

Chapter One

‘Would you relax?’

‘No.’

‘Ask a stupid question,’ Flick muttered to herself, and then she pushed her shoulders back against the poolside chair, to tilt her chin toward the blazing sun. Except that action only made Rushe’s eyes narrow further. She opted to ignore him.

‘You’re doing that on purpose,’ he growled. ‘We’re all aware of your tits; you don’t have to put them on show.’

‘Rushe, Baby, I love you, but we came out to the pool to relax.’

‘No, Kitten,’ he said. ‘You came here to relax.’

‘You didn’t have to come with me.’

‘You’re wearing a bikini,’ he said, as though it required no further explanation, and actually... it didn’t.

‘If you thought I was the type to run around on you then you’d have dumped me three months ago. You’d have walked out of my studio apartment with Jansen, and I wouldn’t have seen you for dust.’

‘If I thought you were that type, I’d have chained you to the wall weeks ago.’

‘You have... once or twice.’ Her oversized shades concealed her eyes but Flick let her head roll toward him anyway. ‘You could’ve at least brought a bathing suit... do you own a bathing suit?’

‘We didn’t come here to swim. We came here ‘cause you enjoy baiting me.’

‘You didn’t have to—’

‘You’re wearing a bikini.’

Flick brought herself upright while twisting her feet off the reclined chair. Their pool chairs were parallel to each other, and there had to be forty similar loungers all around the glistening outdoor pool. But when she tried to glare Flick was distracted by those burning eyes. Rushe had gone so far as to remove his tee-shirt, which gave Flick an up close reminder of his possession of her, of how his body lured hers.

‘You’re here to protect my virtue from other sexual predators.’ Rushe did his own sexual stalking of her on a daily basis. ‘But when you look at me like that... I’m the only person here.’

‘I’m looking at you,’ he said. ‘But I’m aware of exactly where the other thirty-seven men are.’

‘You counted them,’ she sighed. ‘Of course you counted them. There must be fifty women here.’

‘That I hadn’t noticed.’

Rushe never tried to romance her. Sweet nothings definitely did not feature in Rushe’s repertoire of skills. But he could charm her, though usually it was unintentional.

‘I’m going to get something to drink,’ Flick said, sashaying away from their seats without giving him a chance to retort.

Rushe was right that there were many other people here. Flick had to weave through various groups to reach her aim. As she progressed, the one constant she was most conscious of was Rushe’s eyes burning into her spine. His stare was so intense, and already Flick knew it so well, that being protected by his gaze was second nature to her.

At the refreshment stand, she ordered for herself, and for Rushe too. The vendor disappeared to fill the order, so Flick drummed her fingernails on the counter.

‘Let me buy that for you.’

Flick didn’t want to turn around. She didn’t want to give face to the words because there was one thing she knew for sure – the speaker hadn’t been Rushe.

‘No, thanks,’ Flick said, leaning over the counter in hope to see the vendor return with the drinks, but he was nowhere in sight.

‘A beautiful thing like you shouldn’t be buying her own drinks.’

‘I’m not,’ Flick said. ‘My boyfriend opened a tab when we arrived.’

‘Is that your standard response? You must get hit on a lot.’

‘Not so much recently, if I’m honest.’

These days Flick was aware of when she drew men’s attention, partly because her more recently found vigilance made her look around, also because when men looked at her Rushe went on high alert.

‘I’ll change that if you turn around and talk to me,’ he said.

‘No, actually, that’s not a good idea.’

‘What do you mean—’

‘Problem?’

And Flick knew they definitely had one now. ‘No problem,’ Flick said.

‘I wasn’t asking you,’ Rushe said.

Flick spun to see Rushe bearing over the man who had spoken to her. ‘Said boyfriend,’ Flick said by way of explanation. ‘I did try to warn you.’

Rushe hadn’t been having fun, but now he had a hapless victim in his sights. He would remind Flick that it was impossible to be a hundred percent sure what someone’s intentions were. This guy didn’t pose an obvious threat, but Rushe had been bored and now he had sport.

Flick knew this couldn’t end well; at least it couldn’t end well for the guy who didn’t have a shred of a tan left. Likely, his pallor had more to do with the invisible pressure Rushe exerted than the lack of sunlight.

‘Maybe we should go,’ Flick said. Though her words were vague, the intent of her intonation was to convey how adamant she really was.

‘You’re having fun,’ Rushe said, without taking his attention from the shrinking man.

‘I was having fun,’ Flick said, although sitting by the pool with Rushe hadn’t been fun so much as foreplay.

Rushe was commanding in the bedroom at the best of times. But subtle actions on her part could push him closer to the edge. Rushe was a man who took what he wanted, when he wanted it, and Flick didn’t make a habit of refusing him. In fact, she could count on one hand the number of times that she had.

The stranger spoke up, ‘Man, I didn’t mean anything by it, she’s a good looking woman and—’

‘Trust me, you’re only making things worse,’ Flick said, coiling her fingers around Rushe’s wrist. ‘I want to go home now.’

‘I’m busy,’ Rushe grumbled in that way when his lips didn’t move.

‘Ignore him, he intimidates for a living,’ Flick said.

Rushe didn’t say anything but the guy shrank even further back, so Flick dug her nails into Rushe’s skin.

‘He’s good at it,’ the guy stuttered.

‘I want to have sex,’ Flick said.

‘I don’t,’ Rushe replied.

‘Yes, you do. You’re just being ornery.’

‘And you’re trying to distract me.’

‘Even so,’ Flick said. ‘You get sex out of the deal.’

‘If I want sex, I get sex. I say when.’

Rushe knew how to take control, and he liked to imply that sex was for his pleasure above all else. But when his pleasure came from controlling her orgasms time and again, Flick was at ease with the illusion.

‘I want sex now, and if you won’t supply...’ Flick released his wrist but she didn’t get two inches away before Rushe’s hand snapped up to seize her wrist.

‘You want me to hurt people?’

‘No,’ Flick said. ‘Hurting them is your choice. All I’m looking for is a little attention... topless sunbathing is allowed around here, isn’t it?’

Rushe’s growl wasn’t audible but Flick felt it all the same. Her smile spread when she knew she’d achieved her goal.

‘I’ll get the car.’

He turned and hooked her hand into his back jeans pocket. Flick bestowed her smile briefly on Rushe’s stricken almost-victim, then trotted along behind. From the strength and the breadth of his gait, Flick knew Rushe was sufficiently tormented to make every second of their next joining count.

No one would miss how dangerous Rushe was. Flick’s own first encounter with him was in voice only; she hadn’t seen his face. The deep resonance of his tone had made her stop and take notice. It was just a shame that she hadn’t heeded the instruction those words of his were giving her. Except if she had, Flick wouldn’t be with him now.

Walking into that bar, in spite of Rushe’s warning, had thrown Flick into the path of criminal depravity. But when Flick had thought her safety lost, Rushe stepped in to protect her. Until it was safe to free her from the criminals’ hideout, Rushe had kept her under his wing, and then when the time was right he cast her out. His harsh behaviour had saved her life, except the evil brought her back, twice. Each time Rushe protected her, to his own detriment, until...

Together they’d fallen in love, and at the penultimate play, they’d confessed their feelings. The truth was revealed when there was no way out; their lives were to be taken from them.

To this day Flick wasn’t sure how they’d triumphed, the odds had been against them. But liberating Rushe from his confines had ensured that she and Jansen, the undercover cop working with her, would win the day.

With most of the criminals vanquished and the others behind bars, Flick had a choice. She could remain in her mediocre life, with a sub-par job, without friends to trust, and estranged from her family, or she could be with the man she loved.

Flick was under no illusions, Rushe was a man with a chequered past, a vagrant lifestyle, and some serious trust issues. He wasn’t on any system; the system had failed him from almost the moment he was born. He’d never known who his parents were, he’d never had family, and he’d always relied on himself.

One tragic episode in Rushe’s pre-teen years had shaped everything about him. A woman he’d barely known was tortured and killed, and though Rushe had witnessed the perpetrators carry the woman away, he had been powerless to stop them.

To look at the man he was now it was difficult to believe he could ever be powerless, but he’d spent his life ensuring that he never would be again.

Flick stretched her toes in her sandals and wiggled them while trying to peek at the solid form of Rushe in the driver’s seat. He hadn’t said a word since he’d powered out of the pool parking lot. But they were nearly home now, and Flick struggled to keep her eager anticipation in check.

During the mission that brought her and Rushe together, Flick had been held for ransom. Though no one had known it at the time, Rushe had been the one to pay the demanded amount. Through the course of events, the truth was exposed. Beyond that point Flick was

aware that Rushe had money. He'd told her that the job paid well but Flick hadn't known exactly what that meant.

His bank balance was healthy, but he lived modestly. His car wasn't new and while his apartment complex was respectable, he had the financial means to secure better.

When Flick had queried the abode, Rushe had told her to spend what she wanted because he didn't care where they lived. Flick hadn't wanted different, she just wanted to understand why a boy raised with nothing wouldn't take full advantage of the means he now had. But his response had broken her heart.

'It doesn't pay to get attached to anything,' he had said. 'Attachment is another word for weakness.'

Men like him didn't get attached. No matter how many times Rushe had said those words to her, he hadn't been able to resist their bond. Once, Rushe had told her he resented their love. Flick knew he didn't mean it. The contempt wasn't resentment, it was fear, and men like Rushe didn't experience fear.

Having her, accepting their union, was a risk for Rushe, and he tried to minimise those. Now that they had each other, Rushe's emotional issues flared up. He feared trusting her, and he feared trusting their feelings for each other because losing her, or letting her down, was his biggest burden.

Pressing a button on the dash made the shutters for the underground parking area open. Rushe drove down the ramp and parked up in their usual place.

'So, Lover,' Flick said into the ether. 'What now?'

'Sex.'

There was the monosyllabic man she loved so dearly. Rushe slammed out of the car and Flick took her time about unfastening her seatbelt because just as she predicted her side door was wrenched open and he hauled her out without ceremony.

Dragging her to the elevator, the doors opened to grant entry as soon as Rushe pressed the call button, as though the carriage was intimidated by Rushe's mood too. A few seconds later, a ding declared them on their floor and he proceeded to pull her down the hall to their door.

The apartment was spacious, with half the external wall made up of windows from the ceiling down. To the left upon entering was a solid partition, hiding the otherwise open-plan kitchen from the rest of the living space.

Dragging her past the dividing kitchen countertop, Rushe took her straight to the alcove hallway, which contained the doors to the family bathroom and bedrooms, though the second bedroom was presently half study, half gym. He hung a right to take her into their large square bedroom, housed in the corner of the property. They had a wall of built in storage and on the other side of their bed was the entrance to their shower room.

Now that they were in the bedroom Rushe relaxed, and with a generous nudge, Flick stumbled onto the bed. Before she could correct her position, Rushe took hold of her hips to pull them up, presenting her rear for his delectation.

His grunt of satisfaction made Flick smile and while his hand skimmed her curves, she straightened her arms to prop herself up on all fours. Describing Rushe's skills as a lover never did them justice. Flick knew it was true when Rushe told her that she was the only woman he'd made love to in his entire life. This was a man who didn't do soft, but Flick had been patient and it had paid dividends.

Rushe's fingers stayed over her bathing suit but they advanced downward, between her legs, until they found her opening. With slight pressure, he began to circle it.

'You think you're smart, don't you, Kitten? You think you're a bad girl, you think you're tough... Playing games with me is dangerous, Kitten, very dangerous.'

Curling one finger around the crotch of her suit, he pulled it aside. Two fingers plunged inside and on instinct Flick pushed back to meet them.

‘Oh,’ Rushe said with that dry, sinister amusement he utilised so well. ‘I know you like that, Kitten. I know just what you want. You’re my horny little slut, pleasure on demand, that’s what you are to me...’

His fingers came out of her, but the bite of her disappointment didn’t have time to manifest itself fully because Rushe dragged her suit down to expose her rear. He took it down her thighs, just enough to reveal her most intimate area, then he stopped, everything stopped.

‘Are you going to fuck me?’ Flick asked.

‘Maybe.’

‘Maybe?’

She hadn’t meant to sound quite so indignant, but his heavy hand smacked her ass in immediate retribution.

‘You been screwing around?’

‘What?’ she barked, completely flabbergasted by the bizarre question.

‘Your little boyfriend might like the attitude but don’t forget your place here. You get it when I give it, and you’ll be grateful for it.’

She always was. Flick would never have imagined her life looking like this. She could never have imagined playing their games, and she had no idea that she’d enjoy it so much.

‘Up.’

Flick darted off the bed, tugged up her suit, and got onto her feet, finding herself up close to the bearer of those arousing words.

‘You got something to say?’ he asked.

‘Sorry,’ Flick said, his head tilted a few degrees. ‘Sorry, sir.’

‘Strip.’

Flick was almost as close to naked as one could get without going all the way. But she did as she was told, taking careful time to untie each knot, the one behind her neck, the one on her left hip...

Rushe bared his teeth in familiar frustration. Rushe gave the commands but Flick held the power; she was in control. He didn’t give her the opportunity to reach the next knot. His muscular arm came around her waist, and her body was hauled up against his.

Devouring her with an all-encompassing kiss, Flick took a few seconds to register his damp lips pressing to hers, and the touch of his tongue as it invaded her mouth.

When they’d met, Rushe hadn’t been a kisser. That had changed after they made love for the first time. Tossing her arms up around his neck, Flick prepared for their tongues to battle it out a while.

So when on the next breath Rushe thrust her body away from his, Flick again was left reeling. Rushe certainly was a subscriber to the adage that variety was the spice of life.

‘Let’s see those cans.’

Rushe loved her breasts; then again, he seemed to love every part of her.

Twisting her arms around to her back, Flick untied the top and let it flutter to the floor. Rushe said nothing. His eyes gobbled her breasts as though this was their first encounter.

Rushe didn’t have to move closer, he lifted his arms and cupped a breast in each hand, testing their weight, their texture, their responsiveness. Flick had never been a fan of the large breasts that dominated her meagre five three stature... not until Rushe laid his eyes, and his hands, on them.

‘You’ve got a body made for sin, whore,’ Rushe said, rolling her nipples then caressing their very tips in the way he knew drove her wild.

‘Rushe,’ she sighed, relaxing into his hold.

‘You talk when I tell you to.’

Flick could only nod, her eyes closed and she anticipated his mouth. Rushe could torment her for hours playing with her breasts, with her figure, in the entitlement he had, and she wanted him to have, over her body and her pleasure.

‘Naked.’

With his one stern word, Flick untied the last knot and she was finally bare.

‘Just my insignificant plaything.’

Flick’s eyes remained closed, but she identified the wonder in his voice. Each of them lived in awe of the other, in amazement that they would choose to love and live with each other, and it made them both grateful.

‘Can I...’ Flick opened her eyes to his and moved her hand slightly toward his fly, but Rushe shook his head.

‘On your knees.’

A shimmer of arousal drifted through her, he absorbed that subtle reaction, and Flick recognised his expression of knowing. Rushe hadn’t bothered to put his tee-shirt back on; it still hung tucked in at the back of his jeans. At this proximity to his sculpted form, Flick wanted to touch it, to taste, but he’d just given her implicit access to his most valuable asset... or the physical one she valued the most in moments like this anyway.

Taking his order, Flick lowered to her knees while keeping her attention trained on his eyes. Sometimes she was meant to retrieve him, and sometimes he took the lead. Flick awaited further instruction and after eight seconds, his hand moved to the top of her head.

‘You like to show off your stacked little body, Kitten. You like playing with me; you think you can push my buttons? Speak.’

‘No,’ Flick said, and though he appeared ready to retort he was momentarily distracted by her tongue moistening her lips.

‘You lying to me? Are you allowed to do that? Speak.’

‘No.’

‘You think you can push my buttons?’

Either her lungs had shrunk or the air in here was thinning, because Flick’s chest pulsed with the shallow breaths that were all she could muster.

‘Yes.’

Flick was right but Rushe didn’t acknowledge it. Unbuckling his belt now, she sucked her lips in around her teeth ready to consume him. Like a starving animal, she shuffled forward a few inches and his action stalled.

‘You dirty, little, skank,’ Rushe muttered, and with a tug he unfastened all of the buttons on his jeans.

Running his fingers through her hair from forehead to crown, he coiled them into a tight fist.

‘You want it?’ he asked. ‘You wanna suck on my cock? Do you? Speak.’

‘Yes.’

‘You hungry for it? You gonna suck the spunk from my balls? You want it? Speak.’

‘Yes.’

On that syllable, he parted his jeans to liberate the heavy organ. It jutted up, hard, long, and insistent. As daunting as the sight was Flick knew not to fear it. Over the last few months, her technique had improved and Rushe had no issue with her getting in as much practise as she wanted.

Bringing her head toward his groin Rushe shifted forward a step, and taking himself in his other hand, he touched the tip of his bulging head to her lips. Flick didn’t react.

‘You’re my whore, open.’

Unlocking her jaw Flick let her sticky lips part. While pushing her head toward him Rushe propelled forward until the blunt top of his penis met the back of her throat.

Sliding back again Rushe painted her lips with his pre-seed and urged himself into her cheek, undulating back and forth giving her a reminder of his mass. Flick tried to reposition her head to direct him to the back of her mouth again, but Rushe’s grip in her hair bit deeper and he held her in position.

‘You’re a greedy little slut,’ Rushe grumbled. ‘This isn’t for your pleasure.’

Next he impelled himself into her throat, which caught Flick off guard and she didn’t have the time to inhale. Rushe held for a couple of seconds then moved out and back in, he stretched the confines of her throat, half a dozen times, each advance slower than the last.

Retreating, he left her mouth entirely and he bumped her aside. The taste of him on her lips made Flick crave more; she leaned against the edge of the mattress and tucked her feet underneath herself.

Rushe sat on the edge of the bed to unlace his boots, as if he had all the time in the world, his denim clad thigh was only a few inches from her head.

‘Rushe,’ Flick sighed rolling her cheek onto the bed to face his direction.

‘You like it when I fuck that sweet little mouth of yours; you get what I give you. It’s not feeding time yet.’

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