Lovereading.co.uk
Helping you choose your next book

You loved your last book...but what are you going to read next?

Using our unique guidance tools, Love**reading** will help you find new books to keep you inspired and entertained.

Opening Extract from...

Hunted

Written by Emlyn Rees

Published by Corsair

All text is copyright © of the author

This Opening Extract is exclusive to Love**reading**.
Please print off and read at your leisure.

HUNTED

Emlyn Rees



Constable & Robinson Ltd
3 The Lanchesters
162 Fulham Palace Road
London W6 9ER
www.constablerobinson.com

First published in the UK by Corsair, an imprint of
Constable & Robinson, 2011

Copyright © Emlyn Rees 2011

The right of Emlyn Rees to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs & Patents Act 1988

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual events or locales is entirely coincidental

All rights reserved. This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser

A copy of the British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-84901-882-1 (Hardback)
ISBN 978-1-78033-054-9 (Trade paperback)

Printed and bound in the EU

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

To Jo – my partner in crime

THURSDAY

CHAPTER ONE

23.22, KNIGHTSBRIDGE, LONDON SW7

The willowy blonde sitting beside Colonel Zykov in the back of the black London cab was half his age, and twice as beautiful, he thought, as his wife had ever been. Stepping out into the warm June night, he held out his hand towards her.

'Such a gentleman,' she said, intertwining her black-gloved fingers with his.

Her name was Hazel. She was Scottish. A Glaswegian, she'd explained over cocktails in the fashionable bar they'd just left. Zykov had never visited the distant northern British city, but there was something about this girl's accent that reminded him of Eastern Europe and left him feeling quite at home.

He paid the cab driver, before steering Hazel towards his apartment building's well-lit entrance, on through its revolving glass door and across its polished marble hallway to the lift. He punched an access code into the security control panel. The lift's steel door slid smoothly open.

'Ladies first,' he said.

She didn't move. Instead she said, 'When we get upstairs, I'm going to do something very special for you. But first of all, I want you to do something for me . . .'

'What?'

'Call your office. Tell them you won't be going into work tomorrow. Tell them you're taking a day off.' She smiled.

'Why?'

'Because I'm not in the habit of one-night stands.' Her lips were now almost touching his; he could smell the champagne and kirsch on her breath. 'Which means tomorrow we're going to have a long lie-in. And then you're going to take me out for a very expensive lunch.'

At first he thought she was joking. But as the lift door began to close, she stayed exactly where she was.

He pressed the lift's hold button. He'd put too much effort into this conquest to risk losing her now. Taking out his phone, he made the call and left a message on his PA's voicemail.

As soon as he'd finished, she kissed him, briefly and gently, before stepping back and giggling drunkenly, clearly pleased at having got her own way.

It was a charming enough sound, he acknowledged, but not something he wanted to become a feature of their night. He hoped she'd not had too much to drink. The kind of sex he was anticipating would be neither brief nor gentle. In fact, there was every chance this young Scottish woman would not enjoy it at all.

As they stepped into the lift, he pressed the button marked 'Penthouse', and was gratified to see a smile of arriviste triumph flicker across Hazel's lips.

It was a look he'd witnessed many times on many women over the years. Privilege and power, he'd long ago learned, were the greatest aphrodisiacs. Especially for the young.

The penthouse had, in fact, originally been earmarked for the use of the deputy ambassador, but the current incumbent was a married football fanatic who lived with his family in nearby Chelsea. Which meant Zykov had got lucky. As military attaché to the Russian embassy here in London, he'd been considered senior enough to move in here himself.

He caught his reflection in the lift's mirrored wall. The deep scar on his right cheek – a memento from a knife fight on a Moscow *elektrichka* as a boy – made him look quite the beast beside this young beauty.

He'd first met her three days ago in his preferred lunchtime café, around the corner from the embassy in Kensington Palace Gardens. The day had been warm. She'd been wearing a thin white blouse and no bra, he'd been delighted to observe, leaving her pert breasts enticingly defined through the near-translucent material. She'd caught Zykov staring. Frustrated, he'd had to look away.

And that would have been that, he supposed. Except for the thief. The bearded vagrant had been either drunk, or high on narcotics. He'd entered the café, staring wildly around, before lurching towards Hazel and snatching her purse from the table.

In truth, Zykov had done nothing. Even though he was a soldier, his position here in London was diplomatic. Which meant it wasn't his place to intervene in such domestic altercations. No matter how attractive the victim might be.

But the thief had stumbled sideways, catching his foot on the leg of Zykov's chair. He'd sent them both crashing to the floor.

Zykov had struggled – not to subdue the filthy degenerate, but to get away from him. The thief had scrambled to his feet and fled into the street. In his panic, he'd dropped Hazel's purse, which Zykov had then gallantly been able to return.

She'd been disproportionately grateful. So much so that it had completely slipped her mind that the colonel had been ogling her cleavage only moments before. She was a trainee accountant in a nearby office block, she'd explained. She'd insisted on taking him out for lunch the following day. To thank him. Of course, he'd agreed.

The lift slowed to a halt. Its door opened on to a black-and-white-tiled hallway. Without being asked, Hazel strode across it and on into the softly lit reception room.

The colonel flinched as he followed her, noticing that the heels of her stilettos were leaving deep crescent-moon indentations in the plush grey carpet. He considered instructing her to remove them at once, but instead decided to postpone the pleasure of punishing her until later.

He watched her gazing in silent awe at the sculptures and oil

paintings that littered the dressers and walls. She'd clearly never encountered wealth like this up close before. He knew there was no way she would walk out on him now.

Proof of this came with the smile she flashed him next. She liked it here, she was telling him. Meaning, he also assumed, that she would do whatever it took to stay. She peered, one by one, through the doorways that led off into the bedrooms. He wondered how she'd look on her back.

'Why don't we start in here?' she said.

She'd chosen the master bedroom, he was pleased to see. The one with the biggest bed. He followed her through and switched on the lights, before turning the dimmer down low.

As she dropped her handbag on to the four-poster bed, he noticed her glancing up at the framed photograph of his daughter on the wall. Katarina was his only child. It occurred to him that she was probably the same age as this British girl he'd brought back here to screw. He felt a frisson of pleasure, reflecting that there was clearly life in the old dog yet.

Unable to contain himself any longer, he stepped up behind Hazel, snaked his arms round her slim waist and began clumsily unbuckling her coat. She gasped – in pleasure? in pain? He really didn't care which – as he roughly squeezed her breasts. Yanking her skirt up over her hips, he jerked her knickers down and groped between her thighs.

As she twisted round to face him, he reached up to grab her short-cropped hair, intending on forcing her to her knees. But the girl was wilful: she pulled free.

She said, 'Wait.'

The colonel quivered with frustration. Hazel kicked off her shoes. She shrugged herself free of her coat and slipped off her skirt, shirt and bra.

'So what is this special thing you wish to do for me?' he said, no longer addressing her face.

She stepped in close and began unfastening his black silk tie. 'I want to play a game.'

'What kind of game?'

Her brown eyes glinted darkly as she smiled. 'A tying-up kind of game.'

The colonel's pulse quickened. 'You like a man to be in charge, eh?'

'I was thinking more the other way around . . .'

His eyes widened. SHE wanted to tie *him* up?

'You cannot be serious,' he said.

'Deadly.'

The idea was absurd, of course. She clearly disagreed. Kneeling before him, she tugged his trousers and shorts round his ankles, before pushing him firmly back so he was sitting on the edge of the bed.

'Trust me,' she said. 'You're going to remember tonight for the rest of your life.'

He was tempted to strike her. To pin her to the floor and take her forcibly. To punish her impertinence.

But as her tongue began working steadily up the inside of his thigh, he decided that maybe there really would be no harm in indulging her suggestion. Reaching up, she gripped him in her fist. She was still wearing her leather gloves. He groaned with delight.

'Afterwards you can do anything you want to me,' she said. 'Anything at all.'

That clinched it; it must have shown in his eyes.

'Lie on your back,' she said.

He did as he was told, staring up at the gold-fringed, red velvet bed canopy, wondering if it might be possible to have a mirror fixed to it.

'But what will you tie me with?' he said.

He could have told her there were steel handcuffs and a restraining gag in the locked bottom drawer of his bedside table. Along with Viagra, Rohypnol, several wraps of pharmaceutical-grade cocaine and a loaded pistol. But she already seemed to know what she was doing; and he was intrigued to see where her imagination would lead her next.

Unclipping her handbag, she removed a crumpled pair of black nylon tights. She bit into them and snagged their soft material on her white teeth, tearing the garment in two.

Sitting astride his bare chest, she twisted one torn leg of her tights into a makeshift rope. She looped it round his right wrist and tied it to one of the bedposts. She used the second length of nylon to restrain his left hand. He noticed a small green rose tattooed on the inside of her right wrist.

He tried to pull himself free. He did it for show. To please her. He knew, from personal experience, that for any fantasy to work, it had to feel real.

At the same time, he felt the knots truly were secure.

He watched, fascinated now by the girl's concentration, efficiency and sheer speed, as she fetched his shoes and unthreaded their laces. She seemed utterly focused, no longer drunk at all, in fact.

She crawled on all fours to the end of the bed and got to work on his feet. Straining his neck to see over the swollen hump of his belly, he stared after her, keen to see how she looked from behind. Perfect, was the answer. *What is it the Americans say? Ah, yes . . . Just like a peach . . .*

But he couldn't help also noticing – and it struck him now as strange that he had not noticed it before – that her arms, legs and back were not merely slender, but muscular and toned.

No matter, he thought. It was good she was healthy. For what he had in mind for later on, she would need to be resilient and fit.

He cursed as a dart of pain shot through his right foot. 'Not so tight,' he said.

'Shut up.'

'What?' He tried to pull his foot free. He could not.

'I said shut up, you stupid old fool.'

What is this? he thought. *Part of the game?* It was not funny. She'd gone too far.

'Do not speak to me that way,' he said.

More pain. His left leg this time. She'd lashed that ankle to the end of the bed and was jerking the shoelace tight.

'Untie me,' he said. 'Now.'

He struggled to free his feet. They were pinioned as securely as his wrists. He watched helplessly as the girl clambered off the bed and bunched up his boxer shorts in her fist, before cramming them roughly into his mouth.

He tried to spit them out. She shoved them back in. She moved quickly then, clamping his mouth shut. She used his tie to gag him, wrapping it once, twice round his head before jerking and tying it tight.

His tongue was trapped, contorted. He tried yelling. All that came out was a groan.

Who the hell is she? How do I make her stop?

He bucked in an effort to free himself. His knee thudded into her ribs. In return, she struck him hard across the face.

He froze.

'Do that again,' she said, flashing a knife blade before him, pressing its tip into the soft flesh of his right nostril, 'and I'll cut your fucking nose off.'

His felt his genitals shrink as fear swelled inside him. It wasn't the razor-sharp blade that did it. Or even the threat.

It was the fact that she'd spoken in Russian.