

Newlywed and Nevis

SHE MEASURED HER HAPPINESS as the moment she stepped off of the ferryboat in Nevis, a quiet island in the southern West Indies, in the late afternoon, the sun, warm, golden, setting in the blue sky. They stepped onto the shore of Pinney's Beach, her brown sandals wedged in the brown sand, the sea darkening by the fading sunlight.

They were directed to their room promptly following, a villa, with a small pool in the back overlooking the green fairway, a marble-laden lanai with two wicker chairs, palm leaf fans, a king-sized bed, a full-sized kitchen, and a large master bath with a deep-seated tub, encircled by a crowning of palm trees undulating under the gentle wind.

They ate dinner at Mango's, the sun disappeared beneath the horizon, the sky, deep blue, the stars, fantastic, the humidity, dispersing softly, a single white boat, swaying against an eased current, calypso played. Brandon, who'd chosen to keep his hair long for the wedding, had let it go wild that night, looked comfortable in a cream shirt, rolled at the sleeves, and linen pants, smelled deliciously good, and she, the newly *de-virginized* bride, patiently anticipating the moment that they could be alone again.

She looked at him and she looked at the ring on her left hand. Her happiness lied there, with him, her *husband*; how funny that word sounded, how strange it was to look at him from across the wooden teak table, with white candles held in clear glass vases, and know what forever meant, *finally*, know then that she was old enough to understand it, that they were old enough to *stand* it.

They watched the sky fall, shared a plate of conch fritters and mango salsa, sipped from the same bottle of white zinfandel, laughed. Yes, they laughed the way

friends should, didn't they? After all, that is the way they started, right? Brandon, a preppie, pretentious, deep-voiced prince, strong, loud, wide-eyed and truthful, and, she, quiet, yielding, sweet, soft and humble. How trite was it that they connected so easily? Did that happen everyday? Brandon told a joke, she laughed hard, and she wondered how she got so lucky. She figured that she would never admit to him that the moment she fell in love with him, she knew that he was the one. Ha, did that even exist? Sure. As far as Natalie Chandler was concerned Brandon was all that she needed, all she could ever think about, blushed at the idea that the word *obsession* was quickly aligned with him.



He didn't mean to get her that drunk. But, as they walked the stone pathway, beneath the palm trees that night in the direction of the main house, he couldn't help but laugh at her. Damn it, the girl couldn't walk in a straight line to save her life, she stumbled over simple words, and that breathy giggle was enough to drive him crazy. He would take her dancing on the ocean terrace by the calypso band. She said that the music reminded her of the days that her father was around, and hell, he couldn't deny her that. He hoped that it wouldn't take long, though. The broad-shouldered, beast of a man couldn't wait to get his beautiful brown wife into that big floral bed. At this point, his body warmed with rum punch, belly full of tenderloin, he figured he could go all night, but he would take it slow. She deserved romance, didn't she? After all, her body was new to this, and the couple of times they'd done it since the wedding had hurt her a little, and she, having perfected the whole "submissive", "vulnerable" act, was a willing learner and participant. And he would give it all that he had inside of him.

He would just sway with her a little on the colored stone of the terrace, feel the breeze blow his hair, hear the steel drums, feel a bit of ocean spray, and he would hold her. Yes, he would hold for her as long as he wanted. She smelled so good then, drove him nuts, and he could feel her hips roll a little against him.

Oh, Tallie, don't do that, please...might lose it out here...

His stomach did some funky flip when she pressed her lips against the side of his face. Yes, those lips. He brought them to his own, smaller, less significant, but excited, loving the fullness of hers, anticipating the many moments that this pair of plush brown confection would be near him in the many years that they would be together.

His wife...

Ha, Brandon Greene, you finally did it! And who would've thought it? He, who was shamefully so far up Sophia Baldwin's ass, that there was no hope for him. But he'd been at the bar with Scotty one night some years ago and his curly-headed companion had asked him about the pretty, brown skinned thing with the legs that seemed to go on for days (from that moment on, Scotty had secretly called Natalie "Legs") at the Christmas party his junior year.

"Where did you take her? You nasty bastard, did you land her? Behind Sophia's back, I'm so proud of you," Silly Scotty had said.

"No, man, it was nothing like that," Brandon blushed over his beer. "We went for...tea..."

"Tea? You little faggot. You really went for tea?"

"Yes. It's the truth. She's a really cool girl..."

"But Brandon, you don't have friends that are girls...well, that you actually talk to the morning after..."

He remembered that his heart had tightened. Truly! "Well...funny thing is, this girl is different...she did ask about you..."

"Did she?"

"Yes..."

"I met her, but I forgot her name. What's her name?"

"Natalie..."

"Natalie," Scotty had sung. "Dude, give me her number..."

"Not a chance," Brandon told him. "You're not getting anywhere near her...this one's a good one..."

"Come on, man," Scotty said, slapping his friend on the back. "I just want to take her out...you know for tea..."

He was reluctant to give Scotty her number. He only wanted her for himself. But, he wanted to put up a substantial front in the beginning of their friendship; he wanted to pretend as if Tallie didn't matter. Sure, he would give his best friend a chance to score with the pretty girl. And deep down he could only pray that Natalie turned him down.

He drove their rented golf cart back to the villa, set on a decline, buried beneath lush tropical flowers.

Natalie, who could barely walk, had turned into a giggling mess, and he carried her into the house (of course, she called it a "threshold"), had thrown her on the bed. She smiled, bit her bottom lip, had pulled him down by his collar with her, he, his face reddened, forehead sweaty. She started kissing his face all over, grabbed him at his shoulders, giggling through and through. And she pushed him away, demanded that he turn out the light this instant! And he followed order without hesitation.

"I'm beginning to like this whole 'sex' thing...can I try it this way, tonight?" She'd said in the darkness.

So much for romance.



It was as if he'd awakened nerves that she didn't know she had. She was like a bird that had finally been set free from its cage. She could finally let go of any repressed emotion or sensation or feeling that she'd held inside. She was now a woman who enjoyed sex, many times over, beneath starlit skies on the cool tile floor of the lanai, on the cool marble countertop beneath a banana leaf fan in the kitchen, between the fluffy sheets on a rain-filled, balmy afternoon. She allowed her fingers to wander the length of his skin, to probe into various shadowed niches that she was once so fearful of. She writhed under the warmth and under his proximity, beneath his heavy breathing and his large hands grasping, and his subtle groans and the bed of sweat between them. Each time they made love, she felt Brandon transform into a

carnal beast of knowledge and of experience, going fast when she wanted to, or slowing himself down when she petted him gently. He seemed to have mastered every swift maneuver of his hips and of his pelvis, to make the moans escape her lips just right. He was a connoisseur with his tongue and with his wet lips, sending chills around and through her, causing her to tremble with delight to this new feeling.

As each day passed, she became less and less apprehensive about displaying her naked body to him, and became more and more intrigued by the unwillingness of his hands to leave her skin untouched. On some morning occasions, she opted to remain bare, awaiting and breathlessly anticipating the next moment that his hands would find a home against her curves, around her breasts, between her thighs...

Perhaps being so near to the water brought her alive. Perhaps after feeling a bit of sea spray against her thirsty skin while she watched the sky fall beneath lofty palms with her husband, witnessing the stars appear as the crickets cried made the world disappear. She became less aware of the people around her, of her worries that awaited her in Georgia, and became a slave to the balmy breeze, to her husband's embrace, to the smell of his ocean-misted, creamy skin and saltwater hair. He'd hold her near and she'd bury her face in a sea of black hair, running it past her lips, kissing each patch softly. They'd sit in the open-air lobby after dinner, catch a glimpse of the starry sky above them, sip drinks, hold each other. She loved to tease him in public. She loved to run chilly, ripe mango across his lips, watching him lean up to bite and miss. She loved to graze her fingertips along the backs of his ears over cocktails at Banana's on the summit, while they witnessed the city lights of St. Kitts across the waters glisten, liven, flicker, stretch as far as the eye could see. She loved to press her lips against the nape of his warm neck in the infinity pool outside of the villa, while the sun hid behind a thin veil of graying clouds, threatening a tropical afternoon rainfall. She was certain that she'd never feel closer to Brandon than in these moments, with the fire inside of her ignited, anticipating, with each touch and feel of his heartbeat against her, the moment that he'd take her, and pour his soul inside of her...