

Thinking About You Excerpt

“I’m thinking about how beautiful you are,” I answer Susanna truthfully. She really is stunning, in that classic, elegant way some women are. She’s just very...refined? Is that the right word? Her cheekbones and jaw are sharp, her nose is straight, her blue eyes are extra bright and her full lips are the color of a classic red rose.

Her cheeks are the color of pink roses, thanks to the compliment I just gave her.

“Thank you. That’s very sweet of you to say,” she murmurs, casting her gaze downward for a brief moment before she lifts her head. “I can’t believe we’re here. Together.”

“Why do you say that?” I feel the same way, but want to hear her reasoning first before I make any confessions.

“You’re not my type,” she blurts, covering her mouth after the words escape for a brief moment before slowly dropping her hand. “Not that there’s anything wrong with you.”

I raise an eyebrow. “Gee, thanks.”

Her cheeks turn redder. “Oh goodness, I’m not trying to insult you, I just—I’m making a mess of this, and I apologize. What I meant to say is...” She takes a deep breath, exhaling loudly before she continues. “You’re not the type of man I normally date, but there’s something good to be said in that.”

She’s not the type I normally go for either, that’s for damn sure. She’s too prim, too proper, too sweet. “Like what?”

“There’s nothing wrong with trying something a little different sometimes. Clearly who I’ve been dating in the past hasn’t worked, since I’m still single,” she says with a self-depreciating laugh.

“I thought Dickie was your ex-boyfriend,” I point out with a wince. That is the damn worst name on the planet, I swear.

“Oh, it was never too serious with Dickie.” She waves a hand. Laughs again. “That was a long time ago, though.”

“How long?”

“I don’t know. Six months? Nine?” She tilts her head, as if she’s quietly counting back the months. “Eight months, actually. During the winter. He told me I was a bright light on a cold, dreary day once. That was nice.”

For some godforsaken reason, jealousy rises within me, making me clench my fists in my lap. “I guess he’s a goddamned poet.”

I would never think to say something like that to a woman. I’m not one to say a bunch of flowery nonsense to get between a woman’s legs. I’m a little more direct.

She seems startled by my response. “Oh, he wasn’t a poet. Not at all. That was probably the nicest thing he ever said to me while we dated.”

Huh. Well, I guess that makes me feel a little better, but not much.

And why the hell do I care what her ex-boyfriend said to her? This is a one-shot deal. I’ll take her to dinner, hopefully kiss her a little bit in the back of an Uber, maybe even feel her up a little bit too, and then we’re done. I’ll play my game tomorrow, we’ll win because that’s what we do, and then head back home.

End of story.

The server returns to the table with our drinks, making an elaborate show of popping the cork on the bottle of Veuve Clicquot before pouring us each a glass. I didn’t want any champagne, but when Susanna lifts her glass toward me in a toast, I grab mine and clink our glasses together.

“To new friends,” she says, smiling prettily.

“New friends,” I agree, downing most of the champagne in one swallow.