

A Secret Match

By Kelli A. Wilkins

www.KelliWilkins.com

A Secret Match

This time, it's all about Everett... and he's got a big problem

Everett Kinkade is a world-famous professional wrestler and the sexy heartthrob of millions of adoring female fans. But Ev has a secret he doesn't dare share with anyone. He's gay.

After years of being Ev's secret lover, Josh is tired of hiding in the shadows and wants Ev to openly acknowledge their relationship. Coming out is the last thing Ev wants and fears it will ruin his career.

One night in a moment of truth, Everett outs himself on live TV. There's no going back, and his announcement sparks a firestorm of problems – both personally and professionally. He's forced to come to grips with who he really is while facing down a tag-team out to destroy him.

Torn between living a lie and losing the man he loves, Ev has risked everything... can he find a balance between his career and his heart?

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* *A Deceptive Match* and *A Secret Match* are related titles with shared characters. However, each novel can be read separately.

** These titles make up the *Royal Desires* series. Although connected, each book stands alone as an individual read.

*** These novellas complete the *Naughty Nobles* trilogy. It is recommended that they are read in sequence.

Visit Kelli's website: www.KelliWilkins.com for additional titles as they become available.

CHAPTER 1

Everett rolled over and opened his eyes. He brushed a lock of hair away from his face and squinted as a beam of light peeked through the blinds. Josh lay on his side, facing him. His chest rose and fell rhythmically, and a light snore escaped his throat.

He smiled. This was a perfect way to wake up. Why couldn't every morning start out like this? He stretched, then winced as his lower back spasmed. Damn. His muscles were still strained from Monday night's match against Billy Brighton.

He raised his head and looked at the clock. 8:45. Great. Plenty of time for sex, a shower, and food before Josh took him to the airport. Ev trailed his fingers through Josh's dark brown chest hair. He liked guys who were a little hairy. Not covered in a thick pelt, but a light beard, chest, and stomach hair always aroused him.

Ev caressed Josh's pectoral muscles and breathed in deep. Josh's skin smelled like cologne and sex. Josh might not believe it, but he was hot. Swimming and weightlifting twice a week kept him lean.

Ev eased his hand across Josh's flat stomach and went lower, until he reached his penis. He wrapped his hand around Josh's shaft and stroked it a few times.

Josh's eyes popped open. "Can I help you?"

“No, I’m fine, thanks. Helping myself to thirds, or is it fourths?” he joked. They had made their own fireworks for July Fourth weekend. Last night had been spectacular. Steaks and margaritas followed by a steamy make-out and foreplay session in the pool, then off to bed for hot and heavy action. What could be better?

He kissed Josh. “My plane doesn’t leave for Cleveland until two. We have some time.” He hated to leave Josh when things were going so well between them, but he had no choice. Life on the road gave him three days off every week or so, if he was lucky.

Soon, he’d fall back into the pattern again—hotel, arena, hotel, arena for a week, ten days, or maybe longer. It always seemed like he was coming home and then he was gone again.

Josh kissed him, and his skin broke out in goose bumps as Josh’s rough beard brushed against his cheek. God, he loved that. He clutched Josh tighter, entwining their tongues as he pumped Josh’s cock. “One more time before I go?”

“What do you do when you wake up horny and I’m not around?” Josh asked.

“I help myself.” Ev reached for the lube on the nightstand. “Good thing I bought a new bottle, we nearly used half of it,” he said as he poured some onto his hand and lubed his ass. He handed Josh a rubber and lay back on the mattress.

After rolling on the rubber, Josh climbed on top of him and kissed him. “Say how much you want it,” he teased.

Ev wrapped his legs around Josh's hips. "Please, I need it. I want you to fuck me." Josh liked it when he was vocal and demanding, and he always wanted him to talk dirty.

His body tingled as Josh rubbed the head of his penis against his anus. Josh toyed with him for a few minutes, slipping the head in, then pulling out, until finally...

"Ah, yeah, that's it." Ev moaned and clasped Josh's shoulders as his thick cock entered him. He dug his fingertips into Josh's back as he rocked in deeper. Josh kissed him, his hot tongue probing his mouth in rhythm with his thrusts.

"I'm gonna miss you," Everett whispered.

"You're gonna miss my prick."

"You're so hard in the morning. Go slow. I want to feel it, make it last." Everett relaxed on the bed, enjoying Josh's forceful, slow pounding.

Josh pumped into him a few times, making him groan. "I'm in no hurry. I'm gonna take my time with you, give you something to remember when you're out on the road with those big, sexy, straight wrestlers sweating all over you."

Ev pressed his eyes shut. Why did Josh have to say that? What would people think if they saw a world-famous professional wrestler and heartthrob of millions taking a cock up the ass and loving it? If anyone discovered his secret, he'd die.

Josh bent forward and kissed him again. He devoured Josh's mouth hungrily, aching, yearning, desperate for more.

Without warning, he hooked his ankles together around Josh's waist and grabbed his shoulders, rolling them over on the bed so he ended up on top.

"Ev, what the hell?"

"I'm a wrestler, baby. I do this sort of thing for a living. Thought I'd spice this up a bit before I go, give you a taste of what it feels like to be pinned."

"Go on, Ev. Take what you want, just don't hurt me."

* * *

Josh pulled on his blue T-shirt and rubbed his throbbing temples. The hot shower hadn't done much to clear his too-many-margaritas hangover, and although sex with Ev had been great, it left him feeling drained—emotionally and physically.

He gazed at his reflection in the mirror hanging over Everett's dresser and ran his hands through his short brown hair. He hadn't bothered to shave. Ev liked his thin beard and stubble, and he wanted to be a good boyfriend and make Ev happy.

But *he* wasn't happy. He checked his phone and saw he had three messages, two from Troper, and one from Steve. He'd call them later. First things first.

He took a deep breath and pushed down the feeling of nervous dread filling his stomach. He needed to talk to Everett before he left. Naturally it would be better if Ev wasn't leaving today, but there had been no easy way to bring up the

subject last night, and he didn't want to ruin what little time they had together.

Josh picked up his overnight bag and carried it down the tiled hall. Halfway down, he paused to look at Ev's photo gallery.

Everett grinned at him from the cover of a wrestling magazine, posing with Vinnie Valentine and their tag-team belts. Photos of Ev with celebrities and sports figures took up most of the wall, but there wasn't one picture of them.

He smelled coffee and heard Ev banging around the kitchen, singing along to KC and the Sunshine Band's "Keep it Coming Love."

Maybe coffee will help me think straight, he thought as he headed for the kitchen. He wasn't sure what he was going to say, or how he was going to say it, but he couldn't go on like this anymore.

* * *

Everett turned as Josh came into the kitchen carrying his overnight bag. He glanced at the bag, but didn't say anything. Why was Josh already packed? They hadn't eaten yet.

"Your omelet will be done in a sec. Two eggs, green peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, and pepper jack cheese." He handed Josh a cup of coffee. "Have a seat."

Josh sipped his coffee and leaned against the counter. "You made breakfast? You didn't have to. You grilled the steaks last night."

“I want to. I don’t get to cook for you as often as I’d like.” He slid the omelet onto a red and white plate and set it on the mosaic tiled bistro table. “Mine will be done in two minutes. You want juice?”

“No, I—can you turn off the music?” Josh set his bag on the floor. “I need to talk to you.”

His stomach sank. Shit. So much for a cozy breakfast. He tightened his grip on the red spatula and forced himself to stay calm. This wasn’t going to be good. Nobody needed to “have a talk” early in the morning. It figured. He and Josh were playing house so nice together all weekend, and now Josh dropped this on him.

He switched off the song. Maybe it wouldn’t be so bad. Maybe Josh had a hangover and was being grumpy. “Why don’t you eat first and—”

“No, Ev. I need to say this, and I’m not sure how—”

“You’re not pregnant, are you?” he joked. He forced his voice to sound light, hoping it would diffuse the situation.

Josh’s brown eyes locked onto his. Shit. He knew that look. Josh was pissed. He sat in a chair. “What did I do wrong? Are you mad because I flipped us over when we were screwing?”

“No. It’s not that. We’ve talked about this before. I want you to come out, be open about us and—”

“Eggs are burning.” Ev jumped up and raced to the stove, avoiding Josh’s steely gaze. How could he be such a coward?

He switched off the stove and peeked at Josh over his shoulder.

“You know I can’t—”

“*Can ’t*? It’s more like *won ’t*. I understand it’s—”

“No, you don’t understand.” Ev poured himself a cup of coffee and stirred in a spoonful of sugar. His heart raced a mile a second. He loved Josh, but there was no way he could come out. How could Josh ask him to? They had been through this before, discussed it to death not more than six months ago.

“But you’re right. I won’t. And you know why I won’t. And if you truly understood, you’d never ask me to do something like that.”

“*Something like that*,” Josh mocked. “You make it sound like I asked you to kill your grandmother. I’m not asking you to come out to the world. I want you to meet my friends, go to a club or—”

“I told you, I can’t go to one of those places. You want me to get fired?”

“One of *those places*? You mean a gay bar? You can say the word *gay*, Ev. I want you to come out and be honest—no, you know what I really want? I want you to stop hiding me, denying I exist,” he snapped.

He looked at Josh. The muscles in his neck were sticking out, and his eyes were narrowed to slits. Shit, he was super-

pissed. How long had he been holding all this in? “Denying you exist? What’s that supposed to mean?”

“It means I’m tired of being hidden in your closet like a dark, dirty secret.”

The cup slipped from Ev’s hand and hit the counter, splattering coffee everywhere. “What?”

“You heard me,” Josh said, his chest heaving. “Dammit, Ev, I didn’t want to do it this way, but I’m tired of being treated like I’m disposable, hidden from the rest of the world because you’re too ashamed to admit who you are.”

“Where is all this coming from?” Ev scowled. “We talked about this before. People can’t know. No gay wrestlers. If we went to a gay bar and someone took photos or leaked it, I’m done. Screwed out of my job and the rest of my career.”

Josh folded his arms across his chest. “That’s an excuse. It wouldn’t be like that. People are more open-minded now. There are gay athletes, singers, actors. People would accept it.”

“Like hell.” He yanked paper towels off the roll and started mopping up the coffee. This was great. He had to leave for a show in a few hours and Josh picked now to fight with him?

“Nobody would accept it, not the other wrestlers, not Nick, and not the fans. My whole persona, my whole career, is based on me being a heartthrob women dream about—”

Josh let out a laugh. “Yeah, your whole persona is a lie, like everything else.”

He threw the sopped paper towels in the trash. “What the hell does that mean?”

“Are you kidding me? Look around, Ev. There are pictures of you with everyone else in the world, except me. No photos, someone might catch on. You won’t go out with me or meet my friends. I can’t go anywhere with you—”

“We go places—”

“Yeah, and when we do, you’re always looking over your shoulder, afraid of being seen with me. If anyone asks who I am, you say I’m your brother, or cousin, or friend. Never your boyfriend. That tells me I don’t matter to you.”

“Don’t matter? I can’t believe you’re saying—”

“Oh, come off it. I’m tired of being your shameful secret. You breeze home for a few days and take me out of the closet like I’m a sex toy. When you’re done, back in the closet, and off you go. Off to dazzle thousands of female fans and pretend you’re not gay.”

Everett flopped into his chair. His heart pounded faster, and he felt like throwing up. Josh’s hurtful words wounded him to the core. How long had Josh felt this way? The last time they had discussed it, they’d had a calm and rational talk, and Josh seemed okay with keeping things quiet. But this was way off the charts.

“How can you say that? I love you and—”

“You love me? Really? Then why do you hide me like I’m something to be ashamed of? I’m ignored, tossed aside like a stranger when anyone else is around, but I’m sure handy to keep in the bedroom to suck your cock.”

He bowed his head, hiding behind his black curls. How could he argue? Josh was right, but he didn’t understand. He couldn’t come out. He couldn’t risk it. Nobody could know the truth—the big, strong wrestler was a raging queer.

“What brought this on now? I thought we were happy. Last night was great, and this morning—”

“It’s not the sex, Ev. It’s everything else. No, there is nothing else. When you’re home all we do is stay here, eat, and screw. I want to make you a part of my life. I want to go somewhere with you and hold your hand and kiss you in public. I want to be a real couple and not hide.”

“I need to keep a low profile.”

“You wouldn’t if I was a woman.”

Ev chuckled. “Yeah, but if you were, I’d be *normal*. It would be okay for me to be seen with you. I wouldn’t get my ass kicked for thinking sinful things about you.”

Josh shook his head. “Jesus, how bad did your parents screw you up?”

“You know what it was like for me. You know why I can’t let anyone know about... this. Please, Josh.” Tears welled in his eyes and he clenched his fists, willing himself not to cry. Only pansies cried. A real man never shed a tear.

“My friends ask about you all the time.”

“You didn’t tell them—”

“No, of course not. I won’t out you, Ev. I promised you that a long time ago. But they keep asking me when they’ll meet you. Some of them don’t believe you’re real. They think I made you up because there are no pictures of us anywhere. Another one thinks you’re secretly married and I’m your fuck toy on the side.”

He didn’t respond. What could he say?

Josh paced the kitchen. “You know what I do? I tell them you’re shy. Shy, Ev. You. The man who is on TV every week. I lie for you and tell them you’re shy.” He paused. “So go on, go live your life and pretend to be straight. I won’t miss you too much, since you’re never around anyway.”

“What are you saying?” Josh knew him better than anyone, and he was pushing him away. Once again, he wasn’t good enough. He had screwed up, like usual. They were so happy this morning. Why couldn’t anything good last?

“You need to get your shit together, Ev, because I’m not living like this anymore. Nothing I say will make you change your mind, so how’s this?” Josh stopped pacing and faced him. “Go to Cleveland and figure out what you want. Come out, or don’t, but don’t expect me to hide anymore. When you get back—”

“I can’t come out. If I did, I’d be throwing away everything.”

Josh picked up his overnight bag. “You know what? You just did.”

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Falling for the wrestler she had been assigned to interview wasn't part of Danni's plan, until Vinnie Valentine pinned her heart in a flash.

Disgruntled with her job as the office assistant for a national sports magazine, Danni Stone impersonates a reporter to prove herself to her boss. Her assignment? Spend thirty days on the road with Vinnie Valentine, a sexy professional wrestler.

Life isn't going well for the Heavyweight Champ. Vinnie is struggling with a manipulative boss, prepping for the most important match of his career, and feuding with his arch-enemy, Thorn. The last thing he needs is a nosy reporter following him around—even if she is hot.

Thrown together in close quarters, Danni can't help falling for Vinnie, and she unwittingly becomes a key player in his title match. Their mutual attraction grows, and late one night, they give in to the lustful feelings they've been fighting.

As their relationship deepens, Danni considers telling Vinnie her secret. But before she can confess the truth, Vinnie discovers she isn't the reporter she claims to be. Her lie threatens to ruin everything between them. Will their

relationship be destroyed by her deception or will their love win out?

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But when Larry unwittingly falls into the clutches of the murderer, it's up to Deke—and Greg—to save him before it's too late.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kelli A. Wilkins is an award-winning author who has published more than 100 short stories, 19 romance novels, and 5 non-fiction books. Her romances span many genres and heat levels.

Beauty & the Bigfoot, a paranormal-comedy, was published in September 2017.

Kelli released ***Trust with Hearts***, a contemporary romance, in July 2017. Her third gay romance, ***Four Days with Jack***, was released in June 2017. Kelli's trilogy of erotic romance novellas, ***Midsummer Night's Delights***, ***Midwinter Night's Delights***, and ***Ultimate Night's Delights*** was published in spring 2017.

Loving a Wild Stranger was published in January 2017. This historical/pioneer romance is set in the wilds of the Michigan Territory and blends tender romance with adventure.

Kelli's third Medallion Press romance, ***Lies, Love & Redemption*** was released in September 2016. This spicy historical western is set on the Nebraska prairie in 1877.

Her writing book, ***You Can Write—Really! A Beginner's Guide to Writing Fiction*** is a fun and informative guide filled with writing exercises and helpful tips all authors can use.

Kelli posts on her Facebook author page:
<https://www.facebook.com/AuthorKelliWilkins> and Twitter:
www.Twitter.com/KWilkinsauthor.

She also writes a weekly blog:

<http://kelliwilkinsauthor.blogspot.com/>.

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