



CHOCOLATE
LEMONS
AND
PEPPERMINT
TEARS

The Bittersweet Life Of Xena

ROBIN R ROBINSON

Chocolate Lemons & Peppermint Tears:

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by Robin R Robinson

Chapter 1

In The Beginning

Xena stood back and surveyed the room. Everything had to be perfect. And from her point of view, it was. The faint, sour sweet scent of their earlier lovemaking floated around Xena's nostrils and lingered in the air.

Fragrances of potpourri that smelled of ginger and ylang ylang wafted side by side an air of anticipation and electricity. Soft, sensuous, sounds of jazz enveloped the room as the deep, mournful growl of George Howard's saxophone licked at Xena's ears and made her tingly all over.

The gorgeous redwood, very rustic, yet romantic four-poster bed, emitted an aura of pure sumptuousness. The plush, peach-colored goose down comforter seemed to beckon to Xena to enlist herself in its warmth.

She smiled subtly to herself. Just hours earlier, her body and his were entwined as they immersed themselves in each other and sought to satisfy the wild cravings that lied deeply within.

Xena glided across the three-inch thick shag carpet that was the color of juicy peaches in the sunshine. She approached her full-length antique mirror and dropped her raw silk covering that was the color of burnished bronze and soft as a baby's bottom. Her beautiful brown eyes travelled down her body's reflection. Another subtle smile crept across her full, round, soft as a rose petal, mouth. Those regular trips to the gym were definitely paying off. He would be pleased. Again. And oh, how she looked forward to it. Again.

Tying the sash of the robe around her waist, Xena walked into the living room and settled herself in front of the fire with a glass of her favorite wine: Gewurztraminer. The sound of fat raindrops bouncing and dancing on the window serenaded Xena and set the mood as she began to reminisce about her life and the marvelous, enigmatic man she had met only six weeks ago. The man who spelled trouble with a capital "T."

At 3:33 p.m. on a hot summer day, smack dab in the middle of August in the year

1960, Xena Quay Vaughan was born at Mercy General Hospital in Sacramento, California.

An only child, Xena stimulated herself by writing in her diary, which was actually a steno pad, and reading everything she could get her hands on: romance novels, mysteries, action adventure, some science fiction, (she loved Octavia Butler) and even the dictionary.

When she turned twelve her tastes developed just as she did and she ventured into poetry and discovered erotica; Anais Nin was one of her favorite authors. Her voracious appetite for the written word was constantly whetted and ultimately satiated by the myriad of writers (mostly African American) whom she would grow to love and learn from.

Xena always knew that she was blessed, even as a young girl. She knew that her life would be much more than the everyday grind of mediocrity. And oh how she dreamed of leaving sleepy little "Sac Town," (affectionately dubbed by the natives) as soon as she could. Granted, it was a wonderful place to be born, raised, and go to school since it was clean, homey and relatively safe. But it was also a place where everybody knew everybody else, worked for the State and got paid on the same day—usually the last workday of the month. Nevertheless, it was still home and she had to make the best of it until she could get on the good foot and get gone.

Xena found herself more bored than not and if it weren't for the adventures she took while reading she knew she would have gone bonkers a long time ago.

Quite naturally, Xena gravitated to people who marched to their own drum and dreamed big dreams. She made friends with those who not only understood her need to express herself creatively through her writing, but who were also very supportive of her biggest dream: To move to Los Angeles and become hugely successful writing novels and screenplays. These were the folks she wanted in her space. Folks who didn't give a damn what people felt or thought about her wonderful uniqueness. Folks who could understand and appreciate that in order to soar one had to spread ones wings and take a leap of faith, even if the building was fifty stories high.

When she was a budding young girl with new breasts tucked neatly away in white cotton training bras bought on sale three in a pack at J.C. Penney, Xena and her best friends, Tracy and Toni, would spend hours daydreaming about the palatial mansions they would live in, the servants who would serve them, and the rich, powerful and sexy men they would have to juggle around in their date books.

"Sooo many men and sooo little time," they would say, before bursting into girlish giggles.

Tracy was going to be a famous pediatrician and Toni, a hotshot electrical engineer. Lofty expectations for young girls who were expected to go to college, get married, have two kids; maybe a dog, and buy a nice tract home furnished by Levitz that could be paid for in easy monthly installments.

Xena was stubborn and headstrong, (being a Leo and all) and when the dreams of her friends started fraying at the edges and began to look a little worn, she would be the one to give them pep talks and lift their spirits: "Hang in there, girl, stay focused; keep your head to the sky and your feet on the ground."

However, those words got stuck in Xena's throat like sand paper more often than not when she found herself constantly defending the barbs and dismissing the negativity that was steadfastly thrown her way by those who were "only looking after your best interest, dear." Those who didn't want her "to get your hopes up." Those who wanted her to think about getting a "sensible job so you can have something to fall back on, sweetheart."

In spite of that, the tenacious threesome continued to hold onto their dreams for many years; all three of the girls taking and excelling in college courses that would put them on their respective and necessary professional tracks.

But when Toni and Tracy both moved away, their parents wanting desperately to go back home, down south, time started to fly. It wasn't long before Xena found herself not only the number one fan in her fan club. But the only one.

Being blessed was one thing, but believing it was an entirely different issue. And most folks in Sac had not a clue that they were indeed blessed; that they only had to wake up and wipe the sleep from their myopic eyes so they could actually see. As a result, there were a whole bunch of zombies walking around who were content with the ho hum, been there done that, same old song and dance they'd come to accept. And of course, there were the naysayers who always had something negative to say.

"Giiirrrlll, I don't know who Xena thank she is," Jackie said, sucking noisily on a chicken wing that was several drops away from dripping greasy sauce down the front of her cheap, Wal-Mart top. Jackie had been jealous of Xena from day one, since the third grade when they first met. Xena beat Jackie in the fifty-yard dash and won the blue ribbon and from that day on, Xena and Jackie never got along.

Release Date
May 2009

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