

Chapter One



Naailang pa rin si Brenda sa tuwing pupunta siya sa bahay ng grandaunt ni Louisa. Kunot-noo siyang huminto sa tapat ng higanteng iron gate ng Legazpi mansion.

Castle, pagtatama niya sa sarili.

The stone house looked more like a castle than a mansion with its thick marble columns, arched windows, balconies, and sculpted stone figures on its flat low-pitched roof. The ivory house gleamed with elegance in the evening lights at the far end of the vast sprawling garden, making her think of royal parties and European blue bloods.

Early 1900s pa itinayo ang mansion ng mga Legazpi, at tila isa itong matapobreng mestiza na nakatunghay sa mga Indio na kagaya niya. Ganoon kung makatingin sa kanya ang grandaunt ni Louisa noon. Parang subhuman ang turing nito sa pamilya niya mula pagkabata at pakiramdam yata nito ay mahahawa ng kahirapan ang apo nito kapag dumikit sa kanya.

But she supposed that was all in the past now.

Umiling siya sa sarili at pumasok sa gate nang buksan iyon ng guard.

Tinanguan siya ni Manong Lucio, ang

matandang security guard ni Mrs. Lucrecia Legazpi. “Good evening, Ma’am Brenda.”

Noong bata pa siya, naguguluhan siya kung bakit kailangan ng guard na may baril ni Madam Lucrecia. Takot ba ito sa magnanakaw? Bakit? Maliit lang ang isla nila at halos magkakakilala ang lahat ng mga taga-roon. Pero siguro ganoon talaga ang mga mayayaman. Paranoid kagaya ng isang taong kilala niya.

Bronze skin, cold eyes, a sculpted mouth, and a deep rich laugh. Naramdaman niyang tila kumuyom ang sikmura niya sa matinkad na imaheng kumislap sa kanyang isipan. *Masculine scent, warm male skin, a hard, ripped body above hers...*

Maingat siyang humugot ng hangin at maingat ding pinakawalan iyon.

Pinilit niyang ngumiti sa matandang lalaki. “Good evening, Manong. Mukhang marami nang tao sa loob.”

Tumango ang matanda. “Andyan na halos lahat ng bisita ni Madam. Pahatid kita sa golf cart.”

Umiling si Brenda at wala sa sariling hinawakan ang kulot na buhok nang tangayin iyon ng panggabing hangin. Inihatid niyon ang amoy ng mga rosas at camia sa kanyang ilong, at tinulungan noong itaboy ang ilang matitingkad na mga alaala.

“Okay lang po. Maglalakad na lang ako.”

“Mahaba-haba rin ’yan. Ang taas pa ng heels

mo. Ba't di ka pa kasi nagkotse? Sandali lang, tatawagin ko lang—”

“Exercise din ’yon. Okay na po. Thank you po.”

Nilakad niya ang mahabang driveway papunta sa mansion bago pa tawagin ng matanda ang nagmamaneho ng golf cart.

Tama si Manong Lucio, mananakit ang mga paa niya sa taas ng red heels niya at sa haba ng lalakaran. Tinitingnan pa lang niya ang tila walang hanggang driveway ay parang gusto nang magdemanda ng mga paa ni Brenda. Napakunot-noo siya sa kanyang killer heels.

Once upon a time ay kaya niyang umakyat ng hagdan hanggang tenth floor at mag-power walk ng one-hundred meters sa kanyang stiletto. But she supposed *once upon a time* was the key phrase. It was ancient history. Isang dekada na rin.

Magkasalubong ang mga kilay, ibinalik niya ang titig sa puting mansion at ibinaling ang lahat ng atensyon sa makinang na mga ilaw sa dambuhalang mga bintana. She didn't like the way fragments of old memories pierced her consciousness.

It's the red heels, she thought, the little black dress and the fancy makeup. They all reminded her of how she used to be ten years ago. The big city, the dizzying climb up the corporate ladder, the parties, and the four-inch heels.

Bhirang-bihira na siyang magdamit nang

ganito sa isla nila. Tuwing may mga ganitong event lang siya nagbibihis na parang rarampa siya sa catwalk. Kapag birthday ng mayor, kapag Christmas party sa bahay ng mayor, kapag birthday ni Louisa, kapag may event sa bahay ng grandaunt nito.

Successful ang lodge na pagmamay-ari niya. Mayroon silang dalawampung silid, may boating rentals, equipment para sa snorkeling at scuba diving, guides, instructors at madalas ding gawing venue ang lodge ng mga intimate weddings at reunions. But it was nothing sparkly, nothing flashy. It felt like home away from home. Walang dahilan para magbihis si Brenda na parang dadalo siya sa isang fashion show.

And fashion shows, sparkly lights, flashy dresses, sky-high heels, and heady sweet perfumes always reminded her of *him*.

Pinigilan niyang pumikit, natatakot na baka atakehin siya ng mga alaalang ayaw niyang harapin. Huminga siya nang malalim at hinayaang mapuno ang kanyang baga ng amoy ng mga camia at rosas.

She had to stop this. No point in having a sour mood at Madam Lucrecia's birthday. Hindi sila malapit ng grandaunt ni Louisa, pero ito ang naging *messiah* niya noong panahong tila magugunaw ang mundo niya.

Brenda had needed the escape. The world had

been crumbling beneath her feet. Her mother had been depressed, her father had turned out to be a cheating liar, and he...

Tumitig ulit siya sa matayog na mansion na tila isang larawan sa isang fairytale book.

“Don’t sour your mood,” usal niya sa sarili.

Umakyat siya sa marmol na hagdan ng mansion at binuksan ng isang staff member ang malaking antigong pinto para sa kanya.

“Good evening, Ma’am Brenda.”

“Good evening, Felix.”

“Nasa patio po sila.”

“Okay, thank you.”

Golden lights from the dripping crystal chandelier warmed the cream walls and polished wooden floors. Napakataas ng ceiling, mula roon ay nakatunghay sa kanya ang mga angel fresco. Makinang ang mapulang kahoy na sahig at halos puwede na siyang manalamin doon. Humahalo ang mahihinang tawa sa malamyos na musika ng violin sa hangin. Some people would find the music and golden lights romantic. She found it depressing. The sound of violins always had an undertone of sadness.

Tinanguan siya at binati ng mga nakasalubong na staff sa foyer at tumango at ngumiti rin siya sa mga ito. Tumuloy siya sa likod ng bahay at muli siyang tinukso ng amoy ng mga rosas at camia

nang lumabas siya sa patio. The evening air felt cool and comforting against her skin. The courtyard glowed golden underneath the clear evening sky. Parang puno ng mga alitaptap ang mga puno at halaman sa hardin dahil sa mumunting mga ilaw.

Pabalik-balik ang mga staff na may dalang tray ng champagne at canapés sa malawak na courtyard.

“Ma’am Brenda,” nakangiting bati sa kanya ni Manang Norma at inalok siya ng laman ng tray nito.

“Salamat po.” Nakangiti niyang tinanggap ang isang champagne flute at inilibot ang tingin sa paligid. “Si Louisa, Manang?”

“Andyang lang ’yon. Parang nakita kong kasama ng lola niya sa may gazebo.”

“Okay, salamat po.”

Naglakad si Brenda papunta sa kanang bahagi ng hardin papunta sa gazebo. Nakita niya ang ilang pamilyar na mga mukha at nginitian niya ang mga ito. Marami rin siyang nakitang mga artista, at malalaking personalidad—karamihan ay business associates ng grandaunt ni Louisa. Financer kasi ang lola ni Louisa at marami sa mga kilalang artista at mga pulitiko ay humihiram ng pera rito. Kumikinang ang lahat sa mga mamahaling bato. The rich, the powerful, the famous and the influential—this was Madam Lucrecia’s world.

This was *his* world.

She pressed her lips into a thin line at humigpit ang hawak niya sa kopita. She really had to stop this.

Natanaw niya ang malaking dome ng gazebo sa dulo ng brick pathway. Nababalutan iyon ng malagong pink bougainvillea na gumagapang sa makakapal na mga haligi. Sumilay ang isang ngiti sa kanyang mga labi at binilisan niya ang paghakbang.

Nakita niya si Louisa na parang isang fairytale princess sa brown nitong buhok at sa kulay champagne nitong sheath dress. Sa tabi nito ay ang Lola Lucrecia nito, tila isang Reyna Emperatriz sa kulay gintong kaftan gown. Nakapalibot sa mga ito ang mayor ng Jomalig, ang governor ng Quezon at ang asawa ng mga ito. Sa tabi ng mga ito ay dalawa pang lalaking bahagyang natatakpan ng lola ni Louisa. Todo ngiti ang governor at ang mayor sa isa sa mga lalaki na para bang kasagutan sa hunger problem sa Pilipinas ang sinasabi nito.

Marahil ay kung sinong bilyonaryo ang lalaki, isang multibillionaire mogul na bumibili ng maliliit na isla para gawing bakasyunan. Matangkad ito, hula niya ay nasa 6'2" o 6'3". Bahagya itong nakatalikod sa kanya at hindi niya lubusang tanaw ang mukha. But from her angle, she could make out a strong jawline, razor-sharp cheekbones, and

a hint of full sensual lips. He had thick dark hair that curled slightly at his nape. The soft pale lights illuminated his bronze skin and the steel gray polo hugging the breadth of his shoulders and wide muscular back.

A trickle of unease slithered down her spine.

Umiling siya. Stupid. All these fancy people made her feel jittery and stupid. Pero bumalik ang titig ni Brenda sa lalaking nakatalikod. Her eyes trailed over the curve of his shoulders, the long line of his back, the strong muscular arms and exquisite fingers...

Halos mabali niya ang stem ng champagne flute.

Muli, umiling siya. For crying out loud, she was starting to see things. It was the lights and scents. Nahihilo sa bilis ng tibok ng kanyang puso, pumihit siya pakaliwa para humanap ng mas maluwag na espasyo.

Lumingon ang lalaki at nagtama ang kanilang mga mata. Nanigas siya na parang may tumutok ng baril sa batok niya.

Cold dark eyes stared back at her.

For a moment she couldn't move, couldn't breathe. All she could do was stare at Rafe Diego Salvatore.

Memories flooded her like a raging tide.

His laughter, his smug smile, his cold dark

eyes... Warm silk sheets, the scent of sex in the air, his slick, hard body above her, around her, moving inside her. His cold dark stare, his hard, sculpted mouth, his deep, low voice... *It's over.*

May gumalaw sa gilid ng kanyang mga mata si Louisa. Humakbang ito palapit sa kanya.

Saka lang tila muling dumaloy ang dugo sa kanyang mga ugat. Tila hinigop ng isang malaking vortex ang mga alaala at natunaw ang lamig sa nagbabagang galit.

Rafe Diego Salvatore. Playboy extraordinaire. The one thing she didn't need, shouldn't have wanted but still did. Once upon a time, she did. And she had paid for it.

“Brenda.”

Naramdaman niyang hinawakan ni Louisa ang braso niya, pero hindi niya maialis ang titig kay Rafe. Hindi rin nito iniwas ang titig sa kanya. He stared at her—cold, hard and unflinching.

“Hindi ko alam. Hindi ko alam na pupunta siya.”

Lumunok siya, pilit pinababa ang umahong mapait na galit sa kanyang sikmura. Pinunit niya ang titig sa binata at ibinaling iyon sa kaibigan. Maputla ito. Tila hinigop ang dugo mula sa mukha nito.

“It's okay, Louisa.” Pilit niyang niluwagan ang pagkakapulupot ng mga daliri sa stem ng flute, pilit

inipon ang kumalat niyang katinuan. She imagined herself hurling the champagne flute at Rafe. “It’s bound to happen sooner or later.”

“Kung alam ko lang—”

She let out a hard smile. “I’m not a child and you’re not my keeper. Hindi mo kasalanan kung makita ko ang mga taong hindi ko gustong makita.”

It was nobody’s fault, she told herself. Hindi niya alam na kakilala ng lola ni Louisa si Rafe. Pero ano ba ang inaasahan niya? *Rich and influential people know each other.*

“Brenda, we can go and—”

“It’s okay.” Maingat siyang sumimsim ng champagne. Focus. Stay calm. She needed to stay goddamn calm. “I have to greet your grandaunt. O mamaya na lang siguro? Mukhang importante ang pinag-uusapan nila. I don’t want to intrude.”

Tiim ang mga labi, pinilit niya ang sariling lungunin ang mga ito. She wished she hadn’t.

His eyes, dark and smoldering, met hers. He was still the same, so goddamn same. God-like. The air seemed different around him. The colors seemed sharper, the texture more defined.

It hurt. Ten years, and it still hurt. It could be twenty years, fifty years, a hundred years, and she knew it would always hurt.

Struggling for breath, she forced herself to look away from him. At dumapo ang kanyang tingin sa

babaeng tumabi rito.

Nagulat siya na hindi siya napaluhod sa kinatatayuan. Nagulat siya na hindi siya napasigaw o napahawak sa dibdib niya. Dahil tila siya sinaksak nang ilang ulit doon.

“Brenda...” Hinawakan ni Louisa ang kanyang braso pero hindi niya magawang ialis ang titig kay Edwina.

Beautiful, aristocratic, glamorous Edwina. The social butterfly, the It girl, the media darling. Beauty, brains, perfection—Edwina Isabel Abrera.

Gusto niyang basagin ang champagne flute at isaksak iyon sa babae.

“Brenda...”

“Mukhang mahalaga ang pinag-uusapan nila.” Bumaling ulit siya kay Louisa. “I’ll greet your grandaunt later.” Naglakad siya palayo sa gazebo.



Chapter Two



Humabol si Louisa sa kanya. “You don’t have to. I’ll tell Lola you don’t feel well.”

“It’s okay, Louisa.” Hindi siya huminto sa paglalakad hangga’t hindi siya nakakarating sa dulo ng garden. Walang mga bisita sa parteng iyon, at mas malalago ang mga bulaklak at ang mabababang halaman. “I have to deal with this. I just can’t deal with it in front of your grandaunt, the mayor and the governor. I don’t need an audience in case I screw up.”

“Brenda—”

“I’m okay.” Gusto niya uling lumagok ng champagne pero wala nang laman ang flute niya. Pinilit niyang ngumiti kay Louisa. “It’s been ten years. I have to be okay. Go back to the party. I just need to regroup. Sige na.”

“Pero—”

“Louisa, please.”

Sandali itong pumikit at humugot ng hangin. “I was about to call you, pero dumating ka na.”

“I know. Thank you. Sige na, Louisa, I need some time to pull myself together. Give me time to get over the shock and get myself back to my feet.”

“Okay, okay.” Muling humugot ng malalalim

na hininga ang kaibigan niya. “Here, let me take that.” Kinuha nito sa kanya ang wala nang lamang champagne flute. “If you want to leave, tell me, okay?”

“I will. Thanks.”

Naglakad si Brenda papunta sa mahabang trellis. Kagaya ng gazebo, nababalutan ang bubong at mga gilid niyon ng malalagong pink, white at purple na bougainvillea.

Gusto siyang dalhin ng mga paa niya pabalik sa mansion, papunta sa gate palabas ng property ng mga Legazpi. Pero nagpigil siya. Siguro tama si Louisa. Dapat umalis na lang siya.

Gaya ng ginawa niya sampung taon na ang nakakaraan. She went the hell away. Took the easy way. She couldn't keep doing that.

Sandali siyang pumikit at humugot ng hininga.

Sampung taon na. She had to be f*cking okay by now. Smile, nod, say a few words. Be goddamn civil. Gaano ba kahirap iyon? It wasn't like they were going to be freaking best friends. She didn't have to see them after tonight. Maybe she'd see them again someday in the future and... Nanikip ang sikmura ni Brenda nang mabuo ang isang imahe sa kanyang isipan.

Si Rafe at si Edwina, at isang bata sa pagitan ng mga ito.

Muntikan na siyang mapahawak sa gilid ng

trellis.

God.

A child. What if they already had one? What if they were already married? Hindi na niya sinundan ang buhay ng mga ito nang umalis siya sa *Ravo*. Bakit pa? Hindi niya kailangang malaman kung ilan ang bisita sa kasal ng mga ito o kung sino ang gumawa ng cake ng mga ito.

She was going to be sick.

Lumunok si Brenda at parang may nakabarang mga bubog sa lalamunan niya. She couldn't do this. She had to do this.

Smile. Nod. Say a few words.

She could do that. She had to do that.

Get it done. Get it over with. Do it now.

Pinatigas niya ang sikmura at pumihit siya para bumalik sa party. At muntikan siyang sumubsob sa isang matipunong dibdib.

Big, warm hands gripped her waist to steady her.

She knew it was him the moment his scent hit her. Strong and masculine, dark, cold and spicy. Sex and danger. His scent slithered around her, smothered her, until all she could breathe was him. Awtomatikong dumapo ang mga palad niya sa dibdib ng lalaki para itulak ito. Pero dumiin lamang ang mga daliri nito sa kanyang baywang. He pulled her closer, pressed her body against his hard frame.

Heat crawled across her flesh at the contact. Memories of his hard body molded against hers teased her senses like a taunting caress. How many times had he held her like this in the past? Held her close, crushed her against him as he pushed her down on a bed, or against a wall, and slid his hardness deep inside her?

Nanginginig siyang humugot ng hininga. “Let go.”

His fingers flexed against her waist, the pads grazing her skin through the thin fabric of her dress. Heat seeped through the material, spread over her flesh like licks of flame. Binitawan siya nito na tila ba napilitan ito.

Agad siyang umatras ng tatlong hakbang. Marahas ang paghinga niya. Tumaas-baba ang kanyang dibdib.

His gaze flickered to her breasts, and his eyes darkened with something primal and predatory. Heat, instant and searing, spread across the heavy mounds, gathered and concentrated on the tight peaks until they swelled and hardened. She fought the urge to snarl and scream.

“Kumusta, Rafe?”

Nanigas ang katawan ng lalaki nang banggitin niya ang pangalan nito. Color stained the tight skin across his cheekbones, and his chiseled lips parted slightly as he took in air. The coiled muscles of his

shoulders tightened as he breathed.

Iniangat nito ang titig sa kanya. Mainit iyon, nakakapaso. “Fine. You?”

Parang matutumba siya pagkarinig sa boses nito.

Focus. Smile. Nod. Small talk. Then goddamn leave.

She needed to leave.

“Good.” Pinilit niyang huminga. “Hindi ko alam na magkakilala pala kayo ni Madam Lucrecia. Business partners? That’s good. Madam Lucrecia is an exceptional businesswoman.”

Those dark eyes never left her face. Intimidating. He had always been intimidating.

“You own a lodge.” His voice held a rasp she knew so well. It scraped across her skin like coarse silk, filling her head with images of tangled limbs, low groans, and rumpled sheets.

The arousal, the dizzying lust he had always lit inside her, sharpened her fury. Ginamit niya iyon. Kailangan niya iyon.

“Yes.” Sinalubong ni Brenda ang mainit na titig nito, hinayaang gumapang ang yelo sa kanyang tono. Indifferent. Strangers. They were nothing but people who used to know each other.

She needed to get away from him.

“Madam Lucrecia lent me the start-up capital for the lodge. I owe it all to her. And you? You’re

probably the CEO of *Ravo Tradings* by now. Your father must be very pleased.” Humakbang ito palapit sa kanya at awtomatiko siyang napaurong. “Don’t.” Tuluyang tumagas ang galit sa kanyang boses. “Don’t you dare.”

His lips curved, his dark eyes gleaming with heat. “Tired of the act, aren’t you?”

“F*ck you.”

“That’s better.”

“Get away from me.”

“If I don’t?”

“What do you want, Rafe?”

“You.”

Tila sinampal siya nito.

Ang galit, ang sakit, umahon ang mga iyon na parang nagbabagang putik. Mainit, madumi, nakakasuka. He had said those exact words to her before.

You. I want you. And he didn’t stop until he had her. Then he destroyed her.

“You’re a monster.” Tumalikod siya at halos tumakbo palabas ng lilim ng trellis. Naroon na ang luha, parang unos na gustong bumaha mula sa kanyang mga mata.

It sickened her to know she used to have feelings for someone like him. Someone so cruel, so heartless. It sickened her to think he would hurt her again like this. That he would play this game again.

It sickened her to know how little he thought of her, how little he felt about her. She already knew it ten years ago. But to have it slapped so hard against her face was crippling.

Pumulupot ang isang braso ng lalaki sa kanyang baywang, ang isa sa kanyang mga balikat. He pulled her hard against his chest, locked her in his arms.

“Let go!”

Nagsimulang manlabo ang gilid ng kanyang paningin. Nagsimulang maghalo ang mga kulay na parang matubig na painting.

“Don’t. Stop it. Don’t cry.” His lips pressed hard against her temple and her whole world crumbled.

“Let go!” Hindi siya makahinga, hindi siya makakita, at napasigaw siya nang malamang umiiyak nga siya.

“I’m sorry.”

Napahiyaw siya at kinalmot ang mga braso nito para pakawalan siya. Pero humigpit lamang ang yakap nito.

She screeched, clawed, and bit like a wounded animal.

“Oh, God, oh, God...” Her cries melted into pitiful sobs.

Nanatili itong nakayakap sa kanya, tinatanggap ang nanghihinang bigat niya. Binuhat siya nito at umiiyak niya itong itinulak.

“Let go of me.”

“Don’t fight me.” Idinampi ni Rafe ang mga labi sa kanyang noo, at tila piniga ang kanyang puso.

Umupo ang binata sa batong silya, inilapat ang pisngi niya sa matipuno nitong dibdib. Pinilit niyang kumawala kay Rafe, pero humigpit lamang ang hawak nito sa kanyang balikat.

He cradled her head, set her on his lap, and pressed her hot face against the cool silk of his dress shirt. The tender touch was a knife to her gut. She remembered he had been good at that, too. That was why it had hurt so bad. He had made her believe he felt something for her, too, had made her believe that maybe he had loved her, too. Lies, all lies.

“Let go of me. Let go!”

“Not yet.” His fingers tightened in her hair, keeping her pressed against him.

His warmth, his scent, the feel of his hard body curved against hers only made the pain heavier. It smothered her, and tears threatened to choke her.

“Don’t cry.” Ibinaon nito ang mukha sa kanyang balikat. “I can’t take it when you cry.”

“Let go of me! What the f*ck do you want from me!”

“You. Just you.”

Her heart jumped into her throat when his mouth moved across her neck. She struggled,

desperate to block out the roughness in his voice, the blooming arousal spreading across her skin.

“Don’t do this. Rafe, don’t do this...”

“Brenda.” His lips brushed hers and an electric heat jolted her whole body.

Muling tumakas ang ilang luha at muli niya itong itinulak sa dibdib. Pero sapo nito ang batok niya, at malaya nitong sinakop ang kanyang mga labi.

His taste flooded her like a drug.

She fought, resisted the dizzying heat suffusing her blood. It flooded her bloodstream like poison. He was poison. His taste drugged her until her vision blurred, her heartbeat spiked, and her blood roared in her ears. Her skin tingled with fevered heat, her silky dress felt coarse as the fabric rubbed against her flesh.

Panicked, she pressed her palm harder against his chest to push him away, and felt his coiled muscles jump beneath her touch. He groaned, grabbed her wrists, yanked them up and pulled her arms around his neck.

“I want you.” His voice, thick and rough with arousal made her muscles clench. His mouth molded against hers, his tongue delving deep.

Rumagasa ang dugo sa kanyang ulo nang magniig ang kanilang mga dila. Each stroke of his tongue brought dizzying jolts of heat pulsing deep

between her thighs. She could feel herself softening for him, could feel blood pulsing into her sex, could feel the thick rush of arousal dripping between the swollen folds.

Gumapang ang mainit at magaspang nitong kamay sa kanyang hita at napaigtad siya.

“I got you,” he groaned, sliding his hand beneath her skirt to glide up her inner thigh.

May sumisigaw sa likod ng kanyang isipan pero hindi maintindihan ni Brenda ang sinasabi niyon sa lakas ng tibok ng puso niya. The rough texture of his palm against her flesh ripped a moan out of her. His hardness jerked against her thigh at the sound of her moan.

“F*ck it, Brenda.” His fingers kneaded her thigh, left a burning trail as they crawled up.

His mouth feasted on hers as if he was dying of hunger, and she was the only one who could satisfy him.

Her whole body stiffened when his fingers stroked the soft skin inches below the damp crotch area of her thong. Dizzying thrill flooded her veins as his fingers skimmed the edge of the lacy silk.

“I missed you.”

Softly, softly, the rough pads of his fingers danced around the edges, grazing the sensitive flesh around her mound.

She bit her lip hard, arched her back and thrust

her hips into his hand, and cried out when his fingers brushed the swollen lips of her sex. Parang dulo ng mga karayom na tumusok ang init sa kanyang laman.

He cursed against her lips, tightened his hand in her hair as his mouth covered hers again. Her body hummed with sexual tension when his fingers slipped inside the drenched scrap of lace. He groaned when he sank his fingers inside her.

A thick, heavy ball of heat curled inside her womb. Every nerve cell in her body pulsed with sexual heat. Dizzy, her body could do nothing but respond to him. Thick, rough fingers plowed inside her clenching channel, working in and out, in and out, stretching her tightness, drawing hot creamy arousal from her quivering depths.

The ball of heat grew heavier and heavier inside her womb, wound tighter and tighter until—

“Rafe?”

Rafe’s fingers stilled between her legs.

“Rafe?”

Umungol si Brenda at ikinuyom ang palad sa dibdib nito. Pinilit niyang imulat ang mga mata. The lights from the lanterns pierced through the vines above the trellis’s roof, casting fractured beams of light across his stony face.

“Rafe, is that you?” The sultry feminine voice stabbed through the thick fog of lust like a thin

knife.

Sinaksak ng tinig na iyon si Brenda sa dibdib, derecho sa kanyang puso.

Nakatiim-bagang ang lalaki. Isang matigas na linya ang sensual nitong mga labi.

“Rafe, are you there?” Si Edwina. Perfect, beautiful Edwina.

Parang nabasag ang paligid niya.

