

She's Out There Bad by Dorrie Williams-Wheeler Web Excerpt 1

Before I knew it, every Friday I was at Dark Knight with Candy taking Vicodin and posing for pictures. Then I started posing by myself. Soon afterwards I started posing with other models, both male and female. Sure, I had always wanted to be a model, but this was not what I'd had in mind. But the money was so sweet—\$1,500 here, \$2,000 there. Candy had made the “big jump,” so anytime I posed with her the pay was much more because she was making a name for herself in the adult film industry.

The money helped me buy clothes and drugs. There were so many easy doctors in L.A. All you had to do is meet them at the right time and at the right place and they would write you prescriptions for anything that you wanted. The doctor Candy and I used was an oral surgeon who prescribed Valium and Vicodin based on dental work and oral surgery that we never had.

Now, granted, I will be the first to tell you that Vicodin and Valium are not the most exciting drugs in the world. But they can have a numbing effect that softens the blows inflicted by the world. Vicodin and Valium helped me to cope with my poor decisions, and with my secret heartbreak about not yet seeing Dante. Sometimes I used sleeping pills to help me sleep at night.

I was so immersed in my new life that I had stopped calling Dante pretty much all together. It was so stupid to me. Here I was all the way in California, only a few hours away, and he had made

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no effort to see me. I knew he probably was having sex with someone else. My heart was hurt about how things had gone down, but I didn't let it break me.

November came around and Dante was finally done with training. He expressed a desire to see me. It was the week of Thanksgiving and he had taken some leave time off from the military. Rather than spending the money for a plane ticket home to Tennessee to see his family, he invited me to San Diego to visit with him. I was finished with school for the holiday break, so a trip to see Dante was totally in my schedule.

Dante lived in an apartment close to the naval base with two other guys. At his request, I made arrangements to stay at a hotel so that we would be guaranteed our privacy. I booked a luxury suite at the Marriot Courtyard Hotel. The Internet map directions that I had printed from my laptop provided me with perfect directions to Dante's apartment.

Around 7 p.m. two days before Thanksgiving I pulled up in front of his apartment. I was so nervous. I opened my make-up compact to give myself a fresh once over. My eyes shined, and my golden bronze lipstick made my full lips look extra luscious.

A knock on the window startled me. It was Dante.

When I first laid eyes on Dante, I fell in love with him all over again. I instantly felt safe with him, and I so regretted my actions of

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the last few months. I so badly wanted to share with him the pain I was feeling on the inside, but I couldn't tell him about the drugs or the sex pictures. He would never understand or forgive me.

I wanted us to be Dante and Shaylene again, and I got out of the car and hugged him real tight. At that moment, I wanted nothing more than to leave everything behind and marry him, and just be with him forever.

"Girl, you look good, you smell good . . . let me take a look at you," he said, taking a step back to admire me.

"You look good, too." I was only half telling the truth. He looked a little rough around the edges, like he hadn't been keeping himself up as much as he had in the past. His hair was nappy and short, the little sporty waves were gone. He was dressed rather low key in a dark green Abercrombie T-shirt and a pair of khaki pants. He wasn't the fashion plate he once was. He placed his arm around my waist as we walked into the apartment. His roommates were sitting on the couch.

"Hey, Kevin, Brad," Dante said, "this is my girlfriend from home, Shaylene."

They both waved. Brad, a white guy with glasses, gave me an awkward look. I was used to getting awkward looks from white people who usually couldn't tell if I was mixed. But Brad gave me an "I know you from somewhere look" that quite frankly made me

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feel very awkward. Kevin was a dark-skinned black guy who looked like he might be about 18 or 19 years old.

Dante led me to his bedroom, which looked like a college dorm. A twin bed sat on the far wall underneath a window and next to a small nightstand. The cluttered desk held a computer.

My picture was nowhere to be seen.

We sat in his bedroom for a couple of hours just talking and looking at each other. It seems that we were constantly interrupted by Brad telling Dante that he had a phone call. In a move that I saw as extremely rude, instead of just telling Brad to tell the callers that he was busy or had company, Dante took every call.

After returning from the fourth phone call I had to have a few answers.

“You’re a popular guy, huh?” I asked.

“People just call me all the time.”

“Girls?” I asked.

“Guys, girls, people I met in the Navy.”

“So are you seeing anyone?” I hadn’t been a saint myself but I needed to know if Dante was seeing another woman.

“I thought me and you were still together. Why would you ask me a question like that?”

Good answer, but I hardly believed him.

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“What about you? I notice you had Louis Vuitton luggage in your brand-new car, nice diamond earrings, somebody's been lacing you up. I didn't know retail paid so well.”

I had purposely tried to tone down my appearance, but he had noticed the small luxuries I didn't hide.

“I told you I have a little weekend job at a boutique.” I couldn't bear to tell him the truth.

“So, Shaylene, you're telling me that you haven't been with any men since we were together this past June before I left for the Navy?”

Dante could always tell when I was lying. I hadn't seriously been having sex with any men, and that incident in the bathroom at the club didn't count.

“Dante, I have been working. I have been trying to get with you but you never had time for me. And you? I know you have been messing around with someone. You can tell me the truth. You don't have to lie to protect my feelings.”

Dante wasn't stupid enough to tell me the truth.

“Shay, who am I going to be with?” he asked. “You are the only one for me. My hand has been my best friend, for real. And look at those ugly, horny bastards I live with. I wouldn't even bring any women over here.”

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We went back and forth on the fidelity subject and then we started kissing. As things intensified, I knew I didn't want us to have sex with his roommates in the next room. I reminded Dante of my hotel room.

"Look, meet me at the hotel," I said. "I'm at the Marriott in room 118."