

## MATTHEW'S TOUCH

Ella entered the TriBar with her two small sons securely attached to her hands. Normally she wouldn't have taken her sons to a bar but she knew the patrons at that time of day would be the die hard regulars who were really nice people except they liked to tip a glass a lot.

All she wanted to do was pick up her Avon order that had been left with the owner for safe keeping until Ella and her sons returned from a short visit with Ella's mother and father out of town.

Sitting about center of the U-shaped bar was a beautiful black woman who called herself Black Beauty. She was a working lady of the street with a smile that could light up a room. Ella knew how Beauty lived but she always liked her.

Matthew, a blonde haired, brown eyed boy of three years, marched directly towards Black Beauty. Ella's sons had spent a great deal of time with their grandfather who was very prejudiced, extremely vocal with his opinions.

Ella was afraid of what words might come out of the mouths of either of her sons when seeing a real person of color. "Are they yours?" Black Beauty asked Ella. Ella nodded her head as she tried to guide Michael, her eldest son, to a place next to her while she waited for Mike, the bartender to fetch her Avon order.

Black Beauty smiled at Matthew, helped him crawl upon the stool to sit next to her. Ella squirmed, ready to apologize for anything ugly that might be hurled from either Matthew's or Michael's young mouths.

Ella watched as Matthew extended his tiny hand towards Black Beauty's face gently touching Beauty's cheek where he softly rubbed it with his small fingertips then pulled his hand back to look at it. Black Beauty laughed and winked at Ella. "It doesn't rub off, my pretty baby."