



nexus

Under World

MARIA DEL REY

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Also by Maria del Rey

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Underworld

A Nexus Classic

Maria del Rey

One

IN THE DISTANCE the sea washed lazily to the shore, thin white streaks of spray dissolving into nothing, swallowed by the blackness that blurred the boundary between land and sea, sea and air. Overhead the sky was a scattering of sharp points of light, the thousand stars glittering in an ocean of darkness sliced open by the thin crescent of a new moon. The silver light illuminated the sea which hardly stirred, as though the heat of the day had settled for the night also. Nothing moved, and the song of the insects was louder than the wash of water against sand.

Pamela closed her eyes and sighed, wishing that the sky would open up and the rains pour down over her, washing away the sticky heat and the feeling of lassitude that had enveloped the island. Nothing moved in the night because nothing had moved during the day. The heat seemed to rise from the ground, as though the earth itself were burning day and night. Oppressive and permanent, it was too much to cope with, too hot, too sticky, too trying.

She opened her eyes. The rain had not come, and the breeze that should have wafted from the ocean was stillborn. Suddenly the dull grey normality of England, of heavy cloud and sudden showers, seemed a luxurious and exotic dream. How did people stand it? How did they cope with the unchanging, unyielding heat day in and day out? The people on the island didn't worship the sun, they feared it, fought it, cowered under it and survived as best they could. It was tourists who sought the sun; they came and lay under the harsh rays, imagining that they were being natural when nature itself sought shelter.

Sighing once more, glancing out to the distant shore in the vain hope that the breeze would pick up, Pamela turned and looked back into her room. The stucco walls of the villa had started to crack, the rough surface spider-webbed with fine lines, as though it had started to age and wither. It was the heat, nothing could stand it, she thought glumly. But in the light, in the early hours after dawn, the villa sparkled magnificently, a palace on the rocks high above the clearest water she had ever seen.

The air-conditioning struggled, trying to scythe through the heavy atmosphere, but it was futile. She padded barefoot back inside, the lightest wisps of material wrapped loosely around her. Her body was perfectly tanned, her firm breasts and thighs a rich golden brown, her hair bleached magically by the sea and sun. At home she would have looked a Goddess, but here on the island she was just another tourist, too stupid to keep out of the sun, too shameless to cover herself up.

It would be over soon, she told herself, catching a glimpse of her partly-clothed body in the mirror by the bed. The thin cotton wrap was almost transparent, the fullness of her breasts, the cherry-red nipples jutting prominently, were held tightly, but then the garment flowed around her. As she walked it flared behind her, flowing as though carried by a breeze that wasn't there, exposing her long limbs, toned to perfection, sleek and sexy, and the darkness between her thighs was clothed only by tiny white briefs that immediately caught the eye.

The bathroom was a haven - somehow it managed to defy the worst ravages of the heat. Her feet pressed hard against the tiles that were cooler than any other surface on the island, she couldn't work out how. Not that it mattered, all that mattered was the respite from the heat. She crossed the room to the bar near the terrace, retrieved a bottle of icy water and then returned to the bathroom to enjoy it. She was torn between slaking her thirst and cooling her body.

The best she could hope for from the shower was a tepid flow, the worst a blistering explosion of boiling water.

As she unscrewed the bottle-top she heard the distant crunch of tyres on gravel. Was that Chris, she wondered? Back on the terrace she saw the jeep crossing through the sea of darkness – two strong beams of light cutting through the night, lighthouses lighting the way across the dirt track that connected the villa to the nearest road. She couldn't tell; Chris or Ginny, it had to be one or the other.

The bottle of water was pouring condensation down her hand, jewels of water tracking over her skin. She was sticky and uncomfortable, her clammy body wearing the strains of the day like a layer of dead skin. But there was a way to cleanse it all away, and she had been waiting for the moment all day. She returned to the shower and untied the wrap, letting it fly gently to the floor. The car crunched to a halt outside, the engine died and she heard steps coming closer.

Pamela sighed. The water pouring over her body was a shock that swept away the stickiness, the moroseness and the lethargy. Sharp icy fingers of sensation touched her wetly, flowing sensuously over golden skin, slipping down over her shoulders, between her breasts, dripping from her puckering nipples. She poured the full bottle over her body, bathing herself completely and enjoying every second of it. Her body glistened in the full-length mirror, her flesh glossy with a tanned healthy glow. It made her feel good again, glad to be alive, her body tingling delectably.

She emerged from the shower, trailing water along the floor, her wet flesh cool and sensitive to the slight breeze that had not been there before. Again she caught sight of herself in the mirror. She smiled; she liked the look of herself, her body toned and sexy, long limbs, taut belly and full, well-shaped breasts. Her nipples were red and glossy, wet with glistening droplets of water that prised in the light.

Standing by the mirror admiring herself, she couldn't resist a sly touch, her fingers brushing away the drops of water that balanced on her pert breasts. Her fingers brushed roughly across her nipples, sending a shudder of delight through her body. She touched herself again, cupping her breasts and pouting to herself in the mirror, a smile on her full, red lips, her eyes half-closed with a desire she had not yet acknowledged.

She sighed, a look of pleasure darkening her face as she squeezed her nipples hard, tightening thumb and fingers over each of them. It felt good, as though the cold water had taken away all feeling and she had to stroke life back into them. Her body responded, the heat building again on the very tips of her nipples, a red heat that was pure and sexual. She teased herself again, parting her lips to utter the sigh that was impossible to suppress. Her breasts were very sensitive, and she could always bring herself to orgasm when she wanted to.

Vaguely she was aware of noises down the corridor, from one of the other rooms in the villa. It didn't matter; she was feeling good after the miserable day she'd spent alone in the isolated house by the sea. She lay back on the bed, her hands still cupping the fullness of her breasts, still holding the golden flesh tipped with reddish peaks. She stroked her thumbs back and forth, brushing the erect points that yielded and then sprang back, each motion a pleasure that snaked through her body to connect with the heat that pulsed deep between her thighs.

She murmured deliriously, trying to stifle the cry that sprang to her rosy lips as she pinched her nipples, cruelly pressing hard so that the pleasure was an explosion of energy. It fired something deep inside, something deep and secret, a feeling that she treasured and kept for herself only. Her eyes were closed now, the vision in the mirror - body exposed, long limbs parted, breasts held tightly - didn't interest her. It was the feelings that she gave herself that

were the source of her pleasure, the fountain of delight that never ran dry. She squeezed her breasts, stroked them, held them tightly, avoiding now the pulsing heat of her erect nipples, building the layers of pleasure, adding to the growing swell inside her.

She opened her eyes, glanced at the reflection of herself and then closed them again. She crossed her arms over her chest, flicked her nails over her nipples and felt the explosion of pleasure, a bursting of the boundaries, taking her over the edge into an orgasm that made her arch her back and moan wordlessly. She had climaxed, her body yielding to the blissful explosion of pleasure as she had teased and coaxed her breasts until the slightest touch was an unbearable delight. It felt as though her breasts were on fire, her nipples molten points connected to every pleasure centre in her body.

When Pamela opened her eyes she saw that she was no longer alone. Chris was standing in the doorway, his eyes fixed on her nakedness. Their eyes met, locked, but neither of them spoke, as though afraid of what the other's reaction might be. Chris was emotionless, his face impassive. Only his eyes had expression, eyes that were dark, intense and staring directly into her own.

Suddenly she shivered, and it felt as though the heat of her body had brought on the coolness of the night, displacing the heat that had been strangling the day. Very slowly she reached down and covered her sex with her hand, and with the other she crossed her chest, trying to cover up the body that he had so obviously been staring at.

'How long?' she asked softly, tearing her eyes from him. He was still at the door, one arm lodged against the frame, the other by his side. Apart from a pair of faded jeans he was naked, his muscled torso glistening with a layer of perspiration, bleached curls across the chest and down over the rippling muscles of his stomach.

'Long enough,' he told her, dark eyes flicking from her body to her face. He moved slowly, pushing himself away from the doorway and taking a step into the room. He was a powerful man, strong, with the kind of presence that filled a room as soon as he stepped into it.

'I didn't hear you,' she whispered softly, sitting up on the bed, trying to keep herself covered. Her body was tingling, her breasts still throbbing, the pulse in her sex still strong and aching with desire. She knew that he had seen everything, that he had watched in silence while she had touched herself, loving herself to orgasm in the sticky heat of the night.

'You looked good,' he said, advancing slowly. A dagger of perspiration fell between his nipples, a wet smear against his golden flesh.

'Where's Ginny?'

'With Maria. Do you do this a lot?'

Pamela edged away from him slowly, aware that she was doing a bad job of covering herself up. She moved into a corner, tucking her knees under her chin and wrapping her arms around her tightly. He was staring at her, his eyes dark and wild. Ginny was away, she wouldn't be back for hours and he had seen more than enough . . .

'You've got a lovely way of touching yourself,' he said, putting one knee on the edge of the bed. He was moving closer, the pungent aroma of his body an aphrodisiac that flowed over her.

'We shouldn't do this, Chris,' she whispered when he touched her. His hand was cold, so very cold when it should have been fire. He touched her again, his fingers tracing circles on her knees. She watched his fingers, watched the strong hands tracing patterns on her body, and when he opened his palm she knew she could not resist.

He pulled her towards him, lifting her up and into his arms. His chest pressed sweatily against her breasts, and the heat of her nipples carried pulses of pleasure through

her. She was hot, keyed up, the fluttering thrills of pleasure pulsing from her swollen nipples. Wrapped tightly in his strong arms, breathing his scent and able to feel the power of his being she felt out of control. He scooped her up unexpectedly, and carried her out onto the terrace.

'You're beautiful,' he whispered, his lips touching her throat as he murmured the words. Out to sea the waves hardly stirred, the water resting under the sharp starlight.

She turned from the sea and into his arms. They kissed at once, a long, searing embrace that took her breath away. His arms caressed her feverishly, moulding her body, tracing the curves of her back and thighs. Each breath filled her lungs with the scent of the sea and the scent of him, the same masculine fragrance that was directly physical. She touched him, running her hands over his chest, down the taut muscles of his stomach and then down between his thighs. His prick was etched hard against his denims, a stiff rod of flesh that she stroked lovingly.

He stepped away from her and stripped off, pulling off his jeans and standing naked in front of her. She touched him again, her fingers playing the length of his hard prick. She smiled to him, and for the first time he smiled back.

'You like this, don't you?' he told her throatily, pulling her forward and cupping her breasts with his hands. His rough fingers sent a frisson of excitement directly to her pussy. Her nipples were still sensitive and every touch was intense and exciting.

'I do,' she admitted, throwing her head back with a sigh. She loved to have her breasts played with, she loved to have them kissed and adored, to feel lips and teeth against the cherry-red buds.

'And this?' he asked, reaching down with one hand suddenly to stroke her pussy. Her response was to close her eyes and fall against him. She was slick with love juice and longing to have her pussy sucked. She parted her thighs

and waited, opening herself to him, waiting desperately for his touch to make her cry out with pleasure.

‘Not so fast,’ he whispered, ‘not so fast.’

She whimpered. Her body was aching, on fire and growing hotter. She tried to force his fingers into her wetness, but he pulled his hand away, returning to tease her breast playfully. Almost against her own will she reached down and pressed her fingers into her sex, teasing open her pussy lips to press two fingers into the reservoir of desire that throbbed blissfully. She pressed her fingers in and out slowly, savouring the feeling, and enjoying the play of his rough hands on her breasts.

‘Taste me,’ she said, bringing her pussy soaked fingers to his lips. He kissed the moistness from her fingers, sucking hard the essence of her pussy. He sucked her fingers into his mouth, lapped his tongue over them and then bit her softly, his teeth digging into her flesh.

She touched herself again, this time using both hands, playing with her pussy button with one hand while extracting the jewels of honey with the other. He supped up every drop, feasting hungrily on her juices while playing with her erect nipples at the same time. She felt delirious, her body wracked with waves of pleasure until he swooped down and bit her hard on a nipple as he speared her sex with his fingers. She collapsed onto him, wilting as the shock of her orgasm pierced her silence.

He lifted her, held her against him and then lowered her softly onto his thick, hard cock. She was soaking, dribbles of pussy juice smeared over her thighs, and he entered her long and slow, filling her completely. Her arms were around his shoulders, limp, resting against him, but as he began to press in and out slowly she broke through the afterglow. Her nails began to press into his shoulder, digging into his hot flesh, digging into his hard muscular back.

She moaned softly, animal-like, as he fucked her powerfully, holding her under the bottom and steering her

up and down his hard prick. Faster and faster, each thrust going deep into her sex, filling her, penetrating, taking. He was all strength, all power, fucking her, fucking her, fucking her . . .

He was making hard, guttural slabs of sound as he pressed his hardness into her, matching the rhythm of each stroke with the hard throaty sounds that he forced from his mouth. His hands were moulded to the roundness of her backside, cupped under her and holding her tight while her long legs were wrapped around him. They were trapped together, each a prisoner of the other as their bodies merged and separated endlessly. She was moving her hips round and round, enjoying the feel of his cock as it entered her body.

She screamed her orgasm into the night, her cries drifting out over the still sea and into the darkness. They were a blur of movement and then his call joined hers, a wordless explosion of rage and desire as he pumped waves of come into the velvet wetness of her sex.

He released her, let her sink weakly to the cool marble floor of the terrace. She half-watched him go, padding naked back into the villa, his back crossed with the tracks of her nails, red symbols of her pleasure etched into his flesh. She felt as though he had devoured her as she had devoured him, their mutual pleasure more powerful than either had imagined.

She stood up hesitantly, still feeling a little dizzy, and staggered back into the bedroom. Her breasts were swollen, her nipples ringed with bite marks, her body glossed with sweat, her scent merged with his. She crawled onto the bed and felt the ooze of his semen dripping from the puffy lips of her sex, his juice escaping from her body. She closed her eyes and let the sleep take her, unable to resist the distant song of water and sand.

'What time is it?' Pamela asked on waking. She felt groggy, bathed in a warmth that was impossible to resist.

'Nearly five,' Ginny replied softly.

Slowly the fuzz cleared, and the hazy outlines solidified into reality. Ginny was sitting on the edge of the bed, leaning over Pamela and smiling.

Pamela was naked, her hair a mess, her body marked with bites and bruises, her nipples still erect and sensitive despite the passing of the hours. 'Five?' she asked hoarsely. Had Chris gone?

'Five, and Chris has gone, in case you were wondering,' Ginny told her, her smile broadening. She looked fresh, as though the heat had not affected her, as though she were immune to it completely.

'Has he?'

'Was he good?'

Pamela swallowed hard. Denial was pointless; her body was her betrayer even if Chris had kept his mouth shut, which she doubted. 'Look at me,' she said softly, looking down at her nakedness.

'You look good,' Ginny assured her. 'He knows how to give a woman pleasure, as well as take it for himself.'

'I didn't mean for it to happen . . .'

'I don't believe you,' Ginny stated, without rancour. 'You've had your eye on him ever since we first picked you up. Do you really think I'm that stupid?'

'I'm sorry, I didn't mean to . . .'

Ginny reached out and brushed the hair from Pamela's face, her fingers so cool, just the way that his fingers had been. 'You're very pretty, and I could see that he fancied you too. I'm just surprised it took so long.'

'You don't mind?' Pamela asked cautiously.

'Mind?' Ginny laughed, her eyes narrowing with amusement. 'Why should I mind? There's always a reward for me to look forward to.'

'A reward?' Pamela repeated, smiling.

‘Yes, darling, a reward. You.’

Pamela had no time to react. Ginny kissed away the questions, leaning over and pressing their lips together tightly. Her mouth was cool and sensual, and Pamela responded to Ginny’s kiss after a fleeting moment of hesitation. She lay back and let the pleasure flow through her once more.

When they parted Ginny was smiling again. She stood up and reached behind her neck and undid the single knot that held her loose dress in place. Pamela watched the garment slip away and then set eyes on Ginny’s body, on the firm breasts, the gentle curve of her belly, the shapely thighs and prominent mound shaved clean. She was older than Pamela by a good ten years, but for a thirty-five-year-old Ginny looked great. Her body was flawless, and her shaved pussy so brazenly sexual that Pamela’s desire was raging instantly.

‘Let me kiss your sweet little cunt,’ Ginny sighed, the word ‘cunt’ sounding strange and exotic from her lips.

Pamela lay on her back and brought her knees up to her chest, exposing herself lewdly to Ginny’s gaze. She instinctively understood what the other woman wanted, able to see in an instant the nature of the reward.

‘Good girl,’ Ginny whispered, kneeling down between Pamela’s open thighs. She began to kiss softly, running her lips around Pamela’s open sex, breathing in the subtle aroma that was part woman and part man. ‘I love the taste of Chris’s come inside a woman’s body,’ she whispered.

‘He filled me completely,’ Pamela reported breathlessly, knowing that her pussy would soon be wet with her own juices again.

‘I wish I’d been here to suck it out of you there and then,’ Ginny said, pressing her tongue into the pussy groove, the very tip of it entering Pamela gently.

‘I wish I’d known,’ Pamela sighed, drawing in breath as Ginny’s tongue began to work its miracles of pleasure.

'There's always tomorrow . . .'

Ginny whispered, and then silenced Pamela with a long deep kiss, her tongue going deep into Pamela's velvet pussy.

The breeze whipped furiously at the parasol, making it rock dangerously on the edge of the terrace. Pamela gripped the handrail and stared out at the sea, at last stirring angrily, the white-tipped waves crashing violently against the shore. Even the heat seemed to have died down, the breeze taking the worst edge off it.

'What are you thinking about?' Ginny asked, joining Pamela on the terrace.

'Just how the weather's finally changed for the better now that I'm leaving.'

'It's not always this bad,' Ginny explained, 'if it was we'd not stay here. Every few years though it does get unbearable - you were just unlucky, this was the worst it's ever been.'

'Don't you ever miss England?' Pamela asked, turning away from the sea to face Ginny.

There was no doubt in Ginny's clear blue eyes. 'No, I never miss it. We like it here, this is where our life is now. What about you, would you ever consider leaving England?'

Pamela shrugged. 'Not really,' she said, forcing a smile. 'Look, Pamela, you and Chris have really been good to me and there's something I've got to tell you.'

'It's okay, there's no need to thank us,' Ginny assured her. Her eyes were suddenly wet with tears that sparkled in the sunlight.

Pamela shook her head. 'No, it's not that,' she explained softly, taking Ginny's hands in her own.

The breeze flapped at Ginny's skimpy robe, the bright red silk held tightly at the waist. She was naked beneath the robe, which barely covered her backside, the tan of her skin in contrast to the vivid scarlet that clothed her. 'I know what it is,' she said quietly.

Pamela was about to tell her that she didn't, but stopped. 'When did you find out?' she asked finally, guiltily. Her heart was pounding. For days she had wrestled with her conscience, trying to find the words and the moment to reveal the truth, and now it was happening. She regretted staying on the island. It would have been easier to seduce Chris, get what she wanted and leave on the next flight out. But she hadn't counted on being seduced by Ginny, she hadn't counted on the three of them making love together, wildly and passionately, with absolute abandon and no thoughts for the consequences.

'You're not the first. There was one more before you, last summer. We were suspicious of her from the start, and then when our suspicions were confirmed we kicked her out. Chris informed the local police and had her deported within the day. With you it was different.'

'I'm sorry, I didn't know what I was letting myself in for,' Pamela explained quietly, voicing her true feelings.

Ginny managed a smile, a flickering half-smile that didn't mask the sadness of her face. She leaned forward and planted a soft, wet kiss on Pamela's mouth. 'Do you know the story?' she asked softly. Pamela shook her head. She knew only what she had been told, enough to get her to the island and into their home. 'Let me tell you then,' Ginny said.

They walked back into the house holding hands tightly, Pamela wearing cut-down jeans and a tight denim top, Ginny wrapped sexily in her brief red robe. Together they sat on Pamela's bed, beside the cases stacked neatly one on the other ready for her departure.

'Do you want it back?' Pamela asked, hesitant despite her decision to do as Ginny wished.

'We've already found it. Chris went through your bags this morning, as soon as we saw that it was missing. But don't worry, we were surprised that you took as long as you did.'

'I'm so sorry, Ginny, I didn't think it'd be like this . . .'

'The story,' Ginny reminded her, kissing Pamela's fingers softly.

'Yes, I'd like to know,' Pamela said, daring to smile at last. She felt an immense debt of gratitude - by rights Ginny and Chris should have had her thrown into a police cell; instead Ginny was beside her on the bed, kissing her and looking at her lovingly.

'The ring was given to me by an ex-lover. A very ex-lover,' Ginny began, leaning back on the bed, her robe falling open at the top, her firm breasts exposed to the streaming shafts of light that filled the room. 'He was a very powerful man, very famous and, unfortunately, very married. I was madly in love with him, infatuated with this charming, rich and good-looking man. I suppose I still had illusions that he'd leave his wife and marry me instead. Old-fashioned dreams that I believed in completely. I was madly in love and he was madly in lust. We made love all the time, whenever and wherever we could. We took risks, especially as he was always in the public eye.'

'Can I ask who it was?' Pamela asked, smiling hopefully.

Ginny shook her head, her eyes sparkling with excitement. 'No, things have gone far enough as it is. You'll know him if I tell you, I can promise you that, but I don't want any more people to know. Will you grant me that?'

'Of course.'

'He was a good lover too, not wild and passionate like Chris - he was more imaginative, inventive, more outrageous and I learned lots from him. He was the one that asked me to shave my sex for him. He loved the look and feel of it, loved to kiss and suck, to drink from my hairless little cunt. I liked it too, I liked to flaunt myself, wearing tight little dresses and short skirts with nothing on underneath, tormenting him all the time with my presence, with my body.

'It was only a matter of time before half of London knew what was going on between us. The whispers were growing

louder, and if it wasn't for his friends in the media we would have been gossip column fodder. I remember once we made love at the opera. We were in one of the private boxes and shielded from view. I sat astride him and fucked him like mad, until our voices were as loud as the performers'. When I climaxed I felt ready for the applause. We were crazy like that, always taking risks for the pure thrill of it.

'In the end it was too much for his wife. She didn't really care what he got up to, so long as he was discreet. She went away for a long weekend and left us to it, alone in their town house, though to me it was closer to a mansion. It was our last weekend together, though I didn't realise that until later. All these years later I can still remember every moment of that weekend. He dressed me up in his wife's clothes, let me wear her most expensive things - from handmade lingerie to designer dresses made in heaven. For the whole weekend I was her, I was his wife. He even called me by her name in public, introducing me as his wife to friends of theirs. It was a wild game that had me excited and confused in equal measure.

'And the sex was obscene and public. Dressed as his wife, he made love to me in the toilet of an expensive restaurant, making certain that we were seen together. At the table he made me part my thighs, he wanted the other guests to see my naked pussy, to see how hot and sexy I was. It turned me on - I was dripping, every touch of his fingers was like fire on my body.

'That last night in their bed, under her portrait practically, he sucked my pussy dry, slaking his thirst for my body. He turned me onto my belly and used his lovely prick to fuck my arsehole - till he filled me with come. Every desire, every little game we played that night - I even wrapped her silky panties around his hardness and milked his cock till he spurted into her expensive knickers.

'Before dawn, in an insane fit of gratitude or delirium, he gave me the ring. And I took it because I loved him, because

I thought he loved me. I didn't realise that he was paying me off, that I was being cast away now that I had become a nuisance to his titled wife.

'A few weeks later he approached me indirectly and asked for the ring back. He offered money; more money than I had ever had before, but I turned it down. The ring was his wife's, a family treasure that he had given away in a last fit of madness. I didn't want to give it back, I liked the idea of having some part of them forever. When I met Chris and he suggested leaving the country I accepted at once, and I imagined that the ring would be forgotten, that he'd stop pestering me for its return. How wrong I was . . .'

'I suppose that he's probably responsible for me being here,' Pamela remarked after Ginny stopped. She was dying to know who the mysterious man was, but whoever he was he was undoubtedly several steps removed from Anthony Grey, the man who had passed the job to her.

'He's a clever man, Pamela, he would have made sure that you of all people wouldn't be able to trace him. What was the story you were given? Chris was a thief and you were returning the ring to its rightful owners? Or was I the thief and Chris my pimp?'

'Chris was the thief,' Pamela admitted.

'The ring's back in your case, where you'd hidden it,' Ginny announced. 'I don't want it any more, I'm sick to death of all the trouble it's caused. All I want is for me and Chris to be left alone, to get on with our lives.'

'Why?' Pamela demanded angrily. 'If you're sick of the trouble at least sell it back to the bastard, make him pay for what he's done.'

Ginny smiled. 'You're a good girl, you shouldn't be messed up with this sort of thing. Why don't you come and stay with us for a while? We'll look after you until you decide what it is you want out of life.'

'What I want,' Pamela smiled, 'is to kiss you properly. Let's make love, Ginny, before it's time for me to leave for the

airport.'

Ginny smiled and leaned across the bed, her breasts free of the robe, and kissed Pamela on the mouth, a hard, passionate kiss. Pamela smoothed her hands over Ginny's thighs, eager to caress the bare sex that she had come to love more than anything.

Two

THE BRIGHT SUMMER sunshine showed off the grounds to best effect, from the closely cropped lawn to the explosions of colour down by the fountain. The shrubs and evergreens in the distance hid the far walls of the estate, a vivid green border that marked the edges of the world. Anita sipped champagne and gazed out across the lawns and gardens, silently enjoying the pleasant summer weather and the relaxed flow of people going in and out of the house. The breeze was warm and scented with jasmine, adding a faintly Mediterranean flavour to the day.

Down by the fountain, which was spraying brilliant crystals of water into the sunlight, she spotted Peter, engrossed in conversation with a number of his guests. He was laughing, and his laughter was reflected in the faces around him. She didn't recognise any of them, though Peter had so many friends she could not hope to know them all. The man closest to Peter waved to one of the uniformed waiters, who nodded curtly and marched briskly towards the group, a champagne bucket held tightly in his arms. Now one of the women was speaking, her face open, attractive, a vivacious smile lighting up her expression.

Anita forced herself to look away, half-afraid that the young woman was flirting with Peter. She turned back to the house, determined not to allow her jealousy to spoil the occasion, but to relax and enjoy the party as everyone else seemed to be. A waitress passed by, black-skirted and wearing a white short-sleeved top, her dark, Latin features cold and impassive. Anita smiled but the woman seemed to