

NONA



We partied non-stop. Christian's people were super cool. They kept me in stitches all night. It may not be the cure for the common cold, but laughter did wonders. It seemed like this evening's earlier drama happened a whole lot more than a few hours ago. Or maybe it was the alcohol talking. I was working on my fourth martini, so everything was peachy right about now. Usually a sistah didn't consume that much alcohol, but I just felt safe with Christian.

I might add he looked delicious tonight. And, ooo, he smelled better than he looked. If I hadn't sworn off men at . . . hell, *whatever time that was*, I'd be all over him.

That didn't mean that I couldn't have some fun and tease a little. I danced close with my breasts in his mid-section . . . just like I was doing right now. This man hit the gym regularly. His body was hard as a rock. And you know it'd been a minute since a girl got some. Let's just say that my "interest" was piqued.

Misery loved company. So I decided to share some of my torture with him. In time with the music, I swung around and backed that "thang" up. Christian recognized a good moneymaker when he felt one. Electricity ran between us immediately. I glanced over my shoulder. He grinned like a kid in a candy store.

Yeah, that's right. A sistah can still drop it like it's hot when she wanted to. Since we were quickly heading into "rated-X", I swung around to bring this thing back to "PG-13". I remained close enough, though, to dig my hands into the back of his ribbed, Sean John mock turtleneck. Wouldn't want this thing slipping into "G". Hey, this wasn't "The Backyardigans", *okkaaay?*

I wished my girl, Stacey, was here to see me slap the back of his

Armani slacks because that was how we got down. It was alright, though. I could represent solo, if I had to.

When we get back to the table, the guys spoke animatedly about some strip club they'd gone to. Royalty First.

"Dawg, I'm telling you that's her." Ricky pointed to a slim woman standing to the side of the dance floor.

"Are you sure? I don't know about that." Allan looked puzzled.

"If he says that's her, believe that. This dude doesn't forget any tail," Dorian editorialized.

"I'm telling you *that's* her! Chris, man, tell them!" Ricky put Christian on the spot.

Christian pled the fifth. "I don't know, man. It's hard to tell from here."

"Aww, see how you are. Nona shows up and a brotha' wants to act all brand new. What's that about?"

"I'm just saying I can't really tell. That's all." Christian evaded, but Ricky was having none of that.

"Oh, my bad! If she doesn't have her ass in your face, you can't recognize her."

"Why it gotta' be all that? I wasn't the only one there." Christian laughed, taking his grilling in stride.

"You should remember her. She was the one that gave you attitude."

"The skinny one?" Christian asked.

"What am I saying here?" Ricky faked exasperation.

"I'm just making sure we're talking about the same one."

Ricky bugged his eyes for effect. "Yeah, the skinny one. Girl so skinny, if she got her hair braided, she'd look like a mop."

"Damn, that's skinny!" I chuckled.

"You know what caused that, don't you?" Ricky asked no one in particular.

"What?" AR took the bait.

"Those Dick Gregory diet Shakes."

“WHAT!?!” We all sung simultaneously.

“Yeah, that Dick Gregory. Man, I’m telling you. When they started making those things in multiple flavors . . .”

We all roared. We laughed so hard I had to breathe so I didn’t pee on myself.

“Laugh if you want to, but that Rocky Road Dick Gregory got a lot of people all twisted up.” Ricky philosophized.

“You know that you need help, right?” Dorian teased his cousin.

“Yeah, well, somebody needs to tell Skindarella that it’s after midnight.” Ricky got in a parting shot.

CHRISTIAN



I glanced over at Nona. She was asleep in the passenger seat, snoring lightly. And she was still fine as the day was long. I was equally fascinated with watching her while she was awake and dancing as I was while she was unconscious.

We were so comfortable with each other. It felt like we’d known one another forever. There was a sense of beginning in the air. She must’ve felt it too because she didn’t have a problem with my driving her home. Not only did she give me her keys, she was cool with coming to my place.

Since he didn’t drink alcohol, AR agreed to take my car and make sure that everyone else got home safely. So here I was behind the wheel, pushing her newly repaired SUV down the freeway to Northeast Long Beach.

Normally fatigue kicked in during my drives back from LA, but not tonight. Exhilaration coursed through me. My attention drifted into the night. The charcoal colored sky was occasionally interrupted by streetlights overhanging the interstate. The only other illumination