



Angel

DANIEL WYATT

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Dani Wyatt

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by Dani Wyatt

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A NOTE TO MY READERS:
I appreciate every one of you.

This one's for you SW.
Dedicated to the naughty little girl inside us all.
Take care of her and she will take care of you.



Angel



Dani Wyatt
hoplessly romantic - shamelessly smutty

Sordid fun and other dirty shenanigans

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Chapter One

MAGNUS



“You are wound too fucking tight, man. When’s the last time you got laid anyway? Go find some fucking chick and just get it done!” Erik smirks at me as he spreads his fingers on the polished birch. The desk used to be mine, and it was big even for me. Erik isn’t small, not by everyday standards, but he looks like a toddler playing like he’s some big shot behind that desk.

He’s wearing a fucking idiot grin, and I have half a mind to wipe it off with a quick shot to his jaw.

What he doesn’t know is I get laid a few times a day. In my mind at least and by my own hand. I got laid a couple hours ago. Laying back in my bed, my fist around my rock hard shaft, trying to talk myself out of jerking off for the second time before six a.m. as I thought about my angel.

I lost that battle, just as I’ve lost hundreds exactly the same over the last few months. As I gripped myself, squeezing and jacking up and down with the sheets tossed off my body, my thoughts had drifted to what her lips would taste like, the way they curve and stay full when she smiles. Thinking of that gorgeous smile as I would sink my tongue so deep inside her I become part of her fucking DNA. The image of myself placing her on her knees in front of me, her willing eyes looking to me for reassurance...

My fantasy unfolds with the first brush of her tongue on the slit of my cock, drops of pre-cum seeping out just for her. The things I would say to

her. How she would smile when I told her she was my good girl... The weight of her magnificent tits in my hands.

The taste of her pussy. Her legs spreading willingly for me. Then that smile again.

Every time it happens, I imagine teaching her, guiding her, showing her everything I want her to know about sex. About how I was made to please her and her me. Making her mine in ways most men would think perverse, but it's not. The ways I want her are beautiful. The ways I wish I could have her. Take care of her. Possess her beyond anything most rational men would understand.

My Angel.

My babygirl.

But it's what I need. It's what I've always needed, I just didn't know it until I met her.

I would tell her to open her legs for me, order her to play with herself so I know exactly what she likes, how to reward her when she is a good girl. Fuck, I gripped my cock so tight, thinking of how her pussy would feel. My stroke sessions are more fits of lust-filled anger than pleasure. I want her so badly it hurts. I need the release because I'm sure I will never truly have her and that is my own private torture.

Pulses shoot up my cock, thick and hard simply from the memory of my morning fantasy, and I shift in the chair where I sit facing the front of the desk, hoping my brother won't notice the hard-on that is beginning to fill the front of my pants.

That's never happened before at the mere thought of a woman. Hell, I haven't gotten hard for anyone in so many years I don't even bother to count anymore. Until three months ago, and my cock seems to be eighteen years old again. Wiley and half hard twenty-four seven.

I rub an open hand over my jaw and mouth, unconsciously grooming my beard in an attempt to regain control of my pulse. I twist my neck and let out a huff as I try to shake away the endless fantasies of her, a girl who shows absolutely zero interest in me. A girl I can't get out of my head.

My angel. My Cassie.

The four words out of her mouth that first day I met her told me I was a goner. You would have thought they were more provocative than, 'Can I help you?'. But that's all it took.

“I even have a few girls in mind.” Erik soils my daydream. “My cast-offs, shall we say. I’m sure they would be happy to take one for the team.” My baby brother doesn’t know when to shut the fuck up sometimes.

“Fuck you, Erik.” I point a meaty finger in his direction. “Getting laid is not the answer to everything. And those women should kick your ass not sleep with you. You need to learn to treat them with more respect.”

I turn away so that I won’t see his reaction. This is the exact same room I walked out of last year. Nothing has changed, and everything has changed. Erik has managed to turn what was my center of organization, my control room, into something more chaotic than I could ever find comfortable. But it doesn’t matter. He’s the Chief Executive Officer of Foundation Demolition now.

Right or wrong, that chapter of my life is over.

“I just think getting laid couldn’t hurt but okay, bad joke.” He scribbles on a yellow legal pad in front of him then his eyes snap up to me with something I think might be pity. “Look, you weren’t wrong about letting the demo go forward that day. You did everything right.” Erik puts down the pen and drums his fingers on the desk, watching me as I avert my own line of sight from his. He knows me well enough to realize I’m still stuck on that fucking day but him bringing it up every time we see each other pisses me off.

He’s ramping up for another lecture on how I should come back to the business. With a thrust of my chin I set him straight. “Well, I clearly wasn’t *right* either. I don’t want to talk about it.” My fingers squeeze my knees and I shake my head. “We’ve run circles around this and it’s better this way. You’re doing a great job and I’m not bringing unnecessary attention to the business.” I shift back and forth in the chair, bring a palm up to run a few hard strokes over my head and as belly twists tight. I want to be somewhere else.

Erik’s upper lip twitches the way it does when he’s nervous. “You were the best though. No one knew how to rig a building like you did. It was almost magical, how you just knew where each impact should go. Every detonation in the right order. Like you were conducting a symphony of destruction. Dad taught us both well, but you had something else. Like Rain Man for building implosions.”

“Except being the best didn’t save that girl, did it?” The harshness in my voice reminds us both how fresh the pain is for me.

Pain. I shake my head thinking of the word, trying to clear it, wondering how I can think what I'm feeling equals pain. I'm fucking alive. This isn't pain, it's just emotion. I'm an asshole.

Erik's chest rises and falls with a deep breath and he rolls a pen back and forth under his fingers, but I'm done here. I shoot him a look that says "no arguments" as I grunt and push off on the chair, rising to my feet.

My *foot*, I should say.

Singular. My constant reminder of that day's error in judgement.

"Do you need anything else?" I clasp my hands together, rubbing them until the friction creates heat. My forehead draws tight as the sun assaults my eyes looking out the window so that I don't have to see his concern. We're on the seventh floor of the Foundation building, looking across the Detroit River to the Canadian Club sign. Somehow it helps settle me. That sign has been in my memory since Dad had his first office on this site. Seems like a thousand years ago.

Foundation Demo's first location was nothing more than a single story, brick square, with bars on the windows and no running water. Two more office buildings were added to the group after that first one, then seven years ago we built this glass and metal monstrosity to house the new, international team of demolition experts. We're the best, no one doubts that.

"No, I don't need anything else. What I still fucking need is for you to let this *other* stuff go." Erik has a habit of thinking he's right about everything and he's the one that needs to learn to let stuff go. We've gone a few rounds over the years because he refuses to see things any way but his. "I mean, fifty thousand to another rehab? *Fifty thousand*? Do you even know how much that is?" He rubs the back of his neck as I shift my weight off my prosthetic as I move behind the chair. The new one they just fitted me with is still a bit stiff and it's digging into what's left of my calf muscle.

I do know how much money that is, and it's not like I don't have the cash. He's just pissed because he sees it as a waste. Never mind he's the one that has a garage full of vintage motorcycles, a Porsche 911 Turbo and two Aston Martin Db5s. He fancies himself the James Bond of building demolition. Somehow those trinkets are worthy of the expense in his mind, but not my spending money on trying to fucking help people out of a death spiral.

"What the fuck do you care? It's my fucking money. My percentage of the profits, Erik, this is what I want to do with it. Don't cock-block me man,

you'll lose. You know I won't fucking back down." I suck my lips against my teeth with a quick crack of my neck. I love my baby brother, but we're not too old to throw down if need be. He's sandpaper on my nerves right now and he knows it.

If Mom was still here, the only thing she'd say to us is, "Take it outside, boys. Supper's at seven."

"That's enough, man. Come on." Erik cracks his palm against the desk, toppling the picture of Mom and Dad sitting at the corner.

I reach over to right it and he's drumming his fingers again, making heat start to rise from my core. God, I miss my parents.

He should know he's pushing for a brotherly beatdown, but he keeps going anyway. "Some junkie *broke into* your demo site. You didn't *do* anything wrong here. Fucking tweakers looking for a place to squat for the night. One dies and *it's her own fault* and now it's your responsibility to save them all?" He throws his hands up and his voice hits a high note.

"Do you fucking think people *want* to be addicts? You think they enjoy that fucking life? 'There but by the grace of God go I.' That's what Mom used to say. You should think about it." I point at the photo, then raise my hand up to cover my eyes and pinch at the corners of my forehead. The pressure from my fingers somehow relieves the pressure inside my head.

Erik huffs a dramatic sigh as I rub my temples. I'm thinking about her, the woman they found in the rubble. Thinking maybe if someone had given *her* a chance, showed her they cared, maybe she'd be alive today.

I know Erik doesn't want to hear what I say next but I don't care. "Do you know Sarah Templeton had been on her own since she was fifteen? Ran away from home because her mother's boyfriend thought she was his personal sex toy? Then she found a new 'boyfriend' who promptly beat her ass until she went *to work* for him. He also made sure he got a needle in her arm, so by the time she was sixteen she'd already been arrested eight times for prostitution and four times for possession. But, yeah, I guess she just needed to pull herself up by her bootstraps, right?" My nostrils flare as I stare him down.

He's the baby, and sometimes he needs the hammer between the eyes because he can't see things from any perspective but his own. "Not everyone has the same foundation as we had, Erik. Keep that in mind." After the accident I wanted to know everything I could about the woman that died.

Sarah Templeton. Even then I hated how the company lawyers tried to paint her as a low life. They wouldn't even use her name.

Like somehow her life mattered less because of her background. I didn't notice it before this all happened, but people assign a different value to women when they sell their body. When they have an addiction. It was so clear to me during the investigation and the case that somehow to most people, the human that was Sarah Templeton didn't matter all that much and it infuriated me.

My brother stares right back at me, calculating whether it's in his own interests to keep poking the bear.

Erik, my sister Cindy and I had an amazing childhood. Even when we were dirt poor and supper was the one meal you could count on, we were happy. Erik doesn't seem to grasp the trauma some people go through in their lives. Most of the addicts I've gotten to know since the accident have something horrible in their past. Something that finds their weakness and turns them to the dark road. He has no fucking idea how lucky he is.

From the way he settles back in his chair and his shoulders fall a few inches I think he's decided to keep his mouth shut for the moment. Smart choice.

"Now. Are we done?" My voice thickens as I stuff my hands down in my pockets. The muscles in my shoulders ache and twitch. My mouth is dry and I just need to be out of here. I can't stop thinking of where I want to be. Even if it's just looking at her. I came here to sign some IRS shit for him but the conversation quickly turned and I'm ready to be gone.

"Yep. I guess we are. Thanks for coming by to sign. Fucking IRS wants to know every fucking thing." Erik leans back in the chair. He's got Mom's fair skin, Nordic light hair and lean build, while I, on the other hand, take after our father. Mom used to say Dad and I descended from some ancient human-grizzly hybrid and from the view I get in the mirror every morning she's not far off. Even my voice comes out of me as a half growl most of the time. "I'm changing your direct deposit like you asked. Once a month still fine?"

"I don't care. Whatever. I don't need the money." I pick up the picture of Mom and Dad from the edge of the desk, looking at how they still smiled at each other after fifty-two years of marriage. It makes me happy and sad at the same time, and I dust the top of the frame with my index finger before setting it back in place, turning it to face him.

I've left the business in any official capacity, but Erik and my sister insisted I keep drawing a salary. I also have a lot of zeros behind my company profit sharing account, but I only use that now for donations and contributions to the rehabs I support. I'm starting a scholarship sort of deal with three of the best rehabs across the country. The ones where the fucking celebrities go when they need to dry out, the best places. The programs that actually work, where you're not a junkie, you're just a hero in need of a rest. But the real addicts, the folks on the street with nothing and no one, don't get to go to those facilities. No money, no help. I want to change that.

"You earned your checks, man. You turned this business around in the last ten years. I just hope I don't fuck it up. You ever want to come back, no questions. The whole wine business thing with Cindy—" He laughs and pushes back in his chair with a knowing grin. "We both know you're just there to get her started. Hell, you don't even drink..."

He busts out with a hearty laugh as I back away toward the closed door, anxious to get back outside in the fresh air. I'm done. The room starts to feel smaller and smaller, and my heart is starting to pump faster knowing the sympathetic stares and averted eyes I'm going to get from the staff when I walk back toward the elevator.

"Hey, it's something to do. Cindy needed some help. I'm a glorified gopher over there, but if she needs me, I'll stick around for as long as she wants."

"So now both of you are off doing your wine thing and I'm here steering the ship. Not sure that's what Dad had in mind when he left the company to all of us."

"Cindy never cared about blowing shit up. She's happy as hell now that she's bought the distributorship."

She's doing well. She has around seventy employees and the new building is almost ready. The warehouse is state of the art. Ten sections kept at perfect temperatures for the different kinds of wine. Fuck if I know anything about it, but she's in hog heaven. I just do what I'm told and that's fine for now. Keeps me busy. I can even bring my two mutts, Tinder and Leopold along to the offices.

I'm almost to the door when I turn around one last time to see Erik look at his watch then his fingers click on his keyboard.

"Okay." Erik stops typing and reaches up to the ceiling, stretching and leaning side to side. "Well, I have work to do. You go run your little errands

for sissy and take care of those in need and those vicious dogs of yours. I'll be here blowing shit up."

As I turn, I can't help but think of where I want to be. Who I want to be talking to. I step forward, my gait slightly off balance. My fingers grip the cool metal handle of the door and a rush of blood streams down south. I know when I leave here my next stop will be to see her.

I lean to my right. The pressure from my prosthetic needs adjusting. Finding a specialist that could form fit and teach a six-foot-seven-inch, three-hundred-and-seventeen-pound man how to walk again with the bottom of one leg blown off hasn't been an easy road.

Erik pushes back from his place behind the desk and steps forward as I start to open the door. I pivot taking one quick look back his way. Squinting into the morning sun as it streams through the floor-to-ceiling windows.

"One more thing." His voice changes, the lightness gone.

He nods slightly and looks down at a thick folder at the corner of the desk. For some reason he can't meet my eyes.

Our mutual discomfort heightened by the fact that one black boot is sticking out from under the hem of my charcoal gray slacks. Where the other boot should be, there's just slick, curved metal.

"We settled the last of the claim." He flips up the corner of the folder, then closes it again. "It's done. I know you don't want to talk about it, but I wanted you to know. It wasn't your fault, but we settled and accepted all of their terms just as you asked. Now, you just need to settle it with yourself, Magnus. It was an accident. You weren't at fault."

I sniff. My hand tenses on the door handle, the veins traversing the bones leading to each finger in thick rivers. My desire to turn the knob falters as the words tumble out of my mouth. "Tell that to Sarah Templeton." My head starts to pound. "Oh wait, you can't, can you?"

I force my wrist to turn my hand.

The click of the handle, the blast of air as I jerk open the door. I feel like I'm watching the whole thing from somewhere else. The irony of the entire situation is that Sarah's piece of shit mother came out of the woodwork after her daughter died. Found some TV attorney to take her case of wrongful death against me and the corporation. Erik wanted it to go to trial, but I put my foot down. We paid off that worthless bitch because there was no way I was letting Sarah's name be dragged through the mud. Her mother did jack shit for her until she was dead, then all of a sudden she was the grieving, long

suffering, maternal figure. Sarah deserves some peace, even now. The ancillary benefit of settling out of court was it kept both Sarah and the entire sad event out of the media.

I shoot off one final barb. “Doesn’t feel settled to me.”

Erik shakes his head and looks down, but I finally walk away. I turn the corner out of his office away from the elevators and onto the stairs, sparing us all the forced smiles and averted eyes on my way out.

Chapter Two

CHASTITY



The sound of breaking glass doesn't even turn my head anymore. Working as a picture framer, the back room at the gallery is a mixture of nail guns, glass crashing in the scrap bucket, the lame piped in gallery music, and low conversations between co-workers.

My friend Andrea works here with me at Westwood Gallery and Framing. She was a model for a while, and trained as a flight attendant after high school except the airline went belly up before she could start.

We met at the Humane Society on one of my volunteer days and she was there doing some court ordered community service. She made a bad decision one night and egged an ex-boyfriend's car with four *dozen* eggs. Found out that was what's known as a misdemeanor. We bonded over homeless mutts, tragic rescue intakes, and cleaning cat boxes.

Someday I'd love to have my own rescue shelter. Save all the animals I can't save there.

I was unemployed when we met. Taking care of Mom had kept me busy for the most part, but when money started becoming even more of an issue, she encouraged me to step out. She knew I needed the push. Andrea helped me get the job here at the gallery, even though I had zero retail or picture framing experience. She's as close to a best friend as I have.

As close to any friend as I have. Moving seven times before I turned sixteen didn't lay the ground work for building lasting friendships. Toss that in the blender with my fascination with Disney princess movies, my voluptuous shape, and my brain's unique way of evaporating my power of speech around strangers, and you can safely say I was far from winning any popularity contests.

Andrea is typing away on her phone standing next to me while I work on a family photo. She looks like a cross between Whitney Houston and Heidi Klum, minus about eight inches in height. Oh, and the freckles. She has a nose full of them, and flawless, deep olive skin with runway-model cheekbones. Yeah, she's *that* girl. The one men will break their neck to ogle. And whenever we are together, I'm definitely her wing-man.

Woman.

Wing-woman? Is that a word?

Well, I may be on her wing, but I don't feel like a *woman*. I'm grown up on the outside, but not on the inside. Not much about being an adult appeals to me to be honest. I'm tough when I need to be. I can take care of myself and others, but deep inside, I wish someone would take care of me.

The thing that drew me to Andrea at first was when I told her my favorite movie she didn't laugh in my face. Almost anything Disney will have me snuggled on the couch, wide-eyed with anticipation. But then there's *Beauty and the Beast*. I can recite every line in my sleep. Sing every song with gleeful emotion into my hairbrush, hopping from my bed to the floor, spinning around and around. I'm not afraid of a dramatic drop to my knees either for the big finish.

Favorite food? I'd go with cotton candy and cupcakes if it wouldn't rot my teeth and send me into a sugar coma. I'm a fan of Mac and Cheese as long as the pasta noodles are shaped like cartoon characters or circus animals.

I sleep with more stuffed animals than pillows, and I still have to have a nightlight too. Not just any nightlight either, but the one that casts pink stars around it.

Andrea is giggling softly to her self as I'm working on finishing up framing a collage of family photos. Clipping the fasteners into the back ridge of the frame. Before she needed to tend to her phone, Andrea and I were discussing my most recent run in with our area manager, Eddie.

She tugs the hair tie out of the messy bun on top of her head, flips her hair up and over her head a couple times then puts it right back up flashing me her

best mother hen look. “Then what did he say?” She rolls her eyes and shakes her head, making a face like she’s just sucked on a slice of lime. I’d just finished recounting my miserable morning with Eddie. A miserable morning which comes on the heels of a miserable few years.

“He said he wouldn’t tell Julie, but to *remember* he’s doing me a favor.”

“That man is *suuuuuuch* a prick. That is going to come back to haunt you, mark my words.” She stabs a finger in the air toward my nose.

“I’m sure it will. Then, when Julie walked in after and called me upstairs my heart stopped.” I brush my bangs back; I need a haircut but that has not been in the budget. Andrea has been trimming my bangs for me for the last six months during our lunch breaks.

She sticks her tongue out at one of our co-workers who is staring at her. She gets that a lot, even here at work; the guys just can’t seem to help themselves. The back room at the gallery is fitted with five enormous, flat-topped tables, where we do the framing for the artwork both for the gallery displays and client custom work.

I like the work itself quite a lot. It’s creative, hands-on, and doesn’t require all that much human interaction. Or reading. Because although that is a simple task for most people, for me letters like to spin and find ways to make it impossible for me to make sense out of them.

But, when I’m on my own, when no one is watching or waiting for me, I love books. Stories. I just need to take my time, so although most people would think I would hate reading I don’t. I just don’t like doing it in front of people.

Waiting on the customers here isn’t so bad. You show them what you think will look good on their artwork, make some small talk if necessary.

Andrea looks down at her freshly manicured fingernails as she turns to say something. “Bet it was a surprise when Julie offered you a promotion instead of firing you.”

I smile down at the piece of artwork I’m sliding into a frame and Andrea hops up and takes a seat on the table next to me, leaning down closer to keep our conversation private.

None of the other employees know I’m being transferred to our newest flagship store in Belvedere, three hours north of here. It’s a very upscale, vacation community that surrounds Lake Sherwood. You can’t touch a property around there for less than the upper six figures. But it’s straight out

of a magazine. The houses are all set behind long, stone fences, looking like fortresses along the shore.

Mom and I used to go up that way for lunch, or just to drive around the lake sometimes on the days she was feeling up to it. When the sun would go down, I always looked at the houses, the lights on inside, wondering what it would be like to be on the inside looking out instead of the other way around. It always reminded me of *The Great Gatsby*. I used to look for the single green light, far away across the lake. Thinking of Daisy and Gatsby.

Anyway, I start at the new store tomorrow, and I'm thankful my mom's old beat-up Corolla is still humming and I have a half tank of gas to get me there. Hopefully.

They offered me an assistant manager position, and both the money and the change of pace are welcome. What isn't welcome is Eddie will be there as well.

I flip over the large photo portrait and secure the corners with the metal frame brackets, blowing an errant tendril of mud-colored brown hair out of my eyes.

"I almost punched Eddie when Julie asked if I would mind moving. If I would be *willing* to give up my apartment." I heave out a breath, which takes more effort than it should, the anxiety still tight in my belly. "I had to tell him everything this morning when he found me sleeping on the sofa in Julie's office. I hated it. He just smiled the entire time."

Julie is the regional manager of the chain of galleries and picture framing shops I work for, and Eddie is the area manager. Julie is as by the book as they come, and if she knew I used my key to come in here last night and camp out, I'd be at the unemployment office right now, not getting promoted.

There is a low thud starting in my temples as I tell her the rest. "Julie offered to put me up in the same hotel where Eddie is staying. That was so awkward. I panicked, said I had an aunt that lived near by just so I wouldn't have to stay in the same place as him. Good thing we get paid today, I will have to find someplace else and pay for it myself. I doubt it will be as nice as the Hampton Inn she offered." I wince when I slip my finger on a piece of wire and it jabs me with a pin prick.

Eddie is married, but he has already made it clear he would be more than happy to entertain Andrea on the side. Now he seems to be setting his eyes on me. He's a fifty-something, chain-smoking, cheating son-of-a-bitch, and my stomach turns every time he enters my personal space.

He walked in early this morning and found me asleep on the couch in Julie's office, snoring and drooling, dressed in a t-shirt, pink panties and nothing else. The contents of my duffel bag, which I usually keep in the car, were all over the floor of the office. Because, as of yesterday, I don't have anywhere to go. That one duffel bag is everything I own.

It's not even full.

"Your life sorta sucks right now, Cassie. I'm sorry I can't help. I've been camping out at my Aunt's house since Jimmy and I broke up. I get it. And losing your mom and Cherokee in the same month." Andrea drops her eyes and shoves her hands under her thighs. "I heard Eddie's wife left him too."

That doesn't surprise me. But my mind is on my own predicament.

My throat tightens, like there is an egg or baseball lodged in there, and my hand shakes a little as I wire the back of the picture and turn it back over to clean the glass one more time. Then I'll wrap it up for the customer and move on to the next one. I look down as I wipe the glass cleaner away, my reflection staring up at me with pity. Or is it contempt? I don't know what I feel right now. Even about myself.

The mention of Cherokee and Mom choke me up, and a burning tear drops onto the glass. I quickly wipe it away with my thumb, not wanting Andrea to see. Cherokee was my dog. That doesn't really describe him and his importance in my life, but he was a dog.

And, well, my mom was my mom.

She was the kind of mom you sang 'Proud Mary' into your hairbrushes together. She gave me enough boundaries to keep me safe but not so many I ever felt caged. She brought home purple hair dye one Christmas Eve. We were flat broke and I knew Santa would be flying right on by our house that year. So, with purple hair and a few strings of Christmas lights, she read Charles Dickens to me and we strung popcorn onto thread then draped it over the five-dollar tree she managed to bribe the guy at the corner tree lot to sell to her. It made Charlie Brown's tree look like the one outside of Rockefeller Center.

Later on, she gave me the wisdom that only someone who knows they're dying can give. She made me smile and she made me want to take care of her until the last day. Which I did.

She named me Chastity, but everyone calls me Cassie.

Her first breast cancer diagnosis came eight years ago, but the problems started long before that. Since Dad hightailed it out of our life when I was seven, Mom struggled to put food on our table. She had a small disability check from the federal government, and a paltry pension, but when she passed away there was no way I could catch up on the rent that was already behind.

As of approximately twenty-four hours ago, I'm homeless. I only have the possessions I managed to stuff into the duffel bag. Everything else is padlocked in the apartment until there is a court date to finalize the eviction in thirty days. If I don't come up with the back rent and court costs, I'll lose everything that's left inside.

My life is a suck hole right now – Andrea is on the nose as far as that goes. Hers isn't much better. She's got a nose for the wrong kind of men and it's landed her in a similar financial situation as myself.

“Well, maybe the move is good for you right now.” Andrea hops down from her seat on the table and digs for her phone in the back pocket of her perfectly fitted jeans.

“Yeah, except I have exactly seventy-two dollars in my checking account and that is not enough for an apartment. I'll have to find a crummy motel for a month until I get some paychecks saved, but then I still owe the back rent on the other place, and if I don't pay that then I lose everything. Mom's furniture, her jewelry, our photo albums. Everything.” I close my eyes and try to breathe.

The bell rings on the front door of the store, notifying us a new customer is in the shop, and someone is supposed to greet everyone that comes in. It's not my turn though, so I pivot on my heel and step forward to pull a long sheet of brown Kraft paper off the giant roll and wrap up the framed picture; it's a smiling family, wearing jeans and matching white button-down oxfords, all sitting far too randomly in a park somewhere.

Andrea shuffles off the other station and I try to stave off the weight of everything that is spinning around in my head. When she sneaks back up behind me it makes me jump a foot off the ground.

“You're up. He's back,” she whispers, japing a finger out toward the framing counter, and I screw up my face as I look at her, but she's just snickering.

“It's not my turn, I —” A sudden hot flash takes over as I look out to see the customer striding through the clean white walls and dark oak floor of the

gallery. I'm too young for hot flashes, but it's an affliction I've developed over the last couple months. They are directly related to one person. The one I'm looking at right now.

I look out toward the front counter and my breath catches in my throat, my stomach doing an Olympic gymnastics routine.

"When are you two just going to get to it?" Andrea gives me a wicked smile and picks up my calculator and pen, handing them to me.

"He's not interested in me like that." The hot flash has my palms sweating, and red blotches form on my neck and chest.

"The hell he isn't."

"He's just polite. It's just business."

"What about the wine he brings you? That doesn't look like business. And the way he looks at you. He spends *two hours* here talking to you every time he comes in." She sighs dramatically as she looks out to see the man she's nicknamed "Hulkerson" closing in on the long, custom-framing design counter toward the back of the store. "You've talked to him more in the time he's been coming here than you've talked to me in *two years*. He probably knows more about you than anyone. I listen when I go out there."

"Yes, like I said, he's polite and I am polite back."

"I don't see him being '*polite*' with any of the other staff here." She makes little air quotes as she says it. "And if you're not here when he comes in, he leaves. I mean, you're good at your job, but you're not *that* good. We're not talking brain surgery here. Besides, when I eavesdrop on your little *polite* business conversations, y'all ain't talking no business." She snaps her head back and forth as she says it. "I heard you telling him the names of your stuffed animals, for crissake. And he *was listening*."

"Shut up, it's not like that. He asks me a lot of questions and I just answer. He's nice, Andrea." I glare at her and my mouth is watering. "And, he says he likes what I pick out for the posters. He's just getting things done for the Wine Distributorship he owns, passing time. Once the building is done and decorated, he won't be back. He just wants everything to be consistent. Since I started with him, he just wants the same person. That's it."

I stifle my groan because she's right. At least about part of it.

From the first time I waited on him, I couldn't stop thinking about him. I'll never tell anyone how I laid in bed that first night after he'd come in the store and imagined him sitting there next to me. Then as time went on it was

more. Me wishing he would hold me in his lap. Read to me. Help me pick out my clothes. Even brush my hair and give me a bath. It still shocks me. The fantasies I have about this stranger who would want nothing to do with me in that way.

But that's not even the worst of it. I think about all of him. I wonder how he would feel as he pushed inside me. How he would look without his clothes. If all his dark facial hair is balanced out by more in other places. I've never fantasized about anyone before him. I've tried to masturbate when I think of him, but I can never quite get *there*.

With all the strange thoughts I've had about him, I've decided there must be something wrong with me. That part of me must be broken. I'm a deviant.

No, no one would understand the things that go through my mind, and I'll never tell.

Andrea turns toward me, lowering her voice. "Well, whatever. You can tell yourself all sorts of stories, but I know if it was me I'd be climbing that like a tree and swinging from every branch. That guy is a beast. And I bet he's got beast mode down low too. Have you Googled him?"

"No!" I snap at her. She knows better. The calculator and pen shake in my hand as I step toward the door out to the gallery floor.

"You're a technophobe. It's not natural at your age. Your phone is from the seventeenth century. I would be embarrassed to pull that thing out in public." Andrea mocks me by flipping open an invisible phone, bobbing her perfectly arched eyebrows.

I laugh and shake my head, shouldering open the door. "Shut up."

He's at the counter. I snap my eyes his way and he's looking back at me with those *eyes*.

Those eyes that remind me of black coffee. Sometime I think I even see steam rising off of them, they draw me in, make me warm and giddy. Just like a good Starbucks. Gah, I'm a mess.

Magnus Leonard.

He sets down a stack of posters on the long design counter out front and my menopause symptoms kick in again when he looks back to the door where I'm standing. "Technology is the root of all evil, Andrea. I've never 'Googled' someone in my life and I'm not starting now. And don't you dare, either." I point at her with a scowl. Part of the problem is even if I did have a computer, and internet and all those first world things, my spelling is so

crazy even Google would scratch its head. Not to mention it would take me so long to figure out what I was reading in the search results, it's just not worth it.

I gather my breath. If I'm honest, I know I'm the only one that he will let wait on him and for some reason it makes it harder to go out there.

My feet feel like they are encased in lead as I force them to lift and propel me forward. Heat is already radiating from my cheeks as I walk out of the back room and to the framing counter where he's standing, hands down in his pants pockets, chest as broad as a billboard. He's like a wall. His black t-shirt is stretched across his shoulders, like XXXL is still a bit too small, tapering down to a narrow waist where it's tucked perfectly into pressed, gun-metal-gray dress pants.

Whenever he comes in, whatever he's wearing, it looks like he just stepped out of the dry cleaner. Even his t-shirts are pressed and perfect. His onyx-colored hair looks freshly cut as well. Every time. He's got this GQ caveman vibe and I have to be honest, I've never had this kind of reaction to a man or a boy in my life. Must be some powerful pheromones he gives off.

Either that, or I'm having a stroke.

I've probably helped him frame at least a hundred wine posters already, but he just keeps bringing in more. He never asks the price, just tells me to pick out what I like and slips his black Amex into my hand.

Oh and there's the *wine*. He gives me two or three expensive bottles of wine every time he comes in. I don't have the heart to tell him I don't drink. He's clearly a wine connoisseur and I've never taken a sip of alcohol. Nor do I plan to. Been there, seen that, want no part of it in any way.

Besides, I'm pretty sure he's like some big deal. He owns this wine distributorship, but from what Andrea says, he used to own or be part of some big demolition company. Whenever she tries to tell me something about him I hush her and walk away. I don't know why, but I don't want to know.

But, from the bit she's managed to sneak through my defenses, apparently there is a lot of money in blowing things up. So, he's *him* and I'm... well, I'm *me*.

I'm homeless. And chubby. And dyslexic.

And homeless.

Did I mention homeless?

I'm surprised the 'L' on my forehead isn't visible from Mars.

I wish I could enjoy the wine he brings me. Sometimes I consider downing a bottle to lose myself for a while. But I won't do it.

My Dad drank. He had good reason, I guess. I don't remember a lot, but I remember enough. Mom said things were good with all of us in the early years. Then there was an accident at the steel mill where he worked. A furnace he was working on exploded and killed one of his co-workers. Mom said he never got over the guilt. She said he was never the same after that. She told me to marry someone kind, someone without a damaged past. It hurt her as much as it did Dad.

He disappeared one night when I was seven, but I still remember when he was drunk. The sweet and sour smell on his breath when he would lean down and yell right in my face for not picking up my room or not finishing my dinner. That was enough for me. I'm sure wine can be delicious, but I'm not going to find out.

Magnus has spent more here in a couple months than I make in a year.

"Hi." I gulp down my nerves as I come up behind the counter. Those Starbucks eyes following me like a painting in a haunted house. "Haven't you filled all those walls yet?" The inferno generating inside me makes trickles of sweat traverse slowly down the indent of my spine, only to be lovingly absorbed by the too-tight waistband of my skirt.

It took me a good year working here to be comfortable waiting on customers. But that seems to be a hat I can put on, as though I'm acting a part. I have to take my time taking names and information, but I have a system that helps hide the fact that I'm writing as slow as a second grader. And, I've got Andrea. She double checks everything for me as well.

"Hi Cassie." His voice turns my girl parts to molten lava.

From the first day he came in here, he and I seem to have had things to talk about, despite my antisocial streak. You would think with his imposing presence and form it would be the opposite, but I feel comfortable, like I can talk to him about anything. It's very strange for me.

I'm uncomfortable in general because it's conversation and socializing, and still somehow it's at least tolerable *with him* because he doesn't seem to expect anything. He asks me things about myself. And I answer. Truthfully, most of the time.

And then sometimes I ask him things. And when I do he answers. It's going on three months now, and we've managed to find out quite a bit about each other. I love listening to him. He seems so disciplined, so controlled

and sure. There's this twinkle behind those dark chocolate eyes that feels soft.

Talking to him is like listening to someone read a classic book. The words roll out of him with such ease yet each one is chosen perfectly. There is no filler. No posturing. He's sincere and honest and I can feel things while around him. Nice things. Comforting things.

I have a feeling there is a lot more going on inside that calm, controlled demeanor. But I don't delve too deep.

Because after all, he's him and I'm me.

I do my job as I try to keep from drooling and jumping across the counter and doing the things I read about in my books.

Oh and what about his name?

Magnus.

His name is seriously *Magnus*.

It couldn't be more fitting. I have to crane my neck to look up into his face when he's standing; falling upward into those stout-brown eyes, dark and clear.

And today, fire shoots up and down my spine when his full lips turn upward at the corners as I settle on the other side of the counter; his slightly crooked smile always looks a bit out of place, like he doesn't smile often enough. It pulls at his lips and reveals just a hint of white teeth. They're not perfectly straight, nor is his nose for that matter and I like that. I think his rough imperfections are exactly what makes him perfect.

"These are for you." He slides two bottles of wine toward me. "Did you enjoy the last two? The Bordeaux was from a particularly good year. Good Bordeaux is hard to come by these days." His voice rumbles out like a train from a tunnel, sweeping me along with its momentum so that I feel like I have to say something.

"Yes, it was...a good year," I mumble like an imbecile.

What the hell do I know about Bordeaux and years? Nothing, that's what. If you ask me about strawberry-flavored milk or what kinds of sprinkles taste best on top of a hot fudge sundae, then I'm your girl.

Blood rushes in my ears as I try to follow up with something less idiotic. "It was smooth."

What the heck? Smooth? I give up.

I drop my eyes to the table and start to measure the dimensions on the stack of posters, scribbling the numbers on the order forms. My face is so hot

it's about to go super nova, and I think my nipples just stabbed right through the fabric of my blouse.

Chapter Three

MAGNUS



She sees me as a monster. I can tell by the way her fingers shake and she tugs at her skirt whenever she waits on me.

Because in a way I am. A monster that is.

What's the weather like up there?

You beat up any grizzlies lately?

What's it like to lift a small car over your head?

The funny thing about the jokes is, the people who make them seem to think they are so very original. Like they're the first one to every make a joke about my size.

I'm sure if my IQ were displayed on my forehead, that wouldn't be such a joke.

Seems having a high IQ isn't as funny as having strikingly dominant physical features.

Humans baffle me.

She definitely baffles me. But in a good way. And the way she smells is unlike anything I've experienced before. Like purity and softness with a hint of cherry on top.

And that's one cherry I wish I could taste.

Maybe I am part bear like my mother had always said, because when I catch her scent a fury claws inside me. A raging, spitting, snarling urge to consume her. To protect her and show her the ways I would love her. Ways that make me think of things I'd never thought of before.

At the same time, I'm afraid I would break her. My cock would break her. My past would break her. She's so soft and I'm so hard.

My love would break her.

But then I would fix her.

Because I want that, too. I want to break her and then be the one that puts her back together. I can see it – *this*, us. Her coming to me. Asking me my advice, guiding her in this world, making sure she's safe, but then wanting everything good for her when she goes out to be successful without me. I don't know what this is that she's shaken loose inside me, but it's dark and perverse, and it only makes me think I may truly be a monster.

Not to mention, my face won't grace the cover of GQ anytime soon. I'm no pretty boy. A beauty like her would never want a Neanderthal like me. Besides, I my size and my crooked features weren't enough to drive her away, I'm too old for her.

I clear my throat and shake my legs out. Those thoughts are driving gallons of blood into my dick, and the last thing I want is to really scare her.

So I settle for just hovering around her, coming in here on the pretense of getting my posters framed. But sooner or later I'm going to run out of posters. And then I'm not sure what I'll do, because I can't imagine not having her in my life.

"So, same as usual? You just want me to pick out what I think looks best?" She shifts on her hip behind the counter and looks up to meet my eye. She has this way of widening her eyes when she looks up from under her lashes, like she's not sure I'm real.

I lick my lips. "Yes." Her body shifts and sways under her clothing as she moves, filling in the fabric with round softness. I like how she dresses. It's sweet, simple, never showing too much or being garish. Almost always skirts and simple dresses. Her favorite outfit is the one she's wearing today. A yellow skirt with some white lace at the bottom, a white blouse that she buttons to the top and a pair of red and white polka dot Keds with rainbow sparkling laces.

How do I know what her favorites are? Because I've been following her. Yes. Probably by the legal definition it's stalking.

Jesus, I'm so far gone I don't even recognize myself.

The groan that comes up from somewhere in my toes as I think about her makes me uncomfortable, and I swallow and look away just to regain some composure. I lose the fight and my eyes snap right back to her.

Her eyes flash up at me with a flicker of amusement. I want to light her face with a smile to match but I'm no comedian.

I need to say something. "So, how are you doing?" Stupid question. "I mean..." Around her, words become like calculus problems after a fifth of tequila. "I'm sorry. I'm trying to ask if you're doing okay. I mean, with your mom and Cherokee. I worry about you. You look like you need to eat. Are you eating okay?" She gives me a quizzical look; my questions have turned to something more paternal over the last few weeks and I can tell it puzzles her.

In the ninety-four days since I walked in here, she completely up ended my program. In that time, we've actually shared a lot about ourselves. Secured an unusual bond which for me builds with every passing day. I need to know everything about her life. I can't stop myself. I admit, I'm obsessed. And jealous as fuck. I nearly snap when anyone other male looks her way.

It wasn't more than a month after I'd been coming in I asked her what she did over the previous weekend. She mentioned she'd been out Friday night with the gal that works with her, Andrea. I immediately asked her where they went, who else they were with, what time she got home, who drove, if they were drinking. I bordered on fatherly interrogation. I felt it was my right. My obligation to know everything.

When she told me there was some jack-off that tried to follow her to the ladies' room, I jumped to my feet and from the way she startled at my sudden movement, I think I scared her. Her green eyes darkened and her bottom lip quivered for just a second. Thank Christ she quickly tagged onto her story that she'd managed to lose the guy and dragged Andrea out of there, because I was already imagining tracking the little fuck down and teaching him some manners.

Then, twenty-seven days ago, I stopped in just because I couldn't fight the urge to see her, to hear her voice. Usually I call first to make sure she's here, but I was in the neighborhood and had to come inside, my obsession getting the better of me. I keep a couple of posters in my trunk, just for such occasions.

Only, that day when I came in, the guy that must be the manager told me she would be gone for a week. I've seen him around and I don't like the vibe he gives off. His name's Eddie because I make it my business to know the names of the folks she works with. I don't like the way that he fucking looks at her. If I could eliminate him from her life I would, but that scares me because it only makes it that much clearer just what a psycho I've become for her.

The morning she was due back at work, I was at the front door when the shop opened, waiting. My heart broke when I saw her. Red-rimmed eyes, her usual, perfectly smooth hair was in a messy ponytail, her face hinted with gray instead of her usual peachy pink cheeks. Finally, I asked enough questions to demolish her barriers and she told me both her mom and dog had passed away within a few days of each other. I knew about her mom already; when they said she would be gone for a week I did some digging and found out why, but I didn't know about her dog. I mean I knew *about* her dog – she'd talked about him a lot– but to find out they'd both died so close together broke my heart.

I hated that I didn't know before.

It just made me want to protect her that much more. Now, today, I don't want to make the same mistakes. I'm asking her more than just how she's doing. I want to know how's she's *really* doing.

"Thanks." She blinks a few times, like she doesn't want to look at the world. "Yeah, I'm doing okay." Her words say one thing, but I see her eyes are saying something else. I want to know it all; I want to fix it all. I want to be the one she comes to with everything, good and bad. She takes a breath. "It hurts though. Still. A lot." The slightest tremble accents her words and my heart clenches.

Against my better judgment, I lean my massive torso over the counter, locking my elbows, and wait for her to look up. I've never dared come this close – I've never crossed this line.

But today I see she needs someone, and I want to be that someone. I love the way her hair curls under at the ends. It's the color of rich, strong coffee, with a sheen like hot milk. It makes my fingers twitch, aching to get tangled in it. The way her bangs sometimes catch on her long eyelashes when she looks up. The facets of her eyes, making me think of polished jade, rimmed with sparkling gold ribbon.

“If you need help with *anything*, ever, I want you to call me.” I draw back one hand to my back pocket, pinching one of my personal business cards out then slipping it across the counter.

I watch her trying to decide whether or not I’ve just crossed the creepy guy line or if I’m being sincere. From the way she’s so unsure around me, I imagine she’s fresh, pure, and untouched. Fuck knows. I can’t be sure. But if I were the praying kind, I’d pray for that. Because I want all her firsts to be mine. I want to own this fragile being in front of me. Own all of her experiences, her body, her heart, and her soul.

Then, I lower my head a few inches inhaling to the depths of my lungs. I swear to God I catch the hint of something else on her. A scent of arousal. I’m instantly hard. A fog of some primal instinct clouds my rational mind, and I reach out to cover her hand with one of mine.

For a second I forget where we are. I’m close to staggering, trying to control the need that shoots through me at the feel of her skin against mine. My cock is at full height, and if she catches sight of what I’ve got behind my zipper I’m going to get banned from this store for life with a restraining order against me.

No closer than your cock will allow, Mr. Leonard.

But in my fire-seared brain, something shakes loose. Her eyes are locked onto where my massive hand eclipses hers, and I lean in farther, filling myself with her scent until my lips come down to brush the silk of her hair.

She releases a gasp and I feel her body tense.

Thoughts of what her cunt looks like right now flicker like flames behind my eyes. I wonder if she’s wet for me. Is she bare or does she wear the same soft brown color down below? The fantasy fills my brain, making the world fall away. I’ve never been this close to her. All my fears about what I want to do to her explode. She’s so tiny and I have to fight for control.

I would hurt her.

And it would be beautiful.

“Angel, babygirl.” The words slip from my lips into where I’m now latched onto the top of her head. The brush of my lips turns into a kiss and I want more.

She retreats. Her head falling down an inch, then as quickly snaps upward, smacking my lips into my teeth.

“I’ll finish this up...” her voice shakes. I wince, but it’s my pride that’s hurt the most.

I fucking scared the shit out of her. What was I thinking? I don't know how to do this. I've never had what you would call a game, but with her I can't even think straight.

I manage to stand up and turn half sideways, thinking that may obscure her view of the size twelve tent in the front of my dress slacks. Since that first time she waited on me here, she's been the center of every thought passing through my brain. She's in my dreams, images of her legs spread for me. My hand on her ass, my cock in her mouth. The sounds she will make. *Fuck.*

Why the fuck did I go with boxers today? I need twelve pairs of compression shorts if I'm within a mile of her.

The blood is like a hurricane roaring in my ears, but I pick up on the whimper of her discomfort through the noise. I hate that I made her feel so awkward, so afraid of me. She's moving about like she doesn't know where to look, gathering up her pen and calculator. Making a half turn one way, then a quarter turn back.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean..." I manage.

Her hands are stabbing at the calculator as she turns. "I'll write it up. You can pick them up next Saturday."

That's *ten days*.

Ten days before I'll have a legitimate reason to come back. But I'll see her before then. The last five days I've forced myself to stay away from stalking her at her apartment. The landlord there caught on and I have to admit I questioned what the fuck I was doing.

It's not everyday you see a half-grizzly, half-human with one metal foot sneaking around behind the dumpster's and questioning anyone that comes within twenty feet of her bedroom window, so I've had to back off. It's been killing me not being closer. After the landlord threatened to call the cops, I took to driving around her block a few times a night, keeping a distance. Just checking on the lights in the apartment. Waiting until I saw them turn off. Wishing her sweet dreams and tucking her into bed in my own way.

The last two nights I've had business functions and a celebration dinner with Cindy and some of her employees. By the time I got to the apartment complex for my nightly drive by, all the windows were already dark.

I'll watch her come and go from the store too. Follow her to the animal shelter where she volunteers on Thursdays and after work on Sunday. I think I could sniff her out if need be. Her sweet scent, her kind smile, the

innocence she tries to hide. They call to me like a witch to the cross. I want her in ways I can't understand but my mind settles on the fact that maybe some things are just not meant to be.

She scurries toward the back room of the gallery nearly tripping and falling on her way. My heart pumps triple time as I walk toward the front door of the store; my vision darkens around the edges, and I have to grip the door frame as I leave. My fingers ache as the metal strains under the force. Because the last thing I want to do is leave. But I can't figure out how to stay.

I don't know how to do this.

The only word I need to hear from her is my name. And it's not Magnus. It's something even I don't understand. The word thrums in my brain like a dark primal drumbeat.

It's Daddy.

Chapter Four

CHASTITY



After my shift was over, I said goodbye to Andrea and hit the road north toward Belvedere and what I hope will be a new positive step in my life. No reason to stay around here tonight, so with a few extra bucks padding my wallet from Julie, I can manage a motel tonight. Andrea promises to come and see me soon, then quick hugs, and I'm off. Three hours away suddenly feels a lot farther as we muttered our goodbyes.

I turn the knob on the radio and I'm met with static. I punch at every button. Static.

Great, even the radio is giving up on me. In the silence, it's impossible to quiet the voices in my head as I drive. I try to fill the silence by singing the entire sound track to *The Little Mermaid* half the way to Belvedere, but I can't stop my mind from playing over and over the moment with Magnus today.

Yeah, *that* moment. The moment when he bent down and his lips kissed the top of my head. Like he was entitled. It was unlike any sensation I can describe.

My legs shook, my panties took a direct hit, but it was more than that. More than just lust. For a fleeting moment, I felt wildly connected to him, like he was somewhere I could be safe. And I wanted him to pick me up and carry me off, cradled against his bulk.

Tears sprang to my eyes when I got to the back room and I heard the bells on the door signaling his exit. Thank God no one saw, because I wouldn't know what to say.

And what he called me.

Angel. Babygirl.

Thank goodness I'm heading out of town today because I can't ever face him again.

I'm not sure why, but I can't.

And it's not fair because if I can't even bear to look at him then why do I see his face every time I close my eyes? I hear his voice; I feel his hand on me.

Imagine.

His fingers.

Inside me.

Stop. I shake my head and roll down the window of the Corolla, hoping the November wind will clear my mind.

He ran away too. So that confirms it – it was definitely a mistake. I must remind him of someone.

Could even be a daughter. He's probably got ten years on me at least. And I'm younger looking than my age, people often mistaking me for a teenager.

Maybe she died. His daughter.

Yes. That's it. I remind him of a daughter who died and that's why he acts that way. I am misreading all of this.

So why are my nipples like rocks at the mere thought of him? And why is there a near constant SOS throbbing between my legs? What is happening to me?

It's nearly 10:30 p.m. when I pull into the motel where I've made a reservation. I hop out of the car and stand at the counter until a twenty-something guy emerges from the back office, licking his fingers on one hand and staring down at his phone in the other.

"Help ya?" He doesn't look up. Customer service at \$19.99 a night isn't what it used to be.

"Yes, hi." I force a smile. I heard that's the way to make your voice friendly, put people at ease. "I have a reservation. Chastity Stewart."

He looks up slowly, mouth gaping, eyes less than focused. There is a hint of something in the air, and from the reddish slits that look back at me, it

doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out the smell wafting out from the back room from where he emerged.

"Reservation?" His gaping mouth becomes a goofy smile. "Haven't had one of those in a while." He chuckles and looks puzzled when I don't get the joke. "Guess you're not just reserving a room for an hour then? We have our one-hour special for \$9.99. No ID required." Another drawn out chuckle; he clearly finds himself very amusing.

Tears nearly burst from my eyes. This is what my life has come to. I wish my mom was here, right now, just to help me get through the next few minutes and tell me everything is going to be all right. But she isn't here, and I'm not sure everything is ever going to be all right. I rest my arms on the counter, try to avoid sniffing, and try to speak in an even tone that doesn't give away how lost I feel right now. "I'm renting it for the week." I grab the pen off the counter and swallow the lump in my throat.

He narrows his eyes at me with a lethargic look up and down, licking his teeth, then this grin spreads over his face and he nods. "Got it."

He shoves a blank information card in front of me. "Fill this out. If you're going to have a lot of people coming and going from your room," he winks and drags dirt-encrusted fingers through hair that hasn't seen shampoo for a while. He lowers his voice, leaning in as though we are sharing a secret. "Just watch out, the cops have been trolling us the last few days. Quota time, I guess. Couple girls went for a ride downtown last night. If you need any *supplies*, just let me know. I've got you covered." He nods at me with a knowing grin.

I clear my throat and struggle to fill out the card, taking my time just like my mom taught me when the letters start to dance. She never lost her patience with my reading and writing, made sure I was able to manage. Luckily, the clerk's sense of time is as wonky and he doesn't seem to notice it takes me a lot longer than it should to complete the simple registration.

When I jab the completed information card toward him, he snatches it from me. Then he wrestles to open up a drawer under the counter, mumbling something to himself.

He hands me the key. Not a key card, obviously. No, this is an actual brass key on one of those plastic ID rings with the room number. This is barely a step above the Bates Motel. Actually, I'm not even sure which I'd prefer.

We manage to finish our transaction without any more need for words, and I'm relieved. I don't know how most people do this, any of it. I find it so exhausting just trying to interact with people, never mind when those people remind me of everything I've lost.

With a sigh, I remind myself that tomorrow is a new day. Bigger paycheck next week. New town. Fresh start.

No more Magnus.

My heart skips a beat, and I can't decide if it's from relief or some twinge of grief. I think I will miss him. He made me feel special in an odd way. When he was there with me, I felt like all his attention was focused on me. I've never felt that before except from my mom.

Not even the stunning Andrea drew his eye, not once. It was like he didn't even see her when she would sashay by. And I've yet to see another male customer that could manage that.

It's not that I think I'm ugly, not that I honestly think there is a standard by which that should be judged. I'm just not much of anything. Average. Average hair, a little plump, plain face, quiet. I wouldn't know how to flirt if you held a flame thrower to my nose.

I'd spent so much time with mom in the last five years, if it weren't for Andrea I would have had no meaningful human contact at all.

Unless you count Magnus.

And part of me wants to count Magnus.

But the larger part of me doesn't because I'm not sure what is there to count.

I groan under my breath as I wiggle the key into the lock of room 112 and take in the stale scent of the brown carpet, damp-stained velvet accented wallpaper, and a general feeling of dread.

I perch on the end of the bed and stare at the square box of a TV, complete with foil wrapped antenna, certain that the faded floral comforter on the bed would never pass the body fluids black-light test.

So this is it. Home sweet home.

Chapter Five

MAGNUS



“Westwood Gallery called.” Cindy greets me with a smile as I step into the lobby of Renault Wines. She’s taking messages from the after hours’ voicemail at the front lobby reception desk. “Angela or Anita or something.” Cindy’s off-hand manner irritates me this morning.

It’s not even seven a.m. but we’re both the first ones here every day. This may not be my life’s work, but I’m happy to be helping my sister achieve her dream. She has a passion for wine, and since her second husband died two years ago from a brain tumor, she’s been slowly but surely rebuilding her life.

I’ve always had a deep paternal streak, a need to help and care for people. Animals too, for that matter. My sister has a good heart and hasn’t had the best of luck in life through no fault of her own. Her first marriage ended in a divorce from a cheating asshole who I made sure understood the error of his ways before he disappeared at my direction. So using my business skills and anything else I’ve got to help her get this little venture up and running has come at the perfect time for us both.

The hairs on my arms tingle when she says the gallery called. My dick also thickens and my balls jerk tight. The mere mention of the gallery name has me needing a cold shower, and it wasn’t even her that called.

I correct my sister. “Her name’s Andrea. What was the message?” I try to play it cool, but my sister’s got a line on me.

She smirks, picking up the piece of paper where she’s written down the message and regards it for a long moment before she speaks. “They called to say ‘why the hell don’t you just go and ask her out already?’ Or, I don’t know, marry her or whatever the hell the men in this family do on a first date. Dad had Mom roped in and at the church two weeks after he met her. What’s taking you so long? This has been going on for months. We don’t have any more wall space for all these posters you’re getting framed, Magnus. Don’t pretend. That day I went in there with you? You practically drooled all over yourself when she came out to wait on us. You’re gone for her, brother. Be a man and go get what you want.” She holds the paper out in my direction and raises an eyebrow. “What you deserve.”

I ignore her editorial. “What did they *actually* say?” I try to hide my annoyance.

She lets out a long breath and pinches her lips to the side before answering. “They said they have a question about your order. That’s all.”

“Fine.” My voice lowers, the simple thought of *my* Cassie sends me into a different state of mind. My dark desires for such a sweet young girl must be wrong, but on the other hand, I want everything good for her in this world. I want her every dream to come true and I want to be the one with her every step of the way.

“*Magnum.*” My sister’s voice pokes me out of my daydream with the nickname she knows I despise.

I tighten my lips and fill my chest with a deep breath, meeting her eyes without a word.

“You deserve to be happy. You can’t blame yourself forever. You dedicated your life to the business. What happened was an accident Magnus. A tragic accident. You think you have to suffer, that somehow it’s your duty. You haven’t been interested in a woman for so long I can’t even remember. And the last year...” She steps over to brush something off my shoulder then reaches up to swat my face with a playful smack. I raise my brow looking down. My little sister has attitude, that’s for certain. “Over the last year you’ve been the walking dead. Snap out of it. I see it in your eyes. The Leonard men don’t play around when it comes to their women; they see what they want and they go after it. I remember Dad even said he knew the first second he’d laid eyes on Mom. Said he never even been interested in

dating before her. He knew the right one would come along and he waited. You've waited long enough. You've suffered. Go be happy. Please."

When she looks up at me I pull her in for a quick side hug. Why I needed her words to push me I'm not sure. Her reminding me of mom and dad tipped the scales. Suddenly, it's like a switch goes off. The court case is settled, I'm done waiting. I make my way out the front door on my way to claim what I know is already mine.

My sweet Angel.

It's almost eight when I get there –they open at nine– and just the thought of her has my ears buzzing and blood flowing. After yesterday, after touching her for the first time, I've had a near constant erection.

When the door opens at the gallery at nine a.m., I'm waiting. When Andrea tells me Cassie is gone, I nearly stop breathing until she tells me where she is. She's been transferred. By 9:03, I'm back in my car, heading her way.

Chapter Six

CHASTITY



After a fitful night of near zero sleep, I came out to turn the key in the ignition of the Corolla. But any luck I had left officially ran out this morning, because the ole girl clicked and that was it. Swallowing my pride, I found the same clerk in the office and asked if there was anyone that could jump my car battery. Without looking up from his dog-eared issue of *Barely Legal*, he pointed to a corkboard on which there was a local bus schedule posted.

Great. Thanks for the help.

The bus stop is only two blocks down from the motel, which I guess you could say was a stroke of luck, but it sure doesn't feel like it. I got to the new store in time, but the day has had its own ups and downs.

Like I said, I like the job itself. But it's not my dream. I do it for the paycheck, and the bigger paycheck of an assistant manager is sorely needed right now. But I'm also sad because I can feel my dream of being a dog trainer or having my own shelter slipping further and further away. Animals have always made more sense to me than people, but growing that kind of business takes time and savings, neither of which I will have for a very long time. Probably never.

Eddie was already here when I arrived at nine and before long, we'd settled into the list of things on which he wants me trained. I've done most of the assistant manager duties from time to time back at the other shop, but

Eddie insists on going over every minute detail and rubbing up on me every chance he gets. Just when I'm about to run for the hills, he steps away, letting me fill my lungs with a cleansing breath. We've been working for a few hours but it feels like a week already. I'm so tense around him.

"Finish up the schedule for next week, then come and show it to me. I'll be in the office." He licks his lips and leans close enough I can smell the cigarette he'd just smoked outside, as strong as if he still had it in his mouth.

His lips are cracked and I have to fight back the urge to gag. Another lip lick and then he's gone.

I let out an audible breath. It's just us here at the moment. The store doesn't officially open for another few days and the thought of being here, alone, with Eddie... it's raising the hairs on my arms.

When I've got the employee schedule set, I grudgingly trudge back toward the office. It's near the back employee entrance and I can smell tobacco as I approach. Eddie's outside again, smoking another cigarette. Figures. We've left the door propped open a few inches with a brick because the safety keeps locking us in. He called the door guys, because it should be locked from the outside, but instead it seems to be locking from the inside. So, for not, it's the brick and the scent of his cigarette breaks.

I sit down in the seat in front of the desk and stare at the second hand on the wall clock until Eddie steps in a minute later, knocking the office door closed behind him. There is no one else here, so I'm not sure why we would need a closed door but my heart immediately sets to racing.

The inside of my lip is raw where I've been biting into it all morning. When he steps by me, brushing my knee as he goes, I try to sound confident. "Here, I think I've got it all covered. Even added a couple extra staff for the day before and day after we open, just in case." I hand him the iPad, showing him the electronic scheduling program all filled out.

Instead of taking a seat behind the desk, he steps to the front and half sits on the edge front of me, crossing his arms and spreading his legs farther apart than would seem comfortable.

He smacks his lips and gives me a grin that only crowds my breath in my throat. When he stares at me without another word, I set the iPad down on the edge of the desk, next to where he's leaning, and cross my ankles, pulling my knees tight.

"So..." I just want him to start talking and move us along to whatever is next.

“So. I saved your ass the other day, didn’t I?” He nods down at me.

The cut of his words and the way his nostrils flare does nothing to settle my nerves. Being in such a closed space with him isn’t my idea of a good time.

“Sorry?” I squeak, the confidence I’d mustered a second ago evaporates.

“With Julie. Covering for you. You could be more gracious you know.” He brings one hand to his mouth and circles his lips with two fingers.

“Thank you. I was in a bad situation; I didn’t think it through. I appreciate you not telling her.” I want to say fuck off and die because I’d already thanked him like a hundred times that day, but I keep it to myself.

“I’d think you would show me how grateful you were.”

I don’t want to know, but I know what he’s saying. Everything slows down. My body feels like stone, frozen in place. I can’t move. Then his hands go to his belt buckle and the bile in my throat is threatening to spill all over him.

“Uh...” I still can’t believe this is real. This doesn’t really happen, does it?

“You have a choice, honey. Keep your job, or I’ll get those pictures I took while you were sleeping over to Julie. I’ll admit that I tried to help you, that I didn’t want you to get in trouble, but I just couldn’t in good conscience let it go. Not when I found you here in the office on the computer downloading some highly inappropriate material. Naughty girl.” He smiles, and my stomach turns on itself.

I hear the click of the metal buckle, the rasp of the zipper.

“You’ve sucked a cock before, right? Of course you have, sweet face like yours.” His lips fall open and I see his tongue dance around in his wet mouth.

My power of speech leaves me and I desperately try to force the words to come out but they are stuck in my closing throat.

“No? Well, well, this will be fun for both of us. I’ll show you what to do, teach you how this works, because this is your new job security. When you’re done, maybe I’ll buy you lunch.”

Eddie wipes his tongue over his teeth with a sucking sound. I can’t feel my hands but I see they’re shaking, clutched in my lap. Sweat breaks on my forehead and under my arms. I can’t understand why I can’t move.

The image of my mother’s face comes to me. My father coming home drunk and needy. How she fought him off more times than a little girl should

remember.

Then, for some crazy reason, I think of Magnus.

Eddie's words smash around inside my head.

You've sucked a cock before.

No, I've never done anything like this before. I've never been touched by a man before. The only person that ever made me think I wanted to was Magnus, and in that second as I think of him and my mom, I shoot out of the chair, my back ram-rod straight. Not away from Eddie but toward him, the heels of both my palms smashing him in the center of his chest with all my might.

It's exactly the opposite of anything he'd been expecting, and it catches him off guard. He's stunned, off balance, his hands still down at the front of his pants. He struggles to right himself but the force of my unexpected assault topples him flat back onto the desk.

"Fucking bitch." He spits as his arms flail around to re-gain his balance, spilling his coffee mug and the iPad onto the floor.

"You're a jerk!" I scream, stomping my foot as hard as I can on top of his black loafer. "Suck your own stupid self!"

Even as the words come out, I realize I'm bad at this. I can't even insult someone properly.

I throw myself at the door of the office tugging it open and break into a half run down the short hallway toward the back door, my eyes burning as the first angry, desperate tear burns its way down my cheek. I hate feeling so alone. Being an adult sucks more and more as time goes on.

Outside the back door a cold gust catches me. My skirt flies up, my hair tangles in my face spinning it into my gaping mouth. I scratch at it, trying open it in front of my eyes. I need to see where to go, and then it dawns on me I have nowhere *to go*.

Nowhere to go.

I start to laugh and cry at the same time, my body shaking with cold and fear and desperation. This is my life; this is all I have left. Eddie knows he can screw me any way he wants and there isn't a thing I can do about it.

I can't even get a bus back to the roach motel. My purse is still inside and I have no money on me. Not that there is much more in my purse anyway. Seven dollars and sixteen cents, and that's only if you count the penny I found outside the motel this morning.

“Somebody help me.” I choke out the words as I stand in the back parking lot, spitting my hair out of my mouth while my brain spins inside my head. “I have no job, nowhere to live, no car, no family. Nothing.” I scream toward the sky no longer caring if anyone is watching or listening.

I’m still pinching the hair out of my eyes and off my wet cheeks when I hear the hum of a car engine moving closer. I’m standing, looking stupid in the middle of the parking lot. Whoever it is can go around me and leave me to my misery.

When I finally get my hair under control, the car engine is right behind me, it’s more a rumble than a hum now and I’m ready to spit nails and tell whomever happened across my path they picked the wrong gosh darn day to mess with me. I’ve got nothing to lose.

I’ve got nothing.

I flip my head around to see a black, vintage Charger, no more than a foot from me. The engine is vibrating the asphalt under my feet and I the heat is billowing from the chrome grill.

“You’ve got the whole parking lot!” I wave my hands around in an arc like a mad woman. “Go around me!” I yell and stomp, indicating all the empty space as I square my shoulders, my hands turning to fists at my sides. I know I look ridiculous, my righteous fury offset by my pink sweater and ruffled skirt not to mention the lime green ribbon that, until a minute ago, was tied neatly on top of my hair.

Any second I expect to hear Eddie’s voice as he comes out of the back door to taunt me. I know that somehow I have to get back in there to retrieve my purse if I want to ever leave this parking lot.

My madness turns inward and I spin away from the automobile, my right shoulder tightening up to meet my ear, my throat closing. The silent tears that stained my cheeks take a turn.

Biting my tongue, I do what I can to hold back the sobs that start somewhere in my toes and wrack my body until I can no longer fight them. The sounds that burst out of me here in the open air sound like every painful moment in my life balled into a fist and punched into my gut, the sound of it all coming out of me like a trapped animal.

I’m at the mercy of the clutching sobs and my vision is so blurred I put my hands out in front of me as I walk back toward the rear entrance of the store. Somehow I have to get my purse; I have to be strong enough to at least walk back in there.

If I have to fight him off again, so be it.

Chapter Seven

MAGNUS



I've been on the road for three hours to get here, and when I see her it's not what I'd hoped. I swear to God whoever made her cry is going to die.

I never want to see this again.

Never.

Fuck, my hands feel like they're going to tear the steering wheel apart like it's someone's throat.

She looks so lost, so alone standing out here in a parking lot in the cold, sobbing and shouting and scared. She looks scared. My heart is trying to burst out of my chest.

Something about touching her, whispering those words I've wanted to say to her for so long set me on a path that can't be stopped. I don't just want her.

I need her.

And as much as everyone would tell me I'm crazy, I know she needs me.

If I didn't know what my purpose in life was before, I do now.

To never let anyone make her cry again.

I spin the Charger into a parking spot, and try to calm myself for a second by revving the engine and twisting the wheel back and forth. I don't want her

to see me when I'm this angry, don't want her to be afraid of me. But someone is going to be afraid.

Someone is going to breathe their last breath if I have anything to do with it.

Nearly every day since I laid my eyes on her I've followed her. Shadowed her like some criminal. I had to have her in my life, even in such a distant manner. She didn't know I watched her, walked the perimeter around her apartment making sure no one was lurking.

She almost always looked content, coming and going, but deep inside my own self-loathing pounded. I called myself a coward because I couldn't step forward in her life. But I told myself it was for the best.

I mean, look at her. She's so small, so delicate; I want to care for her like the little girl that she is, want to be her Daddy, and keep her safe and loved. And then there's the other side of it – my gnawing need to consume her, my ideas of fucking her. The filth that plays over and over in my dreams with her at the center of every one.

None of this can be what she would want. Lurking is for the best because this obsession is dangerous, the dreams I have of her can't be normal.

A need like mine would surely only end up harming her. And I could not take that chance. I'd miscalculated on an important decision once before and look what happened. The loss of half my lower leg is nothing.

My mistake took the life of an innocent woman, and that is something no one could forgive. Least of all me. For a year I didn't know what would become of me. If at any moment I would be arrested. Branded a criminal. A murderer even. Yes, they say it was a mistake, but in my mind, a killer is a killer and I didn't want my shame to ever touch her.

But, something shook loose in me yesterday and I branded her with the name I've had for her for far too long. The name I call out every time I jerk off and cum with her in my every fantasy.

Angel.

I drove like a mad man, making it here in under three hours, and thank Christ I pulled up now. I throw myself out of the Charger, the metal that replaces my foot scrapes on the asphalt of the parking lot as I lurch forward, getting to the door just as her desperate hands find the handle.

She's shaking, and a fury bubbles up inside of me in an emotional intensity I've never experienced. I know now how a man can lose himself and kill with his bare hands.

“Who did this to you?” I force calm into my voice, but it still bursts out at a volume that startles her. She gasps and flips her head in my direction. I’m on her, my hands brushing her wind-blown hair from her face, my thumbs rubbing to erase the tears, because it hurts me too much to see them there.

“What are you doing here?” She makes no effort to remove my hands, not that she could.

My brow draws tight, the muscles in shoulders and back twitch and tighten uncomfortably. The sight of her sweet face in this much turmoil is hurting me.

“I’m here *for you*. Tell me. Tell me right fucking now. Who made you cry?”

She brings one hand to flutter over her mouth and nose, and a new torrent of tears seep from her eyes. They’re tears of relief. I feel it. She needed someone to be here for her. Well I’m here now, and I’m going to make someone pay.

“Are they in there?” I look toward the door, and I instinctively know I’m right. Whoever hurt her, they are inside that building, because I feel her resistance in the slight tightening of her lips. “Stay behind me.” It’s an order and when she follows my command without question, I fall in love with her even more.

I blink once at the word that just hit me in the chest like a canon shot.

Love. Is that what this is? I lock my jaw tight and shake it off, my inner conflicts need not be solved this moment.

I swing the door open and secure her hand in mine reaching behind me; it’s like a doll’s hand in mine. I want to pick her up and carry her wherever she needs to go. I want her sweetness to cover me and my mark to cover her.

I want to see her sweet lips dripping with my semen, and my cock clenched in those tiny hands while she looks up at me with awe in her eyes.

And the name she will come to know as her everything. *Daddy*.

“Where?” I ask on a growl as I turn to look over my shoulder. “Where?” I repeat, louder and that one word booms off the walls in the back hallway as we step in from the outer door.

“He was in the office.” The words are barely audible from her shaking lips but I see a spark in her eye and it only makes my need to be her champion more furious.

My chest constricts, rises and falls like a tidal wave as I try to soften my expression, arranging her gently against the wall just inside the back entrance.

“Listen to me.” I bite my bottom lip and put both my hands on her face. “What happened?” I lower my voice, my ears picking up any errant noise from down the hall.

I search her expression for clues. Her green eyes sparkle and dilate, and she looks down at her feet.

“I want to protect you. I want to help you. Please, let me. I have to do that.” My voice turns to a growl. “I need to know what happened here so that I can fix it.” The words grate as they come out. “You don’t understand. I have to fix it.” Her eyes widen at the desperation in my voice.

“My boss. He sort of...” I watch her eyelids close for a moment too long and I already know what she’s going to say. I can feel it pushing at my temples, and everything turns red. “He wanted me to suck —”

I push two fingers over her lips, because I can’t hear the next words. A shockwave of pain reverberates through me and if she says anything more right now I think I would die.

“Don’t move.” I grit the words out between my teeth.

I lean down, my hands gripping the sides of her head harder than I should, willing my strength to make everything in her life better. I bring my mouth down, kiss the crown of her head and turn on my heel toward the shuffling I hear coming from the office a few feet away.

“Chastity?” An irritated male voice barks and the grizzly roars to life between my ears. Four more steps and I meet him inside the office doorway. “Is that you—” Those are the last words the fucker gets out before his jaw and my knuckles are introduced.

My other hand juts forward and clutches his windpipe. My nerves sizzle and my jaw aches as I grind my teeth. The thought of anyone else touching her, anyone else expecting her to touch them, turns off any parts of the civilized Magnus.

I want to see blood, hear bones cracking; I want to hear him beg for his life.

I want to hear him apologize for hurting her. I want him to realize she is forever out of his reach. Because she belongs to me. And no one will ever get through me.

My gaze sharpens, I know this asshole from the other store. His eyes are bulging from his skull and his hands slap with a feeble attempt to pull mine from around his throat.

I shift my shoulders, pulling him around me to slam him into the wall, his feet barely touching the ground. My hatred for this man is matched by my hatred for myself.

Why did I wait?

Why didn't I take care of her sooner?

I let this happen, and that is going to haunt me. Because she's my responsibility. I've known that since the moment I saw her, and I hate that I was so self obsessed. My own turmoil and past kept me from her and led to her getting hurt.

"I could kill you." I spit the words into his face, tightening my grip and turning his head to the left against the wall with a thud.

"Magnus—" Angel's voice cuts through my rage. "Don't, please, just take me away from here. If you do this, you can't be here for me."

No other voice but hers could reason with me right now.

I drop the piece of human filth like a lead weight, not caring if the fall breaks him. He crashes to the floor, knocking over a waste basket and landing forward on his face, blood streaming in a long string from the gash on his lip.

"You don't deserve to live." I kick the spilled garbage over him but it's her I need to care for right now.

My Angel turns her lips upward and then sticks her tongue out at the lump of flesh on the floor.

"You wanna take a shot?" I can't help it – she looks so fucking cute staring him down with me at her back.

"Naw. I think you covered it."

A relieved smile breaks out on her lips, like finally she knows she's going to be safe, and it's so damn beautiful. She just made me her bitch. My cock is diamond hard, but at least today I wore armor, two layers of *Under Armor*, and it's still barely enough to trap my dick so it won't scare anyone within a hundred yards.

"Come here." I lean down and I can't help myself. I have to pick her up. She gives me a quizzical stare for just a moment, but she's light as a feather, and when she opens her legs and wraps them around my waist, I know what it means to love someone more than yourself.

By most people's standards I barely know her, but I know what's mine and I will protect her and love her until the last breath I take.

I start to lead us toward the back door as she brings her hands to the back of my neck.

"Wait." Her eyes go wide and my heart sinks. "My purse. It's in the office. On the floor." The sparkle in her eyes turns dark, her fear returning for a moment. She doesn't yet realize that I am her shield against anything and anyone that could harm her from here on out.

I'm at the office door again in three huge strides keeping her tight against my chest.

She clings to me, her sweet warm breath floating next to my ear and bolts of dangerous sexual energy ripple through my body. "That's Eddie."

"Um hum," I grunt, giving him the stink eye. He's managed to get himself on all fours and that's exactly where a bitch like him belongs. "Don't get up. You stay right down there until we're out that back door. And if you ever do anything to hurt her again, I'm going to tear out your throat with my teeth. And that includes you thinking you should call the cops. Trust me, you don't want to do that."

"Fuck you. I'll call the fucking cops and you'll be banged up right where you belong, motherfucker." Eddie manages to rise to his knees. His bravado is only half-cocked but I can't believe he's even this brave.

"You want to call them?" I step forward and watch him flinch. "Sure, you could. But you and I both know that's not in your best interests, don't we?" Eddie's eyes narrow as he grabs a handful of napkins from the top of the desk and wipes the bloody saliva from his chin.

"Magnus, please can we go?" Angel's hands squeeze my shoulders, making me sigh even through my anger.

"I know you, I know everything. You're like an open book." I wag my finger at him. "Why'd your wife leave you, Eddie? Huh? Maybe we should call her and find out." I taunt him. His eyes are wide, glancing between Cassie's face and mine.

I know it must look fucking bizarre how I'm carrying her like a doll on my hip, but it's the most perfect spot and I don't give a shit what anyone thinks. Least of all him.

He licks his lips and falls back on his heels. His chest deflates a bit and he stares at the wall. Anyone that was around her, I did some digging and

made sure I knew who they were, and this piece of shit has some background that would not work in his favor if he called the police.

“That’s what I thought.”

I turn to gather Angel a little higher on my hip. Her eyes are darting from me to Eddie, then back as I secure her.

“We’re done here.” Three steps and we are on our way out the office door. And that’s when Eddie barks at us from behind.

“You’re not safe with him, Chastity. Maybe you should find out who *he* is. The things *he*’s done!”

A knot tightens inside me as I step up the pace of our retreat. Angel is quiet by my side, but Eddie’s last words scratch in the back of my brain.



We’re in the car and I’m having a very hard time not pulling her over to me and tearing her clothes off. The need that courses through me cannot be contained much longer, and if the way she allowed me to carry her out of that place was any indication, the months of subtle cues and clues about who we are and how we feel about each other simply needs to be unearthed once and for all.

“I guess I’m out of a job.” Angel’s got her hands in her lap and I love that she looks over at me when she says it.

The energy is charged; the inside of the car nearly vibrates in the space between us. The way she’s clasping one hand inside the other, then releasing and doing it again tells me she’s feeling it too.

“Do you really want that job?” I ask.

I want her in my bed, in my house, so that I can take care of her every want, need, and desire, and I’m fairly sure this job will get in the way of my plans. But if she loves it, then I’ll make it right and have a chat with Eddie to be damn sure she is not only secure in her job but that he finds himself new employment elsewhere. Because if she wants to go back to work, I get it, but there is no fucking way that jagoff is going within ten miles of her ever again.

“I don’t mind it. And I have bills to pay. And it could be worse.” She brushes her hands across her forehead, then fusses with the neckline of her rose pink sweater. The way the buttons down the front strain over the swell of her tits has my mouth watering to taste them.

“Okay. Then you don’t work there anymore. You don’t have bills to pay; you don’t need to worry about that now.”

I slip the key into the ignition and roar the Charger to life. I can see her nipples pressing out from the clinging pink fabric and I can’t deny how badly I want to suck those nipples hard and full until my mouth is stuffed with her. I want her innocence around me, and I want to make her filthy with every depraved fantasy I’ve had for the last three months.

I want the world to see the sweet, naive girl, but behind my doors I want her completely at my mercy. Available and greedy for me as I am for her.

“But—”

“Stop.” I turn to her with a harder voice than intended, but suddenly all the waiting has come to a peak and I don’t just want to start at the beginning with her. I put the car into reverse, thinking of where I want to take her.

I don’t want a date. I want a life. And I want it now, with her. “We’ll talk about that later.” I reach over and draw her hand away from her neck where she can’t seem to stop fidgeting.

Her eyes fall from mine, looking everywhere but my direction. I press on the gas, the car inching backwards out of the parking space.

“I want to take you to my family’s house on Lake Sherwood. It’s only twenty minutes from here. Let’s go there and talk. I want to know so much more about you. I want to know everything about you. Would you like that?”

I want to jump right over the impatient, self-conscious beginnings of this and straight into showing her what her new place in the world will be. With me eating her pussy or her between my legs with either her hand or her mouth on my cock.

I want to move her in, but I’ll hold back. Because I have to, for her sake.

“Sure. This has been a very strange day.” The soft giggle that falls from her sweet lips tightens my chest and thickens my cock until it can barely be contained.

“I know things have been bad for you today, Angel, but I hope they’re also starting to become good. Because this is quickly becoming the best day I’ve had in as long as I can remember.”

Her hesitant, sweet smile lights up my heart and I swear her shoulders quiver as she starts to laugh, the tension of what’s just happened starting to ease. When I give her fingers a little squeeze and she returns the same, I feel like the world has become a more beautiful place. There’s fucking rainbows

and unicorns dancing around in my head. Maybe that's fucking crazy but it's true.

I reach my left hand across my body to put the Charger in drive because I refuse to let go of her hand. As I ease the car forward, I hear the soft sigh that tumbles from her ripe, glazed lips and I imagine what sounds she will make the first time my tongue slips inside her cunt.

Hell, I'm almost afraid of the sounds *I* will fucking make the first time I get my mouth on her innocence. I know a lot of people think I'm half animal already, and fuck, maybe I am because the thought of her flavor as it spreads over my tongue has rumbles and growls already surfacing from some primal part of me I've never known before.

The sound of her happiness is my muse. It's more beautiful than anything I've heard before and it makes me wonder what I will do when I hear her cum for the first time. It may just be what kills me.

We're at the back of the parking lot when she draws our entwined fingers over onto her thigh, hiking up the hem of her skirt a little. I'm not even sure she knows why she's doing it, but I do. As she exposes the warm, silky skin, my ability to concentrate on driving gives out.

I aim the car into the furthest back corner of the lot, where huge oak trees overhang, nearly covering us, then I put it back in park and release her fingers from mine. The windows are nicely tinted as well, so I'm sure no one will be able to see. I'm greedy to feel her flesh under my palm. Even now my fingers are tightening on the inside of her thigh, and I just wish I were kissing her there.

"Why are we stopping?"

"Because, Angel, I can't wait. There are things I can't stop thinking about, things I want to do to you, and I'm afraid I will drive us off the road if I don't get some relief. I can't stop thinking of how your cunt will taste, how your tongue will feel inside my mouth, and that's just the beginning." I search her face, almost shocked at the honesty and vulgarity of my own words. I fully expect her to smack my hand away. But somehow I know it won't matter. What's mine is mine, and sooner or later she will come to understand.

But my Angel has a surprise up her sleeve for me.

"Why aren't you kissing me then?" She pushes my hand another two inches up her silky skin, turning her body my way, and my mind goes blank.

For the space of a single breath, my life is focused on those beautiful words, and I can hear my blood pumping in my ears. A single sentence, but it means the universe to me.

You've never seen such a giant man move so quickly.

Chapter Eight

MAGNUS



I cover her with my mouth, with my body, grappling with her tiny limbs, pulling her into my chest as one hand reaches down to lay the seat back a few inches. I want her to stay here for eternity.

She lets out a little whistling, whispering moan when my lips touch hers. They are even softer than I ever imagined in all my fantasies. Her flavor is like springtime and honey, with a dash of dynamite.

Hesitation doesn't even have any meaning for me any more. That first kiss wasn't soft, it was greedy and selfish. Too many days have gone by with just dreams of her, and I'm not a patient man.

My tongue slices between her full lips. My movements are harsh, delving deep on the first stroke so she has no doubt I'm here to claim what's mine and I intend to be here again and again. I don't want her to doubt what I'm feeling; I need her to know how deep down she's touched me, how many of my dreams she's starred in. All of them, in fact. I imagine her sharing every moment with me, and in my mind's eye I see how good it could be.

I wish I could have saved all the moments in my life before this one, all the moments from hers as well, so we could share them together for the rest of our lives.

My massive hands easily circle her tiny neck, arching her head back as my eyes engulf her, tugging her so close I feel the softness of her tits against

the rock hard wall of my pectoral muscles. The poke of her hard nipples only searing her into me more than the moment before.

Our kiss is a fury. I expected this tiny girl to shrink from me. I'm a massive, hairy beast next to her silky softness. She doesn't just pull at my shirt, but fists the fabric as though our kiss is her lifeline, and my heart feels like it's going to burst in my chest.

My own desire is multiplied a thousand fold because she wants me back. Because that is really all I need to know.

We both take a shaking breath, our lips still softly connected. My forehead touching hers for a long moment, stringing together all the memories I've made with her in my dreams, realizing they'd felt nothing close to the real thing.

"Jesus, Angel." The words catch as I release them and I have to clear my throat to continue. "You feel better than every dream I've had about you. Please, kiss me again, right now before I die." My cock aches as she leans forward.

Now it's teeth and tongues and wet lips sliding back and forth as my cock cries out in pain, bending in half inside my layers of compression shorts. I want her mouth, her hand, her tits and her cunt. I want them all on me and around me in all the filthy, depraved ways I've ever dreamed.

The car is not the best place for this, but she's giving me no indication that she wants anything different. She is as rapt as I am in this moment.

My fingers move with purpose; a fleeting thought about being gentle crashes around in my mind, but that is not possible. I glide up her thigh until I feel the fabric between her legs, pressing my knuckles into the little valley of her panties, seeking out the heat that is rising from her, needing to feel the soaking wetness that will soon be on my tongue.

I break the kiss, both of us panting as her eyes waver for a moment, trying to find focus. Her head tilts back to rest against the window. Her eyes catch mine with a flash of sparkling green lust, and I want to memorize everything about his moment... I need her to look at me like this every time, in awe as I give her what she needs and craves.

"Open your legs." It comes out as a growling order, not a request. "Wider," I grunt, and I watch her mouth fall open as she draws in a deep breath and her thighs spread under my touch. "There are so many things I want to do to you, Angel, do you know that? Can you feel that?"

I push my hand harder between her legs, demanding she open for me, my fist banging forward watching her beautiful, jade-green eyes widen as she nods her head ever so slightly.

“This is so strange, isn’t it?” she manages to stutter as I shift my knuckles into the wet dent of her panties. I feel her juices soaking through and it sends a shock wave up my arm, raising the beast already fighting to get out.

“I don’t think it’s strange, Angel. Does this feel strange?” My fingers slip between the elastic and the edge of her upper thigh, into that sensitive spot, and her precious lips open further to steal halting breaths, each of which I bend closer to capture with my mouth.

I tease, running my fingers now up and down the circle of elastic, tempting myself to delve, to feel what will soon be mine, the flavor of her perfection. I can tell from the bit I’m managed to feel, she’s smooth and hairless. I close the remaining space between her face and mind, my tongue jutting out to trace around the outline of her open lips. Then spinning inside her mouth as her hands come up to rest on my cheeks with a devilish grip.

Each second of this first time I’m committing to memory so I can play it over and over in my head until the last moments of my life. Nothing has ever been so poignant, so destined. I’m a virgin in so many ways just like her, because nothing and no one has ever come close to making me feel these kinds of soul-reaching sensations.

She tenses as my fingers jerk her panties to the side. I tug and pull until the cotton fabric hangs loose, the elastic giving up and showing me what I crave. The scent of her arousal hits me like a cannon ball to my nuts and I have to pull back from our kiss and bite my lip to keep from emptying them right there.

“Baby, you’re so wet.” It’s like Christmas and New Years and every fucking win I could ever imagine. “So fucking wet. That’s the most beautiful thing I’ve ever felt, Angel. You’re wet for me.” My voice throttles up a notch at the thought that I did this to her, and my dick threatens to erupt, my balls throb, wanting to spread my seed all over her. Mouth, tits, pussy and ass. I’ve imagined them all. And I’m about to embark on what will be the first of an endless number of moments like this.

“You have that effect on me.” She tugs at my neck and giggles as my fingers brush her naked outer lips, sending my mind into a spin. “I’ve started bringing an extra pair of panties to work because of you.”

“Christ.” My voice trails off as I bring my forehead to rest on top of her head. It’s all too beautiful. Her words, her scent, the first moment my fingers slipped inside to feel the delicate flesh, sopping and silky on my calloused fingertips. “You have no idea how long I’ve dreamed about this. About us. It hurts to breathe around you I need you so bad.”

I drop one hand to grip the front of my pants, showing her the effect she has on me.

“I guess we were slow starters.” Her breathless words come out in a little burst as I quit the teasing and discover her clit and stroke it between two fingers. “Oh my god.”

I’ve pleased myself while imagining this moment so many times, it takes a Herculean effort not to spill right now. My balls are practically inside my body, drawn up so tight and ready to heave, but I want the one thing I’ve needed the most. Two things. I need her to know who I am, and I need her to cum.

“Magnus.” The thrust of my fingers low into her soaking heat elicits my name with a gasp. Her eyes pop open and she leans back to look into my face.

“You’ll always be safe with me, Angel. You know that already, don’t you?”

She nods, her breaths coming faster as I slip one finger just inside her opening, the pad of my thumb strumming over her clit in time with her breathing. She shifts her soft rump as she settles back farther on the passenger seat, my body in the center of the space, thanking Christ I hadn’t ever switched out the front bench for bucket seats. She lowers another inch on the slick vinyl, giving me better access. Her eyes flutter open and closed as I play and gently glide a thick finger where her body gushes then hold it still.

“I’m going to be someone to you. Only to you. And you are someone only to me. I want you to agree to trust me, let me show you who we can be together. How this is not just our first moment. Our first moment began the day I stepped into that store and saw you. You know that’s right, don’t you? We’re not strangers; we’ve been together since then. You feel it too.”

I push my finger deeper, but I feel the resistance, the tightness. My chest constricts at the thought that she’s so pure, so innocent, and my skin turns to fire.

“Yes. That’s what I meant about it being so strange. God, that feels so good.” A soft giggle swells my heart. Her hands reach out to discover the hard tension covering my chest and opening herself more for me and I swallow hard at the perfection of it all.

Waves of her silky hair curl around her neck, a light green ribbon decorates her tossed hair, her eyes are barely focused and yet completely connected to mine. Her sweet scent and the wet folds of her cunt spin a potion more intoxicating than the strongest liquor. “Magnus—” She shudders, her face lax as one hand drops to my forearm and the other flails, uncertain of what to do.

I grab it and hold, entwining our fingers so I can feel her tighten, telling me everything I want to know.

“I want you to call me something other than Magnus, baby.” My breath comes faster, not knowing if she will understand. But nothing can stop me from my own frantic need to be this to her.

“What?” The single word sounds desperate, unsteady, and I let the pad of my thumb begin to circle the hard nub of her clit as it grows with its own greed. My middle finger gently pushes through her tight opening as fear rushes through me at the thought of my girth entering her here.

“Inside my head, I’ve been calling you ‘Angel’ ever since I met you. How did it feel when I said it out loud?”

“It felt...” Her voice drifts.

Her fingers tighten on mine as she adjusts her hips upward into my hand, her skirt gathering higher on her thighs, giving me a view of the pink, soaking heaven where my digits draw out her essence. “It felt right,” she says. “I mean, it seemed odd, but it still felt right. Like that was my name.” Her words are slow, sounding drunk and the blush on her cheeks makes the pain of my need rise another notch.

“That is your name. And you want to know my name?” I drive my finger upward slightly into her center not enough to breach her, but enough to feel the tightness gather around. She stills with an inward gasp, her body freezes, then shakes around me, her eyes dropping to slits, her brow tightening. Then her eyes pop open again to catch mine as I stare at her, rapt in what is about to be the pinnacle moment of my life.

“Your name?” She repeats. She’s lost as I move my fingers inside her, working her sugar sweet clit and tracing a circle at her opening as her legs begin to quiver, telling me what I want to know.

“My name, the name you will call me from now on, whenever we are alone.” I enter her more, not enough to tear, but enough to finger fuck the cunt that’s pulling me inside. Faster and faster I work. She drenches my hand, her fingers tightening like a vise onto mine. “When you cum, you will say this name. Do you understand?” My core tightens like a cable that’s ready to snap.

“Yes, oh God, *oh my God.*” Her pelvis rises to meet my finger – the insides of her thighs squeeze together, trapping me between them like the naughty girl I need her to be.

“Daddy.” I seeth the word between my teeth. “I want you to thank Daddy for this, right now.” I pound my finger inside her, farther than I first intended, searching and pressing at the front wall.

I release her hand from my other, breaking away. I’m unable to stop myself; I fall down down, my shoulders hitting her open thighs and diving between her legs with my mouth wide, grinding my tongue into her raised clit. Kissing and losing myself in the spill of her juice flowing over my lips.

Her hands flail around my head, fingertips digging in, trying to find her center. She is shaking like an earthquake. I suck her cherry clit between my lips and the first of her flavor soaks my mouth, my throat, all the way down into my soul as she cums with my name on her lips.

My real name.

“*Daddy—*”

She drenches me as I push my face nearly inside her with sounds that shake the car. I swallow every drop, my fingers feeling the undulations of her climax. My lips feel her heat rise as I lower my face to suck more of her release. It fills my mouth, sliding down my greedy throat with my nose on her swollen nub.

I want every bit of her to touch my face, drenching my beard. She brands me with her orgasm, and she is completely mine.

My own deep growl is muffled by the way her cunt vibrates across the scratch of my facial hair. I imagine carrying her around with me like this, her scent and juices on me for the rest of the day, and my already painful erection begs for relief.

Her whimpers turn to a painful yelp when I work back up and set my teeth, gentle but firm, over her now elongated clit. Knowing I’m the one that did this to her is like nothing I’ve ever felt. The way her body soaked me, the sounds she made, the name I’ve longed to hear dripping from her lips, all of it

meshed into a moment unlike any other in my lifetime. She takes my breath away in the common moments, but right now I don't think I will ever breathe again.

Her panties hang in stretched and torn shreds against her thigh, her lower lips glistening, and I imagine the slick white of my cum dripping from that opening. It enrages me and turns my cock to metal at the same time.

I want my seed inside her, filling her, so no part of her cunt is untouched by me. And I want it to stay inside of her. If I had my way, I'd fuck her standing on her head so no part of me would ever find an exit. I'm as baffled by these feelings as I am by how quickly she's taken to who I am, to who I've demanded to be to her now because I can see from the way she's looking at me, she needs me in the same way I need her.

I grunt as I make my way up her body, splaying her legs with my hips, scooping an arm around her waist and shifting our position. I'm in the passenger seat here, with her on my lap, facing me as I work her hips toward the front of the car, her back resting against the dashboard. The softness of her ass half dangling between my spread knees.

The red on her cheeks continues to ride; heated blood ripens her face from her climax, as I reach a hand to the back of her neck and pull her face to mine. I need her to taste herself on me; I need to share that with her and hear her breath as my tongue slides into her mouth with her flavor still fresh.

My beard is soaking with her as our lips come together in a mutual moan, tongues gathering to each other in a binding kiss before I guide her to sit back up, the taut fabric of her sweater doing nothing to hide the peaks of her ample tits that I now need between my teeth.

“Open your sweater.” I lean back and watch. I want her to do it for me, I need her to give herself to me.

Willingly.

Gratefully.

Because I need it all from her.

And in return, I will give her more.

“I'm going to live in that sweet cunt of yours, Angel.” I meet her eyes. “You need to know that is mine now. And I will do as I wish with what's mine.”

Her fingers quiver slightly as she opens the buttons without question, her eyes fluttering from my face down to watch the unsteady movements of her hands. The slight tremble in her fingers and the bend of her mouth tells me

she's a bit unsure. Maybe even embarrassed and I love it. Her innocence only makes me crave her more.

“Get those tits in my mouth. They're mine now too, and I need to mark what's mine, babygirl. I want you to remember this moment. I want you to look down tomorrow and remember I was here.”

I wrap my hands around her waist, tightening because I need to control her in this and so many other ways. I need her to give me that control, to be at my will, at my whim, while I use her and care for her like my most prized and valuable possession.

Possession.

It is what she must be to me now.

Possessed by me.

“Yes, Daddy.” I lose my fucking mind when she gives me that gift.

Dragging open the front of the soft pink, fuzzy fabric and snapping open the front clasp of her bra, she spills out the softest, most brilliant tits God ever put on this earth.

“Feed me,” I growl and I see her swallow. She's still a bit insecure, but it only winds her farther into my heart. I need her a little unsteady, needy for my words and my help.

She leans forward, tentative, scooping one hand under the weight of her magnificent left tit. She's full, lush, and it's the most beautiful thing to see her nipple harden as she brings it to my lips, her own mouth parted, waiting for whatever comes next.

My mouth fills with her, my tongue tracing and memorizing all those little bumps, the raised center, the warm rim. She arches when I hollow my cheeks and draw her over my tongue and near to the back of my throat, increasing the suction until it is impossible to draw more of her into my mouth.

These are my own thoughts, but they're shocking. I need so much from her, so quickly, but I've been told that is the way in our family. A helpless tradition, a dominant trait that comes straight out of family legend, stretching as far back as the Viking ancestors. Men that don't just choose a woman, but a mate. A one and only that seems to call to them from some time before time was measured. I didn't believe it until now, didn't expect it, but now it's happening to me. These new feelings slamming around inside me like a wrecking ball. Smashing the old me and creating a new one in its wake of devastation.

I need to cum like my heart needs to beat. I want to lift those soft hips up, release my cock, and set her on top while I play and suck at her tits, but I won't take her like that, not here.

Not in a car.

I'm still doubtful her body can take what I have.

I am not a virgin, but with more than a decade between me and any other female contact, I'm feeling like one. When I release her softness from my mouth with a sucking pop, a shuddering breath raises her chest. I drop one of my hands into my right front pocket, digging around for my knife while she looks at me with a question in her eyes.

"What are you doing?" She half smiles and giggles as I grope in my pocket with a grunt.

"You'll see. Unbuckle my belt, Angel. You need to get your hands on my cock and give me some relief. Otherwise when we get back to my place, you may need to speed dial 911."

My fingers finds the slick pearl handle deep in my pocket. As I pull the folded knife free, I see hesitation in her eyes.

"That wasn't a suggestion when I said to get your hands on my cock babe." I raise my eyebrows and give her a stern look. "Get your hands down here and get my pants open," I grunt and she moves with purpose, but I also see a flash of fear come across her sweet face. "You're okay, babygirl. You're just going to hand-fuck me while I make you cum again. Then we're heading back to my place. It's your turn to make Daddy cum, babe."

Those last few words send a blush to her cheeks, but her tongue comes out to dance on her lower lip. I grip an iron fist around the knife as she does as she's told, managing to unbuckle my belt, which is no small task. The hard-on from Hades is making enough upward pressure to hold it tight.

No one has ever made me want to talk like this, so overt and vulgar. But with her, it almost feels beautiful, like it's part of how I love her.

Love her.

That's the Viking thing again because no one in their right mind would think someone like me could fall in love at first sight. But I did, that first moment, I knew it and now I'm sorry I fought it for this long. The primal need clutches around my throat, but as sweet as she looks, as accepting as she is, I still need her to understand it all.

"Angel." I nearly stutter as her hands graze across the tip of my cock under the layers of fabric, sending a jolt of energy over my skin.

“What?” Her eyes dart from my face down to her hands. Even under the layers of compression shorts, she can feel what’s there and I love the anticipation in her eyes.

“Just... I want you to understand why you’re going to call me Daddy. I need you to be clear.” I see her swallow, and the tension seems to release in her shoulders as her hands slip the leather out of the buckle.

“Okay.” A dance of her tongue again, coupled with a devilish little smile, has my balls tingling. Her hands are so close; I may not get a chance for her to get her hands on me before I explode.

“I’ve never felt like this. Not with anyone. When I saw you the first time in the store, I don’t know, something switched inside of me. I’m not fucking kidding, it felt like a click or a twinge in my heart. And this whole new world I wanted to live with you became so clear.” I keep the knife in one hand and bring the other to graze down her hair, stroking it behind her ear, then resting my hand on her bare leg.

“I remember that day, too. When you walked in and I saw you. I mean, you do draw a girl’s eye, you know. But it felt different. I figured it was just bad tacos or something.”

I squeeze her leg and can’t help the laugh that comes out.

She laughs too, and her grin is adorable. “I don’t think that was it though. I didn’t have tacos that day.” She shifts a little on my knees and I move my hand to push her skirt higher. I want a view of her pussy; I need it in my line of sight. Her panties are in shreds and she shimmies her body a few inches instinctively giving me a better view, and I fall for her more every second. Her pussy owns my ass, and it’s the best feeling in the world.

“I’m not going to be your boyfriend.” My eyes search her face for a moment and my voice falls to a low timbre. “That’s not enough. I’m not going to date you like a boy. I need you in a way I didn’t understand before. I need you to come to me. I need to take care of every fucking thing in your life. I want you to come to me first with everything beautiful and good that happens in your life. And I require you to come to me with everything that is bad or sad or challenging for you as well. I want it all; every time your head hurts, I want to know. Every time you feel insecure or need someone to tell you how gorgeous you are, that’s me. I’m also not going to hesitate to turn that sweet ass over my knee when you need it. When you act up, I’m going to be there with what you need. I’m also going to fuck you like I own you, and you’re going to thank me every time.”

My little monologue has her eyes wide, and thank fuck she's holding back a crooked smile and not trying to find a way out of the car as fast as possible.

“Can I take you out now? *Daddy?*”

Holy fuck.

“Yes, baby, get those pants open. What's taking you so long?”

Heat is coming from between her open legs, sending me wild. I lean forward and sink my teeth into the side of her tit, harder than I intend, but it only makes her hands move faster, with a greater purpose. I'm falling into some new place. A new purpose wells in my heart and it's like coming home.

She jerks down my zipper, only to see the clear outline of my monster cock pushing painfully outward against the slick fabric underneath. I see the confusion and a hint of disappointment, which only drives me into more fury. Her wanting me is the pinnacle of everything. It's clear there is no easy way for her to free the beast from the layers of nylon that hold me tight. Her bottom lip pokes out and I ease her troubled mind with a flash of the knife and a few words.

“I got this.”

I open my hand and release the blade from the pocket knife. I have to let go of her leg to pull the fabric up, giving it some space between where I'm about to slice through it and my throbbing erection. In one movement, I slip the blade under the elastic band and the sound of tearing nylon fills the space between us.

Her lips open into a disbelieving oval when I put the blade away, and I throw the sheathed knife on the floor of the car. Then I take both my hands and jerk the fabric open further, tearing it enough that my cock leaps up and out like it's on a spring.

“Oh my god.” Her face turns near white, then a smile ignites across her lips. “It's, like—Oh my god.”

“I know babe. It's big. Now get your hands on it,” I order.

I swoop my fingers down between her legs and she lets out a yelp as I work the wet folds, drawing out her slick juice, then bringing it up to her lips, painting it on her.

“This is you on my fingers, Angel. I'm going to put it on me, where you belong, and then you're going to hand fuck me until you and I cum together.”

I press my slick fingers to her lips and she opens. The sensation of her accepting warmth, her tongue wrapping around my fingers, sends drops of pre-cum out of the slit of my dick. It's already covered in the slick, clear liquid and it's about as primed as a powder keg.

"Good girl." I drop my fingers from her mouth and take her hand in mine, rubbing the slick liquid into her palm. Then I spread it up and down over the helmet of my iron-hard dick.

"Now, you're going to make Daddy cum, Angel. I'm going to hold on as long as I can, because I need you to always cum first. But then it's your job to do what I tell you, do you understand?" The rumble of my voice is in contrast to the soft words, and I see the effect it has on her as her face brightens and the twinkle in her eyes tells me we are a match made in a heaven. It's just neither of us knew until we found each other.

I guide her hands to circle my fat shaft. Even both of them working together don't cover the real estate, but her eyes are flickering with lust and it catapults my own until my ears buzz and my toes curl.

"Like this." My single hand covers both of hers, and my mind races around with all the ways I want to fuck her, my heart ricocheting around in my chest, making it hard as fuck to breathe.

I take my free hand and find her clit with the pad of my thumb then my forefinger on the other side, feeling her shudder as I give it a slight pinch, then roam up and through her wetness, moving in time with her as I show her how I want her to fist my meat.

"Faster, a little faster. Tighter. Right there, when you go over the head, squeeze like this."

There is no sense of self consciousness, no embarrassment; she is shaking as I flick and finger her, teasing her while I teach her how to please me. And please me she does.

"Like this?" Her breathy words nearly draw up my balls and end it right there, but I want more, I want it longer, and I want my cum sprayed on her skin while she soaks my palm with hers.

She's got my cock mastered already, so I drop my guiding hand from hers. My other hand still involved in discovering every petal and soft texture of her amazing pussy.

When she grips down tight on my iron hard on, I lean my head back with a deep groan. I can't keep my eyes open, it feels so fucking good. My fingers feel her heat, her wetness, and I draw my hand out for a moment. I bring her

glorious flavor to my lips, my tongue swirling around cleaning all her essence from my digits.

I let her hands work, mine reaching up to press against the ceiling of the car, bracing myself because it feels like she's pumping my soul from my body.

I open my mouth and lick her sweet liquid candy from my fingers for a long moment, sighing like a growling beast as her hands work my thick, bone-hard dick.

"So good."

With that I'm back with her. I'm not going to last much longer. She's too sweet, too good, too beautiful.

And too mine.

I shift my hips and bang her thighs open with my hand, I want her wide.

"Put your feet up here." I grab at her ankles, pushing her legs apart and setting her feet on the car seat, spreading them on either side of my legs.

"Scoot down, I want to see that pretty cunt when it cums. I want my cum on you there."

She strokes me, even and smooth, then fast and tight, varying her movements until my neck muscles tense with the effort of holding on. I finger her sensitive clit, a fingertip on each side, swirling and flicking. I drop my hand from the roof, swooping it down and I don't hesitate, shoving my middle finger into her tight hole, making her jerk and gasp.

I lock down every muscle. This is too good; I have to concentrate to keep my climax from erupting. But I want us to cum together so I have to hold on.

"Angel, babygirl, cum for Daddy." My need is banked in my throat, making the words lurch out in halted grunts, but her eyes catch fire at the sound.

"Oh my god." She's close, I hear the tension building in her voice.

"*Cum for Daddy.*" Once more with fingers and voice, and she gushes in my hand. I throb at the feeling of it, sticky and warm, and cum tips the head of my cock; I'm right there with her, but she needs to fall first. Always her first.

She's tight as hell as I work my single crooked finger inside her cunt. Then her hands clamp down on my cock as her pussy spasms against my fingers.

"*God. Fuck—*" I lose my vision for a moment, but fight like a dog to get it back because I need to see her face when she goes off. "Cum, baby, for the

love of Christ.” I whimper like a damn kid and grind my fingers around her clit. “Kiss Daddy, right fucking now.”

My voice is harsh, but I need her to hear me. I lean forward, our lips connecting with force as I consume her scream, as I roar my own release right back into our desperate tongue war. Wet heat covers my hand, and my dick explodes in an orgasm harder and longer than I thought could be possible, dimming my vision as the car swirls around me. My balls jerk and draw up so tight, I wonder if I may never see them again.

I don't ever want to leave this moment, it's everything I'd wished for and so much more. But even with that thought, I'm awestruck at the idea of how my cock will feel as I slip inside her for the first time. I may just never come back from that. If her little hand job has me this gone, God only knows what will happen when I push inside her and give her my cum for the first time.

I break our kiss. My hands staying steady on her and in her, her body still shivering, and her little aftershock sounds are sweet magic to my ears. When she finally steadies, I look down to see my cum in glistening white rivers over her fingers, drops and streaks on her thighs, a few streams even decorating the glistening, unfolded outer lips of her cunt.

“I've never cum that much in my life.” The look on her face tells me she wasn't expecting what just happened either. My mom used to tell me I had a hollow leg, except she thought I filled it with food, now I know better.

It's stunning to see me on her there. I've imagined it, fantasized about it in the dark of my bedroom, in the morning, in the shower, on my deck, everywhere. In such a short time she's colored my dreams in so many ways and so many times. And the reality is infinitely better than the fantasy.

This is more brilliant than any masterpiece. Her open wet cunt with my fingers inside her, and my cum dripping over her clit. Her hands are still clutched around my cock like she can't imagine letting go.

“You will be mine forever, you know that, Angel? You're never getting away.” I lean forward, kissing the tips of both her quivering nipples as her eyes try to focus. “You love to cum for me, don't you?”

“Yes.” She breathes it out as if it's a huge relief to agree with a matching nod of her head.

“Good. Because you will only cum for me. You will do what I say. No one else will ever have you like this. You are Daddy's girl — my sweet Angel. Daddy's best girl.”

Chapter Nine

CHASTITY



My hand doesn't feel like it's mine anymore.

Magnus has claimed it as his own.

My eyes drift from the angular, jutting brow, lower down to where the black of his beard starts, just under his cheekbone in front of his ear. I like how it moves under his chin when he pulls his bottom lip between his teeth, bites it then releases, over and over. I shiver when I think of the hair I saw around the base of his cock earlier.

He's stunning. I'm fascinated by his throat. The way his Adam's apple moves with every swallow. I imagine how it must have looked when his mouth was fixed between my legs, moving against my secret folds.

Licking.

Swallowing.

Licking more.

Sucking and swallowing.

Gahhhhhh! My inner thighs are still warm from the burn of his beard. My insides quiver and go taut as Magnus brings my hand to his lips. He holds my fingers there, not kissing, just breathing with my hand there, his other hand resting on the worn, brown leather of the steering wheel.

His face is a mask of tension. I feel it coming off of him and see it in the set of his head. The tightening in his jaw muscle.

“Are you okay?” My belly flips and flutters. He’s been too quiet since we left the motel after picking up my stuff.

“Not really.” The timbre in his voice tells me his answer is honest.

“Did I do something wrong?” I have this new sensation of being utterly truthful with this giant hulk of a man who’s taken me into himself, bit by bit in microscopic increments, over the last few months.

He’s taken me, then he’s spilled it all out and shaken me up, spun all my desires into a beautiful package and given it back to me with sensations that make my head light. My heart is filled with truth, connected now to someone else, a feeling like nothing I’ve ever known.

“You didn’t do anything wrong,” he says reassuring me. “I did. I let you stay in a place like that.” Even under the thick darkness of his beard I could see his jaw tense, and hear it pop.

After we went inside the motel room to get my duffel and the few clothes I hung up, Magnus said he would arrange to have the Corolla towed to a mechanic near the cabin tomorrow. But I could tell as soon as we pulled up to the dump where I slept last night, as soon as he took a breath so deep his jacket tightened across his chest, that he wasn’t happy.

Now, he’s driving but he’s still holding his breath. He’s alternating holding the steering wheel and gripping his nose and mouth. I had to shake his shoulders to get him to draw in oxygen.

“You didn’t *let* me stay there. It was all I could afford right now. I told you that. It’s not your fault.”

“I know what you told me, but it’s still on me. I wasted too much of our time. All the time from the day I met you, and during that time you lost your mother, your dog, your home. Where the fuck was I while that was going on?”

Magnus smacks the steering wheel with the heel of his palm. He then grips onto the circle, spinning us onto the interstate, heading north toward Lake Sherwood. I should be nervous doing this, going to his house when no one else knows where I’ll be. But like I said, I feel safe with him. Safer than I have since Mom got sick. In a way I feel safer than I ever have.

After a few minutes, I see his jaw muscles relax and an uneven breath leaves his lips.

“I’m sorry. I’m sorry, I lost my temper with myself, but I never will with you. I don’t ever want you to be frightened of me. Let’s stop and eat. I

know a great restaurant about another hour from here. I want to eat with you baby. How does that sound?”

“I could eat.” I agree with an excited lip bite. It’s been a while since I had a real meal and I’m surprised how great it sounds.

For the next hour, he’d peppered me with questions. Nothing too serious and by the time we pulled off to eat, he seems more relaxed. He pulls the Charger in front of this bistro type place with linen on the tables and a wine selection that Magnus had said is one of the best in the country.

After the restaurant, he opened my door and buckled me in before closing the door. We ride in silence for a few minutes until I can’t stand it.

A chuckle sneaks out. Then another, despite knowing he’s still a bit unnerved from our conversation about the wine he’s been bringing me for months. At the restaurant, after he opened the door and we stepped inside, a hostess had seated us, the sommelier had come over and Magnus started talking wine with him, finally ordering us a bottle.

When the tuxedoed man came back with Magnus’s selection, uncorked the bottle and poured some in my glass, my face went hot with embarrassment. How was I going to tell Magnus that I had not tasted a single one of the hundred or so bottles that he’d given me?

Then, when the man held the bottle out over Magnus’s glass ready to pour, his huge hand came down to cover it, shaking his head.

It turns out neither of us drink. That’s right, neither of us. Not only had I never tasted any of the wine he’d sent me, but he hadn’t either. Nor any before that.

He kissed me right there in the restaurant as the sommelier cleared my glass and snapped his fingers for the staff to bring us two ice waters in wine glasses.

My chuckle draws his attention. He looks at me with a question in his dark eyes. “You still laughing about the wine?” He asks with his own crooked smile. When he does that, his left eye closes slightly and the scar just underneath almost disappears.

“Yes.” I smile as he finally brings my hand down, resting it along with his on my leg, sending a shiver down to my toes. Every touch ripples over my skin, and I wonder for a moment if it will always be that way, or if those kinds of things pass.

I can’t image it not being like that with him. I feel like we’ve been together so long. Like there is some other part of us that knew each other

before. Another life, maybe, or just two souls that share things about themselves without words. A high-speed conduit that communicated differently than most people. It has to be something, because I barely blinked when he said we were going to his place on the lake.

Our place. He says it's going to be ours. That thought makes me realize we are moving at warp speed but for some reason, I am happy to be here for the fast ride.

“The wine thing was funny. But don't lie to me. From now on, complete honesty, okay? I can't take anything less than all of you, and when you lie you keep parts of yourself from me. I can't have that. I want it all. I need it.”

“And what if I do? Lie I mean.”

He lifts and pats our combined hands onto my knee, then rubs them up and down my leg.

A little chuckle escapes his lips. “Then, Angel, your ass will be upturned and as red as a good Bordeaux.”

Magnus looks behind us, thumps on the accelerator and the Charger lurches forward so fast my head bounces on the headrest.

“In a hurry?”

“That pussy's not going to fuck itself.” His words pool heat between my legs as he breaks into a smile that melts me into a puddle.

After a moment, I realize I can't stop thinking about being put over his knee. That image making my nipples draw tight and tenses the muscles inside my girl parts. “So, what other transgressions might beget me a spot over your knee?”

“Not doing as you're told.” He glances over, then back at the road, his smile fading a bit but not disappearing. “If I tell you to do something, I've thought it through. Whatever it is, it will be what's best for you. You are from this day forward my primary responsibility, and I take that seriously. Test me as you wish, you will never see me angry. I will be your greatest hero, and sometimes that might get you what you think you want, but I assure you, babygirl, Daddy will always give you what you need.”

My stomach feels like it just took a ride on a tilt-a-whirl. Whenever he says that word my legs press together and muscles I didn't know I had tighten up.

The Charger is pristine, like he just drove it straight off the lot. The dashboard gleams as the sun comes through my window and onto the black

vinyl. The car is as pressed and clean as Magnus himself, and that's a bigger turn on that I ever expected.

I am lulled into an odd sense of connection and security at the sound of his gruff, smooth voice. His choice of words. The meaning behind them. My girl parts are still tingling, and yet I'm more peaceful than I've been in months. Maybe even years.

"I don't know what to say." That's complete honesty. I want everything he said, and for once, I'm not over thinking it. I'm following this feeling he's bringing out inside me. I have no questions.

More than anything, I want to be curled into his lap, his hands in my hair, his lips wherever he wishes to put them. A shiver courses down my back at that thought. The way he attacked me with his mouth was unlike anything I could imagine.

"Then say nothing right now. But I want you to know, your voice matters to me. More than anything, so when you do have something to say, I want to hear it. But..." He pauses, turning and tipping his chin lower so he can look at me from under his brow. "Sassy little girls are punished." He turns back to the road. "So, keep that in mind."

My heart leaps as he takes the exit ramp toward Denning just outside of Lake Sherwood, the resort area where my mom and I used to go sometimes.

Magnus said we were going to his family's cabin out here. The idea of sleeping with a view of the lake is wonderful, and I'm hoping that a nap is in my near future, because my eyelids seem to be weighted.

By the time we pull into the gravel driveway, I'm close to dozing off, but even through my tiredness I can't help but take in how magnificent it all is. This was not what I expected at all. I guess it is technically a cabin because it's all timber-framed and log built. But, wow, it's not a little family cabin on a lake. It's as big as the apartment building where I used to live with my mom. The front entry arch is up so high I have to turn my head to the side and look out the front windshield, straining to see the peak.

Then, as Magnus pulls the car to a stop at the entrance, I get a little taste of magic. Taking a deep breath, I let out a little moan. The sun is dipping down, and I can see the glass surface of the lake reflecting the tangerine orb as it hits the horizon and ignites in pink and orange.

"That's so beautiful." I let out the sleepy words, a little embarrassed that I'm nearly falling asleep on our first official date. But I'm that comfortable. More so than I can remember for so far back.

“No.” He lifts the back of my hand to his lips. “That’s a sunset. You’re beautiful.”

Magnus is out of the car and at my door in what seems to be a single stride, swifter than a man of his size should be. He takes my hand and gently pulls me out of the car.

“This is your family’s place?”

“Yep. See over there?” He wraps an arm around my shoulders, turning me to face a small, dark-wood cottage, sitting closer to the lake. “That’s the place my mom and dad bought. We used to spend summers here, and holidays too. Ice skated on the lake at Christmas and learned to sail in the summer.”

There is a wistful distance in his voice, a fondness tipped with sadness.

“Good memories.”

“Very good. I still miss my parents. Dad died around twelve years ago and Mom five years later. She just didn’t have the heart to go on without him. They were…” He trails off and hugs me tighter. I press my face into his leather jacket. His scent is there along with the leather, fresh but masculine, and I draw a deep breath as he continues. “...great parents. And they loved each other every day. Dad always said he fell in love with my mom in one second.”

We start toward the front door of the huge cabin when Magnus stops dead, and my heart clenches. Maybe thinking of his parents makes this seem trivial.

“I don’t want you going back to that job.”

His voice takes on an authority that shifts parts inside my body.

“There are these things called bills.” My reply meets his authority with a bit more snot than I intended, but it’s true. It must be nice to be all set up with family money, but most of us aren’t that lucky. I have not had the same experience. “Not everyone has a silver spoon to call on when they need it.” I top off my snot with that snark, and I half expect Magnus to let me go from his embrace, but instead he pulls me closer.

“Baby,” he says, turning to look down. “You’re tired. But when you’re ready, in the next few days, I want to know all about these ‘bills’ you have to pay. I don’t think you quite grasp the idea yet. Daddy wants everything from you. That includes your bills. But I get it, this is new to you; you will come to understand. For now, as much as I’d like to get you inside and continue

what we started in the car, you need rest. And it's my job to give you what you need."

He has to bend far down to plant a kiss on the top of my head, and as much as I want to tell him I am perfectly capable of paying my own bills and that he should mind his own beeswax, a bigger part of me literally swoons.

I think I should tell him that, but if I'm being honest, and it seems he's bringing the honest out in me, it would be really nice to be so taken care of. I don't care about a lot of money, never have. Mom taught me to live in the moment. In the experiences of life, not in things. But bills still had to be paid, so I learned to persevere with my reading. I love my books because they let me have experiences I couldn't have any other way. I've traveled, I've been in love, I've witnessed murders and horrible family drama. It may take me ten times longer than most to get through my books, but I love them just the same.

But right now, I want to experience this. And this is real.

We blend together as we walk under the entryway. Magnus has a key ready and the deadbolt makes a thump that matches what my heart is doing inside my chest.

It's actually beating everywhere. I can feel the thumps in my fingertips and my throat, inside my ears. My blood has never felt so dang alive before.

He carefully unhinges our bodies, and I feel a little loss when the weight of his long arm leaves me. But his hands come to my shoulders, turning me to face him. He has to look down nearly as much as I have to look up, and I'm immediately lost in those seductive, dark eyes, wondering if he's holding back something dangerous. Half hoping.

"I've never brought anyone here. I've never had a woman in my home anywhere. Something always told me to wait. That there would be someone special, and I should save things."

There is a softness in his voice that makes me shrink underneath his intense gaze.

"I know what you mean. I've saved things too."

He tilts his head and blinks, then as quickly as I see the question in his eyes it's replaced by a twinkle and a knowing.

"You saved yourself for me, Angel. And I will never tarnish that gift. But first, let's get you inside, draw you a bath and get you to bed."

I purse my lips together at the sound of that and he shakes his head slightly.

“Sleep now, princess. What did I tell you? Daddy knows best, little girl. And you need sleep. Trust me. Once I’m inside that sweet pussy, I’m moving in, so you’re going to need your rest.”

I sigh and nod. Something tells me he’s right.

Chapter Ten

MAGNUS



It's going to be a miracle if I can keep my dick under control for the next few hours. I'm standing at the edge of the bed, having tucked the billowing white linen around her twice already, and already I can see I've created a monster. Who knew this sweet, shy little Angel I've craved for months would turn the tables on me.

"Please." Her pout has a direct line of communication with my dick. That word is going to be my undoing.

"Stay under the covers, Angel. Don't make Daddy turn you over and give you your first spanking."

She flings the covers back and I know she's testing me, but that's fine. That's what I'm here for, to show her I will never waver. What I say, I mean, and eventually that will be the safety net she counts on.

My cock twitches higher in my pants. I tossed out the cut open underwear, and now I'm regretting my decision to go commando because she's eyeing the near constant tent in the front of my pants like a lioness stalking her prey.

"I said please. Didn't you say you would give me what I need?"

She pushes her still damp hair from her face, jumps up and kneels in the center of the bed. The white sheets, crisp and clean, make all her soft pinkness even more intoxicating. Thank Christ I made her put on my t-shirt

to sleep in. I wanted something on her that smelled like me. It drapes down over her legs and hangs on her like a doll dressed in life-size clothes.

“Yep, and I *will* give you what you need. But that’s not always the same as what you *want*.”

From the twinkle in her green eyes and the way she bites down on her lower lip, she’s fairly sure she’s got the drop on me. Poor baby’s going to learn eventually; I’ve been preparing my entire life for her and my resolve will not falter.

“Where do you want me?” She wiggles higher on the bed, half leaning down on one elbow.

This is our family place, but it’s really mine. I built it a few years back, paid for it myself, thinking I would use it for just a weekend house, but while I was working I barely spent any time here. Now, I’m rethinking that. It’s got twelve acres, a barn, the old cabin. The grounds are partially wooded, and I’m starting to see visions of a future here much different than I’d ever expected.

“I’ll show you where I want you, Angel.”

“Oooo.” Her mouth makes my dick drip cum inside my pants as I imagine those lips making that sound as she takes my monster between them. “Goody. I knew you’d give in.”

But there’s something else in store for her at the moment.

“Daddy means what he says. I’m not fucking you until tomorrow, princess, and I’ve had about enough of you pushing the issue.”

“Sure he does. But I bet I can get what I want if I really try.” She bats her eyelashes and I can see from the determined look in her eye that she’s not clear on just who’s in charge here. I’m not a boy, easily swayed by her flirtation. I’m a man, and she will soon learn the difference.

I take a seat on the edge of the bed. Sure, I want to spread her and sink my dick home and stay there for about a week. But once we cross that line, her pussy’s going to take over and it will take every ounce of my control to not let her sweet heat call the shots. I need to set some boundaries right now.

I reach over to her, looping my hand down and around her waist, and she gives me a playful grin. I ate her cunt and she came twice after her bath, and she wants the main event, but I already told her that wouldn’t be happening tonight. Our first time is planned out to the last detail; I want it perfect for her. And she’s tired. It’s been a long crazy day, but she thinks just a wink

and a peek at her shiny pussy is going to weaken my will. She needs to learn that when I say so, playtime's over.

“Come here, princess. Time for a lesson on who's in charge.”

A flash of realization finally spreads over face, her cheeks still warm from the bath turn deep crimson just as I've got her around the waist, and she begins a futile struggle. My power is no match for her tiny, curvy body. I have no doubt she can be a firecracker, and I honestly look forward to all the ways I'm going to teach her just what being my precious little girl is going to mean.

“Ass up, princess.”

“Wait, what—”

Her arms flutter around a bit, but I've got her up and over my spread knees in about three seconds, pushing the t-shirt up to her waist. I look down and see a pair of *Beauty and the Beast* panties covering her full ass-cheeks, half riding up her crack and it feels like I just took a hard sucker punch to the gut. On a grunting prayer I regain my composure.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph those panties. I'm horrified at how turned on I am right now.

She must read my mind because she wiggles her ass and cranes her head around. “I stopped at the store on my way up here last night. They had them at the dollar store, a little treat for my job promotion. Do you like them?” She tilts her head, with a smirk on her face.

“Yes, very much. I like them so much, I'm going cum all over those sweet panties and stuff them in that sassy mouth of yours when I'm done.”

The sight of her ripe ass cheeks sends my mind spinning. Thinking of the day I will take her here as well. Fuck. I shift my hips under her torso as she starts trying to press her hands on my rock solid thigh in an effort to dislodge herself from her new position. But that's not happening.

I jerk the soft white fabric down until they catch on the crease below her ass cheeks and the first smack has her sucking in a breath that must go all the way to her toes.

For the next minute, it's two people lost inside the same new experience. Bodies tense, random words spilling out of open lips, heady breaths, and hands and arms gripping onto any part of the other they can find. The sound of my hand smacking on her flesh lights up even deeper, more primal parts of me.

“Next time, when I tell you how it’s going to be, don’t keep pushing the issue, babygirl. I mean what I say. You’ll get more than enough of my cock eventually, trust me on that.”

The next smack brings a yelp from her throat, but at that exact a moment her hands find my lower leg and hold on like a child. Her body softens and by the next swack, her ass comes up to meet my hand.

Soon, she’s melting over my legs, her sounds changing from painful to pleasurable, and I feel even closer to her than I have so far.

Her red ass is more than I can take, and I can’t resist sneaking a finger down into her crack, touching ever so gently at her back entrance, listening to the change in her breathing when I press.

“This will be my cock’s second home someday soon, little girl. Daddy’s dick is going to be in here before you know it. Would you like that? My cock in your ass?” The words rumble out of me, my finger ready to push inside, gently teasing her there with a spin around the puckered rim, but if I did that, I don’t think my resolve would hold.

“Uh huh.”

With that I pull her panties back up and over her crimson skin. I gather her, shaking, into my lap for a long hug. I’m shocked that I love the cuddles as much as the sex. Maybe more. Damn, this sweet girl has me by the short hairs, that’s for sure. When her breathing steadies, I lay her back on the bed so her legs are almost dangling off the edge, her cheeks plump and her lips shiny and open.

“Spread your legs and get those knees up, too.” I reach down and release my cock from my pants, stepping over so I’m centered between her knees. Her eyes light up at the sight, but I set her straight. “I told you I’m going to cum on those cock teasing panties, and that’s what I’m going to do. Then you’re going to put them in your mouth so you can taste us together while you fall asleep.”

My fist tightens around my diamond-hard shaft as she opens her legs. Her face reminds me of a kid on Christmas morning, her eyes nearly popping out of the sockets as she watches me pump my cock, aiming the head down. I’m already close, pre-cum making my hand glide easily up and down. My balls tingle, and a sensation like lightning hits me in my gut when Angel puts her index finger into her mouth and starts to suck.

“Jesus, fuck.” My head falls back and I bite the inside of my cheek so hard blood flows over my tongue.

That's it. My dick explodes with white jets of cream as I lean in to be sure it lands right where I imagine her sweet virgin body opens up. The cotton drips with strands of my cum as I grunt and lean down to lock one arm on the bed, next to her hip, so I don't fall on my face. When my orgasm lets me breathe again, I gather the last of my cream off the end of my dick with my fingers and smear it on her lips. I fight my still-hard cock back into my pants and zip up. Reaching down, I tug the panties down from her full hips, over her knees and off her ankles, leaving shining trails of cum on the insides of her legs.

"Now, up on those pillows, sweet girl." I hold the sticky panties in one hand while I swing the covers back over her.

"You're not really going to—"

I push the cum-soaked crotch of her panties between her sassy lips before she can finish her sentence. Her mouth is full and her eyes are smiling. She needs the comfort of knowing that when I say something is going to happen, it will.

"Now I have work to do and things to prepare for tomorrow."

Once I've tucked the comforter around her, her eyes are already nothing but tired slits. I lean down and kiss the parting of her hair. "Good night, my precious Angel."

Daddy loves you.

I'm thinking it, I'm just not sure she's ready to hear it. So I hold it in my heart for now. She points to her mouth, asking if she can say something, and as beautiful as she is with those cum-soaked panties in her mouth I have to nod.

"You can take them out if you need to tell me something, but then they go right back in."

She takes the fabric out, just far enough so she can speak.

"Okay. Where will you be? Will you come in to sleep with me?" Her eyes light up a little and she brings my heart right along for the ride. She replaces the fabric into her willing mouth.

"Yes, baby. I'll be here in a bit. I'm keeping my clothes on though because I'm only so strong."

Her giggle is like a good night kiss to my heart. I want to make her smile and laugh more than I want anything else for myself in this life.

Seeing her so innocent and relaxed makes me think of my twinge of disappointment when she told me she's on the birth control shot to ease some

of her symptoms from her endometriosis. Once she told me about her health issues, I settled comfortably with waiting. As much as I want to swell her with my seed, I think she needs her own time to be her little self. Her health is most important. The time will come. But for now, I'm here to take care of her. The babies will come soon enough.

I make my way to the bedroom door, and her breathing is already low and steady. She looks so small in the massive log bed, and my mind thunders with all the worries I have for her. I can see right now where the love my dad had for my mom came from.

The way he took care of her all makes sense now. He always said he worried about her even when she was happiest. Because he worried someday that she wouldn't be and everything he did was for her.

I get it, Dad, I get it.



After several hours of prep-work, I tiptoe back into the bedroom. I had to throw around some big tips to get what I needed here for the morning, but thankfully I'm a well-liked guy in town. Even when I had to call a couple shop owners at home, they were gracious and made sure I had everything I needed for my babygirl. Because I need to make sure tomorrow is perfect. I set up my usual dog sitter as well. Tinder and Leopold are at my other house and I have a service that comes twice every day I'm working to walk them and feed them. The housekeeper is there in the guesthouse as well spoiling them to death in the evenings when I work late. But I made sure to call in re-inforcements. One of the dog walkers is their favorite and I made her an offer she couldn't refuse, so she's taking them home with her for a few days while I spend my time with Angel.

My dogs are part of my family, and very soon Angel will meet them and we will all be together, but for the moment, I need it to be just us. I slip through the bedroom door as silent as I can manage.

I cover my nose and mouth to muffle the snort when I see how she is draped diagonally across the bed, my t-shirt pressed up under her tits and her arms wide over her head. The sex-soaked panties have fallen out of her mouth and are laying on the pillow half, stuck to her cheek. White flakes of my cum encircle her lips.

Her reckless abandon makes me happy. Not just happy, fucking joyful. So does the sight of her bare pussy. I want her this comfortable here in our home.

Because that's how it has to be. She's mine. In a pre-historic, caveman, drag-you-by-your-hair-then-love-you-until-you-can't-walk sort of way.

I slide into the closet, getting into a pair of boxers and clean jeans, discarding my clothes from the day in the hamper. I leave my chest bare; I want to feel her against me. Against my heart.

My better judgment tells me if I'm climbing in there with her, and expect to not ravage her before dawn, then I'm going to need to put on a suit of armor. But I make the sign of the cross and ask for strength instead.

I debate whether or not to take off my prosthetic. It's not comfortable enough to sleep in, although I'm not all that concerned about sleep. We haven't talked about it at all. My foot that is. Or lack thereof more accurately.

My heart sinks for a moment as I wonder if it will disgust her or make me less attractive to her. I may be her confident champion, a beast of a man that most people would think wouldn't let anyone's opinion unsettle him.

But that's not true. I care what she thinks of me. I want her as attracted to me as I am to her. I need that. With a deep breath, I sit down on the edge of the bed and undo the straps that hold the metal spring that serves as my ankle and foot in place. Then I remove the two layers of fabric and formed latex that cover the base of my lower leg. In the dark I can see the outline of the curve where it ends, just above where my ankle used to be.

I set it down on the floor next to the bed and shift my weight around trying not to disturb her.

It takes a few slow movements for me to shift her back up onto the pillows. I bundle her against me, and slip under the covers and she moans, flinging an arm around in high arc and practically knocking me out with an elbow shot to my temple. That girl has a swing on her, that's for sure, and I have to stifle a laugh. But she doesn't wake.

Another few shifts of our bodies and I'm spooning her like nobody's business. Who the fuck would have thought someone like me would know the word 'spooning,' let alone imagine that it would put this big stupid smile on my face.

I breathe her in, the cherry sweetness reminding me of what she's going to give me tomorrow. And what I'm going to give her.

My cock springs to life at the thought, but he will have to make do with some nice bum nuzzling from inside my jeans. For now. He won't have long to wait though, because by this time tomorrow night, my girl will not be able to walk on her own.



By six a.m., I've managed to get everything in order. I'm running on a couple hours of sleep but I'm wide awake. I'm as nervous as a bride on her wedding night. A shift inside me makes me feel lighter than I have in years. The mixture of pride and gratitude that she is here with me nearly has me pinching myself to be sure this isn't a dream.

The house has a bedroom on the main level that I've never used. It was sparsely decorated, and for my purposes it will be perfect.

I let the workers in at four o'clock in the morning, and warned them that if they were louder than a mouse taking a shit I would be wringing necks. This whole thing needs to be a surprise.

The last of the delivery people are out the back door, so I step lightly up the stairs, only to hear water running in the bathroom.

Fuck, if she heard anything I'll be pissed. I don't know why it means so much to me that this day is perfect for her, but it does.

"Angel?" The first grayish pink of the sunrise is coming up over the east side of the lake, casting a glow across the wave tips. The wind kicked up during the night, blowing in a temperature drop and reminding me that Thanksgiving is in a few weeks.

"I'm in here."

"What are you doing up?" I push open the bathroom door to see her standing there, fresh from the shower and dripping all over the marble floor, sporting a fresh pair of panties with the image of Beauty and the Beast dancing.

"I wanted to take a quick shower before you came back. Today's the day, right?"

I grab a towel from the counter as I step toward her, opening it up and rubbing it on her dripping hair.

"Yes, Angel, it is. Come on, we've waited long enough. I want to show you."

I scoop her up, leaving the towel in a heap on the floor. A flash of insecurity filters through as my leg reminds me of the parts that are no longer there. Phantom pains, they're called, and for me they're a reminder of more than just my missing body parts. I shake it away, nothing is going to come between us today.

We head out the bedroom door toward the stairs and her hands rope around my neck. Already the scent of her is making my chest tighten and my mind spin. I need her.

She has no idea how much.

Chapter Eleven

CHASTITY



The scent of the flowers hits me half way down the steps, and Magnus starts kissing me before we even hit the landing, making my body flutter. I feel so small in his arms, so overwhelmed. But when he turns the corner in the hallway off the great room and breaks our kiss, I can see the smile right there, twitching under his thick, black beard. He turns our connected bodies sideways and guides my eyes with his own to the corridor in front of us.

“Oh my God.” My mouth drops open and every girl dream I’ve ever had is blown away.

The corridor floor is lined with vases filled with every kind of white flower I can imagine. Roses. Lilies. Peonies. All pure white and lush with their simple, honest beauty.

“You are too sweet for me, Angel. Too pure. But you’re mine. By whatever grace of God made that so, I will do everything in my power to deserve you. I’m not letting you go. Not ever. You are Daddy’s girl now, and I am going to show you just what that means.”

He strides forward down the hallway, a slight hitch in his step from where his leg was amputated. I swallow, wondering what it will look like. I don’t care, not in that way, I just hope I don’t embarrass myself by staring or

looking at it the wrong way. I don't ever want to hurt his feelings or make him think that it matters to me because it doesn't.

"Show me," I whisper, and kiss his cheek, feeling the rough scratch of his beard.

"No, baby, you're going to show me," he rumbles as he steps into the enormous bedroom.

There is a massive bed, draped in pure white sheets and about a thousand pillows. Candles are everywhere, lining every flat surface, and a vanilla scent mixes with the smell of flowers in the air.

"Wow." My eyes dance around the room. It looks like something from a fairy tale.

He doesn't halt, even for a step, and before I know it he is settling me on the edge of the bed, my legs dangling over the side. Magnus stands straight, and once again I'm in awe of just how enormous he is. His shirtless chest is covered in just the right areas with dark hair, highlighting the thick muscle that tightens and twitches under his skin.

There is a tension in his face; I can tell he's holding himself back. It only makes me want him more. I can see the erection pushing up and out at the front of his jeans, and it makes me tingle. I squeeze my thighs together as he brings his hands to my cheeks.

"You're going to do whatever Daddy says, baby. Okay?"

Such soft, sweet words rumbling out of such a hulk of a man.

"Yes, Daddy." I nod. It feels so natural to call him that, and it's also making me soak my panties.

"Good girl." He leans down to take my mouth. His tongue presses forward, urgent, without hesitation. He doesn't taste sweet or easy; he tastes like wintergreen and a bit of coffee. It's the taste of a man, and my heart thrums inside me until the room spins.

Our kiss grows frantic, my hands gripping onto his forearms. I love the feel of his muscles under my fingers, flexing and hardening – the way his veins stand out making me melt into a puddle. The size of his forearms would put most men's thighs to shame.

We break away in a gasp and my body shakes as he stands erect, licking his lips and tracing his gaze over every single one of my curves. I'm still wearing the t-shirt he gave me last night, but he seems to see right through it.

"Lean back. Spread your legs for me," he groans as though the words hurt.

He lifts his hands from my cheeks, nodding for me to do as I'm told as he crosses his arms over his chest.

I hesitate, not because I'm scared, but because I'm mesmerized by him. The heat in my face drifts down and consumes my body in invisible flames.

"Do as you're told," he grunts, lifting an eyebrow. "Remember what your sassy mouth earned you yesterday."

I settle back on my locked arms with a pout, not sure if I'd like to test him right now or not. I'm moving too slowly because Magnus reaches down to grip one ankle, impatience in his eyes.

He places one of my feet on the edge of the bed, then the other.

"Now, you better spread those knees, Angel. Daddy doesn't like to wait. If you're scared or nervous, you can always tell me, but you cannot disobey. Now let me see what you've got for me. Show me who you belong to now."

He grips his chin with one hand, squeezing tight as I part my knees. My mouth falls open and my quick, shallow breaths dry my lips.

"Jesus," he moans, with a shake of his head.

"Are you upset with me?" I plead, confused by the expression on his face. It looks like disappointment. My knees immediately snap back together.

"Fuck no, babygirl." His enormous hands come down to rest on my knees, opening me up again. I'm soaking wet, and I wonder if he thinks that's bad. "Daddy's so damn proud of you." He traces his fingertips down my inner thigh and I flinch when they graze over the wet fabric that covers my crotch. My body is weeping and quivering as he begins to slowly rake his giant fingers to and fro. "I want you wet for me all the time. It makes Daddy so happy. My tongue is going inside you very soon, sweet girl; I'm going to show you how special Daddy's kisses can be. I'm going to swallow every drop of your delicious cum, princess. I want you all over my face."

My head falls back on my neck as he continues stroking me through the fabric, his breathing coming deeper as he caresses me.

"That feels so good," I mumble, my body tightening, ready for the building explosion.

"Daddy's going to make you a big girl today. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

"Um hum." I nod, eyes still closed, his words nearly pushing me over the edge into the waiting bliss.

“Good girl.” His words crash over me. I love those words. I want to hear him say them over and over.

His fingers stop moving and my eyes snap open only to see him stepping back.

“I’m going to eat you now, baby. First I’m going to suck your juice from your panties, then I want you to pull them to the side when I say so, and I’m going to taste your sweet cunt.”

“Okay, Daddy.” My belly does ten kinds of flips when he lowers his face, my skin tingling as his tongue traces downward from my knee. The tickle of his coarse beard making me shiver.

I don’t recognize the sounds leaving my lips as his hands reach under my ass cheeks and raise my hips off the bed, right into his open mouth.

Daddy groans so loud it scares me. His teeth bite at me through the thin fabric of my white panties, and I feel my body send out another gush of wetness which he begins to suck right through the drenched crotch.

“So good.” He grunts as he licks and draws the fabric between his bared teeth. There is a primal look in his eyes. Something has turned inside him and I’m excited and scared at the same time. “Pull your panties away. Give it to me.”

I’m shaking, my body tight and trembling, the tension in my tummy ready to release. My breath comes faster as I reach down and tug the strip of fabric sideways. Daddy’s face centers in my drenched folds, his tongue darting out and into my opening in one thrust taking my breath from my lungs. My toes curl and the muscles in my back pull me tight.

“Oh my God,” I sing as the sensations drown me.

He shakes his head back and forth, pressing his nose and mouth into my body, making sounds like an animal fighting for its life. I’m sure he’s half bear and half mountain lion. Then he freezes, his tongue deep inside me, and my body presses forward, desperate for him to give me what I’m aching for.

“Please...” I plead as his eyes come up to meet mine, his brow tight, the texture of his beard sending me nearly into the bliss I’m dying for.

I feel him breathing deep through his nose. He’s drawing in my scent, his tongue still thick in my opening.

“What are you doing? Daddy, please, I need to cum.”

He withdraws for a moment, rasping his beard through my soaking folds, and my hips jerks upward. I want more. “I’m memorizing you, sweet girl. This is all mine now, you understand that, don’t you? You may carry it

around for me, but it's not yours anymore. And I need to know every part of you in every way. Taste, smell, texture, color. You're giving that all to me, aren't you, princess? Willingly."

I can't focus on any of that. "Please, can you keep going?" The words quiver as I make my desperate, begging plea.

A solid smack comes down on my outer thigh, making me draw in a sharp breath. I look up to see a playful twinkle in Magnus's eye.

"Answer the question." He raises his eyebrows. "Don't try to distract me because you won't. You tell me who this belongs to. You tell me, Angel."

He leans in to me, his lips drawing my clit inside his mouth, pinching and making me yelp. He gives me another quick smack then lets my hard nub go.

"Focus, Angel. I know you liked that little spank, but you need to focus."

"It's yours," I murmur, his tongue now flicking back and forth over my clit, as his lips suck it inside.

His mouth releases me for a moment. "More. Tell me this cunt is mine." He bites at my outer lips, tugging them out, then releasing. He lets go of my hips, and both his hands come up and around, fisting the fabric on the neck of my t-shirt. In one pull, he tears it down the front, my tits exposed, as my nipples draw tight. "These tits are mine." He grabs them both, fingertips kneading and pulling the flesh. "I take care of what's mine. Now say it, Angel."

"It's all yours." My voice catches in my throat as his fingers pinch my hard nipples, sending me nearly over the edge into an orgasm. "My body is all yours, Daddy. All of me," I whimper, so desperate for him to give me what I need.

He's playing now, I can see the fire behind his dark, narrow eyes. His hands leave my tits, staying flat as they traverse down to my hips. "Let go of those panties." It's an order, not a request, and my fingers release the soaking fabric without question. He grabs at the elastic and tugs them up, over my bent knees, down my calves, tossing them aside and standing up to look at me, laying open and desperate for him. His face is just inches from my pussy, his eyes intent and focused. I watch as he licks his lips. His eyes seem to roll up and then come back to mine.

"Spread those legs further for me. Open up for Daddy, Angel. I want to see inside. Pull your pussy lips apart with your fingers, show it all to me." He reaches up and makes quick work of the t-shirt that covered my top half. He reaches down and rolls my nipples between his fingers, and my back

arches into him. My hips come up, seeking out his mouth, but he teases me, running his beard through my sensitive folds with a smile as his eyes switch from looking at my pussy to my face, then back.

The heat from his tongue flicks my clit, and I hold my legs spread so wide my hip joints ache. I'm having a hard time keeping my outer lips pinched in my fingers, they're so slick with my own juices. Finally, when I think I can't stand it another second, his lips lock on and he eats me like a wild animal. His beard is rough on my inner thighs, tickling my sensitive flesh, and I'm drenching his face as he sucks and swallows everything. I give him all of me until my body curls up and I cum so hard the whole world goes white, and all I can feel is my hips convulsing on his face.

My hands grip his head, his dark hair soft between my fingers as I turn into a beast myself, wanting him harder and deeper into me. I raise my hips and jerk them onto his face, taking what I need. He's making more noise than me, and the sound of his pleasure is sending me over the edge.

Animal-like noises fill the room, but Daddy doesn't stop. I'm flailing on him in a fit as the climax shakes me, making me scream until my voice breaks.

"Daddy—" It's the only word I know right now, and it only seems to make him more crazed. He sends me over the edge into a second orgasm that nearly makes me black out.

"I'm here, baby. Daddy's got you." His words melt me into the bed – no other thoughts can form inside my head. I'm a puddle of whatever he needs me to be.

Chapter Twelve

MAGNUS



“You amaze me,” I whisper, not sure whether or not I’ve said the words out loud.

Angel is shaking, soaking, the flavor of her sweet cum still on my face and dripping from my beard. She came so hard I think it scared her. Her eyes went wide and her hands started flailing around like she was drowning.

I let her cunt go and scoop her up in my hands, drawing her into my chest and taking a seat on the bed where she can curl into my lap. Her body spasms another few times and her breathing begins to slow as I kiss her hair and pet her until she starts to calm down.

Her quivering voice grabs onto my heart. “Daddy.” She clings to me with a death grip.

“You’re okay. It’s okay.” I half chuckle, because I’m so fucking happy I can’t help myself. I don’t think I’ve ever chuckled so much in my life, but now it seems to be part of my new roster. Smiling and chuckling. Jesus, who knew?

“That was so good, but I felt very strange. Like I wasn’t even here anymore. Like I’d gone somewhere else, somewhere wonderful.”

My arms tighten as she pushes her face into my chest.

“You know we’re going to do more now, right baby? You’re going to make Daddy happy, just like he made you happy.” My voice deepens, knowing very soon I’m going to be inside my precious Angel, marking her and making her mine forever.

“Yes, Daddy.” She looks up at me with a wide-eyed innocence. She’s so perfect. My Angel is everything I knew she would be and more.

“Good girl. Now, I want you to undo Daddy’s belt, undo my pants and take me out; I want my cock in your hand at all times, you understand? When we’re together, unless I say so, your hand or your mouth is on my cock. Now do as you’re told.”

Angel licks her lips as I brush some of her wild hair away from her face, but her hands immediately reach down between us and she tugs on my belt. She’s anxious and excited, the blush still on her cheeks, the scent of her cunt wafting up around me, making me ravenous for her.

In a few more seconds, she’s got my monster out and he’s standing up straight, near bursting at her touch. She wraps her soft hands around the steel shaft and immediately begins to pump.

The thought hits me like a blast of arctic air. I need to get my pants off. Easy enough for most men, but it’s going to require taking off my prosthetic. Angel stops the movement of her hands, tipping her face to look into my eyes.

My heart nearly stops as I search for the words. “I need to get my pants off, baby.” I know I need to just say it, get it out there in the open. Whatever the consequences, I’ll have to handle them. I feel my shoulders tense. “And, I have to take my prosthetic off.” My voice is tight with anxiety. I hate that my disability is creeping into our moment. There is a lump in my throat the size of a softball, wondering if this is the moment she turns tail and runs.

But my babygirl amazes me more with each breath I take.

“I want to do it for you. Can you show me how? I want to take care of this for you every day. I want to help you.” Her emerald eyes twinkle, and I can see how sincere she is. Her heart is as big as my stupid grin.

In the next minute, we’ve blasted down the formidable wall I’d built. I’d been so worried about what would happen when we finally got to this moment, but now it’s here and it’s amazing. My babygirl leans down, and I

guide her to unfasten the prosthetic, showing her how it's attached. Her eyes sparkle, her attention on everything I do. She wants to learn; she wants to share this with me. I'm the luckiest man alive.

Then, when she's done, she kisses my leg and comes right back up with a huge smile as she takes my cock between her fingers and starts to massage. And I forget all about my missing foot.

I kick off my pants as she works her magic.

"Oh fuck." I lean back against the headboard throwing my arms crossed over the top of my head trying to catch a breath. My eyes close as I find myself lost in the moment and the sensation. My balls draw up tight and my cum threatens to spray right there and then. I fight for control, but I'm quickly losing it as she tightens her grip, one hand coming up to spread the drops of cum that have leaked out of the engorged head, caressing and popping it in and out of her tightening fist.

"I wish I could lick it," she whispers. And that's all I can take. "Give it a hug with my mouth."

Every curse word I know streams from my lips.

"Put your mouth on me, Angel. Quick, Daddy's so close and he wants you to swallow it all. Show me how much you want me, babygirl."

She manages to wriggle off my legs as I open them, giving her room to crouch down in front of me on the bed. She lifts her eyes to meet mine as her tongue darts out to take that first glorious lick of the creamy droplets streaming out of my slit.

"Mmmm," Angel moans as she tastes me for the first time.

"Tell me you like it, babygirl. Tell Daddy you love how he tastes."

She flutters her eyelashes, red rising in her cheeks.

"I know you like it, Angel. You're making a wet spot there on the bed aren't you? Your little sweet cunt can't help it. Reach your fingers down there and feel how wet you are.

She takes her fingers and puts them between her legs, a look of hesitance shadowing her eyes. I let her feel that for a moment because I like her a little unsteady, that hint of embarrassment more sexy to me than anything Victoria's Secret can offer. I need her to look to me for everything, even this reassurance; I need her to need me for everything. It's the most powerful feeling I've ever had, and I will never abuse it, but only use it to guide her and help her.

“It’s okay, Daddy likes you wet. I’m so proud that you’re wet because of me. You’re a good girl. Now tell me how it tastes, I need you to tell me. The filthier you talk to me, the happier I am. Keep your other fingers inside you; I want you rubbing that pussy the whole time, you understand?”

She smiles, her tongue licking her bottom lip as she wiggles her hips on me. “It’s so good. So slick and salty, and I want more. Much more. Can I do that? Can I put my mouth right over your cock? I’ve never done it before.”

“*Jesus*, yes. Go on, open your mouth, I’ll show you how to make Daddy happy, princess.”

She’s on me like lightning and I thrust up into her because I can’t wait. The heat from her mouth sends showers of sparks and fire over my skin. She’s making these noises that send my head spinning. I need her on me; I need her to cum with me. I change my mind.

“Baby, hold on.” It pains me to interrupt her magical mouth. “Come here” I maneuver her hips toward my face as I scoot us both further down onto the soft, white fabric of the bed. “Daddy’s going to show you something else. You keep sucking, you’re a good girl, that’s your place. You look so beautiful with my cock in your mouth.”

She tries so hard to keep going while I move our bodies, but I finally get her positioned over my face and she sucks me down deep into her throat, and I nearly lose it right there.

“Goddamn, Angel, that’s so good.” My beast is tapping her tonsils and she’s making no sounds of protest. It’s like every second she becomes more and more perfect.

I jerk her legs apart and spread her over my face, knocking her knees even further apart. I toss my head back and forth as I place them on either side of my head, her pussy dripping liquid down her legs, but I want something else, something new.

I pull her ass cheeks apart, feeling how she pauses for a moment as her mouth works my girth. I need to remind her who she is.

“Daddy doesn’t need to ask you for these things, the things he will do to you, the things he will do with you. I just want that to be clear, baby.” I kiss one side of her ass, then give her a small bite so she’s focused. “So you do as you’re told, and always remember, when you cum you make me so happy. Have you got that, Angel? Your cum makes me proud. So be sure you do that a lot, for me.” She hums her agreement around my cock and the

vibration settles right in my balls sending up a pre-shot of cum into her mouth.

I tense my abdomen along with my neck and shoulders, holding back the explosion that is threatening to blast down her throat.

Her scent is still on my face, in my nose, rising from my beard as my fingertips dig into her ripe, round ass cheeks, parting them and exposing all of her to me. I take one long, slow lick from her hard button, through her folds, scooping my tongue into her opening where she's gushing. I swallow deep, and it tastes so good, but I don't stop there.

I trace my tongue around her dark bud, swirling slowly inward so she knows what's about to happen. I've saved all these desires for her, and I want to be her sexual god. I want to be her guide, the one that gives her every sensation she's ever desired. And some she never knew she wanted.

I hear her gasp around my cock as my tongue finds the center of her tiny, tight hole. I raise her ass cheeks in my hands at the same time as my tongue presses inward, opening her and licking at her rim.

Her body freezes, but her mouth sucks me so far down her throat I'm momentarily blinded by the sensation. She's clearly shocked by what I'm doing, but I'm happy to know she isn't trying to stop me. The sucking heat from her mouth, the way her tongue is swaying as it works my shaft, is more than perfect. The thick vein that runs the length of the bottom of my dick is throbbing and painful. I'm not going to last much longer, and I want her toppling over the edge with me. Our mutual orgasm is my only goal right now.

I plunge my tongue inside, fucking her ass with the lightest caress as her body yields to me. Her sucking grows more intense, and she shifts her hips back and down to give me better access. As she does, she only grows more beautiful in my eyes. She knows what she wants and I'm the one that will give it to her.

With my tongue working her tight, dark hole, she bobs up and down on the head of my cock, her tits bouncing and slapping against my hips as she goes. Her hands clutch at the base and pump along with the rhythm of my tongue strokes. I realize I'm done for and release one hand to find her clit, pinching and rubbing in hard circles it as I fuck her ass with my mouth.

A rush of wet heat drips down my beard; her ass shakes under my mouth and her tight hole pulses and tightens. Her hips start kicking up and back with her pleasure. She goes off and I'm right behind her.

We both groan and my cum blows out of me so hard I'm ready for her to choke and pull off, but she doesn't. My cream is coating the back of her throat as her body seizes up and begins to shake so violently I have to hold her hips up. I release her ass and bring my mouth down to swallow her cum just as she is swallowing mine. Both of our bodies are engulfed in the same bliss. I'm still cumming when she finally collapses on my face, her body quivering and her hard nipples rubbing on my hips as she rocks back and forth. She doesn't release me, even then. She's drawing out every drop of my cream, like it's milk, sucking it out of me and down her throat.

If it's possible, I'm even more desperate to be inside of her now than I was before. I flip her quivering body over, centering her head on the pillows. Her eyes swirl around for a moment and her legs fall open automatically, making me nearly pass out from pride.

"You're such a good girl." I kiss her, our lips soft and meant for each other. Her tongue finally awakens and strokes inside my mouth as I position myself over her, my hands coming to cradle the back of her head. I want her to look at me when I enter her.

"Daddy—" The single word means so much. She's a puddle, completely mine in this moment, thinking of nothing else but our combined pleasure. "Fuck me."

Holy hell.

She blinks, then a small smile twists at the corner of her lips. Her hips shift under me and my cock is ready again, hard as it's ever been.

Her hands come to tighten onto my forearms, her mouth slightly open and her sparkling eyes searching my face.

"Are you ready to be my big girl?" I jerk my hips up and down, the tip of my cock searching in her slick heat, finding its home. When I feel that tiny opening latch on, I hold steady, my brain nearly exploding with the sensations.

"Yes, Daddy," she says on a groan.

"It's going to hurt, babygirl, I can't help that. But it will get better, I promise. So just hold onto Daddy. I'm going to put my cock inside that little tight pussy now. Daddy can't wait any longer, baby, I need to be inside you."

With that, my hips press forward, the tip of my cock inching into her sopping opening. Her eyes are already wide, and I'm not even close to being in there.

"Oh, what if it doesn't fit?" A flash of fear darkens her eyes.

“It will fit, baby. Trust me, your body will take me. Not all of me, not today, but we can’t stop now. You need to let Daddy inside, because I need to cum inside you, princess. Daddy needs it. So just open your legs really far for me, and let Daddy do it. It will feel so good, I promise.”

I slide up between her full thighs, loving the sight of her curves, the way her body spills over in mounds of soft flesh as she curls her hips up to meet me.

“Oh, Daddy—” Her back bows upward, rasping her hard nipples against my chest.

I blanket her with my massive body. I’m three times her size and it scares me. I say a silent prayer to the Viking gods, beseeching them to hold me to my word and not let me hurt her too much.

“Kiss me, babygirl.” I order. “I want your kiss. I want it right now.”

Our lips lock together as I make the first upward thrust, tearing into her as she screams into my mouth and closes her eyes for a long moment. I pull back an inch and give in to another forward jerk of my hips, my body taking over. I need to be in there. She’s so fucking hot and wet, any rational thoughts have already left my mind. She feels a million times better than all my fantasies.

I kiss her hard, cutting off her whimpers as I drive back and forth again, getting at least half my length into her tight opening. That’s all I can give her, I can’t push in any further. I freeze, shocked by how she’s got a stranglehold on my dick.

I pull back from our kiss, my eyes dancing over her face as I try to read her.

“Baby, breathe, don’t stop breathing.” It’s taking all my will to hold still. My blood pumping so hard through my veins I feel it all the way to my toes. I want her around me so bad it’s nearly my undoing.

“Mmmm,” she moans, her fingernails drawing blood on my forearms, but I feel no pain. “It hurts. But it’s good.” Her eyes focus on my face again and my cock sheds a few more drops of my cum into her cunt.

“I know, baby, just try to relax.” My dick nearly explodes when she pushes her hips forward, taking more of me, her body forcing the issue.

I meet her with my own small jabs, back and forth. It’s hard as hell to hold back. Her pussy is tugging at me from the inside, like a conveyor belt reeling me in. I can’t stand it any longer and I shift my torso off her, pushing up on my locked arms to look down where we are connected.

“Jesus, baby, it’s so beautiful, I wish I could take a picture and save this forever.” The sight of her opening squeezing and taking my slick shaft is like a masterpiece. A few streaks of red shine through, and the thought of her virgin blood on my cock has me ready to spill.

“More,” she moans, and I grit my teeth when I see her eyes. That look tells me she means it. This connection right now, our eyes locked together as our bodies become one, makes her mine forever. I’ve never imagined this before, but she needs to know I’m never letting her go.

“You’re mine,” I rumble as I start fucking her faster. She lets out small yelping sounds with each drive forward, but her hips buck up to meet my motion. “Daddy’s never letting you go, Angel. Never.”

My words ignite us both and her head falls back as my body tightens. I ease my dick in and out, watching her pink snatch grip around me. We’re moving with each other, her body strung tight, arching her tits upward, and I can’t hold back. I lower my face and suck one nipple deep into my mouth, wanting her down my throat. And with that I feel her body explode and drench my cock, then she locks down until I can barely move.

But I’m done.

I shoot my cream inside her, imagining it coating her from the inside, filling every space with me. Marking her with my seed, and I already know no one else will ever be here but me. I want my scent on her always. Whenever she’s out in public, I want her to stink of me. I want to be sure everyone knows she is more than taken, she is possessed.

The sounds coming out of us both nearly shake the house down. I cum so long and hard I lose track of everything else except our bodies coupled together. I’m shaking like a bitch, and I fucking swear a tear comes down my cheek and soaks into my beard.

The walls of her cunt are doing something amazing, milking even more cum from my balls.

When I can finally see straight, I look down, searing this moment into my memory. The look on her face tells me what I need to know. She’s completely lost in this moment, unaware of anything other than being a vessel for my pleasure. I slip my tongue between her lips in a deep kiss, just as my dick drenches her cunt with one last shot of cum. But she’s already filled right up, no more space, no more room. It seeps out and drips down my balls.

Chapter Thirteen

CHASTITY



“**W**hat time is it?” I mutter, half to myself knowing Magnus probably

can’t hear me. “I feel like I have no idea how long I’ve been here. Is that normal? That I feel like this, so floaty and disconnected?”

Magnus is running water in the bathroom as I lay like a human form of Jell-O on the bed. The sheets are soaking under me, squelchy and damp from our sweat and our sex. On top of that, my body feels funny. I mean, it feels good, but it feels funny.

I’m naked, but I don’t feel exposed. Daddy has made me feel beautiful and natural like this. I’m not sure how he managed to do that so fast, but it’s liberating. Being cared for by such a brute of a man sets little fires in my heart. He’s bringing out the second warm, damp cloth to lay it on my battered pussy.

The length of each of his strides would be the same as four of mine. I barely noticed when he put his prosthetic back on after he scooted to the side of the bed, but it catches my eye now and in a way it only makes him sexier to me.

The light streaming into the room hits him across the jaw and chest. The dark chest hair calling for my hands. It accents each of his square features,

from his jaw to his chest to his abdominal muscles. But his lips seem to have fixed into a permanent, yet uneasy, smile. Like his face is still getting used to the idea.

I stretch my arms above my head as I lay diagonally across the massive bed, watching him coming my way. My eyes drop to where his cock has lost little of its size.

“Is it always hard?” I ask as he reaches the edge of the bed.

He gives me a narrow-eyed look. “Why are your legs closed, baby?” His voice deepens and I screw up my face as I try to look innocent.

“Sorry... I forgot?”

He releases a long, low breath, and I let my knees fall open. A twinge of searing pain hits me from the quick movement. He rubs his eye with one hand, taking a seat on the edge of the mattress.

“I know it will take time for you to understand and remember everything. But, you must always give Daddy a clear view of your pussy. Unless we are out, or I say otherwise... It’s one of the many ways you make me happy. And in turn, I will learn everything about what makes you happy. It’s my job in this world to give you that, to give you everything. All of it is yours.”

I see his eyes latch on as my body opens to him, and his cock thickens and jerks upward.

“Next time you *forget*, you will earn yourself a punishment. So try to remember it all, my Angel. Daddy doesn’t like to punish you, but I’ll do it anyway if I have to, because it’s my responsibility. Part of my commitment to help you be the very best you can be. I want everything good for you in this world, sweet girl.”

I wince and suck in a breath as he sets the warm cloth down between my spread legs.

“I’m sorry, princess. It will get better. I hate that it hurt you.”

“It’s okay, I like it. A lot. Having orgasms is amazing. I feel like glitter is exploding inside me. And...”

Magnus chuckles as he gently rubs the towel back and forth, making my body tense. He licks his top and bottom lips, watching the slow movement of his hand. “And what, baby?” His eyes follow the line of my body, up over my breasts, my chest, my face, until they lock onto mine.

“And I feel so close to you when it happens. It’s not just the feeling, you know? I want to crawl inside you and be part of you. I know, it’s stupid.” I shake my head and look away, heat rising to my cheeks.

“God, babygirl. You just made me the happiest Daddy in the world. That’s exactly how I feel. How I feel when I come inside you. I’ve never felt anything like that before. Like I was delivering you my soul, for you to keep it for me. It almost hurt it was so intense, but I never wanted it to end.”

My eyes snap back to see him looking out the window. His jaw is tight and his brow pulls together.

“What is it?” He looks so sad, and it doesn’t seem right after telling me how happy it made him.

“You are everything to me, Angel. You’ll never know the lengths I would go to just to protect you. To keep you safe. I love you more than you will ever know.”

It’s happening so fast, and yet it feels exactly right. All those months of just talking to each other... Andrea was right; it was more than just being friendly, and deep down I knew it even then. But I was scared. In the time we spent together at the shop, he’d asked me so many questions about myself. At the time I guess I didn’t put it together, but he was learning all about me and I was already becoming part of him.

Clearly, his lifestyle is different than mine, and for a moment it slaps around inside me that I couldn’t ever be what he wants me to be. But the way he looks at me, the things he says, he can’t be faking it.

His hand lifts from between my legs to gently caress my tits, moving back and forth between them as I lay spread and supine for him.

I know I’m head over heels in love with him – I have been for a while. I think I was in love with him after the first couple of times he came into the shop. But I’m not ready to return the words, not yet. I’m just not quite there. But it doesn’t seem to matter to him, he doesn’t even falter.

My hand drifts to the muscles of his back, stroking the hard flesh as the cloth warms me between my legs.

“I have something for you.” Daddy reaches down under the bed and my eyes light up.

“I love surprises.” I’m giddy when I see the big pink bow that adorns the white box. Immediately I’m thinking clothes. It’s the right size. Maybe a cute t-shirt or more underwear.

“I’ve had this for you for a while. But I was too big and stupid and waited, but here it is. I hope you like it Angel.”

He hands me the box, I don’t waste time getting the bow off and throwing the top off the edge of the bed. Warmth covers me, my heart is in my throat.

“This is...” I can’t find the words.

I pull the dark leather bound book out from the neat tissue paper cover. It smells wonderful, like an old library. The dark front is embossed, I flip open to the cream colored pages, tipped around the edges in a hint of brown.

I don’t know what to say. I’ve never gotten such an amazing, thoughtful gift.

“It’s the first edition in English. I didn’t think the French would be as easy for me to read to you. I don’t think either of us speak French.”

I’m speechless and his smiles lights up the dark hair of his beard.

“Come here. Let’s get you snuggled in and I’ll read you a chapter, how’s that sound?”

I’m in heaven, Daddy reads me the first *two* chapters because I begged him to keep going after he finished the first. It’s perfect, I lean into this chest, his lips periodically kissing the side of my head or my cheek as he goes. When he takes a breath at the end of chapter two, my stomach roars. A loud growl that makes us both laugh.

“I’m going to go get you something to eat.” He closes the book and sets it on the comforter next to my hip. “You need your nourishment. So just lay here and keep that cloth between your legs a little longer. The medicine will help ease the soreness. I’ll come get you when I’ve got food ready.”

Before I can answer, my stomach growls again in response.

“I guess Daddy knows best.” I mumble on a sigh, grabbing the book and clutching it over my chest.

I smile as Magnus rises from the bed to full height, and his cock does the same right along with him. I’m happy he doesn’t seem at all self conscious about his foot anymore. Not since that first time. I’ve helped him take it off and put it on a couple times now, I think he likes how I kiss him there. I want him to know I love that part of him as much as everything else.

“Don’t you forget it, babygirl.”

I watch as he retreats out the door of the bedroom, a deep sigh falling from my lips and the butterflies fluttering around in my belly. I’m so happy right now, I don’t want this moment to ever end. I just wish my mom could see how happy I am, how things have turned out for me.

I’m almost drifting off to sleep when the sound of my phone breaks through the silence.

Daddy brought my things into the great room when we arrived, and the beeping sound of a few more text messages pulses against my ears. Someone

is texting, over and over, all in a row, and I figure it must be Andrea wondering if I'm okay. She probably called the shop to see how it was going with just me and Eddie there, and who knows what he told her.

With a grimace and slow, tentative movements, I manage to get myself off the bed. I tiptoe into the massive great room and hone in on the sound. I can hear clattering and clinking of plates and dishes, food being prepared, coming from down the hall where the kitchen must be, and it makes my stomach turn over again.

Having someone worry about feeding me will be very welcome.

I find my purse on a sofa table and flip the canvas flap open, digging around to find my old flip phone. I may not be up on all the technology, but it works. I get texts, I can call people, even send and receive pictures and it's only fourteen dollars a month, which is still at the top range of my communication budget.

I'm humming as I walk back toward the bedroom with the phone in my hand, bringing up the messages to see what Andrea has to say.

Inside the room, I catch a glimpse of myself in the long mirror that leans against the wall. I'm a mess. My hair looks like I've been riding along with my head out the window, and I have a sudden, strong urge to brush my teeth. After being so wild with him, so secure, I notice the thickness of my upper arms and the way the dimples show on the outside of my thighs. I bring a hand down to push inward on the pouch of softness under my belly button. I push in, then let go and it pops back out. I suck it in, standing straight, then breathe out. It's no use.

The word *ugly* flashes through my mind. I don't recognize the voice, but I know it's not my own. It belongs to one of the kids at school, or one of the random people on the street.

"Don't do this," I tell myself, eager not to ruin the moment with self-loathing.

I bite the inside of my cheek and step away from the image in the mirror. My emotions are crashing, and I hate myself for hating myself. It's a vicious circle that goes on and on.

When I get into the bathroom, I pull out the new toothbrush that is waiting there for me, turn the water on with one hand and flip open my phone with the other, ready to read what Andrea has to say.

But when I look down at the matchbook-sized screen, the toothbrush freezes in my mouth. I drop it, letting it clatter into the sink as foam drips

from my chin, grabbing at the device and scrolling through the messages. My stomach is suddenly in my throat.

I wipe the back of a hand over my mouth, my breathing speeding up as I scroll down through the messages until I see a link. I click, and there is a picture of a newspaper article and the image of Magnus.

“Local Businessman Charged with Manslaughter.”

Chapter Fourteen

MAGNUS



“Angel?” I lay two plates of food on the bedside table, piled high with tasty, irresistible morsels. I want her to eat. She worries me constantly and I know she hasn’t been eating right.

The wind that rushed through the trees earlier is now whipping around in torrents whistling through the massive pines that surround the house. A late fall storm draws gray clouds across the lake, the sun no longer casting the amazing streaks of color there.

I smooth my hand over my head. The bathroom door is open an inch and I hear the water shut off.

Then I hear something else.

A sound assaults my ears and tears at my heart. My blood runs cold as I rush to smack open the door. I’m not even concerned at what state she may be in, I’m only able to focus on the sounds of her crying.

“Baby.” Barging through the door, my head swivels toward the sound and I find her in my white t-shirt, sitting on the floor of the shower with her arms wrapped around her knees, her head hanging. “Jesus, Angel, what the fuck is wrong?” I grunt out, already hot with rage. What the fuck has happened?

“Go away! I want to leave. I don’t even know you.”

My head throbs and there is a pressure behind my eyes, a ringing in my ears. I'm disoriented and there is this horrible feeling of pressure in my chest. It's not coming from the outside; it's more like lead weights have been chained to my heart and it's pulling it down into my stomach.

"Baby, what is it? Christ. What the hell happened? Tell me, I'll fix it. Whatever it is, I'll take care of it. But you have to tell me."

When she raises her face from its nest between her upper arms, I see such anger there that I nearly recoil, afraid of what she's about to say. But instead I lean forward, my hands on her cheeks.

My Angel wrenches her head side to side, trying to dislodge my grip, but it's strong as iron. I know better than to break the connection. Whatever is going on, we will get through it and move on. But we have to do it together.

She will learn, problems are just that, problems, but we are bigger than any of those.

"Who *are* you?" Her voice shakes as she kicks at my legs, her arms darting down to push at the floor of the shower, trying to get to her feet. But I'm not having that; she needs to tell me what's wrong before I lose my fucking mind. "I knew this was too good to be true. I knew you couldn't be what I thought."

"Baby, I'll answer anything you want, but just ask me a question I can answer. I'll never lie to you, I'm an open book; I don't know what in the fuck is going on, but it sounds like you're scared." The idea makes my stomach turn, but I have to name it. "It sounds like you're scared of me. And if you're scared, that means I've done something wrong. So I'll fix it. Tell me what it is and I'll fix it." I hate that my voice falters on the last words. There is a burning in the bottom lids of my eyes. My mind wanders for a moment to all the things I want for her. All the ways I wanted today to be her day. Her perfect day.

I don't recall the last time I cried. If you count the tear I shed the first time I came inside my Angel, then well, not so long ago. But this is different. I feel it choking me. I think the last time I had a full on cry, was when Mom died, but I'm on the verge right now. Her tears are my tears, and more than that, they are my responsibility.

"I want to go home. I don't want to be here with you." The snap in her voice cuts me, but I see past it. I see her, and this noise is just that, noise. I need to find a way to calm her down, but that won't happen if I push against it.

She pushes me over the edge when she slaps at me with one hand, kicking me with both feet.

“Baby, we’re going to figure this out.” Faster than a man my size should move, my hands dart out, around her waist and she’s up and over my shoulder in an instant. I’m beginning to like this, carrying her around while the caveman in me thumps his chest.

Angel squeals and gives me a few good kidney shots with her balled fists, but I’ve got three times the weight on her and there is not much she can do to physically hurt me. Of course, she could tear my heart right out, and cause me pain that no one else can, but if I stick to doing everything right for her, I just have to pray to God that never happens.

I stomp down the hall and into the great room. The scent of lilies and peonies hits me and even my babygirl stops her tirade for a moment, the scent is so beautiful and strong.

After a second of standing there, I start to feel her hands soften. Instead of knocking into me like little ball peen hammers, they come around the back of my waist so she can steady herself against me.

“Put me down. Please.”

I don’t know if the scent of the thousand white flowers has worked some magic, but I feel her soften and her words lose their edge. I hear a sad little girl, a scared little girl, and I know that’s what she was trying to hide with her tantrum upstairs.

She’s shivering, and that’s when the truth hit’s me. She’s terrified. I realize it in a moment of clarity and it cuts through me sharper than a knife.

“I will never hurt you, Angel. I’d never let anyone hurt you. I’d die first.”

She’ll learn soon enough that she doesn’t need all these theatrics to get my attention, but old habits will have to be undone slowly, I understand that. So for now, I just need to know what the fuck is hurting her, so I can fix it.

I guide her feet down to touch against the wooden planks that make up the floor, catching her under her arms and pulling her forward. The wide, winding staircase is a step behind me and I bend back to take a seat, dragging her onto my lap, facing me, so we are eye to eye. I settle her legs outside of my own, my hands looping around her waist.

“I don’t like tantrums, Angel. You can and you must tell me everything. Always. Every thought, everything that bothers you or makes you happy. I want it all. Don’t hold it in. But tantrums and this kind of drama won’t be

tolerated. But, we'll deal with that another time. Right this second, you tell me what's hurting you, okay?" I kiss her bright pink lips, still a bit swollen from their use earlier, then kiss away what's left of her tears.

As I do I hear her breath come out around us in a long sigh, hanging in the air like a sweet mist. I can't help but fill with pride that she's still naked. She's so vulnerable, and yet she doesn't think to cover herself. It just seals our connection, tells me she truly belongs to me. I'm her shield against all the bad in the world.

"I got a text. A few. They're about you." The cut is back in her voice, so I tip her face back and take her lip between my teeth for a long second.

"Daddy doesn't like that tone, baby. Just talk to me. Don't brat, okay?"

I love how she crinkles her nose and pushes out her bottom lip, her eyes on mine as she decides how she's going to proceed. It only takes a second. Then with a quick look up at the ceiling, she pulls her pout to the side and continues in a soft, clear voice.

"Who's Sarah Templeton?" Her voice banks in her throat with a little hitch, and my flesh goes cold.

Her eyes are pleading for an explanation, one that will make her feel safe. I see the little tears start to form in her eyes, but she pulls her lip between her teeth and bites down, trying to stem them from flowing.

I grip her soft hips, tugging her closer as I try to figure out a way to explain.

My heart is in my throat.

"Baby." I lean my forehead in to meet hers, trying to draw strength from her.

Her eyes drift, so I release one hand from her hip and lift my fingers to squeeze her chin, keeping her focused on me. This whole exercise is made nearly impossible because she is naked and her nipples are speaking in tongues, and there is a heat radiating from her open legs straight onto the carved wood in my lap that seems to never soften around her.

Her green eyes mesmerize me; it's so hard to keep my breath steady as they dilate and narrow, her breath warm on my nose, our faces just inches from each other.

I drop my fingers from her chin, graze them down her neck and around the back where my hand grips, secure but soft.

"What about Sarah Templeton?"

My blood goes cold and I suck air through my teeth as I try to find my center, try to find the right words.

But it's more than that. I used to pray that I could give my own life to bring her back. I know God wouldn't do that, wouldn't give me such an easy way out, but it's still what I've prayed for, night after night, for the last year.

Until I met my Angel, that is, and realized that she could be a part of my life. Then I wanted so much to live.

My lungs burn as I fill them, preparing to tell her my shame. I have to come to terms with the idea that she may decide I am not safe for her. That she cannot live with a man that was responsible for someone's death.

"We were demolishing a building." I sit up straight, caressing the back of her neck, letting the sensation of her soft skin distract me from what I need to say. Memories I've tried to push away since I met her. "Angel, the short version is, I was in charge of the demolition. I was always in charge; it was nothing unusual. For weeks before it came down, we had the building secured so that I could analyze where the charges should be set, where the weak points were, how the structure would fall. I was also responsible for making sure no one would be able to get inside." The last words crack in my throat, and time bends around me. I'm right back there in my mind, the initial thrill of the moment when the explosives go off is a rush like nothing else. I can't explain it. Even after hundreds of jobs, that moment when it happens still feels as new as the first time.

Angel raises her hands, presses them to my cheeks. I close my eyes. I don't deserve her love. I don't deserve her kindness. Not right now. Maybe not ever.

"I did the final walk through myself. There was a break in the fencing, a point where it was tugged away and dug out like someone may have tried to get inside. I walked that building ten fucking times, I swear to God." I harden at the sound of the words, then shake my head. It's just excuses, nothing can change the fact that I'm guilty. "I missed something. I failed in my duty. I killed that woman as much as if I'd pointed a gun to her head and pulled the trigger myself." My throat tightens and my gut grinds over on itself. I have to fight to hold back the shaking in my voice. My eyes are burning but I won't allow myself to shed the tears. "I should have done more; it was my responsibility. I should have called off the demolition until I could get a team in there to check every corner of the building." For the first time since that day, I let go of the fight, and the tears spill from my eyes.

My other hand comes up from the security of her softness and I press it against my forehead as if I might be able to wipe away the memories by sheer force alone. Then I press my fingers into my eyes, willing the tears to stop. I don't deserve them.

I have to take a breath before I can continue. "I gave the all clear. I didn't press the button, but it was my fault the charges were set off – my moment when the first boom shook the ground. It was then that I caught the movement at one of the doors on the ground floor. Impossible." I look into her eyes, misty through the tears. "It was impossible; she couldn't be there. I wanted to stop it, but it was too late. I charged out of the safety shelter anyway, trying to somehow get to her, get her out of there before it all collapsed. But I couldn't. The building came down and I was too close. I only got as far as the fence before the whole thing tumbled. In my head it was like a house of cards, everything I'd built, everything I was proud of in my life came crashing down. I watched in horror, but I was too close. A piece of concrete came down on my foot, smashing it so badly it had to be removed. I remember thinking it was what I deserved, a constant reminder of my failure to save her." I look down at my missing foot, the stump. My punishment. "I didn't want to live any more, but I couldn't die. I thought God had chosen my punishment, and I had to accept it. Money no longer held any meaning; I just wanted to give it all away. Until I met you." I can't meet her eyes. I don't want to see her disgust. "Then I started to think, maybe, I'd found a way through it."

"But," Her eyes are questioning. "Why did she go in there? I mean, it was fenced off and marked off; why would someone go inside?"

I rub my fingers hard between my eyebrows and clear my throat, trying to catch the sob threatening to break free.

"She was a drug addict. She was just looking for a place to be safe for the night maybe. Who knows? Maybe someone was after her, she was scared. I hate that thought. She was trying to find a safe place and I killed her."

We sit in silence for a few minutes because there's not much left to say. I know she's going to leave me. I have to suffer. To make it right, I have to suffer.

But her voice comes out in a warm whisper. "I just got so scared when I read it. I just felt hot and like this was all some sort of joke." Her fingertips cover her lips before she continues. "This all has happened so fast; I just

knew it was too good to be true. I knew I must be an idiot for thinking you would want me. That we could have all this so fast. There had to be something to take it all away from me.”

“I would do anything to change what I did. As God is my witness, I’ll take my punishment, but I never meant to hurt her.”

“I know.” She places her fingertips on my arm. “She would forgive you I think. You need to forgive yourself. It’s so heavy Daddy. I can feel you carrying it around.”

I’ve heard those words before. From Erik, from Cindy. But from her, from my Angel, finally they find their mark. I need to forgive myself, to find the change that will allow me to move on. I nod, tears still streaming down my face. “Thank you.”

“It was just the text message, Magnus. I got scared because I didn’t know the truth. I should have just asked you.”

“Who sent it to you?” Somewhere deep inside I knew someday I would have had to tell her, and it’s my own fault for not coming clean sooner. Then my addled brain clicks into gear and suddenly I know. “*Fucker*. Eddie, right?”

Angel nods and I lead her by the hand over to one of the massive, chocolate-brown, velvet sofas that overlook the lake behind. I lift her body into my lap, facing me again.

“I got so scared.” Her eyes fall and her hands flutter around her neck until I take them in mine. “I mean.” She looks up at the ceiling and her eyes flood, the salty streams breaking through the dam of her lower lashes to wet her pink cheeks, and my heart cracks. “I don’t really have anyone in this world left. I mean, when I got the text, I thought about who I could call if I was in trouble. Who would come and help me. And there wasn’t really anyone. I have Andrea, and she would want to help, but she doesn’t have a car. I have no family. It just dawned on me that if you were a dangerous person, and you got me up here for some other reason, what would I do? No one would come looking for me. I’m here all alone.”

“You’ll never be alone again.” I hate the fear in her voice, the loneliness. I want to take it all away and give her everything she deserves.

“It all just hit me at once. I mean, this has been so intense and I guess deep down I just don’t think I deserve to be happy. Not this kind of happy. And I feel like maybe there’s something wrong with me for wanting... all this. Like the way we are, you know? Like there is always the other shoe

that's going to drop and when it does, life gets to laugh at me and say, 'See? Told ya so.' People like me just don't get to be happy."

I squeeze her hands and bring them to my chest. We're both still naked, and my cock is standing straight up between us, her slick pussy pressing against me. I lean forward and kiss her lips, long and slow, dropping her hands so mine can hold her cheeks.

"You deserve to be happy, Angel, you really do. I felt the same way. I was sure no one would want me. And I'd never really wanted anyone before you. Then that first day I saw you, it was like this whole new part of me opened up, and it scared the shit out of me, Angel. The thoughts I'd had. I thought I was a sick fuck just for the thinking those things. The ways I wanted to treat you and take care of you. The ways I wanted to fuck you." My heart is thrumming in my chest. I've never talked to anyone like this before, told them how I feel. I'm the strong, silent type. And honestly, before Angel I just didn't have all that many feelings to begin with. Now suddenly they're back with a vengeance. "You've changed me, babygirl. I kept my distance, but only because I couldn't forgive myself for killing someone. I mean, how do you live with that? How can anyone around me live with that and still trust me? I understand why you were scared, sweet girl. And I'm so sorry."

"It was a horrible accident. I'm so sorry for you both." Her sweet face looks at me with such innocence, and I feel how much she needs me to be strong for her.

I need to forgive myself so I can be everything she needs. Because she is my everything.

"I'm starting to forgive myself, babygirl, but only because of you. I have to, so I can be the best Daddy for you. The best lover. The best friend. The best of everything you need."

She licks her lips, turning her face into my palm and kissing me. The throbbing from my dick is starting to reach my ears as she adjusts her hips forward, leaning harder into my thick erection.

"Daddy..."

That single, sweet word has me by the balls. The words are lost in my clenched throat, and her fingers catch the salty rivers that start down my rough cheeks. Both my hands drop to the pinch of her waist, jerking her body into me like I'm clinging to her for dear life. A wrenching noise leaves

my chest as I bury my face into the curve of her neck, trying to find peace there.

As her hands leave my cheeks, they dance over my shoulders and pull me in against her. Her perfect innocence moves me, the way her body melts against me, and I feel the way she accepts me for whatever I am in this moment. How she trusts me when I'm not sure I deserve that trust.

"I'll tell you what I know," she whispers into my ear. "I know I've never met a more honorable person in my life. I trust you with all of me. For all the days you'll have me, Daddy. I just know in my heart you are meant for me. We are meant for each other. We are here to fill the other's empty spaces. To heal the parts that are broken. I'm the soft to your hard. I'm the pink to your black. I'm going to give more than I take. Because I've never wanted someone like I want you. I want you in my life. Not for a day, a week or some definable amount of time. I want you in my life. I want you to be my life. Like you are part of me. I don't know how to explain it, but I've never been more sure of anything. I'm your babygirl, Daddy."

I'm not sure she knows how deeply her words carve into my heart. They resonate in a part of me long forgotten, a deep, buried part of my being that needs to possess and care for her, that needs her to give herself to me completely. Suddenly, I know what forever feels like. It's inside each moment.

Like now. I could live right here. Even with the clutching pain in my chest, I want this. I never want her apart from me, because we belong to each other.

"If you trust me, then hold on, because I'm about to show you just how I'm going to love you for the rest of your life."

My teeth find the softest flesh at the bottom of her neck, making her gasp. At the same time, a flash of heat comes from between her legs, radiating out onto my already painfully thick erection.

"Make me yours, Daddy."

My four favorite words.

Our whispers turn to fire on our lips, meeting, melding and merging us into one. I'm on my feet, her ankles like a belt around my waist as I carry her. She's going to see just how deep I value what she gives me.

Chapter Fifteen

MAGNUS



“Did you always want me?” Angel’s words grab at my heart and twist. Her innocence needs to be cherished. It feeds the power hungry beast inside me.

“Yes, baby. From the first moment.” My dick is weeping as I draw her body to me, my mouth taking a full bite at her lush tit. Her hands come up to each side so that she can feed it to me.

Something spins inside of me, like a flame growing in intensity. I can feel her there. Our connection isn’t just physical, but something I’d only thought existed in books and songs.

Together, we release pent up breaths. She’s the only one that can extinguish the blaze inside of me; there’s no point trying to veil the sexual beast she’s unleashed. I draw her tight nipple between my teeth, applying pressure until I hear her hiss and suck in a breath, my nose pulling upward to meet my lowering brow. I hold her there, just at the edge of it, pulling my lips back so she can see her hard peak held steady between my teeth.

I’m hypnotized by this sweet angel. She’s erased every memory of what came before. My life exists in two halves now. Everything that came before her, and now what will come after. And after is the only part that seems to matter to me now.

“That feels so good.” Her tiny voice shakes as she watches my face. Seeing her offering herself to me like this is the realization of every dream I’ve ever had. Every jack-off session filled with my hopes and dreams that she would be this for me. She’s mine, right now, mine to have and hold. To own and cherish and fuck and teach and bite and caress. All of it. I used to chant it, over and over, the thoughts in my head.

When she’s mine...

With a sweep of one arm, a flex of my legs, I’m on my feet, heaving her upward and spinning in motion to the first flat surface I see.

I pin her against the wall, pressing her body flat with my weight, forgetting the loss of my limb. She’s my doll, lifted so her thighs rest on my shoulders, level with me so I’m staring down her sweet drenched cunt. This is my church. My home. My world.

“Look at me, princess,” I speak as I draw in the deepest breath I can. My nostrils light on fire as her scent cascades through me, lighting me up.

Her hands come to rest on the sides of my head, and I see the shock in her eyes, the wonder that I’m able to hold her here, high against the wall as my fingertips dig into the soft flesh of her ass. But she’s as secure as though she were belted into a harness. I’ll never let her fall. Her eyes finally rest on mine as her face softens and she accepts that she is safe in my grasp.

“I haven’t felt anything in so long, babygirl. You are my world now. I don’t think I could go on if you were gone. So I’m never going to let that happen. I just need you to know that. Don’t even try, because I won’t allow it.” She whimpers as my grip tightens. “I’ll find you, and I’ll bring you home. Every time. I’m your home now, and you’re mine.”

Her pussy lips glisten and I bury my face between her legs. My tongue extends as far as it will go, and I feel the walls of her cunt clutch around it, shaking my face violently back and forth, desperate to get her all over me. I want to wear her around, twenty-four hours a day, and have her wear my cum in the same way. Whenever she goes out of this house, whenever she will be away from me, she will be marked. My scent will be all over her, so any other fuck that even thinks of looking her way will pick up on my scent and know she’s mine.

Growls and grunts surface from somewhere in my gut as her thighs shake next to my cheeks and I hear her laugh. The rasp of my beard makes the tender flesh pink and sensitive as I attack her and eat her, like I’m a Roman at a feast. Decadent, entitled and without remorse.

She cums as I suck and clip my teeth on her hard nub. She spasms and her fingernails score the sides of my head through my hair, and I just love wearing her marks. Her heels kick into my upper back, making my breath come in bursts.

I grunt into her pink heat. “Get those hands down here and open this up for me. Hold those lips spread wide; I want it open.” My need for her to be vulnerable and exposed, totally at my command, clenches in my gut.

She releases my head, and her quivering fingers come down to pinch at her soaking labia, peeling herself apart for my pleasure. My tongue goes on the offensive, her clit is my prey.

I’ll never be able to live without her again, I know that. I’m teetering on the brink of danger. I need her on me. Her hands, her mouth, her cunt, her ass. I suck and lap until her body draws tight and her liquid arousal is running down and soaking her ass-cheeks, covering my hands as they hold her tight. I twist my giant palms so my thumbs wipe up some of her self-made lubrication on their way to spread her lush cheeks from below.

She lets out a series of rapid gasps as I lift her even higher, placing my hands so each thumb is at the tight opening of her ass. I slip them higher, applying pressure there so she knows what’s happening, what’s coming next. Tiny mewls and whimpers fall from her lips and she jerks upward, planting herself firmly on my face.

I draw back, my beard and face already drenched with her. Her body glistens with sweat and need, giving her face a twist of sweet agony. “You want it, babygirl?”

“Please, Daddy, don’t stop.”

“You want this?” My thumbs press upward another half inch, her dark hole yielding to the pressure. Her eyes go wide and her head falls back, curving her neck until she is resting against the wall. I push, applying more pressure, and I’m almost inside, but I need to hear her beg. I need to know how much she wants it. How much she wants me. Always.

“Yes. I think I do.”

I press my mouth forward, flicking my tongue back and forth, watching how hard it is for her to hold herself open for me right now. I don’t know why, but I love to see her struggle like this. I want to be her sexual master, to push her to do things that make her blush and shy.

The gasps turn to nods of her head. “Yes, I want it. Daddy, I want it.”

“Want what, Angel?” My thumbs are so close to popping inside her ass, I can already feel her clenching and releasing, the anticipation making her lower lip quiver. I suck her clit and swallow the river that comes out of her.

“What you’re doing... back there.” She wiggles her ass in my hands and I slowly glide inside.

“You want me in your ass, don’t you? Next you want Daddy’s cock in here, yes? Tell Daddy you’ll never say ‘no’ to him. You’ll never deny me anything.” I freeze, waiting for her to answer, the pain in my cock almost more than I can take. Holding back my own climax has wrecking balls slamming around inside my head, threatening to burst my brain. “Tell me, or you won’t get to cum, babygirl, and I know you need that. Daddy knows. He always knows.”

“Please, don’t stop. Yes, yes.” A clutching sob quivers her breasts and her body is on fire. “I want your hands on me. Always. Everywhere. I’ll never say ‘no’ to you. Never. Please, I need to cum.”

“Good girl. You’re here for my pleasure and mine only. I plan on fucking you straight into forever, baby.”

Nothing could stop me right now. The world could be on fire and I’d fucking let it burn while I give her what she needs. I shove my slick fingers into her tight hole as my mouth ravages her, like I’m a marauder hell bent on claiming what’s his. I pump upward and into her, only a few times, working her cunt with my mouth, and she sprays my face with a release so powerful her body goes limp, melting in a vibrant explosion of sounds that will forever be part of the symphony playing over and over in my dreams.

I gulp down her juice, the liquid running like lava in my blood, heading down, down into my dick until I cum all over myself. I don’t hold it back. I want it inside her –that’s where it should be– but this is too much. Holding her onto me like this, it’s a battle I can’t win. My cum sprays, hot and thick, up into the air between my body and the wall. When it comes back down, it catches on me and cascades down my shaft and my balls, dripping onto the floor.

I let out an agonized roar into her body and her fingers leave her pussy lips. Her hands flail and smack against the wall as she loses any control she had left. She cums and cums, her liquid soaking into my beard and dripping down onto my chest, my thumbs feeling the clench and release of her ass with the spasms of her orgasm. It’s the most beautiful thing I’ve ever experienced. She’s utterly consumed, unaware and at my mercy.

My perfect, dirty little girl.

I ease her down off the wall and carry her, clinging to me like a baby monkey, back into the bathroom. Inside the shower, the water runs down her ample curves as I soap her body and then shampoo her hair. The candy cane scent of the shampoo makes her smile. I had it delivered this morning, along with everything else.

My cock is still hungry, still needy. Somehow he knows that he hasn't had what's rightfully his. He needs to fill her again. This time I want her bent over, and it's going to be mean. I can't help that; I want her to know the depth of my need for her. Sometimes it will hurt, because we burn that bright and we always will.

When I slip into her soaking cunt, her hands flat against the slick shower wall, she lets out this gulping, hiccup sort of sound. I know I'm plumbing the limits of her depths as I stroke my monster in and out, feeling her body mercilessly pull and release. The thick vein on top of my dick stands out like a damn garden hose. My balls are throbbing, holding back a load of cum so big it's nearly killing me.

"You're. So. Deep. Inside. Me." Each word is accented by that sweet hiccup sound as I thrust forward.

"I want you to feel me in your throat, baby. So you know I can get all the way inside you whenever I want."

She shakes at my words, and I reach around to stroke her clit with the pads of my two middle fingers. In the space of a breath, she cums, drawing out my own roar and release, the orgasm nearly bringing me to my knees, and her along with me. I brace one long arm over her head and my fingernails scratch at the slick glass, trying to hold on.

The muscles in my legs shake as jets of my cream fill every space she has. It weeps out around my girth in opal dots, washing away in the water on the floor of the shower. I hold myself tight as she recovers, and the final spasms of my cum find their home.

Chapter Sixteen

MAGNUS



“**Y**ou were the one that paid for mom’s funeral, weren’t you? You sent those flowers, the hundred dozen white roses. And then, that day after I told you Cherokee had died, I got an email from the humane society saying someone had donated five thousand dollars in his name.”

I nod, slightly ashamed of my own cowardice. “I should have done more, baby. Daddy should have taken better care of you, shouldn’t have waited this long. You’re such a special girl, I knew it all along. I wanted you, but I held back. I had this ugliness going on in my life and I didn’t want it to touch you. I wasn’t even sure whether or not I’d be going to prison. You were the only thing that brought life to my days in the last three months, Angel.”

She’s snuggled into my lap as flames crackle and pop in the fireplace. We’re sitting at a side table as I feed her the dinner she’d requested. Macaroni and cheese, with noodles in the shapes of Disney characters. Yep, they make that. And I made sure to have some delivered yesterday along with everything else. Somehow, I just knew.

We’ve been locked down here at the cabin for going on five days now, and I don’t want to give her up. She’s had me read Beauty and the Beast to her three times and I’ll do it a thousand more if that’s what she wants.

I needed her like this, all to myself until the world came calling again. She's told me things I wish I had known before. Like that she was evicted from her apartment. That all of her belongings, the things she's had since childhood, the things she inherited from her mom... they're all still inside. Doomed to be tossed in a dumpster because she can't come up with the back rent on her own. Well, all that has changed now. The apartment is secure, bought and paid for, and I'm having her things boxed up and sent here where they'll be safe.

I got her set up on a computer too. Who knew someone her age was so technophobic. But we talked a lot about her dyslexia. I made a few phone calls and have a specialist that is going to start working with her in a couple weeks. In the mean time, he gave us a few online programs for her to use to start to help.

"Do you think they'll like me?" She dabs the linen napkin at her lips then drapes her arms around my neck and I melt.

"Baby, they'll love you."

We've got a dinner planned for tonight with my sister and brother. Angel invited her friend, Andrea as well.

"What do I call you?" She scrunches up her nose. "When people are around."

"Well, I think in our house, with the people we love, you can call me Daddy. If they don't understand, then that's their problem. I don't ever want to hide who we are, baby. But let's see how you feel when they are here. I don't ever want you to be uncomfortable. Out in the world, in public, you can call me Magnus. Or just whisper 'Daddy.' Now sit up straight." I kiss her hair and spoon a heaping, steamy pile of cheesy noodles between her lips as she wiggles into my lap. "Baby, I'm so sorry you had to go through all that on your own. Thinking you had nothing, nowhere to go." I shake my head. "Nobody should ever have to stay in a place like that."

"It's okay. I was only homeless for a couple of days. Made me grow up a little."

"Just don't grow up too much, my Angel. Daddy likes you just the way you are."

"Thank you so much. You're just a big, sweet teddy bear. My big teddy bear." She kisses my cheek and my heart just about pops right out of my chest.

Epilogue One

CHASTITY



One month later

“**Y**ou know what Daddy needs, now it’s your job to give it to me, baby.” Magnus’s rippled torso catches the light from the sunrise. My fingers tingle as they bury deep into the tufts of dark hair that adorn his chest. I love his body hair, the way it winds down from his torso, pointing the way to his cock and then decorating his legs. “You’re going to give Daddy one of your very special mouth hugs. Your mouth. My cock.”

He knows mornings are not my thing, but this is important to him and I love making him happy.

He settles on the edge of the bed. I’m a tangled mess, as usual, my hair has a mind of its own, especially after sleeping on top of Daddy all night. No, that’s not quite right. Yes, I was on top of him all night, but he was also inside me all night.

He said that’s been one of his fantasies since the moment he met me. Sleeping with his cock inside me. And I love making his fantasies come true. Because he makes mine come true every day.

“I’m yours Daddy.” I roll over and curl myself around where he’s sitting. My mouth is already watering as I inch-worm my way over until my face is on his naked lap. The coarse texture of the hair on his thighs rubs against my cheek. “Can I put it in my mouth? I want it very, very much. I want you, Daddy. I always want you. My pussy is wet already.”

I creep forward half crawling, licking my lips as his dark eyes follow my movements and he gently pets my wild hair away from my face. His arm darts to the bedside table, coming back with a ponytail holder and he makes quick work of getting my hair out of the way.

He has to watch, he always wants to watch. I think that is my favorite part. Well, one of them anyway. I have so many favorite parts of my life with Daddy, it’s hard to pick, but the way he looks at me is definitely one of them. The look in his eyes tells me so much. He looks at me like I might disappear at any moment and maybe this is the last glimpse he’ll ever get. Every moment he makes me feel like I’m the most important part of his life.

“Lick it, baby. Be a good girl, start with your tongue today. Daddy wants to see you lick it like it’s your favorite lollipop.”

My hand shoots out from under me, taking hold of his full erection. It’s rarer for me to see him without one than with one, and I have to say I love his desire for me. And he needs to know I desire him, that’s what he needs from me, so I try to tell him and show him whenever I can.

My tongue reaches out and taps at the slit where I see the drops of liquid waiting for me.

I bat my lashes as I moan, tasting him on my tongue, watching as his eyes drift. I swirl my tongue around the tip of his cock and take a quick, playful bite, making him laugh.

“Now, don’t get yourself in a pickle, little one. You keep that up... Your bottom is still red from last night. You want another layer of ouchies, you just keep that up.”

I curl the tip of my tongue around the deep ridge, under the helmet, which is already throbbing and turning a deep bluish-purple from all the blood. I love that part, when I can feel how much he wants me, when the tip is soft and hard at the same time.

I follow the vein that stands out like a slithering snake on the top side, flicking my tongue and teasing up and down until he lets out a pained sigh.

“I loved sleeping with my cock inside you, baby. You know that’s my favorite way to sleep with you. Daddy needs that. He needs you to want him

all the time, like he wants you. When you fall asleep on my chest like you do, with my dick clutched in that tiny, tight pussy, you make Daddy so happy, Angel. Just like you are doing right now.”

I’m getting lost in the moment, moaning as I lick up and down, getting him slick with spit just the way he taught me. I never dreamed I would love this so much, but I do. The flavor of his cum is the best way to wake up, and we always start the day with loving each other. Daddy calls it our ‘know and show’ time. He needs to know how much I want him, and he needs to show me how much he wants me. Always.

I pop up onto my knees. The sleepy feelings are gone and the tingle between my legs is better than any coffee. Daddy got me off already with his fingers this morning. He likes to finger me while I’m still sleeping, making me cum when I’m still half in my dreams. He whispers wonderful, dirty things in my ear when he does it and I cum almost immediately. He knows my body and what I need even better than I do.

Then he usually gets up and showers, does some work while I sleep a bit more. He’s like a machine. I think he only sleeps four or five hours a night, whereas I’m barely functioning with my eight or nine.

“That’s such a good girl.”

The tip is tapping at my tonsils and I’m sucking so hard the sound of my effort fills the room. I used to be embarrassed about the funny little noises that come with sex, but Daddy taught me very quickly there is nothing to be embarrassed about. When it comes to us, I’ve learned it’s all about our love, and there is nothing bad about love. It made me feel so secure. He likes that I’ve turned into his little sex toy. And I like that he wants me that way, too. He told me no one else has ever made him even think of the things we do together, and I love that we are the first for each other in so many ways.

My own sounds of pleasure as I feel his erection tighten under the slick skin match the grunts and curse words that he’s letting out in generous portions. I love listening to him like this, making him nearly helpless, lost in the moment. Giving him so much pleasure that he loses himself completely. He has power over me, but he tells me over and over that I’m really the one running the show.

“Fuck, Angel, you suck my cock so good, your mouth should be sainted.” He lays back on the bed, throwing his arms straight up over his head, giving me even better access. I kneel next to his hips, working up and

down as my boobs bounce under me, slapping against his side with every down stroke.

I gather his balls in the palm of one hand while the other twists and pumps along the base of his cock, and Daddy's hips tighten in an upward thrust, sending the thick head down my throat until I see stars. The gagging sounds start, but Daddy likes that too, and the tears fill my eyes.

"Take it all, sweet baby. You're making Daddy cum, princess. Just a little more, take it, make Daddy so happy——" The tension in his voice reaches for the ceiling with each word.

The curse words start again and I open my throat so that the head of his cock can fill it. The explosion starts with a jet of hot cream, and I instinctively begin to swallow. I drop one hand down between my legs, playing with my clit as my own release spins and tightens inside of me.

We cum together, in a fit of moans mixed with Daddy's swearing.

His cum is dripping down my chin, joining the happy tears that cover my face from the effort I always put into sucking him. He gives me so much, has given me so much... This is one way I can show him how much I appreciate him.

"Fuck, baby, how do you get better at that every time? You nearly sucked me dry. I may never find my balls again, the way you deflated them."

I giggle, and he sits up, immediately kissing me. He loves when his cum is on my lips, and this time I have a surprise for him.

"Why are you holding your lips closed, baby? You know I want to give you a big girl kiss."

I smile, then open my mouth, sticking my tongue out just a little bit so he can see.

"Oh, sweet girl. You know I love to see that. I know how hard it is to hold it in your mouth." He leans over and holds my cheeks tight, looking down at me as I hold most of his load in my mouth. He looks so proud it makes my heart soar. "Rub it all over you. I want to see you wear it for me."

He dabs two fingers into the slick cream on my tongue, then starts to rub it on my tightened nipples. Another moment and he sees my fingers are still down between my legs. A gruff smile breaks across his face, slicing his beard open with the sight of bright, white teeth.

His hand cups over mine, moving my fingers inside me. "Angel, you keep your fingers in that pussy of mine. I'll busy myself making sure you

have my scent all over you today. I want everyone to smell me on you, to know you're mine."

He lets go and brings his hand under my mouth, and I release his cum into his cupped fingers, then give him a broad smile.

"Are you nervous, babygirl?"

He starts to rub the slick combination of spit and jizz down my breasts, over my soft belly. My breasts. Down the insides of my thighs.

"A little. But you'll be right there, so I'll be fine."

"Keep playing with that clit, baby, I didn't tell you to stop." He waits for me to do as I'm told before he continues. "And yes, you are right, I will be right there with you. You just answer the questions they ask, tell the truth and then we're done. My attorney will be there to intervene if needed."

"But what if they ask about what you did?"

"Then answer. I'm not afraid—I was protecting you. Besides, they aren't interested in what happened after the fact, baby. Andrea was right to file a complaint against that piece of shit, and you have every right for your story to be told as well. What he did broke the law, he's lucky this is just a company investigation. I can't believe he has the nuts to try to fight his dismissal. But, stupid is as stupid does, I suppose."

He shifts on the edge of the bed, reaching down and I hear the snaps on his prosthetic coming off. I shudder with delight as I'm sure I know what coming. Something special, something I asked him for a week ago, embarrassed that he would think I was perverse. But, ends up, it's become one of the ways he can make me cum almost faster than his mouth. And he loves to see me cum, even this way.

"Lean back baby."

He brings up the base of his leg. The smooth skin curved with a deep silver scar that reminds me of a smile. I call it his other mouth now and I spread my legs as he brings the flesh at the base of his leg to my pussy, rubbing and gliding up and down. Increasing the pressure and tempo.

"I'm going to cum again if you keep doing that."

The sight of his massive, naked body is almost enough to send me over the edge, but the gleam in his eye makes it almost impossible to hold back.

"Don't you cum, Angel. You didn't ask permission." He pulls back leaving me feeling lost for a moment. "Hold that thought baby, today is a special day."

He flips me over onto all fours with one swoop of his hand, making me flail around and suck a startled breath into my lungs. My heart is already thumping faster and faster because I love when he manhandles me like this.

“I’m sorry, I was just telling you——”

His hand squeezes over my mouth, stopping my words. “That’s the problem, baby, you don’t tell me. I tell *you*. Now, look up in that mirror.” He points toward the wall with a straight arm.

Just yesterday, Daddy installed a giant mirror over the headboard of the bed.

I squeak from under his hand. Even as he moves behind me he’s powerful enough to keep me in place. I look up to see us both centered in the massive reflection, and I know now why he wanted the mirror. Seeing his form behind me makes me bleat, a mixture of pleasure and awe. The sight of us together only makes me realize just how huge he is. The beard, the muscle, the hair all over his body as he looms above my pale, crouched form is enough to send a gush of lady juice out of me, my body instinctively submitting to him.

“I’m going to fuck your ass today, my little princess.” He moves a finger to tease at my tight bud making me flinch. “That’s what the mirror is for. I want you to see how beautiful you look the first time I fuck your tight little ass. I know you’ve been saving it just for me. Daddy’s so ready, baby. Don’t worry, I’ll go slow. You’re ready, I made sure so it won’t hurt.”

His finger glides down my ass to enter my drenched opening, gathering out my slick juice and rubbing it on his cock. I’m mesmerized by the vision in the mirror.

Goosebumps pebble my flesh delves inside me again, taking more of my slick lubrication and playing with it circling around my tight back entrance, pushing a finger inside to make me slick and ready, in and out, in and out.

“You ready, baby?” He takes his hand off my mouth and places both of them on my ass. Pulling my butt cheeks apart, knowing he needs to see everything.

I nod, almost on the verge of an orgasm just from the anticipation that this is finally happening. He’s been preparing my body for a month, working first one finger inside my ass, then two, before he and I played with a couple toys. He can make me cum easily now from the ass play, and now that it’s really time for him to put his cock inside me, I’m so excited I can barely breathe.

“I’m ready, Daddy. I want it. I want it in my ass. Please, please.”

The pleas are all he needs. He says my begging is his undoing. It reminds him how much I want him and need him, and he says that is what keeps his heart beating everyday.

“Good girl. Now, you keep your eyes on yourself, I want you to see what you to remember the look on your face the first time my cock slides inside your ass.”

With that, the tip of his cock slips to press against my back entrance, easy, even pressure starts immediately as he holds his erection in a tight grip, guiding it forward. I keep my eyes on the picture of us in the mirror. His face tense with restraint. I know he wants to fuck into me like he does my pussy, like it’s the last fuck he’ll ever have with me, but I trust him and I know he would never hurt me.

I gasp as my body stretches and opens to him. A rumble comes from his chest and I watch his eyes close in the reflection as he lets out a long, slow breath, the muscles in his torso coursing like waves under the dark hair over his pectorals. Then his eyes snap open and he takes the first real thrust, driving the head of his cock inside me with a soft pop, and my mouth turns to an open gasp.

“You okay, baby?” He grunts, barely able to get the words out.

“Uh huh.” I nod, my hair a curtain around my face. I’m lost in the feeling of being stretched, filled with him. “Keep going, it feels so good, I want more.” I whimper and he answers with slow, even strokes.

Before I know it, my body heaves with an orgasm that comes from nowhere, crashing over me with sparks and flashes like a bucket of glitter. He deepens his even thrusts as I go off, making the climax explode, the room losing focus as I scream his name, begging him, “Daddy, don’t stop. Never, ever stop, Daddy.”

I’m not sure who is the loudest, because Daddy cums just after me, with his fingers clenching into the softest part of my hips. I know there will be bruises there tomorrow, he’s holding on so tight as he fills me with hot jets of his seed. I never dreamed it would feel so good, and from the way Daddy’s face looks, I don’t think he did either.

“You have no idea how much you mean to me, Angel. You just could never know.” His words come breathless, both of us desperately clawing at the edge of consciousness, trying to recover. He’s still attached as he draws the coarse tips of his fingers up and down my back, raising goose bumps as

they go. “You will never know.” The words sound cracked, fragile, and I bite down inside my lip to keep from crying.



An hour later he’s given me my bath and we are dressed and in the kitchen.

“Come here, kitten.”

He pats his lap and I crawl on. He feeds me breakfast every morning.

He brings a bite of scrambled eggs to my lips and I open them. I know better than to fight him on a good breakfast. He worries so much about everything when it concerns me, including what I eat.

“I got an email last night from the guys at Integrity.”

They are the architects that are designing the new addition to the Sarah Templeton Life Center.

“Yeah?” I ask, half covering my mouth as I chew the bite he’s just put in.

“Yep. That little question about having the animal kennel and shelter attached is all resolved, baby. That was the best idea I’ve ever heard. It will be perfect. I hired the same consultant that worked with the animal and addict rehab programs out in California, and he will be here next week for us to start laying out the new program.”

My arms go around his neck as my belly flips. “That is so great! I know that having the animals there will help everyone. It’s just perfect. They can all help each other. I love you so much.”

I kiss his beard and it tickles my nose. It still does that every time.

“I love you too, princess. Now, another bite. You didn’t eat enough yesterday. I saw you give Tinder half your plate of food under the table last night.”

I kick my legs back and forth, knowing I need to be careful what I say next. Daddy loves me, and is very tolerant with me, but he does not stand for sassy, bratty replies.

“I’m sorry. I just wasn’t that hungry and I didn’t like the hamburger. I don’t like meat, you know that.”

“Yes, baby, I know. I’ll try to find some other options for you. My little blossoming vegetarian still needs to eat healthy food. You can’t live on cupcakes and French fries. I’m going to be sure of that.”

Another mouthful of eggs arrives at my lips. Daddy bought the drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility in downtown, the one where you go if you don't have any money. He's upgrading the place, building onto it, expanding it. He will have a scholarship program for people that don't have the ability to pay, because he wants everyone to benefit from the same treatment, but it's not going to be second rate in any way. It will be high end. We will have the best of the best when it comes to doctors, and the programs there will be first rate.

It was my idea to incorporate an animal program, and that gave us the idea to have an animal shelter next door. That way the residents could have access to some supervised work, bond with the animals, adopt one during their stay—there are all sorts of ways they can help each other.

“And what about Dad?” I gather my courage and swallow hard, waiting for his answer.

“Well, when you are ready, he's ready to talk to you, baby. But I think you should wait. He's just started his treatment. I say we give him a couple months. I have to do what I think is best for you, and he was in bad shape when they found him. Just be glad he agreed to go the facility. I paid for everything he needs—clothes, the program for six months, his apartment. Let's give him some time. He's been sick for a long time.”

“Okay. I trust you.” I take another bite of eggs before I continue with my mouth full. “I know I don't even know him, but I wish him well. Even if he doesn't want to be part of my life, I still want to know he's okay.” I gulp down the food. “But if he does, I want to meet him. Again. And just see what happens.”

“If that's what you want, baby, I'll make it happen, as long as I know you will be safe and he won't hurt you. But we'll talk more about it as time goes on. Let's see how he does in treatment, okay?”

It's toast this time, with strawberry jelly, and I take a bite before I lean my head into the crook of his neck. It's my favorite place, I can smell his masculine scent, hear the low thump of his pulse in his neck, his heart in his chest.

We finish up breakfast and I sit on top of the kitchen counter, spinning my hair between my fingers, watching while he does the dishes.

“Andrea called last night.”

“Yeah? How's she doing?” He looks over at me with a warm smile. Everything and everyone that means something to me is important to him.

“She’s good. Seems like she and your brother Erik had a nice time at Thanksgiving dinner. They went out to lunch yesterday, and they are going to dinner Saturday.”

We had a big dinner here at the cabin for Thanksgiving, with Daddy’s family all around us. Andrea came too, because her mom was out of the country with her new boyfriend. She ended up sitting next to Erik and he looked like a deer caught in headlights the whole night.

A deep chuckle comes from Daddy’s throat as he dries his hands and folds the dishtowel in a perfect square before placing it on the counter. He steps over and I spread my legs for him to stand in between. He doesn’t need an invitation, he just moves in and kisses the top of my head.

“They did seem to make a connection.”

“Yep. She said he’s texting her like four times a day. Making sure she’s okay. Asking her if she ate her lunch, if she has gas money, and if she slept well. Sounds like the Leonard men have something in common.”

He wraps me in one of his bear hugs with more deep laughter.

“We may be slow to start, but once we do we’re hard to stop.” He rubs his fingers on my back. “How’s your ass, baby? I didn’t hurt you, did I? I’d kill myself if I hurt you.” His voice loses its lightness and I know he’s so worried about everything.

“I loved it, Daddy. It’s a little sore, but the good kind of sore. You didn’t hurt me. It felt so good.”

“Good. I love you, babygirl. So much.”

His phone buzzes in his pocket and he lets me go to pull it out. He smiles and taps out a reply to a text. When he looks up, his eyes dance and sparkle, and I know something is up.

“Who was that?”

“You’ll see, come on. I have a surprise for you. Put this on.” He reaches over to the chair where my winter jacket is hanging. I wondered why it was there, he’s normally so tidy, everything put away in its proper place. Seems like someone’s been hiding a secret plan.

Once he’s got me zipped up he turns his back to me. “Hop on.” He crouches down, and in a second he’s got me piggy back and out the front door just as a pickup is pulling down the long, gravel drive through the pine trees. It crunches around the circle toward where we’re standing. It’s cold, but he has heat lamps on in the entryway and the overhang.

It doesn't take me more than two seconds to see the person in the passenger seat struggling to calm an excited ball of fur.

"What? Is that what I think it is?"

He lowers my feet to the ground as my hands dart to cover my mouth and I start jumping up and down. I love Tinder and Leopold, but I've been talking about how much I loved raising Cherokee from a little pup. I guess when he said making me happy and giving me everything I want (within reason of course) is what makes him happy, he wasn't kidding.

"If you think that is a brother and sister that need a good home then yes, it's what you think. They're a mixture of St. Bernard and German Sheppard, we think. So I hope you're prepared for a couple big new friends, Angel. They're all yours."

The man opens the door of the truck and one by one he sets down the giant fluff balls, and they come running right to me. I'm crouched down, and they may be puppies but they knock me right over, covering my face with puppy breath as they lick me until I can't breathe.

I manage to open my eyes and look up just in time to see Daddy hastily brushing fingers under both his eyes.

"I love you, Daddy. Sooooo much."

"I love you too, Angel. More than you can ever know."

Epilogue Two

MAGNUS



One year later

“Dude, calm the fuck down.”

“I can’t. I’m a fucking mess.” My chest feels like bricks are stacking on it, more every second. My palms are sweaty and my voice sounds like I’m hitting puberty again. “And we shouldn’t be fucking swearing right now.” I jerk an elbow into Erik’s side as he laughs at me standing in his matching tuxedo to my left.

Thank God this is a civil ceremony and the justice of the peace is standing out of ear shot.

My legs are shaking, and I keep having to wipe the sweat off my brow. I never thought I would be here, and now that I am I’m acting more like the blushing bride than the strong, steady groom.

We’re standing in the living room at the small cabin, the lights dangling from every surface, vertical or otherwise. Angel wanted a Christmas themed wedding and that’s what I gave her. I had the cabin completely decked out like the inside of Santa’s workshop at the North Pole. I told the designers

that my angel loved it in the movie “Elf” with Will Farrell, when he stayed up all night in the department store and decorated the Santa’s workshop. I showed the wedding planners the scenes in the movie and told them to make it look like that, spare no expense, and I have to admit they did not disappoint.

There are intricate paper snowflakes dangling by the hundreds from the ceiling. Twinkling white lights fall from everywhere. Soft tufts of some kind of fake snow cover the surfaces and there are jars and jars of every kind of candy you could think of on a buffet in the back of the room.

Now I’m standing here, sweating like a whore in church, waiting for my sweet angel to step out of the limo that just delivered her from the main house to the cabin door.

I say a prayer at the ceiling as the music cues up, and I see her father step inside first, holding the door open for his daughter.

When she comes in and takes his arm, I don’t fight it any more. I’m just praying I can answer the questions when they are asked, because I’m already crying so fucking hard I have to slap away the tears so I can see my precious girl as she walks down the short aisle.

Andrea is here, maid of honor, and Erik’s my best man. And I wouldn’t be surprised if they are doing this very thing themselves in a few months. They’ve been almost as inseparable this past year as we were from the day we got together.

Seems the Leonard men really do have the Viking curse. Once we see our one and only, we’re done. Tag us and bag us, because we are all one-woman men.

The next twenty minutes pass in a blur of my own pussy tears and our words of love. All I remember clearly is her. She’s so beautiful it’s like staring into the sun. I know for sure that I manage to repeat my vows between my straight out man sobs, but that’s about the only other thing I remember.

After that, it’s ‘I do’s’ and congratulations, and I’m still a bit of a mess. Dragging the back of my hand over my cheeks every few seconds. Only now I have a hard on the size of a toddler’s arm sticking up inside my black tuxedo trousers.

“Come on, babe.” I take her arm, leading her to the back bedroom where Mom and Dad used to sleep. I had it completely redone. The rest of the few guests we invited are all at the other end of the building. They all know I’m

not waiting any longer to take my new bride for the first time. So they are all enjoying the free food and copious amounts of great wine, courtesy of Cindy, while I take my sweet angel to the other room to fuck her the first time as my wife.

“That was so amazing, Daddy.” She whispers. She still doesn’t like to call me Daddy in front of a lot of people, and that’s fine. I love her little soft, embarrassed moments. “You made the house look just like in the movie.”

“Only the best for my babygirl. Now, get in that bed, I’m going to eat my wife’s pussy until she cums a couple times. Then I’m warning you, Angel, Daddy needs it hard. I need my wife to remember her first fuck with every step she takes for a few days. Your pussy’s going to be feeling me even when I’m not there, princess. Daddy needs to get off hard, so you just be a good girl and let me do what I need to do, okay?”

“Yes, Daddy.”

When she reaches down and lifts up the bottom edge of her dress, pulls it up as I’m closing the door behind us and shows me her naked pussy underneath, I nearly explode in my pants.

“Face down, ass up, baby. Daddy’s coming in.”

She giggles as I chase her to the bed, and she crawls up as I dive into her pussy, pushing the layers of white fabric out of the way. I want to take her like this, in her sweet, white dress. I want my cum on the fabric, and I want it boxed up and kept that way in remembrance. She may not be a virgin, but it’s our first time as husband and wife and that deserves commemoration in my book.

After she covers my face with two rounds of her sweet release, I’m as primed as a powder keg, ready to let loose inside her pussy. She’s as tight as the first time I took her, and every time feels like the first for me. I’m a complete bitch for her and my little princess keeps me on my toes.

I wait until she gets her breath back, then I’m dropping trou and naked behind her, my cock spilling out cum already.

“Daddy.” She looks over her shoulder, her face flushed.

“Yeah, babe?” I rub my cock through her soaking folds, committing every second of this to memory. I push it onto her hard, sensitive nub, clit fucking her with the tip as she tries to focus.

“I didn’t tell you last night because I wanted it to be our wedding surprise. But the doctor called. He said it looks like everything worked. I

won't take any more shots. I could even get pregnant right now. He said it's not likely, but possible."

"Fucking awesome. That's the best wedding present ever, baby. My god."

I slide into her without another word. I need her body around mine. All the waiting, the worrying. Her endometriosis kept her on the Depo shot, but I found a specialist and she had some treatments over the last couple months. We just had to wait and pray they would work, and it looks like good things come to those who wait, because I can feel it already. I'm putting a baby inside her if it kills me.

We fuck in every position possible over the next hour. I cum buckets into her cunt, leaving her laying on the bed with her hips stacked on six pillows, because I want every drop of my seed in her womb today. I'm taking root, I can feel it.

"Lick me clean, princess. I tried to get it all inside you, but looks like there's a couple drops there for your mouth."

I crawl up onto the bed, push the tip of my cock down to her ready, waiting lips as she smiles up at me and flicks that magical tongue over the head, taking the droplets of white cream that sneak out.

"Mmmmm. Thank you." She moans as she cleans me off.

The music is turned up louder in the other room now, and I'm sure it's my sister's message to hurry up and get out there with the rest of the celebration.

"Come on, my sweet girl. Let's get you some food. I'm worried you didn't eat enough yesterday with all the excitement."

She grins, licking the last taste of me from her lips. "You say that every day. I'm going to be as big as a house if you keep it up. And if I get pregnant _____"

"When, Angel. Not if. When." I take the pillows out from under her legs, watching as a little of my seed drips from her pussy. I hate that it's coming out of her like that, but I'll be giving her multiple refills until her belly is full of me. "And if you ever lose a pound, I'll be pissed, you know that. All of this is mine. And if you get rid of any of it, I'm going to spank your ass until you can't sit down for a week."

She giggles and I slap her soaking pussy just for good measure before flipping her dress back down and pulling her up.

I gather up my clothes and she helps me get myself back together before wrapping her arms around my waist and pulling me tight. And I hug her back, twice as hard.

“You’re dripping down the insides of my legs, Daddy.”

“Good. I want you to feel me like that this entire day. You know who you belong to, don’t you?”

“You, Daddy. Always and forever.”

“Good girl. Such a good girl.”

Epilogue Three

CHASTITY



Five Years Later

“**M**ommy and Daddy will be right there, Emily. One second _____”

I lose the last words on a pleased gasp as Magnus pinches my clit between his magical lips, making me cum on his face for the third time this morning. My head swims with pleasure, making the next words difficult to form.

“Are...” A moan as I regain my breath. “Are you done?”

I smile at the sight of my monster of a husband sitting on the floor of the kitchen, leaning against the cabinets with his tongue still lapping between my legs where I’m straddling his face, his hands gripping my skirt at my hips.

“Because it’s pancake Sunday, and these pancakes aren’t going to make themselves.”

“Go, babe, I’ll just watch from down here.”

“You’re impossible.”

Emily is playing with the dogs in the great room. I can see her from my position in the kitchen, but she can’t see her father or what’s going on down below.

“You’re beautiful.” He answers with a sigh. Letting my skirt down with a smack on the outside of my thigh. I quit wearing panties years ago, Daddy’s orders. “That ass is going to be turned up and red tonight. You know why, too.”

“Yes, Daddy.” I whisper down at him.

“No skipping meals, baby. I told you, I like you just the way you are. The babies only made you more beautiful to me. You skip breakfast again, and it won’t just be a spanking.”

Emily is four and Magnus Jr. is three. Then there’s Lenny, who is just six months. We’re done now. The doctor said the complications with Lenny would make it dangerous for me to have any more babies, but we’re okay with that. We have three beautiful children and our life is full and chaotic, and more wonderful than I ever imagined.

We’ve managed to keep our own personal dynamic alive, too. I will always be Daddy’s girl, and although we tone it down when we’re with them, even in front of the kids we show our love that way. We are still who we are. I belong to him completely and he loves me unconditionally.

He’s a ripe pain in my butt sometimes, but I know that he really does know best and I trust him completely.

The rehab is running on its own now. With the kids and everything, I only manage to work there once a week at the shelter doing some group pet therapy with the patients, but that’s enough for me.

Even Dad is working a little. He’s slow, his rough life has caught up with him a bit, but he does what he can with some activities and talks at the center. He certainly knows what they are going through, and it gives him purpose. Magnus bought him a little house nearby, down the road from us, and he has a driver to take him wherever he wants.

Erik and Andrea got hitched a couple years ago. They ended up living in the city, which suits them, but we get together every Friday night for a family dinner. Cindy comes too. She hasn’t found her happily ever after yet, but she’s doing well. The wine business is now in six states and there’s no sign of the growth stopping any time soon.

“Baby’s crying.” Magnus has ears like an eagle. “I’ll go get the little monster. Get those tits out and ready. I’ll hand him off to you and finish up the pancakes.”

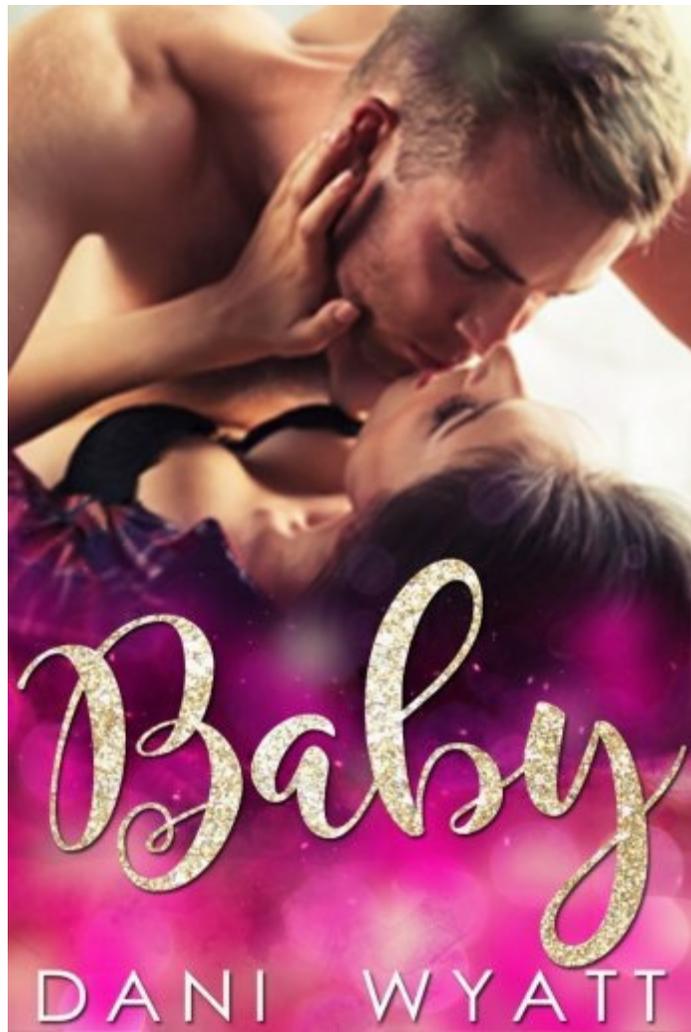
“Yes, Daddy. Whatever you say.”

“Darn right.”

With a smack on my ass and a kiss on my cheek he's out of the kitchen and chirping something at Emily as she pulls on the dog's ears and tumbles around with all her furry friends like a pig in mud.

Every day I still let Magnus know how much I want him. Because I do. I guess I never imagined what this kind of life could be like for us. Ours is a special kind of love, but I can't imagine it any other way. I'm the luckiest girl I know.





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BABY

CHAPTER ONE RYDER

I felt like I was going to puke. The way they treated my Chloe was nauseating. What a fucked up family, sitting there, slobbering all over themselves. If they thought that their little princess—Chloe’s older sister—was about to snag me like a little bitch and use me to turn them into some kind of second rate, trailer trash royalty they’d be wrong. If they only knew what they had coming, they’d be running as fast as they could for the tin can where they came from.

Don’t get me wrong; I grew up in that same trash heap down at the bottom of Eight Mile. Yeah, there was a movie about it. Don’t make a big deal about it, but that’s where I grew up, and that’s where Chloe and her family still live. Only, they don’t have any fucking idea what I know about their precious Theresa, a.k.a. Trixie. And it’s about to go viral.

“Why didn’t you wear a suit? This is a special night.” Trixie Whitehouse sat there like a smug cartoon queen with her strapless orange nightmare of a dress barely holding up the weight of her third round of silicone implants.

“I don’t wear what you tell me to wear.” I lean back in my chair, my eyes unable to stay off the ultimate prize, who sat there like a demure china doll next to her parents. I wore my fatigues. I knew Trix hated them, and I also knew my babygirl loved me in my camo, and she’s the goddess I serve.

“Chloe, go get us two more Bud’s.” Edgar Whitehouse is too lazy to go get his own beer from the bar, so he sends his youngest daughter to do his dirty work.

“Sit.” I growl at Chloe inches her chair back to stand.

“No, it’s okay. Let me go.” She smiles and I see the wheels turning in the beautiful head of hers. She’s so scared of her family knowing about us. The

pleading look in her eyes breaks my heart.

What a fucking evil piece of shit her father is. I want to jump across the eight top and smash the ten teeth he has left down his throat. But I know that would be too much for my little girl, so I roll my eyes and swallow deep, counting the seconds until I get us the fuck out of here.

My gut told me to steal her away from them the day I got home. But, she wasn't ready and my plan wasn't quite pulled together but it is now.

"Why aren't you listening to me?" Trixie looked like a ten-cent whore, and her breath smelled like a trashcan filled with ten kinds of cheap liquor and a hundred ashtrays. She made my stomach turn.

My voice caught in my throat. "Trix," I took a deep breath before continuing. "I told you I would come here, but lay the fuck off."

Even the thought of pretending to be her friend sets my teeth on edge, but I'll do anything to stay close to Chloe. Just a little while longer and this whole charade is over.

It was one of Trixie's skanky friend's getting married, and she was in the bridal party. I was thankful because it meant she was sitting at the head table and not with the family. She's staring at me.

"What?" It was all I could do not to push her face away from me and flatten her on the ground. In her condition, it was only a matter of time before she ended up on the floor, but I didn't want to be the one to put her there, at least not in front of my angel.

"Why are you such a grump?" Trixie pouted, maintaining a distorted fantasy that somehow I might think looking at her bratty face was cute.

"I'm not a grump, but you *are* drunk, and if you don't know by now how I hate..." I let my voice trail off.

What the fuck did I care? She knew how I felt about drinking, and she chose to throw back as many shots as the bartender would serve at once along with the other Orange Crush contingent standing next to the bride.

She wasn't going to listen anyway. Her attention span made a flea look focused. I looked over at my girl walking back from the bar, her hands gripping two brown bottles with red and white labels. She set them down in front of the toothless wonder and his lovely bride who applied her eyeliner as thick as her lipstick. Besides her raccoon eyes and smeared red lips, there wasn't a bottle of peroxide left at Walmart from the looks of her hair.

"Mom!" Trixie screamed across the table.

I took a deep breath, all I wanted to do was grab my baby's hand and get her the hell out of here. She looked so lost and out of place with this circus sideshow. How the fuck she came from the same place as the rest of these freaks is beyond me.

I was only here for Chloe; she had begged me not to be to brutal with Trix. We hadn't been together since the day I met Chloe. I wasn't even sure why her sister wanted to be friends with me. I hadn't touched her in years, not since those first months in high school when we got together. Before I met her family. And Chloe. In fact, my dick would turtle up if Trix even made an eyelash bat my way.

Truth is, I know why Trix wants to maintain our friendship. She's thinks I'm about to provide her winning lottery ticket.

As long as my baby was still in that house with these freaks, I would try to keep her life from getting even worse by playing along. Being gone overseas, I needed to know she was at least under a roof, such as it was. I couldn't back out on my contract, so we had to make a deal with each other. We stuck to it, but time's up. I'm done with hiding and pretending. It's time for me and my babygirl to be together for real.

"Yes, princess?" Elvira's twin leaned her elbows on the table, taking a deep draw from the long necked, brown bottle, and then wiped the back of her hand over her chin when she couldn't even manage to keep the beer from dribbling out of her lips.

"Don't you think Ryder looks older? I think he got older while he was sitting in that desert for so long. Did you get older?" They both laughed.

"Yep. Older and wiser," I spat back as my gut clenched.

Trixie leaned over, her hand on my leg and her triple D silicone popping out the top of the cheap cream-sickle dress. It felt like acid was burning through my pants where she rested her hand, and I couldn't breathe for another second with her so close to me.

I jerked my leg sideways and kicked my chair back so hard it almost fell over.

"Where are you going?"

"To get some water."

"There's water right here silly. Come on, let's dance!" She looked up, leaned on the table and tried to stand up. The tendrils of her intricate up-do falling in highlighted streaks across her face. What a train wreck.

“No. I’ll be back.” I looked over at Chloe, sitting there with her eyes low, her teeth biting on her lower lip. Jesus, if she knew what she was doing to me, sitting there looking like that.

I threw my head back and cracked my neck, trying to release some of the tension from watching the freak show. My cock screamed for my babygirl.

Just knowing she was sitting there thinking about me was almost more than I could take. I needed to take a walk and try to tame the beast that was quickly growing in my pants.

Of course, I should have broken it off with Trixie long ago, but I stuck around and played nice with the family. Chloe was less than legal when we met, and I’d never have gone near her then. But I knew. I knew our day would come and I needed an excuse to stay close, so I played the friend game with Trix.. Chloe actually felt so bad, like somehow she’d done something wrong when we had our first kiss.

Trix thought I was her ticket out of the trailer park even before word of my inheritance began to circulate. I hated myself for a long time for this, but when I laid my eyes on Chloe when she was only thirteen. I knew even then; she was the only one for me. I would’ve never done anything back then with her, but I think I stayed loosely bound to her sister just to keep an eye on her until it was our time. In fact, I never touched Trixie after that day.

Fuck, it shocked the hell out of me when I put us in the friend zone and Trix took it as well as she did.

Chloe begged me not to bring us out in the open before I deployed, and after she explained it to me, there was no way I wanted to make her life any harder than it already was.

Her fucked up parents had some twisted idea that their little blond princess somehow was more valuable than the sweet smoldering angel that had her fingers wrapped unwillingly around my heart, and soon, around my cock, but not yet. Chloe was worth waiting for.

She was *the one*, and I was going to do it all right for her. It was killing me not being able to feel the insides of her curve around my cock as I entered the first time, but we had to do it like I planned, for her benefit. Even in high school I kept my eye on her. She was the little sister, the jail-bait, but looking back, even then I knew. I just didn’t want to admit it.

“Hurry back, and bring me another...” Trix waved her empty glass in the air. There was no way in hell I was getting her another drink, and the fact that she asked me to was just another nail in her coffin.

I gave my girl a quick nod as she looked up at me, careful not to let anyone see. She was so sweet, even when those bottom feeders treated her like a piece of shit, she still didn't want to hurt them. She was a better person than me; I would have firebombed the whole table if I had my way.

I got a hold of my hard on and took about a hundred deep breaths. Thank fuck when I got back to the table, all the garbage crap were on the dance floor falling all over each other. I slipped down next to my girl, careful to sit next to her, not on top of her like I wanted.

"They're going to see us." Her sweet, glossy, rose pink lips looked so beautiful, all I could think of was what they would feel like around my cock.

"I don't give a fuck anymore. I'm ready to blow this whole shit show up right now, babygirl."

I slipped my hand down and my head felt like it was going to explode as I felt the sweet soft skin just above her knee. Of course, I couldn't stop there, and found my way slowly upward, under the hem of her skirt, listening to her breathing get faster.

"Ryder...*oh my god.*" She lowered her head, whispering, looking like she was praying, and I almost lost my shit knowing she liked what I was doing to her.

Only a few inches more. I grazed the outside of her panties, feeling her body jerk and twitch as my fingers opened her legs under the white linen tablecloth. She was shaking, and I looked up at her face to see her dark eyelashes flutter over her round, brown eyes.

"Open your legs," I hissed in her ear, knowing she would do whatever I asked. "Farther."

"Ryder..." My name on her lips only made me detach from reality even more as I could feel the moisture even on the outside of her panties. The sweet, white, cotton lace trimmed panties that I had bought her yesterday just for tonight. If it wasn't going to be my face, I wanted to know something from me was up against that sweet little pussy all night.

I rubbed softly on the outside of the crotch of the panties, watching her closely. She swallowed hard, and I knew I had to get my fingers up inside her and make her cum while she sat there, looking out at her evil sister and drunk parents dancing like they were riding the wave at Chateau Marmot.

So much for getting my cock under control on my little walk, that beast was back with a vengeance, and I was thankful for the low light in the banquet hall. I could have fucked her by now. There have been plenty of

chances, plenty of time together over the couple weeks or so since I've been back. But my girl wasn't ready. She had some fucked up idea that because she wasn't a bulimic skeleton like her sister and her friends, that if I saw her naked I would run. Jesus, I had to teach this beauty her true value. I planned to.

She sat there like a glorious diamond among the sewage of the room. I still couldn't wrap my head around the enigma that was Chloe. Beautiful, fuck yeah. And she was sexy as hell with those lips, that sweet round face, those brown eyes that looked right through me.

But it was more than just her looks. She had the spirit of a broken colt, but the brain of a scholar and the talent of Raphael. Only, her family didn't value any collateral other than the color green and some fucked up version of fake pageant beauty.

I thank Christ they had left her alone for the most part, so she could at least be herself. Sure, she needed me to help her remember how valuable she was, how inherently beautiful, but that would come in time. She was natural and there was nothing make-up, some diet, hair color or silicone could ever do to improve on her.

"I want you to cum..." I whispered into to her ear.

"Ryder, please..." Her voice rose into that sweet higher register.

"Shhh, open..." I instructed.

She obeyed, thankfully, because I was about to scream "Fire" and get everyone the hell out of here if she held back any longer.

The feel of her slick wetness wrapping around my fingers had my cock tall and tight, ready to shred metal. But my sweet angel needed this, and I had to fight my own dog like nature to bring her the pleasure she deserved, letting my own needs wait.

She was getting close to being ready for me to take her for real, and after what was going to go down tonight, I was fucking positive she would finally understand there was never going to be anyone else for me but her. She was the one hung up on how she looked, I told her every chance I got how fucking sexy she was, how hard she made my cock. I wanted her to feel like she was the only person in the world when I was with her.

"God..." She closed her eyes, barely able to keep her voice in check. It was just what I was looking for.

"You want my fingers inside you don't you baby?" I whispered, keeping a scout eye out on the dance floor for the trio of trash to come sloshing back

to the table. What I saw was a drunken mass of human waste pulsing and slipping on the slick wooden floor. Whatever they were laughing at was unclear to anyone that had decided to remain sober.

“Ryder, please, not here...” Her voice quivered as I worked my way inside her panties.

“Yes, here. You’re creaming all over my fingers, so just let go, babygirl. Tell me you want my fingers...”

Watching her cheeks turn into crimson blazes of heat made me only want to see and hear her cum that much more. Luckily, our table was in the back corner of the banquet hall. There were a couple drunks sitting at another eight top next to us, but they were oblivious.

She needed a push.

“Fucking say it...” I used my Sargent voice. I slid the tips of my fingers up and over her engorged little hard nub, giving it a good flick while watching her eyes fall to half-mast and her mouth make a little gasp.

I felt her hips take a quick hitch lower, giving me the access I needed to get into the deeper center of her heaven. If I was being honest with myself, what I really wanted to do was throw her down on the table and feast on her for supper, but instead I had to settle for making her cum all over my hand.

“I want your fingers inside me ...” She cocked her head lower, whispering in that babygirl voice that made me lose my shit.

Her hips shifted again, and I knew I had her. She couldn’t pretend with me, and I couldn’t with her. There were no hard edges between us; it was lightening bolt energy, like invisible fibers had sewn us together somewhere along the line.

My only frustration was her own lack of confidence in herself, but, like I said, the fucks that raised her had done that, and it was going to be my job to undo it.

Taking another quick look out at the trash trio, I took my middle finger and followed the hot, wet folds down until I felt that heavenly spot and pressed inside her innocent body. If I didn’t have my fingers stirring inside my precious angel, I would have been filled with rage watching those fucks out there making assholes of themselves, but lucky for me, my baby was here and at least part of me was inside her.

She was purring next to me, and I felt my cock pushing painfully up against the waist of my pants. It took a special part of my brain, something deep inside from my SEAL training to give me the discipline I needed to not ravage her right here and now.

I pressed inside, just beyond my first knuckle, letting the clutches of her virgin walls tense around my finger. She gushed as I palmed her open slit, grinding against her engorged nub, back and forth, slipping in just far enough to tease her and give her a little jolt as I toyed with that special spot just inside.

Never had I dreamed I could actually have this ravenous feeling of possession and protection over a girl. No other girl had ever made me want her, not like this. I felt like she was born just for me and it was my job on this planet to take care of her.

Baby's juices were streaming over my fingers. Her breath was coming in short little gulps. I felt the clutch of her walls grab me like she was hanging onto my probing finger for life itself. I gave it everything she needed, my hand making circles in time with my slick finger pulsing in and out. She was close; I could feel it like a magnetic pulse flowed between us.

"Mmmm..." She moaned, her hips cocked and her opening gushed all over my hand.

"That's my girl...cum baby..."

I knew it was all she needed, to hear me whisper that magic in her ear.

Her tiny hand fell low under the table to dig her nails into my wrist as I worked up under her skirt, her mouth opening and the most beautiful noises fell from her candy sweet lips. Feeling those little convulsions and the river of juice that came out of her almost made me fucking jizz in my pants.

There wasn't anything I had been through, even during hell week, even all the missions that had left us running for our lives in caves and dirt all over the world, that trumped the kind of control I had to show right now over my own desire.

"Oh my god..." Her face dropped. Long, shimmering waves of her dark chestnut hair fell over her pink cheeks, and she shook and came all over my hand.

I gave her a second to gather herself, then I slowly slipped my dripping hand out from inside those sweet white panties. I could smell her on my fingers, and I knew I had to take a break to spread that sweet slippery juice

over my own granite rod in the men's room and give myself some relief or the rest of this shit evening was going to be hell.

"I'll be back, babygirl." I gave her a quick peck on the cheek. We're done hiding.

Her hand reached up to grab my wrist. Those wide eyes had nothing on a baby doe, and my heart seized up in my chest.

"Thank you."

My balls threaten to heave right there. She fucking thanked me for making her cum, doesn't she realize that every orgasm she has is her priceless gift to me?

"Baby, I love you. I just need a minute. Don't move. I'll be back, and then we're going to light this shit up tonight. Okay? *Don't move.*"

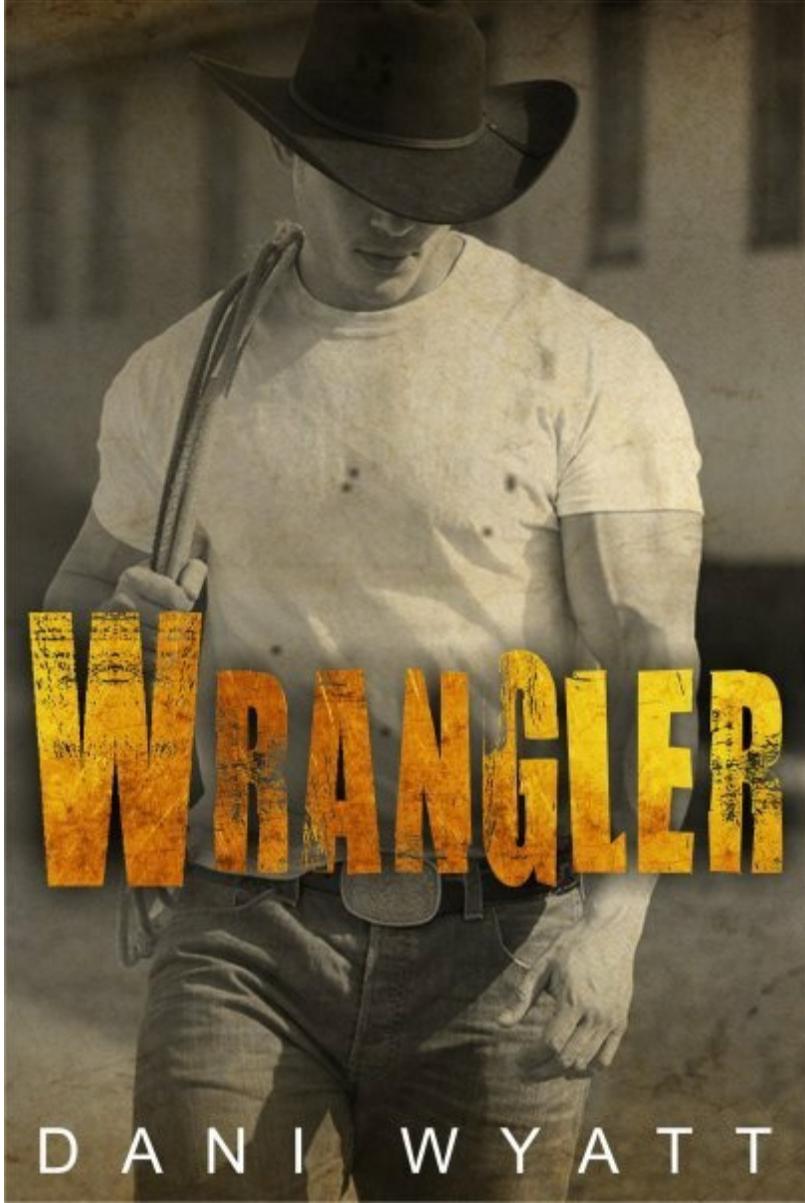
I looked down at her from under my brow. She didn't always listen and we needed to work on that, but for now, I just needed to her mind this one thing while I took a minute to stroke her effect on me into some tissue in the bathroom.

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WRANGLER

Chapter One

CHAD



“Harder. Can’t you do it harder?”

The voice of the girl Roger has bent over in the bathroom echoes in the tall ceilings of this century old farmhouse. “Oh, fuck yeah, do it *harder*.” This chick likes to give out orders. “Up a little. No, not... yes! Stop there, now. Do it now. Do it harder. Faster! Can you go fast?”

I’m in town barely two hours and already I’m glad I haven’t unpacked because I’m rethinking my decision to move back. I press my fingers into my eyebrows trying to stave off the thundering headache that is gaining momentum, listening to my best friend plow some chick on the other side of the bathroom door.

Through the door it’s Roger now. “Can you, you know, shut the fuck up?” He sounds wound as tight as a lasso around a mustang’s neck. He’s had her in there too long for his taste already, and I know Roger; he wants to get in and get out, and all her instruction is keeping him from the finish line.

A groaning chuckle gathers in my throat until I can’t hold back.

Not because I think it’s funny. To the contrary, it’s because Roger hasn’t changed at all in the time I’ve been gone. Myself, I haven’t touched a woman since before I’d left Michigan years ago. If I think about it, it’s gotta be five? Six years since I’ve even been on a date let alone anything else.

And Roger’s still on his quest to touch as many women as possible. We’re best friends, but sometimes I wonder how.

In a solid hundred year old farmhouse like this, you might expect the walls to deaden the sound, but the acoustics must be something else because it just seems to be amplified. Fuck, if I closed my eyes I could imagine they're putting on a sex show right here next to his mother's old davenport.

I don't even realize that I'm gritting my teeth until my jaw pops and a jolt of pain darts through my brain. When Roger picked me up at the airport, I told him all I wanted was a shower and a bed. Unfortunately, I failed to specify that the bed should be empty.

"So." The girl in the bathroom has a friend and she's sitting here bouncing her foot and staring at me like I might relent and fuck her just to pass the time. That ain't happening. If Roger wants a fuck-chick that's up to him, but I'm not interested. When her friend plopped down next to me on the sofa I found the first reason I could to redirect myself to the kitchen. I offered her a glass of water or a Coke but she's not here for liquid refreshment.

I made evening plans for us.

Roger's words bang around inside my head. Ten minutes after I dumped my bag in the guestroom and he drops that one on me.

His hook-up's friend is looking expectantly at me, but I can't think of anything to say to her. Small talk's never been in my wheelhouse on my best day. But, I'm a gentleman, my father raised me right, to treat all women with respect and I struggle to think of something to say without encouraging her too much.

It's hard to take a breath let alone make idle chat while I'm thinking about my visit with my mom. I made my most important stop on the way home from the airport when I dropped in to see her at the facility where she now lives. Not that she saw me. She doesn't even know who I am any more. At this point, I guess I don't give a shit what we do tonight.

I swig my Coke, shake my head at no one in particular. Roger's been like this since 5th grade when he managed to persuade Jane Wilkinson to show him her panties behind the hog barn at the 4-H Fairgrounds.

On the other hand, I'm getting damn near monk status at this point, and it doesn't bother me. I've never been a player so to speak. I don't think I'm bad looking, and women make it clear they're available if I'm interested, but I'm not. Call me a bitch, but I need more than a willing body. At this point I'm just not sure I'll ever find it.

The blond on the sofa doesn't hide the way she's staring directly at my crotch and I'm finding it difficult to stay in the same room. "So." She

attempts to open dialogue again.

So. I repeat silently. It seems to be her go-to word. Deep conversationalist. Her perfume reminds me of Boone's Farm and my Grandmother's Rose water.

I gulp down another swig from my Coke, grimacing as the icy fizz hits the back of my throat. "Yep, so."

Roger and the brunette are ratcheting up the porn soundtrack from behind the door. That chick is faking the shit out of it, screaming like a hyena on laughing gas. Sounds a whole lot like 'let's get this over with' to me.

He grunts his release and she mutters a few forced compliments, then a moment later the toilet flushes, his first condom of the evening spinning into the abyss.

For a moment, all I hear is the popping fizz of the Coke in my bottle.

"Where you from?" Blond sofa girl leans forward, her silicone-enhanced rack nearly spilling out of her black tank top, a smile playing on her lips.

Sally. Her name finally registers. She's peroxide blond, with two inches of black roots. In heels she's nearly as tall as a Shetland pony, and she wears enough makeup for three drag queens ready to take the stage. I'm polite, but distant. This was not the night I had in mind.

She gives me a flirtatious shimmy of her shoulders, the jewels on her top glinting under the artificial light.

I meet her eyes for a split second, then look away. "Couple hours north. But not for a while."

There's a click and the bathroom door opens behind her. Roger emerges, looking like the Cheshire cat who just fucked the queen of hearts. I give him a death stare, but all I get in return is an open mouth grin as he jerks his head toward the bedroom, bouncing his eyes between me and sofa Sally.

"Where have you been?" Sally tries her best to keep the conversation flowing, but the only thing flowing is thoughts of me taking my best friend out with a shot to the jaw.

Roger answers for me. "Oklahoma, honey, he's been in Oklahoma. Where the women are scarce and the sheep wear wedding bands." Roger grins as he tucks his plaid shirt tails into his jeans. It's a miracle he's not wagging his dick in Sally's face asking for a clean-up.

I roll my eyes so hard the room spins. My hackles are up and if he wasn't my best friend I'd already have flattened him. Tonight I am not in the mood

for his shit. Sally makes this ‘pssssfftt’ sound as she springs back upright, disappointed that I’m not interested in her inflatable triple Ds.

“So.” There’s that word again, but it’s from the brunette this time. “Are we going out or what?” She follows Roger, fussing with the hem of her black dress. Although ‘dress’ is a generous term, the thing she’s wearing is more like a tank top that’s stretched just enough to keep her from getting arrested.

“Of course we are.” Roger stuffs his wallet into his back pocket and shoots me a sidelong glance. His teeth are on show again. “What do you say, Chad? Ready to head out?”

When he bobs his eyebrows I almost lose it. Just lucky for him I’m standing by the front window and I can’t be bothered to make the leap to the front door to knock him out. His grin widens and he grabs his keys, points one at me.

“Well, buddy?” He checks himself in the mirror, runs his fingers through his military-grade haircut. It’s near blond, a throwback to his family’s Scandinavian roots. Mine, on the other hand, is brown like maple syrup.

That’s what my mom used to call it. No self-respecting dude would say they have ‘maple syrup brown hair.’ I guess being back in my home state is bringing back thoughts of my mom and dad.

Other thoughts too. Memories. Some that would be better forgotten.

“Well, I know I’m ready.” Roger slaps me on the shoulder as he breezes past. “Or maybe you want to shave that thing off your face first?” He attempts to grab at my beard, and God knows there’s plenty of it to grab, but I smack his hand away with a growl. As I lean back I rub at the hair on my cheek with my middle finger.

Roger chuckles and gives me the finger right back.

“Well, I like it.” Sally stands up and copies the brunette, adjusting the hem of her jean skirt in a show of false modesty. “I think beards are sexy.”

Roger nods. “Uh huh. Of course you do.”

She smiles at me and bats her eyelashes, Roger’s playful insult going right over her head.

“Ready, *Chad*?” Roger toys with my name. He’s looking my way, meeting my eyes, measuring just how pissed I am. His toothy smile spreads like wet paint.

My urge to take him to the ground, put him out with a half-nelson and then go find a quiet, empty bed is compelling. But even though he’s half

asshole, there's something comforting about being around him. He's familiar, and right now familiar feels good. He never fails to entertain, that's for sure. He flashes me his best shit-eating grin, turns and grabs his black Stetson off the hat rack.

I crack a smile and shake my head. "Let's go."

Roger motions towards the door. "Ladies, shall we?" When he pulls it open the breeze brings with it the scent of lilacs and fresh cut hay. The crickets are starting to sing as a dusting of stars pierce a wide country sky.

The girls jostle and giggle with each other as they trot out the door, followed so closely by Roger that he's able to give the brunette a loud slap on her ass to send her on her way.

He looks back over his shoulder. "So, now that you're back, you planning on keeping your Oklahoma look? You channeling a little bit of the old Forrest Gump? You know, running from coast to coast. I'm just saying, people gonna have a hard time deciding if you're a homeless guy, a sociopath or a Viking."

He wrangles me out the door and slams it behind us.

"Will you shut the fuck up? Where are we going, anyway?" We fall in step across the wooden planks of the front porch toward the steps.

Sally turns her head as she walks in front of us. "That rugged look is hot. I like it."

"Which car?" Brunette asks. Roger never introduced us and I'm not interested enough to ask her name.

"Whichever you want, ladies, your choice."

They laugh and rush on ahead, leaving me and Roger to walk together. For a moment it's like old times. "I have to admit, you're doing well," I say, nodding at the lineup of cars.

Of the three vehicles arrayed in front of us, the Ford 350 pickup would be my first and only choice. Roger knows that, which is why it's the one he used to collect me from the airport. It's as big as the fucking plane that brought me in, with black dual tires, four doors and an engine ready to haul the weight of a dozen Clydesdales.

The girls don't give the truck a second glance; they head straight to debate between the Mercedes and the Range Rover.

"Yeah, you know, I'm doing okay. You know when mom passed and I sold the old farm, this place was perfect. A little closer to civilization with freeway access for the haul-in clinics than back home. Two hundred acres all

the arenas and pastures all set up. It worked out perfect. Add to that the horse training business and I'm making ends meet. But you know all that already. But, I've franchised my system, did I tell you?"

"Your system?"

Roger and I started training horses since before we had any hair on our balls back in our hometown of Meyer about two hours from here. We might have taken different paths since, but our roots are in what we learned together over many years and a whole lotta mistakes. If you need a serving of humble pie, training horses is a good place to start. They don't care who you are, how much money you make, or how much swagger you may think you have. It takes patience and more than that, you best check your ego because they can smell a fake like week-old road kill.

He laughs, puts up his hands. "Okay, you got me. *Our* system. But you know, we have different styles, man. Anyway, I've packaged it up, branded it. Videos, webinars. I'm doing three seminars a month. All over the country to a full stable of eager students at twelve hundred bucks a pop. I even have my own line of training tack and supplements."

I nod. "Good for you, man."

"Where are we going?" Sally yells from her place by the Range Rover.

Roger cups a hand to his mouth as he hollers back. "Murphy's."

"No." I stop dead on the gravel drive.

"Man, what now?" Roger turns and squints his eyes at me. "Come on, no one's going to know who you are. We're two hours from where anyone knows you. You don't have to worry about that around here. And even if we were back home no one would ever recognize you with all that hair. And that baseball hat. I mean, who the fuck wears a baseball hat around here? Unless it says 'Mack' or 'John Deere.'" Roger snickers at his own joke but I don't move.

"I'm not going to Murphy's." My skin prickles, the evening suddenly chillier than it was a moment ago. Murphy's is a place where Roger and I used to hang out just before I left for Oklahoma. It was a good ninety minutes away from our hometown when he had an apartment here and back then I needed the distance. It was kind of a shitty time in my life, and I just don't want the trip down memory lane.

"Okay, okay." Roger waves a hand at me. "Where then? Your call, buddy."

“Head over a couple towns, maybe Plythesville. They have that downtown with a few bars. I’m sure not that much has changed in four years.”

“Fuck man, that’s a whole forty minutes away from here. We’ll take so long we’ll meet ourselves coming back.”

“Then go ahead to Murphy’s, but I’m staying here.” I spin to head back to the house.

“Okay, *okay*.” Roger sighs and shakes his head. “Fine, well there’s that giant barn of a place, you know,” He thinks for a moment. “Crutches. Yeah, that’s it. Got a good and rowdy mix of regulars, bikers and townies.”

“Fine.” If anyone recognizes me it’d be a miracle this far from home but tonight I need to be sure I’m anonymous. Besides the beard and hair, I’ve put on a good thirty pounds in muscle since I left. My life in Oklahoma consisted of horses, chores and two hours on the weights every day.

Roger starts walking toward the girls, pressing the key fob in his hand and the lights on the Range Rover come to life.

“Let’s go.” I puff out a laugh, and with everything that’s going on it feels good to release the tension like that. “You need a beer.”

“Yeah?” Roger chuckles. “You sure you don’t have a six pack hiding in that beard? Why don’t you root around in there and see what shakes out?”

I hurl a half-hearted swing to his jaw, but Roger jets forward out of the way. I miss by a whisker, and I’m sure he must have felt the rush of air as my fist passed his face. Anyone who didn’t know us would think it was serious, but he’s laughing and hooting as he takes off at a canter, leaving me to take a few calming breaths of Michigan’s late summer air.

I reach up to grab the coarse hair that hangs from my chin and there is an emptiness that rumbles in my gut. Being home with no idea what the future holds is both freeing and frightening.

Roger turns and leans against the Rover while the girls climb into the back. “Since you don’t seem interested in the little homecoming gift I brought you, I see a three-way in my future and you may need to find your own ride back.” He tips his hat at me then clucks his tongue. “Just sayin’.”

He nods, and I return it as I saunter over to stand with him. The girls are in the back, adjusting their skirts for some level of decency.

“Hey.” I set my hand on his arm, keeping him a second longer from opening the driver’s door. “Thanks for letting me stay. I’ll get down to town

and start looking for a place tomorrow. You sure you don't mind if my place is around here? Competition?"

"Hell, no. Buddy, I'm glad to have you close by. We don't compete, I think it will help both our businesses. And you know what it's like around here, finding your own farm with barns and training arenas and everything else you're going to need, well that might take a while. Or you'll have to find a blank slate and build everything. Going to put a dent in your wallet, too. The price of land around here isn't what it used to be. The city's coming in. You can't stop progress."

"Yeah, I'll figure it out. My wallet's fine."

"Sorry, man." His usual lighthearted tone is gone. "I know it's hard to come back. With what happened with Leander and the farm and everything. But I'm glad you're here." Roger twists his lips toward the side, then shakes his head and gives me a mischievous smile. "You're who I want to be when I grow up and get old! Now get the fuck in the car and let's go get drunk, you pussy."

Yep, there's no place like home.

Chapter Two

CHAD



Small towns are full of cliques and clichés. Seems everyone's favorite pastime is passing information. Information about everyone else is the best form of entertainment, and bad news is as good as it gets. And that's exactly why I'm not back in Meyer.

It's been great to have Roger settled here. Far enough away from home, but with him here it feels rooted somehow still. Back when Leander, my half-brother, was on trial, you would have thought it was the O.J. case all over again. I remember people actually following us in their cars back home, chasing us down. That entire time in my life is something I'd rather forget.

But I remember the pain on my mother's face, the way my dad got thin and drawn, tired. He never recovered.

I remember being ashamed. Hell, that still hasn't gone away.

But between my new Viking look, and the distance we've put between ourselves and my hometown, I'm feeling like I'm getting a fresh start. And besides, the years out west changes things. I've spent my time turning the helpless into the hopeful. The lost into the found. Sure, they had four legs and the smell of horse is not everyone's idea of perfume, but to me, it's as close to heaven as I can find here on planet Earth.

Roger barrels down unlit dirt roads chatting it up with the girls, I just keep my eyes forward until the lights of the big barn come into view.

The parking lot at Crutches is half filled with motorcycles and pickups. A baker's dozen shining Harleys stand near the entrance, probably a local MC, but there are other bikes around the lot mixed up with flat beds still stacked with hay. There are other vehicles here too. Hondas and Priuses that have made their way in from the new suburbs out to the east. As Roger says, you can't stop progress.

As we pull into the lot we can hear the music thumping, pulsing against the car windows. Roger palms the wheel and settles the Range Rover into a space by the line of trees where the vehicles are sparser.

"Why'd you park so far from the door?" Sally hits the high notes with her displeasure and the fillings in the back of my teeth feel it. "I don't like to walk." I glance in my side mirror to see them already refreshing their faces with more makeup.

"I'll carry you." Roger puts the car in park and turns to the back seat. "Just hop on." He glances down toward his crotch then back at the girls. Their laughter isn't convincing, but Roger doesn't care.

As they open their doors and start to climb out I grab Roger's arm. "You need to learn some manners my friend." My tone is light, but it's true and sometimes his disrespect to women pisses me off. I would never talk to a girl the way he does.

"Chad, man, you need to learn to lighten up and get laid." Roger checks himself once in the rearview before grabbing the door handle and stuffing the key fob down in his pocket.

I shake my head without answering his gruff chuckle.

"You're officially a virgin again, you know that, right? I know you; you didn't even get yourself a slice of that sweet Oklahoma pie, did you?" He

jumps down out the door and slams it behind him.

The girls are ten feet in front of us already as I slide myself out the passenger door and adjust my ball cap down a hitch. Being back has my gut knotted. I shouldn't feel shitty about what's happened—it had nothing to do with me. I somehow feel Leander's mess is still on me.

Roger tips the brim of his hat up and kicks a rock in the dirt parking lot toward the girls making them spin around and yelp.

“Don't y'all go wanderin' off now. My friend here needs some lovin'.”

“Shut the fuck up, man. *Enough.*” The glare I shoot Roger settles his ass right down because his jokes are getting fucking old.

“Fine, fine.” He chuckles and shakes his head. We close the space toward the door and the girls slow down when they see the bouncer collecting cover charge. “Hey, you bringing Arabelle back?”

I'm surprised he's interested—surprised he even remembers her name—but then that's Roger. One moment he's a cocky pain in the ass, the next he's genuine and solid.

“Yeah, I am as a matter of fact. I gotta find a place first. I don't think I can live without her. That's my girl.” My heart tightens just thinking about her being back in Oklahoma without me. She and I haven't been apart more than a handful of days since I got her. I've got a transport waiting to pick her up, I should just ask Roger to board her at his place. Not sure why I'm hesitating, maybe I'm still not a hundred percent sure coming back to Michigan is the right move.

“I remember when you picked her up over at that livestock auction. Poor filly was a tail hair away from dog food. You do have a way with the damaged ones. Something I've never seen before.”

Arabelle was all hip bones and hate when I led her out of that auction ring. Of all the horses in all the years I'd trained, she was the turning point for me. I saw the fire in her eyes; I knew she was special but she'd known nothing but sorrow and cruelty. Now, she's a champion cutting horse but so much more to me. And as close to a relationship as I've ever had. She's the center of my training program and goes with me to every clinic and seminar I teach.

The hulk guarding the bar door looks like he just stepped out of the old West. Cowboy boots and a Stetson, jeans so tight his left-hanging package draws a giggle and some admiration from the girls as they wait for us to catch up.

We both reach for our wallets at the same time, but Roger puts a hand on my wrist. “Whoa, dude, I got this.” He stops next to the girls and pulls out a crisp hundred. “Put your money away. Welcome home.”

“No, I got it.” My wallet is stuffed with far too many Benjamins to be in a bar, but I didn’t think of that when I emptied out my checking account yesterday. I left most of my money in two investment accounts I’ve been playing with, but I didn’t want to leave a pile in Oklahoma State Bank & Trust. They don’t seem to have a branch anywhere in Michigan.

The Electric Slide has turned to Zac Brown and Sally starts snapping her fingers in the air and shaking her ass as we all step inside.

Roger shoves the hundred into the bouncer’s hand and doesn’t wait for change.

“Come on. I don’t have many redeemable qualities, so at least let me pay.”

“You know, you’re not an asshole,” I mutter next to his ear. “You just try really hard to make everyone think you are.”

“Yeah? Tell that to Courtney. I don’t even think she knows my real name anymore. She calls me asshole like it’s on my birth certificate.” Roger tips his hat at some ladies that pass by. “She might come by later. Wants to say howdy to her brother-from-another-mother.”

Courtney is Roger’s sister. She’s almost my sister. She’s rough around the edges and keeps Roger’s ass in line.

“Sounds good. She’s doin’ okay?”

“She’s fine. Just broke up with her girlfriend, so she’s a little bitchy, but what’s new. Just don’t be surprised tonight when she comes barreling through the door with a tackle hug for you. Just sayin’, be prepared. She’s like a fucking hurricane in heels.”

With that, we’re in the door. The bar is a massive space, even bigger than when I left. Enormous vaulted ceilings with old barn beams holding up the peak of the roof. The dance floor is covered with a variety of city and country types all fighting for space, and there’s a smell of beer, testosterone and too much perfume.

Unfortunately, I hate bars. Even nice ones like Crutches.

Back when Roger and I were sixteen, old man Reynolds who worked as a hand on Roger’s family farm bought us a fifth of Jack one Friday night. We proceeded to down the whole thing in a matter of a couple hours and I puked for the rest of the night. I’m telling you, puking in the ditch at the side of a

cornfield with my best friend next to me moaning for his mamma isn't my idea of a good time.

Since then, drinking never held any interest for me, and neither did meaningless hook-ups. Roger, on the other hand, is perfectly at home in this establishment as we wind through the crowd to an abandoned table not far from the back bar and thankfully a good distance from the dance floor speakers.

"I want a rum and Diet Coke." Sally chirps us her order, flips her head around to Roger, then back scanning the crowd looking like an excited toddler.

Brunette turns and holds up two fingers then leans down to whisper and giggle in Sally's ear as they soak up the abundance of the male selection in the crowd. I jerk the chair out from the table and sit my grumpy ass down.

Roger chuckles as he plops down in a wooden chair next to me. He sweeps the wide-brimmed hat from his head and settles it on the table, then rakes a hand through his close-cropped hair and grins at Sally as she wiggles herself into the chair next to me.

I puff out a deep breath I've been holding and press my fingers into my eye sockets. Making eye contact would only encourage her.

"Can we get some service over here?" She snaps across the table into the crowd. When I look up, I see her flapping her hand impatiently at someone.

I look where she's looking but all I see is a tray filled with drinks being maneuvered through the crowd. I shift my body weight in an attempt to gain a few more inches of space between myself and Sally.

Her hand shoots up higher in the air and this time her voice takes on a bitchy tone that makes me embarrassed to be sitting at the same table.

"Girl!" Her gums flap along with her hand. "Hey, are you working or not? How long do we have to wait to get a damn drink?" She's shouting now and I shove my chair back popping up and away from her. I'm not sitting next to this all fucking night and Roger catches the look in my eye. He gives me a sympathetic blink. Even for him, this is too much.

I turn to walk away from the table, but there's no way I can let it pass. "Hey," I snap, then I check myself, remembering Sally is a woman and even if she does look like a blond Oompa-Loompa, she deserves respect. I gather my restraint before I continue. "Don't talk to people like that." I rap my knuckles on the table in front of her, making sure she's paying attention. "Don't be rude, it's busy in here."

I heave a deep breath out and consider going outside and hitching a ride home.

“What the fuck do you care?” Sally’s snarky tone tightens the muscles down my back. “She’s a *waitress*, for crissake.” Sally laughs and suddenly leaving is not on the agenda.

She needs to learn some manners. Part of me wants to tear into her, but the soft spoken, gentleman part of me takes a seat on the other side of the table, because few things piss me off more than people deciding how they should treat someone based on some false hierarchy of importance.

And on top of that, from what I’d overheard of their jabbering in the Rover, Sally is unemployed. The irony rakes on my nerves and my fuse is rapidly burning down. My antsy ass is back on my feet ready to take that walk again but I have a few words before I go.

“Everyone deserves—” I’m ready to lay into her with both barrels when I see the waitress’ tray start our way and I catch the first glimpse of her face.

I never knew what people meant when they said they felt the ground shift under their feet, but sure as shit do right now. Don’t ask me to explain it, because I can’t, but there’s this soft jolt in my chest, pulling me up sharp. And when I lock my eyes on her I see something I’ve never seen before.

I’ve felt it before though. Once. The moment I laid my eyes on Arabelle in the auction ring that day, I knew something was about to happen, like I know something right now. I’m just not fucking sure exactly what it is.

“What can I get you folks?” The voice of an angel rings in my head like chapel bells.

You can get yourself under me.

The words that rocket through my head shock me. The sweetest face I’ve ever seen is looking back at me. Warm home grown innocence and curves that light up parts of me left dark for too long have me blinking trying to make sure this isn’t a dream.

Her name tag reads Lori, but she doesn’t look like a Lori. Everything about her says *mine* and I shake my head trying to get a grip.

She’s staring at me and her eyes catch mine for a long moment. They are not just looking at me, they’re tagging me, and my cock decides his long winter is over.

Sally and the brunette bark their drink orders her way and she acknowledges them with a quick smile, then her eyes are back on mine.

I'm the first one to admit I'm confused by what's happening right now, but I'm powerless to stop it. This girl has cast a spell on me in the matter of a few seconds and my mind quickly goes to the thought of her clothes laying on my bedroom floor and my fingers diggin' into her hips.

"And you?" Her dark eyelashes flutter in my direction and I can't help imagining those eyes going wide the first time my cock slips between her luscious thighs and upward into what my mind believes already belongs to me.

"What about me?" I shift and take a step around the back of Roger's chair. I swear to fuck I catch her scent and it runs like fire over my skin. "I'll tell you anything you want to know."

Her quizzical smile and slight eye roll doesn't deter whatever this is that she's brought to life.

Fuck, she's got a goddamn dimple. And the growing boner in my pants sees it too.

Suddenly I'm aware of every dick-swinging mother fucker that is glancing her way. I don't give a slinging horse shit if they just want a drink. I don't want anyone looking her way. I don't even fucking want her in here; it doesn't make sense but I want to take her away from here so no other man can ever put his eyes on her again.

It takes super human effort to hide everything that is happening inside my body and mind right now. Feelings I cannot identify are creeping up from my toes until they wrap around my skull. The feelings are not just inside either; there are great heaving feelings in my crotch ready to stampede their way out of my Levis.

I may cum just from looking at her dimple. Can that be possible? I don't give a shit; my hard-on sees the same thing as me and sooner or later, she's going to get a good look at just what her dimple does to me.

"Chad." Roger's laughter shakes me from my trance. "You going to order or just make the poor girl stand there being uncomfortable for the rest of the night?"

She's fighting another smile and I don't see discomfort. I see tiny sparklers lighting up her chocolate brown eyes. She's magnificent and I take another step forward to which she counters back.

"Do you want a drink or not?" She loses the smile and I see her swallow.

"No, I don't want a drink. I want your number."

Roger lets out a hoot then interrupts. “Sorry. Look, Lori, he’s been in a secluded mountain cabin for a few too many years so his social skills, although lacking before, now seem non-existent. He doesn’t bite though. Well, not unless you want him to.” Roger licks his lips and the thought that he’s looking at her with anything but the purest of notions makes me want to level him.

“Okay.” She tips her head trying to establish if we are done here.

She lets out a little girlish giggle and I lose my fucking mind. All that sexy with an innocent sweetness on top and drops of cum begin to soak my boxers. It’s like I’ve been saving up every lustful thought I should have had over the last God-knows-how-many years and they are all coming to call right now inside my fire-seared brain.

I don’t want her to walk away, but I’m not sure I can tie her ass up and sling her over my shoulder without raising some eyebrows. So I just soak her up and smile.

“Well, I’ll be back with your drinks.” She turns away, and my eyes follow.

Her waist is the perfect size for my hands, her ass is the perfect size for fucking, sucking, biting and watching. In fact, there isn’t a part of her that isn’t the perfect size. She’s all slow s-turns and deep valleys. Who wants a boring straight-away; I’ll take all she’s got and make the most of every luscious inch.

I tilt my head to get a better angle watching her move through the crowd. She’s wearing these shiny ballet flats the color of an Oklahoma spring sky, not boots or high heels like the other waitresses. Her matching baby-blue skirt hits her mid-thigh.

My eyes follow the curve down her inner leg, past her knees as she bends them and walks up on her tip-toes like she’s being careful not to disturb someone, sidestepping a couple of Barbie-bar flies with makeup so thick it looks like they’re wearing Halloween masks. But the way she walks, it only gives me a better perspective, and all I can think is just how much I want to trace those curves, memorizing them with the tip of my tongue, then start all over with my fingers. Rinse and repeat.

I’d never considered what my ‘type’ might be, but seeing her it dawns on me that there’s a reason for that. I don’t have a type.

It’s her. She’s it. My *type* is this one girl. Ripe and lush and as sweet as apple pie.

I don't know if she has a boyfriend, if she's married or hell, she may have a wife for all I know. But one thing is clear in my mind, whatever she is, there's part of me that's already decided I need to be part of her life.

She makes her way past a group of five city boys wearing jeans without a Levi's or Wrangler label. In fact, I think they may have taken a wrong turn and shopped in the women's department for those fancy pants.

There is something about a dude that cares a little too much about his appearance that ruffles my feathers. Like they don't have enough to offer from the inside and that makes them a bit too concerned over what they look like on the outside. Doesn't send up real-man signals as far as I'm concerned.

Whatever, what they wear is none of my concern, but what is my concern is the way the fuckers eye her as she tries to squeeze through and don't give her the goddamn courtesy of stepping aside and giving her room to get by.

She's forcing a polite smile, but I see the discomfort on her face. She's pissed, but she's too polite or too shy to say so. Instead I see her mouth the words 'pardon me,' her full lips shaping each syllable like the words are made of fucking clay, but the douche patrol ignores her and I'm seeing red.

Disrespecting her and not giving an inch in the opposite direction? That's pushing all my buttons. They make her shove her way through, causing her ample tits to brush against the shoulder of one of them and my blood is on boil. She has to raise her tray above her head and tuck herself tight. Her embarrassment and desperation show in the way her shoulders pull toward her ears and she loses her smile.

Fuckers. Someone may have a lesson in being a gentleman coming very soon.

"Chad, hey." Roger smacks the back of my arm from behind. "Jesus, man, are you gonna stare at that all night?"

I gather my restraint. He might be my friend, but right now that doesn't seem to mean a whole lot to me. Hearing him call her 'that' makes my fists ball.

"Careful. Watch your manners." I grunt at my childhood friend.

"What the fuck." His face lights up into a toothy grin and he slaps the table sending a squeal out of the girls who, thankfully, seem to have lost interest in what is going on behind them. "You know her? Huh? Some old flame? Maybe you fucked her once, although I doubt you could remember that far back—"

“You better shut your fucking mouth. You say another fucking word and I’m going to send your teeth to your tonsils.”

Roger pushes his tongue into his cheek. His eyes still sparkle with amusement, but he gets the message. It’s nothing personal, but I meant what I said.

“Okay, buddy. I’m just glad to see you back in the land of the living. Go get what you want.”

I turn back around grumbling under my breath. “I intend to.”

She’s two douches into the crowd of city boys now, trying to squeeze by the five of them, when one steps behind her and blocks my view. His crew look on as he dry humps the air behind her ass, and they think that shit is funny, but I’m not laughing. In a heartbeat, I’m headed their way, heat gathering in my chest and radiating down my arms to the clench of my fists.

“Hey, where are you—” Roger calls after me but I’m on a mission as I clear my way through the crowd. I don’t know this girl, but I know that in my presence no one will ever disrespect her like that.

They are still cuttin’ up like they are in some comedy club when I bow up behind the air-humper with his cocky attitude and slicked back hair. I’m a quiet sort, but I’ve never been one to shrink from a fight.

Three of the guys see me coming, I’m hard to miss. The dick head about to be schooled has his back to me but it only takes him a split second to pick up on the signals from the looks on his friends’ faces that something big is happening behind him.

My head spins with the variations of how I’m going to play this. I’ve been in my share fights, but this piece of shit holds no sway. I have a sixth sense when it comes to people, and he’s no match.

By the time he turns around, the decision is made. I want to lay the fucker out and use the heel of my boot to grind some manners into him, but getting my ass thrown out of this place will not serve my new purpose for the evening, which is keeping my eye on her.

“What the fuck do you want?” The little fucker suddenly has a set of balls. They may be the size of a couple mouse turds, but balls nonetheless.

I smile, and palm my beard as I look down at him. I catch a glimpse of his back-up squad lining up to cover his ass, and it makes me embarrassed for them. That shit ain’t gonna be any deterrent.

“You’re going to go and tip that waitress that just walked by.” My voice is clear, rumbling out of me like the eleventh commandment.

“What? Fuck you.” He snaps with an over dramatic eye roll. “You better step back.”

I drop my hand from my beard and brush some invisible shit off the guy’s shoulder with my fingertips, invading his personal space like it’s my God-given right. Being around horses all my life, one thing you learn, you always stay calm. No matter what may be churning around me, I’m unflappable.

I clear my throat and nod toward where I can still see Lori moving through the crowd. “That waitress. You just insulted her and that shit doesn’t fly with me. So unless you want to be wearing your ass for a hat, you are going to apologize to her by digging in your wallet, coming up with a hundred bucks, walk your sorry ass over there and put it on her tray. You tip her, or we’ll have a different conversation.”

I drop my hand from his shoulder and thumb the stiff handle of the knife I always carry in my front pocket. I pinch it between my thumb and forefinger, inching it out before stuffing it back down inside my pocket with a grin. If my general size isn’t intimidating enough, with my hair nearly to my shoulders and my beard meeting it, I’m sure I look scary as hell to these city boys.

If this guy has any sense, he can read the crazy in my eyes, and realize it’s in his best interests to settle this without blows. I want to spend the rest of this evening admiring the miracle that just walked into my life, but I’ll do what I have to do to make sure he treats her with the respect she deserves.

His four comrades are flanking him but I lock eyes on him and repeat my order.

“A hundred bucks. Right fucking now. You go tip her and this can be over. Or...” I crack my neck and release a deep breath. “...you and your bridesmaids are going to be on the floor trying to pick up each other’s teeth.”

He gives me his best Scarface nose twitch and his buddies straighten up behind him.

“I’d say two hundred is more like it.”

I don’t need to turn around to know Roger’s voice. He’s to my left, he matches me in height and outweighs me by another twenty pounds he wears in his gut so we are a solid wall facing down their rhinestones and hair gel.

“Fuck off.” The dipshit’s voice is losing some bravado. “I’ll give her a hundred.” His whole group shifts back, their chests deflate and shoulders drop. Inside my head I’m laughing my ass off imagining this group of glitter boys going toe-to-toe with me and Roger.

But on the outside I'm all business.

I have to keep my eyes on the prize, and right now getting escorted out of the bar for stuffing my fist down his gullet would not bring me closer to her.

He reaches around and digs in his back pocket, pulls out his wallet and waves a hundred-dollar bill in my face.

"Okay?" He swallows and the fear in his eyes would be visible from a hundred paces, but he's trying to save some of his pride.

"Go give it to her, say something nice and I'll be watching from over there." I jerk my head back toward where we were sitting.

He nods and turns to walk her way.

She's at the tail end of the bar, giving drink orders to the bartender and it rakes my nerves that her tank top is cut too low. I can tell she's sweet, kind and from the rest of her outfit, she's not the type to dangle her goods for the world to see, so that shirt will have to go.

Other waitresses are wearing the same thing, so I know it's the bar's uniform shirt, but I don't give a shit about them. I give a shit about her, and any other fucker that has his eyes on her sends my protector instinct into overdrive.

Her tits are full and proud, like a goddamn American flag flying above the indent of her waist. And fuck if I'm not feeling mighty patriotic right now.

Just watching the swell and flow of that ass of hers has me rolling in the dust, thinking of how I'd train her, teach her things that an angel like her hasn't imagined. She's casual and understated, but she's put together like a show pony. Neat and carefully groomed. Her hair hanging down over her shoulders gleams under the flashing lights and even from here I can see that she's wearing just the right amount of make-up.

Most women overdo that shit but I like it natural, clean. Fuck, she's as perfect as I've ever seen. I've never even touched her, and already this lush little dove has me whipped.

I imagine taking her out to the field, laying her out and messing up her hair, thrusting into her until she tears at the grass underneath as she tries to hold on. I want her wearing my cum like a badge of honor. I want her covered in me so everyone knows she is more than just taken by me – she's ruined in the most magnificent and gorgeous way.

She's tapping her foot to the music and tracing ChapStick over her lips as she waits for her drink order, so she doesn't see the douche bag pushing

through the last few people to get to her. She snaps around as he comes up next to her, then he lays the money on her tray, says a few words and turns back.

I've known her for all of five minutes, but I pick up clues. It's body language, and I know body language. It's another side effect of my work with horses. They're great communicators if you know their language. And when it comes to people, we're not that different. The set of her jaw, the slant of her hips. I think I know what she's saying better than she does.

She's happy. I see it in her eyes, her body. And I'm happy simply because she is.

I imagine the touch of my fingertips on those plump cheeks. How soft she must be, like the petals of wildflowers. How I'd draw her next to me, kissing her hair after I've fucked her and done things to her God didn't intend. Teaching her the meaning of the word pleasure.

Her face lights up as she picks the money off the tray, stares at it in her hand for a long moment.

Then, it happens.

When her eyes finally raise under her lashes, they flicker across the mass of people and light on mine. It only lasts a second, but she breaks into a dimpled smile that starts on her lips but finishes in her eyes and that shit's all mine.

That's my new purpose in life. To make her smile all the way to her eyes. Every fucking minute of every single day just so I get to see that dimple again and again.

[AVAILABLE NOW](#)

DANI WYATT

WHERE SHE

Belongs

THE FOREVER COLLECTION

WHERE SHE BELONGS

Chapter 1

Decker

“It was just a handjob.” Claudia rolls her eyes like this is a joke. “That’s barely even anything. I didn’t even kiss him, for chrissake.”

She’s looking everywhere but at me as if avoiding my eyes is going to change the outcome for her. “You know the rules,” I say.

Believe it or not, it hurts me every time this happens. I want to help them all, but in the end, they have to help themselves too. I can’t do it for them.

“I’m *great* at handjobs. I got him off in like *twenty seconds*. I mean,” Claudia attempts to look pitiful, “it’s almost like shaking someone’s hand. Would you fire Allister for shaking hands with one of the guys?”

Allister, my right hand man, pipes up. “Congratulations on your skill set. And no, it is not like shaking hands.” His sarcastic answer doesn’t hide his own disappointment. His voice has always been low, but when he’s disappointed it takes on extra weight, extra gravity. It’s a bit like if a bass drum was suddenly able to speak.

He’s more pissed off this time than usual, and he hates firing girls as much as I do. It’s because he’s the one that talked me into hiring her – even when I expressed my doubts that she would take the opportunity seriously. Looks like I was right, but I don’t take any pleasure in that.

It’s too bright in here. The light and the situation drives ball-peen hammers into my temples and I rub them with my middle finger.

I look at the file open on my desk, then glance around the room. I can’t make an exception for her. The rules are the rules, that’s why we’re all in here. It’s my job to deliver the bad news.

I’m momentarily distracted by the surroundings of my office. They’re far from interesting. White gloss, cool air. Actually, the temperature in here is fine, but it feels cold. My office at the back of the club needs some warming up and organizing. I despise disorder.

The white gloss paint is there because that's what I like. Clean, pure and without blemish. Neatly stacked pillars of white boxes, labeled with their contents and color coded by unpacking priority, line one wall. My new office furniture was delivered last week – at least it got me out from behind the folding banquet table which had been my temporary desk for a month. The place needs artwork and some other touches, but I just haven't had the time.

Seems that's a theme with me because my house looks the same way and I've lived there for five years.

I listen as Allister heaves a deep breath in and out.

Allister is my General Manager. He's also my best friend. If you saw him on the street, you'd probably cross to the other side. But he's one of the best people I know. Heart of gold and the size of Texas.

He's shaking his bald head, running a hand back and forth over it while he stares at Claudia. It's unusual for him to step in, to try to persuade me to take on a girl against my better judgement. But I guess he took pity on her – early twenties, brunette, streetwise attitude. Maybe she reminded him of someone, I don't know. I didn't push it.

As for her, she's glaring back and forth between us like she can't understand what she's done wrong. And that is exactly her problem.

But this is my club and I have to work damned hard to keep it.

It's one in a chain that I own. Monarch night clubs. They are a mash-up of trendy, urban bar with a side order of gentleman's club. Don't get me wrong, it's not seedy at all. I've made my name in this industry by keeping the seedy element away and that's the way I intend it to stay. Which is why I have to be strict with the girls. Today it's a handjob, tomorrow a blowjob. Once you start down that road there's no turning back.

I suppose "gentleman's club" isn't really the right label. I mean, I do have dancers, but they don't take their clothes off. They don't wear a whole lot to begin with, but they also don't take anything off.

They dance, and they do it well enough that they don't need to show their bodies. Are they sexy? Yep. Do the men in the clubs wish they were dropping clothing? Of course. But while they work for me it's not happening.

My clubs have a fine dining area, a dance floor with a bar. Classy, trendy. And then there is the 'back wall' as it's come to be known. The dancers are not center stage, but they are a huge draw. Somehow, I've managed to create a club where women and men feel comfortable coming in, but there is still an atmosphere of the upscale gentleman's club – without the slimy element.

Monarch V is the jewel in my so-called crown of successful nightclubs, and I am obsessed with how everything is presented, from the staff to the decor. But my office could use some warming up. I love what I do, but it's beginning to wear on me. I'm also an obsessive planner, and my plan is to work another few years, then turn everything over to Allister and see if life has anything else in store for me. I'm not old, but I'm not young either, and as much as growing this business and helping out all these girls has been my reason for getting out of bed every day for a long damn time, there has to be more, I'm just not sure what that 'more' is.

It took the better part of a year to get this particular club up to the zoning standards the surrounding high-brow community demanded. But, in the end, it will be worth it. Having a club on this side of town, and in this prime location, will pay off in spades. On weekends, the queue is already lined around the block and we've only been live a little over a month.

Guess all the pearls and bowties that live around here are just as eager for a little fun as anyone else. I see the same folks that sat on their pious high horses in the local government planning meetings, the ones who were giving me shit about putting in the club, drinking and whooping it up here every night of the week.

Fucking hypocrites.

But their money is as green as I need it to be, so whatever. Their two-faced bullshit is between them and God.

"So, I'm done?" Claudia juts a hip out and finally settles her vitriol on me. "You're *firing* me? This is *total* bullshit. One handjob and one joint, that's all it was. And now you're firing me? I didn't even *smoke it here*, for chrissake. You can't tell me what I can do on my own time. This place is turning into the damn Westlake Baptist Church."

I'm holding her file in front of me. "Yep, you're done. The rules are clear. You signed the contract: You go to school. You don't take drugs, and you don't drink. You certainly don't touch the customers. You fucked up." I close up her file, shaking my head. "I don't fire people, Claudia, they fire themselves. Get your stuff out of your locker; we'll send you a month's pay to give you time to get on your feet. Allister will walk you out. I wish you the best." I lean back in my chair. My temples are still pounding and my stomach is curling over on itself.

I entwine my fingers as I rest them on my mid-section. My stomach lets out a low rumble, reminding me that once again I've put the girls and the

club before my own basic human needs.

It's already one in the morning and I don't remember eating anything since I'd arrived here at noon.

"You can suck my ass!" Claudia gives me one final single-finger salute before she trudges out the office door, Allister rolling his eyes at me as he walks behind her.

As much as I try, I can't save them all – that's what I have to keep reminding myself.

The irony is I don't even care much for nightclubs. I don't drink and never went in for strip clubs at all. Just didn't do a damn thing for me. But, these places evolved after I retired from the Marines. Sixteen years of service and I'm damn proud of it, but it was time to move on. These clubs are the way I make a living – and a very good one at that. And, at the same time, I have some unique rules for my staff and try to give back where I can.

The low vibration of the bass from the club floor comes through the open office door. I'm usually gone by midnight, but between dealing with Claudia and sticking around to interview a few new dancers, I'm beat. Tuesday nights, the club is quiet and we do our Men's Only night. We also do a thing called, 'Open Tryout Night.' Similar to open mic night at comedy clubs or the like, but we let girls who aspire to dance or work here come in, strut their stuff and show us what they've got. So I usually stick around to see if there are any worthy applicants coming through the door.

After a few minutes, Allister steps back into the office as I twist my head around on my neck, trying to relieve the pressure.

"All set?" I ask.

"Yeah. That girl is... colorful. Had some unique parting words for you." He licks his lips, then adds, "And me."

I shrug. Insults don't mean a thing to me. "Yeah? I wish her well. It's a shame." My stomach roars again, and I push my chair back and stand up.

"You done for tonight?" Allister shoves his hands down into his front pockets, regarding me with a wry smile.

"I think so. I'm going to go have the kitchen make me something to go. Anyone else coming in tonight?" I straighten up the loose papers on my desk into a stack and file them in my drawer. I put my Dunhill pen in my top drawer too, remembering when the staff gave it to me at Christmas. I'm a hard fuck to buy for; I don't want for anything and don't want much in general.

But I do appreciate quality and rarity, and they all chipped in and bought me that pen. Probably the best fucking pen in the world. I exhale louder than I expect. I guess I'm just a little tired of all this. I finish by brushing dust off the walnut top of my desk until everything looks in order.

"A few gals are still here to try out." Allister reaches for his back pocket and pulls out three Polaroids, starts flipping through them. Then he looks at my face with mock concern. "You get some ice on that?"

"It's fine."

"Uh huh. You're not twenty anymore. Next time call for back up."

There is a low throb coming from under my left eye where I took a punch earlier. It will be purple by morning, but right now it's just an irritation.

"I got the job done." My voice sounds gruff. I hate fucking fighting, but I also don't back down when the situation calls for me to get physical. And when someone lays a hand on one of my girls, the situation calls for it.

"You know we hire bouncers for that shit. You take on three at a time, old man, just at least let me stand behind you. Got it?"

"I haven't lost a fight yet, have I? Who got carried out of here calling for their mommy? Me? Nope." I'm pissed because if the bouncers were *doing their job*, I wouldn't have to jump in when I see that shit going on. "New subject."

Allister stares at me and then nods. He knows when I'm not messing around. "No problem." He flicks one of the pictures against his palm, black Sharpie scrawled across the white strip at the bottom of the photo.

We always take the girls' names, phone numbers and a quick picture as soon as they come in to apply. Even if they don't end up working here, we try to establish we are here to help, if they need any help, and get some basic information right up front so we can keep track of everyone that comes in.

He steps toward me, ready to show me the photos, but I'm already up, coming around toward him. I'm grabbing my briefcase off the floor before he can even get close, taking my jacket off the hook, marching for the door.

Allister and I have been friends since we were in boot camp together a thousand years ago. We didn't end up serving together, but those first weeks of hell bonded us, and we've been as close as family ever since. We're even in height, his build being slightly leaner than mine. Besides working with each other, we work out together four days a week so there is not much we don't know about each other.

“Here.” He jabs the photos toward me as I work my way to the door. Some guys might get off on the young women that come in for tryouts, but I’m not overly eager to look. It’s all work, we don’t play here. I’ve never touched one of the girls that works for me.

Fuck, I haven’t actually touched a woman in more years than I can count. And when I say touched, I mean as in an arm around the shoulder, or a kiss. No one but Allister knows this, and I doubt anyone would believe me, but that’s about all I’ve done with a woman. Nothing below the belt has ever happened.

Virgin.

Even the word sounds unbelievable to me, but it’s true. I’ve never been overly outgoing, except when it comes to running my business and getting shit done. I’m on the shy side and have never felt comfortable with women in general as far as relationships go. I gave up years ago thinking there was someone out there for me. I figure that part of life just isn’t in my stack of cards.

I know most of the guys that come in here sit there with their dicks hard, watching the harem of beauties that work here. They probably think that as the club owner, my cock samples all the goods. That couldn’t be farther from the truth.

I don’t even remember the last time I stroked off. If it’s not the real thing, I’m just not all that interested. And I guess I just haven’t met the real thing. And I probably never will.

So I stay focused on work. Not just making money, though that part isn’t awful either. But the other part. Seeing so many of these girls come in over the years looking for work, thinking it was just another seedy club where they would take their clothes off and bang customers in the bathroom for extra cash.

Then when they see what I’m doing here, they see a glimmer of hope for a different future. Since I had started my first club, I’ve gladly paid for my girls’ rehab, attorneys, GEDs, college tuition, and I’ve bashed in some pimps’ faces when they’ve tried to come get back what they think belongs to them.

It’s become my life and I’m proud of each of them when they go off into the world to become whatever is next. Some are now lawyers, PTA mothers, social workers, even doctors.

I take the pictures from Allister’s hand as I pass by and look down at the top photo as I step into the hallway, heading for the club floor.

I'm too tired to care much right now about what wayward young woman we may be able to help, but I pull my shoulders back and try to focus. This is important to me, I remind myself. I love the money I make, but I want to matter. I want to make a difference in someone's life. That's what gets me off.

There's a tug on the skin covering my chest as I pull my shoulders back and the muscles stretch over the scars, reminding me of why I retired when I did from the military. I roll my neck around, trying to loosen the tightness as we get closer to the end of the hallway.

"I can handle it, boss." Allister says from just behind my left shoulder, sensing my fatigue. "Just get your food, take off, leave it to me. Two of these girls look like they won't last a day with your rules anyway. And the third," he makes a noise in his throat, "she looks like she's never been outside her nursery before. Although, you know, that innocent one has a rack on her. And a fucking ass for days. A little on the thick side, but different strokes for different folks. I guarantee she's never seen the inside of a club before."

I chuckle under my breath. Allister enjoys looking, and he and I don't necessarily have the same taste but he's a gentleman to his core.

"Who's on the door tonight?" I ask, rubbing my chin with my other hand.

"Buzz," he says with a huff.

"He's on his last warning." I second his huff. We try to help out everyone, guys as well, but I'm harder on them. I expect the men that work here to be gentlemen at all times as well, and Buzz seems to think this is his own private dick playground, and that shit does not fly.

"Yeah, I know. He's trying my patience, and there isn't much of that to begin with. When that little doe arrived I gave him the stare. He was looking at her like she was a bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken."

Allister never touches any of the girls that work here either, but he's a bit more outspoken than me. As we're making our way down the hall I bring the three photos he stuffed into my hand into my line of vision.

I shoulder open the swinging door that separates the offices from the club floor, then glance down absently at the top photo just as I'm losing the bright light of the hallway for the dim flashing lights of the bar. And I feel like someone just shoved a taser down my pants.

There she is, standing across the room, same face as the one in the picture. She's got her arms crossed, eyes looking around like she's just landed on Mars.

I know it's fucking impossible, but I swear I can smell her and it's like some long forgotten scent suddenly bombarding me with feelings about this tiny, lush creature – a complete stranger.

My pace quickens and I'm making a beeline for the three girls standing where Allister left them waiting. Except I only really see one.

"I got this, old man." Allister urges me to make my way home, but there's no fucking way I'm leaving now. "Like I said, that little one isn't half-bad, it's just—"

"Shut up." The anger in my voice shocks me.

All he's doing is talking about her and I'm worked up like this. What the fuck is wrong with me? Thinking that he's looked at her, that he's had lustful thoughts about her, has me ready to turn against my best friend. I don't know what this reaction is, but I do know; I don't want anyone's eyes on her except mine. The mere fact that she's here applying for a position as a dancer has me ready to split heads.

"I'll send the other two home. I'll talk to this one." I look down at the picture in my hand, then back up and my cock is filling my pants, something that has not once happened in all the years I've run these clubs and been around these girls. Whoever this little sweet-tart is, she's managed to move things inside me I wasn't sure were still moveable.

A rush of blood through my ears blocks out the music and ambient sounds of the club. Heat radiates from my core and I'm drawn into a vortex of something long forgotten. I want her in ways I didn't realize I could want. Some primal part of me stirs and I know what I've been waiting for is right here.

Right now.

Now I have to go and make sure she knows she's claimed.

Chapter 2

May

"You are not sneaking out!" Leah shouts, doing her best to sound threatening.

We are in my bedroom. Tapestries hang on the walls beside oil paintings framed with ornate gold-leaf. And among them hang my posters and torn off magazine covers. When I was younger it was all boy bands, but now they have been replaced by covers of Bon Appetit and a truckload of retro '80s band posters I found in the attic.

Simon, our guardian, took the posters down over and over as I grew up, but I would usually get one of the staff to get me more. They feel sorry for us. Most of the estate staff stayed on after the accident, and Miss Henrietta and Mr. Fredby are like grandparents to us.

I would get more posters, save them up, then stay up all night covering my walls all at once, because seeing Simon's stupid face turn fire-engine red when he would see it was almost as good as having the posters back up.

He was my father's right hand man. His confidant and advisor. Now, he's just an asshole.

"Shhhh!" I hiss as I pull on my thigh-high white socks and take a deep breath. "You're going to get us both in trouble."

My sister, Leah, gives me her best motherly glare. She looks so much like Mom it's spooky. I mean, I don't remember Mom that well, but from what I do remember –and from the scrap book pictures I've worn out over the years– it's almost like looking at my Mom's face when I see my sister.

"No, you're the one that's going to get in trouble." She lowers her voice to an agitated whisper and inches her wheelchair forward in an attempt to intimidate me.

It doesn't work, I'm determined.

"No one is coming to check on us. Besides, they are out for the night."

You would think it would make me mad that my fiancé is out almost every night without me, but ours is not a match made in any sort of heaven. Couple that with the fact that he's the son of our guardian, who hasn't been the most nurturing soul over the last twelve years, and the weirdness factor is off the charts.

"This will never work." Leah presses her palms down and rubs the tops of her thighs with a wince. They get sore during the day and by evening she is in the chair, which I know she loathes.

"It will work." The tenacity in my voice is as much to convince myself as her. "It might work." I temper my bravado and slip my feet into a pair of sparkly, pink and purple, patent leather ballet flats. I pop up from the edge of the bed and grab my favorite sweater, which I picked out just for tonight.

"You are *not* wearing that." Leah groans.

"What? I love this sweater." I pick up the lime green, polka-dot cardigan and hold it out, regarding it. "It's fun."

"Like we would know what fun is?" Leah snorts and spins in a slow circle in her chair.

“Like you would know what *style* is? For all we know, striped kimonos and chef’s aprons are what girls our age are wearing.” I look at the sweater again. “Dad would have liked it.” I push one hand into the cashmere sleeve and pull it up over my shoulders and the opposite arm. Before I start to button it, I walk over to the enormous mirror which stands above the antique dresser, flanking the door to the ensuite bathroom. I’ve got on a white bra and panties. At least they match. And they are as fancy as anything I have. But they do not say ‘stripper.’

I do my best not to focus on the way my collarbones don’t stick out or there isn’t a rib in sight. I realize I may not be the pinnacle of every man’s desire, but maybe there is some demand for the novelty, dancing chubby girl.

This is as sexy as I’m going to get, so I hope it’s enough.

“Dad liked everything you did.” Leah’s voice is softer.

I snap my head around and see her bright smile. She’s beautiful, like magazine cover beautiful.

I always wished I could look like her. If we were in a movie, she would be the glamorous leading lady and I would be the plain Jane sidekick with my too-round center and my inability to keep wild, inappropriate things from tumbling out of my mouth at the worst possible moments.

“He loved everything about everything. Especially us.” The melancholy hangs like a mist for a moment before I finish buttoning my sweater to the top button and clutch my arms around myself, running them upward over my upper arms to my shoulders.

“How are you going to get there? If you take a car they will know.”

“I’m taking the bus.” I stand up, stretching every inch of my five feet, grinning as I drop my arms and face my older sister. She’s still giving me that protective stare.

“The bus? How do you even know there is a bus?” She’s mocking me now.

“It’s called the *internet*.” I roll my eyes, turning back toward the mirror and grabbing a hair band from the top of the dresser.

How would a stripper wear her hair to a stripper interview?

“The *internet*? When were you on the *internet*?” Leah’s eyes widen.

I tip my head back and forth like a metronome before I squint my eyes and tell the truth. “I grabbed a bus schedule out of Mariana’s purse.”

Mariana is one of the kitchen staff here at the estate.

I see Leah behind me cover her face with both hands and shake her head, snorting.

“I’ll be fine. It’s like less than a mile from here. I mean, where else can I work and Simon won’t know? They never come around up here at night. It’s just been the two of us up here for months. I can sneak out at eleven, be back by four-thirty, and hopefully get some money in my pocket. We are not living here forever, Leah. I’m telling you.” I spin around as I throw my auburn hair into a ponytail on top of my head. “We are leaving here and getting our own place at least for a while. I want to be out in the world, see things. I want to *do things*.”

“I told you, just go, leave me here. I have no life anyway.” She drops her eyes to look down at her legs. When she’s not in the chair, she has to use her forearm crutches. Both her legs were crushed in the accident and she’s lucky they were able to save them at all.

She eyes me with hope and it hurts to look at her as she continues. “It’ll be so much easier for you to just go get a place on your own. You can get the money together for that if you don’t have me around. Taking care of me is not your obligation. I want you to be happy, May. That’s what I want more than anything.”

“I *will never* leave you,” I snap. “And *I want us* to be happy more than anything. I’ll figure this out. You just have to trust me.”

“How do you even know about this Monarch place? What do you even know? It could be dangerous.”

“I’ve been reading about it. Simon lets me read the business section of the newspaper and I’ve been following it for a year. The city council tried to block the entire project, but finally they got their zoning approvals and it’s been the big talk around, because who would have ever expected there to be a nightclub –let alone a strippy type club– around here? Everyone was just all gaspy and not-in-my-neighborhood about it.” I smile because it made me oddly satisfied when they won the battle and were able to build the club. This stuffy neighborhood needs some shaking up.

“What about Victor?” She screws up her face as she says his name.

“What about him?”

“You’re supposed to marry him. If your plan is to go out and make money so we can move out, are you not doing that? Because, you know what that means.” She shakes some hair out of her eyes. “Do you love him? Like Mom and Dad kind of love?”

I don't want to have this conversation right now and we both know the answer anyway. I play with my ponytail then try to loosen the waistband of my skirt so not so much muffin top is hanging over. It doesn't work so I just pull my sweater down farther, which also does no good.

I swallow hard and do my best to stay focused. I'm doing this, and yes, it may be silly but I don't care. I lean into the dresser and play with a sterling silver hand mirror that used to be Mom's.

"That's not what everybody gets. Mom and Dad were lucky. I just want some freedom before I get married. I won't lose this place either. I'll marry Victor. But this place is our home even if it doesn't feel like it right now with *them* here." The last time we saw our mother, in the hospital before she passed away, she made us promise to keep this house in the family.

Dad built it for her and everywhere we look, we are reminded of the love they'd had for each other. "I just want Simon to see we can do things on our own. That he can't control us forever. I mean, we don't even have any friends. We have never been to a nightclub. We haven't even been to the stupid mall. I want to go to school and be a real chef but they won't listen to me; they've got all the power right now and I want to shake things up. We need money of our own. We're like two princesses shut up in the tower. I want to live a little before I'm Mrs. Victor Galetti."

"Oh, I don't know." She lets out a long breath. "You've always had the craziest ideas. Lord knows I've doubted you before and you've made me eat crow. But I don't see how this is going to get you anything but in deep trouble." Leah pulls at her hands in her lap. The shimmer in her eyes reminds me just how lost we would be without each other.

"I'm nineteen years old, how much trouble can I get into? I'm an adult." I hold my head high in preposterous bravado.

She snorts out a laugh with a shake of her head. I push off the dresser and close the space between us, skipping as I go.

I crouch down in front of her, the hem of my pleated, navy-blue uniform skirt riding high enough to show the tops of the thigh high socks.

"I'm going to get us out of here." My voice is steady and sure. "I'm going to get into that culinary school and become the most famous pastry chef and baker *evah*." I toss my head back then settle my eyes back on her with raised eyebrows. "Did you like that raspberry napoleon I made tonight?" I bob my eyebrows and nod at her.

“Yes. It was amazing. As usual. How do you just know how to make stuff like that? You never even follow a recipe.”

“Magic.” I grin and wrinkle my nose at her. It’s true though. When I’m baking I’m as happy as I ever can be. I feel peaceful, and forget that I’m engaged to a man I barely know – and what I do know I don’t like.

I forget the charmed, blessed life we’d had until a drunk driver exploded our world. I don’t dream of much, but I want that peace, that sense of being alive I get when I bake. It’s stupid, I know, but it does it for me. Takes me away from this suffocating, isolated world.

I rise to my feet, wondering if I should lather on some make-up. I don’t have much, but I decide I can toss it in my bag and apply a coat of paint on the bus.

The reality of what I’m about to do hits me and I feel my stomach clench. I suddenly feel so stupid. What makes me think I can make money dancing?

Because you can’t think of any other option that will actually bring home money and let you work during the hours when no one will notice you’re gone. And, you’ve got moves.

Leah would have been the stripper. Legs that end at her neck, cheekbones set in a way that would make any Vogue model jelly, and the way she carries –*carried*– herself, was like royalty. She would have had every chin drop to the floor when she took the stage.

I, on the other hand, am none of those things. But my legs still work, and that means I need to do this. My stomach tightens, knowing eventually I will have to take off my top and they will see the imprint the accident left on me as well as my six-pack abs covered in a couple layers of cupcake calories, but I shake it off. My plan is to amaze them with my novelty, or at least feel so sorry for me that they will give me a shot.

I know I just need a chance. I will do whatever it takes to teach myself to dance. Or anything else. I don’t care. I’ll do whatever I need to do to get us out of here. We may both carry the memories of that horrible day on our bodies and in our hearts, but we still have each other and that will never, ever change.

Simon, our legal guardian, has practically kept us prisoners here since the accident. He still insisted we wear school uniforms Monday through Friday when the tutors came. He said it provided order and structure. Just what two young girls who lost their parents needed, uniforms and structure. Never mind hugs, kindness and understanding.

We are both over the age of legally needing a guardian now. I turned nineteen a couple months ago and Leah is fifteen months older than me. But somehow we are still under a conservatorship, which Simon is of course in charge of. The only way out of it is to go to court and have it removed. But that requires money and freedom, two things the poorest rich girls I know don't have.

"So." I stand taller, throwing my chest out and grinning from ear to ear. "You want to see my moves before I go?" I spin around and hit the play button on the CD player sitting on the desk next to the window.

"Noooo," Leah exaggerates, rolling her eyes as she turns her chair away from me.

Her glossy, sable hair falls to the middle of her back, so shiny I practically see the outline of myself looking into it. It's not the only contrast between us – she's a head taller than me; my face is more cherub than Kate Moss, and I fill out every possible available inch of my clothes.

Mind you, that doesn't stop me from sampling all the yummy goodness of the things I bake. Besides, it's not like I'm ever going to actually date. My future has been decided and Victor shows about as much interest in me as a chunk of broken concrete.

OK, that's not entirely true. He tried to kiss me once. The day we got engaged. He slipped the ring on my finger after Simon explained to me that I was getting married and to whom – and why I would do it without question.

Well, that's not fair, he gave me a choice. There's always a choice. He made it very clear that if I didn't marry his son, that was fine. I would be granted my freedom.

But I would also never see my sister again. Or this house.

Leah doesn't know that part, and I will never tell her because she would tell me not to marry him. Not only would I lose her, we would lose this place and I couldn't bear that.

"Well, I'm going to show you anyway." I spin the volume knob up and the funky 1970s Rick James jam fills the twelve foot ceilings of my bedroom.

I strut away from her at first practicing my most provocative walk, but then trip over some invisible obstacle, and quickly recover to spin on my heel and head toward her.

She's still facing away from me and I grab the handles on the back of her chair, spinning her around to view my onslaught of awesome. I know strippers wear high heels, but I don't have any and I will have to figure that

out as I go. My plan has some holes as big as the Grand Canyon, but I shall overcome.

I barely hit the five-foot mark and have more fluff than any self-respecting stripper would strut, but I've got determination for days. Leah may have hit the genetic jackpot as far as looks, but I've got tenacity, and hopefully that will be enough.

"Oh my gawd." Leah shakes her head as I step back, twist around and give her my best come-hither look over my shoulder as I gyrate my hips.

"Stoooooopppppp. *It.*"

"I just can't stop. I got the music in me." I sing-song and shimmy as Rick starts extolling the wonders of a very kinky girl.

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Thank You.

I have so many amazing people I've met since I started putting my naughty thoughts on the page. To some of the first fans who supported me, the bloggers,

fellow authors who have been more than generous with their time and opinions as well as the other professionals that put up with my particular kind of crazy, thank you.

Neda, Gi, Mel/Alexa Riley, Sybil, Celia, Aria and so many more ...you guys remind me

Every day that when we support each other everyone wins.

XOXOXO

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dani Wyatt used to feel bad about having such dirty thoughts. Luckily, one day she decided to start writing them down. Her uber alpha heros have a wicked possessive streak and an insatiable libido. Her heroines are intelligent, quirky and worry about having too much muffin top. With her books, you can count on a heaping helping of HOT, a dash of rough and always a happily ever after.

When she's not writing (which is not often) she is probably laughing about some irony (like A-1 Steak Sauce is vegan), riding her horse, wondering why The Walking Dead can't have a new episode every night, or looking cross-eyed at some piece of technology sent to ruin her day.