

Now or Never
by Carol Sandford

He moved the silky strands between his fingers, marvelling at its colour and the way it felt, but he couldn't keep his eyes away from her face, he was drawn to it like a moth to a flame.

He hovered above her, supported only by his elbows, his long body draped intimately close with hers. He felt at home where he was, at peace, and he wasn't sure about the sensations that it evoked.

It had all started so suddenly. One minute he was hurrying out of his quarters, the next, it had become a desperate situation for them both as they struggled to maintain their balance and keep on their feet, in amongst a lot of flailing limbs, shock and bubbling, light-hearted, embarrassed laughter.

That was until everything came to stunned standstill. When he found himself somehow, somehow with his arms around her. Not only around her, but on her breasts. Unable to move, he could do nothing more than stare into her surprised eyes.

But her eyes held more than surprise. Within their depths he thought he saw more; desire. Need. She confirmed it when he reluctantly began to move his fingers away. He suddenly found his hand imprisoned by hers, the added pressure letting him feel her racing heart and the heat that poured into his already hot palms through her tunic.

Daring himself to step even closer to her, bringing his heated body within a few discreet millimetres away from hers, trapping their hands between them, he towered over her. She rose her flushed face to his, her lips unconsciously opening, waiting, inviting him to kiss her.

Without even considering the consequences of his actions, he slowly lowered his mouth to hers, settling his lips against hers with a contented sigh.

Within their hearts, the moment felt entirely right. Their bodies meshed together as though God himself had created them to be as one.

She rose up onto her toe tips in a desperate attempt to somehow get even closer, even deeper, but he matched her desperation with his own, and moments later she found herself gripped by the buttocks and hauled up higher, allowing that precious depth, of not only her tongue, but his.

Cradling his hips with her slender thighs, he turned and hurriedly moved into the inner sanctum of his bedroom. Placing her non to gently upon the bed, a fact that she didn't mind about, the next few moments became a tangle of limbs and clothing as they tried to separate one from the other.

Tension consumed the air surrounding the naked couple as he settle his long form against hers realising that the time had come for them to step away or leap into the unknown. But not yet.

Something had happened between them. Something that had brought them to this moment. Something ~different~ As he tenderly rained tiny kisses about her creamy features, they thought about ~them~.

Why now? Why not long ago when it wouldn't have mattered and when it would have been more right? When other people would have accepted the instant attraction and given their blessings.

Why now?

Was it because they were two lonely people seeking out the oldest of reasons for a union? That didn't seem true. She'd had her men, he'd had his women, more than he'd care to admit to sometimes.

But the instant their eyes locked, they knew why. It was because they ~wanted~ to know what it would be like between them now, as a man and a woman, deeply attracted to each other, with nothing between them except faded past memories.

It was now or never.

Holding her head, he couldn't help his fingers from curling into tight fists, her hair pulled taut between his fevered fingers, but she welcomed the pain, obliterating the possible wrongness of what they were about to do. Instead she felt herself going rigid, waiting for what she knew was coming.

His tongue filled her waiting open mouth, but her own met his half way and welcomed him in. She was sure that the moan that left her lungs to collide with his was kicked from the very depths of her reawakened womb, and she couldn't help the tiny frantic movement against his own not too dormant body.

This was it.

He savagely broke away from her mouth, the pain it caused in doing so reflected in his eyes as he once more focused on her bright gaze. Seconds passed as the one question that held all the answers hovered between them, but before he could ask it, and on a wave of relief and excitement, she brokenly whispered, "Yes, oh, yes!"

But even as the words were slipping from between her lips, he was entering her body, unable to wait any longer, certain of her decision.

It had been so long for her, her muscles tightened against him, but it felt so good, so sensual, so ~right~, neither stopped to adjust, neither dared.

He kissed her again, feeling her loosen with every plunge on his tongue. She blossomed like a new born bud, eager to see the sun. Eager for its heat.

He dropped one arm, bringing his hand beneath her trembling thigh, lifting it higher, allowing him to deepen the intimate locking. Now they were sealed and nothing was going to stop them, nothing.

She felt her inner coil begin to tighten, he knew it too by the way she fought a silent battle to buck like stallion whilst trying to hold back to delay the ultimate ending.

But he wanted her to let fly. He wanted her to shatter into a trillion pieces in his arms and know that he'd been the one that showed her the way. That he'd finally gotten the woman of his innermost fantasies to let him in even if it was just for a little while.

And that was all it ever could be; A one off. One magical moment of madness never to be repeated again, no matter what their hearts decreed.

But he was going to make sure that that one moment was going to be the best moment. A moment that they would never forget. A moment that would see them through eternity, because they both knew that this was it; their one night to relive a miracle.

She felt herself suddenly flipped from being intimately entangled beneath him to being on top of him, their bodies still linked, their hearts still pounding in unison. She splayed her hands upon his chest, her fingers instantly curling, threading themselves amongst the thick mat of soft hair that covered his broad torso.

He felt so good, so manly, so ~strong~. His muscles rippled beneath her hands as his own fingers trailed a fevered path along her arms and across her swaying breasts as they began to gather tempo together.

When neither could stand the slow torture any longer, his large hands dropped suddenly to her slim waist and she knew instantly that the loving was done. Now the urgency began. The final step to fulfilling a fantasy. Heaven was all but a heartbeat away.

He pushed up, she pushed back. He groaned with erotic pain, she gasped with carnal need. He rose, she rose higher, and as he held on for dear life, she let herself go with an abandonment that left her crying with the power of her release.

His own explosion barely a nanosecond after, sent him careening into her arms, catapulting him off the sweat-saturated sheet and against her sweetly drenched body, their arms enfolding one another into an embrace that belied all the saints to come between them.

They held onto one another whilst reality came crashing down around them, neither one of them ready to let it in. Not yet. But when their bodies cooled and their passions withered and they felt ready to face each other, they found they couldn't.

Instead he buried his head into the slender line of her throat and pulled her closer still. Her own hands blazed a trail along his spine as she too settled her head upon his shoulder.

Time stopped. The world disappeared before them as they silently made a pledge. It ended here and it ended now. They had no other choice and they wanted it no other way.

Finally at last, they pulled their bodies apart far enough so that their faces could touch and their lips meet for a kiss that silently whispered their goodbye. He felt tears dampen his cheek but wasn't sure if they were his or hers. But feeling them gave him what he needed to pull away from her.

But she was already pulling away from him, her legs disentangling themselves from his. Silently he watched her as she collected her clothes, made her way into his bathroom and closed the door.

He watched her every step of the way, drinking in her beauty, aware that he would never see it like that again; nude, spent, abandoned. Proud.

He had to get out. Now. It took him less than one minute to slip his uniform back on, and with one last lingering look to the still closed bathroom door, he walked out of his quarters, leaving behind a memory that

he would never forget.

~*~

Absently, Will watched the woman seated across from him. He was aware his captain was speaking but he couldn't break his gaze away from her. He longed to reach over and touch her, and remember, but it just was not possible.

He broke his gaze away from her and instead focused on the woman beside her. They were as different as night and day. One ebony, the other copper. One tall and willowy, the other delicate and serene. One he loved, the other he fantasized over.

Absently, his fingers stroked against each other, remembering. Wanting. He ached to feel her silky hair between his fingers as they made love. To see the coppery strands splayed out over his pillow. To see her milky blue eyes fix upon his as they climbed to oblivion together.

Could he?

Would he?

Maybe.