

An excerpt from *Midtown Masters*, Sins in the City book three, by Cara McKenna

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Suzy eyed the microwave clock as she stepped inside her apartment. Six ten—enough time to shower before her evening gig began.

She toed off her sneakers by the door, dropped her purse on the counter. Her purse, containing her wallet, containing a driver's license issued not to a Suzy or a Susan or a Suzanne but to a Soo-jin, though she was Suzy to most everyone aside from her mom and grandma. Plus a few creepers she'd dated who were a little too enamored of her Asianness for her comfort.

“Suzy” fit her—apart from being petite and probably more cute than beautiful, she liked the contrast of such a sugary, quaint name with her thoroughly, shamelessly debauched soul.

Shower accomplished, she blew her hair dry and walked past her own bedroom to the one at the end of the short hall, a towel wrapped around her body and cell phone in hand. She checked its clock and texted Meyer.

Where are you? 20 minutes to show time.

He wouldn't *not* show, but she hated when he cut things close.

She set the phone on top of the dresser and began rooting through its drawers, considering the occasion. A click from down the hall turned her head. “Meyer?”

A “yes,” came from the kitchen, where he’d let himself in with his key. “I felt your text. No faith,” he called, voice growing louder, closer.

“I hate rushing. It throws my game off.”

Meyer strode into the room—she watched him in the reflection of the stately cheval mirror that stood beside the dresser. He was a tall, slender man, but moved with more precision than you’d expect. Everything about him was precise. Not stuffy or OCD, just...neat. He was the most self-possessed pervert she’d ever met, and she’d met quite a few. Good-looking to boot, with just a few fine lines to give away that he was in his mid-thirties, and a smattering grays glinting at the temples of his stylish brown hair. Stylish, but again, not fussy. He could’ve been a model in an ad for scotch or cashmere sweaters or investment services. He looked *expensive*.

Hell, he *was* expensive, same as Suzy.

“Good day, darling wife?” He came to stand beside her and check his reflection. Those hazel eyes made a quick and approving scan before moving to her.

“Not bad,” she said. “I was at Baker Hall this afternoon, helping my old neuro professor with her research. You?”

“The usual. Clothed some orphans, bathed some lepers, threw a Frisbee for some three-legged puppies.”

She snorted. “Uh huh.” Far more likely her fake husband had spent the day in the park, arguing with octogenarians. “Let me guess—you played chess for ten hours and drank eight espressos and got into a fight with somebody’s great-grandfather over a war that happened a century before you were born.” Meyer had a doctorate in history, Suzy a masters in psychology. They were both as underemployed as they were overeducated.

“I prefer to think of it as passionate political discourse,” he replied.

“You’re a waste of a PhD.”

“And your only resemblance to a shrink is that you charge by the hour.”

She stuck out her tongue at him.

“But let’s not argue, darling. Who are we fucking for, tonight? A regular?”

Smiling, she bobbed her eyebrows. “Miss Lindsay.”

Meyer rubbed his forehead in mock despair and groaned, stepping away from the mirror.

“Oh, come on! I like her. She’s sweet.”

He walked to the computer desk that faced the wide bed. “How a woman can solicit live pornography and yet remain so *aggressively* vanilla I’ll never understand. Where’s my ring?”

Suzy crossed the room to root through the top desk drawer, where she found the small, polished pine box that held all three—his and her silver wedding bands, and the cubic zirconia engagement ring. She handed Meyer his. “I find Lindsay very refreshing.”

“I was hoping for somebody kinky, tonight,” he countered, slipping on his ring. “Dust off the old strap-on?”

“Maybe tomorrow, if you’re lucky. But that’s all up to the customer, and tonight Lindsay calls the shots.”

“I’ll endeavor to stay awake,” Meyer said through a sigh. “Please fuck me properly when this is all over?”

She ignored that. “I’ve got a million stories in my head about who she is. Lindsay.”

“Librarian with a gluten allergy,” he guessed, circling the bed, straightening a pillow. “Frozen dinners, twelve cats, no life.”

“You’re mean.”

“Who books for *seven* on a Tuesday evening?”

“She could live in England for all we know—that’s like midnight or something there.”

“Too shy to even let us hear her voice. Probably has a debilitating stutter.”

“So what if she does? Besides, plenty of our viewers do that.” They were fully enabled to do a regular web cam chat, complete with video and audio feeds of their audiences, but they offered other options, too, including text-to-speech. Shy clients liked that. They could type their requests and the computer would read them out to Suzy and Meyer. Not as erotic as hearing the orders issued by a panting human on the other end of the internet, but comfortable clients were repeat clients, and paying customers, besides. They’d agreed to do this for a year, and by the time they were done Suzy would have made enough to pay off her mother’s mortgage, and Meyer would have made enough to...to do whatever he wanted the money for. *Something depraved, no doubt.* Bless him.

“Better get limber,” Meyer said, and commenced to stretch his jaw in all directions.

She laughed. “Not a bad idea. The lady certainly likes the way you give head. And you won’t catch me complaining.” Suzy rarely faked orgasms for the camera. She didn’t like to, and never *had* to when that particular talent of Meyer’s was their audience’s request. And with the mysterious Lindsay, it always was.

Lindsay liked intercourse, too—usually missionary, sometimes doggy, always Meyer doing most of the work. *Every woman's fantasy*, Suzy thought with a smile, though frankly a waste of her talents. Still, a night camming for Lindsay was always a relaxing one.

*Mr. and Mrs. Parks* was the name of their venture, and their website. Park was actually Suzy's real last name, and Meyer had figured that, pluralized, it sounded adequately expensive, like they were “the sort of people who had a couples membership at a racist country club.”

“Never mind that we fuck for money,” she'd said to that. “And we're not married and never have been, but if we were, somehow you'd have taken my last name.”

“Details.”

They *had* dated for a time, shortly after they'd met in a coffee shop on the Carnegie Mellon campus, though they made far better friends and business partners than they ever had boyfriend and girlfriend. Suzy liked performing, liked the camera, and Meyer... Well, Meyer liked everything sexual. Women and men and all designations in between; being on top, being on the bottom, being watched, doing the watching...pretty much everything that ended in a screaming orgasm.

They'd started camming about six months into their relationship—not for money, but in a stubborn, grasping attempt to stay monogamous in the face of friends' skepticism that either was capable of it. Suzy had wanted strangers' eyes; Meyer had wanted variety. They'd both been shocked at how quickly they earned a large and enthusiastic following, and soon they began receiving requests for private shows. Each could use the extra

money, and building the venture had injected some new passion into their lives, both in and out of bed.

Before long it became clear their romantic relationship was fated to dissolve, but the money was so good and the sex so fun, they'd agreed to stay monogamous for one year, and make the most of it. Forgoing condoms helped support the illusion that they really were married, plus Meyer informed Suzy that telling women you were abstinent basically put them in heat. The Morrissey Effect, he'd called it, pussy in the bank, though Suzy had pointed out that he wasn't abstinent at all—he had sex with her on camera nearly every night. *Details*, he'd said. Always *details*, with Meyer. A bride could abandon her groom at the altar and he'd still proclaim it the best wedding ever, provided there was cake and an open bar. *The groom tried to hang himself in the coat room*, you'd say.

*Details, details.*

“What do you think?” Suzy asked him, holding up two fistfuls of matching underwear, black and taupe.

“Can't you wear some garters or something?” he asked, finger-combing his hair. “Give me something to play with, here.”

“Not for Lindsay.” The girl—no, the *woman*, more likely, given how much she spent on these evenings—wasn't the garter type, Suzy bet. Miss Lindsay liked passionate but traditional sex. She liked her men lustful yet doting, her women seductive but not trussed up like pole-dancers. *She wants to watch sex she could imagine being a part of*, Suzy hypothesized. Sensual, explicit, but fundamentally *respectful* sex, where the man

was gorgeous and gifted and the woman always got hers, first. “She’s a classy one, our Lindsay.”

“Dull as an old crayon.”

“Bitch all you want, but at least with her I know it’s not going to be two minutes of deep-throating then you coming all over my face.”

“That happened *once*,” Meyer said, holding up a single finger. “And the customer is always right. Look on the bright side—same price if they use the entire hour or just the two minutes, and if I recall you were finishing your thesis that week. We charged him a small fortune per minute that night, *and* you got an extra hour to work on your dissertation.”

“I’m just glad we’ve got regulars and a ten-week waitlist, that’s all I can say.” She stripped her tee and bra and slipped into the taupe push-up. “Otherwise I’d be getting it up the butt every night.”

“Lucky girl,” Meyer said, fussing with the angle of the camera.

“Hey, it’s fine if I have time to prep, but you’re not exactly the sort of man who can just jump right in.” Meyer was blessed, you might say. Great for business, but a bit rough on a small woman, without ample warm-up. “Nice on occasion, but not every night. Which is what it would be, if we were stuck relying on randos. We could rename the website Asian Girl Takes It Up the Ass.”

“That’s half the internet, Suze. No way the domain is still available.” Meyer grinned at his own joke as he dimmed the lights. “Candles?”

Suzy checked the clock—four minutes to seven. “Shit. Hang on.”

She tugged a gray sweater dress over her head then jogged to the trunk beside the desk where she stored their props. She pawed past a tangled strap-on harness and handcuffs and assorted dildos and found the shoe box of candles. She took three and Meyer took three and they lit and arranged them on the matching bedside tables, soft, flickering light setting off the gold accents woven through the quilted comforter.

*What a weird room*, Suzy marveled. She and Meyer had already been camming when her roommate had moved out this past winter, and instead of finding a replacement, Suzy had made a trip to IKEA and invested in an expensive-looking bedroom set. She'd done their stage up nice—way nicer than the rest of the apartment—so now it appeared as though an art-school dropout and a sensuous housewife were cohabitating. The dresser was full of her cam clothes, outfits ranging from young and raunchy to glam-on-a-budget, the closet hung with various dresses and a couple of Meyer's suits. It was going to feel strange, and a little sad, disassembling this space when their exhibitionist period came to its inevitable close.

She went back to the dresser to put in earrings. “What do you think you'll do when our year of professional monogamy's up, Mey? Date? Or just fuck every guy in Pittsburgh in alphabetical order?”

Meyer snorted. “Dating. You're so old-fashioned. What would that even look like? ‘Kinky bisexual alcoholic lapsed-Jew pervert seeks same,’” he dictated, air-bracketing the heading with his hands. “‘I enjoy walks on the beach, sunsets, pegging, flogging, brunch—’”

“I get it.”

“Single-file line, ladies and gents. No shoving, please.”

She rolled her eyes, feeling adequately stupid for having suggested it.

“No one dates anymore,” he said, fussing with the computer. “Especially not me.”

“You and I tried to. And I’d like to again, when this is all done with.”

“More power to you, sister. Just don’t bore me with the details.”

“I won’t even know how to dress for a date,” she thought aloud, eyeing Mrs. Parks’ open closet once more. “I’ve gotten so used to costumes. I forget what plain old Suzy even looks like, trying to get into somebody’s pants.”

Tonight they were dressed down, relatively, her in her dress, minimal makeup and jewelry, Meyer in gray slacks and a snug black sweater over a collared shirt, like they’d just gotten home from a night at an art gallery or wine bar. *Lindsay would like that*, she imagined. Just the sort of date their one-woman audience would want to go on, if only she could muster the nerve.

“Time?” she asked Meyer.

“Thirty seconds. And she’s online.”

“Yikes.” Suzy scurried to the end of the bed and sat with her legs crossed at the ankle, hands in her lap, smiling warmly, eager to greet an old friend. Meyer tapped and clicked on the laptop, readying the feed and telling the linked-up camera on its tripod to stand by. He punched the volume up, loud enough for them to hear Lindsay’s requests read out by the computer, but hopefully not so loud that the robot voice would put a damper on the sophisticated tone they were after, tonight.

Now Meyer, too, hurried to the end of the bed and sat beside Suzy. Took her hand, smiled for the camera. “Ready, Mrs. Parks?”

“Ready, Mr. Parks.”

And when he told the camera, "Record," the curtain lifted on another night's command performance.