

Excerpt: Blogface Blarney

“Vodka martini, extra dry. Two olives.”

“Yes, Ma’am. Coming right up.”

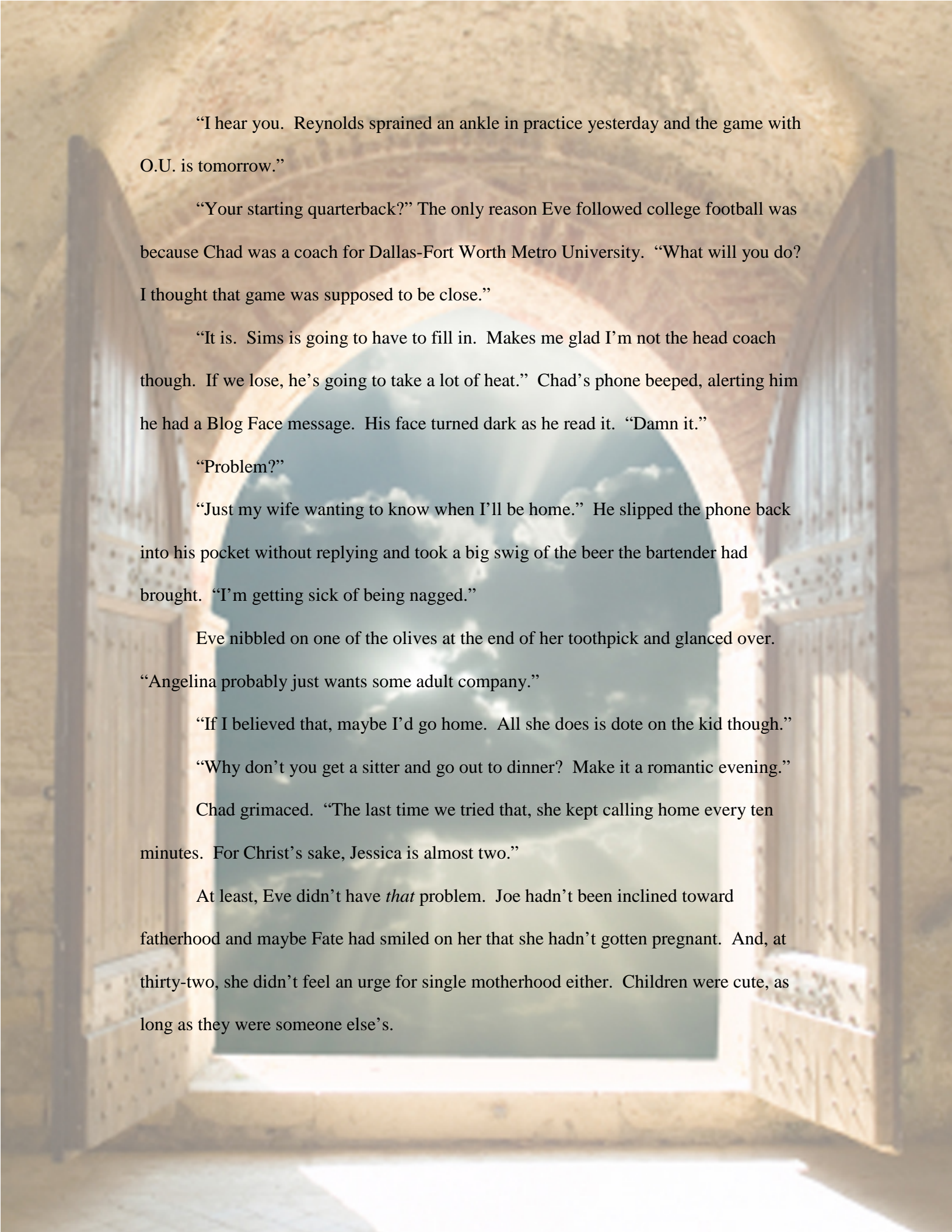
As the bartender moved away to get her drink, Eve O’Connor closed her wet umbrella and plopped it alongside her satchel on the empty barstool next to her and pinched the bridge of her nose to relieve tension. TGIF had never sounded so good. Her art classes had been crap today. Not one high school kid had taken notes on value and hue in color and they certainly had not cared about line and space in composition.

Given the array of video games on smart phones and tablets, it was getting harder to get her students interested—let alone keep them interested—in something as mundane as classical art. Little wonder newbie teachers lasted less than two years in many cases. She had even contemplated changing careers herself, but Joe, her worthless ex-husband, had gambled away her savings before she’d caught him and she was still paying off the cost of the divorce. Besides, she had almost ten years invested in Deer Hill High School.

“Why so glum?” a male voice asked behind her. “It is Friday, after all.”

Eve turned to find her friend, Chad Olson, grinning at her as he pulled out the stool on her other side. Adonis good-looking, with sun-streaked blond hair and nearly cobalt-colored eyes, the few women in the bar this early were already eyeing him. Combined with his athletic football-coach build, Eve suspected they wouldn’t be alone for long before one of the ladies sent over a drink.

“I’m just tired,” she said as the bartender placed the martini in front of her and automatically started her tab. “Rough week.”



“I hear you. Reynolds sprained an ankle in practice yesterday and the game with O.U. is tomorrow.”

“Your starting quarterback?” The only reason Eve followed college football was because Chad was a coach for Dallas-Fort Worth Metro University. “What will you do? I thought that game was supposed to be close.”

“It is. Sims is going to have to fill in. Makes me glad I’m not the head coach though. If we lose, he’s going to take a lot of heat.” Chad’s phone beeped, alerting him he had a Blog Face message. His face turned dark as he read it. “Damn it.”

“Problem?”

“Just my wife wanting to know when I’ll be home.” He slipped the phone back into his pocket without replying and took a big swig of the beer the bartender had brought. “I’m getting sick of being nagged.”

Eve nibbled on one of the olives at the end of her toothpick and glanced over. “Angelina probably just wants some adult company.”

“If I believed that, maybe I’d go home. All she does is dote on the kid though.”

“Why don’t you get a sitter and go out to dinner? Make it a romantic evening.”

Chad grimaced. “The last time we tried that, she kept calling home every ten minutes. For Christ’s sake, Jessica is almost two.”

At least, Eve didn’t have *that* problem. Joe hadn’t been inclined toward fatherhood and maybe Fate had smiled on her that she hadn’t gotten pregnant. And, at thirty-two, she didn’t feel an urge for single motherhood either. Children were cute, as long as they were someone else’s.

The bartender set another beer down in front of Chad and inclined his head.
“From the brunette over there.”

“Thanks.” Chad turned and smiled at the woman, lifting the stein in salute. She inhaled, lifting half-exposed breasts and smiled back. He turned back to Eve. “Looks like a score. Maybe I should cancel my other appointment.”

“Other appointment?”

Chad tapped the phone in his shirt pocket. “Met a girl on Blog Face last week.”

“How many does that make?”

“A few.” He shrugged. “Less than ten anyway. I don’t keep them around long enough for anyone to dig her claws into me.”

Eve motioned to the bartender for another martini. “Just a thought, but I don’t suppose you mention you’re married?”

“Why should I? I’m just getting a little action. I don’t lead anyone on.” He looked at the brunette and winked. She winked back. “You see?” he said to Eve, “it’s an open invitation. Why turn it down?”

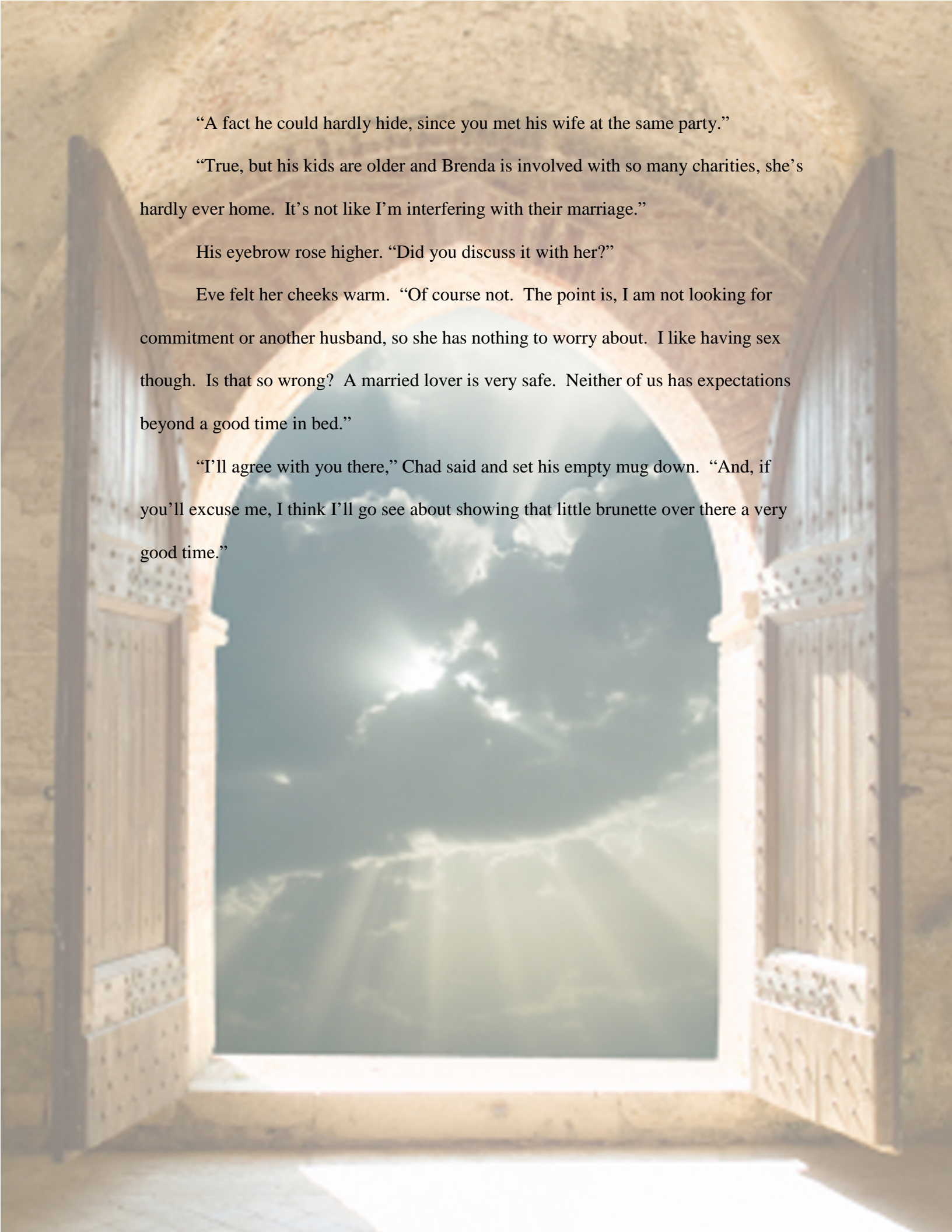
“Well, Angelina is waiting. Besides, the brunette hardly looks old enough to be legal.” She knew that sounded snide, but she couldn’t help herself.

Chad frowned. “What’s gotten into you? You’re seeing Caldwell—my *married* boss—so it’s not exactly like you’re wearing a halo.”

“That’s different.”

He arched a brow. “Really? How so?”

Eve sipped her martini before answering. “I knew Brian was married. He was upfront about it.”



“A fact he could hardly hide, since you met his wife at the same party.”

“True, but his kids are older and Brenda is involved with so many charities, she’s hardly ever home. It’s not like I’m interfering with their marriage.”

His eyebrow rose higher. “Did you discuss it with her?”

Eve felt her cheeks warm. “Of course not. The point is, I am not looking for commitment or another husband, so she has nothing to worry about. I like having sex though. Is that so wrong? A married lover is very safe. Neither of us has expectations beyond a good time in bed.”

“I’ll agree with you there,” Chad said and set his empty mug down. “And, if you’ll excuse me, I think I’ll go see about showing that little brunette over there a very good time.”