

THE CHATROOM MURDERS

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One

Would I Lie To You?

JENNIFER STOOD QUIETLY NEAR the bedroom entrance, her ear to the partially opened door. She listened carefully to her son's raspy breathing, barely audible above the drone of the second hand humidifier. The baby was suffering with a bad chest cold and was having a dreadful time sleeping. Like always, money was tight, but he had desperately needed the humidifier, so Jennifer had gone ahead and purchased it at the neighborhood thrift store. *Damn, just another expense I really can't afford*, she thought sadly.

Satisfied that the baby was finally asleep and hoping for some uninterrupted time for herself, Jennifer crossed the small living room and sat down in front of an old folding card table beneath a window. On top of the table, a large personal computer occupied most of the usable space. Reaching around the back, Jennifer flicked on the power switch, being careful not to chip her recently polished fingernails. The machine generated the usual assortment of subtle beeps, clicks and odd computer-type noises as it booted up. While not quite state of the art, this particular model served her purpose perfectly.

It had grown unseasonably cold for Norfolk, Virginia during the last few nights, and Jennifer could feel the chill of the evening air as she watched the pale sun settle in the distance behind the fire station next door. As quietly as possible, she slid the window closed on its tarnished aluminum frame.

Her husband had tried to teach her how to work the various programs that came with the computer, but the only one that even remotely interested Jennifer was the video conferencing software. The rare times that Bill was home and not playing sailor boy out on the high seas, he would use it to chat with his parents for hours on end. More often than not, the picture quality was good enough so that they could see and converse with each other without any trouble. Even though Jennifer despised her in-laws, she had to admit that it was kind of cool to see the faces of the people you were talking to online. Her mother-in-law certainly enjoyed seeing her grandson on the other end. *Better than having the old hag visit us here in this shit hole*, Jennifer thought. That would only confirm Mildred's little speech before the wedding about how 'this girl' wasn't good enough for 'her Billy' and how they should wait until after he got out of the Navy to get married so he could get a good job with his high tech training before they started a family and blah, blah, blah... Just the thought of her mother-in-law's nagging made Jennifer ill.

But that was months ago, before his ship got called up for emergency duty in the Gulf to provide support for the troops. Boy, that had taken everybody by surprise. Why hadn't she listened to him and gone back home to Iowa for the six months or so that he would be out to sea? But no, she had to prove her independence and now she was just another Navy widow, home alone with a sick infant in a crappy little one-bedroom apartment off of the main strip, waiting for her husband's meager government pay check to hit the bank account.

Before leaving on his long deployment, Bill capitulated to Jennifer's unceasing whining and set up the computer so that it would

automatically log on to their Internet account. Since she had barely finished high school, graduating with the academic distinction of Summa Cum Lucky, she didn't pretend to understand any of the highly technical operating instructions. Modems and software and parity bits... God, all that stuff made her head hurt! *Did he really think I could understand all that computer crap?*

Thankful to be distracted, Jennifer pushed all those thoughts aside as the computer finished booting up. Grabbing the mouse with her right hand, she clicked on the icon that started the teleconferencing program. When it finished loading, Jennifer searched down through the directory list. *He isn't logged on yet. Good.*

She drew the shabby drapes shut, then reached over and turned on a small desk lamp. Jennifer knew from experience that this was just the right amount of light to talk to him; the background was dim enough to hide the ugly tattered furniture that came with the apartment, but there was still enough illumination so that he could see her clearly. Perfect mood lighting. Everything had to be perfect tonight!

After pushing back the folding chair, she hurried into the bedroom. As Jennifer removed her terry cloth robe, she tried to remember the last time she had dressed up for an evening. To save time, the sexy black lingerie and silk stockings recently purchased from the upscale shop at the mall had been carefully laid out on the bed. That shopping trip had really blown her meager household budget to hell. *Couldn't skimp there*, Jennifer thought as she sat on the edge of the bed, smoothing the hose onto her legs. *Don't all rich business executives wear expensive, sexy underwear? God, this feels so good!*

She had borrowed a designer skirt and jacket, along with a matching silk blouse from Maria, her best and only local friend. Since Maria worked downtown as an executive secretary at one of Norfolk's most prestigious law firms, she needed to dress well for her job. *She has damn good taste in clothes*, Jennifer thought, giggling

aloud as she remembered her friend questioning her why she needed to borrow the outfit. *If she only knew.* Jennifer quickly put on the blouse and found her hands trembling as she tried to fasten the buttons. *Must slow down,* she thought. *I can't afford to pay Maria back if I ruin her clothes.*

As she stood in front of a full-length mirror, Jennifer took silent inventory. Running her hands down the sides of the deep red skirt to smooth out the wrinkles, she thought, *My figure snapped back fast from having the baby. Still tight and firm in all the right places.* For a moment, Jennifer shut her eyes and imagined that he was here in the room, standing behind her, his hands running up the curve of her hips, playing with the small of her waist, his breath on her neck. *Oh yeah. This is going to do it.*

A soft *ding* sound from the incoming Internet phone call in the living room snapped her back to reality. *Damn, is he early or did I just lose track of time?* Jennifer thought as she shook her head to clear the cobwebs. She reached down and grabbed a matching set of red heels. Stumbling as she quickly tried to put them on, Jennifer arrived back at the computer just as a small icon in the lower right hand corner of the screen started to flash.

The particular teleconferencing program that she was using split the computer screen into two sections. A quick check of the left side showed a preview window generated by the small camera attached to the top of her computer. Currently, it showed Jennifer's head and shoulders in frame. The right side of the screen, where Jennifer would soon see him, was blank. Using the screen as she would a mirror, she played briefly with her wavy, brown hair and applied a last bit of dark bronze lipstick. Reaching up to the camera, she adjusted the lens with a practiced twist. Now the preview screen showed all of her, sitting in front of the computer, legs crossed at mid-thigh. The bright light shining directly on her from the table lamp made her dark bra visible through the delicate fabric of her white blouse. She started to

move the mouse with her right hand to accept the call, pausing at the last second to open another button on her blouse. *Perfect!*

Jennifer clicked on the 'Accept Call' button.

The right side of the screen started to flicker as the powerful computers belonging to her Internet service provider made electronic connections with other computers across the Internet, but she didn't really care about all the behind the scene activities. Jennifer was totally focused on the fact that she was going to see and talk to him once again.

"Hello, darling." The deep voice emerged smoothly from the stereo speakers located on either side of the computer.

Jennifer loved it when he called her darling. The timbre of his words, combined with a slight trace of a Hispanic accent was just so... well, sexy was the only way she could best describe it. One of the first things that had attracted her to him was the seductive quality of his voice. *Well, that and his incredible good looks.* She reached forward to pull the microphone a little closer as his image popped into view.

"Hello back, Carlos. I almost didn't make it here on time."

"No? Were you going to stand me up? Shame on you!"

Jennifer giggled like a schoolgirl as she felt her face begin to burn. She could always be made to blush at the drop of a hat.

"Mmm, you're as red as a beet!" he continued.

Jennifer tore her eyes away from his image to look at herself on the opposite side of the monitor. She could see that her face was, indeed, a bright crimson. Jennifer also noticed that her nipples were pushing through the material of her borrowed silk blouse. She wondered if Carlos was aware of her all too rapidly growing excitement.

"I see that you've got your high beams on. Are you happy to see me, or are you just a bit chilly this evening?" he said, narrowing his dark eyes. Apparently, he was paying attention.

Jennifer let out another small laugh as she tossed her head back slightly. “Oh, you!” she said demurely, trying to maintain some sort of false composure.

“What almost made you late for our chat?” Carlos asked.

“Well, I had an afternoon meeting that ran overtime,” Jennifer lied. “And then I found out that Williams from the accounting department made a few errors on a key project I assigned him, so I had to step in and lend a hand.” A feigned look of annoyance crossed her face. “Honestly, sometimes I think that place would fall apart without me!”

“The nerve of that guy, trying to keep you all to himself! But then you must have all the men at work thinking up any excuse just to be near you,” Carlos teased.

Jennifer’s smile widened as she ran her hand along the collar on her blouse. “Thank you, Carlos. You always find the best way to flatter me. And no, I try not to socialize with any of the jerks that I work with. All of those assholes combined don’t have the class that you have. They’re all so crude, so, so... unlike you.”

Jennifer didn’t have to lie about that part. *God, he was so handsome!* Staring intently at his image on the computer screen, she felt herself warming as she thought back to their first on-line meeting. After Bill departed for his Navy cruise, Jennifer had quickly become lonely in the small apartment. With each passing day, she had grown a little bolder and a lot hornier until finally she had cautiously started surfing the Internet to fill the time. Her natural curiosity getting the best of her, Jennifer located a web site where she could download some hunky Chippendale pictures. When she got bored with looking at the well-muscled men, their bodies outlined in tight spandex pants, she had turned on the computer’s teleconferencing program and connected to one of the servers that handled most of the public traffic. At first, Jennifer was content to lurk in the background, listening, but not participating in the various conversations taking place in the chat rooms that she visited.

And what conversations they were! Jennifer had been flabbergasted as she spied on the chat room participants talking dirty to each other. It seemed to her that a large percentage of the computing world was on-line searching for kinky sex. Reduced to its basic level, video conferencing was being used as a cheap, anonymous thrill. You could see, chat and do almost anything you wanted to with the person on the other end, and it didn't cost \$5.99 a minute like one of those telephone numbers advertised on late night television. Jennifer was hardly what you'd call a prude, but this sort of thing was unheard of in the small mid-western town where she and Bill had grown up. Later on, she found out that there was a special term used for mutual masturbation while chatting and viewing each other over the Internet – cybersex!

Then one evening she had met Carlos in a singles chat room. Jennifer had been browsing the ads along with the pictures that some of the people had posted, the majority mostly bald, overweight men looking for a good time. When she stumbled across CJ's ad, she had paused. *Recently suffered through a bitter divorce and very lonely*, she read. *Need to talk to a woman who is a good listener.*

Something in his short ad really appealed to her, but she couldn't quite put her finger on it. Was it the lonely part that had first attracted her to him or perhaps it was the need for a sympathetic ear to chat with? *Nope, it definitely was the picture*, she thought. Dark, wavy hair. Well-trimmed moustache. Deep, soulful eyes. *How could any woman have been so stupid to leave someone as handsome as Carlos?*

Jennifer had answered his ad, setting up a videophone conversation the very next night after concocting an elaborate story about how she was a successful, single executive who didn't have the time to date much because of her busy work schedule. This excuse also worked well to explain the reason why she was visiting the chat room in the first place.

With ever-increasing frequency, they had shared long nights during which they talked about everything and anything for hours on end. Lately, she admitted to herself, the conversations had become very sensual. A palpable sexual tension hung thickly in the air during their many heated conversations over the last three months. It was almost childish the way they dropped sexual innuendoes and coy double meanings to each other, but neither one of them cared. Jennifer resented the fact that she needed to lie to Carlos, to pretend that she was something she wasn't, but she was ashamed to tell him the truth. *Besides, it wasn't as if I'm cheating on Bill*, she justified to herself. *I'm just chatting with another lonely soul.*

During the last few weeks, Jennifer had found herself thinking about Carlos constantly. What a gentleman he was! Always polite and never, ever vulgar. Hell, he turned her on by not talking dirty to her! The typical evening's video chat usually ended with her telling CJ good night and then immediately going into the bedroom or shower and masturbating until she came in great big, shuddering orgasms. *But never together on the computer with him! Well, tonight's the night, baby!*

"So it's your turn to flatter me now!" Carlos' deep voice brought her back to the task at hand.

"Uh, I'm sorry, Carlos. What did you say?" Jennifer cursed herself for being caught up in her fantasy and not paying attention.

"Hmmm. You're just home from work, so you must be tired. Maybe I should hang up and let you get some rest."

"NO!" Jennifer protested at the screen. She hesitated for a minute and listened for the baby, hoping she had not wakened him. "I mean, I'm fine. I was just thinking about, well, you know, your ex-wife."

"Jennifer, whatever made you think of her? When we're together like this and I'm gazing into your pretty eyes, the only thing I can focus on is how beautiful you look."

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Damn! Why did I have to mention her? Jennifer thought. “I’m sorry, CJ. My mind was wandering. Let’s not mention her again. Ever.” *The bitch!*

“Then it’s agreed. We will only speak about each other when we’re together. And I hope you know that I enjoy chatting with you so very much.” His gaze narrowed again. “I’m glad that you made it back in time. Remind me, have I told you yet how absolutely lovely you are tonight?”

“Excuse me, CJ. I have to crack open a window. It’s grown a bit warm in here.” She uncrossed her long legs to reach up to the window.

“Oh, darling, do that again!”

Jennifer smiled. “Do what again, CJ?”

“Everything you just did. Stand up and let me see how hot you look tonight!”

“Carlos, do you remember when you told me the last time how you would like to see me dressed? Well, I was taking careful notes.” Jennifer lowered her gaze directly at the camera. “Did I get everything just right?”

“Jennifer, you know you did. You look absolutely stunning. I especially like those incredibly sexy legs.”

“You mean these?” Leaning back slightly in the chair, Jennifer slowly crossed her legs. She always enjoyed the feel of silk nylons rubbing against each other, and the thrill was heightened now that she knew Carlos was watching. She was acutely aware that her skirt had risen a bit higher so that the tops of her stockings were just visible.

“You know what I’m talking about, you little tease!” Carlos said.

Jennifer knew the time had arrived. In a low voice she said, “Why don’t you sit back and relax, Carlos. I wore something special

for you tonight, underneath my clothes, so I could make you, well... you know.”

“You did all that for me? How did I get so lucky to have met an angel like you? You’ve really gone out of your way to make me feel special.” The inflection in his voice changed slightly, mimicking Jennifer’s previous tone exactly. He was so close to the camera that his face filled the entire section of the screen. “Since you look so hot tonight, I think that it should be me making you, well... you know, maybe five times tonight? Will that be good for you? After all, it’s you who has made me so very happy these past few weeks.”

The expression of delight that crossed Jennifer’s face emphasized the fact that she understood exactly to what he was referring. Her racing pulse quickened.

“CJ! No!” Then a bit more seductively, “Just five times?”

“What a greedy little girl you are!” he said with a wide grin. “Now, sit back and take your punishment!”

That last sentence struck Jennifer like an electric shock. So sexy... so forceful, as if she were compelled to do his bidding.

“Yes, CJ, of course. Anything for you.” She settled back, grimacing as the old folding chair squeaked with the shift in weight.

His gaze remained steady as his voice dropped even lower. “Good. Very nice. You look so beautiful tonight. I like your hair. It looks so soft. Can you touch your hair for me?”

“Like this?” She stroked her hair as if she was brushing it.

“No. Lower. Down by your neck.”

Jennifer moved her hand down to where her light brown hair touched her neck. “Like this?”

“Yes. Slowly, darling.” His voice had dropped to a whisper.

She brushed her hair aside, exposing her neck. “Here?” Her breathing was louder now.

“Yes. Caress your neck as though I were doing it to you, sitting there right next to you.”

“Mmmm, like this?” She drew her fingertips from the side of her slender neck to the front of her throat.

“Yes. Now, imagine that I’m kissing your neck. Do you like the feel of my lips on your skin?”

Jennifer shut her eyes. She had no trouble with that image since that was all she had thought about for weeks. *Damn! Won’t be long until he has me going at this rate!*

“Yes, CJ. It feels just like you’re here with me,” she whispered softly. She moved her left hand with which she had been stroking her thigh off camera up to her left breast.

“You’re so soft, so beautiful,” Carlos cooed. “I want you.”

As her hand cupped her breast, Jennifer let out a small moan. Her right hand dropped from her neck to the flat of her stomach. It was so quiet in the room that she could hear the nylons on her legs rubbing against each other once again.

“Yes, that’s it, Jennifer,” Carlos encouraged her. “Can you pull up your skirt so I can see some more?”

Jennifer uncrossed her legs and hiked up her skirt. She saw herself in the preview screen, her head tilted to one side, blouse wide open and the crotch of her black panties clearly visible.

“Darling, you make me so hard! Do you know I’m there with you?”

Jennifer could only manage a feeble “Uh huh” as she flicked at her nipple with her thumb.

“Yes, I’m right there with you,” Carlos said, his voice caressing her. “Kissing your breast, sliding my hand along your thighs...”

Her blouse was open to the waist now, hanging loosely on her shoulders. She roughly pulled the lacy bra up, exposing her breasts.

“Now my mouth is moving down your stomach, licking your belly. Can you feel that, darling?”

“Mmmm, yes, CJ.” Jennifer’s hand quickly descended down from her breast to her stomach. Her fingertips played with her navel for a brief moment before reaching the top of her black panties.

“I can feel you, baby,” Carlos said, his voice rough with passion. “Can you feel me? I’m kneeling in front of you, between your legs, kissing your belly.”

She somehow managed to gasp out a yes. Her hand moved down between her legs and her hips starting to move in rhythm as the chair squeaked louder and louder.

“Darling. Make believe it’s me, playing with you, stroking you, kissing you...”

Jennifer surrendered to her fantasy. No longer able to ignore the feeling that was rapidly building deep within her, she was dimly aware of his seductive words fading off in the distance. She leaned back in the chair, legs spread wide, masturbating wildly. Her face was contorted in what Bill had laughingly called her ‘ecstasy face,’ cheeks bright red, tongue licking her lips, her head making small circular motions back and forth. Jennifer always knew when she was ready to reach an orgasm because she would shut her eyes so tightly, little light flashes would appear. She could clearly see the sparkles now, tiny light specks dancing around the edges of the blackness. The sound of her increasingly rapid breathing echoed inside the small apartment.

As her fingers traced up and down, Jennifer felt the first wave of her orgasm. The computer monitor, elevated from the table on a small stand, rocked back and forth on its shelf with her involuntary movements. Trembling uncontrollably, her high heel tapped in rhythm against the tabletop as an intense spasm coursed through her body.

Even though they were thousands of miles apart, she imagined their bodies were locked together in an everlasting embrace on her apartment bed. She could feel his growing excitement as he lay on top of her, crushing her down onto the cheap mattress, his hands dancing quickly across the silky curves of her body as her long manicured

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fingernails reciprocated on the lean muscles of his neck. The taste of his sweetly scented breath mixed with his smooth tongue, probing the inside of her mouth in a never-ending, passionate kiss.

“Ahhhhhhh, mmmmmmm!”

“Go darling! Go!” CJ urged her on.

Jennifer’s body convulsed as she tore at her panties, ripping them off in one strong tug. She brought up her leg to rest on the tabletop. With her body in this position, CJ could see her hips bucking up and down. Sweat covered her body as Jennifer tightened her eyes once again as another wave overtook her.

“Darling. Open your eyes. Look at me.”

Jennifer heard his voice from far away. She forced her eyes open and gazed at the image on the computer screen. CJ was staring at her, holding up his index finger.

“That’s number one.”

Jennifer closed her eyes tightly as she began to tremble once again.