

## LAST NIGHT AT THI TELEGRAPH CLUB

By Malinda Lo

She brushed her nose against Kath's neck, and she wanted to bottle up the fragrance of her. She felt Kath's pulse beneath her lips, and Kath's hand cupping the back of her head, and at last, Kath's mouth touching hers. It was still a shock to feel it: the connection between their bodies, as if it had risen from the marrow of her bones, thick and charged and sweet. Before, she had been afraid of being discovered and afraid of discovering herself, but the more they kissed, the less afraid she felt, until her fear was subsumed beneath much more powerful feelings.

She wanted to touch Kath's skin. She tugged the hem of Kath's blouse out from her skirt and slid her hands beneath it, and finally she felt the warm skin of her back, and the quiver of Kath's body as she touched her. Kath drew back briefly and reached for the buttons of Lily's blouse, asking, "Can I?" Lily helped her unbutton it, and then Kath put her hand on the bare skin of Lily's waist, and Lily closed her eyes. Kath's hand slid up over her ribs and cupped the curve of her breast, and her thumb trailed electrically over the outline of Lily's nipple through her bra. And then she pushed her leg between Lily's thighs, and Lily gasped at how it felt—the pressure and the movement there—and it was exactly what she wanted. She was astonished by the way this worked between them so instinctively, as if they had been made to do this together.

But Lily felt as if there were no time. She couldn't entirely forget that they only had an hour together. A desire for something more was rising inside her as Kath moved against her, their skirts riding up as their bodies rubbed together. It felt urgent, as if they were counting down the seconds till a bomb would explode. There was no time; they had to do this right now. And she reached for the hem of her skirt and tugged it up to her hips, and she took Kath's hand and moved it to the cleft of her

Kath hesitated. "Are you sure?" she whispered. "Please," Lily said, overcome.

So Kath put her hand between Lily's legs, and Lily helped her, fumbling with her underwear. It was awkward, but when Kath's fingers touched her, they both gasped.

"Am I in the right place?" Kath asked.

"Yes," Lily whispered.

It all felt like the right place. Kath's fingers rubbed and rubbed, and it was so marvelous, so intoxicating—she'd never even really touched herself like this before—and now she was pinned against the side of the filing cabinet, and it made a dull metallic thud as her hand slapped against it.

"I'm sorry," she gasped, but she couldn't really be sorry because it was all happening so quickly, so unexpectedly, and she clutched Kath close to her as the sensations took over, her body shuddering, and she pressed her face into Kath's neck until it was over. There was a minute in which she breathed in and out, in and out, and Kath held her gently, her head resting against the filing cabinet. Then Kath kissed her neck and shifted herself over Lily's thigh and whispered, "Can I is this all right?"

"Yes," Lily said, and she leaned into Kath, holding her as she moved, feeling Kath's wetness slide against her

...How different this was from when Lily was alone in her room. How different, and how much more: an overflowing amount of more. Kath kept rocking against her thigh, her breath ragged against Lily's cheek, and Lily stroked her hand over Kath's hair tenderly, feeling impossibly close to her. How precious she was, and how miraculous.

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