

Antwerp, Belgium: Winter.
Friday Night

It was Benoît's last night on top of the world. And that world was spread out for him in tempting shades of cream, cocoa, and caramel, dancing to the beats he spun from the DJ booth, gyrating in their short shorts, mini skirts and teasing wisps of cloth that barely qualified as clothing. Some of these girls danced for him, he knew. In the chaotic swirl of multicolored lights, Benoît felt their eyes on him. Adoring. Lustful.

“DJ Dionysus!”

One of them leapt, cat-like, up to the DJ booth raised three feet above the rest of the room. Brown corkscrew curls exploded around her café au lait skin. She gripped the edge of the booth, fingers curling over the chipped black wood. With an inviting grin, she threw her head back, giving him a glimpse of breasts swelling above her neckline. Benoît tipped the headphones away from his ear. “What?”

“Play Sex Machine,” the catgirl demanded. Her eyes sparkled like mints in a candy dish. She'd slipped him her number earlier in the evening but she wasn't anything he wanted a piece of.

Benoît nodded at her, grinned.

She stepped back and dropped down, the crowd swallowing her again, and Benoît lost himself in the music once more, in the symphony of flesh and flirtation on the dance floor below him.

It was the last time. Although it didn't feel like it. Tonight felt like any other night at Orgy. The girls. The feverish high. Music vibrating the walls of the building, which like every other one in Antwerp, was ancient but sturdy. He thought he would feel something different tonight. Regret at leaving it all behind. An unbearable sense of nostalgia. But he felt neither of those things. He was moving toward something that he wanted more. Another life. Another career. Something other than the dead end he would butt his head against in this country.

Benoît bobbed his head to the music. Threw his fist in the air. He felt its pulsing beat in his bones, but his mind felt locked in the “after.” After the gig ended. After he packed up his things. After he got on that plane. What would—? A flick of a hip jolted his attention. A playful gaze turned over a bare shoulder. But the strobe lights flashed and the image that caught his eye flickered away under the bright beams.

“This music is tight!” someone shouted nearby. “Go DJ D!”

Benoît grinned and rained more bass on the crowd.

“Yes!”

He scratched through the intro of a song and cued the next mix on the iBook glowing white near his hand. Michael Jackson flowed seamlessly into Kanye West. The crowd

screamed. Girls flung their hair. Shook their sweat covered breasts at him. Benoît threw his head back and laughed. This he would definitely miss. He felt the sweat beading down his hairless scalp, heat from hundreds of bodies that danced for him.

The pretty shoulder emerged from the crowd again and Benoît paused, taking more than a second look when the girl, dancing with taller and paler girl who only served as a foil to her curvaceous darkness, caught his eyes and held them. She was gorgeous. Nothing like he was used to seeing here at the club and maybe that was cause enough for his body to react to strongly. He licked his lips. Yeah, she was hot. A good distraction and maybe incentive for him to stay and dance after his set was over.

This was a moment Benoît was more than familiar with. When the music and his looks—muscled chest and arms under the thin shirts, smirking red lips—worked together to bring him what he wanted. He waited for her to come. Benoît felt the warmth percolate in his belly as he waited. But instead of approaching, the girl dipped to the music, twitched her backside and looked away.

He felt the unpleasant slap of surprise. This never happened. Through the galloping beat of the music, his hands flying automatically over the turntable, queuing the next mix, ramping up the sound effects, he stared at the girl.

The pale yellow tank top. Hair a thick halo around her round face. Those ass-hugging jeans. His heart pounded faster. Before he could check himself, Benoît jumped down from the DJ booth and swam through the crowd toward her.

“Hey.”

Up close, her amazing doll’s eyes, large and brown with thick and curling lashes, nearly brought him to his knees. A cascade of silver stars sparkled on a silver chain around her neck. “What did you say?”

Her English jarred him. An American. That explained her amazing ass.

The bodies, jerking and flowing to a techno remix of “Thriller,” bumped him on repeat as he drifted into the girl’s orbit. Her body was hypnotic. Breasts lifting as she raised her arms to the ceiling, ass shaking, that glitter-bright smile. A boy moved close to her now.

He was slim and feminine enough to let Benoît know that he wouldn’t have any objections to someone making a play for the girl’s attentions.

“I thought you were coming over to say hello,” he said in English.

She laughed. A husky gurgle that he leaned closer to hear above the music.

“Not a chance, pretty boy.” She spun away from him, shaking her ass to the music, watching him with her laughing gaze over one shoulder. “I’m here to look, not touch.” The sweat clung like silk to her bare shoulders.