

# SLOW BURN by Ebony Farashuu

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## Introduction to the Main Characters

Serafina Jordan is affectionately called “Sera” by her friends and family. A sensitive Sagittarius, she loves hard and because she loves so hard she falls even harder when that love is betrayed or taken away. Loyal and passionate, she longs to find a man who is capable of loving her with the same intensity in which she’s willing to give her own heart...

Ayzha Darwin, Serafina’s best friend, is trapped in a stale marriage. At the age of twenty she married Riley Darwin, a man fifteen years older. Eight years into her marriage, the novelty of having a younger wife has worn off and Riley has placed her back on the shelf like an old bowling ball that he dusts off and throws down the lane every once in a while. Starved for affection and thirsty for romance, it’s just a matter of time before another man breaks down her defenses and feeds her exactly what she’s been craving...

Khalil Roberts is an aspiring musician and music producer. The son of a famous Jazz saxophonist, Khalil has spent the bulk of his life taking advantage of the carnal perks his privileged lifestyle has afforded him. Hard partying and fast women were the norm until a serious discrepancy in his past caused him to look deep inside of himself and figure out what type of man he wanted to be. Spiritual, poetic, and sensitive, Khalil is the ideal man now because he’s chosen to learn from the mistakes he made way back when...

Dr. Jeremy Sanders is a player his father can be proud of. However, instead of playing sports, Jeremy plays women and he always scores big. Love is not an option, not even when Sera, his girlfriend of two years walks out of his life, leaving him to ponder whether or not he’s been thinking with the right head. Jeremy’s thoughts will take you on a journey that reveals that no man is born a dog, but he can be trained to chase multiple cats...

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## SLOW BURN - Chapter 5

Ayzha Nicole Darwin

Thunder is the sound that lightening makes. I saw him leaning towards me smiling his electric smile, and heard his voice telling me all of the things I thought I wanted to hear. The low rumblings made me shiver. His cautious touch sent a jolt of raw energy through my body.

“So, when can I see you again?”

It reminded me of an old Babyface song. I loved the acoustic guitar on that track; and as I sat inside of Tyree’s car watching storm clouds slowly descend upon the park where we’d chosen to meet discreetly, that song played over and over in my mind.

I wasn't doing anything wrong. We talked. I didn't touch him, not even when he placed his hand over mine and gave it a gentle squeeze. I didn't squeeze back so I was pretty sure it couldn't be called holding hands.

"You shouldn't be seeing me now," I said glancing over at him.

His dark eyes flashed with amusement and a satisfied smirk eased itself over his face.

"I do believe the lady is still afraid."

"Of you? Whatever." I dismissed his assessment of my emotions with a wave of my hand.

"I want to kiss you." He said it so simply he may as well have been telling me that he liked the color blue.

"What makes you think that I want to kiss you?"

"You're here." Tyree fingered the lace at the hem of my pink skirt.

He had no right to touch my skirt, had no right to squeeze my exposed knee, but I did nothing to stop him, just took a controlled breath and stared at his hand stroking my leg so familiarly.

"I'm leaving," I said evenly.

"Now, you know you're not leaving until I get my kiss."

"Then I guess we'll be stuck here for a very long time." "Would that be so bad?" Now, he was tracing lazy circles on my bare arm, "Stuck here with me in the middle of a storm?"

I didn't answer. I reached for the door handle. He reached for my hand. I froze.

"I have to get back. I'll be late." I almost sounded as if I were begging.

"I know. The sooner I get my kiss the sooner you can leave."

I took another deep breath, and then another, and then another. Panic was beginning to sink in but I couldn't allow him to see the affect he was having on me. I should never have agreed to this. I knew that it was wrong. What had possessed me to agree to meet up with Tyree in such an intimate, confined space? Words like neglect, disregard, and despair popped into my head. Loneliness, frustration, stupidity... Oh just get it over with.

I leaned in and just as I was about to kiss him, Tyree shook his head and quickly exited the car. Dumbfounded, I watched as he walked around to the passenger side and opened the door for me. His strong hands grabbed mine, pulling me from the confines of his black Lexus. We were standing too close to one another. I couldn't look at him. Sensing my embarrassment, Tyree turned me around, hugged me from behind, and planted the lightest of kisses on the left side of my neck.

"You look beautiful today."

"Don't say that," I whispered.

"Why not? It's the truth." Tyree rested his chin on my shoulder.

I saw a flash of lightening. One Mississippi...two Mississippi...three Mississippi, thunder gently rolled in the distance. A significant amount of tension left my body and I began to relax in his embrace. Wobbly, my knees became. Rapidly, my heart beat. I felt as if I would slide right out of his arms and fold up like a chair after a tent revival.

"You'd better go."

"Yes."

He opened my car door and I quickly got in. My hands were shaking so badly I damn near poked myself in the eye trying to put my shades on. The sun wasn't shining anymore.

“Thanks for lunch.” I allowed myself to look at him. I almost hated myself for liking what I saw.

“Anytime, Lady.” He replied.

I drove away slowly, gently fingering the sensitive spot on my neck Tyree had chosen to kiss. I dared to close my eyes at the stop sign. I could still feel the gentle pressure of his lips on my skin. Suddenly, my situation was very clear. I had just had lunch, in a park, in a car, with someone who was definitely not the man I’d pledged my life to in a church full of friends and family eight years ago. My skin began to itch and I nervously raked my fingernails up and down my arm.

I had just had lunch with another man and instead of feeling guilty I felt...rejuvenated. I giggled anxiously. My body began to tremble, but the nervous itch was gone, replaced by a tingling sensation I wasn’t accustomed to feeling. I spotted his car slowly approaching from behind me, and a smile overtook my mocha-glossed lips. Ohhhhhh....I’m in so much trouble.

