

Excerpt – A Moment on the Lips

Copyright Norah Wilson and Heather Doberty writing as N.L. Wilson – January 2014

“Mind if I move these papers off the couch, Dix?” Rochelle asked. She’d set her glass down on the table and was already sweeping them away. “Oh, and isn't this that fake ID you thought you lost?”

“Hey, thanks,” I said. “I was—”

Rochelle continued her foraging. “What’s this? A movie? Sock It to Me: Erotic Adventures in Argyle?”

I snatched the DVD from her before she scratched it; it was one of my favorites. I didn't see the case, but for the moment I slid the disc onto the pile of unsorted DVDs by the player.

“Okay, it’s time for a toast,” I said. “What shall we drink to?” I fixed her with an innocent gaze. “Oh, I know! Here’s to us. And to those wonderful men in our lives . . .”

Rochelle didn't pick up on my brilliant hint. Nor did she raise her glass in salute. She simply stared down into her wine. I did a quick visual scan. Nope, no lipstick stain on the rim of the glass. No white crumbs of dishwasher powder or unsightly streaks.

“What is it?” I asked.

I didn't like the silent seconds that hung between us.

Finally, she lifted the glass and downed her wine. I blinked, then did the same. And being the wonderful host I am, I poured us each another.

Okay, I am one kick-ass PI. There is none finer in all of Marport City. Maybe none better in all of southern Ontario. Wait . . . only southern? Let me rephrase. In all of Ontario.

Yeah, modesty is another of those things I suck at.

But truthfully, I’m good at reading people. Intuition? I haz it. I pick up vibes like some people pick up . . . things that get picked up. (Yup, I suck at metaphors too.) I also know my best friend. I was starting to suspect there was something eating at Rochelle Banks this fine Friday night. I suspected something was wrong. Then I more than suspected. My intuition was banging, my skin tingling. Oh, and then she said:

“I’ve got a little bit of a problem, Dix.”

I put my wineglass down. But only long enough to refill us.