

deep green

deep green

color me jealous

melody carlson



TH1NK Books
an imprint of NavPress®

© 2004 by Melody Carlson

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without written permission from NavPress, P.O. Box 35001, Colorado Springs, CO 80935.
www.navpress.com

TH1NK Books is an imprint of NavPress. TH1NK is a registered trademark of NavPress. Absence of © in connection with marks of NavPress or other parties does not indicate an absence of registration of those marks.

ISBN 1-57683-530-8

Cover design by David Carlson Design

Cover photo by Alamy Images

Creative Team: Jay Howver, Erin Healey, Cara Iverson, Glynese Northam

This is a work of fiction. The characters, incidents, and dialogues are products of the author's imagination and are not to be construed as real. Any resemblance to actual events or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Published in association with the literary agency of Sara A. Fortenberry.

Carlson, Melody.

Deep green : color me jealous / Melody Carlson.

p. cm. -- (TrueColors ; bk. 2)

Summary: A Christian high school girl considers having sex with a former boyfriend in order to win him back.

ISBN 1-57683-530-8

[1. Jealousy--Fiction. 2. Dating (Social customs)--Fiction. 3. Christian life--Fiction.] I. Title.

PZ7.C216637Dee 2004

[Fic]--dc22

2004000282

Printed in Canada

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 / 08 07 06 05 04

Other Books by Melody Carlson

Dark Blue, *Book 1 of the TRUECOLORS series (NavPress)*

DIARY OF A TEENAGE GIRL *series (Multnomah)*

DEGREES OF GUILT *series (Tyndale)*

Finding Alice (*WaterBrook*)

Looking for Cassandra Jane (*Tyndale*)

one

I KNOW WHAT EVERYONE'S BEEN SAYING ABOUT ME, BUT HONESTLY IT'S NOT my fault that Timothy Lawrence dumped Shawna Frye the day after the Harvest Dance. Really, it's just the way life happened. I mean, just because you've gone with a guy for a year doesn't mean you *own* him. Besides, I didn't see any engagement ring on Shawna's finger. She swears Timothy got her a promise ring last summer that she lost swimming at the lake. Yeah, right. It's not like Shawna is the most honest person on the planet. I mean, she's been saying all kinds of crud about me lately. And not only are they total figments of her imagination but they're totally mean too.

I overheard her talking to Lucy Farrell in the locker room today. "Jordan Ferguson is a backstabbing tramp," she said in this cruel voice that didn't even sound like her. Of course, Shawna didn't realize that I could hear her going on and on from behind the closed door of the bathroom stall. Or maybe she did. Maybe she just didn't care that her words cut me deeply. But everyone knows she's out to get me. It's what's driving her these days. I'm just glad she's not the violent type (at least I don't think she is). Just the same, I've been watching my back, and I wouldn't be surprised if she pulled some weird kind of vengeful stunt, like letting her side of the pyramid collapse while I am precariously balanced on top. Of course, I

always have to be on top since I'm the smallest cheerleader—just one more reason why I need to get this stupid mess sorted out ASAP.

So, while I was holed up in the bathroom stall, no pun intended, I had to ask myself why on earth Shawna was telling all this to Lucy Farrell. I mean, Lucy's nice enough, but she's not exactly that involved in our group of friends, and frankly it's none of her business. But I suspect Shawna's just looking for new sets of ears since everyone else is probably sick and tired of hearing her whine and complain about me all the time.

The really sad part in all this is that I honestly thought Shawna and I were friends. *Good* friends even. And I really liked her. Next to my old best friend, Kara Hendricks, Shawna was the best friend I'd ever had. She's fun and funny, and we're both cheerleaders, and we like the same kinds of things (including the same boys, as it turns out), but I'd really hoped we could be friends for a long, long time.

"Didn't you think she'd get mad when you stole her boyfriend?" Amber Elliot asked me the other day. It didn't help that Amber was staring at me like I was the village idiot. Like, *Duh, how dumb are you, Jordan Ferguson?*

But the truth is I really didn't think Shawna would care that much. "I told you that Timothy said they were *over with*," I explained to Amber in my most convincing tone. "He *said* that they both knew their relationship was *history* and that they were only staying together through the Harvest Dance and only because he'd promised to take her."

"That's not what Shawna says." Amber was giving me her non-sense look. Now, Amber's African-American and the kind of girl who doesn't put up with anything. I suppose that's one reason she makes such a good head cheerleader. Well, that and she's just really

good at it, not to mention incredibly gorgeous. Think Halle Berry kind of gorgeous. I mean, this girl really turns heads.

But back to me, which I know sounds a bit narcissistic, but the honest truth is, I'm not as much self-centered as I am a bit obsessive-compulsive. Just ask my friend Kara. And I'm trying to deal with it. But that's another problem altogether.

Still, the really hard part about all this latest brouhaha (I used that word in speech once and it means something like "much ado about nothing") is that I'm the new girl in this particular group. See, I only became a cheerleader this fall, and it still feels like I have to prove myself on pretty much a daily basis. And it doesn't help that everyone else in this group is pretty loyal to Shawna, who's been in this group for years now. Anyway, most of them have sided with her already.

Amber's about the only one who's tried to keep the middle ground, but that might have more to do with being head cheerleader than with being my friend. Still, I haven't given up on her alliance.

"What do you think I should do?" I asked her today. "Should I break up with Timothy?" Of course, I knew that no matter what she said I probably wouldn't do this. I don't even know if I *could* do this — that's how much I like this guy. But I was curious about what she'd say.

"I'm not about to go there," she said, "but you and Shawna better sort this thing out before basketball season starts. We can't have two snarling cheerleaders spoiling the morale for everyone else."

I forced my best smile. "I'm trying, Amber, really I am. But Shawna won't even speak to me."

"Well, give her time to chill." Amber rolled her big brown eyes dramatically. "Thank goodness football season is almost over with."

“Tim says basketball season is supposed to be really good,” I said, hoping to encourage her.

“Yeah, it’s *supposed* to be. Let’s just hope the cheerleaders can do their part to keep it together without someone getting murdered before the season is over.” She looked at me like I was personally responsible for the morale of the entire team. “I gotta go now.”

I waved goodbye and wished I had said something more convincing. I mean, I could really use someone like Amber to be solidly on my side. The truth is, I feel pretty alone right now. Even Kara Hendricks, my old best friend, seems to be holding me at arm’s length these days. But at least I have my Timothy. Now, *that’s* some consolation prize!

I can’t deny that I’ve had the hots for Tim ever since last year. He was a junior then but already playing on the varsity basketball team, he’s that good. And speaking of good, he’s not bad-looking either. Ha! He’s actually so good-looking that, according to Shawna, a local modeling agency approached him about being in some ads, but he turned them down, which I think is a shame because I’m willing to bet he’s very photogenic with those big dark brown eyes and his naturally blond hair. Not to mention that he always looks tan. He says it’s his Native American blood, but I wonder if he doesn’t sneak off to the tanning booths occasionally.

Of course, Timothy didn’t have a clue last year that I was infatuated with him. Mostly he didn’t even know that I existed, since I was still pretty much a nobody. Plus he was going with Shawna, one of the coolest girls in the school. Just the same, I enjoyed watching Timothy from a distance. And I used to cheer for him from the bleachers like he was the only one down there—or on the planet for that matter. I suppose I was obsessing a little. But believe me, he looked totally awesome in that blue and red uniform. I loved

watching him dribble the ball down the court with such smooth confidence. Most of all, I liked his smile. I still do.

Of course, I *never* told a single person any of this. It was like my clandestine obsession. I didn't even tell Kara, and we were still pretty close at the time. I guess my feeling is that when you really, really like someone, it's best to play your cards close to your chest (as my dad would say). It gives you the advantage. And I think that has a lot to do with how I finally managed to hook Timothy. Whenever I was hanging with my new circle of friends and Timothy was around, I would just act all nonchalant and laid back, like *I could take you or leave you, Timothy Lawrence*. Sure, I'd laugh at his jokes — he's a real teaser too — but then I'd just toss it right back at him as if I didn't even care what he thought about me. Although I did. I cared a lot.

And then when he asked me to dance with him at the Harvest Dance, since everyone was sort of switching partners, I just acted all aloof and like, *Well, okay, I suppose I could dance with you, just this one time though*. I suppose I was kind of like playing hard to get, which seemed to make him more and more interested.

"I don't remember ever seeing you around school before," he told me as we danced a slow dance. "Until you made cheerleader anyway. Where you been hiding all this time?"

I shrugged. "I've been around."

And so it went. A regular cat-and-mouse game. But he thought he was the cat pursuing the hard-to-get mouse. Little did he know.

Still, I never dreamed that he would really pursue me seriously — at least not so quickly anyway. But the very next day, he called me and then came over to my house. He told me that he'd been postponing his breakup with Shawna, but the time had finally come. He actually seemed a little disturbed about the whole thing,

melody carlson

which I thought was rather sweet. But I tried to console him and assure him that if it were really time to break up, the best thing was to just do it, and as quickly and painlessly as possible.

Maybe I was wrong about that part. Or maybe I'm just one of those people who has to learn everything the hard way.