



THE TWELVE DATES OF CHRISTMAS

Chloe's Christmas of Cursed Chaos



MIRANDA MAY

Chloe's Christmas of Cursed Chaos

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Luna Moon Publishing

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Foreword

Hey y'all!!!

Welcome to my solo release in the shared world! I'm super excited about this book as it's a first for me. While I've written characters that are pansexual and bisexual, I've yet to have a female main character that was with another female on page. But this book changes that. This is my first foray into FF within in the harem. This book, out of all of the ones I've written, is a true polyam book. All five characters are involved with one another. This is also one of the shorter books I've written. And the lightest. Have I mentioned that this book is very special to me because it's a first for a lot of things? I'm just really happy to get to share this story with you, and I hope that you love it as much as I do.

Not only is this book a part of a shared world, but it's also an intertwined story. In the shared world, I have two co-writes with Kaytie Marie, plus we each have our solo books. We decided to write about a group of four best

friends who all find their love this Christmas season. Each book is a standalone and you don't have to read all of the books, but just be aware that all four books do include the same four best friends. They don't have to be read in any specific order, but know that some of their story might bleed into each of the books. We'd of course love it if you read all four, but understand if you don't. The four books are this one, A Jolly Christmas Disaster & The Monsters' Christmas Party by me and Kaytie, and Tali's Christmas Revenge by Kaytie.

Be warned that reading chapter twenty-seven and beyond does have spoilers for the other books.

There are not nearly the amount of triggers in this one, but I've listed those and the content warnings on the next page. Your mental health is important, so please make sure you're taking care of yourself when reading this. Thank you for giving this book a chance and happy reading!

Content Warnings

As always, if there are any triggers I missed, please let me know by emailing me at mirandamayauthor@gmail.com! This list does include spoilers! Remember, your mental health is the most important thing!

- Breathplay
- DP
- DVP
- Group sex
- MM
- FF
- Pregnancy (in epilogue)

New Member Profile



Welcome to Love -N- Shenanigans, the last dating app you'll ever need.

Your best match (or matches) are just a few clicks away!

Basic Information

Name: *Chloe Cadogen*

Age: *26*

Species: *Witch*

Job Description: *High school English/Literature teacher.*

Marital Status: *Single*

Dependants: *Just two cats, Sasha and Poppy*

Describe yourself using 10 words or less: *I take no bullshit, love life, and play for keeps.*

Person who referred you: *A barista at Serendipity gave me the card, and then some of my exes suggested that I check it out. I'll explain more later.*

Additional Information

Sexual Designation: *Female*

Sexual Orientation: *Straight...maybe a little bi-curious? I'm not sure. I admire the female form but have yet to find a woman that I'm sexually attracted to.*

Are you Monogamous, Swinger, Polyamorous? *I was raised in a polyamorous home, and I think that's what I would be most comfortable with.*

Are you willing to date outside of your species? *Yes, please. I'd actually prefer someone outside of my species.*

Hobbies: *Hiking, running, any physical activity honestly, sports (both playing and watching), and reading.*

Do you have any kinks you would like to be taken into consideration? *Breath play, exhibitionism, impact play, sensation deprivation, voyeurism*

Please describe your perfect partner/partners: *I'm looking for people who want to walk beside me and not try to take over my life. I want people who may not have the same interests but are willing to do something just because I want to. I want people who care about me and each other. Ideally, I would want a polycule in which everyone loves everyone.*

Additional Notes

I'm fairly certain that I've been cursed. Every man I've ever dated has ended up being the fated mate of one of the witches from my prior coven. That includes in high school, college, and the one or two men I've dated in the years since. Even when I moved to a new coven, I would meet the mates of my previous coven members. Eventually, I just gave up altogether on dating.

I'm sure you're asking yourself why I'm on here if that's the case. I don't want to be alone. As much as I try to hide it, there's a loneliness inside of me that aches to be filled. I want to meet the people who are meant for me. There's something deep inside of me that tells me they're out there, just waiting for me to meet them, but I don't know how. I don't know how much longer I can go meeting everyone else's mates and never my own. I just want to be happy, to fall in love.

My old coven is throwing a Christmas party the day before Christmas Eve, and they want me to bring dates. They say they're "concerned" that I haven't been able to meet anyone. I'm tired of their pitying looks. I'm just so tired. My exes all got together and ambushed me, telling me that I should try this website, so here I am. Even if I can't find my mates here, I need someone to go to this Christmas party with me so I can get them off my back. If I could get out of going to the party, I would. The problem is that my mom is the head of the coven, and I'll never hear the end of it if I don't show up.

Chapter One



Chloe

I'm in the middle of a lecture when I feel my phone buzz in my pocket. I try to ignore it, but I feel it go off another two times, one right after the other.

Finishing up my thought, I shoot my class a smile. "Now, I'm going to allow you just a little time to get ahead in your reading. Go ahead and take out your copies of *Wuthering Heights*."

Waiting to make sure that they're doing as requested, I step into the hallway and pull out my phone. The messages are from my coven chat, and they all know that I'm in school, so this must be important.

Laoise

911 Witches!!! I'm on my way to Serendripty now. Meet me when you get off work!

But quickly.

Tali

You suck.

Glancing at my watch, I realize there's only twenty minutes left of school. I really shouldn't leave early, but if one of my girlies needs me, then I'll be there.

I swear, if I leave work, and this isn't an emergency, I'm going to kill you.

Closing out the group chat, I dial the front office. "Mooncrest Academy, this is Elenor. How may I help you today?"

"Hey, Elenor, it's Chloe Cadogan. I've just received an urgent message from my coven, and I need to head out. Do we have anyone that can watch my class for the last few minutes?"

"Of course, Chloe," Elenor simpers, making me roll my eyes. She's a member of my previous coven, the one my mom runs, so she's always trying to kiss my ass. At least, in this case, it's working in my favor. "I'll call one of the teachers with a free period. They should be there in just a minute."

True to her word, Abel Mackenzie is marching up to my classroom just a few moments later. He flashes me a smile. "I've got you, Chloe. Do they know what they're supposed to be doing?"

"Yes. I just have them reading *Wuthering Heights*. I guarantee you most of them are behind in the reading anyway, so this will help them."

We both head into my classroom, where I inform them that Mr. Mackenzie will be with them for the remainder of the period, reminding them to be on their best behavior, and that I'll see them all tomorrow. I grab my things and head out the door.

Within twenty minutes, I'm pulling up outside of Serendripity. The only downfall to working at Mooncrest Academy is that it's at the edge of town, which isn't too big, but it likely means that I'm the last one to arrive. I climb out of the car, looking both ways before crossing the street.

"Clo!"

Turning, I find Tali speed-walking toward me. "Huh. I figured I'd be the last one to arrive."

"I was in a damned meeting," she tells me as we stalk toward the coffee shop, one of our favorite places to meet.

"Belle's not waiting outside, so I'm guessing that she hasn't arrived yet." I pull out my phone and laugh as I see that she only responded a few minutes ago. "She's on her way now. We should wait for her."

Tali nods, and I pull my coat closer as we settle in to wait for Belle. She's been through some shit, most of it revolving around being raised in a human cult for most of her life. She's only been out for a few years, so she still regularly has issues with doing things that are commonplace for most of us. One of which is walking into a public place on her own, which is why we're waiting. There's no point in making her more anxious than necessary. We like to look out for her when we can.

Making sure there are no humans around, I flick my fingers and mumble, "*Dóiteán.*"

"Thank you," Tali mumbles as the air around us heats.

"Here she comes." I elbow Tali and nod in the direction of Belle heading toward us. She still doesn't drive, and as usual, she's walking with her head down as she stares at her feet. "Hey, Belle!"

Belle's head jerks up before I can see her let out a sigh of relief. She smiles as she reaches us. "Hey, girls. Thanks for waiting for me."

“As soon as you’re ready to do it on your own, you just let us know,” Tali says softly. Belle and Tali are roommates, and it’s only because of Tali that Belle was able to escape the cult. The two of them are definitely the closest out of all four of us, but we’re all as close as sisters.

I swing the door open, allowing the two of them to step inside before me. They both pause just inside the door, and I push past them as all three of us seek out Laoise.

“There she is!” I practically yell, internally wincing when I see Belle flinch. I probably shouldn’t have called so much attention to us. Oops.

Laoise’s face lights up when she sees us heading for her. “Oh, finally. I thought I was going to have to be the pathetic girl sitting here all by myself, surrounded by empty chairs.”

Rolling my eyes, I drop into my usual seat, grateful to see a coffee already waiting for me. “Shut up, Laoise. No one would ever think you’re pathetic.”

And they wouldn’t. Our unicorn fae is the only non-witch in our coven... I mean, technically, Belle is a half-witch, but she doesn’t seem to have any magic. But our coven is about so much more than our species or the magic we wield. It’s about who we are as women, and what we want from life. That we’re the best of friends is just an added bonus.

But back to Laoise. When we first met, she was surprised I was able to pronounce her name correctly just from seeing it written. It’s an Irish spelling that’s pronounced Lee-sha. It confuses the hell out of everyone, but my original coven uses Gaelic for our spell casting, as our line originated in Ireland.

Laoise is a unicorn fae, a species that doesn’t often stray from the Fae Realm, but she hates it there. She has the most beautiful, bright-colored rainbow hair and is probably the most beautiful woman in all the realms with

her pink eyes and easy smile. It's part of the reason she does so well with being an influencer. I admire her beauty, but as with all women, I feel no sexual attraction to her.

That seems like a weird thing to say when I think I might be bisexual. Why only think and not know? Because I get turned on by the female body as long as there's no face attached. As soon as I see a face, it's gone. It's a weird problem to have, I assure you.

"Do you want to explain why we had to have an emergency meeting?" Tali asks, breaking my attention from my thoughts. "Some of us have actual jobs we have to be at, you know."

I have to hold back a snort when Laoise waves her hand dismissively. "I said to meet when you were done. I'd rather have to work than deal with my family any day—even with the money that comes along with it."

"Oh, no. What did they do now?" Belle asks, leaning forward in her chair.

Of course, Laoise's emergency involves her parents. They usually do. I've never met them since they never leave the Fae Realm, but based on the stories Laoise has shared, I'm happy about that.

Laoise tosses an envelope on the table, telling us how she'd received her family's annual Christmas invitation. I grab it, waving it around without actually reading it. "And? You get one every year, and you never go."

Tali grabs the envelope from me, and I turn to her with a droll look. She just shrugs her shoulders with a smirk as her eyes flash over the page.

"What's it say, Tali?" Belle asks, trying to lean over to read it over Tali's shoulder as she reads it aloud.

I wish I could say that I'm surprised by the contents, but I'm not—not even a little.

"Gods, she is the worst." I wrinkle my nose in disgust. "You're obviously

not doing what she says, right?”

Laoise laughs. “Hell no. My mother should know better than to try to control me. She’s been trying my entire life, and she has yet to succeed. No, I have a plan. Kind of.”

Tali leans forward, resting her chin on her hand, her bad mood obviously forgotten. “Do tell.”

Laoise breaks down her plan for us about bringing home the most inappropriate dates—monsters of all things. Honestly, I love the way her mind works, and her parents deserve to be put in their place. At least my parents aren’t nearly as annoying.

“I’m sorry to interrupt.” Belle nearly jumps out of her seat as all four of our heads snap in his direction and he just grins. “I’m Vincent. You might have seen me here a time or two. I’ve seen you ladies in here rather frequently.”

I nod because I recognize him. He’s always been nice to all of us.

“Yeah, I’ve definitely seen you here before.” Laoise flirting? What a surprise. I wonder if she even realizes she’s doing it.

Vincent pulls some cards from his pocket, and Laoise reaches for one. “We’ve been told to keep an ear out for anyone who might be in need of this, and you, my dear, sound like you’re in great need.”

Laoise plucks the card from him and reads it with a frown. “Love -N- Shenanigans? What is this? I’ve never heard of it.”

I’ve never heard of it, so I pay attention to what Vincent says. As he goes on to explain it, it sounds more and more like bullshit to me. A dating app for humans and supernaturals? That seems to be asking for trouble. And all this talk about fated mates? I somehow doubt that a dating app can help with that. No, that’s apparently my specialty, seeing as I’ve helped multiple of my old coven mates find their fated mates.

How have I managed that? By dating them.

Yup. That's right. This girl, right here, finds the fated mates of others just by dating them. At first, it was surprising and hurt a bit. But as it kept happening, I realized there was no way this could be a coincidence. Two or three guys? Sure. But twenty? Not so much. And yes, I have dated and/or slept with twenty guys between high school and now, and all twenty have ended up being fated to another member of my mom's coven. Which is how I'm twenty-six and single, not having been on a date in over a year.

Pathetic, right?

Which is why when Vincent finishes his spiel and hands each of us a card before walking away, I scoff. "Yeah, right. With my love life? I'll probably end up meeting your guys' mates, not my own."

Wrinkling my nose, I look down at the card as if it's going to bite me.

Belle, being Belle, tries to make me feel better. "Come on, Chloe. That can't keep happening. You've just had some bad luck. Eventually, you have to meet your own mates, right?"

She glances at Tali and Laoise to back her up, but luckily, Tali changes the subject. I love Belle and her seemingly endless supply of hope, but this isn't something I can ever get my hopes up about. Not anymore.

I don't know how much more rejection I can take. I don't know how many more mates I can find for others when it seems likely that I'll never find my own. It's why I broke down and got Sasha and Poppy, my two precious Russian Blue cats. At least with the two of them, I know I'll never be truly alone. It's not the same as human companionship, but that's what I've got my besties for. When I feel like I'm going to drown in my loneliness, they're always there to make sure I don't.

I'm only half listening to the conversation as I sip my coffee, my mind

wandering in directions I wish it wouldn't.

When my phone buzzes, I pull it out to find a message from one of my exes. Frowning, I glance up at the girls, but they're too lost in conversation to notice what I'm doing.

Noah

Hey, can you swing by my place? I've got something I wanted to talk to you about.

Yes, Nadia knows, and she'll be here. She says she would love to see you.

If you don't have plans, can you join us for dinner?

I don't know why he's being so pushy, but I can tell he's not going to let it go. Sighing, I sent him a quick response, letting him know I'll be over when I'm done with the girls.

Dread fills my stomach, and I know I'm not going to like whatever he has to say. My intuition is never wrong, so as I jump back into conversation with the girls, I try to drag it out as long as possible.

Does that make me a coward? Probably.

But the unease that's rolling through me isn't something I want to deal with sooner than necessary, and who can blame me for that?

Chapter Two



Chloe

As I'm leaving Serendipity, my phone rings. The edge of unease rises until I feel like I'm choking as I check the caller ID.

Frowning, I realize it's my mom. I don't know why that should cause me unease. I love my mom, and she loves me.

Trying to shake off the feeling, I answer the call and lift it to my ear. "Hey, Mom!"

"Hey, honey. How are you?"

I cross the street and climb into my car before answering. "I'm alright. I just got done having coffee with the girls. Laoise's mom sent an invitation for their family Christmas party, and it looks like she's not going to be able to get out of it this year."

"That's unfortunate, but speaking of—"

"Hold on, Mom. I'm turning the car on and switching to Bluetooth." I press the button to start the car, putting my phone in its holder before flicking my hand. "*Dóiteán.*"

Mom's laughter spills through the speakers. "You've always been so impatient when it comes to warming up your car."

"I don't like to be cold. Sue me." Mom just laughs again as I pull out on the street. "So, what were you going to say?"

"Yeah, about that. The coven has voted to reinstate our old Yule celebration."

Great. Now I know why she's calling and why it filled me with unease. Damn it.

Mom takes a deep breath. "I know you're no longer officially part of our coven, but it would mean the world to me and your dad if you'd come."

"Why now?" I ask with a sigh. "The Emberwitch Coven hasn't had a Yule celebration since I was a kid."

It's not that I'm against celebrating Yule, but one of my dads was raised in another coven who didn't celebrate Yule. They celebrated Christmas, so that's what we celebrated at home growing up.

"Well, honey, Mrs. Abbott was just diagnosed with stage four breast cancer. They've said she's unlikely to make it past January, so she wants to celebrate like she did when she was a kid. I couldn't say no to her, and I guess neither could the rest of the coven. And honestly? I kind of miss it."

"I'm sorry to hear about Mrs. Abbott. She's really the sweetest woman, and I can't believe this is happening to her. I'll make sure to come over one day this week to see her." Mrs. Abbott is almost three hundred years old, so she's lived a long, full life. But that doesn't make it any easier to say goodbye or to hear that this is happening to her. "I assume the celebration will be starting on the 21st?"

Mom hums. "It is. The gala will start at six o'clock and go all night. Even if it's the only part of Yule you take part in, you know it will make Mrs. Abbott so very happy."

I snort. "You don't have to guilt me into it, Mom. I'll be there."

"And maybe you'll think about bringing a date?"

And there it is. The real reason that my mom is calling me. I'm sure she wants me to attend the celebrations, but as her only child, I know she wants me to give her grandchildren. Something I refuse to do on my own.

“Mom, we’ve talked about this. I haven’t had much luck in my love life. I’m still not seeing anyone, so it seems unlikely that I’ll meet someone between now and then. But if I do, I promise you, I’ll bring them with me.” I try to bite back my frustration, but she knows this is a sore subject with me.

“I’m sorry, honey. Of course you will.”

“Look, Mom, I hate to cut off this conversation, but I just pulled up outside of Nadia’s house. I’m meeting with her and Noah for dinner, so I’ve got to go.”

Mom doesn’t say anything for a moment, and I’m sure she’s wondering why I’m meeting them. I’m surprised when she doesn’t mention it. “Tell them I said hello, and enjoy your dinner.”

She hangs up the phone before I can say anything else, and I laugh. I love my mom, but she’s the worst about not allowing anyone else to say goodbye at the end of a phone call. I throw my phone into my purse and climb out of the car, hesitating on the sidewalk outside of the house. I really don’t want to be here.

Noah is the boyfriend I was most serious with in college. We were together for over a year before I brought him home to meet the family and coven. I thought I’d finally found the guy for me—except he wasn’t meant to be mine but Nadia’s. I wasn’t in love with him, but I figured that would come with time, and it certainly didn’t negate the hurt from once again finishing in second place behind someone else.

The door to their house opens and there Noah is in all his shining glory. His brown hair is perfectly styled, dimples only enhancing how good-looking he is as he grins at me. “Are you planning to stay out here all night?”

“I was considering it,” I tell him as I start up the pathway. “What did you want to talk to me about?”

“Why don’t we step inside first?”

He’s acting weird, which makes me frown—something he quickly notes and laughs.

“I’m sorry. It’s been a long day, and honestly? I’m starving.” Noah runs a hand through his hair, a sure sign he’s nervous.

I consider turning around and making a run for the car, but what good will that do? He’ll just find me some other time and corner me. I might as well get this over with.

I step inside, breathing in the scent of roast. One thing I can say about Nadia is that she’s an amazing cook. It’s the main reason I wanted to come.

Noah shuts the door and mutters, “*Claudere.*”

Spinning on my heel, I point my finger at him. “Just because we use Gaelic in the Emberwitch Coven doesn’t mean I don’t know Latin, asshole. Why the fuck did you just lock me in here?”

“Because we want to talk to you, and we know you wouldn’t do so willingly,” a voice I’m not expecting to hear says, causing me to freeze.

What the fuck is going on? Is this an ambush?

I turn much slower this time, eyes going wide when I find not just one more ex but all nineteen gathered in the hallway.

“Someone better start talking before I lose my shit,” I tell them, shoving through the crowd to find the mates of my exes. I snort, very unamused to find that I have, in fact, walked into an ambush.

Nadia steps forward, reaching for my hand. “I know you’re probably pissed off that we’re ambushing you—“

“Pissed off? Yeah, that’s putting it lightly. But since I’m here, you better actually have food to feed me, or we’re going to have a problem.” I yank my hand out of her reach, and she steps back with a nod.

Someone snorts behind me, but I don't bother turning around to see who it is. I honestly don't care. I just want to know why I'm here, and I want dinner—preferably to go.

“Of course, I have food for you,” she replies, leaning over to grab food containers that she hands to me before finding her seat once more. I take them from her with a quiet thank you before dropping onto an armchair that they've placed in the center of the other couches and armchairs.

My eyes slide over each of the coven members that I used to be close to before I left the coven. I hate that those friendships have faded away, but it's hard being around my exes all the damn time.

There's Nadia, who is only mated to Noah, neither of them wanting more than a monogamous relationship between the two of them. Lulu, whose six-man harem are all my exes. Josh, who is married to another two exes. Violet with three of my exes filling out her ten-man harem. Lastly, there's Alice, Cassandra, Phoebe, and Iris, with two exes each who are still actively seeking out more men and women to complete their polycules.

These are men and women I used to be close to, but circumstances tore us apart—or should I say fate tore us apart?

“Let's get this over with. Whatever you have to say, spit it out so I can go eat this amazing meal Nadia made for me in peace at my house.”

For a moment, everyone just looks at one another as if they don't know who should be speaking. Finally, Nadia rolls her eyes and leans forward in her seat. “Did your mom tell you that the coven is bringing back the Yule gala?”

“She did. I actually just got off the phone with her, and she implied heavily that I needed to be there so I won't disappoint her and my dads.”

She nods sympathetically. “We all know why you pulled away from the

coven and why you formed one of your own, and we don't blame you in the least. But we all used to be friends, and we miss you, Chloe. With that being said, we know it's hard for you to be around all of us since your exes are our mates, and you still haven't found yours."

"But we have an idea," Noah interjects. "There's a new dating app called Love -N- Shenanigans. I've had a few buddies meet their fated mates there. We're beginning to wonder if Fate herself isn't involved. There have been so many stories about people finding their mates all over the world."

"We wanted to gift you a membership, but it's free, so that felt like cheating," Nadia adds. "Instead, we thought we'd get together to see if this is something we could convince you to sign up for. We want you to be as happy as we all are. After all, some of us might not have met our mates if not for you."

Part of me knows that they're doing this out of gratitude, but the other part of me just wants to rage at them. If it was as easy as meeting someone on a dating app, don't they realize I would've already done it?

Noah clears his throat. "We're all so grateful to you, but we hate how unhappy you are. Can you maybe just give this a try for us? For your parents? Just think what it would mean to them if you were able to meet someone? If you could bring a date to the Yule gala. Think how happy you would be if you found your mates."

And just like that, the rage is gone. I *do* want to meet my mates, and if I don't try this and they're on there waiting to meet me? It would be a travesty.

"Fine," I mutter, letting them know with my tone I'm not happy with any of them. "I'll sign up when I get home, but if any of you try this shit again, you're dead. Don't act like I can't do it. You know my dark magic is my

strongest. If this doesn't work, though, I don't want to hear another word from any of you about this again."

Nadia nods, a smile lighting up her face. "Absolutely. We just want you to be happy, Chloe. We love you."

I wrinkle my nose to show my annoyance, but it's nice to hear.

Damn it, now I actually have to sign up. Fuck me.

Chapter Three



Chloe

As soon as I step into my house, I immediately open up the containers to see that Nadia put a spell on them to keep them warm. I grab a fork and start tearing into it, moaning as I do.

Sasha and Poppy emerge from wherever they were sleeping to rub against my legs. I set aside my food so I can get their wet food for dinner before returning to my own food. They sing my praises—or curse me for making them wait so long. It's sometimes hard to tell with cats. I know they love me, and I love them. That's all that really matters. If they're calling me a bitch, then what can I do about it? It's not like I can understand them. At least not yet. I'm hoping to turn them into familiars, but we haven't gotten to that point yet.

It's a whole process, and I'm not going to lie; I just haven't felt like doing it yet. But having familiars means that my magic will be more stable, and that's never a bad thing. If it's a good match, then I could grow more powerful. Not that I need a lot of help with that. After all, I come from a long line of coven leaders. I just have no desire to lead the coven I grew up in. That's partially because it hurts to be around them, but I just like teaching more. And being a coven leader is a full-time job, to be sure.

As much as I don't want to think about it, I know I need to consider the words of my former coven members. I get what they're saying, and I know it's coming from a good place. But it still doesn't change anything. It's perfectly clear to me I've been cursed. I don't know how, when, or why—but

my love life has been cursed. I don't know a damn thing about curses, but I guess I can add it to my things to research—or to have Belle research. She likes researching anything that has to do with the supernatural since she's still playing catch up on the world we live in.

It would make my parents feel better if I found someone to attend the Yule gala with me. If I go into it knowing that they're not meant for me, then I won't be hurt, right? That's exactly what Laoise is doing. It'll get my old coven off my back for a while. Maybe it'll keep them off my back long enough for me to figure out how and why I've been cursed. Hell, maybe I can even break the curse. Wouldn't that be nice?

What's the worst thing that can happen? I help someone else find their mate in time for the holiday season? That doesn't seem like a bad thing to do.

I just have to remember to not get attached, and maybe I can get laid. It's been a while—over a year, in fact. That's going to have to be a priority for me. I'm too young to go for this long without sex. Ugh, why did I let it get this bad? Just because I'm not dating right now doesn't mean that I need to be celibate.

Though I guess I will be dating if I do this. And I have to do this, don't I? I guess I don't have to, but it really would be easier if I could get everyone off my back.

Yes, this is what I need to do. But because I like talking over my decisions, I should probably ask someone else's opinion. I know that any of my girls would listen and give me their opinion, but there's only one person I can think of to talk this over with.

Decision made, I pick up my phone and dial Belle. She'll tell me if I should do this or if I'm just setting myself up to get hurt.

“Chloe?” Belle sounds like she's been lost in her work, and I feel like shit

for bothering her.

“Hey, Belle. Sorry, I know you’re probably busy—“

She cuts me off. “Absolutely not. You know I’d drop anything for you, but I just finished the cover I was working on, so you’re good. What’s up?”

I mull over it, trying to figure out how I want to explain this. Belle, being Belle, just sits and waits patiently for me to get the words out.

Finally deciding that straightforward is the way to go, I blurt out, “My old coven is throwing a Yule gala, and they want me to go.”

A sigh escapes me, and I can almost hear the question in her pause.

“Okay?”

“The exes and their mates bombarded me and said they were worried about me. How they didn’t think I should be alone anymore and that I should try this new dating website.”

Belle laughs. “Let me guess, Love -N- Shenanigans?”

I nod, even though she can’t see me. “You guessed it. They said I should use it so I’ll have a date to the gala. I really don’t want to because we all know it’s going to end because of this damn curse—“

She cuts me off again. “You don’t actually know it’s a curse. You just think it is, but I’m sorry, continue. Wait, can I also just say how much I love that you call them the exes?”

I snort. Gods, I love this woman. “It’s what they are. Part of me thinks I should do it, but the other part really doesn’t want to be disappointed again, you know?”

“I’ll make a deal with you,” Belle says slowly. “I’ll sign up if you do.”

“What?” I’m not sure that I’m hearing her words correctly. Why would Belle want to do this? I have no doubt that shock is tingeing my words. “But you don’t date.”

“No, I don’t, but I have decided I’m going to celebrate Christmas this year. I want to have a Christmas like I see in those movies I love.”

I lift a hand to my heart, glad my friend can’t see me right now. Honestly, it takes a lot of effort to hold in the “awwwww” that wants to escape my mouth. Even if I hadn’t already convinced myself to sign up, this right here would’ve made me say yes. If anyone deserves a good Christmas, it’s Belle.

“Then I think we should both sign up. You deserve everything you want, girlfriend.”

There’s another moment of silence, and I think I hear her snuffle but ignore it.

“Well, I’m at my computer now. Let’s do it before we change our minds,” she finally says, and I have to agree. If I don’t do this now, then I will talk myself out of it.

I grab my laptop off the table and flip it open, waiting for it to load. I set the phone on the counter, putting Belle on speakerphone while I get the website pulled up. I sign up and run through the questionnaire before letting out a sigh of relief.

“Finished?” Belle asks.

“I am.” I scoff. “I can’t believe we just signed up for it.”

She laughs. “Me neither. Oh, no. One of my clients is having a meltdown. I’m going to have to go. Thanks for calling me, Clo. I think this will be good for both of us.”

“I sure hope so,” I murmur before saying good night.

Staring at the submitted screen, I start freaking out. What did I just do? Why the hell did I think this would be a good idea? All it’s going to do is lead to broken hearts. Or maybe just my broken heart. I guess I can look at it

as doing my good deed for the holiday season, helping others find their mates.

I hate to admit it, but I'd definitely gotten my hopes up on thinking this could be the real thing. I'd answered the questions honestly as if I was looking for my fated mates—because I have zero doubts that I have more than one—and I'm going to end up crushed when they meet their mate at the gala. I just know it. This was stupid.

No. *I* was stupid.

I'd been so excited to help out Belle, and I still am. I just know I'm also setting myself up for more pain. As if I ever need more of that in my life.

Shaking my head, I close out of the website and check my work email to see if anything came in after I left. I answer a few questions from parents and send a quick thank you to Mr. Mackenzie for covering my class for me before shutting it down. I'm going to need to do something to keep my mind off of this shit.

I think it's time to go for a run. There's still snow on the ground, but it's not too bad, and the sidewalks have been cleared. I just need to get out of the house and out of my head. A run will do just that. Then, I can pop into the shower and watch a movie in bed before calling it an early night. That sounds amazing.

I hustle down the hallway and into my room. I change into my running clothes before popping in my earbuds and heading out the door.

I run longer than I probably should have—especially since it's dark—but my mind feels at peace when I finally make it back to my house. I smile as I walk up to the porch.

I love my house. It was my grandma's, and when she passed away, she left it for me. She knew that my mom would have no use for it, seeing as she is

the coven leader and the coven has a house for its leader.

It's not very big, only three bedrooms and a ranch style, but it's got the most amazing wrap-around porch that I love using all year round. When I inherited it, I painted it a taupe color with black accents. It just looks cozy, and to me, it is.

Pushing inside, I head straight for my en suite. I had both bathrooms redone, with mine getting a much larger shower with multiple shower heads while I had a soaking tub installed in the extra bathroom. How did I afford that on a teacher's salary? Easy, we have family money. I just don't like to throw it around.

I could afford a mansion, but I don't want one. Why would I when it's just me and the cats and is likely to remain that way for a very long time?

Shaking my head, I turn on the shower before tossing my clothes into the hamper. I take a long, heavenly shower before getting ready for bed.

Not bothering to look at my phone, I turn it on silent. I'm not in the mood for any more interruptions tonight. I don't know how much more I can take on top of what I've dealt with today. Hopefully, none of the girls need anything else from me tonight, and if there are any notifications coming through from Love -N- Shenanigans, I don't want to know about them. That's a problem for tomorrow's Chloe. Today's Chloe is fed up and unable to deal with any more shit.

I reach for the remote, and pull up one of the Christmas movies Belle recommended to me the other day and press play.

As I cuddle into my big, comfy bed, I realize this is the perfect way to end the day.

Chapter Four



Chloe

Waking up the next morning, I don't feel nearly as anxious about my decision the night before. This is totally something I can deal with, and in the long run, it'll make my life easier.

I grab my phone and start flipping through my notifications. I don't have anywhere to be this morning, so I might as well stay comfy as long as I can. I'm sure one of the girls will message me later, and we'll get together. But right now, I have a wide open day with nothing planned.

I flip through the texts I received from my mom, two of my dads, Noah, and Nadia, before catching up on social media. I notice I have a notification for Love -N- Shenanigans, but I ignore it for now. It's not like it's going anywhere, and it's just too early to deal with that.

I spend the next hour mindlessly scrolling through my phone before my babies jump on the bed, meowing their displeasure at not getting their breakfast yet.

"Yes, ladies, I know. I'm such a terrible mommy. How could I make you wait for breakfast?" When I reach out to pet Sasha, she hisses at me, and I laugh. "Okay. Okay. I get it. No love until after food. Then let's get out there, yeah?"

I climb out of bed, both cats weaving between my legs as I head for the kitchen. I laugh when I almost trip over them because what else am I going to do? Yell at them? A whole lot of good that would do me. Thankfully, they leave me alone as soon as I set their bowls down.

Glancing out the window, it looks nice outside, so I think I'll head out there this morning. Thankful for having set up my coffee maker the night before, I pour a cup into a to-go mug before grabbing my laptop and my jacket before heading for the back porch. I leave the back door cracked for the cats in case they decide to join me. There isn't any snow on the porch, so they might, but they're not huge fans of the cold. I settle on my porch swing and look out over my large backyard for a few moments.

Opening my laptop, I pull up Love -N- Shenanigans's website and sign in. My eyes widen at the sheer number of matches I seem to have. There are so many. I don't have any messages because I set my profile so I would have to be the one who reaches out. I don't want a bunch of creepers in my inbox.

I don't know how long I sit there going through the matches, but I manage to make it through all of them. Really, all I do is check out their picture and skim their profiles to see if I thought we'd be a good fit—even if it's just for a Yule gala. The last thing I need is to invite someone who annoys the piss out of me. I'd never hear the end of it from my dads.

“Eek!” I scream, almost throwing my laptop as something comes flying at me. I almost bat it away before realizing it's Sasha. I set my laptop to the side so she lands in my lap purposefully. I run a hand over her back and shake my head as I try to get my pulse under control.

“You silly cat. You almost gave Mommy a heart attack, then where would you be?” I pause. “You'd definitely be one of those cats that ate me when I died, wouldn't you?”

She seems to turn her nose up to me as she lets out an indignant meow.

“My bad. I didn't realize how offensive it was to say that.” I laugh as she settles in my lap. Yes, I'm one of those people who talks to their animals as if they were humans. What can I say? I'm often lacking in companionship, but

even if I wasn't, I'd still talk to them. I don't know what to tell you. I've been like this my entire life.

Turning back to the laptop, I sigh. "What do you think, baby? Anyone stand out to you?"

It's not like I expect her to answer me, so color me surprised when she meows and her paw stabs at the screen.

What the fuck? That was obviously a coincidence, right?

"Show me which one again? Sorry, I wasn't paying attention."

Sasha turns her head to look up at me, and if looks could kill, I'd definitely be dead. She slowly turns her head back, sticking her paw out and tapping the screen once more.

Holy shit. She totally pointed to the same profile. Maybe the process of making her my familiar has already started without me realizing. Who knew that could happen?

"Huh. Okay. Let's see who you picked out." I click on it and realize it's one of the couples. I'm not sure how I feel about it. There were about five couples and two groups that I matched with, all looking for the missing piece in their relationship. There's only one couple that doesn't have a female in it, and both groups do. I know I said I might be interested in exploring that side of things, but I wonder if that was a mistake. I'm still questioning my sexuality, and for there to only be one couple without a female, I feel like maybe it was a mistake on my part.

Shaking my head, I focus on the couple Sasha had chosen for me.

Landon and Sienna Hayes. They have a photo of both of them set as the profile picture, and they're both absolutely gorgeous.

Sienna's red hair looks silky even in the picture. Her green eyes are piercing, surrounded by thick, black lashes I'm envious of. Zooming in, I

realize she has a smattering of freckles along her nose as well. Glancing at the profile, I see that she's a demigod—a daughter of Brigid. It makes sense that she's as gorgeous as she is.

Landon's arm is wrapped around her waist, his honey brown hair is pulled back in a bun, and his eyes are a shocking blue that I almost can't look away from. He's not much taller than Sienna, but that doesn't mean anything. He could be short, or she could be tall. I wouldn't be able to tell until I met them. His shoulders are wide, muscles flexing beneath his T-shirt.

Glancing at their profile once more, I see that he's a vampire. Huh, a healer and a vampire. That would be useful for one another, wouldn't it?

I shake my head, clicking out of their profile. I check out the male couple, finding two insanely attractive men staring back at me. Holy shit. They're hot as hell.

Ryder King and Tristan Beckett. They're in a long-term relationship, and like the first couple, they're looking for something they feel is missing. I'm still not sure how I feel about slotting myself into existing relationships. That just seems like it's asking for trouble, doesn't it? I guess someone has to meet someone first—it's unlikely to meet the whole group all at once, right?

Shaking my head, I force myself to stop dwelling on how polyamory works. What I need to do is focus on my matches to see if there's someone who can help me out for the Yule gala.

I flick through their photos, and it's clear that they love one another—and that they're really hot. Oh, wait. I mentioned that already, didn't I?

Both men are tall and muscular, but that's where their similarities end. Ryder, who turns out to be an incubus—yes, please—is the epitome of tall, dark, and handsome. His black hair is cut slightly shorter on the sides, while the top is that perfectly styled messy that so many men go for and very few

can pull off. Ryder definitely pulls it off. His eyes are a dark brown, almost black, depending on the light, but they're so expressive.

Tristan, on the other hand, has pale blond hair that is perfectly in place with piercing green eyes. His eyes seem cold as he stares at the camera, even when he's smiling. This is someone who doesn't let anyone know what he's thinking unless he wants to. It surprises me slightly as he's an angel, and it feels like he should be the expressive one. But that's just me typecasting people, something I shouldn't do. I know better.

It's interesting that an angel and a demon are in a relationship. From the stories I've heard, the two species don't often get along. But it's very clear these two do, so I guess what I've heard doesn't matter.

I click out of their profile, moving on to the next and then the next. Once I've made it through all seven profiles, I find myself returning to both Sienna's and Landon's profile and Ryder's and Tristan's. I don't know what it is about these two couples, but I just can't seem to get them out of my mind. Even when I was going through the other profiles, I was comparing them to these four people.

I don't want to feel like a third wheel dropping into either relationship, which is what keeps me from immediately messaging either couple. This is what makes polyamory so hard at times. Not to mention, I can almost guarantee that once they meet me, they'll meet their fated mates.

Speaking of which—I didn't check to see if either couple was fated. I'm surprised to find that both couples are fated mates. Do they think that they have more fated mates? If not, I don't know why they'd be on this site. But if they've already found their mates, does that mean the curse won't apply to them?

When Sasha bats at my face, I jerk my head back. "What the hell, Sasha?"

You don't know you're cursed, I hear an unfamiliar voice in my head, though it's faint.

Wait...what?!?! Did she just?

“Did you just talk to me?”

I swear Sasha rolls her eyes. *I'm your familiar. Of course, I'm talking to you. We've been trying to get you to hear us since you brought us home, but you never did.*

“We? Is Poppy my familiar as well? But I haven't started the process. I don't understand.” I chuckle as I realize I'm freaking out about a familiar bond forming without my permission, not the fact that my cat is talking to me. Sometimes being a witch is weird as fuck.

Fated familiar bonds will form whether you want them or not, Chloe. This isn't the first life we've spent with you, but we'd kind of like it if it was the last.

For a moment, I forget how to breathe as I take in Sasha's words. This isn't my first life. Somehow, I knew that, but I haven't been able to confirm it before this moment.

“Hey! Where are you going? I have so many questions!” I call out as Sasha jumps from my lap and sashays out the door.

I'm tired. There's a lot I cannot tell you. We'll speak later. For now, stop staring at their profiles in fear. Either close it out or message them.

And with that nugget of wisdom, she's gone.

I glance back at my laptop before closing it. Yeah, I'm not in the right headspace for this right now. Maybe later.

Yeah. Later sounds much better.

Chapter Five



Chloe

After the bomb Sasha just dropped on me, I decide to veg out and watch some trashy reality shows. It's much easier to get lost in someone else's drama than my own.

When my phone rings, I consider not answering, but chances are it's one of the girls. I can never leave them hanging.

I sigh, reaching over to pick it up off the floor where I tossed it earlier. I smile when I see it's Belle. How anyone could ever not be happy to talk to her, I'll never know. "Hey, babes!"

"Chloe? I need you."

At the panic in her voice, I sit up straight. "What's going on, Belle? What do you need?"

"I thought I could do this on my own, but I can't. I matched with four men last night and started talking to them. They all know each other, and I'm supposed to be meeting two of them at Serendipity in less than an hour."

"Okay. I can definitely help you with this." I push off the couch, heading for my room. Something tells me I'm going to need to accompany my friend to Serendipity—not that I mind in the least. "First, why don't you tell me about them?"

"All four of them? Or just the two from today?" Belle already sounds less stressed.

"Let's start with the two of them from today, and then we'll talk about the other two."

I can imagine Belle nodding on the other end of the line before she lets out a surprised laugh. “One of these days, I’m going to remember you can’t see me nodding when we’re on the phone.”

Belle is all too excited to tell me about the men she’s clearly interested in—even if this was only ever meant to be a way for her to have an authentic Christmas experience. I’m slightly concerned when she tells me that *the* Jack Frost, troublemaker and bad boy, eldest brother to Santa and Krampus, and a dark elf named Cypian are the men she’s meeting tonight. Once more, I know I can’t typecast based upon species, but I’m definitely meeting these men before leaving her alone with them—whether Belle wants that or not.

As I get dressed, she tells me about the other two members that make up their foursome. A nightmare shifter named Nick and a pixie named Derek. It sounds like an interesting mix, that’s for sure.

By the time she’s finished gushing about the four of them, I’m already walking out the door. She almost sounds relaxed, but I know she’s going to freak out again now that she’s finished talking. It’s just how she is, and I love her for it.

“Well, I’ve got great news for you,” I tell her. “I’m getting in my car right now and heading to your place.”

There’s a moment of silence as I start the car, and my phone switches to the Bluetooth. “You still there, babe?”

“I am. Why are you coming over?”

I laugh. “Because you need me. We both know you’re not going to walk into Serendipity by yourself, and there’s a solid chance that you’ll just talk yourself out of going. I’m not going to let that happen on my watch, so I’m coming over so I can help you stay calm. Plus, I need to meet these men who think they can take you out.”

Belle's sigh of relief fills my car as I pull out of the driveway. "Thank you, Chloe. I don't know what I would do without you, Tali, and Lee."

"You'll never have to find out, babe. You're stuck with us for life."

"Happily stuck," she adds, and we laugh together. "I'm gonna get off so I can get dressed. I unlocked the door for you, so you can just head inside when you get here."

"Perfect, babe. See you in a few."

The drive to the apartment that Belle and Tali share is short. I find a parking spot easily and head for their door. I'd be concerned about Belle leaving her door unlocked if we lived anywhere but Fort Veyelsa. But it does make it easier since I don't have to wait for her or Tali to come to the door. Honestly, we really just need to get one another keys for our places. We're over at each other's places all the time. I'll bring that up with the girls next time we get together.

I find Belle in her room, throwing clothes out of her closet. She jumps when I laugh before throwing herself in my arms. "Thank goodness you're here. I don't know what to wear."

Twenty minutes later, Belle is ready for her date. I offer to drive her over so she doesn't have to walk, but also because I have to meet these guys. I've seen Belle nervous and uncomfortable before, but nothing like this. I know she hasn't dated since she escaped the cult, so this is a big deal for her.

"I'm proud of you, babe," I tell her as I find a spot near Serendripity.

Belle turns to me with a frown. "Proud of me for what?"

"For taking a chance. For going outside of your comfort zone. I know it's hard for you, but I'm so proud of you. Not only for signing up for the dating site, but for going out on a date with two men. Our little girl is growing up."

"Shut up." Belle tries to glare at me but ends up laughing, completely

ruining it. "I'm not a child."

I shake my head. "No, you're not. You're a beautiful woman who has dealt with more shit than she ever should have. But here you are, going out on your first date. I'm happy for you."

"I just want someone to spend Christmas with me," she says, and I'm not sure if she's trying to convince me or herself. "It's nothing more than that."

"Regardless, you're going on a date, and that's amazing. Now, let's get in there so we can scope the place out before they get here, yeah?"

Belle nods, climbing out of the car and straightening her dress. I walk around the car, taking her arm in mine as we head for the coffee shop. I feel her tense up just before I open the door but say nothing. I hope one day she can not freak out about heading inside somewhere, but for now, she has us to help her.

Pushing inside, I realize it's busier than usual. "Why are there so many people here?"

"I have no idea." Belle shrugs as she glances around before letting out a sigh of relief. "They're not here yet."

"Perfect. Let's find a table, then. Do you want to see if our usual table is free?"

Belle nods. "Yes, please. I think I'd feel most comfortable there."

"Alright, let's see what we can make happen, then." I lead her toward our table, frowning when I notice a foursome sitting there. Damn it. I was really hoping no one would be there. I can practically feel Belle drooping beside me when the group stands up, heading for the door. I practically drag her to the table before anyone else can reach it, throwing my bag on top of it but not sitting.

"Are you not going to sit?" Belle asks, confusion on her face.

I shake my head. “No. There isn’t a clear sight to the door. I figured we could stand up so they’ll be able to find you when they arrive. After I’ve met them and feel comfortable leaving you with them, I’m heading back home. I’m being lazy today, and I was in the middle of some serious drama on the show I was watching.”

Belle laughs. She knows all about my obsession with reality television—even if she doesn’t get it. “Well, tell me about it. It’ll take my mind off how nervous I am.”

“Of course, babe. Whatever you need.” I catch her up on the drama of the housewives show I’ve been binge-watching, keeping my eye on the door. Belle isn’t paying any attention, so I’m the first to notice when they step inside.

The dark elf’s human glamor works about as well as Laoise’s does, meaning that it’s still clear he isn’t human. Luckily, humans nowadays don’t seem to notice as much. I’ll admit he’s attractive, as is Jack, but like Ryder and Tristan, they’re complete opposites. Everything about Cypian is so dark except for his white hair, whereas everything about Jack is light and icy. I don’t know how anyone would mistake them for anything but exactly what and who they are.

Suddenly, Belle’s head snaps toward the door, a smile lighting up her face. I continue talking before following her line of sight.

“Jack! Cypian! I’m so glad you’re here.” She’s beaming at the two of them as they make their way over. Neither man has eyes for anyone but Belle, and that’s a definite plus for them. When they just stand there staring at one another, I clear my throat.

Belle rolls her eyes as she turns to look at me, begging me with her eyes not to embarrass her. I’ve never seen Belle like this, and I kind of love it—

another point in their favor.

“This is one of my besties, Chloe. She wanted to meet the two of you to make sure you aren’t serial killers before she’ll let me have coffee with you.” I can see the laughter dancing in her eyes as she turns back to her dates.

The dark elf is the first to turn to me. “Hello, Chloe. You’re a good friend looking out for her. My name is Cypian, but please call me Cy—both of you. In case you couldn’t tell from my looks, even in my human guise, I’m a dark elf.” He gestures to his skin and hair that easily give away his species before offering me his hand.

“I’m aware. It’s part of the reason I insisted on coming.” I bite my lip before taking his hand. “I’m also aware not all dark elves are bad, but I needed to make sure you were one of the good ones before I left her with you. I hope you understand.”

“I respect you more for it, honestly. Most people would pretend my species wasn’t the reason they were worried,” he says with a nod, his smile growing.

“I prefer to tell it how it is. Who has time for beating around the bush?” I wave my hand in the air before turning to Jack. “Now, I hear you’re *the* Jack Frost. Everyone says you’re an asshole.”

“I am.” Jack shrugs, and I have to bite back a snicker. He’s definitely an asshole.

I shake my head. “Nothing wrong with that as long as you’re not an asshole to my girl. If I find out you were, I’ll be paying you a visit. I don’t care how old you are or how powerful you are. I’ll kick your ass if you hurt her. Capisce?”

Jack inclines his head in understanding before focusing on Belle, the corner of his mouth turning up. “Belle, it’s nice to officially meet you.”

“You too. I’m really excited about our coffee date.” She turns to me with an

expectant look, though her smile never dims. She's ready for me to get the hell out of here. I'm so proud of her. "Did they pass your inspection? Can we grab a coffee now, please?"

I nod, reaching out to squeeze her hand—letting her know I approve. "Have a good date, Belle. Gentlemen."

"That's probably the first time we've been referred to as gentlemen," I hear Cyprian say with a snort as I walk away.

Jack scoffs. "True enough."

I bite back my laughter until I'm outside. As soon as the door closes behind me, it spills out. I know Belle doesn't think that anything more is going to come of this date or with the other two men, but something tells me that neither of those men is going to be giving up on her anytime soon. They look practically in love already, and this is their first meeting.

I want that for Belle. Hell, I want that for all of my friends. I know the chances of me ever having it are slim to none, but I would love nothing more than for my besties to fall in love and find their happily-ever-afters. They deserve it.

With that, I head for my car. I'm so ready to put on comfy clothes and get back to my trashy shows now that I know Belle is in excellent hands.

Chapter Six



Chloe

Arriving home, I find Sasha and Poppy sprawled out on the couch where I'd been lying earlier. They're going to throw a fit if I try to reclaim my spot.

Shaking my head, I walk toward my bedroom and change back into my pajamas. I make a quick detour to the kitchen to grab a snack and make some hot chocolate. My eyes snag on my laptop where I left it earlier, and it seems to be calling to me. My feet are moving across the room before I can even register my decision.

I tap my fingers on the top of the laptop, trying to figure out why it feels so important to pull up the Love -N- Shenanigans website again. I thought I'd decided that I didn't want to be a third wheel, and yet, it's like a siren's call.

"Fuck it," I mumble and open the laptop. Since I live alone, it's not password protected, so the Love -N- Shenanigans website pulls up straight away. It's timed out, so I have to log back in. The matched profiles pop up, and my eyes are immediately drawn back to the same two profiles.

I understand the lure of Ryder and Tristan. While I'd been surprised by an angel and demon being together, I kind of love it. I've always loved the idea of opposites attract. Not to mention the whole incubus thing. One of my old coven mates said she was with an incubus, and he ruined her for other men for years. I definitely wouldn't mind experiencing that—even if it's just a one-time thing. It would be pretty cool to get to experience it, right?

I've also never met an angel before, so that would be pretty cool. Plus, did I mention how hot they are? I would not complain about watching the two of them together—with their permission, of course. Consent is key to all things in life.

The fact that I also feel drawn to Landon and Sienna's profile is freaking me out a bit. I've never been with a woman before, even if I've found them attractive. What if that's all it is? What if once it gets down to it, I just like the way women look? How embarrassing would that be? I would hate to do that to someone.

But I'm definitely attracted to Sienna. She's more beautiful than even Laoise—which is really saying something. Unicorn fae are some of the most beautiful creatures in any realm, but this demigod outshines even my best friend.

Shaking my head, I turn to make my hot chocolate and grab some string cheese and grapes from the fridge. My eyes immediately fall to the laptop as soon as I close the fridge, and I don't know what to do. I'm afraid—one hundred percent. I'm shaking in my damn nonexistent boots. When you've been hurt as many times as I've had, you find yourself wary of anything that has to do with dating. There are only so many times you can fall for someone, and then they turn out to be fated to someone you know.

It doesn't hurt any less with each time it happens, but you don't want to call attention to it. You just hide how beaten and bruised your heart is with a smile on your face. It fucking sucks, and I don't know if I can go through that again. Yes, my exes, their mates, and my parents want me to find a date for the Yule gala, but why? Do they enjoy my embarrassment? Do they enjoy my broken heart? Because that's all this can lead to, right?

I jump when my phone vibrates across the counter. Laughing, I pick it up to

see a text from my mom.

Mom

Trust your intuition.

Fate has a funny way of giving us just what we need when we need it.

I don't know what decision you're struggling with, but your intuition has always been strong. Believe in it. Believe in yourself.

Gods damn it. My mom and her intuition.

But her messages do what she wants them to as I close my eyes and try to figure out what my intuition is. I shut out the noise of my thoughts and emotions, reaching down inside myself.

I need to message them.

Damn it. That wasn't the answer I was hoping for.

With a sigh, I head for the laptop and click on Sienna and Landon's profile. The mouse hovers over the message button as fear locks down my body, the what-ifs running through my mind at warp speed.

Trust in yourself, Chloe. I jump at the unfamiliar voice inside my head, turning my head slowly to find Poppy standing in the doorway. She comes over to rub against my leg. ***I'm so glad you can hear us now. You can't let fear rule your life, or you'll never be truly happy. Take a chance and trust yourself.***

Biting my lip, I find myself suddenly fighting tears. I know Poppy is right, but knowing something is true doesn't make it any easier. Dropping into a chair, it takes longer than it should for me to click on the message button finally.

Hi! I'm Chloe—which you can clearly see. It seems that the two of you matched with me, and I'd love to talk to you. I've had a rough time in love—something I'll tell you about at some point, I'm sure—but it's making me cautious and a little scared about this. I've also never been with a woman before, even though I've been attracted to them for as long as I can remember.

I don't actually know if that equates to being interested in the person beyond that attraction, but if you're willing to give me a chance, I'd like to find out. You're gorgeous. Both of you.

Okay, I think I've word vomited enough. I hope I haven't embarrassed myself too much. I look forward to chatting with you.

Embarrassed, I go to slam the laptop shut, but I know that I need to send another message. I click away from the message and navigate to Ryder and Tristan's profile. This time, I don't hesitate to hit the message button.

Hi! It looks like we're a match, and I can't seem to stop clicking on your profile. I figured that was a good reason to send you a message. I've never met an incubus or an angel before, so that's really cool.

If the two of you are interested, I'd love to get to know you a little better, maybe even set up a date sometime soon.

With a nod, I close my laptop. While I've sent both couples messages, I won't be checking the site again today. I'm not going to allow myself to obsess over it like I know I will. Pulling out my phone, I turn off notifications for the app there. I'm going to be a good girl and get lost in some trashy

television. I'll check again tomorrow. If they haven't messaged back by then, I'll know it wasn't meant to be.

Having made that decision, I grab my hot chocolate and my snack before heading to the living room. Poppy trails behind me, winding in and out of my feet as I walk. Sasha lifts her head when she hears me and rolls her eyes before moving over slightly. I bite back a laugh as I plop down beside her.

Ugh. You couldn't have been a little more graceful. I was comfortable. Sasha is clearly annoyed with me as she stands up and makes her way to the other side of the couch.

I just watch her go with a smile on my face. Poppy hops up beside me, settling on my lap as I reach for the remote. Hitting play, I immediately get lost back in the drama, completely forgetting about the messages I sent.

I'm telling you, there's nothing better than losing yourself in someone else's drama.

Chapter Seven



Sienna

I reach forward, grab another weed, and pull it out of my garden. I scan the space, checking to make sure I haven't seen any others.

My phone makes a noise, and it takes me a moment to realize it's the alert notification for Love -N- Shenanigans. I jump to my feet, grab the phone from the table, and head for the door.

"Landon!" I squeal, realizing that someone has messaged us. While we've had a few matches so far, there's only been one that drew my and my husband's attention. A beautiful witch by the name of Chloe. Unfortunately, she has it set up so she has to be the one who initiates contact—something I completely understand, but I also really want to talk to her.

Another squeal falls from my lips as I realize the message is from her. Landon comes rushing in, paint splattered all over his clothes. I'm lucky he even heard me if he was painting. Even with his supernatural hearing, he generally gets lost in the zone while painting.

"What's going on, Sie?" Landon blinks at me, telling me he's still trying to pull himself out of his painting haze.

Instead of answering him, I hold up my phone so he can see that Chloe messaged us.

"Oh," he says, his voice even. "The little witch messaged us?"

I try not to be let down by his obvious lack of excitement. It's not like I can blame him. We've been burned a few too many times while trying to form a polycule—not on this site, but in general. Landon and I have been together

for...it's coming up on two hundred years, and it was love at first sight. But we also knew something was missing. Yes, the two of us were meant to be together, but we were missing someone or multiple someones. Occasionally, we would try adding someone to our relationship, but it never felt right.

Honestly, we'd given up until this new dating site popped up. I heard someone talking about it and how multiple people had met their fated mates on the site. I just knew we had to give it a chance. Landon had been more than a little reluctant, but he's not very good at telling me no when it's something I really want. He's afraid that we're setting ourselves up to get hurt again, but I don't want to live like this for the rest of my life.

It feels like a part of me is missing. It's like I'll never be whole until I find what's missing, and since I'm practically immortal, I'd rather not live like this forever. Which is how I convinced Landon to give it a chance, but only on the condition that if it didn't work out, we wouldn't discuss it again for at least fifty years. I really hope we can find what's missing so that I don't have to spend the next fifty years feeling incomplete.

"Yes, she did." I don't mean to let the hurt slip out in my words, but when Landon winces, I know it did.

"I'm sorry, darling. I really am. I want to be as excited as you, and I promise if you're right, I'll let you rub it in my face forever." Landon gives me a small smile as he pulls me into his arms. I lay my head on his chest, my eyes falling shut as I take the comfort he's offering me. "Did you read the message?"

Pulling back sheepishly, I shake my head. "No, I got too excited when I saw she messaged us at all."

Landon leans down to kiss me, filling it with all of his love. "Well, then, let's find out what she has to say."

“Okay.” I pull back just enough so I can read the messages out loud to him.

“It sounds like she’s been burned, too,” Landon says thoughtfully.

“Obviously, we need to message her back.”

“Obviously?” I ask, cocking an eyebrow.

He chuckles, shaking his head. “As much as I don’t want to get my hopes up, I feel drawn to the little witch just as much as you do.”

“That’s because she’s perfect for us.”

He shrugs. “At least on paper.”

I pout at his pessimism, but I know he’s just trying to protect us. “Why don’t we go to the office so we can message her together?”

“That sounds like a good idea.” Landon throws his arm around my shoulders and starts leading me to our shared office, his eyes falling to my shirt. “Shit. I’m sorry, darling, I didn’t mean to paint your clothes.”

“It’s okay, honey. I knew what I was getting into when I married you.” It’s not like it’s the first shirt of mine he’s covered with paint, and it’s not likely to be the last. That’s what happens when you have a creative partner—at least one that works with visual mediums.

I allow Landon to lead me to my desk, sitting in my chair as he boots up the machine. There are a lot of things I hate about the world now, but computers and the internet are not included on that list. I don’t even know how we survived before them. If I had to travel back in time, I’d be screwed. There’s just something about having instant access to any and all information that I love.

Pulling up the web browser, I pull up the Love -N- Shenanigans website and navigate to the messages. I can’t help smiling as I read over Chloe’s messages again. It’s very clear that she was nervous about messaging us.

“You’re sure you’re okay with the fact that she’s not actually sure if she’s

into women?”

I shoot Landon a wink. “No one can resist my beauty and charms. So, no, I’m not worried.”

“Or lacking in confidence, it seems.” Landon chuckles.

Hi, Chloe! This is Sienna, but Landon is here with me. We’re happy that you messaged us! I tried to message you as soon as we matched but obviously couldn’t. We were really hoping you’d reach out to us.

I don’t want you to worry about the fact that I’m a woman and you’re not sure if that’s something you’re interested in. For now, I’d just really like all of us to get to know one another, and it’ll work out the way it’s supposed to.

We also think you’re beautiful. I know you said you’ve had a hard time with love, but we’ve also been burned before while trying to find the rest of our polycule. We completely understand where you’re coming from, and we’ll take this at your pace. Something just tells me you’re just what we’re looking for.

“Really, Sie?” Landon sighs, and I turn to him with a frown.

“What?”

He laughs. “Darling, you’re going to scare off the woman before we’ve even met her. Maybe try not to come on so strongly next time?”

I glance back at my messages, trying to figure out what he’s talking about. And then I get to the last sentence. “Oops?”

I laugh as I turn to look at him, and he quickly joins me. I really hadn’t meant to come on so strongly, but it’s how I feel. Landon is used to me at this

point, but when we first met, I know his friends often thought I was coming on entirely too strongly. He never did, though. He always says it's part of my charm, but I know it's definitely been a turnoff for some people in the past. Let's just hope our little witch isn't one of them. That would make me sad.

"You know we can't just sit here and wait for her to respond, right?"

"Huh?"

Landon laughs again. "We have no idea when she's going to respond. I, for one, have zero intentions of sitting here, staring at a computer while we wait for a response."

"Oh. Yeah. That would be kind of dumb," I agree, but I can't seem to tear myself away.

Landon stands, pressing a kiss to my head before he turns off the monitor. "Come on, darling. Let's go watch a Christmas movie and order Chinese for dinner."

"That sounds amazing." I allow him to pull me from my chair. He leads me out of the office, but I can't help glancing back at the computer when I pause in the doorway. I really want her to answer me, but Landon is right. There's no sense in staring at the computer. Plus, my phone will alert me if she does message us.

Landon and I split up, him heading for the kitchen and me to the living room. He'll order from our usual Chinese place, but I know he'll also grab us some drinks before joining me. I crash onto the couch, flipping on the television before scrolling through the Christmas movies.

"Honey, are you okay with watching one of the Hallmark channel movies? I've got so many of them recorded, I need to start watching them." I won't tell him I've definitely recorded some that I've already seen. I can't help that

I love them so much, and he's unlikely to remember if we've watched it before or not.

"Sure, Sienna. Just put on whatever you want."

I grin, pulling up one of my favorites and getting it ready. He'll be expecting this one, as I make him watch it at least twice every year. I haven't even watched it once this month. I'm really going to have to get on watching these movies, or I'll be watching them when the Valentine's Day ones come out.

"Food will be here in forty-five," Landon says, sweeping into the room with our drinks and settling beside me. "Apparently, everyone decided to order Chinese food tonight. But that'll give us a chance to watch at least part of the movie before we have to pause it."

"Sounds good, honey. Thank you."

Landon glances up at the screen and rolls his eyes. "I don't know why I'm surprised."

"I don't know why you are either." I laugh, hitting play as I settle back into his arms.

I love Landon so much, and I love being married to him. I wish we could be happy with just the two of us—no, wait. That's not right. We are happy when it's just the two of us. It's just hard to live every day knowing that there's a piece of your heart, your soul, missing.

Shaking my head, I force myself to turn my brain off and focus on the movie. When dinner arrives, we pause only long enough to get resettled before diving back in. Three movies later, we decide to call it a night. As I climb into bed, I can't help pulling up the app to see if Chloe messaged—even though I never received an alert.

"Anything?" Landon asks as he shuts off his bedside light, rolling over to

take me into his arms.

I shake my head. “Nothing.”

“Maybe she was busy today. I’m sure we’ll hear back from her tomorrow. Now, let’s get some sleep.”

I don’t say it out loud, but I don’t know what I’ll do if we don’t hear from her. I don’t want Landon to realize just how gaga I am over this woman.

I roll over to lay my head on his chest, grateful that sleep comes easily in his arms.

Chapter Eight



Chloe

“Chloe!” a feminine voice screams my name, but when I jerk around, I don’t see anyone.

I’m all alone as dust flies through the air, the building crumbling around me. I’ve never felt more scared or alone in my life.

I squeeze my eyes shut. When I open them, I’m inside a room. It feels familiar, but I know I’ve never been here before.

Glancing down, I frown at what I’m wearing. Am I supposed to be at a toga party?

“Chloe? Where are you, love?”

I turn toward the door, a smile on my lips. I don’t recognize the voice, but I do. It’s all very confusing.

“Leon, is that you?” It’s my voice that echoes through the room, but I’m not the one who spoke.

Someone steps into the room, but I can’t seem to make them out. The harder I try to focus on them, the more blurry they become.

My body moves without me telling it to, and suddenly I’m in the man’s arms as he kisses the hell out of me. My eyes fall shut on instinct.

When I open them once more, there’s a man hovering over me. Somehow, I’m lying down—and completely naked. I can’t make out this man’s features either, but I know he’s not the same man I was kissing just moments before. I don’t know how I know that, but I do.

Another body presses against my back. This one is softer and decidedly more feminine. Some piece of me knows that this is the woman whose voice I heard. I turn my head, unsurprised, when I can't make out her face. I am surprised that she kisses me as Orion's cock slides between my wet folds.

"So beautiful," she breathes. Her name is Zoe, and I love her. Just as I love the man now pushing inside of me.

My back arches as she takes my nipple between her lips, her hand sliding down my body to circle my clit. A moan spills from my lips as boots sound out. My head rolls to the side to find two men standing there—Leon and Zeno.

"I see you started without us," Zeno says with a laugh.

"You were taking too long," is my only response as I gesture for them to join us.

All of my lovers together, just as it should be.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

I sit up abruptly, my hand clutching my chest as I gasp for breath. What the fuck was that?

I snatch my phone off the nightstand and cut off the alarm.

This is always the worst part—waking up from the dreams that I've often thought were more than dreams. Based on what Sasha said yesterday, I really think these are memories of past lives. Though this is the first time I remember having four lovers. And one of them was a woman! I wonder if this has something to do with the couples I messaged last night.

I've had these dreams—memories or whatever the hell they are—since I was sixteen. Every night I dream of the past, and at first, I thought they were

just dreams, but there were just too many similarities between them. That's when I began thinking they might be past lives.

I rub at my chest, trying to take away the pain there. Anytime I have these dreams, I wake up with an ache in my heart. Today is the worst it's been, but those dreams are the most vivid I can remember.

A tear snakes down my cheek as the aching loneliness courses through me, reminding me again and again that I'm alone. That I have no one to love.

Fucking hell. This is *not* what I need this morning. Glancing at the time, I know I need to get out of bed, or I'm going to be late to work.

For the last few years, I've been doing research on past lives, but I hadn't wanted my mom to know, which has limited my access. I wonder if Tali might know anything about them? She's one of the most intelligent people I know, and she's a fount of information on the most random things. I'll message her later to see if she knows anything or if she knows where I can access some books on it besides my mom's house.

Tossing my phone to the side, I hurry into the bathroom to shower. Twenty minutes later, I'm pouring coffee into my to-go mug. Even though I had to spend more time than usual trying to get over my dreams, I'm not running behind. Let's just hope I can keep it that way.

Heading for the door, I call out, "Bye, babies. Have a good day, and be good."

You be good. It sounds like Sasha is pouting even though I can't see her.

Don't be a brat. You'll fall back asleep as soon as she leaves. Poppy suddenly appears in the hallway, running down the hall so she can rub against my leg. ***Don't forget to check the dating site.***

"Shit! I never did turn back on my notifications. Thank you, Poppy. I'll check as soon as I get to school."

I blow her a kiss before heading for the car. I pull up the navigation in my phone before pausing. I've got time to turn the notifications back on, at least. I flip over and find that I have two messages. Holy shit! They both messaged me back.

As much as I'd love to know what they had to say, I don't have time for that. Instead, I turn the notifications back off before returning to the navigation app. I'll check the messages later—either at lunch or after school. I know it'll probably drive me crazy not knowing what they said all day, but it's better than reading that they want me to fuck off. That would make for a really shitty day. I'll definitely wait.

I curse as I pull out of the driveway. The map has just turned red, alerting me that there's been an accident on the road leading to the school. It's unlikely that it'll be cleared up before I get there, so I might be late to work after all. Damn it. I was really trying to avoid that.

At least that'll give me time to drink my coffee. I'm only half paying attention to the map while I'm driving since I know where I'm going. I only use it so I know about traffic, so I'm surprised when my phone starts ringing. Frowning, I glance at the screen to see it's my mom. What is she doing up so early?

I hit the button on my steering wheel to answer the call. "Hello?"

"Good morning, Chloe. I know you're on your way to school, but I just had to call you. I'm sorry if I freaked you out with my messages yesterday."

"You didn't," I assure her. "I'm quite used to your cryptic messages. After twenty-six years, you kind of come to expect them."

My mom hums, and I realize that's not even remotely why she's calling. She doesn't think she freaked me out. She wants to be nosy.

"Was there something else, Mom?"

“Well...” Mom trails off, and I can hear her speaking to someone else for a moment. “Sorry about that, Clo. I just wanted to make sure that everything was okay with you and make sure you knew that if there was anything you needed, I’m always here for you.”

I bite back a laugh. Yup, she’s definitely fishing for information. “Thanks, Mom. I know you’re always there if I need you. But I’m also aware that you don’t like not knowing what’s going on, but you’re not getting any information from me. My lips are sealed.”

“Really? Why do you have to be like this?”

“You and my dads raised me to be this way,” I tell her. “I’m just not ready to talk about it, okay? I promise I listened to my intuition, just like you taught me. If there’s anything to talk about, I’ll let you know. But right now, there’s nothing.”

Mom lets out a heavy sigh. “Okay, fine. I love you.”

“Love you too, Mom.” Hanging up the call, I just laugh. As nosy as she is, I love my mom a lot. I love all of my parents, and while we had some issues after I first left the coven, I know they love me, too. They’d do anything for me, no questions asked.

It’s not their fault that I’m embarrassed by my love life and refuse to share it with them. I also don’t see that changing anytime soon. But that’s something I can worry about later.

I curse as I come to a standstill. It seems I’ve caught up with the traffic. Yippee. I really hope this isn’t how the rest of the day is going to go.

Chapter Nine



Chloe

It turns out that the rest of the day goes exactly like my morning had. By the time the last bell rings, I'm so over it all.

I ended up having to work through my lunch. One of my honors students needed help with a paper she's working on. It wouldn't be so bad if I hadn't forgotten to grab my lunch when I left the house this morning, but I had. Now I'm starving and exhausted. I'm going to have to have dinner delivered because there is no way I'm cooking tonight.

Collapsing into my chair as the last student exits the room, I dig my phone out of my purse. I stare at the notifications from Love -N- Shenanigans, wondering if I have the spoons to read the messages right now. I want to—I really do. I'm just petrified of what they'll say. Not only am I worried about being rejected, but I'm just as scared that they'll be interested. I know it's ridiculous, but dating sucks.

Deciding to put my big girl panties on, I click on the first notification. It's from Sienna and Landon. A smile creeps along my lips as I read over them. Sienna is kind of adorable. I definitely want to get to know her and Landon more.

My hands hover over the keypad as I consider whether or not I should reply. Will it seem desperate? I don't even know when they sent the messages. I could've been last night or even this morning. I don't want to seem too overly eager and turn them off. Maybe I should just wait until I get

home to read it. Plus, I have another message from Ryder and Tristan to read. Yeah, I'll wait until I get home to reply.

When I go to click out of the message, something stops me. Something is telling me it's important that I not wait. I need to respond to them now. Damn intuition.

Hi! I'm so sorry I'm just now getting back to you. Last night I decided to turn off my phone and just veg out. Then I had some very vivid dreams, and it was hard to wake up from the

My morning sucked, as has the rest of my day. The last bell just rang, and this is the first chance I had to read your message

Please don't think I'm not interested because I definitely am. I just been a bad da

The Hayes

Oh, no. I'm so sorry to hear that.

This is Sienna, by the way. Landon is still at work.

You don't work

The Hayes

Oh, I do. I'm a nurse at the hospital, but I only work four days a week. Twelve-hour shifts suck, but it's so much nicer having three days off.

I can imagine

I chat with her for a few more minutes before realizing there are a few more things I need to wrap up before I head home.

As much as I'm loving chatting with you, I've got to go. I've got a few things to do before I can go home.

The Hayes

I completely understand.

I don't want to come on too strongly, but would it be cool if we exchanged numbers?

And maybe set up a date for this weekend?

I have to bite back a squeal, but I can't hide my smile as I shoot her my agreement and phone number. She promises to add me to a group chat with her and Landon, and we'll work out the details for the date once he's off work.

I take a deep breath, going to set my phone down, but change my mind. I pull up the group chat with my coven instead.

Ladies, I'm kind of freaking out. Can we get together af
everyone is off wor

Belle

Is everything okay? I can meet you now if you need me to.

No, it can wa

Tali

Why don't you come over for dinner? It's been a while since I've cooked for the four of us.

Laoise

You don't have to ask me twice. I'll be there. What time?

Tali

6 should be good.

Belle

I live here, so I'll definitely be there.

Thanks, babes!!! I love you, and I don't know what I'd do without you.

Thank goodness for my besties because I'm definitely freaking out right now. I have a date with a married couple this weekend. Holy shit! How is this my life?

Wasn't I worried about being a third wheel? And yet, somehow, I'm actually looking forward to this. But I definitely need to talk this over with my coven. I'm going on a date with a woman and her husband!

Shaking my head, I set my head down and focus on what I need to do so I can head home.

An hour later, I'm pulling into my driveway. Luckily, I have a few hours before I need to meet the girls for dinner. I hurry inside and feed my cats so they won't tear my head off. Both of them love to eat, and they don't have a problem complaining when they get it late. Now that they can talk to me, I'm sure it'll only get worse.

Collapsing onto the couch, it hits me that I never read the message from Ryder and Tristan. Fucking hell. I'm such a mess.

Grabbing my phone, I click through until I can find the message. I feel even more like shit when I see there's a new message that just came in.

Ryder & Tristan

Hey, Chloe! This is Ryder. I can't tell you how excited I am to hear back from you. Tristan and I are both really looking forward to getting to know you.

Hi, Chloe! This is Tristan. I know Ryder messaged you last night, but I wanted to pop on and say hi.

No rush on getting back to us. I just had a free moment. Looking forward to hearing from you.

OMG, I'm so sorry. Please don't think I was ignoring you. I didn't notice the message until this morning, and then I had the day from hell.

Ryder & Tristan

Hey, no worries. I get it. Do you want to talk about your day from hell?

For some reason, I spill it all out to him. Even the part about Sienna and Landon. I don't know what it is about Tristan, but something just makes me want to spill my guts to him. I discover that he's a teacher, too, though he teaches kindergarten. I could never.

Teenagers might be needy and moody, but so are kindergarteners. And they're worse because they can't do shit for themselves. I barely have the patience to deal with high schoolers. If I had to teach young children, I'd never make it.

Ryder & Tristan

How would you feel about talking on the phone?

I hate chatting online. I'm not even a big fan of texts.

It's so hard to know what someone is really saying without hearing them, you know?

Showing your age a little

Ryder & Tristan

Damn straight.

Honestly, I'd love to chat on the phone.

My phone started ringing almost immediately after I send him my number. My stomach swoops, and I chew on my bottom lip before answering the call. "Hello?"

"Chloe?" The voice is deep and gruff, sending shivers up and down my spine. Please let this be Tristan.

"Yup. Tristan?"

He chuckles, and I love the sound of it. "That would be me. This is so much better. You don't sound anything like I thought you would."

"And how did you think I'd sound?" I don't want to put him on the spot, but I'm genuinely curious.

"Well, I certainly didn't expect you to have a sexy, husky voice like you do." I can hear the smile in his voice. "I guess I was expecting you to have a higher-pitched voice. Please don't think I'm complaining. I love your voice."

I laugh, a smile sliding across my lips. "I would hope so since you called it sexy."

From there, we move on to other topics as we get to know one another. When I glance at the time, my eyes widen. We've been on the phone for well over an hour, and if I don't leave for Tali's place now, then I'm going to end up late. Not that the girls will mind, but it's still rude.

"I hate to do this, but I'm having dinner with my besties. If I don't head out in the next few minutes, I'm going to end up being late."

"We wouldn't want that." Tristan chuckles. "I was kind of hoping that Ryder would make an appearance so he could say hi, but he hasn't made it

home yet. But speaking of Ryder, what are the chances you'd go out with us this weekend?"

I bite my lip, glad that I don't have to hide my smile since I'm alone. "I'd really like that, but I'm going out with Sienna and Landon on Saturday."

"Then how about Sunday? We can do a day date since Ryder doesn't go into work until late on Sundays."

"Yeah, okay. I'd really like that. I know you don't like texting, but is it okay if we figure out the details in a text?"

Tristan laughs. "We absolutely can. Just because it's not my preferred method of communication doesn't mean I don't know how, little witch."

"Little witch?" A giggle spills from my lips. "I like that."

"That's convenient since that's what Ryder and I have been calling you."

I giggle again. "The two of you have been talking about me?"

Now it's his turn to laugh. "Ever since we matched with you, sweets. I'm going to let you go so you're not late."

"I appreciate that. I'll look forward to your text and please feel free to give my number to Ryder as well."

"That I can do."

We say goodbye, and I take a moment to pet Sasha and Poppy before heading for the door. "Sorry I ignored you ladies. I promise you'll have all of my attention when I get back from dinner."

You better. Sasha turns her back on me, flipping her tail up and swinging it from side to side to show her annoyance as she walks away.

I snicker as Poppy weaves between my feet, rubbing her head against my leg. **Ignore her. She's a diva.**

I can hear you. There's a bit of a growl to Sasha's words, and I can't help laughing out loud this time.

Poppy's laughter sounds out inside of my head, surprising me. ***You were meant to.***

"Let's just try to get along, ladies. I'll be back as soon as I can." I blow them kisses before finally walking out the door.

I can't believe that I spent so long talking to Sienna and Tristan today. I also hate how giddy I'm feeling. This is only supposed to be about finding dates for the Yule gala. I'm not supposed to fall for them, but I think it might already be too late for that. My hopes are already up, and all I can do is hope that I don't end up with a broken heart.

Chapter Ten



Chloe

Luckily, it doesn't take me long to get to the apartment that Tali and Belle share. Unfortunately, it is after six when I finally walk through the door.

"Sorry I'm late," I call out as I hang up my coat.

"Shut up and get your ass in," Tali calls back. "As if you could be late."

Belle greets me with a hug as I step into the kitchen. Laoise is snacking on something as she leans against the counter beside the stove where Tali is currently working her magic. Not her real magic, but her cooking magic. There is a difference.

"That smells amazing, Tali." I move to the stove, scenting the fragrant air over the source. "What are you making?"

"Just some chicken parm with pasta," she says nonchalantly as if it's no big deal that she's cooking us a whole ass meal after working all day. "Belle helped. She got everything started for me."

Belle snorts. "Yes, I was a *huge* help by doing none of the cooking, just the prep work."

Tali laughs as she glances over her shoulder at Belle. "Trust me, you saved me a ton of time."

I roll my eyes as I give her a quick side hug before moving on to Laoise. Then I head around to join Belle, who is sitting on a stool on the other side of the counter.

"How was everyone's day?"

Laoise snorts, rolling her head to the side as she looks at me. “Don’t even, Clo. You’re the one who called this meeting, so you’re the one who’s going to start. We can talk about the rest of our days afterward.”

I knew this was coming, but I was kind of hoping that they’d give me a few minutes at least.

“Can’t we talk about you guys until dinner’s ready, and then we can focus on me?”

Tali laughs. “Unfortunately for you, dinner is ready.”

At least that gives me a few minutes before I have to start talking. I know I’m being dumb. I asked them to talk, and here I am, trying to put it off. It’s just that I haven’t ever mentioned to them that I suspect I might be bisexual. They won’t have a problem with it, but that doesn’t make it any easier to bring it up.

Gods... If I end up bringing a woman to the Yule gala, I’m going to have to tell my parents.

Shit.

That’s definitely not a conversation I’m looking forward to having. Once again, it’s not because I think they won’t support me—it’s just a lot.

Once we’re all settled at the table with food on our plates, three sets of eyes turn to me.

“Okay, so I have a lot to tell you, and I’d love it if you could let me get it all out before you ask any questions, if that’s cool?”

Belle nods from beside me. “Of course. Assuming I don’t forget the questions I have.”

Laoise and Tali also agree, and then they’re all just watching me again.

“I filled out the application for Love -N- Shenanigans to get my mom and the exes’ mates off my back. They all want me to have a date to the Yule

gala, so I figured, why not? What's the worst thing that can happen? I help someone else find their mate?" I ignore the pity and sympathy I see in their eyes. It's always the same thing whenever I bring up my love life. At least I didn't mention anything about being cursed. That always sets someone off.

"The three of you know I come from a polyamorous family, and eventually, that's what I want for myself. What you don't know is that I'm..." Trailing off, I try to figure out how to phrase it. "I'm attracted to women. I don't know if I want to be with a woman, but I don't *not* want to—if that makes sense."

Tali is fighting to hide a smile as I narrow my eyes on her. "Just say it."

"You said no interrupting," she replies, sass filling her tone as she raises her eyebrows.

"Gods damn it, Tali. Just say it."

She holds up her hands in surrender. "We know you're attracted to women. We've known for a while."

My jaw drops open as I glance between the three of them. "But... how? I wasn't even sure."

"Do you know how many times you've checked us out or other women?" Laoise laughs. "We just didn't know if you were ever going to do anything about it or not. We didn't want to bring it up before you were ready to talk to us about it."

"You know we love you no matter what or who you love," Belle adds, reaching over to squeeze my hand.

I roll my eyes. "Of course, I know you love me no matter what. I just can't believe you knew. But I guess that makes sense."

"Does that mean you matched with a woman?" Belle asks gently when I don't say anything else.

"Yes...but there's more to it than that." I shake my head. "Out of all my

matches, there were two groups and five couples. Four were a man and a woman, and the other was two men. All looking to expand their relationship. Two of the couples were calling to me, so I reached out. Now I have two dates this weekend, and I have no idea what to do with myself. I talked to Sienna and Tristan today for what feels like forever, and I already feel like I'm falling for them."

Belle squeezes my hand again. "That doesn't have to be a bad thing."

I can't help turning to her. There's something there in her eyes. Is she already falling for the men she met on the site? The corner of my mouth turns up, and a smile lights up Belle's face. Oh, yeah. She's got it bad.

"Yeah, I guess not," I agree, but it's always there at the back of my mind. I just know I've been cursed. I don't want to lose more people. I want to be happy.

"Tell us about them," Tali says, a sad smile on her face. I frown, but she just gives a small shake of her head.

Something is definitely going on with her. I know Laoise and Belle have asked her about it, and she's just said she's fine. I guess it's my turn to ask her. I'll do that before I head home tonight. Hopefully, she'll be willing to talk to me. If not, then I guess the girls and I will have to put our heads together.

"There's Sienna and Landon Hayes—they're married. She's a demigod, Brigid's daughter, and a healer to boot. Landon is a vampire, and I don't know too much about him yet. We haven't really gotten to chat yet. But Sienna did say he loves to paint. The other couple are Ryder King and Tristan Beckett. Ryder is an incubus, and Tristan is an angel."

As expected, that sends the girls spiraling with questions. I answer them as best I can, but obviously, I don't know them super well yet. But even just

talking about this with the girls makes me feel better about what I'm doing. Yes, it could all still fall apart, but nothing is guaranteed in life. That's just something we have to deal with—humans and supernaturals alike.

Once we finish eating, Belle pours each of us a glass of wine, and then we head out to their back patio. They have an awesome little garden area that we love to sit in and chat. Yes, it's cold outside, but they also have space heaters out there, so we don't freeze.

"I also woke up this morning from another dream. It was somehow the same but different." I gasp as I realize what I haven't shared with them. "OMG! I forgot to tell you. Apparently, Sasha and Poppy are my fated familiars... or something like that. They just randomly started talking in my head yesterday. It was insane."

Tali leans forward with wide eyes. "Fated familiars? I've heard stories of them, but I've never known anyone who had one—let alone two."

"So, they just talk inside your head? That must be so weird." Belle grins. I know she's fascinated with magic since she doesn't have any of her own.

"It's definitely weird." Shaking my head, I focus on Tali. "How much do you know about past lives? Between the dreams and what Sasha said to me, I'm pretty sure I'm being reincarnated. But more than that, I think my dreams are actually memories."

"That would actually make sense," Laoise adds. "Especially since you think you're cursed. A lot of people who are cursed are forced to live over and over again until they finally break the curse."

I scoff. "Are you finally admitting that I'm cursed?"

Laoise winces as she turns to Tali, who sighs before nodding. "We were pretty sure you were, but it didn't do anyone any good for us to say anything."

I've been looking into ways to find out how someone has been cursed, but I haven't found anything. I would've told you as soon as I found something."

"Seriously?" Belle huffs. "The two of you just let me go on and on about how there was no way she could be cursed while you knew she was. Why would you do that? Now I look like an idiot."

"You do not," I assure her.

"Belle, that wasn't why we didn't say anything." Tali takes a long sip of her wine. "You have this optimism that we've all had beat out of us by what we've been through in our lives. Even being raised in a fucking cult and being abused by your stepmother, you *never* lost it. We didn't want to take that away from you."

Belle blinks as she stares at Tali, and I can already see the tears forming in her eyes. "Fiddlesticks, Tali! I was so mad. Then you had to go and say something so sweet that I can't even be angry."

I'm up and out of my seat at the same time as Tali and Laoise. The three of us crowd around Belle as a tear slides down her cheek.

"We'd do anything to protect that part of you, Belle," I add, laying my head on top of her head. "You know that. I don't even blame them."

She sighs. "Neither do I. I love you, besties!"

We share I love you's before settling back into our seats.

Tali leans forward in her chair as she considers me. "I think looking into past lives might be a good idea. I've got shit going on at work this week, and I'm going to have to go through some books, but I think I can help you. I hate to make you wait, but how about we meet up next Monday at your place?"

"That sounds perfect, Tali. Thank you."

Settling back into my chair, there's a smile on my face. This is what I love about my coven. I already feel better about all the shit—the possibility that

I'm bisexual, going out with two different couples this weekend, the curse, and even the past lives. Without these three women, my life would be utter chaos.

Not that it's not chaotic now, but it would be *way* worse.

Chapter Eleven



Chloe

“I don’t think I can do it, Lee,” I practically scream.

I Laoise laughs, a tinkling sound that I’ll never grow tired of hearing. “Yes, you can. It’s okay to be nervous, but there’s no pressure here, Clo. I know all three of you are probably hoping this turns into something more, but right now? It’s just getting dinner and drinks. This is easy. You do this all the time with the three of us.”

I roll my eyes, glad she can’t see me, as I drum my fingers on the steering wheel. I’m supposed to be meeting Sienna and Landon in fifteen minutes, but I’m sitting on my phone while Laoise tries to convince me to get out of my car. I’m staring at the restaurant as my stomach flutters. I can’t remember the last time I felt so nervous about something.

“The difference between meeting you three and tonight is that I already know you.”

“Obviously, that’s true.” Laoise snickers, and I can’t help joining her. “But try not to think of it like that. Try to think of it as just dinner and drinks. What’s the worst thing that can happen? The three of you don’t hit it off? That would suck, but it’s certainly not the end of the world. But think about what the best thing could be.”

For a moment, I do let myself think about it. I think about what it would be like to fall in love with the two of them. I think about the loneliness that lives inside of me disappearing. I think about what it would be like to spend the rest of my life with them.

“Damn,” I mutter. “Why did that calm me down?”

“Because it’s what you want. You want that outcome, and some part of you recognizes that it could happen. All you have to do is take a chance and step out of your car.”

My eyes catch on the restaurant once more, and I realize Sienna and Landon have just arrived.

“They’re here,” I whisper.

“See? They’re so excited to see you that they’re here early—just like you.”

I smile, watching the door even after it’s closed behind them. “Thank you, Lee. I’m going to head inside now.”

“Yay!!!” Laoise cheers, clapping her hands. “Call me after you get home!”

“Okay, babe, I will. Have a good night.” I end the call and slip my phone into my purse. I take a deep breath, steeling myself before finally exiting my car.

Who knew that dating required so much talking yourself into shit?

No wonder I stopped dating.

Well... that and the curse. Mostly the curse, though.

I’m not going to worry about that right now. There’s a beautiful couple waiting inside for me, and I’m hoping that we hit it off. I wish Belle was here so I could borrow just a little bit of her optimism from her, but I guess I need to put on my big girl panties and believe in it myself.

I’ve totally got this.

I walk across the street with my head held high. Pushing into the restaurant, my eyes immediately find the two of them being sat at a table, and I freeze.

I don’t have this.

Nope.

I should just turn around right now and get the hell out of here.

Yes. That sounds like a great plan. So what if it makes me a coward? I can live with that.

Sienna's eyes lift, locking with mine, and it's like the rest of the world no longer exists.

It's definitely too late to leave, but I don't think I want to leave anymore.

"Miss?"

Tearing my eyes away from Sienna, I turn to see that the hostess is staring at me like I have two heads. Something tells me she's been trying to get my attention for longer than would be considered normal.

I flush, one hundred percent embarrassed, but I force a smile to my lips. "I'm so sorry. I just got a little lost in my thoughts. You know how it is."

The woman continues to look at me like I'm insane, so I'm guessing she doesn't know how it is. Okay, then.

"I'm just meeting some friends. I already see them. Thank you." I don't bother waiting for her to respond, already moving toward Sienna and Landon.

Both of their eyes are on me, and it's a lot all at once. They're even more gorgeous in person, and the heat in their eyes has me swallowing.

Holy shit. Maybe this wasn't a good idea.

I'm not even remotely looking where I'm going as my eyes flash between the two of them, my breath coming in pants. Which is why I shouldn't be surprised when I walk right into someone moments before something cold and wet spills down the front of my jacket, soaking my dress.

I squeal at the coldness, an apology already on my lips as I turn to the waiter.

"If you'd look where you were going, then things like this wouldn't happen," the teenager says, his face pulled back in a sneer.

My hands automatically go to my hips, eyes narrowing at the little shit.

“Oh, yeah? Well, I was distracted by how hot my dates are. What’s your excuse?”

The boy’s ears turn bright red as he bares his teeth at me. “I was watching where I was going. You’re the idiot who wasn’t paying any attention.”

“And yet, somehow, you weren’t able to avoid her,” a masculine voice cuts off whatever the teenager was going to say next. My eyes lift to find Landon standing there with Sienna at his side. “Because if you were looking where you were going, then you’d have been able to step to the side to avoid her. Unless you’re saying that she somehow jumped in front of you?”

“I...uhhhh...” The teenager flushes an ever darker red, his eyes flashing to a table where a group of teenage girls are sitting, giggling.

I feel someone else at my back and startle. Turning, I see what I’m guessing is the manager. “Is there a problem here?”

This time, Sienna is the one to speak up. “There is. This young man spilled water all over our date, and instead of apologizing, he tried to berate her and blame her.”

As the teenager’s head drops, I start to feel bad for him. “I mean, I wasn’t exactly paying attention to where I was going.”

“See!” The little shithead points his finger at me. “She even admits it’s her fault.”

Well, now I don’t feel bad at all.

“Jeremy, it doesn’t matter who was at fault. You can’t talk to customers like that. You don’t blame them, and you definitely don’t point fingers.” I can tell the manager is trying to stay calm, but he’s failing. “Go to my office right now.”

The four of us watch the boy scurry away before the manager turns back to us. “I’m so sorry. Your meal will be on us tonight, of course. I know that

doesn't make up for your dress getting wet."

"It's okay, really," I tell him. "If he hadn't been a little shit, I wouldn't even have cared. I'm a high school teacher, so I'm used to dealing with teenagers, but that wasn't okay."

"And you certainly don't need to comp our meal," Landon assures him.

The manager shakes his head. "No matter what you say, your meal will be comped. Miss, I am sorry for the way he treated you. If there's anything we can do to make it up to you, all you have to do is ask."

I wave my hand in his direction. "Honestly, it's fine. I'm fine. I'd just like to get my date started."

"Of course." The man nods, glancing between the three of us but not saying anything. "I'll be sure to have a new server out to help you shortly."

Then he's gone, leaving me to stare up at Landon and Sienna, my face flushing. "Well, this was a great first meeting."

"No worries, little witch," Sienna says as she slides her arm into mine. "You and I will head to the bathroom to see if we can't get you dried up a bit while Landon gets us some drinks."

Landon smirks, inclining his head to his wife. "As you wish, darling. Chloe, what would you like me to order for you?"

I huff out a laugh. "Usually, I would say nothing, but I definitely need a drink after that. I'll take a margarita—frozen and no salt. Thank you."

"It's my pleasure, little witch."

I shake my head as I realize they both called me little witch, just like Tristan had. I bite my lip, glancing out of the corner of my eye at Sienna as she leads me toward the bathroom. She's so beautiful and so tall. I feel so tiny compared to her.

"Whatever you have to say, Chloe, just say it." There's a bit of a lilt to her

voice, and I swear I could listen to her speak for hours.

“Both you and Landon called me little witch. Why?”

Sienna looks amused as she turns her head to look at me. “Because that’s what you are.”

“It’s just weird,” I tell her. “The other couple I matched with, they also call me little witch.”

Sienna hums. “It sounds like it’s meant to be, then. You’ll have to tell me and Landon about the other couple.”

“Oh... Really? You want me to tell you about them?” I can’t keep the shock out of my voice.

“Of course we do. I assume you wouldn’t have brought them up if you weren’t interested in them, which means they’re important.” Sienna’s smile is soft as she leads me into the bathroom. “We know how polyamory works and that you might be seeing other people besides us. We don’t mind, but we do expect you to be open and honest with us about it if this moves beyond tonight’s date.”

I nod slowly. “That makes sense.”

Sienna leans over to press a kiss to my cheek before leaning over to check to see if anyone is in the stalls. “It’s just us in here. I know we haven’t talked much about our magic, but I thought you might have something that could dry you right up? Sadly, I don’t have anything in my arsenal to help with that.”

“I do, actually.” I laugh, shaking my head. Why hadn’t I thought about that before now? “*Tirim amach.*”

Magic spills from my fingertips, and within seconds, my jacket and dress are just as dry as they were before I walked into the server.

“Good as new.” Sienna grins. “Now that you’ve taken care of that, how

about we really get this date started?”

“I’d love nothing more.”

I follow Sienna to the table, and as soon as Landon sees us, he jumps to his feet. “Welcome back, ladies.”

He holds out Sienna’s chair for her as I start to take my coat off, but then he’s helping me take it off.

“Oh, thank you.” I duck my head, flushing. I don’t think I’ve ever had anyone help me take off my coat as an adult. It’s kind of nice.

“It’s my pleasure, Chloe.” Landon reaches over, pulling my chair out for me, and once I’m seated, he pushes it back in before hanging my coat off the back. He moves back to his seat, and I’m happy to see our drinks have already been delivered.

“Wow. They got these out here fast.” I lean over to take a drink, sighing at how good it tastes.

Landon chuckles. “I think we’re going to get exemplary service after that incident. Probably much better than we would’ve received from the boy.”

“Eh.” I shrug, already over it. “I’m really nervous, just so you know. I’m probably going to babble and blurt out things I don’t need to. It’s just what I do when I’m nervous, but I thought I should warn you. I’m not always like this. It’s just that the two of you are breathtaking, and I’ve never been on a date with a married couple before—or even with a woman ever—so this is a lot for me.”

“Hey, hey.” Sienna reaches across the table, laying her hand on mine. “Don’t stress, baby girl. I promise you, we’re just like every other person you’ve ever dated. There’s just two of us, and we happen to be married.”

A sense of calm rushes through me at her touch. “Wow. That’s potent.”

Sienna frowns. “What’s potent?”

I glance at our hands before meeting her eyes once more. “Is calming not one of your powers as a demigod?”

Sienna glances at Landon, who looks just as confused before she shakes her head. “No. Not at all. All of my powers revolve around healing. I wish I could calm people.”

“Uhhhh... well, your touch definitely sent a sense of calm pulsing through me.” I shake my head. “Maybe it’s a new power?”

“Or maybe it means something else,” Landon says quietly. “But let’s not think about that just yet. I know you and Sienna have had quite a few conversations throughout the week, and I’m sorry I’ve been quiet. I just didn’t feel comfortable since I haven’t actually spoken to you yet. I didn’t want to get between the two of you and what you were building.”

And that’s when it hits me. They’re both just as nervous as me, which makes me smile.

“It was nice getting to know Sienna, but I want to get to know you, too. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have sent the two of you a message.” I snort. “If I’m honest, if it had just been her, I probably wouldn’t have messaged. I really don’t have any experience with women.”

“And there’s nothing wrong with that, baby girl,” Sienna assures me, and I kind of love that she keeps calling me baby girl.

Landon laughs, shaking his head. “You’ll have to watch out for Sienna. She likes to come on a little strong sometimes.”

Sienna laughs with him. “I wish he was lying, but it’s absolutely true. If I ever get to be too much, please just let me know. I don’t want to scare you off.”

It’s nice to hear her say that because I don’t think I want to be scared off.

“Oh, honey, while we went to get Chloe dried off, she told me that there’s

another couple she's been talking to who also calls her little witch." Sienna lays a hand on her husband's arm, but her eyes are on me.

"Really? That's funny. Are you comfortable talking about them with us? I'm sure Sienna told you we believe in open communication." Landon wraps his arm around Sienna's shoulders, pulling her to him as they both watch me. "We've had some issues in the past with people not being honest, and we've been hurt. We'd prefer that not happen again."

"Of course! I'd love to tell you about them, but I also feel I should tell you about the fact that I'm fairly certain I'm cursed."

Sienna's eyes widen. "Cursed? Oh, no. Definitely tell us about that."

So I do. I tell them about Tristan and Ryder. I tell them about my date with the two men tomorrow. Then I spill the beans on my cursed love life and my belief that I'm being reincarnated. The best part of all of it is they don't dismiss my words. They listen and never once seem to doubt me, but it also doesn't seem to put them off.

We stay there for hours, the manager coming back to apologize to us numerous times. The last time it's to tell us they're closing, and it's only then that we notice we're the only ones in the restaurant. The three of us scurry outside, and they offer to walk me to my car.

"I had a really good time tonight," I admit, leaning against my car door.

"So did we, baby girl. Right, Landon?"

Landon nods. "We did. How would you feel about going on individual dates with us this week? It'll let the two of us get to know one another, and it'll let you and Sienna have some time without me as a buffer. I know you're still feeling out your interest in women, but we should probably figure that out pretty quickly. This feels like it could really go somewhere, and none of us want to get our hopes up if that's not something you're interested in."

“Yes. Please. I would love to.”

Which is how I end up with a date with Landon for Tuesday and another with Sienna for Friday. They each stop to kiss my forehead before we say our goodnights. As much as I’d love to kiss them both, I’m not ready for that—something they obviously catch.

All in all, it’s one of the best dates I’ve ever been on, and I still have another one tomorrow. Maybe it’s finally time to break this curse I seem to be under. One can hope.

Chapter Twelve



Ryder

“Why aren’t you ready yet?” Tristan’s voice is tight, his disapproval clear as he practically taps his foot.

I turn to him with a lazy smile. “Because I’m tired?”

“Damn it, Ry. Don’t do this. Please, I’m begging you. Don’t ruin this before it’s even started. I know you haven’t talked with her as much as I have, but she’s amazing. You’re going to love her.”

I sigh as he shoots me a pleading look. I’m definitely interested in the little witch, but I really hate being awake before noon.

“You’re lucky I love you,” I grumble, finally rolling out of the bed and heading for the shower. “Give me twenty minutes, and I’ll be ready.”

“I love you, too,” he calls after me, and I just shake my head.

I take the quickest shower possible. Sadly, it doesn’t do much in the vein of helping me wake up, but at least I’m clean. What will help me is the coffee Tristan has waiting for me when I step back into our bedroom.

“Thank the gods,” I murmur, dropping my towel as I reach for the cup he left on the dresser. I bring it into the closet with me, trying to figure out what to wear.

That’s where Tristan finds me five minutes later, no closer to figuring out what I’m going to wear.

“Ry?”

I shoot him a sheepish smile. “I don’t know what to wear. I don’t even know what we’re doing.”

Tristan sighs, grabbing my hand and dragging me from the closet. He points at the bed, where he laid out a pair of my favorite jeans and a Henley. “Obviously, everything I said to you last night went in one ear and out the other.”

“I’m sorry, baby.” I set the now-empty cup of coffee down before pulling him into my arms and kissing him. “I promise, I’m excited about this date. I’ve had to work some crazy hours this week to cover for losing Tyler. We have a new security guy starting tomorrow—it’ll be better after he’s trained.”

“It better be. I feel like you haven’t been around at all this week.” He shakes his head. “Get dressed and stop waving around your magic dick. We’re not going to be late because you hypnotized me with it.”

I chuckle but release my hold on him. “You’re so bossy this morning. I like it.”

“You’re impossible!” While his words sound annoyed, he’s grinning. “I’m going to make you another cup of coffee. We need to be out of here in like ten minutes.”

I nod, already pulling on my clothes. “I’ll be ready. I promise.”

I can’t help checking out his ass as he walks out the door. What? Not only am I an incubus, but my angel’s ass is magnificent. Once he’s out of my line of sight, I hurry to finish getting ready. As I’m heading for the kitchen, I realize Tristan never did tell me what the plan was for today.

“Good boy,” he purrs as he meets me in the doorway to the kitchen, handing me a to-go cup.

I take a long sip of it before letting out a contented sigh. “That whole good boy thing doesn’t work on me like it does you.”

He shrugs. “I figured it was at least worth a shot. I’ve always wanted to call someone a good boy or girl.”

“Maybe you’ll be able to call the little witch a good girl. She might like that.”

Tristan is already pushing me toward the door. “We’ll never know if we don’t get moving. She’s meeting us at Serendripity, which means you have until we get there to finish your coffee.”

He throws my coat at me before pulling his own on, then he’s pushing me out the door. I can’t help laughing.

“Someone is a little eager.”

“I am, damn it. And there’s nothing wrong with that. Get your ass in the car before I spank it.”

I shouldn’t smile at the growl in his words, but I can’t help it. “Again, that’s your kink—not mine.”

“I hate you.” He climbs into the driver’s seat of his SUV, leaving me to walk around the passenger seat. My door is barely shut before he’s backing out of the driveway.

“You don’t hate me. You love me.” Smirking, I fasten my seat belt and lift my cup to my lips. I’m finally starting to feel a little more human, but it’s definitely smart that we’re meeting at Serendripity. I’m going to need at least one more coffee to wake up.

Yes, hello, my name is Ryder, and I’m a caffeine addict. I’m not even ashamed. With the crazy hours I work, there’s no way I could survive without it. That’s the downside to owning a sex club in a town thirty minutes from where we live.

I would’ve loved to open the club in Fort Veyelsa, but we didn’t even know the place existed when I opened it. We actually moved here two years ago. I love it here, and I’m considering opening a second location, but that’s not happening anytime soon.

Glancing over at Tristan, I can't help smiling again. My love is so nervous and excited that he's practically shaking. I just hope this date goes well.

I met Tristan about three hundred years ago, but it took us nearly a century to get over the prejudices between angels and demons to get together. We've been inseparable ever since. He's the best thing that's ever happened to me, but we've always known it was never meant to be just the two of us. While something clicked between us immediately, there was still a hole in our chests, telling us that there was someone, or maybe multiple someones, who were meant to be a part of our relationship. It's just hard to keep believing in it after two centuries, you know?

I've just finished my coffee when Tristan pulls into a parking spot. He's out of the car before I can say anything. I laugh, shaking my head as I follow him.

He doesn't bother waiting for me. In fact, he's halfway across the street already.

"Tristan," I call out to him, and he spins around. "Are you planning to wait for me?"

"Not if you don't hurry up." He shoots me a grin, continuing to stand in the middle of the road as he waits for me.

Luckily, no cars come up the road in the amount of time it takes me to reach him. "You really shouldn't stand in the middle of the road, baby. That's a good way to get hit by a car."

He shrugs. "I'd survive."

"That might be true, but then you'd have to miss the date."

"Ohhhh." He nods. "That's true. I guess it's good that no cars came then, huh?"

The two of us are laughing when we step inside, and my eyes scan the

coffee shop for the pretty little witch. I lock in on her almost immediately, sitting at a table with a drink already in her hand. This time, it's me who is leading Tristan.

Chloe's eyes lift, lighting up when they land on us, and she scrambles to her feet with a smile on her face. I drop Tristan's hand and sweep her into my arms, feeling that same clicking that I felt the moment I met Tristan.

"Oh!" Chloe laughs, wrapping her arms and then her legs around me when I don't release her. "It's nice to meet you too, Ryder."

Tristan is laughing along with her, his hand landing on my shoulder. "What's going on, big guy?"

"Mine," I growl, wincing when Tristan's head jerks back, and Chloe's laughter dies away. "Shit. I'm sorry."

I slowly set her down on her feet, running a hand through my hair. I didn't make this totally awkward or anything.

"Ry, you might want to dial down the incubus charm," Tristan hisses, and it's only then I realize I've been pumping out pheromones. People are already making out around us, and I can see that it's going to get out of control quickly. But I can't seem to rein it in.

"Fuck. I don't know what's wrong with me. I can't shut it off." I curse, already moving for the door. "I'm sorry. I'm heading for the car. You two enjoy the date. I'm sorry."

Without waiting for a response, I'm running for the door. I can't remember the last time my incubus powers spun out of control like this.

Wait. Yes, I can. The first time I met Tristan. Between that and the click I felt inside, I know she's meant for the two of us. The only problem is I've ruined it. She's never going to want anything to do with me after I practically

assaulted her, growled at my mate, and sent pheromones pumping through the damn coffee shop.

Shit. Shit. Shit.

I pat my pocket as I dash across the street, ignoring the honking of cars. Thank the gods I have my keys with me. Otherwise, I'd have to stand outside in the cold until their date is over. I'd do it because my love deserves this, but it would've sucked. I climb into the driver's seat and start the car. Heat blares from the vents as I lay my head on the steering wheel. Even now that I'm away from Chloe, I can't seem to get my powers under control.

If my time with Tristan is any indication, I'm in for days of this shit. At least I'll be at the club for most of that. There's nothing wrong with pumping a sex club with lust—much better than doing it in a coffee shop with unexpected people.

I don't know how long I sit there, but I startle when the passenger side door opens. I don't bother to lift my head.

“Tris, I told you to enjoy the date with Chloe. I'm sorry I ruined it, but you, at the very least, deserve a chance with the little witch. She's meant to be ours, but I fucked up. One of us should at least have a shot with our fated mate.”

“You didn't fuck up—not really.”

My head snaps up at the husky feminine voice. Chloe is smiling as she climbs into the front seat. Tristan closes the door for her before climbing into the back seat.

“We got you a coffee,” she says shyly as she offers me the cup. I take it from her but can't seem to get my mouth to work as I stare at her blankly. What is she doing in our car? Why aren't they inside the coffee shop? I know

we're fated mates, which means my pheromones won't affect her as badly, but she won't be immune to them—just like Tristan isn't.

“I don't understand,” I finally force out.

Chloe smiles as she settles back in the seat. “I understand why you ran away, Ryder. They don't seem to be hitting me as hard, but I saw what was about to happen in Serendipity. You're an incubus, and I'm sure that sometimes means you leak lust. If I plan to be in your life, I should probably get used to that, shouldn't I?”

“Really?”

She just shrugs, glancing back at Tristan, who smiles and nods. He's completely smitten, unable to take his eyes off of her. “I asked her the same thing. She said she still wanted to go on a date with both of us.”

“I can't go on a date. I can't be around people right now. Anywhere I go will turn into an orgy.”

Chloe takes a sip of her coffee before turning to face me. “Why aren't I being affected as much as the others?”

I bite my lip. Do I tell her the truth and risk scaring her away? Or do I lie? Lying doesn't seem to be a good way to start a relationship.

“An incubus's fated mates have a small resistance to his pheromones. We're able to fight off the effects easier, and they don't hit us as hard.” Well, I guess Tristan is taking the choice away from me. I can't say that I mind.

Chloe's eyes are wide as she glances between the two of us before nodding. “So that's what you meant. Okay.”

“You're not running and hiding?” I ask, unsure how to take her reaction.

She shakes her head with a laugh. “I'm pretty sure the couple I went out with last night are also my fated mates. It would explain why I was drawn to both of your profiles and none of the others.”

“You’re taking this surprisingly well,” Tristan says slowly.

Chloe laughs. “My life is in chaos currently, so why not throw in fated mates? It’ll be a nice change from the past, that’s for sure.”

I frown. “What do you mean by that?”

Chloe snorts before explaining how all of her exes ended up being fated to other members of her prior coven. I’m surprised that she signed up for Love - N- Shenanigans at all with that kind of history, but I know she was looking for dates to a Yule gala. Still, that took guts to put herself out there like that, and now she’s found four possible fated mates. That’s kind of amazing.

“That fucking sucks,” is what ends up spilling from my lips. Chloe snorts while Tristan shoots me a glare. I just shrug. It’s not like I meant to say that—it just came tumbling out.

“It does. It did. But I guess I’m owed some good juju at this point, right?” Chloe glances between the two of us. “So we can’t go anywhere because Ryder will cause an orgy, but I still want to hang out with you. Although, I’m not sure how much longer I’m going to be able to resist trying to fuck one of you two with all those pheromones pumping in the air. It’s been a long time since I’ve had an orgasm that I didn’t give myself. Over a year, in fact.”

Her face flushes, but she doesn’t look away. I can’t help smiling at her.

“Well, that’ll never do.” I glance back at Tristan, seeing the question in his eyes. “We can’t have sex, as that will lock in our bond, and I don’t think that’s what we should do on our first date. But maybe if we take the edge off, I can get my powers under control.”

“Ryder! You can’t just offer that—“

“Yes, please,” Chloe says, cutting him off with a smile on her face. “I don’t think we should do it right here, though. Your place or mine? Oh, I should

warn you I have two cat familiars. So they're sentient... In case that would change your answer."

I'm already putting the car in gear. "We'll take you to our place. We'll have some fun and hopefully be able to just hang out after that. Then one of us can drive you back to your car."

"If you're okay with that," Tristan adds, and when I meet his eyes in the rearview mirror, I see the warning there.

"Right. What he said."

Chloe's giggles fill the car, and I love the sound of it. I might break a few speed limits in my hurry to get us home, but what can I say? My cock has been hard since the moment I laid eyes on her. As much as I'd love to fuck her right here and now, I really don't want to screw this up. But I also can't let it slide that she's been the only one pleasuring herself for a year. That's unacceptable.

I pull into the driveway, already out of the car and moving to the passenger's seat before Chloe has even opened her door. I scoop her into my arms as Tristan hurries ahead to unlock the door. He holds the door open for us so I can continue down the hallway.

"Bedroom or living room?" I ask Chloe, hesitating.

"If we don't want to have sex, we probably shouldn't tempt ourselves by going to the bedroom," she says, hunger in her eyes as she leans up to kiss me.

Shit. I hadn't even kissed her before now. What kind of an asshole am I?

A horny one, apparently.

Without breaking our kiss, I head for the living room. I can hear Tristan behind me, but he hurries past. I can hear him throwing pillows and blankets to the floor, and I smile into the kiss.

“What?” she hums, pulling back.

I nod to Tristan, who is currently building us a nest on the floor. Chloe giggles, wiggling in my arms until I set her down. She drops to her knees and starts helping Tristan.

“You don’t have to—“

“I want to,” she tells him.

I smile, undressing as the two of them finish up. When they turn back to me, I’m already naked. Chloe’s eyes go wide as she takes in my hard cock. I stroke myself a few times before squeezing at the base. I’m entirely too close to the edge already, and we haven’t done a damn thing. What the hell is wrong with me?

“That’s... a lot of piercings,” Chloe says slowly before audibly gulping. “And a lot of inches. I guess it’s a good thing it’s not going inside me today.”

Tristan snickers beside her, coming to rest at her back. “We can stop anytime you want.”

“Fuck that shit.” Chloe shakes her head, hands moving to her coat. “Help me? My hands are shaking.”

Tristan smirks, his arms going around her to knock her hands away. “I’d love to.”

I continue stroking myself as I watch my love unwrap her like the present she is. Once she’s naked, I drop to my knees in front of them.

“Get naked, Tris,” I bark, already spreading Chloe’s legs. Tristan helps her lay back before shuffling out of his clothes.

My hands close around her inner thighs as I duck down, running my nose along her dripping-wet pussy. “Gods, you smell divine.”

She doesn’t get a chance to respond as I dive in, eating her like she’s my last meal on Earth. I fuck her on my tongue, letting it vibrate, and she lets out

a gasp. Tristan and I chuckle as I circle her clit with my thumb.

It's always fun when a lover gets to experience some of my special powers for the first time. A vibrating tongue is the least of them. I can't wait to show her all the treats I have in store for her... Just not today.

Chloe lets out a loud moan that has me looking up her body, only to discover Tristan sucking her nipple into his mouth. I grunt because it's hot as hell to be working with him to give her an orgasm. One of her hands tangles into his hair, while the other tangles in mine. I groan into her cunt every time she pulls on it, directing me where she wants me.

Between the two of us, it doesn't take long for her to tumble over the edge, her hands pulling both of our hair as she screams out both our names. "Oh, my gods! Ryder! Tristan!"

Her thighs clamp down on my head as she squirts, drenching my face in her juices. I hum as I work her through her orgasm until she falls back onto the floor, completely boneless.

"You taste so good, little witch," I purr, sitting up and stroking my cock. "I almost came when you did."

My eyes fall shut as I stroke my length. It really isn't going to take much to send me over the edge. I jolt when I feel a small hand circle my length, and my eyes fall open.

Chloe kneels in front of me, biting her lip. "Let me."

"If you're sure." I let my hand fall away, watching as she slowly works me in her hand.

She turns her head to where Tristan is stroking his own dick lazily and crooks her finger at him. "You get over here too."

He chuckles but shuffles across the floor until he's kneeling beside me. Chloe wraps her other hand around his length, a hiss escaping his lips.

I reach over, turning his head to face me. I kiss him, our tongues twining together as I feel a tingle at the base of my spine. Oh, yeah. This is going to be over really quickly.

“Gods, that’s so hot. The two of you are hot on your own, but together? Fuck.” Chloe whimpers, her hand tightening on my cock, and that’s all I need.

I break the kiss to groan, my hips rocking into Chloe’s touch as I spill over her hand. A second later, Tristan follows me over. All three of us are panting when Chloe lifts her cum-covered hands to her lips. “Yummmm... You even taste better together.”

And now my cock is rock hard again. I close my eyes, reaching for my powers, and this time, I’m able to shut them off. Thank the gods.

It’ll take longer for my cock to soften, but I’m usually walking around at least half-hard most of the time, anyway.

“That was definitely a fun way to start a date,” Chloe says with a laugh. “I definitely need to wash my hands. Would one of you fine gentlemen like to show me to the bathroom?”

Tristan is on his feet in seconds, helping her stand. “I will.”

I watch the two of them walking away, completely naked and smiling. My mates.

There’s still something missing—our circle isn’t complete yet—but the hole in my heart is no longer gaping wide open. Whoever else is in our group, it’s clear that Chloe is the center of it. Maybe the other couple she went out with yesterday will be the remaining links. Hopefully, we won’t have to wait too long to find out.

For now, I need to make sure Chloe is comfortable after what just happened. I pull my clothes on, cleaning up the blankets and pillows and

setting the room right before grabbing both hers and Tristan's clothes. I drop them off with Tristan, brushing my lips against his.

"You were right. She's ours," he says, and I smile.

"She is. I'm going to make some grilled cheese. Join me in the kitchen when you're both ready?"

He nods, knocking on the door. "Chloe, I have your clothes."

I hear the door open but don't turn around. If I see her naked again, I'm going to want more, and that's just not in the cards tonight. And I'm okay with that.

Now, I just need to prove to my mate that we can take care of her by providing her with some comfort food. You can never go wrong with comfort food.

Chapter Thirteen

Chloe

The front door opens, and I glance up from my laptop as Tali sticks her head into the living room. “Hey, babe. How was work?”

“It was... It was work. I’m glad to be done.” Tali shakes her head. “I found the spell we need. We shouldn’t have any problems with this. You’re sure this is what you want to do?”

Closing the laptop, I nod. “I’m sure. I need to know what the hell is going on.”

Tali nods, coming to sit down beside me. She pulls a book out of her purse and starts flipping through it. I bite my lip, wanting to tell her I think I met my fated mates, but I’m almost afraid to admit it out loud to her. What if speaking it to someone who isn’t one of the said mates jinxes it? That could totally happen, right?

“Clo? What’s going on?”

I look up to find Tali staring at me, unblinking. She always sees too much. Can’t keep a damn thing hidden from her.

“I think they’re my fated mates,” I admit quietly.

“Who? One of the couples?”

I shrug, ducking my head. “Ummm... both of them?”

Tali’s face softens. “That’s amazing, Clo. Why do you sound so worried?”

“Because of this stupid curse! I don’t want to get my hopes up just for them to tumble down around me. My love life is cursed. I don’t think that even

fated mates can override that.” I shake my head, turning away from her as a tear slips down my cheek.

“Oh, Clo.” Tali wraps her arms around me, letting me fall apart for a moment before leaning back. “I still haven’t been able to find anything on how to figure out your curse, but maybe visiting your past lives will help.”

“Gods, I hope so. I want this so badly, Tali.”

Tali’s face turns determined as she nods. “And you deserve it. Let’s get this show on the road, and see if we can figure out what to do next, yeah?”

“Yeah.” I hesitate. “Thank you, Tali. Not just for helping me with this but for being my friend. For inviting me into your little coven and for giving me sisters I never knew I needed.”

“Oh, babes, you don’t have to thank me for that. The four of us were always meant to be friends—to be a coven. We were written in the stars.”

I laugh, loving the sound of that. “You’re right. We were. Now, what do we have to do?”

Tali shows me the spell in the book. It seems pretty straightforward, if a little advanced, but I’m not worried. If anyone has the power for that spell, it’s Tali.

Which is why ten minutes later, I’m lying on my bed surrounded by amethyst flower petals for clarity. Candles and the setting sun are the only light in the room as Tali stands at the end of the bed.

“I won’t be able to pull you out of this. Whatever it shows you, you’re going to have to ride it out until it’s done. So I’m going to ask you once more—are you sure?”

I nod, closing my eyes. “I’m one hundred percent sure. I need to do this. I need to see if I can learn anything about this curse, and so far, this is the only way we’ve discovered. Stop worrying. It’ll be fine.”

Tali hesitates for another moment before she begins chanting. I feel the magic swirling around us and settling inside of me. I don't really know what to expect, but one moment I'm in the here and now, and the next, I'm not.

"Chloe, this is not safe."

I look up to stare at a man I have never seen before. His clothes are definitely from a different era, but I was never very good at history, so I can't even begin to figure out when I have landed.

"Nothing is safe, Clifford. These men and women deserve more than this. I do not care how dangerous it is. I am going to keep helping them for as long as I can. If it means the end of my life, then so be it. It is not like I have much to live for." The me of the past scoffs, shaking her head. "I want to leave this world a better place than it is right now. Can you not understand that?"

Clifford nods. "I know, Chloe, but it is hard for me to let you take these risks."

"Risks?" I scoff. "Everything is a risk for me. I am a single woman who has never married in her thirties. I am constantly living in fear of someone discovering that I am a witch. I am alone in this world, and it hurts. There is an ache in my chest that nothing seems to ease. If I die helping these men and women escape slavery, then I will be happy with how my life ends. This is something you need to learn to accept. Besides," I add, "what does your wife think of you being here in the home of an unmarried woman?"

Clifford's face hardens. "You know Rebecca does not approve of our friendship, but that will never keep me away. I care for you. I always have."

"And I care for you, too. I also care for your wife and your children. You cannot be involved in this, Clifford. I will not allow your wife to become a widow. Now, go home, and do not come back."

“But—“

“No. They will be here soon, and your wife will notice your absence soon. Go home, and leave me to my choices. What is meant to happen will happen.”

Clifford looks torn before finally nodding. “I am proud of the woman you have become, Chloe. Stay safe.”

He leaves then, and I have to watch as my only friend finally walks out of my life. This is the way it is meant to be—me, all alone with my pain. But as I told Clifford, I will do good in this world before my time ends.

I lift a hand to rub against the constant ache in my chest as a wave of loneliness washes over me, and I feel sorry for the me of the past. She has no one and nothing—except the lives she saves.

Before I can dwell on that for long, I’m ripped from her body and flung into pure darkness. It’s disorienting.

Even more disorienting is the bright light that suddenly appears, forcing me to close my eyes. I blink them slowly, allowing myself to adjust to the light before looking around.

All around me is blood and death. Men and women swinging axes and swords. My own ax is heavy in my hand as I watch a man run at me.

My arm lifts of its own accord, slicing across his chest as a wicked grin spreads across my face.

This is the only thing that washes away the loneliness for a bit—killing and conquering. The world I live in is a brutal one, but it is one in which I thrive in my own way.

I hear someone coming up behind me, and I swing around with my ax raised, but I’m too late. The sword sinks into my stomach before the man rips

it down and then out of me. The ax falls from my hand as I fall to my knees. My eyes fall to my stomach, watching as my insides spill out of me.

When I fall onto my side, all I can think is thank the gods. Finally, my misery will end.

I'm sucked back into the darkness, fighting tears. The next few visions are short, barely flashes. I barely recognize where I am during them, though I can guess. The Boston Tea Party. WWII. The renaissance. Aboard a pirate ship. Being hung in Salem. The Black Death. And so, so many others.

There doesn't seem to be any sense of order, skipping between ancient history and more recent history in a flash. In each and every one of the past lives I land in, I'm alone and lonely. There's an ache that is ever present, a pain I can never escape. I experience so many deaths—all of them so young. The oldest I die, I think, is in my forties. I have lived a lot of miserable lives. Not a single moment of them is happy. How is that possible?

The next time I drop into a past life, something tells me that this is going to be the last one—that this one is the most important. Maybe even my first life.

“Chloe!”

I turn at the sound of my name, smiling when she comes into focus. Zoe. My love... who looks almost identical to Sienna. What is this?

Three men follow her up the stairs to join us.

Past me, smiles as her lovers surround her. Zoe. Zeno. Orion. Leon. They're everything to me. My mates, fated to me by the gods. Never before have I felt more loved than I do now.

Meanwhile, my eyes flash between the four familiar faces. There is no mistaking them. They share the same faces as Sienna, Landon, Tristan, and Ryder.

Leon pulls me in for a kiss as he backs me into our bedroom. Zoe presses

against my back, her hands making quick work of my clothing. I hear the sound of the door closing, followed by what can only be Zeno and Orion kissing.

“Gods above, you are the most beautiful creature in all the lands,” Leon murmurs against my lips, and I can’t help the smile that graces my lips.

“No, my love, that would be you.”

Something crashes against the wall, causing all of us to jump apart. My eyes fly around the room until someone steps out of the shadows.

“Really, Leon? This is what you turned me down for?” The man’s eyes roam over my naked body. I duck behind Leon, trying to hide from his gaze.

“Who is this, Leon?” I ask, peeking around him to look at the sneering man.

Leon growls. “This, my darling, is Phthonos—the god of envy.”

“You are an incubus, Leon. There is no reason that you should have turned me down. I am well aware of how attractive this body is.” Phthonos runs his hands down his suddenly naked body.

I shiver. Something isn’t right about this god. Or maybe it’s not that it isn’t right... He is the god of envy, and the envy is clear in his eyes.

“I would show you the best time of your life, incubus.” Phthonos steps forward, and we all take a step backward. His eyes narrow but never leave Leon. “I have always wanted to share my bed with an incubus.”

Leon shakes his head. “I have met my fated mates, Phthonos. I have no desire to bed you now or ever. I love them, and I will not betray them—not even for a god.”

Phthonos’s sneer only deepens. “Somehow, I knew that would be your answer. That is fine. You refuse me because of your mates? Then I shall take your mates from you. For now and forevermore. The lot of you will be

miserable in life after life. Alone and unable to find the people that were made for you. I curse you, Leon and his mates.”

He continues to speak, but I can no longer hear his words. The world around me begins to darken as the people around me begin to blur.

No. No. I need to know what the curse is. If I can't figure it out, then I won't know how to break it.

I fight against the darkness that seems to be trying to yank me from the memory, but it doesn't do me any good. It's too late. They're already gone, and I'm alone once more.

I wake up gasping, sitting up on the bed as tears roll down my cheeks.

“Oh, thank the gods!” Tali throws herself into my arms. “You’ve been out for hours. It’s nearly midnight. I was afraid you weren’t going to wake up.”

“Wait. What? Hours?” I glance at my bedside clock and see it’s just after 11:30 at night. We started the spell at just after six. What the hell?

Tali pulls back, wiping away my tears. “You looked like you were in so much pain. Did you find out what you needed to?”

I scoff, shaking my head. “I found out some things, just not everything. I’ve lived many short, miserable lives over the years. I was always alone with my pain and loneliness. Something was missing, and I never found them. I think I saw my first life, though. The weirdest part of it was that Sienna, Landon, Tristan, and Ryder were all there. They had different names, but it was clearly them. The Greek god Phthonos is who cursed us. He wanted to fuck Ryder—I mean, Leon. He’s the god of envy, and we were the ones who had to deal with his wrath. I couldn’t make out the actual curse, so I have no idea how to break it.

“I don’t fully understand it. How could they have been there? And why

were their names different, but mine was the same? This doesn't make any sense. How am I supposed to break this curse? Why are they back in my life? I didn't see any of them in any of my other lives—just that one. What's different now? Fuck, Tali. I don't know what to do.”

“I wish I knew what to tell you, Clo.” Tali shakes her head. “I don't know enough about past lives or this god of envy to answer you. I'll look into it. But it sounds to me like you've met your fated mates for the first time since your original life. That has to mean something.”

I look away from her, squeezing my eyes shut. “Does it? Maybe I should take this as a warning to stop seeing them. Then they can't hurt me.”

“Chloe Cristina Cadogen!” I wince at Tali using my full name. I turn to her with tears in my eyes, and she takes my face in her hands. “I will not let you throw this away because you're scared. You better put on your big girl panties. You're going on individual dates with all four of them this week, aren't you?”

I nod. “Yes. I'm supposed to go out with Landon tomorrow, but I think I should cancel.”

“Absolutely not. You're going to go out on that date with your fated mate, and you're not going to self-sabotage. You're going to get to know them and fall in love with them just like you did in your first life. I'll figure out a way to break this curse for you. You're going to get your happily ever after—no matter what I have to do to make it happen.”

I throw my arms around her, sobs escaping me. “I love you so much, Tali. I promise I'll try my hardest.”

“That's all I, or anyone else, can ask of you. I love you, Clo.” She pulls back as meows fill the air. “I think Sasha and Poppy have realized you're awake. I had to kick them out after you fell under. They were not happy.”

I jump off the bed, throwing the door open. The two of them weave in and out of my legs, talking over one another inside my head.

“Ladies! Enough!” I hate to yell at them, but my head is still spinning from what I’ve just experienced. Having the two of them yelling at the same time inside my head is not helping. They immediately stop talking but keep moving around me. “Tali, thank you. Go home and get some rest. I’m sorry I took up your entire night.”

“It’s fine, Chloe.” Tali wraps me in a hug. “You need to get some sleep, too. You’ve got school in the morning and a hot date.”

I laugh. “I do. Now get out of here.”

She hesitates for a moment before heading out.

Can we speak now? Poppy asks, and I shoot both of them a tight smile.

“You can, but for the love of the gods, one at a time, please. Let’s go lie down, and I’ll tell you all about what just happened.”

I follow my familiars to my bed, throwing my clothes to the floor before climbing under the covers. I immediately start telling them what happened, unsure how much longer I’m going to be able to stay awake. That spell and the subsequent visit to hundreds of lives have left me exhausted—both physically and mentally.

Chapter Fourteen

Chloe

Pushing into the house, I drop my stuff on the table just inside the door and head for the living room. I kick my shoes off, not really caring where they end up. I collapse onto the couch, whispering a small healing spell. I didn't get enough sleep last night and had the day from hell at school. Sometimes, I really hate teenagers, and I have to ask myself why I chose to become a teacher. Today was one of those days.

My head is killing me, and I only have a few hours until Landon will be arriving on my doorstep to take me out. I considered canceling on him about a hundred times today, but I didn't. Not only because I promised Tali I wouldn't but because I want to see him again. I got to know him a little at dinner, but I want to see how he is when it's just the two of us.

The spell kicks in almost immediately, and I slump in relief. I don't know why I didn't think to use it at school. Sometimes I'm an idiot, I swear. Deciding that a short nap will probably help, I roll over on my side and drift off.

I jerk awake at the sound of a knock. Grabbing my phone, I realize it's Landon. I must not have turned my phone off silent when I got off work. I have missed calls and messages from the girls, Sienna, Landon, Ryder, and Tristan.

Fuck.

There's another knock on my door, and I jump off the couch. Throwing the door open, I realize I probably should've taken a moment to make sure I

wasn't a mess, but it's a little too late now. "I'm so sorry. I fell asleep on the couch after work. I just need a few minutes to get ready, then we can go."

"Hey." Landon reaches out, cupping my face in his hands. I blink up at his smiling face and melt into his touch. "Take a deep breath, okay? It happens, and you don't have to hurry to get ready. We don't have reservations or anything, so we don't have to be anywhere at any certain time."

"Thank you," I whisper, wrapping my arms around him and laying my head on his chest. "I really am sorry. I've been looking forward to tonight, but I didn't get enough sleep last night, and today hasn't gone well."

Landon rests his chin on top of my head as he holds me to him. "That's okay. We can stand here as long as you want. Although we might want to shut the door so you don't freeze or your cats don't get out."

He does know we're familiars, right? Sasha asks in that snooty tone of hers that has me rolling my eyes.

"They're my familiars. Even if they go outside, they won't wander too far. Especially not in the winter." As much as I'd love to stay in his arms for the rest of the night, I pull back and give him a small smile that he returns before shutting the door behind us.

Grabbing his hand, I drag him toward my bedroom. "Come on, you can keep me company while I get ready."

"If you're sure."

"Oh, I'm sure." I grin at him over my shoulder as we reach my room. "You can sit on the bed. I don't really have any other seating options."

"That's because your bed takes up the whole damn room." Landon chuckles. "You sleep in that thing all by yourself?"

I flush, ducking my head as I head for my closet. "I decorated this house for what I wanted, not what I had. Belle called it manifesting my life or some shit

like that.”

I flip through my clothes, trying to figure out what to wear as Landon’s laughter floats to me.

“I guess that’s one way of doing it,” he says. “You don’t have to wear anything fancy. I figured we could get some food and then go ice skating or something.”

“Ohhhh... I haven’t been ice skating this year. That sounds like fun.” I grab my favorite pair of jeans that hug my curves perfectly and the cashmere sweater that Laoise gave me for Christmas last year. It’s the softest thing I’ve ever owned, and it actually keeps me quite warm. Plus, it’s fitted and looks damn good on me. What can I say? I want to look nice for Landon.

Once I’m changed, I grab a pair of ankle boots and step back into the bedroom to find Landon lounging on my bed, his head in his hand. His eyes find me immediately, filling with desire as they rake over my body. I bite my lip to keep myself from inviting him to spend our date in my bed. I already jumped into bed with Tristan and Ryder—well, sort of, anyway—and I don’t intend to repeat it tonight.

I’ve heard stories for years about how fated mates can’t seem to keep their hands off one another when they meet, but I thought it was just a lot of bullshit. Now? I’m pretty sure they were telling the truth. All I want to do is fall into bed with all four of them—even Sienna, who I’m still feeling things out with. I like her so much, but we haven’t done anything physical, and as much as I don’t want that to be a deal breaker...

I’m getting ahead of myself.

“I’m just going to freshen up in the bathroom, and then I’ll be ready to go.” Without waiting for a response, I duck into the bathroom. My eyes widen when I catch a glimpse of myself in the mirror. My short hair is a disaster,

and the makeup I wore for work today is smeared everywhere. I look like a mess.

How the hell was Landon looking at me like he wanted to eat me up?

“I think it’s cute.” Landon’s voice causes me to jump, letting out a squeal as I turn to see him standing in the doorway with a smirk on his lips. “Sorry. Didn’t mean to startle you. I could practically see you freaking out over how you looked. I just wanted to tell you that you looked cute, all mussed up when you answered the door. It made me want to drag you to bed so I could muss you up some more.”

“No. Nope. We’re not doing that. We’re going on a date.” I spin back around, grabbing my brush and fixing my hair. I studiously avoid meeting his gaze in the mirror as I fix my makeup.

When I turn back to him, he looks amused. I still refuse to meet his eyes and try to rush past him, but he grabs my hand. “Chloe, my sweet little witch, what’s wrong?”

“Tristan and Ryder got me off yesterday before I jacked them off,” I blurt out, eyes going wide as I cover my mouth with my hand.

Landon doesn’t seem phased. “It sounds like everyone had a good time then.”

I drop my hand, frowning. “You’re not mad.”

“Little witch, we told you that as long as you were honest with us, we didn’t have a problem with you seeing others. You were just being honest. Why would I be mad?”

“I have no idea. You might as well know that I’m a bit of a disaster. My life is chaotic, and I don’t see that changing anytime soon. Now would be the best time to run.”

He pulls me into his arms once more. “No, little witch, I don’t think I will.

We all need people in our lives who thrive on chaos. You're not going to scare me off that easily."

Is that what I was trying to do? Fuck. Maybe I was.

"Then let's go on this date."

Landon leads me out of the room, and I quickly feed Poppy and Sasha before allowing him to lead me to his car. We eat at a cute little diner that I never knew existed before tonight, and it's amazing. After the way our date started, I wasn't expecting much from the rest of it, but it's so easy to talk to Landon. It feels like he's my best friend, even though I've known him for such a short amount of time.

There's an invisible cord that seems to drag me close to him anytime I try to step away, and I finally give up. I hold his hand. I let him wrap his arm around my shoulders. At the skating rink, we skate hand in hand, and I have so much fun getting to know him. I find out that his passion is painting, but he's a social worker during the day. I mean, gah. Could he get any more perfect? Apparently, after living as long as he and Sienna have, they've amassed themselves quite a fortune, but they still like to give back.

After we finish skating, we get some hot chocolate and just walk around looking at the Christmas lights. It's almost nine by the time we head for his car. I'm not ready for the night to end, but after last night, I need to make sure I get a decent amount of sleep. So I don't argue with him when he says it's time to head home. We've almost made it back to my place when his phone starts ringing, a smile lighting up his face.

"Sienna, hi."

"Hey, honey." Sienna sounds tired. "I just got off work. I'm heading to the car now. How did your date with Chloe go?"

Landon chuckles. "Well, we're still on it, but you can ask her how it's

going if you'd like."

"Hi, Sienna!" I try to release Landon's hand, feeling weird holding his hand while talking to his wife, but he's having none of it. In fact, he lifts my hand to his lips and kisses the back of it before glancing at me.

"Hey, baby girl. I'm sorry for interrupting your date. It's just that I always call Landon when I get off, so he doesn't worry. I'll let the two of you get back to it."

"No. Wait." I'm not ready to say goodbye to either of them yet. "We're just driving back to my house right now. You're not interrupting anything, I promise. Why don't you stay on the phone with us? Tell me about your day."

Landon shoots me a smile as he squeezes my hand.

"How about you tell me how the date went instead?" Sienna sighs. "It wasn't a good day at the hospital, and I don't want to bring you two down. Not while you're finishing up your date."

I bite my lip, glancing at Landon, who nods. "Well, it all started off with me falling asleep on the couch and waking up to Landon knocking on the door." I let my eyes fall shut as I recount the date, a smile on my lips the whole time.

"It sounds like you've both really enjoyed the date. I'm glad. I'm looking forward to our date." Sienna pauses. "Oh, shit. I forgot to tell you, Landon. The blood shipment was delayed, so I wasn't able to get you any. You'll have to drink from me tonight and maybe for the next few days."

Landon sighs as he pulls into my driveway, putting the car into park. "Darling, I can't drink from you on back-to-back days. It'll take too much from you. I'll figure something out."

"Oh. You don't drink from people?" I ask, surprised. "I thought vampires liked blood right from the vein."

Landon chuckles. “We do, but I don’t like drinking from people without their permission, and it’s not safe to drink from the same person over and over—even if they’re a demigod. So I usually supplement Sienna’s blood with bagged blood.”

I consider him for a moment. “You can drink my blood. I don’t mind.”

Landon splutters as Sienna’s laughter sounds throughout the car. “You can’t just offer up shit all willy-nilly like that,” he says with a shake of his head.

“Baby girl, drinking blood involves more than just drinking the blood,” Sienna says softly.

I chew on my lip. I hadn’t been aware of that, but considering Landon is the first vampire I’ve met, I’m not surprised.

“Okay. Then tell me what it involves, and I’ll decide. But honestly? I don’t think my answer is going to change.” My thighs clench together as heat rushes through me. There’s just something about the idea of him biting me that turns me on—a lot.

“Did you know that vampires and incubi are actually cousin species?” Landon asks, undoing his seat belt as he twists to look at me. When I shake my head, he sighs. “They are. My bite is an aphrodisiac. More than likely, it would make you come.”

“And come hard,” Sienna offers.

Landon chuckles. “Yes. Exactly. If that was the only side effect, I would’ve taken you up on your offer with no hesitation. But once I’ve finished feeding, I’ll be feral until I get off. I don’t know that I would be able to stop myself from taking you, and that’s not the impression I want to leave with you. If we’d already slept together, I wouldn’t worry so much. But you have no idea how hard it’s been for me to keep my hands off you tonight.”

“So, we’d have to sleep together?” I ask hesitantly.

Sienna hums. “Not necessarily. You could give him a blow job, and that would probably be enough.”

“Sienna!” Landon wipes a hand over her face. “What are you doing?”

She laughs again. “I’m trying to get you laid, honey. It’s pretty clear to me that Chloe isn’t put off by what you’re saying. Am I right, Chloe?”

“Yes. I want you to feed from me, Landon, and I really want to suck your cock.” They both curse, and I just smile. “But we should head inside. I think your car is a little cramped for this.”

“You’re sure about this?” Landon asks.

“Absolutely.” I nod, glancing at his phone. “Is that something you might want to watch, Sienna?”

Sienna curses again. “Holy shit. Yes. I definitely want to see that. Fuck. Hold on. I’m pulling over. I’m not going to make it home in time. I’ll video call you in a minute.”

I’m already out of the car and halfway to my door before Landon gets with it and climbs out of the car. He puts on a burst of speed and is standing next to me a second later. I grin up at him.

“I was beginning to think you weren’t going to join me.”

Landon shakes his head. “This is not how I was expecting this night to go.”

“I’d like to say me neither, but I was imagining you naked in my bed while I was getting dressed.” I laugh as I unlock the door. “Not that I imagined you feeding from me. Hell, half the time, I forget you’re a vampire.”

Landon hums, stopping me when I start toward my bedroom. “I don’t think we should go to the bedroom. I really don’t think I’ll be able to hold back.”

I nod. “Okay, living room it is. Apparently, that’s my new thing.”

I laugh when he gives me a weird look, but I just shrug. I don’t really need

to give him the details of my date with Ryder and Tristan. Before either of us can say anything, his phone rings again. He lifts it and smirks before answering.

“Are you safely on the side of the road?” he asks, taking my hand and leading me to the couch.

“I am. Let me see Chloe, please.”

I take the phone from Landon, smiling when I see Sienna’s face. “Hello again.”

“Hello, baby girl. I just wanted to check in and make sure you don’t feel like I was pressuring you into this. We all know I tend to come on a little strong at times.”

I shake my head. “No. I want to do this. Like *really* want to do this.”

That makes her laugh. “I understand. Do you have somewhere you can set the phone so I have a good shot of the two of you?”

I hum, glancing around the room before pushing Landon down on the couch. He grunts, laughing a little as I walk over to the side table where a stack of books sits. I have a phone stand over there, too, so I set it on top of the books before laying the phone in it.

“How’s that?”

“I think it’s good, but why don’t you go over and join him so I can make sure?” She winks at me, and I grin.

I climb into Landon’s lap, looping my arms around his neck before turning to look at the phone. “Good?”

“Definitely good. Landon, can you reach the phone? That way, when Chloe goes down on you, you can show me what it looks like to have her between your legs while I imagine her between mine.”

Landon’s head falls back onto the couch. “The two of you together are

going to kill me. I just know it. But yes, I can reach the phone. This is the last time I'll ask you, Chloe, I promise. Are you sure this is what you want to do?"

I undo my jacket, letting it fall away from me as I nod. Then I grab the bottom of my sweater and pull it over my head. "This was a gift. I really don't want it to get ruined."

Landon chuckles, his eyes falling to my lace-clad tits as he bites his lip. "Damn, baby. These tits are amazing."

"Gods, I wish I could see them in person," Sienna pants.

I twist in Landon's arms, making sure Sienna gets a good look at them. Landon isn't wrong. I do have nice tits.

"Fuck, baby girl," she whispers. "Make her feel good, Landon."

"Yeah, Landon. Make me feel good so I can make you feel good."

Landon closes his eyes for a moment, and when they open again, his pupils are red. I bite my lip. Why is that so hot? His mouth falls open, revealing his fangs and a shiver runs through me. "Do you care where I bite you?"

I shake my head. "Wherever you want."

"Thank the gods." He pulls me toward him, but we stop at the sound of Sienna's voice.

"Take his cock out now, baby girl. You'll be desperate for it when he finishes feeding."

I glance up at Landon, and he nods, so I reach between us and undo his pants, and reach inside so I can push down his boxer briefs before grasping his thick cock. He hisses as I stroke it, and I lick my lips as I get my first look at it. He's not as long as Ryder is, but he's got the incubus beat on girth.

"Holy shit. That's a yummy-looking cock," I whimper, eyes widening when I realize I said that out loud. "Fucking hell. Please ignore me."

“Never, sweet witch. Never.” Landon’s arms tighten around me as he pulls me closer until my jean-clad center is flush against his dick. He leans forward, and his teeth sink into my tit.

Fire rushes through me, my head falling back as my hips cant forward. They weren’t kidding about his bite. I grind against his dick as I fall apart. With each pull of blood, I find myself climbing once more. By the time he pulls back, I’ve come three times, and all I can think about is getting his cock inside of me. As much as I’d like it in my soaking wet cunt, that requires too much work.

Instead, I slide to my knees between his legs. My lips immediately find his head, my tongue darting out to taste the precum there. I moan, grasping the base of his cock with one hand while the other undoes my pants. Landon leans over, grabbing the phone as my fingers slip into my pants.

“That’s right, baby girl. Suck his dick while you finger yourself,” Sienna’s pants, and I glance up at the phone. Landon has switched the camera, so I can’t see her anymore, but I keep my eyes locked on the camera as I lower my mouth onto his hard dick.

My eyes fall shut as I take as much of him into my mouth as I can before backing off and trying again. Landon’s hand wraps in my hair as he curses.

“I’m sorry, Chloe. I wish I could sit here and let you suck my dick, but I can’t.”

That’s all the warning I get before he’s bucking up into my mouth. I try to keep up with his pace, gagging every once in a while as he slides down my throat, but it’s clear he’s desperate to come.

Sienna’s moans fill the air around us, and I find myself glancing up at the camera once more. I continue working my fingers over my clit, but I know

I'll need more to come again. I push three fingers into my pussy, rubbing my palm against my clit as I chase my own high.

Sienna's the first to break, moaning long and loud before falling silent. Then Landon is spilling down my throat, which sends me right over the edge. I collapse against his leg, panting, and he reaches down to pull me into his lap.

"Are you okay, little witch? Was I too rough?"

I shake my head, letting my eyes fall shut. "Nope. Just the right amount of roughness."

"Oh, baby girl. You look ready for bed."

I blink my eyes open and glance at the phone to see Sienna smiling at me.

"That was fun. We should do that again," I say, letting my eyes fall shut again.

Landon laughs. "Darling, I'll call you when I head home. I'm going to tuck Chloe into bed and then head home."

"Okay, honey. Sleep well, baby girl."

I try to tell her good night, but I can't seem to get my mouth to form the words. Instead, I sigh and curl further into Landon's chest. I feel amazing. Best orgasms of my life. But now I'm exhausted.

"It's okay, little witch. I've got you. You just sleep."

As if I have any choice in the matter, but his words make me feel better about falling asleep in his arms. And sleep, I do.

Chapter Fifteen

Tristan

Why did I think I needed to come so early?

I sigh, glancing at the time and realizing I still have another thirty minutes before I'm supposed to pick up Chloe. I'm sitting just up the road from her house because I don't want to show up this early. To make it even worse, I've already been sitting here for twenty minutes.

It's ridiculous, I know. I'm entirely too excited about going out with her. What can I say?

I've loved our daily phone conversations, but there's just something different about sitting across from someone and talking. Call me old-fashioned, I don't care. Plus, who wouldn't want to stare at her gorgeous face for hours on end? I know I would.

My phone rings, and glancing down at it, I see it's Ryder.

"Hey, Ry."

"You're sitting down the road from her house right now, aren't you?"

I can hear the laughter in his voice, and I grimace. He knows me entirely too well.

"What makes you think that?"

Ryder laughs. "You forget that you're always sharing your location with me. I've been staring at the dot sitting there for at least ten minutes."

I don't correct him on how long I've been sitting here. He doesn't need to know. "So what?"

“Just call her and see if she’s ready, baby. There’s no point in sitting down the road when you could be out with her.”

“But isn’t that a little presumptuous?”

I can practically see him shaking his head at me. “Call Chloe, baby, or I’m going to call her for you.”

“I hate you,” I tell him, nerves rolling through me.

“No, you don’t. You love me.”

I scoff. “You don’t have to be so smug about it, but you’re right. I love you, and I’ll call her now.”

I don’t bother waiting for him to respond as I end the call. If I don’t, he’ll just keep giving me shit. I love him, but he definitely likes to push my buttons. I take a deep breath before clicking on Chloe’s name.

“Hey, Tristan!”

I melt into the seat, eyes falling shut at the sound of her voice. “Hey, little witch. I’m sorry to bother you, but it seems that I might have misjudged the amount of time it would take to get to your place. I’m sitting just up the road, and I was wondering if—“

“You better drive your little angel butt over here right now. I’ll leave the door unlocked. I’m almost done getting ready.”

I chuckle. “Yes, ma’am.”

Chloe’s laughter rings through the air, pulling another smile from me. “I’d apologize, but I doubt it’s the last time I’ll be bossy. It’s a hazard of teaching teenagers.”

“Okay, sweets. I’ll see you soon.”

“Byyyyyeee,” she sing-songs before hanging up the phone.

I put my SUV into drive and head for her place. I shoot Ryder a text once I’m in her driveway to let him know I love and appreciate him before putting

it on silent. I know my mate, and he'll spend the whole date calling and texting if I let him. To say that he's smitten with our little witch is putting things lightly. Climbing from the SUV, I make my way up to the door—unlocked, as she said it would be.

“It's me,” I call, shutting the door behind me.

“Give me five minutes,” she returns.

Before I can step any further into the house, two cats come streaking toward me. I smile, dropping to my knees. “Look at you, pretty girls. Which one of you is Sasha?”

One of the cats comes to a stop just out of my reach, her eyes narrowing before she lets out a meow.

“Well, it's nice to meet you, Sasha. If you're interested in some pets, I'll happily give you some,” I tell her before turning my attention to the other. “And you must be Poppy. You're not a shy one at all.”

Poppy lets out a loud meow as she rubs herself against my hand. I glance at Sasha, but she's still watching me as if she doesn't trust me. That's fine. I know these two are more than just cats—that they're Chloe's familiars. That means they're highly intelligent, and I'm not going to pretend otherwise. Either I'll win her over, or I won't. Chloe has mentioned on more than one occasion that Sasha is a bit snooty, so I won't take it too personally.

Poppy jumps into my lap, her paws going to my chest and putting her face as close to mine as she can. She tilts her head to the side as I run my hands down her back. I'm not sure what she's looking for, but I keep my gaze locked with hers. I have nothing to hide.

Finally, Poppy gives a little nod before nuzzling her head into my chest and letting out a soft meow. Sounds like acceptance to me.

“Okay, I'm ready—“ Chloe cuts off when she sees me on the floor with

Poppy in my lap, laughing. “I see you’ve met Poppy.”

“Yeah, I think she likes me.” I laugh when Poppy mews her agreement. “Sasha, not so much.”

Chloe laughs. “She says it’s not that she doesn’t like you. She just doesn’t know you and is being cautious. She doesn’t want to get too attached if I’m going to fuck it up. Damn, Sasha. That was mean.”

She shakes her head at whatever Sasha says next, rolling her eyes before meeting mine. “Poppy says she likes you very much. You have a good aura and give the best scratches.”

“Well, one out of two isn’t so bad.” I push to my feet, keeping Poppy in my arms so I can continue to pet her. “Did you want to head out now or hang out since I’m insanely early?”

“I’m not going to lie.” Chloe laughs. “Ryder texted me early and told me this would probably happen, so I started getting ready. But I’m good to head out now.”

Of course, Ryder texted her. I don’t know if I should be mad or grateful. “Of course he did. I will warn you that if you want to enjoy our date, you should put your phone on silent. Ryder won’t be able to stop himself from calling and texting us. I already silenced mine, and when he realizes I’m not going to answer, he’ll start blowing up your phone.”

Chloe tries to fight back a smile. “Okay, but why is that so adorable?”

I shrug. “That’s Ryder for you. He’s a bit obsessive and has boundary issues, but somehow he makes it endearing.”

“Poppy, get down so Tristan and I can leave.” Chloe rolls her eyes as Poppy lets out a meow, telling us just how unhappy she is about it, but does eventually jump down. “So, where are we heading on our date?”

I grab her jacket from the rack, helping her into it. It’s not until the door is

shut and locked behind us that I tell her, “First up is dinner. You can choose where we go, but I’m starving. Then, after that, I thought we could play in the snow or look at Christmas lights or something. Honestly, I just want to spend time with you.”

She practically melts against my side as she looks up at me. “I don’t care what we do, either. Let’s play it by ear after we finish eating.”

“Sounds like a plan.” I walk her around the SUV and open her door for her. Once she’s settled, I shut the door before hurrying around to the driver’s side. I haven’t been here for long, but it’s still cold outside. I should’ve started the SUV with my remote starter. I’m already messing this up. Damn it.

I start up the car, berating myself for not thinking of her comfort first.

“Hey.” Chloe lays her hand on my arm, waiting until I turn to look at her before continuing, “What just changed?”

I shake my head. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Yes, you do. Don’t do that. You tensed up, and even though you’re trying to hide it, I can tell you’re upset.”

I hate that it was so easy for her to pick up on. “I’m just mad that I didn’t think about getting the car started before bringing you out here. It’s cold, and I just want you to be comfortable.”

A smile lights up her face. “While that’s adorable, I’m fine. I promise. Don’t beat yourself up over something like that.” She leans in close to me, whispering, “Plus, I don’t know if you know this or not, but I’m a witch. I can warm up the air if I need to.”

I throw my head back, laughing. Of course, she can do that. “I’m sorry. I don’t know why I’m stressing out about it. I just want this date to go well.”

“It already is, Tris.”

“Tris?” I ask, my smile turning into a smirk. She just gave me a nickname,

didn't she?

Chloe flushes, turning to face forward as she shrugs. "Your name is a mouthful. If you don't like it, I won't call you it again."

"Oh, no, little witch. I *love* it. You can call me anything you want."

"How about asshole?" she asks, her lips twitching.

I shrug as I back out of her driveway. "I mean, that seems like an odd term of endearment, but if that's what you want to call me, I guess I'll learn to love it."

Her shoulders are shaking as she tries to hold in her laughter, but I don't call attention to it. Instead, I focus on the road as I head toward town. "So where do you want to eat, little witch?"

"I don't know, asshole, I was thinking—" she cuts out, laughter spilling from her. "Okay, yeah, I can't do that. I do like Tris, though."

"So do I."

It takes her a few minutes to calm down enough to answer my question. "I'd actually really love some Chinese food."

"Sold." I reach over to start typing in the address of mine and Ryder's favorite Chinese place. I know how to get there, but I always prefer to use my navigation. That way, if there's an accident or road closure, I don't find myself stuck.

Ten minutes later, we're pulling into the shopping center. Chloe is out the door before I even shut the car off.

"Hey!" I call, and she pauses while closing her door.

"Yes, Tris?"

I smile, really loving the way the nickname rolls off her lips. "I wanted to open your door for you."

She leans against the side of the SUV, peeking her head back inside with a

grin on her face. “I’m really hungry, but I promise to let you open the door for me for the rest of the night.”

“Good.”

As soon as I make it around to her, I wrap my arm around her waist and tug her against my side. She doesn’t say anything, just hums as she returns the favor, her finger sliding into the belt loop of my jeans. She doesn’t try to open the door, allowing me to open it for her, which makes me smile. It’s clear she’s been here before as she leads us to a booth. When the server brings out the menus for us, neither of us looks at it, already knowing our order.

Dinner is amazing, as always, but I love how easily the conversation flows between us. We talk about our days and her date with Landon the night before.

“I know it’s still early, but maybe the five of us should get together. Since you’re fairly certain you’re mated to them and us, it would be good if we got to know one another. Don’t you think so?”

Chloe shrugs, ducking her head. “I haven’t even gone out with Sienna yet. We’re getting together Friday since it’s the first day we could make work for both of us. I’d like to see how it is when it’s just the two of us before we do that.”

I nod, reaching over to squeeze her hand. “I get that. There’s no pressure. I just...I don’t know how slow Ryder and I can take this. We’re both a little...”

“Obsessed?” she asks with a laugh. “Isn’t that what you said about Ryder?”

I laugh with her, because how can I not? “Yeah, that’s probably the best word.”

“I think it’s cute,” she offers. “Endearing, if you will.”

She keeps throwing my words back at me, and I kind of love it. “Yeah,

okay. You can stop now. Are you finished?”

“Yeah. If I eat anymore, I’m likely to explode.” Chloe laughs, taking her hand back so she can take one last bite.

She’s adorable and gorgeous all at the same time. I don’t know how I got so damn lucky to have both her and Ryder as my fated mates, but I’m so happy they are.

After I’ve paid, we head back to the car. I start heading for a park that’s nearby, figuring it’ll give us a place to hang out while we talk some more. She’s practically bouncing in her seat as I pull into the empty parking lot, but she does wait for me to come around and open her door for her, which I appreciate.

As soon as her feet hit the ground, she takes off into the park. It takes me a moment to realize she’s heading for the swings. I chuckle, following her at a slower pace. By the time I catch up, she’s already swinging.

“Do you want me to push you?” I ask.

“No, come swing with me.”

I lower myself into the swing that’s entirely too small for me, but what am I supposed to do? Tell her no? Absolutely not. I’m beginning to realize there isn’t much I wouldn’t do if she asked me to.

We swing for a bit before she launches herself into the air with a squeal. She spins to face me, a grin on her face. “Want to make snow angels?”

“Sure, sweets.” I plant my feet on the ground to stop, not wanting to risk throwing myself into the air like she had. Something tells me it wouldn’t work out as well for me. I follow her over to a spot with undisturbed snow, and she plops backward and gets to work on her snow angel. I know I told her I’d make one with her, but I don’t want to take my eyes off of her.

Instead, I drop to my knees beside her, and when she turns to look at me

with a question in her eyes, I lean over to press a kiss to her lips.

I don't mean for it to turn into anything more, but she does something to me. It's not like with Ryder when his incubus pheromones take over. It's completely different but draws me to her just the same. I can't get enough of her.

Chloe's arms wrap around my neck, and I hoist her out of her snow angel until she's straddling me. She lets out a small whimper as she grinds her core against my cock. I bite her bottom lip, and a moan spills from her lips that has me tightening my grasp on her. When she starts rocking her hips, I know I need to stop this. This isn't the reason I took her out here, and I'm most certainly not going to fuck her in a public park in the middle of winter.

When I pull back, she chases my lips, but I just shake my head. "Sorry, sweets. You just looked so tempting, and I couldn't help myself. But this isn't what tonight's about. It's about getting to know one another better. We already fooled around on our first date, so I'd rather keep things PG this time around."

Chloe grins, leaning over to kiss my lips. "Okay, Tris. How about a snowball fight?"

"Anything you want, little witch."

Which is how I find myself avoiding snowball missiles. My little witch sure has an arm on her, that's for sure. I know it's a little juvenile for us to be at a park after dark, throwing snowballs at one another, but on the other hand, it's the most fun I've had in forever. This date is definitely a success. Let's just hope our incubus can keep it in his pants long enough for their date tomorrow.

Chapter Sixteen

Chloe

“Come on, little witch,” Ryder calls when I lag behind him. He raises his arm, inviting me into his warmth, and who am I to turn that down?

I hurry to catch up, letting him pull me close. After my date with Tristan last night, I wasn't sure what to expect from my date with Ryder. It certainly wasn't for him to show up at my door with grocery bags so he could cook me dinner. Or for him to invite me to go see the Christmas symphony in the next town over. Now, we're walking the streets and just enjoying ourselves.

The funniest part is that Ryder hasn't even tried to kiss me. It surprised me since Tristan couldn't seem to keep his hands off of me even after he declared that we needed to keep it PG-rated. After all, Ryder is an incubus, and you'd think he'd at least want some form of affection, but so far, nothing.

I know I shouldn't complain—and technically, I'm not, except inside my head—but I've been thinking about kissing him all night. It's not like I can be the one to initiate it, seeing as I'm nearly a foot shorter than he is.

“What's going on, little witch?”

I turn my head to look up at him, biting my lip before shrugging. “Nothing.”

“Uh uh uh.” Ryder shakes his head. “You wouldn't let Tristan get away with that last night, and I'm not letting you get away with it now.”

“He told you about that?” I ask, surprised.

He nods. “Of course he did. He was bragging about how amazing you were and how you wouldn’t let him get lost in his head like he’s prone to do. But that isn’t going to get you out of answering my question.”

I glance down at my feet, really not wanting to answer him. I know I’m being stupid, and I don’t want to admit that to him. Although, something tells me he isn’t going to let this go.

“I was just trying to figure out why you haven’t tried to kiss me or anything tonight,” I mumble, but I know he’s heard me when he tenses.

He sighs, stopping us and lifting my chin with his fingers until I meet his gaze. “Oh, little witch, what are we going to do with you? I’m on strict orders from Tristan to not get either of us riled up. You’re not ready to bond with me yet, and if we sleep together, that’s what’s going to happen.”

“That makes sense.” I try to duck my head, but he doesn’t let me look away from him.

“It doesn’t mean I don’t want to kiss you—it’s all I’ve been thinking about, but I have to make sure I have my powers under control.” He laughs. “And let’s be real—being around you makes that very difficult.”

I laugh with him, relief rushing through me. At least I know it’s not because of something I did wrong or that he doesn’t want me. That would be the worst.

“I promise I will give you a kiss before we say our goodnights, but for now, we’re just going to keep it friendly, okay?”

“Sure, Ryder, that makes sense. I’m sorry for even bringing it up. I knew I was being stupid—“

He cuts me off with a sharp shake of his head. “You were not being stupid, and you absolutely should have said something. I always want to know if

something is bothering you. You can't let shit like that bottle up inside of you, or one day you'll explode. That's not the way I want you to explode."

I laugh as I wrap my arms around him, laying my head on his chest. "Yeah, me neither."

We stand there hugging for a few minutes until I pull back. "What now?"

"It's getting a little cold. Why don't we grab some hot chocolate—I know a good place up the road—and head home. You have to be tired from going out with all of us this week on top of your night with Tali." He brushes his hand across my cheek, a smile spreading across his face.

"Yeah, that's probably a good idea. I have a date with Sienna tomorrow, but thank goodness, tomorrow is the last day of school until after winter break."

"Oh, so that means you're going to have more free time, then?"

I shrug. "Yeah, I guess so."

"I had a new guy start this week, so I shouldn't have to work such crazy hours, which means I'll be pretty readily available to hang out with you any time you'd like to."

"I'm sure I'll take you up on that." I pause, glancing up at him as he starts leading us down the street once more. "I don't even know what you do for work. How has that not come up yet?"

Ryder wrinkles his nose, turning his head to look at me. "That's because I was waiting to tell you. I own a sex club—it's actually just around the corner—called Le Ravissement. It's not always the best thing to announce when you're trying to get to know someone."

"An incubus with a sex club? Yup, that checks out." I laugh, looking at him through my eyelashes. "You'll have to take me some time."

Ryder's arm tightens around me for a moment, his eyes falling shut as he

takes a deep breath. “Little witch, nothing would please me more. But let’s not talk about that anymore because it’s not going to help me control my powers.”

“Okay.”

I don’t say anything else as we head for what turns out to be a coffee shop. I’m content with just being in his company. After we have two piping hot chocolates in our hands, we head back to his car, and then back to Fort Veyelsa. We don’t talk much on the drive back, and I don’t even mind. It’s nice to just relax and enjoy one another’s company.

When he pulls into my driveway, I wait in my seat as he rounds the car. Like Tristan, he likes to open the door for me. It’s super sweet, but I hope they don’t expect me to let them do this for the rest of our lives. I’m just a little too independent for that, but for now, I’ll keep indulging them.

We walk to my front door hand in hand, and I’m not ready to call it a night. Yes, I’m tired, but I want more time with Ryder.

“Come in?” I ask as I pull my keys out.

Ryder sighs, running a hand over his face. “I’m not sure that’s a good idea, Chloe.”

“I’m not going to try to jump your bones, big guy.” I laugh as I open the door, stepping inside. “I just want some cuddles before bed. If I promise to keep my hands to myself, will you come in?”

He snorts, shaking his head. “Yeah, I can come inside, but definitely no wandering hands, or we’ll be in trouble.”

I can hear the desire in his words but choose to ignore them. He was right earlier. We’re not ready to bond yet. We’ve only known each other for what? A couple of weeks? While we might be fated mates, I don’t want to rush into something that’s irreversible. There’s still so much up in the air in my life

right now. I now know that I'm cursed, as I thought I was, but I have no idea how to reverse the curse.

I'm still confused about how I saw Landon, Ryder, Sienna, and Tristan in my first life. I don't know what it means, and since I've been going out with them all week, it's not like I've had time to look into it. I probably should have mentioned it to them, but a small piece of me is afraid to. What if it sends them running? No, for now, I'll keep that little tidbit of information to myself. Hopefully, this weekend, I'll have time to go to my mom's house. I didn't want to involve her because I knew she'd have questions, but I need access to her library. I don't know how much I'll have to tell her, but hopefully not too much.

"Should we watch TV?" he asks, nodding toward my living room.

I bite my lip, considering him. "Yes, but what if we do it in my room instead?"

"Chloe! What did I say?" Ryder's eyes fall shut, his hand going to adjust his very clearly hard cock as he takes another breath.

I giggle because that's not at all what I meant. I can feel his pheromones spilling from him as he tries to wrangle them under control. That's definitely not what I meant to cause, but it's kind of reassuring to know how much he wants me.

"Not like that, Ry." I hesitate, realizing what I've called him, but when he doesn't say anything about it, I just shrug. "I really am tired, and I want cuddles. I figured we could cuddle, and you could let yourself out when I fall asleep. Assuming you're okay with that."

Ryder's eyes open as he nods. "Yeah, I can do that. I'm sorry. I'm more on edge than usual, but nothing would bring me more pleasure than holding you until you fall asleep."

I bite my lip as I watch him. “Are you sure? I don’t want to make it any harder on you.”

“Yes, little witch, I’m sure. In fact, if you’d like me to, I can stay the night. I’d love to wake up beside you in the morning.”

I’m nodding before I even process his words. “You’re sure it won’t be too hard?”

“Oh, something will definitely be hard,” he mutters with a laugh. “But I have it under control. I promise.”

“Good. That sounds amazing.” I grab his hand, leading him down the hallway. “Wait. Will Tristan mind?”

Ryder shakes his head. “Not at all, but if it’ll make you feel better, we can call him and ask.”

“Let’s do that.”

He waits until we make it to my room before pulling out his phone. He must put it on speaker as it rings through the room.

“Hey, Ry. Are you heading home?”

Ryder chuckles. “Actually, baby, I was thinking about staying over at Chloe’s, and she wanted to make sure you were okay with that. Say hello, Chloe.”

“Hi, Tris!” I wave awkwardly before realizing he can’t see me and slam my palm into my forehead. When I glance up, I see Ryder is fighting laughter. I flip him off, grab my pajamas, and head for the bathroom to get changed.

“Hi, Chloe! I’m glad you’re having fun, but Ryder, you know the rules. No sex.” I can hear the frustration in Tristan’s voice as I leave the door open a crack. I want to hear how this conversation plays out.

“And there won’t be any sex, baby,” Ryder purrs. “We haven’t even kissed tonight. We’re going to climb into bed—fully clothed, I might add—and I

won't even kiss her. She says she wants cuddles, and you know how much I love cuddles."

Tristan sighs. "Yes, I am aware. I just don't want either of us to mess this up, Ry."

"And we won't. I promise."

Having changed while they were talking, I push back into the room and offer Ryder a smile. "Thank you, Tris, for letting me borrow your mate for the night."

"Our mate, sweets," Tristan reminds me. "I just wish I could come cuddle with the two of you, but something tells me we wouldn't end up just cuddling."

Ryder laughs. "That's probably a good call. Love you, baby."

"Love you too, Ry. Good night, sweets."

I call out my goodbyes as I climb into bed. Ryder flips off the light, taking off his shirt and dropping his pants.

"I hope you don't mind, little witch, but jeans are a killer to sleep in." Ryder climbs in beside me as I turn on the TV, flipping over to a Christmas party.

"Do I mind that you're mostly naked in my bed? Absolutely not. But I made sure to wear my flannel pajamas so there would be less temptation." I roll onto my back to look up at him as he's resting his head in his hand, arm bent at the elbow.

"You're tempting in anything, little witch, but that's okay."

I chew on my lip for a moment. "Do I really not get a goodnight kiss? You did promise me one."

Ryder chuckles. "How about I give you a kiss in the morning and wish you a good day instead? That way, we don't end up in over our heads."

As much as I'd love to argue with him, I see his point. I just nod, but when I go to turn on my side, he tucks his arm under me and rolls me to lay my head on his chest instead. As he holds me, I feel sleep rushing toward me. I'm warm and comfortable, and it's been a long week. My eyes fall shut as I bask in his embrace. I try to tell him goodnight when he brushes his lips across the top of my head, but can't seem to get my lips to move.

“Sleep well, little witch.”

When he begins to hum quietly, I allow sleep to pull me under. Having him stay over was a good call. This is just what I needed.

Chapter Seventeen

Chloe

I'm fighting a migraine as I leave the academy. It's so hard to deal with teens on the last day before vacation. They have zero focus, which is why I had their final earlier in the week. The plan was to watch *Wuthering Heights* since they finished the book this semester, but the little assholes wouldn't shut up.

Even though I slept better than I have in forever, I was still tired when I woke up this morning in Ryder's arms. He kept true to his word and gave me a lust-inducing kiss before heading out the door with a smirk on his lips. He left me all hot and bothered with not enough time to take care of myself if I wanted to make it to work on time. Not that I minded all that much, but added on to my classes being completely unruly, I'm just so ready for the break to start.

As I climb into the car, I whisper the healing spell and let out a sigh of relief when the pain slides away almost instantaneously. If only I knew a spell to make me not feel so exhausted.

I'm usually a homebody during the week. I'll see the girls whenever they ask, but besides that, I prefer to stay at home. Being out every night this week has really thrown me for a loop. Being an extroverted introvert is so hard sometimes.

I've been looking forward to my date with Sienna all week, hoping that we can figure out if this is something I truly want or not, but I just don't think I can go out again tonight. I don't want to cancel, though, so I'm wondering if

she'd be okay with hanging out at my place instead. I press her contact before backing out of my spot and heading home.

“Hi, baby girl. Did you just get off work?”

I relax at the sound of her voice. “I did. It was not a great day. I’m so exhausted. Agreeing to go out every night this week was not a good call on my part.”

“Oh.” I can hear the disappointment in Sienna’s voice, and I wince. Before I can set her straight, she sighs. “Do you want to cancel? I completely understand if you do.”

“No way,” I quickly respond. “I’ve been looking forward to seeing you all week. I know it’s your day off, and you probably want to go out and do something, but would you be okay if we just hung out at my house? We can watch some TV and order in. I know it’s not an ideal date...”

“It sounds perfect,” she says, cutting me off. “I don’t care what we do as long as we get to hang out, baby girl. I enjoy staying in as much as the next girl. I’ll change into some pajamas and head over in, say... an hour? That should give you enough time to get home. I’ll stop at the store on the way over and get some candy and popcorn. If there’s anything in particular you want, just shoot me a text.”

“Gods, you’re perfect.”

Sienna laughs, bringing a smile to my face. “Oh, baby girl, I’m nowhere near perfect, but I know what it’s like. You forget I’ve been married for a very long time. I know how it feels to not want to disappoint someone, but just not having it in yourself to go out.”

“Definitely perfect,” I say again with a laugh. “I guess I’ll see you in an hour?”

“You sure will, baby girl. Drive carefully, and let me know when you make

it home, so I don't worry."

My smile only grows. "I will. I promise. Bye, Sienna."

Luckily, the drive home goes quickly, and I remember to shoot her a message to let her know I made it home in one piece. The first thing I do is head for my bedroom, changing into the pajamas I wore to bed last night. They still smell like Ryder, and I find it comforting.

After that, I grab my queen-size air mattress and get it blown up. I grab all the extra blankets and pillows from my linen closet and dump them on the floor of the living room. If we're doing this, we're doing it right. Sienna might not be sleeping over—though I wouldn't mind if she did—we can still treat this like I would a sleepover with my besties. Or at least similarly. It's not like I'm attracted to or interested in any of my besties. Not like Sienna.

By the time she arrives, I'm already buried under the covers. I pull up the app for my door, unlocking it before swapping over to my doorbell app.

"It's unlocked, Sienna. Come on in."

I giggle when Sienna startles, her eyes falling to the doorbell camera. She grins, shaking her head, and then she's pushing inside.

"Where are you at, baby girl?"

"In the living room," I call back, refusing to crawl out from beneath the blankets.

Sienna stops in the doorway, smiling as her eyes run over the room. "This looks cozy."

"It is. You should join me." I pat the bed beside me, and she kicks off her shoes before heading over with the big bag that I'm assuming holds the snacks.

She sets it down beside the air mattress before climbing on beside me. I roll onto my back so I can smile up at her.

“Hey, baby girl. Thanks for inviting me over. I know I said I’d be cool if you had to cancel our date, but I really wanted to see you.” She pushes back the covers and slips beneath them.

Turning once more so I can face her, I grin. “I really wanted to see you, too.”

“Would it be okay if I kissed you?”

I nod, not having to think about it. I want to know what it will feel like for her lips to brush against mine. I want this—I want *her*.

I keep saying I don’t know and trying to push everything off because I’ve never been with a woman. It’s only because I’m scared. I know I want her. I know I want this. It’s just so hard to get over the pain I’ve had to deal with in the past. I just need to keep reminding myself that this time is different. The four of them are fated to be mine. I’m not going to introduce them to my coven and lose them when they find their mates. They’re *mine*.

Sienna moves in slowly, clearly trying not to spook me. I think about leaning toward her but decide against it. I’ll let her come to me. With my luck, I’ll just screw it all up and send her running. I don’t know how I could do that, but it wouldn’t surprise me.

My eyes stutter closed when her lips meet mine, and I revel in the softness of her lips. It’s so different from kissing a man. Her lips are soft and plush, her tongue delicate as it slides across my lips. I open for her, whimpering when our tongues meet. Reaching out, I grasp her hip. She slides her leg between mine as her arm bands around my back, pulling me closer until I’m flush against her side.

Desire courses through me, heating my lower belly. With just a kiss, she has me wet and wanting—wanting so much more. So much that I don’t fully understand. Kissing my other mates has been amazing, life-changing even.

But kissing Sienna is earth-shattering. I feel like the entire world is crumbling around me and reforming in a new, better way.

Kissing Sienna is how I want to spend the rest of my life.

When we break apart, we're both panting. We just stare at one another as we try to catch our breaths.

"Wow," I finally manage to say, and she laughs. "That was a damn good kiss. Apparently, I should've been kissing women before now."

Sienna's eyes narrow. "Absolutely not. I'm happy that I'm the first and last woman you'll ever kiss."

That brings a smile to my face. "I like the way that sounds," I admit.

"I do, too." She leans back in and kisses me slowly, lavishly, before pulling back. "Why don't we get a movie going?"

I blink at her for a moment, my brain taking a moment to catch up. "Yeah, sure. Didn't you say something about snacks?"

She reaches over her head, grabbing the bag, and dumping its contents on top of us. Laughter babbles from me as I'm pelted in the head with candy and salty snacks.

"I don't think you got enough," I tell her when the bag is finally empty.

"Probably not," she agrees. "Now, about this movie?"

Getting the hint, I grab the remote, and we flip through the movie channels I have until we land on a holiday rom-com. Sasha and Poppy join us on the mattress as Sienna pulls me into her arms, and honestly, this is exactly what I need.

We make it through the movie before our stomachs start growling, and we place an order for pizza. We watch another holiday movie before deciding to watch something else. Something with a lot of sex in it, apparently.

Let me tell you, watching sex scenes with Sienna is *very* different from

watching them with my coven of besties.

I try to be discreet as I rub my thighs together, knowing that my panties are already damp. I don't usually get turned on during these types of scenes—they're usually very unrealistic—but with Sienna curled around my back, I can't seem to help myself.

When her lips brush against my neck, I hiss at the unexpected touch. That doesn't keep me from arching my back and dropping my head to the side to give her better access. Sienna chuckles, her hot breath sending shivers through my body.

“Is my baby girl feeling needy?”

I whimper, biting my lip as I nod. She turns my head until I can meet her gaze. I don't know what she sees there, but she gives me a small smile before kissing the hell out of me.

“Let me make you feel good, Chloe, please?”

I consider her offer. I knew we would get to this point eventually, and yes, it's a little sooner than I would have thought... But I want to be with her. I want to see how different it is with her versus with the men I've been with.

“Yes, please,” I finally say, sighing. “Please make me feel good.”

“Good girl,” she murmurs, helping me turn onto my back before climbing on top of me. She leans down, brushing her lips against mine again and again as she slowly lowers her weight on me.

This is so different from being with a man. Sienna is taller than me, so our bodies don't line up exactly, but she's all soft curves and I love it. My hands run up and down her sides, as our chests rub together, my nipples pebbling. Her hips slide between my legs as she deepens the kiss. I want to feel the rest of her, but my arms just won't reach.

When she pulls back, her lips are puffy as she smiles.

“You’re so beautiful,” I tell her, reaching up to cup her cheek in my hand.

“So are you, baby girl.” She turns her head to press her lips to my palm.

When she leans back toward me, I think she’s going to kiss me again, but she kisses along my neck instead. I roll my head to the side as she adjusts her weight and kisses down my neck. Her hands slide beneath my shirt, pushing it up and revealing the fact that I’m not wearing a bra.

I whimper as her hand closes around my tit, giving it a little squeeze before her fingers find my nipple. She leans up to look down at me as she rolls it between her fingers, a smirk on her lips as I buck against her.

“Do you like that, baby girl?”

“Yes. So much. More, please,” I practically beg. I lick my lips, my hand sliding up her side to cup her tit in my hand. Unlike me, she’s wearing a bra. She’s smaller than I am, but that’s to be expected with her lithe form. I wonder what they’ll look like. When I go to slip my hand under her shirt, she tuts and shakes her head.

“No, ma’am. I’m going to make you feel good. If you still want to explore once I’ve done that, you can do so after. I want this to be all about you.”

I pout, not having expected her to tell me no. “Fine.”

Sienna’s thumb brushes over my pouted lip. “None of that, Chloe. If you start touching me, I won’t be able to concentrate. This is your first time with a woman, and I want to show you just how good it can be with a woman. It’s different from being with a man. Don’t get me wrong, I love being filled up with a cock, but there’s just something special about being with a woman.”

“Show me,” I beg. “I want to know. I want everything.”

“Shhhh,” she hushes me. “I know you do. Just lay back and enjoy how good I can make you feel.”

She ducks down, closing her lips around my nipple as she continues to

work the other with her fingers. She's right. This is so different from past experiences, and certainly not in a bad way.

I freeze for a moment when she begins kissing down my stomach, and she hesitates at the waistband of my pants. Her eyes flash up to me, a question in her eyes as she hooks her fingers inside of them.

I bite my lip, forcing myself to relax before nodding.

Sienna drags my pants down, throwing them to the side before coming back to my panties. "You're sure, baby girl?"

"Yes. One hundred percent sure, I assure you."

She laughs, sliding the panties down my legs. Then she's ducking between my legs, my legs going over her shoulders. She runs her nose along my wet slit, humming. "You smell amazing, baby girl. I bet you taste even better."

Before I can think of a response, her tongue is tracing the same path as her nose. My hands fall to her head as Sasha and Poppy launch themselves off the mattress.

A little warning next time would be appreciated, witch. Sasha's snappy tone almost pulls me out of the moment, but then Sienna does something with her tongue that has me gasping.

Have fun, Chloe. We'll be back when the two of you are done. Poppy's words have me smiling for a moment.

Sienna closes her lips around my clit, rolling it with her tongue as she slides two of her slender fingers into my dripping cunt. She immediately finds my G-spot, hitting it with each thrust of her fingers.

"Sie, yes. There. Gods, you're really fucking good at this."

Sienna chuckles but doesn't let up as she adds a third finger. My hand goes to my tit, rolling and pinching my nipple as my orgasm grows. It's just out of reach. I just need a little bit more.

“So close,” I gasp. “More. Please.”

I whine when her mouth falls away from my clit, but her free hand quickly replaces it. A whimper falls from my lips as she pushes a fourth finger into my pussy, pulsing her fingers against my G-spot over and over.

“Come for me, baby girl. I want you to cover my face in your cum.”

When her tongue slides inside along her fingers, I completely lose it. I scream out her name, my hand tightening on her hair as I grind against her fingers and mouth. My back arches off the mattress as I paw at my tit, and for just a moment, I forget how to breathe.

Sienna works me through my orgasm, only removing her fingers once I’ve collapsed backward, trying to remember how to breathe. Instead of coming back up to lie beside me, her mouth latches onto my pussy as she licks my juices and moans.

“Too sensitive,” I finally say, tugging at her hair until she joins me. “Holy shit.”

“I like watching you come, baby girl. You’re definitely going to have to let me do that again.”

I flush, ducking my head. “I’d like that, and maybe next time I can try?”

“I think I’d like that very much.” She leans over to kiss me, and I like the way I taste on her lips. “Okay, let’s finish watching this movie, yeah?”

“Shouldn’t I get my pants?” I ask, gesturing to where they are halfway across the room.

Sienna shakes her head. “Absolutely not. I need to have access in case you get needy again.”

Her words have my thighs clenching and my eyes widening. She throws her head back as she laughs and pulls me into her arms. “Don’t worry, baby girl. I won’t take advantage—much.”

I roll my eyes but kiss her once more before turning my attention back to the movie. I have no idea what's going on, and I don't even care. I just want to lie here in her arms for as long as I can.

Best date night ever.

Chapter Eighteen

Chloe

I wake up the next morning still feeling a little tired but definitely more relaxed. Sienna didn't end up leaving until after midnight, but she tucked me into bed with another earth-shattering kiss before she left. I kind of love that I keep getting tucked into bed. It's nice to have people who want to take care of me. Besides my besties, of course, but they have their own lives to deal with.

I groan when my phone starts ringing, and I'm surprised to find it's nearly ten. I haven't slept this late in forever. Snatching my phone off the charger, I'm unsurprised to find it's Laoise.

"Good morning, Lee," I croak, clearing my throat.

"Finally!" Laoise laughs. "The girls and I have been out here knocking on your door for like ten minutes."

Frowning, I roll out of bed. "Really? Why didn't you just use the key?"

"We weren't sure if you'd be alone and didn't want to walk in on anything," she says, acting all sly.

"Whatever, bitch," I tell her as I open the door, hanging up the phone. "Morning, ladies."

"Good morning to you, too," Tali says, eyeing me. "Up late, were you?"

I wave her off, turning on my heel and heading for the kitchen. "I need coffee before I have to deal with your nosy asses."

"We come bearing breakfast and coffee." I stop at Belle's words, eyes landing on the to-go cup from Serendripity.

“Belle, you’re a goddess among women. Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise.” I grab the drinks from her, leading my besties to the living room instead. I set them on the coffee table as Tali hands out our breakfast burritos. I lift my coffee to my lips, take a long drink, and moan. “Oh, yeah. That’s what I needed.”

Luckily, the three of them don’t immediately start their interrogation—because there is no doubt in my mind why they’re here first thing this morning. All of them are aware I went on dates every night this week. They let me finish my burrito and coffee before Tali opens her mouth to start in on me. I hold up a hand, shaking my head.

“Not yet. I need more coffee. Anyone else?” When they all shake their heads, I shrug. That just means more for me.

Once in the kitchen, I brew a full pot, knowing I’ll drink it throughout the day. Don’t judge me, I really like coffee.

After it’s finished and I’ve doctored my coffee to perfection, I know I can’t put this off any longer. I’m lucky they didn’t follow me into the kitchen and demand answers. They’re even kind enough to wait until my ass hits the cushion before throwing their questions at me.

“Tell me all about them,” Belle says with a smile on her face. I can’t help staring at her for an extra moment, noticing there’s something different about her. She’s practically glowing. I wonder if that means things are going well with her guys.

Tali doesn’t hold back, just goes for the throat. “So, are you into women or not?”

“Tali! You can’t just ask someone that.” Laoise pushes our friend, shaking her head. “Although, I would like to know the answer to that question, too.”

“Clo isn’t just someone. She’s our best friend. Of course, I can just ask her

that.” Tali grins as Belle and I giggle. She raises her eyebrows. “So?”

I shrug. “Maybe.” I laugh at the look on her face before nodding. “I don’t know about all women, but I’m definitely into Sienna. We experimented a little last night, and honestly? It was hot as hell.”

“Sleeping with her on the first date?” Laoise grins. “That’s my girl.”

“Technically, it was our second date since I went out with her and Landon last weekend. I *did* get a little action with Ryder and Tristan on our first date, though. And Ryder slept in my bed the night of our date. Does that count? Oh, and I definitely went down on Landon after he fed from me.”

All three of their jaws are practically on the ground, and all I can do is laugh. “I don’t know why you’re surprised.”

“Do you think they’re your fated mates?” Belle asks quietly, not meeting my eyes.

“Actually, I do.” I glance at Tali, who gives a small nod of her head. “And when Tali helped me out with past lives on Monday night, I saw them in what I’m assuming is my first life.”

“No way!” Laoise gapes at me. “Why didn’t either of you tell us?”

Tali shakes her head as she leans back. “Not my news to share.”

“And I’ve had a busy week.”

“So we heard.” Laoise laughs. “Good for you, babes. You definitely deserve it.”

I duck my head, grabbing my phone when it goes off. I smile when I see it’s Ryder.

“Who is it?” Belle asks, leaning over to peek at my phone.

“It’s Ryder, but I’ll answer him later. I want to spend time with my coven.”

Belle shakes her head. “And you will, but don’t ignore him.”

“Yeah, you’re stuck with us for the day,” Laoise informs me. “We cleared

our day for a veg session, just the four of us. We're all about to roll into the business of the days leading up to Christmas. This is probably our last chance to get together before then, honestly."

My heart sinks at that. While I've loved getting to know Landon, Ryder, Sienna, and Tristan, I don't want to lose my besties. We're all seeing people at this point, but I won't let this affect my relationship with my coven. Or at least I'm going to try my hardest not to.

I glance at the three of them, but they've already taken out their phones. I'm guessing they've got some people to check in with as well, so I open up Ryder's message.

Ryder

Good morning, Chloe. How's my sexy little witch doing after her last date of the week?

I'm doing good. Tired after staying up late all week, but I plan taking it easy today

Ryder

Please don't take this as me demanding anything of you, but I wanted to check in with you and see if you thought any more about us meeting Sienna and Landon.

I bite my lip as I stare down at the message. It's really not that much longer until the Yule gala. They should meet one another before then. It would kind of suck if they didn't get along, and if we didn't find out until then? Yeah, that would be bad. I pull up a new chat, adding all four of them to it.

Sorry to add you to a group chat without asking first, but this will be so much easier

Sienna and Landon, I'd like you to meet Tristan and Ryder. And vice versa

Sienna

Ohhh. I love a good group chat. It's nice to kind of meet you both.

Ryder

Is this your answer to my question, little witch?

Also, it's nice to meet you too, Sienna. And Landon, whenever you arrive in the chat.

Landon

I'm here. It's a pleasure.

Tristan

I'm here, but I'm not happy about it.

Sweets, you know how I feel about texting, and you add me to a group chat?

Ryder

:laughing face emoji: :laughing face emoji: :laughing face emoji:

Suck it up, buttercup.

Tristan

I'm glad to meet you, Sienna and Landon.

Though, as Chloe and Ryder can tell you, I'd much prefer to meet you in person.

Actually, that's the exact reason I started the ch

Ryder asked about the five of us getting together. I didn't want
make that decision on my ow

Ryder

You know I'm down, little witch.

Sienna

I think that's a great idea, actually.

Tristan

Can I leave the chat now?

ABSOLUTELY NO

Sorry for the caps... kind

Ryder

:laughing face emoji: :laughing face emoji: :laughing face emoji:

Keep it up, baby. You're going to piss her off, and then you'll have to let her sit on your face while you apologize.

Sienna

:laughing face emoji: Let her sit on his face? Something tells me he'd do that willingly.

OMG! Can we please get back on track

Landon

I'd love to meet everyone in person.

Ryder

How about today? Me and Tristan are free.

Sorry, Ry. My coven is over, and we're going to spend the d
veggie

Landon

How about tomorrow?

Ryder

We're free.

So am

Tristan

Excellent. So now I can leave the chat.

N

You don't have to respond here if it bothers you so much

I just want a place where I can send the four of you a message

one

Sienna

That seems reasonable. I'm sure Tristan understands.

Tristan

I do, sweets.

I'm sorry if I upset you.

I'll be happy to stay in the group chat.

Thank you

Where should we meet tomorrow

Ryder

Serendipity? I can always do with more coffee.

I knew I liked you for a reason

Ryder

Because I'm hot?

Tristan

And full of himself?

Sienna

I think we're all going to get along just fine. Serendipity works for us.

Excellent. Tomorrow at 1

Or is that too early? I know Ryder hates being up before noon

Ryder

I'll happily wake up to see you, little witch.

Landon

10 sounds perfect.

Okay, I'm going to get back to the girls no

I'm looking forward to tomorro

I watch as they all reply that they are, too, before silencing my phone and turning back to the girls, who are all staring at me expectantly.

“We’re all going to meet up tomorrow at Serendripity so they can meet each other.”

Laoise smiles, and it lights up her beautiful face. “That’s awesome. I’m so happy for you.”

“Okay, I’ve spilled all kinds of information. Who else has something they want to share?” I ask, raising my eyebrows as I glance between the three of them.

Belle ducks her head, a blush turning her cheeks pink. Laoise takes a sudden interest in her nails, and Tali just throws herself back in her seat.

“You’re all brats. Fine, what are we watching?”

“Christmas movies!” Belle bounces off the couch, snatching the remote off the coffee table. “A new one came out last night, and I haven’t had time to watch it.”

Tali shakes her head, fighting a smile. “I guess if we have to...”

All four of us burst out into laughter when Belle sticks her tongue out at Tali and blows raspberries. Gods above, I love my friends, and spending time with them is just what the doctor ordered.

Chapter Nineteen

Landon

Gods, why am I so nervous?

I run a hand over my face as Sienna lays a hand on my bouncing leg. “Honey, what’s going on?”

“I have no idea. I wasn’t even this nervous when we were going out with Chloe for the first time. It’s just that something tells me that meeting Ryder and Tristan is going to change our lives. I just don’t know if that’s a good thing or not.” I force a smile, reaching over to stroke my fingers over her cheek as she frowns at me. “I’ll be okay, darling. I promise.”

“I don’t doubt that. Honestly, I’ve been feeling the same way. If this meeting goes badly, I don’t know what we’re going to do.” She shakes her head before taking a deep breath. She looks like she wants to say something else, but her head jerks up as a smile lights up her face.

I follow her line of sight to see that Chloe has just walked in. Sienna waves to get her attention, and she smiles when she catches sight of us. She’s absolutely breathtaking today. Although, if I’m honest, she takes my breath away anytime I see her, so it’s not that abnormal.

“I can’t believe the two of you beat me here!” Chloe exclaims as she shrugs out of her jacket and hangs it on the back of the chair on Sienna’s other side. “I left earlier than I usually would have, sure that I’d be the first one here.”

She walks around the table until she’s standing between the two of us. She ducks down to press her lips to Sienna’s before turning and doing the same to

me. All I can do is grin at her as she pulls away. Chloe winks at me, a smirk tugging at her lips as she makes her way back to her chair.

“I like that greeting. I must insist on it from now on,” Sienna purrs as she laces her fingers with Chloe’s.

“I can get behind that.” Chloe is still smiling when she turns to me with raised eyebrows. “You’re quiet today.”

“And you’re beautiful,” I blurt before snorting. “Damn, I just lost all my cool points, didn’t I?”

Sienna laughs, her hand landing on my shoulder. “Oh, honey. You never had any cool points.”

The three of us laugh together, and I finally begin to feel at ease. I don’t know what comes over me when Chloe is around, but it makes me feel like an awkward teenager. I try to remember back to when I first met Sienna, but it’s been so long, I can’t really recall if I’d been this awkward. At least Chloe seems to think it’s cute—that’s something, right?

“There’s our girl,” a deep voice calls, and my head snaps up, eyes locking on the two men walking toward us. Holy shit, are they hot. Is *this* Tristan and Ryder? Blinking at the two of them, it only takes me a moment to figure out it is them. I can practically feel the pheromones pouring off Ryder, and Tristan looks exactly how I would picture an angel.

“Holy shit,” Sienna murmurs, her nails biting into my skin.

I laugh, leaning close to whisper in her ear. “I agree. They are yummy.”

“Do you feel the pull, too?”

I tilt my head, considering her. I have to push past the initial lust that threatens to overwhelm me, but I discover I do feel a pull toward the two of them. Hmmm... isn’t that an interesting coincidence? What are the chances of Chloe’s other mates being our mates as well? I find I like the idea of that.

Chloe twists in her seat so she can see the two of them. “Ry. Tris. You made it. Come meet Landon and Sienna.”

Tristan’s eyes land on me, widening slightly as his mouth forms an O. Glancing at Ryder, I see the same expression on his face as he stares at my wife. Yeah, I’m pretty sure that confirms it. The five of us are all fated to one another. That’s not exactly what I was expecting, but I can’t say that I mind it.

Tristan smiles as they reach the table, reaching out with his free hand to me while keeping the other wrapped around Ryder’s waist.

Ryder ducks down to press his lips to the top of Chloe’s head, his eyes still locked on Sienna.

When I take Tristan’s hand, the world around me goes dark.

What the hell?

A blinding light flashes, forcing me to close my eyes. When I blink them open once more, I have no idea where I am. Though I guess that’s not one hundred percent true. I somewhat recognize my surroundings as I’ve dreamed of this place before. But why am I here now?

“Chloe!” I hear someone call, and a smile slides across my lips. I know that voice. It’s Zoe. But who is Zoe, and how do I know her? How do I know who she is?

I continue climbing up the stairs, and it takes me a moment to realize there is a man on each side of me. Glancing over, my eyes widen when I realize it’s Ryder and Tristan—except I know that isn’t their names. Not in this time, anyway.

How? What? I’m so lost.

Turning my attention to the girls, I'm not surprised to see Chloe as I'd heard the other woman call out to her, but when Zoe turns, I realize it's Sienna. Chloe smiles, her eyes flashing between the four of us as we surround her. Zoe. Zeno. Orion. Leon. That's who we are now. As with our present timeline, I know that we're all fated mates. I can feel the love for the four of them burning inside of me.

Ryder—no—Leon pulls Chloe in for a kiss as he backs her into what I know is our bedroom. Zoe presses against her back, her hands making quick work of her clothing. Orion and I follow them into the room, shutting the door behind us before turning to one another.

Orion, wearing Tristan's face, reaches up to cup my cheeks in his hands. "Zeno..."

Then the two of us are kissing, our hands roaming over one another's bodies as my cock hardens.

"Gods above, you are the most beautiful creature in all the lands," I barely manage to hear Leon's murmurs as he continues to kiss Chloe.

Her response makes me smile into my kiss with Orion. "No, my love, that would be you."

Something crashes against the wall, causing all of us to jump apart. My head jerks to the side, eyes narrowing as I search the shadows. There. There's someone stepping out of the shadows.

"Really, Leon? This is what you turned me down for?" The man's eyes roam over Chloe's now naked body. She ducks behind Leon, trying to hide from his gaze as we all close in around her.

"Who is this, Leon?" Chloe asks, peeking around him to look at the sneering man.

Leon growls. "This, my darling, is Phthonos—the god of envy."

“You are an incubus, Leon. There is no reason that you should have turned me down. I am well aware of how attractive this body is.” Phthonos runs his hands down his suddenly naked body.

Chloe shivers, and I wrap my arm around her. It’s clear that she feels what I do—something isn’t right about this god. Or maybe it’s because he’s the god of envy. Either way, I don’t want him anywhere near my loves.

“I would show you the best time of your life, incubus.” Phthonos steps forward, and we all take a step backward. His eyes narrow but never leave Leon. “I have always wanted to share my bed with an incubus.”

Leon shakes his head. “I have met my fated mates, Phthonos. I have no desire to bed you now or ever. I love them, and I will not betray them—not even for a god.”

Phthonos’s sneer only deepens. “Somehow, I knew that would be your answer. That is fine. You refuse me because of your mates? Then I shall take your mates from you. For now and forevermore. The lot of you will be miserable in life after life. Alone and unable to find the people that were made for you. I curse you, Leon and his mates.

“In this life, your very first, you have loved, but now you will lose. When all of you are reborn, you will spend your many lives searching out one another, but you’ll never manage to find all of your mates. Or if you do, it will be very far into the future. You will always feel the missing pieces inside of you. You may find one or two of your mates in each life, all except the witch. The witch will live alone for the rest of her days. Always knowing that the ones she meets are never meant to be hers. In fact, those that are near and dear to her will always be meant for someone else. You think you can turn the incubus against me? We’ll see who has the last laugh as you live your miserable, lonely lives.

“If one day, the five of you manage to find your way back to one another... I will consider ending this curse, but the decision will always be mine. And I will enjoy watching as each and every one of you suffers. It really is too bad, Leon. All I wanted was a night with the renowned playboy incubus, but I find that he has been tamed by his fated mates. The stories must have been vastly exaggerated, but since you have wasted my time, vengeance is my right. I think the five of you have spent enough time together in life. I wish you the best of luck in all the rest of your lives, and know that I will always be here enjoying the show as I watch you all suffer.”

Phthonos laughs, and it’s a slimy, evil sound. I wince, wishing I could drag my mates away from him, but something tells me that will only make things worse.

“Goodbye, darlings,” he whispers, waving his fingers at us before disappearing.

“We should,” I start to say, cutting off when the walls begin to shake around us. “Hurry, we need to get out of here!”

I grab Orion’s and Chloe’s hands and begin dragging them from the room. We’re on the top floor, and something tells me this isn’t something we can escape, but that won’t keep me from trying.

The five of us stumble over to the door. I lose my hold on Chloe’s hand as the walls start coming down.

“No!” I roar, trying to dart back into the room, but strong arms bind themselves around my chest and pull me away. Tears fill my eyes as I get one last glimpse of my love’s eyes before dust and falling stone separates us.

“Chloe!!!” Zoe screams, fighting against Leon, who is trying to drag her down the stairs.

“Let me go, Orion!” I yell, trying to get to Chloe.

“No. I am sorry, Zeno, but I cannot do that. Chloe is gone, and I will not lose you, too.”

Turning my head to look at him, I shake my head. I’m not ready to admit that she’s gone. She could’ve survived the crashing walls, couldn’t she? She’s the most powerful witch I’ve ever met. She can’t be gone. I can’t live without her. Tears stream down my face as I finally allow Orion to drag me toward the stairs.

We don’t get far before we’re knocked to the ground. I hear Zoe’s screams before the stairs collapse beneath them, the roof falling toward us. I yank Orion into my arms, kissing him. “I love you, Orion, and I would not change a damn thing. I love all of you, and I know we will find one another eventually.”

“I love you, too, Zeno.”

That’s the last sound I hear before pain overcomes me as stone pins me to the ground. I cough as dust fills my lungs. I can’t believe this is the end.

My loves, I will find you again one day. I swear it.

I suck in a breath as I come back into my body, my body vibrating with what I’ve just experienced. My eyes move from face to face as I realize I’m not the only one who just experienced that.

“What the fuck was that?” Ryder finally says.

Chloe’s elbows land on the table as she lays her face in her hands. “I think that was the first life we lived.”

“First life?” Sienna repeats, and I reach out to take her hand in mine as I drop my hold on Tristan’s hand.

Chloe takes a deep breath before sitting up in her chair. “I would have shared this with you eventually, but I wanted to find out more information

before I did so. I told you how I believe I was cursed. I actually had a flashback to this moment on Monday when Tali cast a spell to help me remember my past lives. I was shocked to see my apparent mates in that life wearing your faces. I saw hundreds of lifetimes before this one, but I wasn't able to hear the curse then. I'm sorry I didn't tell you. I've been having these kinds of dreams since I was a teenager. It just took me until recently to realize what their relevance was. Until Monday, I didn't know it had anything to do with the four of you. I should have told you then, I just... I needed more time."

"It's okay, little witch," Ryder says as he collapses into a chair. Tristan doing so much more gracefully in the chair beside him. "I'm sure it was a lot for you."

Sienna reaches for Chloe's hand once more, giving it a tight squeeze. "I promise we're not mad at you. I've been having flashes of lives I don't remember living the last twenty-something years if I had to guess."

"So have I," I admit. "But I never thought anything of it. I honestly thought it was just vivid dreams, but I can see now it wasn't."

Chloe turns to Ryder and Tristan, who both nod, and she scoffs. "Well, fuck."

Well, fuck, indeed.

It looks like today's meeting isn't going at all like I saw it going. Now, we just have to figure out what it all means.

Chapter Twenty

Chloe

I wander the aisles at the grocery store, not really knowing what I'm looking for. Hell, I'm not even sure why I'm here. I'm sure I needed to get something, but I have no idea what that might be.

I can't seem to get yesterday off my mind. Shortly after realizing that the five of us were all fated mates and that we'd lived a life together before this one, I'd excused myself and ran away. Cowardly? Maybe, but it was all just too much for me. The four of them have been blowing up our group chat and my phone ever since, but I've ignored them. My phone has been on silent since I walked out. I check it every once in a while to see if the girls need me for anything, but I avoid reading their messages or listening to their voicemails.

I know it's not their fault, but I just can't deal with it.

Glancing at my phone, I blink when I realize how late it is. What the hell? There's no way I've been wandering in the grocery store for four hours, is there?

Looking at my empty cart, I shake my head. Pushing it back up front, I abandon it and head for my car. I told my mom I'd be at her place at five, which is less than thirty minutes from now. I'm probably going to be late, but I know she won't hold it against me.

As I exit the store, I run straight into someone, and the only reason I don't end up on my ass is because they grab my arms to keep me upright.

“Chloe?” My head jerks up to see Noah standing there. “Are you okay? I didn’t see you there.”

I shake my head, forcing a smile to my lips. “No, it’s my fault. I wasn’t looking where I was going.”

“What’s going on, Chloe? You don’t look so hot.”

“Thanks, Noah,” I snort, trying to move past my ex. “That’s just what I needed to hear today.”

Noah sighs but doesn’t relinquish his hold on me. “That’s not what I meant, and you know it.”

I stop trying to break from his hold, looking away as a tear slips down my cheek.

“Clo, talk to me. Just because we’re not together anymore doesn’t mean that I don’t care about you. You look like you need someone to talk to, and here I am. It’s meant to be.”

I can’t help laughing at his words. Meant to be... I curse the gods and fate. Look what being meant to be has brought me in my life. Nothing but pain and loneliness. I shake my head, knowing that’s not true.

“I don’t want to bother you,” I tell him. “I’m sure you’re busy.”

“I always have time for a friend. Come on, let’s go to Serendripity and get a cup of coffee. If anything is going to make you feel better, it’s going to be coffee.” Noah grins, ducking down so I’m forced to meet his eye.

I smile, shaking my head again. “Yeah, okay. I guess a cup of coffee would be nice.”

“Why don’t we walk, and you can tell me what’s going on?” Noah offers me his arm, and I hesitate before sliding my arm into his. He pats my hand, turning to head toward the coffee shop.

When he offered to talk to me, I didn’t actually intend to tell him anything,

but as we walk, I spill it all. Finding my fated mates. Finding out we were cursed in a past life. Hell, I even tell him about the sexual encounters we've shared, which is probably entirely too much information, but once I start, I can't seem to stop.

As we walk into Serendipity, I fall silent, finally done with my story. "Oh, Chloe. You've been through the wringer over the last few weeks. Why don't you go find a table while I get our coffee?"

"Okay." I don't bother arguing; not even sure I have it in me at the moment. I sit at the first table I see, leaning my head against the window and watching as people walk by.

How did my life get so complicated? Why am I being punished thousands of years after apparently pissing off a Greek deity? How long can a curse last, anyway? Shouldn't it have an expiration date? Surely, Phthonos isn't still holding a grudge... right? I get that he's the god of envy, but this seems beyond petty.

"Here you go, Clo." Noah slides a coffee into my hands, and I greedily lift it to my mouth, sighing as it hits my tongue. "At least I got that right. If nothing else, at least I got you a coffee hit."

Glancing up at him, I give him a soft smile. "I'm glad I ran into you today. I didn't realize just how badly I needed to tell someone about what was going on."

"I'm surprised you didn't call up one of your coven girls. I thought the four of you did everything together."

I shrug. "We've all been a little busy. I didn't want to bother them."

Noah sighs. "We both know they wouldn't think it was a bother, but I get it. It's hard with the holidays just around the corner. But I'm glad I ran into you,

too.” He shoots me a soft smile, reaching across the table to take my hand in his. “What you just told me makes a lot of sense.”

“What do you mean?” I ask with a frown.

“It’s why you were never really able to love any of us, no matter how hard you tried. It was more than the fact that we were fated for someone else. A part of you knew that you had fated mates of your own, and you were waiting for them.”

I shake my head. “I wasn’t... I didn’t... I loved you, Noah.”

He shrugs. “There’s no reason to lie about it, Chloe. We’re both adults, and we’ve been over for a long time. I love Nadia, and it seems you’ve finally met your fated mates. You might not have remembered your first life, but some part of you knew that you’d already found love once, and you weren’t going to settle for less. Nor should you have. I get that the whole thing is complicated with past lives and curses, but you found your fated mates. Why focus on the negative?”

I shrug. “Because it’s easier.”

“Now, now. That’s not the Chloe we all know and love.”

I wrinkle my nose, but a smile is already forming. “I guess I never looked at it like that.”

Noah nods. “I figured you hadn’t, and one of the upsides to having fated mates? You don’t have to do it on your own anymore. In fact, you never have to do anything alone ever again... unless you want to, of course.”

“Of course,” I agree, taking another sip of coffee. “Thank you, Noah. I really did need to hear an outside perspective, and what you’ve said makes sense. Maybe I’ll stop avoiding them.”

“Eventually,” he adds for me with a laugh.

My phone rings, and I curse when I see it’s my mom. “Shit. I’m supposed

to be at my mom's right now."

He snorts. "You better get on it, then. Nobody likes it when the coven leader is upset—especially her own daughter."

I wave off his words. "She's not my coven leader anymore. Thanks again for this, Noah. I needed to hear that."

I stand up, grasping my coffee as I head for the door before answering the call. "I know I'm late, Mom. I ran into Noah, and he was giving me some much-needed advice. I'm heading for my car now, so I'll be there as soon as I can."

"Advice, you say?" Mom sounds intrigued, and that's not at all what I wanted.

"Yes, Mom. Advice. No, I don't want to talk about it. At least not yet."

Mom hums. "Okay, Clo. I'll let you get away with it for tonight, but we *will* be talking at the Yule gala. Do I make myself clear?"

I snort. "Yes, Mom. I understand, and you'll be happy to know I have dates for the gala. Four of them, in fact."

"This just keeps getting better and better." Mom sighs. "But I'll wait until Yule for you to tell me all about it."

"Thanks for letting it go. I know that's hard for you, but I do appreciate it. I'll see you in like twenty or thirty minutes, okay?"

"Okay, honey. I love you."

"Love you, too."

Hanging up my phone as I reach my car, I climb in and hurry out of the parking lot. It should be interesting having dinner with my mom and dads before sneaking off to her library. I know she said she'll let it go, but I know my mom. She's not great at letting things go. I guess I'll see if she's improved on that or not when I get there.

It can't be any more awkward than the conversation I just got out of, right?

Chapter Twenty-one

Sienna

I 'm almost done with my shift, grateful to have the early shift for once. When the clock hits six, I call out my goodbyes as I dig my phone out of my pocket. I let out a heavy sigh when I find that Chloe hasn't responded in the group chat.

Anythin

Landon

Not on my side.

Ryder

Ours neither.

This is getting out of hand. We've given her two days

We're supposed to attend Emberwitch's Yule gala with her in two
days. We need to talk to her

Landon

And how do you expect us to go about that when she's not answering our calls, darling?

I don't know

Ryder, can you and Tristan meet us at our place

Ryder

Yeah, we can do that. Just shoot me the address.

I drop the address into the chat as I slam into the locker room. On one hand, I get why Chloe is avoiding us, but on the other, I want to turn her perky little ass bright red—and that’s not even something I’m usually into. She’s just being such a brat, and I can’t stand it. I don’t know how, but we’re going to have to figure out a way to get through to our girl. We all need to get on the same page.

Shaking my head, I yank my purse out of my bag and head for the door. When I hear someone call out my name, I ignore them. I’m off until the new year, and there’s no way I’m letting anyone keep me here any longer. Not to mention, I really need to see Chloe. I’m going crazy while she’s avoiding us.

It’s kind of ridiculous how she has all four of us wrapped around her little finger after such a short period of time. We’d do anything for her—if she’d just let us. And I guess it’s not that short of a time since we knew her so many years ago. I’m still trying to wrap my head around it all. I don’t know much about reincarnation, but I’m sure my mother does. Or one of her other god friends. I might just have to reach out to her to see what she has to say on the matter. It’s unlikely she didn’t know I’d been reincarnated. I’ll have to find out why she would keep something like that from me.

As soon as I climb into my car, the phone starts ringing. I shouldn’t sigh when I see that it’s Landon, but I do. I’d been hoping it was Chloe. A little sad and pathetic? Definitely.

“Hey, honey.” Backing out of my spot, I start the drive home.

“Hey, darling. I wanted to check in with you. Your messages sounded a little... frantic.”

I laugh. “Yeah, I guess they probably did. I’m just worried about Chloe, and it’s driving me crazy that she’s cut us off. This isn’t just about her; it’s about all of us. Why won’t she let us be there for her?”

“Probably because she’s lived life after life alone. I know we’re just now getting our memories back slowly, but I’ve already seen lives where I’ve met you, Tristan, and/or Ryder in some capacity. The four of us have had each other in some lives, but she’s been alone in every single one of them. She hasn’t had anyone to rely on. We need to give her time.”

“We don’t exactly have the luxury of time with her old coven’s gala in two days, do we?”

“Fuck the gala,” he says, and I scoff.

“I’m fairly certain Chloe wouldn’t appreciate that sentiment.”

Landon laughs. “You’re probably right, but she’d have to speak to us first, wouldn’t she?”

“See! It bothers you too!”

“Of course, it bothers me, too.” Landon sighs. “But hey, at least you got our other two mates to come over to our house, right?”

Laughter bubbles out of me. “Yes. That was certainly my nefarious plan all along.”

“I love you, Sienna.”

“I love you, too, Landon. I’ll be home in like ten minutes. Did Ryder say how long they’d be?”

“Probably around the same time as you. It’s funny that all five of us live within a ten-minute drive of one another and have never met before.”

I hum my agreement. “Something tells me that’s because of the curse.”

“I think you might be right. Drive carefully, and I’ll see you in a bit.”

Landon ends the call, and I don’t bother turning on the radio. It won’t do

me any good—I don't have any energy to focus on anything but Chloe. We need to come up with a plan.



A few hours later, we have a plan—not a great plan, per se, but here we are regardless.

Straightening my shoulders, I rap my hand against the door before pressing the doorbell. There aren't any sounds from inside, but we know Chloe is here. I parked right behind her car in the driveway. To prevent any attempts of escape, I'd even parked diagonally. It might be going overboard just a bit, but what can I say? I'm not taking any chances.

When no one answers, I shake my head and turn to stare at the doorbell. "I know you can see us, Chloe. Pretending you're not home isn't going to work.

Your car is in the driveway, and I can hear your pretty kitties meowing up a storm. Even they're saying you can't hide from us any longer."

I can feel the guys at my back, holding their breath as we wait. Chloe doesn't say anything, but I smile when I hear the door unlocking.

"Good girl," I say, winking at the camera before pushing inside. Sasha is sitting just inside the door, but Poppy runs over to thread between our legs as we step inside. "Chloe?"

She doesn't answer, but Sasha stands up, walking down the hallway. I glance at the guys, who just shrug. When Poppy bounds off after her, I assume Chloe's familiars are leading us to her. When they stop outside of Chloe's half-closed door, I push past them.

My lips tug up at the corners when I realize Chloe is hiding under the covers. She's fucking precious—even when I'm annoyed with her.

"Chloe, why are you still hiding from us?"

There's a moment of silence before a muffled response comes. "I'm not hiding."

Ryder snickers, stepping around me and heading for the bed. He climbs on top of the huge bed, pulling down the covers so he can see her face as he hovers over her. "Little witch, you're definitely hiding."

Her bottom lip pokes out as she tries to grab the covers from his grasp, but Ryder refuses to relinquish his hold. "What are the four of you doing here, anyway?"

"We're here, sweet girl because you haven't been answering our calls or messages." Landon takes my hand, leading us over to the bed. The two of us climb up as Ryder rolls to Chloe's side. Tristan joins him a moment later. "You've been hiding from us, and that's not okay."

"I was feeling overwhelmed."

I snort. “And we weren’t? Come on, baby girl. You were scared, and you didn’t know how to deal with it. And that’s okay. But you can’t cut us out like that. Especially not when it’s something that affects all of us.”

“I’m sorry.”

Tristan blows out a puff of breath. “We don’t need you to apologize. We need you to promise you won’t do it again.”

She shakes her head. “I can’t promise that, but I can promise I’ll try.”

“That’s all we can ask for, sweet girl,” Landon says as he reaches over me to take her hand. “The four of us have been getting back memories of our past lives. We’ve been alone for a few of them, but not like you. In most of them, we’ve had at least one of the others with us.”

Chloe’s eyes squeeze shut, a tear escaping. “I’ve been getting back a lot, too. I was always so alone and lonely. The loneliness ate at me. I’ve lived nothing but miserable existences, no matter how hard I tried. It’s been a lot to deal with.”

“Why didn’t you come to us, sweets?” Tristan asks as he rests his chin on Ryder’s side.

She shrugs. “I’m scared.”

“Of what?” I can’t help asking her.

She turns her head to look at me and Landon for a moment before a shuddering breath leaves her. “That I’m going to accept this, and we’ll all be together and in love... Only for it to be ripped out of my hands again. I don’t think I can go through that again.”

All I can do is blink at her. I can’t tell her that’s not going to happen because I can’t guarantee that. We’re dealing with the gods, and they’ve always been fickle. I really need to reach out to my mom. I’ll do that tomorrow, I promise myself.

Not knowing what else to do, I pull Chloe into my arms and let her fall apart. At least she's talking to us now. We'll figure the rest out together.

Chapter Twenty-two



Ryder

“Little witch, I know you’re scared, but this is a good thing. The five of us are meant for one another, and I literally mean we’re all fated mates. I can’t say for sure that I love Landon and Sienna since I haven’t had a chance to get to know them, but I know it’s coming. I’ve loved Tristan for years, and you? You’re everything I could want in a mate.” I give her a tight smile. “I think the five of us should bond.”

Chloe scoffs. “Just like that. With barely any conversation between some of you?”

Sienna shrugs as her eyes meet mine. “When you know, you know. Right?”

“Yeah, I guess.” Chloe laughs. “This whole situation is crap. Utter crap. Not being fated to the four of you—nothing could make me happier. But being cursed and remembering our past lives... that I could’ve done without.”

Landon chuckles. “Trust me, sweet girl, we all agree.”

Chloe takes a moment to look between the four of us. “You’re sure about this? You want to bond all of us right now? Have sex with one another?”

“Why not?” Tristan tosses her a wink. “It’s going to end up there sometime. Why not now? If there’s a chance it can break the curse and help release some of your anxiousness from that? I say hell yes. Just because we’re all bonding doesn’t mean that we all have to have sex right this minute. We just all need to be in the room having some kind of sex.”

“Gods, baby, could you make it sound any less hot?” I pull Chloe from Sienna’s arms, rolling her until she’s facing me. “Personally, I’m down to fuck anyone that wants me to.”

Chloe giggles. “Of course you are. You’re a man whore.”

“Only for my mates.” I press a kiss to the tip of her nose. “Plus, you’re the one with the bed that’s big enough for all of us to fuck on. What does that make you?”

“Prepared,” Sienna offers up as she goes up on one elbow so she can look down on our girl.

“Yeah, that.” Chloe sticks her tongue out at me, making me smile.

“I love you, Chloe.”

Her face turns red as she ducks her head. “I love you, too, Ry.”

“Then let’s fuck.”

The five of us laugh together, and it brings the attention off of Chloe like I wanted.

“New rule,” I say, tapping Chloe on the nose. “The bed is a no-clothes zone—at least for tonight.”

Sienna reaches for her shirt, pulling it up and over her head before shooting me a wink. “Now that’s a rule I can get behind.”

Chloe rolls over at Sienna’s voice, and now she’s just blinking as Sienna slides her pants down, tossing them to the floor..

“Little witch, that means you too,” I tell her as I yank off my shirt and push my pants down my legs, leaving myself naked since I didn’t bother with underwear today.

Chloe rolls to her back, her face indignant until her eyes land on my hard cock. I stroke myself, biting my lip as I watch her eyes follow the movement.

“Little witch?”

“Oh, um...” Her eyes jump up to meet mine as she flushes. Finally, she reaches for her shirt and yanks it over her head.

Deciding she’s moving too slowly, I help her with her pants and panties while Sienna shuffles behind her and helps her take her bra off. When Sienna leans back, I take a moment to allow my eyes to roam over her gorgeous body. She and Chloe are built so completely different, but they’re both beautiful.

“Looking good, red.” I offer Sienna a wink, and she just grins as Landon and Tristan move to the bottom of the bed, having shed their clothes. “This could get awkward since this is new to all of us. How do we feel about me releasing my pheromones? They won’t hit any of you as hard as they would others since we’re mates, but it would allow you to let go of your inhibitions enough that I think we’ll be able to get through this without feeling awkward.”

“Yes, please.” Chloe grins up at me. “I definitely want to see what sex is like on those pheromones of yours.”

My eyes find our remaining three mates, who all give their nods of approval. Reaching into my well of power, I let it trickle out and build up slowly. I cut off the stream of power when Chloe throws herself at me while Tristan and Landon turn to kiss one another.

I push on Chloe’s shoulders until she’s lying back on the bed once more. “Come on, red. I want to see the two of you together.”

“Only if we get to see the three of you play,” Sienna says, gesturing to where her husband is making out with my lover.

“I think that can be arranged,” I tell her as she locks her eyes on Chloe, who is relaxing back on her elbows as she watches the guys kissing. At least until Sienna is hovering over her, and then her attention turns to her. “Tristan.

Landon. Get your asses over here. Our women want us to play with one another while they play.”

Landon pulls back from the kiss, blinking his eyes as he tries to focus. When he finds Sienna, now on her back with Chloe ducking between her legs, he grins. “Hell, yes. Let’s do that.”

They climb further up the bed to join me, and I pull Landon to me. I kiss him hard, my tongue probing his mouth. We groan together as our tongues tangle together, but when Sienna lets out a breathy moan, we break apart.

“Yeah, we’re going to need to move. I need to see this.” I move back slightly until I can settle against the headboard beside Sienna’s head, giving me the perfect view of Chloe working her tongue in and out of Sienna’s cunt.

“Baby girl, I think you lied to me. You’ve definitely done this before.”

Chloe pulls back to grin up at her, Sienna’s juices covering her lips and chin. “Nope. I just know what I like.” And with that nugget of information, she dives back toward to continue devouring that pretty pink pussy.

“Landon, come here. Tristan, I think Chloe is feeling a little desperate. Why don’t you fill up that dripping cunt?”

“Yes,” Tristan hisses as he moves up behind Chloe. He kisses down the side of her neck as his hands squeeze her ass. “Is that what you want, sweets? Do you want me to fill up your cunt with my cock?”

Chloe lifts her head, turning it so she can see Tristan. I can’t see her face, but when I hear her words, I imagine a feral grin on her face. “Tris, if your fat cock isn’t filling me in the next thirty seconds, then I’m going to find another cock to sit on.”

“Holy shit,” Landon breathes as he stops between my legs, his body facing me as he stares at our mates.

I hum, grasping his arm and dragging him toward me. “Come sit between

my legs with your back to my chest so you can watch them while I make you feel good.”

Landon’s head jerks in my direction, his eyes wide. He only hesitates for a moment before doing just what I asked. My cock nestles between his ass cheeks as he moves back as far as he can. I rest my head on his shoulder, wrapping my arms around him. I lay one flat on his stomach, loving the way the muscles tense and then release at my touch. My other hand circles his dick, which pulls a hiss from him.

I kiss his neck, sucking and then laving the same spot over and over again as I stroke his massive cock. One thing is for sure, not a damn one of us is going to be disappointed by the cocks in our mate group—we’re all packing.

Chloe’s moans have me turning my attention back to them. I lick my lips as I watch Tristan sink into Chloe, who’s laid her head on Sienna’s thigh while Sienna runs her hands through Chloe’s hair.

“How does his cock feel?” Sienna asks. “Is he stretching you so well? He’s got a big cock. I was definitely looking. Once you make me come, I plan to be filled up with a cock, too. Whose cock do you think I should take first?”

“Mmmmm...so good,” Chloe moans as Tristan’s hips meet her ass. “Definitely Ryder first. I’m sure you’ve been thinking about riding that incubus cock just as much as me. He says there are surprises too.”

“Mmmmm...I do like a good surprise,” Sienna purrs, her attention to me. “Mmmm, looks like Ryder is making my husband feel good right now.”

Landon hums his agreement, his hips starting to move to meet my strokes. He must be getting close. Perfect.

“Chloe, I think you owe your mate an orgasm. Baby, any time she stops eating out Sienna, you stop moving.”

Tristan groans. “I love when you get all alpha male on me, Ry. Sorry,

sweets. I want that man's cock up my ass tonight, and that won't happen if I don't listen."

Chloe flips me off as she turns her attention back to Sienna's pussy.

"Landon, are you close?"

He snorts. "Much closer than I should be, but it won't take long for me to get it back up again."

"Good. We like short refractory times in this group." I laugh. "We're going to turn and kneel beside Sienna. I want you to cover her with your cum. I think she'll look beautiful wearing it."

Landon curses and climbs to his knees. I move with him, never stopping my strokes. Sienna's eyes meet mine, and I smirk. Her eyes are glazed over, and her mouth drops open as she pants and moans. She's just as close as Landon is to coming.

I nibble on Landon's earlobe, dropping my voice to what Tristan calls my bedroom voice when I tell him, "Come for me, Landon. Cover your wife with your hot cum while she comes."

"Fuck," Landon curses, his hips pistoning before he's groaning. He comes hard enough that I have to hold him up, and with the first spurt of cum that hits Sienna's chest, she tumbles over the edge. She calls out Chloe's name as she grinds against our girl's face.

"Beautiful, just beautiful," I murmur as I milk Landon's cock, watching as it splashes over Sienna's tits and face. "So hot."

Landon pushes away my hand, and I move back to my position, leaning against the headboard as he crawls to an empty spot before collapsing. My eyes fall to Chloe as she finally sits up, her face soaked with Sienna's release. She swipes her fingers across her face, collecting the juices there before sliding her fingers into her mouth and moaning.

“You taste so fucking good, Sienna.” It’s only then that she notices the cum covering Sienna. “Oops, you got dirty. Let me help you clean up.”

I reach out to stop her, shaking my head. “No way, little witch. I worked hard for that cum, and I’m not sharing.”

“That’s hot, and I’m not complaining,” Chloe responds before moaning when Tristan thrusts into her harder, drawing her attention back to him.

“Come here, red.” I crook my finger at Sienna and pat my lap. “You’ve got a dick to ride, and I have some cum to lick up.”

Sienna scrambles onto her knees and moves to straddle me. I expect a little foreplay, but she reaches between us and notches my cock at her entrance before sliding down my length. We moan together, and once she’s fully seated, she leans over to kiss me. I hum into the kiss, lapping up the cum that hit her lips before pulling back.

“Ride me.”

Sienna smirks but lays her hands behind her so her tits are arched toward me, and she begins to rise on my cock before dropping back down. I lean forward, sucking her nipple into my mouth and lapping the cum off. She gasps but keeps moving. As much as I’d love to keep sucking on her tits, there’s more cum for me to lick up. It doesn’t take long for me to clean her up, and when Chloe lets out a lascivious moan, my head snaps toward her.

I bite my lip as I watch Landon and Tristan holding her between them, working her up and down their cocks—which are both jammed into her wet cunt. Fuck, that has to feel amazing.

“Okay, red, you’re going to want to see this. Time to turn around.” I help Sienna spin around, and I know the moment her eyes land on them, her pussy clamping down on me. “Get to riding, Sienna.”

She doesn’t need any further prompting as she begins to bounce on my

cock. My hand snakes around, rubbing her clit. As much as I'd love to make sure she comes a few times before I do, I can already feel my orgasm sneaking up on me. It's just too much watching the three of them while Sienna rides me.

Chloe's head falls back, her mouth falling open on a silent scream as she comes. I pinch Sienna's clit, sending her over the edge and taking me with her. My hands move to her hips as I thrust into her from below before stilling as I coat her insides with my cum.

Sienna climbs off of me, turning to kiss me dirtily. "Thanks for the ride, cowboy. I enjoyed that, but I didn't feel any surprises."

I laugh, waving my hand in the direction of the other three. "Blame them. They distracted me. Next time, I promise."

"I'll hold you to that." Sienna winks before crawling across the bed, giving me the perfect view of my cum leaking out of her pussy.

Gods, why is that so hot?

Even hotter? When she lifts up to her knees beside Chloe. She grabs the other woman's hand, pushing her thumb and pinky down before leading it to her pussy. "Chloe, I need you to push Ryder's cum back inside me."

Chloe's eyes go wide, but she happily begins fucking Sienna on her fingers. Sienna's own fingers slide between her and Landon, easily finding Chloe's clit. Within seconds, they're both exploding again.

"Tristan, have you still not come?" I ask him with a frown. How is it my angel mate lasted longer than me?

He shoots me a wink. "Too many holes I want to fill." I snort as he slaps Chloe's ass.

"Does that mean it's my turn for a man sandwich?" Sienna asks, and Chloe immediately starts nodding.

“I’m gonna go ride the incubus dick.”

Chloe is obviously dick and pussy drunk—not that I mind. I definitely want to bury my cock in her pussy.

“Alright, little witch, come and get my cock,” I tease her as Tristan and Landon pull out of her, causing her to whimper at the loss. I move over to her, pulling her into my arms so the guys can move to surround Sienna. I lower us to the bed with her back pressed against my chest before hooking her leg over the top of mine. My cock slides against her cunt, and she lets out a long, loud moan.

With a grin, I thrust into her and bury myself deep. “Are you ready, Chloe?”

“Ready for what?” she pants.

“For your surprise, of course.” I don’t wait for her to answer, calling on my incubus power once more, and my dick begins to vibrate inside of her.

“Oh, my gods!!!” she screams, her nails digging into my arm that I’ve wrapped across her belly.

Three heads snap toward us, and I grunt as Chloe’s pussy clamps down on me. A groan escapes me as I realize Landon has taken Sienna’s ass while Tristan has slid into her cunt.

Tristan smirks. “Did his cock just start vibrating, sweets? Doesn’t it feel amazing? He can get you off without ever moving.”

Sienna’s jaw drops. “You have a vibrating dick, and you didn’t use it on me? I’m hurt.”

“Next time, red.”

I begin moving in and out of Chloe as she writhes in my arms. I wring one, then two orgasms out of her as the guys do the same to Sienna.

“Call on your magic,” I call out to all of them. “It’s time.”

I feel the magic rising in the air around us as Landon's teeth settle over Sienna's neck.

I pick up my pace, fucking in and out of Chloe as I chase my orgasm. I'm not worried about her coming again—her pussy is already fluttering around me. I feel my magic reaching for the others', and with one last thrust, I come apart. My dick thickens before my cum spills from me and into Chloe. My orgasm sets off hers, and it seems to set off the others. We all come as our magic twines together all around us.

My eyes find Landon, who is licking the wound on Sienna's neck as it closes. As our magic bonds, our orgasms go on and on until we collapse on the bed, all panting.

“Well, shit. That was even better than I imagined,” Chloe says, and it sends all of us into laughter.

Tristan climbs off the bed, going into the bathroom, and coming back with damp towels. He throws one at me so I can clean up Chloe while he takes care of Sienna.

“Mmmmm... thank you,” Chloe murmurs, already half asleep. “I need to pee and take a shower before bed, but I can't move. One of you is going to have to take care of me.”

I laugh, her body shaking with it. “We've got you, little witch, don't you worry.”

And we do. We manage to get both women to use the bathroom before we climb into Chloe's insanely large shower. The girls are nodding off as we watch one another, but we make it as fast as we can before we all climb into the bed naked.

This is what I've been waiting for. Peace settles over me as I let sleep pull me under.

Chapter Twenty-three



Chloe

After my mates leave, I find myself sitting on the couch, staring off into space. We bonded last night, each and every one of us. And yet, I don't think the curse has been broken. I found a spell in one of the books in my mom's library that will allow me to find out if it's broken, but I'm afraid to try it. I'm afraid of what it'll reveal.

Which is why I didn't mention it to them last night or this morning. I know I shouldn't keep things from them, but I didn't want to get their hopes up. I figure it'll be better to find out for sure if we're still cursed before I let them know. I just can't seem to get myself to cast the damn spell.

Glancing at my phone, I wonder if I should call the girls. I know Tali and Belle are probably working, and I hate to bother them... but I don't think I can do this alone. And isn't that the point of having a coven, so I *don't* have to do things like this by myself?

I go to our group chat, hit the video call button, and wait for my besties to answer.

Belle is the first to appear on the screen, a worried look on her face. "Clo? Is everything okay?"

"I promise I'll tell you all about it when the others pick up."

Belle nods, worry still lining her pretty face.

"What's up, bitches? I mean, witches?" Laoise cackles as she pops up on the screen. "It's been a hot minute since anyone has called a video chat meeting."

Tali's face pops up on the screen. "Hi, ladies. What's going on?"

"Hey, ladies. Thank you for picking up. I'm kind of freaking out, and I need the three of you to talk me down." I shake my head.

"What's going on, Chloe? What can we do?" Belle asks, and I see someone walk behind her, pausing to press a kiss to the top of her head. I don't know which of her men it is, but it brings a smile to my face. I love that Belle has met men who cherish her as she should be.

"We all know I've been freaking out a bit about the whole fated mates and past lives." I pause when all three of them hum their agreement. "Well, I've been avoiding said mates, and let's just say they weren't very happy about it. They showed up at my door last night, demanding answers. Then we all slept together and bonded?"

"Why did you phrase that like it's a question?" Tali asks, eyes narrowing.

I laugh. "There's definitely no question about it. I felt all the bonds snap into place. Not just between me and them, but between all of us. It was insane."

"I kind of want to know how the group sex went," Laoise offers, shrugging her shoulders when Belle and Tali glare at her. "Sorry, not sorry. I'm never going to be one that doesn't want to hear about the sex. But seriously, Clo, that's amazing. I'm so happy for you."

"Thank you. Unfortunately, that's not why I called." I bite my lip, glancing over at the spell beside me. "I don't think the curse was broken. I was able to find a spell in one of the books at my mom's place, but I'm afraid to do it. I didn't even mention to everyone that I don't think it's broken. Please don't start with me about hiding things. I'll tell them as soon as I know for sure, but right now, it's just a feeling in my gut."

Tali nods. "And you're afraid to find out if you're right or not?"

I grimace, nodding. “Exactly. I want it to be broken, but if bonding didn’t break it, then what the hell are we supposed to do? I can’t handle losing them again. The first time was hard enough, and then all the lives I had to live without them? I don’t know what changed in this life that allowed us to find one another, but I’m so grateful. And so worried that the rug is going to be pulled out from underneath us.”

“That makes sense,” Belle says softly. “But wouldn’t it be better to know for sure?”

“Of course it would. That’s why I called the three of you. I just need you with me while I cast the spell.”

“We’re here, and we’ll be here to support you no matter what the spell reveals,” Laoise swears.

I nod once more, taking a deep breath as I lift the sheet so I can read it. I read the words, moving my hand in the gestures required, and then wait.

When nothing happens, Tali’s the first to speak up. “How are you supposed to know if you’re still cursed or not?”

“It takes a few minutes, but once it’s done scanning, there will be an aura-like color that forms around me. Red for cursed and white for not cursed.”

The four of us sit in silence, and when I see a red forming around me, my tears spill over. “It didn’t work. I’m still cursed. What do I do now?”

“Now you talk to your mates,” Belle says, more forcefully than I would’ve expected. “They deserve to know, and they’ll be there for you. That’ll be five people to try to come up with your next move. Plus, the three of us. We’ll do anything we can to help you.”

“I know you’re right, but that really isn’t a conversation I want to have after the amazing night we had. But I’m going to do it. Thanks, babes, for sitting with me while I did the spell. I couldn’t do it by myself.”

All three of them say their goodbyes, and I end the call. Poppy and Sasha hop onto the couch beside me. Poppy immediately starts rubbing against me while Sasha sits just out of reach.

Are you okay, Chloe? I'm surprised it's Sasha who asks the question.

"I don't know if okay is the right word. I'm devastated that bonding didn't break the curse, but Belle is right. I have to tell them, and then we can figure it out together."

That's very logical. I'm glad you've reached this conclusion on your own. Sasha's tail slashes through the air as she stares at me for another moment, then jumps off the couch.

She was worried about you. She hides it behind her attitude, but she truly cares for you, Chloe. Both of us do. If there's anything we can do to help you, just let us know. With one last rub of her head against my hand, Poppy follows Sasha.

I bury my face in my hands, taking a moment to freak out by myself before calling my mates. Once I've cried the tears I needed to release, I pick my phone back up and start a video call.

Sienna's the first one to hop on. "Baby girl, is everything okay?"

"Is Landon with you, or will he be jumping on his phone?" I don't answer her question because I'm not going to repeat this over and over again to each of my mates. I've already had to explain it to my best witches. I can only do this once more. That might make me weak, but honestly? I don't care.

"I'm here, sweet girl." Landon's face hovers over Sienna's shoulder for a moment before he moves around to sit beside her.

Tristan is the next to pick up, and I can already see Ryder leaning over his shoulder. "Hey, sweets. What's up?"

"Okay, now that I have all of you on the phone, I have something to tell

you.” I sigh. “Bonding didn’t break our curse. I cast a spell to look for curses, and I’m still cursed. Since we were part of the same curse, that means all of you are as well. I... I don’t know what to do next.”

“That’s okay, little witch.” Ryder’s smile is sad. “You don’t need to figure it out. That’s on all of us to figure it out.”

I nod. “I’m glad. I won’t lose the four of you again—I *can’t* lose you again. I know it’s entirely too soon to say this, but I love you—all of you—and losing you would break me. I was barely able to handle the memories of losing you the first time. Actually losing you? I can’t.”

“First, I can’t believe you told us you love us for the first time over video call,” Ryder says with a smirk. “But we love you, too. Next time, we’re doing this in person.”

All five of us chuckle before growing serious once more.

“We feel the same, baby girl,” Sienna assures me while Landon nods. “I’m going to reach out to my mother to see what she can tell me.”

“I still have some angel friends who will speak to me. Most of them refused to after I took a demon as a mate, but fuck them.” Tristan shakes his head. “I’ll see if any of them have any ideas.”

Ryder presses a kiss to Tristan’s cheek. “I’ll check the paranormal dark web to see if anyone has any ideas.”

Landon shrugs. “I guess I’ll just google it? I don’t know that I know anyone who might have any ideas, but I’ll see what I can do.”

I feel like an enormous weight has been lifted off of me with their words. I’m not alone anymore. I have the four of them to rely on. They can help me carry my burdens.

“Thank you, all of you. My mom expects me to fill her in at her coven’s Yule gala, so she might have some ideas.”

“In the meantime,” Sienna says, her eyes staying on me, “do you want us to come over?”

A smile slides across my lips. “As amazing as that would be, I think I need some time on my own.”

“Okay, sweets,” Tristan agrees, blowing me a kiss. “We’re going to get to work on this. Why don’t you just take the day to relax, or at least attempt to?”

“That does sound nice. I’ll try. Thank you. Love you!”

They all call out their own I love yous and goodbyes, and I lie back on the couch. Poppy and Sasha join me a minute later, kneading at me and the couch until they’ve made their perfect spots. If you would’ve asked me just an hour ago, I’d have told you I was too anxious to sleep, but after speaking with my besties and then my mates, I fall right to sleep.

Chapter Twenty-four



Tristan

Ryder and I have managed to find out absolutely nothing about how to break a curse from an envy god. Sienna was going to speak with Brigid today, but she hasn't told us if her mom was able to provide her with any information. She'll probably tell us when we meet at Chloe's place.

Tonight is the first night of Yule and, therefore, the night of Emberwitch Coven's Yule gala. Per Chloe's instructions, we're wearing tuxedos—both in black because it's classic and what we had in the closet. I expect Landon to be wearing the same, but it's Sienna and Chloe who I'm most looking forward to seeing. Not that I don't love a man in a tux, but something tells me both women are going to knock us on our asses with their beauty.

Sticking my head into the bathroom, a smile blooms as I watch Ryder trying to tie his bow tie. It's a skill he's always struggled with, and no matter how many times I teach him how to do it, he always fails.

"Let me get that, Ry." I push his hands away as he turns to me and quickly ties it. "All better."

Ryder chuckles as he wraps an arm around me and tugs at me until I'm flush against his body. "Thank the gods I met you, baby, because a bow tie will always be the bane of my existence."

"Now you have Landon, Sienna, and Chloe too. Maybe one or more of them can also tie a bow tie."

"No, I think I'll leave that for you. It can be our thing." Ryder leans down and brushes his lips against mine, but when he tries to deepen the kiss, I pull

away with a groan.

“Nope. Can’t get that started. We actually need to get going so we can pick up the others.”

Ryder pouts for a second before perking up. “Yeah, I definitely want to see the three of them all dressed up. If they look even half as sexy as you, I’ll be the luckiest man at the gala.”

I shake my head, shoving him into the bedroom. “Just get your shoes on and close that pretty mouth of yours before it gets you into trouble.”

Ryder shoots me a wink but, thankfully, listens to me. Not bothering to wait for him, I head for the front door. We’ve pulled out our fancy wool coats for the event, and I pull mine on as I remotely start the SUV. Ryder joins me a moment later, and the two of us head for the car.

We make the short drive to Chloe’s house, and when I check my phone, I see that Landon and Sienna have already arrived.

Sienna

We're in the living room. Chloe wants to make a grand entrance and refuses to come out until you get here.

Landon

Just in case you couldn't read between the lines, she's saying get your asses here now.

Ryder

I guess it's a good thing we just pulled up then.

Chloe

There's nothing wrong with wanting to make a grand entrance.

You're right, sweets. There's not a damn thing wrong with

I, for one, am looking forward to your grand entrance.

Ryder

Kiss ass.

Rolling my eyes at Ryder through the windshield, I climb out of the car, and the two of us make our way to the front door. It swings open just before I reach for the handle, revealing a grinning Landon.

“Well, damn, boys. The two of you clean up really well.” Landon lets out a low whistle, heat building in his eyes as they move between me and Ryder. I bite my lip when his tongue swipes out across his lips.

Ryder snorts. “The two of you might be content with just looking, but I’m not.”

Landon looks confused up until the moment Ryder tugs him into his arms and kisses the shit out of him. Grinning, I push up against Landon’s back, and press kisses down his neck. My cock is already half-hard as I grind against his ass. Landon breaks the kiss, turning his head to capture my lips.

For just a moment, I feel Ryder’s pheromones swirling in the air around us before he gets them back under control. I grin into the kiss, especially when I hear the telling sounds of heels making their way toward us.

“I damn well better be getting that kind of greeting, too,” Sienna purrs.

I pull back from Landon, brush my thumb across his bottom lip, and smile. My eyes lift to Ryder, who is looking a little starstruck. Spinning on my heel, I find the reason for his awe.

Sienna looks divine. She might be a demigod, but she looks every bit a goddess tonight. Her rich red hair is pulled back in what I know is a chignon. I’m sure you’re wondering why I know this, but it’s simple, really. I’ve been alive for hundreds of years in this lifetime. I’ve tried just about everything under the sun—even being a hairdresser at one point.

Her strapless dress is a dark hunter green with silver accents that hugs her body. It dips in the front, revealing more of her modest cleavage. She might not have tits like our Chloe girl, but that doesn't mean they aren't amazing in their own way. It nips in at her waist, staying tight over her hips until the dress hits her mid-thighs. From there, it flares out to where it rests on the floor. She's wearing heels, making her taller than Landon and almost as tall as me and Ryder. Overall, she just takes my breath away.

I move toward her while Ryder still seems incapable of moving or speaking. I take her hand, turning her so I can get the whole effect. I bite my lip when I realize the back of the dress laces up like a corset top. I've always been a sucker for a corset top—even when they weren't being used purely for fashion. What can I say? They make tits look amazing.

"My dear, you're ravishing," I tell her as I swoop in for a kiss. Sienna's hand rests on my chest as our tongues duel—at least until Ryder pushes me out of the way.

"*Bella*, you're magnificent. And this dress?" Ryder kisses his fingers, ignoring the glare I'm sending his way. He leans in close as if he's going to whisper in Sienna's ear, but he speaks loud enough that Landon and I can both hear him. "The only place it would look better is on my bedroom floor."

"Our bedroom floor," I cut in, but he just ignores me as he swoops Sienna backward and kisses the hell out of her.

Landon sighs as he moves to my side. "He's always going to outdo us, isn't he?"

I snort. "One hundred percent, every time."

I pull my phone out of my pocket when I hear it go off, laughing at the message I find in the chat.

Chloe

You do remember that I have a doorbell camera, don't you?

If the four of you are done making out, I'm ready to make my entrance.

“Chloe says it's time to stop making out so she can make her entrance.”

Ryder pulls Sienna into an upright position before turning to me, his confusion clear. “How...”

“Doorbell camera,” Sienna offers, and I nod. “Come on. I know we all want to see how hot our girl looks.”

The four of us pile into the foyer, staring down the hallway as we wait for her to appear. My phone dings again, and all four of us pull out our phones.

Chloe

Wait in the living room.

You all are terrible listeners.

I chuckle, grabbing Landon's and Sienna's hands and lead them into the living room. Sienna manages to grab Ryder's hand, completing our foursome. I consider sitting down, but decide against it since we'll be leaving shortly. Instead, I throw an arm around both Landon and Sienna, pulling them snugly against my sides. The five of us have managed to spend a lot of time together over the last few days, and it's really helped us get to know one another.

Knowing that we're mates and knowing our mates are two very different things. Just as loving the idea of someone is completely different from loving them. I know I love Sienna and Ryder because they're my mates, but I'm beginning to love the people they are as well. I don't doubt that our polycule will be unbreakable in just a short time.

I hear the sound of heels once more, and because Sienna is standing in my arms, that only means one thing—Chloe is making her way out to us. My mouth falls open when she appears in the doorway, absolutely taking my breath away.

Her black bob is pulled back from her face with a comb, and her makeup is on point, but it's the dress that makes her appear ethereal. It's strapless like Sienna's, but that's where the similarities end. The top of the dress is a dark blue that fades to white at the very bottom of the dress. It's fitted to her hips where a silver tulle overskirt begins. Painted on the top of the dress and continuing onto the overskirt are gold swirls.

“So?” Chloe asks as she spins, and I see that the back of her dress laces up as well.

Undressing our women tonight is going to be fun, that's for sure.

Sienna's the first one to find her words as she rushes over to Chloe, tilting our much shorter mate's head backward until their eyes meet. "You're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen, and that's saying a lot since I know actual goddesses. Not a damn one of them holds a candle to you. And I adore this dress."

"Me?" Chloe shakes her head. "Look at you. You're the one who looks like a goddess."

Sienna laughs as she leans down to kiss Chloe. It's done and over much too soon for my tastes, but it's what finally gets the three of us moving toward them. Once we've all shared our kisses and compliments, Chloe's phone dings.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you. My mom sent a limo for us, and it's waiting outside."

"A limo? Really?" I scoff. "Why couldn't we just take one of our cars?"

Chloe giggles. "Because I'm the coven leader's daughter, even if I'm no longer in the coven. I'm meant to make an entrance—especially since I've finally met my mates. Mom can't wait to meet the four of you and show off her daughter's mates."

"Meeting the parents... that usually doesn't go well for me," Ryder admits, causing Chloe to grin up at him.

"Mom's going to love you. I promise. She's going to love all of you because you love me, and you make me happy. Plus, you're all hot, so don't be disturbed if she hits on you. It's just what she does."

Landon blinks at her. "Your mom is going to hit on us?"

Chloe shrugs as if it's no big deal. "Yeah, more than likely. She probably won't even realize she's doing it, so don't worry about it."

I glance at Ryder, who just shrugs. "Okay, sweets. Whatever you say. Why

don't we go take our fancy ride to your mom's estate, then?"

"Just think. We can all drink, and get sloshed if we want because we don't have to drive," Chloe says as I slip my arm over her shoulders. She grins up at me as Sienna links their hands together, and then the five of us head outside and into the limo.

I'm really not sure what to expect from this Yule gala, but something tells me it'll be anything but boring.

Chapter Twenty-five



Chloe

As the limo comes to a stop outside of Mom's estate, I realize she's arranged for the five of us to arrive late. Four heads turn in my direction as I sigh.

"What's up, baby girl?"

I squeeze Sienna's hand as the driver comes around to open the door. "Mom told me the wrong time, so we could make a dramatic entrance. Everyone else is already here."

"That's okay, little witch," Ryder assures me. "All heads would be turning our way, regardless."

Gods, I love the four of them so much. I lay my hand in the driver's and allow him to help me from the car before he does the same with Sienna. Ryder, Landon, and Tristan all climb out on their own before moving to surround me and Sienna.

"So what's the plan, sweet girl?" Landon asks, reaching up to cup my face, his thumb trailing up and down my cheekbone.

"The plan is that since I'm the coven leader's daughter, I'll enter one step in front of you, and then the four of you will trail me." I shake my head. "But I don't like that plan. None of us are better than the other. I want us to enter together, arm in arm. Ryder and Tristan, you'll be on the outside of Sienna and I. Landon, you're the lucky man that gets to stand between the two of us."

Landon grins down at me. "The luckiest man alive."

“Why can’t I be in the middle?” Ryder grumbles, and we all laugh. Our incubus definitely prefers to be the center of attention, but he does as I ask, and the five of us link arms as we start up the stairs.

I blow by the men standing at the doors and head for the ballroom. Mom loves her entrances, so she made sure to build our ballroom in what’s technically the basement, but the only way to enter is from the main floor—meaning that everyone’s eyes will be on us as we descend the stairs into the ballroom.

My mom’s assistant stops in front of us just before we reach the doors, her eyes scanning my mates before turning back to me. “I’m so glad you made it, Chloe. Your mother will be pleased with your entrance. The party started almost an hour ago, so you’re sure to make quite the splash with your new mates. You know they’re supposed to enter behind you, don’t you?”

“Thank you, Jennifer, but I don’t care what we’re supposed to do. When have I ever done anything that I’m supposed to?”

“Never,” Jennifer says with a laugh. “Let me send your mom a message just to let her know that you’re here. Then you may enter however you like.”

We share smiles as she mumbles under her breath, casting a spell to carry a message to my mom. When she turns her attention back to us, I know it’s time.

“Have fun, Chloe, and I’m really glad that you finally found your mates. You deserve every happiness coming your way.”

Before I can thank her again, Jennifer scurries away. The five of us walk to the double doors before us as I cast a spell.

“Le líonadh.”

The door swings open, allowing us access. Music and the sounds of people talking reach my ears. Taking a deep breath, I lead my mates into the

ballroom and down the stairs.

I can tell the moment that we're spotted as silence rolls throughout the room. All eyes are on us, but I don't bother looking at them as my eyes seek out my parents. I can't help smiling when I find them with smiles on their faces and pride in their eyes. Once we reach the bottom of the stairs, the crowd parts for us, allowing us to walk to my parents with ease.

"There's my baby," Mom squeals, swooping in to pull me from my mates' arms into hers. There's a moment where Ryder resists relinquishing his hold on me, but eventually, he releases me.

My dads follow at a slower pace but sweep me into their arms as well.

"And these are the mates?" Mom asks as my dads step back behind her. They defer to Mom in all things.

"Yes, Mom. These are my mates. Ryder King, incubus. Tristan Beckett, angel. Landon and Sienna Hayes, vampire and demigod. Mates, this is my mom, Christina Cadogen."

Mom takes one look at Sienna and nods, a smile forming on her lips. "You're a daughter of Brigid?"

Sienna inclines her head to my mom. "I am."

"You have her beauty and that red hair. My daughter is one lucky witch."

"No, it's us who are the lucky ones," Landon tells her, stepping forward to take her hand and lift it to his lips. "It's wonderful to make your acquaintance."

"And yours," Mom murmurs, smirking at me.

I just roll my eyes. "Go ahead, Mom. Get it out of your system. Flirt with all of them before I tell you what you want to know."

My dads give me amused smiles, and I make a note to introduce my mates to them after speaking with Mom. I would've done so now, but I knew Mom

wouldn't be able to resist. They've been with my mom long enough to know how she is.

"Who said anything about flirting with your mates?" she asks, but she's already fluttering her eyelashes in Tristan's and Ryder's direction. "I've never met an angel and an incubus in the flesh before. I hear incubi pack quite the punch."

Ryder laughs, reaching out to take Mom's hand in his. "We do... if we haven't already met our mate or mates, which I have. And look at them—all four of them are gorgeous. They're the only ones who will get my pheromones from here on out."

Mom squeals again. "Baby!!! You found your perfect polycule! I'm so happy for you. And your incubus is quite charming. Maybe I need to meet an incubus of my own."

I sigh. "Okay, Mom. How about I introduce my mates to my dads, and then I can talk to you? How's that sound?"

"I guess that's fine." Mom sticks out her bottom lip, and I have to bite back another sigh. She's acting put out, but I know if I don't tell her what's going on now, she'll just get annoyed I didn't tell her sooner. I love my mom with all of my heart, and I know she loves me, but she's slightly—a LOT—self-centered. Which is fine, even if it's tiring at times like this.

Shaking my head, I drag my mates over to my dads and just manage to get them introduced before Mom pulls me away from them.

"Now, darling child of mine, it's time for you to spill. What's going on, and why did you need access to my library?"

Glancing around, I shake my head. "Is there somewhere quieter we can talk?"

Mom waves her hand in the air before leading me to a secret door. I had no

idea it was there before this moment, and then we step into a small room with couches and a few armchairs.

“How?”

Mom just laughs. “I had them put in throughout the castle. Sometimes I just get tired of dealing with people, and I need to step away. By the way, Chloe, this dress? It’s magnificent and looks amazing on you.”

Shaking my head, I lower myself onto one of the couches as Mom lounges on the one across from me. “Thanks, Mom. I appreciate it. It’s kind of nice to have a reason to dress up.”

“Remember how I’d joke about my love life being cursed?” I wait for her nod before continuing, “It turns out I was right. This isn’t my first life, and my mates? I’ve loved them before.”

“Oh, how romantic!” Mom lays her hands on her chest, practically swooning.

“Not quite. Our first life was a long, long time ago. The five of us were together and so happy, but someone else wasn’t happy about it. Have you heard of Phthonos before?”

Mom shakes her head. “Not that I can recall.”

“He’s the Greek god of envy, and he wanted Ryder. When Ryder refused him because he wanted to remain true to his mates, Phthonos wasn’t happy about it. He came into our home and cursed us before bringing our home crashing down around us and killing us.” I ignore my mom’s gasp, but take another deep breath to steady myself. “The four of them often found one another in their lives, but they’re long-lived species, unlike witches. It’s never been more than three of them in a life but for me... I was always alone, and without them, I couldn’t find happiness. I died young in most of my

lives. The various causes were all different, but part of the reason was my broken heart. Loneliness is all I could feel.

“Those dreams I’ve had since I was a teen? They were flashes of past lives. It wasn’t until last week that I was able to remember my first life, and that’s only because Tali found a spell to perform. Then, when the five of us were together for the very first time, all connected to one another by touch, we were sent back. We saw how Phthonos cursed us and lived through our deaths. He cursed us until we found one another and said maybe he’d lift the curse if we managed to do that. This is the first time we have, but when the five of us bonded our magic—“

“Had an orgy, you mean.” Mom grins as my face flushes red.

I shake my head. “No, Mom. I mean, when we bonded our magic together. I am *not* discussing our sex life with you. Fuck.”

“Calm down, Chloe. It’s just sex. It’s completely natural. Your fathers and I —“

“Nope. Nuh-uh. You can stop right there,” I cut her off. “I absolutely don’t want to hear about my parents’ sex life, and don’t you want to hear the rest of the story?”

Mom waves her hand in the air again. “Yes, yes. Continue with your story.”

“The curse wasn’t lifted. We’re still cursed.”

Mom’s face falls. “No, baby, really?”

“Unfortunately, yes. I was hoping you might have some ideas? We’ve been trying to find ways to break it, but nothing so far. Brigid gave Sienna a vial of something gold but wouldn’t even tell her what it was—let alone what we were supposed to do with it. The gods are an odd bunch.”

Mom nods. “That they are. I’m fairly certain I’ve seen a ritual for summoning a god. Give me a moment.”

I wait as Mom's eyes close, her forehead burrowing. She has a photographic memory, but the way she keeps track of things inside her mind is like the old card catalog system they used to use in libraries. She doesn't have instant recall, but it'll only take her a few moments to locate it.

"Yes, there it is." Mom's eyes pop open, and she calls a piece of paper and pen to her before scribbling it down for me. "Some of these ingredients will be hard for you to find, but I think I might know what that vial is that Brigid gave to your Sienna."

"Oh?" I move to sit beside her, finding the ingredient that she's pointing to. "God's essence? What is that?"

Mom smiles softly. "It means that Brigid took a part of her powers, her immortality, and gave it to her daughter. She must've known what the five of you would have to do. Convincing a god to give up some of the essence isn't easy, and it usually comes with a high price for those seeking it out."

I take the paper from her, reading over it and realizing she's correct about getting some of these ingredients. "Thank you, Mom. It means the world to me that you were able to help me."

"I know that I'm self-centered most of the time, but I do love you and your fathers. I want nothing more than for you to be happy. Your mates do that. Even after only seeing the five of you together for a short period of time, I could see that." Mom squeezes my hand. "Now, let's get back out to the party. We'll have dinner served, and then once the dancing starts, you can sneak out. The sooner you can complete the ritual, the better."

I throw my arms around her, fighting against tears. "Thank you."

Chapter Twenty-six



Landon

It's been three days, and we've finally managed to get everything we need to cast this ritual to call down Phthonos. After everything we've had to do to get here, I sure hope it works.

Every day, I've watched Chloe grow tenser and tenser, anxiety keeping her on edge. And there's not been a damn thing any of us could do to help her beyond finding the ingredients. I've hated it.

"It's okay, honey." Sienna reaches over and squeezes my thigh.

I try to give her a smile, but something tells me it looks more like a grimace. "I'm just ready for this to be over and done with."

"We all are, and what a better night for it than Christmas Eve?"

Pulling up in front of Chloe's mom's place, I put the car in park and realize we're the last to arrive. Chloe is pressed between Tristan's and Ryder's bodies as Ryder distracts her with his tongue—in her mouth, perv. *Get your mind out of the gutter.* Hell, I need to get my mind out of the gutter after that. They're standing on the stairs leading up to her mom's house, after all.

"Okay, darling, let's do this. I've always wanted to call down a god." I chuckle, shaking my head. I've definitely never wanted to summon a god, which is why my words sound so insane. But this has to work. If we aren't able to get Phthonos to break the curse, there's no way that Chloe will enjoy our first Christmas together, and that's not what any of us want.

Sienna snickers as she climbs out of the car. Chloe and Ryder break apart at the sound of our doors shutting, but Tristan continues to cradle her against

him.

“You’re here.” I can hear the relief in Chloe’s voice and wonder if she seriously thought we wouldn’t be. I quickly dismiss that, knowing that she’s just stressing out, and I can’t even blame her. We’ve put a lot of hope into this going our way tonight.

“There’s nowhere else we’d rather be, baby girl.” Sienna grins at her as we come to a stop at the bottom of the stairs. “Shall we get this show on the road?”

Chloe nods, a determined look on her face. “Everyone has their ingredients?”

“Yup.” Ryder leans over to brush his lips against hers once more before grabbing her hand and pulling her down the stairs. “Now, where is this sacred place your mom is letting us use?”

I take Sienna’s hand in mine as we follow the two of them. Tristan comes down to take Sienna’s other hand as he walks with us.

“Anyone else nervous?” he asks with a laugh.

“Damn straight. I don’t know what we’ll do if this doesn’t work.” I shake my head. “We *need* this to work for Chloe’s sake.”

“The first thing the two of you need to do is get rid of your negative thoughts. They’re not going to help anything. Have a little hope.” Sienna squeezes my hand. “And if you can’t, then I’ll hope enough for all of us.”

We fall silent as I try to rid myself of my doubts and negative thoughts, but it’s hard. It’s like they’ve buried themselves deep inside my head and don’t want to leave.

Ahead of us, Chloe giggles as she looks up at Ryder. I appreciate that he’s able to help her relax and forget for a moment how important this moment is. I know Sienna would be able to do the same, but her job tonight seems to be

to keep me and Tristan from losing our shit. This is why I've always wanted a poly relationship. I have nothing against monogamy—Sienna and I have been in a mostly monogamous relationship since we got together hundreds of years ago—but it's so hard to be everything for one person. But when there are multiple people in a relationship, everyone is able to get everything they need from different people. It just makes sense, and it's not like the heart is finite. No, our hearts can love more than one person at a time equally.

Shaking my head, I pull myself back to the present. It seems I allowed my brain to run away on a tangent. It's not the first time it's happened, and it won't be the last. But right now, I need to be in the here and now.

Looking around, I realize we've stepped into a clearing of sorts. Magic flows around us, in the air and in the earth. This must be where we're doing the ritual.

Chloe leads us to the center where an altar sits, a bowl and athame sitting atop it. We circle the altar as Chloe takes a deep breath, her eyes jumping around the circle to each of us. “This is the Emberwitch Coven's sacred circle. This is where they perform their rituals and hold their celebrations. Mom is allowing us to use it to summon Phthonos. The power of our past elders lay beneath the earth and should keep him contained in this area until we're finished with our conversation.”

“Baby girl, do you have the paper with the ritual your mom gave you?” Sienna asks.

“Yes.” Chloe nods, pulling the paper from her pocket and unfolding it. She lays it on the altar so we can all peer down at it.

Ryder shakes his head. “I'm terrible with languages. Remind me what it says?”

“Beneath the moon in a sacred place,” Chloe begins to read. “Your circle

must come together with your combined magic. Gather the ingredients carefully—if only one is incorrect, you are doomed to fail. Calling a god to you takes much power, and they're often not happy about being summoned. Be prepared for their wrath. Then it lists the ingredients and the ritual. Let's double-check that we have all the ingredients. The essence of a god?"

Sienna holds up the vial of her mother's essence, placing it on the altar.

"Hair of a unicorn? I've got that thanks to Laoise." Chloe places the baggie beside the vial. "Next is the lightning stone."

She nods when Ryder sets it on the altar before continuing, "Sage, blood of a minotaur, and cedarwood?"

"Right here," Tristan says as he lays them onto the altar before Chloe continues down the list, each of us laying the ingredients onto the altar until she's finished.

Chloe squeezes her eyes shut, murmuring under her breath, "Please, gods, let this work."

When she opens her eyes, she begins pouring the ingredients into the bowl as we watch. This part we can't help with. She's the one who will have to cast the ritual using our combined powers.

Once she's done, she lifts the athame and holds it out to me. "Each of you must slice your palm and allow three drops of your blood to flow into the bowl—no more, no less."

"You've got it, sweet girl." I slash the athame across my palm before closing it and holding it over the bowl. As soon as three drops hit the bowl, I pull my hand back and pass on the athame. Sienna goes next, then Tristan, and finally Ryder. Once the ritual knife makes it back to Chloe, she does the same before setting it aside.

"Take one another's hands and close your eyes. I will be pulling on your

power, so please don't be alarmed."

I do as requested, and she begins speaking in Gaelic. There's a tug on my power, and release my hold, allowing Chloe to take what she needs. I might not have any kind of magic like the others, but there is still power within me. The air grows thick around us, thunder and lightning coming from out of nowhere. I can feel the magic of witches long gone, rising over me and funneling into Chloe.

As she finishes the ritual, there's a crashing noise before the five of us are thrown away from one another. I groan, lifting a hand to my head as I try to sit up. Both my head and body ache, like I did a hard workout before drinking all night. Around me, I can see my mates all sitting up, wincing with pain—except Chloe. She still stands beside the altar with her head thrown backward, power rushing through her.

"Huh... I haven't been summoned to the Mortal Realm in... at least a thousand years."

My head jerks around at the sound, finding Phthonos walking toward us from across the clearing. I scramble to my feet, moving toward Chloe, who has turned to face off with the god. The others fill it behind and beside her as we watch the god of envy.

"The five of you look familiar... Why is that?"

Chloe laughs without humor. "I would hope so since you cursed the five of us thousands and thousands of years ago."

Phthonos tilts his head to the side, eyes narrowing as he looks between us. "Ah! Yes! Because the incubus would not sleep with me. I apologize for that. I was... not a good man back then. Why have you summoned me here? It's clear that you've found one another again."

"That may be," Chloe says, taking a step forward as we all reach for her,

but she shakes us off. “But the curse has not been lifted. You were supposed to be watching. How could you be if you’d forgotten about us? Who does that? Just curses someone and then forgets about them.”

Phthonos drops his head, shame on his face. “Someone foolish, but I have found love myself, and now I understand. I’m sorry that I have forgotten you and the curse. To make up for my blunder, please allow me to not only remove it, but to offer you another gift.”

My eyes narrow. “And why would you do that?”

“Because I am still having to prove myself to others that I’ve learned from my past. That I am a better man, and because the five of you deserve it. Being cursed because of my pettiness is...” He shakes his head. “I know I cannot make up for it, not truly, but I can offer you something that will help me atone for my sins. The witch will die before all of you, as she is not one of the long-lived species. I would like to offer her, and in turn, the four of you, immortality. It cannot take away the years that I kept you apart, but it will give you eons longer than you could have ever had together.”

Chloe shakes her head, face pinched in confusion. “You want to grant us immortality? Can you even do that?”

He laughs. “I am a god. Of course, I can do that, but only if that’s what the five of you want. First, let me lift the curse, and then you can speak amongst yourself.”

Phthonos waves his hand in the air before stepping back, and it’s like a weight is lifted off my shoulders. A weight I have never been aware of because it’s always been there, wrapped around my heart. Glancing at the others, I realize the same thing must have just happened to them. A single tear slides down Chloe’s cheek as she glances back at us. I don’t know what she sees there, but she immediately turns back to Phthonos.

“We don’t need to speak amongst one another. Make us immortal. Give us the rest of eternity to be together, and we will forgive you. It is clear you’re trying, and everyone deserves a second chance.”

A smile lights up Phthonos’s face as he waves his hand in the air again, five candies appearing in his other hand. “Thank you, little witch.”

The four of us growl at him as Chloe looks on, amused, and he holds up his hands in surrender. He walks forward and offers the candies to Chloe. “Eat this sweet, and eternal life will be yours. I appreciate your kindness, and I hope the gods bless you and your mates for the rest of your life.”

Chloe takes the candies from him, handing us each one before tossing hers into her mouth. With a shrug, we follow suit. As I swallow it down, a zing of power rushes over me, and suddenly, all five of us are glowing. It’s so bright I have to close my eyes, but it only lasts for a few moments.

“If you would not mind releasing me, I’d love to get back home. I have mates of my own waiting, and they will wish to hear this story.”

“We release you, Phthonos. Thank you.”

The god’s visage flitters for a moment before he completely disappears, leaving the five of us alone once more.

“We did it,” Sienna says, shock clear in her voice.

“And we’re immortal.” Tristan laughs.

Tears spill down Chloe’s cheek while she grins at us. “This is amazing, and I hate to be that bitch, but if we want to exchange presents, we need to head back to my place. I have to be at Tali’s and Belle’s place in two hours.”

There’s some grumbling from all of her mates, but none of us can wipe away the smiles on our faces. We have the rest of forever to be together. We certainly can’t begrudge our woman spending the night and morning with her best friends.

We head back to our cars, all of us feeling lighter, and I know Christmas will always be special to us because of this moment. I might not have been sure that it would work, but I'm ecstatic that it did.

Chapter Twenty-seven



Chloe

Tali drops onto the air mattress Laoise and I shared last night, instantly waking both of us. I roll over to look at her, lifting an eyebrow. “Seriously?”

“Merry Christmas!!!”

“Ugh, Tali, that was so not cool,” Laoise groans as she sits up.

“There better be coffee.” I make grabby hands, and she reaches over to grab a steaming cup off the table. “Thank the gods.”

I lift the cup to my lips, humming as I take a long drink. Meanwhile, Tali is handing Laoise her own cup.

“So, Lee...” Tali grins. “What are the chances of me convincing you to make pancakes?”

Laoise rolls her eyes, but she’s already climbing off the mattress. “You’re lucky I love you.”

“I love you, too,” Tali calls over her shoulder as she stares at me. “How does it feel?”

“How does what feel?”

“Not being cursed!” She makes a face. “What else would I be talking about?”

I shrug. “Fuck if I know. This is what you get for waking me up.”

“It’s not even that early.”

“Yeah, but I was up late with my mates. We summoned a god, in case you’ve forgotten.”

Tali snickers as she stands up. “I’m pretty sure I’ll never be able to forget that. But not only is the curse broken, but you’re immortal. How awesome is that?”

I laugh, allowing her to pull me to my feet. “Okay, yeah. That does feel pretty awesome. I’m just tired.”

I follow her into the kitchen, watching as Laoise starts on breakfast. “What about presents? When are we exchanging gifts?”

“Not till Belle gets up.” Tali shoots me a pointed look.

“If we have to be up, then so does she, Tali. You can’t play favorites.”

Tali’s face softens. “I’m not. She’s just been stressing out about hosting a Christmas dinner tonight. I wanted to let her sleep in a little.”

“Well, she has. I’m going to wake her up.” I laugh as Tali tries to stop me, but I dodge past her and head for Belle’s room. Somehow both she and Laoise end up running past me and launching themselves into Belle’s room and onto her bed.

I stand at the end of the bed, trying to figure out where I can jump on to join them. Unable to find a spot, I choose to climb right on top of Belle with my hands on her chest, my head laying on top of them. “Good morning Belle. It’s Christmas, and Lee made pancakes. Tali said we had to wait for you to get up to open presents, but you were taking too long, so we came in to get you.”

Belle is laughing so hard that she’s shaking the whole damn bed, which only gets worse when Laoise snatches Belle’s phone out of her hand, and Tali blows raspberries on her cheek. I fight a smile, blinking up at Belle innocently. I hope that it’s like this between us for the rest of our lives. With the three of them, I can let go of everything and just have fun. Sometimes that’s what we all need, and I think that’s why Tali wanted the four of us to sleep under the same roof and wake up together on Christmas morning.

There have been so many changes in our lives, and we all know things are going to change. Of course, they are. We've all met our mates, and we're all deliriously happy. But that means our friendship is going to change, and this is a chance for one last hoorah. I can't even be mad about it.

"Okay, okay, okay! I'm up! Merry Christmas, coven. I'm so glad I get to spend another year with you all." Belle smiles at the three of us, and it's clear that she's fighting tears. I don't call her out on it because they're clearly happy tears, and who am I to rain on her parade?

"Come on, witches! We've got gifts to open, then we all need to get ready to see our mates. Plus, we have an awesome fucking dinner party to go to tonight!" Laoise grabs my arm as she winks at Belle.

I follow her out of the room, leaving Tali and Belle alone. When Laoise tries to race past me, we end up in a shoving match before running down the hallway as our giggles trail behind us. I'm just so happy and free in a way I didn't know I needed to be.

Tali and Belle eventually make their way out, hand in hand. We devour our pancakes before tearing into our gifts. Before too long, it'll be time to return to our mates and then get ready for tonight's dinner. But for now, I bask in the warmth that is my besties.



“I wasn’t this nervous about meeting your parents,” Sienna hisses, straightening her clothes for the umpteenth time.

I giggle. “There’s no reason to be nervous. I love you, and you love me, which means they’ll love you.”

Shaking my head, I knock on the door and ignore my mates’ grumbles behind me. We haven’t exactly had a chance for them to meet before today, so they’re kind of getting thrown into the deep end. It’s time to see if they can sink or swim.

The door swings open, and I grin up at Cypian. “Hi, Cy!!! Belle!!!” I launch myself under Cypian’s arm, wrapping my arms around Belle. I can feel the tension leaking from her, and I’m guessing we’re the last to arrive.

Not bothering to introduce my mates, I drag her down the hallway until I find where everyone else is gathered.

“Best witches!!!” I yell as I see them. “Best witches’ mates!!! Hello. For those of you who haven’t met me, I’m Chloe. Last night I summoned a god and convinced him to lift the curse he placed on me and my mates in our first life. Oh, and now I’m immortal!”

Belle is giggling beside me as half the room just gapes at me. I shrug. They might as well get used to me now.

Sienna’s silky laughter meets my ears, and I glance back at her and the rest of our mates. “Baby girl, was that necessary?”

“Necessary? No, but I figured it would be easier than telling the story over and over again.” I shrug. “And these delectable snacks behind me are my mates—Sienna, Landon, Ryder, and Tristan.”

“Chloe, how much coffee did you have today?” Laoise asks, trying to hide her laughter behind her hand.

“Who knows? A lot. It’s all good, though, because there’s food here.”

Sienna comes down to take my hand, glancing at Belle. “I assume you’re the hostess, Belle?”

Belle nods. “I am.”

“Good. Please tell me there are some snacks I can give her to try to help her calm down until we eat.”

Belle giggles, nodding for us to follow her toward what I’m guessing is the kitchen.

“Come on, I’m not being that bad, am I?” When neither woman answers me, I narrow my eyes. “There’s nothing wrong with overly caffeinated Chloe. She’s fun!”

“And loud,” Belle adds. “Plus, she talks about herself in the third person.”

“But she’s cute as a button—even when she overshares to a room full of people she doesn’t know.” Sienna bends over to kiss me when Belle’s squeal breaks us apart.

Belle holds up her hands. “I’m sorry. It’s just that the two of you are so cute. And to think, Chloe wasn’t sure if she was attracted to women.”

Rolling my eyes, I flip Belle off. “Hush you.”

“But I have snacks,” she says with a smile, holding up my favorite cheese crack dip.

“Cheese crack!!!” I squeal, running over to grab it from her and piling it onto a plate before filling it with crackers. “Thanks, Belle, you’re the best.”

The three of us head back to the living room. The two of them can’t stop giggling, but I’m choosing to ignore them as I chow down on my dip and crackers. So what if everyone bursts out into laughter when I step back into the living room—something about me looking like a squirrel?

As I get to know my friends’ mates and Derek’s family, I realize this is what the four of us have been searching for over the years. Yes, we found one another, but we all knew there was more out there that was meant for us. Being surrounded by my chosen family, I realize there’s nowhere I’d rather be.

Merry Christmas, indeed.

Epilogue



Chloe

One year later

It's been a year since my mates and I were blessed with our curse being removed and my immortality. Now, Sienna and I have some amazing news to share with them, but we've chosen to wait until our handfasting ceremony to share it —though if I'm honest, I think Landon might be onto us. Damn vampire hearing.

Glancing down at my simple white floor-length dress, I wish it were time for the ceremony. While we hadn't spent the night apart, and I'd seen all four of my mates just hours ago, I still miss them. For some unknown reason, my mom decided that none of us were allowed to see one another until it's time for the ceremony. We were all locked in a room off the ballroom—last year, she'd only revealed one to me, but it turns out there are a vast number of them. I don't even want to think about what she might use them for.

“You look beautiful, Clo.” Belle steps up beside me, a small smile on her lips as her eyes fall to my stomach. I'm not showing yet, but she just can't seem to stop watching it for changes. At three months, I'd worried that both Sienna and I would be showing, but not so far. Something tells me that'll change very soon.

Yes, we're both three months pregnant. Somehow, our mates managed to knock us both up around the exact same time. Weird, right? But that's the

story of my life.

“So do you. All of you.” I turn to face my besties as tears fill my eyes. “And congrats again, Belle. I can’t believe what those men did for you, and then apologized for it? I knew I liked them.”

All four of us laugh, but I can see tears in all of their eyes. Our friendship might be different now, but that doesn’t make it any less strong. In fact, I’d dare to say that it’s the strongest it’s ever been. We might not have as much free time as we used to, but we always make time for one another. Something I never see changing.

“Okay, I need hugs before I start crying and ruin my makeup that Lee spent so much time on.” I lunge forward, wrapping my arms around Belle and Tali. Laoise does the same as they wrap their arms around us, and we come together in a group hug as we all fight off tears. “I’m so happy that the four of us are here together for this. You mean the world to me, and I couldn’t do this without you.”

Laoise scoffs. “You’re damn pregnancy hormones are contagious.”

Belle giggles. “That’s not how that works, Lee.”

Her words send us into another peel of laughter, and I think we’ve passed the moment for tears.

A knock on the door has us breaking apart; Tali moves to the door. She speaks quietly to whoever is on the other side before shutting the door and turning back to us. “It’s time. The three of us are going to head down and join your mom. There will be a knock on your door and each of your mates at the same time—“

“And then we’ll walk out at the same time to the center of the room,” I say, cutting her off with a smile. “There are five aisles with chairs between them,

all circling the stage in the center. Mom is officiating, and the three of you will be tying us up.”

“Kinky,” Laoise says with a snicker, and there we go again, falling into a fit of laughter.

Once we’ve calmed down, Laoise moves over to me and runs her fingers down my cheek. “Perfect. Just what you needed for your final look. You’re glowing, Chloe.”

I squeeze my eyes shut as I once again fight off tears. “Out of here, all of you, or I’m going to end up crying.”

“We love you, Clo,” Belle calls as she follows our friends out of the door, shutting it behind her.

My mates and I decided we didn’t want a wedding ceremony—especially since Sienna and Landon are already married. A handfasting is something that makes more sense to us, and it feels deeper than a piece of paper provided by the government. Mom had been ecstatic about performing the ceremony, and I can’t wait to bind myself to my mates in yet another way.

I jump at the knock on the door before it opens, revealing the ballroom to me. Taking a deep breath, I step out and start down the aisle. Our guests stay seated, different from most human weddings, but I’ve never been more grateful as my eyes flicker from one mate to the next.

Sienna wears a dress similar to mine, her makeup soft, and her hair pulled back from her face. She’s always beautiful, but never more than she is right now. My eyes move to the guys, smiling at how hot they look in their suits.

I’m surprised by how many guests are here, seeing as it’s Christmas Day and only eleven in the morning. We knew that holding the ceremony today could cause some people not to attend, but we knew that this was the day it should happen. So here we are.

The five of us meet at the center, climbing the five sets of stairs that lead to where my mom and besties stand. We stop at the top of the stairs, waiting until Mom calls us together before we can come together. I can't wipe the smile off my face as I stare at my mates.

"Welcome, guests. Today, we come together to celebrate the coming together of five mates in a handfasting. This is something that witches have done for millennia, and my daughter's mates wanted to honor that tradition when it came time for them to tie the knot, shall we say?" There's laughter from the guests, and Mom waits until they're finished before starting once more. "In many times rings were only for the very rich, while love knows no such bound. The cords are not permanent but perishable as a reminder that all things of the material eventually return to the earth, unlike the bond and the connection that is love, which is eternal."

Mom smiles as she looks at each of my mates before focusing on me. "If the five of you will join us in the center."

We move as one, stepping forward until we're almost touching.

"Please, place your right hands in the center. Chloe's coven will now wrap these five lives together even more deeply than before."

Ribbons raise in the air with my besties' magic, slowly winding around each of our arms, tying us to one another. When it's finished, tears fill Mom's eyes as she smiles.

"Now, a blessing for the polycule. May you know nothing but happiness from this day forward. May the road rise to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home. And may the hand of a friend always be near. May green be the grass you walk on. May blue be the skies above you. May pure be the joys that surround you. May true be the hearts that love you."

I glance at each of my mates, who are grinning from ear to ear just as I am.

“You may kiss!”

The ribbons drop from around us as we converge on one another. Kisses are shared between all of us as tears slide down all of our cheeks. Once we’re done, still wrapped around one another, my mom calls out once more.

“And I believe that my daughter and Sienna have a surprise for their mates.”

Landon winks at me, confirming that he already knows what’s coming. Tristan and Ryder tilt their heads, questions in their eyes.

I take Sienna’s hand in mine, and together we yell, “We’re pregnant!”

There’s a moment of silence before the guests burst out into cheers. Tristan and Ryder are both crying again as they pull us into their arms, Landon pressing against our backs.

“Both? At the same time?” Ryder sounds shocked.

I laugh. “Not only at the same time but *really* at the same time. According to the doctor, it happened within days of each other. We just found out two weeks ago, but we’re like three months along already.”

Tristan throws his head back and crows out his joy. “We’re having two babies!!!”

Once again, the five of us come together in happiness and tears. Nothing could make this any better. Surrounded by love, I know that we’ll have a long, happy life together.

Author's Note

What did you think? Did you enjoy it? Get a few laughs out of it? I should be honest, I'm not a terribly funny person, so I'm not sure I should be writing rom-coms. But I really enjoyed writing this, and I hope it shows. I hope that you enjoyed this world and these character's stories as much as I loved writing them. Definitely consider reading all of the books in the shared world. This was my first foray into a shared world, but it won't be the last. This is my last release for the year, but there's so much to look forward to in 2024. My plans aren't nearly as set in stone as they were for this year because I'm trying my hardest to not burn out while still giving you as many books as I can. I have so many stories I want to share with y'all!

I want to thank my author friends for dealing with me complaining about the insane amount of words I've had to write over the last few months. I want to thank Cassie with Weaver Way Author Services for taking me on as a last minute client when my editor was no longer available. Thank you to all of my

teams and to all of my readers. You have made my first year (plus a few months) of being an author absolutely amazing. I've been blown away by the support for me and my books, and I hope that I can keep giving you great books to read.

Until next year! I hope all of you have a great holiday season! If you're reading this after December 2023, I hope you're having a great day!

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About the Author

Miranda is a new author who has been writing since high school, but never considered being published until now. When she discovered reverse harem books, she knew it was time to share her stories. She has plans to write paranormal romance, urban fantasy, omegaverse, and contemporary—all reverse harem/why choose/polyam stories.

Growing up a Navy brat, Miranda has lived in many places. She currently makes her home in Piney Flats, TN with her husband and her two adorable corgis, Luna and Trixie. Don't worry if you've never heard of it, it's a teeny tiny town less than an hour from the Tennessee/Virginia border. When not writing, Miranda spends most of her time reading or playing Dungeons and Dragons like a true geek. She also has an almost unhealthy obsession with corgis—so don't be surprised if she brings them up.

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