

THE
WOMAN
WHO PLEADS

Love Can Not Be Measured By Words

ANTONIO FLEMING

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The Woman Who Pleads
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DEDICATION

The achievement of this book will always be dear to me, because I just didn't write this novel to remind women of their significance to life or the importance of them never allowing the blessing they are to be taken for granted merely to be accepted by someone who don't appreciate them. I wrote this book initially to impress a woman who gives meaning to the word: *EXTRAORDINARY*. She didn't just challenge and inspire me to unleash potential I sheltered, while at the same time ARGUING to ensure I upheld the integrity of "ALL" women in my writing. In my pursuit to gain her acceptance, she allowed me to learn through her grace the honor and appreciation of true love. I dedicate this book to the woman who made it her own personal work of art, though the words are my collection of thoughts. Renesha Acosta, I thank Allah ta'ala for allowing my mind, eyes, heart, and soul to be nurtured by the spectacular essence of your love. Without you, this emotional rollercoaster novel would not be. You are magnificent in so many ways, yet indescribable as a whole. "Demi," is my reflection of you for the world, though she still fall short of truly defining your worth.

It is also imperative that I give appreciation and love to Aya and Cadence - *IRREPLACEABLE* the both of you are.

IN THE NAME
ALLAH
COMPASSIONATE,
ALL MERCIFUL

All praise and thanks are due to Allah ta'ala, alone, the Sustainer and Creator of existence. May the choicest blessings and peace be upon the last of the righteous messengers and prophets, Muhammad ﷺ his family, Companions and all those who follow in his footsteps till the blowing of the trumpet.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا
{110}

Say: "I am only a human being like you. It is revealed to me that your God is One God, therefore whoever wishes to reach Allah (before death) let him do improving deeds (the soul's cleansing) and let him not associate anyone with Him in the worship of his Lord".

(Surah Al-Kahf: 110)

The Prophet (PBUH) stated the following:

"The mother is in the middle of the doors of Paradise."

(Ibn Hanbal, V, 198);

"Paradise is under the feet of mothers."

(Nasai, Jihad, 6)

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CHAPTER 1

With the soothing sounds of raindrops beating rhythmically, and the cool mystic breeze seeping through the window on an autumn morning, Randle laid in bed holding his pillow with a semblance of intimacy. Existing in a dream that seemed so real, he basked in the ambiance of Lo Jones and Alice Braga feeding him honey grilled flamingo rolls on the luxury sundeck of the chartered superyacht, Eclipse, drifting on the currents of the Mediterranean.

Startled, by the music of Nikki Minaj blasting by his ear, he strained to open his eyelids and looked around, disoriented as the phone rang unwantingly. Randle struggled to reach for the phone in pure frustration. Deeply immersed in a soothing dream, he wasn't ready to wake up from it's pleasantries, especially given the fact that he had a throbbing headache from his excessive drinking at Club Erotic, prior to staggering home to close his eyes.

"Yeah?" Disgruntled, he pressed the phone to his ear answering in a tone of pure rebuke. "Who the fuck is this?"

"Good morning, Randle. May I speak to Sheri, please?"

With his eyes glancing at the clock on the nightstand to clearly distinguish the time, he spoke with open distaste, not surprising to Naomi. "Haven't I advised your stupid trifling ass not to call my house before twelve o'clock?" He growled. "Instead of disturbing my fuckin' sleep, why not utilize this time to decontaminate your throat and body, given its no more than a playground for STD's?"

Naomi had no practical idea what her girlfriend actually saw in this sorry life of trash, but given an associate was leaving her office, she responded without losing any sense of her composure. "Randle, will you please give the phone to Sheri?! The matter is very urgent. And may I remind you, the house you are currently breathing in belongs to her father, a man of prestige and character which you certainly are not. I can't fight my girl battles nor stop her from loving you, though I have begged her to stop having compassion for stray animals. But if you ever disrespect me again, I promise with all the life inside of me that you will regret the day you ever desired to experiment with a black woman."

Randle's anger intensified while hearing that statement. Deep down inside, he knew so well that he was crossing the wrong line disrespecting Naomi, but the thought of her checking him and abruptly waking him from a jewel of a dream he may never visit again only fueled what was already thumping inside of his throbbing head. In his inner thought,

he wished he could sit on her chest and pluck out her eyebrows with two rusty nails welded together. With nothing but air filling his chest, and the alcohol still affecting his emotional state, Randle exploded, "Bitch, I wouldn't care if you were on your last breath or you were calling to warn that there's a hurricane outside the fuckin' door. If I tell you not to call my damn house before a certain damn time, then respect it!! Even though you too trifling to have respect for yourself. Your girl is my hoe, and wherever she lay her head, I'm the man of that mutha-fucka!"

With all intentions of hanging up the phone following his last words, Randle couldn't help but glance at Sheri as he removed the phone from his ear, not concerned with any rebuttal that Naomi may slam him with. The sight of her resting peacefully in the sun's glow before his eyes insanely aggravated him, especially considering what he had subconsciously lost. Without pondering upon the thought or hesitating on his action, Randle slammed the phone against Sheri's face as if he was crushing an irritating mosquito.

Startled in immeasurable disbelief, Sheri quickly sprang up in the bed, completely covering her face while screaming in shock and aggravation, not knowing if another blow would follow or if he was just exercising as he does sometimes. "Aiiiiiiiiii!!!" With blood starting to ooze into the palm of her hand firmly pressed against the throbbing and squirting cut, Sheri peered through her fingers and asked, "What the hell was that for?!"

"Your lame ass girlfriend is on the phone, slut." He replied, staring intensely into her visible eye. "Now get the fuck up! Because if you get a drop of blood on these sheets, you gon' have a muthafuckin' problem."

Witnessing the cold look of anger that ran in his eyes and knowing fully well of his unpredictable rage, Sheri lowered her gaze, quickly eased off the bed while picking up the phone in fear, simply placing it against her face while stepping into the bathroom. Closing the door behind her, Sheri shook her head in complete disgust while observing the reflection of the gash in the mirror. She pretty well knew from the wavering pain starting to be felt that another black eye was imminent due to this idiot's abuse and it would have people gossiping about how he had abused her yet again. This was the last thing she needed on a day as prominent as this one. "Girl, let me call you back," Sheri insisted. Before nonchalantly whispering, "I love you," and placing the disconnected phone on the countertop without inquiring the purpose of Naomi calling.

The streaming blood on her face had her suddenly thinking about her late grandfather and wishing she was a child in his arms again — no worries, no cries, just laughter and love. At 26, Sheri was already an honor graduate from Spellman University, a successful CEO of the art gallery "Art of Life," as well as "Art Annex," her web based

service which electronically connects novice art buyers to professional art sellers around the world. Impressively, she was also founder and CEO of Unity After School Center (Unity), a program for heightening the scholastics and critical thinking skills of inner-city kids. Driven by ambition to be more than just another beautiful black face in a sexist world, Sheri initially started the art companies to expose her late grandfather's secret collection to more than the stale air of his secluded gallery exiled in the basement of his home and to fill his void in her life. Later, she would host a private showing of art for some high echelon art buyers and couldn't believe she was now looking like she'd been slapped by an elephant's trunk across the eye. If only Randle could control his temper.

"Sheri! Sheriiiiiii! I'm hungry!" Randle yelled. "Slut come fix me something to eat, cause I know you hear me calling you."

"I'm coming right out bae!" She yelled without hesitation.

"Bitch, I don't see you! And, since your dumb-ass girlfriend woke me up from my dream, I also need you to bring me two Advils for my damn headache." Fueled with anger, that tasting the sensuous soft fingers and lips of Lo Jones was no longer a virtual reality for him, Randle's impatience spawned new and increased anger as his headache caused him to become even more agitated.

"Slut, it doesn't take that fuckin' long to wipe your face. If you don't bring your ass now, imma get outta bed and really give you a reason to spend time playing with a first aid kit — I'm your first priority bitch, and don't you forget it."

The annoying sound of his voice was the last thing she desired at the moment, but aggravating his flaring insensitivity and slave owner rage, she didn't desire either. "Okay, baby!" She hollered back like a woman with no self-worth and scurrying into the room.

"I didn't hit your soft ass that hard." Randle shouted, as she walked over and handed him two Advil, before going downstairs and quickly returning with a bottle of water.

Observing her walk away, Randle couldn't help but admire how unfathomably sexy she was. Her luscious skin resembled bee's honey, and the Victoria's Secret Pink boy-shorts were fitting her body as if spandex gained it's origin from the way they accentuated every curve and seemingly melted onto her flesh. Sheri's walk was so graceful and seductive that the most faithful of married men, or woman, wouldn't be able to resist staring in lust.

"Fuck them stank whores!" Randle yelled out while cackling in between his self-centered comments. "My President is a gangster and boss pimp."

Lost in the political controversy being broadcast on CNN, Randle had forgotten about his command to Sheri and notice when she walked back into the room with breakfast

in hand — two fried turkey sausages, scrambled eggs with melted cheddar cheese, toast with apple jelly and a glass of orange juice.

"Baby," Sheri called out enticingly, while standing beside the bed, extending the breakfast tray.

"Bitch, don't you see me watching my pimp tight President talking on TV. This is the second time I've been interrupted this morning, and it will definitely be the last," he threatened while turning to look at her square in her eyes, piercingly void of empathy with vile darts of hatred.

Not knowing if trying to be seductive would cause him to react abusively towards her as well, Sheri just stood there mildly trembling, and holding the tray while staring into his den of demons. Randle liked being in control and sensed her fear of him potentially punishing her. Reaching for the glass of orange juice of which he took just a few sips, Randle unexpectedly grabbed the glass rectangular serving tray from her hands then instructed her to take off her clothes. Leaning to the side of her as she slowly removed her white chiffon sleep shirt, he arrogantly releasing his hold of the Florentine designed crystal tempered, allowing it to fall to the floor.

The disgrace of his actions sparked a sense of fear and dampened even greater the ambiance. Sheri wanted to be alone but knew walking away would be physically detrimental. In a natural reaction to stimulate passion, after removing her bra to expose her peanut size nipples, Sheri lowered herself and tried to kiss Randle while maneuvering to slide out of her panties, assuming that a spark of heated affection would breathe sexual tranquility into the atmosphere. Yet, he surprised her by muzzling her face with his right hand, before their lips could connect, and stiff-arming backwards with a quick thrust.

"Bitch, I said take off your clothes, not touch me! And turn the fuck around before you drop them panties." Randle scoffed in a tone that was more so cold and empty of desire. "I wanna see that ass not your face."

Sheri had a strong adrenaline rush of uneasiness but turned her back to him and slowly wined as she slid her panties over her ass. Bonding her legs together as the descending fabric caressed her thighs, Sheri bent forward to expose her pretty, shaved pussy to him. Stepping out of her boy short panties, she separated her legs so he could see straight through her gap, then seductively bite into her fingernail while gazing at him over her shoulder. In her complete nakedness, Sheri knew for sure that responding in any way besides remaining silent was not in her best interest. So, she sensuously began caressing her clitoris with the fingers of her free hand and hoping that it would suppress his newfound attitude by turning him on instead of making her stand naked like a scarecrow.

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"Trump! Trump! Come here boy!" Randle called out, seemingly paying her no further attention. Caught off guard, she jumped at the shock of Trump dashing in between her legs with the speed of a competition show dog on an obstacle course. Trump was a very active pit bull puppy that mysteriously vanished from his ex-girlfriend house who had bought the puppy for her nine-year-old autistic son. Randle presented him to Sheri as a gift of apology for slapping her in front of her cousin, Maria, at a jazz lounge a few weeks prior. His senseless excuse for the public embarrassment was that Maria wouldn't stop voicing disrespectful lies about the President, and Sheri never attempted to stop her, which eventually set him off.

"Hi boy... Hi boy..." Randle chuckled as he tickled Trump's face.

After lifting him to say, "I love you," while looking into Sheri's slanted left eye, he leaned over and placed Trump in front of his breakfast tray on the floor as she silently stared in disbelief, mildly shivering with her nipples hard and pussy dripping like a broken faucet. Leaning back onto his pillow without surrendering any affection to her nakedness, Randle began fantasizing of his moments with Lo Jones and Alice Braga, while admiring more of what the President was saying on CNN than his naked and supposedly irresistible girlfriend before him.

CHAPTER 2

Walking through Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport terminal with the swagger of an Arabian prince, exposing his pedicured toes in Fendi sandals and Ralph Lauren linen giving more attraction to the muscular curves of his Zulu warrior physique, Terry epitomized the male definition of sexy. The magnitude of unexpected attention he was receiving from the eyes of passing women had him smiling, and psychologically feeling as though he was shirtless on the shores of Zanzibar, especially when the four Russian bikini models standing a few feet in front of him on the escalator turned around and casually eased back down the ascending steps, merely to take a few selfies in his arms. Exiting with expansively animated smiles embellishing their exotic aura, they openly cajoled, strolling through the terminal.

Damn he's a lucky guy, Terry heard a passing traveler voice to an associate walking in the opposite direction with him, as one of the foreign runway models seductively caressed his chest with a V.I.P entry pass to their upcoming fashion show and a separate piece of paper with all of their international cell phone numbers scribbled on it. The exotic beauty of each foreign model was hypnotic to the eyes of the onlooking strangers. Finally reaching their separation point in the airport, the models conjoined and whispered among themselves as Terry said good-bye, before attempting to walk away programming their numbers in his phone. Giggling after they all called out his name enticingly in unison, they then paraded behind him like a gang of hyenas. The tallest of the entourage spoke in a raspy, sexy accent, seductively asking if he would be their personal trainer, masseur, and tour guide during their weekend stay at the Ritz Carlton, while the others stood behind her, anxiously awaiting a response with shy poses and giggling.

"I'd be less than a gentleman if I allowed y'all to come and leave my city without exposing each of you to unforgettable memories in Hotlanta." Terry stated as they began to hug him again, and express their excitement and thanks, noisily, with heightened elation.

"Здорово!" He heard one utter as they strutted away, casually looking over their shoulders, giggling.

It had been six years since Terry was last seen in the city, and he knew that the discovery of his return was about to ignite fireworks among family and associates. With each step, he couldn't help but linger on all the years that he had lost by being away from his loved ones and how emotional he was getting by just breathing the southern air. A

sacrifice that positively helped to mold him into a better man as a whole traveling the world as a philanthropist and an exceptional Playboy. The anticipation of hugging his mother and sister once again filled him with nothing shy of endless joy. Yet, it was momentarily critical not to expose the secret of his return, otherwise their constructed plan would crumble.

With his plane arriving thirty minutes ahead of schedule and his driver not scheduled for another forty-five minutes, Terry decided to kill some time by catering to his appetite, instead of waiting at the entrance. Surveying the area as he strolled admiring the airport's transformation, he walked into Annette's Bar and Grill restaurant after making eye contact with the gorgeous British bartender and incorrectly reading her body language. Electing to sit at the bar to bask in her ambiance, Terry ordered roasted chicken with pan drippings and mussels in a bourbon chile broth while admiring her hypnotic features, brushed with brown skin. Psychologically feeling himself, he assumed that the bartender was in awe of his sexiness and constantly stealing glances, but she was actually observing the lacrosse game, broadcasting on the wall mounted flat screen behind him. Seeking to nurture her attraction, Terry invaded her privacy by gaining her attention and asking, "If I was so fortunate to breathe life as your man, would you look at another man just as you are looking at me right now?"

"What? Excuse me sir?!" Shocked by such an unexpectedly forward question, the bartender could only smile out of politeness, given the fact that his words caught her completely off guard and she didn't want to deflate his ego by expressing her thoughts. "With all due respect, sir, I can't answer that question."

"Your smile reflects tranquility in an indescribable way." Terry conveyed, while indirectly lowering his gaze to caress the visible curves of her body.

"Thank You sir," she replied.

"My name is Terry, and yours?"

"Demi," she said with the most seductive and cocky accent he had ever heard, rivaling the tall Russian model, as she fixed a drink for another customer.

"Respectfully, I know we just met, but would you mind if I referred to you by what you are as a whole?"

Using her fingers, Demi combed the curly strands of fallen hair from her face as she obliged the request of a new customer at the bar, before allowing Terry to look into her eyes again. Slightly confused and taken aback by the stranger's second off the wall corny question, and clueless of whether or not he was about to be disrespectful or make an attempt to be appealing, Demi briefly stared at him with a puzzled look upon her face

before politely uttering, while placing the brandy bottle back on the shelf, "I thank you sincerely for the Casanova charm sir, but it will be unprofessional and inappropriate for me to say yes."

Respecting her words but not trying to lose the opportunity of exploding the depths of her foreign wetness, while back in the city, Terry rained phrases in a charming French manner that wet her intellectual appetite. "*Tu es plus belle qu'une rose irresistible.*" By artistically teasing with words that made it quite impossible for her to hold back the radiant beauty of her smile, flattering images floated in thin air, causing her to lower her head in a shy effort to shield her blushing cheeks, walking away to assist another customer.

Observing the extraordinary book, "*Destruction of the Black Civilization,*" by William Chancellor, Demi had laying behind the counter. Terry took a new approach in his attempt to stimulate her interest once she returned and began sanitizing her work area. Gaining her attention by surprising her with an intellectual question regarding the book, they preempted the traditionally prescribed dialogue, foregoing the opportunity to discover each other in an orthodox fashion. Though they intrigued each other anticipantly and overwhelmingly, Terry found himself hesitant for the first time as his prowess was arrested by her stature. Looking into her eyes, Terry felt an unexpected sense of vulnerability that had him wishing Demi had no moral standards but felt her religious beliefs would cause her to reject his request to exchange numbers.

Being internally groomed to always be a lady, she remained silent in anticipation of his desire to court, for it is the gentleman who pursues the woman and not the reverse. Surprised by the way Terry paid his bill, then walked away from the bar without granting them the pleasure of discovering more about one another beyond the given, Demi began to feel exposing her intellect and elements of her integrity may have intimidated him. She couldn't believe she had crossed the path of someone debonair enough to be mentally and physically attractive yet seemed to be afraid to pursue her. Before rising out of his seat Terry eloquently said, "*la vie est une fleur, et la beauté de votre sourire est ce qui la nourrit. Un plaisir inoubliable c'était.*" Demi grabbed his plate and glass off the counter to be washed.

Attempting to leave the restaurant with suspense lingering in the air between them, Terry couldn't help but wonder who she was internally while selfishly fantasizing of how she may taste and how it would feel to be deep inside her hidden warmth as she bit passionately into his bottom lip.

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"*L'eau peut accorder à la vie les plaisirs les plus doux et les pires malheurs, Terry!*" Demi vocalized in French, which caused him to turn his head and interlock their eyes in one last intimate stare exiting the restaurant.

Terry smiled without making any other bodily gestures, knowing fully well the true reference of her statement. Retrieving the cellphone from his pocket as he strolled through the terminal en route to the train, Terry started texting to discover the status of his driver and noticed a floral shop before the entrance of the concourse and decided to enter.

"Good afternoon, sir," the florist greeted with a foreign dialect as he walked in.

"Good afternoon," Terry replied while gazing at the exotic floral arrangements around the shop. "Do you deliver?" He asked.

"Yes sir," the florist answered.

"Excellent," Terry mumbled to himself, caressing a bouquet of Lady Slippers. Recognizing her Hakka dialect from his time in Taiwan, he unintentionally humored her with his diversity by trying to communicate in Mandarin, which caused her to hold her stomach while laughing, given he unknowingly said, he was a gay mud wrestler and wanted her to spank him with roses. After being enlightened of his statement and laughing with her in regards to his own stupidity, Terry spoke directly and requested, 47 red roses with 1 white rose inserted in the center, to be delivered to a blessing, while writing on a card:

'In traveling the world, I've discovered that not even this extra-fragrant bouquet of roses scratches the surface of the unparalleled beauty of your smile. You are a blessing that exceeds the boundary of, and I pray as we breathe apart, The Most High never erase the priceless glow of your imprint from my memory.'

Emotionally touched by an Angel,

Terry

404-555-8132.

"Awww, this is sooo sweet of you. Thank you for your generous purchase, sir," the florist stated. "I wish more men were as thoughtful as you."

"Truly, I thank you for assisting me in birthing a smile upon a phenomenal woman's face, which is far more appreciated. I ask that you be creative with the arrangement and give her a significant reason to think of me."

"I promise to arrange something unforgettably magnificent for you, sir," the florist assured.

Receiving a text message from his driver acknowledging that he was walking into the airport, Terry paid the florist then departed the shop. Bounding and exiting the train in the concourse, Terry kept pondering on the metaphor of Demi last words.

"Excuse me sir," the contracted security officer said to Terry in her bedroom voice as he strutted through the security exit and the traveler in front of him caused the gate sensor to beep, by brushing against it.

"Yes?" Terry replied, perplexed, slightly turning his head to give the officer his full attention as she walked up to him grinning mysteriously.

"Sir, I need you to come with me for a moment please." The officer advised grabbing the long head of his triceps, caressing it affectionately as she escorted him into an unguarded security section of the airport.

In complete confusion of what was transpiring, Terry walked without resistance while repeatedly asking her to elaborate on why he was being detained.

"TSA routine security check, given your presence caused the sensor to go off, sir."

"Security check! That sensor went off..."

Interjecting his explanation by using the hand gesture as though she cut her throat, Terry immediately stop talking. "Please don't agitate me with your questions right now, sir," the officer retorted sternly while silently praying that he didn't make a scene which would attract uninvited attention, undoubtedly causing her to be fired and possibly prosecuted if her prior actions came to be revealed as well. Trying to seem more convincing with her hidden intentions, she called a code into her walkie talkie and stated when someone responded, "I can request more officers to come assist me if need be, sir." The act of deception suspended him of resistance, and she noticed as she stared in his eyes.

Shaking his head in complete disbelief, Terry calmly replied no, while obeying her command to enter a door, he noticed she opened by jimmying the lock with her service knife, instead of using a key. Observing that the air in each room they entered lingering of a fetid smell and was dark, until she turned on the lights, Terry wondered should he just stop and request his lawyer. Stepping into an empty room with only a reciprocal mirror and no adjacent door, she handed Terry a drug urine cup and a grey tote box. Attempting to close the door as he stood eyeing her in bewilderment, she calmly instructed him to urinate inside, after removing all his clothes, and then stand on the metal plate in the center of the room.

He initially detested the officer's command out of audacity, given the fact that he has gone through numerous airport security screenings around the world without having to remove his clothes or submit a urine sample. Yet, realizing his objective for getting home

clearly meant that he must remain incognito, and had nothing to hide, Terry obliged after the officer grabbed her radio and made it seem as if she was calling for additional assistance. "Code 6!"

Locking the room to secretly admire the articulated curves of his naked body on the other side of the two-way mirror, Debra couldn't believe that a man's skin could have the perfection of a marble sculpture and a body that out measured that of an Adonis. In her mind, Terry was undeniably sexy with his clothes on, yet with them off, he looked like a luxury sex toy made of rare, preserved To'ak chocolate.

"Code 6! Code 6!" Debra uttered into her walkie talkie.

Standing naked on the cold metal floor plate feeling slightly violated, Terry looked around dumbfounded not understanding why he was instructed to wait naked. The thought of hollering for the officer to bring her supervisor and contact his lawyer seeded his thoughts, but he didn't want them to think his impatience meant he had something to hide. A simple act of suspicion, that could warrant them to detain him longer and a cavity search was definite out of the equation.

"Gurrrl, dis butta be a code 6 dat cause me to fantasize when I'm with my man tonight," her co-worker Trina said sarcastically as she walked into the room behind two other female co-workers. "Yo last code 6 was cute, but he had a mustard seed dick, and I'm not in da mood to be strainin' me eyes right now. I was just about to take my damn lunch break and try out dis new vibrating tongue that ya insert on ya pantie liner. I bought it on da way to work."

"Oh, my fucking god, what is that?" Pam lustfully asked entering the room and staring through the two-way window in overwhelming awe. The sight of his nakedness caused her to teasingly fondle her breast with intimate affection and mildly stuck out her tongue desiring to massage every measure of his muscular body with it.

"Damn. Damn. Dammmmn — I've never climaxed by just looking at a naked man before, and I think I just did twice." Stacey admitted while starting to take picture of his body with her cell phone. "Gurl I'm beyond moist — I..I.. I can feel myself drippin'. They cut their fuckin' hand in the Bible over Joseph (may God be pleased with him), but I'll cut a nipple and a toe to feel his lips, fingers, and dick inside of me."

Laughing amongst themselves at her comment, Trina contemplated going to the supply room to retrieve her new vibrator and using it while staring at him. "Gurl ya talkin' 'bout cuttin' ya nipple. A man dat sexy can fuck me in my ass on my mama bed while her and my fuckin' daddy watch." Trina admitted while giggling, though everyone knew she was dead ass serious.

"Girl you stupid," Pam rifled. "And I literally mean that witcho nasty ass. Debra, I applaud you for this one, but I may never be able to fuck my man again without fantasizing about him the entire time," she confessed without cracking a smile. "I'll ride that dick until the vertebrates in my suspension cord lock up. I know that's ain't no soft dick! Damn he sexy as fuck!"

"Bitch, you need psychiatric treatment and yes that anaconda sleeping. You mean spinal column or spine, not suspension cord with your dumb ass. But gurr! the three of you is playin'." Debra corrected while scrambling to reconnect the intercom. "When you're fortunate enuff to have a man in your life that will literally cause Michael Angelo's 'David' to weep in envy, you comfort him by dedicating your throat to him in his grandma car if requested, at his fuckin' baby mama house, and all the ex's just to make a statement." Her stupidity caused them all to laugh. Realizing the system was now working, Debra pressed the intercom button and stated, "Turn to your right sir. Turn to your left sir. Turn around, spread your legs, and touch your toes sir. Squat and cough aloud three times please. Now turn back around sir."

Laughing uncontrollably until the shift supervisor called on the radio for Debra to reveal her location, her co-workers began scrambling and peeking out the door window while fearing the risk of being caught. They took one last lustful look before Debra pressed the intercom button to say, "Sir you may put your clothes back on and the door will be unlocked."

"Dammn. I wish we could keep him forever." Trina cried. "I've neva seen a man wit bulging veins in a limp dick before. I can only imagine what it looks like hard and coated with my cum."

"You are the Queen Bitch, Debra," Pam cheered while squeezing her with a hug as Trina cracked the door and peeped out. "He is unmatched in this life! I thank you for this one, but I'm glad I don't know his name because I would definitely call it out while straining to force a climax with my icepick dick ass boyfriend. I'm so tired of using a vibrator to stimulate myself when he get off me."

"I'm assisting an elderly woman through the terminal, sir. I'm en route back." Debra retrieved her walkie talkie and stated as Terry stepped into his boxers.

"Ya damn lie bitch! Ya back here wit me sweatin' dis fine ass nicca wit an anaconda dick." Trina piped, as Debra clipped the walkie talkie back onto her service belt, which caused everyone to laugh.

"His name is Terry," Debra blurted out, smiling "And I don't care who I'm with because my mind, my mouth, and my pussy belongs to me. Just because I'm married don't

mean that I have to think of my husband or call his name in order to stimulate myself. I'm definitely going to fantasize about Terry sexy ass when my husband touches me tonight."

"Debra, did you say his name was Terry?" Pam asked for confirmation.

"Yes," she replied still smiling and envisioning climaxing on his mouth reverse rodeo style.

"Gurl have you lost your damn mind?" Pam screamed in an aggressive tone that caught everyone's full attention. "Yo hot ass has literally gone too fuckin' far this time. Are you fucking stupid?"

With everyone's mind now swirling in total confusion of who Terry is, Trina shook her head while allowing her hands to hide the emotional shock in her face until Pam allowed the movements of her tongue to cut through the silence that had begun to engulf the room. "Terry's my future baby daddy, bitches, because I'm going to find out where he lives and blackmail him with these pictures in my phone, for some of that dick."

Everyone burst into uncontrollable laughter while slightly pushing at Pam playfully because they seriously thought that she was about to say he was a killer that would look into this incident and hunt each one of them down once he discovers the truth.

With everyone giggling and continuing to stare at his every move, Debra lift out the office to unlock his room door. Completely oblivious to the truth of his violation of privacy, Terry quietly followed as Debra and her giggling coworkers escorted him through security. He wasted no time in walking towards the luggage area. Reaching to grab his designer bags from the baggage conveyor, Terry felt his phone vibrating and disregarded it for the moment because he wanted to leave the airport before another unexpected incident occurred.

"Terry," Marcus called out approaching from behind him. "Terry!"

Turning around to a smothering bear hug. "It's good to see you again, sir," Marcus grinned while patting him on the back. With both of them smiling, Terry handed Marcus two of his three his bags and said "Let's get out of here without hesitation."

"Yes sir," Marcus uttered, "I had to park in the garage because you took longer than 10 minutes, and I didn't want to miss you by driving around in circles."

"It's okay," Terry stated while laughing to himself at the thought of what just occurred. "Marcus, you wouldn't believe why I'm late if I literally wrote it down for you."

"Terry, coming from you, I'd definitely believe it," he replied simmering with a small chuckle. "Everything is unexpected regarding you!"

"Marcus, do you have everything situated as I asked?"

"Yes sir!" He replied opening the rear car door for Terry to enter. Everything is in place as you requested, and she left a message this morning asking me to instruct you to take your vitamins because you will definitely need them, given you couldn't get away to share the weekend with her Croatia."

Retrieving his vibrating phone from his right front pocket as the car exited the parking garage, Terry noticed he had a text message from an unknown number:

"If I were your woman, would you look at another woman as you looked so bright-eyed at me and submissive to me?"

Smiling at the anticipation of seeing her again, Terry responded to the text, *"I'll never take for granted a blessing that only God can bestow."*

CHAPTER 3

Screaming at the top of her lungs as though she were an opera singer trying to be soulful, Sheri gave new meaning to the Toni Braxton song, "*Just Be A Man About It*" even though she knew so well that her voice resembled the sound of a choking squirrel. Singing seemed to be the therapy that allowed her to mentally escape while blanketing her in tranquility. The audio system in her Lexus LC 500 had her grooving like she was part of the engineered sound, drifting through traffic without concern for the speed limit or police.

Pulling into the Art of Life parking lot, Sheri shook her head in amusement when she saw her mother's AMG S 63 parked sideways in three reserved spots. After backing into her slot, she gathered her things and took one last look in the rear-view mirror to assure herself that the foundation she applied to hide the discoloration had not faded away. "Flawless," she whispered to herself, sliding on her Cartier shades before exiting the car to meet her mom who was already approaching, gracefully.

Wearing a crepe ruffle front sheath dress that outlined her ebony curves with precision and an open toe pair of red bottoms, Mrs. Johnson couldn't help but give signature to the fact that she's the original, and Sheri was no more than a carbon copy of her sexiness.

"Good morning Ma," Sheri said smiling, silently adoring her shoes as she walked closer.

"Morning baby," she replied, expressing her affection with a gentle hug and an European style kiss greeting without their cheeks touching.

"Ma, how many times must I inform you that you cannot park your car like that? Those spots are reserved for my marketing employees," Sheri chastened.

"Well, I guess until you utilize your college degree and clearly comprehend the fact that I am Teflon to all that. Girl, men like to see the way I perch down in the seat like a swan when I enter the car and drag my legs inside with a slow grace of seduction. I cannot do that with another car parked tightly beside me."

"Ma!"

"Ma, nothing," Mrs. Johnson shot back. "You need to remind yourself of how sexy you are, and stop being a trailer park doormat for that sorry abusive white boy you consider your man."

Catching the glare in her mother's eyes as she spoke her words, Sheri knew pretty well that her mother was being direct, and in trying to avoid any form of confrontation, she kept silent as she followed her mother into the office building.

"Good morning, Mrs. Johnson and Ms. Johnson," Heidi, the receptionist, greeted as they entered the building.

"Good morning," they replied in unison.

"Ms. Johnson, with the showing that you have scheduled this morning with the buyers, I took the liberty of contacting Keyerra, and I asked her to fill in for the luncheon with the kids. She accepted. Novia Maori from the Beatriz Gallery called and said she felt offended that you didn't invite her to the private showing. She claims she doesn't love you right now because she's quite jealous. And Naomi is in your office eating your chocolate covered strawberries," she instigated with a giggle.

"What strawberries, Heidi?" Sheri inquired, shrouded with a confused look.

"A 48-count decorative arrangement that arrived about 10 minutes ago."

Without saying anything more than, "Thank you," Sheri turned and headed to her office with her mother in matching step. Opening the door, Naomi was sprawled across the sofa as though she was smizing for a glamour photoshoot. With 24 long stem purple roses on her desk in a Vera Wang crystal vase and two large decorated confectionery boxes, one containing chocolate covered strawberries and the other white chocolate covered strawberries, Sheri paid Naomi no mind because she was so in awe of the arrangement and dumbfounded as to who would possibly have sent them.

"You may actually be my daughter after all," Mrs. Johnson said, reaching to grab the card to see who sent the arrangements only to have her hand slapped and pushed away by Sheri.

"Stop being so nosy, Ma," Sheri jabbed. "The roses and confectionery inside the boxes are for your eyes and your tummy, but the card is off limits. It's for my eyes only, unless, of course, I choose to share. These flowers are so beautiful!"

"They truly are, but just because these may be the first flowers you have ever received, don't try to start acting so special. Naomi, what does the card say?" Mrs. Johnson asked while cutting her eyes in a catlike slant with attitude. "I know your nosy ass has already read the card, looked in the boxes, and probably went online to find out what the person sending them looks like," she voiced intuitively.

With Sheri and Mrs. Johnson staring at her with intense curiosity, Naomi just sat smiling and pondering the words that she read. Given that Naomi didn't reveal what they both were aware that she knew, Mrs. Johnson rolled her eyes while sarcastically stating,

"And I was going to tell your bald headed, slue-footed ass you look cute in that Christian Dior outfit, but now I'm not going to lie." Sticking out her tongue to seal the gesture, thereby causing an outburst of laughter from all of them.

After taking a bite from one of the chocolate covered strawberries in the box and witnessing Sheri read the card, Mrs. Johnson demanded that someone should tell her what the card said and who the mystery man was because she knew without a doubt that it wasn't Randle's pathetic ass. He and Sheri had been dating for almost two years, and the only gifts he managed to give her were repeated black eyes and busted lips.

"These strawberries are really good," she blurted while reaching to secure three more between her fingers.

"Damn, can I at least have the pleasure of tasting one before you and Naomi eat them all?" Sheri barked.

"Girl, you can eat the whole damn box and swallow every drop of water in the vase to clear your throat for all I care," her mother retorted, "Just tell me what the note says. What the hell you being so secretive for?"

Retrieving her phone from her hand-made Louis Vuitton tote bag, to act as though she actually dialed a number, Mrs. Johnson placed the phone to her ear and voiced aloud. "Randle, Sheri has a gift in her office from another man and she won't tell me what the card attached to the flowers says," she conveyed while giggling.

Literally hearing his name sent an impulsive chill through Sheri's entire body, and she knew that he could never discover the gift because he'd take his jealousy out on her instead of being understanding. "Ma... that wasn't cool at all."

"Well, it sure was funny." Naomi assured, still laughing. "I wish you would have enlightened me of your intentions Mrs. Johnson, so that I could have recorded it and submitted it to Funniest Home Videos. Girl, you looked like you literally transformed into cement when you heard your mom mention his name, and you know that's physically impossible."

"Shut the hell up, Naomi!" Sheri shot back. "And Ma, the arrangement is from someone I'm absolutely clueless about, named Abdul Waahid, which is scary, because a stalker is dangerous, and that's not sexy."

"I'd rather have a romantic stalker than a southpaw fighter for a lover," Mrs. Johnson admitted sarcastically while grabbing another strawberry.

Sheri began rolling her eyes because she knew what her mom was implying, so she continued by reading the card aloud to alleviate her mom's suspense. "The card says, Miss Nosy — *You are more beautiful than a word and more precious than time. May you never*

forget that you're an irreplaceable blessing! A gift of God's true mercy upon life! Sincerely, Abdul Waahid."

"How come I can't meet a man with sensitivity and sweetness like that?" Naomi complained while rising from the sofa to hand Sheri a tablet detailing all the art scheduled for the showing that morning, and reaching across the desk to grab two more strawberries with crunchy bits of toffee attached, before blowing a kiss to Mrs. Johnson in her pursuit to exit the room. "Every man I meet only wants to buy me shots of hard liquor."

Holding in the sarcastic response she wanted to convey to Naomi's words, Mrs. Johnson rendered a teasing smile instead. "Sheri, I'm not going to open a discussion with you about this mysterious admirer, because I know how you are." Shaking her head in disgust and just thinking about Randle, but more so how she'd like to dip him in banana syrup and throw him into a lightless dungeon with three wild baboons. "Baby, you deserve the right to see who this Abdul Waahid is," her mom uttered with sincerity. "His message confirms it all. And in light of the fact that he just opened your eyes to three characteristics your unmannered toddler of a man never has — money to buy you a gift, thoughtfulness to appreciate you, and the essence of romance — I urge you to get his digits and coordinates."

"Mom, Randle would kill me if I looked at another man, let alone entertained open conversation, or accepted gifts." While leaning back in her chair, Sheri secretly mumbled while admiring the flowers.

"That's your problem Sheri. You're truly becoming complacent, entertaining fear and abuse instead of love and happiness. You are the property of God, and not a man you open your acceptance to. Your father has never disrespected me in public or in private. Nor has he ever raised his hand to me, and you've helped me to campaign for women of abuse. I just don't understand how, of all things, you accept it with endurance."

"Ma, I have some very important things to give my focus to this morning, and respectfully, I don't have the time to have a love life discussion with you. You can have these flowers and the strawberries."

"What?" Mrs. Johnson exclaimed in shock.

"You heard me," Sheri spat, "I cannot accept these gifts. So, you can have them or, rather, give them away to someone you think would like them."

In complete disbelief of the words spoken, Mrs. Johnson just looked at her daughter, momentarily, without saying a word while reaching for the boxes of strawberries with no sense of hesitation. For the life of her, she just didn't understand how her baby girl, who was molded to be a woman of strength and stature, allowed this freeloading boy to beat on

her and destroy her self-esteem, and even more dangerously, how she considered it to be love.

"Well, I'm going to eat these strawberries with appreciation of God and Abdul Waahid, whomever this mysterious admirer is." Mrs. Johnson acknowledged candidly. "But I think the roses would signal a taste of class and elegance if we presented one rose stem to each of the guests attending the art exhibit."

Lifting her eyes away from the documents she was now reading and cutting them upon her mother, Sheri jokingly stated "I applaud the idea and think we should offer them one of the strawberries as well."

"You have lost your damn mind in more ways than I actually imagined." Mrs. Johnson said without any hint of humor in her tone. "I'm about to finish the remaining strawberries, but the only individuals who will be able to share in the untouched box with me are Zoe Kravitz, Iman, and Sanaa Lathan if they attend the exhibit. Otherwise, all your father will taste upon his tongue from my body tonight is liquid chocolate covered strawberries," Mrs. Johnson avowed humorously.

Laughing out loud to herself, Sheri paid her mom no mind as she giggled softly. She liked being in her atmosphere when time permitted them to merge their schedules and admired her aura far more than she knew. Her mom was not only the strongest woman she has ever been exposed to in her life but also the most courageous.

Raised by a single father due to her mother dying of triple negative breast cancer at the age of three, Mrs. Yara Johnson never knew the enduring warmth of a mother's love, only a father's protection, compassion, and sincerity. This is why she gives so much of herself to being a rock and pillow for her Sheri.

While working as a waitress at night to help support her way through college, at a once prestigious and prominent strip joint in Buckhead called the Gold Club, she met Sheri's father, Gip, whom at the time was one of Atlanta's most powerful drug kingpins. A king in his underworld, yet he chased her like the paparazzi seeking the mesmerizing glimpse of Jessica Moore's smile. After having Sheri and her brother, Yara gave Gip an ultimatum to give up the underworld life of crime and raise their kids to have worthy moral values or to continue a life of uncertainty and exist without all three of them. To her surprise, Gip left the house that night without saying a single word to her or the kids, only to return the following morning after the sun had risen with a six carat marquee cut diamond ring, with which he proposed and granted her request without ever looking back to the streets. Strategically, the Johnson's built a lucrative foundation off buying, selling, and developing real estate as their new hustle.

Unable to stop lifting her eyes to admire the roses from her mysterious sender, Sheri couldn't help but linger in thought of who he was and what it actually felt like to be appreciated by someone. Only her father and brother had given her flowers before.

With Mrs. Johnson sitting in her daughter's office trying to take the perfect sexy selfie for her social media page with a strawberry squeezed between her lips and Sheri vividly lost in thought of being romanced by a man, the intercom buzzed on her desk slightly startling both of them.

"Yes, Heidi?" Pressing the button, she answered.

"The cars are beginning to arrive, and a few of the guests have been escorted inside the gala event." Heidi advised.

"Thanks Heidi. Please advise Camila to serve the NV Veuve Clicquot instead of Dom Pérignon, and make sure that she doesn't pour it like she's serving at a house party even though it is non-vintage. The vintage champagne will be served to extra special guests who become customers. Mom and I will be down in a moment," Sheri acknowledged while looking to witness her mom still in model posture.

As she stood to gaze in the mirror fastened to the wall behind her desk, she attentively began checking that the nature of her eye color hadn't worsened and fluffing her hair to perfection. Sheri teasingly scolded, "Get yourself together and come on, Mom."

"Unlike you my child, I go to sleep resembling an angel. I wake up defined as a queen and spend every moment of my day reflecting a Boss Bitch.

So, know I'm always, in essence, perfection," Mrs. Johnson effused while snapping her last photo.

Shaking her head in amusement of her mom, Sheri grabbed the vase along with her tablet, and uttered, "Come on," once again while exiting the office.