating wildly now. My clit is a pulse point. Lick me, please...Lick.

I ran to my bedroom, grabbed my electric wand and darted back. I plugged the cord into the surge protector under my desk, the sliding platform for my keyboard tearing at my hair. I didn't care what it took to be able to augment his words with my vibrator. I wrote:

I can't help myself. I brought my vibrator.

Mmm. Oh yes, my darling, I want you to come for me. I want to feel your body convulse in ecstasy. I want to lap you as your shudders

subside. Now, my sweet, turn it on now and read my words. Don't reply until you're done.

I sat back, parted my cleft with one hand and positioned the wand's head with the other. One leg tossed over the arm of the chair. I read his words...

You feel my fingers move, curling upward to press the cluster of nerves. My other hand comes into play now. Two more fingers slip inside. What a gloriously tight fit you are, like a hand in a glove. Four fingers wide now, V. Only now do I start to lick, and you taste magnificent.

I turned the wand to low...the *buzzzzzzz* seizing me. His words filled my mind, and intense sensation filled my loins.

Yes, you taste and smell wonderful, V. Yes, that is my tongue you feel so firmly. Flat, hard licks, faster... and faster... swirling over your flint-hard nub. Oh, you're so wet, so scented, so fucking hot. I want you, V. I haven't wanted a woman this badly in a very long time.

I licked my lips, my breath coming in short little pants now. My nerves were stretched taut.

I pull my fingers from your heat and replace them with both thumbs. I drag my entire face over your pussy, licking, biting, sucking your swollen lips deep into my mouth, coating myself with your incredibly hot scent...

I turned it to high and my legs began to tremble.

I feel your body trembling. I feel your tight pussy contracting around my thumbs. My palms cup your bottom, lifting you to my

mouth like a rich dessert. I want you to come. I want to drink your pleasure from this sensual chalice of yours. Come, lovely V, shower me.

“I’m coming,” I murmured to the screen, the words awkward as I typed them out with one hand.

Come for me. Come now.

His sensual command seized me. It started in my lower belly, this hot unfurling sensation. The tingle grew and grew, and suddenly, my back arched. I cried out into the quiet of the house as my body went rigid, my chair nearly tipping me to the floor. The glorious sensation cooled yet still danced over me like gauze in a breeze. I drew a ragged breath then typed the words he was waiting for.

I did come. Like fireworks actually.

No, precious V, not nearly enough. Tell me in vivid detail how.

If I do, will you come too?

Sensual creature that you are, I couldn’t help but do so.

I smiled.

Yes, I came. I parted my pussy lips and pressed the head of the wand firmly against my clit. My body recoiled at the chill of it, but the extreme sensation was exactly what I needed to feel there and so pressed harder. I first set it to low and read your vivid imagery. I could feel you there feasting sensually between my legs.

I read more, seeing you, feeling you lift me to your mouth. The sensation started gathering then...that’s how it feels. It’s a gathering

that radiates outward from my sex to the far reaches of my nerve endings...and builds...builds...then it grips me. The sharp, intense tingle contracts my muscles and arches my back as all sensation rushes back to that point. I cried out when the orgasm washed over me. I'm soaking wet now, and it's because of you. I want you to come for me.

Stroke your magnificent cock. I know it fills your hand. Cup your balls with the other, pretend it's me there, caressing you as you stroke hard...just for me. Were I there I would watch you, every action, every drip. I'd lick your little male nipples and you'd feel the sweep of my red-gold hair over your belly. I'd kneel between your legs and lick your balls while you pumped your cock hard. Come now.

Oh, my extraordinary lover V. Yes, I came to your words, to the images that flow from you like manna from heaven. Just a moment, lovely one. Brb.

I smiled at the waiting chat box. "You went to wipe up, didn't you?"

I'm back.

Thank you, I told him sincerely.

Oh, sweetheart, we are by no means finished.

The sentence implied there was more to come. And the thought thrilled me beyond belief...

Oh? I asked, my chest feeling oddly tight. I briefly examined the sensation. Yes, I had this familiar flutter before, years before. I was falling head over heels.

I have a question... How came you to be this sensual creature?

I smiled and shook my head to myself. I couldn't begin to say actually. *I think I've always been drawn to imagery. Is that what you mean?*

Your ability to paint living hues with words is unlike anything I've experienced before. It's quite hot, V. Quite hot.

Thank you. That seems to be a talent of yours as well. I'm enjoying our "discussions" immensely.

As am I. Words can be very intimate if used to their full potential—as we've just experienced.

Oh yeah, I said to myself. Feeling the chat might have opened a door to friendship, at least a tiny bit anyway, I said, *I know you are a proficient wordsmith. I know you have a knack with a phrase that can play my imagination like a fiddle...*

LOL And you're wondering about me the man, eh?

Grinning I replied, *I'd be lying if I said no.*

Then let's do in chat what we began in our email correspondence. You tell me one thing about you the woman, and I will follow with one thing about me the man. Does this sound appealing?

Lol How is it I can ask first and you still manage to get me to take the first turn?

Touché. All right, I live northwest of Chicago. And you live...?

My heart fluttered. I wasn't sure I wanted to say. Oh, I did on one hand, but the safer rational side of my brain stalled.

V?

Yes, I'm still here. I live in Wisconsin. I had a feeling we were in the same time zone.

:) Hello, neighbor.

:) Hello.

Your turn, V. What else do you want to know?

I wanted to know if he were single, instead I asked, *You took the day off. What type of work do you do every day?*

Before we share more of ourselves I think we need to get more comfortable. I suggest we pull these petal-strewn blankets back and snuggle in my bed. Come, lovely V, lay your head in the crook of my arm as we chat.

I smiled. He still wanted to play. And in that moment I wanted to play too.

I snuggle my naked body next to yours under the rose-scented coverlet, one bare leg tossed casually over yours. I feel your arm wrap around me, your fingertips lightly sweeping the side of my breast. My arm crosses your belly. Snuggled beside you like this, I find I have the urge to toy with your semi-flaccid cock. I do so. I hope you don't mind...

My body rises to your knowing touch, and I am left to ponder how it is you've managed this sensual alchemy as my body is so recently spent. My hips lift ever so slightly, a blatant invitation to your hand. I kiss your head, the scent of your hair adding fuel to the growing fire your fingers are expertly tending, my hand gently lifting the red-gold strands to my lips. I can't help but kiss the silk.

I thrilled. He was getting hard again so soon after coming. "Oh you are *sooo* sexy," I told him though he couldn't hear me. I had forgotten all about the question I had asked.

My hand curls around the base of your cock. I lightly squeeze you. The blood pumped back into your veins with my action comes rushing back with full force when I release you. You swell. What a marvelous male creature you are. I cup your balls, delighting in the loose, fully spent velvet of you. There are so many parts of you to play with. I find I want to touch them all and make them mine for a time.

Ah, my beauteous sensual lover, yes, make it so. My body is yours to explore. I give my all over to your waiting hands. What will you do with free rein I wonder? You must fill my mind with details.

Details? I whisper in your ear. The devil is in the details, and I am she. My hand closes on you once more in illustration.

That particular comment made my cock surge to fullness and sent a shiver down my spine. Go on, devil V, cast your spell, take my body but leave my soul.

No. I want your soul as well. I rise up, my lips kissing along the side of your neck, my tongue tracing your ear and biting you softly. I feel you squirm. Your hands move to embrace me, and I capture your

wrists and press them to the bed at your sides. Oh, that's nothing...wait...

Mmm...yes, my sweet. Devour me if that is your will.

Yes, I will...slowly...inch by inch... You feel me lick your little nipples. I hear your soft gasp as my teeth worry the little nubs then cool your flesh by licking and softly blowing upon them. You're covered with goose bumps. Are you feeling chilled? Perhaps I can warm you.

Oh yes, my temptress, you can warm me... Of this I have no doubt. And now look what you have wrought. My cock is hard and dripping excitedly. Yes, I do believe you are a devil to tempt me so. Have your way with me, my imaginative beauty.

I laughed.

And will you pay the price?

Price, V?

The price to keep your soul.

No.

Grinning, I wrote a challenge,

By the time I am done with you, I will have it, you know.

Sweetheart, I'm stronger than you realize.

That was a gauntlet at my feet if I ever saw one. I broke into a big smile, loving that he made me find myself, find my imagination again.

LOL We shall see then, won't we?

Yes, I admit your wordcraft is spectacular. My body has responded, and my mind thrilled more than once since our first meeting. But, sweet angelic V, it will take much to bring me to my knees and convince me to hand over my soul.

Angelic? Existence is filled with dualities, and as mere mortals, we must admit there would be no light without the dark, or dark without the light. This duality of existence was created for a reason I think. It makes sex fluid and spectacular, for if not, then why does it dance upon our minds like it does? As a would-be devil I freely embrace the concept of light and dark. Mmm, but I digress...

Empty threats, little demon, I see nothing yet...

Then see this imagery, my doubting fellow. The scene has changed. You are no longer upon your petal-strewn sheets but in my bed.

I love your décor, all fiery reds, a bit warm down here, eh?

I laughed out loud.

Not nearly as warm as it will be.

As I've said...I see nothing yet...

I bit my lip.

You find yourself stretched out on my very comfortable bed of red satin. What's this? Your wrists are tied to my headboard and you wear a blindfold. My, my, what a predicament. And look, is that a hard cock I see for my efforts?

Yes, temptress, it is very hard all of a sudden. I must ask why have you tied and blindfolded me here.

Why, to remove one sense to enhance the others, of course. You'll have to anticipate rather than see me. You'll have to feel me with every other nerve of your body and not your fingers.

LOL I may have been in error to challenge you, V.

I grinned.

Nervous, are we?

Trembling with excitement here at my desk, sweetheart.

I lean into you and kiss your lips. My tongue finds yours and coils around it, lightly sucking. My lips shower your face with kisses, your cheeks, your forehead, your chin... I whisper against your skin, Yesss...tremble for me. You can end this you know. Just sign my paper that releases your soul to my care.

I shake my head, my cock and rational mind at odds.

I gently nip and bite a path over your skin. I work your nipples again and all over your chest and belly, then suddenly stop. My gray eyes survey the effect. You're covered with my love bites now and seeing them makes my eyes sparkle. I like you prettied up this way.

And I'm as hard as granite now. I think I like this wicked side of you, V.

I lay on top of you, trapping your ship's spar of a cock between my thighs. You buck up at me, presumably to take any sensation your cock can find, and fall short of the mark. No, shadow lover, there is much more to come before your cock slides home. I make my descent... The sweep of my red-gold hair tickles your belly and bare thighs as I move all the way to the bottom of the bed. I kiss the soft tops of your feet over your ankles. I incline my head slightly, thinking. I'm tempted to tie your legs wide as well, but I think you won't fight my sensual journey. Am I right?

I couldn't possibly stop you now...

I smiled knowing my words were having an impact. I could feel his body in my mind, feel how hard he was. And I was soaking wet with wanting him.

I kiss your knee and higher. Your legs spread for me as I knew they would. I lay on my belly between them with soft lips kissing your inner thighs as I slowly climb to the center, pressing and parting your warm velvet balls with the flat of my tongue, following the soft wrinkled line to the most sensitive place I seek. I press into you. Your body tightens as I find the head of your cock, the sensitive underside exposed and vulnerable. You're wet. I lick you there, and your body flexes forward.

Mmmm...

That simple response made me throb.

I whisper, "Do you yield?" My teeth lightly gripping the firm rim of your cock head, I wait for your reply.

I groan, "No, devil V, I do not yield."

I tighten my grip, and your breath comes short. I release you, and as soon as you relax, I press the tip of my tongue into your small slit and all over the smooth head. I delve again and the nerve endings there dance for you. I lick down the hard shaft to your balls, pressing my face there and breathing the hot musky maleness of you, tasting the hot seep of your excitement in occasional trickles. I can hear your heart beat and realize the telltale pulse so loud to my ears is just under the thin skin of your magnificent cock. It makes my own heart synchronize. "Do you yield?" I ask again. This time I straddle your thigh and press my pussy there, seeking any sensation I can from you. I'm hot like a glowing ember there.

I groan deeply as you mark me with your flame in more ways than one. You are exactly what you profess. You knew my hands would ache to touch you. You knew my eyes would want to see the flush of your arousal painting your alabaster flesh as you work my body over. My imagination struggles to fill in the mystery of you. I ache for it, and I fear my soul requires it. I want to see you, lovely one. I want to see how delightfully swollen and wet your pussy is. I crave to touch the cherry nub of your clit tucked in these velvet folds. I want to touch you, fill you, to fill my hands to overflowing with the soft bounty of your creamy breasts. I want to devour and explore you as you are doing to me. I want to find the places that make you whimper for me as I groan for you. I want to lose myself in your body...for eternity if need be. You have no idea how close I am to signing away my soul and anything else I have.

My smile widened.

I take you into the heat of my mouth. Drawing, sucking your cock deeply. My body is aching. These tender ministrations are creating a corresponding heat in me. Mmm, oh yes, they are. I wish I had a cock such as this, and you a cherry nub, for if we did, we would transcend bounds. For a time we would truly know what the other feels—the throb of clit and smooth, firm cock against a tongue. I lick you now from balls to tip. Your thick rim is marvelous, and being orally driven, I bide there awhile... while you squirm.

Your words are magic. Pure magic. Yes, I squirm in that life and here. For here, marvelous, sensuous V, my cock thrums with every tympanic beat of my heart. I'm stroking for you, dashes of pre-cum splashing over my knuckles. Finish this, lover. I'm near mindless with wanting you. I can't type just yet. I must read it...feel it.

Oh my god. I grabbed the vibrator again, locked it tightly between my closed thighs and typed. I could barely think... I was so close...so fucking close...

I rise from my teasing and straddle your hips. My fingers curl around you and lead you between my legs. Oh no, it's not what you think. Your incredible heat makes contact as I draw delightful circles around my rosy swollen slit. I use you to masturbate...slow and deliberately...ooh...yess... I lubricate your circling orbit with your hot silver essence and my own glistening excitement. Mmm, it's a slow descent, and I tremble, my thigh muscles tightly suspending me over your body. I drag the tip of your cock back and forth over my slit until I open.

I finally ease onto you, taking all of you in until my bottom sits upon your balls and my pussy is completely filled. Only now you hear me whimper with need. You didn't exaggerate. You're thick and huge and oh so fucking hot deeply inside me like this. In fact, my whole

being feels expanded. I balance on you, holding half my weight with my hands and the other half supported hotly by you as I am pinioned to you. I lean into you and fuck you hard, hips rocking and arcing to the natural curve in your cock. I ride you at my pace, your pending orgasm hindered by my sorceress's spell.

Your thick, hot rim runs wild over my sopping-wet ridges in a most delightful cadence. I fall forward and kiss you hard, my tongue mirroring the thrusts below. I'm moaning against your lips now, all sensation gathering in my lower belly. Your wild, beast-like groans are my undoing. "You want this, don't you?" I ask breathlessly as I ride a brewing firestorm. You surprise me by your hard-breathing silence. I fuck you harder, my round ass slapping back at you. Oh yesss, I feel your upward thrusts now. I knew you'd ride with me. My devil magic removes both bonds and blindfold as my own orgasm builds, my pussy tightening and gripping you wetly.

"Say it! Give your soul to me!" I cry out as my climax explodes, my pussy shuddering and milking you to follow.

I could almost hear him speak these next words.

God yes! Yes, my soul is yours, lover. Oh yes, it's yours! The words come out in a hiss as I grab you hard by the hips and pull you down on top of me while I thrust upward. I've never been so completely covered, never so completely scorched with exquisite female heat, with your luscious body fully and deeply speared, my balls empty, flooding you, pouring into you with the hot, molten lust of your making. My hands rise to cup your beautiful breasts, thumbs and forefingers tweaking nipples lightly, creating their own magic that make your muscles contract around me, that make your tight crimson walls milk me dry. I can scarcely breathe it feels so good. I reach for you, my hands on your face now. Kiss me.

The words were my undoing. I cried out to my empty office as wave upon wave crashed over me. Then I realized. I hadn't even turned the vibrator on. Just having it there pressed tight against my clit had been enough...that and those words on my screen.

We were both silent for a time. I was spent, sated, filled with wonder. Before this compelling man, I'd never before brought myself to orgasm with words. Not even when playing with cyber sex years before. Hot, yes, but the words of other people never inspired me the way this man's words did. I came all right. I came without anything buzzing away on my sex. I came from this man's words alone. I wondered then what an orgasm in the real world would feel like if he brought me to it.

Are you there, sweet lover?

And then I came back to earth...

Yes. Did you like that?

Immensely. I was stroking my cock like I'd die if I didn't. Thank you for sharing that bit of fancy with me.

I grinned.

What fancy? I do believe, sir, that you owe me your soul.

My lady, I do believe you've had that for awhile now. And the rest too by the way.

I smiled... Was that true?

Hey, are you ever going to answer my question?

Question? Oh, wasn't I waiting for you to go first?

LOL I think I know who the real devil is.

Mmm...that reminds me. Turnabout is fair play.

Oh?

My sweet, I intend to steal your soul next.

I wanted to say, "I think you already have." Instead I said, *Well, since I'll never get answers unless I go first, I work in a planning and development department.*

LOL Changed the subject, did you? And I find I must answer if we are ever to get back to the "turnabout is fair play" issue.

Waiting...

Impatient imp. I'm an architect. So how might I go about stealing that soul of yours?

I smiled. So you're a Chicago architect, and I'm a Milwaukee planner. Nice. I suddenly had the feeling it wouldn't matter if all he did was deliver pizza. I enjoyed this man far too much to care. His next words took me by surprise.

Would you ever consider speaking live? By phone or on Skype?

I didn't answer at first.

V? Have I gone and ruined things by asking?

No, to be honest, I've never done that before. Just thinking of the details... I admit I like the anonymity of email and chat. You understand, don't you?

I could feel him smile again.

Yes, sweetheart, I do understand you. Please understand me. I find I long to put flesh on the words. I apologize if I am too forward.

No, not too forward. I mean it is a natural progression, is it not? People do C2C all the time. I've never done it, but I wouldn't be opposed to trying.

Surprising myself with that admission, I couldn't believe I just wrote that. I had the camera right there, a small little lens right on my computer screen.

V, I promise, if it doesn't work or feels funny we could go back to chat. Instantly if need be.

I swallowed hard. The lens pointed right at my chair. How did I feel about sitting here on camera, let alone naked? On the other hand...I'd love to see him.

I really don't want my face online. Does that make sense?

LOL It makes perfect sense. I don't need the people in my office seeing me with a hard-on on the internet either.

I laughed.

I would never post that.

Nor would I post any part of you. I find I like keeping you to myself. Shall we try then, V? We can set our cameras below the neck. I'm sorry if that sounds so depraved. Please understand I just crave more between us...

My heart tripped.

Ok. I'll try it.

Terrific. Say in an hour? I have some things I have to see to around here.

The delay was what I needed and suddenly I sensed he did that for me. He gave me time.

In an hour then. I'll have to read how to set the camera, but it shouldn't be too hard to figure out.

An hour then. And, V, listen, please don't feel shy. You couldn't possibly be lovelier to me than you already are.

Thanks for that. Before I sign off, I have an important question, one I should have asked before we became pen pals. Are you married?

No, never have been. And yourself?

I swear I could read the tension in his voice as if he hadn't considered the possibility.

I shook my head, the peculiar action people do sometimes even when talking to themselves or on the phone. I replied, *No*.

I'm glad. That means I get to have you all to myself. I'll be back in an hour, lovely one.

In an hour.

I signed off and went to get dressed. Being in front of the camera was one thing. Being in front of the camera in nothing but these fuzzy socks was quite another. I wanted to look nice but wanted to be comfortable, and truth be told, I wanted to be ready for any direction our verbal play took us. I put on my best underwear, a comfortable pair of drawstring pants and a T-shirt. After assessing my appearance in the hall mirror, I went back to my home office and, with forty-five minutes to kill, began searching for the FAQ's for the built-in camera I was about to use.

What a wanton woman I had become...

It really didn't take long to figure out the Skype program that would allow us to talk live on camera. With five minutes to spare, I took my seat and adjusted the camera on my screen to show nothing above my throat. My heart was beating hard. I had never in all my life ever even considered talking on camera, let alone having a conversation that no doubt would be as sensually intense as all other communication with this man had been thus far. Because I was fairly certain this conversation would somehow turn me into a sex-crazed maniac, I set my electric wand on the desk within easy reach. I didn't want to inadvertently bend before camera and show my face...not yet anyway.

"Breathe," I commanded. My breathing had become erratic for the last twenty minutes or so, and I felt like I had been out running and was trying to catch my breath. I would periodically have a tremble take me from head to toe. I was nervous, I was excited. My life had been so different just mere days ago. As far as different went, I certainly felt different. I felt wild, I felt sexual, I felt powerful. That thought made me pause. Yes, that's what it was. I felt like a powerful,

sexual creature. And as odd as this fact truly was, with this intimate stranger I felt fully appreciated as such.

An image popped on the screen, a small box asking me to click. Another tremble took me as my index finger made contact with the mouse. He popped into view, a tad pixelated but my oh my...

"There you are!" he said, and by his tone, he was obviously happy to see me...or to see as much of me as he might.

My eyes drank him in. He was so much nicer than my mind had envisioned. Wearing jeans and a button-down shirt that might be green or might be olive, I couldn't tell, he had a watch on his left wrist. The wrist itself was large boned and finely made, and his sleeves were rolled up, showing muscles and the line of veins under his skin. He *was* bronzed, and he *did* have large hands. I smiled. Some women liked men's behinds, some women liked well-muscled chests. I was a woman who liked forearms and sleek musculature in general, though a nice ass could turn my head too. This man would definitely turn my head. I said, "Yes, I figured out this camera thing and, I might add, am I'm very pleased with myself!"

He laughed. The sound was rich and gave me a very warm feeling in the hollow of my belly. "I'm glad, V. Can I tell you something, my sweet?"

"Of course."

"You are as lovely as I've imagined you to be. And look how long and thick your red-gold hair is! It does look the color of autumn leaves, V. A perfect description if I do say so...makes me want to bury my hands into the lushness of it."

I looked down at my straight hair nearly covering both breasts with its length. My heart beat faster. I laughed to break the tension...my tension.

"Well, you never know what anyone really looks like when you chat. I always figure it's safer to stick with the truth. For no other reason than having to remember what you said you looked like."

He laughed again. It was a happy sound. I could see him move slightly in his chair. His office was neat and organized behind him. Mine had wallpaper that looked like the north woods, the north woods with a set of bookcases and a pole lamp.

“Well, I for one am fortunate, for here you are in the flesh. So tell me, sweetheart, are you uncomfortable talking this way? If you aren’t, we can easily go back to chatting, or back to email if you prefer...”

I cut in. “No. I mean, yes.” I laughed. “I’m okay, and thank you for your consideration for my feelings.”

“I want you to feel comfortable around me, V. I can’t express how important that is to me.”

I smiled. What an endearing thing to say. “It’s funny, I don’t really know you and you really don’t know me, but yes, I am surprisingly comfortable.”

“We’ve shared a level of intimacy that most people never attain.”

“We have.”

I could hear the smile in his voice when he said, “Perhaps it’s because you own my soul now.”

I laughed again, feeling at ease now. “The devil is in the details.”

“Ah, you bring up an excellent point, lovely V, a little matter of turnabout...”

“Hey, I took your soul fair and square!”

“On the contrary, I surrendered it to you. And now I find the need to possess yours the same way. Will you yield?”

“Will I...?” I laughed. “No, I’m keeping my soul where it is, thank you very much.”

“I can make you beg me to take it. Shall I show you...?”

I swallowed. Good lord he was so sexy. Sexy body, sexy voice, sexy mind...sexy S. I had the urge to ask his name. Later, my mind whispered. Instead I asked, “Hmm...what shall you do? The camera limits the creation of the scene, doesn’t it? No, I think you’re at a disadvantage here.” I taunted, thrilling at the idea he might challenge me again. And this time body to body, if not face to face.

“Oh ho, my little temptress dares me,” he said with a smile, playing with his words. “Give me free rein, lovely one, and I’ll make your soul sing for me.”

I could feel my panties getting wetter by the second.

“Free rein...that sounds dangerous!”

His voice grew husky. “Do you trust me, sweetheart?”

I laughed nervously. What a thing to admit to a stranger.

“Tell me, V. Seriously, do you trust me?”

I thought for a moment. I had trusted him in the last two venues. Then I realized I actually had the power here. The power of the X. I saw the little X in the top right corner of my screen. I could always close the program, couldn’t I? I said, “I trust you.”

I saw him let out a breath. Yes, I did trust him. In that moment I sensed our conversations had become as important to him as they had become for me. Realizing that fact allowed me to trust him even more.

“That makes me very happy, lovely lady. V, I have a request...”

“A request? What can I do for you?”

“Now that I know for a fact your long red-gold hair is the color of autumn leaves, I wonder if the rest holds true.”

“The rest..?” I deliberately played coy.

I could hear the smile. “Your alabaster breasts that spill over a man’s large hands. Is it too bold to ask if I may I see for myself?”

My heartbeat sounded staccato in my ears, soundlessly, because in that moment I couldn’t speak anyway. I crossed my arms at the hem of my shirt and pulled the garment over my head. My hair swished into place over my bra.

The words he spoke were soft, admiring. “Please move your hair a little, my sweet. Let me see the bounty before me.”

I complied. A toss of my hand swept the long hair to the sides of my breasts. I felt more uncovered in this moment than if I’d sat there naked. I looked down. My bra was a half-cup style that meant more breast rose above the satin cup.

“Lovely, absolutely lovely. A moon and stars tattoo over your heart. The way you described it before, I suspected it was really there. I remember you telling me the design is precious to you. I hope you share the story sometime. But for now, gorgeous woman, please unclasp your bra and expose this masterpiece on my screen.” He leaned back in his desk chair.

His image in the camera clearly showed the outline of a very large, very stiff cock held secure in his jeans. And, yes, he had told me he had gotten hard in several emails and our earlier chat... but I saw it for myself now. His desire was real, as real as my own. He was hard for me, because of me. And the sight made me bold. “You want to see more, do you? And what will I get for taking off my bra?”

He laughed. “I’ll remove my shirt, of course. Does this sound fair?”

“For now.”

“Temptress.”

I smiled at his words. Ever so slowly I reached behind with both hands and unclasped the bra, with one hand coming round to hold the cups in place. I eased both straps from my shoulders. “How’s this?” I asked, knowing full well he wanted my breasts bare.

“Such a beautiful tease. Did no one ever teach you not to tease men, V?”

I laughed now. “Never.”

“Teasers get what’s coming to them. It’s all part of turnabout.”

I swallowed. “Then here...” I said as I slowly lowered one cup and fully exposed my left breast.

The outline of his massive cock seemed to get broader right before my eyes. Emboldened, I lowered the other cup until my breasts were completely bare. I cupped them with my hands, lifting them for the camera, my nipples tight and tingling.

“Exquisite. I can see all the shades of you, my sweet. Yes, English roses, all shades of pink. Be my fingers, V. If my hands were cupping

your beautiful breasts, my fingers would be compelled to roll each nipple and areola.”

I rolled my fingers firmly, the wildly dancing nerve impulses zinging me right to my clit. My panties were soaking wet now. Carried away, I pinched harder and made myself whimper.

“Yes, V, I would make you moan. I would kneel at your feet and bury my face between your beautiful breasts and shower your hard nipples and soft creamy flesh with kisses. I’d suckle you, first one nipple then the other...so plump, so succulent...”

“Oh you *are* a sexy man. Take off your shirt for me.”

I watched him unbutton the shirt. It was slow, deliberate, like a striptease. My clit began to throb. When his body twisted to remove it completely, I could see his iron ribs, his tight, trim body. He had a light sable furring over his chest just as I had imagined. Oh my god, he was splendid. I wanted to see the rest. “I’d do the same, though your little nipples are much smaller than mine. I’d treat you to every description we’ve shared.”

“Mmm, yes, my sweet. We’d bring each other such delightful sensations. Would you do something more for me? Would you arrange your shiny tresses so your rosy-tipped breasts peek through the red-gold silk?”

I arranged myself as he asked, the hair covering more than halfway down the fullness, my nipples peeking through. “Like this?”

“Yes, you look like a goddess, V. Do something more for me, please?”

“What would you like?” I asked, sensing he wanted to see all of me.

“Stand and pull your pants off. I desire to see you as Venus rising on the foam...”

I stood and slowly did a striptease of my own. I left my panties on.

“You have very nice legs. If I were beside you, I’d be compelled to run my hands over them. To part them...to...”

I laughed lightly. "You're making me hot talking like that!"

"That is my intention."

"Well, you're succeeding."

"Good. Now turn for me. Let me see you from behind."

I complied again, turning slowly, wearing nothing but panties and fuzzy blue socks. A devilish thought came to me, and I hooked my thumbs into the elastic and pulled upward, the material stretching and defining and resting between the rounded cheeks. I slid them down, bending low as I did, my back still to the camera. I knew he could see intimately between cheeks and thighs. He could see the sweep of my hair to the middle of my back when I rose, knew too he appreciated what he saw by his next words.

"My god, you are amazing. Turn, lovely one, show me the rest of your charms."

Kicking both panties and drawstring pants aside, I heard him laugh. "Adorable, I love your little socks."

I laughed with him. "Hey, my feet get cold!"

"Then by all means keep them on," he said, the smile still lingering in his tone.

For no reason the day before I had trimmed my pubic hair down to the skin, not shaved, but so short as to appear as nothing more than a ginger shadow on my cleft. *What will you think?* I silently asked him as I turned to face the camera.

"Your womanly outlines tempt me. Such a sensual creature you are. Widen your stance just a little more, V. Yes, my sweet, a little more. I see that you do glisten. Are you aroused for me? Say it, tell me why your inner thighs are wet and glistening."

I deliberately reached my hand down to gather the wetness he so hotly referred to and showed the camera. "Yes, I glisten. I am aroused to be standing here for you this way. Show me what I do to you."

I watched him stand and unbutton and unzip his jeans. He stood in boxers, his cock jutting forward, large, straight out with a slight angle upward like a post in the center of a tent.

“Show me,” I said again.

He slid the boxers down. Oh my god, what a cock. He looked to be as long as my forearm and as thick as my wrist. His balls hung heavy, one ever so slightly higher than the other. I took my seat and said, “Turn for me, let me see all of you.”

He turned in place, trim side, trim thighs, very nice legs and ass. His cock was like a compass needle turning with his body. He too had a tattoo. I smiled when his turn brought it into full view. The tattoo was on his upper back to one side of his spine. It was a shooting star. I made a mental note to ask him to tell me its story sometime.

“Do you approve, my beauty? This is what you do to me.” He punctuated the last words as he turned by closing his hand around the base and pulling the skin back. The head was massive and shiny, a testament to how aroused he was. The very tip had a droplet of cum gleaming in the light of the computer screen.

“Mmm, yes, I approve.”

He sat down again, his legs spread before him, his cock large between his thighs. Holding it in his hand once more, he said, “Let me see you.”

I obeyed by putting one foot up on my desk. My pussy gaped open. “Is this what you wanted to see?”

“Oh, yes, now be my fingers. Splay yourself for me, show me all your hidden delights, V.”

I groaned inside. I could come so easily. I eyed the vibrating wand.

Both hands went to my dangling lips and parted them wide.

“So very wet. Tell me what you taste like, sweetheart.”

I slipped a finger inside, pumped it slowly for his benefit—and mine—withdrew it and brought it to my mouth. He couldn’t see, but he knew I tasted myself. “Mmmm...” I said for his ears.

His heavy cock twitched on screen. “Describe for me please...”

“First of all, I’m slippery, viscous...”

“Ready for my cock...”

“Mmmm, yesss, ready for your thick, hard cock.”

“And your taste...?”

“Mildly salty, mildly sweet. Hot, scented. Ready.”

He groaned and began to stroke his cock in earnest. “Oh, V, you make me burn. I won’t be able to go long this time. Come with me now. Use your fingers for me. Let me watch you work your little clit.”

Oh my god.

I spread my cleft with my left hand, and with two fingers of my right, I began a frantic dance of rapid little circles. I could hear myself whimpering along the groans coming from the speakers before me. I watched him cup his balls with his other hand. His stroking hand gleamed wetly in the light of the computer screen. He was drenched in pre-cum. I said, “Yes, baby, stroke for me, harder.”

He did stroke harder, faster. That he did so at my command fired my blood and redoubled my efforts. He said, “Twirl your little hard bud for me. Tell me what you feel as it unfolds. Tell me, V.”

“Oh... I feel it... Mmmm...it’s building...a gathering...Oh...” I couldn’t speak anymore. I tried, but only a small hot growl came from the back of my throat. I worked my clit in a blur of fingers, whimpering now like a mindless animal.

“Come for me, V. Come now!” His climax erupted on screen. I watched it all as his belly tightened. Those great milky spurts and his heavy, breathy groan were my complete undoing. My belly tightened as well as all the gathering sensations coalesced. My back arched in the chair, and my muscles contracted as the climax hit me with the force of a tsunami.

“Ohhh...Mmmm... I’m commmmmmmmming...oh mmmmmmm...” I cried out.

When the last wave washed over me, he spoke. “That had to be the most exquisite image, incomparable to anything I have seen in years. I wish I were there to hold you, to feel the remnant tremor and

to see the afterglow I know paints your pale skin so prettily.” He used his discarded boxers to mop up.

Feeling somewhat high, I smiled. “I wish you were here to hold me too.” My next words came out on their own. “You’re beautiful, you know. It’s been a long time since I’ve seen such...such... I mean that was so...so...powerful. Thank you.” For some inexplicable reason, I felt my eyes tearing up.

“Perhaps one day you’d allow me to make love to you and hold you afterward?” He hesitated before adding, “Beyond our computers?”

My heart skipped a beat. There was no denying the fact we placed the cart before the horse. Before I could answer, a dog, his dog presumably, was barking at the doorbell. He said, “Excuse me, sweetheart, someone is at the door.” I watched him rise from his chair, gather his clothes, and quickly dress. Unfortunately the camera angle was so low I could only see his lower half leave the room, not that seeing his behind in jeans was a bad thing. In the distance I could hear, “Okay, Roscoe, settle down. See, it’s only Jim.” The barking stopped, but dog toenails clicked excitedly on the floor. Jim was a friend. A moment later I heard S say, “Pour yourself a cup of coffee or grab a beer, I’ll be right back.”

Back in his desk chair he said, “I’m so sorry, my sweet. An old friend stopped by. He’s having relationship issues and needs to talk.” He sighed. “If this wasn’t important, I’d send him on his way. Please give me an hour or so. I’ll be back as soon as I can.”

“That’s not a problem. I have some things to do around here anyway. You must introduce me to Roscoe sometime,” I told him, knowing he could hear the smile in my voice.

He chuckled. “I hope to, in person. Please consider my words while I’m gone.” With that, the screen closed, leaving only my desktop wallpaper behind.

I briefly toyed with the concept of doing some paperwork, but my heart and mind weren’t in it. Instead they lingered on his suggestion

of taking this odd relationship from the surreal internet world to the real world. Would I? *Should I?* It was hard to say. After our extremely intimate exchange of the last hour, I found myself even more head over heels for this faceless stranger, and I didn't know a thing about him other than his profession and the city he lived in. Chicago was a big city too.

I thought about all the people who routinely used online dating as a way to meet outside of busy lives that really didn't allow for the time it took to find compatible people to interact with. This wasn't all that different, was it? Yes, it was different. There was an intimacy now, one that may have started with a flirtatious spark but was a full-blown blaze now. I knew most online dating unfolded over cups of coffee or dinner in an open public place. How could I sit across from this man and make small talk to get to "know" him after all we'd shared?

I got dressed and went for two more aspirin and another big glass of water, still feeling dehydrated from my little binge the night before. "Questions, questions, questions, *ugh*, my head," I said aloud, feeling the throb of thinking too much pressing in from behind my eyes. Needing to be free of the direction my thoughts were headed, I turned on a marathon of old '70s detective shows and stretched out on the couch. Little did I realize the remains of the hangover would cause me to sleep until the wee hours of the morning.

"Damn it," I said to the "fix it and forget it" infomercial playing where Kojak had been when I closed my eyes. Looking at the blue LED light of my DVD player's clock, I saw it was 3:00 a.m. Wrapping my robe around me, I headed outside, hoping the cold night air would clear my foggy head.

What a lovely clear autumn night it was. It was a sky just like this one the night I said my goodbyes in Greece. As a result of the Earth passing through Halley's Comet's dust, the Orionids meteor shower made its appearance that night. Remembering, my eyes swept the sky. We stood there under the same crescent moon and twinkling stars, our

arms around each other, willing the clock to turn back time. I remembered making a wish when several shooting stars, their white flames reflected in the ocean of darkness, zipped across the sky. Years had passed. It was time to let it all go. If I could send Dan packing, I could certainly make room for new memories. “Stop it and turn the page,” I said to myself, wiping my eyes on my terrycloth sleeve.

Why was I so emotional? Then it hit me. Simply put, I was scared. We had a nice thing going now, S and I. Flirtatious, hot, fun. What if it couldn’t hold up to the litmus test of reality? I wanted more, but what if I lost it all? Like Icarus flying to the sun on wax wings, would I too fall into a broken mass because I wanted too much?

I went to the computer and turned on my Skype. Of course he wasn’t on. “What did you expect?” I admonished myself. My mind worried over what S might think. Did he think the idea of meeting him was so abhorrent to me that I never looked back when I shut the computer off? I checked my email, holding my breath the whole time.

Dearest V, keeper of my soul,

I admit my first thought was you were done with me for asking for too much. Then my rational mind remembered your night out with friends. Perhaps you grew tired waiting for my return. Tomorrow is Saturday. Come, meet me halfway somewhere. Sleep well, my love.

Yours,

S

I gasped for air, not realizing I still held my breath. I wanted to meet him. I wanted to know him outside the artificial box. It was a chance I knew, but security was an illusion we humans convinced ourselves of. Maybe after all the intimacies we shared, if this meeting didn’t work out, we might at least part as friends. Filled with that resolve, I wrote back.

S,

You're right, I did fall asleep. I'm sorry about that. I would have loved to talk and get to know you more. To that end, there is a lovely place in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, a grand Victorian mansion called the St. Moritz directly across from the lake. If you've never been there before, the water is a vibrant blue, almost as blue as the Mediterranean. Let's have dinner there, and we can talk face to face.

*Yours,
V*

I clicked send, and to my great surprise, the chat box opened up on my screen.

I was hoping you'd come online.

You're up late, or early.

I blame my friend Jim. He's snoring like a freight train in the next room. I thought I'd give one last look on here before I tried to sleep again. You should hear this guy. Even Roscoe left the room. We may end up sleeping in my car!

I thought *oh you poor thing*. To him I wrote, *I read your email*.

And I read yours. I can't tell you how happy that makes me, V.

I smiled. I was feeling pretty happy too.

* * * *

The next morning I checked my inbox and saw another email.

My Love,

On the outside chance you'd approve, I've taken a room at the St. Moritz, room 301. I'm told it has a spectacular view of the crystal blue waters. I have also arranged for dinner for two to be sent to my suite at 6:30. I assure you, if dinner and conversation is all we share, it will be enough. The prospect of meeting you face to face has me feeling light headed. I will leave something for you at the desk. Our unusual relationship is moving at lightning speed. The idea came to me as I was thinking of how you might be most comfortable. I don't want to lose you, V. Not when I've just found you.

Yours,

S

p.s. My cell is 312-555-1789

I reread his email twice. My heartbeat had somehow made it to the back of my throat, it was pounding that hard. I was as nervous as a teenage girl on her first date. After a few short weeks, this was finally happening. I reached for the phone and speed-dialed a number but found only voicemail on the other end. That wasn't a bad thing. I really wasn't prepared for a barrage of questions. I had a date to prepare for, and there was a very good chance I'd be spending the night in Lake Geneva.

"Andrea? Hi, it's me. Listen, I have a blind date tonight with that email guy Mr. S. Uh, the dating service didn't give me his last name, so the other info I'm about to leave you with should work if you need to get a hold of me for any reason. Anyway, because it's always good to let people know where you're going and who'll you'll be seeing, here's his info. He's staying at the St. Moritz in Lake Geneva, room 301 and his number is 312-555-1789. Hey, one more thing. I think I'm in love! Later."

With that I hung up and went to get a haircut. Good trims always made me feel good about my hair for a week or two, and Saturday was Jillian's day at the hair salon. As popular as this new stylist was, I hoped I wouldn't have to wait too long. I had a feeling, a warm

bubble of possibility that sent me to the drug store for a small pack of condoms. Dr. Fischer had declared me as healthy as an ox when she checked on the IUD she'd given me to control my monthly cramps, but we lived in a world where caution was necessary. Anything might happen and I wanted to be sure I was ready for it.

By mid afternoon, I was so antsy I made a shambles of my closet. According to the Weather Channel, we were expecting a typical Wisconsin October evening, which meant the air would be crisp and clear. It also meant Lake Geneva would be gorgeous with its colorful old trees dressed in their autumn finery. It was laughable, for in the end, I chose the classic little black dress that happened to be my first choice, but I tried on everything I owned anyway. I knew by the pile on the bed I'd have more than an hour returning everything to their hangers later.

The dress was nice, my favorite actually, with a deep V-neck that exposed a nice amount of cleavage and three-quarter sleeves to keep the chill away. I laughed at the logic. I was sure to be warm, hell, I was warm right now just thinking about what *might* occur. I set it on the bed alongside the cashmere sweater I decided to bring in lieu of a shawl. In my dresser's top drawer, I dug through the mountain of serviceable underwear to the back where my fancy stuff had laid untouched for the better part of two years. Checking each garterless stocking for runs and finding none, I set them on the bed. I chose the black satin and lace demi-bra and matching panties and a pair of t-strap heels. Some understated jewelry topped off the ensemble. I looked at the clock to check my time then packed a small overnight bag in case I'd be needing one and applied my makeup last.

The small details of getting ready helped to pass the time and miraculously kept my jitters at bay. Remembering the condoms in my everyday purse, I transferred the pack to my smaller clutch, figuring they'd be handier there than in my overnight bag. I didn't want to take the edge off any mood we might create by having to rummage for them through my extra clothing. At 5:45 I took one last look in the

mirror and declared myself fit for a date with the intimate, but as yet unknown, S.

* * * *

The main road circling the lake was as breathtaking as I'd thought it would be, and I hoped he had driven while it was still light enough to fully appreciate its beauty. The sun had set but still lit the sky with bands of purple and several shades of reds and oranges. I found the little sailor's ditty playing in my head—*Red sky at night sailor's delight*. And opposite the wash of color, a thin white crescent moon was making its way across the sky as day slipped into night. Loving this sentimental moon when it smiled like the Cheshire cat, I briefly acknowledged my moon and stars tattoo over my heart and the reason it was there. Perhaps I would find a similar love with this compelling stranger.

The mansion-turned-five-star-hotel was welcomingly lit. I left my keys with the attendant to park my car and headed to the front desk. "Hello, I'm expecting a package from the gentleman in room 301."

"Here you are," the woman behind the antique secretary said. She slid a flat shirt box toward me. It was tied with a white ribbon that had a red long-stemmed rose tucked inside the bow. "There are only two rooms at the top floor of the hotel. You'll find 301 to the right of the elevator."

"Thank you." I took the box to the ladies room to open it in privacy. Given what we'd shared I could only guess what the contents would be. Inside, under a fold of tissue, I found a simple black domino mask and a handwritten note. It read:

My Darling V,

I know meeting so soon is difficult for you. Believe it or not, it is for me as well. When thinking how I might make our transition easier on the both of us, I recalled it is the anonymity of the internet that had

allowed us to proceed in our relationship. I wait for you with a mask of my own. Let's keep them on until we no longer need them. Come to me, sweetheart.

S

Stuffing the box in the trash, I slipped the note in my purse, grabbed the thoughtful disguise and the rose, and with trembling legs took the elevator to the unknown. At the door to 301, I pulled the mask over the top half of my face, adjusting it in my reflection on the brass doorplate. After a deep breath to steady my bow-strung nerves, I knocked.

"Ah you came," he said happily. The note of relief was unmistakable, his lower lip obviously smiling below the edge of his black mask. He stared at me a long moment as if surprised by my appearance. "I must say you're as beautiful as I imagined you'd be face to face." His eyes *were* green, at least they appeared so in the recess of the eyeholes, green and sparkling. I loved green eyes. He had a nice chin too despite the small knick from shaving. Taking my hand, he kissed the back of it. The tingle of real contact immediately shot up my arm. His hands were hot, halfway between rough and soft, and I was struck with the impression his hands had known recent labor.

"Please come in. Here, let me take your things." He stepped aside and helped me out of my sweater, surprising me when he opened the closet and hung it inside. Dan would have tossed it on a chair. Deciding S had more class in his little finger than Dan possessed in his entire body, I shook the unfair comparison away, realizing for the first time that when all was said and done it really didn't matter to me. That was just Dan, and I was over him and the pain he wittingly or unwittingly caused me.

Not knowing where to begin a conversation I chose the obvious. "The masks were a nice touch," I told him sincerely, a nervous smile playing on my own lips. They did help, but how exactly, I couldn't

say. This little bit of cloth kept my anonymity safe and put me at ease. Anyway, this was the best I could come up with.

"It seemed that we both needed to hold a little of ourselves back for a time. I'm glad you came, V. Truth be told I was afraid you'd change your mind about meeting me in person."

"As long as we're being honest, yes, I did have my doubts, but then I figured meeting you for dinner would be no different than meeting a blind date."

He smiled. I got the feeling he was thinking the same thing as I, that our last encounter had been anything but *blind*.

A moment later a knock came at the door. "Room service," the male voice announced from the hall.

"Thank you, leave it please."

"Yes, sir." The elevator dinged. Presumably the man went back downstairs.

"I hope you don't mind. I ordered for us. Salad with blackened chicken and cherry cheesecake."

He laughed. "It gave me something to do other than wringing my hands anxiously. We can order something else..."

Somehow his being nervous put me at ease. I laughed, "No, that's fine. Anything from their menu is excellent. Thanks for taking care of that."

"You're welcome."

Rolling the teacart in, he closed the door behind him. The table was set for two before the window, and a flickering votive candle in hobnail glass sat in the center. I stood there looking out at the stars reflecting on the calm water. The water reflected lights all around the lake, marking cottages and mansions alike. Behind me, I heard him pouring the wine.

Handing me the first glass, he said, "It's beautiful here this time of year. The leaves aren't this far along in the city. They reminded me of your description when I saw them on the ride up—red-gold hair like autumn leaves." Raising his own glass to me, he added, "And I must

commend your choosing this location for our dinner. Having never been here before, I have to say this hotel is a magnificent piece of late Victorian architecture.”

“I thought you’d like it.” Our professions gave us a common thread outside of our apparent sexual appetites. I smiled inside. While we ate we talked for a time about historical features, and I told him about the Hornsby mansion but left the name out of the conversation to keep my real identity out of the mix for the time being.

“Adaptive reuse, that was inspired! I can’t tell you how often in the past the city just tore them down. There’s an urban renewal underway and more interest to compromise now, and it’s about time too. Some of the brownstones they took out... It would break your heart they were so perfect.” He shook his head. “They buy the lots, tear down the houses, then build these modern structures you know won’t last fifty years, let alone a hundred.”

The conversation and wine flowed. I found him witty and funny and charming beyond belief. I laughed at something he said.

“You have a wonderful laugh.” His voice suddenly turned husky, his eyes serious in the flickering candlelight. “You’re very beautiful, V. Did I tell you that yet?”

His voice sounded just like that on the computer yesterday when he told me to come for him. I felt myself blush. “That’s a nice compliment, thank you.”

“...with skin like English roses.”

Apparently he hadn’t missed the blush. The thought made my cheeks even warmer. I was sure the blush now covered my cleavage. He rose from his chair and set our dessert and wine aside. I had the distinct impression he was giving me a moment to compose myself. My eyes followed him as he moved our dinner dishes back to the teacart then set the whole of it out in the hall.

Walking towards me he said, “I can’t express how I’ve enjoyed sharing our words, but especially yesterday...when you allowed me to

see you...” For the first time I could clearly see the outline of desire bulging in his pants.

My eyes lingered below his belt, and when he drew a ragged breath, they came back up to his.

His opened hand firmly pressed the front of his slacks. When he spoke he was apologetic. “Sweetheart, seeing you in all your living color does things to me that I can’t explain *or* control. Please don’t be put off by—”

“Undress for me.” Stunned at my boldness, my mind asked incredulously, *Good god, did I just say that? It must be the wine.*

He stood frozen as if he thought his mind had played a trick on him and I had actually said something else entirely.

“Please.”

He drew another slow breath. “I have something to show you before we go further.”

Reaching into his pocket, he withdrew a folded sheet of paper and handed it to me. Unfolding it, I read his recent clean bill of health. Apparently, he’d had his annual physical and wanted me to know.

Tipping his head to the paper in my hand, he added with a grin, “That’s purely coincidental. I switched insurance companies recently.”

I smiled. “Thank you for that. No worries on my end either.” My condoms could stay in my purse. I felt a thrill run through me. Without fear of pregnancy and STDs, whatever was to come would be spontaneous from this point forward.

His hands worked buttons and zipper without hesitation for all that they trembled slightly. When his clothes and shoes were tossed aside, he, his mask, and his massive hard-on stood before me. My oh my, he was fine up close and in the flesh.

“This is what you do to me.” He emphasized the statement by curling his fingers around his length and stroking it slow and deliberate.

“You’re beautiful,” I told him, my voice sounding awestruck even to my own ears. My panties were soaked.

He asked huskily, “May I undress you, V?”

By now my heart was beating a staccato pulse through my veins. All I could do was nod. He knelt before me as I sat in my chair, and lifting one foot, he slowly unbuckled my shoe, repeating the process with the other. His hands caressed my calves, sweeping up and down, his light touch getting bolder with every inch he climbed. Lifting my hem, his fingers slipped under the elastic-topped stockings and gently rolled them down and off my legs. Raising one leg, he kissed my ankle, murmuring hotly against my skin, “Your alabaster skin is like moonlight, silken moonlight.”

He stood then, taking my hands and compelling me to rise also. The jewelry came off first, followed by the dress, which he carefully set over the back of the unused chair. I stood in panties and bra, and it was then he kissed me, our masks moving slightly upward as lips found each other. It was the kiss I wrote, soft, tentative at first, then bolder. I wrapped my arms around him, drawing his nakedness closer to my burning skin. Easing my thigh between his bare legs, I deepened our connection, and the soft weight of his balls felt hot against my leg. I couldn’t help myself. My fingers closed around him. His blood thrummed through the veins in response—his cock was a living flame in my hand. He was right. My fingers could barely close around him. I stroked once, twice, three times before his hand pulled me away. “No, love, I’ll go off like a canon if you do that,” he said against my cheek.

Even with his hand covering mine, I managed one more stroke. “Tease,” he groaned at the corner of my lips. I was forced to let go when he turned me in his arms to stand before the gilt-framed mirror. His warm fingers unclasped my bra. In the reflection I watched him behind me, his hands sweeping over my hips and belly and sides to come at last to pull the black lace and satin from my breasts. His hands filled with my roundness as kisses burned a swath along my left

shoulder blade. It was very odd to see myself like this. I liked it even though I felt like a voyeur watching through a window. I liked it *very* much.

His skin was so much darker than my own. His fingers were shadows against my pale flesh. Slowly, exquisitely, he worked magic there, intermittingly tweaking and rolling my nipples and areolas. I watched one bronzed hand slide down my belly to dip below the elastic of my panties, the last bit of clothing I wore. My stance instinctively widened, and mesmerized, I could do nothing but lean my head back against his chest and moan. His fingertips drew circles there under the cloth, and I knew he was as keenly aware of my aroused scent as I.

I watched his face in the mirror, and he held my gaze hotly as those very fingers moved to his lips. He turned me then and kissed me soundly, my salty, sweet taste unmistakable over his tongue. Distantly, I heard myself whimper.

“Yes,” he cooed against me, “whimper with pleasure, little tease.” He kissed me again, harder this time, bending me back while his fingers strummed inside my panties. “V, I’m so hungry for you.” He whispered this statement at the corner of my mouth before drawing my taste between us for another kiss.

Hungry? Food was the last thing on his mind and mine. Lowering to his knees again, he wrapped his arms around my hips and pressed his face to the junction of my thighs. He looked up and held my eyes, and the question was clear in the jade depths. My answering nod was nearly imperceptible, but he’d seen it. His fingers hooked the elastic and pulled my panties down. I stepped from the scant puddle of cloth. Warm hands ran up and down my legs from ankles to hips, rising to the apex of my thighs where thumbs parted velvet lips to expose a now throbbing clit. This he kissed softly then a hesitant tongue tip drew a moist circle there. Suddenly with a groan he crushed his face there, and the tremble that ran through him as he filled his lungs with

the scent of pure lust ran through me as well. My fingers curled in his chestnut hair. It felt like silk.

We stood that way for several moments as he mastered the desire that would have him spill his seed too soon. Taking me by the hand, I followed him to the overstuffed chair. There he arranged my legs, first one then the other, over the padded arms and splayed me wide. My heart was pounding at being displayed so.

“Lovely little orchid,” he told me softly, his lips on my inner thigh.

When his fingers parted my lips to expose the succulent rosy core, my body responded with another rush of wetness. Slipping his hands beneath me, he cupped my bottom, and drawing close, he sucked at my slit before treating me to the most glorious licking.

I was growing insensible, no, combustible. I couldn’t take much more and told him so. “*Mmm*, please no more, I’m going to *commm...mmmm...*”

He circled my opening with his fingertips, not once releasing my clit from the warmth of his mouth. I heard myself gasp as one then two fingers slid inside at the same time, and his tongue pushed back on the little sheath covering my nub. He worked me slowly, turning this way and that until his hand rested palm up, his fingers curled upward. The combination of hot mouth and intent fingering was sublime. “*Please...*” I tried again. “*Oh god, I’m commmming... Oh...*”

I couldn’t believe when he stopped dead, ending my orgasm before it began. I looked down to see him with his wet smiling lips, humor lighting his masked eyes.

He had threatened a sexual retribution the day before. I laughed. “Turnabout *now*? That’s...that’s...*mmmm...*” The tongue fully licked me once more from bottom to top and effectively silenced me.

He chuckled wetly. “I wouldn’t dream of stopping unless you asked me to.” He passed his tongue over me again. “But if you want me to...”

“No! Don’t stop. I just don’t want to come so soon...and I’m so...so...mmm...”

He accentuated by sucking my juicy lips into his mouth and sliding his tongue inside me between the words. “So delectable? I’ve a...better suggestion in mind, a more complete...connection with...you.”

He left me panting there when he went to retrieve my rose from the top of the antique dresser. In one motion he pulled the petals free then went to sprinkle them over the bed. When he turned he noticed my legs were still spread wide as he’d left them, only now my fingers were toying there.

His words came out in a breathy groan. “The way you look, the way you taste...your scent...you fire my blood, love.” With his magnificent cock in one hand, he slowly, deliberately, stroked for my pleasure, and his cock fit perfectly in his hand. We masturbated ourselves for each other for a time, and when he held out the other hand toward me, I took it and followed him to the bed.

He pulled me to him hard, and we kissed rough and wild, caught as we were in this firestorm of passion. Our hands and lips moved in lust-driven euphoria. He held my breasts in both hands and worked magic there. Emboldened by desire, we changed places, and now it was I who lightly nipped and sucked at his little nipples.

My words came hot even to my own ears as I moved over his skin. “I want to kiss you like you did me...like you kissed me on the chair...” Punctuating my statement, I held his nipple hostage between my teeth at the same time I stroked his huge firm cock. His groan thrilled me beyond belief.

“That might not be a good—” He stopped short as my teeth grazed him again.

“Let me,” I replied by tightening the hold on his shaft and making the flesh glide over the steel.

He fucked my hand. If there was such a thing as an orgasm building in one’s palm, this sensual act would be the catalyst for it.

My other hand cupped his full and heavy balls gently, hefting their weight and rolling them in their velvet sack.

“I want to feel you on my tongue.” I slipped down the front of his body to my knees and kissed the twin orbs I held in my hand. I looked up wordlessly, daring him to deny me, my gray eyes meeting green behind our disguises. He nodded slowly. Our silent conversation made his excitement dribble over my fingers.

When I brought said fingers glistening to my mouth, he groaned. “*God, love*, you’ll burn me alive if you don’t stop.”

Pressing my face to his soft fleecy sack, I told him hotly, “I’ve only begun.” I nuzzled the velvet before I trailed my kisses from balls to tip then back down his legs. The heady scent of him brought a throb in my clit that corresponded to the ache in my swollen nipples. Kissing the inside of his thighs, I slowly made my way upward again. When I licked his balls the second time, his cock instinctively pressed forward seeking more. I pressed there, a hard flat-tongued lick that followed the wrinkled velvet up from base to tip. His subsequent groan made me want to devour him. I worked this firebrand of his, adding sensual tinder and stoking the blaze I knew would come when I ultimately swallowed him fully...as fully as I could manage. He *was* a well-endowed man.

I was amazed by two things—the pure heat against my lips and the color of his ardor. So swollen was he that his cock head was a deep crimson purple, the same plum color his words painted on me several days before. Determined to paint him like a canvas, I flicked my tongue under the thick rim, circled it then dipped into the small slit.

He responded like a volcano testing its vent. “Mmm...” The sound came from both of us when I drew him into the moist heat of my mouth. His hands wound into my hair as he glided past my lips and over my tongue. I let him fuck my mouth slowly with several short-measured thrusts.

But I wanted more. That he was enjoying this wasn't enough for me now. I wanted him to writhe under me. I gently pushed him down on the rose petals and gave life to the words I'd used to describe this very act. His impulse was to guide me, but I didn't let him. I was enjoying myself far too much to rush him to the end.

After several minutes of sensual torment, he told me breathlessly, "Turn for me, little flower, let me see you, let me taste you again, let me bury my face in your hot pussy."

Those words brought another rush of heat to my core. As expertly as he'd treated me in the chair, I didn't hesitate. Straddling his head, I lowered myself until we were belly to belly, drawing him once more into my mouth. At the same time his fingers spread me wide.

"Ahh..." I moaned at the welcome intrusion. He was so fucking hot to spread me like this, this ultimate sexual act of another having access to the inside of your body. His fingers slid in and out of me like mini pistons, and I nearly came when he also decided to suck me like I had a little cock. The only thing I could do was treat the big cock the same way as the trembling surrender seized me again. I held it back as best I could, but good god, I wanted this man.

Within minutes we had our rhythm, then without warning, he flipped over and, pinning me beneath him, turned to face me. "Are you ready for me, love? I can't wait. I need you now."

I was more than ready. I pulled my knees wide in answer, and he settled between them. Together we sheathed him like a saber sliding into its scabbard. And the blade was glorious. My ankles locked at his lower back, and my hands ran wild over his back from shoulders to ass. There were many large cocks in the world, but the man who knew how to wield his such as this was rare. I knew then, as he plied his bow over my taut strings and made my body sing, that this man was a virtuoso.

His increasing tempo arched his body over every sensitive inch of mine. Slanting his mouth over my lips, our tongues danced. My sex, so aroused and wet, stretched to accommodate his full length and

girth. It was a tight fit, mmm, yes, it was, but he buried balls-deep with every thrust and rubbed my insides with glorious pulses. His murmuring words ground out against my kiss-swollen lips, and in the back of my mind, I wondered briefly if he spoke to me in another language or had made me completely insensible.

He repeated, "Come, lover, come with me now. I can't hold back any longer."

The last time he commanded my release the gathering storm had taken me. And it did again. We rode each other hard, matching thrust for thrust until he took one last orgasmic plunge and spilled into me in great heaving spasms. I cried out, the heat of his release sending me over the edge. Brilliant pinpoints of light exploded behind my closed eyes as my body arched upward and convulsed around him. Wrestling every bit of his climax from him, the contractions within me milked him dry.

When our breathing returned to some semblance of normal, he kissed me softly. "Thank you. I've been dreaming of this moment since you described yourself to me."

"It was *more* than I dreamed." I smiled up at him.

"For both of us," he whispered, kissing my eyes closed. I stroked his back and unlocked my legs. The ache in my thighs even felt marvelous. He didn't withdraw, and that semi-flaccid fullness felt very nice. So nice in fact, I lifted my hips to get more.

He groaned, helpless to do otherwise, and soft-fucked me. All it took was a little movement to feel him harden inside me. "Using your devil's powers on me again?"

"Yesss," I purred.

His stroke increased in length, and he moaned in the back of his throat. How we managed it, I didn't know, but a few minutes later, we lay side by side drenched in sweat and sticky with cum and completely and utterly sated. At least for the time being.

He rose, and I turned to watch him. He was splendidly made and that semi-swollen softness made me want him all over again. I heard

the bath running and smiled. When he returned he asked, "I imagine you're as sticky as I am. Would you join me?"

The tub had the faucet on the side so we sat facing each other for the better part of the hour, just soaking in bubbles and talking about nothing and everything at once as couples do when they first meet.

After washing ourselves, he said, "You were marvelous, V. I'd have you again if you'd have me."

I maneuvered the span of the tub to straddle his hips.

He laughed, his masked eyes twinkling in the bright lights reflected in the mirror over the sink. "Though I wasn't thinking it would be in here..."

That made me giggle. Pressing down on his lap to trap his cock between us, I told him, "I'd have you again but, no, not in here."

"Whew."

I laughed. The semi-soft length hardened like a flagpole between my thighs.

I ground down on him. "What's the matter? Too much cock and not enough clearance?"

I felt him rise. He chuckled, and the hands that brushed the bubbles away from my breasts lingered on my nipples. Lifting them, he dipped his head and kissed me there.

"You're so beautiful, V."

As large and accommodating as it was, it didn't take long to discover the limitations of the tub. But we made do, sloshing water over the sides. When we had washed for a second time, we mopped up, wrapped ourselves in the remaining large bath towels and went to find out dessert.

When we had dried each other sufficiently, we ate our forgotten cheesecake and drank wine amid the tangle of pillows and sheets. How cheesecake segued into another round of mutual sucking and licking and more fucking, I'll never know, but it was near two in the morning when I rolled breathlessly from his flagging cock and snuggled in the crook of his arm.

"I'm completely drained," I told him, my fingers caressing the flat plain of his belly. "Wonderfully so."

"You?" He laughed. It's been years since my body's responded like this." His cock twitched in illustration.

I laughed. "That hardly looks spent." In fact his cock was still somewhat hard. Good grief, I had it bad. I could climb back on, and I told him so.

He tested the firmness in disbelief. "Look what you do to me. My cock has a mind of its own where you're concerned."

I smiled happily. We hugged each other tight. A silence fell over us. After four incredible couplings, the wild desire was temporarily sated for now. I sensed each of us wanted to say something but didn't know how to begin.

As if he read my mind, he asked, "So besides casting your siren's net over helpless men like me..."

Loving their looseness in my hand, I toyed with the heavy, spent cock and balls. "Helpless? Ha!"

He covered my hand with his own but didn't remove it. "Seriously, love, tell me more about you before I ravish you again. He has a mind of his own, remember? We only have so much time to talk." I could still hear the smile. I also felt his cock's pulse in my palm.

I laughed. "Well, if we're short on time..." I gave him a squeeze. "What would you like to know?"

"I've been curious since you first mentioned these have meaning that's precious to you." His finger traced the crescent moon and stars over my heart. "I'd like to know what you find precious. Let's start there."

I find you precious, I told him silently. Accessing the bittersweet memory, I was surprised to discover that my happiness in this moment had lessened the ache. Determining that speaking of it wouldn't alter this special place and time, I explained. "I was an exchange student studying architecture in Greece several years ago

and met someone there. He was special to me. The time with him was singular and defining and worth remembering.”

He was quiet a moment then asked, “How so? That is if you don’t mind me asking.”

“He and I...well, we had a connection. A whirlwind romance of the sort romance novels are written about. It lasted less than two weeks.”

“What happened?”

“He was engaged to someone. As I understood it, they were high school sweethearts, and after so many years together, it made sense for them to marry.”

“And despite that he had this affair with you?”

“I wouldn’t classify it as an *affair* exactly. It just happened.” I was feeling a tad defensive for my precious memory, and I didn’t know why. Sensing a better explanation would help him understand, I told him, “He was a good man. I loved him, and he loved me, and despite this fact, he honored a commitment he had with another. It broke my heart to lose him, but I understood.”

“He must have been a good man for you to love him that much to defend him,” he commented softly.

“He was.”

“So tell me about the tattoo.”

“The last night we were together, we stood on the balcony and looked up at the stars. There was a thin crescent moon similar to that one”—I motioned to the window—“like a Cheshire cat smile, and the sky was filled with stars, more stars that we see around here. As we said our goodbyes, a very bright shooting star appeared. The Orionid meteor shower was happening then. There weren’t many meteors visible that night, so that bright one was noticeable. I marked the moment over my heart to remember it by.” She didn’t tell him of the wish she made on that star.

Untangling from me, he rose from the bed and went to refill the wine glasses. He stood for a time looking out the window with his

back to me. I asked him about his own star tattoo. It was nicely done, delicate and artistic as though a Renaissance painter had done it.

"I was away for half a year, and when I returned home, I discovered the relationship I thought I had actually belonged to another."

"How's that?" I asked, confused.

"She had eloped with an associate in her office while I was away. Apparently they had a prior connection I was unaware of. She and I grew up together. We'd been friends a long time and she didn't know how to tell me."

I winced. Having been dumped by Dan, I naturally assumed it must have been painful. "I'm sorry, that must have been rough to go through."

"No, not really. I suppose the lack of emotional response meant that's how things were meant to be. Like I said, we'd been friends a long time. Neither of us knew how to say it had been over for awhile. We've managed to still stay friendly."

"You're lucky. My last relationship ended badly." He asked me to elaborate and so I did, leaving nothing out.

His voice had an edge. I found it interesting that he was angry on my behalf. "They were both fools. The first for letting you go and the last because there is simply no way a woman able to extract such a response from me the way you have since we first met could be categorized as dull. You do realize this *Dan* said those things to take the spotlight off himself because you literally caught him in the act of cheating on you? I find it infuriating that he hurt you like that."

"I came to the realization late, but yes, I do know now." To lighten the mood, I tried humor. "My girlfriend's husband burned the mattress in his brush pile. That made me feel better. There's nothing like a fire purge."

He didn't laugh. I came up behind him and wrapped my arms around his waist. He really was annoyed with the last two men in my life. I could feel a slight tremor running through him. I told him

softly, "Thank you. Because of you I've put all that heartbreak behind me."

He brought my hands to his lips, my breasts flattened against his back as he did. "I'm so sorry you were left broken-hearted."

I couldn't tell of which heartbreak he spoke, but I knew with a certainty that Dan didn't matter anymore. "That's okay. I wouldn't have met you and I wouldn't be here right now." I laid my cheek against his back and caressed his lightly furred belly. I could hear his heart beating hard. I was about to suggest we go back to bed when I remembered he hadn't finished the story. "So where did you get your tattoo?" I asked, my fingers tracing the artistic lines.

"Corsica. I knew a man who'd settled there, an exceptionally talented tattoo artist. I wanted the star to reflect the memory I cherished."

"Oh?"

He covered my caressing hand with his own, and held it tight. "I made a wish on this shooting star and never wanted to forget."

"Well, it's expertly done. Mine is plain by comparison." I retraced the design on his shoulder with my fingertip.

"Yours suits you perfectly."

I smiled against him.

"V?"

"Hmm?"

"Do you trust me now?"

The way he asked sounded odd, like he was afraid of the answer I might give. "Do I trust you?"

"Do you trust me enough to tell me your name?"

I'd had this crazy, intimate relationship with a relative stranger for weeks, and it just occurred to me we didn't even know each other's names. But choosing now, I realized I wanted to see this man again. I *wanted* him in my life. Without a second thought, I tossed my anonymity out the window. "My name is Vivienne, Vivienne Bennet."

Apparently he'd been holding his breath, for he let it out in a relieved sigh. "A beautiful name for an extraordinary woman." He kissed my hand again then let it go. "May I see you now?"

"Oh, the *masks*." I laughed lightly. "You know, I'd forgotten we were wearing them. I suppose we should take them off considering what we've been up to for the last six hours."

"Turn your back to me, V, *Vivienne*. We'll take them off together and turn on three."

My heart was pounding. This was another act of intimacy we were about to share. It wasn't sexual by any stretch but an intimate act nonetheless, one that would seal our relationship. I turned my back as he directed and removed the mask that had kept me safe in my own mind.

"One...two...."

A thought hit me. I only knew him as S. "But wait, you didn't tell me your name."

"Three."

I turned to face him and blinked.

"My name is Stephan."

The room spun and swallowed me in blackness.

* * * *

"Vivienne, Viv. Come on, honey, wake up." The words and the hand lightly tapping my cheek pulled me out of the stygian mist. "Vivienne, honey, are you all right?"

"How...?"

"You fainted, sweetheart."

"No." I touched his face in disbelief. "I mean it's...it's you...*how*...?"

"I made a wish on a star." His beautiful green eyes smiled down on me. "And it came true."

I'd made that same wish. I wished to the stars and to Greece's pantheon of ancient gods, whose presence permeated everything around us. I wished to heaven and anyone else listening that night. I wished for this love. I started to sob. Six years spilled forth as he held me in his arms and rocked me there on the floor. Stephan, *my* Stephan, my whirlwind lover from so long ago, found amid the ancient ruins and impossible blue waters of the Mediterranean. Through the vastness of the internet, our mutual wish came true as though divine hands had delivered our electronic missives personally.

He smoothed the hair back from my face and gently kissed away my tears. He told me how he'd gone home to end his long-time relationship because he'd fallen in love with me. "I had to tell her in person. After so many years I owed our friendship that." He went on to explain that he found her content and happy, and with a clear conscience, he sought his own happiness. He headed back to Greece. "I took the next flight out. I was sure I'd find you there because you'd signed up for all four study tours. But you were gone." I could hear the question he didn't ask. *Why?*

I pictured us passing in the air and the image filled me with sadness. "I was too sad to stay any longer. I canceled my tour and left the next day."

Pressing a kiss to my temple, he explained how he tried to find me. Unfortunately, privacy clauses and the fact that I'd completely ended contact with the student tours prevented it. After exhausting all avenues by phone, he even tried to get the hotel's concierge to take a bribe. "All he'd say was your flight from Greece flew to Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Frustrated, I stopped in Corsica to see an old friend."

"The artist who gave you your tattoo?"

He nodded. "He suggested I take a job in Chicago, and so I did. I knew the chance I'd find you there would be slim. But it was all I could do."

"I didn't know," I told him. "I never thought I'd see you again." He gently wiped away the tears that rolled down my cheeks. For six

years he'd lived less than two hours away. Though we kept a special memory of the love we shared close to our hearts, years had passed with both of us assuming the other had moved on.

Then he told me how he stumbled upon the literature site. Having never been there before, he read the newest postings and found mine. When he read the descriptions of my story's characters, *our* physical descriptions, it touched an unconscious chord and he knew he had to contact the author. He couldn't explain why, only that he was compelled to.

"Did you know it was me?"

He shook his head. "When you walked in the door, it surprised me how much you looked like someone I knew long ago. But no, it wasn't until you explained the reason behind your tattoo that I knew." Hugging me tighter, he explained how he felt the entire world shift as the pieces fell in place. This was why he went to stand at the window. He *knew* it was me.

In all the vastness of the internet, in the cautious manner we chose to communicate in, neither of us could have imagined who it really was we were speaking with. We'd only been drawn to physical similarities that mirrored those held in fond memories. We never suspected the other's true identity, and thinking on it now, that made sense to me. With millions of people online, and long convinced the other had moved on, why would we have even entertained the thought?

Lifting me in his arms, he carried me back to our bed. "Never again. I'll never leave you again, my love."

I wrapped my arms around him, needing him, loving him.

He laid me back on the bed and kissed me softly. "I love you, Vivienne, my beautiful sensual V."

Over his shoulder, the moon smiled.

THE END

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I started kindergarten already knowing how to read, and this was curious as no one in my family recalled teaching me how. I loved words from the very beginning because words described everything down to the smallest detail and added color to the world. Aside from loving the evocative potential of words, I also love that they describe how things work. I literally devour any and all informational reading materials from cookbooks to books on quantum physics. Needing to feed that hunger, I eventually tackled an entire World Book Encyclopedia. A wonderful husband joined his life to mine and a son and daughter followed. I didn't even contemplate expressing my imagination through words until the Internet came into my life.

When room-sized computers became personal and the Internet was no longer the purview of the geek, it was then that, quite by accident, I discovered the theatrical world of online role play. And what a stage it was! Often misspelled words hastily typed out in the chat rooms described scenes and appearances equivalent to anything played at Shakespeare's Globe Theater. At any given hour of any given day I might converse with a shape-shifting shaman, a knight of the realm, or a barbarian slave girl with jingling bells on her ankles. It was a world where warriors carried sharpened blades, wizards held fireballs in their hands, and cyber lovers gave sensual caresses through intimate verbs. I found I had a knack for crafting fantasy worlds. At my husband's urging I entered a contest for erotic fiction. I never expected it to go anywhere but I did like to dazzle my mate so I gave it my best. To my surprise I won first place.

Being an informational reader, it wasn't until I borrowed a historical romance novel to read on a long train ride that I seriously considered fiction. Up to that point I read very few novels. Part of a series, the book had me hooked by the time the train pulled into the station. More than once I mentally rewrote a scene by adding

suspense, additional dialogue, or expanding a love scene that should have been longer.

Today my active imagination has me writing everything from children's stories to historical fiction. My current magnum opus is a modern day fantasy tale of the ultimate battle between the dark and the light. Possessing that entire range of shadow myself, when the inevitable writer's block seizes me, I turn to writing erotica for it is here where the colors are the most vivid. The steamy imagery and fluid scenes unfolding in my mind's eye challenge me as a writer and more often than not, help to blast through any writer's block where my larger work is concerned.

I hope my erotic imagery transports the reader to a time and place where, through the magic and power of words, they are able to be inside the mind of the characters. Often from this intimate vantage point, the reader experiences the seductive transformation that will eventually send the hero and heroine hurtling toward the precipice. Come be the voyeur to their printed lives. Open yourself and allow my words to take you there. Draw close as coals ignite and feel the climax build as if you yourself are there being plied with firm hands and soft kisses. And when all is absorbed and endured and nerves are strung bow tight, release this most cerebral orgasm and free fall to earth. When the last page is turned and the lovers roll into each others' arms truly spent, know that I may just have another ember tucked away to warm your senses.



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