

SOPHIE'S TREAT: A HALLOWEEN ROMANCE

New Orleans native Sophie LaCroix heads to NYC for a sexy Halloween party with her 'bud,' Paul Wilkins in tow. Both are theatre majors at the Yale Drama School, so once in costume, they're different people. Not Sophie and Paul—but the seductive 'Mississippi Gambler' Colonel Bartholomew W. Davis and 'Bourbon Street Madam' Lady Tiffany.

What's the story with The Colonel's seductive ways? Is he just trying to rattle Sophie so much she breaks character? Could he actually be trying to get her into bed? Or is there *love* in the air?

Add a sexy Catwoman and three naughty witches. Stir the cauldron and cast a spell.

'Double, double, call me honey, lick my ____, and ____ my ____!'

Could it all be a trick that leads to a romantic treat?

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About the author.

Jane Colt is the pen name of a successful nonfiction author who is excited to be transitioning to erotic fiction. She writes fun, upbeat stories. No dark, brooding, broken, tortured guys who need fixing. Just great, handsome, smart, sexy 'real men' whose only weakness is being unable to resist the women she pairs them with. Think Hallmark romance movies plus hot sex! Jane is married and lives in Massachusetts with her husband and two cats. For information on her writings, see www.janecolt.com.



A HALLOWEEN
ROMANCE

SOPHIE'S TREAT

by
Jane Colt

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Chapter 1: SETTING THE STAGE

“Come on, it’ll be fun.” Sophie gave her handsome companion a playful squeeze as they walked through the Green after Improv class. The afternoon sunlight of the glorious New England fall day made everything look golden. “And I don’t want to go alone.”

Paul looked at her with mock astonishment. “Seriously? *Sophie*, my kick-ass buddy needs a *baby sitter*? The girl who had the nerve to tell a world-famous Shakespeare scholar in front of our entire class yesterday that he knows ‘*squat*’ about *The Tempest*—that girl is a-s-c-a-r-e-d to go to New York by herself on Halloween? Is u afwaid of the big bad New Yowk city gobwins?” he teased.

The pretty, auburn-haired 25-year old walking beside him punched him in the arm. “No, jerk face. I just don’t like trying to figure out the subway. Every other time I’ve gone in, it’s been with someone who knows their way around. You may have grown up in Manhattan and think of the subway as a playground. But the New Orleans system isn’t nearly as confusing. We have streetcars, not subways. We believe in a more *genteel* form of public transportation. It’s part of our Big Easy charm.” She batted her eyelashes in exaggerated fashion. “Come on, Paul. We’re pals. I don’t want to get lost. I’ll feel safer if you were with me.

“And as long as you brought up what happened in class, I’m still mad that you didn’t stop me. How was I supposed to know the ‘John Smith’ who wrote the book we were discussing—the John Smith from the University of *Iowa*—is now at Yale and was teaching our class? His picture wasn’t on the book and ‘John Smith’ is such a common name. Wouldn’t you have to be really

vain to have your students buy your own book? You were sitting right beside me. Letting me look stupid was *so* not cool!” She punched him again—hard.

“Hey! Cut that out!” He swatted her on the behind.

She pretended to look offended. She stuck out her ass defiantly. “You may look, but not touch, young man.” He spanked her again. She frowned.

“First, you didn’t look stupid at all. You may not have known that *our* Smith was *the book’s* Smith, but it took guts to challenge the prof so directly.” He put his arm around his cute friend and pulled her against him as they walked along. “You’re right. I should have said something. I’m sorry. But the whole class was having such a good time watching you—wondering what Smith was going to do—that I couldn’t deprive them of such first-class entertainment. It really was fun. Smith turned out to be OK with it. And, hey, I *did* eventually bail you out, which you haven’t thanked me for yet.”

Sophie’s look said, *I’m not buying it, Buster*. “And what was that explanation? ‘Excuse me, Professor Smith, but Miss LaCroix appears to be experiencing a case of the vapors. It’s endemic to her hometown, New Orleans. I’ve seen this hit her before. I’ll take her to the Infirmary after class.’”

He chuckled. “Come on, Soph. Everybody knew I was trying to give both of you a graceful exit. Smith got a good laugh and let you off the hook. Besides, it’s too beautiful a fall day for you to be mad at me. You know how much you love this weather.”

The couple crossed the leaf filled lawn enjoying the late October chill. It had been a spectacularly colorful autumn in Connecticut. Most of the red and gold foliage that had adorned

the many trees that dotted the campus were now on the ground. Because this was only Sophie's third autumn in the northeast, any time she saw a decent pile of leaves, she'd change her path so she could walk through them.

"Oooo!" she squealed, spotting another pile. Swish. Swish. Swish. The unique, crinkling sound of leather against leaf fascinated her. She could never get enough.

"We call those '*leaves*,' Miss LaCroix, '*leaves*.'" Her tall friend teased.

"Very funny. Fall is just so different here. I love it!"

He smiled warmly at her unbridled joy. "So, tell me again why you want me to go to the City with you?"

The couple turned onto Chapel Street and headed towards Starbucks.

"My friend Nathalie's having a Halloween party. She's a grad student at Columbia. We were besties in college, and we promised to stay in touch. We Skype and text all the time. She'll be crushed if I don't go."

"And I should want to go ... *why*?"

Sophie took Paul's arm, sidled up against him, and rested her head on his shoulder. She adopted a breathy Louisiana accent, fluttered her eyelashes, and in an instant became a Bourbon Street seductress. "Aside from telling everyone how helpful, generous, handsome, strong, and"—she nibbled his earlobe—"sexy you are, I'll be *ever so grateful*, kind sir."

Paul shivered, then laughed at how quickly she took on the character. "Look, Sophie, if we were friends-with-benefits and you were promising me hot sex in exchange, sweet talk might

work. But we aren't, so you'd better try another approach. And you can drop the Southern Belle act. We've been in the same theatre classes for the last three years. I know you worked like crazy to lose that accent so you can be a professional actress. The only time you pull it out is to get something. Let me see. Like when some newly arrived, cute, helpless 'Lou-zee-ana' debutante wanted a manly man to carry a refrigerator from her car to her dorm room—and 'forgot' to mention it was up three flights of stairs?"

"Awww. That's sweet." She gave his arm a squeeze. Keeping the accent but ignoring the comment about when they met on move-in day. "You think I'm *cute*. You've never told me that before. Mercy me. I feel the *vapors* coming on again."

Stopping and facing her, he took the two ends of her red scarf and pretended to strangle her with it. "I've *also* never told you what a pain in the ass you can be."

"OK, OK." She went back to her normal voice, as they reached their destination. "How about this? Nathalie's invited a bunch of girls from her dorm who recently escaped from all-women's colleges. So they're *good to go, nudge, nudge, wink wink*, if you know what I mean."

"*Good to go, nudge, nudge, wink wink*? Is that some sort of code?" he laughed as they both ordered pumpkin lattes.

"Alright, if I have to be blunt about it. If you come with me, there's a good chance you'll get laid. Theatre girls new to the Big Apple ...with racing hormones ... wearing sexy Halloween costumes ...drinking more than they should...looking to hook up with some sophisticated New York City guy!

“I’m not making any guarantees. But the way Nathalie talks about how horny they are, *even you* should be able to nail one of them. And I’ll help. I’ll be your wingman ...*wing-girl* ...or whatever it is. I swear.” She playfully held up her hand as she sat down at the marble topped counter.

“*Even me?*” He sat beside her and gave her a playful shove. “Wow, you really know how to make a guy feel good when you’re asking a favor.” He paused, took her hand, looked deep into her eyes, and lowered his voice so it was deep and sexy. “I’ll tell you what, sweetheart. I’ll attend this soiree if you guarantee that if I strike out, it’ll be you and me”—he kissed her neck—“*making magic.*”

Sophie froze for a moment as Paul’s voice rumbled through her and ignited a spark deep inside. *Whoa! What was that?* Then it hit her that he was *acting*. She burst out laughing. “You and me? *Making magic?*” She snorted so hard she nearly knocked her coffee cup onto the floor.

She stopped as soon as she saw the hurt on her companion’s face. “I’m sorry, Sweetie. I didn’t mean it like that.” She touched his cheek softly, confused by his reaction. “But you being all ‘Mr. Sexy Pants’ with me was so *not-you*, I was sure you were just trying to crack me up. You *know* I think you’re a great guy and a good friend. And OK, we both want to sow some wild oats while we’re in grad school. But I don’t think either one of us should be just a stalk in one another’s sheaf of wheat.”

Now it was Paul’s turn to hoot. “*A stalk in one another’s sheaf of wheat?* Sophie, your metaphors are terrible? It’s a good thing you want to be an actress, not a writer. Look, I wasn’t propositioning you. I was just messing around. I’m working on a character for a play I want to be

in next spring. But you didn't have to laugh *quite* so hard. Don't worry about it. We're good. *Of course* I'll go to the party with you."

"Thanks. I knew I could count on you." She flashed a grateful smile and gave him a big hug.

"So, what's the plan? If it's a good party, we don't want to take the train back that night. Can we crash somewhere? Can Nathalie handle us? I mean," going back to his sexy voice, "Can Nathalie look after pure, virginal *you* while some sexy French maid is *nudge, nudge, wink wink, polishing my furniture?*"

Sophie threw her hands up in mock astonishment.

"What is it with guys and the whole French maid thing? Strippers, I get. Naked flesh. But isn't *sex* enough? Do you need someone to *clean* something for you to get *really* turned on?"

She took a paper napkin out of the holder and breathed sensuously on the white marble surface. Placing her cheek on the stone, she slowly caressing it as though it were her lover and quietly moaned. Looking at Paul, she switched to a French accent, and asked darkly, "Eez this zee zort ov thing you men can't ré-zist, Monsieur? Ahm I making you yearn to be ... *dusted?* Shall I *polish* you"—she rubbed back and forth on the marble—"until you are ... *satisfied?*"

Paul took some foam from his latté and put in on the tip of her nose. "Make fun of us all you want. But *you girls* are the ones who can't wait to get into those sexy Halloween costumes in the first place. Us guys just appreciate the scenery."

Wiping the foam from her face, she wagged her finger at her companion. "And speaking of costumes, this is a *real* costume party. So no embarrassing me. Or I won't steer any of that delectable theatre-girl heinie your way."

“Not to worry. I’ve got a few days to figure something out.” He looked at his watch and got up to leave. “You should know from our last production that I’m ‘costume guy.’ My outfit will be so good, I promise you won’t even know it’s me. So, do we have a place to crash?”

“Absolutely. My friends Paulette and Mark, who go to Columbia Law, have an apartment in married student housing. They’ll be out of town for the weekend, and they’re letting me use their place. We’re all from New Orleans, so whenever I’m homesick, they let me hang out with them. Their place is decorated to remind them of Bourbon Street. There’s plenty of space for both of us.... A friend of Nathalie’s is letting her have the party in her apartment on Riverside Drive and 115th. Mark and Paulette’s place is on Broadway and 112th. We won’t have far to go when we’re done.”

“Great. Text me any details I need to know. I’ve got to get to rehearsal. And so, m’lady,” Paul said formally, shifting into a British accent as he got up, “I must take my leave.” Then he gave Sophie his best, sweeping bow. “The *thee-a-ta*, like the Sirens unto Odysseus, call my name. I am powerless to resist.”

“Oh, thanks!” Sophie pretended to remember something important and pulled out her phone. “Siri, remind me to buy some *bacon*.” Looking at Paul, she gave him a silly smile and batted her eyelashes coquettishly.

Her friend gave her a puzzled look. “Was that supposed to be a joke?”

“I don’t know. Was that supposed to be acting?”

“In the immortal words of The Bard, *Hmmmpf!*” He turned dramatically on his heels and strode out the door.

Sophie watched her tall, dark-haired ‘bud’ as he walked across the lawn towards the theater. She admired how good his behind looked in his tight, faded blue jeans.

Has Paul’s ass always looked that good, or have I just never noticed? And speaking of asses, why did I like it when he spanked me? That was a troubling surprise. Has it been that long since a man’s hands have been on my ass that I like it even when Paul touches me? Wow! The last time was the guy in Much Ado. He played Benedict to my Beatrice. We fought all day on stage and screwed all night. OK. Much too long.

“Hey, Siri. Remind me to get laid.”

Her phone responded cheerfully. “OK. I’ve added ‘Get Laid’!”

The other people at the counter looked in her direction and chuckled.

She clapped her hand over her mouth. *Did I really say that out loud?*

She looked up and noticed Paul again in the distance. *Hmmm. What was with that “if I don’t score, how about you and me?” That’s the first time that’s ever come up—even kidding. Oh my God! Is he possible he **wasn’t** kidding? No, he said he was trying out a character. We’re still good. That’s the trouble with actors. You never know when they’re being themselves or doing a bit.* [The alarm on her phone chimes.] *Shit! I’m going to be late for class.*

She jumped up, grabbed her backpack, and rushed out the door. Looking ahead, she saw Paul in the distance. Then she noticed two girls walking about 20 yards behind him. The pair were giggling and making comments to each other. They were clearly admiring his derriere. But more than that, their hand gestures and naughty glances back and forth revealed they were speculating about the dimensions of another part of Paul’s body.

Sophie shot the pair a warning glare, even though she knew they couldn't see her. *Hey! Hands off, sluts!* Then she stopped in her tracks. *Why did I just say that? I should be happy a couple of babes are scoping out my bud. The vapors. Definitely, the vapors again.*

She laughed at herself as she looked at her watch and sped up.

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After confirming everything with Nathalie and Paulette, Sophie texted instructions to Paul.

–meet sat noon my place. going early 2 help n. taxi 2 train station. b sure 2 bring costume.

–k

At noon on Halloween, the couple met in front of Sophie's and climbed into a taxi. Each had a conspicuously large garment bag. In a flash, they were at the station and on the train.

“Thanks for heading in early, Paul. I really appreciate it. Nathalie asked me to help her get everything ready. I knew you wouldn't mind.”

“Of course not.” Paul pointed to her white garment bag that said *Creole Costumes* on it. “So, who will Miss Sophie LaCroix transform into tonight?”

“It's a secret and a surprise. All I can say is I hope you have a lobster bib with you.”

Paul shot her a puzzled expression “Lobster bib? Let's see. *Seafood?*” Glancing back at the garment bag, “You're going as a creole crustacean!”

Sophie punched him on the arm as he laughed. “And I'll keep doing this until I get a decent answer. Why do you wear a lobster bib when you eat lobster?”

“OK, OK, you want a serious answer. I wear a lobster bib to keep my shirt from getting stained.” He struck a pose pretending to be deep in thought. “Eureka! A French maid who will be sure to keep me clean!”

She punched him even harder. “You and your French maid! *No Bozo!* You—and every other guy at the party—will need lobster bibs because you’re going to *drool* when you see me,” she said triumphantly.

“You know, Soph, I’ve told you that metaphors aren’t your strong suit. That was about as good as your *sheaf of wheat* one. People don’t *drool* when they eat lobsters. Babies drool. Lobster is *messy* to eat. So *French maid* still works with it. You sure I’m not going to meet Babette and her feather duster?”

Sophie tried to give Paul an angry look, but she knew exactly what he meant by her metaphors. Everyone teased her about that. So, putting her hands on her hips and turning his way, she said, “Mr. Wilkins, in my status as President of the Yale Drama School Board of Proper Ways to Think about Women and their Sexuality—which I’m creating right now—I think that you should take some time to think quietly about your Neanderthal-like approach to male-female relationships.

“Babette and her feather duster, indeed! When you think of women you’d like to be with, someone like *Madamme Curie* should come to mind, not some strumpet with cleaning utensils. You should be ashamed of yourself! Meanwhile, I’m going to read Shakespeare.” She pulled her iPad out of her backpack. “If I can finish *Lear* by the time we get to the City, I can play for the next couple of days.”

Paul responded with a hearty laugh. He thought Sophie's metaphors were cute. And he loved the incongruity between Sophie's Puritanical lecture and the slogan on her tight black t-shirt:

"Theatre girls do it in front of an audience!"

"I said *quietly*, Mr. Wilkins," she repeated somberly without even looking up at him—but smiling at the exchange a few seconds later.

Chapter 2: THE PLAYERS

Natalie, Sophie, and Paul worked furiously to give the apartment just the right feel for Halloween. With all of them being grad students, they were on a tight budget. But they did great with what little they had. Plenty of hand-carved Jack-O-Lanterns would give off just enough light to simulate dusk. A Halloween play list had scary sounds between each song. A big bowl of candy by the door was ready for any little kids who stopped by—and any of the big kids at the party.

The girls found Paul's contributions especially impressive. He'd bought a portable doorbell that let out a cackle whenever anyone pressed it. He also showed them how to use dry ice to make the punch bowl look like it was smoking.

Nathalie carried more refreshments to the dining room. Then she surveyed the food and drinks. "I think we're in good shape. Let's see. Solid carbs, liquid carbs, light liquid carbs, heavy duty liquid carbs. Great! Something for everyone. Now for the fun part. Costumes! Paul. You can change in the bedroom all the way down the hall. Sophie and I will get dressed in here."

As soon as the two best friends stepped into the room, Nathalie said excitedly, "OK, Soph, what kind of sex tease are you going to be this year? You had no competition last year. I'm *still* jealous at all the attention you got with that Vampire outfit. That *corset* drove the guys wild." She took off her light blue Columbia T-shirt and playfully threw it at Sophie. "So, I have serious weaponry this year. You'll see." She unhooked her bra and wriggled her jeans down off her hips.

Then just as she hooked her thumbs around the elastic to pull her panties off, Sophie said, “Wait a minute there, sweet cheeks! What does that say?”

Motioning to Nathalie that she should turn towards her, Sophie read out loud the words on the bright orange cloth. Below an embroidered black cat was “Halloween pussy loves to be petted.”

“You little slut, you! I love them! Where’d you get ‘em?”

“Online somewhere. I’ll check my browser history and let you know. They’re just a little something to get me in the mood.” Nathalie slid them off, bundled up all of her clothes and tossed everything into the corner of the bedroom.

Unable to resist the temptation, Sophie gave Nathalie’s nude bottom a friendly slap. “*Cute* costume, Nat. Definitely a winner for ‘Super Tramp.’ Let me guess. ‘Lady Godiva—without her horse—looking for a really *big*, really *wide* stallion to *ride* and *ride* and *ride*?’” For effect, she spanked the other cheek as well.

“Hey! Don’t bruise the merchandise.” Nathalie playfully rubbed both cheeks. “I want to keep these babies in tip top shape for tonight. I’m on the prowl.” Then she placed a big orange and black box on the bed. *The Pumpkin Palace* was emblazoned across the top. Opening it, she pulled out a black body suit. “Catwoman!” she yelled. Holding the dark cloth against her naked body, she posed like a superhero and dramatically flicked her long blonde ponytail back and forth.

Walking over and fingering the sensually soft—and sinfully thin—black fabric, Sophie said, “And I suppose going commando means that Catwoman’s superpowers will come from the *barely* obstructed view of her pokey peaks, cute cunny, and beauteous bum?”

Nathalie answered with a sexy wink. “I like to think of them as the secret to my hypnotic powers.”

“Trust me, sweet cheeks, nothing about you or your power is going to be *secret* in that number tonight.” Sophie added a naughty laugh.

Nathalie sat on the bed and began to inch the catsuit up her legs making sure the thin fabric didn’t tear, “So do you want to concede now about who ends up being Queen of Tarts, or shall we through the motions? What’d you bring? I can’t wait to see.”

“Nothing *at all* sexy this year.” Sophie struck a serious posture and adopted a businesslike tone. “In honor of my hometown, I went for understated nostalgia—I’m a nineteenth-century New Orleans business woman.”

She unzipped the garment bag and removed a spectacular, long, deep red gown. A similarly colored garter belt and thong. Stockings with a tiny fishnet pattern. And, finally, 5” glittering red stilettos and a matching mask.

Nathalie whistled in admiration. “‘New Orleans business woman,’ my ass. You mean ‘Mississippi Madam.’ Seriously, Soph. That’s beautiful! I’ve never seen a dress shimmer like that. Quick. Let’s get it on you. I’ve got to see this.”

The dress clearly was designed to drive a guy crazy.

It was a study in contrasts. Some features of the red gown suggested modesty. A long flowing skirt; long, tight sleeves that zipped at the wrist; covered shoulders.

But everything else said *sex*. The top fastened with a single covered button behind the neck, so that Sophie's back was completely bare to the waist. A V-neckline so wide and open that it barely covered Sophie's nipples as it dove dramatically to a point a couple of inches below the bottoms of her breasts—thus unveiling plenty of deliciously creamy skin. The zippered sleeve's cuffs were encrusted with rows of rhinestones, which also decorated a diamond-shaped cluster at the waist. The high-cut, off-center slit up the skirt exposed her fishnet wrapped legs, whose already sexy shape was accentuated by the lift of her heels. And a pair of 'fuck-me' stilettos kissed her appreciative feet. An elegant red mask covered her eyes and nose.

Between all the strategically placed sparkle and all the silky, alabaster skin, no man would be able to look anywhere but right at Sophie's cleavage.

"You look fantastic, Sophie! Sexy as hell. Where'd you get it?"

"You know my sister Martha? She's expanded her business. She's added costumes for Mardi Gras. She let me borrow this. I knew you were going to be loaded for bear, so I asked her to send up her sexiest creation. I can't wait to see Paul's reaction. He's never seen me in anything like this before."

"Speaking of Paul," Nathalie commented from the make-up table where she was drawing on her whiskers, "you've been talking a lot about him these days. Is something going on there? Are you guys doing the nasty? Or is the coast clear if I want to make a run at him?"

"Paul and me? *No! God*, no! No! Of course not! Paul and me? Are you kidding?"

Her answer shot out immediately, uncontrollably—and kept rattling on.

“I mean he’s a really nice guy and we’re buds and all, but that’s it. We’re just friends. Yeah, he’s free. You know me. I don’t want anything serious at this point.

“Are you interested in him? Really? You’ve never said anything about that before. But he’d be a great catch for you. Definitely go for it. You have my blessing. Not that you’d need my blessing because you’re a woman and he’s a man, and you’re free to do whatever you want and so is he. But I appreciate your asking me before you made a move on him because I’d do the same thing if I were in your shoes and I wanted to go after a guy you were friends with. You and Paul? I never thought of him as your type. I didn’t think you liked them that tall and all marathony. You always ogle guys with bulging biceps.

“Paul’s a great guy. Really helpful and dependable which is why he agreed to come with me because I wanted to come to the party—and wouldn’t have missed it for anything. I didn’t want to come down from New Haven alone, so I asked him to come as a favor. And he did. So he’s just the kind of nice guy you should go for.

“The two of you are great. I love both of you. So, yeah, you’d be great together. He deserves a great fuck. So do you. I don’t know how he is in bed, but I’d like to think ... But *no*, there’s nothing between us. So you definitely want to hit that.

“To be honest, however, the other day there was this odd, quasi-sexy moment between the two of us that made me wonder. Then I decided I was crazy. ‘Cause you know me. Solo Sophie. Single Sophie. OK, Skittish Sophie. So, no. There’s *absolutely nothing* going on between us. *Nothing. Nada.* If you’re interested in him, go for it.”

Nathalie crooked her head over her shoulder and gave her friend a bemused look. Her smirk turned into a giggle. Then she deadpanned, “I’m sorry. I didn’t quite get that. Was that a *yes* or a *no*?”

Sophie had to laugh at herself. She had no idea where that came from. If she’d heard someone else nervously blather off the same answer, she’d think *Bullshit, honey. You’ve got it so bad you don’t even know it.* But she and Paul were just friends.

It must have been Nathalie suggesting she was interested in him. That surprised me. I just wanted to dot the I’s and cross the T’s so there’d be no misunderstanding. So she wouldn’t feel nervous making a play for him in front of me. Yeah, that’s what it was.

“You want it clearer? OK. Fuck like bunnies. Right on the dining room table. I’ll even watch and do running commentary.” She picked up a hairbrush, pretended it was a microphone, and did her best sportscaster voice.

‘And we’re back, sex fans. During the commercial, our young couple stripped down, so you missed a very sexy strip tease on Nathalie’s part. Ever the gentleman, Paul is starting with hugging and some high-quality kissing—good pressure, tongue play and just the right amount of moisture to get some nice moans from Nathalie. Paul is massaging her left breast with his big right hand, while his left hand is on her cute little ass pulling her tighter against him, which is sure to get his **e-n-o-r-m-o-u-s** pecker rocking. You know, the kind of cock that Nathalie insists be standard equipment on any guy she fucks. Now notice that Paul is kneeling down in front of her. From the look on her face, her moans, and the way she’s squirming, it’s clear he’s giving her some nice oral action despite the fact that all the blood in his brain is rushing to his crotch.

‘And let me take a moment and say to all of you wannabes out there that this is where training comes into play. Paul avoids a rookie mistake here by focusing on that juicy pussy even though his brain has shut down and all he hears is his cock saying ‘Screw it. That’s long enough. Let’s *do* this honey and get back to watching the game!’ This is what separates the amateurs from the professionals. Paul’s making sure that every part of Nathalie’s sexy bod gets the right kind of attention before the main event. That’s Hall of Fame material, ladies and gentlemen.

‘And now back to the action. Nathalie’s stiff nipples and the way she’s running her hands through his hair tell us she’s primed. Looks like she’s going to be the aggressor tonight, sex fans, ‘cause she’s pulling him off his knees and pushing him onto the dining room table. OK. Now she’s eyeing that big, beautiful cock, and—’”

Nathalie laughed so hard she had to hold her sides. Once she stopped, she just looked at Sophie, smirked, and shook her head. “I’m not mentioning any names, but somebody here really needs to get laid.”

Grabbing hold of one of the pointed ears that were part of Nathalie’s Catwoman costume, Sophie remarked, “Love how your pointy ears match your pointy points. Very stylish. I’m sure the subtlety won’t be lost on Paul.”

Nathalie stuck her tongue out at her friend and ran her hands sensuously down the front of her body. “Tease all you want. It only reveals your deep insecurity and wild jealousy of my Goddess given *resources*. But now that I have your permission, I need to go start seducing your ‘he’s just my friend, really, truly, just my friend, I honestly have no interest in him, so you go screw yourself silly with him’ *Paul*. I imagine he’ll find *this* pussy delectable.”

Sophie couldn't miss the double entendre. A knot in her stomach told her how much she didn't appreciate it. "You slut you!"

"Compliments will get you nowhere. Just get your ass in gear, sister, and finish putting on your makeup. My guests will be arriving shortly. I need your help.

*

Sophie finished as quickly as she could. As she began slinking her way to the living room, she heard Paul's voice in the kitchen. He was helping Nathalie with the rest of the food and drinks. He was handing things to her through the pass-through. She was putting them on the table. Every time Nathalie came back for more, she'd give Paul a big smile and add, "Thanks, sexy!"

Hmph! Sophie grumbled. She certainly didn't waste any time. Straining to see Paul's costume, all she could glimpse were white sleeves. White sleeves? A lab coat? Ice cream man? Not very imaginative.

Sophie had to admit that Nathalie's Catwoman was stunning. Her friend was a yoga addict, and that trim body made Sophie think she should reconsider her aversion to doing Downward Dogs in an overheated room—even if it did make her lightheaded. That super-tight, black catsuit couldn't have been any more revealing than if it were body paint. It wasn't like her friend to wear something so daring. *I guess she's really serious about going after Paul.* As Catwoman sashayed across the room to the bar, Sophie had to admire her lithe, taut form. *Damn! That is one tasty morsel. If I were a guy, I'd hit that in an instant.*

She had to laugh because that's exactly what she'd have said out loud if Paul were standing beside her. Whenever they saw someone really hot—of either sex—that's what they now said. "If I were a girl ... If I were a guy ..."*That's why I know we're just friends. I'd never say something like that to a guy I was dating. I'd be afraid he'd think I was suggesting a threesome or I was bi or gay. I can kid with Paul because I know it isn't messing anything up between us.*

Sophie could tell that Nathalie was prancing around the room so Paul could see her body from every angle. It was obviously part of her plan to snag him. Deciding the right thing to do was to help her, the Mississippi Madam walked up behind him.

She pulled out her best New Orleans accent. Not the 'deep South' accent of Georgia. Something softer, almost a drawl, with just a dash of French. Just enough to give her character an exotic flavor. "We have a wonderful variety of beautiful young women in my establishment, good sir. I can *personally* recommend that vixen in black, as long as you're careful about her claws. If you'd like to meet her, I'll be happy to arrange an introduction."

When Paul turned and faced her, he was speechless. He froze in place as he drank in the luscious sight. Then he took a deep breath, stepped back, and gave her a respectful bow. "My apologies, Miss Tiffany, I'm apparently still recovering from a case of the ague. My brain gets confused. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Colonel Bartholomew W. Davis of the Charlestown Davises. I've just arrived in New Orleans, and I'm ever so pleased to meet you. Thank you for welcoming me into your establishment."

Sophie was just as stunned by Paul's appearance. He had done a great job of looking like Rhett Butler. Long white jacket and pants, string tie, fake mustache, even the hat. But he added

a black mask, which gave him a devilish quality. Colonel Bartholomew W. Davis definitely didn't look like the 'bud' she traveled with on the train from New Haven.

He also didn't *behave* like Paul. He gave off a sexual confidence that was positively electric. Her heart rate spiked from just being beside him. She felt excitement flow *everywhere* in her body.

Chapter 3: TRICKS?

Colonel Davis kissed Miss Tiffany's hand. Then he leaned in so his lips were right by her ear. He spoke softly, as though he was confiding a secret. But it was a voice filled with lust and barely restrained desire. "I am a man in search of female companionship this evening, Miss Tiffany. I seek beauty. I seek grace. And I am not ashamed to say that, above all, I seek pleasure. I am told that if I place myself in your hands, I will not be disappointed. I will leave the arrangements to you.

"I have indeed been admiring the young woman costumed as a feline. She is indeed glorious. But I have never been partial to golden-haired women." He stroked Sophie's neck seductively and twirled a lock of her auburn hair around his finger. His voice rumbled through her again. "I believe *this* color is more to my liking. But," releasing her curls and looking Nathalie's way, "that beauty does have magnificent ... *assets*, ... and marvelous curves. The color of her hair reminds me of champagne. I have no doubt she would be delectable. And I can easily picture us pleasuring each other for hours. But I leave the choice to you. In the meantime, I am at your service." He bowed again and wandered off in Nathalie's direction.

Sophie's head spun—as the rest of her body vibrated.

Except for the playful exchange a couple of days earlier, Paul's never said anything remotely suggestive to me. And now he's sex on a stick? Was this Paul speaking as himself, or was this supposed to be Colonel Davis? And exactly what was he saying? Does he actually want me to

find a girl for him to have sex with? I suppose I did kind of promise that. And when I mentioned Nathalie as a possibility, he definitely responded ... sort of.

*Was his playing with my hair a come-on? Was he making a play for me? Does he want to have sex? OK, when I asked him to come with me, he teasingly asked me to guarantee that—one way or another—he'd get laid. When I laughed at the idea, he said he'd just been joking. But that was after that hurt look. Was he lying? And if he's interested in **me**, what's he doing over there with his arm around Nathalie? And why is his hand now slowly sliding towards her ass! Is he that horny that one of us supposed to be his Plan A and the other Plan B? Men!*

As she watched the Colonel press Catwoman tight against his side, she recalled she'd seen that suit someplace else not too long ago. *Where was that? Gran's yearbook!*

Sophie's grandmother has passed away a few months ago when she was home in New Orleans. Helping her mother pack away some things from her grandmother's apartment, she came across Gran's Tulane yearbook, which she'd never seen before. Paging through it that night, she found an intriguing inscription written by her grandmother's roommate. "To Sexy Scarlett. Don't worry. Your stairway secret is safe with me. You naughty naughty girl! I wish I had that kind of nerve. And that kind of guy! Love, Miriam." Since Sophie's grandmother's name was Cynthia, she knew there had to be a story that explained "Scarlett." She went through the yearbook looking for clues.

The mystery was surprisingly easy to solve—which is probably why her grandmother never showed Sophie the yearbook. Her grandmother had been in the college theatre company, and she'd played the female lead in some romantic comedy set in the South. It looked like it supposed to be a send-up of *Gone with the Wind*. Gran played 'Scarlett' opposite a disarmingly

handsome ‘Rhett.’ A series of pictures of the couple made it clear to anyone with half a brain that their relationship extended beyond the stage. And ‘Rhett’ definitely was not her grandfather, whom her grandmother didn’t meet until a few years after college.

“Way to go, Gran! It’s nice to know I’m not the only tart in this family,” she said out loud with a delightful laugh when the pieces fell together in her mind.

In all the pictures, ‘Rhett’ was wearing the same white suit Paul had on. The cutest picture had the caption, “Rhett and Scarlett in New Orleans after their wedding.” The couple was looking at each other with a silly, lovey dovey expression that said, “As soon as we’re done here, we’re having *sex!*” It was clear they *weren’t* acting.

“Hmmm. So that finally explains her taste in movies,” she remarked wryly. “Gotta say, I’m impressed.”

Sophie was referring to the fact that Gran’s favorite movie was *Gone with the Wind*. Sophie found it long, tedious and depressing—*except* for that one scene. The one where Rhett picks up Scarlett and carries her up the staircase as she struggles. It’s clear what’s going to happen once he gets her to the bedroom—whether she cooperates or not. Sophie had to admit that the couple of times she agreed to watch the film with her grandmother, that scene turned her on. She had no idea Gran had apparently lived out some version of that scene—and many others!—with her own Rhett.

She looked back at Paul. *Interesting coincidence that he and I would both pick costumes from the same era.* As she appreciated how much the costume suited him, it occurred to her that she’d never seen her tall, handsome friend look so tall, handsome, and *sexy*. *I wonder. Could we?*

*Should we? Wouldn't it ruin our friendship? What's wrong with you, Sophie? I'm being crazy again! It's **Paul!** He's my bud.*

After flirting with Nathalie for a few minutes, 'The Colonel' headed to the bar. But as soon as he got there, three cute girls dressed as sexy witches glommed onto him. Clearly, they were taken with his good boy (Southern gentleman)/bad boy (Mississippi gambler) appeal. Just as clearly, they'd already done enough pregame drinking to feel bold and naughty.

Seeing Sophie take in the scene, Nathalie came over. "Wow! I had no idea your friend Paul was so sexy. It's great you aren't interested. Great for me, I mean. But there's competition. He's already attracting flies."

She pointed to the three witches. "I've seen them in my dorm dining hall. They have dinner a lot with Wonder Woman over there—the sister of the tall, red-head of the threesome. They're freshmen who love to party but don't know how to drink. Theatre majors who have fallen in love with Shakespeare, the subject of Wonder Woman's dissertation. The three of them are always together and joined at the hip. They call themselves the 'three witches' and are always quoting dialogue from *Macbeth*. You know, 'Double double, toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble'? Except I've never seen a production of *Macbeth* where the witches' costumes make you think they'll say, 'Double double, call me honey, lick my clit, and fuck my cunny.'"

Sophie laughed so hard at Nathalie's catty comment that everyone turned and looked at the two of them. They quickly stepped into the kitchen. Sophie added, "Right, *witches* spelled the Elizabethan way—with a 'b.'"

"Do I see green in those eyes?" her friend teased. "Come on, Soph, you said you and Paul are just friends. Even so, you've got to admit he's really rockin' it tonight. You'd have to be dead

not to notice how hot he is. But I've never seen *you* look sexier either. So get your ass out there, and make me proud. Meanwhile," she pushed out her chest and pinched her nipples. "I'm going to show Paul some of my superpowers."

As Sophie looked out from the kitchen, she saw the three girls continue to hang all over Paul, even though Nathalie had joined his harem. She fumed. *OK, buster, two can play that game.*

*

Dressed as she was, the Mississippi Madam didn't have to do anything to attract attention. As soon as she stepped into the room, cute guys approached her. She was getting even more attention than at last year's party.

But no matter which handsome guy came on to her, she couldn't resist looking to see what was happening with Paul. *Still with the three bitches? Come on, Paul. They're barely legal!* There was no question he had turned on the charm, and the witches were eating it up. *He's even fetching them drinks. By the time he asks, "Does anyone want to get naked?" it'll be a chorus of "Me! Me! Me!"*

She stewed over the fact that Paul couldn't lose. If he introduced himself to the girls as himself, they'd love the idea that a grad student who acted in summer stock was talking to them. And if he said he was 'Colonel Davis,' they wouldn't be able to resist the whole older man, worldly charm, dashing rogue thing. She sighed deeply. Nathalie was right. He *did* look hot.

Nathalie walked up to her and pulled her into the kitchen. "I'm conceding defeat." She glanced towards Paul and the witches. "There's too much competition. It's three against one. And they're offering him something I can't. *Three against one*, if you know what I mean." She

gave Sophie a knowing look and raised her eyebrows. “They’re so taken with his being an actor, I overheard them draw straws to determine which Shakespeare character they’ll be with him. The winner was the short blonde. She chose Miranda from *The Tempest*. Second was the redhead. Desdemona from *Othello*. The cute one with that gorgeous head of long, black hair picked Ophelia from *Hamlet*. They say they want to experience first-hand his range as an actor is. His ‘range as an actor’? *Bullshit.*”

Sophie dropped her jaw in surprise. *Paul and all of them? No! He may be horny, but he’d never do that. Would he?*

Catwoman then gestured towards a muscular Caped Crusader leaning against the bookcase. “Besides, Batman with the big biceps over there keeps eyeing me like he wants to peel me like a grape. He says we have ‘unfinished business’ from Gotham City, whatever that means. I’m giving up on Paul.”

When Sophie stepped back into the party, she looked around to see what ‘the Colonel’ was up to. He was on the balcony on his phone. Then he came back in and walked quickly to the three witches. And then

OHMYGOD NO! THE FOUR OF THEM JUST WALKED OUT THE DOOR!

*I can’t believe this! He’s going to have a **foursome** with them? I thought Nathalie was just being bitchy when she hinted at that. Shit! He was out on the balcony getting a hotel room. I knew he wanted to get laid, but I didn’t think he was just a dog in heat who’d take advantage of three girls like that. I am sooooo angry at him.*

She was so furious, she stepped back into the kitchen, threw a bag of potato chips on the floor, and stomped on it.

And just when she thought things couldn't get any worse, Paul reappeared. Apparently, he forgot something. He walked back into the apartment and headed for the bedroom where he'd changed. No, it was more like he *strutted*. Sophie had never seen a more self-satisfied look on his face. *Of course he's feeling like cock of the walk. He's about to cock-a-doodle-do all three sluts! I'm going to tell him what a prick he is!*

When Sophie stormed into the bedroom, she saw Paul with his hand in his backpack. She was so livid she spat out her words. "What'd you forget? Condoms? I hope you have enough—and that you brought the right size--*TINY!* Christ! I know you're a *guy*. But I thought you were one of the good ones. *A foursome? With a bunch of drunk freshmen? You're a pig!*"

Paul was stunned at the force of the verbal assault. Then, a little smile appeared at the corner of his mouth. "Why Miss Tiffany, I think there's been some misunderstanding between us." He pulled his hand out of his backpack. He was holding a wallet, which he opened to put in some bills that were in his other hand. "I am sorry to have to tell you that you unwittingly allowed three *inexperienced* young women into your establishment this evening. When I realized that, I took it upon myself to make sure none of the rogues here who frequent houses less reputable than yours took advantage of their innocence. I watered down their drinks all evening. Then I purchased tickets for them to a special 1 AM performance of *Macbeth* at the Vivian Beaumont. I just escorted them downstairs and put them in a carriage that will convey them to the theatre."

Putting his wallet into his backpack, he walked over, and took Sophie's hand.

“I returned to put the change I received from the carriage-driver into my wallet and to inform you that I my carriage is waiting so that I can see you safely home to your estate. Your staff can continue to oversee the evening’s entertainment here. I assume that each of us is ready for *bed*. Shall we go?”

Sophie was mortified she’d misjudged Paul so badly. He wasn’t taking advantage of the three freshmen. He’d been looking out for them. Watering down their drinks. Keeping them company to protect them from the wolves who didn’t care about anything but getting the girls drunk and into their pants. Sending them off to a play. It was sweet he was being so protective—especially when so many sexy Snow Whites, naughty nurses, voracious vampires, randy cowgirls, titillating tramps-r-us and the like who kept trying to get his attention. He’d passed up any number of sure hook-ups to keep an eye on the freshmen. He’d even given up his chance with Nathalie.

By staying in character as Colonel Davis after Sophie unloaded on him, he was also more forgiving than she had a right to expect. She knew him well enough to know he’d never prey on girls like that. He was entitled to make her feel like a real bitch, to dress her down for jumping to conclusions, and to demand an apology. ‘Colonel Davis’ was a Southern gentleman, however, and he was letting her off the hook.

But as *touched* as Sophie was by the way Paul handled the three witches, and as *relieved* as she was that he wasn’t making her embarrass herself at misreading the situation so badly, she couldn’t deny how *aroused* she was by the sexual confidence he projected. As soon as he took her hand and said he was taking her home to *bed*, her heart raced, and her body throbbed in all the right places. But she also felt confused.

*Wait! Is it Paul or the Colonel who's doing this? Is this Paul saying he wants **me**? How do I feel about that? I've never seriously thought of him that way. Should I?*

Then it hit her.

Ha! I get it now! Paul and I are 'pals,' so he wouldn't suggest sex. That means we're playing 'improv chicken' like we did in class—trying to push another actor so far out of their 'comfort zone' that they either get flustered and can't finish the scene or fall out of character. So, the Colonel is saying Miss Tiffany has decided to 'entertain' him herself. He wants to see when I'll back down. ... Damn. She sighed. I was just beginning to think maybe 'more than friends' might be worth thinking about. I guess not. ... But if he expects me to flinch first, he's got another thing coming.

“Thank you for your explanation, Colonel. I spoke too quickly. I should have known that a gentleman of your breeding would never take advantage of any sweet young flower who should not have been here. I shall speak to my staff to see how this happened. I am in your debt for protecting the reputation of my establishment. And I thank you for your offer to accompany me home. That's a more *comfortable* location for us to settle our *affairs*.” She gave him a naughty wink and ran her finger along his cheek. “You are most kind, sir. But before I can leave, let me inform my assistant of my plans.”

As Paul gathered up his coat, Sophie went back to the party, grabbed Nathalie and tugged her into the other bedroom.

“OK, I'll fill you in more tomorrow, but I'm leaving now with either Paul or the Colonel. I don't know which it is. It's probably an improv game he's playing. But even if he's coming on to me, I don't know what I'm going to do because we're just friends. But he's so hot and sexy

tonight. And he's a great guy. I don't know if I can resist. I'm totally confused about what I want. But I need to make sure you're OK with whatever I do, because you said you wanted to make a run at him and he sent the trollops to the theatre."

Nathalie got nose to nose with her good friend. "You're really funny when you're stupid, Soph. Can't you see the two of you have the hots for each other? Everybody else can.

"It was cute how you both kept watching each other all night. Every time some stud came up to you, Paul would find a way to get his pussy posse to giggle loudly and get your attention. If he stopped looking at you for too long, you'd slink by and let him drool over you. Both of you passed up tons of opportunities to hook up. There's so much sex in the air, there's not a girl in the room whose panties aren't soaked or a guy who's not hard. Even a philosophy major could get laid tonight. Paul may be a *good* guy and all, but he's still a *guy*. And if he wanted to, I bet he could have gotten all three of those girls into bed with him. They're in that dangerous 'first semester away from home and I'll try anything stage.' But he didn't want any of them. He wants *you*. And even if you don't know it yet, you want *him*.

"So when he tells you he's taking you home to *bed*, if you don't know what that means, I don't know who you are anymore. And don't worry about me. I've got Batman. So, go! Like you told me, fuck like bunnies. Just make sure you use protection."

It was news to Sophie that Paul had kept an eye on her all night—like she'd been doing with him. *He wants me? Does he really? No. Natalie's crazy. I don't want him. Do I?* She was so befuddled, she just stood there.

Nathalie literally pushed her friend out the bedroom door to where Paul was waiting. ‘The Colonel’ offered ‘Miss Tiffany’ his arm, bowed towards Nathalie and said, “Thank you for your hospitality. I am sorry to leave so early, but I am escorting Miss Tiffany home.”

*

An already confused Sophie was dumbfounded when she emerged into the crisp evening air. A white horse drawn carriage was waiting. The tuxedoed driver tipped his top hat. “Welcome, Miss Tiffany. I’m happy to be of service this evening.” She sighed deeply. It was one of the most romantic sights she’d ever seen.

“I hold some substantial IOUs from a few very prominent individuals. When I asked for the favor in exchange for cancelling them, they were happy to oblige. May I assist you into your carriage?”

He helped her up and then tucked a heavy blanket around her to protect her from the chill. When his hands pressed the fabric against the sides of her breasts—and lingered—a rush of sexy warmth flooded her body. She couldn’t tell if the touch was deliberate. Or if it came from Paul or the Colonel. She didn’t care. She loved how it made her feel.

As the couple got settled and snuggled under the blanket, the driver turned. “While your final destination is close by, Miss Tiffany, the Colonel has asked me to show you our exquisite Riverside Park and the Hudson River. A brilliant full moon will light our way. Please sit back and enjoy our glorious city.”

Sophie was impressed with how the driver navigated the narrow paths in the park to show her the full moon reflecting on the river and the views of New Jersey. Paul sat silently at her side and

let her enjoy the experience. The only sounds came from the horse pulling the carriage—the slow ‘clop’ ‘clop’ of its footsteps, an occasional forceful exhale, a head shake that would cause the bells on the harness to jingle. They made their way to the top of the park, north of Grant’s tomb, then down through the park to 108th Street. Ambling east along 108th and turning north on Broadway, they attracted the attention of the neighborhood partiers moving from one bar to another. Sophie could also tell from the looks of any of the women they passed that she was the object of no small amount of envy.

*This is so cool. It was thoughtful of him to do this. It’s so romantic. Is Nahtalie right? Does he have a thing for me? Is this his way of showing it? Maybe we **were** both sending signals that we want to be more than friends. Maybe we should just go for it and see what happens. But maybe Paul’s in ‘I’m a nice guy and protector’ mode, and he was looking out for me the same way he was looking out for the trollops. Maybe the carriage ride is just a carriage ride—something very ‘Big Apple-ish’ he knew I’d enjoy. I’d feel **so** stupid acting all sexy towards him and then have him tell me he was just being a good friend. And if we’re actually playing ‘improv chicken’ and the first one to break character loses, Paul will never let me forget it if he wins. Why can’t this stuff ever be simple?*

When the carriage turned at 112th street and slowed to a stop, she made up her mind. She’d stay in character and try to get Paul to show his hand about what was really going on. If this was just a game, she was sure he’d stop it before it went too far. But how far would be *too* far?

And if this was Paul’s way of saying he wanted them to be a couple? She’d just have to see how she felt as things went along. She’d never thought of Paul sexually before, although she *sure* did now. But was it too much, too soon?

Sophie had her own set of keys to Paulette and Mark's because she visited so often. When she and Paul entered the apartment, she said, "Thank you, Colonel Davis. Please make yourself comfortable."

A pink envelope addressed to "My favorite New Orleans tart 😊" rested on the small table in the hallway. She picked it up and headed for the bedroom. "I just need to see that my maid prepared everything. There should be a bottle of champagne in the refrigerator, Colonel. I would be ever so grateful if you would open it for us."

Chapter 4: TREATS!

As soon as she stepped into the bedroom, she noticed that something looked different. She sat down on the lush white bedspread and surveyed the room. Same romantic canopy bed. The walls were still a rich and sensual deep red. But the artwork was all new. She opened the envelope.

“Dear Sophie,

Hope you had a great party. If everything’s gone well, you’ve got some handsome hunk in tow.

Mark said he’d kill me if I did what I was threatening to do. But I went ahead anyway hoping it would add a little spice to your Halloween.

Welcome to Bourbon Street, where no *decent* woman will ever be found. I put our best sheets on the bed—butter soft. Pillows! Pillows! Pillows! Sexy music already cued up on the iPod. The candles just need to be lit. Best of all, I took down all the tame New Orleans memorabilia you usually see when you visit and put up our whorehouse artwork that normally graces the bedroom walls. Hope it does for you what it does for us!

You get the idea. Have fun! Use your imagination! Mark and I have the best times!!!!

Love,

Paulette”

Sophie hadn't told Paulette anything about her Madam Tiffany costume, so she thought it a surprising coincidence that her friend's bedroom looked like a New Orleans brothel. She lit the candles, turned on the music, and took in the romantic, sexy look of the room. "So, this is what this place looks like when it's just the two of you," she said quietly as she walked around the room looking at the many beautiful paintings of naked women and couples making love.

Thinking for a moment about what she wanted to do, she finally called out, "Colonel Davis. The light in this room is much easier on my eyes. I would greatly appreciate it if you would bring our champagne in here."

Paul stepped into the room, handed her the crystal flute sparkling with bubbles, and surveyed the room. "Exquisite taste, Miss Tiffany." He walked around and admired the artwork. "A room that perfectly reflects its owner—and why I sought you out."

Sophie was anxious to find out what Paul was up to. "So, Colonel, how do you propose we proceed?"

Paul clearly had a plan in mind. He pulled out a large roll of stage money and placed it on the nightstand.

"I have recently been extraordinarily fortunate at the gaming tables, Miss Tiffany. And I would like to celebrate by sharing my good luck with you—as you will share your beauty and *special talents* with me. I know of your reputation for imaginative entertainment, so I will leave it to you to determine which *enjoyments* I may experience—and to set the price."

Sophie froze. *How could he know about my hooker fantasy? Groan. This is going to be so hard to keep in bounds.*

He looked at her with his piercing, dark brown bedroom eyes. “You seem hesitant to suggest how we should begin. I imagine that after an evening of standing and walking around as you managed your establishment, your feet would enjoy a massage. I would gladly pay for the privilege.”

Damn him! My Achilles heel, and he knows it. Sophie intended the pun. She once confided to Paul after having had too much to drink that there were times she enjoyed a good foot massage even more than sex. “It’s so great because I don’t have to do anything but lie back and enjoy—whereas in sex, I’m supposed to do stuff too. And someone who knows reflexology can find spots on a woman’s feet that—if pressed just right—get her really, *really* hot.”

OK. I can’t turn down a foot massage. But that’ll be it. Just a foot massage.

“That’s very considerate of you, Colonel. Let us say \$100.”

“A fair amount.” He took a bill and handed it to her. “Please recline on the bed, Miss Tiffany.”

As she sank into the sea of pillows covering the bed, he removed her shoes and began working her feet. She wanted to tell him she’d like it better if he let her take off her stockings first. But she knew how much guys like fishnets. Besides, if he wanted her to take them off, he’d have to pay her.

As soon as he started massaging and kneading her feet, she got very relaxed. *Ooooo, he certainly knows what he’s doing. Has he been taking lessons?* He thoroughly and sensuously massaged one foot. Then, the other. To her delight, he kept going back and forth.

Next, he took his thumbs and concentrated first on one very specific spot on her left foot, and then on another spot on her right foot. When he massaged the first one, she felt a tingling in her breasts. When he did the other one, she felt the start of a deep warm ache between her legs. She squeezed her thighs together in response. *Someone's been doing his homework.* As he alternated between the two spots, the pleasure increased, and she sighed. She was in heaven.

With the champagne helping her feel increasingly sexy, she decided to tease him. *This is 'improv chicken.'* *Don't just lie there. Rattle him.* She adjusted her dress so the slit revealed virtually all her long, sexy leg. And as he switched from foot to foot, she moved so the leg he was working on was fully visible. Paul would pretend he was looking just at her foot. But she could tell he was drinking in her leg. And as she shifted legs, she could see him trying to look up her dress.

He paused. "I suspect, Miss Tiffany, that after such a long evening, you would feel more comfortable if you removed your dress and let me massage your entire body. What would that cost me?"

Since taking off her dress would let him see her breasts, Sophie decided this is where he thought she'd back down. She brooded for a minute and decided what to do. If this was *Paul* talking, he'd gotten her so turned on that she was willing to risk the next step. But if this was just 'chicken,' she wanted to see his reaction to her willingness to be so bold. She was Miss Tiffany, after all, Madam of a New Orleans brothel. This type of situation was *her* domain, not the Colonel's.

"Another very thoughtful suggestion, Colonel. It is rather warm, and I would enjoy a massage. Normally, I do not let someone I've just met see and *touch* so much of me. But you did

me a service earlier this night by guarding the reputation of my establishment. You showed that you are a gentleman. I will allow this for \$300.”

“Agreed.”

She studied his face to see what his expression revealed. *I called his bluff. Is he surprised? Pleased? Both? Damn! He's not revealing a thing. And his mask makes it impossible to tell.*

He counted out the bills in businesslike fashion and folded them in half. With a sexy smirk, he slid his hand along the slit in her dress, ran it up the sensitive flesh on the inside of her thigh until he found the top of her stocking. Then he tucked in the bills.

The deep yearning his maneuver set off was so strong, she had to bite her lip to keep from moaning deeply.

The liquid warmth coursing from her center to the rest of her body had her head swimming in images of their naked bodies entwined and having passionate sex. *Get a grip! Don't get in character **that** much.*

She took a deep breath and tried to clear her head. As she sat up so she could remove her dress, she fought the pounding ache that told her to stop trying to figure things out and give in. *This has turned out to be one of the most romantic nights of my life so far. Don't spoil it by overanalyzing everything. Would being 'friends with benefits' with Paul be so bad? He's a good guy. We'd handle it so it didn't ruin our friendship.*

If this was ‘chicken,’ she was sure Paul would stop before any clothes came off. It was time to find out. She took a deep breath.

The open-backed dress buttoned just behind her neck. Leaning forward, she pulled her hair out of the way so that it spilled forward. “Excuse me, Colonel, but I would appreciate it if you would unfasten this button.” As she felt his warm breath on her neck, her breathing sped up. After he undid the button, she sat back and ran her fingers through her auburn curls as the front of her dress opened enough to give him more than a peek at her breasts. But the long sleeves still kept enough cloth in place to frustrate his view.

Then she extended her arm, wrist up. “Colonel, would you also please unzip this so that my sleeve will slide over my hand?” But she held her wrist so close to her body that his hands were within inches of her breasts as he moved the zipper down. He did her right wrist—and paused—watching her left breast as he pulled the red cloth off her shoulder and slid the entire sleeve off her arm. Her creamy breast with its deep rose circle was fully exposed. Then he did the other side, the same way, revealing the other breast. Her breathing—and his—deepened noticeably.

She instinctively raised her hands to cover herself, but he stopped her. Holding her wrists firmly, he gazed at her naked chest. Feeling herself under the power of this masked man staring at her made her so aroused that her breasts began to swell and her nipples pucker. The warmth and moisture between her legs increased and her heart quickened.

Even though the two of them still had masks on, she could tell he was looking deeply into her eyes. Looking back at her breasts, he was silent for a few seconds, and then simply whispered, “Beautiful. Perfect. A dream come true.” As they sat longer, the impact of his gaze made her nipples tighten even more.

It was the most intimate moment of her life. She didn’t know why it felt like that. She’d had a few boyfriends, and she’d had sex with a couple of them. Nudity—especially partial nudity—

shouldn't have felt like such a big deal. But nothing had ever felt like this. Something about this moment was different. She felt exposed—but not in the sense of being physically naked.

Emotionally, she felt unguarded, vulnerable. The moment was so powerful, she began to tear up.

OK, this is the real deal. Not some game. So, we're really going to do this.

Typically, the first time she let a guy see her breasts, she'd do something sexy like stroke or squeeze them. Or she'd adopt a sexy pose. She'd do it to get a reaction from the guy and to show that she was in charge. It was almost as though she was playing a role—'Sexy Sophie with the Terrific Ta-Tas.'

But here, she was just being herself. She was letting the man who knew her best look at her aroused flesh. She was letting him watch her body respond to him. And his reaction was so still and silent—so perfect—that the moment had an almost sacred quality to it.

She felt an ache of the sort she'd never felt before. Deeper. She was moist with desire for this man.

After a few seconds, the intensity was too much for her. She found herself giggling nervously, pulled her hands so that he let go, and pressed some fabric against her breasts. She regained her composure and spoke as Tiffany again. "I'm sorry, Colonel. I forgot that there is one more zipper." She twisted herself so he could reach it. "It's that tiny one down there in the back."

As Paul got closer, she saw beads of perspiration on his forehead. Whatever was happening between them was affecting him as well as her. And it felt like it was taking on a life of its own.

As soon as the back zipper was undone—and while Paul was still right beside her—she rocked forward so she was kneeling on the bed. She gathered the skirt, and effortlessly pulled the dress over her head. Sitting back on her heels—now wearing only a garter belt, thong and stockings—she handed Paul the dress and asked quietly, “Colonel, would you please place this carefully on that red leather chair over there?” As he did, she lay face down.

“There is some massage oil on the nightstand, Colonel. That would make this evening so much more pleasant.”

Sophie was amazed at how slowly and carefully Paul massaged her. It made her feel so good, it strengthened her resolve to not think about the situation. All that mattered was the slick feeling of his hands on her skin. After a while, she felt his strokes get firmer. They also freely ran all over her behind. When she felt his thumbs slide down the inside of her cheeks and explore the sensitive skin within inches of her opening, she felt the heat inside her deepen. She squirmed, pressing her sex into the mattress, and, unable to stop herself, opened her legs wider in invitation. Paul responded and slid his hand underneath her and cupped her mound. She closed her eyes and moaned softly.

When his hands slid along her torso and massaged the sides of her sensitive breasts, her breath caught. As he moved his hands underneath her chest, she willingly lifted herself up so that he could reach her breasts—which were aching for the feel of his hands. When he pinched her nipples, the sound she let out was deep and long. It was pure yearning.

“Excuse me a moment, Miss Tiffany.” Paul moved off the bed. “I want to make sure I don’t get any of this oil on my suit. My tailor would be very upset with me if I did.”

The words barely registered with her. She felt wrapped in a warmth so thick even sound bounced off it. She felt too content, too wanted, too safe—but especially too *aroused*—to think. All she knew was how right everything felt. No one had ever made her feel like this before.

The feeling was so good, so real, so irresistible that all she wanted was to feel his hands on her again. Her tingling body told her that she needed him to touch her *everywhere*. When she felt him climb back on the bed, she sighed—waiting for his strong hands to continue their exploration.

She felt her garter belt unhook.

Chapter 5: EVEN BETTER TREATS!

“I have decided that I will make one last payment, Miss Tiffany.”

She felt the garters unsnap from the top of her stockings.

“I will pay you the balance of my winnings, \$5,000.” He pulled the garter belt from under her waist, slid off her thong, and rolled the stockings off her legs. My only condition is that you allow me to see your face before we continue.”

Paul didn't wait to give her the chance to answer as he grasped her body and turned her onto her back. She saw that he had removed not only his clothes, but his mask as well. The loving expression on his face made her melt.

He reached down and removed her mask. She smiled shyly.

When he spoke, it was without the Mississippi gambler accent.

“Miss Tiffany, allow me to say that I think you are the most remarkable woman I have ever met. For nearly three years, I have read dispatches about your beauty, your intelligence, your caring heart—*especially* your reputation as an exceptionally devoted friend. But I never dared approach you because I did not think that you would want a Mississippi River gambler to fall in love with you.

“But I decided to take a chance and to follow the deepest desires of my heart. I have journeyed to your establishment in New Orleans tonight to plead my case. I will confess to some

subterfuge in this matter, which I will gladly explain at some later time. But it was only to win your heart, as you have already captured mine.

“And so, you would make me the happiest man in New Orleans if you would allow me to *court* you.”

Sophie had never seen such a look in a man’s eyes directed at her. *Love* and, more importantly, absolute and total *acceptance*. The look told her that it was OK to be nervous about what he’d just told her. It said he knew that if he’d told her about his feelings as himself, she’d be running out the door in a panic. It told her this was why he’d somehow orchestrated the evening so it would be ‘Colonel Davis’ describing his feelings about ‘Miss Tiffany.’ And it also told her that he knew—even better than she did—that she was as crazy about him as he was about her.

As Paul’s love melted her fear, a small tear rolled down her face. She breathed deeply and sighed. She gave him a loving and grateful look.

“Why Colonel Bartholomew W. Davis, I am all a-flutter.” She would never be able to thank him enough for letting her say—as ‘Miss Tiffany’—the scary words she was about to utter.

“While you are proposing this on only the very first day we have ever met, I, too, am familiar with your reputation. You may think of yourself as a gambler, but I know you to be a man of true heart, trustworthiness, constancy, patience, deep conviction, great understanding of others—and acceptance of their limitations. I have never before met a man with such qualities, and I find it impossible to put into words just how deeply your affection for me has touched my heart.

“I hope you will not think that I am a woman who is ruled by her passions if I happily accept your proposition. I will be delighted to be courted by you here in New Orleans or anywhere else—even in a place called New Haven.”

Unable to restrain himself any longer, Paul pulled her against him so they were sitting face to face and her legs were wrapped around him. “Miss Tiffany, nothing would make me think that you are anything less than the most extraordinary woman I have ever met. You stir feelings in my heart and in my body that no other woman could match. And I will follow you, even to this place called New Haven.”

He held her tighter and kissed her full, red lips. As she responded, their tongues sought each other out. She pressed herself against him so she could feel his hard shaft against her belly. He moaned as she shifted her weight and ground against it.

As his strong hands ran softly up and down her naked back, she leaned up and pressed her breast against his mouth. He kissed every inch of both breasts with the gentleness of a man who was certain he was dreaming and feared that any sudden movements would wake him up. Then he circled her nipples with his tongue and sucked each passionately. As Sophie’s moans got louder, he lay her down on the bed. He kissed each eye, her nose, her lips, her chin, her neck. Then he continued kissing in a straight line down her chest, belly, navel, her tantalizingly bare mound, until he reached the swollen pink lips of her sex.

Pushing her legs apart, he put his mouth against her pussy, sucked deeply on her lips and then circled her clitoris with his tongue. An electric charge shot through her body. She bucked sharply.

She fisted the sheets as she pressed herself against his mouth. “Oh, Paul,” she moaned. When he began sucking her clitoris, she said, “There!” and tried to hold herself completely still against him. Getting the message, he grabbed her behind and held her in position as he continued the same rhythmic sucking. She closed her eyes and let herself sink into the moment. Her short passionate cries got higher and higher until his tongue sent her over the edge, and her body bucked against his mouth again in climax.

He drank in any wetness he could find as her body relaxed. “Sophie, you taste like Heaven.” His voice was deep, passionate and hungry. “I could get addicted to this.”

Sliding back from between her legs, he reached over to the nightstand where he’d put a condom and quickly tore it open.

“Just a minute there, *Colonel*,” Sophie said to him with the dreamy look of a woman who has just been satisfied. “The least I can do is to help you with that.” Taking the foil package from his hand, she knelt opposite him, and teased. “Let me see if I can figure out how this works.” She cupped and squeezed his balls. “It doesn’t go *here*.” She slid her hand up and down his cock a few times and gave him a naughty grin. “That means it must go *here*.” Removing the condom, she leaned forward to put it on Paul’s penis, but then stopped. “My oh my, it seems as though we have a little moisture already. We can’t allow that to fall on these nice clean sheets now can we?” She bent down, put her mouth over just the head of the hard, red, veined penis and licked the pre-cum from the opening at the tip. “Much better.” She unrolled the latex over the warm, sizable shaft.

The tension in his body said things were about to get more energetic. He pulled her towards him and held her against him as they fell against the sheets. As he nestled his cock against her opening, she spread her legs and squirmed. “Oh Paul. Please! Now!”

He sharply thrust his shaft inside, and they both groaned deeply. As he stroked in and out, she closed her eyes so she could focus on her arousal and let it carry her to another orgasm.

“Open your eyes, Sophie. Open your eyes and let me watch you. Please.”

As difficult as it was—because she felt so exposed—she did as he asked. The way she felt about him at this moment made her want to do whatever he asked. She opened her eyes, looked directly into his and—as he she gave herself to him—let him see in her face the passion, desire, mounting tension, and, especially, the love she felt for him.

Paul’s arousal began to crest. With each thrust, he got closer to orgasm. “Oh Sophie. *Oh Sophie. You feel soooo good. OH GOD! You feel so good.*”

With the swelling of his cock telling her he was about to come, she closed her eyes and gave into the wave that would carry her over the brink. Squeezing her legs as tightly as she could so he was inside her as deeply as possible, she could feel that she’d lit the fuse that would make both of them explode. As his penis throbbed and released, her sex pulsed around the full length of his shaft. Both screamed out each other’s names, and they held each other tightly as their bodies trembled.

*

It was a magical moment for both of them. Paul was finally with the woman of his dreams. Sophie was letting someone truly love her. As they lay together on the soft sheets, they felt more

contented than either had ever thought possible. He pulled her close to him and they kissed tenderly.

Pulling back so she could see his face, Sophie returned to her normal voice. “So, *Colonel*, you mentioned something about *subterfuge*? I take it that you weren’t the only person involved in your plot to seduce little ole’ me. Who were the players in your drama? And when did you start planning this.”

Paul sat up against the headboard of the bed. Holding up his left hand, he started counting off who was involved. “Let’s see, everything actually began when *I* [holding up one finger], thought *you* [holding up a second finger] were the most amazing girl I’d ever met. But seeing that you didn’t feel the same way, I knew I’d have to wait. Then, this past summer, I got a note from *your mother* [finger three] thanking me for the flowers I sent when your grandmother died and for being such a good friend to you during that time.”

“Yeah, you were really great. It was a tough time for me. With Gran gone, my family is just my mother and sister. It meant the world to me that we talked every day.” She squeezed his arm tenderly.

“Anyway, your mother said she didn’t want to meddle in your life, but she wanted me to know that she’d never heard you talk so much about a guy before. Then when *Nathalie* [finger four] attended the services for your grandmother, *your sister Martha* [finger five] asked her what the deal was between you and me. Nathalie said she thought you really liked me, but were scared because of everything that had happened between your parents.”

“Then, I got a phone call from Martha saying that she didn’t want to meddle in your life. *But* she wanted to tell me that that every time she asked you about me and our relationship, you got

really evasive. Like your mother, Martha said that you'd never talked so much about a guy before."

"You know, I don't remember that at all," Sophie said. "Apparently, I was a stupid chatterbox. All I remember is telling them how school was going."

"Anyway, Martha said if I liked you as much as you apparently liked me—but weren't willing to admit to yourself—she wanted to help. She said your grandmother's death made her feel it was crazy to pass up opportunities for love. If I didn't feel that way towards you, she understood. But if I did, she had an idea about how to light a fire under you. Of course, I told her I was crazy for you."

"Nathalie and Martha worked out all the details and then brought me into the loop. There'd be a Halloween party designed to make you *jealous* enough to see how you really felt about me. A costume party. Each of us in character. Sex, romance, shameless flirtation. Your sister said it would push all your buttons."

"Wait a minute. Nathalie was *never interested* in you? That was all to get me *green-eyed*?"

"Absolutely. The original plan was after getting your permission to go after me, Nathalie would be all over me, and I'd pretend to love it. I'd completely ignore you. Nathalie swore that before the night was out, she'd figure out a way to get you to uncork your feelings for me."

"And the three witches? Did Nathalie arrange that too?"

"No, that was just amazing luck. As soon as they came in, Nathalie sent them my way, and told me enough about them to make sure I'd keep their attention all night. But I could tell immediately they'd already had more to drink than they should have, and it was pretty clear they

were in way over their heads. The wrong kind of guys would have an easy time taking advantage of them. I'd heard about the *Macbeth* production a few weeks ago. I'd actually thought about asking you if you wanted to go before Nathalie came up with the party idea So I figured it was the best way to keep them out of trouble. I was just lucky they had some last-minute cancellations."

"The idea for the *foursome*?"

"OK, that was mine." He shot her with a naughty smile. "Natalie agreed it would make you not only *jealous* but *really angry*. You know, the whole *guys are never satisfied with one good woman and always fantasize about threesomes and girl-on-girl action*. She said she'd plant the seed with you so that when I escorted them out the door, you'd assume we were heading for debauchery.

"So, Paulette and Mark were—"

"Not yet. Let me backtrack a little. When Nathalie and Martha came up with the party idea, we concocted the New Orleans brothel theme. Martha came up with all the costumes—yours, mine and Nathalie's. Martha said Catwoman was one of your childhood heroines, so she figured a very sexy Catwoman making a play for me would really bother you.

"At first, Nathalie didn't want to wear something so revealing. But at the end of class one day, she overheard a guy from Columbia she's been crushing on say something about his vintage collection of Batman comic books. After that, she said she'd 'suit up and take one for the team.' The next day, she invited Batman to the party.

“But Martha wasn’t done. She knew you visited Paulette and Mark a lot and they decorated their apartment with a Big Easy theme. She called them and roped them in, too [fingers 6 and 7].

“Courtesy of your sister, your friends are enjoying a luxurious weekend at *The Plaza*, downtown. They aren’t apple-picking in the Poconos. And the racy artwork isn’t theirs. Martha shipped it up from New Orleans, and they agreed to hang it in their bedroom—for atmosphere. I gather from my conversation with Paulette, however, that she and Mark have been having a great time with it. They like it so much Martha’s going to have a hard time getting it back.

“So, *Miss Tiffany*, that’s the story. And on behalf of the entire cast, I am authorized to apologize to you for the way we made you a player in our drama without your knowing it. However, the goal of the conspiracy was that the two of us ‘live happily ever after’—which is, of course, the way every good play should end. And what do I report back to my co-conspirators?”

Sophie was overwhelmed with love and gratitude that her family and friends cared for her so much to concoct such an elaborate scheme. The look in Paul’s face said he absolutely adored her. She sighed. She wiped away the tears and regained her composure.

“Well, *Colonel*, because my mother, sister, and even my long-time friends count as my New Orleans *family*, they are forgiven. But you, sir, deserve an appropriate reprimand.” She pulled the sheet back covering them and planted herself squarely on Paul’s lap. “You are a Southern gentleman, and should have known better than to deceive a lady.” She kissed him deeply and rubbed her sex against his shaft until it sprang back to life. “And so, *Miss Tiffany* will now give you everything you deserve.”