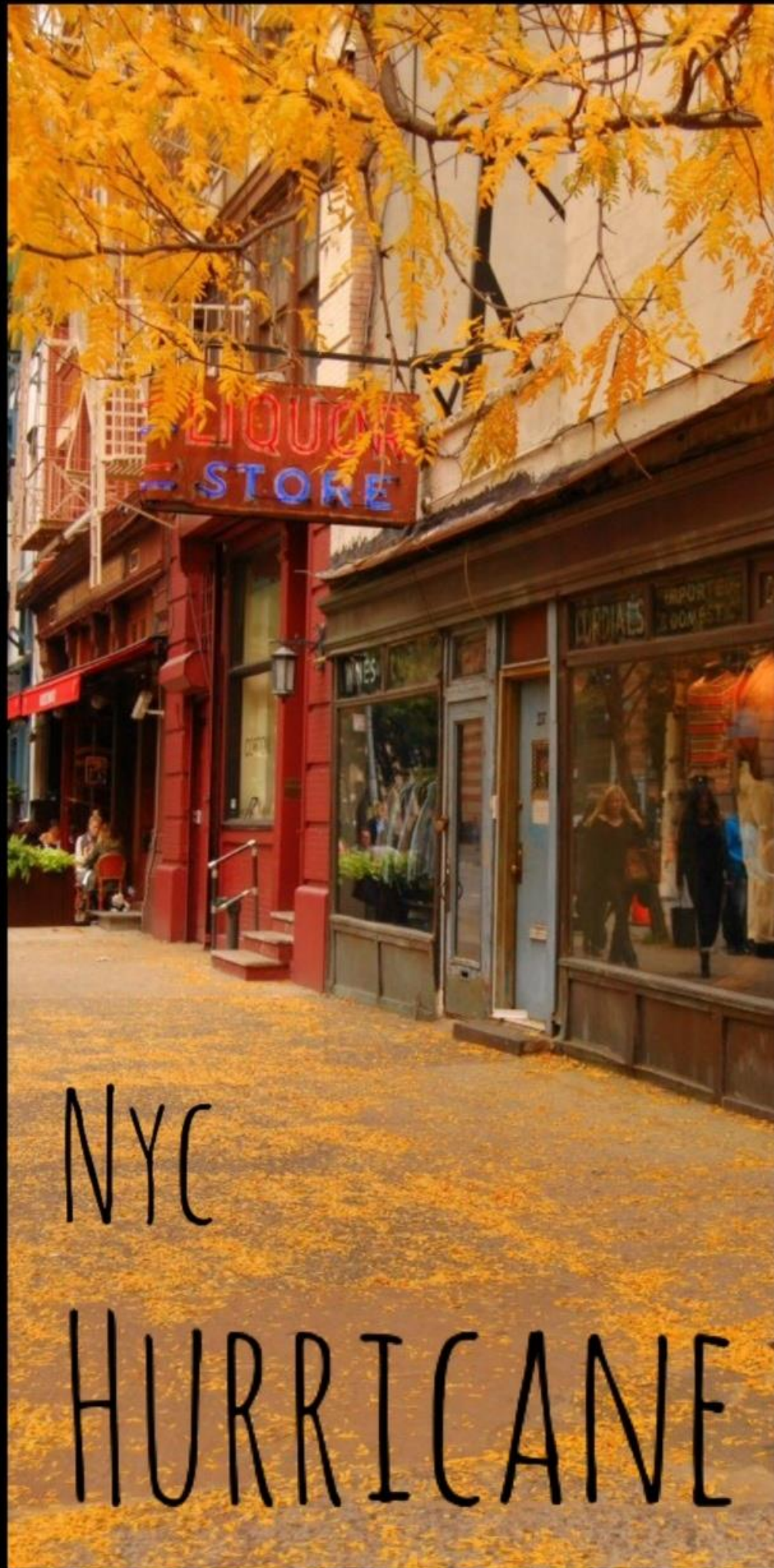


Love&Travel novel by

SABRINA BARBANTE



NYC

HURRICANE

NYC Hurricane

A [very] short love&travel novel by Sabrina Barbante

I've been watching him for days and days.

The New York Winter was milder than I expected. He was the only male able to really and magnetically attract my attention after four months in the Big Apple.

Easy dates, parties quite easy to be invited to as an European, funny people. But, sexually speaking, everything was too easy. Plain. Too fast. Too much given for granted, when sex is in my country one of the less granted things.

NYC affairs, funny at the beginning, boring after the third date.

You stop an affair for boredom, here.

He, the dark eyed man serving coffees at Gregory's in the seventh Ave was the only beautiful and hard to reach male I'd seen in this center of the world. Just one center of just one of the worlds I'd bumped into in my 26 wandering years.

Maybe that's why he made me so eager to talk to him; reaching him, so busy and concentrated, so willing to make up something to attract his attention while he was working, in that river of people asking him muffin and coffees. He, among coffees and muffins, was the very first thing that made me feel home after four long months.

I remember I spent more than one night thinking about his hands, his tired eyes, trying to figure out something about his life.

Did he have a girlfriend? Was he dating anyone? He was too handsome to be alone and in the reign of the easy affairs I imagined he had several occasions to date and screw with all the women he met. Just to forget about them after one day or two, in the case they were particularly good with blowjobs.

Me, I didn't want to be an occasion. I didn't want to be just a moment. I didn't want to just say HI, and then go out with him and then to bed and then good bye, nothing personal, in the very and most deep NYC way.

I knew I could, even more because he had noticed me. Sometimes he looked

at me, I had the impression he smiled too. He knew I was there all that time for him, not just for the cinnamon rolls nor the coffee or the wi-fi.

It would have been so easy to just say *hi* to him. But saying *hi* and all the rest was not what I was interested in.

How could I take my chances? And how could this occasion give him, in a few instants, the hint of the idea I was worth more than the common dating mode? (without even knowing how I move in bed).

I decided to follow him. Learn something about his life and habits.

What was he interested in? Modern art? Football? Horror movies?

Well, I would have become an expert to casually meet and share a slot of destiny with. So, one night, I did it. I followed him after he left Gregory's. It was a sudden idea, on the spur of the moment.

It was hard not to be seen. He took a cab, I did the same. But the only thing I learned was where he lived.

He opened the door with his own keys, no one opened the door from inside. He switched on the light himself, saw it from the window. It was a third floor in Brooklyn. He lived alone, at least that night.

In the following days, I heard his name. Duncan. He was from Canada.

He often looked at me. I often dreamt about him. It became a kind of obsession.

I didn't accept any other man's invitation, nor friend's.

One day I planned to leave my Ipad there, at Gregory's. Risking to lose it forever. I would leave it there, to come back at closing time, out of breath, asking my savior if he had found it...

And then who knows.

But... I couldn't, that night. Because of the hurricane.

Sandy arrived, the day before Halloween, as a kind of anticipated destiny's trick or treat.

24 hours at home for security reasons and three days Gregory's closed.

In NYC, winter comes in one night.

Like Halloween, like destiny and courage.

After the Halloween hurricane, I went back to Gregory's in winter dresses and boots and asked for a coffee.

He said: and a cinnamon roll?

I smiled and said yes.

He asked me: what's your name?

Sandy, I replied

Are you serious?, he said, while the rest of the room kept a curious and discreet NYC silence for 30 seconds.

Well, yes. I said.

He gave me my coffee, and added 'hope you'll be milder with me than this hurricane'.

'Did Sandy caused a lot of troubles where you live?'

He said yes, but he had to keep on working so he told me 'If you are not busy we can talk about it later'.

Later arrived, and at ten we left Gregory's together.

And we met the day after, after a night laughing and telling stories. He took me to a Halloween party. I was dressed up with dead leaves all around my smoke-grey dress, and had smoky eyes. I was a Hurricane. He was amused by my funny dress, tales, name. He called me *the hurricane*.

One night, just before kissing me, he said he was wandering if the destiny made us talk just the day after the hurricane Sandy. And if it was a matter of destiny that he had to leave the apartment because of the damaged caused by it, and look for another house, in the same period I myself was looking for it.

One night, just before kissing me, he confessed he'd been thinking about me as a sign of a wind of change in his life.

One day, I'll tell him all the truth about me.

I'll tell him I like sleeping with my cats, I like watching soft porn movies and that I eat small pieces of paper every now and then, when I'm stressed.

And that I was able to pretend my name is Sandy to manipulate other people's idea of destiny for my own purposes.

Yes, I'll tell him that actually my name is Sarah, and that's the way he'll be allowed to call me.

But I'll still allow him to call me the hurricane.

*Editing and English review by Antonio Aloisio
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