

# Ecstasy

## Killer on Call

book one

by

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Gwendolyn

# One

Kissy would forever blame it on the garlic. As she regained consciousness she tried to bring a hand up to wave the smell away but found that her hands had been cuffed behind her. She blinked her hazel eyes a few times trying to clear the heavy mist from her vision. Her long straight dark brown hair hung smooth behind her down the wooden slats of the chair that was driving splinters into the backs of her thighs.

She was distracted from this pain and the taste of blood in her mouth by the sight of an extremely well-built man who was hanging from a beam to her left. A sisal rope crossed his barrel chest, circled up his arms, bound his wrists and then ran through rings attached to the beam. He was a dark man with an even darker farmer's tan to mid-thigh and mid-Herculean-bicep. He wore only a pair of worn red boxer-briefs and a cloth grocery bag over his head.

Kissy heard a moan to her right. She turned her head, sending a flash of stars spinning in her vision. Blinking through the haze she saw another man, this one clothed in a tuxedo, lying on the cement floor. What little hair he had was drenched in blood seeping out of a wound high on the crown of his head. His face was turned towards her and she watched as he blinked his eyes, slowly becoming conscious as she was.

The sound of voices bled in through the thrumming in her head. Two voices. The one coming closer was familiar. The seductive female voice was not. With an effort, she focused on the male voice. His face swam into focus as he straddled her lap. She bucked against him, realized that was the wrong move and tried to shrink away. She tried to avoid his gaze but as her options were bloody old man on the floor, blue handed hunk in the air, and garlic-breathed man's neon green shirt in her face, she gave in and looked up into his eyes, his intense gray eyes whose pleading gaze didn't match the mocking viciousness of his words.

"She's my date, Vanessa," he said, speaking to the blonde behind him. "I get to kill her."

A small evil smile haunted his lips, then he leaned in and kissed her with that awful garlic breath.

## Two

Kissy burst through the back door of Julia's apartment without knocking. "Julia Goodenuff, I am going to die if I don't find a man to fuck right now." She pulled up short at the sight of a white-blond, kinda nerdy hunk in the kitchen. After just an instant of flapping her lips like a fish, she recovered admirably. "Good to see you, Timothy Goodenuff. Julia didn't say you were coming to visit."

"Julia didn't know," said Julia from the couch on the far side of the main room where she lounged with a cast-wrapped leg elevated on three pillows.

Timothy wiped his hands on the frilly pink apron tied about his slim waist and offered one to Kissy. "You've changed, Kiersten."

Kissy's breath caught as she slid her hand into his warm, firm grasp. "It's been ten years since anyone's seen you, Timothy. Everybody's changed. And it's Kissy now."

"Kissy." He made a meal of the sibilants. "You've grown up nicely."

He reached out and lifted the fringe of dark brown hair hiding the left side of her face. "You still have that scar from homecoming."

She lifted his hand and traced the triangle of black dots on his forearm. "And you've still got that AP History tattoo."

"Tattoo? Julia stabbed me with a stack of pencils."

"But he's gotten over it," Julia drawled from the couch.

Kissy drew her finger from the lead remnants in his arm down to a long, black-painted pinkie nail. "You're going goth?"

Tim looked down at the nail. "It represents my dark side."

Kissy dropped his hand and turned to grab a cider from the fridge. "Where have you been for a decade?"

She shut the door and perused the collage of postcards taped up over just the past three years.

"Merchant Marine," Timothy said.

"Bullshit," his sister called out.

“Timothy,” Kissy drawled disapprovingly. She saw a smile quirk his lips as he turned back to his mixing bowl.

He murmured, “I’m Tim now.”

“Whatcha making, Merchant Marine Tim?” Kissy asked as she leaned against the counter that separated the kitchen from Julia’s self-designated great room.

“A salad.” He held onto a bulb of garlic while he pulled his cell out of his pocket and checked a text. Kissy sipped her cider. “All I see is lettuce, onions, anchovies, and that bulb of garlic.”

Tim looked up from the phone as he started cutting the garlic. “Do you still play guitar?”

“Yes. I’m doing a tour of the open mics in town.” Kissy wondered if she could get a waist like Tim’s if she ate smelly salads.

“And that one in Atlanta,” Julia added.

“Oh yeah,” Kissy amended, leaning back against the wall. “And that one in Atlanta. I had a layover. I also do circus tricks now.”

“Not very well,” Julia murmured.

Kissy turned to smile at her. “Who’s in a cast?”

Julia looked back down at her book. Kissy turned to Tim who was scraping the entire bulb of diced garlic into the salad.

“Who’s gonna wanna kiss you after you eat that?”

Tim paused as he picked up his fork, thrown by the question from left field. “I,” he started and stopped for another moment’s thought. “I wasn’t really expecting to be kissed tonight.”

Kissy tilted her head and considered this. “That’s too bad.”

She took a sip of cider and pushed off the wall. In two strides she was at Tim’s side. With a hand icy from holding the cold drink, she cupped the back of his head and kissed him. Tim stood with the giant salad bowl in one hand and a fork in the other, dumbfounded. When he finally leaned in to enjoy the kiss, Kissy turned away and returned to leaning on the wall.

“Okay. You can eat now.”

Julia sighed lustily from the couch. “Be careful, Kissy. He has no heart. He says he will never fall in love.”

“A girl doesn’t always need love.”

“He’s my brother!”

Kissy looked back at Tim, who looked a bit like he'd been run over by a truck. She smiled to herself and ambled over to the fridge.

"Beer?" she asked, taking one out.

Tim managed to croak out, "Please."

After a couple of sips and a bite of his salad, Tim looked at his phone again. He typed a reply and then looked up at Kissy. He was still a little flushed. "Would you like to perform at a warehouse party?"

"Sure," she said. "How much does it pay?"

"Performance is the price of admission."

"Hey!" She perked up. "I've heard about this. Theatre of E. It's like a rave of performance artists run out of a warehouse in the clothing district."

"Every Wednesday."

"Today is Wednesday," she observed.

"Wanna go?" he asked.

Kissy finished her cider as she considered how awake she really needed to be at her desk job the next day.

"Let me go change and grab my ukulele."

"I thought you played guitar," he asked through a mouthful of odor.

Kissy smiled. "A lot changes when you don't visit for ten years. I played guitar in high school. I've learned some new tricks since then."

"And earned an appropriate name," he breathed for her ears only.

Kissy smiled slyly at him and dropped her bottle in the recycling bin on her way out the door.

He shouted after her, "I'll meet you outside in ten."

She stopped and looked back inside. "I'm a girl, Tim. And we're going to a party. I'll meet you outside in thirty."

The screen door slammed behind her covering Tim's murmured, "And I'll be waiting eagerly."