

Real Love

Heavy rain was ripping through the city like a knife through a ribcage. Neon signs were bleeding color and light into the puddles of the streets. An ordinary night for me; I don't carry an umbrella. Sitting with my feet propped up on my desk, I read one of my favorites, the aroma of my coffee surrounding me like a sweet-smelling smokescreen. I sigh. No cases yet for Vesper Webb: Private Eye. Ain't it ironic how someone who's always enjoyed playing in the rain still wishes for true sunshine in her life? I'd been unlucky in love for nearly two decades, even with my ex boyfriend.

Until that girl walked through my door.

She was a siren, drenched in seawater with glitter for skin and a pristine pearl smile. And those intoxicating aquamarine eyes with flecks of gold—of course they'd be the color of my birthstone. She was dressed in a vintage romper; a navy polka dot top and white shorts that showed off her elegant long legs. My eyes flickered to her pale pink lips which glistened with sparkly gloss. I knew from the moment she entered my life that I loved her. I loved that sweet, sunshiny creature. And you know what? I finally realized what love truly meant for me because of her, and it's not the same as anyone else I've ever met.

With Her, I found that real love was innocent, gentle, modest, original, and safe.

You see, I considered myself a matchmaker. I'd always been the one to share romantic advice because I thought I had love all figured out: grand romantic gestures, long passionate kisses, the type of stuff you'd find in hallmark movies and romance novels—not my style.

While true that I loved flowers and poetry and good food, something unspoken between me and that girl was much more valuable; our shared vulnerability.

With most infatuations I had, male or female, I'd experienced what I could only describe as obsession, an overwhelming desire to bring them joy and love even if I had to destroy myself to do so. I'd laugh at every joke, I'd compliment every outfit, I'd give up responsibilities to spend time with them. Most—and worst—of all, I'd put their emotions before my own, no matter how much I'd been hurting. I became their suicidal guardian angel in the hopes of being loved in return. No matter how much they broke my heart.

I didn't feel that way with Her.

Until that girl entered my life, I didn't know what a relationship was supposed to feel like. I'd only ever dated a man before, and self-doubt plagued me while I was with him. With Her, I'd feel peace, a sense of unmatched understanding. I could be myself around that girl. I didn't feel that I had to be someone else entirely to keep her from leaving me. She enamored me, the siren luring the captain in with her charm. With Her, I'd feel love that was sweeter, healthier, and complex—something protective, not possessive. I'd feel it most when we slept beside each other. She'd offer her love and support naturally; no second guessing if that girl loved me.

As a P.I. I wasn't the most openly physically affectionate, but that girl respected my boundaries and understood me when no one else could. She called herself the lucky one, but honestly? I was indebted to her. She was my Femme Fatale.

And I just loved being able to show her off to everyone I met.