

of those perfect white teeth.

The conductor unwound her lanky length and rested back on her elbows.

"I don't run from involvement. It's just a...politic solution."

"We don't work in an office."

"That's...not exactly what I mean. I can't explain. You'll just have to trust my reasons."

"What if they're not good enough..from my point of view at least?"

"Why don't you take Calla up on her offer? She's an attractive woman."

"Is that what you'd advise me to do?"

"No, no I wouldn't."

"You speaking from experience?"

"As the composer said, 'I know the score.' I don't think you'd like that particular...kink."

"How do you know what I'd like?" Kris' voice had deepened seductively. It was mostly unintentional but she made good use of it to inch herself a little closer to the beautiful woman at her side. "You could always find out for yourself," she tempted in a whisper.

Diana released a shaky breath. "You know...I really wish I could." Her voice had taken on the same hushed, breathy timbre.

"Then, why don't you?" It was pure invitation.

Diana's eyes graced Kris' soft pink lips, the jade irises that sought to catch and hold hers. Diana leaned in, breathlessly, almost imperceptibly and her hands intercepted Kris's, squeezing them for emphasis, "I want you..." Oh, yes. "...to stay away from me." She rose gracefully and walked away.

Feeling damned whether she did or didn't, Kris made a hard dissonant pass across her strings, breaking a few and spent the next half-hour replacing them.

Afraid to return to her room, Kris scouted out the terrain a bit until she caught sight of Ralph and David relaxing on the lawn in front of the open-air amphitheater.

"Oooh, honey," David gave her the once-over, "you look like the cat not only got your tongue, but chewed it up pretty good before spitting it out."

"She did." Kris took the cup from his hand and sipped it experimentally. "Pina Colada? You guys..."

"We travel light, but in style," Ralph said handing her a plastic cup filled from their thermos. His russet red hair contrasted with stormy hazel eyes and even in the afternoon light he still displayed the unlined features of a kid.

"Gay men are so Dorian Gray," she murmured into her cup.

"Why, thank you, darlin'," David drawled.

"Um-hmm," Ralph agreed, "in both hedonism and youthful appearance. Oscar said it best when he stated 'that is what I'd truly like to be.'"

Kris smiled in spite of her mood. "Reminds me. What do we do about lunch?" she asked.

David reached into his bag and handed her a sandwich. "Much more reasonable than concession prices."

"Thanks."

"So, what happened, girlfriend?" David asked.