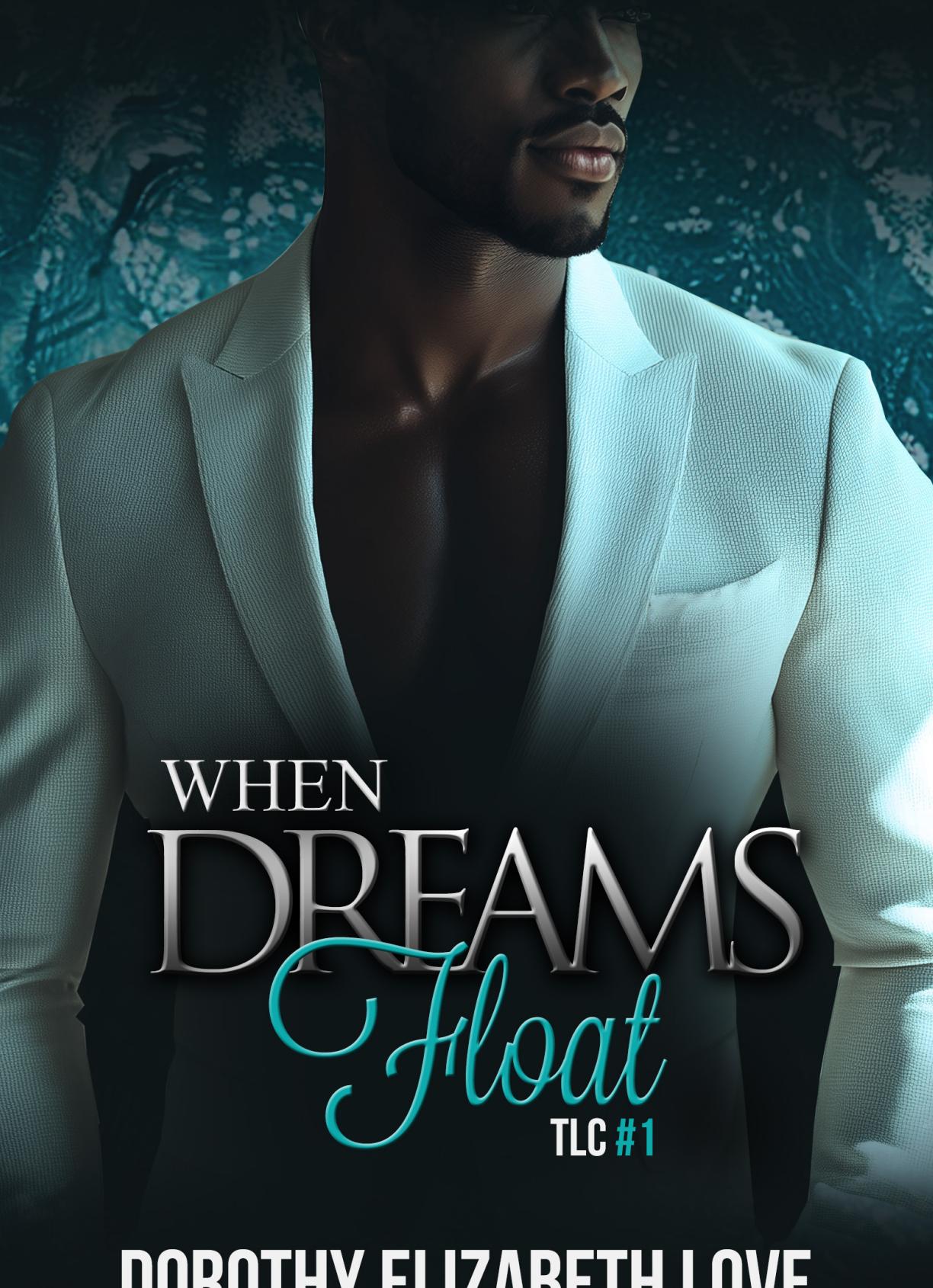


SENSUOUS AFRICAN AMERICAN ROMANCE



WHEN
DREAMS
Float
TLC #1

DOROTHY ELIZABETH LOVE

Sensuous African American Romance

When Dreams Float

by

Dorothy Elizabeth Love

Travel and Love Collection

Book-1

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LED Literature and Publication

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Chapter 1

If there was ever a time to thank his lucky stars; this was it.

But Winston Knight was a man of science and didn't put much stock in chance or luck. He dealt better with facts. And the fact of the matter was that something about her halted him, excited his insides, and numbed him to the world around him. He didn't understand why he felt so drawn to her, and that intrigued him.

Another luscious thought ricocheted through Winston's mind as he watched her slip the long gold chain around her neck, its attached pendant dipping between the pale-yellow lace of her blouse in the valley of her breasts. The pendant lay softly against cinnamon-brown skin. How he would love to run his fingers up, down, and around that chain.

The problem was he had never met her before. And from where he was standing on the other side of the jewelry store, he wouldn't get the chance. She was about to leave.

Somewhere in his aroused fog, a voice called to him. "Final call for Flight Number TN1 to Papeete, Tahiti."

Winston quickly glanced down at his watch. He was booked on that flight, the start of his business trip, a medical retreat. It was the only plane leaving Los Angeles airport for Papeete this afternoon. His mind warred between rushing to catch his flight or missing it in order to go around the jewelry shop counter and confront the attractive lady who had caused his current physical condition.

Making a quick decision Winston took a step in her direction, stopping only long enough to put back the item he'd picked up to use as an excuse to stare at the woman as she had tried on the necklace. He had never had an immediate reaction this strong and was dying to discover more. He would end this fantasy and go introduce himself.

Maybe this won't start as another mundane business trip, after all, he thought. "Damn it!" he mumbled, looking around the store. "Where did she go?"

Entering the corridor, he looked to the left, away from his plane and saw a figure dressed in pale yellow amongst a crowd of people headed around a corner. He looked to the right and saw the airline attendant preparing to close the gate to his plane. He wasn't sure why he hesitated. Perhaps it was the sheer absurdity of being so mesmerized by a stranger. He was Winston Knight—calm, rational, logical. But nothing was logical about the immediate and unexplainable attraction she ignited in him. Even if he sprinted like an NFL running back, he wouldn't make it to his dream girl in time to still make the flight.

“Damn,” he said, reluctantly trotting toward his gate. That would teach him to hesitate before going after something he wanted.

As he boarded the plane, he spotted Chuck Rogers, a friend and fellow doctor. He waved, genuinely glad to see him. He and Chuck had been planning this trip for months. And he was glad to get it started. Besides, the past twenty-four hours had been more taxing than he had expected. His ex-girlfriend, Daphne, had called him last night to argue about his decision to go without her. It had ruined his evening. And the disappointment he had just experienced from missing a chance to meet someone new didn't help much. So, Chuck's friendly face was just what he needed.

“Glad you made it. I was getting worried that you wouldn't,” Chuck said over the general chatter of travelers and movement in first class. “Where're you sitting?”

Winston glanced at his boarding pass. “Seat 3C. Aisle.” He found his seat and placed his carry-on luggage in the overhead compartment.

“I think this one might be empty.” Chuck pointed to the seat next to him. “Ask to change seats and join me back here.”

As Winston removed his luggage from overhead, someone, he assumed the flight attendant, asked, “Is there an extra blanket under your bag?”

“I'm about to remove my bag. I'll check.” He took a step backward and bumped into her. Turning to apologize, he felt a jolt, partly from the contact but mostly from the shock.

An inviting smile greeted Winston first. That smile could melt the coldest winter, he thought. And he was no exception. Then he noticed the fullness of her ruby-colored lips, the soft slant of her chocolate eyes, the shine of her black hair that lay on soft brown shoulders. She was lovely. There was a hint of Jasmine, her perfume, in the air entertaining him.

He was definitely the lucky one.

“No.” Winston had to think hard to remember the reason she stood next to him. It wasn’t just attraction—it was curiosity, intrigue, and a pull he couldn’t explain. “Yellow looks good on you.” His eyes traveled farther down. “Especially with that necklace you have on.”

Chapter 2

“Thank you,” she said, fingering the pendant between her thumb and index finger. “I just got this. I thought it would be a nice going-away present to myself.”

“Very nice,” Winston said, enjoying watching the pendant drop.

He stared at her lovely features before deciding on a plan. Something about the way her lips curved, when she smiled, made him want to see it again. “Where’re you seated? Since there aren’t any extra blankets in here, I’ll have the flight attendant bring you one.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll probably see one of them around the same time you would since I’m seated next to you.”

“3B?” he asked hopeful, not bothering to hide his excitement.

“No. My friend, Sandra, is seated there. I’m at the window in 3A.”

Winston turned to his friend. “Chuck, I’ll chat with you later,” he said, giving him a wink. Chuck smiled; winked back. There was an unspoken understanding between them—Winston had found a new focus for the flight.

“Melanie?” A female voice coming up behind Winston said, “The flight attendant will bring you another blanket. As much as you fly, I can't believe you packed your jacket in your stowaway luggage.”

So, her name is Melanie, Winston thought, returning his carry-on luggage to the overhead bin. He had an eight-hour plane ride with one seat between him and getting to know a lot more about Melanie. The disappointment at having missed the opportunity to meet her in the jewelry store was swiftly replaced by the anticipation of how he was going to make the best of this plane trip. Somehow, he had been given another chance. Twice in one day. He wouldn't strike out.

“Looks like you're taken care of for now,” he said.

“I guess I am.” She flashed that alluring smile again, and Winston warmed.

Winston sat, wondering how he was going to remove Melanie's friend from between them. It would happen before this plane landed, he decided. He wouldn't let Melanie get away until he was sure that ring on her third finger wasn't put there by a boyfriend. It wasn't a wedding ring, so the coast was almost clear. Fate wouldn't be cruel enough to throw the type of curveball that equaled a loving, gift-giving boyfriend in the mist. If so, that would be strike three. Winston frowned.

There was something in the way she looked up at him, how close she stood in the aisle, that made him think of all sorts of pleasant possibilities. He started having

a teenage physical reaction and blamed it on having gone too long without sex. Why else would he react to this woman like this?

Melanie's voice interrupted his thoughts. "Sandra, here's the tourist guide for Tahiti. Maybe we can map out a sightseeing tour?"

"For Pap-pete?" Sandra asked.

"Girl, you're purposely saying that wrong," Melanie said grinning. "The Polynesians pronounce all their vowels. It's Pa-pe-et-a."

"Yeah. There, too." Sandra flipped through the book.

Winston's mind did another calculation. In Papeete, he and Chuck would attend a medical meeting and then take a transport bus to the cruise ship. The ship wasn't scheduled to leave until 10 p.m. tonight. That would give him approximately two additional hours in Papeete to turn a chance encounter into something more.

Lord, he thought, if anyone could read my thoughts, I'd probably be arrested. He hadn't even been introduced to the woman and he was planning the next several encounters with her. With that thought, he decided to change things.

Winston turned to face them. "Papeete is Tahiti's version of New York," he said, directing his gaze at Melanie. His voice was smooth and confident, the kind of tone that invited curiosity. "Lots of fun things to see and do."

“I know it's the capital,” Sandra said. As she turned to look at him, her long braids flowed about her dark chocolate shoulders. “I was hoping that meant plenty of big-city fun. “So, you've been to Tahiti before?”

“I would love to travel there once a year.” Winston decided vagueness might be more beneficial than admitting this was his first trip. If they thought he had, he could use that to his advantage. “First time for you, Melanie?”

Melanie did a double take upon hearing her name, then smiled, her eyes lingering on his for a moment as if wondering how he knew her name. Winston noticed the subtle way her lips parted, as though she were debating whether to flirt or to play it cool.

“This is the first time for us both,” Melanie said, her voice soft, teasing. Then, with a curious tilt of her head, she added. “And you are?”

“Very pleased to see you again.” Winston replied with a grin. The statement was both true and a well-played move. “I'm Winston.”

Sandra looked back and forth between them, her eyes widening slightly. “You two know each other?” she asked Melanie, raising a brow.

“We met just a few minutes ago on the plane,” Melanie explained, her gaze still fixed on Winston. “And I remember seeing you in the jewelry store today. But...”

"Jewelry store?" Sandra interrupted. "You mean the guy you were..." she stopped, clamping her mouth shut.

"Were what?" Winston wanted to know, intrigued by the unfinished statement.

Just then, the captain inconveniently interrupted with a greeting to the passengers. He came across the intercom system promising a wonderful and eventless flight. A bell tone accompanied the seat belt illumination warning, and flight attendants began rushing down the aisles. One attendant stopped to stand in the aisle between them, effectively blocking Winston's view of Melanie's wide smile. Winston silently cursed the timing of the unwelcome interruption. He would have to explore Sandra's comment and the thoughts behind Melanie's smile later.

He leaned back in his seat, unable to see Melanie's smile, but the memory of it was enough. Melanie had noticed him in the store. Since she had mentioned it to Sandra, she must have been thinking about him just as much as he had been thinking about her. That detail alone made his heart thrum with anticipation. And judging by the fact that no one had mentioned a significant other, there didn't seem to be anyone in her life who posed a real threat to his plans.

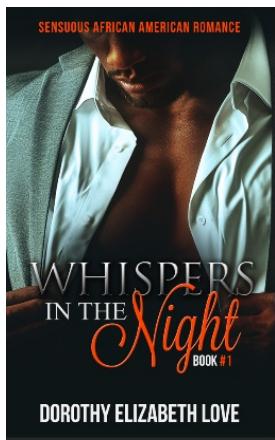
Perfect, Winston thought as the plane began its ascent, lifting his spirits along with it. The excitement building in him wasn't just about reaching Tahiti. His mind

wandered, conjuring images of gold chains, soft lace, and cinnamon-brown skin being dazzled by his touch danced in his head.

Soon, he thought. Real, soon. He closed his eyes, letting pleasant thoughts take over. And I'll have plenty of time to learn more about Melanie.

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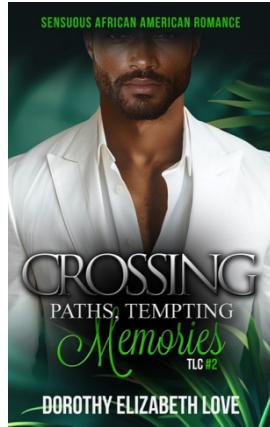
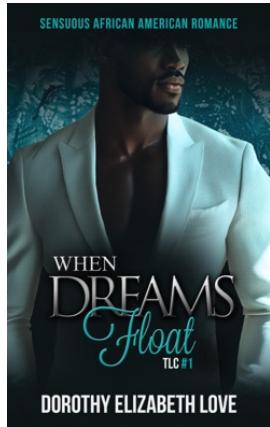
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Let's Stay in Touch

Hi there!

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you—from the bottom of my heart—for spending your time reading a few pages or possibly one of my books. It means the world to me that you've stepped into this journey with me.

Writing has always been my passion; it's where my heart truly comes alive. Being able to share stories that entertain, stir emotions, and bring joy (and a dose of heat!) to readers is why I do what I do.

I hope you've found moments to smile, sigh, and maybe even blush as you read. Would you be willing to do me the honor of sharing my novels with others who support African American Romance?

With gratitude,



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Book-1 Excerpt

Travel and Love Collection