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LOVE/SEX WARNING/DISCLAIMER:

This story is not about love, it's not about friendship, it's about sex. Shallow sex. Torrid shallow, sex. The kind of sex where people don't call you the next day and you don't really care. Everyone is a consenting adult, but in some states that doesn't matter. If you have a problem with "Chicks With Dicks" (of the silicone variety) then for god's sake don't read this. If you have a problem with "Exit Only" or to put it more bluntly, anal fuckage, then don't read this story. If threesomes bother you then <all together now> don't read this story. If you are under 18 years of age or if this type of story is illegal in the state, country or province in which you live, don't read this story. If depictions of this nature disturb you, you've been warned so don't come crying to me.

Author's note: This story comes from a lot of places. I have to thank Silent Bard and Loafie for the title since I thought of it the night I cooked them Bananas Foster for dessert on our weekly date night. I'd like to thank Stacey for the 'inspirational' reading material she loaned me, and Indi for the inspirational poster she gave me <g>. This is the first sex scene I've written since The Party and I'll admit I'm a little rusty. In fact, I'm not sure I remember how to do this stuff. I'd also like to give a great big public "thank you" to the wonderful women who helped me move: Hes, Loaf, Tami, Glo, Kym, Erin, Carol, Sarah, Xana, and Stacey, this is for you guys...

Cooking With Fire A Faux Uber Sex Tale By Bat Morda 11/1/99

I could drag this thing out for days,- hell knowing me for months- slowly and carefully creating a world and characters that look like one's we're familiar with; the hair, they eyes- you know the drill. Then I could put them in a setting where these two women meet and interact as the plot carefully and slowly builds to it's inevitable conclusion. Raunchy sex. There may be talk and discussion as to whether these two women are in fact True Ubers (tm), but does any of that matter? Does the UberXena have a dark past she struggles daily to keep in check? Is the UberGabrielle ready to join the first Heaven's Gate Comet Cult she comes stumbling across? Does she have tattoos and is she into food? And most importantly, is there a book deal somewhere in all of this?

To spare us all a lot of grief, me for writing and you the poor, mistreated

reader, for reading- I'm going to circumvent all that nonsense and give it to you straight. Er... I mean gay. A quickie little summary on each of our faux-uber characters, what makes 'em tick, then I'll get right to the...er...meat of the story and get to the sex. Does that sound like fun?

UberXena: Yeah, she looks like Xena and were she ever to try to say the name "Gabrielle" in that *special* way she'd have it nailed. However, Tiffany Schrade doesn't know anyone named "Gabrielle". (That's right, I said Tiffany and not Alex. You got a problem with that?) Tiffany does know a Gabriel though. But she *never* says his name. Her dearly loved and sadly killed younger brother. Any UberXena or FauxUberXena worth her toner has a dead younger brother don't cha know. You think Xena had it bad with the death of Lyceus? Man, this UberXena had it *real* bad. Her brother was killed by a peanut. That's right, I said PEANUT. Killed by a fucking peanut in the prime of his life. See, the poor boy had a deadly (obviously) allergy to the nut and got one in his Kung-Pao chicken. As a result Tiffany dedicated her life to the culinary arts so no one would be accidentally killed in such a brutal manner on her shift. In the dog cook dog world of overpriced eateries, Tiff sliced, diced and julliened her way to the top. As head chef of Le Bistro, she cooks things you can't afford, with utensils you don't own in a kitchen the size of your whole apartment. This is high end food. Rest assured- no one even slightly allergic to peanuts has ever been even made minutely queasy by that dreaded nut.

UberGabrielle: Decisions, decisions...Long hair or short? Well I think we'll go with short since I've never writing one of *those* stories before. Not that I'm crazy about the short hair mind you, but whatever. No, her name isn't Brie, or Brielle, or Gabby or Rielle even. It's...<thinking, thinking...> Samantha. Samantha Steele. Wow, pulled that right of my ass just now, I did. Samantha for Samantha Stevens (I *so* love Bewitched) and Steele for Remington Steele (I *so* loved Stephanie Zimbalist). So, Samantha Steele is a food critic. See it's the Gabrielle/Food connection guaranteed to drive some Xenites nuts. It's what I'm all about really, pissing people off. I don't care why and how- but as long as I'm causing some level of distress or annoyance somewhere in the universe, well then I guess my job is done. So back to our short haired, food knowledgeable UberGab... She's had a time of it; The poor girl got dumped. Granted it was months ago and she's pretty much over it. But there is still that occasional moment where she deeply and truly hurts inside because she feels incredibly stupid for feeling hurt, if that makes any sense. Then she calls one of her three near and dear friends and they get together and drink and say nasty things about the dumping woman in question, everyone has a laugh and feels better. Don't fret about the friends, we'll get to them later.

UberCallisto: Her name is Cassandra Wilson. Cassandra for Cassandra Peterson

of Elvira fame but she's called Cass for short in deference to Cass Eliot who's voice I adore. Last name, Wilson from the name "Andrea Wilson" that Moon Unit says at the end of the song Valley Girl. I don't know why these things come to me but they do. So Cass is her name and sex is her game. That's right- a big time, high class mondo expensive Call Girl. Or Call Womin or Womyn if you're sensitive about such things. She's kinda crazy as any UberCallisto worth her peroxide should be. She lives with Tiffany Schrade in a gorgeous house. Belonged to Tiff's mum but I'm eliminating all the boring plot involving the house and what debt Tiff feels she owes Cass to let the bitch live with her. I'm sure there is some dark sordid, twisted secret in there somewhere. But damn if I have the energy to ferret it out. Lets just say that there is *some* big reason that Tiff and Cass share a huge house and leave it at that. I wouldn't exactly call them friends. They don't really like each other, after all. But they share an abode, even if due to their schedules they seldom see each other in it.

As for our other characters, that'd be Sam's friends UberEponin, UberSolari and UberEphiny. And what is up with Eponin being in, like one episode, and then turning up in practically every Amazon ridden fan fic story ever since? Somebody get me her publicist. There names are, <thinking, thinking> Grace McFadden, RJ Smith, and Chase Griffith. Don't' ask me where these names came from because I don't have the foggiest idea.

The whole point of this little get together is that Grace, Chase and RJ (that has kind of a nice ring to it) are taking Sam out for her birthday. Since it's been a few months since the dumpage happened that I mentioned earlier, Grace, Chase and RJ have decided that 'ol Sam has been off the meat wagon long enough and she needs to get laid. A night of sweltering fun sex that will get the last traces of the blues out of her blood and put her back on track. That little bit of rub down and smelling salts before being thrown back in the ring. But like any decent story there is a twist. I mean you don't *have* to have a twist, I just think they're more fun. Some stories are predictable as hell and people still like them, so it's a matter of taste I guess.

Anyway, this story has a twist. No, no one sees dead people or is dead people for that matter. Grace, Chase and RJ pool a few grand together... They debate giving it to an online bard for a present, buying some horrendously overpriced Creation Entertainment merchandise on eBay or spending it on a high classed hooker for Sam's birthday. Guess which they do? They give it to the one who's selling herself. No, silly it's the HOOKER. But here's the twist. They think Tiff *is* the hooker. See, that's the funny part. Cass is the hooker but they pay Tiff- and I'm talking *lots* of money. Enough money to buy, like three rare items from Creation on eBay or pay the interest on Brazil's national debt. Okay, maybe that little twist will be funnier when the story gets going. Maybe not, but maybe the sex will be worth the lack of humor. Or humor worth the sex. Hell, I don't know. Just read.

In the beginning...

Samantha Steele smiled tightly, dipping a spoon dubiously into her turtle soup. Having become acquainted with turtles as pets as a child, the thought of eating turtle soup was rather unsettling. It wasn't that she had particularly fond memories of turtles, but rather she remembered what mean, nasty, smelly creatures they were. She wondered if somehow by eating turtle soup she'd be infused with the same foul disposition she remembered in her deceased pet, Spike. Still, her friends Grace, Chase and RJ insisted on bringing her to Le Bistro for dinner. It was her birthday and the trio insisted she celebrate. Idly she considered that milestone as she dipped her spoon yet again. She didn't have a thing against birthday's as a general rule, she just didn't feel like celebrating this one. It wasn't some big "milestone" birthday, those were so fucking annoying. No, she'd just been in an odd funk for the past few months and as a result, wasn't in a partying mood.

Still, it was nice to be eating at a restaurant and not on the clock, she thought after another savory spoonful. That was her job; to think about food. Details like presentation and bouquet were her meat and potatoes (so to speak) as were deadlines and copy to be written. But today, on her birthday, she considered a different kind of "dead line" waiting for her many decades in the future and another type of clock.

It wasn't a "biological clock" per se that invaded Sam's thoughts. While based somewhat in biology this clock was more of a "dating timex". It wasn't the hurt so much of getting dumped that bugged her. No, it was more a humiliation with getting so upset at the dumpage in the first place. Like being the only one in the theater laughing at a movie. It wasn't as if it were any surprise. Like movies, some relationships have very predictable plot twists and conclusions. Was anyone surprised Old Yeller got shot? Still, Sam cried every time she saw it and felt foolish for doing so.

That was why Grace, Chase and RJ demanded the dinner. Sam was in her "I'm so predictable" funk, and while it was predictable in and of itself, her friends wanted to get her out of it. Le Bistro was an obvious choice. The restaurant wasn't new, it'd been offering overpriced fare to the rich and pretentious for two generations now. No, what was new was the head chef. Much fanfare heralded the addition of Tiffany Schrade to the kitchen. Even RJ who professed to know nothing about the food business had heard the news.

"So, Sam, whadda ya think so far?" RJ asked quietly, leaning over the table towards Sam.

After dabbing at the corners of her mouth with the linen napkin, and taking a quick look around at the elegant dining room, she answered. "Soup was good and the waiter seemed to know the ins and outs of a Caesar salad."

Grace looked up from her salad and grinned. "Come on Sam, we're not the Martha Stewart magazine. You don't need to dance around with us. Do you like this

place or not?”

“I hear the chef is cute,” Chase added, keeping quite true to her name.

Sam smiled in spite of herself. “Yeah guys, I like this place. The soup was killer and these crusty bread dealies with the salmon and dill, rock.”

“That’s more like it,” RJ replied with satisfaction. “So, besides us-- what are your big birthday plans?”

Sam shrugged. “You’re it guys,” then lightening her tone added, “who says I need anything but the three of you anyway?”

“Smoothie,” Grace whispered, blowing Sam a kiss.

RJ growled at Grace. “Don’t let your wife catch you doing that, tease.”

Chase laughed. “Come on, we’re trustworthy. Besides, look whose talking. I’m surprised you were able to take a break from that eight month honeymoon you’ve been on to join us for dinner.”

“You’re just jealous,” RJ shot back at Chase. “Besides, any girlfriend that doesn’t recognize the sanctity of our date nights isn’t worth keeping.”

“Amen to that,” Sam added, taking a sip of Merlot.

Dinner continued in that vein, four close friends chatting and hanging out as one would expect. Slowly, almost unconsciously Sam felt tensions seep away. While she always enjoyed the time when the four of them got together, the elegance of the restaurant and the magnificence of the food did indeed infuse the night with something special. But like any exquisite painting, Sam couldn’t help but wonder about the artist behind the brush.

In the kitchen Tiffany Schrade selected a filet of sea bass. Never one to simply oversee a kitchen and provide direction to her assistants, she enjoyed the act of cooking. There was something about the tactile process of marrying foods together to make elegant dishes and coordinating dishes to make unforgettable meals that Tiffany enjoyed. From the small potatoes sculpted to look like mushrooms, to the subtlety of flavor in the stuffed artichokes every detail was important and all together, they made magic.

She didn’t really think much about the people she was cooking for. Not past the fact that it was her duty as well as job to make sure their meal was perfection personified. At the prices Le Bistro charged she wanted to make sure that everyone went home well satisfied. There were occasions, usually at least once a night, where she did interact with her patrons. Any table that ordered Bananas Foster got an opportunity to see Le Bistro’s acclaimed chef in action. It was a chance for her to step away from her gleaming pots and pans and stroll into the candlelit dining room, usually to quiet, respectful, applause.

Tonight was one such night, and a special one at that. She’d heard from the restaurant owner that Samantha Steele the renowned restaurant critic was dining there that evening. Howard had insisted that she prepare all the food served to that table and Tiff was grateful they’d ordered a variety of challenging dishes. Sam’s visit didn’t

surprise her though. Grace McFadden had contacted her two days earlier with an offer interesting enough that she'd looked forward to their visit ever since.

With the evening coming to a close, Tiffany made sure all the ingredients for the famed dessert were on the portable table and tucked two birthday cards underneath the trivet. As the doors to the kitchen opened up, Tiffany allowed herself a moment to adjust her eyes to the candlelit diningroom then pushed the table forward. Gentle applause greeted her as she made her way to the table with the four women. She spotted Sam immediately, Grace's description proving quite fitting. She wasn't surprised, Grace McFadden was the west coast editor for a national magazine and clearly knew how to use her adjectives.

As she approached the table, all four women picked up their wine glasses and toasted her. Tiffany favored them all with a radiant smile, her blue eyes twinkling as Sam smiled in return.

"I hope everything was satisfactory," she said conversationally as she began to peel bananas.

"Awesome," RJ replied, to which Grace added "wonderful" and Chase added "orgasmic,"

"What they said," Sam finished with a smile.

"Glad to hear it," Samantha was familiar with the recipe for Bananas Foster. A dish she knew from Bremen's in New Orleans. Once the bananas were peeled and sliced, Tiffany lit the burner under the saute pan on her table. She melted some butter and added some brown sugar, banana liquor, a couple of cinnamon sticks and some vanilla. When all the ingredients had melted together she added the bananas, gently sauteing them in the mixture. Then she added some dark rum and lit it with a match

With a wave of heat and a low *thrum* the pan lit up with dancing blue flame. Unconcerned by the firestorm before them, Tiffany lifted the pan from the burner and shook it gently, sauteing the bananas and letting the rum burn out. When the flames extinguished she withdrew four bowls of french vanilla ice cream from the chilled compartment on her cart, draped each small pyramid of ice cream with four slices of sauteed banana and drizzled the remaining sauce over each. She handed out three of the bowls before withdrawing a candle from her pocket, and sticking it on top of the final pyramid and lighting it.

"Happy birthday," she said as she placed the bowl in front of Samantha.

Sam didn't know what to say beyond a simple "thank you". So she opted for that, hoping more would come to her later. She was grateful that no one sang. Before anyone got any ideas about vocalizing, she blew out the candle and looked around, hoping none of the other tables noticed. When she looked back to their chef, she saw the woman withdraw two cards from under a trivet on her cart. Tiffany handed them over with a smile. Sam opened the first. Her eyes were greeted by an art print of a woman's exquisitely tattooed torso and breast. Raunchy and elegant at the same time. "Happy Birthday," it said inside. "Meet Tiffany Schrade. She's your birthday present.

You get a free private cooking lesson with her. With love, Grace, Chase and RJ.”

Blushing and stunned, Sam didn't know what to say. It had to be some sort of joke.

“No joke,” Chase affirmed, reading her expression. “You're always talking about how you'd like to do more cooking and not just writing about it. Ms. Schrade is going to help you do just that.”

RJ giggled at that which made Sam suspicious but before she could react, Tiffany handed her another card. “I don't have quite the taste in cards your friends do,” she commented, glancing at the well lit nude shot, “but I hope this will suffice.”

Sam opened the card, which smelled faintly of rosemary and lavender. It was an art print of some well painted people making a big ado over a pot of some sort of herb, Sam guessed basil. “Happy birthday” Tiffany had printed inside, as well as her home number to set up the cooking lesson. In small print at the bottom it read “and you'd better call because your friends forked over a bundle for this.” Sam couldn't help but laugh at the brazen honesty of it all.

Sam wasn't laughing the following week after she parked her black BMW and headed up the steps to the address she'd written down on the back of the card the Tiffany had given her. She glanced at her watch and fought the impulse to get back into her car and run home. It was one thing to attempt cooking with her buddies who were as about adept in the kitchen as she was. It was quite another to consider sharing a kitchen with a master chef. She certainly wouldn't sketch in front of Drew Strewzan or pick up a guitar around Emily Sailors. She also didn't know what to wear and her friends were certainly no help in that department. They all suggested she dress as if she were on a date, which this wasn't and Chase went as far as to use the word sexy which was hardly how Sam felt. Still she figured Tiffany would have an apron or extra chef's shirt for her to wear so she opted for a short black leather skirt and soft clingy deep green sweater. She wore black stockings and strappy shoes that were comfortable enough to walk in if she didn't have to do it for long. At the point of no return, she rang the doorbell to the large historic looking house.

Tiffany answered the door with a warm smile, her eyes twinkling. “I wasn't sure you were going to show,” she said. “Come in and have a glass of wine.”

“I got kinda lost,” Sam replied taking a moment to study her tutor for the evening.

Tiffany Schrade wasn't dressed like a chef anymore than Sam was dressed like a student. She wore supple black leather pants, comfortable looking boots and a white silk button down shirt.

“The Hollywood hills are kind of a pain when you're driving up this far,” Tiff commented, pouring her guest a glass of deep red wine. “You were coming from the beach?”

“Yeah,” Sam confirmed, taking a grateful sip. “Traffic wasn't bad though.”

“Cool,” Tiff replied with a nod. “What do you say we get started then?”

The meal went more easily than Sam anticipated. Tiffany was a patient teacher, taking the time to explain why she’d chosen a particular cut of meat, what preparation she’d done ahead of time that sort of thing. She commented on certain tools she found indispensable in the kitchen and which gizmos she found a waste of time. Sam worked at her side, doing everything that Tiff demonstrated, tasting - and retesting to get the seasonings just right. She already had an extensive background food wise and was a quick pupil. It hardly seemed like any time had passed when they were enjoying the fruits of their labor over a candle lit dinner at an elegantly set table.

“If you don’t mind my asking,” Tiffany said partway through dinner. “Your friends picked kind of a bizarre gift for your birthday, don’t you think?”

Sam smiled. “It’s because they’re such good friends. I’ve not been myself lately and it’s kind of driving them nuts. And they know I’ve wanted to learn more about cooking.”

It was Tiffany’s turn to smile. “That’s not exactly what I’m talking about. I don’t know where your friends got their information. I think they have me confused with the woman I share this house with, but they seem to be under the impression that I’m an escort for hire or something. They didn’t expect me to be doing any cooking in the kitchen with you tonight.” Sam’s eyes grew wide as Tiffany placed a very large stack of bills on the table in front of her. Sam could guess that it was easily several thousand dollars. “They were paying me to fuck you.” she finished quietly.

Perhaps she should have felt humiliated or embarrassed, Sam thought idly, but she wasn’t.

“So why the cooking?” Sam asked, arching an eyebrow. “You could have turned me away at the door.” She spoke with a bravado she didn’t feel but didn’t really care. What was one more humiliation added to her collection.

Tiffany smiled, taking another sip of wine. “I don’t fuck for money, my housemate does that. But you seemed really interested in cooking when I spoke to you on the phone, and I figured, what the hell.”

“But you obviously fuck women?” Sam pressed. “You’re dressed for more than a cooking lesson.”

“Fucking? Yeah, I’ve done a fair amount of both,” Tiffany nodded. “But prefer women, yes.” She cocked her head and look thoughtful a moment. “To be honest, it’s been a while. I hadn’t made my mind up either way if I was going to make a play for you or not. I broke up with someone a awhile back and have been enjoying some peace and quiet. I’ve been too busy getting the restaurant in shape to get out and shag much.”

“Lovely,” Sam replied with faint disdain.

“Oh, I take it the lovely restaurant critic doesn’t go in for shagging? What sort of outfit would you call the one you’re wearing?” Tiff teased. “And why are your friends trying to buy you a hooker for your birthday if you’re not up for casual sex?”

Sam got defensive. “Look, my friends are weird and I don’t have a problem with casual sex.” She stopped herself, she was lying. “At least I didn’t before.”

“Grace told me you got dumped. What happened?”

“Someone casually lost interest in me. End of story. I forgot that half of “casual” sex means you’re not interesting enough not to be casual. I found them more interesting than they found me.”

“What were you looking for?” Tiffany asked.

“What everyone’s looking for, I guess. A clock that tells the same time,” Sam replied with a small smile, as if remembering a personal inside joke.

“And this casual chick? She wasn’t in the same time zone as you?”

Sam broadened her smile at the comment. “I thought we were in the same time zone. Sometime’s it felt so right, you know? But it turns out she didn’t wear a watch, and was only interested in killing some time. She was waiting to make a change and I was a nice diversion in the meantime.”

“You weren’t up for a being a diversion?”

Sam took a sip of wine considering her response. “No, I was fine at being the diversion. The part I had problems with was being disposable. Being a diversion whose time is past isn’t all it’s cracked up to be.” Sam sighed. “But you learn something and move on.” Guessing Tiffany’s next question she pressed on. “I learned about not giving everything away. Keeping some power for myself. I don’t believe everything at face value.” Shrugging, Sam took another sip. “I guess your house mate has it right, maybe it’s more honest to have the money up front. You know what you’re talking about then. It’s not like someone is going to tell you ‘I totally want to fuck you until I find someone else I want to fuck. That line about multiple partners has nothing to do with reality, it’s just incase I get caught, okay?’”

“Would that have made it any easier?”

“Maybe. Who knows?” Sam finished off her wine and poured them each another glass.

“But whining about it helps?” The callousness of Tiffany’s words were softened somewhat by the gentleness of her eyes. “Think about it, Sam. Your friends are willing to pay thousands of dollars for you to stop bringing them down. Yeah, it’s what friends are for, but that doesn’t mean they like it. Like any rude surprise, it’s not so much that they were all that... It’s that they got a chance to be unaffected by it by getting out before they broke you the news. At least that’s what I did. And your pissed off because you had to go through the whole humiliating ordeal of hurt and surprise and all of that in front of your friends and now you’re cranky and wounded. Just let it go. I guarantee whoever it was isn’t worth it and they only did it to you so you couldn’t do it to them.”

Sam knew she should have been angry. People weren’t supposed to read her so easily. But she wasn’t. The truth in the other woman’s words rang with the clarity of a tuning fork. “You’re right, of course,” she muttered quietly, her eyes falling from

Tiffany's to the embroidered tablecloth.

"Will you excuse me a moment?" Tiffany asked, rising from the table. Sam nodded her head in agreement and watched the tall woman head towards the bedroom. Sam took the opportunity to clear the dinner dishes from the table and rinse them off in the chef's huge well appointed kitchen. That finished, she picked up her wine glass and wandered into the living room, lost in thought. Several nice art prints decorated the wall in tasteful frames with unobtrusive matting. Of the CDs neatly stacked on the CD player, Sam recognized several titles. The room was dimly lit, with extra light coming in from the full moon shining outside the large windows that looked over a garden and pool. It was a comfortable and sophisticated, Sam felt at ease in the room.

Her thoughts drifted. Was she so annoying that her three closest friends would have forked over an insanely huge amount of money so she could get laid? Was getting laid all that important? And most importantly, would it do the trick? Recreational sex, casual sex, phone sex, adventurous sex. Sam had thought she'd done all those things, but then she wondered. Had she really done anything? If she couldn't remember it, then could it have really been that remarkable? If all it left was an ache, with more bitter than sweet, then what was the point of holding on to it at all?

Tiffany returned shortly, her hair freshly brushed and smiled. "Interested in dessert?"

Sam smiled back, not knowing how to take the comment. "I figured that was part of dinner." Just then, in that split second, Sam made a decision. She would see where this path would take her. In this night, with this woman. Not worrying about tomorrow or the tomorrows down the road, she would enjoy the moment for what it was, and not give away more of herself than she could stand to lose. That and she decided she was still hungry and could use dessert.

"It's a variation of Bananas Foster only I make it with peaches and brandy." Tiffany explained heading for the kitchen.

"Where do we start?" Sam asked, figuring that cooking was indeed all the taller woman was talking about. After her whole 'self revelation/mind thing' she was a little let down. Still, she wasn't expecting to get laid when she'd arrived, and wasn't crushed about it now. Maybe it was the things you didn't do that were the real adventure.

As before, a skillet was heated over a small flame. Tiffany added butter, brown sugar, vanilla and two cinnamon sticks. While it was caramelizing together she pulled a small container out of the fridge and set it in a warming pan of water.

"This is some home made caramel sauce that doesn't have alcohol in it. I use it to compliment the brandied peaches," she explained. With skillful fingers she sliced and peeled several fresh peaches, putting them in the caramelizing mixture to saute. She had just lit it on fire when the sound of an opening door announced the arrival of Cassandra Wilson, Tiffany's house mate.

"Oh god," Tiff groaned. "Cass is home." She glanced at the clock on the wall.

“And much too early at that.”

“Honey, I’m home,” Cass called from the entry way. She made her way to the kitchen and stopped short, her eyes widening at the sight of Sam. “And I see we’re entertaining company. Whose the bird?” she asked dismissively as she dropped a heavy black leather duffle bag down on the coffee table.

“I’m Sam and you must be Cassandra,” Sam said extending her hand. “The high priced hooker?”

Cassandra smiled. “A girl with balls, Tiff. You’re favorite. Where’d you find this one?” She looked Sam up and down. “And honey, you can call me Cass.” Her nose twitching, she noticed what was simmering under the blue flame in the skillet. “Oh, and I’m just in time for dessert, goody.”

Sighing, Tiffany resigned herself to her fate. There was no getting Cass away from a challenge, and she’d obviously found that in the restaurant critic’s repartee. “What are you doing back so early?” she asked.

Cass moved into the kitchen, getting three bowls down from the cupboard and scooping french vanilla ice cream into each one. She glanced at Tiffany and then said quietly, “Tiffany Schrade, is that Bananas Foster in your pants or are you just happy to see me?” As she spoke she handed the bowls to Sam who handed them to Tiffany.

“I may have gotten something from dinner on me,” she replied tightly. “Thank you for noticing.”

Sam gave Tiffany’s outfit a cursory overview and didn’t see any food. Suspecting some sort of inside joke she let it go. After scooping some peaches into each bowl of ice cream, Tiff drizzled the brandy caramel over each and finished them off with some of the regular caramel she’d just heated. Some ground cinnamon and nutmeg finished off the presentation.

“Can you believe it,” Cass began as they arranged themselves at the table. “Ol’ Tommy boy had more of an imagination that I suspected. He wanted to fuck me up the ass while his friends Doug and Henry watched. As if!”

“Didn’t know you had a problem with ass fucking,” Tiff said casually.

“That wasn’t the issue,” Cass retorted. “If he thinks he’s getting himself and two friends off for the price of one, he’s crazy.”

“So you just left?” Sam asked, shocked.

“Not hardly. Tommy has been a pretty good client. No, I tied him up, got Doug to fuck him while he sucked Henry off. They all came in like, two minutes.” Cass laughed. Sam decided that the laugh had a slightly psychotic bend to it. “They’re these ‘no way are we queer’ kind of repressed guys. But get a woman in the room with a dildo on and a crop and they’re all too happy to do anything I say. Twisted little fucks, but a woman’s gotta eat, right?”

“Well it’s good to take pride in one’s work,” Sam agreed, not quite sure of her stance on the matter.

“Problem is,” Cass continued in a conspiratorial tone. “It got me horny as hell. I

love to watch men go at it. They're such sports about it. You don't see them getting all pissed and bent out of shape when another guy says 'take my meat, man!' Say that to a woman and she'll bite your dick off."

Tiffany chuckled. "Yeah, Cass has lost a lot of dildos that way,"

"I don't date PC tight asses," Cass corrected her. "I enjoy a woman who enjoys a woman with a dick. And men who like women with dicks too for that matter."

"So why don't you take your horny ass and go call on one of them, then? Or perhaps take your bag of toys and retire to your rooms for the night?" Tiff pressed, with a pointed glance at Sam. "I was busy or couldn't you tell?"

Cass returned her attention to Sam, looking her over once again. "Tiff, honey, I don't think she gives it up on the first date. Still it could be interesting to watch."

"This dessert is incredible," Sam exclaimed. Partly to change the subject, and partly because she couldn't help herself. The contrasts were delightful. Hot peaches, cold ice cream and warm tingly sauces. It left her taste buds resonating with delight, her head slightly swimming from the brandy and wine. The more she thought about it, the more she wanted to play. "And you don't know anything about what I do on the first date."

"I'd suggest more brandy and retiring to the living room," Cass suggested with a wink to Tiffany. "Why don't we just find out."

"Sure, why not?" Sam replied, to the chef's surprise.

Ready for anything she pulled out three crystal snifters and poured them each a brandy. While the taller women retired to the overstuffed leather couches, Sam moved over to the stereo. She'd noticed the CD sitting there earlier. Graceful hands slid over the stereo components, opening the player and gently inserting the disk. She adjusted the volume and selected a song before hitting 'play'. The speakers thrummed with the slow sexy beat and Kim Ferron's vocals. The song was "Nothing" but as Tiff and Cass watched Sam start dancing, the crackle of something was very much in the air.

*I think I'll go for a walk
maybe out in the rain
let the tears roll down my face
and not feel the pain*

Tiffany Shcrade watched for a long moment, enjoying the easy rhythmic movements of the woman she'd cooked dinner with. There was something mesmerizingly beautiful about a toned body in motion. Tight muscles contracted then relaxed drawing piercing blue eyes all over the moving form. Finally she stood and moved toward Sam, her slow easy movements falling right into time with the dancer.

*Maybe think about something
maybe think about you*

*(Yeah you can't hurt me now)
You know you can't hurt me now
You can't hold me down*

Sam moved towards Tiffany, closing the space between them, ignoring the woman on the couch. Her hands slid up the taller woman's arms until they came to rest behind a strong neck, draped with soft ebony hair. Her body brushed against the taller woman's and smiled as she felt warm strong hands circle around her back.

*And I've got plenty of time
time to figure it out
time to think about you and me
whatever that was all about*

Sam's body was heating up and she knew it wasn't just from the warm hands resting on her lower back, light fingers brushing skin at the bottom of her sweater. Her lips still felt toasty from the tingle of brandy, her skin warm from the human touch of her dance partner. And after brushing against the taller woman's thigh she realized what it was Cass was joking about earlier. While not obvious earlier, from this proximity it was clear that Tiffany Shcrade was packing.

*Got nothing to prove
got nothing to say
No, I guess I never thought
you were good for me anyway
I've got nothing to loose
Nothing but you*

"You alright?" Tiff asked in a quiet voice.

"Oh yeah," Sam replied her hands sliding down the taller woman's back. This was where she needed to be. Just going with the physical, feeling that warm buzz of lust. She kept one hand on the smooth silk of the white shirt, but the other moved lower across Tiffany's ass and to the side of her thigh. She could feel the strap of the harness through the soft leather, and could hear the taller woman's breathing catch as her secret was found out.

*I think I'll go for a ride
until my memory fades
roll down the windows and
glide down the 75 till the morning breaks*

“Is that for me?” Sam purred, her hand lightly caressing the bulge of silicon through the supple pants.

“You think you need it?” Tiffany asked with a smirk.

The air nearly crackled with the energy of the physically erotic. This wasn't about misunderstood possibilities, or phone calls in the days and weeks to come. This was about how things started. The rush of the unknown, the pseudoinnocence of the uncomplicated. Bodies that move and respond, finding that groove for the first time. It fucking rocked.

*Maybe light up a joint
and take a walk on the moon
(Yeah you can't reach me now)
You know you can't touch me now
You can't hold me down*

The hand resting on Tiffany's back moved steadily back up to her neck. Gently gliding around to the front, Sam cupped the side of the taller woman's face, the hand from her crotch moving back to her butt, and steadily pulled the taller woman in for a kiss.

“Oh this works,” Cass murmured from her place on the couch. She'd been watching the other two; Getting turned on and enjoying it as those sensations manifested themselves in her body. She glanced at her black leather duffel, considered getting a vibrator and using it as she watched the other two dance, but decided against it. She wanted the buzz to last for awhile. Changing her mind she got up and joined them.

*And I've got plenty of time
time to figure it out
time to think about you and me
whatever that was all about*

Cassandra stepped into the space behind Sam and easily matched her movements to the smaller woman's. She enjoyed the way Sam's hair smelled, it was one of the many things she enjoyed about women. The smoothness of soft skin and all the wonderful delightful scents. A hint of fabric softener, some hair gel, and a light scent that was all woman. Women just smelled so fucking good. Sam and Tiffany were still kissing, and while she didn't have *that* sort of emotional connection to her house mate, she couldn't deny that Tiffany Schrade was a sexy woman. Over the years they'd fucked a handfull of times but it was usually because they were bored, high or both.

*Got nothing to prove
got nothing to say
No, I guess I never thought
you were good for me anyway
I've got nothing to loose
Nothing but you
Nothing but you*

When their kiss broke, Cass turned Sam around. She danced close to her, enjoying the green of her eyes as they reflected the dim lighting, and was getting quite turned on by the wet softness of Sam's lips, red and moist from her previous kiss. For her part, Tiffany took the opportunity dancing behind Sam to wrap her strong arms around the smaller woman's waist. One hand gently made it way up, brushing across the soft sweater to a full breast, the other gliding along the waist of the short leather skirt, soft finger tips playing across strong abdominal muscles.

*Why did you have to be so unkind
why did I have to be so inclined
to loose my mind
But I've got plenty of time
time to figure it out
time to think about you and me
whatever that was all about*

"You like this?" Cass asked quietly and she lightly kissed Sam's neck. "Dancing with a couple of turned on dykes?"

"Who wouldn't?" Sam murmured back, not quite believing what she was getting into, but glad of it none the less. "I'd put this right up there with softball or professional women's basketball."

They all chuckled, then Sam felt Tiffany's warm lips near her ear.

"Honey, I think we can do better than basketball."

*Got nothing to prove
got nothing to say
No, I guess I never thought
you were good for me anyway
I've got nothing to loose
Nothing but you
Nothing but you
Yeah nothing*

“Take her to the couch,” Cass whispered, deciding to take charge of the situation. Given her professional expertise, Tiffany didn’t object. The lights were low, and Sam noticed that a number of candles around the room had been lit. Cass had obviously been busy while she and Tiff danced.

Sam turned around again and ran a bold hand over the other woman’s thigh, purposefully stroking the bulge beneath the leather. Tiffany obviously enjoyed the sensation and was in no hurry to sit down, making that bit of silicon harder to touch.

“Yeah,” she breathed.

“You like me touching your dick?” Sam asked, her hand stroking up and down, touching either side, fingers gliding along thigh and bulge, lightly teasing at the base of zipper.

“I can think of something I’d like just as much?” Cass purred. “I’d like to see you suck her dick.”

Another wave of heat rushed through Sam at the warm breath of Cass on the back of her neck. She didn’t know what was more of a turn on, the breathing or the hot words. Loosing some of her inhibitions, she decided to play along, and felt oddly freed by it.

“You want me to put on a show for you, bitch?” Sam demanded. “Tell me why I should do that?”

Cass grinned. A slow, sexy, playful grin that lit up her whole face. “Because if you do that real good, Tiffany is going to fuck you with that dick, and I’ll give you a tongue lashing like you’ve never had before.”

“Sounds like a win-win to me” Tiffany groaned and Sam continued to touch her.

Cass winked, and gave Tiffany a shove. She fell back onto the black leather couch, sitting up, with her legs spread open a little. Cass took a seat next to her, kicking off her shoes and tucking her legs under her on the couch. With one arm resting against the back cushion, she was comfortable and ready to watch the show. “Why my dear Samantha,” she said happily.. “I do think you’ve gotten Tiffany all worked up and hard.”

“We’ll see about that,” Sam replied and leaned in for a kiss. She kissed Tiffany deeply, her tongue exploring and tasting a mouth she wanted to get much better acquainted with. While she kissed, she gently pushed Tiffany’s hands away from the waistband of her leather pants, choosing to undo the fasteners herself. Then she began to kiss her way down the seated woman’s neck, and unbuttoned the white silk shirt as she moved.

“Come on,” Tiffany urged.

“No,” Cass countered. “Honey, you take your own sweet time.”

“Fuck you,” Tiff growled at her housemate.

“Later, I promise.”

White silk shirt open, revealing a satiny, minimally lacy bra, Sam undid the

pants and reached inside, to gently free the black dildo underneath. It was attached to a well made black leather harness, which blended in nicely with the leather pants. Smiling at what she'd found, she began to casually run her fingers up and down it's length. Cass and Tiffany's attention was riveted.

The dildo wasn't girthy, maybe an inch and a quarter in diameter if that. But it was nice and long. Easily seven inches, made of firm black silicone with a pronounced head. Thankfully it wasn't all realistic and vein covered like some of the dildos she'd seen in porn shops. And this one didn't have balls either. It was an odd thing to think, but it struck Sam as somehow feminine. Sleek, smooth and already she could imagine how good it was going to feel inside of her.

Keeping her eyes locked with Tiffany, she kneeled down between the woman's legs and opened her mouth, reaching her tongue out to touch the tip of the dildo. Blue eyes flared in arousal and Sam smiled. This was *so* working.

"Yeah, baby, lick it," Cass encouraged, one hand already under her sapphire blue mini.

Her own arousal rose at the appreciation she was receiving from her audience and Sam let herself go. Not to be overly theatrical, mind you, but she didn't feel the same reservations she'd felt when doing this with men. Gently, Tiffany caressed the sides of her face and neck, occasionally touching her head and the back of her neck. She wasn't being forceful, but was clearly encouraging. Relaxing her throat muscles, Sam took gradually more of the silicone into her mouth, the dildo sliding in easily.

"She's getting you nice and wet," Cass commented to Tiffany. "I think she wants you to fuck her with that."

"Is that true?" Tiffany asked. Sam only nodded between mouthfuls.

"You want my meat in your hot pussy? Fucking you?"

"Oh yeah," Sam agreed, licking at the base of the dildo, wanting every inch of it to be nice and wet.

"Then get up here."

Not needing to be asked twice, Sam stood. Cass was immediately behind her, reaching under the leather skirt and pulling at her panties. "Leave the skirt on," Tiff suggested as Cass threw Sam's underwear to the side.

Moving forward, Sam straddled Tiffany's hips, the seated woman still wearing all her clothes, pants open and dildo standing erect. Carefully she positioned herself, surprised at how wet she'd already become. It took very little maneuvering, just enough to position the dildo at her entrance, and she slid down it's firmness like it was made for her.

"Ohhhhh" she sighed feeling wonderfully full. The silicone firmness touching her in all the right places. "Yes," she panted. "That feels great."

"Yes, it does," Tiffany replied. She'd slid her hand under the skirt and was touching lightly, feeling the wet dildo slid into her partner, not touching her clit, but lightly touching just below.

Cass was thrilled. There was an erotism all it's own to sex with one's clothes on she'd always felt. Tiff looked sexy in her open shirt with her bra and pants, even her boots still intact. And Sam was all ready to be stripped. Standing behind the other blond, she reached her hands under the smaller woman's sweater. Touching heated skin and fabric, she urged the sweater upwards until she'd pulled it over Sam's head.

For her part, Sam was moving faster now, enjoying Tiffany's dick and fingers, getting closer to that edge. Her bra was removed next, with Cass reaching around from behind to play with her breasts and pinch her erect nipples. After a few moments of that, she let go and unfastened the skirt. Once that was removed they all looked down to watch Tiffany's hands working and the black dildo sliding in and out of Sam.

Unable to restrain herself, Cass reached inbetween her own legs to see just how flooded it had gotten her. She wasn't disappointed. She offered her fingers to Sam who gratefully took them in her mouth, sucking wantonly. That was enough for Sam, she came powerfully, letting go of Cass' fingers an instant before she'd have seriously bitten the other woman. Powerful spasms shot through her, tying her whole being up in knots then gloriously releasing her.

She leaned forward, collapsing against Tiffany. "That was great," she panted.

"No shit," Tiffany purred, her voice warm with affection.

In an instant Cass was at her black duffel, pulling at the double zipper. "I have got to be fucked, right now that was so fucking good!" she exclaimed in a rush. "Sam get off of her. Tiffany get that dildo out of the harness and get your fucking clothes off."

"She can be such a bitch sometimes," Tiffany chuckled.

"I agree with her," Sam shot back with a grin. "I want to see you naked." Looking back at the coffee table, Sam's eyes widened in surprise. It was as if, in a matter of seconds, an entire sex store had materialized out of nothing. Several dildos of various colors and sizes had appeared, a bottle of lube, some translucent beads, a variety of vibrators, some restraints, another harness, a blindfold, a crop, a whip and a huge zip-loc bag that Sam could see contained condoms, latex gloves, dental dams and finger cots.

"Where the fuck is it," Cass muttered as she searched the depths of her bag. "Ahh, here it is," she said, announcing victory. What she pulled out was another dildo, similar in size to the one Tiffany was currently wearing. Only this one had some sort of thick sleeve pulled over it. "Cyberskin," Cass explained "Better than the real thing because it feels the same and you don't need a guy attached to it."

With a gentleness that surprised Sam, Tiffany helped to lift her off the dildo, still resting comfortably inside her. With care she pivoted and rolled Sam over to a sitting position on the couch. Now feeling empty when a moment ago she'd felt deliciously full, Sam wasn't thrilled with the new turn of events. With a smile, Tiff seemed to sense her disappointment.

“Trust me,” she whispered quietly, “this will be worth it.”

As Cass requested, Tiffany Schrade took off her clothes, starting with the boots, then shirt, bra and finally pants. She wore no underwear under the harness, Sam suspecting it was a change that happened inbetween dinner and dessert when Tiffany had excused herself. Undoing the snaps on the metal ring that held the dildo in place, she removed the black silicone dildo and tossed it aside.

“Don’t think I’m taking care of boiling your dildos, Tiff,” Cass warned. “You can clean up your own mess.”

Tiffany rolled her eyes but reached out her hand to accept the dildo with the thermal plastic sleeve. In moments it was snapped in position as Cassandra knelt on the floor inbetween Sam’s legs.

“Ready for more, sweetheart?” Cass asked coyly. “I think you are.”

Sam didn’t know what she was ready for, but made her mind up the instant Cass moved forward.

“Oh fuck,” Sam groaned as Cass’ lips found her center.

“If you insist,” Tiff replied with a grin, taking her position on her knees behind Cass.

It was a moment Sam would remember forever. The kind of moment when you seriously can’t believe what’s happening to you, what you’re participating in, but are loving every fucking second of it none the less. Those moments tend to stick, no matter what else happens; the moments when you find out you’re more adventurous than you thought you were. When you uncover a new little corner of life for the very first time.

Sam couldn’t believe it. She was actually having sex with two women. While she never thought of herself as reserved. She’d certainly never done this before. And being okay with something intellectually, as some abstract theory, was a damn sight different than sitting on a couch with your legs spread, while one woman is eating you out and another is fucking her from behind.

Tiffany’s eyes never left hers, aside for the occasional glance down to Cass to make sure everything was still proceeding according to plan. In an odd way, it was as if she and Tiff were still fucking, only now with Cass acting as some sort of intermediary. When Tiff slowed down, Cass slowed down; if Tiff pumped harder than Cass’ tongue became more firm. In a cool way, Tiffany Schrade was fucking Sam again.

Glancing over to the coffee table, Tiffany could easily reach the assorted toys. Selecting another dildo, she grabbed it then the bottle of lube. Next she grabbed the zip-loc bag, fishing a finger cot out of the bag, she passed it to Cass who’s mouth was still hard at work.

Sam’s heart sped up another notch, as improbable as that may seem. Although this time it was from fear. She suspected what was coming next and it represented completely new territory for her. She wasn’t sure she was going to like it. If Tiffany

sensed her reservation, she chose not to acknowledge it. Moving back and forth with strong, steady strokes, she seemed very much a woman on a mission. Her mission, bringing off Sam a second time, only using Cass as her tool.

The dildo she'd chosen from the assortment on the table, was slimmer than the one she'd worn earlier and not quite as long. Efficiently, she coated it with lube, and without preamble, and maneuvering a little, began to insert it into Cassandra's ass. On her hands and knees, Cass went still, a low groan vibrating against Sam's clit as she made her appreciation known. Sam had seen women occupied twice, as it were, in a porn or two, but never expected she'd see it in person.

"Get her!" Sam gasped, surprised at how turned on she was at the sight. It was a weird thing, she supposed, to watch someone fuck someone else why they were fucking you. But it was hot too. Tiffany's attention was on her, and how Cass was turning her on. It was clear that she herself was getting quite worked up by the show.

"Fuck her ass!" Sam said, a little louder this time. Which made Cass groan again. Then she saw Cass' hand, with a tiny condom on the middle finger, moving toward her. "I didn't say my ass," she exclaimed, startled.

"Too bad," Tiffany said with a grin. "What I do to Cass, she does to you,"

"Oh god," Sam panted, trying to relax her body. At first it felt really weird. Like something incredibly foreign, somewhere where it felt very out of place. Cass, had taken the time to get her finger well lubed in the abundant juices before moving down, so when her finger began to slide in, it moved smoothly and easily.

Sam was stunned. She had no idea she'd be so sensitive there, and how receptive those nerve endings would be to the attention they were receiving.

"Yeah," Cass murmured against her pussy, "smooth and tight."

Tiffany's eyes flared a darker shade of blue and she began to work both dildos in Cass faster. Cass' middle finger picked up a steady pace and her tongue worked harder.

Sam was loving it. She could feel Cass struggle to keep her mind on what she was doing as her own body took over. That was erotic in and of itself and the closer Cass got to exploding, so did Sam.

"You keep fucking me," she told Cass seriously.

"Keep licking me, and fucking me." Sam threw her head back in bliss. "Yeah, baby, just like that."

Cass' movements became frantic as her own body took over. Rising on the heated rush, Sam kept in time her own body anxious for the sign she knew would send her over the edge. It only took a moment more when Cass groaned against her body, her finger and tongue pushing hard as she came, Sam coming in the next heartbeat.

Still it wasn't enough. Her green eyes smoldering, she gave Cass only a minute then gently pushed the other woman away. Gently gliding her finger out of her ass and rolling to the side to relax against the couch, she watched Sam move to the coffee

table, picking up the other harness and a light blue dildo.

“That’s ambitious, don’t you think?” Tiffany commented, looking at the size of the dildo.

“I don’t fucking care,” Sam said, her voice husky with lust. “God I need to fuck you.”

In seconds, Tiffany had her harness off, not even bothering to remove the dildo. It was tossed in the same direction as the other toys that needed cleaning. In seconds she was on her back, welcoming Sam on top of her with open arms.

“I need you to fuck me, Sam, come on-- do it!”

“Oh yeah,” Sam groaned, at her first touch of Tiffany. She was warm and wet and wonderfully slippery. She eased forward, the big dildo tight, but moving in with ease.

“Ugh,” Tiff groaned, lifting her feet off the ground and making the access deliciously easy for Sam. “That feels so fucking good!”

Supporting her weight on her elbows, Sam thrust her hips forward, smiling down at the woman she was fucking, having the time of her life. It was naughty and wild and all the things you thought about doing and wouldn’t admit you wanted. She loved that she was fucking someone she didn’t even know, thrilled that another total stranger was watching them, and from the sounds of it, getting off again with the aid of a vibrator. And she was just enjoying some incredibly erotic chemistry for exactly what it was. Fucking killer sex.

Tiffany was so turned on by the evenings previous activities that in no time she was coming, wrapping her legs around Sam’s waist and holding her tight with strong arms. She rested like that, Sam giving her the time she needed to cool down. Instead of withdrawing, however, she pushed forward again, just a little. Tiffany jumped, as if the added sensation wasn’t welcome right after an orgasm. But Sam knew better. Waiting for another bit, she moved again. This time Tiff moved with her. Waiting longer still, her movement was followed by Tiff’s gasp.

“Yes...Sam” Tiffany managed inbetween pants. “Again.”

“I’m so glad you didn’t say ‘do it again, Sam,” Sam said with a chuckle.

For Tiffany, however, it was no laughing matter. Sam leaned down to kiss her. Her lips being possessed firmly and passionately, her whole body thrumming with good feelings. She began to gasp after a few playful nips on the neck.

“Yeah, Tiff,” Sam grunted. “Take it.”

“Nice and hard,”

“You’ll get it hard.”

The time for conversation was limited. A few more firm strokes and Tiffany was groaning “I’m coming!” as if the shuddering of her body wasn’t enough to herald this climactic event.

“That was gorgeous,” Cass purred as she moved over to help Sam out of her harness. “I say we sleep for a few hours and go at it again.”

“You’re crazy,” Tiffany groaned, content. “I don’t even like you, why should I fuck you.”

“Well I’ve got an excuse,” Sam added. “My friends paid.”

“No they didn’t,” Tiffany countered, looking at Sam seriously. “This was a friendly thing between us. Your friends had nothing to do with it.”

“A friendly thing, is it?” Sam asked, with a grin.

“Absolutely,” Tiffany assured her. “Friendship is the best place to start with anything, casual or otherwise. You never know, sometimes these things work out.”

Samantha nodded. It felt right. And even if it wasn’t, she wasn’t afraid of giving it a go. There were times, she realized when great sex could ruin you for anyone else--make you feel empty and lost; and other times great sex could make you feel found. The same rush that could wreck you, could bring you back home again too. It was a peaceful kind of symmetry that pleased Sam to no end. Not worried about what might or might not be in store for her down the road, Samantha Steele fully and completely enjoyed the moment in the company of two women she hardly knew. Curled up for the night with one of them, she thought, before she drifted to sleep, of the thank you note she’d send her friends. Exactly what she was thanking them for she decided, they need not know.

That following Friday....

Four friends sat around a table, playing cards. There were chips of various colors on the table, some coins and a few bills. Grace and Chase sat next to each other, drinking beer and sharing a joint. RJ and Sam enjoyed cigars and while Sam preferred tequila with her cigars, RJ had a fondness for Southern Comfort.

“I’ll see your bet and raise you fifty,” Grace announced with a chuckle. “Looks like Sam doesn’t have the cash.” Confident she’d gotten the woman across from her out of the picture, she studied the other three.

“I’ll call,” Sam announced, withdrawing a package of Reeses Peanut Butter Cups from her purse and putting it in the pot.

“I’ll give you a thousand dollars for that,” Chase said, her eyes wide. “That is so fucking beautiful.”

“You dipwad,” Grace scolded. “I’ll *share* it with you, bonehead.”

“Oh.”

“Well Ms. Thing is in a good mood if she’s teasing the stoners with chocolate,” RJ chuckled.

“Must have had a good cooking lesson,” Chase observed, her fingers creeping towards the candy.

Sam laid her cards down on the table. “Full house, babes. Beat that.”

“Oh fuck,” Chase groaned. “I forgot we weren’t playing go-fish. See, all mine are in pairs...er sort of.”

“As for my cooking lesson,” Sam continued. “I had a lovely time. It proved quite educational. I’ll cook you all Bananas Foster sometime.”

“She actually cooked?!” Grace exclaimed in horror.

“Furthermore, we are all taking a weekend in Big Sur one month from today. Each of us and a date, a night at the Ventana Inn, dinner, and a room with a hot tub for everyone. On me.”

“Now where are you gonna get the cash for something like that?” RJ asked, shuffling the cards.

Sam looked at her pointedly. “You don’t honestly think I’m so far gone I’m reduced to **paying** for sex now do you? Honey, I was never **that** depressed.”

Chase was still confused. “Look, did you fuck the cook or not? And who am I gonna ask to Big Sur? Oh god. The pressure.”

“Well, I had someone in mind for you, Chase. Her name is Cass and she already said she’d love to go and I don’t think you’ll be disappointed.”

Carefully, RJ split the deck and began to deal out cards. “Let me get this straight. With money the three of us pooled together for your birthday, you’re taking all of us to an outrageously expensive place for the weekend?”

“Why Rebecca June, I do believe you’re getting it.”

“And I suppose you’re bringing your cooking instructor?”

Sam smiled. “She still has a thing or two to teach me.”

“See guys, I **told** you we were doing the right thing.”

Looking back, Sam always remembered that poker nights, and the weekend that followed as one of the best birthday presents she’d ever gotten.

The end.