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Title: "Intermezzo" Author:

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Synopsis: A lovely little 'Intermezzo' for our favorite couple. This is fourth story in the "With or Without You" series, the sequel to "Through A Glass, Darkly".

### "Intermezzo"

*Intermezzo: 1: a short light entr'acte; 2: a movement coming between the major sections of an extended musical work (as an opera) b: a short independent instrumental composition; 3 : a usually brief interlude or diversion*

Amanda Stetson opened her eyes slowly, blinking a few times to adjust to the morning light. The sun sneaking through the thatched blinds made a patchwork effect on the floor, and she vaguely wondered how long they'd slept. From the brightness of the pattern, she guessed the morning must already be well underway.

Her gaze traveled lazily to the large screened doors leading out to the veranda. She could hear the ocean in the distance, the steady 'lap-lap' of the waves hitting the shore a soothing melody. She stretched contentedly. Lee had been absolutely right; this was the perfect place for a honeymoon.

"A tropical paradise for lovers' the brochure had claimed. It was all that and more. This second honeymoon of theirs was a long overdue opportunity to finally be completely alone, to recover and renew themselves after the turbulent first year of their marriage. And for the last three days and nights, that's exactly what they'd been doing in this quaint little hut nestled among the trees. It was almost as if they'd been shipwrecked here together, far away from the outside world.

She laughed a little at that image. Robinson Crusoe never had it this good. Their 'hut' came equipped with all the amenities, from the fully stocked refrigerator and bar in the sitting room to the over-size Jacuzzi in the bathroom. Meals were a phone call away, breakfast, lunch and dinner magically materializing at the touch of a button. And the food was incredible; if not for the exercise her eager husband was providing, she would definitely be bringing home an extra five pounds.

She cast a glance in his direction, playfully watching as he slept. She smiled as he shifted slightly, one leg tangling underneath the sheet and the other lying unceremoniously on top. Reaching out, she ran her fingers lightly through his hair. Those new blonde streaks testified to the strength of the island's tropical sun. So did the sunburn on his backside.

Amanda grinned; just one more thing they could attribute to the seclusion afforded by their private beach. They had been so pleasantly distracted that first day that neither one of them had paid much attention to the sun, a consequence they were both keenly aware of when it set that night. Lee had been sleeping on his stomach ever since.

She heard him stir again, mumbling something unintelligible as he hugged his pillow. With a sly smile, she contemplated her plan of attack. Using her right foot, she carefully pulled the sheet off his body, bunching it at the bottom of the bed as she cast a longing look at her husband's quiescent form. There were definite advantages to sleeping naked, Amanda thought pleasantly as she admired the view. Inching closer, she rested her chin on her hands while she waited patiently for his response.

It didn't take long. "Hello, sleepyhead," she murmured as those expressive hazel eyes greeted her.

"Hi," he answered groggily, shaking the cobwebs from his head with an effort. "How long have you been awake?"

"Oh, not long."

Stifling his yawn, he lifted his head, vainly searching for the clock. "What time is it?"

"I have no idea," she informed him, her fingers gently tracing his jaw line.

He intercepted her hand, lightly kissing its palm. "In that case, it's much too early to get up."

"Too early? If we were at home..."

"But we're not at home," he whispered, rolling closer with a provocative grin. Amanda felt his body bid her a hello of its own as he added with a laugh, "That's the best thing about a honeymoon. No schedules to keep."

"The best thing?" She moved her fingers caressingly over the small of his back, her touch light and teasingly tender. "I can think of a few other perks."

"Now that you mention it, so can I," he agreed, leaning in to kiss her. "Actually, I'm beginning to feel kind of perky now."

"I noticed," Amanda chuckled softly as she redirected her sensuous stroking lower. "So, what are we going to do today?"

Lee pulled back to stare at her curiously.

"Besides the obvious," she replied in response to his look.

"Well, yesterday you said something about shopping. Although," he told her with a raised eyebrow, "why you actually want to go to all that effort is beyond me."

"Because we haven't set one foot out of this place since we arrived," she explained with an exasperated smile. "And I've heard they have some fabulous little shops in their market district. I want to find something special for Mother and the boys."

"Oh, your mother and the boys, that explains it," he laughed. "Yeah, I'm sure Phillip and Jamie will appreciate something from that 'Island Originals' store."

She clucked appreciatively. "So you did glance at the brochure."

"It was pretty hard to miss with all those items circled in red. Very subtle, Mrs. Stetson."

"Thanks. I thought as long as we were there, I might just look at one or two..."

"I can see it all now," he teased. "The bags will get heavier and my wallet will get lighter."

She ran her hands mercilessly across the ticklish spot on his midsection, and he quickly surrendered. "Okay, you win," he laughed, capturing her hand. "We'll shop, we'll shop."

"Thanks," she smiled archly. "I thought you might see it my way."

"Oh, I do," he said as his eyes roamed over her in unspoken admiration. "Although it's pretty hard to improve on what you're wearing right now."

"Lee, I'm not wearing anything right now."

"Exactly," he grinned, his mouth hovering inches from hers. "Why don't we discuss the details of the shopping spree later and say good morning properly?"

She lifted her head, nibbling at his lips enticingly. "If you insist." "Oh, I do," he said, his mouth closing on hers as he kissed her deeply.

"Mmmm," she sighed as she seized the initiative, rolling him onto his side and holding his body tightly against her own. Her legs rested intimately between his as she pressed her breasts firmly to his smooth chest. Leaning forward, she captured his lips, her mouth persistently demanding. She heard him groan as her tongue explored him, his body reacting forcefully to her proximity.

Amanda laughed wickedly at his reaction. She loved being able to do that to him, to push him so quickly towards the point of no return. Drawing back a little, she caught his eye. "How's your sunburn this morning?" she inquired solicitously, running her palms gently over his shoulders.

"Much better."

"That's good," she responded teasingly. "I wouldn't want you to hurt yourself."

"Don't worry, it doesn't hurt at all when I do this," he said, covering her neck and chest with a series of slow kisses. "Or this."

"Oh, Lee," Amanda sighed as she felt his lips on her bare skin, the sensation pushing everything else from her mind. Now it was her turn to moan her approval. As her body responded automatically to his touch, she murmured quietly, "I love waking up with you like this."

"Me, too."

"This has been the best trip. When I think of everything we missed out on the last time..."

"Shh," his voice soothed. "Don't talk about that. Only happy thoughts are allowed on this honeymoon. Besides," he grinned, his hand lightly following the curve of her hip, "we still have four more days together, just the two of us."

"Okay," she concurred, her own hand imitating his as she began to explore his body. "I won't talk about it. In fact," she added, feeling his arousal pressing against her, "I don't think we should talk at all."

They moved together, their growing desire easily keeping conversation at bay. The look reflected in both pairs of eyes needed no voice to convey its passion. While they usually enjoyed taking things slowly, Amanda knew instinctively that this would not be one of those times. Deliberately, she moved her legs so they were no longer between her husband's, instead encircling him and pulling him towards her.

She felt him come into her without thought or hesitation, thrusting against her in a steady rhythm as familiar as the beat of her own heart. They lay together in a warm embrace, their lovemaking an unspoken pledge that this is what they would always bring to each other, an unbridled joy in the sharing of their lives and their love. Her body matched his stroke for stroke, both of them moving quickly to a climax as natural as it was explosive.

They clung to each other, their heartbeats slowing to an easy cadence. "Love you, Mrs. Stetson," he murmured in a voice still gravelly from their efforts, and she sighed sweetly in return. From the sheltered circle of her husband's arms, the outside world seemed a million miles away. She felt the tears prick inexplicably behind her eyes; this time together was only an interlude, a sweet illusion that would end all too quickly. But in the meantime, she would enjoy its perfection to the fullest.

"Lee," she whispered softly, her lips trailing across the salty flesh of his chest. "About that shopping trip..." She scooted up to gaze directly into his eyes, her mouth resting inches from his. "We can always go tomorrow."

Eyes sparkling, he touched her lips once more. "Anything you say, Mrs. Stetson. Anything you say."

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