



# Driving Her Crazy

By Amy Andrews

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*But three things stand in her way...*

1. Dangerously mouthwatering photographer Kent Nelson—he's far too brooding and arrogant.
2. A road trip across the Outback with the above distraction—did she mention she doesn't do sleeping under the stars?
3. An insatiable longing to throw her rule book out of the car window... Because what happens in the Outback stays in the Outback. Right?

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## **Driving Her Crazy** By Amy Andrews Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### About the Author

Amy is an award-winning author who has written thirty-one romances for Harlequin Mills and Boon in both the Medical and RIVA/KISS lines. She's sold over a million books and been translated into a dozen languages. Amy works part time as a PICU nurse. She's been married for 22 years and has two teenagers. She lives on acreage on the outskirts of Brisbane but secretly wishes it was the hills of Tuscany.

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Kent Nelson stood staring across the view of Darling Harbour, his gaze following the line of the iconic white sails of the Sydney Opera House. He stood with his back to the woman swinging idly in her chair, his good leg planted firmly in front of the other as he leaned into the hand resting high against the floor to ceiling tinted window.

'So, let me get this straight,' Tabitha Fox said, tapping her pen on her desk, her bangles jangling, as she too admired the view. Not the one she was used to seeing when she looked towards her windows but a mighty fine one nonetheless. 'You want to *drive* several thousand kilometres to take a few photos?'

Kent turned, his ankle twinging as he rested his butt against the glass, and folded his arms across his chest. 'Yes.'

Tabitha frowned. She'd known Kent a long time, they'd been to uni together about a thousand years ago, even shared a bed for a while, but since the accident in Afghanistan he'd been practically invisible.

Until he'd turned up today wanting to take pictures any staff photographer could take.

'Okay...why?'

Kent returned her curious gaze with a deliberately blank one of his own. 'I'm your freelance photographer—it's what you pay me for.'

Tabitha suppressed a snort. His official status might be freelance photographer for the glossy weekend magazine *Sunday On My Mind*, but they both knew he'd 'declined' every job offered and, she'd bet her significant yearly salary, probably hadn't taken a photo since the accident.

She narrowed her eyes at him as she tried to see behind the inscrutable expression on his angular face. 'There are these things called planes. They're big and metal and don't ask me how but they fly in the air and get you to where you want to go very quickly.'

A nerve kicked into fibrillation along his jaw line and Kent clenched down hard. 'I don't fly,' he pushed out through tight lips.

The words were quiet but Tabitha felt the full force of their icy blast. Cold enough to freeze vodka. She regarded him for a moment or two as her nimble brain tried to work the situation to her advantage. She drummed her beringed fingers against her desk.



An outback road trip. Local people. The solitude. The joys. The hardships. The copy laid out diary style.

And most importantly, breathtaking vistas capturing the beauty and the terror in full Technicolor shot by a world-renowned, award-winning photographer on his first job since returning from tragedy in Afghanistan.

For that reason alone the paper would sell like hot cakes.

'Okay.' Tabitha nodded, her mind made up. 'Two for the price of one. Journey to the Red Centre stuff—the most spectacular photos you can take.'

'As well as the Leonard Pinto feature?'

She nodded again. 'Might as well get my money's worth out of you. Lord knows when you'll grant us some more of your time.'

Kent grunted. Tabitha Fox was probably the most business-savvy woman he'd ever met. She'd built *Sunday On My Mind* from a fluffy six-page pull-out supplement to a dynamic, gritty, feature-driven eighteen-page phenomenon in five years.

He lounged against the glass for a moment. 'Tell me, I'm curious. How'd you get him? Pinto? He's pretty reclusive.'

'He came to me.'

Kent raised an eyebrow. 'A man who shuns the media and lives in outer whoop-whoop came to you?'

Tabitha smiled. 'Said he'd open up his life to us—nothing off limits.'

Kent fixed her with his best 'and *pigs might fly* look. 'What's the catch?'

'Kent, Kent, Kent,' she tutted. 'So cynical.'

He shrugged. After spending a decade in one war zone or other, cynical was his middle name. 'The catch?' he repeated. 'Sadie Bliss.'

Kent frowned. The journo on the story with the most spectacular byline in the history of the world? 'Sadie Bliss?'

Tabitha nodded. 'He wanted her.'

Kent blinked. 'And you agreed?' The Tabitha he knew didn't like being dictated to. She especially didn't like relinquishing her editorial control.

She shrugged. 'She's young and green. But she can write. And, I—' she smiled '—can edit.'

Kent rubbed a hand along his jaw. 'Why? Does she know him?'

'I'm not entirely sure. But he wanted her. So he got her. And so did you. She can...' Tabitha waved her hand in the air, her bangles tinkling '...navigate.'



Kent narrowed his gaze. 'Wait. You want her to travel with me?' Three thousand kilometres with a woman he didn't know in the confines of a car? He'd rather be garrotted with his own camera strap.

*Not happening.*

Tabitha nodded. 'How else am I going to get my road trip story?'

Kent shook his head. 'No.' Tabitha folded her arms. 'Yes.' 'I'm not good company.'

Tabitha almost burst out laughing at the understatement. 'In that case it'll be good for you.' 'I go solo. I've always gone solo.'

'Fine,' Tabitha sighed, inspecting her fingernails. 'Sadie and her *staff* photographer can fly to Pinto and get the job done in a fraction of the time and at half the cost and you can go back to your man-cave and pretend you work for this magazine.'

Kent felt pressure at the angle of his jaw and realised he was grinding down hard. He'd already burned his bridges at a lot of places the last couple of years. He was lucky Tabitha was still taking his calls after the number of times she'd covered for him.

But days in a car with a woman whose name was Sadie Bliss? She sounded like a twenty year old cadet whose mother had named her after one too many fruity cocktails.

'I do believe,' Tabitha said, swinging in her chair as she prepared to play her ace, 'you owe me a couple.'

Kent shut his eyes as Tabitha called in his debts. 'Fine,' he huffed as he opened them again because he wanted—needed—to do this. To get back into it again.

And he did owe her.

Tabitha grinned at him like the cat that got the cream. 'Thank you.'

Kent grunted as he strode to her desk, barely noticing his limp, and sat down. 'Do you like his nudes?'

Tabitha nodded. 'I think he's sublime. You?'

Kent shook his head. 'They're all too skinny. Androgynous or something.'

Tabitha rolled her eyes. 'They're ballet dancers.'

Leonard's nude of Marianna Daly, Australian prima ballerina, had won international acclaim for his work and hung in the National Gallery in Canberra.

'Well, they're not Renaissance women, that's for sure.'

Tabitha raised an elegantly plucked eyebrow. 'You like Rubenesque?'

Kent grunted again. 'I like curves.'



Tabitha smiled. *Oh, goody.* She picked up the phone her gaze not leaving his. 'Is Sadie here yet?' She nodded twice still spearing Kent with her Mona Lisa smile. 'Can you send her in?' she asked, replacing the receiver before the receptionist had a chance to respond.

Kent narrowed his gaze. 'I don't trust that smile.'

Tabitha laughed. 'Suspicious as well as cynical.'

Kent had no intention of subjecting himself to her Cheshire grin. He rose from the chair and prowled to the window, resuming his perusal of the view as the door opened.

Sadie checked her wavy hair was still behaving itself constrained in its tight ponytail as she stepped into the plush corner office, determined not to be intimidated. So what if the legendary Tabitha Fox could make grown men weep? She'd given Sadie the job and, lowly cadet reporter or not, she knew her big break when she saw it.

Even if Leo's agenda was questionable.

'Ah Sadie, come in.' Tabitha smiled. 'I'd like you to meet someone.' She nodded her head towards Kent. 'This is your photographer, Kent Nelson.'

Sadie turned automatically, her gaze falling on broad shoulders before her brain registered the name. She blinked.

The Kent Nelson?' she asked his back, the image that had affected her a few months ago revisiting.

Kent shut his eyes briefly. Great. *A groupie.* He turned as Tabitha said, 'The one and only.'

Sadie was speechless. Multi-award-winning, world-acclaimed photojournalist Kent Nelson was coming with her to the back of beyond to take photos of a reclusive celebrity?

She almost asked him who he'd pissed off but checked her natural urge to be sarcastic.

Kent was pretty damn speechless himself as one look at Sadie Bliss blew his mind. And his was not a mind easily blown. Tabitha was smirking in his peripheral vision so he hoped he wasn't staring at her like a cartoon character whose eyes had just popped out on springs because, try as he might, he was powerless to pull his gaze away from all those curves.

Curves that started at her pouty mouth and *did not let up.*

Sure, she'd tried to contain them in her awful pinstriped suit but they looked as if they were going to bust out at any moment. They looked as if they had a mind of their own.

Bliss? *Very appropriate.* A man could starve to death whilst lost in those curves and not even care.

Great. Just what he needed. Three days in a car with a rookie reporter whose curves should come with a neon warning sign.

Sadie looked at Tabitha with a scrunched brow. 'I'm sorry, I don't understand...Kent *Nelson* is the



photographer on my story?'

'We-e-ll-ll...' Tabitha wheedled. 'Plans have changed a little.'

Sadie could feel the pound of her pulse through every cell in her body as a sinking feeling settled into her bones.

They wanted to take her off the story.

Give it to someone else.

Sadie cleared her throat. 'Changed?'

She was determined to act brisk and professional. She might not have scored this story on merit, but she intended to show everyone she had the chops for feature writing. And if Ms Tabitha bloody Fox thought she wouldn't fight for her story, then she was mistaken.

*Sunday On My Mind*, the country's top weekend magazine supplement, was exactly where she wanted to be.

And if she had to write one more best-dog-in-show story she was going to scream.

'We want you to do two stories. The feature on Leonard. And another.' Tabitha flicked her gaze to Kent briefly before refocusing on the busty, ambitious brunette who had been bombarding her inbox with interview requests for the last three months. 'On an outback road trip.'

Sadie held herself tall even though inside everything was deflating at the confirmation that the story was still hers. She didn't even allow herself the tiniest little triumphant smile as Tabitha's words beyond '*two stories*' sank in.

'A road trip?'

She looked at Kent, who was watching her with an expression she couldn't fathom. She was used to men gawking at her. Being lumbered with an E cup from the age of thirteen had broken her in to the world of male objectification early. But this wasn't that. It was brooding. Intense.

He was intense.

She'd seen pictures of him before, of course. The night of the exhibition there'd been a framed one of him taken on location somewhere in a pair of cammo pants and a khaki T-shirt. His clothing had been by no means tight but the shirt had sat against his chest emphasising well-delineated pecs, firmly muscled biceps and a flat belly.

His light brown hair had been long and shaggy—pushed back behind his ears. His moustache and goatee straggly. He'd been laughing into the lens, his eyes scrunched against the glare, interesting indentations bracketing his mouth.

He'd held a camera with a massive lens in his hands as if it were an extension of him. As a soldier carried a gun.



The whole rugged, action-man thing had never been a turn-on for her—she preferred her men refined, arty, like Leo—but she'd sure as hell been in the female minority that night in New York.

Hell, had the man himself been there, she doubted he would have left alone.

But looking at him today she probably wouldn't have recognised him if they'd passed in the street. Gone was the long hair and scraggy goatee that gave him a younger, more carefree look. Instead he was sporting a number-two buzz cut, which laid bare the shape of his perfectly symmetrical skull and forehead. His facial hair had also been restricted to stubble of a number-two consistency, emphasising the angularity of his cheekbones and jaw, shadowing the fullness of what she had to admit was a damn fine mouth, exposing the creases that would become indentations when he smiled. If he smiled.

The man sure as hell wasn't smiling now. He had his arms folded beneath her scrutiny and Sadie became aware suddenly she was watching his mouth a little too indecently. Quickly, she widened her gaze out.

Unfortunately it found a different focus. The way his folded arms tightened the fabric of his form-fitting, grey turtle-neck skivvy across the bulk of his chest. The bunch of muscles in his forearms, where the long sleeves had been pushed up to the elbows.

'Yes,' Kent said smoothly, interrupting her inspection. 'A road trip.'

He watched as Sadie took that on board with eyes as remarkable as the rest of her. Finally he understood what people meant when they talked about doe-eyed. They were huge, an intense dark grey, framed with long lashes. They didn't need artfully applied shadow or dark kohl to draw attention—they just did.

His gaze drifted to the creamy pallet of her throat, also bare of any adornment. In fact, running his gaze over her, he realised Sadie Bliss was a bling-free zone. No earrings, no necklaces, no rings.

In stark contrast to Tabitha there was nothing on Sadie's person that sparkled or drew the eye.

Not an ounce of make-up.

Not a whiff of perfume.

Even her mouth, all red and lush, appeared to be that way all on its own merit.

Sadie cleared her throat as his gaze unnerved her. An odd little pull deep down inside did funny things to her pulse and she glanced at Tabitha to relieve it.

'From Darwin to Borroloola? That's like...a thousand kilometres.'

Sadie did not travel well in cars.

Tabitha shook her head but it was Kent who let loose the next bombshell. 'Actually, it's Sydney to Borroloola. You can fly from Borroloola to Darwin and then back to Sydney once the interview is done.'

Sadie forgot all about the funny pull, Kent's celebrity status and the good impression she was trying to make with Tabitha. 'Are you nuts?' she said, turning to face him. 'That would have to be at least...' she did a quick mental calculation '...three times the distance!'



Kent remained impassive at her outburst although it was refreshing to hear a knee-jerk, unfiltered opinion for once instead of one couched in the usual kiss-arse afforded to his level of celebrity. Tarnished as it was.

## **Users Review**

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