

# A NIGHT IN THE SKY

*A short story about a passionate encounter on  
date night*

*Best Kept Secret*

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*Here you will find a free short story  
by me, Charlotte Asher. I write  
alpha male erotica with a heavy  
splash of BDSM.*

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## A NIGHT IN THE SKY

The elevator slowly rises from the ground floor of the Hilton hotel. We had been waiting ten minutes for the pleasure. I was wearing a black dress we had found at Selfridges, Max Mara, I thought it was a bit revealing, but of course James did not. Another couple share the lift with us and they seem less taken back by the whole thing, they had probably visited Cloud 23 before. Locals to Manchester? - I assume so.

The girl is tall, probably five foot nine and she wears a beautiful flowing cocktail wrap, her left leg revealing her delicate olive skin in a sensual tease. She looks Brazilian or Italian or something, I can't really tell. Dark curly hair adorns her back, flowing in an endless wave, I wish my hair could be so pretty, so majestic. Her partner is about six feet himself, adorned in a lavish suit, like a Ted Baker piece, red velvet, quite extravagant but a bit flashy for my taste. He is not so attractive in the conventional sense, but he seems at ease with himself, somewhat confident. I offer a look to the girl and face forward again.

James looks at his watch for a few seconds before sniffing and returning to me, he seems agitated.

'Hope its the far seat by the window. More intimate.'

'You know best,' I smile and hold his hand.

'I think they have your favourite cocktail.'

'They'd better.'

The ring of the lift fills the space as we come to a stop. A slight pause and the doors slowly slide open.

We step into the waiting area to be greeted by an enthusiastic young girl, the host. She wears a simple black t-shirt with some heels and smart pants.

'Welcome to Cloud guys, do you have a reservation?'

'Eight o'clock, the window seat I believe. Wilson.'  
James replies.

She scans the board in front of her for a few moments before landing her finger on a space.

'Ah yes, follow me, we'll get you sat down right away.'

The girl leads us through to the main bar with the Brazilian girl and her man fading into the distance behind us. It is here that I start to get the sense of my surroundings. A view scanning the Manchester skyline ripples out across the city - football stadiums, old textile mills, new buildings, dazzling lights, you can see everything from up here. It is oddly tranquil despite the chaos of the city below. The soft rebound of the colours hits every shining surface on its way up to the 23rd floor where we walk to our place. House music thuds in the bar, but it is not too loud, you can still hold a conversation, close to your man's ear. Bar staff work frenziedly to get cocktails ready and to prepare wine, the drinks are flowing tonight and why not? It was Saturday evening in full flow. Many couples sit across from each other gossiping about the latest news and their personal

lives and many girls are here for a ladies night, the pornstar martinis slipping down tremendously well.

We get to the table and he pulls my seat out for me.

‘Thank you. Ever the gentleman.’

‘You didn’t say that on the climbing wall yesterday.’

‘Well...what was I supposed to say when you left me dangling by a harness, terrified for my life?’ I feign displeasure with him, putting some menace behind my voice. But I get lost in those brown locks and those blue eyes and purse my lips before looking at the ground with my arms half-folded. My feet shuffle slightly.

‘Don’t pout, it ages you.’

*Rude. I shall not then.* ‘This view is stunning,’ I remark.

Other couples stand around after their drinks, iPhones at the ready, taking endless selfies, trying for the perfect angle - the perfect Instagram moment that seems to elude them. We are definitely going to be doing the same, no matter how much of a curmudgeon he wants to be. Laughs abound between a group of girls nearby and one of them is staring at James, with serious bedroom eyes. She sips a martini and leans her chin into her knuckles, her hand facing inwards. Her eyelids move a fraction before she spots me out of the corner of her eye and quickly shifts her attention back to her group, pretending to join in on the laughs.

‘It’s not bad right. I had heard good things.’ With a snap of his fingers he calls a waitress over. I blush

slightly, I had barely glanced in the menu's direction. He is wearing a Ralph Lauren houndstooth sport coat, with a bottle green jumper under it and a white dress shirt poking out from under it. Too covered up for my liking; with a chest like his, it felt cruel to conceal it even in the stiff cold of mid-February. But he knew how to put a look together, for a rugged man like himself he could dress when he felt the temptation.

I cough. 'Can I look at my drink first Mister Wilson?'

He stays looking towards the waitress, ignoring my request.

'I've already got that figured out.'

*Oh really Mister Smarmy.* I'm annoyed but it is fun to test him out. 'What drink is it Mister Know It All?'

He squints his eyes mockingly, pretending to think very hard before taking a deep breath.

'Normally you would go for gin with something fruity, raspberry or cranberry maybe, but you aren't in that kind of mood, it is too refreshing, too made-for-Summer. You were talking about the Bollinger on the way over in the Uber but I think you want something to settle you more. Your vertigo is playing up and I think the red wine, specifically the *Chateau des Bardes* will do that for you. Close?'

He's good. But I know that. I've known that since that moment under the mistletoe at Harris and Beatham's Christmas party just two months ago. I've known that since I heard his tales of dare and pursuit, in unknown regions of the world few men ever get to. A

woman's drink choice was probably child's play to him. With his comprehensive answer settling over me, I try to fire back.

'Well Mister Wilson, you've certainly done your research. A little stalker-ish but impressive.'

'I try,' he grins; acknowledging it is a little odd but not in a creepy way. My vertigo is quite unnerving, nowhere near as severe as our first time on the practice climb late last month but still to the point where it would take me several months to do a serious climb with him. We both stare out into the far horizon through the window. Yet despite my fear about the height we are at, the glass is strangely comforting. I can imagine my hands pressed against it in a hotel room, vulnerable to the city's judgement. I can imagine a lot more than that too...

The waitress arrives, she seems a little annoyed by James snapping his fingers, I don't blame her, but her expression eases as he comes into her view and she flicks her hair back smiling. There is something about how women look at him, I can't quite describe it. My jealousy comes bubbling up, almost frothing sometimes when I see it and yet... it is exciting to know he is desired and wanted by so many different women. I don't know if they experience the same emotion that swells across my body when I see him and talk to him, but I can imagine a similar sensation. A man worth fighting tooth and claw for.

'What can I get you sir?'

The *sir* is a little ingratiating however.

‘Château des bardes, the bottle, and I will also get “The Industrialist”, thanks.’ The waitress busily jots the order down and swivels on her heels back towards the bar. The pace seems to be picking up, with many orders flying back and forth from bartenders, glasses going to be cleaned and cloths wiping down initial spills on the counter. And despite his earlier unease, James seems calm.

A trip to Manchester seemed dull, in all honesty on his announcing it to me two weeks again, even when done in his normal impromptu James manner. Of course, the trip to the Todra Gorge in Morocco, later in April had been sorted months in advance, pleasure before business was the normal mode of things for James.

It was the reality of being worth a lot of money as he is at thirty two. Shortly after Christmas, James sold his startup for \$50 million to a US firm who had valued his company very highly, him and his two co-founders had done tremendously well from it. James especially as the initial founder with most of the equity.

Funnily, this was still all I knew. Was he a banker of some kind? He was still discreet about what exactly the firm was but he had been happy to let it go to other hands in the end. I wanted to know why of course, such a mystery could not stay a mystery for long. Like any good entrepreneur, James was anxious for a new business adventure. No one retires at thirty two, it is a slow death to completely shut down your brain at such



an age and I did not think that a man like him could relax for long.

‘Do you think many people propose here?’ I ask. The question sounded innocent in my head but very dumb out loud. *Propose*. Really Sophia? My skin begins to crawl and my teeth are gritting together involuntarily.

‘Propose?’ He has genuine shock on his face.

‘Yes. Propose.’ The words were not sounding any smarter. I wanted to crawl into a hole in the ground away from his leering expression. *Those blue eyes*. If only he could look through me or just to the side of me, but not directly at me after asking such a silly question.

‘Probably a few a year, but maybe not. I’m not a mindreader.’

He playfully taps my knee, brushing his finger down my leg towards my feet, tracing the parallel lines running down, the tip of his finger is warm, more than inviting. At the last second he lifts a fraction of my dress and his fingers go exploring upwards before retracting down in a teasing manner. ‘Someone looking to get hitched?’

‘I didn’t mean it like...’ Crimson red overwhelms my face.

‘I know baby. You don’t have to explain. It is a romantic spot and it’s Valentine’s Day. I get it, trust me. I’m not freaked out...too much.’

I do, I do trust him. I stare at him slightly open-mouthed. A carnal appreciation starts to wash over me as a mixture of thoughts collide in a fuzzy kaleidoscope of lust and care. It still feels like an illusion

meeting James, one big practical joke. He stares back, his eyes wandering to my lips just for a split second and back to my eyes. The silence feels good, not like the thousands of awkward silences endured with men who could never excite me like him.

We have been on a couple of dates to some glitzy places in London and yet the venue did not seem stale here. Nothing could ever quite compare to that view from The Shard, but the view from Cloud was quite special too. I look out at the cars below us on Deansgate, a big traffic jam breaking out. They look like tiny ants moving amongst a colony, plans in motion and little empires to build. Some are moving towards fateful encounters to discover their first taste of love, boyfriends and girlfriends learning to fall for each other again and married couples reigniting a spark sometimes faded by the relentless years. It makes me happy.

Drinks arrive. The red wine is poured into my glass and the waitress leans over to pour it into James's glass. She lingers a fraction of a second too long and James holds his hand up to signal for her to stop.

'That's great thanks.'

The bourbon mixture he ordered arrives too. It smells odd to me, but I am not a whiskey or hard liquor kind of girl. A rocks glass makes a satisfying clink on the table as I balance the wine glass stem between my fingers, cupping the underside. It sounds silly, but I love the delicacy of a wine glass, the touch of it, it is slender

and so fragile - it delivers me back into thoughts of James and his sensitive touch.

'You're welcome. Shall I open a tab?' The waitress asks.

James thinks for all of a nanosecond.

'Yeah, we'll be here for a while.'

The waitress beams a smile his way.

'Great. Let me know if you need anything.'

She walks away quicker this time, understanding James has no interest in other girls at this particular point in time. A couple further away gesture for her attention and point to several items on the menu.

On the periphery of my vision I catch her looking again. The woman from the group. The blonde-haired girl cannot stop her eyes wandering in our, I mean *in his* direction. Frowning I give her a cold look, but she maintains a poker expression, assessing our situation before turning back to her friends after a couple of seconds.

James was not even looking.

'My friend is at a bar down the road tonight,'

James said. 'I would pay a brief visit but it can wait till tomorrow I guess.'

I smile, maybe he has his priorities straightened again.

'Your friend?'

'An old climbing buddy, we went to university together. Didn't see him much for years afterwards but we eventually re-connected. Bumped into each other at Yosemite actually early last year.'

*Climbing again, great.* I knew it would be actually be a fascinating story but I was all climbed out for the time being after my harness mishap the other day.

Sensing my weariness, he quickly changes topic.

'I do like this dress on you though.' He inches closer out of his seat and moves his hands more deliberately over the surface, almost drawing the fibres out of it. My skin feels hot as I crick my neck and lean closer into him. 'I like caressing you in it, watching my hands move gradually over you and drawing out the sensations in this soft skin.' He leans even closer. 'Arousing you with only my words and the slightest hint at my intentions, knowing you have to wait and be a good girl for me,' he whispers into my left ear.

His breath feels intoxicating and his scent falls over me, like the remnants of a magic spell cast only for seduction. Ever the poet when he feels like it, my mind starts seeking out naughtier places and I close my eyes with his hands still gliding across my legs. With so many people around us it feels dangerous, too voyeuristic and yet, I don't want him to stop. But something out of the corner of my eye stops me dead in my tracks.

The woman from earlier is looking again and this time it is not so subtle. She has a European look to her, but I can't trace from where, French or Dutch maybe? Her hair is a shimmering gold, tied in an old-fashioned braid. She is very pretty, probably a model I have no doubt, her body is very athletic and she is wearing a push-up bra with a red dress that swathes gently across

her roaming figure. Her boobs are even great. *Who in the heck is this woman?* I pull back from his touch and drink the wine, deliberately taking loud sips.

James sees her looking after a quick throw-back of his bourbon. I see a flash of recognition in his eyes. It is subtle, barely noticeable, like the first ember rising from the kindling to create a flame, but it is there.

I keep drinking and scrutinise him closely. He gazes at me, mildly defensive but his mind is elsewhere, lost in a foggy maze of other women - there is something between them.

And I start to grow irritated.

'That woman keeps staring at you.' My arms start to fold. I hate getting protective at such an early stage in our relationship - it looks weak. But my body betrays my concerns whether I want it to or not.

'Yeah.'

'Yeah?'

'She would do.' He retorts.

*She would do.* 'What on earth does that even mean?' Is he being cocky again? There is a time for that and it doesn't seem to be this moment. My stomach clenches as a nervousness wracks my waist.

'She is my ex-girlfriend.'

My heart drops like a stone to the bottom of the ocean. An uncertainty plagues my voice, it is completely unlike me as a lawyer in training. But I start to feel myself being laid bare and not in a good way. She was gorgeous for a start and I really did not feel like I could compare to a tall continental girl with her angelic blond

hair and her shapely curves. Time seems to suspend itself around our little table as the animated conversations amongst lovers and friends continue to spiral all around us.

‘Oh.’ I am slightly lost for words. ‘How long ago?’

‘Years ago. Three years maybe since we last spoke.’

‘Maybe?’ I seethe.

‘Maybe.’

‘You don’t actually know?’

‘No. It is difficult to remember, our relationship fizzled out fast.’

My head was spinning and some strong emotions were beginning to show on my face.

‘James, you know I’m not the type to usually get fazed by things like this, but I’d be lying if I said it doesn’t bother me. I know it is not your fault she is here, but knowing you two were together, I don’t know.’

Controlling the wine glass, I try to settle the rapid beating of my heart, as somersaults torture my insides.

He sighs and looks out the window for a brief few seconds before checking to see if she has lost attention. She was back talking with her friends. He moves around to face me properly, shifting in his seat.

‘We met at a local gym can you believe? A Bannatyne’s just over there on Quay Street.’ He points out the window to a rough location. ‘I was just working out, it was the early stages of the startup and I was still working the day job and hitting the gym more than

climbing. Just bench presses and so on.’ His leg folds over his knee as he takes another breath.

‘On my last set, I put the weights back down on the supports and I see a girl struggling on a squat. She has no support or spotter. So I rush over like any normal person would and help her with the last two reps.’

My eyes roll, I know where this is going, the big sexy superhero saves a damsel in distress and makes a few jokes.

‘She took her headphones out and thanked me. And I can’t remember what I said next but I made some silly joke and she loved it. After two minutes we were still talking and she did not seem in a rush. So I took her phone number before going back to working out.’ *Knew it.*

‘I didn’t text her for maybe two weeks afterwards, thinking it would be stupid. But on a whim I did one day and she remembered who I was. We exchanged messages over a couple of days and met at Rosso, that place owned by the football player. The meal went well. Surprisingly well. We had a lot in common.’ He pauses to give the story a more dramatic feel.

‘After a couple of dates, we were officially a couple. I discovered she was a ballet dancer, much younger than me. And fiercely ambitious, she had all of these aspirations to perform with the Moscow and New York ballets.

‘A few months go by and she grows frustrated with the pace at which my startup is developing. Cash flow is difficult and things don’t happen as we expect

them to - many setbacks and unexpected things, just the cogs and machinery of business life. But alien to her. “Boring” I was told in multiple arguments. Some nights we would argue for ages. She claimed I was “deluded” about my business idea and it would never work. She knew I knew she didn’t really understand it, but I got her frustration.’ He sighs, releasing the air in an unhurried manner.

‘The arguments reached a fever pitch one night. We were out at a restaurant in the Northern Quarter and she made a scene there, banging her plate down in a tantrum before storming out. I didn’t chase her, it felt like it had ended right there and then, and I was correct. The following morning I called her up and said it was over, she said she was sorry for the way she acted but she agreed and we agreed we should split.’

He looks quite detached about the whole thing, almost clinical, but I knew him well early on in our own relationship and I knew she had left some imprint on him, no matter how small he claimed it was.

‘I won’t lie to you, we burned brightly at some points in those months. The passion flowed effortlessly between us in the early weeks, the sex was... extremely good.’ My fingernails are being chewed to a fine nub and my nerves are frayed to a thin mess. ‘But we were two firecrackers, she was only twenty one, I was twenty nine and it was like the same ends of a magnet coming together. A strong force, but we repelled too much.’



His short story comes to a close and the air settles slightly. I feel a bit hurt but slightly better than earlier considering that the elephant in the room is dealt with. He claimed things were over between them, I want to believe it.

‘So things are done between you two?’ I ask.

‘Yes, you have my word. I will go say hi to her later but just to be polite, that’s it. We had our time and she wanted out.’

‘She doesn’t look like she does *now*?’ My neck moves forward slightly and my eyebrows move upwards to emphasise the word.

‘She’ll have to deal with reality I guess. And by the way you’re just as pretty as her, don’t be insecure, I know you feel threatened. You just like to play intelligent all the time, so you forget these outward things. But it doesn’t go unnoticed, all the guys at climbing told me I was a lucky guy.’ He pauses again, emphasising more carefully and dropping his voice a few levels. ‘The words they used most often were “smoking hot”.’

I feel a flicker of a smile on the corner of my mouth. He sure has a way of comforting, not super chivalrous, but he smooths over the cracks. It could have been a very ugly situation but he diffused it in the best way possible and I run my hand along his forearm to his elbow, showing my affection. Breaking the pattern of the conversation, I try to cut the tension between us.

‘I still don’t understand your business. Were you Heisenberg or something?’

He laughs.

'I'll tell you tomorrow. Let's just focus on us for the rest of this evening okay? Business can wait.'

'Yeah it *can* wait. But I'd love to hear it now. The suspense is killing me. And what better setting to do it?' I challenge him.

For once, he acquiesces.

'Alright, are you a girl who can keep a secret?'

'I like to think so.'

James looks around, his eyes darting across the room, as if he was hiding a giant conspiracy about the moon landings. After some deliberation and an awkward fidgeting with his bourbon glass he begins to reveal what his company was all about.

'We did a lot of things. But the core one which made me and my co-founder the bulk of the money was a new system for autonomous truck driving. I came to despise what we had done when I realised how it could affect so many lives of normal truck drivers and we probably undersold it. Millions of men in the US and elsewhere could be left unemployed by this...potentially. I stated I did not intend for the technology to be used that way, but maybe I can't stop it. I didn't want to be the one to make the decision so I sold to Google and Ford.' He seems almost melancholic on saying it. 'I'll spare you the technical details, but our system is...was really good.'

It was impressive, as far away from my perfect industry as could be, but impressive. I wasn't sure I would fully understand it, so I stayed clear of the details.

‘Well it sounds impressive to me.’ I offer him some consolation, as it is odd to see his mood spike downwards so quickly.

‘Yeah, well, I’m glad I sold. It’s funny, as I got more into technology, I pushed myself further back into nature, into the countryside, climbing, using my phone less. It is like my body was trying to tell me something.’

He stops talking and sits back in contemplation. His climbing and nature-obsession makes so much more sense now, it was almost his coping mechanism. To find solace in the environment as a way to escape technology. I stare into his eyes and he flashes a quick smile back towards me. There is a maturity there that was probably not there just two years ago, a maturity his ex-girlfriend had probably not experienced.

Looking at the girl again, I almost felt sorry for her now. She had loved James when he was still not quite the man he had become, he was nearing thirty at that point and meandering with something that had a high chance of failure. I could understand her hesitation and frustration with him. Quickly, my sympathy dissolves, as I catch sight of her bright teeth and mile-high cheekbones and ample boobs. She reminds me a little bit of Abbie, my friend in London. There is something about girls who know they are beautiful but try to downplay it, it isn’t *lying* exactly but, it felt misleading. Was that the right word? I’m not sure.

He finishes the bourbon and we make light work of the wine, I didn't feel good, drinking such a pricey bottle so quickly, but it didn't seem to faze him. The waitress slips back over, her pen dabbing the paper with more orders. Another bourbon for him, I go for "The Dean", a honey and vanilla twist on a classic mojito. The drinks arrive quickly and we are back to a flirty conversation moving on from business.

'How many climbing goals do you have for this year?' I ask.

He scrunches his face for a split second, trying to gather his thoughts properly. 'A few. Probably not enough really, four or five major ones. Most I am knocking out in the States later in the year. You should come for a bit one time if you have some time off work.'

Going on a holiday with him. Sounds great, despite my climbing phobia.

'As long as I don't have to climb a hundred metre rock face or something?'

He sniggers.

'Nah, I'll train you on some ninety metres ones, child's play.'

*Child's play.* He has some nerve.

'You like toying with me don't you?' I shoot back.

'More than you know.'

'More than I know?' I retort.

'Well at least in conversational terms. There are many other ways I can toy with you Sophia.' *Yes, I know just all about that sir.*

'I have claws you know.' I snap again.

‘And I have clippers.’

‘You can’t restrain me James, don’t even try to.’

‘After last week I beg to differ.’

Last week - it was difficult to forget. The handcuffs, the leather riding crop, the strength of his grip. I had not expected to like them and for him to take me so far, so early and yet here I am, smirking like a badly behaved toddler in response to his challenge.

‘Do you still remember what you have to call me?’ He isn’t playing anymore.

‘Yes, its familiar. I’m sure I’ll remember with the right prompts,’ I say.

‘I think I have the prompts stored somewhere.’

Combing my hands through my hair, I find my legs uncrossing themselves, opening up to him subconsciously. I can’t stop myself.

He smiles finishing his second bourbon and he bends his left leg on his right knee again, stretching his hips and thighs. I try not to stare down too conspicuously, but the conversation has opened up too far now. So many men neglect their legs to just favour working out their arms and chest, the glamour muscles - but not James. He has those climbing legs, not overly muscular like a bodybuilder’s, but toned and firm to the touch. Without warning, I find myself drifting off into secluded thoughts. Thoughts of my hands roaming down his thick legs and back up again, feeling his power through my fingers and preparing myself for his instructions, each delicious stroke and erotic moment.

*Calm down Sophia.*

He catches me looking and shifts the gears of the conversation again, sliding the drink to the side of the table in front of him.

'I like this hotel, I want us to get a room here for tonight. On one of the top floors.'

I feel the butterflies fluttering away in my stomach and my heart swells in an unsteady rhythm.

*Yes boss.*

'Are you sure you will get it booked?'

'Give me a second.' He picks his iPhone up and thumbs away at a Chrome browser moving quickly to bookings.com.

My mojito is almost finished and I feel refreshed. Watching him closely, I run my fingernails to the top of his knees. Watching him at work, or concentrating is always a wonderful sensation. In the brief time that we have known each other, it is one of those tics that identifies him straight away. The furrowed brow, set against the brown locks, the blue eyes scanning across the screen - it is nice to see him like this every once in a while.

Animated conversation continues all around us, the bustle of the waitresses and the employees only matched with more fervour by the joyous clink of glasses, toasts to loved ones and the continuance of relationships. Pitch black outside, only illuminated by the dancing crosshairs of the lights below, the street lights and cars all entangled in a precarious battle of space as the party revellers and lovers meandered slowly to their evening destinations.

‘Booked...’ He stops typing on the phone and blacks the screen out, placing it down slowly on the table between us. His blue eyes set themselves across my dress. I feel him devour me with a renewed hunger, I can feel his desire overcoming him gradually and I hold his knee tightly, my nails almost digging into his legs as the pressure mounts between us. His steely gaze starts to open me up, my submissive side peering out from behind my prim and proper exterior.

‘So Mister Wilson.’

‘So Miss Richardson.’

‘Is there a, is there a bill of some sorts we can...we can get?’

Three seconds float by as the tension clings with all its might to the air.

‘I’ll close out the tab.’

The bar was fading out after its peak time, it was somewhere around 12.30am or 1:00am, I wasn’t sure. But drinks were still being served and people were still enjoying themselves. A multitude of couples were lining up for photos against the gigantic windows. A cute young Indian couple snap a picture, the man’s hand around her waist and her hand to his chest. I want a picture too. I tug at his sport coat.

‘James, come here.’

‘Alright boss.’

I rush over to the nearest free window with him dragging behind me reluctantly.

‘What face are you going to pull, the squatting duck?’ He mocks.

‘Oh shush, Mister Cynical, you’ll learn to love selfies someday.’

After the photo he grabs my phone.

‘Hey I...’ My protest falls short. His firm hands delve to the back of my neck pulling me closer, out of nowhere and he plants his lips directly onto mine, their texture brushing over mine in a river of sensation. I reciprocate, my hands moving towards his face as I bury myself into him hungrily. If this is what addiction to a man feels like, it is quite the rush, unlike any feeble narcotic. Briefly he moves his left hand down my back to the point where it curves.

To not provoke too much of a scene, he retracts from the kiss, gracing my cheek gently, before taking a pause and a sharp inhale.

‘I’m going to say hi to her before we go, don’t want things to be awkward.’ He looks across to the ex-girlfriend, a determination stricken across his face. I understand, reluctantly, releasing his hand.

‘Go say hi.’ The angst builds inside me again. Promises before about everything being okay between the two of them, I hope they were not mere words. I cross my fingers.

He goes to greet her briefly. Her golden braid swings underneath the lights overhead as they exchange pleasantries. She touches his shoulder for a second and looks over towards me with a withering gaze. *Oh god, don’t look this way, we cannot be friends.*



Without smiling she turns back to James and he says his goodbyes. I see her eyes flicker the same way mine do when he weaves his words but his body language does not betray a lingering affection. He wasn't lying, it was over between them.

As he walks back towards me, the atmosphere shimmers into a fine mist, a haze of a dream. She looks back towards him almost forlornly, her eyes reaching for him in the midst of the bar, losing track of him as he stretches the agonising distance further and further. I knew her pain, it was a pain every girl had experienced, the one who had got away. For all the envy I have held for her, the earlier contempt, I hope she finds her love, if not this Valentine's, then sometime in the near future.

We leave the bar and offer a quick thank you to our waitress, before stepping back into the lift. I can't keep my hands off him, I need him now. Unfortunately, another couple joined us, we are going down only a couple of floors to the 21st. Choking my giggle, I look up at him. He keeps a poker face as the other couple, an older British pair stare at us as if we are weirdos, with some visible distaste across their faces.

Floor 21 soon arrives and we step out, leaving the happy couple behind.

'Which room?'

'Just here on the right. King suite.' He replies.

'There should be a guy up to deliver our key card any minute now.'

Thirty seconds elapse as we wait in silence and a hotel employee comes briskly walking down the corridor, an electronic key card out in hand. He is Middle-Eastern, perhaps Egyptian or similar, he smiles courteously and gives the card to James, slightly out of breath from his quick walk

‘Mister Wilson, your card for the night. We can bring another one up for your guest if necessary too?’

‘That won’t be necessary, but thank you.’

‘Anything else just give me or the front desk a call.’

‘Thank you.’ James responds as the man goes hurrying back towards the lift to go all the way back down to reception.

With a quick swipe of the card, we are in. The suite has a simple minimalist layout. The floor-to-ceiling windows give us the same view as we had at Cloud 23 over the city, taking in her every detail and there are two bathrooms, one with a shower and one with a bathtub. A bathrobe dangles from the hook with some complimentary slippers on the floor.

I peel my black dress off, slowly working my hands across my skin and stepping out of it to leave it coiled on the floor. I go to remove my bra but there is no need. He holds me from behind, directing me towards the bathroom mirror. We stand together for a few brief moments, as I revel in the touch of his shaved jaw and chin on my neck, before he leans in closer to adorn me with the softest of kisses. His thumb and forefinger

reach for my bra clasp and within a few seconds my breasts are exposed in front of the mirror.

'Be a good girl for me and run that shower would you?' I lean back, matching his kiss and wrapping my hands around his neck, basking in his affection for as long as I can. Wearing just my panties, I idle across to the shower controls and turn the dial, setting the temperature gauge to something warmer than usual to combat the ferocious cold outside. The water comes spurting out from the nozzle overhead, flowing directly downwards. It starts off freezing but soon warms up and I slip my fingers between my thighs and my panties before gradually rolling them down towards my ankles. He watches me get into the shower, the clear jets washing my body clean and the sensation overwhelming me in a quick jolt of pleasure.

As the water runs across me, I move my hands across the sore and aching parts of me - my shoulders, my hamstrings, my neck and stomach. The steam begins to rise to shroud the proceedings in a cloak of eroticism as I struggle to see him through the glass, but I know he is there somewhere. A minute passes and I run the shampoo through my hair, rinsing out the oil and dirt, the vapour billows around me, wrapping my body in a protective layer. Having finally undressed amidst the steam, his suit and shirt hung up on the hook, he steps in with me. He is so lean, even more so than how I remembered him last week at climbing. He has the body of an Olympian, a gymnast, not overly-muscled, but so lean and domineering.

I close my eyes and let my fingers massage his tense muscles just above his collarbone. They slide down to his chest and my hands move in a circular motion, gliding across the slick definition he has developed. Beneath the surface I can sense the power he holds there, my mind wanders to that chest positioned directly above me as I hold onto his back for dear life. The water caresses my sex as his body begins to turn me on immeasurably. In return, his hands roam across my breasts and down to my stomach as he makes a come hither motion before bringing his fingers back to my expectant mouth.

His hands move faster, in a smooth rhythm, beginning to envelop everything. They roam ever further downwards, eating up the space and I instinctively reach for the glass behind me, pinning my palms to it as his fingers encircle my most intimate parts, my sensitive bud. Without having to look down, I sense what is happening to me in swift bursts of time. My breathing is starting to intensify to a sharp pitch as I hold my mouth close to his ear. Ever so slowly, so deliberately, he looks directly into my eyes and slowly slides his first finger inside me as I gasp and close my eyelids.

The sensation overwhelms me, a million shots of hot lightning flowing to my nerve endings as his touch moistens me down there, interacting with the trickle of the water in a sensual symphony. He moves his finger ever so slightly down there and using his other hand reaches for my neck, pinning me against the glass, the water cascading down my belly in a rich waterfall as the

momentum builds. His grip prevents me from movement, prevents me from resistance, prevents me from ceasing the tides of pleasure beginning to wash over my hungry body.

He takes his time, he is no rush with me and we have all night. The grip around my neck hardens as he inserts a second finger inside me, his motions are ever so slow but firm and controlling. I am powerless to that touch, I might release at any moment and I cannot stop him. To align with him, my hips begin to rock back and forth, my neck held in place, my unstoppable climax gaining acceleration. My hands come clasping behind his thick back as he continues and I dig my nails in as hard as I can as my breaths become short inhales and exhales. It is not hyperventilating but it feels close as my moans draw louder and louder.

‘James. Don’t stop.’ I manage to utter from my restricted lungs.

His grip only tightens and he speeds up, making a circling motion with his fingers. I close my eyes as the water beats down, the warm currents flow across me and intermix with my moisture. My hands reach for something, anything as the sensation becomes impossible to hold back. I’m so wet and he knows it all too well, he knows how excited he gets me and he will not stop.

‘James, I...I. Oh god, oh god!’

My entire body begins to quiver for what seems like an eternity, as he slaps my ass with a strict swipe. The blood courses through my veins and my heart

pounds with an unrivalled fury as I flood his fingers - my wetness enveloping over his tips and knuckles. He holds me to restrict my flailing and slowly retracts his fingers from inside me. Through the steam and the rising plumes of vapour I see his shaft engorged for me. He is so erect for me, the eccentric veins running down the body, his abs next to his jagged lines, veering towards his rock hard sex, it is all too much to take in.

‘Just relax baby, don’t squirm too much.’

‘I’m trying.’ I’m breathless. *You made me do it.*

He kisses me softly everywhere, his lips tracing my belly, my inner thighs, my breasts. And finally he tastes what he has done to me, his tongue making long stroking movements as I grab his hair and rummage my fingers through those locks. He moves back up my body and returns to my lips, the fires of passion and love lighting up those beautiful eyes, he has some words for me.

‘We’re going to the bed.’ There was no wavering in his voice, no ambiguity, he was in charge tonight.

He lifts me in the shower and turns the stream off as we move onto the bathmat outside, grabbing a towel he dries my body, letting the fibres work into my delicate skin. I feel oddly shy, my face reddened with the excitement and exhaustion of what he had just made me do. He leaves me to dry my hair and I rub furiously to wring the moisture out of my strands before wrapping it to my head.

Walking through the suite, I walk to the edge of the bed as he reclines with his towel over his lower

body, just finishing above his knees. Letting the towel on my head drop to the floor, it makes a soft thud as I walk over to him and crawl onto the bed on my hands and knees, sidling up to him and planting a kiss on his lips. He reciprocates and devours me, moving across my mouth in sudden and unrestrained ways. Feeling down his body, I slip my hands underneath his towel and unravel it from around his waist, pulling it over his feet before throwing it to the floor.

In the background, the city lights twinkle against the stars as the night roars into full swing. I switch the bedroom lights off just by the headboard and a blackness descends on our activity, but not for long as the lights illuminate most of the bed, shadows placed at every angle through the ceiling-high windows.

He is just as erect as before, his shaft is so long and firm. I kiss him by his kneecaps and work my way up his muscular quads and thighs, enjoying every moment I can grip onto him. Using his grasp, he holds tightly onto the back of my neck at the base of my hair to dictate my movements and my mouth moves closer to his magnificent cock. Gradually, I shift from his inner thigh and roll the tip of my tongue across his smooth surface, eating up the distance with a keen fervour. I need him inside my mouth.

‘You feel so good James, so hard, so strong.’

He spreads his arms out on the pillows and arches his back slightly as I slide my mouth over his taut sex, my hands gripping his upper thighs for support. He tastes so good after our shower, the scents patter my

nostrils and arouse my senses fully as his masculine essence clings to me. His cock feels slickened, covered in my moisture as I hungrily consume him and look up to him from lower down on the bed.

‘Keep going baby, you need me inside you don’t you, you’ve been a disobedient girl and you need me inside to set you straight.’

‘Yes, anything for you.’

Raising myself from my huddled position, I move upwards on the bed and swing my legs across his body, facing him directly on my knees before teasing him for a few seconds. But I cannot wait long, the anticipation is too great. He slides inside me, closing my eyes and my legs feel weakened and numb as I try to catch my breath properly.

‘Ooooh god...gosh.’ I’m gasping again, he feels impossibly big within me. The cool reflection of the moon bursts against my back. The whole city can see us, but I do not care, this moment, this evening was made for us, for the true consummation of our blossoming love. He slaps me quickly to bring my focus back and with some considerable effort I tilt my head backwards and writhe back and forth on top of him, taking every inch of him as deep as I can.

The pressure is extreme and I feel completely filled up, brimming with him, but I look down to admire his physique. His athletic form taking my mind further and further to new heights of delicious pleasure. Wrapping his hands around my hips, he begins to thrust upwards to create a new sensation and I meet him, our



bodies colliding in a fierce confrontation. There is so much force behind his thrusts and my nerves are shattered with every stroke. Leaning back further, I grind my hips back and forth, his shaft angling towards all of my erogenous zones as I glisten with wetness again. The sweat builds on my chest with the exertion as we moan together against the sounds of the night.

‘That feels so good. I want you inside me all night James.’

Quickly and without warning he flips me over with his might, pinning my arms to my side so I am immobile. His stunning body lurches over me, keeping me constrained as he holds my ankles in the air and applies his weight, I can feel all of his power and his desire in those biceps and that grip, dominating me, allowing me to submit to his every will. His solid abs constrict my legs and arms and he slowly moves his right hand to my neck, choking me with a brutal strength, his intentions ever clearer.

His core engaged, I see his abs crunch together in a mosaic-like pattern, his masculinity ebbing and flowing as he begins to stroke in and out of me, changing his pressure on my throat. I am helpless at this point to stop every deep manoeuvre. The beaming colours come dashing through the window, splattering the bed in a hazy mixture of moonlight and neon and his body illuminates, all the contours and lines instantly visible to me, like a classical painting.

His strokes build in speed as my body starts heaving to the rhythm and my eyes roll backwards in

appreciation of his control. *Don't stop James.* The blazing sensation grows as he pummels me harder and harder; our bodies making a slapping sound alongside his vigorous attack. His hand is still on my throat and he decides to constrict my breathing as he moves through my wet folds at a devastating speed. I don't know how much longer I can take it.

'James, I can't, I can't...I...I.'

'Good girl, you're so tight and wet for me.'

He only gets faster and my face turns a bright crimson red as the same sensation from the shower comes rushing over me. But I am underneath him, squirming is impossible this time and I just have to take the explosive current somehow. I scream loudly as he releases some of his grip from my throat and he slaps me again whilst my constrained shuddering begins. *I can't describe how hot that feels.* My toes curl in the air and I gradually let my feet idle down his chest and down his stomach. I am exhausted already and my brain is shut down temporarily as my heart and my kinky side take over in full swing. I stare at him wide-eyed, not speaking a word as he leans over towards me, his blue eyes steering through to my core.

'Fuck. That was hot.' He hisses, with a lover's menace behind his words.

I'm speechless. Shivers run rapidly down my spine as I try to anticipate what his next plans are for me.

'But I think you need to bent over looking out at the city.'

*I agree.*

He orders me to stand by the window, my legs spread apart for him. He doesn't have to ask twice. On bambi stilts, I cross the floor gingerly, the shadows and light moving across my breasts and stomach, my hair gleaming in a playful dance with the hues of the night.

I come to the window and place my hands on the glass, it is cool to my touch, a welcome respite from the warmth of the sheets. The city is in full view, the noise of traffic and sirens ringing out to our floor. I can see very small outlines of people on the pavements below, but it is such a long way down. I wonder if they can see me, I want them to see me, to see us, it turns me on even more so to know we might be being watched.

I wait a few seconds before feeling him grab a fistful of my hair. I blush momentarily, thinking of the view he must have, me bent over and exposed for him like this.

'Stay where you are.' He commands. Inch by inch he brackets my hips and grinds his shaft into me from behind. A feral growl comes from him. I almost convulse from him entering me so forcefully and I raise my head back up to meet his.

'Please James. Please.'

But he is in charge.

'What did I tell you? Stay where you are.' With the crook of his elbow to my neck he holds me still before ravaging me with a vicious spanking. Two or three colossal hits, to tell me to stay down. *Yes sir.*

I bend over again, transfixed with our reflection in the glass, a blurry scene of potent lovemaking interspersed with the atmosphere of the Manchester skyline. He pulls my supple body into his, repeatedly, never letting go as he yanks my hair, disciplining me fully for my slight transgression. My hands are slipping on the glass from the sweat building up as the heat transferring between our bodies is never-ending. But I try to keep them there as I bite down into my lip, drawing a tiny amount of blood. His free hand moves to where he spanked me and I see him in the reflection, a slight smile forming in his mouth before he caresses me there, creating tingles through my lower body.

His darkened gaze roams across me as he admires my performance for him. He seems pleased with me, enamoured with my body and I flicker my eyes continuously as he stares at me in the reflection.

'I think you like looking at yourself don't you Miss Richardson.'

'Yes Mister Wilson.' The words barely escape me as another gasp and moan are released from my desperate lungs.

'Look at you. You're being ravished. You're so responsive for me.'

He is building again, his sex plowing into me from behind with ever more speed and force. His hand moves along my moist back, detailing every little part and he tugs ever firmer on my hair. He is so rough with me, so in control, so sure of how he wants to have me, he staggers me. His erection is unspeakably hot and

rigid and caresses through my delicate folds with each energetic thrust. My moans begin happen with each thrust as I hear him breathing harder too. He is close I can feel it. The friction and stimulation feels so good and I close my eyes with the ecstasy beginning to course through me again.

‘Oh baby. Don’t stop.’

‘No talking.’

He leans over and pants his hot breath into my neck as my hands slide at a glacial pace down the glass. He bucks into me, fucking me like only he can, the tension coils up inside me but I cannot bear it for too much longer. I sense we are going to come together. His hips move at a blurring speed as the slapping sounds of our bodies resound across the room, I take his full girth and length as his ever hardening shaft fills me.

My moans increase in loudness and his breathing gets louder. My hands lose their grip and my legs buckle from the pressure as I lose all ability to instruct my body. My orgasm bursts free from me in a cracking shudder as I feel him pulsing inside me, his body stiffening to a granite-like hardness. The aftershocks are hard to take, the sweat pours down my back and he brings me up to him, my head rolling back onto his shoulder as he begins tenderly kissing my ears and the cusp of my neck. The world stands still for a few minutes as he caresses me gently, still inside me, still forcing me into his body.

‘Well done baby. That was amazing.’ He says with a husky whisper.

We have no energy left to walk backwards towards the bed and we collapse on the floor, the carpet cushioning some of the blow. My chest rises and falls with his in tandem as I lay on top of him. I have submitted but I feel content in the beginnings of his post-coital embrace.

‘That was...’

‘Shhhhhh.’ He blurts, putting his finger to his mouth.

He was right, a passage so intense, there was no reason to try small talk so quickly. We lie on the ground, still, for what feels like ten years. Time stretches out before me as the stars twinkle in the sky above, I think I should make a wish at some point this Valentine’s.

I turn to him with an urgency in my voice. ‘I love you James, you know that right? I know it sounds crazy after only a few months, but I am a complete woman with you.’ I hated sounding so defensive again, so needy but it was the truth. I felt vulnerable with such a statement but I wanted to hear him say it back.

‘I know baby. I know.’ His tone is hushed. In that James way where he can settle everything down after the heady heights of an emotional rollercoaster. I can tell he is thinking the same thing, he is as taken with the sentiment as I am. The thought calms me down after a moment of worry. ‘I love you too. I am not the

sentimental type but there's something about you, you bring the best out of me.'

Sighing and smiling, I keep my ear to his chest, listening to the distinct thud of his unbridled heart, and the steady movement of his lungs.

'This was a perfect Valentine's James. It was almost scripted. I wish we could do this more often.'

'We can.' He replies.

'But all of your business commitments?'

'New business can wait.' *Oh yeah that was mentioned.*

I prop myself up to gaze into his gorgeous blue eyes and I kiss his hair. I hope I can be this close to him all the time.

'Something about being in the heights of the city, you feel more vulnerable and more attuned to yourself and each other in these surroundings. It really awakens something in me'. *I can tell.*

'Me too.' I reply. My head nuzzles into his chest as I purr and murmur with his arm hugging me close, holding onto me for dear life.

'Let's do it again in another city.'

'Why Mister Wilson, does this mean more travel to far-flung destinations?' For just once my life could become a vacation, I was content with that.

'Hmm. It just might.'

And so there I lay. On top of this muscular chest, the tendons moving below me, shifting like the sand under a thousand feet. My hand grazed through his hair as he held me to him, his heartbeat pounding through to

mine. He looked so peaceful, so at ease with himself and the world, ready to drift off into his dreams but not before one last kiss for the night. Our night in the sky.