

JB TREPAGNIER



FEMME FATALE

THAT SUPER SECRET SPY SCHOOL I'M
NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW ABOUT

🔫 BOOK THREE 🔫

FEMME FATALE

JB TREPAGNIER

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1 CASPER



Fucking McKinley. She was an awful girlfriend, but I didn't take her for a traitor. As soon as I saw her face, my stomach dropped to my butt and I couldn't breathe for a minute. Jordan slipped into my lap and wrapped her arms around my neck.

"Want me to kick her in the vagina?" she asked.

"Fucking bitch," Luke snarled.

Luke blamed all of this on Hex, but now that we'd met her, he'd all but adopted Kendasha. He was going to tear McKinley apart now that we knew she was Baba Yaga.

“That’s your ex?” Kendasha asked. “The blonde one is prettier.”

“Kendasha,” Abony warned.

“She’s not wrong,” Bailey said.

She really wasn’t. McKinley was smooth and much more put together than Jordan was, but Jordan was better than her in literally every way.

“Did you know about this?” I asked Boss.

“She was on my list. When we found out about Baba Yaga and that it might be an inside job, we all put together a list of who it could have been. She was on the top.”

“Why didn’t you say anything?” Bailey asked.

“Why would she do this?” Jeremy said.

“I could only prove it a few times, but every time McKinley went out, valuables and money would go missing from marks. When their assets were seized, it was always less than what we originally found. Most of these people were masters at hiding and underreporting that kind of thing when it came to taxes. Tax fraud was *always* one of the things they got charged with in addition to what we found on them. Unlike the various tax offices across the world, we have the resources to look into that kind of thing.

“Now, all of you work marks differently, and sometimes, catfishing them isn’t required. When it is, sometimes, they lavish you with money and gifts. McKinley pretty much exclusively did, inserting herself as a girlfriend. It worked and we aren’t out there with you. We also aren’t going to dictate how someone chooses to do their job if they are good at it.

“When the numbers wouldn’t add up, McKinley always tried to say they were gifts because we allowed you to keep those. But plenty of times, it didn’t make sense. Entire offshore secret bank accounts were emptied, and it wasn’t the kind of money you give a girlfriend you haven’t known for that long.

“McKinley wasn’t a hacker. She was competent with computers, but I’d never stick her in front of one. The first two times it happened, we easily caught her and made her give it back. Firing any of you is complicated because you have a lot of immunity for what we’re doing and you could compromise everything if you felt slighted.

“After I caught her and made her return the money, I thought she’d learned her lesson, but I think she just got more careful. Assets were still going missing, but it was in the range a ridiculously wealthy criminal would bestow on a pretty woman kissing their ass.

“Still, I was getting suspicious because, at this point, she would have been quite wealthy, but she kept insisting she wasn’t getting paid enough to live in New York, even though she lived in one of my properties. She also got snippy any time she was asked to work a mark that wasn’t a straight man, even though you are all trained to work anyone. McKinley was generally only good at playing the girlfriend, but there were other missions she would have been qualified for that she didn’t want to do.

“Cerulean and her team were tasked with digging into her finances. Sometimes, she said the missing money was a gift, and other times, she had a story about how it went to pay off some criminal associate she never saw. She *always* complained about how broke she was because I didn’t pay my agents enough.

“The account her checks were being deposited into was what we thought it was, if a little low for what we pay her. So, they were digging into secret bank accounts. I’m not sure if she found out I was looking into her or she was just mad I took the big money away and wasn’t giving her every raise she asked for, but the breach happened before we could zero in on anything. Her name was released with everyone else’s, so I just assumed she was a victim and helped her disappear.”

Now that I knew it was my ex-girlfriend, it made even less sense that my name wasn’t released with everyone. She knew my full name because we were living together. My name and

the guy she was cheating on me with were probably the only agents at work she actually *did* have real names for.

She wasn't friendly with anyone else. We never did brunch or hung out with other agents while we were dating. No one would have told her their real names because it was never like that with anyone. Bailey and Luke found out when her name was released with all the agents and we all became closer.

"I was on suspension when the breach happened. Did you actually fire me and only bring me back because you had no other choice?"

"You were never fired. I suspended you because I was trying to figure out what to do with you. You're amazing behind a desk or working marks, but baby boy, you shouldn't even be in the same country with a certain kind of criminal. It was our fault things went ass up.

"Things seemed to be going well with your girlfriend. She was older than you and had been an agent longer. We *thought* she was mentoring you, so we put you on a team doing similar missions. That was never you. Suspending you was never a punishment. It was meant to let you recover from what happened while we looked at *you* and decided on the best place for you."

That was a lot. I'd never seen Boss angry when she suspended me, so I just assumed she was. I'd seen it enough since the breach, I should have figured it out. McKinley shit all over me after what happened that I just assumed everyone was pissed.

"I still don't get why she didn't release my name."

"She didn't release mine or Luke's, either," Bailey said. "Boss knew my name this entire time."

"There were several names here she didn't release because she didn't have access to them. Only I know where those names are. Most of them are either because you went to great lengths to keep your real name hidden or I'd been mentoring them since they were minors and their parents asked me to keep everything on the business side."

“McKinley wouldn’t have released my name,” Luke said. “She was older than me, so she was an established agent before I was ever hired and then became a trainer. She never noticed me when I was an agent and any time she came into the training room, she repeatedly told me Boss should have fired me.”

“Listen up, boys. Black and I have been doing this for a long time. We were agents before we started this business. We know what makes a good one and our recruitment process is flawless. We’ve never fired anyone. Most of the time, if you fuck up, it’s because we fucked up and put you in the wrong place. If McKinley hadn’t betrayed literally everyone before I could get my proof, she would have been the first. Don’t listen to anything she told you.”

Easy for her to say. I was the one who dated her and lived with her. I was the one who was constantly told I was never good enough. I had been the one who planned to give up everything for her and came home to an empty apartment with a note she had been cheating on me.

“So, I get that she’s terrible, and I didn’t like her, just based on her voice and how she spoke to me. She lied to me about what she was going to do with what I wrote for her. I want to work with your computer team to help find her,” Kendasha said.

This kid right here. She had her shoulders squared, and I could see her braces while she chewed on her lower lip. Kendasha was ready to find McKinley and bring her down. Honestly? It had been months, and Cerulean and her team didn’t figure out how she did it until she told them.

It would be poetic if a fourteen-year-old destroyed my ex-girlfriend.

“That’s up to your mom,” Boss said.

That was the thing about Boss. She understood insanely gifted kids, probably she was once one of them herself. Boss also got that she wasn’t their mother. It didn’t matter how smart they were or how much they wanted to do something, the final say belonged to their parents.

“I don’t like it. This woman sounds dangerous,” Abony said.

“She is,” Kendasha said. “She’s also the only other person outside of this room that knows I’m Hex. If I don’t help catch her, she could tell someone who isn’t as nice as these people.”

Abony gave this long-suffering sigh. Kendasha wasn’t just book smart. She knew exactly how to get what she wanted, but it looked like Abony wasn’t falling for it.

“What did I tell you about doing that? You’re smart, but you need to be in school, being a kid.”

“Momma, school is *boring*. It’s probably going to stay boring unless the new school decides to skip me some grades like my old school wouldn’t. I can learn from this and use it in the future.”

I’d been skipped a grade and Kendasha was smarter than me at fourteen than I was as an adult. I wasn’t putting myself down. I was secure in my intelligence. I tried to figure out how Hex got in, got the data, and got out without us knowing until the names were released, too. Keeping her with the other fourteen-year-olds was a crime. She was probably bored out of her mind.

“I’m pretty sure the *only* reason you had the time to think up this elaborate plot that got this woman’s attention in the first place was because they refused to skip you after you embarrassed the school board and principal. I’m going to let you do this because we have a good thing going here and I don’t need you bored again. I’m guessing if you’re working with super spies, they can keep you safe and rein you in.”

“Everyone on our computer team was once where Kendasha was. The rest of my agents will protect her, too. They are all trained to fight.”

“I’m only an orange belt, but I know how to fight dirty. I’ll totally kick her in the vagina,” Jordan said.

My girlfriend would totally kick my ex in the vagina. McKinley had a black belt, but she hated training. All of us made time to hit the mats except her. McKinley only went

down to train if Boss made her or she gained two pounds. She always refused to eat my cooking because she was obsessed over those two fucking pounds.

Jordan was just an orange belt, but she probably could kick her ass. And Bailey was like my feral little sister. If Jordan didn't, Bailey would. Luke was also on board because he'd lost a sister because of this.

We were going to find McKinley. She had funds, and she was trained to disappear. But we also had Boss and Black, who'd taught her everything she knew.

There were a lot of CEOs and businessmen who didn't like Boss. None of them were as dumb as my ex and tried to come for her like this.

2 JORDAN



Boss pulled us all aside after Abony took Kendasha home. She hadn't started school yet because they were grading her placement tests to figure out where to put her. I kind of wanted to know what Kendasha did to her old principal and the school board that they were deliberately holding her back and not letting her skip grades.

No one was ever going to skip me in school. I graduated just fine, but it wasn't my favorite thing. A lot of my teachers wanted things done a certain way and my brain didn't work like that. I'd find a method that worked for me and my answers were right, but the way I got there was different from how they taught us, so they took points off. That was also one of the reasons why when I found out I could make money on OnlyFans, I spent my cash on a scam class to become a spy instead of sticking it out and trying to go to college.

“Listen, I put that family in the same building as you. They are on the floor below you. That building has the best security out of all the places I own property in New York. I usually give those apartments to agents who have been with us the longest and have the greatest chance of being recognized on the street.

“McKinley got invited to a party in the penthouse and demanded I move her there. She hadn’t been here long enough to need the security and frankly, she was only ever good at working a certain kind of mark.

“Some straight men prefer the company of pretty, vapid women. That’s not any of my agents. Some of them found it demeaning to pretend. Cadmium and McKinley were the only women who didn’t. Cadmium is versatile and can work other marks, but McKinley was only ever good at that. Keep an eye out for that family while they are in your building.”

I was only just learning more about Casper’s ex. I already hated her because of how she treated Casper, but now I hoped she got untreatable crabs and head lice. I was already distracted because something didn’t make sense. I looked right at my girlfriend.

“You had no problem pretending to be stupid for a man? Didn’t your face do that thing it does when I get my French words mixed up?”

Luke started giggling.

“She only reserves that face for the people she cares about. She’s a pro on missions.”

“I was *way* better at playing stupid than that bitch ever was,” Bailey sulked.

“You were more versatile,” Boss said. “I mean it. Watch out for Abony’s family. Black and I trained McKinley. She’s not stupid or she never would have been hired. McKinley wasn’t gifted with computers like some of my agents. She wasn’t the best fighter and certain missions we couldn’t send her on.

“But McKinley is insanely gifted with languages and disappearing into a role when. She’s just as adept at disguising her appearance as Cadmium is. She could be anywhere with her stolen money right now.

“There’s one thing I *do* know. McKinley will be watching us on the news. She’ll know this didn’t destroy my business. I’ll rebuild this side of it. McKinley knows everyone is looking for Hex and that eventually, they are going to find out Baba Yaga was the one pulling the strings. Kendasha was careful about everything except not scrambling her face on that video chat.

“McKinley doesn’t have a name, but I’m guessing she took a screenshot of her face. Abony told me she doesn’t allow Kendasha on social media, but she’s fourteen and a genius with electronics, so let’s just assume she’s got secret social media accounts. Eventually, McKinley is going to release that screenshot of Kendasha’s face and reveal she’s Hex, to get people pissed off about that instead of Baba Yaga.”

“She’s probably watching Kendasha, too,” Jeremy said. “Or has someone watching her. People are pissed, but her age is going to stop a lot of people from hurting her. They are going to hear her out to find out how and *why* she did all this like you did. Kendasha was the *only* one who figured out that bounty. I’m good and I don’t think I could have done what she did in that amount of time. McKinley can release Kendasha’s face, but she has no idea if Kendasha can expose her, too.”

“The money was probably the only reason McKinley trusted her not to,” Casper said. “She’s fourteen. It’s not like she could move it to another bank account without tipping off her mom. It’s in the same account McKinley set up, so she could take it away whenever she wanted.”

“It *pisses* me off she betrayed everyone, cheated on Casper, manipulated a kid, and I’m mad insulin costs so much Kendasha had to do this to help pay for it,” Bailey growled.

Boss may have warned us McKinley wasn’t stupid, but I wasn’t sure I believed her. If Boss and Black didn’t destroy her, Bailey would. Bailey was feral about her friends, and I

was sure she hadn't forgotten Casper's part in bringing Carl down. And then there was Luke, who lost his sister. Jeremy and I benefitted from that breach, but we weren't idiots to think a ton of people didn't suffer for it.

"What do you want us to do?" Casper asked.

"Deep Throat sent us a few people to look into, but he understands how short staffed we are and there is no rush on them. He agreed that when we had a lead, we'd have the power of the CIA behind us. We're all in on finding McKinley before she can sic some unscrupulous agents on Kendasha who don't care that she's just a kid.

"Mauve, you're going to be training the most, but I think you can help draw her out. She doesn't know you and your background is going to make her never believe you're an agent here. She cheated on Red and then left him behind, but something tells me she's going to be jealous as hell if he takes up with a tall, leggy former model.

"Red, I want your social media full of photos of the two of you together and Mauve, you're going to use one of the profiles we set up for you to make an obscenely obnoxious love fest. I want a ton of posts. Red can coach you on all the little things you can do to piss her off and draw her out."

Bailey started cackling.

"That's going to do it. That girl is a total narcissist. She mistreated Red, but she didn't want him with anyone else. McKinley probably expects him to be living off fast food and smelling like unwashed asshole because he just can't get over her."

Casper gave us this evil grin.

"I know *all* the buttons to push because I avoided them when we were dating."

"And I want you to have fun pushing those buttons while using your computer skills to find her. Mauve still needs to master French and prepare for her next belt. You're all capable of multitasking. Cadmium, I want you training in the afternoon and finding out what identity she's going by in the morning.

“She’s probably ditched the one we set her up with and we never trained her to set up fake identities because we did all that for you. McKinley probably purchased one from a black-market dealer. The only people here who know you were once a part of that and have contacts were the ones you chose to tell, and I think they are all in this room.”

“They are. I can do that.”

“Good. Go home and be prepared to work in the morning.”

3 JORDAN



I thought we'd be plotting to take a bitch down when we got home. Jeremy and I hadn't even met McKinley, but we were ready to take her down. If Casper just wanted to snuggle on the couch and play video games or have an epic threesome again, we could totally do that. I mean, he just found out his cheating ex masterminded this entire thing. He totally deserved a blowjob.

Casper didn't want that. He went straight into the kitchen and started cooking. I didn't *always* get takeout. I knew how to cook. One thing I learned about Casper was that he took up that entire massive kitchen when he was cooking. There was only one person in our penthouse who knew how to share the

kitchen with him, and that wasn't me. Jeremy was the one who cooked with him, and Casper wanted the kitchen to himself tonight.

We were all piled on the sectional like milk-drunk puppies. Jeremy was rubbing my back, Luke was rubbing my feet, and I was playing with Bailey's short hair.

"Are we taking a personal night?" I asked.

Bailey and Luke started giggling.

"Casper is plotting," Bailey said.

"He comes up with his best ideas working a tomato sauce," Luke said.

"Which means you need to work yours," Jeremy said. "You need to get the login information for one of the profiles Bailey set up for you. You need to send Casper a request and set yourself in a relationship. McKinley really wanted an apartment in this building and she's, apparently, been to this penthouse before. If she thinks Casper got the penthouse and is living with a hot blonde, she's probably going to lose it."

"Oh, she *totally* is," Luke said. "Entitled doesn't even describe her. I didn't train her because she's older than us, but I know a lot more fighting styles than a lot of the older agents because of my time in the service. They were all proficient fighters, but you can never have too many tricks in your arsenal if you get cornered.

"Every single one of them came to me for my expertise, except McKinley. I don't expect anyone to kiss my ass or give me special treatment because I'm a combat veteran, but I *am* an expert on fighting. She expected to come into *my* training room, insult me, and take zero corrections on her form because she just knew she was right. McKinley was only going to get one good punch in and then she'd be doomed. She didn't hold her fists right.

"The training room was for sparring and fight training. We have jump ropes and space to run laps to get your heart pumping, but my space is where you go so you don't get killed in the field. She kept demanding I remove some of the fighting

equipment and bring in a treadmill for her to run on. She could do that on her own time. That's not what I get paid to do."

"You'll *never* have to worry about me asking you to bring anything into your training room that involves running. People should only run if they are getting chased by zombies and angry chihuahuas. People who do it for fun have some weird masochism kink I don't get," I said.

"Runner's high is a thing," Bailey said. "I used to run before class every day. Now that I don't have to worry about getting spotted on the street, I think I'm going to start again."

"Couldn't I just spank you? It sounds a lot more fun."

"Frederick isn't into the spanky spank, but she'd be into doing that to you. I could fit her in my back pocket, but she always makes me be little spoon," Luke said.

"I have it on my resume that I repeatedly make a giant who has several black belts be my little spoon. I'd get all sweaty if you were big spoon. You run hotter than the werewolves in your books."

"I like my big, sexy werewolf," I said.

"You need to get posting on social media or I'm not going to snuggle with you. We need McKinley all up in her feelings that Casper has an amazing apartment and a hot new girlfriend instead of plotting against Kendasha."

"You really do," Jeremy said. "That kid is insanely smart. If her new school does the right thing and puts her in the appropriate classes and Boss pushes her, she's going to do amazing things. We can't let anything happen to her. We can't do that to her mom after everything."

"Bailey, what's the log in?"

"Give me your phone. I know what profile to use. I set up a whole bunch of them. Eventually, you're going to have to play the dumb, hot girl to a criminal who is dumb as rocks. McKinley isn't about girl power. She likes putting other women down to make herself feel better, and she always thinks she's the smartest person in the room. Just say all the weird shit you always say. *We* know your brain does all this

weird brilliant shit, yet talks about being chased by angry chihuahuas, but McKinley is going to jump to some stupid conclusion that she's better for Casper than you are. *She* doesn't want him, but she doesn't want him happy with you, either. The more ridiculous you are and the happier you two seem, the crazier it's going to make her."

"Are we talking ten cups of coffee ridiculous or I haven't eaten in four hours ridiculous?" I asked.

"Don't do hangry," Jeremy said. "You bit me once."

"Yeah, but I didn't break the skin and you like it when I bite you."

"Only when you're naked."

"Here," Bailey said, handing me my phone. "You're officially a trust-fund baby and budding influencer. Most of your followers are paid for, but I posted a few photoshopped photos and you got several that way. You need to post photos, but you need to do reels, too, to make it believable."

"I'm so awkward on video," I moaned.

Seriously. It was like taking badge photos. I panicked and shit got weird. Modeling was different. Much like everything else, I couldn't explain the logic behind that. Still, I needed that judgey bitch with her judgey panties on, so I could be *super* weird.

Except now that I had to plan it instead of it coming naturally, it was like the time my parents put me in ballet lessons and I choked at the recital. Why could I always say something fucked-up when I didn't mean to, but when it counted, my brain was totally blank? Was this how people like me meditated before bed? Because I was clearly devoid of thoughts, and that never happened to me.

"She has that look on her face where she's panicking again," Bailey said.

"She's adorable when she does that," Luke said.

"Don't overthink it. Go into the kitchen and gush about Casper cooking. Make him take his shirt off and put on

Bailey's pink apron," Jeremy said.

"Ooh, yeah. Casper will totally hate that, but he'd do it if it pissed McKinley off," Luke said.

"And Casper is pretty with his shirt off for a guy. It should get you a lot of likes and some more follows. The more the algorithm pushes your posts, the sooner McKinley is going to find them. She probably digging into all of us for intel, but our profiles are all on lockdown for security purposes. Your fake one won't be. She'll see it as soon as you set yourselves in a relationship."

I'd better get on that. I was used to taking photos in very little clothes. I did it for a while before I left the bass player and then I did OnlyFans for cash when I fell for a scam. All my boyfriends and girlfriend were hot.

I wasn't as good at fighting or computers as they were, but something told me I was *much* better at being half naked in front of a camera than all of them.

Time to make Casper uncomfortable.

4 JEREMY



I had known Jordan for five years. I'd never met McKinley, but I knew enough to know she wasn't ready for my girlfriend. A lot of people underestimated Jordan and wouldn't even give her a chance. When they did, she *always* proved she was a very tall badass, even if she did things differently than anyone expected.

I was grateful to Boss. She could have never brought me in on this and I'd still think she was just an assistant at Stantech and I'd still be grateful to her. Jordan lit up, and her confidence was so much better after she got hired. She still had her freakouts and needed a pep talk, but she was learning she was capable of so much.

Boss didn't just ask her to throw her relationship with Casper on a public forum because McKinley didn't know her. Jordan had this way of drawing people in. You either loved her

or were jealous of her. Most people loved her, but there were a few shitty people who didn't. Everything I knew about McKinley so far put her in the shitty person category.

After Jordan got over her awkwardness and freakouts, we were all standing behind her in the kitchen trying not to laugh. I had no problem with what Jordan was doing and Luke wouldn't either, but dancing shirtless in the kitchen in Bailey's frilly pink housewife apron was against Casper's religion.

Casper was a good-looking guy who was more muscular than I was. He'd probably get a ton of likes. He was busting his ass with this, and I was trying not to giggle.

"Oh, he's got moves!" Jordan taunted, pointing her phone at him.

Casper just rolled with it. He grabbed her and pulled her to his chest.

"I've got all the moves. Taste this sauce, love."

Jordan let out this orgasmic moan. She wasn't faking it. Casper's cooking was that good, and she loved Italian. After Jordan licked the spoon, Casper wiped sauce on her nose. Yeah, they were totally milking this, but they were adorable together and I loved them like this.

"Go set the table. You're my dessert," Casper said, swatting at her ass.

"Yes, *sir*."

Jordan turned her phone off and we all went to set the table. Casper made his trademarked spaghetti. He told us his Nonna taught him how to make it when he was just a kid. I was not going to say no to Casper's cooking. In fact, I wasn't complaining *at all* that Bailey and Casper cooked when they got up in their feelings.

"Think that did anything?" Jordan asked after she hit upload on her phone and put it away.

"Oh, yeah. McKinley was older and glamorous when I got hired. She was like, this perfect, supportive girlfriend at first. I was recruited with five other people when Boss had a full

roster. I was on the waitlist for one of her properties and living with a friend from grad school. She changed after I agreed to move in with her. McKinley wanted me to be an entirely different person, and nothing I did was good enough for her. She thought I was going to change everything about myself for her. I don't *mind* showing off and I do sometimes, but she wanted me to be this alpha asshole showboat."

"Sorry I made you dance topless in front of the entire internet," Jordan said.

Bailey and Luke both started laughing.

"He does that while he's cooking *lots* of times, just never in my apron."

"Emily is going to give me shit if she sees that," Casper groaned.

"I always cook when I'm in a mood," Bailey said. "Emily said it was like having a feral housewife. She got me that apron as a joke. The relationship was never going to work out, but I love that apron. And yes, Emily and I both are going to give you a hard time. You made a fifties-housewife apron look sexy."

"I'll take the compliment, Frederick," Casper said, sticking his tongue out at her.

"Wait!" Jordan said. "Was McKinley the type who got mad if you tried to hold her hand in public, but if another woman smiled at you, then she got gross with the PDA?"

"Yeah, actually, she was."

Jordan was up to something. Her big blue eyes did this cute little squint when she was plotting. I hoped we were all prepared for what was about to come out of her mouth. She tossed Luke her phone since he was across the table. He nearly dropped it in his spaghetti since he wasn't ready for it, but Luke's reflexes were insanely fast.

"So, we have to *Lady and the Tramp* this spaghetti and make a video."

I let out a low whistle. Jordan didn't share food. If you offered her some of yours, that was her food now.

"Can you share a noodle with Casper without biting him?" I asked.

"Just how many times have you bitten Jeremy over food?" Bailey asked.

"I didn't break the skin. And I'll share food if there's spite involved. This is a spite noodle we're using to catch a bitch."

"It's perfect," Casper said. "The PDA isn't just going to be over the top. McKinley used to always knock vegans because she thought they were all preachy and judgmental, but she was like that about carbs. When we went out to eat, she'd shit talk anyone eating bread. You'd think I physically abused her when I made homemade pasta, like I was going to kick her out of ketosis just eating it next to her. The spite noodle isn't just going to piss her off because we're sharing it."

All hail the spite noodle. Luke started recording, and Bailey and I got out of the way of the camera. Okay, that was fucking adorable. It didn't go down exactly like it did in the cartoon. It was messier and more awkward because Jordan kept giggling, and Casper was trying not to laugh.

Their lips finally met, and they shared a passionate kiss. Jordan blushed and started laughing. She got embarrassed at the weirdest things. Luke stopped recording, uploaded the video, and tossed the phone back to Jordan. Jordan's reflexes were getting good, too, because she caught it.

"Should I be jealous you just shared food with Casper?" I asked. I was smiling, so she knew I wasn't angry.

"It wasn't *really* food. It was a spite noodle," Jordan said.

"I know we just shared a noodle and that might mean something deeper than pasta, but can I borrow our girlfriend for the night?" Casper asked.

"Dude, yeah. Of course. You don't need my permission."

I wasn't jealous of Casper *or* the spite noodle. It was probably the only time Jordan would share food with any of us

in her entire life.

5 JORDAN



I was glad Jeremy was chill and understanding. He could have made a big deal about the spite noodle because I *never* shared food. I may or may not have bitten him the first time we hung out when I was saving my pickle for last and he thought I didn't want it. Jeremy wasn't much better. He may or may not have stabbed his coworker with a fork when he tried to steal his fries. We would admit to nothing and Boss was supposed to teach us how to pass a lie detector test, eventually. She could probably get it out of us with Tangerine's serum, but why would she even want to know that?

Unless I had to testify about the spite noodle in a court of law when we caught McKinley and had to give back story. I didn't want a jury letting her go because I bit my boyfriend over a pickle. We came to an understanding after that and now all my boyfriends and my girlfriends knew my plate was sacred, so I didn't have to panic and bite someone because they were stealing my food.

"You look like you're stressing about something," Casper said, pulling me into his lap

"The spite noodle is kind of a big deal. If it actually does anything, what if the jury decides we're the bad guys because I bit Jeremy over my pickle?"

"Jordan, I'm honored you shared exactly one spaghetti noodle with me without going feral and attacking me. If she sees it, it's going to piss her off. No one is going to be interested in your social media posts we used to try to draw her out. Everyone is more interested in the evidence of her crimes. No one outside the penthouse is going to find out about the spite noodle unless you slip and mention it at work, then you're probably going to have to explain. Boss and Black are going to think it's cute. Blue is going to pretend like it's annoying, but they do that even when they think something is funny."

"Sharing food isn't funny," I grumped.

"It was *one* noodle,, and it probably pissed my ex off."

I whirled around and straddled his lap.

"We're all alone and I shared a noodle with you."

Casper growled and grabbed my ass to pull me closer.

"Based on your previous track record, you deserve a reward for sharing one measly noodle with me without getting mean about it. What should I do with you?"

"Whatever the fuck you want, but I'd prefer we both be naked."

"Never tell a man that, Jordan."

I shrugged.

“I’m pretty open minded and I know you’d never hurt me. The feet thing might not even be weird with someone else.”

“Shut up, Jordan. I’m not touching your feet. Ask Luke if you want to explore that. I’m going to *devour* you.”

I had no idea what McKinley was bitching about. Casper did the growly dominant thing all the time. He just wasn’t an asshole about it and only did it when it was appropriate. Like when I was grinding myself on his dick. That was the perfect time to whip that shit out. Not at work and certainly not in public.

Casper stood up and tossed me on his bed. He did that stalky thing where he crawled over me like I was his prey. Damn, that was hot. Casper practically ripped my clothes off. There was something about a guy being so into you that he tried to yank your pants off with your shoes on, then got mad at your shoes.

Casper was bigger than Jeremy, but not as massive as Luke, so he wasn’t afraid to throw me around a bit and manhandle me. I was, apparently, into that. Jeremy did it a little now that I was working out, but Casper was doing it like I skipped a fucking belt in my Krav Maga training.

I was a strong, powerful woman who was learning to kick ass, be a spy, and speak multiple languages, but I was digging Casper getting a little disrespectful with my tits. I growled back and pulled his hair. He seemed into that because he bit me.

Casper kissed his way lower, but I stopped him. He wanted to devour me, but I had plans, too. He said he wanted to devour me, but the man just found out his cheating ex-girlfriend masterminded this entire plot. If that wasn’t when your boyfriend *deserved* to get his dick sucked, I didn’t know what was. There were a bunch of different blow job occasions—sympathy blow jobs, birthdays, anniversaries, steak and BJ day. I just never gave those out unless he had similar holidays for eating pussy.

And Casper definitely did.

“I wanna suck your dick,” I said.

“Well, *I* want you to come on my tongue.”

“Well, there’s no kink police in here saying we can’t do both.”

“Good point.”

Casper just picked me up and placed me where he wanted me. I was so into Casper like this. At work, he was polite and in charge, but worried about another mistake like the one that got him suspended. I think Boss reassuring him that he didn’t get fired and then rehired because she was desperate boosted his confidence.

I was here for confident Casper in the bedroom. And his dick was *right there*. I grasped it and swirled the head with my tongue. Casper dove in and wasn’t lying about devouring me. Damn. I needed to up my game, so I deep-throated Casper. He just growled and licked me harder.

This was a whole-ass frontal assault. I could barely even concentrate on the dick in front of me. Casper was fucking evil. He slid two fingers inside me and I nearly lost it. I’d barely even gotten started with Casper when my orgasm hit me like a freight train. It was intense, and I was barely handling life right now.

Casper eased every little aftershock out of me and then yanked me up to put me on all fours. I hardly had a chance to catch my breath or figure out what was going on when Casper slid into me. He gripped my hips and started fucking me just right.

Casper pressed on my back like he wanted me to lower my chest, so I did. That let him fuck me deeper and he was hitting my G spot just right. He was fucking me hard, but not *too* hard. It was perfect.

Casper brought his hand down on my ass to spank me. I knew I was into that, but I wasn’t expecting it from Casper. He was always such a fucking gentleman. Casper shoved his hand underneath me and started working my clit.

I was a goner pretty soon after that. I felt Casper cum with a huge growl. He thrust his orgasm into me while I was dealing with my own aftershocks. Casper collapsed on the bed and pulled me into his chest. I snuggled in and kissed his chest.

I *really* liked this side of Casper.

6 LUKE



Everyone had their plots and subplots going. They were going to let me in on what they found out because of my sister, but I still wasn't an agent anymore. I'd be a horrible agent for this if I still was. Because I'd kill her on sight if it was me they sent after her.

This was more than me missing my sister. We all enlisted and had drastically different experiences. My little sister got groomed by an older, abusive superior officer and the military refused to do anything when she finally spoke out about it. They wouldn't even transfer her so she didn't have to report to him, which made no sense because they *should* have.

My sister did her time and got out, but she was messed up when she got home. I was deployed when she got home and

couldn't do a damned thing about it. Combat fucked me up, but I still would have stayed. I left as soon as I could because of her.

She was brilliant. She kept getting all these amazing opportunities, but she'd sabotage them because she thought it was better for them to go wrong on her terms rather than get surprised. She did it with jobs, relationships, friendships, you name it. She tried to do it with her siblings, too, but we refused to let her.

All that changed when Boss and Black brought her in for an interview. I'm sure part of it was the excitement of being a spy and the rest of it was that Boss and Black were like our mommy and daddy in any way we needed. They could kill us or ruin our lives in multiple different ways, but when Bailey needed someone to yell at for absolutely no reason, Black took it. When she needed someone to listen and not ask a ton of questions, Boss was there.

I didn't even know what she was really doing here. I just knew Stantech was a fantastic opportunity run by an amazing woman. I thought Holly would never even meet Boss, but I didn't want her to implode this. I was dealing with my own issues getting fired because the only people who would give a combat veteran a chance were bars that wanted bouncers.

I applied for a security job at the Stantech building because I needed a job and I thought if Holly saw me every day, she'd realize things were okay here. I didn't even intend to tell anyone my sister worked there. Blue must do a deep dive on *anyone* who applied because when I interviewed with Black, he knew literally everything about me.

The interview got really weird and Black asked a lot of questions I'd never need to do as a security guard. I sucked it up and answered because I wanted the job. I was used to following orders without questioning them. Black finally put me out of my misery, offered me a job, and told me about what I'd *really* be doing.

And it was perfect, even after I got moved to teaching. Holly and I both loved what we did. Holly and Elizabeth got

along better and we had dinner and movie night every Friday. Boss took Holly under her wing and she *healed*. Holly even had a polycule going with a really great guy and this cute girl.

It was going *great* until fucking McKinley released everyone's name and she had to disappear. Elizabeth and my parents didn't read the list of names. They thought the whole thing was this conspiracy theory and a bunch of unwashed guys in their mom's basement were fucking with people.

They thought Holly just fucked up again, disappeared, and ghosted everyone. I had to listen to them bitch about how irresponsible she was and I couldn't say a damned thing about it. I knew the truth. Holly had healed. She got her life together, and she was an amazing agent.

She should have retired an amazing agent, but McKinley happened.

And I wasn't letting her hurt Jordan. Because I knew her type and she would. I was older than Casper and had been here longer. I trained him to fight myself. Casper was this baby-faced ginger when he got recruited and everyone was flirting with him. Casper had offers from men and women, but he was singularly focused on his training.

I don't think McKinley even liked Casper. Not who he was as an amazing person. She seduced him and claimed him because everyone else wanted him. She made a big enough show about warning people away from him once they were together. McKinley treated him like garbage. She was only ever nice to him when it looked like he was thinking about leaving her.

She didn't even like him, but she didn't want anyone else to have him. She couldn't even do him the favor of ending it when she did find someone she liked.

I had no idea why she didn't release Casper's name. She didn't need to break into the server room to get it. McKinley was probably one of the few people who knew it. I was *way* more suspicious about that than anyone. If she just wanted to break up with him, she could have released it and emptied the

apartment with her shitty note the same way she actually did it.

No, McKinley left Casper here for a reason. She hadn't reached out, but she was watching him. McKinley was a total bitch to anyone she thought was sniffing around Casper considered what she did to him in the end. She may or may not care about the lovefest Jordan was posting on social media, but I wasn't going to risk her reacting badly and coming for Jordan.

So, I did my fucking *job*. I helped Jordan with her French until it was time for lunch, and then I met Jordan and Bailey in the training room.

“So, I'm altering your training a bit,” I announced. “The trainer I replaced thought you only needed to be proficient in one style of fighting. It's effective and will do in a pinch, but there are better styles. You need to be versatile. Casper and Bailey would be dead right now, but they fought their way out using multiple styles of fighting.

“McKinley bragged about being a good fighter, but the only reason I ever saw her spar was because Boss forced her to and that was only once a month. I watched her spar for hours and I know how she fights. Cadmium is basically feral and fast as fuck. Mauve is still learning, but I can teach you both how to beat her if she comes back here.”

“Cadmium could beat her, but I don't think I can,” Jordan said.

Jordan took to fight training like a fish to water, but if she went up against any of our previous employees in a real-life situation, she'd hold her own for a bit, then eventually get bested. That was *only* because I'd had my hands on her for a few months. She was going to be fantastic once she was fully trained.

“You can beat her, even with an orange belt, because I know her weakness. I had Black pull her record before we left last night. I was reading it last night when you went off with Red. She only ever had one mission go wrong, and she didn't have to fight her way out. McKinley got dumped on the street

in her underwear and got arrested for indecent exposure. Boss used her connections to bail her out and get her home.”

Bailey snorted.

“I love that for her. She pretended like her shit didn’t stink when *anyone’s* missions went wrong like hers never did.”

“How does that help me beat her? She’s still a black belt and I’m just an orange belt.”

Jordan needed a pep talk. That happened sometimes. She pulled off all these amazing things in the short time she’d been here and she was going to make a fantastic agent one day. Sometimes, she just needed you to remind her of that.

“Because the only fight experience she has is in this training room and I happen to know her weakness. McKinley will do *anything* to avoid taking a hit to the face. She forgets her training and gets sloppy. The fighting style she was trained in involves tiring your opponent out, but you run the risk of tiring yourself out too and losing. *I* teach my students a variety of fighting styles. I teach them to find a weakness and exploit it. Anyone who tries to tell you that’s not an honorable way of fighting has never seen combat and had to fight for their life.

“She breaks from her training when she’s sparring. McKinley was the only one who didn’t come to me to update their fight training. The people she was sparring against caught on pretty quickly—she got sloppy if they went for her face—and exploited it. She’d always try to end the fight with the exact same move when she realized they were going to mark her face.

“It’s effective, but risky. If she can get her arms and legs around someone, she can snap their necks or choke them out and it’s pretty hard to get her off. Executing that move against another trained fighter is difficult and you’re liable to get body-slammed and killed. McKinley only pulled it off once against the many people she sparred against. Everyone saw her do it the first time and prepared for it. She just kept doing it, even though they knew it was coming.”

“I think I know what you’re talking about,” Bailey said.

“I don’t,” Jordan said.

“Cadmium was the only person here I ever taught it to. She’s tiny and the fastest person I know. She’s the only one I trust to actually be able to pull it off and have the brains to know when it’s appropriate to use so that it actually works.”

“Aw, Green. I’m starting to think you like me.”

“Shut up, Cadmium. You know I love you. Mauve, I’m going to teach you how to block that and punch a bitch in the face. Since Cadmium knows that move, I’m going to have the two of you spar. McKinley is much taller than Cadmium and shorter than Mauve, so it won’t be the same, but it’ll prepare both of you.”

“I’m not punching my girlfriend in the face,” Jordan said.

“Cadmium can take it. And you hit me on the training mats all the time.”

“Yeah, but you’re a big sexy moose and Cadmium can fit in my purse.”

Bailey and I both started laughing. Bailey was teeny and cute, but Boss threw her a bone when she arrested her and Bailey busted her ass. She was probably the deadliest person I’d ever trained. When Bailey jumped into a moving garbage truck and hurt her back, she fought an entire room of criminals and won. The only reason she couldn’t make it to the stairs was because backup with big guns showed up. If they weren’t armed, Bailey probably would have beat their asses out of spite and run out of the building.

Bailey decided to make a point by punching me directly in the stomach.

“I can take a punch just as well as the moose can. He taught me everything he knows.”

I wasn’t going to hit her back, but I did pounce and put her in a headlock because that was just the kind of relationship we had.

“Cadmium was my best student until you ended up on my mats. Both of you are unpredictable and that’s going to save

your life if you ever need to fight.”

Jordan just shrugged.

“She could just pick us off with a gun.”

“Maybe. Boss and Black train us not to rely on those. They are almost impossible to hide with the silencer on and if you’re in danger, you often don’t have the time to stick it on your gun. Gunshots are loud. You might not just bring someone’s criminal associates. People tend to call the authorities when they hear them. Boss and the agencies like hers have a lot of strings, but if you *and* your partner get busted, they don’t find out right away to get you out. Boss and Black ended up in a prison where they didn’t have the option to contact their handler. Their handler didn’t know if they were dead or in jail. Ask them to tell you about the time they had to break out of jail in the eighties. It’s much harder now,” Bailey said.

Boss and Black *loved* to tell that story. I’m sure they didn’t find it funny when they were in a filthy prison in their younger days, but they sure thought it was hilarious now.

“Cadmium knows how to shoot, though. You had her do it when you were teaching me to throw knives.”

That was Bailey’s secret, not mine. If she chose to tell Jordan, I’d tell her what I found out from McKinley’s personnel file right now. She’d get a huge kick out of that. I looked at Bailey and let her know if Jordan was going to find this out, it was going to come from her.

“Boss and Black have an elite team. We don’t just find evidence and give it to people who can arrest them. As much faith as people like to put in the justice system, certain evil people have so much power that they’ll never see the inside of a jail. Arresting them puts anyone who tries *and* their families in danger.

“We take them out of the equation. Usually, it looks natural, but sometimes, we want it pretty obvious they were assassinated because it flushes out the criminals we *can* arrest that might not have come to our attention yet. Assassination missions are rare and those with guns are even rarer, but when

we need that, they usually send me. I'm a dead shot, quick to get away, and no one ever suspects the small female in a crowd," Bailey said.

"I meant it when I said she's the fastest person here. It's not just fighting. She can get in and out of places like lightning, especially when she's not beating bad guys down. Boss teaches you how to defend yourself and get out of a dangerous situation, but you don't learn what Cadmium knows unless you were handpicked for the elite team. According to McKinley's file, she repeatedly tried to get on it, but Boss and Black thought she was ill suited," I said.

"She could always pay someone like she did Kendasha," Jordan pointed out.

"She won't," Bailey said. "Not unless she finds someone insanely stupid who *wants* to end up in prison. Pulling off a sniper kill, especially in a populated city like New York, takes insane planning. The type of people who are going to pull that off *without* getting caught and ratting her out are expensive.

"She killed her gravy train when she fucked over Boss. McKinley was padding her bank account from her missions. I'm sure she thought she could continue stealing by pretending to be in love with rich men, but it's not that easy. Blue and our team leads get insane details on our marks. They find out things even their best friends don't know. Like, if Clarence wasn't Red's first time as team lead, you would have known about the feet thing."

I snorted.

"I don't think any of Red and Blue's research was going to properly prepare her for how weird that man was. But Cadmium is right. McKinley probably realizes right about now that getting close to rich men is a lot harder when Boss doesn't give you a dossier about them and things can get violent when you aren't prepared about what not to say. She has to work harder for her stolen money. I doubt she'll spare what she does have on an assassin over her ex-boyfriend. She left him here for a reason and I think she'll do something stupid if she sees

your posts, but she's greedy. She's not going to pay the amount it takes to shoot you and not have it blow back on her."

That much was true. I was worried about McKinley hurting Jordan, but she wasn't going to have her killed. I served with snipers. I knew what it took to pull that off and not get caught. McKinley did a lot of stupid shit, but she'd fucked over a ton of people to distract Boss when she thought Boss was onto her. She wasn't going to do a damned thing to Jordan that was going to lead back to her and a cheap assassin would do that.

But McKinley liked to use hackers who would do shit for cheaper than an assassin for bragging rights and she was bold enough to think I couldn't teach her a damned thing when it came to fighting.

Everything McKinley ever did to Casper broadcasted she didn't give a shit about him. She betrayed everyone whose name she could get to. She fucked over people she didn't know in the process.

McKinley didn't release Casper's name, so maybe she *did* care in her own way. She was a total asshole to anyone who was just nice to him when she was here.

She may or may not care Casper had a new girlfriend, but I trusted that bitch as far as I could throw her.

7 BAILEY



I was going to have to have a come to Jesus talk with Luke about freaking out our girlfriend. Jordan didn't freak out like most people. You had to channel it into something productive and then feed her or she worked herself up about it and then it was even harder to calm her down.

He definitely needed to step up her training, but it wasn't just because of McKinley. I knew I'd be going out again, but Jordan might, too. I was more worried about Kendasha than I was about Jordan. Jordan would make her jealous and sloppy. She might leave a crumb on the internet that the computer geeks could trace her location from.

There was a certain genius fourteen-year-old with braces that could expose everything and Boss had her hands on her. I agreed with Luke that McKinley left Casper here for a reason and was probably watching him. Our social media accounts were all locked down. We didn't have photos of us you could see without our permission. I was guessing McKinley was still on Casper's and was watching.

Unless Casper removed her after he found out she was cheating. Casper was rarely on social media. He only got on it to keep up with his family. I was going to have to ask him.

For now, I was sweaty as fuck and out of breath after sparring with Jordan. She was totally adorable. Jordan was worried about hurting me, but she soon learned I was hard to hurt. She was a good fighter for a newbie. Luke and I were teaching her to go for the face and to counteract the move McKinley liked to do.

And I was trying so hard not to laugh. I was trying to teach her how to do it on Luke. You kind of had to jump and fling yourself at someone, wrapping your arms and legs around their shoulders and using your momentum to fling them on their back. Then, you just choked them out.

Jordan had her hands on her knees while she was panting. She held up a finger because she needed a minute.

"I want to go again. I can do this."

"You don't have to get it today," Luke said.

"You're going to hurt tomorrow," I warned.

"One more time."

"Come at me, bro."

Jordan let out this battle cry and flung herself at Luke. She was a little too leggy for this move. She kind of hit his chest and bounced off. Jordan groaned and rubbed her ass.

"Why are you such a firm moose?"

Luke offered his hand and yanked her to her feet.

"I don't see you complaining when I'm naked."

“Yeah, because you’re a fucking snack,” she said, pinching his nipple.

Luke really was a snack. It was time to go home, so we all headed to the showers. I sent a few texts and let Jeremy and Luke walk her home. I walked to that little Chinese place she loved so much and ordered a ton of food. I finally met Bai, who’d helped her so much.

I knew Mandarin just as well as Jordan did. I introduced myself to Bai and thanked her for helping my girlfriend. Bai didn’t even blink that Jordan was in here with Jeremy and was also dating me. She fawned over me and threw in some extra food. Bai told us to come back again so she could catch up with Jordan and I headed home.

Jordan was about ready to eat someone when I got there. I started handing out food. I usually enjoyed cooking for my people, but I was exhausted after training. Luke was pure evil today. Honestly, I loved it when he got like that. Despite what Jordan thought about running, I love pushing my body.

I had spent my morning looking into the alias Boss had given McKinley to disappear under. I was pretty sure she wasn’t using it anymore. Boss was, too. Buying identities wasn’t hard. I’d done it before but buying *good* ones took skill.

McKinley was used to being given them by Boss and Black, but she had hacker contacts. Casper and the computer geeks were looking into it, too. I didn’t find much before lunch, but Casper kept going.

“Any luck after lunch when Luke tried to kill us?” I asked.

That big-ass fucker blew me a kiss.

“Love you, baby.”

I flipped him off with both hands. He didn’t need to be joking about that with me if he hadn’t said it to Jordan yet.

“I realized I never removed her from my accounts after we broke up,” Casper said.

I figured. He wasn't on there much except to read what his friends and family posted.

"Did you at least shit post about her after?" Jordan asked.

"Not my style."

"We all got on his social media," Jeremy said. "He doesn't post often, but when he does, it's updates for his friends and family out of state. He can't blow it up without being suspicious, but he can post a little more often and Jordan can tag him."

"Guys, she left me here for a reason. She might not care about Jordan, but she might reach out to find out where we are at in finding out who did this, because she thinks we don't know it's her. Even if she knows we have Kendasha, she covered her tracks pretty well. McKinley has no reason to think Kendasha unscrambled her face. She might reach out and she also has no idea about the photo trick Jeremy wrote."

Jeremy's photo trick was coming in handy. McKinley leaving Casper here to get an inside on our investigation was an excellent theory, but she hadn't reached out so far. And it didn't make a lot of sense with how she ended things. She *could* have emptied the apartment and left a note that she wasn't going to let him ruin his life for her.

She didn't. McKinley left a nastygram that she was cheating on him and leaving with her lover. The only way Casper was going to give her the time of day after that was the situation we were in now.

This would be a *lot* easier if we knew why McKinley left Casper behind.

8 JORDAN



Luke was a giant moose meanie in training. I loved every minute of it. I still wasn't going to do anything stupid like going running for *fun* because I hadn't lost my mind, but I had a fucking blast sweating my ass off on the mats. I was probably going to be just as sore as my first day of training. I regret nothing.

Luke and Bailey passed me tubes of arnica and massage oil, told me to take a hot shower, and sent me off with Jeremy to give me one of his trademarked massages. Jeremy had other ideas after hearing Bailey and I talk about training. He usually did.

Instead of a shower, he turned on the *fabulous* tub in our bathroom and showed me the salts he got for sore muscles.

“It’s *much* more satisfying when you’re walking funny because of me and not because you worked out too hard. Because, girl, you looked like your thong was on crooked when Luke first got his hands on you, and I had no idea what was going on.”

“Shut up. I did not. I had the ugly granny panties on after that because I’d suffered enough.”

“Not the granny panties with the hole in the butt,” Jeremy gasped. “You have three boyfriends and a girlfriend now that expect better quality underwear. The holey drawers need to go. Now, get naked and get in the tub.”

“Yes, sir. And it’s just a small hole. It’s not like my ass is hanging out. Those are my comfort granny panties. I’m not tossing them until my whole ass falls out of that hole. You’ll have to love them like you love the rest of my fuckery. Now, get in the tub with me.”

“Yes, ma’am. And you’d make dirty, ratted pantaloons look sexy. I was just fucking with you about your sacred panties. Hop in.”

Jeremy knew exactly how hot I liked my bath and shower and he had the temperature just right. I settled in and leaned against Jeremy’s chest. I sighed when he wrapped his arms around me.

“What did you put in the water?”

“I asked your girlfriend what she does after a hard training session with your other boyfriend. This was when we first moved in and they weren’t your girlfriend and other boyfriend yet. She gave me a whole list and Luke gave me some aftercare pointers. I knew it was coming.”

“From bath stuff and pointers after Luke kicks my ass?”

“It was *how* they said it. I might be completely tone deaf when someone is into *me* but my radar is spot on for other people. I might not have known you were into *me* but I could tell you were catching feelings for them.”

“You’re like, super great about all of this.”

“It’s hot as fuck. Even when I don’t get to watch, just thinking about what they are doing to you gets me going.”

“You might have to forever imagine what Bailey and I get up to. You don’t want to fight her if she gets mad if you ever ask to watch us. She spent today helping me learn to fight McKinley and teaching me this badass monkey move she can do, but every time I tried it, I bounced off Luke and ended up on my ass. Bailey’s also an assassin, so don’t let the fact that she’s pocket sized and adorable fool you.”

“I’m not fucking with your girlfriend. You have to be fucked in the head to get excited when a girl kicks you right in the nuts. I’m sure he had protection on, but I’m not going to live my life in a cup looking over my shoulder for a pint-sized ninja looking to maul my nuts.”

“Especially since they are such majestic testicles,” I said, grinding myself against him.

“Jordan, I adore that you’re a beautiful woman who owns her sexuality, but maybe your vagina is overriding your brain at the moment. You spent four hours sparring with an assassin and bouncing off a moose. The bath salts and arnica aren’t magic. You’re still going to hurt tomorrow. You sure you want to fight an assassin and bounce off your moose with a sore vagina in your holey granny panties tomorrow?”

Motherfucker. I had my thing with everyone. My thing with Jeremy usually involved some soreness the next day. Not my trusty granny panties with the hole in the butt sore, but I’d be flinging my whole crotch at Luke tomorrow. I was supposed to wrap my legs and arms around his shoulders, fling him to the floor, and choke him out.

My girl couldn’t take that kind of abuse.

“I can’t even see your face and I know you’re pouting. I didn’t say no orgasms. I said you’re going to regret sex tomorrow. I’ve got a perfectly good tongue and a drawer full of sex toys. Positive reinforcement training doesn’t just work when I’m trying to teach Darth Vader tricks. It works on you,

too, love, but with orgasms and food instead of stinky fish treats.”

Yeah, I wasn’t even mad about being compared to our naked cat because orgasms and food were suitable rewards, but I could very much be bribed with both. If I ever got held hostage for information on Boss, they’d never figure out my weakness. I wasn’t going to fall for prison food. I mean, I’d eat it because bad things happened if I didn’t eat for a few hours, but I wasn’t telling you shit.

“Is it really all that fair that we have a wide array of purple sex toys and guys hardly have any? Why are they all purple? Did they do some scientific study that women actually prefer purple penises? Because if any of you came at me waving your dick in my face and it was purple, I’d send you straight to the emergency room.”

Jeremy chuckled.

“Yeah, they all seem to be pink or purple unless it’s the kinky monster dildos. I was going to buy you a dragon dildo, but I wasn’t sure if you’d be into it. Luke’s been giving you those books, so maybe. But you’re right. If the dick you want to play with is attached to an actual man and it’s purple, please don’t risk a man’s cock like that, even if he’s begging for sex. Grab him by the cock and lead him straight to the nearest emergency room.”

“Some of you are weird about your wieners.”

“Don’t call it a wiener,” Jeremy moaned.

“That’s another thing. Why do you need so many names for your cocks? You’ve got the cute, little names and the names that make it sound like a powerful weapon, but if I flicked your nuts with my finger, you’d crumple and cry.”

“It really is a massive design flaw. Get out of the tub or you’re going to pickle.”

Jeremy grabbed a towel and dried me off. Then, the asshole rolled the towel up and snapped my ass with it.

“Go lie on the bed and grab the headboard.”

I was easily distracted and easily pleased. My muscles felt slightly better, but perhaps I shouldn't have tried skipping to the bedroom. I ended up looking like a drunk baby horse because I was all arms and legs and I spent all day using them trying to fight my girlfriend, who was, apparently, an assassin.

Jeremy didn't see it or he would have teased me about it because damn, that was awkward. I got to the bed as quickly as I could without looking like a total asshole. I wasn't trying to be graceful. That one fateful year of ballet lessons in second grade told me that was never going to happen. I unceremoniously flopped on the bed and grabbed the headboard.

I wasn't trying to be pretty. I was trying to have all the orgasms.

Damn, Jeremy looked good naked. I used to have a thing for the rock stars and Jeremy had that rock-star body. His tattoos were *much* better than the last band member I dated. Jeremy's body was a work of art and he went the extra mile and got his dick pierced. All those condoms that said they were ribbed for her pleasure were an utter disappointment in that regard, but dick shinies were awesome.

“What am I going to do with you, Jordan?”

“Like, right now while I'm naked, or are we talking about my fuckery?”

“Never change the fuckery. I meant right now. I can't have you looking like that on our bed and *not* give you all the orgasms, but I'm also guessing Bailey didn't take it easy on you.”

I groaned. She totally beat my ass, but I was pretty sure she *was* taking it easy on me. Bailey pulled it instead of breaking my face when they were teaching me to defend against McKinley's fighting style, but I still hurt all over.

“I actually have an idea,” Jeremy giggled. “There's a new toy I haven't tried yet and I still get to taste you.”

“I'm listening.”

My boyfriend skipped to the dildo drawer *much* more gracefully than I did to the bed, but he'd been sitting behind a computer trying to catch McKinley instead of learning how to fight her. I wasn't graceful, but I had some trademarked ass-shaking moves that I wasn't about to bust out for the next few days.

Jeremy hid the fucking toy behind his back as he made his way back to the bed. He'd better not be hiding it because it was one of those obscene, twelve-inch double dongs that looked like it would feel like childbirth. Luke felt amazing but anything bigger than him was my no-no place.

"You'd better not be hiding the sex toy because it's scary."

"No, I bought this specifically for you. You've got three boyfriends now. One day, you're going to get this kinky idea in your head to take all three of us at once. You're probably not going to want Luke in your ass, but three holes, three guys, Jordan. Think about it. I got a vibrator that does the ass and pussy. Think of it as a trainer dildo for foursomes."

"Aw, Jeremy. You always take care of me. Come show me."

"Yes, ma'am."

I felt greedy with three boyfriends and a girlfriend. I'd played with Casper and Jeremy before, but that was new to all of us. I was pretty sure we all enjoyed it and might do it again. Don't ask me how I ended up in a relationship with this many people and never even thought about orgies. Which was weird because that was my favorite thing to masturbate to when my imagination wasn't cutting it.

And now that Jeremy was using this toy and his tongue on me, *why* had this thought never once crossed my mind? I felt very stuffed, but it was also the best of both worlds. Especially since Jeremy was also using his tongue.

I was losing my damned mind. His tongue was going hard and fast, but he was going just hard enough with the vibrator to be intense, but not enough to hurt. My orgasm was fucking intense, and it just kept going. Jeremy slowly licked my clit

until it was totally done and my body was limp. He set the toy aside and pulled me to his chest so we could snuggle.

“How was it?”

“We are so scheduling an orgy. I’m going to find a way to get Bailey there without her killing all of you.”

9 CASPER



I had never shared a girlfriend before. If you told me I was going to before this, I would have told you that you were insane. It just *worked* with Jordan. It was hot as fuck sharing her with Jeremy in bed. We'd all just kind of eased into this and now we were a family. It worked, and I loved everything about it.

Outside of our apartment and the office, Jordan and I were pretending like it was just us in the relationship. It was part of the job, but we were usually in another country when it happened and we rarely did this with people we were actually dating.

Pretending like I was desperately in love with Jordan wasn't a problem. I was. It was *weird* acting like she was just mine. She was mine. When she was just with me, she was hyper focused on me. When we were all together, no one was left out. But she was also Jeremy, Luke, and Bailey's.

We left the penthouse hand-in-hand, just in case McKinley saw the posts and was watching. Hacking CCTV footage was child's play. I wasn't even Kendasha-level genius, and I'd been able to do it since I was fourteen. McKinley couldn't hack. She'd asked me to do it a few times, and I always told her no.

I didn't know how much money she'd stolen, but by now, I was pretty sure she realized worming her way into the lives of wealthy criminals without Boss helping her get close and all the intel Blue, Black, and her team lead got was pretty fucking hard.

McKinley wasn't going to use her stolen money to pay a hacker to watch me, but it wasn't that hard to figure out how to get into CCTV footage. Jordan and I were walking to the office holding hands and chatting.

"How do we know she even looked back after she left?" Jordan asked.

"She covered her tracks well and set up Kendasha to take the fall. McKinley might have been dumb enough to fuck over Boss and Black, but she's not dumb enough to underestimate any of them. She left me here for a reason. McKinley knows my social media is only friends and family. I only remove someone if they start posting really heinous shit and I'm not really friends with anyone like that.

"We never made it social media official. She didn't want to, and neither did I. I thought I was into her, but deep down, I knew my mom was going to ask to meet her and she would *hate* her. It was going to cause drama. McKinley left me that little love note, letting me know she'd been cheating on me for a long time, but I'm pretty sure she was counting on me not removing her from social media. I'm hardly on it and wouldn't think to do it unless I saw her post."

Which is exactly what happened. I was furious about what she did to me. I didn't post my business all over social media, but I did make a few vague angry posts about her. Luke and Bailey knew what they were about and my mom called me because she knew it was a woman, but no one else would have figured it out unless they knew the situation or they raised me.

"Yeah, but I'm on your accounts now," Jordan said. "You never post about work stuff. You post life updates for your mom that have nothing to do with work. Casper, you'd never post anything that would tip off McKinley on social media."

I had to remember that Jordan had never met McKinley. The woman had some sheer *audacity*. She could have disappeared with a note that she didn't want me to ruin my life going with her. She *wanted* me to know she'd been cheating on me.

"I think McKinley is delusional enough to think that if she messaged me pretending to miss me and regret everything, I'd start talking to her again. I think she was planning to eventually contact me and pretend like she wanted to get back together, she just wanted to make sure it was safe first, so I gave her information about our investigation."

"I haven't known you as long as she has and we haven't been a couple that long, but even *I* know you aren't going to fall for that. Even if we didn't know she was Baba Yaga, you strike me as being a spiteful, little gremlin under that calm veneer and our in-charge team lead. If we weren't trying to catch her, something tells me you'd troll the shit out of her."

I started laughing. *That* was why I was so into this girl. She saw me and she wasn't trying to change a thing about me. Jordan was right. That was *exactly* what I would have done. I knew who some of her marks were because she always came back from missions and bragged to me, even though she wasn't supposed to. I would have used the most dangerous one to keep her constantly looking over her shoulder because fuck her. I had time to think about how wrong she treated me.

"Can we bust her and you get revenge at the same time?"

“That’s the plan, but if Luke gets his hands on her first, he’s going to kill her because of his sister. And Bailey is basically our sister, so she’ll kill her because of what she did to Luke and me. Bailey is good enough to do it without leaving a trace, but Luke would get caught. Boss has connections, but if she couldn’t spring him, a jury would convict him in a heartbeat because we can’t tell the truth and Luke is massive. They’d paint him as someone who came back from combat wrong and hurt a woman. Whatever we do, we have to keep Luke away from McKinley.”

Luke was a golden retriever for the most part. Once you got to know him, it was easy to forget he was also deadly. When Boss decided to move him from active agent to another role, she just as easily could have made him an assassin instead of our trainer. He would have been as equally good at that, but he wouldn’t have been as happy as he was as our trainer.

I knew his younger sister because we were coworkers, but we weren’t close. I met his older sister, Elizabeth, after the breach. Luke was close with both of his sisters, but he was particularly protective of the younger one. He’d kill McKinley with his bare hands and feel good about it for about a week. Then the PTSD he fought so hard to deal with getting to a good place would kick in and it would destroy him.

I didn’t care if McKinley died, but I wasn’t letting her do that to Luke.

“How do we keep Luke out of this?” Jordan asked.

Jordan didn’t know all the dark details of Luke’s past, but she knew enough. She cared about him enough to know that he needed to *see* McKinley pay. He needed to be a part of us catching her, but Luke couldn’t be in the same room with her.

“By catching her the *right* way and not letting Luke in the same room with her. Go work on your French modules and fighting, love,” I said, kissing her knuckles. “The rest of us will be doing our thing. Learn and distract Luke while you’re at it.”

We went through the front door where our real names disappeared and our code names became the only thing we were known by. For once, I was comfortable leading a team. We'd had two successful missions so far, even with Jordan being hardly trained and Jeremy, Tyrian, and Crimson being newer than Jordan.

I had an *excellent* team with just the right set of skills to do this. If McKinley reached out, my team had written code to get access to her devices in two different ways. We were also digging into any forums she might have been active on and might be posting on now. Cerulean and her team were working with Kendasha to up security at the office so this couldn't happen again, but also go through anything on Kendasha's old laptop to see if they could trace her. Boss upgraded her laptop to something appropriate for a fourteen-year-old genius.

And then there was my criminal little sister. She wasn't just an assassin. The *only* reason Boss was able to arrest Bailey was that she happened to be in the same room when we were arresting her criminal cohorts. Boss had all the major players in the black-market, fake ID ring down, but Bailey wasn't even on her radar because she was that good at hiding.

I went straight to Bailey's office first. We used to have someone who did our aliases that Boss had Bailey train, but fucking McKinley blasted their name with everyone else, so Bailey was doing it until we brought in someone new for Bailey to impart all her wisdom on.

"Dude, I'm jealous. You get to hog our girlfriend any time you leave the penthouse. I'm hoping your stupid ex is watching and also getting jealous."

"Any luck on the information Boss gave you?"

"Yeah. Boss gave McKinley an alias and set her up in London. The apartment is still in the name she gave her and *someone* is using the credit cards, but it's not McKinley. The signatures don't match and the purchase history isn't her style. They are ordering their groceries in and it's a lot of pasta and bread. McKinley is doing a lot of work to make it look like

that's her using that identity in London just in case Boss checks, but it's not.

"There's a CCTV camera right outside the flat. The person she has living there could pass for her, but is definitely not McKinley. The woman wears a mask like she's worried about the flu or COVID, which isn't weird because plenty of people do, but it means we can't run facial recognition. This person doesn't move on the street like one of us and she always has her hair down or in a ponytail. Big massive red flag that's not McKinley."

"Is that something I don't get because I have a dick? I get that we are more hyperaware of our surroundings on the street, but I don't get the hair thing."

"Why do you think Boss keeps her head shaved?"

"Because she has amazing bone structure and looks like a total goddess that way?"

Bailey started laughing and looked me dead in the eye.

"Watch it. Jordan might get jealous and despite her self-deprecation humor, she's actually catching onto this whole fighting thing wicked fast. She's like a damned prodigy."

"So? I think every last one of us finds that sexy as fuck. You'd have to be blind not to notice Boss is attractive. Jordan has probably noticed, too. That doesn't mean I'm trying to sexualize Boss or think of her like that. I have so much respect for that woman."

"We all do. Anyway, Boss gives the girls a tip when we are on a mission working criminals in countries we've never been to before. Buns and updos are timeless, elegant, and no one questions them but no one can grab your hair and subdue you that way. McKinley *always* came to work with her hair in a bun. She was the one dumb enough to release her name with everyone else's. She also has to worry about Boss eventually finding out what she did. McKinley is *not* going to be walking around London with her hair down bumping into pedestrians because she's not paying attention to her surroundings. That's not her."

I was the one who lived with McKinley and dated her but clearly, there were a lot of things I didn't know about my ex. I wasn't going to question Bailey on this. McKinley preferred having long hair, but she never wore it down, even at home. I never really questioned it before. I enjoyed brushing a woman's hair and playing with it, but McKinley always said she didn't like that. Her hair was always in an elegant updo for work. She took it down when she showered and did a messy bun when she slept.

She would have dyed her hair before she wore it down since she was in hiding. McKinley was a brunette, but she was always jealous of my red hair. For some reason, she hated blondes on principle and was quite vocal about it. McKinley would have gone blonde if she didn't want to be recognized because she didn't exactly hide her disdain for the entire blonde community.

“So, this woman is the key to cracking McKinley.”

“Maybe, maybe not. She might just be some random woman McKinley found who could kind of pass for her if you aren't looking hard enough who is doing this for the apartment and credit cards. She could be someone like I was who needed to disappear because of a guy and McKinley is exploiting that. This woman might not ask a ton of questions about why McKinley is doing all this or asking her to do certain things because the alternative is worse. Or she could be a criminal associate. We don't know.”

Bailey was probably right. McKinley could be using her. We needed to find a way to get to this woman without blowing up her life if her situation was like Bailey's. I hadn't forgotten New Orleans. If Bailey's friend hadn't slowed him down until we got there, Carl might have killed her. I wasn't doing that to another woman, even if it meant stopping McKinley.

“Do you have a plan?” I asked.

“No. I still have friends in the black-market, fake ID business, even though it's been a while. They won't talk to cops, but I'm not a cop. The whole point of those places is so people can disappear and not get caught. They don't keep it

where anyone is going to find it, but they *do* keep records of who they gave what to so the identity they spent all that time crafting doesn't blow up on someone because they gave it to two people."

"We're so not cops, but what makes you think they'll talk to you?"

"Sometimes I forget y'all have never broken the law. *Good* fake identities that will stand up to the DMV, employee, credit, and criminal background checks are hard to come by. If someone has to leave their life, they are desperate. We try to help them by setting them up with good credit and the means to get a good job.

"Most of us don't help everyone. We charge for our services because it's a lot of work, but we don't want repeat business. The more someone comes crawling back to us, the bigger chance we get caught. If you're trying to disappear because you did something stupid and there's a big chance you're going to repeat that mistake, most people aren't going to touch you with a ten-foot pole. Someone brought down the entire ring I was working at and got me busted, too, helping someone who didn't deserve it for extra cash and then trying to do it again on the side when they came crawling back. I can't tell them the truth about McKinley, but there's enough I *can* tell them that they'll talk to me."

"So, they are criminals with a code?"

"Most of them, yeah. There are some who will help criminals get away with it. The rich criminals just move to a country they can't be extradited from and keep being rich. Sometimes, the grunts want to run. That's a case-by-case thing. Wife beaters who go too far and murder their girlfriends always look for us as are people on bail who know a jury is going to convict them.

"The groups I worked for helped people the system failed like me. We helped people escaping cults and gangs. There *are* groups that help bad people. I know how to talk to both of them. You, my friend, need to go talk to Boss. She was already

looking into that woman before the breach. She might have found something you can bring to the computer geeks.”

“None of us are actually geeks.”

“Oh, my god, you’re all huge geeks. It’s my favorite thing about you.”

“Well, thanks, I guess. I’m going to find Boss and see if she can get me what she’s found out.”

“Get a copy of McKinley’s personnel file, too. Green and I have both read it. We gave it to Byzantium, but he had Mauve all to himself last night, so I doubt he was doing any reading.”

“But she could barely walk.”

“That’s totally not going to stop our girlfriend.”

Probably not. But I needed to worry about catching my ex for now.

10 JEREMY



I loved this job. I knew Jordan did, too. It was never boring. McKinley was a total asshole that fucked up a lot of lives but catching her was going to be interesting. Crimson and Tyrian were deep diving into all the hacker forums and discords trying to find if Baba Yaga was posting anywhere currently or in the past.

I was reading McKinley's personnel file. Wow, *no one* liked her except Casper and the dude she was cheating on him with. Her team lead wanted her off his team and her partner hated working with her. McKinley was paired up with someone like Jordan and I would be. One person would be working the mark and the other would be watching their camera and mic in case something went wrong.

Boss, Black, and Blue didn't like her much either, but they were worried about what she'd do if they just fired her. I read

through all her disciplinary files while I waited for Casper to get here. It wasn't just the stealing. McKinley mouthed off to her team lead, bullied her coworkers, and kept taking her mic and camera off so that her partner couldn't see or hear what she was doing.

Was she *trying* to get killed?

McKinley seemed to be a good agent if it involved the right kind of mark. The only time she remotely had a mission go wrong, if you could even consider that, was when she wasn't playing an airhead and mouthed off to someone. She got backhanded, dumped in an alley in her underwear, and arrested but still finished her mission.

But she wasn't stupid. I had no idea how many languages they were going to eventually teach us here but McKinley was fluent in a lot of them. She had been a double major in languages and business and had just graduated law school when Boss tried to recruit her.

I didn't get her *at all*. Black went over my salary when he gave me the job offer. Generous didn't even cover it. When he told me what I'd *really* be doing, he also went over the hazard pay and how they did raises. We had a generous pension and 401K.

McKinley had been an agent for twelve years. She could have lived quite comfortably and still just told Boss she wanted out to be a lawyer. She could have converted her pension to an IRA and cashed out some of her 401K to start her own law firm.

Everyone just wanted her gone. Boss would have dropped her investigation because it was a straightforward way to get rid of her. Boss probably would have *helped* her to ensure McKinley stayed quiet about what she used to do. McKinley's fake position at Stantech was as a lawyer, so she had something to put on her resume.

I was giving a running commentary to Crimson and Tyrian while we waited for Casper to check in.

“I don’t even know what Red saw in her. I like Mauve *so* much better for him, even if I don’t get this whole group thing,” Crimson said.

“So, you don’t want an entire group of super spies to love you like she does?” Tyrian asked, puffing up his chest.

What we had wasn’t for everyone and that was okay. It took a *lot* of understanding and communication. But it didn’t matter who you were or how secure you were in anything, sometimes, you needed a little reassurance. And right now, I was pretty sure Tyrian needed to hear that Crimson wasn’t going to replace him or ask him to share her with someone else.

“No way. I spent years dealing with my shitty attention span until I could function like an actual human being. I can be a good girlfriend to exactly one person at a time and I chose you, asshole. I don’t want anyone else. You’d better treat me right because we’re on the same team and I’m learning this whole spy shit. I will *fuck you up* if you mess this up because I really like you.”

That was...kind of sweet, I guess. Jordan’s love language was much different, but Tyrian was practically swooning that his girlfriend both threatened him and told him she loved him, Tyrian was blushing like fuck.

“Thanks. I’d never.”

“I can’t imagine *ever* treating someone the way that bitch treated Red. She’s still doing it. If we’re all wondering why she didn’t release his name, you know he is,” Crimson said.

“I’m pretty sure she was hoping I’d tell her what was going on with the investigation when she thought Boss might be getting close,” Casper said, shutting the door behind him. “Boss won’t tell her. If it’s not your mission or your team, you don’t talk about it with anyone else. McKinley knows this. She used to ask me about mine all the time and I’d refuse to tell her. She knew I had a mission go wrong and how I escaped, but she didn’t know my target or what I was there for. McKinley is going to play the card that she needs me to swoop in and save her to get me to give her information.”

“Then why did she tell you she was cheating on you? Why *any* of this? Look at her file, man. She could have quit and been a lawyer. Depending on what kind of lawyer she decided to be, she could have made decent money.”

“She’s terrible with money. Her parents used to be well off and gave her everything since she’s an only child. They paid for college and law school, but the last semester of her last year, they got in trouble with the IRS because they had been cooking their books and fudging their tax returns to pay less. They lost everything.

“McKinley was supposed to get set up when she graduated. Her parents were going to buy her a penthouse apartment, and she was going to be a nepotism hire at this fancy law firm where she’d make partner even if she was terrible at it. She didn’t get the penthouse apartment, but it was a little unfair for the law firm to rescind the offer just because of her parents. She’s spoiled and terrible with money, but McKinley is intelligent and got through law school on her own merits,” Casper said.

“Sorry, but that’s a shit villain origin story,” Crimson said. “The next part is where Boss swooped in and offered to make her a spy. I’ll bet if she didn’t want to do the whole spy thing, Boss would have made her a lawyer on the business side. We all know what the starting salary is and what the benefits are. This is an amazing place to work. Especially after where we came from.”

That much was true. Damien or Ashley used to throw these pizza parties, but it was always the cheapest, nastiest pizza in New York and we could only have one piece because he was cheap. It was never whatever we wanted with plenty of alcohol like Boss and Black did. It wasn’t just that the pay was better. The work-life balance and culture were better.

“Yeah, but if Boss recruited her before she ever had to chance to deal with a shitty boss, she probably doesn’t know how bad it is at other places,” Tyrian said.

“This was McKinley’s first job. She never had to work in high school and her parents paid for everything in college and

law school so she could focus on school,” Casper said. “She’s never experienced a shitty job or management in her life, so she thought that’s what she had here.”

“I’ve read most of her file and no one liked her. I don’t know why *you* liked her. I still don’t know where she is or how to catch her,” I said.

Casper filled us in on his conversation with Bailey. I loved that girl to death. She was good for Jordan and I appreciated her brutal honesty when she could. I got why we didn’t get all the details about Carl and why she didn’t tell us all about her past until we got to New Orleans. She was hilarious and a damned good cook.

But I wasn’t fucking with that girl and that was even before I knew she was an assassin. She could beat my ass and, apparently, murder me and disappear without a trace. Bailey was also extremely pissed at McKinley. McKinley didn’t ruin her life and make her have to flee, but McKinley hurt people she cared about. Bailey had no romantic feelings for Casper at all. They weren’t even close before the breach. Bailey and Casper were ride or die siblings now and Bailey was going to fuck her up for what she did to him and Luke.

Casper slid a flash drive onto our workstations. I didn’t know what was on it, but any time I got a flash drive at this company, there was something explosive on it.

“This isn’t in McKinley’s personnel file because it wasn’t finished. This is the internal investigation Blue and Black were doing on McKinley. She was hiding her stolen money behind a bunch of different shell corporations. Like I said, she’s not stupid, and she has enough law background to know how to make it hard to catch her.

“They were still working through shell corporations, but Blue and Black weren’t working on this full time because they didn’t know what McKinley was planning. They both need to be focusing on recruiting to build our numbers, so we’re going to do this. I have minimal experience doing this, but I *have* done it before on my old team when I was still a baby agent and hadn’t gone out yet.

“Black gave me a refresher and some pointers. I still want Crimson and Tyrian looking for Baba Yaga online. I’m going to be digging into her shell corporations. Mauve might not get her out of hiding, but if her money disappears, she definitely will.

“Byzantium, I want you focused on your training and helping me when you’re done. McKinley is a high priority target and the information she has could put even more people in danger. Mauve is the only agent here we can send out that she doesn’t know. We’re all going to be watching her back, but I want to use this as a training opportunity for you. In the morning, you’ll be working with Black and Boss. After lunch, you’ll come back to work with us.”

I could do that. I wasn’t letting this woman hurt Jordan.

11 JORDAN



Maybe I was finally getting the hang of French. I mean, I wasn't getting it mixed up with Spanish anymore and it seemed easier. Luke and Bailey had been helping me a lot. Bailey was quizzing me at home and Luke sat next to me while I did my modules and walked me through them. Luke always told me Black would be better at it and loved teaching languages, but Black was trying to catch McKinley and find us more agents, so I wasn't mad about it.

"You're an amazing French teacher, even if you think Black would be better at it."

"You're coming along nicely, too. You no longer sound like you have marbles in your mouth and don't know what

country you're in."

"That's mean as hell, but totally fair. You coming to eat lunch with the team?"

"If Red doesn't kick me out because of what that bitch did to my sister."

Luke told me about his younger sister. I don't think he would have been so pissed she had to leave if he could tell his family the truth. They thought she just fucked up her life and was off somewhere being stupid. Luke had to sit there and listen to them talk about how she worked so hard to get her life back after she got home and just fucked everything up.

Most every news outlet that covered the breach focused on the businesses that were supposed to be a front for spies. A lot of them didn't focus on the actual names and if they did, it was a tiny link at the bottom of the article to see them. Criminals would definitely want that list, but Luke's family? They had no reason to look to see if that was the reason she ghosted all of them. It was unfortunate, and I felt terrible for all of them.

"Red is your brother. He's not going to shut you out of this, but he's not going to let you end up in jail over that woman. None of us will."

"You don't need to worry about me killing her. Cadmium knows how to do it and not get caught. She's also fiercely protective of her people. McKinley hurt Red, me, and plenty of her friends here. If she even *thinks* McKinley is going to do anything to you now that we're using your relationship with Red, she's going to go rogue. You're going to see an entirely different side to your girlfriend."

I got everyone hated Casper's ex. I wasn't all that fond of what I knew of her. I didn't want to lose anyone I cared about because of this woman. I didn't think she'd do anything to me over all the love posts I was posting about Casper and me. She didn't care about him. McKinley had so many options when she left that didn't involve trying to destroy Casper on the way out, but she didn't.

All I was doing was learning, and I was happy with that. I wanted to catch her, too, but I had to be honest with myself. I'd never have Casper and Jeremy's skills with the computer. One day, I'd know as many languages and fighting skills as Bailey, but I wasn't there yet. I might never be an assassin, and I'd *never* be able to do what she could do with fake identities.

So, I listened while the rest of my team filled us in on where they were with their investigation. Casper went into a ton of detail and I was pretty sure it was all for Luke's benefit. Casper always told us what we needed to know, but never little details that probably didn't mean anything. Casper was usually straight to the point because we got an hour for lunch and then it was back to business.

“Cadmium, what did you find after I left your office?”

“I just set the scene. All of these places know of each other and talk. The identities they are selling aren't like the ones we have here. The ones here just have to stand up to a criminal deep dive and maybe a private investigator if the mark is the suspicious type.

“The ones that are being sold are social security numbers of dead people. We give them a past and a credit history and give them to people who were born around the same time. All of us talk in some way, even if we can't stand another group, because giving two people the same social security number is a good way to get one of them busted for identity theft. If they get arrested for something we did, they are probably going to give us up for a lesser sentence.

“Everyone knows my group got busted. Most of them know whose fault it was, but not exactly what went down. I know who the gossips are. I may or may not have contacted them and told them it was a shady cop who got us all arrested. The shady cop was now on the run with the FBI after them and one of our groups helped her disappear. I sent McKinley's photo and said that if they helped me track down what identity she was given, I'd take care of her before she could lead the FBI to them. I said I wanted payback. I whispered it into the ears of people who were going to sprinkle that shit all over the black-market ID community like glitter at a gay rave.”

“Ha! I do love you, Frederick,” Luke said.

“Seriously, you’re amazing,” Casper said.

“I’m going to eat you so hard tonight,” I growled.

Because seriously, that was sexy. The most criminal thing I’d ever done was jaywalking, and I still wasn’t convinced Deep Throat wasn’t keeping a file about that because I puked on him. He was *way* too nice to me in New Orleans. I know what I’d do if someone barfed gas station eggrolls all over me and it was not what Deep Throat did. Okay, I didn’t know *exactly* what I’d do, but it would be epic.

“Don’t threaten me with a good time over lunch when we still have four hours left at work.”

“My training mats are about to get super sapphic and I can’t even enjoy it because Cadmium is like my little sister and it’s gross,” Luke moaned.

“You pop a boner and I’m cutting it off.”

“I don’t think he can help it,” I said.

“Oh, we can help it if we try. I don’t think about her like that. She doesn’t *want* me to think about her like that. I respect her, so I don’t. If *you* start getting all moaney and sexual, I might.”

“I so don’t get this group thing,” Crimson said.

“Neither did any of us until we did it, but it’s not for everyone,” Casper said. “Now, you all have work to do. Cadmium, bring your work phone to the training room in case your criminal friends reach out.”

“It’s way too soon for that, but sure.”

Maybe I shouldn’t have promised I was going to thoroughly eat my girlfriend’s pussy right before we were supposed to get up close and personal in the training room.

Bailey might not turn Luke on, but I wasn’t immune to her.

12 BAILEY



I was finally starting to feel like myself again. Boss gave me my life back in more ways than one. Before I got hurt, I was on the top of the world. Emily and I had broken up, but we were in a good place as friends. I was a damned good agent and assassin. Then, one night, shit went wrong when I was on a rooftop bar. I could have gotten out, but someone signaled for backup before I took them out.

A bunch of goons with guns came spilling out of the stairs and all the knives I had hidden on me were currently buried in someone. I could hear a garbage truck passing by and I had a better chance of living through it trying to land in the back of it than with those guys with guns.

My partner was something of a math prodigy. He could easily tell me if the angle I'd picked for a kill shot wasn't perfect and he told me *exactly* how to time it so I ended up in the back of the garbage truck and not the sidewalk. He promised to stop it and get me out before the truck could crush me. He did, but neither of us could see what was *inside* the garbage truck or what I was going to land on. I could have died or been paralyzed, but it was his quick thinking that got me to a hospital in time.

I missed that fucking kid. He was an even bigger geek than Casper, but he was *my* geek. He watched my back and kept me safe on missions and I took him to the gay bars to find him a nice boyfriend. Not everyone was good enough for my partner. And now he was on the run and I couldn't protect him or hang out with him anymore. I missed cocktails with my geek.

After I got hurt, I was lost again. I couldn't do what I was good at to get my mind off of the fact that I couldn't talk to my family. I'd been in a cage once. I didn't do well in hospital beds. I was in one for what felt like an eternity then I was stuck doing physical therapy.

Then the fucking breach happened, and I lost my geek and all my friends except Luke. I got a new geek, but I wanted my old geek, too. He was this adorable, unassuming little thing but pretty deadly. I loved that kid. I hoped he was okay wherever he was.

I was back in my happy place. I was hunting down bad people and I could talk to my family again. I had an amazing girlfriend who knew all my secrets, so I was going to get to keep this one. Casper and Luke were my best friends and Jeremy was getting there.

We just needed to catch McKinley and train Jordan. I didn't have the patience to be a teacher. I was planning on using my degrees to work in museums because I'd make a terrible teacher. Fight training might be an exception. I mean, it was pretty much expected that you body drop your students, so you could do that if they were being stupid and no one even questioned it.

We were all changed into our fighting clothes, but Luke was too good of a trainer to set us loose without warming us up. I was a little sore because yesterday was the hardest I'd trained since I got hurt, but I knew Jordan was feeling it harder.

Luke wasn't just some big-ass mountain of a man who knew a million styles of fighting. He was also insanely intuitive when it came to other people's bodies. He could have sent us to stretch and fucked around on his phone. The guy before him did that sometimes because he was old, out of shape, and had gotten complacent with his paycheck.

Luke pulled out the yoga mats and ran us through a yoga routine to get us stretched out and warmed up. Yeah, Luke didn't just learn yoga when he got home from overseas. He saw how beneficial it was for him and got certified to teach it because he thought one day, he could use it to help other people.

And he did. Sometimes, people came home fried because a mission went wrong. Sometimes, I was just pissed in general because I couldn't talk to my family. Luke would let us work out our aggression sparring with him and then that fucker always made us do yoga. I loved it and so did Jordan.

My body felt *loads* better by the time Luke was done with me. It always did.

“Cadmium, help Mauve stretch out a bit more.”

Gladly. Any chance to touch my girlfriend. I was *so* proud of her. She took to fight training really well, but her flexibility started out terrible. Jordan took all of this seriously, even if she took most everything else pretty hilariously. If she wasn't good at something, she busted her ass until she mastered it. Her flexibility was coming along so well.

And helping stretch out that tall, lithe body was sexy as fuck. She was lying on her back while I helped press her leg over her head. Pretty soon, she was going to be able to take Luke out with a roundhouse kick to the head.

“Should this be turning me on?” she asked.

“Oh, it’s turning me on, but I don’t have a whole-ass human pressing on my leg. Am I not stretching you hard enough?”

“Harder, baby,” Jordan said, winking at me.

Minx.

“Don’t break her because she’s horny,” Luke said. “We don’t have time for pulled hamstrings.”

“I actually think I can go a little further. Not a lot, but a bit more. It makes the soreness better. But please don’t break my butt.”

“When you’ve got a butt like that? Never,” I said.

“My butt isn’t nearly as big as Green’s, but I still can’t find jeans that fit right. Which is stupid because Queen *and* Sir Mix A Lot wrote some pretty famous songs about big asses.”

“Let’s leave my ass out of this,” Luke growled.

When Luke came to the gay bar with me, he was fighting off guys that wanted to bounce off that bubble butt. He had a *fabulous* ass, and the fucker was self-conscious about it and wished it was smaller.

“We all love your butt, dumbass.”

“Shut up, Cadmium. Get up and show me what you’ve got. Mauve, stop worrying about pulling off McKinley’s one signature move and start learning how to stop her. It’s going to be a rare situation where you’d actually be able to use it in real life and anyone trained in that style of fighting is going to know what you are doing when you start prepping for it. You don’t *need* to be able to pull that one off. You just need to know how to stop her.”

He was right. Luke didn’t even teach that move to most of us. He’d taught it to me because I was small and fast. A few people asked to learn because it’s a showy move that looks badass.

“I know how to do it and I’ve *never* used it. Luke and I can teach you other ways to be badass.”

Jordan just gave me this evil grin.

“Awesome.”

13 JORDAN



Getting your ass handed to you shouldn't be that sexy or fun. Bailey was taking it easy on me, but I felt like I was *learning*. If she ever came close to hitting me, she'd pull her punch and Bailey and Luke would tell me how to fix it next time someone came at me like that. I was learning a lot, and I was having *fun*.

I was supposed to be learning Krav Maga and preparing for my next belt. Luke was still doing that. McKinley didn't know it. If she learned it, she did it on her own time or after the breach because Luke never taught it to her and for some reason, Boss never forced her to learn more than one fighting style after Luke was hired.

He was teaching me how to fight McKinley with Krav Maga. Bailey was coming at me how McKinley was going to do it and they were teaching me how to win. I was kind of glad Luke said not to worry about pulling off that signature move. Bailey looked badass when she did it, but I looked like someone used a Taser on a giraffe because I was much taller than she was.

Bailey's work phone never went off, but she said it wouldn't. We didn't know if McKinley went with one of them or she tried to make one on her own. We also didn't know if she gave them her real name, the identity Boss crafted for her when she needed to leave, or reused any of the names she used while on missions. Bailey could only give them two names and her photo because giving them a list would draw suspicion to her story.

I was ready to go home. I was exhausted, but my body wasn't hurting nearly as much as yesterday. I had to leave with Casper, but I wasn't even complaining about it. We filmed a quick video walking home down the streets of New York City holding hands. I hit upload and then tagged him.

"You realize you're going to have to meet my mom now, right? I don't know if McKinley is creeping on my social media, but my mom is seeing all of this. She's already demanded I bring you home so she can cook for you because she thinks you're too skinny. She wants to know if you're like my last girlfriend about food."

"Definitely not. Tell your mom challenge accepted. I'd love to meet her."

Meeting parents was always awkward because *I* was fucking awkward. But Casper was a momma's boy, and she raised one amazing man. Like, he had that old time chivalry like opening doors and pulling out my chair, but he knew I could handle my shit and didn't act like he was better than me. The *only* reason he was cold to me when we first met was because of my background and he probably thought I wasn't going to last long. He warmed up as soon as I proved myself.

“She lives an hour away, so after we catch my ex, it can’t be avoided.”

“I really do want to meet your mom and thank her for you ending up so amazing. Like, when I sleep in your room, I don’t have to worry about ending up folded in half and soaking wet because you left the toilet seat up if I get up to pee while half asleep. And that’s *your* fucking bathroom.”

“Is me putting the lid down my only attribute? I did that growing up, but I definitely do it now because I don’t want my cat drinking out of the toilet and getting sick.”

“You open doors and pull out my chair, but you still treat me like a badass, even though I’m barely trained. You’re better at computers than I’ll ever be, but you never talk down to us when you’re talking computer shit. You’re an amazing cook and I like you enough to share one noodle with you.”

“Thanks. I don’t always need my ego stroked but having to think about McKinley all the time now brings back all the shit she used to say to me. I can’t believe I never said anything back and didn’t just walk out.”

“I will *always* tell you how amazing you are and if I ever get stupid and start talking to you like that, I expect you to call me on it.”

“Deal. And if I don’t, Bailey will. She’s feral about her friends, even if she’s your girlfriend now.”

“It’s kind of not in my nature to be mean unless you’re a fucking groupie sniffing around my boyfriend.”

“Not the groupies! You don’t have to worry about that with us. Everyone thinks we have boring jobs. We don’t get groupies.”

“You’re all insanely hot. I’d pull someone’s hair for hitting on you while you were getting coffee.”

“Luke and Bailey taught you better than hair pulling,” Casper laughed.

“Dude, I’m trying to make a *point*, not end up in jail. I can’t fuck them up or piss on you to claim you without having

to explain that to a jury and I'd die if I had to eat prison food. I heard it's terrible and they don't even give you seconds."

"Well, we're home and you pretty much announced to the entire team you had carnal plans with Bailey tonight. She can't just sit there and let someone spoil her. Frederick has probably cooked a five-course meal because you promised to lick her pussy when you got home."

"I'm not complaining about that, but one day, she's going to sit back and let me do everything for her."

"Maybe. It might not be in her nature. I'm not going to complain when that girl gets a bug up her ass to cook for us. It doesn't matter if she's trying to cheer up Luke, me, or herself. She always makes enough for everyone and it's better the next day. Sometimes, she makes Cajun recipes and sometimes, she just makes shit up. It's *always* amazing."

"Then we'd better get upstairs. At least this building has a functional elevator. My old building didn't. Half my furniture came from previous owners who didn't want to carry it down the stairs when I moved out. The landlord didn't want to do it either and said I could keep it or move it. I was too dead-ass broke to have it all hauled off and pay someone to bring the new furniture I'd have to buy in, so I kept it. The couch was ugly as fuck, but if you only sat on the right half, it wasn't too uncomfortable."

"Don't tell Bailey and Luke that or something bad is going to happen to that bass player. After hearing that, I'm tempted to fuck him up electronically."

"Oh, Jeremy already did. He barely made any money playing because he couldn't find a band that would hire him. He only ever booked anything if someone was sick. He liked telling people he was dating a model, but he hated that I was more successful than he was. He'd spend all the money I made.

"He got borked off his mind on cocaine with some groupie and they both crashed a photoshoot I was doing. They made such a scene that it ended any hopes of making any more money modeling. That was when I left him. Since he ended

my modeling career, Jeremy made damned sure he'd never book another gig, even if he was just filling in for someone."

"I really like your first boyfriend. You smell that? I told you she cooked!"

I could smell it outside our front door. There were a few things that could pull my attention and put me in a singularly focused trance. Those things were sex and food. Both were waiting for me inside our apartment.

Luke and Jeremy were sprawled out on the sectional playing video games. Luke liked his teenage vampire shows but would play video games with us. I didn't know what they were playing, but Jeremy was winning.

"Mother fucker!" Luke swore, smashing his thumbs on the controller.

"Dude, I *totally* picked this game because it was the only way I was ever going to beat you in a fistfight. You could crush my skill with your thighs."

"Bro, are we having a pissing contest?"

"Nah. I kind of want to be a badass with my fists, too."

"You will be," Bailey said, coming into the living room and drying her hands on a towel. "Once you're fully trained in languages and learning how to watch Jordan's back, you'll learn some fighting. At least, my geek did."

"I miss Stone," Luke said. "That kid was barely bigger than Bailey but fucking deadly with his fists."

"He was also a computer genius and always nice to me. McKinley made fun of him all the time and called him a runt," Casper said.

"Not in front of me," Bailey said. "If she pulled that shit in front of me, she would have definitely gone back to Luke to learn how to fight. Now, I threw together an experiment in the kitchen. I don't know if it's going to taste good or not, but it's ready."

"You always say that and it's always good," Luke said.

It smelled fantastic, and I was pretty much drooling. I followed them into the dining room. Bailey had gone all out. She set the table and lit candles. Bailey even broke out the good plates.

“Do I get food and candles every time I threaten to eat you out in front of the entire team?”

“In all fairness, we’d all do food and candles if you did that,” Jeremy said.

“You should do it more often since Crimson and Tyrian enlightened us about that nipple thing with the spatula,” Casper said.

“I’m not going to kink shame, but I hope they don’t cook with that spatula,” Luke said.

“Well, *I* used a regular old spatula that’s never been used for sex when I was making dinner. If one of you snuck out in the middle of the night to experiment with the kitchen utensils, you’d better quietly buy everyone a new spatula.”

“If anyone is thinking of coming at me with anything from the kitchen, I’m getting really good at punching people in the face,” I said.

“Now that’s settled, I made shrimp and eggplant cakes with andouille Hollandaise sauce, roasted Brussel sprouts, and sticky toffee for dessert.”

“Oh, my god. I’m going to eat you out twice,” I moaned.

“I’m going to have to up my cooking game if it gets sexual favors,” Luke said.

“You’re just figuring that out?” Jeremy asked. “Jordan’s pretty easy to please.”

“That’s why she’s such a good girlfriend,” Casper said. “She never demands anything and little things make her happy.”

“I only have one shitty ex like you do, but you’re totally right,” Bailey said.

“Girl, you have me beat on shitty exes. McKinley was awful, but not Carl awful.”

“Carl is probably having a shit-go of things in prison. If he’s not dealing with guys who hate cops, there are guys in there who have a problem with men who hurt women. There’s probably a gang of just gay guys who are going to come at him with a shank when they find out he got his start trying to force his ex to be straight. He’s going to have to sit there and listen to me testify against him and he’s going to explode and say something. It’s going to look bad to a jury.

“I don’t know how, but McKinley is going to get hers, too. Boss is motivated and so are the rest of us. Boss has enough strings to make sure she doesn’t end up in the nice jails for rich people. Her entitled shit isn’t going to make friends with prisoners or guards. She’s *definitely* not going to have a good time if she thinks prison lesbians are just going to flirt with her and worship the ground she walks on because she’s pretty like how she tried to do with me. I didn’t do anything because I didn’t want to get fired, but she’s going to get laid out if she pulls that with the wrong lesbian.”

“I want to look her in the eye and tell her I helped catch her, but I don’t know if Boss is going to let me,” Casper said.

“Have you met Boss?” Bailey laughed. “She’s poised, elegant, graceful, and we’ve all seen her put men in their place. She can *totally* cut up and be Petty Betty. Remember that girl I went on two dates with, she decided we were end game, and then tried to fuck up my friendship with Emily? I was so mad about that; I was off my game. Boss had some pretty epic suggestions that didn’t involve her having to get me out of jail.”

“Tell Boss how she treated you. She’ll get you that face to face,” Luke said.

Bailey was a damned good cook. Even when she was just experimenting, it tasted amazing. She always made enough for Jeremy and I to eat our fill and leftovers the next day. But I was done eating now, and I had plans. It wasn’t my night to

wash dishes and since Bailey cooked, it wasn't on her, either. I set my fork down and looked across the table.

“Get that sweet ass to your bedroom. I don't know exactly what all I'm going to do to you, but I'm going to do it *a lot*.”

“Yes, ma'am.”

“I'll get the dishes. Have fun and don't do anything I wouldn't,” Luke said.

I kissed him on the top of his head.

“Dude, I'm already doing that. If you tried to go down on Bailey, she'd end you.”

14 JORDAN



I was trying so hard to get this whole bisexual thing right. I was crazy about Bailey. I was a decent cook. I could feed myself, but I'd never be as good as Bailey, Casper, or Jeremy. I wasn't even sure I was all that great at sex with women. I definitely needed more practice. I practically had a PhD in dick with all the boyfriends I currently had.

Bailey was already barefoot when she came to her bedroom. She'd changed clothes when she got home, too. She was wearing loose sweatpants that were hanging low on her hips with her thong peeking out and she was wearing a tank top. With her short, blonde hair and cut, little body, she made

that look sexy as fuck. Fuck. When I changed clothes to lounge around the house, I *did not* look that good.

“You’re so fucking hot it’s not even fair,” I moaned. “And you cook like *that*.”

“You’re one to talk. I needed a break from work stuff, so I told Blue I’d break their face unless they got me your modeling photos from your file. I saw the photos. Shit, girl.”

“Oh, my god, they found those? And they are in my employee file?”

“They do extensive background checks before they bring someone in, both on the spy side and the business side. Casper helped with yours since Blue and Black were looking at a ton of people and you kind of found us. Casper’s seen them, too.”

“Do I need to threaten Blue so they don’t show anyone else?”

“Those photos are *beautiful*. You should be showing them to everyone because I’ve seen you try to take an ID photo. If there were photos of me like that out there, I’d be posting them everywhere. Shit, girl, why were you working a job you hated instead of monetizing your social media and just posting photos of yourself?”

“I didn’t think about it. I raised a ton of money on OnlyFans when I wanted to pay for that scam class. I want my money back for that, by the way.”

Bailey grabbed my belt and yanked me toward her. She wrapped her arms around my waist and gave me this sexy smirk.

“You’re the only one who *doesn’t* deserve a refund from that fucking class. The sheer *audacity* that you send Boss’s fucking company your resume with that note and the class as a qualification got you in the door. Your other attributes got you hired and you’ve busted your ass and proved you deserved it since you’ve been here.”

I bit my lip.

“I might have a bit of a praise kink because that gets me going.”

Yeah, even though she was pointing out my own fuckery, there were a lot of compliments in there, too, and I was eating that shit up.

“Do you need me to call you a good girl and spank that ass?”

The moan I moaned when she asked me that. Holy shit. For now, I just really needed to kiss my girlfriend. I grabbed Bailey and kissed her while walking her back to the bed. I usually liked it when someone took charge in the bedroom, but Bailey hardly let anyone take care of her, so I hoped she let me do this.

She was pretty much pocket size and my upper body strength had gotten so much better since Luke got his hands on me. So, I picked her up and tossed her on the center of her bed. Bailey shrieked and fell out laughing.

“Damn, girl. I like this cavewoman side of you.”

“Good, because when you talked about using your criminal contacts against McKinley, it made me horny as fuck. You’re going to lie there and let me have my wicked way with you.”

I had no idea what I was doing. I was making it up as I went along. I just knew I really wanted to do this. Bailey always tried to take care of us. When we tried to do the same for her, she’d always pull out a little something extra so we weren’t totally spoiling her.

She wasn’t wearing a bra. Bailey had these small, firm breasts that didn’t always need one. When I pulled her shirt off, I started nipping and biting my way down. Bailey was moaning and digging her nails into my shoulder, so I was *pretty* sure she was into it.

“Fuck, you’re beautiful when you’re trying to top me.”

“Am I at least getting it right?”

“Relax. You’re better at this than some people who have been doing it for much longer. Do that thing with your tongue

and teeth again. Big fan of that. I also have toys in the top drawer that I'm planning on using on you when you're done with me. I'm a big fan of those, too."

"Aw, you're inviting me to snoop in your dildo drawer? I have one, too."

"This isn't like dating a guy unless Jeremy, Casper, and Luke have a kink I don't know about. We can share the dildo drawer as long as we properly clean them. Luke is a giant marshmallow, Jeremy is probably into some weird shit, and Casper is too uptight not to be a total freak in the bedroom, but something tells me none of them are going to let you peg them. Grab the purple vibrator for me and the one that looks like a rose for you. It's going to blow your mind."

"Someone needs to explain to me why they are all fucking purple," I muttered, rifling through Bailey's dildo drawer. "Okay, they are *all* purple. Which purple vibrator? Why the fuck are they all purple?"

"The one that doesn't look like a dick. It kind of looks like Grimace from those old McDonald's ads."

I found it right away, and I had no idea what to do with it. I didn't have one like this.

"Did McDonald's have a kinky side business I was maybe not weird enough to know about? Are *you* that weird?"

Bailey started cackling.

"It's just a clit stimulator, but I figured a fast-food reference would make it easier for you to find it. McDonald's never got kinky."

"Oh, thank god, because I was about to feel really weird using this on you if it was your favorite toy and that was its origin story. And I'd definitely be thinking some things about you. It would probably take me a while to figure out what those things are, but I'd be thinking them."

"Stop thinking about why it's purple and any origin stories your lizard brain might be coming up with. Get over here and use it so I can blow your mind with the rose."

“Yeah, right. Sorry. I got distracted for a minute.”

The whole Grimace thing threw me off, but I really did want to know why all the sex toys were purple. I climbed on the bed, but I didn't use the toy right away. I knew what those things did to me and I wanted to taste her first. I wanted to draw this out for a bit.

Bailey squirmed while I flicked my tongue on her clit. I slid two fingers inside her to work her G spot and found it much easier this time. I might be new to this, but I wasn't an idiot. Bailey might be into me, but she wasn't going to fake it with anyone. If she wasn't enjoying this, she wouldn't have insulted me, but she *would* have given me directions to help me. Bailey wasn't doing that. She was crying out and pulling my hair.

I eased off when I could tell she was getting close. Only then did I turn the toy on and press it against her clit. I slid my fingers back inside her and started working her G spot again. Bailey didn't last long before she was bucking on the bed and crying out. I eased her down and went to snuggle, but I knew damned well she wanted to be big spoon, so I just went with it.

Bailey played with my hair for a bit and told me I was amazing and then she sat up.

“Are you ready to have your mind blown?”

“Um, maybe? It was probably already blown once, and that's the reason I am the way I am.”

“See this little thing? I'm betting you can't even handle the lowest setting and you'll probably squirt.”

It was this innocuous, rose-shaped thing. At least it was red and not purple. I was dubious about the rose thing because it didn't look like any vibrator I'd enjoyed before, but I trusted Bailey.

“How do you want me?”

“Lie on your back and spread your legs.”

I did what she asked. I was doubtful, but definitely curious. I'd never squirted before in my life. Bailey had this look on

her face like she knew it was going to happen and she wanted bragging rights in our group thing. She hovered over me, but she didn't do anything.

“Okay, I'm going to put it on the lowest setting. Are you ready?”

I said I was ready, but I was so not ready. That thing sucked my soul out of my body through my clitoris and I think I died for five minutes. I probably did squirt, but I wasn't ready for that conversation. I could hear someone knocking on Bailey's door, but I wasn't ready to talk to anyone yet. My soul hadn't reentered my body yet.

“Is everything okay in there? Jordan screamed pretty loudly,” Luke called.

Bailey sat back on her heels looking like Darth Vader when we gave him tuna fish.

“She's fine. She squirted.”

“No shit?” Jeremy said.

“Get online and buy her a fucking rose for your bedroom!”

That toy was definitely intense. Now that Bailey shared her secret to getting me to squirt, they were all going to go out and buy it.

I still didn't get why most sex toys were purple but I didn't know why that rose had a higher setting than the one Bailey used on me.

That could literally break a girl.

15 CASPER



I think we all got online and tried to figure out what a fucking rose was and why it made Jordan scream that loud last night. Our rooms were pretty soundproof, so the fact that we could even hear her was pretty impressive. I know I ordered one as soon as I found it. I was sure Jeremy and Luke did, too.

Jeremy's shake recipes were insane. The protein powder Blue gave us was vile, but he always made it taste good without completely negating the benefits. Today, it tasted like mint chocolate chip ice cream. Jordan was dragging ass out of bed, so I put hers in a tumbler for when she got out of the shower.

I liked walking to work with her. We always chatted and held hands. She was drinking her shake, and I had a cappuccino in my tumbler. The streets weren't as crowded as usual. They were still packed, but not terrible.

"Is that Boss and Deep Throat up ahead?" Jordan asked.

I couldn't believe I missed that. Boss was insanely tall, and it was hard to miss that regal profile and shaved head. They weren't too far ahead of us. We could have caught them, but I wasn't planning on it. Boss and Deep Throat were probably talking work. If it wasn't McKinley, it was another case.

"Ah, fuck," Jordan said.

She shoved her tumbler at me and went charging at Boss. I ran after her because I had no idea what she was doing. It looked like she was *trying* to pull off that move Luke was trying to teach her on a tourist. They both went down. The man cushioned Jordan's fall, and she just kept punching him until he was out.

He was right behind Boss and Deep Throat and they turned around when he went down. Deep Throat kicked something away from the man toward Boss. She picked a knife up gingerly by the handle. It wasn't a big knife. It probably wouldn't have killed her if he'd stuck her with it.

I tried to block the crowd with my body, but I was just one man. Deep Throat took over for Jordan and handcuffed the man she'd knocked out. There had, apparently, been a car following Boss and Deep Throat. Two men in suits popped out and threw the man in the back.

I heard Deep Throat lean over to Boss.

"Get that knife to Tangerine and have it tested for poison."

Oh, shit. Did someone just try to kill Boss? I wrapped an arm around Jordan and ushered her inside behind Boss.

"You two, with me. And you, thank you," Boss said.

Boss wasn't fucking around. She rarely got angry but when she did, you didn't want to get in her way. Boss led us underground to Tangerine's lab. This could have just been a

random mugger. I'd been mugged when I first got to New York before Boss taught me how to fight. Still, most of them didn't try to do it in daylight on a crowded street.

And how had Jordan seen the knife?

I'd only been to Tangerine's lab when I offered to let Boss test her truth serum on me. It was wild. It was a science geek's wet dream. Boss slammed the knife on the table.

"Someone just tried to stick me with that. I need you to test it for poison because all it would have done is piss me off."

"Did you at least kick their ass?" Tangerine said.

"No, she did. Good job, Mauve. How could you even tell he was trying to stab me?"

Jordan just shrugged.

"It was either a knife or a candy bar wrapper, but he was being like, really shifty about it, so I tackled him. I knew I couldn't pull off that move Green was trying to teach me, but I knew it would knock him down. Punching people that hard really fucking hurts."

I was so in love with this girl. Her instincts were spot on, even if she always tried to play them down. She could have just saved Boss's life. Even if she didn't, she spared her from getting stabbed. She probably did see the knife and registered it was a knife, but she was trying to talk herself out of being the hero here. If McKinley had just saved Boss, she would be demanding a raise and bragging about it to everyone.

Boss stalked over to a mini fridge I didn't notice before. She made Jordan an ice pack for her hand. I got it. Punching someone for real instead of the punching bag felt different. It did hurt after. I pulled Jordan into my lap while she iced her hand.

I'd probably never get the opportunity to watch Tangerine work again. She was probably under four feet tall, so her entire lab was built for her size. Tangerine moved through it like a total badass. She had the knife swabbed and running through one of the machines in no time.

Boss's phone rang, and we only got her half of the conversation. I barely got anything. I was pretty sure it was Deep Throat because it just had to be, but I had no idea what he was saying. Boss let out an enormous sigh and pinched her nose when she hung up.

“Deep Throat says that man was a known assassin. They've been trying to catch him for years. We looked into him, too. He's got a particular MO. He lets his clients choose how he does it and he's managed to pull all his kills off without getting caught so far. This isn't a killing knife unless he stabbed me somewhere I was going to bleed out before anyone could get help.

“A trained assassin isn't going to do that in the middle of a crowded street in the morning. I'm guessing he was going to bump me and nick me with it. A knife is sloppy. When my assassins are going the poison route, they have jewelry. He was behind us, so we didn't see him. Deep Throat would have grabbed him just for bumping into me and I would have searched him when I felt the cut. Someone either doesn't know me or they *do* know me and wanted me to know they got a cut in before the poison kicked in and I might have died.”

Boss had a lot of enemies. Anyone she took down when she was a spy would have a hard time identifying her now because it was before she transitioned and changed her name. She was an out and proud trans woman, so it wasn't a secret. Tracing Boss's pre-transition life to a badass spy and assassin would probably be impossible unless you worked for her and she told you about it. Boss handled the breach with utter grace. Pretty much everyone thought it was just a smear campaign by jealous competitors and that she was just a harmless businesswoman.

Her jealous competitors didn't want her dead. They wouldn't profit from that. They wanted to devalue Stantech until Boss was pushed out, swoop in and buy it for nothing, and profit off all the talent and portfolios Boss had built while changing the entire company culture so no one wanted to work there anymore.

Everyone always said women killed with poison, but after I got to know Bailey, she said our male assassins used it, too. A sniper rifle was only ever used if they couldn't get close to someone. Poison gave them a chance to get in and safely get out with minimal danger and casualties because most of what they used was slow acting and made it look natural.

“We have a problem, Boss,” Tangerine said. “This isn't just any poison. It's one of mine. You pretty much can't get it outside of my lab. It's locked in a safe and I only ever give it to the specific agent who needs it for their mission. I never give extra either. It's always the specific dose needed to do the job. The only agents who have ever met me are the assassins, and no agent had been in my lab until after the breach. I'm not even sure they knew where it was. There's a kitchen, gym, and lounge in here for me to unwind. I'm in here all day. I would have known if someone managed to find my lab, break in, *and* know where I keep this particular poison.”

Fuck. We had more than one traitor here? I'd read McKinley's file, too. I was aware she knew Boss had assassins, and she wanted to be one, but Boss kept refusing her. McKinley never would have met Tangerine. I only knew she existed after she needed guinea pigs for a truth serum. Her lab had insane security.

All the locks were biometric keyed with a pinprick of the finger and blood. I found out when I met Tangerine that they were done that way because Tangerine was diabetic like Kendasha's mom. She'd get focused on work and forget to eat to keep her blood sugar up. It wasn't just a biometric lock. It took a reading of Tangerine's blood sugar when she got to the lab and then there was an automated lab assistant who would shut the lab down until she took another reading and ate something if she needed it.

No one here could get in that lab unless their blood was keyed to the lock, even if they happened to know where it was. I'd actually been in here before and didn't know most of what she kept locked away. I just knew I didn't want to fuck with most of it.

Boss looked utterly confused because she was thinking what I was thinking. I trusted everyone who was still here and there was no way anyone could have known where Tangerine was keeping her poisons, much less gotten into her lab.

“Casper, you don’t happen to know who McKinley was cheating with, do you?” Jordan asked.

“This agent named Brick. He also has a red-colored code name, and she made sure to tell me how superior he was in every way. I never really liked him.”

“Was Brick an assassin? Tangerine could have given him the poison for a job and instead of using it, he kept it for McKinley and used something else to kill the target. Since ruining her company didn’t work, this could be Plan B. He probably wasn’t superior in any way. He just had a big mouth about things he shouldn’t be talking about and didn’t ask a lot of questions about why she wanted a deadly poison. She might have left with him, but if he’s no longer useful to her, she probably did the same thing to him as he did to you.”

Motherfucker. I looked to Boss because only she had those answers. She looked like she was about to murder someone.

“Brick was an assassin for all of five minutes. He was a former sniper in the military and I thought he’d be good at it. Our assassins very rarely take people out with guns because it’s too messy. There are at least two sides to every issue. If someone is shot rather than us making it look natural, those two sides start blaming each other and things escalate. There’s generally a lot more violence involved and we only take people out when we’re trying to *avoid* more violence.

“Brick was never going to be the guy we sent out to romance marks. I had reservations about hiring him because he’s got some problematic views about women being just as capable at things as he is. I hired him because getting in as security is just as good as a romantic partner and some of the men he’d be getting close to like that kind of talk.

“He had *extensive* training on how to get close enough to someone to get the poison in them. His first time going to take someone out was planned perfectly. His mark liked to hang out

at the VIP section of a club full of shady people. He brought his best security with him. We had another agent there to start a fight because we knew the entire club was going to end up brawling. Brick was supposed to usher the mark out and it would make sense he had his hands on him to protect him. He had jewelry that would deliver it and the mark wouldn't even notice the prick in the chaos.

“His partner was watching the entire thing from a van outside and as soon as the other agent started the fight and it spread, he moved to the side to watch Brick's back. Everyone said Brick panicked and started shooting civilians. When he started shooting, other people did, too. The mark ended up dying in the gunfire.

“The mark was dead and it could have been explained as a bar fight that went wrong instead of one of his enemies assassinating him. It didn't cause any drama or fallout in that country. Both sides just assumed he died because of the lifestyle he was living. We all decided Brick wasn't suited to being an assassin and demoted him. He said he used the poison on the jewelry like he was ordered to, but didn't get a chance to use it on the mark.

“Mauve, you're spot on, as usual. He must have never intended on using it and started the gunfight intentionally. No one could have gotten into this lab and Brick was the only time we sent someone with that poison and they used an alternative method. Add in his tie with the one person we know for sure betrayed us? It's the *only* way someone could have gotten their hands on this particular poison.”

Seriously, how did Jordan even *do* that? I didn't know Brick all that well, but I avoided him because he seemed kind of toxic. Luke hated him, too, and said he knew guys like Brick. Brick had been here longer than Luke and me. As soon as Luke got hired, Brick showed up in his training room trying to prove something. He tried to beat Luke's ass to prove he was the superior fighter and Luke laid his ass out. He kept coming back to spar with Luke and refusing to pull his punches like a friendly spar. Luke continued to beat his ass.

I'd initially been furious McKinley cheated on me. Especially with Brick. Bailey had her own interactions with that man. He didn't go as far as Carl did, but Bailey said Brick thought lesbians were just women who hadn't been fucked right and had offered a few times.

After hearing about Brick through Bailey and Luke's eyes, I just figured if McKinley was into that kind of toxic shit, then I could do *so* much better than her because that would never be me. And then Jordan just kind of barged her way into my job. Jordan, who shouldn't be any good at this on paper, and I thought was going to blow it and get fired shortly after she was hired. Barfing on the CIA didn't really change my mind about any of that.

But she was actually *amazing* at this. She wasn't just picking up fighting and languages well. Jordan's mind managed to put things together it would have taken the rest of us ages to figure out. It took her less than two minutes to figure out Tyrian had a weird connection with Abaddon and we probably eventually would have connected McKinley with Brick and the poison, but not as fast as she did.

"I'm sorry, Boss. I know she needs to be working on languages and fighting, but we need her *mind*. Maybe pull her from languages in the morning to work with Cadmium and my team and teach her to fight after lunch. I've got a room full of computer geniuses and one person who has ties to the criminal element, but none of us make connections as fast as Mauve does. She might see something we overlook or don't think is important because we don't think like she does," I said.

I didn't want to interrupt her training. I knew damned well she sought out this job because she wanted to go on missions and see the world. I didn't want to stop her from doing that because honestly, it was exhilarating and a lot of fun. She was *years* away from doing that if we could get a full roster again. Languages were something we kept learning. We traveled all over the world and needed to be fluent. The only reason everyone on our team wasn't learning was because of fucking McKinley.

“I agree with you. I saw something in her at her interview. I knew it could go both ways. She was either going to blow everyone away who thought I was insane for hiring her or she was going to fuck up so badly, it brought my entire empire down. Luckily, when she messed up, she only threw up on my ex-lover.”

“Like, literally, he terrifies me,” Jordan said. “Is he keeping a secret file on me every time I jaywalk so he can make a federal case?”

That was why I loved this girl. She kept me on my toes. She’d pull these brilliant deductions out of thin air that were totally spot on and then she said shit like *that*. No one got federal charges for jaywalking and if Deep Throat was mad about it, he’d vent to Boss, but wouldn’t do a damned thing to one of her people. Not for throwing up on him. He was probably beating the shit out of that guy who tried to kill Boss to find out who hired him and then he was going to destroy McKinley for trying to kill her.

Boss just laughed.

“Deep Throat is a teddy bear. After he got his suit dry cleaned and found out that you thought gas station eggrolls were a good idea, he thought the whole thing was hilarious. He has a good sense of humor. That’s why he was my lover for so long and why we’re still good friends. You only need to worry about him if you hurt *me* or break the law. You just got his suit dirty, and he has about a million suits.”

Deep Throat didn’t give off teddy bear vibes. He scared me, too, sometimes. He was *terrifying* when he came to New Orleans to help Bailey and he wasn’t even hunting me. He didn’t strike me as the type to get revenge on Jordan for puking on him, but I also didn’t get vibes off of him that he’d find it funny. I’d never dated the man, so what did I know?

“Red is right. You put together connections it might take the rest of us ages to figure out. I wouldn’t have remembered Brick’s mission without digging through a ton of missions without you asking who McKinley was cheating with and Red giving me his name. We need to put that brain of yours to

work because McKinley just tried to kill me. I'm sure it was her and not Brick. If Deep Throat hasn't gotten her name out of the assassin yet, it's just a matter of time.

“We need to keep up your fight training. You did a good job disabling that man, but I want you deadly in every form of fighting Green knows. You're coming along great with the fight training, but we need to be using the fact that you don't *think* like anyone here, too. I want you working with Cadmium and the computer team looking at anything they might not think is important, but you do.”

Jordan nodded her head but looked stunned. She said weird things a lot. She had absolutely no filter from her brain to mouth. I'm sure there were plenty of people who treated her like she was a complete idiot because of the completely random things she said sometimes. But she wasn't. She was pretty fucking brilliant if you pointed her in the right direction and put her in the right setting.

Which was right here with me.

16 LUKE



Black showed up in the language lab instead of Jordan. When he told me what happened, I was *so* proud of Jordan and furious someone tried to hurt Boss. Boss was an icon for the trans, black, and gay community. I wasn't a part of any of those, but she also did a ton of work helping veterans, which was definitely my sister and me.

Boss didn't just donate money or give us jobs. My sister and I were fucked up when we ended up on her doorstep for work. Boss *helped* us heal from everything we went through. I owed that woman my life and my sister's. Boss dealt with our shit and never gave up on us. She could have kicked us to the curb and forgotten about us but she never did.

If you came for Boss, you might as well be coming for me, too. I wasn't an agent anymore, but I had certain skills. Boss was like a second mother to me and Black refused to tell me where Deep Throat took the guy with the knife so I could help beat the answers out of him.

"You're staying right here, Green. I might be much older than you, but you've never been able to beat me in a fight."

I was motivated, but I wasn't stupid. Black's hair might be going gray and he might be smaller than me, but he could kick my ass and barely break a sweat. Boss and Black were partners, but they did that differently back then. They both worked the mark and Black was the brawn. I sat my ass down and sulked because I had way too much pride to get my ass handed to me by a man in his sixties because I needed to prove something.

Black sat there babysitting me and trying to distract me until his phone went off.

"Mauve figured it out. That girl is pretty brilliant considering what she thought was an appropriate interview outfit, and she jumped on the chair in my office and shook her ass at me when I offered her the job."

"I know. That's why I'm in love with her. She's also going to make a badass fighter one day. What did she figure out?"

Black told me about Brick. I *hated* that guy. The only thing I liked about him was beating his ass when he showed up in my training room thinking he was going to school the teacher. I also liked pairing him up with female agents and letting *them* drop him, too, because he had these wild ideas about men being superior to women. Bailey wasn't my only female agent who was slightly feral and thought it was amusing to show fully-grown men who was boss.

Everyone knew when a mission went wrong, but no one knew all the details because we weren't supposed to talk about it. Most people took it personally when something went wrong because so much was riding on it. I'd never seen anyone get fired, but everyone got suspended until Boss figured out what to do with them.

We all knew Brick got some kind of promotion because he wouldn't shut up about it. We also knew he blew it on the first mission and got demoted back to his old team. His ego never went down a peg. Brick acted like he didn't do a damned thing wrong when he got back.

I guess he didn't. If McKinley had been playing the long game and asked him to blow the mission to steal that poison, he was dumber than I thought. Or, he blew the mission to steal the poison for something else and blabbed about it when McKinley got her hooks into him. Either way, they had both been agents long before Casper was hired and I didn't even know they were friends, much less together.

So, why was McKinley even messing with Casper and such a bitch to anyone who was nice to him? Brick was a caveman. He wasn't the type to share a woman like we were doing unless they both needed something from Casper.

"Go," Black said. "Mauve is going to be helping Red and Cadmium in the morning instead of working on French. She'll be back with you after lunch for fight training. Be there with them. You might notice something, too, and something tells me she's more effective at making sure you don't disappear and do something stupid than I am, even though I can definitely beat your ass better than she can."

"You like bragging about that, don't you, old man?"

"It was ungraceful and I think she was trying to do something, but didn't exactly pull it off, but I just watched your girlfriend take out an assassin the CIA has been hunting for years. When that girl is fully trained, *she* might be able to beat me in a fight."

That's what I *wanted* for her. I wanted her to be a better fighter than me because one day, she might need it. I wanted her to fight her way back to me so I could worship that body and take care of her. I wanted that for Bailey in a totally platonic way, too.

I followed Black to Casper's team room and everyone was asking Jordan to tell the story about how she knocked out a trained assassin. I wanted to hear it, too. Pretty soon, I'd be

giving her the green belt exam, but she was nowhere near a black belt. It was fucking impressive she took that guy out.

Jordan was, of course, embarrassed as hell and insisting it wasn't a big deal. It really was. She'd saved Boss's life. I was pretty sure Tangerine engineered antidotes for her poisons just in case. She was brilliant, and I got those vibes off of her. I also knew that poison could have seriously fucked Boss up or killed her before we figured out it was one of Tangerine's.

"It's not a big deal," Jordan muttered. "He didn't know we were behind him or that I saw something that might have been a knife. He wasn't expecting the Spanish Inquisition from behind. If he knew I was coming, he probably would have stabbed me with the poison knife."

"Nah, it was amazing!" Casper said. "She shoved her protein shake at me and just took off without making a sound. It was like the crowd parted just so she could do this, but the assassin was so focused on Boss that he didn't notice what was going on behind. She tackled him and then bam, bam, bam just kept face punching him until he was out. Deep Throat didn't even have to do anything except kick the knife away and call for the people who were following in the car to get him out of there. Boss could have kicked his ass, too, but Mauve *handled* it."

"I got lucky. And punching people in the face hurts."

"Let me see your hands," I demanded.

I'd taught her how to throw a punch. She'd been doing it on the punching bag for months. Jordan was still a newbie. In the heat of the moment, she could have forgotten to hold her fist right and broken something. I gingerly examined her hand to make sure. She'd get benched if her hands were broken.

I kissed her bruised and bleeding knuckles and gave her hands back.

"You hit him *perfectly* and from what I can tell, completely wailed on that man's face. You did good, baby girl."

Casper, Jeremy, and Bailey had probably already told her that. Casper saw the whole thing go down. We all did different

things for her, so hearing that from *me* was probably getting it through her head that she didn't just get lucky. I was the one who was turning that hot body into a fighter. Bailey started assisting me recently, but she used what I taught her to stop the assassin.

Casper was good with his fists, too, and I'd taught him everything I knew but she'd never seen him fight. He didn't have time to come down and spar with anyone. Jordan knew Bailey could fight and didn't hand out compliments lightly, but it was still different coming from me.

"Well, someone just tried to kill Boss. We need to do something before another person tries," Jordan said. "I know I'm supposed to be helping, but I've never met McKinley or Brick. I don't know how they think. Nothing they've done so far makes any sense to me. I'm pretty sure I'm in love with all of you, but I'm not blowing a mission and getting demoted to steal poison for you. I spent several years broke as fuck with bad bosses, so this is amazing for me. I really don't get why McKinley did any of this. I'm not sure how my lizard brain is supposed to help here."

None of us got why McKinley did this. Casper lived with her and I don't think he understood, either. I barely knew McKinley because she was rude to me, so I didn't bother. I barely knew Brick either, but I knew guys *like* him.

"You need to be finding Brick, not McKinley. I'm guessing he's going to be *much* easier to find. McKinley has been planning this for a while. Probably since the first time Boss made her give back the things she stole. She manipulated Brick and used him.

"I'm guessing that's what she tried to do with Casper, too. I've been trying to figure out why she messed with him when the two of them weren't even remotely compatible. She Mrs. Robinson'ed the young guy with computer skills because she was hoping Casper would do what Kendasha did for free. When it became clear he wouldn't, she posted on the hacker forum and paid someone.

“I’m guessing when she was done with Brick she did the exact same thing she did to Casper. She could have let Casper down gently, but she tried to devastate him on the way out. Brick probably fell hard. He thought they were going to take down Boss together and then disappear to a luxurious lifestyle. Brick knows things we don’t and has a reason to turn on McKinley.”

“You know, I never thought about it like that, but you’re probably right. She was always trying to turn me against Boss. I never would have done it and if she asked, I would have told Boss. She knew that and that’s why she told me about Brick. McKinley probably thought I’d never get over it and if she threw me a crumb, I’d fall right back into her lap and betray Boss without even knowing about it.”

“I can dig into Brick, but I need something to go on. I can’t go to my criminal friends with the same story and I doubt they’d help him, anyway. He has this face that always made me want to hit him. I’m sorry, but he gives off those vibes. I can’t be the only one. If he asked for help, they’d tell him no.”

“Oh, he totally has those vibes. I got to hit him in the face all the time and enjoyed the shit out of it,” I gloated.

“I just messaged Boss and asked for Brick’s file, too,” Jeremy said. “A lot of us don’t know him. We can learn more from his employee file.”

I worked with that man for years and I was actually *dying* to read his employee file. I might be a fully mature adult man, but I loved me some other people blasted from the swing. . I tore through McKinley’s file like it was the last book in one of my smutty trilogies that I’d been waiting months for, pre-ordered, and waited for it to get delivered so I could stay up all night reading it.

I didn’t like McKinley. I liked her even less after Casper and I got close and I found out what she did to him. My petty ass *loved* reading that no one else liked her either and why. I was betting Brick’s file was just as juicy.

And it might bring him back here so I could hit him again for giving that poison to McKinley and possibly knowing what

she was doing with the breach.

“What about us?” Crimson asked. “I get we’re the computer geeks. Tyrian and I know hackers, not black-market ID criminals. How can we help with this Brick?”

“Deep dive into his real name and the name Boss gave him to disappear. Brick is one of those guys that has his last name tattooed across his back. Those kinds of guys think you can take everything from them but their name. He looked like someone farted any time you called him Brick because it wasn’t his name. Ten bucks says if McKinley dumped him in some foreign country, he’s abandoned the identity Boss gave him and is back to using his real name because he thinks he can take on anyone who might come for him,” I said.

“He’s not going to be posting on any hacker forums,” Casper said. “He thinks we’re all nerds who can’t get laid. You probably *could* find him on hookup sites. He never catfished anyone here. Brick always infiltrated as security. He does think he’s god’s gift to women, and he’s probably looking to forget McKinley with a lot of meaningless sex. *We* could probably catfish *him*.”

“If he’s into feet and likes sending as many dick pics as Clarence, I volunteer Cadmium as tribute,” Jordan said.

“Nah, girl, you still need training, so we’re both going to do it. Get used to it. Most straight men are gross, present company excluded.”

“Boss got me an electronic copy of Brick’s file. I’m emailing it to everyone. If we’re using him to get info on McKinley, then all of us need to read it to help us locate him. Get Green one of the extra laptops because his idea was good.”

I loved being a teacher, but there were things about being an agent I missed, too. I trained everyone so that *they* could bring down the bad guys, but that was the main thing I missed.

It was nice to briefly get a chance to do that again *and* get to train Jordan and Bailey.

17 JORDAN



I was nervous. This was an insane amount of pressure. I kept pointing out things I thought were pretty damned obvious. I thought everyone would tell me they already knew that. They didn't. They treated me like it was brilliant, I noticed. Every time they did that, I thought back to every single math teacher I ever had who basically called me an idiot for not getting it and the fact that I had to repeat their class every summer so I didn't get held back.

These people, like, wanted me for my brain. And half the time, it was on its own tangent and I had no idea what it was doing. I was getting good at the fighting stuff and catching on with languages, but I didn't expect to be in here helping all the

smart people. They kept saying I made connections they couldn't, but could I even do that if I was trying?

I was sitting in Jeremy's lap so we could read Brick's employee file. His ID photo was in there. Casper was so much cuter and definitely smarter. He'd been a decent agent, even if a lot of people didn't like him. He had earned the recommendation to be an assassin.

Brick had started out as a sniper, and then got a promotion. He disarmed bombs and IEDs in the military. He made it back alive, so I'm guessing he had the patience to be good at it. You didn't do that kind of thing if you made rash decisions.

"I don't know if McKinley asked him to blow the mission, or he did it before they got together, but he definitely did it on purpose. If he was the type of person to panic in a bar fight, he would have blown himself up in combat. It doesn't vibe," I said.

"She's right," Luke said. "They don't give that job to someone who makes a situation worse. A lot of times, they have to de-escalate a situation before they can get in there and do their job. They have to be insanely steady because if they aren't, they could kill themselves and a lot of other people.

"I think Deep Throat is getting Boss our service files if she recruits veterans because Brick's is in here. You don't have to *like* the people you serve with but you do have to count on them to have your back. Brick's military file isn't the same guy we all met. That guy went out of his way to save people and was well liked by his superiors. He was awarded numerous bravery medals. That guy doesn't deliberately blow a mission where civilians get harmed to steal poison."

"I'm also at that part," Bailey said. "He didn't leave because he wanted to, but he didn't get a dishonorable discharge. His wife was also enlisted and taken prisoner. Brick got erratic because he thought they weren't doing enough to get her back. They failed him. They essentially discharged him, told him to get his shit together, and he could reenlist when his head was back on straight. They cut him off from all

information he would have gotten about his wife by discharging him and just expected him to cope.”

“That doesn’t seem like a guy who would take up with McKinley either,” Jeremy said. “I get why he jumped when Boss offered him a job. We don’t operate under the same rules as the military. Boss might have been able to do something about his wife. Did he even ask her?”

“She offered,” Luke said. “It was one of the perks she offered if he took the job. Boss promised to find out if she was still alive and if she was, she’d get her back. Boss kept him apprised of every lead, but none of them panned out. She was doing that even after he blew that mission and was stomping around here being a dick to everyone. It makes zero sense that he would turn on Boss and take up with McKinley. The guy seemed pretty devoted to his wife.”

The door to the office opened and Boss joined us. She elegantly sat in one of the chairs and crossed her legs.

“It makes even less sense to me. Brick asked for updates about his wife constantly. I tried to help him because if she wasn’t dead, she was going to be a different woman when I got her back. She’d been a prisoner for years. There’s no telling what they did to her. He told me the only way I was going to help him was getting her back or knowing for sure if she was dead.

“Brick never wavered in his devotion to her. He asked any time he saw me and if he couldn’t find me, he asked Blue to ask me. The two grew up next to each other. They were in school together from daycare to their senior year in high school. He never struck me as the type to give up or even look at another woman unless he had *solid* proof she was dead. I didn’t get to know him as well as my other agents, but he took his vows seriously.”

I wasn’t getting anything that I thought should be obvious to everyone, even if I had a better picture of Brick. Nothing about this made sense. I knew Casper. He’d do anything for me *within reason*. Even if I wanted to, I couldn’t change a thing about him and I’d never be able to manipulate him into

doing anything against who he was. A lot of people might not like Brick and I might not agree with his views on some things, but he didn't strike me as the type McKinley could twist into something she wanted any more than Casper was.

We needed to talk to Brick.

“Did Brick ever seem like he gave up finding his wife and wanted revenge on you for not finding her?” I asked.

“Unless he was faking it, no. And I'm pretty good at noticing when people are lying to me. Brick didn't say goodbye like everyone else, but he asked me for an update the day before the breach. I had another lead, and he seemed excited about it. No matter how many leads ended up being dead ends, he always thought a new one was going to be the time we found her.”

“If he hasn't given up on his wife, where would he be to get those answers?” I asked.

“He was an outstanding soldier. Good enough to know he doesn't have the resources to find her on his own without getting killed. He also knows he can't get her out of wherever she is if she's still alive without help or they both die. Mercenaries could help him get her out, but not without the risk of them just shooting her. I suppose some of the really good hackers out there could get leads on her location, but they aren't going to be as quick or effective as someone with government contacts. And both of those are expensive. He'd run out of money before he found her.”

“Unless he enlisted again,” Luke said. “He could have gone back under his real name and pretended like he was better adjusted about it. Brick might think that's the only place he can go after the breach and McKinley dumping him where he can get those answers.”

“You're an excellent teacher, but you would have made a damned good agent, too, if you weren't such a romantic. You're probably right. Dig into the forums to make sure he didn't go the hacker and mercenary route and I'll make that phone call. It should take me minutes to confirm if Brick is back at his old job with his old name and slightly longer than

that to get his commanding officer to get his ass on a plane and back in my office.”

I hadn't had some brilliant revelation, but Luke sure did. And I definitely didn't want to be Brick right about now.

18 JORDAN



Luke was probably spot on. I was guessing Brick was back in the military under his old name. Boss was furious, and I was going to fuck Luke so hard tonight because he saved my ass. My brain was hurting because I was trying to have a brilliant thought and it just wasn't coming. It was like that time when I was fifteen and I ate all the deviled eggs before family even got there at Thanksgiving and I couldn't poop for days.

Why was everyone expecting me to be brilliant? And I was making deviled eggs when we got home because I'd learned nothing the many, many times I ate too many before.

I asked Casper if we could stop by the store on the way home from work.

“Yeah, sure. What do you need?”

“I want the kind of regret that can only come with massive amounts of deviled eggs.”

“Ooh, good call. We should get enough eggs for everyone and we can all do fancy deviled eggs for dinner.”

“See? That’s why I love you. You just *get* me.”

“You mean that?”

“Hell, yeah. We’re going to *destroy* some deviled eggs tonight.”

“I meant the part where you love me.”

Oh, fuck. That just kind of came out. I peered over at him. I meant it or I wouldn’t have blurted it out. I just wanted to make sure it wasn’t going to freak Casper out.

“Yeah, kinda do. You’re stuck with me, cupcake.”

“I can’t think of anywhere I’d rather be than stuck in a penthouse with you and deviled-egg farts.”

“I will have you know I *do not* fart. I poof air out my butt like a fucking lady.”

“How is that different from farting?” Casper asked, screwing up his face in confusion.

“It’s a girl thing. Your Wonkas exclude you from getting it.”

“My what now?”

“Your balls. They are between the Willie and chocolate factory.”

“Never call my balls Wonkas again,” Casper moaned.

“Jeremy doesn’t like it when I call his dick a wiener.”

“Girl, go get the eggs. Jeremy, Bailey, and Luke texted me a list of what they want for their deviled eggs. I’ll grab it.”

I happily skipped off and grabbed a ton of eggs. A pretty woman came to stand next to me like she wanted some. I thought I was blocking her way, so I moved over while I was making sure none of the eggs were broken.

“That’s a lot of eggs,” she smiled.

“My boyfriend and I are having a deviled-egg contest.”

“He’s cute. Keep your eye on that one.”

Was she trying to get her hair pulled? I’d fought three groupies at once before. I would beat her ass in front of all these raw eggs if she thought she was going to hit on Casper in front of me. She must have seen the look I was giving her. She held up her hands.

“I meant no harm. I’ll grab my eggs and get out of your way.”

That’s what I thought. Casper was *mine*. We checked out and made it home. Our kitchen was pretty big. We boiled the eggs and then had a deviled egg cookoff. I couldn’t pick a favorite. I probably wasn’t going to poop for a week, but totally worth it. I crawled into Luke’s lap and wrapped my arms around his neck.

“You were brilliant today,” I sighed.

“You really were,” Bailey said. “I’ll bet money he’s back in the military.”

“I wish Boss would have come back and told us before we left,” Jeremy said.

“She was probably arranging for him to be on a plane,” Casper said.

“Won’t he just run?”

“Maybe. He’s either planning on lying and throwing McKinley under the bus because he doesn’t know about Tangerine’s serum or he’s going to be brutally honest because the situation is not how we think.”

“I didn’t get some big revelation when I was reading Brick’s file. Do you think I should read McKinley’s? I think

I'm the only one who hasn't."

"Probably, but let's focus on Brick for now," Casper said. "Her employee file is mostly complaints against her, all the times Boss reprimanded her for stealing, and her trying to get a promotion to assassin. We are just guessing at her motivation. We'll never know for sure until we arrest her. There wasn't much in there I didn't already know since I lived with her and she bitched a lot. I can tell you about her and everything in that file."

"Tomorrow? I want my moose tonight. He was a hero today."

"Kinky. I'm in," Luke said.

"Watch it," Casper said. "She just ate twenty deviled eggs and says she doesn't fart. She has butt poofs we don't understand because we have dicks."

"Butt poofs are totally a thing," Bailey said, giving Casper a hard time just because she could. "Our digestive tracts are different from yours. We can't fart. We aren't designed that way."

"I've known Jordan for five years and about a million pepperoni and jalapeno pizzas with extra cheese. She farts."

"Traitor," I said, throwing a pillow at Jeremy.

"And I think Frederick is forgetting the fateful night Luke cooked enchiladas with beans and made her laugh so hard, she farted."

"That doesn't count. Luke engineered that."

"Oh, it counts, and you laughed even harder that your ass cheeks clapped," Luke giggled.

"Don't make me beat your ass when our girlfriend wants you to herself tonight," Bailey said, flipping Casper and Luke off.

Luke scooped me up. I wasn't a short person, but I always felt so teeny when he did that.

“I’m taking my toy and going home because you’re being mean,” Luke said, sticking his tongue out at Bailey.

It was just a short walk to his bedroom and then I had him all to myself.

19 LUKE



I felt pretty damned good, even if my girlfriend had the insane idea to have a deviled-egg cookoff for dinner. Deviled eggs were a weakness. I ate way too many of them. I didn't care if *she* farted, but I was going to be mortified if I had a little butt poof while my dick was in her mouth.

My stomach felt sturdy, and I felt like I had done something. I blew my first mission by catching feelings for my mark and ended up teaching. I didn't regret that until the breach. I wanted to be a part of taking the person who did it down.

First, it was Hex, then we found out she was just a kid. Then it was McKinley. I was furious Brick stole the poison

until I read his file. The guy was a total ass the entire time he worked with me, but I didn't think he was always like that. Something wasn't adding up. We needed to talk to Brick, and I helped do that.

And my girl wanted a night with me. She was nestled into my chest nibbling on my neck as I carried her to my bedroom. But something was missing. Boss gave me enough kinky books to have plenty of fantasies. I'd been passing them to Jordan, so maybe she'd been thinking about them, too. I mean, you don't claim three boyfriends and a girlfriend without thinking about threesomes.

I set her down, and she immediately got on her knees and went for my zipper. Maybe I was insane to turn down a blowjob so she could invite another guy in here, but I couldn't help thinking about how insanely hot it would be to share her with someone else. I wanted to watch her get railed by one of them, too.

"How about we pause that and invite one of your other boyfriends in here?"

"Like, I'm totally down and have been thinking about that, but you have a giant moose dick and they aren't exactly tiny. Jeremy's is pierced, and that's super great in bed."

"I have firmly held religious beliefs about sticking needles in my dick, Jordan."

"That's what Jeremy's wiener is for, silly."

"Don't call it a wiener," I groaned.

"The whole point of this and the books you give me is that I like all of you and can't pick. No one in those books has to. How am I supposed to pick who to invite tonight?"

"Girl, you are a badass, independent woman who saved fucking Boss from an assassin. You could get greedy and invite *all* of them. You're probably the only one of us who could get Bailey in here without a broken nose and two weeks of revenge plots."

"Oh, my god, I totally *could* invite all of them. Is that greedy?"

“Oh, honey. We’re all going to get off and we’re all going to enjoy the fuck out of watching *you* get off. You should be worrying more about how you’re going to handle all of us, cupcake.”

“I can barely handle life most days and I’m super bad at math, but I’m really good at having orgasms. I could do it,” Jordan said, proudly lifting her chin.

She marched out of my bedroom to fetch her other lovers. It was finally happening. I’d been fantasizing about this since we became a group thing. I knew Casper and Jeremy would come. Bailey was a tossup. None of us were going to fault her for not joining us. She wasn’t into guys at all and could have some lingering trauma from what Carl did to her that she didn’t want to see us have sex with Jordan.

Casper and Jeremy came in following Jordan. I was pleased to see Bailey behind them. I was *so* proud of her. I just sat there grinning like an idiot.

“So, we need some rules,” Bailey said. “I don’t care if you touch each other, but I don’t want you touching me. I have no problem sharing Jordan and pleasing her with you, but you *only* touch her. And I want to share Jordan with the moose.”

That was...perfect. Casper and Jeremy were like brothers to me, but Bailey was my best friend. We’d been friends way longer than anyone in this room. I’d adopted that feral girl who looked me dead in the eye and kicked me in the balls from the first day. She eventually trusted me enough to tell me a bit of her story. I’d been friends with her long before the breach and then after, we both adopted Casper and moved into together.

It just made sense that the first time I shared Jordan with someone that it be Bailey. And I could do that while respecting her boundaries.

“I’ve already shared her once with Casper, but I want to do it differently tonight,” Jeremy said.

“Well, don’t do that shit without warming her up first,” Bailey said, stalking over to Jordan and yanking her into a

kiss.

We all descended until we could push Jordan onto the bed. I had a massive bed. We could all fit on it comfortably. I bought it when we moved in and I had the space for it. Bailey slept in my room a lot and so did Casper's cat sometimes. They were both tiny, but they hogged my bed, so I bought a really big one.

We managed to pull it off. We kissed every single inch of her and managed to rid her of her clothes without accidentally touching Bailey. Sometimes, Casper or Jeremy accidentally brushed my dick. Was I into that? I couldn't tell. Jordan was naked, and I was finally getting to share her with my family. I was focused on that for now.

We kissed, nipped, and bit. Casper had his face buried between her thighs while Jeremy took care of her breasts. Bailey was kissing her mouth, and I was nibbling on her neck and ears. I loved the little noises she made during sex and she was making a lot of them with all of us focusing on her.

Jordan wasn't passive. She probably never would be. It just wasn't in her nature. She was stroking my dick and fingering Bailey. If Jordan had more arms, I had no doubt she'd have Jeremy's cock in her hand, too. Casper was a little busy between her legs and she definitely couldn't reach him.

Casper must have done something she likes. Jordan moaned and squeezed my dick. I let out a growl and bit her ear.

"All of you had better stop if we're having orgies. I get hungry when I'm overstimulated and then I need a nap."

"You just ate twenty fucking deviled eggs," Bailey said.

"She'll eat twenty more and then pass out if it gets to be too much for her. Trust me," Jeremy said.

We were completely out of eggs, so we needed to do this *carefully*. I was pretty sure we'd kept her up all night having sex, but it was just one on one. I wasn't going to question anything involving Jordan and being hungry. Especially if Jeremy could fact-check it.

“I’m going first because women are lying when they say sperm isn’t nasty. I don’t care what you eat, it’s gross. I have to put my mouth there and I don’t want to taste it,” Bailey said.

I wasn’t going to argue with that. I wasn’t that fond of it and that shit came out of me. I’d been having to clean it up since I found out jerking it felt good. It was *messy*. If I’d personally designed dicks, we’d only shoot shit out of it when we wanted to make a baby. It would just solve *so many* problems if they worked like that.

“How do you want it, Bailey?” Jordan asked.

“Okay, so I had this idea when you invited me and I’d *never* do this with anyone I don’t trust. Luke is a marshmallow and my best friend. Boss stuck me in front of this giant motherfucker and he asked me to fight him. I wasn’t threatened by him even then. I knew that bastard used his size to protect people like me and he was going to teach me to fight.

“I have this idea and I’ll *only* do it with Luke. I want Luke to fuck Jordan with that moose dick while I eat her out. And we’ve all heard so much about it, you’re going to have to take it out and wave it around for a bit so we can compare it to other cocks we’ve seen and judge.”

I was grinning like a fool. It meant a lot when Bailey gave out compliments and that was the best one she could have given me because that was the kind of man I tried to be. It was also huge that she wanted to do this with Jordan and me. Of course, there was one other person we had to talk to about this particular threesome.

“How do *you* feel about that, Jordan?”

“Dude, game on. Get over here.”

Yes. Game on.

20 JORDAN



We were seriously about to test all the bragging I did about being good at having orgasms. I wasn't that hard to get off. Even the bass player could do it and he was kind shitty with caring about that kind of thing. There were four people in Luke's bedroom who just wanted to make me cum. What if I literally exploded?

That never happened in the porn I watched, but those videos were all about titillating angles and the money shot. Had someone actually studied orgies where everyone was focused on the woman and had that shit peer reviewed? Had some brave woman exploded in the name of science and that's why porn was all about men?

Jeremy would totally know. He read all the time. If it wasn't peer reviewed, he collected a variety of reviews and opinions before he made up his mind. Jeremy wouldn't be standing here with a boner ready for a gangbang if I was going to explode. He was a really hot nerd. Jeremy would have researched this first.

"This is your show, Bailey. Direct us," I said.

"Luke needs to get naked and show us the moose dick you've been bragging about. It's essential to my plans."

"We're all curious, man."

"And we're secure enough in our cocks to be impressed, but not jealous."

"No pressure," Luke moaned. "It's just a dick. It's the only one I've ever had."

"It's not *just* a dick. You have a moose dick. Jeremy has a pierced dick. Casper's dick has this slight curve that hits my G spot just right. You should all whip them out so I can admire them."

I was super fond of all their cocks. I kind of just wanted to stare for a minute before they used them on me. Yeah, I was a thirsty bitch, and I didn't agree with Bailey that they were ugly. Some of them totally were. I'd seen some that looked like mushrooms that would make you see monsters that only grew in realms populated by arrogant Fae princes that took human women as servants but ended up falling in love with them like Luke's books. My guys didn't suffer from poisonous Fae mushroom dick. If the church had commissioned dick paintings during the Renaissance, my guys had dicks like a Michelangelo.

It was probably weird to ask for a dick parade but they gave me one. Damn, they were *fine*. And they were each reacting differently to standing there with their cocks out while I stared. Jeremy was smirking and stroking his cock. Casper looked like he wanted to cover his with his hand. Luke looked like he didn't know what to do.

“Okay, that’s enough of that. And that thing is a monster, Luke. Go lie on your back,” Bailey ordered.

Now Luke was smirking, too. He went and laid on his back with his arms behind his head. He looked bigly pleased with himself. Jeremy and Casper went to sit on the loveseat against the wall to watch and stroke their cocks.

Bailey didn’t have to tell me what she wanted. I climbed on Luke facing away from him and eased myself down on his cock. I groaned as he stretched me out. I was already super wet, but he lubed himself up just in case.

“Damn. That’s impressive. I’ve honestly never seen a dick that big before. Does it hurt?” Bailey asked.

I sighed because this dick on the wrong guy would totally hurt. Luke knew how to use it.

“It’s perfect.”

Luke wrapped his arms around my waist to steady me.

“You good?” he asked.

I was better than good. I was about to be perfect. Bailey crawled towards me like a cat. She started flicking her tongue on my clit while Luke fucked me. It was everything. I’d never felt this good before. There were definitely perks to this group thing. My whole body felt like a live wire. Luke yanked his head forward to nibble on my shoulder. He kept one arm around my waist to support me and used the other hand to play with my nipples. That was a bonus for having an insanely strong boyfriend.

“I wish I could reciprocate,” I managed to get out through clenched teeth.

Bailey just chuckled and licked me faster. I must have clenched down on Luke’s cock because he started fucking me a little harder and bit me. Fuck. Between Luke’s massive cock and Bailey’s expert tongue, I was barreling towards something big. Maybe I *would* actually explode. I wasn’t going to stop either of them because I would happily explode all over this bedroom if my orgasm was going to be as big as I thought it was.

And holy motherfucking fuck, when it hit me, it definitely was. My body tensed and my toes curled. Luke had to use the arm he was using to play with my nipples to hold me down so he could finish thrusting his own orgasm out. Luke also had his teeth clamped down on my shoulder.

All I could do was blabber the words *oh fuck* over and over again until it was over and this seemed to be the orgasm that never ended. I was shaking when it finally ended. Luke wrapped his arms around me and just held me. Bailey climbed on us and rested her chin on my belly.

“How was that, baby girl?” Bailey asked.

All I could do was whimper. Everyone started laughing, but they weren’t making fun of me. I was pretty sure they got it.

“It was the same for me,” Luke said from underneath me.

“Holy shit. When we’re done, it’s your turn,” I said to Bailey.

I meant it. Everyone was getting off tonight. Bailey had her fantasy, and we did it, but I was returning the favor later. We all just snuggled until I had a better handle on life again. I crooked a finger at Jeremy and Casper. Maybe I was an idiot for asking for a second threesome, but I was always ambitious, even if it was sometimes about the wrong things.

Bailey and Luke took Casper and Jeremy’s place on the loveseat and Casper and Jeremy joined me in bed. I had a pretty good idea what they had planned. Jeremy had already told me he wanted to do it and got a toy for me to experience it a bit to talk me into it. I was fully on board, but they were going to have to have a discussion about where they put their dicks because I wasn’t picking.

“So, should we arm wrestle, or can I claim her ass?” Casper said.

“You haven’t had that yet? Ten stars. Definitely recommend. You take it, but prep her right.”

I climbed on top of Jeremy so we could make out while Casper got Luke’s lube out. I moaned as Casper worked me

with his fingers. Jeremy was kissing my neck and pinching my nipples just how I liked it. I'd done this with Jeremy enough to know when I was ready, so I let Casper know.

He backed off so I could grab Jeremy's cock and slide down it. We both moaned when my ass met his hips. Casper pressed my back so that my chest was pressed against Jeremy's. Jeremy wrapped his arms around me and nipped at my nose.

"You ready for this, Jordan?"

"Fuck, yeah."

Casper took his time pressing his cock into my ass. He did it just right so that it didn't hurt at all. I just felt a little pressure and a lot of fullness when I had all of him. It was different from the toy Jeremy got me because they were bigger and flesh and blood but it felt just as good.

It felt even better when they both started thrusting. They each had their own rhythms. Sometimes, they were in sync and sometimes they weren't. It didn't matter which was which. The friction was fucking amazing. I wanted more. I started moving my hips, so I was grinding on Jeremy and pushing back against Casper's cock.

"Kitty wants to play," Casper growled, spanking my ass.

"She does. Do that again and fuck me harder. Jeremy, pull my hair a bit."

"Yes, ma'am," Jeremy said, tangling his hand in my hair. "Give her what she wants, man. You might think you're in control because you're topping, but we're all her bitches."

"Speak for yourself," Bailey snorted. "I'm my own bitch."

Casper and Jeremy gave me *exactly* what I wanted. They fucked me hard and fast while spanking my ass and pulling my hair. It was perfect. They were all so different personality-wise, but they fucked differently, too. Jeremy and Casper weren't the same and were both versatile, but they also did *this* very well.

I just had a massive orgasm, and I was about to have another. Damn. I couldn't contain my cries. I threw back my head and just let go when it hit. It was just as intense as the first one I had tonight. Jeremy, Casper, and Luke all said I clamped down hard when I came on their cocks. They said it was pretty intense.

Casper and Jeremy weren't that far behind me and then we all laid down to snuggle for a bit. I was exhausted and a little sore, but I wasn't quite done yet. I didn't want to kick anyone out of Luke's bed, but there was one person in this room who hadn't gotten off yet.

“Bailey, get that sweet ass over here now.”

“Yes, ma'am,” Bailey said, stalking toward Luke's bed.

I was about to eat the shit out of my girlfriend.

21 CASPER



Last night was amazing. I'd already purchased the clit sucker Bailey used on Jordan that made her squirt, but I was so buying a bed like Luke's. We could all comfortably fit in it to sleep after we worked out bed politics. I planned on doing this again, but maybe in my room next time.

Boss texted me that it was okay if we were a little late getting to the office. She'd used her connections to get Brick on a plane and straight to our office. We'd be questioning him all day. For the newbie's safety, Bailey, Luke, and I would be in the room with Boss and they would be watching from the movie room.

I fired off a quick text to Boss about having Luke in the room with us. I trusted Luke implicitly, but his sisters were his blind spot. Especially his baby sister. Luke and Brick didn't get along. Luke beat his ass all the time, but Boss told me to trust her. She thought having another combat veteran in the room would put him at ease.

Luke and Bailey wanted to get there early, so Jeremy left with them. Jordan and I followed shortly after. I liked having her to myself, but I felt like I was being greedy. We pretended to be together before I got to know her and we'd probably have to do it again. It was just weird doing it right outside our front door like she wasn't dating the others, too.

We went our separate ways when we hit the subterranean level. Boss wasn't going to bring a potential enemy into Tangerine's lab. She didn't even let the assassins in there. I'd only been in there twice and once was when Boss was really pissed after that guy tried to stab her with a poison knife.

She told me exactly where to meet her. Brick was sitting on one sofa and Bailey and Luke were sitting across from him. Boss was tall, slim, and could have modeled like Jordan did. She could definitely beat the shit out of everyone in this room. Boss was standing and pacing like a feral cat. I really hoped Brick didn't piss her off because blood was hard to explain to the dry cleaners.

I took my place across from Brick and just glared at him. This was the guy that had fucked my girlfriend. Now that I had time to think about it, McKinley was a *terrible* girlfriend and I didn't even like her all that much. It was the *principle* behind it. McKinley made it public knowledge we were together. She was doing that right up until the breach. Brick couldn't say he didn't know she was in a relationship or that she lied, saying we broke up.

"Tell me, Brick, when did you give up on your wife and decide to kill me?" Boss purred.

Brick looked utterly confused. He wasn't a good actor. If he was, he would have been sent on a greater range of

assignments. He legitimately had no idea what she was talking about.

“We know you blew your first assassin assignment and stole the poison that was given. I also know you were fucking my ex-girlfriend behind my back while we were all working here.”

“Fuck you, man. Whoever told you I was sleeping with that woman lied. I found her revolting, but she said she could help me. Yeah, I stole the poison, but it wasn’t for anyone here. McKinley was supposed to help me get close to the person I intended to use it on, but then the breach happened and she changed her number. I still have the poison and I’m going to use it on the person I intended to as soon as I can come up with a plan.”

Brick was *pissed off*, but did he honestly not know? Had he not put all the pieces together yet? It sounded like McKinley used him. It wouldn’t shock me, but I needed the full story. It also wouldn’t shock me if McKinley lied about cheating on me just to hurt me. The Brick I worked with wouldn’t have denied it if he slept with my girlfriend. This Brick seemed offended at the entire idea.

“Start from the beginning. Tit for tat. Tell me why you deliberately betrayed my trust, blowing a mission to steal that poison and I’ll tell you what I know,” Boss said. “McKinley left Casper a note that she was having a torrid affair with you. That’s not the man I hired.”

“Because it’s not me. My wife was it for me. The military wouldn’t tell me anything, but I talked with people who were on that mission that went wrong. The intel was bad, and that was how my wife got captured. A lot of people questioned the mission, but they didn’t have the option to not do it.

“Their commanding officer was promoted as soon as the dust settled. He got a big pay raise and a cushy job with fewer responsibilities and fewer lives in his hands. Which meant he fucked up, they knew he fucked up, and they didn’t want to deal with the scandal of admitting it, so they moved him. It was *his* fault my wife got captured. The poison was for him.”

Ah, fuck. I could see where this was heading, and I didn't like it.

"I get it, man," Luke said. "My whole family is military and if we could have gotten our hands on my baby sister's commanding officer to beat the shit out of him, we would have. You met her. She used to work here. You'd have a hard time getting close to him if he wasn't your commanding officer. Now that he's been promoted instead of dishonorably discharged, you never would have gotten close enough to pull that off without getting killed."

"I couldn't have helped you," Boss said. "I have strings everywhere, but if you weren't killed on the spot, I couldn't have gotten you off if you got caught. Deep Throat only could have used his connections to move you to a different prison. How does McKinley play into all of this?"

"I was an asshole when they let me out of the military. I could hear myself doing it and I couldn't stop myself. I didn't want to get close to anyone because I didn't want to lose them. I didn't just lose my wife. All my friends were deployed, and I lost them, too. I did and said things I knew were going to drive people away. And, Green, I came at you a lot because you were a better fighter than me. I wanted you to help me be better, but I went about it the wrong way and I know that. I'm sorry. Red, I *never* slept with your girl. I don't know why she said that.

"McKinley cornered me after my mission went wrong. I tried to ignore her, but she was the only one who seemed to get I was pissed about something and ask me what it was. I eventually told her about my wife and that I wanted revenge. Our relationship was strictly business. She told me that her dad was high up in the military and that she had a ton of hacker contacts Boss didn't know about.

"McKinley swore that if I gave her enough time and some money to pay off her hacker friends, she could get me in the same room with him in a way that I could pull it off and not get caught. Boss had *just* told me another lead didn't pay out at finding my wife, so I asked McKinley to come over and demanded results for the money I gave her.

“We got in this massive fight and she told me to give her two weeks. We all got called into a meeting, the next day, about the breach. Everything was hectic after that with identities and disappearing. I was supposed to meet McKinley in London, but she never showed up and disconnected her number.”

Who was going to tell him? I hated giving bad news. I really felt bad for the guy. He'd been a total dick before, but he apologized and I think we all understood why. Because McKinley didn't just steal his poison and manipulate him. It sounded like she stole his money, too. I dated her. I shouldn't have to tell this man what she did. Boss pinched the bridge on her nose with her fingers.

“Okay, so to sum it up briefly, we found Hex. Hex was hired by another person who was definitely McKinley. She used you and manipulated you into giving her money. She definitely stole the poison *you* stole because she hired someone to kill me with it. Also, look at this file and tell me if you still want to ruin your life getting revenge.”

Something told me Boss never stopped looking for his wife, even after the breach. She cared about all of us. She would have kept looking until she found her and then tried to reach out to Brick. We all knew Boss probably found something on his wife and it was going to be in that file. If she'd been looking since he got hired, something was bound to pan out, eventually.

Brick didn't look right away, and that told me what kind of man he really was.

“If I had known that poison was going to end up in *anyone's* hands but mine, I wouldn't have taken it. If I'd even suspected she was going to betray everyone, I would have told you. If I had known she was connected to Hex, you would have been the first person I told. You gave me a lot when you hired me and I know you could have fired me when I was being a jerk to everyone and blew that mission. I have a ton of respect for you. And Cadmium, all that shit I said to you was me lashing out because I was pissed at life. I don't actually

believe any of that nonsense. You'd make a hell of a soldier if you ever enlisted. I'd trust you to have my back."

Bailey could hold a grudge better than anyone I knew, but she was also reasonable when it came to forgiving people if they were actually sorry. She'd probably never forgive Carl, and I didn't think McKinley could give her a reason that was good enough. Brick? It sounded like he was a victim. That didn't excuse him from taking it out on us instead of handling his emotions, but we couldn't control how other people reacted.

Bailey just gave him a small smile and a nod.

"I'd make a shit soldier. I question everything."

"She really does," Luke said. "She'll even try to fight you if she asks how you are and she doesn't believe you."

"You've apologized and we all understand. Before we start grilling you for anything that might help us find McKinley, you might want to look in that folder because I never stopped looking for her."

Brick looked like he was bracing himself. Boss had given him countless leads that didn't pan out. This could either be another one or Boss found out she was dead. I doubted that was it. Boss wouldn't have dropped that on him right after he found out he helped McKinley and gave her money. Boss wouldn't have handed him *anything* except solid proof his wife was alive. Boss wasn't cruel. When she was pissed, she was cold and calculating, but she didn't play with her food.

"If she's dead, just tell me."

"Your wife was a combat medic. She had skills too valuable for them to kill. I trusted she would have told them that rather than let them hurt her. There was always the possibility she refused to treat their wounded and died for it, but I doubted it. I found where they are keeping her. She's mostly treating kids now, but she can't leave because she was in the middle of nowhere without her passport.

"Even when I thought you betrayed me and tried to kill me, your wife wasn't my enemy. I put in a few calls to get her

back in the states. You look at that drone photo of your wife knowing she's coming home and tell me if you want to be dumb enough to risk death or jail trying to take out her commanding officer.”

Brick was a massive guy. Not as big as Luke, but huge. He tore into the envelope, took one look at the photo, and burst into tears. He was trying to profusely thank Boss for finding her. Was I tearing up, too? This was more Luke's domain.

“Thank you. Seriously. Would it be possible for me to come back and you bring my wife on? We're both military; but I don't want her anywhere near that. I know the breach was a major thing, but you handled it beautifully. They released our real names but not our photos or missions. I went back to my real name when I went back to the military. No one has tried to come at me. Most people didn't even know. They were more worried about the corporations that were a front than the names on the list.”

“He's right,” Luke said. “My family thinks my sister fucked up. They know Stantech was on the list and that we both work there. They think it's a conspiracy theory and didn't even look at the names to see hers. You could technically bring some of them back.”

“I'll think on it. Brick, I'll try to make it happen. Tell us *anything* you can that would lead us to McKinley.”

22 JORDAN



Wow, did I have something in my eye? Brick wasn't the bad guy and Boss reunited him with his wife. I was thinking further ahead. If Boss brought Brick back and hired his wife, we'd have more agents. What was more than that, she could probably bring Luke's sister back, too, and plenty of other trained agents. That would give the rest of us time to train and people to learn from.

I was snuggled with Jeremy and Crimson was sitting on Tyrian's lap. Black was on the other side of the door from Boss, watching just in case and Blue was watching with us.

"I didn't have that on my bingo card," Blue said.

"Drag bingo is a ton of fun," I said.

“Yes, it is. Shut up and listen.”

“There’s not much I can tell you,” Brick said. “She was supposed to be in London, but she wasn’t. She said she hated London because she preferred sunny places. I always thought we’d meet there and then she’d eventually move someplace warm like Florida or a tropical island.”

“She hates the heat,” Casper said. “Bitch was like the White Witch. Loved it cold, but hated Christmas, too. McKinley wouldn’t be anywhere humid.”

“I would imagine there are some cold places she wouldn’t want to show her face again. I know I don’t want to go back to some countries I had to pretend to be a total dumbass in,” Bailey said.

“How did the two of you communicate?” Boss asked. “She used message boards with the hackers until she took it to a burner phone and then she used a video chat where she tried to scramble her face with Hex. Hex is working for me now and she’s working with a team to try to trace the video and number McKinley was using, but anything else I can give them would help.”

Brick just gave her this goofy grin. He was so much prettier when he smiled.

“The number I was texting her on was disconnected, but I *do* have something that might get her attention. It was something I’d been thinking about when she disappeared without helping me. I might have been pissed off enough to fall for her bullshit, but I wasn’t a complete idiot. She wanted cash, but I refused. Then, she wanted a money order, and I also said no.

“I knew a money trail could be my undoing, but there was always something about that woman that raised my hackles. I lied to her about how much savings I had and insisted on sending it wirelessly. I’d been thinking about reversing the charge since she didn’t actually produce any results. I’ve just been so busy. I’ll bet if I do that and give Hex and her team the account where I sent the money, it would get her attention.”

“Ha!” Bailey yelled. “I could kiss you, but I’m very gay, my girlfriend would find out, and you’re very much in love with your wife.”

“Please don’t. My wife is very jealous and she could have been a sniper instead of a medic. I mean it, Boss. If I could come back here, I would. I know I fucked it up the first time, but I’d be better the second.”

“Don’t make any big decisions right now. Go to the hotel room I booked you and meet your wife at the airport in two days. Reunite and catch up. Be there for her. If you still want to come back here, I’ll try to make it happen. Don’t tell her the truth about what we do here right off, but one of our staff doctors is looking to retire, so we’d be in need of someone with medical training soon. She’d have to pass our vetting and interview, but it’s within the realm of possibility. For now, get us that bank account and go reunite with your wife. Goddess knows you’ve waited long enough.”

So, this wasn’t even remotely what we thought it was, but Boss found Brick’s wife and we maybe possibly had a lead.

“Can the tech girls do anything with that bank account?” I asked.

“Oh, yeah,” Blue said. “Brick was already suspicious. If she had given him an offshore bank instead of one based in the US, he probably would have started asking questions. It might not have been her primary bank account, and she probably moved the funds somewhere, but it’ll help narrow down where she might be.”

“It was dangerous to take his money after he refused to give her cash,” Jeremy said. “She got greedy. That was the first time I’d ever seen Brick, but he was pretty determined to kill that man. He would have eventually done it with or without the poison or McKinley’s help. It would have been messy and she could have gone down for it with him if he mentioned her help. I don’t think he’s going to do that *now* but thirty minutes ago, he would have.”

“Well, kids, it’s back to work,” Blue said. “Mauve, get over to the training room and the rest of you back to the nerd

cave. Red should be coming back with updated assignments. If Boss finds a way to bring Brick back, there might be other agents who feel the same way. We might be able to fill our rosters with some of the old team, which means all of you go back to being babies and focusing on learning how to be agents.”

I *could* have been worried that Boss was going to bring all the experienced agents back and get rid of us, but I wasn't. We were all super inexperienced, but we'd proven ourselves.

All I was thinking about was that Luke might get his sister back.

23 LUKE



I didn't think the chuckle-fuck who constantly started fights with me was actually a decent guy. I fully believed he was McKinley's partner, got my sister sent away, and tried to kill Boss. We were wrong and I could admit that. Brick seemed like someone I might be able to get along with.

And I almost took a cue off Bailey and heterosexually kissed that man when he planted the seed in Boss's head about bringing him back and why it would work. It meant she could extend that offer to my sister and other agents. I wanted my sister back more than anything, but I also didn't want my girlfriend going on missions until she was fully trained. I didn't want Bailey being overworked because Jordan wasn't trained.

If Boss handpicked the best to come back, I could slow down Jordan's training, so she didn't burn out. Bailey wouldn't have to go out every time we needed a female agent and Casper could be a team lead instead of going on missions since he was the only trained male.

I wanted to grab Boss and make her tell me if she was going to bring Brick and some other agents back, but my momma didn't raise a stupid moose. Boss would beat my ass all over my training room if I demanded an answer from her. Next time I saw her, I'd just tell her how much it would mean to me to have my sister back and that we could properly train the new agents with a full roster.

I'd *politely* suggest it. Boss had that envelope with Brick's wife in it but I was guessing she had different plans if Brick had been in on this. I didn't want that woman mad at me.

Jordan met me in the language lab. We didn't have much time before lunch, where we could all get together and properly gossip. I started testing Jordan by talking about what just happened in French. She was doing so well. She followed everything I said and was able to hold a decent conversation with a passable accent.

"You're doing good. We still need to work on your accent a bit because you won't fly as a native if we need you to, but you're getting close, Let's go to lunch, and then it's back to fighting for you."

I didn't say anything to her about slowing down her training. She didn't know we were pushing her harder than the other agents. Honestly, she took to everything we threw at her and ate it up. She'd probably think we were going easy on her because I thought she couldn't handle it. She seemed to click with fight training, but I didn't want her injured or burnt out.

Bailey couldn't contain herself as soon as we sat down. Bailey hated drama when it involved *her*, but she ate up other people's drama.

"So, now that we know Brick isn't a total ass-face, and he helped us out, Boss should give him his job back. She could offer a lot of people their jobs back and give them the option

because Brick was right about most people not paying attention to the list of names. Think we can give her a list of all the cool people and tell her which assholes we don't want back?"

"Being an asshole doesn't make them a bad agent," Casper pointed out. "You wouldn't be on the same team as them."

"Maybe *you* don't mind breathing the same air as assholes, but it gives me this zit right here on my chin and I prefer having a flawless complexion."

"We thought Brick was an asshole, and he wasn't," I said.

"Oh, Brick was a total dick. He admitted he was a dick, explained why, and apologized for it. Most of them don't have his tragic backstory. They are just rude. McKinley's origin story isn't even good. It could have been this story about overcoming adversity, but she became a villain. It's fucking stupid. Some of these people were fucking stupid."

Bailey and her grudges. She was going to hold them unless someone gave her a very good reason not to. We all understood Brick. I was Brick once. I didn't really get why he didn't let Boss help him more like she did the rest of us, but I got it. She wasn't our therapist, even if she had a knack of knowing what we needed to heal.

And Bailey was right. Some of our old coworkers were entitled shit bags. I didn't like them any more than she did. They weren't as stubborn as Brick when it came to me repeatedly kicking their asses, but they definitely stepped on my training mats thinking they were about to do something with me and I had to prove a point.

They let me teach them a better way of fighting if they learned under the old teacher. They were proficient, but I wouldn't call them my best students. Their arrogance would cost them in a fight if shit went sour. Like, Bailey was one of the most secure women I knew. She knew she could kick ass and the things she was good at, but she didn't have the ego to go with it.

"Your sister should be at the top of the list," Jordan said.

Jordan had met my older sister, but not my youngest. She knew her background, but she never assumed they wouldn't get along. Even if they didn't, Jordan would make it happen. I knew both women really well. Jordan seemed to get along with everyone and my sister would *adore* her.

"I agree. Your sister was one of the good ones," Bailey said.

"Can we start a petition?" Jeremy asked. "I don't know about working with assholes again. Crimson and Tyrian were just about the only coworkers at my last job that I could stand. We could at least vote to bring Luke's sister back."

Everyone who'd worked here longer than the newbies started laughing. Boss and Black weren't even remotely dictators, but I wasn't about to hand them a petition and demand they rehire someone, even if that person was my sister.

"Boss *and* Black can kick my ass. I don't think that's going to go over well. She's thinking about it."

"What are the geeks doing after lunch?" Bailey asked.

All of a sudden, the lights in the break room started flashing.

"Code purple! Make your way out of the building to the sidewalk."

What now? I didn't even know what a code purple was, but I grabbed Jordan and got us out of there.

After that last attempt on Boss, I wasn't taking any chances.

24 JORDAN



I didn't know what a Code Purple was. It sounded festive and a little dangerous. Okay, I lost my shit when I found out it meant bomb threat. Blue was outside explaining to us that Betty got a suspicious package. Boss evacuated the building. Brick was still there, so he was trying to disarm it with a bunch of noisy people trying to insist he wasn't qualified.

"Was this her?" I asked.

"Probably. The card was addressed to Boss and signed with a lipstick kiss. I recognize that shade. It's the one she always wore," Blue said.

"Bitch," Bailey muttered.

“That means she knows we’re onto her,” Jeremy said. “I’m guessing Boss has enemies that would be petty enough to do this, but none that wore that shade of lipstick.”

“Oh, I’m probably the only one who noticed that,” Blue said. “It was this fabulous shade of red and I once asked her where she bought it. She sneered at me and told me people with dicks shouldn’t wear lipstick. McKinley probably forgot all about that interaction but I hold a grudge longer than Cadmium does. I kept my eye on that one and I was the one who first noticed she was stealing. Keep that in mind if you want to get stupid, kids. I’ve got endless resources and Boss’s trust.”

I gulped because I only knew the tip of what kind of resources Blue had. Deep Throat might not be trying to get me busted for jaywalking, but what if Blue tried to take up that mantle?

“Sorry. I’ll try not to annoy you.”

“You’re good. It’s kind of adorable and I’m pretty sure that’s just how they do it on your home planet.”

“I’m from Portland.”

“Same thing. If they’ll stay out of his way, Brick can take care of this. He was one of the best before they let him go. Several places tried to snatch him up because he’s *that* good. Boss just had what he wanted, and the job was a bit safer. We’re lucky he was standing there with us when the package was delivered.”

“Who delivered the package?” Luke asked.

“A bike messenger. Boss took him down when she realized what it was. The kid was terrified. I don’t think he knew what it was, but he might be able to tell us who gave it to him.”

The front of the building was glass, but it was tinted so I couldn’t see inside. A bunch of men in protective gear came out to tell us that the threat was gone and we could go home.

“That doesn’t mean us,” Blue said. “We need another game plan because that bitch just tried to blow us all up to get rid of Boss. I have big opinions about dying. I like being a part

of this, but not the dangerous stuff. And I'm not changing myself to work a mark. Let's go be pissy because I'm angry."

I was angry, too, now that I had time to think about it. McKinley just tried to blow up an entire building of innocent people. She probably hadn't even met anyone over on the business side. I'd seen their faces, but I'd never spoken to them.

We may have survived the blast on the subterranean level, but we would have been buried in rubble. No one knew we were down there and I'm sure the air filtration systems would have been damaged. We would have died a lot slower.

Yeah, I was pissed. All of us were. This had to stop. I trusted everyone here, but someone was watching us. McKinley knew the first assassin failed, so she followed it up with a bomb. She had no way of knowing Brick would be here to stop it, but she could just turn on the news to read the bomb didn't work.

This woman was a lunatic with a lot of stolen disposable income. We needed to stop her. She sent hundreds of innocent people into hiding to throw Boss off her scent.

She was willing to kill all of us to get away with it.

25 JORDAN



Boss had a war table set up. Everyone on the secret side of things was there except Kendasha. Kendasha's test scores were off the charts. The only reason she wasn't currently enrolled in college classes was that she needed to catch up on a few upper-level science classes. She was in school when the bomb arrived in the lobby.

Boss and Black weren't fucking around and we all knew we could be here late. Black immediately found out what we wanted to eat so he could order it for us. This was definitely an emergency pepperoni and jalapeno pizza situation and if anyone else wanted one, they were going to have to get their own. The spite noodle was a one-off and I wasn't sharing my

pizza. I could have *died*. I deserved a whole large pizza to myself.

Brick was sitting with us. I hardly knew the guy, and this was the first time we were ever in the same room together, but I got good vibes from him. He felt like one of us.

“What can you tell us about the bomb?” Boss asked.

“It was built well. They knew what they were doing. It had to survive the handoff and trip to the building. Someone was counting on you being a little rough trying to get all the extra tape that was on the box to detonate the bomb. If Blue hadn’t recognized the lipstick, no one would have known it was her and you might have.

“I’ve seen this kind of bomb before. There are instructions to make them on the dark web. Bad people like this kind because you can make it with things from the hardware store without drawing any suspicions. This wasn’t a newbie. The person who made it has done this before. It gets messy if you get this one wrong,” Brick said.

“That explains how you knew how to disarm it so quickly,” Boss said. “I don’t know what we would have done if you weren’t here. You’re right. You deserve your job back if you still want it. The ball is in your court. Talk to your wife when her plane lands. If you still want to come back here, you’re a hero and we all owe you.”

Luke cleared his throat.

“There are other people who deserve their jobs back, too. My sister for one, but there are others also. They are probably just as willing as Brick. I’ll bet if you told them he went back to his old name with no problem *and* let them know who betrayed them, they’d want to come back and catch her.”

“You’re going to need them,” Casper said. “She’s not going to stop. First, it was a poison knife and then it was a bomb. She’s escalating. We’re good, but we all have unique skills. None of us knew how to diffuse that bomb except Brick. There are other people in hiding with skills we need, too.”

“You’re right. Everyone, start making lists. Think about your teams. Blue, Black, and I will start putting together what we know. Green, your sister gets top priority. I had her working McKinley to see if she could get her to admit she was stealing. McKinley thinks she and Evergreen are friends.”

Black and his names. Luke’s sister was named Holly. I always thought he gave Luke the code name Green because of his vivid green eyes, but Holly was here first. He gave her the code name Evergreen because her name was Holly and then Luke showed up with bright-green eyes and got the name Green.

Luke looked like he had no idea that McKinley was Holly’s mark, but he was happy she might be coming back. I grabbed his hand and squeezed it.

“She never liked McKinley. I always wondered why she complained about her so much, but she never told me she was investigating her for you.”

“Just for theft. None of us thought she was capable of all this.”

“I lived with her and I didn’t think she could do any of this. What do you want the rest of us to do?” Casper asked.

“Find the bank account Brick gave us. If we can take away her money, she can’t pay for any more assassins. I’ll work on getting some agents back. Evergreen was the best at infiltration and espionage. By now, she knows her first two attempts didn’t work, and she’s probably seen a photo of Brick.

“If we bring some other agents back, it’ll throw her off. She’ll think I’m doing it to restaff, not because we are onto her. If we can get Evergreen in touch with her to feed her bad information, she’ll think we’re barking up the wrong tree and she’ll be easier to catch.”

“She also strikes me as being super jealous. If she thinks you called everyone back but her, she’s going to get pissed,” I said.

Bailey snorted.

“She always did think she was the best agent here. She’s going to lose it if she thinks Boss is rehiring agents and never called her.”

Boss just gave us an evil grin.

“That’s what I’m counting on.”

26 JORDAN



Damn. I wanted to be Boss when I grew up. Everyone wanted me focused on my training because I'd never be able to do the computer stuff the rest of my team did or have criminal contacts like Bailey. So, that's what I did.

But Boss was making phone calls and people were coming. Some were closer than others and got here sooner, but as soon as Boss asked, they all came. They were slowly filtering in. Holly wasn't here yet, but it would be soon.

I was going through my language module with Luke when an idea hit me. It was one of those things I thought everyone should know, but I was learning not everyone thought like me. Maybe Boss had already thought of this and was going to get

annoyed with me for mentioning it, but my hunches had been spot-on so far, so I was going to get annoying.

I knew there were cameras everywhere and someone was always watching, so I started hollering for Boss. It was Blue who came over the speaker.

“Child, you are neither dying nor on fire. Why are you shrieking?”

Boss immediately came strolling into the language lab and sat next to me.

“This one is different. When she starts screaming for me, she’s not being needy. She had an idea and she’s just exuberant about it. Her ideas have been pretty spot-on so far. That seemed like a big one.”

“Okay, so she’s tried an assassin and a bomb and they didn’t work. It’s probably pretty clear to her at this point that offing you is going to be pretty hard and she’s not going to want to keep wasting money for failed attempts. There’s a way she could have a *ton* of people trying to kill you for *free*.”

“Speak.”

“Kendasha. The only people who know she’s Hex is us and McKinley. Kendasha made sure she had the face of who hired her in case anyone asked, even if she thought the project was harmless. McKinley made her the public face of the breach and I’m sure she did her due diligence and made sure she could prove it.

“McKinley’s not stupid. If she wasn’t having someone watch Kendasha, someone is watching our building. If the other agencies don’t know Hex was just a hired gun and a fucking kid, then they need to. I talked to my roommates about the other agencies. A lot of them didn’t even try to have a successful business side. They ran off government money and wealthy donors. Some of them recruited their agents from prison. It was either work for them or rot in prison for the rest of their lives.

“They didn’t fare as well as Stantech. Their funding dried up with all the attention and some of their agents had to go

back to prison. Everyone who was expecting or promised a pension isn't getting one. They are on the run with a false identity trying to get jobs.

“If *those* people think you found Hex and hired them instead of punishing them without knowing the full truth, they are going to come for you. These people are pissed. They lost everything. They aren't going to ask *why* you hired Kendasha. They aren't going to give you a chance to explain McKinley tricked her, and she's the real enemy. You don't just need *your* agents looking for McKinley. You need *all* the agents looking for her because she could use them against you.”

“You're actually spot on, as usual. Your three lovers only know the tip of how bad it was for some of the other agencies and their agents. The ones attached to a viable, successful business sent their agents off with a pension and a nice cushion to start over with. The ones that didn't had their funding cut and the people giving them money pretending like they didn't know them.

“They kicked everyone out of the country with a barely scraped-together new identity and no money. I had a lot of empty properties here I used to rent out to my agents and some are just investment properties. I put a lot of them up and helped them find work.

“I should contact them, too. I didn't bring everyone back. I try to treat all my employees like I would family, but some of them didn't play well with others. They were excellent at their jobs and that was why they were recruited. They just never meshed with any of the teams I put them on. There are some agents in New York that I didn't train, but could be a good fit.

“I was actually trying to avoid siccing everyone on McKinley because I wanted her arrested, not dead, but she's come for me twice now. The poisoned knife was one thing, but she tried to blow up a building full of innocent people to take me out. I can handle myself, but my business side doesn't know how to fight at all and you're my only new agent who is learning how to fight. If she turns the other agents against me, I can't protect all of you.”

“I feel like I should be doing more. I’m just learning French and how to fight.”

“If you’ll recall, your fight training stopped an assassin. You’re already doing more than you should. You shouldn’t even be on a team yet. You should be learning while we figure out where to put you. We put you all together not knowing if you would mesh. It could have been a disaster. We were planning on breaking you up once we were staffed and you were all trained, but we decided not to. You don’t just work well together, you’ve all become close.”

“Close enough to know about the nipple thing,” I muttered.

“I’m sorry, what?”

“You won’t be able to make eggs when you find out. Never mind.”

“Well, now you *have* to tell me.”

I totally opened the door to this and now I couldn’t shut it. Boss was probably the most elegantly powerful woman I knew and now I was trying to explain the spatula-nipple thing to her when I didn’t really have a full understanding of it. It was so fucking *weird* none of us wanted a full explanation. We just wanted them to never bring it up again.

And now I was repeating what I tried to block out to the woman who could fire me just for bringing up nipples and spatulas in the same sentence. Boss was just nodding and smiling with this serene look on her face.

“I don’t kink shame, but better or worse than dealing with Clarence?”

“His foot thing wouldn’t have been weird, but he *made* it weird.”

“True. One of my lovers has a bit of a foot thing. He just likes strappy, six-inch heels and giving me foot rubs. It’s really nice, actually. Some men don’t like it when women like us are taller than them in heels. Not mine. He has this knack for picking out the sexiest heels that are insanely comfortable. If Clarence had been like that, we wouldn’t all still feel bad that it was you and not Cadmium. She has more experience with

that kind of thing and always gets her revenge in a way that doesn't blow the mission."

"With hardware store hot sauce sometimes," I said.

"That was one of my favorites. You should join us when she gets back from a mission. She tells me her little revenge subplots over tea when she gets home. Now, you need to get to lunch with your team. Keep the ideas coming. They are always excellent. Despite how you applied and how you were dressed, I knew I saw something special in you. I'm glad I was right."

Boss once told me she thought I was going to prove everyone wrong and be an amazing agent or this was going to blow up in her face and I would destroy her entire company. I could still epically fuck up and do that, but it was nice to hear she thought I was doing well.

I knew I was supposed to be focused on training, but I needed to do *something* to help catch McKinley.

27 CASPER



The problem with my ex-girlfriend was that she wasn't just smart. She had a law background and parents who lost everything and ended up in jail. McKinley tried to make it as difficult as possible to find where she was hiding her stolen money just in case she ever got caught.

She had about a dozen American bank accounts with different banks that were in her name. They had checking accounts with no money in them and savings accounts with different interest rates with a thousand dollars in each gathering interest. She was making small transfers before the breach, but the accounts had no activity now.

We found the account she gave Brick. It was in her name and just like the other American bank accounts, it had the same amount in savings and nothing in checking. I guessed that it wasn't just interest that kept the money there. She didn't want those accounts closed because there was no money in them.

The money had been transferred to a bank in London, then to another shell corporation. We'd eventually find where it ended up, but she went overboard protecting her money. I was updating Jordan and Luke over lunch.

"What if it's not in a bank?" Jordan asked. "I grew up next to this weird old man. We were all convinced he was a warlock and if your ball went in his yard, he'd curse you and all your hair would fall out and never grow back. Looking back, he was completely harmless and we were weird for thinking that.

"He died when I was fourteen. We finally met his kids and grandkids when they came down for the funeral. They never visited when he was alive. They were mad that there was no will and hardly anything in his bank account, but when they started cleaning his house out to sell, they started finding cash hidden everywhere. It was sewn into mattresses, hidden in books, mixed in with the flour and sugar.

"The guy was a millionaire, but you couldn't tell by how he was living or by his bank account. It was all cash and hidden around his house. If McKinley doesn't want anyone to find and take her money, that's what I'd do."

I would be *so* pissed off if we spent all this time sorting through all these bank accounts and shell corporations and McKinley was sleeping on a giant pile of cash. I didn't think she was. McKinley watched as her lavish lifestyle and inheritance were seized by the government. She *could* have decided to go cash only, but I doubted it.

She was always pressuring me into changing my bank from a credit union I liked to a bigger bank where she thought I'd get a better interest rate. McKinley also thought I should be

investing more. I had a great interest rate and several good investments, so I ignored her.

“She could, but I doubt it. If she has to pick up everything and move in the dead of the night, it’s going to be hard to do with that much cash. If she can’t grab everything, she going to lose what she left behind. Traveling with it is risky. Baggage gets lost all the time and someone could always steal it. She’d also have to explain why she had all that cash if she tried to make a claim for it. It’s too risky.”

Jordan just shrugged.

“I’ve never had a lot of money. Half the time, I wasn’t getting my allowance because I was in trouble for something. Then, I got to New York and was living with a hobosexual bass player who ruined my modeling career and spent my paychecks. I wasn’t exactly swimming in good-paying jobs until I got hired here. I’ve just been letting my direct deposits sit in my checking account, but someone who has a history of getting paid more than me probably needs to help me figure out what to do with it. Right now, I’m too scared to spend it, but eventually, I’m going to get comfortable and try to buy a tiger to play with Darth Vader.”

“No tigers,” Bailey said. “It can’t fit in the automatic litter box and I’m not sitting there smelling tiger-sized turds waiting for you to scoop. And we don’t have enough freezer space to feed you *and* a tiger.”

“She’s right,” Jeremy said. “We wouldn’t be able to keep as much people food in the kitchen if we had to feed a tiger. Think of your stomach.”

“Fine. No tigers, but I still might buy something equally irresponsible that doesn’t cut down on the amount of food I eat if it’s just sitting there in my checking account.”

I could help with that. I grew up comfortably. We never wanted for anything, but my family wasn’t like McKinley’s. My parents raised us to be responsible with money. Yeah, I splurged sometimes, and I wore nice clothes, but they didn’t cost as much as half a year’s salary for some workers in America.

So, I told Jordan I'd help her with that. Anything to spend more time with her. She just smiled at me. I'd do anything for one of those smiles.

But lunch was now over. It was time to dig into more of McKinley's endless bank accounts and send Jordan off to fight training.

I kissed her goodbye and watched her go.

28 JORDAN



Tonight was a big night. One of the apartments Boss owned in our building opened up, so she was putting Holly there. Holly's flight was supposed to arrive while we were finishing up at work. We invited her over for dinner to meet everyone. We were having some kind of Cajun-Italian mashup because both Casper and Bailey were cooking.

I was nervous. Elizabeth liked me and said I was good for Luke when we finally ended up together. Holly was an entirely different person. I wanted his sisters to like me because they could both kick my ass. And even if Holly didn't decide she wanted to fight me, Luke had been agonizing over her having to leave. I didn't want to cause drama.

I was sitting between Jeremy and Luke on the sectional repeating my mantra for tonight—*please don't be weird*. Because—let's face it—I was very weird. I definitely explained the nipple thing to Boss earlier. I was avoiding nipples for the rest of the night. If someone else wanted to broach that fateful topic tonight, that was on them.

“You're quiet and that's never a good thing,” Luke said.

“Or it's a really good thing,” Jeremy said. “Her ideas have saved our asses a lot recently.”

“The two of you are idiots,” Bailey called. “Meeting the sister is a major thing. Especially when they are as close as Holly and Luke. She's stressing. Rub her back and make her feel better because we can't feed her until Holly gets here.”

“Not even an appetizer?” I moaned.

“I'll take her back. You take her feet,” Jeremy said.

“Yeah, man. You said she bites when she's hungry.”

They didn't rub my feet and back for very long before there was a knock on the door. Luke jumped up and bounded to the front door. I heard this unreal shriek, then saw two arms encircle Luke's neck as Holly flung herself at him.

“I'm so happy to see your stupid face, big brother!”

Luke set her down, and I finally got a look at Holly. She looked nothing like Luke and Elizabeth. Luke and Elizabeth were fair with bright-green eyes. Holly had olive skin and dark hair and eyes. Luke and Elizabeth must take after one parent and Holly took after the other.

“Come meet my family. This is my girlfriend, Jordan. This is her other boyfriend Jeremy. She's also dating Casper and Bailey. Sorry, I know it's supposed to be code names, but you're family and we're all dating the same girl.”

Wow, Luke. Way to just air it all out. I wasn't ashamed of my relationship, but maybe we could ease Holly into the dynamics of our relationship until we knew how she would react. Casper and Bailey came out of the kitchen to show their

faces. Holly would have known them from before under their code names.

Holly just fell out laughing and I wasn't sure what was funny.

"I'm proud of you for the girlfriend upgrade, Red. Cadmium, I didn't take you for sharing a girlfriend with my brother."

"Bailey, please. After the breach, your brother became my best friend. He's a great guy. And yeah, we're all proud of Casper that his choice in girlfriends got exponentially better after McKinley. No one liked her."

"I don't know Jeremy or Jordan yet, but if my brother likes one of you well enough to date you and the other enough to share his girlfriend with you, I look forward to getting to know you. Boss had nothing but good things to say about the newbies she hired."

"Dinner is ready," Casper said. "We made a little Italian and a little Cajun. You can't tell by looking at either of them, but Jordan and Jeremy really like food."

"That's because Casper and Bailey are amazing cooks," Jeremy said.

"Well, let's eat and catch up! I want to know everything that happened in spy world while I was gone. I was totally bored. Boss sent me to Scotland and Scottish men are *fabulous* but I was working a corporate job where I was bored to tears. I was someone's *assistant*. I kept wanting to look for clues that they were up to no good so I could bring them down, but that wasn't my job anymore. And he was about as interesting as plain white bread."

"I can't imagine. I thought I was going to go crazy while my back was healing but at least I knew I could still bring down the bad guys."

"It's good to be back. I told Boss to give me a new identity, and I'd dye my hair and fuck, get plastic surgery so I didn't have to leave. Knowing it was one of us who did it? I can't *wait* to bring that bitch down. I was fetching coffee and

filtering out this man's hate mail so he only got nice emails because of her.”

“Not the hate mail!” Jeremy gasped. “He couldn't deal with that himself?”

“Apparently, not. And I couldn't be mean back and respond to it.”

“That had to be miserable,” Luke said. “Holly and Bailey have a lot in common when it comes to putting idiots in their place.”

“I didn't know you were pretending to be McKinley's friend to find out about the money she stole,” Casper said. “She didn't have a lot of female friends.”

“No, she wasn't into the whole girl power thing at all. Boss trained me in espionage and infiltration. Sometimes, I had to get close to people we didn't have a dossier on or the intel might be faulty. I had to watch her for a bit to find out how to get close to her.

“I'm not sure what her deal is. Most people grow out of 'high school mean girl' politics when they get to college. Some of them are still terrible as adults, but not as bad as they were in high school. I got close to her by pretending like I was Maura Stone from my freshman year of high school. I had to pretend to say some really nasty things about our coworkers to get her to trust me.”

“What did she say about me?” Bailey demanded.

“Not much. I think she was scared of you. She once made an offhanded comment that you had terrible taste in women, but that was it.”

“Bitch,” Bailey hissed.

I mean, I thought Bailey had fantastic taste in women. She was dating me and I'd met Emily twice now. She had brunch with us and she was at the gay club when Bailey took Luke and me. Emily was great. I wasn't threatened by her at all and she seemed genuinely happy Bailey and I were together.

“Did she say anything that might help us now?” I asked. “Like, in hindsight?”

“I didn’t get that far. People like McKinley don’t trust easily. They don’t have friends. They let people in their life they intend to use and eventually stab in the back. All their friendships are transactional. They tend to think everyone is like that. I was just looking to get her admit she was stealing and to invite me to her place so I could look for clues where she was hiding the money. If I even suspected she was planning on turning on us, I would have gone straight to Boss.”

“What’s the plan now?” Jeremy asked. “The number Brick was using was disconnected. Can anyone even contact her?”

“McKinley gave Brick a burner number and told him it was her primary. I’m guessing she’s got a few burners. Boss has a different number for her. Casper might have a totally different number for all I know. I had a number on my work phone and I turned that in when I left. Blue had just upgraded all our phones, so they kept them, but Blue also didn’t feel like sitting there and wiping all of them. They were just going to wipe them as they handed them out to new agents. I’ll get my work phone back tomorrow and we can start checking the numbers she gave out.”

“Well, I deleted her number from my phone and promptly forgot it,” Casper said. “I was so looking forward to nights where the most dramatic thing that happened was making sure my girlfriend had enough to eat so she doesn’t bite anyone and forgetting McKinley ever existed. Then her fucking face showed up on Kendasha’s laptop and now I have to think about her all the time.”

I didn’t particularly want to think about Casper’s ex this much either. Back when I was eighteen, much dumber, dating bass players, and punching groupies, I had the self-esteem of a platypus. I mean, they were kind of a mishmash of a bunch of different animals, were at risk of extinction, and for a while, people thought they were fake because they sounded so weird. That would fuck up anyone’s self-esteem.

I would *totally* compare myself to ex-girlfriends and feel like I didn't measure up. But I wasn't a platypus anymore. I emerged from my cocoon and was now the majestic beaver. Beavers were pretty fucked up, too, but they didn't care about it. They just saw running water and said absolutely not. And they were totally secure in that.

I wasn't building dams, but I had a job I was proud of. I had amazing partners. I met Bailey's ex, and she was great. She was completely different from me and that was just fine. I didn't want to do anything like she might have because things didn't work out between her and Bailey. I didn't want any part of me to be like McKinley. It sounded like *everyone* hated that woman.

"How wild is it that a kid took us all down?" Holly asked. "McKinley would have known the basics of the security at the office, but she's not a computer guru. She never tried to be. She really wanted to get promoted to assassin because she thought it would be exciting. We spoke enough for her to tell me she thought computer stuff was boring. The information she would have been able to give to a hacker would have been minimal. It *should* have been easy for us to catch them, especially with her hitting up multiple agencies. That kid has to be scary smart to pull it off with the information McKinley would have had on the security systems."

"She told the computer nerds how she did it. No one even *thought* to look out for how she did it to stop her. We do now. She's also helping us find McKinley," Casper said.

"Now, I am, too," Holly said. "I hadn't had time to fully work McKinley, but she thinks I'm like her. She also thinks I'm not a fan of Boss. It would make sense for me to call her and tell her I got my job back and ask if she's coming back, too. It's going to drive her *nuts*. She hated Boss. She loathed most of the people working here because she thought she was better than us. McKinley will get sloppy when she finds out Boss is bringing people back, but only her best."

"Oh, my god, that is going to drive her *insane*," Casper said.

I knew what I *should* be doing. It was literally what everyone was telling me to do. I needed to be perfecting my French and working on my green belt. The *only* fucking thing I had in common with McKinley is that I kinda found the computer stuff boring, too. I still thought it was utterly amazing Jeremy and Casper could do it and I liked sucking their dicks when they pulled off something amazing. I just didn't want to sit behind a computer all day. I just felt like I should be helping.

I was the only person on my team who hadn't taken a look at McKinley's employee file yet. I might not be able to do a damned thing with the information, but it was high time I stopped hearing what was in it secondhand.

29 BAILEY



I was always friendly with Holly, but I didn't know she was Luke's sister until after the breach. *Most* of my coworkers kept their relationships private for security reasons and because it wasn't really anyone's business. Luke and Holly kept things professional. I was on the mats with them in the training room all the time and I never guessed until Luke told us when we were spilling secrets after the breach.

There could have been a bunch of coworkers boinking I didn't know about because most people didn't air their business. McKinley was pretty much the only one who got gross about her relationship. The rest of us went to the training room to hit things like normal people when we were having

relationship drama. McKinley went around snarling at everyone and practically pissing on Casper.

Holly was keeping me company in my office while we worked. I really liked her. I just needed to tell her one thing.

“Can I just tell you that you and Elizabeth domesticated Luke perfectly? The man keeps tampons *and* pads in his bathroom just in case someone is sleeping over and has a preference. He also has Midol in there. If I want to sleep in his room and I’m on my period, he doesn’t give a shit. Luke just whips out the heating pad and doesn’t even blink. If I was straight, he’d be quite a catch.”

“What’s the deal with you and my big brother if you’re gay and he’s very hetero?”

I didn’t advertise my history with Carl to anyone outside of Casper and Luke. Boss made sure no one knew she recruited me from a bust. The team that busted the ring didn’t even know about me and I just happened to be there when they were arresting everyone. They didn’t remember my face from the screen they were watching and Boss didn’t show them the video when she appeared in the interrogation room to talk to me.

I felt comfortable sharing all that with Holly. I let her know that I sometimes still had nightmares and even though I was several states away from him and could fight back now, I still worried about him finding me again. Luke had been there for me and let me sleep in his bed.

“He does have this way of making you feel totally safe, like no one can hurt you,” Holly said. “Probably because he’s a fucking giant who could kill you with his bare hands, but only does that to bad people.”

“His girlfriend accidentally called him a big, sexy moose the first time she met him and it just kind of stuck.”

“Ha! I love it. Check your email. I’m about to text her. I’d call, but even my mom knows to text first before she calls and make sure she tells me it’s not an emergency and I’m not in trouble. McKinley is insane, but I doubt she’s the kind of crazy

who answers unexpected phone calls. She might not even have my number anymore. She might think I'm calling about her car warranty and not pick up."

"I don't, but I was worried about my ex."

"Girl, me, too. If Red is any indication of how she treats her boyfriends, we're probably not the only people looking for her."

"Oh, my god, their friends and new girlfriends, too, if they talked about it. There were a million ways she could have broken things off with Red. She chose to lie about cheating on him with Brick and opted to list all the ways Brick was better than him. Brick couldn't stand her but thought she could help him. We all want to beat her ass and we didn't date her."

I checked my email because I needed to. I knew enough about my criminal contacts to know they'd react one of two ways about all of this. They might be busting their asses to get me McKinley's new ID so I could take care of her or they weren't looking at all.

Snitching was frowned upon. They knew *I* didn't. Boss specifically told me not to because some of those places were helping domestic violence survivors and I might need those contacts later. I don't think they cared either way if I took out a bad person who lied to them, but if I fucked it up, she'd need a new identity or go to the cops. If the new identity didn't hold, she'd snitch to save her ass.

I checked my email every day *hoping* they sent me something, but knowing it might not happen. Maybe Holly coming back was good luck because there was an email in my inbox. It wasn't long and flowery. It was just a name and a social security number. I could work with that. McKinley was going by Courtney Gordon now.

"I got the name she's going by now. While I dig into that, any luck on your fishing expedition?"

"I think she's thinking about it. It's like she keeps typing, deleting it, and retyping. She might be rage-typing. I'll bet she's rage-typing that she hasn't heard from Boss yet. When

Boss brought me in to work here, she gave me a dossier on McKinley like she would any other mark.

“Boss said when we are ready to go out, she gives everyone the same type of mission. They tend to be easier. She’s not trying to freak us out the first time. She reviews our debriefing and they decide on the next missions. It’s all to cultivate where to put us where we’ll excel the most.

“McKinley didn’t know this or she wouldn’t have been bragging out of her ass, but playing dumb to flirt with criminals is usually reserved for baby agents unless the mark is going to be on the harder side. She was never moved to anything more advanced because she wasn’t good at it. McKinley *thought* she was. She thought everyone was either flirting or killing.

“She wanted to be an assassin, but she actually had no idea what *I* did. I don’t kill government leaders. I insert myself in their politics and topple it from the inside without laying a finger on anyone. I *could* have been an assassin. I’m a really good shot, but Boss saw something different in me. I’m good at what I do. If I’d had more time with McKinley, I could have figured out what she was up to, but I didn’t. I’ve tricked even the sneakiest politicians into messing up. Give me time with McKinley and I’ll have something.”

I started running my programs with the name and social security number I was given. I needed to do my part and I could do a lot with that information.

“You know, I’m glad you’re back, and not just because you can help us catch McKinley. The big, sexy moose was in a dark place when you had to leave. Red and I tried to help him, but he didn’t start really smiling again until a certain leggy blonde got hired. He really missed you.”

“I missed him, too. And I happen to like the leggy blonde as well. She’s good for him.”

I was pretty fond of her, too.

30 JORDAN



My moose was being a total hardass. If I wasn't worried about breaking my hand, I'd spank that perfect bubble butt. I didn't *care* there were cameras and Blue would probably come over the loudspeaker and say something snarky. Luke refused to get McKinley's employee file for me. It was electronic, so he just needed to show me how to pull it up and he said no.

He repeatedly pointed out to me that everyone had a job right now and mine was focusing on languages and fighting. Luke said he would get me a laptop to read it over lunch. Motherfucker. I didn't like doing anything over mealtime except enjoying my food. I was totally capable of

multitasking, but I didn't like thinking and tasting at the same time.

But I guess that's what I 'd be doing if I wanted that file.

Luke gave me a hard time all morning because I was sulking and speaking French at the same time. I practically bolted to the break room when it was time for lunch. Luke must have texted Casper because there was a laptop next to my plate with the file pulled up.

Before I got into it, I needed to know what this woman looked like. Maybe I still had a little platypus in me. I pulled up her photo. She was pretty in a put together way that I would never be, but I *knew* this woman from somewhere. I recognized her face and I shouldn't. I didn't use to live and work on this side of town. When I was on this side of town, I couldn't tell you a single face I passed unless it was someone I was friendly with and made it a point to say hi.

I was staring pretty hard at the photo and ignoring my lunch. It was driving me nuts. Where had I seen this woman before and why would I even remember her face? I had to have had some interaction with her at some point. It was more than just passing on the street.

"Deviled Eggs!" I yelled. Everyone jumped.

"You can't want deviled eggs again," Bailey moaned.

"No, when we were at the store, Red went in one direction to buy your list and I went in the other to get the eggs. A woman walked up to me and commented on how many eggs I was buying and made a shitty joke about stealing Red away from me. I was about two seconds from smashing a carton of eggs on her face when she backed off and left.

"That woman was McKinley! I don't know how long she's been in New York, but she either saw the posts I tagged Red in and was following me or is close enough to our office to see us coming and going holding hands. It would be hard to get me alone in New York, but it's like she tried to approach me somewhere Red might see her like it's a game."

Bitch. If I had just treated the woman in the grocery store like a fucking groupie and thrown down by the eggs, Casper would have come running and seen she was his ex. Why did I ever grow up and out of my punching-groupies phase? I could have ended this before she tried to blow us all up.

“I can’t believe I didn’t notice her,” Casper said. “We were all convinced we were putting on a social media show for her in another country that we didn’t even think to look over our shoulders at home.”

“It’s even worse that she’s been watching us,” Bailey said.

“She knows better,” Holly said. “She wanted that assassin job. She was never going to get it, but she’s probably watched enough movies to know that you need proof the job was done. She has trust issues and Boss has enough connections to fake it until whoever is trying to kill her is caught. McKinley has probably been close enough to watch both of her attempts go down.”

McKinley hadn’t just seen the social media posts and watched me with Casper. She’d also seen me take out the first assassin, and she’d probably seen me on the sidewalk talking to Blue when she tried to bomb our building. She’d probably figured out I was an agent by now. Maybe I could have been talking to Blue because I was standing with Casper, but Blue and I totally had a thing where they pretended to be irritated with me, but totally loved me.

McKinley was watching me. She was older than me with a lot more training and a lot of stolen money. Luke was right. I might have figured out she was still in town, but I *needed* to be focused on my training right now.

31 JEREMY



We seemed to be hitting the motherlode of luck today. Bailey's criminal contacts came through, we had Holly back and a few more agents looking, and McKinley couldn't resist taunting Casper's new girlfriend so we knew where she was.

She'd already responded to Holly's text, so Holly was trying to draw her out. The tech girls were in their woman cave looking through street cam footage to pinpoint her location. She had to be close. Bailey was doing her thing in her office with her new identity.

And then the most perfect thing ever happened. We were barely in the office two hours when Casper found where she was keeping her money. We were going to find it eventually, but every time we found a new one and it wasn't it, it was like staring at a giant box under the Christmas tree all month and

then finally opening it and it was nothing but ugly clothes that were going to get your ass kicked at school. It was a massive let down.

Yeah, we got stupid. We jumped around hooting and hollering. Casper and I bro hugged while Tyrian and Crimson furiously made out. We didn't really care about their PDA because there were no wild spatulas in our office. I was kinda curious how the nipple thing went down, but not that curious. I was also curious about that movie where the guy made a human centipede and I had regrets.

Black came in while we were all hooting and dancing. I had my own ass-shaking moves, but I didn't trademark them like Jordan had. I was standing on my desk showing them to everyone when Black strolled in.

"You and your girlfriend seem to enjoy dancing on furniture. Be glad we view office furniture as an investment and buy for quality because you both get enthusiastic about it. If the furniture breaks, your ass might, too. I broke my ass once on a mission and it's not pleasant.

"Rid McKinley of her money and then take a break. You've all been working your asses off. We're going to have a little office party so you can get to know some of the agents who have come back. They've all been itching to be a part of the investigation. We're going to have to completely redo teams. This one is working well, so we're going to leave it alone, but the people who are coming back might not be working with the same crew. We also might move some to this team if they mesh well. So, steal her stolen money and get your asses to the break room. We ordered enough food that Mauve and Byzantium might think it's too much."

Challenge accepted.

It was *immensely* satisfying when we all crowded around Casper's desk and watched him take her money. Boss gave us an account to transfer it to in the event we found it. She didn't tell us whose account it was, just that it would never be traced back to her or Stantech if McKinley had any cash lying around to do any forensic accounting about who took her money.

Casper dramatically clicked the last key on his keyboard and we watched her money disappear. We needed more ass shaking. It seemed like we'd been fishing through this endless void of shell corporations and bank accounts forever. It was frustrating as fuck. We were about to have a little party with everyone, but I wanted to celebrate with the computer geeks on my team and then go eat massive amounts of food with my girlfriend.

We did some dancing and hugging. Crimson and Tyrian sucked a little face. We had our moment and then we made it down to the break room. There were some new faces I'd only seen in passing, but I only cared about one.

As soon as we saw Jordan, Casper and I took off running. We mobbed her as soon as we saw her. I knew Bailey and Luke said most people kept their relationships a secret here except McKinley and she was kind of gross about it, but we were all totally secure with our relationship.

If someone tried to flirt with Jordan, she probably wasn't even going to notice. If she did, she'd either shut it down or come to us and talk to us first. I wasn't going to hide my feelings. Casper was all over her, too. We were just so fucking excited to have made progress. Luke wasn't holding back, either. He wrapped all of us in a giant, moose hug.

I thought Bailey might be a holdout. She kept a lot of secrets before and she might want to keep her private life private. I was completely wrong. As soon as she joined everyone in the break room, she marched straight to Jordan and yanked her down for a passionate kiss.

I didn't know much about the new people but they started hooting and clapping at the display. Bailey immediately flipped them all off. If they were having trouble recognizing her without the wigs and contacts she used to wear, they probably had no problem now. She probably flipped them off regularly before they all had to leave.

I could see Brick sitting at a table with his arm around a pretty woman. Boss must have made good on her promise of hiring his wife as one of our new doctors if she passed vetting

and wanted the job. Brick looked like he had been in a seriously dark place the first time I saw him and I didn't blame him. He was grinning and hooting for Bailey now.

We'd seen most of these people in the hall, but I hadn't spoken to most of them. They introduced themselves, but I hadn't heard of most of the colors they gave me. They generally laughed and told me what part of the rainbow it fell under and why they wanted to give Black a wedgie about it.

Most of them weren't even that bad. I wasn't even mad I got mine because Jordan did something to earn the name Mauve that she still refused to talk about which Black seemed to find amusing every time he said her code name. Jordan was terrible at keeping secrets and knew how to laugh at herself. Eventually, she was going to find that story hilarious and then we'd all hear it.

I was a patient man.

"Hey, are you the newbie who took out the Shark?" someone asked. There was a crowd gathering around us and they all wanted to talk to Jordan.

"I thought Clarence was just into cats. Was he internet famous somewhere with a Shark nickname?"

"Clarence? No, the assassin you knocked out was pretty famous. My team was looking into bringing him down before the bust. Everyone knows him as the Shark. He'll kill anyone for the right amount of money and his signature is that the client gets to pick how he does it. No one knew what he looked like, but we managed to find a few of the aliases he used on jobs. Deep Throat found a passport with one of them after he arrested him."

This was the part where Jordan got nervous and started babbling. She wasn't good with compliments at all. She had a bit of a praise kink in bed, but when you pointed out something amazing she did, it made her uncomfortable and she tried to downplay it. It was fucking phenomenal that she took out a trained assassin and saved Boss, but Jordan probably thought it was just a normal Tuesday.

“I didn’t *know* it was some famous assassin. I wasn’t even one hundred percent sure it was a knife. I could have assaulted someone over a gum wrapper and Boss would have had to get the charges thrown out.”

Luke hadn’t taught me how to throw a single punch, but I would throw down with all these black belts if they treated Jordan any kind of way because of what she’d just said. A lot of people saw a tall, gorgeous, former model and just assumed things about her intelligence, but she was brilliant and saved our asses more than once.

The guy she was talking to wasn’t nodding and smiling like he was patronizing her. He gave her this huge grin like he was proud of her.

“Maybe, but those kinds of instincts are going to save your life once you’re fully trained. Always trust your gut. If it looks like a gun, it probably is. If you don’t know if it’s a knife or a gum wrapper, assume it’s a knife. Getting stabbed hurts like a bitch and if they hit you in the right spot, you can bleed out before anyone could do anything.

“We have a lot of antidotes to poisons here, but those will only do you any good if you can get home in time. Your partner has a medical kit and first aid training to patch you up, but some of those poisons they use act faster than others. Every single person here would have had your back and completely understood if you beat some random dude’s ass over a gum wrapper. Shit happens. We’ve all probably done that at least once.”

“I totally did,” another guy said. “I thought someone was reaching for a gun and tackled them like we were on the rugby field. Broke their collarbone and it ended up being their cell phone. The only reason it didn’t fuck the whole mission up was that I was pretending to be security for this woman and she couldn’t stand that guy. She actually gave me a raise for a bit before we busted her.”

Bailey shrugged.

“I assaulted some prick on a mission just because I didn’t like him and then lied to my mark that I saw a weapon. It was

immensely satisfying, and I didn't have to deal with him the rest of the time I was there."

That was just so fucking Bailey. I was glad she was my friend because she could be terrifying sometimes.

"So, you're the team that found the traitor, huh?" a woman asked. "Team lead looks good on you, Red. A lot of us asked for you on our team when you got hired, but after you got with McKinley, a lot of people didn't want to work with you because of her. She was an asshole to anyone who was nice to you. You didn't see a lot of it because she did it when you weren't around, but she even cornered some very hetero men and accused them of being into you. I know from personal experience they aren't into men because I fucked several of them."

"I want names," Bailey said.

Those two must have been friends before all of this, though she probably wasn't the kind of friend who knew all of Bailey's secrets.

"I don't kiss and tell, but basically once you fuck someone with several black belts, you don't go back."

"There are definitely perks, but hot nerds are really good, too," Jordan said.

"Not going to lie, I'm jealous of the group thing you have going on. I know most of them and they are good people. I'm guessing the one I don't know is, too, or the ones I do know wouldn't be in a group thing with him."

I just winked at her.

"Mauve and I were a thing first. I suggested she explore her feelings with the others."

"I love it. Now, I think we all need to sit down and shit talk Beige."

I fell out laughing. Black and his code names. I didn't know what McKinley's code name was until now. Most of Black's code names were meant in good fun, but he must not

have liked her even back then. Everything I knew about McKinley was that she would have *loathed* that code name.

“I’m sorry, Black gave her Beige?” I hollered.

Jordan lost it and then everyone started laughing. Casper was wheezing.

“I was kinda peeved he saved Red just for me, but she complained endlessly about her code name. She wanted a glamorous shade of purple that everyone knew since it’s always been associated with royalty, but Black gave her Beige and refused to change it. We’ve been calling her by her real name, which is McKinley since she lost the right to her code name after she betrayed everyone.”

“I kinda want to call her Beige now just because she hates it,” Jordan said. “Bitch tried to blow me up.”

“Taking her money got her attention,” Holly said. “If she doesn’t try to ferret out something from me, she’ll probably reach out to Red to see if it was us.”

Or it would make her more dangerous. I didn’t appreciate the bomb either.

32 CASPER



I missed some of these people. Most of my old team had come back. There was only one person missing, and I didn't like him much. I was introducing them to my new team, and they seemed happy for me. We were all laughing and joking when my personal cell phone went off. I thought it was my mom. I was half drunk, but I always answered when she called or texted.

Except it wasn't my mom. It was a love note from my ex saying she missed me. Fuck that. I was too drunk for this, but we needed to catfish her. I put my fingers to my lips and whistled to get everyone's attention.

“McKinley, Beige, whatever the fuck she’s going by now is trying to catfish me by telling me that she misses me.”

“I will punch that bitch like a bar full of groupies if she thinks she’s going to take what’s mine,” Jordan growled, plopping in my lap.

I wrapped my arms around her and kissed the top of her head. I adored everything about this girl.

“You don’t have to worry about that. With any of us.”

“Damn straight,” Luke slurred.

Luke was a giant, but he drank pretty hard at the celebrations he was invited to. Especially if they were linked to the breach. He was pretty fucked-up right now. We all knew how ecstatic he was to get Holly back, but he wanted to see McKinley pay. Bailey was pretty drunk, too.

“You know what you have to do, but make her work for it. Don’t seem too desperate. She was the one who lied to you about cheating on you.”

“With who?” Pink demanded.

She had been friends with Bailey before they all had to leave and just informed everyone she had a blackbelt kink. Pink was on my team and we were friendly, but not too friendly. She always kept her distance, and I finally found out it was because she was worried she was going to get fired for punching McKinley if she cornered her for being nice to me.

None of us wanted to say anything because Brick’s wife was sitting *right there* and had probably been through some shit. I barely knew him and I didn’t know his wife at all, but Brick opened his big, fat mouth and announced it was him McKinley lied about.

We all held our breaths because we didn’t know how his wife was going to react. She was missing for years. He very well could have given up and moved on. I believed him that he didn’t, but I also wasn’t his wife.

And then Brick’s wife fell out laughing like it was the most ridiculous thing she’d ever heard, even though it was within

the realm of possibility.

“I’m sorry. If you knew my husband, you’d know he’d never look at another woman unless he saw my dead body and even then, it would take him years. He’s told me about this woman. Even if I was dead and he was ready to move on, it wouldn’t be with someone like that. He told me why he was even tolerating her and I understand why he needed that revenge. It’s over now.”

“Well, we have her attention, and we are all dying to watch her go down. Respond and read *everything*,” Stone said. “She once trapped me in the men’s room for saying hi to you in the breakroom.”

Okay, so McKinley was totally insane for someone who was probably using me for my hacking skills. That wasn’t called for at all. I was shocked any of these people were being nice to me for staying with her. I was glad Stone was back. Bailey missed him and he had been a great agent. She practically tackled him when she saw him again.

I pulled out my phone and texted her that if she missed me, she wouldn’t have cheated on me and left me for Brick.

Brick and his wife started giggling again when I read that out to everyone. The Brick I worked with before didn’t giggle. It was a good look on him. McKinley must have been waiting by her phone. When we were dating, she used to leave me on read forever, but if I didn’t respond right away, she’d accuse me of cheating. I guess liberating *that* much money from her secret bank account got her attention.

McKinley: *I got confused, baby. I was in a bad place after a mission went bad and Brick manipulated me. It was the biggest mistake of my life. Evergreen said Boss has started bringing people back. Are they close to finding Hex so I can come home? I want you back.*

Everyone around me was gagging. Jordan was in my lap growling about groupies again. That was one thing I loved about Jordan. She wasn’t pissing on me to claim me just because someone was nice to me, but if someone was obviously trying to fuck me, Jordan was going to throw down.

She could really hurt someone now that Luke had his hands on her, so we needed to make it clear that none of us were like the bass player and had any intention of cheating on her.

If McKinley was in New York, then she would have seen Kendasha coming into our building. She knew we had Hex and Hex wasn't in jail. McKinley didn't have to have a mole or a job here to figure out the basics. She was trying to catch me in a lie to ferret out if we were onto her. I decided to play a little hard to get.

I texted her that she didn't really deserve any updates from me after she cheated on me, but that we found Hex and Boss was bringing people back so we could find out who hired them.

McKinley: *I want to come back to New York, Casper. It's my home. I want to be close enough to win you back. That girl you're with is totally wrong for you. I don't like having to constantly look over my shoulder. I'd feel a lot safer if this person was caught and we found out what they did with our names. Ask Boss to bring me back. I was one of her best and I can help. I miss my ginger boy.*

I just rolled my eyes. I *hated* it when she called me that. And if my girlfriend could crawl through my phone screen and beat my ex-girlfriend's ass, Jordan was at that point as I read the text out. Everyone else was groaning and saying they never wanted to work with her again.

"I'm only sharing a girl with you and not dating you, but I've lived with you long enough to know that you'd punch me in the face for calling you ginger boy," Luke said.

Bailey just snorted.

"I want to punch *her* in the face for calling him ginger boy."

"It's not my favorite thing in the world."

"I was barely friends with you before all this and that annoys me," Cinnabar said.

I barely knew her, either, but she also had red hair, so Black gave her a red-based code name. Her hair was a deeper

shade of red than mine. It was more maroon. I was *very* ginger and got sick of all the jokes in school and college. I didn't mind compliments when people liked the color of my hair, but she always made it seem like a fetish. Don't ask me why I overlooked that for so long.

"Tell her you got a promotion after the breach and *maybe* you could suggest to Boss she allow her to be on your team. It's going to chap her vagina lips that you got a promotion when she never did and that if she's allowed back, she'll be working under you. Also, tell her that you think Boss brought back everyone she intended to. It's going to drive her nuts," Jordan said.

She had been like a deer in the headlights working Clarence but that guy was a lot even for me and I was texting him part of the time, too. She was good at this when the mark wasn't bombarding her with dick pics, demanding to see her feet, and getting mad if it took her longer than five seconds to respond. Jordan was going to make a hell of an agent one day.

I fired off that text and I could tell McKinley was typing, deleting, and retyping. She was probably pissed. She wanted to be an assassin, but she would have taken team lead, too. Most people didn't get my current job until they'd been here a good while. They had a variety of positions first.

I was under no grand idea that I got my position because I earned it. I was all Boss had and Bailey either turned it down or Boss thought she was going to hit someone. I'd been trying to bust my ass, but I knew she may demote me when this was all over and that was totally fine.

McKinley: *Casper, I can help. I'm tired of London. Talk to Boss. I want to be with you again. I can be on a flight tomorrow.*

Boss was in there with us. This was what she wanted. McKinley had to be smart to pull this off. I didn't know if she thought I was stupid or Boss was that we weren't catfishing her to get her out of hiding. Greed made people idiots.

Boss had me text McKinley to meet her for lunch at this out of the way bistro as soon as her plane landed. McKinley

pretended to book a flight and give me a time.

We had her.

33 JORDAN



Okay, so we were really waiting two days for McKinley's fake flight to get here. I trusted her about as much as I trusted a groupie in a tube top who had been shooting vodka shots all night and thought bass players were how they got in with a band. So, like, not *at all*. My tiny trust had been betrayed in way too many dive bars.

I trusted Boss, though. She told Casper to pick that bagel place Kathleen liked so much on our first mission. The Reuben was delicious. If they stuck to sandwiches everyone loved or even combinations that sounded remotely good instead of what photographed well for social media, they'd probably have a lot more customers.

Boss specifically picked it because of the lack of customers. She also called, introduced herself, and promised them a big ass donation to keep their doors open longer if they completely vacated the premises during lunch and let her staff it with her people. She said they'd never know she was there, and she'd send those people ahead of time to learn how to make the bagels and sandwiches so they wouldn't turn away any customers.

Boss offered enough money that they took her up on it and didn't ask a lot of questions. Also, one day, I wanted to be powerful enough to ask a whole-ass SWAT team to make nasty bagels just to bring a bitch down and throw *that* much money at the bagel place to let strangers in their kitchen and no one asked questions.

I doubted Boss had any trouble with groupies, but she didn't trust McKinley, either. Before she called drunk cabs for all of us who didn't live close enough to walk, she gave everyone assignments. I was still focusing on training and I had no problem with that. Casper and Holly were going to be texting McKinley to see if they could get her to trip up and reveal her location before the meeting. Bailey was doing her thing with her fake ID. Everyone else was seeing if they could find out where in New York she was hiding from the traffic cams. Boss had a plan, but she really didn't want to destroy that bistro if something went wrong.

We didn't live that far from the office, so we could stumble home just fine. Unlike my old building, our penthouse had an elevator, and it actually worked. I nearly broke my ass on the stairs at my old building hiking my butt up that many flights after I got home from a concert. We didn't have to worry about that with the new apartment.

We were walking home. Jeremy and Casper were helping Luke since he got a little more fucked-up than the rest of us. It took a lot to get Jeremy drunk and Casper had to stop drinking as soon as McKinley started texting. Bailey usually got drunk at our parties, but she always stopped drinking and started eating with enough time to sober up before it was time to go home so she could be alert walking home.

I knew that was because of Carl and if she ever was not sober enough to be aware of her surroundings, she would have had Black call a cab. Bailey was drunk, but sober enough to fight back. I was trailing behind everyone to watch their backs. Out of all of us, Jeremy and I were the most sober and Jeremy had his hands full with Luke.

I didn't think McKinley was going to risk hurting Casper when she thought she was close to getting her job back. Plus, she was *weird* about Casper. McKinley might have started out using him, but I had this idea she caught feelings for him. Casper was an amazing guy, and I did that, too.

Casper was loyal as fuck. He wasn't the kind who cheated, even though she treated him like garbage. I didn't start punching groupies until I found my boyfriend balls deep in one and I *only* hit the ones who were flashing him their tits or throwing their thongs on stage. I didn't attack anyone for talking to him or enjoying the show.

It was just people who made it clear they wanted to fuck a musician, and I knew he was going to take them up on it because he always did. In hindsight, I should have been beating *his* ass, not theirs. They weren't *making* him cheat on me.

I was walking behind my partners thinking about groupies and my ex. I'd come a long way since then. I saw someone duck in an alley near our apartment. I wouldn't have usually thought twice about that, but I could tell they were wearing large sunglasses and their hair was in a bun under the scarf around their head. I couldn't see her face, but I knew McKinley *always* wore her hair in a bun.

And most people lurking in alleyways in New York weren't wearing a pair of heels that cost around nine hundred dollars. I only even knew that because I'd walked the runway in them or done photoshoots in them and they told me how much they cost. My broke ass definitely wasn't spending that much on shoes. I mean, I could now, but I wasn't used to being comfortable financially. What if I bought one pair of badass heels and couldn't stop? I wasn't going broke again over shoes.

I could have ignored it and called Boss but McKinley knew where we lived. She'd been watching us long enough to figure out what building Casper was living in. It would be stupid for her to do anything when she was this close to thinking she could insert herself in our investigation and sabotage it from the inside, but it was also stupid to have someone try to stab Boss and blow us all up.

I didn't *trust* this bitch, and I was the only one who noticed her. I didn't call out. Luke, Casper, and Bailey were pretty drunk. Jeremy wasn't trained to fight at all. Something could go wrong. I'd stopped walking, and they kept going. I needed to think. Luke and Bailey had been teaching me how to fight the style of fighting she knew and Luke told me all her weaknesses.

McKinley was still older with a lot more experience and a black belt to my orange. I should just call Boss when we got home and let her know McKinley was lurking nearby.

I started to move again. My intention was to walk past the alley and pretend like I hadn't seen a damned thing. I didn't just stop on the sidewalk and tip her off, either. I took my phone out and acted like I was reading a message.

But she darted from the alley when I was passing and yanked me into the shadows. She slammed me into the wall and pressed something over my nose and mouth. I held my breath because it was making my eyes water, but I couldn't break her hold when my eyes were filling with tears and I was struggling to breathe.

This was going to suck. My lungs were burning and I couldn't get that rag away from my face. It wasn't really a relief when I started sucking air. The shit on that rag was vile.

I was about to pass out and get kidnapped by Casper's stupid ex. Someone better find me before she tortured me or didn't feed me properly. Or worse, killed me because Casper and I were together.

34 LUKE



We were in a panic and I'd just shoved two peanut butter sandwiches I'd thrown together in an attempt to sober up down my throat. Jordan had been right behind us but she wasn't with us when we got to the steps of our building. Jeremy went looking and found her phone on the ground just outside the alley between our building and another.

We were all in a panic. Even Casper lost his shit and Casper pretty much never did that. It was why he was team lead and would probably stay that way. Bailey was pissed, but it was the kind of pissed your mom got when you knew she was about to call every single contact in her phone and handle some shit. She was *deadly* calm, which meant if Boss didn't

catch McKinley before her, McKinley was going to end up very dead.

It was Bailey who called Boss and Black on three-way. We were good, but Boss and Black were the OG dream team. Bailey was curt and didn't put the phone on speaker. She told them Jordan was missing, and we got a lot of yeses and nos before she hung up and turned to all of us. I didn't even kidnap Jordan, but I was scared of Bailey right now.

"Eat what you need to so you can sober up and then we need to walk back to the office. Boss and Black are calling everyone back to look for her. Black said he'll bring some of his coffee that makes you see noises because we aren't leaving until we find her."

As we should. Black got hooked on this coffee on a mission in another country and had it imported. He rarely shared it with the class. Black drank that stuff every morning, but he only let the rest of us drink it if we were pulling an all-nighter and we hardly ever did that. You didn't just see noises on that shit. You lost the ability to blink. Black was the only person I knew who acted normal after drinking it.

Casper cooked when he was stressed, so while I was pacing and Jeremy was glued to his laptop, Casper was throwing together paninis just in case we still needed to sober up. We all grabbed one and started making the walk back to the office.

I'd say this for Boss and Black. When they started recalling agents, they only recalled the ones I thought were decent people. Some of them were good agents, but I didn't care for their egos. The people who showed up to help us find Jordan were those who were friendly with her at the party. They weren't besties yet, but they were here because she was one of us, even if she was new.

They weren't looking to be the hero or get a promotion out of this. The enemy had her, and we were going to get her back. Plus, she had their respect for taking down the Shark and I think she won them all over just being Jordan. She'd barely

been gone an hour, and I already missed her calling me a moose.

The computer geeks were already doing their thing with the CCTV footage. We saw Jordan stop and look at her phone while we kept walking because she didn't call out and we assumed she was following. Jeremy asked for them to zoom in. Even I could tell Jordan wasn't reading anything. She noticed something and was thinking.

I didn't know *why* she didn't call for us to come back. She made a decision to keep going and a McKinley-shaped shadow yanked her into the alley. Jordan was just an orange belt, but she was nearly a green belt. She might even be able to skip a belt again with all the training Bailey and I had been giving her to fight McKinley.

McKinley might be a black belt, but Jordan could have fought her off. I mean, I stressed to her to go for the face. Even if McKinley didn't do everything she could to avoid getting hit in the face, taking a punch there was disorienting no matter where you got hit. Jordan would have just needed to land one punch to get away, and she was good with the punching bag.

Something happened in that alley that Jordan wasn't prepared for and couldn't fight off. I was guessing Taser or chloroform. McKinley couldn't have carried Jordan herself. Jordan probably weighed a little less, but she was much taller than her. McKinley had help.

"We need to see the *other* end of the alley."

"Oh, hush," Cerulean said. "I might not be able to kick your ass because you're a fucking moose, but my IQ is higher than your weight. Give me some fucking credit."

"That's totally fair," I said. "And if you came into my training room and asked to wail on me, I'd let you, but I'm not about to fight back until you've gotten some training."

"I'm a pacifist who doesn't even kill bugs, but I will fuck someone up electronically. This is the other end of the alley at the same time she was getting snatched."

It didn't make sense. McKinley was in the alley by our building. She pulled Jordan in there with her, but no one ever came out of the other end of the alley. There were dumpsters in the alley, but Jeremy checked behind them. Even if McKinley left her there, she would have come back out.

Where the fuck did she take my girlfriend?

"Pull up blueprints of both buildings," Black said. "One or both has a doorway in that alley. It'll be where McKinley has been hiding and where she has our girl."

Had that vile bitch been hiding in my backyard this entire time? If she had hurt Jordan in *any* way, I would kill her with my bare hands. Casper's phone went off. We were all here, so it was either his mom or McKinley again.

"We didn't fool her. She's watched us enough to know that Mauve is an agent and Blue actually likes her. She knows Boss does, too, because she watched Mauve take out that assassin. She knows me enough to know I'm not faking it and we really are together. McKinley's not stupid and she knows Boss isn't, either. If her money went missing it's because *we* found it and took it. She said she'll trade my girlfriend for her money and Boss throwing Kendasha under the bus instead of telling everyone who was really responsible."

"She's smart, but not as smart as she thinks," Boss said. "She probably thought it was a game staying in New York and watching us. She made a mistake approaching Mauve in the grocery store. Snatching her was another. Taking my agent and trying to blackmail me? Monumentally stupid. She only knows the tip of the resources we have here."

I knew more than I did before the breach. Pissing Boss off wasn't wise, but it would only take five seconds to slit Jordan's throat if we pissed off McKinley.

Hold on, Jordan. We're coming.

35 JORDAN



My head hurt and my mouth tasted like asshole. I wasn't sure where I was, but I was lying on my face and arm at a really weird angle. I remember the alley and McKinley shoving a rag over my face. I'm glad she was such a fucking snob because it felt like a high thread count wash rag and it was clean. I got kidnapped, but at least I didn't have to worry about a cootie rash on my face because she knocked me out with a questionable rag.

I'd never been kidnapped before, but if I was going to do this spy thing, I'd better get good at it because I imagined it might happen again. I pretended I was still out because she might give something away that I could use. I was guessing

this wasn't just because of Casper. She picked me for a reason and I really hoped it wasn't because she thought I'd be the easiest person to grab because I proved her right.

She couldn't have carried me by herself and gotten far. My people would have noticed I wasn't behind them when we got to the door and the alley wasn't far from it. Did she have someone throw me in a car? There were cameras everywhere in the area we lived in, but if McKinley knew that, she might have brought me somewhere there were no cameras.

Boss would make every effort to find me, but I was a baby spy now. It was up to me to unkidnap myself. I opened my senses and tried to crack my eyes open. I could only hear one person moving around.

"I know you're awake. Chloroform doesn't last that long," McKinley said.

I sat up. She must not be threatened by me because I wasn't tied up. McKinley wasn't dumb enough to think I was completely harmless after being trained by Luke because she was pointing a gun at me. I sat up and tried to work the kink out of my shoulder.

McKinley was one of those women who never left the house unless she looked flawless. That definitely wasn't me, but I had hoped if I ever met her, my hair wasn't fucked up and I didn't have couch marks on my face. She could have just ovaried up and fought me black belt to orange belt and then we'd both be a hot mess right now, but bitch cheated.

"This isn't going to end well," I pointed out.

"I have no beef with you. My ginger boy needed a rebound when I left and that just happened to be you. I just want what's mine back. Boss can give me back my money and give everyone Hex, just like I planned, and then I'll be taking Casper back. I realized when I left him behind that I actually like having him around."

I couldn't help it. I didn't know where I was and she had a gun pointed at me, but I fell out laughing. This bitch right here. She'd worked for Boss longer and she *lived* with Casper

much longer than I had. I wasn't that delusional when I was a drunk eighteen-year-old fighting groupies because I thought I was in love with a bass player.

“Please tell me you don't call Casper that to his face. Did you pay attention *at all* when you were dating? He *hates* that shit. Boss isn't giving your money back, either. She's probably already figured out where you took me. I get she has the whole mama bear thing going on, but I've only been working for her a few months. She totally hates you more than she cares about me. You're fucked, dude.”

“Casper *loves* my pet name for him. You clearly don't understand him. You talk a lot. If I knew that, I would have stopped at the hardware store for duct tape.”

Yes. I *did* talk a lot. In addition to calling me an idiot, my math teacher said my big mouth was going to get me in trouble one day. While I was talking, McKinley wasn't shooting and Boss had more time to find me. I was going to blow all kinds of diarrhea of the mouth straight at this bitch.

“Probably should have gotten something to tie me up, too. If you wanted to grab someone Boss had more time to care about, Cadmium was *right there*. She was just drunk enough that you might have actually chloroformed her and not ended up dead. I'll bet you picked me because you're scared of her. She's like, Pokémon-sized and she could take you out.”

“I have no idea what that is. Is it a poor-people thing?”

I really should stop laughing at her since she was pointing a gun at me, but seriously?

“Okay, I'm being serious now. You could have kept all your stolen money if you'd just told Boss you wanted to quit and be a lawyer. She would have helped you get set up somewhere and probably sent you clients. Why fuck over *that* many people and piss off one of the most powerful women in the world?”

“Boss isn't a woman. He can wear all the heels and dresses he wants, but he was born a man. And I'll bite. I stole those names because I was hoping everyone's badge photo was on

the server with their real names. The most powerful criminals in the world would have set me up for life if I could send them a database of faces of agents who might show up to bring them down. It was a bust. None of the servers had badge photos, so it was useless to me. I released the names because I wanted to put Stantech out of business. I *hated* working for Boss.”

Casper would have hated her pet name, but he would have left her if she said that vile shit about Boss not being a woman around him. And McKinley was worse than I thought. Releasing their real names sent everyone into hiding. If she had sold their photos, those people would have gone to their missions and gotten murdered. Boss had assassins. The criminals probably did, too. They might start hunting them down. Boss and most everyone else did a wonderful job spinning it as a conspiracy theory from a rival business and that was the only reason Boss was able to bring people back.

“That’s fucked up, son. How’d you even pass vetting to get hired?”

“I do what I need to so that I can survive. Boss never realized that about me.”

“That wasn’t survival. That was greed. You would have gotten people murdered.”

“You know, when I grabbed you, I had no intention of shooting you. I was just going to keep you here until I had my money and my ginger boy, but you’re really judgey and annoying.”

Yeah, I was judging. I wasn’t under any grand notion that my shit didn’t stink, but I never tried to get people murdered. And I had no intention of getting shot tonight. McKinley moved the gun away from me to rub her temples because I guess my having an opinion about her being an awful person was giving her a migraine.

I pounced. She wasn’t expecting it and she should have. I might be new, but I had *some* training. I grabbed the gun, yanked it away, and tossed it across the room. I punched her right in the face for good measure. I felt her nose crunch under my fist. Bailey and Luke were going to be *so* proud of me.

I wasn't at the celebration point yet because she punched me right in the tit. What the fuck? She was a black belt and tit punching was what went down in bars when groupies wanted to fuck your boyfriend. I tried to hit her in the face again, but she tried to dodge and I got her in the ear. Honestly, that was probably worse than getting punched in the face.

McKinley got her foot between us and kicked me in the stomach with those super expensive heels. I stumbled back as the air flew out of my lungs, but immediately bounced back because McKinley was diving for the gun. If she was only thinking about shooting me before, she definitely was now that I'd broken her nose.

I jumped on top of her back just as her hands closed on the gun. McKinley tried to roll over and crack me in the head with it, but I caught her wrists. I was on top of her, but there wasn't much I could do when I was sitting on her and didn't have use of my hands. I wasn't letting her point that gun at me. McKinley started bucking trying to get me off of her.

She tried to roll me and then the gun went off.

36 CASPER



Cerulean got us blueprints in seconds. Our building and the building next door had access to the alley, but ours let out from the storage area where most people stashed their bikes. A few people parked motorcycles there, but it was mostly where people kept shit they didn't want in their apartments but didn't want to throw out.

McKinley wouldn't be living in there. Security in our building was tight and Boss owned a lot of the apartments. We had decent neighbors. Someone would have called the cops or stopped McKinley if she was with someone holding an unconscious woman. And this building had *us*, Abony and her family, and now Holly living in it. I had to believe we would have eventually run into her.

We all had a pretty good idea where she was staying. The building next door was mostly offices, but there was a deli on the first floor. Boss said it used to be owned by Holocaust survivors who lived in an apartment above the deli. They passed on a few years ago and their kids inherited the property. They had been running the deli and renting the apartment out for extra income.

Boss and Black said they ate at that deli all the time in the eighties and got to be friendly enough with the couple that owned it to be invited over for dinner and invite them over plenty of times. They both knew the alley entrance to that building led to the deli and a staircase to the apartment.

We still weren't taking any chances. We divided up into teams and hit each building. All of us who were dating Jordan took the deli apartment because I could just feel that she was there. Jeremy wasn't even remotely trained for fieldwork. That had taken a back seat to tracking down Hex and McKinley.

We still strapped him in Kevlar and brought him. Boss knew he needed to be there, and this was a test. It was well and good to pair them together because when they came here, they were just dating each other. It was another thing entirely if he couldn't handle his shit when she was in danger. He wouldn't be fired, but he would be assigned to someone he didn't have such an emotional connection to.

Honestly, as we all spread out in the alley, Jeremy was dealing with this better than Luke was. Probably better than me, too, but I was keeping it contained. Bailey was just looking for a reason to kill someone and honestly, stubbing her toe would do it.

The SWAT team was trying to avoid busting the door in because it could be heard and we didn't want her hurting Jordan if she hadn't already. Jordan was her collateral right now, so she was probably okay, but that could change at any minute. McKinley would have armed herself.

They were so close to picking the lock when everything changed. We heard a gunshot, a scream, and a second gunshot. I got that we were supposed to be calm, collected spies but that

was my girlfriend in there with my crazy ex. We were *all* freaking and demanding they get that door open.

The lock wasn't that sophisticated, but it was a steel door. They were in the middle of ramming it when the door flung open and Jordan stumbled out. She was cradling her arm and covered in blood.

“Oh, thank god. Bitch shot me and then I accidentally shot her when we were fighting for the gun. She got me in the shoulder and I heard getting shot in the gut hurts like fuck. I found out *why* she did all this, but if Boss wants to question her, you might want to get her medical attention before she bleeds out. And fucking ow! Getting shot hurts like a bitch, but McKinley screamed louder, so I guess hers is worse.”

I didn't care what happened to McKinley. She could die on the floor above a deli for all I cared. Jordan got the answer to the burning question of why she fucked over so many people. The rest of it didn't matter to me. I didn't need any magical answers about why she got into a relationship with me, got possessive with all our coworkers, and treated me like garbage.

We all crowded Jordan and pulled her into a hug. Bailey was so tiny, we just smashed her between us and Jordan.

“Think Boss would notice if I snuck in there and finished that bitch off?” Bailey growled.

“I'd help, but there are too many cameras on the swat team,” Luke said. “If it makes you feel better, I took a bullet to the gut once. You can only kill her once. A gut wound is the gift that keeps giving. She'll have to suffer knowing a baby agent got her in that hospital bed, Boss has her money, and she's going to jail as soon as she's healed enough not to cost the taxpayers money to keep her alive.”

“Worse than fucking up your back jumping off a roof onto a moving garbage truck?” Bailey asked.

“Dunno. Never done that before, but it sucks.”

“Guys?” Jordan asked. “I've never taken a gut wound or jumped off a roof, but getting shot in the arm *sucks*.”

Oh. We were terrible boyfriends and girlfriend. Our girl was shot, and we needed to take care of that. But my eye kept being drawn to this man at the end of the alley. I could see the bulge in his pants where he had a gun and I could see part of a badge at his belt.

A cop watching one of our busts wasn't a huge deal, but the delivery bag he was holding was. McKinley couldn't have gotten Jordan up those stairs by herself and that bag was from this nasty-ass restaurant McKinley loved. There was not a single carb in that place. They liked to do abominations with cauliflower and butter. McKinley loved it, but that wasn't gnocchi and the bread they served tasted like eggs with no seasoning.

I pulled us all into a tighter group hug. My mic fed to everyone here.

"Twelve o'clock. The guy at the end of the alley is armed, has a badge, and I'm pretty sure that's who carried Jordan up the stairs. The delivery bag is McKinley's favorite restaurant," I said where he couldn't hear.

The swat team was all upstairs with McKinley, so it was all agents outside. At least one of them was going to be a medic.

"Take care of it. We're trying to get her stable."

"I got it," Bailey said.

Bailey was about to ruin this dude's entire day. Especially since Luke went with her. They both wanted to hurt someone and Jeremy and I just wanted to get Jordan out of there to get the bullet out. We started guiding her away, but she stopped us. I thought she had a shitty pain tolerance after the cat attack, but she could grin and bear it when she needed to.

"If he helped, I want to watch this," she whispered.

"Excuse me, are you a cop?" Bailey asked, trotting toward the man with the bag.

Damn. She was doing that big-eyed thing where she looked like one of those innocent anime girls who was totally harmless. It was always *way* more effective when she wasn't

wearing contacts and a wig. She could bat her eyelashes and play the biggest straight guy and then totally fuck them up.

“Yeah, sweetie,” he said. “I was just picking up dinner when I heard the gunshot and thought you could use a hand.”

Lie. He would have called for backup. He would have been over here inserting himself as soon as Jordan came out covered in blood. And you just didn’t call Bailey ‘sweetie.’ I was guessing he was trying to figure out if McKinley was okay and where we would be taking her after so he could ferret her away.

Bailey was freakishly fast. I’d sparred with her before, and it was almost supernatural. He realized she wasn’t harmless right when she went for his gun. Unlike a lot of men Bailey beat the shit out of, this guy had training for that.

Their hands closed around the gun at his waist at the same time. *None* of us realized the idiot had taken the safety off while we were taking care of Jordan. The gun went off and shot him right in the crotch. He crumpled holding his balls and Bailey put the safety back on his gun.

“You’d better be right, Red, because I just shot a cop in the dick. Boss might not be able to get me off from that and I’m not doing the whole prison-wife thing,” Bailey said.

The swat team finally came out. One of them was holding McKinley. She was also covered in blood and passed out. I got a good look at her face. Jordan beat the shit out of her. That was my girl. Jordan was going to have a bruise on her cheek, but McKinley’s nose was broken and one of her eyes was swollen shut. She took *everything* Luke told her about McKinley’s weaknesses and went straight for the face.

“That’s unfortunate. He with her?” one of the swat guys asked.

I mean, it made sense, but I wasn’t one hundred percent sure. Jeremy was totally savage. He let go of Jordan, fished the cop’s phone out of his pocket, and waved it in front of his face so it unlocked.

“There’s a lot of sexting between him and a contact that matches the name McKinley is going by now. Hope it was worth it, bro,” Jeremy said, kicking him right in the dick.

We *all* wanted to kick him in the dick. McKinley couldn’t have pulled this off without him.

“Hey, big guy. Throw him in the van with this one. Get your girl in the second van. We’re all going to the hospital, but we want to make sure everyone makes it there alive,” one of the SWAT team said, tossing Luke some zip ties.

Luke wasn’t gentle when he zip tied the cop’s wrists and heaved him over his shoulder to toss him in the back of the van. The SWAT team was only slightly gentler with McKinley because they didn’t want her to bleed out. I scooped Jordan up and carried her to the other van like she was made out of porcelain.

We all joined her and Luke hauled her into his lap so she didn’t get jostled. The pain was starting to get to her as the adrenaline wore off. She was close to passing out.

“They’d better hurry up and get Jordan to the hospital. I’m okay without killing either of them. You were right about the gut wound and jail. It lasts *much* longer. And as long as I don’t go to jail for shooting a cop in the dick, I regret nothing. He helped kidnap my girlfriend,” Bailey said. “Also, if he’s a snitch who tries to pull the concerned officer thing despite what we found on his phone, none of us saw Byzantium kick him in the balls.”

“Thanks. And I get that my girlfriend is the brawn and I’m the brains, but I want to learn how to fight. This was my first time in the field and if you and a SWAT team hadn’t been here, I wouldn’t have noticed that guy was armed and working with McKinley. I wouldn’t have been able to fight him off. Jordan was injured, so we would have been sitting ducks if he decided to take shots at us. I want to learn how to fight.”

“You will,” I said. “You’ll get all kinds of training we haven’t done yet because we were focusing on McKinley and needed you on computers. You’ll get fight training, medical training, and how to go undercover when you’re needed in

public instead of in a van or the next room. And it wasn't any training that tipped me off that guy was with McKinley. It was the takeout bag. It was this place she loved that charged out the ass for putting cauliflower in things it shouldn't go in. I noticed the gun and badge after."

Jeremy handled himself just fine considering it was his first time and Jordan was shot. He never once lost his shit and when we were all wondering if Boss was going to have to get Bailey off for shooting an innocent cop in the junk, he snapped into action and got us proof. We would have eventually gotten it, but unlocking the phone without his face would take time and he got that handled. I wouldn't have minded being the brains to Jordan's brawn, but Jeremy would make a capable partner once they were trained.

Jordan moaned and buried her face in Luke's neck. Now that she was out of danger, she probably hurt like fuck. Luke wrapped her up in a bear hug because everyone reacted to this differently. She could go into shock. One of my college friends went to a questionable tattoo studio to get an eagle tattooed on his chest. They went too deep with the needle, he went into shock, and they had to stop. I don't know if he eventually went back and had it fixed or lasered off, but for about three years in college he had half an outline of an eagle on his chest.

Bailey banged on the back window of the van.

"I don't give a shit about the two assholes in the other van, but can you get my girlfriend to the hospital faster? They need to get the bullet out and get her the good drugs ASAP."

The swat team didn't take orders from us, but at least they sped up. It was almost over. Jordan could tell me what McKinley said while she had Jordan hostage about her reasonings for her life choices. McKinley was about to have a long, painful recovery and then rot in jail.

And I looked forward to never having to think about her again.

37 JEREMY



I didn't know how things went down when an agent was injured on a normal day. Every agent Boss recalled was in that alley trying to find Jordan and they were all waiting in the hospital waiting room like she was their sister. None of us were married to Jordan, so all the updates were going to Boss and Black, who were giving them to us.

It seemed like we were waiting forever for Jordan to get out of surgery. I knew a shoulder wound wasn't fatal, but I still hated she got shot. I personally didn't care what happened to McKinley and that corrupt cop. After I stole his phone and unlocked it while he was writhing in pain, I disabled any logins so anyone could look at it. I slipped it in my back pocket for when Boss asked for it. Normally, I'd be here digging through it for evidence, but my girlfriend just got shot.

We'd been here for hours. The doctor finally came out and went straight to Boss and Black. They came back to us.

"She awake and high out of her mind. We can all go in. McKinley and the cop are still in surgery since the damage was more extensive."

"No one gives a shit about them," Pink called.

Someone else in the waiting room shot her a shocked and disgusted look, but honestly? Girl, same. They kidnapped and shot my girlfriend. Fuck them with a rusty spork. We all filed into Jordan's hospital room and she was definitely high. We mostly drank, but one time when we first started hanging out, we smoked a bowl. Jordan got horny and *very* friendly when she was high. I thought she was only friendly because of the pot and didn't want to lose her, so I stopped buying it. I was kind of an idiot because it wasn't the pot. She really was into me.

"Oh, my god, hi! Did I really get shot? I can't even feel it anymore. I can't really feel my toes, either. Will they let me bring home what's in my IV?"

"No," Boss said. "And if you get hooked on that after, I'm going to ship you off to rehab."

"You don't want to be on that long term," Bailey said. "You can't take a shit and you eat way too much to get backed up. It's miserable. Trust me."

Jordan started giggling.

"I like pooping."

"Jordan, can you tell us what happened?" Boss asked.

I got why Boss needed to know. We all did but Jordan got carried away with stories when she was sober. I'm not sure if Boss knew what she was getting into by asking Jordan to recount what happened while she was high on pain meds.

"So, I saw a bitch-shaped shadow in the alley, but everyone was drunk or helping drunk people. I stopped for a minute to decide what to do. I was going to call you when we got back to the penthouse but the bitch-shaped shadow yanked

me into the alley and shoved a really expensive scarf soaked in chloroform over my face.

“I don’t know what happened until I woke up in that apartment. She didn’t tie me up, but she was pointing a gun at me. I tried to keep her talking until you showed up, but then I decided to just get really annoying.

“Anyway, she wasn’t trying to fuck you over because you were digging into her stolen money. I don’t think she even knew. It’s actually waaaay worse. She was hoping all the servers had badge photos so she could sell them to criminals so they knew when an agent was working them.

“Listen, that would have gotten a ton of people unalived and that would be really bad. She sucks, so when I gave her a migraine by being annoying, I decided to pounce. When she lowered the gun, I got that song in my head. You know that zombie movie where they are all bashing the zombie with the bat to that Queen song? *Don’t Stop Me Now?*

“I played that in my head and punched her right in the face. And then she hit me in the tit, which is a total bitch-groupie move, so I hit her again. She kicked me in the stomach and dove for the gun. When we were fighting for it, the gun went off and got her in the stomach, but she was lying on her back, so she didn’t fly off like Wile E Coyote. She still had her hands on the gun and got me in the shoulder, which sucked *all* kinds of unwashed balls, so I tried to get the gun and get out of there since I didn’t have my phone. But hey! You were all in the alley and you’re here now! This shit in my IV is pretty great. Come give me uppies,” she said, holding her arms out.

Bailey was the only one small enough to crawl into her hospital bed. Her bed was smaller than the bed Bailey had in New Orleans, so Luke wasn’t going to fit and neither would I.

Wait, McKinley was trying to sell badge photos? That would have gotten everyone killed. Boss was furious and so was everyone who used to work with her. Jordan was high off her ass, so she just started giggling.

“She also thought Casper was going to take her back, and she had a *fucking stupid* pet name for him. Like, she thought

Boss was going to give her the money back and my boyfriend was going to run away with her. I'm fucked up right now, but not *that* fucked up. She had this big-ass, pretentious glass of wine on the table that probably cost a lot and she did that sniffing thing when she poured it, but it was mostly full. I doubt she kidnapped me drunk. So, she was dead-ass sober when she said all that. McKinley didn't even have this awesome stuff they are giving me. Hey, can you ask them not to give it to her? She was going to kill a bunch of agents and she thought she had a claim on my boyfriend, so she doesn't deserve it."

"She never would have had me again," Casper said. "None of us are like that bass player. McKinley is delusional. How are you going to handle it, Boss?"

I was so worried about Jordan; I hadn't even looked at Boss. Boss got angry like Bailey got angry. Also, how my granny got angry. They didn't lose their shit. You couldn't even tell what emotion they were feeling. You knew they *should* be pissed as fuck and wrecking the room, but they weren't. Which made them insanely dangerous. I'd seen this before in my granny. Boss was about to fuck some shit up without even damaging her manicure.

I pulled the cop's phone out of my pocket and handed it to her.

"I took this after the cop got shot in the junk. I unlocked it with his face and then disabled any lock screen sign-ins. You should be able to get into everything."

Pink handed her a second phone.

"Swat did the same with McKinley's phone when they were stabilizing her."

"I expect that from swat and trained agents. You did an excellent job keeping your cool with literally no field experience and an injured partner. We'll be starting you on *real* training now that this nightmare is finally over. I'm sure you're all curious about what's going to happen. Deep Throat has been working with other countries since this was originally an international crime.

“He’s thrown in something since Kendasha is a minor that keeps any charges off the child. He’s added the attempted assassination, the bomb, and was adding kidnapping when I left, but I’m guessing that gun isn’t legal either. She’s not getting her money back since I’ve turned it over to Deep Throat for evidence so she’s not going to be able to afford a good lawyer. Her cop friend isn’t getting suspended with pay until this goes away because he drew the wrong attention to himself. They will be going away for a while. And no killing them, Cadmium.”

“Oh, I’m not. I had an enlightening talk with Green. If I kill them, then it’s over. I’ll get a little tickle in my vagina every night before I get peaceful night’s sleep knowing gut wounds suck and McKinley’s sleeping on a shitty prison mattress stewing about how she lost her ex-boyfriend and her freedom to a hot as fuck former model and baby agent. I don’t think I need to explain the vagina tickle with the cop. He kidnapped my girlfriend, and I shot him in the dick. He’s going to remember me every time he takes a piss in prison.”

“Fuck, girl,” Pink scoffed.

Fuck, right. Bailey was just slightly unhinged, but she was fiercely in love with Jordan and I thought they were good together. And if I thought Luke was wrong about it being more poetic to let them live, I would have helped Bailey kill them.

“Yes, fuck,” Jordan giggled. “You should all get out of here so I can fuck my girlfriend.”

Ah, yes. This was the point during Jordan’s high when she got horny. Instead of me freaking out and thinking she just had her hands down my pants because of the pot, she had surgery on her shoulder this time and was on something much stronger.

“Nope. I’m not snuggling with you unless you calm your vag. You just got shot, and no one is fucking you while you’re impaired.”

“You’re mean. I got kidnapped and shot. I’m at least owed a pity fuck.”

“You might want to get out of the hospital bed,” I warned.
“She’s going to get grabby next.”

“Been around her with a bullet wound and morphine before?” Bailey groaned as she pulled herself out of bed.

“Pot.”

“If all of you are going to be meanie pants and not give me orgasms, can you feed me? Not hospital food. I want a big, greasy, jalapeno-pepperoni pizza.”

“If the doctor says it’s okay, she’s more than earned it,” Boss said.

Jordan was going to be just fine. She wanted this whole spy thing and just kept rolling with the punches. She didn’t balk after she got stuck with Clarence and I don’t think this changed anything for her, either. She was still the Jordan I’d known for the last five years because that conversation could have gone a different way, even with the morphine.

The McKinley saga was over. Jordan could focus on her training and I could start mine. Boss brought all the good people back, so we weren’t going to be needed like this again. Crimson and Tyrian could figure out where they needed to be and focus on spatulas.

Jordan was going to need to heal and do some physical therapy before Luke would let her back in his training room, but there were other things she could focus on.

And I was excited about learning to fight. Kicking the guy, who abducted my girlfriend, in the junk had been exhilarating.

38 JORDAN



For a hot minute, taking a bullet and shooting McKinley seemed cool as fuck. A badge of honor, if you will. Then, they took away the morphine, and it kind of sucked. It hurt like a bitch and no one wanted to give me orgasms because I constantly talked about how much it hurt. I just wanted to whine and also get laid, but they didn't want to make it worse.

I couldn't do fight training. I missed it, but I got to learn so much cool stuff. After my language modules, Blue sent me to different agents to get a crash course in their specialties. There were so many of them! I knew Bailey sometimes did the

catfishing thing, but she was also an assassin. Holly did the whole espionage thing.

Pink specialized in politicians. She went to school intending to work her way up to being the first female president, then politics turned into an even bigger shit show, so she came to work for Boss.

Blue even let me spend time with the guys with big muscles who brought all kinds of people down working as their security. That part was pretty cool. They said they might as well be wallpaper to those people. They said *anything* in front of them. Their mics picked it up and fed it straight to their partner, who was recording everything.

Jeremy was training, too. He was out from behind the computer now. He spent his morning getting medic training from Brick's wife, Dana, who ended up being cool as fuck and his afternoons learning how to fight with Luke. Jeremy had always been thin with wiry muscles but his tattooed body was starting to get even hotter. He also spent time learning from Stone, who had a background similar to him and was going to go back to being Bailey's partner.

And he wouldn't fuck me because I got shot. None of them would.

Man, screw McKinley. She was a muffin muffler. I could be having all the sex right now and gotten my green belt. At least she was suffering. She didn't go to London, where she would have had universal healthcare. No, she stayed in the United States and didn't purchase health insurance while she was hiding from us.

Which basically meant as soon as she wasn't going to keel over and die, the hospital sent her straight to the po-po where she might get an aspirin for the pain. Boss had all her money and even if she could come up with bail, the judge didn't grant it because everyone wanted to kill her. I mean, Bailey decided she'd suffer longer if she lived, so my girlfriend wasn't going to do it, but the many *other* assassins McKinley would have happily had killed across the world probably would.

Her cop friend was equally fucked. We found out how they got together after work went through his phone and contacted his precinct. They were, apparently, about two seconds from nailing his ass for stealing drugs and cash from the evidence locker, so we gave them the missing pieces from his text messages.

He kept the money and sold the drugs. He realized they were catching onto him and needed to disappear. He couldn't steal more from the evidence locker because they were watching him so that stank-ass bitch told him kidnapping me would get him the money he needed to get away.

Pretty sure she intended to fuck him over and take his money and drugs if her stupid plan had worked. Which it wouldn't have happened. They were so close to finding me when I saved myself. According to Boss, McKinley was blaming everything on the cop and he was blaming everything on her.

But that would soon be in the past. All my people had gone home, and I was at the office a little late. I adored Brick's wife, Dana. She'd been teaching Jeremy and handling all my follow-up appointments as I did physical therapy. Dana was hilarious, and she was a great doctor. She said things were a little rough when she first got captured, but they treated her well after they realized she was a doctor, even if they wouldn't exactly let her go home.

She was looking at my last MRI. I was bouncing my knee and biting my lip. I wasn't benched nearly as long as Bailey. I loved doing little internships with various agents, but I *missed* fight training.

"You want the good news or the bad news first?"

"I'm dating four people because I don't like choosing."

"Clearly. And I was just fucking with you. There's no bad news. Your range of motion is good, your MRIs are clear, you said the pain is gone, and your physical therapist and I have cleared you for fight training again. I let your moose know it was a possibility before you got here so he could plan accordingly."

I shrieked, jumped on her table, and showed her my trademarked, ass-shaking moves. Seriously, healing was painful, and sometimes physical therapy sucked, but I did all of it and only bitched at home. I was ready to forget McKinley, but the pain in my shoulder was a constant reminder. It got less and less each day until it was gone. Then not being able to continue my fight training made me think of her.

Dana laughed.

“Get the fuck off my table and go home. My husband is cooking dinner tonight, and he promised to go all out. I’ve been home several months now, and he’s still spoiling me worse than he did before.”

“Girl, go get you some of that.”

At least one of us was getting laid. Maybe I could use my clean bill of health to get me a little dick and pussy because I was all pent-up. I practically skipped home, took the elevator to the top floor, and flung the door open intending to make this grand announcement about someone needing to fuck me, but then I stopped.

There was a giant stack of pizza boxes from my favorite pizza place and a handmade banner made from an old sheet and lots of glitter that said *Merry Fuckmas*. Christmas was two weeks away, but something told me this had nothing to do with the birth of Jesus and things were about to get really kinky after a long dry spell. And I knew them well enough to know Jeremy came up with the idea, Bailey came up with the slogan, that was Casper’s old sheet, and the glitter was Luke’s.

“Are we having a fuck party?” I asked.

“Luke is an overprotective moose who just decided for all of us that we weren’t having sex until you were cleared medically for fight training just in case we caused some kind of secondary injury that permanently prevented you from fighting and doing missions. We *all* disagreed with him, but he said we had to beat him at arm wrestling to get to fuck you before that, which isn’t fair because his biceps are bigger than Casper’s thighs.

“It’s kind of an agreement we came to when we moved in together. Someone can decide on a house rule and we can disagree with it. A challenge is issued to decide on it and whoever wins the contest decides if the rule is a go or not. We *usually* decide it in a fair sparring match in the training room, but Luke cheated and suggested arm wrestling, which *none* of us can beat him at. And it was temporary, so we were only miserable for a few months,” Bailey said.

“You cock *and* vagina blocked me, moose?” I demanded.

Luke scooped me up in a bear hug.

“You got kidnapped and *shot*. You talked about how much it hurt all the time. I got scared. I’m allowed to get scared and overreact. It was just until you healed. We’ve been planning tonight since I made everyone wait. I gave them a reading list.”

“Kinky books?”

“You know it.”

“He gave me one with a group thing where one of her lovers is a giant, lesbian spider who eats men. Big fan,” Bailey said.

“None of us have tentacles,” Casper said.

“So, pizza and orgies?” Jeremy asked.

“Hell, yes. Merry Fuckmas, indeed,” I said.

39 JORDAN



I loved pizza. Honestly, it was health food. If you did your toppings just right, you could get all the food groups on one pie. It was a balanced fucking meal, no matter what my friend's mom said at the sleepover when I was eleven. We were *eleven*. We should have been provided *all* the junk food at a sleepover instead of peanut butter-covered celery, diet coke, and a lecture about weight. She probably fucked up countless girls at that sleepover.

But now I was full of pizza and had other plans. They might have been reading Luke's porn books and planning what they were going to do to me, but I was going crazy, too. I was

also reading Luke's porn books and planning for when the dry spell ended. I had ideas.

I dragged everyone to Luke's room since he had that big massive bed. I was on a mission. I wanted all the threesomes again. Bailey and Luke had their thing before they even met me. She was close with Casper and Casper would destroy anyone who hurt her or me, but I didn't think she was comfortable enough to do kinky things with Casper and me. Or even Jeremy and me.

And that was totally fine. I'd been thinking about all the things I wanted to do with them together. I knew what I wanted to do tonight. But first things first.

Had everyone seen my trademarked, ass-shaking moves?

I told Alexa to play *The Lonely Goatherd* from *The Sound of Music*. On the surface, it would seem like an odd choice for a striptease, but Julie Andrews was a badass, and that song was metal as fuck. It had Julie Andrews, goats, *and* yodeling.

I jumped on Luke's bed and started doing my striptease. I got caught up in the moment because that always happened when I was dancing. I *sucked* at ballet the year I was forced to take it, but I excelled at body surfing and dancing at concerts. I could *totally* carry that over to a striptease.

I was careful who I flung my bra and thong at. If the wrong boyfriend got my thong, I was never getting it back. Since I was feeling better pain wise, I'd stopped wearing my holey granny panties and comfy lady boxers under my clothes. Also, no one was going to see my undies since no one would fuck me.

I was wearing my lucky thong today, I put this baby on because I knew I had a follow up appointment and I was hoping to get good news. I did, and I was also getting laid. I tried to throw them at Bailey so I'd get them back, but Luke shoved her out of the way, snatched them out of the air and shoved them in his back pocket.

"I want those back!" I yelled, shaking my ass to Julie's yodeling.

“Tough shit.”

“That is my lucky thong. You’re more likely to get laid if I have it on.”

“Give it back!” Bailey hissed, punching Luke in the arm.

Casper tackled him and wrestled my panties out of Luke’s back pocket just as the song ended and I struck my sexy pose.

“Ha!” Casper yelled, holding up my thong triumphantly.

Jeremy snatched it away from him and tossed it to me.

“Hide that if you want to keep it.”

“If I find some weird omegaverse nest in your closet made out of my dirty panties, I’m going to be mad.”

“What the fuck is an omegaverse nest?” Bailey demanded.

“I could explain it, but our girlfriend just did a striptease to Julie Andrews and looks hot as fuck naked. I’ll give you a book.”

“I lived in a drag bar for months and not one of those queens did Julie Andrews like that. I’m actually impressed you went there.”

“Look, I made a *choice* and I regret nothing. Julie Andrews is badass as fuck. I’m very naked and I haven’t had sex since before I got shot. Neither have any of you. What are you going to do about it?”

Bailey was insanely fast when we were sparring. She always went easy on me, but no one ever expected the Spanish Inquisition. She came flying like a bat out of hell and tackled me on the bed. I shrieked and laughed because that shit didn’t hurt anymore and I was in love with this woman. She buried her face in my neck and bit me.

“Get over here and touch her,” Bailey ordered. “She’d probably find it hot if you touched each other, but don’t touch me.”

I’d never thought about that, but I was pretty sure that was never going to happen. I didn’t want to think about it right now because they were all in bed touching and kissing me. It

was pretty much everywhere. I pretended to be ticklish and kicked Clarence when he wanted to slobber on my toes, but Casper was sucking on my big toe and I was kind of into it. Casper wasn't weird about it.

I twisted my torso to suck Jeremy's cock while he played with my hair. I gripped Luke's cock with my free hand as he nibbled on my nipples. Bailey had her face between my thighs while Casper did things to my feet that felt amazing.

I loved it when all of us were together like this. It was so intense and basically every inch of me was getting touched or kissed. I returned the favor and grabbed what was near, of course. Having Jeremy's cock in my mouth and Luke's in my hand just added to my pleasure because I loved their little growls and moans.

When I couldn't stand it anymore, I told them my first fantasy. Bailey and Luke were down like I thought they'd be. Bailey changed places with me and lay on her back. She really did look like some ethereal pixie with that short, white-blonde hair and violet eyes. And she was naked on Luke's bed waiting for *me*.

I crawled over her and lowered my mouth to her breast. Luke got behind me and rubbed his cock through my slit. I moaned as he started working himself inside me. Holy fuck, that thing was a massive anaconda.

I was a big fan of that thing and Bailey's body. She was tiny, but perfectly portioned and beautifully muscled. I wanted to kiss her all over, so I did. Bailey had abs, so I licked and kissed my way down until I had what I wanted.

I licked and tease Bailey's clit while Luke did the same with his cock. He always liked to take it slow at first so I could get used to him. I appreciated that. I could feel Luke doing something behind me, but I just concentrated on eating Bailey out. I trusted him.

I felt him squeeze lube on my ass. He'd better keep that moose dick right where it was. It was way too big to go in my ass. Luke felt me tense and spanked my ass.

“Relax. I’m not going there,” he growled.

I felt him work his finger in my ass while he was slowly fucking me. Oh, okay. I was here for that. He had big moose fingers, too. Luke was fucking me with his cock and fingers and it felt awesome. I also knew he was preparing me for when he was through with me and Jeremy and Casper got their hands on me. I was also *never* going to say no to double penetration now that I’d done it. I was a big fan.

I buried my face in Bailey’s pussy and licked her harder as Luke picked up speed. Luke slid another finger into my ass and I moaned. So, I did the same to Bailey. I curled my fingers up and started massaging her G spot.

She was thrusting and fucking my face. She was pulling my hair, too. I loved it when she did that. I also adored the shit out of what Luke was doing behind me with his cock and fingers. He always started slow because of his size but he always managed to work up to something so intense, it took my breath away.

I was so fucking close. Luke had those long, muscular arms. He adjusted so he could reach around me and finger my clit. Bailey went off only seconds before I did. Oh fuck, and I went off hard, too. I think I forgot to breathe for a minute. Luke let out that bear-shifter growl I loved so much and wasn’t that far behind me.

I crawled over Bailey and yanked her to my chest. Sometimes, you had to make your diminutive girlfriend be little spoon. Sometimes, she didn’t fight it if you just gave her a mind-blowing orgasm. And I always loved being Luke’s little spoon after he fucked me like that. Those big strong arms felt amazing wrapped around me. He was my moose, but he was a *beast* at snuggles.

We laid like that for a while, but my lady bits were also a beast right now. She’d been neglected for months. It wasn’t just my partners. That rancid bitch shot me in the dominant arm and it hurt too much to get myself off. I could forgive Luke for getting everyone to refuse to fuck me, but none of that would have happened if McKinley hadn’t kidnapped me.

If my vagina could audibly rumble like my stomach did when I went three hours without eating, it definitely would have. Two of my boyfriends were sitting across the room naked and stroking their cocks. Casper and Jeremy looked beautiful naked. I was already horny again.

I shifted and Bailey giggled.

“I think that means she’s ready for you two.”

“Fuck, yes.”

“Luke did all the prep work for what we had in mind,” Casper said.

“And what does your cute, kinky behind have in mind?” I asked.

I mean, I was pretty sure I had an idea from the hint, but I wanted all the details. Casper flopped on his back and crooked a finger at me. He was definitely an ass man. Casper was already lubed up and manhandled me so that I was facing away from him. He didn’t need to tell me a damned thing. I watched a *lot* of porn during my extended dry spell when I only wanted Jeremy but thought he wasn’t into me like that.

So, I knew exactly what was about to go down and I was here for it.

Casper gripped his cock, and I eased my ass down on it. I moaned as he stretched me out. I leaned back against Casper once I had all of him and he wrapped his arms around my waist. Jeremy started panther crawling toward me. He’d always had this long, lean body, but ever since Luke got his hands on Jeremy, he was moving into ballet-dancer-bod territory.

He slid that big, beautiful, pierced cock into me, but he was smirking at me like he knew something I didn’t. I knew that look.

“What are you up to, imp?” I demanded.

“Wait and see.”

The most dangerous words Jeremy could ever utter.

Jeremy revealed what he had in his hand and I groaned. They had all bought that rose vibrator Bailey used on me and he had one in the palm of his hand.

“You’re trying to kill me, aren’t you?”

“La petite mort.”

“I knew what that shit meant *before* Boss made me learn French.”

“Jordan? I love you, but shut the fuck up and let us give you all the orgasms. You weren’t the only one not having sex while you were healing.”

“But—”

Jeremy shut me up by turning the rose on and placing it directly over my clit. Orgasms and food were the quickest way to shut me up, and he knew that about me. That fucking clit-sucker, man. It looked so harmless and unassuming, but the thing barely touched me and my body was shaking with a super-intense orgasm.

I wasn’t even finished cumming when Jeremy and Casper started fucking me. Oh, they were *devious*. They had been planning this. Jeremy would take the rose away and they’d fuck me for a bit. When I wasn’t expecting it, he’d put the rose on my clit and I’d die all over again.

Everyone in this bedroom was a superhero at giving multiple orgasms, but that rose should be classified as a weapon of mass destruction. By the time Casper and Jeremy were done with me, I was *wrecked*. I lost track of how many orgasms I had. Could you have too many of those? My entire body was pretty limp, and I was worthless for anything but cuddling and sleeping until morning.

Would Luke go easy on me on my first day back at training because it was my first day and because I didn’t think it was possible to cum that much?

We all crashed into a big puppy pile on the bed. It was *finally* over. Jeremy and I could just focus on our training and Casper and Bailey could do their team lead and assassin stuff. We didn’t have to spend all this time thinking about Casper’s

ex-girlfriend or some nefarious figure with stolen data and what they might do with it.

I never intended to think about her again except for the trademarked, ass-shaking moves I intended to throw down when Boss told us her sentencing. I was going to spend the rest of my life being the best girlfriend ever to all of them. I was going to make Casper forget he ever had a shitty girlfriend because I loved him exactly the way he was.

In addition to being the best girlfriend I could possibly be, I was going to jump into my training and bust my ass. Boss took a massive chance on me and she was such an amazing woman.

I might not be the best agent she ever had, but I was going to try to be the best agent I could be.

EPILOGUE

BOSS



Ah, my kids. I thought of all of my agents like my kids. Being a mother wasn't really in the cards for me. I could have adopted, but I had way too many enemies to bring a helpless child into my life. I tried to treat them all like family. I understood they worked for me, but I tried to make it a place people wanted to work.

Black and my lovers were the only ones who knew how utterly devastated I was when their names got released and they had to flee. I wasn't worried about the damage to my business. I had spun worse things into gold. All of those nasty things had been lies, but I knew how to fix it. It was the fact that someone put my people in danger.

And then it was my people that did it. I was surprised when I thought Brick tried to kill me, but happy when I learned it wasn't him. Honestly, McKinley didn't surprise me. There had always been something a little off about her.

It had been seven years since we captured McKinley. She was going to be behind bars for a long time. So was her cop friend. We'd all moved on.

I recalled the agents I thought worked best as a team, but I didn't leave the rest of them out in the cold. They would be

perfect fits at other agencies. I called and most of them did the same thing I did. They were working for them now and probably happier than when they were working for me.

I was sitting with Black and Blue waiting for our newest baby agent graduate to come home from her first mission. Her other two boyfriends were pacing the room. I'd sent her girlfriend with her along with her first boyfriend, who was technically her partner.

Their mission had gone exactly to plan. I had a feeling it would. Jordan was shaping up to be quite the capable agent. We were just waiting on their flight to come in to debrief and for Bailey to regale us with whatever revenge she got up to with household items if the mark got a little grabby.

Our trio was just going undercover at a tech startup Deep Throat sent our way that was suspected of defrauding charities and funneling money into some pretty dark criminal elements. They got what they needed on the tech startup and information to bring their criminal contacts down, but Bailey had also once fashioned nipple clamps out of coaxial cables and duct tape, so I was counting on a good story if she got a little revenge.

While we were waiting, my phone went off. It was Kendasha. She was twenty-one now. She finished her PhD at eighteen and wanted to start a business building things. I happily invested. She made things for clients, but she also took my little spy empire to the next level with her inventions.

Her little brother had gone viral for his piano playing. The boy was a prodigy at jazz. Kendasha was inviting us to hear him play. I accepted, of course, because I loved jazz.

When I hung up, our heroes were finally home. I usually sent new agents on girlfriend or boyfriend missions their first time out. Jordan had technically already done that. She'd also gone undercover at an insurance agency. It wasn't standard for me at all, but we didn't really have a choice.

She did *beautifully* this time. So did Jeremy. I don't know how we missed Jeremy when he was in college. We would have taken him on the business side or this side. Jordan was

totally unlikely. She sent us a resume that she was really applying to be a spy with a winking emoji.

I had Blue look into her. It could have been a massive disaster. She didn't know this, but I had Blue hack into her old job. They recorded all her calls. I listened to her calls in Spanish. Learning a new language on your own as an adult with no help was hard, but she managed to do it. The calls she was taking were difficult with upset and injured people and she handled them perfectly.

If I wasn't sure before, I knew now. Jordan and Jeremy might have been new seven years ago, but now that they were fully trained, they were going to be a force to be reckoned with.

McKinley tried to topple this empire I'd built with my best friend, but she lost. We rebuilt with new and old faces and now we were stronger than ever.

And woe to anyone who came for my kids again.

AFTERWORD

Thanks for sticking it out with Jordan and her group. I started her story back in 2006 with just a tiny smidge of MF romance and ended up not finishing the series. I still *wanted* to wrap up her story, it just wasn't the right time. Several years later, I started writing why choose romance and eventually came back to Jordan. It had the great bones for a why choose romance, so I took what I had already written, did a ton of rewrites, changed a ton of things to fit with my brand, and you got what you just read.