

Changeling Press

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KARLAND

CYCLONE

BONES MC



# **CYCLONE (BONES MC 15)**

*A Bones MC Romance*

**Marteeka Karland**

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**Marteeka Karland**

## CYCLONE (BONES MC 15).

*A Bones MC Romance*

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**Cyclone — I might be a whirlwind when I get angry or hyper-focused on something, but I'm usually the laid-back brother. I'm calm, cool, and collected under fire. Until I'm not. My passions burn hot but cool quickly, and any woman in my bed knows that. Which is why I make a point to only take women who know the score. I'm up for a good time, but that's it. My club comes first. I don't have time for, nor do I want, a permanent woman. Then a party happens and I make a huge mistake. When I finally come to my senses, I realize this is one mistake that could cost me my position as vice president of Bones MC. And my life.**

**Willa — To say my daddy is a shade over-protective is the understatement of the century. I try to be a good girl — and really, I'm sure the car in the tree was *not* my fault — but trouble seems to find me and hold me hostage. Sneaking into a Bones MC party, though? That was all me. I was lonely. And bored. I called it an early Christmas present to myself. Unfortunately, when I was downing Long Island Ice Teas, I didn't take into account that I'd never drunk alcohol before. Next thing I know I wake up**

**in bed with one of the men from the club. I have no idea what we did or if I enjoyed myself, but I'm pleasantly sore, and there are condom wrappers all over the place. Then my gaze collides with the man who's draped half over me. Yeah. This isn't going to end well.**

# CHAPTER ONE

## **Cyclone**

“Hey there, baby. How about I take you on tonight for a good time?” A svelte brunette with big tits straddled my lap in a bid for my attention. I was pretty sure I’d had her a few times but wasn’t certain. Especially not now. I was drunk off my fucking *ass*. And getting drunker by the moment.

“Another time, sugar.” Right. Not any time soon. I didn’t keep coming back to the same women. Not often. And not without some time between fucks. The last thing I needed at this point was a woman clinging to me.

“Come on, Cyclone.” The woman’s whiny voice was getting on my everloving last nerve. “You’ve not been with any of us in weeks. It’s my turn.” She pouted, her plump red lips begging to be kissed. If I hadn’t already told her no, I might have given in. I’d learned a long time ago not to give the club whores a reason to go against me. If I did, she’d be pushing back every inch she could. Reversing myself with her was the best reason she could have.

“I said no,” I growled at her, pushing up from my chair. The room spun, but I refused to give into it, concentrating on keeping a steady gait. Moving toward the bar, I signaled the prospect behind the bar for a beer. It was probably time to slow down on the hard liquor. The younger man nodded once and pulled out a Bud Light from the fridge. He handed me the bottle unopened because everyone knew I was picky about shit

like that.

“Thanks.” I gave the prospect a nod before moving away from the bar to a table with a few of my other brothers. Most of them had a woman either on their lap or kneeling in front of them, giving them head.

As party clubs went, Bones had pretty mild parties. But occasionally, the guys needed to let off some steam. Tonight was one of those nights. Normally my brother, Ice, would be here with me. He kept the demons at bay for me. Ice had a woman now. Dawn was the daughter of El Diablo from Black Reign in Lake Worth, Florida. While I was happy for my brother, that made me the most eligible bachelor in the fucking club. Which meant the club girls were getting more aggressive.

*Not interested.*

The second I sat down, one of the girls near me turned and straddled my hips. “Been lookin’ for you all night, baby.” She ground herself over my crotch. While I was at half mast, I wasn’t really feeling it. Likely the alcohol. Besides, the bitch had so much perfume on I could barely breathe.

I lifted her by the waist and set her on the floor. “Not tonight.” I turned her away from me. “Go find someone else.”

She looked back over her shoulder, pouting prettily. It was all I could do to keep from rolling my eyes. Being the president’s son had gotten me women since I was old enough to not look like a fresh-faced kid. But that attention was nothing compared to what I got the second I became vice president. Now all of a sudden I literally had to throw women



out of my room every fucking night. I was going to have to take some kind of stand before I lost my temper.

This woman just wouldn't take the fucking hint. Instead of slinking away to find another brother to bother, she climbed right back on my lap, this time fusing her lips against mine. When she thrust her tongue into my mouth, I thought I might puke. And not just because of the alcohol. I think the woman had gargled with curry and onions.

I grabbed her upper arms and shoved her off me before using the neckline of my T-shirt to scrub my mouth. "Christ! Wha' the fuck'd you eat?" My words were slurring but I didn't care. The fucking *taste!* "You swaller a fuckin' skunk?"

"What the fuck, Cyclone?" the woman screeched. I winced at the sound. It was about as pleasing as nails on a chalkboard and had my fucking head throbbing. "All you had to do was say you weren't interested."

"Pretty sure I already told you to find someone else." The hit of adrenaline I got from trying to fight off the nausea cleared my head somewhat, but I still wasn't in any way sober. Not even a little.

"You said you wanted me. I was gonna be your old lady, Dan."

"Never in hell have I *ever* been that drunk. I don't think it's even possible to be that drunk." I stood, somehow managing to be steady on my feet. When I took a step toward her, she wisely backed up. "Ain't never hurt a woman who didn't need it, but the only name you're allowed to call me is Cyclone. Get me?" I stared her down. Hard. The woman

backed up several steps before tripping over her high-heeled boots and falling on her ass. A couple of the nearby club girls giggled or outright laughed at the busty blonde as she fumed. “You ain’t ever gonna be my old lady. Only an old lady gets to call me by my given name.” I pointed a finger at her. “You ever call me by anything other than my road name again... I’ll fuckin’ kill you.”

The common room was quiet except for the music. Thankfully, the brothers had it at a reasonable level. It was better for my head but did nothing to suppress my explosion. Everyone was a witness. While I hated to be a spectacle — didn’t seem very vice presidential — perhaps it was better this way. The club girls were getting far too aggressive, all of them either trying to land me or worm their way between my brother, Ice, and his new woman. A couple of the newer ones had even tried for Stunner. I only thought Stunner was vicious. Suzie, though...

I remember how he’d beat the shit out of one of the prospects in Bones — Pig — when said prospect had harassed Suzie. She’d been just a kid at the time. The beating had been epic. My father had taken his own turn too, but Stunner was the one Pig still remembered to this day. Apparently Stunner had taught his wife a few tricks in that department because Suzie had turned into a real badass over the years.

OK, so not really. But no one messed with her man. She was just as possessive as Stunner was. Which made me smile. Until I realized everyone was looking at me like I’d lost my mind. Probably because I’d gone from furious to grinning. Yeah. Likely thought I was crazy.

“Fuck this shit.” I slammed my bottle down on the table next to me and stomped off. Last thing I needed to do was to lose my temper worse than I already had. I wasn’t a really good drunk.

I managed to make it outside before I sank into a chair. The weather was cool but still warmer than usual for this late in the year. What little bite there was, I welcomed. With my anger evaporating, so was my clarity. Yeah. I’d drunk way more than I should have.

Looking up at the night sky, I took a deep breath. Stars twinkled overhead in the darkness. Gradually I closed my eyes and just let my head spin. There wasn’t anything I could do other than not drink any more and maybe sleep it off. The cool air was soothing, easing the nausea that had threatened earlier from the overabundance of perfume.

I had nearly dozed off when someone stumbled into me. There was a sharp, feminine cry, then a small figure fell into my lap. Literally.

She giggled. “I’m so sorry.” Her apology was ruined when she giggled again. “I really am sorry, but falling is just so funny.” The woman’s laughter was musical. And familiar, though I couldn’t place where I’d heard it. When she sighed and rubbed her face in the crook of my neck like she belonged there, I didn’t really care.

I knew I should probably tell her to get the hell away from me, but for some stupid reason, my arms closed around the small figure. She either didn’t notice or didn’t care because she never moved her face from my neck. She *did* inhale.

Deeply.

“God, you smell good...”

“You too, sugar.” Too late I realized I’d voiced my musings out loud, but I wasn’t about to take it back. The woman smelled like heaven. Like lavender and spring rain. Her lips were soft against my skin, driving me crazy, when I didn’t welcome the sensation. I didn’t *need* a woman. I never wanted anyone to have any power over me. But this woman could make me reevaluate that position.

This wasn’t a club girl. She didn’t smell right. All the women here tried to outdo themselves in the perfume department most of the time. No. This girl was fresh and sweet. It was dark outside, and I couldn’t see her clearly, but I was sure she didn’t belong at this party. Though her form was slight but curvy in all the right places, she didn’t have the feel of the women here. Unless she was new, but I’d have known if she were. Anyone coming to the club had to be approved by Ice, me, or Stunner. We liked knowing who was in our midst.

“Mmmmm...” She latched on to my neck with her mouth, sucking and quite possibly leaving her mark. Strangely, I found my hand going to her head to hold her there, encouraging her to continue when I should really push her away.

But, God, her gentle sucking and licking felt good! It was her scent combined with the tentative way she touched. Other than her mouth on my skin, she didn’t do more than rest one palm against my chest. The other was pinned between her body and mine.

“Like my taste?” My voice was rough and slightly slurred, but I couldn’t be bothered to care all that much.

“Um-hmm...” She sounded so contented it made me feel like I’d accomplished something truly incredible. Given my drunken state, maybe I had and didn’t remember it. “You taste like heaven.” Her breathy whisper made my already interested cock swell in anticipation. “Could lick you all night long.”

She sucked at my neck again, the little sting making me groan. Wasn’t I annoyed before when that club girl had blanketed me with her body? I had no idea who the other woman was, but this woman... yeah. Whole world of difference. Though, I had no idea who she was. I mean, there was something familiar about her. I just couldn’t place what.

“You’re welcome to lick me as long as you want.” I bunched my hand in her hair. Where before I held her gently, now I wanted to control her movements. Needed to control the woman. Still, that nagging feeling I knew her, and that I probably shouldn’t be doing this kept me in check. Somewhat. At least, I didn’t just take what I wanted when it was so freely offered.

She shifted so that she straddled me much like the club girl had. They’d been on me every day since the day I became vice president. This girl was different. I couldn’t put my finger on it, but despite her actions, there was a vibe of innocence about her. Yet another reason I needed to stop this madness.

*But, Goddamn, it felt fucking good!*

No. Not “it.” The woman. It was her touch that felt

good. Her kisses. Her scent. All of it. Everything about what was happening.

Somehow, she brushed her lips against mine. It wasn't a bold kiss. Rather, it was tentative. Like she was experimenting.

"Mmmm..." She hummed in pleasure as she continued to brush her mouth over mine. I opened my mouth and darted my tongue out to lick at the seam of her lips. She gasped in a breath and stilled. So I did it again. This time, she moaned, her body trembling in my arms.

I pulled back to gaze into her eyes. In the dim light, I could see little of her face, but her eyes were a sparkling blue. The crescent moon was reflected in the glittering depths, and I saw arousal shining back at me.

"You want me, sugar?"

She shuddered, whimpering. "I do. Please."

With a grunt, I stood, the woman securely in my arms. She wrapped her legs around my waist and hung on as I stalked back into the clubhouse, just wishing a motherfucker would say something. As much as I wanted this woman, I wasn't fucking her out in the open. For one thing, it might be warmish outside, but it was still December in Kentucky. Getting her naked was going to happen, but it would happen inside the clubhouse. In private.

Normally, I'd take her to an empty room, or, if she was a club girl, I'd go to her room. But I didn't know if she had quarters here or where she was staying. Besides, I wanted her

in my room. Why? Beat the fuck outta me. But there was something driving me that way. Call it blind instinct. I was taking this woman to my room. To my bed. And, if I had my way, I wasn't letting her out until we were both well and truly satisfied.

Assuming I managed to get there without falling on my face. Perhaps I should have stuck to beer tonight. The Jack Daniels was hitting me harder than it should have. Or maybe I'd just drunk that much. Thank God I didn't have whiskey dick because there was no way I was willingly missing the chance to fuck this woman.

\* \* \*

## **Willa**

God, had a man ever smelled this good? There was an underlying hint of gasoline all the men in Bones had, but there was something woodsy and wild about this man. Fresh-cut hay and cedar mixed with a feral scent that drew me in like a bee to honey. It was too dark to really tell who had me and I didn't really care. Especially when he made me feel this good.

I'd been heading back inside the clubhouse when I'd fallen into his lap. Literally. His voice was familiar, though I'd never heard the husky drawl the way he spoke to me while I was in his arms.

My head spun and I felt like I was flying. Though I'd been buzzing pretty hard before I ended up in the arms of this man, I was pretty sure the last three shots of Fireball I'd done

right before going outside were starting to hit with a vengeance. And I'm sure the two Long Island Iced Teas I'd consumed before that weren't helping either.

Sure, I was drunk off my ass, but even if I had been stone-cold sober, that kiss would have had me dropping trou and begging him to take me any way he wanted. I also had the feeling I should know this guy. Instead of making me wary of what was going on, it put me more at ease to think I knew the guy. It was dark outside, and I was otherwise occupied sucking his neck on the way inside and couldn't focus on anything other than getting myself and him naked.

The next thing I knew, we were in a room, and he was kicking the door shut as he fisted his hand in my hair and turned me so he could kiss me again. It wasn't a gentle kiss. In fact, it was almost brutal in its intensity. I reveled in it. My clit throbbed with each thrust of his tongue.

One of his hands slid under my shirt to cup my breast. He squeezed and kneaded the slight mound through my bra until I moaned into his mouth, surrendering myself to him completely.

Somehow, my shirt ended up on the floor along with his and his strong arms circled my body to hold me against his naked chest. My bra was the only thing preventing me from rubbing my nipples over his muscled chest. With a frustrated whimper, I tried to reach behind me to undo my bra, but his arm was over the clasp. He grunted and shoved the offending garment up over my tits with his other hand, never letting go of his hold around my body.



“Oh, God!”

When he dipped his head to latch onto one of my nipples, I came unglued. Arching into his touch wasn't enough. I needed to be naked so he could touch other parts of my body. And I desperately wanted to touch him.

He lifted me again, urging my legs around his hips. I could feel the ridge of his cock through my jeans and his and ground my cunt against it. Friction. I needed friction.

When I was on my back on the bed, he let me go long enough to whip my jeans off. He must have taken my panties and shoes with them because I found myself naked except for my socks and bra. Then his head was between my legs, and I forgot my own name. All I could do was scream.

The alcohol made me lightheaded, and that problem was compounded by pleasure like I'd never known existed. The room seemed to spin and spin until I was completely out of control. All I could do was hang on to his broad, muscled shoulders as he crawled up my body.

The tip of his cock entered my pussy in one hard shove, and we both cried out. There was an unexpected pain as he entered me, reminding me why I'd set out on this venture in the first Goddamned place. At nineteen, I was still a virgin. I'd hoped to give myself an early Christmas present by finding someone to fix that little problem. Looked like I'd managed. The problem was, it really hurt. I sucked in a breath, tensing up and gripping his hips with my thighs.

“What's wrong, sugar?” Were his words slurred? Between the haze of lust still enveloping me, the shock of the

pain, and all the alcohol I'd consumed, I couldn't be sure. The point was he stopped moving.

"Just... just give me a minute," I gasped out.

"I hurt you?"

"No! I mean, yes, but it's easing."

"Too big for ya." I'd have thought those words would have been said with a smugness that would have set my teeth on edge. Instead, he stroked my hair off my face and continued to kiss my jaw and chin until he found my mouth once again. Then he began those drugging kisses, building me back up to the point of madness once again.

He stayed perfectly still, though I could feel his heart throbbing through his chest as well as his dick. He tasted of whiskey and mint. Even if I'd been sober, the taste of him would have been just as intoxicating as any alcohol. Not because he'd been drinking. Because of the way he made me feel.

"Take a breath, sugar." His voice was smooth now, like he had more control than before. Which I wasn't sure I liked. I wanted him as out of control as I was. Though, I had to be grateful he'd paused the action. Past the pain of when he'd first entered me, the way he stretched my pussy burned, though the pain was replaced by a pleasurable ache. An ache that needed to be eased by the orgasm I knew was close by.

"Please," I begged in a whisper, "I need..."

"I know, sugar," he said near my ear. "Hold on to me. I'll make it good for you."

I did as he instructed, and he started to... *move*.

With wicked snaps of his hips, he pressed forward, sliding farther inside me until he was seated all the way. Then he slid out again. Then back in. The pain was gone and the burn fading. In their place was an unimaginable pleasure, one I had no hope of fighting.

“Oh, God... Oh, God!” I broke out in a sweat as the sensations built and built. There was a roaring in my ears that grew louder by the second. The man fucking me moved faster, but all I could focus on was the pleasure radiating from my clit and pussy as it spread through my thighs and belly.

Then it happened. With a scream, I came. It was like nothing I'd ever experienced before. No amount of masturbation had ever given me what I was experiencing now. My orgasm rushed through me with the force of a detonation. I thrashed under him, meeting each thrust of his hips with one of my own. My pussy clamped down on him, making the throbbing of his cock that much more intense inside me.

Somewhere in the haze of my surroundings, I heard this man bellow to the ceiling, his cock growing impossibly bigger only to pulse inside me over and over. He shuddered around me as his own body went slick with sweat. The last thing I remember before I passed out was his hoarse groan.

“Fuck... me...”

## CHAPTER TWO

### **Cyclone**

Sweet baby Jesus in the manger, my head fucking hurt. And yeah, Jesus had very little to do with it. I'd debased myself all on my own. The hangover, I'd been expecting. What I wasn't expecting was the bare breast next to my mouth with the nipple just begging to be sucked. Without thinking, I snaked my tongue out and lapped at it.

*Delicious.*

The woman beneath me moaned, tunneling her fingers through my hair gently, almost tentatively. I took the nipple between my lips and sucked gently, loving the way it pebbled to my touch.

God, I wanted to fuck this woman again! I had vague memories of the pleasure I'd found with her the night before, but my head was having none of it. It felt like an ice pick stabbing into my temple.

With a groan, I moved to kiss between her delicate breasts before I looked up into her face... *and froze.*

She had a dreamy smile on her face, but her brows pinched together like she was in pain. Beautiful chestnut curls spread out like a halo over the pillow. Her eyes were closed, and she made a contented sound as she arched her back, offering her breast to me. She most definitely wasn't a club girl. In fact...

“Willa?”

She frowned.

I couldn't help but reach up to stroke the frown on her delicate lips. Then her cheek. “Hey, honey. Open your eyes for me.”

Her lashes fluttered before she followed my instructions and opened her dark brown eyes to look straight into mine. Eyes filled with a mixture of pleasure and pain. Her lips parted on a gasp. Then she groaned, her hand going to her head.

“Oh, God...”

“Headache?” It was a stupid question to ask, but I really had nothing else at the moment. I was in shock because, really, this couldn't be happening.

“Yeah.” She swallowed, then her eyes opened in alarm. “Sick...”

I rolled off her, pulling her up with me to sit up in the bed. She gave a weak whimper before scooting to the edge and running toward the bathroom. I knew how she felt. My stomach was rebelling too. I took several deep breaths, trying to calm my roiling stomach. This was a serious clusterfuck.

Willa. Trucker's daughter. Trucker, as in the road captain for Bones MC. Unless she'd somehow replaced the woman I'd been with all fucking night, I'd spent the entire night with the daughter of a truly massive man, fucking her senseless. Yeah. My life expectancy had just decreased dramatically. To make matters worse, I couldn't be sure I

wouldn't seek her out in the future for more of what we'd done. Not only were the bits and pieces I remembered mind-blowing, I knew I wanted to experience this woman stone-cold sober, so I could enjoy every blistering second of fucking her sweet pussy.

My headache got worse.

The toilet flushed, and I hurried to sling on a pair of jeans as the woman in question stumbled out of the bathroom. She'd snagged one of my T-shirts from the bathroom to cover herself and kept her head down as she stood there. The only words I could use to describe the current situation was *fucking awkward*.

"You good?" It was a lame question.

"Yep." She didn't look at me, but crossed her arms over her chest and avoided my eyes. Her back was to the wall next to the bathroom, and she seemed to be trying to blend in with the flat surface. Which is when I noticed the condom wrappers.

There were at least six scattered over the floor. I guess that was something. Though I had no idea where I'd put what I'd used. Which was more than a little gross. But I was a guy and this was my space. The fact that it bothered me when it never would have before messed with my mind a little.

I looked back to Willa and had to shake my head. Which reminded me of the pounding headache I was trying to ignore. Never in my life had I seen a woman look so Goddamned sexy. She was small, with legs that seemed to go on for miles. All that curly hair fell in ringlets down her back

nearly to her waist, surrounding her like a cape. Those dark brown eyes were large and round. Innocent. I had no doubt she'd never been in a situation like this in her life and probably never would be again.

She glanced up at me before lowering her gaze again. "What happens now?"

Yeah. That was the million-dollar question.

I took a deep breath before I replied. "Are you on any kind of birth control, Willa?" When she gasped and looked up at me with wide, shocked eyes I had my answer. I tried to keep my voice gentle when I felt anything but gentle. I wanted to kick my own ass. "We'll get something to keep you from getting pregnant in case I forgot protection."

"Seems like you used condoms." She indicated the opened packets on the floor. "I'm sure it'll be fine." Her naivety grated on my nerves. I had to remind myself none of this was her fault. I had no reason to be irritated with her. I was irritated because I was all kinds of stupid for letting this happen in the first Goddamned place and needed to lash out.

"Do you remember everything about last night, Willa? Because I sure the fuck don't. Only takes one time." I let my exasperation show despite knowing being harsh with her was a shit thing to do.

She flinched back, her face flushing. "No." Her voice was barely above a whisper. "I'm sorry. You're right. That was a stupid thing to say."

I sighed, feeling like a complete fucking asshole. I'd

known Willa since she was a baby. I'd been a skinny teenager at the time, but I remembered Trucker carrying a very pregnant Helen from the back of that fucking eighties-model Winnebago with a knife sticking out of her belly. Mama had delivered Willa into the world and Helen had refused to name her until they'd caught the man who'd stabbed her. Not out of stubbornness, though. Out of fear.

That man's death was a legend in the club. They'd gotten the bastard so drunk the moonshine they fed him dribbled from his lips because he was unable to swallow. He'd probably have died on his own from alcohol poisoning if they'd let him be. But no one in Bones used hope as a tactic when it came to something like a man's death. Oh no.

It had been the coldest couple of weeks on record for the area when we'd struck. And by "we," I mean my dad, Cain, and the rest of the club. I was too young to participate. Me and my brother, Ice, had snooped in club business, watching and listening to everything we could. Looking back, I'm sure Data and Cain knew we were snooping. It wasn't long after that Dad had talked with us about being careful what we said in front of others and to never, under any circumstances, discuss anything associated with Bones with anyone outside of the club.

The guy had been blackout drunk. Unable to do anything but lie where they left him on the floor of the shack he'd been renting while looking for Helen. They'd left the doors and windows open, and the guy had frozen to death. Considering the fact he'd been trying to cut the baby from Helen's body to sell, I thought he'd gotten off too easy.



“You want me to take you to the pharmacy? I’ll get you a morning after pill.” I tried to soften my tone but wasn’t certain I managed.

“No. I’m good. I can go myself.”

I nodded my head only to wince as the pounding intensified. “Good. Just so you know, I’m clean. But if you still want to get tested, I’ll pay for it.” She nodded her head but didn’t say anything. “You’ll let me know if you, uh, you know, you need anything?” Could I be any more of a bastard?

“Yeah.” She kept her arms crossed over her chest and all but bolted for the door, not bothering with her clothes. I’d have to get those back to her at some point. Preferably without Trucker knowing. Though my shirt swallowed her whole, I found myself tilting my head, staring at her retreating form, hoping to catch a glimpse of her ass as she fled.

That wasn’t gonna work out well for me. Especially as I glanced at the sheets on my bed and saw a stain of blood. Yeah. I wasn’t touching that possibility because there was absolutely no way I’d taken Willa’s virginity while so drunk I could barely remember anything. That was just too crass for words. If this situation didn’t cost me my position as vice president of Bones for abusing my power over an innocent woman, it would certainly get me killed by Trucker.

Well. If he decided to punish me, I’d take it like a man. Even if I had to stand there while the big bastard cut my Goddamned throat.

\* \* \*

## Willa

Oh, God. I was in so much trouble.

OK. So, this was salvageable. First thing I needed to do was go to the pharmacy. I could get Plan B over the counter easily enough. I believed Cyclone when he said he was clean. And he was right. I didn't remember enough about the previous night to be sure of anything. Well, other than the fact that we'd had sex.

*Sweet God, we'd had sex!*

I wished like anything I could remember it all. The flashes I had were surreal and unbelievable in how good the sex was. I could remember him working my body with a masterful touch, coaxing me into one orgasm after another until he'd simply demanded I come for him. And I had. Oh, how I had. For my first time, Cyclone had certainly made sure I'd had as much pleasure as humanly possible.

Had any other man besides Cyclone been cuddled on top of me when I woke, I'd probably have burst into a fit of giggles. Well. *After* I'd puked. Cyclone... terrified me. I had no idea why, but I'd seen the intense look he got sometimes. The way he focused on the enemy. Lord knew several of the old ladies had once had enemies. Cyclone had fought those enemies the same as every other member of Bones. The difference between him and everyone else was I got the feeling Cyclone enjoyed the violence.

Unfortunately, he was also the most beautiful man I'd

ever seen. Sure, he was rugged and all that macho shit men seemed to embrace, but he was as handsome a man as ever I'd seen. Dark blond hair with a slightly darker beard framed his face. Intense hazel eyes seemed to see everything. Before he'd let his beard grow, when he'd kept stubble or shaved his face clean, he'd been obscenely good-looking. With the beard? Yeah. The man was devastating. And every single woman in the club had her eyes set on him. I was way too young to be able to hold my own with a man like him or to even keep his attention for longer than it took to take me to bed. Likely, he'd have forgotten about me by this time tomorrow.

I stumbled to my room. It was still early, and the clubhouse was quiet. Thank God. Doing the walk of shame in Cyclone's big T-shirt wasn't something I wanted anyone to witness. The club girls would be all over me and I wasn't ready for that.

As a rule, families of club members stayed away from the club girls. That prevented problems. While old ladies were generally easygoing and docile, when it came to protecting their claim on their men there wasn't one of them who couldn't be as vicious as those men. Even Suzie, Stunner's woman and Cain's daughter, and the sweetest person I'd ever met, had taken matters into her own hands when one of the newer club girls had made a play for Stunner after he'd been voted in as sergeant at arms for Bones. It hadn't been a beating per se, but that one swing of Suzie's bat had broken both bones in the woman's forearm. And Suzie had swung that bat with a smile.

So yeah. I wasn't ready for anyone to know what I'd

been up to with Cyclone. Seemed like he wasn't too keen on anyone seeing me, either, and I didn't really blame him. I was at least fifteen years his junior, as well as the daughter of his road captain. I seriously doubted he wanted anyone finding out I'd spent the night with him.

I knew I needed to go to the pharmacy, but my head pounded, and my stomach was in knots. All I wanted to do was drink as much Gatorade as I could. Then find and take a bottle and a half of aspirin. Maybe then I'd feel human again.

## CHAPTER THREE

### **Cyclone — Six Weeks Later**

“It’s settled, then,” Ice said with a grin. “Cheetah and Millie are both patched in.” There were congratulations and applause. Both women had huge smiles on their faces. Millie looked up at Shadow, who dropped a kiss to her forehead. “Cheetah, unless you want to pass off the making of colors to someone else now, do your thing.”

“I got this.” Cheetah’s smile was brilliant. The woman was in her mid-to-late-forties now, and very beautiful. As long as she’d been with the club, and as affectionate as she was with everyone — she really was a hugger — I’d never seen her with a man — or woman for that matter — in any kind of intimate fashion. Sure, Cheetah partied just as hard as everyone in the club, but sex didn’t seem to factor into the equation. “And if Millie manages to talk Venus into patching over, I’ll do her colors in hot pink.” That got a laugh from everyone.

I glanced at my brother, and he gave me a nod and a grin. Yeah. We’d be approving any request from Venus if she decided to come be with her sister. I was glad to get this moving.

“Glad to see you men did this.” Cain came forward to me and Ice. The rest of the club was giving Millie and Cheetah their congratulations, leaving me and Ice, along with a few of the other officers, to speak with Cain. He shook his head once.

“Shoulda done it a long time ago. Guess I was too resistant to change.”

“That why you resigned?” Ice had always been more sensitive to our dad’s moods, while I was more in tune with our mother.

Cain shrugged. “Partly, maybe. I am getting too old to try to manage both Bones and ExFil. Since ExFil is what mostly funds everyone here, and most of Salvation’s Bane depends on ExFil for work as well, I decided I could best serve everyone by keeping a hands-on approach to ExFil. Ain’t sellin’ the company, and you boys ain’t quite ready to take that over.”

I snorted. “Ain’t speakin’ for Ice, but I’m not sure I’d ever want to take over ExFil. I love workin’ there, but the bureaucracy involved, especially when we get sent somewhere by the CIA, is more than I like to deal with.”

“Well, that *and* you suck at bureaucracy.” Ice grinned. “Last job you went on didn’t go so well with the CIA officer in charge.”

Cain actually chuckled. The man rarely showed any kind of affection or preference toward us when dealing with club business, and he’d gotten in my face over that incident. “I love you, son, but you will never be in charge of ExFil.”

I barked out a laugh. “Well, thank God for that. After you pulled the stunt of putting me and Ice in charge of Bones, I was worried. I’d never willingly go against you, but I’d have fought you on that one.”

Ice looked at me, his lips twitching as he fought a grin.  
“Ditto.”

“Asshole.”

“Need to talk to you, Cyclone.” Cain jerked his head in the direction of the stairs. “My office.” His mood was still somewhat light, but I could sense a shift. Whatever he needed to talk to me about was serious.

“You mean, *my* office.” Ice smirked.

Cain scowled. “You’re the president of Bones, you little shit. But the office is still mine.”

Ice chuckled and raised his hands in surrender. “Must be why I’m still waiting to move all my shit in.”

“Why don’t you go see to your woman. Give me another grandbaby to spoil.”

“Already on that one, Cain. I’ll have her knocked up before you know it.”

Cain gave a curt nod. “See that you do.” He looked at me and his gaze hardened. “Come with me.”

OK, this was different. I glanced at Ice and his expression was as puzzled as I felt. As I followed Cain down the hall, my gut tightened. Whatever this was about, it was fucking serious.

Once inside, Cain sat at his desk. “Close and lock the door, Cyclone.” He never called us Cliff and Daniel now. Once we’d been given our road names, that’s who we were to him. When I turned back, he nodded at the chair across from his

desk. "Sit."

I did, crossing my ankle over the opposite knee. "What's going on?"

"You tell me." The order was barked like a drill sergeant. It was difficult not to flinch.

"Gonna have to give me a point of reference, Cain."

"Mama said there's something going on with Trucker's daughter, Willa. Said you'd know what and could fix it."

Several feelings shot through me. First and foremost was dread. But if I were honest, there was also an odd sense of anticipation that I had no business feeling.

"Mama said that." It wasn't a question. Cain didn't answer, just stared me down. Hard. I'd seen that look a few times in my life since coming to live at Bones. He didn't use it often but when he did, no one defied him. Not even me. "I'll take care of it."

"You'll tell me what the fuck went down so I can see if I can contain the damage."

I watched my father carefully, trying to gauge what I needed to do or say. "With all due respect, Cain, you made me vice president. This is something I need to fix on my own."

He slammed his hand down on the desk, standing to pace the length of the room. "If you've done something to Willa, Truck'll kill you and I won't be able to stop him. You know that, right?"

"Fully aware. I wouldn't lift a finger to defend myself,



either. He has a right to defend his daughter as he sees fit.”

“Then fuckin’ tell me what the fuck happened!”

“That’s between me and Willa, Cain.” I had to stand my ground. Knowing Cain was trying to protect me, that he had my back as much as he could, was good to know, but I was the vice president of Bones. He needed to give me the respect of treating me as such. “I’ll talk to her. See what the problem is.”

Cain turned to face me then, his face thunderous. “The problem is, she’s gone.”

My gaze narrowed. Thinking back, I realized Trucker hadn’t been at Church, which was unusual. Especially since everyone knew we were voting to not only patch in Millie and Cheetah, but to consider women to be patched in in the future.

“Gone?” I was hyper-focused on Cain now. That sense of anticipation turning to dread in a heartbeat.

“Yeah. Trucker said Helen had missed Willa day before yesterday. When she didn’t call or text last night, Helen went looking for her. She wasn’t in her room, and there was a note saying she was leaving for a while and would get in touch with them once she was settled.”

“She’s left Bones.”

“Helen said she’d been acting odd for several days. She was worried about Willa. So was Trucker.”

“They talk to Mama?”

Cain leveled me a hard look. “If they had, trust me

when I say you'd most definitely know it."

"I'll get Data to track her cell. I'll find her."

"You better." Cain pointed an accusing finger at me. "When you do, you better fucking make whatever happened between the two of you right. You don't, vice president of Bones or not, grown-ass man or not, you'll fuckin' answer to me. Worse, you'll answer to Trucker."

"I hear you."

"Yeah? Because after you answer to both of us you'll have to answer to Angel. If she cries, Daniel, if you make your mother cry..." The threat was implied but could not be overstated.

"Understood, sir." It was the only way to answer my father with something this serious.

\* \* \*

## **Willa**

"License and registration, please."

I was in a world of trouble. I'd been so preoccupied trying to ignore my personal problems I hadn't been paying attention to anything but the traffic around me. Yeah, I'd passed a few vehicles, but there were also cars that had passed me.

The North Carolina state trooper stood next to my car at the driver's side looking appropriately menacing. He frowned as I retrieved the requested documents, my license

from my wallet and the car registration from the glove compartment.

He took both items and stalked back to his car. It had been six weeks since my encounter with Cyclone and no matter what I did, I couldn't move past it. Probably because he'd been my first. He'd been the man to take my virginity and it had been glorious. Well, what I could remember of it anyway. Bits and pieces of the night came back to me in the ensuing days, and I'd come to four conclusions.

First, I was certain it had been the best night of my life thus far. Second, I wanted a repeat. Third, there was no way I was getting a repeat. Fourth, there was no way I could see Cyclone with one of the other women in the club. Or anyone else for that matter. Which all added up to me needing a break from Somerset.

“Do you know what the speed limit in this area is, ma'am?”

My attention snapped back to the problem at hand. Which was that North Carolina officer. “I...” I glanced at my GPS which indicated the speed limit on the interstate where we were. “Sixty?”

He scowled at me. “Please step out of the car.”

“What's going on?”

“Please step out of the car,” he repeated, none too gently.

I swallowed hard and did as he ordered.

Once I was out, he shut my car door. “Turn around and

face the vehicle. Put your hands on the hood.”

“I don’t understand what’s happening. Are you *arresting* me?” My heart pounded and I broke out in a sweat. Tears threatened and I wished like hell I’d called my mother while I’d waited on the officer to come back to the car. At least they’d know something was wrong.

“Ma’am, I clocked you doing ninety-eight miles an hour. My radar gun’s been calibrated recently, but even I found that hard to believe, so I paced you for over a mile to verify what I was seeing before I hit my lights.”

“I... *ninety-eight*?” My voice squeaked. Dear God. I was in so much trouble...

“That’s correct. Were you even paying attention to anything? I was right behind you, and you never let off the gas.”

When I just stared at him, he took my shoulder and spun me around before patting me down. Once done, he took my upper arm, urged me in the direction of his car, put me in the back seat, then started reading me my rights.

After that, things were kind of a blur. I have no idea if he shut my car off or got my purse and wallet or my phone. I wanted to cry, but I was too scared to do anything other than sit there in shock.

He got in the car and turned to face me. “If you’re running from something, you need to tell me now, ma’am. I’m not about punishing someone who’s trying to get away from a bad situation, but the speed you were driving isn’t safe for you

or other drivers around you.”

“No,” I said quietly. “I didn’t realize I was going so fast.”

“You were nearly *forty* miles over the speed limit.” He looked as stern and cross as any cop would in his position. “I’m charging you with reckless driving. I’ll have your car towed. Once we get to the station, you can call someone to come get you and get the car out of impound.”

“I’m not from here, sir. I don’t have anyone to call.”

“Do you have family?”

“I do, but they’re all in Kentucky. I was, uh, on a trip.”

“Then you can call Kentucky once we get to the police station.”

“My phone is in my car with my wallet.”

“I’ll get your phone and your wallet. They’ll be checked at the station, but they’ll let you make a call.”

“How long will I have to stay there?”

“Until someone comes to pick you up. I’m sorry, ma’am, but I’m doing this for your own good. At seventy, I’d have given you a citation and let you go — but ninety-eight? You’re going to get yourself killed. Or, worse, kill someone else. Do you understand?”

I blinked several times, trying not to cry. “Yes, sir.”

“Good. I’ll be right back.”

He went to my car, turned it off and put a tag on the

driver's door before he returned with my wallet, phone, and keys. After doing a quick inventory, he sealed it in a bag with my phone and my keys.

“I locked your car. I'm putting an immediate suspension on your license in the state of North Carolina pending a hearing.”

“I'm so sorry, officer. I'm sorry.”

“I understand. I hope you understand my job is to keep everyone driving this road as safe as I can. That includes you.”

“Yes, sir.”

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Cyclone**

“What the fuck is she doing in North Carolina?” I realized the situation I’d gotten me and Willa into wasn’t ideal, but her discomfort was no reason to take off and worry her parents. She wasn’t in an unsafe situation. There was no way I’d ever hurt Willa — or any woman for that matter — simply because we’d both been drunk and not considering it wasn’t a good idea for us to be behaving like we did. At worst, seeing each other would be a bit awkward for a while, but it was just sex. Most adults had sex at some point in their life. Besides, even if she felt unsafe or thought I’d use my position to harm her in any way, all she had to do was go to her daddy and Trucker’d take care of me. And I’d be dead.

“Not sure.” Data was moving his mouse from one screen to another, alternately typing and clicking until he got the information he wanted. “Her phone’s at the Haywood County Jail. Looks like her car’s been impounded.”

“Fuck!” I scrubbed a hand over my face. “What do they have her on?”

Data’s face was hard, his brows knit together. “Speeding and reckless driving. She was arrested a couple hours ago. They’re still processing her. Looks like she was doing ninety-eight in a sixty.”

“And they arrested her for that? I realize North Carolina is real hard-ass with shit like that, but actually

*arresting* her seems a bit of an overkill.”

Data shook his head. “Not sure, brother. Like I said, she’s still in processing.”

“Reach out to them. Make her bail so she can come home.”

“I can make her bail, but she’s gonna need someone to go get her. They’ve suspended her license pending her trial date.”

I took a deep breath, then let it out slowly. Calm. I needed calm. “Just pay her bail. Get her a taxi to a hotel and send the info to my phone. And send me a virtual key so I can get in when I get there.”

“Maybe you should send Trucker after her. Or ask Ice and Dawn. Cain and Angel would go, too. You don’t seem to be in the best frame of mind for the job.”

“You’re about three seconds away from pissing me the fuck off, Data. I realize I’m a couple decades younger than you, but I’m capable of rounding up one small woman on my own.”

“Hey. Ain’t sayin’ you aren’t capable. Just sayin’ you don’t want to scare the girl to death or Trucker’ll have your hide.”

“If one more person reminds me how Willa is Trucker’s little darlin’. I think I’ll puke.” I muttered the complaint under my breath, but it was really becoming a problem. Yes, I’d fucked up. I got it. The reminder that my neck was on the line was not needed. Besides that, I already



felt bad about the whole thing. Well, not the *whole* thing. That night I'd spent with Willa would haunt me for the rest of my life. The woman was all kinds of special. So sweet and innocent, with a willingness to let me corrupt her and never question anything I did. She'd followed where I led and hadn't looked back.

“What happened between you and Willa, Cyclone?” Data's wife, Zora, narrowed her eyes at me.

I mimicked her expression just to piss her off. “What makes you think anything happened between me and Willa?”

Zora rolled her eyes. “Well, she didn't leave the club to go *find* herself or whatever excuse she gave Trucker and Helen. The rumor is she was seen leaving your room in the wee hours of the morning a few weeks ago wearing nothing but a very oversized T-shirt.”

“That's the rumor, huh?”

She shrugged. “Well, that, *and* I did some digging. Security cameras are a bitch when you're trying to hide an illicit affair.”

“Zora...” Data glanced at his wife.

She just lifted her chin stubbornly. “It's true. You saw it same as me. Though, I have no idea why he took Willa to *his* room instead of hers or someplace neutral if he didn't intend to make her his.”

Data scrubbed a hand over his beard. “Honey, we talked about this. Pretty sure both of them were more than a little drunk.”

“So? Is that any excuse for him to avoid her for weeks afterward? How would you feel if he’d done it to Eleanor or Alice?”

“No, baby.” Data reached over to squeeze Zora’s knee. “It’s not an excuse. And you know I’d kill him if it had been one of the girls.” Data didn’t look at me and I knew that was on purpose. He was trying to diffuse the situation with me and Zora, but yeah. I was very much in the wrong.

Zora looked me in the eyes, obviously wanting to drive her point home. “She’s a good girl, Cyclone. If you don’t want her, that’s fine, but don’t ignore her like she’s nothing. I get that you don’t love her or feel anything other than friendship for her. You watched her grow up so I’m sure the situation isn’t comfortable, but she deserves for you to acknowledge whatever happened between you.” She stabbed me in the chest hard with her finger. “You make it right.”

“I will. Which is why I’m going to get her.”

Before Zora could continue to chastise me, my phone buzzed in my back pocket. Being tied to a fucking phone was one thing about being vice president I fucking hated. With an annoyed huff, I pulled the thing out and checked the screen... and frowned.

“Data?” I turned the screen so he could see the number calling me. “That Willa’s number?”

His eyes widened but it was Zora who answered me. “Yes, that’s her. Answer it, Cyclone.” It was a command, pure and simple.

I gave her a look but answered the call. “Willa?”

There was a silence before she spoke. “Uh, Bohannon?”

“No, honey. It’s Cyclone.”

“Daniel? Why are you answering Bohannon’s phone?”  
I remember chastising the club girl for using my given name the night of the party. It never occurred to me to even correct Willa.

“It’s the club phone, honey. I got it when I was elected vice president. You good?” It was a testament to how off-balance she was that she called me Daniel instead of Cyclone. She definitely wasn’t expecting me to answer.

“*Déjà vu*,” she muttered before replying in a stronger voice. “Yes. I’m good. I, uh, need someone to, uh,” she cleared her throat, “come to North Carolina and pick me up.”

“Yeah. I know. Your mom got worried when she found you were gone, so Data tracked your phone. What the hell were you thinking, going that fast? And in North Carolina?”

“I’m sorry, OK?” She raised her voice, but I could hear the slight wobble. “I didn’t mean to. I had a lot on my mind and was just... *driving*.”

“Cyclone...” Data stood and gripped my shoulder. “Rein it in or give me the fuckin’ phone.”

He looked as furious as I felt. Both of us were angry at me. I took a deep breath. “Sorry, Willa.”

“Can you just tell Calliope or Cotton I need their help,

please? I tried to call both of them, but it went straight to voicemail.”

“Yeah, they’ve gone to Evansville to be with Blossom after she has that surgery on her foot.”

“Shit. I forgot.” She sighed heavily before continuing. “Would you mind maybe telling my dad? I didn’t want to call him and Mom, but I’m not sure they’ll let me call someone else since I actually talked to someone this time.”

“I’m leaving in fifteen minutes to come after you, honey. Data’s gonna work on getting you out and to a hotel. You can rest and get something to eat while I get there. Then I’ll bring you home.”

There was a pause. “I don’t want you coming for me, Cyclone.” There was a slight wobble to her voice, but she sounded almost angry as she made her wishes known. “Please send someone else.”

“Sorry, honey. It’s me you’re gettin’. Just sit tight. I’ll get you home. And we’ve got a lot to talk about.”

I caught a muttered, “Stubborn bastard,” before I ended the call. I shot off a text to Ice. He needed to know where I was going. Then I turned my attention back to Data. “Once you have arrangements made, send it to my phone. I’ll also need an address to put in my maps.”

“All over it.”

“Cyclone.” Zora wasn’t letting me ignore her no matter how badly I wanted to. “You hurt her again, I won’t go to Ice or even Trucker. I’ll go straight to Helen. After everything

she'd had to go through to get Willa into this world..." Zora closed her eyes and inhaled for patience. Even I could see how she was trying to hold on to her temper. "Then to have the threat of her own personal monster coming back for her and the baby? Helen was so traumatized she wouldn't even name the child for fear of the bad luck it might bring them both. Well, if you think you're gonna be in trouble with Trucker, just wait until Helen gets ahold of you."

"Yeah. Copy that." I tried to keep the bite out of my voice. I figured I'd already pushed it far enough with the woman. Data would only let me get by with so much. I shook my head. "Sorry, Zora. I'm only irritated at you because you're a hundred percent right."

She raised an eyebrow. "Oh, I know. At least you better know. I'm not saying you have to make Willa your old lady or anything. But you need to respect her. No matter how uncomfortable you are with what happened. Have you even checked on her since then?"

I winced. "No. Tried to keep my distance."

"I see. I suppose you did it because you believe you're so irresistible to women she'll cling or something. Got news for you, big guy. You're not nearly as magnetic as you want to think. Most of the women here want you because of the power you represent, but I think you know that."

"I don't need a lecture from you, Zora. I'm aware the club girls see a single vice president as their ticket to ruling the roost around here. And, no, I don't want a woman of my own. Not yet anyway. I've got to establish myself as an authority

figure in Bones, as well as learn a whole helluva lot before I even think about bringing a woman into my life permanently.”

“Did she indicate she expected more from you than one night?” Zora wasn’t letting this go. She intended to drive her point home and I honestly couldn’t blame her.

“No. She didn’t. And you’re right. I should have checked on her. I offered help if she needed it, but I should have followed up and made sure she was all right.”

“You absolutely should have.” She leaned back in her chair, never taking her eyes off me. “I trust that’s a mistake you won’t make again.”

“No, Zora.” I didn’t even try to keep the exasperation from my voice. “I’m not a complete dumbass. Now, while I realize you’re looking out for Willa, you’ve pushed me as far as I’m going to let you. I fucked up. I freely admit that. And I’m going to fix my fuckup. But I’m still the vice president of this club and you’re an old lady. That gives you liberties, but enough is enough.”

She stood so suddenly her chair rolled back several inches. Then Data’s tiny wife marched up to me and poked a finger into my chest hard enough to make me pay attention. “*Wrong*. It’s not nearly enough, Cyclone. Not *nearly* enough.”

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Willa**

I couldn't sit still. They'd put me in a holding cell with a couple other women, but I was the only one who seemed on edge. The other two were watching me with smirks on their faces.

"I take it you've never been arrested before?" one of them asked as she popped her gum.

I shook my head without looking at her. "No. But that's not the problem," I muttered. While it wasn't exactly what I'd call comfortable sitting in a county jail, I'd rather stay here for days — weeks even — than face Cyclone. The good news was if he was coming to get me himself, it would be several hours at minimum before he got here. I just wanted out of here so I could wrap up in a big fuzzy blanket and contemplate my life choices.

"You afraid your daddy'll whup your ass?" The other one grinned like it was all some kind of big joke.

I snorted. "If only." They looked at each other. One of them rolled her eyes, but I tried not to look at either of them. "My dad's the least of my problems."

"Willa Norvac?" A woman in a light brown uniform approached the cell.

"Yes, ma'am." I stopped my pacing and turned to face her. There was no way Cyclone could have gotten here this

fast.

“Your bail’s been posted, honey. Come with me.”

“I... but I can’t drive. The state trooper who brought me in said my license was suspended immediately until I had my court date.”

“That’s correct. The person who paid your bail also paid for a cab to a hotel until someone comes to pick you up. You can check with the hotel when you get there, but I’m pretty sure your room’s taken care of, too.”

I nodded. Maybe Cyclone had sent my dad after all. One could hope. “Thank you.”

She opened the cell door and I stepped out. Once the door slid shut, I followed the woman to the processing area once more. She handed me the bag with my things and instructed me to do an inventory. When I’d finished, I signed a form to take possession of it all and she escorted me outside. The taxi was waiting.

“Have a better night, honey,” she said with a gentle smile. “Just make sure to slow down and pay attention from now on.”

“Yes, ma’am.” I didn’t point out that I wouldn’t be driving for the foreseeable future. “Thank you.”

Once I was inside the taxi, we sped off. The guy tried to make small talk, but I was doing my best to stave off a panic attack. If I could hold it together for a little while longer, I could fall apart in private.

“Seems like you had an eventful evening.” The guy



grinned. He glanced at me every now and then through the rearview mirror. I didn't respond. *Couldn't* respond, not and keep my composure. I was trembling where I sat thinking about the coming confrontation. How was I going to get through this? I was sure I was making it out to be worse than it really was, but honestly, my emotions were off-the-charts chaotic.

The driver pulled up under an awning for a chain hotel. Nothing fancy, but reputable and nice. "Here we are."

The guy had continued to chat the whole trip. Even though I hadn't said much, he hadn't seemed to mind. Thank God it was only a fifteen-minute ride. By the time I stepped out of the cab, I was so wound up I felt like my hair was standing on end.

Sure enough, I had a room reserved and a payment method on file. Someone — presumably at Bones — had reserved a suite. Two rooms with one king-size bed and a sleeper sofa. Which meant Cyclone — or whomever was on the way — was planning on staying in the same room with me until they'd rested and were ready to head back. I was still holding out hope he'd give in and send someone else. The reminder I'd have to face someone soon didn't ease my anxiety.

I'd packed some clothing, but everything was in a suitcase — in the trunk of my car. Even though I couldn't change clothes, I still wanted a shower. I felt grimy and dirty.

The bathroom was spacious and had both a shower and a deep, jetted tub. For the first time since I'd been stopped by

that police officer, I started to calm down slightly. The simple prospect of a warm bath in a jacuzzi where the jets could pound my aching muscles for a while was welcome.

Being careful not to get the water too hot, even though I really wanted the temperature as hot as I could stand it, I ran the bath and stripped while the tub was filling. I'd just turned off the water when my phone trilled from the bathroom vanity.

I ignored the call, letting it go to voicemail. Whoever it was would leave a message if it was important. But the phone rang again. And a third time. Which was when I realized I was going to have to answer it because the caller wasn't going away.

I cringed when I saw Bohannon's name on the screen. I hadn't had a chance to change the contact name from Bohannon to Cyclone yet. He was the very last person I wanted to talk to right now. I thought about turning my phone off but knew doing so would only get me in more trouble than I was already in. God knew I didn't need more trouble. I was in over my head as it was. With a sigh of resignation, I picked up the phone — which was now starting on the fifth call — and answered it.

“Hello?”

“Why didn't you answer the phone?” His clipped demand made me cringe. I'd lived my whole life in the club and could hold my own against anyone there. Normally I wasn't the shrinking violet type. I had fire when I needed to, but these last few weeks had thrown me. I was dejected, uncertain, off-balance, and more than a little scared.

“I-I just got to the hotel. I left my phone in the bathroom.” Not a lie.

There was a beat of silence before he continued. “Sorry I snapped. I was, uh, concerned when you didn’t answer. You good?”

“Yep.” Thankfully, he couldn’t see me cringe, because I most definitely was not good. Physically, I was OK. Mentally? Not so much.

“Seems we’ve had that exchange before, huh?” When I didn’t say anything, he continued. “I’m about three hours out, honey. Data gave me the hotel information and I’ve got a digital key, so don’t be alarmed when I let myself in.”

“Please don’t call me honey.” I couldn’t make myself put any force behind my words. Mainly because, even though he was still several hours away and not right in front of me, he still intimidated me. Those feelings were more a state of mind for me because, until that night six weeks ago, I had rarely interacted with Cyclone. He was there, but off-limits. Same as I was off-limits to him, unspoken though it was. He had been a prospect, then a patched member of Bones. I was the daughter of an officer in Bones, not a club girl. Even though he was also family of an officer, he was so much older than me we’d never had a reason to interact.

“Yeah.” He sounded tired. Or maybe resigned? “Sorry. I’m trying to be gentle and not too overbearing. Data and Zora thought I might frighten you if I didn’t tone down my personality a bit.”

When he didn’t say anything more, I plucked up my

courage and pushed him a little. “I’d like to take a bath and I need to see if I can get some stuff delivered. I don’t have any clean clothes.”

“Why not?” That bossy, demanding tone was back. This was definitely the vice president of a powerful MC I was talking to now. Not the man who was trying not to frighten me.

“My suitcase is in the trunk of my car and the car is impounded.”

He grunted. “Get in touch with Zora. She’ll take care of it.”

“OK.” I wouldn’t be getting anyone else to do that stuff for me, but it wouldn’t do any good telling him that. The path of least resistance was to tell him I’d be a good little girl and do what he said, then do whatever the fuck I wanted.

Again, there was a silence. I could all but see him narrowing his eyes at me. “I’ll tell Zora to call you. She’ll probably be able to anticipate what you need, but I don’t want her to miss anything. We won’t be heading back tonight, obviously. So I want you to have everything you’ll need.” Yeah. He knew what I was about.

“I can take care of it. You’re driving. If you don’t concentrate, you’ll end up in the same position I’m in.” That came out more annoyed than I thought I was capable of with Cyclone. The man was seriously pushing all my buttons and I hated he could get to me this easily. “I know you think I’m not capable of taking care of myself but I am. I don’t need Zora to buy things for me with club money. I have a job and money of

my own.”

“Huh. You can push back. Who knew?” Did he sound... amused? Was he trying to push me over the edge?

“Am I some kind of entertainment for you? Is this all a big-ass joke?” Now my temper was spiking.

“Not at all, Willa. Like I told you before. You and I have things to discuss, and we need to be equals to do it. For whatever reason, you don’t see yourself as my equal right now. It’s my job to get you there.”

Yeah, my temper was redlining. “Bastard,” I muttered.

“Unquestionably. So hold on to all the emotions you’ve got running around inside you until I get there. Then we’ll have it out. *As equals.*”

“I’m taking a bath, then I’m going to lie down. As I’m sure you realize, I’ve not had the best of days.”

“Good. I’ll text you when I get there so you’re not startled when I walk in on you.”

I ended the call without saying goodbye because I simply couldn’t say another word to the asshole without completely losing my shit. If I lost my shit, I knew I’d cry, and I wasn’t going to do that. Not in front of him. As close to tears as I’d been before his call, now I was good and pissed. Why? Beat the fuck outta me. He hadn’t said anything overt, but his attitude was so fucking smug! He was manipulating me into getting what he wanted. In this case, he wanted a certain emotional response. Anger over intimidation. What pissed me off was, it had worked. Even worse? He was right. In order to

deal with him and this whole fucked-up situation, I needed to see us as equals. And I didn't.

“Ugh!” I yelled, not caring if anyone heard me. Surely to God the walls in a two-room suite would be thick enough to muffle the sound. I picked up the tiny complimentary bar of soap and threw it against the door. It wasn't much, but the emotional explosion helped me center myself and gain back a bit more of my backbone. After several weeks of self-pity and generally being down in the dumps, it kind of felt good. Just add it to the list of things that aggravated me about Cyclone.

While I was in the bath, I pulled up an app on my phone for a local store that delivered and started shopping for basic essentials. A change of clothes from top to bottom, toiletries, and some snacks. OK, *lots* of snacks. I had a four-pound tub of peanut butter and a forty-eight-ounce jar of grape jelly in the cart and my mouth was simply to God *watering*. And a half a gallon of milk. And a case of Coke Zero. And a big-ass barrel of fucking cheese balls.

Fuck.

I was about to place my order when my mom's name popped up on my phone screen to FaceTime. No way I was touching that. So I declined, then shot off a text.

**Me:** *In the bathtub. What's up?*

**Mom:** *Zora said you needed some clothes and stuff for an overnight stay. She said to put them in your cart and she'd take it from there.*

**Mom:** *Everything OK?*

How to answer that?

**Me:** *I know she told you what happened.*

**Mom:** *Yes. But I know there's something else going on. Tell me?*

**Me:** *I don't want to talk about it right now. I'm fine.*

I knew that wouldn't deter my mother, but I hoped she'd back off for a while. She'd get it out of me eventually — it wasn't like I could keep my secret forever — but I needed some more time. Plus, I had the “conversation” coming up with Cyclone. Talking about this with my mother wasn't high on my list of things I was just itching to do.

**Mom:** *Baby, if it's something I can help with, you know I will. Is it Cyclone? I know something happened between you two.*

How the fuck did she know that? I'd been very careful sneaking back to my room without anyone seeing me. Unless...

**Me:** *Who ratted me out?*

My temper was starting to redline again. Even if someone saw me, it wasn't their Goddamned business! If it was a club girl, I'd go medieval on her skank ass.

**Mom:** *Zora told me and made me promise not to tell your father. That's between you, him, and Cyclone. I don't care about any of that. I only care about you.*

That was my mother. She was always so gentle with everyone. She didn't like confrontation, and was always the

one trying to smooth things over.

**Me:** *I'm fine, Mom. I just need some space and time to think. Besides, you know I like road trips.*

**Mom:** *I'm here if you need me, sweetie. My first loyalty is to my kids before anyone else. I will always take your side on anything. Your father will too. I hope you know that.*

**Me:** *I do. Thanks, Mom. But I promise I'm fine.*

**Mom:** *Good. Put the things in your cart and text Zora which app you're using. She'll take it from there.*

**Me:** *I can buy my own things.*

**Mom:** *I know. Since you won't let me help with anything else, I'm asking you to let me help with this.*

That was my mother. I knew from experience she meant every word. I also knew she'd get the whole story out of me sooner than I wanted. Because she was my mom.

An hour later, two of everything I'd ordered arrived. Along with two boxes of the Christmas cakes I loved so much. The regular-size ones. Not the jumbo ones. Because the jumbo ones didn't taste the same. So, yeah. I knew I was busted all the way around. There was no way Zora hadn't figured out my secret. Not with the additions to my order.

I groaned, falling to my back on the bed. Though I had at least a day before I had to face my mom and dad, I only had a couple hours to figure out what I was going to say to Cyclone. And I had to say something because by the time we got home, everyone in the stupid club would know what was



going on because this shit never stayed quiet. Shit just got real.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **Cyclone**

It took me close to four hours to reach the hotel and Willa. Longer than it should have because I took my time. I needed to figure out how I was going to handle this situation without hurting Willa or pissing her off too badly. Her getting angry was fine. It let me know she wasn't afraid to express herself and that she wasn't frightened of me. Pissing her off too much would only push her away, and she needed to come home.

If she refused to leave with me, I'd have to get Trucker to come get her, and he'd likely give me my beating here rather than in our home compound. Because, yeah. No matter what happened in the next couple of days, I'd resigned myself to a beating. Which meant my position in the club was going to be called into question because I absolutely would not defend myself, and this club needed strong leaders. Not pussies who wouldn't fight.

Pulling into the parking lot, I exhaled a long breath. Normally, driving a cage, I'd want to get there and back as quickly as possible. Though I didn't mind a chilly ride on my bike, I was sure Willa wouldn't appreciate having to ride behind me. I'd taken an F-150 so she'd be comfortable. I had the feeling there was more to this whole situation than Willa being upset, because I hadn't sought her out after that one explosive night.

Fuck. Just thinking about the night we'd spent together got me hard as fucking steel. True, there were parts that were hazy and try as I might I didn't have real clarity, but I'd literally fucked her all night long. The only thing that was completely clear was that it had been fucking blissful.

I sat in the truck for a good fifteen minutes before finally manning up and sending Willa the text I'd promised. The last thing I wanted to do was scare her any worse than she probably already was. What I had to figure out was what had spooked her. Obviously, staying away from her had been a mistake, but how did I get her to tell me why she'd run? More importantly, how did I fix it?

One thing at a time. First, I'd go to her room and check on her. Make sure she was OK. Then I'd get her something to eat if she was hungry. After that, I'd shower and get some rest. Tomorrow, we'd talk. I'd get her to tell me what was going on, then I'd help her fix it. Once she felt better about her situation, we'd head home.

Simple.

The suite Zora had secured for Willa was on the top floor. Though I'd texted Willa, I still knocked on the door before using my phone to unlock the door and step inside.

"Willa?" She didn't answer, but her small form moved from the bedroom to the doorway of the living area. She'd piled a metric crap-ton of junk food on the counter by the tiny refrigerator. And I mean she was fucking *serious* about the junk food.

She was dressed in an oversized sleep shirt and black

leggings. Thick fuzzy socks were on her feet. She leaned against the door, looking anywhere but at me, standing on one foot while the other one rubbed at the back of the opposite ankle.

“Hey.” I set my bag on the floor before turning my full attention to her.

“Hey.” Her voice was small, and she wrapped her arms around herself.

For long moments we stood there. I had no idea what to say, and she looked like she didn’t want me anywhere near her.

The bathroom was in the bedroom part of the suite, which meant I’d have to invade her territory. I took a deep breath and pointed through the open doorway to the bathroom. “Do you mind if I clean up?”

Without a word, she turned and crossed to a chair on the other side of the room, putting the bed between us. Well. Rome wasn’t built in a day.

I snagged a change of clothes from my bag before heading to the bathroom. I took my time in the shower, enjoying the heat on my muscles after the ride in that fucking cage. Maybe I’d have been just as sore and stiff if I’d ridden my bike, but I didn’t think so. I was used to long rides. Enjoyed them. As I dried and dressed, I scowled. I’d come four hours to get Willa and she hadn’t said a fucking word to me when I’d gotten here. My ire built further when I opened the door to find her nowhere in sight.

“Willa?” I called out to her, but she didn’t answer. If she’d left the suite, I was going to spank her ass no matter how much trouble it got me in when we got back to Kentucky. “Willa!”

I stormed into the next room and came up short. She sat in a chair with her knees to her chest looking out the window. She didn’t turn her head or acknowledge me in any way. There was no way she hadn’t heard me, so this was deliberate. I ground my teeth in frustration.

“Willa, I can’t help you if you won’t talk to me.”

When she spoke, her voice was soft. Small. Lost. *Fuck*. “What do you plan on doing with your life, Cyclone?”

OK, that came out of nowhere. I took a careful step toward her, even though she was facing away from me. I didn’t want to startle her, though she could probably see my reflection in the glass. “I’ll continue to work at ExFil and help Cain all I can while helping my brother lead Bones. It worked for Cain. It will work for me and Ice too.”

“What about besides that? What about a family?”

I shrugged, not sure where she was going with this. “Hadn’t really planned on having a family other than Bones. I mean, I have my parents and brothers and sisters, but I hadn’t really thought about anything else.

She turned to look at me then, her wide, brown eyes glistening with unshed tears, but her face was an expressionless mask. “I’m pregnant, Cyclone.”

The silence stretched on while I processed what she

was saying. Pregnant. Willa. I shook my head once, not truly understanding her words. “OK.” The statement didn’t compute, like, at all. “You’re pregnant. I’m sure Trucker and Helen will be overjoyed. I mean, unless you were going someplace to have an abortion?” Everything inside me rebelled at... something. The idea that she was pregnant? The fact she had a choice to terminate the pregnancy? I was a believer that a woman needed to be able to make her own choices, but I didn’t want Willa to get an abortion. And I couldn’t figure out why.

Her expression hardened. “No, dumbass,” she snapped. “I’m not going someplace to have a fucking abortion. How can you be so obtuse?” Instead of the scared waif who’d run from my bedroom six weeks before or the emotionless, resigned woman I’d first seen when I got inside the hotel room, this Willa was full of fire. A strong protector for the child she carried. The transition made me sit up and take notice. Did the same for my cock, too.

“I wasn’t trying to be insensitive, Willa. What the fuck is going on? This is about more than you being pregnant. Having a baby isn’t the end of the world and if you really don’t want the child you can get rid of it.”

She closed her eyes and took a deep breath. If I had to read her expression, I’d say she was inhaling for patience. When she opened her eyes again, they were filled with unadulterated *fury*. “You’re the father, Cyclone. You. Doesn’t take a genius to figure that out and you’re not completely stupid.” She held my gaze with her force of will alone. “I’m pregnant with your child, Cyclone.” If the tone of her voice

and the angry fire she was spitting at me were accurate, she wasn't happy about the situation. And not because she was pregnant. She didn't want me as the father. Which suited me just fine. It did! Really!

I shook my head. "You got the morning after pill. Right?"

She rolled her eyes, clearly exasperated. Like she wanted to go, *Duh, dumbass!* "I did. But I was hungover the morning I snuck out of your room back to my own. So I didn't go to the pharmacy until the next day. Apparently, the longer you wait, the less likely the pill is to work, and it already started at only sixty-five percent efficacy. I had little better than a fifty-fifty chance it would work, and I lost."

Scrubbing a hand over my mouth, I sat on the couch next to Willa's chair, never taking my eyes off her. "Pregnant."

She stuck her chin up and her frown deepened. "Yep. Pregnant. You know. Knocked up. Bun in the oven. Preggers. Prego."

When she would have continued, I shot her a look. "I know what it means, Willa."

I waited for the panic I knew would follow to set in like a clue-by-four between my eyes. And waited. I stared hard at Willa, knowing she was right but not being able to process the whole situation. Her little pixie face reminded me of an angry Tinkerbell. I could all but see her arms at her sides, hands balled into fists as she stomped a tiny foot on the ground while fairy dust scattered around her.

A grin split my face. Holy shit. “Pregnant.”

“It’s not funny, you bastard!” She shot to her feet and kicked my shin. “Fucker!” Then she winced, not putting her foot back down. Obviously it had hurt her toes.

“I wasn’t laughing at you, honey. Honest.” My grin grew wider. “Come here.” I held out a hand to her.

“You’re delusional if you think I’m touching you right now. Not unless it’s to stab your eyes out with a spork!”

I stood and reached for her, not missing the fact that she didn’t pull back. Once she was in my arms, I rested my chin on the top of her head with my arms tightly around her. “I’m not making fun of you, Willa.” I tried to rein it in, as Data had told me to do. Tried to sound gentle and compassionate and understanding. “Not at all. I’m laughing at myself.”

“Why would you do that?” It was more of a demand than a question. She didn’t pull away or even look up and her words were muffled against my shirt.

“Because the thought of you pregnant with my baby didn’t send me running in a screaming frenzy to the fuckin’ hills? Because your daddy’s gonna kill my fuckin’ ass, then resurrect me so he can do it again? Several times. He’ll probably make an Olympic sport out of finding ways to make my death as miserable as possible. And you know what?” I waited until she looked up at me with angry, glistening eyes before speaking again. “It’s worth it.”

She frowned. “Why would you say that, Cyclone? You



don't want a woman. Everyone says so. Why would me having your baby make you smile?" The longer she talked, the more thunderous her expression became. "Is this some kind of power trip for you? 'Cause your little guys can fucking swim?" She shoved out of my arms and stalked away, back toward the bedroom. "What a fucking asshole," she muttered as she disappeared through the open door.

"This isn't a power trip, Willa." I tried to smother my grin. "I'll be honest with you. I'm not sure why it makes me smile, you being pregnant with my baby, but it does."

"Well, it doesn't make me smile!" She whirled around where she stood next to the bed, pointing a finger at me. "You didn't want anything to do with me! Now you're happy about this? Ugh! You're such a bastard!"

I blinked several times while I tried to get a grip on reality here. There was no way in hell I should be happy about this. None whatsoever. Not only was she right that I didn't want a woman, but a baby would tie us together forever...

And there went my cock. Fucking bastard sprang hard almost instantly at the thought of her being in my life permanently. Not as my woman or anything, but I liked knowing she'd always be there. Which only led to more questions. Fuck.

No! I needed to focus on all the reasons this was a bad idea. I didn't want a kid. Not yet anyway.

"You're right. Look, honey. I get it. I'm sorry."

I reached out and tried to take her hand, but she shook

it away.

“No.” She stepped away, her voice quaking with emotion. “You don’t get to touch me anymore.”

I felt a pang of regret as I watched her retreat to the bed. “Willa, I’m sorry. I don’t know what I’m feelin’.”

She whirled around, her face a mask of fury. “You don’t have to know what you’re feeling. I only thought you should know. I mean, you were right. It only took one mishap.”

I was probably the biggest bastard in the world for even thinking about wanting a baby when I wasn’t even sure if I wanted a relationship yet, but I found myself in awe of this whole situation. It hit me out of nowhere and I didn’t trust the feeling. Not yet. I needed to think about this and what her revelation meant long term. Then I’d figure out what I wanted to do about Willa in my life. “OK, honey.”

“Don’t call me honey! I’m not your honey! I’m not your *anything!*” With her small explosion of anger came two tears, which she wiped away with an angry swipe of her hand.

“I’m making this worse.”

“You think?” she snarked.

I raised my hands in what I hoped was a non-threatening gesture. “It was a reflex, Willa. A chauvinistic one, but a reflex. I won’t do it again.”

“Good.” She still looked supremely pissed, and I couldn’t blame her. We stood there in silence for a moment, and I felt the heat of her glowering gaze burning into me.

Finally, she turned away and walked over to the window.

“Look, I’m sorry.” I scrubbed a hand over my face. The news had rocked me, but instead of draining my energy as the adrenaline wore off, I found myself... energized. “I’m not trying to be a jerk. I just don’t know what to say.”

She sighed, her shoulders slumping slightly. “Then don’t say anything,” she said. “Just let me be mad for a while. Then maybe I can talk about this like an adult.” Willa took a few shaky breaths before turning back around. The anger had melted away, replaced with sadness and a sense of regret that seemed to come from somewhere deep within her. “I’m sorry. I have no right to be angry at you. I’m an adult. I can deal with this.”

“Sure, you can deal with this. You’ve got a core of steel inside you just like your mother, but you don’t have to deal with this all on your own. I’m here to help you. It’s as much my mistake as it was yours.”

She scowled again. “Mistake,” she hissed. “You want to know what my mistake was?” I opened my mouth to answer but she plowed on. “My mistake was being attracted to you in the first Goddamned place. You’re not worth my infatuation or attraction.” She put one hand over her stomach, like it was churning uncomfortably. When she shoved past me and sprinted for the bathroom, I realized I was right.

Willa vomited over and over, retching so hard it made me wince. I ambled over to the bathroom to find her leaning over the toilet, struggling to hold her hair out of the way and stay upright at the same time.

Before I realized what I was doing, I found myself gathering her hair to hold it back in a ponytail at the back of her head before snaking an arm around her middle to hold her up. If she noticed, she was too sick to say anything.

It seemed like she was sick forever. Not constantly but in waves. Between times, she'd sit back, whimpering and spitting in the toilet every few seconds before flushing. A couple minutes later, it would start again. All the while, I stayed with her, murmuring nonsense to try to comfort her when I had no clue what to do. I knew one thing. We weren't leaving tomorrow. She needed rest and care before taking a four-hour trip back to what was likely going to be a very uncomfortable situation for her. Fuck. For both of us.

Eventually, she was done. She pulled away from me and lay down on the cool, tiled floor for a while. I stood and got a wet cloth and a glass of water before curling up on the floor beside her. I wiped her face gently until she looked up at me, taking the cloth from me to finish up. After she'd gotten her breath back, she sat up and rinsed her mouth before spitting in the toilet once more and flushing.

"Let's get you to bed," I said, trying to sound gentle.

She nodded, still pale and exhausted, but struggling to her feet. I stood as well, steadying her as we went into the bedroom. I wanted to pick her up and carry her, but I was afraid I'd shatter the fragile truce we had going on. I watched as she crawled onto the bed, lying on her side and curling up into a ball. Then I stood in the doorway for a few moments, debating whether or not to leave. When I heard a muffled sob,

I knew there was no way I was leaving her alone.

With a sigh, I walked back to the bed and climbed in beside her. She allowed me to pull her into a loose embrace, burying her face in my chest. That's how we stayed, holding each other for a long time, until the sobs had stopped and her breathing evened out. Looking down at her, I could see the tear stains under her eyes and on her cheeks. She looked so lost and forlorn even as she slept it hurt my heart. When had this woman gotten so thoroughly under my skin?

Was it because I knew she was carrying my child? Or was it the woman herself? I was beginning to think it was a lot of both. Even if she chose to abort the child, I knew I'd never stop thinking about Willa. Mainly because there hadn't been an hour during the last six weeks when I hadn't thought about her.

With a sigh, I pulled the covers higher over her sleeping form. I wasn't sure what I was going to do or how much of an input she'd let me have in this situation, but I knew I wanted to be in her life and the baby's. Assuming she decided to keep the child.

Which brought up another dilemma. She was nineteen. I was thirty-five. The age gap wasn't insurmountable, but everyone was different. Just because her parents and mine had a similar age gap, as did several members of Bones and their old ladies, didn't mean she'd accept me even if I was interested in keeping her for my own. Which I wasn't. *I wasn't!*

Tomorrow. I'd figure it out tomorrow. Right now, I was

tired and needed sleep. If I wasn't in top mental condition when she woke, there was no way I could hold my own with her. Especially not with the bombshell she'd dropped.

With that last thought, I settled her just that little bit closer, dropped a kiss on the top of her head, and closed my eyes. Soon after, sleep took me.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### **Willa**

I woke up warm and cozy, a comforting, familiar scent surrounding me. It took me a couple of seconds to realize that Cyclone was in the bed with me and was wrapped around me in an intimate embrace. I glanced up to see his sleeping face, illuminated by the soft moonlight coming in from the window. His brows furrowed slightly, as if he was deep in thought, and I found myself wondering what he was dreaming about.

I was pulled out of my musing when the reason I'd woken up nudged me in the bladder. I knew it was impossible for me to feel the baby move at this point, but my bladder didn't care. I extracted myself from Cyclone's arms and padded to the bathroom. My whole body hurt. I probably hadn't moved since I'd fallen asleep.

Once I'd done my business, I washed my hands and brushed my teeth. Looking in the mirror, I studied my reflection for a long time. My eyes were bloodshot from my bout of sickness and crying, and there were dark circles under them. My cheekbones stood out sharply. It was a shock to see how my appearance had changed in only six weeks. I figured it was more from stress than the actual pregnancy itself, but I had started getting sick a week and a half ago and vomited most days at least once.

I splashed some cold water on my face and vowed to move on to the next step, whatever that was. I'd figure it out.

The first thing I needed to do was to try and get some sleep. I'd need it in the morning when I headed back with Cyclone. With that thought, I turned to head back into the bedroom.

When I opened the door, I saw that Cyclone had moved to the edge of the mattress and sat up. Waiting on me?

He cleared his throat. "Hey." He stood slowly, moving toward me. "I didn't want to bother you, so I stayed here. Thought you'd want some privacy." He looked back over his shoulder at the bed, waving a hand in that general direction. "Are you all right? Do you need anything?"

I nodded, but the tightness in my chest told a different story. I couldn't keep up the lie any longer. "No, Cyclone. I'm not okay. I haven't been since that night." My voice came out shaky, betraying my emotions. God, I was so done with crying! He wasn't worth crying over and I was just too exhausted to spend that much energy again.

Cyclone's expression shifted from concern to worry. "What can I do to help, Willa? That's all I want. To help. To make things better for you."

"Why are you here, Daniel?" It was the first time I'd called him by anything other than his road name except for when he'd answered the phone and I'd expected to talk to Bohannon.

He was silent for a long moment, and I thought maybe he wasn't going to tell me or that he would make up some bullshit reason. Instead, he scrubbed a hand through his hair and muttered his response. "I wish to God I fuckin' knew." Without looking at me, he held out a hand. "Come back to



bed. We're not heading back in the morning because you need rest. There's no reason to hurry back, especially when we have stuff between us that needs to be resolved."

"I don't want to talk about it right now."

"I know. And I'm not sure I'm ready to talk either. There's so much rolling around in my mind and I need a chance to process it all."

"I know what you mean," I muttered. "I've had a few days to deal with it and I'm still not there."

"Then let's rest here and relax for a while. Tomorrow. The next day. Whatever it takes. Once we've both had time to come to terms with what's already happened, we'll figure out what's going to happen next. Together."

I wanted to deny him, but the truth was, he was right. Any decision I made, he deserved to be a part of, if he wanted to be. He hadn't asked for this any more than I had but done was done. He was also right that I'd had far longer to process being pregnant than he had.

"You're not stupid, Cyclone. You knew when I told you I was pregnant the baby was yours."

He gave a heavy sigh. Did I imagine the tinge of red that spread over his cheeks? "Yeah. I knew. Was hoping I was wrong, but I knew."

"Do you still wish you were wrong?" I hated how small I sounded, that his words affected me so much when he obviously didn't want to be in this situation. Also, that thought made me feel like a hypocrite because I didn't want to be

pregnant either. But the fact was, I wouldn't want this baby to be anyone's other than Cyclone's.

He didn't answer immediately. Instead, he held my gaze for several moments, taking a couple of slow, deep breaths. "I can't answer that honestly, Willa. Give me some time to think. Like I said, we've got time. I have no intention of leaving here until we've both decided what we want to do. Can you give me that?"

I lowered my gaze. "Yeah. I can do that. I want any decision I make to be rational and I'm not capable of that right now."

Cyclone's hand enveloped mine as he led me back to the bed. "Come on." He urged me to climb in first. I followed his direction, sliding under the sheets, feeling the cool softness of the material against my skin. He climbed in beside me, his body warm and welcoming as he pulled me back against him, spooning his body around mine.

God, I loved being in his arms. It had felt just as good that morning when I'd woken up so hung over. The longer we lay there quietly, the more the tension between us faded away to be replaced by a sense of comfort I hadn't felt before. In that moment, it felt like everything would be all right. Cyclone would help me. He'd make sure I had what I needed in material things and possibly even emotional support. We might not be in a relationship or be a couple, but I knew he'd do right by me. If not, my daddy and his momma would probably kill him. But that wasn't who Cyclone was. He wouldn't shirk his responsibilities for any reason. Which was

another thing I worried about.

“I don’t want you to try to forge some kind of relationship with me out of duty or obligation. You can be part of the baby’s life if you want to be without us being a couple. The last thing I want to do is make you miserable.”

“You won’t, honey.” There was a pause and he stiffened. “Sorry. Slipped out.”

Try as I might, I couldn’t suppress the giggle that escaped. “It’s OK. I might have overreacted about the nickname. Just a touch.”

“For what it’s worth, it’s an endearment I mean. You’ve always been sweet as honey as long as I’ve known you.”

“I’ve had a crush on you since I was old enough to think boys weren’t gross.” I wasn’t sure why I let that slip. It probably made me seem even more pathetic than I already did.

He sighed. “I’m sorry this happened, Willa. But I’d be a Goddamned liar if I told you the whole situation didn’t affect me. I’m still working through my emotions, but I have a need to be close to you. Holding you... it soothes me somehow. I can’t explain it any better. At least not yet.”

That surprised me.

I snuggled deeper into Cyclone’s warm embrace, feeling his heartbeat against my back. His words touched me deeply, and I could feel the emotions swirling inside me. It was a strange feeling, being so vulnerable with him. “It soothes me too.” My voice was barely above a whisper, and I

don't know if he heard me.

I have no idea why I decided to turn over to face Cyclone. I looked up into his face and found an intensity in his eyes that made my mouth go dry. My pulse quickened as I studied him. What was happening between us was more than just a comforting embrace and reassurance. It was a connection, a bond I couldn't explain and didn't want to think about right now. I was still angry at the man. At least, I knew I needed to be. As if magnetized, our lips met, and a spark ignited. And I was lost.

We kissed lightly at first, then he deepened the kiss and I followed willingly. Eagerly. Our bodies molded together as if they belonged to each other. The world melted away, leaving only the two of us lost in pleasure. Cyclone's hands moved down to my hips, pulling me even closer against him as we continued to kiss.

My mind was spinning, trying to understand what was happening and trying to decide if I wanted to push him away. I probably needed to, but did I really want to? No. I knew I didn't want him to stop. Cyclone ignited a fire inside me that I had no hope of getting under control. There was a sense of euphoria as I surrendered to the moment, my body entwined with his. He pulled back slightly to look at me, his eyes clouded with pleasure.

"I'm not sure what will happen tomorrow, but I want tonight. And it's not just about sex."

I blinked up at him, confused and lust stupid. "It's not?"

“I thought it was, baby, but my feelings are so far from ‘just sex’ it’s not even funny.”

“But... you don’t want a woman.” Confusion warred with hurt, and I put a little more distance between us. “If you don’t want sex with me, just say so. It’s not like I’d force myself on you.” Did I sound bitter? Maybe. I did push back then, but his arms tightened around me, not letting me move away from him like I desperately needed to.

“I don’t want a woman in my life. At least...” He shook his head, his brow furrowing. “I didn’t. Now, I’m not so sure.”

My heart beat so hard it was a roar in my ears. How many nights had I lain awake wishing he’d seek me out? Had I stopped wanting him after that disastrous morning after? No. I hadn’t. I wasn’t sure I’d ever stop wanting Cyclone. “I know you probably won’t believe me considering I came to that party for one reason, but I don’t think I can do casual sex again. You were... I mean... I hadn’t ever...”

“I know.” He smiled tenderly at me, stroking my cheek with the pad of his thumb. “At least, I figured. There was blood on the sheets. I was your first lover. Wasn’t I?” Then he stilled, his eyes narrowing. “Why did you come to that party?”

I snorted. “To get laid. That’s why I’d started drinking. To keep my courage up.”

“So, any of my brothers would have done?” The emotions on his face changed so rapidly it was hard to keep up. But I thought I saw anger, bitterness... maybe even a touch of hurt.

“No. I meant it when I said I’d had a crush on you for a long time. While I admit I wasn’t sure whose lap I fell into, my intention was always to try to seduce you.”

Trembling in his arms, I whimpered. I’d laid myself bare to him. He knew how long I’d wanted him. He knew he’d taken my virginity. And he was still in bed with me, about to make love to me again. Or, rather, he was about to have sex with me again. At least, I kind of hoped that’s what we were going to do.

“So it was me.”

“Yes, Daniel. It’s always been you.” My voice was barely above a whisper. I knew it was a bad idea, that it probably made me too stupid to live, but I wanted this one last time. We might never do this again, might never share all this passion I thought might affect both of us, but I wanted it. One time. Sober so I could enjoy it fully.

He stroked my cheek, giving me a gentle smile before leaning in to kiss my lips softly. When he pulled back, he pressed his forehead to mine. “Then, let’s do it right this time. We’re both stone-cold sober. We both know I’ve already gotten you pregnant. There’s an attraction between us I can’t fight and I ain’t even sure I want to try.”

“Cyclone...”

“Shh...” He kissed me again before continuing. “I ain’t promisin’ a happily ever after, but I’d like to at least explore what it’s like to have you in my life, Willa. If it doesn’t work out, at least we’ll know.”

“One day at a time?”

“That’s it exactly.” I bit my lip, glancing away from him, but Cyclone caught my chin gently and turned my face back up to his. “I promise I won’t betray you, honey. I won’t slip behind your back and fuck other women. While we’re working this out, it’s me and you. No one else. If either of us decide it’s not right, we’ll talk to the other about it before we move on. Yes?”

That sounded better. “You promise?”

“I do. And I never break my word. It’s something Cain taught me almost from the moment me and Cliff came to live at Bones. I’m not perfect, as evidenced by the way I’ve handled this situation so far, but I never break my word.”

I nodded my head. “Then yes. I’d like to see what happens next.”

He grinned before leaning into me, pressing his lips to mine once more. Nothing had ever felt more right. Now that we’d come up with a plan — even if it was to wait on making any decisions — I felt better.

I’d admitted to having feelings for him. Well, at least as much as he’d admitted to feeling something for me. For a man like Cyclone to tell me he was confused about his feelings, to admit he didn’t know what he needed to do was oddly reassuring. No matter how much I wished he was so madly in love with me he’d embrace having the child we’d conceived, I was glad he was taking his time to work through all the angles. The last thing I wanted was for either of us to rush into something. No matter how much I truly wanted it. I

absolutely would not be miserable because I'd chased a dream.

With a sigh, I surrendered to Cyclone. His kisses were sweet and hot. I loved the way he made me feel. Like I was the most important person in his world. The way he held me so carefully, stroking my back with one hand while he cradled my head with the other.

His tongue swept into my mouth, stroking in an erotic slide. It took minutes of his drugging kisses before I was a whimpering, moaning, needy mass of nerve endings. Had it been this good the last time? And this was only his kiss!

"I want you," I whimpered as he pulled back. I didn't want him to stop. Not now. Maybe not ever.

"Good," he murmured. "Because I want you too."

His mouth found mine again, deepening the kiss until I was clinging to him. My arms circled his neck, my hands were buried in his hair. His body moved against mine, and I reveled in the feel of his hard muscles and every inch of hot skin that pressed against mine.

Cyclone groaned against my lips, and his hands slid up my side to cup one breast. I gasped, arching my back into his touch.

"You're driving me crazy," he murmured against my mouth. "You taste so fuckin' sweet."

"It's a two-way street," I mumbled, needing to get closer to him. I needed to get my clothes off so he could caress my skin.

It felt like everything faded away and it was just the



two of us. For those few moments, we were suspended in time, connected and intertwined with no worries other than exploring each other.

I was lost in the sensations of his hands, his mouth, his body against mine. Every movement caused a wave of pleasure to spread throughout my body. I felt myself melting with each touch, growing more and more addicted to him.

When Cyclone moved off me, pushing himself up on stiffened arms, I whimpered in protest.

“Shh, honey. I’m not going anywhere.” He used one hand to reach back between his shoulder blades and strip off his shirt. Tattooed muscles rippled with every movement. Brawny arms, defined chest, and ripped abs seemed to dance before my avid gaze.

“Daniel...” I breathed his name like a prayer. And maybe it was. “Please don’t break my heart.” The words slipped out before I could censor them. Even as I pleaded with him, I knew he was destined to do just that. This man would break my heart because Cyclone was a force of nature, not someone to be controlled. No matter what he thought now, he’d grow to see me and any child I carried as trying to control him. Even knowing that, I still wanted this time together. I wanted to remember every blistering second of what we were about to share.

“Trust me, Willa,” he said as he gently removed my sleep shirt. “One day at a time. One moment at a time. We’ll get through tonight together. Then we’ll take on tomorrow. Then the next day. OK? One day at a time.”

I nodded and let my hands find his chest. I caressed the skin beneath my palms up to his shoulders and down his muscled arms.

Then he lowered his head to my breast, and I cried out when his lips closed over one nipple. He pulled gently, sucking first one peak then the other. Whenever he switched sides, his fingers toyed with my flesh until I was crying out and writhing beneath him.

“Such sweet nipples,” he rasped against my skin. “Could suck on these forever.”

“Oh, God!” I cried as he sucked me harder, stretching my nipple until it slipped from his mouth with an audible pop.

“Need more.” Cyclone’s needy growl was an aphrodisiac.

He trailed his mouth down my torso to just above my mound. Had he done this last time? I thought he had. My breath came in sharp pants and my body was coated in a fine sheen of sweat. I was lightheaded and my pussy tingled with excitement. Then his mouth closed over my clitoris, and I was lost.

Holding my thighs apart, Cyclone licked and sucked at my lips, growling against my wet folds as he dragged his tongue from pussy to clit over and over again. Every touch of his mouth and every stroke of his fingers had me on edge. When he finally plunged two fingers inside me, I came in a hard, wet rush, screaming his name.

I was lost in the sensations of his hands and his mouth

on my body. Every movement caused a wave of pleasure to spread throughout my body. I felt myself melting with each touch, growing more and more addicted to him.

When Cyclone finally drew away, I felt like I'd been deprived of something vital. But he only crawled up my body, kissing me once again. I tasted myself on his lips and tongue, but it only inflamed me further.

He sat up on his knees to shove his sleep pants from his hips. When he did, his cock bobbed proudly from a dark thatch of curls beneath that hard Adonis belt. He was, in a word, mesmerizing.

“You're so beautiful,” I murmured, reaching out to stroke the length of him.

He groaned and closed his eyes, enjoying my touch. I let my fingers travel up and down slowly before grasping his base and stroking up slowly. I had a vague recollection of touching him like this before. Of stroking his cock until he batted my hand away and sank into my pussy. Would he do it again?

Cyclone hissed out a breath before grabbing my wrist. “Stop,” he murmured. “You're driving me fuckin' crazy, woman.”

He leaned down and kissed me deeply before shifting his hips back. Then he pushed forward into my wet pussy. I gasped as he filled me, eyes wide and lips parted as pleasure unlike anything I could remember before washed over me.

His thrusts were slow and steady as his gaze held mine

captive. He seemed to be gauging my every reaction, looking for... something.

Cyclone growled in pleasure and then grabbed my wrists and pinned them to the bed as he lay fully on top of me. His eyes glinted with a feral intensity that sent a thrill of anticipation through my body. This wasn't a man unaffected by what we were doing. He was deeply affected. It might have been only lust, but he wasn't as in control as I'd have thought he would be. I wouldn't say I was at all torn up about it either. I loved this intensity, the way his gaze ate me up.

He increased his thrusts, pushing deeper — my breath caught in my throat as I felt the orgasm building inside me. I wanted to be in this moment forever, a part of this wildness that consumed us both. When I couldn't take it any longer, I cried out, my hips bucking wildly as I came with a brutal intensity. My pussy clamped down on him, and Cyclone let out his own deep shout of completion. Hot cum filled me and I welcomed the sensation, letting the pleasure wash over me as it would. Another powerful orgasm rocked me, and I cried out his name as I clung to him as tightly as I could with arms and legs.

When it was over, when we'd both relaxed somewhat, I was still panting, trying to catch my breath. It was the most wonderful experience of my life. I couldn't help but wonder if he'd repeat it before we left for Kentucky.

Cyclone pulled away from me and rested his forehead against mine, his breathing still labored. "You," he said quietly. "Your body was made to be pleased."

He looked into my eyes and smiled before pressing a soft kiss to my lips. I smiled back, feeling my cheeks heat up as I wrestled with the urge to hold him to me. I didn't want this to end. Not yet.

With one final kiss, Cyclone pushed himself off me and slid from the bed. "I'll be right back, baby. Don't get up."

He stalked to the bathroom. I heard water running, then he returned with a cloth. I tried to close my legs, but he gently pushed them apart before cleaning my pussy. I blushed. The act was too intimate. Almost like he really cared about me.

Then he tossed the cloth back in the direction of the bathroom and climbed back into bed with me. Pulling me close, he tilted my chin up for another, gentle kiss.

"Get some rest. We'll get breakfast in the morning, then talk." He smiled down at me. "You good?"

"You seem to always be asking me that same question."

He chuckled. "Yeah, I guess I do."

"But yes. I think I am good."

"Honey, you're better than good. You're absolutely fuckin' perfect."

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### **Cyclone**

When I woke up, I had a satisfying feeling of *déjà vu*. My head was resting on the most perfect set of tits I'd ever had the pleasure of lying on, with one pert nipple right in front of my face. Naturally, I shifted just that little bit so I could lave it with my tongue.

Willa moaned in her sleep. I glanced up at the peaceful look on her face. One small hand was tunneled in my hair. When I flicked her nipple again, her fingers flexed and she moaned louder, this time arching her back slightly. I couldn't help but grin.

I'd fucked her several times over the hours we'd been in bed. Each time I took her, I wanted more. The pleasure was indescribable.

OK, no. I didn't fuck her. What I did with Willa this time wasn't fucking. That was what we'd done the first night. This was... If I had to put a name on it, I'd say it was making love. Thanks to Cain and Angel, I'd been able to learn what love was and how it felt, but this was different. Not only did I have this all-consuming need to make everything right in Willa's world, but there was a protective possession to my feelings. I wanted her with me and only me. Any other motherfucker who even looked at her would feel my wrath.

I pulled back from her nipple and lay there smiling. Willa stirred again and started to wake up. I leaned up and

kissed her sweet lips before whispering in her ear, “Good morning, beautiful.” That was when I heard it. She laughed, like the tinkling of a bell.

Her lips lifted and her deep brown eyes were heavy-lidded with pleasure as her lips stayed curled in happiness. “Good morning, Cyclone.” I pulled her closer and kissed her, long and deep with a tenderness I’d never shown a woman. Had never wanted to show a woman.

We lay like that for a while, tangled together. I felt more content than I ever had before, and I realized it was all Willa. I’d never felt so alive, and I never wanted this closeness I’d found with her sometime in the night to end.

I’m not sure when those feelings built inside me, but something had clicked during the night when we’d made love. I was still struggling to figure out what those emotions all meant, but I knew I had to explore them with her. Only her. The thought of doing what I’d done with Willa through the night and into the wee hours of the morning with anyone else was a hard no. Something inside me had shifted. And I wasn’t sure what to do about it.

“You want a shower?” I stroked her hair, still laying half on top of her and not in any hurry to move.

She bit her lip, looking unsure of herself. When she met my gaze again, she had a shy, almost pleading look on her face. “Will you come with me?”

I barked out a laugh. I wasn’t sure what I expected her response to be but that wasn’t it. “Thought you’d want some privacy, but I’m all for running my soapy hands over your

body.”

That got a giggle from her. Given the glorious, eager smile she gave me, I knew I’d said the exact right thing.

She pushed at me, and I moved off her, so she could get out of the bed. “That sounds perfect.”

Willa led the way, for which I would be eternally grateful. The woman had an ass to make angels weep.

I adjusted the water and let her step in ahead of me. When I stepped in behind her, she slid into my arms like we’d done this a thousand times. She put her arms around my neck and pressed against me like she was starved for my touch. I wasn’t altogether sure I wasn’t starved for hers.

“Cyclone,” was all she said, but it was filled with so much desire it made my heart skip a beat.

My heated gaze dropped to her lips, and I kissed her like I’d found my home in her. Like I’d never want to stop. And the thing was, I might not ever want to. And I wasn’t altogether sure how I felt about needing her this much.

I bent my head and kissed her. Not a sensual, sexy kiss, but a deep, abiding one that spoke of all the emotions I was feeling. I kissed her long and slow in an effort to make her understand how deeply I was in. How deeply we were in. Because I sure as hell wasn’t the only one feeling this shit. Willa wasn’t *all* in and I didn’t blame her. After the way I’d treated her, not just the past six weeks by ignoring her, for not checking on her, but for the way I started out when she first called.



Pulling back, I pressed my forehead against hers. I needed a moment to process my thoughts. We'd said we'd talk today but I wasn't sure I was ready. I mean, how did I tell her I was falling for her when I wasn't even sure I could admit it to myself?

"I'm sorry, Willa."

She froze, stiffening in my arms. I didn't let her go, but did reach for the shower gel with one hand. I squirted a stream over her breasts. Setting the bottle back on the shelf, I used the same hand to rub the gel into a gentle lather.

"Sorry? For what?"

"For the way I treated you. From that very first night."

"What?" She looked up at me, her eyes wide, shocked.

"I've fucked things up with you from the first Goddamned moment you fell into my lap. And I'm so fuckin' sorry."

She gave a little shake of her head. I pulled her closer so her soapy breasts were mashed against my chest. I continued to rub my hands over her skin, this time down her back all the way to that pert ass of hers. "I don't understand." Her voice broke, tears gathering in her lovely eyes.

"Honey, I should never have taken advantage of you that night. Being drunk was no excuse. You were drunk too, and I'm not sure you would have made the same choices if you hadn't been.

"Daniel, I got drunk so I could get up enough courage

to have sex with someone.” She frowned, then shook her head, lowering her gaze to my chest as if thinking through what she wanted to say. “No, that’s not exactly right. I wanted it to be you.” She looked up into my eyes again. “I’d hoped it would be you, but had no expectation you’d have me.”

“If I’d been sober, I wouldn’t have.”

She winced and tried to push away. “Gee, Cyclone. Tell me how you really feel.”

“Stop fighting me, Willa,” I commanded gently. “Let me finish.”

“Is this really the best time to talk? I mean, I feel a little too exposed. You know. Because I’m naked.” Her temper was starting to spark again. And I’d be Goddamned if my cock, the fucking prick, didn’t respond.

I chuckled. “Yeah, baby. I think this is the perfect time. This way, you can’t get away from me.”

She glared up at me. “You just said you didn’t want me! What the fuck, Cyclone?”

“No. That’s not what I said. I said I wouldn’t have taken you to bed if I’d been sober.” I knew I was grinning, and I was probably a crazy bastard, but I loved it when she got snippy with me.

“It’s the same thing!” She shoved at me harder, seriously trying to get away this time. “Let me go, asshole!”

“Shh... calm down and let me finish. Do you seriously think I’d have taken you to bed, with you drunk off your ass, knowing who the fuck your daddy is if I’d been in my right

mind?” I raised an eyebrow at her. She stilled and looked wary as if sensing a trap. “Never thought there was enough alcohol in the fuckin’ world to make me do what I did with you that night. No. What I should have done was ask your father’s permission to make you my old lady.”

“Old lady? You never even noticed me. Not as anything other than a child.”

“Oh, I noticed you, all right. Though, I admit, I never expected to have you in my bed.” I backed her up so the spray hit her back, rinsing her with gentle strokes of my hands under the water. Then I turned her around and did the same to her front, cupping her tits as I did. Despite her ire, she moaned as I gently squeezed the slight mounds.

She let her head fall back to rest on my shoulder and I circled her small body with my arms, resting my mouth at her neck. I bit down gently, and she squealed.

“What I’m trying to say here,” I spoke against her throat, inhaling the sweet scent of herbal soap and delicious woman, “is that I shouldn’t have taken your virginity when we were both drunk and unable to make rational decisions. Not taken you to bed like an animal. The next question is, if we hadn’t both been shit-faced, would I have made a move on you? The answer to that is probably not.” Again, she stiffened but I plowed on. “But, now that it’s done, we’re gonna get to know each other. Just like we discussed last night. I’m gonna talk to your daddy and take my punishment like a man. After that, assuming he lets me live, we’ll see if we can stand each other long enough to form a relationship.” I kissed her

shoulder before sliding my hand down to cup her pussy. “You with me?”

She shivered and made an affirmative sound. We both stood there, barely moving as the warm water ran down our bodies. I squeezed her once before turning her in my arms so she was facing me once again.

I urged her to lift her leg to hook over my hip and with one smooth thrust, I slid inside her.

Willa gasped, her eyes going wide before she whimpered and clutched at my shoulders. “Daniel! Oh, God!”

“Come, honey. Do it now!”

She screamed, clamping down on my cock as I thrust in and out of her. Her orgasm wanted to trigger my own, but I wasn't ready yet.

I pulled out, spinning her around and mashing her up against the shower wall, lifting her leg to place it on the low bench. One arm around her waist, the other at her hip, I shoved back inside her, caging her in with my body.

Willa shuddered against me, crying out in surprise when I started to move. I couldn't seem to get close enough to her. Couldn't get deep enough. Couldn't get... enough!

“Fuck... Fuck!”

I slammed into her as she bucked and tried to push back, meeting me thrust for thrust. Our mingled cries and grunts filled the bathroom as I finally surrendered to her sweet body.

With a brutal shout, I came deep inside her. Willa came with me, her body milking mine for all I had to give her. When it was over, her legs gave out and she sagged back against me. I knew how she felt. My own legs felt like jelly.

With shaking hands, I managed to get the water turned off before slumping on the bench with Willa in my arms. We were both breathing heavily. My heart pounded in my ears.

I reached for a towel on the rack beside the shower, drying first her, then me. “Come on, honey. Let’s get dressed, then figure out where the fuck we’re gonna go from here.”

“All right.” She looked up at me with something I hadn’t thought I’d see, especially not this soon. Complete trust.

As I gazed into the fathomless dark pools of her eyes, I knew without a doubt she had me. I was well and truly fucked. Because there was no fucking way I would let Willa go. She was mine.

It was time I started acting like it.

## CHAPTER NINE

### **Willa**

After we showered — and made love — we dressed and went to breakfast. He took me to a little diner that had the best pancakes I'd ever eaten. I'm pretty sure the sounds I made as I ate were embarrassing, but Cyclone only grinned.

“Someone was hungry.” He had a smug look on his face, like he'd accomplished a monumental task.

I shrugged. “What can I say? When it's good, it's good.”

That got a bark of laughter out of him. His eyes crinkled at the corners, and I couldn't help but smile in return. I hadn't ever seen him look so relaxed before. I hadn't ever seen him look so carefree before.

Not even in bed.

We talked over breakfast, about nothing of consequence really, but it was nice. It felt... right. Like we belonged together.

When breakfast was done, Cyclone stood and dropped some bills on the table to settle the tab. Then he pulled me to my feet. “Come on, sunshine. We've got things to discuss.”

I tried not to let the dread in my heart show, but when he peered down into my eyes, there was no way to keep my feelings from him. He gave me a tender smile, then pulled me to him for a brief hug before dropping a kiss on top of my

head.

“Don’t look so scared. We’re gonna be fine.”

“We?”

He took my hand and led me to the parking lot and the truck he’d brought to pick me up. I wished he’d brought his bike, but the weather was a little more than I was prepared for. Christmas was in less than a week and things had gone from unseasonably warm to very chilly overnight.

“Yeah. We. Thought we’d already decided we were giving this a shot.”

“Oh. Well, OK.” I know I sounded young and childish, but I was so nervous I didn’t know what to say. And I was getting ready to have a very real adult conversation with a man I was equal parts terrified of and infatuated with.

He opened the door for me, and I climbed in. Once I’d fastened my seat belt, he shut the door and trotted around to his side. When he climbed in beside me, he reached over, finding my hand and giving it a firm, reassuring squeeze.

“Don’t look so scared. I’ll only take a bite out of you if you ask.”

I couldn’t help the way my body reacted to his words. I shivered and actually broke out into a sweat, gasping as my gaze jerked to his. He grinned and winked at me before starting the truck and heading back to the hotel.

As he opened the door to our suite, my phone chimed. I glanced at the screen to see my mother’s name, requesting a FaceTime. I groaned. I wasn’t sure I was ready to talk to her,

but she'd be getting anxious and I didn't want her to worry more than she already was.

“Go,” Cyclone said, urging me to the bedroom. “Talk with your mother.”

“I don't know what to say.” I felt like a little kid who knew she was in trouble and was avoiding her parents for as long as possible.

He shrugged those brawny shoulders and gave me a reassuring smile. “Tell her whatever you want. Better to prepare her for us coming home. You do that. I'll call Trucker and we'll get this part of it over with.”

And just like that, all those pancakes I'd eaten threatened to come up. “Oh, God. NO! Do not call my father.” The phone had stopped chiming, but I knew my mother would call back in a few seconds. She always tried at least twice, knowing I was forever losing my phone.

Pulling me into his arms, Cyclone hugged me fiercely. “Honey, I have to. If he finds this out from anyone else, the ass beatin' I'd get wouldn't be just epic, it'd be catastrophic. Besides, I respect your father, though he's not going to believe that when I tell him everything. By avoiding you all this time, I earned every single thing he'll do to me when we get back. No matter if you want me long-term or not. I'm gonna be lucky to get out of this with my balls intact as it is.” He tilted my chin up with gentle fingers and kissed me briefly. “You talk with your mom. Let her know you're good. Tell her everything. It will help you figure out how you really feel and what you want to say to me once these conversations are over.



Because we still have things to settle between us.”

I took a deep breath. “OK. It’s just... I don’t want to disappoint my mom.” I couldn’t help the tears that dripped from my eyes down my cheeks.

“Honey, she’s your mother. She loves you more than life itself. She may not like some of the choices you make, but she would never be disappointed in you.”

As I stared up at him, trying to find the reassurance I needed, my phone started chiming again. Cyclone framed my face with his hands and kissed me once again before giving me an encouraging smile and moving to the other side of the suite and shutting the connecting door.

I took a deep breath and answered the FaceTime call. “Hi, Mom.” I gave her a bright smile, hoping like hell she thought I was happy to hear from her.

“Hi, sweetie. You hanging in there?”

“Yeah. I’m doing fine. Just contemplating how much weight my right foot needs to lose to keep this from happening again.” I tried to make a joke but had to stifle the wince.

“Cruise control will become your new best friend, huh?” She still smiled, but I could tell she was still worried.

There was an awkward silence between us that I’d never experienced with my mother. She’d always been a mother and best friend all in one. I told her everything in my life. Always had. Any time I’d ever had a problem, Mom was the first person I ran to.

“Baby, what’s going on? I know something’s not right.

I can't help you if I don't know what's happened."

"Mom, I'm pregnant."

She blinked several times then gave me a gentle smile.  
"I assume you didn't plan on this?"

"No." My reply was soft, and I looked away from the phone.

"It happens. Happened to me with you. Surely you know I'd never judge you or be angry at you for this. Right? I mean, I can hardly be angry when I was in a similar situation."

"I know. I'm sorry."

"Honey. Why are you sorry?" She sounded almost relieved. Had she been that worried about me? So worried that finding out her daughter was pregnant wasn't something she was angry about? "Things happen. While I wish you'd taken more precautions, this isn't the end of the world. Your father and I will help you in any way we can. If that's taking you to terminate the pregnancy, we will. If that means we help you raise the child, we'll be on board with that too. Baby. We love you! With all our hearts."

And yeah, the fucking tears started again, no matter how hard I tried to hold them back. "I'm so sorry, Mom. I didn't mean to shut you out. I just didn't know what to do."

She tilted her head, studying me for a long moment.  
"There's more. Isn't there?"

Right. How to answer that. If Cyclone was on the phone with Dad, then there was no reason not to tell my mother. Besides, if anyone could keep my dad from killing

Cyclone, it was my mother. “Yeah. There’s more.” I chuckled as I used a tissue to wipe my nose. “A lot more.”

“I’m guessing you need to start by telling me who the father is.” She phrased it carefully and kept her tone as gentle as possible, but my mother knew me well enough to know the subject of the baby’s father was the part she dreaded the most.

“Yeah.” I shook my head once, not believing I was having this conversation and really not wanting to divulge this, but it had to be done. “Cyclone. Daniel Gill is the father.”

My mother’s expression didn’t change. She still had a mild, pleasant look on her face, but something in her eyes told me she was considering all the possibilities and not liking the outcome of any of them. “I see. I suppose that’s why he insisted on coming after you himself?”

“He didn’t know until he got here. I only found out myself a few days before I left.”

“Did he... hurt you, honey?”

“What? NO! He’d never hurt me, Mom. I mean, yeah, he was an asshole at first, but not in a mean kind of way. Just a clueless, *guy* kind of way.”

My mom pursed her lips and I thought she might be trying to hold back a grin at my description.

“Yeah, I could see that. Most men tend to be that way sometimes.”

“It didn’t help that I didn’t cushion the blow. I just... blurted it out.”

That did get a laugh from her. And just like that, the tension inside me eased. I had to tell her the rest because I knew Cyclone would tell Dad and my father would need my mother to keep him from killing Cyclone.

“There’s more, Mom.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah. We were both at the party a few weeks ago. That’s when it happened.”

Her gaze turned speculative, and I knew she’d work it out before I had the chance to tell her. “Were you —” She cleared her throat. “Were you drunk, Willa?”

“Yeah. I was. But before you go assuming the worst, he was too. And I got drunk on purpose.” I said it all in a rush, needing to stop the murderous thoughts I could practically see running through her mind.

“You got drunk on purpose.” It wasn’t a question. More like she wasn’t quite sure she could believe I’d done something that stupid.

“Yes.” I took in a deep breath before letting it out. “I wanted to have sex. You know. For the first time. I did it at the club because I knew the men there would be safe, but also because I kind of hoped it would be Cyclone.”

Her expression softened, but just as quickly turned stern. “You know you’ve put your father in a pretty bad position. He’s not going to like this at all.”

“Yes. I know. I didn’t quite think that part all the way through.”

“Have the two of you talked about this?”

“Yes. Well, somewhat. Just enough to know we want to try being together. Assuming Dad doesn’t kill him first.” I muttered that last part, saying it more to myself than my mother.

“That’s a very big ‘if,’ sweetie.” She shook her head just as I heard a very loud, very angry roar in the background.

“What do you fuckin’ mean you got my daughter pregnant?”

My mother winced. “Yeah. A very big ‘if’.”

“Mom, please help me.” The tears were threatening again. “I think I might love him.”

“Honey, I know you love him. At least, you love the idea of him. You have since you were ten.”

My eyes widened. “You knew about that?”

“You’re my daughter. A mother notices things.” She gave me a knowing nod. Then there was more shouting in the background.

“You get your fuckin’ bitch ass back to this clubhouse with my daughter, you bastard! When you do, you better have made your peace with Jesus because the prospects will have your fuckin’ grave dug by the time you get back. We’ll have a nice little ceremony right after I piss on your fuckin’ headstone!”

“Yeah.” I shivered, tears flowing freely now. “A very big ‘if’.”

## CHAPTER TEN

### **Cyclone**

“You get your fuckin’ bitch ass back to this clubhouse with my daughter, you bastard! When you do, you better have made your peace with Jesus because the prospects will have your fuckin’ grave dug by the time you get back. We’ll have a nice little ceremony right after I piss on your fuckin’ headstone!”

To say Trucker was pissed as shit didn’t even come close to what the man was feeling. The odds of my surviving this dropped from near zero to less than zero. Didn’t matter. I wasn’t giving Willa up. If that meant I lived out the rest of my life nutless and drinking my food through a straw, I’d take it. Of course, it kind of sounded like he didn’t plan on letting me live that long. Before I could say anything more, he disconnected the call.

“Well. That could have gone better.” I scrubbed a hand over my face before laying my phone on the table and moving to the connecting door. I was about to knock when Willa opened the door and looked up at me. There were tears on her cheeks and a wave of fury washed through me.

She gasped and took a step back. Yeah. I needed to rein it in. Again. Seemed to be my motto of late. “Sorry, honey. Didn’t expect your mother would make you cry. Doesn’t seem like her.”

“She didn’t. But I heard my dad in the background.”

As she spoke, more tears spilled over. “He’s not going to let us be together.” Then she dissolved into more tears.

I pulled her into my arms, lifting her so I could carry her to the couch. She straddled my hips and wrapped her arms around my neck, clinging to me as I rubbed my hands up and down her back. “It’s all going to be fine. I promise you, Willa. We’ll get through this.”

“I’m so sorry, Daniel. So sorry.”

“You’ve got nothing to be sorry for. I never do anything I don’t want to do.”

“But I practically targeted you! Sure, stumbling onto you outside the clubhouse was an accident, but I came there hoping it would be you.”

“You want to know a secret?” I couldn’t believe I was about to tell her this, but she needed to hear it. “After talking with Trucker, hearing his rather vocal and violent pushback, instead of feeling relieved I wouldn’t have to take on a woman, that I’d be getting that beating I so richly deserved before I went on my merry way, I found myself pushing back just as hard as he did. Not aggressively. That ain’t the way to handle a man as big as Trucker. But I’d told him in no uncertain terms that if you’d have me, I was keeping you. Whether or not he approved.” Her eyes got wider and wider as I spoke. “And I meant every fuckin’ word, honey.”

“Daniel?” There was a becoming blush staining her cheeks and she trembled in my arms. Her eyes were wide and glassy as tears still dripped from them.

“I noticed you, Willa. At the compound. Yeah, I watched you grow up, but I noticed you as a woman. I tried to block it out, to deny I noticed because you were as off-limits as it got. But I saw you. When you fell in my lap that night, I think on some level I knew it was you. I mean, there was no way I was in a state to think rationally, but I knew you were familiar to me. I didn’t look too closely at who you were because I wanted you with every part of my fuckin’ being.”

“And now?” Her voice was soft, vulnerable.

“The only way I’m letting you get away from me is if you tell me you don’t want me. I’ll always respect your wishes, but even then, I’d be lying if I said I’d let you leave without a fight. I want you, Willa. You and this baby. So, the ball’s in your corner.”

“Oh, Daniel!” She threw her arms around my neck again, and the tears came in racking sobs into my neck.

“Don’t cry, honey. Please. I can’t stand for you to be sad.”

“I’m not,” she said, her voice muffled by my neck. “I’m just so...”

“Relieved?”

“Yes! I didn’t think you wanted a woman. You even said so. I said it before, but I don’t want you with me out of a sense of obligation.”

“I never do anything I don’t want to do. Even taking the vice presidency of Bones. Sure, Cain forced me into it, but I’d have told him to pick someone else if I really hadn’t



wanted to do it. It's a burden sometimes, and I'm still learning, but if my dad needs me to do something, then I give it a good effort. So, I might not have chosen the situation — with you or with Bones — but I'm all in. With both. Though, I gotta tell you. I think I'm gonna be happier with you than I am with being vice president of Bones. And I'm pretty fuckin' happy with being vice president.”

She sat back on my lap, swiping her eyes with the sleeve of her shirt. “So, you'll take me on? Make me your old lady?”

“Oh yeah, honey. It'll be rough goin' with Trucker, but I'll prove to him and Helen that I can be what you need. We might not love each other yet, but there is a mutual respect that will grow. And to be honest?” I waited until I had her undivided attention, her gaze focused squarely on mine. “I think I'm more than halfway in love with you all ready.”

The smile she gave me was brilliant, if still a bit tearful. But I could see she believed me. What I didn't tell her, and what I wasn't sure I was fully prepared to admit even to myself, was that I was already way the fuck past halfway in love with her.

We stayed the night in Waynesville, talking. Making love. How the fuck had I managed to live this long without having this kind of closeness with another person? I finally got it. Spending a night fucking a club girl wasn't nearly as satisfying as making love with my woman.

I got Kickstand to make arrangements to have Willa's car brought back to Bones, and Willa was finishing packing up

her shit when my phone rang.

I glanced at the screen and winced. Ice. My brother as well as my president.

“You calling as Cliff or Ice?” I didn’t bother with formalities. Cliff would understand.

“Both, you dumbass. What the fuck did you do to Trucker’s daughter? And don’t tell me it ain’t none of my business because, A: I’m the president of Bones MC, and B: I’m your fuckin’ brother. Right now, from the sound of it, you’re gonna need both solidly in your corner.”

“Congratulations,” I said dryly. “You’re gonna be an uncle.”

Ice chuckled. “Yeah. Good one. Tell me what’s really going on.” When I didn’t say anything his laughter died down. “You’re serious, aren’t you.” It wasn’t a question.

“You think I’d joke about that? With Trucker’s daughter? I might be an asshole, but I’m not a stupid asshole.” Yeah. The irony wasn’t lost on me.

“So actually knocking up the daughter of a man as big as Trucker is better than joking about knocking her up. Yeah. Not stupid at all, Cyclone.” If my brother’s tone of voice was any indication he was nearly as angry with me as Trucker was.

“It is what it is, brother. She’s agreed to be my old lady, so I’m not really sure what the problem is. Ain’t sayin’ we’re in love, but we’ll get there.”

“You know he’s callin’ for your patch, right? Not only does he want you replaced as vice president, but he wants you

out of Bones.” Where there had been background noise before, I heard a door close, and all the chatter died down. “He said you took advantage of her when she was drunk. That’s rape, Cyclone. Pure and simple. Not only will that cost you your patch, Trucker would have every right to fuckin’ kill you, and no one in this entire Goddamned compound would lift a fuckin’ finger to help you. Even Dad can’t get you out of that.”

“Trust me when I say he’d have every right and I wouldn’t even try to defend myself.”

“You’re Goddamned right he would! What the fuck, Dan? What the Goddamned fuck?”

“Daniel? Is everything OK?” Willa had walked in on the conversation and no doubt had heard my brother yelling at me.

“Yeah, honey. It’s all good.”

“No, it’s not.” She moved to my side. “I could hear someone all the way in the next room. Is that my dad again?”

“Nah. It’s my brother.”

“Ice? Why is he yelling?”

I sighed. I didn’t want her involved in this conversation. “It’s nothing. Let me wrap this up and we’ll get on the road.

As if I’d flipped a switch, Willa’s face hardened instantly. She held out her hand. “Give me the phone.”

I raised an eyebrow at her. “Much as I appreciate you

being upset on my behalf, I'm not givin' you the phone, honey. I'll deal with my brother or your father or anyone else I have to. Not you."

As if I hadn't just told her no, Willa moved to my side and plucked the phone right outta my fucking hand. With a glare up at me, she put the phone on speaker.

"Ice. This is Willa."

There was a pause before Ice said anything. "I need to talk to my brother alone, Willa. I'm sorry, but this is club business."

"Seems like it's about me, which makes me club business, which means I will have my say. Now what's the fucking problem?" Oh, that little snippy voice of hers was gonna get her fucked but good. For some odd reason, that particular tone of voice made my cock hard as granite when I knew I shouldn't encourage her. Any other woman I'd have put in her place, but Willa was right where she needed to be. The old lady of an MC VP.

Again, there was silence before Ice continued. "Uh —" He coughed once. "— I need to, uh, ask you if —" He cleared his throat. "Well, did Cyclone, uh, you know, take advantage of you when you, uh —" Another throat clear. "I mean, were you drunk when the two of you..." If this had been any other situation I'd be laughing my ass off. Still might. I'd bring this up over and over at family Christmas dinners. It'd be a hoot.

"You mean, did he fuck me without my consent? No. In fact, if anyone took advantage of anyone in that situation it was me. He was so drunk I'm not sure he knew where he was

exactly, let alone who I was.” When Ice didn’t say anything — I really wish he’d FaceTimed us because I’d love to see his expression — she continued. “I set out at that party to lose my virginity. I had Cyclone in mind, though I’d never have been brave enough to approach him without some liquid courage. So? I got drunk. Landed in his lap. And things took a natural progression. And you know what? It was absolutely *glorious*.”

After another brief pause, Ice continued in a cheerful voice. “OK, then. ‘Nuff said.” A chuckle I was sure my brother hadn’t meant to let loose sounded over the speaker before he cleared his throat again. “You kids have fun. See you when you get home.” Then he ended the call.

Willa looked up at me, all sweet and innocent. “Was it something I said?”

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### **Willa**

The trip to the compound was enjoyable. More than enjoyable. I'm not certain I've laughed so hard in my entire life. Cyclone and I got to know each other in the four hours it took to get home.

He was actually a pretty nice guy when you got to know him. His gruff exterior was just a façade so the older guys in the club would take him seriously. I appreciated that. I understood it.

We chatted about silly things like what our favorite colors were, what kind of music we liked, and what our favorite movies were. We even talked about our families and our childhoods. Though he mostly knew about mine, I didn't know anything about his and Ice's time with the MC that had kidnapped them. Kiss of Death, it was called. I could see now why he was so protective of Suzie and his brothers. Because it wasn't only Cliff. He was a fierce protector to Gunner and Hannah, Cain and Angel's biological children. It was clear that he had been through a lot in his life even before he came to Bones.

As we rode, he held my hand firmly in his. It felt nice. Comforting as well as proprietary. I liked feeling like I was his. Because he damned sure was mine. Even the thought had me gripping his hand harder. He chuckled and I shot him a look, lifting my chin.

“Hang on as tight as you want, honey. I’m yours. I’m always gonna be yours.”

“I have a feeling I’m going to have to stake my claim pretty hard in front of the club girls. You’re pretty popular around the clubhouse.” Even saying it hurt, but I was going to get past it. My daddy was one of the biggest badasses in the club. And I was his daughter.

“You do what you need to. I’ve got your back.”

“Same as I have yours.” I met his gaze with a level one of my own.

As we rode, I noticed that Cyclone was constantly stealing glances at me. I couldn’t help but feel a little self-conscious, wondering if I had something on my face or if my hair was a mess. But then I realized that he was just looking at me like I was something special. Like he wanted to admire me from afar and not scare me off with his intensity.

It made my heart swell, and it made me realize just how lucky I was to have him in my life. The start to our relationship may have been unconventional, but it was real, and it was strong and growing stronger with every passing hour. I couldn’t help but smile, secure in the knowledge that I was right where I belonged.

We pulled into the compound at two in the afternoon of Christmas Eve. I’d had to stop once to puke, but Cyclone had held my hair back, much like he had in the hotel room. This time, however, when tears streamed from my eyes as I was sick beside the road repeatedly, I not only welcomed his touch, I took comfort in it. Still, I was really glad to be home.

When I got out of the truck, my mother was already running toward me to pull me into her arms.

“I’m so glad you’re home. We’ve got so much to talk about.”

I turned to look back toward the clubhouse just in time to see my dad stomp off the porch and straight toward Cyclone.

“Dad!” I called but he didn’t look in my direction. Instead, he moved faster and faster to Cyclone.

“Bloody hell...” Cyclone barely got out the words before my dad’s fist connected with his face. Once. Then again.

“Dad! Stop!”

I pulled away from my mom, hurrying over to the two hulking men. Cyclone wasn’t fighting back, but he was trying to block some of my dad’s blows. I think it was more instinctual rather than defensive.

“I said stop!” When I got to the pair, I jumped on my dad’s back, shoving my hands over his eyes.

“What the fuck? Willa, get off me!” He backed up several steps, his body tensing as if waiting for a blow.

“Dad, I said stop! Right the fuck now!” I put every ounce of authority I could into my voice, doing my best to sound like I’d heard my dad sound a few times when dressing down a prospect. Or someone who’d brought back a cage empty of gas and full of Red Bull cans. Surprisingly, it worked. *Might* have been that I was still on his back with my



hands over his eyes.

“Willa...”

“No. I mean it, Dad. You’re not gonna beat up my man just because he knocked me up. Not when he’s my choice. No one gets to tell me I can’t have him except Cyclone. Not even you or Mom.”

“He took advantage of you, sweetheart.” When he tugged at my wrist, trying to get my hands off his eyes, I let him. Still didn’t climb down in case he got it into his head he was going to go after Cyclone again. “He’s probably using you now to hang on to his position in the club. Or his very life. Because I intend to bury that fucker.” Yeah. Dad was in Trucker mode. Which wasn’t a side he often showed to me or my brother and sisters.

“No, Dad. You’re not. You’re going to go to Mom and calm the fuck down. Then we’re all gonna sit down and talk about this like civilized fucking adults.” I winced. I was in so much trouble once this was over. I’d never spoken to my dad — or anyone for that matter — like I had to Dad and Ice. And it had to be two officers in the club. You know. In front of most of the club.

Yeah. Trouble.

“Stand down, Trucker.” Ice was leaning against one post on the front porch looking all casual. Like he didn’t have a fucking care in the world.

“Big help there, Ice.” I gave him a heated look, like I was ready to carve out his liver.

“Hey. Don’t look at me. He’s a big motherfucker.”

“Yes! He is! And I’m five foot nothing and a hundred pounds! And fucking pregnant!” I was losing my patience, my temper redlining. Again.

“Brother, I sure hope this is all pregnancy hormones, ‘cause if it ain’t, you’ve got your hands full.”

“Watch it, Ice.” Dawn, Ice’s woman, watched on with amusement, but she gave her man a sidelong glance. “She’s gonna be our sister. Do you really want to get on her bad side this early in the game?”

“Point taken, baby.”

Cyclone just grinned, even as he spat out a mouthful of blood. “Oh, she read me the Riot Act a couple of times after I got to North Carolina.” Cyclone was understandably winded but somehow still on his feet. I’d stopped Trucker from hurting him too much, but my dad could pack quite a punch. “She ain’t the shrinking violet everyone always thought she was.”

“Of course, I’m not,” I snapped, glaring at Cyclone. I couldn’t help it. Even in the midst of a beating, he was having fun at my expense. “I’m the daughter of the road captain of Bones MC. I can make up my own fucking mind about who I’m gonna fucking fuck. No one gets to make that decision for me. Not Cyclone. Not Trucker. Me!”

That got everyone’s attention. Unfortunately, more than one of the members of Bones were smothering grins. I was about to let loose on some motherfuckers. And where the

fuck did that thought come from? I was sweet, Goddamnit!

Thank fuck Shadow's woman, Millie, stepped forward and laid a hand on Trucker's shoulder. "She's right, you know." Her Russian accent was somehow soothing on my frayed nerves. "Have you heard her side of story, Trucker?"

"No." Dad sounded and looked wary as he glanced at me over his shoulder with narrowed eyes. "I haven't. But I heard his side." He pointed to Cyclone. "He admitted she was drunk when he... err... when they... uh..."

"Did the nasty? The hunka chunka? The horizontal tango?"

"Willa..."

"What? You've lived in an MC your entire adult life and you can't say the word 'sex'? Really?"

"Not in relation to my daughter, Willa." He sighed heavily. "Can you please get off me?"

I was still on Dad's back, my legs wrapped around his middle as best I could. He was thick and all muscle, and I wasn't exactly a large or athletic girl. I glanced at Cyclone. Even though he was still breathing hard, he was trying to smother a grin. And failing. So I scowled back at him before answering my dad.

"Depends. You gonna go after my man again?"

"Where's this coming from? Since when are you interested in boys?"

Mom stepped forward and wrapped her arms around

Dad's middle, and I slipped from his back. Millie was there to steady me. The other woman gave me a wink and two thumbs-up before going back to her man. Where Millie's sister, Venus, dressed in hot pink, Millie preferred teal. I was looking forward to the specially made Harley she was having delivered. Should be fun.

“Honey, you know very well she's had a crush on Daniel since before she was a teenager. The fact that she hasn't ever been interested in other boys should clue you in to the fact that man is hers.”

“But is she his? Because I still think he's agreeing to make her his old lady just to get out of trouble.”

OK, that hurt. I stepped back a couple of steps, my gaze going immediately to Cyclone. Now, instead of amusement at my outburst, he looked like the man I'd always been slightly terrified of. He was the son of the former Bones president. Raised in this life. Trained to be the biggest, baddest warrior he could be. He was also the vice president of the club. Not the man I'd grown to love. Except, they were the same man. Now I was going to see how the two meshed.

“That's enough, Trucker. You can beat on me all you feel like you need to for the way I first claimed your daughter. It's not something I've not beaten myself up over during the six weeks since it happened. But you need to get one thing straight. I do not do anything I don't want to. That includes taking an old lady. No matter how much trouble I'm in. I'll take any punishment I've got coming like a man. I'll even resign as the fucking VP if that's what's demanded. I'll do it

all with a smile and a fuckin' princess wave. But I will not make a woman mine unless I'm feeling it here." He pounded his chest. "I'd support her and the baby, if she chose to have it, in any way she saw fit. I'd be part of the kid's life as much as she'd let me. But I would not make her my old lady unless it was something we both wanted."

Cyclone was right up in my dad's face now. My mother still had her arms around Dad, probably to prevent him from lashing out again, and she didn't move.

"Do you love her?" Dad bit out the question between clenched teeth. "I mean, really fuckin' love her?"

I expected Cyclone to tell him what he'd told me. That he was getting there. Instead, without hesitation, he nodded his head crisply. "Abso-fuckin'-lutely I love her. She's smart, beautiful, and so fuckin' fierce she makes me proud. She'll be the best old lady a vice president could ever have, and the best mother to our children. And you can expect there to be more."

"Maybe." I qualified. "Because I'm only six weeks into this little hellion and I'm already sick every fucking day. You want more babies? You better hope and pray this sickness gets better."

That got a laugh from several of the brothers and also seemed to diffuse the situation. Trucker relaxed and allowed Mom to move him away from Cyclone. Cyclone moved to me and pulled me into his arms. He didn't smile or show any of the tenderness he usually reserved for me. Instead, he looked like a warrior ready for an attack. He still tightened his arms around me instead of preparing to defend himself.

“Looks to me like she’s made her choice, Trucker. Why not give them a couple of months. See how things go. We can reserve judgment until then.”

Trucker pointed a finger at Cyclone. “You better do right by my daughter, boy. This club killed a motherfucker for her and her mother. Just because you’re the VP and one of my best friends’ son doesn’t mean you won’t meet a similar fate if you fuck her over.”

“She’s my woman, Trucker. I’ll protect her with my life and love her until the day I die.”

I gasped, burying my face in his chest. Tears were threatening at his declaration. Had been threatening for a few minutes now and I wasn’t sure how long I could hold them back.

“See that you do.” With that, Mom took Dad back inside the clubhouse. I clung to Cyclone, not wanting to let him go even though I knew I needed to get Mama to look at him.

“Well.” Ice grinned down at us. “I guess that settles that. Welcome to the family, sis.”

# EPILOGUE

## **Cyclone**

The club Christmas party was in full swing. The old ladies had run off every club girl in the compound and taken over the common room. It currently looked like an explosion of commercialized Christmas. Complete with glitter beards for a few of the guys, a tradition Suzie had started when we'd first come here. I loved every single second of it. Especially since Willa had the most beautiful smile on her face I'd ever seen.

She was wearing a dress I hadn't seen before, and my dick instantly reacted to it as soon as she stepped out of the bathroom. She was stunning.

The emerald gown was made of a soft, luxurious fabric that clung to her curves in all the right places. The neckline was scooped low to show off her cleavage, while the hem stopped mid-thigh and gave a tantalizing glimpse of her smooth legs. With the sleeveless design, her toned arms were shown to perfection. The back dipped low enough to entice any onlooker with its daring design.

Her hair was swept up in a bun with curls and strands spilling freely down her back. The shimmering material reflected the lights of the Christmas tree and there was no way I could keep my eyes — or my hands — off her. My fingers itched to get her out of the sexy little number. One thing was for sure, I fully intended to unwrap my present early this Christmas.

I pulled her into my arms and placed a tender kiss on her lips, then stepped back and admired her once again. She was stunning, and I couldn't help but feel like the luckiest bastard in the Goddamned world.

“Merry Christmas, honey,” I said, pulling her close for another kiss.

“Merry Christmas, Cyclone.” The smile on her face as she looked up at me was brilliant. The chocolate of her eyes sparkled under the lights, and I knew I'd forever remember this moment.

“Come on, you two.” Helen came up behind Willa and leaned in to kiss her daughter's cheek. All the women had dressed to the max. All the guys managed to get away with jeans and T-shirts along with our cuts. Helen looked as happy as Willa. Trucker stood behind his wife, scowling at me. I wasn't sure he'd ever be all right with me marrying his daughter, but I was sure he would at least let me live as long as I treated her well. “Cheetah has Willa's property patch and I'm pretty sure Trucker expects you to have a ring, Cyclone.” She arched an eyebrow.

“Of course, he does.” I snorted.

“And you better not fuckin' disappoint.” Trucker scowled at me and it was all I could do not to grin at the big fucker. Yeah, I had a twisted sense of humor.

Instead of responding to him, I pulled a small box from my jeans pocket. The velvet box was light in my hand, and I opened it slowly, revealing a sparkling diamond ring. It wasn't huge or ostentatious. Just a simple marquise cut one-carat



stone on a simple gold band. A gasp escaped Willa's lips as she took it in, her eyes wide with surprise.

Her gaze instantly jumped to mine, a look of wonder on her lovely face. "Oh, Cyclone," she breathed, taking the ring from the box and holding it up to the light. "It's beautiful."

"Not as beautiful as you, honey." I took the ring from her and slipped it on the fourth finger of her left hand. It was a perfect fit. Raising her hand to my lips, I dropped a kiss to the back before turning her hand over and kissing her palm. "Not nearly as beautiful as you."

All around us, kids played and laughed. I couldn't help but wonder if our kids would be as happy running around here as I had been as a kid. Those were some of the happiest memories of my life.

My gaze landed on my adopted brother, Gunner, and his twin, Hannah. They were going on sixteen and already finding their place within the club. In some ways, I thought Hannah was even more of a force to be reckoned with than Gunner. I grinned, hoping if we had a girl she'd be just like my sister.

Adults ate and drank. A couple of the kids' dogs bounded around the room looking for scraps and cuddles. But the only person I saw was Willa. Well, until Trucker stepped up beside me.

"I still owe you a beatin', you bastard." Yeah. Gonna be a long road with this one.

“Dad, you promised.” Willa frowned at her father. She’d opted to take the hard line with him, not backing down an inch. She’d claimed me in front of most of all the officers and most of the club, and she stood by that claim. A couple of the club girls had given her pushback, but at least one of those girls now avoided Willa like the plague. I had no idea what went down and apparently only Willa and Dawn were around when it happened, but I was proud of my woman for standing her ground. She’d lived in the club all her life and knew what she had to do to defend her territory. It was good to know she could and would. I was one lucky bastard.

“I got eyes on you, Cyclone. I will be watching. You mistreat my daughter, me and you gonna have a round.”

I grinned. “No worries there.” I smiled down at my woman. “Willa has my heart.”

Trucker just grunted, still looking disgruntled.

As the night went on, the party began to wind down. Most of the club members and their women and children dispersed, and only a few stragglers remained. Willa and I stood in the center of the room, lost in our own world. A couple of the brothers gave me shit about being pussy whipped, but I just flipped them off. Several of them had their own women they adored so I knew there was no real heat in their ribbing.

I brushed a strand of hair out of her face and tucked it behind her ear. “I’m sorry we got off on the wrong foot after we both sobered up, Willa. I handled myself badly.”

She grinned up at me. “Yes. You did. But you came

through in the end, so I forgive you.”

I smiled back, relieved. “You’re an incredible woman, you know that?”

Willa chuckled. “I am indeed.”

We were silent for a few moments, lost in our own thoughts. Then, she spoke softly. “I love you, Cyclone. I think I always have.”

“I love you too, honey.” I winked at her. “Let’s get out of here. I need to unwrap my present.”

“Oh?” Her arms slid around my neck, and she pressed her body against mine.

“Yeah. It’s currently wrapped in a shimmering green gown. Got me hard as fuck.”

Her grin turned positively wicked. “In that case, let’s get going.”

We left the common room and made our way to our rooms inside the Bones clubhouse on the third floor with the other officers’ quarters. As I shut the door and pulled Willa into my arms, I couldn’t help but feel like the luckiest man in the Goddamned world. I had a club of brothers who’d lay down their lives for me, the woman I loved by my side, and my child growing in her belly.

I had the best Christmas I’d ever imagined. I had my woman. And I was never letting her go.

## MARTEEKA KARLAND

Marteeka Karland is an international bestselling author who leads a double life as an erotic romance author by evening and a semi-domesticated housewife by day. Known for her down and dirty MC romances, Marteeka takes pleasure in spinning tales of tenacious, protective heroes and spirited, vulnerable heroines. She staunchly advocates that every character deserves a blissful ending, even, sometimes, the villains in her narratives. Her writings are speckled with intense, raw elements resulting in page-turning delight entwined with seductive escapades leading up to gratifying conclusions that elicit a sigh from her readers.

Away from the keyboard, Marteeka finds joy in baking and supporting her husband with their gardening activities. The late summer season is set aside for preserving the delightful harvest that springs from their combined efforts (which is mostly his efforts, but you can count it). To stay updated with Marteeka's latest adventures and forthcoming books, make sure to visit her website. Don't forget to register for her newsletter which will pepper you with a potpourri of Teeka's beloved recipes, book suggestions, autograph events, and a plethora of interesting tidbits.

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