

Chapter Fifteen

Quickly flipping open her umbrella, Connie Raymond locked the car door and scanned the rain obscured side street in search of a particular small cafe.

Diane said it was around here somewhere, she thought to herself. Fifteen years in this city and I still can't find my way around these small streets. Oh, there it is. She entered, spotted Diane and waved as she approached. "Sorry I'm late," Connie said, while shaking a few errant drops of rain water from her blond hair.

"I'm one apple martini ahead," Diane remarked, while displaying an empty glass, "you've got some catching up to do."

"Martini for lunch? You haven't changed one bit."

"What for? This stuff is good for you, it's got fruit in it."

"Alcohol?" Connie said, with her head tilted to one side, "not when you have to drive in this traffic."

"What a beautiful blouse," Diane remarked, as Connie slid into the booth. "I see you still haven't given up on the monograms," she added, while pointing at the red italicized *CJR* embroidered over the green satin fabric.

"Why should I?"

"Don't you think it's time you told me what the *J* stands for?"

"No, I don't. I never liked my middle name."

"Then why use the initial?"

"It was my grandmother's name ... what can I say, I'm superstitious and besides, *CJR* looks better than plain old *CR*."

"I give up. So tell me, how is the politico?" she asked, while sucking on an olive pit and signaling for the waiter.

"Yes?" the waiter asked, as he approached.

"I'll have another," Diane replied, while hoisting her glass, "and she'll have two."

"You know," Connie said, as the waiter departed, "John is, well, John. Always another windmill to tilt at."

"You are managing to keep busy, aren't you?"

"I thought I knew what I was getting myself into but I hardly ever see him anymore, although, I sometimes feel his weight in bed at night, just not on top of me."

"Bummer."

"Tell me about it, I've got more batteries in the refrig than food."

"Well, you must have seen something in him, after all, he wasn't the only guy chasing you?"

"Maybe it was the combination of his brown eyes and slicked back hair that got me," she giggled.

"You mean his football pedigree had no influence?" Diane asked, dropping the olive pit into her hand.

"Not really. I think it was more the law degree and my desire for a stable future."

"Hmm," she said with a frown, "OK, I've heard enough, let's order."

Thirty minutes later, after reminiscing about their college days and while eating salad and sipping their soft green tinted martinis, Connie lowered her fork and pushed her plate aside.

"You know," she said, "when you told me about your club escapades, I thought you had finally lost your mind but when we hung up, I found myself getting incredibly horny."

"Not so crazy Huh?" Diane commented, with a wink.

"Well, I'm not saying that I'd want to do it but I'd like to hear more about it."

"What exactly do you want to know?"

"Well, for starters, you said that it's all very discrete and anonymous, so, how is that accomplished?"

"Masks, fake names and for some, costumes."

"Can anyone just walk in?"

"No, membership is strictly by recommendation and there is a small fee that is generally paid in cash and in advance."

"So, how does it work?" Connie inquired, sheepishly.

"Single women are in demand, so, you would have the pick of the litter."

"OK, but what I mean is, what if you're not into pain and all that?"

"There are all levels of involvement and everyone sets their own limits."

"Is it just about the S&M thing or is there ... you know, sex?"

"All you can handle and any way you like it."

"Right there, I mean, in the club with other people around?"

"It's up to you. Either in front of the crowd or in one of their back rooms or elsewhere, if you choose."

"Whew," said Connie, with a deep, audible sigh.

"I get my cookies each and every time but it sounds like you've been on an involuntary diet."

"So," she said excitedly, while wiggling in her seat, "you just go in and pick someone?"

"I know what that fidgeting means, you're getting turned on, aren't you?"

"Maybe just a bit," she said, with a giggle, while her cheeks turned a light shade of crimson.

"Look, the senator isn't giving you any, so, why not try it? You might just like it and I assure you, you're secret will be safe."