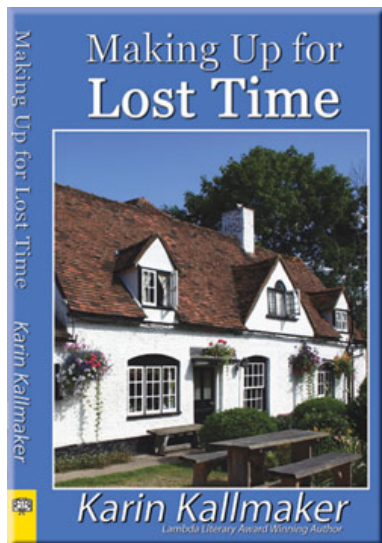


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## Excerpt from MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME



MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME IS A CONTEMPORARY LESBIAN ROMANCE BY KARIN KALLMAKER.

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## *Thick Chocolate Sauce*

Chocolate is not something you hurry—not eating it and not cooking with it. Patience is always rewarded when working with chocolate.

8 ounces (8 baker's squares) unsweetened chocolate  
(you can use chocolate chips, but try not to)  
1 cup heavy cream at room temperature  
1/2 cup sugar

### PREPARATION:

Chop the chocolate into smallish bits. The larger the pieces the longer the chocolate will take to melt. Chocolate chips save time but supermarket-quality chips can separate if overheated. Also, since the chips have been sweetened, the final sauce is sweeter.

### METHOD:

In double boiler, combine the sugar and 1/2 cup of the heavy cream. Stir constantly over boiling water until the mixture boils. Turn off the heat, but leave the mixture over the hot water. Add the chocolate and stir and stir. And stir. Do not be tempted into turning the heat back on. The chocolate will melt, eventually. If you heat the chocolate too high you risk the cocoa butter separating out.

Once the chocolate is completely melted, add the remaining cream and stir until smooth, thick, lush and decadent.

You may need to taste the finished product several times, over and over.

This sauce can be used as cake topping—it will run over the sides quite attractively. You can also fill the hole in an angel food cake with it; its semi-sweet richness is a luscious counterpoint to a sweet cake. Whatever you think would be good with chocolate probably will be!

 *From the Waterview, Mendocino* 

## FROM CHAPTER TEN

She removed a tray of eight small, well-chilled bowls from the refrigerator and set about painting them with the chocolate. Chocolate bowls for chocolate mousse at dinner the day after Christmas, the last evening the Warnell party was to be with them. All in all, Jamie was glad the holiday would soon be behind them. It hadn't been much fun this year.

The only problem with the holiday being over was that Val would go away, too. Val had said there was a little more work to do--like insulating under the dining room floor. So she hadn't set a definite departure date. But she'd go.

"Damn." Her eyes were unaccountably watering,

and she'd just messed up one of the bowls. It had a hole where Jamie's fingernail had caught it.

"Jamie, do you--what's wrong?"

"Nothing," Jamie said. "I just messed up a cup, and I'm happy about it."

"And you cry when you're happy."

"Right. I'm really, really happy right now."

Val stood there for a moment, then said, "Okay. But I wondered if you wanted to see the dining room with just the firelight. I think you'll love it. And then you should take off, because I'm about ready to drop and you've worked just as hard as I have."

"Let me finish this last bowl."

Val came over to inspect. "This is amazing."

"Just takes patience. Like you and the stenciling. How you can stand on a ladder for that long I'll never know."

"We make a good team," Val said.

"Complimentary skills," Jamie replied, after a swallow. "There." She lifted the tray and carried it into the refrigerator. After the chocolate had hardened a small amount of hot water swirled inside the bowl would loosen the chocolate away from the sides. It would only take a few minutes tomorrow morning.

Satisfied that the bowls were protected from damage, she followed Val into the dining room.

The new wood blinds, in the same whitewashed maple as the mantle, were closed. With just the

firelight, the dining room looked like a family home. The light didn't quite reach the cash register and dessert case, and the blinds hid the new lettering and designs that Val had added to the glass.

"This is nice," Jamie said. She wandered over to the fireplace, stopping here and there to set a chair more squarely under a table. She sank down on one of the raised hearths. "These are really handy. I've been warming myself every morning right here, first thing."

"I'm glad you like it." Val sat down next to her.

Jamie found herself unaccountably nervous. Val was too close, for one thing, and in this light she looked like some kind of goddess. Even worse, Jamie was feeling a little too emotional, a little too much on the ragged edge.

"We are a good team," Val said again. When Jamie didn't answer, she said in a low voice that cut through Jamie's heart, "Jamie?"

She lifted her head to find Val leaning toward her. She couldn't turn away, she didn't want to. Val's lips were like warm silk on hers. Jamie knew she whimpered, but holding it back would have cost her the effort she was making to keep from throwing herself into Val's arms.

The kiss was long, long enough to make the fire at Jamie's back seem cool by comparison. Her heart was hammering in her ears and nothing seemed real except for the press of Val's lips.

Then Val opened her mouth with a deep sigh that

Jamie was helpless to resist. She responded with a gasp and tasted Val's mouth on hers, all the while holding her hands rigidly at her sides, unwilling to take the consequences of what would happen if she touched Val and her restraint gave way to the flood of long-banked need.

When Val's fingertips brushed her cheeks, the sensation was so sweet, and so welcome, that she panicked. Val lurched into the space where Jamie had been as Jamie dashed toward the kitchen, saying breathlessly, "I forgot to close the refrigerator."

Val was following her. Jamie dashed through the kitchen to the walk-in refrigerator, opened the door and pulled it shut behind her. Silly, she thought, Val knows how to open the door.

Open it she did. She was framed in the kitchen light like a primordial being, glowing with energy and power.

The primordial being said, "Are you nuts?"

"No, I just didn't want to ruin the chocolate."

Jamie brushed her fingers lightly over the fully set chocolate stencils.

"Then I'll just close the door," Val said. She did. But she was on the inside.

Jamie backed into the corner.

"I'm not going to hurt you," Val said. "What on earth do you think I have in mind? I just wanted...to kiss you. Because we make a good team."

"I'm not interested in that kind of partnership."

"Fine," Val said. "A kiss is just a kiss."

Maybe to you, Jamie wanted to say. Instead she said, "Like with Jan?"

"Jealous?"

"Of course not."

Val was taking slow steps toward Jamie. "You're going to freeze in here."

"I'm fine. I'm used to it."

"Jamie, come out into the kitchen." She reached for Jamie's hand.

"No."

"Jamie..." Val took her hand. It was electrically hot against Jamie's rapidly chilling fingers. "I'm sorry I frightened you. It was the last thought on my mind."

"I'm not frightened." Jamie trembled. "I'm cold."

"Come into the kitchen," Val repeated.

"I've got work to do."

"Christ, Jamie. So do I." Val's voice cracked and her brilliant blue eyes flashed. "I have things I need to do. Like this."

Her mouth found Jamie's again, this time more firmly. Jamie's knees, against all laws of physics, melted. Val held her pinned against the chilled boxes of cheese and milk. Her warm arms went around Jamie, and Jamie thought she would faint.

She kissed Val back. She wrapped her arms around Val's waist and returned the kiss, pressure for pressure, taste for taste.

When Val drew back, she whispered against Jamie's eyes, "Was that so bad?"

"No," Jamie admitted. "A kiss is just a kiss."

Val sighed, not passionately this time, and she let Jamie go. "We'll catch our death if we stay in here much longer."

"Right," Jamie said.

Val opened the door and Jamie turned off the light. In the kitchen, Jamie fussed around the leftover chocolate in the double boiler. It was still warm and semi-soft.

"I wonder what I could use this up on?"

Val came over to examine it. "Would it make chocolate milk?"

"Wouldn't dissolve. You'd have chocolate pellets in white milk."

"Frosting?"

"Hmm, it would be a soft dip for cupcakes if we had any left."

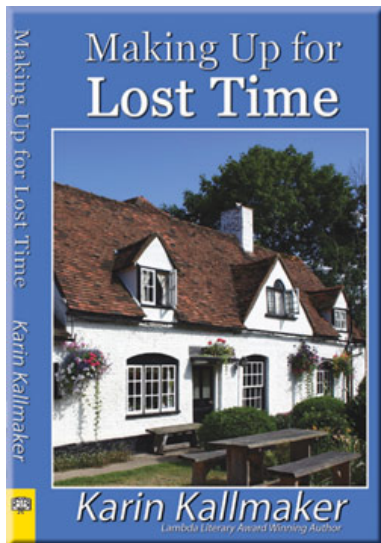
"Well," Val said, "we could eat it with our fingers."

Jamie started to tremble again. She scooped up some of the soft, slightly runny chocolate on her index finger and offered it to Val.

Val slowly and deliberately took Jamie's finger in her mouth, licking the chocolate away. Her tongue lingered longer than necessary and Jamie knew that Val must feel her quivering.

Val reached for the bowl of chocolate, but Jamie said, her voice barely audible, "Let me." She offered more chocolate to Val, but as Val drew close to accept it, Jamie swept it across Val's mouth and cheek. "We could paint with it."

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