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Deseo

by P. Kristen Enos

Preview:

Deseo

The Story of Susan and Maya

The Novella Version

By

P. Kristen Enos

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Prologue

The muffled melodic voice of Celine Dion suddenly coming from the kitchen caused Susan to look up from her book curiously. She glanced at the clock and saw that it was almost six-thirty and wondered who could be calling at this time on a Saturday evening. She jumped from the couch and rushed to see if she could fish the phone out of her purse before the call went to voice mail. By the time she reached the kitchen counter, the phone was silent, showing that she hadn't made it.

Still, she pulled out the phone and saw that the caller had been Tom. He was an old college friend who only called her when he was between serious girlfriends but needed a date for functions he had to attend for his law firm. She actually didn't mind since it meant an opportunity for dressing up, great food and maybe some dancing.

Instead of waiting for a voice mail that was probably in the process of being recorded, she immediately pressed the call button.

Tom responded right away. "Hey, Susie!" he greeted. "Did I catch you at a bad time?"

She smirked at his opening words that never changed over the years. "No, not at all. Just having a quiet evening with a good book. How are things?"

"Pretty good. Hey, I just found out that the firm bought a table at a fancy fundraising dinner downtown next month. It's Saturday the 8th. But, well, it's a little different than the usual dinners. -- "

The hesitation in the otherwise self-assured, almost cocky man got her attention.

“ – It’s for some organization that does AIDS and Breast Cancer work. Apparently, we’re doing it as a goodwill thing. And Max thinks there may be some very rich clients that we would attract if we showed that we supported the event. But he did say that if you can’t handle seeing a fag in a dress, then you probably shouldn’t go.” He added with a chuckle, “I’m not thrilled about the idea myself, but I’ll be fine as long as they keep their distance, which won’t be a problem if you’re there.”

Susan thought about it for a moment. She really didn’t know any gay people so the idea of going to an event full of them was an unusual proposition indeed. Her silence must have made him more nervous since he asked, “You still there?”

“Um, yes, I was just trying to determine how I’d feel about attending such an event. I mean, I’m for supporting good causes, but – you’re right – it might be a little awkward to see something like that. I’m glad you warned me.”

“Oh... so does that mean you don’t want to go? Hey,” he said in the spontaneous cheerfulness that added to his charisma as a lawyer, “I’ve been told they’re serving some great food with an open bar. There’s also supposed to be a live band but, well, I think that dancing would be too weird... And if you just can’t take it anymore, we can arrange a signal to leave early. I can always come up with an excuse, I’m a lawyer after all,” he reassured her with a chuckle.

She smiled and said, “Well, I guess I have nothing to worry about then. I don’t think I’ll have problems with it, so you’ve got a deal.”

“Great!”

Chapter 1

The live band managed to get a large crowd on the dance floor by its third song. Susan sighed inwardly as she watched couples in various gender combinations bounce around in fun in their tuxedos and fancy gowns. She wanted to dance herself, but she knew Tom was far more interested in commanding the attention of his coworkers and their dates with lively jokes.

Though still early in the evening, she had stopped paying attention half an hour ago to the chat, limiting herself to responding with a pleasant smile to the occasional look from someone around her. She was smart enough to keep up with the lawyers' conversations and jokes, but she just wasn't interested in the subject matter of political issues and scandals.

She realized other tables that still had people sitting down were filled with very lively conversations and laughter. She couldn't help but wonder what the other party attendees talked about.

Susan felt her smile falter as she once again felt his hand press against the back of her bare shoulder. But she immediately chastised herself for being a little hypocritical given why she was here in the first place.

She and Tom had first met when they both lived in the dorms in their first year of college. Even before she really got to know him, she was attracted to his energetic and smooth charm. She had finally gotten to know him when he started to date her roommate. But as expected of college romances, when he ended the romance, Susan was already dating a friend of his. And though there were periods where they had both been single at the same time, he never pursued her romantically, which affirmed her disappointment that he just wasn't attracted to her.

And as the years passed, even though they didn't see each other as much since he moved to the city for his job at the law firm, they remained casual friends. Then about five years ago, he called her out of the blue and mentioned that he needed a casual date for an event at his firm. At first, she was thrilled at what she hoped was a disguised attempt to start something romantic. But it was clear as the evening went on that he remained true to his voiced intention of keeping the event casual between them. Susan quickly chastised herself for being too hopeful and settled into her role of the pleasant date.

So when Tom called her up again about half a year later with a similar offer, she looked at the invites as an opportunity for a nice night out.

With that experienced mindset, Susan didn't think any further about the latest invite other than an opportunity to buy an outfit that was far fancier than her usual attire of simple dresses or skirts. However, as the night drew nearer, she did start to be concerned about her own comfort level regarding the event in question. The idea of being confronted with lecherous advances by manly women in tuxedos with cigars didn't appeal to her. But instead of backing out – which she wouldn't have done anyway since she always kept her word -- her curiosity couldn't help but be piqued.

She figured that as long as she dressed as feminine as possible and Tom never left her side, she would be safe. At the least, she knew it would be an unforgettable night. She just had to remind herself not to stare too much if she came across a man who wore an evening gown.

However, the reality of the event was just as unforgettable. Ever since she had first entered the lobby of the elegant and grand hotel, her gaze darted everywhere, absorbing all the details of the reality of a black tie fundraiser for breast cancer and AIDS. Her breath was taken away when they entered the beautifully decorated and populated ballroom.

Yes, she saw butch women in tuxedos and men in evening gowns. But they were dressed to impress, not to be a parody of the opposite gender. And there were far more people who were dressed in very stylish attire for their own gender, even if they seemed to be in same sex pairings.

At first, Susan did feel a little nervous, not wanting to be out of Tom's proximity, occasionally clinging to his arm – something she usually never did on their previous dates. Yet, as the evening went on, her comfort level increased. She no longer felt the need to prove her heterosexuality to people who honestly didn't seem to care. And in fact, she realized that a majority of the event attendees were in heterosexual pairings. By the time they had sat down to eat, she was finally able to relax and enjoy the incredible food and wine as well as the aura of a crowd that clearly had a lot of money to contribute to a good cause.

Unfortunately, Tom didn't seem to relax at all as the evening progressed. When Susan had stopped clinging to him, he would start to reach for her as he spoke to everyone he knew related to his firm. He finally just draped his arm across the back of her shoulder as if it was his expected right to be there.

Even though they had only been there for about two hours, she was becoming a little tired of his constant presence. Once, in an attempt to get a little personal space, Susan walked out to the lobby, which had clusters of event attendees. But Tom was right behind her, apparently not willing to risk even a moment of appearing alone.

Resigned to spending the evening as a mere observer of the true fun to be had at this event, Susan resorted to watching the dancing crowd.

Her gaze occasionally lingered on a gorgeous woman with long black hair in a strapless, short red dress that was wrapped tightly around her curves. Her skin was light brown, indicating that she was probably Latina. The dancing woman seemed to be