

only in your dreams  
a gossip girl  
novel

by  
**Cecily von Ziegesar**



LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY  
New York and Boston

*She is pure Alice in Wonderland, and her appearance and demeanor are a nicely judged mix of the Red Queen and a Flamingo.*

—Truman Capote

*Disclaimer: All the real names of places, people, and events have been altered or abbreviated to protect the innocent. Namely, me.*

## hey people!

It's been summer for about five minutes and already the city sidewalks are a hundred degrees. Thank God we can finally ditch our tired, hideous blue-and-white seersucker school uniforms—for *good*. Unless we decide to resurrect them for our first college Halloween party. Pleated kilts drive boys wild!

It was hard work surviving four years of high school, balancing partying, shopping, studying, partying, and shopping with just the right amount of grace and poise to land us in the Ivy League. We did it, though, and we've got the diplomas—and the graduation presents (*vroom, vroom, vroom!*)—to prove it.

In case you've had your head under a rock all year long, we're the kids who play as hard as we shop, and now that we've amassed our new summer wardrobes, it's time to get down to some serious play. You know us, and it's okay to admit it: you wish you were one of us. We're the girls strolling around Manhattan in crisp Marni sundresses and who-cares-if-we-ruin-them Jimmy Choo flip-flops. We're the tanned-since-spring-break-in-St.-Barts boys on the rooftop of the Met slugging Tanqueray and tonic from antique

silver flasks. Summer's here, and those tedious worries like APs and SATs are over. The next couple of months are all about the good stuff: love, sex, fame, and *infamy*. Speaking of which . . .

**the most famous girl in town is about to become even more famous**

She's a local legend already, but could she be headed for a whole new level of notoriety? Like, *Vanity Fair* covers and red-carpet

premieres? It sure looks that way now that **S** has managed to land the only summer job worth *getting*: a starring role in a major Hollywood movie headed up by potentially insane rogue director Ken Mogul, playing opposite that gorgeous, golden-stubbled megastar **T**. *Swoon*. Judging from her history, **T** will soon be her leading man offscreen, too. Some girls really do have all the luck.

Even though everyone thought **B** was *destined* for the part, she appears to have gotten over losing out to her best friend . . . again. Maybe she's getting used to it, or maybe she's too busy cavorting with her delicious-looking new boyfriend between the perfectly pressed 600-thread-count cream-colored Egyptian cotton Claridge's of London hotel sheets to care. That's right: her whirlwind affair with that strapping English gentleman Lord **M** has changed settings from steamy New York to swanky London, and I can only imagine they're putting **B**'s hotel suite to good use. Of course, Lord **M**'s manor is purported to be even nicer than Claridge's, if that's possible—so why isn't she staying with him there? We'll find out soon enough: word of her escapades is already making its way back across the pond.

Scandalous information about our favorite perpetually stoned but still perpetually cute **N** is also making its way back to the city—although he's only a jitney ride away, in the summer-lovin' Hamptons. He's doing hard time on Long Island after that pesky stealing-Viagra-from-his-lacrosse-coach-and-almost-not-graduating episode. I hear he's already tan and persistently sweaty from all the reroofing he's doing at his coach's house. Some of the local ladies have been doing drive-bys just to get a peek at him with his shirt off. Meanwhile, on *this* side of Long Island—that's Brooklyn, FYI—**V** was seen enjoying the spoils of her short live-in with **B**. Hello, black silk DVF wrap dress! Only **B** would leave *that* behind like a used toothbrush. No one knows if **V** was having a fling with both sides of that stepsibling duo or not, but both **A** and **B** have moved on. Literally. Last I heard, **A** had taken up with a tattooed belly dancer in Austin, Texas, with two boxer puppies of her own. Thank goodness for **D**—he's been seen all over town frantically checking out the city like a tourist. Looks like someone's getting sentimental about his big move

out west this fall.

**Q:**

**Your e-mail**

Dear GG,

So there I was, in Heathrow Airport on my way to this totally fruity British boarding school my parents are making me start this summer, when whom should I see but **B**, aka the girl of my dreams. I thought my problems were solved, until I arrived on campus and heard three *very* disturbing rumors:

1) **B** is not only dating some English douche bag, she's *engaged* to him.

2) *He's* already engaged to someone else.

And, craziest of all:

3) Lord Douchebaggio isn't satisfying **B's** womanly needs, if you catch my drift. Maybe he's too tired out from spending time with his fiancée?

Help a brother out, here. I'm going to freak the F out if I don't find a girl who knows that soccer is *not* called football.  
—B Back on the Market?

P.S. *I* can go all night.

**A:**

Dear BB on the M,

I don't know how they do it in England, but here in America seventeen is *way* too young to get married. Hello, we haven't even hooked up with our freshman year hall mates yet! Sit tight. Nothing lasts forever. . . .

—GG

P.S. All night, huh? What did you say you look like?

**Q:**

Dear GG,

It took a lot of begging and pleading, but I finally convinced my dad to shell out for a summer rental in Southampton just for me and my friends. Now we're here and no one else is. What gives?



—No Sex on the Beach

Dear NSOTB:

If you must know, getting to the Hamptons too early in the season is a little . . . well, tacky, unless you *have* to be there, like some people I know. In the meantime, why not shake it up? You've got a whole house at your disposal—fashion those palm-frond-patterned ABC Carpet & Home sheets into togas and get into the college spirit!

—GG

### Sightings

**B** accusing a Virgin Atlantic bag handler of stealing one of her *many* Cosabella lace thongs from her Tumi duffel. That's what you get for flying commercial! **S** reading—*reading*? Hello, school's out!—a tattered paperback copy of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* on a shady bench in Central Park. No doubt she'll reminisce about it someday on *Inside the Actors Studio*. A sweaty **N** pumping up and down and up and—there goes my imagination!—through East Hampton center on his old red Schwinn ten-speed. What happened to the Range Rover? **V** at Bonita, that tiny, rustic Mexican place in Williamsburg, asking someone to wipe down the table before she sat down. Maybe **B** really did rub off on her. **D** cruising up and down West End Avenue for hours—where's he supposed to *park* that big blue Buick pimpmobile he scored as a graduation present, anyway?

That's all for now. I'm out of here. After all, you don't have to be an MIT-bound math geek to realize there are only eleven weeks of summer—a mere seventy-seven days—before we have to grapple with things like coed dorms and declaring a major in fashion design and maybe a torrid extracurricular affair with that probably-pretty-cute-under-his-tweed-blazer-and-bow-tie English lit professor. But let's not get ahead of ourselves: it's hot outside, and things are already getting steamy. Life is full of mystery—not to mention cute girls in polka-dot bikinis and hot guys in pastel-colored surf shorts. The summer, with its lack of rules and sched-

ules, provides the perfect setting for some severe misbehavior. Right now, I'm taking my new oversized pale pink Gucci sunglasses, a copy of French *Elle*, some Guerlain SPF 45 sunblock, and a cozy turquoise-and-tangerine-striped Missoni towel and hitting the park. Which part of the park? Wouldn't you like to know?

gossip girl You  
know  
you love  
me.

## *the honeymooners*

“Good morning, madam!” trilled a female voice in a super-perky British accent.

Blair Waldorf sighed and turned over onto her side. She’d been in London three days but still wasn’t over her jet lag. She didn’t mind, though: it was a small price to pay to see her movie-star-handsome, real-life-English-blueblood boyfriend, Lord Marcus.

Wendy, one of the three maids whose round-the-clock services came with Blair’s penthouse suite at Claridge’s, clacked across the blond parquet floors and deposited a heavy mahogany tray onto the king-size bed, which was so big Blair had divided it up into four sections: one for sleeping, one for eating, one for watching TV, and one for sex. So far, *that* section had remained unused. Wendy drew the thick maroon velvet curtains on the massive wall of windows, flooding the enormous room with light. It reflected off the opulent gold-filigree ceiling and bounced off the gilded mirrors that lined the attached dressing room.

“Ouch!” Blair cried, pulling one of the six sumptuous goose-down pillows over her head to shield her eyes from the sun.

“Breakfast as requested, Miss Waldorf,” announced Wendy, lifting the silver cover off the tray to reveal a barfy-looking mush of watery scrambled eggs, massive greasy sausages, and a pool of stewed tomatoes.

Classic English cuisine. Yum.

Blair smoothed her tousled chestnut hair and straightened the straps of the soft pink Hanro cami she'd worn to bed. The food looked disgusting but smelled delicious. Oh well, she deserved a little treat, didn't she? She'd worked up an appetite the day before, walking around West London sightseeing.

If you call Harrods, Harvey Nichols, and Whistles *sights*.

"And your paper," added Wendy setting the *International Herald Tribune* on the tray with a flourish. Blair had requested the daily paper when she checked in—a Yale woman had to keep up on world events, after all. So what if she hadn't exactly gotten around to the reading part?

"Will that be all?" Wendy asked primly.

Blair nodded and the maid disappeared into the sitting room. Blair speared one of the huge sausages with her fork and picked up the paper, skimming the front page. But the tiny typeface and matter-of-fact photographs were so boring she couldn't concentrate. The only paper she ever read was the Sunday Styles section of the *New York Times*, if only to scan the charity event pictures for familiar faces. Why would a worldly woman like herself need to read world news, anyway? She *was* world news.

Blair had always been impulsive, but her presence in London had actually been Marcus's idea. His graduation present to her—other than the ridiculously extravagant Bvlgari earrings—had been a plane ticket to London. Blair had envisioned rainy weeks locked in his enormous stone castle having chain-sex—the equivalent of chain-smoking—stopping only to gnaw on a cold leg of mutton or whatever medieval snack was stored in the castle's primitive but well-stocked kitchen. But Marcus had been so busy working for his dad all he ever had time for was lunch and a brief snog.

Dropping the unopened paper onto the floor, she scanned her bedside table for British *Vogue*—she'd stocked up on all the English magazines so she'd know what to buy and where

to buy it—when her new razor-thin Vertu phone chimed prettily. There was only one person who had her new London telephone number.

“Hello?” she answered as sexily as she could with a mouth full of scrambled egg.

“Darling,” Lord Marcus Beaton-Rhodes greeted her in his charming British accent. “I’m coming round. Just wanted to make sure you were up, love.”

“I’m up, I’m up!” Blair was unable to control her excitement. She’d spent the last two nights alone, and her horniness was bubbling over into near-frenzy. How they’d made it this far without actually doing it, she wasn’t sure. Was this their chance for a morning interlude sans knickers?

“Right,” he continued in his charmingly straightforward way. “I’ll be by shortly. And I’ve got a surprise.”

*A surprise!* thought Blair giddily as she shut her phone. That was *just* the kind of wake-up call she needed to get her out of bed. She scurried to the bathroom, discarding clothes as she went. Could it be roses and caviar? Chilled champagne and oysters? It was kind of early in the morning for that, but judging from the last present he’d given her—the Bvlgari pearl earrings, with their dangling gold Bs—it was bound to be good. Some equally exquisite symbol of his undying love? Everyone back in New York was so insanely jealous of her perfect English boyfriend that they’d spread rumors Marcus was already engaged. There was only one way to put *that* rumor to rest forever: return to New York wearing his ring. Preferably a flawless, four-carat, emerald-cut diamond, although an old family heirloom would do.

How humble of her.

Lord Marcus had initially invited her to spend the summer at his father’s Knightsbridge mansion, but when he’d picked her up from Heathrow in his chauffeur-driven cream-colored Bentley he’d taken her straight to Claridge’s. “We simply haven’t got the room, sweetheart,” Marcus whispered directly

into her ear, his hot breath sending shivers down her spine as the desk attendant handed her the room key. “Plus, when I come over, we’ll have complete privacy.”

Well, that’s hard to argue with.

Blair wasn’t sure what Marcus’s dad did for a living, but it had something do with bonds, and whatever it was sounded very boring. Marcus was interning at his dad’s office for the summer, and late nights and early mornings meant he had hardly any energy for . . . sex. Blair had only done it a few times with Nate Archibald, and she was beyond eager to try it with someone older and more experienced, like Marcus—not that sex with Nate had been so bad.

Her rosemary La Mer bath tonic and minty Marvis toothpaste masking the stink of scrambled egg and tomato, she hurried back to the bedroom and hopped into bed, wearing only a light sheen of lavender-scented bath water, Chanel No. 5 perfume, and the Bvlgari earrings she hadn’t taken off once since her graduation party at the Yale Club a little over two weeks ago.

After ditching Vanessa Abrams’s small apartment in dingy and weird Williamsburg, with no intention of moving back to the crazy world she used to call home, Blair had decided to live at the Yale club. She and Lord Marcus had met in the elevator, and his hot accent and neatly ironed jeans had gotten to her right away. Fate had it that their rooms were side by side, and she could imagine the feel of his sexy English breath on her neck even before they’d kissed—which had happened that very night. After pouring her heart out to him over six or seven cosmos, Blair was so sure she’d found the love of her life, she practically threw herself at him. She was too tipsy—and he was too much of a gentleman—to do more than kiss. But all *that* was about to change.

Blair draped the sheets over her body and lit a cigarette, striking a pose that said, *I’m on my honeymoon and worn out from doing it, but what the hell, let’s do it again.* She grabbed the

newspaper off of the floor and propped up the front page so it looked like she was reading it. There. Perfect. An intellectual sexpot. A worldly woman who read all about international crises—and preferred to discuss said crises *in bed*. If only she had a pair of vintage fifties reading glasses to perch on the tip of her nose.

All the better to see you naked with!

As if on cue, Lord Marcus flung the bedroom door open and Blair turned her head slowly, as if she could barely stand to break away from the current poultry deficit in Asia. He was wearing a perfectly tailored charcoal summer suit with an olive James Perse T-shirt underneath that made his striking green eyes look serious and deep and oh-so-promising.

“What’s this, then?” he asked, furrowing his golden-brown eyebrows. “Remember I said I had a surprise?”

“I’ve got a surprise for you too,” Blair cooed sexily. “Come look under the sheets.”

“Right,” he continued a little impatiently. “Well, put on your clothes, love.”

“I don’t want to,” Blair complained, pouting.

He hurried across the room and kissed her quickly on the nose. “Later,” he promised. “Now throw on some clothes and meet me downstairs in the lobby.” Then he turned and left the room, leaving her perfumed, well-moisturized, and depilated body naked and alone.

This better be a good surprise.

Blair emerged from the wood-paneled elevator in a hastily chosen ensemble: a chocolate brown Tory Burch tunic (thank you, Harrods), a favorite pair of old True Religion jeans, and clunky gold Marc by Marc Jacobs clogs. She looked like a jet-setter on holiday. Just right for a weekend jaunt to Tunis in Lord Marcus’s private jet. Could *that* be the surprise?

The grand, chandelier-lit marble hotel lobby was abuzz with activity, but Blair noticed a hush fall over the crowd as

she crossed the tiled floor, her clogs clapping noisily, to the overstuffed black velvet chaise where Marcus sat waiting for her. He was so goddamn handsome Blair couldn't help admiring him, like he was a painting or some rare piece of sculpture, and it was hard to resist plunging her fingers into the thick waves of his golden-brown hair. She was so busy mentally rhapsodizing over her gorgeous English lover that she barely noticed he was holding hands with someone who was *definitely* not her.

Ding, ding. Hello?

Forgetting the romantic jaunt to Africa, Blair's eyes narrowed at the horsy blonde holding her boyfriend's hand. *What the fuck?*

"Blair, at last," Lord Marcus greeted her smoothly, standing but not letting go of his companion's hand. "This, my dear, is my darling cousin Camilla, the one I told you about. My soul mate. She's in town for a couple of weeks. We were practically twins growing up! Isn't that the most marvelous surprise?"

"Marvelous," echoed Blair, throwing herself onto a nearby armchair. She didn't remember hearing anything about any cousin Camilla.

But then, listening had never been her strong suit.

"I'm so delighted to meet you," said Camilla, staring down her long, prominent nose—the kind of schnozz even the best plastic surgeon couldn't fix. Her pale English complexion was layered with comical amounts of beige powder and primary-red blush. Her legs were clownishly long and skinny, like she'd been stretched on one of those old-fashioned lengthening machines Blair had tried to find on eBay.

"Mimi just turned up yesterday morning, unannounced," Lord Marcus explained. "Imagine, like a lost waif, with bags in hand." He chuckled.

"Yes, well, thankfully I can count on my dear Mar-mar to open up his home to me," Camilla gushed, casually running

her free hand through her long, flaxen hair. Hair that could easily be cut off in the middle of the night.

Wait—his *home*?

“You’re staying at his place?” demanded Blair rudely, already hating the crooked-toothed Camilla and her ugly yellow Indian silk sundress, which probably cost thousands but looked like a tablecloth. “But I thought there wasn’t room.”

“There’s always room for *family*,” Lord Marcus answered, squeezing Camilla’s talonlike hand before turning back to Blair. “Not to worry, sweetheart. We’ll all have a grand time together.”

Sure they will.

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