
Chapter 1

Before she knew it—well before she allowed the intellect that usually came to her rescue in these situations to make itself known—she found herself beneath him on the bed. How her clothes had managed to desert her in the meantime as he was carrying her roughly in his arms, she would never know.

But somehow, in distinct contrast, she was placed—naked as the day she was born—on her back on the bed in a manner that suggested that she was the most precious thing in the world to him. That fanciful notion would have made her laugh, especially since they had only met an hour or so ago, if his next movements hadn't wiped those genteel impressions so thoroughly from her mind.

Devour was too tame a word for what he proceeded to do to her. Without missing a beat, without the slightest misstep—and most definitely without asking permission to do so—he pressed her thighs firmly back and wide apart, exposing her damp secrets to him completely.

Every atom in her body blushed deeply; not that he had

seemed to notice in the least. He was too busy staring hungrily down at her.

Seeing that eager tongue run itself over his lips brought the last remnant of her intellect to the forefront, and she made a feeble attempt to extricate herself, but he was much too strong for her to be able to do anything but wiggle helplessly beneath the hold he maintained on her with just one arm.

Seconds later, she looked down, with not a small amount of trepidation, her eyes greeted by the sight of his generous crown of golden curls entangling what remained of her own small patch of them. Any regrets she might have had about being here with him—a man she'd just met when she had made it a habit of eschewing just such encounters all her life—evaporated as every little bit of her was introduced, with utter abandon on his part, to every inch of his face.

Lips sucked lips that a firm, strong tongue then parted insistently. He refused to allow her to arch away from him. Instead, a large, surprisingly gentle hand slid beneath her bottom to cup it and lift her to him, giving her no choice but to offer herself up to him so that he could become even more intimately familiar with parts of her that made her squirm helplessly—embarrassment fighting with and losing to—the lust he was so deliberately forcing to bloom within her.

He was relentless in his single-minded pursuit of her complete undoing. His lips and tongue kept that tiny pearl perfectly captive, never once breaking contact nor offering any kind of respite from his fevered attentions as he leaned more fully over her, artfully using the breadth of his shoulders to his own advantage to hold her still for him as his hands then sought and found her wrists, pinning them firmly to the bed beside her.

That one move—so keeping with what her impression of him as a naturally dominant man, even from across the bar—elicited her first groan which spurred him on, her usually erudite vocabu-

lary reduced to panting and mewling vocalizations that only had her blushing that much harder.

And the way his devilish amusement at her whimpering rumbled—vibrated—his bearded mouth against her privates sent her spiraling towards a culmination of such terrifying power that she was very nearly afraid of it.

But nowhere near enough to ask—beg, she suspected would be a more accurate word—him to stop.

Not only was she quite sure that she had no ability left to form the necessary words, but she wasn't eager to give him the satisfaction of pleading with him, either. She had a feeling that his ego didn't need any kind of help from her.

Even with his face buried between her thighs—somehow even more so because of his audacious delight at being there—the man's entire demeanor fairly screamed dominance and control.

And, a few short seconds later, he had her screaming, too...

"HE'S HERE!"

"Who is here?" Livvie Morton barely looked up from her computer.

The young woman at the door skirted furtively further into her office, closing the door behind her before leaning towards her boss and hissing, "Him! True Kensington. He's heeeerrrrreeee!"

It wasn't her words so much as the way she'd said them that actually prodded Liv into peering at her assistant, who, at the ripe old age of twenty-six, seemed to be positively vibrating with excitement.

"Okay. I think I need more information. What am I missing, here? Why, exactly, are you fangirling so hard? Is he a rap star or something? Is he famous on YouTube? Is he a Real Housewife—Househusband— of Somewhere?"

Candy rolled her eyes dramatically. "Christ, you're not that much older than I am!! How can you possibly not recognize his name?"

"I'm more than fifteen years older than you are, and you well know it. At times like this, that seems like an entirely insurmountable length of time. And you know that I don't much bother keeping up with who's doing what to whom nowadays...I'm much more interested in Henry VIII or King Tut than anything that's going on with...I want to say Conway West?"

The look the younger woman gave her as she deliberately mangled the singer's name was priceless.

"At the risk of sounding like your mother, you'd better stop rolling your eyes so hard at me or they're going to fall out onto the floor."

"Kanye West, Livvie. Kanye," came the long-suffering correction.

"Yeah. Right. Whoever." Liv turned to face her exaggeratedly patient friend. "So, make with the explanations. Why should I be going gaga—Lady or otherwise—over True Kensington?" She wrinkled her nose, muttering only somewhat under her breath, "And who names a baby 'True', anyway? That's an unusual choice for a name."

"It's a family name—ancestral, even." She adopted a faraway tone of voice. "He's British! And his accent is just amazing! I'd be willing to pay him to read the dictionary out loud while I just listened."

The dreamy sigh was a bit over the top, but Liv supposed she understood. She had a thing for British accents, herself—she didn't know many women who wouldn't admit to that particular weakness. She'd just learned to control her reactions better.

At least, she'd thought she had until a night or so ago, when she'd succumbed to the undeniable attraction of one of his countrymen...her mind began to drift into memories that were best

not explored at work, so she forced her attentions back to the situation at hand.

"What do you suppose he wants with us?" she mused, hoping to turn Candy's mind back to work, too.

Instead, she just managed to get herself another impatient look designed to make her feel like a slack jawed yokel for not already knowing the answer.

"He's a corporate raider! He takes over companies—large and small—gobbles them up and turns them around, selling them at a nice profit. He's an uber zaddy—incredibly expensive, perfectly tailored suits, sexy a-f, and just the perfect amount of swagger—he's tall, with legs that go on for miles! Not to mention he's filthy rich and incredibly gorgeous!"

Liv filed that word—"zaddy"—away to look it up on urban dictionary later, although she thought she probably got the gist.

"But he's depressingly discreet, too," Candy mused out loud. "Oh, he's dated a couple of starlets and models, but no one seriously for any length of time." She turned to look at the door as if he was standing in the doorway, sighing, "I wonder how he feels about poor, penniless secretaries?"

Despite Candy's histrionics, it wasn't his preference in female companionship that Livvie was worried about. It was what she'd said before that that didn't sound at all good. What could he possibly want with a small, one man band company like hers? They shouldn't even have been a blip on his business radar, they were such small change.

Something—self-preservation, stubborn streak, she wasn't sure what—made her begin to compulsively straighten her already very neat desk. "Ms. Daigle, would you go downstairs and get me a cup coffee?"

Her tone—as well as her choice of formal address—snapped Candy out of her reverie—somewhat, anyway, at least enough to enjoy pointing out to her, "But you have a Keurig right there and the shop'll be mobbed."

It was Liv's turn to roll her eyes. "I know that."

Sometimes, she could be quite dense. "But he's waiting for you." She said the word "he" as reverently as any disciple ever could.

"I know that, too. But he also didn't bother to make an appointment, and I am in no hurry to find out what he might want from me. Let him cool his heels for a few minutes. I'm not about to let him think I'm going to allow him to disturb me or put me off kilter just because he thinks he can."

Candy nodded and winked wisely. "Ahhhhhh. Gonna play hard to get? Make him work for it?"

All she got was a puzzled, somewhat myopic look for her efforts as her boss scrunched up her nose. "Work for what?"

Another ginormous eye roll that silently questioned Livvie's intellectual capacity. "Forget it," she threw over her shoulder, heading for the door.

Once she'd closed it behind her, Liv could hear Candy mumble nervously to what must've been the illustrious Mr. Kensington something about it being just a few more minutes before she'd be ready to see him. So, although she tried to resist the impulse, she nonetheless took the time to duck into her small, private bathroom and primp—but just a bit, regretting it as soon as she saw herself in the mirror.

Son of a bitch!

She still had that well-fucked look from two nights ago! The man had impressive staying power, in more ways than one! She hadn't been able to sleep well last night—she was still clenching occasionally—when something reminded her of the filthy things he'd done to her—and he was still seeping out of her, nearly twenty-four hours later! Tingly, sensitive nipples brushed against the inside of her bra constantly, and she was hyper aware of the dampness of the panties that clung to her almost as tenaciously as he had.

So, besides a light coating of soft blush lipstick, she didn't do

much, ending up standing behind her desk with her back to the door as she donned the jacket to her smart linen business suit.

But instead, her arms seemed to get tangled in it.

"Fuck me!" she groaned, craning the jacket and her arms around in an ungainly fashion to try to get them to conform to each other.

She never expected to find her arms pinned neatly together behind her back as someone turned her towards them, forcing her to arch her back as he pulled her against his tall, rock solid body, forcibly pressing her still very sensitive chest against his distressingly, intimately familiar chest.

Before she could say anything, his hand came up to cup the back of her head and he held her still for a devastatingly thorough kiss that threatened to wipe her mind irretrievably clean. He didn't nibble, he didn't coax—he demanded.

He reached out and took what he wanted from her, giving her exactly what he knew—unerringly—she craved in return, thoroughly enjoying subduing her a bit at first as she struggled futilely until he literally watched the dawning realization in her eyes of just who it was kissing her so thoroughly.

"What the fuck are *you* doing here?" she asked when he finally allowed them to come up for air.

True chuckled low in his throat, the deep, possessive sound of it making nearly all of her come to peak at once. "We never did get around to names that night, did we? And you snuck out like a thief the next morning while I was still lying—utterly spent, as I had hoped I had left you—in the aftermath, so I never did get the chance to tell you my name, then make you scream it uncontrollably as I fucked your brains out one last time."

Liv tried to move away from him, but, with what should have been alarming ease, he refused to let her step away from him. He did help her get into her jacket, although only after whispering naughtily, "I'd much rather take it off you or, preferably, keep

your arms trapped behind you while I ruck up your skirt, push your prim little panties aside, and ram myself into you."

It was the same now as it had been that night. What was it about a British accent that made unutterably dirty things sound so completely refined?

"H-how do you know I don't know your name?"

"Because I would have heard it that night if you had." He didn't sound as if he was bragging in the least, merely stating a fact.

"And how do you know I wear prim little panties?" Neither question was one she should have been asking, she realized, but only after they were already out of her mouth. The man's ability to bamboozle her with viciously potent sex appeal was incredibly dangerous. She lost all semblance of coherence in his presence, and that couldn't be a good thing...could it?

His knowing smile made her frown fiercely. "Because you're the prim little panty type. And besides," he continued, stepping back from her and taking her hand in his to press the back to his lips, "I relieved you of yours that night, remember? With my teeth?"

Without letting her respond to his outrageous statements in any way except the flush that nature brought her, he straightened, bowing formally to her. "True Kensington, at your service, Ms. Morton." Then he proceeded to gather her back into his arms again.

Livvie's eyes narrowed, and he noticed. He noticed everything about her, and this was a definite sea change that made him quite curious. "How do you know who I am, then?"

Still, he looked more uncomfortable about that question than any of the others she'd put to him. "Well, I have certain resources at my disposal and I availed myself of them when I awoke that morning—cold and alone—and realized immediately that one night with you wasn't going to be anywhere near enough to sate me."

His eyelashes, she realized as he stared wolfishly down at her, were really too long and beautiful for a man, but that was about the only physical flaw she could find with him, not that she was trying very hard. Livvie knew she shouldn't have been thinking about such things—she should have been resisting him much more actively. But the truth of the matter was that her body was already his—already completely ignoring her will—what there was left of it in his presence— and was making itself ready for him.

And somehow, he knew it, too, the bastard! It was in the just slightly smug look she saw on that handsome face every time she looked up at him!

"So you had me what, investigated? Followed?" Liv stiffened in his arms. That was one of the few concepts that could—and did—throw a bucket of ice water over her runaway hormones. She had a thing about privacy—having had a very bad experience with a man in the past who hadn't bothered to pretend to respect hers—and it remained a very tender spot with her.

His voice was annoyingly soft and soothing, although with an unmistakable hint of a steel undertone. "Nothing that sinister. It's no longer that hard to find out who anyone is, if one has the will to do so."

She didn't seem particularly mollified by his answer, so he decided to turn the subject around. "Your secretary recognized me immediately. Did she tell you who I was?"

As if she'd heard her title being taken in vain, Candy knocked perfunctorily on the door, then came in, bearing the coffee she'd asked for as a stalling tactic, but she wasn't looking where she was going. Instead, she was gazing behind her longingly as she made her way blindly to Livvie's desk.

"He's gone!" she lamented forlornly. "I don't know where he went! I knew you shouldn't have made him wait—"

Again, no amount of trying to get out of his hold got her anywhere but held just that much more tightly, until she stopped

trying to get away with an annoyed sigh, despite the acute embarrassment she was feeling that Candy was catching her in such a position.

"I'm right here, Ms. Daigle. I decided to take advantage of your absence to introduce myself."

Although she jumped a bit at the sound of his voice, Candy recovered better than Livvie would have bet she could have. "Seems as if you've done a bit more than that," Candy murmured under her breath, taking in the unusual scene of her relatively staid boss being held impossibly—improperly—close in the handsome man's arms.

But True merely gave her a ghost of a smile, with zero trace of apology or explanation. "Thank you very much for the coffee," he said, politely but pointedly.

Candace took the hint, backing—however reluctantly—out of the office and closing the door as slowly as was humanly possible.

"Did she?" he repeated, and Liv had the feeling it wasn't something he preferred to do.

"Yes. She simpered nicely over you as I'm sure you're quite used to most females doing, but I had no idea that the man I went to bed with was the same man who was supposedly sitting nicely in my waiting room."

"I know."

This time, when she moved a bit, he let her go.

"And why is that?"

"Why is what?"

Liv frowned. "Don't be obtuse. I'm not an idiot."

"Of course, you're not," he agreed readily.

"Why, exactly, are you here?"

He hitched his hip up onto the edge of her desk, crossing his arms across his chest. "I thought I'd just told you why." One long finger reached out to trail its tip from her exposed collarbone to dally between her breasts, just above her bra, in an impossibly

light, terribly intimate manner, making her shiver once, quite unmistakably, only to be withdrawn suddenly. The loss of his heated touch on her flesh caused a slight whimper before she could completely squelch it.

She marshaled her emotions as best she could around him, though, eying him with blatant suspicion. "And that's the only reason?"

His eyebrows went up. "What other reason could I have?"

"Oh, please. That's not an answer, and you know it. I want to know if Morton, Et Al is of any interest to you on a business level."

"All businesses are interesting to me. That's why I got into...well...business."

"Another non-answer." Surprised and annoyed to realize that she was still standing within arm's reach of him, Liv moved further away from him but remained behind her desk. She wasn't about to give that up to him, too.

And she knew, instinctively, he'd take it, if she offered—that he'd take much more than that from her, if she let him.

Just like he'd have her again, ruthlessly, without compunction, in much the same way she could lose her company to him, too.

And he'd make damned good and sure that she enjoyed every single second of getting fucked—either way—too; of that she had absolutely no doubt.