

Max

A. L. Brooks

Max couldn't get out of the Green Room quick enough. It had been a delicious yet bittersweet experience with Tania and Jacky and the emotion of it had overwhelmed her. How tawdry it now seemed to be doing what she was doing. How connected Tania and Jacky had seemed to be. It only served to emphasise the distance she had been feeling between herself and her own partner, who was at home, in their house, unaware of Max's escape to this place.

Unaware of her betrayal.

As she yanked on her coat in the small locker room, fighting back tears, she sensed someone hovering nearby. Glancing round, she saw Mandy, the club's owner, standing in the doorway. Max hadn't seen her when she'd first arrived—that taller woman, her assistant, had been on the door.

Max risked a look at Mandy, but almost lost it at the sympathy she saw in those clear blue eyes.

She shook her head at the question in Mandy's expression, and tried to push past her to the door.

To her surprise, Mandy laid a hand on her forearm.

"You can tell me it's none of my business," the older woman said, her tone soft. "But did something happen in there? At the very least, anything I should know about?"

Max heard the concern in Mandy's voice, and knew it wasn't only about the possibility of something Mandy needed to deal with. Underlying it was a genuine concern for Max, and for the state she was in. She dared to meet Mandy's eyes again, and the warmth she found there in the crystal blue rocked her back on her heels.

She shook her head. "It's not about that," she whispered, then wished she could take back the words, escape and be alone with her torment.

Mandy hesitated a moment, then spoke again. "Like I said, you can tell me it's none of my business, but do you need to talk? Are you okay to go home right now, because you can stay for a little while longer if you need some time. You don't need to go back in there"—she gestured towards the door to Green—"but you could stay in my office for a while, if you need?"

Max was torn. Right now she did want to be alone, but at the same time, she knew she was in danger of breaking down. Doing that in a cab on the way back to the hotel could be awkward, and embarrassing, but any worse than doing it here, in front of Mandy?

Mandy lifted her hand from Max's arm, and took one step back. "I've never done this before," she said with a wan smile. At Max's raised eyebrows, she chuckled. "Attempted to console a customer who didn't seem too happy with her time here, I mean. It's not really my forte."

Max couldn't help but smile, but it was a feeble effort.

"It's just," Mandy continued, as Max took one step forward towards the hallway, "I remember you from about a month ago. You didn't seem happy then, and you certainly don't seem it now. You probably won't understand me saying this, but I really don't think you should be coming here."

Max stared at Mandy.

"This isn't right for you," Mandy said. "Is it? Whatever you're looking for, this isn't the place to find it."

Max's tears spilled over. They'd been threatening ever since she watched the love shared between Tania and Jacky play out on their faces. With Mandy's soft words, nothing could hold the flood back any more.

She turned away from Mandy, mortified, then couldn't help but lean in to the gentle touch of Mandy's hand in the centre of her back.

"I... I'm not happy in my relationship." The words tumbled out around her sobs. "We haven't had sex in over a year, and I thought it was just that, and coming here would make up for that bit missing from what we have. But it didn't. I care about her, I do. It's just..."

She trailed off and sucked in a couple of quick breaths, trying to calm her heart, which was beating too fast.

She turned back to face Mandy. "I can't believe I'm telling you this." She shook her head, and wiped at her eyes.

"I'm a stranger." Mandy shrugged. "I have no history of you and your partner, therefore no judgment."

Max nodded, and sniffed, knowing her face was a mess but beyond caring right in this moment. "I've been trying to blame it all on the lack of sex life. I thought coming here would scratch that itch for me. And, you know, last month it wasn't half bad. I felt so...alive again, after my time here. But then I had to go home, and pretend nothing had happened. And it was easy." She shuddered. "Way too easy."

The doorbell rang, but Mandy didn't move.

Max heard Mandy's assistant step up to the door, and Max shrank back, aware of how open their conversation was to the hallway.

"Follow me." Mandy moved farther down the hallway to another door that Max hadn't noticed before. Mandy held the door while Max stepped past her into the small room. It contained a couple of small chairs and a bank of lockers.

Mandy pushed the door closed behind them.

"Thanks." Max glanced around, and wondered why she was here, why she was spilling her story to Mandy. Was it as simple as Mandy said, that telling a stranger was so much easier? She paced the small room, unable to sit down with her feelings so close to the surface.

"After last time, I separated my feelings. I somehow managed to split my physical and emotional sides, stick them both in their own boxes up here." She gestured to her head. "I just went on about my normal life as if I hadn't been in here being fucked by strangers for the evening." She sucked in a deep breath. "But the memory of what I'd done here, I just couldn't let it go. So stupid," she muttered, gazing at her feet following the same path across the room and back again.

"Maybe, in a way, it wasn't so stupid." Mandy's voice was quiet, and Max looked up at her. "It seems you regret it now, but hasn't it actually done you a favour? Opened your eyes to the fact that your relationship's problems aren't anything to do with sex?"

Max stopped walking.

She sighed. "Yes, that's exactly what it's done."

Mandy took a slow step or two closer and laid her hand on Max's arm again. "Then use it. Use the knowledge to find yourself a better place, either in that relationship or out of it. But don't waste time on something that doesn't make you happy. Life's too short."

Max heard something beneath the simple words that spoke of a deep and painful loss in Mandy. She stared at Mandy for a moment, then nodded.

Mandy stepped back. "You can stay in here as long as you need, but I'll leave you in peace now. Take care of yourself."

"Thank you," Max whispered as she watched Mandy leave.

She heaved in a huge breath, then let it out nice and slow, her eyes closing as she did so. The odd tear still leaked from her eyes, but the sobbing had abated for now. She knew there was more in there. There was no way she was cried out yet.

After a few moments she pulled her coat tighter around her body and eased the door open a fraction. She peered into the darkened hallway but it was empty. Bracing herself, she opened the door fully and strode towards the front door.

She glanced into the office as she reached the door.

Mandy and her assistant were chatting across the desk that separated them. They both turned to look at her as she hovered in the doorway, but neither spoke. An encouraging smile crossed Mandy's features, and Max returned it, albeit weakly. Mandy nodded, once, and Max stepped up to the heavy front door.

As she heaved it open the cold night air hit her full force, and she took some deep, calming breaths. She felt the cold sear her lungs, but she welcomed the sensation.

It was time to face the music, she knew that now. Sneaking away to a club to have sex with strangers was not the way to deal with her relationship problems. Telling lies to her partner of eight years was not the way to deal with her relationship problems. Telling lies to herself about what she was feeling, and what she wanted—and what she didn't want—was not the way to deal with her relationship problems.

It was time for her to sit down with Sue and have it all out. God knew where it would leave them, but it was time.

* * *

Six months later

"You did *what*?" Anna's face was rigid with shock, and for a moment Max wondered if she'd made a mistake in confiding in her oldest friend.

Anna placed her wine glass on the table before her and sucked in a long breath. When she exhaled she shook her head, as if trying to shake some sense into it.

"You went to a *sex* club? Really?" She blinked, then leaned forward, dropping her voice. "What was it like? How many women did you, you know, do it with? How many times?"

Max snorted a laugh.

Anna threw her hands up. "What? Come on, you can't just throw that into conversation and not expect a thousand questions back."

Leaning back in her chair, Max relaxed. She had been right to confide in Anna, to explain, at last, why her relationship with Sue had come to an end. It had been six months since Max

had sat down with Sue and told her they were over. It was probably the most awful thing she'd ever had to do to a person, but she'd done it.

Sue had been upset but not surprised—she'd known they were in a bad place but hadn't known how to dig them out of it. In a way, she was grateful for Max having the courage to speak out, but she'd also been a little annoyed about how they'd both let it drag on to such a point. It wasn't exactly an amicable break, but there was acceptance on both sides that it was the right thing to do.

Max had moved out of their home a few days later. The small flat she was now renting wasn't the prettiest or in the nicest area, but it would do.

Anna had been there for Max as soon as Max called her to tell her the news, offering her a shoulder to cry on or an ear to bend whenever she needed it. But though she'd asked Max what was going on, Max hadn't been able to tell her then. It was all still too raw.

But tonight, over a bottle of wine in Anna's local pub, somehow it had seemed like the right time to come out with it.

"I went twice. The first time, I had sex with two different women. The second time, I had a kind of threesome."

Anna gasped and her eyes went wide. "Oh. My. God." She topped up their wine glasses. "I need details. Now."

It took time, but they had plenty of that this evening. Max told her everything—from the relationship issues that started to crop up between her and Sue that year before she ended things, to finding the article about the club and deciding to go, all the way through to the aftermath of her last visit, and her realisation that shagging strangers wasn't going to fix anything.

"I did enjoy it, on one level. I had the kind of sex I'd only ever dreamed about." She looked away as memories of being fucked with the strap-on in the Blue Room set her blood racing. That had been the highlight from her two visits—the domination that woman had over Max still thrilled her whenever she thought about it.

"Does Sue know any of this?"

"God, no!" Max exclaimed. "No. No way. The way things ended, there was no need for her to know this."

"You haven't been back there again since you two split up?"

Max took a sip of her wine. "No, and I wasn't going to. Not after what happened last time. But recently..."

"What?"

Max sighed. “I’ve been trying to kind of separate it in my mind. What happened before compared to where I am now. When I was going there while I was still with Sue, there were all these feelings of guilt wrapped up in it and I left there convinced it wasn’t the way forward for me. Certainly not if I was trying to work out the issues with Sue. But now that’s all over, and I know I’ve made the right decision in doing that, I’m still...”

“Horny?” Anna asked with a grin.

Chuckling, and blushing, Max nodded. “Yeah. So damn horny. That first night, with the woman with the dildo...” She blushed deeper but Anna smiled and she plunged on. “That was just amazing. I’d really like to have something like that again. Ideally with a partner in the long term, but I’m not ready for that now, I know that. I need some time on my own before I think about being in another relationship.” She twirled her glass in her fingers. “But I can’t stop thinking about what it would be like to go back there occasionally, and either see if that same woman was there, or someone else like her. Just to let off some steam. To, you know, feel like that again.”

Anna frowned. “But why would you need to go there? Why couldn’t you just, I don’t know, hit up a dance club, or put an ad online or something? I do it all the time! There are so many women out there who’d jump your bones so fucking fast, you know.”

Max shook her head. “Thanks, but... It’s hard to explain. There was just something about that place. It really touched something in me I didn’t know I needed.”

“I thought that was the strap-on.”

“Ha bloody ha.” Max slapped Anna’s arm.

* * *

The hangover was manageable, at least. They’d downed another bottle after the first, and there’d also been some weird shot thing to finish off the evening, Max seemed to remember. It was all a little hazy.

She sipped a large mug of coffee as she slouched on her small sofa.

I’m getting too old for this.

But opening up to Anna, getting everything off her chest, had been cathartic. Anna had known her for so many years now, and had shared all of Max’s ups and downs during that time.

She smiled to herself. Anna’s questions had been hilarious, and had taken away much of the embarrassment she was feeling about admitting what she’d been up to.

Her phone buzzed on the coffee table in front of her, and she groaned as she leaned forward to retrieve it. She hoped it wasn't anything important; her brain wasn't up for dealing with complicated questions or conversations right now.

"Does your head hurt as much as mine?" It was Anna, sounding miserable.

"Thank God it's not just me."

"Oh, no. Totally a joint effort. God." Anna groaned. "Look, I was wondering if you were up for some food. I'm desperate and my fridge is bare."

"I think I could manage food. But can we go somewhere quiet? I definitely can't handle noise."

"Oh, God, yes, me neither." There was a pause. "Okay, how about that little café we found at the back of the market that time, remember? We couldn't believe no one was in there."

"Oh yeah, I remember. Perfect. About half an hour?"

"Brilliant."

Max chuckled when she walked into the café and found Anna, looking very sorry for herself, slumped in a chair at a table in the corner. The café was just as empty as that first time they'd been, and although there was a radio playing somewhere, its volume was not at a level that caused Max any pain.

Her friend looked rough. Her normally bright blue eyes looked jaded, and her skin pale. The short blonde hair that she was usually so anal about, sculpting it to perfection with a ton of product, was now just a shapeless mess with bits sticking out all over the place.

"Hi." She slid into the chair opposite Anna.

Anna chucked a menu at her. "They still do all-day breakfast. Full English for me."

Max didn't bother to open the menu. "Same. And more coffee."

"A bucket, methinks."

Orders placed they lounged in their chairs, sipping the coffees that had been brought to them in big mugs.

"So," Anna said, after a few minutes. "I was kind of thinking."

"About?"

Anna shifted in her chair, and her cheeks flushed. "About that club." Her tone was low, her gaze flicking round the room. "About you wanting to go there again."

"Look, Anna, you're my best friend, but if I want to go there again, I will and there's nothing you can—"

"No, wait! Hold your horses." Anna held up a hand. "Not where I was heading."

"Oh. Sorry."

Max waited, curiosity burning inside her.

Anna looked uncomfortable, and nervous, both rare states of being for her cocky friend. “Well...” Anna spun an empty sugar packet in a circle on the table. “I was thinking that, er, if you were going, whenever you were going, that, um, I might come with you.”

The last five words were rushed out, and Max only just understood them.

“You...what?”

Anna seemed to be avoiding looking at Max. “I’ve always been your wing woman, haven’t I? Maybe not so much in the last few years, since before you met Sue, but in the old days, we always did the clubs and stuff together. So, you know.” She shrugged, and raised her head to finally meet Max’s gaze. “I just thought, why should this be any different?”

Max stared at her. Then snorted. Then laughed out loud.

Anna looked sheepish, then joined in the laughter.

“*You* want to go to the club, don’t you?” Max nudged Anna’s hand where it still fiddled with the sugar packet. “You want to get some action, don’t you?” Max’s voice was sing-song and Anna stuck her tongue out at her. “Yep, you can definitely get plenty of that there, if that’s your choice.”

“Fuck off.”

“Will not.”

Anna laughed and pushed Max’s hand away. “Yes, okay. I woke up this morning and all I could think about was what you told me about that place. So yeah, I admit it, I want to try it. See what all the fuss is about.”

“Well, well. I admit I’m surprised.”

“Really? Given what you know about me and my history?”

That Anna had continued to flit from one short-term fling to another, from one-night stands to casual open arrangements, was no secret. It worked for Anna where it might not for others, and Max had always admired her for it, in a way. At least, admired her tenacity, and for following a path that suited her, rather than trying to do a long-term relationship when she knew she wasn’t cut out for it.

“I suppose if I gave it any thought I’d assume that as you were so proficient at picking up whoever you wanted, whenever you wanted, you didn’t really need somewhere like the club.”

Anna was silent for a moment. “I guess. It’s just—”

She stopped talking as their food was delivered, rubbing her hands together at the enormous plate that was placed in front of her.

“Lovely,” she said to the waitress and reached for her cutlery.

They ate in silence for a few mouthfuls, before Anna continued the conversation while buttering a slice of toast.

“I suppose I’m intrigued as to whether going somewhere that I know for certain I’m going to find someone to have sex with will feel different to a night out at a regular club where there isn’t that guarantee. I wonder if it will take the fun out of it, you know? If it’s delivered up on a plate, so to speak.”

Max finished chewing her mouthful of bacon and swallowed. “I never thought of it like that.”

“I mean, I guess that’s what’s good about it for a lot of the women who go there. That uncertainty is taken out of the equation.” Anna stuffed the toast into her mouth and moaned in appreciation. “So good,” she mumbled.

“Don’t talk with your mouth full. Didn’t your mother ever tell you that?”

Anna gave her the finger.

“Well, I suppose for me that was part of it, certainly.” Max mused. “I wanted sex, and I knew I could get it there. If I’d gone out to try to pick someone up, I could have potentially not found anyone. Or if I did, I would have had to insist on going back to her place. It would have been...complicated.”

Anna nodded.

Max wiped her mouth one last time and scrunched up her napkin. “So, when are you going?”

Anna tilted her head, looking confused. “Well, whenever suits you. I’m easy.”

“Wait, you mean go together?” Max sat back in shock. “Don’t you think that would be a bit, well, weird?”

“Huh?”

“Anna, you’re my dearest friend but there is no way I need to watch you doing the dirty with someone.”

Anna’s eyes widened. “Oh, shit. I didn’t think of that.”

Max laughed. “*Ew*, can you imagine?”

“Bugger.” Anna huffed out a big breath. “The thing is, I’m kind of nervous about going on my own.”

“You? Nervous?” She kept her tone gentle but her incredulity still shone through.

Anna blushed. “Yeah. I feel like I might be a bit out of my depth there.” She shrugged. “I don’t know, I can’t explain it.”

Max’s thoughts raced. “Well, there might be a way for us to go together but not have to witness anything icky.”

“Yeah?”

Now it was Max’s turn to blush. This conversation was definitely going to breach some boundaries between friends.

“Well,” Max said, drawing out the word. “If, for example, each of us wanted to experience a different room, then we could go into the club together, but be unlikely to see each other again until the end of the evening. Or even just back at the hotel.”

Anna grinned. “Okay, so what room would you want then?”

“You’re the club virgin, you get first pick.”

Anna’s laugh was loud in the quiet of the café. “This is hilarious.” She shook her head. “Okay, believe it or not, my preference from the way you described them would be the vanilla one. I’m not into BDSM at all, and actually not that much into toys.”

“Seriously? Wow, I would have assumed you would be.”

“I know. A lot of women have made that assumption and it always baffles me. Is it just because I’m butch? Is that some kind of prerequisite to a butch identity that you’d automatically want to pack or at least use them now and again?”

“Hey, you know as well as I do, our community is full of stupid stereotypes, so yeah, I guess that could be it. It wasn’t why I thought it, by the way—I just somehow thought, given how adventurous you are in your exploits, that adding all sorts of extras to your sex life would be part of that. I stand corrected.” She tilted her head and winked at Anna.

“So, if I chose Green, does that suit you?”

Max chuckled. “Oh, yeah. And I think you know that.”

Anna smirked.

* * *

Anna didn’t do nervous. Nerves and fear were for women with far less self-confidence than her.

So why was her stomach in knots and her heart rate up?

Max sat opposite her in the carriage of the train they’d boarded an hour ago. She seemed cool and calm, but then, she’d done this before.

Anna was still gobsmacked at her friend’s revelations. Sure, she’d thought things weren’t right between Max and Sue for ages before they actually split up, but she’d never imagined learning this about the woman she’d known for so many years. A sex club! Go Max.

She sipped her gin and tonic and stared at Max, who had her nose buried in a magazine. Had Max been this nervous on her first visit to Manchester? Probably even more so, she mused. Max wasn't anywhere near as cocky as Anna, so that first time for her must have been especially nerve-wracking. Yet, she still went ahead with it.

Yeah, so if she did it, you can do it. Come on, get a grip.

Three hours later they'd checked in to the hotel, had a quick meal, and were in a cab on their way to the club.

Anna's nerves had by now converted to excitement and anticipation. Tonight, in some way, shape or form, she was going to have sex. She'd had sex last week, with a cute little thing she'd charmed in a pub in Hackney—they'd gone back to Anna's place and fucked the night away. But, as usual, at the start of the evening it hadn't been a cert, whereas tonight it was. Guaranteed. Cast iron.

She grinned. It was kind of weird, but good.

The black door was imposing, as was the way to gain entrance—the eyes peering out at them through the small opening in the door made her feel like she was back in school, being stared down by the headmistress.

Moments later, however, they were ushered into a dim hallway, the woman who'd opened the door for them smiling in greeting. She was older than Anna would have anticipated, but despite the piercing gaze, her demeanour was welcoming and friendly.

"Welcome back," the woman said to Max. "How are you?"

Max grinned. "Very well, thank you. Everything sorted out."

"Good." The woman winked, then turned to Anna. "Hi, I'm Mandy. Welcome. You're new here, yes?"

"Hi. Yes, I am, but Max has filled me in."

"Good. Then I won't keep you. Enjoy your evening."

They paid the entrance fee, stowed their bags and coats in the locker room, then headed for the door to the first room.

Max had explained the layout, and Anna knew she was about to step into the Green Room.

"Holy shit," she whispered, as she stood inside the doorway, letting her eyes adjust to the low lighting. "Your description was spot on."

Max chuckled. "So, you okay if I leave you here?"

Anna gave Max a nudge and laughed. "Yeah, I'm a big girl, I can handle it." Her gaze was everywhere, taking in the fantastic sights before her.

Women, all around her, kissing, fucking, licking. *Holy shit.*

“See you at closing time.” Max’s voice was already trailing off, her own attention focused on a door that Anna could see in the far corner of the room, a blue light above it.

“Uh-huh,” Anna managed.

Max walked away, and Anna strolled over to the bar. Her attention was locked on a couple pressed up against a wall quite near the bar. One was being fucked from behind by the other, and Anna could see *everything*, even with the low lighting. Her pussy clenched and she let out a slow breath.

Yeah, this really was as amazing as Max had said. Hell, even just sitting watching would be an incredible way to spend an evening, never mind finding some action for herself.

She stepped up to the bar and ordered a gin. When she’d paid, she took her drink over to the centre table and pulled herself up onto one of the high stools.

It was intoxicating, sitting in the centre of the room while all around her, women in various stages of undress and intimacy were enjoying each other in full view of anyone who cared to watch. Anna had seen a good amount of porn in her life, but those movies paled into insignificance compared to this. Her breathing turned ragged; she was so aroused already, and she hadn’t even touched anyone.

That needed to change. Observation time was over. She gulped down the rest of the drink, enjoying the warm glow it spread in her chest. Time to find a suitable playmate. Max had explained about how those on the wall were signalling their interest in seeing some activity, so Anna let her gaze roam.

There were a few lone women waiting, and one or two looked as if they had the kind of body Anna would usually find appealing. She wanted to make sure she’d swept the whole room first though. No need to jump in for the first woman on offer, not when there was such a range on display.

She chuckled to herself; she sounded like she was perusing the breakfast buffet at a top hotel.

Movement just to the right of her line of sight grabbed her attention. A couple, both long-haired, had their shirts open, revealing their bare breasts, their mouths fused together in a kiss. Except that the blonde woman facing Anna had her eyes open, and stared at Anna as she kissed her red-haired partner.

Anna grinned.

The woman pulled out of the kiss and said something to the redhead, who looked round. Then she looked back at her partner and nodded, and in the next moment, the blonde beckoned to Anna.

Well, okay then.

Anna slid off her stool and strolled over.

“Hey.” She smiled at the pair, her skin already buzzing with anticipation.

The women turned to face her, and the blonde looked her up and down. “What do you think?” she asked her partner.

“Definitely,” the redhead replied, a sexy smile spreading across her lips.

“You up for a threesome, handsome?” The blonde trailed a finger down the front of Anna’s shirt.

No-brainer.

“Hell, yes.” Anna’s voice was low and husky, and her pussy began to throb.

“We thought you could—”

Anna placed a finger over the blonde’s lips to cut off her words. “You did the inviting, but I’ll set the agenda.”

The blonde blinked; the redhead groaned.

Anna leaned in close to the blonde. “Any objections?”

As she asked it, she ran a hand up the woman’s torso and cupped her left breast, letting her thumb rub over her rigid nipple.

To her right, the redhead groaned again and pushed herself against Anna. She was all in, that much was obvious.

The blonde, however, was resisting. Used to being in control? Well, she’d have to lose that if she wanted any part of Anna for the evening.

Anna waited, still rolling the nipple. The redhead shuffled beside her, her gaze locked on the movement of Anna’s fingers.

The blonde licked her lips, blinked a couple of times. Then Anna saw it—a slight softening in the eyes, the barest hint of movement towards Anna.

Resistance gone.

Anna didn’t hesitate, moving forward the last few inches to kiss the lush, full lips the blonde had licked only moments before. It was a hot, wet, and messy kiss, with tongues circling and diving and teeth clashing, but it set Anna on fire. She’d only walked into this club about twenty minutes ago and look where she already was. Max was right—this place was amazing.

Anna pulled back from kissing the blonde and turned to the redhead, whose eyelids were heavy, her lips parted as she stared at Anna.

Moving her hand from the blonde’s nipple to the redhead’s, Anna revelled in the reaction as she pinched it—a gasp, a groan, a tilting of the head.

Anna leaned in and kissed her. Her lips weren't as full, her kissing nowhere near as aggressive as the blonde's, but that made it even better. Variety was the spice of life, after all.

Ending the kiss with her breathing ragged, Anna grinned. "Very nice. Both of you."

She lifted her other hand so that she could play with a nipple from each of them at the same time and was rewarded with twin lustful moans as she did so. The two women watched Anna's hands on their partner, their eyes wide with desire.

"Now, before we get really started, how about you tell me your names? I'm Anna."

"Paula." The blonde smiled.

"Marie." The redhead, her voice little better than a tight groan, pushed herself into Anna still further so that her small breast filled Anna's hand.

Anna took full advantage, squeezing and kneading the soft, warm flesh, then dipping her head to lick at the nipple, which elicited a moan from Paula. Anna glanced up at her as she licked; watching Paula's obvious arousal was a turn-on itself.

She paused for a moment to say, "Paula, take the other one."

Marie's whimpered, "Oh, yes," had barely left her lips before Paula was sucking on her other nipple.

Anna shifted to her right to give Paula more room, and the pair of them went to work.

Marie's moans increased in volume and she grabbed Anna's shoulder, her hand clutching hard, almost enough to make Anna wince. She didn't care.

They worked Marie's breasts for some minutes, and all the while Marie moaned, and whimpered, and squirmed.

"Fuck. *Please*," she begged, but Anna had plans for more than just her and Paula giving Marie pleasure.

An idea had been forming that she figured should be possible to carry out. The couple of times she'd had threesomes before, they'd been in a bed, fully naked, and therefore had a lot more scope and room to move around in. Even so, there were some delicious options still available here in the club, and she intended to utilise them.

She straightened and pulled Paula off Marie's breast.

The two women breathed heavily, their faces flushed.

At their questioning looks, Anna smiled. "Both of you back against the wall." She motioned with her hand. "Face me, stand as close to each other as you can."

They did exactly as they were told, pressed tight against each other, their gazes locked on Anna, perhaps wondering just what she had in mind.

She stepped in and pushed their shirts back, leaving both hanging off their shoulders so that their breasts were fully on view. She bent to have a taste of Paula's more ample breasts, enjoying how her fatter nipples responded to each bite and tug.

Marie's hand snuck across to join in, and Anna didn't stop her. At one point, Marie slid two fingers on either side of one of Paula's nipples and eased it away from her body so that Anna could flick her tongue over it, causing Paula to cry out above them.

When Anna eased back, ready to move on to the next step, Paula and Marie kissed and Anna enjoyed the display. Their kiss was slow, and tender, and she wondered what their story was, whether they were already a couple before they got here tonight, or something else. Whatever they were to each other, however, tonight they were hers to play with, and that was all that mattered to Anna.

She took in what they were wearing. Paula was in a skirt, which would be easy enough to hike up for what Anna had in mind. However, Marie wore jeans, so Anna hoped she wouldn't mind a little indignity when Anna yanked them down to her ankles. She snorted to herself. Given what they'd already started, she didn't think Marie would really have a problem with baring herself to the room.

Anna shot a quick glance around the room and behind her. Yep, they had an audience. She couldn't blame them; if she was sitting at the bar right now she'd be watching this show too.

She smirked. Time for the main act.

Opening the button on Marie's jeans snapped her out of the kiss with Paula.

Marie smiled at Anna, then took over undoing the jeans. "Where do you want them?" There was a wicked grin on her face.

"Ankles." Anna motioned to her lacy underwear. "Those too."

"Oh, God." Marie's voice was strained, her pupils blown wide.

Paula let out a small moan.

"You." Anna turned to Paula. "Can just pull that skirt up out of the way, if you like." She saw a glint in Paula's eyes. "Or take it off too. Whatever you prefer."

It seemed Paula was quite keen—the skirt was yanked down, along with her black G-string, in a matter of seconds.

Anna chuckled. "I do like to see such enthusiasm."

Paula smirked, then opened her legs. "Is this how you want me?"

"Oh, yeah," Anna murmured, her gaze on the brief triangle of hair between Paula's legs.

Marie finished dealing with her clothes, and she too, with a little shake of her head, opened her legs. "Is this what you wanted?" she said to Paula. "This voyeuristic enough for you?"

Paula nodded, her expression tender and full of love.

Ah, so they are a couple. Interesting.

“Thank you.” Paula kissed Marie and cupped her face. “Are you okay?”

Marie laughed and kissed Paula back. “Fuck, yeah!”

Anna took that as her cue. She nudged them back again from where they’d turned to kiss, then placed a hand on each of their bellies. Paula’s was a little rounded, and Anna loved how the flesh moved beneath her fingers. Marie’s was flatter, a tad harder, and she shivered in a delectable way with every sweep of Anna’s hand across her skin.

As she trailed her hands downwards, both women inhaled sharply, and Anna grinned. This was just so thrilling, having two women at her mercy rather than one. Again, her previous threesomes had been so different—there’d been more alcohol involved, for one thing, so there’d been more silliness and giggling. But there had also been much more of a rolling give-and-take, with all three women involved taking turns with each other, or even playing tag on certain actions. Having both Marie and Paula submitting solely to Anna’s whims was intoxicating in a whole new way for her, and she loved it.

Her fingers encountered soft, trimmed hair on both women, and she let the tips of all her fingers play through the fuzz for a few moments before she moved further down.

She locked gazes with Paula first, then Marie, switching back and forth between them after a minute or so each time, watching their reaction to her slow journey towards their pussies.

Paula was biting her lip; Marie was simply breathing heavily.

Then even Anna couldn’t wait any longer; tormenting them was one thing but she had her own hunger to assuage as well.

She slipped the middle finger of each hand down over two clits and in between two wet pairs of pussy lips. Both were soaked, and both women shuddered and moaned as Anna’s fingers travelled through that slippery wetness.

It was intriguing, feeling the difference between her fingers, how each woman was shaped, how much more viscous Marie’s pussy juices were than Paula’s.

Anna stroked, as slow as she could, from each woman’s entrance up to her clit and back again.

Paula and Marie thrust their hips, staring at her with open-mouthed expressions, until Marie couldn’t seem to stop her eyes from closing, her face flushed with pleasure. Paula kissed Marie, who kissed her back with a hunger that would surely leave them both with bruised lips at the end of the day.

Anna pushed a finger inside each of them and they broke the kiss to cry out, turning their faces to stare at her.

She leaned in, kissing first Marie, then Anna, all the while slowly fucking each of them, their pussies tightening around her fingers and pulling her in deeper, their hips bucking now, asking for more.

She plunged in with more fingers—Paula could take three, Marie only two, but however many it was, it was incredible. This she had never done, in all of her sexual adventures over the years. Fucking two pussies at once was extraordinary. It was fantastic having two women, both clutching her for support, thrusting wildly against her and almost fighting each other for the right to kiss her. She dived from one hot mouth to the other as she fucked them hard.

“I want to touch you,” Marie gasped to Paula in a moment when all of their mouths were free. She turned to Anna. “Can I?”

“Oh, yeah. Both of you, touch each other if you want.”

She didn't mind—it was taking all of her strength to keep upright, keep fucking them, and keep them braced against her. The thought of then trying to get enough leverage to be able to rub their clits as well defeated her, so she'd take any help they were offering to get each other off.

The two women grinned, then those grins turned to long, low moans as they crossed arms and each found the other's clit.

Anna took a small step back, which still enabled her to keep fucking them while at the same time giving them room to stroke each other. She looked down to watch the action. She really wanted to see this, to see all of their hands working in unison on the pair of them to bring them to orgasm.

It was a mesh of fingers and hands. Everything was dripping wet now, sliding around so easily. A trickle of sweat crept down between her shoulder blades—this was *way* better than any gym workout.

Both Marie and Paula maintained a fast rhythm on each other, and Anna suspected that their climaxes couldn't be far away. The air was filled with their groans, and breathy cries, and the lovely wet sucking sounds of fingers working pussies and clits.

Marie tipped over the edge first, stiffening suddenly, her teeth clenched and her pussy gripping Anna's fingers so tight she wondered if she'd ever retrieve them.

The sight and sound of Marie's orgasm seemed to do the trick for Paula too, as she came only a minute later, gushing all over Anna's hand as she did so, her head thrown back and a long, keening cry escaping her lips.

Marie removed her hand from her partner's clit and leaned into her, nuzzling her neck, whispering words Anna couldn't hear and weren't meant for her ears anyway.

Anna's knees ached from bracing herself for so long, and her wrists burned from working so hard in the past few minutes. Both pains she could live with, given what pleasure she'd received too. Her own clit was rock hard and in desperate need of attention, and she'd need to do something about that soon. She could, of course, ask either Paula or Marie to take care of that for her, but as soon as she had that thought, another one popped into her head. Why not find someone else? Why not just stroll around the room some more and see who else took her fancy? After all, she had all evening...

Eventually both Paula and Marie gave her the signal that she could extract her fingers from their wet warmth.

They slumped back against the wall once she had done so, and she leaned next to Paula to take the weight off her knees for a moment.

"Can we do anything for you?" Paula pulled her clothing back up and straightened out her skirt. She reached across to the button on Anna's trousers, but Anna took her hand and gently pushed it away.

"You know what, I'm going to leave you two to have some alone time. You're obviously together, and shared something new tonight. I'm grateful you let me take part in that." She smiled at them both. "That was amazing. Thank you."

"Our pleasure, believe me," Paula murmured.

"Oh, trust me, there was pleasure in there for me too." Anna winked. "And now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to have a look around, and see who else I can share some pleasure with tonight."

Marie grinned. "Why not? That's what this place is for after all."

Anna chuckled. "So I'm discovering."

"Thank you." Paula's tone was gentle.

Marie nodded, pulling Paula close, but keeping her gaze on Anna. "Yes. Thank you. This was...exactly what we were after."

Anna gave them a mock bow. "Enjoy the rest of your evening," she said, her gaze already drifting as her clit throbbed to remind her of its urgent need.

* * *

The Blue Room was much busier than the last time Max had visited it, and she found it a little daunting to begin with. She took her whisky to the central bar and sipped as she took in the surroundings once again.

It was different being back at the club now, six months down the track. While she knew she still carried a measure of guilt over what had happened with Sue, she was coming to understand that that might never entirely go away, but that she'd be able to live with it. The past month she had made some real progress with that, and realised she was allowed to be happy. Allowed to feel lust and desire and want.

So, here she was again, hoping to do something about that. Hopefully with someone just as hot and dominant as that last woman she'd been fucked by in this room. Even the thought of it made her wet.

She counted a dozen couples already in action, and a further four or five women hanging by the walls, waiting. Her last visit to Blue, she'd been invited over by that butch from almost the exact same spot she was sitting at now. But tonight she planned to be a little bolder, and offer herself up by finding her own spot on the wall.

The tingle that shot down her spine at *that* image made her smile. Look at her, being all brave.

The last sip of whisky eased down her throat and she took a deep breath. She was ready, of that there was no doubt. Her pussy throbbed, and her heart thumped; the anticipation caused her entire body to heat up.

She slipped off the stool and walked to a free space on the wall. Leaning against it, she tuned in to the sounds of the couple next to her, who were making use of one of the chairs so that the woman wearing the strap-on could sit and have her partner straddle her. They were fucking slowly, kissing deeply, oblivious to anything around them. It was a beautiful sight, and Max's pussy clenched. Yes, to feel that was exactly what she wanted.

Patience, she knew, was a virtue, but she struggled to summon it tonight. Her gaze swept back and forth, trying to spy a willing partner for the evening. The other single women on the walls were either all like her, waiting for someone who was packing to deliver what they wanted, or simply weren't interested in Max. The latter didn't upset her—here, of all places, one could be choosy. Especially on a busy night like this.

The door from Red, opposite Max's vantage point, opened, and a tall woman strode into the room. She marched around the room, inspecting all the women by the walls, and stopped when she got to Max.

She stared, looking Max up and down.

Max didn't know what it was, but there was something unsettling about the woman, about the way she leered at Max. It put Max on alert, and she straightened up.

"How about it?" the woman barked, her voice rough.

Max hesitated for a moment. This was not a situation she'd ever anticipated having to deal with here. That was naïve, perhaps, because surely there were plenty of occasions where two women meeting here wouldn't necessarily both be interested. And she definitely wasn't interested in this woman—she scared Max, rather than thrilled her. She didn't know what the etiquette was but there was no time to worry about that now.

"No, thank you." She kept her tone polite, but firm.

The woman flinched and sneered. "Oh, really? Think you're too good for me, do you?" The smell of beer from her breath hit Max's nostrils.

Oh, great. Pissed and belligerent.

Max made to walk past the woman, to get to the bar and a place of safety, but the woman blocked her path.

"Hey! I'm talking to you."

Movement behind the woman caught Max's eye. Out of the darkness, a hand grabbed the drunk woman's bicep and pulled her round.

"No means no," said a voice, loud and clear. "So unless you want me to have you thrown out, you'll just move on. Now."

Max strained to look past the drunk woman's shoulder to see who her rescuer was, then startled in surprise. It was the same woman from before, the butch with the long leather coat.

The drunk stared at the new arrival, then squared her shoulders, slapped the hand away from her arm and stomped off.

"You okay?" the rescuer asked, stepping closer but not far enough in to invade Max's space.

Max couldn't help the chuckle that escaped her throat. "I am now. Thank you." She paused, wondering if the recognition went both ways. "And hello again."

The woman smiled and it transformed her face. What had been plain and serious was now handsome and relaxed. "I didn't actually know it was you when I stepped in. And I hope it was okay that I did because—"

Max held up a hand. "Oh, more than okay! She was really starting to scare me."

"Not quite what you had in mind for the evening, huh?"

"No. Not really."

Did she dare?

Yes.

“Actually, you were pretty much what I had in mind for tonight,” Max said.

Holy shit. Bold or what?

The woman’s eyes widened, then she barked out a laugh. “Well, I don’t remember you being that feisty last time.” She moved nearer. “I quite like it. Although, of course”—she lowered her voice—“I will need to put you in your place for being so cheeky. Just a little.”

Max smiled as wetness drenched her underwear. “I understand.” She relaxed her shoulders and stepped backwards until her body came into contact with the wall behind her. “Whatever you feel is appropriate.”

Good grief, where was this coming from? Is this what was meant about being free to find the woman inside herself?

“What’s your name?”

“Max.”

“I’m Kath.” She stepped in and ran a fingertip down the side of Max’s face. “It’s nice to see you again, Max.”

Then, to Max’s surprise, she leaned in and kissed her.

They hadn’t kissed last time. Then it had been all about fucking and dominance and control. And as much as Max wanted that again, this kiss was...lovely. The last kiss she’d received had been with Lou, the first woman she’d been with here at the club, and how could she have forgotten how wonderful kissing could be?

Kath’s kiss was gentle, which surprised her, but it was delicious too, making her quiver all over. She wrapped her arms around Kath’s waist and pulled her in, not caring if she was stepping over a line.

Kath didn’t stop her; instead she grasped hold of Max’s hips and tugged her closer, pressing their pelvises together, the seam of her jeans creating arousing pressure between Max’s legs. Her clit was pounding already, and something told her she was in for more than one orgasm tonight.

Kath pulled away, her grin wide. “Well now, that’s twice I’ve let you get away with things.” She tugged Max’s arms away from her waist. “I definitely need to put a stop to this.” Her words were firm but her eyes twinkled. It was intoxicating—the dominance was there, yes, but it had softened just a tad from last time, and it made Kath even more attractive as a result.

Kath glanced to one side, and Max saw what she was looking at. In the time it had taken for the drama to unfold with the drunken woman from Red, and for their kiss to consume them, the couple who had been using the chair had vacated it.

Oh, God. Say you want to use that. Please!

“I think I know just what will help both of us take our minds off that little incident.” Kath smirked, which sent another gush of juice into Max’s underwear. “Wait here, don’t let anyone else grab that”—she gestured to the chair—“and I’ll be right back.”

Max leaned back against the wall, her heart racing. This was...perfect. She was grinning, but couldn’t help it. Somehow, a sheer fluke had brought her and Kath together again, and it eased any remaining nerves Max had. Now she knew she was in for a good time—she knew how incredible sex with Kath could be, after all. And all the additions to their interaction since last time—the humour, the kisses—made it even better.

Kath reappeared with something in her hand.

“Sorry, we need to do this.” She leaned forward to wipe the chair with what Max now realised was an antibacterial wipe from one of the bathrooms.

“Thank you,” Max said as Kath straightened up. “I never even thought of that.”

Kath shrugged, scrunching up the wipe and throwing it onto the floor behind the chair. “I’ve been here a few times. You learn what’s necessary.” She grinned, and it was wicked. “Plus, it gave me a chance to get dressed, so to speak—I’d only just got here when I got that woman off you.”

Max glanced down at Kath’s groin, saw the tell-tale bulge in her jeans and shuddered with anticipated pleasure.

Kath’s breath in was sharp and Max snapped her eyes back up to meet her heated gaze.

“Undo your shirt,” Kath said without preamble, her eyes narrowing. “You can keep it on, but I want to see your breasts so get that shirt and your bra open.”

Max’s knees trembled. It wasn’t only the words that Kath used, but the tone and the presence she had.

Her fingers fussed at her buttons for a moment before she got them under control enough to actually pop the things open. She kept her gaze locked with Kath’s as the shirt fell open, and was thrilled at the look of intense hunger that stole across Kath’s face. Reaching behind her, she flipped the bra hooks. Her breasts, abundant masses that they were, fell free of their confines.

In the next moment Kath’s hands were there, shoving the bra up so that the straps tangled and held it out of the way. She looked at Max’s breasts, but her looking was like touching.

Max’s nipples were rigid already and aching for Kath’s mouth or fingers to find them.

“Very nice,” was all Kath said, and still she didn’t reach out for Max.

It’s too early to beg, isn’t it? And even if I did, she’d ignore me, I’m sure.

So Max waited, her breasts exposed to anyone who cared to see them, but she only cared what Kath thought and wanted. Like all her previous visits to the club, it was easy to shut out whatever else was going on in the room once you were involved in your own tryst.

After an agonising couple of minutes where Kath stared at her breasts and Max tried hard not to press forward and force them into Kath's hands, Kath finally relented, and reached out one hand.

Max strained towards the touch, but Kath immediately retracted her hand.

"Wait," she commanded. "You will wait until I touch you, understand?"

"Yes. I will. I just..." There was no point finishing that sentence. Kath would make her wait. And while it would be worth it, Max knew, she really wished Kath would get on with it.

She willed herself to relax back against the wall and wait.

Kath tortured her for another minute before raising her hand again. This time Max held herself back, and Kath's murmured, "Good girl," was music to her ears.

The touch, when it came, was exquisite. A sharp tug on her left nipple, between a thumb and forefinger. It shot a bolt of something fierce through her pussy; her clit jumped.

"Oh, God." Max moaned.

Another minute elapsed before the next touch. How could Kath control herself like this?

Again, a sharp tug, but this time on both nipples at once and Max whimpered with the pleasure-pain those pulls induced.

"You get me so fucking hard." Kath's voice was rough, and the wave of triumph that flooded through Max was overwhelming. So the control wasn't total, and knowing she was unravelling Kath like this was beyond arousing.

Kath stepped back. "Jeans off. And underwear too."

Max had never taken her clothes off so fast. As she did so, Kath sat down on the chair, undid her jeans, and pulled out a dark-coloured dildo that seemed a little larger than the last one she'd used on Max.

Trembling, Max walked to stand in front of the chair. Her shirt just about reached the tops of her thighs, so although she was fully exposed, there was enough material covering her not to worry too much about what sort of view she was giving the rest of the room. Her pussy was drenched; moisture trickled down the tops of her thighs. Although the dildo Kath was wearing looked big, Max knew she was wet enough to take it.

Kath rolled a condom on, then sat back, looking at Max before her, her dildo jutting up, just waiting for Max's pussy to greet it. She ran the fingertips of one hand down Max's body, from her breasts to her pussy, fingering her curls then stroking between her swollen pussy lips.

It took every ounce of Max's strength not to move, not to impale herself on those fingers, knowing that to do so would make Kath stop. And oh, God, she did *not* want Kath to stop.

"Hmm, someone's ready." Kath grinned as she held up her now wet fingers, turning them to admire the shine in the low lights of the room. Then she licked her fingers.

Max groaned.

"Oh, yeah. And very tasty," Kath added, licking her lips.

Oh, fuck, please. Please fuck me now!

Her silent prayers were answered—Kath grasped her hips and rasped, "Come here."

Placing one foot on one side of the chair, Max swung the other leg up and over to stand straddling Kath.

Kath's gaze was locked on Max's wet pussy, which was now within licking distance, if she so desired.

Max didn't want her to—not yet, at least. Maybe later. Right now, all she wanted was to be filled and fucked.

Once again Kath made her wait and Max wanted to curse her even as she delighted in the ache it elicited in her oh-so-ready pussy. There really was something to be said for sexual torture.

Moments later, Kath tugged on Max's hips and relief and anticipation flooded through her. She lowered herself until her pussy was no more than a couple of inches away from the head of Kath's dildo.

"Fucking you from behind was good." Kath stared at Max with an intensity that thrilled her. "But doing you this way is going to be even better."

"Oh, yes..."

Kath pulled her down, using one hand to guide the dildo into her, and Max was astonished at how easily she took it all, in one long, slow, penetrating thrust.

Sweet Jesus, that felt good. Way more than good.

"God, you look so fucking hot riding me like this." Kath's voice was strained. "Come on, fuck yourself on my cock. Faster."

Max didn't need telling twice. She sunk onto it, as deep as she could go. Her hands went to Kath's shoulders, and she used the leverage from that position to rise up until the dildo was nearly out of her body before plunging back down again.

"Fuck, yes! Just like that." Kath groaned. "Do it."

Max did, thrusting faster and faster, her hands gripping Kath's shoulders. Their heads were close, their mouths almost touching. Kath's eyes were closed. Max had to kiss her, this moment couldn't be only about a fuck now, not when they were this close.

Kath responded, driving her tongue into Max's mouth as the dildo slid deeper into Max's pussy. Kath brought her hands up from Max's hips to her back, pulling her close, moaning as she plundered Max's mouth. Then she swept one hand round to Max's front, squeezing a breast and pulling on a nipple.

All of it, the kissing, the massaging of her breast, the feel of that big dildo buried deep inside her and fucking her so perfectly, filled Max with a sense of completeness she'd never known.

She bore down even harder, panting in between their kisses, her eyes glued shut as ripples of extraordinary pleasure washed through her. She usually never came from just penetration but something was different tonight—perhaps the position or the joy of reconnecting with someone who'd made her feel so good before. Whatever it was, Max could recognise the signs of her impending orgasm and she was shocked they were building without anything specific happening to her clit. Kath inside her like this was that good.

Kath moaned against Max's throat; her control seemed to have slipped. Max was no longer Kath's toy to do with what she would—she was an active participant in whatever this was, and Kath seemed to be struggling to maintain her composure the longer it went on.

This, too, aroused Max in a way she'd not felt before, and when Max happened to open her eyes, and Kath looked up at her, what she saw in that hot yet tender gaze sent a different kind of pleasure coursing through her.

They kissed again, and in leaning farther into that, to get even closer to Kath than she already was, her clit made contact with the harness.

That was it—her orgasm crashed through her, her thighs locking into position as she drove down onto the dildo for one final thrust, her pussy throbbing out a rhythm she feared would stop her heart.

She cried out, wrapping her arms around Kath's neck, and Kath kissed her shoulders, her neck, her collarbone, all the while holding her tight, holding her close.

“So fucking good,” Kath croaked against her skin. “Oh, God, so fucking good.”

“Yes,” Max whispered, kissing the top of Kath's head. “Yes, yes, yes.”

After a moment where they simply held each other, Max leaned back. “Did you...do you need...?”

Kath shook her head and pulled Max close again. “Later,” she whispered, wrapping her arms around Max, her hands warm through the fabric of Max's shirt.

They stayed like that for some time, until Max's pussy told her in no uncertain terms that it had had enough, and she eased herself up off the dildo.

Kath helped, holding it steady. When it finally popped out of her, she sat back down on Kath's lap.

"You don't mind, do you? Only my legs are like jelly."

Kath chuckled and pulled off the condom, which she discarded on the floor.

"Not at all. You weigh next to nothing."

She pulled Max close again, kissing her gently. "That was amazing," she said, when they came up for air. "*You were amazing.*"

"So were you," Max whispered, brushing a few damp strands of hair away from Kath's forehead. "I...I love how you talk to me."

Kath nodded. "You bring out the best in me." Her eyes went wide, as if she thought she'd said too much.

"Good." Max kissed her lightly. "Ugh, I hate to say this, but I need to clean up before we do anything else." She stopped and stared at Kath. "Sorry, that was rather presumptuous of me, wasn't it? I mean, if you want to move on or—"

Kath placed a finger against her lips. "Nope. I would like to spend some more time with you too."

Max flushed with pleasure of a more emotional kind. "Good."

She cleaned up in the bathroom, her expression dreamy and a delicious lassitude washing over her. That had been so perfect, and she really didn't want the evening to end. She was also dreaming of something that probably couldn't happen—making an arrangement to maybe see Kath outside the club. She snorted. To do what? Have some kind of friends-with-benefits thing? Or just a sexual relationship where they met occasionally for Kath to fuck her brains out?

Don't be ridiculous.

Still, maybe there was some value in asking how regularly Kath came here.

I mean, it's a bit of a trip up here, but even if it was every couple of weeks it wouldn't break the bank, would it?

She snorted again and dried her hands. This was not the time to be getting carried away. For now, she should just be grateful for the time they were sharing this evening.

With a smile at the thought of how they could share that time, she exited the bathroom and strolled back into Blue.

Kath was at the central bar, a beer in front of her.

“I hope you don’t mind.” She gestured to the beer. “I kind of needed a break after that. You wore me out.” She winked.

Max laughed. “No problem. I’ll just get myself something and join you, if that’s okay?”

“Definitely okay.”

With another whisky in her hand, Max slid onto the stool next to Kath and they clinked their drinks together.

“Those three look like they’re having some serious fun,” Kath murmured after a moment.

Max followed her gaze. In one corner, a tall woman sporting a strap-on was being sucked off by not one but two women at her feet. They were taking turns and playing with each other while doing so.

“That’s what I love about this place.” Max grinned. “Anything and everything goes, and nobody bats an eyelid.”

Kath chuckled. “Yeah, I know what you mean.” She took a sip of her beer and sighed. “It’s why I’m going to miss it so much.”

“What do you mean?”

Shit, was she never coming back again?

Shrugging, Kath said, “Sometime in the next few months, I’ll be leaving Manchester. I mean, of course I can still visit this place occasionally, but not every week like I have been doing.”

“Work taking you away?”

It didn’t feel odd at all to be talking to Kath like this, someone she’d only been fucked by twice with barely any other conversation between them.

Kath shook her head, and her eyes took on a faraway look. “No, it’s... Well, let’s just say that something I’ve had to do for some time now won’t be needed much longer. I’ll need to get away when that happens.”

She looked sad, and Max ached to console her, put an arm around her, but at the last minute she remembered the bloody “no-touch” rule for the bars.

“It sounds like whatever it is will cause you pain. I’m sorry for that.”

Kath shrugged again and took another swig of her beer.

“So, any idea where you’ll go?” Max hoped if she drove the conversation on, Kath might pull out of her sad place.

“Probably London. I’ve visited it lots of times over the years, but never lived there. It could be fun to see it from a different viewpoint.”

“London?” Max squeaked.

Kath looked round at her. “Yeah. Why?”

“I live in London,” Max blurted out.

Kath’s smile started small but grew wider by the second. “What a coincidence.”

#

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