

## An Excerpt from “Deeper Than Skin”

Written by: C.C. Cowan, Published by CCP Publishing, Copyright © 2007

...Morning came quickly, Emerald had plans to meet with a few of his boys for a quick work out, and then a short meeting about an idea Emerald had. He was hesitant about keeping his appointment with the fellas because he knew he could not front around his boys. They were like brothers and bond to see right through his guise.

Emerald knew it would take more than a few deep breathes and the avoidance of eye contact to convince his friends that things were okay, especially since his inability to sleep the night before left him with some unwanted company- bags under the eyes. Damn, this is not cool. I never let a trick flip the script on me like this. I am the man, or at least I was before I met Angela. I would be damned if I let her continue to affect me like this. I am going to meet my boys, have a good work out, maybe play some b-ball, and talk some shit and then get down to business. No Angela, No distraction and that will be that. After all, I'm a playa, no emotions involved right. Right! So to hell with Angela and to hell with these freakin' bags under my eyes. A quick shower, a couple of drops of Visine, a fitted-tank and a piece of new ass to tap and your boy will be back in the game. Emerald held himself as he leaped out of bed. His grip was firm in a show of strength, manliness, confidence and an urge to release his self. He bolted to the bathroom to release the pressure of last night's Coroner binge. He showered, a thick lather clinging to his muscular frame. His long mane cascaded his back as the steaming water tickled his scalp and revived his spirit. Each strand of his dark and neatly groomed mane detailed the history of his life; it was the history of a once troubled and insecure child. In the length of his hair, was a story of perseverance, strength and will. At the root of those very same locks, the comfort and intelligence of loving one's skin. Angela loved his hair. Especially when he would lie on top of her and they would dangle on top of her face. They smelled of Vanilla and Freedom, Africa and passion fruit. He recalled the first time they met. He stood under the wide showerhead, the warm water flushing his pores and relaxing him. He mind drifted and he recalled the first time they met. It was Eight months ago to be exact:  
September 13, 2004

“Angela come on, we're going to be late girl. And you know how I get if I have to sit way in the back of the club.”

“Yeah girl, a sister has to be up front if she's going to get her lap dance on.”

“Lap dance?”

Angela was hesitant about going to an exotic dance club.

‘Look ladies, I'm just not into that kind of thing. You know, I'm just.’

“You're just what?”

“She's just stuck up is what she is; she needs to stop acting so uptight and live a little.”

“Excuse me, I am not uptight; I'm just reserved.”

“Reserved? Pre-served is more like it. Girl that thing is bottled up like a jar of peaches. When are you going to settled down and give a brother a little bit of that jam.”

The other women laughed aloud.

“I mean girl that thing has been air tight since you came out the womb. It's time.”

“Time to what?” Angela snapped.

“Oh oh, wait a minute girl, she's about to go Jackie Chan on you.’

They laugh again.

“All I'm saying is that you need to open up a little let the kitty breathe.”

“Yeah well, the kitty is just fine, and can we stop talking about my personals please.”

“Yeah well honey don't you get anxious sometimes?”

“Didn't I just say I didn't want to talk about it anymore?”

“Oh girl please, somebody has to talk about it, because the men sure aren't.”

The others cosigned.

“Well, when one starts to talk about it, he’ll be talking to me, during an intimate moment beneath the sheets, in my house, in my bed, and without you nosey heifers cheering from the sidelines.”

“Ooh!”

“Oh now we’re nosey?” Tiffany questioned playfully.

Irene interjected “Alright now that’s enough, ladies we are going to have a good time tonight, and I hope ya’ll have your dollars ready because I have all I need to get my weekly fix.” She begins fanning herself with a stack of one-dollar bills.

“So Angela are you coming?”

“I don’t know.”

“Come on girl, there’s some really nice looking guys at the club. You don’t have to get with any of them, just enjoy the show it’ll help you forget about.”

“Don’t even say it.”

“Alright, alright, girl it’ll be fun, I promise.” Joyce pleaded, as she checked her out one last time in the mirror. Her large round frame was neatly dressed as she puckered and glossed her lips.

“Let her stay home honey, more for us” Tiffany remarked sarcastically. They were friends but she and Angela always took little barbs at each other.

“Okay I’ll go, but just because I don’t want this trick (referring to Tiffany) to have all the fun.”

Angela sprung up from the white leather sofa, snatched the tube of lip gloss from Joyce’, checked herself in the mirror and took a deep breath.

“Alright girl, bring it on.” Tiffany said.

She chuckled, “Oh I’m bringing it, but I warn all of you, if one of those guys waves his thing in my face I’m pressing charges.”

Tiffany chuckled and responded “Yeah right girl, me too, hello 911 arrest this man for decent and beautiful exposure.”

They all laughed, and headed out to the club it would be a night that would change one of their lives forever...