

Central Park was streaming with people clamoring to enjoy an unseasonably cool Sunday in July and it was just like I imagined. There where people sunbathing; playing with their pets; jogging; rollerblading, and just strolling along like I was at the moment as I headed to meet John. I was in awe of how green and lush the landscape was compared to the cement and brick metropolis that surrounded it.

Once John found out that I hadn't checked it off my 'things to do in NY list', he insisted that we come here this weekend. I spotted him walking towards me looking like a college student, down to the backpack he sported. His golden hued hair was longer than usual, and was lightly wind tousled and he sported his signature sleeveless tee this time in white with red shorts and a pair of throwback Jordan's.

Jordan's?

He smiled at me and I could only imagine I didn't look much different with my hair pulled back into a high bun, a snug white wife beater and coral colored shorts that stopped mid thigh and all white old school Adidas. We walked into an easy hug having spent so much time together lately that we were more than familiar. I pointed to his sneakers

"Nice kicks!" I joked.

He glanced down quizzically at his choice in footwear. "What? Are you kidding? These are classic!"

I just shook my head as we linked arms and set off to stake our claim to a blanket sized plot on the big lawn. We settled on a spot that was relatively less crowded and I watched as he set up the blanket, two pillows, a large thermos, hummus, crackers and chips with onion dip.

"Wow, you are really prepared! I'm impressed. What's in the thermos?"

He shot me a sly grin and handed it over for my inspection, watching as I opened it sniffed and tasted the mystery drink.

"Yum, is this Riesling?" I took another sip.

"Very good Ms. Spencer. You're a lush after my own heart." He teased.

I threw the top of the canister at him.

We spent the afternoon relaxing together. Sunbathing with a good book is a very much underrated experience. Well, partial sun because it had grown considerably overcast as we enjoyed our picnic, which was probably what contributed to the cooler weather. I reclined back on a pillow slightly perpendicular to John while using his torso as a foot rest. My oversized Channel shades concealed the fact that I had stopped reading the hilarious Abe Lincoln Vampire Hunter, and was watching him instead. He was intently covering each page of an old National Geographic edition.

Nerd!

A very handsome nerd though, and I could watch him all day. It was so cute the way his eyebrows furrowed and lips pursed slightly as he read. I found myself wondering how his lips tasted. Just then he looked at me and I pretended to be just looking up from my book and he shot me a wink.

Could he tell I was staring at him?

I flashed him a smile.

So what if I was looking?

Especially since I caught him studying me when he thought I wasn't looking. Often.

After a while he closed and pulled his aviators down.

"So how's your book?" He asked as he grabbed one of my bare feet and began to knead and rub.

Ah that feels good!

"It's really not bad. I was skeptical when Donna told me that she was reading it, but it is funny and holds your interest." I raved.

He continued to massage my thankfully pedicured foot.

"I don't know, but I'm having a hard time picturing our sixteenth president hunting and killing vampires in his spare time. Vampires?" He shook his head with speculation.

I laughed in agreement.

“I know! I did too, but I’m telling you it’s crazy because it’s mostly a true story so it almost makes you want to believe the parts that are farfetched.”

He didn’t seem swayed.

“Well, how about I just take your word for it because I don’t plan to read it.” I pulled my foot away and waved my other foot at him for attention.

“Or, how about I read it to you?” I suggested.

John cocked his head to the side as he tugged my foot lightly pulling me off my pillow.

“I think I like that. That’s a creative compromise Ms. Spencer.”

I giggled as I repositioned myself on my pillow and began reading to him about Abe Lincoln meeting Edgar Allen Poe in New Orleans.

Just as I finished the chapter I was reading a splatter of water hit my book.

I knew it smelled like rain.

I looked at John who was wiping a drop from his nose and then we both scrambled to pack up our garden party.

The downpour hit just as we were scurrying out of the park. John grabbed my hand and I followed him as he ran a few blocks west of the park to his building.

“You can wait it out with me until it clears up.” He offered.

I nodded in silent agreement at his suggestion. I was soaked and my bun came loose somewhere between the pouring rain and the running. His building was older but it was very well maintained. We took the large ornate wooden stairs up to his second floor apartment and I leaned up against him involuntarily for warmth at the air conditioned hallway. He opened his door and pulled me into the apartment with him. I wrapped my arms around myself as he put down his back pack.

“Let’s get you warmed up. OK?” He rubbed my arms before he disappeared down a hallway, I assumed to his bedroom.

I loved his place. It had a totally dark wood, Sherlock Holmes without the clutter feel to it. There was a large bay window in the living room that was surrounded by floor to ceiling

bookcases on either side. His sectional was light brown micro suede that went perfectly with the tone of his wooden floors. I walked over to one of the bookcases to marvel at his book collection but a glass door at the bottom caught my attention. It housed a record player accompanied by a rather large record collection. Elton John, The Beatles, Neil Diamond, Michael Jackson, Dionne Warwick and Burt Baccarat, Led Zeppelin, Motown Greats, The Big Chill Soundtrack. There had to have been well over 100 records. I kept flipping through and stopped when I spotted the Isley Brothers.

Yes!

I turned on the sound system and gently dropped the needle on the groove for the first track.

"You find something you like?" I heard John shuffle back into the room while I was loading the album, and turned around to face him with glee as the soulful ballad filled the room.

He stood there shirtless, his wet hair disheveled and holding a big T-shirt and towel for me. I was captivated by the definition of his body. He wasn't bulky, but chiseled. Every muscle was defined, even the hard lines that led to his hips stood out. He didn't have a six pack, he had a ten pack.

The look in his hazel eyes was unmistakable as he looked me up and down and I realized what I must look like. My hair hanging in wet spirals around my T-shirt that was soaked, and plastered to my body revealing my black lace bra, and all of my curves. I flushed red hot even more aware that I was now aroused so my nipples were probably peaking thru my top. I stood wordlessly as he walked over to me holding up the accessories to get me dry.

"You must be freezing," he observed. '

Every step he took closer to me made my heart beat faster and faster. He thought I was cold.

Not quite.