

## CHAPTER ONE

Bishop Riley needed to get his stealing done for the day before his little sister came out of chemotherapy.

The laptop sat crookedly on his wide-sprawled knees as he navigated the website he'd just hacked. He tapped more keys, starting to download their clients' names, addresses, and credit card numbers to his hard drive.

"Come on baby," he murmured. "Show me the money." Daisy's chemo treatment was going to be done any minute, and he was fresh out of credit card numbers to cover her co-pay.

Fraud detection systems were quick on the draw these days, so he only got one or two uses out of each number before it passed into the great credit card graveyard in the sky. He'd used the last of his stockpile yesterday. The last time he'd come up short on the co-pay, Daisy had been so worried that she sold her school textbooks on eBay and proudly handed over the cash to the receptionist at their next visit. He couldn't let that happen again, because he'd be damned if *both* Riley kids were going to end up loser dropouts.

The door to the treatment rooms gave the deep whirring that signaled its automatic opening and he crossed his fingers.

"Anybody but Daisy," he muttered under his breath. "Anybody but—" The small figure in the wheelchair had a magenta-pink wig on. "Crap."

Looked like he was about to be damned, after all. No surprise there.

Daisy's least favorite nurse—the one who called her sweetums—wheeled her over in the office-policy wheelchair. Bishop uncrossed his fingers and clicked to minimize the tab where the

new credit card numbers were downloading, pulling up the tab for his cover story job instead. He began energetically clacking the keys at random. He'd written three jokes earlier, so if his nosy sibling peeked, he'd be covered.

"There ya go, sweetums." The nurse patted her shoulder. "You take it easy for the rest of today, okay?"

"No aerial yoga, check," Daisy said. "Can I at least make the kegger tonight?"

Bishop wagged his finger at her. "C'mon now, sweetums. We discussed this. No keg stands on chemo days."

A smile tickled the edge of Daisy's chapped lips, but she'd never abandon a deadpan, especially not before the nurse stomped off in a huff of offended teddy-bear print scrubs. Which she promptly did.

"What are you doing?" Daisy asked. "You better not be looking at dirty pictures in the hospital waiting room."

He grimaced. "Please don't tell me how you know laptops have dirty pictures in them."

"I'm eleven, not four." She narrowed her eyes at him, which only made them seem more sunken. Her skin was one shade lighter gray than he'd come to expect and her sarcasm got sharper when she was nauseous. This wasn't his first rodeo, though, so he'd already claimed a seat closest to the trash can and didn't need to move. The status bar said ten more minutes to download all the stolen numbers, and more importantly, Daisy looked like she was going to need at least nine of those to sit very still if she wasn't going to lose her lunch on the way to the parking lot.

"I'm working, if you must know."

She went a shade paler, making the vivid color of her newest wig stand out even more.

“Are we picking up an Uber person on the way home?”

“Nah, other job. Joke writing one.”

“I still don’t understand why a dating app needs jokes.” She eyed the trash can. Yup, stalling was definitely in order here.

“I’ll show you.” He pulled up YouTube and found the latest commercial. Three minutes, fifteen seconds. Well, that was at least a third of the time they’d need, and cleaning up the inevitable vomit would probably use up the other six. Win/win, and then they’d be able to go home without washing dishes to cover their bill. If that was even an option in hospitals. Wait, *was* that an option in hospitals? He made a mental note to check as he spun his laptop around and hit play.

The dating app name zoomed onto the screen in pink cursive letters.

*So You Think You’re a Match?*

“The hottest new dating app on the market!” the voice-over proclaimed. An animated hand popped up holding a phone with a slimy-looking blond guy on it. “Swipe right for yes, left for no, and wait for a verdict!”

The animated thumb swiped left, and a comment bubble popped up on the screen.

“The nose, right? It was totally the nose.”

A canned laugh track played and Bishop tried not to wince. He really wished they’d cut the laugh track.

The thumb swiped right on a square-jawed dude with dark emo-adjacent bangs and the comment bubble followed.

“Oh yeah, this is the one. This is the guy who will finally respect you, love you more than his mother, and not leave his toenail clippings on the coffee table.”

Bishop took a breath to brag that they’d chosen one of his jokes for the commercial but Daisy interrupted.

“Ew! Do boyfriends really leave their toenail clippings on the coffee table?”

“I don’t know what boyfriends do. I tried playing for that team and they benched me.”

She sniffed. “I still don’t get what the jokes are for.”

“Keep watching.” He hit play again and the picture expanded to show a cartoon girl out with her friends at a table littered with wine and martini glasses.

“This is the one,” she squealed, clutching her phone to her chest. “I just know it.”

“He may not be Prince Charming,” her phone’s voiceover piped up, “but by the look of that selfie, he’s at least the Crown Prince of the Ab-Roller.”

Her friends erupted into laughter and the picture zoomed out to the app’s logo again.

“Taking love a little less seriously, because it’s not life and death...it’s just dating!” the commercial proclaimed.

“Why wouldn’t people take love seriously?” Daisy asked. “I mean, you don’t want to end up married to just whoever, right?”

Bishop was still trying to figure out a way to work into the conversation that he’d written that last joke as well. He had no idea how many freelance joke writers the website had, or what the odds were they’d use two of his jokes in a single commercial, but he’d be lying if he said that wasn’t why he chose that particular commercial to show to his sister. But she wasn’t acting particularly impressed anyway, so he gave it up as a loss.

He spun his laptop back to face himself. Down to five minutes and they'd be able to pay and get going.

“You'll understand when you're older and infinitely more jaded. With those apps, people get all up in their head about it. There are thousands and thousands of people on them and it's pretty easy to start thinking every one's your soulmate. Adding the jokes reminds people it's only a date, not a diamond solitaire.” He waved a hand to indicate the waiting room. “Like this place.”

Daisy nodded, her face shrewd. She was a prodigy at not taking things too seriously. She'd been diagnosed when she was so young he wasn't sure she remembered what it was like to be a kid without cancer, but she hadn't spent much time crying about it. He'd never been sure if that was because she didn't understand what death was, or because somehow, she knew she wasn't going to die. Though before her surgery when she was nine, even the doctors hadn't been so sure about that one.

What he did know was whenever he took her to chemo, she was always teasing and joking with the other kids, trying to take their mind off the nausea. He liked to think she got it from him. After all, it wasn't like anybody else in the family had a sense of humor.

“Does it help?” she asked.

“Hmm?” Four minutes and ticking down fast.

“When you're using the app, do the jokes make you feel better?” She was looking at him particularly earnestly. Her blue eyes were bright, even after chemo, not dulled by pain and pills like their mom's. He had the same eyes, though Daisy claimed his were more electric Kool-Aid and hers were more summer sky. He was pretty sure they were the same color and girls just liked to believe their eyes looked like the sky instead of sugary, over-processed beverages.

“I don’t use the Match app. I just write their jokes.” He pulled a pack of wintergreen gum out of his backpack. It was the only thing that reliably settled her stomach after chemo, and took the weird taste out of her mouth that she always complained about. “Gum?”

She took the gum, but still frowned. “Why wouldn’t you sign up?”

“What, and take shit from myself?” He snorted. “I can dish it out, little sis, but you know I can’t take it.”

“If it’s an app all about not taking things so seriously, then it shouldn’t be that big of a deal. Besides, you need a date,” Daisy said.

Bishop crossed his arms, smirking openly. “Do tell, Queen Daisy. For what?”

“To buy you dinner and tell you you’re pretty.” She nodded firmly. “That’s what people do on dates.”

He tipped his head. “Well...yeah.” That actually did sound pretty good.

Dating had kind of fallen by the wayside for the last few years, because he needed every dollar he could get for deductibles, co-pays, and out-of-network costs. He didn’t have the room in his life, wallet, or heart for any female except his baby sister.

On the other hand, he loved dating. The flirtation, the thrill of first dates and first kisses and second times in bed...it was his favorite rollercoaster ride. His future wasn’t something he’d foist on some unsuspecting female, but so many women in Austin these days were too busy with their jobs and school to get serious. A lot of them were probably looking for casual, just like him. Also, his sister was looking expectantly at him and he needed to stall until the program finished.

“Okay, you sold me. I’ll make my profile right now.”

Bishop typed his name into the app, flicked his way through all the toggle switches for preferences and gender identities, and added a two-sentence bio. Doffed his signature fedora and

ran a hand through his black hair, then stuffed it back onto his head and gave the camera a twinkly-eyed smirk as he snapped a selfie.

“Ugh, comb your hair first,” Daisy complained. The gum seemed to be working, though, because her face was getting its color back.

“Shows what you know. Women like their men’s hair messy and their smiles crooked. Do I *need* to read you the whole Twilight series again?”

She lit up. “Yes! Would you?”

“Absolutely not.” That was three months of his life he was never getting back. Her face fell and he improvised. “At least not unless you want to trade me reading aloud for you making me omelets. Not just cheese ones, either. That’s cheating.”

“You don’t even let me come to your apartment anymore.”

That was because a methhead had moved in next door and he was a little afraid he might become the neighborly victim of some bathtub-chemistry explosion. Daisy had enough health challenges without adding a meth lab mishap to the list.

“Well, I would invite you over more if you’d make me omelets,” he lied. The program chimed completion, and he tilted the screen away from her before he opened the results.

“Besides, I don’t want you stealing my wallet and using it to go on an American Girl doll buying spree. Again.”

“Whatever. That was years ago and it was *one* doll.”

“One doll that cost more than a pony.”

“You said I could pick my own present! You didn’t say I couldn’t get an American Girl doll.”

He didn't answer her, because his screen was full of delicious credit card numbers. Solvent again, and it felt oh so sweet. He clicked on the top one and entered the information into the new app profile on his phone.

Thank you, Harlow Rimes, you generous soul. You don't even know it, but you may have helped a man find true love. Or at least free dinner.

He wouldn't mind being called pretty, either. An ego had to eat, too.

The credit card didn't decline, so he used it to make a quick donation to his favorite LegUp charity campaign, the one for the cat with the tragic paw accident. LegUp was the Swiss account of internet piggy banks. It didn't ask questions and it transferred anonymously to anywhere, so you could "fundraise" for any cause you wanted. He punched a button on his phone, opening it to the PhonePay that linked to all his phony LegUp accounts. Take that, exorbitant chemotherapy co-pay.

"You ready to drive, Miss Daisy?" He pushed out of his chair. "Because I am all signed up and ready to take love a little less seriously."



## CHAPTER TWO

Harlow Rimes hauled open the glass door and then shook out her hand with the quick reflexes of a Texas-born girl used to sun-scorched metal door handles. Inside, she was greeted with a blast of air conditioning that carried the scent of kale, dirt, and the astringent bite of eucalyptus.

Harlow hadn't exactly gotten off work on time, so her two best friends were already inside and waiting in line, even the perpetually late Sadie.

"I've been wanting to try this place for weeks. What do you think?" Sadie beamed up at her, hair held back in an elaborate crown braid and dark eyes shining.

What she thought was that the juice bar smelled like a farmer's market had a love child with an essential oils counter, but she didn't think that would be helpful to say. "When I said I wanted to go out for a drink, I wasn't expecting quite...this."

“I’m on an alcohol cleanse for 30 days,” Sadie said. “You should try it. It’s a great way to get your life back in alignment with your intentions.”

Her life and intentions were pretty far out of line right now, but that had a lot more to do with her embezzling boss, curses be upon his name, than it did with drinking.

“Plus, alcohol is loaded with sugar.”

“So is fruit juice,” Alice pointed out, and Sadie frowned at her taller friend.

“They have vegetable juices, too!”

“Juice is fine,” Harlow said, interrupting the burgeoning argument between her friends. “With all the sad desk lunches I’ve been eating, this’ll be the first time in weeks I’ve been within biting distance of a vegetable.”

At least the cream-colored walls with their arched nooks were soothing, even if she’d like the flickering electronic pillar candles even better with a sidecar of whiskey.

“I saw the press conference.” Alice silenced a reminder on her ever-chiming phone and stuffed it back into her purse. “They haven’t found your boss yet, huh?”

“Oh, they found his plane ticket easily enough. Window seat all the way to some little island nation where the tourist trade is booming but the government is so dysfunctional they’re never going to get around to our extradition request.”

The line moved forward toward the counter.

“So what’s going to happen to all those people who already put the money in to buy houses in the subdivision you guys were building?” Sadie’s shoulders cringed under her sleeveless blouse.

“Hopefully our liability insurance will cover it, but an entire development’s worth of money is a huge claim. I’m sure the insurance company is going to try to find some embezzlement loophole that will make it our problem.” And then they’d go bankrupt.

She was only a junior associate without a stock option in sight, so in that scenario, all she’d lose was her job. And oh, yeah, the three years of unpaid internships, dues paying and coffee fetching she’d given to this company after grad school, hoping to earn a spot in the corner office. Namely, the office Hank just ditched for a beach chair, a margarita, and his younger, about-to-be divorced secretary.

“So what does that mean for you getting promoted to run Sunnybrooke?” Alice asked, zeroing in on the heart of the issue.

“The bad news is, the whole plan of me being his co-designer for the next neighborhood is clearly in the trash can. The good news is, the whole position is now up for grabs, not just the co-chair.”

Sadie perked up. “So this might actually help you?”

“It could, except I’m still young for the position, and Hank was the one who’d promised it to me. Now that he’s gone, everybody just knows me as the assistant of that guy who screwed the company over. Not the best look.”

The line cleared and they stepped up to the counter. The options felt too dizzying to analyze after the emergencies she’d been juggling all day, so Harlow just ordered a lavender lemonade.

“Add an extra stress-relief booster to that lemonade,” Sadie advised the clerk, then glanced at Harlow. “Actually, make that a double.”

“You’re the one giving all the press conferences and keeping that place on its feet.” Alice scanned the menu. “Maybe they’ll remember that when they’re passing out promotions.” She turned to the clerk. “Dark kale and beet juice please, and add an energy shot. The caffeine one, not the ginkgo one.”

“That’ll be \$36.14,” the clerk piped up after taking Sadie’s order, too.

Harlow cringed. She should at least catch a buzz for that kind of investment. She dug in her shoulder bag anyway. “Let me get it. You girls deserve some kind of compensation for listening to all my whining the past few weeks.”

“Don’t apologize. It’s been shitty.” Alice skewered her with a look from under razor-cut bangs. “You deserve that promotion. Don’t forget it, no matter what those suits decide.”

“Um, I’m sorry, but this card has been declined?” The clerk offered her credit card back to her.

“What?” Harlow frowned down at it, then rolled her eyes. “Oh, I’m sorry. Wrong one. I had to cancel that one.” She swapped it for her debit card.

“What happened? Are they having trouble making payroll?” Sadie accepted a seashell from the clerk that was apparently their juice bar stand-in for an order number, and led the way to one of the round booths, with their white pegged leather seats and gleaming black granite tables.

“No. In the midst of all this other crap, my credit card number got stolen somehow. It’s really my week.” She tucked the credit card in with her cell phone so she’d remember to cut it up later.

“Oh wow, you’re so pretty!” A perky redhead interrupted. “Are you two sisters? You could be models.”

Harlow collapsed into the booth. *Not* the sisters thing again. As if that weren't bad enough, hearing your friends described as models while you lurked in the background was a special little moment of its own. She knew she probably looked tired, but she'd hoped her press conference makeup would cover up a bit of that.

"Nope, not sisters," Alice said. Her voice was tight, but she left it at that. The redhead was getting off easy. When Alice and Rob were in an off-again phase, her normal saltiness got even sharper and anything could happen. As long as it was bad.

"Oh..."

The trail off was ominous. Harlow held her breath and hoped the other girl wouldn't go there.

"But like, where are you two from?"

Harlow stared up at the clueless redhead. People. As if her ex-boyfriend, Chad, hadn't been enough, this week was doing its best to destroy her faith in humanity.

Alice ripped a pen out of her purse, pulled a napkin from the holder at the center of the table, and scrawled four quick shapes on it. "Recognize these?"

"Um, that's Texas. And...New Jersey?"

"This is Sweden, where Harlow's family is from. China, where my family used to live." Alice snapped the pen against the next shape. "This is Korea, where Sadie's great-grandparents immigrated from. This is Texas, where *we* are all from." She crumpled up the napkin and dropped it in the redhead's empty juice cup. "And none of that is any of your damn business."

The redhead gawked and Sadie scooted further into the booth, eyes down like she could disappear if she tried hard enough.

“Bitch,” the other girl muttered under her breath and flounced away, flinging her cup at the trashcan and missing.

Alice stiffened, and Harlow tried to remember if she had enough in her checking account to cover a bail bond.

But instead of going after her, Alice just tossed out, “Yeah, you kind of are.”

She dropped into the booth.

“Sorry,” she said to Sadie. “I know you hate making a scene, but sometimes I just can’t help it.”

Sadie gave her a wavering smile. “That girl was cruising for it. I can’t blame you; it just makes me...tired.” She turned to Harlow. “So, did they get much off your credit card?”

“Once I reported it as fraud, I’m not responsible for the charges. But they were for the weirdest stuff! The person used it to sign up for a subscription to that new dating app, So You Think You’re a Match.” Her phone chimed, and she ignored it. “And to donate money to a LegUp for a pawless cat.”

“That poor kitty!” Sadie’s hands flew to her mouth. “Maybe it’s a really nice thief, then.”

Alice made a choking sound and Harlow elbowed her before she said something too sharp. “It’s not a real cat. The description said it lost its paws in a tragic meat slicing accident and most people don’t have a meat slicer anywhere cats are allowed, so...”

“So it’s probably a way to funnel money from cards into cash, so they can buy drugs or hookers or something,” Alice said. “Signing up for a dating site seems weird, though. Can’t they trace the account to the thief really easily?”

“You’d think. I mean, it’s all screen names, but the GPS has to be turned on in your phone to find matches in your range, so I bet they could follow it right to the guy. I made a report

to the website and got this canned response.” She shook her head and wished for a glass of wine instead of a stress relief booster that was probably going to smell like her eucalyptus foot soak. “I bet they don’t do a thing.”

Her phone chimed again.

“Do you need to get that?” Sadie asked. “We can wait if you need to put out a few work fires.”

“It’s just that dating app. I got nervous and needed a distraction while I was waiting to go on for the press conference, so I swiped a whole bunch of profiles and I’ve been popping up new matches like crazy.”

“Do you really have time to date right now?” Alice pulled a lip gloss out of her purse. “I don’t even feel like shaving my legs when I’m working the kind of hours you are.”

“Yeah, but it’s been months since Chad, and more of the good ones are probably getting snatched up every week.”

“And you don’t want to die alone.” Sadie nodded.

“It’s not that. I mean, dying’s probably going to be pretty sucky no matter who’s there. It’s all the time leading up to it that bothers me.” She slumped, dropping her face into her hand. She’d been thinking about this way too much lately. “I want, I don’t know, to be the kind of spunky old lady who would own a wacky parrot. The parrot would say all this random stuff that made no sense so me and my husband would be the only ones who could decode his little phrases. Because I want someone who loves my weird parrot, too. Like, how empty would the world start to feel after a while if nobody else understood what your parrot was saying but you?”

They both stared at her for a second, then Alice said, “Is the parrot a sex metaphor?”

“Ugh, no.” She rolled her eyes and pulled out her phone to silence it. “Never mind.”

“C’mon, let’s see the goods.” Alice beckoned, her slender gold watch gleaming.

Harlow shrugged. “Okay, but don’t blame me if the goods are odd.” She clicked on the notifications for new matches.

Alice leaned in to see the latest one. “Lacrosse Boss, who is fit but trying a little too hard to be sporty.” She scrolled past him. “Playa62. Nice pecs but a weird nose and he already messaged to ask what you were doing and oh! You just got a new message.”

“From which guy?”

“Hottie with the *eyes*, wow. He calls himself Professional Joker, whatever that means. Hopefully a comedian and not a Dark Knight reference. Fifth new match on the list.”

Sadie had pushed up onto her knees by now and was leaning across the table to see. She inhaled audibly. “Is he real? I read sometimes these dating apps put in fake profiles of models to try to make their site look like it has tons of hot people. I know the last girl I went out with from the app looked *nothing* like her picture. The guys I’ve tried have been more honest about their pics, but not by much.”

Harlow tugged her phone away from them and remembered the guy at once. She’d had a similar thought when she’d swiped right on his profile earlier.

Caribbean blue eyes and a mischievous smirk that made her tingle. Messy black hair spraying out from under the edges of a battered charcoal fedora. Weird backdrop choice though, since he was surrounded by industrial-looking chairs and ugly carpet. Most people took their profile selfies out at the beach or the gym or something.

“You’ve got to double-filter to get eyes like that,” she agreed, but her fingers were clicking through to his message as if they didn’t share her cynicism.

**Professional Joker: Hey, is this thing on?**



She smiled. That was a change from the usual Wat up? Or UR so pretty. Or the ever-classic Heyyyyyys or the Heeeeeeeys. She still wasn't sure which she hated more: the drawn-out y's or e's.

**Development Diva: It is indeed on. You type into the tiny rectangle, and hope the genie who lives inside grants your wishes.**

Why had she said genie? Now he was just going to make a joke about rubbing his "lamp" and she was going to have to block him.

**Professional Joker: Dear Rectangle Genie, I would like three million dollars, for my landlady to stop boiling sauerkraut, and to take you out to dinner.**

She snorted a laugh.

"I'm going to go see what's taking our drinks so long," Alice said. "Text Blue Eyes something witty from me, hmm?"

**Professional Joker: (You of the golden hair and stuffed narwhal you, just to be clear, in case the genie is a separate entity.)**

Harlow's hand rose to her hair, still smoothed back in its careful press-conference-on-TV-look-older bun. He thought it looked golden? It was on her driver's license as brown, though it was light-ish, and in the summer sometimes it sun-bleached to where she could almost claim blonde, though not without a twinge of imposter syndrome. More tellingly, he must have already dug into the other pictures on her account, not just her profile pic. There was one of her hugging her stuffed narwhal Henry that she'd put in because she was laughing and she thought it would make her look fun.

“What did he say?” Sadie had given up leaning and scooted her way around the round booth so she could see.

“He asked me to dinner.” Harlow set down her phone, hoping the heat she felt wasn’t showing in her cheeks. She’d been in the office so much this summer she barely had any sort of tan to cover it.

“Whoa, already?”

“Too soon.” Alice set down a trio of compostable plastic cups.

“I know, right?” Harlow said, stealing one more wistful glance at his profile pic. “He only has one picture up, we’ve only been chatting for a minute, and he’s already skipping coffee and shooting straight for dinner.”

“If he only has one pic up, he could be catfishing you with a cologne ad. Did you Google Image search that pic?” Alice took a slurp of her dark green juice.

Harlow grabbed for the purple-tinged cup. “No, but...I don’t know, I kind of like that he’s not messing around. Plus, the backdrop is too weird for that pic to be an ad. It looks like he’s in a doctor’s office.”

“Maybe he got diagnosed with a fatal illness and you’re his YOLO bucket list girl.” Sadie smiled over her mega-sized juice. “You’d totally be my YOLO girl, if I were dying.”

“I thought Henry Golding was your YOLO guy if you were dying.”

“I get both, duh,” Sadie said. “I’m the one fictionally dying here.”

Harlow laughed, but she was only half paying attention. She didn’t want to say no yet, so she messaged back to stall.

**Development Diva: Usually people ask the genie for a million. Why triple?**

The three dots barely started to bounce before he hit her back.

**Professional Joker: Inflation.**

**Professional Joker: Probably I should have asked for three dates, too, just to be safe. But I figured one date was the wish currency equivalent of three million dollars, so I probably couldn't afford the upgrade.**

A laugh tickled at her throat.

**Development Diva: But one date with me is also equivalent to the wish currency of changing your landlady's sauerkraut habits?**

**Professional Joker: You don't understand: there are gallons. Gallons and gallons of sauerkraut every week. I can't prove it, but I think she may be selling commercial without a sauerkraut permit. Also, wish currency exchange rates are complex.**

"Let us see," Alice interrupted. "I can spot a scammer a mile away through his DM's.

"Sorry, we were joking about...sauerkraut." That sounded way stranger out loud. Harlow passed over the phone to them with a twinge of reluctance. "Here. What do you think? Is it charming he's moving faster than weeks of digital small talk, or creepy?"

Sadie's eyebrows popped up. "Whoa, these are in complete sentences. *With* punctuation. Oh my God, Harlow, you've got to set a date." She scrolled up. "He used a full colon in its correct context!" She clutched the phone to her chest. "If he whips out a semicolon, I'm gonna put a ring on it, dibs or no."

Harlow extricated the phone from her friend, swapping an amused glance with Alice. "Second opinion?"

“This is the first time I’ve seen you stop worrying about work in weeks.” Alice’s voice was gentle. “I’d take it.”

Harlow gulped a breath and went for it.

**Development Diva: Okay, in the case of gallons of illegal sauerkraut, I’ll accept that wish currency exchange rate. Cash flow for the rectangle genie is not so great right now, so the three mil might take a while. But I think I could deliver on that date. This week maybe?**

Was that too pushy? She didn’t have much time to think it over, because Professional Joker had fast typing thumbs.

**Professional Joker: You free tomorrow? We can meet in the park, and I’ll bring dinner.**

A few seconds later, a pin popped up with the GPS location of the park.

“He sent GPS.” Alice chuckled, reading over her shoulder. “I might as well start shopping for bridesmaid dresses.”

Harlow hesitated. Tomorrow. Most guys were afraid of looking too eager, which might mean he was desperate for a hookup, or he might be a freak, or both. She liked that it wasn’t the standard date-at-a-restaurant template, though. Her gut said it was fine, but she’d make sure to transfer her pepper spray to her smaller, date-night purse. She took one more glance at his profile picture and her stomach tingled as she began to type.

**Development Diva: Your wish is my command.**