# Ultimate Burlesque

Edited by Alyson Fixter & Emily Dubberley

Published by Excite Books

**Please note that this extract contains scenes of an adult nature**

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# Introduction
# by Chris Manby

Thank you for buying *Ultimate Burlesque*. You're clearly a person of great taste. This delicious little book of erotic stories is part of a wider initiative called *Burlesque Against Breast Cancer* (www.burlesqueabc.com), which was created to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Burlesque is a style of entertainment renowned for its wit and saucy edge. Originating in the Victorian era, it encompasses comedy, music and, of course, striptease. Its recent revival has given a much-needed shot of glamour to the world's stages and reminded us with its new stars that sexy women come in all shapes and sizes. That's what makes burlesque the perfect way to help support the fight against breast cancer.

I lost my cousin Clare to breast cancer when she was just 35. In our conversations as she neared the end of her brave fight she reminded me how important it is to enjoy life to its fullest. Don't worry about having an extra inch on your bottom. Just stick on your high heels and wiggle it! That's why I've jumped at the chance to be involved with Burlesque Against Breast Cancer.

In buying this book you're showing your support for a fantastic bunch of people doing a very difficult, but worthwhile, job. Macmillan provides practical, medical, emotional and financial support, as well as pushing for better cancer care. So enjoy the warm glow that comes from knowing you're helping them achieve all that. For another sort of glow, maybe you could act out some of the stories …

Chris Manby, 31 July 2008

# Inner Diva
## by Jo Rees

I could never tell her this, but I can tell you. You see, my feelings about her were always completely secret. They still are. But the essence of them, of what she did for me, has fuelled me all this time. I'll tell you it all from the beginning, so you understand.

As far back as I can remember I've been enamoured with the theatre, in the way that countless girls before me have been. Bette Davies in *All About Eve* was particularly inspirational. You see, in my wildest fantasies I imagined myself as a diva, uttering a *bon mot* to a devastatingly handsome man as I draped myself over a banister in a long, sexy evening gown, cigarette in one hand, dry martini in the other. In other words, just about as far away from the real me as it was possible to get. I was shy and skinny, ashamed of my freckly legs and flat chest. I dressed like a boy, in jeans and shirts, and I never wore make-up.

But, just like those old movies, the theatre was timeless, un-beholden to the fashions that I got so wrong at school. The theatre let me be me; as soon as I walked through those swing doors my normal reality was completely forgotten.

Star-struck as I was, I quickly realised I was terrible at acting, but that didn't put me off. I worked wherever I could. Right from when I was fifteen. I'd work in the bar, in the green room, dusting off props and painting scenery. I learnt how to work a lighting grid and filled in as the prompt for the

countless semi-professional troupes that came to our provincial theatre.

I loved them all. I knew most of the Noël Coward plays by heart and all the usual musicals. As time went on I got to help out with hair and make-up and the costumes too. I hung out with the cast, ingratiating myself with all the little favours I did these greater mortals. I could magic up take-away pizza when it was most needed, and I could find a bar open at 11.30pm when the town was asleep, where we could drink red wine until the early hours. Anything to keep the camaraderie alive, to keep the spell going.

More often than not I had a one night stand on the last night of a run, with one of the actors who I'd taken a shine to. Even at the time I'd wonder whether they were doing it out of sympathy or just because even when the groupies had gone home I was still there, still willing. But the encounters left me strangely empty. The reality never matched up to the fantasy. When the run was over, they were, after all, just out of work actors. I knew I was destined for something bigger, something greater. I just didn't know what.

Then Lionel Bartlett took over as the theatre manager and I was employed permanently, thanks to the council grant that had been issued to Lionel to put our theatre on the map. There was a big overhaul and the naff theatre lounge with its gold bar and mottled framed posters replaced with a cool glass spacious one that sold posh champagne and ciabatta sandwiches.

Lionel, or Mr B, as I called him, had come from the West End, but why he'd come back to our town I never fathomed. He said that he wanted to bring something back to his roots, having spent some of his childhood nearby. But I heard that there'd been some sort of disgrace and he'd left his old job in a hurry. He never admitted he was gay, but I'm sure he was. He certainly never made a pass at me although, to be honest, I wouldn't have minded so much if he had. We became friends as much as colleagues. He asked me to go on various scouting missions with him, spying on the other theatres and working

out which acts would be popular at our theatre.

The first time I saw Kathy Au Lait perform, I immediately felt like Calamity Jane seeing Katie in Chicago. She was from another world. I was hopelessly smitten.

Mr B was sceptical about a burlesque performer. He told me that the *Daily Record* had found her striptease show disgraceful and it would never wash with our regulars.

But for once I didn't care. Even from a distance, watching Kathy Au Lait in the darkness of the stalls, I was struck by her stage presence. She had dark, sparkling eyes and wavy black hair. She was voluptuous, beautifully curvaceous in the way that I could never and would never be. The way she strutted around the stage wiggling the feathered bustle on her bum made something inside me ache. Here was my Diva. I had to get close.

I begged Mr B to get her to come to our theatre. My head was buzzing with marketing plans. How I'd call everyone in my autograph book to get them to come and see the show. Kathy Au Lait was sensational. We had to have her.

On the day she transferred to our theatre, Mr B offered her my services. My stomach was churning with nerves as she looked me up and down with cool disdain. 'Call me Kat,' she said. I expected her to have a French or German accent, but she sounded quite English and proper. I wanted to drop on the floor and kiss her polished toes.

It was clear from the start that she was ambitious and totally professional about her art. Despite her plump curves, she was supple as a gymnast. In the week of rehearsals that Mr B had pencilled in, she turned up only once, limbering up on stage in dancers' tracksuit pants, folded over at the waist, and a T-shirt knotted just above her stomach. She gave a flawless performance, then plucked her designer handbag from the chair and flounced past Mr B and me to zoom away in her convertible Mercedes outside. We were both besotted.

When the show opened, I was too nervous to watch her performance, busying myself in her dressing room, magnetised by her costumes and her pots of make-up. I knew that I was

behaving like an infatuated schoolgirl, but I couldn't help it.

Off stage, in her dressing room, she was cool and distant. She was such an enigma, I found myself dreaming about her. I would dream about the way she wore her robe while sucking on a cigarette. I would fantasise about it falling open so that I could catch a glimpse of the curve of her creamy breasts. I would wake sweating.

Then, on the second night, she seemed to have made a decision about me. She called me over to help.

'Do these, will you?' she asked, handing me a pair of nipple tassels and a small, nail-varnish sized pot of glue. 'They stay on better, if someone else does them.'

She let her gown fall open. She was naked. Her pussy was waxed to a thin line of black hair, but all I could really concentrate on was her beautiful breasts, right there. Right in front of me.

'Paint the glue on first,' she instructed. 'Right on the nipple. Then press them on.'

I'd never had a lesbian urge before, but now I craved her. I wanted to cup the smooth, creamy flesh in my hands and feel the weight of those curves. I wanted to nuzzle my face in between them, squeeze them onto my cheeks. I wanted to be lost in their warmth.

I wondered whether she knew how much I secretly desired her. She looked straight ahead. Cool and collected. Bigger than her body. Transcending it. More powerful.

But I wasn't. I was a slave before it. I wondered if she could hear my beating heart as I unscrewed the top of the glue pot. My hands were trembling as I wiped off the dripping liquid from the brush and then reached out to her and brushed the liquid over her nipple. Gently. Slowly.

I saw her skin pucker, her nipples harden at the coldness of the liquid, but she didn't comment. I felt my own nipples harden in unison. Aching. Screaming out to be touched. I wanted to rip open my shirt, glue my nipples onto hers. It was almost unbearable.

Then I pressed the nipple tassels onto the glue. She put her

hand over mine and pressed down with me. It was so intimate. I felt my pussy become wet. Wetter than it had been after my dreams. I don't think I'd ever done something so sensual, so erotic.

'There,' she said. 'Good job.'

She smiled at me. It was friendly and all at once I felt the magnitude of my secret. But I wasn't ashamed, only grateful she'd given me so much to stoke the fire of my desire.

I was in a trance afterwards. I could only think about her nipples, the way she smelt. I counted the minutes until I could do it again. The next time, I thought, I would accidentally risk touching her skin. I felt sure she wouldn't mind. Would it feel as soft and warm as it looked?

But the next night I was in for a shock. I didn't even know Kat had a manager, until I found Tony Cramer sitting on her dressing table using his mobile. He was wearing jeans and a checked shirt, unbuttoned to reveal his tanned chest. He had a short beard and a dark, mussed-up hairdo. He looked at me as he finished his call, his wolf-like light blue eyes boring into me, assessing me. Then he finished his call with a simple, 'Ciao'. I flushed deeply as the silence between us grew.

I immediately felt jealous and furious he'd interrupted the intimacy I'd started to share with Kat, but there was no doubt he was attractive. And Kat thought so too. I watched her hug him, light up for him. I shrank back, watching. Were they together? A couple? It was hard to tell. But I felt him watching me watching them.

That night I dreamt of Kat again, but I was Kat and Tony wanted me. I pictured him naked with his hands on his hips, his hard cock glistening. I woke up confused. It was bad enough dreaming about Kat, but dreaming about them both felt way more intimate.

On the fourth night, Tony turned up during the interval. Kat had sent me off for drinks. When I came back, I heard giggling from behind the dressing room door. It was open just the tiniest of chinks. Still holding the tray, I put my eye up to the gap. I could see the mirror.

In its reflection, I saw Kat was half-naked beneath her open sarong. I could see her breasts. I couldn't take my eyes from her breasts. My breasts.

She loved them. I saw that now for the first time, as she cupped them in her hands, showing them to Tony.

So they were together …

I felt my own nipples grow hard. Aching to be sucked. I shifted in my jeans, feeling myself becoming wet. Mesmerised, I watched her reach out to squeeze the bulge in Tony's jeans. Then, looking at him, she nodded, biting her lip, daring him. I watched him take out his hard cock. She smiled at it appreciatively. It was long and smooth, just as I'd dreamed it would be. She licked her fingertip and ran it around the end of his cock, then used the moisture to circle her own nipple.

I gasped, stunned by my longing. I wanted nothing more than to burst in, to beg Tony to take me. I wanted to lean over the dressing table while he fucked me and I wanted to suck her nipples hard at the same time.

I'll never know if I made a noise, but suddenly they were both startled. Tony quickly slipped his cock back in his jeans and Kathy lifted her gown back over her shoulders.

I didn't know what to do. So I pushed open the door with the tray of drinks. I don't know if they noticed my blushing. I could hardly walk. It was agony, the longing between my legs.

I put the tray down on the dressing table.

'Here. These are for you. It's that time again,' Kat said, holding out the nipple tassels.

She opened her gown, so it was obviously cool with her that Tony was there to watch. Or maybe she thought it was just a professional thing she did in front of him. But I felt caught. Implicated. Was she letting me know that there was something sexual between her and Tony? Or letting Tony know there was something sexual between her and me? Did she know I'd been watching? Did it give her a thrill to know that Tony's cock juice was drying around her nipple? Did she think I didn't know?

I realised then that I liked being a voyeur. In the spotlight now, I felt terrified, but exhilarated too. This was our own theatre. Right here. This complex, fantastical threesome. The tension was unbearable.

I felt Tony watching me as I unscrewed the little nail-varnish sized pot of glue. I could feel her heat. Smell her. I knew she was watching Tony. And I knew he was watching me.

I painted on the glue and pressed the nipple tassels into place and stood back. She looked very beautiful. I wanted so much to touch her. I felt my legs heavy with blood, my head giddy.

'How does it feel?' I asked. I said it out loud. I meant only to think it.

'You want to try a pair?' Tony asked me. His voice was soft. Amused. 'You should.'

There was a beat. I looked between Kat and Tony and saw their offer. But I was a moth that had flown into their brightness. 'Maybe. Not now. The curtains …' I mumbled.

I hated myself then. Right at that moment. I'd been asked to open the door to a fantasy and I'd refused. I was a trapped bird in the cage of my own conventionality. People like Tony and Kat would always be on the other side.

Kat got dressed and I helped her on with her clothes, but I felt crushed. I wanted to say something, to bring back the moment, but I knew it was lost.

'We'll watch from the wings,' Tony said, as she went back on stage.

I stood next to him as we both watched Kat start the second half of her show.

Her nipples. The brush stroking her nipples. It was all I could think of as I watched her. I felt defeated. Jangled with sexual tension I didn't know how to disperse.

'I like watching her like this. She's got a great ass,' Tony whispered. 'You like watching her too, don't you?'

His tone said it all. I looked up at him. I saw in his face … amusement, sympathy? He'd rumbled me. All at once I saw

that he knew everything.

But before I had the chance to say anything, I felt him slide his arm around me.

Then his hand slipped under my shirt and down the back of my jeans and down the back of my pants.

'She makes you wet too, doesn't she?' he whispered.

I felt his finger sliding inside me. I didn't have to answer. He could feel for himself.

'It's OK,' he said. 'I know.'

I didn't protest. I knew it was wrong. But everything I'd felt earlier suddenly came rushing back.

'Come,' he said.

He took his hand out of my jeans and led me to the worn sofa that was outside the green room door. It had a broken leg and was propped up, its back to the stage. We used it to fling costumes on.

Now Tony unhooked my jeans, quickly yanking them down with my knickers. I gasped. It was unthinkable that he should do this here. In the wings. What if someone came? What if Mr B passed by?

But the thrill was greater, my desire and need too strong. He held my hand, guiding me to kneel on the sofa.

'Watch her,' he whispered. 'This is the best part of the show.'

Then Tony knelt down behind me, bending me over the sofa back. His face was right under my hot pussy. I felt as if I might melt onto it.

He eased my legs apart. 'Watch her,' he whispered again.

I watched as Kat unhooked her basque. Suddenly Tony darted his tongue right into me. I heard the noise my wet juices made, clicking over his lapping tongue. Then his chin pressed into me as his tongue licked at my clit, then sucked it, hard. I could feel my legs shaking. I clung onto the back of the sofa, gripping the worn velvet. And then Kat's basque was off and there were her breasts, full and free. The audience applauded as she wriggled her shoulder and the tassels swung around. Then she bent over and I saw just a glimpse of her pussy.

And I came. Right then and there in Tony's mouth as he sucked at my engorged clit. Quickly and furiously, I felt the pleasure crash right over me. My knees buckled. I gasped.

As the audience applauded for Kathy Au Lait, I felt the applause was all mine. I felt like a firework, showering out hot sparks of energy.

I didn't feel shame, you see; I felt gratitude. I felt initiated into a world where a sexual favour, like the one Tony had bestowed on me, was the kindest gift a person could give.

We didn't discuss it. It was beyond words. Instead, we both acted as if nothing had happened. I don't know if he ever told Kat. Two days later, the show closed and I never saw her again.

But in her wake I felt as if I'd been reborn. Something real had happened. And at last it had happened to me. I couldn't put it into words, the thing I'd learnt, but I knew that my inner Diva was set free. That's the thing about the theatre, you see. It's open to anyone who has the guts to perform. So I did. I learnt a routine. I found the most outrageous props I could and I set about titillating my audiences. Making them feel the camaraderie, keeping them in the bubble of tension I'd learnt all about from Kathy Au Lait.

And that's the story. Except for this very last bit. Because, in all the years I've been working, our paths never crossed again. But last week Kat's agent called. He said that Kat wanted to pass on that she was pleased to see my career doing so well. The erotic theatre club I set up with Mr B is now so famous, after all. She wants to meet to discuss doing a double act together!

Tony Cramer, her manager, suggested it, apparently. So I'm meeting them both after my show tonight.

I'll let you know what happens …