

DARK FAÇADE



Let the party begin...

Sylvia Hubbard

Synopsis: Maxine, an AA graphic designer who has no life, realizes that her best friend and coworker disappeared the day after telling Maxine she was going out on a hot date with a man she met on the Internet.

Now it's up to Maxine to find out what happened to Lisa and who was this mysterious man, who emailed his picture to her friend that Maxine just can't stop thinking about.

Dark Façade

WC:40K (est)| Part 1-19

Dark Façade II: When the Dark Comes

WC: (TBD) | Part 20-35

Dark Façade III: The Evil Behind the Mask

WC: (TBD) | Part 36-50

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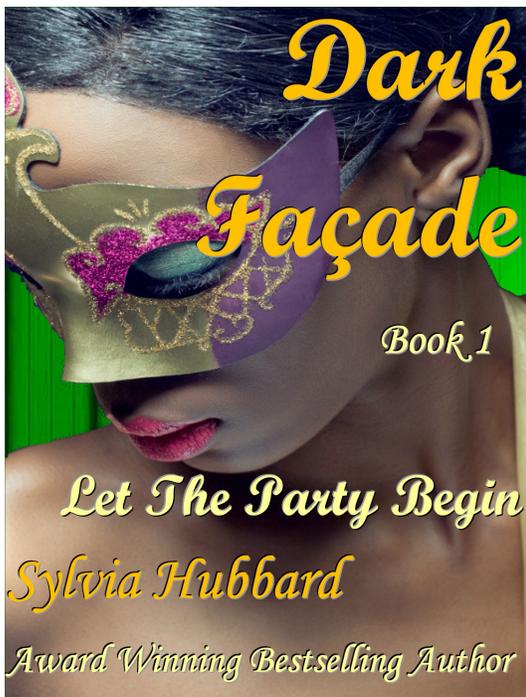
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Dark Façade Chapter 1 Excerpt

“He is so damn cute!” Lisa said dreamily staring at the screen of a slightly tanned white man with the widest smile.

Just getting into the office, Maxine sighed not really wanting to listen to her co-worker’s machinations all day of cute guy. She hadn’t had her coffee and a migraine was on the brink of overtaking her whole face. Maxine wrinkled her nose at the screen not really taking a good look, but just accessing the fact that this was a white man. She was never into white guys, but heck, it was a free country and Lisa was at the point in her life where she wanted to look for more meaning when it came to men. According to Lisa, she was tired of all the ‘brothas bull crap’ and didn’t want to deal with them anymore.

“Looks can be deceiving,” Maxine said sarcastically, going over to the work bin and seeing which project she was assigned. “A five thousand dollar computer monitor can make anyone look cute.”

Lisa snorted. “You just don’t get it, Max.”

“Get what? That you’re on the Internet looking for a white man? It’s some pretty weird stuff out there, girl, so you better be careful.” Maxine went over to her desk and turned on her computer.

Coming over to her desk, Lisa’s lean framed leaned over. “You don’t get that black brothers are just plain lazy. I need a man who’s going to work for me. Appreciate me. Worship the damn ground I walk on.”

Nodding over to the computer screen of the guy with the omnipresent stare, Maxine asked coolly, “And you think he can do this for you?”

“At this point, anything is better than those trifling ass niggas out there.”

“You don’t have to be black to be a nigga,” Maxine teased, pulling up her reports from yesterday. “Fine, Lisa. Find your dream man online and I’ll dance at your wedding, okay?” Right then she just wanted to drop the subject and get to work.

“Don’t worry,” Lisa said, walking back over to her desk to continue to stare at the screen of the picture. “It’ll be soon. I’m going out tonight to meet him.”

Stopping her work, Maxine looked over at her co-worker worriedly. “Didn’t you just find him today?”

“Yeah, but when you do your thing online, things move fast.”

“That’s just way too fast, Lisa,” Maxine said apprehensively.

“Last time I checked I was grown, Max. Quit your worrying.” Lisa huffed. “That’s your problem, Max, you have this great single life and you don’t know what to do with it. You’re childless with a great job and no trifling family to bother you. You need to be out there taking chances, meeting new people.”

“Going out with a complete stranger is not my idea of living; Especially some guy I met online in the morning and going out the same night. You know absolutely nothing about this man.” She stopped her venting and decided trying to talk to Lisa about now was like talking to a deaf person. Lisa was not hearing a word Maxine was saying.

Maxine let it go and continued working. She wasn’t going to let her co-workers stupidity interfere with her work. Even though Lisa was about the only thing in Max’s life that could be called a close friend, Max didn’t voice her opinion about Lisa’s promiscuous lifestyle.

Working at Bianchi/Bellini Marketing as graphic designers, they had become fast friends from the first day they had worked together four years ago. They loved their job and hardly ever missed a day of work.

The day dragged on and Maxine paid very little attention to Lisa and how she spoke about this all too wonderful online stranger. Lisa had gone so far as to put his face in her screen saver so when she went to lunch, Maxine had to stare at those deep turquoise eyes and even notice that there was a small scar directly above his left eyebrow. That perfect row of teeth large smile seemed to be proprietary, but Maxine was no fool. This man probably sent this out to millions of women just to get some bootie.

In her opinion, white men were no better than any other man. They were all after one thing and Maxine had made too many mistakes in the past to even let that bother her.

By the end of the day, Lisa was just too happy and rushed out of there to get ready for her date.

Going home to her boring existence, Maxine fixed a TV dinner, watched a little CSI and then went to bed. This was her daily routine except on Sunday’s when she didn’t go to work she just slept all day long. Maxine never really longed for something exciting to always have to do, like Lisa did. Doing the same thing every day felt stable and comfortable and she didn’t mind her lonely existence. Being alone meant she kept control of the things around her and being in control was important to Maxine. This feeling of being in control had always been important to her; she’d never been sure why, but she knew keeping her surroundings like she wanted it, kept her from going crazy... and that was something she knew deep down inside she could never become.

As Maxine relaxed and prepared to sleep, for some reason, she thought about Lisa and wondered what she was doing on her hot date. Maxine's mind relaxed and next thing she knew she felt warm all over.

Tingles encompassed her body as wet kisses hungrily showered her face, neck, and then down to her chest. Her nipples hardened and pulsed and she felt the wet mouth suckle her tips and then a soft tongue laved the entire breast before moving to the other one.

Between her legs, she could feel the moistness increase and wanted to feel even more between her legs. Who was doing to this her? It felt so good, so damn good.

Reaching down, she cupped the face reluctant to stop the beautiful oral ministrations, but too curious to know who could make her feel so wonderful.

Bold passionate turquoise eyes met her own and that beautiful smile-

Awaking screaming, Maxine clutched the covers and looked frantically around the room. Once she was assured she was alone, she laid back down.

Damn Lisa!

Getting to work the next day she was almost too embarrassed about the dream to face Lisa and was glad no one was in the office when she entered. Quickly, Maxine got to work immediately.

When their supervisor came in at ten asking where Lisa was, Maxine looked at the empty desk and frowned. Not wanting to get Lisa in trouble, she lied to her boss and said, "I forgot to tell you that she called in sick."

He looked at her suspiciously. "Well, okay. Can you get me an update on that logo she was working on? I want to sign off on those changes by the end of the day."

Maxine nodded eagerly trying not to look worried. "Sure. I'll get that over to you right away." When he was gone, she called Lisa's home but there was no answer. Looking over at Lisa's computer, she had to wonder what happened on the date.

Already knowing Lisa's password, she was able to get in on Lisa's computer and access her Palm Calendar. Lisa had the yesterday's date in red, meaning it was important. Clicking on yesterday's events, Maxine saw two entries for the time after work. The first entry said Miller. The time for this entry was thirty minutes after work.

Maxine knew Miller Market by Lisa's house. Maybe Lisa had stopped in to pick up something for the date because Miller's Market was like any convenience store in Detroit, selling almost everything under the sun.

Afterwards the first entry, typed in red letters, BIG DATE! 2121 Milwaukee @ Detroit Masquerade. This wasn't Lisa's address, so Maxine printed out this page and called Lisa's home. There was no answer to her home number or cell phone number.

Maxine knew Lisa had a kid, but the father of the child had custody and the child only came over every other weekend. Never meeting the father, but often hearing how Lisa had to leave him but no one believe he had been abusive. Unfortunately Max didn't try to get herself or her thoughts involved with Lisa's past personal life.

With tomorrow being Friday, Maxine knew Lisa had to pop up somewhere. Lisa never missed her chance to see her child.

The date must have been pretty hot!

Maxine went to Lisa's home on lunch. No one was there and Lisa's car wasn't in the driveway.

'Why am I so worried? She's a grown woman, she said so herself!'

Getting back in her car, she reached in her purse and looked at the address she had printed off. 'Damn Lisa! Why'd you have to go on the date and not tell anyone where you were going?'

Maxine drove by Miller's grocery store, but there was still no luck seeing Lisa's car.

Putting her car in drive, she checked her watch. There was still time to make a quick run just to check out the address.

'Go to the police!' her common sense screamed, yet the realization was that Lisa hadn't been missing over 48 hours and the police wouldn't care. Plus Maxine was not a relative so they probably wouldn't let her file a missing persons report right away. Maxine had no idea how to get in touch with the father of Lisa's child, nor did she know anyone else relative to Lisa.

This wasn't like Lisa. Even though she took some chances, she would never do anything crazy or dumb.

Or would she?

As Maxine headed to the 2121 Milwaukee address, all she could think about was those deep turquoise eyes and that irresistible smile. Would he be there?

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