

Lips of an Angel : One Breath, One Touch

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Rating: MA

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The cold air of the room raises the level of all sensation, intensifying with every movement. My breath is coming in slow shudders, increasing each time I feel the brush of his lips. Astride him, I brace my hands on his shoulders, throwing my head back to avoid his eyes. Each shivery little breath just seems to enflame him further. He's greedy for every inch of skin, every sound he can elicit from me. And I give in, craving this with the worst kind of need. It just hammers home the reality of the world I've lived in; I feel more alive in these stolen moments with him than I have in the last half-dozen years, as if I sleep-walked through every major event in my life since then. The last six years, a glass house I can hear shivering over my head with every passionate expression that passes my lips.

His fingers slide with infinite care over the curve of my shoulder, the slope of my spine, and my entire body blazes like fanned embers. Their journey ends at the top of my hip, guiding me into the rhythm he wants and I let him for once. Let him need to consume me the same way I need to set him alight. Unable to help a throaty whimper, I concentrate on the extraordinary feel of having him inside me again. Hyper-sensitive from his hands mapping every inch of me when we first made it to the room, I can feel each of the individual pearls around my neck rolling back and forth with our motion. The pearls my husband gave me on my wedding day. Pearls that I would have never purchased or worn if left to myself.

Appearances. Life has been all about appearances and perceptions since I made my bed and chose to sleep in it after an interview one November evening. All about secrets and the hiding of them on a grand scale. About hiding who you are during the day and making sure not to get caught at night. Look the part, act the part, be the part. In the world of the superhero, anonymity is what keeps you and yours alive. One person to the public, someone else to the larger world you're protecting. And when you're already two people to those you serve, what more is left for those that love you? I gave up the *Planet* for him, enmeshed myself with the very heroes I had made a name for myself with. And still it wasn't enough. Never enough to make up for what I had lost before he and I had ever met.

As if sensing my thoughts, my lover tumbles me onto my back on the luxurious depth of the hotel's bed, sinking me deeply into the feather mattress as he sheaths himself as deeply as he can. The feel of him inside me is heaven enough to prompt a wail, shivering in reaction when crossing my legs around his waist and pressing my palms against the warmth and smoothness of his back. We shouldn't be doing this, both of us are well aware of it, but we're both too weak, too desperate to fuse back into a single whole that the consequences matter very little. Fate tore us apart cruelly once and marriage vows seem very small now, indeed,

when you're confronted with the enormity of what we have together. The three-hundred-dollar hairstyle, the custom wardrobe of original designer clothing, the sports-car in one of the six garages, even the ability to walk freely among the gods watching over us all, what is that in the face of what my body, what my heart, feels when he's near? He feels like home, like shelter, like nothing else I've ever known in my life. Now that I have it back, how can I ever let it go again. How did I survive without him?

Inhaling the scent of him, tangled my fingers into his black hair, I can feel him increase the speed and intensity, forcibly clearing my mind of any thought other than him and now. Channeling the heat and impossible perfection we attained in that single crystallized rendezvous in an Arctic fortress, he knows me from the inside out and takes full advantage of this ; every heated stroke, every broken murmur against my hair, rings through my veins like skilled fingers over the strings of a harp. Higher goes the fire built on the reality outside our haven, both taking as much as is physically possible to store away for the nights when miles stand between us. I cry out, whimper, beg, plead. No longer any secrets between us, I make no attempt to hide my craving for him.

I hear him groan as I whisper hasty, needful things into his ear, feeling the caress of my own long hair against my cheek and knowing that it's only adding an extra tease to his desperation. Clasp him as near to me as I can, the intimacy so painful when I meet those beautiful blue eyes and slowly tighten around him. God, he's so beautiful, so goddamn beautifully perfect. Wanting more, more, ever more of him and as deep as he can go. Hurt me a little; let me feel you there later when the world, when the woman who stole my place, comes to claim you again. And he gives me all I ask for and never lords it over me after, my weakness for him and this hopeless love that joins us. More than knowing my need for him, he knows who I am. Who I was. The woman I will always be, no matter how far I try to run. And no matter in whom I try to bury the past.

In this bed, I'm not the Justice League's liaison. I'm not a former Pulitzer prize winner. I'm not a staple in the society column. Not a reluctant hostage to fortune. I'm not Mrs. Bruce Wayne. In this bed, it's still seven years ago and I'm still Lois Lane, still full of fight and wickedly intelligent in the ways of getting what I want, be it hero or headline. And I'm his, as I always was. Not a million light years nor ties to another can resist what we have. Two halves of the same whole, indivisible by the hand of man.

And then thought is gone, the tension in my every pore very nearly cataclysmic, and the room behind my eyes is awash with sunlight and I'm falling. Falling, plummeting, plunging full-throttle toward some unknown fate below. Struggling to brace myself, I feel myself tumbled over, eyes flying open with a gasp. Both of us breathing hard, shivering all over, and I'm looking down at him. He's caught me, holding me this time by the hips rather than the waist as he did that long ago night. My guardian angel that has fallen from his heights yet again for me. And in this, this hell of multiple lives, he has saved me once more. And the only prayer I know worthy of this sacrifice is a whisper of, "Kal-El," as the inferno consumes us.