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TOTAL
PACKAGE
DIAMOND TAYLOR

Total Package

By

Diamond Taylor

Total Package by Diamond Taylor

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Total Package

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my parents who have always nurtured and supported my dreams. My long time friend, Kim, for giving me something to laugh at. And to all the wonderful writers and forums who have shared in my vision. And, finally, I give thanks to the Most High.

Chapter One

Could the afternoon get any more frustrating?

James Carrington threw back the last of his beer in one quick swallow, grateful the work day had ended. One of his top clients had threatened to take her business elsewhere because he had advised her against changing her stock options yet again. Never mind it was the third time she had changed them this month. And if that didn't beat all, he'd had a flat tire and had to catch a cab.

"Ready for another?"

James looked up from his empty beer and nodded at the bartender. She handed him another brew and smiled, but with his mind preoccupied he didn't return the friendly gesture. Despite her beauty, his thoughts stayed on Rachael.

"You waiting on someone?" she asked.

"Yeah." *Waiting on Charles' late ass. Again.* Would that brother ever show up on time? "Thanks."

James sucked down a third of the new draft, wishing it was Rachael's pussy he sucked on instead.

He checked his watch and sighed. Charles was a half-hour late, probably knee-deep in pussy.

Charles was a ladies' man and would know what he should do about Rachael. His advice would probably be to hit it and keep on moving, but it wasn't that easy for James.

Rachael had tapped into the innermost part of his soul, and he was

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sure that if she let down her guard, he could tap into hers. But he knew this wasn't going to be an easy task.

"Hey, pick your lip off the floor before I step on it."

James smiled. "Hey, thanks for showing up." He stood and pounded his fist to Charles'.

"No problem. You sounded like you're in a real funk. So, what's up?" he asked claiming the stool next to his.

Charles turned to the bartender. "I'll take a beer and another for my buddy here."

He looked at James. "I want you to know I gave up a date with Lisa. Wait, maybe it was Linda, Louise—something like that." Charles smiled at a woman across the bar.

"You're a player, and one day, if you aren't careful, you're going to meet your match."

"Maybe so, but until then there's thirty-one flavors, and I intend to try all of them. Besides, I'm just having a little fun, that's all. Now, what's wrong?" Charles gave the woman a wink before turning back to James.

"Man, this thing with Rachael is driving me insane. I don't know whether I'm coming or going. Every time I try to tell her my feelings, I choke. I just..."

"Hey, slow down, man." Charles laughed and shook his head. "See, that's what I'm talking about. Man, baby girl got you twisted. And you ain't even sniffed the pussy. And you mean you never said anything to her?"

"Well, not exactly. I never really tried. I don't want things to be strained between us if it doesn't work out. Besides, you've seen the men she dates. Model types, you know." He took a long swig of beer.

"Hey, J, you know what you need?" By the wicked gleam in Charles' eyes, James knew it was another one of his lunatic schemes.

"Oh, no. Last time you gave me that look, we ended up on a road trip to Vegas. And I lost twelve hundred dollars. Remember?" Despite the less than perfect memory of the trip, James allowed a half smile. "You almost got us tossed in jail because you were drunk and started kicking the slot machine." He shook his head. "No, thanks."

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“Man, that machine took my money. And I wasn’t drunk, I was buzzed.”

“Buzzed, drunk, whatever you wanna call it. You threw up in my car.” James shook his head, chuckling at his friend’s irritation. He took another sip of his beer. “But go ahead, even though I know I’m not going to like it. Right now, I’m desperate. What’s your brilliant idea?”

“When you going to let that shit die, man? That was a few years ago.” Charles took a drink of his beer. “Now about your Rachael problem. First off, she isn’t a mind reader. You got to step to her if you want her. Y’all from two totally different worlds.”

Turning in his seat, he looked James in his eyes. “She’s ‘hood; you’re suburbs. That’s not the only difference. You come from money; she’s had to struggle to get where she is. You have to let her know even though you come from two totally different backgrounds that on some level you get her.” He paused. “Your problem is you’re trying to get at her without really knowing where she’s comin’ from. How much do you really know about her? And I’m not just talkin’ the basics. That’s the easy stuff. Number one rule, man, especially with a woman like Rachael—you gotta make love to her mind first before she’ll give up the panties. Turn her on mentally, and the panties will come off.”

James rolled his eyes. “I don’t think where we’re from has anything to do with this.”

“Whateva, man. I’m just telling you from experience. The last thing an around-the-way girl way wants is a suit. She wants a dude who’ll be down for whatever and got his shit together.” Charles downed the last of his beer. “My advice—lose the suit after business hours, just chill the hell out. Let her know James the man, not James the suit.”

“I refuse to go around with my pants hanging halfway down my ass. And I’m sure Rachael can appreciate a businessman as well as a thug.” He looked into his drink as if it would magically give him the answer to his problem.

“All I’m saying is relax. She needs to see you can have a good time and can lay it down on her. All it takes is one time to show her what’s up.” Charles finished then turned his attention back to his beer.

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One time. One night. Maybe.

"Just out of curiosity, why haven't you ever hooked up with her? I mean, you hang out all the time. Surely the subject has come up." Charles gave James a sideways glance.

"We're friends, so no, the topic never came up. She made it very clear she cares about getting ahead not settling down. She's very driven. Her focus was and is on her career."

"Friends. Say no more. You are in the dreaded friends' zone."

Charles broke into an off-pitch version of the *Twilight Zone* theme song and everyone in the joint turned toward them. James groaned and put his head on the bar.

"Cheer up, man." Charles slapped James' back so hard, his head shot up. "We'll think of something. So no worries." His buddy nodded to the bartender for another round.

James wondered if Rachael would treat him differently if she knew he had romantic feelings for her. He was determined to make her see him as more than a friend. He just didn't know how. "No worries. Yeah, right," he mumbled. "I'm going home." Without another word, he dropped money on the bar and walked out.

* * * * *

James rode in the back of the cab in a daze. His thoughts remained on Rachael and how to get her to notice him as more than just the good guy next door. In the back of the cab, James was dazed, his thoughts on Rachael and how to get her to notice him for more than just the guy next door.

The cab pulled in front of his building. His eyes followed the row of apartments upward, seeking out Rachael's apartment. A silhouette captured his attention. The fine lines of every peak and valley called to him. His hands itched to grip the hourglass shape of her waist as he entered her. His cock strained against his zipper. Releasing an expletive, he let his head fall back on the headrest.

Rachael seemed like an unobtainable goal. But, never one to give

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up on what he wanted, James racked his brain to formulate a plan.

He needed to show her the type of man he was, that he could be more than a friend and would treat her the way she wanted—no, needed—to be treated.

“Are you getting out or what, pal?” The cab driver shot him a dirty look.

“Sorry, man.” He tossed him a tip before climbing out.

Rachael had left her scarf in his truck the other night. That was as good an excuse as any to stop by to see her. He ducked into his condo to get it before heading for Rachael’s. James paused in front of her door, shoulders squared and knocked.