

# *VICIOUS PLAY*

Written by

Tiffany FitzHenry

Based on the novel  
"Les Liaisons Dangereuses" by Choderlos De Laclos

FADE IN:

EXT. ARIEL - VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY - EARLY MORNING

We CIRCLE high above Vandy in full spring bloom.

DESCENDING over the manicured grounds, we FLY past out-sized Greek and Roman inspired buildings, towering with aspirations. Then over a lake, past the CREW TEAM, flawlessly executing their morning row.

A docking sailboat PULLS US onshore, where we head towards a nearby cropping of mansions and quickly realize, it's GREEK ROW. Then MOVE IN slowly towards one particular colonial estate, a white-columned beast.

Through an upstairs window, we FLOAT inside.

INT. DELTA DELTA DELTA - EARLY MORNING

Naked FEMALE bodies, like a harem, are tangled as far as the eye can see. The aftermath of an all-out orgy.

Through the mess of sleeping beauties walk long legs on towering stilettos. Power publicist LYNETTE MYERS, 40's, ex-beauty queen, the best in the business.

Lynette bends down every few feet picking up cell phones, dropping them into her oversized Birkin bag.

LYNETTE

(to a snoozing slut)

Your family must be so proud.

Finally, she spots him, the one young man in the entire room. SHAWN VANCE, 19, black, movie star good looks. He's naked, knotted up with four girls on the bed, like a lion in a den, the Heisman Trophy lying on the floor next to the bed.

Lynette walks over, carefully picks up the Heisman, and lowers it into her bag. Then shakes Shawn awake. He looks up, sees her face, and immediately goes back to sleep.

Lynette places her bag on the ground, takes off her heels, and straddles him, forcing one girl to the floor with a THUD.

She leans down, and whispers in his ear.

LYNETTE (CONT'D)

Morning sunshine.

He smiles, lets out a deep satisfied SIGH. Finally he opens his eyes, looking proud.

LYNETTE (CONT'D)  
What's going on, Shawn?

Crossing his arms behind his head, Shawn takes a moment to observe Lynette on top of him in a very short skirt.

SHAWN  
Ah, I just won the Heisman.

LYNETTE  
Yes. I was there. What's all this?

SHAWN  
Everyone wants to sleep with the Heisman Trophy winner, as I'm sure you can understand.

LYNETTE  
Wow, how gracious of you.

SHAWN  
That's what I'm saying.

LYNETTE  
I'm just, thinking out loud here, but, well, did you have to oblige them all at once?

He thinks on it a moment.

SHAWN  
I feel like I did.

Shawn's quite amused with himself, Lynette less so.

Noticing, suddenly, his pounding head, he winces.

LYNETTE  
(baby voice)  
You probably need a Tylenol.

He grabs her hips, moves his own around beneath her.

SHAWN  
Vicoprofen should do the trick.

She removes his hands, and stands up. Smoothing her skirt.

LYNETTE  
Never heard of it.

SHAWN

That's because your arm's not worth millions of dollars, Lynette.

LYNETTE

But yours is.

SHAWN

So I get to have special things.

LYNETTE

What do you know about special?

She asks sincerely, looking around.

LYNETTE (CONT'D)

Nothing has any meaning to you.

SHAWN

This? This is very meaningful to me. This is my search for the right woman. Maybe you've seen her. Mid forty's, hot as hell, especially when she's really angry.

Flattery dulled by exhaustion.

LYNETTE

There are a lot of people invested in you, Shawn. But I can't help you if you're bent on losing it all.

SHAWN

(flirty)

Come on, Nette. Try again, but this time, really compel me.

LYNETTE

You think your charisma will get you through anything, don't you?

SHAWN

Yes. (He does)

LYNETTE

My god. You think I fix your messes because of your charm?

SHAWN

Yes. (He does)

LYNETTE

You're forgetting about the outrageous money I'm paid to make you look like a reasonably good person. To make it so I'm the only one who knows you're a cavernous wasteland of bullshit.

Shawn goes quiet. He takes a deep breath.

LYNETTE (CONT'D)

Oh what? Did I hurt your feelings?

SHAWN

No, I was just thinking. You get to see the real me, raw, unfiltered, which let's face it, is like being in an exclusive club, and you're getting paid.

(beat)

I just feel like *I* should be getting something out of this.

LYNETTE

You are beyond help at this point, you know that, right?

Lynette continues collecting cell phones.

SHAWN

What do you want from me? You want me to walk around like the next Tim fucking Tebow?

LYNETTE

Yes.

SHAWN

You want a confession that I feel hallow and empty inside?

LYNETTE

Yes.

SHAWN

You want me to tell you that I regret the things I do?

LYNETTE

Yes.

SHAWN

But the truth is I don't.

LYNETTE

What about your career?

SHAWN

I'm not obsessed with football like the rest of the world. It's boring.

LYNETTE

Boring?

SHAWN

Painfully.

LYNETTE

(exasperated)

Then why are you here?

SHAWN

Football is a necessary evil. A gateway of sorts.

LYNETTE

To your real obsession.

SHAWN

I see a girl I want, now that is a riveting game. Pursuit and conquer. Then on to the next.

LYNETTE

Shawn the conqueror, is that how you want to be remembered?

SHAWN

But it won't be. There are different rules for guys like me. Rules people like you help create. If I lived in the real world sure, I would just be a whoring bastard. But I live in this world. And in this world I am a magnanimous king who's very gracious with his time; a modern day Solomon, if you will.

LYNETTE

Well, I won't, Shawn. Not anymore. I'm done baby sitting his royal highness, after today.

SHAWN

(feigning surprise)

Hm, why the sudden change of heart?

She gives him a knowing glare, as she steps deeper into the throngs of women. Finally, she stops, hovering above one young beauty, seething as she stares down at, KATIE MYERS, 22, over achiever, the spitting image of Lynette.

Lynette steps on her hand to wake her.

KATIE

Ow!

When Katie, blurry eyed, sees her mom, visible panic.

LYNETTE

Oh honey if you think that hurt,  
getting kicked out of law school is  
going to sting something fierce.

Katie's confused, disoriented.

KATIE

Mom. Wait, what happened? I, I  
don't remember...

She sits up. Looking around, she can't believe her eyes.

LYNETTE

Let's jog your memory, shall we?

Lynette picks up Katie's phone and starts clicking away.  
After a few seconds Lynette shows Katie Shawn's Instagram.

KATIE

No.

At the top, we see Katie on Shawn's lap, her long legs, just like her mother's, wrapped around him. It's a video clip.

KATIE (CONT'D)

(remembering)  
Oh God. Oh God, no.

LYNETTE

Oh yes.

Glaring over at Shawn.

LYNETTE (CONT'D)

Four millions views and counting.

SHAWN

My followers really appreciate the  
consistent quality of my content.

KATIE  
I don't want to see it.

LYNETTE  
You can imagine how I felt.

Lynette pushes PLAY.

CUT TO:

VIDEO ON SCREEN:

The camera sways about, then FOCUSES for a moment on one of her spread legs, and PANS up to clearly show Katie, on Shawn's lap, riding him, moaning in ecstasy. Writhing.

Beyond wasted, she might even be drugged.

Shawn flips the camera to himself.

SHAWN  
She scored a one hundred and eighty  
on her LSAT, ladies and gentlemen.  
It's my *great pleasure* to introduce  
the world to Miss Kathrine Myers.

He flips the camera back to focus on her.

KATIE  
(slurring)  
If you posted that, it would  
literally ruin my life.

CUT BACK TO  
PREVIOUS SCENE:

Satisfied and smug, Shawn smiles at Lynette.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARQUIS MANSION - DAY

GARDENERS are pruning and VALET are shinning vintage cars in front of an enormous, grand southern estate, when a Maserati comes speeding up the long drive, barrels up to the entrance and comes screeching to a halt. Shawn steps out of the passenger's side, Heisman in hand, and the car peels off.

Whistling happily, with a spring in his step, Shawn bounds up the grand marble staircase, and lets himself inside.

INT. MARQUIS MANSION - MADELINE'S ROOM - DAY

Opera music blaring, MADELINE MARQUIS sits at her gilded vanity, scrutinizing her reflection carefully, to her utter satisfaction.

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON:

Her supple chest as she applies perfume.

Her perfect legs as she pulls on hose.

Her tone body as she zips her black dress.

Her neck as she straightens her pearls.

Her feminine hands as she pulls on WHITE GLOVES.

CUT TO:

INT. MARQUIS MANSION - HALLWAY - DAY

ANGEL ON -

WHITE GLOVED HANDS as they carry a silver tray of daintily portioned succulent and minted iced teas through several doors until we enter the final door leading to -

INT. MARQUIS MANSION - SITTING ROOM - DAY

Neoclassical architecture, thirty foot silk drapes and black and white marble sets the stage for stately southern style. Grand in every fashion but welcoming as a porch swing, the estate is a showcase of wealth and accomplishment and this room is it's crowning glory, with abundant but tastefully placed relics of athletic feats of valor emphasizing coach Marquis' focus on his esteemed career.

The Marquis' Brazilian housekeeper, MARIA, sets the tray in front of -

MADELINE MARQUIS, 22, dangerously beautiful and with the air of a duchess, she's like a young Kerry Washington meets Scarlet O'Hara. She easily masks her boredom under a look of genuine warmth, sincere as a buttercup, as she listens to -

SUSANNA CARTWRIGHT, 50's, nouveau-riche social climber, who's blabbing on indelicately. CORDELIA CARTWRIGHT, her sullen teenage daughter, sits by her side.

Cordelia's texting nonstop on her hello kitty covered phone as her mom talks to Madeline.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

I simply can not over state how thrilled Cordelia's father and I are that she's been accepted to attend Vanderbilt this fall.

Susanna swipes at Cordelia to put away the damn phone.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT (CONT'D)

(hushed)

Our biggest concern is in keeping her...on the straight and narrow, if you understand.

MADELINE

(deep southern drawl)

I do.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

It's of the utmost importance.

MADELINE

Consider it my highest priority.

On Mrs. Cartwright's face, measurable relief.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

(to Cordelia)

Madeline is set to graduate next spring, Magna Cum Laude with a double major in Architecture and Aerospace Engineering. Chi Omega president elect...

MADELINE

Mrs. Cartwright, you flatter me.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

Do whatever she tells you, Cordelia. You'll come out on top.

MADELINE

(in Portuguese)

The bottom can be fun too.

From nearby, Maria Eduarda SNICKERS quietly.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

Translation?

MADELINE

I said, you're very kind.

Awkward beat, it's pretty obvious that's not she said. But, undaunted by a little lie, Mrs. Cartwright presses on.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

I must know your secret. I mean, a girl in your shoes has the world at her finger tips, temptation round every corner. How do you...fortify yourself against, *the distractions?*

MADELINE

My mother's always watching over me, and I couldn't bear the thought of letting her down.

(beat for effect)

I know she's at peace, with our Lord, and so that's where I stay. It gives me a kind of strength you wouldn't believe.

Mrs. Cartwright is mesmerized. Madeline reaches for her bible, close at hand.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

You are awe inspiring, and please, call me *Susanna*.

CORDELIA

(to Madeline)

Do you have a boyfriend?

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

Cordelia! That's in such poor taste, child.

(to Madeline)

Please pardon her, Madeline. She's coming from Agnes Scott, this will be her first time ever at a school with...young men.

MADELINE

Well then, that's perfectly reasonable, and it's wonderful you've decided to bring her here. Most of the young men she'll encounter are fine southern gentlemen. It's hard to find anyone bent on debauchery here at Vandy.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

With one exception, of course,  
though Shawn's probably like family  
to you and I'd never gossip.

MADELINE

Of course.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

But, well, how did he get out of  
the mess with the underage girl?

SHAWN (O.C.)

Lawyers.

Mrs. Cartwright spots Shawn as he swaggers into the room from  
the doorway he'd been occupying for quite some time.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

And you've got to have the right  
judge too, obviously. But it's the  
lawyers who do the real heavy  
lifting. The best lawyers are truly  
worth their weight in gold. Maybe  
even platinum.

He picks up Mrs. Cartwright's glass of untouched iced tea and  
gulps it down until it's gone.

Shawn stares at Cordelia, unblinking. Finally,

SHAWN (CONT'D)

There's a cat face on your phone,  
did you know that?

CORDELIA

I have one with owls, too.

Shawn eyes Madeline a beat in disbelief. Then looks back to  
Cordelia.

SHAWN

Well, I, for one, much prefer the  
pussy.

MADELINE

Cordelia's transferring in this  
fall.

SHAWN

A nearby high school?

MADELINE

She's going to be a sophomore, just like you.

CORDELIA

I might see you in a class.

SHAWN

Unless the professor's female.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

You don't take women teachers?

SHAWN

Quite the opposite. I take them exclusively. But, I traditionally give them such a good fuck at the top of the semester, the only attendance they require of me is, well, home study. Know what I mean?

He nods toward Cordelia suggestively.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

Would you just look at the time.

(to Madeline)

You're a tremendous hostess, your mother would be so proud.

Madeline points to the sky.

MADELINE

She is.

Madeline stands and goes to Cordelia, embraces her tightly.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

(feigning excitement,  
while walking her out)

Tell you what, how about I take you over to the sorority house in the morning?

CORDELIA

Okay.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT

How wonderful, thank you Madeline.

CORDELIA

(to Shawn)

Bye.

SHAWN  
TTFN, Puss in boots.

Cordelia stares at him, equally confused and mesmerized.  
From the doorway.

MRS. CARTWRIGHT  
Cordelia! Now!

Madeline guides her out, closes the door behind them. She takes off her gloves. Tosses them at Shawn playfully.

SHAWN  
Does father know his house is being used to round up harlots for your collection...I mean, *sorority*.

Madeline starts pulling up the skirt of her little black dress. Strapped high on Madeline's thigh is a hidden flask.

MADELINE  
I'm just helping to bring her into the fold.

Shawn studies her as she takes a drink from her flask.

CLOSE ON: HER SUPPLE LIPS.

SHAWN  
Mmm... Yeah, not buying the welcome wagon bit. Bullshit meter's reading off the charts in fact. This seems like too much, even for you.

MADELINE  
I can't do a simple act of charity?

SHAWN  
Ah...no. No you can't.  
(beat)  
So, where is our loving father?

MADELINE  
*My father was half in the bag, on his plane in route to the Paris house but his flight was diverted for the strangest reason. An orgy.*

SHAWN  
Can you imagine the flight crew trying to communicate with the tower on that one?

MADELINE

I don't think I could possibly care any less. You're an infantile fool, Shawn. That's all you'll ever be.

SHAWN

It's such a shame your mother had to up and die. She would have had the time and attention to give you, which you so obviously lack.

MADELINE

Tell me, is it hard living life and never learning anything at all as you go? You make it look so easy.

SHAWN

Is it hard competing with gods like me for your father's approval.

She studies him intently.

MADELINE

Something get left up your ass last night?

He thinks about it.

SHAWN

I don't think so.

MADELINE

You're even more unpleasant than usual.

SHAWN

You're right. Something's off. I don't feel like myself.

He starts pacing about, trying to figure out why. Finally.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

You know what it is?

MADELINE

Thrill me.

SHAWN

I can't stand fucking these Ivy League bimbos for one more day.

He holds a nude statue, rubs it's bosom.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

Brilliant, over achieving...and  
yet, so easily conquered. I think  
it's dulling my senses.

He licks the statue's privates.

SHAWN (CONT'D)

I may be getting off my game and  
not realizing it because the bar is  
set so low at this point.

MADELINE

You poor dear. We can't have that  
now can we?

SHAWN

It would be a fate worse than  
death.

MADELINE

Well, let's not call the Make a  
Wish Foundation just yet. I think  
I've got just the right medicine to  
fix what ails you.

SHAWN

Madeline, I don't want your drugs.

MADELINE

I'm not offering my drugs, you  
idiot. What I am offering you is  
your drug.

\*\*\*\*\*