

Sophie

Marc Nobbs

MARC NOBBS

SOPHIE

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For the real Sophie

I met Sophie shortly after her mid-course exams. Her parents contacted the tutoring agency. The agency then contacted me. I followed my normal routine and arranged an initial meeting to assess her needs. Sophie, her parents and I sat around the dining table at her home drinking tea while I evaluated her class notes.

“There are several Oxbridge candidates in her mathematics class,” Sophie’s mother told me. “The class teacher has left her behind rather than hold back the others.”

“Clearly, that’s unacceptable,” said her father. “I know one or two of the school governors and I’ve persuaded them to help fund these extra classes. They don’t make a habit of this of course.” He tapped the side of his nose and gave me a knowing look.

Her parents did all the talking. Sophie sat opposite me looking overwhelmed. Her dark hair was high on the back of her head in a ponytail. Her green eyes, while bright and alive, looked down at the table.

“What do you think, Sophie?” I asked.

She looked up. Her eyes sparkled, and the way she looked at me sent shivers down my spine. If she hadn’t already, this girl would break many a young man’s heart.

“I don’t know. I suppose Mummy and Daddy want the best for me. I know I’m not as good as the others, but I can do better than I am now.”

“And you think if I help you, you’ll get better?”

She shrugged. “Suppose so.”

We settled on two hour-long sessions per week, with a review after three months. Sophie had just turned seventeen. I was twenty-five, teaching at a local high school, and living alone. Tutoring was a side job. Sophie’s parents thought that the age difference was a ‘good thing.’ I was young enough for Sophie to relate to, but old enough to give her good advice.

I got up to leave. Sophie stood too and saw me to the door. It was all I could do not to stare as she walked in front of me. She had the sleek, toned body of an athlete, but with curves that could reduce a grown man to tears. She wore tight leggings and a hooded sports top, which did little to hide her attributes.

“I’ll see you at the weekend then, Sophie.”

She smiled. “I’ll look forward to it.”

In educational terms, the first session was a disaster. Sophie was at the age I would have expected her to take responsibility for her own learning. I wanted her to recognise her own weaknesses so we could work on them. She should have dictated the program we followed.

But her experience at the hands of an over-zealous class teacher focused on his brightest and best had left her confidence battered and bruised. She struggled with even the simplest of problems, and became more frustrated with herself as the hour wore on.

“This is pointless!” She threw her pen on the table. It bounced and rolled onto the floor. “I’m less than useless at this. I’m wasting my time and yours.”

“You can stop that kind of talk, right now.” I used my ‘teacher voice’ to get her attention, and then continued in a softer tone. “You’re not useless, Sophie. Just under-confident. All you need is some encouragement and a little push in the right direction every now and then.”

“Easy for you to say, you’ve got brains and the certificates to prove it. What do I have? A bunch of ‘F’s, that’s what. I’m just no good at this. We may as well give up.”

“Rubbish. First off, you’ve got plenty upstairs. I’ve seen enough today to know that. Once you realised you knew how to deal with a problem, you rattled through it. Second, you’ve committed to these sessions for at least three months; you have to see them through if for no other reason than your parents have already paid for the time up front. I’ll be annoyed if I have to give you a refund. I had plans for that money.”

“Really? What plans?”

“Never you mind.”

She pulled a miserable face. “Well, I hope it’s something really nice you’re going to buy with my suffering.”

“It is.”

“Humph!” She folded her arms, inadvertently pushing her chest up and out. She had on a tight, low-cut, summer T-shirt. It suited her.

“I tell you what,” I said, trying not to stare at her chest. “By Wednesday’s session, I’ll draw up a program that’ll cover the basics of the course. Give you a solid platform to work from. Then after that, we’ll see where we go next.”

She nodded in agreement, and we brought the session to a close. She saw me to the door, and again I had trouble not staring at her body.

I devised a program designed to do two things. I wanted to ensure she could do the simple things well and to build up her confidence. She had the ability - that much was clear. What she didn't have was belief.

It worked. After three months, Sophie's confidence had grown. She was back at the level she should have been when I first took her on. I arranged for her to re-sit the exam that had prompted the extra lessons. Her mother sat with her to ensure she didn't cheat, then delivered the paper to me for marking. By the next session, I had her result.

"Sixty-five percent still isn't great, is it James?"

"It'll do, for now. Take a good look at it. Notice anything?"

Sophie looked through her paper, shaking her head.

"Look at the ones you got right, or rather the ones you got wrong. Notice anything now?"

"No."

"Everything we've covered so far, you got right. Well, near enough everything. Enough to call it a pass, at least. Most of what you got wrong, we haven't touched yet."

The sessions were working. Sophie and her parents agreed to retain my services right up to the final exam. Her confidence wasn't quite soaring, but it was better than before. And while she was still behind the others in her class, she wasn't falling any further behind.

Over the next couple of months, Sophie made some rapid progress. Her test scores at school improved, and she needed less prompting from me. She also took charge of her own programme. She was starting to realise where we needed to focus our efforts. Every day that we were due to meet, she would ring me an hour or two beforehand and tell me what she wanted to work on, giving me just enough time to find the right books and papers.

The arrangement was a hassle for me— one that could have been eased if Sophie had been more organised. But the problem was resolved in a way I didn't expect. She'd been distracted throughout one of our sessions at the end of October. When we finished, she said there was something she wanted to show me.

"In the garage. Come on!"

Sitting in the garage was a brand new Renault Clio.

“What d’you think? Daddy got it for me.” Her smile was the width of her face. Her emerald eyes always sparkled, but now even more so.

“I didn’t know you could drive.”

“I passed my test on Monday. This is my reward. Isn’t it great?” She was quite literally bouncing with excitement, at least, bits of her were.

“It’s very nice. What size engine does it have?”

“I don’t know. I don’t care either. Come on, get in.”

It was an expensive model - chock full of the sort of toys I would have loved. “Is this a satellite navigation system?”

She smiled again and nodded. “Daddy says it’s so I can always find my way home.”

“Well, all I can say is, you’re a very lucky girl. I wish my parents could have brought me something like this when I passed my test. All I got was a clapped out Ford Fiesta.”

“James, you still have a clapped out Ford Fiesta.”

“So? I grew quite fond of it.”

She giggled, something she did a lot when she wasn’t hard at work.

“James, I’ve been thinking – this car could make life easier for you. For both of us, really.”

I was confused. “I know it’ll make your life easier, but how will it help me?”

“Well, you always seem to forget to bring something or other with you. And, I was thinking. What if I came to your house instead?” She turned on her sweet smile. It was probably the smile that secured the car. If I had trouble not giving in to her when she smiled this way, what chance did her own father have?

“I’m not sure, Sophie. The nights are drawing in and the weather’s getting bad. You’re an inexperienced driver; it could be dangerous.” I don’t know why but I wasn’t entirely comfortable with her coming to my house.

“But we’d have all the materials available. That’s got to be better for my studies. Hasn’t it?”

“That’s true. I suppose. But I’m not sure your mother would think it is a good idea.” I was running out of reasons to stop her.

“I can persuade Mummy. It’s you I need to convince. And I have the perfect way. If you don’t let me come to your house from now on, you won’t get this.” She held out my payment.

“That’s blackmail, Sophie.”

“It is. What’re you going to do about it? Report me?”

“There’s not much I can do, is there? I guess we’ll meet at my place from now on. Here, I’ll give you the address.”

Sophie was due at my house at three on Sunday. I normally slept in on Sundays, but I got up early and went over the house like it was springtime. I vacuumed in everywhere, and tidied up the spare bedroom, which I used as my office. I even did the previous night’s dishes and then got a take-away for lunch so there weren’t any more to do. She pulled up on my driveway a little before three. Early.

“Hi, James,” she said as I opened the door. “I got us some Coke and chocolate on the way here. Mummy was around to make sure we had refreshments at my house, but I wasn’t sure that you would have anything.”

“Coke and chocolate is all that is in my fridge sometimes.”

“Oh. Never mind. Look, I’ve got a test on Wednesday on elastic collisions, so can we concentrate on that.”

“Sure. I normally work at the desk in the back bedroom; top of the stairs, on the left. Go and find a spot, and get my *Nelson, Longman and Wall* book off the shelf. I’ll get us some glasses and ice for that Coke.”

It was a very good lesson. Sophie seemed less distracted, and she picked up the techniques for the questions quickly.

That went on for several weeks. Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons, Sophie would pull up outside my house with chocolate and Coke, and we would get through plenty of work. One particular Wednesday, just as we were finishing the lesson, she had something to say.

“James ...”

“Yes?”

“I really appreciate all your help and everything. I don’t think I would be able to get through this exam without you.”

“Thanks.”

“I wish there was some way I could repay you.”

“You do that at the end of every lesson, with money.”

“Yeah, but ...”

“No buts, Sophie. You pay me to do a job, and I do it. It’s that simple. If you really want to repay me then you’ll get the grade you are capable of in the summer. One of the reasons I do this job is to see people I’ve helped succeed”

“My grades will probably be better because of you. And not just maths. You’ve taught me how to look at what I know and don’t know, and then learn from it. You know that, don’t you?”

“Yes. And knowing that will be thanks enough.”

“You went to university, didn’t you James?”

“Yes. Why’d you ask?”

“We have to get our applications in soon. I’m still not entirely sure I want to go.”

“D’you want me to be honest?”

“Please.”

“You’d be a fool not to. I had a wonderful time. I know things are even harder now than when I went, but I’m sure your parents would look after you financially.”

“Daddy said that.” She looked down, as if ashamed of her family’s wealth. “He even said that I needn’t get a loan.”

“So go for it. It’ll be a shame to have worked so hard and then miss out on an experience like that.”

“Where did you go?” She looked up and leaned towards me.

“Liverpool.”

“So you moved away from home?”

“Yeah. You feel less guilty about staying out until three and four in the morning if your mother’s in another city.”

“Daddy wants me to stay local.”

“What do you want?”

She sat back in her chair and shrugged. “Dunno.”

“Sophie, my cousin gave me the best advice when I was making up my mind. Wanna hear it?”

She nodded.

“Listen to everyone. To your parents, friends and teachers. Then ignore them and do exactly what you want to do.”

She smiled. “Thanks, James.”

“You’re welcome.”

It seemed to me that Sophie saw me as a big brother, or at least a big brother’s best friend. After she asked me about university, she started to confide in me more. I heard all the gossip from school, and I always knew who fancied who. She even told me about parties that her friends were having, and hinted that I might want to go. I never did. I didn’t think it was right, and besides, a group of teenagers wouldn’t want some mid-twenties teacher type hanging around.

I cared a great deal about Sophie. I wanted her to get into university, and to get into a good one. She was a sweet girl and deserved the very best.

We took a break from lessons for Christmas and the New Year celebrations, but started up again in early January. We still had the sessions at my house; the arrangement had become too convenient to change. She arrived, as always, a few minutes early, and thrust a bottle of Coke into my hand when I greeted her at the door.

“What are we working on today?” I asked.

“Oh, surprise me. Pick me some hard ones, and let me get on with them. Let’s see how I do.”

“Sure. Do you want to get the glasses while I go and find something?”

She met me upstairs with two full glasses of Coke and a plate of biscuits. The cheeky thing had raided my larder. I didn’t have very much to do that session; she wanted to test herself. She worked hard and, after I had marked her work, she had done better than either of us expected.

“What’s gotten into you?” I asked.

“I’ve got some motivation.”

I didn’t say anything.

“I’ve been offered places at all the universities I applied to.”

“That’s excellent news, Sophie. Any thoughts on which one you might take up?”

“Daddy wants me to go to Leicester, because it’s closest, but I quite fancy Cardiff. I’ve always had a soft spot for that Welsh accent.”

“Well, you know what I think you should do.”

“Cardiff?”

I nodded. “Cardiff.”

Sophie’s eighteenth birthday fell on a Wednesday. I expected her to cancel our lesson, but when she hadn’t by bedtime on Tuesday, I thought I should get her a present. I tracked down a bottle of eighteen year old Bordeaux, and bought a small locket on a chain. I presented them to her after our lesson.

“James, you shouldn’t have. This wine must have set you back a fair bit.”

“My uncle bought me a bottle from my birth year when I turned twenty-one. I’ve still got it. It struck me as a unique sort of present.”

She picked up the second present. “And what’s this? Oh, James. It’s lovely, thank you.”

“It’s for luck. When I went into my exams, I always wore a St. Christopher that my aunt bought me. I thought this might be your lucky exam charm.”

“Thank you.” She leaned over and kissed me on the cheek.

“Actually, James, I have something for you.” She gave me two envelopes.

“Open this one first,” she said, pointing to the larger of the two. It was a party invitation for that Friday night.

“Mommy insists on throwing me a birthday party. It will probably be ghastly with all my family there, but she would like you to come. She wants to thank you herself for helping me.”

“Okay, I’ll be there. What’s in this one?” I opened the other envelope.

“The Dome nightclub in town sent free tickets and vouchers for Champagne to the school. It’s for a post-exams party.”

“I don’t know, Sophie.”

“I’m not taking no for an answer. Not this time.”

“Okay, whatever you say. I guess I’ll have to show you kids how it’s really done.”

“I’m counting on it.”

I spent most of the birthday party with Sophie's parents. They insisted on buying me drink after drink as thanks for my work with Sophie.

"You've done a marvellous job, James. Truly marvellous. I can barely recognise the girl; she is so much more confident. Here, let me get you another whisky," her father said. We were at the bar and he was telling his neighbours about me.

"Really, Mr Harris, I couldn't."

"Nonsense, it's the least I can do. Barman!"

Her mother was the same. At one point, when she had cornered me at a table, I felt as if she was showing me off to her friends. I didn't get to speak to Sophie at all because she spent all of her time with her friends and younger relatives. Around half past ten, I made my excuses and collected my coat. Before I left, Sophie came to say good-bye.

She gave me a small hug and peck on the cheek. "Thanks for coming. It must have been awful spending all night with my parents."

"It wasn't that bad. At least I didn't have to buy any drinks."

"See you tomorrow?"

"If I'm not too hungover."

A few weeks before the exams, Sophie stepped up her lessons to three a week. We spent a lot of time doing past exams papers, working out what to expect. By the eve of the first exam, I was convinced that Sophie was as prepared as she could possibly be. She, on the other hand, wasn't quite so sure.

"I'm nervous as hell," she told me before she left my house.

"That's perfectly normal."

"But it's not very good for me, is it?"

"Yes, it is. I'd be more worried if you weren't nervous. Being nervous will get the adrenaline pumping, and that will keep you alert and on top of your game."

"If you say so."

"I do say so. Now remember what I've told you. The exam is three hours long, that's 180 minutes. With 100 marks on the paper, that's over a minute and a half per mark. Take 10 minutes at the start to read through the paper, mark the questions you know you can do, and then do

those first. The confidence will help you with the ones you find more difficult.”

“I’m not looking forward to this.”

“No one does. But you are ready. You’ll do well.”

“I’d better go and get a good night’s sleep.”

“Good idea. Best of luck.”

“Thanks.”

“Harry, it’s me.”

“James, you prick. Do you have any idea what time it is?”

“It’s eight-thirty.”

“Exactly. What d’you get me out of bed for anyway?”

“Are you busy tonight?”

“I’m going to The Dome with some mates. Why?”

“I thought you might be. It just so happens that I’ve got a couple of free tickets.”

“Free tickets? How?”

“This girl I tutored gave them to me. They’re having a post-exams party there. One of them is yours. If you can stand being seen out with your nerdy older brother.”

“You? At a night club? Dancing and everything? That is something I’ve got to see.”

“But I need to ask a favour first.”

Harry met me in town two hours later. Whenever people found out we were brothers they had trouble believing it – we couldn’t have been more different. I was the nerdy one – studious, serious. He was Mr. Cool – good at football, always up for a laugh. He was the blonde haired, blue eyed boy; I had an uncontrollable mousey mop and muddy brown eyes. Even our careers had taken a different path; I was a teacher, he was a car-mechanic.

“You really mean you don’t have any going-out clothes?” Somehow his face managed to show his surprise, amusement, pity and disgust all at the same time.

“H, my wardrobe got nothing in it but white shirts and grey suits.”

“Are you sure you’re my brother? There wasn’t a mix-up at the hospital?”

He took me to his favourite shops and we gave my credit card a bashing. He’d only agreed to help me dress right for the club if I brought him a new outfit too. He insisted I buy him dinner that evening as well. We agreed to meet at my local at seven.

Later that evening, after showering, shaving and cleaning parts of my body that never normally got cleaned, I got dressed and admired the result in the mirror. I looked pretty sharp; my brother had good taste. I walked to the pub, where Harry was already standing at the bar with a half empty glass in front of him.

“Where’ve you been, Brov? You’re already a pint and a half behind.” He lifted up his glass and drained it. “Make that, two pints behind. Get ‘em in, I’ll find us a table.”

I ordered drinks and food for us and then joined him.

“Cheers, Brov,” he said as I handed him his beer.

We talked until the food arrived then ate in silence. Harry always ate in silence. He claimed it was good manners. I thought it was because he stuffed so much food in his mouth it was impossible for him to speak. He finished eating first and fetched us more drinks to wash down the meal.

“Tell me about this girl. Why is she giving you free club tickets?”

“She says it’s as a thank you for helping her with her A levels.”

“A likely story. She must have a crush on you.”

“Don’t be stupid, Harry.”

“You’re right. Stupid idea. How could anyone have a crush on you?”

After a couple more rounds, we called a taxi and went to the club. By the time we got there, a long queue had formed outside. It took over ten minutes, shivering in the cool night air, before Harry and I got to the door. I presented the tickets Sophie had given me, and the two of us were waved in. The Dome was huge, and there were so many people crammed into it that I would have no chance of locating Sophie. I shrugged and resigned myself to a night of watching my brother drool over countless girls, and no doubt succeed in taking one of them home.

“It’s your round.” Harry said. Every round so far had been my round.

I headed for the bar to get the drinks. My lack of cash and the extortionate cost of two bottled beers forced me to open a tab on my credit card. While the barman was setting that up, a familiar voice behind me said, 'I'll have a Bailey's please, James.'

I turned around. "Oh you will, will you?"

"Yes, please. After all, it's a celebration."

She looked stunning. As always, her hair was in a ponytail, but she had some spray on it that made it sparkle. She wore just enough make-up to enhance her features; her lips, cheeks and eyes. She was wearing a classic little black dress; short with a low back and halter neck. She caught me admiring it.

"Like the outfit?" She held her arms out and spun around.

"It's certainly not what I'm used to seeing you in."

"Is that a yes?" It was that smile again. That oh-so-hard-to-say-no-to smile.

"Yes, Sophie. It's a lovely dress."

"And the shoes?" She stood on one leg and waggled her foot. They were indeed nice shoes. I lifted my eyes up her body admiring her legs on the way.

The barman brought Sophie's drink and we left the bar. Sophie looked at the two bottles in my hands.

"I hope you're not planning to get too pissed. I expect a dance later and I don't want to have to hold you up."

"This one's for Harry. He's over there."

"Introduce me then," she said.

I took her over and did as she asked. Harry seemed very pleased to meet her. Sophie insisted that we join her at her table. She went on ahead to make space for us.

"Is that the one, Brov? Man, she is smoking."

"That's her."

"I don't know how you've managed it, being alone with her all this time. I'd have jumped on her by now."

"That's because you're an uncontrollable thug. Besides, I enjoyed working with her, and if I'd tried anything, she would have wanted a different tutor."

“Aw, Brov. You need your head looking at. She is hot. I don’t know why you don’t just go for it.”

“The word is ‘ethics.’ I’ll lend you a dictionary if you like so you can look it up.”

“Fucking ethics, eh? Too bad, Brov. Still, your ethics don’t affect me, do they?”

“Harry, you go near her and I swear - I’ll kill you.”

“I’d like to see you try.”

It was a good night. We drank Champagne, danced, and I chatted with some of Sophie’s friends. Sophie never stopped dancing. I have no idea where she got the energy. The music’s beat was rapid, and I could only last for a couple of tracks at a time. Each time I forced my way on to the packed dance floor, Sophie pushed everyone out of the way, and came running over to hug me. When I left to recuperate, she tried to hold me back. A little after midnight, I was sitting at the table trying to get the last few drops out of the last Champagne bottle. My credit card was feeling the pressure. Sophie’s best friend, Andrea, flopped down next to me.

“It’s empty,” she said.

“So’s my wallet.”

“Well, I’ve got some cash left. I’ll buy on one condition.”

“What’s that?”

“For god’s sake, just get it over with and kiss Sophie.”

“What?”

“She’s hot for you. Surely you’ve noticed. Your brother has. He’s a good kisser by the way.”

“What?” My brain couldn’t cope.

“At school, right, Sophie talks about nothing but you. It’s James this and James that. She thinks the world of you. I wish the two of you would just fuck and get it over with.”

“What?”

“Oh, I give up.” She got and bounced back to the dance floor.

I wasn’t alone for long. Sophie took Andrea’s seat next to me. I was suddenly wide awake.

“Sophie.”

“James.”

“I wanted to say thanks for asking me tonight. I’ve had a really good time.”

“Thanks for coming. I’m just glad I’ve finally got you out of the house, and away from those books.”

We looked at each other. Her eyes were sparkling and she looked prettier than ever. She smiled at me and if it was possible, her eyes lit up even more.

She gently placed her hands on my face and pulled me to her. She planted a delicate kiss on my lips. She tasted so sweet. I allowed the kiss to linger and savoured her taste. Then I realised what I was doing. I pulled away.

“Sophie, I can’t do this. We can’t do this.”

“Why not, James. I’m a big girl. I can do what I want.”

“It’s not right. I’m your teacher.”

“No, you’re not. Not really.”

“What would you call it then? You pay me to help you learn. You might not be at my school, but you’re still my student.”

“James, I want this so much. I always have.”

“I can’t Sophie. It’s not ethical.”

“Yes, you can. I know you want this as much as I do.”

She reached up to my face and we kissed again, this time with more passion. I slipped my tongue into her mouth and almost immediately, she began to suck it. We kissed for well over a minute before she pulled away.

“I’ve wanted this for so long,” she said with a sigh.

I smiled at her. She glanced at her watch. “Mummy thinks I’m staying at Andrea’s tonight. This place closes soon. Let’s go now before the crush starts.”

“Go? Where?”

“Your place?” She sounded less sure of herself than usual.

“Okay. We’ll go back to my place. But no promises, okay.”

We got a taxi back to my house. The whole journey we kissed and caressed. My hands roamed over her body, up her back, along her perfect thighs. Sophie had equally busy hands. She searched my mouth with her

tongue and she had her hands in my hair or on my back. She even opened two of the buttons of my shirt and ran her fingers through my thin chest hair.

Back at my place, we were no sooner through the door than Sophie pushed me back against it and once again explored my mouth with her tongue. I returned the favour, before pushing her off me so I could offer her a drink. I took her hand and walked towards the kitchen, but she stood her ground.

“Where are you going?”

“The kitchen, I was going to make some coffee.”

Her eyes told me what she thought of that idea. She nodded in the direction of the stairs and smiled. I smiled back and nodded my agreement. I let go of her hand and she walked slowly up the stairs. I watched for a while, now unashamedly admiring the gentle swing of her hips. She reached the top and turned to look at me.

“Hurry up with that coffee. I’ll be waiting for you.”

She disappeared into the bathroom, and I hurried into the kitchen. I was nervous as hell as I made the coffee. My emotions were all over the place. Upstairs, waiting for me, was a sexy, willing, eighteen-year-old. Every man’s dream. But at the back of my mind was the nagging thought; *Teachers shouldn’t do this with their students.*

She called down the stairs to me, “James? I’ll be in the bedroom. Okay?”

What the hell! She wanted me, I wanted her, and to hell with the consequences.

I poured the coffee and took it upstairs to the bedroom. I stopped dead in my tracks. Sophie was lying on her side on the bed. She had taken her hair out of its ponytail, and it flowed down around her face. She rolled onto her stomach and propped herself up on her elbows, her legs bent at the knees and her feet in the air. From this position, I could see right down her dress. A phenomenal sight. Any doubts I’d had disappeared.

I put the coffee down on the bedside table and sat facing her on the bed. She pushed herself upright, her legs underneath her, and draped an arm around my neck. “I’ve been in love with you for such a long time. Almost from the first time we met.”

She placed her lips against mine. I responded and wrapped my arm around her, my hand on her back. Clearly, she was in no mood to waste time, and guided my hand to her breast. I felt it through her dress and squeezed gently. Her breathing deepened and she moaned into my kiss.

She moved her hands from around my neck and set to work on my shirt buttons. One by one, she undid them. I was wearing my shirt outside of trousers, so when she had opened the last button, she had no problem slipping it off my shoulders. She pulled back to look at me. Then she bent her head and licked my nipples, sending shivers down my spine.

She stopped all too suddenly, scuttled over to the other side of the bed and jumped up. She stood still, looking exquisite in that little black dress. She smiled that smile again. Then reached up to the halter-neck clasp and undid it. She brought down the straps but held her dress up.

I could see now the answer to a question I'd had all night. Was she wearing a bra? Yes. I could see the silky black halter-neck but nothing more.

“This is Gucci. It was a birthday present. I'd hate to leave it on the floor.”

I jumped from the bed and fished a coat hanger from the wardrobe. I handed it to her and she placed it on the bed. Then she slipped the dress down and stepped out of it. She looked fantastic in a delightful black mesh bra and matching panties. Her bra was stretched to breaking point by those fabulous breasts and I could see her nipples through it. The black material contrasted with the creamy whiteness of her flesh. Her skin looked smooth and her stomach as flat and firm as a board.

She arranged her dress on the hanger then turned her back on me and walked over to the wardrobe to hang it up. This gave me a heavenly view of her backside. From the back, it looked as if she was not wearing anything, the thong disappearing between the cheeks of her arse. From the front, I could see her thin, wispy pubic hair through the black mesh material.

She sat back down next to me, smiled and draped her arm around my neck. We kissed again. I went straight for her tits, caressing them through her bra. I tried to avoid her nipples, gently brushing them occasionally, teasing her. She gasped each time I did, and I could feel the nipple harden a little more. In time, I reached into her bra and scooped out her breasts. Then I attacked her buds, rubbing and squeezing them. She broke off the kiss. Her mouth was open and her eyes were wide. Her moans of pleasure were barely audible. She reached behind and unclasped her bra. I bent my neck and sucked one of those tiny buds into my mouth.

“Oh.... Oh, my god.... Oh James, don't you dare stop. God, that feels so good.”

She threw the bra onto the floor and put both hands on the back of my neck, pulling me to her tighter. I flicked one nipple with my tongue. I rubbed the other nipple between my thumb and forefinger.

“Oh yeah..... Oh, that's nice.... that's nice James ... Oh my god, don't stop.”

I pulled back from her, fighting against hands that were desperate to keep me there.

“No ...” she said, but all I wanted was to swap nipples. I alternated between nipples, sucking, flicking and rubbing. Eventually, I pulled away and sat up straight.

“Oh, James,” she said. “I never... no-one ever... that was nice.”

“There's more to come,” I said. “Lie down.”

She did as I said. I followed her, taking care not to put any of my weight on her. I kissed her mouth briefly then ran my tongue down her chin and neck, between the valley of her breasts, and on to her navel. I dipped my tongue into her belly button and swirled it around before continuing the journey south.

I was on my knees between her legs. I gripped her thong and pulled it down. Sophie lifted her hips to assist me. I smoothly pulled it past her knees and off. I tossed it on the floor with the bra. Then I ran my hands up her legs and parted them. She lay, her legs spread, waiting to see what I would do next.

She smiled at me. “Well?”

I lifted her right leg and kissed her knee. I lavished her with more tiny kisses until I reached the top of her thigh, and then did the same with other leg. I bent down and kissed her just above her neat patch of pubic hair. There was no doubt she was turned on; her scent flooded my nose.

I slid my hands around her waist then up her back, letting my thumbs trace the curve of her breasts. Her skin was soft and smooth. She held my head and gently pushed it downwards. It was obvious what she wanted and I was more than willing. I traced my tongue through her pubes and she moved her hands to caress my shoulders. Then she slid her fingers up and through my hair. I could feel her wetness against my face, and sense her muscles tighten. She was making soft animal sounds deep in her throat, and she gripped my hair tighter still.

I wanted to prolong it, but was unable to resist. I pushed my face into her, and let my tongue lap up through her slit until it flicked across her clit. She gasped. I moved my hands to cup her buttocks and pull her to me then dipped my tongue inside her and lapped upward. She arched her back and rocked her hips. I settled into a rhythmic lapping, up her slit and across her clit. She pressed my face hard against her, and she thrust back against me.

She made a short, harsh panting sound that grew in intensity until I was worried she might wake the neighbours. Then she squealed. A high-pitched squeal. Her body tensed for several seconds then went limp.

Her hands fell at her sides. I lay between her legs, rested my head on her thigh and licked her slowly. I was in heaven, and very nearly fell asleep enjoying the closeness. Time seemed to stand still.

Sophie's breath slowly returned to normal, and she lifted her head up. "James... Oh James..."

I pulled myself up her body until my face was level with hers. I looked deep into her eyes, and she smiled back up at me. "Recovered?"

"I want you, James. I've always wanted you."

I still had my trousers and boxers on, and sat up on my knees so that I could undo my belt buckle. Sophie reached up to help. I let her get on with it. I knelt in front of her, her head level with my crotch. She finished with the buckle, and took great pleasure in whipping the belt from around my waist. She wore nothing but grin, and the gleeful expression of a child opening a present. She threw the belt on the floor, and attacked my trousers' button and fly. Neither lasted long. She reached inside, her hands going around to my buttocks, and forced my trousers down as far as they would go.

My boxers were all that stood between Sophie and her first glimpse of my cock. She grabbed my boxers by the waistband and pulled it away from my belly. She peeked inside before looking up at me with a smile. She tugged them down and over my cock. It sprang down and hit her on the nose as it was set free.

"Oh, Hello." She was talking to my cock. "I've been waiting to meet you for a long time. How about a kiss?"

She leaned forward and kissed the tip. I swear, I nearly came right then. She pulled my boxers down to my trousers, moved her hands back up and gripped my bum cheeks. Finally, after such a prolonged stripping,

teasing me as much as I had teased her, she opened her mouth and engulfed my cock, sucking in as much as she could. I was just getting into the rhythm of Sophie's blowjob when she stopped and lay back down again.

"Make love to me."

I fumbled to get my clothes off. Sophie watched with the thighs parted invitingly. "Come on. I've waited long enough, don't you think?"

"Sophie, is this ...?"

"I've been saving myself for you."

I smiled, took my cock in my hand and guided it towards her waiting pussy. Sophie reached down too, and together we rubbed my cock up and down her slit, covering the head with Sophie's ample lubrication.

"Now," she said.

She let go of my cock and put her hands around my waist, pulling me to her. I pushed forward, slipped easily into her. She was so wet, and she was pulling me toward her with such force, that I slid in all the way in one go. She held me there, enjoying the new sensations. She wiggled her hips as if she was trying me on for size. I looked at her face. Her eyes were closed and her mouth slightly open. She was beautiful. She finally released her grip on my waist, telling me she was ready for me to take over.

I pulled out slowly, stopping when only the head of my cock was inside her. There I waited for a moment before plunging back in. I repeated this several times, each one slightly quicker than the last. We settled into a rhythm, with Sophie meeting my every thrust. She moaned quietly, and as we moved to the beat of our own tune, her moans grew louder.

Ultimately, my own pleasure took over. I felt my orgasm building and increased the tempo until I was pounding Sophie with all I had. She seemed to like it. Her moans peaked in silent scream, her body tensed, and she came for the second time that night.

She trembled beneath me and I could hold back no longer. With a low grunt I filled Sophie full of cum. Jet after jet of the creamy liquid flooded her pussy. I'm ashamed to say that for the first time that night I wondered if I should have been more prepared.

Our orgasms slowly subsided. We lay in each other's arms until I realised that I was nodding off and still had my contact lenses in. I got up reluctantly to take them out. When I returned to the bed, Sophie had

sunk beneath the covers and was sleeping contentedly. I slipped into the bed and spooned up beside her. I draped my arm over her, and I fell fast asleep too.

The next morning I cooked Sophie breakfast then drove her home. She got me to pull up a couple of streets from her house.

“Last night I told you that no-one would find out. I think Mummy might get suspicious if you drop me outside the house.”

“Point taken.”

“I had a lovely time last night. Thank you.”

“No. Thank you.” I meant it.

She blushed. Before she left, I felt that I had to ask her about the risk we had taken. “Sophie, can I ask you something?”

“Sure.”

“Last night, we didn’t, I mean, I didn’t...”

She stopped me mid sentence. “You’re worried about not using a condom?”

I nodded.

“Well don’t. I’ve been on the pill for almost three years. Doctor’s orders.”

“But what about..?”

“I know you haven’t caught anything from me. You couldn’t have, could you? When you think about it.”

“But how do you know you haven’t got anything from me?”

“I trust you. If you were worried about it, you wouldn’t have done it.”

This girl was amazing. She had more trust in me, than had in myself. She leaned over and kissed me on the cheek, before saying goodbye and getting out of the car. I watched her walk away, and she turned and waved at me as she crossed the street. I waved back then drove home.

We saw each other several times over the next few weeks, and when I broke up for the school holidays we saw each other nearly every day. We even got a cheap holiday in Ibiza from lastminute.com. Her parents found out before we went. They were bound to, weren’t they? But surprisingly, they actually approved of our relationship.

All too soon, the A Level results were published. I took her to school pick up them up. I thought it best for Sophie to go in and collect them alone, but she was gone barely a minute, returning with an unopened envelope.

“Go on then. Open them.”

“I’m scared, James. What if I fail?”

“You won’t.”

“I can’t. Here, you do it.”

She handed me the envelope and I tore it open. Inside was a small card containing her results. She’d passed. And what’s more, maths was her best result.

I tried by best to look forlorn and said, “Bad news, Sophie.”

She looked horrified, bringing her hands up to her mouth. I could see tears start to well in her eyes.

“I’m afraid we’re going to see a lot less of each other. You’re going to Cardiff – you passed.”

Her horror turned to disbelief. “Really?”

I nodded.

“Let me see.” She snatched the paper from my hands. After she’d looked at it, she set about me, hitting me playfully on the arm. “You git. You horrible, horrible git.”

“I’m serious, Sophie. We’re going to be a couple of hundred of miles apart. It’ll be hard on us.”

And it was. Two days before she left for Cardiff, we went out or a romantic evening. I brought tickets to a London show, and we spent the night in a hotel. That was our last night together.

She settled to life at university and although we spoke on the phone a few times, seeing each other proved almost impossible. We’d been together for barely two months, but our relationship and been going on for almost a year. It felt so right when I was with her that I wondered how I’d cope on my own again. But I was wrong. A newly qualified teacher started at my school that September, and we hit it off pretty quickly. By Christmas we were an item and a year later we were married.

Last I heard, Sophie had met her dream man; a young, talented, postgraduate maths student. They too planed to settle down together.

I'm happy, Sophie's happy, but we're not together. Life's funny like that.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marc Nobbs lives in the Northamptonshire countryside, just a stone's throw from where Princess Diana is buried and the Gunpowder Plot was, well, plotted. It's far cry from his inner-city roots, but that's what an education does for you.

He works full-time for a firm of solicitors, counting other people's money and wishing that all those zeros represented his own millions. He cries like a baby every time has to write a six figure cheque with someone else's name on it.

Marc is originally from Wolverhampton in the Black Country, and despite having escaped that god-forsaken place, he still lives in hope that he may one day see his beloved Wolverhampton Wanderers pick up a trophy. (It's a very vain hope) He studied at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth and he's still not entirely sure how he ended up in Northampton.

Marc started writing erotica in the late Nineties. He has been selling his stories for cold hard cash since late 2005.

When he's not writing erotica, reading erotica, or working, Marc enjoys DIY and gardening (at least, that's what his wife tells him), and shouting at rubbish footballers who aren't worth the money they get paid. He also enjoys beating his father-in-law at chess.

For more information about Marc and his upcoming releases, visit his website



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