

Overtime
a *New Avengers* fan adventure
by C. Kay
Rated M

1985

The snap they took that first holiday to pastiche Bond movies now rested in state on her ebony coffin. Representatives from ABT, the Bolshoi, and London's own Royal Ballet filled their Kensington flat with condolences and cheques of generous quid to fund a memorial scholarship in her name. Before closing the casket, Michael added Steed's last bowler, saying, "He'll meet you, Purdey-girl."

Thatcher herself squeezed his arm during the September service to add, "Over time, you'll carr-" Striding brusquely away from overmuch well wishers telling widowed Gambit he'd "carry on," the prematurely graying man intoned, "They'll never be another for me, Ma'am."

Invisible to all, a ghostly Purdey whispered, "Says you."

March, 1991

Dr. Calabasas' attempt at *sotto voce* plainsong of "Killing Me Softly" made overtime schmoozing an umpteenth Cal State funding soiree a real pain.

So I hotfooted to the cash bar for some Hummingbird Cake to zip home; three years single made TCM channel's annual pre-code movie marathon the main romance in my life besides food, public radio classical concerts, and heavy metal ballads. *Even if Heaven grabbed my elbow, what would I know to do?* I laughed to myself.

Canned mocktail plus purse under my chin, dollars stretching to the cater-waiter, a heavy plate's eight soothing pineapple-banana bread layers of All-Spiced cream cheese goodness wobbled on my elbow in danger of schmearing down my one formal dress.

But somebody's hand grabbed the slipping dish. "Can't let something this good go to waste, can we?" a security guard explained, his gentle teasing belying a Cylon's slitted gaze.

Just as I'd thought, I didn't know what to think. *It's the brickhouse I saw passing out dance scholarships after CSUB's convocation:* healthy head of true curls, manners fine as his body, tall enough to make my own 5'7 ¾" feel dainty, long arms and legs muscled lean by maybe military training instead of a gym lunk's iron pumping, he'd impressed me enough to think, *He's got Burt Lancaster's posture.*"

Tonight that classic movie stance shone like the silver hair slightly brushing his After-Six tux collar. His scent like Hawaiian Tropic and fresh ginger, evoking memories of braver teenage summers, gave my usual Charlie Brown smile more gumption.

The stranger's full lips slightly grinning in return, Cake Savior gave dessert's first bite a run on my anticipation. He flashed a friendlier smirk as I stared into narrow eyes that were an indigo blue dark as rum in his equally rich-featured face.

"So . . ." I joked to keep my behavior classy, "any chance of Thatcher keeping Bush awake through the next N.A.T.O. field trip?"

His laugh matched the genuine smile. "I'll pass that on to our Iron Lady. Are you a student of history or just political affairs?"

"I'm a Carter Democrat with an adjunct's position in our French department."

His grin turned almost wistful. "Next you'll admit to studying ballet—"

"Yeah," I blurted to a fainter laugh, "three nonconsecutive years in grade school." When early Spring breezed through the anteway door he'd opened to Stockdale Country Club's bar, my breath caught to see airborne coattails highlight an ass firmer than my Marine ex-steady's.

"It is a little tight in this crowd. Shall we tour the terrace?" The mystery man's flirting style seemed wistful, too.

I flounced butt-first to not shimmy my fragile Herrera against the leather banquette's bench and said, "Have extra fork, will travel," after he joined me, setting an extra fork snagged for him near my mocktail's napkin.

"May I?" he asked, poising tines over the leaf-green frostings' edge with barely concealed boyishness that inspired LOTS more mental notes: *Still sober in spite of a generous hosted drink minimum and healthy appetite; manners fine as his abs; kinda talks like public TV detectives but his accent isn't smooth like Alastair Cook. More like a quieter version of Irish? No way to know—I've never been to Europe.*

"Waste not, want not." Then he leaned in for that sample, almost too close to my off-shoulder bodice, and then back to his side of the banquette. *Cat or mouse?* my dormant cougaress wondered, and I stopped giving a damn if that utterly masculine timbre was real brogue or something else. *Lord knows certain recently uncloseted Marine never played this much with me.*

The man's broad smile now what my freshman students called "cheesin'", his savoring focused more on me. "Would you say they blended enough pineapple with the banana, or does this Hummingbird need something more exotic?"

Trying to keep my sweaty legs immobile when his tongue's tip briefly flicked one corner of those killer lips, I replied to well-confirmed provocation, "Depends on what you need." Now he almost gasped as I leaned forward, to strains of "Blue Danube Waltz"'s overture from the faculty ball, to catch a light sniff of his breath.

I held position like Kay Francis hovering over Herbert Marshall's fading smirk in *Trouble in Paradise*. "All-Spice's about right, unless the cheese is too hard. Means the layers won't give." I dipped my index finger where he'd run that fork and swirled a scosh of frosting on my Mojave-dry tongue.

Once CSUB's band rolled out "Drink, drink" from "The Student Prince" operetta, Quick Study barked, "Jim Beam neat," at the bartender, perfect thighs spreading to show off his inseam. I wasn't the virgin of Crockett's day and eagerly studied said jewels while he gauged my expression over each sip of Scotch. Suddenly shouting, "Run my tab," to a waiter, he gripped my first salon manicure even pinker in running us towards the golf course. My, that age-quilted hand felt warm.

Cresting the eighteenth hole, he just as suddenly let go and playfully rolled all his hot toughness down a sand trap into the opposite side's gully. "Dare you," felt damn extraneous to hear with a man like him laid out for me.

Fendi heels from 1990's Miami Vice squad homecoming kicked away, I double-dared by rolling—arms out horizontal with my legs—onto his bod.

"Oof, you're not a lightweight, are you?"

"Same goes, Husky!"

"Knew you thought I was hunky," he chuckled, kissing one of my lips so quickly and tightly it almost made me wet.

"I said husky, egotist."

"No, you're turned on, Love." His steely knee gradually slid outside my right hip.

"Did not," I still tried to argue my first point. And gripped long handfuls of golf turf to keep from grabbing him.

Other knee seductively easing by inches down the opposite side of my pelvis, he finally whispered at my panting mouth, "Are so."

When the CSUB fundraiser's guests started shouting "Goodnights" to each other outside of the Stockdale Club's darkening ballroom, Quick Study graciously paused to hurry us to my Pontiac. "Better your place or mine for this," he growled, agile handling of the Sunfire's max speed making her engine growl, too.

Best hint ever, I rawly thought. Ten minutes later he had me flattened into luscious "Bull Durham" French kisses against my slammed front door.

Steed's replacement only said her aunt helped UNCLE train Special Ops, so no reason Queen's Council wants lookout kept on the poor thing pre their summons. Eyes-for-cake, just what harm

could you do the British Empire? Special Branch operative Gambit opined with boredom. His first impression of Kay Barratt, made whilst she perused the 'tea' counter, was not a scintillating diversion from duty. *This can't be the bird who outsmarted top lieutenants of the Cali cartels before uni graduation?*

As Purdey might have told him, "You always miss the trees for the forest, Mike." Crossing the CSU ball's room past likelier love lights, he realized Barratt's daring velvet gown was his favorite dark blue; noticed the exemplary figure under and shoulders above it; and guessed, *Whatever hidden fullsomeness matches those red lips, only being lonely caused it. None of her fellows on the faculty chat her up or as yet share a glass with her.*

Kay hummed the beat of every song she liked lively as Purdey'd kept that chaperoning ballet bar. *Stands to reason a little attention could soften Miss Barratt towards QC subpoenas about her namesake.* Mike purposefully jostled her bare forearm to make the required contact.

Why Grandma, what a big eye you're giving me, he gloated as he saw his own extra decades hadn't prevented her having the usual yen lasses did for him. Mike ignored nostalgia's warning pangs when she thought he didn't see her grab a fork to share dessert with him as was Purdey's habit.

Gambit grinned again to flex his romantic timing and be the center of all passing by. He never expected Kay to reference his boyhood idol, Palladin the gunfighter. *Does looking like him work on bustiers the way it did on Year 10 brassieres?*

Somehow in answer, timid Kay gamely licked a long bead of buttercream from inside his bite at her cake. *Lord this bird makes me hard as the Devil!* Leaning back after unbuttoning his monkey suit, he stared her down over an eighth of Jim Beam, daring Teacher to misbehave—not acknowledging that the ice was chiming too much between pulls from the liquor he drank and giving his own heat away.

That navy gaze puzzlingly grew lovelier moss green. Gambit forgot himself to grab a Purdey's hand while 'running for it.' Spent once reaching the eighteenth green's crest, Mike tossed his jacket away to roll downhill in acquiescence of Kay's impact on his widowed body.

When she rolled flat out to land on him without care, he blurted out about her weight; the memory, as Gambit later paced her condo garden, made him wince. *Your arms are good, so heavy and warm as per the old Army drinking song, Barratt.* He groaned as flashbacks of her silky belly in his mouth and her unbelievable ardor for every bit of him rose his silk boxers 0300 in salute.

Panties torn off by his fevered teeth, he ate me with all three years' starvation I felt. Whether collapsed on his windpipe from cuming or screaming wild joy at ball-bearing-hips' fast grind, this strange man never complained.

Gifted hands just lifted me on one wide shoulder's span, smoothly adjusting lamps and tables foreplay overturned, while carrying me to bed. Thick biceps cradled my 220 pounds with ease.

He stripped that tux with no sleazy freaking (occasionally licking my nipples to keep me crazed), simply a pro's slow dance to his entrancing a cappella basso singing, "Drink, Drink." Blessedly this midnight gift at last sidled up my spasmed kneeling body to kiss each part of me he bared.

I didn't have to worry if he'd be gentle or have to beg him, "GET ON me," the man just k-n-e-w how to calm my anxious hold on my cotton panties with kisses, run his wild mouth like honey over my neck, breasts, or spine. And how to gradually pound me like sand, through unpent shrieks, into our dead sleep. Weak hand falling to his empty pillow hours later, I ran after him like clever marine's '92 coupe.

My heart sang when I found him lingering on my moonlit patio. Quick Study's pensive expression belied that precision shaped view which earlier dropped me to bended knees.

Risking tenderness rejected by too many men before, I laid my head next to his face, chin on the shoulder which once carried me, to wrap my lace-robed arms around to the front of his waist. Bearhugging my third lover, I whispered, "How ya doin'?"

Bad shock, a true stranger turned around. "The name is Gambit." Face now gold granite, it was like Study dared me to see this for more than some detective fantasy brought to life in my overgrown backyard.

Mike relaxed a bit when Kay let off those hands' none-too-rusty tickle of his rocky bellybutton. "And the Christian one?" she murmured.

"Michael."

"Not tired? Or would you want to come back to bed, m-Michael?" Kay's stammer reminded Gambit of her biographied celibacy. *Not possible this bird's only laid two blokes*, he thought, obstinately ignoring her question.

Kay padded away on those strong, cheeky legs saying, "Well if you want to shower, I'll be in bed."

Cat-quick, he rushed to her side before she could fall asleep. Shifting abruptly to regard his lingering coldness, Kay's temper showed. "Either get in bed like the gentleman you purported to be or get your rear in gear for home."

"I can't without my car." Mike's flat honesty bellylaughed them back to lovers. He helplessly swallowed a thirst to rediscover her.

Revelling at the contrast of her natural décolletage's delicacy to her lacy robe's brocade trim, he untied white ribbons restraining it. Then feigned binding those soft ivory thumbs to the old four poster bed with her stockings' pink ties. To Kay's moans, he used the ribbons' yarn tassels to stoke both their utter thrill.

Licking sweat off his stiff upper lip as I straddled Michael, I adored his bull neck, lolling from unyielding to avid from all my moves.

Rocked in the heaven's cradle of Kay's thighs, arms no more missing Purdey, he and a new love hit the sun.

Mike waited the morrow on her first look for him after the night's maneuvers; he'd watched too many women covet the vintage orange Jag in his garage, his mid-century Belgravia mews, or fabled ass to want another one-off. *Be a real woman, ask me to be the man for just you.*

I can't hide this need for him shining Lou Gramm's 'midnight blue' through my lashes. So I trembled asking, "Best of dear hearts, make every Gambit just for me?"

As Michael delightedly snatched his love close, Purdey's spirit flew to her final rest with a whispered, "Like I told you, Irish-for-dear-heart: one of these days . . ."

An End