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“Ate, ano’ng gagawin mo sa tickets for your supposed honeymoon?” tanong ng kanyang kapatid. “Oh, the bloody asshole! Kung makikita ko ang lalaking iyon ay talagang babalatan ko,” nanggigigil na pahayag nito. Bigla siyang napaisip sa bagay na sinambit nito. “Hoy! Maria Victoria Villaluz, nawawala ka na ba sa sarili mo? Huwag naman dahil talagang imo-murder ko ang dati mong fiancé,” patuloy nito, sabay yugyog sa kanya.

“Maria Cecilia! Tumahimik ka muna, p’wede? Nag-iisip ako, eh,” asik ni Marivic sa nakababatang kapatid.

Dramatic na huminga ito nang malalim. “Good. Huwag kang padala sa emosyon. He’s not worth it.”

She grimaced. “Paano ako makakapag-isip kung panay ang buka ng bunganga mo? I’d better think in my bedroom. Don’t follow me.” Tumayo siya at iniwan si Maricel sa sala.

Napaupo siya sa kanyang kama. Ngayon sana ang araw ng kasal. Isang linggo na ang nakalipas mula nang maganap ang pinakanakakahiyang eksena sa

buhay niya. Her ex-fiancé jilted her a week before their wedding when a woman appeared on her wedding rehearsal and claimed that she was pregnant with her boyfriend's child.

Nang araw na iyon, pakiramdam ni Marivic ay pinagsakluban siya ng langit at lupa. Abot-abot ang kahihiyang nadarama niya sa harap ng ibang tao nang aminin ng lalaki na nagka-affair ito sa babae, at ngayong buntis ang huli ay hindi na siya nito mapapakasalan pa. Literally, she collapsed.

Hindi na muli nagpakita pa sa kanya si Cris. He sent her a letter of apology. What a coward! Mabuti pa ang mga magulang nito dahil ilang beses na personal na humingi ng tawad sa kanya. She returned the engagement ring to his family. And she threw out and burned the things she received from Cris.

Naha-high blood si Marivic sa tuwing maaalala ang lalaki. He betrayed her. And in the end, he blamed her because she refused to sleep with him before marriage. Oh boy, tama siya na hindi niya ibinigay rito ang sarili.

Kinuha niya ang airline tickets sa kanyang dresser at tumitig doon. Cris had paid for it. May sumagi na ideya sa kanyang isipan. May dalawang linggo pang natitira sa kanyang one-month leave.

Kailangan niyang makapagpahinga bago bumalik sa trabaho niya as interior designer.

She had to go somewhere na walang makakakilala sa kanya, and made the best of the time. Hindi siya dapat magmukmok at umiyak dahil lamang sa walang kuwentang lalaki. Life was not over yet. Ipinangako niya sa sarili na mag-move on kahit mahirap.

Lumabas siya ng kuwarto at hinanap si Maricel.

“Maricel, where are you?” sigaw niya.

Bumukas ang front door at iniluwa niyon ang hinahanap. “Bakit? Kung makasigaw ka ay parang nasusunog na ang bahay.”

“Sis, I’m going.”

“Going, where?”

“To my honeymoon. All by myself. Pera niya ang para sa trip. Since hindi na siya nagpapakita pa, I may as well use it. Kahit papaano’y makakabawi ako sa lalaking iyon.”

Ngumiti ang kapatid niya. “Good idea. You need a time off, and away from here.”

“Okay ka lang ba na iiwan kitang mag-isa?”

“Ate naman. For goodness’ sake, I’m twenty-four.

Huwag mo akong alalahanin. Go and make use of that trip.”

Nagmadali siyang bumalik sa silid para magsimulang mag-impake. Bukas ay first class siyang lilipad patungong Europa. She had every intention to enjoy the trip, and come back home afresh.

Nagi-guilty si Marivic na iiwan ang kapatid niya. Silang dalawa na lang kasi ang naiwan sa kanilang pamilya. Their mother died couple of years ago, at ang ama nila ay hindi nila alam kung sino. Their mom didn't want to tell them about the man para raw sa ikabubuti nilang magkapatid.

Kahit pa ganoon, nagawa pa rin silang buhayin ng kanilang ina at naipagtapos pa sila sa kolehiyo. Their mother was a bank manager so they weren't totally poor, but they weren't rich, either. Ang nakakasakit lang ay aksidenteng nabaril ang kanilang ina and she died instantly. Nasa bilangguan na ang salarin, ngunit hindi na maibabalik pa sa kanila ang ina. Naikuyom niya ang mga palad. She still missed her, lalo na kapag may pinagdadaanan silang magkapatid.

Mark Anthony Exchaure was on his way to roam Europe. First time na pupunta siya roon without any

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business affairs, and without any girl in tow. He's going for his long-awaited vacation. He left firm instructions sa kanyang executive assistant na hindi siya tatanggap ng personal calls. Sa email lamang siya puwedeng kontakin nito kung sobrang importante ang sadya, otherwise, ayaw niyang paistorbo.

He worked so hard as CEO of *MCE Universal Industries, Inc.* and he was so tired from long hours of working in the last few weeks. He deserved this vacation. Susulitin niya ang panahon para magliwaliw at mag-enjoy.

Ipinangako niya sa ina na sa kanyang pagbalik ay aayusin niya ang problema ng kanilang pamilya.

He's traveling first class to France.

Papunta na siya sa kanyang seat sa eroplano nang madaanan niya ang isang pasahero na tila umiiyak. He saw the falling tears na agad nitong pinahid. He looked back to see her face bago siya nagtuloy-tuloy sa kanyang upuan.

The face was beautiful and young but looked hurt and broken. She's traveling alone, at sa hula niya ay may problema ito sa relasyon. There was no wedding ring so he assumed she had broken up with a guy.

Napailing siya nang maalala na nakita rin niya

sa ganoong sitwasyon ang kanyang kapatid. No, he should not think of problems right now. He needed a break. He went to his seat at hindi na lumingon pa sa babae.

Nang lumapag ang eroplano sa destinasyon, makakasabay pala niya ang babae pababa. He eyed her curiously habang nakasunod siya rito. Binasa niya ang nametag ng carry-on bag nito, *Marivic Villaluz*. Ang apelyido nito ay may dating sa kanya. It reminded him of his mission, pero hindi muna niya dapat isipin ang problemang iniwan sa Pilipinas.

Sinipat niya ang babae. Matangkad, balingkinitan ang pangangatawan at maputi. Mahaba ang nakaponytail nitong raven black hair. Ang mukha ay makinis at walang kolorete. She's simple, ngunit labas ang tunay nitong ganda.

Mark followed her silently off the plane, and he enjoyed the view of her back. The feminine curves and the sexy swell of her butt, at ang amoy nito ay nakaka-arouse ng kanyang manly urges. He grimaced. He felt like a horny beast, at sa kawawang babae pa.

Nang palabas na siya ng airport ay lumingon siya para hanapin ang babae, ngunit hindi na niya ito nakita pa. Nagkibit-balikat si Mark at pumasok sa sasakyang sumundo sa kanya.

He felt like he was hit on his gut when he saw her again. Nagkatagpo sila ng babae na roon din nag-check in sa hotel kung saan siya nagpa-reserve.

Nagkasabay pa nga sila sa elevator, but not once did she ever turned to his side. Tumikhim siya. “Hi,” he said and waited for her reaction.

Nilingon siya nito. She smiled timidly. “Hi.”

“Ilang beses ka nang nakapunta ng Paris?” tanong niya na may ngiti sa labi nang makita ang panlalaki ng mga mata nito. “Galing Pilipinas din ako. I’m on vacation for now. Actually, magkasabay pa nga tayo sa plane but you didn’t notice me.”

“Oh... I... ah... first time kong mag-travel out of the country,” tila nahihiyang pag-amin nito.

“I’ve been traveling constantly for business. But this time it’s my real vacation. I have every intention to enjoy this trip to the fullest bago bumalik sa atin and face work and other problems.”

“Ako rin. When I get back, I want a fresh start. I hope this trip will give me some space and air to breathe, to clean my clogged spirit.”

“Nasa sa ’yo ang desisyon. You can enjoy it if you want to. Just open your eyes and enjoy what

you see. Maraming pasyalan dito at nasisiguro kong mag-e-enjoy ka. Always bring your camera para may souvenir ka,” payo niya.

“I’ll keep that in mind. Thank you.”

Fancy that, sa parehong palapag pala sila papunta at magkatabi pa ang kanilang suite. Mark smiled to himself. “Magkapitbahay pala tayo,” nasambit niya nang nasa harapan na siya ng kanyang pinto and she was on the next door opening her suite.

Nginitian siya nito. “Oo nga. Have a good day.” Then she went inside her room.

Napailing ang binata. Hindi niya akalain na magkasama pala sila ng babae sa iisang hotel. He didn’t know what to make of it. But at least, hindi na mukhang malungkot ang dalaga. She even smiled at him. He liked her.

Aaminin ni Mark, he was quite drawn to her. Ewan ba kung bakit. Hindi naman ito ang pinakamagandang babaeng nakilala niya, pero malakas ang panghila nito sa kanya. He liked to get close to her and help her forget her hurt. Napailing siya uli bago pumasok sa kanyang silid.

2

Gumaan ang pakiramdam ni Marivic nang nasa loob na siya ng silid. The suite was quite big and very classy. Napahalakhak siya. She imagined the money Cris paid for the reserved accommodation to this five-star hotel. She didn't feel guilty for using this opportunity. He owe her this after the scandal and humiliation she suffered. She hoped to have a good time to at least lessen the pain.

She was tired and jet lagged. She went to the luxurious bathroom and gave herself a wonderful bath. Pagkatapos, ibinagsak niya ang sarili sa malaking kama. She liked the feel of the beddings. Ipinangako niya sa sarili na mag-e-enjoy siya sa honeymoon niyang ito.

Bigla niyang naalala ang lalaki sa katabing silid. He seemed nice and very friendly. Hindi niya alam na pareho pala ang sinakyan nilang plane. Sana lang hindi siya nito nakitang umiyak. Oh, she had to leave the pain behind para makapagliwaliw siya nang malaya.

Tama si Mr. Stranger, maraming mapagpapasyalan dito and she intended to experience all the beautiful

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sites and have fun. Oh dear, hindi man lang niya naitanong ang pangalan ng lalaki. She hoped to meet him again. Iba rin kasi kapag may kakilala in a strange country. Besides, he's well traveled, marami itong mairerekomendang dapat pasyalan.

Ipinikit ni Marivic ang kanyang mga mata at biglang rumehistro ang mukha ng lalaki. Ang guwapo nito, in fairness. Ang tangkad at ang dating nito? He commanded grace, power, and masculinity. He smelled good, too. Napangiti siya nang pasekreto niyang nilanghap ang pabango nito.

Hindi pa nga siya nagsimulang mamasyal, but she was smiling already. She owed it to her neighbor. Ano kaya ang magiging reaksyon nito if she went crazy and invited him to join her on her honeymoon? Napahagikgik siya. For that thought, she loved Paris already. Nakatulog siya na may ngiti sa labi.

Nang magising si Marivic, it was already morning and she was so hungry. Tumawag siya ng room service at nagbilin na dalhan siya ng pagkain sa kanyang suite. Pagkatapos niyang kumain ay balak niyang lumabas at umpisang mag-enjoy.

She was energized after eating and very much ready to explore the beautiful city. Kalalabas lamang niya sa kanyang suite nang bumukas ang pinto ng

katabing kuwarto at iniluwa ang lalaki na hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa niya naitanong ang pangalan.

She smiled at him. “Hello.”

He smiled back. “Hi, going out?”

“Oo. Uumpisan ko na ang ipinunta ko rito.”

Lalampasan na sana niya ito nang bigla itong nagsalita sa kanyang likuran. “Do you mind if I go with you?”

Napahinto siya at lumingon. *Why not?* “Sure. Mas beneficial sa akin, you surely know where to go.”

Was she being impulsive? Who cared? Kailangan niyang maging malaya at mag-enjoy. She would be stupid to reject the handsome man. Hindi naman siya masuwerte sa mga lalaki, so why not have him around her for this trip? She giggled.

Nag-sightseeing sila nang ilang oras at panay ang pagpapa-picture nilang dalawa. They even had pictures together at the *Eiffel Tower*. Her legs were a bit tired, but she had a lot of fun. Masarap ding kasama ang lalaki. He’s very knowledgeable and she asked him a lot of questions.

They were in an ice cream parlor relinquishing their thirst from the European summer. She noticed

the way he stared at her each time she licked her ice cream. Napansin din niya ang paglunok nito. Was she tempting him without knowing? She shrugged, paano ba niya malalaman? She had not much experience in flirting and dating.

“Ano’ng plano mo for tonight?” naitanong nito.

“Are you trying to offer your services tonight?” balik niya. Oh dear, she became daring.

“Oo. Like I told you, nandito rin ako for vacation. Not unless nabo-bore ka na sa akin.”

“Oh, no. I’m glad for your company. May alam ka bang nightclub na puwede nating puntahan tonight? Iyong puwede tayong sumayaw at uminom. I haven’t been in a nightclub yet.”

“Aha, you want to loosen up.”

“Tama. Just because my ex-fiancé ditched me, ibig sabihin na gumuho na ang mundo ko.” Oops, she said something personal. Hindi na niya mababawi pa. Napatitig ang lalaki sa kanya. “Ano? Naaawa ka sa akin? Don’t be. He’s such a jerk, anyway.”

“May alam akong lugar na puwede nating puntahan mamayang gabi. But you need an appropriate dress.”

Napatigil si Marivic at napangiti nang matamis. “Since you are being nice to me, puwede mo ba akong samahang mag-shopping? Hindi ko alam kung ano ang dapat suotin sa ganoong lugar.”

He chuckled. “Sure.”

“It may seem funny to you. Pero hindi kasi ako sanay na lumabas for night life. Madalas routine ko ay work and back home. Siguro iyan ang dahilan kung bakit na-bore ang ex ko at naghanap ng iba.”

“Huwag mong sisihin ang sarili mo. He obviously didn’t know how lovely you are. Kawalan niya.”

She liked what he said. Nakahanap siya ng kakampi. Masarap pala sa pakiramdam. “You are being nice. Hindi ko pa nga alam kung ano’ng pangalan mo. Thank you, anyway.”

He laughed. Hindi niya mapigil na tumawa rin. She felt better. Pati nga ang pagbanggit sa naudlot niyang marriage ay hindi na masyadong masakit.

He offered his hand. “Mark Anthony Exchaure, at your service.”

Tinanggap niya ang kamay nito. “I’m Marivic.” Suddenly, she felt something when their hands clasped. There was friction. She withdrew her hand,

careful not to show na may naramdaman siyang kakaiba.

Well, attracted siya sa lalaki at hindi niya ito maiwasan dahil hindi naman siya bulag. She liked him too. But whatever she felt, panandalian lamang. They both came to this place to enjoy and have fun and that's it. She would like to enjoy this trip to the fullest para pagbalik niya ay hindi na siya masyadong mahihirapang mag-move on. Kailangan niyang may mabaon na good memories from this solo honeymoon.

“Bakit hindi mo isinama ang nobya mo?” Hindi niya mapigil ang kanyang curiosity.

“No girlfriend at the moment.” He shrugged his broad shoulders.

She couldn't help but admire his built. Napalunok si Marivic and she scooped her ice cream and moaned from sweet pleasure. Nanlaki ang mga mata ng lalaki na napatitig sa kanya.

Bigla siyang pinamulahan ng mukha. “Ang sarap, eh.”

He tore his gaze away and tasted his own. “Tama ka nga. Ang sarap.” He even licked his lips.

Her eyes widened by the way he did it. He looked

so tempting and she wanted to taste him. Napailing siya.

Ano ba itong pumasok sa ulo ko? But she liked the way she felt.

Sinamahan siya ni Mark na mag-shopping para sa damit na susuotin niya sa paglabas nila mamaya. Napanganga siya nang makita ang damit na itinuro nito, a sparkly dress na indecently short. Sleeveless with a scoop neck.

“This would fit you perfectly.” May ngiting bumaling ito sa kanya.

“S-sigurado ka? That’s too revealing. My legs would be on display.”

He smiled at her seductively. “Hindi ako magrereklamo. Come on, not unless nagbago na ang isip mo.” His eyes were challenging her.

Marivic raised her chin and refused to be taunted. “Okay. Isusukat ko muna kung kasya sa akin.” She took the dress and went to the fitting room. It took her a lot of willpower bago niya ipinakita ang sarili sa lalaking naghihintay sa labas.

Bigla itong napatanga at nanlaki ang mga mata. Sinipat siya nito mula ulo hanggang paa. Tumagal ang

mga mata nito sa naka-display niyang hita. She pulled the hem down but to no avail. Talagang masyadong maikli ang damit.

He was still gazing at her body. She felt as if he caressed her through his eyes. She shivered at the thought.

“Perfect! Iyan ang bagay sa ’yo.”

Para siyang nakahinga nang maluwag. “Masyado lang maikli. Sigurado ka bang okay lang ito?”

Tumaas ang kilay nito. “Are you backing out?”

“No,” agad niyang sagot. She saw the way he looked at her. Was it desire she saw in his eyes? Napailing siya. Nag-iilusyon yata siya.

“Maghanap na lang tayo ng shoes na bagay sa damit mo. Tonight, you will be the belle of the night.”

Napahagikgik siya. “Your words make me feel beautiful. Nakakadagdag ng self-confidence. Thanks.” Kinindatan niya ang binata at bumalik sa fitting room to change back to her own clothes.

Mark almost couldn’t believe it. Did she just wink at him? Damn the woman! Wala itong ideya na halos

tumulo na ang kanyang laway at nanigas ang kanyang pagkalalaki nang ipakita nito ang hitsura na suot ang damit na iyon. The dress accentuated her sensuous figure, it took his breath away.

Tama nga ang hula niya na may long legs ito. He groaned. How would it feel if those wonderful legs were wrapped around him? Napamura siya. How long could he last before his control breaks? He desired her. He wanted her.

Gusto niyang malaman kung gaano kalambot ang balat nito. He wanted to know how would she react when he kissed her sensitive parts. Oh, no. Tino-torture niya lamang ang sarili. Tonight, his endurance would be tested.

They went on shopping for her shoes. Siya mismo ang pumili para kay Marivic. She loved it but when she saw the price, napaatras ito. Hinila siya nito palabas ng shop. Umalma siya. He was tired already. Isa pa, bagay talaga ang seksing heels sa damit. Whether she liked it or not, kukunin nila ang sapatos. He was willing to pay for it.

Lumapit si Mark sa saleslady at ibinigay ang kanyang credit card. “We will take it.”

Marivic gasped loudly and looked horrified.

“Hindi mo puwedeng bilhin ito para sa akin. It is too much. I cannot pay you for it.”

He put his finger to her pouting lips to shut her up. “Kung hindi ka tatahimik ay hahalikan kita right here and right now. Regalo ko ito sa 'yo, so hindi mo ako kailangang bayaran. We are friends now, aren't we?”

Tumango ito. He removed his finger from her lips and he was almost tempted to taste those red, ripe lips. But no, he mustn't do it; he couldn't afford to ruin the easy companionship they had. Nag-enjoy siyang kasama ito.

Ibinuka ng dalaga ang bibig nito, pero kaagad ding itinikom iyon nang makita ang matamis niyang ngiti at itinuro pa ang kanyang mga labi. Pinamulahan ito ng mukha at sinimangutan siya. He found it cute. Napangisi siya.

Bumalik na sila sa hotel pagkatapos nilang mag-shopping. He invited her to have dinner with him but she refused. He told her that they would be leaving around ten in the evening.

At exact time, Mark waited outside her door. Inabangan niya ang paglabas nito. He was so excited to see her with the dress on. Palakad-lakad siya

paroo't parito habang hinihintay itong lumabas. When she did, his jaw dropped.

“Oh my! Tiyak na magiging busy ako keeping other men at bay.” Sinipat niya ng tingin si Marivic mula ulo hanggang paa. He licked his lips at the delectable display. His pulse quickened. Uminit ang buo niyang katawan at pinanigasan siya. He groaned. “How can I take my eyes off you? You are beautiful and gorgeously sexy. Did you mention your ex left you? Goodness, he’s such a loser.”

She flushed from his compliments. “Talaga bang maganda at sexy ako ngayong gabi?” She was a bit conscious dahil sa iksi ng damit nito. Her flawless, long and shapely thighs were such a sight to behold.

“Definitely! Hindi lang ngayong gabi. You are simply beautiful. Ang suwerte ko naman at ako ang makakasama mo ngayon.”

She smiled and straightened her spine. “Tayo na nga dahil baka magbago pa isip ko.”

Mark offered his hand. She stared at it and then she took it. It was sweet. Their clasped hands fit perfectly. Ewan ba kung bakit na-feel niya na para bang ito ang babaeng perfect para sa kanya. Napailing siya. He didn't even know her. *Posible ba ang ganito?*

Even her smell became familiar to him pati na ang warmth ng mga ngiti nito. She became something to him. Napailing siya muli.

“Something wrong?” tanong nito nang magkatabi silang maupo sa backseat ng kotse na naghahatid sa kanila sa pupuntahan.

He raised their joined hands and kissed her hand. He smiled at her seductively. “It just feels good being with you. Hindi ko bibigyan ng chance ang mga magiging admirers mo mamaya.”

She chuckled and blushed. “Hindi pa nga tayo nakarating, parang lasing ka na.”

Nalalasing siya sa pagnanasa sa babaeng katabi. They were seated skin to skin and hot surge of their bodies ignited. Alam niya na naramdaman din iyon ni Marivic dahil naramdaman niyang nanginig ito. Attracted sila sa isa’t isa.

Nang makarating sa kanilang destinasyon, tinulungan niya itong lumabas ng sasakyan. He gathered her close to him. His hand on her waist, staking his claim over her. Seryoso siya na hindi pagbibigyan ang ibang lalaki na makalapit man lang kay Marivic. He became possessive of her. Fortunately, hindi ito umangal sa ginawi niya. It really felt good,

her in his arms. It also felt right.

Ano ba itong nararamdaman ko? Hindi naman ako naging ganito sa ibang babae. Was it because she's a mystery to him? *Damn. I'm losing my grip.*

“You are the goddess of this disco ball. Tingnan mo ang mga kalalakihan, napapaligon sa 'yo and they are devouring you with their hungry eyes,” he said in her ear, and nibbled her earlobe when he couldn't help it. She gasped and trembled. Oh yes, affected din ito. He wondered kung saan papunta ang gabing ito. Sana nga sa kama niya dahil mababaliw siya kung hindi niya ito matikman.

The music was loud and everybody was on the dance floor. “Gusto mo na bang sumayaw o uminom muna?” sigaw niya sa tainga nito, at ininguso ang direksyon ng bar.

Her eyes lit up. Nginitian siya nito. She came to him at isinigaw ang sagot sa kanyang tainga. “Drink first and then sasayaw tayo. S'abi mo ayaw mo akong sumayaw sa iba.” She splayed her hands on his chest and he gritted his teeth to the great temptation. He almost couldn't breathe. She's playing with fire.

Mark crushed her to his chest. “Kung wala lang tayo rito, I guarantee, I already ravished you

thoroughly. And you'd be writhing from pleasure and shouted from great ecstasy.”

Her knees buckled from his declaration and she was beet red. Nakaawang ang mga labi ni Marivic at nanlaki ang bilog nitong mga mata. “Y-you are tempting me,” sagot nito nang maka-recover. She pushed his chest gently to put a little distance between them.

Hindi siya kumurap nang magkatitigan sila. “I am trying. I hope it works. I want you badly.”

Napalunok si Marivic at namuo ang pawis nito sa noo. He took his handkerchief and wiped the sweat. Siya man ay pinagpawisan din. “We need a drink. Hindi ako marunong sumayaw, but after a drink or two maybe I can,” he winked at her and guided her toward the bar.

Kailangan niyang putulin ang temptation sa kanilang usapan, if not, he would steer her away and back to the hotel to make love to her. Unfair naman ito sa babae; she wanted this experience and he would give it to her. Hindi siya sumasayaw ng disco dahil pulos kaliwa ang kanyang mga paa, pero willing siyang ipahiya ang sarili para sa dalaga.

The drink helped them both. They wiggled and

giggled to the tune of the music. Nobody really cared about the awkwardness in his dance, pero aaminin niyang nag-enjoy siya. Marivic was all smiles and her eyes glittered. Her moves were provocative.

When she wiggled her sexy butt on him, kamuntik pa siyang matumba.

Nang maging slow ang musika, Mark grabbed her by the waist and crushed her to his chest. “You are not going anywhere. Hinihintay ko ang sayaw na ito,” he said against her ear and licked her earlobe.

Napaungol si Marivic at napakapit nang husto sa kanya. Ikinapit nito ang mga kamay sa kanyang leeg, and danced with the rhythm. He moaned when she rested her head on his chest. His erection was hard and thick. Such a torture.

“Do you know how hard I am?” He bit her ear gently and kissed her bare shoulder.

She looked up. “Ganoon ang epekto ko sa ’yo?” She appeared incredulous.

“Yes. From the moment I saw you. You got my attention even when you were crying on the plane.”

She gasped. “I looked so stupid, didn’t I?”

“Not really. I assumed you are heartbroken.”

Ngumiti si Mark at hinalikan niya ang tungki ng ilong nito. His hands caressed her back, at pababa ang direksyon niyon patungo sa makurbang pang-ubo nito. He squeezed her there and pulled her even closer para maramdaman nito ang paninigas niya.

“Oh my! S-should we finish the dance?”

“Yes. Makakaya ko pa,” he said and moaned while caressing her lithe body. He was dying to feel her skin without any clothes on.

When the music stopped, he pulled her away from the dance floor. His heart thudded in his ears. “Are you willing to leave o gusto mo pang sumayaw?” He was giving her a choice. Hindi niya ito maaaring pilitin.

Tinitigan siya ni Marivic. He saw her bit her lower lip. He groaned. He wanted to taste and nibble those full lips. Sa palagay niya, she wasn't aware that she was seducing him. “My feet are tired already. A-alis na lang tayo.”

His eyes glittered. May ngiting napatitig siya rito. His mind turned and great anticipation made his blood boil. Pinamulahan ng mukha ang babae at nagbaba ng tingin.

Hinawakan niya ang dalawa nitong kamay at

hinagkan ang mga iyon. “I desire you strongly, pero hindi ko ipipilit ang sarili ko kung ayaw mo naman sa akin,” sinsero niyang pahayag without breaking eye contact with her.

Marivic gripped their joined hands. “I... I desire you, too. Natatakot lang ako na baka ma-disappoint ka lang pagkatapos,” she said and looked tense.

“With you, there will be no disappointment from me. Kakaiba kang babae. Malakas ang epekto mo sa akin. Maniniwala ka ba kung aaminin kong nag-iinit ako matitigan lang kita?”

She gasped and was stunned. “Paano ako naging desirable? Akala ko ay boring ako at walang sex appeal.”

Mark smiled devilishly. “If you allow, gusto kong ipakita at iparamdam sa ’yo kung gaano ka ka-desirable. I want to lick and taste you. I want to make you moan from desire and passion. I want you to writhe under my touch. I want to hear your screams of delight and satisfaction.

“Sisiguraduhin kong hindi mo makakalimutan ang gabing naging akin ka. Sisiguraduhin ko that you would feel cherished.” Naramdaman niya ang pagnginig ng katawan nito. Her knees buckled but

he never let her fall.

She took deep breaths. She flushed deeply and bit her lip. Alam niya na nag-iisip ito. He hoped his seductive words were convincing.

Nagkasukatan sila ng titig. His breath suspended habang hinihintay ang isasagot nito sa kanya. “S-such promise sounds preposterous, b-but are you good as you claimed?” Napatikhim ito at napalunok.

He admired her flushed cheeks. Nakakadagdag iyon sa ganda ng babae. “There’s a way to find out kung papayag ka na i-demonstrate ko sa ’yo.”

Marivic looked undecided. “Oh... well, maipapangako mo bang hindi mo ako iinsultuhin k-kung sakaling hindi ako passionate?” she stammered.

“I assure you, hindi ako madi-disappoint.” He tugged her close and said in her ear, “When I’m inside you, I am sure that it will be heavenly. So, tatanggapin mo ba ang alok kong passion in bed or are you still going to wallow the injustice done to you by your ex?”

She straightened. “If you let me experience it the way you claim it will be, s-siguro oras na para tuklasin ko mismo kung unfeeling ba ako.”

“I am sure you are a warm and passionate

woman. Your body reacts immediately to my touch.” Pinalakbay ng binata ang mga kamay niya sa likod nito pababa sa balakang bago pumisil sa pang-upo. Napasinghap ito sa kanyang ginawa. “Tell me, hindi ka ba affected? Wala ka bang nararamdamang init ng katawan?”

“M-meron,” she sighed.

“Did you feel that with your ex-fiancé?”

“Hindi.”

Mark smiled winningly. Hindi pala ito attracted sa dating nobyo nito. He wondered why she wanted to marry the guy in the first place. Tama lang siguro na hindi natuloy ang kasal ng babae. But he didn't like the way she was hurt and humiliated.

Binitawan niya ang mga kamay ni Marivic at umatras siya nang dalawang hakbang. She suddenly looked confused. Without breaking their eye contact, he offered his hand. “Wanna go with me and find the paradise tonight?”

She bit her lip again. Shyly, tinanggap nito ang nakalahad niyang kamay at nakahinga siya nang maluwas. She would be his tonight at ipinangako niya na ang gabing pagsasaluhan nila ay hindi nito makakalimutan.

Honeymoon with a Stranger - Eve Rodziewicz

3

They left the place in silence. Walang nagsalita sa kanila habang lulan sila ng kotse patungo sa hotel.

Nang makarating sila roon, wala pa ring nagsalita sa kanila. He didn't let go of her hand. He felt her tense.

Nang nasa elevator na sila at walang ibang sakay, Mark pulled her to him at walang sabi-sabing kinuyumos ito ng halik. He stopped in time when the elevator chimed upon reaching their floor. Nangusap ang kanilang mga mata. He was desperate, gusto niyang makasiguro na gusto rin nitong mangyari ang nais niyang mangyari sa kanyang kama.

“I am giving you a chance to back out if you don't really want me.”

She chuckled. “I should not feel it but I do want you.”

Pagkatapos ng confirmation nito ay hinatak niya si Marivic palabas ng elevator patungo sa kanyang suite. He fumbled upon opening the door. When he succeeded, marahas niyang hinatak papasok ang babae. Natakot siyang baka magbago ang isip nito.

He closed the door abruptly and secured it.

Then he pushed her toward the wall. His hungry eyes devoured her. His pushed his hardness against her so that she would feel it. Parehong nag-iinit ang kanilang mga katawan sa ilalim ng kanilang mga damit. He was almost tempted to hump her against the wall, but she deserved better treatment of lovemaking.

But his control was slowly slipping. Hindi niya matiyak kung kaya pa niyang kontrolin ang sarili. He's always controlled in sexual act, but with this particular woman, he wanted to be wild and free.

Marivic opened her mouth to say something, ngunit hindi niya ito binigyan ng pagkakataon. He captured her lips. She willingly opened for his entrance. His tongue slipped deeper inside her mouth at pareho silang napaungol.

When her knees buckled, napakapit ito sa kanyang leeg. His blood roared through his ears as he kissed her mouth over and over again. Pinangangapusan sila ng hininga nang pakawalan niya ang bibig nito.

“Your lips are the sweetest. Your mouth makes my head spin and it tastes wonderfully sweet that it melts my senses,” Mark commented in a husky voice.

Ngumiti ang babae. Namumula at namamaga ang mga labi nito, her cheeks were pink, at namumungay ang mga mata. “Ang sarap mo palang humalik,” sambit nito.

“There will be more,” turan niya at muling inangkin ang mga labi nito. His hands fumbled on the zipper of her dress. He wanted to see her in bare flesh and savor the beauty before he ravished her.

Thankfully, the dress didn't become a problem. It went down to a heap on the floor. Kumawala ang binata para suriin ang kagandahan ni Marivic. Napanganga siya nang makitang hindi pala ito nakasuot ng bra. She stood in front of him wearing only her lacy panties. He worshipped and caressed her body with his eyes. Nakadama ng hiya ang babae at pinagkrus ang mga braso sa dibdib nito para takpan iyon.

“Don't. Please, let me drink in your beauty. Alam kong maganda ka, pero hindi ko inasahan na may nakakauhaw ka palang katawan.” He removed her arms from covering the front view. Her breasts were perfect. He groaned from wanting to taste it. He bent on his knees. “Look at me, Marivic.”

When she looked at him, dahan-dahan niyang tinanggal ang panties nito. His hand deliberately

grazing her sensitive skin. Nanginig ito at napasinghap. Her creamy skin glowed from the heat of his touch.

Panay ang lunok ni Mark. His throat was dry. His hands shook from the intense desire. His heart thudded.

With the panties gone, she was stark-naked. He licked his lips nang mapa-level ang mga mata niya sa private paradise nito. He ached to taste the sweetness and wetness of her folds. When he touched the kinky hair, her knees melted. Sinalo niya ito. Tumayo siya at kinarga ito papunta sa naghihintay na kama. He laid her down gently.

His hands travelled from her breasts to her belly, down to her thighs, and lower still to her feet with deliberate slowness. She writhed from his touch. Tinanggal niya ang suot nitong sapatos. Pagkatapos ay nagmadali siyang nagtanggap ng sariling saplot habang nakatitig sa babaeng nakahiga sa kama.

Nanlaki ang mga mata nito at malakas na napasinghap nang makita ang kanyang kahubdan. Nang bumaba ang paningin nito sa naninigas niyang alaga, she shivered and swallowed.

“Now, you see how much I want you,” he uttered in husky voice.

He captured her foot, kissed her toes, and licked it. Isang ungol ang narinig niyang tugon mula sa kaniig. Pinag-igihan pa niya ang ginagawa habang dahan-dahang naglalakbay ang bibig pataas nang pataas. He nipped at her legs up to her thighs. Napatigil siya sa gitna nito. He chanced looking at her and smiled at her naughtily before his mouth kissed, licked, and nipped at her wet, slick folds.

Though shocked by what he did to her intimate part, she arched her back, aching for more, at hindi niya ito binigo. Mahigpit itong nakahawak sa kanyang buhok. She moaned aloud and cried out when she had her orgasm.

Nagpatuloy ang paglakbay ng bibig ni Mark papunta sa pusod nito and he licked the indentation, pataas sa tiyan, patuloy sa naghihintay nitong mga dibdib. He ran his hand down to her side from shoulder to thigh as his mouth took the tip of her breast.

She was still shuddering from the waves of her orgasm, but her body became heated again from the merciless exploration of his mouth and hands.

Nang dumapo ang bibig nito sa kanyang

hinaharap, tila nawala si Marivic sa katinuan. Nakalimutan niya ang lahat. She was deeply immersed in the racing desire the man ignited in her. Nag-aapoy ang kanyang katawan habang pataas nang pataas ang pagnanasa sa bawat naglalagablab nitong halik at sa bawat galaw ng dila nito sa kanyang balat.

The press of his long, hard body on top of her made her hot and wild. Binigyan niya ito ng access nang patutsahan nito ng halik ang kanyang sensitibong balat sa ilalim ng kanyang leeg. “Oh... Mark... I need more....” She purred and clung to him. Naramdaman niya ang matigas nitong pagkalalaki sa pagitan ng kanyang mga hita. She wanted it to be inside her, now. She was feeling desperate to feel him inside.

By the time na ipinasok nito ang daliri sa kanyang pagkababae, buong katawan niya ang nanginig. She flinched a little at that intimate touch. She still wanted more at kailangang maibigay ni Mark ang gusto niya or she would be crazy. He gave her an earth-shattering kiss while he stroked her with his finger. She knew she was wet and ready for more and for the new experience of passion, at halos hindi na siya makapaghintay pa.

“I want you, now,” she demanded huskily.

He parted her legs and he eased into her in one swift thrust. Napasigaw siya sa sakit. Hindi niya napigil ang luha. She knew the first time would be painful. Na-shock lang talaga siya sa kirot.

Napatigil ang lalaki sa ginagawa. She looked into his shocked face. Bigla siyang binalot ng hiya dahil sa edad na twenty-six ay untouched pa rin siya. He probably didn't like it that he had to stop.

“I'm sorry, hindi ko sinabi na wala pa akong experience. Nakakahiya kasi. Pasensya ka na if I disappointed you,” sabi niya sa natulalang si Mark. He just stared at her incredulously. He wasn't moving. Nagbaba siya ng tingin.

“P-please, look at me. Hindi ka dapat mahiya. I just felt ashamed of myself, I desire you badly that I wanted to bury myself right away. I'm sorry for the pain. Hindi ko lang inakala na untouched ka. Thank you for giving me this honor, at hindi ko ito makakalimutan. It's only you who had given me this gift.”

“H-hindi ka disappointed?”

“Sweetheart, I am honored. Pero ayaw kitang saktan pa.” He tried to withdraw but she stopped him by clasping her legs around his waist. Hindi

siya makakapayag na hindi nito itutuloy ang pag-iisa ng kanilang mga katawan. She had waited for this. Titiisin niya ang hapdi basta lang maramdaman niya ang lalaki sa kanyang loob.

“I am not letting you go na hindi tinatapos ang sinimulan natin. Sa umpisa lang naman ang sakit, hindi ba?”

“Right. P-pero sigurado ka ba sa gusto mong mangyari?”

“Yes. Tonight, make me yours.”

His eyes lit up and he grinned. “I assure you there will be intense pleasure after the pain.”

Such promise made her melt. Gusto niya itong maranasan. “Then, give it to me now.” She tried moving under him to initiate the move.

Mark moved slowly, carefully, and gently while watching her facial reactions. Napasinghap ang dalaga at napakagat-labi. Unti-unti na itong nakakapasok nang tuluyan. She felt the pain eased.

“Masakit pa ba?” May tenderness sa tono nito.

“Hindi na. I feel deliciously full. B-but I want you to give me more. Don’t control yourself. Gusto kong maging wild ka at maging wild din ako para

ma-enjoy nating pareho ang gabing ito.”

“Then let’s soar high together.” He pounced into her fast and wild. Marivic gasped and moaned from the sheer pleasure na ngayon lamang niya naranasan. Humabol siya sa rhythm nito, and they danced together in the abyss of their passionate lovemaking. Ipinikit niya ang mga mata nang palapit na siya at the edge of explosion.

She cried out when she gained her pleasure spiralling in her body, in her mind and in her whole being. Her body rippling around his. She melted. He thrust deeper and faster and reached his release. A loud growl escaped from his lips, and then he collapsed on top of her. Pareho silang humihinga nang mabilis.

Mabigat ang lalaki, ngunit hindi niya ininda dahil masarap sa pakiramdam nito sa ibabaw niya. She encircled her arms around him and kept him close.

When their breathing calmed down, he rolled off her. He gathered her in his arms. She nuzzled in his warmth.

“Alam mo, iyon ang pinakamasarap na na-experience ko. It was new and somewhat magical,” Mark told her tenderly.

“Yes. Hindi ko akalain na ganoon pala kasarap at kaganda sa pakiramdam. I now can say that I am a warm woman.”

“Yes, you are a passionate woman. Don’t doubt yourself anymore.” At hinalikan siya nito sa noo.

Oh, how sweet and caring he was. If only she could have him for long, pero ayaw niyang sirain ang masarap na gabing ito para mag-isip ng ibang bagay. She had to enjoy what he could offer her until it lasted.

“Hindi ko naramdaman ang desire na ito sa ex ko. Yes, we kissed pero walang kuryente, walang spark. I didn’t feel the flutter in my stomach and the intense excitement,” pag-amin ni Marivic.

He smiled. “Ibig sabihin, hindi ka talaga attracted sa kanya. I wonder why you wanted to marry the man.”

Tumikhim muna siya bago nagsalita, “Magkaibigan kasi kami mula pa pagkabata. My mother said he’s the best man for me. I did like him a lot plus our parents wanted us together. Akala ko sapat na iyong dahilan to settle down and make a family. Wala kasi akong ibang alam tungkol sa pakikipagrelasyon, much more about the desire. I accepted the fact na ang ex ko ang

future husband ko simula pa nang ako'y nasa high school.”

“Pinagsisihan mo bang hindi kayo nagkatuluyan?”
She felt him tense.

She looked up and caressed his face. He was so sinfully handsome. Gusto niyang magpakalunod sa kaguwapuhan at sa ganda ng katawan nito. “Hindi. Ngayon alam ko na magiging miserable lang ang buhay namin if we didn't have that intense desire for each other. Hindi ko lang nagustuhan ang pagtataksil niya sa akin. Sana sinabi niya sa akin ang totoo. The wedding should have not been planned. Pero nangyari na, nakaraan na. Kailangan ko na lang itong ibaon at kalimutan.”

He kissed her soundly. “That's my girl.”

Marivic knew this affair was not in her mind when she took this trip, pero ikinagalak niya na nakatagpo siya ng lalaki na siyang pumukaw sa kanyang pagkababae. She also knew that after this, she would never be the same again.

She no longer felt the bitterness na ipinagpalit siya at iniwan ng dating fiancé. No, she felt different now. Something awakened inside her. For this wonderful experience, she owed it to Mark. *Je t'aime, Paris.*

Napangiti siya at ipinikit ang mga mata. Coming to Paris was good for her.

She woke up because of her loud grumbling stomach. She open her eyes and then it hit her, ang mga nangyari kagabi. The evidence was right beside her, nakadagan pa nga ang braso ni Mark sa kanyang dibdib, his legs were entangled with hers. She felt warm all over for the intimacy. Uminit ang kanyang mukha at nanginig siya sa alaala ng kanilang pagtatalik.

She stayed silent, at halos ayaw niyang huminga para huwag maistorbo ang pagtulog ni Mark. Hesitantly, she turned her head to look at him. Her jaw dropped open when she saw him very much awake with a gentle smile on his face. She flushed. She turned her head away from his intent eyes.

“Oh, no. Look at me.” He tugged her closer and tilted her head back to him. Nakapikit ang mga mata niya at hindi niya mapigilang mapahalakhak.

Napasinghap si Marivic at nanlaki ang nakabukas na mga mata nang bigla itong kumubabaw sa kanya. Naramdaman niya ang paninigas nito, nudging at her opening. He smiled at her devilishly.

Goodness, he still wants me! Akala niya ay

mawawalan na ito ng interes sa kanya pagkatapos siya nitong maikama. She was obviously wrong.

Before she could say anything, he entered her. Her mouth opened when she felt the fullness of his manhood. He rocked her slowly without breaking their eye contact. “I love looking at you when you flush and writhe from passion.”

She moaned softly while catching up with his pace. She kissed his throat, savoring the taste of him. Narinig niya ang pag-ungol ni Mark. She liked the reaction she got, kaya pinag-ibayo niya ang paghaplos sa dibdib nito. She nipped at his skin while he pumped into her. Nakagat niya ito sa balikat nang marating niya ang tuktok ng kaluwalhatian. He joined her with her name on his lips.

“What a great way to say good morning,” anito at kinagat-kagat ang kanyang tainga.

“Walang duda. I like it.” She giggled underneath him.

After their pleasant touse in bed, magkasabay silang nag-shower. Marivic felt sore but it was worth it. The waves of pleasure was beyond her comprehension. Wala siyang pagsisisi na ibinigay niya ang sarili sa isang estranghero. Her ultimate lover.