

Chapter 3

Jellybean hangs up the phone. The Assistant District Attorney is again upset with her boyfriend. It is a petty argument, but that is all they do anymore, endless fighting over stupid things. She needs to end it once for all. There is no way it will ever work out with Detective Jake Smith.

Jillian Ross, senior ADA worked in this office since passing the bar nine years prior.

Jellybean, as her boyfriend nicknamed her, and Jake shared a tenuous on and off relationship since they met, before his wife and he split up. Though never discussed, she knows the reason for his divorce. She never believed she was Jake's first extramarital affair; she was wrong. Even with his shortcomings, he had always been faithful to his wife until meeting the slim, gorgeous lawyer.

An early homicide case, after he made detective grade, had him working closely with Jill. They started with occasional all-business lunch meetings. From there it escalated faster than a dry-grass fire in a Santa Ana windstorm. Smith was working around the clock on unwarranted overtime. The vast majority being in Jill's upscale downtown apartment and it was not on paperwork.

It took Jake's homemaker wife a couple of months to figure out the situation. The final straw came after Jellybean and her detective finished their first major fight; her lover refused to get divorced! Jill phoned the wife planning to end their marriage under the guise of apologizing, saying she had not known he was married. She guaranteed the woman the affair was over. Also, assuring the woman Jake loved her very much and always would. She ended the conversation, that in his mind nobody could replace his wife. Jellybean hung up confident her scheme worked.

As she anticipated this did not relieve Jake's wife mind; it only confirmed her suspicions. Jake's wife of twelve years kicked him to the curb, having a locksmith change the locks and throwing all his belonging on the front lawn before he got home from work. His soon to be ex then drove four hours to Santa Barbara for an extended visit with her supportive parents.

Jillian Ross' plan put the final nail in Jake's divorce. The ADA is as smart as her UCSD, Magna Cum Laude degree said she was; Jake was hers.

It's seven tenuous years later, during lunch hour on New Year's Eve. Jill has two tickets to Hilton Hotel's Olive Lounge bash. After their daily phone battle that morning, she decided not to go with Jake. Jillian Ross phones Smith's partner. His line goes straight to the recorder. Perfect!

The pair must be at lunch or out celebrating early. She redials Jake's number and leaves a voice message, "I can't do this anymore. I won't see you tonight. Don't call me!" After a few minutes of guilt over breaking up on a phone message, she adds, "maybe we can talk in a few weeks," and hangs up.

Later that afternoon, preceding the long holiday break, the offices are empty and Jill believes she must be the only one still working. She heads to the employee lounge vending machine to buy a soft drink. The room filled with city attorneys chatting away without a care in mind.

After she selects a Diet Fresca, Jill joins a group of males. She stands quietly listening while sipping her cold lime and grapefruit drink. Outgoing Jonathan Jerrod, the self-appointed master of ceremony, leads the discussion.

Jon is eight years younger than Jill. They had only one real conversation over a case, but from that point on, whenever they passed in the halls, break room or wherever, Jon constantly hit on her. She rebuked every attempt even though she secretly loved the flattery.

Standing quietly within the circle of men, Jill takes a long hard look at Jon's chiseled face and broad shoulders. He has not taken his eyes off her since she entered the room. Jill needs to get back to her office and starts for the door.

"Hey Jellybean, where are you going?"

How could have Jon called her that? It is Jake's secret pet name.

Jill stops and turns, "Jon, I need to talk to you. Can you come by my office when you're finished?"

Exuberant Jon runs the halls the long way around and beats her to her office. As Jill turns the hallway corner, she sees him holding open her door and grinning like a pubescent schoolboy.

"M'Lady," Jon bows and holds his arm across his body towards the open office door.

"Cut the crap and don't EVER call me Jellybean." Unbeknownst to her the nickname already widely used throughout the office outside her presence.

"I'm sorry," he genuinely apologizes. "Can I call you Jill-O?" smiling.

"Call me Jill...ONLY!"

"Your wish is my command, M'Lady."

"And knock off the English crap!"

"We bien."

"And the Spanish crap! Speak like an American!"

“How’s an American talk?” raising his eyebrows in a pseudo look of confusion.

“Englis... forget it” rationalizing, “This isn’t going to work.”

“Where are we going for New Year’s?” handsome, immaculate-dressed Jon gleefully inquires.

“Well...” reluctantly. “That’s why you’re here. THIS IS NOT A DATE! But I happen to have an extra ticket to the Olive Lounge.”

“What time should I pick you up?” eager Jon.

“I’ll meet you THERE at eight.”

“It’s easier if we just go together. I promise I’ll sit on my hands.”

“The Bayside Hilton! If you’ll excuse me I have work to do.”

“Me too.” At the door, he turns back and winks, “I’ll see you there.” Jon ignores Jill-O’s ungrateful look and rushes out. He has to get last week’s suit to the cleaners. Jon prays “One Hour Martinizing” is not a come-on bait and switch, advertising scheme.