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Une Fable Pour Deux \* Joana A Park Une Table. Pour Deux (A Table for two...) Joana A Park

Every woman goes through a moment in her life when she feels she needs a change, something new, a boost. Why not get that boost in Paris? After years of looking at the beautiful Eiffel

Tower in pictures, I was finally going to actually see it. I had recently gone through a difficult divorce and this trip was exactly what I needed to refresh myself. My best friend Mark and I planned our trip perfectly, from the hotel we were to stay at, to sightseeing, to the food we were going to eat. A budget for this trip did not exist. We wanted the best and nothing less. We had decided to spend a whole month there, why not? At this point we were both successful and just wanted to experience the trip of a lifetime. The only thing I wasn't looking forward to was the flight. I hated to fly. So, of course our trip would start out a bit rough due to turbulence and the flight was so long but we were determined to make this the best trip ever.

As the plane arrived at the Charles de Gaulle airport, our spirits had become lighter, excitement was pouring out of our pores. We both stared out the window of the plane, like two kids in a candy store.

"Oh my god Gia, can you believe we are here? We're in Paris, baby!" Mark said.

I looked around and took a deep breath. "The airport is even beautiful." I replied.

We both laughed.

"I'm really going to like it here, so much eye candy, girl, did you see how gorgeous?" Mark commented as a very good looking French man passed us.

I smiled and nodded yes.

"You want to get a drink before we get a taxi? Mark asked.

"Sure, after that flight, I need a shot!" I replied.

"I can't wait to see Jacques, it has been years. I bet he's still as scrumptious as the last time I saw him" Mark said.

"I know, I've missed him so much!" I mumbled.

"Girl, I'm going to find you a sexy French boy so you can finally get John out of your system. You are a beautiful single woman and you need a single young sexy French man." Mark commented.

I smiled as I sipped my drink. John was my exhusband, we were married for 10 years when he suddenly decided he needed something different. Someone younger. I say he had a mid-life crisis but who am I to judge. I had been in a slump, maybe it was because I kept comparing men to him but I was finally done and this trip was going to define that. As we rode to the hotel, I leaned my head on Mark's shoulder. Mark and I had been friends for years, we worked together and finally opened a successful business together. When we arrived at the hotel, we went straight to our room. We were extremely tired from the flight but as we got into bed we couldn't sleep much because we were too excited about being in France.

As the sun came up, from my bed, I could see in the far distance what I mainly came here for, The Eiffel Tower. I took a deep breath, just soaking it in.

"It's so beautiful, isn't it?" Mark whispered from across the room.

"I've been staring at it for hours." He added.

I sat up so I can get a better view. "C'est magnifique." (It's magnificent) I responded.

"Oui, Oui Mon Chèrie" (Yes, Yes my darling) Mark replied.

We both laughed.

The smells were so different in Paris. I'm sure, to me the smells were probably enhanced because I loved France and the idea of waking up there was amazing. The smell of warm baguettes and fresh coffee were heavenly. For years, Mark and I dreamed of sipping coffee at a French café overlooking Paris and we were finally doing it! We quickly got dressed and went out for breakfast. There were so many cafès in the area but we decided to walk a bit and find one closer to the Eiffel tower. Mark and I walked in silence. The views were incredible, like real life paintings. We stopped now and then to soak in the beauty. It was so incredible. Mark suddenly stops me and points.

"There, we'll have breakfast there. What do you think, mon amie (my friend)?" He said.

I nodded in excitement. He grabbed my hand and pulled me across the street. "There are so many beautiful views out here, and I'm not only talking about the monuments." Mark said with a smirk.

"I know, Mark. I don't know if I want to go back home, I love it here and it hasn't even been a day." I mentioned.

Mark smiled and said "You never know, maybe some sweet French guys can sweep us off our feet and persuade us to stay."

I smiled in agreement.

We made our way to this quaint little café that had two small tables out front. Café Les Jardin was its name. I remember it because of all the beautiful flowers that surrounded it. That sweet smell was so hypnotizing. We ordered our petitdèjeuner (breakfast) and began to people watch. Mark and I were totally mesmerized, that we didn't even notice the waitress had already brought us our food.

As I snapped out of it, I tapped Mark and said "I'm going to leave here weighing 500 pounds, the food is so good."

Mark nodded in agreement as he took a bite of a bright pink macaroon. We were in the middle of an intense conversation when the weirdest thing happened. A gigantic monarch butterfly landed directly on my hand.

"Oh my goodness!" I reacted.

"Look at that! That's a sign, Gia. Even the French butterflies like you." Mark responded with a giggle.

I laughed. The butterfly seemed to be content sitting on my hand.

Suddenly a tall young man approaches our table from across the street and says "Excusezmoi". We both looked up at him then each other, he seemed 7 feet tall. He was beautiful. I had never seen a man with five o'clock shadow, wearing a blue knit cap look so attractive. His eyes were piercing.

"Savez-vous que cela ça porte bonheur?" (Do you know that is good luck?) He said.

I nodded and smiled and Mark answered "C'est vrais?" (Is that true?).

He smiled and replied "Oui!" (Yes!).

I smiled and whispered "Wow!"

The young man winked & said "Bonne Journèe." (Have a nice day).

The butterfly sat there and flew away as the young man walked away. Mark and I just watched him as he reached the corner he turned back towards us and smiled.

"Oh my God, Gia, he said it was good luck? Really? Good Luck was bumping into that beautiful French pastry. Was that even a real butterfly or does he just come with them? Wow!" Mark asserted.

"He was adorable! Did you see that smile and that accent, wow! But how old was he, 16?" I joked.

"Who freaken cares, he has to at least be 21, he was carrying a bottle of wine plus 21 is legal in America, probably ancient out here. Isn't France's age of consent 15 or something like that?" Mark said jokingly.

I nodded no with a smile.

"We need to meet more of those, where should we go?" Mark added.

"Follow the butterflies?" I added as I laughed.

Mark laughed and said "Finish, so we can get going. I want to find more of those butterfly boys."

This was a great beginning to our trip. We were now more enthusiastic about it. We spent this day on a lovely sightseeing tour. I really don't think we were really paying attention, we were just there. It seemed like a movie, like a dream. Mark and I stood in awe as we looked at the Eiffel Tower, it was way bigger than I thought it would be. So beautiful too. The architecture was mind-blowing. The aura around it was magical. I encountered a total soulful experience as I touched it. In Mark's words, I had a soulgasm, through and through. We took so many pictures that our cell phones were totally full. We were such tourist at that moment, it was actually embarrassing. I had a permanent smile from that moment on.

Just one weird thing though. I don't know but I could swear I kept seeing that young man from this morning, maybe it was just wishful thinking because he was gorgeous. I mean, even this morning's event was weird but then I liked weird.

I didn't mention it to Mark, I'm sure he would just make fun of me. We were in Paris, he would just say all French guys looked alike. This was a trip of a lifetime and we were having the time of our lives. Today would be the only day we would be on our own. Mark's friend Jacques had the next few days planned for us and we were excited. Since he was from Paris, he could give us a different kind of tour. The

underground style, you know. Jacques was a special friend of Marks; they met in Germany a few years back and liked each other but never really made a move, so I know he was all about impressing Mark. I'm sure his special tours would be fabulous. First, we were to visit the Château de Versailles (Palace of Versailles), which was located about 15 miles southwest of Paris. It seemed farther due to all the traffic that day though. We could not believe how beautiful this place was. We were totally enchanted by France, everything was simply alluring. As we wandered around the palace, I saw Mark and Jacques were talking between themselves so I gave Mark the eye and heading in the opposite direction, you know to give them some space. I walked slowly behind them, just immersing myself in everything beautiful. The gardens were so exquisite. So many flowers, trees and butterflies. I laughed to myself at the thought of the young man from the other day appearing again. For some reason, I could not forget his laugh. After waking up from my daydream, I noticed I had lost the guys. I walked quickly towards the doors where a crowd of people stood. I thought the guys would be there. The guide was talking in detail about all the elaborate furnishings.

Pointing here and there. I looked around and they were nowhere in sight. This stuff was all so complex and gorgeous though! I couldn't help but stop and listen. The guide was describing some jewels when I saw something that attracted my attention. I walked towards the window to get a better look. I could swear I saw the guy from the other day again. My mind had to be playing tricks on me. I walked quickly towards the door and to that area. I had to make sure I wasn't going crazy. As I arrived at the spot, there were other young guys there but none that looked like him, so I was definitely going crazy.

Suddenly I hear Mark say, "Gia, where did you go? Oh my God, you are going to give me a heart attack!"

I smiled and approached them.

"You shouldn't go off on your own like that G, strange things have been happening to women out here. It's quite dangerous to be alone." Jacques stated.

"Just wandering around, I'm ok guys." I answered.

"Just don't do that again, s'il vous plaît." (please) Jacques exclaimed as he put his arm around me.

"Now we have to get going if we are going to make that party at Le LimeLight on time. Wait til you guys meet Vincent, he's delicious!" Jacques added.

Mark looked over and smiled at me.

"Let us go then." I replied.

"What are you going to wear, G?" Mark asked me.

"I don't know, something short and slinky maybe." I replied.

"Oui! (Yes) That will work!" Jacques added.

"What does that mean?" I asked.

Mark and Jacques laughed amongst themselves.

"We want to find you one like the one from the other morning, remember him, ohhh la la tall, young and handsome. Oh don't forget that smile, ufff I get the chills just thinking about it!" Mark replied.

I smiled and looked away.

We arrived to the hotel with enough time to shower and get ready. Of course, Mark took longer than everyone did to prepare himself. He is such a diva! I walked out of the bathroom wearing a small black dress and red shoes. "Jolie, You need some bright red lipstick to finish that ensemble. Come here." Jacques said as he rummaged through my makeup case.

"You look very nice, Jacques." I said raising my eyebrows.

He laughed. "Merci Gia, but you look better." Jacques responded.

"She is beautiful, but not enough to make me change my ways. Uh no." Mark shouted from the bathroom.

We laughed out loud.

"Are you ready yet? We must head out already, Mark. We don't want to be too late!" Jacques shouted back.

"Oui Oui mon amour" (yes yes my love) Mark said as he came out of the bathroom looking gorgeous.

"Let's go, Paris party life awaits." Mark sang as he grabbed his jacket.

"Attendez une minute! (Wait a minute!), I have some rules for you both. So listen!" Jacques affirmed.

"Gia, pay attention, no wandering off, s'il vous plait, it's for your own safety and Mark, you are my date tonight, so no funny business, no wandering eyes." Jacques added. Mark and I smiled.

The taxi got us there in less than 10 minutes. We arrived at this tall, dark building. You could hear the dance music playing outside. The line was long but Jacques got us in with no problem. He knew the owner. He even managed to get us a table in the VIP section also. It was so exciting, so many people dancing, the music was loud and bumping. The wine flowed like a river. We had been there not even five minutes and we had a few drinks waiting for us at our table. We were like superstars. I stood next to the table and looked around. There were people everywhere. Even some people dancing in cages. Yes cages. Very unique. As we walked through Jacques squeals with excitement.

"Oh putain!, Mon DJ préfère est la. J'adore PAUL ! Allez ! On va dancer !" (My favorite DJ is here tonight! I love PAUL! Come on, let's dance!) Jacques added as he pulled Mark onto the dance floor.

Jacques and Mark were in their own world, dancing, kissing and just being themselves. As Daft Punk's music began to play, I screeched out loud and began dancing. The music was so loud, I felt surrounded by it. I closed my eyes and swayed back and forth to the rhythm. It was enlightening. As I danced in my own world, a mob of people came through bumping into me, almost knocking me down. I suddenly felt a hand on my waist and a whisper.

"Pardonnez-moi." (Pardon Me) A voice said.

I slowly turned to see who it was. It was dark but I could see that beautiful smile. Oh my goodness. It was him! The young man from the other morning and he looked even better than I remember.

He laughed and said "Je me souviens de vous." (I remember you).

I smiled and looked over at Jacques and Mark.

Jacques got up and shook his hand.

"Vincent, Qu'est-ce que faites-vous ici de beau?" (What are you doing here handsome?) Jacques shouted.

He smiled and replied "La même chose que vous, à la recherche d'un bon moment." (Same as you, looking for a good time.)

They both laughed and hugged each other. "Look, these are my friends, Gia and Mark from America. This is Vincent Rousseau." Jacques introduced.

He smiled and replied "Enchanté." (Nice to meet you.)

I just smiled. He then reached out his hand towards me and said "Come with me." I looked over at Jacques and he nodded in agreement. We moved through the crowd to the bar area. Mark and Jacques wanted their privacy so getting rid of me was easy.

"That's the guy we bumped into the other day? Remember I told you about it, the butterfly guy." Mark commented.

Jacques laughed and responded "He's a nice guy, he is the owner of this club. I'm sure he owns all the butterflies in Paris, he's rich. If I could have one moment with him, I'm sorry I would take it."

Mark smiled looking towards us and gave me thumbs up. Vincent moved me in front of him so I leaned against the bar because the crowd was dancing wildly.

As we stood there watching, he whispered "Seen any butterflies lately?"

I smiled and replied "Not till now."

He laughed. While he looked away into the crowd, I looked at him. He was very handsome. Tall, thin, with very curly wild hair and what a smile, oh and don't let me forget that accent, made my knees weak. He turned towards me and smiled as he squeezed closer to me.

I whispered "How old are you?"

He laughed and replied "Assez agè" (Old enough).

"Really?" I asked.

He smiled again and whispered in my ear "26" as he handed me a drink.

He then stood in front of me, just looking at me.

"How do you like Paris?" He said.

"It's very nice." I replied

"Just nice? That's not good. I'll have to change that." He responded.

I smiled and nodded. He then grabbed my hand and motioned to go with him.

"It is quieter over here. We can talk better." He said as he led me to another part of the club. "Sit here, I will be right back." He said as he walked over to speak to the bouncer. Everyone seemed to know him. Everyone greeted him everywhere he went.

I just watched him walk away thinking, "what was I doing here? I mean he's very attractive and he seems to be into me, what was the harm? I have everything under control. Or did I?"

I could see my cell was ringing and it was Mark.

"Hey?" I said.

"Where are you, G?" Mark said.

"I'm at the other side of the club with Vincent." I replied.

"Ohh ok, I'm just checking on you, how's it going? Is he being nice?" Mark asked teasingly.

"It's going good and yes, he's super nice." I replied.

Mark laughed. "Have fun but be careful, I'll call you when we are about to leave, ok? Oh and Jacques said he's 26 and this nightclub is his, so he's very legal girl, go get that hahahaha!" Mark added.

"Don't do anything, do everything" Jacques said in the background with a laugh.

I laughed and hung up. Vincent walked back slowly, like giving me a special look at him. He sat next to me and put his arm behind me. He smelled so good.

"Do you dance?" He asked.

"I do sometimes but I'd rather sit here with you." I said.

He smiled and sipped his drink. We spent a few minutes just smiling at each other and looking at everyone dance.

He then leans in and says "Puis-je vous embrasser?" (Can I kiss you?) As he licked his lips.

I just smiled. He looked at me up and down and slowly approached me. The kiss started out slow. His lips were amazing, soft and smooth. He tasted so sweet. As we separated from the kiss he asked "How long are you going to be in Paris?"

I smiled. "About month or so." I replied.

He smiled and whispered "Maybe you can stay here forever."

# I smiled and shrugged my shoulders as I sipped my drink. He winked.

"I can probably help with that." He added.

"Oh, can you?" I replied smugly.

He sipped his drink then licked his lips. He leaned in again and said "Embrasse-moi" (Kiss me) in a very sexy tone.

As we kissed I whispered "Vous êtes sexy" (You are very sexy).

This totally changed the kiss to a more intense deeper one. As we kissed, his hand went from my knee to my thigh. His other arm held me tight as he leaned on top of me. He glanced at me as he slowly slid his hand under my dress. My heart began to race as he ran his fingers across my panties. He began kissing me rough. I reached over and felt him. He had an amazing bulge beginning to form. This excited me.

He quickly stopped my hand and whispered "Permettez-moi de changer votre point de vue agréable de Paris en quelque chose de spectaculaire" (Let me make your nice view of Paris into something spectacular). He smiles and stands up. He seemed anxious as he looked around. He grabbed my hand and led me into the back office. The room was dark, only a blue light was lit in the background. As he locked the door, he grabbed me from behind and pressed me against him as he kissed my neck. "Voulez-vous de moi?" (Do you want me?) He whispered as he bit my ear.

I responded with a breathy "Oui" (yes).

He replied "J'ai eu envie de vous depuis la première fois que je vous ai vu" (I have wanted you since the day I first saw you).

He spun me towards him and began kissing me deep and wet. His demeanor had changed a bit but it was so sexy. He lifted me onto a table and as he kissed me removed my underwear. I unbuckled his pants quickly. He was very well endowed.

He then stopped again and with his lips against mine whispered "Etes-vous sûre que vous voulez de moi?" (Are you sure you want me?).

He didn't even let me answer even though my answer was yes. In one swoop, he was deep inside me. His eyes remained fixed looking directly at me as he thrust in and out of me. His expressions were as if he were in another world. His moans were deep. His hands caressed my neck, which I made me feel strange, like as if he were measuring it. I guess he noticed I felt weird, he then smiled and slid his hand to the nape of me neck and pulled my hair gently as his lips rubbed across my neck to my face. The feeling of his breath on my lips was intense. As we both reached climax, he looked directly in my eyes and whispered "Vous êtes à moi pour toujours." (You are mine forever).

I was so into my release I didn't pay any attention to what he was really saying. He smiled, slowly rubbed his lips against mine and whispered "Que pensez de Paris maintenant?" (What do you think of Paris now?).

I smiled as I tried to catch my breath He laughed and winked. What an incredible end!

After a few minutes, Vincent grabbed my hand and led me back into the club, Mark and Jacques hadn't moved from the table. The bottles of wine were stacking up though.

"What have you two been up?" Jacques asked.

"Un gentilhomme ne parle jamais" (A Gentleman never speak). Vincent replied with a smile.

He then turns, kisses my cheek and whispers "I'll be back in a while, don't leave, ok."

I nodded yes and watched him walk away.

"Oh no, something happened there, you are glowing girl hahaha" Mark said.

Jacques smiled and whispered "Told you he was nice, real nice hahaha."

"Come on guys, really? How old are you boys? 10?" I responded with a smile.

"Let's just say, many women and men have tried to get where you were at tonight with him and it hasn't happened, so you must be real special. Shit I even tried." Jacques commented.

"Is that right? Oh ok hahaha" I laughed.

"Did he put his sexy butterfly in your net?" Mark joked.

I laughed as we enjoyed the rest of the evening.

One minute I could see Vincent across the club. the next minute he was gone. Sort of like the times I had thought I saw him. It was weird but I figured he must be busy, after all he is running a pretty popular club. Mark and I decided to dance while Jacques went out for a smoke. After a few minutes of just drinking and dancing, Jacques decided it was time to go. He had a mood change suddenly and wanted to leave. It was weird but we were all drinking so we really paid no mind to it. Jacques grabbed my hand and pushed through the crowd. He grabbed a waiter and asked him to get Vincent for us so we can say goodbye but he was nowhere to be found. We made our way to the doors and waited. Vincent came around the corner on his

way back in. He looked disheveled.

"Vous-allez bien?" (Are you ok?) Jacques asked.

"Oui, Je suis juste tombée par teer en jetant ma poubelle, mais je vais bien" (I just tripped as I threw out some garbage.) Vincent said.

He smiled and he thanked us for coming to his club. He pulled me aside and gave me a tight hug and whispered "Je vous reverrai." (I will see you again.)

I smiled in agreement.

He bit his lip and whispered "À très a bientôt." (real soon).

Jacques tapped Vincent's shoulder and grabbed my hand.

"Ok, Ok let her go Vincent, our taxi is waiting." Jacques interrupted.

He laughed and waved. I walked slowly to the taxi, just giving him a last view. He just watched and smiled.

"Damn Gia, what'd you do? He's hot for you. What you give him, girl?" Mark mentioned.

I laughed and replied "Just a little taste."

We all laughed as the taxi took us across town. Upon arriving at the hotel, I ran into the bathroom. As I pulled down my underwear, I noticed a trace of blood, I didn't think anything of it. It had been a while since I had relations. I also saw some small bruises on my arms from where Vincent grabbed me, at the moment I didn't feel a thing, I couldn't even remember if he had held me that tight.

# Jacques and Mark were in the other room talking loud.

"Gia, come in here! You have to see this." Mark yelled.

I put on my sweatshirt that was hanging on the door and went into the room. Mark was pointing at the television.

"That is exactly what I was talking about." Jacques interjected.

"Another woman found strangled and near the club, a few miles away." Jacques added.

"Oh that is so scary!" Mark said.

"Now you see Gia, the women before this one were all in the same fashion, dark haired and foreign. No wandering around for you, mon amie (my friend)." Jacques explained.

"Who could do such a thing? That is so horrible!" Mark asked.

"Whoever it is, he or she is a very sick person." I answered.

Jacques looked upset by what I had said. He rolled his eyes.

"How long has this been going on because there are a lot of victims?" Mark asked. "For months now, this person is real good, he keeps getting away with it. You know what's strange, these girls were all at one time associated with Vincent." Jacques added.

"Really? Whatever Jacques!" I asked.

"So he's a suspect?" Mark asked nervously.

"I didn't say all that." Jacques commented with a laugh.

"That's not nice Jacques, don't mess around." Mark stated.

Jacques laughed.

I just stood there and watch the news report, it was so creepy.

"WOW! It is almost 4am, we need to rest. Later on today we have another excursion, if we get up on time." Jacques asserted.

"Well, I know Gia will sleep real good after having some of that luscious young French baguette." Mark laughed.

Jacques muffled his laugh.

"Very funny, Mark! Grow up boys, grow up!" I said as I threw a pillow at him.

"Go to bed, dorks! Bonne Nuit." I added.

"Sweet dreams of Vincent" Mark whispered.

As my head hit the pillow, I was quick asleep. We slept for hours, more than what we were supposed to. I woke up to my cell ringing next to my face.

"Hello?" I mumbled. There was a short pause.

"Bonjour, mon coeur." (Good morning my sweetheart) The voice said.

"C'est qui?" (Who is this?) I asked.

"You already forgot about your special butterfly?" The voice said with a laugh.

"Oh Vincent, how are you?" I said with a giggle.

"Trés bien, merci, et toi?" (I'm good, thanks and you?) He replied.

"I'm good also, thanks." I answered.

"Any special plans for today?" He asked.

"I'm not sure. I have to ask the guys." I whispered.

Again another pause as if he were thinking of what to say.

"If not, would you want to meet for lunch?" He asked.

"Hmmm Sure, why not?" I replied.

"Meet you at Le LimeLight at 2?" He said.

"Oui (Yes) I'll be there." I agreed.

"Super" (Fantastic) see you then." He ended.

I put my cellphone on my chest and laid in bed smiling like a little school girl with a crush. I finally got up and stumbled to the bathroom. I felt so dizzy. I had an awful hangover. I didn't even drink that much. My stomach felt horrible. As I came out of the bathroom, Mark was coming in.

"What are we doing today?" I asked.

"I don't know, I feel shitty. I just want to sleep I'm exhausted, why?" Mark questioned.

"Vincent asked me out to lunch." I gloated.

Mark splashed water on his face and smiled.

"You should go, I'll just lay here and vegetate with Jacques." Mark said.

"You sure?" I wondered.

Mark nodded yes.

"Just leave a note with all the info on the night table so we know where you'll be. I'm not worried about Vincent, he seems harmless. Don't listen to what Jacques said, he was just joking." Mark added as he stumbled back to bed.

I nodded yes.

I walked over to the closet to see what I should wear. I suddenly felt nervous but excited. As I fumbled to get dressed, Jacques came into the bathroom.

"Going out? With Vincent?" Jacques asked with an attitude.

"Just having lunch." I replied.

He smiled.

"Just having lunch huh? With a dessert side of Vincent? We'll meet for dinner, if you want, you can invite Vincent to join us but it will have to be around 6 because I have some business to attend to." Jacques stated.

He kissed my cheek and walked over to answer the door.

"Who the hell is knocking so loud?" asked Mark.

"Taxi for Mademoiselle is waiting." Said the lady.

"Gia, your taxi is here. When did you call for a taxi? Oh I forgot, Vincent is on it. Be careful ok?" Jacques asked. I shrugged my shoulders and walked towards the door.

"I'll see you guys later. Be good." I said.

"Never" said Mark.

"Be careful !" Jacques asserted.

"Au LimeLight, s'il vous plaît." I said. The taxi driver nodded in agreement.

The ride was much shorter than I remember and the building was beautiful, not as creepy as it looked like in the dark. Out front stood Vincent. He looked gorgeous as usual. Oh that smile!

My taxi pulled up right in front of him and he opened the door. He reached in and grabbed my hand. As I got out, he smiled and kissed my hand.

"Je suis heureux que vous avez décidé de me joindrer" (I'm glad you could join me). He whispered.

"How could I not." I replied.

He smiled. "Je voudrai vous emmener dans un endroit spécial ici à Paris."(I want to take you to a special place, here in Paris.) He added.

"Ou ça?" (Where to?) I asked.

Right then his car came around the corner and he says "Croyez-moi" (Trust me.) He opened the door so I can get in, then he got in the driver's seat. He looked over at me and smiled. We took off quick. He had a beautiful car. Jaguar convertible, white with gold trim. Lots of real gold trim. We didn't go far, I recognized the area from walking through there before with Mark. We pulled up to a beautiful restaurant. The valet rushed to Vincent's door. "Monsieur Vincent, Comment allez vous?" (How are you?) The valet said.

"Je vais bien, Mario." (I'm well) Vincent replied as he got out and handed him the keys.

"Une table pour deux, Monsieur?" (A table for two?) Asked the maître d.

"Oui. "(Yes) replied Vincent.

"Vin rouge, s'il vous plaît." (Red wine please) He added.

We walked in hand in hand.

"Sit, please" He said as he pulled the chair out for me.

I smiled as I looked around. "It's very beautiful here." I commented.

"Wait until you taste the cuisine." He said as he laughed. "So what are Mark and Jacques doing today?" Vincent asked.

"Mark is doing nothing as usual, Jacques said he had some business. We are going to meet for dinner. You want to join us?" I asked.

"That would be nice, we'll see what the day brings?" He responded.

The local newscast was on the television in the background. I glanced in that direction.

"Horrible, isn't it?" Vincent said.

"Mmmhmm, it is very scary. Who would do such thing?" I added.

He looked toward the television with an empty expression then looked towards me and said. "You have nothing to be afraid of." *His expression seemed disturbed. "I will protect you." He added.* 

*He became jiggery. He kept tapping his fingers on the table and playing with the silverware.* 

"Is everything ok?" I asked.

He smiled and replied "C'est excellent! (It's perfect) Too much coffee. That is all." He kept watching the television and his expression would worsen with the more details he was hearing.

"We can do this another time, if you are not feeling up to it." I said concerned.

"No, no, l'heure est parfatet." (The time is perfect). He said with a smile.

He motioned at the waiter to turn off the television. He then turned towards me and smiled.

"Tu est très belle aujourd'hui" (You look beautiful today) He said.

"Merci" (Thank you) I responded.

He leaned over the table and motioned for me to come closer.

"J'ai oubliè de vous embrasser." (I forgot to kiss you) He whispered.

We kissed deeply.

"Now everything is perfect" he said as he bit his lip. He slowly poured the wine as he watched me from across the table.

"Let's order a little bit of everything, this way you can sample a lot of the French cuisine, oui (yes)?" He asked.

I nodded yes.

I watch him as he ordered. He was so handsome, so cultured and so young. "We'll get dessert elsewhere." He said with a smile.

As we had lunch, we spoke about everything under the sun. Vincent was a very special man with very lucky circumstances in life. He was a young entrepreneur. Worked hard for all he had. He owned Le Limelight and the restaurant we were eating at. He seemed very interested in my boring life. He was a pleaser, always made me feel special and appreciated, which made him the perfect man in my eyes.

"Que souhaitez-vous faire après?" (What would you like to do next?) He asked.

I shrugged and replied "I don't know."

He smiled and said "You speak very good French, answer me in French."

I smiled and responded "Je ne sais pas."(I don't know)

He smiled, reached for my hand and kissed it.

"Let's go for a ride. Come on, I'll show you Paris, Vincent style." He whispered in my ear.

We walked over to his car, hand in hand, as he opened the door he whispered "Are you ready?" I didn't know what to say so I just smiled. He had me under his spell completely. He got into the driver's seat and reached over to my side and kissed me as he put on my seatbelt. "I need to keep you safe." He said jokingly.

It was such a beautiful day and a ride in a beautiful convertible with the Eiffel Tower in the far distance was perfect. Now and then, he'd looked over at me and smile. I loved his smile and I think he knew that.

He suddenly stops the car and says "Donnezmoi vos sous-vêtements."(Give me your underwear.) I laughed and replied "What?"

He smiled and said "In French."

I nodded and repeated "Quoi?" (What?).

He smiled and repeated "Take off your underwear."

He reached his hand towards me so I can hand them to him. "Tu me fais confiance, non?"(You trust me, no?) He said.

I slowly lifted up, slid off my undies and handed them to him. He smiled and threw them out the window of his moving car.

"Why did you do that for?" I asked.

He smiled and answered "Pourquoi pas?" (Why not?)

I seriously could not believe I just did that but then I was on an adventure, why not spice it up? How many times in your life do you get to travel through France with a gorgeous young man who wants your underwear? Never. So there you go, I had no choice. I was enjoying the scenery, as Vincent drove. We'd glance at each other and smiled, we even kissed a few times waiting for the street light to change. He made me feel rejuvenated, like a new young woman with a new life. Plus the taste of his lips was intoxicating. His kisses always gave me the chills. He knew he had a special hold on me. As he drove I became mesmerized by the scenery.

He suddenly turned down the music and says "Puis-je vous toucher?" (Can I touch you?).

I didn't think anything of it so I nodded yes. I liked his touch.

He reached his arm over and placed his hand on my thigh. He slowly felt his way up under my skirt. "Ça vous plâit?" (Do you like it?) He whispered as he touched me.

I nodded yes because he always made me speechless.

He smiled and began to move his fingers around. I closed my eyes in ecstasy. I grasped the side of the seat for stability.

"Profitez-en" (Enjoy it) he whispered. "I like to watch you enjoy it. Laissez-vous aller!" (Let yourself go!) He added.

I couldn't resist moaning in delight as his fingers slid in and out of me. For some reason, I didn't not feel ashamed, I felt empowered. He just watched with a delighted expression as I moaned louder and louder. He then slowed his hand down and says "I don't want you to finish

yet." He pulls over and leads me to him. I quickly unbuckled his pants and set him free. I climb on top of him. He inserted himself deep in me, very slow, as in a tease. He smiled and leaned his head back. I began to kiss his neck. He held my butt as he led me up and down on him. I don't think I ever had an orgasm like that before! Unfortunately, this sensual moment became very strange and uncomfortable. I slowly caressed his neck, his smell was so inviting. I tangled my fingers in his curly hair as he licked my breasts.

I reached his ear and whispered "Oh Vincent."

He moaned louder as I said his name. His grip became a bit tighter as he peaked. Out of breath he whispers "Je t'aime" (I love you). I replied "Je t'aime" (I love you)

Who knew those words would set him off. He suddenly grabbed my shoulders tight and pushed me away. The look on his face was frightening. Maybe he didn't mean those words for me. Maybe he didn't want me to tell him I loved him. I don't know what happened. He didn't squeeze my neck but the force of his push hurt me enough.

He looked directly in my eyes and said in a heavy tone "Ne refait ça plus jamais!" (Don't ever do that again!)

I didn't even know how to react, what did I do? I quickly climbed off him and sat silently in the passenger seat. He took a deep breath, put his hands through his hair and closed his eyes.

*"Je suis desolé."(I'm sorry) He mumbled without looking at me.* 

I nodded ok. I just looked out the window feeling very awkward. I just wanted to go back to the hotel. He looked embarrassed and I felt worse. His face was totally different, he seemed very upset and remained very quiet as he drove me back to the hotel. He pulled up in front. He never looked at me. I began collecting my things to get out of the car, I looked towards him and said "Merci pour le déjeuner" (Thank you for lunch.) He said nothing just stared forward as if

he were ashamed to look at me. I felt so heartbroken. He suddenly grabbed my arm and says "I'm so sorry Gia." His face was full of regret. I just nodded in agreement, kissed his cheek, made my way out of his car and into the hotel. I was totally confused about what had happened. He watched me enter the hotel, then screeched away in a hurry. "Merde, Qu'est-ce qu'il avait dans sa tête?" (What the hell was I thinking?) Vincent thought as he pulled his car over a few blocks away. He grabbed his head then pounded on the steering wheel. "Stupide! Stupide!" He yelled. He fumbled for his cell phone. He looked at it wondering if he should call Gia. He dialed her number and it went straight to voicemail. He threw his cell phone onto the passenger seat and sped off again.

"C'est le problemé avec moi?" (What is wrong with me?) He asked himself.

I really knew nothing about Vincent Rousseau. Only what Jacques had told us. I mean Jacques knew a lot about him so I didn't bother to ask Vincent about himself. I was told Vincent came from a family with lots of money. But nothing actually about him directly. I decided to do a Google search on him, just to see what would come up. Not many articles on him but the ones I found kind of gave me an idea. He grew up in an upscale part of Paris. Throughout his childhood, he was a prodigy. Upon entering teenage, his life was turned around when his father was found murdered. Many people describe him as very quiet, cautious and introverted. That was not the Vincent I had met though. A year later, after his father's death, his mother took her life. These were the events that led to Vincent inheriting millions. In which he invested wisely and became one of the most prominent young Parisians. I didn't find anything about him having any serious relationships, even though he was very young.

In an interview, he had mentioned that falling in love was overrated and wasn't for him. He seemed to have many women interested in him but no actual girlfriends. His club, Le Limelight was super popular. I found more articles on it then him.

As Vincent arrived at his condo, he sat in his car thinking. He reached for his cell and dialed Gia's number again. Again it went to voicemail. He took a deep breath and waited for the tone. "Gia, C'est Vincent. Please call me when you can." He whispered into the cell. He sat there for a moment then entered his home.

"Comment puis-je arranger ça?" (How can I fix this?) He said to himself as he unlocked his door. "Je ne peux pas la perdre maintenant." (I can't lose her now). He said out loud.

I entered my hotel room, Mark was knocked out and Jacques was out so I went straight to the bathroom and began crying. I felt uneasy. I couldn't comprehend what I did to make him mad. In the mirror, I could see a large red mark begin to form near the base of my neck. I was so disturbed by what had happened but also curious about why it happened. I could just drop it and move on but there was something holding me to him. I took a quick shower and got ready for dinner.

Mark came into the bathroom half asleep and asked "Are you crying?"

I coughed and said "No, I was singing."

He laughed and replied "That's awful. I'm going downstairs for some coffee, want some?"

I poked my head out of the shower and nodded no.

I took the opportunity to get out the shower when he left. I looked frantically for an outfit that would cover the mark on my neck. I didn't want them to know what happened. Mark would kill Vincent, if he knew he had hurt me. Lucky it was a chilly night, so I was able to wear something that would cover. In my mind, I convinced myself to just move on but my heart was a different story, I was starting to have feelings for Vincent. Strange that it may sound but I felt like I was falling in love with him. Yes, it could be lust but I couldn't let him go, it wasn't that easy.

"Maybe this incident was for the best and I should keep my distance before my feelings for him get stronger." I thought to myself but I still couldn't help but wonder what was really happening in Vincent's mind.

Mark had returned and was getting ready for dinner. We quickly made our way to the restaurant at the hotel.

Jacques was there but seemed anxious. He kept looking around.

"Hey there, how was your meeting?" Mark asked.

"It was long and boring" Jacques jokingly replied.

"I bet it was." Giggled Mark.

I just looked at them as if they were silly.

"Oh and Mr. Special couldn't join us for dinner?" Mark commented.

"No, he had other plans. Maybe next time." I responded quickly.

They both looked at each other but didn't react to my quick response.

"I ordered some appetizers, see what you'd like as your entrée." Jacques said. I nodded as I grabbed the menu.

"This restaurant has a wonderful Poulet grillé au Gingembre, (Grilled Chicken in Ginger) you should try it." Jacques added.

"Sounds delish, I'll have that and a big glass of red wine." I answered.

"Are you ok, Gia? I know you and you seem weird." Mark asked.

I nodded yes nervously.

"Did he do something to you?" Mark asked concerned.

"Oh my god Mark, not at all, what can he do to me that I wouldn't let him do." I replied with a smile.

"I don't know, Gia, I'm sensing something is not right." Mark added.

"Maybe they had a lovers quarrel, leave her alone." Jacques interjected.

I pointed at Jacques, as if he guessed correctly but Mark wasn't believing it. He just stared at me.

I sipped my wine and looked around. I noticed my cell was flashing in my purse. Vincent had called and left a message. I was still freaked out so I just deleted the calls and the message without hearing it.

"You sure you are ok?" Mark asked.

"J'ai la pêche" (Just Peachy) I replied with an attitude.

"So what are we doing tonight? Le Limelight?" Jacques asked.

"Yes, let's go there, free drinks? good music?" Mark added. I made a face and nodded no.

"Not tonight. You guys can go, I'm turning in early, I need some rest." I stated.

They looked at each other and smiled.

"But Vincent is going to miss you." Mark joked.

I smiled and responded, "I think Vincent will be ok for tonight."

Mark was suspicious but he wasn't the kind of person to pry.

Vincent's mind was on overdrive, he hoped Gia didn't tell the guys about what happened. How was he going to explain it? He drove towards Le Limelight passed Gia's hotel to see if he could see her. He needed to let her know that it

was all an accident. He could see into the restaurant as he drove by but decided not to go in. He arrived to the long lines waiting to enter his club. Even though he had lots of work to do, he kept glancing at his phone to see if Gia had returned his call. He genuinely felt awful for what had happened and didn't know how to make things right. He had fallen in love with Gia and didn't want to lose her.

He tried to keep his mind busy while he waited for the club to open. He wasn't accustomed to being ignored and Gia was doing a good job at that. Getting no response from Gia was really starting to bother him so much he was feeling physically sick. The evening started slow. Vincent was anticipating Gia coming to the club so he played out in his mind how he could apologize and gain her trust again. He wandered the club as he did every night, greeting the patrons. In

the

distance, he saw Mark and Jacques so he walked up slowly.

"Cou Cou" (Hello) Vincent said to them.

"Hey Vincent, how's it going?" Mark said.

"Very good and with you?" Vincent replied.

"I'm in the best club in Paris, so I'm fabulous." Mark responded.

Vincent laughed. "Elle est où Gia?" (Where's Gia?) Vincent asked.

"Oh she stayed in tonight, she was feeling tired." Jacques answered.

Vincent nodded in response.

"Well enjoy your evening, drink are on the house." Vincent said.

As Vincent started to walk away, Mark called him back.

"Hey Vincent, I don't mean to be nosey but did something bad happen between you and Gia? She seems depressed." Mark inquired.

Vincent looked nervous and confused. He scratched his chin as he looked away

"No, not at all. Did she say something?" Vincent replied.

"No, that's why I'm asking because she was acting weird, well weirder than normal." Mark added.

"Maybe she's really feeling ill?" Vincent said.

#### Mark shrugged his shoulders.

### "I'll call her to see if she's ok." Vincent said as he walked towards the bar.

After this conversation, Vincent knew Gia was avoiding him. He dialed her number again and this time it didn't even ring, just voicemail. He felt angry but kept his composure. He stood at the bar, looking around. Le LimeLight was packed as usual. His eyes scanned the crowd when a pretty brunette caught his eye. He smiled at her and of course she smiled back. She made her way through the crowd to where he was sitting.

"Bonjour" she whispered in his ear.

"Bonjour" He replied with a smile.

She smiled and said "My name is Camille."

He reached to shake her hand.

"Je m'appelle Vincent." He added.

"Oh I know who you are." She replied.

Vincent smiled and replied "Oh you do?"

She nodded yes as she looked across the bar for the bartender.

"Would you like to have a drink with me?" She whispered.

Vincent smiled and nodded yes.

"Is there somewhere more private we can go to? It's very loud here." She asked.

He grabbed her hand and led her to a back room. By this time, Le Limelight was full to capacity. So no one would notice if Vincent left for a while. He entered the room first, then led her in. He walked over to the mini bar and poured himself a drink. "What would you like to drink?" he said.

She pointed at a bottle of expensive wine.

He poured her a glass of wine as he watched her look through his papers on his desk. "So where are you from Camille?" He asked.

She smiled and replied "From Denver, in the United States. Colorado to be exact."

He nodded and smiled. "You're visiting Paris for a long time?" He added.

"No just one week. I wish it were longer, it's so beautiful here." She replied.

He walked over and handed her the drink. She looked at him up and down.

"You are extremely good looking Vincent." She commented.

He smiled shyly and replied "Merci."

She sipped her drink and looked around the room. Vincent lowered the lights and sat next to her.

"You have some delicious looking lips?" She said.

Vincent smiled as she moved in for a kiss. Vincent didn't like forward women though, he always controlled the situation but this time, he seemed to have lost control from the moment he began speaking to her.

"Wow, that's what I call a real French kiss?" She laughed.

He smiled nervously.

"Do you know how hot you are? You are so gorgeous!" She commented. He just smiled and she began kissing him again. She was all over him in seconds. As they kissed, Vincent could not help but think of Gia. He had never let a women take over his thoughts like she had. As the kisses became more intense, so did Vincent's thoughts. As Camille lowered herself onto him and began to unzip Vincent's pants. He just watched. He didn't like not being in control so he pulled her up to him. She quickly began kissing his neck. The moment had gotten so out of hand that he knew the only way out was to say Gias name in Camille's ear. That would upset any girl.

"Who the hell is Gia?" She yelled.

He nodded confused and tried to get up.

"That's some bullshit, you are here with me not this bitch Gia." She added.

Vincent finally got up to walk away and Camille grabbed him. She put her arms around him and began kissing him.

"You are just too cute. I'll make you forget this Gia chick." She whispered.

Vincent couldn't go through with it. He pushed her away and walked towards the door. "I'll be right back." He said. He figured if he wasn't back in 15 minutes she would just leave.

Minutes later, the lights dimmed down again. He enters the room slowly and approached Camille from behind.

She whispers "Oh Vincent! You've changed your mind, I see. This is very sexy, baby."

He said nothing but began fondling her. As they had sex, she moaned loudly and repeated "You like that baby?" with no response from him. He just moaned in pleasure. No words. He began to caress her shoulders and slowly moved up to her neck. He suddenly grabbed ahold of her neck, squeezing gently.

She smiled with her eyes closed and whispered "Harder."

To Camille, it seemed to be a game but she was about to regret it. The grip became tighter and tighter, she began gasping for air but he was not letting go. She grabbed for his hair but became limp due to asphyxiation. He squeezed again until he felt a crack. Camille fell over and slid to the floor limp. He just sat there, trying to catch his breath.

In my hotel room, I was woken up by horrible nightmare. The look on Vincent's face kept replaying in my mind. In my dream, I could actually feel the pressure on my neck and his breath on my face as he squeezed the life out of me. It was chilling.

I could see my body lying on the floor with Vincent looking down over me. I gasped and sat up quickly. I looked around my dark room "Oh my goodness, it was just a dream" I said to myself.

"I'm over thinking everything as usual, that's ridiculous! Vincent would never do something like that to me or anyone". I thought.

I got out of bed and walked over to the window, I still couldn't shake that strange feeling. That dream felt so real. I was out of breath and shivering. I walked slowly to the bathroom and splashed cold water on my face. I leaned against the wall and looked into the mirror.

"What is wrong with me?" I thought.

"How could I think like that about Vincent?" I mumbled. I looked over to the other side of my room and saw my cellphone was flashing. Vincent had called while I was asleep.

"What a coincidence?" I thought.

I pressed redial and put the phone to my ear. It took a few minutes but he answered.

"Gia?" He said.

"Qu'est-ce que tu me racontes?" (Whatcha up to?) I asked.

He made a breathy noise and replied "Just cleaning up? Et toi? (And you?)"

I snickered and said "I couldn't sleep. I missed you and needed to hear your voice."

He smiled and said "It's nice to hear yours. I miss you too. You should come by Le LimeLight."

I took a deep breath and replied "Not tonight, I really do need to rest a bit."

He then said "Can I see you tomorrow?"

I smiled and replied "Call me."

I couldn't help but think something was going on. He seemed rushed and preoccupied. Vincent put the cell phone in his pocket and bent down to pick up broken glass at the bar. He then returned to his office.

In the dark room he whispered to himself "What am I going to do with you?" As he reached over and caressed Camille's cheek.

"J'espère que vous allez garder un souvenir mèmorable de votre viste de Paris." (I hope your visit to Paris was memorable.) He whispered. He lifted her up and carried her to the indoor garage. He covered her in a sheet. She was actually unnoticeable in the back seat of his truck. He managed to leave the club undetected. He drove slowly as if he were lost. After a few minutes he found the perfect spot. He carried her to a bench and sat her there as if she was looking into the distance. Very morbid. He took the sheet off her and placed her sweater over her shoulders. He pulled a butterfly out of his pocket and placed it on her lap. Where it would be noticed. He looked around as he ran to his truck and returned to the club.

Vincent couldn't get Gia out of his mind. "Je suis un idiot parfois." (I'm such an idiot sometimes.) He said to himself. The incident with Gia replayed in his mind clearly. He covered his eyes and exhaled.

I laid in bed, just thinking. I reached for my cell and turned it on to reveal a picture of us together. We looked so happy. Vincent's face was so sweet and loving. I loved his scrubby beard look.

"Should I come straight out and ask him what happened, or should I just drop it? He did apologize." I thought.

I just couldn't get over the look in his eyes though. It was very different. It was actually terrifying. Like he was a totally different person. I wanted so bad to convince myself everything would be ok but I just couldn't. Something was definitely wrong and if I wanted to be with Vincent, I had to talk to him about it. At least, for my mind's sake.

At the club, Vincent made his rounds like he did every night and ended up by Mark and Jacques's table.

"Where is Jacques?" He asked Mark.

"I was wondering the same thing, he said he was going to smoke and hasn't returned." Mark replied.

"I hope the crazy killer didn't get him" Vincent joked.

"Oh Jacques is not his type. He's annoying but not enough to be killed for." Mark replied and laughed.

Vincent laughed.

"I spoke with Gia. She is feeling a bit under the weather. Can you do a favor for me and give her this gift? Maybe it will make her smile."

Vincent asked.

Mark nodded yes excitedly.

"What is it? Jewelry? Candy?" Mark asked.

Vincent laughed.

"It's a personal gift, I think she will like it." Vincent replied with a wink.

"Ohhhh! Can I see it?" Mark asked.

"Sure." Vincent answered.

Jacques had just then returned to the table.

Mark laughed and said "I'll just see it when she opens it, so we all can be surprised."

Vincent smiled and walk away.

"Expensive gifts, sexy private time, fancy restaurants, this looks like it's going somewhere fast." Mark commented.

"Maybe he's in love." Jacques said with an attitude.

Mark smiled and crossed his fingers. Jacques didn't seem amused by that thought.

"What was that face for?" Mark asked.

Jacques nodded and looked away.

"You act like Vincent is your man. Give up on that dream, he's not like us, Jacques." Mark said.

Jacques totally ignored Mark and walked towards the exit.

I tried to fall asleep but the thought of dreaming the same thing again wouldn't let me. The hours were dragging. I literally watch the minutes as they ticked by on the clock. The tick tock was loud in my head. Totally annoying. Suddenly the hotel room door flies open.

"Gia, baby, wake up! We come bearing gifts, pretty gifts." Mark said in a super cheery voice.

*I covered my eyes from the light, sat up and smiled.* 

"Gifts for me? From who?" I asked.

"De votre Prince Charmant." (From your Prince Charming) Jacques said in annoyed tone.

I grab the box and shook it.

"Careful Gia, it looks fragile." Mark said.

"What do you think it is? It's kind of heavy." I whispered excitedly.

"Open it, dammit! I want to know!" Mark commanded. I peeled the box open and looked in. I then looked at Mark and Jacques.

"It's a jar?" I said confused.

"A jar? Did he send you jelly or something? Pull it out! Let's see!" Mark says excitedly.

I slowly pull the jar out of the box. It was a decorative jar with a small Eiffel Tower and a fluttering butterfly inside it.

"Oh my goodness, how romantic!" Mark swooned.

I stared at it and smiled.

"You know Jacques, that's how they met, we were at a café and a freaken butterfly lands on her hand and he appeared looking like an angel from heaven." Mark explained.

Jacques laughs and said "Really? That's just creepy."

Mark covers his mouth and laughs.

"Yeah it can be Jacques mon amour, but after everything that's happened between them, it seems romantic now." Mark laughs.

"What does the card say?" Jacques asked.

I read it to myself and smiled

"Well?" Mark added.

I handed it to him. He read it and made a confused face.

"I'm sorry? Why the hell is he saying I'm sorry for? Sorry for being so damn romantic and gorgeous?" Mark asked.

Jacques walked away and I laughed.

"Oh who cares Gia, forgive him, look at that beautiful romantic gift, look at him, he's sweet, richhhhh and gorgeous." Mark added.

I stared at the jar. It was so glittery and very pretty.

Mark tosses me my cell and demands "Call Him! Call him, call him, now!"

I smiled and replied "I'll call him in the morning. It's late and he's probably asleep already"

Jacques opens the blinds and says "It is morning sweetheart! He won't mind if you wake him, trust me."

I smiled and dialed his number. It rang 3 times and went quiet. I could hear someone rumbling to get the cell to their ear.

"Bonjour" Vincent said in a groggy voice.

"Merci Vincent!" (Thank you) I said.

He laughed and replied "Je vous en prie, mon amour."(You're welcome, my love).

We both remained quiet. I could hear him take a deep breath.

"I want to see you. Can I see you today?" He mumbled.

"Today? When?" I replied.

"Oui, pour dejeuner" (Yes, for lunch) He added.

"Can Mark and Jacques come along?" I asked.

He laughed.

"Sure, I will pick you all up at 1?" He added.

"That's sounds fine! A Bientôt." (See you later) I replied. "Definitely, A Bientôt" (See you later). He replied.

I slowly lowered the cell from my ear and stared at the screen.

"You ok? Girl, talk to me." Mark asked concerned.

"Oh yeah, I'm fine. You need to take a nap we are going to lunch with Vincent later on." I said.

*I just laid in bed, thinking. I couldn't help but wonder what could be troubling Vincent.* 

"Could that beautiful smile be hiding something dark?" I thought.

I laughed to myself.

"See this is what happens when you watch a lot of television crime shows, constant suspicions about everything." I thought.

After tossing and turning, I decided to get up and go to the hotel patio and people watch. I found a comfy chair with a beautiful view. So many people walked passed. So many couples in love. What a better place to be than in the City of love and actually experiencing it. Sounds cheesy but true. I spaced out just looking passed at the Eiffel Tower in the distance. I still couldn't believe I was in Paris. I also couldn't believe I was happy after being depressed so long. Every time I thought of Vincent, I would smile. He had totally changed me. I felt like a teenager in love especially after the beautiful gift he sent me.

I snapped out of it when an older gentleman tapped my shoulder "Excusez-moi, puis-je m'asseoir ici?"(Excuse me, can I sit here?) He asked. "Oui, bien sûr" (Yes, of course) I replied.

He sat across from me and began reading his newspaper. I looked towards him as he opened it. The front page headline read –

Le corps d'une autre femme èté retrouvé! (Another woman's body found!)

The picture on the newspaper looked very familiar to me. I squinted a bit to see it better. "Where do I know that place from?" I thought to myself. The gentleman lowered the newspaper and looked at me.

"This is so horrible! Poor women" mumbled the man.

I looked at him and nodded yes.

"Are you from Paris?" He asked.

I smiled and nodded no.

"I'm just visiting" I replied.

"Beautiful city but you must be very careful out here. Do not ever travel alone. We have some wonderful people but there are a few bad ones also." He added.

I nodded in agreement.

"Would you like to read this?" He asked as he handed me the newspaper.

reached for it and said "Oui, Merci."(Yes, thank you) I put the paper on my lap as he walked away.

I slowly turned the paper over and stared at the picture. I knew this place. I had been there before but I just couldn't pin point it.

"Maybe I just saw it on an advertisement or on television." I thought. I scanned the article for a name or location but I didn't find one. Reading on how the body was placed for display totally freaked me out. "As if she was waiting for someone", was what the newspaper read. They also found a butterfly on her lap. The newspaper said the killer prepped her to look pretty. I glanced away and lost myself in thought again.

"Where do I know this place from?" I asked myself.

Vincent showed up a bit early so he decided to get a drink at the café across the street. The older gentleman who was sitting across from me was also there.

As the gentleman ordered 2 coffees, the barista asked "Vous Voulez comment votre deuxième café?" (How would you like your second coffee?)

The gentleman pointed and replied "Oh, je ne sais pas. Je faisais juste des achats pour la jeune dame." (Oh I don't know. I was buying for the young lady over there).

*"Juste un peu de crème et du sucre" (Just cream and sugar) He added.* 

As he walked out of the café, Vincent came around the corner and just watched him.

"Is that Gia?" Vincent asked himself. "Who is this man she is with?" He thought.

The gentleman walked over to me and handed me the coffee. I smiled with gratitude.

"I didn't want to drink alone, I hope you don't mind." He said. "Thank you very much. That was very nice of you." I said with a smile.

"I'll sit with you until my wife returns, if that is ok?" He added.

"Oh of course, Monsieur. It would be my pleasure to keep you company." I replied.

"Oh pardon me, my name is Laurent De Rosnay." He said extending his hand.

"It is a total pleasure, Mr. De Rosnay. My name is Gia Barina." I responded as I shook his hand.

From across the street, Vincent stood watching intensely. He could feel a strong feeling of jealousy in the pit of his stomach.

"Who is that man?" He thought.

He felt anxious not knowing. He grabbed his coffee and walked into the bathroom. He looked in the mirror and punched the wall next to him. He needed to control his anger before exiting the café. The gentleman sat with me for a bit and then left to go meet his wife. Shortly after I got up and started walking toward the hotel entrance.

"Gia! Gia!" Vincent shouted as he crossed the street.

I stopped and waved hello.

"Bonjour Beautè" (Hello Beautiful) He said as he kissed my cheek.

"Sorry, I am a bit early." He added.

I smiled and replied "Don't worry about it. I'm very happy to see you, let's go upstairs and get the guys."

He held my hand as we walked towards the elevator.

"What happened to your hand?" I asked because I noticed his knuckles were red and bumpy. He nodded and said "Oh nothing, I might have banged them against something. I didn't even notice."

I kissed his hand and smiled.

"Did you enjoy your coffee?" He asked as we entered the elevator.

"My coffee?" I asked.

He nodded and said "Oui." (Yes).

That was strange. "How would he have known I had coffee? Was he watching me?" I thought.

He smiles and points at my shirt. I had dribbled coffee on it.

I smiled and replied "Oh, It was very nice. A sweet older man brought me coffee while he waited for his wife. He was a total gentleman."

Vincent nodded in agreement. We walked down the long hallway to my room. Half way there, he pulls me close and kisses me deeply.

"I have missed you so much." He whispers as he hugged me tight.

"Me too." I whispered.

His kisses were so good, long and sweet. Always gave me butterflies in my stomach. I smiled and opened the hotel room door.

"Bonjour Vincent" Mark shouted from across the room.

Vincent smiled and waved. Jacques shook his hand as he passed him.

"Where would you all like to go for lunch? It's on me. Anywhere you want." Vincent said. "Ohhhh, if it's on you, take us where you know the food is good and the wine is better." Mark suggested.

Vincent smiled and replied "I know exactly where to take you."

Mark did a little dance of excitement.

"Fancy or Casual?" Jacques asked as he held two different shirts up to his chest.

"Oh, casual is fine." Vincent replied.

Jacques nodded and put on the blue shirt. I was in the bathroom putting on makeup when Mark entered.

"Goodness Gia, look at him, he is so beautiful." Mark said as we both looked out the bathroom door at him. He was standing by the window and the sunlight shining in caressed him perfectly. I smiled and raised my eyebrows. He looked over at us and smiled as he talked his cell.

"Our limo is waiting downstairs." Vincent said.

"Wow, limo! We are going in style. Let's go everyone." Jacques replied.

Excitedly we made our way to the lobby. In the elevator, Vincent kept looking at me and when our eyes would meet he'd smile. If he only knew the impact his eyes had on me. As the elevator reached the lobby, he grabbed my hand and led me to the limo. Mark and Jacques followed behind.

"So where are we going?" Jacques asked.

Vincent smiled and whispered "C'est un secret" (It's a secret) as he stared at me from the other side of the limo.

Mark pointed out the window as we passed the Arc de Triumph. After a long romantic ride through Paris, we pull up to a beautiful white building.

"We are here!" Vincent said.

We all looked in awe out the windows.

"Wow Vincent, this place is marvelous!" Mark said.

*Vincent smiled and replied "Only the best for my sweet Gia" as he helped me out the car.* 

I felt like a princess, so honored.

"Bienvenue Monsieur Rousseau" The Maître d said as we approached the door.

"Votre table est prête" (Your table is ready) He added.

Vincent nodded his head and motioned for us to follow him. Our table was in a private part of the restaurant. The decorations were outstanding.

"Order whatever you'd like. It's on me. I want you to have a wonderful time." Vincent said as he pulled out the chair for me.

"Oh Vincent, I like you and I really like that! You are a wonderful host!" Mark commented with a laugh.

Jacques nodded and laughed also.

This restaurant was lovely, dimly lit but bright enough. Vincent sat across from me. I had to stare at him. The lighting made him look so mysterious. I watched him as he and the guys laughed and talked about anything and everything. His laugh was contagious. I couldn't believe I was there with him. After a few minutes of laughter, Mark interrupted the fun.

"Why are you so quiet Gia?" Mark asked.

"I'm just listening to you guys. It's a very interesting conversation." I responded with a laugh.

Mark looked past me at the art work on the walls and pointed to it so Jacques would look.

"Is it ok if Mark and I take a look around while we wait?" Jacques asked.

"Sure. It's very charming here, go check it out!" Vincent replied.

I smiled because I knew they were just trying to give us some privacy. I smiled as the guys walked away.

"Thank you for bringing us here, Vincent." I said.

He smiled and replied "C'est un Plaisir, mon amour." (My pleasure, my love).

*I reached over at the flower on our table and smelled it. Vincent watched my every move.* 

"Can I ask you something?" I asked in a hesitated tone.

"Sure, you can ask me anything?" Vincent replied.

"What happened the other day?" I said in a quiet voice.

His face turned concerned, he nodded and replied "A misunderstanding, my heart. I can't apologize enough for that."

That answer confused me more than I already was. What did that mean?

"Je ne comprends pas." (I don't understand.) I said.

"It's a past issue. I did not mean to hurt or scare you. It has nothing to do with you, Gia." He said very concerned as he caressed my cheek.

I looked down and smiled.

"J'ai un sentiment spècial pour vous. Je n'aurais jamais..." (I have special feelings for you. I would never...) He said.

I looked away and whispered "I thought I did something to offend you."

He nodded no.

"Absolutely not! You did nothing. I'm sorry Gia, I hope you can forgive me. It was not your fault." He whispered.

I smiled and nodded. He move over to my side of the table and kissed me. How could I not forgive him, he was truly apologetic. We sat at the table cuddling while the guys toured the restaurant. Vincent and I talked amongst ourselves.

On the other side of the restaurant there was a young lady walking up to the tables with a picture. She approached our table and spoke directly to Vincent.

"Excuse me, aren't you the owner of the dance club Le Limelight?" She asked.

Vincent smiled and nodded yes.

She hands him a picture and asked "My friends and I were there last night and we had a great time! I was wondering, have you seen this girl?" He looked at the picture and nodded no. "I see so many people every night, she doesn't stand out to me. I'm sorry." He said.

At that time, Mark and Jacques joined us at the table. "I'm looking for my friend." She stated to them as she handed them Camille's picture.

"Were you at Le Limelight last night?" She asked.

They both nodded, looked at the picture and then looked over at Vincent.

"I was too busy looking into these pretty eyes, I didn't notice and with so many people, it's kind of impossible to see one person." Mark said as he pointed at Jacques.

"Have you gone to the police?" Jacques asked.

"No. She does this a lot but this time she's more than late. She hasn't even called us." She replied.

"You should go to the police. I'm sure they can help you more than we can." Mark added.

"Thank you, I'll do that. I'm so worried for her." She responded as she walked away.

We all looked at each other concerned.

"Wow, that's freaken scary, I hope she finds her friend." I said.

Vincent nodded in agreement.

"Hey, Jacques and I have decided to go to London for a few days, you guys want to come? Let's go see the Queen!" Mark asked.

"London? The Queen?" I asked.

"Yeah girl, The Queen, Your Highness. London, it's like right there." Mark said as he pointed out the window. I sighed and replied "I don't know. London?"

Vincent smiled.

"You should go, London is nice. It's not Paris but its ok!" Vincent joked.

Jacques laughed and raised his hand to high five Vincent.

I shrugged my shoulders indecisively.

"I'll think about it, I guess. I need to use the ladies room, excuse me." I said.

"Ok, think about it and be quick! And FYI that is too much info, go do your thing and let us know, yuck! Remember wash your hands." Mark joked.

They all laughed.

"I have a call to make also, so excuse me for a bit. Behave yourselves." Vincent added.

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Mark and Jacques smiled.

Vincent walked towards the doors as I walked towards the bathroom. Vincent took the cell phone out of his pocket and looked at it before dialing, he seemed to be looking for something specific cause it took him a while to dial. After a few minutes, he returned to the table. I entered the bathroom and looked around.

"Wow, this bathroom is bigger than my apartment." I thought.

The girl who came to our table was washing her hands. I smiled at her as I passed her.

"Miss? I'm sorry to bother you." She said.

I nodded it wasn't a bother. The girl continued, "I really do need your help." I stopped and looked at her. I really didn't know what to do so I said, "I wasn't at the club last night, sweetheart."

She looked frustrated.

"I don't want to get your boyfriend in trouble but he's lying." She said.

"He's lying about what?" I asked concerned.

"About seeing Camille." She stated.

"Ok, maybe he did see her, that doesn't mean he knows where she's at. Like he said he sees many people every night." I replied with a jealous tone.

The girl fumbled in her purse and handed me her cell phone.

"Camille texted me this pic and message last night." She said with a bit of an attitude.

I looked at the picture and the message read:

"Hey ladies, hanging out with this hottie, talk to you all later."

The picture was a selfie of herself with Vincent she had taken at the club.

I handed her the cell.

"Ok?" I questioned. "This still doesn't mean he knows where she went or where she's at." I added.

"I know but I thought maybe she told him where she was going or something." The girl said.

"If Vincent knew anything, he would have told you, I'm sure of it. He wouldn't keep that from you especially knowing you are looking for her." I assured her as I washed my hands.

I walked passed her to dry my hands.

"You never know, she might already be at your hotel room waiting for you and you are here looking for her." I added. The girl nodded.

"I'm sure she is fine, don't worry." I said as I walked out the restroom.

I watched Vincent as I returned to the table and wondered why he didn't say he saw the girl. What was he hiding?

"Vous allez bien?" (Are you ok?) Vincent asked.

I nodded and smiled. He looked passed me and saw the girl also came out the restroom.

"So, are you coming to London with us or not?" Mark asked.

I smiled and looked at Vincent.

"You should go." Vincent whispered.

"I guess." I answered.

"Geez, don't be so disappointed, it's only London." Mark joked.

"And you, Vincent? Will you be joining us?" Jacques asked.

"Oh I can't, I have some things to do. Le Limelight doesn't run itself. But you all go and have fun!" Vincent replied.

"Souhaitez vous commander vos plats maintenant?" (Would you like to order now?) The waiter asked.

Vincent looked at us, waiting for us to order.

"Should I order for everyone?" Vincent asked.

"Yes, of course. You have wonderful taste, go for it." Mark said. Vincent nodded and began to order. I loved hearing his voice, it had such a sexy tone. He smiled and looked over at me.

I smiled in return.

"Merci, (Thank you) Monsieur Rousseau" The waiter said.

Mark had the most mischievous look on his face so I knew he was up to something. He reaches over and taps Vincent's hand.

"So Vincent, why isn't a gorgeous man like you married or at least taken?" Mark asked.

Vincent laughed and looked over at me. I shyly looked away. "I haven't found the right one yet?" Vincent replied with a shy smile.

"Jusqui'ici? (Until now?) Jacques whispered.

Vincent laughed and replied "Peut-être" (Maybe).

I was too busy trying to fix the confusion in my mind, I didn't even hear the rest of the conversation.

"Gia? Gia?" Mark said as he tapped my hand.

"Yeah, what's up?" I asked.

"You look like you are 1,000 miles away girl, wake up! Vincent was saying something important." Mark joked.

They all laughed. Vincent motioned like it was no big deal.

I looked over at Vincent and smiled. "I'm sorry, what were you saying?" I asked.

Vincent nodded and winked.

"We are just messing with you Gia?" Jacques added. Vincent put his arm around me and whispered in my ear, "Je t'aime" (I love you).

I remained quiet and smiled. He smiled back. I did not want to rehash another blowout by saying Je t'aime so I left it at that. Thank goodness, the food arrived because I was feeling a bit uncomfortable, I really didn't know what to say.

As the waiters put the food on the table, Mark commented "Everything looks excellent Vincent. Thank you so much!"

Vincent nodded gracefully.

"My pleasure Mark, I'm glad you are enjoying it." Vincent replied.

Jacques nodded in agreement with Mark. We all ate more than we should have. Everything was so delicious. Vincent pointed at the pastry cart.

"The pastries are magnifique also, they are made here, in house. You need to try at least one" Vincent added.

Mark motioned no with his hand. Vincent smiled.

"Would you like another drink before we leave?" Vincent asked.

I nodded no.

He then looked at the guys.

"Oh no Merci, Vincent. I can't drink or eat another bite." Jacques answered.

Vincent waved down the waiter "L'addition, s'il vous plaît" (Bill, please) He said.

"Excuse me I need to go to the little boys room before we leave." Mark said. I smiled and jokingly replied "FYI, too much info. Wash your hands."

Mark made a funny face then laughed.

Vincent reached over for my hand. "Venez avec moi une minute" (Come with me for a minute) He whispered.

We walked across the restaurant to a waiting area.

"C'est pour vous" (This is for you.) He said as he handed me a beautiful rose.

"J'espère que vous avez passè un bon moment" (I hope you are having a great time) He whispered as he pulled me close to him.

I can say I enjoyed every moment with him, he was so sweet and very romantic.

I smiled and whispered "Oui, Merci" (Yes, Thank you).

He caressed my chin as he kissed me. This kiss I felt throughout my body, it was so slow and so sensual.

"Can we spend a little time alone before you go to London?" He whispered as we separated from the kiss.

I smiled, nodded yes and whispered, "I think we should."

He smiled and said "Great! Give me a second.

He reached for his cell phone and made a call. I couldn't hear who he was talking to but every now and then he would flash that smile at me. I walked over to where he was standing and put my arms around him. "I ordered a limo to take Mark and Jacques wherever they want to go and back to the hotel, we will take the other to a special place then I'll drop you off so you can go see London." Vincent said.

I smiled with excitement.

He kissed my cheek and whispered "Do you trust me?"

I nodded and said "Yes, of course".

Vincent walked over to the guys to let them know what he had planned and walked back. Mark and Jacques were delighted to have some time alone. They waved as they got in their limo. I waved back with a kiss. Vincent then pulls a handkerchief out of his pocket.

"Can I blindfold you?" He said with a smile.

I was hesitant but he always made everything seem so exciting. As he covered my eyes, he whispered "Je ne pourrai jamais vous blesser."(I would never hurt you)

That was strange to me but I took it as a miscommunication or bad translation on my part. He grabbed my shoulders and led me to the limo. He sat me across from him.

"Let's play a game." He said.

"Ok" I replied.

I heard him moving things around.

"Qu'est-ce que c'est?" (What is this?) He whispered as he slowly rubbed a strawberry on my lips.

He was very close to my face because I could feel his breath on my lips also.

I licked my lips and replied "A Strawberry"

He laughed and whispered "Exacte."(Exactly.) He then dripped a bit of lemon on my lips.

"C'est Aigre?" (Sour?) He whispered.

I nodded yes.

I then felt his tongue glide slowly across my lips.

My heart began to race.

"Je veux te goûter maintenant" (I want to taste you now) He whispered.

I remained silent and submissive. His hands caressed my breast as he kissed my neck. He then lifted my skirt and began removing my underwear. I did not resist. We remained face to face. His breath on my lips made the experience even sexier. The feeling of his fingers sliding down my legs was so sensual.

"Take off your blindfold" He commanded in a whisper.

I pulled it off but had my eyes closed because the sensation was so extreme.

"Open your eyes, I want you to watch me." Vincent whispered as ran his tongue across my pearl.

I twitched as he bit it softly. He would poke it lightly with the tip of his tongue as to tease me and then would just dive in as if he were eating a dessert.

He held my legs tight as he devoured me completely. I couldn't help but moan loudly and gyrate to his rhythm.

He then whispered "Vous voulez de moi?"(Do you want me?) In between moans I squealed loudly "Oui Vincent?" (Yes)

He quickly turned me around and entered me from behind. The feeling of his body bumping mine felt so good. He held me tight as he rammed himself inside me, over and over. His moaning in my ear totally turned me on. I felt I should be a little aggressive. So I turned myself around and pushed him down on the seat. He smiled as I climbed on top of him. I kissed him deeply before I began my descent. His chest was so soft.

I ran my tongue all the way down to his beautifully toned belly. His breathing became harder and faster as I slowly licked his length. He watched me and smiled as I had my dessert. I couldn't get enough of Vincent.

I followed his curves back up to his lips with my tongue and gently sat on him, taking him in completely. He moaned loudly. We stared at each other for a few seconds before he grabbed my face and began kissing me. Suddenly his grip became a bit rougher. "Not so rough" I whispered.

He had his eyes closed and seemed not to hear me. I reached for his hand that was making an imprint on my hip and tried pulling it off but the grip got stronger and stronger. Suddenly I was

on my back and he is on top of me with his forearm on my neck. It seemed like we were in a wrestling match. Scrambling to get composure. I fought to get him off me but the more I fought the worse it became. I reached up and slapped his face a few times which snapped him out of whatever mind warp he was in. The pressure on my neck made me lose consciousness. I was unresponsive. Vincent automatically grabbed me and began breathing into my mouth.

He screamed "GIAAAAAA!"

I could hear him but he seemed miles away. I kept coming in and out of consciousness. I woke up in his bedroom, it seemed hours later. The drapes were drawn shut in order to make the room darker than it was. I was drenched as if I was put in a shower. I felt terrified. I didn't want to move. I could hear Vincent yelling on his cell to someone.

He kept saying "She isn't waking up, what do I do? This wasn't supposed to happen."

Then he would mumble in French. I couldn't comprehend what he was saying. My brain couldn't grasp it. I felt like I had been pummeled like a punching bag. I didn't think I could even walk. The room was spinning.

What was happening? Why would he do this to me? Was Vincent the killer everyone was looking for? There was no way.

I laid there motionless. He came into the room and sat at the edge of the bed. He was sobbing out loud.

He walked over to the side of the bed and said "Rèveiller vous Gia, s'il vous plâit." (Wake up Gia, please).

He seemed confused. He paced back and forth, smacking his head, as if he were punishing himself. He walked over towards the windows touching his head like he could not believe this was happening.

I remained as still as I could. I was petrified at that thought of what might happen to me if he knew I was awake.

"Why would he want to kill me?" I thought.

Maybe we were in an accident. I can't remember what happened. I just felt scared. He left the room and then I heard his car speed away. "What do I do?" I thought.

I don't have my purse or my cell. I don't even know where I'm at. I slowly got up and stumbled to the door. I stood there for a second, trying to grasp my composure. I looked around and saw some pictures on a mantel. One seemed to be of Vincent and his parents, some of different landscapes and the other was me at the Eiffel Tower. He wasn't with me that day though. I immediately got goose pimples.

"He was there that day, I remember seeing him.

I knew it!" I said to myself.

I quietly walked into the kitchen. I didn't want to make too much noise, just in case someone else was there. Through window I could see an older lady working in the yard next door.

"Did I have enough time before Vincent returned to get to her?" I asked myself.

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I open the door quietly and took off running towards the fence line. She glanced at me in horror.

"Madame j'ai besoin de l'aide, j'ai eu un accident." (I need help, I was in an accident) I said.

The lady ran up to the gate and helped me into her yard.

"Je vais appeler la police" (I'll call the police.) The lady said.

"Don't call the police, I need to call my brother.

Can I call my brother?" I asked.

She nodded and handed me her cell. Mark's cell went straight to voicemail. It's the only number I knew by heart. I automatically began to cry. I had no money, no way back to the hotel and I think Vincent was trying to kill me.

The lady put a sweater over my shoulders and asked "Vous êtes ou?" (Where do you belong?)

I told her the hotel I was supposed to be at and she agreed to take me there.

"Quel jour sommes nous?" (What day is it?) I asked.

The lady said "Dimanche" (Sunday.)

I had been knocked out for days not hours like I thought. What was going on?

In the distance, I could hear Vincent's car approaching. I began shaking.

"Oh mon voisin Vincent est chez lui, peut-être qu'il pourra nous aider." (Oh my neighbor Vincent is home, maybe he can help us.) The lady suggested.

I grabbed her, nodded no and pleaded "Please, I don't want anyone else to see me like this."

She put her arm around me to console me and agreed. Thankfully her garage was connected to her home so getting into the car and leaving was fairly easy.

Vincent arrived to an unexpected surprise. He ran up to his room to find I was gone. He looked in the bathroom, under the bed, in the closet, I was nowhere to be found. He knew if he didn't find me first, he'd be in serious trouble. He noticed the pictures in the living room had been moved. The one of me was turned down. He grabbed it and threw it across the room.

"Where could she have gone?" He thought.

He paced back and forth. He grabs his cell and called Jacques.

"Hello?" said Jacques.

"Hello Jacques. It's Vincent." Vincent replied.

"Hey, how are you and Gia doing? Jacques asked.

Vincent laughed with a sigh of relief "We are fine, having fun. She wanted to talk with you but now she's in the ladies room. Je ne sais pas." (I don't know) Vincent responded.

"Tell her we are having fun in London and we'll see her soon then. Take good care of our girl for us." Jacques replied.

"Oh I will. Say hello to Mark for us." Vincent ended.

Vincent threw his phone on the bed.

"Where the hell is she? She couldn't have gotten back to the hotel. I wasn't gone long enough, she has to be nearby. She is not well." He thought.

We quickly arrived at the hotel. I was a mess, my head hurt tremendously and my vision seemed blurred.

"Serez-vous d'accord?" (Will you be ok?) The lady asked.

"Oui, Please do not tell anyone you saw me?" I said to the lady.

"C'est notre secret, mais vous devez être prudent, allez voir les autoritès." (It's our secret but you need to be careful, go to the authorities.) The lady said.

"I will, Merci." I said as I hugged her.

I walked up to the front desk. I looked dazed and confused.

"Mademoiselle? Is everything ok?" The concierge said concerned.

"Bonjour, J'ai perdu mon sac (I've lost my purse) and I don't have my key." I said.

"Aucun problème, (no problem) I remember you. Here you go." He said as he handed me the key.

I rushed to the elevator and to my room. I stopped at the door and listened. I wanted to make sure no one was in the room. I put the key in slowly and pushed the door open. The room was exactly how I had left it but my purse and cell were on the night table. That was strange. I stood at the doorway and from there looked into the other rooms. I took a deep breath and walked towards my bed.

"How did my purse and cell get here? I had them with me." I thought.

I walked towards the bathroom and everything was there also. Mark and Jacques had taken most of their things but my stuff was there as if I had never left the room. I stood there spaced out trying to figure things out. I was startled by my cell phone ringing. I ran to grab it thinking it might be Mark, when I grabbed it, I immediately dropped it. Vincent was calling.

"Does he know I'm here?" I thought.

I scrambled around the room, packing what I could and called the front desk to let them know I would be checking out immediately. I was running around so fast that I tripped and fell, knocking the side table over. A small box that had butterflies in it fell out of it.

"Oh my God! I have to get out of here." I said to myself. I tore through the nightstand drawer looking for a directory. I needed to find a hotel in a different area that I could check into. I needed one Vincent might not know. Which would be a stretch since he knew everything and everyone. I found a small one a few miles away. It seemed hidden enough. I left the hotel room and made my way downstairs. I felt paranoid as I waited for my rental car to arrive. I sat at the back of the bar, just watching my surroundings. I didn't want anyone to notice me so I remained quiet and calm. The moment the car pulled up, I walked quickly to it and got inside. I wasn't sure which way to go so I asked the valet who pointed out the easiest directions. I felt a bit safe because Vincent had no idea what car I was driving or where I would be staying. Or so I thought.

Vincent arrived at the hotel minutes after I had left. He was told I had checked out of the hotel with no forwarding information. But that wasn't a problem for him because he had the money and the means to get any information he wanted.

As he got back into his car the Valet asked "Cherchez vous une jeune dame Américaine dans une voiture noire ?" (Are you looking for a young American lady in a black car?)

Vincent pulled out his cell phone which had a picture of us and pointed at the girl in the picture, "Est-ce que c'est elle?" (Is this her?) He asked.

The Valet nodded and replied, "Oui, Elle a demandé la route pour aller à Chantilly" (Yes, she asked for directions to Chantilly.)

Vincent nodded and handed the Valet a large tip. "Merci" (Thank you) Vincent said.

"What is in Chantilly?" Vincent thought.

The Concierge ran out, stopped Vincent and handed him a cell phone.

"Monsieur Rousseau, votre ami a laissè ceci dans sa chambre quand elle a quittè l'hôtel." (Mister Rousseau, your friend left this in her hotel room when she checked out.) He said.

"Ah Merci" (Oh Thank you) Vincent replied.

Vincent put the cell in his pocket and sped off.

"Why would Gia be going to Chantilly and with no cell phone?" He asked himself.

He needed to stop and think. He decided to go to his office at Le LimeLight, where he can try to figure out what to do without interruptions. As he walked in he waved at the bartender and went straight to his office.

"Pas d'interruptions, s'il vous plaît." (No interruptions please) He yelled across the bar.

He walked into his office and slammed the door. He grabbed a directory and began looking up hotels in that area. There were just a few. His fingers ran up and down the page. He stopped at one that got his attention. He grabbed his cell and called it. To his surprise, Gia had a reservation there but hadn't checked in yet.

"Perfect. I will let her get comfortable before I go see her." He said to himself. He needed to explain to her this was an accident. He really didn't mean to hurt her. He would never hurt her. He had grown to love her. Which was something he really never felt. Vincent thought.

Meanwhile, Mark and Jacques were having a wonderful time in London. Pub crawling, sightseeing and messing with the Queen's guard at Buckingham Palace. While at Picadilly Circus they ran around like two little boys. So many people. It was exciting and beautiful. Mark loved his Great Britain.

"Let's go see the Tower of London" Mark asked.

"Baby I've seen it 3 times, but you go I'm just going to run to the hotel to charge my phone, we will meet there, Oui?" Jacques replied.

"Oh come on Jacques, please?" Mark pleaded.

"Mark, you go and enjoy the Tower, we'll meet for dinner." Jacques responded.

"Ok" Mark said with a sad face.

Jacques kept looking over Mark's shoulder at the crowds of people.

"What are you looking at?" Mark asked.

"The tour schedule making sure you won't miss it." Jacques answered.

Mark smiled and kissed Jacques.

Mark turned around and accidentally bumped into a girl who was walking passed.

Jacques smiled and said "Already trying to pick up the pretty girl." Mark made a face and walked in the opposite direction. Jacques walked quickly as if he were following someone. He rapidly disappeared into the crowd.

I drove it seemed for hours. Despite all the craziness, the views were spectacular. I truly loved France. I didn't understand why this was happening but then I did give myself to a stranger. A stranger who I have fallen madly in love with.

I had finally arrived at my destination. The hotel was very sweet, it looked like a small American bed and breakfast. I loved the flowers. So many pinks and blue ones. It was very romantic. I would have loved to share this with Vincent, under other circumstances of course.

I took my bag out of the trunk and walked slowly to the door. This place was simple but amazing.

The owner greeted me at the door "Mademoiselle Gia, bienvenue dans notre hôtel. J'espère que votre séjour sera long et satisfaisant" (Miss Gia, welcome to our small hotel. I hope your stay will be long and satisfying.) He said.

I smiled and replied "Oui, Merci Monsieur." (Yes, thank you sir).

He walked me to the front desk and handed me my key. He then pointed in the direction of my room. His son carried my bags up. The room was adorable. So colorful. I crawled onto the bed and laid down. I stared at the ceiling. My heart felt heavy. Vincent was so important to me. I felt as if I needed him though. Our connection was so intense that my every thought was of him. Vincent sat at his office looking at the pictures on my cell. He loved looking at the pictures of us together. He felt so disappointed at himself. He felt so out of control.

"How could he let this happen?" He thought.

He anxiously waited for the moment to go see Gia. Throughout the evening he looked at his watch religiously, waiting for closing time at Le Limelight. He was so busy trying to figure out what he could say to her. He just wanted to get to Chantilly and ask for forgiveness. But he knew it would be difficult because he knew she was now afraid of him. Upon closing, he jumped in his car and drove towards Chantilly. He glanced over at the passenger seat wishing Gia was there.

He pulled slowly into the parking lot. The hotel was dark. He sat there looking at the windows. To his surprise, I had gotten up and was looking out but in a different direction. He could see me clearly.

"Elle est si belle" (She is so beautiful) he whispered to himself.

He hesitated before getting out. He looked up again at the hotel.

"Je dois lui parler maintenant." (I need to talk to her now) He thought.

He slowly walked to the door, then to the front desk.

"Excusez-moi. Ma femme s'est endormie et j'ai oublié ma clé. C'est la chambre 247." (Excuse me, my wife is asleep and I forgot my key. The room is 247) He said. The girl at the front desk looked it up and replied "J'ai personne dans cette chambre" (I have no one in that room).

He smiled and said "Je bu quelques verres, la salle est sous le nom Barina" (I had a few drinks, the room is under the name Barina).

She smiled and replied "Oh c'est la chambre 246." (Oh! That is hotel room 246)

He laughed and nodded his head.

She handed him the key and asked no other questions. Vincent was always very charming and he knew how to get what he wanted. He grabbed the key and walked towards the stairs. As he reached the door, he stood there silently.

"Je ne veux pas lui faire peur, dois-je frapper à la porte?" (I don't want to scare her, should I knock?) He said to himself.

I could not sleep. I felt anxious. I stared at the light under the door. I could see movement in the hallway. The hotel seemed very busy. Suddenly I heard someone whisper my name. I sat up in my bed startled.

"Gia, c'est Vincent, je dois vous parler, se il vous plaît laissez-moi rentrer." (Gia, it's Vincent, I need to talk to you, please let me in.) He whispered through the door.

Vincent's voice sounded so sad. I got up and walked slowly to the door. I could see him through the peep hole. He was leaning against the wall. Housekeeping was in the hall so I didn't feel threatened. I opened the door with the latch on.

Vincent stood up straight and said "Mon amour, can we talk?"

I looked directly at him and replied "Talk? About what?" He walked closer to the door and placed his face directly in front of mine.

"Gia, please forgive me! I did not mean to hurt you, it was accident. I swear." He said.

I took a deep breath and said "An Accident? Really Vincent?"

He turned and walked back towards the wall. He wiped his face as he thought of what else to say.

"I don't know how to explain, please Gia, please." He begged.

For some reason, I felt he was being truthful. I unlatched the door and walked away. He pushed the door open and stood in the doorway.

"Je t'aime" (I love you) He whispered.

His words stopped me. I turned towards him. He stood there awaiting confirmation. I walked back towards him.

"I love you too." I whispered.

He closed the door behind him and stood near it. I had so many questions. I needed to know about that girl that was missing. It weighed on my mind so I came straight out and asked.

"Vincent, that girl at your club, why did you say you didn't know her?" I asked.

*He looked confused. He unzipped his jacket and sat down on a chair near the window.* 

"Because I don't know her, Gia." He replied.

"Vincent, I saw a picture of you with her from that night." I added.

He suddenly looked nervous.

"Are you sure it was me?" He asked with an attitude.

I walked towards him and said "Vincent, don't play with me, it was you."

He stood up, grabbed my arm and said "Ok! Ok Gia, It was me, but I really don't know where she is at. I only spoke with her for a few minutes."

I looked at him and asked "Did you sleep with her?"

He looked at me offended and nodded no. He reached in his pocket for a cigarette.

"Gia, I hung out with her for a few minutes, she was rather overbearing so I left her alone and went back to what I was doing. I have no idea where she is or what happened to her after that. Believe me." He assured.

I felt it in my gut, he was telling the truth but I still was a bit nervous. I don't think he would lie to me considering everything that was going on. He approached me and hugged me tight.

He whispered "Je t'aime" (I love you).

I just held on to him with my eyes closed.

"What happened to me, Vincent? Why was I at your apartment days after that dinner" I said softly.

He walked over to the bed and sat down. He motioned for me to join him.

"Mon amour, we were having a wonderful intimate time, when we fell over and you hit your head, I couldn't grab my balance and I fell on you. I didn't mean to hurt you. I could feel you were breathing after trying CPR but I couldn't wake you up. So I took you to my apartment and put you in the shower and that didn't work. I called everyone I knew and no one could help. I was just told to let you rest but I was afraid. I panicked." He explained.

I just stared at him trying to comprehend what he just said. He seemed worried about what I was going to say.

"Vous devez me croire." (You have to believe me.) He said in a sad soft tone.

"I do" I whispered. He dropped to his knees in front of me, grabbed my hands and kissed them.

We stood up and hugged again.

"Please stay with me tonight?" I whispered. He nodded yes and kissed my forehead.

Mark and Jacques were on their way back from London. At the train station, they were stopped by the police, who were looking for a young girl who was missing. They showed them a picture. Both said they didn't know her, they were just visiting London.

On the train Mark asked "Jacques, she kind of looked like that girl at Picadilly Circus, don't you think?"

Jacques nodded and replied "No this girl seems older."

Mark nodded in agreement and prepared for the ride. It was going to be a long trip.

I still felt a bit queasy so I laid down. Vincent laid next to me and motioned for me to put my head on his chest. The sound of his heartbeat was so soothing. "Is it ok if I turn on the television?" He asked.

I nodded yes. He went from channel to channel looking for something to watch. He stopped on a news channel from Great Britain. The report was about another missing girl.

"Please change that, I don't want to see that." I asked.

As he pointed the remote at the television. The next channel reported that they found the body of Camille Henderson. It was the one the newspaper reported days earlier. I sat up in the bed.

"Oh my god Vincent!" I whispered.

He just watched in horror.

"Est-ce que c'est elle?" (Is that her?) He asked.

I nodded in shock as I watched.

"That is so sad." I commented.

Vincent looked at me and turned off the television. He looked disturbed by the news.

"Are you ok?" I asked as I touched his back.

He nodded yes but was very pensive. "Je ètait avec elle que pendant un moment." (I was with her for only a moment.) He whispered.

"Did you see anyone else around her?" I asked.

He slowly nodded no.

We laid in bed just staring at the ceiling. His heartbeat was now rapid and his breathing shallow. I sat up and looked at him.

"Vincent, vous allez bien?" I said.

He looked at me and replied "Je ne peux pas croire qu'elle est morte." (I can't believe she is dead.)

It was a chilling thought. We remained quiet.

On the train, Jacques made his way to the bathroom. Mark seemed disturbed by the picture of the girl. He grabbed a newspaper that was on the seat and opened it. To his horror, he read about Camille's murder. They had described how she was found and it sent chills up his spine.

"Wow, that's awful!" Mark said to himself.

He became chilly so he reached over and grabbed Jacques' sweater. He laid it across him and smelled it as he cuddled it. As he tried to make himself comfortable, things started falling out of Jacques' pocket.

Mark started to fumble as he tried to pick everything up. He reached deep under the seat feeling for anything else. He grabbed something silky and pulled it out.

"A butterfly?" he said to himself. "That's strange" he said out loud.

"Why is it strange?" Jacques replied.

Mark jumped out of his skin. "Oh, you are back! I tried covering myself with your sweater and your pockets started to empty out." Mark answered.

"Why do you think it's strange?" Jacques asked again.

"No reason, I suppose. Just being silly." Mark elaborated.

"I found it in London and I thought Gia might like it." Jacques replied. Mark smiled and said "Definitely. She's into butterflies these days."

But knowing the girl's body was found with a butterfly made it extremely weird. Mark took the newspaper and put it between the seats.

"I'm mad at Gia, she didn't even call us." Mark tried changing the subject.

"Mark, why did you think me having a butterfly was strange?" Jacques asked.

"No reason honey. Just me and my crazy imagination." Mark replied.

Jacques nodded in disbelief.

"Gia did call, well Vincent did, it was a weird call but he said she was ok." Jacques added.

"I can't wait to see her, I missed her so much. I still don't understand why she stood us up but I think Vincent had better plans for her." Mark said.

Jacques nodded in agreement.

"I'm going to call her" Mark added.

He dialed her number and waited for her to answer.

Vincent and I were fast asleep. Having him there made me feel safe. The ringer of my cell woke us up. It actually startled me. I had left that cellphone in Paris, why was it ringing here? I sat up and moved towards the side of the bed. Vincent reached in his pocket and pull out the phone.

"Where did you get this from?" I asked.

He sat up and replied "Le concierge de l'autre hôtel, me l'a donné" (The concierge at the other hotel gave it to me.)

I stood up and moved towards the window.

"What were you doing there?" I asked.

"Je vous cherchais" (Looking for you) Vincent replied annoyed.

He handed me the phone "Répondez au telephone." (Answer it) He said.

I looked at the phone and saw it was Mark. I became excited.

"Hello" I said in a happy tone.

"Girl, where have you been?" Mark replied.

"More like where have you been?" I asked.

"We are on our way back from London, did you see they found that girl?" He informed.

"Yeah, that's sad!" I replied.

"Where's Vincent?" Mark asked.

"Right here with me, we are in Chantilly." I answered.

"Where the hell is that?" Mark asked.

"A few miles from Paris, I checked out of the other hotel so come out here, I'll get you a room." I said.

"Ok, I'll let Jacques know and we'll see you two in a bit." Mark ended.

"Ok, À bientôt." I replied.

I looked over at Vincent, who was lying in bed.

"Merci de ne pas leur dire ce qui c'est passé" (Thank you for not telling them what happened.) He said.

I smiled as I crawled back in bed next to him.

"Don't worry I won't be telling anyone about that." I responded.

He smiled and opened his arms so I can cuddle him.

"Est-ce que tu me aimes?" (Do you love me?) He asked in a soft tone.

I didn't even have to think about it. The words just flowed out.

"I do love you." I replied.

He smiled and kissed my head.

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Mark sat thinking about the girl he bumped into at Picadilly Circus. He could have sworn the pictures the police showed him were of her. He tried to think to see if he could remember anything that could help them locate her.

"I just bumped into her. A minute in time." He mumbled to himself.

He scanned his head for anything that would stand out. The only thing he could remember was that Jacques said he was trying to pick her up. He pulled out the newspaper and began reading about Camille. That butterfly he found in Jacques' pocket was out of the ordinary and then reading about Camille's body being found with one was even creepier.

"Vincent and his butterflies" he whispered.

Jacques woke and said "Quoi?" (What?).

Mark smiled, nodded his head and looked awa

Vincent and I just laid in each others arms. I turned over and stared at him. He was so young and beautiful. That messy curly mane totally made me crazy. The shape of his lips were perfect. He squinted his eyes and smiled at me. I wanted him so much right now.

I took a deep breath and whispered "Fais moi l'amour" (Make love to me).

He did not waste any time. He turned towards me and began kissing me gently. I reached for his shirt and took it off. He seemed to want me to take control so I took a chance. His skin was so smooth and warm. I ran my lips across his slight hairy chest as I made my way down to his waist. I unbuckled his belt and removed his pants as I kissed his thighs. His thigh hair was so soft on my cheek. He moaned softly as I caressed him with my mouth.

He moved his hips back and forth slowly as I took him in. When he was ready for me, he guided me up towards him. For a moment, I stopped and looked directly at his face. He then grabbed my face and kissed me deep. It was as if we had been away from each other for a long

time. Our kisses were wet and wanting.

Our tongues intertwined as if we were tasting each other for the first time. I reached down and helped him enter me. He grabbed my hips and pushed me onto him. I sat up and watched him enjoy me. His hips grind against me slow. I could feel him so deep inside me. With one movement he was on top of me. We didn't lose a moment. This time it felt so different. There seemed to be real love, more tenderness. It was perfect! Afterwards, we laid in each others arms and just talked until we fell asleep.

As soon as Mark got off the train in Paris, he excused himself from Jacques and called me again. "Again Mark." I said as I answered the cell.

"Gia, baby I need to talk to you." Mark said concerned.

"About what? Are you ok?" I replied.

"Yeah, I'm fine! Can you meet me? By yourself?" Mark asked.

"Of course, where?" I responded.

"Let's meet at that café where we first met Vincent." Mark added.

"Ok? Are you sure you are ok?" I asked.

"Oh yes, just be there by 2." Mark ended.

Vincent looked at me strangely.

"Tout va bien?" (Is everything ok?) Vincent asked.

I nodded yes as I hung up my cell.

"You don't look ok." He added.

"Mark wants to meet me in Paris at 2 but he didn't say anything else." I answered.

"Ok?" Vincent replied. I shrugged my shoulders as I walked towards the bathroom.

"I'm going to jump in the shower, do you want to join me?" I asked him.

He smiled, raised his eyebrows and followed me in.

Mark and Jacques went back to his apartment. When they arrived Mark threw himself on the sofa.

"I'm going to meet Gia for a bit, if that's ok? I know you said you had some work to do." Mark said. "Yes, I have to check into work. Maybe we can all meet for dinner?" Jacques asked.

Mark nodded yes. Jacques walked over to Mark and hugged him.

"What's wrong baby? You seem out of it?" Jacques questioned.

"I'm fine, it was just a long train ride and I want to see Gia." Mark replied.

They kissed passionately.

"You know I love you right?" Jacques asked.

Mark smiled and replied "Of course you do, why wouldn't you?"

Jacques laughed and responded "There's my Mark, welcome back baby. Maybe we should hit the shower and freshen up?"

Mark smiled and said "I know your freshen up and it sounds delicious right now."

I wondered what Mark was being so secretive about. As I put on my makeup, Vincent cuddled me from behind. I loved looking at him. In between applying eyeliner I glanced at him as he shook out his curly wet hair.

"I'm going to go by Le Limelight for a bit. Do you want to meet for dinner?" Vincent asked.

I nodded yes.

He kissed my cheek and whispered in my ear "Je t'aime, À plus tard!" (I love you, see you later).

I smiled and replied "I love you too."

I quickly changed and started my trip to Paris. It was quicker getting there than when I left. I could see Mark sitting at the café. He looked disturbed. I parked and ran across the street. He greeted me with a big hug.

"Hey sweetheart, how was London?" I asked.

## "It was beautiful, you missed out G." Mark replied.

"So what's the secrecy? What's going on?" I asked.

He fumbled around with the silverware.

"Are you ok, Mark? Did something happen?" I asked.

"You know those murders?" Mark mumbled.

I nodded yes.

He leaned over the table and whispered "I think I know who did it?"

I looked at him concerned.

"I think it was Vincent?" He whispered.

I sat back in my chair and smiled.

"WHAT? You're kidding right!" I asked.

"Baby, look at all the coincidences." Mark added.

"What coincidences, Mark?" I asked.

I waited for him to speak. He looked around.

"Every time one happens, he's not around." Mark said.

"I think that makes everyone in Paris a suspect, Mark" I said angrily. "Seriously, think about it!" Mark commanded.

I nodded no and looked around.

"So how do you explain the murder in London?

Because he was here with me." I said.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"You were in London, does that make you or Jacques the killer?" I whispered.

He looked upset.

"I can't believe you wanted to meet with me to tell me you suspect the man I love of murder." I added.

"You love him? Since when? You don't even know him." Mark said.

"I do love him, Mark. Since the first time I saw him. I think I know more of him than you know about Jacques." I answered.

He reached over the table and grabbed my hand.

"I'm sorry G, I shouldn't have said anything." Mark said.

"Let's get some coffee." He added.

I sat there thinking. I was very upset with Mark for even entertaining that stupid thought.

Mark suddenly says "Isn't it weird how the dead girls are always found with butterflies on them."

I nodded yes with an attitude.

Automatically my mind was transported to the hotel room. That table I knocked over had a box of butterflies in it. Vincent wouldn't have had enough time to put those there.

> "Could they have been Mark's or even Jacques?" I asked myself.

"Are you ok? You just turned pale." Mark asked.

"I'm fine, just fighting off a cold." I replied.

"Let's talk about something else." I asked.

After a few minutes of crazy conversation about his trip, Mark excuses himself to go to the bathroom. I took the chance to call Vincent.

"Mon amour?" Vincent answered.

"Are you busy?" I asked.

"For you, never. What is wrong?" Vincent replied.

"Can I come by? I want to talk to you about something." I asked.

"Bien sûr, Je suis à mon bureau, venez me voir." (I'm at my office, come by.) He said.

"I'll be there in 15 minutes" I replied.

Mark walked back eating his favorite bright pink macaroon.

"Who's on the phone?" Mark asked.

"Just Vincent, I'm going to see him in a bit." I said with a smile.

Mark smiled. "So should we meet for dinner?

All four of us?" Mark said.

"Yes, definitely." I answered.

"We'll let Vincent pick the place, he has great taste." Mark with a laugh.

I smiled and kissed his cheek.

"I'll call you in a bit with details." I said as I walked towards my car. Mark waved as he walked in the opposite direction.

I drove quickly to Le Limelight. I rushed passed the bouncer and straight for Vincent's office. I knocked softly.

"Entrez" (Come in) Vincent said.

He smiled as I walked in but then looked concerned.

"What's wrong Gia?" He asked.

I didn't even know where to start or how to even tell him. He grabbed me and hugged me tight until he felt I was relaxed.

"Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas?" (What's wrong?) He whispered

"Mark vient me dire quelque chose de vraiment bizarre" (Mark just said something really weird to me.) I said.

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"Quoi?" (What?) Vincent asked.

"He thinks you are the murderer." I said really fast.

"QUOI!? Moi? Pourquoi?" (WHAT!? Me? Why?) Vincent said loudly.

"That is what I said, he is ridiculous! Right?" I said.

"Oui! (Yes) He is crazy!" Vincent said.

I went to walk towards the sofa when he grabbed my arm.

"Wait! You believe him don't you?" Vincent added.

"No, no I don't believe him. I just was telling you what he said." I replied. He looked upset. He walked towards his desk and knocked over some books. I jumped out of my skin. He looked over at me and nodded.

"I'm sorry Gia, I'm a bit upset that your friend thinks I killed someone." Vincent said.

I walked over to him and hugged him.

"I told Mark that it was ridiculous. Only thing while he was talking something else came to my mind." I asserted.

Vincent looked at me with interest.

"When I was at the other hotel, I knocked over a table that contained a box of butterflies." I added.

Vincent looked confused. Then he remembered the butterflies with the bodies,

"I couldn't help but think Mark or Jacques were the killer." I whispered.

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Vincent nodded and responded "I don't think so but I'm not the killer either."

I smiled and sat down. I looked down and saw a shiny thing in between the cushions. I pushed my fingers through and pulled out an earring. I lifted it up to show Vincent.

"Who's is this?" I asked.

He shrugged his shoulders as he took a shot. I placed it on the table. I didn't want to seem jealous.

"Did he have other women in here after me?" I thought.

"Before you think anything Gia. That could belong to anyone." Vincent said.

"Anyone?" I asked.

"Any woman? Paul, James and even Jacques has used my office for whatever. If you know what I mean." He said.

I nodded yes.

He pointed his finger at me and said "No, I know that expression! Gia, I haven't been intimate with anyone else since I met you." Vincent stated.

"I believe you, Vincent." I said.

He nodded his head. I walked over to him and kissed him.

"I believe you. I swear." I whispered.

Mark returned back to the apartment earlier than Jacques expected. Mark watched him from a distance while Jacques loaded something into his trunk. Mark pulled over a few cars back. Jacques looked around and got in his car.

"What the hell was that all about?" Mark thought.

Jacques took off towards the expressway. Mark followed at a distance.

"Where the hell is he going?" Mark said out loud.

Jacques drove with Mark following for almost 15 minutes. He pulled off onto a small street. Mark kept his distance. Jacques got out and went to his trunk. He opened it and reached in. As he lifted what he had back there, Mark gasped as he saw an arm fall out from under the sheet.

"OH MY GOD!" Mark said.

Jacques walked towards a small house. Mark got out his car and followed quietly.

"I can't believe I'm doing this. What is going on?" Mark said to himself.

Mark went through the back and peeked in the window. He could see Jacques in there but not what he was carrying.

"Where did he put it? What was it?" Mark asked himself.

Jacques quickly ran out and jumped in his car. Mark watched from behind a tree. As Jacques pulled away, Mark entered the house.

"Is anyone here?" He asked aloud.

He heard mumbling. He slowly opened a room door to find a girl bound and gagged. Mark was horrified. He quickly ran to the girl and uncovered her mouth.

"Aide-moi cet homme veux me tuer" (Help me that man is going to kill me.) She said.

Mark untied her and ran with her to his car.

"I need to call the police before he gets back." Mark said.

Mark trembled as he dialed for the police.

"Shit I don't speak French." He said aloud.

Mark scrolled through his contacts and stopped at Vincent's number.

"Vincent, I'll call Vincent." He fumbled as he dialed his number.

"Hello?" Vincent said.

"Vincent, its Mark, I need your help!" Mark said hysterical.

"What is wrong? Are you ok? Where are you?" Vincent asked. "I don't know I need the police. I followed Jacques and he was going kill this girl and I don't know what to do." Mark said.

"What! What are you talking about? Calm down, ask the girl if she knows where she is at?" Vincent asked.

The girl heard Vincent and said "Ivry-Sur-Seine.

Near Porte de Vitry Avenue" Mark said.

"Ok, I think I know where you are at. I'll call the police. Where's Jacques now?" Vincent asked.

"I don't know. He left quickly like he forgot something." Mark replied.

"I'll call the police and we'll be right there." Vincent assured.

Vincent quickly explained to me what was happening. I was so confused. It sounded all so crazy like a movie. I quickly followed Vincent to the car. We jumped in his car and headed towards Ivry-Sur-Seine. Vincent was having trouble explaining what was going. The police thought he was insane. What Mark had told him was so farfetched that the police thought it was a fake call. He pleaded with them to go help Mark. They hung up on him twice.

Vincent looked over at me and said "Put on your seatbelt, I'm going to have to get their attention."

I looked at him concerned but did as he said. He reached over, kissed me and whispered "Je t'aime" (I love you).

I mouthed it back. He suddenly peeled out of his garage and sped towards the expressway. Five minutes into our drive, the police flashed their lights and started following Vincent's car. He looked over at me, winked and sped off. Mark sat in car with the girl. She was shaking and crying. He helped her lay down in the back seat and covered her with his jacket.

"I'm so sorry. You are going to be ok, I promise.

The police is on their way." He said to her.

She nodded but was hysterical.

Mark looked around. In his rear view mirror he could see Jacques' car approaching. He gasped and lowered himself in his seat to hide. Jacques drove passed him. Mark watched him get out and walk towards the house. Mark looked back at the girl and said "I'll be right back. When the police gets here, tell them I went inside."

The girl had her eyes closed but nodded yes.

Mark walked towards the house. Upon entering, Jacques was rushing out and crashed into him.

They were both startled.

"What are you doing here?" Jacques asked.

"What are YOU doing here?" Mark replied with attitude.

Jacques looked nervous. He looked around but had no answer. Mark was frustrated.

"What have you done, Jacques?" Mark asked.

Jacques looked at him offended and remained silent.

Vincent's car screeched through the expressway with 10 police cars following with sirens and lights blazing. I looked at Vincent and then looked behind us. Vincent smiled.

"What are you talking about?" Jacques replied. Mark turned and pointed as the police came down the street. "I have a girl in my car saying you wanted to kill her." Mark said.

"And you believe her?" Jacques argued.

"I saw you with her Jacques. What is going on?" Mark asked.

"Nothing is going on? You are insane!" Jacques replied.

A police car pulled up next to Mark's car and saw the girl. She jumped out and pointed at the house. The police put her in his car and waited for backup. Jacques noticed the police and pulled out a gun.

"Oh my God Jacques, What are you doing? Mark said.

"I'm not going out like this. Take a seat, it's going to be a long day." Jacques said as he pointed at a chair with the gun.

Suddenly there was the noise of screeching tires and sirens in the other direction.

"Vincent!" Mark yelled.

Jacques walked towards the window to look out. I jumped out the car and ran towards the house. The police grabbed Vincent before he could run in.

"Jacques? Mark?" I said.

"Gia, run! RUN!" Mark yelled.

Jacques hit Mark with the butt of the gun and ran after me. He grabbed my sweater and pulled me back. I screamed. Vincent tried to run back but the police held him back.

By now, the neighborhood was surrounded by police.

"How did they know I was here?" Jacques asked angrily. "I don't know." I replied.

"You are part of all this?!" Jacques yelled.

I flinched to the tone of his voice.

"If Mark would have left things alone, I would have been gone by now." Jacques said.

I was so confused. Jacques was pacing back and forth. Mark finally came to. He got up slowly.

"Why Jacques?" Mark pleaded.

"WHY WHAT !?" Jacques shouted.

"Why did you kill them?" Mark asked.

"I didn't kill anyone. Vincent did!" Jacques shouted.

"WHAT?" Mark said confused.

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"It is his fault! All he had to do was love me but he chose all of them instead." Jacques whispered.

Mark and I didn't understand what was going on.

"What are you talking about?" Mark asked.

Jacques hit Mark again, knocking him out. He kept mumbling "How am I going to get out of here?"

He suddenly grabs me and said "Gia amour, you are my ticket out of here. I hope you said goodbye to Vincent."

He put his arm around my neck and pulled me towards the door. I struggled against him but I couldn't get loose. I could see all the police pointing their guns at us as we stood in the doorway. Vincent reached his hands up and yelled "Jacques, Laissez-la partir!" (Let her go!)

Jacques stood quiet.

"Baissez votre arme et laissez-la aller." (Put the gun down and let her go.) Yelled the policeman.

Vincent went passed the police with his arms up.

"Jacques, Laissez-la partir, s'il vous plâit. Prenez-moi à sa place" (Let her go, please. Take me.)

Jacques pressed the gun against me and replied "Je n'ai pas besoin de toi. C'est votre faute!" (I don't need you. This is your fault!)

Vincent nodded no. The police yelled at Vincent to return back. Vincent kept approaching us.

"Reculez Vincent! Je vais la tuer" (Get back Vincent! I will kill her) Jacques yelled.

Vincent looked back at the police then at Jacques.

"S'il vous plâit Jacques, laissez-la partir" (Please Jacques, let her go) Vincent pleaded.

Jacques tightened his grip on me and whispered "Vincent shall never know that I love him and since I can't have him, no one will."

At that point, he points his gun directly at Vincent and shoots 4 times consecutively. I screamed in horror as I saw Vincent fall to the ground. "If you and Mark would have stayed away, this may have never happened." Jacques said as he pushed me down to the pavement and pointed the gun at me. I covered my head as gunfire erupted around me.

I laid there wondering how this fantasy vacation came to this. I finally lifted my head. Jacques lied dead next to me and the police were coming to help me and Mark.

"Vincent!" I thought as I stood up and ran towards him. Two officers were kneeling besides him. He looked to be in horrible agony. Blood everywhere.

"Reculez" (Stand back) said the policeman. I pushed against him to get to Vincent.

"Je vais garder la pression sur sa blessure." (I'll keep pressure on his wound) said the other policeman.

I felt as if I were moving in slow motion. I fell to my knees next to him. He was barely alive. His chest was covered in so much blood.

"Vincent... Vincent..." I sobbed.

I reached over and touched his face. He felt cold to the touch.

I put my face next to his and whispered "Vincent, Je t'aime. Please hold on."

He wasn't moving. I grasped his hand and put it to my lips, he slowly turned his head towards me. His expression softened and he smiled.

Just like that he was gone. I had never felt pain like that in my life. I sobbed loudly holding on to him.

The police pulled me back as they covered his body and took him away. This all has to be a dream. Nothing ends just like that. It's funny how one second in time can change your life completely and in another second everything can be destroyed.

I often think of Vincent and smile. We shared a short time together but he made an everlasting impression that nothing can erase.

It has been 3 months since we returned from France. We never spoke about the incident. Mark and I became withdrawn, even from each other. I never blamed Mark for anything that happened, even though he thought I did. I had to find a way to convince him because I didn't want to lose my best friend also. To my surprise, Mark called me. It seemed a bit awkward but we decided to meet for lunch.

It was such a beautiful summer day. I decided to walk over to the café. From a distance I could see Mark, he didn't look himself. But neither did I. Mark got up and greeted me with a tight hug as usual.

"How have you been?" Mark whispered.

I smiled and replied "I'm ok. You?"

He smiled, pointed towards the table and said "Have a seat."

We sat in silence for a few minutes. I had missed him so much.

Mark suddenly said "Girl, I'm hungry, lets order lunch."

I laughed.

As the waitress took our order. We smiled and started catching up on everything.

As the evening came to a close, we said our goodbyes. We knew things would never be the same. We both lost a lot that day. We started to walk away, arm in arm. Suddenly a warm breeze blew and a beautiful monarch butterfly flew passed us. Mark smiled and said "Did you see that? That's Vincent, letting you know he is still with you...."

I slowly closed my eyes and envision that beautiful smile...

"Je t'aime Vincent..." I whispered.

La Fin. .



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