

An excerpt from *Downtown Devil*, Sins in the City book two

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Clare tried to focus on the screen, on the plot, but good as the movie was, a half hour in it simply wasn't enough to hold her attention. Not when she could feel Mica's body heat at her side, all but sense his pulse and every urge coursing through his body.

*And I know exactly what that body is capable of.* She knew exactly what it looked like, doing dark things to hers, knew how ably it could excite her, please her. She knew the feel of his skin under her palms, the smell of him.

Mica's attention was on her—not the film, not his roommate sitting mere feet away. She could sense it, real as touch. She glanced to the side and, sure enough, those eyes were waiting. Watching. His face was bathed in the restless glow of the TV, and he smiled.

Nothing about this man was more seductive than his smile. Her gaze dropped to the open V of his collar, to the soft, sparse hair and tempting skin. She inched her hand over, up his thigh to close over his. He clasped her fingers, thumb rubbing her knuckles fiercely, and the intention in those eyes went dark as pitch. Clare swallowed.

*Take me to your room.* It'd be so easy. Just stand, tug her to her feet, lead her down the hall. Vaughn wouldn't care. He was buzzed, same as them, and he had to know he'd walked in on the middle of a make-out session. And he'd been kind to Clare the morning she'd woken up alone in his best friend's bed, so he wasn't the type to judge. It wouldn't be rude if they just left. She held Mica's gaze, then flicked her own over his shoulder, to the hall. His grin deepened.

He leaned close and put that brazen mouth to her temple. "Something you need?"

"I bet you can guess."

“The movie not working for you?” he whispered, and she shivered as his lips brushed her cheek.

“It’s fine, but I’m feeling a little distracted.” A little distracted, a little drunk, monumentally horny. She freed her hand to rub his thigh, dipped her face so she could press her mouth to his jaw. Not quite a kiss, but she let him feel a hot, heavy exhalation, and hear the need in her very breath.

He turned his head, caught her lips with his. The kiss was deep and dirty, so good she wanted to drop her chin back and sigh aloud. Instead she held his head in both hands, let her fingers get lost in his dreads, let him feel her hunger, taste it on her tongue.

There was a bunch of shouting on-screen, whisking Clare out of the moment just long enough to remember they weren’t alone. She pulled back, flushed, and let Mica go. She felt silly and overcome, and surely he could see that in her dopey grin.

*We should go to your room,* she mouthed.

“In a minute.” And he was kissing her again, hungry and needy. No red-blooded woman could possibly say no to that.

Mica’s hand crept higher, warm palm cupping her breast, stealing her breath. A flash of worry chased the bloom of arousal. *We’re not alone on this couch.*

It was dark, though, and Clare’s buzz made it hard to feel scandalized. A glance in Vaughn’s direction said he wasn’t paying them any attention. The wine was making it very difficult to care . . . and to be perfectly honest, there was something a little wicked, a little hot, about going there with Vaughn sitting only feet away. With most any other guy, she doubted that would be the case, but Mica’s sexuality was so bold, so provocative . . . it fit, somehow. And Vaughn seemed like the type of man who’d have no trouble excusing himself or calling out his friend if things got too weird for him.

As for Clare, the idea had her hot. Her cheeks were burning, her blood pulsing thick and fast from both nerves and excitement.

“Your room,” she said again, rubbing Mica’s arm.

He whispered, “Do you like him?”

Her hand stilled. “What?”

“My friend. Do you like him?”

Upended, unsure what precisely he meant, she said, “Sure.”

“You want him?”

No reply came, not for long seconds. “I’m not . . . I don’t know.” She knew Vaughn was kind and respectful, and handsome. But what Mica was getting at . . . Shit, she wasn’t thinking straight. The wine had left her warm and easy. If all Mica was after was a bit of kinky dirty talk, she wasn’t opposed.

“Want him how?” she asked.

“You want to kiss him?”

“I . . . I don’t know. Maybe a little. Does that make you jealous?” she teased. “Or . . . or did you want to see that?”

By the light of the TV, he smiled. “Maybe a little.”

“It’s all up to him anyway,” she said.

“Ask him, then.”

She flushed, bit her lip. “I couldn’t.”

“You could. Just turn. Catch his eye. Ask him.”

“Is that a dare?”

“If that excites you, sure.”

Fuck, did it? She couldn’t guess. All she knew was that the more they talked about it, the less insane—and the more thrilling—the idea felt. Mica had a way of making the filthiest, most *wrong* things sound irresistible.

His voice went low, all but growling against her throat. “It excites *me*.”

She swallowed. “Yeah?”

“Yeah.”

“I wouldn’t even know how to ask.”

“You just turn,” he said again, “and you meet his eyes, and you tell him, ‘I want to kiss you.’”

Clare blushed. If she did it—if she wasn’t rebuffed and embarrassed and left never wanting to come by this apartment again—and if Vaughn was into it, where would this end, exactly? With Mica getting his kinky thrill and hustling her down the hall to his room? Or somewhere altogether unexpected?

*Unexpected is exactly what I’ve been feeling deprived of.* Playing it safe had left her with three years’ worth of regrets, whereas throwing caution to the wind on Thursday had given her the best sex of her life. *Impulsivity: one; self-control: zero.*

“You want me to dare you?” he whispered.

“No.”

“You want me to ask him for you?”

Another warm flush as she tried to imagine it. Imagine what Mica would even say to his friend. At length, she committed aloud. “I’ll do it.”

That smile deepened, carving lines beside his lips. “Good.”

*But not without another dose of courage,* she thought, reaching for her wine.

Vaughn glanced to their end of the couch as she set the glass back on the table. His own tumbler was empty, and it had been his second. He was feeling the whiskey, no doubt. “I’ll, um, I’ll get out of your way, I think.”

And faced with now-or-never and her nerves muted by the alcohol, Clare was startled to hear the response waiting on her lips.

“Could I kiss you?” Her eyes held his and the words seemed to float in the shadows between them. A bold question, spoken softly, warmly. Hopefully, even—she heard longing in her voice.

His brows rose. “Kiss me?” He looked past her to Mica, and Clare could only imagine what

that man's expression must be saying. Something filthy. Something shameless.

She nodded. "Only if you want to."

His mouth closed, opened. He blinked, and she admired his eyes, those dark lashes she'd not really noticed before. If not for Mica's energy eclipsing everything around him, she might have met Vaughn at that party and gone home thinking he was the best-looking man she'd seen all night.

"So, do you want to?" She couldn't say who this woman was, operating her lungs and lips and tongue. It was as though desire had turned corporeal, stolen her body and voice. No regard for what was appropriate, no cares beyond the wants of her mouth, hands, sex. "Would you kiss me?"

Another glance at Mica, a pause, a nod. "Yeah," he said softly, lids dropping low. "I would."

She stretched her arm along the back of the couch, angled her legs, welcomed him to come close. Their eyes met, and she saw her own wine-tinged uncertainty reflected back at her. But there was more. Curiosity behind the hesitance, and yeah, she felt that, too. Mica wasn't her boyfriend, after all—far from it. She wasn't worried about doing something that might derail or redefine a relationship.

She could already feel Mica's heat and energy at her back, and now his fingertips joined the scene, alighting softly between her shoulder blades. He didn't urge, didn't push. Merely touched, letting her know, *I'm here. I'm watching. I'm excited.*

Vaughn edged closer and their knees brushed. She stroked his collar, studied his mouth. Those stunning white teeth, framed by soft-looking lips. A flash of pink as his tongue wet them. He leaned in and she did the same.

For a moment, Clare barely registered the kiss. All she was aware of was Mica's watching, and for half a minute it was a performance, not an intimate exchange. Then something changed. Something fell aside, and in a blink her attention shifted, captured by Vaughn's mouth.

His lips were full and lush, and they tasted of whiskey. She let him know she liked this,

putting a hand to his face. His jaw was rough with the day's stubble, but other parts were soft—his cheek, his earlobe, his temple. As she touched him, his kisses deepened. Not dirty like Mica's, not that bold, but sensual and taunting in their own way. Mica's sexuality was a brushfire; Vaughn's was a smoldering hearth.

She tilted her face, invited more. A hand warmed her side, and it took her a moment to realize it was Mica's. She shivered, and heat rushed in as that pleasant chill subsided. *This is so wrong. So wrong and so fucking hot.*

Vaughn cupped her neck, his broad palm cool from his glass. With every stroke of their tongues, every exhalation that mingled between them, his hesitation faded, until she could feel the excitement humming deep in his chest. Mica's hand slid lower, kneading her hip. She felt its mate at her neck, pushing her hair aside. His breath caressed her nape, then came his lips. Two men's mouths on her. Two men's heat stoking hers. Two men's desires, at once intimidating and empowering.

She reached back to run her hand over Mica's hair, fisted it softly.

"You like how he kisses?" he murmured, loud enough for them both to hear.

"Yes." She spoke it right against Vaughn's mouth, and felt his body tense in reply.

Mica's palm on her hip rose and slid forward, closing her breast in its heat. The other was still in her hair, and she wondered if the two men's fingertips were touching. With every sweep of Vaughn's tongue, every soft squeeze of Mica's hand, she was sucked deeper into the lust, so deep that the wine was moot, its chemical intoxication *nothing* compared to this.

She was all but panting when Vaughn drew back, stealing that heavenly mouth. "Where's this going?" he whispered. His voice was thick, distracted. Sexy.

"I don't know." She suspected one person in this room *did* know, however. She suspected the man at her back knew exactly where he wanted this to end up. She craned her neck and met Mica's gaze.

"You like him?" he asked, dark eyes full of heat.

“Yeah.”

“You want him?”

She swallowed and spoke the truth. “I think I do.”

“You should have what you want,” he said simply, and lowered his mouth to her throat once more. It snatched her breath for a moment, then she sought Vaughn’s eyes and asked, “Do you want that?”

“If you do. If you’re not too drunk, I mean.” He looked flustered, some clarity returning to brighten his eyes. “I mean, I don’t know.” His hesitance couldn’t be faulted. The proposition implied that he’d shortly be getting naked with his best friend, and that didn’t seem like a leap the average man would take lightly.

“I’m not drunk,” she said, realizing it was true. She’d had a large glass—enough for a healthy buzz, enough to dull her inhibitions, but not enough to rob her of her judgment. “And I do want that. You, and him.”

Vaughn didn’t reply except to kiss her. Deep and dirty, with more passion and aggression than she’d yet felt from him—a taste of what Mica transmitted, when they did this. She imagined all that lust that radiated from his skin, doubled. Two mouths, four hands on her. Two excited male bodies. Two cocks.

*This is really about to happen.*

And as that fact sank in, she didn’t think they could get there soon enough.