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## Chapter 1

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“I’ve got a bad feeling about this, Lily,” Ophelia whispered into her cell. “Apart from anything else, I’ll make a fool of myself.”

She heard Lily’s patient sigh at the other end of the line. “It’ll be good practice for you, O.”

“Of looking like a fool?”

“No, flirting. If Jake asks for your number, then I’ll know he plays around. C’mon, it’ll be fun.”

Grand theft boyfriend didn’t fit Ophelia’s idea of fun. “Why don’t you trust him?”

“I do trust him, but after my last disaster, I want to be sure. The thing is, Ophelia, I think he’s the *one*.”

This from the woman who went through men like disposable coffee cups. “You’ve only known him a week.”

“Yes, but the sex is fantastic. Last night we did it...”

Ophelia mentally clapped her hands over her ears. “TMI, Lily Mason.”

Lily snorted a laugh. “God, Ophelia, you need to loosen up.”

She felt quite loose enough, thank you very much. “Anyway, how did you know he’d be here in the law library?”

“He said he had to find some old book on the same floor

where you go every night. That's what gave me the idea. You can't miss him, O. Tall, dark hair, stubble beard."

Moving to the end of the bookstack, Ophelia peered over the top of her reading glasses at Lily's new boyfriend. He sat under the window at the far end of the room, wearing earbuds and reading. Obviously, he thought he had the place to himself because his feet were on the desk. Ophelia thought it rude.

"He's the only person on this floor, Lily, so it's him. But I'm too nerdy to be his type."

If truth be told, Boho Lily from the Village didn't seem his type either. His impeccably tailored overcoat and overconfidence pointed to Manhattan. But what did Ophelia know about type when she hadn't been anyone's type in over a year? Only two boyfriends in her life and the last one had called her an old soul. Too bookish, too stick-in-the-mud for her twenty-two years. He'd been too polite to say boring. They'd broken up after three months. She hadn't dated since.

"You need more confidence, O," Lily breezed into Ophelia's thoughts. "You're really pretty even though you don't always make the effort."

"Gee thanks."

"And he likes blondes and you're more or less blonde."

More mousy than blonde in Ophelia's opinion, especially when compared to Lily's platinum bob. Sneaking into the row nearest to Jake, Ophelia made a gap in the books to study him. A strong profile beneath cropped black hair and as Lily said, a stubble beard. In his heavy overcoat, he looked large and intimidating, almost dangerous. Not a man to mess with or even to flirt with for that matter. She couldn't imagine her vivacious, fun-loving friend with this guy. Yet there was no denying Mr. Manhattan or wherever he came from was sex on legs. Even the librarian, Cheryl, who'd delivered a pile of books to his table had hit on him.

"I've got coffee downstairs, Jake."

The librarian had left disappointed, but Ophelia wished he

had gone downstairs. The top floor of the Baines Law Library was her special place at night. Nobody came up here as the books were out of date, the furniture rickety and the lack of heating turned the place to an icebox in winter. Ophelia loved it anyway. She loved the solitude, loved that she could bring a flask of soup and no one would tell her off. Most of all, she loved the old leather-bound books. Whenever she moved along a row, she would run her fingers over the spines so every book would know she cared. Kind of silly, but this was her home most nights. Having someone else here felt like an intrusion, especially when she had an important case to prepare.

“Okay, Lily, I’ll flirt with him for exactly twenty seconds and then I go home.”

“Thanks, girlfriend. He’s picking me up for dinner at eight-thirty so text me ASAP.”

Ophelia ended the call at the same time Jake removed an earbud and looked around. She stepped away from the gap, worried he’d spotted her, but he reinserted the bud and began to thumb his phone.

“How’s your ass?”

Whatever his caller said amused him as he laughed loudly. “The harder I give it to you, the better you like it. Fuck, you were begging for cock last night.”

Ophelia blinked at the crudeness.

“What are you wearing?”

Oh. My. God. He had Lily on the phone. Ophelia knew she should get the hell out before she got trapped behind the book-stack, forced to listen. It would be like a phone three-way with her best friend. Eww!

“No FaceTime, Candice. I want you to tell me word for word.”

Candice?

“First, take off your bra. Are your nipples hard?”

The question made Ophelia flush with heat. Intrigued, she put her face back in the gap, feeling like a voyeur but unable to

look away. His feet were still on the desk, one hand resting on his thigh and he seemed so relaxed, he must have done this a million times.

“Rub your nipples for me, babe.”

Ophelia shivered at the rich timbre carrying across the room. At any moment he’s going to unzip and she really would have to skedaddle because watching him do *that* would be disgusting.

And yet.

His hand slid to his crotch, played with the zipper. Ophelia had to bite her lip to muffle her moan of excitement, aware that an intense ache had started between her legs. When he began to stroke himself through his pants, Ophelia pushed her face further into the gap to see as much as she could.

“Take off the thong. Is your pussy wet?”

Ophelia couldn’t stop inching her fingers between her legs to check. Her tights were damp.

“I’m gonna fuck you so hard, Candice. Stroke yourself to get ready.”

Ophelia ached to oblige but she really shouldn’t. Should she?

“That’s it, baby. And think of me sucking your titties while you’re stroking.”

Oh, God, that did it. Jamming her knuckles in her mouth to stop any sound escaping, she began to strum between her legs. It felt so good.

“Don’t forget your clit.”

So coarse, so wet-making and *sooo* sexy. Ophelia made circles over the spot in question, scratching at her itch. She was sopping wet, barely breathing behind her knuckles, hips going back and forth. When he turned his head toward her hiding place. Ophelia snatched her hand away, positive she’d been caught. But he couldn’t have seen her as he was talking again.

“Now imagine my hand burning up your ass.”

Really?

“I’m spanking you so hard. Tell me how it feels?”

Ophelia closed her eyes and thought about his heavy hand smacking her butt. It felt... odd... crazy, sick and... *arousing?*

“Put two fingers inside. All the way up, baby.”

Ophelia couldn't believe what she was about to do. Working her hand inside her panties she slipped two digits deep, swaying to the rising heat, her breath coming in pants now. She felt so wicked, but she deserved this. It had been too long.

“That's right, you're riding my cock.” He tipped his head back, made a low growl. In the dimness of the room and with the light behind him, he looked like a wolf—a huge frightening wolf.

“Fuck that pussy, girl.”

Feverishly, Ophelia stroked on while staring dumbly at his crotch, picturing the hardness beneath the fabric. Why hadn't he unzipped?

“I can't hold on, babe. Come for me now.”

Ophelia clamped, the ferocious ache between her legs about to explode when his loud laugh brought her to an abrupt halt. Jolted back to reality, she yanked her hand out and quickly wiped her fingers on her tights.

“Go take a shower, sugar. I'll be over later tonight.”

He ended the call, removed the earbuds and swung his feet off the desk. Dazedly, Ophelia watched him begin sorting through his pile of books, checking each before dumping it noisily on the floor. Ophelia stood on the spot, her ache undiminished, her mind racing at the implications of Jake's conversation. Clearly, Lily's scumbag of a boyfriend intended a booty call after his dinner with Lily. She could text Lily the truth or go over there with the news, but why not shame the lowlife into leaving both Lily's life and her precious library in one go.

With heart in mouth, Ophelia left the safety of the bookstack and stomped across the wooden floorboards, determined to give him a piece of what was left of her mind. It was only when she came to a halt at his desk that he looked up although he had to have heard her coming. His gaze met hers and Ophelia was

confronted with a set of navy-colored eyes that were way too knowing. Oh, shit.

Ophelia pulled her shoulders back in a show of confidence. “Excuse me, I’d like to talk to you.”

The navy appraised her from top to toe. Okay, ponytail, old sweater, vegan boots and leggings with a hole in the crotch, thankfully covered by the sweater, didn’t exactly exude woman-power, but she had to see this through.

“Yeah, what is it?”

“You should know that I heard...” Ophelia said and promptly lost her courage.

Not a shred of discomfort showed on his face. “What did you hear?”

Ophelia abandoned her plan, went for the retreat. “It doesn’t matter.”

“Let me be the judge. What did you hear?”

Ophelia had hoped to shame him into leaving but faced with his quiet authority, it was she who wanted to turn tail and run.

“Um... I thought I heard you mention a book on criminal procedure to the librarian, but I can see you don’t have it.”

She spun on a heel to leave, but only managed one step before his deep voice pulled her up short.

“Which book don’t I have?”

Slowly turning, she jabbed a finger idiotically in the direction of his book pile. “I thought it was that... that red one on top.”

“You’re right, it’s not on criminal procedure. What’s the title of your red book?”

“Er...”

“Don’t you know?”

Ophelia’s brain shorted out under the effort of thinking. “I-I can’t remember exactly, but it’s definitely red.”

He looked at her as if he knew every thought in her head. This whole idea had started out pear-shaped. Now it would torment her for all time.

“I think I know what you’re looking for.”

He stood up abruptly, his immense frame towering over her meager five and a half feet. At least six feet, four inches. And broad. Lily had a giant boyfriend.

“There’s no need...” Ophelia declared bravely, but already he’d walked off leaving her no option but to be sucked along in his wake.

He led her to a bookstack at the far end of the floor. “This section is on criminal procedure, but I doubt your red book is here. Are you sure you’re not looking for something else?”

The way he said ‘something else’ had Ophelia scrambling for a response. “It-it might be at the end,” she mumbled, scooting along the row to put distance between herself and her tormentor. When she started checking the other side of the aisle, he leaned against the pillar at the end to wait.

“No luck?” he asked as she neared him.

“It must be on loan.”

“Unlikely.”

“Someone could have borrowed it,” she insisted, aware that his eyes were on her shapeless black sweater with the loose threads around the bottom. Ophelia didn’t do sophistication whereas he was every inch designer.

“Perhaps there’s another book you can borrow, Ms....?”

“Jones.”

His brow rose. “So, Ms. *Jones*, you like coming up here?”

“Yes,” she confessed. “I usually have the place to myself.” Taking a step to leave, she stopped, rooted to the floor. In the whole of her young womanhood, Ophelia had never been so aware of a man’s presence—his masculinity, his strength, his beauty or his aftershave for that matter. If testosterone could be packaged, he had it covered.

His voice came down at her, low and inquiring. “You’re a lawyer?”

Looking up to answer his question, she could see he was older than Lily’s usual twenty-somethings. Around thirty-two or three. All grown up.

“I-I passed the Bar a month ago,” Ophelia stammered, struggling to focus under his intense gaze. “I’m with the D. A.’s office preparing my first case.”

“I’m sure you’ll do well.”

Ophelia glowed under the praise. “Thank you. And you?”

“Defense attorney. I get the bad guys off.” His eyes traveled to her mouth, stayed there. “Maybe one day we’ll cross paths in a courtroom.”

“I...”

Her words faded when he picked a stray hair from her shoulder. “I’d enjoy going up against you, Ms. Jones.”

Ophelia couldn’t think of a single thing to say to the wall of chest in front of her. Okay, she wasn’t great with chitchat and she hadn’t had sex in forever, but either way it wouldn’t have mattered because this man was all too much for her.

Time to go. Except he shifted on his feet and the movement opened his overcoat to reveal a white business shirt and charcoal-colored pants. She didn’t want to leave. She wanted to put herself inside that coat and never come out. Ophelia shivered at the thought.

“Are you cold?”

In actual fact, she felt the opposite, but she had to cover. “A little. I should go.”

“Is that what you want?”

His eyes were darker now, but not enough to conceal the invitation in the inky depths.

Only a step and she’d be in his arms. This couldn’t happen, not even with the man who would soon be Lily’s ex. Ophelia prided herself on being honest, on being a good friend. To give in now, to claim him even for a few minutes would be the worst betrayal.

On a rush of loyalty, she snapped, “I don’t want anything from you.”

She expected anger. Instead he smiled at her—so infectious, she had to resist the urge to smile back.



“But you enjoyed listening?”

She'd loved every filthy second. “I don't know what you mean.”

He lifted her hand in his. His fingers were so big, she couldn't see her own, but she felt his lips on them. Those fingers had been inside her body. Ophelia cringed, hoping he wouldn't notice.

“And if I'm not mistaken, you did more than listen.”

Caught red-handed, so to speak. “Did you...”

She petered out at the awkwardness.

“Did I know you were there? I'll take the fifth.”

Embarrassingly, her fingers were still on his lips. But there was something worse going on in her body. His talk of discipline had awakened her interest and going by his perceptive expression, he knew.

“I didn't expect to be having this conversation in a library, Ms. Jones.”

“Nor did I,” Ophelia muttered inanely.

He smiled and to her horror, tasted her fingers. “Very nice.”

“I-I really do have to go.”

He released her hand. “I understand although you could stay and see what happens.”

Yes, she could stay. Yes, she could have his badness, have sex with the sexiest man on the planet.

Ophelia stared at her boots.

“Would you like to stay, Ms. Jones?”

She nodded at the floor.

He lifted her face. “Are you sure you want to take this step because it might change you?”

Taking steps didn't matter when it felt like destiny had taken over her life. “I'm sure,” she answered shakily.

“Then take off your glasses.”

Ophelia placed them on the shelf beside her and stood very still. His hand slid around her waist to draw her inside his coat. She could feel his cock through his trousers—thick and long and hard. He bent low to kiss her, his tongue seeking entrance.

Ophelia parted her lips for him and gave herself over to his kiss. Everything around her blurred until there was nothing but him, his skilled mouth, his powerful arms encasing her, his erection against her stomach. As he deepened the kiss, his hand slid over her butt, squeezing gently to start with, then harder when she flexed into the pain. He massaged, compressed again. Over and over he went while his tongue played the inside of her mouth as though probing another part of her body. Ophelia felt his other hand slide to her crotch to hold her butt and sex sandwiched. She whimpered in pleasure at the restraint.

He lifted his head from the kiss, his hand moving around between her legs. “You’re very aroused, Ms. Jones.”

Ophelia didn’t answer because her soaked tights were proof enough.

With a soft laugh, he worked his fingers through the ripped opening in her leggings, carelessly popping stitches to make room for his hand. She felt him push her panties aside to touch her. Ophelia bit her lip to stop her moan, not wanting him to know her desperation although in her sex-starved condition, how could he miss it.

With a tweak of her clit, he withdrew. “Take them off.”

This couldn’t be happening. Not to her—sensible Ophelia Tate who didn’t do reckless. The whole lust at first sight thing only happened in movies and romance novels, but not in real life or at least, not in her life. Yet without a second thought, she obeyed. Removing her fluffy-lined boots, she peeled her leggings and panties down to free a foot. He waited quietly, although she saw him raise a brow at her waist-high pink panties. Finally free of her clothing, she stood in front of him, every cell in her body liquid with desire. His hand reclaimed her sex. Ophelia spread her legs to accommodate him, shocked at her own shamelessness. A thick finger pierced her, explored. Ophelia gripped his coat lapels to hold herself up, squirming into the knee-buckling bliss as he began to caress and rotate while his thumb made its own circles. Her clit felt so huge, it would surely burst if it didn’t have

relief. Ophelia buried her face in his chest and prayed for completion.

She was almost there when he left her, leaned low to whisper in her ear, “Not yet.”

Ophelia, in a lust-ridden stupor, watched him ease his zipper over the swell in his pants. With a grunt, he liberated his erection, holding it with one hand while he shoved his pants and briefs to his knees. Ophelia saw the top of his cock poking up through his broad fingers and when he took his hand away, she gawped at the sight of his erection standing straight up in the air. Ophelia didn't have much of a sex résumé, but this was the biggest, most beautiful appendage she had ever laid eyes on. Ophelia couldn't look away, nor could she imagine it fitting inside her body.

“You're...” she said before she could stop herself.

A chuckle from above her head and Ophelia reddened at her silliness.

He reached into his coat to retrieve a condom, rolled it on in one smooth movement and adjusted it around the base. As he lifted her, Ophelia slipped her legs into his coat and around his waist. She felt like a limpet stuck to a rock—an enormous rock made of granite. He held her easily—so easily that he had her supported on one hand while the other slid under her sweater to undo her bra. At the feel of her breast being encased in warmth, she squeezed her eyes shut to absorb the sensation and when she opened them again, she realized she'd forgotten to breathe. Ophelia wondered if someone could pass out from sheer lust.

Wrapping her arms around his neck, she clung to him as he spread her open with his fingers as though checking she could take him. Ophelia wasn't sure herself.

He didn't enter her straight away. Instead he kissed her and with each dip of his tongue into her mouth, he sank her down, inch by measured inch, but not all the way.

“You're a snug fit, Ms. Jones,” he rumbled against her mouth. “I'll take it slow.”

She didn't attempt an answer because she was too far gone to

say anything useful. Jake lifted her free, lowered her again, held steady for a second before settling into shallow slides—each drop putting him further inside her body. And when she thought there was nothing left to fill, he found more. Backing her up against the bookshelf, he set his blue eyes on hers and Ophelia saw the lust—an emotion she hadn’t expected. Not for *her*, the girl with the ripped tights and baggy sweater and pathetic sex résumé.

He knew her confusion because he smiled softly. “Have confidence, little one.”

To prove her confidence, Ophelia spread her arms out, grasped the edges of the shelf and pushed herself forward in offering. She felt her body being peeled back as he thrust to the end of her.

“Nicely done, girl.”

Ophelia didn’t know whether she should thank him for the compliment. He surged into her, every weighty slide sending books flying from the rocking shelves. Ophelia was too close to climax to care about the wreckage to her precious books, let alone stop. As she met his grinding drives with her own frenzied movements, her muscles gripped the enormous slippery heat plundering her body. Her orgasm exploded, hips jerking uncontrollably as she traversed each spasm on loud, reckless cries, squeezing as hard as she could when she felt the throb of him join her in ecstasy.

Finally he stopped. Ophelia let go of the shelf to place her hands on his shoulders, expecting to be put down, but he continued to hold her.

“Sorry about your tights.”

Ophelia flopped against him. “I’m more worried what the librarian will think about the mess.”

He continued to thrust lazily into her as though nowhere near finished. “She’ll figure it out, Ms. Jones. You haven’t found your red book.”

Ophelia gripped the heat inside her, nowhere near finished herself. “I’ll have to keep looking.”

Another shunt. "I'd advise that."

Nestled in the warmth of his coat while he stroked, she allowed herself to think that this was right. Not exactly proper but definitely right. But as his movements quickened, her conscience drifted into focus. Later he would be doing this with Lily and then with Candice.

Oh dear God, what had she done?

Dropping her legs from his waist, she leaned out from his chest. "Put me down."

Calmly he lifted her free to set her on the floor, even supporting her when she stumbled on jelly legs. In silence she dressed, retrieved her glasses from the floor and tried not to look at him removing the condom and tucking himself back in his pants. What did someone say in a situation like this? Nothing. Just start walking and ignore the fact that you want him again.

He caught up to her as she gathered up her laptop, coat and bag. "This has to continue, Ms. Jones. What's your number?"

Looking up into his eyes, she saw no guilt, no remorse. He couldn't have cared less about Lily. "You can't be serious."

"It was good sex but there's more to explore."

Ophelia zipped her backpack. "It shouldn't have happened."

"I disagree. It's obvious you need instruction."

The insult made it easier to insult him back. "Not from you, you jerk."

His expression barely acknowledged the insult. "I gave you the opportunity to walk away. Admit it, you loved every inch." He moved closer. "But before I take you next time, I promise to put you over my knee. You need to learn how to behave with a man."

Ophelia, nose in the air, got high on her horse. "Sir, I presume that's a joke?"

He smiled darkly and Ophelia felt like she'd said something indecent.

"When it comes to discipline, Ms. Jones, I never joke. Tomorrow night's good for me."

“You dirtbag!” The sound cracked the air like a whip. “How you ever became a lawyer is beyond me.”

His features took on a dangerous edge but, in her anger, she hardly noticed. “And as for your phone sex, I should report you to the Bar Association for immoral behavior.”

Ophelia had no time to make her big exit as he spun her around to bend her face first over the table. She felt him looming over her, felt his hand holding her down while the other dragged her tights and panties away. A hard smack to her bare butt had Ophelia crying out as tongues of heat flowed to every erogenous zone in her quaking body. An exhilaration she’d never have believed possible if she hadn’t felt it firsthand.

“Please,” she sobbed, ashamed at herself but helpless to suppress the high.

His weight shifted. Ophelia braced for his next slap, confused that she wanted the pain. Instead he leaned down to breathe hot in her ear while yanking up her tights. “This is what I mean by instruction, brat.” Releasing her, he moved back. “Now go home to your safe little bed and think of me when you fuck your vibrator.”

The man was a depraved brute.

On wobbly legs, Ophelia took her things and started for the door, pausing halfway to adjust her sagging tights. Despite her humiliation and the sting of her smarting ass, she managed to fire a parting shot, although it wasn’t much of one. “Stay out of my library. It’s for real lawyers.”

Taking the stairs, she was one floor down when she sat on a step to let the tears flow. She’d had sex with her best friend’s boyfriend. Jake, being the cheater that he was, wouldn’t tell. It didn’t matter because she blamed herself.

Ophelia speed-dialed Lily but ended the call before it connected. Her betrayal had to be delivered in person.

She texted *cu tmw*.