



THE
CHATSFIELD[®]



Doctor *at*
***The* CHATSFIELD**

CAROL MARINELLI

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Doctor at The Chatsfield

«HarperCollins»

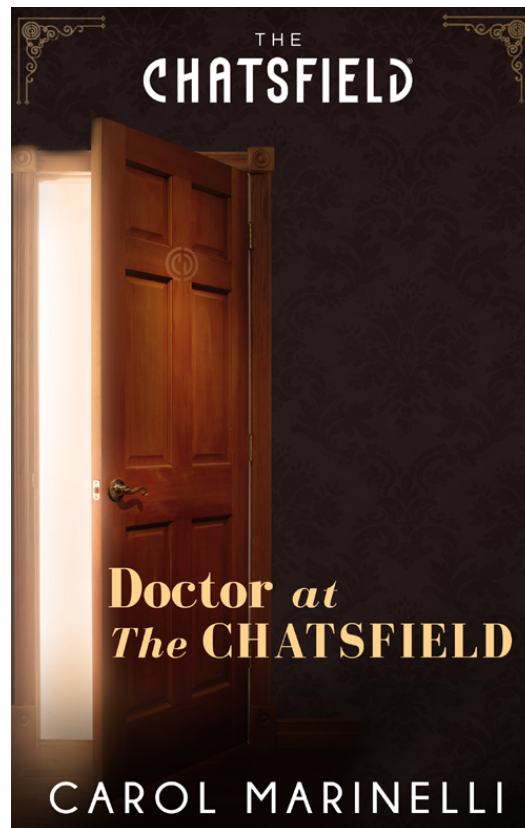
MARINELLI C.

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Step behind the hotel room doors of the Chatsfield, London... Receptionist Natasha knows something's missing from her life – she's just not sure what. Until she finds herself playing emergency midwife in the Chatsfield lobby... Delivering the tiny baby is exhilarating – and so too is listening to delicious Dr Joshua Mason's instructions over the phone! So when he turns up in reception, Natasha's thrilled to discover he's as sexy as his voice. Maybe he's just what she's been looking for all along?

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Doctor at The Chatsfield

Carol Marinelli

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[Chapter One](#)

'Congratulations, Natasha!'

Natasha raised her glass of sparkling water as her friends toasted her with far nicer bubbles and offered their congratulations on her upcoming promotion.

'So, what does Reception Manager actually mean?' Harriet asked.

'Fewer night shifts,' Natasha said.

‘You mean we’ll actually get to properly see you on a Friday night?’ Harriet teased because, having had dinner, instead of heading on to a club as the rest of her friends were, Natasha was about to head into work.

‘You shall,’ Natasha nodded, while thinking that even if she wasn’t working the last thing she fancied now was a night of clubbing.

‘Have you heard about Dion?’ Harriet asked and the table all fell a little silent but Natasha just laughed at her friend’s sudden disquiet.

‘Yes, I’ve heard that he’s just got engaged. Good luck to his fiancé, is all I can say, I just hope she doesn’t have an ambitious bone in her body or she’ll soon find it quashed.’

Natasha meant every word. Despite being together for two years it had been a relief when she’d ended it.

On the night he’d proposed. Yikes!

‘She looks like you, apparently.’ Harriet said.

‘And I looked like his previous girlfriend,’ Natasha shrugged. ‘Thin, blue eyes, blonde...’

‘Till you dyed your hair,’ Harriet laughed. ‘Remember when you did that?’

Oh, Natasha remembered very well her brief foray into being a brunette, just to annoy Dion. It had worked!

But she’d gone back to blonde, which she loved and he’d soon cheered up and it had been then that he’d produced a ring.

‘Men,’ Natasha sighed, ‘are so predictable.’

‘You’re just jaded,’ Harriet said.

‘Possibly,’ Natasha admitted and then glanced at the time on her phone. ‘Well, I’d better make a move, I’m going to take my jaded self off to work now.’

‘Stay a bit longer.’ Harriet pushed but Natasha shook her head. It had been nice to catch up for dinner with her friends before she started her night shift as receptionist at the very exclusive Chatfield Hotel but Natasha was more than happy to have the excuse of work to slip off early.

‘I really can’t,’ she said, ‘I start at ten but hopefully the next time we get together I should be able to stay longer.’ She gave a tight smile. ‘I’m off to get chatted up by rich businessmen.’

‘Save one for me,’ Harriet laughed.

There was another round of congratulations and then Natasha slipped out of the restaurant and headed towards work, grateful for the taxi ride to Mayfair just to gather her thoughts.

Was she jaded? No.

The truth was, Natasha couldn’t quite put her finger on what was wrong. Dissatisfied, discontent. Dis....

Yes, she was glad to get away from her friends who had insisted that she join them tonight to celebrate her promotion, because somehow the congratulations didn’t sit right with Natasha.

She liked her job. In fact she really, really liked it. She just didn’t love it.

Natasha had the perfect personality to work in hospitality. She was outwardly calm, completely unflappable and had an eye for detail that could never be taught, which was why, at twenty five, she’d been offered a generous increase in her salary and far more sociable hours and would now be in charge of reception.

It was a compliment indeed – the Chatsfield was a seriously top-end hotel, luxury was the name of the game there and to be offered such a frontline position after only a year should have had Natasha swinging around lampposts.

Was she mad to be considering handing in her notice?

Natasha pushed that thought aside as the taxi drew up outside the Chatsfield. Glamour started now as the taxi door was opened for her and Natasha thanked Ben, the doorman who was on tonight, and stepped into the decadent foyer. There was a group of couples heading out, the women dressed

to the nines, the men in sharp suits, and everywhere Natasha looked there was beauty, glamour and excitement.

It truly was another world.

Natasha went through to the changing area to get ready for her ten 'til seven shift. All the staff were expected to look smart at all times and Natasha took that part of her role seriously, knowing how important those first impressions were when the guests checked in. Not only that, Gene Chatsfield, the owner of the Chatsfield hotel empire, was in residence in the presidential suite. His huge success was no accident and it was more likely than not that he would check on every staff member during his stay.

Natasha had four dark grey suits in her locker and she took out a fresh one, just back from laundry, to wear tonight. Before she put on the cream cowl neck blouse that was a part of her uniform, Natasha took some time to do her make up, making sure to keep it neutral. After dressing, she pinned up her long, blonde hair, then gave it a light spray to ensure it stayed in immaculate place.

Natasha clipped on her name badge and checked her nails before heading out to start her shift. She was greeted by Mark - who was seriously jealous and upset that Natasha had been promoted rather than him. 'It's only you on the desk tonight,' Mark warned. 'Vivien called in sick.'

'That's fine,' Natasha said, checking the computer and seeing that they had a few prominent guests outstanding. 'The Belmont party haven't checked in.'

'Not yet.'

Natasha glanced up at the clock. The Belmonts had arranged for a small celebration to be held in the bar for one of their party's fiftieth birthday and they had been extremely specific about the food that they wanted served and the timing of things.

'Apart from that it should be pretty quiet,' Mark said.

'You've just jinxed me,' Natasha smiled but it wasn't returned.

'Oh, I'm sure that there's nothing *you* can't handle, Natasha.'

She heard the tart edge to his voice but chose to ignore it. Natasha really liked Mark, he was incredibly bitchy and funny but so good at his job that Natasha could well understand why he was upset at being overlooked, especially as he had worked there for longer.

Mark was right though, Natasha thought as she checked with housekeeping that the rooms were ready for the late check-ins, there really wasn't much that she couldn't handle at Chatsfield. Whatever presented she just dealt with the dramas and problems in her usual efficient way and her emotions stayed well in check. Possibly, Natasha conceded, because she wasn't in love with her job.

Yes, she liked her work, from interacting with the guests to the glamour of the place, but there was something missing and Natasha was actually scared to find out what it was.

'We can't afford it,' had been Dion's response when Natasha had broached returning to study, though not in hospitality. 'Anyway, it's a moot point given that you don't even know what it is you want to do.'

His less than helpful attitude had made Dion another moot point and she'd got rid of the boyfriend who was holding her back but now, more than ever, with only her wage to make the rent, Natasha really couldn't afford it.

Whatever *it* was.

'Natasha.' James the concierge who was on tonight came over. 'There's been a train crash...'

'Oh no.'

'There are delays getting to and from Heathrow.'

That was the part that mattered here at the Chatsfield. Here the guests left their problems at the door and it was the staff that dealt with the details.

Natasha flicked on the television in the small lounge behind reception and saw the unfolding news and, yes, the traffic was gridlocked. She rang through to Daniel the bar manager and explained the likely reason why the Belmont party were late.

‘Thanks for that, Natasha’ Daniel said. ‘I’ll let the kitchen know.’

The late guests eventually arrived, grumpy and tired after a long flight and delays getting from Heathrow.

‘There’s been a train crash,’ Mr Belmont told her.

‘I heard,’ Natasha said, swiftly checking them in, and they were soon soothed by the efficient Natasha telling them that their rooms were ready, and when Mr Belmont pulled her aside to check on the plans for his wife’s birthday treat, she was able to tell him that their table was waiting at the bar and the kitchen knew they had been delayed.

As they left the phone rang and it was Gene Chatsfield, who had guests arriving on an early flight and had just seen the news.

‘We’re keeping a close eye on things, Mr Chatsfield,’ Natasha assured him. ‘We’ll make sure they get here. There’s a helicopter booked now. I’ll call you at 6am as arranged and let you know what’s happening.’

Natasha made a note to herself to do just that and then looked up and smiled as a heavily pregnant woman walked into the foyer.

‘Can I help you?’

‘Please...’ the woman said.

Natasha wasn’t smiling a second later as the woman clutched her stomach and groaned in pain.

‘Oh!’ Natasha moved rapidly from behind the desk and went to see if she could help, perhaps to guide the woman to a seat, but Natasha’s approach briefly halted when the woman’s waters suddenly broke.

Natasha glanced over to James, who was already reaching for the phone to summon a maid to take care of the puddle - heaven forbid anyone slip!

‘Please...’ the woman said again.

‘It’s ok,’ Natasha attempted to reassure her, while taking the woman’s arm and trying to steer her out of the reception area and to the small lounge while she worked out who to call for her. ‘Are you a guest here?’

‘Please...’

‘Is there anyone I can call for you?’ Natasha asked.

‘Please,’ the woman begged and it dawned on Natasha that she didn’t speak English.

‘I’ll keep an eye on reception,’ James lips twitched as Natasha opened to lounge room door. ‘Take your time!’

Natasha was, as always, calm. There had been a couple of guests who had gone into labour during her time at the Chatsfield and medical emergencies were a fairly regular occurrence which she was used to dealing with – summoning help, while ensuring the other guests stay remained undisturbed.

‘My name’s Natasha...’ she pointed to her badge. ‘Na-tash-a.’

‘Maya!’

‘Maya!’ Natasha smiled in relief that they’d managed to at least introduce themselves. ‘Are you a guest?’

She didn’t get an answer, the poor woman folded over as another contraction hit.

‘Shall I call you an ambulance?’ Natasha asked but the woman didn’t answer, instead she pulled a face and made a grunting noise.

An ambulance, Natasha decided!

She called the emergency number and it took ages to get through but once she had Natasha explained what was going on and gave the few details that she had. ‘Her waters have broken and she’s having contractions.’

‘How far apart are they?’

‘Sorry?’ Natasha said. ‘Oh, I’m not sure, she had one when she arrived and another just before.’

‘Roughly how far apart?’

‘Five, maybe six minutes,’ Natasha said. ‘Maybe less.’

‘Is there any other way you can get her to hospital,’ the operator enquired and it was then that Natasha remembered the train emergency. ‘We’ve got a lot of emergency services diverted and so there may be some considerable delay for something not life-threatening. Is there someone who can give her a lift?’

‘I don’t know,’ Natasha said, ‘Possibly. I’ll try and speak with her again.’

Natasha did try again, asking the woman if there was anyone she could call but it was futile. Maya wasn’t even carrying a handbag, and then another contraction hit.

‘Deep breaths,’ Natasha said, because wasn’t that what everyone said? But just as Maya seemed to come out of the contraction she went into another.

‘James,’ Natasha popped her head out of the door. ‘Can you call for an ambulance again and tell them that things seem to be happening a lot more quickly.’

‘Of course,’ James said and, given the possibility of delays, Natasha moved straight to the next solution and looked up who the doctor on call tonight for the hotel was.

No doubt he wouldn’t be too pleased if it turned out that Maya wasn’t a guest but as she pulled up his details on the screen, Doctor Joshua Mason having to forgo his call out fee tonight, was the least of Natasha’s concerns as she rang his number.

‘Yes.’

He had a very clipped voice and Natasha rolled her eyes at his brusque introduction as she watched Maya pacing the room.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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