

A close-up photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a dark navy blue suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a dark tie. He is adjusting his tie with his right hand. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with soft lighting.

Bonus Scene

Chasing
DESIRE

USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR
SCARLETT AVERY

About This Bonus Scene

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Scarlett Avery

Context For This Secret Chapter:

This was originally part of chapter 2. This scene happens right after Ethan steps out of the conference room to give Ashley and Benjamin some privacy to speak to their American client calling from Singapore.

Since I removed this chapter from the revised book, I also removed Greg as a character, but I thought this interaction was as perfect as secret.

Enjoy!

Scarlett

Ethan

*Ethan defends Delilah against a co-worker
who's putting her down*

I'm leaning against a wall not too far from the conference room. From this vantage point, I'm sure I'll see Delilah walk by. I hope it happens before the meeting resumes.

I lower my eyes back to my screen and force myself to focus on something other than the curvy Texan.

"Ethan, mate."

I look up.

"How are you?" Greg Bamrick approaches me.

I don't think I've seen him since Delilah started at Harrow Sloane Arts.

Where Benjamin closes potential buyers with his savvy knowledge of art as a curator and his sophisticated talk, Greg is the definition of your ultimate smooth operator. He'll never be mistaken for a model. He disarms his victims—rich women—to find a way into their purse and ultimately to their credit card.

I push myself off the wall and take a step forward to greet him. "Greg. I haven't seen you in weeks. Where have you been, mate? From your dark complexion, I can only assume you were away." I extend a hand.

He shakes it. "I was."

"Well, that explains it. Where to?"

"Brazil," he says. "Three weeks basking in the sun. I went with my best mate. We landed in Rio, but he

hooked up with a hot babe who lured us to Bahia. Ethan, it's like freaking paradise."

Brazil is one place I long to visit. "Is Bahia far from Rio de Janeiro?"

"It's twenty-two hours north via car."

I whistle.

"Lucky for us, Rafaela had a set of wheels," he says.

"Rafaela?"

"My mate's hot Brazilian hookup-slash-shag."

"Got it."

"They met while she was visiting London relatives here a few months ago. He kept in touch. My mate declared we needed to go visit. I was more than willing to follow."

"I see."

"Bahia has the most incredible beaches I've ever seen. In my opinion, not even Thailand comes close."

"That sounds like a dream."

"It is. We found out while we were there, Bahia is where Brazilians go on holiday. The best beaches and places to stay are a well-kept secret. It's this little hidden gem amid tropical greenery. You have to know where to look. Without Rafaela, we would have been another pair of clueless tourists. I didn't do a thing other than eat, drink, and work on my tan." Greg pulls open the top of his shirt as proof.

"So, it was a relaxing holiday," I say.

"Almost." He chuckles. "The women there are delicious. David was set with Rafaela. I, on the other hand, was single as can be. Let me tell you, Brazilian

women are fucking wild. It's impossible to resist them.” He says that last part in a rather low voice.

“Brazilian women are legendary for their beauty and curvaceous bodies.”

“They're absolutely gorgeous. Lucky for me there were a lot who were more on the slender side.”

“Right.” *Slender women don't hold a candle next to a full-figured beauty, mate.* “This is your first day back?”

“It is indeed. I'm headed to the kitchen to grab my second cup of coffee of the day to jolt some energy back into my body. I'm still jetlagged.”

“I bet you are. You traveled from the other side of the planet. How long is the flight?”

“Eleven hours. I slept the whole way back.”

Wow. “I don't blame you.”

“As exhausting as it is, I'd do it again in a heartbeat. The women there are worth it. Everything else is just a perk.”

Note to self. Must put Brazil on my travel plans.

“You're here for a meeting with Ashley and a few other musketeers?” Greg changes the subject. “I hear something big is coming down the pike?” He flashes me a complicit grin.

I'm sure it's an important meeting. Why else would Ashley ask me to come back when I was here a few days ago?

“I am,” I say. “Ashley and Benjamin had to take an urgent call so I'm just passing time in the corridor waiting for them to be done. I'm keeping myself busy by answering a few messages.”

Greg's eyes shift from side to side. He turns around and looks over his shoulder. It's as if he wants to make sure no one else is in earshot. "Have you met the new girl?"

"Delilah or Katrina?"

"I quite like the Canadian girl. I think we connected. I can already tell she's into me."

Right.

"She's a bit too much on the athletic side for me, but I'd rock her world for one night."

I hope Katrina has more sense than that.

"I'm talking about the American with the funny accent."

I beg your pardon? Her accent is charming.

"I was surprised to see her this morning when I arrived. I totally forgot we had someone taking over Samantha's spot for the summer while she's exploring the American art scene in New York City. It's good to be the owner's little girl." Greg smirks. "She just had to snap her fingers and voila, Daddy dearest found a replacement."

Greg is right.

Samantha was itching to spend time in Manhattan, and her father made it happen in the blink of an eye. When Ashley mentioned she was participating in an employee exchange program with Drawing Room Arts—a prominent New York City gallery—I expected the American candidate to be standoffish, like so many women I've met during my travels to the Big Apple. I understand it has to do with the go-go-go mentality so common amongst the residents of the City that Never

Sleeps, but this British lad prefers his women with less of an edge.

I also expected the candidate to be a bit body-obsessed, like so many New Yorkers I've met who would never dare to eat a full sandwich for fear of gaining a pound. I was quite pleased to see Delilah didn't fall in either of those categories. Her body checks off all the right boxes on my attraction meter. The fact she has such a friendly, pleasant, and welcoming personality is a major bonus.

"To answer your question, yes, I've met Delilah," I say. "She's lovely."

"She seems nice enough, I guess. I only chatted with her briefly before I headed to my office."

Nice? "She has a warm personality. She's lively, bubbly, and she has a great sense of humor." I sound like I'm campaigning on Delilah's behalf.

"At least she's not as old as the other women working here. Those girls are either in their late twenties or well into their thirties. In other words, well past their prime." Greg says that with such disdain.

Rich, coming from a guy who's pushing thirty-six.

"That said, the American chick is still way too old for me," he says.

"I doubt she's much more than twenty-five years old."

"My point exactly. Past twenty, women become mouthy and they start thinking on their own."

What a crime that is.

"That's not a good combination. I like them malleable."

Translation: Too naïve to know you're not worth it.

“When they’re younger, it’s much easier to satisfy them because they’re not too demanding. You always come off better than most awkward teenage boys they’ve dated, which makes you look like a bloody hero. That’s more my cup of tea.”

I guess when you don’t have much more to offer, it’s best to aim as low as possible. If you don’t, you’d never get any pussy.

“You’re entitled to your opinion, Greg. As far as I’m concerned, an eighteen-year-old or even a twenty-year-old is of little interest to me.”

“You like them broken in.” He smirks. “A little used. You like it when her pussy has already been stretched to the max.”

I glare at him in disbelief.

I make it a point to avoid speaking to Greg as much as possible. His views are more fitting of a wanker stuck in an archaic era than someone his age.

“Even if she was in a more appropriate age range, she’s still a little too... how can I say this...” Greg pauses, shifts his eyes to the ceiling for a fraction of a second and back down to me. “Her arse is way too big for my liking and she’s carrying way too much up here. Those huge melons would choke me.” He gestures to his chest. “I wouldn’t know what to do with the rest of her either.”

Of course, you wouldn't, idiot.

His last comment is reprehensible.

“I have to disagree.” I don’t have an explanation for coming to Delilah’s defense so vehemently other than

she brings out my most basic possessive instincts—and I don't even know her yet.

“Have you seen her from behind?” Greg widens his hands far apart.

Trust me, I should be arrested for the way I've been ogling her fine ass. “I try to be as respectful as possible when I look at a woman.” Greg is the last person who needs to know I have a thing for Delilah.

“You're such a gentleman, Ethan.” There's that smirk again. “If you ask me, there's way too much of her to handle. When she's naked, everything must jiggle.”

Unless she's made of marble, that's normal, you asshole.

“I like my girls to look like models with perfect bodies. This whole *plus size is beautiful* fad is pure rubbish. It's the kind of crap men who don't have a hope in hell to get laid grasp onto in order to get some action. When a woman lets herself go to that point, it's time for you to move on to a newer, skinnier model. It's too bad, really.” Greg shakes his head. “She has a gorgeous face and her eyes are arresting. If she wasn't carrying so much weight, she'd be one nice piece of arse.”

How daft can this guy be?

I seriously consider flattening this idiot's nose, but I choose to exert self-control. “Greg, you're missing the boat here when it comes to women.” I'm not in the mood to lecture anyone this morning, but this guy is smoking some bad crack.

“Are you telling me you like big women?” He asks that as if it's the most inconceivable thing on the planet.

“You can have any woman you want, mate. You’ve been a hotshot since you were sixteen. Why settle? Fuck, mate, you’re not even thirty yet. Wake up.”

Did he just say settle? This guy is even more of a wanker than I gave him credit for.

Delilah’s ravishing body is what my wet dreams are made of. A full-figured girl is my ultimate fantasy. Nothing compares to fucking a curvaceous woman with big heavy tits and a generous—and well-padded—ass to make me lose all common sense.

I let a low growl escape before speaking. “Not that I think this is the place for this kind of conversation because...” I pause to make sure no one is coming our way. “One, it’s gauche. Two, Delilah could hear you and that would be highly inappropriate. And rude. And callous. And insensitive. Three, you would hurt her feelings. And four, Ashley would fire your ass since she’s also a big girl.”

“No need to take offense, mate. There’s plenty of pussy of all sizes to go around.”

That’s his response?

Unbelievable.

“If you like them thick, knock yourself out. I’ll stick to skinny chicks.” Greg shrugs.

He doesn’t get it.

I narrow my eyes at him. “I should walk away right now and leave your sorry arse standing here, but before I do, let me educate you.” My tone is condescending. I take a step closer to make sure he hears me because I don’t want my voice to carry. “I know I can have any woman I want. And I do. Always. I much prefer

women with too much breast to hold, soft hips to grip, and a pillowy lush ass to cushion my wild thrusts. When I slap her ass, I *want* it to jiggle. I don't go for women who are skin and bones because I hate—and I mean, hate with a passion—feeling like I'm fucking a board.”

He considers me for a few seconds and then nods. “I get it. Our taste varies.”

As if that's the conclusion I was looking for. “Right.” I need to strike up a conversation with someone else in this office before I strangle this guy with my own bare hands. “Listen, mate, I—” I don't have the chance to finish my sentence because the door to the conference room flies open.

Both Greg and I shift our attention down the corridor.

Ashley pops her head out, smiles, and waves at me. “I'm so sorry again, Ethan.”

“Don't worry about it, Ashley. These things happen.”

“You're a sweetheart. I'm glad Greg is keeping you company.”

I wouldn't quite phrase it that way. “Indeed.”

“We're done with our call,” she says. “Come back inside. It's time to kick off this meeting.”

“I like the sound of that.” I look at Greg. I don't have anything more to say to this arrogant bastard, but I was brought up in a way that makes it difficult for me to be impolite. And it's just not the British way. “Have a good day, Greg.” There's no point in adding more.

“Ethan”—he slaps my shoulder a few times—“it was great catching up with you.”

I wish I could say the same.

* * *

**Thank you so much for reading Ethan, Delilah,
and Xander's story.**



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