



On the Cutting Room Floor...

*****This is an explicit and erotic novel intended for the enjoyment of adult readers only.*****

This was originally a part of the manuscript, but with all creative works, you often find your beloved scenes snipped out during the editing process. I felt there needed to be some resolution with a few of the secondary characters/storylines so I hope you enjoy this special excerpt!

Maybe you'll find one of these characters with their own story in the future....

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Machiko put the finishing strokes on the wall and a feeling of profound satisfaction filled her heart. She stepped back to wipe the perspiration from her brow. The forest and its magical creatures smiled back at her. She couldn't stop beaming proudly.

Gemma walked over to her with her beautiful son holding

tightly to her hand. They stood next to her and admired the artwork.

"Mac, that's simply gorgeous!"

"Gorgeous!" Jonah mimicked. He tugged at the hem of his mother's dress and asked, "Can I go play?"

Gemma responded in a motherly tone, "Yes, but stay close and be careful."

The little boy scurried off. He noticed Machiko's art supply box and stopped to investigate. Within seconds he had pulled out the pouch of chalk and proceeded to turn the concrete floor into his own art pad.

Gemma gave her a guilty look. "I'll reimburse you for the pastels."

Machiko waved her hand. "No worries. I have a billion of those things. At least Jonah can appreciate my art without feeling the need to add his own finishing touches!"

"Now that you're done with this project, do you still want to help me with mine?" Gemma smiled, showing her pearly whites.

"Of course! But you're going to have to return the favor."

"Do tell." Gemma's brow quirked up in interest.

"Well, last night Caleb took me to that outlook up in the canyon and..."

"Yes?"

"He took my hand and dropped to one knee..."

"He did what?"

Machiko held out her left hand. The sun hit her engagement ring and the stone glittered like a disco ball.

"Oh my God! Oh my God!" Gemma squealed and hugged her tight.

Jonah looked up from his activity and rolled his eyes before resuming his masterpiece.

"I can't believe it. He finally popped the question!"

Mac's spirit swelled with elation at being able to share the news with her friend. "You're the first to know."

"Not even Frankie? Luc?"

"Nope, no one. Just you." She smiled, her face stretching, her cheeks hurting but she didn't care.

Gemma started to cry and Machiko teared up. "This is supposed to be happy news. Stop it! You're going to make me cry."

Her friend cried harder.

"Look, if you don't stop it right now, I'm not going to ask you to be my Maid of Honor."

Gemma rubbed her eyes and grabbed her friend in a death grip. "Yes! Yes! I'd love to be your Maid of Honor." She stepped back and clapped her hands together, flush with inspiration.

"And I'm going to design the most delicious shoes for you. And

for the bridesmaids. Oh, and I've got so many great ideas for decorations..."

Machiko couldn't stop laughing. "I think I've just lost control of my own wedding."

Gemma stopped squealing and gave her a mischievous look. "You think?"

CHAPTER TWENTY

Donovan Blake's elegant boutique was transformed into an intimate showroom with a modest runway. Silk screens fell across the store windows like curtains, and the sensual painted images of women in stilettos added to the theme of the event. Fun and Flirty.

Machiko nervously wrung her hands as she waited for the show to begin. The event drew many exclusive guests, including celebrities and society's upper echelon. Frankie, Luc and his family were conversing in the corner. Olivia, Mac's peppy young assistant, wielded her camera like a paparazzo as she documented the event with candid shots.

Caleb entwined his fingers in hers and handed her a martini

glass. "Drink up. You look nervous. Gemma is taking things better than you are, and it's her fashion show."

She took the glass and drained it in one long gulp, handing him the empty glass. He peered into the glass and shrugged, placing it on a nearby ledge.

"You're right," she said. "I guess I'm worried about the response she'll receive for this new line."

The lights flickered and Gemma walked onto the runway. Her blonde curls flowed around her upper back, her little black dress reminding Machiko of a sultry movie star.

She lifted the microphone up to her lips. "Welcome, everyone! I'm pleased and honored that this show can be shared with my family, close friends, and future fans." She giggled as everyone cheered her on. "I can't tell you how special this event is for me. Not long ago, I met a brilliant artist who taught me a lot. She showed me the spirit of adventure and the rewards of taking risks. This show is a grand gesture of thanks to her. Allow me to introduce my new shoe line, designed with the help of my future sister-in-law, Machiko Barrett!"

The crowd cheered and clapped as the DJ pumped up the music. Waves of models walked the runway, one after the next to display cutting-edge stilettos and high heels, all incorporating Machiko's artwork.

As the last model left the runway, the media and crowd went wild. Caleb grabbed Mac and kissed her hard on the lips. "You're amazing, darling! I had no idea Gemma was incorporating your art with her shoes. My two girls really outdid themselves!"

Machiko wrapped her arms around his neck and rose on her tip-toes, touching her lips to his. The noise, the crowd, the music all faded around them as she became lost in the kiss. She ran her hands up and down his back and the weight of her ring finger reminded her of her most treasured success. Caleb.

He clutched the fabric around her waist and she could feel his excitement against her stomach.

He murmured against her lips, "I want to take you to the back. I want to show you how proud I am of you."

Donovan cleared her throat and they both turned to look at the brunette. Her eyes laughed as she spoke, "I've got a private dressing room in my office. Just make sure to clean up afterwards."

They broke out in laughter and she could feel the heat spread to her cheeks. Machiko adored Donovan, and during the past few months had grown as close to her as she was to Gemma. The elegant beauty had offered to design her an exclusive, custom made wedding gown. In turn, Machiko had asked her to be one of the bridesmaids.

"We won't be too long," Caleb teased, his arm firmly around Machiko's waist.

"I can't help but feel a little jealous. I've always wondered what two people in love look like. All I have to do is watch you two." Donovan crossed her arms and her eyes glowed with emotion.

Machiko beamed at her friend. "Donovan, you're absolutely stunning. One day you're going to find your perfect match. I just know it! You work too damn hard. You're so focused on your career, the man of your dreams could bump into you in a crowded room and you wouldn't even know it. Live a little and enjoy your life."

The brunette gave her a big hug. "Caleb is one lucky guy!"

"You're right. I feel extremely lucky myself!" Machiko swatted Caleb on the arm. "And I plan on taking you up on your offer."

They continued their conversation for a few seconds, and her friend headed back to speak to Gemma.

"I don't suppose you'd want to..." Caleb began and Machiko grabbed his hand.

"Shut up and follow me."

He swung her back against him and kissed her tenderly. "I knew I loved you for a reason." He gave her another kiss. "Okay,

maybe a few other reasons."

The barbeque was in full swing as Caleb sat next to Luc on the porch, watching his friends and family frolicking in the water. He leaned against the rail, a cold beer in his hand.

"You don't know how relieved I am that everything worked out the way it did." Luc's heavy accent sliced through the silence.

"Me, too. I can't help wondering how my life would have turned out if you had never sent Mac here." Caleb looked over at his friend.

"I had hoped you would get along with her. I never dreamed she would make an honest man out of you! If I had, I would have sent her here sooner."

"C'mon, I wasn't so bad."

"Let's just say I got tired of keeping track of who you were dating. Speaking of which—have you heard from her?"

Caleb polished off his beer. "I called Jordan. I wasn't going to, but Mac thought I should. She was a lot more forgiving than I could ever be. In the end, I think it was good for all of us. I doubt Jordan and I will repair our friendship so easily, but I think we can be friends again someday."

Luc slapped him on the back. "You're a lucky bastard. Machiko is something else."

"I agree. Thanks for giving up the house. I know it must have killed you."

"Not really. We're still going to be neighbors. A quick meeting with your real estate agent, et voilà! I'll be redecorating your bachelor's pad!

Caleb groaned, "How did I miss this?"

"Don't worry, my friend. I won't tear down too many walls." Luc winked.

"You wouldn't dare."

"Well, nice talking to you. I'm going to go see if my wife and children would like to play a game of beach football." Luc dashed off before Caleb could protest the impending destruction of his house.

Mac headed toward him, drenched from her ocean swim, and climbed the steps to the porch. He brightened when he saw her, leaning his back against the rail. "How's my fiancé doing?"

She rubbed her forehead. "I was doing great until Gemma accidentally hit me in the head with a Frisbee."

He couldn't hold in the laugh. "That's my sis."

She frowned and lunged for him, rubbing her wet body against his dry one. He spilled his beer in the process.

"Hey now, that's a perfectly good beer."

Thhhpppppttt! She blew a raspberry kiss on his chest. "I bet you won't think it's wasteful if I poured the beer all over my body."

Caleb perked up. "Hell, yeah!"

Gemma made it up the steps and squealed. "Euww! Euww! T-M-I. If this is the tail end of your conversation, I can imagine how bad the rest was."

He wrapped his arm around Mac's waist. "Get used to it, sis. This is how engaged couples act."

"I think I'm gonna gag." She made a face that made him laugh.

Mac grabbed his beer and took a swallow. She kept the bottle in her hand. "Have you told him yet?"

"Told me what?" He pried the bottle away from his fiancé.

Gemma threaded her hands together and squared her shoulders. "Next week, after the wedding, while you two are off on your honeymoon, I will be going to the Big Apple."

"And?" He shrugged his shoulders.

"Jeez, take all the fun out of it, why don't ya? Okay. Brace yourself. Donovan's brother was at the show the other night. He was so impressed with my line he asked me to fly out to discuss going global. His company wants to invest in me!" She

practically screamed out the last sentence.

Mac broke away and the two women embraced, bouncing up and down like school girls at a concert, watching their favorite boy band.

As they bounced his sister announced, "Gemma Holden shoes will be a household name!"

Their actions made his stomach flutter and the image they made was an endearing one. He couldn't be happier that the two women he loved shared a bond he couldn't understand. This was the Mac he'd always believed existed. Seeing her newfound liberation and strength made him exceedingly proud.

He smiled, shaking his head. "Congrats on your world domination!"

He paused for a second, his smile fading as he ran a hand through his hair. "Oh. Hey, does that mean we have babysitting duties? It's going to be kind of awkward having a six-year-old hanging around on our honeymoon."

The women stopped bouncing and Gemma rolled her eyes. "Don't be silly. Frankie's agreed to babysit."

Mac turned to her and her eyes widened. "Are you sure that's a good idea? You know what an, um, free spirit Frankie is."

Frankie interrupted from the bottom of the steps. "Hey, now. I resent that. It's not like I'm going to put a tie-dye on Jonah

and take him with me to a protest rally against fur manufacturers."

Mac groaned, "I didn't mean that. I'm talking about you teaching Jonah all the lyrics to a Queen song. Last time I had to babysit Jonah, I couldn't stop hearing Bohemian Rhapsody in my head for weeks!"

Frankie reached the porch and threw up her hands. "Have it your way. I'll have a week to spend with him, so I'll just have to teach him every song to A Chorus Line."

Caleb, Gemma and Mac groaned in unison.

Gemma turned to Caleb and giggled. "Suddenly, the honeymoon babysitting gig doesn't sound like a bad idea."

Machiko was wrapped in the sheer fabric, the curtains draped down her arms like angel wings. The moonlight streamed through the window and her body glowed, bathed in a soft halo of light. She looked like the goddess he'd always believed her to be.

Caleb touched the brush to the canvas. With every stroke he formed lines and shapes, almost as if he was caressing her skin, the curves of her body. Her eyes glistened in the dark like diamond dust in charcoal. Her lips were full, sexy, seductive.

This was the first time he had painted since the night he created the cherry blossoms on Mac's body. Since then, he'd longed to paint again, but hadn't had the courage until now. Not until Mac had persuaded him to paint her in this setting, in this light.

He had been nervous that his hiatus from painting would prove his artistic talents were nothing but an illusion. As he filled the colors and shading in, he realized how much he had missed the power of being in control. Painting was a high and he could soar in any direction he wanted.

His mind conjured up images of Mac that night he had called her naïve. She had been so passionate in her words and now he believed she possessed more passion than he did. He didn't know how long he had been working on this project but he figured Mac would want him to get to a stopping point for the night.

He raised his eyes from the picture to take another look at Mac for comparison. His eyes took in figure visible through the transparent material. Her breasts were full, perfectly rounded, her nipples taut and poking through the fabric. His eyes skimmed the honey-colored flesh to the perfect outline of her womanhood, the cleft barely covered by the draping.

He swallowed his desire and quickly returned to her face. He watched her eyes flutter, and then she licked her lips so slowly

his cock swelled, desire seizing him. Caleb dropped his brush in the water jar and scooted back his chair.

She relaxed from her pose when she saw him head toward her. Mac started to unwind herself from the fabric but he halted her actions.

"I like seeing you wrapped in all this fabric. Bound and vulnerable. I like knowing I can do whatever I want to you, and that you can't stop me." He leaned forward and took her lower lip in his mouth, sucking gently.

She moaned, squirmed, tugged on the fabric, irritated that she couldn't reach or touch him. She sighed, "You're playing dirty."

He grabbed a piece of the draping fabric and secured it around her arm, wrapped the excess material around her waist and down her leg. He took the other side and repeated the motions.

"Now you're my captive. You're all mine to do with as I please." He captured her chin in his hand and placed a chaste kiss on her lips before letting go.

He reached out and tweaked her nipples, pulling and pinching until they were hardened pebbles. He massaged her breasts, squeezing, kneading them until low moans escaped her lips.

"Do you like what I'm doing to you?"

She nodded her head, biting her lip.

"Would you like me to continue?"

Her eyes told him her answer. He smiled and squeezed her breasts together, gently biting first one nipple, then the other. He kissed, licked and fondled her breasts and she shivered in response.

"I think you're enjoying my attentions a little too much. It's time you were punished for your wantonness." His tone was serious yet he knew she loved this game.

He knew Mac enjoyed him being dominant, enjoyed knowing that he was in charge. In return, he loved knowing that she trusted him enough to enjoy playing these games. That she trusted him enough to take control.

Caleb walked over to the art station and grabbed two clothespins that he often used to clip up photos in the darkroom. Photography was fast becoming a hobby of his. He had documented all the murals Mac had painted for a book he was putting together to surprise her.

She shuddered when he held up the items in his hand. He didn't speak as he palmed a breast, pressed the clothespin to spread open before closing it over a taut nipple. He repeated his movements to the other breast. He could hear her quick breaths as she endured the pain and reveled in the sensation.

He grazed his lips across her mouth and when she gasped,

opening for him, he plunged his tongue inside. He explored the velvety depths, clashing and dueling with her tongue. She tasted sweet, and he had the urge to taste her other, sacred lips.

Caleb ran his hand across her smooth belly, and then slid to his knees. He parted her thighs and took her into his mouth, as much for his own pleasure as for hers. The sweet, intoxicating musk of her body was like a drug, lulling him to euphoria. He continued to torture her with his mouth and tongue. He licked, teased, plucked at the sensitive flesh with his teeth.

When she was panting and ready to orgasm, he moved up her body, leaving her unfulfilled, without the sweet release she'd been so close to. Her torture was his torture because he was so hard it hurt to move. He needed to be inside of her, to claim her, to please her and release the pressure building within them both.

His eyes met hers and he could see the desire blazing, burning through her. Caleb pulled the clothespins off one at a time and dropped them on the floor. She hissed and writhed, her expression lust-filled.

He gripped her waist and slammed her hard against his body. "What do you want, Machiko?"

She answered through gritted teeth, "I want you to fuck me."

He stepped back, taking his time to undress. She was shaking

visibly from desire and he loved how much he heightened her need with his cruelty. He remained in control even though he was ready to end both their miseries.

He slid his arm around her torso and his other hand slid to her throat. His hold was light but he made her lips quiver, her eyelids heavy.

When he looked at her face he let out a shallow breath, his heart pounded so loud he mistook it for hers.

"So fucking beautiful," he growled and ground his mouth over hers.

He leaned her back against the window, the hand that was on her waist slid to her bottom, and gripped the ample flesh. His kiss deepened and he finally dragged his lips away.

His stiff shaft touched the opening of her sex and he could feel himself pulsing in anticipation. Her breathing became heavy, her body flushed with heat.

His eyes locked on hers as he spoke hoarsely, "I've never felt more alive than when I'm with you. I love you."

He entered her swiftly, her moisture coating him as he moved. She threw back her head and the window became her pillow as he moved in and out of her. His swollen cock fit snugly in her and the sensation was too damn good for words.

She followed his rhythm as he increased his movements, their

bodies flowing together like a river of molten lust, inching its way closer to the edge of a vast waterfall. Her moans escalated with every stroke and he didn't stop pleasuring her until they both reached the pinnacle, dropping off into a whirlpool of endless pleasure.

He never stopped kissing her, his mouth devouring hers. He continued to milk every bit of orgasm from her, every last tremor, feeling her liquid warmth wash over him. His own pleasures slashed through him like a palette of colors to form a perfect painting, a cohesive union of souls.

He shuddered at the mind-boggling lovemaking. His body relaxed, melted with hers and the world seemed complete, filled with only Machiko.



AUTHOR BIO

Jax Cassidy is a multi-published author and has written under the pen name Cassidy Kent. She is Co-Founder of Romance Divas, an award winning romance writer's website and discussion forum. In between skydiving for charity and campaigning against human trafficking, she enjoys the company of close friends and indulges her caffeine fix at the nearest cafe. An avid traveler and an adventurous spirit, Jax has drawn inspiration from her experiences and often blends the exotic mix of Eastern and Western lifestyles into her writing. When she isn't locked up in her office penning her latest manuscript, Jax can be found creating abstract paintings for future art shows, or dividing her time between California, Texas, and Florida.

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BOOK LIST

The Lotus Blossom Chronicles, Book One
SIREN'S SEDUCTION

The Lotus Blossom Chronicles, Book Four
LOVE'S HEALING GARDEN

Writing as CASSIDY KENT

Published through Amber Quill Press

One Wicked Winter

Santa's Helper

Dear John

What Lies in Winter

Published through Phaze Publishing

Fortune's Fool

Sunset Key

Raleigh in Rio

Dolce & Diana

Miranda Writes

Sonnet Seduction