**They Call Me Breathless**

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**Chapter 1: The Stage**  
  
Taking a deep breath I pushed through the curtains and jumped up the few stairs to the stage. Striding confidently to the mic, I signaled Val to begin the drum line for the first song of our set. Swaying my hips to the beat, my voice rang out clear in the crowded club. God, I love my life.  
  
Tonight our setlist included selections from Ariana Grande, Rhianna, Pink and Lord. Dancing across the stage, the crowd was really into the beat. It was easy to get caught up in the atmosphere, all the people dancing, their bodies swaying, moving rhythmically to the tones I sang. We chose our list carefully, making sure that people would get nice and thirsty from all the heavy dancing with our upbeat songs, then give them breaks to go get more drinks with deliberately timed slower songs. Strategic and kinda manipulative? Sure. Effective? You bet it is.  
  
Since I started singing at this club, all my nights have been packed. You can gain quite the name for yourself singing for one of the hottest clubs in town. If you're into that kinda life, I honestly wasn't sure yet what kind of life I wanted permanently. So, for now at least, I liked my anonymity. When I was here working, they called be Breathless. Yeah, I'm a Dick Tracy fan and I figured it was meant to be as I got my start in this business singing jazz. That was actually how the club owner, Nicholas, initially found me. It was two years ago now that I was singing in a little Jazz bar on the outskirts of the city, barely scraping by. Now, I'm on top of the world, or at least the part of the world that I had carved out for myself. And for me, that was just as good.  
  
Belting out the last verse of Ariana Grande, Dangerous Woman, I saw Nicholas standing on his VIP balcony overlooking the dance floor with a clear view of the stage. I could even see the glint in his deep green eyes through the haze of heat rising off the dozens of bodies intertwined below him. Meeting his stare, he raised his martini glass to toast my performance, before continuing to watch the show.  
  
After we finished, loud techno and EDM filled my ears. It was getting late and the best way to keep the night owls happy was an alcohol and drug addled rave. I loved it all. The way the lights danced over the curves of the bodies before me. Men and women alike, muscle sinew straining with the rapid movements and skin glistening with sweat. I thrived in this world.  
  
Stepping off the stage, I followed my bandmates to our reserved back room to rest and change before we had to go mingle on the dance floor. I collapsed on the large sofa as we all caught our breath from the performance. Pop nights were hard, just from the physical exertion the songs required. Luckily, we knew the best way to wind down after a hard night.  
  
"Shots!" Valorie, our drummer and my best girlfriend shouted as the entered the room carrying a tray of lemon drops. She was a little older than me, just turning 23 last month. She was followed closely by a girl I had seen at some of the shows before. I think she was a bar tender at another club we went to, she looked very familiar. Raffi, our keyboard player, eyed her up immediately and began chatting with her as they both took their chosen shot glasses. Raffi was a sultry 22 year old looker, with curly brown hair, deep tan skin and hazel eyes.  
  
"Hell yeah!" Dillon, our base guitarist and Val's on and off boy toy shouted, striding forward taking shots in both hands. Dillon was a picture of an emo kid, with black hair falling over his eyes, black chipped nails and black skinny jeans that hugged his 25 year old frame.  
  
Niko, lead guitarist and my best friend, plopped down next to me, placing his hand on my thigh. Niko has tousled brown hair, light brown eyes and honey skin. "What do you think babe? Going to join us tonight?" he teased, giving me his best crooked smile. I gazed into his eyes, Niko and I were in the foster system together for as long as I can remember. We even ran away to live on the streets when things got too rough before we aged out. Celebrating our joint 21st birthday a few months ago (we're only three days apart in age), it was finally feeling like we were leaving those torn up lives behind. Normally, I didn't drink when I was working, even after sets. I have to make sure my assets are in top shape, and for me in addition to T&A that meant treating my throat and vocal cords right.  
  
"Fine, but only a few rounds or you know it'll fuck up my voice for tomorrow." I chided, reaching forward to grab a shot. I probably would have said no, but Vodka is my go to and this is one of my favorites.  
  
Toasting to another great night, we slammed back the first round. After the second, and third, my fingertips began to tingle. Laughter and voices rang around me as the band began to relax. I could feel Niko pushing me back on the couch, his lean but muscled frame trapping me between his arms.  
  
"How about it babe? I think you need a reward for relaxing enough to party with us? It's been a while..." He let his sentence drop off before leaning down to capture my ear gently between his teeth. Turning my head to grant him better access, he placed sloppy kisses down the side of my neck and over my shoulder. Opening my eyes I hadn't realized I closed from the sensation, I spotted Dillon and Val going at it on the coffee table. Her tight leggings were pushed down to her ankles and he had her bent over grasping the opposite edge of the circular tabletop.  
  
My mind already foggy from the alcohol and dehydration that came from such an intense show, I took their forms in with a sharp intake of air. Val liked to be taken in front of people, something that she had been happy to show me the appeal and excitement in. Niko worked his way up to my ear again, his hand snaking under my short sequin dress.  
  
"Look at her Bea, look at her taking it from behind in front of us like the little slut she is." His fingers fumbled with the edge of my panties, tracing the line where they met my inner thigh. I groaned beneath him. "She wants us to watch her, Dillon too." He whispered, my eyes flickering to Dillon I realized he was intently staring my my exposed thighs.  
  
Niko hitched my dress up further, fully exposing my skin to the hot air and my black lace panties to the hungry eyes of Dillon, who audibly groaned, grabbing onto Val's hips harder. Niko's hand found its way under the thin fabric and slowly, clumsily traced my folds. I moaned, wanting more.  
  
"Look at him babe, he wants to see you. See what I can do to you with just my hands." His fingers began to make soft circles over my clit, before dipping down into my sex, sliding two fingers in causing my back to arch into his body. "See what I can do just with my fingers." He continued with a chuckle, taking the lobe of my ear between his teeth once more. Tracing his now wet fingers back to my clit he moved them in small circles, causing the room to spin. I closed my eyes and held onto his back, riding the waves of pleasure that his fingers were working deep inside me. Suddenly he stopped, I audibly whimpered.  
  
"Keep your eyes open love, or you're going to miss the show." He murmured darkly. I opened my eyes as his fingers made their tantalizingly slow journey back inside me, only to draw the same path to my clit. I took in Dillon's gaze, hungrily watching Nikos fingers pleasure me with renewed vigor. My body arched off the couch of its own accord as his fingers dipped back into me once again, he was bringing me higher and higher each time his fingers put pressure on my clit, only to delay my end when his fingers entered me. Damn he was good at this.  
  
Dillon was now pumping into Val with everything he had and her cries of pleasure filled the room. Hazily, I saw Raffi sitting on one of the back chairs getting head from the female groupie I saw Val escort in earlier. Raffi had one hand on the girls head, the other taking a drag of a cigarette, his eyes fixed on Val.  
  
Following Raffi's gaze, I could see why. Using one arm to support herself on the table, she had her crop top pulled above her breasts as was frantically pinching and pulling at her nipple with her free hand. Her brows were furrowed in concentration but her eyes locked onto mine as I felt Niko's fingers enter me one last time. I was so close, and meeting Val's eyes I could tell she was too.  
  
Drawing up to my clit, Niko pressed down, hard. I unraveled beneath him. Crying at my own release, I heard Val's squeals reach a new octave as she clenched around Dillon's cock. Grunting, he pumped into her a few more times, riding out her orgasm as her upper body collapsed on the table. His movements stilled as he found his own end, sinking to his knees on top of her.  
  
I closed my eyes and focused on Niko's fingers, still making lazy circles over my clit. The sensation was too much as I moved to still his wrist. He chucked in my ear, "See Bea? This is why you should party with us more often."  
  
Nodding, because words were beyond my capabilities at this moment, he captured my lips in a quick kiss before going over to switch places with a now satisfied Raffi. The chick didn't seem to mind, this is what she was here for. To be part of the action. Resting until my breath calmed, I stood on wobbly legs, part post orgasm, part coming back from being a little tipsy.  
  
Glancing back I winked at Niko who had his own pants around his ankles as the groupie worked her magic on him. He winked back before letting his head fall back with a grown. We had each other's backs in more ways than one and we both knew how to play this game, and we played it well. We were never a couple, and certainly not in love, but were there for whatever comfort each of us needed, when we needed it most. He understood that and I loved our no strings attached flings.  
  
Heading to the bathroom, I fixed my hair, dress, and makeup preparing myself to go out into the crowd to fulfill the second part of our duty tonight. After each show, we had to spend an hour or two mingling with the general population of the club. Deep down, I loved the attention that my role as lead singer brought. So with a final glance, I smiled at my reflection and headed out to the packed club.  
  
As I said, God I love my life.