



The Bitch

By Jackie Collins



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The best-selling novel by Jackie Collins is back, and fierce as ever! Las Vegas. A carousel town set in the middle of the desert. Blazing neon signs promise all the vices known to man, and then some. Devastatingly handsome ladies' man Nico Constantine hits town to make a killing at the casinos. But instead of tripling what's left of his dwindled fortune, he ends up losing everything, and owing the mob -- big time. Meanwhile, gloriously beautiful Fontaine Khaled has shed her filthy rich husband for the life she really wants: a riotous whirl of champagne, designer clothes, and the hottest, sexiest men. But her never-ending party comes with a price -- one even her ex-husband's outrageous alimony payments can't afford. When Nico collides with Fontaine, their mutual lust is immediate and intense. Nico will need to use her if he wants to stay alive, and Fontaine fears she's met her match. Love is the last thing on their minds, but it may be their fate -- if their creditors don't get them first. Completely re-written, updated and revised for 2012 by the author. And now available as an e-book, only at Amazon.com

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Editorial Review

Review

A generation of women have learned more about how to handle their men from Jackie's books than any kind of manual.

-The Daily Mail

Millions buy Jackie Collins books. Impossible to put down.

-The Wall Street Journal

About the Author

There have been many imitators, but only Jackie Collins can tell you what really goes on in the fastest lane of all. From Beverly Hills bedrooms to a raunchy prowl along the streets of Hollywood; from glittering rock parties and concerts to stretch limos and the mansions of the power brokers -- Jackie Collins chronicles the real truth from the inside looking out.

Jackie Collins has been called a "raunchy moralist" by the late director Louis Malle and "Hollywood's own Marcel Proust" by Vanity Fair magazine. With over 500 million copies of her books sold in more than 40 countries, and with some twenty-nine New York Times bestsellers to her credit, Jackie Collins is one of the world's top-selling novelists. She is known for giving her readers an unrivaled insiders knowledge of Hollywood and the glamorous lives and loves of the rich, famous, and infamous! "I write about real people in disguise," she says. "If anything, my characters are toned down -- the truth is much more bizarre."

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Chapter One:

Nico Constantine rose from the blackjack table, smiled all around, threw the pretty croupier a fifty-dollar tip, and pocketed twelve shiny gold five-hundred-dollar chips. A nice round six thousand dollars. Not bad for a fast half hour's work. Not good for someone who was already down two hundred thousand.

Nico surveyed the crowded Las Vegas casino. His intense dark eyes flicked back and forth among the assembled company. Little old ladies in floral dresses exhibiting surprising strength as their skinny arms pulled firmly on the slot machines. Florid couples -- weak with excitement and too much sun -- picking up a fast eighty or ninety dollars at the roulette tables. Strolling hookers --

blank eyes alert for the big spenders. The big spenders themselves, in polyester leisure suits, screeching away in middle-American accents at the crap tables.

Nico smiled. Las Vegas always amused him. The hustle and the bustle. The win and the lose. The total unreality.

A carousel town set in the middle of arid desert. A blazing set of neon signs housing all the vices known to man. And a few unknown ones. In Las Vegas -- if you could pay for it -- you could get it. Just name it.

He lit a long narrow Havana cigar with a wafer-thin gold Dunhill lighter, and smiled and nodded at the people who went out of their way to catch his eye. A pit boss here, a cigarette girl there, a security guard on his rounds. Nico Constantine was a well-known man in Vegas. More important -- Nico Constantine was a gentleman -- and how many of those were there left in the world?

He looked good. For forty-nine years of age he looked exceptionally good. Black hair-thick, curly, with slight traces of gray that only enhanced the jet. Black eyes -- unfairly surrounded with thick black lashes. A strong nose. Dark olive skin beautifully tanned. A wide-shouldered, thin-hipped body that would make many a younger man envious.

However, the most attractive thing about Nico was his style -- his aura -- his charisma.

Hand-finished, tailor-made three-piece suits in the very finest cloth. Silk shirts of exquisite quality. Italian-made shoes in glove-soft leather. Nothing but the best for Nico Constantine. It had been his motto since he was twenty years of age.

"Can I get you a drink, Mr. Constantine?" A cocktail waitress was at his side, long legs in black cobweb stockings, a wide mouth smiling and full of Las Vegas promise.

He grinned. Naturally he had wonderful teeth, and all his own, with just one vagabond gypsy cap. "Why not? I think vodka, on the rocks, be sure it's 90 proof." His black eyes flirted with her outrageously, and she loved every minute of it. Women always did. Women positively adored Nico Constantine -- and he, in his turn, was certainly not averse to them. From a cocktail waitress to a princess, he treated them all the same. Flowers (always red roses); champagne (always Krug); presents (small gold charms from Tiffany in New York, or, if they lasted more than a few weeks, little diamond trinkets from Cartier).

The cocktail waitress went off to get his drink.

Nico consulted his Patek Phillippe digital gold watch. It was eight o'clock. The evening was ahead of him. He would sip his drink, watch the action, and then he would step once again into the fray, and fate would decide his future.

Nico Constantine was born in 1930 in a poor suburb of Athens. He was the first brother to three sisters, and his childhood had been that of a small boy caught up in a sea of femininity. His sisters fussed, bullied and smothered him. His mother spoiled him, and various female relatives kissed, cuddled and catered to him at all times.

His father was away a lot, being a crewman on one of the fabulous Onassis yachts -- so Nico became the little man of the family. He was a beautiful baby, a cute little toddler, a devastating young boy, and by the time he left school at fourteen, every female in the vicinity loved him madly.

His three sisters, not to forget his mother, guarded him ferociously. To them he was a prince.

When his father decided to take him away on a trip as a cabin boy, the entire family rebelled. No way was Nico to be allowed out of their sight.

Absolutely no way.

His poor father argued, but to no avail, and Nico was given a job in a nearby fishing port, on the small dock, not a hundred yards from where one of his sisters worked scraping fish. She watched him like a hawk. If he so much as even talked to a member of the female sex she would appear, bossy and predatory.

The Constantine family desired to keep young Nico as innocent and untouched as possible. They worked on it as a team.

Nico meanwhile was growing up. His body was developing, his balls were dropping, his penis was growing, and most of the time he felt as horny as hell. Well who wouldn't, living in close proximity to four women? His sexual senses were assailed on every level. Naked breasts. Body hair. Creamy female smells. Underclothes hanging up to dry every way he turned.

By the time he was sixteen he was desperate. To jerk off was his only relief, but even that had to be planned like a military operation. Female eyes watched him constantly.

He realized he must run away, although it was a difficult decision to make.

After all, leaving behind all that love and adoration...

It had to be done though. He was being smothered, and it was the only answer.

The only way he could become a real man.

He left on a Sunday night in December, 1947, and arrived in the city of Athens two days later, cold, tired, hungry, certain he had made a wrong move, and already anxious that his family would come chasing after him.

He had no idea what to do, how to get a job, or even what kind of a job to look for.

He wandered around the city, freezing in his thin cotton trousers and shirt, with only an oilskin to keep out the biting ice and sleet.

Finally he took shelter in the entrance of a large apartment building, and stayed there until a chauffeured car pulled up, and two women in furs got out, chattering and laughing together. Instinct told him to attract their attention.

He coughed loudly, caught the eye of one of the women, smiled appealingly, winked, projecting unthreatening vulnerability.

"Yes?" the woman asked. "Do you want my autograph?"

He was always quick, and without hesitation said, "I have traveled three days to get your autograph!" He had no idea who she was, only that she was mysteriously beautiful, with soft pale curls, a slender figure beneath the open fur and a sympathetic smile.

She walked over to him and he inhaled sweet perfume. It reminded him of the womanly smells of home.

"You look exhausted," she said. Her voice was magical, vibrant and comforting.

Nico didn't answer. He just looked at her with his black eyes until she took

him by the arm and said, "Come, you shall have a hot drink and some warm clothes."

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